



**MONKEYDM**

# THE DROWNED GROOM

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5TH EDITION ADVENTURE

UNTIL DEATH DO US PART

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# **THE DROWNED GROOM**

**THE DROWNED GROOM IS AN UNDERWATER GHOST-CHASE ADVENTURE FOR 5E DESIGNED FOR 3-6 LEVEL 15 CHARACTERS, FOR USE WITH THE 5TH EDITION RULESET.**



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## THEME NOTE

The Drowned Groom is an adventure with an air of horror. For this reason, we encourage thematic setups. Use creepy music, lower the lights and enjoy an adventure that explores ghosts, death, love, and other enticing themes!

## BALANCING NOTE

As is the case for most high-level adventures, there is a fair chance the party will just have answers to everything. While this may be the case, encourage them to try and use deduction not rely on constant spell usage as a means of puzzle solving.

However, as a means of balancing, the divination spells (such as commune) or other such spells that can simply inquire on the identity of the murderer should yield false results, due to the nature of the adventure as a murder-mystery.

## BACKGROUND

"Most would say that there is nothing quite as beautiful as young love. And for the most part, they'd be right. But not entirely. It was 150 years ago, within Olin, when young love led to the most disturbing tragedy the city had ever seen. A young woman of noble descent, whose name has now been lost to time, is said to have fallen in love with a commoner. He, despite being nothing more than a baker, is said to have drawn her attention while playing the organ in the church. They say he played it as if his hands were touched by the gods themselves. And she was just as beautiful as his singing, mind you! And so, the young man fell for her. And she for him.

With their love being as perfect as it was, the man asked the girl's family for her hand in marriage. They were pureblooded nobles, so the response was negative. They wouldn't allow the only descendent of their great family name to waste it on a baker with fancy fingers. But, as it turns out, the baker was stubborn and he planned a secret wedding.

Their secret, however, was found out, as the priest betrayed him, scared that if the boy were to get married and leave with his beloved, no one would get to hear the gods through his playing anymore. A day after the priest told the family, the young baker couldn't be found. His lover, scared, approached her family and begged them to tell her everything they knew. No one told her a thing except her youngest brother. He told her they had tied him down below in the cities' caves. When high tide would strike, he would drown down below. And she would be married to someone else.

The girl rushed down in the caves with swift steps, but her lover... was gone. He had died drowned and alone. As for the end of this tale... no one knows for sure.

Some say the woman was married to a man she didn't love. Others say she killed herself alongside him. There is even talk that she might've sold her soul to make those who betrayed them pay.

One thing is for sure... The priest and her family all died shortly thereafter. And at night, when the tide is high, the citizens of Olin swear they can hear an organ playing from somewhere below. But surely, this is just a ghost story, no?"

**-Shreddbert Gest**

## PLOT HOOKS

The three available plot hooks for the adventure change its flow and structure slightly, but each of them will lead to the same course of action and endings, but the overall mood changes.

- **The Crimes.** It seems a series of odd crimes have started happening across Olin and the local guard force is too busy to take care of them. For this reason, a group of private investigators (the party) has been hired to take care of the issue. If you wish for the party to start with less information regarding the background of the adventure, then use this plot hook. Simply start from chapter 1.2. and proceed from thereon.
- **The Story.** The city of Olin is full of troubles, but that's neither here nor there. The party, whether they're together or as individuals, all find themselves in a tavern, where people are discussing the cause of these crimes. If you want the party to have the background right away, allowing them to solve puzzles more easily and through narrative, rather than mechanics, use this plot hook. Simply start from chapter 1.1. and proceed normally from thereon.

# CHAPTER 1. A SERIES OF MURDERS

In which the party is hired to investigate unruly events.

## CHAPTER 1.1. THE INN

If you chose the Story plot hook, continue reading through this chapter. If not, proceed to the next chapter (1.2) immediately and start your story from there.

Read this:

'The Mahkra Tavern is exceptionally full tonight. The seas have been unruly and the rain is pouring outside. Thus, sailors and drunkards alike have all gathered in their favorite spot, where the lights don't shine bright and the music isn't too loud, and you too find yourselves here. The air is heavy, though, as lately... murder has been the talk of the town. Victims with seemingly no link between them, all dying. The only thing their bodies have in common? Their lungs are filled with seawater, despite the fact they all died in their homes or in the streets, nowhere near close to the docks. You hear the many sailors looking about and urging a stocky dwarf to get on stage. A roar of applause and cheers begins as he raises himself on the bar. You know this to be Shreddbert Gest, the tavern's bard. He clears his throat... then begins speaking.'

Shreddbert Gest will now briefly explain to the people that he's about to tell them a story, something unreal, but since they all want an explanation for the murders, this is all he can give them. Read through Shreddbert's character information, then read the entire "Background" section in his voice.

### SHREDBERT GEST

**Information:** Stocky and quite old for a dwarf, Shreddbert's voice is rugged and rough, almost as if his vocal cords had been brushed with sandpaper for years. Despite this, he is a great and jolly storyteller, accompanying himself with atmospheric drums native to his dwarven heritage. In secret, he is a god of storytelling, aiming to guide people towards the being that is responsible for the crimes.

After you've read the background section in his voice, detail how the crowd begins laughing and roaring before they die down and go back to their drinks. This is a perfect time for the party to have their initial discussion.

**GM NOTE:** If you are playing this adventure as part of an ongoing campaign, allow for the party to make small talk and initial plans. If you are instead playing it as a one-shot, ask for each party member to introduce themselves and how they look. Once the party has spoken for a little bit, proceed.

A few minutes after the party's chat, an armored individual will get up from one of the tables and clear his throat.

Read this:

'You watch as from a corner table a guard gets to his feet and clears his throat, attracting attention. "That's a great story, Shreddbert. But that's not the truth. And that's what we want to find. So if anybody's interested in helping investigate these murders, I urge you to come to me. The recompense, I assure you all, is very much worth it." With those words, the guard bows his head and sits back down, finishing his drink.'

**GM NOTE:** The guard should serve as the party's call to action, but each party might react differently to such a prompt. If you think your party might react better to being directly approached or you see they are feeling uninterested once the guard has stood up and brought up the offer, then you can push harder. Your main goal should be to get the party to onboard the adventure. If you've done that, you can consider the mission a success.

Once the party has approached the guard, he will hand them a small sheet of paper with the details to the guard barracks they are to report to. From there, they will be led on their quest.

With the party having found out about where they need to go, you may proceed to the next chapter. If instead, the party wishes to spend more time within the inn, they may do so.

**GM NOTE:** If you haven't started in this chapter, but the party decides to investigate the Tavern for further clues, they can do so. If they do, do not present Shreddbert's tale, but detail how the party enters right as the story is finished. They can investigate the area and speak to NPCs.

To start, if the party wishes to speak to people in the tavern, ask for a **DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) check**. On a success, they'll realize the only noticeable individuals are an older-looking elf drunkard, a group of sailors, and Shreddbert, who is now fiddling with his dulcimer.

Approaching the old elf, he'll smirk and say he won't talk to them unless they give him a drink. Instead of giving him a drink, the party can choose to either persuade or intimidate him with a **DC 18 Charisma (Intimidation) or Charisma (Deception) check**. If given a drink or the party makes a successful check, he'll speak to them. The only worthwhile information the elf has is that he was alive during the "story", but he believes it to be heavily embellished since the girl's brother is still alive. If asked about the boy's name, he'll say it is Rosecrest.

If the party approaches the sailors, they will ignore them initially, as they're rolling bones. The party can choose to join the pot. They must place 10 gold on the table and roll a **DC 18 Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check**. On a success, they make an additional 30 gold. The sailors will also say that from time to time, they can hear the organ of "The Ghostly Groom" while they're on the docks, readying their ships. They can hum the song. In response to hearing the song, any party member that is a bard or proficient in the Religion skill can make a **DC 18 Intelligence (Religion) check** to identify the song. On a success, they identify it as a song to the Swan Gods. The party might benefit from visiting her temple, as it may give information.

**GM NOTE:** If the party chooses to inquire about visiting the Swan Gods' temple, you can proceed to chapter 1.3., Lead 6. That lead details what they may find in the temple.

Lastly, the party can choose to speak to Shreddbert. He's jolly, welcoming, and calm. If asked about the murders, he'll say he doesn't believe in ghost stories. The party can make a **DC 22 Wisdom (Insight) check** to reveal he wholeheartedly does. If pressed about his true feelings, he'll say he would bet his life on this being the work of evil spirits, but he's not one to stir their ire. At the end of his discussion with the party, he'll ask them to sing along with him for the next song. One party member can join and they must make a **DC 18 Charisma (Performance) check**. On a success, Shreddbert will hand them a token of thanks after the song. This token is a scarab of protection with 2 charges left. Any party member that looks at the scarab can make a **DC 18 Intelligence (Arcana) check** to realize its legendary nature on a success. If questioned about it, Shreddbert will only smile and deny any further answers.

If the party has talked to all the relevant parties in the inn, pressure them to proceed and leave it behind them.

## CHAPTER 1.2. THE POLICE

This chapter can serve either as an introductory chapter (in case you chose The Crimes as your plot hook) or as a continuation to chapter 1.1. Either way, proceed normally, detailing how the party finds themselves in front of the guard barracks.

Read this:

'So, there you are, in front of the Olin guard barracks. In your hand, you carry a small sheet of paper, a quest paper, which relates the need for private investigators in solving a series of recent murders. Since most of the victims are of noble descent, the prize is surely worth the task... You walk through the front gate and are led through the hallway by a secretary, all the way into the office of the Guard Captain, who is not there presently. And so there you wait, on a series of chairs, for the Guard Captain to arrive.'

**GM NOTE:** If you chose The Crimes as your plot hook, this is a proper time for the party to have their initial talks. If you are playing this adventure as a one-shot, allow the party to introduce themselves and describe how they all look. If you are playing this adventure as part of an ongoing campaign, proceed without this.

Within a short few minutes, the Guard Captain, Onar Ovich, arrives.

### ONAR OVICH

**Information:** Though looking no younger than his mid-20s, Onar Ovich's missing eye and bald head give the Captain an air of experience and ruggedness. His voice is booming, yet soft, like that of a ship's captain, able to calm the storm. He's understanding, stubborn and trustworthy.

Ovich will introduce himself to the party, then sit down at his desk.

Read this:

'Guard Captain Ovich sits down, brushes a bit of dust off of the wooden desk, then looks at all of you with an intense glare. "Look, this type of murder string is well above the paygrade of the people in my force. They're good men, just not investigators. Neither am I. So if you think you can take care of the job, the pay is handsome. And I'm warning you, a lot of people are going to try and convince you this has something to do with a ghost story the city has, but I assure you, it's not. This is a killer. And I'm convinced about that. It won't be easy, though. Are you in?'

With that, Onar will offer the party a price. His base price will be 3000 gold per person. He can be persuaded to give more with a **DC 17 Charisma (Persuasion) check**. After the price has been set, he'll ask for a party name to write down in the paperwork.

**GM NOTE:** Money is always relative to the campaign you are running. Feel free to change the amount you give to the party based on what feels appropriate for your setting and your campaign's economy.

Once the paperwork is done, he will hand the party a binder with all of the leads. Once the party has that binder, you may proceed to the next chapter.

## CHAPTER 1.3. THE LEADS

To start, the party should look through the binder to find prominent leads. One party member must make a **DC 18 Intelligence (Investigation) check**. If the roll is below 18, they only discover the first 2 leads. On an 18 or higher, they discover leads 3 and 4. On a 20 or higher, they also discover lead 5. Present the leads to the party (by reading them the first "Read this" fragment for each lead discovered), then allow them to look further into whichever leads interest them. The leads' table below should give easy access to the information each lead provides.

### LEAD

Information

#### 1 - Noble's Family

The Evensnows will talk about their patron's deeds right before he died, uncovering the love triangle of his daughter.

#### 2 - Bodies

The morgue will reveal the lack of any normal wounds, as well as some unexpected belongings.

#### 3 - Crime Scene

The crime scene will lead to the discovery of some tracks, as well as an unnatural noise.

#### 4 - Second Victim's Family

The Ravenpeaks didn't expect their son to die so, especially since he was particularly loved by everyone.

#### 5 - Old Rosecrest

The last living remnant of the story will give the party puzzle pieces to confirm the ghosts' existence.

#### 6 - Swan Temple

The true identity of the ghost haunting those who get in the way of true love.

**GM NOTE:** Not all leads are necessary to get to the bottom of the truth, but they might provide additional story context for the party, in case they are interested in the narrative. However, there is a chance the party might wish to ignore most leads and just decide to descend into the caves early, looking for the ghost. If they do this, allow it! It will only derail the adventure partially since the Drowned Groom will force the party to return to the leads eventually.

Once the party has explored their 3rd lead (but not if it's not lead 1) they will be approached by a small boy, dressed nicely and with a small envelope for the party. He hands it off to them then runs off, too fast to be caught. The envelope is addressed to the party from "The Evensnows". Inside is the following message:

'To the investigators,

We wish to speak to you tonight regarding a possible suspect. We feel as if we might've found the culprit. He is dangerous beyond imagination and must be taken care of posthaste. Visit our estate and we will tell you everything. This shall serve as your invitation

Signed,

Lady Evensnow.'

**GM NOTE:** This message should serve as a prompt for the players to move on to the next chapter, but they should not feel rushed. As this adventure is highly narrative, don't feel the urge to progress once the party has only explored 2 leads. If you feel they need more of the story to piece everything together, give them the necessary time. Judge for yourself and progress when you feel it is appropriate. Inform them there is still time until the night.

Once the party chooses to go and visit the Evensnows with the invitation, proceed to the next chapter.

### LEADS

#### 1 - NOBLE'S FAMILY

Read this:

'Looking through the documents, The family of the first victim strikes out as being the most interesting of leads. The patron of said family, Lord Evensnow, died without apparent cause within his own home. Most of the family seem to think this was the cause of rival noblemen, but nothing could be proven outright, no suspect can be found and their stories hardly match.'

If the party chooses to follow this lead, bring them to map 1. They will be greeted by the butler in area 1, who will introduce himself as James Cook.

#### JAMES COOK

**Information:** James is loyal to the Evensnow family, yet carries a desire to move up in the world. For this reason, he is willing to let a few things slip between the cracks, including the family's secrets. That is, of course, only if he is asked explicitly. Otherwise, he will remain silent.

James will state that although he wishes to help the party, the family is distressed and they do not wish to speak with anyone except the police. If the party brings up they are working with them, they must make a **DC 18 Charisma (Persuasion) check** to convince them of this fact. If they fail, James will tell the party to go away and have no further discussion with him. Regardless of if he believes the party or not, he tells the party he will inform the family of the party's request to talk.

**GM NOTE:** As chapter 2 has the party return to the Evensnows, this will not change regardless of if James is convinced or not. He will, however, only offer secrets (the paragraph after this one) only if he is convinced of the party's identity.

If convinced of the party's identity, James will offer up to speak of what he knows, but in return for coin. If bribed with 60 gold or more, or if intimidated or deceived via successful a **DC 20 Charisma (Deception) or Charisma (Intimidation) check**, James will tell the party the family's been very stressed with their daughter, Henrietta, who is planning to man a weird man they don't approve of. They suspect he might've killed Lord Evensnow to ensure the marriage goes through. Aside from this, he holds no further information.

The party is now asked to leave the premises and they may no longer explore map 1 unless they do so sneakily (requiring **DC 22 Dexterity (Stealth) checks** from all members who wish to explore while hidden). If they proceed to explore sneakily, they won't find anything of note in any area except area 5, where Henrietta is locked inside. If they arrive at that area, proceed to chapter 2.1., area 5, where the party speaks with Henrietta, then return to the leads once the interaction is done.

## 2 - BODIES

Read this:

'According to the records, the bodies can be found within the city's morgue, under the care of Finn O'Flanagan. The logs say that the bodies were found with no wounds, but they died of suffocation. This is worth checking out.'

If the party chooses to follow this lead, they will make their way to the morgue and be welcomed by O'Flanagan, who is looking over the bodies.

### FINN O'FLANAGAN

**Information:** Finn O'Flanagan is a ginger-haired doctor that has an air of sadness to him, but otherwise kind eyes. His hands are bloodied, and the rest of his surroundings look very untidy, if sterile. Although things are messy, he knows where they are.

Read this:

'Finn welcomes you within the morgue within seconds of hearing what you've come for. He takes you to the backroom, where you see two bodies laid out on slabs of stone. Both of them seem to have been opened and on a large table next to them, you see a collection of belongings and notes, likely written by Finn. He looks over it and wipes his hands with a towel, before beginning to speak. "I need to go tend to something real quick, but anything you're looking for can be found in the notes, I assure you. Hope you find what you're looking for.'

**GM NOTE:** If the party casts speak with dead on the two men, they'll say they didn't know who killed them, but they both drowned.

Any party member can look over one of the two stacks of notes. One details the bodies, while the other details the belongings. If a party member looks over the medical files, they must make a **DC 18 Wisdom (Medicine) check**. On a success, they find out that the bodies were found with no signs of a struggle, but with their lungs filled to the brim with salt water.

If a party member looks over the other documents, they must make a **DC 18 Intelligence (Investigation) check**. On a success, the party will find the names of the two victims: Lord Theobald Evensnow and Archibald Ravenpeak. The party will also find records of their possessions. Both men had sigils of the Swan Gods, and Ravenpeak also has a love letter to a certain "Henrietta".

Once the party finds these items, they may make a **DC 16 Intelligence (History) check**. On a success, they identify this is eerily similar to the ghost story of the Drowned Groom. Maybe Henrietta is the key to all of this. If the party looks at the sigils of the Swan Gods, they may also make a **DC 16 Intelligence (Religion) check**. On a success, they realize they are linked to the Swan Temple. They may now access lead 6.

**GM NOTE:** If the party has already visited the first lead and spoken to James, they will already know who Henrietta is, prompting them to further investigate her.

### 3 - CRIME SCENE

Read this:

'Apparently, the crime scene for the second victim, who was killed in the street, is still closed off from the general public and evidence has been preserved, but no one has had time to look over it just yet. Who knows what it may have? The body has been moved, but there may still be tracks.'

When the party arrives at the crime scene, they will be met by a guard stationed there. The guard will inform them the only witness who saw Archibald Ravenpeak speak with someone who was in an alley, then he moved out from the alley and into this street when he started choking as if magic had been used on him. When the witness looked in the alley, he didn't see anyone. As if no one was even there. After receiving this information, the party may start investigating.

Anyone party member may make a **DC 18 Wisdom (Survival) check** to look for tracks. On a failure, they'll find a few human tracks and think them to be related (but these are just red herrings). On a success, they'll notice no tracks lead directly in the alleyway or out of it.

Additionally, any party member may try to investigate the alley with a **DC 16 Intelligence (Investigation) check**. On a success, they will find a small bit of kelp. It can be analyzed with a **DC 20 Intelligence (Nature) check** to be identified as an underwater plant that can be found in caves, usually.

Next to where the body was originally found, there is also a nail trail in the mud which spells out "Revenge".

That is all the information present at the crime scene.

### 4 - SECOND VICTIM'S FAMILY

Read this:

'Due to lack of personnel, it also looks like no one has had the chance to speak to the family of the second victim. The Ravenpeaks are beloved nobles of the city, so maybe enemies of theirs are at the source of all of this. Talking to them could provide a new perspective.'

If the party chooses to follow up on this lead, they will end up on the Ravenpeak estate, where they will be met by an old mute butler, leading them into a large circular chamber with a fireplace, where the victim's mother, the widowed Lady Grizelda Ravenpeak, awaits them.

Read this:

'In looking to speak to the victim's family, you end up on their estate and are then ushered into a dimly lit circular chamber, where a large half-moon-shaped sofa surrounds a mahogany table, both resting in front of a fire. At one end of the sofa, dressed in all black and with her hair even blacker rests a middle-aged woman. Her visage is grim, as she stares directly into the fire.'

### LADY GRIZELDA RAVENPEAK

**Information:** The matron of House Ravenpeak is in a state of disarray, which is represented by the lack of excitement. Usually, she would be the life of the party, her raven-black hair contrasted by bright dresses and an even brighter smile. She, alongside her entire family, is beloved by the populace for how welcoming and charitable they are. Now, she can't imagine what's the source of this tragedy.

Deeply saddened and almost catatonic, Lady Ravenpeak will talk to the party about her now-dead son, Archibald. She is just as confused as anyone, as she has no knowledge of any enemies. If anything, he was beloved. Most women adored him and most men considered him a brother. He was also soon to be married to the young Lady Henrietta Evensnow.

If asked about any enemies, she would say no. A successful **DC 18 Wisdom (Insight) check** will reveal to the party that this is untrue. If pressed on the matter via a successful **DC 18 Charisma (Intimidation) or Charisma (Persuasion) check**, she will confess that he had spoken to Lord Evensnow to marry Henrietta, although she wanted to marry a commoner boy, the son of a strange druid. If asked about the name of this man, she'll say she does not remember it.

If asked about why she did not initially tell the party about this person, she'll say that she does not want to get killed too.

### 5 - OLD ROSECREST

Read this:

'Digging deep through the documents you've been offered, you find a single letter from a person named Reginald Rosecrest. This letter addressed to the guard force and Guard Captain Onar Ovich, specifies that "IT is happening again". On top of the letter, there is a small note from the Guard Captain, which calls the letter simply "the ramblings of a disturbed old man". But what if they aren't?'

If the party chooses to pursue this lead, they will find Old Reginald Ravencrest within his small home. The half-elf is now 162 years old, nearing the end of his life. He welcomes the party into his home, the walls of which are covered with sheets of paper.

### REGINALD RAVENCREST

**Information:** The younger brother of the long-deceased Matilda Ravencrest serves as the last remnant of his family's fate. He knows they all died because of the Drowned Groom. His entire life, he's been fighting the guilt he's felt for his family's death. And every 50 years, he gets to watch it all again. This might all be inside his head, but to him, it's the only plausible truth.



With a maddened voice and a hint of paranoia, Reginald will tell the party the story of his family. He will tell the party how his older sister, Matilda, wanted to marry a young baker by the name of Dorian, who his family then killed. His sister threw herself into the ocean not long after his death. And then, the murders of all those who wronged their love began. And every 50 years, they begin again. He will point the party to his wall of journal notes, all of which dated and showing the murders that happened 50 years ago and 100 years ago. He is convinced it's happening again and the families are at fault. Lord Evensnow even died on the 150th anniversary of Dorian's death.

The party can make **Wisdom (Insight)** checks to see if the Ravencrest is telling the truth and all checks will reveal he is. At the end of their discussion, Ravencrest will ask the party if they believe him.

All party members that say they do must make a **DC 16 Charisma (Deception) or Charisma (Persuasion) check** to convince him (Persuasion if they do or Deception if they are faking it). If more party members believe him than don't, he will hand the party a small necklace. He'll tell them it's his sister's necklace and that they must give it to Dorian's ghost below the depths, else he will never rest.

## 6 - SWAN TEMPLE

**GM NOTE:** This lead is only accessible if the party has spoken to the proper NPCs in chapter 1.2., or if they had found the amulets in lead 2. If they have done either, proceed with reading this lead.

Read this:

'The entrance to the temple of the Swans is grand, with two large doors of opposing colors, one white, one black, to signify the duality of love. The walls of grey marble carved intricately, have almost a magnetic atmosphere, urging you to step within.'

Within the temple, they'll find a gnomish priestess by the name of Toa, who will welcome them and answer any questions openly, while subtly flirting from time to time. Regarding the two amulets, she'll recognize them as being of the temple, but also very old. Regarding the two men (Lord Evensnow and Archibald Ravenpeak), she'll confess that the two had come to arrange a marriage for tomorrow.

Lastly, if the party mentions the song they've heard or even hum it, they can make a **DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) check**. On a success, they'll notice a distant voice humming along from the temple, yet Toa will say no one else is in the temple except her. If the party looks through the temple, they won't find anyone, but the humming will get louder and louder so everyone can hear it. If the party approaches the organ, they'll see a pool of water underneath the seat, as well as a little bit of water on the keys.

Aside from this, there is no further information in the temple.

# CHAPTER 2. THE LOVE TRIANGLE

In which the party discovers the matter behind all of this.

## CHAPTER 2.1. BE OUR GUEST

Read this:

'As the sun slowly sets, you find yourself entering the Evensnow Estate. The large walls of the villa are particularly unwelcoming and imposing and paired with the air of recent loss of life, the setting is nothing if not somber and extremely grim. And yet, here you are... And the welcoming figure is a young butler, who bows their head.'

Welcomed by James Cook, the party can now be brought to map 1. They are all in area 1. The butler will immediately take them to area 2, where they meet the matron of the family.

## AREAS OF THE EVENSNOW ESTATE

### 1 - ENTRANCE

The party starts here and they will be subsequently brought to area 2.

### 2 - SITTING ROOM

When the party enters the room, they will find Lady Evensnow inside.

#### LADY EVENSNOW

**Information:** An elegant elvish woman with silver-blond hair, with a gaunt and inquisitive look to her. She is quite cold and chooses her words carefully, but tries to not come off as too combative or scheming.

Lady Evensnow will welcome the party in and ask them to sit down, before sending James away for some tea. To begin the discussion, she will begin to tell the story of one of her husband's enemies, a boy by the name of Edlear, the son of a forest hermit, who had been threatening her husband repeatedly. She mentioned this to the guard, but they did not seem to believe her. Surely, a party of more educated adventurers would be wiser.

The party can make a **DC 22 Wisdom (Insight) check** to reveal she is hiding something about Edlear. If pressed about this, she will deny and not confess anything. Her goal within the discussion is to direct the party's attention towards this boy. After a brief discussion, she will also offer to lead the party to the study, where her husband died (area 4).

In addition, if any party member has a passive Perception above 20 they will hear small subtle taps on the wall coming from the nearby room (area 5). That is where Henrietta is locked inside. If the party asks about the banging on the wall, they will be asked to ignore it. If they press about it, she will ask them to leave.

After the party has discussed with Lady Evensnow about everything they wish to, she'll lead them to the room where Lord Evensnow (area 4),

### 3 - DINING ROOM

The party moves through this room while on their way to the crime scene. They may make a **DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) or Intelligence (Investigation) check** to instantly look around. They'll find a few letters on the table, which can be stolen with a **DC 20 Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check**. If they try to take them openly, Lady Evensnow will prevent them from doing so.

If stolen, the letters reveal the correspondence between Lord Evensnow and Archibald Ravenpeak which speaks on the details of the marriage between Archibald and Henrietta. In one of the letters, Lord Evensnow assures Archibald he need not worry about Edlear, as he'll "be taken care of". If Lady Evensnow is confronted with this, she'll deny any implication and ask the party to leave immediately.

### 4 - STUDY

Read this:

'As you walk into the room that served as a final resting place for Lord Evensnow, the thing that immediately strikes you is the large organ at the end of the room. The moment you step inside, you observe a pool of water by the chair. Lady Evensnow shakes her head in disappointment and calls out to James, but before she can let out 2 words, the organ begins playing itself. You hear the sound of a song that feels creepily similar. You watch Lady Evensnow's eyes widen. And then the windows burst into pieces, with spirits floating inside. They begin whispering, under the music of the organ. "LIAR. LIAR. LIAR." Roll for initiative.'

The party now enters an encounter. 5 wraiths have come for those that stand in the way of the lovers, and the organ will continue playing. The main aim of the 5 wraiths is to kill Lady Evensnow (noble) and James Cook (commoner).

Additionally, each round, at initiative 20, each party member must make a **DC 19 Wisdom saving throw**. On a failure, they become charmed by the organ's noise and they also attempt to kill the two. A charmed creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns. The charm can also be broken if the creature becomes deafened or if the organ is destroyed. The organ has an AC of 15 and 80 hit points. If a creature targets the organ, the wraiths will start attacking them to divert its attention.

Once the encounter is finished, if either Lady Evensnow or James Cook are alive, they will instantly start blaming Edlear and say that he, the son of a hermit and a witch, is surely at fault for this.

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### MAP 1: THE ESTATE



**GM NOTE:** With the amount of healing and resurrection spells a party of this level has, it is assumed the party will keep the family alive. However, in case they don't, encourage them to do so. If they decide they don't want to resurrect them under any circumstances, then have the guard arrive a little while later and try to correct course by encouraging the party to move towards the caves looking for the cause of the murders.

To end their interaction, either Lady Evensnow or James Cook will say that either the party finds a new suspect or they speak with Edlear, because if they don't do either of those, then they will send their entire force against Edlear.

**GM NOTE:** This should serve as a prompt for the party to move onto the next chapter and meet Edlear. If they decide not to do this and simply press on to the caves, that is alright, the following chapter can be skipped without much issue.

## 5 - HENRIETTA'S ROOM

From the outside, the windows to this room are boarded up. The only way is either by breaking the windows **DC 20 Strength (Athletics) check**, unlocking the door with a **DC 25 Thieves' Tools check**, or teleportation. Inside, the party can find Henrietta Evensnow.

### HENRIETTA EVENSNOW

Information: Henrietta Evensnow is a young and beautiful elven girl, whose high elf status never prevented her from feeling one with those her family deemed lesser. Recently, she has fallen in love with a druid by the name of Edlear, who she wanted to marry before her family locked her in her room and started arranging a different marriage.

From inside her room, Henrietta will explain that she told her father she wanted to marry Edlear, but he wouldn't let her. He locked her inside and decided to arrange a different marriage with Archibald Ravenpeak. Then, before she knew it, both were dead and her mother blamed Edlear. Now she's locked inside and can't do anything to protect her lover from her family's evil plans.

She will beg the party for their aid, telling them to go and warn Edlear that her family might be trying to frame him. If the party goes to warn him, proceed to chapter 2.2.

## CHAPTER 2.2. NOT A WITCH

**GM NOTE:** As noted in previous chapters, this chapter describes the interaction between the party and Edlear. However, there is a moderate chance the party will simply ignore this interaction and proceed straight on to the underwater caves. In case they do so, there are no issues, as they are likely to return.

Read this:

'Prompted by the information you have discovered, you make your way to the location you were told would allow you to find Edlear. He is not far off from the city, near the coast, in a cottage covered by trees. A complete and utter juxtaposition to the Evensnow Estate. And with a creek, the door opens, Edlear exciting to welcome you as visitors, blissfully unaware of what's happening.'

### EDLEAR

Information: The wood elf known as Edlear grew up most of his life with his hermit mother, learning to become a druid. When he finally made his way within society, he instantly bonded with Henrietta Evensnow and asked for her hand in marriage.

Edlear will be entirely forthright with the party, telling them how he hasn't heard from Henrietta in days since she went and told her family of their love. He has heard her father is dead and has decided to stay safe just in case. Any and all Wisdom (Insight) checks will reveal he is telling the truth. Upon speaking further with the party, he will tell them that he has nothing to do with any of this, but thinks it might be related to a story he's heard before and he is scared he's getting framed for it. As a sign of good faith, he'll give the party 2 greater healing potions. Then, he will continue answering whatever questions he is asked.

**GM NOTE:** When you feel the discussion grinding to a halt, narrate how a boy starts running towards the party. He is dressed like a messenger. When he arrives next to them, proceed to the next chapter.

## CHAPTER 2.3. TIME'S RUNNING SHORT

**GM NOTE:** This chapter is a continuation of the previous one. If the party has already interacted with the Drowned Groom (by going to the caves before speaking with Edlear), then skip this chapter entirely.

Read this:

'With a quickened step and a flushed face, the boy begins to charge towards you. He carries no envelope, instead, placing his hands on his knees. His voice cracks as he speaks. "Captain Onar Ovich sent me... Priest's dead. A priest of the Swan Gods. The captain said to meet him immediately!'

The party should now go and meet Captain Onar Ovich once more. Ovich, stressed and confused, will tell the party that the priestess Toa was found dead in the temple by the other priests, with saltwater in her lungs and the organ playing loudly, but no one there. Ovich, though he feels it may be just an imitator, will suggest the party go and investigate the caves below the city, as civilians are starting to get worried and accuse him of not doing his job properly.

When the party decides to go and investigate the caves, proceed to the next chapter.

## CHAPTER 3. LOVE IS ALL

In which the party descends into the depths.

### CHAPTER 3.1. THE DROWNED CAVES

Read this:

'Not too far off from the docks, nestled in between reeds and blocks of rock, is a small entrance. You have to go pretty far down, right by where the waves splash against the rock, to enter. Now, when you enter, you feel lucky to realize it's low tide, but it might not be low tide for much longer. You must investigate the area quickly before it will spell your doom.'

Bring the party to map 2, then ask for a **DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) check**. Each party member that succeeds can faintly hear the distant sound of an organ playing, despite being in a cave. The noise is coming from the direction of area 3.

The party may now move through the map in initiative order, regardless of there being no enemies. They start at area 1. When one party member reaches area 2, the cave will awaken, and 6 sunken warriors will rise from underneath the water and start attacking the party.

As the party begins fighting them, narrate how the water begins to rise in level. In 3 rounds, the high tide will come and the cave will get filled with water. Once it does, each round, on initiative 20, 2d6 parasitic anemones will come into the cave and attack the party.

For the encounter to end, the party must reach area 3, at which point they will fall through a massive tunnel, 100 feet long, and fall straight into the water. They must make a **DC 18 Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) check** to land properly in the water. If unsuccessful, they take 8d6 bludgeoning damage by hitting the water straight on.

Once at the bottom, proceed to the next chapter.

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### MAP 2: THE DROWNED CAVES



## CHAPTER 3.2. THE GHOSTLY GROOM

Read this:

'As you drop down in the tunnel that seems to lead to the distant organ, you find yourself in a small cave system. You look down next to you and see the remnants of a rope ladder, one that used to lead down here... One that was once used by a bride to reach down and try and find her lover. The sound of the organ gets louder and louder, and you begin stepping forward, yet the system now requires you to fully submerge. So... what will you do?'

Describe how to reach the sound, they must go fully into the water and on the other side. If they don't have access to means of water breathing then the amount of time they can hold their breath is a number of minutes equal to 1 + their Constitution modifier.

Upon going through the tunnel, they will have used up 1 minute.

After the entire party makes it through the tunnel, bring them to map 3.

Read this:

'You emerge out of the cave and into a gigantic underwater chamber, fully submerged, but which rings out with the beautiful song of a deep-sea organ. Playing the keys is a specter-looking man, part ghost and part-sea horror. The creature turns its face towards you, yet the keys keep playing.'

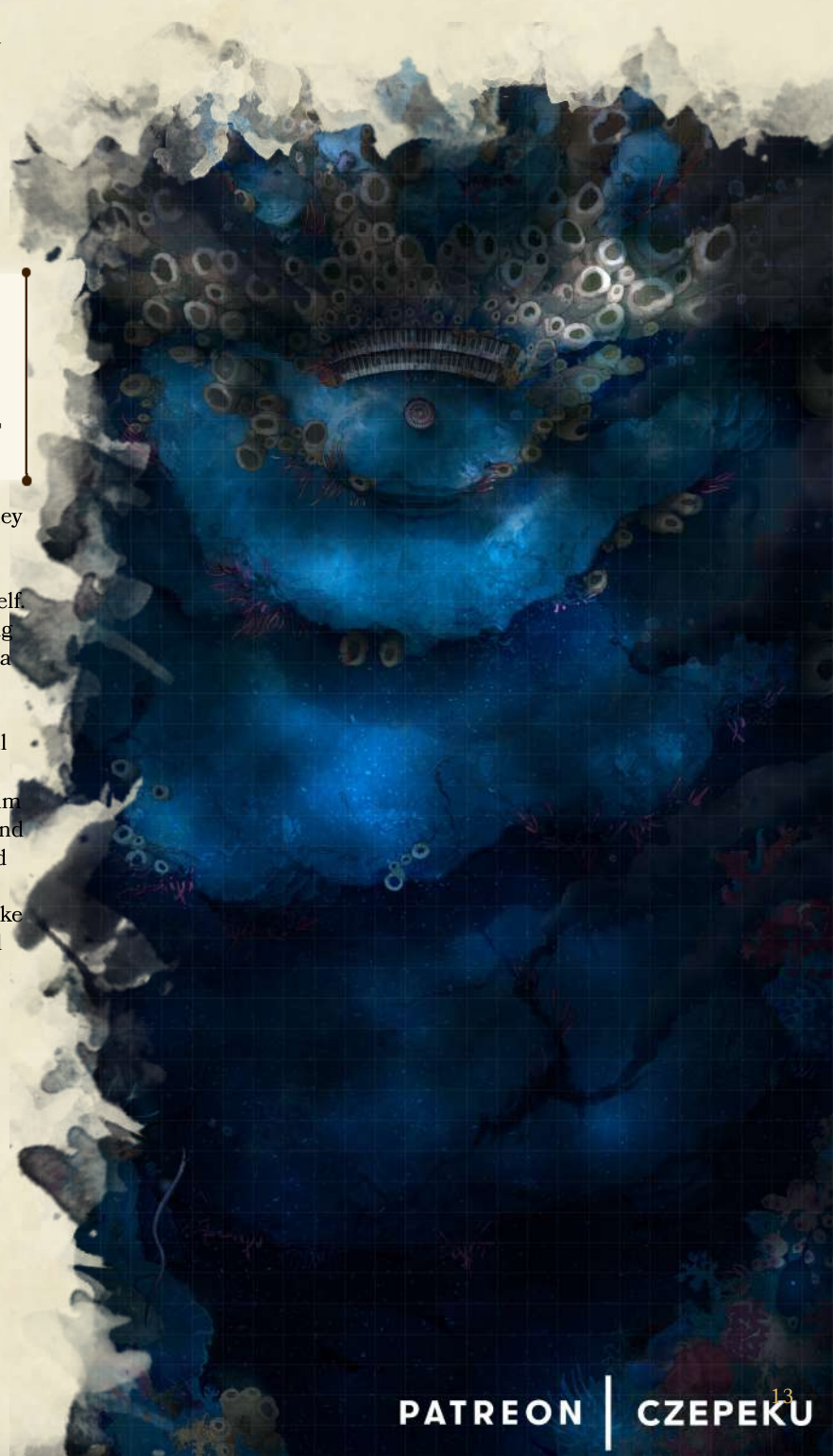
The party is now face-to-face with the drowned groom. If they attack him head-on, they will begin combat. If instead, they have means of speaking with him (either by telepathy or by water breathing) he will speak with them and explain himself. He was once Dorian. As he was dying and drowning, a being from the depths made a pact with him. He would return as a specter, an undead to bring about his vengeance and kill all those who oppose true love. And the only way to break the cycle is if true love wins. If it doesn't, he will be forced to kill again and again.

If at any point during the discussion the party presents him with the necklace from Ravencrest, he will become angry and start fighting them. If instead the party speaks with him and begins implying they could help true love win, one party member (which has been helping the discussion) must make a **DC 22 Charisma (Persuasion) check**. If successful, he'll believe them and ask them to go and protect the true love between Henrietta and Edlear. If unsuccessful, he'll remain mistrustful and attack them.

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### MAP 3: GROOM'S LAIR



## LAIR ACTIONS

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On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), The Drowned Groom takes a lair action to cause one of the following effects; The Drowned Groom can't use the same effect two rounds in a row:

- **The Underwater Organ.** The organ's notes begin playing themselves louder and louder, almost to a deafening extent. Each party member must make a **DC 15 Wisdom saving throw**. On a failure, they become charmed by the organ's noise and become an ally of the drowned groom and an enemy of their party. A charmed creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns. The charm can also be broken if the creature becomes deafened or if the organ is destroyed. The organ has an AC of 18, 200 hit points and immunity to poison and psychic damage.
- **The Waves.** The Underwater Groom causes waters to contort and crush enemies. All creatures hostile to it must make a **DC 14 Strength saving throw**, taking 28 (6d8) bludgeoning damage on a failure and half as much on a success.
- **The Sealife.** With his alluring song, the drowned groom calls down upon the sea to help him, summoning 2d4 parasitic anemones.

Once the party defeats him, or if they leave to go and protect true love, proceed to the next chapter.

## CHAPTER 3.3. LOVE WINS?

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When the party returns and speaks to Onar Ovich, they will be rewarded with their prize. At this point, they've completed their quest successfully.

If the party chooses to leave the lovers to their family's whims, then the ghost of the drowned groom will once again return in 50 years, thus the ending is only temporary. The curse is not broken and the cycle will repeat itself.

If instead the party helps out the lovers and sees them be married, the curse will be broken and the drowned groom will instantly perish, freed from his eternal torment, thus giving the party the truly good ending.

The end.

# THANK YOU !

A big thank you to all of those who follow and support me, without you I couldn't have brought this project to life.

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And now onto the next project...

Cheers !

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**A MASSIVE THANK YOU TO ALL MY PATRONS !**

