

THE TALE OF SEPHA & ADE

by Kelly Dayton

CREATURE(S): *Hades & Persephone* | **LEVEL:** 3

SYNOPSIS

Tales of Lady Sepha Lekore are known throughout the lands. Now she's gone missing and her father Lord Lekore is offering a reward to anyone that can find her. With promises of a tidy sum, the adventuring party can investigate the last place she was seen to try and locate her. What they find will take them into the Underdark lair of a drow noblewoman with her eloped lover the young Lady Lekore. This adventure is designed for level 3 characters.

ADVENTURE HOOK

MONEY & OPPORTUNITY: The Lekore family is wealthy and holds a lot of land. Lower level adventurers have the opportunity to make a name for themselves and earn a bit of coin should they locate the missing noblewoman.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

The Lekore family has held lordship over Louton for generations. The area is peaceful aside from the occasional attack by orcs and drow scouting parties. Louton is known for two things: its harvest festival and beauty of the Lady Sepha Lekore. Word has spread that she's gone missing and Lord Lekore is willing to pay anyone that can find his daughter. Lady Sepha is expected to open the harvest festival in two weeks time.

Adventurers can search Sepha's quarters and her favorite reading spot outside the town walls. Clues will lead them to a cave system that leads to the Underdark. The adventurers will discover that Sepha & Adé have eloped. Adé will ask the party to abandon their quest and allow Sepha to stay with her. Adventurers can decide whether or not to allow the two ladies

to continue living in peace or bring the knowledge of their union to Lord Lekore.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

- **LORD LEKORE (N MALE HIGH ELF NOBLE):** Head of the Lekore family. Has ruled over Louton for decades. Prideful and relies heavily on tradition.
- **SEPHA LEKORE (CG FEMALE HIGH ELF NOBLE):** Daughter of Lord Lekore and heiress to the Lekore family. She shuns typical "ladylike behavior" and prefers to spend her time exploring the woods surrounding Louton. Uses the **druid** stat block.
- **LADY ADÉ PARGA (LN FEMALE DROW NOBLE):** A drow noblewoman who loves to explore both the Underdark and the surface. Smart and stubborn, she's determined to get drow accepted by other races. Uses the **priest** stat block.

CHAPTER 1 – LOUTON'S LOST LADY

The town of Louton is abuzz with energy. As you enter the town, preparations for a large festival can be seen in their early stages. What should be a happy affair seems to have a sombre air to it. A large manor house can be seen on the eastern edge of town. You're directed towards the manor for your audience with Lord Lekore. Upon entering the house, Lord Lekore greets you in the entrance hall. A tall, imposing high elf, he has a serious, no-nonsense air about him.

"Welcome adventurers. I appreciate your hasty response to my call for assistance. Please, let us discuss this matter in a more personal location."

- The party is shown to a private dining room. Lord Lekore proposes that they search for his missing daughter. He's stressed about his missing daughter and tells the party that as tradition dictates, as the heiress, it's imperative that she be located in time to open the upcoming harvest festival. Lord Lekore is willing to share the following information:
- Sepha is an avid reader. Much to Lord Lekore's consternation, Sepha also loves to explore the forests surrounding Louton.
- Louton is peaceful, but occasionally has incursions from orc raiders and drow scouting parties.
- Sepha is friendly with a lot of the townspeople & is well liked.
- Sepha's last known location was her favorite reading spot by the river that is right outside town.
- A DC 12 Wisdom (Insight) check reveals that Lord Lekore seems worried about his daughter's disappearance. Additionally, when talking about orcs and drow, a DC 10 Wisdom (Insight) check reveals Lord Lekore's distaste for them.

Lord Lekore tells the party that they are to be given access to Sepha's quarters and that the guards of the town have been instructed to allow them limited access to the manor. If the party decides to investigate Sepha's Room, continue on. If they choose to go to her last seen location, skip ahead to *Chapter 2*.

INVESTIGATING SEPHA'S ROOM

You find yourself in a finely furnished room. Bookcases lined with tomes stand on one side of the wall while a small writing desk faces toward an open window. Small knick-knacks are neatly organized on a small dresser near a large bed. Nothing seems disturbed or out of place.

Sepha's room should give off the feeling of someone who loves to learn. Perhaps an open book with handwritten notes lays on the desk or the knick-knacks are small sculptures of different creatures. Characters should be free to explore the room, however if they were escorted by a guard who will discourage any type of thievery. A few clues can be found around Sepha's room. Roll on the following table if a character succeeds on a DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check:

D6

1

RESULT/ITEM

A note written in Undercommon: Characters who speak Undercommon will be able to tell that it is a short love poem.

2

Remnants of a disguise kit

3

Small pendant with a spider symbol

4

Small bottle of tree sap

5

Sprig of an oak tree, which can be used as a druid focus

6

Hand-drawn map of the local forest with a cave system marked

Additionally, if a character makes a DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check while searching the desk, they discover a hidden drawer containing a journal and empty coin purse. The journal is older, but if a player takes time to read it, it shows that Sepha met two dryads out by the river and started learning Druidic magic. Additionally, towards the end of the journal, she mentions meeting the drow scouting parties and their leader Adé Parga.

Guards try and avoid any questions directed at them. On a successful DC 14 Charisma (Persuasion) check, the guard reveals that Sepha has recently started sneaking out after sunset and asked the guard to not inform her father about her nightly adventures.

DEVELOPMENT

The party should be directed to her favorite reading spot near the river and hints should be directing the characters towards a possible drow culprit.

CHAPTER 2 – THE GAME IS AFOOT

Upon heading outside the city, read the following out loud to your party:

You quickly encounter a small foot path through the dense forest. After about fifteen minutes of walking, the path opens up to a clearing. A small babbling stream about fifteen feet wide cuts through the middle of the clearing. A large oak tree grows next to the bank of the creek and under it looks to be a small stone bench.

The guards head back to town if not stopped by the characters. If questioned, they are honest and inform the characters that they escorted the Lady Sepha here the day she went missing and then headed back into town as was usual. When they came to escort her back, she was nowhere to be found.

INVESTIGATING THE CLEARING

The clearing itself is fairly bare. Besides the stream, the oak tree and the small stone bench, there isn't much else here. A DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals no signs of a struggle. However, a DC 10 Wisdom (Survival) check reveals two different sets of footprints leading off into the woods on the other side of the stream. If the characters succeed on a DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) check, two dryads can be seen observing the group on the other side of the stream across the clearing.

If characters become hostile toward the dryads, they attempt to defend themselves.

CROSSING THE STREAM

Once characters attempt to cross the stream, a **water weird** emerges from the stream and attacks the characters.

If characters defeat the water weird, they may come to the incorrect conclusion that it had something to do with the Lady Sepha's disappearance. If this happens, the dryads might make an appearance to either lead the characters further into the woods, or entice them to keep looking. If the characters still head back to the city, have Lord Lekore demand proof of his daughter's demise.

DEVELOPMENT

After overcoming the water weird, the party should follow the footprints and head deeper into the forest.

CHAPTER 3 – DESCENDING INTO DARKNESS

Following the two sets of footprints you soon stumble upon a cave that is jutting out from a small hill. At the mouth of the cave, a number of footprints can be seen both leaving and entering the cave.

The two sets of footprints lead deeper into the woods before leading to a cave.

If dryads directed the characters toward the cave, they should lose the party before the mouth of the cave. Have the party stumble on the footprints or have the dryads tree stride right near the cave.

Either a DC 10 Wisdom (Survival) or Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals a number of footprints. Their age is indeterminable; however, the two sets that the party was following are leading into the cave.

- The cave mouth is about 15 feet tall. It is dark and there is no light source in the cave.
- As the party enters the cave, two **swarms of ravens** fly out.

INTO THE UNDERDARK

Exploring the cave, you find a small path about five feet wide that leads downward into the cave. After walking for a while, colorful and semi-fluorescent fungi can be seen. They give off a dim light, and as you continue downward, their frequency continues. Eventually you hear the sound of running water, and as the cave pathway opens to a large cavern you find yourself in what can only be the Underdark.

Large fluorescent mushrooms are scattered throughout the area providing dim light. The path continues into the vast cavern and carved into the stone seems to be some type of structure about 500 feet from the opening of the cavern. Outside the structure, a small group of six **drow** can be seen talking to each other.

Their voices echo through the cavern. They seem excited about something and start to move into the structure with a lone drow remaining behind.

The party can approach the drow without sneaking. One drow, a male, is surprised to see non-drow, but is otherwise not hostile. If questioned in Elvish or Undercommon, he takes the party into the stronghold. If this occurs, continue onto *Confronting Adé & Sepha: Non-Violent*.

If characters attack, he signals for help on his turn. At the end of the round, six more **drow** appear with two **giant spiders**. The drow attempt to take the characters alive and would rather subdue them then outright kill them. Should the characters eliminate more than half the reinforcements, then Adé and Sepha make an appearance and beg the party to cease their fighting. Either way, the party soon confronts Adé and Sepha.

CONFRONTING ADÉ AND SEPHA: NON-VIOLENT

If the party took the non-hostile route, read the following aloud:

You're lead through the stronghold. Handfuls of drow are scurrying about preparing for something. You are brought to an ornate door where your guide knocks once and then opens the door and motions for you to enter. You see a tall drow woman standing discussing something with the only other elf in the room. Wearing finely-dressed clothes but with a mace sheathed at her hip, the drow seems slightly annoyed at the intrusion. Sitting near her is a high elf, who you instantly recognize as the missing Lady Sepha Lekore. She seems surprised to see surface folk, and rises as you enter.

The tall drow woman narrows her eyes at you and says to you in Common, "Welcome guests. What brings you into my domain?"

ROLE-PLAYING ADÉ AND SEPHA

- Sepha is very much in the Underdark of her own free will. Characters can determine this with a DC 12 Wisdom (Insight) of either the tall drow or Sepha. It does not seem that Sepha is being held against her will. If characters wish to make checks to see if she's been bewitched or if she's been hurt, then all checks should come back as negative.
- Adé should be played as being wary of surface dwellers, but willing to listen to what they have to say. While proficient with her mace, she is more prone to attempt diplomacy before resorting to violence. If the characters remain respectful, she answers their questions truthfully. She speaks bluntly and straight to the point.
- Sepha interjects to explain that she met Adé while she was exploring the forest and that their friendship has grown and deepened. When she tried to get her father to see that the drow weren't the enemies he wouldn't listen. Sepha explains that she feared her father would arrange a marriage for her soon, so instead she took matters into her own hand and eloped with Adé.

- She begs the party to allow her to stay in the Underdark with her new wife where she is happy and free to continue learning about the drow and about druidic magic.
- While Sepha doesn't have access to the money her father does, she will instead offer up payment in the form of four potions — two *potions of barkskin* and two *potions of healing*.
- While Sepha is against it, Adé suggests an alternative way for the characters to get both the potions and the money from Lord Lekore. Proceed to *Conclusion A*.
- Adé protects Sepha and visa versa. If the characters make an attempt to snatch Sepha and run, both turn hostile. Sepha is a **druid** and Adé is a **priest**. See *Confronting Sepha and Adé: Hostile* for tactics.

CONFRONTING ADÉ AND SEPHA: HOSTILE

If the characters decide to attack the drow, Adé and Sepha protect the drow and attempt to subdue the party.

TACTICS. Adé prioritizes Sepha's safety over her own. Adé first casts *sanctuary* on Sepha and begs her to retreat. Afterwards, Adé uses her mace to attack the characters non-lethally. Sepha first casts *barkskin* on herself. If Adé convinces her to retreat, Sepha retreats into the stronghold. Should the characters be victorious, proceed to *Conclusion B*. If Adé and the drow are victorious in rendering the party unconscious, proceed to *Conclusion C*.

DEVELOPMENT

The party now has to decide how to proceed. Continue on for the different conclusions depending on how your party interacts with Sepha and Adé.

CONCLUSION

CONCLUSION A

Sepha and Adé make it very clear that they want to stay together and both are happy with this relationship. Although Sepha doesn't want to trick her father, Adé offers a way for the party to collect the reward money for finding Sepha and offers an alternative route in exchange for the party's silence on the truth.

Adé smirks at the party and kisses Sepha on the forehead. She opens the door and speaks softly to the drow that first escorted you.

"This should only take a moment." She says to you.

A few minutes pass and a single knock is heard at the door. It opens to reveal a different drow man.

"Berus, thank you for joining us. I think I found the perfect task for you. Please show our new friends here your special talent."

The new drow turns and eyes you for a few seconds before he nods. His form blurs slightly and standing in front of you is an exact replica of Lady Sepha.

Adé turns and looks at the group, a smile on her face.

Adé informs the group that Berus is a **doppelganger** and is willing to take Sepha's place on the surface until Lord Lekore can be reasoned with. Berus is happy to oblige and live as Sepha. Characters can make a DC 20 Charisma (Persuasion) check to try and convince Sepha and Adé to come clean to Lord Lekore about their relationship. An additional DC 20 Charisma (Persuasion) check with Lord Lekore sees him grudgingly accept their relationship. Failures see Lord Lekore not recognize the marriage, and he attempts (but fails) to frame Adé for kidnapping.

CONCLUSION B

If the party turns hostile and succeeds in killing Adé, Sepha is devastated and attempts to run from the party. Should she make it out of the cave, it should be implied that the dryads help her escape into the woods. If

the characters manage to capture Sepha and bring her back by force, she tries to escape at any opportunity and tells her father that she would rather live in the woods than spend another day without her partner.

CONCLUSION C

You awaken underneath the Oak tree by the stream. A note is attached to your bag and it reads the following:

I know you were just trying to help, but please I'm happy where I am. Give my father this note and perhaps you'll still earn your reward. Father if you're reading this, then I'm sorry. I couldn't spend another day confined to the manor. I'm happy where I am. Maybe one day, when I think you're ready to listen, I'll return, but I know you're not ready yet. I love you father and I'm sorry to hurt you so. I'll return someday.

*Your loving daughter,
Sepha Lekore*

If characters return to the cave, they find the entrance caved in and not accessible.

REWARDS

If the party returns to Lord Lekore with Sepha (or Berus pretending to be Sepha), the party receives 100 gp total. Additionally, anytime the party is in Louton, they will be given free lodging in guest quarters at the Lekore Manor. Characters should be rewarded by advancing to 4th level at the conclusion.

AUTHOR'S NOTES

I would like to acknowledge one of my bestest friends (who also doubles as my DM) Ali, @Azniac on Twitter, for encouraging me to write this one-shot and helping me with wording.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Kelly Dayton lives in Austin, TX with her two cat sons Orion and Nox. A fan of *D&D*, cooking, and playing video games, she has also started learning how to paint minis. If you're interested in reaching out to her, you can find her on Twitter as @TheCommonMasses.