

# Dorm Rooms and Dean's Lists

A D&D 5e One Shot Adventure designed for Level 3 characters

## Background:

Our quest takes place at King's Service University located in the city of Barbiesaw in the kingdom of Kourn. King's Service University, or KSU, is a place where promising young adventurers are recruited to come to study and hone their skills before heading off into the world (or adventure grad school) as a member of the King's Service: skilled adventurers assigned to serve the various lord's and magistrates in the kingdom. While at KSU, students take coursework emanating from one of the 5 colleges on campus: combat, faith, arts, arcane, and nature. Each college is geared toward a specific type of skills, and students may take their classes from one or more colleges depending on their major or minor (for instance, a wizard might spend four years in the college of the arcane, where a paladin might take classes in both combat and faith). Each of these 5 colleges is staffed with faculty and headed by a dean. In order to graduate from KSU, each student must receive an official recommendation from one of the college's deans, which comes in the form of being recorded in a great tome belonging to the college, known colloquially as the "Dean's Lists".

Outside of classroom activities, there are a host of amenities and activities for students such as athletics (go owlbears!), clubs and organizations (such as campus ministry), residence life, and a dining hall (known for their fried cockatrice Thursdays). The overall institution is run by the Arch-Dean, Alampe Newtith, an old and respected wizard and former graduate who has been serving for many, many years. Our players are all students at KSU and studying to be new adventurers.

In the course of their studies, students are encouraged to abide by a common set of standards and expectations known as the Student Code. However, if and when a student violates the Student Code, the guilty party may be reprimanded in some form or fashion. As luck would have it, each of our players has violated the code recently (PCs get to determine what they did to earn an infraction), and have subsequently been punished.

Though the circumstances for how our players ended up on the wrong side of the code may differ, they have all been assigned the same punishment, which is providing community service to the KSU library. Each player has been instructed to show up in the early morning and report to the head librarian in order to fulfill their punishment.

## Library

- *Setup Notes:* having all been reprimanded in some form or fashion, the players find themselves spending a day off to help at the campus library. They will report for duty to the head librarian, Aerister Ursplindaar. After being led to a lower level of the library, they will be assigned to go through an old room and organize and catalogue its contents as the old library is set to be razed and a new one constructed (thanks to fundraising efforts by the Arch Dean). After bringing the characters to the room, the librarian will leave them to their task and mention checking back at the end of the day.

- Librarian notes – female human warlock; quiet and meek; has been at the college for a short time; comes across as aloof; will answer questions correctly (except those about anything that predates her time at KSU, the current Arch-Dean, her patron, or how she came to work at KSU); generally positive and helpful; secretly an agent of the BBEG
- *Location notes:* The library is a noticeably older building than that of the other campus buildings and one that has been in dire need of repair. There is a main floor with some desks and administrative space and several floors of stacks above it as well as an “off limits” basement below. The room the party is taken to is below ground and down several dark corridors (really play up the descent). The librarian will mention that this is a much older part of the library that is rarely visited and mostly used as a storage space for old records. The room the party is led to will have only one door in and out (locked/unlocked with librarian’s key). It’s approximately 60’ x 60’ with 20’ ceilings. All walls and floor are made of old stone and mortar. The room has a couple of oil lamps in sconces around the room that the librarian will light before she departs (with magic, she is a warlock). The room is filled with odds and ends, including shelves filled with rolls of parchment, stacks of books of all sizes on the ground, a series of paintings leaning against one another, a couple of shelves with various knickknacks (clay jars, wooden boxes, a model ship, etc.). The room smells dank and most of the items are dusty and in poor state of repair. All of the items are of a mundane and uninteresting variety (old recipes for how to cook various parts of enchanted animals, a YA fiction series – Bardo the bard, records of college enrollment, minutes from a committee on campus lighting, etc.).
- *Key developments:*
  - Ask characters what their approach to cleaning would be to set the stage
  - Find and break the urn – after some time in the space, the PC’s will discover a black urn that looks out of place on a shelf (looks like it was recently placed). This can be done as a part of the cleaning activities or if a PC has the inclination to look around exhaustively. After discovering the urn, either 1) the PC decides to touch it or 2) have a different PC bump into the shelf to force the vase to fall. Either way, have all PC’s roll a DEX save with the lowest roll dropping the vase (after a comedic juggle to try to save it). The result is the vase breaks, revealing a pile of dust and an amulet with a hexagonal pendant inscribed with a seal of unknown origin (the design is geometric with the letters “SPSU” on it). Upon inspection, the ghost appears.
  - Speak with the ghost – the item is attached to the ghost of a former student, Ross “the Hornet” Bocher (everyone calls him Sting). He is a self-proclaimed fourth year student about to graduate, he just needs to make sure his name is on the Dean’s list for graduation (provide a quick side bar on Dean’s Lists if the PC’s need it). It will become clear through conversation though, that there is more here than meets the eye:
    - He will start by assuming that he’s lost somewhere on campus and that he needs help figuring out where he is. It will take someone pointing out that he is a ghost for him to realize this.
    - He is a student in the College of Shadows (which KSU does not have).
    - He claims to be a student at Servants of a Peaceful Society University or SPSU, a place where adventurers are trained to be free thinkers and advocates of the open, free nation known as Mayretta (a place no PC has heard of).

- His no memory of the Kingdom of Kourn. He mentions that there was no king in these lands in “his” day, and that people lived in a democratic society, though they routinely had to fight off the advances of bordering autocratic nations. As he recalls details from his time at SPSU, many things will sound familiar (the campus layout, description of some of the buildings, etc.). However, if he lists the names of leaders of the school, or anything about the ruling class of Mayretta, nothing will ring a bell for the PCs. As far as they have been taught, the Kournish Kingdom has been in existence for millennia, after it was founded by the first Kournish King from the wilderness (it’s always been this way).
- The pendant is his, and it was a sort of student ID from his days as a student.
- He was on his way to a meeting with his dean to get his name on the College of Shadows Dean’s List when he bumped into a warlock student who accused him of breaking her concentration. The last thing he remembers was the student saying something like “good luck getting on the dean’s list” and then her eyes glowing green. He now recalls that she may have been being snarky in her delivery.
- He is now convinced that in order to break his curse and make his way to the afterlife, he must get his name on his college’s dean’s list in order to finish his unfinished business. In his incorporeal form, he cannot do it (he tries to pick up the pendant but can’t), and he implores the party to do it for him.
  - Notes on Sting: ghost of a human male rogue; talkative, eager and enthusiastic, not very bright, confident he was going to be a master rogue and that his skills in deception, sleight of hand, stealth, etc. were second to none; talks a big game but is easily frightened; he can move through walls and turn invisible; aside from being seen and heard, he cannot interact with the physical environment; he will aid the players in whatever way he can, though he is not very smart and will disappear during combat due to fear
  - Leave to handle the mission

### Crashball Field

- *Setup Notes:* with Sting in tow, he will guide the party to where the College of Shadows “should” be, all the while commenting on how the campus looks similar and yet different (small trees are massive ones, the painted rock is twice the size, etc.). This leads them to the Crashball stadium. Sting will not know what Crashball is and swears that the college of shadows used to be right in the stadium’s footprint. He will mention that the college was unique in that most of the floors were underground so as to be able to avoid the light (lots of all dark labs). Sting is convinced that they should be able to find a way to get into the college from the stadium, if they can just find a way to get below ground.
- *Location Notes:* The crashball stadium consists of a large bowl-shaped arena with a grassy field in its center. It is tended by a groundskeeper, Reginald Greenthumb. When not being used for a game or practice, the stadium largely sits empty. In addition to the arena seating, there are some locker rooms, a storage shed for tools, areas for concessions, and a small platform where the live owlbear mascot (Scruffy) sits during games. At the time of the PC’s visit, the groundskeeper is putting down field lines for the next big match (large Owlbear motif in the center of the field).

Anyone familiar with the stadium (i.e. the Barbarian) would recall that there are no “lower levels” beneath the ground floor. However, there is a heavy iron door in the locker room area marked “staff only” that no one has ventured into. The only persons seen coming or going would be the groundskeeper and the Arch-Dean.

- o Notes on Reginald Greenthumb – he is an older human male of little intelligence. He has a grumpy demeanor and is very particular about how the stadium looks. He is easily distracted and confused by logic. He has been working at the stadium for years and reports directly to the Arch Dean. He will recognize the barbarian and is likely to trust him. He knows that the staff area leads to the Owlbear pen and that the Owlbear responds well to food and music. He is unaware of the trapdoor beneath the owlbear cage or any points of access to the lower levels.

- *Key Developments:*

- o Need to discover the staff entrance and gain access. The party can head directly to the staff entrance, but the door is locked. The party can gain access via the groundskeeper’s key, magical means (i.e. Knock), picking the lock (DC 15), or forcing it open (STR DC 20).
  - The groundskeeper will not immediately give access to the space or part with his key. He can be pickpocketed for the key or it can be taken by force. Alternatively, he can be convinced to part with the key either as a part of a trade (he views it as loaning the key) or with a clever ruse (such as “I dropped something behind the door and will bring it right back”)
  - If the party searches the area near the staff door (i.e. the locker room), they will discover the following in random lockers: rations (3 portions of grilled meat on thin metal skewers, function as **darts**), a netball racket (like a lacrosse stick, functions as a metal **quarterstaff**), and another set of crashball pads (**breastplate**). The metal skewers can be used as crude **thieves’ tools** with Sting providing guidance on use. The racket can be used as a makeshift **crowbar** to try to pry the door open.
- o Discover the Owlbear pen and trap door. The door leads to an unlit staircase and corridor that leads downward to another metal door (it is unlocked). The door opens to a small room roughly 30’ x 30’ x 30’. The room contains a large cube that is covered with a cloth. The cube is a large metal cage. Inside the cage is Scruffy the **owlbear** mascot. In the ceiling, PCs can make out a trap door that presumably leads to the platform above in the arena. If the PC’s remove the cloth and/or come close to the cloth, Scruffy will let out a loud squawk and hit the side of the cage. If investigating, the PCs will notice that when Scruffy slams into the cage, it shakes and is not secured to the floor. If they repeatedly antagonize the beast, he will eventually break free. Any two PCs can attempt to move the cage on a STR check (DC 20, take the total) If the PCs try to move the cage without subduing Scruffy, he will attack anything that touches the cage. PCs can subdue Scruffy by feeding him rations, playing a song, or through magical means. Once the cage is moved, there is an unlocked trap door that is easily discovered on the floor that leads below.

### Rogue College Dungeon

- *Setup Notes:* Having discovered the trap door into the abandoned College of Shadows, the party descends, using Sting as their guide. The party will advance, undisturbed, to the dean’s office on the lowest level.

- *Location Notes:* The walls and floor of this area are all of the same stone and mortar as the lower levels of the library (must succeed on a DC12 INV to determine that fact). There is no light source unless otherwise noted. All doors are unlocked unless otherwise noted. This location is an ancient ruin. There are accumulations of dust and dirt in corners. The air is stale and has a slightly foul odor to it. All the equipment and items in this area are in disrepair and unusable for their intended use. There are bodies of former students and staff in the various areas, though all are decayed beyond recognition and consist of skeletons or corpses with trappings of clothes or armor on them. If the bodies are investigated, it will be revealed that none suffered any sort of trauma and it is as if they simply “fell down dead”. The path to the dean’s office leads down several floors connected by staircases. In order of descent, there is a floor of classrooms, a floor of labs, a floor of training areas, and a floor of faculty offices before finally terminating on the floor with the dean’s office. The Dean’s office features an external annex room (waiting area) with a large clerical desk (for the admin), and several chairs for waiting students. Behind the desk is a large wooden set of double doors. The ceilings in this room are higher (20’) and there are remnants of what appear to be banners or tapestries hanging from the walls.
- *Key Developments:*
  - o Battle the admin – upon arriving in the dean’s suite, there will be two **zombies** slumped into chairs in the W side of the room. There is a third **zombie** on the E side of the room laying under a table. Behind the admin’s desk is the former admin herself (**wight**). Upon entering the room and hearing the full description, Sting will remark how he’s had to visit the Dean’s office a number of times (he got into trouble a lot) and that if anything could be considered a positive of this current trip, it’s that he’s glad to not have to deal with Dean’s Secretary this go around. He will share some details about how she was a mean old crone with daggers for eyes and a fork for a tongue and cold as the grave itself. She was fiercely loyal to the Dean but an absolute monster to all the students. Her name was Mrs. White. As Sting describes her, the wight will stand up slowly from behind the desk and call out with a screech, “YOU DON’T HAVE AN APPOINTMENT”, which will raise the zombies in the room as well and initiate combat.
    - *Combat notes :*
      - Wight cannot use longbow attacks and is only equipped with the longsword
      - Wight will move to melee range and use two handed longsword attacks unless target is below 18hp, in which case it will use a sword attack and life drain second, if the target is below 6hp, it will use life drain first. It will target the most vulnerable PC it can reach within melee range and will not willingly move in a way that would prompt an opportunity attack.
      - The wight will always succeed on saving throws against turn undead, or any spell that would impose negative status effects.
      - The wight will survive until their second turn, at least. To do this, it can use a jar to refill 20 HP as a reaction to going under 0HP for the first time. The jar is labeled “tears of students”.
      - Zombies will always travel to nearest target and engage in melee
      - Starting in the second round of combat, another zombie will appear in the doorway to the room from the S. So long as the door

- remains open and unbarred, a new zombie will appear each round on the zombies' turn.
- Once the wight is slain, the zombies will all drop back to corpses and combat will end.
  - Treasure – there is a silver letter opener (**dagger**) in the admin's desk in one of the drawers.
- Inscribe Sting's name on the Dean's List. With the admin defeated, the doors to the dean's office will unlock. The inside features a wide desk, shelves of books on the W and E walls, and a couple of chairs facing the desk and one large one behind it. On a podium behind the desk and chair against the far wall is the dean's list. If the players should look for it, the dean's body is nowhere to be found. The room, however, is more well-kept and not as dirty as the rest of the ruin. Once Sting's name is inscribed in the list, the book will glow white, enveloping the room. The party will see Sting, bathed in light. He will thank the party, glow, and then vanish into the light. The light then bathes the room until all the PCs are effectively blinded. Shortly afterward, the party will wake up in the storage room in the library where they started their adventure.

### Conclusion:

The players wake up in the library, lying prone in the place they were standing when the urn broke. Their wounds have been healed and spell slots returned (as if recovering from a long rest). After the party is apprised of their situation, but before they can ask any additional questions about their person, the librarian will open the door. The librarian will appraise the group's work, and comment on the broken urn and dust on the floor. The entire party will remember the events that transpired as they "happened". If the party tries to explain or share anything regarding what they "think" have happened, the librarian will listen attentively before suggesting that perhaps there is something amiss. She will examine the dust from the urn and wonder out loud if they somehow disturbed some kind of sleeping agent, perhaps a type of inhaled poison that has now settled. She will quickly usher everyone out of the room for fear that it might still be in the room. She will sign off on the PC's community service documents and bid them a good day.

Once out of the library, the party will realize by some "tell" that the events may have actually occurred as they remember them (e.g. still in possession of the groundskeeper's key or another item that was picked up). The PCs are left wondering what may have actually occurred. We end the scene on asking each PC how the events of the day would impact them: do they keep in touch with the other players? Do they go back to search for the College of Shadows? Do they share this story with anyone else? Does this change their outlook on KSU, the leadership, the kingdom?

*Post credits scene:* A hooded figure is seen wandering down a dark hallway with a floating light above their head, alone. They approach a metal door and pull out a key. In the light, you can make out an image of the key, which has a distinct head, that is the same shape as the amulet found in the urn. They open the door and walk in, revealing the door opens to a walkway which extends out over a great expanse above what appears to be a bottomless pit. As they approach the end of the walkway, there is a single platform resting on a column which rises up out of the pit. On the platform sits another robed figure on a

twisted metal throne. The figure's face is covered by a hood and face wrap such that you cannot make out any discernable features. The standing hooded figure approaches the throne, stops, and does a slight bow to the seated figure. The standing figure then removes their hood, revealing it to be the librarian. She then says "the first seal has been broken". The figure in the chair shifts their weight forward and mutters back "good". At this point a sounds begins to erupt from within the pit, small at first and then building to a deafening blast. The sound ... the hum of buzzing insects.