

shalara var

Background. Thrown out of the house by her herbalist mother for concocting a poison for a client that her mother had refused to help, Shalara Var became a Journeyer. She led the dangerous life of an assassin in her late teens, and then attempted to insinuate herself into the household of Lord Gris, the supposed scion of a dwindling petty noble family in fabled Avalence. It turned out that Gris, a rather mysterious figure of questionable species, after eliminating the last few members of the family in question, had himself impersonated a distant heir. Shalara settled into the role of masquerading as a long-lost daughter of House Gris. The tension between “uncle” and “neice”, as each attempted to guess whether the other knew the truth of their assumed identities, has made the Gris household a rather bizarre one. Add to that “uncle’s” rather unusual behavior at times, and the place can be ludicrously weird. Shalara associates with adventurers of rather dubious morals and motivations, all the while maintaining the pretense of respectability—at least, respectability by somewhat loose Avalencian standards.

Description. Shalara is a handsome young woman, apparently in her mid to early twenties, with long black hair and dark brown eyes. She is not a great beauty, but not without her charms. She has been trained in courtly manners by her mentor, Lord Gris, and can pass herself off as a minor noble convincingly. Whenever pressed for too many details, she will fall back on her cover of being found by her “uncle” after being estranged from her family in her youth. She is not given to fits of passion, but is calm and somewhat calculating.

Her nature and the company she keeps have led her to be rather cautious. If the dresses and gowns she wears around the city are a trifle garish or overwrought, it is only to more easily conceal the armored leather bodices she has sewn into them.

Spells. Shalara knows the following Oneiros spells: *Anti-magic*, *Darkness*, *Wood to Water*, *Counterspell*, *Detect Aura*, *Read Aura*.

Garden. If Shalara has one passion, it is her plants. At the Gris mansion, her bedroom and the adjacent upper terrace are a veritable hothouse of exotic blooms and botanicals, many specimens of which she has gathered on her numerous strange adventures. The servants have strict instructions not to go there.

Blue trailer

As its name implies, the blue trailer produces long tendrils which tend to hang over the walls or branches which it favors. Its small, slightly bluish leaves are small and rounded, and the trailer produces small, bitter berry-like pods nearly constantly. These may be collected and dried for at least a month before being boiled in alcohol until attaining a heat of indigo-blue-green (**Sight/Alchemy** at -3), then reduced to a consistence of rabbit-serpent (**Dexterity/Alchemy** at -3).

Malignity	4
Period	1 minute
Damage	-2 lines of Fatigue; when all lines of Fatigue are full victim falls asleep through the end of the next hour of the Sleeping Castle.
Remedy	-4 / Sandpowder +10, Royal Jelly +6

ghal’s tongue

A cousin of the blue trailer, this vine bears small, pale leaves. It blooms in the late autumn (month of the Serpent), producing white, blotchy flowers of a sickly appearance. These may be distilled into an alchemical product, slightly bitter, of a honey-like consistency. The alchemical procedure requires the flowers to be worked with a bit of the soil in which the plant grows to a consistency of horse-goat-horse (**Dexterity/Alchemy** at -3) then heated to a color of grey-drab-blood (**Sight/Alchemy** at -3) before cooling.

Malignity	4
Period	3 rounds
Damage	1 line of Fatigue
Remedy	-4 / Floommilk +16

Zunna’s roses

Zunna’s Ruin, in the foothills west of Cragwindle, is surrounded by poisonous roses whose scent improve **Smell-Taste** but whose thorns cause the victim to sleep for years. Shalara gathered some there and was able to cultivate some. Smelling Zunna’s roses requires a **Dream** roll at -8; failure indicates that the character has gained 8 experience in **Smell-Taste**. Any character handling the roses must also check **Luck** at -6 adjusted by the character’s armor rating; vigorous activity near the roses adds an additional -4 to the **Luck** roll. A partial or total fumble indicates the character has been scratched by a poisonous thorn (below). The roses lose all potency (and indeed their scent) within an hour of being cut.

Malignity	3
Period	6 rounds
Damage	Increased drowsiness and loss of 1 point of Will per minute until Will reaches 0; the victim will then sleep for a period equal to his or her Dream in years in perfect stasis. Remedies noted below are only effective if administered before the character falls asleep; once asleep the character may only be waken by a 7-point <i>Counterspell</i> cast from Lethe at a -9 difficulty.
Remedy	-5 / Moonmilk +15, Elixir of the Gnomes +10

ossiphage

See Book Three, *Worlds*, page 21.



the perfume box

Disguised in her room among a heady assortment of essential oils, perfumes, and balms and salves are a few of Shalara's favorite poisons. She has two doses of Ghul's Tongue venom (distilled from the plant and with the same characteristics), one dose of Nadja's Tears (see below), and one dose of North Wind (see below).

In her room Shalara also has four narcoleptic candles imbued with essential oils of the blue trailer vine, these candles, when burned, induce sleep to any within a small

room. Each candle burns for an hour, and the poison has the same effect as contact with the vine.

nadja's tears

Developed by the Talissian necromancer and botanist Vordred, this poison derives its name from a mythical vampire of the Outland people. Nadja's Tears appear as a sticky, semi translucent reddish substance, similar to honey, but more resinous. It dissolves almost instantly in blood, although not in water or saliva. The victim begins to hemorrhage first from his or her eyes, then from other orifices, and finally even from pores. The ingredients are the blood of the rare sand leech, essence of the wind spider and the flower of the vermilion vine. Manufacturing the poison is an alchemical operation with a difficulty of -9. Dosage is 3 grains.

Malignity	5
Period	5 rounds
Damage	-2 Life
Remedy	-7 / Belidane +12, Moon Milk +8, Sandpowder +5, Oil of Selikanthe +2

north wind

One of the most terrifying blade poisons known, the North Wind is made from the distillations of various serpent venoms. Its symptoms are a sensation of intense cold of the internal organs.

Malignity	6
Period	2 rounds
Damage	-3 Life
Remedy	-5 / Tincture of Erozone +9, Turngrease +5, Oil of Selikanthe +2

healing

Since accidents *do* happen, Shalara also has a collection of remedies and antidotes in the event of that unfortunate mishap. She has one dose of Belidane (a +6 healing herb, +1 versus venoms); one Bjwal Pearl; three doses of False Suppore (a +1 healing herb), and one dose of Oil of Selikanthe.

