

Inner Sanctum

The room has a vast covering of vegetation on the floor, walls and ceiling. Its leaves make it appear like a deep crimson ivy, but there's a sticky substance on the leaves. Three large gray flowers are in various spots along the cramped corridor that exhibit a movement similar to breathing. The characters can move unhindered through the leaves, the gray flowers not reacting unless there's a blatant attack. Muffled from the leaves, the PCs can hear two voices around the left corner; it sounds like an argument.

Ossen is here... sort of. He's managed to project a spectral version of himself across the physical world. His main form is still in Ald Sotha, but he's here to stir up some trouble. Shakaask had teleported into the room when Ossen started to seize control of the trial. Shakaask apologizes and pleads with Ossen. The characters can hear the conversation, perhaps even see them depending on how quickly they move. If they decided to listen, it becomes apparent that Shakaask was tasked with watching over these plants and studying them. He's very displeased that the naga had failed in keeping them away from the outside, even more so that our beloved heroes got in here. After more blubbering from the naga, Ossen calmly raises a finger and says, "You had your chance and you could not do what I asked." Upon clenching his fist, the naga screams in pain as it's reduced to a pile of ashes. Ossen turns to face the characters with his piercing gaze. With an open hand, some seeds from the flowers float past the PCs into the awaiting palm. His mouth does not move, but they can hear him. *They actually didn't think much of the seeds for some reason. I played up the fact that the flowers were magical in nature, but Corbin (our wizardly tinkerer) didn't find any desire to look closely.*

"Too long have you hindered me, believing yourselves earth movers does not make you so. You bask now in the presence of your undoing. It should grant some comfort to know that I've found the chamber where the Shroud of Ahzidahl resides. When it's in my possession, Blaine will pay for his disloyalty and the deck will be mine. It's only a matter of time before you all fall. This will be short." Initiative. *You always need a villain monologue, I mean c'mon. Also, with names like Ald Sotha and Ahzidahl, is it obvious that I like Elder Scrolls?*

The corridor with the plants is difficult terrain, and whilst inside it, they are always engaged with the flowers. It takes two move actions to go one range of moment (far away to nearby would take two move actions). Players can choose to do it in one movement but suffer a 1d3 opportunity attacks.

Encounter:

Lich flower x3

Lich Count (as Ossen, with Escalator ability) x1: Crysx is not immune to Ossen's *fear aura* (use **Look Upon Your Doom** for HP threshold)

Lich hounds x3 (at escalation 2 if needed)

When Ossen is hit, it becomes apparent that it's not actually him as his form distorts briefly. After being defeated, his form is swept away with a breeze. The plants will fight on if he's killed before them, withering when destroyed. Seeds can be extracted for study. *Nobody cared.*

This fight was excruciatingly underwhelming. We had a full table, six people, and according to the rules for calculating encounters in the core book, this should have been sufficient. I was actually concerned it was too much, as the flowers can be a pain in the neck. Ossen got a couple of good hits in but I feel like I need to *heavily* tinker with the lich to make it an effective final boss at the end of the game. The lich hounds choked the entrance to the hallways so Ossen was firing spells from the tomb. With them trapped in the hallway, the plants easily had their way with the players, but my rolls were just garbage. Had I been rolling well, perhaps the battle would've gone differently. 13th Age is a pretty swingy game, in regard to dice luck. Even with a lack of performance on my end, Ben was scared for Crysx. The rest of the party was rather neutral to the encounter, relieved if anything at all. It was a walk in the park, but at least the image and emotional tone were decent!

Resolution

When they exit the inner sanctum, there's a group of 40 dwarves waiting outside the door looking sheepish. It's apparent that they were under a mind control spell by the naga, as they all shout, "The Lightbringers Come!" in dwarvish, bowing to Crysx and Lisbeth. If the PCs ask, they will agree to fight during the future assault to reclaim Ald Sotha.

They did, and gave a map to the dwarves, with the marked location of the ship that the PCs had arrived on. The dwarves are excavators hired to dig out this find for a rich archaeologist. Shakaask had imprisoned hem, but there's more details on that in the next adventure: Quest for the Phoenix Feather!