

THE HAUNTED CITY

In this adventure, the Player Characters pursue the deadly Eliza Farrow and attempt to halt her evil plans. This takes the PCs from an isolated farmstead and the site of Farrow's latest atrocity to the ill-omened city of Nerekhall, where they must contend with protective locals and the continuing threat of evil magic experiments conducted decades or even centuries ago. The heroes pursue Farrow into the ancient catacombs beneath the city, where they confront Farrow and witness firsthand the legacy of Nerekhall's past!

The adventure begins with the PCs coming across a farmhouse, its inhabitants dead and brigands picking through their belongings. The PCs soon learn that the brigands did not murder the farmers, with evidence pointing to a monstrous, blood-draining creature. Traveling on, the PCs come to the Hollow-Way Inn along the road to Nerekhall. Here, they learn of Lady Eliza Farrow's presence and some of the dark whispers that follow her everywhere.

Armed with the knowledge that Farrow is responsible for the murders at the farm—and some inkling of her darker designs—the PCs continue to Nerekhall. In that ancient and shadowed city, the PCs investigate Farrow's activities and seek to discover her current location—she seems to have vanished from the city's streets. Their investigation finally takes them below those streets, through Nerekhall's perilous sewers and into the even more dangerous catacombs beneath. These ancient catacombs are home to repositories of forgotten lore, derelict magical laboratories, and the remnants of past experiments—some of which might be quite hungry.

Nerekhall's catacombs also serve as a hiding place for mages who continue to dabble in the dark arts that almost destroyed the city many years ago, and one such practitioner is the goal of Eliza Farrow's journey. Should the PCs successfully navigate the perils of the catacombs, they confront Farrow and her new ally, a necromancer with deadly minions of his own.

ACT I: BLOOD ON THE FIELDS

In this first act, the PCs come across a scene of devastation—an isolated farmstead, its inhabitants killed in cold blood. Brigands pick over the scene for valuables, but the PCs soon learn that these bandits were not the killers. The PCs find themselves following the trail of an unnatural killer with great resources, and eventually learn the monster's identity—Lady Eliza Farrow. With clues to Lady Farrow's nefarious intentions, the PCs have little choice but to follow her to the ill-omened Free City of Nerekhall.

To begin the first encounter, read aloud or paraphrase the following:

You've been on the road less than an hour this morning when an isolated farmstead comes into view up ahead. As you draw closer, it becomes clear that all is not well. Goats wander freely, their pen left open, and rough men in shabby armor come and go from the farmhouse itself, piling belongings in a waiting cart.

A RED DAWN

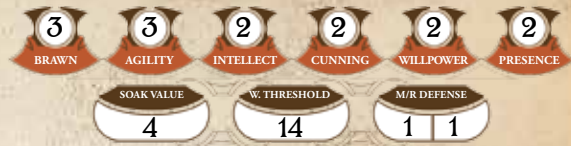
The adventure begins with the PCs traveling over one of northwestern Terrineth's dirt roads. The destination depends on the PCs and their current goals, but should be nearby or in the direction of Nerekhall (relative to the PCs' starting location). Greyhaven is a good possibility if the group includes any mages or aspiring Runemasters. The first encounter could also be placed anywhere in the vicinity of Tamalir if this is the PCs' current location.

A group of brigands are in the process of picking over the farmhouse for valuables, but they are not responsible for the destruction. The brigands came across the scene shortly after dawn and saw it as a convenient opportunity to reap the rewards for someone else's work. The farmers were not wealthy, but what valuables they did possess were left behind, along with plenty of useful goods and foodstuffs. Once the PCs come closer, they see several corpses on the ground near the farmhouse, already thoroughly looted.

The looters are distracted, and so don't immediately notice the PCs at a distance. Although they are happy with their easy pickings, the brigands are used to threatening and even fighting for their loot. If the PCs approach directly, the brigands might become protective of their find, assuming the PCs are keen to loot as well. However, if any of the PCs wear vestments of Kellos, the armor of a baronial knight, or other sights of prestige or authority, the brigands are likely to try to conceal their doings, but quickly resort to violence when that fails. However, they aren't willing to die for these somewhat meagre spoils, and quickly surrender or flee if the fight turns against them.

BRIGAND LEADER (RIVAL)

The most charismatic or ruthless brigands often naturally assume a leadership role. Although no more eager to die than any other bandit, some fear losing face more than an enemy's blade.



Skills: Cool 2, Leadership 1, Ranged 2, Melee (Light) 2.

Talents: None.

Abilities: None.

Equipment: Axe (Melee [Light]; Damage 6; Critical 3; Range [Engaged]; Vicious 1), bow (Ranged; Damage 7; Critical 3; Range [Medium]; Unwieldy 2), shield (Melee [Light]; Damage 3; Critical 6; Range [Engaged]; Defensive 1, Deflection 1, Inaccurate 2, Knockdown), padded armor (+1 soak).

BRIGAND (MINION)

Most brigands are common folk driven to banditry through desperation.



Soak Value 3 Wound Threshold 5 M/R Defense 0/0

Skills (group only): Cool, Melee (Light), Ranged.

Talents: None.

Abilities: None.

Equipment: Mace (Melee [Light]; Damage 6; Critical 4; Range [Engaged]).

EXAMINING THE SCENE

After the PCs defeat, drive off, or bargain with the brigands, they probably want to take some time to examine the crime scene. Even if the PCs didn't give the brigands a chance to plead their innocence, even a cursory inspection of the bodies indicates they were the victims of something else entirely.

Two of the three corpses are extremely pale, with small ragged wounds in their throats. The last corpse—a large and physically imposing farmhand—has a broken neck but no other wounds. A successful **Hard** (◆◆◆) **Medicine check** reveals the victims died shortly after midnight, and that the two with throat wounds have been almost entirely drained of blood.

ENCOUNTER ESSENTIALS

KeeP the following in mind when running this encounter, especially if it leads to combat.

- There is one brigand leader.
- There is also one minion group for each PC. Each group consists of two brigands.
- The brigands are out for loot. They aren't fighting for a cause and don't want to die for their goals, or for their boss.
- The brigands don't necessarily want to fight, they just want the loot they found on the farm, and possibly any other loot they can easily get from the PCs.
- The brigands can be intimidated into backing down. This requires an **Average** (◆◆) **Coercion check** opposed by the brigand leader's Leadership. Of course, if any brigands have died, add ■ or more to the check.
- The brigands try to flee if their leader is defeated or more than half of them are defeated.

Nothing of value was taken from the farm prior to the brigands' arrival (not that the farmers had much in the way of valuables). If any of the brigands escaped, it is much more difficult to determine if anything was stolen, or when.

Fresh furrows in the dirt, like the wheel tracks of a large wagon or a carriage, lead away from the farmhouse, down the road in a Northerly direction (the same direction the PCs are likely already going), toward Nerekhall. Characters can discover these tracks with a success on an **Easy (◆) Perception or Survival check**. A character who generates **▲ ▲** on the check also finds footprints heading from the murder scene to the road; a faint set of slim prints alongside those left by heavy boots indicates someone wearing fine garments and stepping with extraordinarily light pressure.

THE HOLLOW-WAY INN

Whether the PCs set out to follow the tracks or proceed on their original course, before nightfall, they arrive at the Hollow-Way Inn, along the road to Nerekhall. Even if the PCs decided to ignore the brigands and farmhouse entirely, they come upon the inn close to nightfall, making it the logical place to rest for the night, or at least catch the latest rumors.

The two-story, half-timbered inn is old, but reasonably well maintained, and warm firelight shines from within. The stable houses a number of horses or other riding beasts equal to the number of PCs. Nearby, a coachman harnesses a pair of strong, white steeds to a decorative and sturdy coach of red wood, with thick dark curtains drawn over the windows—clearly the property of a wealthy individual, likely a noble. Oddly, it appears the coach is preparing for departure, though it is already dusk. Any character who spotted the tracks at the farmhouse can easily notice identical tracks veering from the road into the courtyard, clearly left by the coach.

When the PCs enter the inn, they find several guests occupying the common area. A surly, stringy-haired innkeeper—Gartulf—offers assistance if approached, but otherwise wipes glasses (which never seem to get clean) and ignores the PCs.

INN GUESTS AND STAFF

There are a number of individuals currently at the inn, whom the PCs might interact with. These NPCs don't have adversary profiles, since they aren't likely to feature in combat or other structured encounters. If a PC uses a social skill that requires a check, set the difficulty based on the situation.

ENCOUNTER GOALS

Before they leave the inn, the PCs should know the following:

- Lady Eliza Farrow probably killed the farmers.
- She is on her way to Nerekhall.
- Nerekhall has a history of darkest magic that threatened all of Terrinoth.
- Lady Farrow's goals can't be good for anyone!

Based on this information, the PCs should be motivated to pursue Eliza Farrow to Nerekhall.

Gartulf: The innkeeper, an aging widower with unkempt grey hair and a perpetual scowl. He doesn't say much, unless it's to complain about his employees.

Rudderick: Rudderick is the young stablehand. He's only worked at the inn for a few months. He is currently nowhere to be seen, which Gartulf decries as "typical."

Esmā: A young woman who works at the inn, assisting Gartulf with everything from cleaning, to cooking, to serving food and drink. She's perpetually cheery, in what seems to be an attempt to compensate for her employer's dour demeanor. Esmā's worried about Rudderick; she says it's not like him to disappear like this and shirk his responsibilities, despite what Gartulf says.

Gharros: A big, muscled, intimidating orc who wears a surprisingly fashionable gambeson. He spends most of his time at the inn seated by the window, alternatively gazing pensively through the glass and scribbling furiously. Gharros is a gentle, soft-spoken poet from Tamalir, traveling in search of inspiration.

Loujis and Lerha: Lerha and Loujis are wanderer gnomes, heading nowhere in particular. The twins had been traveling with a group of kin, but became separated during a goblin attack. Ever cheerful, Loujis and Lerha "just know" that their friends and family are alright, and they aren't in any particular hurry to rejoin them. The twins greatly enjoy pranks of all kinds.

Khertra Deepvein: A dwarf from the city of Forge, Khertra is on her way to Greyhaven to negotiate a trade deal for her family to supply arms and armor to the city

guard. The boisterous Khertra dedicates herself to the task at hand, but is never too busy for a drink and a song.

Alvahn: A handsome city elf—plain to see from his modern attire and casual mannerisms—who makes his living as an actor. He’s on his way to Nerekhall, where he’s heard the Orphean Theatre is always in need of new players. He is also something of an inveterate gambler, and happy to play a round with anyone who’s willing.

A SPECIAL GUEST

The coach outside belongs to Lady Eliza Farrow, a noblewoman residing at the inn. The innkeeper and other guests are happy to remark on this, as a visiting noble is an exciting event. As one would expect, Lady Farrow has kept to herself during her brief stay, not deigning to interact with the common folk. There is little the innkeeper can tell the PCs, except that Lady Farrow arrived with her entourage shortly before dawn and has not been seen since.

Since Farrow arrived while they were asleep, most other guests only know of her arrival because it’s the primary topic of conversation; the PCs are certain to hear about her during their time at the inn. Not only is any visitation by a noble big news, but some of the guests and staff are quick to swap certain dark rumors about Farrow’s notorious deeds.

The PCs can pick up the following rumors and news by talking with the staff and guests at the inn. You can simply provide the rumors to any PC who chats with NPCs, or require an **Easy (◆) Charm check**, with the PC receiving one rumor for each ✨. If the PC succeeds with ▲ ▲ or more, they receive only true rumors.

- Rudderick, the stablehand, hasn’t been seen all day. Gartulf is none too happy about it.
- When Lady Farrow arrived at the inn, she had what looked to be bloodstains on her dress. Her guards were quite adamant that she was fine.
- Eliza Farrow is the last surviving member of the Cathori bloodline. Her sister died under mysterious circumstances. (True.)
- Lord Merick Farrow was heartbroken after the death of his brother, Alric, and disappeared from public life after his marriage to Eliza Cathori following a brief betrothal period. (True.)
- The Ironbound of Nerekhall are always watching for practitioners of forbidden magic, who come to the city in search of forgotten knowledge more often than the magistrates admit. (True.)

- Lady Farrow bathes once each month in the blood of a young maid, to preserve her youth and beauty. (False, technically.)
- Eliza Farrow traveled to Terrinoth from a faraway place. (False.)
- The magistrates and nobles of Nerekhall are all members of secret societies. (False. Only some of them are.)
- Lady Farrow has had several husbands die under suspicious circumstances. (False.)

In addition to these rumors, a character who succeeds on an **Easy (◆) Knowledge (Geography) or Knowledge (Lore) check** knows additional information about the history of Nerekhall. For many years, Nerekhall was something of a haven for practitioners of dark and forbidden magic. This came to light when a particularly powerful mage, Gargan Mirklace, opened a doorway into a realm beyond Mennara, a borderland of the Ynfarnael itself. The unnatural monstrosities that spilled forth almost completely destroyed Nerekhall, and could have done untold damage to Terrinoth if not for some fast action. Despite some reservations by members of the Council of Thirteen, Nerekhall was permitted to rebuild. The magistrates of Nerekhall—and the Council—have watched the city closely in the decades since for signs of further corruption.

DARK DESIGNS

In fact, Eliza Farrow is a vampire, and the perpetrator of the heinous crimes at the nearby farmhouse. She stopped at the inn for the day to avoid the sunlight before continuing on her trip to the Free City of Nerekhall. There, she plans to make contact with a necromancer named Mavaris Skain, a disciple of the powerful dark mage Lord Vorakesh.

Lady Farrow’s entourage are aware, or at least suspicious, of her true nature, but are too loyal, afraid, or inured to the horror to do anything about it—even if they weren’t compelled by her powerful magic and vampiric abilities.

Most PCs should be eager to bring Farrow to justice for the murders, but there are clues that she is working toward much more dangerous ends.

EAVESDROPPERS

The gnomes Lerha and Loujis—but especially Lerha—are uncharacteristically quiet on the night of the PCs’ arrival, as anyone who’s shared the inn with them for the last few days can attest. The gnomes had planned to play

a prank on Lady Farrow, since stuffy nobles are some of their favorite targets. However, as the gnomes moved into position to prepare their prank (an impossibly convoluted affair involving a wine bottle filled with water, a horseshoe, false mustaches, and a mouse), they overheard Lady Farrow conversing in her room. This was surprising, since they had seen her enter the room alone.

Although frightened by the entire incident, Lerha is willing to tell the PCs what happened. If she does, read aloud or paraphrase the following:

"I heard that fancy noblewoman, but another voice too, a man's," explains Lerha, fidgeting nervously. "It was raspy and low, with a weird sound to it, like crackling flames. There was an eerie, flickering green light coming under the door and through the keyhole, too. It was creepy! I was too scared to stick around for long—even if I did know Loujis was waiting down below with the mouse all ready to go."—At this, she looks sadly to her brother, who gives a reassuring smile—"But I heard some of what they said; not very much, but some. It sounded like they were arranging a meeting, or a gathering. She said something about Nerekhall, and he definitely said something about a 'bargain.' Yeah, that's it, a bargain, involving his 'master.' And something about a sacrifice."

Lerha falls silent, and there's a small squeaking sound, before a mouse leaps out of her pack and scampers across the floor.

The conversation Lerha heard was between Eliza Farrow and the necromancer Mavaris Skain, awaiting her arrival in Nerekhall. Despite the distance remaining, Farrow was able to converse with the necromancer by means of an enchanted basin in her possession, which reveals its magic properties only when filled with fresh blood. Based on Lerha's story, it should be clear that Farrow is up to no good, and that magic is involved. Although the PCs won't know the details at this point, additional asking around confirms that Farrow was alone in her room at the time.

DEPARTURE

Just after nightfall, Eliza Farrow, accompanied by her vacant-eyed lady-in-waiting and two somber guards, descends the stairs from the inn's upper level and makes her way to the waiting coach. This should happen very soon after the PCs arrive, or even as they enter the inn. In any case, they likely haven't yet had a chance to even

catch the rumors about Farrow.

If the PCs are present, you can read aloud or paraphrase the following:

The noblewoman is strikingly elegant, with golden hair and ivory skin. She moves with a grace that puts most elves to shame; the overall effect is heightened by the way her white dress drags lightly on the floorboards as she glides past. Her dress is as unblemished as her skin, save for a small red drop on the collar. But the most remarkable thing is her eyes, subtly tinted red and blazing with life.

Two imposing guards escort the lady, hands on the hilts of their swords. They glare at the surrounding inn patrons in silent warning, even as the noblewoman glances your direction, the merest ghost of a smirk on her red lips.

Eliza Farrow has no interest in stopping to talk with anyone, including the PCs. If any nobles are among the group, she politely declines to converse; otherwise, she simply ignores them. Farrow's bodyguards are quick to intercept anyone who appears to pose a threat to their lady. Of course, Farrow is more than capable of defending herself and dealing with any threats, but she does try to keep up appearances when in view of others.

In any case, Farrow's primary goal is to continue her journey to Nerekhall. If the PCs do force a confrontation at this time, she fights only as necessary, preferring to let her two guards handle it while she escapes. She has a strict timetable to keep, and would prefer to reach Nerekhall well before dawn.

ROOM SERVICE?

If the PCs rent rooms, at least one of them ends up in the room used by Farrow. With a successful **Average** (◆ ◆) **Vigilance check**, a character entering the room notices scuff marks on the floorboards, as if something was dragged under the bed. Sure enough, there's a fresh human corpse under the bed. It's the stablehand, Rudderick, his throat torn open and body largely drained of blood (which Farrow used to activate her enchanted basin). Any PC who examines the room carefully or looks under the bed, of course, finds the body automatically, as well as small drops of blood on the floor and desk.

If the PCs don't discover the corpse, Gartulf does when he goes to tidy up the room (as much as he does, anyway). He announces his discovery with a loud scream.

CHARACTER MOTIVATIONS AND THE ADVENTURE

This adventure makes certain assumptions about the PCs; primarily, that they are not content to sit by while a murderous and unnatural villain pursues her wicked plans. However, to provide further incentive for the PCs to pursue and stop Eliza Farrow, you might look for additional ways to tie this goal to the PCs' Motivations and goals. Some of these are going to be pretty obvious—a PC who desires justice isn't going to let a murderer get away, while one dedicated to vengeance against the undead might grow suspicious about Farrow's true nature. By working with the players, you might find that other Motivations are relevant—if a PC is afraid of failure, can they stand to let dark events unfold without doing something about it? Even a character motivated by greed might see an opportunity in the noblewoman, one way or another.

ELIZA FARROW (NEMESIS)

The impossibly beautiful Eliza Farrow has been known to those of noble circles for far longer than her youthful complexion would indicate. Despite various dark rumors surrounding her life, few realize that Eliza Farrow truly is a vampire, a monstrous undead creature that feeds on the blood of living humans and the other intelligent races. Farrow is charming, calm, and collected, but her vicious side can reveal itself in a moment.

4	4	4	4	4	5
BRAWN	AGILITY	INTELLECT	CUNNING	WILLPOWER	PRESENCE
SOAK VALUE	W. THRESHOLD	S. THRESHOLD	M/R DEFENSE		
6	18	20	1 1		

Skills: Arcana 3, Brawl 2, Charm 3, Cool 3, Discipline 3, Knowledge (Forbidden) 4, Negotiation 3, Ranged 3, Riding 2, Vigilance 2.

Talents: Adversary 2 (Upgrade the difficulty of combat checks targeting this character twice.), Dark Insight (use Knowledge [Forbidden] to determine spell effects).

Abilities: Blood Call (When Eliza Farrow damages a target using her fangs or a magic attack, she heals wounds equal to the wounds inflicted).

Blood Mist (If Eliza Farrow suffers damage in excess of her Wound Threshold, she is not incapacitated, but takes the form of a cloud of blood mist. While in this form, she can fly [see page 100 of the **GENESYS** Core Rulebook] and does not suffer damage from physical attacks. If she suffers additional damage from a magical attack, she becomes incapacitated as normal and resumes corporeal form).

Dominate (May use the Dominate action once per encounter, making an **opposed Charm vs. Discipline check** targeting one character in short range; if successful, the target is immobilized for 1 round per uncanceled ✨, and Eliza may spend ☹ to stagger the target for 1 round).

Sunlight Sensitivity (While exposed to sunlight, Eliza Farrow reduces all her characteristics by 2 and halves her Wound Threshold and Strain Threshold.)

Undead (does not need to breathe, eat, or drink [except blood], and can survive underwater; immune to poisons and toxins)

Vampiric Magic (Eliza Farrow reduces the difficulty of all magic skill checks one step).

Spells: Eliza Farrow can choose any magic action allowed for the Arcana skill, and may select additional spell effects, as normal. Her favored spells are: Blood Funnel (Choose one target at short range for the attack and make a **Hard [◆◆◆] Arcana check**; if the magic combat check succeeds, the target suffers 4 damage + 1 damager per uncanceled ✨, with Critical Rating 2 and the Blast 4 and Vicious 4 qualities), Curse of the Night (Choose one target within short range and make a **Hard [◆◆◆] Arcana check**; if the check succeeds, the target decreases the ability of any skill checks they make by one and reduce their strain and wound thresholds by 4 until the end of Eliza Farrow's next turn; she may maintain these effects by performing the Concentrate maneuver).

Equipment: Fangs (Brawl; Damage 6; Critical 2; Range [Engaged]; Ensnare 1, Vicious 2).

FARROW'S GUARD (RIVAL)



Skills: Cool 2, Discipline 1, Ranged 2, Riding 1, Melee (Light) 2, Vigilance 1.

Talents: Quick Draw (Once per round, may draw or stow weapon as an incidental.)

Abilities: Grapple (May take the Grapple incidental; until the start of the guard's next turn, enemies must spend two maneuvers to disengage.)

Stay Back! (When a character within short range attempts to move past the guard, the guard may, as an out-of-turn incidental, spend a Story Point from the GM pool and knock the character prone.)

Equipment: Sword (Melee [Light]; Damage 6; Critical 2; Range [Engaged]; Defensive 1), crossbow (Ranged; Damage 7; Critical 2; Range [Medium]; Pierce 2, Prepare 1), shield (Melee [Light]; Damage 3; Critical 6; Range [Engaged]; Defensive 1, Deflection 1, Inaccurate 2, Knockdown), leather armor (+1 soak).

IN DEATH'S WAKE

After finding Rudderick's corpse, it should be clear to the PCs that Eliza Farrow is a murderer, responsible for the deaths of both the farmers and the stablehand. As if that weren't enough, Nerekhall's dark past and Farrow's urgency to reach the city do not bode well.

If the PCs decide to go after Eliza Farrow when her coach leaves or immediately after, see the Pursuit encounter on the next page. Otherwise, the direction of her departure and the brief questions her party asked about the road to Nerekhall and recent events confirm that it is her destination. The PCs might plan to catch up to her in Nerekhall, and it's reasonable to resume their journey after a night's rest.

HARRIED BY HOUNDS (OPTIONAL ENCOUNTER)

If the PCs do anything to arouse Lady Farrow's suspicions, or if they follow her straight away, the noble summons a pack of barghests to deal with them. If the PCs chase after Farrow's coach, the barghests take part in the chase, described under the Pursuit encounter. Otherwise, the barghests prowl the fields and woods

surrounding the inn, and attack the PCs or anyone else who ventures forth from the inn during the night.

Here are some important points for the encounter:

- The number of barghests equals the number of PCs.
- Barghests do not feel fear, so it's unlikely they will retreat.
- Barghests are horrifying! Unless the PCs have some considerable experience dealing with the undead, they must make a **Hard** (◆◆◆) **Discipline check** when the barghests attack. A PC who fails is disoriented until the end of the encounter.

BARGHEST (RIVAL)

Barghests are large, savage, undead canines. Peasants say that once a barghest has the scent of its quarry, it never stops hunting them. This is all the more horrifying for the fact that these undead beasts are utterly indefatigable. Barghests resemble large, dark-furred wolves or dogs, but their faces are usually almost entirely skeletal, with glowing red lights in their empty eye sockets. Most barghests feature additional wounds or signs of decay, with large portions of fur, skin, and flesh missing, revealing pale bone. Yet, barghests never bleed. Once a barghest has the taste for a victim, it is relentless in its attack, not stopping until it or its prey are dead.



Skills: Athletics 2, Brawl 2, Perception 3, Resilience 3, Vigilance 2.

Talents: Swift (A Barghest does not spend additional maneuvers to move through difficult terrain.)

Abilities: Maul (A Barghest adds to Brawl checks against prone or immobilized targets).

Pounce (Add Knockdown quality to the first attack a Barghest makes during the same turn after using a maneuver to engage the target).

Undead (does not need to breathe, eat, or drink, and can survive underwater; immune to poisons and toxins).

Equipment: Claws and fangs (Brawl; Damage 6; Critical 3; Range [Engaged]; Vicious 1).

PURSUIT (OPTIONAL ENCOUNTER)

Based on what they have seen and learned so far, the PCs might decide to try and stop Eliza Farrow immediately. And they're right, she should be stopped before she can do any more evil! However, the adventure works best if Farrow continues on to Nerekhall. It can still work if the PCs interrupt her plans or even defeat her, as long as they receive some clues in the process hinting at her plan—to meet with a dangerous necromancer and strike a nefarious bargain—but the GM will have to modify some events during the latter parts of the adventure. Fortunately for you, the GM, stopping Farrow is no easy task for the PCs, but is likely to lead to an exciting chase scene!

If the PCs don't have riding animals of their own, they might be tempted to use the horses residing in the inn's stable. This shouldn't pose much of a challenge, especially with no stablehand to object. However, horse theft is considered a serious crime throughout Terrinoth, and the owners of the steeds as well as the inn's remaining staff are certain to spread word of the deed.

Depending on how quickly the PCs mount up, the encounter should begin with the coach at medium or long range. Any further than that, and there's just no hope of the PCs catching up. Here are some important things to consider during the chase:

- The coachman concentrates on escaping, which means he uses two maneuvers each turn to move

the coach away from the PCs.

- Farrow's coach escapes if it gets to a distance of extreme range from the PCs.
- The coachman and one of Farrow's guards sit in the driver's box. The rest of Farrow's party is inside the coach, although the additional guard might climb out onto the coach to fight or repel boarders.
- The barghests join the encounter in the second round, attempting to drag the PCs from their mounts, kill their mounts, or otherwise stop them in their tracks.
- Eliza Farrow can pull back the curtains in order to target the PCs with spells from within the coach.

COACHMAN (RIVAL)



Skills: Brawl 1, Ranged 1, Riding 2, Vigilance 2

Talents: None.

Abilities: None.

Equipment: Dagger (Melee [Light] Damage 3; Critical 3; Range [Engaged]; Accurate 1), padded armor (+1 soak).

ACT II: SHADOWED CITY

In the second act of the adventure, the PCs arrive at Nerekhall, and are free to explore the city. This part of the adventure is open-ended, as the PCs investigate Eliza Farrow's doings in the city at their own discretion. However, whether they know it or not, the PCs are racing against Eliza Farrow, whose plans threaten the entire region, and perhaps all of Terrinoth.

THE FREE CITY OF NEREKHALL

Nerekhall is as impressive as any of the Free Cities, but even those who do not know of its dark past sometimes feel a sense of oppressive foreboding, of unknown dread, when they travel the city. This feeling is heaviest in the dark of night, in the dim alleys away from the street

lamps, and beneath the creaking timbers of Nerekhall's oldest buildings.

Nerekhall is a city of thousands, although it is smaller than some other Free Cities, perhaps due in part to its sinister past. Most citizens prefer not to discuss or even acknowledge the city's darker history, but the presence of the Ironbound is a constant reminder of those profane events. When the mage Gargan Mirklace opened a gateway to the Black Realm, he unleashed legions of demonic terrors on the city. Only by the desperate efforts of the other Free Cities and the Daqan Baronies was the crisis contained and the rest of Terrinoth spared.

Some of Nerekhall's buildings are centuries old, but many more have been rebuilt in the decades following the city's near-destruction. Regardless, most of Nerekhall's streets are bordered by tall, looming structures, with the occasional narrow alley.

In addition to its impressive and somewhat imposing architecture, visitors to Nerekhall cannot help but notice the Ironbound, magically animated constructs that guard against the dark magic that once almost doomed it. In denouncing rumors of evil magic festering in the city's recesses, its leaders must only point to the ever-present and ever-vigilant ironbound.

The residents of Nerekhall come from all walks of life, though perhaps are not so varied as in Tamalir. Consequently, they hold a wide variety of attitudes. Still, the pall of Nerekhall's past hangs over much of the city, and touches most residents in one way or another.

IMPORTANT LOCATIONS

The following are some of the most notable places in Nerekhall, or those which the PCs are most likely to visit during the adventure.

MARKETPLACE

Nerekhall's marketplace is only a shadow of the like found in Tamalir and other trading hubs, but it nonetheless draws a variety of merchants offering diverse goods. Some say that enchanted objects, forbidden texts, and other curiosities dredged from Nerekhall's catacombs are available to buyers who ask the right questions; of course, merchants dealing in such contraband are understandably wary, lest they draw the attentions of the Ironbound.

TOWN SQUARE

Nerekhall's town square is the center of life in the city, where townsfolk can hear proclamations, gather for festivities, and witness public executions. This last event is always a big draw, as Nerekhall's magistrates make a great show of executing any practitioner of dark magic, both to deter other would-be dabblers and to uphold the public image that Nerekhall has moved past its dark history.

THE ACADEMY

The Academy is Nerekhall's center of learning. A far cry from the University of Greyhaven, the Academy instructs in mundane matters. While students learn a number of subjects that touch on the topic of magic—from history, to philosophy, to theology and other natural sciences—they receive no instruction in the mystical arts themselves. The Academy is the destination for the youth of the nobility without the aptitude for study in Greyhaven, and even draws the occasional scholar from

outside the city. Rumors suggest that the Academy provides a convenient cover story for those who would come to Nerekhall in search of the forbidden, but these are just rumors.

THE IRON TOWER

The imposing edifice of the Iron Tower rises above the city's High Quarter. Reinforced with iron walls and inscribed with warding runes, the tower is designed to withstand attacks both mundane and magical. The responsibility for guarding against corruption in the city lies foremost with the wizards of the tower, some of whom also hold the position of city magistrate. Among other defenses, the artificers are the caretakers and creators of the Ironbound.

MOONSHADE INN

The Moonshade Inn is a high-priced establishment that caters to visiting nobles and merchants. Wealthy residents of the city also find reason to seek entertainment at the inn, which has the finest collection of wines and spirits in the city.

IRONBRICK INN

The Ironbrick Inn, though of good quality, provides an affordable alternative to travelers unable or unwilling to pay the high costs of the Moonshade. Accommodations at the Ironbrick are simple but functional, and the inn provides for most any needs of a weary traveler.

WELCOME TO NEREKHALL

The PCs may arrive at Nerekhall under a variety of conditions, depending on whether they pursue Lady Farrow throughout the night or rest before traveling by day. If the PCs travel by foot, they do not arrive at Nerekhall until later in the second day, giving Eliza Farrow a significant head start. A mounted party can easily reach the city in a day's (or night's) ride.

As befits a Free City, Nerekhall makes an impressive sight for approaching travelers. Its stone walls rise almost 20 feet high. If the PCs arrive during the day, only one of the heavy iron gates is open—and only partially, as if ready to slam shut at the slightest need. Curiously, it almost looks as if the gates are designed to be sealed from the outside.

THE IRONBOUND

The purpose of the constructs known as Ironbound is to defend Nerekhall against dark magic and eliminate the threat posed by its practitioners. To these ends, they are effective at both detecting and defending against magic. It's likely the PCs will merely observe the Ironbound during their time in Nerekhall, but they could also attract attention from these metal guardians. Although the use of magic isn't illegal in Nerekhall, characters who use it in the proximity of an Ironbound are likely to attract its attention. If the character uses a sanctioned form of magic in a way that does not threaten the stability of the city, they aren't likely to receive more than a brief questioning from the Ironbound or other authorities. Flashy magic that threatens to panic the citizens, and any use of dark magic (such as by a character with the Dark Insight or Blood Sacrifice talents) invites much harsher treatment from the Ironbound and the city's authorities.

Guards in polished armor and holding spears stand aside the gates. Unless the PCs give the guards reason to be suspicious by their behavior or appearance, they can pass without much difficulty—during the day, that is. Between sunset and sunrise, the gates are kept sealed and barred, with guards stationed atop the parapet to watch for threats or the occasional traveler. However, the gates are seldom opened to admit visitors after nightfall, and then only for individuals of import. Of course, this means that Eliza Farrow had the gates opened to admit her party, as befits a noble. The guards on duty when the PCs arrive may not have witnessed her arrival personally, but word gets around in the barracks. If a PC asks the right questions and succeeds on an **Average** (◆◆) **Charm check**, the guards mention that a noblewoman and her party arrived only a few hours before dawn—a quite unusual time for such personages to be traveling.

CITY GUARD (RIVAL)

Nerekhall's City Watch maintains strict discipline, equal to that of any Free City. Each guard knows of Nerekhall's dark past, and that they must be ready to guard against the danger within as readily as that without.



Soak Value 5 **Wound Threshold** 13 **M/R Defense** 1/1

Skills: Discipline 1, Melee (Light) 2, Perception 1, Vigilance 1.

Talents: None.

Abilities: None.

Equipment: Militia spear (Melee [Light]; Damage 5; Critical 4; Range [Engaged]; Accurate 1), shield (Melee [Light]; Damage 3; Critical 6; Range [Engaged]; Defensive 1, Deflection 1, Inaccurate 2, Knockdown), leather armor (+1 soak).

IRONBOUND (RIVAL)

The magically animated constructs called Ironbound are a pretty common sight in Nerekhall, standing still as statues at street corners or sometimes even patrolling the city. Ironbound can detect the presence of magical energies, and can usually distinguish the forbidden magic that is their charge. Still, Ironbound tend to err on the side of arrest where unfamiliar magic and unfamiliar practitioners are concerned.



Soak Value 6 **Wound Threshold** 15 **M/R Defense** 3/2

Skills: Discipline 3, Melee (Heavy) 3, Melee (Light) 3, Resilience 3, Vigilance 3.

Talents: None.

Abilities: Graven wards (Increase the difficulty of all spells that target an ironbound twice.), Strength of Iron (An ironbound can wield a Melee [Heavy] weapon in one hand.), Watchful (Ironbound add to Perception and Vigilance checks to detect the use or effects of Magic skills).

Equipment: Halberd (Melee [Heavy]; Damage 7; Critical 3; Range [Engaged]; Defensive 1, Pierce 3), large shield (Melee [Light]; Damage 5; Critical 5; Range [Engaged]; Defensive 2, Deflection 2, Inaccurate 2, Knockdown).

IN THE SHADOWED CITY

Once the PCs enter the city, they can begin their investigation of Eliza Farrow's whereabouts and plans. The arrival of a noble in a city of this size isn't nearly so remarkable as at a small roadside inn, so the PCs have to make a greater effort to find word of Farrow's activities. They might do so by asking around among persons on the street, visiting the better inns, or even talking to the authorities.

You should let the PCs take the lead during this part of the adventure, resolving their activities based on the information provided earlier about the city. The following encounters cover some of the more likely events depending on how the PCs go about things, and should be easy to adapt to the situation. Any one of these encounters should get the PCs back on Farrow's trail.

INVESTIGATION GOALS

However the PCs choose to go about their business in Nerekhall, they should sooner or later discover the following clues, putting them back on Eliza's trail and leading below the city. If the PCs don't discover these clues through another means, simply inquiring among the locals about the latest news and rumors could ultimately reveal the information (alongside plenty of idle gossip and outright falsehoods).

- Eliza Farrow has not been seen in the city since her arrival at the Moonshade Inn. (It's almost like she disappeared.)
- Mavaris Skain, the middle son of a lesser noble family, recently left his position at the academy under unpleasant circumstances. Apparently, he made some rather cryptic threats to his former colleagues, and has not been seen for days now.
- Expansive ancient catacombs run beneath the city. Many people believe these were used in the past—and possibly to this day—by practitioners of forbidden magic, for all manner of vile experiments.

If the PCs try something wildly different, the important thing is to make sure they ultimately end up discovering the information outlined in the Investigation Goals sidebar.

SIGHTSEEING

When the PCs arrive in Nerekhall, their priority should be finding Eliza Farrow. To this end, they are likely to travel around the city asking questions and looking for signs of nefarious activity. The PCs might also decide to undertake additional activities in the city, such as buying supplies. Depending on what they've discovered so far, the PCs might feel that time is of the essence. If for no other reason, the PCs should realize that the longer they wait to investigate Farrow, the colder her trail grows.

Of course, the PCs won't see Eliza Farrow out and about the city during the day, or even the night, for that matter—unless they were hot on her trail the entire journey from the Hollow-Way Inn. Farrow descended into the sewers within a few hours of her arrival in Nerekhall. But while they won't come across Farrow herself in looking around the city, a walking tour of Nerekhall could lead to one of the other encounters or clues in this section.

THE DISGRACED SCHOLAR

Before the end of the adventure, the PCs will encounter Mavaris Skain. They might learn of him during their investigation, particularly if they ask among Nerekhall's educated class, or if a scholarly character takes the lead.

Publicly, Skain is a recently disgraced former member of the faculty at the Academy. What few know or suspect is that Skain is in fact a necromancer, sworn to the service of the dread Lord Vorakesh. Eliza Farrow has come to Nerekhall seeking an alliance with Skain and, through him, with Vorakesh.

Of course, the PCs won't learn all this until later, though they might have suspicions. There are some things the PCs can learn from hearing rumors or speaking with Skain's former colleagues at the academy:

- Mavaris Skain was very unpopular with both the faculty and students. This was largely due to his deathly pall and sunken eyes, spiteful attitude, and cold demeanor. Although usually withdrawn, he was known to sometimes erupt in animated cackling at the most inappropriate times, which didn't help his reputation.
- After his dismissal from the Academy, city magistrates searched his office. If they found anything of note, they didn't inform the faculty.
- Skain's area of expertise was medicine—more

specifically, anatomy. His work required regular use of cadavers.

- Skain was asked to leave the Academy because he had grown more and more neglectful of his duties (and because no one liked him around, anyway).
- As Skain left the Academy, he threatened his former colleagues, promising them “suffering and darkness” and claiming that one day, they would all serve Skain and his “master.”

Skain’s office has been thoroughly searched, and little of interest remains among the books, scrolls, maps, and other ordinary academic paraphernalia. The charts and atlases include several maps of Nerekhall at different points throughout its history. A PC who examines the maps and succeeds on an **Average (◆◆) Knowledge (Geography) check** notices that one moldering old unlabeled map depicts a tunnel system, parts of which line up with a more recent map showing Nerekhall’s sewers—this is clearly a map of Nerekhall’s rumored catacombs. This section of map includes a deep chamber that Skain has been using to conduct his forbidden magical experiments. Although his laboratory is not labeled as such, the map can help a reader to find their way to its vicinity.

THE PICKPOCKET

If the PCs ask around among Nerekhall’s criminal elements, or a Player Character inclined to such matters takes the lead in investigating, the PCs might learn of Danne Bulvert and his recent misfortune.

Danne Bulvert is a small-time thief who’s relatively well known among Nerekhall’s seedier elements. Word has gotten around that Bulvert had a strange experience recently, and he’s now laying lower than usual. According to some rumors, before his sudden change in behavior, Bulvert had his eye on a lucrative prospect—the purse of a noblewoman who recently arrived in town.

The PCs can find Bulvert drinking heavily in one of Nerekhall’s taverns, maybe even the Ironbrick Inn. During the day, the PCs might find him sleeping it off in an alley, but he’s quite terrified to be outside after sunset.

Bulvert had quite a shocking experience on a recent night (the evening following Eliza Farrow’s arrival, which may be one or more nights past, depending on when the PCs arrived in town and how long they have been investigating so far). He’s not keen to talk about it, especially with strangers, and he might even make a run for it if he suspects the PCs are in league with Eliza Farrow—and in his current paranoid state, simply asking

direct questions about Farrow might lead him to such a conclusion.

Bulvert also knows full well that the word of a petty thief is worthless against that of a noble, and doesn’t expect anyone to believe his story. If the PCs can convince him to trust them, and that they will believe him, he shares his experience. Due to his fearful condition, Charm and Deception checks targeting Bulvert add ■■, but Coercion checks add □.

When Bulvert is ready to talk, you can read the following aloud or paraphrase it, depending on the situation:

The thief rubs his chin nervously before speaking. “I thought that noble what just arrived, Lady Farrow, would make for some easy money. I didn’t intend no harm, mind you. I knew she might have guards or the sort, so I rounded up a few pals. We waited for her to leave. She was at the Moonshade, I heard, but she didn’t show herself ‘til after dark. I thought that was a stroke of luck at the time.”

He pauses and stares off, a pained look on his face. “She was alone when we made our move, so I didn’t expect any trouble. But she just smiled, like she was expecting us. Before I knew what happened, one of my mates cried out and fell to the ground, bleeding, and she was dragging the other along with her—he didn’t even seem to struggle. I didn’t step out when the others did. Not sure why, but something felt wrong. It’s the only reason I’m still alive—I know it.”

His story finished, Bulvert lifts the bottle in his trembling hand and takes a long swig.

SCENE OF THE CRIMES

Bulvert can answer additional questions as needed, and might even be convinced to take the PCs to the scene of the incident, though he is greatly fearful to do so. Although the body of Bulvert’s friend is long gone, close inspection of the street and a successful **Easy (◆) Perception or Survival check** reveals drying blood between the cobblestones, the condition of which lines up with the timeframe of Bulvert’s account. A character can spend ▲ on the check to discover scuff marks, as if boots were dragged along the street, leading to a nearby sewer grate. (See **Into the Sewers**, on page @@.)

DANNE BULVERT (RIVAL)

Skills: Cool 2, Coordination 2, Deception 2, Melee (Light) 2, Skulduggery 3, Stealth 3.

Talents: None.

Abilities: None.

Equipment: Dagger (Melee [Light]; Damage 3; Critical 3; Range [Engaged]; Accurate 1) blackjack (Melee [Light]; Damage 5; Critical 5; Range [Engaged]; Disorient 2, Stun Damage).

MOONSHADE INN

Upon arriving in Nerekhall, Lady Farrow rented rooms for herself and her servants at the Moonshade Inn. The Moonshade is Nerekhall's most respected and expensive inn, and default choice of nobles who, for whatever reason, do not stay at a relative or acquaintance's manor. The inn is clean and warm, and comfortably lit by lanterns. At night, its frosted windows seem to glow with a soft light.

A broad, high-roofed stable houses Eliza Farrow's two white steeds and her coach, as well as a few steeds belonging to other guests. The inn caters to a higher class of patron, and inside, merchants and nobles enjoy expensive wines and spirits and discuss matters of import (and salacious gossip).

Farrow's entourage remained at the inn while she descended into the sewers. This group includes her lady in waiting, coachman, and two guards, unless the PCs defeated or drove off any of these characters back at the Hollow-Way Inn. Lady Farrow has her own room. While it has been empty since her arrival, a guard remains outside the door at all hours. He is quite insistent that Lady Farrow is resting and should not be disturbed, under any means.

Farrow's lady in waiting and coachman seem alternatively dazed and fearful. Getting useful, cogent information out of them takes persistence, and the difficulty of social skill checks to do so is Average (◆◆). In addition, Farrow's guards do not look well upon anyone who questions the servants, and quickly move to end any conversation.

In Farrow's room, a small silver basin sits on a table, its reflective surface marred with dried red-brown stains.

If the basin is filled with blood, a swirling image of a gaunt, sinister male face appears in the liquid's surface. This is Mavaris Skain (see page 16), who grows incensed and vanishes when he realizes he is not speaking with Lady Farrow.

The room also holds a traveling lockbox, which can be opened with a **Hard** (◆◆◆) **Skulduggery** check. The chest contains jewelry and coins worth 300 silver. Of course, Farrow's guards, the inn's staff, and the authorities all object strongly to stealing from a noblewoman.

JURISDICTIONAL DISPUTE (OPTIONAL ENCOUNTER)

Nerekhall's authorities prefer to handle matters concerning the city internally. This includes threats to the city, and especially those of a magical nature. This is in part due to pride, and in part due to a desire for secrecy—the rulers of Nerekhall maintain that “the corruption is passed,” and so strive to resolve matters pertaining to such forbidden magic as quickly and quietly as possible.

This is all to say, if the PCs go about proclaiming that they are looking for a vampire—or making other claims of dark magic, threats to the city, or the like—it is certain to draw attention. That attention arrives in the form of Magistrate Edmin Cawl. Like all of Nerekhall's magistrates, Cawl holds both administrative and judicial duties for the city, and few other than a fellow magistrate could hope to gainsay his word within Nerekhall.

Another way the PCs might draw the attention—and ire—of the city's leadership is by attacking or otherwise moving against a noble, and that includes Eliza Farrow. This includes acting without indisputable evidence of her guilt, but even acting on strong evidence is only slightly less egregious in the eyes of the city's magistrates—obviously, anyone with evidence of a crime should report it to the authorities, not take matters into their own hands.

How an encounter with Edmin Cawl unfolds depends on both how the PCs react to his queries, and how they drew his attention in the first place. If the PCs simply asked questions openly about Farrow or otherwise made their investigation obvious, Cawl is not overtly confrontational, though he makes his authority clear. Cawl wants to maintain order in Nerekhall, and so he doesn't appreciate adventurers causing trouble with an unofficial investigation of a respected visitor to the city.

If, however, the PCs attacked Farrow or engaged in other illegal or antisocial activity under Cawl's purview, he is likely to be much more direct in his approach. Depending on the severity of the PCs' actions, he might even begin by arresting them, with the intent to question them later.

Encounter Essentials: Keep the following in mind when running an encounter with Magistrate Edmin Cawl:

- Cawl is accompanied by a number of city guards equal to the number of PCs. (If he suspects the involvement of dark magic in events, consider replacing one or two guards with ironbound.)
- PCs can successfully complete a social encounter with Cawl by targeting his strain threshold (see page 124 of the **GENESYS** Core Rulebook). You might give the PCs to social skill checks if their investigation has been circumspect and professional, or if they have caused collateral damage or drawn lots of attention.
- Cawl's primary goal is to maintain order in the city.
- His secondary goal is to uncover and purge dark magic and those who use it, and to do so without undermining the citizens' confidence in the city's leadership or causing concern to the Daqan Lords.
- Although he initially distrusts the PCs, it's possible

they might convince Cawl to allow their investigation to continue, or even to provide limited support.

- Cawl holds the PCs accountable for any damage they cause to the city's infrastructure, or any injury to its citizens.

MAGISTRATE EDMIN CAWL (RIVAL)

A thin-faced man of noble bearing, Cawl is sincere in his conviction to protect Nerekhall's interests and his loathing for dark magic and those who would practice such. However, his dislike for those who violate the law or act as vigilantes is only slightly less.



Skills: Charm 1, Coercion 2, Cool 2, Deception 1, Discipline 2, Negotiation 2.

Talents: None.

Abilities: None.

Equipment: Fine clothing, sash of office.

ACT III: THE DESCENT

Whatever means they employ or clues they stumble upon, the PCs eventually discover that Eliza Farrow descended into the city's sewers—a rather unusual place for a refined noblewoman. To stop Farrow's plans, the PCs must follow her trail down into the darkness of Nerekhall's sewers and the catacombs beneath.

INTO THE SEWERS

Eliza Farrow's route to the catacombs takes her through the sewers, and the PCs must likewise travel through the sewers to reach their destination. The PCs don't necessarily have to enter the sewers through the same grate that Farrow did, but if they do, they find the half-submerged corpse of the thief Bulvert's first accomplice. (His throat is torn out, but he wasn't drained of blood.) The sewers are quite dark, although limited sunlight filters down from the occasional grating.

Once the PCs are in the sewers, they have a few likely options for following Eliza Farrow. Of course, the PCs aren't limited to these options, and might come up with other viable methods for locating or tracking Eliza.

- If the PCs took the map of the sewers from Mavaris Skain's office, they can use it to navigate. The character reading the map makes an **Average** (◆◆) **Knowledge (Geography) check**.
- The PCs can follow physical signs of Farrow's passage. This requires an **Average** (◆◆) **Streetwise or Survival check**. Farrow's supernatural agility and other gifts leave a more subtle trail than a normal person would, but there are still occasional footprints in the muck, or even scraps of her dress caught on rough stones.
- A character with ranks in any magic skill might sense the dark magic that follows in Farrow's wake, or that Skain's ritual gathers below. The character

must succeed on an **Average** (◆◆) **Perception check** to obtain a strong enough sense to guide the party.

A PC who succeeds on any of these checks is able to lead the party to the catacombs in a fairly direct route, although there may be encounters along the way. If a PC doesn't succeed on the relevant skill check, they not only lose valuable time, but cannot attempt that same method again unless something about the circumstances changes. In addition, you might spend ⚔ or ☒ on a check to have the PCs become lost, wander into a dangerous situation or combat encounter, or lose a significant amount of time.

SAFETY HAZARD (OPTIONAL ENCOUNTER)

Although reasonably well maintained, the sewers of Nerekhall are a dangerous place. The PCs, particularly if they stray from Eliza's course, might contend with steep tunnels, sudden drops concealed by rivers of filthy effluent, and even unstable construction.

For any such hazard, the PC or PCs at risk (likely those in the front of the group) can attempt an **Average** (◆◆) **Vigilance check** to notice the danger in time to take appropriate precautions or circumvent it. You should modify the check's difficulty or add ■ based on darkness, particularly deep sewage, and other conditions.

Characters who fail might fall down a vertical pipe, tumble down a steep tunnel, or be crushed by debris. You can represent any of these nasty incidents with damage as if the character fell from short range (see page 112 of the **GENESYS** Core Rulebook). Such a fall inflicts 10 damage and 10 strain, which a character can reduce with an **Average** (◆◆) **Athletics or Coordination check**. Each ✨ reduces the damage by one, and each ▲ reduces the strain by one.

DOWN THE CATACOMBS

Whether following a map or Eliza Farrow's trail, the PCs eventually descend a spiraling flight of narrow stone steps into the city's catacombs. The construction is clearly older than that of the sewers, and streams of filth are replaced with narrow tunnels and crumbling flagstones. There is absolutely no natural light, though the PCs might come across old torches in sconces if they're lucky.

Once the PCs find the catacombs, they must again find Eliza's trail or otherwise navigate. The PCs can employ any of the options previously described for navigating the sewers; however, a character without magic ability can attempt a **Hard** (◆◆◆) **Perception check** to detect the palpable aura of dark magic emanating from Skain's lab. They might feel it as a sense of dread, an unnaturally cold wind, or any other appropriately creepy sensation.

LAIR OF EVIL

Finally, the PCs come to the heavy oaken doors of Mavaris Skain's necromantic laboratory. The shadows in the corridor seem to have a physical presence, and unnatural voices can be heard chanting within. When the PCs open the doors, read aloud or paraphrase the following:

As you push open the heavy oaken doors, thick shadows spill forth like waves over your feet. Beyond, violently flickering candle flames illuminate a high, vaulted chamber. Crumbling stone columns support the shadowed ceiling above. Living corpses in corroded, ancient armor stand solemnly as a twisted figure in dark robes stands above a struggling prisoner chained to a dais. He holds aloft a wicked dagger, as he chants in an inhumanly deep voice that seems to fill the chamber. Lady Farrow stands close at hand, clearly playing a part in the ceremony, shadows and ghostly lights coiling around her.

The purpose of the ritual (which the PCs may or may not discover, depending on how quickly the swords come out) is to empower Lady Farrow, granting her the ability to move in the sun's light unhindered. This would greatly expand her reach and influence, not to mention remove her only physical weakness. This ritual is a gift from Lord Vorakesh, to seal the alliance with the Farrows.

The thief Bulvert's remaining companion and the intended sacrifice, Harvold, is stretched across a stone dais, his wrists and ankles shackled. At the culmination of the ritual, Skain will slay the sacrifice (see sidebar on page 16).

MAVARIS SKAIN, NECROMANCER (NEMESIS)

Mavaris Skain bears an unsettling resemblance to the corpses he works with. In the privacy of his lab deep in the catacombs, Skain wears tattered black robes and ornaments himself in corpse talismans and profane symbols. Skain's embrace of the forbidden art of necromancy is decided overcompensation for his own fear of death. To this end, he has sworn his service and lasting life to Lord Vorakesh in exchange for tutelage in the blackest of arts.

2	2	4	3	3	2
BRAWN	AGILITY	INTELLECT	CUNNING	WILLPOWER	PRESENCE
SOAK VALUE	W. THRESHOLD	S. THRESHOLD	M/R DEFENSE		
2	13	17	1 1		

Skills: Arcana 3, Cool 2, Discipline 2, Knowledge (Forbidden) 3, Melee (Light) 1, Vigilance 1.

Talents: Adversary 1 (Upgrade the difficulty of combat checks targeting this character once.), Chill of Nordros (Magic attacks gain the Ice effect with no increase in difficulty), Dark Insight (use Knowledge [Forbidden] to determine spell effects), Necromancy (When this character uses the conjure magic action, it gains the Summon Ally effect with no increase in difficulty; all creatures the character summons must be undead.).

Abilities: None.

Spells: Mavaris Skain can choose any magic action allowed for the Arcana skill, and may select additional spell effects, as normal. His favored spells are: Death Knell (Choose one target at short or medium range and make an **Average** (◆◆) **Arcana check**; if the check succeeds, this magic attack inflicts 8 damage +1 damage per uncanceled ✨, with Critical Rating 2 and the Ensnare 3 and Vicious 3 qualities.), Wilt (Choose two targets within short range and make an **Average** (◆◆) **Arcana check**; if the check succeeds, Skain can choose one additional target for each ▲ and all targets reduce the ability of any skill checks they make by one until the end of Skain's next turn; if an affected character suffers strain for any reason, they suffer 1 additional strain; Skain can perform the concentrate maneuver to maintain all effects of this curse.), Wall of Bones (Make a **Hard** (◆◆◆) **Arcana check**; if the check succeeds, Skain reduces the damage of all hits he suffers by 1 plus 1 for every ✨ ✨ beyond the first until the end of his next turn; in addition, if an attack targeting Skain generates ☠ ☠ ☠ or ☠, the attacker suffers a hit inflicting damage equal to the total damage of the attack; Skain

RUNNING THE ENCOUNTER

The confrontation with Eliza Farrow and Mavaris Skain is the climax of the adventure, and should be suitably exciting. Here are some things to keep in mind when running the combat:

- The PCs face Eliza Farrow, Mavaris Skain, and three minion groups of Reanimates, with three reanimates in each group. If the group has fewer than three PCs or more than five, consider removing or adding a minion group.
- The dais, Skain, and Farrow are at medium range from the doorway. The reanimates stand between the PCs and the nemeses, and some may be within short range.
- The ritual continues as long as Skain remains engaged with the dais and performs an action each round to conduct the ceremony. While the ritual is ongoing, the swirling shadows grant 2 ranged defense to all characters in short range of the dais. If the ritual is interrupted, Skain and Farrow each suffer 4 strain. If the PCs do not interrupt the ritual by the fourth round, Skain performs an action to slay the sacrifice on his turn, completing the ritual; remove Eliza Farrow's Sunlight Sensitivity and increase her wound threshold by 4.
- Eliza Farrow is not willing to give her unlife for the bargain with Skain and his master. If the fight clearly turns against them or the ritual fails irrevocably (such as if Skain is killed), she flees. Even if Farrow would be defeated, she attempts to use her Blood Mist form to escape.

may perform the concentrate maneuver to maintain the effects of this barrier.).

Equipment: Bone staff (Add +4 damage to magic attacks and first Range effect does not increase difficulty; heal 1 wound after damaging a target with a spell.), sacrificial dagger (Melee [Light]; Damage 4; Critical 3; Range [Engaged]; Accurate 1, Vicious 1); heavy robes (+1 defense), forbidden grimoire (A user with the Dark Insight talent can add the Additional Target and Enervate effects to curse spells with no increase in difficulty).

REANIMATE (MINION)



Skills (group only): Melee (Light), Perception, Ranged, Resilience, Vigilance.

Talents: None.

Abilities: Undead (does not need to breathe, eat, or drink, and can survive underwater; immune to poisons and toxins), Undying (The GM may spend ☠ ☠ ☠ from any check a PC makes to return one previously defeated Reanimate to an existing minion group, removing damage from the group accordingly; the GM may spend ☠ to return two Reanimates to a minion group.).

Equipment: Rusted blade (Melee; Damage 6; Critical 3; Range [Engaged]), worn bow (Ranged; Damage 6; Critical 3; Range [Medium]), antique mail (+2 soak).

ELIZA FARROW (NEMESIS)



Skills: Arcana 3, Brawl 2, Charm 3, Cool 3, Discipline 3, Knowledge (Forbidden) 4, Negotiation 3, Ranged 3, Riding 2, Vigilance 2.

Talents: Adversary 2 (Upgrade the difficulty of combat checks targeting this character twice.), Dark Insight (use Knowledge [Forbidden] to determine spell effects).

Abilities: Blood Call (When Eliza Farrow damages a target using her fangs or a magic attack, she heals wounds equal to the wounds inflicted).

Blood Mist (If Eliza Farrow suffers damage in excess of her Wound Threshold, she is not incapacitated, but takes the form of a cloud of blood mist. While in this form, she can fly [see page 100 of the **GENESYS** Core Rulebook] and does not suffer damage from physical attacks. If she suffers additional damage from a magical attack, she becomes incapacitated as normal and resumes corporeal form).

Dominate (May use the Dominate action once per encounter, making an **opposed Charm vs. Discipline check** targeting one character in short range; if successful, the target is immobilized for 1 round per uncanceled

☠, and Eliza may spend ☠ to stagger the target for 1 round).

Sunlight Sensitivity (While exposed to sunlight, Eliza Farrow reduces all her characteristics by 2 and halves her Wound Threshold and Strain Threshold.)

Undead (does not need to breathe, eat, or drink [except blood], and can survive underwater; immune to poisons and toxins)

Vampiric Magic (Eliza Farrow reduces the difficulty of all magic skill checks one step).

Spells: Eliza Farrow can choose any magic action allowed for the Arcana skill, and may select additional spell effects, as normal. Her favored spells are: Blood Funnel (Choose one target at short range for the attack and make a **Hard** (◆◆◆) **Arcana check**; if the magic combat check succeeds, the target suffers 4 damage + 1 damager per uncanceled ☠, with Critical Rating 2 and the Blast 4 and Vicious 4 qualities), Curse of the Night (Choose one target within short range and make a **Hard** (◆◆◆) **Arcana check**; if the check succeeds, the target decreases the ability of any skill checks they make by one and reduce their strain and wound thresholds by 4 until the end of Eliza Farrow's next turn; she may maintain these effects by performing the Concentrate maneuver).

Equipment: Fangs (Brawl; Damage 6; Critical 2; Range [Engaged]; Ensnares 1, Vicious 2).

IF THE RITUAL SUCCEEDS

Things get really bad. In addition to the intended benefits for Eliza Farrow, the influx of dark magic threatens to reopen the dormant portals that almost led to Nerekhall's destruction. The catacombs shake, hot winds blow through the room, and demonic howls and screams echo from all around.

Even Farrow doesn't stick around for long, gloating over her victory before swiftly leaving the PCs to deal with the consequences of their failure. The PCs can only hope to escape the catacombs and warn the city's magistrates, as rifts open and spill forth green flames and the PCs glimpse demonic entities. For his part, Skain revels in the chaos, counting on his own dark magic to protect him.

ADVENTURE REWARDS

If the PCs stop Skain's ritual, they can be proud to have halted at least some of Eliza Farrow's nefarious ambitions, as well as put an end to a foul necromancer threatening the city. PCs interested in more tangible rewards can discover coins and valuables worth 400 silver by searching the ritual chamber and surrounding area. In addition, Skain's lair holds a number of forbidden texts and profane artifacts that could be worth a great deal more to the right buyer.

If the PCs ended an earlier encounter with Edmin Cawl on good terms and conducted the remainder of the adventure in line with his wishes, he thanks them for their discretion and rewards the PCs with 200 silver coins each. If things did not go so well, Cawl might be looking to bring the PCs to justice for their vigilante behavior.