

in dealing with such powerful entities) is left to your imagination.

TAKING LEAVE OF LOTTIE

Depending on how their dealings with the lichs go (and whether they did any damage to Lottie's Palace while getting to her), the characters can spend a few hours hanging out with the undead. Any prospective business dealings can be lined up, after which the lichs order one last round of drinks, then kick the characters out of Lottie's Palace.

CONCLUSION

With the events of this episode complete, the characters attain 6th level! Leaving Lottie's Palace behind, they can return safely to their borrowed battle balloon or mobile headquarters, ready to try to figure out where the Six might be conducting their ritual—and how to stop it.

FRANCHISE DOWNTIME

Much of the break between episode 5 and 6 will be focused on determining the location of the Six's ritual site. The key clue to doing so is knowing that the ritual needs

to be undertaken in a location where the planar boundaries are already thin, and where an existing planar portal is likely already in operation. Still, though the end of the world might be nigh, on the off chance that the characters are successful in stopping the Six's plans, they'll have bills to pay.

All the activities mentioned in this section are introduced or talked about in the "Franchise Tasks and Downtime" section in chapter 2.

LOCATING THE RITUAL SITE

As the endgame approaches, the time the characters have spent with the orrery and its component pieces can grant the necessary insight to build a detector that can sense portals or planar disturbances. A portalometer, if you will. The research or scrutineering activities can help the characters uncover the necessary information or tools, while the crafting a magic item activity can cover the construction of the portalometer.

The details of the portalometer are left to the imaginations of the players (including coming up with a better name if they like). The detector might take the form of a magical receptacle allowing one or more orrery components to function as a compass, a divination window tapping into planar disruptions to show brief glimpses of possible locations, or any other device channeling suitable magic.

If you really want to dig deep, you could experiment with the idea that the orrery's power gives it a kind of consciousness (or you could even make it a sentient magic item, as detailed in chapter 7 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.) In that scenario, the orrery's consciousness might be what the portalometer taps into. Or the orrery components possessed by the Six might begin to call to the components held by the characters, as the artifact seeks to be made whole once more.

The time necessary to locate the ritual site is left to your determination. If the characters are anxious to cut to the chase, you can have a successfully created portalometer lead them straight to the site. In a pinch, you could even say that any orrery components the characters still possess become attuned to the ritual as Splugoth prepares it, allowing the characters to triangulate the ritual site's location. For more build up, you can set up a search involving side treks, which might cover the length and breadth of the Sword Coast as the characters make use of their mobile franchise headquarters.

These side trek missions might tie in to improving the magic of the portalometer and involving tracking down lore or components. Or the characters could discover several possible locations for the Six's ritual, then investigate and eliminate false leads before finding the real site. One such side trek is detailed in "The Moon Glade" in episode 6, and you can add similar events as you wish.

SEEKING THE SIX

Any number of downtime and franchise activities—from research to schmoozing to shady business practices—can be used by characters seeking to learn more about

LOTTIE

