

# KEEP ON THE SHADOWFELL

## Forgotten Realms Conversion

The introductory 4th edition DUNGEONS & DRAGONS adventure titled *Keep on the Shadowfell* takes player characters (PCs) from 1st to 3rd levels. A player or Dungeon Master (DM) need not own the *Player's Handbook*, *Dungeon Master's Guide*, or *Monster Manual* to use the *Keep on the Shadowfell* adventure. The adventure provides all the necessary rules to play, and it is designed to fit into most campaign settings. The material that follows is a guide to placing the adventure into the FORGOTTEN REALMS setting. The article includes additional encounters, adaptations to the adventure's people and places, and expanded interactions with nonplayer characters (NPCs). With this guide, a DM can jumpstart his FORGOTTEN REALMS campaign before the three core D&D books even arrive on the shelves.

HEROIC

1-10

by Greg Bilslund

illustrated by John Stanko

cartography by Mike Schley

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## HOW TO USE THIS ARTICLE

*Keep on the Shadowfell* intentionally leaves gaps in geography and history, enabling a DM to place the adventure anywhere within his or her campaign. To place *Keep on the Shadowfell* into Faerûn requires this article to provide—and in some cases override—many names, backgrounds, and histories presented in the original adventure. As DM, you must be prepared to adapt the adventure's original text to the information presented here. Read the adventure text in conjunction with this article before running the adventure. You might want to place sticky notes within the adventure's text to help remind yourself of changes as the players run through the adventure.

## PREPARING FOR ADVENTURE

*Keep on the Shadowfell* provides several adventure hooks and an encounter called “Kobold Ambush” to jumpstart the action. You can use its existing encounter and hooks, or you can use the alternate hook and encounter presented here. The alternative beginning allows you to start the adventure in a larger city, or else begin in a safe hamlet in Deepingdale or eastern Cormyr.

You can make multiple hooks available to the party. The adventure hook on the following page allows you to involve all the PCs in the adventure. However, an individual PC might have a specific investment in activities in Winterhaven. Try to tailor the hooks so that each character has a personal, moral, or financial investment in the adventure.

### THE SETTING

In the FORGOTTEN REALMS setting, the town of Winterhaven—around which much of the adventure revolves—lies on the East Way between Arabel and Highmoon. The town is located deep in the Thunder Peaks, precariously situated at the edge of Sembia’s influence.

### THE THREAT

Long before the arrival of the dracolich Aurgloroasa (known to some as the Sibilant Shade), in the Thunder Peaks, another dragon prowled the mountains. The great wyrm, Shadraxil, was the shadow dragon sire of Aurgloroasa’s mother, Shhuusshuru. At the birth of Cormyr in 26 DR, Shadraxil was already a great wyrm and sire to many other dragons, including Shhuusshuru.

As Cormyr extended its power, the nation built fortresses along its frontier, including in the Thunder Peaks. At that time, Shadraxil laired there, and in the year 236 DR, the great wyrm began attacking Cormyr’s outposts. Among these forts was the place that was to become Shadowfell Keep.

In response, Cormyr sent a contingent of brave soldiers led by the knight Jerold Keegan. Keegan devised a plan to lure the beast into an arcane trap, where Cormyr’s War Wizards managed to bind the wyrm in a prison within the Plane of Shadow.

Shadraxil has been trapped in the prison for twelve centuries, forgotten by most and assumed dead by the few who recall his name.

After centuries of imprisonment, Shadraxil believed he would never escape. However, when Shar folded the Plane of Shadow into the Shadowfell following the Spellplague, the dragon awoke and saw his chance. The Spellplague weakened the protective seal keeping the dragon imprisoned, and so Shadraxil struck a deal with Shar, offering his services in her dark purpose if she could use her agents to free him. After years of excavation and preparation, Shar’s servants are finally poised to free Shadraxil, a beast mighty enough to upset the balance of power in the region. Shadraxil’s liberation could be the opportunity Netheril and Sembia have coveted in hopes of delivering a killing blow to Cormyr and the Dalelands.

### RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

An underpriest of Shar named Kalarel has infiltrated the nearby town of Winterhaven. His cult operates out of the town, which helps supply Kalarel and his followers, who are hard at work in Shadowfell Keep preparing to unleash the wyrm.

## ADVENTURE SUMMARY

The PCs learn that something is amiss in the town of Winterhaven, and they travel there to investigate.

The characters then discover that what seemed only a minor threat is actually part of a greater peril. As characters speak to NPCs in Winterhaven and face Kalarel’s agents, they gain clues that help them uncover Kalarel’s plans and give them the information necessary to thwart the evil cult’s machinations.

### HOOK: FLEEING ACOLYTE

The adventurers begin in a village or city near the Thunder Peaks, perhaps sharing a drink together, talking of recent events, or minding their own business. At some point, a group of ruffians enters the tavern and approaches a thin, wiry man sitting in the corner. The man is a resident of Winterhaven and an acolyte of Chauntea. He has been sent by Winterhaven’s priestess, Sister Linora. The ruffians corner him and start threatening him. Finally, one draws a dagger and seems about to kill the fellow.

**Alternate:** The thin, wiry man enters a tavern where the PCs are enjoying a drink. After he spots them, he confesses that he is looking for help to root out an evil cult in his hometown (see Gevarn’s Plea on page 8).

## TAVERN THUGS

### Encounter Level 1 (500 XP)

#### SET UP

The player characters have arrived in the tavern of the Gilded Lady in a city at the base of the Thunder Peaks. If you have no preference for the city in which the characters begin, use Highmoon, the capital of Deepingdale and a city several days east of Winterhaven. The Dalelands consist of free counties full of warm-hearted, independent people.

Set up the tactical map on the game table, and place a miniature of a human man in the area marked “M” on the tactical map. You don’t need to place a miniature for the barkeep because he won’t participate in the encounter; the tavern is otherwise empty. Allow players to place their character miniatures within the tavern. Once they’ve selected a location, the action begins.

This encounter includes the following creatures:

- 4 human thugs (T)
- 2 human ruffians (R)
- 1 human mercenary (H)

#### Once the players place their miniatures, read:

*A low fire burns in the hearth of this comfortable common room. The tavern, called the Gilded Lady, is empty of patrons except for a lone human man.*

*Not long after you sit down with your drinks, a group of tough-looking humans saunters into the tavern to the center of the room. The man in the corner leans back into the shadows of his booth. However, the seven new arrivals spot him. Four move to the front and back doors, while three cross the room, cornering the patron.*

At this point, give PCs the opportunity to act. Place miniatures of the human gang according to the positions marked on the tactical map. If the PCs address any members of the group, the human mercenary grunts and tells them to mind their own business.

#### Unless the PCs attack the men, read:

*The leader of the group, a scarred man in chainmail, leans menacingly over the table of the patron.*

*“You’re the one, ain’t you?” he asks.*



*The other man recoils in the booth, mumbling. You hear him manage to stutter, “I—I-d-don’t know what you’re talking about.”*

*The scarred man seizes the shirt of the tavern patron, fumbles with the man’s shirt collar, and yanks out a holy symbol.*

At this point, give the PCs another opportunity to act or ask questions.

#### Perception Check

**DC 12** *The holy symbol that the man in the corner wears is made of oak and bears the symbol of a rose. The symbol is that of the goddess Chauntea, a benevolent deity of nature and the harvest.*

#### Unless the PCs attack, read:

*“He’s the one,” says the scarred man with a sneer. He reaches for his sword and, pulling it out, lunges for the terrified man.*

When the PCs rise to the defense of the acolyte of Chauntea—either physically or verbally—the human mercenary shoves the acolyte back into the booth and turns to the PCs, urging his allies, “Take care of this rabble.” If the PCs do not come to the acolyte’s aid, then the human mercenary kills the man. In that case, engage the PCs in the adventure by having the kobolds from the “Kobold Brigand” encounter in *Keep on the Shadowfell* attack them as they make their way along the East Way through the Thunder Peaks.

4 Human Thugs (T)		Level 1 Minion	
Medium natural humanoid		XP 25 each	
<b>Initiative</b> +0	<b>Senses</b> Perception +0		
<b>HP</b> 1; a missed attack never damages a minion			
<b>AC</b> 14; <b>Fortitude</b> 13, <b>Reflex</b> 11, <b>Will</b> 11; see also <i>mob rule</i>			
<b>Speed</b> 6			
⊕ <b>Club</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>			
+5 vs. AC; 2 damage.			
<b>Mob Rule</b>			
A human rabble gains a +2 power bonus to all defenses while at least two other human rabble are within 5 squares of it.			
<b>Alignment</b> Evil	<b>Languages</b> Common		
<b>Str</b> 14 (+2)	<b>Dex</b> 10 (+0)	<b>Wis</b> 10 (+0)	
<b>Con</b> 12 (+1)	<b>Int</b> 9 (-1)	<b>Cha</b> 11 (+0)	
<b>Equipment</b> club			
<b>Description</b> Brawny and unshaven, these men look like the kind of people you wouldn't want to meet in a dark alley.			

Human Mercenary (M)		Level 3 Soldier	
Medium natural humanoid		XP 150	
<b>Initiative</b> +5	<b>Senses</b> Perception +6		
<b>HP</b> 47; <b>Bloodied</b> 23			
<b>AC</b> 18; <b>Fortitude</b> 16, <b>Reflex</b> 15, <b>Will</b> 14			
<b>Speed</b> 5			
⊕ <b>Longsword</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>			
+10 vs. AC; 1d10 + 3 damage, and the target is marked until the end of the human mercenary's next turn.			
⊕ <b>Press the Advantage</b> (standard; recharge ⓧ ⓧ) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>			
Requires longsword; +10 vs. AC; 1d10 + 7 damage, and the target is pushed 1 square and dazed (save ends).			
⤵ <b>Crossbow</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>			
Range 15/30; +9 vs. AC; 1d8 + 2 damage.			
<b>Alignment</b> Evil	<b>Languages</b> Common		
<b>Skills</b> Streetwise +7			
<b>Str</b> 16 (+4)	<b>Dex</b> 14 (+3)	<b>Wis</b> 11 (+1)	
<b>Con</b> 15 (+3)	<b>Int</b> 10 (+1)	<b>Cha</b> 12 (+2)	
<b>Equipment</b> chainmail, longsword, crossbow with 20 bolts			
<b>Description</b> This tall, muscular human has long hair, a thin mouth, and a pointed nose. He wears chainmail and carries a sword with confidence.			

2 Human Ruffians (R)		Level 2 Skirmisher	
Medium natural humanoid		XP 125 each	
<b>Initiative</b> +6	<b>Senses</b> Perception +1		
<b>HP</b> 37 each; <b>Bloodied</b> 18			
<b>AC</b> 16; <b>Fortitude</b> 12, <b>Reflex</b> 14, <b>Will</b> 12			
<b>Speed</b> 6			
⊕ <b>Mace</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>			
+7 vs. AC; 1d8 + 1 damage, and the human bandit shifts 1 square.			
⤵ <b>Dagger</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>			
Range 5/10; +7 vs. AC; 1d4 + 3 damage.			
⊕ <b>Dazing Strike</b> (standard; encounter) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>			
Requires mace; +7 vs. AC; 1d8 + 1 damage, the target is dazed until the end of the human bandit's next turn, and the human bandit shifts 1 square.			
<b>Combat Advantage</b>			
The human bandit deals an extra 1d6 damage on melee and ranged attacks against any target it has combat advantage against.			
<b>Alignment</b> Evil	<b>Languages</b> Common		
<b>Skills</b> Stealth +9, Streetwise +7, Thievery +9			
<b>Str</b> 12 (+2)	<b>Dex</b> 17 (+4)	<b>Wis</b> 11 (+1)	
<b>Con</b> 13 (+2)	<b>Int</b> 10 (+1)	<b>Cha</b> 12 (+2)	
<b>Equipment</b> leather armor, mace, 4 daggers			
<b>Description</b> These ruthless-looking women are armored in leather and wear a smug expression, as if inviting trouble.			

## TACTICS

The human thugs stand guard at the door. However, at the signal from their leader, they charge in at the characters' flanks.

The human mercenary ignores the acolyte and turns his attention on the PCs. Although the mercenaries are working in the service of the cult of Shar, they are practical opponents and flee if a fight appears lost.

## FEATURES OF THE AREA

**Illumination:** Bright light.

**Booths:** These are planted to the ground and flush with the wall. They are difficult terrain.

**Chairs:** Chairs do not limit or restrict movement through a square.

**Tables:** A table is tall enough that a Small creature can move under it and gain cover from doing so. It costs 2 squares of movement to hop up on a table. A character can use a standard action to tip over a table, which can then grant cover for a standing creature or superior cover for a prone creature.

**Hearth:** A low-burning fire provides warmth to the room. The fireplace is built into the wall and does not affect movement.

**Hearth Chairs:** These provide cover for someone adjacent to it. These also count as difficult terrain.

**Rug:** A character adjacent to the carpet can use a standard action to make a DC 10 Strength check to pull the carpet up. Any creatures in squares occupied by the carpet must succeed at a DC 15 Acrobatics check or be knocked prone.

**Bar:** This countertop has a solid front and can provide cover to a standing character or superior cover to a prone character. The bar is difficult terrain.

**Treasure:** The human gang has 5 gp and 83 sp among them regardless of how many the PCs defeat.

## WHAT'S NEXT?

When the fight concludes, the player characters have the opportunity to talk to the terrorized acolyte of Chauntea, who introduces himself as Gevarn. (See Gevarn's Plea on the next page for information about the acolyte and his plight.)

The characters need not worry about the town's authority; the barkeep, who hides behind the bar during the fight, recounts the heroics of the PCs to the town constable, who dismisses the affair.

## GEVARN'S PLEA

This section provides a read-aloud section and a question-and-answer section to help communicate what Gevarn knows. You should feel at liberty to summarize or restructure the conversation as appropriate. When the PCs approach Gevarn, read:

*The man huddled in the booth is dressed in plain clothes, indistinguishable from a craftsman or farmer were it not for the holy symbol that he now clutches in white-knuckled hands.*

*The man's brown hair is in utter disarray, and even now, his thin, wiry frame quivers from the traumatic experience. He looks up at you with wide, blue eyes as you approach and says:*

*"Th-th-thank you so much for saving me. Chauntea bless you; bless all of you! I thought for sure I was d-d-dead. My name is Gevarn, and I'm an acolyte of Chauntea."*

### Q: Who were those men?

*"Hired street thugs—ruffians sent by the forces of evil to stop me on my mission."*

### Q: Your mission? Why were those men after you?

*"I come from a town called Winterhaven up in the Thunder Peaks. The cleric I serve, Sister Linora, has learned that a cult of Shar has asserted itself in our town. She sent me to go find help, but I'm afraid I'm not well-educated in the ways of the world, and those men must have tracked me down to stop me from finding aid."*

### Q: What else can you tell us about this cult?

*"Sister Linora has learned through her communions with the Great Mother that Shar has turned her dark eyes upon our humble little town. Shar, the Mistress of Night, seeks ever to increase her influence over the world and bring us all to ruin. The Sister instructed me to go find help while she tries to uncover the cult and discover its dark purpose."*

Gevarn can provide a basic description of Winterhaven. Having seen the PCs take care of the ruffians, he expresses a desire for their help:

*"I thank you all for coming to my aid. Having seen how well you handled yourselves with those thugs, might I beseech you to come to the aid of our beleaguered town? The lord of the town would surely reward you if you manage to find this cult and eliminate it. You would also have the thanks of me, Sister Linora, and the Great Mother if you would lend us your aid."*

## GETTING TO WINTERHAVEN

If the PCs heed Gevarn's plea, he accompanies them on the four-day journey to Winterhaven. As the PCs near Winterhaven, they are set upon by kobolds (see the Kobold Brigand encounter from *Keep on the Shadowfell*.) Gevarn seeks refuge during the encounter, and the kobolds do not attack him. Gevarn knows nothing about the creatures, but he's sure the characters can learn more once they reach Winterhaven.

## ADAPTING WINTERHAVEN

The following text replaces the read-aloud text at the beginning of the Winterhaven section in *Keep on the Shadowfell*:

*The rutted East Way winds through the Thunder Peaks, eventually coming upon the walled town of Winterhaven. The town is nestled in a forested valley in the midst of the Thunder Peaks. The stone walls appear weathered but still manage to support the defensive palisades.*

*Small thatched homes stand around Winterhaven, each fronting a small piece of farmland that's been cleared of trees. Beyond the farms, to the west and south, are dark woods, and in all directions rise tall mountain peaks.*

## NAMES

Many of the names from the *Keep on the Shadowfell* adventure should be changed to accommodate the FORGOTTEN REALMS setting.

Original	New
King's Road	East Way
Cairngorn Peaks	Thunder Peaks
Orcus	Shar
Avandra	Chauntea
Nerath	Cormyr

## WHAT'S NEXT?

When the PCs arrive in Winterhaven, Gevarn parts company with them and heads for the temple (area 10). Gevarn invites them to come to the temple and speak with Sister Linora once they are settled. For room and board, he directs them to Wrafton's Inn (area 2).

## IMPORTANT LOCATIONS

This article expands on several locations from the published adventure. You should incorporate the original information with the additional descriptions provided here.

**Valthrun's Tower:** In the original adventure, this five-story tower is rumored to be more than 300

years old. In reality, it is much older. A character succeeding at a DC 25 Arcana check can determine that the tower is enchanted with a ritual allowing it to remain unaffected by the elements. A character succeeding at a DC 20 History or Dungeoneering check can discern that the tower is at least 1,000 years old and dates back to the birth of Cormyr.

The truth is that the spire was built as a watchtower for the fortress, known then as Keegan's Keep. When Keegan's Keep was destroyed (see *The Truth of the Keep* on page 34), tomes contained in the keep's library were transferred to the tower. They have remained locked away on the lower levels of the tower, where Valthrun doesn't go. Later in the adventure, characters can persuade Valthrun to search these ancient libraries to learn the truth of Shadowfell Keep.

**Bairwin's Grand Shoppe:** In the original adventure, Bairwin is a world traveler who owns a local general store. However, in this adaptation, Bairwin is Kalarel's underling and the leader of the cultists located in Winterhaven.

Bairwin operates the cult out of a basement in his shop. Bairwin arrived several years ago at the same time as Kalarel, and he has covertly supplied Kalarel with the tools and provisions necessary to excavate Shadowfell Keep. He has also begun recruiting others to his cause.

## IMPORTANT PERSONS

This article provides new information for playing several NPCs from the original adventure.

**Ninaran:** Although Bairwin operates the cult in Winterhaven and supplies Kalarel with provisions, it is Ninaran who keeps an eye on things. She has a cabin outside of town, but she spends her evenings in Wrafton's Inn, listening to folks and making sure



no one suspects the activity up in the keep. She is also the point of contact for the goblin, Irontooth, who keeps the kobolds in line.

Ninaran is quiet and rarely speaks, but if a PC seeks out conversation, she asks questions without offering anything about herself. When a PC answers a question, she provides a noncommittal "Ah" or "Is that so?" Ninaran might ask any of the following questions:

"Where are you from?"

"What brings you to Winterhaven?"

"How long are you staying?"

"Do you like Winterhaven?"

"Who have you met so far?"

If characters reveal why they are in Winterhaven, Ninaran expresses casual interest. She then reports everything they say to Kalarel.

If the PCs try to ask Ninaran questions, she is evasive and sticks to the story that she is a simple trapper and hunter. PCs can make DC 14 Insight checks to learn that she is purposefully concealing information about herself.

**Bairwin Wildarson:** A former resident of Sembia and devotee of Shar, Bairwin seems at first to be merely an eccentric shopkeeper. Among the adventuring gear and provisions in his shop are a variety of odd items, each with a story behind it.

Bairwin takes special interest in dark-seeming characters—warlocks, rogues, or races of typically nongood alignments, such as drow or tieflings. He is interested in finding more potential recruits for his cult and focuses on speaking to any of the aforementioned races or classes.

**Thair Coalstriker:** This gruff dwarf is in poor humor over the success of Bairwin's shop. He openly complains about the Grand Shoppe's overnight success. He explains that Bairwin arrived in town with a wagon full of junk a few years ago and has since managed to build a shop that seems constantly to acquire more merchandise and expensive items despite having few customers.

Characters who question Thair further learn that Bairwin was at first a frequent customer of Thair's. Bairwin often purchased metal goods like shovels, spades, and wheelbarrows. Thair assumes that Bairwin managed somehow to sell these items at great

profit to others in the area—perhaps dwarves in the nearby hills. Whatever the case, the dwarf smith is bitter over Bairwin’s shop’s growth.

**Sister Linora:** This middle-aged, human woman manages the town’s temple. She is a quiet, humble, soft-spoken woman except when it comes to Shar. She expresses open frustration at the town’s (and particularly Lord Padraig’s) unwillingness to recognize the threat. She, like the acolyte, Gevarn, pleads with the PCs to find the cult and provide proof of its existence to the lord and citizens of the town.

## Q&A

### Q: What do you know about a cult of Shar?

At this point, most people are dismissive of such an idea, laughing it off. Characters can make a DC 15 Streetwise check to learn any or all of the following points of information related to the cult:

- ◆ The town has no underground caverns or hidden places of which its citizens are aware.
- ◆ There aren’t any new or suspicious folks in town. The newest person is Bairwin, and he arrived several years ago.
- ◆ The gates are shut at night, and the only people who leave through them are returning to their homes outside town. Farmers, like Eilian the Old, and trappers, like Ninaran, leave shortly after dark.
- ◆ Most people are more concerned about the kobolds attacking travelers and townspeople than they are about a subversive cult.
- ◆ If there were a cult, most folks believe it would be outside of town—off in the dragon burial site southwest of town or the old, ruined keep to the northeast. Even so, people find that highly doubtful.

### Q: What do you know about Shar?

**Sister Linora or Gevarn:** *“She is the Mistress of Night, one of the greater gods, and she has only evil in her heart. Out of the primordial chaos, she and her sister, Selûne, created the world. However, unlike her good sister, Shar longs to see the world fall into darkness and evil.”*

**Bairwin or Ninaran:** *“Why do you ask about the Mistress of Night? She has nothing to do with us.”*

**Anyone else:** *“Shar? Well, of course, I know of her, but what does she have to do with me? She’s an evil goddess, and Chauntea watches over us here in Winterhaven—that’s all I need to know.”*

## LEARNING ABOUT THE AREA

Allow characters to make History checks for information related to the Thunder Peaks and Religion checks for knowledge related to Shar.

## THUNDER PEAKS

**DC 15:** The Thunder Peaks stand on the border between Cormyr and the Dalelands, with Sembia just to the southeast. Since Sembia’s expansion, the Thunder Peaks and the road through them has become riddled with dangers.

**DC 20:** A dracolich known as the Sibilant Shade prowls the peaks. Although dormant in recent years, the dracolich stirs sometimes to prey on particularly treasure-laden caravans that pass through the Thunder Gap along the East Way.

**DC 25:** When Cormyr absorbed the nations of Esparin and Orva at its founding, it created a series of fortresses in the Thunder Peaks to guard its eastern border. For reasons now lost to time, these keeps failed and Cormyr withdrew its military might to instead guard the lower lands.

## SHAR, MISTRESS OF NIGHT

**DC 15:** Shar is a greater goddess who, with her sister Selûne, created Abeir-Toril. She longs to see a desolate world filled only with evil and despair.

**DC 20:** Following the Spellplague, Shar found it within her power to reshape the Plane of Shadow, which she transformed into the Shadowfell. The Shadowfell is a dark reflection of Toril, where undead and shadowy humanoids stalk the land.

**DC 25:** Shar exercises a strong influence over Netheril and Sembia, whose denizens worship her openly. Although activity on her behalf outside those nations is limited, small cells do exist that represent her interests. The Monks of the Dark Moon is among the most devoted and formidable groups of followers.

## INVOLVING THE PCS

Once the PCs are settled in Winterhaven, you have several options for involving them in the adventure. Depending on the hook the characters are following, several things might happen. The section below discusses how to deal with those situations and how to adapt them to the FORGOTTEN REALMS setting.

## KOBOLD AMBUSH

When the PCs leave Winterhaven after first arriving there, they are set upon by a group of kobolds (see the Kobold Ambush encounter from the original adventure). From this encounter the characters normally receive a small dragon figurine with the symbol of Orcus on the bottom. For this adaptation of the adventure, that symbol should instead be Shar’s symbol: a black disk with a thin, outer ring of

purple. Characters might then realize that the kobolds are somehow involved with the cult activity.

## DRAGON BURIAL SITE

In the original adventure, the dragon burial site was indirectly related to Kalarel's machinations. However, in this adaptation, the dragon burial site supplies evidence of Shadowfell Keep's true purpose (see *The Truth of the Keep* on page 34).

A dragon is buried at the site, but the creature is only a juvenile, which a character can identify with a DC 15 Nature check. A PC succeeding at the check also determines that the bones are those of a shadow dragon, and the site is more than 1,000 years old.

The dragon site is a red herring, a ruse created by long-dead Cormyrian knights to fool everyone into believing Shadraxil was dead instead of sealed within the Shadow Rift. The scheme succeeded until Kalarel learned the truth. The gnome, Agrid, is one of Kalarel's minions and has information that the PCs can use to uncover cult activity in Winterhaven. Unlike many of Kalarel's other servants, Agrid is not devoted to Shar or Kalarel's cause. Kalarel hired him to capture Douven and take over the excavation. When faced with the prospect of death, Agrid offers what information he knows. When bloodied or when only one ally remains, the gnome surrenders and offers the character information in exchange for his life. If the PCs accept, the gnome says:

*"Kalarel is the mastermind! He wanted the mirror in that crate over there for some ritual in the keep in the mountains. I don't know why. My contact in the town was a shopkeeper named Bairwin; he was the one who paid me and told me where to find that old fool, Douven."*

Once the gnome has offered his information, he tries to cajole the PCs into letting him go, pointing out that he didn't kill Douven, and the PCs would be cruel to kill him. If the PCs insist on bringing Agrid back to town as evidence of the cult activity, he looks for every opportunity to escape.

Once Douven is freed, he also offers an important bit of information to the PCs:

*"When I set out to dig, I had thought this was the burial site of the great wyrm, Shadraxil. He was a terrible shadow dragon slain by a group of Cormyrian soldiers led by the knight, Sir Keegan. However, the skeleton of the dragon here is much too small to be that of Shadraxil. I can only wonder what became of the great beast."*

## KOBOLD LAIR

These encounters remain almost identical to the original encounters. One change is that at his death, Irontooth cries out, "*Mistress of Night, prepare my way.*"

Also, Kalarel's note to Irontooth is identical except for the final line, which should instead read, "Then Winterhaven's people will serve Shar or else feed Shadraxil's empty stomach."

Characters discovering this note might wonder who or what Shadraxil is. Characters making a DC 20 History check recognize the name as being that of a great wyrm supposedly slain by Cormyrians in the third century (DR).

## REVELATIONS

If the PCs discover that Bairwin is leading the cult in Winterhaven, they are likely to confront him directly or turn to Lord Padraig. If the PCs go to Bairwin's shop, he greets them pleasantly. When the PCs begin asking probing questions, demonstrating that they know of his involvement, he flees, darting into the backroom where a secret door leads down to an

underground chamber. Characters following him trigger the encounter on the next page.

If characters turn to Padraig for action, he demands evidence. Unless the characters manage to present the gnome, he says he will not take action against a member of the town without just cause. In the event the PCs present Agrid, who bemoans his treatment but tells of Bairwin's involvement, then Padraig asks the PCs to help apprehend Bairwin (see the next page).





## CULT OF SHAR

### Encounter Level 3 (700 XP)

#### SET UP

Whether the characters confront Bairwin directly or attempt to apprehend him on behalf of Lord Padraig, the shopkeeper flees into the backroom at the first sign of danger. Characters following him find a secret door ajar in the shop's backroom. The door opens into a narrow stairway that spirals downward into darkness.

Bairwin purposefully leaves the door ajar, hoping to lure the characters after him so he can confront them with his allies. Two sightless reapers stand vigilantly near the entrance to the underground shrine. Two devotees stand near the altar with Bairwin behind them, ready for the attack.

This encounter includes the following creatures:

- 2 dark servants (D)
- 2 sightless reapers (R)
- Bairwin, cult leader (B)

#### When the characters enter the area, read:

*A pall of dim purple light consumes the room. Candles line the walls, burning with flickering, purple flames. Three rows of pews lead up to an altar. A long carpet with a repeated symbol—a black disk surrounded by a thin purple circle—leads up to the front. Several dark-clad figures stand around the room, poised for action.*

#### TACTICS

The creatures occupying this room attempt to engage the PCs near the entrance where the carpet begins. The sightless reapers in particular

attempt to block the main corridor, forcing any PCs to move through the pews if they want to reach Bairwin.

The dark servants move through the pews when necessary, striking at the PCs' flanks and then using *shadow shift* and a move action to retreat out of reach.

Bairwin remains in the back, blinding the PCs with *night's veil* so the sightless reapers can gain combat advantage and attempt to keep them in place with *blade of the reaper*. Bairwin and his followers are utterly devoted to Shar and to Kalarel's plan, and they gladly fight to the death.

2 Dark Servants (D)		Level 2 Skirmisher	
Medium natural humanoid, human		XP 125 each	
Initiative +6		Senses Perception +1; low-light vision	
HP 38 each; Bloodied 19		AC 16; Fortitude 14, Reflex 15, Will 12	
Speed 6		⚔ Short Sword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
		+7 vs. AC; 1d6 + 1 damage	
		⚔ Shadow's Wrath (standard; recharge y z) ♦ Necrotic, Weapon	
		+5 vs. Fortitude; 1d6 + 1 damage plus ongoing 5 necrotic damage.	
Shadow Shift (minor; at-will)		The dark servant shifts 1 square as a minor action.	
Combat Advantage		The dark servant deals an extra 1d6 damage on melee attacks against any target it has combat advantage against.	
Alignment Evil	Languages Common		
Skills Stealth +9			
Str 12 (+2)	Dex 16 (+4)	Wis 10 (+1)	
Con 14 (+3)	Int 12 (+2)	Cha 9 (+0)	
Equipment Black robe, short sword			
Description Clad in robes of midnight black, these sallow-skinned humans have sunken eyes of pure darkness except for a thin outline of deep purple.			

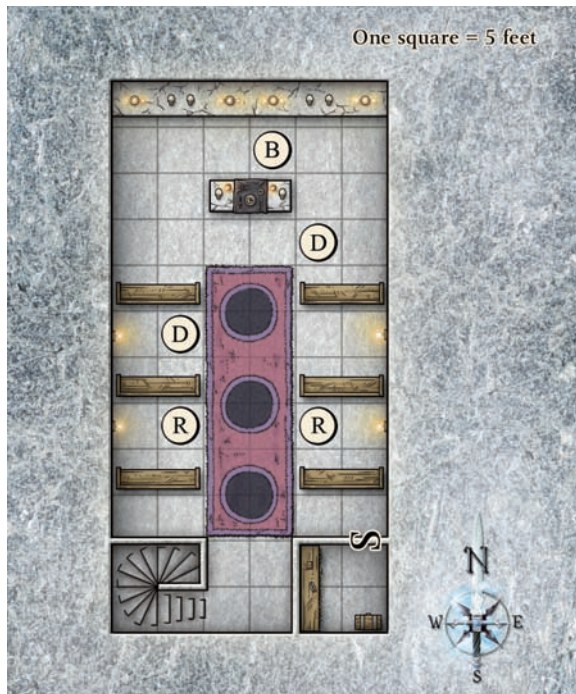
2 Sightless Reapers (R)		Level 3 Soldier	
Medium shadow humanoid		XP 150 each	
Initiative +4		Senses Perception +1; blindsight 5	
HP 47 each; Bloodied 23		AC 19; Fortitude 13, Reflex 15, Will 13	
Resist 5 necrotic		Speed 6	
⚔ Shadow Scythe (standard; at-will) ♦ Necrotic, Weapon		+10 vs. AC; 2d4 + 4 necrotic damage.	
⚔ Blade of the Reaper (standard; at will)		+8 vs. Fortitude; 1d8 + 3 damage, and the target is immobilized (save ends).	
Stalking Shadow (immediate reaction; when an adjacent opponent shifts; at will)		The sightless reaper shifts 1 square.	
Alignment Evil	Languages Common		
Skills Stealth +7			
Str 14 (+3)	Dex 13 (+2)	Wis 11 (+1)	
Con 15 (+3)	Int 10 (+1)	Cha 12 (+2)	
Equipment Black robes, scythe			
Description These wraith-like figures are cloaked in dark, voluminous robes.			

Bairwin, Cult Leader (B)		Level 3 Contoller	
Medium natural humanoid, human		XP 150	
Initiative +2		Senses Perception +3; low-light vision	
HP 47; Bloodied 23		AC 16; Fortitude 14, Reflex 14, Will 17	
Speed 6		⚔ Quarterstaff (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
		+9 vs. AC; 1d8 + 1 damage.	
⚔ Night's Veil (standard; at-will)		Range 10/20; +7 vs. Fortitude; 1d8 + 3 necrotic damage, and the target is blinded (save ends).	
⚔ Darkness Unleashed (standard; encounter)		Close burst 2; +7 vs. Fortitude; 1d4 + 3 necrotic damage, and the target is pushed 2 squares and blinded until the end of Bairwin's next turn.	
Alignment Evil	Languages Common		
Skills Nature + 8, Religion +7			
Str 13 (+2)	Dex 12 (+2)	Wis 14 (+3)	
Con 15 (+3)	Int 12 (+2)	Cha 18 (+5)	
Equipment Leather armor, quarterstaff			
Description This bespectacled, middle-aged man wears lavish garments of purple and black. His eccentricity makes him an unlikely suspect for a cult leader.			

## FEATURES OF THE AREA

**Illumination:** Dim light; candles burn with purple flames throughout the room. Although Bairwin and the servants are human, the blessing of Shar has granted them low-light vision. Unless the PCs provide light, the enemies in this room have concealment against characters without low-light vision.

**Carpet:** This carpet is patterned with the symbol of Shar, and it is a sacred object of the shrine. The carpet grants followers of Shar (Bairwin and his cohorts) a +1 bonus to all defenses. A character can make a DC 15 Arcana check to notice that enemies on the carpet are benefiting from this object. If the object is removed from the shrine, it loses its magical properties.



**Pews:** These pews are constructed of a dark wood. They are difficult terrain. Also, a character might note with a DC 15 Intelligence check that the pews occupying the room appear capable of accommodating a much larger group than the creatures currently occupying the room. A PC who notes this might realize that the cult has other followers within the town's environs. Although this adventure does not call out any other cult members, you should feel free to include more—perhaps members of the cult seek revenge on the PCs for their actions by attacking them while they sleep in Wrafton's.

**Secret Door:** The southeastern corner of the room consists of brick and mortar, like the rest of the shrine. However, a PC making a DC 15 Perception check might notice a seam along the wall.

**Secret Room:** This room contains a set of shelves along the west wall and a small chest that sits along the south side of the room (see Treasure below).

The shelves contain a dozen identical volumes of devotions to Shar. Many of the books are more mundane, including treatises on history that detail the dark goddess's exploits. Several of the tomes, although not actual ritual books, describe rituals of unbinding. A few books describe the history of the Thunder Peaks, and PCs who take the time to peruse the books might (with a DC 15 Perception check) notice a book that speculates that the death of the great shadow dragon, Shadraxil, was in actuality a ruse meant to deter those who would seek to unleash the beast.

These books are part of Kalarel's library, which he has already studied thoroughly. He has left them in Bairwin's keeping now that his ritual is on the verge of completion.

The shelf does contain one ritual book, which a character making the Perception check noted above can identify. The ritual book contains *comprehend languages*.

Also, on the top of the shelves is a correspondence between Kalarel and Bairwin. It reads as follows:

*Your latest shipment of supplies should meet the keep's needs until the ritual is finished, which should be any day now. I will send word if we require anything else. Rest assured that you will be rewarded by for your actions on behalf of Shar once Shadraxil is released from his prison.*

—Kalarel

**Treasure:** The chest contains exactly 200 sp and 100 gp.

## LORE OF THE CULT OF SHAR

A character who makes a Religion check can identify certain features of this encounter's creatures and is aware of the following information:

**DC 15:** Worship of Shar is predominantly located in Netheril and Sembia, yet small pockets of devotees exist throughout Faerûn. These cells are usually independent and act according to what they believe fulfills Shar's will.

**DC 20:** Servants of Shar begin to physically transform as their faith allows the goddess's malign influence to bleed into their souls. Over time, humanoid devotees gain vision that lets them penetrate darkness, and they also acquire the powers to unleash necrotic energy upon their adversaries.

**DC 25:** The most devoted followers of Shar often undergo a transformation that warps their body, leaving them emaciated echoes of their former self. These people become creatures of shadow, less powerful than shades but nonetheless formidable.

## SHADOWFELL KEEP

Once the characters have exhausted their options in town and have figured out the danger that Kalarel and his cohorts represent, then they are likely to head toward the keep. However, the characters might learn a little bit more of the story through the efforts of Valthrun, an NPC.

### THE TRUTH OF THE KEEP

When Valthrun learns of the suspicious activities in Shadowfell Keep and around Winterhaven, he grows alarmed and tells the characters that he must consult the historical texts locked away on the second and third story of his tower. If the PCs allow him a few hours to search the tomes, he can reveal to them the secret of Shadowfell Keep—a secret that has remained guarded for centuries. The following text, which Valthrun communicates to the PCs, replaces Valthrun’s information from the Questions Answered section in the original adventure:

*“Shadowfell Keep, as folks call it now, was not always known by that name. It seems that this name arose only in the past century from people’s fear of the plane through which the dead travel. Not so long ago, yet beyond the memory of most, the keep was known as Keegan’s Keep.*

*“Stories tell of how the lord of Keegan’s Keep, Sir Jerold Keegan, became a crazed lunatic and slew his family and friends, forever cursing the place. However, the truth of the story is much more tragic.*

*“Sir Keegan was a renowned hunter of dragons. Thus, when the great wyrm, Shadraxil, a shadow dragon of particularly ill temperament, began to plague Cormyr, it fell to Keegan to come up with a way to defeat the beast.*

*“The knight lured the beast to the keep, and there, he managed with sword and sorcery to occupy the creature*

*long enough to perform a ritual to trap it away in a place of shadow. That would have been the end of the story were it not for the power of Shadraxil.*

*“Incensed by his defeat, the wyrm poured all of his malice into revenge against the knight who trapped him. Such was the dragon’s power that even from beyond the Shadow Rift, he was able to deceive Keegan into believing his friends and family were conspiring against him. Eventually, the knight’s mind snapped.*

*“The author of the historical treatises speculates that he suffered paranoid delusions, for Keegan went on a rampage through the keep, killing his wife and comrades before eventually a grievous wound drove him to flee into the keep’s crypts. It’s not known what happened to him after that.*

*“Cormyr’s leaders, fearing that Shadraxil might continue to wreak havoc upon those stationed at the keep, ordered the place destroyed and its secrets hidden. They slew a juvenile shadow dragon and created a false burial site, all in an effort to conceal the truth—that Shadraxil still lives, waiting just beyond the rift for an opportunity to have vengeance upon those who did him wrong so very long ago.*

*“Whatever activity is occurring at the keep, it can surely mean ill for Winterhaven and those of nearby lands. Please, will you do what you can to help?”*

## RUNNING THE ADAPTED SHADOWFELL KEEP

The changes to adapt Shadowfell Keep for the FORGOTTEN REALMS are detailed in this section. Many of the names from *Keep on the Shadowfell* should be changed to accommodate the alternate setting.

## KEEP OVERVIEW

**1. Guard Room:** No change.

**2. Torture Chamber:** The goblin prisoner, Splug, can provide information about the cult that the PCs might have missed.

**3. Excavation Area:** The holy symbol found in this room is a symbol of Selûne, not Bahamut.

**4. Balgron’s Chambers:** A character trying to force Balgron to reveal the pass phrase can make a DC 20 Religion check to find out that “All life fails in the dark” is a devotion to Shar.

**5. Crypt of Shadows:** No change.

**6. The Hidden Armory:** No change.

**7. The Skeletal Legion:** The ceiling of the eastern section of this room is covered with a mural. When the characters enter this section, read the following instead of the original adventure text:

*Silvery-white light from above suffuses this wide section of the crypt. A dome depicts a radiant sky with a set of vivid silver and blue eyes gazing down. The eyes are surrounded by six equidistant silver points of light with a single larger point of light above the eyes. Surrounding this radiant image are dark tiles.*

*Altars inscribed with elaborate script stand on either side of the area. Relief images of soldiers in plate armor on their knees in prayer appear on the walls behind each altar.*

The text from *Keep on the Shadowfell* related to the altar and the dragon statues also varies. The script on the altars is in Common, and both altars read:

*In the light, life thrives, perseveres, and endures against the darkness. Our Lady of Silver, give us strength to stand against the darkness and face the night with vigilance and bravery.*

The secret compartment in the southern altar contains a number of moonstone pendants equal to the number of party members. Aside from their appearance, these behave in the same way as the dragon statues described in the original adventure.

**8. Sir Keegan's Tomb:** Keegan's responses to the following questions should be adapted to be consistent with the Truth of the Shadowfell section on the opposite page.

**Q: Who are you?**

*"I am Sir Keegan. I was the lord of this keep. It was my charge to keep the Shadow Rift sealed and prevent Shadraxil from breaking free and unleashing a reign of terror upon Cormyr."*

**Q: What happened here?**

*"Shadraxil's power was so great that the wyrm was able to extend his influence from beyond his shadow prison and consume me with madness. I was possessed! In a rage, I slew my wife and then moved through the keep, killing my comrades one by one even as they stood stunned. I became a murderous fiend!"*

**Q: Why are you down here? What happened next?**

The text is identical except for the name of the king, which should be King Tharyann.

**Q: What can we do to help?**

The text is identical except that Bahamut should be Selûne.

**9. The Maze of Caves:** No change.

**10. Kruthik Nest:** No change.

**11. The Water Cave:** No change.

**Walk of the Dead:** See the encounter on the following pages.

**12-14. Hobgoblin Rooms:** At your option, you can play the hobgoblins as cohorts of Kalarel, or you can replace some of the hobgoblins with the cultists from the cult of Shar encounter on page 12. If you choose to include some cultists, replace the hobgoblin soldiers with sightless wraiths and replace the archer or warcaster with dark servants. You should keep track of adjustments in the encounter level so you do not create an encounter that is too easy or too difficult for the PCs.

The only other change of note occurs in the Warchief's Council Room, where the map showing an attack on Winterhaven should not include any undead.

**15. Tunnels of the Cube:** No change.

**16. Trapped Chamber:** No change.

**17. Ghoul Warren:** No change.

**18. Cathedral of Shadow:** This is a subtemple devoted to Shar, not Orcus. Replacing all mention of "Orcus" with "Shar" should be adequate to adapt the encounter. At your option, you can also alter the description of the underpriest, giving him a tattoo of Shar's symbol.

**19. The Shadow Rift:** All mention of "Orcus" should be changed to "Shar." Use the following read-aloud text in place of the original encounter's text:

*You descend into a nightmare. Crimson streams spill from above and form a pool of blood in the center of the chamber. A foreboding purple light illuminates the room.*

*A yawning, black portal dominates the northern wall of the chamber. Huge talonlike shapes strain against the portal, as if the darkness were a thin film restraining some beast. A set of blazing runes has been inscribed on the floor before the portal.*

*Opposite the portal stands a massive black statue of a beautiful woman clad in robes. The statue's form seems as dark as midnight on a starless night.*

*To the east, steps lead to a platform where a small pit is flanked by two small demon statues.*

*To the west, another set of steps ascends to an altar of bone flanked by wide pillars. A human clad in heavy armor and carrying a skull-capped rod stands behind the altar. His eyes are closed, and a book rests open before him. He chants a low, droning prayer to Shar, the Mistress of Night.*

The players might note that on the poster map that accompanies the adventure, the large statue depicts a demon rather than Shar. You can reveal the illustration at the start of this article to more accurately express what the scene looks like.

The rest of the encounter operates in the same way as the original adventure. The thing in the portal is in fact Shadraxil, straining against the Shadow Rift. For added effect—and to drive the point home to the players—you might describe how upon the death of Kalarel, a deafening, draconic roar emanates from the other side of the rift before slowly fading away.

The dragon statues described in *Keep on the Shadowfell's* final encounter are instead the moonstone pendants that characters might have recovered from the altar in the Skeletal Legion encounter. These pendants otherwise have the same effect.

## NINARAN'S CABIN

**Encounter Level 4 (875 XP)**

### SET UP

The way this encounter is triggered depends on how the PCs handle their interaction with Ninaran. If the PCs don't confront Ninaran until the Walk of the Dead interlude encounter, then this encounter is likely to follow immediately afterward.

This encounter assumes that Ninaran flees from the PCs and heads for her cabin to make a stand. Ninaran flees from the graveyard (either through the crack in the wall in the large mausoleum, through



the front gate, or over the fence) when she is bloodied. She then runs toward a nearby section of forest. PCs who immediately chase after her can follow, but her speed 7 means she likely keeps a lead on them. PCs who are not able to immediately chase her can learn from members of the town where her cabin is located. When they go there, the encounter is triggered.

The PCs might instead become suspicious of Ninaran before the graveyard encounter. If PCs seek her out at home, the guard drakes stand poised to attack, growling and alerting her of the characters' presence. Ninaran first tries to dismiss the PCs peacefully; if they do not leave, the encounter is triggered.

If PCs covertly follow Ninaran to her cabin or else attempt to break into the cabin, the encounter is triggered when the PCs enter the clearing and the guard drakes become aware of the character and attack.

Regardless of how the characters initiate this encounter, Ninaran should begin at full hit points, even if the characters have already dealt damage to her.

This encounter includes the following creatures:

- 2 guard drakes (D)**
- 3 shadow wolves (W)**
- Ninaran, elf archer (N)**

**When the PCs approach the clearing, read:**

*Alders and ash trees stand around a large cabin in a grassy clearing. Brush fills the area between the trees but, otherwise, the area is clear of foliage. The cabin is made of long tree trunks, interrupted only by a few windows. In front of the cabin's door stand two scaled beasts, each about the size of a dog. They growl menacingly at you.*

The PCs emerge from the woods in the squares south of the guard drakes. If they attempt to move anywhere beyond the line of trees, the creatures attack.

### Passive Perception Check

**DC 18** Canine forms hide in the brush along the line of trees.

**DC 24** A dark form moves within the cabin.

<b>3 Shadow Wolves</b>		<b>Level 3 Lurker</b>
Medium shadow beast		XP 150 each
<b>Initiative</b> +5	<b>Senses</b> Perception +7; low-light vision	
<b>HP</b> 38; <b>Bloodied</b> 19		
<b>AC</b> 17; <b>Fortitude</b> 15, <b>Reflex</b> 16, <b>Will</b> 14		
<b>Speed</b> 8		
Ⓣ <b>Bite</b> (standard; at-will)		
+8 vs. AC; 1d8 + 2 damage,		
<b>Combat Advantage</b>		
If the shadow wolf has combat advantage against its target, it deals an extra 1d6 damage and blinds the target (save ends) on a successful melee attack.		
<b>Fade to Night</b> (immediate interrupt, when the shadow wolf is the target of a melee attack; at will)		
The shadow wolf gains combat advantage against the attacker and makes a melee basic attack against the attacker. The shadow wolf then shifts 1 square.		
<b>Shadow Stalk</b>		
If a shadow wolf moves at least 3 squares from its starting position, or if it does not attack this turn, it gains concealment until the end of its next turn.		
<b>Alignment</b> Evil	<b>Languages</b> –	
<b>Skills</b> Stealth +8		
<b>Str</b> 13 (+2)	<b>Dex</b> 14 (+3)	<b>Wis</b> 13 (+2)
<b>Con</b> 14 (+3)	<b>Int</b> 2 (-3)	<b>Cha</b> 10 (+1)
<b>Description</b> Created by Shar's followers out of dark energy channeled from the Shadowfell, these wolves are pure black. As they move, the shadows seem to rise about them.		

Ninaran, Elf Archer (N)		Level 4 Artillery
Medium fey humanoid		XP 175
Initiative +7	Senses Perception +12; low-light vision	
Group Awareness aura 5; nonelf allies in the aura gain a +1 racial bonus to Perception checks.		
HP 44; Bloodied 22		
AC 17; Fortitude 14, Reflex 18, Will 15		
Speed 7; see also <i>wild step</i>		
⚔ Longsword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
+8 vs. AC; 1d8 + 3 damage.		
🏹 Longbow (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
Ranged 20/40; +9 vs. AC; 1d10 + 5 damage; see also <i>archer's mobility</i> .		
<b>Archer's Mobility</b>		
If the elf archer moves at least 4 squares from its original position, it gains a +2 bonus to ranged attacks until the start of its next turn.		
<b>Elven Accuracy</b> (free; encounter)		
An elf can reroll an attack roll. It must use the second roll, even if it's lower.		
<b>Wild Step</b>		
An elf ignores difficult terrain when it shifts.		
Alignment Evil	Languages Common, Draconic, Elven	
Skills Nature +12, Stealth +12		
Str 13 (+2)	Dex 20 (+6)	Wis 16 (+4)
Con 14 (+3)	Int 12 (+2)	Cha 11 (+1)
<b>Equipment</b> leather armor, short sword, longbow, quiver of 30 arrows		
<b>Description</b> This pale elf has dark hair and a deadly purpose in her keen eyes.		

2 Guard Drakes (D)		Level 2 Brute
Small natural beast (reptile)		XP 125
Initiative +3	Senses Perception +7	
HP 42; Bloodied 21		
AC 15; Fortitude 15, Reflex 13, Will 12		
Immune fear (while within 2 squares of an ally)		
Speed 6		
⚔ Bite (standard; at-will)		
+6 vs. AC; 1d10 + 3 damage, or 1d10 + 9 damage while within 2 squares of an ally.		
Alignment Unaligned	Languages –	
Str 16 (+4)	Dex 15 (+3)	Wis 12 (+2)
Con 18 (+5)	Int 3 (-3)	Cha 12 (+2)
<b>Description</b> This four-legged reptile appears strong and powerfully built.		

## TACTICS

When the characters enter the clearing, the guard drakes move forward and attack, attempting to bar them from approaching the cabin. The wolves then move in to attack the characters from their flanks.

The night wolves attempt to gain combat advantage, negotiating their positions with the guard drakes. They dart in, attempting to strike and blind characters before retreating either by shifting and moving away, gaining concealment from *shadow stalk*, or by using *fade to night*. The wolves keep moving—out of melee range when possible.

From the cabin, Ninaran shoots at the PCs, taking advantage of the cover provided by the windows. She keeps both of the doors locked, delaying any PC from entering and giving her time to position herself for melee or allowing time to escape.

## FEATURES OF THE AREA

**Illumination:** Daylight (unless PCs are traveling by night).

**Bedroom:** Ninaran's bedroom contains a small altar devoted to Shar, a nightstand, a bed, and a wardrobe. Squares containing these furnishings count as difficult terrain. The nightstand and wardrobe contain only mundane belongings.

**Bookshelf:** Ninaran possesses a number of books, most of which are religious treatises on Shar and the Shadowfell.

**Closet:** A small closet stands at the entryway to the cabin. It does not impede movement, but a creature can open the closet with a minor action and move into the square, preventing line of effect and line of sight if the closet door is closed. The closet contains fur coats, cloaks, and other winter gear.

**Door:** These wooden doors are locked. A character can unlock the door with a DC 20 Thievery check or can break down the door with a DC 16 Strength check.

**Forest:** Thick foliage grows on the edge of the clearing. These areas do not provide cover or concealment but are considered difficult terrain.

**Table and Chairs:** The tables and chairs are difficult terrain. A table can be tipped over as a move action and can then provide cover to a standing creature or superior cover to a prone creature.

**Windows:** The windows can provide cover. A pair of shutters can be opened or closed on the windows as a minor action. A creature can climb through an open window as a move action, but doing so elicits an opportunity attack from an opponent adjacent to the window.

**Treasure:** If the characters take time to search Ninaran's cabin, they discover little of value. The only exception is a pair of silver candlesticks on her altar (worth 50 sp each). If the characters capture or kill Ninaran, the PCs also discover the treasure described in The Dead Walk encounter. If the characters confront Ninaran before the graveyard encounter can occur, then they discover Kalarel's letter (described in The Dead Walk encounter) on her bookshelf. In this case, the graveyard encounter does not occur, and the characters inadvertently save the lives of ten of Winterhaven's citizens. ✕

### About the Author

Greg Bilsland is a game editor and contract writer at Wizards of the Coast. His writing credits include the *Forgotten Realms Player's Guide* and several **D&D Insider** articles. When he's not working, he spends much of his free time writing speculative fiction in one of Seattle's many coffee shops.