

Narrative Plot Sample

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EXT. LESSER FAYDARK FOREST - DAY

Rain cascades through the lush canopy of leaves overhead, pelting the dense floor of the forest below. Two figures, HAYDEN and YELENA, cut their way through the thick underbrush. They push through the forest with haste, as if tracking something. Finally, Hayden pulls down a curtain of vines to reveal a large, circular clearing in the woods. There, they see him in the distance, their quarry, the ROGUE, clad in an ornate cloak and hood and fleeing toward the cave-like entrance of the CATACOMBS of A'MODANE. A pack of large, dog-sized GECKOS run at his side, darting to and fro in the path of their master.

Hayden gives chase, trying to match the Rogue's speed as best a HUMAN can. Yelena, a WOOD ELF of exquisite grace and beauty, follows closely behind him. Hearing them advance, the Rogue turns, pulling back his hood to reveal the reptilian maw of a LIZARD MAN. Hayden and Yelena follow, hot on his trail. With a hiss, the Rogue dispatches his pack of howling geckos, sending them at the heroes.

Two enormous STATUES stand guard on either side of the arched entrance of the Catacomb, each with sword drawn in one hand and a dagger being held behind the back in the other. The Rogue bows his head slightly as he performs a silent prayer, tracing a symbolic gesture over his heart. Before disappearing inside, he takes one last look behind. Hayden and Yelena are coming, battling their way through the pack of geckos.

INT. THE CATACOMBS OF A'MODANE – DAY

Hayden rushes through the door of the catacombs, stopping himself short of tumbling off a darkened stairway that spirals down a large, circular shaft. Yelena follows calmly behind. She pauses at the threshold to perform the same prayer that the Rogue had previously done.

Below, the lit torch of the Rogue can be seen getting further and further down the stairs. The heroes pursue, staying close to the walls as they venture into the darkness, trying to keep their footing on the crumbling, ancient staircase.¹ Suddenly, Hayden drops, falling through a missing part of the stairway. He lands hard on an unstable, wooden floor intricately carved with ancient symbols. The Rogue watches, laughing with a serpentine hiss. Hayden doesn't miss a beat, lunging for the foe, just as a stone door comes down between them. Through a small window, the Rogue smiles, taunting Hayden with the stolen KEY OF BEGGARS before disappearing down another set of stairs.

Yelena, gracefully leaping to the wooden floor, rejoins Hayden. The strange floor wobbles slightly when she lands. Frustrated, Hayden examines the statuary around him. A row of menacing faces, each with a mouth open in horror, runs all along the circular wall of the shaft. Eventually, he finds one of them has a LEVER inside of its mouth. Yelena tries to stop him, but it is too late. He pulls the lever. Steam pours from the open mouths of the statues as the sound

¹ Keeping the Rogue in view at all times will help to maintain the sense of a chase and provide direction for the player.

of a large, rusted gears echo from elsewhere in the catacomb. The floor gives a little, and then begins to descend. It is a primitive type of elevator.²

As the elevator slowly passes by, a massive OSSUARY reveals itself to surround Hayden and Yelena on all sides. Thousands of skeletons fill the walls. All manner of race are lined together, each dressed in the same cloaks as the Rogue. Through a series of small slits cut into the walls, the Rogue can be seen descending a second staircase that follows the path of the elevator behind the wall.³

A strange whisper begins to echo in the shaft, getting louder each time it repeats. The sound comes from the dead. Entombed bodies break free from the walls, several millennia of rot and dust billow from them as they come alive and shamble toward Hayden and Yelena. Each reanimated corpse repeats the gasping echo of “unworthy.” The dead attack! Fighting back to back, Hayden and Yelena defend against a sea of endless living corpses. The fight is long and intense, but they outlast the undead. All is quiet for a moment, and then the elevator begins to creak and rock. The extra weight of the corpses is too much for it to hold.⁴

With a loud snap, the elevator drops, scraping against the walls of the shaft as it careens further down. A large chamber blurs past. The Rogue stands at its ledge, watching as the elevator tilts sharply and tumbles into a pit of grinding iron gears below. Hayden and Yelena keep their footing, dashing up the ever ascending tilt of the fallen elevator as it inches toward the ledge of the open chamber.⁵

They leap for the safety of the ledge, barely grabbing it before the remains of the elevator are pulled into the crushing mechanism. Hayden pulls himself to the chamber above. He extends a hand to Yelena. Happy to be alive, he turns, only to find the point of a sword in his face... then another and another.

INT. THE ANCIENT HALL – DAY

A myriad of men and women of all races surround Hayden, each dressed in matching, ornate cloaks. The Rogue, dangling the KEY in Hayden’s face, is the only one without a sword drawn. He concedes to Hayden’s speed but mocks the *human’s* lack of intelligence.

Yelena pushes herself passed the armed men and women, much to Hayden’s surprise. A matching cloak is handed to her. She vouches for Hayden, saying that he *will* learn in time. The others nod, sheathing their swords. The Rogue snorts in disapproval, but relents... tossing the key at Hayden’s feet. Hayden looks at the key, then back toward Yelena and the others. It was all just a test. Yelena nods to him, handing him a robe as well. The men and women join Yelena as they welcome Hayden into the THIEVE’S GUILD.

² A puzzle could be built around this sequence.

³ Even when confined to a specific area, it is important to remind the player of the primary mission.

⁴ Using the bodies of fallen enemies to affect the narrative can give players a sense that their actions have direct consequences to the story.

⁵ The environment used as a danger and a tool could lead to some interesting gameplay.