

DDAL00-05



# WINTER'S SPLENDOR

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*You're invited to the Midwinter Gala in the City of Splendors!  
Among the jovial festivities, a sinister mystery waits to be unwrapped.  
A two-hour holiday adventure for 1st – 4th level characters.*



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DDAL00-05C WINTER'S SPLENDOR

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# ADVENTURE PRIMER

“NOT EVERY FLICKERING ORANGE GLOW IS A FIRE, darling. What does a little girl like you have to fear?”

—Ammalia Cassalanter to her daughter, Elzerina

## BACKGROUND

THIS YEAR'S MIDWINTER GALA IS HELD IN Waterdeep's glamorous Sea Ward. The festivities include a bustling outdoor holiday market and special performances at the **CASSALANTER VILLA**, which the Cassalanter family have graciously opened to the public for the duration of the holiday.

The pleasant atmosphere is tainted when aasimar opera singer, **ARIA CAVATINA**, is attacked by a tiny fiend that seemingly appears out of nowhere. The City Watch shuts down the event, holding guests in the villa for questioning until the culprit can be identified.

The fiends wreaking havoc on the party are doing the bidding of **ASMODEUS**, who already holds sway over the Cassalanter family. The devils have been inadvertently summoned by young **ELZERINA CASSALANTER**, with whom Asmodeus has been communicating via her toys. Elzerina does not know that her innocent playtime has invited these devilish creatures into her home.

Will characters be able to crack Asmodeus's puzzle and put a stop to his fiendish meddling? With a villa full of Waterdeep's most prominent citizens and a family with a secret so dark they'll do anything to protect it, mayhem and mystery await this Midwinter!

## EPISODES

The adventure is spread over three episodes that take approximately two to four hours to play.

- **Episode 1: Breaking the Ice.** The Midwinter Gala is in full swing in the Sea Ward. During a performance at Cassalanter Villa, a visiting performer is attacked by a minion of Asmodeus. This is the **Call to Action**.
- **Episode 2: Where There's Smoke....** The City Watch shuts down the festivities until the culprit is discovered. Characters can explore the Cassalanter Villa or interact with guests to uncover Asmodeus's plot. This is **Main Objective A**.
- **Episode 3: Silent Night, Devil's Light.** Based on their discoveries, the characters find themselves in the City of the Dead facing off against a minion of Asmodeus, and hopefully putting a stop to his meddling. This is **Main Objective B**.

## BONUS OBJECTIVES

This adventure includes two bonus objectives that the characters can pursue if they have additional time to do so—earning additional advancement checkpoints (but no treasure checkpoints) in the process. These bonus objectives are found in this adventure's appendices, as follows:

- **Bonus Objective A: Voice of an Angel.** Aasimar bard Aria Cavatina needs help completing an ancient song, which is said to conjure a celestial to one's aid. This bonus objective is found in **Appendix 4**.
- **Bonus Objective B: Danse Macabre.** Elzerina Cassalanter possesses a cursed toy that has a strange effect on her. This bonus objective is found in **Appendix 5**.

## EPISODE SEQUENCE

Depending on your time constraints, and play style and environment, this adventure will take approximately two hours to play.

## HOW WILL YOU PLAY?

The duration of your session depends on how much of this adventure you plan to utilize. At the very least, your session will last approximately two hours. However, if you wish, you can provide a longer experience for your players by presenting the bonus objectives.

**Main Objective Only.** To complete the adventure's main objective, the characters participate in Episodes 1 through 3 in order.

**Bonus Objectives.** You can extend this adventure by one or two hours by including opportunities for the characters to pursue the bonus objectives.

These objectives branch off Episode 2 and 3, but their order is fluid—they set the scene for the final episode and may even have an impact on events as they transpire.

### A DARK FAMILY LEGACY

This adventure prominently features the Cassalanter family, whom characters may have already encountered in *Waterdeep Dragon Heist™*. Ammalia and Victoro Cassalanter are secretly cultists of Asmodeus, but outwardly maintain patronage and devotion to the demigod, Siamorphe, who represents a nobles' divine right to rule. Charitable acts, such as opening their home to Waterdavians for the Midwinter Gala, help the Cassalanter family keep up appearances and detract unwanted attention to their more nefarious clandestine activities.

# ADVENTURE FLOWCHART

## CALL TO ACTION

*Breaking the Ice*

## BONUS OBJECTIVE A

*Voice of an Angel*

## MAIN OBJECTIVE A

*Where There's Smoke...*

## BONUS OBJECTIVE B

*Danse Macabre*

## MAIN OBJECTIVE B

*Silent Night,  
Devil's Light*

# EPISODE 1: BREAKING THE ICE

*Estimated Duration:* 20 minutes

## SCENE A. THE MIDWINTER MARKET

**T**HE ADVENTURE BEGINS IN THE SEA WARD, where the Midwinter Gala is in full swing. To set the scene, read or paraphrase the following.

Wheels of carriages and drays crunch over the freshly-fallen snow, delivering visitors from across the city to the Sea Ward. Despite the frigid temperature, the atmosphere is warm and jovial. Red velvet-covered tents line Delzorin and Diamond Streets; merchants offer treats and trinkets. The air is filled with the voices of carolers and the scents of spiced pastries and mulled wine.

The Midwinter Gala is an extravagant affair that lasts for a tenday. In the Sea Ward, it is a festive, pleasant scene. Characters can interact with the merchants to purchase seasonal snacks or small gifts.

### AREA INFORMATION

The Sea Ward glitters and gleams during the Midwinter Gala. The streets are crowded with merriment.

**Dimensions & Terrain.** Delzorin and Diamond Streets are both closed to traffic. The streets have been cleared of snow, but the snow is banked on the sidewalks and the roofs of the villas that line the street. Throughout the day, snow falls in intermittent bursts, adding a fresh coat to the ground.

**Lighting.** The sunlight is feeble behind snow clouds, but the rays catch the light of the freshly-fallen snow and it is quite bright outside. The light under the tents is dimmer, lit by candles and magic lanterns.

### CREATURES/NPCs

If characters peruse the midwinter market, they can visit one of the following NPCs.

- **Wizdil** (CG gnome **commoner**) sells cups of mulled wine, ale, or beer for 5 cp. Wizdil staves off the cold by imbibing from his own supply and is in quite good spirits.
- **Merry** (LG halfling **commoner**) sells pastries, cookies, and cakes for 10 cp. Merry is passionate about baking and refers to her offerings as “positively scrummy!”

- **Hildegard** (N human **commoner**) sells beautiful knitwear (hats, scarves, gloves, and small knit animals) for 1 gp. She is actively knitting an ornate cowl when the characters approach.
- **Vela** (CG human **bard**) sells intricately-crafted wooden instruments; available at her table are a violin, viola, and lute, along with rarer instruments including a hurdy-gurdy and a balalaika. Each instrument costs 100 gp. Vela plucks at the balalaika to the same tune of the songs sung by the carolers.
- **Pavel** (N half-elf **commoner**) sells an array of fine stationary — notebooks, holiday cards, blank scrolls, quills, and monogram wax stamps. Each item costs 3 gp.

### WHAT DO THEY KNOW?

The merchants are glad to answer questions about the Sea Ward, the Midwinter Gala, and the upcoming performance at the Cassalanter. Because people have traveled to Waterdeep from across Faerûn, the merchants are equipped with *Volo's Waterdeep Enchiridion* (W:DH, pg. 163).

The merchants are especially excited about the upcoming performance at the Cassalanter villa; they all speak highly of the visiting bard, Aria Cavatina (LG female protector aasimar **bard**), whose angelic voice is famous. They urge the characters to watch the performance.

## SCENE B. JOIN US IN SONG

At 3 p.m., when the sun is beginning to lower in the sky, the doors of the Cassalanter Villa open. A servant of the household steps forward and heralds the start of the performance in the villa, by sounding off on a trumpet.

The crowd clusters in the **Entrance Hall** (see the Cassalanter Villa Map, Appendix 3) and the servant, **Willifort Crowelle** (LE **doppelganger** in the form of an aging male tiefling), leads them to the **Ballroom** on the second floor. The doors remain open to allow the overflow audience to trickle into the villa.

The villa, as always, is well fortified. Four **guards** flank the front door, two on each side of the interior. Inside the ballroom, six additional **guards** are posted around the perimeter of the room. The guards are private hires of the Cassalanter and are there to prevent guests from wandering around the estate. In addition to the private guards, the City Watch is on hand. Among the City Watch present is captain **Hyustus Staget** (LG male Illuskan human **veteran**) and two **guards** under his command.

### THE BARD FROM AFAR

Aria is beautiful and statuesque, with vivid red hair that contrasts her silvery-white skin. When she sings, her eyes glow a mesmerizing sapphire and shimmering wings sprout from her back. Aria is famous across Faerûn and hosting her is considered a great honor. She is a soprano.

Aria is warm and friendly. She comes from a long line of opera singers. In her possession is music for a song titled, *Golden Wings*, which has been damaged. She hopes to find someone who will help her restore it to its former glory. (See *Voice of an Angel*, Bonus Objective B, Appendix 5).

A temporary dais has been constructed next to the Cassalanter's beautiful harpsichord, which has been transported from the main hall to the ballroom. Ammalia and Victorio Cassalanter, dressed in opulent winter finery, smile warmly at the crowd. Their 8-year-old twin children, Terenzio and Elzerina, squirm in their freshly-starched holiday clothes. A DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check notes that Elzerina looks anxious beyond just typical childlike ennui. She glances around the crowd, then over her shoulder, and nervously at her parents. Balled in her fist is a crumpled piece of paper (a story called *The Wooden Girl*, ripped from one of her books).

Ammalia introduces the performer, opera singer **Aria Cavatina** (LG female protector aasimar **bard**). Aria performs without accompaniment. She sings an opening song, elevating a familiar holiday tune; radiant light fills the room and enraptures the audience. Read or paraphrase the following.

The singer's voice fills the room, and her radiant light follows. It is a soft, warm light that makes the Cassalanter's décor gleam and shimmer. Her voice is bright and clear, and you are riveted by it. The crowd watches in silence; even the ornery children have gone quiet and watch, open-mouthed.

## IMPISH TENDENCIES

Aria extends her arms, heralding the start of another song, but suddenly stumbles and lets out a blood-curdling scream — any character that succeeds at a DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check sees that a bright red imp has glommed onto the back of her neck. The imp attacks her with its sting attack and manages to do maximum damage (25 hps). Although Aria is hurt, she is more distressed from shock and surprise than from injury.

Allow the characters a chance to act; they should be given no more than 30 seconds of real time to decide, and no time for discussion, as there isn't time for strategy or planning.

- The imp is fixated on attacking Aria, largely because of the celestial aura she emits. If the characters attempt to communicate with it, it reacts with hostility toward them as well.
- If the characters choose to remain put, the City Watch guards manage to defeat the imp.
- The crowd panics, and Captain Staget steps forward. With a booming voice, he commands the City Watch and the private guards to shut down the festivities.

Captain Staget shuts the front doors, locking everyone inside. "No one is allowed to leave until we can conduct an investigation!"

Captain Staget urges anyone willing to help with the investigation to step forward. (Meanwhile, one of his guards stabilizes Aria.) The inside crowd is comprised mostly of commoners, Waterdavian nobility and Cassalanter servants, and no one volunteers to help. Captain Staget turns to the characters and asks for their assistance.

A successful DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check OR any character with at least a 12 passive Perception finds a piece of crumpled paper near the imp's body — it's a page torn from a children's book. If a character doesn't find it, Captain Staget does, and inquires if anyone knows what it is. The page contains a fable called *The Wooden Girl* (see Appendix 6 for the player handout).

## CALL TO ACTION

The characters, willingly or not, are now tasked to find out why an imp has suddenly appeared in the Cassalanter villa. The sooner they can sleuth out the culprit, the sooner the festivities can resume.

# EPISODE 2: WHERE THERE'S SMOKE...

## (MAIN OBJECTIVE A)

**Estimated Duration:** 90 minutes – 2 hours

### SCENE A: LOCKDOWN IN THE VILLA

CAPTAIN STAGET PERMITS THE CHARACTERS access to the Cassalanter Villa, but Ammalia and Victorio protest, requesting that the characters remain limited to the main compound — they claim they wouldn't want the characters to wander out of sight and get hurt. Staget reluctantly acquiesces to this request.

A successful DC 17 Wisdom (Insight) check catches the worry masked behind the Cassalanter's otherwise warm demeanor; with the presence of a rogue imp in their home, they worry that this will cause suspicion and eventually lead to the discovery of their Asmodeus cult.

#### SMOKE SIGNALS

The culprit of the attack is Asmodeus, Lord of the Nine Hells, to whom the Cassalanters have pledged the souls of their young children. To spy on the Cassalanters, Asmodeus sent minions — several **imps** and a **spined devil** — to communicate with young Elzerina to gain access in their home. Elzerina is much more outgoing and ambitious than her shy brother, Terenzio, and makes for an easier target.

Asmodeus enjoys toying with clever potential votaries. He has tasked Elzerina with solving a puzzle using an old Faerûn fable, *The Wooden Girl*, which just happens to be an allegory about Asmodeus himself. He changed the name of the fable's protagonist from *Eliza* to *Elzerina* to catch her attention — and it worked. Reading the story aloud summoned an imp to Elzerina's room. Delighted, she befriended the small fiend, who convinced her to continue the puzzle so that more of his imp friends could join them. Elzerina agreed and completed another part of the puzzle, placing two toys in a pattern that matched two markings in Asmodeus's ancient sigil. When the second imp appeared, Elzerina saw the creatures' true fiendish tendencies and grew fearful. Her fears were realized when the second imp attacked Aria and shut down the party.

Elzerina is afraid to tell her parents what she has done but is willing to help the characters finish the puzzle so the devils plaguing her may be banished, and she can enjoy her favorite holiday festival.

Incidentally, the Cassalanter Villa is already home to several imps who serve Ammalia. These imps take the form of ravens and spiders, guarding secret rooms and spying on guests elsewhere on the grounds. However, Ammalia makes sure the imps never interact with her children (save for her eldest son, Osvaldo, an imprisoned **chain devil**) and they are never to appear in their native form. The creatures Elzerina has summoned are unrelated to these imps and serve a different master.

Ammalia draws her children to her. A DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check sees that Elzerina is especially frightened. When she sees someone holding the ripped story, she lets out a squeak before clamping her hands over her mouth.

To aid in the investigation, a recovering Aria offers the characters an item called the *Bell of Silent Carols* (see Appendix 10 for details).

#### A PUZZLE WITH TWO PATHS

To be successful, the characters must establish the existence of the puzzle first, and then determine if they want to question the guests. Some of the guests help expedite the solution, but others will slow the proceedings down.

Ultimately, it's up to you to determine the pacing that works best for your party. It is also up to you to determine if other actions the characters perform might be helpful or not in solving this mystery. Avoid being too restrictive, but don't make it easy either.

#### THE SIGIL PUZZLE

Asmodeus's puzzle is straightforward.

- On the back of the torn book page is a drawing of his ancient sigil, which is revealed if any character inspects the page. Since Asmodeus's name is on the sigil, the characters will likely figure out immediately that it represents him but may not know yet his level of involvement.
- A successful DC 13 Intelligence (History) OR (Arcana) check determines that the sigil represents Asmodeus and reveals that there are sigils representing other devils and demons.
- A successful DC 18 Intelligence (History) OR (Arcana) check reveals that sigils like this have traditionally been used as summoning circles to conjure devils and demons.
- This check also reveals that recreating the sigil using random objects activated a temporary one-way portal from the Nine Hells, allowing Asmodeus's minions to pass through to the Material Plane. In this context, the objects used to recreate the sigil are toys. Use the annotated guide in Appendix 7 to help facilitate the correct placement of the items.

There is a chance the characters wonder why they should even finish the puzzle if it will just bring more enemies to the villa. A successful DC 14 Intelligence (History) OR (Arcana) check confirms that since Elzerina has already activated the sigil, it needs to be expended fully before it can close. An NPC can also suggest this to the characters if there is doubt.

## ELZERINA'S PART

- Elzerina inadvertently activated the puzzle by reading *The Wooden Girl* aloud. This action summoned one imp named **Chernok**. Chernok is still in twins' room.
- On Chernok's urging, Elzerina placed seven marbles and two barrettes in a specific pattern on the circular rug in her room, activating part of the sigil. This summoned another **imp** named **Brimtoe**. Brimtoe escaped the room while Elzerina was in the ballroom and when he caught a glimpse of the celestial Aria Cavatina, he felt compelled to attack her.

## THE CHARACTER'S PART

- The rest of the toys needed to recreate the sigil are in Elzerina's room in her toy chest.
- Placing at least two toys in the correct placement summons another **imp**.
- Placing at least four toys in the correct placement completes the sigil; however, the last part of the puzzle is dependent on location. Characters need to complete the sigil by assembling the toys in the correct pattern on an unmarked altar in the City of the Dead. (Episode 3 outlines the specific location in the City of the Dead.) Completing the puzzle in this location summons a **spined devil**, whom Asmodeus tasked to kidnap, or at least torment, Elzerina.
- Once the sigil has been activated and the **spined devil** is defeated, the characters can close the portal by pouring holy water on the altar.

## HOW THE CHARACTERS FIGURE THIS OUT

- *The Wooden Girl* is the main source of clues. Asmodeus has highlighted parts of the story to help Elzerina. These highlighted pieces allude to what the puzzle entails.
- The characters can ask the other guests what they know about the story, the sigil, and the Cassalanter villa.
- If the characters get stuck, allow them to attempt a DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) OR a DC 13 Wisdom (Insight) check to reveal another piece of information.

## SCENE B: MORE QUESTIONS THAN ANSWERS

### QUESTIONING THE GUESTS

There are several attendees the characters can question if they so choose. Depending on who, the guest may help or hinder their efforts. If the characters run out of people to question, consult *Appendix B: Monsters and NPCs* in *Waterdeep: Dragon Heist* (pg. 192) to infuse the adventure with more familiar faces.

Captain Staget insists on supervising the characters through this process, though they may choose where to stage the questioning.

## ELZERINA CASSALANTER

CG humanoid **commoner** (child)

**Behavior:** Elzerina clearly exhibits signs of guilt and asks frequently for her brother.

**What She Knows:** A successful DC 10 Charisma (Persuasion) check is all it takes for Elzerina to spill the beans. If a character attempts to Intimidate Elzerina, Captain Staget will have them removed immediately from the questioning, forcibly if needs be.

When a successful check is made, Elzerina admits that she accidentally brought Chernok to her home, although she doesn't fully understand how. She says that *The Wooden Girl* was her favorite story and she saw her name in the text, and thought it was a present for her. In addition, she tells the characters about the imp's behavior, in her room.

*"He was nice, at first! He let me clean his hat, which had a smudge on it. But then Chernok and his stinky friend Brimtoe started breaking things in my room and I got scared. Is Aria going to be alright?"*

## TERENZIO CASSALANTER

CG humanoid **commoner** (child)

**Behavior:** Elzerina's twin brother is excited by the activity in his home, but shy.

**What He Knows:** Terenzio knows nothing about what happened. If the characters succeed at a DC 13 Charisma (Persuasion) check to earn Terenzio's trust. Attempting to Intimidate Terenzio meets with the same results as if they did the same to Elzerina. When a successful check is made, Terenzio says he heard Elzerina talking to someone the other night but didn't recognize the voice.

*"I thought it might be Osvaldo visiting from school, but I don't think it was."*

## VICTORO AND AMMALIA CASSALANTER\*

LE humans (see *W:DH*, pg. 193 & 218)

**Behavior:** Both Cassalanter adults are horrified by what has happened in their home, and this horror is earnest, if not as altruistic as it may seem. They ask eagerly after Aria's health, but maintain a calm, concerned demeanor. A successful DC 18 Wisdom (Insight) check reveals the terror underneath the façade. They wish to not be questioned long, so they can take care of their children, who are frightened by the day's events.

**What They Know:** The Cassalanters are masters of deception and do everything in their power to hide their secret. However, they truly have no idea why a new imp suddenly appeared today, so in that surprise they are genuine.

\*Combat with the Cassalanters is outside the scope of this adventure. However, if that's something your players choose to engage with, you'll need a copy of *Waterdeep Dragon Heist* handy.



### ESVELE ROSZNAR, THE BLACK VIPER\*

CN human **black viper** (see *W:DH*, pg. 196)

**Behavior:** The Black Viper has been lurking in the shadows and approaches the characters with her suspicion.

**What She Knows:** Esvele suggests that Asmodeus contacting the young Cassalanter was likely not an accident. She also says that *The Wooden Girl* is a fable many Waterdavian children read when they are little, and most know that the story is warning against Asmodeus. Beyond this information, Esvele has nothing more to offer.

\*Combat with the Black Viper is outside the scope of this adventure. However, if that's something your players choose to engage with, you'll need a copy of *Waterdeep Dragon Heist* handy.

### FLOON BLAGMAR

CG Illuskan human **commoner**

**Behavior:** Floon has enjoyed quite a few cups of delectable mulled wine. He is in a jovial mood and hasn't quite registered the danger.

**What He Knows:** Floon is rather simpleminded and has no idea what the attack meant or where the imp came from. He will speak about Aria with great reverence though.

*"That bard has a lovely voice, doesn't she?"*

### LAIBA "NANA" ROSSE

LE tiefling **cult fanatic**

**Behavior:** Nana is Elzerina and Terenzio's tutor. She puts on a stern face when questioned.

**What She Knows:** Nana tries to deflect suspicion away from the Cassalanters. She says that another partygoer likely brought the imps into the house to ruin the lovely festivities and bring shame upon the Cassalanters. She might even call attention to a specific guest (not a character), in order to divert attention. Nana claims she has never seen the book Elzerina was reading. She suspects it was a gift Elzerina opened early.

*"Fables are just that — fables. Only silly children believe in fairytales."*

### QUESTIONING THE STAFF

Should the characters want to question the Cassalanters' staff, the servants reiterate what Nana has stated.

- **Willifort Crowelle**, a **doppelganger** taking the form of an old tiefling butler;
- **Tissina Khyret** (LE tiefling **cult fanatic**), personal attendant to Ammalia;
- **Jandar Chergoba** (LE tiefling **cult fanatic**), head chef of Cassalanter Villa.

### EXPLORING THE CASSALANTER VILLA

The characters can find everything they need in Terenzio and Elzerina's room. However, they may choose to explore other areas they have been permitted to investigate. Additional descriptions of these rooms can be found in *W:DH*, pg. 118.

- **Entrance Hall.** There is nothing to see here, move along.
- **Library.** A successful DC 18 Intelligence (Investigation) check turns up a blank *Enduring Spellbook* on one of the grand shelves.
- **Reading Room.** Victorio's journal sits on a side table; a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals a scribbled note from Victorio: *"Neverember's dragons are an answer to our prayers."* The rest of the journal is fabricated drivel.
- **Foyer.** There is nothing to find in this room.
- **Family Dining Room.** There is nothing to find in this room.
- **Kitchen.** Tiefling servant Jandar Chergoba is in the kitchen, should the characters want to question him.

### THE CHILDREN'S ROOM

The twin's bedroom contains two four-poster beds, once for each child. A life-sized stuffed unicorn stands in one corner.

- In the middle of the room is a circular area rug where Elzerina activated the sigil.
- Scattered on the rug are two hair **barrettes** and seven **marbles**; when the second imp appeared, Elzerina panicked and kicked the items out of the way, disrupting the sigil.
- The barrettes and the marbles can be put back in the correct placement, which counts as two of the four required items needed to progress the puzzle.

At the foot of each bed is a large, ornate toy chest. Terenzio's is a rich mahogany; Elzerina's is a shiny white with gold handles.

Terenzio's chest is filled with stuffed animals (wolf, fox, bear, and dragon); a train set; and a set of dice.

### ELZERINA'S TOY CHEST CONTENTS

- A set of **pick-up sticks**\* in a silk sleeve;
- A set of **metal jacks**\* in a velvet pouch;
- An empty velvet pouch that stores **marbles**\* (which are out on the floor);
- Two complete sets of wooden **alphabet blocks**\*;
- An articulating **wooden snake**\*;
- An ornately carved dreidel;
- A beautiful music box in the shape of an egg. Inside is a tiny ballerina that looks suspiciously like Elzerina. This item kicks off the bonus objective, *Danse Macabre*. See Appendix 5.
- Chernok the **imp**, poorly pretending to be a toy nutcracker. At first, he lays limp and glassy-eyed, but once the characters notice him, he waggles his tongue and salutes.

\*Items marked with an asterisk are needed for the puzzle.

### PIPYAP'S SOLDIER

Chernok is the first imp Elzerina summoned. Chernok is bedecked in a soldier's uniform, complete with a soldier's hat, golden epaulettes, and a hole cut in the back of his tiny trousers to accommodate his tail. He is a clever little trickster and eager to socialize. Chernok happily helps the characters complete the puzzle; he wants his friends to join him on the Material Plane.

Although Chernok first and foremost serves Asmodeus, he is a soldier in Pipyap's Legion. Pipyap is an imp of some notoriety, though not part of this adventure.

Chernok is not hostile, but he is mischievous. He laments Brimtoe's foolish behavior but acknowledges that "shiny, radiant things" are very tempting for imps. Chernok enjoys his vacation out of the Nine Hells and will do what he can to prolong his stay.

Pipyap (also spelled *Pypyap*) was the imp familiar of Halvin Graingle, a member of the Cult of the Dragon. Longtime D&D fans may recognize both Pipyap and Halvin's names. Pipyap has moved on to gain a level of notoriety unheard of for a typical imp.

If the characters are struggling with the puzzle, Chernok gives them hints to expedite the solution; however, Asmodeus has forbidden him from revealing the solution outright. Chernok also tells the characters that the final part of the puzzle requires them to place the puzzle pieces in the unmarked altar in the City of the Dead. He tells them to "look for the girl with the wings," alluding to the statue that marks the altar.

If the characters continue to assemble the sigil puzzle in the children's room, each placement of two toys in the correct spot summons another **imp**. The imps quickly unite in their desire to destroy everything in sight; Chernok urges his comrades to be patient and well-behaved, although he too eventually partakes in causing chaos.

*Suggested names for additional imps:* Teufel, Steve, Dimitri, Rimpkin, Gertrude, Lucrezia.

## PLAYING THE PILLARS

### COMBAT

Because of the nature of the adventure, characters don't have much to fight – yet. However, depending on where the characters find themselves in the Cassalanter Villa, there are many secrets and strange creatures to encounter. If the characters are hungry to fight, you can toss a few extra imps their way.

### EXPLORATION

The Cassalanter villa is huge and holds many secrets. The City Watch does not allow characters to venture far, although characters can attempt to sneak into the rest of the villa to uncover more information about the Cassalanters. This is a very risky choice, for there are many guards roaming the property, and being caught earns them the scorn and distrust of the Cassalanters.

### SOCIAL

Questioning the guests gives the characters a chance to meet Waterdavians they may have not yet encountered. The questioning does not have to be treated like an interrogation; the partygoers are eager to see this issue put to rest and are generally amenable to being questioned if it will help the process.

# EPISODE 3: SILENT NIGHT, DEVIL'S LIGHT

## (MAIN OBJECTIVE B)

**Estimated Duration:** 30 minutes

### OBJECTIVE

CHARACTERS CAN COMPLETE THE SIGIL ON THE unmarked altar and summon Asmodeus's minion, solving the puzzle and closing the summoning circle. Captain Staget allows the characters to leave the villa and requests they return afterward to confirm that the issue has been resolved.

### PREREQUISITES

Characters must have either encountered Chernok or sleuthed from *The Wooden Girl* that they need to complete the puzzle in the City of the Dead.

### AREA INFORMATION

It is evening by the time the characters venture across Waterdeep to the City of the Dead. The Midwinter Gala continues throughout the night, although many of the revelers stay clear of the Cassalanter Villa.

Snow has begun to fall, blanketing the city. The City of the Dead is eerily quiet. The characters see their breath form puffs in the frigid air.

**Dimensions & Terrain.** The City of the Dead covers a large area, and characters may be tempted to explore much of it. Depending on the pacing of the adventure, you may choose to let them do this, or place the unmarked altar in a visible place and lower the DC to find it. This is also a good place for characters to use the *Bell of Silent Carols*.

**Lighting.** The cemetery is lit by streetlamps that are placed sporadically throughout the area. The lighting is considered **dim**. Some of the larger mausoleums have sconces for torches.

### ENCOUNTERS IN THE CITY OF THE DEAD

Waterdavians treat the City of the Dead like a public park and outdoor museum and enjoy spending time there in the warmer seasons. Despite its purpose as a cemetery, it is not the spooky, haunted locale that visitors may assume. However, in the winter, it is too cold for sensible folk to spend much time outside, and the City of the Dead is empty.

The absence of people has drawn some lurking creatures. If you have plenty of time to continue the adventure, feel free to roll on the random encounter table below. Characters may encounter some of them; not all the creatures are hostile.

### RANDOM ENCOUNTERS IN THE CITY OF THE DEAD

d4	Creature
1	Ice mephit (2)
2	Dire wolf
3	Giant owl
4	Reindeer x 3 (uses <b>deer</b> stats)

### THE UNMARKED ALTAR

There is a strange stone sculpture in the City of the Dead. Waterdavians are used to unusual statues and have not questioned the appearance of this one. The characters spot the statue by making a successful DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check OR having a passive Perception of 14+. Additionally, speaking the name "Asmodeus" aloud while in the City of the Dead causes the statue to glow, guiding them to it, and lowers the required check to DC 10.

The statue depicts a little girl with wings; she holds a candelabra with nine candles. At first glance, the child appears celestial, but a successful DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals that the wings are spindly and webbed, like a bat's wing. When the characters come within 10 feet of the statue, the candles begin to glow a vivid, angry orange.

Embedded in the ground in front of the statue is a circular stone slab, about two feet in diameter. There are no markings on the slab.

Placing a minimum of four toys on the slab in the correct placement fully activates the whole sigil; it appears in bright orange and summons a **spined devil** (see *Adjusting the Scene*; the creature may be a bearded devil if the party's APL is Strong or higher). The spined devil is named Koluchki, and he addresses the characters, looking around for Elzerina. Koluchki quickly becomes impatient and turns hostile, attacking the characters.

#### ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene, according to your group.

- **Very Weak:** The **spined devil** is no longer resistant to magical weapons and has 19 hp.
- **Weak:** The **spined devil** is no longer resistant to magical weapons.
- **Strong:** Replace the **spined devil** with a **bearded devil**.
- **Very Strong:** Replace the **spined devil** with a **bearded devil** and add two **vargouilles**.

## DEACTIVATING THE SIGIL

Once Koluchki has been dispatched, the sigil continues to glow; if left undisturbed, it will continue to summon a **spined devil** once every hour.

The sigil can be deactivated by dousing it with holy water. This fact is revealed if a character makes a successful DC 13 Intelligence (Arcana) check OR a successful DC 13 Intelligence (Religion) check. Using holy water ensures that the stone slab can never be used again in conjunction with a summoning sigil. The ripped page with *The Wooden Girl* disintegrates.

## RESOLUTION

The characters may return to the villa. When they arrive, the imps have vanished, and another local bard plays jovial tunes on the harpsicord. The Cassalanter and Captain Staget thank the characters for their help. Captain Staget makes *boots of the winterlands* available for those inclined to spend their Treasure Checkpoints on them.

Aria is now healed, and she takes her place once again on the dais. Her beautiful voice fills the chamber, engulfing the audience in a pleasant light that warms without burning.



# ADVENTURE REWARDS

**U**PON COMPLETING THE ADVENTURE, THE characters each receive rewards based upon their accomplishments. These rewards include advancement and treasure, and may include special rewards, such as story awards or new downtime activities, as follows:

## ADVANCEMENT CHECKPOINTS

The characters receive one advancement checkpoint for each objective completed:

- **Story Objective A:** Solving Asmodeus's toy puzzle.
- **Story Objective B:** Defeating Asmodeus's minion and deactivating the sigil.

The characters earn an additional advancement checkpoint for each **bonus objective** they complete:

- **Bonus Objective A:** Completing Aria Cavatina's ruined song.
- **Bonus Objective B:** Removing the curse on one of Elzerina's toys.



## TREASURE CHECKPOINTS

The characters receive a treasure checkpoint for completing **both main objectives** (maximum 2).

## MAGIC ITEM UNLOCK

Characters completing the adventure's **main objectives** unlock these magic items.

• **Bell of Silent Carols.** This item can be found in *Appendix 10*.

• **Boots of the Winterlands.** This item can be found in *Appendix 10*.

## STORY AWARDS

Assuming respectful and appropriate conduct, the characters have earned Respect of the City Watch, which allows them each one check at Advantage on one check to avoid penalty when caught committing a crime that doesn't involve murder, theft, or assault. If anyone attempted to intimidate one or both of the Cassalanter children or otherwise conducted themselves in a manner that would be considered disrespectful, they gain Scorn of the City Watch, which gives that character Disadvantage on their next check to avoid punishment from the City Watch.

## DM REWARDS

In exchange for running this adventure, you earn advancement and treasure checkpoints and downtime as though you played the adventure, but none of the other rewards listed above.

However, this adventure may qualify for rewards earned by completing DM Quests. See the ALDMG (*Adventurers League Dungeon Master's Guide*) for more information about DM Quests.

# APPENDIX A: NPCs

## ELZERINA CASSALANTER

(EL-zuhr-ee-nah CASS-ah-lan-tur).

Elzerina is an eight-year-old girl with some elvish blood, thanks to her father's half-elf lineage. Asmodeus has temporarily set his sights on her to get to her parents, and she feels very guilty for letting imps into her home.

**Personality:** I'm bubbly and outgoing, and I enjoy meeting new strangers.

**Ideal:** All I want to do is explore the city but our parents don't let us out very much.

**Bond:** I adore my brother, Terenzio, even if he is a lot quieter than I am.

**Flaw:** Sometimes I act without thinking.

## ARIA CAVATINA

(Ah-REE-ah Cah-vah-TEEN-ah).

Aria is a protector aasimar bard. She is beautiful and kind and emits a radiant aura wherever she goes. She is an opera singer (soprano).

**Personality:** I am warm, friendly, and forgiving.

**Ideal:** Music is the universal language that unites people from all backgrounds.

**Bond:** I want to make my family proud and uphold the Cavatina name.

**Flaw:** Although I am nice to everyone, I only form close relationships with other celestials.

## AMMALIA AND VICTORO CASSALANTER

(Ah-MAH-lee-ah, Vick-TORE-oh).

The Cassalanter parents appear to be outwardly charitable, but they are involved in a much larger plot to pay off Asmodeus and regain control over their children's souls.

**Personality:** We maintain a warm, if somewhat distant, demeanor. We are gracious hosts to those in our home.

**Ideal:** We want the best of everything: the safety of our children, the wealth and respect from Waterdavians, and a mutually-beneficial relationship with Asmodeus.

**Bond:** We love our children but have made a selfish pledge to Asmodeus.

**Flaw:** Our lust for wealth and power has condemned our family, but we will do whatever it takes to maintain our standing.

## HYUSTUS STAGET

(High-US-tuss STAG-ett).

Hyustus Staget is the captain of the City Watch (veteran). He is gruff but reasonable.

**Personality:** I am quite curt and humorless.

**Ideal:** I do whatever it takes to uphold the Code Legal.

**Bond:** I am sworn to keep Waterdeep safe.

**Flaw:** Because of my job, I am used to seeing the worst in people.

AMMALIA AND VICTORO CASSALANTER



# APPENDIX B: CREATURE STATISTICS

## BARD

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

**Armor Class** 15 (chain shirt)

**Hit Points** 44 (8d8 + 8)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)

**Saving Throws** Dex +4, Wis +3

**Skills** Acrobatics +4, Perception +5, Performance +6

**Senses** passive Perception 15

**Languages** any two languages

**Challenge** 2 (450 XP)

**Spellcasting.** The bard is a 4th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 12, +4 to hit with spell attacks). It has the following bard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *friends*, *mage hand*, *vicious mockery*

1st level (4 slots): *charm person*, *healing word*, *heroism*, *sleep*, *thunderwave*

2nd level (3 slots): *invisibility*, *shatter*

**Song of Rest.** The bard can perform a song while taking a short rest. Any ally who hears the song regains an extra 1d6 hit points if it spends any Hit Dice to regain hit points at the end of that rest. The bard can confer this benefit on itself as well.

**Taunt (2/Day).** The bard can use a bonus action on its turn to target one creature within 30 feet of it. If the target can hear the bard, the target must succeed on a DC 12 Charisma saving throw or have disadvantage on ability checks, attack rolls, and saving throws until the start of the bard's next turn.

### ACTIONS

**Shortsword.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

**Shortbow.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

## COMMONER

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

**Armor Class** 10

**Hit Points** 4 (1d8)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

**Senses** passive Perception 10

**Languages** any one language (usually Common)

**Challenge** 0 (10 XP)

### ACTIONS

**Club.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 2 (1d4) bludgeoning damage.

## CULT FANATIC

Medium humanoid (any race), any non-good alignment

**Armor Class** 13 (leather armor)

**Hit Points** 33 (6d8 + 6)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)

**Skills** Deception +4, Persuasion +4, Religion +2

**Senses** passive Perception 10

**Languages** any one language (usually Common)

**Challenge** 2 (450 XP)

**Dark Devotion.** The fanatic has advantage on saving throws against being charmed or frightened.

**Spellcasting.** The fanatic is a 4th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 11, +3 to hit with spell attacks). The fanatic has the following cleric spells prepared:

Cantrips: *light*, *sacred flame*, *thaumaturgy*

1st level (4 slots): *command*, *inflict wounds*, *shield of faith*

2nd level (3 slots): *hold person*, *spiritual weapon*

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The fanatic makes two melee attacks.

**Dagger.** *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage.

## DOPPELGANGER

Medium monstrosity (shapechanger), neutral

**Armor Class** 14

**Hit Points** 52 (8d8 + 16)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)

**Skills** Deception +6, Insight +3

**Condition Immunities** charmed

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

**Languages** Common

**Challenge** 3 (700 XP)

**Shapechanger.** The doppelganger can use its action to polymorph into a Small or Medium humanoid it has seen, or back into its true form. Its statistics, other than its size, are the same in each form. Any equipment it is wearing or carrying isn't transformed. It reverts to its true form if it dies.

**Ambusher.** The doppelganger has advantage on attack rolls against any creature it has surprised.

**Surprise Attack.** If the doppelganger surprises a creature and hits it with an attack during the first round of combat, the target takes an extra 10 (3d6) damage from the attack.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The doppelganger makes two melee attacks.

**Slam.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

**Read Thoughts.** The doppelganger magically reads the surface thoughts of one creature within 60 feet of it. The effect can penetrate barriers, but 3 feet of wood or dirt, 2 feet of stone, 2 inches of metal, or a thin sheet of lead blocks it. While the target is in range, the doppelganger can continue reading its thoughts, as long as the doppelganger's concentration isn't broken (as if concentrating on a spell). While reading the target's mind, the doppelganger has advantage on Wisdom (Insight) and Charisma (Deception, Intimidation, and Persuasion) checks against the target.

## GUARD

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

**Armor Class** 16 (chain shirt, shield)

**Hit Points** 11 (2d8 + 2)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

**Skills** Perception +2

**Senses** passive Perception 12

**Languages** any one language (usually Common)

**Challenge** 1/8 (25 XP)

### ACTIONS

**Spear.** *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. Hit: 4 (1d6 + 1) piercing damage.

## VETERAN

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

**Armor Class** 17 (splint)

**Hit Points** 58 (9d8 + 18)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

**Skills** Athletics +5, Perception +2

**Senses** passive Perception 12

**Languages** any one language (usually Common)

**Challenge** 3 (700 XP)

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The veteran makes two longsword attacks. If it has a shortsword drawn, it can also make a shortsword attack.

**Longsword.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d8 + 3) slashing damage, or 8 (1d10 + 3) slashing damage if used with two hands.

**Shortsword.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage.

**Heavy Crossbow.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, range 100/400 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d10) piercing damage.





## IMP

*Tiny fiend (devil, shapeshifter), lawful evil*

**Armor Class** 13

**Hit Points** 10 (3d4 + 3)

**Speed** 20 ft., fly 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6 (-2)	17 (+3)	13 (+1)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)

**Skills** Deception +4, Insight +3, Persuasion +4, Stealth +5

**Damage Resistances** cold; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks that aren't silvered

**Damage Immunities** fire, poison

**Condition Immunities** poisoned

**Senses** darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 11

**Languages** Infernal, Common

**Challenge** 1 (200 XP)

**Shapeshifter.** The imp can use its action to polymorph into a beast form that resembles a rat (speed 20 ft.), a raven (20 ft., fly 60 ft.), or a spider (20 ft., climb 20 ft.), or back into its true form. Its statistics are the same in each form, except for the speed changes noted. Any equipment it is wearing or carrying isn't transformed. It reverts to its true form if it dies.

**Devil's Sight.** Magical darkness doesn't impede the imp's darkvision.

**Magic Resistance.** The imp has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

### ACTIONS

**Sting (Bite in Beast Form).** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) piercing damage, and the target must make on a DC 11 Constitution saving throw, taking 10 (3d6) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

**Invisibility.** The imp magically turns invisible until it attacks or until its concentration ends (as if concentrating on a spell). Any equipment the imp wears or carries is invisible with it.



## SPINED DEVIL

*Small fiend (devil), lawful evil*

**Armor Class** 13 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 22 (5d6 + 5)

**Speed** 20 ft., fly 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)	8 (-1)

**Damage Resistances** cold; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks that aren't silvered

**Damage Immunities** fire, poison

**Condition Immunities** poisoned

**Senses** darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 12

**Languages** Infernal, Telepathy 120 ft.

**Challenge** 2 (450 XP)

**Devil's Sight.** Magical darkness doesn't impede the devil's darkvision.

**Flyby.** The devil doesn't provoke an opportunity attack when it flies out of an enemy's reach.

**Limited Spines.** The devil has twelve tail spines. Used spines regrow by the time the devil finishes a long rest.

**Magic Resistance.** The devil has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

### ACTIONS

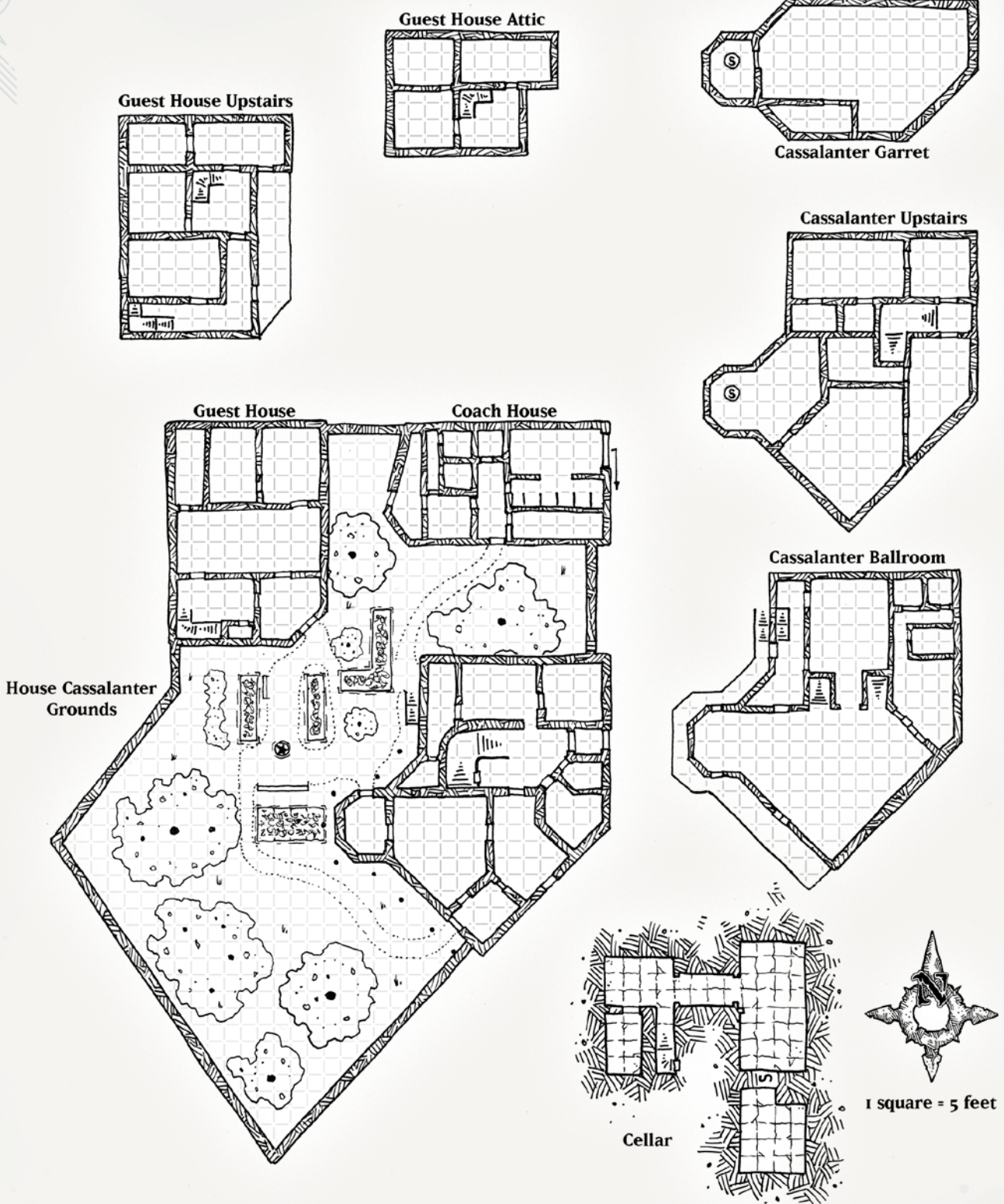
**Multiattack.** The devil makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its fork or two with its tail spines.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (2d4) slashing damage.

**Fork.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d6) piercing damage.

**Tail Spine.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 20/80 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage plus 3 (1d6) fire damage.

# APPENDIX C: MAP OF THE CASSALANTER VILLA



# APPENDIX 4: VOICE OF AN ANGEL

## (BONUS OBJECTIVE A)

**Estimated Duration:** 30 minutes

### SONG OF THE SERAPHIM

**U**ISITING PERFORMER ARIA CAVATINA ENLISTS the characters' help in completing an ancient musical arrangement.

Aria is from a long line of aasimar bards, whose celestial blood is said to come from Milil. A scroll of an ancient song called *Golden Wings* has been passed down from generation to generation in the Cavatina family. Aria's family lore claims that the song has magical properties — when sung or read, the song summons a celestial creature to the aid of the bard who performs it. Unfortunately, part of the scroll was burned when Aria's great-grandmother, Elea, faced off against a dragon many years ago. Aria hopes to compose a new end to the song and restore its power.

#### GOLDEN WINGS

*Like a candle, I burn  
In the glow of your radiance  
Like a plucked string, I learn  
The bright hum of your resonance*

*Like a pilgrim, I bow  
Humbled by your divinity  
Will you come to me now?  
I send you my prayer, my plea*

*Lifted voice, lowered eyes  
Prostrated here on hands and knees...*

### COMPLETING THE SONG

- **Reward creativity at the table.** Players can come up with two new lines of lyrics that fit both the rhyming meter and the theme of the song. See Appendix 9 for the annotated version of the song. The song is comprised of three four-line stanzas that alternate in meter. If the characters come up with appropriate lyrics, they may attempt a DC 13 Charisma (Performance) check with Advantage to confirm that the addition is a good fit.
- **Prompt ability checks.** The characters must succeed at two separate checks without aid: a successful DC 13 Wisdom (Insight) check results in crafting appropriate lyrics, and a successful DC 15 Charisma (Performance) check results in the correct meter. Both successes ensure the song is successfully completed. If the characters succeed at one part but fail at the other, Aria offers her assistance and the characters roll with advantage.

When the song is successfully completed, Aria sings it and the act summons a celestial gold pseudodragon. Aria gives the characters a heartfelt thanks, and awards characters with a copy of the song so that it may never be lost again (see *Appendix 10*).

# APPENDIX 5: DANSE MACABRE

## (BONUS OBJECTIVE B)

**Estimated Duration:** 30 minutes



THE CHARACTERS DISCOVER A STRANGE TOY in Elzerina's toy box that has a strange effect on Elzerina and can destroy it or remove the curse. It bears a maker's mark that reads *BLINSKY*.

### PREREQUISITES

Characters must have discovered Elzerina's toy chest to kick off this objective. Alternately, you may choose to have Elzerina and Terenzio play with this toy early in the adventure.

### ELZERINA BALLERINA

Among Elzerina Cassalanter's many toys, there is an ornate round music box in the shape of an egg, about 10 inches long. The outside is a deep ruby red encrusted with small gems. Opening the egg reveals a tiny ballerina. Turning the key that juts out from the back of the egg makes the ballerina twirl slowly to the mournful melody that emits from the box.

Strangely, the tiny ballerina looks exactly like Elzerina, with blonde pigtails and wide hazel eyes. The ballerina is dressed in a white leotard, similar to Elzerina's Midwinter Gala white dress.

When the key is turned, Elzerina herself twirls until the song ends. She has no control over her body when this happens, and this occurs regardless of how far she is from the item. Her parents assume she is just being her usual self, but this compulsion to dance distresses her greatly. If Elzerina is around the characters when they discover the toy, she panics and asks them to take it from the house.

If Elzerina is absent when they discover it, they may suspect the item is cursed if they have attempted a *detect magic* spell while in the children's room.

- A successful DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check spots the name *BLINKSY* carved into the flat underside of the music box.
- An additional successful DC 14 Intelligence (Investigation) check notices that the ballerina looks startlingly like Elzerina.
- A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check determines that the item is cursed with an enchantment that causes the subject to dance whenever the box is wound. Ultimately, if someone continues to wind the key, Elzerina would be forced to continue dancing until she dies from exhaustion.
- A successful DC 17 Intelligence (Arcana) determines that the curse can be broken by severing the link between the ballerina and the subject. Altering the ballerina's appearance, such as changing her hair color, would work. The ballerina is not a poppet, so altering it will not alter (or injure) Elzerina. Technically, destroying it also works if the ballerina's appearance is altered by the effort (such as a limb breaking off).

Once the curse is broken, characters can choose to leave the toy or take it. They may ask Elzerina what she wants them to do with it, and she is eager for them to take it far away. If the Cassalanter adults are approached about the toy, they say it was a gift from an acquaintance in Damara and don't know much about it. It is worth a hefty sum of gold, however.

#### BLINSKY'S BANE

Gadof Blinksy is a famous toymaker who resides in a place far away from Waterdeep... Barovia. Characters who make a successful DC 20 Intelligence (History) check OR a successful DC 20 Intelligence (Arcana) check, recognize Blinksy's name and recall his reputation for making exquisite, albeit sinister, toys. How did the Cassalanter come by such an item? Tendrils of darkness from across the realms seem to be reaching out for young Elzerina.

# APPENDIX 6: THE WOODEN GIRL

## (PLAYER HANDOUT #1)

### »»» The Wooden Girl «««

From The Faerûn Child's Book of Fables

The girl's name was Eliza and she was brought to life in the puppet-maker's workshop. Like most girls, Eliza was equipped with limbs and a face and, of course, a heart. The puppet maker, Sophie, crafted Eliza with loving detail. Sophie perched Eliza in the window of the shop, where she could wave to the passers-by and enjoy the view of the ocean in the distance.

On the first morning of Midwinter, Eliza gazed longingly through the window, watching the white caps fold over the sea. Snow began to fall, dotting the shop windows and obscuring her vision. Eliza grew sad and wistful. She wanted to leave the shop, but knew that she could not.

Suddenly the snowdrops on the glass began to melt. A vivid orange glow filled Eliza's sight. On the other side of the window stood an old man, face shrouded in a torn scarf, holding a candle. **Elzerina** was fearful, for Sophie had always told her: *wooden girls must stay away from fire*. Sophie told Elzerina about the **wooden snake** she had crafted as a child. When the snake was brought to life, it slithered toward the hearth, seeking warmth. A stray ember ignited the snake, and it withered to ashes. This was not the only warning; Sophie also told Elzerina about the set of **pick-up sticks** she had crafted when she was the woodworker's apprentice. Pleased with her work, Sophie rubbed two sticks together to sand away the splinters — but the friction sparked, and the sticks burnt to cinders.

But the man's flame was low on the wick, and he peered at her through the glass. *Little wooden girl, why are you so sad?*

*I wish to see the sea beyond this pane of glass, she said. When it snows, the drops blur the window, and I feel trapped.*

*What if I took you from your mount? he said. Would you like that?*

Elzerina frowned. *My maker warned me not to go outside, for I could get lost. She says little girls like me get lost in big cities.*

But the man persisted. *Surely she did not create you just to keep you trapped here forever. What if you fetched her a gift for the holiday?*

This filled Elzerina with joy. *Oh, yes! I should so love to bring my maker a present. And perhaps I will get a quick glimpse of the sea.*

He stepped into the shop and lifted her from her mount. He marched through the city and she reveled in the freedom. But he strode not to the sea, but toward the **City of the Dead**.

It was not the cool blue ocean she eventually saw before her, but a scene awash in gray. Perhaps if she blurred her sight, she could pretend that the feeble sun glinting off of the snow-slick tombstones was the white-capped surface of the sea. But Elzerina knew already that she had made a terrible mistake. She suddenly longed for the puppet-maker's workshop, for the stoic company of **alphabet blocks** and sets of dice and intricately-carved spinning tops and tiny ballerinas who danced but never spoke. The man wove through the rows of stones and sat at **a circle embedded in the ground, an altar unmarked and unnamed**. But it had been desecrated already; Elzerina saw the remnants of a fire that once burned, the debris of used tinder.

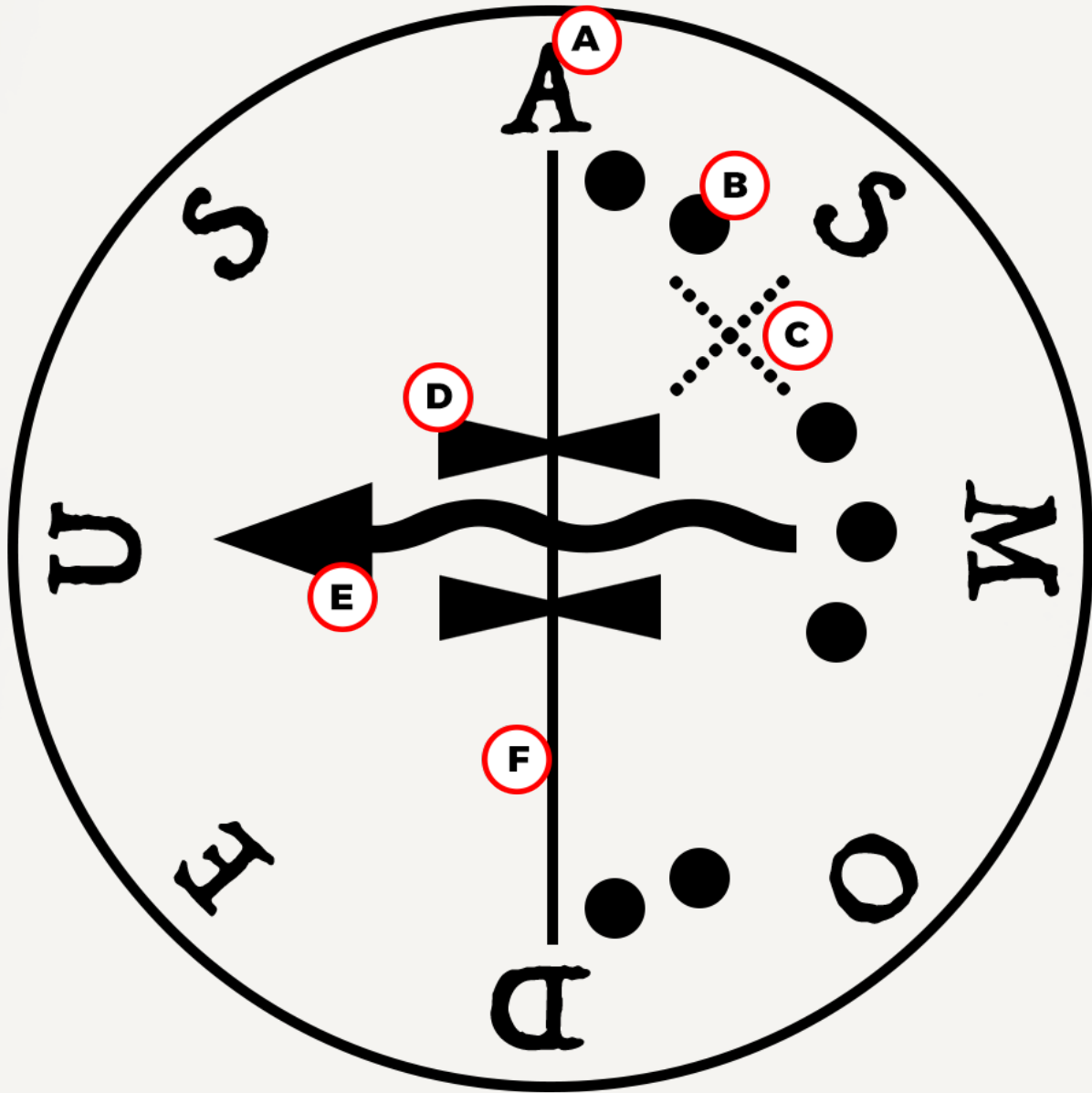
The man pulled away his scarf and grinned at her, an evil smile matched by red eyes that glinted with sadistic pleasure. He placed her atop the ashes and pulled a matchbook from his shabby coat pocket. He had the tool but not the fuel — until he had found the wooden girl in the workshop window, made from the choicest wood for burning, the perfect size for kindle on a long winter night.

The man struck an oiled match tip and the flame roared to life, a curious gradient of deep navy and violent orange. And as the blue heart of the flame engulfed her, Eliza thought of both the azure sea she would never meet and the puppet-maker's kind cornflower eyes, and longed for their cool, **dousing touch**.

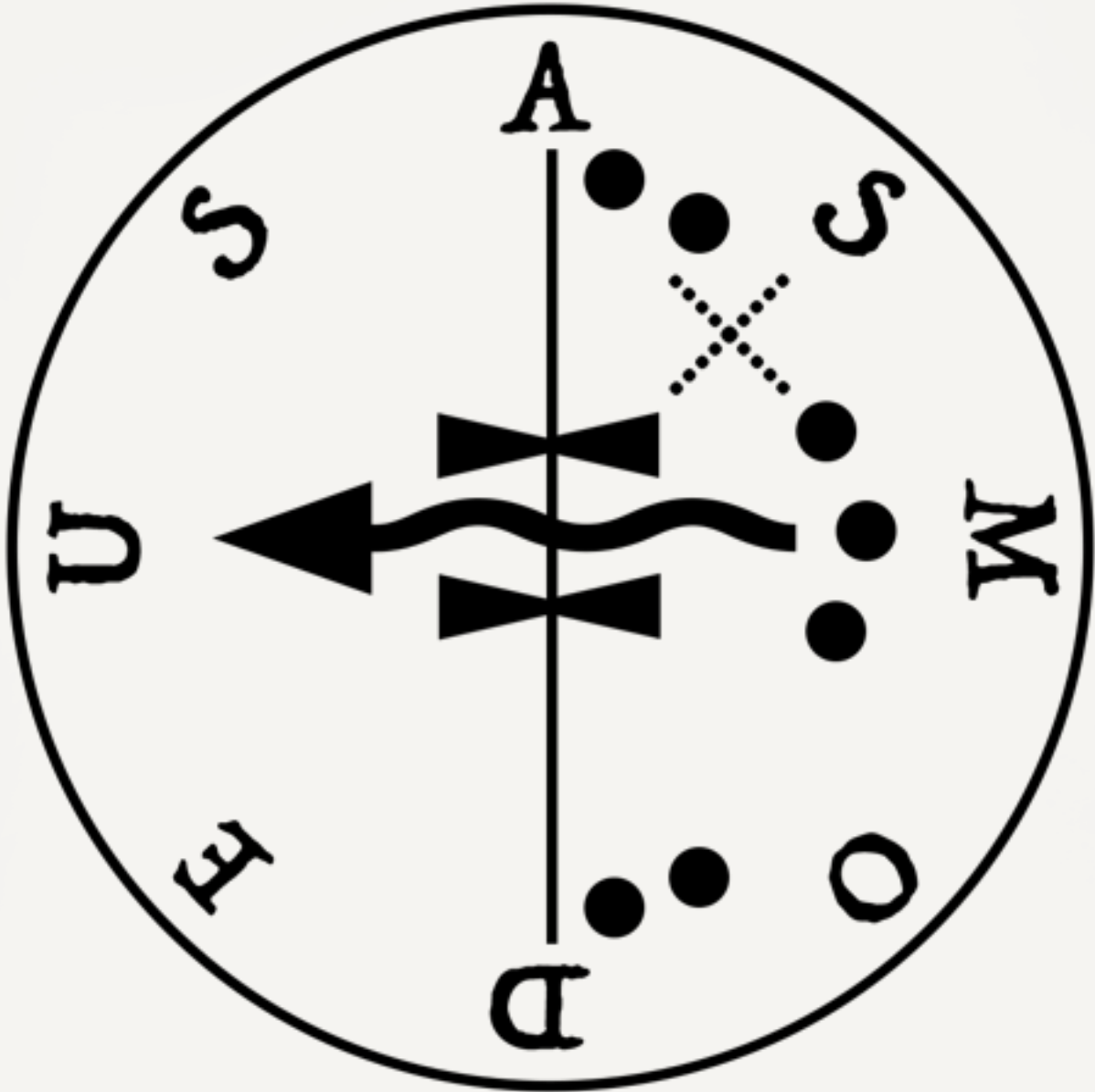
## APPENDIX 7: SIGIL OF ASMODEUS (ANNOTATED VERSION FOR DMs)

Asmodeus's sigil can be replicated with the following toys in Elzerina's toy chest. A minimum of four out of the six items, placed in the proper area, is needed to summon Asmodeus's spined devil.

- A: Each letter in Asmodeus's name is marked with a **wooden alphabet block**.
- B: Each of the seven circles is marked with a **glass marble**.
- C: The crisscross is marked with a **metal jacks**.
- D: Each triangular shape is marked with a **barrette**.
- E: The squiggly shape is marked by a **wooden snake**.
- F: The straight line is marked by a **pick-up stick**.



# APPENDIX 8: SIGIL OF ASMODEUS (PLAYER HANDOUT #2)



# APPENDIX 9: GOLDEN WINGS

(ANNOTATED—PLAYER HANDOUT #3)

## Golden Wings

*Songwriter Unknown*

- A *Like a candle, I burn* (6 syllables)
- B *In the glow of your radiance* (8 syllables)
- A *Like a plucked string, I learn* (6 syllables)
- B *The bright hum of your resonance* (8 syllables)
  
- C *Like a pilgrim, I bow* (6 syllables)
- D *Humbled by your divinity* (8 syllables)
- C *Will you come to me now?* (6 syllables)
- D *I send you my prayer, my plea* (8 syllables)
  
- E *Lifted voice, lowered eyes* (6 syllables)
- D *Prostrated here on hands and knees* (8 syllables)
- E \_\_\_\_\_ (missing line) (6 syllables)
- D \_\_\_\_\_ (missing line) (8 syllables)



# APPENDIX 10: MAGIC ITEMS

Characters completing this adventure's objectives unlock these magic items.

## BELL OF SILENT CAROLS (HORN OF SILENT ALARM)

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*Wondrous Item, common*

This bell has 4 charges. When you use an action to shake it, one creature of your choice can hear the bell's ring in the tune of festive carols, provided the creature is within 600 feet of the bell and not deafened. No other creature hears sound coming from the bell. The bell regains 1d4 expended charges daily at dawn.

## BOOTS OF THE WINTERLANDS

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*Wondrous Item, uncommon (requires attunement)*

These furred boots are snug and feel quite warm. While you wear them, you gain the following benefits:

- You have resistance to cold damage.
- You ignore difficult terrain created by ice or snow.
- You can tolerate temperatures as low as -50 degrees Fahrenheit without any additional protection. If you wear heavy clothes, you can tolerate temperatures as low as -100 degrees Fahrenheit.

## A GIFT OF GOLDEN WINGS

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*Song*

Singing or reciting the lyrics to *Golden Wings* takes one minute. If a good-aligned character casts *find familiar* after making a successful DC 15 Charisma (Performance) check, they may summon a celestial gold pseudodragon to serve as their familiar. This creature is lawful good and abandons the character if they ever willingly harm a celestial.

# APPENDIX 11: DUNGEON MASTER TIPS

This adventure is designed for **three to seven 1st-4th level characters** and is optimized for **five characters with an average party level (APL) of 3**. Characters outside this level range cannot participate in this adventure.

To DM an adventure as a D&D Adventurers League sanctioned game, you **must** have 3 to 7 players—each with their own character whose level is within the adventure’s level range.

## PREPARING THE ADVENTURE

Before you start play, consider the following:

- Read through the adventure, taking notes of anything you’d like to highlight or remind yourself of while running the adventure, such as a way you’d like to portray an NPC or a tactic you’d like to use in a combat. Familiar yourself with the adventure’s appendices and handouts.
- Gather any resources you’d like to use to aid you in running this adventure—such as notecards, a DM screen, miniatures, and battlemaps.
- Ask the players to provide you with relevant character information, such as name, race, class, and level; passive Wisdom (Perception), and anything specified as notable by the adventure (such as backgrounds, traits, flaws, etc.)

Players can play an adventure they previously played as a Player or Dungeon Master, but may only play it once with a given character. Ensure each player has their character’s adventure logsheet (if not, get one from the organizer). The players fill out the adventure name, session number, date, and your name and DCI number. In addition, the player also fills in the starting values for advancement and treasure checkpoints, downtime days, and renown. These values are updated at the conclusion of the session.

Each player is responsible for maintaining an accurate logsheet. If you have time, you can do a quick scan of a player’s character sheet to ensure that nothing looks out of order. If you see magic items of very high rarities or strange arrays of ability scores, you can ask players to provide documentation for the irregularities. If they cannot, feel free to restrict item use or ask them to use a standard ability score array.

Point players to the D&D Adventurers League Players Guide for reference. If players wish to spend downtime days and it’s the beginning of an adventure or episode, they can declare their activity and spend the days now, or they can do so at the end of the adventure or episode. Players should select their characters’ spells and other daily options prior to the start of the adventure, unless the adventure specifies otherwise. Feel free to reread the adventure description to help give players hints about what they might face.

## ADJUSTING THIS ADVENTURE

When combat is a possibility, the adventure will provide a sidebar that helps you to determine the best mix/number of opponents to provide them with to create an appropriate challenge. While you’re not bound to these adjustments; they’re here for your convenience and consideration.

To determine whether you should consider adjusting the adventure, add up the total levels of all the characters and divide the result by the number of characters (rounding .5 or greater up; .4 or less down). This is the group’s average party level (APL). To approximate the **party strength** for the adventure, consult the table below.

### DETERMINING PARTY STRENGTH

Party Composition	Strength
3-4 characters, APL less than	Very weak
3-4 characters, APL equivalent	Weak
3-4 characters, APL greater than	Average
5 characters, APL less than	Weak
5 characters, APL equivalent	Average
5 characters, APL greater than	Strong
6-7 characters, APL less than	Average
6-7 characters, APL equivalent	Strong
6-7 characters, APL greater than	Very strong