

PW7 The Quiet Patron

By Dan Hass



Positioned closest to the breach the River Styx has created to the Abyss, Farberg should have been the first community to come under attack, but the agrarian community – an independent fief – has been quiet and replied to inquiries that it is secure. But questions have arisen. Can heroes investigate this curious situation and bring revelations to light? A Dungeons and Dragons® 5th Edition Adventure for 1-8 7th level characters. Episode 7 of the *Patron Wars*.

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Adventure Summary

PW7 The Quiet Patron is a Dungeons and Dragons® 5th Edition adventure designed for 1-8 7th level characters. It requires a *Player's Handbook*® (PHB), a *Monster Manual*® (MM), a *Volo's Guide to Monsters*® (VGM), a *Xanathar's Guide to Everything*® (XGE), and a *Dungeon Master's Guide*® (DMG).

While the encounters include scaling for 1-8 characters, parties of 1 or 2 PCs and 7 or 8 PCs are fringe circumstances that may play oddly. Specifically, parties of 1-2 are highly susceptible to a single bad die roll, and 7-8 can slow play dramatically. Ideally a party will be 3-6 PCs.

The Digital copies of the encounter maps are available [here](#).

Campaign Choice

While *PW7 The Quiet Patron* is designed to fit within almost any setting according to Dimgaard principles (**low prep time, strong themes, smooth presentation, highly scalable**), it was written using the Dimgaard campaign as its primary influence, and is indicative of the themes in Dimgaard. The Dimgaard campaign guide can be found at www.dimgaard.com.

Preparing the Adventure

It is always a good idea for the DM to read through an adventure before running it. *PW7 The Quiet Patron* is no different. There are some rather complex encounters that will benefit if the DM spends a few minutes deciding how she will play them. *PW7 The Quiet Patron* can be run with a lot of interaction between the PCs and NPCs depending on the inclinations of the players and DM. The module deliberately gives **just enough** information about NPCs to move the plot along, leaving a lot of room for a DM to individualize these to her campaign. In the encounters, the module deliberately gives **just enough** information about NPCs to move the plot along, leaving a lot of room for a DM to individualize these to her campaign, while Appendix 2 has more detailed information about prominent NPCs. It makes things smoother if the DM spends a few minutes deciding how she will deliver the NPCs' interactions. Some DMs revel in the opportunity to assume the personas of multiple NPCs over the course of a session while others prefer a summary approach. The decision is a matter of style and

showmanship. Similarly, many players look forward to opportunities to interact "in character" while others prefer to summarize. Neither approach is "correct"; both are valid ways to collaboratively build a story, but the DM should try to anticipate her players' preferences (and decide her own) and prepare accordingly. To aid in this process Appendix 2 contains entries for the NPCs in this adventure (taken from the DGN series available on www.dmsguild.com).

A battlemat or dungeon tiles may be helpful, but not necessary.

Items for Review

- Creatures. bard (VGM), bargura, berserker, cult fanatic, giant elk, jackalwere, violet fungus, will-o'-wisp
- DMG. Diseases: Cackle Fever, Social Interactions
- Feats. Alert, Lucky, Mage Slayer
- Magic Items. ioun stone (absorption), ring of free action, ring of mind shielding, stone of good luck, sword of wounding
- PHB. **Devil's Sight**, Relentless Endurance
- Spells. *charm person*, *chill touch*, *clone*, *command*, *comprehend languages*, *Eldritch blast*, *entangle*, *fireball*, *friends*, *glyph of warding*, *healing word*, *hellish rebuke*, *heroism*, *hold person*, *inflict wounds*, *invisibility*, *lesser restoration*, *light*, *mage hand*, *Mordenkainen's magnificent mansion*, *phantasmal force*, *prestidigitation*, *sacred flame*, *sanctuary*, *shatter*, *shield of faith*, *spiritual weapon*, *sleep*, *thaumaturgy*, *thunderwave*, *vicious mockery*

Dimgaard Philosophy

Dimgaard's primary principle is that D&D should be an entertaining experience. In particular, it should be fun and interesting. The "best" D&D is a collaborative storytelling event where the DM provides the framework and supporting details, while the players contribute by roleplaying the heroes (their characters) that results in epic tales.

"Epic" implies that the heroes be challenged and that success is a question to be decided by the heroes' deeds and choices. *The Lord of the Rings* is only an epic because the reader doesn't know until the final pages if Frodo, Aragorn and the rest will achieve their objectives or die, fruitless, in their efforts.

A great Dimgaard session (and really any D&D session) is where there is the finest line between success and failure and the heroes *just* manage to win (occasionally, just surviving is "winning"). But for those narrowest of victories to have true meaning, they cannot be foregone conclusions, and likely there will be times when the PCs fail – Boromir comes to mind or Gandalf's expedition to Isengard where he was captured.

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Running the Adventure

PW7 The Quiet Patron is made up of 9 events arranged into 3 encounters. Some are hazards that can be applied in only a few minutes but encounters with NPCs and other creatures that involve combat or roleplaying will take longer. But since the action occurs in a single adventuring day, it should use a single game session.

Often the PCs' actions determine the type of interaction. A combat encounter may evolve into a roleplaying encounter when mistaken identities, misunderstandings, or action based on false assumptions are corrected, thus ending the violence. Other times conversations, interrogations, or negotiations can become heated and erupt in violence changing a roleplaying encounter into a combat encounter.

Dimgaard adventures give the DM opportunities to reward good roleplaying. Good roleplaying can garner an easier path to achieving the desired outcomes. However, it takes stellar roleplaying to completely avoid combat. The world is a dark and violent place where opponents with short tempers often find violence the most direct route to achieving their goals.

The encounters in *PW7 The Quiet Patron* challenge PCs in different ways. The combat encounters are expected to meet the definition of **hard** (DMG p.81), but additionally there are encounters to test the PCs' ability to deal with diplomatic situations and pose difficult questions about their characters' morals.

Modification "Exploits"

Technically each encounter uses a **medium** XP budget per the encounter building guidelines. And for many parties a **medium** encounter may turn out to meet the definition of hard as PCs may be built for roleplaying and the party may not have optimized their tactics.

Modifications have been made to the creatures that do not increase the calculated CR of the creature but do increase the challenge of the creature. These are denoted with a ¹. These are not intended to be used with all parties, nor does a DM need to use every suggested modification. The DM should gauge the effectiveness of the party and decide which of these to use (keeping in mind the definition of **hard** encounters).

Graz't

Graz't is one of the most mentioned demon lords. Despite the large volume of information about Graz't there are few facts about his goals. He is one of the most "normal" demon lords. His minions successfully infiltrate and thrive in established communities, and whatever his objectives, they do not involve the wholesale destruction of civilization – unlike most demon lords.

One line of speculation is that Graz't is actually an archdevil who is deliberately infiltrating the Abyss under the guise of a demon lord. However, the most likely situation is that Graz't is simply wholly narcissistic and selfishly hedonistic, and his vast empire is designed solely to satisfy his all-consuming passions and protect him.

Adventure Background

The River Styx has altered course and insinuated itself into the Material Plane. Several miles upstream from the village of Farjvad, it has merged with the Peka River, forming a breach to the Abyss. Several miles downstream it diverges from the Peka River and enters into the Nine Hells, forming a breach to that realm.

The Abyssal breach was the first to form. When it began to manifest a few weeks ago, it immediately disrupted river traffic. The demon lord Yeenoghu attempted to establish an outpost (the topic of *PW2 A Patron's Outpost*) but was thwarted. Following that attempt was an expedition of the demon lord Zuggtmoy, Lady of Fungus. Her minions corrupted the environment around the Abyssal breach (the subject of *PW3 A Patron's Expedition*).

The Peka River has now fully merged with the Styx across the several miles of waterway between the northern and southern planar breaches.

Because of the River Styx's sudden, random change in course, the area surrounding the town of Farjvad has become overrun with demons from the breach to the north. In response, devils have entered the theater through a breach to Baator to the south.

Because Asmodeus is now an accepted intercessor within the One True Faith, Farjvad's temple has been turned over to the Order of Asmodeus to coordinate the defense of the area. The Asmodean acolyte

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Dante Shadowsoul has become the high priest of the temple in Farjvad.

There are several lesser communities within a day's travel of Farjvad, and these have become the focus of different Abyssal or Diabolic powers.

Palga (the topic of *PW5 The Corrupting Patron*) is a small farming community of a few hundred peasants ruled by the knight Cristole the Earnest. Within the town is a monastery. The Palga monastery has an amalgam of orders within the One True Faith, and their focus is reproducing sacred texts and fabricating copies of holy relics. Often, orders within the One True Faith will entrust a text or relic to the monastery to achieve the replications – taking between a few months to as long as a couple years. While these holy items are not powerful magic items, they are significant foci of religious faith. This has drawn the attention of minions of the demon lord Ansitif the Befouler, who has a particular greed for desecrating the religious items of deities.

Ulskov (the topic of *PW6 The Criminal Patron*) rests on marginal land and has virtually no agriculture. It has never had a formal noble in command. It is a haven for those who operate on the fringes of society – hustlers, entertainers, exiles. At any time, the “ruler” was the most powerful – which often involved influence rather than actual physical intimidation. While this community is scorned by most as impossible to govern and having no resources worth the effort, Eldanoth, the Bloodless Scion, is a demon lord with a special interest in crime. His minions see Ulskov as an entry point with criminal elements who could be molded into a powerful asset.

Farberg (the topic of *PW7 The Quiet Patron*) is the closest community to the Abyssal breach; however, no alarms have been heard. This is because it has come under the influence of Graz'zt – a subtle and sinister demon lord. Graz'zt has slowly molded Farberg into a colony without its residents even realizing they are a victim of his plots.

Finally, at the southeastern fringe of the terrorized zone, Stoknir (the topic of *DGD25 The Insurgent Patron*) has been a small but stable and prosperous barony for centuries. Its position relative to the activity has garnered the focus of servants of the archdevil Azazel. In Azazel's cycle of exile and reestablishment as a Duke of Hell, Azazel needs stable vassal states

positioned to influence the primary activities of the other archdevils.

Farberg's History

Farberg was founded as a freehold about three centuries ago. The founder, Lord Elmar, has become an object of local legend. In truth he was the fourth son of a baron from about a hundred miles north of Tarfodom, and (as the 4th son) he had no choice but to venture out to make his fortune on his own and used his proceeds to establish Farberg. The baron of Farberg assumes the title of “The Elmarson”.

What's Happening in Farberg

As soon as the breach to the Abyss formed, agents of Graz'zt rushed to Farberg. Its position made it an obvious strategic point. The leader of the Graz'zt expedition is the human warlock Natdoris. She has served Graz'zt for several centuries and is one of his most effective agents.

Natdoris' mission is to establish Farberg as a quiet, secret bastion in Graz'zt's transplanar network. It will serve as a depot and headquarters for smuggling resources from Dimgaard into the Abyss, and as a safe entry point into the Material Plane for Graz'zt's minions from the Abyss.

If Natdoris is successful – months away – a lamia will assume rulership over the area, and Natdoris will be assigned a new mission. This process has repeated dozens of times for Natdoris over the past centuries.

However, among the jackalwere consigned to serve Natdoris is Phelan. Phelan has grown extremely jealous of Natdoris' favor from Graz'zt – and he has gained influence among the other jackalweres. He hopes to undermine Natdoris, even if it means the mission fails.

Consistent with the trickiness of Graz'zt, Natdoris is ready to lure potential obstacles to Farberg to be dealt with in favorable territory. At the beginning of the conflict, Natdoris sent lesser warlocks to infiltrate the communities in the area – especially Farjvad. They have monitored the populace to determine who presents a legitimate threat.

The strategies for neutralizing threats involve non-violent means such as bribery, blackmailing, and reputation smearing. At another level, Natdoris has assassination as an option. And for some special situations, she may try to coopt the threats into the Graz'zt organization.