

THE NIGHTSTALKER OF MARKESH

As the adventure begins, the party is in a tavern trying to pick up information that may lead to a profitable adventure. The only talk, however, is of the string of murders that has hit the city. From the information that the characters can gather there will be rumors, facts, and some lies. It is up to the party to put together enough information to act on. The following is a list of possible hints. Roll three times for each tavern the players enter; roll once for each individual questioned elsewhere. No more than 6 hints will be discovered by any one party.

- 1 All the murders took place at night. (True)
- 2 All of the victims were women. (False)
- 3 The corpses were mutilated. (Possibly True)
- 4 Someone saw a woman running from the scene of a murder. (False)
- 5 All of the victims were killed near the cemetery. (False)
- 6 A similar string of murders took place 50 years ago. (True)
- 7 A wolf was seen running from one of the murders. (True)
- 8 All of the murders occurred at full moon. (False)
- 9 An axe murderer recently escaped from prison and he is the killer. (False)
- 10 The murders take place every 13 days. (False)
- 11 There are more victims than the sheriffs know about. (True)
- 12 A new cult has risen in the area. They may be responsible. (True)

The murderer is actually a vampire. His name is Draco Similack. He is fairly well known in name, but not in person. Few people have ever seen him for obvious reasons. He poses as a wealthy merchant who trades in spices, perfumes, and makeups. He needs these accessories to help cover up the fact that he is a pale, cold, somewhat dank smelling person (vampire). During the day he has an aide who discourages visitors. To help strengthen his cover, he has on occasion held formal parties for the rich and influential people of Markesh--always at night of course.

Draco does not kill all of his victims. Not even a full-grown vampire needs to drink as much blood as a single human body contains. He has also taken 3 women alive to use as his own personal blood bank. He feeds off of each in turn, but is careful not to drink too much. He kills the townspeople in order to give his prisoners a respite. He also does not need to eat every day. One good feeding can last up to 39 hours, although the longer he goes without a feeding the more desperate he becomes. After 24 hours, Draco will lose one point of strength every hour until he reaches a strength of three. At that point he will turn to gas and be forced to return to the negative material plane for 50 years. Draco does not like it there. Whenever he is there he is forced to serve another being who abuses him in every way imaginable.

Draco's aide is named Bart. He is a 1/2 orc fighter/assassin with 5th level abilities of each. His attributes are: S:17 I:16 W:13 C:16 D:17 CH:7(10). He is not charmed by Draco. He works for the good money and because he hates all life except his own. Draco occasionally will give Bart a girl who has been charmed and allow him to do as he wishes with her. Bart is Draco's assurance that no holy symbols will be used against him.

Draco also has a pet wolf named Snarl. He is Bart's backup against things which Draco has no power against. Snarl is a huge dire wolf with 3+3 hit dice and the max 27 hit points.

Draco lives in a lavish mansion in the Riverside district of Markesh. The inside is furnished in rich tapestries, opulent furniture, and gold and platinum chandeliers. Should the party of characters defeat Draco and take possession of the mansion for their own use, the total value of the property and furnishings is 13,000 gold pieces--3000 g.p. for the actual building and 10,000 g.p. for the furnishings. This total does not include any special items found by the party during the course of the

adventure. These items will be listed in the body of the adventure and will be introduced as they are encountered. Special items include but are not limited to magic implements, personal money of Draco and his minions, and special art treasures which Draco has collected.

Draco has also started a cult in the area. He and his followers worship Zool. Zool is the being who Draco must serve if he goes too long without feeding. There are various "holy days" during the course of a year when the followers join together to offer worship and sacrifices. At these times, Draco will search out a human virgin, charm her with his charm power, and bring her back to be sacrificed to Zool. There is a 5% cumulative chance per day of the adventure that a sacrifice will take place. The party gains a 10% experience point bonus if they can solve the mystery of the murders and defeat Draco before the next sacrifice takes place.

Draco's ultimate dream is to bring the king under his power and thus rule over mortals as though he himself were alive.

While gathering information, there is a 10% cumulative chance per day that another murder will take place. This will be a feeding for Draco unless the "holy day" roll indicates that a sacrifice is going to take place. To help steer the party in the right direction, they must be witness to the murder. If they are already out at night looking for clues then they will be near the scene of the murder as it takes place. If they are in their rooms when the murder occurs, they will be awakened by screams and will then have the opportunity to run out and see the murderer fleeing.

Only a close examination of any of the bodies will reveal the puncture marks in the neck left by Draco. A freshly murdered body will have a significant amount of blood on the neck and chest. The party will be able to follow Draco, but not closely enough to identify him. They will see him run into the trees surrounding his house and then they will lose him. There is a 10% chance per level that any character will notice a large bat flying from the trees towards the house. No one will see exactly where the bat flies to. Each character making the roll should receive 50 experience points. With this lead to go on, the party should be at least mildly curious as to who lives in the house and this should really get the ball rolling.

DRACO SIMILACK

Strength: 18/74	Constitution: 0
Intelligence: 17	Dexterity: 17
Wisdom: 17	Charisma: 17 (3)

Draco's strength is standard for vampires. His constitution value reflects the fact that he is actually dead. Draco is very cunning and will be difficult to catch not to mention almost impossible to kill. Draco's charisma score depends on when he is encountered. As Draco the merchant he is very charismatic. When feeding or encountered before he has a chance to make himself presentable he is quite repulsive.

BART

Strength: 17	Constitution: 16
Intelligence: 16	Dexterity: 17
Wisdom: 13	Charisma: 7 (10)

Bart is a half-orc fighter/assassin of 5th level abilities. He is fierce in combat and cunning in assassination. He does his best to keep the little details of the living world from interfering with Draco's plans, whatever they may be.