

BLACK LILIES



A level 4 mystery adventure for 5th edition

by Viktor "Navypink" Sych

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This document contains reused illustrations and statblocks originally created for the *Heart of Darkness* campaign book, published independently by Viktor "Navypink" Sych in 2025. You can find out more about the campaign book and its connection to this adventure in the [Introduction](#).

HYPERLINKS

This document makes use of many hyperlinks—whenever it refers to another area, event, or statblock, the text in green can be clicked to navigate to the appropriate page.

PRONUNCIATION GUIDE

| Name | Pronunciation | Language |
|-----------|-------------------|----------|
| Aerin | ay-RIN | Elvish |
| Getari | geh-TAA-ri | Common |
| Josi | YO-si | Getarian |
| Leta | LEH-taa | Common |
| Nihriti | nih-HREE-tih | Varran |
| Sirraen | sih-rrah-EHN | Elvish |
| Thesaneri | t'hess-ah-NAIR-ee | Varran |
| Vaeuan | vay-WAN | Elvish |

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INTRODUCTION

Black Lilies is an urban mystery adventure that takes one or two sessions to run. It was written as an introductory adventure to a campaign book I wrote, but it can be played on its own or inserted into another larger story and whichever setting you prefer.

HEART OF DARKNESS

Heart of Darkness is a sandbox campaign for levels 4-10 that features Sirraen, the setting of *Black Lilies*, as one of the landmarks the party can explore. The statblocks, maps, and graphics in this document were reused from the campaign book, but the storyline is entirely original.

If you run *Black Lilies* and your group enjoys it, you can continue directly into the *Heart of Darkness* campaign with the same party, as detailed in the [Epilogue](#) section.

You can [back the campaign book on Kickstarter](#) (spring 2025). A digital version of the full campaign book will be available on [itch.io](#) once the Kickstarter campaign ends.

CHARACTER CREATION

Players should make level 4 characters for this adventure. If you plan to continue with *Heart of Darkness*, inform your players that they should make characters that they would want to play in a longer campaign, not just a one-shot.

If you use the Varris setting as is assumed by this adventure, and especially if you plan to continue with *Heart of Darkness*, you can download the free [Player Options](#) document. It features player-facing lore, new race and subrace options, and name generators for player characters in the setting. You can also find [my homebrew ranger subclass](#), which allows you to bond with an extraplanar companion, for free on [itch.io](#).

SETTING NOTES

The intended setting for this adventure, and the *Heart of Darkness* campaign as a whole, is the continent of Varris. You don't need to know the full setting lore to understand and run this adventure. Here is the necessary context:

- Varris was once ruled over by the evil, magocratic Varran Empire—many kingdoms emerged after its collapse. One of them is Getari, where the campaign takes place.
- The hegemonic religion is Archfey worship, though the details vary by region. The Church of the Archfey has close ties to the monarchs of Varris and has one unifying principle: fiend worship and arcane magic are illegal.
- Fiends occupy a plane of existence known as the Depths, from which they can make pacts with mortals who worship them. Some fiends can travel between planes.
- Mortals fear fiends and their magic and are often prejudiced against tieflings by association.

THE TOWN OF SIRRAEN

Sirraen is a small fishing town founded centuries ago by elves and now inhabited in equal parts by elves, humans, and half-elves. There is no formal ruler, but the spiritual leader is the elven priest Aerin, while the military leader is Leta, the human guard captain. Aerin answers to the Church of the Archfey that governs all of the kingdom of Getari, while Leta answers to the townsfolk who voluntarily fund the guards to protect their town.

Sirraen lays just outside the primeval Forest of Eyes, but few dare to venture into the wilderness. To the north is Thesaneri, the capital city of Getari — travel by foot to the city takes only a few hours. The map below shows Sirraen with all relevant locations labeled. You can show the [blank version of this map](#) at the back of the adventure to your players. This version is for your eyes only.



THE STORY

This section is organized in chronological order. However, that does not mean that the party must play through every listed encounter or do so in this exact order. Before you begin, read the information below.

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

Listed below are the most important facts relevant to the mystery that the party will have to solve.

- Eight years ago, a woman named Milila signed a pact with a fiend known as the Exile that granted her a new, unaging body. To complete the pact, she set fire to her family home in Thesaneri and fled to the nearby town of Sirraen, where she began a new life as "Lily".
- Lily runs a tavern called the Singing Lily (**Area F**), which allows her to recruit new members into the cult of the Exile. Her pseudonym and the name of her tavern originates from black lilies, magical flowers infused with elemental shadow and originating from the lower plane. She grows the flowers herself in a cave by Sirraen's coast (**Area H**) and uses them to create her famed mead, as well as a poison known as shadow essence.
- In the past few months, Sirraen has been threatened by dark elves from the Forest of Eyes. One of the residents, an experienced fighter named Leta, managed to rally the townsfolk to form a town guard and became its captain.
- The cultists have not had to deal with organized guards before and fear that they may be discovered soon, so Lily devised a plan to dispose of Leta.
- Yesterday evening, Leta received an anonymous tip telling her to meet the sender in Sirraen's slums (**Area E**) to learn about a dangerous group of criminals that threatens the town. Confident in her combat prowess, she went alone as instructed.
- Instead of engaging Leta in combat, the cultists set up a trap that caused Leta to inhale shadow essence. Despite her attempts to resist its effects, she eventually succumbed to the poison and suffered a heart attack.
- Leta was found on the market square (**Area D**) before dawn and brought to Sirraen's temple for healing. She has been unconscious since, but her condition is stable.

THE CLUES

While the party doesn't need to collect all clues to solve the mystery, you should keep in mind which pieces of information are the most important in any given scene. To that end, some sentences throughout the adventure are **bolded**. The bolded information should be relayed to the players—whether you reveal it to them after a successful check or have an NPC say it—as it directly contributes to them uncovering the truth. If the players skip the scene containing a clue, they may miss the information entirely.

NEW STATBLOCKS

If an * appears after the name of a character, it means that you should look for its statblock in the section at the end.

PART I: BEGINNING

In which the party enters Sirraen and is given their quest.

THE GATES (AREA A)

It's a beautiful morning. A gentle breeze flows from the sea, seagulls are squawking... On mornings like these, the likes of you should be... well, certainly not be waiting in the queue leading to the gates of Sirraen. Even the guards seem baffled by its length.

The party meets while waiting to enter the town of Sirraen. Standing in a queue is a good opportunity for conversation, so give them some time to respond and get into character.

After a few minutes, the queue moves. Two N male human **guards** assume the party to be a group, even if they did not know each other before, and ask them to state their names and business within the town. The checks are not rigorous, but quite unusual for a small town.

Once the formalities are done, the guards apologize for the wait and explain that the checkpoints were installed as part of an important ongoing investigation. Any adventurers willing to help will receive a reward from the town guard, they say. A man named Vaeuan who can be found in the barracks (**Area B**) can provide more information.

THE GUARD (AREA B)

The barracks of Sirraen are a large, two-story building complete with a walled backyard for combat training. The lower floor is accessible to the public, while the upper contains Leta's modest living quarters and a meeting room.

Vaeuan* who has a quest for the party can be found by a desk on the lower floor. He is a LN male bronze elf who would be imposing were he not hunched over piles of documents and visibly tired. As Leta's second-in-command, he controls the town guard in her absence and would have his hands full even without having an investigation to organize. He is more than happy to pay someone else to solve the mystery while he focuses on maintaining order.

The elf relays the following information to the party:

- Leta, his captain, is unconscious after presumably being attacked last night. Her condition is stable, but it isn't clear when she will wake up and if she even remembers what happened to her. The culprit must be caught before they, or *it*, can harm anyone else.
- Leta was found just before dawn at the market square (**Area D**) by Aerin, the head priest.
- Aerin had Leta brought to the Temple of Lehani (**Area C**), where their fellow priests take care of her.
- Vaeuan was the last person who saw Leta on the evening before she went out on patrol. She seemed to be perfectly fine and was not acting unusual.

The adventurers' quest is to find out what happened and, ideally, bring the culprit to the barracks alive for a full interrogation. The reward is **500 GP**.

Vaeuan will not rest until the case is solved, so the party can come back to the barracks and talk to him at any point. As Leta's most trusted comrade, he cannot afford to fail her.

PART II: INVESTIGATION

In which the party gathers clues about last night's events.

THE VICTIM (AREA C)

The Temple of Lehani, visible from afar thanks to its golden dome, is not just a place of worship. The townsfolk gather here to celebrate special occasions, socialize, and discuss the sacred texts of the Archfey found in its modest library. Today, the atmosphere is decidedly more grim than usual. A group of townsfolk has gathered to pray in silence for Leta's recovery. The guard captain is a hero to many.

Aerin, a LG androgynous gold elf **priest**, stops praying and approaches the party when they arrive. Assuming that the adventurers were hired by the town guard, they introduce themselves as Sirraen's head priest and confirm that they were the one who found Leta on the market square before dawn. Eager to help with the investigation, Aerin leads the party to a simple bedchamber in the closed off part of the temple. Here, the unconscious Leta lays on a bed while an elven acolyte sits in the corner to observe her state. The acolyte leaves the room upon the party's arrival.

Before the party can examine Leta's state, Aerin informs them that **she appears to have suffered a heart attack** and collapsed as a result. Given Leta's young age and good health, it is unlikely to have been a natural occurrence. In fact, Aerin suspects that it was an assassination attempt.

The table below shows the results of a check made to examine Leta's unconscious body. The columns below the clues themselves are Aerin's comments on them.

EXAMINING LETA

DC Investigation or Perception check result

- 5 **Leta's face is frozen in an expression of intense fear. She clutches a handkerchief in her left hand.**

Aerin claims that the fear on Leta's face might be the result of the heart attack, since they know of nothing that could have frightened someone as brave as her.

- 10 **She has no open wounds or other major injuries.**

This is what led the priests to assume that she was not physically attacked.

- 12 **Her right shoulder and forearm are lightly bruised.**

Aerin believes that her fall caused the bruising.

- 15 **The blood vessels on and around her eyes are darker than the others, as if something blackened them.**

The priests have not noticed this yet.

- 20 **Though the handkerchief in Leta's hand appears clean, closer inspection reveals small, gray dots on it — traces of saliva mixed with an unknown dark substance.**

The priests have not noticed this yet.

If Aerin is made aware of either of the last two clues, they begin suspecting that **Leta was poisoned**. They thank the party for the new insights and promise to begin their research right away in hopes of identifying the substance.

Aerin will be at the temple for the whole day and is eager to answer any further questions the party may have. Since they and Leta are close friends and co-leaders of the town, Aerin will do whatever they can to help.

THE MARKET SQUARE (AREA D)

All major streets of Sirraen converge at the market square, where local fishermen and craftsmen trade their goods with traveling merchants. Most of the houses that open to the square are inhabited by human craftsmen who use the ground floor to sell their goods.

At the center of the square, near where Leta was found, is a notice board. The following are currently pasted onto it:

- An announcement from the town guard informing the townsfolk of Leta's condition and asking them to remain calm and cooperate during the ongoing investigation.
- An invitation to a special prayer for Leta's health that will be held at the temple (**Area C**) tomorrow morning.
- A note that reads: "*Travelers: **make sure to stop by the Singing Lily tavern**. You won't regret it.*" (**Area F**)

Additionally, a **DC 17 Wisdom (Perception) check** made to inspect the ground for clues reveals a scrap of paper laying in the grass of a nearby flowerbed. It reads:

A monster roams the streets. It attacked last night, killing my companion and wounding me. I fear that it will strike again tonight, so you must hurry.

I found the beast's lair, but I'm weak and wounded. I trust only you. If anyone else learns of the monster before you can defeat it, there will be chaos. I marked the door to a shack in the slums with red paint. I will await you there tonight.

A frightened citizen

The note was snuck into Leta's pocket yesterday and is what led her into the cultists' trap. She dropped it before she collapsed. A **DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check** reveals that the note carries a faint smell of mead. The slums in the south-west part of Sirraen are visible from the town square.

If the party fails to find the note, skip to **Part 3**.

THE SLUMS (AREA E)

The slums of Sirraen have formed 10 years ago after the destruction of the village of Neferebet in the nearby forest caused a sudden influx of human refugees. Some work at the docks or fish to survive. Others beg or steal. The townsfolk avoid this place like the plague, believing it to be dangerous and full of criminals.

Unfortunately for the party, it is impossible to locate the shack mentioned in the note. However, as they walk through the muddy ground in search of it, they find a door lying right next to the empty door frame of a shack. The door has not sunken into the mud, however—lifting it reveals a corpse underneath. The deceased is a middle-aged male human with red hair and an old scar on his cheek. Judging by his clothing, he appears to have been a resident of the slums.

The man is the cultist who wrote the note to Leta and attempted to trap her inside the shack to poison her. Leta managed to break free, but the impact of the rammed door knocked the cultist onto the ground. Check the next page for what the party might gleam from the corpse and what can be found inside the shack itself.

EXAMINING THE CORPSE

DC Investigation or Perception check result

- 10 The back of the man's head was smashed against the ground.
He seems to have only been dead for a few hours.
- 12 His clothes are covered in mud, but only at the back on which he now lays.
He has no injuries elsewhere than the back of his head.
- 15 The corpse smells of mud, decay, and mead.
- 20 There are three sets of footprints in the area. One belongs to the man, and the other two arrived at the shack, then left the slums.

The third set of footprints belongs to Lily, who orchestrated the event. She hid in a nearby alley while Leta approached, then helped the other cultist hold the door. Once Leta broke free, Lily fled to the market square.

When the party enters the shack itself, read:

The flooring bends and creaks under your feet as you enter the shack. Its interior is illuminated only through the empty door frame. Claw marks line the walls. Strange symbols cover the floor. A strange smell permeates the still air. Though there's no monster in sight, this place was certainly the site of something sinister.

The shack was supposed to be the lair of a monster, according to the note Leta received. Its appearance was convincing enough to lure Leta into the cultists' trap. Once she was inside, the man who now lays dead outside shut the door, releasing the poison as he did. The air is safe to breathe now, but still carries the substance's scent.

EXAMINING THE SHACK

DC Investigation or Perception check result

- 10 The claw marks on the walls were left by creatures with hands similar in size and shape to humanoids.
- 12 The symbols on the floor are arranged in a circle and appear to be a spell written in Infernal.
DC 18 Intelligence (Arcana or Religion) check:
The writing is actually just meaningless scribbles made to resemble a fiend summoning spell.
- 15 The strange smell is the strongest near the door, where an empty glass bottle lays shattered on the floor. Among the shards is a string. Its other end connects to the handle of the now broken door.
- 20 The bottle is empty, but there are dark smudges on the glass and cork. The substance smells like ozone with a sweet floral undertone. The scent alone is dizzying.

If *detect magic* or a similar effect is used in the shack, it reveals that **the "summoning circle" is not magical**, while the substance in air emits a faint aura of necromancy.

The cultists arranged the interior of the shack in hopes of tricking not only Leta, but anyone who attempts to investigate her disappearance. They know better than to return to the scene of the crime, so they prepared everything beforehand, confident that it would throw off any investigators. The claw marks were left by tiefling cultists. Combined with the fake summoning circle, they are meant to convince investigators that a monster attacked Leta. If the townsfolk find out that a fiend was involved, they will immediately suspect Nihriti, the local herbalist who also happens to be a tiefling. The party will meet her very soon.

PART III: INTERROGATION

In which the the party meets some new suspects.

THE SINGING LILY (AREA F)

There are a few reasons for the party to visit this tavern at this point in their investigation. The smell of mead on the corpse they found in the slums and the note they found might lead them here, as might the note on the market square's notice board. Or they might simply want to question the barkeep about recent events. Either way, the party can obtain some new information here.

The Singing Lily tavern is a two-story building that sits on the corner of one of the streets leading to the market square. The tavern on the first floor is inviting, with clean tables and plenty of light coming in through large windows at street level. The upper floor is inaccessible to guests and contains the cultists' meeting room and two bedrooms for the tavern's owner and barkeep.

The only people present at the tavern when the party enters are a young man tending the bar and a woman dressed in a colorful bard's outfit sipping red wine at the central table. The man is Josi, a CN human **cultist**, and the woman is **Lily***, the CE human owner of the tavern.

Lily eagerly greets the party. She has had no patrons since the announcement about Leta in the morning, since the townsfolk are afraid to leave their houses. To accommodate her new guests, she begins to play her lyre while Josi takes their orders. A pint of beer costs 1 SP, a bottle of wine costs 2 SP, and the tavern's specialty, the thick black lily mead, costs 3 SP. The mead has a faint floral scent (**DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check**).

Both Lily and Josi can answer the party's questions about Leta's disappearance, though Lily focuses on her music unless she is asked directly.

Last night, Josi was tending to the bar. Lily was absent.

- Lily claims to have been tending to her black lilies at the time of the attack. **They are magical plants that must be grown away from sunlight** and watered only at night. Josi confirms all of this.
- She will not reveal the location of her garden since the plants are very expensive and only says that it is outside of the town's walls.

If the party asks about the corpse from the slums, they learn that the man was a frequent patron and actually visited the tavern on the evening before the attack. Josi remembers that he was writing something.

- Lily adds that the man seemed very poor, so she often let him spend hours at the tavern with just one drink, assuming that he had nowhere to go.

What Lily says about her garden is true, but she was not there last night. She was the one who wrote the note found on the market square, then she went to the slums with the other cultist to trap Leta in the shack. As Lily's right hand, Josi knows all of this, but would sooner die than betray the cult. He owes his livelihood to Lily, who in turn treats him like her own son. The party might assume that the two are a couple due to their apparent closeness in age, but Lily is significantly older than she appears.

Once the party is done at the tavern, they notice a crowd of angry townsfolk gather outside one of the nearby houses. Lily looks through the window and tells the party that it is the home of Nihriti, a tiefling herbalist. She says that the townsfolk have always been suspicious of her due to both her profession and ancestry, so they likely blame her for the attack. Lily and Josi are not planning to intervene—after all, if the people resolve the investigation on their own with a lynching, nobody will know the truth about the cult.

THE HERBALIST (AREA G)

This event happens after the party finishes their initial investigation, whether or not they have found **Areas E-F**.

An angry mob has gathered on the town square outside an unassuming, small single-story building. Its only resident is Nihriti, the tiefling herbalist whom the townsfolk have deemed responsible for the attack. Lily's cultists have been hard at work spreading rumors about fiend involvement.

When the party approaches the mob, read:

"Come out, witch!" A man shouts while banging on the door. "If you have nothing to hide, come out and prove it!" The crowd cheers him on. A few of the townsfolk have brought lit torches, others carry knives and clubs. The people of Sirraen have found their suspect—and they will not wait for a trial.

Nihriti has barricaded herself inside, but the townsfolk is prepared to set fire to her house if she does not respond. If the party does not interfere in any way, this is exactly what happens after a few more minutes. Nihriti dies in the fire and the townsfolk disperse, certain that the culprit has been dealt with. Smoke seeps out through the windows for the next few hours while the building slowly collapses.

However, it is unlikely for the party to let this happen. If they confront the mob, its leader shifts his focus. He is a CN half-elf **commoner** named Hendrik and speaks for the whole mob. The party can use diplomacy, intimidation, or deceit to make the townsfolk disperse, each of which requires a **DC 18 Charisma check**.

One man in the crowd carries a large mirror and shouts that he will prove that Nihriti is a fiend. If the party asks him what he means, he explains that **the true form of a disguised fiend can be seen in a mirror**, so Nihriti should be eager to prove that her humanoid appearance is not illusory. This is a common superstition in Getari.

TO THE RESCUE

Aerin (androgynous elf **priest*** from **Area C**) arrives at the scene about 10 minutes after the party and demands access to the door. The crowd parts immediately out of respect for the priest. Aerin addresses the crowd and says that Leta is conscious and the culprit will be found very soon. They instruct the townsfolk to go home in peace and wait for further announcements.

If Nihriti is safe, Aerin thanks the party for preventing another tragedy. The herbalist herself peeks out of the door, but the priest advises her to stay inside for the day. If the house is on fire, Aerin opens the door and finds Nihriti already dead. The temple will organize a suitable funeral soon, but for now there are more pressing matters.

Once Nihriti's situation is resolved, Aerin turns to the party and asks them to follow them to the temple. Leta has just regained consciousness, so she should be able to provide crucial new information for the investigation. Aerin has decided to summon the party immediately so that Leta does not have to tell her story twice in her weakened state.



PART IV: RECOLLECTION

In which the party visits the awakened Leta in the temple.

LETA'S STORY (AREA C)

As the party nears the temple with Aerin, read:

The golden dome of the temple of Lehani sparkles red as the sun begins to set over Sirraen. Aerin beckons you inside.

Aerin brings the party to the same bedchamber that the party saw in **Part 2**. Leta sits on the bed, conscious but greatly weakened. Despite her condition, she is determined to find the culprit. Before she reveals her part of the story, she commands the party to report their findings to her so that she does not repeat what they already know. She listens to the details of their investigation attentively before beginning her own account of last night's events.

- She left the guard barracks in the evening for a routine patrol. The day was completely ordinary prior to that.
- While patrolling, she realized that someone had slipped a note into her pocket. She refers to the note found in **Area D**. If the party has not found it, she only remembers that it mentioned a monster attack and led her to a shack in the slums, its supposed lair.
- A man was waiting for her by the shack, the same whose corpse is found in **Area E**. The moment she stepped in, she saw a glass bottle falling down, pulled by a string. Before the door could close, **Leta glimpsed an old woman standing behind her reflected in the glass.**
- Once she was locked inside the hut, she felt a strange gas spreading through the air and realized that she has been trapped. She managed to break down the shack's door and immediately began chasing after the mysterious woman.
- The woman was wearing a dark cloak, so Leta saw nothing of her appearance. She managed to chase her all the way to the town square, where she finally succumbed to the poison and passed out.
- While unconscious, Leta experienced terrifying nightmares, but she does not remember the details.

The old woman Leta saw and later chased down was Lily. While her fiend pact granted her a new, unaging body, her reflections reveal her original form. The party has no way of knowing that at this point.

Leta is convinced that the woman she saw is the culprit and urges the party to locate her before she can strike again, whoever or whatever she is. Aerin listens in silence before asking the party to leave Leta to rest.

AERIN'S DISCOVERY

If Aerin began their research into poisons in **Part 2**, they bring the party to the temple's library to discuss their findings. They have found a report written by the Church's investigators which describes a poison called *shadow essence*. They show the relevant passage to the party, but ask them not to tell anyone about it—knowledge about fiend cults and investigations thereof is reserved for the clergy.

The substance in question was found stored in glass vials. While safely contained, it has the appearance of a black smoke or mist. It condenses on contact with cloth or paper and leaves black stains, though the pigmentation is faint. When released from the vial, it spreads rapidly through the air while remaining invisible. It leaves a strong smell of ozone after its harmful effects fade.

Two tests were carried out to determine the substance's effects using the seized vials. The first subject, a rat, was dead 2 seconds after inhaling. The second subject, one of the captured cultists, an adult male human, appeared to resist the effects for a total of 18 seconds, before losing consciousness for the following 7 minutes (431 seconds). The veins around the subject's eyes blackened. The subject began seizing after 1 minute and remained so until expiration. A post-mortem examination revealed a swelling of the heart indicative of a cardiac infarction. Indeed, the other cultists claimed that the substance was lethal during interrogations.

Aerin adds that according to the report, the poison was found in the base of captured fiend worshipers. There were apparently **shadow tieflings among the cultists**, but the interrogations did not reveal anything about the object of their cult's worship.

A **DC 15 Intelligence (Medicine) check** can be made to confirm that the symptoms described in the book match the ones Leta experienced, except hers were not fatal.

THE FINAL PIECE (AREA G)

After leaving the temple, the party might wish to visit Nihriti and ask her some more questions. The herbalist lets them in, recognizing them as her saviors from before. She is a N female tiefling **commoner**.

Nihriti's house contains only one room where she brews her potions, eats, and sleeps on a simple bed in the corner. She invites the party to sit beside her by a large table where she prepares herbs and flowers.

- Nihriti knows nothing of fiends, cultists or the shadow essence poison. She is a tiefling since birth and has never been involved with any kind of fiend worship.
- She hopes that the investigation is resolved soon and that the culprit is not a cultist or a tiefling. The last thing she needs is another fiend-related moral panic, she says.
- Today is not the first time the townsfolk have attacked her. A few months ago, they tried to set fire to a cave by the coast while she was harvesting rare herbs there. They claimed that it was the lair of a hag that has cursed the town. Nihriti explains that **the coastal cave provides good conditions for rare shade-loving herbs** and it isn't cursed or even magical.

The cave mentioned by Nihriti is also the location of Lily's secret garden. Even if the party do not immediately connect the clues, the cave should strike them as worth seeking out. Nihriti can reveal its location, not far from the town.

If the party returns to the Singing Lily (**Area F**) at any point after Leta's awakening, Josi is there alone. If he is asked about Lily, he informs the party that she is tending to her flower garden and should not be disturbed.

PART V: CONFRONTATION

In which the party finds the culprit and makes a big choice.

The entirety of Part 5 takes place in the coastal cave that contains the black lily garden, so it relies on the party finding their way there. Check the [flowchart on the next page](#) for details on all possible outcomes.

If Nihriti is dead, Aerin recalls the townsfolk's previous attempt to purge "fiends" while the party is at the temple. The priest can provide the same information as Nihriti.

Hendrik and Josi also know the location of this cave and can reveal it if tricked or charmed.

INTO THE DARK (AREA H)

The cave lies to the east of Sirraen and by the shore of the Perneb River just before it meets the sea. It only takes a few minutes to reach from the gate ([Area A](#)). There are no queues at this time of day, but the guards do warn the party to be careful and not stray too far from the town—monsters from the Forest of Eyes are more active at night.

There are no encounters on the way to the cave.

All is quiet on the coast, save for the hum of waves and a cool night breeze. The pale moonlight dances on the horizon somewhere on the endless sea that opens before you. Humid air with a hint of moss flows from the pitch black mouth of the cave.

This cavern contains two areas, one on the ground level and one underground. Only the cultists know of the latter cave, the entrance to which is magically concealed.

The first cave appears mundane save for faint blue sparks that slowly float through the air. They originate from the magical herbs that grow here, which are touched by the ambient magic of elemental air. They are harmless.

INVESTIGATING THE CAVE

DC Investigation or Perception check result

- 10 There doesn't appear to be anything or anyone in this cave.
- 12 There is a smell of ozone in the air—barely noticeable near the entrance, but stronger the deeper one goes.
- 15 If one listens at the deepest part of the cave, where the smell of ozone is the strongest, muffled voices can be heard from beyond the cave's wall.
- 20 There are no plants in this part of the cave, as if someone walks through it frequently.

There is a narrow passage in the deepest part of the cave, magically disguised as part of the cave wall. Once it is located, the illusion can easily be discerned. A tight passage leads underground to the secret black lily garden.

THE BLACK LILY GARDEN

The black lily garden is a 10 ft. high cave in the shape of a 25 by 30 ft. rectangle. The party enters from the center of the longer, northern wall.

Once the party nears the cave, read:

A faint purple glow illuminates the walls of a cave at the end of the passage. A floral scent clashes with the strong, distinct smell of ozone. Once you near the cave, the source of it all is revealed — a garden of flowers with hearts blacker than the darkest night. Black lilies. Though the air is perfectly still, the flowers sway gently from side to side, rocked by the breeze of another world.

If the party has met Lily in [Part 3](#) and asked about her garden, Lily assumes that they suspect her of being the culprit — proceed with "The truth revealed". Otherwise, proceed with "Fiend attack".

FIEND ATTACK

When the party enters the cave, read:

"Help! Somebody help!" A wounded woman cowers in the corner while three fiendish beings close in on her slowly, knowing that she can't run. Blood drips from their outstretched claws.

The woman is [Lily*](#) and the three "fiends" are [shadow tieflings*](#) and her fellow cultists. The tieflings do not speak and immediately attack the party, embracing their role as monstrous killers. This is all a trick — the tieflings agreed to sacrifice their lives for the secrecy of the cult and to hide Lily's involvement. Lily does not participate in the fight.

One of the tieflings has long white hair, which matches Leta's description of the "old woman" from [Part 4](#).

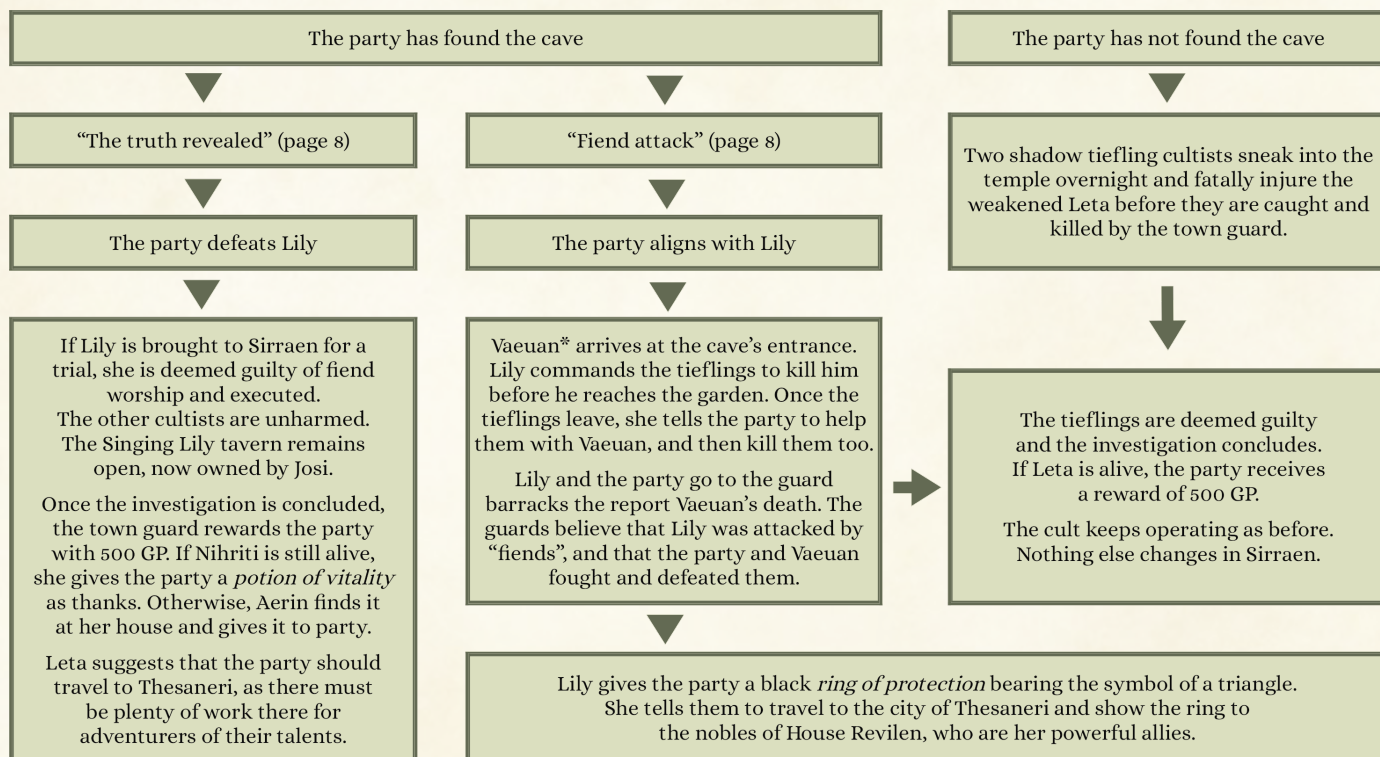
Once the tieflings are dead, Lily thanks the party for saving her life and begs them to escort her back to Sirraen. She claims that she wanted to take a walk on the coast to get away from the tension of recent events but was attacked and chased into this cave. Her passive Deception is 15.

THE TRUTH REVEALED

[Lily*](#) is standing in the middle of this room, waiting for the party. She knows that they suspect her, so instead of lying she hopes to convince them to work with her. Lily reveals that she is a part of an organization whose work benefits the poor and downtrodden by resisting the Church. She does not openly state that she is a cultist, but does not deny it either. Further, she explains that Leta was threatening the secrecy of their work and needed to be dealt with before she could expose them. Once Leta stops suspecting them, there will be no more need for violence, Lily claims. She also mentions that the organization has wealthy patrons who would doubtless reward the party generously for their help. Check the next page for more details on Lily's offer.

Lily is of course prepared to fight the party if they refuse to be her allies. There are 2 [shadow tieflings*](#), Lily's fellow cultists, hiding in the dark corners of the cave. It takes a passive Perception of 16 or higher to spot them. If Lily is attacked, the tieflings emerge to defend her.

If the party is defeated, they are intoxicated and tossed into the sea. A few hours later, they wash up in the docks of Theseneri where the guards take them to jail until they sober up, assuming that they are drunk.



EPILOGUE

Use the flowchart above to determine the events that follow the party's investigation based on their choices.

If you and your players wish to continue directly onto the *Heart of Darkness* campaign, have their characters advance to level 5 and skip the introductory adventure, *Murder at the Lady's Grace*. When the party arrives at the city gates, they are searched by the guards and arrested on suspicion of trafficking illegal magic items into the city. This may seem too harsh, but the guards are on the lookout for "suspicious individuals", so the searches are more thorough.

The party's arrest is a good opportunity for the players to switch characters ahead of the campaign or for new players to join in—after all, there are many reasons why one might end up there, in the same cell as a group of adventurers. The campaign book's Introduction provides examples of other minor offenses that a player character may be in jail for, whether they actually committed them or not.



STATBLOCKS

LILY, CULTIST OF THE EXILE

Medium humanoid (human), chaotic evil

Armor Class 15 (leather armor)

Hit Points 66 (12d8 + 12)

Speed 30 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|
| 11 (+0) | 18 (+4) | 12 (+1) | 10 (+0) | 8 (-1) | 16 (+3) |

Saving Throws Dex +6, Cha +5

Skills Deception +5, Perception +1, Persuasion +5, Sleight of Hand +6

Senses passive Perception 11

Languages Abyssal, Common

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Spellcasting. Lily is a 3rd-level spellcaster. Her spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). She has the following bard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): light, prestidigitation, thunderclap, vicious mockery

1st level (4 slots): charm person, faerie fire, healing word, sleep

2nd level (2 slots): invisibility, phantasmal force

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Lily makes two attacks.

Intoxicating Dagger. Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d4 + 4) piercing damage. Target makes a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or becomes intoxicated for 1 minute. The intoxicated creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

INTOXICATED (CONDITION)

An intoxicated creature has disadvantage on Wisdom, Charisma and Intelligence saving throws. The creature's speed is reduced by 10 ft.

SHADOW TIEFLING

Medium humanoid (tiefling), any chaotic

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 27 (6d8)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Skills Deception +5, Insight +2, Stealth +3

Damage Resistances psychic

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Infernal

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

ACTIONS

Claws. Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 9 (2d6 + 2) slashing damage.

REACTIONS

Shadow Path. As a reaction to taking damage from a melee attack, the cultist can teleport up to 20 ft. to an unoccupied space it can see that isn't in sunlight.

VAEUAN, ELF VETERAN

Medium humanoid (elf), lawful neutral

Armor Class 15 (chain shirt)

Hit Points 58 (9d8 + 18)

Speed 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 16 (+3) | 14 (+2) | 15 (+2) | 10 (+0) | 12 (+1) | 11 (+0) |

Skills Athletics +5, Perception +3, Stealth +4

Damage Resistances lightning

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages Common, Elvish

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Fey Ancestry. Vaeuan has advantage on Wisdom saving throws.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Vaeuan makes three spear attacks. He can replace one of them with a light crossbow attack.

Bronze spear. Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage, or 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack.

Light Crossbow. Ranged Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage.

THE TOWN OF SIRRAEN (PLAYER MAP)

