

---

# LEAGUE OF THE BLUE CLOAK SEASON 1: HEARTS AND MINDS

---

# Introduction to Season 1

*“I’m Kathra Ironsoul. Welcome to the League of the Blue Cloak. Recruit. Aye. Recruit. I know Greycastle has given you the speech about how we’re all family and how you’re welcome. Well, Greycastle handles RECRUITING. But he hasn’t pried the sash from my tongs just yet. Let me tell you how it is. First, we’re proving ourselves here. We’re new to this slag pile of a city. And I – that’s right, me – I only barely got the governor to grant us the charter. I don’t care what Greycastle told you. We’re here to make money. But to do that, we need trust. Right now, we’re lucky for the piddling pig iron jobs that have been trickling in. I don’t care if the jobs beneath you. It’s beneath all of us. But if you want a master’s work, you’ve got to do a master’s job first. So, you do the job. You do it well. You be on your best behavior. You make people think we’re the gods’ own gifts. Get it? And that brings me to you. You’re a recruit. You want to work the forge, you got to put in your hours working the bellows. Get me? You want friends? You want camaraderie? Go join some damned elven hunting lodge. You want the cloak? Earn the cloak.”*

Welcome to Season 1 of the League of the Blue Cloak. Each season will be preceded with a document like this one. It will set up the story for the season and explain any new rules or new world details. It will also include the schedule for the season.

## The Story So Far...

---

Eighteen years ago, a massive earthquake struck the Living City of Santiem. While most of the ancient buildings survived the catastrophe, most of the rebuilt sections of the city were badly damaged or destroyed. The earthquake opened new entrances into the so-called Undercity, the ruined passages and chambers beneath the surface of Santiem. And various monstrosities poured forth. In the chaos,

Duke Rowan Santiem disappeared. Lisella Brayan, a cousin of Santiem’s house and a mercenary captain, claimed the governorship of the city. For the last decade and a half, Brayan has tried to bring the rule of law to the frontier city. And she has been successful for the most part. The city has been growing slowly but surely in that time.

Members of The League of the Blue Cloak arrived in the city about five years ago and began exploring and plundering in an unofficial capacity, but they had many run-ins with Brayan’s standing City Watch. Kathra Ironsoul, a dwarf smith turned adventurer, negotiated with Brayan for official recognition as a guild. After that, League adventurers could operate within the city, though that had to accept a partnership with the arcane College of the Opal Tower. Until recently, the League had only fifty members operating within the city. And the League has been struggling to bring in enough coin to pay the taxes required to keep up their charter.

Vander Greycastle, Veteran of the League, proposed opening up recruiting and taking jobs from various groups and individuals. But jobs have been slow in coming and the League’s other adventurers are not quick to trust raw recruits.

You are one of those recruits. You have recently arrived in Santiem for the first time and your petition to join the League has been accepted. Conditionally. Before you are truly accepted, you’ll have to prove you can handle at least a few simple jobs. And you’ll have to keep in mind that the League is trying to improve its reputation in the city. Just doing the job may not be enough. You’ll have to find a way to make a name for the League in order to truly make a name for yourself.

## Your First Glimpse

---

Santiem is a broad, low city of dark stone that squats on either side of a wide, slow, meandering river in the middle of flat but rocky grassland. The landscape isn’t exactly teeming with life as you make your way to the city as soon as the spring thaw will allow. Gray-green and yellow-brown grasses and shrubs cover most of the earth, except where brown soil or

pale bedrock show through. Squat, scraggly trees grow here and there in small copses, their limbs dotted with white and green buds. The air is clammy and there's an almost perpetual wind. One that drives the all-too-frequent cold rain.

The city itself suits the landscape. It's squat, low, and dark. From a distance, all you can see are the outer walls. Tapered stone, made of massive blocks, and almost wider on the bottom than the wall is tall. And there is no city outside the walls. No foregates. Just a spiderweb of dirt roads winding between miles and miles of farms, all bare and barren, waiting for the spring planting. The homesteads are all clay or brick or stacked rock with tiled roofs. The farmers live well enough.

The city gate is a long tunnel through the wall. No gates are visible, but you do see arrow slits and murderholes looking into the tunnel from either side and above. And on the other side, the city proper.

It's more bustling than you expected, but still less crowded than it should be for its size. Here, just inside the gate, there's a broad plaza of pale brick. During the summer, it's probably a bustling market. Right now, only a few merchants are hawking their wares under the watchful eye of soldiers in the crimson and black livery of the City Watch. Short brick and clay buildings stand together, no alleys between them. And they are built on more impressive foundations of heavy stone blocks. Clearly, new buildings built on old foundations, following the old pattern of the ancient city. Whoever built it liked straight lines and sharp angles.

In the distance, you see a low, flat-topped pyramid-like building. One of the ancient structures that survived whatever cataclysm befell this city ages ago. And you spy a few others, all of the same style. Tapering, angled, and flat-topped. The stone is badly weathered. If the buildings were adorned or decorated once, they aren't anymore. All show signs of being used by the city's new inhabitants. Many of the main roads are paved with flat brick, edged, and guttered. And wherever there is space, people have thrown up buildings of their own. Some are built of clay or brick, usually atop an old foundation. Others are half-old and half-new, patched with mortar and plaster or bricked over. And here and there,

haphazardly scattered about, are mud huts and other ramshackle constructions. It looks like people just settled wherever they could amongst the ruins and built whatever their means allowed them.

Your journey through the city takes you across several canals and near the river, both of which are bulwarked with ancient retaining walls, still holding strong. This city must have been a masterwork of construction once. Now, it's just a foundation for a thousand squatters in the middle of a barren nowhere. Inner walls snake through the city, dividing it into numerous wards. And you pick your way to Blackwater Ward.

## Blackwater Ward and the Broken Lantern Tavern

Blackwater Ward was one of the hardest hit areas of the city in the Great Earthquake. One of the canal's retaining walls collapsed, choking the canal and causing it to flood. The canal ended up dammed up in several places. When the water finally receded, it left a debris-choked pond and several pools of standing water. Attempts to clear the debris and let the ponds drain out ultimately failed. So, the inhabitants of the city did what they did best: they just ignored the problem and built around it. The center of the ward is now a muddy, disgusting stand of bug-infested water surrounded by cobblestone roads and clay buildings made of the thick, black mud.

The Broken Lantern Tavern thankfully stands away from the Blackwater Pond. It's a flattish building of pale clay bricks on an ancient foundation. Sitting on a small block of limestone beside the door is a rusted lantern. It looks as if someone just discarded the thing there and the landlord decided it was easier to just name the tavern after it than pick up the trash. Inside, the common room is low and close, lit by smoky bowls hung by ropes from the ceiling. It reeks of tar and sweat. The furniture is a haphazard collection of discarded junk and debris. Misshapen wooden boards set across barrels, blocks of stone that clearly came from the ruin that once occupied this lot, a broken wheelbarrow propped up and chocked. One impressive table, the room's centerpiece, is clearly a sarcophagus looted from

some ancient tomb, surrounded by mismatched chairs and stools.

Prominently displayed amongst the squalid junk furniture is – well, more junk. Charitably, you might call it the loot from a dozen meager adventures. More like the cast-offs after the valuable loot was sold. Rusted swords, torn bits of banner, half-broken stone icons, and damaged armor. Amongst them are a few trophies of slain beasts. A fire beetle squats on a shelf above one table with candle stubs where it's glowing antenna would have been in life. A dire wolf head is the most impressive. Least impressive are the dozen or so stuffed giant rats mouldering about the place. Each has a tiny linen cap bandanna lazily dropped on its head.

Eventually, after a few meetings, you are allowed to go “below.” Beneath the tavern is a maze of narrow tunnels and chambers, all of the same brick-and-mortar of the ancient city. These chambers are old. In this little private labyrinth, the League maintains its offices and storerooms and training halls. Here, the League displays its real trophies. And here, it hides its real treasures. You're warned pointedly not to go wandering. The League knows how to defend itself against the prying eyes and sticky fingers of overly curious adventurers.

# Month 1 Schedule

Season 1 is divided into two months. The first month begins on Wednesday, May 10 and ends on Wednesday, May 31. The second month begins on Thursday, June 1 and ends on Friday, June 30.

In S1M1, four missions will be available. Starting on Wednesday, May 3, if you have a registered and approved character in League, you may reserve a seat in one of those four missions. You may also attempt to participate in additional missions by showing up 15 minutes before the start of the mission and claiming an open seat (if one exists). To reserve a seat, simply visit the Broken Lantern Facebook Group and RSVP for the corresponding event.

The schedule for S1M2 will be published on Sunday, May 21 and registration for S1M2 missions will begin on Wednesday, May 24.

## S1M1 Missions

---

### A Bit of a Tradition

Saturday May 13

8:00 PM EST – 12 AM EST

325 XP

50 GP

*“Some of my neighbors and I – farmers – we rent a storehouse here in the city. Pooled our coin, see? We’ve got a bunch of milled rye stored in there. And now it’s so crawling with rats that we can’t get in there. We can’t scare the rats out. Ain’t never known a rat that didn’t run from a man, but these one’s won’t. Don’t even know how they got in. It’s a good, stout place. The grain’s probably ruined already. That’s half our stock for the year and it’s a long way till the next harvest. Get rid of the rats, please. So we can get whatever’s still good out.” – Romalden (M Hum), Local Farmer*

*“Rats are scavengers. They only put up a fight when cornered. Even the giant ones. And dire rats are solitary. They don’t swarm. And they’ll eat their normal-sized kin. This is*

*odd. Rats are particularly afraid of fire, but with all the grain in the air, the place would go up like a torch if you brought an open flame inside. Ever see a mill fire? You do not want to be inside of that. You’ll have to be careful. Drive off the rats however you can, but unless you can figure out how they got in and stopper it up, they’ll just come back. Let’s do this job right.” – Astharan Vomaldi (M WElf, Veteran of the League and Naturalist*

### Simple, Right?

Friday May 19

8:00 PM EST – 12 AM EST

350 XP

60 GP\*

*“It’s simple. I’ve got a cartload of goods coming up from Bandery. My, uh, shop’s in the Southbend. Ain’t the nicest place. And the governor’s watch is, uh, stretched too thin to protect honest businessfolk who can’t grease a few palms. So, meet my cart at the gate. Give it an, uh, escort. You know, just stand around it, bristling with weapons and such. Make anyone think twice about helping themselves. Bring it to my, uh, shop. If you got someone who knows how to drive the thing, mores the better. I can tell the drover to give it over at the gate. She’s a cheat anyways.” – Skathi (M Tie), Local Merchant*

*“He’s right about the Southbend. The Watch is still having trouble everywhere south of the river. Let me know if you’re a driver and if you want to take the cart. Otherwise, you’ll have to keep the driver safe as well as the goods and the animals.” – Vander Greycastle, Veteran of the League*

\* The cost of lost goods, a damaged cart, or an injured animal will be deducted from the reward.

## Lost and Found

Sunday May 21

12 PM EST – 4 PM EST

375 XP

50 GP

*“I need your help! Please. Me and my brother were down in the Undercity. I know – I KNOW – we’re not supposed to go down there. That’s why we can’t go to the Watch. But we couldn’t just leave Misty down there. She’s our cat and she wriggled down there. So, we went in after her. We were on this bridge over a big crevasse when there was a shakeup and the thing gave out. He ended up on one side, I’m on the other. I wandered around trying to find another way to him, but I got chased out by some fire beetles. Please, come look for him with. I know he’s got enough food and water to last for days. We both did. I need your help!” – Miri Bottlebrush (F Hal), Local Laborer*

*“Pah. Chasing a cat. Let the thing go, I say, and good riddance. Those two have rocks for brains. Anyway, she’s right. The law is the Undercity is off limits. But not to us. Charter says we can go in. It’s up to you if you want to bring the nugget along. Have to protect her if you do. And her idiot brother. Be careful bringing them out. We’re allowed in. They’re not. And you might want to be ready to heal the brother. If he ain’t already dead. And if he is dead, bring back the corpse so they got something to bury.” – Astharan Vomaldi (M WElf, Veteran of the League and Naturalist*

## For the Colors

Saturday May 27

4 PM EST – 8 PM EST

300 XP

70 GP\*

*“Look, I know the job board’s a dry lode. But that’ll change. We’ll make it change. People just need to see we can be trusted to do right by them. But you can’t spend promises. You*

*need work. So, I’m hiring you myself. This job’s for the League. We got two valuable urns we turned up below. Sealed and stoppered. And delicate as a beardless babe. Opal Tower wants a look at them. Get them there. Don’t bust them. Don’t chip them. Don’t open them. If you can drive, we’ll lend you a cart. But you take it slow and keep them steady. Right? Otherwise, carrying them is slower but safer. But be on the lookout for trouble. Lots of thieves about. Even in the safe neighborhoods.”*

\* The reward will be reduced by half if only one of the urns is undamaged. The reward will be reduced if the loaned cart is damage or an animal is injured or killed.

# Month 1 Rumors and Happenings

Here is a compilation of the rumors and happenings that you might have heard around the Broken Lantern and the City of Santiem during the last month. These were all originally posted in the Facebook group after each mission.

## A Bit of a Tradition

---

If you happened to be in the Broken Lantern's common room on the 9th of Springtide, just after dusk, you may have seen the following. If not, you certainly heard about it.

Three soldiers - members of the City Watch by their red and black surcotes over their chainmail shirts - entered the tavern's common room. One unfurled a scrap of parchment and nailed it just inside the door while another rapped the butt of her halberd on the stone floor. "Hear and attend, all, by the order of the Governor," she began in a bored, officious voice. The tavern fell silent for her announcement.

"All citizens and visitors to the city of Santiem are hereby reminded that entry to any passages or chambers beneath the city or the lands immediately surrounding it is forbidden without the express position of the Governor or her agents. Further any and all unknown objects discovered within the city or below, especially those bearing enchantments, are to be reported and turned over to the City Watch. Trafficing in ancient artifacts and enchanted items is a crime. By Governor Brayan's command, so shall it be."

The soldiers then glance around quickly and stomp out.

If you're attentive, you might hear various murmurings after the soldiers leave.

"S'that y'ken?" says a halving, half speaking in their weird slang.

His friend answers, "Eh. Must've caught another amateur treasure hunter. Hard labor for him, probably, since he likes digging in the dirt so much. Don't apply to us at any rate. We's got the governor's blessing. They's just going around, spreading the word. It's what they's good for. Stomping and shouting."

"Tha's the tankard an the tun," laughs the halving, apparently agreeing.

## Simple, Right?

---

A Conversation Overheard in the Broken Lantern:

"It was quite a row. Everyone in the common room could hear the shouting. First that oily tiefling merchant and Guildmaster Ironsoul. And then Greycastle joined in. After the tiefling left, practically smoking from the ears, Greycastle and Ironsoul kept at it. Must've been an hour. The common room shut up quiet, but we couldn't hear what they said."

"Aye. I saw the tiefling leave, He was tuckin' away a purse full of coin, but he didn't look happier for it."

"I heard some recruits screwed up and Greycastle told them they could keep the coin, even though the League had to cough up the coin."

"That'd do it. Ironsoul? More like Goldsoul, am I right?"

"Goldfist, the way she clutches for the stuff. Just like a dwarf. Want to drive her mad? Put her in a round room and tell 'er there's a gold piece in the corner."

"Think the recruits will get in any trouble?"

"Doubt it. She might hate Greycastle, but she won't cross him. He's got too many friends."

"Aye. He's friends with everyone around here. He snatches friends the way she snatches gold."

"Not just around here... he's got friends in elsewheres. Ironsoul's just got her gold."

"And not enough to buy friends."

"Like she'd spend it anyway. Ha!"

## Simple, Right?

---

The gossip mongers in the Bandery Gate Market are abuzz. It seems a drover's thundertusk boar - a massive, ill-tempered beast hill dwarves favor as draft animals - broke free of its cart on Tanner's Row and went on a rampage. Three people, including a child, were trampled and gored to death. A dyer's storefront and yard were destroyed. Ultimately, the City Watch had to put the beast down. Two soldiers were hurt before the thing finally went still. Folks

remember a hideous dwarf driving the cart. But the animal's brand identified it as belonging to a local merchant. The Watch has confiscated all of his wares and possessions to pay for the damages and he's been sent to one of the governors farm's for hard labor.

## For the Colors

---

On Springtide 18, several small groundshakes roll through the city of Santiem. They begin in the small hours of the morning. Each passes quickly. Various animals, horses and thundertusks, dogs and cats, they are the first to notice. They paw at the ground nervously and vocalize their discomfort with barks, grunts, neighs, and meows. You feel each shake a few moments later. It starts with a distant, uneasy rumbling you can just feel in the pit of your stomach and then grows to a gentle rolling under your feet. Hanging lamps are set swinging and mugs and plates clatter. The citizens of the city and those who have been here the longest, they seem unperturbed. Some mutter about the "city settling itself." Some half-rise, ready to move to a safer place if the shake grows. Most don't even take notice. But then, the people of this city seem so jaded that it's a wonder they notice anything that isn't trying to outright kill them. Of course, visitors and newcomers are more nervous, but most take their cues from the natives and stay calm. A few close their eyes and mutter superstitious wards against the attention of the "King that Crawls" in case the god of the underground really is out on the hunt. And then, the shake fades into the distance and life returns to normal. Nothing significant is damaged. No one is hurt.

The largest shake, still small and doing barely any damage apart from some spilled cups and broken porcelain, comes in the mid-morning. It lasts a few minutes, just long enough that the Santiemers are starting to gather their things and move to shelter, but it too passes without incident.

It's only later that any of you hear that it wasn't entirely without incident...

## For the Colors

---

You thought the groundshakes of the morning passed without incident. But then, in the common room of the Broken Lantern on the evening of Springtide 18, you hear otherwise...

"Beasts up from the Undercity," one of the merchant's guards sitting at a corner table says dismissively. "A'int a month goes by that doesn't happen in some corner."

"Nay. Not beasts. I mean, yes, beasts. But not. Different."

"Same as always."

"NO!" the other says, slamming his mug down on the table, momentarily drawing the eyes of everyone in the place. "No," he says more quietly. "Not beasts. Monsters. Real monsters, they were. I saw them. Made of wind and smoke and fire and rock. Magic spirits. Demons of the Chaos."

Others are listening now. An elven mage in a blue cloak speaks up, "elementals." She says it plainly, but not quite dismissively. "Elementals. They are as mindless as beasts. Not evil. But destructive. And violent. They are as chaotic as the miasma they are born from."

"Sounds evil to me," mutters someone else.

"You'd not say that," some else quips, "if you'd ever fought a true demon."

"And you have fought a demon? Your mother don't count."

The mage stands up and addresses the merchant's guards, though her impassive gaze sweeps the whole room first. "Demons are elementals that have been corrupted by the Abyss. They are both destructive and hateful. A wild dog isn't evil. A boar isn't evil. But both can destroy or kill easily enough. But demons delight in the destruction. And the killing. They crave it. Because they hate everything. They hate existence. They hate themselves."

"But these," she continues, as the guards gulp, "these were just elementals. Just beasts. We don't know how they escaped into our world. They can only come into our world by magic. There were no more than two dozen or so. And all right around the Governor's Hall."

Suddenly, a dark voice pipes up. The voice belongs to an equally dark man, beady eyes shining from the shadow of the cowl of his blue cloak. "You mean right around the Opal Tower. The wizard's academy."

The elf fixes the dark-eyed man and, for a moment, her impassive features show a flash of anger. "Yes. The



elementals appeared in the streets between the Governor's Hall and the Opal Tower. And fortunately too. The wizards were able to help the City Watch dispatch the elementals."

A tension settles over the room. The dark man and the elven mage stare at each other, both unreadable, neither looking away. Finally, the dark-eyed man says "aye, fortunate that." He takes a long pull of his ale, draining it, stands up, and excuses himself.

After that, the room is subdued. No one seems eager to discuss elementals or demons or the Opal Tower any further.

## Month 2 Schedule

In S1M2, four missions will be available. Starting on Wednesday, June 7, if you have a registered and approved character in League, you may reserve a seat in one of those four missions. You may also attempt to participate in additional missions by showing up 15 minutes before the start of the mission and claiming an open seat (if one exists). To reserve a seat, simply visit the Broken Lantern Facebook Group and RSVP for the corresponding event.

S1M2 ends on June 30. That will also coincide with the end of the first season.

### S1M2 Missions

---

#### The Darkness Below

Saturday June 10

8:00 PM EST – 12:00 AM EST

450 XP

25 GP\*

*“Good day. I’m Minister Thane, from the Governor’s Hall. I’ve heard from the City Watch that we have some of your people to thank for bringing a poacher to justice. Romalden of Tam’s Market has been assigned a duty of penance for failing to disclose the discovery of underground ruins and for theft of magical artifacts from said ruins. His farm has also been seized and his wife and children have gone off to live with her sister, I believe. Before we can decide what to do with the farm, we need to determine the extent of the ruins and the danger they might present. This is the first discovery of ruins outside of the city proper. It’s about a day away. We need a team to scout the site, deal with any threats that can be dealt with, gather what objects of value there might be, and to report on any threats that can’t be handled directly. Do you think you have some agents you can trust to do that?” – Minister Veral Thane (M Hum), Governor’s Liaison*

*“Ya see? This is precisely what I said. Do the tinker work right and pretty soon, you’re running the forge. This is our chance to impress the high-n-mighties in the Governor’s Hall. It’s a scouting job, pure and simple. You’ll want to map the place; a simple one will do. But leave no corner unchecked. Kill whatever you can. Whatever you can’t, report it back. Pay’s low on this one, but there’s a share of whatever you discover down there. You know the rules. Don’t skim; you’ll get your due.” – Kathra Ironsoul (F Dwa), Master of the League*

*“Is she gone? Good. Kathra is still furious with me. Listen, I need a favor. I’ve got a new recruit who was very eager to join the League. I’m inclined to trust anyone willing to wear the colors, but this one rubs me the wrong way and he jumped at this job the second it was posted. I think he’s in it for the gold first. I hope I’m wrong. But I need you to keep an eye on him and let me know if something goes wrong. If Kathra catches wind that a recruit I brought in broke the rules, let’s just say she’ll use it against me. Just let me know, okay?” – Vander Greycastle (M Hum), Veteran of the League*

\* The party is likely to discover treasure in the ruins which they are expected to collect and turn over the Guild. They will be compensated for all items of value or significance they recover.

#### Who None Would Mourn

Sunday June 25

12:00 PM EST – 4:00 PM EST

425 XP

45 GP

*“I... look, I shouldn’t even be here, but maybe you people can help. My friends and I are concerned about a problem in our neighborhood. That’s the South Bend. We’ve*

*had a few people go missing. And the City Watch doesn't give one whit. Oh sure, a monster comes up near the Governor's Hall and spooks a few gentlefolk and it's alarm gongs and halberds and let's get the thing. But flower girls and street rats going missing every night in South Bend. Can't be arsed, can they. Please, my friends and have our hands full as it is. People have a right to live without fear of getting attacked in the night. Whoever they might be." – Thorn (F Hal), Local*

*"I don't know who this woman is. She was cagey. We know there's a band of local 'heroes' watching over South Bend, if you take my meaning. That would be my guess. And from what I hear, they are half the reason the Watch stays out of South Bend. But that aside, if something is preying on innocents, even if they are lowborn, they deserve our help. Could be slavers. Could be a killer. Could be a monster. You'll have to investigate. Talk to the locals, scout the area, and work out what's happening. And deal with it. Oh... what? Flower girls? Women of the night. The flowers are their cover. And their sign." – Vander Greycastle, Veteran of the League*

## Mixing Up Trouble

Saturday July 15

8:00 PM EST – 12:00 AM EST

450/300 XP

50/25 GP\*

*"Look, I'm init and need a hep. A mum hep, nosh? Sorry. Sorry. I've got a problem and I need help. And it has to be quiet, or I'll be in a lot of trouble. I'm a... dabmum. A, uh, wise woman? I do midwifery and such, nosh? Round the Bend. But I'm also a dab hand with herbs and such. If the guild knew I was mixin' me own cures, I'd be runnin fer me own nog... uh, I'd be in trouble. Thing is, I've got these pets, right? Keep them in me... in me*

*cellar. Well, I used to. But that shakeup we had last week? Well, it got down there. And I been, umm... tryin things on it. Just a hobby. But I'm all aknot that it's going to come creeping up out of some other hole and hurt someone. But I don't want to land in the... to get in trouble by reporting it. Can you go down the hole and see if you can find Leggy for me? If you can catch her, that'd be great. But if you can't and you have to... you know... well, I'll understand. With all the stuff sloshing in her innards now, I don't know what she might be able to do." – Oona Applechurn (F Hal), Local Midwife*

*"I have nothing against the small folk, but their strange way of butchering your common speech confounds me sometimes. She's talking about a spider. It took me forever to get it out of her. A giant spider that she's been feeding alchemical concoctions too. The gods know why. The thing escaped into the undercity beneath her shop. She'd like it captured and returned if possible. That seems remarkably dangerous and more than a little cruel, but that's the job. Unfortunately, she couldn't tell me enough to identify the variety of spider. So I'm afraid you'll have to adapt to whatever you find. If you do mean to catch it, I've got to warn you. You can't knock a spider out like you can barroom thug. If you knock it around, even with the butt of your spear, you'll kill it before you disable it. And that's even without accounting for whatever strange concoctions she's fed the thing. The point is, you're going to track the thing and then lure it into a trap." – Astharan Vomaldi (M WElf), Veteran of the League and Naturalist*

\* The reward depends on whether the spider is returned alive or whether it is killed.

## A Hole in the World

Saturday July 29

4:00 PM EST – 8:00 PM EST

450 XP  
60 GP\*

*“We are gravely concerned over the sudden appearance of elementals in the streets north of the Governor’s Hall last month. My colleagues and I have been carefully documenting the various sightings. We have reason to suspect an elemental rift – a portal to the Elemental Chaos – has opened in the Undercity. Given the nature of the elementals, it is a small rift and it will likely close on its own. Unless it was opened on purpose. Or unless an actual demon finds the opening on the other end. We should start with a small team first to scout the location we suspect. If the portal is small and naturally occurring, they should be able to close it with the materials and instructions we provide. Of course, someone knowledgeable in the arcane arts would be beneficial.” – Emiri the Saffron (F HElf), Mage of the Opal Tower*

*“Elementals are animate beings composed of a chaotic mixture of raw elements. Cyclones of fire, for example. Sludge-like oozes of earth and water. There are many different types. They are resistant to physical attacks, but not immune and they can be overwhelmed by sheer force. Each elemental has its vulnerabilities. Fiery ones dislike cold and water, for example. Solid earth and crystalline ones are brittle and can be cracked or shattered. Unfortunately, there’s so many different kinds that a lot of guesswork is involved. That said, they are all especially vulnerable pure magical energy – force magic – because it disrupts their basic nature. Hopefully, some of our expeditions have turned up some magical weapons that the guild could lend you for this mission.\*” – Laudwarg of Rimewald (M Hum), Veteran of the League and Wizard*

\* Magical items found in previous missions this month will be available for use in this mission. They

will be loaned and must be returned. After this mission, magical items will be auctioned as normal. Any lost or destroyed magical item’s value will be deducted from the reward for this adventure.

## Month 2 Rumors and Happenings

Here is a compilation of the rumors and happenings that you might have heard around the Broken Lantern and the City of Santiem during the last month. These were all originally posted in the Facebook group after each mission.

### The Darkness Below

A conversation overheard in the Broken Lantern:

"Graycastle and what's her name? The yellow wizard from the tower who's always here."

"Emiri. And no. I don't believe it."

"I saw it myself. With my own eyes. Well, eye," the grizzled old scoundrel grinned, fingering his eye patch. "The two of them sitting here, bold as blind halfling, making eyes at each other."

The swordswoman rolled her eyes. "And I suspect you were up to eyes... your eye, in ale. As usual."

Before the scoundrel could retort, the landlord cleared his throat. As he topped off their tankards, he said "Ajack, she's right. You're a drunk and a gossip. I got no problem with the drunk part because it puts coins in my pocket. But Vander was just reporting to Emiri. He agreed to join some of the Tower's scholars. Some recruits scouted out a ruin and had a run in with a spirit. Apparently, they've never dealt with one before. Said they destroyed it. Emiri suspected it might have returned. Vander agreed to escort her students. And he banished the thing for good. I suspect the recruits are going to hear a few words about dealing with the undead."

The woman smirked, "See? I told you. Graycastle and..."

The landlord interrupted her, "And you Zayle, just because you're as bitter as a keg of dwarven stout doesn't mean everyone is. They are friends. Close friends. Maybe more. Considering what she was saying to him."

Zayle's face soured at the dig, but she couldn't keep the curiosity out of her eyes. And Ajack's own face went beyond interest to hunger. It's as if he was starving and could only be sustained by gossip.

"Look, I don't care about your silly League and your politics," the landlord said, resigning himself, "but you keep my tables full. And my pockets. And there's trouble brewing. Emiri told Vander he's wasting himself where he is. And from his face, he knew she was right."

Zayle looked shocked, "you think he's going to make a play for Ironsoul's seat?"

The landlord shook his head, "not unless something big happens. He said Kathra's good for the League. Good for it 'right now,' he said. But he doesn't like her. And she doesn't like him. Neither one thinks the other BELIEVES in the League. Not the right way, anyway. Don't matter. He's not getting ready to make a bid for power."

"Then what?" Zayle asked while Ajacked stared in rapt attention.

"Well, Emiri said 'up isn't the only way.' She said he should either be in the field or in charge. He's wasted in the middle. And this isn't the only League chapter in the world besides. He could have his own chapter. Just not this one."

Zayle's face soured. "Back into the field? Now that would be a waste. If he's smart, he'll go somewhere else."

"He needs to be where the adventure is," the landlord said. "And that's here. In this city. But out there. Not in here."

"There's adventure everywhere you look," Zayle said. "He should move on."

The landlord shrugged. And then Ajack spoke up quietly, "I like him here. He keeps us honest."

### Mixing Up Trouble

The conversation would have spread faster if not for the hour and for the fact that it was overshadowed by preparations for the upcoming expedition into the caves beneath the Governor's Hall to root out the source of the recent elemental incursion. Astharan Vomaldi made no effort to hide it and Vander Greycastle seemed as if he wanted to be overheard.

But still the rumormill ground a bit more slowly than usual.

Astharan Vomaldi entered the walled-off yard behind the Broken Lantern. His soft, brown leathers were as quiet as his elven footfalls. His eyes glittered in the flickering light of the dozen lanterns scattered around, the mirror of the stars above in the dark, almost moonless sky. A couple of sots were halfheartedly pummeling one another to settle some dispute. That their punches missed the mark twice as often as they found suggested the dispute had been primarily fueled by ale. A few others were standing around, showing the fight only marginal interest. They were in their cups too. And in the corner of the yard, Vander Greycastle was working his forms against a dummy. Vomaldi called to him as he approached.

“Done giving your report,” Greycastle asked, a bit too loudly, and Vomaldi realized he’d been drinking too. That was worrying. Greycastle liked his drink well enough, but he knew where and when to drink. And when to stop.

“Yes,” Vomaldi nodded. “Master Ironsoul is livid. She wants to see you.”

“I’ll bet she does,” Greycastle snorted. Again, not like him to be outwardly disrespectful. “I’m sorry you had to put down the beast.”

Vomaldi bowed his head, “A shame. But its death was the last and least of the injustices visited upon the creature. What the alchemist did to it and its kin was cruel.”

“Do you know what they’re doing to the halfling?” Greycastle asked.

“The Alchemist Guild has seized all of her property. And she is leaving the city.”

“Exile?”

“I do not know,” said the elf. “It doesn’t matter. Either they’ve exiled her or they’ve impoverished her so badly she will exile herself just to survive.”

Vander snorted again. “It’s all the same. And what does Kathra want what me?” He said it loudly. Too loudly. And he kept glancing at the circle around the

fighters. Vomaldi risked a quick glance. They were listening. No doubt.

“Master Ironsoul,” Vomaldi said with some emphasis, “did not tell me what she wanted to discuss with you. But I gather it has to do with the fact that another person who came to us for help has ended up in the hands of the City Watch.”

“And she blames me,” Greycastle said. Flatly. And loudly.

“She has noticed that your recruits seem to have…”

“Honor?” he interrupted. “Integrity?” He was getting loud now. “The ability to tell right from wrong?!”

Vomaldi didn’t bother to respond.

“Maybe what that woman should be asking is why so many of the people who come seeking our help turn out to be scum?”

Vomaldi waited a moment to see if Greycastle was going to continue. He wasn’t in the habit ranting, but he might be meaning to start tonight. He was not himself. When Greycastle simply put his fist into the training dummy and then sagged, Vomaldi chanced responding.

“I suspect it may be because criminals can afford us. At least, they are more likely to afford us than common folk.”

Greycastle glared at the elf, “you’re tall for a dwarf.”

“But I smell almost as bad,” Vomaldi said dryly. And it worked. Greycastle gave a start and stared at the elf before he barked a laugh.

Greycastle sighed and stared at the elf and it seemed as if he was trying to will himself sober. At least he got his eyes to focus. “I’ll meet Kathra in the morning. If I do it now, I might do something rash. Like punch her. Tomorrow, I’ll do something smart.”

“As you will. I will tell her I couldn’t find you.”

As Vomaldi turned away, wishing his friend a pleasant evening, he heard Greycastle say “this is killing me, Astharan.”

## A Hole in the World

There's a joyous air in the common room of the Broken Lantern. It has never been so crowded. And it has never been filled only with folks wearing the Blue Cloak. Even the landlord is absent. The ale is flowing freely. No one is paying for their drinks tonight.

Suddenly cheers go up from one end of the room as Vander Greycastle, resplendent in his plate armor, Blue Cloak flowing behind him, clambers atop the Lantern's largest "table," the stone sarcophagus from an ancient hobgoblin tomb. He raises his hands and calls for quiet.

"We have a lot to celebrate tonight. And I won't keep you from it for long, I promise. I just want to tell you all what we are celebrating."

"First, as many of you know, a group of our rawest recruits went bravely into the Undercity to seek out and close a magical gateway to the Elemental Chaos. They were assisted by a young scholar of the Opal Tower who unfortunately gave his life for our city, a wizard no less a recruit than they were. They fought bravely, proving themselves to be the equal of anyone else here. But we have not gathered to recognize their efforts alone. For others, just as raw, helped equip them for their journey by plunging into the Undercity. And still others stood their ground on the streets of the city to repel the elementals as they attacked. And so, it is with great honor, that we raise up our newest batch of recruits and welcome them as Journeymen in the League of the Blue Cloak."

"Garvin, Warden, Elros, Belver, Varis, Harvok, Feng Jarklypper, Ralthias Kithkani, Arnmarr Chaelee, Hasan, Kern Goldhammer, Kendil, Marta, and Nima Bahram, stand now and let all here bear witness, as well as the Luckbringer and all of the gods, that you are today and henceforth recognized as full members of the League of the Blue Cloak. And thank you all for reminding us that, while we cannot stop the world from changing, through courage and a righteous heart, we can at least ensure that change is for the best."

"Now, everyone sit back down. These tankards aren't going to empty themselves!"

The night passes in a blur of merriment and a drunken haze for many. You are each treated to many hearty thumps on the back, congratulations, and dire warnings that now the real work can begin. But the more attentive among you might notice that beneath the surface, things seem to be afoot.

"Who is that woman with Greycastle," asks someone of a raven-haired swordswoman with sharp features, piercing green eyes, and the air of a serpent ready to strike. "I've never seen her before. She looks like she's expecting someone to stab her."

Later, you might notice one of the Bluecloak wizards, Laudwarg, in a tense confrontation with a few of the Bluecloaks. "We had no idea that there was anything more than a small, natural rift. If we had, we'd never have sent raw recruits. And the Opal Tower made the same judgment. And they paid for it. At any rate, we were right. It was nothing."

"Raw recruits and an apprentice against a demon," one of the Bluecloaks shouts in disbelief. "It weren't right! It were luck!"

A halfling sitting beside the argument adds, "peddlers and peasants, right? You don't try to sell the king's best to a pair of dungboots."

"That's right," the angry Bluecloak shouts after he works out what the halfling is trying to say. "This wasn't top coin. This was the Opal Tower asking for our help because we owed them. So, Ironsoul sent out a bunch of recruits no one would miss."

"Greycastle would miss them," a quiet voice adds from nearby, but no one sees who it is.

But that dovetails with a few observations that you might overhear. Kathra Ironsoul is absent from the celebrations, several people note. And Greycastle seems to be celebrating his own triumph as much as anyone else's. He's in better spirits than he has been in for weeks.

"We cannot stop change from happening," he said, "but with courage and a righteous heart, we can ensure that change is for the better."