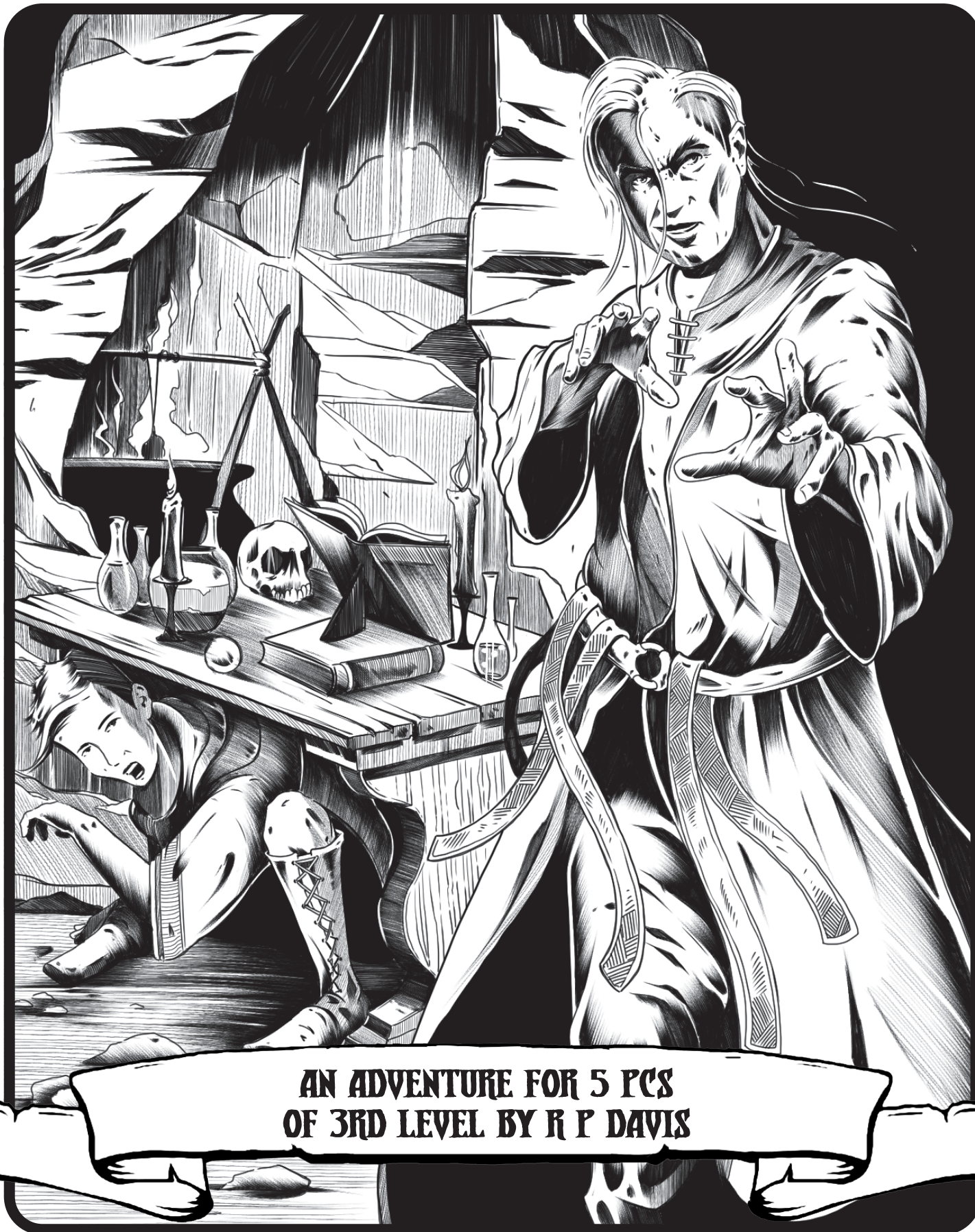


# DEATH OF A MAGE



AN ADVENTURE FOR 5 PCs  
OF 3RD LEVEL BY R P DAVIS

# DEATH OF A MAGE

## Adventure Background

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Uvalius Odolin was little more than a minor, part-time lecturer in clockwork magic at the Collegium. His colleagues dismissed him as a mediocre academic, but as a devotee of clockwork magic and animated constructs, he tinkered day and night in his workshop.

Uvalius was slain a few days ago by his creations. A surge of magic caused by a geomancer manipulating a ley line node under his house caused his automata to go haywire. The geomancer—Shurnas Kradore—holds a grudge against Uvalius that dates back to their school days where Uvalius outshone Shurnas. The geomancer plotted for years to have his revenge, but it went too far: Shurnas planned only to ruin Uvalius, not slay him.

Uvalius was a regular at the Hedgehog, stopping in every evening for at least a pint and conversation, and his drinking companions miss him. They put out an advertisement for adventurers to investigate what happened to him.

## Adventure Summary

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The adventure begins with the PCs answering the advertisement at the Hedgehog. They receive the mission

and directions to Uvalius's house. On the way, they're approached by rival wizards keen to buy magic the PCs find in the house.

At the house, the PCs subdue or destroy the haywire constructs, search the house, and find Uvalius's body—and deal with his bedroom furniture—after which they find out more about his killer from his captive consciousness. The PCs can ignore the wizard and conclude their business, or they can travel into the Margreve to the geomancer's lair, exact the dead wizard's vengeance, and find out why it all happened in the first place.

## PART ONE: THE HEDGEHOG TAVERN

The most prominent watering hole in the Collegium District of the Free City of Zobeck, the Hedgehog caters to the scholars and staff of the Collegium. The place is easy to find, opposite the Steam Gate that leads into Arcane Square. The food is mediocre, the ale is cheap but excellent, and the company varied.

Uvalius was a regular at the Hedgehog, appearing every day around dusk to have a flagon with his friends Ovras

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**Open Game Content:** The Open Content in this adventure includes the *broom of sweeping*, *comfy slippers*, and *staff of the artisan* magic items.

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(a clockwork mage specializing in optics) and Friganis (a masterwork gear-grinder). Ovras and Friganis put out the notice and wait at the Hedgehog to interview investigators.

**What They Know.** Ovras and Friganis know the following and readily share it:

- Uvalius is a homebody.
- His house and workshop are in Broomskill Alley.
- They went round yesterday, but there was no answer to their knocking.
- Uvalius has a gift for clockwork magic, but his brilliance makes him indifferent to things like lecture schedules and meetings with fellow faculty.
- He is as likely to leave valuable things just lying around as he is to protect them with traps and secret compartments.
- Pooling their resources, Ovras and Friganis can pay the PCs 100 gp each to find out what happened.

## The Vultures Circle

Several of Uvalius's colleagues have heard about his disappearance and suspect his demise. When the PCs leave the Hedgehog, the colleagues loiter along the route to Uvalius's house, waiting for a private interview. Each offers the PCs cash and favors in exchange for interesting items from the house.

### IVY OZANYLL

A short woman with a striking blonde streak in her chestnut hair, Ivy is also a clockwork mage who lectures at the Collegium.

**What Ivy Wants.** Uvalius mentioned in passing a specific device he invented that regulates movement in clockwork servants, making them less prone to breaking down.

**Reward.** She offers 500 gp for the PCs to share.

**Roleplaying Ivy.** Cold. Precise. Efficient. Clearly doesn't give a toss about anything other than her ambition. As far as she cares, the PCs can loot the place to the rafters, provided she gets the device she wants.

### TUVIYAR OMANYR

A tenured lecturer in item crafting, Tuviyar was at a reception where Uvalius absentmindedly mentioned he was working on some self-regulating minor magic items.

**What Tuviyar Wants.** If the PCs find anything like self-sweeping brooms, self-cleaning chamber pots, or anything like that, Tuviyar wants them. He knows he can make a fortune marketing such things to Zobeck's upper crust.

**Reward.** He offers 350 gp for the PCs to share as well as sponsoring any PC who wishes to attend the Collegium, full time or part time.

**Roleplaying Tuviyar.** Rather guilty and furtive. Tuviyar doesn't like playing anything but a straight bat, but he's been at the Collegium long enough to figure out he's got to be a bit underhanded if he's to make his fortune.

Both Ivy and Tuviyar tell the PCs they'll wait at the Hedgehog for the swag.

## PART TWO: UVALIUS'S HOUSE

Uvalius's house is a two-story stone tower in a quiet cul-de-sac near the Collegium, though not as near as the dwellings of full professors.

The tower has a single-story addition constructed of whitewashed brick under a red-tiled roof. The house is set a few dozen feet back from the street behind a low, iron fence. The grounds are neatly kept, but the doors are shut tight and curtains drawn across the windows. Mature trees shade the grounds.

**Doors.** Unless otherwise noted, doors are wooden and unlocked. A locked door can be picked with a successful DC 14 Dexterity check using thieves' tools. A door can also be broken down with a successful DC 20 Strength check.

**Illumination.** There are no functioning light sources inside the house.

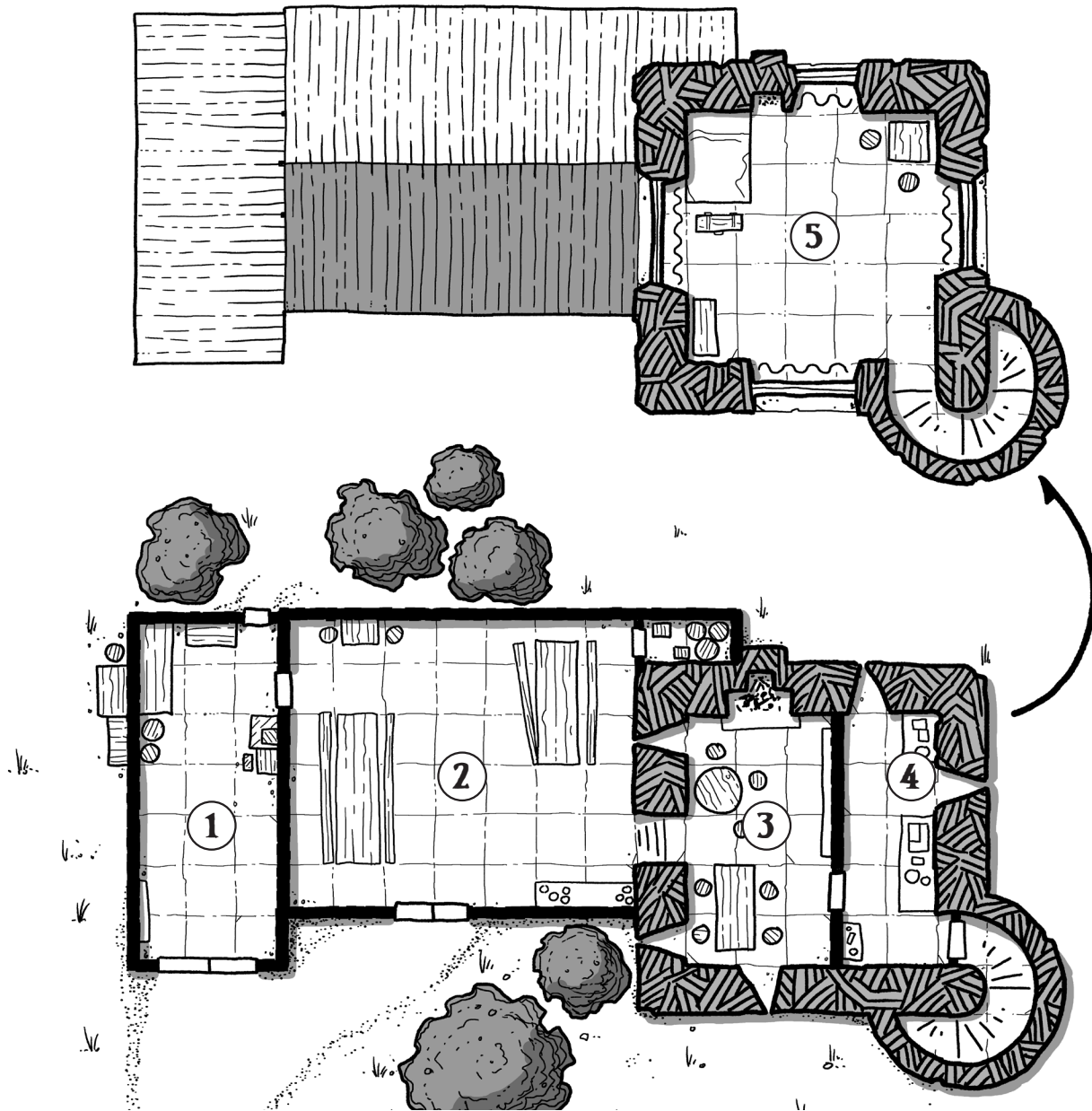
### 1. STORAGE

This area was once a stable and shed for a wagon. The tiled roof is 12 feet high where it meets the rest of the house and slopes off to the west. Birds nest in the rafters. Though the smell of horses lingers, the stalls now contain shelf after shelf of spare parts for clockwork creations. Large double doors open to the street (south side) and are barred from within. A narrow, low gardener's door opens into the back garden and is locked.

**Treasure.** While there's nothing obviously precious, there are enough spare parts here to net a tidy sum (at least 500 gp) from a clockwork mage. The trouble is there's so *much* of it. It'll take an oxcart to remove it all.

### 2. WORKROOM

Whitewashed brick walls support this large room's tiled roof, which peaks 20 feet above the flagstone floor. Two long wooden tables that might once have been used for banqueting are now covered with metalworking tools and clockwork projects in various stages of completion. On the western table is a humanoid figure made of metal, springs, and gears. On the eastern table is an assortment of clockwork insects, which look like fist-sized scarabs, as well as a small but intricate device. In the southeast corner is an enameled-metal bench, bearing alchemical gear. Along the north wall



is a small table flanked by two stools. On the table is a plate with a moldy, half-eaten sandwich. In the northeast corner is a closed door. The double doors leading to the street are barred from within. A short stone staircase leads from the workroom to the kitchen (Area 3).

Tiny clockwork creatures skitter across the floor, paying no attention to the PCs until they enter the room.

#### CREATURES

One **clockwork beetle swarm** (see *Tome of Beasts*) and four **flying swords**.

**Tactics.** When two or more Small or larger creatures enter the room, the beetles rise in a clatter of gears and assemble

themselves into a human-sized swarm. At the same time, the tools and other parts begin to fly about, zooming back and forth. They attack and fight to the death.

#### DEVELOPMENT

The door in the northeast corner leads to a storage closet that contains barrels of wine and crates of mostly rotten food. The door isn't locked.

The device Ivy Ozanyll wants is on the eastern table. It's a clockwork sphere small enough to fit into a pocket, but it weighs more than it looks like it should. It's so complex, layer upon layer of gears and wires and tiny tubes, that trying to understand it makes the eyes water and the head ache. A

PC proficient with the Arcana skill knows it's clearly magical, mixing transmutation and divination magic. A PC who succeeds on a DC 14 Intelligence (Arcana) check knows that a portion of the device exists on another plane of existence, which explains why parts of it are blurry, seeming to wink in and out of existence more rapidly than the eye can follow.

### TREASURE

The casks of wine are worth 50 gp each. A PC proficient with alchemist's supplies can assemble two complete sets of supplies from the various alchemical components. A PC proficient with tinker's tools can assemble a set from the scattered tools and parts. Mixed in with the tools are a pair of *eyes of minute seeing* and enough enchanted tools to make a set of +1 *thieves' tools*.

### 3. KITCHEN

Inside the thick, stone walls of the keep are the kitchen and living area. A wooden wall separates the kitchen from the rest of the keep. Arrow slits look out over the front garden and into the workroom (Area 2). A deep stone hearth is set into the north wall, its fire long dead. An iron cauldron hangs over where the coals once were, and pottery pipkins are nestled in the ashes. A wide, tall shelving unit contains jars of spices, small sacks of flour, a bottle of cooking oil, bundles of onions and garlic, and a box of potatoes.

Tables and stools are scattered about and overturned as though a fight took place here. A broom quietly sweeps dust and ashes into the fireplace, moving eerily on its own. Several of the small clockwork creatures skitter and scurry about.

### DEVELOPMENT

When a living creature enters the room, the table and chairs right themselves, and the broom sweeps over to usher the creature into a chair, which positions itself invitingly near the table. If the creature doesn't sit, the broom strikes the creature, doing no damage but clearly insisting the creature sit. The broom repeats this maneuver for each living creature that enters.

When a living creature sits in a chair, the tiny clockwork creatures climb up and do things like massage the shoulders, comb the hair, untie the shoes and bring *comfy slippers*, and offer mugs of wine from the casks stored off the workroom (Area 2).

There's a 50% chance the tiny creatures are broken. Rather than making visitors feel comfortable, they perform minor annoyances like pulling out clumps of hair instead of combing it and tying shoelaces together instead of offering *comfy slippers*.

If a creature sits in a chair and accepts a mug of wine, the automata ignore it thereafter.

**Note.** The minor items are just what Tuviyar asked the PCs to seek.

### CREATURES

If a PC insists on attacking the automata, each has AC 10 and 1 hp.

### TREASURE

A PC proficient with cook's utensils can assemble a set from the remaining supplies. See the Appendix for the broom of sweeping and comfy slippers. A PC deactivates the broom with a successful DC 12 Intelligence (Arcana) check.

### 4. LIBRARY

Tall bookcases line the walls, and arrow slits look out over the grounds. One set of shelves groans under the weight of dozens of books, from hefty tomes to small volumes. The other is stuffed full of rolled-up scrolls and parchments. In the southeast corner, a door is slightly ajar, revealing a stone spiral staircase leading up. The smallest set of shelves holds wooden boxes, each only a handspan on a side. Each has a brass plaque, and each bears a different name: Sebastian, Melody, Leopold, Preston, and Eufala.

### DEVELOPMENTS

Inside each wooden box is ashes. When a living creature touches a box, a small transparent illusion springs out of its lid, showing the face of a greyhound.

### TREASURE

The spell scrolls containing the spells *fly*, *identify*, *magic circle*, and *resilient sphere*. Uvalius's spellbooks are also here, marked with his sigil, containing the spells from the mage stat block, plus those contained in the spell scrolls above.

**Traps.** The shelf holding the books is protected by a *glyph of warding*.

### GLYPH OF WARDING

*Magical trap*

A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check notices the arcane symbol traced on the wood. A successful DC 12 Intelligence (Arcana) check reveals it to be a dangerous *glyph of warding* designed to freeze the immediate area. When a living creature other than Uvalius touches the shelf, each creature in the room must make a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw, taking 5d8 cold damage on a failed save or half as much damage on a successful one.

**Prevention.** A *dispel magic* spell safely removes the glyph. Alternatively, if a PC proficient in Arcana succeeds a DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check, they disrupt the magic, suppressing it for 1 hour. On a failure, the trap triggers.

## 5. BEDROOM

Rich maroon velvet curtains are drawn across large cathedral windows in each thick stone wall. A canopied bed fills the northwest corner, and an iron-bound wooden chest rests at its foot. There's a small table with chairs in the northeast corner, papers and drawings scattered across it along with a plate, beer mug, and cutlery. In the southwest corner is a wardrobe, the doors of which are slightly ajar. The room was heated by a small fireplace in the north wall, though now the ashes are cold.

A human-sized clockwork figure is slumped against the north wall next to the fireplace, and the body of a human is lying across its legs.

**Creatures.** The wardrobe, the bed's canopy, the table, and the cutlery on the table are all animated by the geomancer's magic. Treat the cutlery as two **flying swords**, the wardrobe and table as two **animated armors**, and the velvet canopy as a **rug of smothering**. As soon as a PC comes within 5 feet of the body, they attack and fight to the death.

### DEVELOPMENTS

PCs examining the body find the human matches the description of Uvalius they were given. An ornate brass key hangs from a cord around his neck.

**Cause of Death.** A PC proficient in Medicine can see the wizard was beaten to death. Uvalius's hand rests on the clockwork servant's chest, on a small hatch that's slightly ajar. Inside the hatch is a memory gear.

**Message Delivery.** Clockwork mages and PCs native to Zobeck know that clockwork servants need memory gears to function. Clockwork mages know how to correctly install a memory gear, and other PCs can install it with a successful DC 14 Intelligence (Arcana) or Intelligence (tinker's tools) check. Once the memory gear is installed, the clockwork servant's head animates, and a wheezing, coughing human voice comes from within it:

"Whoever finds this, I don't have long. The furniture, it... it... came alive somehow. My own bed... tried to smother me. My wardrobe... I think it broke my ribs. I can't... breathe. I know who's responsible. It has to be Shurnas, that bastard..." The voice trails off into wet, hacking coughs and then silence.

### TREASURE

The chest contains Uvalius's most valued item: a *staff of the artisan* (see Appendix). The chest is trapped with a poison needle.

### POISON NEEDLE

*Mechanical trap*

A poisoned needle is hidden within the chest's lock. Opening the chest without the proper key (on Uvalius's necklace) causes the needle to spring out, delivering a dose of poison.

When the trap is triggered, the needle extends 3 inches straight out from the lock. A creature within range takes 1 piercing damage and 11 (2d10) poison damage and must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 1 hour.

**Prevention.** A successful DC 20 Intelligence (Investigation) check allows a PC to deduce the trap's presence from alterations made to the lock to accommodate the needle. A successful DC 15 Dexterity check using thieves' tools disarms the trap, removing the needle from the lock. Unsuccessfully attempting to pick the lock triggers the trap.

## Back to the Hedgehog

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The PCs likely head back to the Hedgehog to collect their reward(s) and inform Ovras and Friganis of what they found out.

If the PCs tell an NPC about what they heard, that NPC recalls hearing about a deep, abiding hatred held against Uvalius by a person named Shurnas Kradore.

### DETAILS OF THE RELATIONSHIP

The NPC (or a combination of NPCs) relate the following details:

- Uvalius and Shurnas were at school together many years ago.
- Shurnas has hated Uvalius for decades for some slight from their school days.
- Uvalius was rather baffled by the whole thing.
- Recently things got worse.
- Anonymous letters arrived at the Collegium, accusing Uvalius of all manner of misdeeds.
- Uvalius's Collegium projects began to go wrong: a device would be fine in the evening and the next morning it'd be smashing into bits, records and notes would go missing or be burned.
- Uvalius started to fear for his future.
- Shurnas's surname is Kradore, and he's a geomancer.
- Shurnas lives in a carefully constructed magical laboratory in the Margreve Forest near a ley line node.

Ovras and Friganis become angry at the news about Shurnas, insisting that "something ought to be done about him." While they can't offer the PCs further monetary reward, they insinuate that if something should happen to the geomancer they'd not lift a finger to protest if whoever made that thing happen also made off with all the scoundrel's stuff.

Nevertheless, the PCs can refuse this further commission without repercussion. If they do, the adventure ends here.

# PART THREE: THE GEOMANCER'S LAIR

Traveling to Shurnas's grotto is uneventful as it's in the eaves of the Margreve Forest, not terribly far off the road. Any of the NPCs can give directions.

All the PCs need do is leave via the Puffing Bridge and head north and east along the road to Morgau and Doresh. Provided the PCs leave at dawn, after half a day's travel, they should see an old stone signpost. The post marks where an old road leads off the main thoroughfare into the woods, eventually ending at Shurnas's grotto in the early evening.

The path follows a crisp, cold stream. As the stream tumbles down over smooth stones, the path climbs into the forested hills, both eventually leading into an arched cavern mouth in a stony cliff face.

The grotto Shurnas has claimed was once a temple and stronghold dedicated to forest gods (in the *Midgard* setting,

Yarila and Porevit). The complex is long deserted by the elves who built it. Its site, nearly atop a ley line, makes it ideal for his studies.

**Light.** Natural areas of the lair (Areas 1–4) are not illuminated. All other areas of the cave are lit by magical braziers that light themselves when a living creature enters that area.

**Dimensions.** Unless otherwise noted, the ceilings are 10 feet high.

**Worked Stone.** Areas 5–10 are carved from the granite bedrock. A PC proficient with mason's tools or who has mining in their history automatically knows someone was mining these caverns. If such a PC succeeds a DC 12 Intelligence check using the tools, they see traces of silver ore.

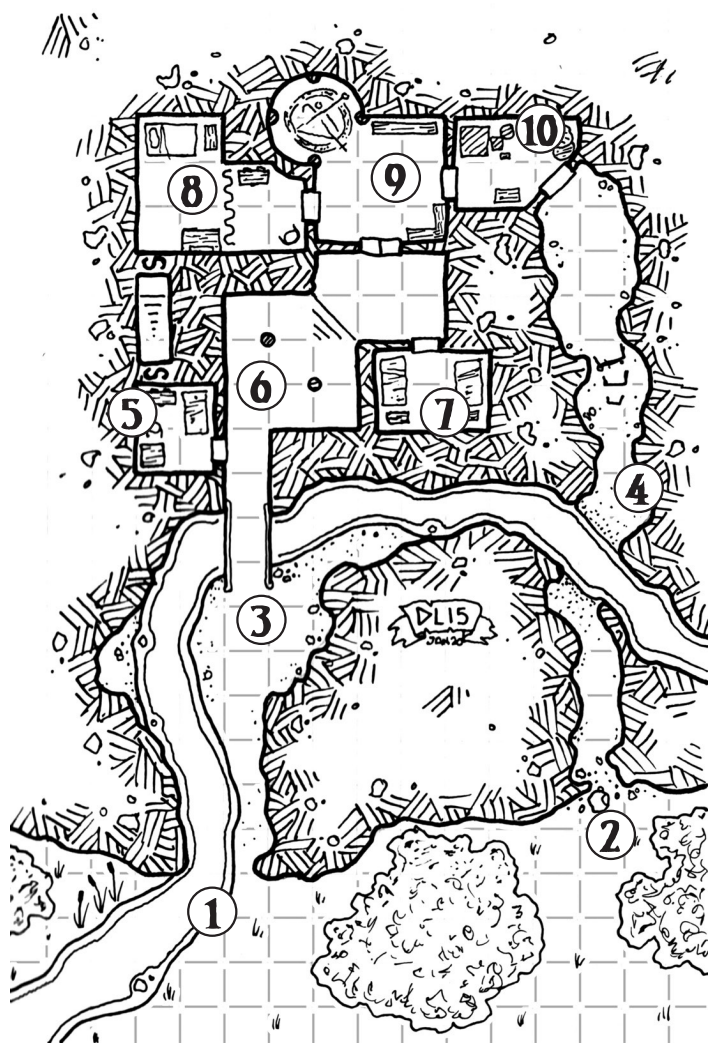
**Doors.** Unless otherwise noted, doors are closed, unlocked, and made of solid oak bound with iron hammered into leafy, twisting vines.

## 1. WAY IN

The path and stream issue from a cave opening 10 feet wide and 15 feet high. The cave mouth is carved into a stone arch resembling trees, branches twisting and intertwined. The carving is weathered, clearly centuries old.

## 2. BACK WAY IN

This portal is concealed by a pile of stony rubble covered by brambles and trailing vines. A passive Nature or Perception of 14 or higher notices something odd about the pile, a vague door shape. A successful DC 14 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals the mechanism to open the door—pushing one of the stones inward causes the door to swing outward with a leafy rustle.



## MAGICAL BRAZIER

Each brazier is made of cunningly wrought black iron hammered into leafy vines supporting a shallow black iron bowl. In the bottom of each bowl is a mote of elemental radiance that flares to life when a living creature comes within 10 feet of it and remains lit until the creature leaves the room or touches the brazier and wills it to extinguish itself.

A brazier sheds bright light for 10 feet and dim light for 10 feet beyond that.

A PC can push over a brazier with a successful DC 12 Strength check, scattering its radiance in a 15-foot cone. Each creature in the cone must make a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw, taking 2d6 radiant damage on a failed save or half as much damage on a successful one.

MAP: [CLICK HERE TO DOWNLOAD THIS MAP FOR YOUR VIRTUAL TABLE TOP.](#)

### 3. STONE BRIDGE

The entrance passage widens into a natural, irregular cavern. The stream issues from a hole in the east wall, gurgles along the north wall, curves around the west wall, then splashes out the cave mouth to the south. The hole in the east wall is too small for a creature larger than Tiny to navigate, and the stream completely fills it.

A stone bridge leaps over the stream, leading into an arched doorway in the cavern's north wall. The bridge is carved in the same style as the cave's mouth, roots and branches intertwined.

#### DEVELOPMENTS

**Halt! Who Goes There?** If the PCs make loud noises in this area, the apprentice in Area 5 might hear them. If the PCs are simply heedless, making no effort to be stealthy, make a Wisdom (Perception) check for Arius (+0). If the PCs make a lot of noise, like fighting or shouting, Arius automatically hears them and comes to investigate. See Area 5 for Arius's description and the Appendix for a stat block.

**Magical Bell.** The north end of the bridge has an audible alarm spell cast on it that sounds a bell in Area 5.

#### CREATURES

**Splish Splash.** A **water elemental** lives under the bridge. It is trained to attack anyone who sets foot on the bridge or tries to cross the stream and who isn't accompanied by Arius or Shurnas. It fights to the death.

**What's All This Then?** If Arius comes to investigate the sound of the PCs fighting the water elemental, he peers out from the door to his room rather than walking out. He's frightened of the elemental and wants to see which way the battle goes before revealing himself.

### 4. BACK PASSAGE

A long, narrow tunnel leads north to south. The walls and floor are slick and damp. The passage smells of mold and wet stone.

About 20 feet north of the concealed door (Area 2), the stream cuts across the tunnel, issuing from the east wall and disappearing into the west. The stream tunnel is too small for a creature larger than Tiny to navigate and is filled with water.

Halfway between the stream and the door leading to Area 10, a set of steps has been roughly cut into the stone. A yellowish slime coats everything in the area at the top of the stairs.

#### DEVELOPMENTS

**Clear & Cold.** The stream's water is clear and icy cold. A PC entering the stream must succeed a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or take a level of exhaustion. The water isn't very deep. A Medium creature can wade across it without difficulty (aside from the Constitution saving throw), but a Small or smaller creature would have to swim it. A PC swimming the stream or falling into it makes the saving throw with disadvantage.

**Steps.** The slimy stairs can be treacherous. A PC traversing them must succeed a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw or fall prone at the bottom of the steps. A PC running up or down them makes the save with disadvantage and on a failure not only falls prone but also take 1d6 bludgeoning damage from the fall.

**Locked Door.** The door to Area 10 is locked and stuck. A successful DC 12 Dexterity check made with thieves' tools opens the lock, but the door remains stuck as the wood is swollen from water. A successful DC 15 Strength check opens the door, though opening the door makes a loud creaking noise audible in Areas 9 and 10.

#### CREATURES

The area north of the stairs contains two **ochre jellies**. The creatures cling to the cavern ceiling, 10 feet above a Medium creature's head. A PC discovers the jellies with a successful DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) check. If the character specifically states they're examining the ceiling, they automatically spot the jellies.

**Marching Order.** Make sure you establish marching order because when a living creature approaches the top of the stairs the jellies drop off the ceiling onto the lead character. If the lead character didn't spot the jellies, this is the jellies' surprise round.

**Combat.** The jellies are famished and attack until slain.

### 5. APPRENTICE'S QUARTERS

The door to this chamber is ajar. Inside is a desk, chair, single bed, and a chest. Behind the chest is a magic brazier. Once the quarters for the guards who protected the temple, now this is the room that Shurnas Kradore has assigned to his sole apprentice, a young human named Arius Azafaris (see Appendix for stat block).

Arius is short and tends toward the flabby. Rather than traditional wizarding robes, he wears tunic and trousers made of hard-wearing wool and canvas in muted tones. He looks more like a peasant farmer than a wizard's pupil.

## DEVELOPMENT: ARIUS AZAFARIS

What Arius Knows. The apprentice knows the following:

- There's a secret door in his room that leads to Shurnas's bedroom (Area 8).
- There's a back way out (Area 4 via Area 10), and Shurnas says never to use it but doesn't say why.
- Shurnas is a mean old bastard who constantly insults and belittles him.
- The lair is built on a ley line.
- Shurnas knows the circle in the laboratory (Area 9) inside and out.
- Arius is the third son of a mercantile family and has few prospects if he can't succeed as a wizard.
- "I came here to learn magic, not dust and mop. If I'd wanted to be a janitor, I'd have stayed at home!"
- A few days ago, Shurnas conducted a long ritual in the circle. When he finished, Arius heard him mutter, "That'll teach that smug Uvalius who the real wizard is."

**Appeal to Ambition.** If the PCs offer to help Arius increase his powers, he happily helps them navigate the lair and warns them about the living wicks in Area 9.

**Shurnas's Achilles Heel.** If the PCs promise to help Arius's powers and status at Shurnas's expense, he tells the PCs how to defeat the geomancer: "If you hit him hard and fast, he'll give up. He's a coward at heart."

## TREASURE

Arius has a few treasures tucked into a sock and hidden in the bottom of his trunk:

- Coins totaling 23 cp, 56 sp, and 12 gp.
- A gold locket with a picture of his mother worth 25 gp.
- A *wand of binding*.

**Secret Door.** Creatures with a passive Perception of 15 or higher spot the outline of the secret door behind Arius's trunk. A successful DC 14 Intelligence (Investigation) check (or asking Arius) reveals how it works: pushing on a section of wall to the right of the door causes it to swing inward. The passage beyond leads to Shurnas's quarters (Area 8).

## 6. RECEPTION AREA

Two stone columns, carved to resemble trees with outspread branches, support the vaulted ceiling of this ornately decorated room. The walls are covered in colorful tile mosaics depicting unicorns shepherded by elves. A set of wide stairs leads to the other half of the room. Bronze double doors, decorated with etchings of trees and stars, lead to the north, and a wooden door leads south.

## ROLEPLAYING ARIUS

When Arius first meets the PCs, he holds up his hands as a sign he's no threat to them, and he asks them what they want. He is curt and proud, for some of Shurnas's arrogance has rubbed off on him. To wizards, he is fawning and obsequious. To others, he is haughty and demanding. Arius holds no love for Shurnas. The geomancer is demanding, treating his apprentice like a menial servant, and Arius thinks he should be getting more training in the arcane arts.

The apprentice has no qualms about hanging Shurnas out to dry. If the PCs tell him Shurnas is guilty, Arius believes them.

## 7. GUEST QUARTERS

When this place was a temple, priests slept here. Now the room is kept as quarters for Shurnas's guests. Given Shurnas's demeanor, this room is seldom used.

Two small beds are neatly made up, and wooden chests rest at the foot of each bed.

## TREASURE

The eastern chest has a false bottom. Searching the chest reveals the extra space. Inside is a leather pouch containing 6 emeralds, each worth 100 gp.

## 8. SHURNAS'S QUARTERS

A wooden door inlaid with platinum threads, depicting a single tree, roots and branches spread wide, leads to an opulent chamber bisected by a heavy tapestry curtain. Braziers provide light and keep the chilly damp at bay. At the foot of an opulent canopied bed is a trunk, and a wardrobe is set against the south wall.

## DEVELOPMENTS

**Secret Door.** Creatures with a passive Perception of 15 or higher spot the outline of the secret door in the south wall of Shurnas's bedchamber. A successful DC 14 Intelligence (Investigation) check (or asking either Arius or Shurnas) reveals how it works: pushing on a section of wall to the right of the door causes it to swing inward. The passage beyond leads to Arius's quarters (Area 5).

**Furniture.** The trunk contains undergarments and socks. The wardrobe contains other clothes, from fine doublets and breeches to heavily embroidered wizard robes.

## TREASURE

**Secret Compartment.** The wardrobe has a false back. Hidden behind it is Shurnas's special treasure: a *cloak of the bat*. A PC who knocks on the wardrobe as part of searching automatically discovers the secret compartment, which is neither locked nor trapped. Otherwise a PC must succeed on a DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) check to notice the difference in depth between inside and outside.

## ROLEPLAYING SHURNAS

Shurnas is arrogant and disdainful, convinced he's smarter than anyone around him and that everyone is working to keep him down. He and Uvalius were boyhood friends but fell out some years ago when they were studying magic. Shurnas is fascinated by ley lines and how they work, and when he's at the grotto (and awake), he is always in the laboratory, practicing his geomancy. Sometimes he even remembers to instruct his apprentice.

## 9. MAGIC LABORATORY

This is the room where Shurnas conducts his magical experiments. In the center of the laboratory is a stone table, atop which is a variety of brass and silver instruments, some of which hold down the corners of a large map of the elemental planes. A bookcase covers the north wall, and another fills the southeast corner. Each is stuffed with books and scrolls.

In the northwest corner, a wide archway leads to a hemispherical room. On the floor of the hemisphere is etched a magic circle, and surrounding the circle are four large candles that flicker with blue flame. The candles are vaguely shaped like crouching humanoids. A leather satchel hangs from a hook on the wall beyond the magic circle.

In the center of the circle is a tall, gaunt, bald man with a nose like the prow of a warship, jutting over a magnificent moustache, pouting lips, and a carefully sculpted goatee.

### DEVELOPMENT: SHURNAS KRADORE

If the PCs question him, Shurnas admits to manipulating the ley line that runs through his laboratory in order to sabotage Uvalius's constructs. He denies any intent to kill the clockwork mage however. He only wanted to overload the clockwork creations, to burn them out and stop them from working.

If the PCs demand Shurnas accompany them back to the city to face the consequences for Uvalius's death, he laughs at them and refuses. Feel free to use some of the following lines:

- "Who's going to believe you? A bunch of dirty peasant adventurers?"
- "He had it coming! I was always a better wizard than him!"
- "I should have been the one who got the assistant lecturer's chair!"
- "I suppose the Collegium sent you to ruin me. Those bastards were always jealous of my work."

### DEVELOPMENTS

**The Magic Circle.** A PC can make an Intelligence (Arcana) check to figure out what the magic circle is supposed to do. In order to make this check, the PC must spend at least 10 minutes studying the circle.

Even with the command words (and Shurnas won't willingly volunteer this information), a PC can only use the powers in the table on a successful Intelligence (Arcana) check, after that initial check to figure out how it all works in the first place. In other words, if a PC wants to use it to *teleport* somewhere, they must discover the command word for that function and make a DC 16 Intelligence (Arcana) check while speaking the command word.

If the check is failed by 2 or less, the circle functions but in an unexpected way. If a PC uses it to teleport, they end up in the wrong place.

This is how Shurnas went wrong: he failed to properly use the circle to manipulate the ley line node under Uvalius's house. Rather than simply causing the clockwork mage's creations to stop working, he sent them into overdrive.

### MAGIC CIRCLE KNOWLEDGE TABLE

Check Result	Knowledge Gained
12	The circle is bisected by a ley line.
14	It can manipulate other nodes anywhere along that ley line.
16	It can <i>teleport</i> a creature using it to somewhere on the same plane of existence.
18	It can conjure elementals from the Planes of Fire and Earth.
20	It has a sequence of command words to activate its <i>conjuring</i> and <i>teleport</i> functions.

**Combat.** When combat begins, four **living wicks** (see *Tome of Beasts*) leap from the braziers and attack the PCs. Each living wick has been burning for 14 days, so each has only 14 hp. They fight to the death.

**Tactics.** See Appendix for Shurnas's stat block. Shurnas is not interested in killing the PCs. He just wants to drive them away. But if they back him into a corner, he doesn't hesitate to defend himself with deadly force. He remains inside the magic circle unless forcibly removed from it or he surrenders.

Shurnas has a habit of casting *mage armor* on himself as soon as he finishes his morning ablutions, so he always has AC 16.

**Ouch! Quit it!** When Shurnas is reduced to 20 hp or fewer, he uses the Disengage action (if necessary) and orders the living wicks to charge into the PCs, heedless of opportunity attacks, and use their Consume Self ability. If Shurnas can't get far enough away to avoid the area of effect, he doesn't choose this option.

**I Give Up!** When Shurnas is reduced to 10 hp or fewer, he grabs his satchel from the wall and uses his action to trigger the circle's *teleportation* ability, which leads to his family's estate in the city. If he can't do that, he surrenders (see below).

Arius absolutely refuses to participate in the battle, instead hiding under the table with his hands over his ears.

**Shurnas Surrenders.** If Shurnas surrenders, he tries to bargain for his life and freedom. He offers the magic items in the laboratory first, reserving his *cloak of the bat* (found in Area 8) for last. In exchange, he promises to flee to a faraway city, never to trouble anyone again. If the PCs refuse to be bribed, he feigns submission and agrees to accompany them back to the city to face justice (see Conclusion).

## TREASURE

Shurnas's satchel contains two *potions of healing*, a *scroll of invisibility*, two *scrolls of mage armor*, 250 gp, and a change of clothes.

Interspersed with the books and scrolls on the bookshelves are several valuable and magical treasures:

- *Eviar's Book of Spellcasting* (see Appendix).
- *Mystical Birds of the East* (500 gp).
- *Caring for and Breeding Owlbears* (150 gp).
- *The Traveler's Guide to Magical Fungi* (50 gp).
- *99 Tricks for Counterspelling* (see Appendix).
- *Scrolls of conjure minor elemental, protection from evil and good, and hold monster.*
- Spell components to taste.
- A map either leading toward or showing a new adventure location for the PCs to explore! The exact nature of this adventure hook is up to you.
- Shurnas's spellbooks (3), which contain the spells in his stat block plus *arcane lock, burning hands, conjure minor elemental, disguise self, glyph of warding, hold monster, protection from evil and good, rope trick, and sleep*. Each spellbook is protected by a *glyph of warding*.

## GLYPH OF WARDING

*Magical trap*

A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check notices the arcane symbol traced on the book's cover. A successful DC 12 Intelligence (Arcana) check reveals it to be a dangerous *glyph of warding* designed to put living creatures in the immediate area into a magical slumber.

When a living creature other than Shurnas touches the book, each creature within 10 feet of the book is targeted by a *sleep* spell capable of rendering 28 hp asleep.

**Prevention.** A *dispel magic* spell safely removes the glyph. Alternatively, if a PC proficient in Arcana succeeds a DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check, they disrupt the magic, suppressing it for 1 hour. On a failure, the trap triggers.

## 10. KITCHEN & STOREROOM

Boxes, crates, and barrels are stacked haphazardly around the walls. There's a cast-iron cooking range in the northeast corner, a sink against the south wall, a wooden icebox next to the sink, and doors in the west wall and southeast corner.

## DEVELOPMENTS

**Exploited Elementals.** Bound minor elementals heat the range and keep the icebox cold. Opening the door of either apparatus reveals the elemental, which laments its captivity and complains about its treatment (provided one of the PCs speaks enough Primordial to understand it, that is).

The elementals can't leave their prisons unless Shurnas is dead, and if they can leave their prisons, they're not interested in fighting the PCs. They just want to get out of the grotto.

**Locked Door.** The door to Area 4 is locked and stuck. A successful DC 12 Dexterity check made with thieves' tools opens the lock, but the door remains stuck as the wood is swollen with damp. A successful DC 15 Strength check opens the door, though opening the door makes a loud creaking noise audible in Areas 4 and 9.

## TREASURE

There is no monetary treasure, but there's enough fresh food in this room to cook a fine meal. In addition, there's enough preserved food to make 12 rations.

## Conclusion

There are various ways this adventure can conclude. If the PCs didn't care to pursue the adventure beyond Part 2, the adventure ended there.

**Kill 'Em All.** If the PCs just kill everyone, they of course can loot the lair to their hearts' content. When they return to the Hedgehog and Ovras and Friganis, those worthies will be disappointed that Shurnas couldn't face the majesty of the law but consider the matter settled.

**Bring to Justice.** If the PCs capture Shurnas, any promise he makes them is false. He has no intention of being brought to justice. The PCs may escort him to the city and turn him over to the authorities, but he soon leverages his family's connections in high places to escape custody and hole up in his family's estate. He'll never receive any kind of trial. From the estate, he'll plot the PCs' downfall, returning later to plague their every footstep.

**What About Arius?** If Arius survives, he leaves Shurnas's service. If a PC wizard showed skill at magic and treated the apprentice with kindness (or at least something better than sneering contempt), the lad asks to become that PC's apprentice.

# APPENDIX

New items and NPCs introduced in this adventure are detailed below.

## New Magic Items

These items can be found in Uvalius's house.

### BROOM OF SWEEPING

*Wondrous item, common*

As an action, you can speak the broom's command word and give it short instructions consisting of a few words (for example, "sweep the kitchen" or "make guests feel at home.") The broom performs those functions until you use another action to deactivate it.

### COMFY SLIPPERS

*Wondrous item, common*

While wearing the slippers, your feet feel warm and comfortable, no matter what the ambient temperature.

### STAFF OF THE ARTISAN

*Staff, rare*

*(requires attunement)*

While holding this staff, you can use an action to cast the mending spell. Additionally, you can use an action to expend 1 or more of its 10 charges to cast one of the following spells from it, using your spell save DC or DC 14, whichever is higher: *floating disk* (1 charge), *fabricate* (3 charges).

In addition, you can use an action to expend 2 charges to conjure an inanimate object in your hand or on the ground in an unoccupied space that you can see within 10 feet of you. This object can be no larger than 3 feet on a side and weigh no more than 10 pounds, and its form must be that of a nonmagical object that you have seen. The object is visibly magical, radiating dim light out to 5 feet. The object disappears after 1 hour, when you use this feature again, or if it takes or deals any damage.

The staff regains 1d8 + 2 charges each day at dawn and can also be used as a magic quarterstaff. If you expend the last charge, roll a d20. On a 1, the staff vanishes in a flash of light, lost forever.

## Magic Books

The books referenced in Area 9 aren't exactly magic items, but they do have a benefit for those who read them. In order to gain the benefit, a PC must study the book every day for 10 days. This study can take place during long rests. A book's effects wear off after 2d10 days. The books can be re-read any number of times.

### EVIAR'S BOOK OF SPELLCASTING

*Wondrous item, rare*

A weighty tome full of detailed notes about casting arcane spells, this book increases your knowledge of magical theory. While its knowledge is fresh, you double your proficiency bonus when you make Intelligence (Arcana) checks.

### 99 TRICKS FOR COUNTERSPELLING

*Wondrous item, rare*

Letters inscribed on sheets of beaten bronze kept within lead slabs, this book helps you counter spells cast by other people. While the book's knowledge is fresh, when you must make an ability check as part of casting *counterspell*, you have advantage on that check.



# Monsters & NPCs

Stat blocks for the adventure are detailed below.

## ARIUS AZAFARIS

*Medium humanoid (human), neutral evil*

**Armor Class** 10

**Hit Points** 9 (2d8)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	15 (+3)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

**Skills** Arcana +5, History +5

**Senses** passive Perception 10

**Languages** Common

**Challenge** 1/4 (50 XP)

**Spellcasting.** Arius is a 1st-level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). He has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *light, mending, prestidigitation*

1st level (2 slots): *alarm, protection from evil and good, shield*

### ACTIONS

**Dagger.** *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 2 (1d4) piercing damage.

## SHURNAS KRADORE

*Medium humanoid, lawful evil*

**Armor Class** 13 (16 with *mage armor*)

**Hit Points** 39 (6d8 + 12)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)

**Saving Throws** Int +5, Wis +3

**Skills** Arcana +5, Deception +2, Insight +3, Stealth +5

**Senses** passive Perception 11

**Languages** Common, Draconic, Infernal, Primordial

**Challenge** 4 (1,100 XP)

**Potent Cantrip.** When Shurnas casts a cantrip that causes damage and misses or the target succeeds on its saving throw, the target still takes half the cantrip's damage but suffers no other effect.

**Sculpt Spells.** When Shurnas casts an evocation spell that affects other creatures that he can see, he can choose a number of them equal to 1 + the spell's level to succeed on their saving throws against the spell. Those creatures take no damage if they would normally take half damage from the spell.

**Spellcasting.** Shurnas is a 6th-level spellcaster who uses Intelligence as his spellcasting ability (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). Shurnas has the following spells prepared from the wizard spell list:

Cantrips (at will): *fire bolt, prestidigitation, ray of frost, shocking grasp*

1st level (4 slots): *fog cloud, magic missile, shield, thunderwave*

2nd level (3 slots): *invisibility, misty step, scorching ray*

3rd level (3 slots): *counterspell, dispel magic, fireball*

### ACTIONS

**Dagger.** *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. or ranged 20 ft./60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) piercing damage.

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