

WRATH OF THE RIGHTEOUS 11/23/2014

Attendance

Chris explains that he just got his eighth-level Cleric powers. *Paul* is confused, “I thought you said you just got your *Hate* level powers.”

Chris points out, “Yes. My character is built upon a *Pathfinder* prestige class based on the Marvel character *Hatemaster*.”

Bruce merely picks out *holy smite* for his character. He reasons that there are likely to be a lot of evil creatures in his future. Based upon the ongoing conversation, many of them are likely to be skinheads of various stripes.

Patrick nods silently. The evil creatures must die. They are all against him, they all must die...

Nobody understands where *Tim* and *Matt* are. *Georgina* mourns the possibility that they have eloped together.

Ernest keeps silent. He knows the truth.

<i>Character</i>	<i>Player</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Level</i>
Tabregon	Bruce	Male Half-elf Oracle of Iomedae, Touched by Divinity	8M2
Tsuguri Chiba	Chris	Male Cleric of Tsukiyo, Child of the Crusades	8M2
Antonius	Ernest	Male Tien Monk/Paladin of Irori, Stolen Fury	8M2
Trystan	Matt	Male Half-elf Paladin of Shelyn, Touched by Divinity	8M2
Shawanda	Patrick	Female Mwangi Paladin of Iomedae, Exposed to Awfulness	8M2
Calanthe	Tim	Female aasimar Sorcerer of Shelyn, Riftwarden Orphan	8M2

In the Dungeons of Drezen

The characters are in the dungeons of Citadel Drezen, accompanied by *Sosiel Vaenic*. Sosiel is eager to find his lover *Aron Kir*, a former (and maybe current) shadowblood addict who wandered into the dungeons looking for demons to suck on. Shudder. They have also captured the tiefling wizard *Corusina*, who had been performing some kind of horrifying evil ritual when the characters arrived. None of the characters are able to understand what the ritual was for, so the characters decide to transport her back through the Hot Forge Room and park her in the one surviving anti-magic cell.

The door beyond the ritual chamber leads to a short hallway, perhaps thirty feet long and angled to the left. Beyond that is another hall and stairs leading down to an iron door. *Shawanda* listens at the door and hears nothing, so she elects to check for traps... paladin-style: she opens the door.

Hall of the Sword of Valor

The hall beyond is lined with glowing red crystals and carvings of demonic entities. At the end is an iron framework with a red banner hanging upon it. *Shawanda* announces, "This must be it!" She heads into the hall. Midway down the hall is a large alcove containing a very large life-like statue of *Deskari*, Demon Lord of locusts.

Tsuguri complains, "My language skills might be failing me, but I don't understand why the *Sword of Valor* is a banner."

Antonius explains that there is a picture of a sword on the banner. He and *Tabregon* pick it up. As soon as they touch it, the murals along the hall disgorge five figures that exactly resemble *Deskari*! They attack everyone except *Tabregon*!

The faux *Deskari*s inflict fear attacks upon most of the characters, their effects muted by *Shawanda*'s aura of courage. *Sosiel* still fails! He is the only one to not realize that the *Deskari* figures are *phantasmal killers*. He dies of fear!

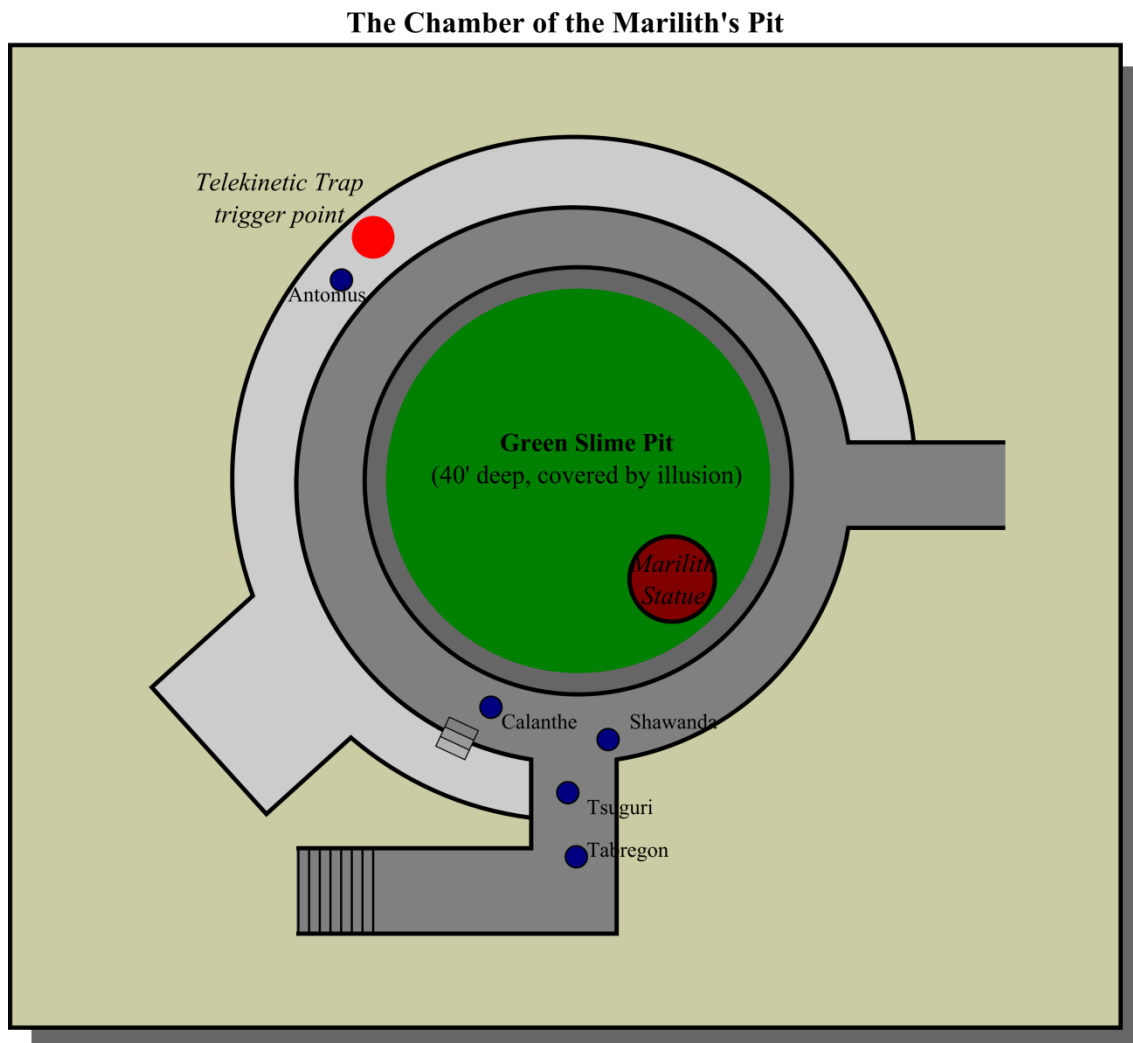
Tsuguri slaps a cure spell upon *Sosiel*. He opens his eyes again and glares at *Tsuguri* with hatred. *Tsuguri* notes, "Well, that's not uncommon." He only becomes concerned when *Sosiel* rises to his feet and draws his weapon.

Shawanda reassures him, "We all love you! You're surrounded by friends!" *Sosiel* brandishes a *gargoyle ranseur* at them, unwilling to let them draw close.

Calanthe flings a *dispel magic* at Sosiel. She discovers that Sosiel is not actually under a spell – he has merely been driven permanently insane. Tabregon uses mythic power to produce a *hold person* spell, freezing Sosiel in place. Antonius chokes him out. “There there, there there...” Calanthe brings out the manacles.

The characters are about to congratulate themselves on their (relatively) easy victory until they realize that the *Sword of Valor* is also an illusion. The only things in the corridor that are real are the murals of demons going antiquing. The characters note the skill with which the murals were carved and start to wonder what the artistic talents of the cultists they have killed might have been.

The Marilith's Pit



The characters pass through the doors, down a corridor, up some stairs, down another corridor, down some stairs, along another and so on, until they enter a large chamber. A five-foot ledge runs around a giant circular pit twenty feet deep. Another ledge above parallels it. Down in the pit, the giant statue of a six-armed, snake-bodied woman bearing six unusual weapons glares upon the doorway. It is a statue of the marilith general *Aponavicius*.

Many things in the area detect as magical, including the floor of the pit. A bit of testing with a crossbow bolt shows that the floor of the pit is just an illusion. The characters decide that the best plan is to approach with care. Antonius leads the way, moving carefully around the upper arcade. Midway along, he discovers that the entire room is a trap: a telekinetic surge activates, pushing everyone to the pit! Shawanda and Tsuguri are both flung down into the depths! Even worse, it turns out that the pit is full of green slime that burns!

Tsuguri uses his dragonscale to *levitate* himself and Shawanda out of the pit upon a silver cloud. They are still covered with green slime, so Calanthe uses *burning hands* to roast the slime off. Tsuguri uses the power of the scale to slowly rotate around to ensure that the slime is all evenly burned away. Shawanda uses her remarkable strength of will to avoid cursing Calanthe's name as she burns. Tabregon uses mythic *cure serious wounds* to restore their hit points and ability damage.

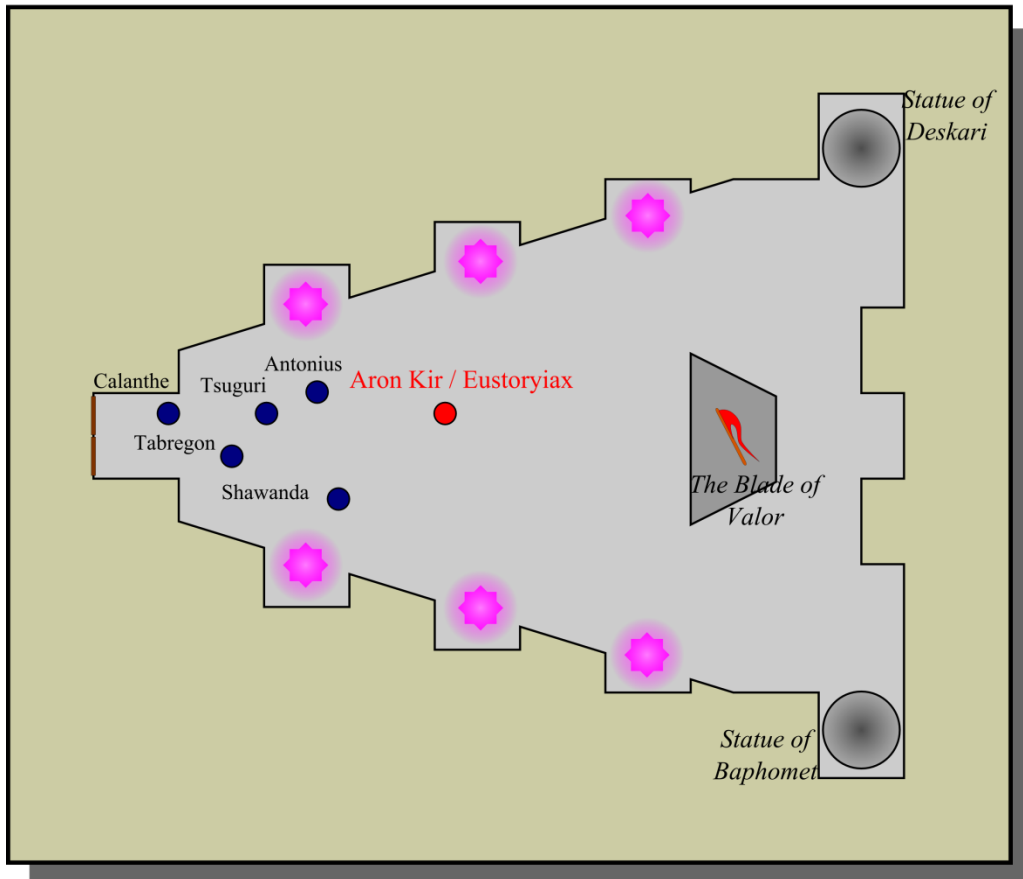
The characters *levitate* their way across the chamber very carefully, pulled across on a rope by Antonius.

The Chamber of the Banner

The characters enter an oddly-shaped chamber dominated by massive statues of Baphomet and Deskari. Seven crystals, massive and *evil*, decorate niches along the walls, three on either side and one against the far wall. A tattered banner bearing the image of a blade lies upon a marble slab before the far wall. As a final charming touch, the entire area is engulfed in *deeper darkness* until Tabregon uses *daylight* to dispel it.

Aron Kir is here, standing with shortsword drawn. He insists that he must protect the *Sword of Valor*. Antonius, Tsuguri and Tabregon slowly advance upon him, attempting to talk sense into him. They do not succeed.

Hall of the Blade of Valor



Calanthe casts *haste*, and then *levitate*. Aron Kir responds by casting a *fireball*, a unique *fireball* that requires a Will save. Shawanda and Calanthe are both gulled by the shadow magic and take awful burns. The others see through it and are only mildly scorched.

Antonius hurls himself upon Aron Kir, pummeling the man into unconsciousness. With the possessed victim down, Antonius girds his mental loins against the impending emergence of a shadow demon. Tsuguri goes around dispensing *communal protection from evil* to keep the demons away. Tabregon tosses some healing towards Calanthe.

It does not take long for what the characters anticipate to become real. Aron Kir's body twitches and the awful smoky shape of the shadow demon *Eustoyriax* emerges from him, accompanied by his shadowy pets *Bitey*, *Toothy*, and *Hurtful*. He launches a telekinetic attack, grapping hold of Shawanda! She is flung across the room, back through the doorway and into the pit! Not back into the pit! Waaaaaaaah!

The others groan as they hear the splash of Shawanda falling into the green slime. Calanthe mourns her choice to have not thrown a *fireball* down the pit. An instant later they hear a thundering splash as Shawanda uses *spider climb* and *haste* to surge back out of the pit.

Antonius kicks on *smite evil* and goes for Eustoryiax with his bare hands. He discovers that shadow demons are immune to a lot of effects, and that *mythic* shadow demons have even more tricks at their disposal, including mythic damage resistance that blocks most harm. Tabregon distracts the creature with a *holy smite*.

Calanthe summons two lantern archons to unleash a series of light-beam attacks against Eustoryiax. She is disappointed to see the demon effortlessly evade their beams – the demon is insubstantial and has a truly excellent touch AC. Dismayed, she flings a vial of alchemist's fire at the creature. Her throw is horribly wide – the vial spirals off into the pit, burning a five-foot section of green slime clean.

One of Calanthe's lantern archons manages to hit Eustoryiax with a light beam, discovering to its horror that mythic shadow demons are not vulnerable to light attacks. Eustoryiax shrugs off the attack. Calanthe grumbles as she drops a *fireball* into the pit of green slime, burning the rest of the stuff away.

Eustoryiax turns its attention to Antonius, clawing and biting him with wounds that turn black from cold. Shawanda moves up to the rest of the group, cutting at green slime as she does. As she draws closer to Tabregon he blesses her with mythic *cure moderate wounds*, restoring her to health.

Eustoryiax, surrounded on all sides, launches another shadow *fireball* right at his feet. Kaboom! Everyone is burned!

Antonius uses mythic power to attack Eustoryiax many times. The shadow demon is badly hurt! Eustoryiax strikes back, again wounding Antonius. Tsuguri moves in with healing magic, restoring Antonius to health.

Shawanda marks Eustoryiax with his *smite evil* and slashes at him! He is critically wounded! Tabregon unleashes *holy smite* and burns the shadow demon again! Calanthe follows up with *magic missiles*, blasting clean through the demon's spell resistance and snipping a few trailing shadows off the sides of the creature.

Eustoryiax turns to see Antonius glaring at him. Antonius strikes, grabbing the demon's heart and crushing it! The demon vanishes except for a strange purple light that grants everyone an additional mythic tier! It is the Quickening!

The Sword of Valor Is Restored!

Antonius touches the tattered Sword of Valor! Its powers activate in his hands. It has two basic powers:

- Carried as a banner before a military unit, it provides the commander a +4 DV and +4 OM bonus.
- Mounted upon a fortification wall, it creates a 10-mile area within which demons and their servants are unable to *teleport* and suffer a -4 AC penalty. Once per month, a worshipper of Iomedae may summon a planetar for a period of a day. Any non-evil creature that sleeps near the *Sword of Valor* becomes immune to fear effects.

The characters take the *Sword of Valor* back to the main hall of the Citadel of Drezen and place it upon the walls.

The Crystals

The glowing crystals in Eustoyriax's chamber radiate faint chaos and evil. They are clearly drawn from the lower planes. They are the sort of thing that a lower-planar interior decorator would use, but not a source of significant Abyssal power. They are not the same shade as the nahendrion crystal energy that charges evil creatures up with mythic power (or kills them). Tabregon *shatters* one. It just breaks and flickers out.

Radiance Strengthens!

The liberation of Drezen and recovery of the *Sword of Valor* increases *Radiance's* powers. Its enhancement bonus goes up by +1, making it a +3 weapon.

Return from the Dungeons

While the characters have been down in the dungeons a *sending* from the Queen of Mendev arrived indicating that more soldiers are quickly upon their way to reinforce the Citadel.

The Madness of Sosiel

The characters carefully bring Sosiel back around and show him Aron Kir (now recovered from possession). Sosiel shows no sign of recognizing Aron Kir, nor does he seem to have recovered from his madness.

Corusina's Ritual

Calanthe finds out that the tiefling sorceress Corusina is irredeemably evil. She has tattoos that allow her to be possessed by demons on demand and seems very committed to the demonic agenda. Calanthe uses *Terendelev's scale* and her own native charms to draw Corusina out and talk about her ritual.

Corusina explains that she was once the Seneschal of the castle. With the collapse of the outer defenses she gathered what cultists she could and started a ritual to destroy the citadel. Her goal was to create a new rift of the Worldwound right through the castle, sending the *Sword of Valor* tumbling straight into the Abyss. She notes that the demons didn't remove the *Sword of Valor* from the citadel because it has its own *dimensional anchor* effect, and they don't much like touching it besides.

The western wall included a portal leading to Aponavicius' personal planar realm. It is now sealed off. The *Sword of Valor* will keep it from being reactivated, though Aponavicius might be able to reopen it personally.

The Queen of Mendev's Army

Queen Galfrey of Mendev's army appears at the gates of Drezen under the command of *Irabeth Tirablade*. She has the Riftwarden *Aravashnial* (now with his eyesight restored) and her wife *Anevia Tirablade* at her side. The army is accompanied by a long supply train including many artisans, craftsmen, and workers. She bears a letter from Queen Galfrey urging the characters to continue their efforts to liberate Drezen and the territory around it and stating her belief that their works have brought victory closer for the crusade.

Also in the letter, Irabeth is granted the rank of Commander and given leadership over the Citadel of Drezen. Irabeth appoints Anevia the Spymaster and places Aravashnial in charge of magical defenses. Aron Kir is given the title of Warden and

placed in command over the guards. Antonius seconds the tiefling *Uziel* to Anevia as a lieutenant.

Eliminating the whispering voices of the cursed souls from the dungeons will probably require a *hallow* spell, which the characters cannot yet cast. They can *consecrate* some of the despoiled shrines, which will help but not completely reverse it.

Aron Kir's Proposal

Aron Kir approaches Calanthe with a proposal. He admits that the characters do not have the magical powers to help Sosiel, but he is familiar with drugs and other substances that might help. He urges the characters to allow an alchemist or herbalist (other than him) to try that approach upon Sosiel. Calanthe tells the others about this, and Antonius asks *Uziel* the tiefling to find out if there are any alchemists in the army.

Some Loot Distribution

Tabregon hands a *pearl of power* (2nd level) to Tsuguri. He accepts a scroll of *dispel magic*. Calanthe picks up a scroll of *dimension door* and a *ring of protection* +2. The characters give Aravashnial a *headband of vast intelligence* +2 (Sense Motive). Antonius gets a *cloak of resistance* +2.

The Corruption Forge

The characters send *Joran Vhane* to attempt to redeem the Corruption Forge, but he does not have the knowledge needed. Aravashnial has the knowledge, but does not have the item crafting skills. The two of them plus a *hallow* spell should be able to reclaim the forge in time.

The Kellid Barbarian Jestak

The characters took the pledge of the female Kellid barbarian *Jestak* some time ago. She is originally from Numeria, and her tribe was trained in siege engineering by the mages of the Technic League. The technomages were not gentle in their approach – they forced the barbarians to work at robot gunpoint. That lasted until the Technic League sold the barbarians to the demons in exchange for interesting demonic magic tricks. She has spent her entire life under the domination of one evil master or another.

Calanthe decides to vouch for her and bring her around to the side of good. The characters place her in charge of constructing siege engines for the citadel. To ensure that she doesn't betray them, all of the characters convince her that they will hunt her to the ends of the earth if she does.

Reconstructing Drezen

The city of Drezen is currently considered to be "ruined". People are filtering in, and will ultimately bring the population of the city to about 2000. Restoring the city will require 60 recovery points. There are several ways to get recovery points:

- One per day spent healing
- One per 500 gp of completed buildings or organizations
- One per 1000 gp of magic items created and given to the city
- And so on.

The characters spend two weeks assisting with the reconstruction. Tabregon and Tsuguri set up a hospital and perform healing activities (20 recovery points). After selling various bits of the loot the characters have obtained, each character gains 15,286.77 gold pieces. Several characters donate money to the construction effort:

- 2000 gold and building construction supervision from Antonius (4 points)
- 14,000 gold for construction, one week of healing and one week of magical sendings from Tsuguri (42 points)
- 10,000 gold for construction and 2 weeks of healing from Tabregon (34 points)
- 6000 gold for construction from Shawanda (12 points)

This is more than enough to reconstruct the city, though the full effort will take more than two weeks to actually finish.

A Knot of Cultists

The characters elect to spend their time exploring the area immediately around the city. They elect to start by scouting along the two rifts near the city (one of them paralleling the Ahari River that cuts through the city) for two days. On the second day the characters find a cave. There are some oddly deformed creatures outside – one looks like

a coyote with lobster claws on its forelegs. The other is a desert eagle with tentacles instead of wings. They look like they have been staked out, possibly as pets or guards.

Tsuguri places *silence* upon a rock. Antonius flings the rock between the creatures to suppress their cries, then the characters move between them as they (silently) bark and cry out.

Inside the cave, someone has tried to make the place look a bit more like home. There are some blankets on the walls and a few bits of furniture around. Antonius *invisibly* and stealthily moves forward into the next cave. He finds a room with an operating table. A lizard with a giant scorpion's tail is strapped to the table. Three human women dressed in matronly clothing are working upon it. They carry falchions and detect as both evil and chaotic.

"Oh!" says one of the women, "I am convinced this will be our best monster yet! Much better than the octo-eagle!"

"Yes, why did we ever think replacing the eagle's wings would be a good idea?"

"But it has a tremendous ability to swim!"

"It cannot breathe water, sister!"

"My octo-eagle shall be the terror of the high seas! Imagine a flock of them coming out of the water to attack a merchant vessel!"

Antonius returns to the others to explain that they are in the Cave of the Moreau Sisters. He returns to chat with the women. Meanwhile, Tabregon makes friends with the claw-ote. It licks his hands. Tsuguri throws a pebble at him.

Meanwhile, Antonius finds out that the women are using the locally strong Abyssal energies to make monsters to please their mother. He asks them, "Who is your mother?"

One of the women answers Antonius' disembodied voice, "Mother Lamashtu, of course! The Lady of Monsters, the Mother of Madness! Are you a devotee of Lamashtu as well? Where is our promotional literature?"

Outside, Calanthe casts mythic *haste* and sends Tsuguri and Shawanda in with weapons drawn. As soon as they see the other characters the three Lamashtu cultists start casting spells and drinking potions. While they're just turning *invisible* this doesn't seem too bad, but things start to get more serious when one of them tries to cast *flame strike*.

Shawanda puts a stop to that nonsense, shattering the spell. Then Tsuguri turns on his *aura of madness* and confuses the *invisible* priestess.

Antonius decides that he'd best take some aggressive action. He appears from *invisibility* and grapples another priestess, starting the process of choking her out. She invokes a *surge of strength* and almost breaks free, but doesn't quite manage it. He continues his grasp until she drops.

Calanthe perforates the un-grappled priestess with mythic *magic missiles*. The priestess responds by turning on her own *aura of madness*. Everyone resists the effect.

Shawanda steps towards the corner of the chamber and swings, hoping to find the invisible priestess. She succeeds! The priestess takes a hit, becomes visible, and swings at Shawanda with her falchion. Shawanda lets the priestess's blade glance harmlessly off her breastplate, and then stabs her deeply.

The critically wounded priestess heals herself. Some of her wounds close up! But then Calanthe hits with more *magic missiles* and creates some new wounds. The priestess decides that this is obnoxious and throws *blindness* at Calanthe, who shrugs off the effect. Tabregon hammers the priestess with his morningstar, critically wounding her. And Calanthe ends the encounter with a couple of *magic missiles*, knocking down the remaining priestesses.

They hacw a considerable quantity of nice treasure, plus a heft load of country-clutter style décor, which the group packs up. After that the heroes decide to go back to town to drop off the country clutter, clawyote and the octopeagle, There, Irabeth tells them a tale of a missing priest of Erastil. They investigated the Erastil shrine in Drezen and found heretical texts that described the location of a hidden tomb of an ancient heretic and they decided the priest must have been seduced by heresy and gone to find the tomb.

The group heads out and explores for a couple days. They have not yet found the tomb, but they are ambushed by a fearsome dweirgeth, which they kill.

The End of the Session

The session ends with the Crusade's control of the Citadel of Drezen restored and the characters having dispersed a cell of Lamashtu cultists nearby.