

Realm Slayer - 505SuReSl

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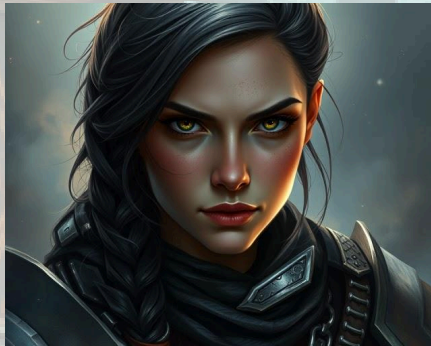
The problem with having something irreplaceable and something indescribably evil is that it always attracts the wrong kind of attention. The Temple of Helm in Kestel houses one of the Dark Shards, a slither of a cursed blade that was once used to slay the founding king of Kestel and beyond. While visiting the helm head cleric the party stops an attempt at stealing the shard. The high cleric asks the party to investigate the incident while they check in with the other temples that hold the other shards of the cursed blade.

DM: (DM summary)

The party, hired by the Temple of Helm to retrieve stolen medical goods, returned successfully, earning the admiration of the clerics at the temple entrance. As they deliver the goods, they are greeted by Tyson, the high cleric. He expresses his gratitude and begins to ask about their encounter with the bandits. However, their attention was soon drawn to two suspicious individuals sneaking into Tyson's quarters. Acting swiftly, the party confronted the intruders, apprehending two of the three thieves after a brief skirmish.

Tyson took the captured thieves for questioning, suspecting they were after a Dark Shard, a fragment of a cursed blade housed within the temple. With the third thief still at large, Tyson requested the party's assistance once more. He asked them to work with the city guard to uncover the thieves' intentions and locate the missing thief, believing this would shed light on the cult's nefarious plans. The party agreed, ready to face the challenges ahead and protect the temple and the city from further threats.

DM: (The encounter should be trivial with one of the assailants escaping using a mixture of stealth and invisibility. No one is seriously harmed during this encounter and the party should be encouraged to talk to the guards to find out more, Refer to **505MoStSh**)



description of the thieves. She pointed to a wall covered in squares of parchment, noting reports of suspicious activity in the old warehouse district, a known criminal hideout.

Within minutes, Captain Elara assigned a squad of seasoned guards and one overly confident new recruit to accompany the party. As they navigated the cramped streets, the guards pulled long brown cloaks over their tunics to blend in with the crowd. Questioning locals, they gathered information about a recent sighting of a cloaked figure entering an abandoned warehouse, a notorious haven for illicit activities. Approaching the warehouse cautiously, they noted signs of recent traffic and prepared to enter. Inside, they discovered dark symbols and an altar, revealing a hidden passage that led to a series of underground tunnels.

DM: (The party here sees signs of recent travel past the hidden door. The guards are aware of what's down there but not how many thieves live in this area and Elara wanted the party to aid in her task to clear out the warehouse - a staging ground for attacks - to better protect the city. The encounter here is **Trivial in difficulty with just four thieves**. Refer to **505TuDaDo**)

As the party watched the last of the surprised and underdressed thieves get their hands tied by the guards, they took note of the room. The small space resembled more of a mine or hovel than living quarters, with hand-dug marks on the walls from tools biting into the soil and rocks. Four flat benches with piles of blankets served as the rough beds for the four men and women, who had been sleeping when the party followed a strange reverberating growl—revealed to be the brawny woman snoring as



the near-snuffed lantern light cast flickering shadows on the walls. The party found several stolen goods in a bag at the end of the woman's bed.

When questioned, the thieves didn't resist and provided the party with information, except for the identity of the man in the black cloak. They claimed to have seen no such man and mentioned that one of the passageways leading towards the center of town had collapsed, which they were planning to dig out before being ambushed. The passageway, connected to the sewers running throughout the city, was a great way to move about undetected. With the thieves in tow, the party was led to the blocked passage, noting it was intentionally obstructed. The thieves

were then escorted out and into the warehouse again, where the door to the street creaked open slightly, indicating it hadn't closed properly when they entered.

As they moved through the streets, the thieves begged for mercy, offering assistance in exchange for avoiding jail and the executioner's block. The guards, making no promises, escorted them towards the city watch headquarters. As they passed several large sewer grates lining the road, the party noticed the distant temple of Helm, unusually devoid of its usual priestly guards. Upon arrival, the city watch took the suspects in for questioning, while the party's feet carried them towards the temple, where a sign read "Closed. Come back tomorrow."

Forcing their way through the jammed door, they found the unconscious bodies of the two clerics who were on guard that morning. A strong stench filled the building, emanating from a large hole in the floor leading to the sewers. In the smashed-open High Cleric's room, they discovered Tyson, slowly regaining consciousness. After healing himself and others, Tyson explained that an unnatural silence and a sudden eruption of the floor had led to chaos. He feared that the thieves aimed to reforge the Realm Slayer, a dire threat.

DM: (They find several sets of footprints indicating a group of people attacked the temple to Helm. The party may encounter a lone cultist in these early passageways, **505WeBIPa**, may just describe what happens and any discovery)

The party braved the nearly unbearable stench as they trekked deeper into the tunnel, carefully avoiding the water to remain undetected. They soon reached a junction of sewer canals, where the city's sewage flowed into overfull drains. There, they discovered dozens of cloaked men and women chanting around a burning brazier, which did nothing to mask the sewage stench. An arcane symbol carved into the ground throbbed with power, and dozens of metallic shards hovered above it, identified as the Dark Shards. The eerie scene hinted at a dark ritual underway, the murmured voices bouncing off the slimy mushroom-lined walls.

The party realized they were not the first on the scene as city watch members revealed themselves and charged towards the chanting cultists. Seizing the moment, the party joined the fray, battling cultists wielding dark, magic-infused blades. As a select few cultists continued their ritual, protected by others, the unholy energy from the blades inflicted deep, agonizing wounds on the party.

DM: (Refer to map on next page, refer to **505ThKeSe**. The encounter should be hard with a few allies from the city watch helping out - but not stealing the spotlight. Refer to **505FrSeSk**. The cultists should rotate to have the shards always being empowered by chanting with fallen members replaced by fresher ones (still conscious ones).)



