

**Campaign/Game:** Saturday Showups - D&D 5e

**Date:** May 6th, 2023

**Session 7:** Wherein the Showups free a village of halflings from servitude under the yoke of the Lords of Rot.

### Characters

**Alys**, Dwarven Sorcerer/Warlock (Sheila)

**Sora Silverlash**, Human Paladin (Pauline)

**Tilly Tealeaf**, Halfling Moon Druid (Madison)

**DM:** Andrew

### Log:

In an arcane age, adventurers have arrived in the “new world” from wherever they originally came from in search of adventure, riches, destiny - something that drives them. Collectively, they are known as the “Showups.” This is their story.

As the session opens, Tilly reflects on the fact that it has been over a year since her home with the hill tribes was raided by the misshapen Malmyrdons, driven by an anonymous elven warlord. She came to Apreea in search of her kin who were kidnapped. She fondly recalls her older brother Bosco, her younger sister Odette, her mother and father Portia and Cade Tealeaf, and her “spicy” grandma Gillian.

Alys' patron, the Epicurean of the Ghouls, has once more sent her on an errand. He has learned a little more about the delicacy that is “The Hyphae.” It seems that this fungus is only able to be turned into a consumable liquor by a process known only to the halflings of the hill tribes. He asks his subject Alys to learn more about this substance and report her findings in her upcoming correspondence.



It was Sora who suggested that the three band together and act. The paladin learned through communion with her deity that there are a group of halflings that are being held against their will in the Hinterlands west of Droughtsburg. She is unsure who is holding them or why they are being held, but in her minds' eye she sees that they are in distress.

The Showups react to rumors Tilly hears from friendly animals and local hunters about footprints and sightings of halflings traveling with the unnatural Malmyrdons in the hinterlands past Droughtsburg. Perhaps this is the break Tilly had hoped for to locate them and make the elven warlord who abducted them pay! The Showups learn about a small, abandoned dwarven fort near Droughtsburg that had been taken by a cadre of Malmyrdons. Inside, they see a sassy older halfling woman cussing the misshapen monstrosities of demonic spirits made flesh, and make plans to assault the tiny stronghold.

Tilly and Sora sneak close. Tilly changes shape to that of a Dire Wolf, a massive monster of teeth and claws. The druid and the paladin rush the front door, crushing the weak Malmyrdon resistance. Alys provides support with blasts of eldritch magic and her signature spiritual weapon - a huge, greasy, spectral turkey leg. The Showups dispatch the Malmyrdons and discover that Tilly's grandmother Gillian ("Call me Grandma!") was held among the monsters. She is relieved and overjoyed to see Tilly, and greets her companions warmly. She describes that she had been brought to give away along with a load of fungus liquor she and the other halfling hill tribe villagers had made. The group had just sold the fungus liquor that she and the other halflings had made in captivity. The heroes agree with Grandma that the other halflings should be liberated from making this liquor, so they all head west toward where they are being held. Grandma leads the heroes away from the fort toward the Garden of Gallows. They rest just before reaching the treeline of that forest.

Grandma Tealeaf asks to learn everything about Tilly's life in the past year. Tilly's bright blue eyes welled up as she relayed to her Grandmother everything she had done, leaving the hill tribes and journeying to the continent of Apreea in search of the elven warlord and his Malmyrdon flunkies. Grandma asked about Sora and Alys as well. Alys describes a time she mistakenly triggered her innate magic with dire consequences. Since then, she has regretted growing up, and by confiding in Grandma about these issues she grows stronger for it. Alys also confides in Grandma about her interest in learning more about fungus brewing, and Sora expresses her commitment to being a vigilante loner with a chip on her shoulder. Grandma is impressed by Sora's bad-assery and mentions that she reminds her of a halfling she knew in her past named "Bruce Wayne" who would dress up like a bat.



In the Garden of Gallows the Showups meet and fight off a marauding beast that was at once a great bear and a giant horned owl. It would alternate between hoots and growls, leading Grandma to dub it a "Hoo-Grr." The party fights off this monster, with Alys connected to it through a bolt of electric energy powered by her dark witchcraft. Tilly takes a few handfuls of scorched and hairy feathers from the beast.

The Showups arrive at the site pointed out by Grandma. They sneak in the front door of the complex. To the right, they find barracks of a few Malmyrdons. Straight ahead, they run into a Fungus Mage, a mushroom-man who is able to cast spells and heal himself. The heroes manage to kill this alien creature. In the laboratory the Fungus Mage was working in, some information is found that identifies why the halflings may have been kidnapped to begin with.

The *Hyphae* (pronounced "High-Fee") is an arcane fungus. It grows as long filamentous branches found in fungi deep underground. The halflings of the hill tribes who live far from Apreea have cultivated these plants for years. They are able to prepare these plants in such a

way that consuming them in a particular ritual will give the imbiber prophetic dreams. Those who do not prepare the Hyphae correctly risk madness, blindness, or death if they are not able to follow the hill tribes' exacting arcane procedures. These dreams could be valuable to would-be conquerors, false messiahs, or treasure hunters who seek that which can not be easily seen.

The Showups move on with Alys scouting ahead invisibly. They find a cage of sorts made of man-sized violet toadstools holding in at least a dozen of the hill tribe halflings. Tilly is overjoyed, but soon another Fungus Mage and his two Mold Marauders notice the invisible dwarf when she accidentally walks through a cloud of spores that give away her position. The Lords of Rot begin to take the fight to the Showups!

The fight goes fast. Tilly transforms into a dire wolf and charges. Alys burns the Fungus Mage with eldritch energy. Sora trades blows with one of the Mold Marauders, cutting the monster down. The Fungus Mage poisons the party with balls of fungal bloom launched from its mouth. Tilly is knocked out of her animal form. Sora cuts down several more Malmyrdons before she locks up with the second Mold Marauder. Her attack explodes the mushroom-man and splashes his guts throughout the chamber. Grandma broke her family and hill tribesmen out and got them out of the way as Sora, with Tilly once again in dire wolf form, tore the Fungus Mage to bits for kidnapping the halflings and forcing them to brew fungus liquor from the Hyphae.

Tilly realizes that almost her entire family is now safe. Her younger sister Odette, her mother and father Portia and Cade Tealeaf, and even Grandma Gillian relish being reunited. However, Tilly's older brother, the master brewer Bosco is still missing. What could anyone want of him?

