

Session 7 - Pilgrimage To Champion's Gate

Date: Mar 4th, 2025

Summary

As dawn approached in Emberwood village, the party was awakened by distant singing that grew steadily louder. Nearly a hundred people in white robes approached through the streets, led by Nathaniel Flint and Joel of Osteen, prominent figures in the Falling Fire faith. The procession stopped outside the Bark & Buzzard tavern, where Nathaniel recognized Syndle and engaged in conversation about their growing religious movement. Nathaniel explained their predicament - they needed escorts to safely guide the pilgrims to Champion's Gate, as their usual protectors were unavailable. The party negotiated payment, settling on 3,000 gold with 1,000 paid upfront. During these negotiations, Xakaris received troubling papers from the Hooded Lanterns, threatening deportation if he didn't report to his guild position within 48 hours. Among the pilgrims were several notable figures: twin sisters Ingrid and Myra Stummer who joined after experiencing visions, elderly dwarf cleric Rufus Apollo drawn by astronomical connections, and Sylvie Roseshot, a former flame keeper who converted to the Falling Fire faith after being moved by Lucretia Mathias's writings in The Testament of the Falling Fire. As they escorted the pilgrimage to the outskirts of The Spokes, a massive blue bird with a 24-foot wingspan appeared overhead - Devlin, their celestial protector. The journey took a dangerous turn in the Spokes, where a 20-foot aberration and insect-like creatures emerged from a mysterious haze. The battle was fierce, with Tark landing critical hits while many pilgrims fell to devastating psychic attacks. Devlin transformed from his bird form into a humanoid warrior, wielding a golden mace against the threats. The party ultimately prevailed, though at a cost of numerous pilgrim lives. Joel promised to resurrect the fallen when they reached their destination, while Ned recovered a valuable half-pound fragment of delirium from the defeated aberration's body. The escort mission revealed the Falling Fire faith to be more than a simple religious movement, possessing both powerful allies and significant resources.

Scenes

Pre-Dawn Awakening

The party wakes up to distant singing approaching Emberwood village

- Party completes a long rest
- Hear singing approaching from outside
- Large group of ~100 people in white robes approaches singing hymns
- Nathaniel Flint and Joel of Osteen identified leading the group
- Group stops outside Bark & Buzzard tavern

Meeting with Nathaniel

The party encounters Nathaniel and Joel of Osteen leading a group of pilgrims at dawn in Emberwood village.

- Nathaniel greets Syndle and discusses the Falling Fire faith's growing following
- Syndle expresses curious but cautious interest in the religion
- Nathaniel requests the party's help escorting 100 pilgrims to Champion's Gate
- Nathaniel mentions their expected escort, Katja Braun, was late returning from the city
- The party negotiates payment for escort services
- Nathaniel mentions their usual protector Devlin will meet them near the spokes

Negotiation and Legal Troubles

The party negotiates escort payment while Xakaris receives legal papers

- Party negotiates up to 3000 gold for escort mission
- Nathaniel pays 1000 gold upfront
- Hooded Lanterns serve papers to Xakaris
- Threat of deportation if Xakaris doesn't report within 48 hours
- Papers signed by Captain Rein Heisworth who protects the docks

Meeting the Pilgrims

The party learns about the pilgrims and their beliefs while organizing the escort

- Meet key pilgrims including twin sisters, dwarf cleric, and former flame keeper
- Learn about Falling Fire beliefs and Testament
- Discuss escort formation and strategy
- Devlin appears as giant blue bird
- Joel identifies Devlin as their celestial protector

Battle in the Spokes

The party fights aberrations while protecting the pilgrims

- 20-foot aberration and insect creatures emerge from haze
- Tark lands critical hit with longbow
- Many pilgrims killed by psychic attacks
- Devlin transforms from bird to humanoid form (Party recognizes as a Deva)
- Party and Devlin defeat the aberrations
- Devlin promises to resurrect fallen pilgrims
- Ned recovers half-pound delirium fragment from aberration

Npcs

Nathaniel Flint

A jovial human man in his thirties who leads the Falling Fire religious movement. Previously met the party at Gilded Lily. Organizes pilgrim groups and seeks escorts for their safe passage.

Joel of Osteen

A powerful religious leader of the Falling Fire faith who accompanies pilgrim groups. Can cast Spirit Guardians and other spells. Described as naive to the dangers of the region.

Tobias Crow

A blacksmith who received 200 gold from the party to speed up production.

Lucretia Mathias

An unseen leader of the Falling Fire faith who has attracted thousands of followers and wrote their sacred text, the Testament of the Falling Fire.

Devlin

A celestial being who can transform between a giant blue bird (24-foot wingspan) and humanoid form. Serves as a protector for the Falling Fire pilgrims, wielding a golden mace in combat.

Captain Rein Heisworth

Captain Rein Heisworth, of the 4th Provisional Expeditionary Force to Reclaim the Capital, better known as The Hooded Lantern. Captain Heisworth is in charge of protecting the river gate and docks. Heisworth issued the summons and deportation papers to Xakaris.

Ingrid and Myra Stummer

Twin sisters who joined the pilgrimage after having dreams and visions about the meteor impact and the city.

Rufus Apollo

An elderly dwarf cleric who studied astrology and was drawn to the Falling Fire faith due to its astronomical connections. Retired science finding religion for the first time in his life.

Sylvie Roseshot

A former flame keeper of the Sacred Flame who converted to the Falling Fire faith, believing in the redemptive power of delirium after reading The Testament of the Falling Fire by Lucretia Mathias.

Locations

Emberwood Village

The village where the party is staying, featuring the Bark & Buzzard tavern, docks, and other establishments

Bark & Buzzard

A tavern in Emberwood Village. The Alsberg family has owned and maintained the establishment for a generation. Karin Alsberg and her husband, Holger (both human) make fine home-brewed beer known as Ember Ale, and serve hearty braised lamb stew with fresh-baked bread.

Hendrick's Farm

Location south of town where pilgrims of the Falling Fire gather and congregate

Champions Gate

The pilgrims' destination along Champions Way road, important for their religious ceremony

The Spokes

A dangerous area with narrow streets between Emberwood Village and Champions Gate, where aberrations emerge from a mysterious haze

Spells

Spirit Guardians

Cast by Joel of Osteen, summoning four angelic spirits to protect within a 15-foot radius.

Guiding Bolt

Used by Xakaris to deal radiant damage and grant advantage on the next attack against the target.

Healing Word

Used multiple times to heal party members during combat, particularly Syndle.

True Strike

Cast to gain advantage on the next attack.

Dissonant Whispers

Used to force an enemy to move away using their reaction.

Shatter

A thunder damage spell cast during the combat with the aberrations.

Sanctuary

A protective spell cast to help shield allies during the battle.

Silence

A 15-foot radius spell mentioned as being cast in response to the singing.

Items

Longsword

A sword that one of the party members is planning to attune to, though there is concern it might be cursed.

Testament of the Falling Fire

The sacred text of the Falling Fire faith, written by Lucretia, containing their core doctrine and teachings.

Deportation Papers

Legal documents served to Xakaris by the Hooded Lanterns requiring him to report to his guild position within 48 hours or face deportation

Delirium Fragment

A half-pound fragment extracted from the defeated aberration's body, larger than typical delirium shards.

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