

# The Mystery of Argenmont Manor



*A 5 hour adventure for 4<sup>th</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup>  
level characters*

**By Patrick Niederriter**





## USING THIS ADVENTURE

This adventure is designed for a party of 4 level 5 players. However, a party of 5 level 3-4 players may still be able to get through it without significant loss of life.

This adventure will take approximately 5 hours to complete.

Mystery of Argenmont Manor can be played by itself or incorporated into another campaign. It can be inserted in any location where a civilized nation has a guarded border. On the other side of the border can be a frontier, unexplored territory, a land of barbarians, or even another hostile nation.

Being a “mystery,” there are multiple skill checks that involve investigation, perception, etc. Also, talking to NPCs and following clues is essential. Murder hobos will probably die horribly.

## ADVENTURE HOOKS

If you're incorporating this into your campaign, you can introduce your party to this adventure in any town. A messenger can simply run up to them and deliver a letter.

*To the honorable [Insert party member's names],*

*The Marquis of Argenmont, Sarrault Lorabec, requests your aid with a matter pertinent to the defense and well being of the realm.*

*The Marquis, and all denizens of the Marches, would be grateful for your presence at Argenmont Manor. A feast in your honor and comfortable lodgings will be provided without an assumed obligation to taking on the aforementioned quest. However, should you choose to assist the Marquis, you will be rewarded to the amount of 600 gold coins per person.*

*To gain entry to Argenmont Manor, travel by way of the village of Isbrendell. Once in Isbrendell, ask for Declan, a carriage driver. He has already been paid and will take you to Argenmont free of charge.*

*We humbly thank you,  
Sarrault Lorabec  
Marquis of Argenmont*

## THE RIDE TO ARGENMONT

The adventure begins with the party riding in the back of a rickety old wagon. Declan, the driver who appears to be in his 40s, keeps a brisk pace. The surrounding countryside can be swamp, plains, forest, or whatever you want. The only fixed feature is that Argenmont Manor sits on a rocky outcropping between 2 mountain ranges. From this vantage point, you could see how the fortification was used to keep watch over the pass between the mountains.

If the party talks with Declan, he will give some basic background information on Argenmont, but it's obvious that he prefers to mind his own business. Information he is willing to share includes:

- ♦ The Lorabec's have been the Marquis of Argenmont for generations, but are the second family to rule this region.
- ♦ The first Marquis' were the Argenmont family, but they died out long ago and the title has been passed to the Lorabecs ever since.
- ♦ Sarrault is the second son of the previous Marquis, Dorell. If really pressed about what happened to the first son, he will brusquely say something to the effect of “He died young. In a fire or something.”



- ♦ Argenmont was established to protect against threats coming from the other side of the border. It's up to your discretion to hint at what these threats are and can depend on the campaign setting. They can be barbarian tribes, warlords, a rival kingdom, or even just wild frontier with various monsters. Regardless, Declan will say that the border has been quiet for decades. He's not even sure if there is anybody on the other side of the mountain pass anymore. So the title of Marquis seems to be largely ceremonial now.
- ♦ Declan has transported a few other people with invitations up to Argenmont today. A very large and surly woman. A quiet man in robes. A male knight and a his squire. An extremely talkative nobleman.

If asked about anything more specific, Declan will only say "I don't know. I'm just a carriage driver" in a pleading tone.

A curtain wall sits atop the steep sides of the rocky hill. There is one road, walled on both sides, that goes up and along one side.

The party passes through the first gatehouse at the base of the hill. The heavy wooden gate is flanked on both sides by small, cylindrical guard towers with pointed roofs. The gate was already open when you approached and these lower guard towers appear to be unmanned. The corridor up the hill also seems like it doesn't get taken care of regularly. Moss and lichens cling to the walls. Plants grow in the gaps where bricks have fallen out. Weeds and scrub grasses have taken over the road, except for a path that's been continuously beaten down by wagon wheels.

At the top of the incline is the second gatehouse. It's a square and squat 2 story building with a steep, pointed hip roof with

flared eaves. Candles are burning in the arrow slits on the second floor. 2 portcullises begin to rise.

Once inside the courtyard, it's obvious the Argenmont was once a strong fortification. Hundreds of soldiers would have manned this castle complex, but it doesn't look like anybody really lives here anymore. The party will notice:

- ♦ The main keep is situated along the edge of the cliff closest to the border. It features a large, 4 story donjon with wooden hoardings on the top floor. The roof is square and pointed. Several other towers, both square and round, roofed and open topped surround the donjon. A sizable rectangular hall is also attached to the main complex. It looks like it's in fine working condition.
- ♦ There are multiple guard towers along the curtain wall. Most look unmanned except for one, located on the side farthest from the main keep. There seems to be smoke coming from a chimney in that tower.
- ♦ A Stable. With a perception check of 12, it appears that the hay is rotten and moldy. It's probably been there for quite some time.
- ♦ The barracks is a large square building towards the center of the courtyard. It looks fairly well maintained.
- ♦ A long, rectangular chapel sits near the barracks. It looks badly damaged. There are large holes in the roof.

Declan stops the carriage. "This is where I leave ya. That there's Krissle, the groundskeeper. He'll take you in. He don't say much though."

When the party gets off the wagon, Declan turns his rig around and leaves.



## WELCOME TO ARGENMONT MANOR

A ragged man of about 60 is raking leaves near the entrance to the keep. He has long, greasy hair. He wears a scowl on his gaunt face. When the party approaches, he drops the rake and curtly gestures for the party to follow him. He won't speak.

A medicine check of 15 will reveal that Krissle does not appear to have a tongue.



By Arshak Nevasardyan <https://www.artstation.com/arnavart>

### Knights of Argenmont

*Medium construct, unaligned*

**AC:** 18 **HP:** 52 **Speed:** 25

**STR:** 16 (+3) **DEX:** 11 (0) **CON:** 13 (+1)  
**INT:** 1 (-5) **WIS:** 3 (-4) **CHA:** 1 (-5)

**Damage Immunities:** poison, psychic

**Condition Immunities:** Blinded, charmed, deafened, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned

**Senses:** Blindsight 60 ft

**PP:** 6

**Languages:** None

**Challenge:** 2 (450 XP)

**Antimagic Susceptibility:** Construct is incapacitated while in the area of an antimagic field. If targeted by dispel magic, the construct must succeed a constitution saving throw against the caster's spell save DC or fall unconscious for 1 minute.

**False Appearance:** The armor looks like a normal suit of armor.

**Multiattack:** The armor makes two melee attacks

**Halberd:** *Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 10 feet, one target*

*Hit: 1d10+3 slashing damage*

He'll walk the party to the front door, which is the ground floor of the 4-story tower. As soon as the party crosses the threshold, they will be greeted by 2 knights in full plate armor. Each carries a halberd.

The knights say nothing. They bow and gesture politely with their hands. Their eyes are hidden by visors.

A round faced dwarf woman in her early 30s rounds the corner and comes into view.

The woman will introduce herself as **Mims**. She takes care of the inside of the manor.



## Roleplaying Mims

*Mims is exceedingly polite and comes across as a bit nervous. She seems completely devoted to the Lorabec family and takes pride in working for them. This can be demonstrated with her compulsive need to stop and straighten an errant candle or clean a scuff mark on a picture frame. In actuality,*

*Mims is really a killer who is obsessed with Sarrault and wishes to serve him as he delves deeper into black magic. Her devotion to Sarrault even prevents her from saying anything bad against him, even playing the sweet housekeeper role. She is merciless with anyone who opposes her Marquis and her keen wit helps her to set traps and strike when her opponent is weak.*

*If asked about the Lorabec family, she will say that there were 3 children. Vallionne, Mallery, and Sarrault. The father, Dorell, became very ill and was catatonic the last few years of his life. He's been dead for years now, though. Vallionne died in a fire before he could become Marquis. Mallery moved away and nobody has heard from her in years. Just Sarrault and Lady Esme are left.*

Mims, accompanied by the knights, will take the party left, from the front door, and down a hallway to the Great Hall. This area of the castle is tidy and well decorated. Paintings of hunting scenes and landscapes line the halls. Sconces are lit. Mims will stop compulsively and use her apron to wipe a smudge off of a picture frame.

Mims will inform the party that the other guests have already arrived. She'll snicker and say that they seem like just the sort of folk we need 'round here. If questioned further about the "job," Mims will say,

"Dark days have fallen the noble house of Lorabec. Their fortune ain't what it used to

be. Couldn't man nor maintain the lower gatehouse. Then the outer guard towers. Then the chapel. We need your help to return them to the glory they rightly deserve."

She promises that Marquis Sarrault will explain everything excitedly says that the Dowager Marchioness, Lady Esme, may also pay a visit.

Mims shows the party into the great hall.

"Plenty to eat and drink. There's a lovely fire too. We just ask that you don't venture too far from the hall," she giggles, "The rest of the manor isn't as tidy I'm afraid. I try to keep up but there just aren't enough hands."

She says she'll be around, if needed. The knights bow graciously and take posts on either side of the door to the hall.

## Mims

*Medium Humanoid Dwarf, Lawful Evil*

**AC:** 12 **HP:** 44 **Speed:** 35 ft

**STR:** 10 (0) **DEX:** 16 (+3) **CON:** 10 (0)  
**INT:** 14 (+2) **WIS:** 15 (+2) **CHA:** 16 (+3)

**Skills:** Deception +6, Insight +4, Investigation +5, Perception +6

**Languages:** Common, Dwarf

**PP:** 16

**Challenge:** 3 (700 XP)

**Cunning Action:** On each turn, Mims can use a bonus action to Dash, Disengage or Hide.

**Sneak Attack:** Once per turn, Mims can deal an extra 2d6 damage when she hits a target with a weapon attack while she has advantage on the attack roll or when the target is 5 feet from an ally.

**Multiattack:** Mims takes 2 melee attacks

**Daggers:** *Melee Attack: +5 to hit, one target*  
*Hit: 1d6+3 piercing damage*



## THE GREAT HALL OF ARGENMONT

The Great Hall is a large, rectangular room that's about 100 feet long by 75 feet wide. At the far end is a large hearth with a crackling fire. A large chandelier hangs in the center of the room and 6 long tables are organized in 2 rows. There are 3 large paintings hanging - one on each of long walls and one above the fireplace.

### If a player inquires into the paintings:

Painting Above the Fireplace - A middle aged woman sits with a toddler on her lap. A middle aged man with a brown and grey hair stands behind her with his hands on her shoulders - he's smirking. They look regal and dignified. Seated next to the woman holding a toddler is a young boy with brown hair and a bowl cut. On the other side of the woman stands a young girl, with her hands folded in front of her.

Painting on left wall - A young man holds a golden scepter in one hand and books in his other arm. His tunic has a very frilly collar. With a perception check of 12, a player could deduce that this is a painting of the boy with a bowl cut. His features match, he's just older.

The painting on the right wall - This painting depicts a young, beautiful woman eating a pear and looking coyly at the observer. Her eyes seem to follow you wherever you go. It appears to be the mother from the other painting.

## SCHMOOZING THE GUESTS

The party can cruise around the room and meet the other guests. At a glance:

- ♦ A slight man in his mid 30s sits by the fire, reading a book. He wears a deep blue and gold brocade tunic. He has short, black hair; nicely styled, and a pointed goatee. **(Thaubrey)**
- ♦ A brunette woman in a plain black gambeson sits at one of the tables, drinking from a goblet. A large sword leans against the bench next to her. She has a crooked nose, like it's been broken a few times. **(Barka)**
- ♦ On the left, a handsome, well-built man wearing a breastplate appears to be demonstrating close quarter fighting techniques to a tomboyish blonde girl who looks to be about 20. He has blue eyes and a scar through his right eyebrow. They seem to be having a good time. A perception check of 10 would allow somebody to guess that they appear to be a knight and his squire. **(Eladio and Magdalena)**
- ♦ A man in his 40s with shaggy, dirty blond hair, brown eyes and rough stubble is perusing the paintings and stained glass on the right side of the room. He wears grey robes and there is a heater shield on his back and a mace at his side. Under the robe, there appears to be chainmail. **(Zayn)**

**Barka** is a barbarian. She'll refer to herself as "Barka of some patch of scraggly weeds" as a way to mock the formality of knighthood...or perhaps to mock the fancy setting. She hopes that the invitation will lead her to either a good fight, a good bit of gold, or a good lay - preferably all 3. She seems unscrupulous.

**Zayn** seems skittish. He will be a little defensive if a party member asks him too many questions...or too personal. He is a cleric and he is from the Order of the Willow, who tend to nomadically wander the countryside and act as rural healers and doctors. He's not sure why he was invited, he's more of a medic than a battle cleric.



**Eladio** seems courteous and pleasant - but tends to interject when Magdalena starts to talk a lot. He'll talk about monsters he's killed and wrongs he's righted, and peasants he's saved in the past. He is a Paladin and has been training Magdalena for the past 3 months since he found her in a small village.

### **Eladio/Sarrault**

*Medium Human, Lawful Evil*

**AC:** 18 **HP:** 112 **Speed:** 30ft

**STR:** 18 (+4) **DEX:** 15 (+3) **CON:** 16 (+3)

**INT:** 10 (+0) **WIS:** 12 (+1) **CHA:** 16 (+3)

**Saves:** STR +7, DEX, +5, CON, +6

**Skills:** Athletics +8, Intimidate +6

**Passive Perception:** 11

**CR:** 5 (1800)

### **Spells:**

*LVL 1 (4 slots): Hex, Protection from Good and Evil, Hellish Rebuke*

*LVL 2 (2 slots): Misty Step, Command*

### **Actions:**

Multiattack x3 Melee

*Spear: 5ft range, +7 to hit, 2d6 + 4 piercing damage*

*Shield Bash: +7 to hit, 2d4 +4 bludgeoning damage, Medium or smaller creatures must make a DC STR check or be knocked prone*

**Magdalena** is clearly excited for all of this. She's from a small village and the opportunity to travel with a Paladin and learn how to become one herself is like something out of a book. She's got loads of

grand plans for when she becomes a knight.

**Thaubrey** is from a minor, but fairly wealthy, noble family. He takes pleasure in name dropping other famous or important people from the realm that he's socialized with - except none of them are really THAT famous or influential. He fancies himself a patron of the arts and an intellectual and isn't at all surprised that he would be invited to an event such as this. If somebody asks what he's reading, he'll tell them it's a book composed of letters between 2 philosophers who fought on opposite sides of some war years ago - he'll drone on about it endlessly like it's some kind of life changing work. Despite being a bit of a blustering braggart, he is polite and seems genuinely interested in the people he meets.

## **ENTER LADY ESME**

Once the conversation slows with the party a gong will sound and a booming voice from out in the hall will say, "The Dowager Marchioness, Lady Esme Lorabec."

A graceful, stately woman, who looks to be in her late 30s, enters, accompanied by 2 more knights. She wears an elegant dress with a cloudy blue gemstone pendant. She takes a place behind a chair at one of the tables and smiles broadly before taking a seat.

A perception check of 10 will reveal that she looks to be about the same age as the family portrait above the fireplace.



"Thank you all for answering the summons of my son Sarrault, the Marquis of Argenmont. Since the passing of my husband, Dorell, my son has worked tirelessly to return this land, and our family, to their former glory and, in doing so, helping every denizen of the realm. I'm afraid the border grows dark again." She raises a cup.

"Your presence warms the heart and replenishes the spirit. With good people such as yourself to lend aid to strangers such as us in such a dire time, surely evil has had it's day. To you, heroes."

With a perception or insight check of 14, a party member will notice that Lady Esme will raise the cup to her lips, but she will not actually drink anything.

**DM Note:** At no point will she allow anyone to touch her and the knights will intervene should anybody try to get too close.

## THE MARQUIS MAKES A GRAND ENTRANCE

Shortly after Lady Esme is finished with her speech, the gong will sound again.

A handsome man in his late 20s enters the room wearing colorful livery and a velvet hat with a peacock feather sticking out. There's also a necklace around his neck with a cloudy blue gemstone set in it.

Lady Esme rises:

"Good adventurers, I present my dear son: The Marquis of Argenmont, Sir Sarrault Lorabec."

Sarrault gestures grandly as he struts in.

"Thank you my most fantastic warrior poets. Each of you is a cool breeze amidst my ragged sails. A ray of sunlight in the cold,

endless throes of a winters squalid squall. Welcome."

Esme clears her throat and laughs nervously.

"My son has a flair for the dramatic. Please, Sarrault, speak plainly."

Sarrault makes his way around Esme's table.

"Thank you, mother," he says as he leans in to kiss her cheek. She pulls away.

"I must retire now. Thank you, my friends."

Sarrault gestures to the knights, "Thank you, Sir Jeromy. Sir Vanderbug. That will be all."

The knights follow Lady Esme out as Sarrault stands facing the fireplace. He faces the fire and leans against the mantle. Mims refills drinks.

"Today, my cornucopius concubines, I bring you a quest the likes of which would make the gods themselves shiver in their ample pantaloons."

Insight Check of 13: Sarrault seems to be unaware of the fact that he is misusing words. He doesn't appear drunk or anything, though. Just a little dumb, perhaps.

Sarrault spins around and slams his first on a table.

"A murder most foul!"

Eladio groans out loud at the gaudy display. Mims drops a cup and shouts, "My lord! Sir. Are you feeling well?"



“No, Mltzy. I’m not well. The stench of crime befouls my very nostrils.”

**Note:** Her name is Mims, not Mitzy. He called her the wrong name.

Thaubrey is clearly enamored by the performance. Barka seems annoyed, but asks who was murdered. Mims chimes in and suggests that, surely, nobody was murdered.

“Allow me to weave for you a tale to capitulate your darkest imaginings...”

Just then, a horn sounds from someplace, cutting off Sarrault mid sentence.

Sarrault is dumbfounded, “What? Now? I don’t...” he looks around confused as Krissle bursts into the room.

## ORCUS INTERRUPTUS

Krissle is panicked.

Zayn asks what is wrong and Krissle gestures wildly. Barka yells for him to spit it out. Mims scolds her, saying that Krissle doesn’t have a tongue. Thaubrey yells, “Then why is he keeping watch?”

Krissle signals for everyone to be quiet and he acts out a charade. He grabs his earlobe and tugs on it. If the players don’t understand the gesture, then Magdalena will say “sounds like.”

Then Krissle will grab a bunch of forks.

Thaubrey will guess “Dinner? We’re all gonna be dinner? Sounds like dinner? Sinner. Thinner. Winner?”

Sarrault tries to guess too, “Eat? Parakeet? Efreet?”

Magdalena says “Sounds like forks.”

Allow the party to guess Orcs and Krissle will nod in agreement.

Eladio perks up at hearing the news and tells Sarrault that he needs to keep Lady Esme safe and that he should let the group handle the threat.

A stuttering Sarrault will agree and scamper off nervously.

Zayn grabs his mace and heads off someplace alone. Eladio and Magdalena say they are going to patrol the western wall. Thaubrey nervously says that he will patrol inside the keep. Barka will go out the front door and head to the gates.

A small band of Orcs have already made it past the outer curtain wall somehow and are attempting to use a wooden ladder to scale the western wall of the keep. No Knights seem to be around and all the other guests have gone their own way, so it seems as though it’s up to the party to stop them.

This portion of the wall is about 35 feet high and encapsulates The Princess’ Garden, a section of the grounds that the party has not yet seen. The orcs are scaling the wall between an open-topped drum tower and a square guard tower with a pointed roof. The party most likely will approach the encounter by leaving the front door of the donjon, the way they came in. However, they could also have gone up the flight of stairs in the donjon and using the door on the second floor that would take them on top of the drum tower. Either way, 2 orcs have climbed on top of the wall already and 3 remain on the ground. From the wall, the party will notice a well-maintained garden below. **See map on page 28.**



### *On the Wall:*

1 Orc Red Fang of Shargaas (Volo's Guide to Monsters pg 185)

1 Orog (Monster Manual pg 247)

### *On the Ground:*

2 Orcs (Monster Manual pg 246)

1 Orog (Monster Manual pg 247)

If the party is large or higher level, add another orog or two, but this fight isn't designed to be particularly deadly.

The orcs on the wall will attempt to cover their comrades on the ground with their ranged weapons. If the Red Fang of Shargaas loses about 25% of its health, it will cast Veil of Shargaas and attempt to escape within the interior of the keep. It will not try to escape Argenmont, almost as if it was on a mission.



When the fight is over, and if the players decide to look closer at the bodies of the orcs, they will see a simple emblem of a winged bug or insect painted in black on their armor and forearms.

A history check of 14 will reveal that the orcs are from the Black Wasp Clan. The clan is small and relatively weak and they are being driven out of their territory by other civilizations (Use whatever civilizations are appropriate for your setting).

## A MURDER MOST FOUL

The guests will all migrate back to the great hall. Lady Esme is in the Hall when the party returns and thanks them for their help and that this attack is just a small example of why The Marquis has summoned them there. The border is no longer safe and Argenmont doesn't have the military strength to repel the forces of darkness.

If somebody questions her story, saying that Sarrault told them that they were there because there was some kind of murder, Esme will deflect and say "Well, with attacks like that, somebody could easily get murdered." She will invite the guests to stay in Argenmont for a time to help build up Argenmont's defenses.

Barka is pleased that she found a few orcs to kill down by the gate. If the players did not already pass a history check about the orcs and their background, then Barka will inform the group. She will also add that the Black Wasps didn't come from the other side of the border...more likely that they were trying to flee across the border and find a new home.



Eladio and Magdalena didn't run into any enemies.

Zayn says nothing and will try to deflect any questions about his whereabouts during the attack. However, if the party gets banged up, he will heal them for free.

Nobody has seen Thaubrey or Sarrault, however.

Suddenly, what sounds like a woman's scream comes echoing down the hallway. The group will go and investigate and find Thaubrey, screaming in the hall,

"Blood. Ewww. I hate blood!"

On the floor is in fact, a pool of blood. Judging by the blood streaks on the floor, it looks like something was dragged into a nearby broom closet. In the closet, a lumped figure is covered hastily by a tablecloth. Mims will arrive and immediately start trying to clean up the blood pool out of sheer compulsion. Under the tablecloth is Sarrault - dead.

A medicine check will reveal that he was stabbed in the back with a small knife. The knife pierced his lungs and he couldn't have cried out if he wanted to.

Lady Esme will scream, "No! My son! My poor son! Who could have done this?"

Eladio will guess that perhaps one of the orcs is responsible. Esme continues to scream and demands that killer be brought to justice and she is quickly escorted back to her bedroom by 2 knights.

Barka says, "So, we're looking for somebody with a KNIFE."

Thaubrey exclaims "We all have knives!"

From here, the party may choose to investigate the entire castle.

## Exploring Argenmont

From here on, the players should be encouraged to explore freely. Skip ahead to "**The Plot Thickens**" section for the continuation of the narrative and use this section as a reference for the locations they visit.



By DarkTarot.com



## THE DONJON

**The first floor** is the main entrance to the keep. A large staircase winds its way up along the wall to the upper floors. Wrought iron sconces light the way. However, portraits are hung along the staircase, evenly spaced apart. They all depict different, regal looking men.

With a history check of 12, they know that these appear to be the portraits of the previous Marquis of Argenmont. If they ask, they do not see one that looks like Sarrault.

With a perception check of 10, the party will see a space where there should be a portrait. The outline of where a painting used to be is visible.

**The second floor** houses the library.- *It's large and well stocked.*

**The 3rd floor** has guest rooms. *It's obvious that this was where the guests were meant to stay. They decor is fancy but outdated. They have been recently cleaned.*

An investigation check of 15 reveals that one of the guest rooms (choose one) has poisonous scorpions hidden in a ceiling compartment above the chandelier. Another room has a secret door behind a mirror. The tunnel weaves between the walls and exits outside, near the walls on the northern side of the donjon. A skilled climber could get up and down without too much trouble.

Also on the 3rd floor is the entrance to the hoardings, which are wooden and wrap around the entire donjon. In times of war, the windows and removable holes in the floor allow crossbowmen to shoot down at attackers from safety.

**The fourth floor** has 2 rooms:

**Sarrault's Room:** If this is the first location the party visits after the orc fight, they will find that the door is locked. It's a difficult lock to pick as well.

If the party has already visited another location within the grounds, especially outside of the other floors of the donjon, Barka's corpse will be found on the floor. Her throat has been cut, blood has soaked into her armor. She is clutching a key, however.

Inside, the room is spacious and comfortable. Furs decorate the furniture and weapons hang on the walls. There appears to be plenty of "trophies" and mementos from victories: Hobgoblin scimitars, an ogre's tooth, a hippogriff's skull, even a few humanoid skulls. There is a potion of heroism in the room too.

There are NO cloudy blue stones anywhere.

In a waste bin, there are some papers. It's a script, It looks like an early draft of a play, The names of the guests and the party are the same as the characters in this script. Sarrault has the most lines. Lady Esme's lines are also written down but everything else is "improvised." The plot, in this version, depicts the death of Barka in one of the guest rooms at night, but it ends there—never finished.



**Mallery's Room** is much smaller than Sarrault's room and not nearly as well decorated. There are more of those cloudy blue stones embedded into sconces, but they've been shattered.

Investigations check of 12: There's a gap between the mattress and the headboard that is covered by pillows. Under the bed is a loose brick in the floor. When pulled up, there is a hole filled with maps and charts of the world. It looks like somebody could read and write laying face-down, all while appearing to be asleep in that bed.

## LADY ESME'S ROOM

Lady Esme's room is not in the Donjon, it's located in a smaller square tower west of the great hall, which is the direction she seemed to have fled after discovering her son's corpse. Knights appear to guard the outside of her room, but they're actually empty suits of armor. The door is locked and requires a 15 dexterity check and thieves tools to pick (There is no key, it's locked from the inside). However, there is an open window in the 2nd floor hallway of this tower.

Athletics check of 12 will allow somebody to slip in through the window to Esme's room by climbing along the wall.

The interior of the room, while once lavishly decorated, is full of dust and cobwebs. Nobody seems to have been here for years.

There is a 4 post bed with a canopy that's full of cobwebs. On the bed is an ornate dress, which looks exactly like the dress

she was last seen wearing.

There is a vanity with a silver comb, perfume bottle, hand mirror on top. They're worth 12 gold each.

An investigation check of 10 reveals that there's an outline in the dust on the vanity that is in the shape of a hair brush.

There's a portrait of Lady Esme and a young man who appears to be the same older sibling as from the pictures in the hall. Then there's one of just the young man with a black ribbon over it from corner to corner.

Perception check of 12: In the picture with her and the young man, Lady Esme actually looks older than she did when you met her. In fact, judging by what you know of Esme, she should actually be somewhere around 70 years old at least.

**Plot Opportunity:** If a lone player decided to fall asleep in the bed in Esme's room, a hooded figure could appear in the window and attack. This is Vallione who has a very close connection to the women in his family, especially his mother. If hit for more than 25% of his health, he would flee out the window and over the roof back towards his tower. He has advantage on all skill checks when climbing in Argenmont.



## THE PRINCESS' GARDEN

East of the donjon, directly below where the orc fight took place, is a walled-in garden. The garden can only be accessed by climbing down the walls surrounding it or through a small gated entrance that can be accessed through the wall East of the donjon. The square guard towers have no windows pointed inward, so no guards manning those towers could look in while at their post. There is one round turret towards the north side that does have a direct line of sight, however (Vallionne's Tower). No princess ever lived in the castle, so the name must be referring to Mallery or some other Lorabec daughter.

The grounds are still well kept. Bushes and shrubs are shaped into the forms of unicorns, hippos and even a giraffe. There is a large, stone birdbath next to a small, elegant fountain towards the center with a bench nearby.

If the final orc was not killed during the attack, his corpse will be found at the base of Vallionne's Tower, in the garden, between the wall and a shrub.

When the party is in the garden, Krissle will appear on the walls near the square guard tower. He will be holding a rope and a scarecrow...scowling.

When/if the party investigates Vallionne's tower, this is where he will retreat to make his last stand.

When fighting Vallionne, he will summon 3 of his knights here.

## VALLIONNE'S TOWER

Vallionne's Tower is a round turret with a pointed roof. There are 2 doors that are on-

ly accessible from the battlements of the walls. The construction is newer than the rest, and the tower isn't immediately accessible from anywhere, almost as if it was constructed later to hide something.

The inside of the tower is just one circular room. Bookshelves and a single desk line the walls along with a few plaques with hanging swords. A small round table sits in the center of the room. A pale blue crystal sits on the table. Examining the crystal, dozens of lines create different facets within the large stone. Focusing your attention on one will show a real time view of a particular area within Argenmont. It appears as though Vallionne uses this to monitor activity all over the castle.

There is a small bed. Underneath it is a wooden trunk. Inside the trunk are bones.

A medicine check of 13: The bones appear to be from a human female.

*Note: These are Esme's bones. Don't tell the party, though. At least not until the story is over.*

A silver hairbrush sits on the table as well. There are still a few strands of hair stuck in it.

An arcana check of 12: This must have been used to summon an illusion of Esme.

There are also several journals and letters in his room. It appears as though he was supposed to be the Marquis of Argenmont after the death of his father, Dorell. His journals detail an obsession with the dark arts, much like his father.



He seemed to be an avid experimenter and showed a lot of magical prowess from an early age. Letters from his mother hint that Vallionne also had an “unnatural” obsession with Mallery, his sister as well. She urged him to find a nice, but pliable girl of good breeding to marry. Eventually, however, these notes and letter change.

One of the letters is a copy of an “announcement” to the people of the surrounding lands made by Esme. It states that Vallionne, the heir to Argenmont, has died in a horrible fire while praying in the chapel and that the title of Marquis will be passed on to Sarrault. Her later letters mourn an “accident” caused by some ritual gone wrong that has horribly disfigured her son. She pleads for Vallionne’s forgiveness, and that the decision to tell the public that he died was necessary to keep up the good name of the family. She also apologizes for not visiting him, but the sight of his new form is something she can’t bear.

No new writings from Vallionne can be found since the “accident” so it is presumed that Vallionne no longer possesses the mental faculties he once had. He had become more monster than man.

**Vallionne** resides here. He will attack any who enter, without hesitation. His first line of defense is to summon 3 Flying Swords (MM 20) to defend his person while he makes his way down to the Princess’ Garden (**pg 28**). Vallionne moves in quick, but erratic motions. There, he will summon 3 Knights of Argenmont to aid him. One will drop down from the guard tower, another from the drum tower and the 3rd will emerge from behind some ivy on the wall, like it had been laying there for years.



### **Playing as Vallionne:**

*Despite what some lore would tell you about Nothic's, Vallionne does retain some of his memories, though they tend to be disjointed. He particularly remembers Esme and is very protective of her belongings. He is intelligent enough to know that he's vulnerable in a fight and will use the Knights of Argenmont to his advantage when threatened. He will prefer to stay behind them and use his rotting gaze and dexterity in a fight.*



## Vallionne (Nothic)

*Medium aberration, neutral evil*

**AC:** 16 **HP:** 68 **Speed:** 30

**STR:** 14 (+2) **DEX:** 16 (+3) **CON:** 16 (+3)

**INT:** 14 (+2) **WIS:** 10 (+0) **CHA:** 8 (-1)

**Skills:** Arcana +3, Perception +2, Insight +4, Stealth +5

**Senses:** Truesight 120 feet

**PP:** 12

**Languages:** common

**Challenge:** 3 (750 XP)

**Keen Sight:** Vallionne has advantage on perception checks that involve sight.

**Animate Objects:** Vallionne is able to animate up to 3 inanimate objects at one time without assistance. These include suits of armor stationed around the castle, swords on the walls, etc. He can animate more with deep focus through his crystal, however.

**Multiattack:** He makes two melee attacks

**Claw:** *Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, one target*  
*Hit: 1d6+3 slashing damage*

**Rotting Gaze:** Vallionne targets one creature it can see within 30 feet. That target must succeed a DC 13 constitution saving throw or take 3d6 necrotic damage

**Weird Insight:** Vallionne targets one creature it can see within 30 feet. The target must make a deception check against Vallionne's insight check. If Vallionne wins, he magically learns one fact or secret about them. If the target is immune to being charmed then they automatically win.

## THE BARRACKS

The barracks are outside of the main keep, within the courtyard. The building is pretty large and the door and the window sills have been painted recently. There's nobody inside, but the beds are made and the place looks like it could house about 50 men and includes an office for the captain of the guard.

## UPPER GATEHOUSE

2 portcullis' seal off the interior of the grounds. From the courtyard, the party can access the 2nd floor of the gatehouse, which houses the mechanism to lower and raise the gates. The room above the road has murder holes and arrow slits to help guards defend the gate, but is otherwise empty and unadorned except for a few small candles sit on the window sills and a single wooden chair.

## LOWER GATEHOUSE

2 small cylindrical towers sit on either side of the lower gate. They are about 10 feet across, just large enough for a few archers to guard the entrance. But today, the towers are dirty and seem unused. The Gate is a standard wooden door on hinges and is left open. The hinges are rusted and broken so it looks like the gate can't be closed anymore. It's probably been left open for a long time.

## THE CHAPEL

From the outside, it's pretty obvious that the chapel is in a state of disrepair. Moss clings to the walls and there are holes in the roof.



Inside, it appears to have been severely damaged in some kind of fire. There is a ruined altar on the far wall from the entrance. 3 alcoves run along both the left and right walls, but whatever shrines were held there have long since been removed. Ivy creeps inside from some of the holes in the roof. Rotted and burnt piles of wood are strewn about, probably from old pews.

If a party member uses detect magic, they will be able to tell that some kind of magic was present here, though it's faded.

Investigation check 15: Behind some of the ivy, crudely etched into the wall are a few symbols.

Religion check 18: They are symbols of Vecna. A lich who is said to have become a god.

*Setting Note: If Vecna is not a part of your campaign setting, then you can use any god of death or dark magic that would be appropriate. The deity in question does not appear in this adventure, so swapping out Vecna for some other evil deity will not adversely affect the plot. Feel free to draw the "symbols" as well.*

Investigation check 17: There is a pressure trigger on a brick next to the ruined altar. When pressed, a small passage on the floor in front of the altar opens in the floor, revealing an undercroft.

## THE UNDERCROFT

This area looks like it's the Lorabec family crypts. Generations of Lorabecs are en-

tombed here, their names engraved on coffins nestled into shelves carved into the wall. A circle is painted at the center of the room and more of those strange symbols carved onto the crumbling pillars that hold up the ceiling.

If the players want to search the coffins, they will search the nearest ones and find bones, some jewelry worth a small amount of gold and a rusty longsword. Searching all the coffins would take a long time as they are nailed shut, mostly. If they ask to peruse the names of the coffins, they will see some familiar names, namely Dorell, Vallionne, and Esme. There is even an empty coffin for Sarrault, so it would seem like they always have one prepared for the current Marquis, just in case.

Dorell's coffin contains a +2 Shield. It is triangular in shape and is made of polished steel. Embossed on the front is a ram, rampant (rearing up) surrounded by laurels.

Esme's Coffin is nailed shut but is completely empty.

Vallionne's coffin is not nailed shut. Inside is a beautifully painted portrait. It's a portrait of Eladio. His eyes are not as warm and friendly as he appears in person, but it's him alright. (See attached illustration)

*Note: If the players discovered the missing portrait from the staircase in the donjon, then you can remind them that this painting matches the style of the other portraits of the Marquis' of Argenmont and that the portrait of Sarrault was missing from the gallery.*

Investigation 17: A scone in the back pulls down, opening another sliding door at the back of the Undercroft. This short staircase leads into the Great Hall, right in front of the fireplace...connecting the chapel to the keep.





**Mysterious portrait found in a coffin.**

By Jessi Price: <https://www.instagram.com/jpricelegendary/>



## KRISSLE'S TOWER

From the courtyard, the party can see a line of smoke coming from one of the guard towers along the curtain wall. In fact, it's the Southernmost tower and lies at the exact opposite side of the grounds from the keep. When they approach, they'll see that somebody has rigged up a stove pipe chimney through the roof of this tower and made a few other modifications to it over the years.

Inside is a bed and a metal stove that's lit along with a small table and a wooden chair. On the table is a quill and inkwell. A few garments hang from a rafter. Shelves line the walls, full of personal belongings like: Pots and pans, fishing gear, some wooden figurines of animals, a few books, etc. One of the books is called "How to Make Realistic Scarecrows." Another is called "Belay've In Yourself: The Art of Rock Climbing and Repelling" The ample selection of shovels, rakes, and other tools would lead you to believe that this is where Krissle lives.

Investigation 10: You find a number of letters hidden in the pages of the books. Dozens upon dozens of them from somebody named "Babette." She writes him often and, judging from the dates, it looks like she has for years. Leafing through them, it looks like Babette keeps Krissle informed of her life over the years and the tone is that of a couple of old friends. She talks about her voyages, adventures, and eventually her marriage and family. At certain points, she alludes to the fact that Krissle helped her in some way and that she owes him a great debt of gratitude.

If the party is completely clueless, feel free to hint at the fact that maybe Krissle helped Mallery, the lost Lorabec sibling, escape the grounds and that this "Babette" is her pseudonym.

## THE NORTHERN COURTYARD

There is a small courtyard between the donjon and the curtain wall on the north side. There's a square guard tower on the wall with an open top which probably houses a ballista or catapult during times of war. From that tower is an excellent view of the borderlands. Nothing seems to be stirring. No buildings are visible. Just forest.

*Note: You can adjust the landscape description to whatever setting you're playing in..forest, jungle, desert, ice fields, etc.*

## THE GUARD TOWERS

The curtain wall is dotted with guard towers at regular distances. The towers have the remnants of bed frames, old and unused braziers, broken lanterns and other odds and ends. At one time, dozens of soldiers would have kept watch on the towers. Now, all of them are empty and in various states of disrepair, except for one (Krissle's Tower).





## THE PLOT THICKENS

After Sarrault's body has been discovered:

**Zayn** will go to the Northern Courtyard. There he can be found pacing back and forth, leafing through and scribbling in a journal. He won't be too eager to talk, but if prodded, he will say that he knows one thing about the orcs that attacked. They worship Orcus, a demon of death and the underworld. And he knows that Orcus doesn't play nice with other gods...undead or otherwise.

**Barka** will say that she doesn't trust any of you and works better alone. She'll storm off by herself.

**Thaubrey** will follow the party around for a while but once they discover the library, he will start perusing the stacks there. If threatened, he will say that something seems off about Sarrault, or the guy calling himself Sarrault.

**Eladio and Magdalena** will go investigate the scene of the orc battle and examine a few of their corpses in the courtyard. Eladio will use this as a teaching opportunity to teach Magdalena about Orc battle tactics.

**Mims** moves the body of Sarrault into the great hall, for now.

If the party goes directly to the 4th floor, they will find the doors locked. If they roll a natural 20 and pick that lock, they can investigate as explained in that room's description. In that instance, Barka's body will be found in one of the guest rooms...the one with the hidden passage behind the mirror. Her throat has been cut. She has a key in her hand. After the

party searches the area, Mims will show up like she's about to clean the rooms after.

If the party explores any place besides the 4th floor of the donjon first, Barka's body will be found outside Sarrault's room - still with a cut throat. Still clutching a key. In this case, Mims will turn up after the party has finished search both rooms on the 4th floor.

Mims will scream.

"Gods save us! Not another one! This is more than the heart can bear! We must assemble at the great hall." She will then drag the body to the hall and ring the gong to gather the guests.

## WHEREVER WE GO...

Another body has been found.

**Zayn** will become even more withdrawn and suspicious. His hand reaches towards his mace if somebody seems to move too quickly.

**Eladio** will declare that foul play is certainly afoot. Magdalena will say "Eladio, who could have done this?" to which he'll respond "Only 1 thing is for certain. Any one of us could be a killer."

If the party tells the other guests that they found a script that implies that "Sarrault" was some kind of actor, then **Magdalena** will excitedly speak up. She'll say that a traveling group of actors came to her town a year or so ago and performed a play called "The Constable's Mistress and the Magic Goose." She didn't have good seats, so she couldn't see the actors very well, but she remembered that the lead actor was named Jeromy Vanderbrie...in real life, not in the play.



Magdalena will remind the party that Sar-rault called his knights by Sir Jeromy and Sir Vanderbrie.

**Eladio** will ask what the party plans to do next, where they plan to go. Wherever they decide, he will state that he's going to investigate an area that they aren't going to...like the barracks or the guest rooms, etc. He will tell Magdalena to go to the library to try and find a copy of "The Constable's Mistress and the Magic Goose," there may be more clues hidden in the text.

**Zayn** will say nothing.

**Eladio** suggests that the entire group regroup in a half an hour, right back here. Then, the group disperses.

**Thaubrey** ventures to the Sanctuary. He tries to be sneaky.

*Note: If Eladio is followed, he will go to the barracks and appear to look around.*

## ...DANGER FOLLOWS

No matter where the party explores, the rest of the guests will reconvene in the great hall in a half hour (Except for Eladio). They are all standing around one of the tables near the entrance.

**Thaubrey** will accuse them of being late and ask as to their whereabouts.

**Magdalena** will excitedly say:

"I was in the library. I couldn't find that play that Eladio wanted, but I found this!" She produces a book, the Lorabec family tree. "It says that Lady Esme should be old. Like really really really old. 70 at least.

No way the lady we met is that old." She will look around excitedly, "I gotta tell Eladio. Where is he?"

**Thaubrey** walks over to stoke the fire. He does and when he turns back to face the rest of the group he looks at one of the large armchairs that's facing the fire and screams a high pitched scream.

Everybody rushes over to find Eladio, sitting in the chair. His throat is cut. Any medicine checks will show that he doesn't have a pulse and that he's appears to be dead.

*Note: Eladio is not dead. He has taken a potion that puts him in a coma like state and has applied fake blood to his neck and armor and has used some kind of prosthetic to show a gash on his throat.*

**Magdalena** is beside herself with grief.

**Zayn** storms off, muttering "This is vile. This is not right." (He heads to the chapel)

**Thaubrey** will sulk in a corner.

## DROPPING LIKE FLIES

The party can explore more. If they appear to be lacking in direction, especially AFTER they've defeated Vallionne, then Mims can appear and tell them that she saw Master Zayn heading to the chapel.

**Zayns** body will be found. He's been killed by what looks like a bladed weapon thrust through his chest. His journal will show his scribblings: He has been trying to decipher the magical symbols. One of them he is confident as meaning:

"Blood of the Innocent."



As night has settled in, an eerie glow emanates from the main keep - like a navy blue aura set against a starless sky. The air is deathly still. When they get back to the keep, they will hear loud arguing in the Great Hall.

When they get there, **Magdalena** is threatening **Thaubrey**. She has a dagger drawn and Thraubrey is holding a book up as a shield, yelling.

"You're crazy. I'm innocent. Get back you, you, scorpion woman."

**Magdalena** yells back,

"It was you. I know it was you. You killed Eladio. You killed all of them. This whole sissy noble bit - it's all an act. You were the only one who stayed behind during the attack. You were in the same part of the castle when Barka was killed. Aside from them,"

she nods to the party, "You were the last one back when Eladio was killed."

**Thaubrey** is flusterd,

"I do protest! I. Pro. Test. All of that is circumstantial. Why would i want to kill any of them?"

"In my literary experience, it's usually the accuser who is the real culprit. I tell you, this is no cute little street urchin. This is a mastermind for murder. This is none other than the long lost sister, MALLERY LORABEC!"

He gasps out loud as he says that.

"You gasped at your own accusation, you chode." **Magdalena** screams.

**Thaubrey** goes on,

"Think about it. The lost sibling, she's been exiled from the family for QUITE some time now but she wants what she feels is rightfully hers - Argenmont Manor. As luck would have it, she came across Eladio...a man who has an invitation to her ancestral home. She dupes him into letting her tag along and them...she starts taking out the competition. The Marquis, Sarrault, first. Next is Lady Esme. Has anybody seen her? No? Me neither. Then anybody else who started catching on to her crimes...even her friend Eladio."

If anybody questions the age differential between Mallery and Magdalena, he will dismiss is as a mere fabrication in order to further separate her from suspicion.

Angered at the accusation of killing her mentor, Eladio, Magdalena will lunch at Thaubrey with the knife. When this happens, the party has 3 options:

The party can stop her and safely disarm her. Both your and the player attempting to intercede will roll competing athletics checks—the higher roll wins. If she loses, she will relent and start sobbing.

The party can kill her, in which case she will die quickly.

The party can also do nothing, in which case she will stab Thaubrey through the eye killing him instantly.



## LIFTING THE VEIL

*If either Magdalena or Thaubrey are killed:*

The party hears a cackling laugh coming from the room. It doesn't take long to realize that the laughter is coming from the chair where the corpse of Eladio is still sitting. Eladio opens his eyes and looks at the people in the room as he stirs. If Magdalena is still alive, she will begin sobbing. She is confused and hurt.

*If the party prevents Magdalena from killing Thaubrey without killing either of them:*

Magdalena will cry a little. She's not a murderer, she was just caught up in a heated moment. She will put some distance between herself and the group...closer to the fireplace. Everyone will hear an exasperated sigh as Eladio rises from the chair his "corpse" was left sitting in. Confused, Magdalena will demand that Eladio explain himself. He will smile and say that his work requires great sacrifice and, unfortunately, there's still a little work that needs to be done. He will then produce a knife and cut her throat, thanking her for her sacrifice. Next, he will pick up his spear which was left lying nearby and arm himself with a shield. At this point he will engage with the party, if they wish to talk, and he will remark that it's too bad that you didn't let Magdalena kill the simpering little nobleman.

### **Roleplaying Eladio A.K.A. The Real Sarrault**

*Eladio may have seemed to be a charming and friendly man, but all of that is gone now. His eyes are darker, more focused, and cynical.*

*If the party had discovered his identity or had a strong suspicion, he will coolly congratulate them on their intellect and confirm that he is, in fact, the real Sarrault - The Marquis of Argenmont. Although, he'll scoff a little and say that his plan had been hampered from the beginning by the idiocy of an inept actor.*

*If the party didn't catch on to Eladio's deception, then he will say that this has gone better than he could have ever planned. And grandly state that he is the real Sarrault.*

*For generations his family has tried to expand their power through dark magic. His father peered into another realm and, for the rest of his life, was catatonic. His brother, Vallionne, became permanently disfigured and the family had to tell everyone that he died. Sarrault, however, is close. He has opened a "Soul Well" in the undercroft of the old chapel. He thinks that by offering enough lives to Vecna (or a deity of your choosing) that he will be given a great gift in return - a gift that grants immense power.*

*Sacrifice pleases dark entities...especially when those sacrificed are innocent. But, the corruption of a good soul, in the process, is even better. The plan was to have a group of travelers visit Argenmont as guests of the Marquis and systematically start sacrificing them to Vecna. However, after the first few guests wound up dead, the rest would surely suspect that the Marquis was behind it all and defend themselves. So, an actor was hired to portray Sarrault under the guise of this all being some kind of interactive theater performance. Evidence that would expose Sarrault's true identity (Like The Portrait) was hidden. Then the "good" heroes would kill the fake, but innocent, Sarrault and Vecna would be pleased.*



## Sarrault cont...

*Unfortunately the actor forgot to memorize his lines and Sarrault, along with his loyal servant Mims, had to think quickly. Luckily, an unplanned attack by orcs, who hate Vecna worship, provided enough cover to change the plan.*

*Sarrault will explain that Mims killed the fake Sarrault and then Barka - after she was snooping too close to Sarrault's room. Sarrault, with the help of a little magic and prosthetic makeup, was able to make it seem like he himself had been slain. Then he was able to isolate Zayne and kill him. With the death of Magdalena or Thaubrey by the hands of formerly "good" people, his family dream has been realized.*

*If asked, he will also tell the party that his brother stayed useful in his monstrous state. He was able to spy on people all over the castle and he controlled the animated suits of armor that guard the area. Always their mother's favorite, it was Vallionne who continuously conjured the illusion of Esme...long after her death. Sarrault sort of writes it off as a kind of sick perversion that Vallionne always suffered from, but he indulged it none-the-less as it proved to be useful.*

## THE FINAL FIGHT: PHASE 1

The fight will ensue. Sarrault is a skilled warrior and will attempt to target casters and rogues by casting hex, knocking them prone with his shield, then using his spear. He will use Misty Step to help close the gap between himself and ranged players but will always save on slot and use Misty Step to help him escape. If Mims is

alive, she will also join the fight on his side, attacking Thaubrey or Magdalena first.

## THE FINAL FIGHT: PHASE 2

*If Magdalena did not kill Thaubrey and the party did not kill her:*

If Sarrault reaches about 50 hit points and it doesn't look like he has a good chance of defeating the party outright, then he will retreat to the undercroft (Using Misty Step to get there faster).

The party will chase Sarrault to The Undercroft. The glow around the grounds has intensified. There, they will see a glowing pattern magically etched into the floor. What looks like a deep blue and purple whirlpool swirls around Sarrault, who is standing in the center.

Sarrault stands amidst the dark funnel, praying out loud for Vecna, Orcus, or any God of Darkness to hear him and accept his gift of souls and grant him power in return. He pledges that his quest to make Argenmont a true power will surely bring even more souls within the fold. The glowing symbols on the floor will begin to flicker. The funnel will become unstable and turn pure black as Sarrault will begin to twist and writhe in pain.

He will sink out of sight for a few moments and ever torch and lantern in Argenmont goes out, soon followed by the black funnel and the glowing runes. A mass of twisted flesh lies on the floor, motionless. Slowly it rises and the party can no longer recognize the figure. A grey monster with endless black voids where it's eyes should be looks at them. Sarrault has been transformed into a Bodak (Volo's 127).





*If the secret passage was discovered, then it goes straight down into the undercroft.*

*If it remains closed, it seems to seep through cracks in the floor.*

All the candles, lanterns, and torches in Argenmont glow red. Some ominous force seems to be gaining power in the undercroft. If the passage had not been discovered, it will now open slowly. Soon all of Sarrault's remains are ash, but something stirs in the undercroft. They can feel it.

Exploring the undercroft, the party sees glowing runes in a pattern on the floor. A dark blue funnel swirls at the center of the design on the floor. Sarrault's coffin magically levitates from the walls and hovers over the funnel. The party can feel an energy being drawn to it. It seems to increase in power and intensity until the coffin descends to the ground. Then everything stops and the air becomes deathly still. After a few moments, the lid slides off. A hand emerges from within, then a dark armored figure stands. If he still has a face, it's obscured by a helm. Just a pair of glowing red eyes shine through. Sarrault has become a Death Knight (MM 47).

*If Magdalena killed Thaubrey or if the party killed her:*

Sarrault will fight to the death, confident that at any moment he will be saved by the dark powers he has tried so hard to appease. When the party defeats him, he will collapse, face down. Blood trickles from the side of his armor and turns back as he angrily breathes his last breaths. He dies.

For a few moments, all is silent. Then his body will burst into a low flame. The flame will grow hotter and larger until it consumes Sarrault's body. The thick black smoke seems to have a will of its own as it travels:

Sarrault will stand for a moment, admiring his newfound power, before he addresses the party.

"Finally. I have achieved what generations of Lorabecs could not. I have ascended. Now, Argenmont can be the center of a new power. From here, I can build forces that will shake the pillars of the earth. In a way, I have you to thank for this - even if you may not have been willing volunteers. Perhaps you can still be useful? Or you could all die here."

4 Shadows (MM 269) will emerge from the shadows to defend their new lord. Are they the subjugated spirits of the other guests?



The dark lord will offer the party a place within his kingdom by helping him build his forces. He will ask the party to recruit more people to serve this new Argenmont and to help him raise an army from the dead, if need be. He will say that the party could even be useful in assassinating individuals who could try and oppose him. If she is still alive, a broken and exasperated Magdalena will reluctantly join him. She feels guilty for the death of Thaubrey and she realizes she's gone too far down this path to turn back.

If they refuse, Sarrault will attack. Magdalena will stand in the corner and watch without participating. As it's highly unlikely that the party can defeat this overwhelming force, it's advised that they flee for their lives.

## THE END

### *If Sarrault is defeated*

As he dies (in either form), Sarrault falls on his stomach and writhes in pain before reaching out for something unseen. He makes no sound, he just freezes in place for a moment before crumbling into ash. Starting at his fingertips, he slowly disintegrates into small, black piles on the floor. The candles and torches all fade out. But, even though it's dark...it feels like a weight has lifted from Argenmont.

Wandering out into the courtyard, Krissle will nod approvingly at the party. He doesn't smile, but it seems as though some weight has been lifted off him as well. He takes the party through the entire castle and points out several things that may be of value for the party to take as a reward.

Fill in a list of your own for items that are appropriate for the kind of game you want to run. Some suggestions from a plot



perspective include:

- ♦ Sarrault's Spear: A +1 Spear with the ability to cast "Misty Step" as a bonus action once per long rest. Must be attuned.
- ♦ Vallionne's Eye: Grants the nothic's weird insight ability
- ♦ Vallionne's Seeing Stone: The cracked orb can be used to see what's going on where one of the cloudy blue stones is placed. They can collect 4 of the stones.

The land has been liberated from the control of Sarrault, the last Marquis of Argenmont. This will certainly shake up the power structure of the realm, but since the border has been quiet for some time, there doesn't seem to be any immediate threat.



It would seem that the Lorabec family has been dabbling in the dark arts for years. What began as a way to liven up banquets eventually became the family obsession for generations. As their power and influence waned from years of squander and isolation, their desperation turned them to those magics even more - even after their meddling caused several family tragedies.

#### Roleplay Ideas:

As a DM, you can choose to award Argenmont to the party and incorporate any estate management rules you like to keep this going.

#### ***If Sarrault defeats the party as a Bodak***

After the party died at the hands of the hideous creature that the Marquis of Argenmont was transformed into, an eerie gloom permanently settles over the land. Krissle is never seen or heard from again. For years, local villagers will avoid the abandoned manor. Those brave enough to venture too close say that the grounds smell of death and decay and that birds refuse to fly over Argenmont. Rumors say a group of evil warriors attended a ball at Argenmont only to torture and kill the Lorabec family. Others theorize that The Marquis was dabbling in black magic himself and killed his guest. Nobody alive knows the truth.

#### ***If Sarrault defeats the party as a Death Knight***

Over the next few months, something begins to stir in Argenmont. At first, it was just the whispers of villagers and farmers. Superstitious peasants murmur about shadowy figures lurking at the edge of settlements, always just out of sight. Then, somebody's son goes missing. A hunter

disappears. Travelers begin to report that it looks like Argenmont has been more active. They were used to guard towers going unmanned all these years, but people say more torches seem to be lit at night. The lower gate gets fixed and patrols are seen again, always from afar. Funny, there hasn't been any call for recruits or conscripts, at least publicly. Yet somehow the Marquis is building an army - but for what purpose?

#### ***If the party is defeated sooner***

On nights where he's had too much to drink, Declan, the carriage driver, will tell stories of being paid the Marquis of Argenmont to shuttle passengers to and from the manor. The only thing is, he only seems to be taking people TO Argenmont - never FROM. After the second group of "dinner party guests" did not require a trip home, he began to grow suspicious. He'll mutter that he thinks something evil is going on up on that hill, he can feel it in his bones. But, even when drunk, he knows to not talk too much or too loudly because who knows? If the wrong person is listening, his next ride up may be his last.

#### **Credits:**

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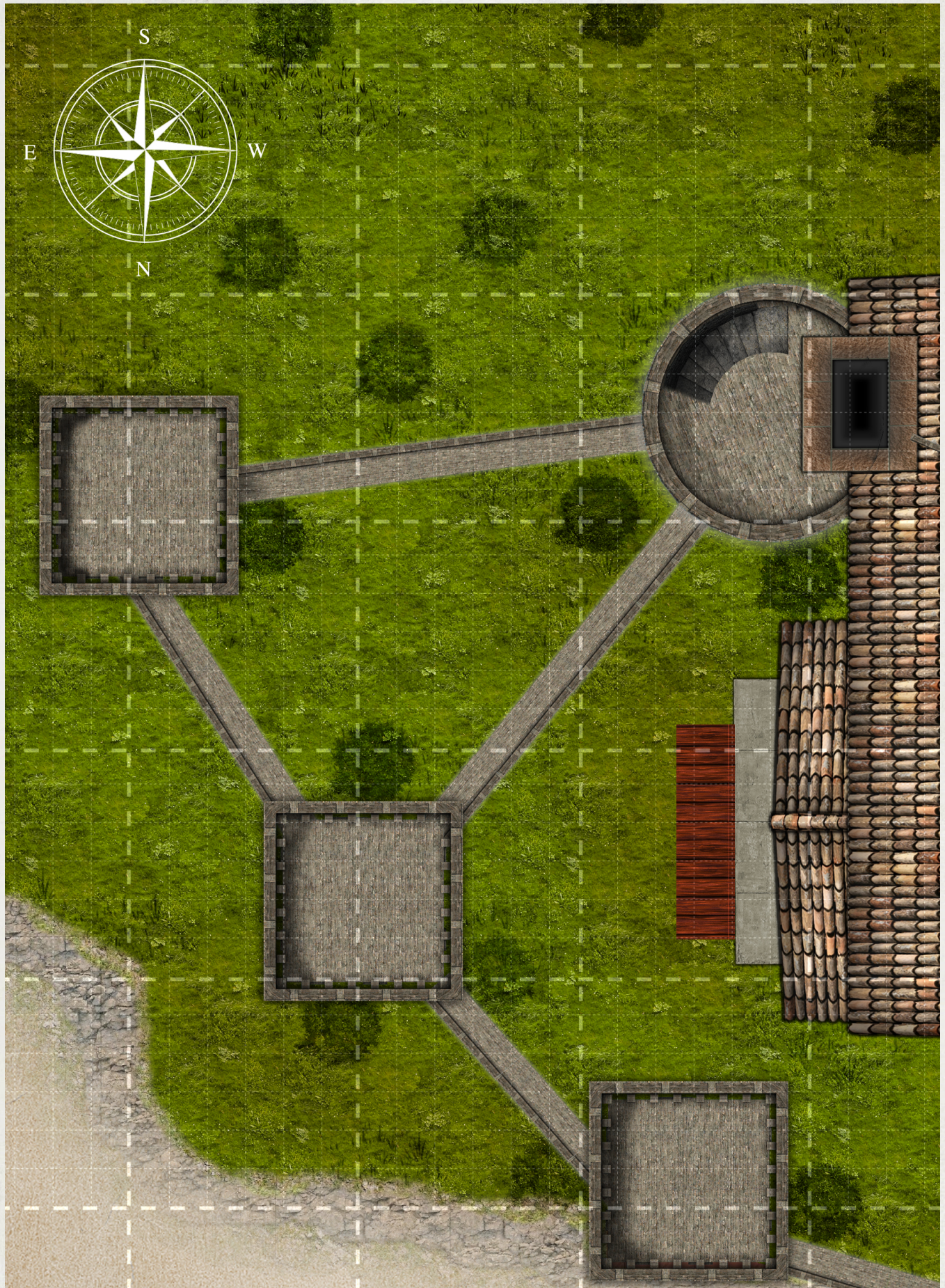
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# Key

1. Lower Gatehouse
2. Upper Gatehouse
3. Barracks
4. Stable
5. Chapel
6. Donjon
7. Great Hall
8. Esme's Tower
9. Balcony
10. Northern Courtyard
11. Princess' Garden
12. Vallionne's Tower
13. Krissle's Tower
14. Drum Tower
15. Guard Towers