

Family Bonds - 447SuFaBo

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The request for aid came as a bit of a surprise for the party as the client, a noble, had a very bad name in the city that he lived within. However his coin was good and he was very influential with the guild. However there is more to Rhiktor Shroud than his name would suggest and the party find themselves at the centre of a dispute that could span centuries.

Will the party locate and save Rhiktor's daughter before he takes matters into his own hands, to the detriment to his family, the abductors and the city itself.

DM: (Rhiktor is a vampire who was sired after he had his daughter. While he battles his own monstrous nature he has fought to become a trusted and respected noble. A local priesthood see's him as an abomination despite him being fully in control of his vampiric impulses and the fact that he has never hurt or fed from a person, only animals. His daughter was taken to try and get him provoked enough to break his oath and lose everything he fought for.)

The party were staying in the Stonebrooke Inn as they waited for the next wagon out of the city when a man approached them. 'Excuse me, I have been sent here at my lord's request to invite you to dinner. He has a bit of a tricky situation that needs resolving and would appreciate the skill that comes from experiencing adventures. If you accept, would you join us at Lord Shroud's manor, it's to the north of the village.' After talking for a brief moment he bowed deeply before heading to the innkeeper to hand a small pouch to him. He had paid for the party's food and board for the next few days.

DM: (The man was Donevan, Rhiktor's head man servant, and he wants the party to meet Rhiktor. However, a few inn locals would come and talk to the party and warn them of Rhiktor and spread rumours that he is a necromancer, butcher and so forth. For reference see, **447MoUnDi**)

As the party enters the noble's mansion, the grandeur of its décor speaks volumes about the wealth of its owner. Donevan, a well-dressed servant, guides you through the opulent halls, explaining that Lord Shroud has been anxiously awaiting his daughter's return. She disappeared after a fit of rage caused by the villagers' slander, and Donevan suspects she was taken by the assailants. Despite Donevan's doubts about the villagers' involvement, Lord Shroud remains convinced.

Upon entering the vast, candlelit feasting hall, you are greeted by Rhiktor



Shroud, a pale and weary noble. He invites you to sit with him, revealing that he is a vampire - a fact the villagers gossiped about but described with much harsher words. Rhiktor expresses his deep love for his daughter, despite his condition, and pleads for your help in finding her. The villagers who attacked his staff and home are his prime suspects, though he has yet to

receive a ransom note, leading him to fear the worst.

As the party leave to begin their search the villagers eye them warily as they inquire about Rhiktor Shroud, their expressions a mix of fear, curiosity, and disdain. The murmur of conversations hushes as they speak, drawing the attention of even the busiest townsfolk.

An elderly man, leaning on a gnarled cane, steps forward, his eyes filled with a blend of caution and sorrow. 'Rhiktor Shroud, you say? They say he used to be a good man, before...well, before he became what he is now,' the old man begins, his voice trembling slightly. 'Some say he's a vampire, a creature of the night, but those who have met him speak of his kindness. I wouldn't go around asking too much of him... unless you want to meet an unfortunate end. There are many who do not like the man.'

A middle-aged woman listening nearby, clutching her apron nervously, adds, 'He loves his daughter dearly, that much is surely true. But ever since she went missing, there's been talk of dark deeds and foul play. Some believe he's behind it all, while others think the villagers themselves

are to blame. Either way, we are all living in fear.' The villagers nod in agreement, their whispers growing louder as they exchange tales and suspicions about Rhiktor.



DM: (Lillia has been taken by Laurence and a local sect of fanatics who want to see Rhiktor run out of town, or staked. She is well looked after as they only want to draw Rhiktor to do something careless, to let the beast within free so they can prove to the officials that he can not be trusted.

For reference and backstory see

447TuLiLa)

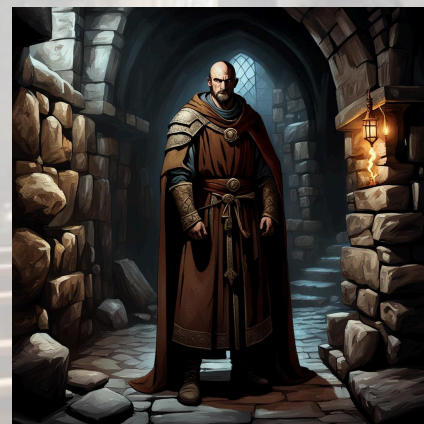
The party takes a few days to find clues or a

lead as to where Shroud's daughter has gone. Eventually someone, a relative of one of the servants that Rhiktor employs, talks about the local church and their zealous behaviour, attacking their family member. Rhiktor paid for the cleric to heal them and paid them several months of pay whilst asking them to take time off. The family member only speaks well of Lord Shroud, praising his kindness and generosity.

After days of searching, the party finally located the place where they believed Lillia was being held. A chance sighting of a blue dress flapping from a broken window in an old church led them to the spot. Despite the sense of being watched and the gloomy weather, they pressed on. Fresh boot prints leading to the church's front door were the only clue, as the other entry points had collapsed and were buried in rubble. The single entrance made them uneasy, but they had no other choice.

Entering the church, the only sound was the wind whistling through the rafters above.

The room was filled with disturbed dust, and a scrap of blue fabric near an overturned pew caught their eye. As they approached



cautiously, they had no idea they were walking into an ambush. Suddenly, the sound of glass shattering and liquid raining down from above broke the silence. A booming voice accused them of being agents of darkness.

The party was drenched in the liquid, and the voice stopped, realizing they were not vampires. Rhiktor appeared briefly, laughed, and vanished. The priest, enraged, commanded his followers to attack, believing the party to be servants of the vampire. Several men and women, armed and ready for battle, emerged, surrounding the party with both spiritual and physical weapons.

DM:(Refer to **447WeBIRa**. The priests will take turns in attacking and defending. This is a Moderate to Difficult encounter and should pose a threat to the party. Close quarters makes AOE spells hard to deal with and that they don't know where Lillia is and don't want to catch her in the AEO. Rhiktor doesn't attack anyone and merely dashes to save Lillia - leaving the party to cover his dash to his daughter and then, the escape back. Refer to **447ThFoCh** for environmental checks, Refer to **447FrUnFe** for suggested combat profiles.)

After the combat Rhiktor takes the wounded to a local healer with the party and explains what happens. Several villagers had heard the commotion and had come to watch as Rhiktor saved his daughter while the church had revealed their guilt in kidnapping and their attempt to frame the vampire. Lord Shroud apologises for the deception before rewarding them with two small chests of gold.