

DESIGN NOTES



Scourge of the Demon Wolf

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Written by Robert S. Conley

Introduction

Since Scourge's release I got feedback about the adventure. This document is setup to share that feedback.

It is not my intent to tell you how to run this adventure. If you decide that the initial situation and the subsequent actions of the PCs warrant different choices by the NPCs then you are running the adventure exactly how I intended it to run.

The way I initially ran Scourge of the Demon Wolf was to setup the initial situation and motivations of the different groups and adlibbed the rest. After the fourth playtest, there were obvious patterns as to how the different groups dealt with the situation. In general the adventure flowed as I outlined in the book.

Some things I made initial notes for, but because they never came up during any of the playtest sessions they didn't make into the final book.

Arbela's Plan

As noted in the adventure, Arbela is an apprentice who is in a hurry to gain magical power. In the supplement I flesh this out a bit and talk about her desire to travel to Viridistan to delve into the ancient demonic magic of the Viridians.

During the penultimate encounter one of the things that occurs is that Arbela flees the conclave, heads back to the ritual site and start it anew. What I don't do is explain why she does that instead of a number of equally other plausible actions.

In my original notes Arbela is a young vain women who not noted for her patience. She also thinks she is brighter than she really is. When Arbela overheard the adventuring party talking to the Masters of the conclave, she decided that this was her time to leave and head to Viridistan. She gathers a few things and heads to the hills with the intent of completing the ritual and gain control of the Demon Wolf. Then with the demonic beast in tow she would go to Viridistan and offer it as proof of her skill.

Needless to say this plan has a few holes in it that in her pride and arrogance she is blind too. But I judged it be something a young ambitious mage would think would work and it had the virtue of concluding in a exciting combat confrontation.

Often times for my NPCs I am faced with several equally probable (in terms of agenda, motivations, and resources) choices for a given situations. In this case the action I take for the NPC is one I feel will generate the most opportunities for adventure.

Talking to the Order of Thoth

Another area I didn't into the adventure is why the mages act so wary when talking to the adventuring party. If the recommended premise of the adventure is used, the party are agents of the Baron, the feudal lord in charge of the region.

The situation with the Order of Thoth in this area of the Majestic Wilderlands is similar to the feudal lords dealing with monasteries, and other organizations affiliated with the Roman Catholic Church. In the medieval period the clergy of the church, which included many layman, had the right to be judged by canon law, not the feudal law of the kingdom. They were very jealous of their rights including the property they own.

While the Order of Thoth is a magical order not a religious order it prizes its traditional independence. One of the reasons the Order of Thoth was founded was to preserve the independence of mages from the being drafted into service by the local robber kings of that time period.

In City-State, the mages has successfully convinced the Invincible Overlord (the ultimate sovereign of the local baron) to elevate the order to equal status with the temples and feudal lords. While they can't totally ignore the local lords, they make sure that there is a good reason why they or their agents are involved in the affairs of wizards.

Dealing with demons are one of the few crimes for which the Overlord will take a direct interest in as demons are viewed the universal enemy and corrupters of all people in the Wilderlands. So when it become obvious in the conversation that the source of the Demon Wolf lies within the Golden House, the mage will be very cooperative to avoid the wrath of the Overlord and his lords. And will go to great length to ensure the silence of the adventuring party. Luckily for them the Golden House has a strong sense of ethics so they will be bribed rather than disappearing into the local mountains.