

TFT: Tower of the Moon

Our Group

Player	Character	Description	Type
Chris	Harbben	Tough Warrior	Hero
Ernest	Karla Dawn Spark	Feisty Mage	Mage
Patrick	Taetzewisp	Elf Archer	Hero
Tim	Agbor Ironfoot	Dwarf Axeman	Hero
reserve	Lelika Vecky	Quick Fencer	Hero
reserve	Delbin Truemoon	Scholarly Aristocrat	Hero
reserve	Mary Nettles	Forest Witch	Hero
reserve	Charles Mux	Creator Mage	Mage

Bruce is pleased that he has been able to draw the rest of the group into something that has obsessed him for close on thirty years. *Tim* admits that he has yet to really try to understand the TFT rules. *Ernest* has a more pressing issue – his entire closet hanging system collapsed during the night, and he mostly slept through the whole event. *Chris* could only hope that his closet would collapse, because that would bring him some surcease from the endless, existential dread. And *Patrick* is off on Amazon, shopping for “existential dread” because that’s what modernity has wrought for us.

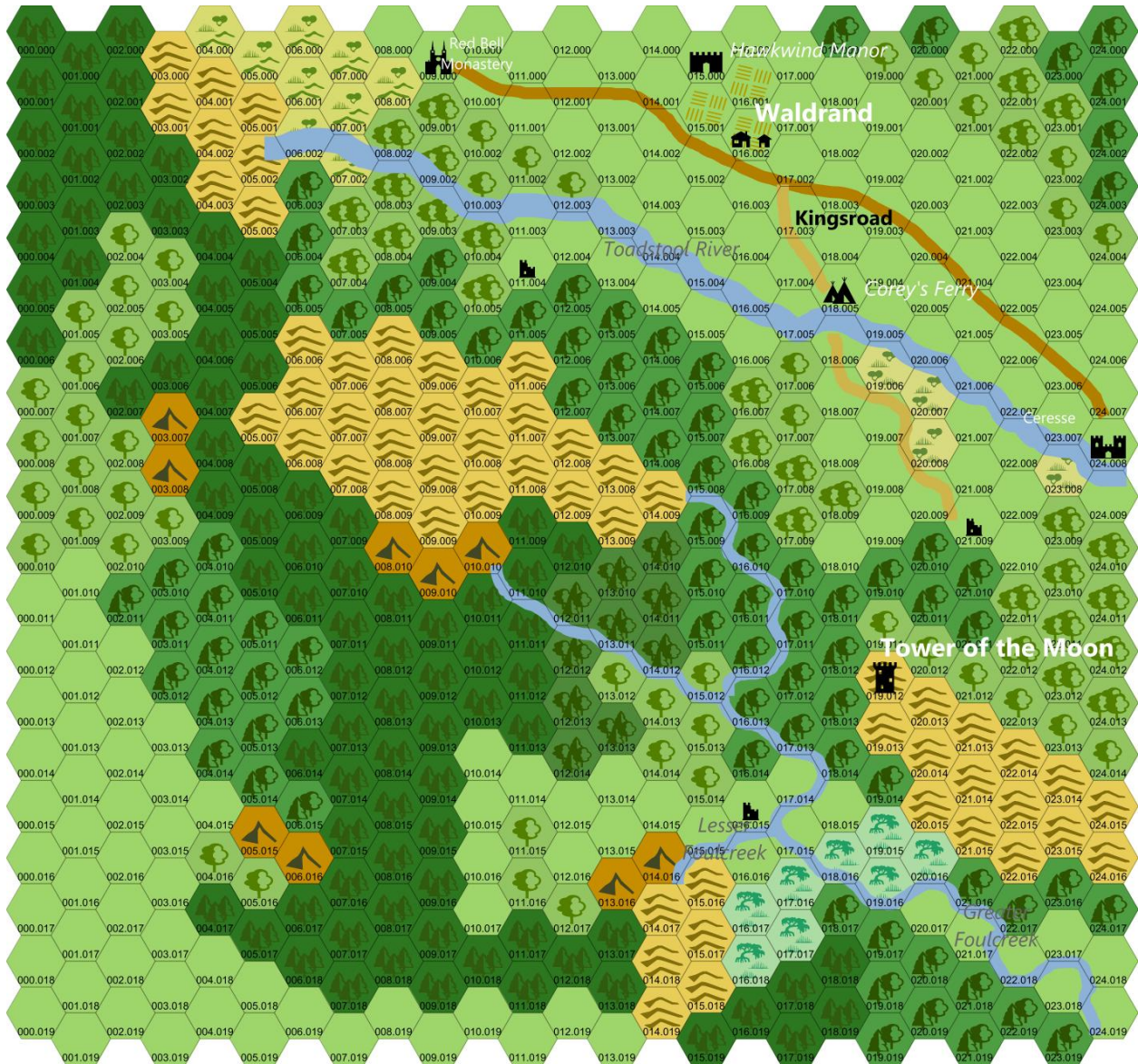
And *Paul* has no concern for any of this, especially the dread, because he and *Michael* are off having a grand time cruising the open seas!

The Village of Waldrand

The group is drinking at the *Sign of the Thirsty Wolf*, the only inn in the village of Waldrand. They’re really just passing through, going from the Red Bell Monastery to the fortress town of Ceresse (and beyond), but Waldrand is convenient. While they’re there, the rather inebriated locals regale them with a terrible story about the fall of the goddess Lukariel and her associated wolf-cult. The core of the story is that the necromancer *Mordark* engineered the destruction of the cult and its priestess *Artesia* after she rebuffed his advances, and that ever since then the Tower of the Moon that had been the center of the religion has been a rather forbidding ruin.

The reason for these stories comes clear when the middle-aged and very proper butler *Gervalt* introduces himself. He works for the Duke Hawkwind family, who rule over all the lands around and who have a manor to the northwest. They have come upon sad times, made even sadder after the family’s eldest daughter and heir *Mariya* assembled a group to go recover the treasures of the Tower of the Moon. They have been gone for days, *Mariya*’s mother is beside herself in concern, and *Gervalt* has been given the task of arranging the girl’s safe return. In exchange, he is offering \$2000 in gold – the bulk of what is left in the family treasury.

Being adventurers, the characters agree to help Gervalt almost as a side matter. They're very willing to go rescue doomed adventuring parties from terrible locations, but that is hardly the most important of their issues. *Agbor Ironfoot* tells Gervalt that he has one metal peg leg and likes quoting the *Adeptus Mechanicus*.



Harbben drinks from his mug and asks the others, “Do you think they use both feet to make the beer? I hope they wash them first.”

Agbor corrects him, “No, you wouldn’t want them to do that. That’s where the flavor comes from.”

Karla muses, “Perhaps this is wolf-piss lager. They do seem to like their wolves.”

Agbor offers, “I bet this comes from the local monastery. The taste comes from the monks’ feet. Also, the rats that died in the vats.”

Gervalt glares at all of them, but he does it politely. He confirms the details of the story the locals told, including the important detail that the Cult of Lukariel included a lot of werewolves, who served as temple guards and who were mostly driven mad by Mordark's poisons.

Harbben tells the butler, "In my country, being a werewolf is a no-no. Also a witch, a Frankenstein, or a mummy. We have a lot of taboos."

Gervalt attempts to redirect the conversation, "You look like you might be willing to inflict a lot of violence. And are interested in money."

Karla nods enthusiastically, "And syphilis!"

Taetzelwisp the devastatingly attractive and androgynous elf looks up from his courtship of a relatively comely local, "I cover the syphilis!"

Oddly, this admission doesn't dissuade the local drunks he's making time with. One of them warbles out, "Its fancy, it's a rich man's disease!"

Gervalt finally tells the characters, "Bring her back, and whatever companions you can find. If all you can do is bring back her remains, that is still worth half of the fee."

Taetzelwisp has one final question, "If she comes back with syphilis, does that count as damaged?"

Gervalt has no response.

Gearing Up

The characters take stock of the situation. They expect a lot of werewolves, so silver things are necessary. Waldrand is not a big place and specialty goods are rare, so the characters are only able to purchase 5 silver arrows and 2 silver daggers. Harbben takes one silver dagger. *Taetzelwisp* takes all the silver arrows. He has a silver dagger, but notes that with his delicate construction he has no intention of going hand-to-hand with a werewolf. Agbor can't use daggers, but takes one anyway. Karla just complains about how nobody gives her a dagger.

While the characters are dividing up their purchases, a one-eared local farmer tells them that the old Lord Hawkwind had the blacksmith craft Mariya a silver dagger for her birthday once. She has always carried it, ever since.

Taetzelwisp cautions the others, "You realize that just using silver doesn't kill werewolves. They're very tough, and you still need to hit them a lot."

Harbben reassures the slightly-built elf, "That's how we'll deal with it. Hammer them until they're juice, then I kill it with the dagger. And restrict the silver arrows to obvious werewolves."

The Journey to the Tower

The Tower of the Moon is not far away, but unfortunately it is on the wrong side of the Toadstool River. There isn't a bridge, but there is a ferry station. The characters find that Corey's Ferry is full of Japanese people, pretending to be First Nations for some reason. Their leader assures Karla, "We are Indians. You see, we have tipis!"

Karla ignores him. She pays the fare for ferry service and everyone gets across the river with little excitement.

The reason for the unusual behavior of the ferry people is partially explained by the fact that the only recent structure on the other side of the river is a military outpost that has clearly been abandoned, apparently due to budget cuts. Someone hammered a sign reading, "F*** Margaret Thatcher" into the overgrown grass in front of the place.

Outside the Tower

The characters travel south for a bit and find the Tower of the Moon easily. Along the way, Harbben asks Agbor, "You're a dwarf, but you can read. How did that happen?"

Agbor explains, "I learned to read in dwarf school, but then I wrote a treatise on how magnets aren't real and they expelled me."

Taetzelwisp offers, "I can read, but only in Elvish. I wrote a book of elvish erotic poetry!" He produces it and gives it to Karla to examine.

Karla isn't impressed, "Shouldn't it have more words, and fewer pictures?"

Taetzelwisp points, "Look! That must be the tower!" That effectively ends the conversation.

The Tower of the Moon is hard to miss. It stands on a featureless hill overlooking the woodland. It is five stories high, with a narrow stair rising to a foreboding gate carved like a wolf's open jaws. There are several visible windows, all of them defended with metal bars.

This Place Has Ruffians!

Karla summons a rat to act like a scout. It appears, then drops over dead. Harbben picks it up and stores it for later. Taetzelwisp objects because he wanted to squeeze it to freshen up his ale.

Harbben tries the gate. It opens easily into a short corridor. He notices but disregards the four murder holes above him, then proceeds inside with caution, the others a short distance behind him. He can hear someone to the right. He speaks and challenge and *Gretal Bloodhawk* emerges. She is a tough-looking woman, and she asks the obvious question, "Who are you?" Her ally *Conroy the Sailor* emerges as well, clutching a spear. The characters can see that he is hurt.

Agbor yells out, "We are looking for a missing princess. Were you bit by a werewolf?"

Conroy angrily denies it, "By the Bloody Sails of St. Sigimund, no!"

The two groups have a short discussion on joining forces that goes nowhere. When the whispery-voiced *Starkad* emerges to complete the trio of ruffians and starts talking about how the Hawkwind family would be sure to increase their promised reward if the characters and their new allies were to send them severed pieces of the girl, everyone knows that the negotiations have really ended. Karla casts a 3-Hex Fire and engulfs the ruffians in flames.

Combat is truly joined when Taetzelwisp shoots Conroy and Karla bonks Gretal with her striking staff, though Gretal's armor is the equal of the attack. Agbor and Harbben move in to trap Gretal in the flames. They don't fail to notice that Starkad retreats back to a place where he isn't burning, but also isn't able to help out his companions. The loyalty runs deep with that one.

Then things go very badly for the ruffians. Harbben ends Conroy with a sword strike and Agbor lands a fatal hammer hit upon Gretal. He howls out, "I call this the Shortener!"

Starkad examines his fallen comrades. He tells the characters, "I never trusted those guys..." He offers to ally with the characters in exchange for a share of the reward.

Agbor suggests, "Maybe you could cut off a finger as a sign of value? That would be an example of non-fungible work, as the tech-bros would call it."

Starkad doesn't really seem to understand what Agbor is talking about. Karla threatens him, but isn't able to make her threats stick. He moves back into the remains of a very-thoroughly looted kitchen and looks set to make a last stand.

Taetzelwisp stands comfortably out of reach and lands arrow after arrow into Starkad in an effort to make him see reason. After four arrows, he surrenders and promptly offers to join up with the characters.

Agbor tells him, "Why don't you head back to town and wait for us at the tavern. We have a three round technical interview process, and you'll want to be prepared."

"How about you let me keep my sword? It's a long way back, and you wouldn't want me to come to misfortune on the way?"

Karla points out, "We had no trouble on our way over here. We also don't want to get stabbed in the back. Maybe you could find a stick. There are lots of sticks out there in the forest."

Starkad gets the point, and goes running off.

With Starkad out of the way, the characters evaluate their loot. They find:

Starkad's broadsword *Wildbrand*, a fine (+1 damage) blade with a +1 DX enchantment;

- One Longbow;

- 14 arrows;
- 6 silver arrows
- One short sword
- One enchanted dagger (+1 damage)
- One spear
- One dagger
- Conroy's sack of loot, including \$34 in silver, \$120 in gold, a hat made from white wolf fur (\$400, plus enchantment below), a pair of silver wolf-shaped earrings (\$500), and 2 healing potions.

Karla and Harbben decide that Agbor would look great in the wolf-fur hat. They put it on him, and he finds that it is enchanted to provide a Stalwart effect. Harbben gets a weapon upgrade by claiming *Wildbrand*. Agbor takes the healing potions.

Guardroom? More Like Rat-Room

The characters move deeper into the first floor. They find a guardroom littered with five skeletons and a table. A broken crossbow sits atop the table, and a pile of hay is arranged beneath it. Harbben and Agbor break up the skeletons while Taetzelwisp covers the hay pile. They find that the bones are gnawed and cracked. By the time they're done, they have no further concerns about skeletal undead.

Then, they turn to the hay pile. Harbben disturbs it with a spear. Three large rats burst out and lunge to the attack! Taetzelwisp squeaks out his alarm about how much damage a rat can do. Harbben reassures him, "Don't worry, they'll probably just give you terrible diseases." One rat impales itself on Harbben's sword. The other bites him for five damage! Holy bananas! Agbor squashes it with his hammer.

Once the rats are done for, the characters search the room. They find:

- \$30 silver
- heavy worked silver crescent moon amulet (a holy symbol of Lukariel) \$250

Karla kind of likes the idea of Lukariel, so she wears the amulet prominently. You know: to emphasize the cleavage. Then she goes back to the main door and uses the spikes from her labyrinth kit to spike the door closed, just in case Starkad gets any ideas.

Harbben points out, "Let's toss the corpses out first, just in case the local necromancer gets ideas first." Gretal and Conroy's remains go down the stairs.

This Is Great Music, It Makes Me Want to Dance

Agbor picks out the next door to open up. Everyone positions themselves (for a change). He opens the door to reveal a great hall, complete with insubstantial dancing shadows. The characters discuss possible ways to drive the shadows away, and settle upon letting in some light. Agbor opens up a window. He discovers that the light has no effect. What it does is persuade a shadow to come over and

offer to dance, in a way that Agbor finds is incredibly, magically, compelling. He goes off dancing with the shadow, losing 5 fatigue as he does.

Harbben wonders where the music is coming from. He looks up to the balcony and spots four zombie musicians. He reasons that if the zombies stop playing, maybe the shadows will stop dancing. He doesn't follow that thought through to question what they might do after that. He does point out what he sees to Taetzelwisp, who obligingly shoots a violin-playing zombie.

The zombie peers down at the arrow in its side, stops playing, and heads downstairs with a short sword to cause a ruckus. This causes a change in the music, which prompts Agbor to change partners (not like he had much of a choice). His new partner is so much less exhausting, costing him only 1 fatigue.

Taetzelwisp shoots a flautist. It charges too.

Karla sees what's happening and quickly blocks the door with 3-Hex Fire. The zombies charge into it with enthusiasm. One zombie goes down quickly, chopped to bits. The other one grapples Harbben in HTH. Harbben clocks it, Karla clocks Harbben, and Taetzelwisp fills it with arrow pinpricks and finally kills it.

Agbor uses this opportunity to escape from the dance, down 5 more fatigue and almost exhausted to death.

The characters kite the last two zombies down, then close the door and go off to rest in the guardroom so Karla and Agbor recover. This takes quite a while. Harbben makes a point of putting broken glass from the kitchen on the stairs leading downwards, then works with Karla to barricade them with the table. Taetzelwisp keeps watch with his bow, boasting "Elf don't sleep!"

Harbben answers, "You say that but then every three days you just collapse for some reason."

Taetzelwisp barks back, "Shut up and hand me another Red Bull from the labyrinth kit."

Nobody listens to Agbor when he complains, "Those dances were REALLY hard with my short dwarf legs."

Let's Try the Basement Next

The characters head down into the ground floor and a storage area that is most a mess of broken crates and jars. The one piece out of place is an unusual statue of a female elf. It is unusual not least because it's wearing clothing and carrying metal weapons. Smart characters decide that they're looking at an elf who has been turned into stone, and promptly seek out a cause. The statue is looking at the one unbroken barrel in the room, which some might consider to be a clue.

Taetzelwisp goes to the heart of the matter by telling the others, "See, that's what a female elf actually looks like."

The others ignore him. Karla sets the barrel on fire. The greater cockatrice *behind* the barrel is furious, and flaps to the attack! It bites Agbor. He avoids turning into stone. Then Karla freezes it and the others pulverize it. Agbor uses his hammer like a push broom to shove the body into the fire to roast.

Searching through the debris behind the now-burning barrel reveals some loot:

- 3 black opals (\$50 each), and
- An array of rat, bat, and crow statues.

The barrel was full of wine turned to vinegar. Set on fire, it smells amazing. Karla takes some vinegar to add to her labyrinth kit.

The characters determine that the elf's name is Sharilyn. She has a10 arrows (2 silver), a longbow, a dagger, a labyrinth kit, and a short sword. Also, the monogrammed pouch that helped identify her.

The characters take a note to bring Sharilyn along to disenchant her sometime down the way. Agbor and Harbben carry her up to the front door. Agbor explains that it'll be easier to turn her back into a "real girl" that way.

The way he says that makes Karla suspicious.

Agbor answers, "She'll be less attractive to me when she's no longer stone." His words are not reassuring like he thinks they would be.

Then everyone rests for a bit, because Karla burned a lot of fatigue.

Werewolf Shrine Time

The characters continue on to the Moon Shrine in the center of the ground floor. The mournful-looking man *Zoran* waiting in the room next door sees the characters enter the shrine. He gives off looking at the silver coin in his hands, transforms into a werewolf, and rushes Karla Dawn Spark. Agbor gets in the way, then he and Harbben slash Zoran to pieces. At which point Karla stabs him through the eye with a silver dagger. Agbor continues to hit the body even long after that, just to be sure.

Karla offers a prayer to Lukariel, hoping to gain her favor as the characters (maybe) work against the evil influence who killed all her servants.

The room Zoran came from contains a huge well full of clear water, and with thousands of silver pieces in the bottom. Karla looks at the coins in the well. She deduces based on the fact that Zoran was looking at his silver piece sadly that this might be a *Pirates of the Caribbean* situation. She doesn't explain to the others, except to tell them that the coins are off-limits. Agbor lifts up a haunch of cooked meat from Zoran's camp site. He tells the others that it is probably goat.

Harbben tries drinking from the well. He is promptly afflicted with lycanthropy, and explains to the others that he really, really wants to protect the well and the shrine, at least until the next full moon. It's fortunate that the other characters don't want to hurt the shrine. *Then* he throws a coin in the well and

realizes that it'll help remove enchantments, just not his. Karla takes advantage of this tidbit to collect a jar of water and rescue Sharilyn. Back in living form, the elf woman explains that she met the cockatrice, got bit, and has only been here for a few days as far as she can guess. She arrived alone, after the servant at the tavern told her about a missing noble girl and a reward.

Then she catches sight of Taetzelwisp. She's *very* friendly to him. Taetzelwisp doesn't object at all, and doesn't mention syphilis. He tells the others, "Hey guys, I think it's time for a little rest..."

Harbben shouts, "I think I'll be upset if you're doing what I'm thinking you're doing..."

Coincidentally, the next full moon is tomorrow. Everyone agrees to camp until Harbben is free of his geas and able to leave the shrine and well rooms.

Sharilyn, Elf Huntress

ST 11 (8), **DX** 13, **IQ** 10, **MA** 12

Talents: Bow, Knife, Literacy, Missile Weapons x2, Naturalist, Sword, Woodsman

Languages: Common, Elvish

Weapons: Longbow (1d+2) with 10 arrows (two are silver); short sword (2d-1); dagger (1d-1)

Equipment: Labyrinth kit

Torture chamber

The rest of the basement was once a torture chamber, equipped with three pits and a hoist system set up over one of them to allow a body to be slowly winched down. Agbor checks the pits with torches and finds the green slime lurking in the third pit. Plus, there are a lot of wolf and human bones. Agbor throws Zoran's body down into the pit with the slime and watches it do its thing. Karla insults it for not being able to eat bones.

The characters camp for a day until Harbben's curse dissipates. He hangs out near the door, wistfully telling the others, "I really love this place! I need you to go into town, find a woman who wants to spend all her time in a two-room apartment."

Meanwhile, Taetzelwisp and Sharilyn spend quality time up in the guardroom. Taetzelwisp boasts, "She's stronger and smarter than I am. But I'm quicker, which makes it fun."

The Wise Wolf and the Unlucky Werewolf

Once Harbben is safe to travel again, the characters head up to the second floor. They go past the empty musicians alcove and find a large dais with a statue of a wolf with the head of a human woman. Karla is all over this artifact. She quickly gets the statue talking and provides it with blessed water from the well downstairs. It tells her that Marilyn is in bondage above, looked over by the specter of evil.

Beyond the statue, the characters find a petrified werewolf. The creature is dressed in rotting clothing. It has one gig, growling, clawed hand upraised, staring down at its leg. Agbor immediately understands, "Haha! That's where the cockatrice bit him!"

Another jar of blessed water later and he is back to health. Karla greets him with a holy symbol to Lukariel prominently displayed. She finds that he is *Arnick the Woodman*, once a guardian of the temple, at least until the stupid bird-thing bit him. Karla catches him up with the current situation. He's all on board with killing Mordark. He's also pretty good-looking. Agbor brings him pants.

Upstairs and Skeletons!

The group moves upstairs. They find a squad of skeletal guards waiting for them. The two groups meet in a brief, very violent, encounter. By the end, the skeletons are all destroyed and none of the characters (including their new ally Arnick) have taken any significant damage.

The group moves on to the priestess' quarters, where Taetzelwisp gets cursed by a wolf-banshee before the others bash it to pieces. Karla and Arnick go down to get some blessed water to fix Taetzelwisp. And then another trip to fetch some water for next time. The others get the distinct impression that Karla is flirting with Arnick. No accounting for taste, apparently.

With the wolf-banshee dealt with, the group strips the room for loot. There's quite a bit of it:

- A set of silver chainmail (enchanted, 4 hits/attack);
- Some nice women's sandals;
- Weapon cleaning oils;
- A set of fur-trimmed white silk robes (\$200);
- A scroll containing a sad but pretty hymn to the moon goddess (\$100 to a bard);
- A silver cauldron. If the user pours liquid into it (up to a gallon and a half), the cauldron takes 3 ST and casts Cleanse Poison cast on it (\$3000);
- \$125 silver;
- Four ruined sticks of fine incense (because Agbor opened a locked chest with his great hammer)

Agbor eventually wakes up to realize that he uses chainmail. He upgrades with new armor.

The Novice's Chambers

Karla takes a quick 30-minute rest while the others hit up the novice's chamber to find:

- A Quarterstaff, enchanted for +1 damage plus Wolf Control (as the Ring)

Karla claims it to turn into a Staff later on, plus the robes to complete the sexy moon goddess priestess look.

Spider Stairs

The upper landing of the stairway up to the fourth floor is decorated with a full suit of plate armor covered in spiderwebs. Arnick recognizes it as decoration, but it didn't have spiderwebs on it 100 years ago. Karla sets it on fire. The spider inside burns and dies. It's a giant spider roasting chamber.

- Taetzelwisp offers, "Mmmm... smells nutty."
- Karla tells Arnick, "Don't worry, I'll keep you safe!"

Finding Mariya

Agbor admires the sitting room, a place where the elites of the Lukariel cult once relaxed with a pleasant glass of wine. He notes, "This painting of Artesia and Mordark is an original Yardik Plott, worth \$250!" The others are busy opening windows to get cross-ventilation. They totally ignore when he mentions that the mechanic's clock is worth \$4800, but weights 300 lbs. Then he goes into the Lady's Chamber to avoid hearing Karla talk about undead spoooge.

The room next door is a large bedroom, suitable for a real magician. It includes a curtained double bed. And on the bed, the characters find a very indignant *Mariya Hawkwind*. She is chained to the bed, and she is furious. She wants to be let free and brought out. She tells the characters that Mordark is next door and is likely to kill everything, and that he's planning on using a ritual in his black books to turn her into some kind of undead version of his long-dead love Artesia. The characters take her at her word and flee after Agbor smashes the chains free of the bed.

The End of the Session

The group heads back to Waldrand, where Gervalt is good to his word and pays them the \$2000 for the return of Mariya Hawkwind. Each character gains 300 XP, which is enough for Taetzelwisp to push his ST up by 2 points, enough to allow him to use a long bow.

Karla decides that she will do what she can to revitalize the old Lukariel cult. She enlists Arnick in this effort, though he really doesn't want to go back on the leash. He never liked the leash.