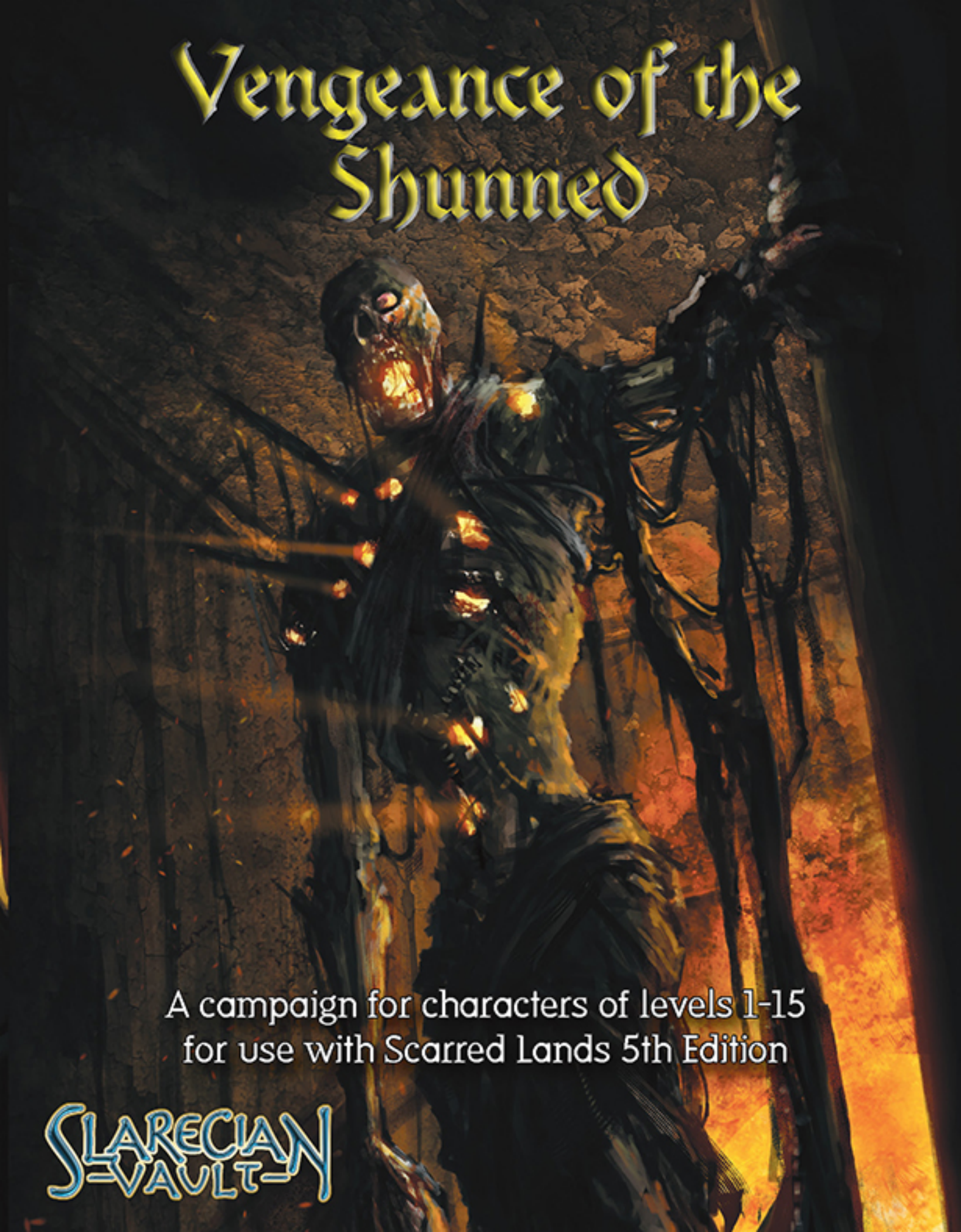
Vengeance of the Shunned



A campaign for characters of levels 1-15
for use with Scarred Lands 5th Edition

Slarecian Vault

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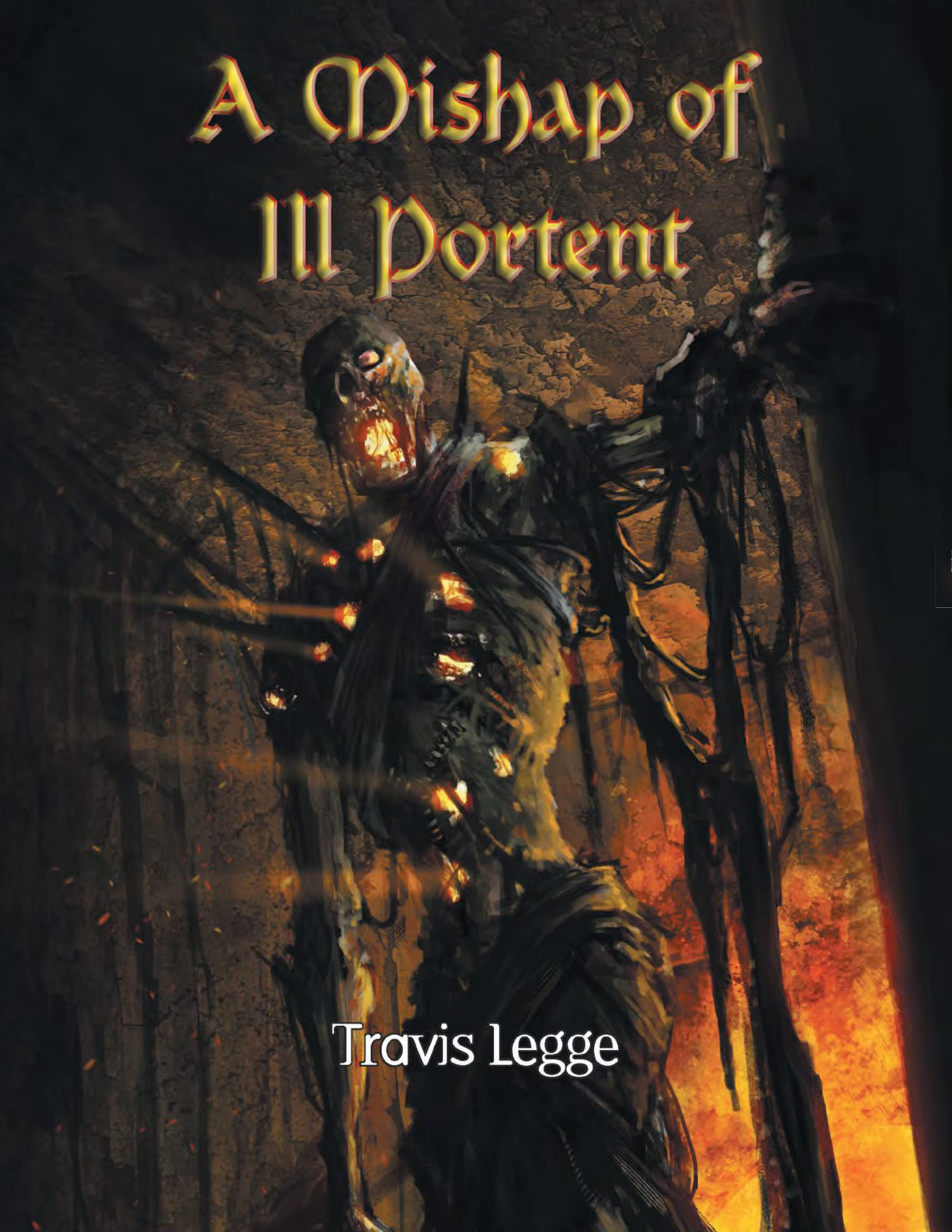
A Mishap of Ill Portent



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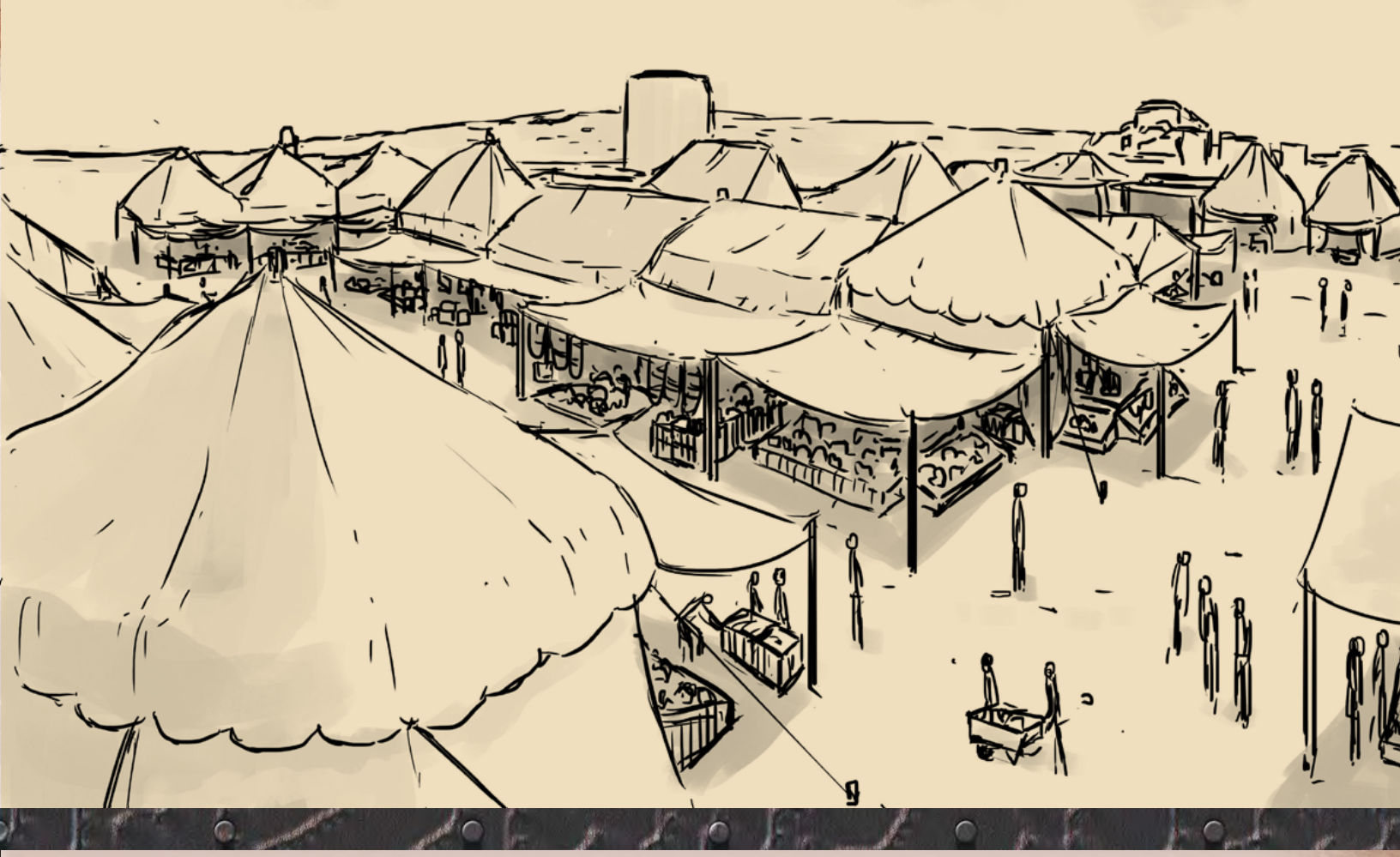


INTRODUCTION

A Mishap of Ill Portent is an adventure designed for four to six characters of 1st level, though it can be easily modified for larger or smaller groups, or a group of average party level (or APL) as high as 4th level. Guidelines are included with each encounter for increasing the difficulty of opposition to suit higher APL groups.

This adventure is set in the small village of Durgan's Rest, named for a dwarven hero of the Divine War, who retired here to begin a life of farming after the fighting ended. Though Durgan is nearly a century dead, the village that bears his name is a thriving agricultural community of surprisingly cosmopolitan composition. Durgan's Rest is also home to an elderly Orc wizard named Tsendur, who holds in his possession a relic that has the power to change the face of Scarn.

SYNOPSIS

While the characters are in the marketplace of Durgan's Rest, a thunderous boom interrupts the peaceful commerce. A large plume of smoke rises from the outskirts of town, and the locals rightly determine that the source of the blast must be the home of Tsendur. The party is tasked with discovering the nature of the explosion, helping Tsendur, should he need it, and preventing any danger from making its way to the village proper. In investigating the incident, the party discovers that something terrible and powerful has been stolen from the old wizard. This revelation sets off a chain of events that threatens to unleash the power of a long dead Titan and threaten every life on Ghelspad.

Background

Tsendur is a venerable orc, having aged into his sixties. He has lived in Durgan's Rest most of his adult life, on a homestead inherited from his uncle. Prior to assuming control of the homestead, Tsendur spent his youth studying magic, and spent a brief time adventuring. The nomadic life did not suit the Orc, who preferred to "sleep under the same stars each night so that he may know them."

When Tsendur inherited the home, he also inherited a small reliquary, called *Drendari's deedbox*, which his uncle had protected for his whole life. This reliquary had been in the possession of Tsendur's family since they came to Durgan's Rest and was entrusted to them to protect by Durgan himself. The diaries of his forebears indicated that the reliquary was not to be opened, but Tsendur's curiosity was sufficient to overcome the decades old edict. He opened the deedbox to discover that it contained a powerful magical clasp, and the interior of the reliquary was filled with sigils and symbols designed to contain the item's power while preventing scrying. Taking rubbings of the item and the sigils, and returning the reliquary to its sealed state, Tsendur journeyed to Bridged City to consult the archives at the Academy of Magic and Engineering. During this research, he discovered that the item was likely the *Clasp of Vergren*, a relic owned by the Sire of Sorcery, the Titan Mesos. Unsure of what to do with this knowledge, and stunned with the responsibility of its charge, Tsendur returned to his home. Unfortunately, he did not know the danger that awaited him.

When Tsendur opened the reliquary, the power of the Clasp was no longer concealed. Maghiel, a wizard and former ally of Durgan's during the Divine War, detected the Clasp's magic and was able to divine its location. Making her way from Hollowfaust to Durgan's Rest, Maghiel descended upon Tsendur's home with furious violence, intent on stealing the Clasp.

Preparation

Text included in a plain box should be read aloud or paraphrased for the players. Sidebars and other shaded text are provided, where applicable, to call attention to important points for the GM to consider and should not be read aloud. Creature and NPC names are provided in bold text where they appear in the adventure, and their stat blocks are provided in **Book 11: Peril Primer.**

Involving the PCs

This adventure assumes that the player characters are in the village of Durgan's Rest when Maghiel attacks Tsendur's home. The party hears and sees the explosion from the battle and either choose to investigate on their own or are approached by the village authorities to investigate. Should financial motivation be needed, the village sheriff can offer 15 gold per person for the party to go see what is going on at the property, as she and her guards are needed to secure the city and prevent a panic.

Mesos' Bane

The moment the explosion to the north occurs, there is a magical surge that can be felt by any creature with the ability to cast arcane spells. From this moment forward, any character within 100 miles of the *Clasp of Vergren* who casts an arcane spell using a bard, sorcerer, warlock, or wizard spell slot must roll 1d6 and consult the following chart.

Table: Mesos' Bane

D6	Bane
1	**Bane of Heat:** You generate heat when you cast an arcane spell. You must make a **Constitution saving throw** against your own spell save DC or suffer 1 point of fire damage. For 2 rounds per level of the spell you cast (one round for a cantrip), you have advantage on saving throws against cold spells or effects, as well as resistance to cold damage. However, due to your discomfort, you also have disadvantage on **Strength** and **Dexterity** checks during that time.
2	**Bane of Luminance:** You generate light when you cast an arcane spell. You must make a **Constitution saving throw** against your own spell save DC or suffer 1 point of radiant damage. For 2 rounds per level of the spell you cast (one round for a cantrip), your body sheds bright light in a 20-foot radius and dim light for another 20 feet. During this time, you have disadvantage on **Dexterity (Stealth)** checks (and the light might make some such checks impossible).
3	**Bane of Lightning:** You generate an aura of lightning when you cast an arcane spell. You must make a **Constitution saving throw** against your own spell save DC or suffer 1 point of lightning damage. For 2 rounds per level of the spell you cast (one round for a cantrip), you have advantage on saving throws against lightning effects, and you also have resistance to lightning damage. However, during the same period, you also have disadvantage on **Strength** and **Constitution** checks.
4	**Bane of the Mind:** You generate an aura of psychic dissonance when you cast an arcane spell. You must make a **Constitution saving throw** against your own spell save DC or suffer 1 point of psychic damage. For 2 rounds per level of the spell you cast (one round for a cantrip), you have advantage on saving throws against psychic effects, and you also have resistance to psychic damage. However, during the same period, you also have disadvantage on **Intelligence** and **Wisdom** checks.
5-6	**No effect.** Mesos' Bane does not flare up for you any more than normal.

The area affected by this magical surge expands by 100 miles per day that the *Clasp of Vergren* is outside of the reliquary. This effect will blanket the continent of Ghelspad in 26 days, regardless of where the Clasp is.

Durgan's Rest

The action of this adventure begins in Durgan's Rest, a small village at the base of the Kelder Mountains, just to the southeast of Bridged City. Though surrounded by the Spine Forest to the north, the land of Durgan's Rest is cleared and plowed for farming, and the village thrives on trading its fresh produce with the surrounding settlements.

Durgan's Rest

Small village, lawful neutral

Population: 220

Government: Democratic oligarchy (elected council rules the settlement)

Defense: 10 guards, 1 sheriff

Commerce: Farming. The open air market of Durgan's Rest is often occupied by traders from Bridged City, members of the Vagabonds, Orc nomads from deeper into the Plains of Lede, and occasional visitors from Veshian settlements in the Kelder Steppes.

Organizations: None formal. A few residents consider themselves friends to the Vagabonds, and more than one retiree of the Vigils of Vesh resides here.

Notable NPCs

Sheriff Isi (F NG manticora **veteran**) Isi is just trying to preserve the calm nature of the village and doesn't much care how that is achieved. Just as likely to drag a few rowdy folks to the village limits to "have it out" as she is to arrest anybody. Wants things calm. Well-liked.

Tsendur (N orc **mage**) well-liked, somewhat reclusive, but regarded as kind and generous by the townsfolk.

Farmer-Merchants (20, **commoners**, mostly LN, a few NG. Mix of human, dwarf, and orc) These represent the farmers who have their stands up at any given time in the open air market at Durgan's Rest. These folks are generally pleasant and good natured simple folk trying to get by. They don't like noise, trouble, or anything else that will spook the buyers and slow down business.

The SRD

Please note: some NPC stat blocks found in Vengeance of the Shunned are drawn from the 5.1 SRD and are not included in **Book 11: Peril Primer** due to space concerns. These can be found free online at https://media.wizards.com/2016/downloads/DND/SRD-OGL_V5.1.pdf. For Scarred Lands specific substitutes see **People of Ghelspad** available at **Slarecian Vault**.

Chapter One: Tsendur's Homestead

Tsendur's homestead sits in a two acre clearing on the northern end of the village. Bordered by the tree line of the Spine Forest on the north, east, and west, the only clear entry to the property is from the south. As the party approaches, read the following:

As you approach the northern edge of the village, you see several townsfolk standing in the street, looking toward the source of the ominous blast. As Tsendur's property comes into view, the severity of the destruction is clear. The single floor, wooden cottage, is on fire. The three story wooden tower attached to the east end of the cottage is also on fire and is missing most of its southern wall. A bucket lies on its side about 10 feet in front of the door.

While the structure is largely intact as the characters first come to the scene, the fire is quickly spreading.

Upon approaching the property, a nearby resident (M human **commoner**) shouts out a warning: "Something grabbed Jasper!"

A successful **DC 10 Charisma (Persuasion)** check will calm the resident down and allows him to explain that he, Jasper, and a couple of the other neighbors had started a bucket brigade to fight the fire. As Jasper ran up to the

house with his bucket, some awful creature reached out and grabbed him. Jasper struggled briefly before being pulled into the house. Characters who succeed on a **DC 14 Wisdom (Perception)** check or have a passive Perception score of 14 or higher, notice shadowy forms moving inside the building.

APPROACHING THE HOUSE

All areas of the house are on fire when the characters arrive. The interior of the building is lightly obscured and is considered difficult terrain. Anyone entering the house must succeed on a **DC 12 Constitution saving throw** or suffer a level of exhaustion from smoke inhalation. This threat persists for up to 10 minutes after the fire is extinguished, and the saving throw must be repeated every 30 seconds (six rounds) the creature remains in the home.

PUTTING OUT THE FIRE

If the party resumes the bucket brigade, the fire can be extinguished at a rate of 10 square feet per minute, with an extra 5 square feet per minute for each PC who joins the bucket brigade, while the fire spreads at a rate of 5 square feet per minute. Any square that is extinguished remains so thereafter. Any square that is on fire for five minutes or more is destroyed. Any creature dumping a bucket of water on the blaze must make a **DC 10 Dexterity saving throw** to avoid being grabbed by one of the **scorch zombies** in the building, who lunge forth and try to seize the firefighters.

Magic that extinguishes flames can be used normally to assist in this process.

If the party decides to run into the burning building to fight the zombies and search for Tsendur, they may first attempt to command the crowd to continue with the bucket brigade. This requires a successful **DC 12 Charisma (Persuasion)** check. If this course of action is selected, assume that the zombies inside the building will be too busy fighting the party to grab any of the firefighters.

COMBAT IN THE FLAMES

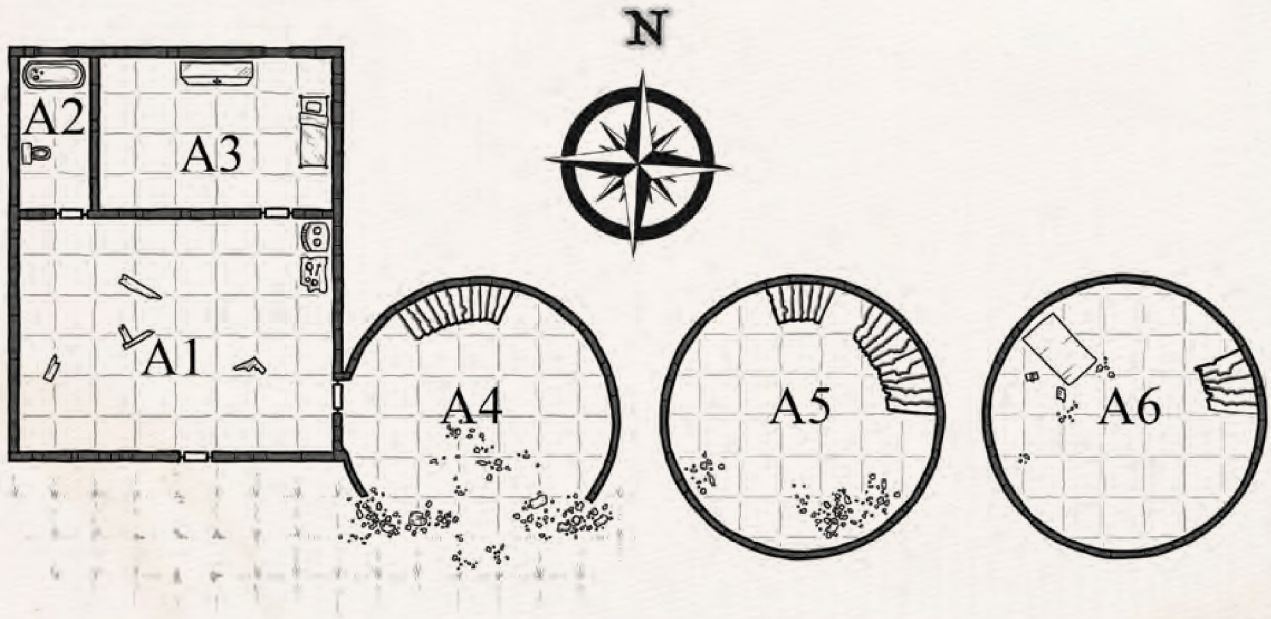
While fighting inside the burning building it is easy to accidentally set oneself on fire, especially when compounding the danger of limited visibility along with that of open flame. Any attack roll or Dexterity check or saving throw made inside the burning building that results in a 5 or lower on the die results in the creature who made the roll being burned. The unfortunate creature suffers 3 (1d6) fire damage and must succeed on a **DC 12 Dexterity saving throw** or catch fire, suffering 3 (1d6) fire damage at the end of each of their turns until they or an adjacent ally use an action to smother the flames. The Dexterity saving throw to avoid catching fire is also subject to the hazard of stumbling into more fire on a result of 5 or lower.

HOUSE MAP

The house is made up of a pair of connected structures. These structures are built from wood cut from the trees of the Spine Forest. The house has been here since shortly after the Titanswar and has been magically tended through the use of *prestidigitation*, *mending*, and other restorative magic ever since.

A1 – COMMON ROOM

This is the common room of the house. A doorway from the south hangs open, the wooden door burned and broken off. On the south east end of the room is an open wooden



door that leads to the landing in A4. North of that door is a wood burning stove and cooking supplies. Along the North wall, near the eastern corner, a closed and locked wooden door leads to A3. Near the western corner is another wooden door, this one is closed, but not locked, and leads to A2. Debris from a dining table, chairs, and a number of personal effects has been scattered across the floor to fuel the fire.

Three **scorch zombies** wander this room. They attack any creature who enters the area and fight to the death.

For strong or very strong parties, increase the number of scorch zombies in this area to the number of player characters +1

Treasure. Anyone who takes one minute and succeeds on a **DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation)** check finds a key ring amid the detritus. This key ring holds the keys to each door in the homestead, as well as the chests in A3 and A5.

A2 – Lavatory

This is the restroom of the cottage and has not yet been touched by the fires or the fighting. There is a bathtub along the north wall, which contains a handful of stones. Against the west wall sits a commode. There is a window above the commode that can be opened or closed.

Treasure. Apart from the personal grooming items in this room, there are two minor magic items present. The handful of rocks in the washtub grow hot enough to heat the tub's contents when a trigger word is uttered while touching them. The commode is also enchanted, casting *prestidigitation* on whoever sits upon it every round they remain seated, using the cleaning property of the spell.

A3 – Bedchamber

The wooden door to this room is locked. Without the key, a creature proficient with thieves' tools can pick this lock with a successful **DC 15 Dexterity check**. The lock can also be broken with a successful **DC 18 Strength (Athletics)** check. Once inside the room, the chamber is a basic bedroom with a wooden framed bed along the east wall. There is a wooden wardrobe along the north wall, next to a closed window in the northeast corner of the room. The wardrobe contains four sets of common clothes, a fine robe, and several small personal effects.

For strong or very strong parties, increase the number of scorch zombies in this area to the number of player characters +1

Treasure. Searching the room and making a successful **DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation)** check reveals a *wand of magic missiles* stashed under the pillow. There is also a spare copy of *Tsendu 's spellbok* under the bed.

A4 – Tower Floor 1

As soon as any creature enters this area, three scorch zombies tumble down the stairs, landing prone at the bottom of the staircase. They rise to their feet on their initiative and attack every living creature in the area, fighting until they are destroyed.

This area is the base of the tower building and is largely demolished. The entire south facing wall is gone. Whatever was once in this room is now shattered and scattered across the floor and the lawn in front of the gaping hole in the building. An open wooden door on the south end of the east wall leads to area A1. A set of stairs along the north wall allow travel up 15 feet to area A5, however the stairs are damaged. All the stairs in the tower are considered difficult terrain and require a successful **DC 10 Dexterity (Acrobatics)** check to safely navigate. Failure prevents upward movement on this floor and causes a fall on the floors above.

Treasure. None.

A5 – TOWER FLOOR 2

The blast that took out the south wall and the subsequent fire damage have left this floor barely standing. The majority of the actual flooring, as well as the contents of this room, have crumbled into A4. The stairs here are also severely damaged, and if a creature attempting to navigate them fails their **Dexterity (Acrobatics)** check to navigate the stairs between A5 and A6, the stairs crumble beneath them, causing them to fall to the floor of A5. Upon stepping (or landing) on the floor of A5, a creature must succeed on a **DC 10 Dexterity saving throw** or fall through the floor, suffering 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage and potentially suffering burns (see above.)

Treasure. None.

A6 – TOWER FLOOR 3

This floor contains the shattered remnants of Tsendur's laboratory. Various apparatuses, vials, papers, and beakers lie shattered around what is left of the floor. In the northwest corner of the room, an Orc's arm pokes out from beneath an overturned bookshelf.

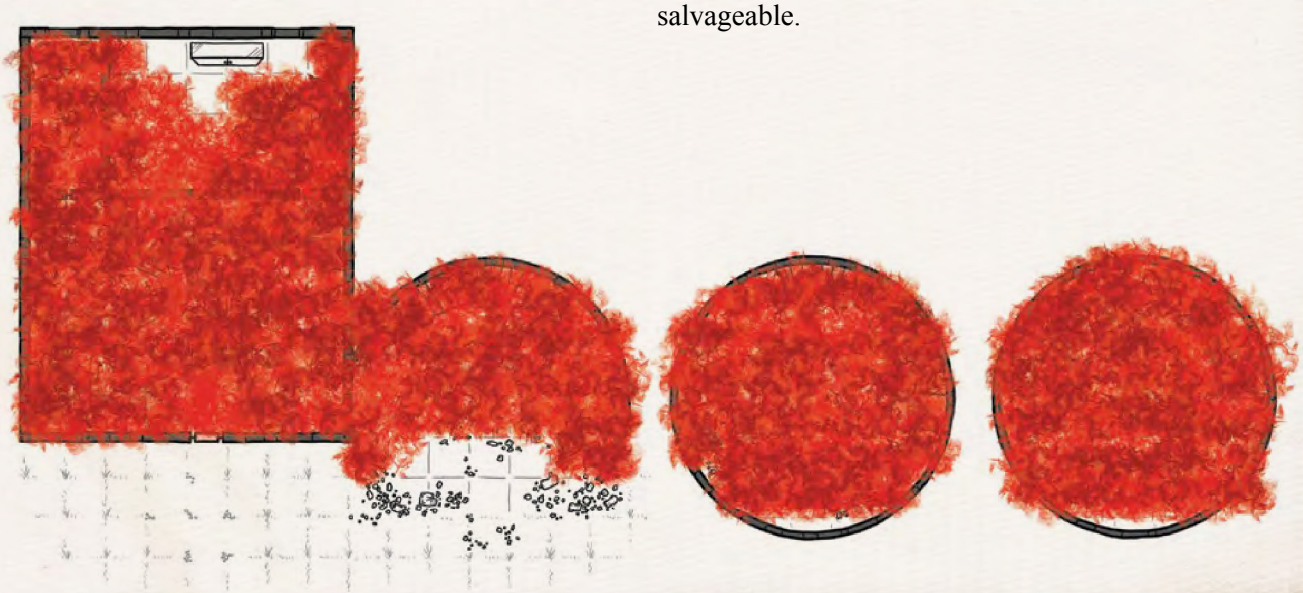
The floor here is unstable. Upon stepping (or landing) on the floor of A6, a creature must succeed on a **DC 10 Dexterity saving throw** or fall through the floor, suffering 9 (3d6) bludgeoning damage and potentially suffering burns (see above.)

Lifting the bookshelf off of Tsendur requires a successful **DC 12 Strength (Athletics)** check. Tsendur's current condition is determined by the number of rounds the party took from their first entry into the building until reaching Tsendur.

NUMBER OF ROUNDS	TSENDUR'S CONDITION
5-10	10 hp, on fire (3hp/round if untreated) 4 levels of exhaustion
11-15	1 hp, on fire (3hp/round if untreated) 5 levels of exhaustion
15-20	0 hp, 2 failed death saves, no longer on fire, 5 levels of exhaustion
21+	Dead

Treasure. Tsendur clutches his spellbook in his hands. See **Chapter Two** for a full list of what is included in *Tsendu 's spellbok . Drendari's deedbx* (see **Appendix: Magic Items**), the reliquary where Tsendur stored the Clasp, is here on this floor. It has no difficulty surviving the flames due to its immunity to damage. The reliquary can be found by spending one round looking around the floor and succeeding on a **DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation)** or **Wisdom (Perception)** check. If the tower is destroyed and the party is searching the rubble, the reliquary requires a successful **DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation)** or **Wisdom (Perception)** check to be found, though Tsendur's scorched body remains.

Unfortunately, nothing else in the laboratory is salvageable.



Chapter Two: After the Fire

Once the scorch zombies have been destroyed and the fire is put out, the party will have a chance to evaluate what has happened. There are a number of avenues by which the adventurers might piece together enough information to conduct further investigations.

Tsendur

Depending on the events of **Chapter One**, Tsendur may yet live. If he is alive, he can explain to the party that he was attacked in his home by an elven woman who was commanding the scorch zombies. The orc claims that he does not know who the woman is, but that he did recognize her and recalls seeing her in Bridged City during his recent trip. He goes on to explain that the woman stole a valuable artifact from his home. This artifact, a powerful magical relic belonging to a titan, was the cause for the trip. Tsendur will be evasive about the properties and specifics of the artifact but can be persuaded to share the information he has with a successful **DC 16 Charisma (Persuasion) check.** If the party explains the odd magic surges that they have experienced, this check may be made with advantage. If

the check is successful, Tsendur shares all the information in the "What Tsendur Knows" sidebar, below.

Tsendur does not respond well to intimidation. If a character chooses to take this route, they may make a **DC 16 Charisma (Intimidation)** check against Tsendur, but the check is made at disadvantage. Sharing the information about sudden magic surges has no impact on this check.

If Tsendur died, his body was not lost to the flames, he may be communicated with or raised normally. There are no spellcasters in town capable of doing so, but anyone from the area knows that such magic is available, if expensive, at Bridged City. The journey is 33 miles from Durgan's Rest to Bridged City. The roads are relatively well-traveled, but not especially well-guarded. Barring any mishaps, Bridged City can be reached in two days by foot at a standard travel pace. If the group travels at a fast pace and encounters no obstacles, they can make Bridged City in a day. If the PCs do not come to this course of action on their own, Sheriff Isi will recommend it.

Tsendur's Spellbook

In addition to the spells listed in Tsendur's entry in **Book 11: Peril Primer,** Tsendur kept a journal in the back of his spellbook. Within that journal is a detailed account of his recent trip to Bridged City, including the name the scholar he spoke with at the Academy of Magic and Engineering: Savila Nebega. The journal also describes Tsendur's opening of *Drendari's deedbox*, and his revelations thereafter, as detailed in the Background entry at the beginning of this adventure. Due to an incantation placed on his spellbooks, anything written in one is magically inscribed in the other, as long as both spellbooks are on the same plane of existence. In the event that both spellbooks are recovered, the party can use this ability to pass messages back and forth, should they discover it through the use of an *identify* spell or by studying either book over the course of a short rest.

Townsfolk

If an adventurer spends one hour asking questions of the townsfolk and succeeds on a **DC 14 Charisma (Persuasion)** or **Intelligence (Investigation)** check, they may determine that a group of seven cloaked figures entered Tsendur's home less than five minutes before the blast. Only one person left the house afterward, an elven woman who was dressed in robes, but no cloak. She ran at an incredible pace and went into the woods. Attempts to track the elf beyond the tree line fail automatically.

Conclusion

Though the party may be armed with various amounts of knowledge regarding the events of this adventure, depending on the results of their investigation, it should be fairly clear that their next step will be to visit the Academy of Magic and Engineering to further investigate the *Clasp of Vergren* and the elven woman who made off with it.

Rewards

If the party survives the fire and gains enough information to move forward with their investigation, allow each character to gain a level. If you prefer tracking experience points over milestone level increases, assign xp based on the creatures defeated, and offer each character an additional 50 xp if either spellbook is recovered, 50 xp if Tsendur's corpse is recovered, and 150 xp if Tsendur is recovered alive.

What Tsendur Knows

If he can be interrogated, Tsendur can explain the following:

The Clasp of Vergren

- The Clasp of Vergren is a magical item that belonged to Mesos and was stolen and hidden by Enkili as a prank.
- In retaliation, Mesos struck Enkili powerless, severing their connection to the worship of mortals in a fit of anger, which was believed by some to be the final straw that prompted the gods to rise up against their parents before the Titans decided to destroy them.
- The Clasp is said to grant the wearer the ability to replenish their magical energy (i.e. regain spell slots) by plugging into the ambient magical energy of the cosmos.
- It is also supposedly extremely dangerous to scry on the Clasp's wearer.

Drendari's Deedbox

- The interior of the box cannot be scried, dowsed for, or detected by any means while the box remains closed.
- During the Divine War the deedbox was used by Drendari to pass messages on behalf of gods and their mortal generals.
- The box's exterior is virtually indestructible. It is immune to all forms of damage and can only be destroyed if bathed in the heart's blood of a divine being for 30 days. Once locked, the box can only be opened with the command word or the *wish* spell.

The Elven Woman

- Tsendur was attacked by an elven woman who was unfamiliar to him. He knew not who she was, merely that she wanted the Clasp.
- After being tortured, Tsendur gave the clasp to the elf.

Appendix: Magic Items

The following magic items are found in this adventure.

Drendari's Deedbox

Wondrous item, legendary

This reliquary was carved from the stuff of shadow and secrets by the demi-goddess Drendari during the Divine War. On the outside, the box appears to be a simple box, one foot tall, six inches wide and six inches deep, carved from blackwood. The front of the box is split into double doors that are affixed to the box with black iron hinges. Each door has a small knob carved from onyx.

The interior of the box offers perfect containment, preventing the contents from being detected by any means. Any item placed within the box cannot be scried, dowsed for, or detected by any means while the box remains closed. During the Divine War the deedbox was used by Drendari to pass messages on behalf of gods and their mortal generals.

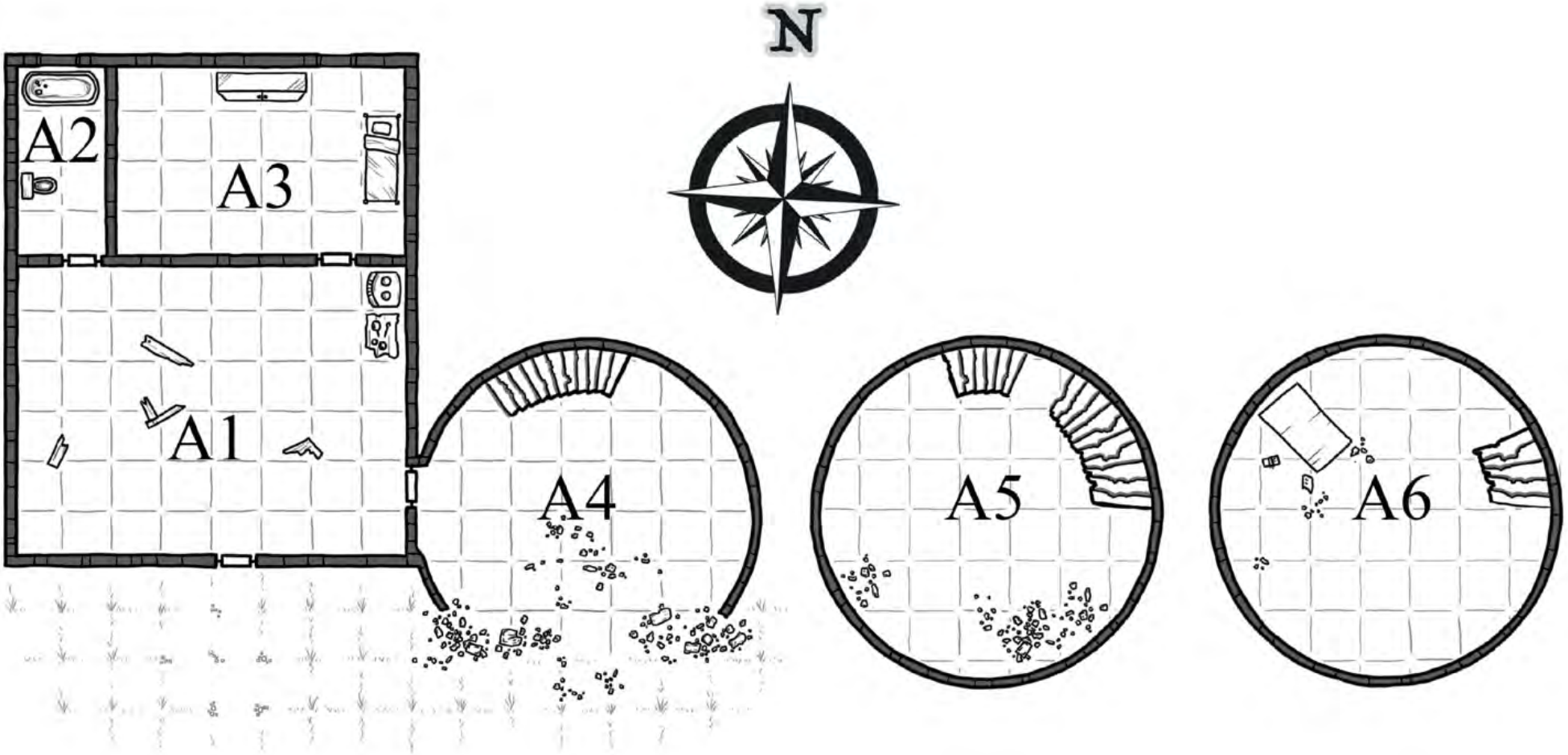
The box's exterior is virtually indestructible. It is immune to all forms of damage and can only be destroyed if bathed in the heart's blood of a divine being for 30 days. Once locked, the box can only be opened with the command word. Any attempt to open the box with a spell other than *wish* automatically fails, wasting the spell slot.

Tsendur's Spellbook

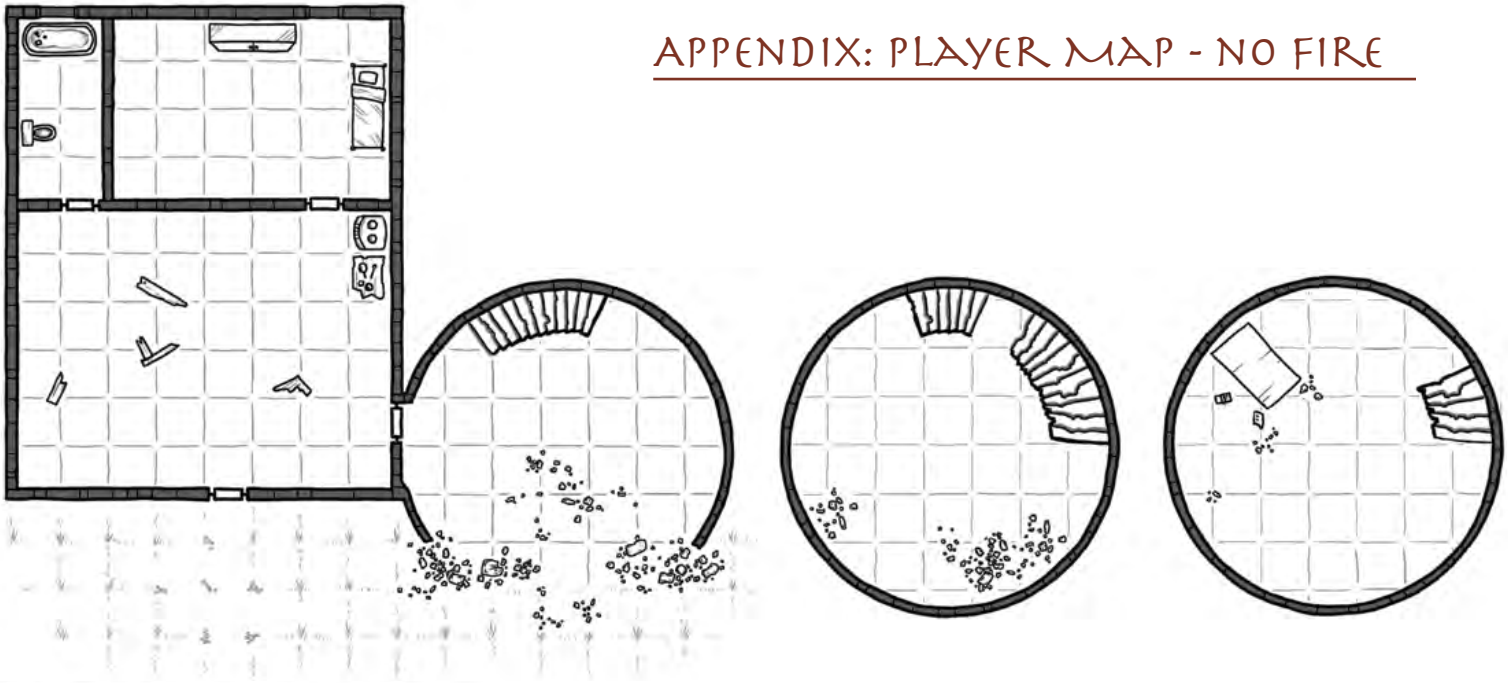
Wondrous item, rare

This item is actually a pair of matched books which are mystically bound to one another. Any writing or drawing performed in one of the books will magically copy itself into the same place in the other book as long as both books are on the same plane of existence. This is extremely useful for wizards who can effectively make an exact duplicate for their spellbook at no additional cost. Some messengers and nobles use similar items to assist in long-distance communication, but the creation of such a tome is prohibitively expensive, making these books rare treasures.

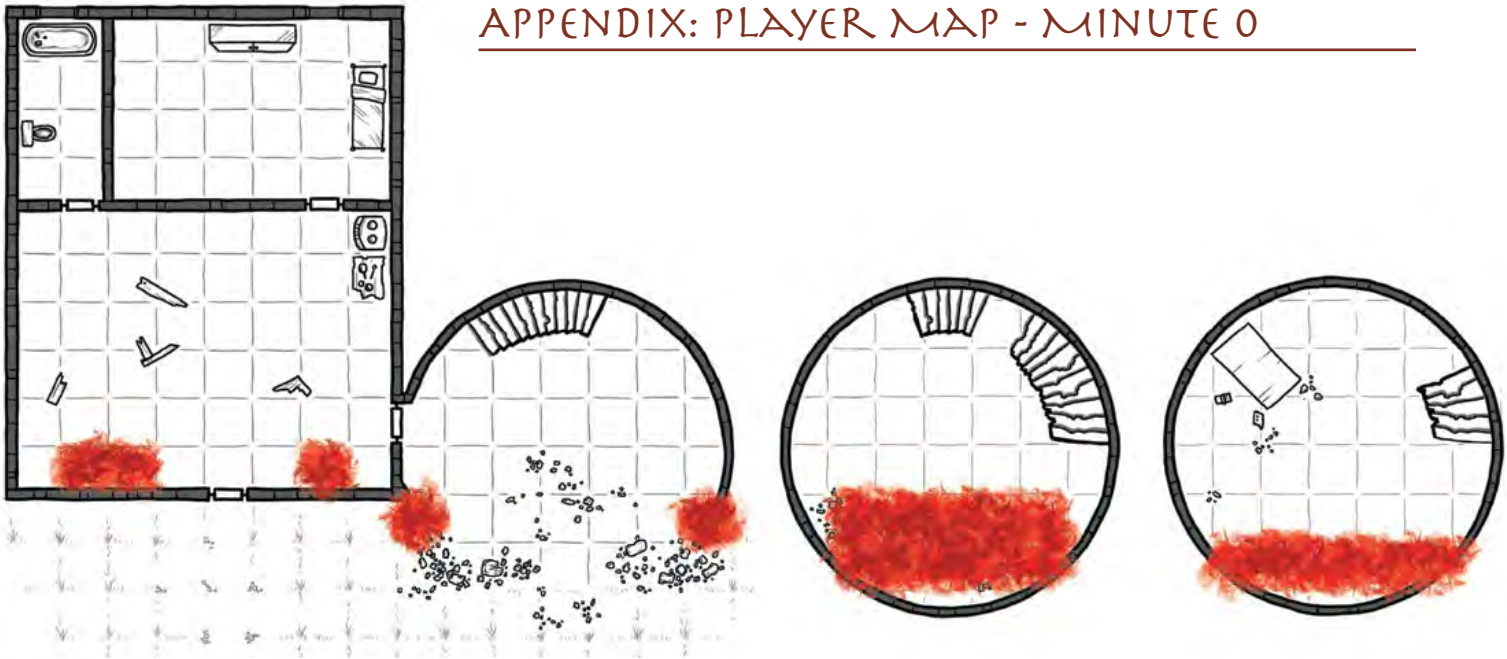
APPENDIX: GM MAP



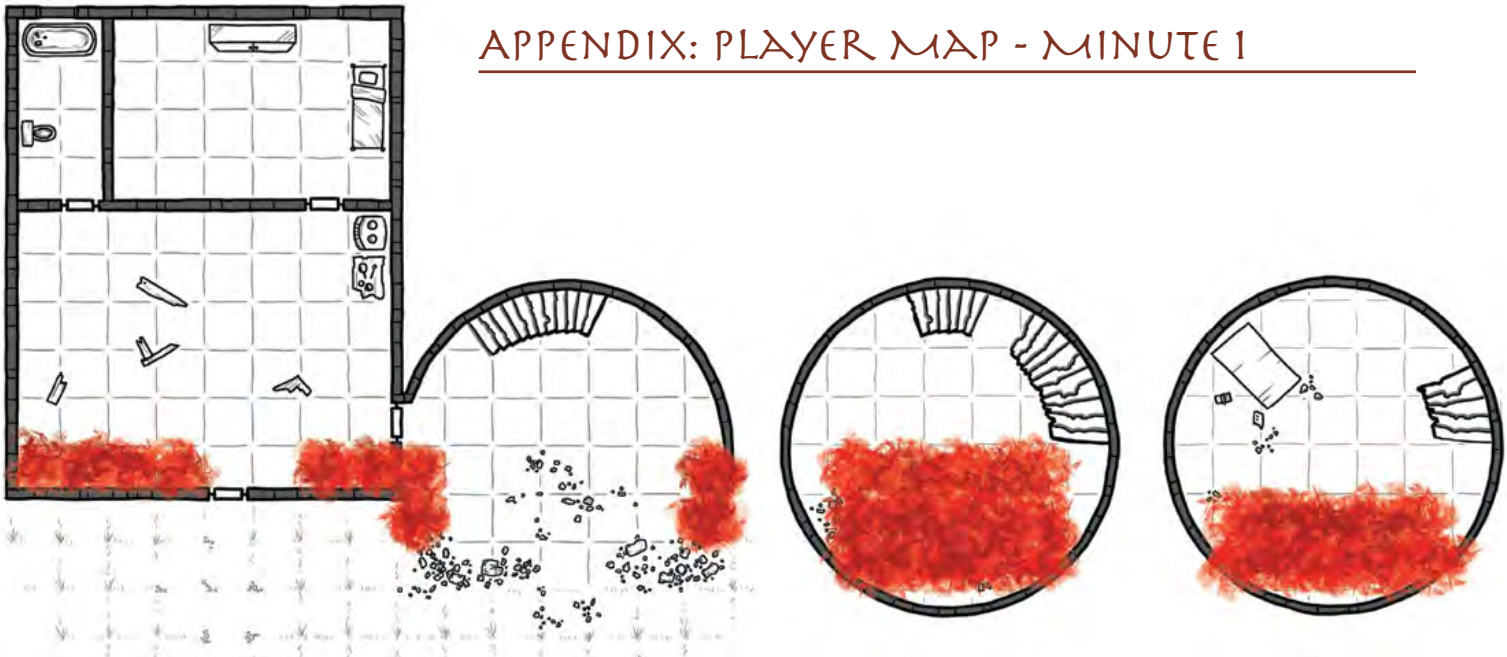
APPENDIX: PLAYER MAP - NO FIRE



APPENDIX: PLAYER MAP - MINUTE 0



APPENDIX: PLAYER MAP - MINUTE 1



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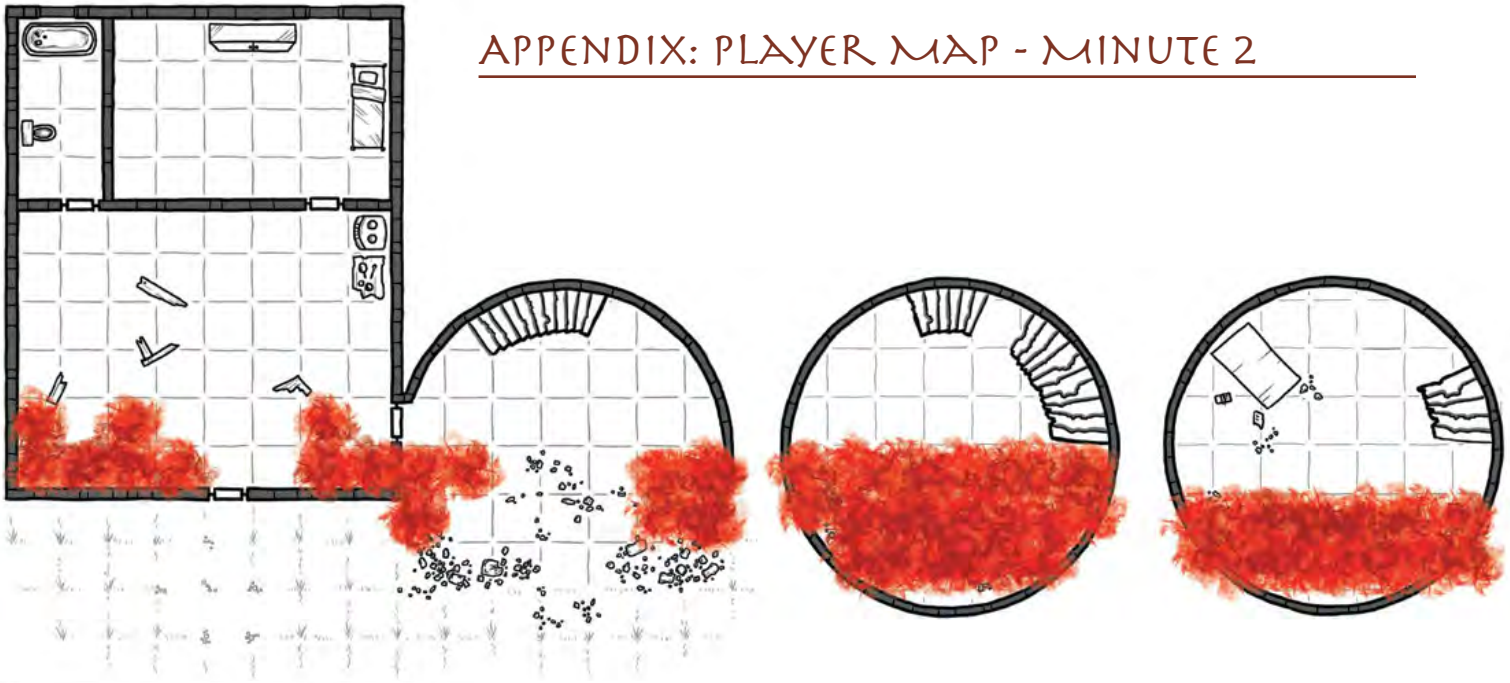

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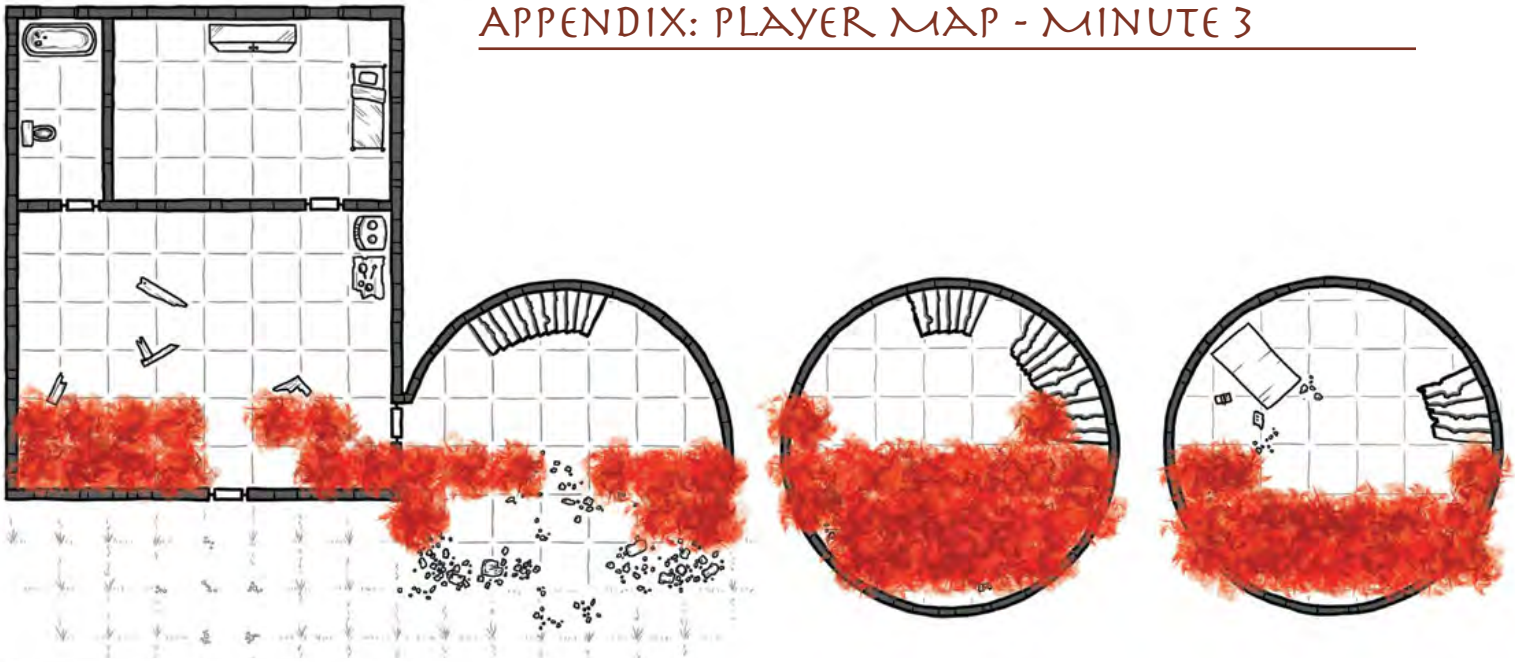

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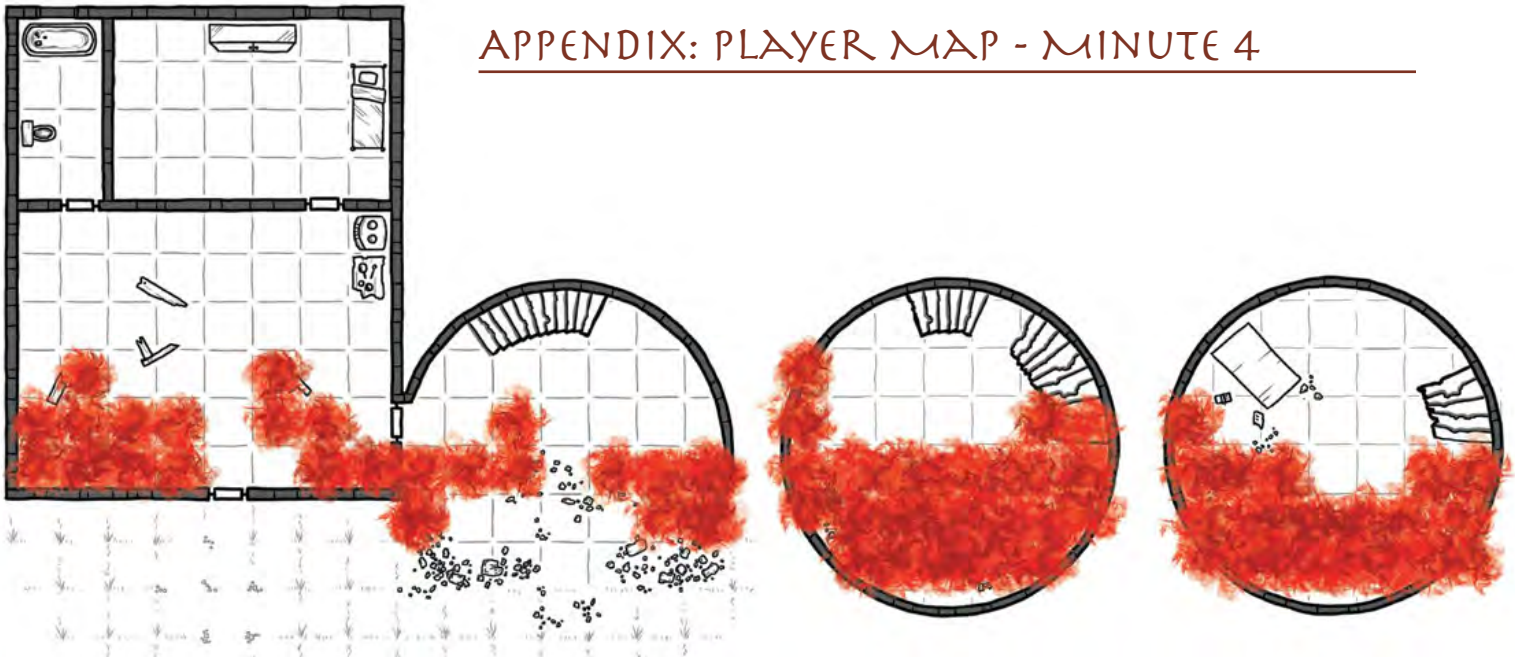

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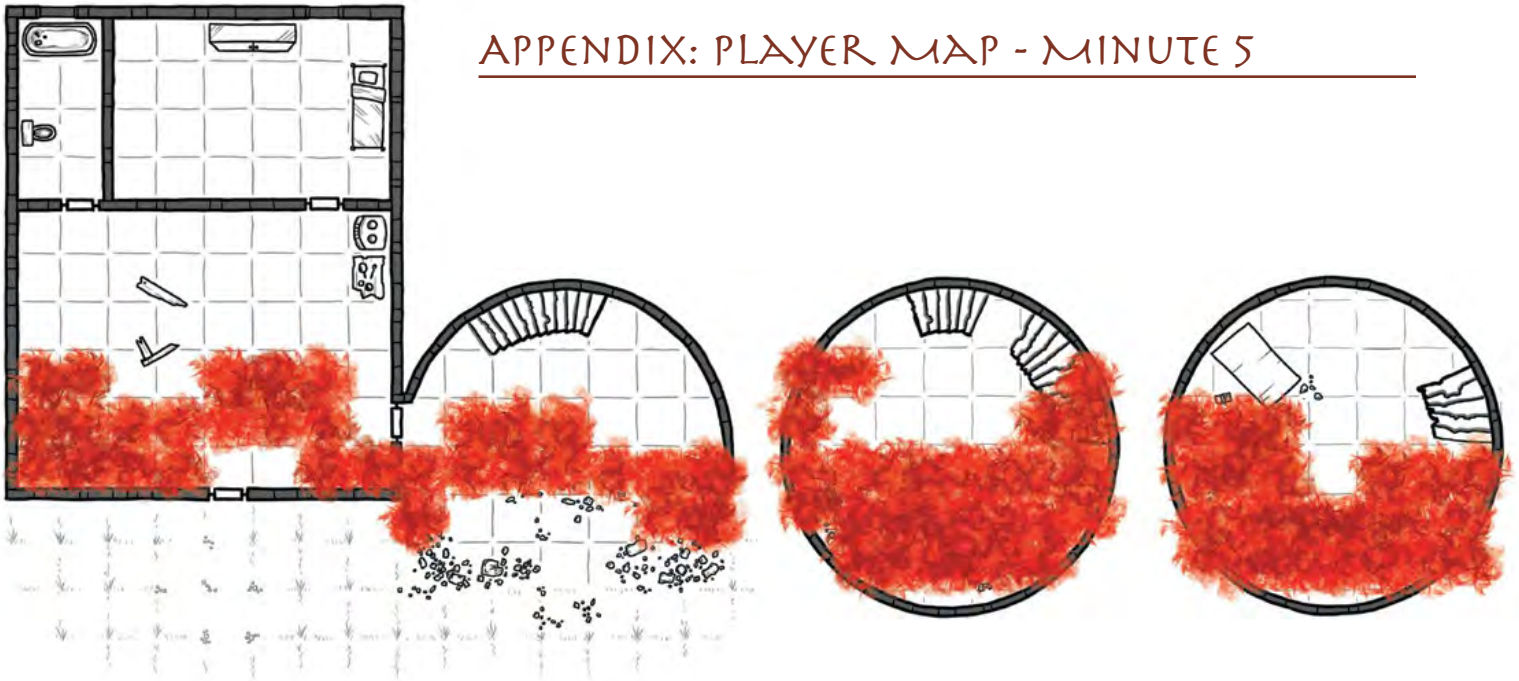
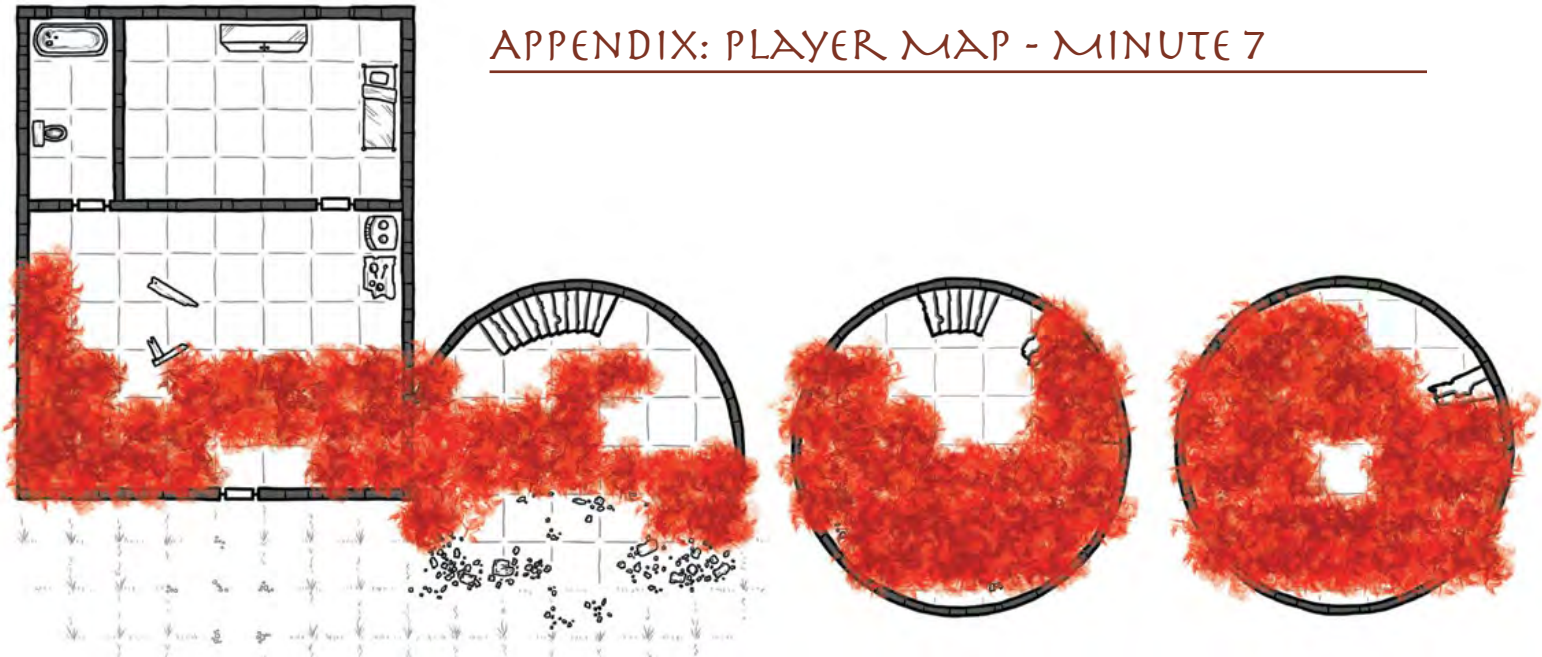


Appendix: Player Map - Minute 6

Appendix: Player Map - Minute 7



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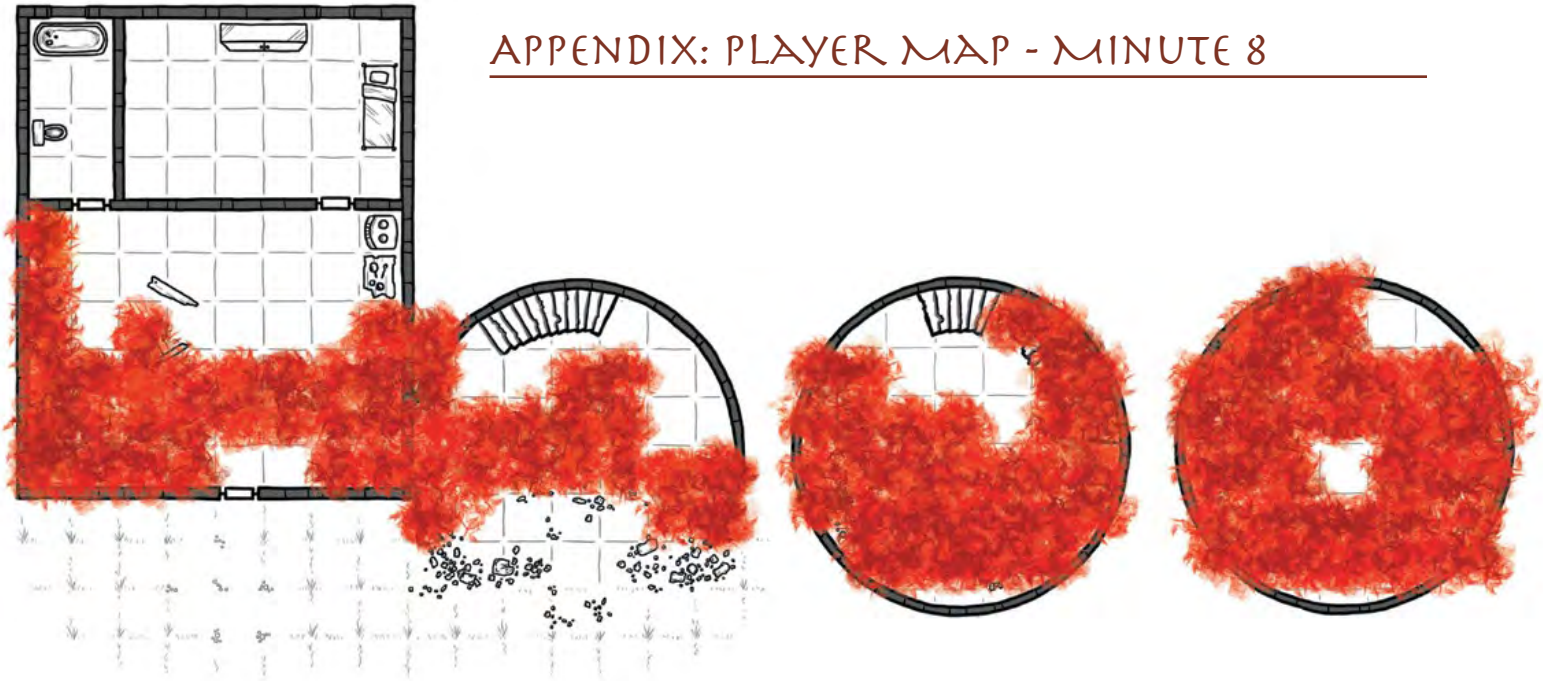

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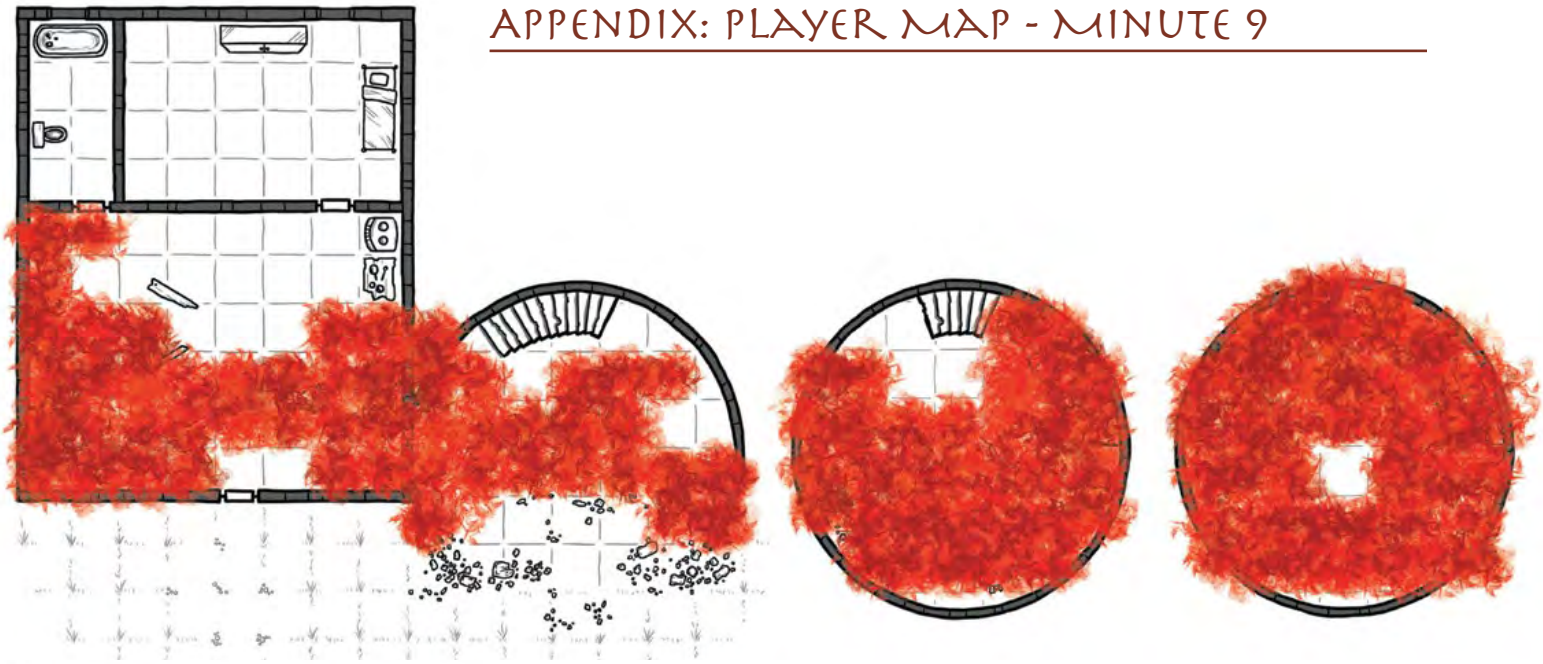

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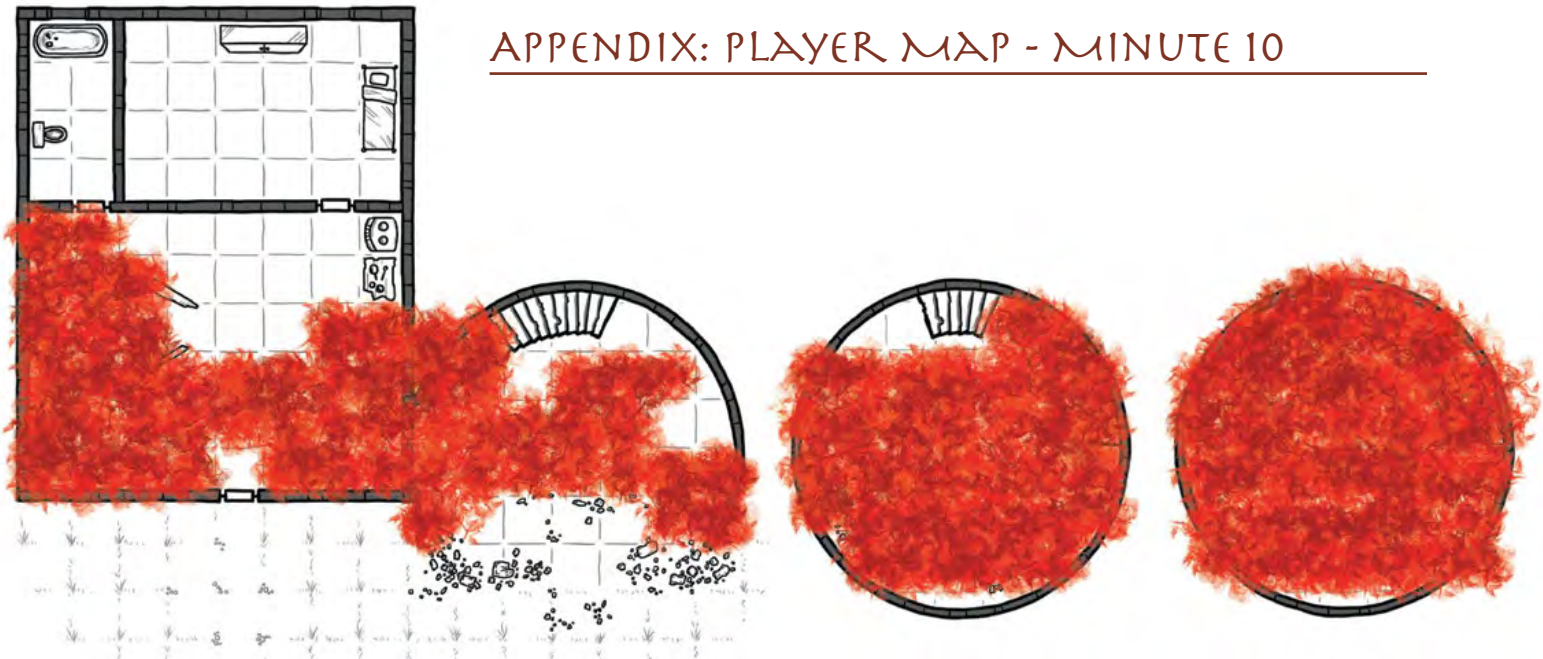

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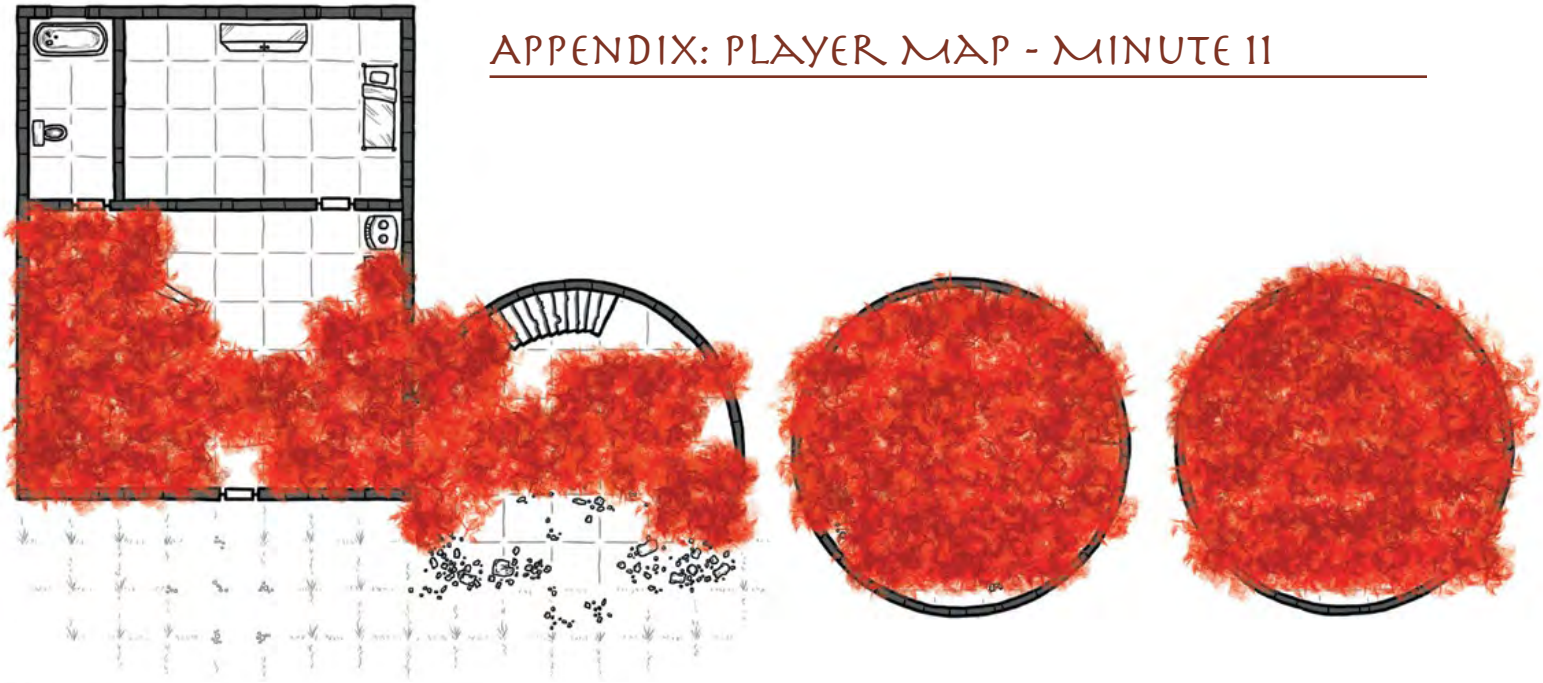
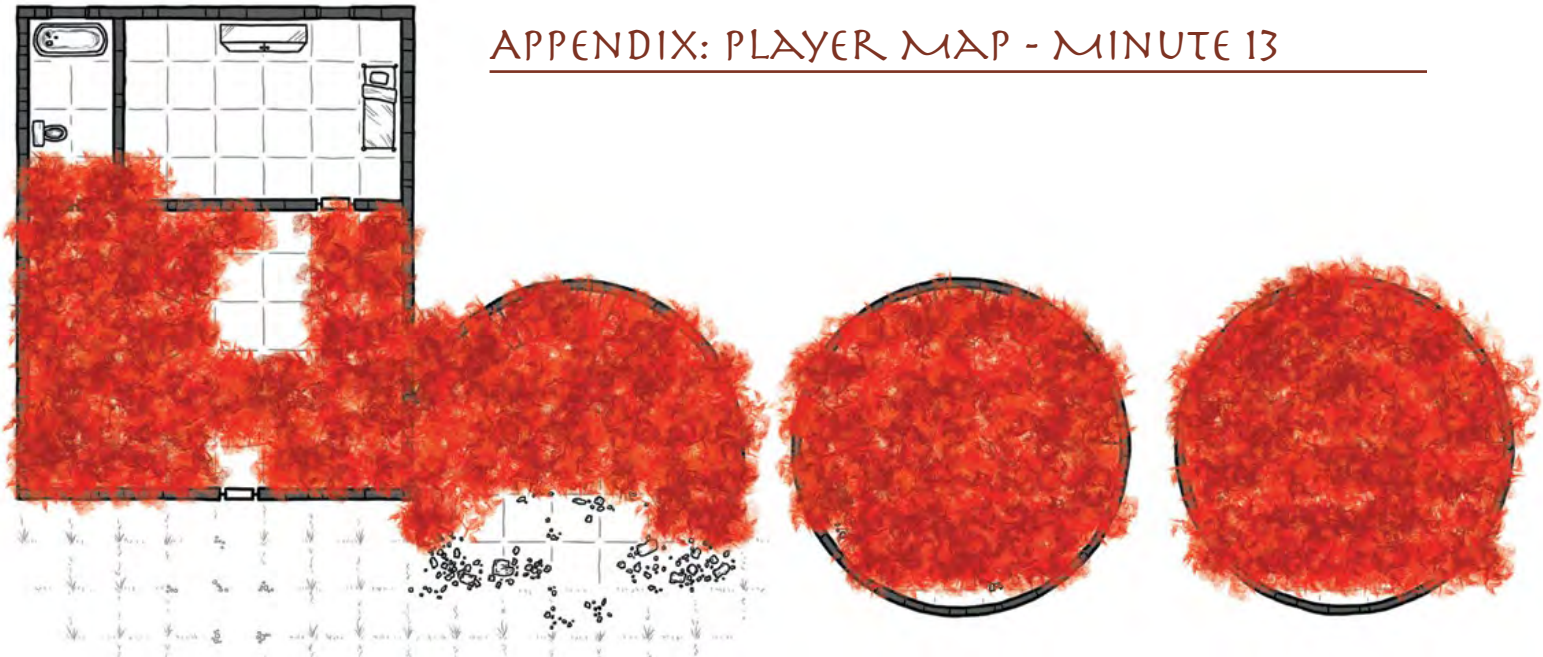


Appendix: Player Map - Minute 12

Appendix: Player Map - Minute 13



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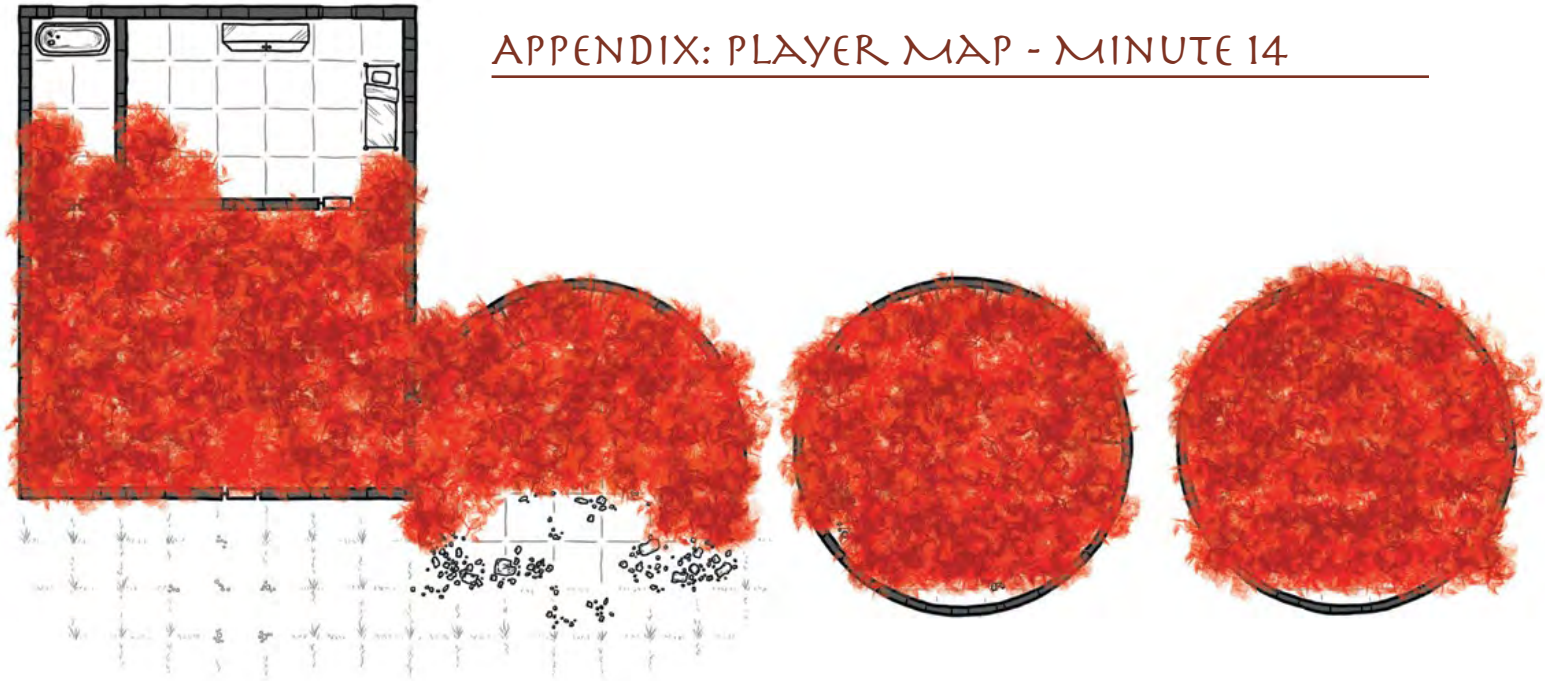

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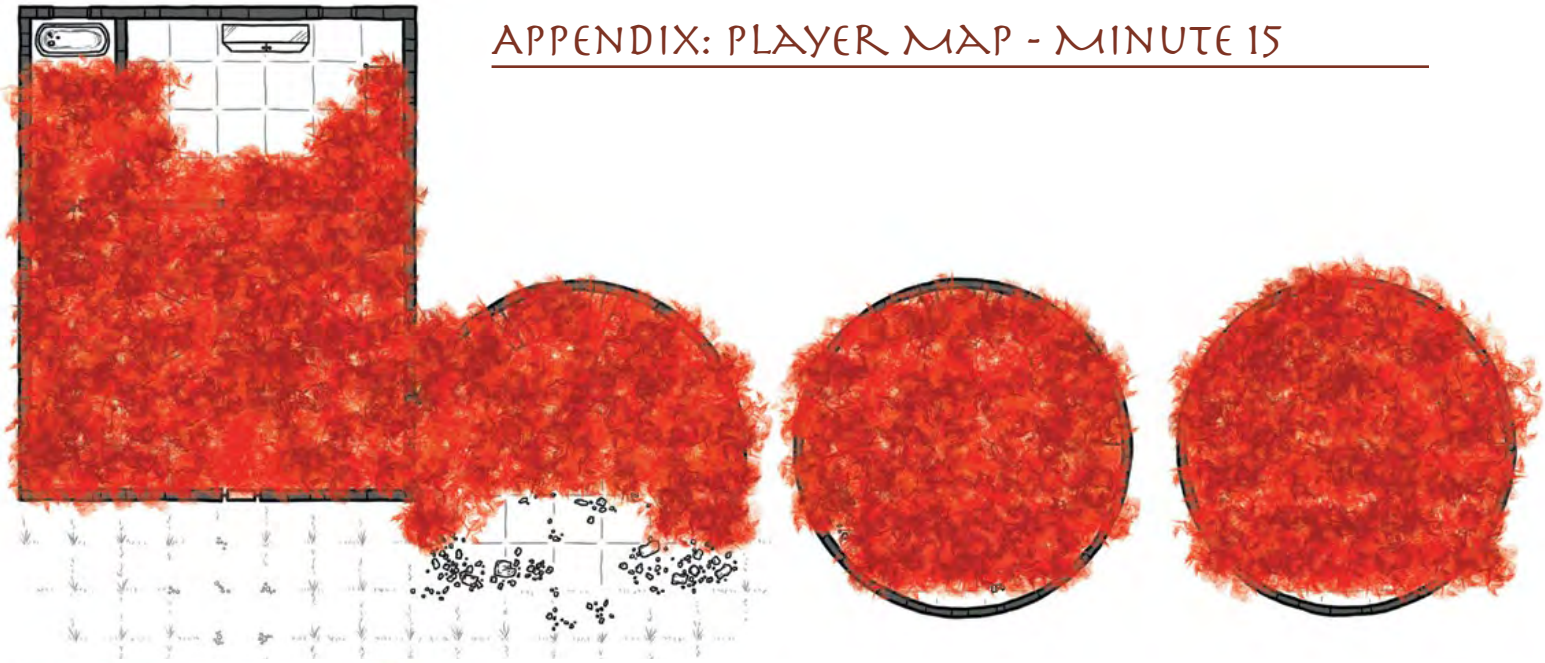

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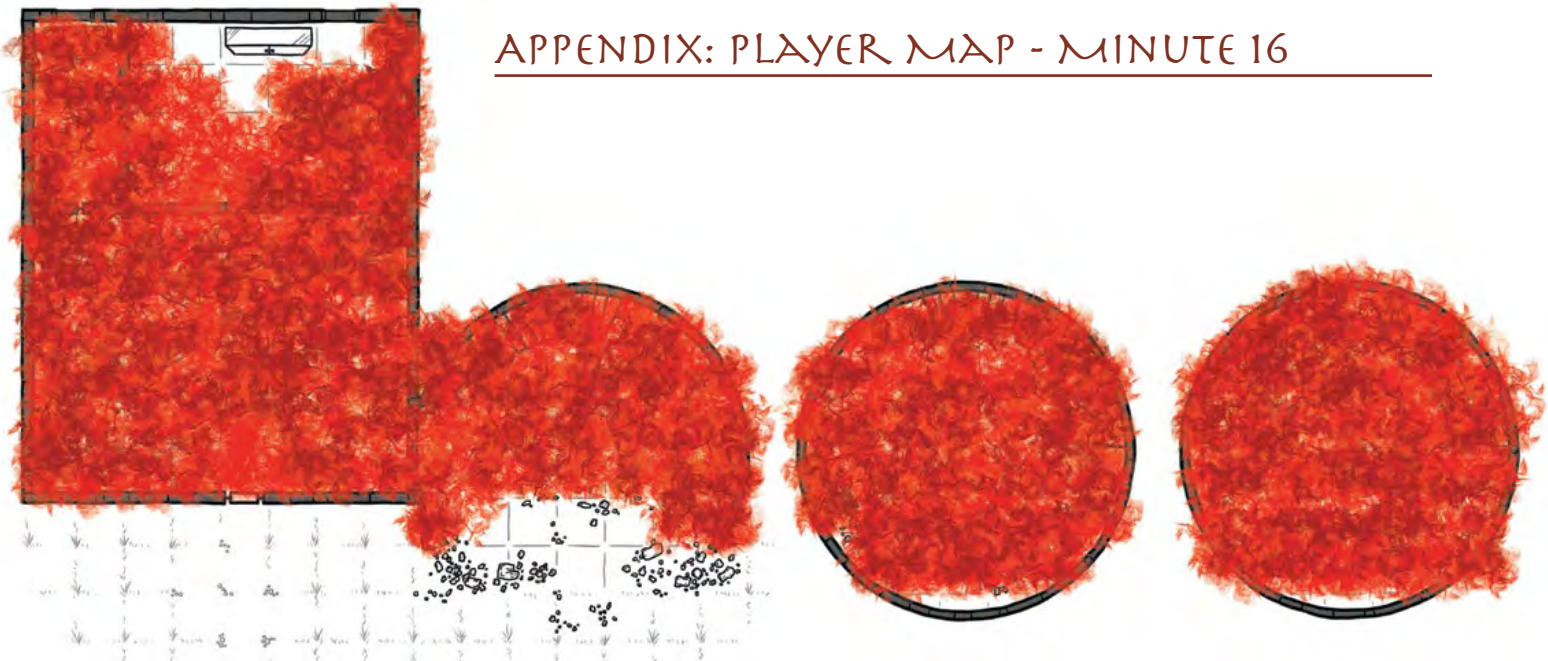
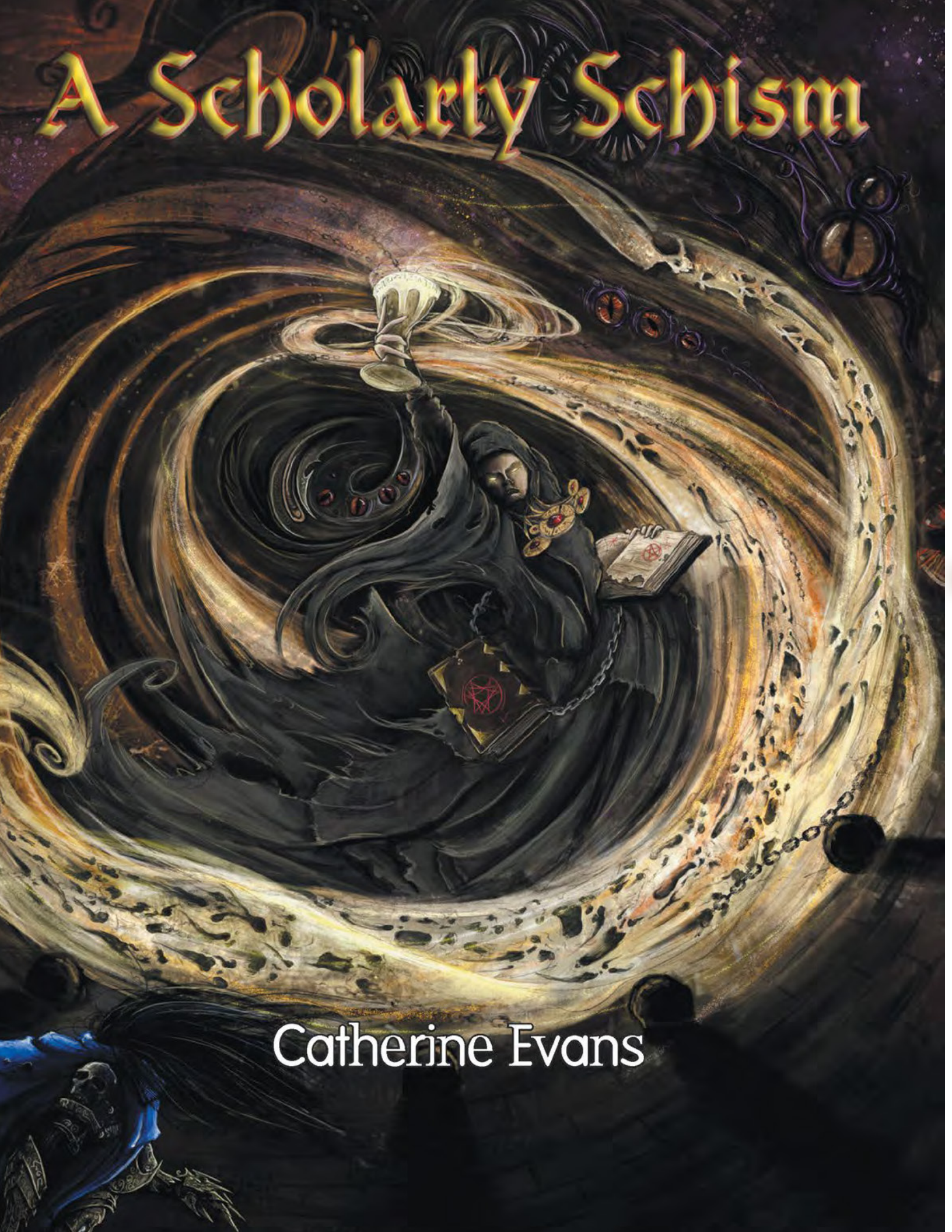


A Scholarly Schism



Catherine Evans

INTRODUCTION

A Scholarly Schism is an adventure designed for four to six characters of 2nd level, though it can be easily modified for larger or smaller groups, or a group of average party level (or APL) between 1st and 4th level. Guidelines are included with each encounter for increasing the difficulty of opposition to suit higher APL groups.

This adventure is set in the Bridged City of the Kelder Mountains, in Northeastern Ghelspad. Most of the action takes place at the city's most famous institution, the Academy of Magic and Engineering, where the characters can follow up leads acquired in A Mishap of Ill Portent and learn more about the thief who stole the Clasp of Vergren from the wizard Tsendur.

SYNOPSIS

The player characters arrive in the Bridged City to find that the Academy is sealed up tight: inside wild magic runs rampant. While navigating a magical labyrinth and helping to stabilize the dangerous currents of Mesos' Bane, they learn the identity and motives of the elf who stole from Tsendur. Within the Academy, the characters also find a clue to the thief's destination.

BACKGROUND

The changes to Mesos' Bane affect every aspect of arcane magic within a hundred miles of the Clasp of Vergren. For most spellcasters that means minor side-effects when they cast spells… for the largest concentration of arcane power in Northeastern Ghelspad, the changes are a disaster.

When the Clasp was moved, and started to change Mesos' Bane, the sheer quantity of magic in the Academy of Magic and Engineering led to a near cataclysm. An eruption of wild magic split chunks of the Academy into different portions of time and space. The mages who lead the Academy sealed it off for the protection of the city, but inside chaos reigns.

Preparation

Text included in a plain box should be read aloud or paraphrased for the players. Sidebars and other shaded text are provided, where applicable, to call attention to important points for the GM to consider and should not be read aloud. Creature and NPC names are provided in bold text where they appear in the adventure, and their stat blocks are provided in **Book 11: Peril Primer.**

Involving the PCs

This adventure assumes that the player characters have travelled to the Bridged City specifically to investigate the recent events in Durgan's Rest.

Mesos' Bane

Any character within 100 miles of the Clasp of Vergren who casts an arcane spell using a bard, sorcerer, warlock, or wizard spell slot experiences the effects of Mesos' Bane as described in **A Mishap of Ill Portent**.

The area affected by this magical surge encompasses the Bridged City and several days of travel in any direction from it.

The Bridged City

Although the beginning of this adventure takes place on the road to the Bridged City, most of the action takes place in the city itself. The Bridged City is a peaceful, well-governed place with significant revenues from farming, iron, lumber and wool, and a reputation as a center for scholarship thanks to the Academy of Magic and Engineering. The city itself is a marvel of engineering, built on bridges and platforms between four mountain peaks (formerly five, until the Blood Monsoon destroyed one).

The Bridged City of the Kelder Mountains

Large city (metropolis), lawful good

Population: 50,000

Government: Hereditary Monarchy (ruled by Queen Gwatra - lawful good)

Defense: City Guard made up of elite soldiers; standing defense force of 5,000 soldiers

Commerce: Farming, iron, lumber, wool. The Bridged City is the major route between the Plains of Lede and the Bleak Savannah, so is also a major trade center

Organizations: The Academy of Magic and Engineering, famous throughout the region as an institution of higher learning. The Academy graduates 25 students each year.

Notable NPCs

Varanesi Silpatur (F *LG* half-elven **guard**)
Dain Ironheart (M *NG* dwarf forge **cleric**)
Savila Nebega (F *NG* human **mage**)
Maghiel the Shunned (F *NE* elven **battlemage**)
Elruen (M *N* elven **mage**)

CHAPTER ONE: THE ROAD

PAY THE TOLL

The total distance between Durgan's Rest and the Bridged City is 33 miles, most of it on good roads. The journey takes two days at normal walking pace, or one day if mounted or pushing the limits of endurance.

Establish the party's marching order and general outlook. Are there scouts ranging ahead? Are they all on the road? Are they drinking, singing, joking to pass the time? Do they have the corpse of an elderly orc amongst their belongings?

When the party are about halfway through their journey (shortly before making camp for the night, or early in the afternoon, depending on the pace of travel), read or paraphrase:

The road is wide and dusty, with ruts from cart tracks and the indents of hundreds of feet and hooves. To your right the Spine Forest looms dark and dense, and to your left the Kelder Mountains stand ready to swallow the sun when it sets. All day you've seen and heard other travelers heading to or from the Bridged City but currently the road is yours and yours alone.

SETUP

If there are scouts, or characters are specifically on the lookout or if any character has a Passive Perception of 13 or higher, the party will be alerted by sounds of movement in the forest: something bigger than the deer and foxes they've occasionally glimpsed.

Forewarned, they may surprise the 6 teenage bandits in the woods.

If not, the party has no warning before a tall, lanky figure in a ragged red cloak steps out onto the road before them brandishing a shortsword. Read or paraphrase:

"There's two ways off this road, friends. You pay the toll, or my mates drag your bodies into the woods. What'll it be?"

ASSESSING THE SITUATION

The would-be bandit is Belo (Human Male, Neutral, **bandit**).

Insight: A successful **Wisdom (Insight)** check, contested by Belo's **Charisma (Deception)** reveals that this is an adolescent rather than an adult… and that his bravado is an act: he is scared stiff.

Perception: A successful **DC 13 Wisdom (Perception)** check lets a character count three other figures in the woods, and two behind large rocks on the other side of the road. All carry light crossbows with bolts loaded.

INTO THE FRAY

Including Belo there are 6 **bandits**, all human and all aged between 12 and 16 years old. They do not initiate combat until Belo is sure the party cannot be intimidated into paying their "toll" (5 gp per person).

Once combat is joined, they will fight until one of them is dead. At that point their nerve breaks and they attempt to scatter into the woods. If characters give chase, give them three turns of contested **Strength (Athletics)** checks to catch the bandits. If they fail, the group disperses and is gone.

SWORDPOINT DIPLOMACY

Belo would rather not fight. If characters convince him they mean no harm, treat him kindly, or seem at all sympathetic, he will drop his sword, sit down in the dust of the road, and begin apologizing. The other bandits will stand down at that point. If the characters talk with them, they learn that:

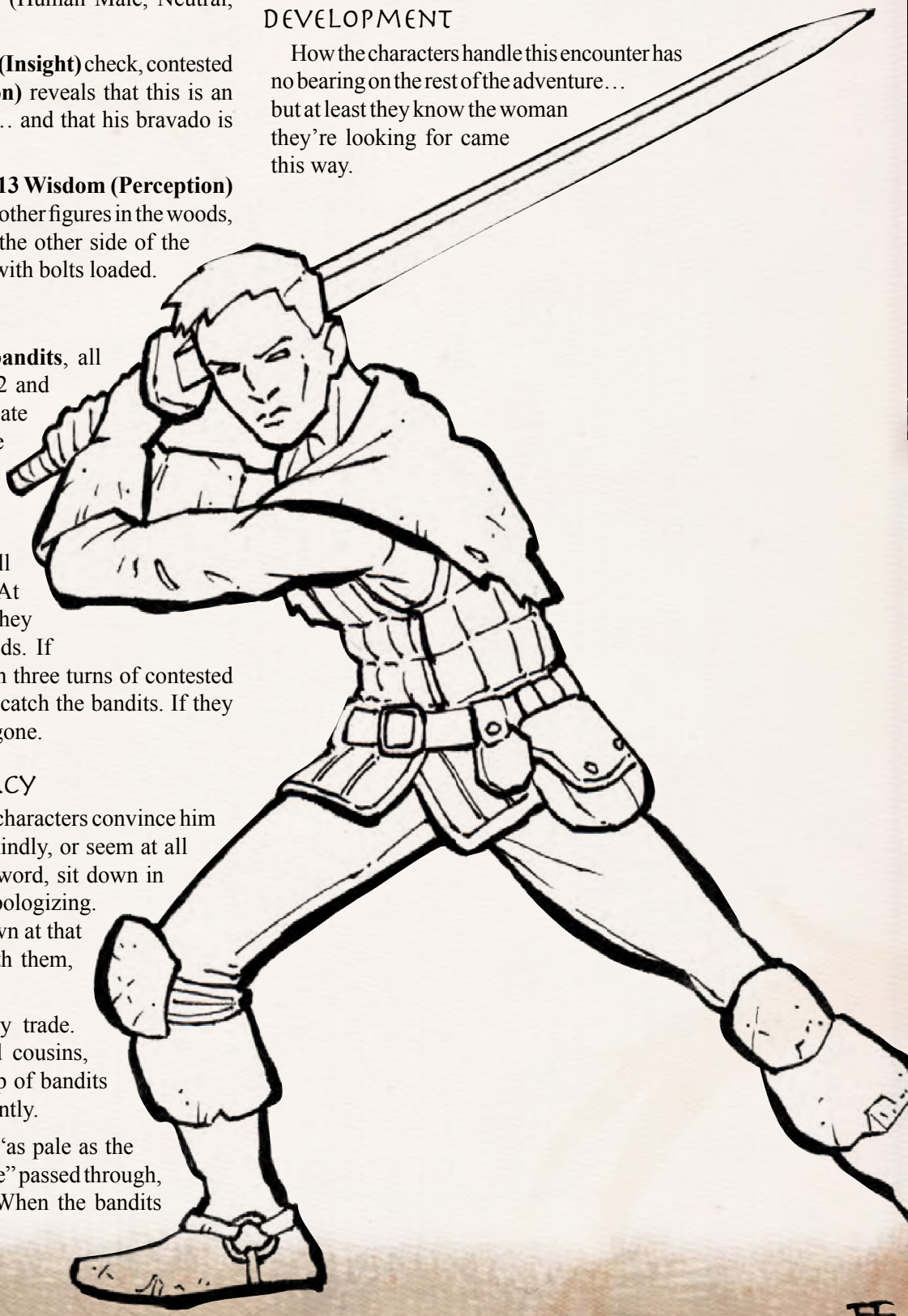
Highway robbery is a family trade. The teenagers are siblings and cousins, children of an established group of bandits who worked this road until recently.

Not long ago, an elf woman "as pale as the moon, as angry as the sun up close" passed through, riding from the Bridged City. When the bandits demanded their usual toll, she used powerful magics to murder them quickly, efficiently, and without a flicker of emotion. One escaped to tell the tale but later died of his injuries.

Banditry is the only way Belo and the others have of making money… and they've got younger siblings to feed, in a tiny hamlet in the woods. They won't give the characters directions there under any circumstances (they're not that trusting) but the story is true.

DEVELOPMENT

How the characters handle this encounter has no bearing on the rest of the adventure… but at least they know the woman they're looking for came this way.



Chapter Two: The City

Entering the City

As the party approaches the Bridged City, read or paraphrase:

You don't walk into the Bridged City so much as ascend to it, climbing a winding stone staircase that starts at the bridge over the Durek River and ends at the city gate.

It's like a maze, though a beautifully constructed one. Four proud mountain peaks make up the bones of the city, with a crumbled fifth peak a reminder of the toll the Blood Monsoon took here. Bridges and platforms span the city, wrapping around and running between the mountains, and humanoid traffic trudges along them like ants. You could fit a hundred Durgan's Rests into the Bridged City, and still have room left over for a couple of market towns. It's vast and imposing, but if answers exist to the problem of Mesos' Bane, or the woman who stole from Tsendur, they will be found in the Academy, at the heart of the city.

The Academy of Magic and Engineering

It's hard to miss the famous spires of the Academy. It's impossible to miss that said spires are currently encased in a dome of golden light.

Questions

Any citizen can tell the party that the Academy has been "sealed up tight" for a couple of days. They have no idea why, but the characters should infer that the time frame coincides with the fire at Tsendur's house. In fact, as soon as Mesos' Bane started to flux, the faculty of the Academy recalled all of their members into the building and sealed it off to protect the Bridged City from the magical chaos inside.

Most citizens do know that a dwarven priest of Goran – tender of some small shrine — has repeatedly tried to get inside the barrier. If characters ask around further, they will eventually be directed to Dain Ironheart.

Tsendur's Corpse

If the characters have Tsendur's body with them – whether they're transporting it openly or have a suspiciously corpse-shaped piece of luggage – they will be stopped at the city gate and questioned by **Varanesi Silpatur**, a half-elven guard (see **Book 11: Peril Primer**).

She is cold and dismissive of outsiders, especially if they could be described as "country bumpkins" and very thorough in questioning why they have a corpse with them. She is slightly warmer towards elves in the party, but not substantially so.

The characters are in no serious danger of being arrested (carrying a body is suspicious but not strictly illegal) but make them work for it, roleplaying Varanesi's skepticism and probing questions to the hilt.

Varanesi will threaten to arrest them if they attempt to bribe her.

Varanesi's Assistance

Once convinced that the party has no nefarious plans for Tsendur's corpse, Varanesi directs them to Dain Ironheart, a dwarven cleric and friend of the city watch, who can help the party speak to their dead friend.

Varanesi will also tell the party, if asked, that the dome around the academy is "some kind of safety precaution. Something bad's happening inside." She does not know any details, but she is concerned.

Shopping

The Bridged City offers limitless possibilities for spending money and replenishing supplies. Characters are able to obtain almost any piece of non-magical equipment here (though there may be a wait time of up to a week for rare/exotic items).

Common magic items and low level (1st-2nd level) arcane spell scrolls are readily available and can be located with a successful **DC 13 Charisma (Investigation)** or **Charisma (Arcana)** check.

Uncommon magic items can be located with a **DC 16 Charisma (Investigation)** or **Charisma (Arcana)** check.

Dain Ironheart, Cleric for Hire

Dain Ironheart (see **Book 11: Peril Primer**) is a dwarven cleric who maintains a small shrine to Goran in the Southern Quarter of the Bridged City. As well as being a working weaponsmith, Dain also sells spellcasting services: healing and blessings to citizens, and occasionally *zone of truth* or *speak with dead* (cast from a scroll) to the City Guard.

Varanesi Silpatur can direct the party to him; so can other citizens.

The shrine is a small, stone building, radiating heat from the forge Dain tends to. Dain himself is a male Kelder dwarven cleric of Goran. As a defender of Burok Torn, Dain is stout and strong, but has a warm and gentle smile under less stressful circumstances.

Roleplaying Dain:

In spite of the sweat and soot of the forge, Dain is clearly a well-bred dwarf. He is courteous and respectful to the party. Once he gets hold of an idea, he won't let it go, and will persist in asking questions/answering questions/telling a story until he's sure he's done a thorough job. This is often long after the person he's talking to has heard enough.

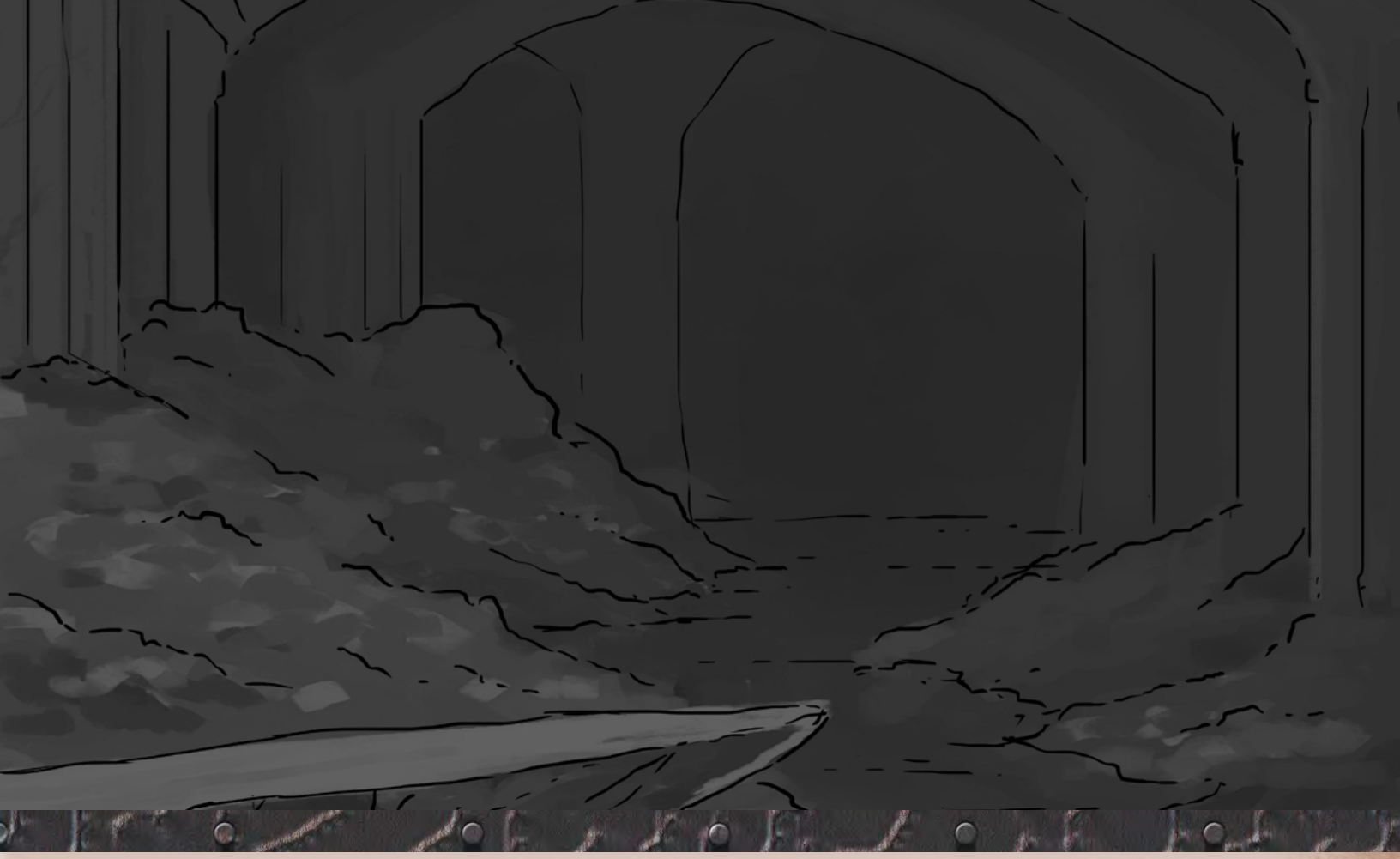
Tsendur's Body

Dain can and will cast *speak with dead* for the party expending one of the three *speak with dead* spell scrolls he presently has in his workshop. His usual fee is 250 gp - but he will waive that, if the party can help him get into the Academy.

Refer to the sidebar in **A Mishap of Ill Portent** p. 13 entitled "What Tsendur Knows" for the information characters are likely to gain from speaking with Tsendur's spirit.

Dain and the Academy

Dain is aware that something happened just before the Academy sealed itself away behind the golden dome: he felt some form of magic. Whatever's going on in there can't be good, and Dain is worried for his friends among the engineers inside. He's determined to get in and thinks he knows how. He just needs some willing assistants (see Entering the Academy, below).



Chapter Three: The Academy

Entering the Academy

The entire Academy campus — a collection of buildings from storehouses, to dormitories, to elegant spires that house magical libraries and workrooms — is currently shielded by a dome of golden light. It is impossible to see what is on the other side.

The dome has two effects, which the characters can learn on a successful **Intelligence (Arcana)** roll:

DC 12: Magic cannot pass through the dome in either direction. In addition, magical travel can neither start nor end inside the dome, and magical senses cannot perceive what is on the other side.

DC 13: The dome is a force field. Each 10 foot square has AC 12 and 25 hit points.

DC 14: Each 10 foot square also regenerates 20 hit points per round.

If the party cannot learn this information themselves, Dain Ironheart is happy to explain it at great length and in unnecessary detail.

Dain's Assistance

If characters encountered Dain in Chapter 2, he is probably with them when they approach the Academy. If not, the party observes him muttering to himself and slowly inspecting each section of the dome, foot by foot, and criticizing the "structural stability" and "second-rate engineering."

Dain has a large bomb in the form of a barrel full of nails, metal shrapnel, and alchemical reagents. He tows it around on a handcart and refers to it as "Karak-morr", the dwarven word for "Sledgehammer." If questioned he explains that the dome is clearly to keep something in rather than keep people out. He intends to blast a (probably temporary) hole in the dome, go into the Academy and make contact with his friends amongst the engineers. He's sure something is badly wrong inside and would very much appreciate company on his "mission."

S ledgehammer"

When detonated the bomb does 30 (8d6 fire and 2d6 piercing) hit points of damage to any creature or object in a 10 foot sphere around it. It can be detonated simply by breaking the barrel, for example by shooting it, or throwing a weapon at it.

There is enough clear space near the Academy's gates (the section Dain chooses for his entrance) to detonate it without damaging buildings, passersby, etc.

Breach

The characters are free to come up with a plan other than Dain's. The dwarf is right: the dome's primary purpose is to keep magic contained and stop civilians from simply wandering into the Academy. Forcing entry is not terribly difficult.

Note that Dain's bomb will draw a squad of 6 **guards** in 1d10 rounds, though the characters will probably be inside the Academy by that point. If the characters are not inside, they are required to provide a good explanation for their actions. If the characters fail, Dain will step in to explain that they are attempting to help those inside the Academy, but first they have to get inside.

Traversing the Academy

Once characters pass through the dome, read or paraphrase:

Beyond the light is darkness. There is no trace of the city you stepped out of. There is barely any trace of the Academy, in any recognizable form. Pools of light push back the darkness here and there, and you make out jagged chunks of stonework; walls and windows and doors in no discernible pattern. A tower top here, a sitting room there… as if the whole place was frozen in the moment of an explosion. In the distance a single tower stands tall and whole.

Threads of crimson light weave paths between the isolated chunks of reality but they flicker and twist, unstable and shifting. Gradually, in the silence around you, you begin to hear faint sounds of movement, whispering cloth and the suggestion of voices. You are not alone.

Visibility

The space between the buildings is lit by the glow from the various rooms and from the dome. This counts as dim light. Characters can see objects and other creatures within 10 feet of them. They cannot see walls, floors, etc.

The Rooms

The red pathways connect the rooms. The pathways run only between rooms, but roughly every minute the end points change (a path from room A to B might now run from A to C, or B to C).

Beyond that is magical darkness. Spells and abilities that produce light or counter darkness work normally, but that only allows characters to see objects and creatures further away: there is no 'landscape' to see.

Shadows in the Darkness

The characters are not alone in the dark. The space is occupied by fragments of living magic and traces of people: psychic impressions of the members of the Academy, like ghosts of people who are still alive. These entities are drawn to real, living humanoids, and are aggressive and hateful towards the real. They attack in groups of 5 (reduce to 3 for weak parties and increase to 7 for strong parties) whenever characters linger too long in the darkness. Use them as needed to keep the action moving.

Use the stat block for **shadows** for these creatures.

Travel in the Dark

Simply walking in the darkness achieves nothing: it is not 'real' space and characters can't just walk until they reach a room. Travelling the paths is the only way (short of teleportation or similar magics) to traverse the Academy. This poses two challenges:

Getting to a path. Most parties will come up with unique and interesting approaches to this. Allow anything that seems remotely plausible to work. If the players are stuck, ask for an **Intelligence (Arcana)** check and tell the player that rolls highest that since these paths are made of magic, perhaps they are drawn to magic (spellcasting attracts one end of a path to them).

Directing paths. The paths move at random between locations. If characters do not come up with a strategy for getting closer to the tower, they will get there in 4 'jumps.' If they do — and again, allow anything that seems at all plausible, e.g. casting magic towards a desired location — they reach the tower in three jumps. Three key locations are described below: characters must visit these. Other rooms they pass through are empty bedrooms, dormitories, or magical workrooms with nothing to find.

Where is Dain?

If you want to continue roleplaying Dain, have him stay with the party. If not, he is separated from them as they pass under the dome. Characters occasionally see him on a path ahead of them, apparently trying to make his way to the still-standing tower.

Area 1: Savila's Study

As characters enter this room, read or paraphrase:

This circular room smells of dried herbs, woodsmoke, and old paper — as well it should, with a roaring fire, stuffed bookshelves, and bunches of herbs and sticks of incense cluttering the space. Seated head to head at a circular table are a familiar elderly orc and an olive skinned human woman in her forties in elaborate blue robes, with grey streaks in her hair. Both look up at your entrance, mildly surprised.

Tsendur and Savila

The characters have walked into an event that has already happened: Tsendur's visit to the Bridged City. Time, as well as space, is currently in disarray in the Academy. Characters cannot affect the course of history, but can interact with Tsendur and the mage, Savila.

Do note that if the characters have brought Tsendur's corpse with them they will have a great deal of explaining to do before they move on to talking about the Clasp and the deedbox. Tsendur reacts initially with shock, but is quick to calm, acknowledging that he sensed his current course of action would be the end of him.

This is an opportunity to give characters, via Savila, full information about the *Clasp of Vergren*, *Drendari's deedbox*, and Tsendur's visit to the Academy. Specifically:

The Clasp of Vergren

Tsendur shows Savila some charcoal rubbings of an ornate, magical clasp. Savila is visibly uncomfortable when she recognizes the design and relates that:

The item is The *Clasp of Vergren*.

It belonged to Mesos and was stolen and hidden by Enkili as a prank.

Mesos struck Enkili powerless, severing their connection to the worship of mortals in a fit of anger, which was the final straw that prompted the gods to rise up against their parents before the Titans decided to destroy them.

The Clasp is said to grant the wearer the ability to replenish their magical energy (i.e. regain spell slots) by plugging into the ambient magical energy of the cosmos.

It is also supposedly extremely dangerous to scry on the Clasp's wearer.

Drendari's Deedbox

Savila asks how Tsendur came to have the Clasp in his possession, and where he's been hiding it. He describes the box in which he keeps it, in his home.

A simple box, carved from blackwood, with double doors with onyx knobs.

The interior of the box cannot be scried, dowsed for, or detected by any means while the box remains closed.

Savila identifies it as *Drendari's deedbox*. During the Divine War the deedbox was used by Drendari to pass messages on behalf of gods and their mortal generals.

The box's exterior is virtually indestructible. It is immune to all forms of damage and can only be destroyed if bathed in the heart's blood of a divine being for 30 days. Once locked, the box can only be opened with the command word or the wish spell.

Development

The scene ends either when the characters try to leave the room, or when Tsendur does. At this point they see something fall from the orc's robe: a brass key with an elaborate, winged design. A successful **DC 10 Intelligence (Religion)** check identifies the design as iconography of Madriel. As the key hits the floor, Tsendur and Savila vanish. The key remains.

Roleplaying Savila

Savila is an accomplished mage and engineer, but she's equally well-schooled in history. She is originally from Lokil (Alliki Nebega, Master of Lore, is her uncle). She enjoys teaching and will respond positively to characters who are curious and ask smart questions. She is also fond of asking pointed questions and encouraging people to draw their own conclusions. "Knowing what we now know about the Clasp, what do you think will be the impact of its return to the world?".

Treasure. The Winged Key has no material value beyond the metal it is made from, but it will be important in the Temple of Madriel adventure.

Area 2: Encountering Elruen

As the characters enter this area, read or paraphrase:

You step off the crimson path into not a room, but a stretch of corridor 40 feet long and 20 feet wide. Once again, you are not alone. Two elves, a woman and a man, have just collided with each other. Both are Drendali, the woman with smooth, bone-white skin and hair and piercing violet eyes, and the man ancient, with skin like crinkled paper, rheumy eyes, and bloodless lips.

Neither elf will notice the characters unless they do something to make themselves known.

A Bitter Reunion

The party can choose to either listen in on the conversation, or to interact — in which case they learn similar information to that below through roleplaying, and if they ask, can learn more about the Battle of Gambedel's Bridge and Maghiel's role in it.

If the characters choose to eavesdrop rather than interact, read or paraphrase the following:

The man gasps and stops in his tracks, blinking at the woman.

"Maghiel? It's been…"

"So long, Elruen. So very long." She sounds… warm. Pleased to see him.

"The Battle of Gambedel's Bridge," he says.

"The Bridge of Betrayal," she speaks over him.

"What are you doing here?"

"Fixing some mistakes. Fixing everything. Hundreds of years of incompetence. I've found the Clasp."

"Mesos' clasp…?"

"Fuck Mesos. Mesos was a monster, like all the titans. Like all the gods — like that coward Madriel. I can do more with that clasp than Mesos could. I can bring order, finally..."

The old elven man's eyes widen, and he begins to shake his head. Before he has time to finish reacting, let alone respond, she takes hold of one of his shoulders.

"I thought you'd be proud, old friend. But you're not. I can't have you tell anyone."

And with that, with her hand wreathed in red and black light in which the faintest suggestions of teeth snap and clench, she reaches directly into his ribcage…

The characters may wish to intervene at this point. If so, combat is basically inevitable. Elruen fights alongside the characters against Maghiel (see **Book 11: Peril Primer** for stat blocks for both NPCs) Combat is probably not survivable but if the party flees the area Maghiel and Elruen cannot affect them and vice versa. In the likely event of the entire party dying at Maghiel's hand, they wake up on the floor of the same corridor (which is now empty) with one level of exhaustion.

Area 3: The Library

As the characters enter this area, read or paraphrase:

From the outside, this is nothing more than a round chunk of a tower, suspended in the darkness. Within… it is a treasure trove of knowledge. The walls are lined with bookshelves, fifteen feet high, with more spiraling inwards to fill the room. A narrow path through them leads to a pair of broad, semicircular desks. The Drendali woman sits at one of them, frowning intensely as she traces something from a huge leatherbound book.

This time Maghiel is not aware of the characters, no matter what they do. She is studying an atlas and tracing a page that shows a village at the foot of the Kelder Mountains, due east of the Sky Keep Ruins.

If characters do not get close enough to spy on Maghiel as she traces the map, the Atlas remains on the desk after she fades out of existence before the characters' eyes. The deep indentations of her tracing, as well as the outline of words, are clearly visible on the page. Her notes say "Lapo - find the Magister's Temple here."

Using the Library

The characters are in one of the Academy's many libraries and they may choose to use it for research. Successful **DC 13 Intelligence (History)** or **Intelligence (Arcana)** checks will help them to locate information about Maghiel or the Battle of Gambedel's Bridge.

Maghiel

Maghiel "The Shunned" is a Drendali Battlemage who is, by now, almost 500 years old. She is a veteran of the Divine War, where she fought alongside Elves and Dwarves for years. She was a force to be reckoned with on the battlefield, a decisive leader, and willing to do whatever needed to be done to gain a victory. Maghiel is most famous for her apparent desertion at the Battle of Gambedel's Bridge. After some public invective about her allies' lack of discipline, lack of heart, and lack of balls, Maghiel disappeared from the pages of history.

Gambedel's Bridge

Also known as the Bridge of Betrayal, at the Battle of Gambedel's Bridge the gods and their allies fought a losing battle against the titan Chern and his minions after the dwarves of Burok Torn fled the field. Madriel herself intervened, though only enough to ensure that Dier Drendal and Burok Torn did not fall that day. There are competing theories about Maghiel's role in the battle: either she fled the field too, or she pursued the dwarves, intending to convince them to rejoin the battle.

Area 4: The Tower

As characters enter this area, read or paraphrase:

There is something… stable… about this space. It feels solid, real in a way that the other parts of the Academy did not. It's full of people, too. Very busy, loud people. A dozen humans and dwarves in blue Academy robes, some clearing space in this cavernous great hall, others scrutinizing and tinkering with jury-rigged machines heavy with antennae and what might be lightning rods.

The brown-skinned woman you saw speaking with Tsendur seems to be leading the efforts.

What is Happening?

A cadre of Academy mages and scientists, led by Savila, are working on a ritual to stabilize time and space within the Academy's bounds; essentially, they are trying to drain away all of the wild magic, sinking it into the engineers' machines and dispersing it safely. Considering they are using magic to do this; it is a risky procedure.

If Dain got separated from the party during entry to the Academy, he is here to meet them. If the characters look for Elruen, he is not here. Maghiel really did kill him (though in the recent chaos, his body has not yet been found).

Savila has time to answer questions and will willingly do so — at least to explain the situation and what is happening with Mesos' Bane. Talk of Tsendur, Maghiel, or any other subject, can wait until after the ritual.

If the characters have Tsendur's body with them, she is baffled and horrified at their decision to bring it, but also deeply saddened by his passing: she had a great respect for the old orc.

More Information

Mesos' Bane & Magical Flux

Savila theorizes that the changes in Mesos' Bane are to do with a magical item she knows to have been stored nearby (the *Clasp of Vergren*). Mesos' Bane has a much greater effect on the Academy simply due to the concentration of magical power here.

Tsendur's Visit

Savila shared all she knew about the deedbox and Clasp during her meeting with Tsendur. She will repeat it now if asked but has no new information.

Maghiel

When Savila has time to think (i.e. after the ritual), she will make the connection between these magic items and the elven woman, Maghiel, who visited the library shortly after Tsendur. She will then immediately make the connection between the name Maghiel and the infamous "Maghiel the Shunned" (it's a common elven name so the connection did not occur to her before this point).

Savila can tell the party everything they could have learned in the library. She suggests that if they want more detail, Lokil would be the place to seek it. She suggests her uncle Alliki Nebega to them as a contact (though she does not reveal, unless asked, that he holds the prestigious position of Master of Lore).

The Ritual

Overview

The ritual is the *True Ritual of Dispersal*. It is relatively weak compared to other True Rituals, but still complex. Rules for the ritual are below. In practice, it consists of the engineers in the room dragging their machine into the center of the space, powering it up (using the magic of cantrips provided by apprentices), and Savila and the three other mages powerful enough to participate standing at the four compass points around the machine, while Savila leads the ritual chant, reading from a huge, leatherbound book.

The True Ritual of Dispersal

This is not the first time the concentrated magical energies in the Academy have required intervention. It would be incredible if the mages there had not developed a means of restoring order. Such is the purpose of the *True Ritual of Dispersal.*

3rd level arcane transmutation ritual

Casting Time: 3 hours

Range: Touch, (½ mile radius)

Components: V, S, M (arcane machinery worth 2,500 gp)

This ritual can only be performed in the Academy of Magic and Sciences in the Bridged City.

When this ritual is completed, a wave of energy ripples out across the affected area, dissipating all magic in its path. All magical effects of 3rd level or lower are automatically dispelled. For each spell of 4th level or higher on the target, make an ability check using the spellcasting ability of the primary ritual caster. The DC equals 10 + the spell's level. On a successful check, the spell ends. Summoned creatures make a Charisma save against the same DC; on a failed check they return to their plane of origin. Permanent magical effects are not dispelled but are disrupted (i.e. they do not function) for one hour after the ritual ends.

At higher levels. When this ritual is cast using a spell slot of 4th level or higher, magical effects are automatically dispelled if the effect's level is equal to or less than the level of the spell slot used for the ritual.

Involving the Characters

The success of this scene depends on creating an atmosphere. If you have the ability to control lighting and music, consider doing so. Bring the ritual to life and describe the ebb and flow of pure magic that fills the Great Hall as this raw, almost living force thrashes and twists against the casters' control. Convey the exhilaration of a good result on the roll, and the exhaustion and mental agony of a bad one.

This scene will be much more effective if the characters take a role in the ritual. There are several options:

Secondary Casters. Party members who have at least 3 levels in Bard, Sorcerer, Warlock, or Wizard can replace one of the mages supporting Savila. They make an **Intelligence (Arcana)** check each hour of the ritual to determine their impact.

Proxies. Party members who do not qualify to be secondary casters can instead work together to replace a maximum of one of the secondary casters. Proxies must have a total of 6 levels (e.g. 3 x 2nd level characters).

AVERAGE RESULT	HOUR 1	HOUR 2	HOUR 3
13 or lower	Each caster and proxy rolls on the Mesos' Bane table. The effects linger for 1d4 days.	6+2d8 shadows manifest in the Great Hall and must be defeated. There are enough NPCs to do this if the characters cannot.	Characters' own magic is strongly affected by Mesos' Bane. For the next 1d4+1 days they have a 10% chance of spell failure on any Arcane spell cast.
14-16	Ritual progresses as normal.	Ritual progresses as normal.	Ritual progresses as normal.
17 or higher	Time required to complete the ritual is reduced to 2 hours.	The flow of magic replenishes and empowers the casters. Primary caster receives 1 level of exhaustion instead of the usual 3; secondary casters and proxies do not receive exhaustion.	The flow of magic coalesces into a momentary vision: Maghiel the Shunned, holding the Clasp of Vergren, looking over a decaying, dilapidated temple to Madriel.

Proxies also make an **Intelligence (Arcana)** check each hour of the ritual.

Maintenance. Channeling concentrated magic is hazardous to the machinery at the centre of the ritual. Characters can assist or replace the engineers in the room in their maintenance, making an ability check of an appropriate combination of ability and tool proficiency (e.g. smith's tools) each hour of the ritual.

Ask the characters to describe what they do to help, e.g. how proxies figure out the words of the ritual, exactly what tinkering maintenance assistants are doing.

Collect rolls from the Academy mages (assume that they all roll 15) and party members who are involved and calculate their average result. Outcomes are as indicated on the table, above.

DEVELOPMENT

This scene — and the adventure — are complete when the characters restore balance to the flow of magic in the Academy. The ritual concludes successfully and the world lurches as chunks of time and space knit themselves back together like broken bones.

Savila expresses her gratitude and offers the characters whatever assistance the Academy can provide, if they choose to pursue and oppose Maghiel.

CONCLUSION

When the ritual concludes, the characters have helped to stabilize the Academy, learned more about Maghiel and her strategy, and earned another level. They may, if they wish, spend more time in the Academy to do further research on Maghiel, the Clasp of Vergren, or Drendali's Deedbox, but there is little more to learn… and if Maghiel really is heading to Lapo, she has several days' lead.

- If you prefer to track experience rather than use milestone advancement, award XP as follows:
- Per bandit killed/dealt with (including negotiation & roleplaying) 25xp
- Per shadow killed 100xp
- Taking active role in ritual 200xp per player
- Library/other info gathering 100xp per player
- Roleplaying award (up to) 200 xp per player

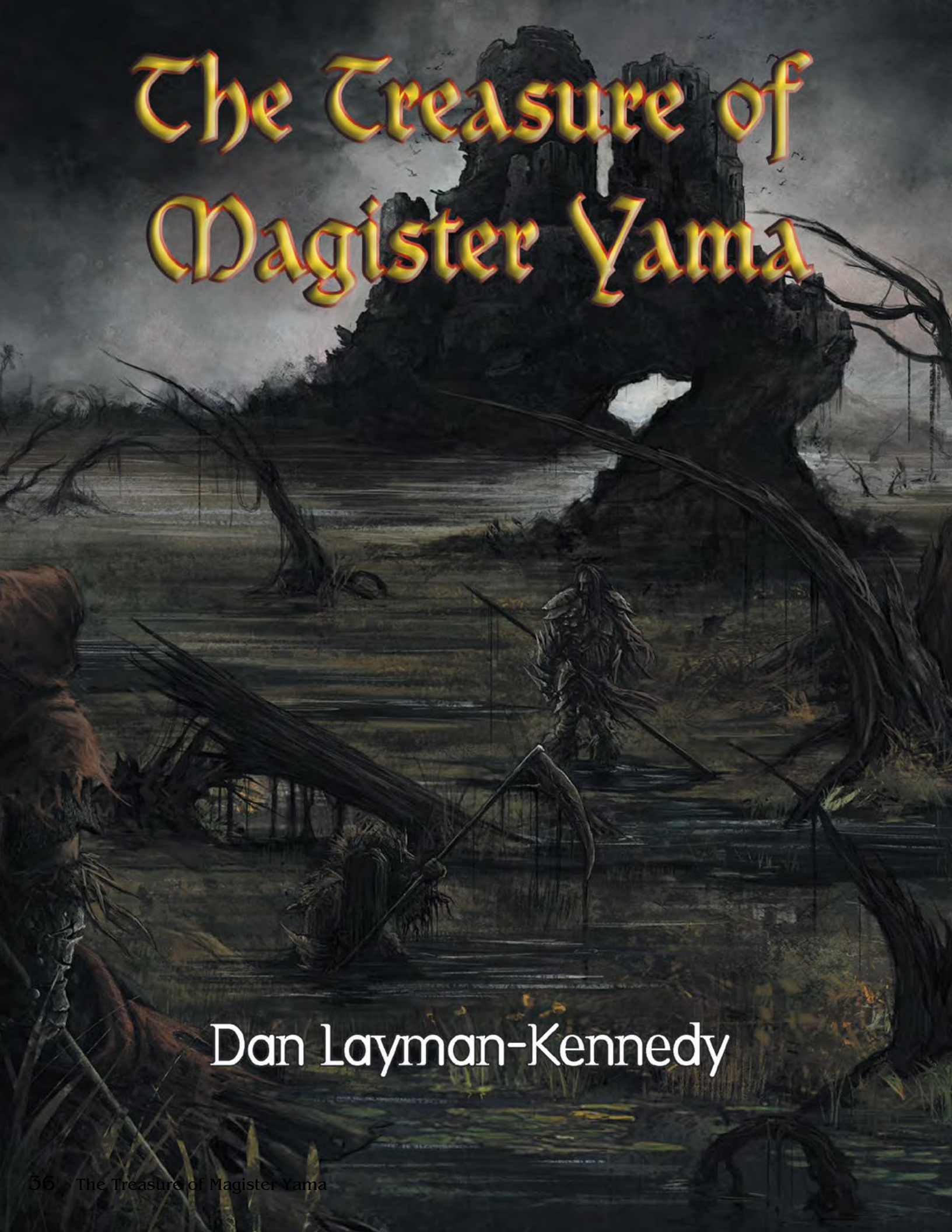
REWARDS

WINGED KEY

This is a brass key with a design of feathered wings. This iconography is usually related to the goddess Madriel.

LAPO MAP

Characters may, if they wish, make a copy of the map and notes Maghiel made. Lapo is an insignificant village, but it is reputed to be near the site of a great cathedral to Madriel — an elaborate monument, but one that was abandoned long ago, for unknown reasons.


The Treasure of Magister Yama
Dan Layman-Kennedy

INTRODUCTION

The Treasure of Magister Yama is an adventure designed for four to six characters of 3rd level, though it can easily be adjusted for larger or smaller groups or groups with an average party level (APL) higher than 3rd. It could also, with some thought, be adjusted for a party with a lower APL, though the challenging encounters in this adventure may prove deadly to a 1st or 2nd-level party even with adjustment.

The adventure takes place in the foothills of the Kelder Mountains, south of the Bridged City and east of the Skykeep Ruins. The action follows after the events of **A Scholarly Schism** and begins with the pursuit of the necromancer Maghiel to the site of the former village of Lapo, where the characters must undo the damage she has done by awakening an ancient Slarecian artifact.

SYNOPSIS

The characters' pursuit of Maghiel the Shunned leads them to an abandoned temple in the shadow of the Kelder Mountains, far from civilization. There, they discover that the mad necromancer has activated a Slarecian relic whose magic has the potential to warp everything around it – and its effects are spreading. Shutting it down will require the use of a device the temple's last priest left behind – but it's hidden in a treasure stash that won't be easy to obtain.

BACKGROUND

At the end of the Divine War, a great temple to Madriel was built in the wilderness at the foothills of the Kelder Mountains. Harnessing the strength of defeated elementals and other titanspawn, the priests of the First Angel raised a vast cathedral on a high place overlooking the village of Lapo, intended as a beacon of light and mercy and learning in the dark wilds. The temple was itself a monument to the victory of the gods – it was laid over a church used by the cult of the titan Chern, as though the weight of its vast architecture restrained the powers cast down in the Divine War. But the site held even deeper secrets; the titan cult had itself built over the ancient site of a Slarecian artifact, the *Sidereon*, and was drawing on its weird power to fuel its dreadful rites. When the architects of Madriel's temple

Evoking Atmosphere

This adventure contains a number of elements drawn from two strains of horror fiction: backwoods horror, which is exemplified in American movies such as *The Hills Have Eyes* and *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*, but also to some extent in British folk horror films such as *The Wicker Man* and *The Blood on Satan's Claw*; and antiquarian horror, which was pioneered in large part by the ghost stories of M.R. James, to whom Lovecraft and his contemporaries and acolytes did a great deal of homage.

While on the surface they seem to be contradictory, these two genres have some interesting elements in common. Both are concerned with old things, especially ones that are decaying or degenerating. Both often feature protagonists who are brought out of comfortable civilization to confront a world that is more primal and merciless than the one they know. And both often contain themes of corruption, as contact with this primal world tends to twist the minds, and often the bodies, of the poor souls who are exposed to realities the human mind was not meant to contemplate.

If you want to bring these elements to the foreground, there are a few things you can do to highlight them in this adventure. Let your descriptions emphasize not only the age of the adventure's setting – the primordial pine forest, the ancient stones of the titan cult's church – but the decay at work. Shacks and cabins lean and creak, their roofs tattered and their walls rotting. The landscape is dotted with ruins, old houses being slowly consumed by fungus and crumbling into the wilderness. Even the temple of Madriel sits on a foundation that is cracked and corrupted with ageless evil. And the NPCs and other creatures the characters encounter are being slowly unmade by the forces they live near; even the ones who aren't being turned into actual monsters are unwholesome-looking, their flesh plagued by boils and tumors, their limbs disfigured, their clothes ragged and fraying.

A note of caution here, however: Both fantasy and horror have a bad record of equating disfigurement, disability, and ugliness with evil. While this style of horror works in part by playing on subconscious fears of death and disease and discomfort with asymmetry, it's not necessary to take these assumptions at face value. Indeed, parts of this adventure are intended to subvert this idea – the withered crone Zavia and the mutated Xurxos are useful allies if the characters are able to treat them as people and not monsters. As always, keep the sensitivities of your group in mind, and make sure you have consent before dialing up the horror elements.

left themselves secret passageways to this source of alien magic instead of sealing it forever in the earth, they laid the foundations for their order's doom.

The temple lasted only half a century as a working sanctuary and place of learning and worship. Its third caretaker, Magister Yama, found himself increasingly seduced by the secrets left behind by the Slarecians, and used the *Sidereon*'s power for his own ends, gazing into strange worlds and summoning servitors from undreamed-of planes. The price of his study was harsh, and he died a little under a century ago, twisted in mind and body – but not before leaving a journal of all he had learned and accomplished.

Now the tale of the temple at Lapo is a cautionary one, spoken of quietly in select and secret circles. Sages know of the folly of Magister Yama in attempting to draw upon that which he could not master and speak his name as one who should have left dead things buried. Others have been tempted to seek out his writings and claim his secrets for their own, but the temple's location in the wild woodlands in the Kelder foothills makes such excursions difficult. Where the village of Lapo once stood is now mostly overgrown with pine forest and bramble, and rumors of cannibal hill-dwellers and dreadfully mutated creatures in the area around the temple keep almost all such would-be seekers after forbidden knowledge away.

The necromancer Maghiel, flush from her victory in obtaining the *Clasp of Vergren*, was not so easily dissuaded. When her researches into sources of otherworldly power told her of Magister Yama's experiments with the *Sidereon*, she knew she had found the thing she needed for the next step in her design. She used a *spell scroll of teleportation circle* to bring herself to the closest place to Lapo familiar to her, from which she made her way to the temple. Once there, she easily unlocked its secrets, awakening the *Sidereon* from its long dormancy to call forth a relic from a distant plane – and then left to carry out her plans elsewhere, leaving the Slarecian machine spilling a wave of alien dweomer into the land around it, which has already begun to feel its warping effects.

Fortunately, Magister Yama foresaw the possibility of such an occurrence, and left a key that would shut down the *Sidereon* in an emergency, stowed in one of his treasure caches. But he didn't leave his treasures unguarded…

Involving the PCs

The clue left by Maghiel in **A Scholarly Schism** read *"Lapo – find the Magister's Temple here."* This should be sufficient to point the player characters in the right direction, assuming they're already committed to pursuing the mad necromancer and stopping her plans.

A successful **DC 15 Intelligence (History)** check allows a PC to recall that Lapo was an old village in the Kelder foothills, and that its location would be easy to find on regional maps from prior to the last century or so. A result of 20 or higher on this check also reveals that a temple to Madriel was built there and later abandoned for mysterious reasons. If no character succeeds on this check, 1d4 hours of research in the libraries of the Bridged City will reveal all of this information.

The title Magister connected to the location is slightly more obscure. A successful **DC 18 Intelligence (Arcana)** check made by a character with an appropriate background or training (at the GM's discretion) might reveal some vague information: that a person called Magister Yama was a priest who went mad after looking too far into knowledge mortals were not meant to learn, and perhaps that he was associated with the temple of Madriel at Lapo. Other details about him should probably be reserved for discovery in the course of the adventure.

The existence and nature of the *Sidereon* is a carefully guarded arcane secret, and one that Maghiel was only able to uncover due to her unique talents. Even if the characters know someone who might hold such knowledge, a person of that sort would be likely to warn them against asking after such things, and to stay far away from dangerous magics.

Lapo

Former small village, chaotic neutral

Population: Unknown, but likely <100
Government: Anarchy
Defense: Inhospitable terrain, hostile natives, dangerous wildlife
Commerce: Barter, some farming
Organizations: None outside family/clan structures

Notable NPCs

Magister Yama (deceased)
Yeoman Golshan, formerly a farmer, now a mutant
Xurxos, a satyr and mutant
Zavia, a crofter

Lapo

The area that was once the town of Lapo lies at the foot of the Kelder Mountains, due east of the Skykeep Ruins. The land here is hilly and heavily forested, with pine woods predominating and thorn scrub making many places all but impassable. The stony hills rise sharply in places, with ancient stairways carved into the hillsides the most reliable way of climbing to higher elevations.

The settlement of Lapo itself is now mostly in ruins, a handful of decaying cottages swallowed by the encroaching wood. Only a few inhabitants now call Lapo home, crofters and hunters in isolated cabins living off the land when they can, journeying to the nearest towns to trade for supplies and food when they can't. The largest homestead in the area is the pig farm kept by Yeoman Golshan, who has defied local superstition by building closer to the old temple of Madriel than anyone has dared in a generation. Golshan's farm lies on a little patch of worked fields and orchards in the shadow of the pine woods, cleared and maintained at great effort by Golshan and his farmhands.

Other Entries to This Adventure

If the characters didn't uncover the clue left in **A Scholarly Schism** that explicitly named Lapo as Maghiel's destination, an investigation of her last known location in the Bridged City – perhaps with assistance from the Academy of Magic – reveals that the *teleportation circle* spell was cast from a scroll. Academy mages are able to analyze the sigil signature to trace her destination to an old circle near Chandler's Folly – an utterly unremarkable town, save that it is the closest settlement of any significance near a long-abandoned temple of Madriel reputed to be a place of great (and quite possibly dangerous) power.

If the characters have not played through **A Scholarly Schism**, they can still begin in the Bridged City investigating the aftermath of Maghiel's actions there, with NPCs supplying whatever clues they need to guide them to Lapo. Alternatively, they might begin in Chandler's Folly, following rumors of a traveling elf wizard who asked strange questions about nearby sites, or of news coming out of the hills of mutant creatures and other strange phenomena. Perhaps when Yeoman Golshan's cart of foodstuffs doesn't show up at its expected time, the town sheriff, missing his longed-for bacon, sends someone out to investigate…

Chapter One: The Angel's Averted Gaze

The road that leads to Lapo runs south from the Bridged City, curving out from the Kelder Mountains to wind through scattered towns and farms far from civilized lands. The journey is nearly 100 miles and requires several days of travel.

At a little village called Chandler's Folly (the last more or less civilized place the characters have the opportunity to rest in before their destination), the path turns sharply west, and the landscape becomes increasingly wild and uneven, with pine woods becoming more and more dominant and the signs of settlement almost entirely absent. Soon the road all but disappears, with little more than a worn footpath to mark the way.

The characters arrive in the area of Lapo around dusk, just as the sun drops below the peaks of the Kelders.

The place you've come to is where Lapo was marked on old maps, but there's no village to be seen – only the stony foothills of the Kelder Mountains rising up in the lengthening shadows, and miles of pine forest and thorny bramble stretching all around. There's only one sign of anything like civilization here: A single point of light, flickering in the window of a cottage half-hidden behind the trees.

Small Comfort

The cottage belongs to Zavia (N female human **commoner**), an old crofter who has lived here off the land her whole life and seen children and grandchildren grow and move away from the wilderness; a granddaughter in Chandler's Folly visits every few weeks to make sure she has enough to eat, but otherwise she takes care of herself with the aid of Grimwarden, her brindled **mastiff**. Unfortunately, Grim's not as young as he once was either; he no longer has advantage on **Wisdom (Perception)** checks that rely on hearing and has disadvantage on **Wisdom (Perception)** checks that rely on sight.

Zavia greets any characters who knock on her cottage door with wariness, but almost any approach that reassures her that visitors mean no harm brings down her guard enough that she calls off Grim and grants them entry. She is ancient and round and wrinkled, with tumor-riddled skin and more fingers than teeth, and she smokes a blackened wooden pipe that wafts foul-smelling smoke through the cottage.

Zavia's house is small – little more than a single room with two chairs, a threadbare rug made of rags, and a fireplace with an iron pot hung beside it. Zavia lets the characters in and brings them by the fire to warm them, and to get a better look at them by the light of her single lantern. If she's treated with respect, a conversation with her can reveal the following information:

- There's no real village here and hasn't been for many years. When the old temple was abandoned, things got a lot worse for the local folk, and when most of them died off or left, the forest ate up what they left behind. You can see the remains of some of the old houses still, but no one but a fool goes in one. Only unnatural things live in such places now.

Other Locals

If the characters choose to explore the area and look for other inhabitants to press for information about the temple, they're sure to find themselves frustrated. While not every local is actively hostile, few are as welcoming as Zavia, and some are bad news indeed. The following represent some sample encounters with less-than-helpful Lapoans:

Esau Pyke lives, along with his several wives and various sons and daughters, in a sprawling, patched-up log house a couple of miles west of Zavia's cottage, sitting atop a high hill amid a grove of ancient pines. Esau and his family love to welcome visitors to their home, and treat guests with a great deal of fawning subservience, making very sure they're warm and comfortable and have enough to eat. Unfortunately, this is because the Pykes are dedicated cannibals eager to fatten up new candidates for their long-empty stewpot. It shouldn't take the characters long to figure out that something is seriously amiss in Esau's indulgent hospitality, but even so they'll need luck on their side to escape his house with their skins intact. Esau Pyke has the statistics of a **bandit captain**, while the rest of his unsavory brood are a collection of assorted **bandits**, **berserkers**, **thugs**, and **tribal warriors** as the GM sees fit.

Ma Stercus is a grandmotherly dowager who lives in the partially renovated ruin of what was once the Mayor of Lapo's house, assisted by her five "sons" (who look nothing at all like her, or each other) in looking after a clutch of seven young children of various ages. "Little lambies get lost in the woods, and sometimes they're lucky enough I finds 'em," she says, though of course the truth is much more awful: Stercus has for years been abducting children from Chandler's Folly and perhaps other places and bringing them back to be raised by her. Ma Stercus is the last descendant of the titan cult that once worshipped where the temple of Madriel now stands, and these abductions are how she indoctrinates new followers of Chern. She has no desire to move back into the old temple now that it's been "tainted" with worship of the First Angel, but she does hope to one day grow her cult to a size that can spread its message beyond the woods of Lapo – by force if necessary. Ma Stercus is a **cult fanatic**, her "sons" are **cultists**, and one or two of the older children might even be **acolytes** showing a promising gift for wielding the titan's divine power. Putting a stop to the cult and rescuing the children (not all of whom are eager to be rescued) might make an interesting side quest – though it's also possible Ma Stercus has other sons and daughters even now at work far afield.

Glomus Corncap is an eccentric dwarf **druid** whose mushroom-covered cottage sits in a small glade ringed with oak and pine. He is a friendly, if intensely quirky, host; he almost never leaves his cottage and enjoys seeing new people. He is also completely mad and obsessed with fungus, which he cultivates in a garden behind his home and uses for most of his day-to-day needs. His prize specimens, however, are raised in his expansive cellar: a collection of **violet fungi** that he keeps fed on the occasional animal that wanders his way. Characters visiting Glomus are likely to be offered hospitality that includes a sedative mushroom tea (**DC 15 Constitution saving throw** to avoid falling unconscious) and wake up in the dark, surrounded by predatory mushrooms – unless they spot the piles of fungus-covered bones at the bottom of the dwarf's garden first.

- The old temple is still up on the hill, but folk stay away from it. Some say it's haunted, some say it's cursed, but everyone agrees nothing good comes of visiting there, and horrible creatures are said to lurk in the woods nearby. If the First Angel ever watched over Lapo, she turned her eyes away long ago.

- Zavia lives about as near as any soul dares to the old temple save for Yeoman Golshan, who staked out his pig farm closer to that site than anyone has in generations. He keeps to himself except when he has meat to sell, though sometimes he allows his farmhands a holiday over in Chandler's Folly. Everyone thinks Golshan's mad, but his bacon's good, so folk trade with him and mind their own business as he minds his.

If given the name Magister Yama, Zavia recalls that might've been the name of the last priest to see over the temple, but that was nearly a hundred years ago. She has no idea what a "*Sidereon*" might be. If the characters ask about Maghiel, Zavia says the following:

"Aye, as it happens, an elf like that was through here a few days ago, and askin' after the temple too. I told her what I'd tell anyone: If yer fool enough to seek after it, ask Golshan the way. I reckon if anyone could point the way up the hill to that place, it's him."

Zavia can't put the characters up for the night – she simply doesn't have the room – but she'll happily share her pot of greasy barley soup before they set off. She suggests that Yeoman Golshan might give them a spot in his barn to sleep ("if ye don't much mind sharing with the pigs and the donkey, that is"), but they'll have to hurry if they want to catch him before he beds down himself, as he'll be less than charitable if they rouse him from sleep. Otherwise, they'd do well to make camp where they can find it.

Strange Husbandry

If the characters choose to make camp, their first night should be unsettling, but uneventful – a chance to build up the strangeness and isolation of Lapo (and perhaps build a little tension) without directly threatening the party. By the same token, their journey to the Golshan farm, whether they go immediately or wait until first light, should be free of dangerous encounters – but feel free to take the opportunity to emphasize the uncanny qualities of the local wilderness. Even characters used to being in the wild can feel something off about this area, and characters who are sensitive to the natural world such as druids and rangers can sense that the land is out of balance, infected by something unnatural.

When the characters arrive at the Golshan farm, whether after dark or in the morning, they find it silent and abandoned. The first sign of trouble is an overturned cart, its harness ties broken; this was attached to the farm's donkey, which was spared the transformations that wracked the other inhabitants and managed to burst away in a panic and run. The cart's contents – barrels of salted pork and smoked sausages to trade in Chandler's Folly, and empty sacks that would have held grain on the return trip – are lying by the trail, with clouds of flies swarming around them. The tracks clearly lead from the farm ahead; a character that succeeds on a **DC 12 Wisdom (Survival)** check can tell that they are perhaps two days old.

Golshan Farm Map

Approaching from the south, the characters encounter the looming hulk of the barn first, then see the rest of the farmstead beyond: a little patch of worked fields and orchards in the shadow of the pine woods, cleared and maintained at great effort by Yeoman Golshan and his farmhands. In contrast to Zavia's cottage and the looming unease of the Lapo woods, Golshan's farm looks well-kept and welcoming – or it would be, if anyone were here to make the characters welcome.

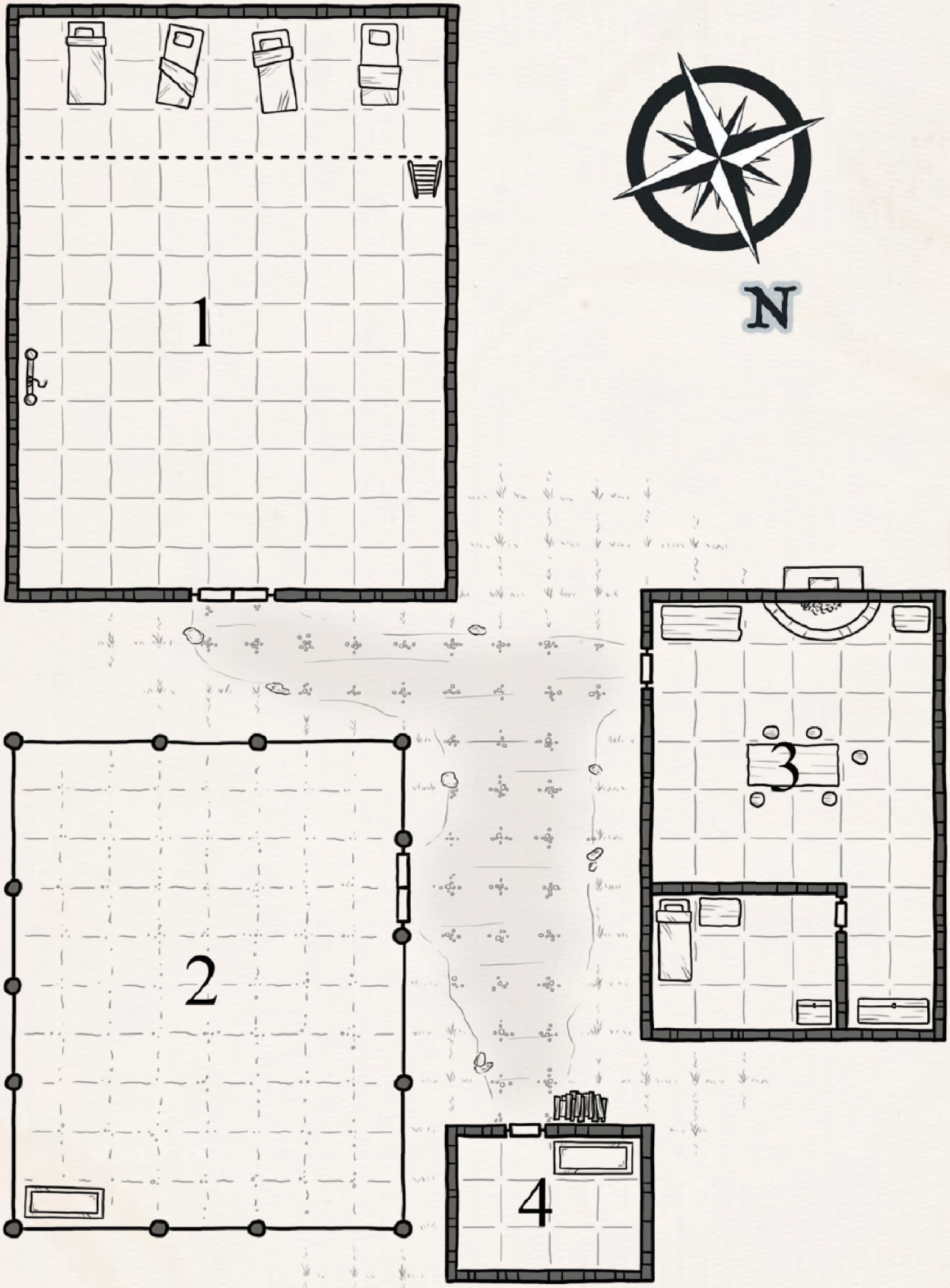
1. Barn

This building is the largest structure on the site and is constructed of sturdy wooden planks. Large double doors (unlocked) are the only entrance. The lower level is mostly a carpet of hay, with a few unbroken bales still stacked under the loft. A few tools (shovels and pitchforks) and a large wooden bucket stand against one back corner beneath the loft, along with several barrels of grain used for feed. Against one wall is a hitching post where the farm's donkey was stabled. A wooden ladder leads to the loft, where the farmhands sleep on makeshift beds made of hay-stuffed sackcloth covered in woolen blankets. A single empty chamberpot is the only other item.

Treasure. Stuffed inside each sackcloth mattress is a leather purse containing the farmhand's saved money – a total of 41 sp and 28 cp between all of them.

2. Swine Enclosure

This pen is made of heavy planks nailed to tree-trunk posts; the double wooden gate now hangs open. In one corner is a wide basin used for slops, still half full of grain, bread ends, and apple cores. The ground inside the enclosure is mud, in which lie the partially-eaten bodies of six horrifically mutated pigs – the characters' first sight of the dreadful effects of the *Sidereon*. These creatures are **banewarped hogs** (see **Book 11: Peril Primer**) – eyeless, six-legged, covered in tumors and boils, and each with a dreadful mouthful of rows of razor teeth. A success on a **DC 15 Wisdom (Survival)** check reveals that their wounds were inflicted as they attempted to consume one another in a cannibalistic frenzy. A series of muddy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tracks leads out of the open gate and into the nearby woods; a successful **DC 18 Wisdom (Survival)** check tells that two hogs, probably the largest of the herd, survived and wandered off, and that the tracks are about two days old. Buried under the hog corpses is another partial body – Golshan's youngest farmhand, who was the one unfortunate enough to be on feeding duty the morning the pigs transformed. The remains are obvious to anyone who makes a search of the enclosure; otherwise, a successful **DC 17 Wisdom (Perception)** check is needed to spot the fingertips just emerging from the mud. Only a single arm and part of a torso remain, belonging to a human male in late adolescence (discoverable on a successful **DC 15 Wisdom (Medicine)** check) – the rest was consumed by the hogs.

3. Farmhouse

This single-story building is constructed of plain stone with a shingled roof and a door of iron-banded oak. Most of the interior is a single common room dominated by a huge fireplace and hearth that serves as the kitchen stove. On either side of the fireplace are sideboard tables; on the left, the wider table is used for food preparation and holds a set of well-kept knives and cleavers. Above it, a pot rack hangs from a ceiling chain and features several heavy pans dangling from iron hooks. The smaller table on the right holds a large clay bowl used for washing as well as the stack of wooden serving bowls used for dining by Yeoman Golshan and his farmhands. To one side of the fireplace, a string of black and greasy (but quite edible) sausages hangs from a hook. In the middle of the room is a massive wooden dining table with five sturdy chairs arranged around it. Golshan's chair, at the head of the table, is larger than the rest and features rough carvings of oak branches and boars. Golshan's bedroom is separated from the rest of the house by wooden walls and a heavy, locked door. His bed of rough-hewn logs and a nightstand with an oil lamp occupy one side, and a locked wooden chest containing his valuables stands in the corner opposite the bed. At the end of the hallway outside his room, a large, unlocked trunk contains a variety of tools and implements used around the house and farmstead. Also in this trunk is a roll of sturdy vellum showing a rough but fairly accurate map of the nearby area, including the location of the temple and the two sets of stone stairs needed to climb the hill to get to it.

Treasure. Golshan's bedroom and the chest inside both require a successful **DC 17 Dexterity check using thieves' tools** to unlock. The chest contains his worldly fortune, such as it is: 23 gp, 118 sp, 210 cp, a hunting knife with a beautifully carved bone handle with silver inlay worth 5 gp, a heavy crossbow with an ornately carved stock worth 75 gp, and a quiver of 20 bolts.

4. Shed

The door to this wooden outbuilding is locked, requiring a successful **DC 15 Dexterity check using thieves' tools** to gain access. Inside are a variety of farm implements, including a small plough and the scythes, axes, and billhooks used for maintaining the farm grounds. Also here are the

What Happened at the Golshan Farm

Yeoman Golshan was thought of with mixed admiration and suspicion by other locals, who thought him mad to build so close to the old temple but were also secretly a little impressed with his audacity. To his hired hands, he was a firm but fair master who worked them hard but not harshly and shared the bounty of his table – a tough man, but he had to be to carve out his oasis of well-tended pastoral order in the Lapo wilderness.

Three days ago, Maghiel came to the Golshan farmstead and asked for directions to the temple of Madriel, which Golshan was happy to provide. That evening, she used the *Clasp of Vergren* to awaken the *Sidereon*, and a wave of eldritch energy washed over the surrounding area, including the farmstead.

The next morning, Jamosh, the youngest farmhand, came out at dawn to harness the donkey-cart for a trip to Chandler's Folly. When he next went to feed the pigs, he found them transformed into horrifying monsters; they seized and devoured him before turning on each other, leaving only two survivors to escape into the wild.

As this was happening, Golshan and the other three farmhands were undergoing their own transformation as the seeds planted by the *Sidereon* the previous night took root and blossomed. Changed into hideous banewarped mutants, they took up their butchers' implements and walked out into the woods in search of meat. At the sight of this, the harnessed donkey panicked and bolted, managing to free itself of the cart a little way down the trail before turning towards Chandler's Folly. It's since been taken in by a lovely family who will be sure to keep it in oats and apples for the rest of its days, just in case you were worried there were no happy endings for anyone from Lapo.

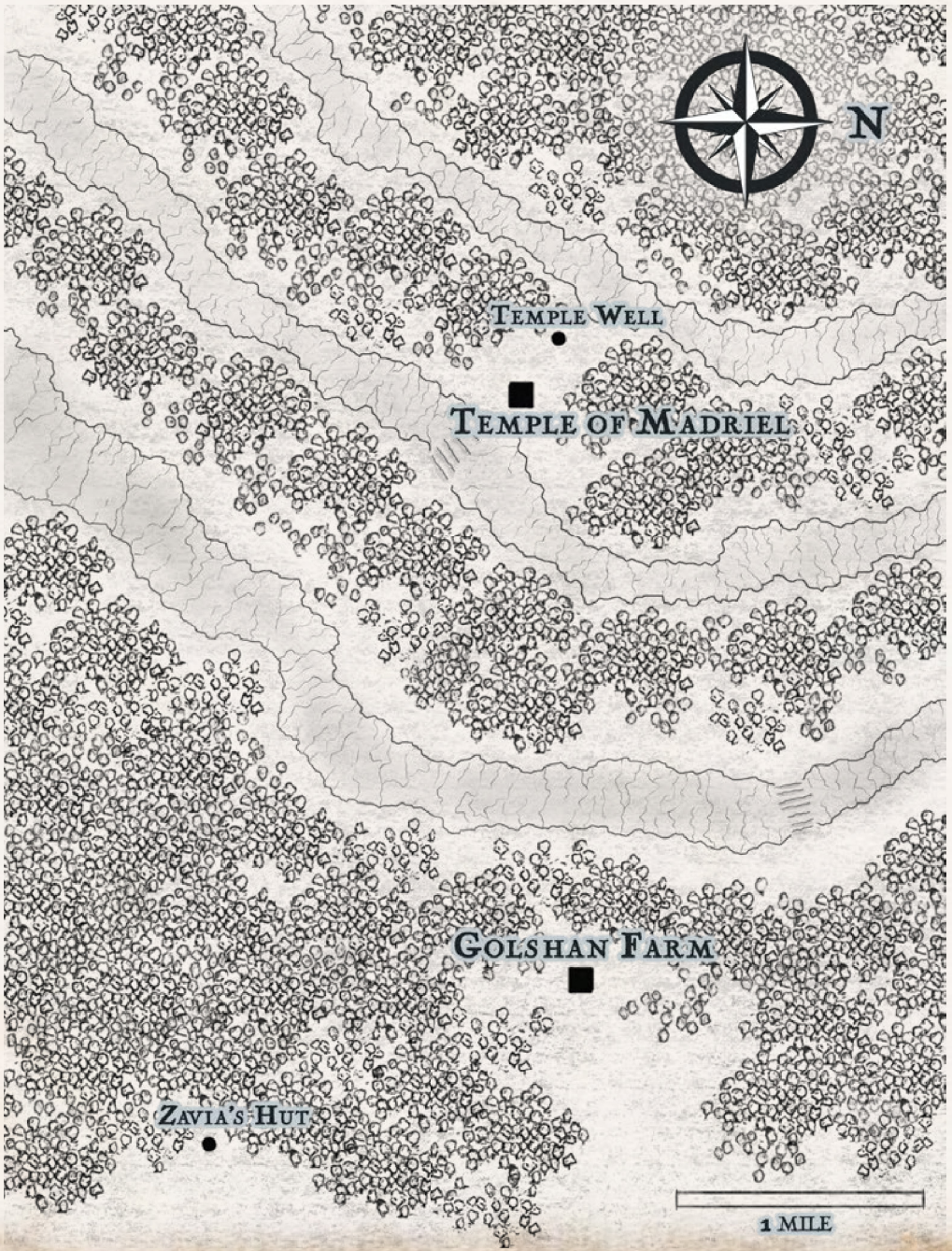
various knives and other tools used for slaughter, and a large basin used for collecting pig's blood. Outside the shed, a small pile of firewood is stacked on the side opposite the swine enclosure, and an axe is driven into a chopping block nearby. (This is used strictly for woodcutting, not animal slaughter; the pigs are taken off to a site in the nearby woods, where another well-used block shows the stains of its purpose.)

Hog Attack

Once the characters have had an opportunity to explore the farm and its buildings and find the map leading the way to the temple, the pigs return home to see if any food awaits them there. A pair of **banewarped hogs** crashes out of the woods as soon as the party is prepared to set out, acid saliva dripping from their monstrous jaws.

The hogs are looking for easy prey and not expecting a fight. The first time a hog drops to half its hit points, and again each time its Unnatural Fortitude feature allows it to survive with 1 point, have both hogs make a **Wisdom saving throw** with a DC of 15 minus the number of player characters who are conscious. The first time a hog succeeds on this save, both leave the scene and return to the forest.

When the battle with the hogs is resolved, the characters will likely be ready to seek out the temple. If they choose to rest in the Golshan farmhouse, the rest should pass uneventfully – but if they take a long rest here, note the "Effects of the *Sidereon*" sidebar.



Effects of the Sidereon

The Slarecians built the *Sidereon* as a device to open gates to planar realms beyond the ones generally known in the Scarn cosmology – weird, truly alien places of mind-shattering aspect. Their science was able to fine-tune its effects; the cultists of Chern who attempted to use it to spread sickness in the name of their patron Titan were less successful.

The *Sidereon* has been more or less dormant for centuries, though even in that state it can be used as a focus for rituals drawing on energies from Outside and calling forth entities such as Magister Yama's treasure guardian servitor. Yama's experiments partially awakened the device, which is why it has been slowly leaking eldritch dweomer into the temple and its surroundings for decades, resulting in the mutation of Yama and Xurxos as well as some of the nearby wildlife.

When Maghiel arrived a few days ago and used the *Clasp of Vergren* to help her awaken the *Sidereon* completely, the Clasp's function as the focal point for Mesos' Bane accelerated its effects. A wave of alien energy washed over the area, mutating the inhabitants of Golshan's farm and a number of other creatures in the local forest. Complicating this is that the awakened *Sidereon* has a kind of sentience; it wants to bring creative changes on the life it senses around it, and it sees Mesos' Bane as a useful vector to do so. As it continues to reach its consciousness out, its effects will spread, creating wave after wave of banewarped mutants across Ghelspad and beyond.

Effects on the PCs

In the short term, the player characters run the risk of being subjected to the *Sidereon*'s mutating properties. From when the party arrives on Golshan's farm onward, a character that takes a long rest must succeed on a **DC 10 Constitution saving throw** or begin to be changed. A character that has a feature granting immunity to disease has advantage on this roll. On a failed save, the character acquires a single cosmetic mutation from the table in the **banewarped creature template** (see **Book 11: Peril Primer**). This effect is minor at first – for example, Twisted Limbs might result in gaining an extra finger joint, or Exposed Viscera might start as a gut wound that refuses to close.

On the character's second failed Constitution saving throw, the cosmetic mutation becomes full-blown. A character that fails this save by 5 or more also gains a second cosmetic mutation, which progresses much more rapidly than the first. On the character's third failed save, the final transformation takes place; the character gains the complete banewarped creature template, acquiring one or more useful mutations in the process.

If the character is not yet a **banewarped creature**, *lesser restoration* removes one cosmetic mutation, and *remove curse* removes all cosmetic mutations at once in a character that has more than one. Once a character becomes a **banewarped creature**, *greater restoration* reverses this effect if it is cast within 13 days of the transformation and the afflicted character is not within 10 miles of the *Sidereon*. (This distance is tripled if the *Sidereon* is still fully awake.) Once 13 days have passed, nothing short of a *wish* can restore a creature whose mutation is complete.

If a player character becomes a **banewarped creature** and lacks the means to reverse the effect before 13 days are up, the player and the GM should work together to discuss whether the character is still suitable for adventuring.

Chapter Two: The Titan's Long Shadow

The path to the temple of Madriel leads through the pine woods and up the hillside. The easier path winds three miles over two sets of stone stairs that each climb up 50 feet. Each character that climbs a set of stone stairs must succeed on a **DC 8 Dexterity saving throw** or take 1d4 bludgeoning damage from slipping on the loose, ancient stones.

The characters can shorten the trip by about a mile if they bypass the first stone stair and climb the first steep rise directly. Doing so requires succeeding on a **DC 12 Strength (Athletics)** check; on a failure, the character falls 1d4 x 10 feet, taking half the usual falling damage from tumbling down the hillside.

Random Encounters

For each mile the party travels, there is a 50% chance of a random encounter. If an encounter happens, roll on the following table and apply the **banewarped creature template** (see **Book 11: Peril Primer**) to the results. Such creatures are hostile, hungry, and aggressive, and are carnivorous in their banewarped forms even if they wouldn't normally behave like predators. However, they may flee after a round or two of combat (at the GM's discretion) if the characters prove to be tough prey.

D10	ENCOUNTER
1	Giant badger
2	Giant goat
3	1d3 **giant lizards**
4	1d4 **elk**
5	1d4+1 **wolves**
6	1d6+1 **giant rats**
7	1d4+2 **bandits**
8	1d4+2 cannibals (treat as **tribal warriors**)
9	Dryad
10	1–2 **ogres**

Such encounters provide an opportunity for the GM to emphasize the increasingly weird and unnatural nature of the region the closer the characters get to the temple and the *Sidereon*. In addition, the landscape itself becomes more and more unsettling as the party travels along. Some of the trees have warped into strange shapes; a few seem to have contorted faces, limbs, or sections of torsos growing out of the wood of their trunks. Stones seem to have arranged themselves into images of twisted faces or grasping hands. And signs of mutation are everywhere; many of the birds, insects, and other small animals that would normally be seen in this type of terrain are misshapen, infested with tumors, or have the wrong number of limbs or heads.

Abandoned Houses

The forest here is scattered with houses that were once part of the village of Lapo before it fell into decay. These are often a mix of wood and stone, and they are in various states of dissolution, many with collapsed roofs and walls and overgrown with vines, fungus, and weeds, and some even partially sunken into the earth as if the land itself is trying to swallow the last remnants of civilization.

If the characters choose to disregard Zavia's warning and explore an abandoned house, roll on the table below to determine what they find.

Treasure. Most houses have long since been emptied of anything valuable, but there is a 1 in 6 chance a house has an old chest or sack containing 2d4x10 gp worth of assorted coins, gems, or jewelry.

D12	ENCOUNTER
1-3	Nothing; the house is badly decayed, but empty.
4	A tree growing up through the house has attained sentience. Though still rooted, it has the statistics of a **shambling mound**, except that its speed is 0.
5	1d4 **phase spiders** have set up residence here and wait in the shadows of the ceiling, in their ethereal state, for prey to enter.
6	A colony of 1d4+2 **mimics** has infiltrated the house and disguised themselves as various doors, chairs, and other furnishings.
7	1d4 **ochre jellies** are hidden among the fungal rot.
8	1d4+1 **stirges** roost in the rafters, waiting for warm prey to pass nearby.
9	1d4 deceased former inhabitants linger on as malevolent **shadows** that rise up to drain the life from anyone who trespasses in their home.
10	A mated pair of **gricks** is nesting here, camouflaging themselves against the ruined stone walls.
11	The corpses of 1d4 former residents have been infested with semi-sentient fungus and rise to attack if their home is disturbed. These creatures use the statistics for **zombies**, except that they have the plant creature type and fire damage prevents their Undead Fortitude feature in addition to radiant damage and critical hits.
12	The floor has collapsed into the cellar, where an **otyugh** has buried itself in the piled refuse. Any character entering the area must succeed on a **DC 15 Wisdom (Perception)** check to spot its exposed eyestalk before it attacks with surprise.

The Sanctuary of the First Angel

Just over the top of the second stone stairway, the temple of Madriel rises against the forest, a vast domed cathedral sixty feet high and over two hundred feet from end to end. Branching off from the main sanctuary are two wings, each rising just over half the height of the central section. The temple's entrance sits atop a three-tiered dais, where four massive columns support a lintel carved with a tableau of Madriel victorious in battle at the end of the Divine War. Underneath, the double doors that fill the tall entrance archway are never locked. When closed, their inlaid carvings show a sunburst surrounded by peacock feathers.

When the characters enter the temple, it is a place of stillness, grandeur, and deep quiet. During the day, its rooms are filled with soft light, and even after dark it maintains its character as a place of serene sanctuary – on its ground level, at any rate.

Temple of Madriel Map: Main Level

As they begin to explore the temple, have the characters make a **DC 12 group Wisdom (Perception)** check. On a success, they note that the thin layer of dust inside the temple is nothing like it should be for a place abandoned for decades – the place clearly has a caretaker.

The caretaker in question is **Xurxos**, the mutated satyr (see **Book 11: Peril Primer**) who has taken up residence in the temple since the death of Magister Yama. When the characters enter, he attempts to evade notice, making a **Dexterity (Stealth)** check with advantage against the group's highest **passive Perception** score. If he manages to sneak past them at first, the characters find him in the third room they enter while exploring the temple.

1. Sanctuary

Inside the ten-foot-thick outer walls, the temple's central space is a study in conveying celestial majesty. Lined with a double row of squared-off pillars, its northwest end is dominated by a vaulted dome set with stained glass showing depictions of Madriel's valor and mercy during the Divine War. These skylight windows suffuse the whole of the sanctuary with tinted light throughout the day, but particularly in the late afternoon before the sun reaches the horizon. At the far end, a dais holds a wide stone altar, behind which stands a 30-foot-tall statue of Madriel with wings unfurled, depicted with flowing robes draped over her armor. She holds her spear in one hand, with the other outstretched in welcoming mercy, and her face shows the sorrow of the Redeemer for the lives she was forced to take during the Divine War. The temple's two wings are behind interior stone walls on either side of the sanctuary, each set with a large, heavily carved wooden door.

2. Library and Scriptorium

The temple's southeast wing houses a library of sacred and historic texts dating from many centuries before the Divine War. The interior walls are lined with six tall bookcases holding this small but well-preserved collection. The center of the room holds three long tables and a scattering of chairs that once served as a scriptorium and study space for visiting scholars and copyists. During the day, this room is filled with natural light from the three tall, peaked windows in the outer wall. When the characters arrive, there is a stack of books and scrolls on the central table, next to an oil lamp that shows the signs of being recently dusted off and lit. The volumes here were consulted by Maghiel a few days ago. A successful **DC 15 Intelligence (Religion)** check reveals that all these works are all concerned with the theoretical origins of the gods and other divine powers, and particularly with the lore of the titans and the rites of their followers.

Using the Temple Library

The library of the temple of Madriel contains a wealth of arcane, religious, and historical knowledge, which the characters may well be tempted to take advantage of at various points in this adventure. If they wish to do so, they can use it in either of two ways.

A character who wishes to simply use the library to acquire general knowledge can spend two hours in dedicated study, and chooses one skill from **Intelligence (Arcana)**, **Intelligence (History)**, **Intelligence (Nature)**, or **Intelligence (Religion)** to focus on. Once within the next ten days, the character can roll with advantage when making an ability check using the chosen skill.

A character who wants to use the library to find specific knowledge about a subject can attempt to track down that information in the library's manuscripts. This process takes 1d4 hours and the character must succeed on a **DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation)** check to find the right sources. If this check succeeds, the character can then attempt a **DC 13 Intelligence (Arcana)**, **Intelligence (History)**, **Intelligence (Nature)**, or **Intelligence (Religion)** check (at the GM's discretion, depending on the knowledge sought) with advantage to learn the desired information. Even on a failed roll, the GM might consider giving out partial information or knowledge that doesn't seem immediately useful.

The library's collection is particularly focused on subjects of interest to the priests who built and used the temple. These subjects include: the history of the Divine War; accounts of the origins and deeds of the gods, especially Madriel; studies of the effects of Mesos' Bane; the history of Ghelspad leading up to the Divine War, and the effects on its geography in the first few decades of the war's aftermath; and surveys of the flora and fauna of the Kelder mountains, including the titanspawn. Inquiries concerning these subjects are likely to yield more complete information that most other areas.

There are even a few books here that have information on Maghiel herself and her role in the Divine War. This information is somewhat more difficult to track down; the research takes 1d4+1 hours and requires a successful **DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation)** check.

If the characters have learned about Maghiel's theft of *The Cantos of the Black Phoenix* and wish to learn more about the contents of that book, a **DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana)** check is required to understand where to begin looking for this information; this replaces the **Intelligence (Investigation)** check for doing other research here. (A character with an appropriate scholarly background might,

at the GM's discretion, have advantage on this check.) If this check is successful, 1d6 hours of study is required, at the end of which the character must attempt a **DC 12 Wisdom (Insight)** check to piece together the information from disparate sources. On a success, the character has a good picture of Maghiel's plan and what she requires to carry it out. On a failure, the character has accurate information, but it's incomplete, and the characters may face a greater challenge in getting ahead of the mad necromancer in the next phase of her plan unless they're able to fill in the gaps in their knowledge elsewhere.

3. Priest's Quarters

This is the chamber where Magister Yama lived out his last days, maintained but unoccupied for many years now by Xurxos. The door to this room is locked but can be opened with a successful **DC 15 Dexterity check using thieves' tools**; alternatively, a successful **DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation)** check in the kitchen reveals the room key under the washbasin next to the hearth. A simple bed, its plain but heavy covers undisturbed for decades, occupies one end of the room. Next to the bed stands a brass brazier that still holds the ashes of the last coals burned in it, and next to it is a wide trunk holding the ancient, now crumbling vestments of its former occupant. On either side of the door, bookcases hold the Magister's private collection of tomes. A careful examination of these bookcases and a successful **DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation)** check reveals two things: one of the books (the Magister's journal) was recently taken out and replaced; and a large book appears to be missing. If the characters have the assistance of Xurxos, he is able to identify the missing volume as *The Cantos of the Black Phoenix*, and that Maghiel took the book with her despite his protestations. A successful **DC 18 Intelligence (Arcana)** or **Intelligence (Religion)** check reveals that this is an extremely rare and notorious book of necromantic lore that is reputed to contain, among other things, information about rituals for resurrecting a dead titan.

Treasure. The trunk is locked and requires a **DC 15 Dexterity check using thieves' tools** to open, or a **DC 18 Intelligence (Investigation)** check to locate the key that Xurxos has hidden inside one of one of the books. Inside, Yama's once-fine vestments have all but fallen to dust, but there is a ceremonial rod bearing Madriel's peacock sunburst worked in gems and gold worth 200 gp, a silver-and-gold holy symbol of Madriel worth 75 gp, and a leather purse of assorted coins and gems totaling 177 gp in value. A search of at least ten minutes and a successful **DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation)** check reveals a *spell scroll of comprehend languages*, a *spell scroll of find traps*, and a *spell scroll of arcanist's magic aura* among the items on the bookshelves.

4. Kitchen

A large fireplace stands against one wall of this room, serving as the old temple's one permanent source of heat; only ashes and cobwebs fill it now. A side table with a clay washbasin stands next to the hearth (Xurxos keeps the room key to the priest's quarters under the basin here), and a longer table once used for food preparation is between the kitchen's two windows. A stone stairway leads down into room B1 of the cellar level.

Roleplaying Xurxos

The mutant satyr Xurxos is a valuable ally in the characters' quest if they can see past his monstrous appearance. As the last person to know the living Magister Yama, and the self-appointed caretaker of the temple, Xurxos is able to provide a number of insights about the forces at work beneath the sanctuary, as well as the actions of Maghiel when she came here a few days ago.

When encountered by the characters, Xurxos' first instinct is to throw himself at their mercy and beg them not to harm the temple; confronted with a group of adventurers, his assumption is that bandits have arrived to sack the place of its treasures, and he is more than willing to offer his miserable life in exchange if he can prevent this.

If the characters manage to reassure him they are no threat, Xurxos is eager to be of help; he knows Maghiel did something terrible and he wants to help set this right. He supplies the characters with Yama's journal if they don't find it on their own, he fills them in on the nature and structure of the levels below the sanctuary, and he leads them through the secret doors in the lower levels to where the *Sidereon* is (though he won't go into its chamber himself now that it's fully awake – "It wants to eat my head from the inside"). He doesn't know about the key in the treasure hidden in the well, but he knows about the treasure itself – he helped build the secret chamber where it's kept. He also doesn't know much about the treasure's guardian, except that "It's old, and awful, and it never sleeps, and the Magister called it from the far dark outside the stars. I never saw it, for it's made partly of ether stuff, and doesn't show itself until it's too late."

Magister Yama's Journal

If the characters don't discover the journal in area 3 on their own, Xurxos (provided he is alive and the characters have allied with him) is quick to let them know of it and inform them that Maghiel was especially interested in its contents.

The journal is written in a patchwork of Ancient Ledean, Primordial, and Titan Speech, and contains the following information for anyone able to read it:

- Magister Yama's account of studying the *Sidereon* and its effects. Key aspects of this are included as handouts in the Appendices. Of particular interest to the characters is Excerpt 5, which reveals that Yama discovered a key to the *Sidereon* in the titan cult's chambers. Fearing the key could be used to awaken the *Sidereon* entirely, he hid it along with a cache of treasure in a secret chamber in the temple well.

- The true ritual *bind sidereal servitor* (see **Appendix: Magic**.)

- The following spells, as if written in a wizard's spellbook: *arcane lock*, *conjure minor elementals*, *contact other plane*, *find familiar*, *glyph of warding*, *magic circle*, *magic mouth*, *phantom steed*

Maghiel's Plan

Maghiel came to the temple of Madriel looking for knowledge and a way to use the *Sidereon* to carry out her goals, and she found both.

Her primary goal is to resurrect the titan Mesos, siphoning his essence into herself, and stealing his power. With the book *The Cantos of the Black Phoenix* in her possession, she now has the knowledge she needs to create a ritual to accomplish this. She needs a number of rare items to perform the rite, and the *Sidereon* gave her the means to acquire the next artifact she needs: an *Atrophian Orb*, the eye of an unborn god.

Channeling the raw power of the *Clasp of Vergren*, she awoke the *Sidereon* from its long slumber without needing the key Magister Yama had hidden away. Once the ancient Slarecian engine came fully to life, she used it to open a portal to the Plane of Dreams and stepped through. A few moments later (though considerably longer for her), she stepped back through with her prize in hand: a luminous, pearlescent orb of congealed ectoplasm, dripping with liquified ether. With the *Atrophian Orb* and the Cantos both in her possession, she departed, leaving the *Sidereon* awake and in motion behind her. As she left she was disturbed and in a daze, mumbling about Shelzar, The Ukrudan Desert, and the bastard's flesh.

If the characters have the help of Xurxos, he can relate Maghiel's actions to them – he was helpful when she arrived (as he would have been to any guest seeking knowledge from the temple's library), but grew increasingly concerned as he saw the types of books she was consulting. He begged her not to read the Magister's journal or to take the Cantos, and he especially pleaded with her to leave "the Device" alone; when she ignored him, he could do little more than watch in horror as she worked her magic. Xurxos isn't entirely sure what she's up to, but he knows *The Cantos of the Black Phoenix* contains forbidden rites related to necromancy and titans, and he hates the thought of such a work being in the hands of someone so clearly willing to wield power without any concern for the consequences. He did recognize the *Atrophian Orb* she returned with and remembers that the Magister once spoke of such things as "good for the sort of magic only the mad would dare perform – at least if you don't want to see this poor world more broken than it *already is.*"

The Library of Chern

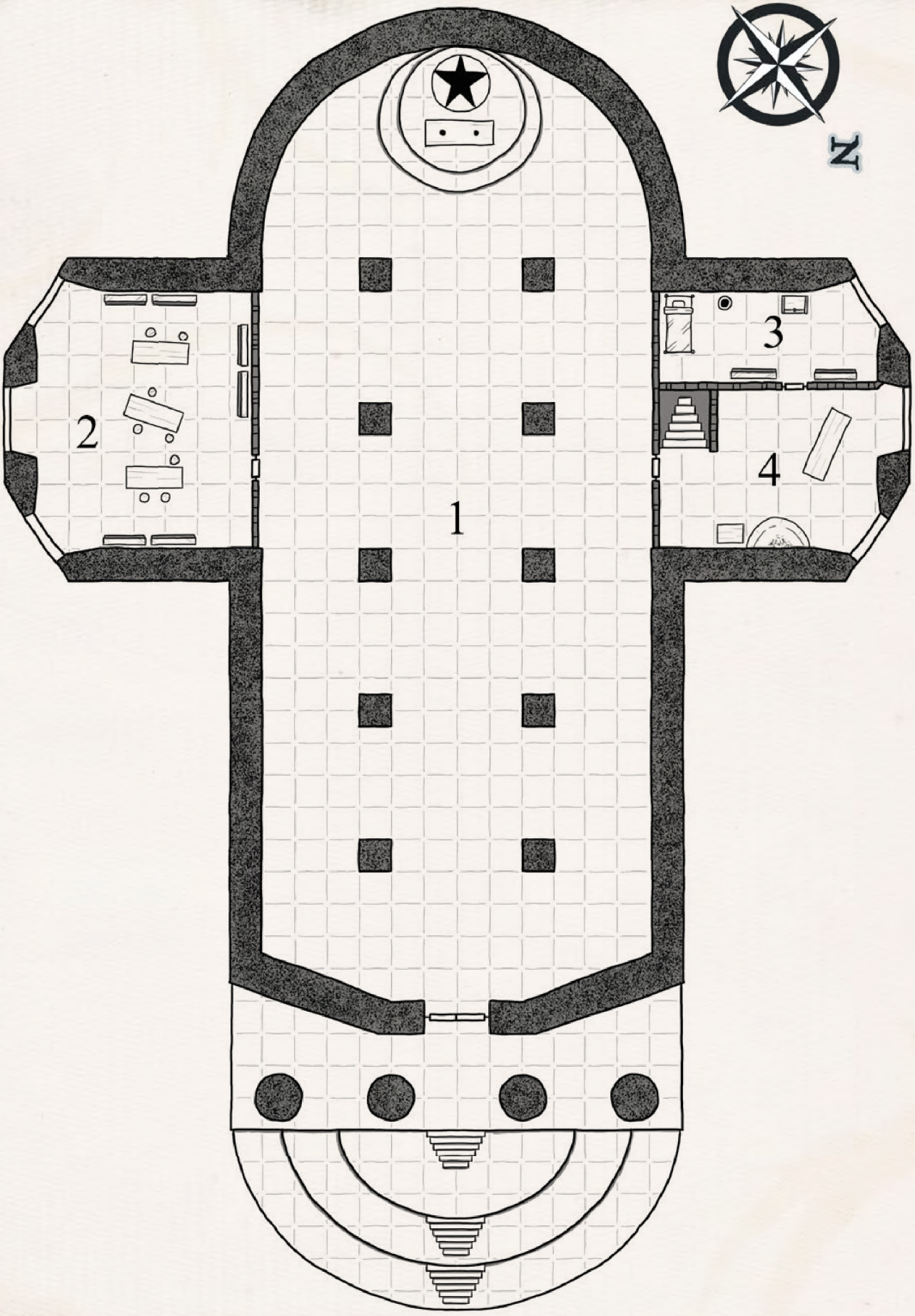
Beneath the temple sits the ruins of a library built by worshipers of Chern. Relatively little remains of the titan cult's library, much of which was removed over time to places like the Academy in the Bridged City and kept under careful surveillance. A few volumes remain, all of which are written in Titan Speech and include journals of the cult's activities from before the Divine War, treatises on the Occult Planes, works of heretical theology, and a few theoretical studies of arcane and divine magic. A search of at least an hour and a successful **DC 18 Intelligence (Investigation)** check reveals 1d4 1st or 2nd-level ritual spells of the GM's choice from the bard or cleric spell lists among the manuscripts.

There are five volumes of particular note here. Each of these is an especially vile and unpleasant work pertaining to various aspects of titan worship or dark magic, and the unprepared risk harm to their minds by reading them. A character that can read Titan Speech and peruses its contents of one of these books must succeed on a **DC 13 Charisma saving throw** for each hour spent reading or take 1d4 psychic damage; a character who fails this save by 5 or more is afflicted with long-term madness.

Each of these works holds a specific useful secret that is yielded from 1d4 hours of studying the book followed by a successful **DC 13 Intelligence (Arcana)** check. The specific benefit granted by each is listed in the description below. A character can gain the same benefit from the same book multiple times, but must repeat the process of study and the ability check each time.

The Armaments of Unbroken Earth, by Ithax the Younger of Leppid. This purports to be a "natural history" of titanspawn, detailing their variety and offering some speculation on how they were created. A character who unlocks its secret can, once in the next three days, cast *conjure minor elementals* without requiring a spell slot, but immediately takes 2d6 force damage when ceasing to concentrate on the spell.

Beyond the Silver Archway, by Ranulf Amaxites. This is a dissertation on the Plane of Dreams and what stranger worlds might lay on the far side of it, and on the uses of insanity as a means to invoke arcane power. A character who unlocks its secret can, once in the next three days,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automatically score a critical hit on an attack roll, but gains short-term madness immediately afterward.

The Canticle of Decay, or Nine Adorations for the Lord of Plagues, author unknown. This is a collection of blasphemous hymns in praise of the titan Chern, full of the imagery of disease, infestation, and rot. A character who unlocks its secret can, once in the next three days, transmit sewer plague when successfully making an attack roll against a creature, which automatically fails its saving throw against infection. Immediately after using this ability, the character gains 1d4 levels of exhaustion.

The Gray King's Courtier, by Gekkereus of Mirum. This notorious work of necromancy and nihilist philosophy is sometimes called the Decimation Hymn in occult circles for its bleak apocalyptic vision of a world utterly given to devastation. It's a work that waxes ecstatic about the mutually assured destruction of a second war between gods and titans, and the possibility of an aftermath where "only the unnaturally quickened have earned the right to exist." Other than *The Cantos of the Black Phoenix,* this is also one of the few works to have reliable information about what might be needed to resurrect a titan. A character who unlocks the secret of this dread book can, once in the next three days, deal an extra 4d8 necrotic damage to a target when successfully hitting with an attack roll, but has disadvantage on death saving throws during the same three-day period.

The World Flayed: A Treatise on the 13 Varieties of Pain, author unknown. This is nothing less than a lovingly detailed guidebook on torture as a sacrament, filled with stomach-turning illustrations and grotesque marginalia. A character who unlocks its secret can, once in the next three days, cast *inflict wounds* at 1st level without using a spell slot and automatically hit with the spell attack, but also takes half the necrotic damage inflicted on the target.

Temple of Madriel Map: Cellar Level and Slarecian Sublevel

B1. Cellar

The stairs from the main level's kitchen lead down here, where four ancient barrels hold the last of the temple's old wine stores. (Three of them are nearly full, but one has been almost emptied by Xurxos during his time here.) Behind the stairs, a pile of straw and tattered blankets makes an improvised bed where Xurxos sleeps.

B2. Dormitories

An unlocked door leads from the cellar to this room, where visiting scholars and monks were given sleeping quarters. Wooden partitions provide partial privacy for the cells here, each containing a stone pallet that served as a bed.

B3. Old Temple of Chern

Behind a secret door (a successful **DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation)** or **Wisdom (Perception)** check is needed to detect this if unassisted by a creature that knows its location and mechanism) in the wall of the dormitory leads to the chamber where the titan's cult performed their rites. Six tall bookcases stand near the walls in here, holding the remains of the cult's library. A massive stone altar, stained with layers of centuries of bloodletting, stands in the middle of the room, cracked in half by sledgehammer blows. Behind it is the remains of a broken statue of Chern, constructed so the striding titan seemed to be made of swarms of insects, writhing worms, and piles of skulls. Between the statue and the back wall, a stone trapdoor is set into the floor, set with a huge iron ring and chain that can be used to pull it open.

Treasure. One of the bookcases has a shelf with a false back (a successful **DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation)** or **Wisdom (Perception)** check is needed to spot this), behind which is a hidden space containing 103 gp worth of coins and gems, a jewel-hilted silvered dagger worth 300 gp, a jade skull with ruby eyes worth 450 gp, a *ring of acid resistance*, a *rod of rulership* topped with a black iron skull, and a *scimitar of wounding*.

B4. Vault of the Sidereon

Beneath the trapdoor, a stone stairway leads down into a nearly circular chamber, the center of which is a dais that holds the *Sidereon*: a huge orrery made of alien metal and gemstone, covered with indecipherable symbols and glyphs. Around the base of the orrery, bronze plates inscribed in Titan Speech have been hammered over the mind-altering Slarecian writing on the original structure.

The *Sidereon* is in motion, its vast rings slowly spinning as it traces the orbits of the strange realms and worlds it describes. As it moves, its components seem to fade in and out of existence, passing into and out of the ethereal and astral realms and occasionally seeming to move through each other in impossible ways. Its machinery is sunk deep into the earth below the dais, causing the floor of the chamber to vibrate as it moves – perhaps only a third of the artifact's entire mass is actually visible in the chamber. On its pedestal, a plate with the clear outline of a keyhole in its center, surrounded by obscure sigils, rotates around the base of the device as its orbits perform their arcane dance.

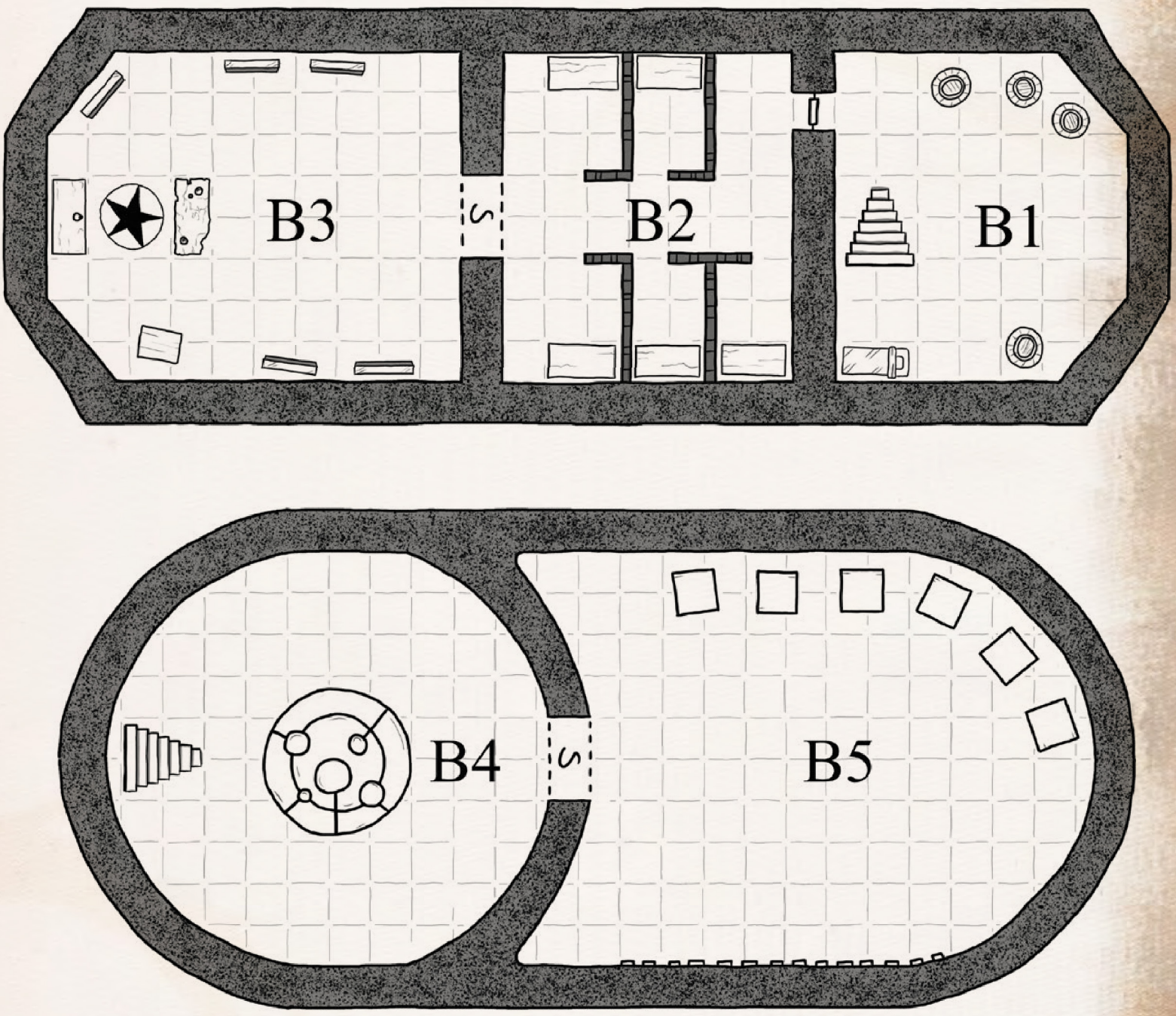
A creature that enters the *Sidereon's* chamber while it is fully awake and can see it must succeed on a **DC 13 Charisma saving throw** or take 1d6 psychic damage, and must repeat this save once per minute while in the artifact's presence. The *Sidereon* has AC 20, 300 hit points, a damage threshold

of 20, resistance to force and radiant damage, and immunity to all other damage types except bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing attacks made with magical weapons. Its artificial mind has Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma scores of 20; creatures with a feature or spell that allows telepathic contact can attempt to communicate with it, though its responses are invariably cryptic, enigmatic, or utterly inscrutable, as its concerns operate on an incomprehensibly cosmic scale. The *Sidereon* can't be charmed, frightened, or stunned, and magic can't be used to render it unconscious.

A creature with spellcasting ability can attempt to use the *Sidereon* to open a gate to another plane of existence, amplify a spell, work a True Ritual alone or with reduced assistance, or perform other rule-breaking feats; the limitations of what's possible with this alien device are left to the GM to decide. Doing so requires succeeding on a **DC 20 Intelligence (Arcana)** check, made with advantage if the caster is also using another artifact or legendary magic item to channel the mystic energy. On a failed check, the attempt fails and the caster takes 3d8 psychic damage. If the check fails by 5 or more, the *Sidereon* also does something utterly weird, left to the GM's discretion and imagination. If the characters have obtained the key and are attempting to shut the artifact down (see **Stilling the *Sidereon***, p. 57).

B5. Slarecian Museum

Behind a carefully-hidden secret door (a successful **DC 18 Intelligence (Investigation)** or **Wisdom (Perception)** check is needed to detect it) is an oblong chamber containing the results of the Slarecians' experiments with the *Sidereon*. Along one wall are set six large blocks of iridescent green crystal, each containing the preserved body of a creature mutated by exposure to the otherworldly energy unleashed by the *Sidereon*: human, elf, dwarf, halfling, orc, and asaatth. The opposite wall holds a honeycomb of small caches holding Slarecian books and scrolls – each of which has been sealed with a brass plate with warnings engraved in Titan Speech that caution against looking at their contents. If a character disregards these warnings, a plate can be removed by prying it off with a crowbar or similar implement and succeeding on a **DC 8 Strength (Athletics)** check. A creature who attempts to read the content of one of these caches must contend with the effects of the **Slarecian language virus** (see **Appendix: Magic**). Between the crystal cells and the caches, a number of faintly glowing glyphs are inscribed on the wall. A character who succeeds on a **DC 20 Intelligence (Arcana)** check is able to touch the glyphs in the correct sequence to open the crystal cells. Doing so causes 1d6 of the blocks to slide open as the front panel retracts into the floor. Each open cell then releases its occupant: a **banewarped mutant** that moves forward to attack the nearest creature. These mutants are unarmed and have only their natural attacks. A second **DC 20 Intelligence (Arcana)** check is needed to close the cells again using the glyphs; this check is made at advantage if attempted by the same character who opened the cells. A living creature inside a cell when it closes is immediately rendered paralyzed and unconscious (and does not age, nor does it require food, drink, air, or sleep).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Chapter Three: The Slarecian Design

The best option the characters have to shut down the *Sidereon* and stop its effects is to retrieve the key from the treasure chest where it was hidden by Magister Yama: in the secret chamber in the wall of the temple well.

Down to the Well

The old stone well that once served the temple has now all but gone dry, its bottom filled with decades of mud and debris (sifting through which yields the remains of a number of partial humanoid skeletons). Some thirteen feet down from the well's opening, a secret door in the stone wall

opens into the small cache where Magister Yama stored his treasure, kept in a brass-bound chest of oiled wood engraved with preserving runes. Finding the secret door requires a successful **DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation)** or **Wisdom (Perception)** check, which is made at advantage if Xurxos is present to guide the characters.

Beyond the cache is a round chamber where Yama's conjured **sidereal servitor** (see **Book 11: Peril Primer**) manifests. The creature is ethereal until the treasure chest is moved, at which point it materializes in the chamber and attacks. Looking into the chamber before the servitor appears reveals a mostly empty cave dug into the stony earth – save that the floor is strewn with half-dissolved bones, the least digestible remains of past would-be thieves vomited out by the servitor.

The inner walls of the well are slippery with a film of slime created by the servitor's presence; climbing down them directly requires a successful **DC 15 Strength (Athletics)** check for every five feet of vertical movement to avoid falling. If Xurxos is advising the party, he recommends lowering one or two of the characters down on ropes to open the door, retrieve the chest, and face the servitor – keeping in mind that the well's opening is barely 5 feet wide.

To complicate matters, while the characters are trying to retrieve the key, four **banewarped mutants** – formerly Yeoman Golshan and his farmhands – emerge from the wilderness to attack the party members who are outside the well. (If this encounter is likely to be deadly while some of the party is involved with fighting the servitor, the GM is encouraged to reduce the number of mutants, or wait until the treasure is fully retrieved for the mutants to attack.)

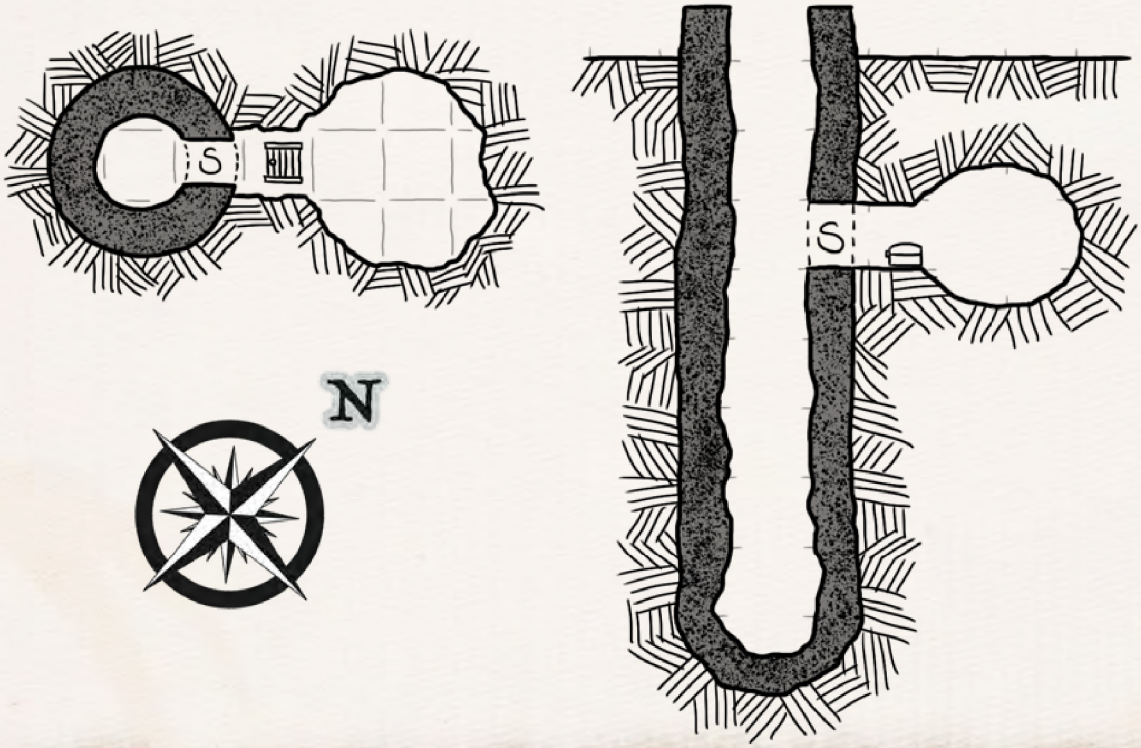
Treasure. The chest is locked (a successful **DC 12 Dexterity check with thieves' tools** will open it, or the lock can be broken; it has AC 18, 8 hit points, and a damage threshold of 5) and opens to reveal the key to the *Sidereon*: a double-barreled skeleton key almost a foot long and made of the same alien metal as the artifact itself. Under the key is a leather sack containing 235 gp, 17 pp, and six cabochons worth 50 gp each, and a wooden box containing two *spell scrolls of remove curse*, a *pearl of power*, and a *wand of secrets*.

Stilling the *Sidereon*

Once the characters have retrieved the key, they must return to the chamber of the *Sidereon* and shut it down. The *Sidereon*, now that it's awake, doesn't wish to return to its dormancy.

When one or more characters enter the *Sidereon* chamber with the key, roll initiative. The *Sidereon* acts on initiative count 20, losing initiative ties. On its turn, it can take one of the following actions:

- It casts *eldritch blast (2 beams, +5 to hit).*
- It targets all creatures in its chamber with *confusion* (save **DC 13**). The effects last until the beginning of the *Sidereon's* next turn.
- It targets one creature in its chamber with a portal. The target must succeed on a **DC 15 Dexterity saving throw** or be teleported to an unoccupied space anywhere in the chamber.



At the end of the *Sidereon's* turn, roll a d6. On a 6, it emits a pulse of energy, causing all creatures in its chamber to make a Constitution saving throw to avoid mutation (see "**Effects of the *Sidereon***" p. 46).

Inserting the key and turning it requires using an action to attempt a **DC 15 Dexterity (Sleight of Hand)** check. If this check is successful, the character must then make a **DC 12 Constitution saving throw**, taking 2d4 force damage on a failed save (or half as much damage on a success) as a wave of cosmic energy courses through the *Sidereon*'s machinery while it shuts down. Once it shuts down, its motion ceases and its effects on the area and its creatures stop.

Optional Encounter: The Ambassador of Dreams

At the GM's discretion, if the characters don't have enough information about Madriel's plan by the time they shut down the *Sidereon*, the following encounter may help to bridge the gap.

As the *Sidereon*'s machinery winds down, a shimmering, prismatic gate opens, and an Emissary from the Plane of Dreams appears: a translucent, opalescent thing like a hybrid of jellyfish and salamander, floating in the air as if drifting in gentle waters. Its head has three faces, each smooth except for a single eye and a flat, expressionless mouth. It speaks telepathically to the characters:

The strange creature's thoughts fill your head as if you were remembering an old song, heard in your youth and since forgotten. "We are an Emissary from the Realm of Dreams. We come forth from the luminous shadow of the Silver Gate to give you warning, for one passed from here and returned with what she should not have taken, and it is a doom to the worlds."

The Emissary can fill the characters in on Maghiel's use of the *Sidereon* and even something of her intentions ("for her dreams, dark and venomous, flowed out from her in our realm as ink from a quill"), and it makes clear if the characters don't know yet that she intends to conduct a ritual to resurrect a titan. It can also explain that she has the first object she needs to do this and what the other artifacts she requires are.

The Emissary has only a few minutes to deliver its message, and precious little time to answer questions before the *Sidereon* shuts down and the gate collapses. But the characters should now understand the stakes of Maghiel's plot and be prepared to make plans to counter it.

Conclusion and Development

At the conclusion of the adventure, the characters should have a good understanding of Maghiel's intentions and what might be done to foil her plan. If they haven't taken advantage of it already, the temple library is an excellent resource to mine for arcane and historic knowledge that may be useful in the next adventure.

Failure

If the party does not speak with Xurxos to learn of Maghiel's activities in the temple, and they do not speak with the Ambassador of Dreams, they can discover some of the possible items on Maghiel's list by researching at the library (though this will cost precious days) or make for the nearest town, where they can easily discover that a Drendali woman stumbled into town, making a bit of a spectacle as she took a room at the inn. The next day, she rented a coach to drive her to Shelzar.

Alternatively, the party can take what they have learned back to the Academy in the Bridged City to seek the counsel of friendly NPCs there who may help point them to their next destination.

Maghiel's Shopping List

The Emissary can permit the player characters to discover a number of plot threads for the coming campaign. The following items may be revealed:

The flesh of a titan - there are several spots this might be acquired.

An *apple of replenishment* - Grown on a single tree in the Ganjus forest

The *Staff of Zuvys* - held in a shrine built by the Order of Silver

Any other item you might find necessary, exciting, or expedient to include. These can range from magic items to simple trinkets like those found in Trinkets of Ghelspad by David Stephens at the Slarecian Vault. These can be used to guide the players back on track as they hunt down the items, preferably in Shelzar.

Appendix: Magic

True Ritual: Bind Sidereal Servitor

2nd-level conjuration (arcane, true ritual)

Casting Time: 3 hours

Range: 300 feet

Components: V, S, M (hallucinatory herbs, a lens fashioned of black volcanic glass, and rare perfumes and incense)

Duration: Until the servitor's task is fulfilled, or it is dismissed by the caster

This ritual must be cast between sunset and sunrise, under a moonless sky with the stars visible. It requires drawing a circle 15 feet across, inside which the caster and other participants stand.

At the end of the ritual, a **sidereal servitor** appears outside the circle. You issue a command to the servitor, which it must be capable of performing within 100 feet of a point within range. Typical commands are "Protect the treasure in the cellar beneath my keep," "Guard the door to my inner sanctum from all but me," and "Attack anyone who trespasses in my house." The servitor can also be commanded to only attack a single named enemy who comes within its territory, or even to build a structure (provided all necessary materials are available to the servitor within its territory).

If you issue a command to the servitor that it cannot fulfill within these parameters, it attacks you and fights until either it drops to 0 hit points or you are dead.

You can dismiss a sidereal servitor by speaking a ritual phrase of unbinding to it in a language it understands. You must be within 100 feet of the servitor to do this, and it must be able to hear you.

At Higher Levels. When you cast this ritual using a spell slot of 3rd level or higher, the range of the spell (but not the servitor's territory) increases by 100 feet for each level above 2nd.

Slarecian Languagevirus

Magical hazard

The Slarecian empire once stretched across the majority of Scarn, though the Slarecians themselves often dwelt far below its surface. Now only ruins remain, barely remembered hints that the alien beings even existed. Many terrors and dangers still lurk in those ruins, though perhaps none more insidious than the Slarecian language virus.

Many sages and explorers have sought to learn more about the lost empire, digging up texts and delving into ruins where the very walls themselves may be inscribed with the Slarecians' strange language. Unintelligible to most, those who have managed to read the messages left behind by the Slarecians, via powerful magics or other methods, have succeeded only in afflicting themselves with a bizarre disease known as a language virus.

When one attempts to read an affected Slarecian text, and many of those texts are so infected, they must succeed on a **DC 22 Charisma saving throw**, or fall under the effects of the infection. Whenever they attempt to speak, their words come out as a sing song of garbled gibberish. Likewise, when they attempt to write, though they try to write the symbols of their known languages, instead they draw strange symbols, scribbles, and otherwise indecipherable nonsense. A victim may still think clearly in any language that they are fluent, but they are unable to communicate verbally with any languages. *Comprehend languages* and other similar magic does not help, revealing that what the victim is saying is pure gibberish. Spells that require verbal components are impossible to cast for the infected.

Worse yet, those who encounter the afflicted may fall under the power of the language virus as well. Anyone that can hear a victim speak, or who attempt to read the scrawling gibberish of an afflicted person's writing, must succeed on a **DC 18 Charisma saving throw** or become infected by the language virus.

Magic such as the *heal* spell is capable of removing the effects of the language virus. Divine casters, however, must succeed on a **DC 18 spellcaster ability** check in order for their magical healing to overcome the infection.

Appendix: Handouts

Excerpts from Magister Yama's Journal

Excerpt 1

"I have made some small study of the Device the former caretakers have sealed away, that the strange precursor race called the Slarecians saw fit to build and sink into the earth here. The records of the Titan-sworn name it the *Sidereon*, for it is like a map of celestial spheres and a key to the understanding of them. I think it was once a sort of Mind, and that it now lies dreaming. Perhaps, as certain persons in the delirium of sleep often do, it might be inclined to a sort of speech if but the proper questioner were near. But this is careful work; for I dread what might come were such a sleeper to awaken, and what waking nightmares might follow forth."

Excerpt 2

"One gratitude I owe the sometime custodians of the *Sidereon*: They were at pains to cover over the glyphs it bears inscribed in the Slarecian tongue, which neither the ciphers of mortal minds nor the arts of the mage can render comprehensible. Indeed, it is writ that the contemplation of this strange language can make the mind insensible to the understanding of any tongue, and the mouth incapable of forming the words of one's native speech, save in a gibbering that is itself a sort of contagion. For this, then, I am thankful to the Titan's priests; that they caused plates of bronze to be hammered over the Device and thus rendered it less perilous, in that respect, for the eyes of Scarn-folk to look upon."

Excerpt 3

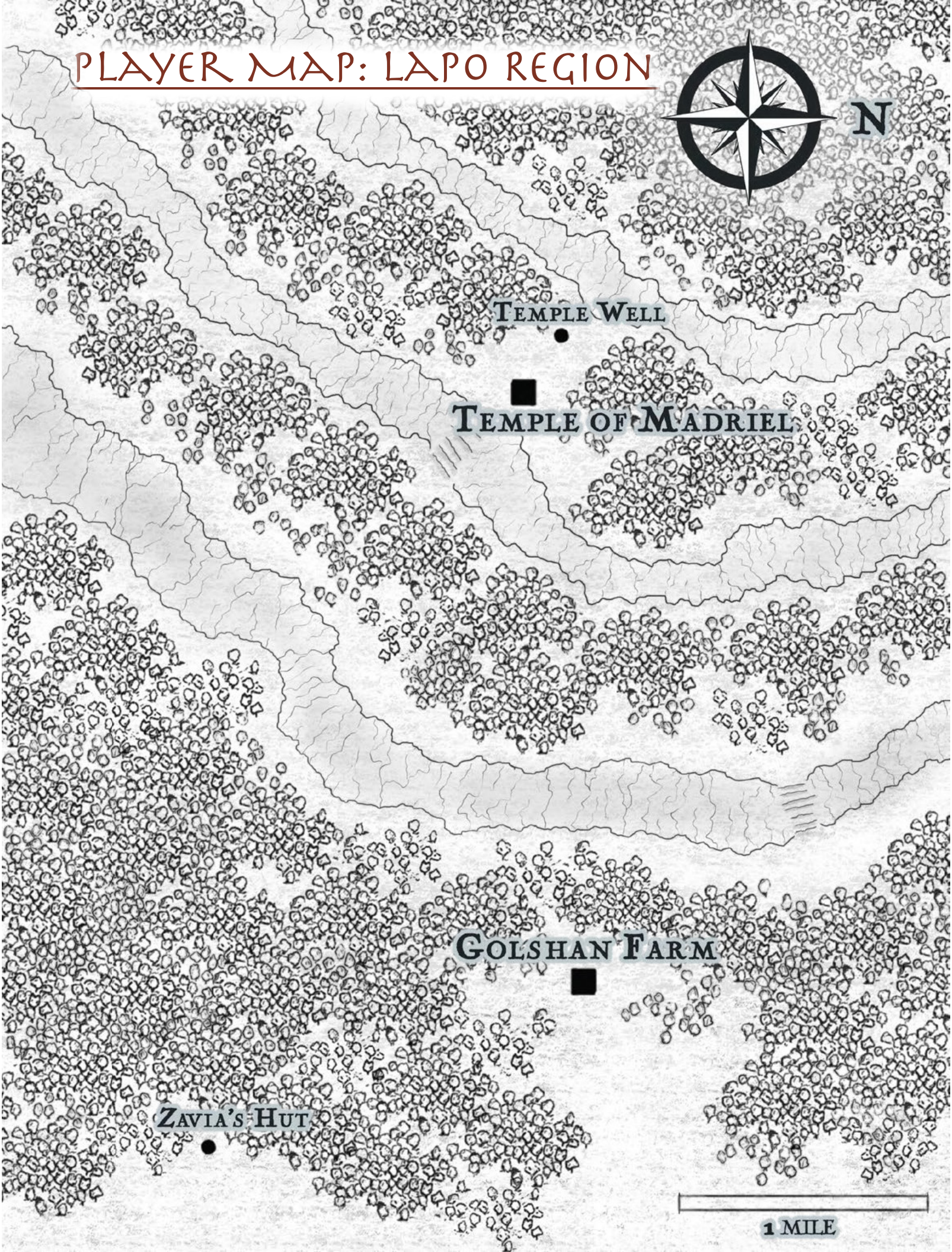
"It is impossible to tell what uses the Slarecians made of their wondrous Device, being alien entirely of intent and reason. But as the Titan-sworn once discovered, a practitioner well-versed in hidden arts may bring its energies to bear on numerous useful tasks, even half-dormant as it is: to see far beyond this world and into sundry other Planes; to call upon forces drawn from far spheres, such that the magus increaseth the power of his rites and spells; to perform True Rituals alone, or with but one or two assisting; and to commune with entities residing in the Occult Planes, provided their names are known to the caller."

Excerpt 4

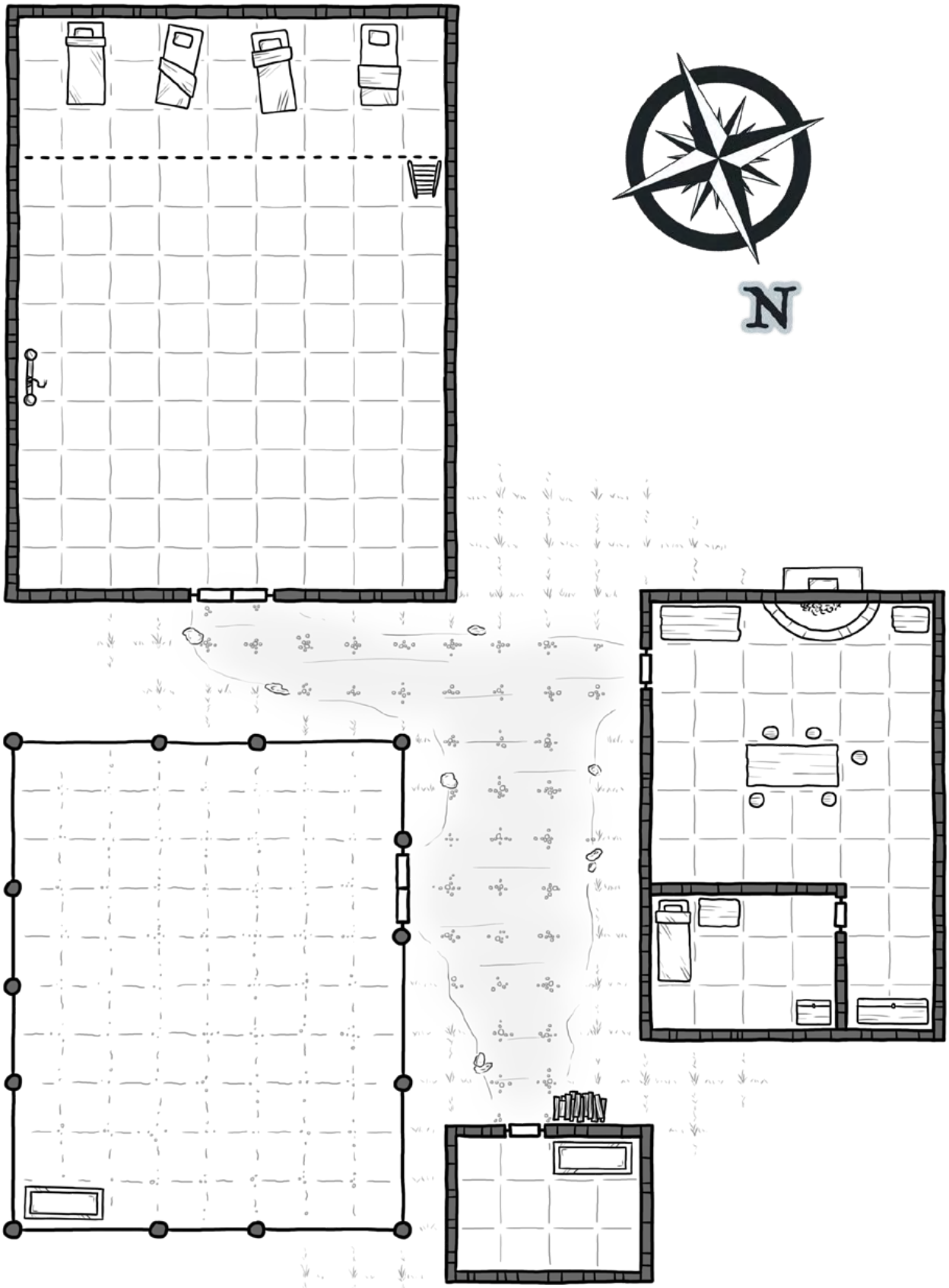
"The writings of the blasphemous priests of Chern say much of the *Sidereon*'s power to cause sickness. How petty such creatures were, sitting at the threshold of this maker of miracles and thinking of nothing but its capability for rot! Should a mind of sufficient keenness set itself to the purpose, the Slarecians' wondrous Device might serve to open the way to vistas undreamt-of in the lore of men and gods. Alas, the Titan-sworn may yet mock me from their unhallowed graves, for I must number sickness among the gifts I have received from my studies. Already I see the unnatural change take hold in my flesh, and wonder at what strange shapes I may yet come to take before it fails me entirely."

Excerpt 5

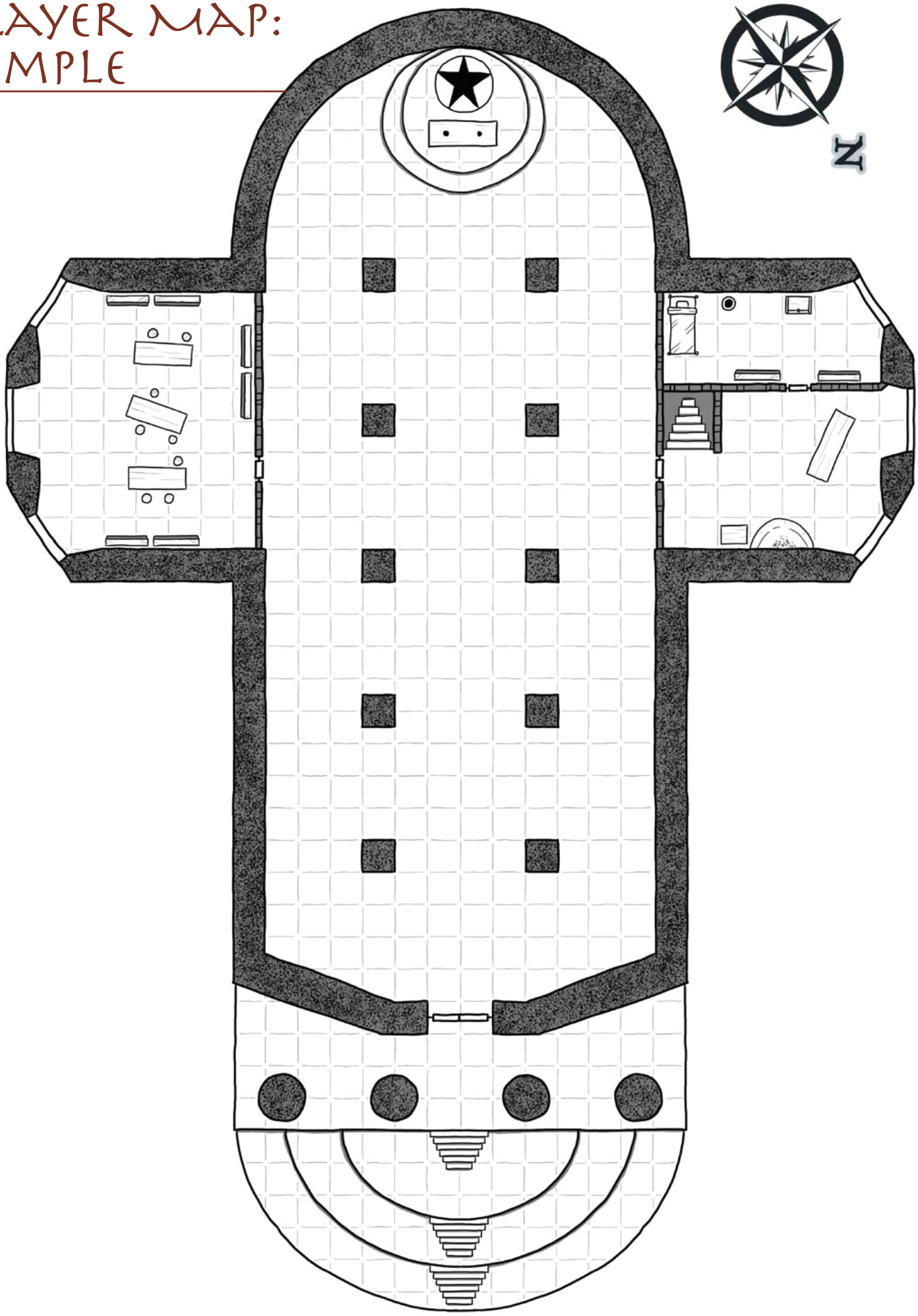
"I have discovered, hidden in the effects of the Titan-sworn, an implement that seems much like a sort of Key, and which like the *Sidereon* seems to be of Slarecian design. It would appear to fit a mechanism in the base of the Device, though I dare not try its working. Indeed, I think it better to displace such an artifact from within the walls of this sanctuary, so I have thus removed it, within a chest of gold and sundry other worldly effects, to the hidden chamber I have caused to be made in the wall of the temple well; and over it I have set a guardian."


PLAYER MAP: LAPO REGION
N
TEMPLE WELL
TEMPLE OF MADRIEL
GOLSHAN FARM
ZAVIA'S HUT
1 MILE

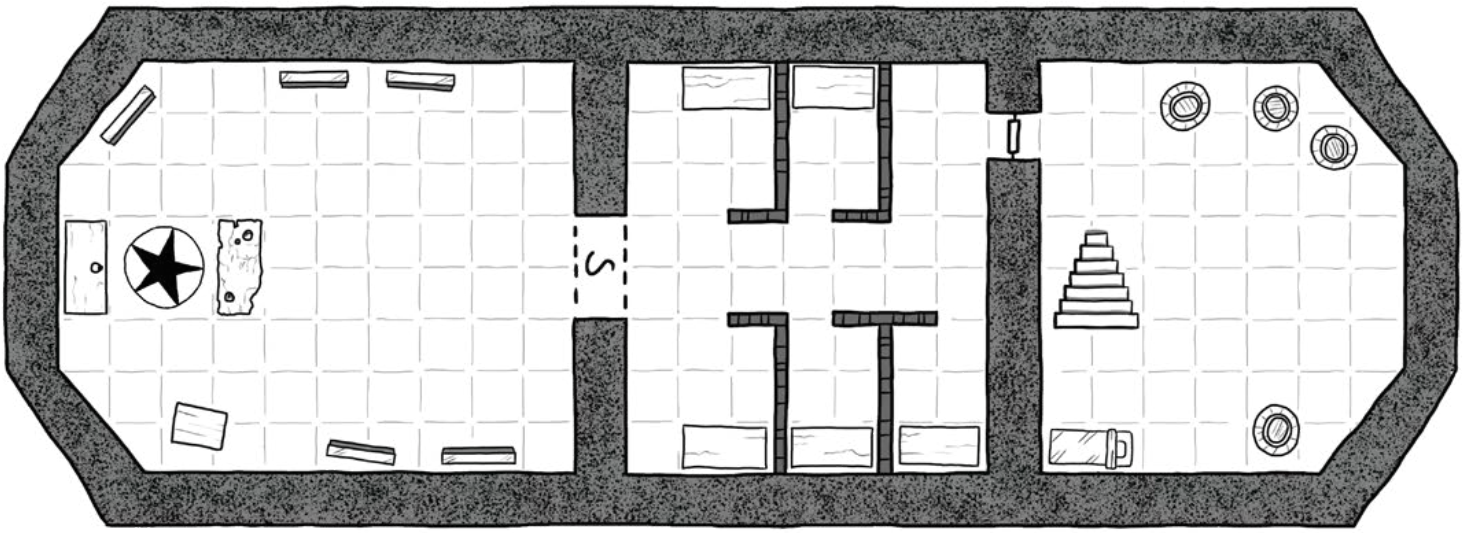
PLAYER MAP: GOLSHAN FARM

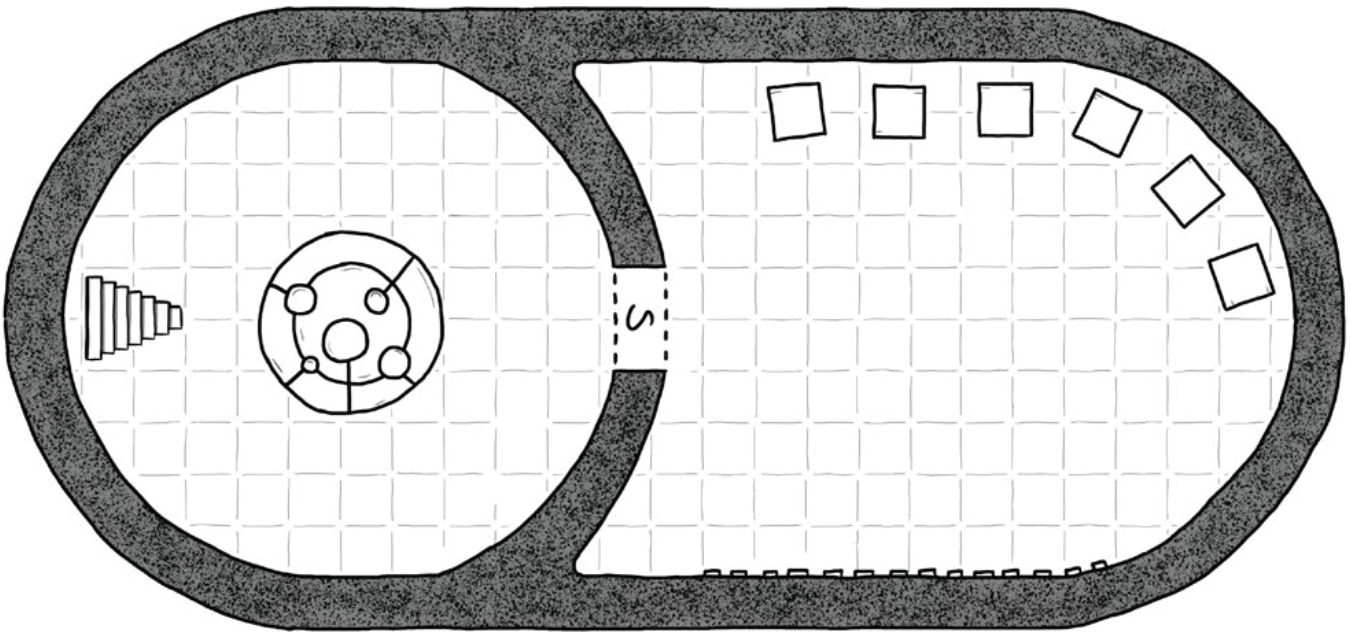


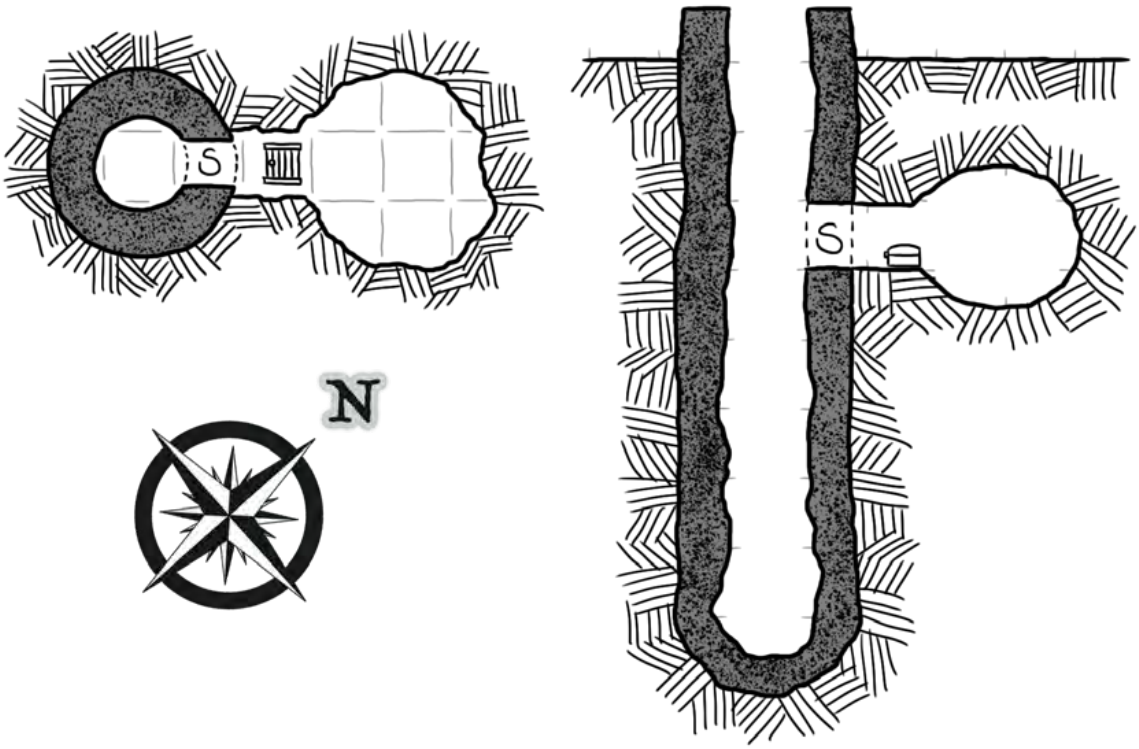
PLAYER MAP: TEMPLE



PLAYER MAP: CELLAR AND SUB-LEVEL

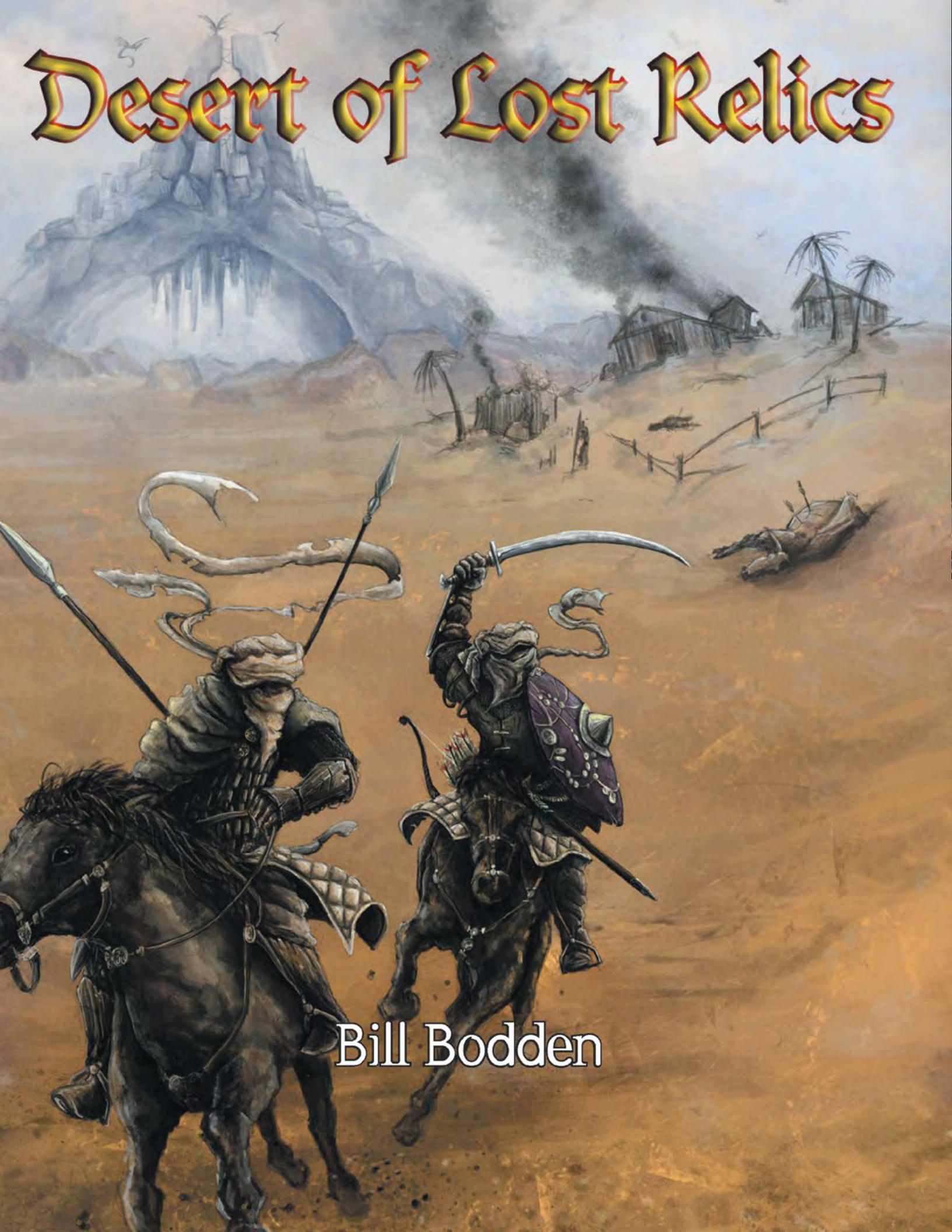






PLAYER MAP: WELL

Desert of Lost Relics



Bill Bodden

INTRODUCTION

Desert of Lost Relics is an adventure designed for four to six characters of 4th to 6th level, though it can easily be adjusted for larger or smaller groups or groups with an average party level (APL) higher than 6th. It could also, with some thought, be adjusted for a party with a lower APL, though the challenging encounters in this adventure may prove deadly to a 2nd or 3rd level party even with adjustment.

The adventure begins in the city of Shelzar and takes the party on a quest into the Ukrudan Desert.

SYNOPSIS

The characters have learned of the plan of the Necromancer Maghiel to collect relics and artifacts belonging to the titans and, in performing a necromantic ritual, be elevated to the power of a titan. The characters have decided that, rather than following after the Necromancer, they should try to jump ahead of her, getting to several of the necessary items first to secure them and thwart the evil scheme. These relics and artifacts are, in and of themselves, extremely dangerous, and valuable to titan cultists as a rallying point to recruit more followers and perhaps even start the Titanswar all over again. Many in Ghelspad would see this prevented and would pay handsomely to have these relics found and secured out of the titan cultists' reach.

The ultimate goal is to get the artifacts to Lokil for safekeeping, and to perhaps learn more about what they are and how to destroy or neutralize them. Lokil is one of the few places the titans couldn't reach; for some reason, though the city surrounding the mountain was razed to the ground, the library and most of the city's inhabitants survived, hidden in the vaults and mines underneath Lokil. A vast treasure-trove of knowledge, many rare and ancient tomes and scrolls may be found in the great library of Lokil.

One of the relics to be found is a large hunk of flesh from one of the titans. This flesh is from the titan Mesos, the Sire of Sorcery. Infused with magic and the fallen titan's essence, this flesh is not only still alive, but seeking to merge with other remnants of the titan. With this and a few other items, Mesos' spirit could be called back and reunited with the remains of his body and favored items. It would take many years for Mesos to return to the power he once wielded, but that's a minor obstacle compared with reforming his body from a few spare parts. Since the power and the life-force of each titan springs not from its worshippers but from Scarn itself, the threat of the titans reforming is an ever-present danger to be guarded against.

Maghiel seeks to subvert this process, draining off the power of Mesos — or any titan's essence — to create a ritual that will transfer a titan's power to herself instead. Keeping these items out of the hands of the Shunned is of paramount importance. The titans' servants will be looking for their former masters' remains as well, and their zeal for this mission is a powerful compulsion that they dare not refuse.

Rumors

Before starting the adventure, roll 2d6 for each player and give them the rumor(s) they've heard. Printing them out and handing each player a strip of paper works best, though simply telling them works too. It's best to give the information in such a way that only the intended player can hear it: if they choose to share their rumors with each other, so much the better! That makes for more fun roleplaying opportunities!

The adventure begins with the characters, on their desert-capable mounts, preparing to journey into the Ukrudan Desert to seek a lost stronghold said to house one or more items of importance to the defeated titans.

Involving the PCs

Maghiel the Shunned has succeeded in collecting several of the relics and artifacts she needs to prepare the ritual of ascension to titanhood but she still requires others. The adventurers hear rumors that artifacts of interest to the Drendali rebel and relating to one of the titans can be found in a lost outpost deep in the Ukrudan Desert. With the help of an overworked and inattentive scribe in the city of Shelzar, the party acquires a map showing the outpost and area around it — all they need do is locate several prominent topographical features of the landscape and the map should lead to the lost outpost. In Shelzar, the party can assemble the provisions needed for an extended expedition into the deep desert, including mounts that can carry heavy loads and move through the desert for long periods without rest.

For drtails on the city of Shelzar, see the **Scarred Lands Player's Guide** p. 195

The fortress is two weeks travel to the north of Shelzar; everything the characters would need for the trip can be acquired in that fabled city of vice. The most expensive items are likely to be their desert-worthy mounts: dune crawlers are not commonly found outside of deserts and can be difficult to maintain outside of their preferred environment. The cost of one of these durable beasts is 400 gp, though that sum at least includes all the tack and harness anyone would need to secure goods and/or riders to the dune crawler's back. See **Book 11: Peril Primer** for the full stats on dune crawlers.

Once the party has handled their purchases, interactions, and downtime activities in Shelzar, including the acquisition of the map, which you can roleplay or simply narrate, proceed to **Chapter One**.

2D6	RUMOR
2	The royal family of Shelzar are all vampires.
3	The Calastian Hegemony has enslaved a minor titan and intends to use it against their enemies.
4	Creatures from another world have secretly invaded Scarn.
5	A civil war is brewing between those Asaatthi who wish to assimilate and those who wish to return the rule of the titans to Scarn.
6	Titanspawn are being seen more frequently and in places they normally don't inhabit.
7	There's a lost city deep in the Ukrudan Desert that overflows with treasure. The beings who lived there vanished overnight just after the Divine War, leaving no one to guard it.
8	A powerful necromancer is calling all undead to her. She's building an army with which to conquer all of Ghelspad.
9	The Calastian Hegemony is hiring mercenaries. Their need seems urgent…
10	Signs and portents suggest that some of the titans may be returning to the world.
11	There is a ghost ship that sails the oceans and seas of Scarn endlessly. All who encounter it become part of its crew… forever.
12	Roll twice, ignoring further results of 12

Chapter One: Across the Ukrudan

When the party is ready to begin the adventure, read or paraphrase the following:

As you part ways with the caravan, you stare across the endless expanse of desert stretching from horizon to horizon ahead of you. The trade caravan traveling from the port city of Shelzar provided the extra security of more swords and more pairs of eyes to keep a lookout; now, you watch as they head away from you to the east, skirting the edge of the desert and heading to the free city of Lokil, avoiding the hefty tariffs and bribe needing to be paid to travel upriver. Your path lies more to the north and west, you goad your beasts into motion, crossing the still cool sands as the sun rises.

In consulting all the maps you could find, the location of the lost stronghold would seem to be closer to the Mounds of Man mountains: the desert ahead of you is not merely sand and dunes: there are rocky outcrops, plateaus, and even a few scattered mountains here and there. There is no sign of water as far as can be seen, but you've brought plenty with you — at least for a while.

During the daylight hours, the desert seems bereft of life. Very little moves in the heat of the day, and smart adventurers will do the same — not only to avoid the worst of the heat, but to conserve water as well. Flying creatures are the exception: vultures cover great distances following their noses to carrion, hoping to get there before others.

Griffons cruise over the dunes in search of easy prey, the air passing over their wings providing a breeze to keep them cool.

The days and nights of travel will feature boredom and endless vistas of sand and rock, punctuated by terrifying encounters with roaming monsters, bandits, and stinging sandstorms. The travel portion can be truncated to any degree that suits the needs of the campaign, though it is recommended that players be forced to endure a certain amount of travel scenes and a random encounter or two before finding their way to the lost fortress.

Desert Encounters

There is a 15% chance of a random encounter (checked twice per day. Roll d%, and on a result of 15 or lower, an encounter occurs) in the Ukrudan Desert during daylight hours. Between sunset and sunrise, the chance increases to 60% (checked once per night).

D%	ENCOUNTER
01-05	2d4 vultures †
06-09	caravan with 2d4 merchants (commoners †) and 1d6 guards †
10-13	1 giant praying mantis*
14-17	2d6 jackals †
18-25	giant ants*: 3d3+3 workers and 1d4+2 soldiers
26	single set of humanoid tracks leading deeper into the desert. if followed, they end inexplicably after a few miles
27-29	1d3 griffon †
30-33	2d8+2 sutak raiders ‡
34-35	swarm of insects †
36-40	an oasis, with the remains of an old campsite
41-44	4d6 spider-eye goblins
45-48	bandits †: 3d6 plus 1 bandit captain † and 1 druid †
49-50	1 blade beast
51-53	1 dust mephit †
54	1 desert stalker ‡
55-57	2d4 hobgoblins † + 1 hobgoblin captain*
58	1d2+1 wights †
59-61	1d3+1 cyclopses*
62-65	1d3 stone giants †
66	1 phase spider †
67-69	asaatthi witchblade ‡ with 2d3 asaatthi blades ‡
70-71	1 mummy †
72-74	giant spider † nest (2d3)
75-76	1d3 ogres †
77-80	a violent windstorm whips up, driving stinging sand into the eyes of travelers and reducing visibility to almost zero, making travel impossible until it passes. storm lasts 1d4+1 hours.
81-83	1 lamia †
84	2d3 hunter's hounds ‡
85-88	1d4 giant scorpions †
89-91	2d3+2 giant praying mantis
92	1 air elemental †
93	1 arcane devourer ‡
94	1 fire elemental †
95	1 efreet †
96	1d4 lycanthrope, wereboars † - day encounter, human form. at night, beast form
97	1d4x4 dust mephits †
98	1 young brass dragon †
99	1 medusa †
00	1 djinn †

* see **Appendix: Creatures and NPCs**

† see the **SRD**

‡ see the **Scarred Lands Players Guide** Appendix: Titanspawn

The Fortress Comes into View

As the party draws near to the fortress, they can see that it features a round curtain wall, and a single, round tower. The gate doors are open: closer inspection reveals there is also a portcullis set into the gate wall, and it too is open. As the characters approach, a tall, snake-like humanoid (**asaatthi witchblade**) comes out of the gate, flanked by two more snake people (**asaatthi blades**). All are armed, and the two in the rear are armored as well, though the one in front seems to only carry a scimitar, which is sheathed. The leader holds up a hand in greeting, and a cautious parley begins.

Unredeemed

These are **Asaatthi**, a race of snake-like beings created by the titan Mormo, the Hag Queen, to fight for her in the Titanswar. After Mormo's defeat, most, freed of her influence, decided to make peace with the other inhabitants of Scarn and try to fit in. These are known as the Redeemed and are the Asaathi race as described in the Scarred Lands Player's Guide.

The group encountered here are Asaathi who remained loyal to the titans and seek to continue the Titanswar as a guerrilla campaign while slowly rebuilding their forces. Unredeemed Asaatthi, as they are called by non-titan's cultists, are bitter, vengeful, and seek to destroy or enslave the divine races. They reserve special hatred for any Asaatthi that have gone over to the other side, and will destroy those first, with neither mercy nor hesitation.

These Asaatthi are setting a trap. If there happen to be any Asaatthi among the party who are Redeemed, these will pretend to be Redeemed Asaatthi until they are ready to spring their trap. They have three humanoid slaves — a dwarf **priest**, a human **spy**, and a manticora **scout** (see the SRD for these stat blocks)— who they use as cannon fodder, driving them into battle while they have four additional asaatthi blades in hiding, prepared to flank the enemy to surround and crush them. For their part, the slaves have grown to hate their masters, and if the odds look favorable, they will turn on these Unredeemed and attack viciously. They know too well that the only thing waiting for them as slaves to the Asaatthi is death, but for now they are biding their time until a solid opportunity for escape presents itself. They will attack without enthusiasm, merely defending themselves and not actually seeking to engage in real fighting with the party. A successful **DC 10 Wisdom (Insight)** or **Wisdom (Perception)** check will make this obvious.

Treasure. The Asaatthi carry 40 gp, 600 sp, 6 Art Objects worth 25 gp each, a *fangstooth scimitar +1 t*hat deals an additional 1d4 necrotic damage on a hit is carried by the asaatthi witchblade. One of the asaatthi blades in the initial greeting party wears *slippers of spider climbing* while the other wears *boots of elvenkind.*

Chapter Two: Into the Fortress

Once the party enters the fortress, use the maps and information below.

Ground Level

This is the ground level of the fortress.

1. Gatehouse

The gatehouse features a portcullis at the outer archway, and a seat of large, iron-bound oak doors in the inside archway.

2. Stable

The ground level stable was used for the mounts of visitors, and to hold patrol beasts while their riders made their reports or grabbed a quick bite or drink. It has a roof in case of storms. It is empty.

3. Well

This covered well drops down to the underground lake below. a single bucket is here, repaired by the Asaatthi inhabitants, and is attached to a coil of new rope, some 60 feet or more in length.

4. Ramp to the Lower Levels

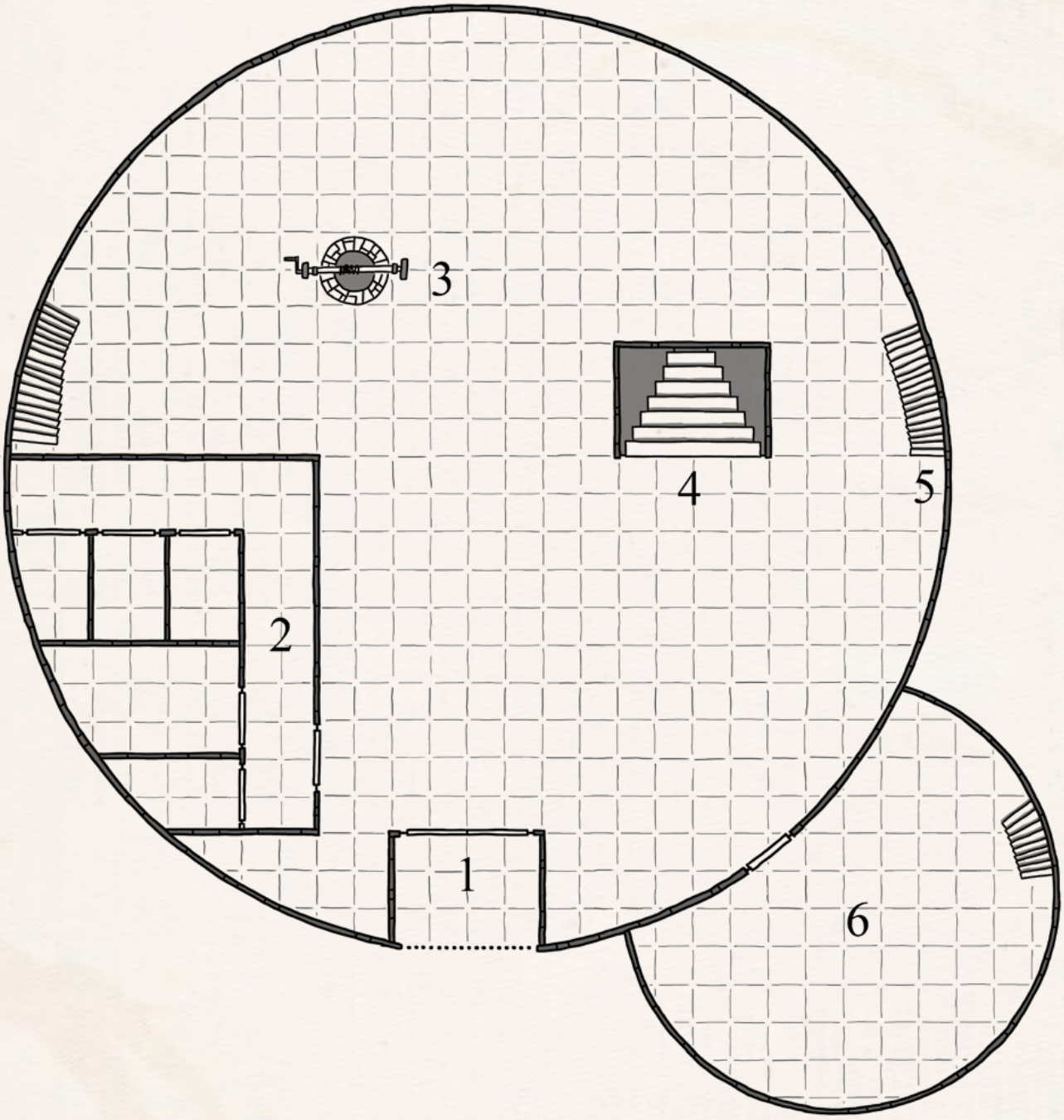
This ramp is wide enough (15 feet wide) to accommodate two riders abreast, and the ramp itself textured and gently sloped to provide secure footing for horses or other mounts to be ridden down to the lower stables. At the bottom of the ramp is a portcullis, and few feet inside of that, large, iron-bound oak doors. The doors and portcullis can be opened from inside.

5. Stairs to the Ramparts

These stairs allowed soldiers access to the upper platforms along the walls in case of attack. Archers would be sent up here, and in case the enemy brought ladders, spear-armed soldiers would join them. Except for these ramparts along the walls, the courtyard is open to the sky.

6. Watchtower

The watchtower features its own staircases, and the doors leading into the central courtyard could be barred from the inside if needed.



The Lower Levels

The air underground is cooler, and just slightly damp. The floors and walls are of worked stone, carved into blocks or textured to appear so. The floor is gritty from more than a century of sand being tracked through the place.

Random Encounters

There are any number of large beasts that have found refuge from the heat and scorching sun in the lower levels. The Asaatthi have done a reasonable job cleaning up the place, so there is only a 15% chance every hour of game-time of an encounter taking place. Roll d% once each hour. On a result of 15 or less, roll 1d8 and consult the table below.

D8	ENCOUNTER
1	2d4 giant rats †
2	2d3 giant centipedes†
3	grey ooze †
4	2d4 giant ants (workers)*
5	giant spider †
6	giant scorpion †
7	snake, giant constrictor †
8	snake, poisonous †

* see **Book 11: Peril Primer**

† see the **SRD**

First Level

1. Entry Ramp

This ramp leads to the surface. It is 15 feet wide all the way up and was meant to allow two horses to move up the ramp abreast.

2. Chapel

The chapel is rather spacious, and includes benches which, though old, have been preserved by the dry air and are still useable, if creaky and splintery.

The altar has been reconsecrated to Mormo, and several smallish statues of her are on the altar and the floor in front of it. From the stains present, it would appear that blood sacrifices were made, though it is impossible to tell what manner of creature was sacrificed here.

Friezes and relief carvings along the walls suggest this chapel was once dedicated to the titans, though many of the carvings have been defaced, most recently those of Denev and Golthaine.

3. Secure Room

This room was used as a secure storage area: it can be locked from inside, and also has a large timber with which to bar the door to further secure it. It is currently devoid of any furnishings save a single silver coin on the floor, forged by dwarves long ago.

4. Latrine

This room was the fortress's latrine, and the smell of recent usage by the Asaatthi is foul and overwhelming. There are more than a dozen seats with holes that drop into a chamber below. On a successful **DC 14 Wisdom (Perception)** check one can hear sloshing sounds coming from the chamber underneath. There is an **otyugh** (see the SRD) in this chamber; it is too far away to reach anyone using the latrine. Instead, it will broadcast wordless telepathic images of being trapped and needing help. The Asaatthi know it lives there, and they made an effort to keep it fed by dumping an occasional body into the pit from the entrance on the second level.

5. Stables

This large room was clearly used as housing for horses. Any hay that remained has long since turned to dust, but the bits of tack and harness still here, though dried out, would be serviceable if given care and attention by a skilled leatherworker.

6 & 7. Stable Guard Room and Sleeping Quarters

This room provided a place for those on active duty to relax in between patrols. The connected room (7) was where the off-duty horse soldiers would sleep in between guard/patrol shifts. The Asaatthi have used these rooms most, and the scent of reptile lingers here, though not as unpleasantly as in the latrines.

8. Barracks

This large room, in former times, housed dozens of infantry in bunk beds. The furniture has mostly collapsed from years of neglect, and any mattresses, blankets, or pillows are piles of dust now.

9. Well and Wash Area

This small room features an arched gallery around the central well access point. The arches allow buckets to drop from all four sides to speed up the process of washing clothes and soldiers' bodies. Nearly a dozen buckets may be found here, each attached to a 50' length of rope. The buckets are made of leather, and while they leak, they are still adequate to the task of bringing water up. Stone basins are cut into the walls all around the outside of this room, some large enough for a humanoid to sit in to bathe.

10. Fissure and Collapsed Tunnel

A large fissure here blocks easy access to the rest of the corridor. The fissure is only about ten feet wide, but the

bottom cannot be seen easily. A torch dropped down will bounce out of sight and a slight glow will be visible from beneath, indicating that the drop is neither straight down nor a short fall. The corridor on the other side extends for perhaps 10 or 15 feet before ending in a massive cave-in.

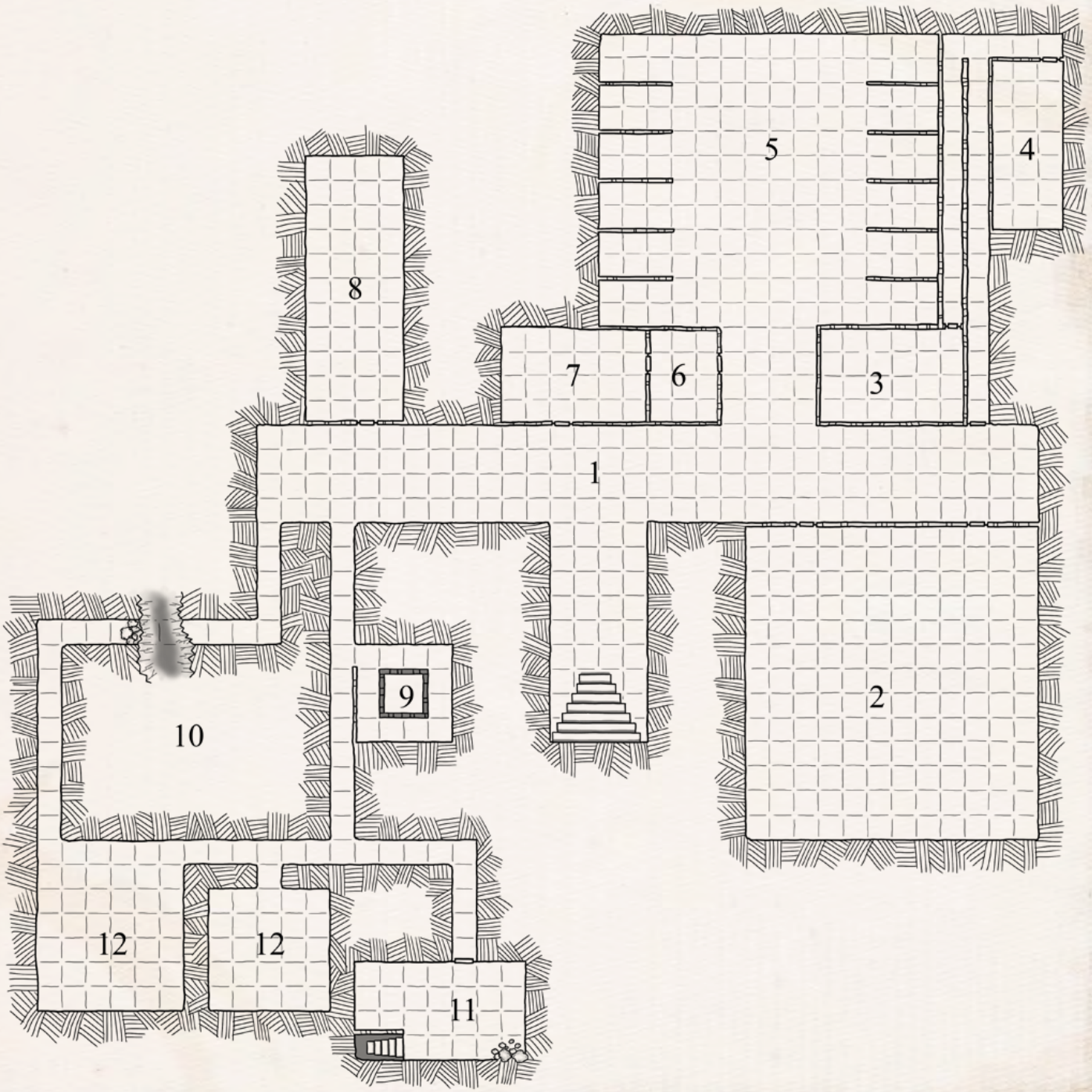
11. Lower Level Access

This room is empty save for two things: A large, barred trap door covering a stairwell, and an uncompleted exit doorway of rubble and unhewn stone.

12. Kitchen and Mess Hall

Food was prepared and served here to the soldiers once stationed at this fortress. There are numerous cupboards and cabinets for storing less perishable food; more perishable items such as meat and fresh fruit and leafy vegetables were eaten as soon as possible. Food suitable for longer storage (root vegetables and grains) were kept in storage here. There is practically nothing left here; what wasn't eaten by mice, rats, or insects, crumbled to dust long ago.

Inside one of the cupboards is an **ochre jelly**; it will lunge out at anyone opening the cupboards to have a look. For stats on ochre jellies, see the SRD.



Second Level

1. Entry Staircase

This staircase descends from area 11 on the first level.

2. Cells

These cells were used to hold prisoners, not only in the distant past but also more recently, though they are all empty now. Any remaining prisoners have died and been fed to the otyugh in area 11 on this level.

3. Alchemist's Laboratory

A large amount of broken glassware can be found in this room, victims of the seismic disruption that happened here more than a century ago. A large, sealed earthenware crock sits on one of the top shelves. Carved into the lead seal running around the seam between the crock and its lid is a warning in the titan language: "Contained herein is a remnant of one of the titans. Open only with great care." If it is opened, the remnant will attempt to move toward the next nearest piece of the titan from which it was rendered.

Tapping against this crock is what appears to be a small, eyeless, white worm. Closer inspection will reveal the object to be a section of tendon, completely removed from any body yet still alive, and trying to reunite with other parts of itself. If they are allowed to unite, they will merge, the tendon burrowing into the flesh, taking up what appears to be its normal positioning within a body. It will also draw the attention of any remnants of the same titan nearby, which will move in its direction to merge with it in the same way. This process of gradually rejoining the titan and its essence will allow that titan to return to the world.

Next to this crock on the high shelf is a small, locked chest, mostly hidden from view and requiring a **DC 16 Wisdom (Perception)** check at to spot. If any character climbs to the top shelf for a better look at the large crock, this small chest will be immediately visible. The chest contains 48 gp, a ring of earth elemental command, 2 uncut opals (10 gp each) and two potions of healing.

4. Office

Barred from the inside, this small room contains the long-dead corpses of an officer and her family. They appear to have killed themselves; a note left on the desk explains that they ran out of food and the complex was overrun with vicious creatures that devoured everything in their path. They killed themselves rather than face those horrors or a slow, painful death by starvation.

The bodies are completely stripped of flesh, though the bones remain. A closer examination will reveal that the surface of the bones is thoroughly burned and pitted, as if by some corrosive substance. (A **black pudding** moved through here, devouring their flesh after they died.) The lock on the door has can be piocked with a successful **DC 14 Dexteriity check using thieves' tools**. Removing the bar from the outside requires a **DC 18 Strength** check.

There is an additional note on the desk which describes finding a blob of flesh in the desert that moved - albeit very slowly - on its own. The note also mentions plans to seal the blob in an earthenware jar (found in area 3 on this level) and that it is a remnant of a titan. It was moving in the direction of the next nearest piece of the same titan's essence. The note at one point reads: "The safest place for the titan relic now is Lokil." It also mentions that a small chest including two *potions of healing* can be found in that same laboratory.

5. Underground Lake

This is the source of all fresh water for the complex. A continual flow drips from the ceiling as water filtering through the aquifer keeps the water levels steady. A small outlet has been created thanks to the fissure; a small waterfall has formed, and water currently trickles over it into the crevice below.

6. Invasion!

The tunnel wall has collapsed here in several places due to the work done by **giant ants**. Their nest occupies parts of this level, and the fissure caused more than a century ago has given them a new avenue of exploration and conquest. Worker ants move through here to the fissure, capturing bubbles of water in their mandibles to take back to the nest. There are 2d4 **worker ants** moving through here. If attacked, the distress pheromones of the workers will bring 1d2+3 **warrior ants** to protect them on the following melee round.

For stats on **giant ant warriors** and **workers**, see **Book 11: Peril Primer.**

7. Ants' Nest

Crawling through the ant tunnels is an exercise in insanity. Tunnels worm through the earth in three dimensions, so climbing up or down is just as likely as crawling on the level. These tunnels are large enough for human-sized individuals to crawl through with no real discomfort, but fighting, in the very great likelihood that one should encounter more ants, will be next to impossible.

8. Unfinished Tunnels

These tunnels end abruply, unfinished by man or beast.

9. Warlock's Chambers

These were the personal chambers of the fortress's resident warlock, long-since fled or deceased. The room contains

dusty furniture. A dresser contains several robes and other clothing items, and a few (1d6) silver and (2d6) copper coins. A successful **DC 14 Intelligence (Investigation)** check reveals a small, flat stone with a small depression worn into one side among the clothes. If the depression is pressed forcefully with the thumb, it casts the spell *force blast* as if using a 2nd level spell slot. The stone charm has 1d6 charges, and will recharge every day at dawn on a d20 roll of 2-20. On a roll of 1, the object loses all magical properties.

10. Warlock's Summoning Chamber

A warlock apparently worked here in previous times. The floor is covered by a pentagram. Inside the pentagram sits a large boulder. If provoked or spoken to, the boulder will reform itself into a medium **earth elemental** (see the SRD.) This elemental has been trapped here for more than a century. It will be grateful if it is freed, and will offer the one who frees it a token - a small, egg-shaped stone, which when held tightly and spoken to in a phrase in Terran (which the elemental will teach to the recipient), will call it back from the Elemental Plane of Earth, ready to assist it's rescuer. This stone is a single-use object.

11. Otyugh Chamber

This chamber is expressly designed to contain the waste and offal of the fortress. A decent-sized **otyugh** has fallen into the pit, and it is trapped. It will try to lure prey to it by sending telepathic images of needing help and being trapped, then will grapple anyone who comes close enough, and bash them to death against the stone walls, consuming them afterwards.

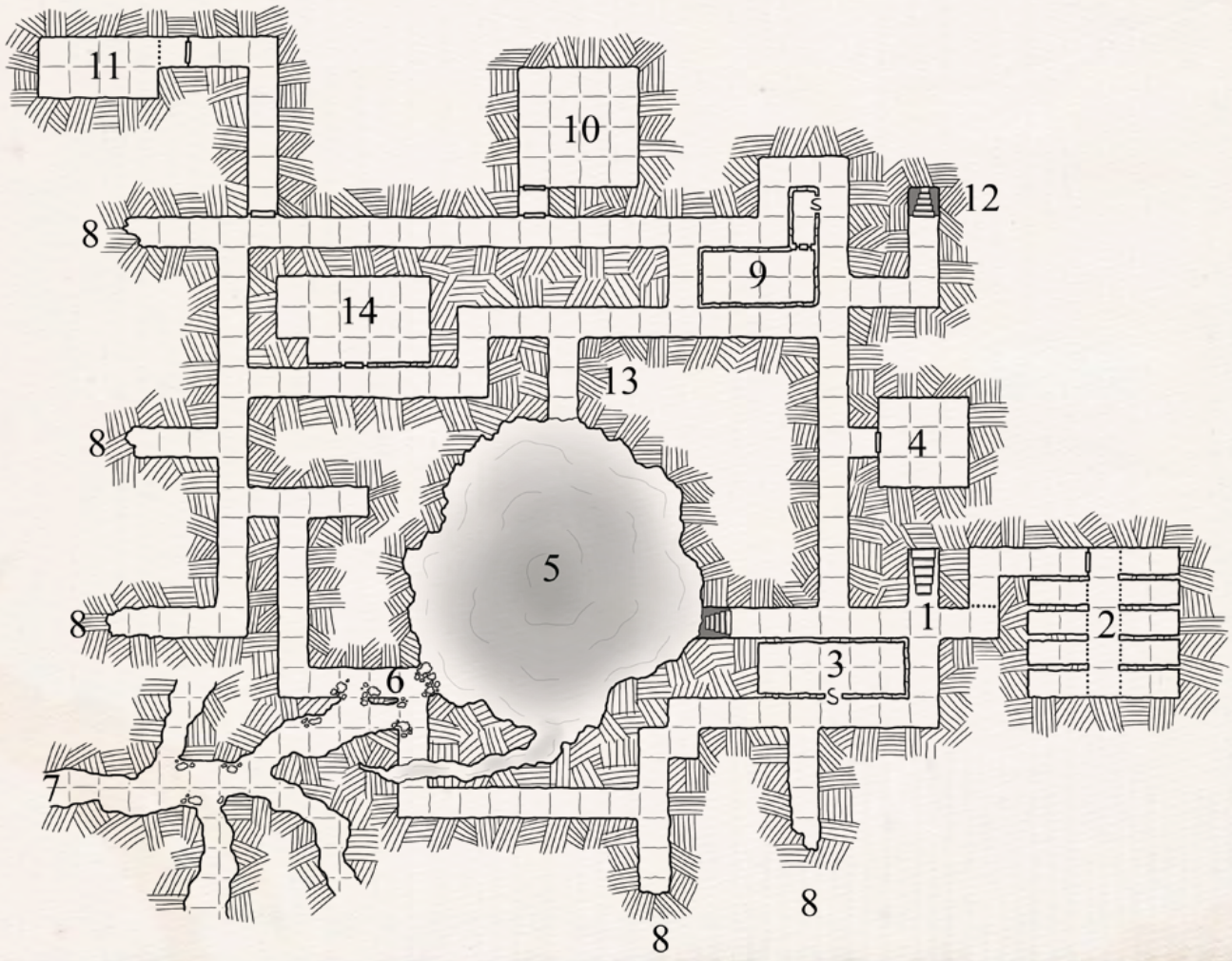
The chamber is entered by a stout oaken door, leading to a portcullis protecting the entrance to the chamber. There is a 15-foot drop from the portcullis to the floor of the pit, though the last 5 feet is filled with waste and offal.

12. Stairs

These stairs lead down to a blank wall. The level below was never completed.

13. Lake Corridor

This corridor provides additional access to the underground lake.



14. Armory

This hidden room is storage for extra weapons, including those captured during battles. There are many spears and quivers of arrows here, along with a few blades of various types, some shields, and a suit of scale mail and a chain mail hauberk. One blade stands out from the others: it is clean and shiny while the others are dull and show tiny signs of corrosion. This is a dancing sword (see the SRD for details.)

Once the characters leave the fortress, they have another week or more of travel to get to Lokil. The route there is similar to the path taken to get to the fortress, though with more rocky terrain. Caves are plentiful here, providing daytime shelter to rest and get out of the burning sun. Such caves are also a haven for desert creatures for the same reasons.

During the second day out after leaving the fortress, a successful **DC Wisdom (Perception)** check will discover a dust cloud behind the party in the distance but coming nearer. The characters should have plenty of time to climb up onto a nearby escarpment or rocky ridge to hide or prepare an ambush, and once there, they will observe a large group of **zombies** — one of which is a **zombie ogre** (see the SRD for both stat blocks)— heading north. These zombies — 17 in all —have been called by Maghiel and are not interested at all in the characters unless attacked. If left alone, the zombies will continue on their way without stopping or even slowing; since they need neither rest nor food, they will quickly outpace any pursuit by curious characters. This isn't intended to be a combat encounter but should be played up for the ominous nature of it, also tying in with the rumor of a necromancer calling all undead to herself. It helps to set the mood of dark and dangerous plots in motion.

Brightness in the Dark

While the characters have bedded down for the night in one of these caves, they will be visited by 1d4+1 **arcane devourers** (see the **Scarred Lands Player's Guide, Appendix: Titanspawn**) These are servants of Mesos, drawn here by His essence emanating from the remnants of His flesh. While any others attack and create a diversion, one will attempt to search for the container with the remnants inside. If any players make a successful DC 10 Intelligence (Arcana), Intelligence (Religion), or Intelligence (History), check, they realize that the arcane devourers are servants of Mesos, suggesting the almost certain likelihood that the contents of the large earthenware jar may contain remains of that titan.

Unless the characters broke the seal, the arcane devourers will not know where the remains of their master are being held. The magical seal radiates magic itself, but blocks the devourers from detecting the remnant inside. If the characters also put the titan's tendon in some sort of container and brought it with them as well, the arcane devourers will immediately find it and leave with that, mistakenly thinking they've located the remnant of Mesos that called to them.

They must search through the various items and containers among the characters' effects looking for it, hoping their compatriots can buy them enough time to find it. Identify is not a perfect choice of spells to use for this purpose, but it's what they have at their disposal, so it may take them more than one try to find what they're looking for, even if they're holding it in their hands.

If the arcane devourers escape with the container and/or the remnant, the players may feel dejected. At least those items didn't fall into the hands of the Shunned.

Chapter Three: Lokil

Lokil was a mighty city in former times. Razed by lava floes called down from the summit of Mount Hederesh by the titan Thulkas during the Titanswar, the city built on the slopes of the mountain was all but destroyed. In doing so, Thulkas and his forces managed to seal the entrances to the vast and timeless library beneath, preserving it almost completely intact. With the city — and the legions of craftspeople and workers who serve the needs of countless wizards, scholars, and researches engaged in study at the library — gone, the library itself fell into disuse for many years, even after the Titanswar was over.

With the help of the survivors, of skilled craftspeople from among the Kelder Dwarves, and a legion of unskilled labor donated by Hollowfaust, the rubble was cleared, and the vaults of Lokil were reopened. Many of the Kelder Dwarves stayed on as miners, merchants, and tunnel fighters, while what remained of the undead legion was returned to Hollowfaust with thanks and a pledge to give the necromancers easier access to the library's contents.

A few years ago, miners expanding a chamber discovered a network of tunnels far older than the library. These seemed to be lined with some sort of chitinous material, and it was at that point that things started to go wrong. Creatures from the depths began making their way into the higher levels, killing or devouring guards, librarians, and researchers by the handful. Some of these creatures seemed to come from elsewhere - other worlds or other planes of existence, perhaps. Worse still, many who entered the newly-discovered tunnels and chambers found themselves changed or driven mad by what they saw or learned there.

The Order of the Closed Book is a group of librarians — clerics, monks, paladins, and others — devoted to protecting Lokil against enemies from outside and from within. This Order has taken up the burden of defending the

library against incursions by these otherworldly creatures. Initially, sealing the entrance was enough, but the creatures and their construct servants dug new passages, reconnecting the more ancient, mind-warping tunnels with those of the library in a number of places. Since then, the Order continues to serve as a bulwark against this threat, but they are fighting a losing battle. They secretly appealed for help to a number of similar organizations, including the denizens of the Gleaming Valley and the secretive Obsidian Order.

Entering Lokil

The line to be admitted to the city is long. Traders are given quicker access than those seeking to plumb the depths of knowledge. Wait times are 3d4 hours, and no business is conducted in the library or by its staff after 6 PM. Those admitted later in the day typically are given an appointment time for the following day and must take rooms or camp overnight. While the city walls and some of the outside buildings have been rebuilt, most of the city is still empty, and it is here many supplicants camp for 1 silver piece per night per tent bribe to the guards while awaiting their turn to visit the archives. There are also two fine inns in the city: the House of Seven Cockroaches, despite it's name, is clean and well-maintained, has good food and helpful staff, and will rent rooms for six gold pieces per week or fraction thereof. Meals are 3sp each and of modest quality. Hedrada's Rest is furnished in a more spartan manner, with uncomfortable furniture and few other comforts. Food here is edible, but not great, though charged at a slightly higher 6 sp per meal. The rate for rooms is the same: six gold pieces per week or fraction of a week.

If an appeal is made to gain entrance by displaying the relic jar, the party will be immediately escorted into the offices of Master of Lore Alliki Nebega (male, LN human), where they will wait 3d8 minutes in an outer chamber for the great man to see them. The Master of Lore will puzzle over the jar, and eventually consulting others including Vadul Noth, (male LG human) Head Librarian and High Luminary of the Order of the Closed Book. Noth will find a warded room in the library in which to store the relic until an armed escort from one of the churches of the gods of Scarn can claim the item and take it someplace safer.

At this point, the characters have fulfilled their roles in trying to thwart this stage of Maghiel's plot. They will be paid 100 gold pieces each for their time and trouble, and be offered a +2 weapon of their choice, or a +1 suit of armor of their choosing.

Rumors & Info in Lokil

The party can discover a number of plot threads for the coming campaign while asking questions at the library, researching its archives, or even engaging in idle chatter in the inns. The following rumors and info may be revealed:

Obscure lore holds that fragments of a lesser titan named Keshe might be acquired in the Canyon of Souls.

The ritual Maghiel may be attempting requires an *apple of replenishment* - Grown on a single tree in the Ganjus forest

The *Staff of Zuvys* - held in a shrine built by the Order of Silver, can be found in New Venir.

A fragment of Mesos lies hidden beneath the residence of a hag in the Sorporata Swamp

The Mourning Marshes have seen a swift increase in titanspawn activity.

Cultists who served alongside Maghiel duting the Titanswar have begun raiding settlements in the Bleak Savannah. No one knows why.

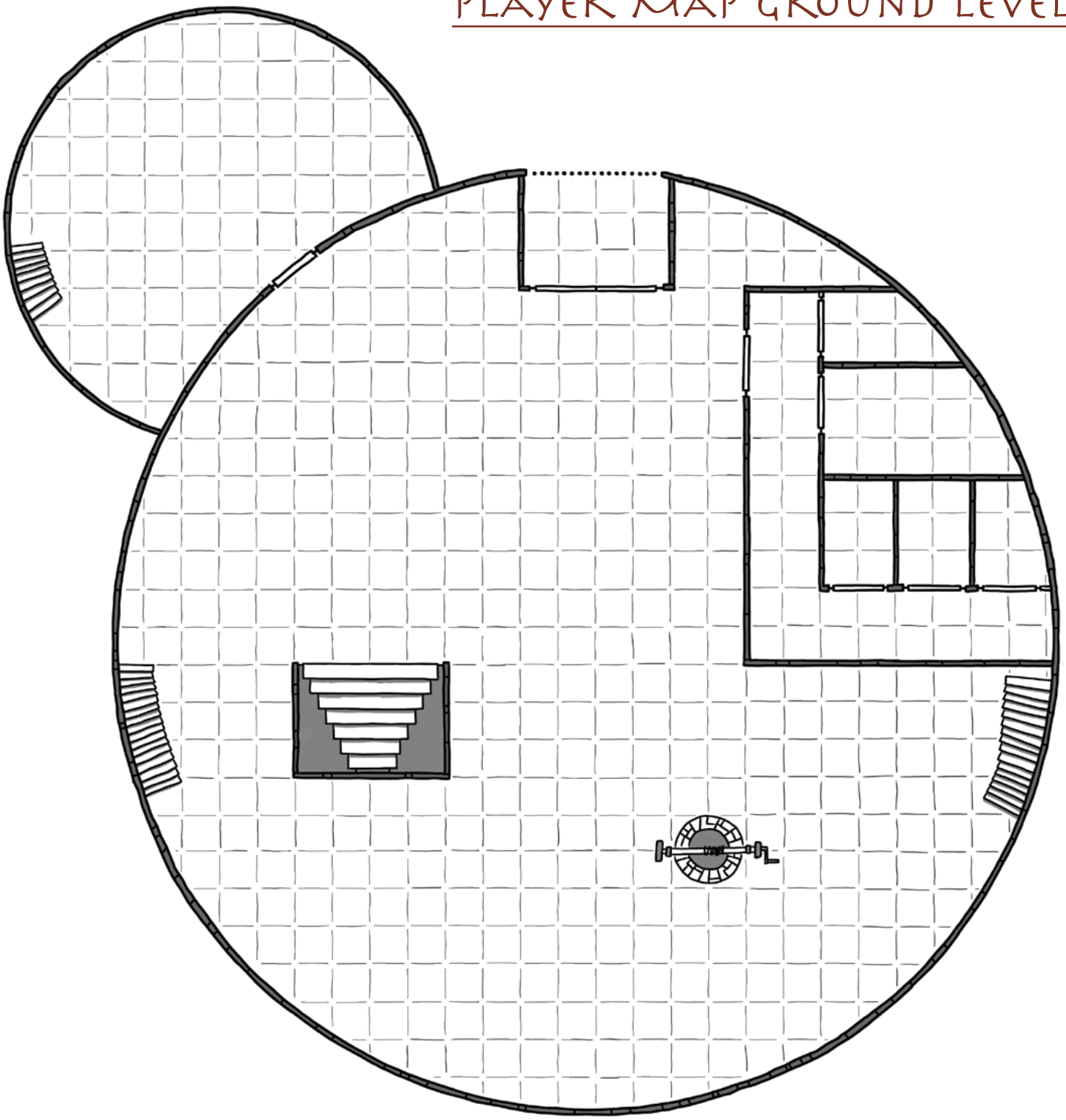
Some dwarf cleric, named Dain, perhaps? Was hiring adventurers to help with an expedition in the southern Kelders. Sounded dangerous and maybe a little crazy.

A wizard in Hollowfaust exploded, as near as anyone can tell, from Mesos' Bane.

Any other item you might find necessary, exciting, or expedient to include. These can range from magic items to simple trinkets like those found in Trinkets of Ghelspad by David Stephens at the Slarecian Vault. These can be used to guide the players back on track as they hunt down the items, dovetailing them back into the adventures and sidequests of this campaign.

If you wish to cover the party's overland travel back toward the Kelder Mountains, consider picking up Encounters in the Calastian Hegemony Volume I & Volume II by Travis Legge at Slarecian Vault to help fill in the journey.

PLAYER MAP GROUND LEVEL



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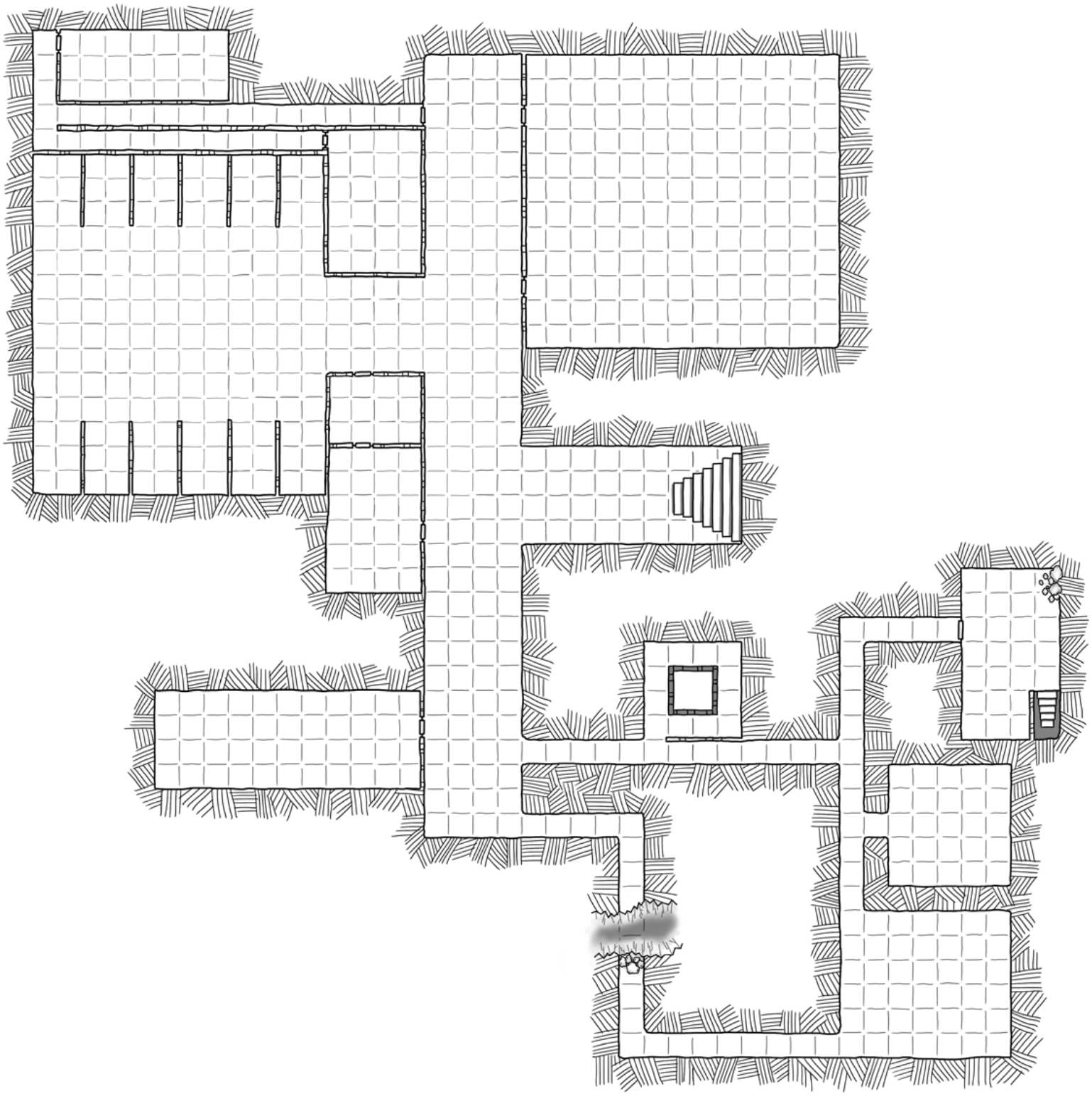

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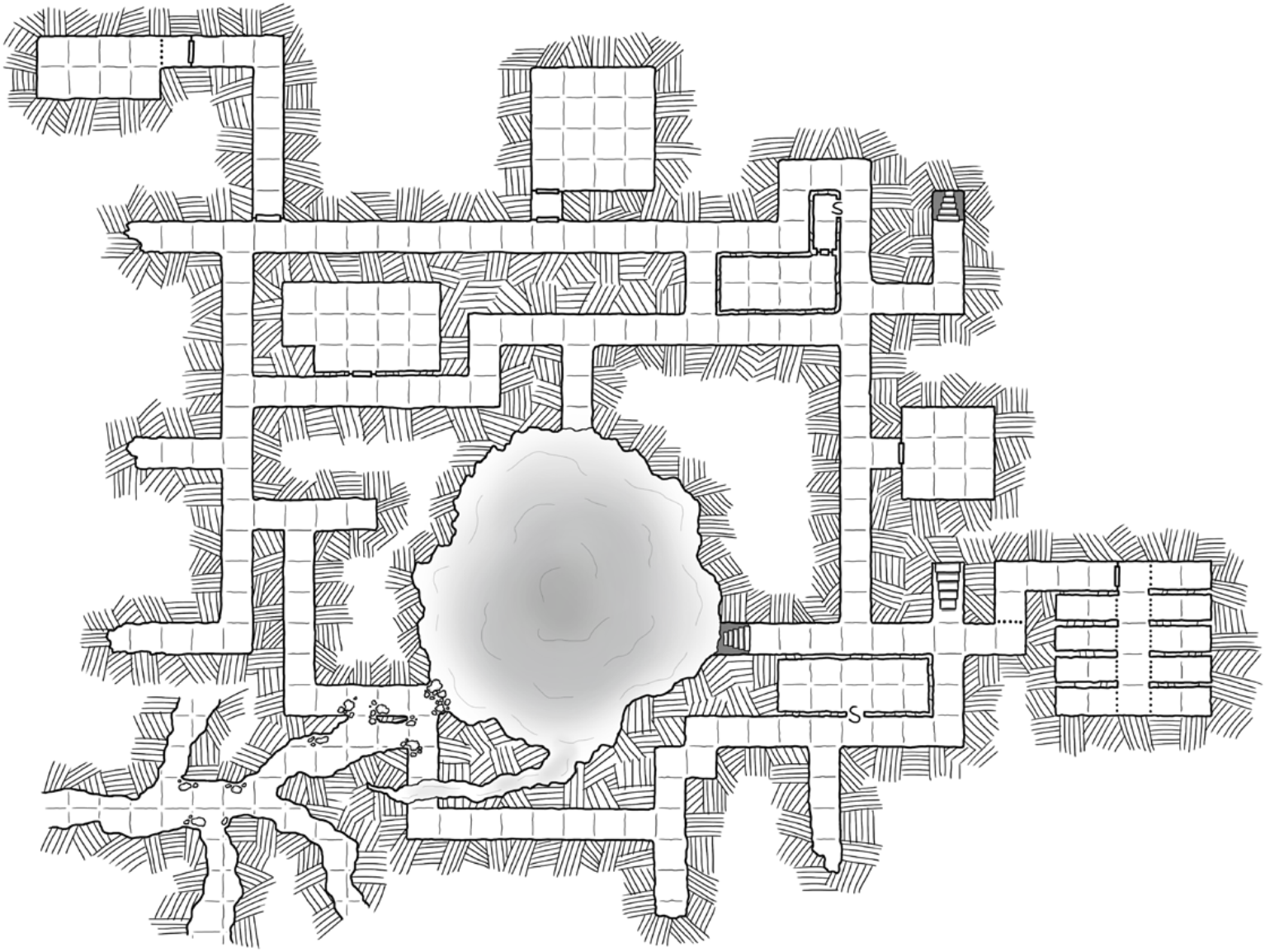


A Titanic Feast

Jeremy Hochhalter

INTRODUCTION

The adventurers have been searching for a powerful individual, Maghiel, a wizard who appears to be seeking to resurrect the titan Mesos. Following rumors and clues, the heroes find themselves in Ontenazu, where the wizard passed through only days before.

If the characters have played *The Cliffs of Death* by Cameron Blair, they have already entered the Canyon of Souls, and should bypass Chapter 1 and interactions in East Ontenazu unless they have chosen to return to the town before heading back through the Canyon in search of Maghiel. If this is the case, the adventure can start in Chapter 2, immediately following the end of The Cliffs of Death.

Characters should gain enough experience to go from level 10 to level 11 by the end of this adventure.

PREPARATION

Sidebars and other shaded text are provided, where applicable, to call attention to important points for the GM to consider and should not be read aloud. Creature and NPC names are provided in bold text where they appear in the adventure, and their stat blocks are provided in **Book 11: Peril Primer**.

INVOLVING THE PCS

This adventure assumes that the player characters have come to Ontenazu in search of Maghiel the Shunned.

SYNOPSIS

Arriving in the town of East Ontenazu, the adventurers hear rumor of several missing children. Locals recall seeing a group of people led by a strange, cloaked figure. They resupplied and hired a guide to lead them through the Canyon of Souls. It was not long after that the first child was discovered missing.

Heading into the Canyon of Souls, the characters find that idle talk around Ontenazu about the dangers of the Canyon was no exaggeration. Battling creatures and the nature of the Canyon itself, the group struggles to find the missing children and the villains who took them, when an odd discovery leads them to find a cave that was previous

unknown to the windwalkers, the guides of the Canyon. What the adventurers find in the underworld beneath the Canyon of Souls may change the fate of an entire race of people…and there are still the children to save!

Background

The adventurer's encounters are heavily influenced by the following people and events.

Maghiel

The wizard seeks power in the Canyon of Souls. Despite the dangers, the vague references and rumors she has gathered on her journey point to something of titanic power dwelling far below the Canyon. Now, she and some selected followers delve into the underworld in search of this power, so that Maghiel can take it for herself.

Maghiel and her group passed through East Ontenazu a few days ago. Hiring a windwalker, Pavlas Kyrillou, they were last seen heading into the Canyon, the same as any group seeking safe passage through the Kelder Mountains.

It wasn't until hours later that it was discovered several children were missing. Hiding them in carts and with magic, Maghiel and her minions stole the children for use as hostages.

The Akesheth

When the Divine War ended, the gods had won, and the Earth Mother, Denev, settled into the earth. Her role as the titan who turned against her own kind and helped in defeating them earned her a measure of safety against the wrath of the gods. Though it is not well known, other titans sided with her in standing against the vengeance of their brethren. Keshe was one of these titans, though its name does not often appear in books of history or arcana.

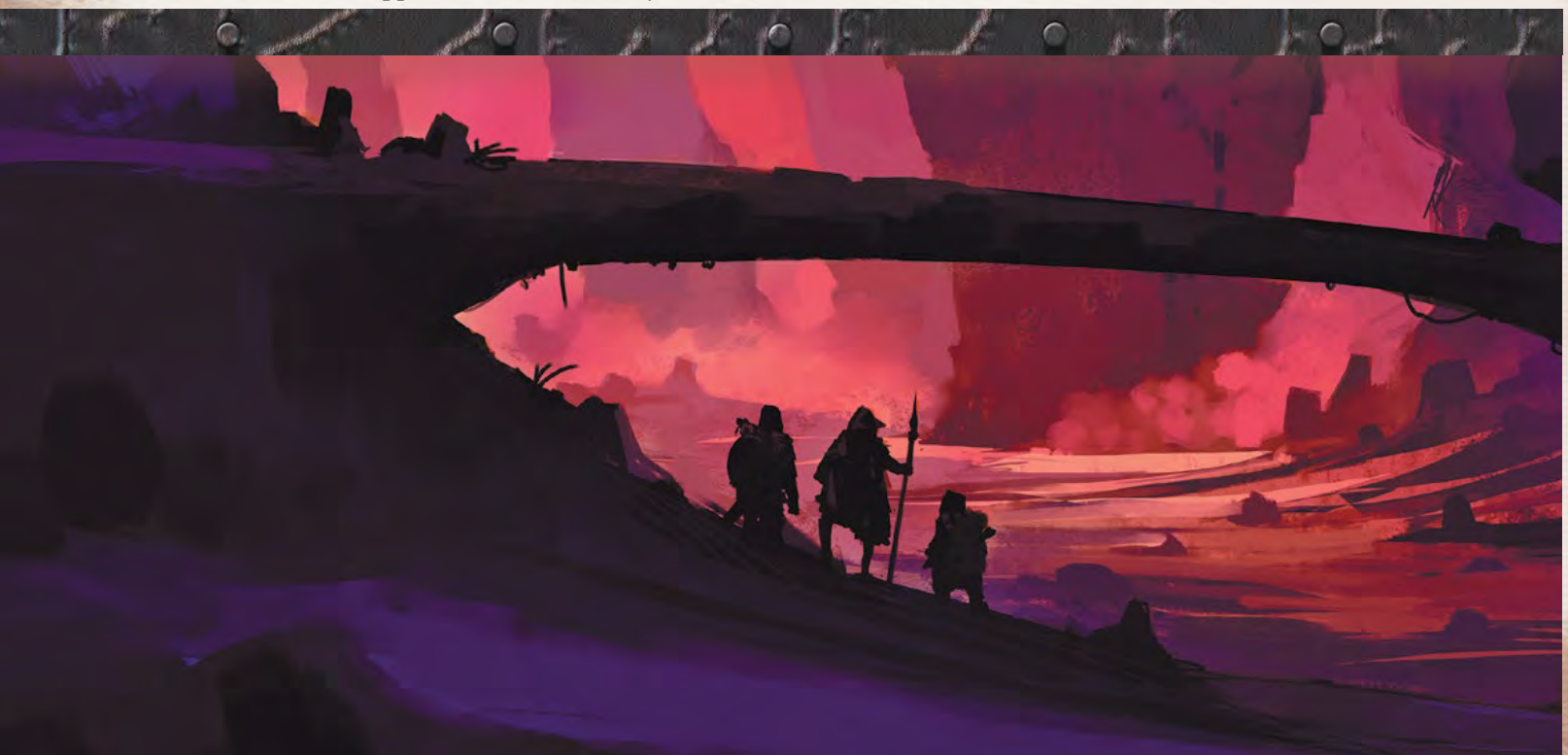
Keshe was a being of chaos, and even its form was an ever-changing mass of eyes, tendrils, and blowholes. Those who witnessed Keshe's true form were often driven mad, their minds crumbling before the chaos of the universe. Having such a being roaming around creation was not tolerable by the gods, even though Keshe had aided them in the defeat of the titans. Rather than destroying the titan outright, the gods allowed Keshe to exist, but cut its form into several pieces, what would come to be known as the Fragments of Keshe. The gods could not have known that the very chaos of Keshe would spawn a new race of beings, literally its own children, after the Fragments went into hiding in the ruins of the underworld.

For birthing a new race is exactly what the Fragments did. The akesheth are the progeny of the Fragments, and the titan's chaos still pulses through their existence. Though the majority of akesheth that are born today are far removed in appearance from a Fragment of Keshe, the chaos of their being still affects events around them.

To protect themselves and their children, the Fragments of Keshe spread across the underworld of Scarn. Akesheth have not traveled to the surface world since their creation, or if they have, those who may have witnessed the strange creatures did not live to spread the rumor.

Recent events are pushing the akesheth upward. Minions of Vangal go in search of the akesheth in order to hunt them, an act that pleases the dark god greatly. The secret of their existence is about to be revealed, and how the world reacts to them has yet to be seen.

Full details about the akesheth appear in *Scarred Races*, a player options guide for the Scarred Lands setting by Jeremy Hochhalter.



Mesos' Bane

During A Titanic Feast, it is assumed that the effects of the Clasp of Vergren have spread to encompass any area the adventurers may explore. A character who casts an arcane spell using a bard, sorcerer, warlock, or wizard spell slot must roll 1d6 and consult the following chart. While in the Canyon of Souls, roll 1d8 instead for the additional possible effects. Once they enter the underworld, return to rolling 1d6 for Mesos' Bane.

D6	EFFECT
1	**Bane of Heat:** You generate heat when you cast an arcane spell. You must make a Constitution saving throw against your own spell save DC or suffer 1 point of fire damage. For 2 rounds per level of the spell you cast (one round for a cantrip), you have advantage on saving throws against cold spells or effects, as well as resistance to cold damage. However, due to your discomfort, you also have disadvantage on Strength and Dexterity checks during that time.
2	**Bane of Luminance:** You generate light when you cast an arcane spell. You must make a Constitution saving throw against your own spell save DC or suffer 1 point of radiant damage. For 2 rounds per level of the spell you cast (one round for a cantrip), your body sheds bright light in a 20-foot radius and dim light for another 20 feet. During this time, you have disadvantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks (and the light might make some such checks impossible).
3	**Bane of Lightning:** You generate an aura of lightning when you cast an arcane spell. You must make a Constitution saving throw against your own spell save DC or suffer 1 point of lightning damage. For 2 rounds per level of the spell you cast (one round for a cantrip), you have advantage on saving throws against lightning effects, and you also have resistance to lightning damage. However, during the same period, you also have disadvantage on Strength and Constitution checks.
4	**Bane of the Mind:** You generate an aura of psychic dissonance when you cast an arcane spell. You must make a Constitution saving throw against your own spell save DC or suffer 1 point of psychic damage. For 2 rounds per level of the spell you cast (one round for a cantrip), you have advantage on saving throws against psychic effects, and you also have resistance to psychic damage. However, during the same period, you also have disadvantage on Intelligence and Wisdom checks.
5-6	No effect: Mesos' Bane does not flare up for you any more than normal.
7	**Bane of Wind:** A sudden, violent burst of wind picks up the caster and hurls them 10 feet in a random direction, then swirls around them until the end of their next turn. The caster takes 1 point of bludgeoning damage, and ranged attacks against them are at disadvantage until the wind dissipates.
8	**Bane of the Canyon:** Your magic and the strange forces that emanate from the Canyon of Souls collide, flicking you like an insect through the Ethereal. You disappear and are hurled 10 feet in a straight line away from your target, reappearing in an unoccupied space. If your spell targets yourself or has no target, you are thrown in a random direction. You suffer 1 force damage. Until the end of your next turn, you have advantage on saving throws against force effects, and you also have resistance to force damage.

Ontenazu

The adventure begins in East Ontenazu, at the base of the Kelder Mountains and at the mouth of the Canyon of Souls.

The Canyon itself has never been anyone's first choice for crossing the Kelder Mountains. However, since the Calastian occupation has effectively sealed off the Irontooth Pass, the Canyon of Souls is rapidly becoming the best method of traveling through the virtually impassable mountain range, despite its lethality. Though the settled areas on either side are known as Ontenazu, they are dramatically different from one another.

Native Ontenazans mostly make up West Ontenazu, while East Ontenazu is a melting pot of natives and travelers who have chosen to stay or are simply taking their time on their way through.

East Ontenazu

Only a handful of years ago, East Ontenazu was nothing more than a massive marketplace positioned near the mouth of the Canyon of Souls. Caravans and travelers would stop in the makeshift forum, which could barely be considered a town as there were few if any permanent structures. Some merchants would set up shop for a few days or even weeks, hawking their wares to other travelers before heading through the Canyon themselves.

Today, the impermanence of East Ontenazu is disappearing. Though much of it is still made up of wagons and tents, those who have decided to call Ontenazu home have begun building structures, including homes, an inn, a gambling hall, and even some permanent store fronts. After defending the pass through the Kelders from the Calastians, permanent fortifications are starting to appear. While no government exists as of yet, many of the merchants who are a part of the ongoing settlement effort are looked to for solving disputes, guidance on what areas should be fortified or cleared for building, and even for hosting events and ceremonies such as weddings and holiday gatherings.

More permanent than even the merchants and travelers who have decided to settle in the area are the windwalkers; guides who have lived in the area and trained to survive the deadly conditions of the Canyon of Souls itself. Travelers looking to cross the Canyon are highly encouraged by the locals to hire a windwalker, lest they fall prey to the dangers of the Canyon. While those traveling the Canyon are not required to have a guide, permanent signs near the mouth of the Canyon have been placed, warning those who are unprepared of imminent danger. Many of these signs are sponsored by newly permanent store fronts, who promise to sell travelers the goods they need to survive a crossing of the Canyon, even if they choose not to hire a windwalker to guide them.

The windwalkers themselves have established a few trading posts, both to make it easy for potential customers to hire them, but also to sell gear they make themselves, equipment they know from experience will see a person through to the other side of the Canyon safely. The windwalkers train for years with master guides to know the signs of any number of dangers present in the mountain pass, and they are currently in the process of erecting a building that will serve as a headquarters and training compound. Not all windwalkers are as well trained, however, and those who are not part of a growing guild of the guides are often found selling their services for far less gold…but with much less experience to guarantee the safety of their charges.

West Ontenazu

The largest settlement near the western mouth of the Canyon of Souls is known as West Ontenazu. Prior to the invasion by Calastia, most of those who lived in the area were nomadic wanderers who lived off the land outside the Canyon, and who viewed the awesome power of the winds there as a focus for meditation, self-improvement, and for honoring the Earth Mother, Denev.

After blocking Calastia's attempt to seize the Canyon, many of those wanderers have cloistered together, erecting homes and monasteries, a place where they can focus on their contemplations of existence, nature, and the divine.

Outsiders are welcome in West Ontenazu, and the people of the settlement are friendly to all unless given a reason to act otherwise. Then they are fiercely protective of one another and their homeland and are quite capable of defending it. Ontenazuans are often most friendly with those seeking enlightenment or the betterment of one's self and will often open their homes to shelter those in need, sharing what they have with complete strangers to help them on such a journey.

Chapter One: Missing Innocents

The adventurers find themselves in the organized chaos of East Ontenazu, hoping to find rumor of Maghiel. If the group has not played the previous adventures in the Vengeance of the Shunned series, they have simply arrived in Ontenazu seeking to cross the Canyon of Souls and hear talk of missing children and potential leads to help find them.

Rumors and Leads

The following rumors can be gathered by interacting with various folk in East Ontenazu.

• (General Populace) Asking around the settlement, adventurers should be able to find out the following information.

• Several children have disappeared. At least five have been confirmed, though it is possible more could be missing. The missing children are Grania, Hanze, Tyrra, Vinn, and Yori.

• (General Populace) Though it is not known if they had anything to do with the missing children, a group of merchants, led by a person whose face was hidden by a cowl, passed through the settlement a few days ago. Many inhabitants of the area suspect the group of kidnapping the missing children, though there is no proof.

• (Windwalkers) A windwalker named Pavlas Kyrillou was hired by a group of merchants to take them through the Canyon. Some of the other windwalkers thought Pavlas was acting strangely about the job. Nervous, and perhaps even a bit afraid. Still, she was seen leading the group into the Canyon, and it did not seem to be against her will.

• (Merchants) The group that passed through was an odd bunch that did business briskly, without even bother to haggle over prices. They purchased food and supplies for the journey through the Canyon, though they also picked up some strange, exotic goods; items that often only sell to magic users.

• (Merchants & Windwalkers) A windwalker named Grigori Antiok left to track the merchants through the Canyon in hopes of clearing up any accusations of their wrongdoing. He left with his tracking hounds less than a day after the merchants and has not returned.

• (General Populace) Several tales of magic behaving strangely…or more strange than usual…can be heard throughout the settlement. The occurrences have only increased over the last few days.

• (General Populace) Specialized gear is recommended for traveling through the Canyon of Souls. A number of merchants in the area sell such equipment.

Supplies and Equipment

Adventurers looking to buy goods can easily find merchants willing to sell them commonly found items (those available in the Player's Handbook), but at twice the listed price. Ontenazu is far from other civilizations, and the cost of doing business at the mouth of the Canyon of Souls is high. Many merchants can be haggled with, however. If the group is actively seeking the missing children, most merchants will offer to supply them for the regular cost of goods, or perhaps even cheaper.

New Equipment

Goggles, 2 gp, - lb. An extra thick piece of blown glass held in a frame of cured and hardened leather, these goggles can be affixed to a person's head with its attached leather straps and buckles. Though the goggles protect the wearer from going blind from the blowing sand of the Canyon, Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight are rolled at disadvantage while wearing them.

Fur Tent (2-person), 5 gp, 35 lb. This tent still has the heavy fur of whatever beast it came from. It provides better and longer-lasting protection against the winds in the Canyon of Souls, though it too will wear down over time.

CHAPTER TWO:
THE CANYON OF SOULS

Traversing the Canyon of Souls is a deadly endeavor on the best of days. The passage through the Kelder Mountains is actually a collection of various canyons and paths, some that plunge into unknown depths, many that are constantly buffeted by the deadly winds, and a few that offer respite from the dangers. Many paths are dead ends, or host other dangers such as wandering undead and other creatures. With a windwalker to guide them, the adventurers can avoid the worst of the Canyon's natural dangers, though creatures and unnatural perils still persist. These windwalkers know the few routes that exist that can lead a group through the Canyon as safely as possible, though the guides offer no guarantees that there will be no dangers.

If the group chooses to attempt passage through the Canyon without a windwalker, all saves against the hazards of the Canyon are rolled at disadvantage. A character who is proficient in Nature or Survival may make a **DC 22 ability check** (player's choice of Nature or Survival) once they have encountered a hazard in order to learn about it, and can then grant their group a better chance of dealing with that hazard. If this happens, the characters do not roll at disadvantage against that hazard. Traveling with a windwalker grants characters advantage on saving throws against the hazards of the Canyon.

Traveling the Canyon of Souls can often be accomplished in 10 days, though during winter months it can take as long as a month or more. Even during good weather, travel through the Canyon can take longer due to the unstable nature of the winds, forcing travelers to seek shelter for days at a time.

HAZARDS

While traveling the Canyon of Souls is a challenging endeavor, the hazards should not be used to punish characters or make a slog of the time spent within the Canyon. Use them as much or as little as works for your group's gaming style. The hazards are included to drive home just how deadly the nature of the Canyon is. Hazards used in concurrence with Random Encounters can heighten the tension of the moment, as adventurers rush to fight their way free of combat before the winds hit, or friend and foe alike trying to dodge falling debris during a rockslide.

Winds. For every hour the characters spend in the Canyon of Souls, roll 1d20. On a 19, or when it is dramatically appropriate, the winds begin to blow. On a 20, stronger high winds blow. They can be heard before they are felt, as they roar through the canyons, giving characters with a passive Perception of 13 or more a chance to hear them and take shelter before the winds reach them, if shelter is available. The winds last for 1d100 minutes, then simply stop. Often, there isn't so much as a breeze in the Canyon of Souls, only the winds or stillness.

The winds of the Canyon of Souls are devastating. Each round a creature spends in the winds, they must roll a **DC 15 Constitution** saving throw, suffering 3 (1d6) piercing damage and being blinded for 1 minute on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. This damage is considered magical for overcoming damage resistance. If a creature fails on three consecutive saving throws, they become blinded for 24 hours, at the end of which they may repeat the saving throw, their eyesight returning on a successful save. Creatures who fail the saving throw over three consecutive days are permanently blinded. If a hazard is marked as high-winds, characters must also succeed on a **DC 15 Strength** saving throw or be pushed 10 feet in the direction the wind is blowing.

Dealing with the winds can be problematic if caught unaware, but should rarely prove deadly. Taking shelter in caves, niches in the canyon walls, side canyons where the wind isn't currently blowing, or using equipment a character may have brought with them are all viable options to get out of the wind. If players are unable to come up with viable solutions, a character succeeding on a **DC 13 Wisdom (Survival) or Intelligence (Nature)** check should allow them to find shelter nearby.

Flight. Flying is almost impossible in the winds. Creatures with a flying speed must succeed on a **DC 18 Strength (Athletics)** check in order to move against the wind, which is considered difficult terrain. Those who fail suffer 7 (2d6) bludgeoning from the wind's force and are pushed half the creature's fly speed in the direction the wind is blowing. Those who attempt to fly along with the wind must succeed on a **DC 18 Dexterity (Acrobatics)** check in order to maintain their control. If a creature succeeds its fly speed increases by half. If it fails, the creature still moves its fly speed but suffers 7 (2d6) bludgeoning damage as it is tossed about. Damage caused by failed checks during flying is in addition to the regular damage caused by the winds.

Wear and Tear. The winds also wear down on gear and equipment. Characters who wear leather armor or just clothes much roll a **DC 13 Wisdom** saving throw at the end of each windstorm they are caught in. A failure means their clothing has been reduced to rags, and armor has a permanent -1 penalty. If this reduces the armor's AC to 10, it is destroyed. Magical equipment roll the saving throw at advantage, but are not immune to the winds. Even metal armor has been said to be worn over time in the Canyon, though the adventurers will not spend enough time here to test that rumor.

Any equipment that has hinges, gears, or other moveable parts must be covered against the winds. If they are not, the equipment ceases to function as sand clogs and blocks its parts. Such objects may be cleaned for 1 hour to make them work again.

Typical tents are destroyed after spending an accumulated total of six hours in the winds of the Canyon. Fur tents (see New Equipment) may make a **DC 13 saving throw** after every 24 hours of accumulated exposure, being destroyed on a failure.

Magical Shelter. Magical housing, such as tiny hut are also affected by the strange nature of the Canyon's winds. The caster must maintain concentration on the spell to keep magical housing from immediately disappearing during a windstorm. In addition, they must succeed on a **DC 10 concentration check** at the end of every hour the housing is under the effect of a windstorm, with the housing disappearing on a failed check. A caster who must concentrate on maintaining such a spell for more than one total hour during a rest must succeed on a **DC 10 Constitution check** at the end of the rest period, or they do not benefit from the effects of that rest.

Rockslide. Rockslides last for 1d6 rounds. Those caught in a rockslide must roll a **DC 15 Strength** saving throw each time they begin their turn within it, suffering 10 (3d6) bludgeoning damage and falling prone on a failed save, or half as much damage and not falling prone on a successful one. Attempting to move through a rockslide should be considered difficult terrain.

Exposure. Traveling through the Canyon of Souls is hot and hard work. For every 8 hours spent traveling, a creature must roll a **DC 13 Constitution** saving throw, gaining one level of exhaustion on a failed save.

Random Encounters

For every eight hours the characters spend in the Canyon of Souls, roll 1d20. On an 18-20, they encounter one of the following. If an encounter has more than one option, only run encounter instructed. Once a unique encounter has occured, do not run it again, with no encounter happening on a repeated roll.

D6	ENCOUNTER
1	(First Roll Only) Mehmet Lakko. A group of eight lepers is traveling through the Canyon of Souls to Vesh, guided by the windwalker, Mehmet Lakko. Mehmet has grown ill during the journey from a mysterious illness. The group is unaware that three of the lepers are **flesh corruptors** that simply appear to be people suffering from the same wasting disease as themselves. The flesh corruptors do not attack unless provoked, seeking to reach Vesh in order to spread their sickness further. (Second Roll) A sand-covered leather bag containing 54 gold pieces, 13 silver pieces, 1 lb. of dried jerky, a canteen, and one potion of healing.
2	2 **blight wolves**.
3	(First Roll Only) Grigori Antiok. Grigori Antiok and his hounds were captured by Maghiel and her minions, and transformed into undead, then set to wait for any others who may come after her. Grigori, now an **overghast ghoul**, roams the canyons with three **ghoul hounds**, searching for the adventurers. (Second Roll Only) Howling Abomination. The **howling abomination** has been sent to find the Pride of Vangal that is in the area. It does not know that the Pride is in the underworld, but it is more than happy to attack any other travelers in the Canyon.
4	2d4 **slarecian ghouls**.
5	Windwalker. The **windwalker**'s name is Calia Petrou. She is well-known by the guilded windwalkers for refusing to join the organization, as well as for rumors that her clients go missing more often than they make it to the other side of the Canyon of Souls alive. Though she would not attack the adventurer's outright, once they run into her in the Canyon, she may shadow them for a while and attempt to steal their belongings when they rest.
6	(First Roll) The skeleton of a random humanoid. Though the winds have destroyed most of its belongings, 3d10 gold pieces worth of coins and gems can be found in the sands around it. (Second Roll Only) Nirliq Chulyin. Nirliq Chulyin, a human, is discovered burying four other humans in the sand of a small side canyon. He claims that his party was set upon by foul, flesh eating creatures, and he was the sole survivor. He has several cuts and what appear to be bite marks to back up his story, as do all but one of his companions. The remaining humanoid appears to have had his skin completely stripped. Nirliq claims to be a wealthy merchant from Vesh, but in reality, he is a **mechanoid emulator**. The real Nirliq is the man who is missing his skin, which the mechanoid stole to assume Nirliq's identity. If discovered, Nirliq will fight if cornered, but will otherwise attempt to flee with his new skin intact as possible. Nirliq is happy to accompany the group through the canyon, helping out if possible, until they reach West Ontenazu. When the journey ends before then, he will stay with the group's windwalker when they descend into the underworld.

Featherweb Bridge

(Three Days from East Ontenazu)

While most bridges in the Canyon of Souls are protected from the winds inside canyons that only get strong breezes, the Featherweb Bridge spans the Canyon of Souls at a junction where no cover from the winds is possible at all. The elaborate rope bridge is a marvel of skill and magic. Even bolstered against the elements, it still requires repair on a regular basis. Though it is open to the wind, a web of rope and magic create a semblance of walls and an arched roof that keep the worst of the gusts from blowing off those who cross the bridge.

Near the Featherweb Bridge, a magically enhanced pulley system was set up to ferry across those who refused to brave walking across the bridge. Usually, large covered baskets are available to carry wagons, beasts of burden, and people to the other side of the canyon via the pulley system. Now, however, it appears that the ropes of the system have been cut, with the length of them hanging down the far wall of the canyon, streaming from the supports on that side. Several scorch marks mar the entrance to the Featherweb Bridge, and signs of blood stain the ground in the area.

In addition, specially trained windwalkers are usually stationed here to help with the pulley system and watch for potential hazards on the bridge. When the characters arrive, no one is to be seen.

Maghiel and her group passed this way and made the effort to make sure it was difficult for her adversaries to follow. They attempted to destroy the Featherweb Bridge, though its magic and design proved too stout to ruin completely. The basket gondola system, however, has been completely impaired.

The wizard had the windwalkers thrown over the canyon's edge, and while most of them fell to their deaths, one managed to land on a ledge not too far from the top of the canyon. Calista Spyrou, a **windwalker**, lies unconscious on a small stone shelf 60 feet below where the gondola system once stood. Those looking over the edge can notice her with a **DC 12 Wisdom (Perception)** check. Reaching her is easy enough if the adventurers came prepared with rope. The winds, however, may have other plans for such an endeavor. During the rescue, roll 1d20. On an 18-20, the winds begin tearing through the canyon, endangering those climbing the canyon wall.

Crossing the Featherweb Bridge can be daunting at the best of times and this is not such a time. Though windwalkers know much about the Canyon, those who are stationed at the bridge have spent enough time there to learn the patterns of the wind and could often time crossings to avoid the hazards of a wind-time journey. Without them, it is up to the adventurers and their guide to guess when it is best to cross. If the group finds and rescues Calista Spyrou, however, she can help them to cross during a safer time when she knows the winds will. When the group crosses the bridge, roll 1d20 (subtract 4 if Calista is helping them cross). On 15-19, the characters must deal with moving through a windstorm for 1d4 minutes. On a 20, the characters must deal with a high windstorm for 1d4 minutes.

The wind is not the only hazard of the bridge crossing. When she could not destroy the bridge, Maghiel left behind three **despairs** to harry those who would follow after her. If the adventurers cross during a low- or no-wind time, the despairs take flight from their hiding spots below the bridge when the group is halfway across, and attack them from range with their foul darts before swooping in to melee range after their prey has been afflicted by the contagion of their feathers. If the group attempts a high wind crossing, the despairs have a harder time attacking from range, but will attempt to sicken their targets for the first round, moving into melee the following round even if their ranged attacks failed. If two of the despairs perish, the third will disengage and flee if possible.

The bridge is 15 feet wide, and spans almost 400 feet over the chasm.

THE TWIN CANYONS

(FIVE DAYS FROM EAST ONTENAZU)

Signs of passage are largely obliterated by the winds. However, as the characters near the intersections which offers passage into what locals have named the Twin Canyons, it is obvious that at least some of the children have been taken down both passages.

EAST CANYON

If the adventurers follow the tracks into the eastern canyon, and they have a windwalker with them, the windwalker with explain that beyond the bend ahead is a small oasis, one of the only respites within the Canyon of Souls. The windwalkers have a waystation set up there, and there are usually at least a few members there, and the area could potentially have others who have hired windwalker guides. Characters with a passive Survival skill of 17 or better notice that the tracks of the children disappear just out of sight of the oasis, though they notice more tracks of beasts of burden than previously.

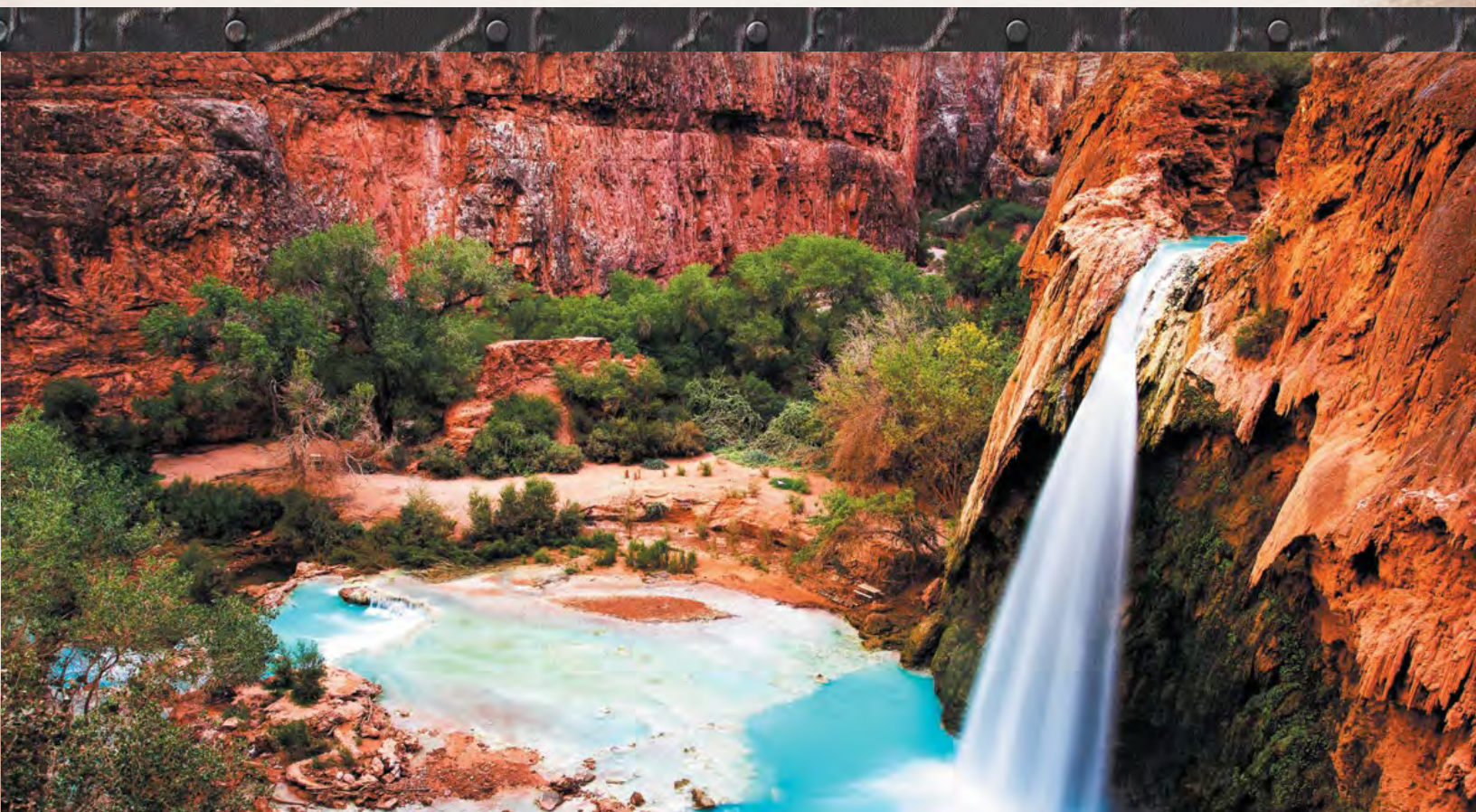
Upon arrival, the group finds several other people resting in the oasis. A watering hole, fed by a waterfall the pours from the face of the cliff, offers fresh water for pack animals, as well as for refilling waterskins. A small covered cart offers a limited range of wares, including 1d4 potions of healing. The cart owner, Jafit Eng, charges 50% more than prices listed in the PHB / SLPG. If the group has a windwalker guide with them, Jafit can be convinced to lower his prices to 25% over list price with a successful **DC 12 Persuasion (Charisma)** check. If the group does not have a windwalker guide, the DC increases to 15, and Jafit cannot be convinced to budge on his prices via intimidation or deception. That being said, he is also open to trade, if the adventurers have goods to offer.

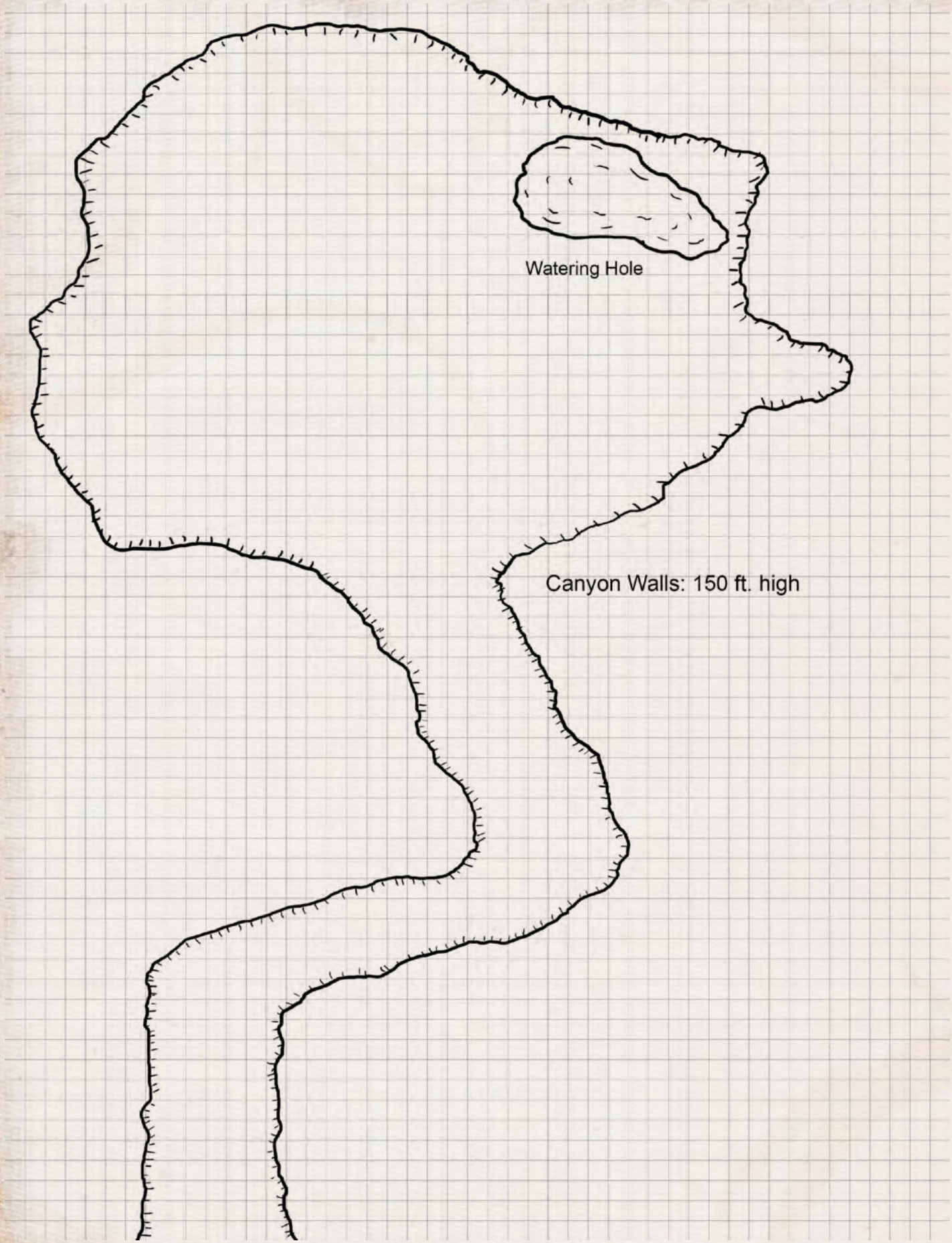
The adventurers see children at play, though they belong to a small caravan that is traveling in the opposite direction. Questioning those in the area about other children reveal that no other children have been in the oasis. Jafit can attest that the last time he saw a group bring children through with them was many weeks ago. The passage through the Canyon of Souls is dangerous, and only those in desperate need make the journey with children.

Asking around to see who has arrived recently, Jafit can inform the group that the group with children arrived yesterday morning, and are staying until tomorrow to let the children relax and recuperate their strength before braving the perils of the Canyon again. Otherwise, only a group of three people arrived a few hours ago. He can point out the three, who stand near the water with two donkeys.

The donkeys are actually two of the missing children, Hanze and Vinn, and have been polymorphed into this shape to hide them. With them are Kevi and Marcu, two human **mages**, and Arylide Drago, an ironbred **gladiator**. The donkeys each wear a perpetuation band, which the magic users have been using to keep them in their polymorphed state. If discovered, the necromancer's minions will do their best to slay or at least delay the characters.

Treasure. Between them, Maghiel's minions have 47 gold pieces, a silver locket with the likeness of a child painted inside, and a *potion of healing*.




Watering Hole
Canyon Walls: 150 ft. high

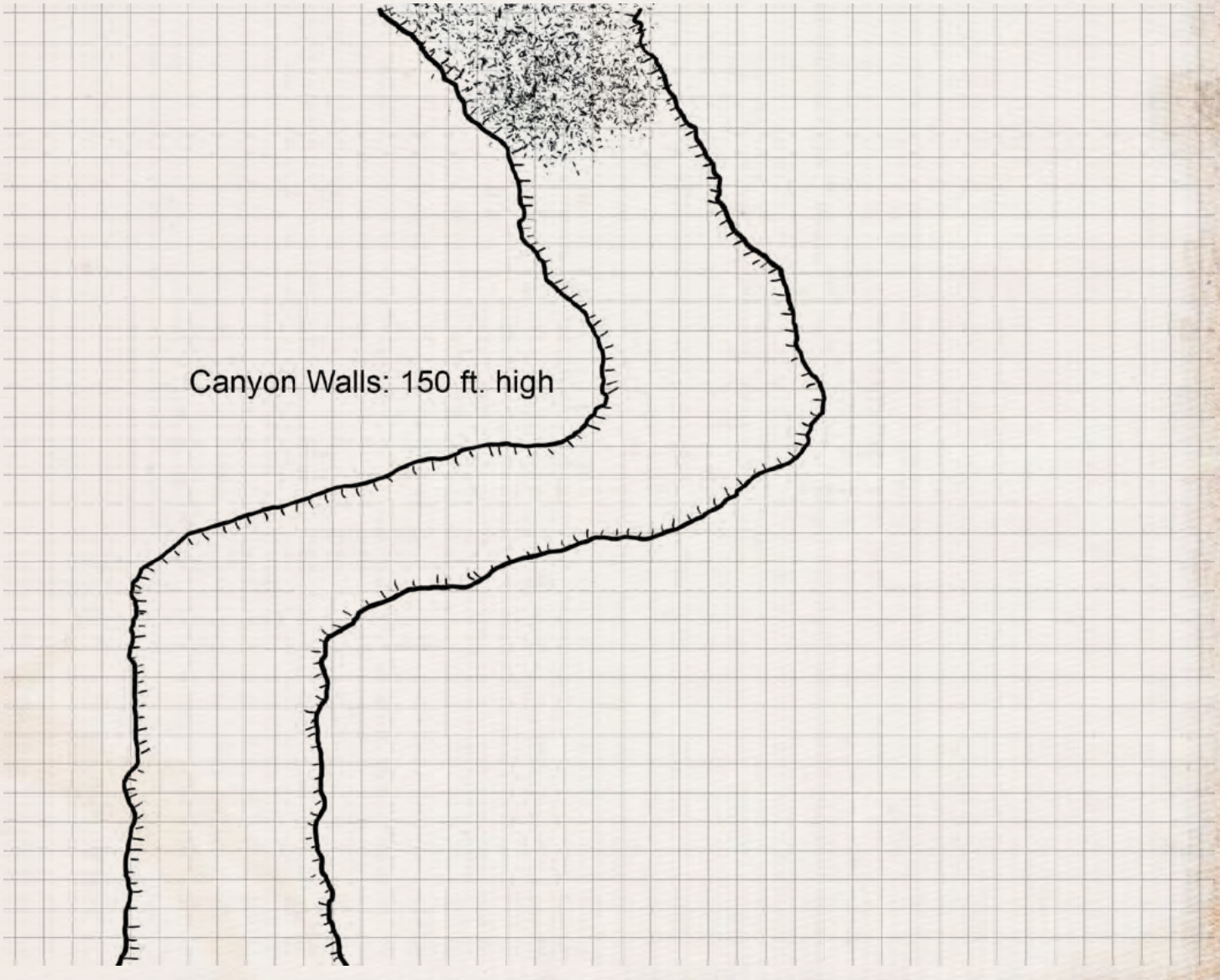
West Canyon

If the adventurers choose to investigate down the west canyon, the tracks of numerous adults and two children are obvious. When they come to the bend, the roaring of the canyon becomes overpowering. Characters cannot hear one another speak, even when shouting right next to one another. In addition, spell casters must succeed on a **DC 12 concentration check** in order to cast a spell.

The wind is very strong here, though the roaring is much louder than the wind should create. Shortly after the bend in the canyon, a wall of wind and sand prohibits line of vision further on.

The group manages to find two children, Grania and Yori, who are huddled together just feet from the sandstorm. Unfortunately, Maghiel has murdered them and transformed them into undead, leaving them as a deadly trap for those who would follow her. The children are now **necronduits**, the spellcasters (a human **mage** and an orc **priest**) that control them are nearby, out of sight at the top of the 150 foot cliff walls that rise on either said of this side canyon. The necronduits wait until a character move up to them, then attack. The spellcasters have no interest in being killed, and so stay out of sight, casting their spells through the necronduits. If the necronduits perish, the spellcasters flee, hoping to navigate the Canyon on their own.

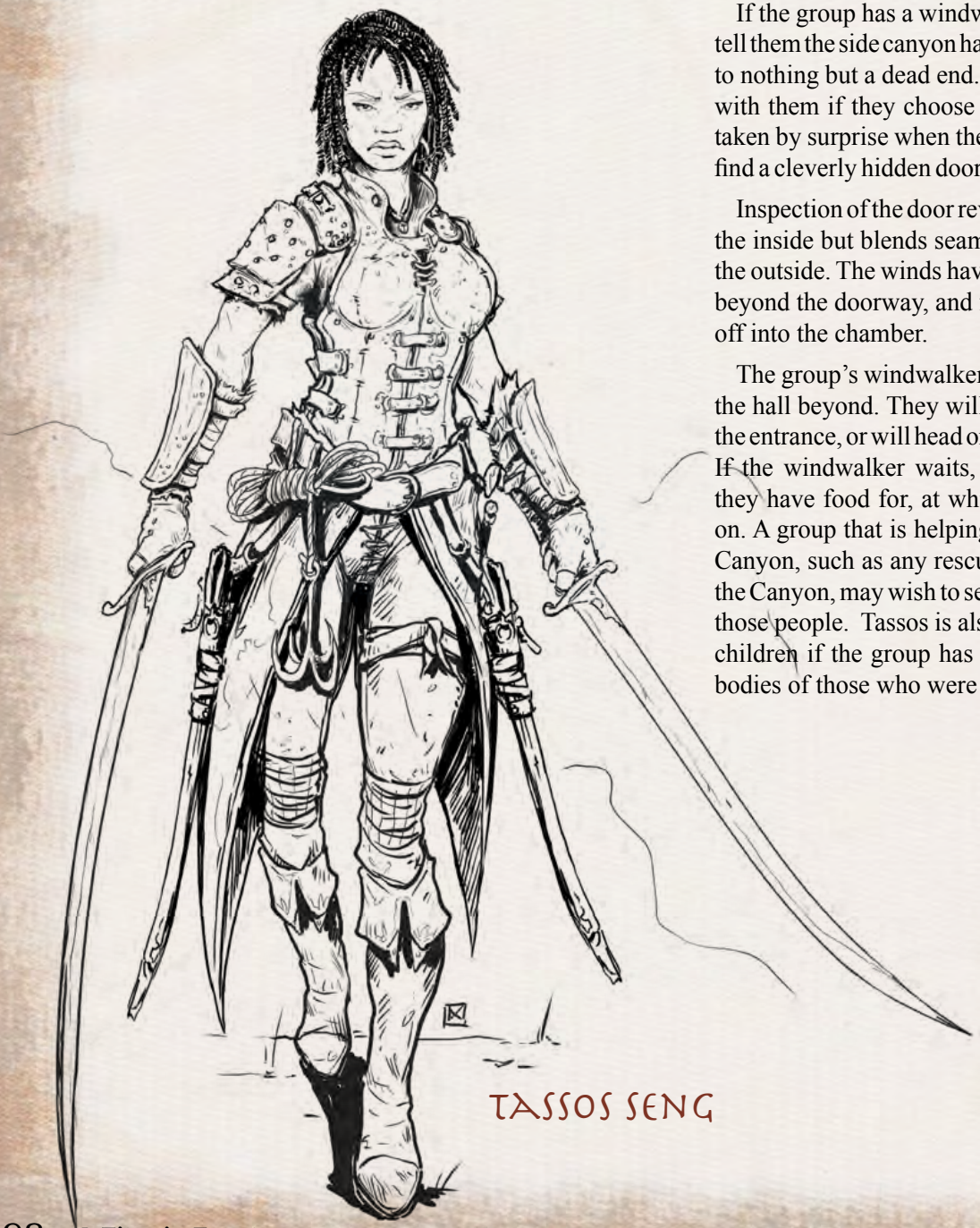
The West canyon is fraught with other dangers, ones that no one has ever returned to tell about. The scope of this adventure does not include further travel into the West canyon, though the DM is welcome to include more encounters. This will delay the adventurers, however, and the canyon itself is quite deadly. Entering into the wall of wind and sand, vision is reduced to 5 feet, and creatures are immediately under the effects of the Canyon's wind hazard, though the **saving throw DC is 18**, and the winds deal 7 (2d6) magical piercing damage per round instead. Spell casters must succeed on a **DC 20 concentration check** in order to cast spells while in the area.



A HIDEOUS CLUE

(SIX DAYS FROM ONTENAZU)

Near the intersection of a disused side-canyon, the adventurers meet Tassos Seng, a **windwalker** who is heading toward East Ontenazu. She found something weird on her way, just down the side canyon ahead, and she is quick to tell another windwalker of her discovery if the group has one with them. Otherwise, Tassos warns the group away from that side canyon, feeling it best they avoid what she found. She does not believe that canyon leads to anything but a dead end in any case.



TASSOS SENG

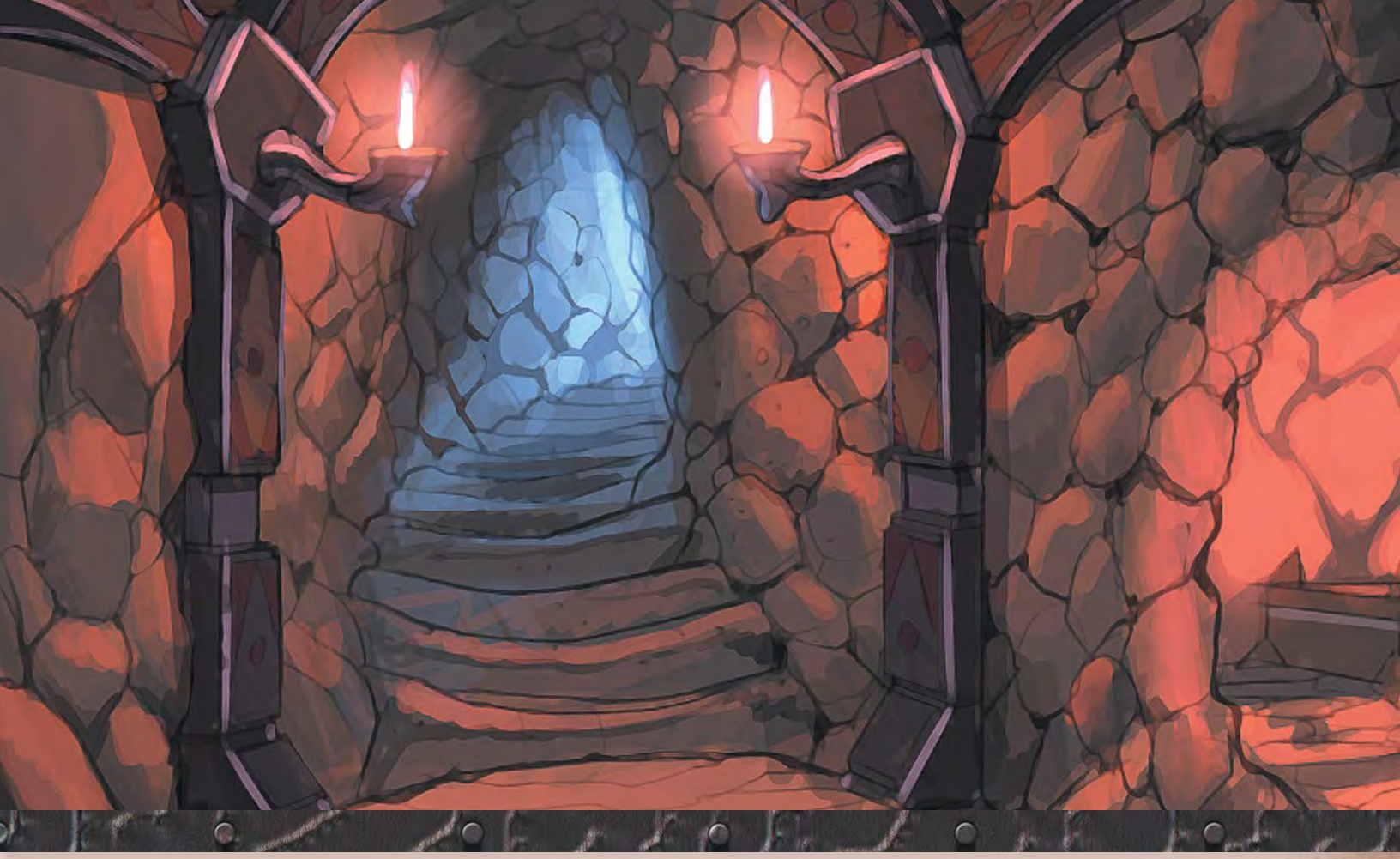
Tassos happened upon the remains of an akesheth. The creature had been outside, searching for signs of an enemy it was hunting, when Maghiel's group set upon it. The wizard left the creature's corpse to rot in the canyon, and the wind has damaged it greatly, to the point that it is unrecognizable as much more than meat. Unfortunately, Maghiel also discovered the passage that the akesheth used to enter the Canyon from the underworld.

Those who inspect the akesheth corpse closely may see a resemblance between it and some kind of marine animal, such as a large squid. Though why such a creature would be so far inland is anyone's guess. The wind has already scoured the akesheth's clothing away where it was exposed, though bits remained beneath the corpse, yet another oddity to those investigating the body.

If the group has a windwalker with them, the guide will tell them the side canyon has been explored before and leads to nothing but a dead end. The windwalker will not argue with them if they choose to investigate, however, and is taken by surprise when they arrive at the dead end only to find a cleverly hidden door that is now standing open wide.

Inspection of the door reveals that it is ornately carved on the inside but blends seamlessly with the canyon wall on the outside. The winds have blown sand into the small hall beyond the doorway, and faint tracks can be seen leading off into the chamber.

The group's windwalker does not accompany them into the hall beyond. They will either wait for them, guarding the entrance, or will head on to West Ontenazu if instructed. If the windwalker waits, it will only be for as long as they have food for, at which point he will have to move on. A group that is helping others to reach the end of the Canyon, such as any rescued children or people found in the Canyon, may wish to send their windwalker on to guide those people. Tassos is also willing to help return the lost children if the group has saved them, or their return the bodies of those who were killed.



CHAPTER THREE: INTO THE UNDERWORLD

Delving into the unknown, the adventurers seek Maghiel in the underworld. What they find, and whether it be friend or foe, will depend on their choices.

ENTRY HALL

This small hall is carved directly from the stone of the mountain. With a successful **DC 15 Intelligence (History)** check, a character understands that the chamber itself is dwarven handiwork, though it is far older than any current dwarven empires. It has held up well against the elements, the door that leads into the Canyon of Souls barring the devastating winds from wreaking destruction on the construction.

Several faint sets of footprints lead on into the dark. Across the room from the door, a spiraling staircase disappears into the earth. The tracks lead to the staircase and then down, but disappear shortly thereafter, the dust and sand that covered the area above not present here.

HALL OF PILLARS

The staircase empties out hundreds of feet below the surface, revealing a carved hall, rows of columns stretching off into the dark. Though several halls lead off of this massive chamber, it becomes obvious that a collapse of this area has filled in much of the abandoned ruins, the rest having been looted many years ago. A natural tunnel can be found, leading from the dwarven ruins and further into the underworld.

Treasure. A careful search of the area reveals a skeleton almost turned to dust by time. Under the bones is a potion of greater healing, a set of thieves' tools, and a +1 dagger.

Something in the Dark

As the adventurers progress through the winding natural tunnel, looking for signs of the necromancer or the missing children, a creature makes itself known.

An akesheon'sul named Tivex approaches the group warily. Though it has reservations about greeting outsiders, Tivex is desperate to find the akeshekk'tor, Roywin, who has been missing for some time and is needed back in the akesheth settlement. Unfortunately, the strange remains that were left in the Canyon above are those of Roywin.

Tivex is devastated by the news, if the group reveals Roywin's death to it. However, Tivex is more than willing to help the adventurers find the person responsible for the 'tor's death, and offers to bring them back to Nol Boldihr, where its people live. Perhaps the akesheth there can help the group to track the necromancer's group. Tivex knows that the manticora are hunting the akesheth, and secretly hopes the group can help them against the minions of Vangal.

Roleplaying Tivex

Tivex is an akesheon'sul, with a white hide marked with red. It is young, and though it understands the dangers that its people face, it has become restless, wanting to explore the world beyond Nol Boldihr. When Roywin did not return from scouting, Tivex offered to be the one to go look for it, hoping to catch more than a glance at the wonders outside the akesheth city.

Being very enthusiastic, Tivex's tendrils often move about rapidly when it becomes excited or nervous, and the tones of its voice rise an octave or two becoming shrill and hastened. The akesheon'sul often has to take a moment, reminding itself aloud of what its teacher, Ahron, tells it about making mistakes because it is too animated.

If the adventurers befriend Tivex, it is quite likely it will offer to join the group, at least until they find where Maghiel and her cohorts went. Having never been in battle before, Tivex will make any attacks at disadvantage, though it is quite capable at using its magic abilities to defend itself and others. Whether Tivex continues on the journey with the group as they leave the underworld will be up to the DM. The akesheon is easily offended by demeaning remarks or hostile actions against it or other akesheth, and will refuse to have anything to do with the adventurers if they continue to be impolite or aggressive to them.

If the players' party includes one or more manticora characters, Tivex will cast invisibility on itself, and will wait until the group gets close enough for them to hear it whisper, "Are you Pride?" If they respond that they are, Tivex will remain silent and either wait for the group to move on or attempt to leave quietly if they remain. With a successful **DC 10 Intelligence (History)** check, a manticora character realizes the strange creature is speaking of Vangal's Pride, the self-given name of small groups of manticora that have sworn off civilization, and live to hunt for their god, Vangal. Non-manticora characters know the same with a successful **DC 18 Intelligence (History)** check. If the group can convince Tivex they are not Pride, the akesheth will reveal itself.

Tivex

Nol Bolhir

Medium city (ruins)

Population: Approximately 160 (akesheth and one spider-eye goblin)

Government: The akesheth of Nol Bolhir have no structured government, though all answer to the word of the Fragments of Keshe. If a Fragment deems a specific akesheth worthy of leading a project, there is no argument from the other akesheth, who honor the chosen one as it should be. The closest Fragment of Keshe resides in a ruin known as the Web of Razors.

Defense: The akesheth in general are stronger than a typical surface world commoner and are capable of defending themselves against many threats. A group of akesheth tutelaries, protectors of the city, can be called upon to defend against incursions, or to help stop outbreaks of violence within the city.

Commerce: The residents of Nol Bolhir want for very little. The plants and creatures that the akesheth grow, harvest, and then reduce into a hearty paste for consumption are all raised within the cavern that holds the city. Many akesheth are skilled in a trade and are the ones responsible for creating the goods needed for day-to-day life. The only exception to this is a spider-eye goblin named Xeech, who acts as a trading liaison with other underworld dwellers. The akesheth of Nol Bolhir currently have no contact with the world above, other than to hide themselves away when wandering bands of adventurers get too close to Nol Bolhir, or the occasional hunting party comes following rumors of their existence.

Organizations: Nol Bolhir hosts a vast array of akesheth, who do not discriminate against any subrace, or separate into clans based on such. Small guilds of crafters exist, mainly to help organize projects. The largest of such guilds cares for the builder beetles that create the blue-black, malleable chitin that the akesheth use to make much of their goods, including clothing, weapons, armor, tools, and even buildings.

General Features: Character's encounter the following features inside Nol Bolhir.

Climate. Nol Bolhir is dry and cool, a fairly well contained ecosystem with very little fluctuation.

Light. The city and much of cavern around it is lit with an ambient purplish light, a bioluminescence from mushrooms the akesheth have found elsewhere in the underworld and transplanted to Nol Bolhir. Though the color may seem odd to surface dwellers, the akesheth find it pleasing.

Sounds. During waking hours Nol Bolhir is filled with an unearthly music, the sound of many akesheth speaking at the same time. Even during time when the majority of the city's residents are asleep, the piping tunes of akesheth speech can be heard in and around buildings where some are still awake.

Floating Islands. Using magic, both arcane and of the mind, the akesheth have created several floating islands that hover throughout the cavern. One of these houses the main hive of **builder beetles**, while the others have various uses, including land for growing plants or raising animals, housing laboratories for more dangerous magical experiments, and general housing for the populace.

Notable NPCs

Akeshekk'tor Yareen (LN akesheth veteran)

Akesheon'sul Tivex (CN akesheth **bard**)

Akeshekk'yo Sulahn (LN akesheth commoner) Sulahn is the lead shepherd that tends to the hives of builder beetles in Nol Bolhir. Sulahn is a powerful psion that has a natural connection with the beetles, and is able to form many wondrous items with their chitin. Sulahn can often be found on one of the floating isles, watching over the beetles.

Xeech (N **spider-eye goblin**) Xeech wears a strange hat that seems to be formed of one large leaf folded about his head. Knowing that the appearance of spider-eye goblins can cause others to be untrusting or even violent, Xeech wears the *hat of disguise* to appear as a typical goblin. Xeech may sell goods to the adventurers if the DM so chooses.

Reaching Nol Bolhir

This sanctuary for the akesheth is a well-guarded secret. Though the race has made a home in the shell of the ancient dwarven city, great care was taken to hide it from those beyond the city's border. An illusion so real that a viewer may reach out and touch it and believe it is solid stone masks the partially caved in entrance to the cavern. The illusion tricks even senses of smell and hearing, and taste if one chooses to lick the rock. To see through the illusion, one must succeed on a **DC 30 Intelligence** saving throw, at which point the illusory form becomes obvious to the viewer and they can proceed through it. However, the illusion grants access to those who think a password, which is given to only the most trusted of outsiders, which to date has only been Xeech.

Nol Bolhir sat in its own dust and debris for thousands of years after the few survivors of the dwarven clan that built it were lost to history. That clan was all but wiped out by a race of psionic beings known as slarecians, who caused the cavern itself to crush much of the dwarven city. Those that survived were hunted down by the slarecians' minions, and hauled into the Web of Razors, a slarecian stronghold less than a day's journey from Nol Bolhir. There, the last of those dwarves were put through terrible tortures and experiments as the slarecians carried out their mysterious experiments.

When the Fragments of Keshe were sent into the underworld at the end of the Divine War, they found the Web of Razors long abandoned, the slarecians exiled to a prison plane. Much of the Web had been looted throughout the many long years since the slarecians disappearance, but some of the race's strange technology still remained, and the Fragments used strange portals to move vast distances to other ruins on Scarn. One Fragment remained in the Web and found the ruins of Nol Bolhir to house its children, the akesheth. Over the years, akesheth who visited the Fragment in the Web of Razors became infected with a strange sickness, causing even their strange hooting language to become unintelligible. In time, however, many of those akesheth returned to normal, or some semblance of it. They had gained strange abilities, however, what the Fragment called "magic of the mind" that had no connection to the weave of magic that magicians could sculpt into fantastic effects. With this mind magic, the akesheth found they could control the beetles that were found in the Web of Razors, and more astounding, they could shape the chitin that the beetles exude. It is also by a mixed use of this mind magic and traditional spells that the akesheth have been able to cloak the city's location in illusion.

First Contact

Akesheth are alien in appearance even in a world full of wonders. They are descendants of a titan, though that information has been lost to history, so immediate accusations of being titanspawn may be unfounded. However, for those who have not met one before, their strangeness can be jarring, their breathy, whispering voices odd and discomforting.

Though this adventure is written with the idea that this is the first time the surface worlders have seen or heard of an akesheth, the DM can alter it to fit the story they are telling. Akesheth characters may be in the adventuring party, and may be happy or nervous about finding another group of its own people. Such characters may make interactions with the akesheth of Nol Bolhir easier or more difficult, depending on their backstory.

Xeech

CHILDREN OF CHAOS

Within the ruins of an ancient dwarven city, the adventurers meet a group of akesheth that have made their home in the shell of Nol Bolhir.

The group can find food and lodging. A thick, gray paste that has all the nutrients a body needs but tastes horrible, is the staple food of the akesheth. It is made up of several plants, insects, and small animals, and is absorbed by the akesheth through their front head tendrils. However, on request, more typical dishes may be created at the direction of the adventurers using those same sources, but prepared in a manner the group may be accustomed to.

Many goods can be found in Nol Bolhir, though many weapons, armor, and even clothing and utensils are made from a blue-black chitin that seems to be able to be formed in any number of ways, including steel-like weapons or flowing silk-like clothing. The akesheth have no use for surface-dweller's money, however, so acquiring such goods may prove to be interesting. The akesheth give their goods freely to one another, knowing that such an act will be returned when their own needs call for it. Having had some experience with bartering in their dealings with Xeech, they are willing to barter for goods the adventurers may have or accept services in exchange. Xeech is commonly found in the city as well, and is willing to bargain with the surface dwellers in a manner they may be more accustomed to.

HUNTED

Tivex introduces the group to Yareen, an akeshekk'tor **veteran**. Yareen is the closest thing to a captain of the guard one may find in Nol Bolhir, as it often is the akesheth that directs defenses against incursions from the outside world. Yareen explains to the adventurers that a group of manticora, known as a Pride of Vangal, have been hunting in the area for the last several days. The akesheth have become convinced that the Pride is trying to find them, with Tivex interjecting that worry about such a terrible thing will happen is the only reason Tivex allowed the adventurers access to the city. While secrecy of their existence is paramount, they must rely on help from outsiders at this point in order to deal with the problem of the Pride.

While the akesheth could send out forces to engage with the Pride, the chance of even one manticora escaping with confirmation that the akesheth exist is just too high. Yareen requests a trade of services from the adventurers. In exchange for dealing with the Pride, the akesheth can help the group find what it is they are searching for in the underworld. If the group refuses, the akesheth cannot help them, unable to venture out of the city until the Pride is dealt with or moves on.

YAREEN

Pride of Vangal

Though the world at large knowns nothing of the akesheth or the Fragments of Keshe, the gods remember. As a whole, they agreed to allow the Fragments to exist in peace, leaving them to their own devices in the underworld. Vangal, however, has other plans. Over the years, the Ravager has sent visions to his most devoted clergy and creations, clues that a monstrous race of tentacled beings lived below the surface of the world. A race of beings that should be wiped out.

While many of the manticora are joining civilization, some have foresworn such an act, seeing it as a sign of weakness. The so-called Prides of Vangal roam the wildlands of Ghelspad, hunting and devouring those that fall before them. Orfeo, the black-furred leader of one such Pride, was recently given visions by Vangal. The manticora led his group through miles and miles of underworld tunnels, seeking any signs of the terrible creatures his god bade him to find and destroy.

The Pride is made up of a **Vangal's roar** (Orfeo), two **claws of Vangal** (Arlin and Kellen), one **fist of Vangal** (Hazelmere), and one **rasp of Vangal** (Avanth). They can be found roaming the tunnels in the area. Being hunters themselves, they may notice others approaching and will set up an ambush if they feel threatened.

Interactions

- If the player characters are seeking the Pride in order to defend the akesheth and Nol Boldir, the Pride will defend themselves and will fight to the death. They have no interest in parlay or working out a deal, and if the adventurers speak of the akesheth, the Pride will attack them, hoping to subdue at least one of them to force more information about the akesheth from them.

- If the group has not met the akesheth and are trying to find Maghiel and her group, they encounter the Pride while the manticora are on the hunt, having found signs of a strange creature nearby. The members of the Pride discovered the trail of the mage and her group, but they were not the prey the manticora were sent here to hunt. They could easily guide the adventurers and help them find where Maghiel went, but first they wish the characters to prove their mettle. The strange creature the Pride seeks is nearby, and if the adventurers can help to find and kill it, the manticora will help them as a reward for their bravery and skill.

Either encounter uses the same battle map, or you can use one of your own devising.

Treasure. Orfeo carries a +1 mace and a +1 spear, as well as a potion of greater healing and a potion of vitality. Between him and the rest of the Pride, they carry 536 gold pieces worth of coins and small gems. The other manticora each have a potion of healing (four total).

Roleplaying the Pride

Though Hazelmere stands taller and broader than Orfeo, it is obvious that the black furred roar is the leader of the pride. Orfeo is hot-headed but is also cunning and powerful. Prone to shouting or attack first and talking about it later, or never, he has nevertheless succeeding in leading the pride in many worthy hunts. To find proof of the akesheth or any other spawn of Keshe has become Orfeo's obsession.

Hazelmere is much more stoic than Orfeo, though his leader's temper does not upset the fist. Instead, Hazelmere uses his alpha's intensity to focus his own will towards a goal. Hazelmere and Avanth are lovers, and both are strictly devoted to Orfeo.

Avanth is the smallest of the pride, her fur so light as to be almost white. She has dyed her mane black with streaks of purple, a strange site for sure. Avanth is the easiest going of the group, her bardic nature lending to conversing openly with strangers. She is quick with a scathing word or the slash of a claw when it comes time to do battle, however.

The two claws of Vangal, Arlin and Kellen, are twins, and are savage in ways that give even Orfeo pause. They take great glee in the hunt, and in watching the light go out in the eyes of their prey. Arlin stands only a few inches taller than his sister, his tawny coat almost identical to hers. The siblings each have one blue and one green eye, though which is colored which is opposite between them. When they face one another, an onlooker gets the eerie sensation the two are strange reflections of one another, as though they were looking in a funhouse mirror. Though the claws obey Orfeo's command, it can take their leader more than one time of telling them to stop something before they will listen, especially when killing is involved.

HUNTING FOR PRIDE

If the group chooses to hunt the creature at the behest of the Pride of Vangal, the manticora travel with the adventurers for a time as they track the beast.

Once Orfeo is certain the strange creature is near, he and the rest of the Pride stop to make an offering of blood to Vangal, each drawing a line of crimson on their own bodies. Any character may choose to do so as well, taking 1 point of slashing damage. After, as the group prepares, characters may notice some of the Pride making bets on the group's success or failure. Characters who blooded themselves may take part in this gambling.

Allow each player to control a member of the Pride, using the player hand outs, during the combat with the beast. Excess Pride should be controlled by the DM. Note that the Player Handout versions of the Pride have less hit points to reflect them better as PCs instead of foes for the players to battle against.

THE BEAST

In a cavern not far from where the Pride leaves them, the characters find an **akesheth abhorrence**. The creature is what the Pride has been seeking and returning with a trophy will put the group in their good graces.

The abomination itself is mad, insane from a sickness it was infected with in the Web of Razors many years ago. It fled before the Fragment of Keshe that resides there could destroy it, and has wandered the underworld since, killing and feeding on whatever it comes across. It has recently made a lair in the ruins of a long-lost temple where the Pride has tracked it to.

Tactics. The abhorrence uses its Baleful Psychoportation to teleport Medium or Small creatures into hidey holes, small spaces and cracks in the walls of the area where it stores its food. It has four such spots available, and a creature teleported into one of these areas is restrained (**escape DC 13**). The rotting remnants of previous meals for the abhorrence may still be in the spaces as well, but do not bar a creature from being teleported into the space.

Once the abhorrence is defeated, any surviving members of the Pride will help the adventurers to track where Maghiel has gone. Depending on the DM's choice, and how the group interacted with the Pride, it is possible that some or all of the Pride may help them to defeat any minions that Maghiel has left behind.

RUINS

Long abandoned, these ruins have been plundered time and again by adventurers and other creatures of the underworld. In ancient times, the chambers hosted a cult of dragon worshippers, though all evidence of such has been lost to time. Some of the walls still show the fine work of the stonemasons that carved these halls, but most are jagged and worn.

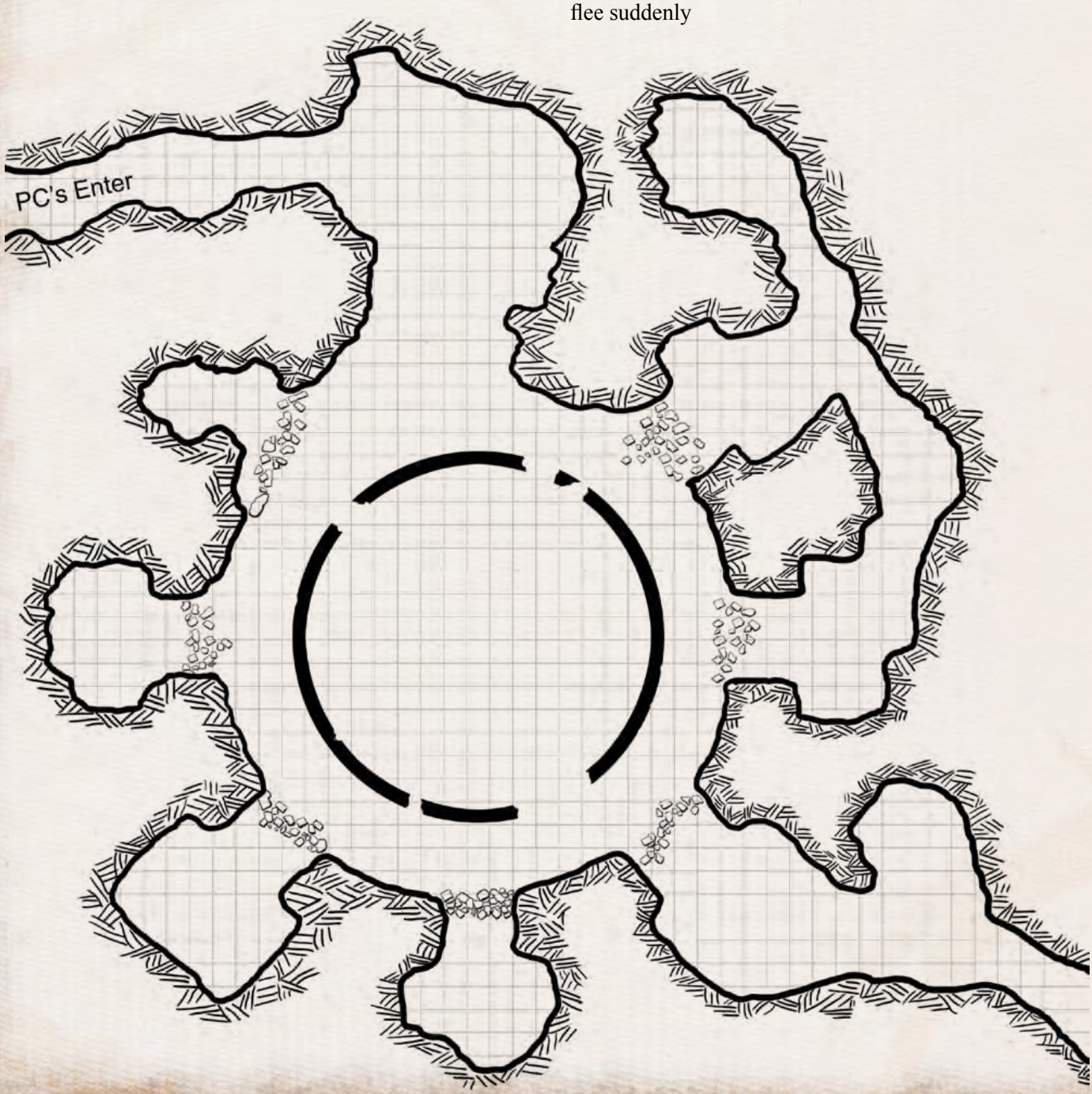
In the center a stone cylinder once housed a temple of worship, but now its walls are broken, and nothing remains within. Most of the chamber's walls still reach the ceiling 30 feet overheard, but large holes have been broken in them. The rubble and other stones have been moved to blockade rooms and tunnels that extend from the main chamber.

These blockades can be knocked down with a successful **DC 18 Strength (Athletics)** check, though the area is considered difficult terrain until a creature spends two rounds clearing the path.

If the adventurers encounter the akesheth abhorrence here, it lingers in the center of the remains of the cylinder chamber.

If they come looking for the Vangal's pride, the manticora hunters are searching the ruins for signs of their prey. The pride is on high alert, so will be prepared for battle if they hear the adventurers arriving.

The tunnel that leads off from behind a blockade can lead back to more familiar areas, or to a place of the DM's devising. It may also be useful if the characters need to flee suddenly



Chapter Four:
To Feast Upon a Titan

While the adventurers have been busy elsewhere, Maghiel has been searching for the titanic presence rumored to be in the area. Already ahead of the characters, she had ample time to find the Web of Razors and delve into the hazards located there. Though the ruins slowed her, she managed to flush out the Fragment of Keshe that resided there, which fled through a bend in space into another cavern nearby. Giving chase, Maghiel cornered the Fragment and began the process of subsuming its power.

The Fragment of Keshe called out to the akesheth, warning them of what was happening. If the adventurers return to Nol Bolhir after dealing with the Pride of Vangal, the akesheth are in hysterics, emitting a haunting wail as they try to determine the best course of action. Tivex and Yareen tell the characters what has transpired, and ask them to save the Fragment from the necromancer.

If the group bypassed meeting the akesheth and instead hunted for the Pride of Vangal, the manticora can lead them to a nearby complex of tunnels where they had heard the necromancer's group not long ago.

Pacing. If the group returns to the akesheth after doing battle with the Pride of Vangal, only to hear that they must rush off again to save the Fragment of Keshe, the characters may be low on resources. Dealing with the encounters between this point and the end may push some groups to the extremes or may even result in unnecessary character deaths. If the group is in serious need of rest before dealing with the following events, wait for the Fragment's call for help to go out until after the rest is over. Or, if you want to push the life-or-death drama of the story, the akesheth are frantic when the adventurers return to Nol Bolhir, practically shoving them back out the door.

95 ft.
25 ft. drop

Too Late, Too Late

Whether directed by the akesheth or the Pride of Vangal, the adventurers find themselves heading down a dark, narrow tunnel. At the end is a small chamber, its walls and floor covered in blue-black chitin, and a hole that descends through the earth in the floor. Guarding that passage are two **footpads**, who are more than happy to see the adventurers that have been hounding them and will be happier to end their chase.

Tactics. If the adventurers are approaching stealthily, have them roll a **group Dexterity (Stealth)** check against the **footpad's passive perception**. If the footpads hear them coming, they will each drink a potion of invisibility and lie in wait to ambush the group. Either way, once battle has begun, the footpads are not against fighting dirty. In addition to their stat blocks, they may employ the following abilities.

Here's Dirt in Your Eye. As a bonus action, the footpad targets one creature within 5 feet of it, flinging loose dirt and sand into the target's face. The creature must succeed on a **DC 15 Dexterity** saving throw to avoid be blinded for 6 rounds. If the creature fails, it may repeat a **DC 15 Constitution** saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the blindness on a success.

Have a Nice Trip. As an action or one of its melee weapon attacks if it takes the Multiattack action, the footpad attempts to pull or shove a grappled creature down the vertical passage. The footpad must be within 10 feet of the hole and may make an opposed grapple check. If the footpad fails, it is unable to move the grappled creature, but the target does not escape its grapple. If the footpad succeeds, it is able to move the target creature to the hole's space and allows it to drop into the hole. A target may make a **DC 15 Dexterity** saving throw to catch itself, otherwise it suffers 10 (3d6) bludgeoning damage and falls 30 feet down the passage before coming to a stop, gripping the sides of the tunnel.

Treasure. The footpads have 104 gold pieces between them. One has a locket on a fine gold chain worth 200 gold pieces.

Descending

The tunnel that leads downward from the room is almost vertical, its surfaces covered by the same blue-black chitin as the room above. The chitin offers foot and handholds, giving those descending it the ability to climb the 95-foot descent easily. The tunnel stops 25 feet above the floor of a chamber below it, where the adventurers discover three ropes tied off to spurs of chitin on the walls. The characters can use the ropes to descend the rest of the way if they choose.

The Aftermath

The adventurers find themselves in a large cavern, an underground lake's water lapping at the shore nearby. Magical orbs of light flicker, their magic fading, and cast strangely dancing shadows around the chamber with their strobing. The walls are covered with the blue-black chitin of the tunnel into this room, though the ground is stone and dirt.

The corpse of a huge, strange creature rests on the shoreline, and a human's body floats facedown nearby, surrounded by what appear to be strange, sinewy and barbed crimson vines. It is obvious that something fed upon the massive, strange creature, consuming its flesh. A few other bodies, minions of Maghiel, lay bent and broken on the ground, as though hurled by some giant. Distant echoes of conversation, cries of pain, strange, unearthly notes, and the sounds of swordplay bounce around the chamber, though there are no signs of where the noise is coming from. If the adventurers encountered the akesheth abhorrence earlier, the large dead creature on the shoreline looks very much like it, only larger.

If the group has no light source of their own, characters' passive Perception and Wisdom (Perception) checks are at disadvantage (-5 to passive) from the strobing light as it causes the shadows of the room to move about, tricking the senses.

The human body in the water near what is the now-dead Fragment of Keshe is that of **Pavlas Kyrillou**, the windwalker that was hired by Maghiel's group to guide them through the Canyon of Souls. After realizing she did not need to return to the Canyon, and bolstered by the chaos of the Fragment's energies, Maghiel had Pavlas killed, then transformed her body into an undead abomination. Pavlas now waits, floating face down in the water surrounded by her new vine-like appendages. When the adventurers come within range of her newfound abilities, she attacks without provocation. Ordered by Maghiel to keep anyone from following her, Pavlas fights to the death.

Tactics. Creatures that Pavlas has grappled and are in the water must succeed on a **DC 16 Strength** saving throw or have the breath squeezed out of them and begin suffocating. Creatures that succeed are still underwater and at risk of drowning, but at regular drowning rules.

Where Did They Go?

Only 20 feet from the shoreline, a portal of sorts hovers just above the water. Almost invisible, it appears as a 5-foot-tall, 1-foot-wide shattering of space. The shards reflect events that have happened nearby, as well as images of those who have passed through it since the day it was created. The echoes of old conversations still reverberate from it, creating a confusing jumble of sound that carries

throughout the chamber. Those who watch the portal for one minute or more will see an image of Maghiel and her remaining minions dragging a child up to the portal, then walking away from the portal on the other side. Though there is no sense of time for when this happened, it is obvious that the wizard fled through the portal. A creature only has only to touch the portal to be transported over a thousand miles away to a chamber beneath the earth in the Festering Fields. The portal is two-way, and travelers may return to the chamber beneath the Canyon of Souls if needed.

Due to the strange magics that created her new form, Pavlas cannot travel through the portal. If the characters flee through the portal without killing Pavlas, she may leave through the hole in the ceiling, free to haunt the underworld and perhaps beyond.

If the group speaks with the akesheth prior to going through the portal, the people of Nol Bolhir are distraught by the news of the Fragment's death. If shown the corpse of the Fragment, an akesheth can sense that the titan's power was drained away, as though feeding an every-growing fire that threatens to burn everything in its path. Though the Fragment was killed, the akesheth wish to help the adventurers in their hunt for the necromancer. They provide them group with a set of *chitin weave armor*, and a *brilliant chitin scimitar*. The akesheth are putting a great amount of faith in the adventurers, not only to gain vengeance for the Fragment of Keshe, but also to keep the akesheth's secret safe. Should the characters ever be back, they will be honored in Nol Bolhir.

Conclusion

The adventurers exit the portal beneath the Festering Fields, far from the Kelder Mountains. Maghiel has outpaced them, gaining the power she sought in the underworld, and still has at least one stolen child, Tyrra, from East Ontenazu. The group must now track Maghiel and attempt to catch up, leading into *The Queen's Gambit* by Emilie Gunderson, the next module in the Vengeance of the Shunned series.

Milestones and XP

Grant individual experience gained for non-combat encounters.

EVENT	XP EARNED EACH
Save Hanze and Vinn	2,000
Return the bodies of Grania and Yori	2,000
Rescue Calista Spyrou	2,000
Help the akesheth against the Vangal's Pride	3,000
Help the Vangal's Pride against the akesheth abhorrence	3,000

To determine experience earned by defeating enemies, total the XP per enemy and divide by number of characters.

ENEMY	XP PER ENEMY
Akesheth Abhorrence	15,000
Blight Wolf	2,900
Despair	2,900
Flesh Corruptor	200
Footpad	2,900
Ghoul Hound	450
Ghoul, Overghast	1,800
Gladiator	1,800
Howling Abomination	7,200
Mage	2,300
Mechanoid Emulator	1,800
Necronduit	1,800
Pavlas Kyrillou	8,400
Priest	450
Slarecian Ghoul	1,100
Tivex	1,800
Claw of Vangal	3,900
Fist of Vangal	3,900
Rasp of Vangal	1,100
Vangal's Roar	1,800
Veteran	700
Windwalker	1,100

If you prefer to track milestones, players should advance one level by completing this adventure.

Connected Fragments

While connected to the Fragments of Keshe, a condition she gained by subsuming the Fragment in this adventure, Maghiel gains the following powers, which adventurers may experience in future encounters with the mad mage.

Intrinsic Armor. Whenever Maghiel is the subject of an attack that requires a roll to hit her, roll 1d10 and add it to her base armor class. This is not cumulative, and visually appears as energy that coalesces where a strike would hit but keeps her from harm.

Havoc Aura (Recharge 5-6). A wave of energy blasts forth from Maghiel in a 20-foot radius, dealing 21 (6d6) damage, or half as much if a target succeeds on a DC 16 Constitution saving throw. The type of damage is random as follows: (d8) 1. Acid, 2. Cold, 3. Fire, 4. Force, 5. Lightning, 6. Necrotic, 7. Poison, 8. Thunder.

Maghiel may do this in addition to her Action as though she had the Multiattack action.

Presence of Chaos [Reaction]. When a creature within 30 feet of Maghiel makes a successful attack, saving throw, or skill check, she can force them to re-roll that action, and they must use the new roll.

Chaotic Bulwark. At the start of a combat, Maghiel is resistant to a random energy type. (d8) 1. Acid, 2. Cold, 3. Fire, 4. Force, 5. Lightning, 6. Necrotic, 7. Poison, 8. Thunder.

The DM may choose to re-roll this resistance at any time during a combat, though may never choose the resistance type.

Regeneration. Maghiel regains 1d10 + her Con modifier hit points at the start of her turn. If she takes damage from (d8) 1. Acid, 2. Cold, 3. Fire, 4. Force, 5. Lightning, 6. Necrotic, 7. Poison, 8. Thunder, this trait doesn't function at the start of her next turn. Maghiel only dies if she starts her turn with 0 hit points and doesn't regenerate.

Turbulent Boon. Maghiel starts a combat with 10d10 temporary hit points, which cannot be healed if lost. She regains 10d10 temporary hit points after a Short or Long Rest.

Maghiel
The Shunned

APPENDIX:

MAGIC ITEMS

BRILLIANT CHITIN SCIMITAR

Weapon (scimitar), rare (requires attunement)

This +1 scimitar is made of blue-black chitin as strong as steel. You can use a bonus action to cause the blade to illuminate with magical radiance. While activated, you gain a +2 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this weapon, which deals radiant damage instead of slashing damage. When you hit undead with it, that target takes an extra 1d8 radiant damage.

While illuminated, the blade emits bright light in a 15-foot radius and dim light for an additional 15 feet. You can use an action to expand or reduce its radius of bright and dim light by 5 feet each, to a maximum of 30 feet each or a minimum of 10 feet each.

CHITIN WEAVE

Armor (chain shirt), very rare

This blue-black armor is half the weight of chain armor, and the chitin of its weaves move as easily as heavy cloth yet is strong as steel.

You gain a +2 bonus to AC while you wear this armor. You are considered proficient with this armor even if you lack proficiency with medium armor.

PERPETUATION BAND

Ring, very rare

Often unadorned with markings and made from mundane metals, this hinged manacle grows and shrinks to accommodate the size of its wearer.

A creature who wears this band is immune to any effect or spell that would alter its form. This also stops a polymorphed creature from reverting into its original form, even if it dies, while wearing the band.

SPELLS

BLEEDING SICKNESS

2nd-level necromancy

Priests of Vangal use magical diseases as one of several methods to scare people into venerating the god of destruction.

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: 90 feet

Components: V, S

Duration: 1 minute

You choose a creature you can see within range. The target must succeed on a Constitution saving throw or become poisoned for the duration. While poisoned, the target oozes vital fluids, taking 1d4 necrotic damage at the start of each of its turns. A creature poisoned in this way can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

The target is also contagious to your enemies. If a creature hostile to you starts its turn within 5 feet of the target, the creature must succeed on a Constitution saving throw or become poisoned until the start of its next turn.

At Higher Levels. When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 3rd level or higher, you can target one additional creature for each slot level above 2nd.

PSIONICS

The akesheth abhorrence is a psionically empowered creature that appears in this adventure. Many of the akesheth are also able to wield strange "mind magic," though that is beyond the scope of this module. Below are two psionic abilities that the abhorrence is able to wield.

It should be noted that psionics are not magic, and therefore cannot be affected by spells such as *counterspell* or *dispel magic*.

VISUALIZATIONS EXPLAINED

Psionics may have visualization aspects, as listed in their descriptions.

Au: Auditory, the ability causes a sound that emanates from the psionicist or the target.

Me: Mental, the target is able to mentally sense that another is using a power against it.

Vi: Visual, the ability creates an element that can be seen.

CRYSTAL CURSE

4th-level psychometabolism

Manifestation Time: 1 action

Range: 120 ft.

Visualization: Vi, Au

Duration: Concentration up to 1 minute

Choose a creature you can see within range. The target must make a Constitution saving throw as crystals begin to grow within its body, tearing its flesh and skin. The creature suffers 4d4 piercing damage per round on a failed save, or half as much on a successful one. In addition, if the target fails the saving throw by 10 or more, they are stunned until the end of their next turn from the horrible pain.

PSYCHIC DISRUPTION

4th-level telepathy

Manifestation Time: 1 action

Range: 30 feet

Visualization: Au, Me

Duration: 1 minute

You create a field of mental static that disrupts concentration except your own. If a creature within the field attempts to cast a spell or maintain concentration on an ongoing spell effects, it must make a Concentration check. If it fails, the spell fails or its concentration is broken, ending its ongoing spell effect.

PLAYER HANDOUT

ARLIN (CLAW OF VANGAL)

Medium humanoid (manticora), chaotic evil

Armor Class 16 (studded leather)
Hit Points 85
Speed 30 ft. (40 ft. if on all fours)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	19 (+4)	16 (+3)	11 (+0)	18 (+4)	17 (+3)

Saving Throws Dexterity +7, Wisdom +7
Skills Insight +7, Perception +7, Stealth +7, Survival +7
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 17
Languages Ledean, Leonid

Assassinate. During its first turn, the claw of Vangal has advantage on attack rolls against any creature that hasn't taken a turn. Any hit the claw of Vangal scores against a surprised creature is a critical hit.

Evasion. If the claw of Vangal is subjected to an effect that allows it to make a Dexterity saving throw to take only half damage, the claw of Vangal instead takes no damage if it succeeds on the saving throw, and only half damage if it fails.

Sneak Attack (1/Turn). Once per turn, the claw of Vangal deals an extra 17 (5d6) damage when it hits a target with a weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 feet of an ally of the claw of Vangal that isn't incapacitated and the claw of Vangal doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

Spellcasting. The claw of Vangal is a 5th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). The claw of Vangal has the following cleric spells prepared.

Cantrips (at will): *guidance, light, mending, thaumaturgy*

1st level (4 slots): *bane, inflict wounds, shield of faith*

2nd level (3 slots): *bleeding sickness±, blindness/deafness, hold person, silence*

3rd level (2 slots): *bestow curse, meld into stone*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The claw of Vangal makes two claw gauntlet attacks.

Claw Gauntlet. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) slashing damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or be paralyzed for 1 minute. The target may repeat their saving throw at the end of each of their turns, ending the effect on a success. A creature that succeeds on the saving throw is immune to the claw's poison for 24 hours.

Shortbow. *Range Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage.

REACTIONS

Uncanny Dodge. When an attacker the claw of Vangal can see hits it with an attack, the claw of Vangal can choose to take half the damage instead.

PLAYER HANDOUT

AVANTH (RASP OF VANGAL)

Medium humanoid (manticora), chaotic evil

Armor Class 15 (chain shirt)
Hit Points 42
Speed 30 ft. (40 ft. if on all fours)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws Dexterity +4
Skills Perception +3, Performance +6
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13
Languages Ledean, Leonid, Titanspawn

Combat Inspiration. The rasp of Vangal grants one creature a 1d8 Inspiration die and it can roll that die and add the number rolled to a weapon damage roll it just made. Alliteratively. when an attack roll is made against the inspired creature, it can use its reaction to roll the Inspiration die and add the number rolled to its AC against that attack after seeing the roll but before knowing whether it hits or misses.

Dead Shot. The rasp of Vangal does an extra die of damage with hand crossbows (included in its attack).

Song of Rest. When the rasp of Vangal plays music during a short rest, at the end all friendly creatures who regain hit points regain an extra 1d6 hit points.

Spellcasting. The rasp of Vangal casts spells as a 7th level bard (save DC 14, spell attack +6). Its spellcasting ability is Charisma, and it has the following spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *mending, prestidigitation, vicious mockery*

1st-level (4 slots): *charm person, disguise self, sleep, thunderwave*

2nd-level (3 slots): *cloud of daggers, enthrall, suggestion*

3rd-level (3 slots): *dispel magic, sending*

4th-level (1 slot): *greater invisibility*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The rasp of Vangal makes one attack with its scimitar and one with its hand crossbow.

Scimitar. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) slashing damage.

Hand Crossbow. *Range Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 30 / 120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (2d6 + 2) piercing damage.

PLAYER HANDOUT

HAZELMERE (FIST OF VANGAL)

Medium humanoid (manticora), chaotic evil

Armor Class 18 (unarmored defense)
Hit Points 68
Speed 40 ft. (50 ft. if on all fours)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Constitution +5
Skills Athletics +8, Intimidation +9, Perception +7
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 7
Languages Ledean, Leonid

Mighty Blow. When the fist of Vangal scores a critical hit, it automatically deals maximum damage for the attack.

Reckless. At the start of its turn, the fist of Vangal can gain advantage on all melee weapon attack rolls it makes during that turn, but attack rolls against it have advantage until the start of its next turn.

Unarmored Defense. While the fist of Vangal is wearing no armor and wielding no shield, its AC includes its Wisdom modifier.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The fist of Vangal makes three unarmed strikes.

Unarmed Strike. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d8 + 5) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a creature, the fist of Vangal can choose one of the following additional effects:

- The target must succeed on a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw or be knocked prone.
- The target must succeed on a DC 16 Constitution saving throw or be stunned until the end of the fist of Vangal's next turn. The next round the target must attempt another save, remaining stunned on a failure.

REACTIONS

Deflect Missile. If the fist of Vangal is hit by a ranged weapon attack, it deflects the missile. The damage it takes from the attack is reduced by 1d10+5. If the damage is reduced to 0, the fist of Vangal catches the missile if it's small enough to hold in one hand and it has a hand free. It may then make a ranged attack with that missle on a target within range. The fist of Vangal is considered proficient with this attack.

PLAYER HANDOUT

KELLEN (CLAW OF VANGAL)

Medium humanoid (manticora), chaotic evil

Armor Class 16 (studded leather)
Hit Points 85
Speed 30 ft. (40 ft. if on all fours)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	19 (+4)	16 (+3)	11 (+0)	18 (+4)	17 (+3)

Saving Throws Dexterity +7, Wisdom +7
Skills Insight +7, Perception +7, Stealth +7, Survival +7
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 17
Languages Ledean, Leonid

Assassinate. During its first turn, the claw of Vangal has advantage on attack rolls against any creature that hasn't taken a turn. Any hit the claw of Vangal scores against a surprised creature is a critical hit.

Evasion. If the claw of Vangal is subjected to an effect that allows it to make a Dexterity saving throw to take only half damage, the claw of Vangal instead takes no damage if it succeeds on the saving throw, and only half damage if it fails.

Sneak Attack (1/Turn). Once per turn, the claw of Vangal deals an extra 17 (5d6) damage when it hits a target with a weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 feet of an ally of the claw of Vangal that isn't incapacitated and the claw of Vangal doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

Spellcasting. The claw of Vangal is a 5th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). The claw of Vangal has the following cleric spells prepared.

Cantrips (at will): *guidance, light, mending, thaumaturgy*

1st level (4 slots): *bane, inflict wounds, shield of faith*

2nd level (3 slots): *bleeding sickness±, blindness/deafness, hold person, silence*

3rd level (2 slots): *bestow curse, meld into stone*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The claw of Vangal makes two claw gauntlet attacks.

Claw Gauntlet. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) slashing damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or be paralyzed for 1 minute. The target may repeat their saving throw at the end of each of their turns, ending the effect on a success. A creature that succeeds on the saving throw is immune to the claw's poison for 24 hours.

Shortbow. *Range Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage.

REACTIONS

Uncanny Dodge. When an attacker the claw of Vangal can see hits it with an attack, the claw of Vangal can choose to take half the damage instead.

PLAYER HANDOUT

ORFEO (VANGAL'S ROAR)

Medium humanoid (manticora), chaotic evil

Armor Class 17 (half plate)
Hit Points 90
Speed 30 ft. (40 ft. if on all fours)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	17 (+3)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)	15 (+2)

Saving Throws Str +5, Wis +4, Cha +5
Skills Athletics +7, Intimidation +5, Perception +4, Stealth +6
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14
Languages Ledean, Leonid

Charge. If the Vangal's roar moves moves on all fours at least 30 feet in a straight line toward a target and then hits it with a melee attack on the same turn, the target takes an extra 10 (3d6) damage.

Hateful Aura. The Vangal's roar and allies within 10 feet of the commander add its Charisma modifier to weapon damage rolls (included in damage below).

Magic Weapons. The Vangal's roar's weapon attacks are made with magical (+1) weapons (included in attacks below).

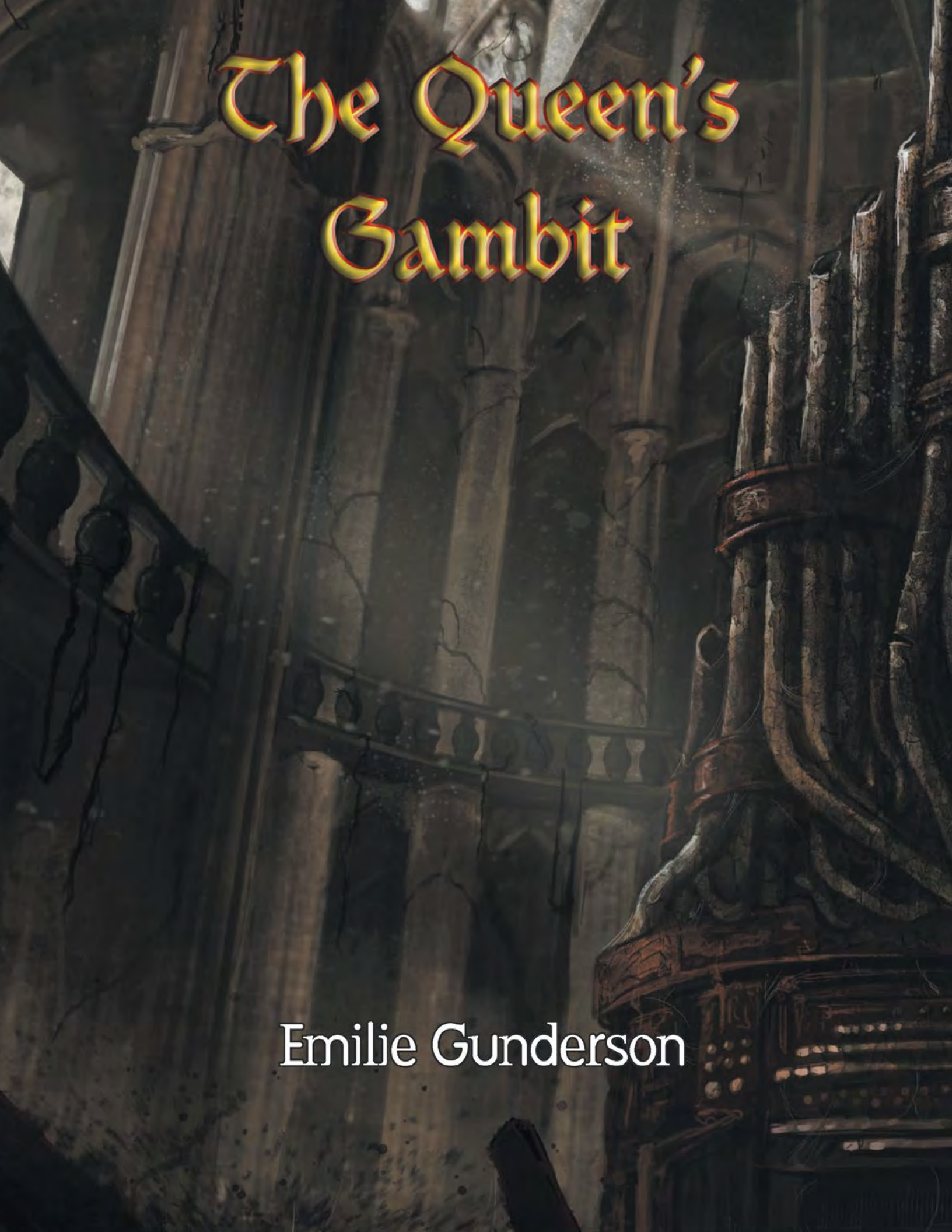
ACTIONS

Multiattack. The Vangal's roar makes two melee attacks.

Mace. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d6 + 5) bludgeoning damage.

Spear. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d6 + 5) piercing damage, or 9 (1d8 + 5) if wielded with two hands.

Frightful Charge (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). The Vangal's roar lets loose a terrifying cry and makes one melee attack at the end of a charge. Whether the attack hits or misses, all enemies within 15 feet of the target and aware of the Vangal's roar's presence must succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or become frightened for 1 minute. A frightened creature repeats the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.


The Queen's Gambit
Emilie Gunderson

INTRODUCTION

THE QUEEN'S GAMBIT

Gambit *noun. 1. In chess, an opening move in which a player seeks to obtain some advantage by sacrificing a pawn or minor piece. 2. A strategic move where a player sacrifices something up front for future gain.*

The Queen's Gambit is an 8-12 hour adventure designed for four to six Tier 3 (Level 11-16) characters and is optimized for five characters with an average party level (APL) of 11. The APL can be found by adding up the total levels of all the characters and dividing by the number of characters (rounding .5 or greater up). Suggestions are included for adjusting each encounter's difficulty based on party size and strength according to the following chart:

PARTY SIZE	AVERAGE PARTY LEVEL(APL)	STRENGTH
3-4 characters	APL less than 11	Very Weak
3-4 characters	APL equivalent to 11	Weak
3-4 characters	APL greater than 11	Average
5 characters	APL less than 11	Weak
5 characters	APL equivalent to 11	Average
5 characters	APL greater than 11	Strong
6-7 characters	APL less than 11	Average
6-7 characters	APL equivalent to 11	Strong
6-7 characters	APL greater than 11	Very Strong

As he trudges up another rolling hill with patchy scrub grass scraping his ankles, Haplo Yelgrin can't help but think to himself, "Freedom is overrated." Having taken orders from the necromancer Maghiel since she plucked him from the Shelzari slave pits years ago, and from his trainers before that, Haplo had grown accustomed to listening and obeying without question. After all, you were either a great knife-fighter, or you were a dead one. Haplo cracks a smile as he trails a couple fingers along the patchwork of scars crisscrossing his chest. His smile turns into a wince, as he brushes one of many bruises appearing on his torso. "Gods it's hot! Is Enkili playing a prank on me? I must have stumbled into the Sweltering Plains," thinks Haplo as he trips over something jutting out of the ground. He peers down to identify what snared him, which isn't easy considering blood is streaming down into his eyes from a gash in his forehead, and he ran out of water hours ago. Expecting to see a root or a rock, Haplo is shocked to find a finger bone protruding from the ground. Spooked, Haplo glances behind him, unable to shake the feeling that he is being followed.

Cresting the top of the hill, Haplo spies the party of adventurers Maghiel ordered him to contact. He reaches for the scrolls rolled up in their leather tube, just to reassure himself they're still there. He rehearses what Maghiel told him to say, calculating the odds of the party killing him on sight. Starting down the hill towards them, he hears a strange sound alarmingly close behind him.

SYNOPSIS

The necromancer Maghiel is weary of adventurers interfering with her plans to amass power, and she has devised a cunning trap to rid herself of them once and for all. Maghiel sends her trusted halfling assistant Haplo to infiltrate the party, and to convince them he escaped from Maghiel with spell scrolls that have the power to nullify her magic. The spell scrolls contain an ancient true ritual called The Censure of Mesos, which could indeed leave her vulnerable if the party successfully performs the ritual. However, in order to perform the ritual, the party will have to construct an effigy of Maghiel that incorporates a nonmagical personal item of hers such as hair, fingernails, or blood. Then, they will have to assemble the required number of competent spellcasters and proxies in an uncharted place of power called the Twisted Path, high in the Titanshome Mountains.

Maghiel believes attempting to perform the ritual is a fool's errand that will distract the party, and give her the time she needs to further her own aims. If that weren't enough, Maghiel has instructed Haplo to lure the party to Site 35 to collect her personal item. Site 35 is a vault under the library in Lokil, that houses horrors so loathsome even she is reluctant to return. Maghiel is gambling that the party will never survive what they find down in the mines. If they do, Haplo will destroy her personal item and substitute an item he collects from an adventurer while she sleeps. If they manage to perform the ritual, the effects of the spell will be redirected back at the caster. By the time the party discovers his treachery, it will already be too late. They will be unable to fully defend themselves, and Maghiel will seize the opportunity to torture and destroy them.

The only thing Maghiel has taken for granted is Haplo's unwavering loyalty. Her escalating brutality has forced Haplo to ask himself if the ends justify the means, and to question her sanity for the first time in his life. A day may soon come when his fear and gratitude are no longer enough to keep him in line.

BACKGROUND

This adventure begins on the north side of the Mounds of Man in the wasteland known as the Festering Fields. If the party played the previous adventure A Titanic Feast, stepping through a hovering distortion in the air transports them into an immense stone cavern full of stalactites. The party emerges topside through a tunnel carved into the side of a hill in the Mounds of Man. If the party did not play through A Titanic Feast, they have heard of the necromancer Maghiel's plans to claim the power of a fallen Titan for herself, so she may rule Scarn with an iron fist. The adventurers have taken it upon themselves to stop her and have tracked her as far as the Mounds of Man before her trail went cold.

The adventurers are surrounded by gently rolling hills covered with a mix of sand and patchy scrub grass. Legend tells that the Mounds of Man were the site of several battles during the Divine War, and that the hills were formed from enormous piles of corpses swept off the battlefields by the gods. The character with the lowest passive **Wisdom (Perception)** score in the party trips over something jutting out of the ground as she exits the tunnel. Upon closer inspection, she discovers she tripped over a humanoid jawbone. Further scrutiny of the surrounding hills reveals a skull and numerous other humanoid bones that have been exposed by erosion.

Tired of the characters' constant interference, Maghiel has decided that eliminating them should be her top priority. However, she'd rather not have to go through the effort of finding them and killing them herself. Instead, she has chosen her halfling assistant Haplo to set her plan for their destruction in motion.

Chapter 1: A Not So Random Encounter

The characters stand under the beating sun, in a dry riverbed running north and south, between two sandy, 15-foot-high hills. They are facing north. Suddenly, a red-headed halfling appears at the top of the eastern hill, approximately 60 feet from the party. A character succeeding on a **DC 13 Wisdom (Perception)** check can tell he has been badly beaten, and he appears to be dehydrated. He wears shredded pants and a loose cotton shirt that is soaked in blood. He is carrying a scroll tube over one shoulder. As he staggers down the hill toward the party, a large creature crests the hill 5 feet behind him. The halfling is being tracked by a Desert Stalker that will attack him immediately. The stalker is a large, bipedal, heavily muscled creature with no visible eyes and a prominent mouth full of sharp teeth. From a distance, it looks like a mass of sand and jumbled boulders. As the

stalker reaches the top of the hill, it is no longer standing in sand, and cannot use its Perfect Camouflage ability unless it retreats down the hill the way that it came. The halfling is named Haplo Yelgrin, and he is no match for the stalker. He currently has 8 hit points and is suffering from 3 levels of exhaustion.

The party may recognize Haplo as Maghiel's assistant from a previous encounter, and they may choose not to help him due to some bad blood between them. In that case, he will likely die. When the party searches his body, they will find two daggers, two roundknives, and studded leather armor under his shirt. Inside the case are several scrolls describing a true ritual called The Censure of Mesos. The last scroll includes a cryptic command at the bottom of the page. It reads: "In the home of the Titans, follow the crimson path to its end and a new beginning in which you will lead your enemies to their destruction, like a lamb to the slaughter." Any character who succeeds on a DC 12 Intelligence (History or Religion) check recalls that the Tianshome Mountains in Albadia were once rumored to be the terrestrial home of the Titans before the Divine War. It will require a successful **DC 20 Intelligence (History or Religion)** check for a character to intuit that the crimson path refers to a magical anomaly in the Titanshome Mountains called the Twisted Path. The last page also has a few handwritten notes scrawled around the edges of the page. They read: "Site 35-Lokil-Her Hair!" A copy of the last page can be found in **Player Handout #1.**

If the party rescues Haplo from the stalker, he is extremely grateful and thanks the party profusely for saving his life, adding that he probably doesn't deserve it. He asks for water, and then tells the party why he's there:

"I've been indebted to Maghiel the necromancer since she rescued me form the knife-fighting pits in Shelzar. I have followed her orders without question, but ever since she returned from Site 35 beneath the ancient library in Lokil, she has changed. Maghiel has always craved power and control, but I fear something at Site 35 drove her into madness. She whispers about people she has never met, and converses with someone named Chelaque the Imprisoned when she is alone. I can no longer aid her in the slaughter of innocents, and I foolishly told her so. That's when she nearly beat me to death. She could have killed me easily with her magic, but instead, she took an obscene amount of pleasure in inflicting pain on me. I'm sure she thought I was dead. I lay in a pool of my own blood for hours before I was able to crawl out of her tent with this set of scrolls. They contain a true ritual called The Censure of Mesos, and I believe performing the ritual will break her connection to magic. If you succeed, we might have a chance of defeating her together. Though, once she realizes the scrolls are gone, she'll stop at nothing to track me down and kill me for betraying her. I can lead you to the mines under Lokil where you should be able to find the components required to perform the true ritual. Maghiel spent months inside Site 35 researching ways to channel a Titan's power, and I'm certain she left behind hair, nails, or some other personal item you could use to construct an effigy of her. All I ask in return is your protection, should she find us."

Most of what Haplo tells the party is true, except that he has no intention of betraying Maghiel. Mahiel has tasked him with convincing the party to accept him, so he can spy on them and report their movements back to her. Haplo has also been ordered to substitute a party member's hair or nail clippings for Maghiel's, should the party return from Site 35 with one of her personal items. If he is able to construct an effigy with the party member's personal item, the spell will be reflected back at the caster when they perform the true ritual, severing her link to magic, and rendering her dependent on conventional fighting. Then, it should be a simple matter of dispatching Maghiel's minions to kill the party while they are in a weakened state. Maghiel cast *mind blank* on Haplo before sending him to find the party 12 hours ago.

Chapter 2: Strange Bedfellows

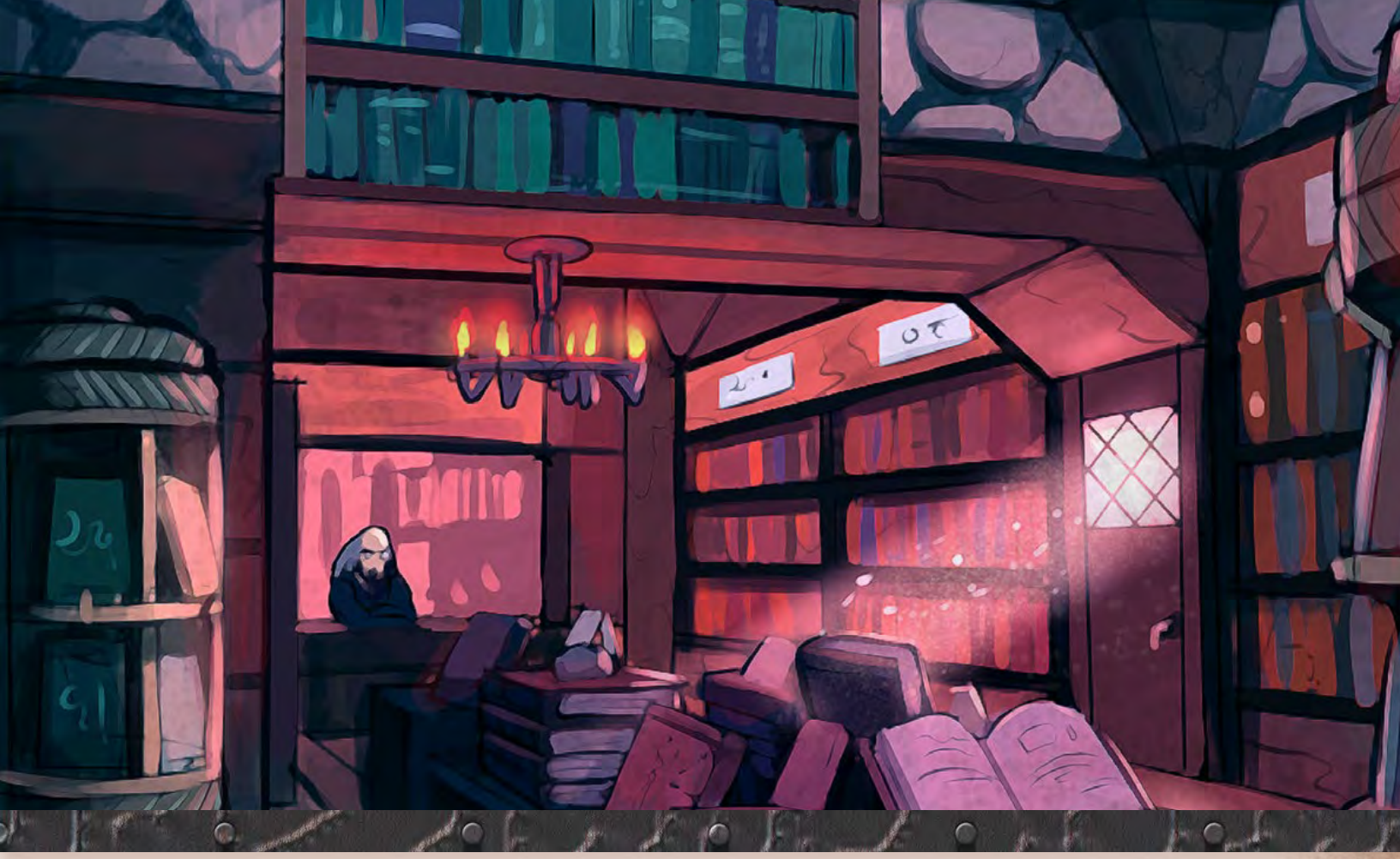
If the party agrees to travel to Lokil with him, Haplo hands over the scrolls and points the party in a northwesterly direction. He does his best to keep up with them, despite his exhaustion.

If the party refuses to travel with him, Haplo hands over the scrolls anyway. Haplo makes a **Charisma (Persuasion)** check to convince the party to accompany him. He may try to guilt or flatter them into helping, telling them he would do it himself if only he were a powerful spellcaster. If he fails, he will attempt a **Charisma (Intimidation)** check, warning the party that Maghiel is aware of their presence in the area, and telling them they are likely to encounter her regardless of whether they attempt to perform the ritual or not. Haplo then trudges off in the direction of Lokil, hoping the party will change their minds and follow him.

The rest of the adventure is predicated on the party accompanying Haplo to Lokil, so pull some strings to get them to go with him even if they are suspicious of his motives.

As the party travels to the northwest, hills give way to flat plains, and they travel for several hours through featureless terrain before coming across an odd sight. An ox grazes on a clump of grass while a pack of ferocious rodents rip bits of flesh off its side. The ox appears completely unaware of what is happening, as the rodents tear a gaping hole in its side, exposing its internal organs. When one of the rodents bites into the ox's intestines, it falls over dead. The remaining rodents swarm over the carcass picking it clean in a matter of minutes. When the pack finishes devouring the ox, they all turn toward the party and charge. The pack of rodents consists of a **swarm of flesh strippers** that attack and fight to the death. The dead ox is 40 feet away from the party. The flesh strippers make tasty snacks once they've been dispatched.

An hour after the encounter with the flesh strippers, the sun begins to set. Haplo won't be able to continue traveling through the night, and will recommend the party set up camp. Once a few party members have fallen asleep, a **miser jackal** will sneak into camp and attempt to steal a metal weapon or other metallic item. If the party sets up a watch, the miser jackal will make one attempt to steal something metallic during each party member's watch. If the miser jackal succeeds on a **Dexterity (Stealth)** check contested by a character's passive **Wisdom (Perception)** score, it succeeds in making off with one unsecured metal item. If a character notices it trying to sneak into camp, it will slink away. If it is injured, the jackal will drop what it is carrying and flee. The rest of the night passes uneventfully.



CHAPTER 3: THE CITY OF LORE

The characters wake to a bright, sunny morning, and half a day's travel brings them to the foot of Mount Hederest and the city of Lokil. Haplo leads the party up a set of stone stairs carved into the mountainside. They pass crumbled buildings swept down the mountain by landslides and earthquakes. Everywhere they look, they see signs of a violent cataclysm, except for the library at the summit of Mount Hederest. In stark contrast to the surrounding devastation, the library is miraculously intact. Its marble walls glisten in the sun, and its arched doorways and pillars are seamless. The unforgiving Ukrudan desert stretches off to the west and north, far below them.

The library's entrance is unguarded, but any character with a passive **Wisdom (Perception)** score of 15 or higher notices a series of runes carved into the lintel. They are *glyphs of warding*. Before the party enters the library, Haplo warns them that the Master of Lore may be disinclined to let them into Site 35. "If that turns out to be the case, I'll create a distraction so you can sneak down to the basement in the elevator. Just follow my lead, for I won't be accompanying you down into the mines." Haplo cannot be persuaded or intimidated into joining the party for that leg of their journey.

The first floor's walls are covered with floor-to-ceiling bookcases brimming with books, manuscripts, and scrolls. There are doorways to the east and west that lead into wings housing more of the library's collection. The ceiling is open to the second floor where light streams in through large glass windows, and more bookcases stretch from floor to ceiling. A small elevator operated by an ingenious pulley system sits in the center of the room, providing access to a walkway that runs along the perimeter of the second floor. Lokil's crest is displayed on the second floor's north wall. The crest consists of a brown checkerboard patterned shield. Open books sit in each of the shield's diagonal squares, and a key rests on a square, purple background in the shield's upper lefthand corner. While the books are just carvings, the key is real. It is a skeleton key that unlocks all the doors in the basement, including the concealed door to Site 35 at the end of the hall.

Several patrons peruse the library's offerings, and men and women wearing cowls with a book embroidered on the front of the garment circulate through the building. One elderly cowled man approaches you and introduces himself as **Master of Lore Alliki Nebega.** Alliki welcomes the party to Lokil. "Before I ask how I may help you, let me explain our most important rule here at the library. None of the volumes may be removed from the building. Breaking this rule will be painful, and possibly deadly. I hope you understand that we needed to enact this policy to protect Scarn's history. You may stay as long as you like, and we have provided a reading room with *silence* cast on it for your convenience." Any character who takes an item outside the library will be subject to the explosive runes version of the *glyph of warding* spell.

What does Alliki know? With the largest library in existence at his fingertips, Master of Lore Alliki Nebega knows or can find information on almost any topic. He specifically can tell the characters the following:

- The scrolls describing the *Censure of Mesos* true ritual are authentic.
- Lokil has enough secondary casters and proxies to cast the true ritual at 5th level if the party does not have enough casters.
- The Titanshome Mountains are the location referred to in the last scroll.
- The crimson path likely refers to the Twisted Path in the Titanshome Mountains. The Twisted Path is a serpentine trail of crimson that appears in the snow on the crags. No one knows for sure where it leads, but it is likely a place of power that hides a forgotten empire or an immense treasure.
- Lokil did not take sides in the Divine War, but one day an unknown Titan unleashed earthquakes and waves of searing lava that destroyed the city. Only the library was spared, possibly by Hedrada, and now the library serves as a shrine to her.

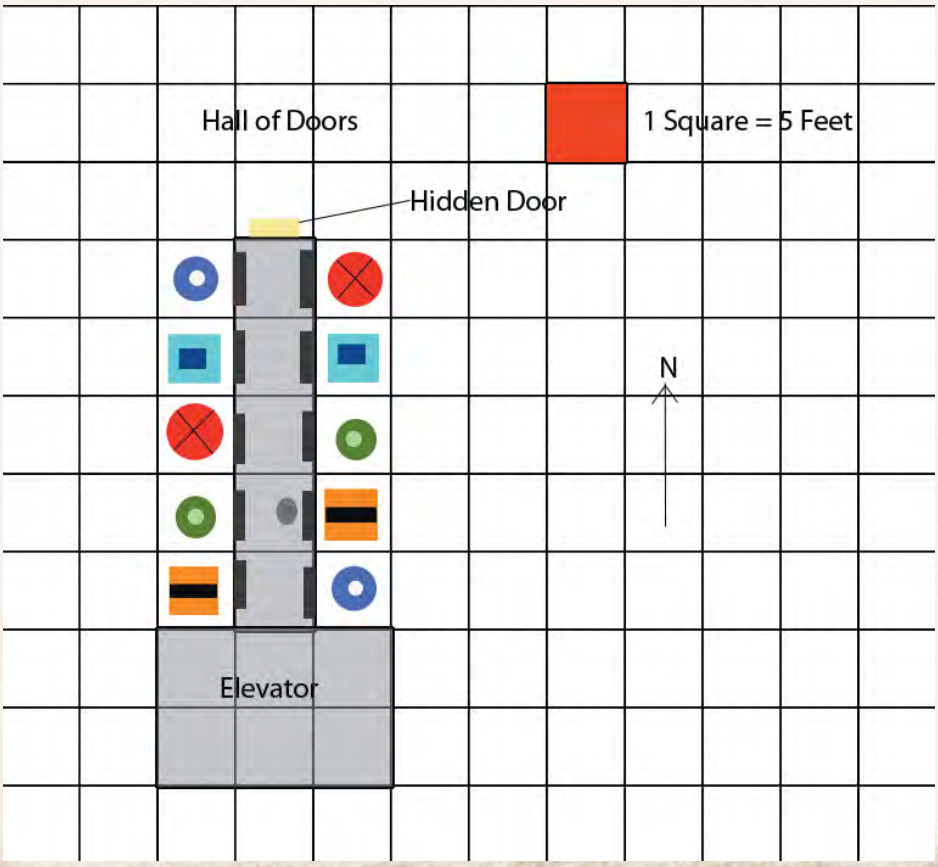
If the party played the previous adventure A Scholarly Schism, they may recognize the Master of Lore's last name. If the characters mention Savila Nebega to Alliki, he beams with obvious pride, telling the party that she's his niece. If the party compliments Savila, Alliki will add, "Yes, she's very talented. She's currently at the Academy of Magic & Science." The party will make any future Charisma checks to influence Alliki at advantage, and he will invite them to overnight in the library's accommodations.

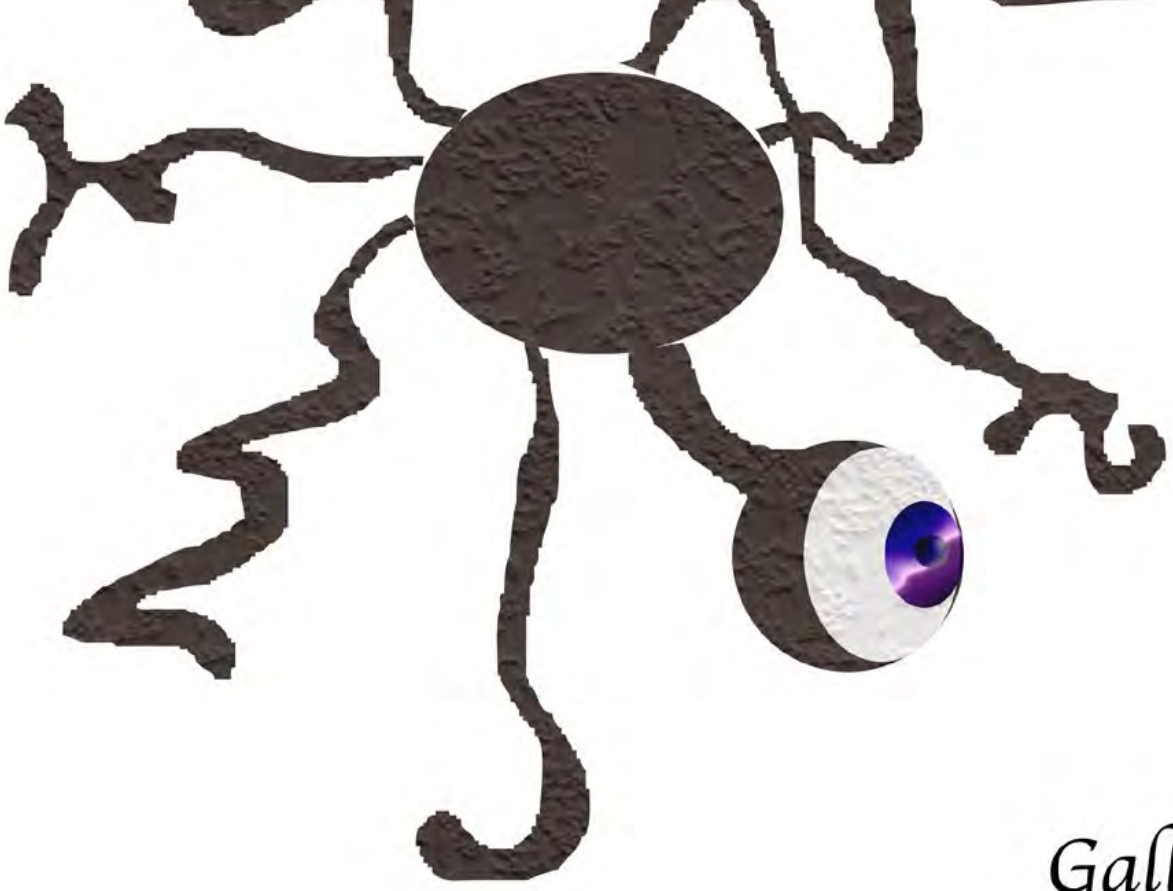
If the characters mention Site 35 during their explanation of why they're there, Alliki takes them aside and asks them in hushed tones how they know about Site 35. Haplo will tell Alliki that the Order of the Closed Book allowed his former master Maghiel to conduct research at the site for over a month. Alliki nods and admits that Maghiel was the last person they allowed down in Site 35 before having to seal it off for everyone's safety. Alliki admits that the order hasn't been able to control the aberrations and constructs they accidentally released from the vault that are now roaming unchecked through the mines. Alliki will add that the creatures aren't the only reason to avoid the area. Several of his brothers and sisters in the order grew sick after exploring the area, and began speaking in strange tongues. Most of them died, but the few who survived wandered off into the desert claiming they had become "enlightened". One of his sisters described finding a chamber where her dreams became reality, and her emotions were given form and substance for some ill purpose. "No, I'm afraid I cannot in good conscience allow you down into the mines. It's just too dangerous." Alliki cannot be persuaded or intimidated into granting the party access to Site 35. Haplo tells Alliki, "That's fine by me, because there's no way in

hell I'm going down there after what it did to Maghiel." Haplo then pulls a tome titled *The Mating Habits of the Manticora* off a shelf, opens it, and ever so slowly begins ripping out a page. Alliki is horrified and calls several of the order over to restrain Haplo, who drops the book, produces two roundknives from under his shirt, and begins whirling around with the blades in his outstretched hands. Haplo traces an intricate pattern across the floor before swiping at Alliki with one blade. If the party succeeds on a **DC 11 group Dexterity (Stealth)** check made with advantage, they are able to sneak over to the elevator and take it down to the sub-level without anyone noticing.

The elevator lets the party out in a dark, 25-foot long hallway that is lined on both sides by five identical metal doors. Each door has a handle and a keyhole. The doors are hinged on the right side and swing outward when opened. A tiny brass plaque graces each door. The plaque on the first door reads *Site 35*. Further inspection by the party quickly reveals that all the plaques read *Site 35*. The actual door to Site 35 is concealed by a *major image* spell masking it to look like an ordinary section of wall. It lies at the end of the hallway. The doors are all locked. A beautiful young woman wearing form-fitting leather trousers and a deep V-neck shirt stands in front of the second door on the right. She tells the party, "I see the order wouldn't let you in either. If you can get me past these doors, I can guide you to the vault." She will tell the party her name is Alissandre, and that she wants to get into the mines to look for something she lost inside. She doesn't specify what the item is. The woman is actually a **seeker's bane**, and she plans on leading the party into a trap. She knows the actual door to Site 35 is at the end of the hall, but she won't help the party unless they have exhausted all other means of finding it, or unless the party is tiring of the puzzle. The doors can be unlocked with the key attached to the Lokil crest found on the second floor, or with a *knock* spell. A character proficient with thieves' tools who succeeds on a **DC 20 Dexterity** check can pick a lock. Every door leads down a 15-foot long passageway that ends at another identical door. This second door leads back to a different point in the original hallway. See the following table to determine which door leads where.

The door to Site 35 is revealed after a character walks through the third door on the left side of the hall followed by the fifth door on the right side of the hall. A character examining the floor and succeeding on a **DC 14 Wisdom (Perception)** check will notice the numbers 1-5 inscribed on the floor in ascending order. Each number is inscribed between its corresponding set of doors. A character examining the far wall and succeeding on a **DC 18 Wisdom (Perception)** check will feel the disguised door's handle. A character attempting to pick the lock while the door is concealed makes her Dexterity check at disadvantage. If the party succeeds in unlocking the door at the end of the hall, Alissandre leads them down a 15-foot long passage into the mines. When the party attempts to leave Site 35, they will find the door has been locked behind them.





Gallows Eye

Chapter 4: Where Angels Fear to Tread

The passage opens out onto a 25-foot-wide rock platform that overlooks an enormous underground room. Three elevated walkways extend from the platform crossing the room's 140-foot expanse to a solid rock wall at the far side of the room. The walkways are made of massive blocks of obsidian, and rise 100 feet from the floor below. The ceiling is 60 feet above the elevated walkways. The room is completely dark, and the only light sources are those the characters bring with them.

The left walkway curves out and ends at an opening in the far wall. Another opening is cut into the bottom of the far wall, 100 feet below and 10 feet to the right of the first one. The second opening leads out onto the floor of the room.

The central walkway leads straight across the expanse, but after 50 feet, it widens into a 45-foot-diameter circular platform. A broken arch stands in the middle of the platform. The 15-foot-high arch is assembled from an odd assortment of wires, gems, spheres, and other

unidentifiable components. It is split into two unequal sections, and there is a gap in the arch about one-third of the way up from the bottom righthand section. Broken pieces of the arch litter the floor under the gap. There is a slot in the smaller section of the arch that consists of a 2-inch wide, 1-foot deep cylindrical shaft surrounded by a shallower 6-inch round aperture. The arch is an inactive **slarecian gatekeeper**. Two stone gargoyles sit on top of the arch. One sits at the apex of the arch, a blue glass horn protruding from its forehead. The other gargoyle sits on the smaller section of arch in the gap. It has a red glass horn jutting from its head. The two statues are actually **slarecian gargoyles**. The walkway resumes on the far side of the circular platform and traverses an additional 30 feet before ending on a 15-foot-wide platform that faces a set of towering, steel doors built into the far wall.

The right walkway flares out to the right for 115 feet before climbing a 20-foot-high set of stairs to a 3-foot wide ledge that clings to the far wall. The ledge continues 25 feet to the right before ending at an opening in the wall. The ledge is covered in loose dirt and is considered difficult terrain.

A character standing on either the left or right walkway, opposite the central circular platform supporting the arch, can detect an opening at the base of the platform. A 45-foot-long tunnel connects the left and right sides of the floor, so a character may move from one to the other.

See the **Site 35 Mines** map in **Appendix 5**.

Alissandre will lead the party down the right walkway. Once she reaches the far side of the room, she will attempt to push the closest character off the ledge. Whether she succeeds or fails, she will flee from the party through the opening in the wall. She dashes down a 25-foot-long, tunnel that winds to the left and empties out into a natural rock cavern. The cavern has two connected chambers that are roughly shaped like kidney beans. The uneven ceiling is 15 feet at its highest point. Alissandre will run into the left chamber and hide in a corner behind a major image of a wall. Two **gallows eyes** hang from the cavern ceiling, one in each chamber, waiting for the characters to enter a chamber before attacking. Each gallows eye has a massive, vaguely reptilian eye that glows with a violet light. The eye is connected by a veined stalk to a bulbous mass that sports six long tentacles. The gallows eyes will ignore Alissandre, and focus their attacks on any character who possesses a slarecian artifact. The gallows eyes will fly out the opening in the wall into the room if they think they are in danger of being defeated. They will then fly into the tunnel below the central platform and hide.

This is one of three combat encounters in the mines that will truly challenge the party for the first time. You may adjust the encounter as follows based on party strength. The adjustments are not cumulative:

- Very Weak-Remove a gallows eye.
- Very Strong-Add a gallows eye.

If the party chooses to explore the left walkway, they will reach the opening in the far wall without incident. On the other side of the opening, a set of stone stairs winds down 70 feet to a landing leading into an L-shaped chamber that is 35 feet wide x 30 feet deep with a 15-foot-wide x 10-foot-deep cutout in the upper righthand corner. The stairs continue down another 30 feet to the opening in the base of the wall that leads out onto the main room's floor. If the characters investigate the floor, they will encounter a flying swarm of tentacled creatures as detailed under *Flying Aberrant Swarms* in **DM Handout #2** in **Appendix 4.**

A shimmering orange curtain of light divides the 25-foot-high chamber into two parts. It runs diagonally from one wall, 5 feet to the left of the entrance, to the upper righthand corner, 10 feet to the right of the entrance. Any creature moving into the curtain for the first time is subject to one of multiple effects detailed in *Colors out of Space and Time* in **DM Handout #2** in **Appendix 4**. Two animated corpses infused with a thick reddish-black ichor stand in front of the curtain, and five more of the creatures stand behind it. The creatures are **acid shamblers**. The two in front of the curtain will attack immediately and the rest will wait to attack until a character has crossed through the curtain. Floating low to the ground along the south wall, behind the curtain, is a bright greenish-yellow fog. This fog is an air elemental called a **bane cloud**. It will hang behind the curtain, waiting for a character to cross to its side before attacking. In the northwest corner of the chamber, a large, mangy wolf covered in sores and patches of rotting flesh, with writhing maggots where its head should be, devours a corpse. The creature is a **carrion hound**. Any character approaching within 5 feet of the corpse can identify it as Alissandre. The carrion hound will defend its meal and attack anyone closing in on the body. If a character takes time to search the woman's corpse, he or she finds a heavy, 6-inch wide stone torus beneath the body. The torus can be used in conjunction with a rod to repair and activate the slarecian gatekeeper.

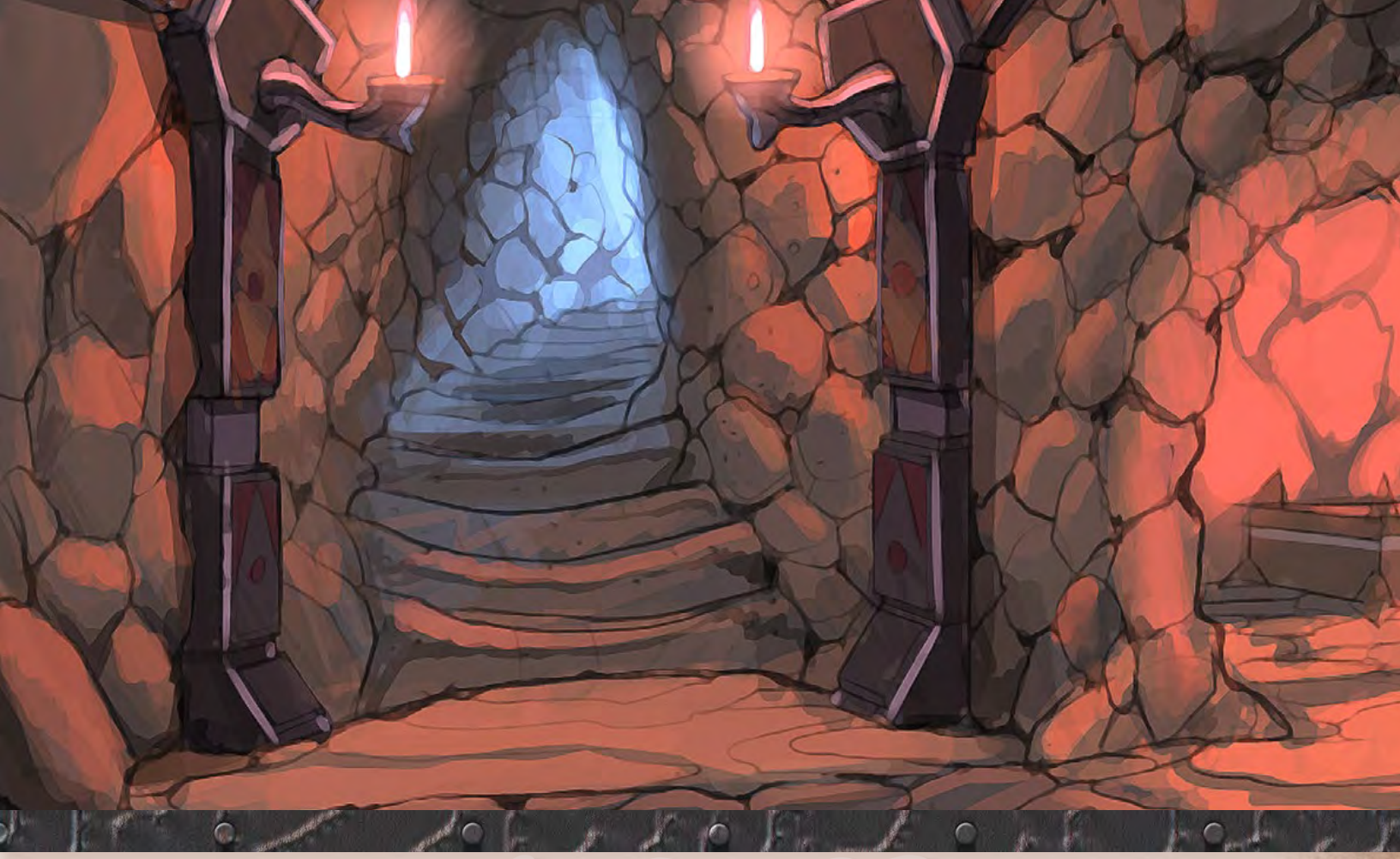
This is one of three combat encounters in the mines that will truly challenge the party for the first time. You may adjust the encounter as follows based on party strength. The adjustments are not cumulative:

- Very Weak-Remove 4 acid shamblers.
- Weak-Remove 2 acid shamblers.
- Strong-Add a carrion hound.
- Very Strong-Add a bane cloud.

If the party chooses to explore the central walkway, the slarecian gargoyles on the arch will attack once a character is standing on the circular platform. Two other hideous creatures lurk behind the bases of the arch. They are a seemingly random jumble of bones connected by spongy pinkish-gray tissue. These odd assemblages of skulls, bits of clothing, club-like limbs, and claws are aberrations called **bone lords**. Once a gargoyle has engaged a character in combat, the bone lords emerge from their hiding places and join in the fight. The gargoyles will focus their attack on any individual who possesses a Slarecian artifact. A 2-inch-wide, foot-long cylindrical metal rod is found among the shattered bones of one of the dead bone lords. When this rod is fitted through the hole in the torus, found under Alissandre's body, and both are inserted together into the aperture in the arch, they fit perfectly. When the control rod clicks into place, the torus spins and the arch is enveloped by a golden glow that starts at the base of the smaller section and spreads up and around the arch to the other side. The pieces of the arch on the floor begin to glow and float up into the air, rearranging themselves to fill the gap in the arch. The slarecian gatekeeper activates and a roiling darkness fills the archway. The gatekeeper then acts as normal, except it does not attack a character if he or she can't immediately provide an offering of 10,000 gold, silver, or mithral pieces. Grateful for being reanimated, the gatekeeper will accept an offering as low as 5,000 gold, silver, or mithral pieces. The gatekeeper will communicate telepathically with a character telling her, "Make your offering. Then choose your destination." This slarecian gatekeeper is still missing a final component that would allow it to access its full range of abilities. It can reliably transport the party to any location in Scarn, but it cannot be used to scry on a creature, or to transport the party to a creature's location, or vice versa. If the characters attempt to step through the gatekeeper without giving it an offering, they don't transport anywhere. Instead, they walk right through the darkness and appear on the far side of the archway.

This is one of three combat encounters in the mines that will truly challenge the party for the first time. You may adjust the encounter as follows based on party strength. The adjustments are not cumulative:

- Very Weak-Remove a bone lord.
- Weak-Remove a slarecian gargoyle.
- Very Strong-Add a yellow-horned slarecian gargoyle.



Chapter 5: Perchance to Dream

When the characters push open the double doors in the far wall, a grating sound echoes throughout the underground complex, and they enter the vault at the heart of Site 35. In this chamber, one's dreams and emotions are given form and substance. Any creature taking a short or long rest in the vault, or any creature that succumbs to a sleep spell in the vault is subject to the *What Dreams May Come* effect detailed in **DM Handout #2** in **Appendix 4.** Even if the creature falls asleep thinking about something pleasant, its dreams will be perverted into a nightmarish version of that thought. Several remnants of Maghiel's dreams and emotions linger in the vault for the party to encounter.

The vault is a 130-foot-square chamber with smooth stone walls and a dirt floor. Five colossal opaque, black bubbles float lazily through the vault, bouncing off the ceiling, walls, and each other. The bubbles are room-sized, and have an oily sheen. Perched on a tangled knot of entwined glass tubes, 80 feet above the floor in the upper northwest corner of the vault, is a dragon made of a viscous, black tar. As the characters watch, it belches out a sixth black bubble that slowly drifts away from it. A similar snarl of glass tubes protrudes from the upper northeast corner of the vault. The majority of the tubes are broken, but they all emit a shifting prismatic display of dim light that suffuses the room. Buried under a shallow layer of soil, more of the glass tubes can be found snaking in every direction. The

tubes carry an otherworldly illness, and any creature that spends at least 1 minute in the vault is exposed to the *Site 35 Infection* as detailed in **DM Handout #2** in **Appendix 4**. If a character attempts to destroy the tubes, they twist, squirm, and phase in and out of existence to avoid any physical attack. If a character attempts to destroy the tubes using magic, the spell will do its normal damage, but the tubes will shortly begin to regenerate after the spell does its damage until they are completely whole again. If the tubes are damaged by magic, they release sickening vapors, and all characters in the vault at the time are immediately subject to the effects of the *Site 35 Infection*.

Strange runes appear inside the tubes anytime a character stares at them for longer than a minute. If a character attempts to decipher the runes, she must succeed on a **DC 22 Charisma saving throw**, or succumb to the **Slarecian Language Virus**. The difference between this virus and the *Site 35 Infection*, is that this infection can spread to other characters.

Three large rose bushes with beautiful red blooms and wicked looking thorns grow in the floor's soil. One bush is positioned near the door, one is in the center of the room, and the third sits between two bubbles in the northwest corner of the chamber. The rose bushes are **rosas malditas** that will attack the party if damaged. If a character attempts to dig up a rosa maldita, she will find its roots are wrapped around one of the glowing glass tubes. Successfully digging up or ripping out a rosa maldita requires two successive **DC 23 Strength (Athletics)** checks. Any character who succeeds on its first Strength check is subject to the rosa maldita's Deceptive Demise reaction, and the rosa maldita will attack the following round. The rosa maldita loses half its hit points after a character's first successful Strength check, and is destroyed after the second.

After the **juvenile tar dragon** belches out the last bubble, it fixes its gaze on the party. All of the bubbles freeze in midair, in the positions shown on the **Site 35 Vault map** in **Appendix 5**. During her stay in the vault, Maghiel replayed the Battle of Gambedel's Bridge over and over in her mind, reliving the dwarven abandonment every time she dreamt. The pain of their betrayal was still keen so many years later, and it can be felt by the characters. Each character will hear her fellow party members repeatedly calling her a, "Deserter, coward, traitor." Then, in a blink of an eye, the rest of her party will vanish, and silence will descend on the vault. The tar dragon chooses this moment to attack. Each party member will have to fight the dragon alone. Once a character kills her dragon, she will appear by the side of the party member with the fewest hit points. Mechanically, each character will fight a separate dragon. Each dragon and each character move through space as if the other characters and dragons were not there. You may adjust the encounter as follows based on party strength.

- Very Weak-Replace the juvenile tar dragon with a **young tar dragon**, and if a character falls unconscious, that dragon will vanish, and doesn't need to be fought by the rest of the party.
- Weak-Replace the juvenile tar dragon with a young tar dragon that does not vanish if a character falls unconscious, and must be fought by the rest of the party.
- Average-Use a juvenile tar dragon that vanishes once a character falls unconscious, and does not need to be fought by the rest of the party.
- Strong-Use a juvenile tar dragon that vanishes once a character falls unconscious, and does not need to be fought by the rest of the party.
- Very Strong-Use a juvenile tar dragon that does not vanish once a character falls unconscious. It must be fought be the rest of the party.

Once the dragons have been dealt with, the characters can turn their attention to the bubbles. Each one encloses a room that can be entered by popping the bubble. Each bubble is immune to all forms of damage except for magical piercing. If a character attempts to break the bubble with a nonmagical attack, or by hitting it, the bubble deforms around the weapon, and then springs back after the weapon is removed. A bubble's surface is tacky and pliable, and each bubble has AC 10 and 1 hit point. If the party does not have a means of delivering magical piercing damage, they can cut off a branch from a rosa maldita, and use its thorns. However, if the rosa maldita is damaged, rusty red blood drips from the wound, and it attacks.

If a character finds a way to enter a bubble without popping it, for example; by using a *dimension door* spell, each room is the same as described below, except it is enclosed by a rubbery black dome that blocks out any light from the tubes in the chamber, and that prevents a character from leaving unless they can pop it, or leave the same way they entered.

When a bubble bursts, it makes a resounding pop, and reveals a circular room with a stone floor. The room hovers motionless in the air, and occupies the same space as the previous bubble. The underside of each room is composed of dirt, rock, and hanging roots, giving the impression that it was scooped out of the ground. The following are numbered descriptions of each room:

1. This is the last bubble the dragon blew, and it is empty. Any creatures that a character dreams about materialize here.

2. This is a kitchen of sorts. Two long counters run east to west with a butcher's block full of knives sitting on one counter. An oven sits at the east side of the room, and an ice box to the west. The counters, oven, and ice box provide cover for two emaciated skeletal creatures with

translucent skin that are hunkering down below the level of the countertops. These crooked creatures are **gauntlings**, and they embody Maghiel's all consuming hunger for power. They will attack any creature they can reach, and will try to eat it. You may adjust this encounter as follows based on party strength. The adjustments are not cumulative:

- Strong-Add a gauntling that is hiding in a cabinet under one of the counters.
- Very Strong-Add 2 hiding gauntlings.

3. This was Maghiel's study. It houses a writing desk and a wooden chair. A blotter and a bottle of ink sit on the desktop. Any character succeeding on a **DC 15 Wisdom (Perception)** check, can make out the body of a letter based on impressions left in the blotter. The letter is addressed to Haplo and starts out by requesting supplies, but it devolves into incoherent ravings about someone named Xoer the One. The ink bottle contains a **bottle imp** that will attack anyone opening its bottle.

4. This was Maghiel's bedroom, and the party can find what they're looking for here. It contains a canopy bed with green and gold brocade patterned curtains, a nightstand with an oil lamp on top, and a wardrobe with a mirror propped up against it. Several strands of Maghiel's long, silver hair can be found on the bed's feather pillow. Maghiel is an insomniac, so she cast an 8th level *sleep* spell on the bed. Any creature climbing on the bed will be subject to the spell's effects. The bed's curtains will also snap shut as soon as a creature climbs on the bed. The curtains have the same properties as the box-shaped cage created with a *forcecage* spell. If a creature is trapped on the bed, the shimmering figure of a sad-faced boy with hollow eye sockets, materializes next to her. The **inn-wight** snuggles down under the covers, and attempts to hug the character. If the character resists, the inn-wight throws a tantrum, flings objects around the room, and then waits for the character to fall asleep. The seemingly ordinary mirror propped up against the wardrobe is a **quicksilver golem**. Once a humanoid's reflection can be seen in the mirror, the golem takes the form of that creature and attacks it until it dies. The wardrobe is empty.

5. This was Maghiel's music room. It is filled with instruments playing a haunting, melancholy tune that each character has heard before somewhere. The tune cannot be placed. Some of the larger instruments include a piano, a harp, and a lute.

6. At first glance, this room appears to be empty. Once a character approaches within 5 feet of the room, hundreds of **ghosts** appear in the room, wavering and wailing in front of the party. One ghost of a young half-elf girl seems more solid than the rest. It cries and reaches out for the hands of its parents. The ghosts want to be put to rest, and the only way they can find peace is if the party promises to kill Maghiel. If the party agrees, the ghosts will be appeased, and will fade back to wait for their deliverance. If a party member attacks before speaking with the ghosts, they will respond in kind. The first ghost attacks, and the other two parent ghosts solidify one by one on succeeding rounds of combat. If the first ghost is defeated, the other two ghosts still materialize and attack. These are the ghosts of the innocents slaughtered by Maghiel and her cohort. You may adjust this encounter as follows based on party strength. The adjustments are not cumulative:

- Very Weak-Remove 2 ghosts.
- Weak-Remove 1 ghost.
- Strong-Add 1 ghost.
- Very Strong-Add 2 ghosts.

Once the party recovers the strands of Maghiel's hair and returns to the library with them, each member advances a level. Each character who contracted the Site 35 infection, but later ended the effect by succeeding on a saving throw, has glimpsed the true structure of reality, and collects one of the following boons: *clarity boon*, *spellshield boon*, or *unity boon*. If more than one character qualifies to receive a boon, award a different boon to each character unless four or more characters qualify. The details of the boons can be found in **Appendix 2: Magic Items.**

CHAPTER 6: COLD WAR

When the elevator door opens into the library, the party discovers the monks have crowded around it, apparently expecting them. Alliki stands front and center with his arms crossed. Alliki explains, "When we heard the elevator ascending from the basement, we knew it had to be your party, considering no one else has been allowed in the basement since you snuck by us. We decided it would be wiser to reseal the entrance and wait, rather than follow you inside. Your friend told us why you needed to go down in the vault. Did you find what you were looking for?"

If a character explains why the party needed to disobey Alliki, and succeeds on a **DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion)** check, Alliki will tell them, "I understand the import and urgency of your mission, and I am inclined to join you. I may even be able to spare some fellow brothers and sisters in the order if you need more participants. However, we are unable to travel that far on foot. Do you have some other means of transporting us to the Titanshome Mountains?"

Alliki is familiar with the slarecian gatekeeper, and knows what must be done to use it to transport to the Titanshome Mountains. If the characters mention the gatekeeper, Alliki agrees to accompany them. "Very well. We shall make preparations for our journey. And now, I think it's time for you to collect your companion." Alliki leads the party to the reading room, where Haplo is confined. He is pounding on the glass pane in the door, and shouting something, but no sound leaves the room. "Mending the torn page in the book was a simple matter. Figuring out what to do with him was not," Alliki declares with a slight smirk.

Alliki unlocks the door and releases Haplo, who is hoarse, but surprisingly relieved to see the rest of the party. "I didn't know if you'd come back or not," Haplo says, and he asks to see Maghiel's hair.

The true ritual *Censure of Mesos* requires 1 primary caster, 3 secondary casters, and 2 proxies to perform the ritual at 5th level. The primary caster should be a party member. If

no party member qualifies to be the primary caster, Alliki will offer to do it. Alliki and any other casters or proxies that volunteer to join the party have the statistics of a Mage. Alliki will provide 2 proxies, and up to 3 secondary casters, including himself, as needed. He will provide the minimum number of people required to cast the true ritual.

The primary caster will have been deciphering the true ritual with Haplo's help while they traveled to Lokil. One more **DC 17 Intelligence (Arcana)** check is required in order for the caster to completely decipher the ritual. The caster may make the check at advantage if Haplo helps.

The primary caster will also require two more days to construct an effigy of Maghiel, and to copy the rest of the true ritual. The monks of the Order of the Closed Book will provide her with the materials needed to copy the remainder of the ritual, thus eliminating the cost for ink, paper, and binding.

The monks will put the party up in guest quarters while the primary caster finishes copying the ritual. Haplo will take the opportunity to sneak into the most powerful caster's room late that night. Roll 1d4. On a 1 or 2, the caster is sleeping in the room when Haplo enters. On a 3 or 4, the room is empty. If the caster is absent when Haplo chooses to sneak in, he automatically succeeds in collecting strands of her hair undetected. If the caster is present, Haplo will try to sneak past her with a **Dexterity (Stealth)** check contested by the character's passive **Wisdom (Perception)** score, and attempt to collect strands of hair that he can substitute for Maghiel's with a **Dexterity (Sleight of Hand)** check contested by the character's passive **Wisdom (Perception)** score. If that party member catches him, he will try to talk his way out of the situation with a **Charisma (Deception)** check contested by the party member's **Wisdom (Insight)** check. If he was caught sneaking into the room before he tried to collect the hair, Haplo makes the check with advantage. If he fails to fool her, he will either confess Maghiel's plan to the party, or keep his mouth shut, depending on which he believes to be in his best interest. If he succeeds in collecting the hair unnoticed, or in deceiving the character who caught him, he will wait until the last possible moment to replace Maghiel's hair with the caster's.

Several options are available to the party at this point. They may kill Haplo, bind him and keep him as a prisoner, forcing him to go along with the party, leave him in Lokil, or be completely unaware of his duplicity. If found out, the party may even convince him to switch sides. If a character succeeds on a contested **Charisma (Persuasion or Intimidation)** check against Haplo, he will betray Maghiel in order to ensure his own survival. Each is valid, and can be played out as the DM sees fit. Haplo is not needed to perform the ritual, but if flipped, he could substitute for a proxy if one of them should happen to die along the way.

The Titanshome Mountains are an inhospitable, frigid location in northern Ghelspad. Alliki and the other monks will dress in winter gear when they are ready to depart. Unfortunately, they do not have surplus gear with which to provision the party. Alliki will offer to cover any shortfall in the offering for the gatekeeper, but only after the characters have contributed all of their own gold and silver first. When the characters return to the gatekeeper, Alliki summons it, because he has visited the Titanshome before, and can most accurately describe their desired destination. When the party presents their offering, it is instantly absorbed into the gatekeeper. The gatekeeper then communes telepathically with Alliki, who tells it where the party wants to go.

As each character walks through the gate, she finds herself in a small cave. The temperature plunges drastically, and a chill wind blows piles of snow into the cave through its mouth. The trees and peaks visible outside the cave are blanketed in snow and ice. Once outside the cave, the characters are exposed to temperatures below 0 degrees Fahrenheit, and any character without resistance or immunity to cold damage who does not have cold weather gear is subject to the effects of Extreme Cold as described in the SRD.

Two towering constructs fashioned from ice stand on either side of the cave's mouth. They are concealed by frozen ice flows. When the characters emerge from the cave, the **crystal golems** burst out of the glacial wall and attack, hoping to surprise the intruders. The cave mouth is 5 feet wide, and the terrain outside the cave is buried under two feet of snow making it difficult terrain. A copse of pine trees lies 50 feet beyond the mouth of the cave. The golems will fight to the death, unless stated otherwise in the adjustments table. You may adjust this encounter as follows based on party strength. The adjustments are not cumulative:

- Very Weak-Remove a crystal golem.
- Weak-Remove the golems' multiattack action for melee slam attacks, and have the golems break off pursuit once a character flees into the trees.
- Very Strong-Extend the golems' radius for Chill Touch to 30 feet.

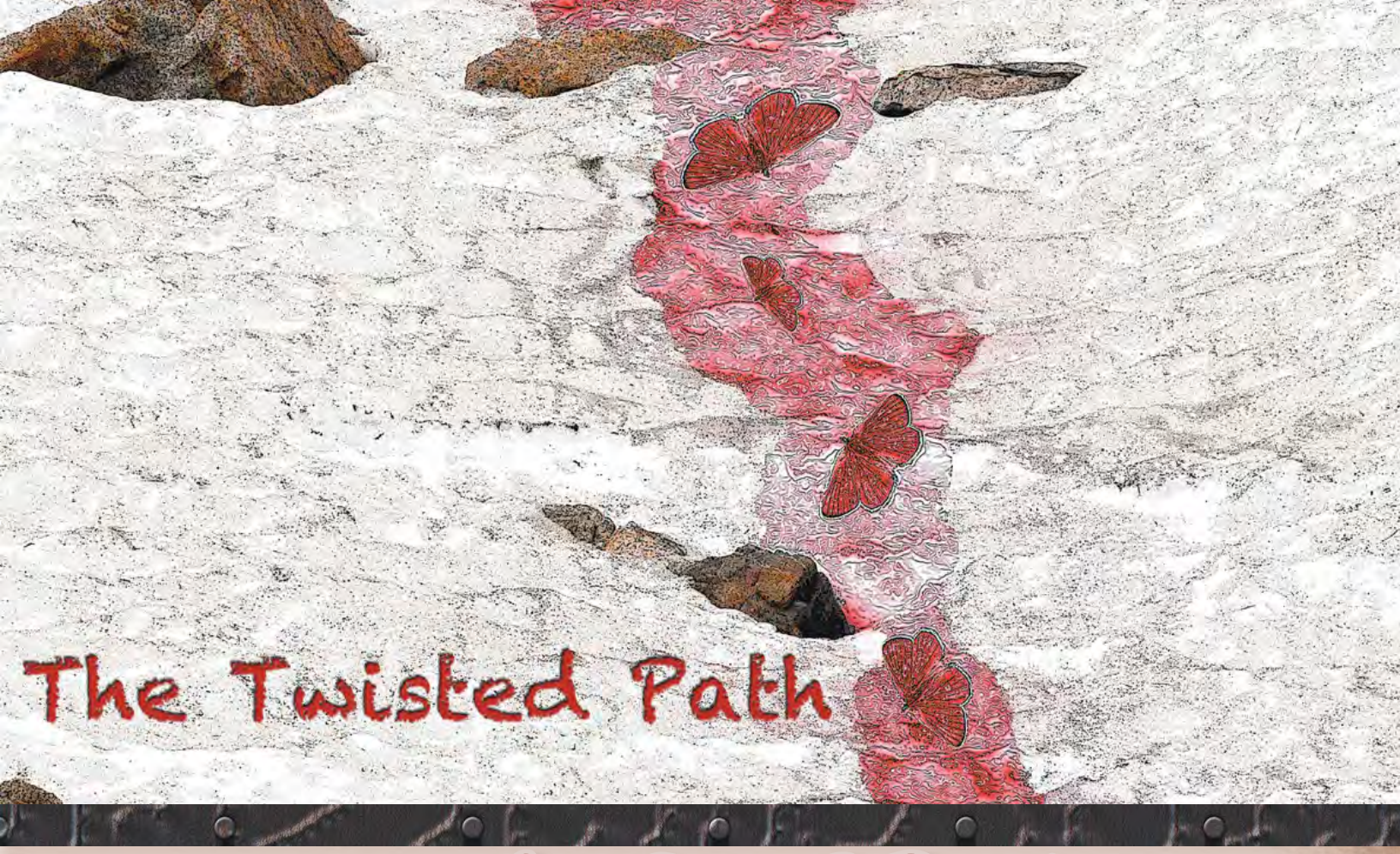
Alliki and his fellow monks (and Haplo, if he is with the party) will focus their efforts on defending themselves, and will refrain from attacking the golems or other creatures they face in future encounters. The golems and any other creatures the party will face in the mountains, concentrate their attacks on the characters, and will ignore the NPC's unless they are the last ones left alive.

If the party defeats or escapes from the golems, they will wander in search of the Twisted Path for 4 hours before

getting caught in a severe blizzard that heavily obscures the area. The blizzard extinguishes unprotected flames, and flames in a lantern have a 50% chance of going out. The characters still plod through deep snow that is difficult terrain.

A polar bear the size of an elephant is tracking the party, camouflaged by the blowing snow. Its blue eyes glow with a fierce intelligence. This bear is the rare **huror** that protects Denev's sacred places. It is nearing the end of its life, and is in search of heroes worthy of facing it in mortal combat. It deems the party worthy, and launches its attack. The huror is outside its lair, and cannot use lair actions. The huror will attempt to deal non-lethal damage to the characters, and once it knocks half of the party unconscious, it will spare them, but shame them in Druidic before stalking off into the snow. If the party kills the huror, it will offer a character its hide before fading away into nothingness. The huror prefers to offer its hide to a druid, ranger, or other follower of Denev, with the understanding that when the character accepting the hide dies, he or she will be transformed into a huror that will once again guard the north. However, it will not offer its hide to any character that was knocked unconscious. The *Huror's Hide* has magical properties as described in **Appendix 2: Magic Items**. If asked about the Twisted Path, the huror will motion to a narrow, winding valley leading deeper into the mountains to the north. You may adjust this encounter as follows based on party strength. The adjustments are not cumulative:

- Very Weak-Remove the huror's second claw attack, and the area is lightly obscured instead of heavily obscured.
- Weak-The area is lightly obscured instead of heavily obscured.
- Strong-The huror's Cold Breath action recharges on a 4, 5, or 6.
- Very Strong-The huror's Cold Breath action recharges on a 3, 4, 5, or 6.



CHAPTER 7: RITE OF PASSAGE

If the characters head in the direction indicated by the huror, the sky clears, and they find a winding crimson path in the snow that disappears into a ravine. If the party was defeated by the huror, it will take them an additional 3 hours to eventually stumble onto the Twisted Path. As the characters traverse the path, the air around them gradually warms, and the snow on either side of the path begins to melt. Steam rises from the path, which is a mixture of acidic water coursing over a red mat of bacteria and blood. Hundreds of **blood moths** flit above it, occasionally diving down to feed on the blood in the path. A character succeeding on a **DC 18 Intelligence (Nature)** check can determine what the path is made of. If a character touches the water in the path, she takes 15 acid damage, and two swarms of blood moths will attack her. If a character tests the water with a stick or similar object, the water dissolves the submerged portion of the object.

The path leads to the base of a 45-foot-high cliff that has a series of blood-red cascades pouring down its face. A set of stairs is carved into the cliffside, and the characters can climb up the cliff to find the site where they need to perform the ritual. The site consists of a cirque containing a small hanging lake surrounded by surging geysers and bubbling mud pots. Steam billows from the oval lake at the center of the cirque. It measures 140 feet by 55 feet, and is a rainbow colored pool of sulfuric acid. Different types of heat-loving bacteria create the striking hues in the water. The hottest water is at the center of the pool, and

it is a deep cerulean that transitions to kelly green, gold, orange, and red as it radiates outward. The center of the pool is deep, and it descends into unknown depths. The outer edges of the pool are the most shallow at 5 feet deep. Water flows through the pool's outlet and spills down the cascades, feeding the Twisted Path below. A potent odor of sulfur fills the air.

A 5-foot-wide, 190-foot-long transparent, crystal boardwalk spirals around the pool and extends over its center. Several vertical, 5-foot-tall bulging white tubes are scattered around the pool's perimeter. The tubes are home to 8 wormlike creatures called **zryx**, which will attack the party in self-defense, if anyone or anything falls into the pool, or if anyone strays from the crystal boardwalk. The tubes all tunnel underground and connect to the central pool. Three zryx have altered their skin color to hide in the pool's water when the party arrives. The other five are hidden in their tubes. When the party steps on the boardwalk, the zryx in the pool will warn their fellow zryx of possible danger by altering the pool's acidity. This shifts the blue color in the center of the pool to a rich violet. A character with a passive **Wisdom (Perception)** score of 15 or greater will notice the change.

You may adjust this encounter as follows based on party strength. The adjustments are not cumulative:

- Very Weak-Remove 2 zryx.
- Weak-Remove 1 zryx.

The characters will need to perform the ritual on the crystal platform suspended over the pool. The platform is 55 feet by 30 feet. The pool deals 50 acid damage to any creature falling into it, and a **DC 14 Wisdom (Perception)** check reveals a small animal skeleton at the bottom of the pool.

If Haplo is still working against the party, he will try to pickpocket the character transporting Maghiel's effigy. In order to do so, Haplo must succeed on a **Dexterity (Sleight of Hand)** check contested by the character's passive **Wisdom (Perception)** score. If he succeeds, he will remove Maghiel's hair from the effigy and drop it into the acid pool, destroying it. He will then stuff the primary caster's hair into the effigy. If the party doesn't notice, he will succeed in his mission, and the spell will be reflected back at the caster.

If Haplo is caught trying to remove Maghiel's hair from the effigy, he will attempt to wrest the effigy away from whoever is carrying it by winning a contested **Strength (Athletics)** check. If he succeeds, he'll dangle it over the acid pool, using it as leverage to bargain for his escape. If the party agrees to let Haplo go if he hands over the effigy (and he believes them), he will leave without a second thought. If Haplo fails to seize the effigy from whoever is carrying it, he will try to escape; fighting to the death if necessary.

If Haplo is helping the party, he won't interfere with the ritual, and the party will succeed in weakening Maghiel, if only temporarily. Either way, Haplo will decline to join the party on their next adventure.

Denouement

Effects from casting the true ritual will carry over into later adventures for good or ill. If Haplo succeeds in sabotaging the ritual, the affected spellcaster will suffer the magic nullifying effects of the *Censure of Mesos* true ritual throughout the following adventure, Expedition to the Gluttonous Caves. If the ritual was performed at the end of the Twisted Path, the heightened effects include:

- The target can't use spells or magical abilities for 30 days.
- It loses attunement to all magic items for the duration.
- It loses any advantage it might have on saving throws against spells or magical effects, regardless of the source.
- It can attempt to make a saving throw using its spellcasting ability 15 days after the true ritual takes affect to end these effects.
- It does not make the saving throw at advantage, regardless of the target's level.
- It may repeat the saving throw once every 24 hours thereafter.
- If the ritual is performed elsewhere, the effects are as described in Appendix 3: Player Handout #1.

If the party successfully performs the ritual with Haplo's help or after foiling Maghiel's plot, Maghiel suffers the same effects as detailed above if the ritual is performed at the end of the Twisted Path. If the ritual is performed elsewhere, the effects are those outlined in **Appendix 3**. The party will not confront Maghiel in the next adventure, so the ritual's effects will continue into the adventure, *The Fall of Durgan's Rest* and possibly into the final adventure, *The Mirovan Henge*.

Appendix 1: Spells

Ghoul Touch*

2nd-level necromancy

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Touch

Components: V, S, M (a pinch of dirt from a ghoul's lair or a small scrap of cloth from clothing worn by a ghoul)

Duration: Instantaneous

Imbued with necrotic energy, your touch paralyzes a living humanoid for 1 minute. Make a melee spell attack against the target. On a hit, you paralyze the target and cause it to exude a carrion stench in a 10-foot radius. A creature may repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on a success.

Living creatures within the stench area must succeed on a Constitution saving throw at the start of their turn or be poisoned until the start of their next turn.

Shadow Touch*

3rd-level necromancy

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Touch

Components: S

Duration: 10 minutes

Your touch becomes imbued with strength-stealing energy. Make a melee spell attack. On a success, the target must make a Constitution saving throw, reducing its Strength by 1d6 on a failed save, or half as much on a success.

If the target's Strength is reduced to 0, it dies and rises as a shadow 1d4+1 rounds later. The caster may control up to 2 HD of shadows per caster level at any one time. If the caster controls other undead, the total cumulative HD cannot exceed the 2 HD per caster level maximum.

Appendix 2: Magic Items

Clarity Boon

Wondrous boon, rare

You have advantage on saving throws against being charmed or frightened, as well as any enchantment spell or magical effect that influences your emotions or sanity.

In addition, without using an action or even being able to use them, you can immediately end one effect that fits these parameters. Once you use this ability, you can do so again only after you finish a long rest.

Huror's Hide

Armor (hide), very rare (requires attunement)

This armor made from the hide of a huror is worn as much as a sign of Denev's blessing as it is for its protective qualities.

While you wear this armor, you gain the following benefits:

- You gain a +2 to AC.
- You have advantage on saving throws against cold.
- You have resistance to cold damage. If you have resistance to cold damage from another source, you are immune to cold.
- If you are not immune to cold, you can tolerate temperatures as low as -100 degrees Fahrenheit without risking exhaustion.

Spell-Shield Boon

Wondrous boon, very rare

You can cast globe of invulnerability as a 7th-level spell. If you do so, you must finish a long rest before doing so again.

Unity Boon

Wondrous boon, very rare

You can cast telepathic bond. If you do so, you must finish a long rest before doing so again. In addition, for the duration of the bond, you can use one skill or tool proficiency possessed by a linked creature as if you were that creature.

Appendix 3: Player Handout #1

Censure of Mesos

5th-level transmutation (arcane, druidic, true ritual)

The early Cult of Mesos created this potent ritual, which uses an elaborate effigy of the target to interfere with its connection to magic. Once information about an enemy magician has been acquired and the effigy created, cultists used this ritual to nullify the target's power so it could then be destroyed. Over time, a few others have managed to steal or duplicate this ritual for their own ends.

Casting Time: 5 hours

Range: Unlimited (same plane)

Components: V, S, M (an effigy that includes a nonmagical personal item, hair, finger nails, or body parts from the target)

Duration: 24 hours

Choose one creature from which you have the required material component. During the casting, the target senses fluctuations in the magic around and within it. The target must make a saving throw using its spellcasting ability, or a Charisma saving throw if it does not have spellcasting ability. If the target has a challenge rating higher than 9, or if it is above 9th level, it has advantage on its saving throws against this ritual.

If the target fails the saving throw, it can't use spells or magical abilities for the duration. In addition, it loses its attunement to all magic items, and it also loses any advantage it might have on saving throws against spells or magical effects, regardless of the source. The target can repeat the saving throw once every hour, ending the effect on itself on a success.

At Higher Levels. When you cast this ritual using a spell slot of 6th level or higher, increase the challenge rating or level of targets that do not gain advantage on the saving throw against this ritual by 2 for each slot above 5th. (With a 6th-level slot, creatures with a challenge rating of higher than 11, or those of at least 12th level, gain advantage on their saves. With a 9th-level slot, the challenge rating or level of the creature must be 18 or higher for it to have advantage.)

In the home of the Titans, follow the crimson path to its end and a new beginning in which you will lead your enemies to their destruction, like a lamb to the slaughter.

Site 35 - Lokil - Her Hair!

Appendix 4: DM Handout #1

Censure of Mesos

5th-level transmutation (arcane, druidic, true ritual)

The early Cult of Mesos created this potent ritual, which uses an elaborate effigy of the target to interfere with its connection to magic. Once information about an enemy magician has been acquired and the effigy created, cultists used this ritual to nullify the target's power so it could then be destroyed. Over time, a few others have managed to steal or duplicate this ritual for their own ends.

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If the target fails the saving throw, it can't use spells or magical abilities for the duration. In addition, it loses its attunement to all magic items, and it also loses any advantage it might have on saving throws against spells or magical effects, regardless of the source. The target can repeat the saving throw once every hour, ending the effect on itself on a success.

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The following alterations are made to the true ritual when it is performed at the end of the Twisted Path:

Duration: Increases to 30 days

The first saving throw is only allowed after the ritual has been in effect for 15 days, and then the target is allowed an additional saving throw once every 24 hours thereafter. The target does not gain advantage on its saving throws regardless of the level at which the ritual was cast.

The end of the Twisted Path is a place of power for arcane true rituals. Any arcane true ritual cast within the site requires a spell slot one level lower than it normally does, or the true ritual can be cast at one level higher than it is without additional expenditure.

Appendix 4: DM Handout #2

Site 35 Effects:

Colors Out of Space and Time

Around Site 35 are various curtains of luminous hues. Moving into one of these colors for the first time on a turn has several possible effects. A creature that does so must make a DC 10 Wisdom saving throw. On a success, the creature can teleport up to 30 feet to an unoccupied space it can see. If the save succeeds by 5 or more, the creature slips out of phase with time and can take another full turn's worth of activity. On a failure, the creature takes 8d6 psychic damage. If the failure is by 5 or more, the creature is also frozen in time, effectively paralyzed until the start of its next turn while everything else seems to speed up.

Flying Aberrant Swarms

Some of the site's bizarre airborne creatures have grown from their minuscule stature into swarms of tiny tentacled beasts that roam the mines. Each swarm has the statistics of a Swarm of Insects, but deals acid damage. The tiny monsters attack any creatures that are not aberrations or constructs, or those that do not have Site 35's infection.

Site 35 Infection

At the heart of Site 35 are chambers wherein sundered crystal tubes stretch in non-Euclidean patterns. Any creature that spends at least 1 minute near these broken tubes must make a DC 15 Intelligence saving throw. On a failure, the creature is affected as if by the confusion spell. Unless it can act normally, the creature can't understand language or communicate in any intelligible way. At the end of each of its turns, an affected creature can make a DC 15 Charisma saving throw. Once the creature succeeds on two such saves, this effect ends for it.

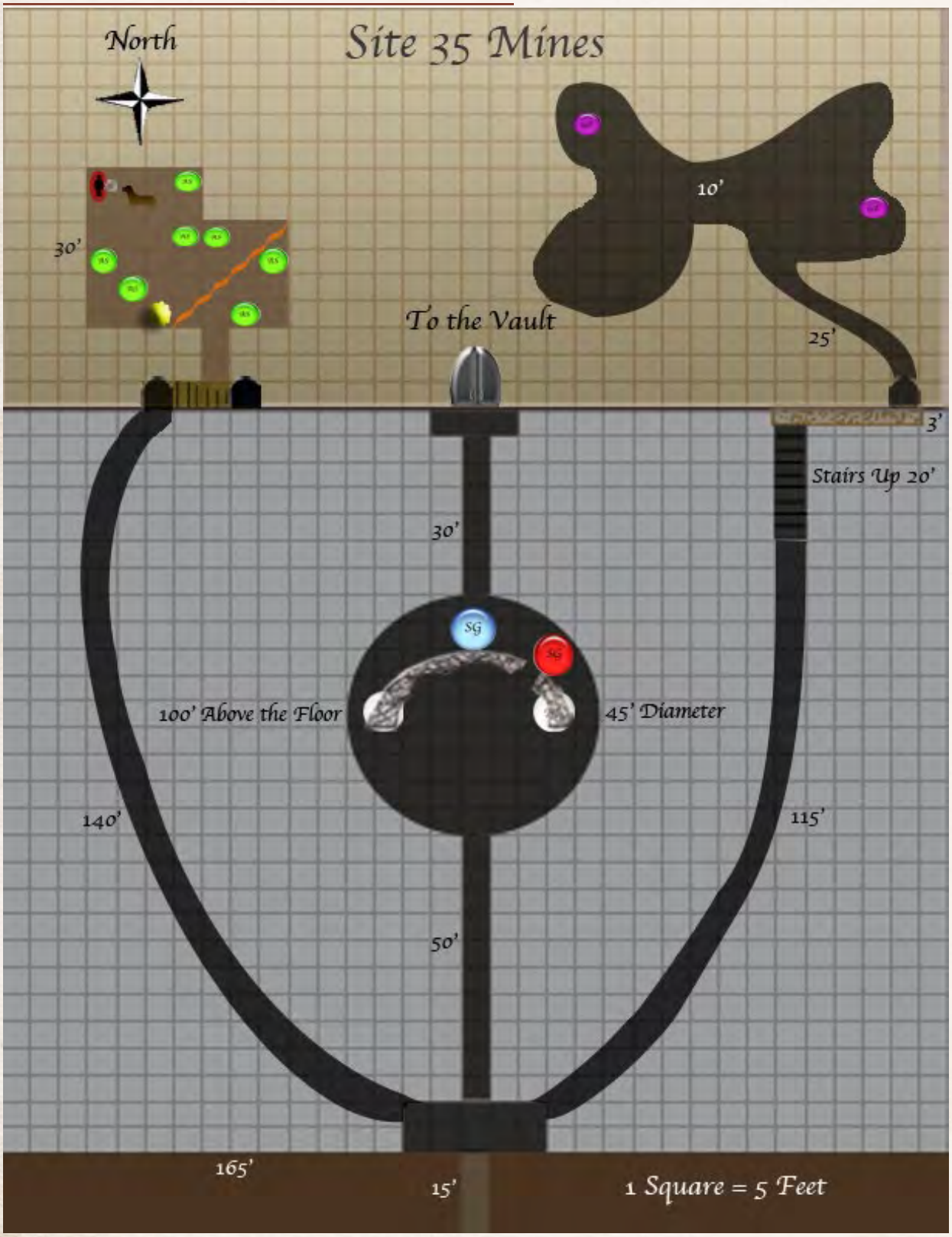
If a creature fails to end the effect before 1 minute has passed, the saving throw can then be repeated only once every 30 days. At this point, one successful save cures the effect. However, if a saving throw ever fails by 5 or more, the effect becomes permanent. A greater restoration spell can end this effect at any stage.

What Dreams May Come

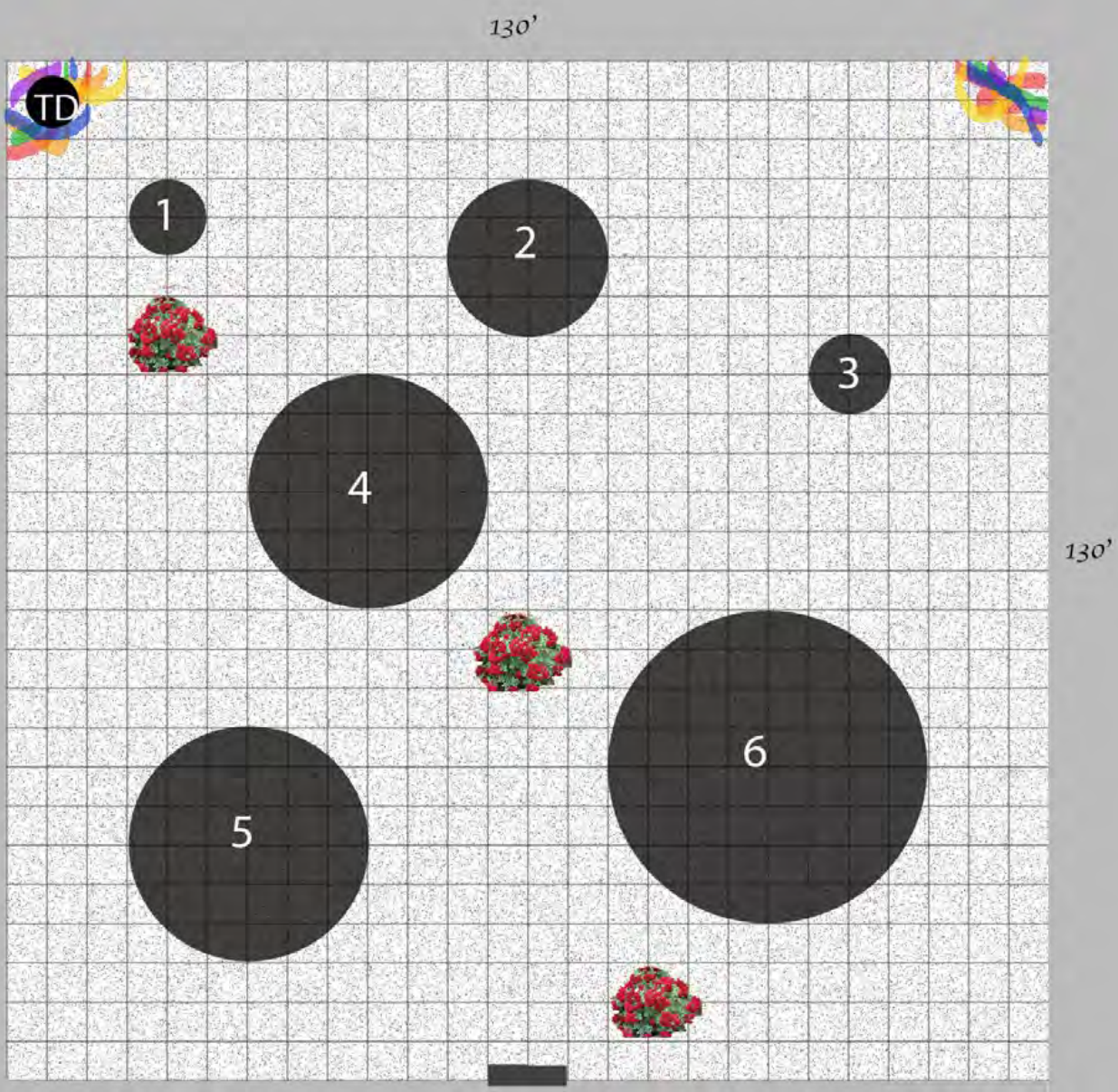
If a sentient creature falls asleep at Site 35, any dreams the creature has might be made manifest. Threats birthed in this way are not illusory, but very real within the site. However, nothing a dream creates within Site 35 can leave the place's boundaries.

Appendix 5: Maps

Site 35 Mines



Site 35 Vault

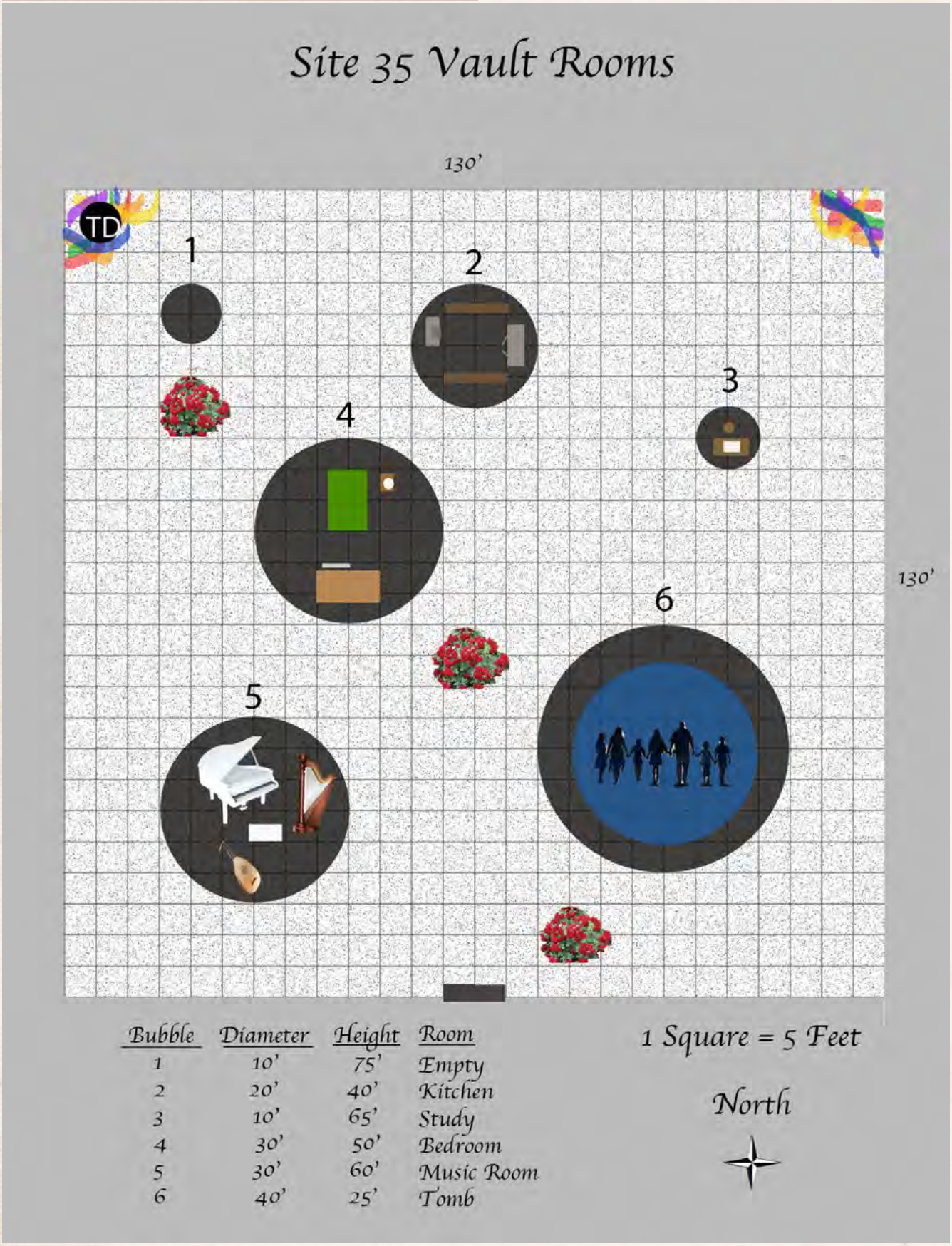


Bubble	Diameter	Height
1	10'	75'
2	20'	40'
3	10'	65'
4	30'	50'
5	30'	60'
6	40'	25'

1 Square = 5 Feet

North

Site 35 Rooms

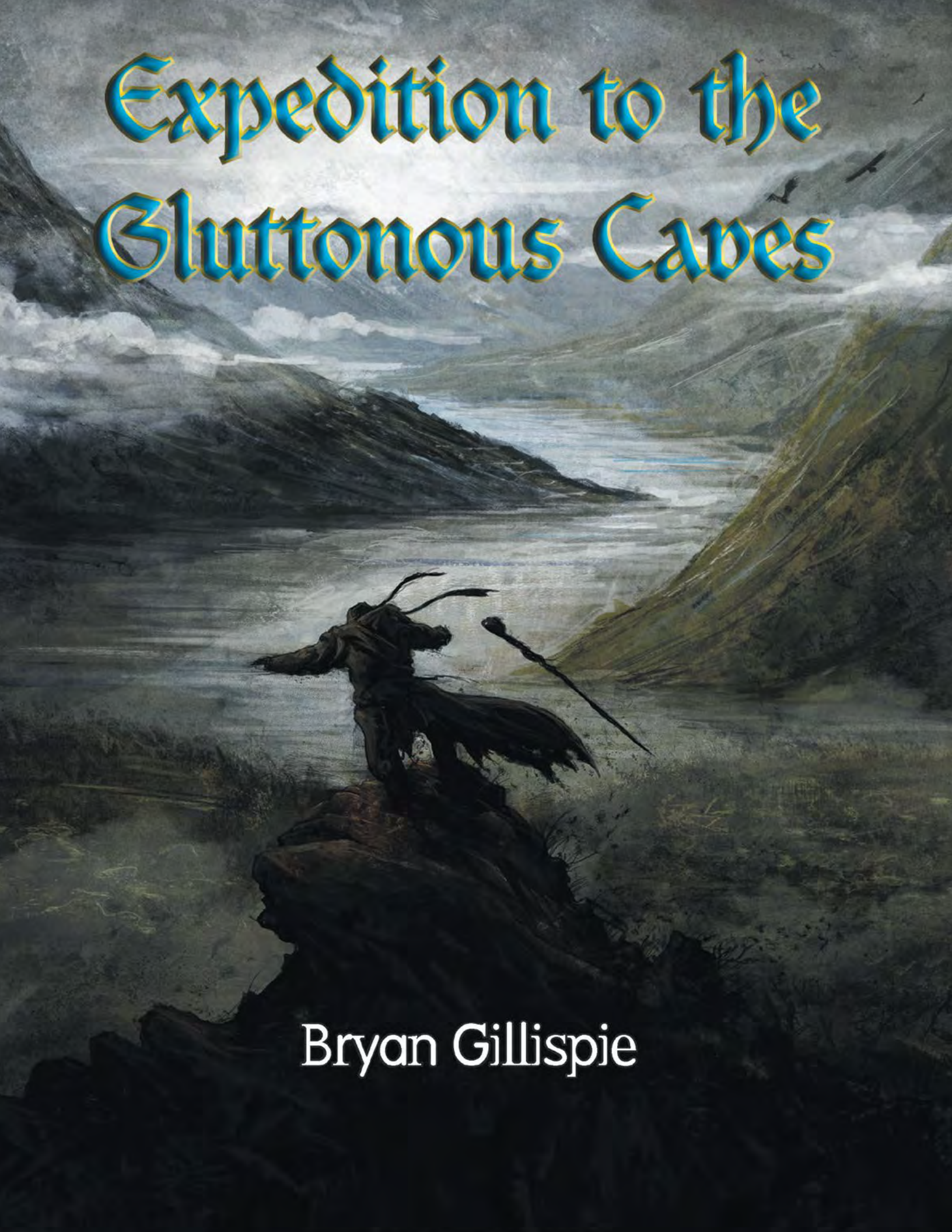


Bubble	Diameter	Height	Room
1	10'	75'	Empty
2	20'	40'	Kitchen
3	10'	65'	Study
4	30'	50'	Bedroom
5	30'	60'	Music Room
6	40'	25'	Tomb

Ritual Site

1 Square = 5 Feet
North
Ritual Site
Geyser
Geyser
55'
140'
Mud Pot
190'
Mud Pot

Expedition to the Gluttonous Caves



Bryan Gillispie

INTRODUCTION

Expedition to the Gluttonous Caves is designed for four to six Tier 3 characters, it is optimized for an average party of level 12. Guidelines are included in each encounter for modifying the difficulty based on the groups average party level (APL). This adventure is set in the Titanshome mountains where the adventurers will need to find an alternate entrance to the Gluttonous Caves to claim an artifact that Maghiel can use to increase the effectiveness of the ritual that she is performing to obtain godhood.

SYNOPSIS

The adventurers have learned that minions of the Maghiel are seeking an artifact that will help increase the power of Maghiel's ritual. The adventurers are tasked with retrieving the artifact by whatever means they can and return it to Dremen, a member of the Academy of Magic and Engineering that the adventurers have met before. Dremen believes they are headed to a lesser known entrance to the caves in the peaks of the Titanshome mountains to the East. Those seeking the artifact have just left but are estimated to be 3 - 4 days away. The adventurers are about 3 days hard travel from the entrance to the Gluttonous Caves. To retrieve the artifact, they will need to brave the harsh environment to arrive in time, fight or negotiate with those that have the artifact, and deal with Maghiel's agents.

BACKGROUND

The adventure takes place in the Titanshome mountains a hostile place covered in old forests, sheer cliffs, deep ravines, and foul monsters. Rumors of strange events happening in the mountains flow from town to town. Titanshome is also rumored to be home to several places of power long forgotten where the bound power of titans resides. There is a particular place of power where the adventuring party will find themselves, the Gluttonous Caves. The Gluttonous Caves are rumored to be an entrance to the very root of Titanshome. Only the most adventurous or foolhardy have entered the caves, even fewer have returned to tell the tale.

Ongoing Effects

Censure of Mesos

One of the adventurers may be under the effects of the *Censure of Mesos* ritual, if the ritual rebounded on them in **The Queen's Gambit** adventure. The effect will last until a successful saving throw is made or 30 days, whichever comes first. The first saving throw may be attempted 15 days after failing the ritual, if that saving throw fails, then they may make a new saving throw every 24 hours until the effect ends, or the saving throw is successful. The adventurer that is affected loses attunement to all magic items and loses abilities, effects, or features that grant advantage against spells or magical effects.

Mesos' Bane

The effect of the Mesos' Bane is spreading across the land. The following is in effect for the duration of the adventure. Anyone who casts an arcane spell using a bard, sorcerer, warlock, or wizard spell slot must roll 1d6 and consult the following chart.

Game Master: This is your adventure too!

You should feel free to sprinkle in random encounters as the adventurers make their way to the destination. See **Appendix: Random Encounters & Discoveries** for a selected list of random encounters or create your own! If you add your own encounters the idea is to challenge the players and possibly make the final encounter harder but not prevent them from completing the mission outright.

Mesos' Bane Effects

D6	RESULT
1	**Bane of Heat**: You generate heat when you cast an arcane spell. You must make a Constitution saving throw against your own spell save DC or suffer 1 point of fire damage. For 2 rounds per level of the spell you cast (one round for a cantrip), you have advantage on saving throws against cold spells or effects, as well as resistance to cold damage. However, due to your discomfort, you also have disadvantage on Strength and Dexterity checks during that time.
2	**Bane of Luminance:** You generate light when you cast an arcane spell. You must make a Constitution saving throw against your own spell save DC or suffer 1 point of radiant damage. For 2 rounds per level of the spell you cast (one round for a cantrip), your body sheds bright light in a 20-foot radius and dim light for another 20 feet. During this time, you have disadvantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks (and the light might make some such checks impossible).
3	**Bane of Lightning:** You generate an aura of lightning when you cast an arcane spell. You must make a Constitution saving throw against your own spell save DC or suffer 1 point of lightning damage. For 2 rounds per level of the spell you cast (one round for a cantrip), you have advantage on saving throws against lightning effects, and you also have resistance to lightning damage. However, during the same period, you also have disadvantage on Strength and Constitution checks.
4	**Bane of the Mind:** You generate an aura of psychic dissonance when you cast an arcane spell. You must make a Constitution saving throw against your own spell save DC or suffer 1 point of psychic damage. For 2 rounds per level of the spell you cast (one round for a cantrip), you have advantage on saving throws against psychic effects, and you also have resistance to psychic damage. However, during the same period, you also have disadvantage on Intelligence and Wisdom checks.
5-6	**No effect.** Mesos' Bane does not flare up for you any more than normal.

CHAPTER ONE

As the magic of the Censure of Mesos fades, you take stock of your surroundings. You notice a cloaked figure at the edge of a row of alpine trees beckoning cautiously at you.

The cloaked figure is **Dremen** from the Academy of Magic and Engineering. He brings information for the adventurers about a nearby artifact that Maghiel is seeking out.

Dremen knows the following information:

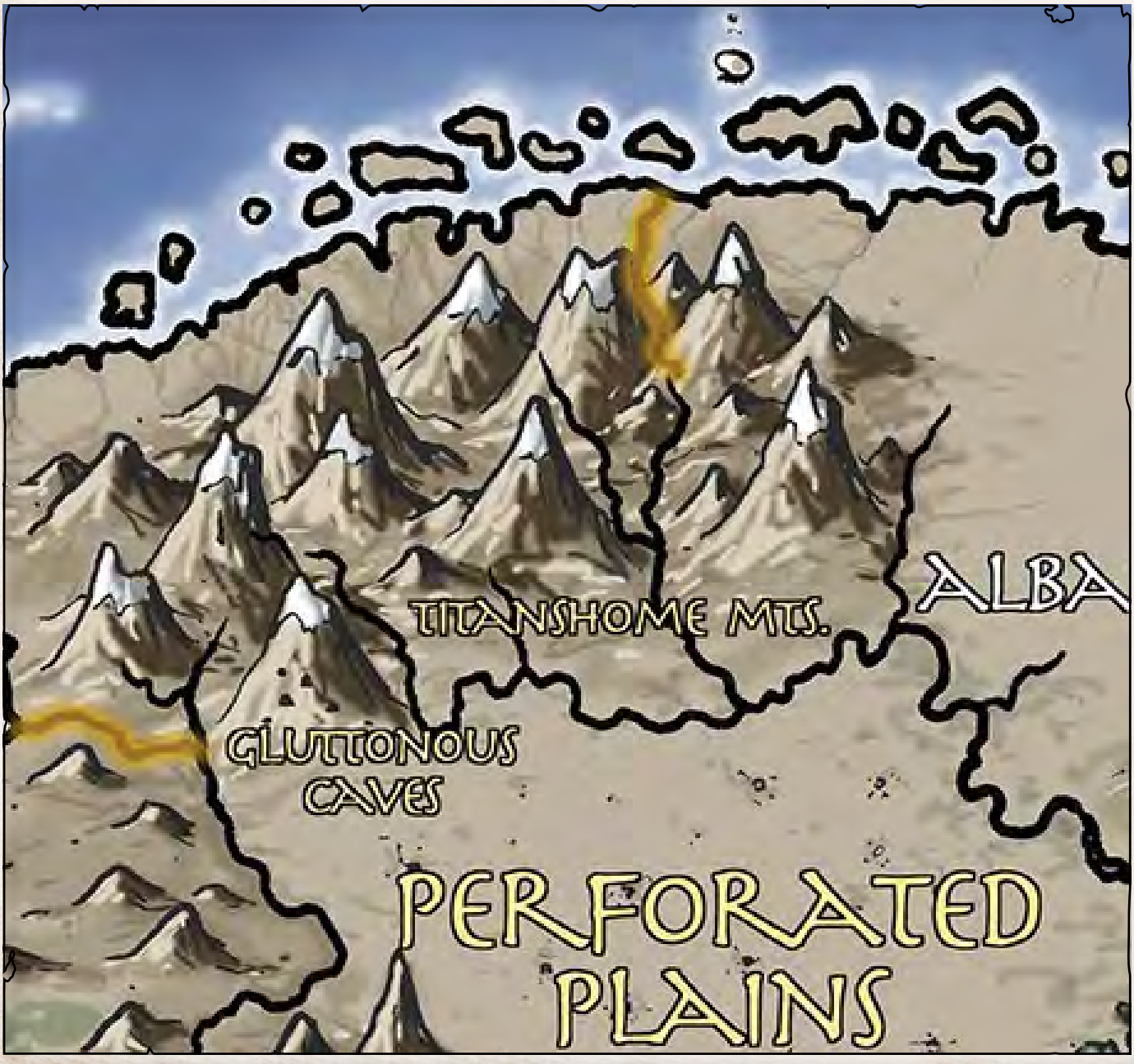
- The artifact is something old and possibly divinely created, he believes it is in the shape of large golden medallion.
- He thinks it can be used as a material component in the ritual Maghiel is trying to perform to increase the potency of the magic
- A contingent of Maghiel's most loyal agents are on the way to locate the artifact, they are about 3 days away. They will be setting off from their rest in 6 - 8 hours*.
- The adventurers are only 3 days away of hard travel but must cross the rugged mountains and trek into the peaks of a one of the ranges
- Scrying has revealed that the artifact is near a lesser known entrance to the Gluttonous Caves
- Obtaining the artifact at all costs is the objective
- Notify him by way of a sending stone (he will give them the stone now) and he will meet them 5 miles north of Artemisia, a town to the south.
- The Gluttonous Caves aren't known for allowing people to leave, many have gone mad trying to trek through them
- He believes since the entrance is far from the center of the caves that the effect on them will be lessened

*this estimate is meant to put pressure on the group, not to add variability to the final time limit. The group may safely take a long rest at this point in time.

Dremen gives them a hand drawn map with the general most direct route. Any other route will take them 4 days to complete the journey. He also gives them a sending stone to use once they have the artifact safe. The sending stone will also glow blue when the artifact is nearby (the closer the more intense the color).

Dremen will bid them a good journey after answering what he can and simply fade away with a wave of his hand.

Once Dremen leaves, the group will have 8 hours to prepare and to rest. The adventurers have 72 – 80 hours to beat the other group to the caves to retrieve the artifact. Keep in mind that the adventurers are free to choose any route they want or use any tactics that might lead them to victory; they don't necessarily need to enter the Gluttonous Caves. Award creativity!



CHAPTER TWO

If the adventurers elected to not take a long rest and start travelling immediately then they have 80 hours to complete their travel to the caves, otherwise they have 72 hours to arrive before Maghiel's agents. There are many hardships between them and the Gluttonous Caves and they may have to do a forced march to get there before their adversaries.

SYNOPSIS OF TRAVEL

Phase 1: This will be the easiest phase that takes them across some of the highest peaks in Titanshome.

Phase 2: This is the hardest day; travel will be across difficult terrain that will slow their progress. During this phase reduce the daily movement rate by half for each of the pacing options.

Phase 3: Will be less hazardous, only call for one navigation check, at the end of the phase they will be at the entrance of the caves.

TRAVEL PROCEDURE

- The players should choose a navigator.
- Once in the morning and then again about midway through the day the navigator makes a **DC 18 Wisdom (Survival)** check, on a success major hazards are avoided. On a failure the adventurers run into a hazard. You determine the hazard by rolling on the chart below.
- When the party camps for the night determine how many hours have passed, including short and long rests, along with how far they have travelled.
- Once the adventurers travel 24 miles, they enter the next phase of the expedition.
- Use the optional random encounters chart in **Appendix: Random Encounters & Discoveries** to provide additional challenges or discoveries. Frequency guidelines for these optional encounters are below.

GM Tip: Have the players state their actions for the trip and work that into a narrative, including discovering any hazards along the way. This will help keep the players engaged.

Encountering hazards and certain random encounters can increase the time spent travelling. All of this time counts against the deadline. Most hazards will add time to the travel even if they successfully overcome the hazard. This is because finding a hazard is a penalty for failing the navigation check to avoid hazard.

For example, if the group fails their morning navigation check then they will find a hazard. You have decided they found the hazard 2 hours into their journey. At this point they would have travelled about 6 miles at a normal pace. Let's says the hazard result was a minor cliff. If the party fails the ability check to overcome this hazard then they have lost 2 hours of time dealing with the hazard. Traveling the remaining 18 miles to complete this phase of the expedition will now take 6 hours at a normal pace. The group may adjust their travel pace at any time. The group may also elect to perform a forced march to make up any time lost, any penalties accrued by the forced march are cumulative with outcomes of any hazards or from travelling at a high altitude.

Travel Pace

This table shows you how many miles a group can travel in an hour at the various pace options and will also show what affect, if any, the pace has on travel.

PACE	TRAVEL PER HOUR	EFFECT
Fast	4 miles	-5 penalty to passive Wisdom (Perception) scores; +5 to random monster encounters.
Normal	3 miles	No effect
Slow	2 miles	Able to use stealth

Hazard and Encounter Notes

Optional Random Encounters

Monster Encounters Check Frequency

Use these guidelines to determine how many checks to use in each phase. Feel free to modify them based on the time you have available.

First half of the travel – 1 check

Second half of travel – 1-2 checks

Encamped – 1 check

Non-monster Encounters Frequency

Roll this check once or twice per phase.

Environmental Hazards

Travelling in the Titanshome mountains is dangerous and exhausting. If the adventurers fail to navigate the terrain, they can run into obstacles that will hinder their travel efforts.

High Elevation

Unless acclimated or have a special trait the adventurers must succeed at a DC 15, Constitution saving throw every 2 hours of active travel or after they engage in combat while travelling. On a failure your character will gain 1 level of exhaustion. The high elevation kicks in half way through Day 1 and continues until the adventurers arrive at the entrance to the Gluttonous Caves.

Cliffs

These obstacles include cliffs, ravines, and sheer walls of rock or other earthen material. They require that the adventurers conquer them through brute force or by navigating around them. Each hazard indicates the required checks to overcome them and the penalties associated with the hazard. If any individual fails a climb check by more than 5 then they fall and take the damage listed.

Minor

Crossing: Strength (Athletics) DC 12

Navigating: Intelligence (Survival) DC 12

Success: They stay on track, no additional time lost

Failure: add 2 hours to travel time

Falling distance 1d4 x10 feet

Moderate

Crossing: Strength (Athletics) DC 14

Navigating: Survival DC 14

Success: you only lose 1 hour of time

Failure: add 3 hours to travel time

Falling distance 1d6 x 10 feet

Major

Crossing: Strength (Athletics) DC 16

Navigating: Survival DC 16

Success: you only lose 2 hours of time

Failure: add 4 hours to travel time

Falling distance 1d8x10 feet

Boulders

This hazard can be natural or engineered by a crafty foe. Either way rocks come tumbling down and everyone needs to get out of the way.

Rock slide! You must succeed on a **DC 15 Dexterity saving throw** or take damage from the rock slide. A failed save takes 3d6 bludgeoning damage or take half on successful save. Anyone failing by more than 5 is buried. It will take 1 hour to dig out a single creature.

Ridge Side Ambush. A group of creatures have setup an ambush, they will drop rocks from a ridge as the group passes below. On a successful **DC 15 Dexterity saving throw** character is able to avoid the rocks. On a failed save the characters take 3d6 bludgeoning damage and must succeed at a **DC 12 Strength (Athletics)** check to avoid falling over the ridge by grabbing rocks or trees along the ridge. If the check fails, the character will fall 1d10 x10 feet. A **DC 15 Wisdom (Perception)** check will allow someone to notice the ambush right before it happens giving them time to shout a warning and give the group advantage on the Dexterity saving throw.

Avalanche!

Something set off an avalanche of snow further up the peak. The group must succeed on a **DC 15 Constitution** check to get ahead of the avalanche. If they fail their path is blocked. If they fail by more than 5, they are buried. Each person buried adds 1 hour to the time. If they try to navigate around it have the group make a **DC 15 Intelligence (Survival)** check, if they succeed, they stay on track. If they fail, they lose 1d4+1 hours.

Unexpected Inconvenience

The group is lost or comes across terrain that requires them to back track or go out of their way. To get back on track someone or the group must make a successful **DC 13 Intelligence (Survival)** check. On a failure, the group loses 1-hour time. If the check fails by more than 5, they lose 2 hours before finding their way back on course.

Hazard Table (Roll 1d20)

Roll	Outcome
1 – 4	Cliff, minor
5 – 8	Cliff, moderate
9 – 10	Cliff, major
11 – 14	Unexpected Inconvenience
15 – 16	Rock slide
17 – 18	Ridge side ambush
19 – 20	Avalanche

GM Tip

Have the group make the appropriate rolls for the hazard and then narrate the event based on what they said they were doing to avoid or overcome the obstacle.

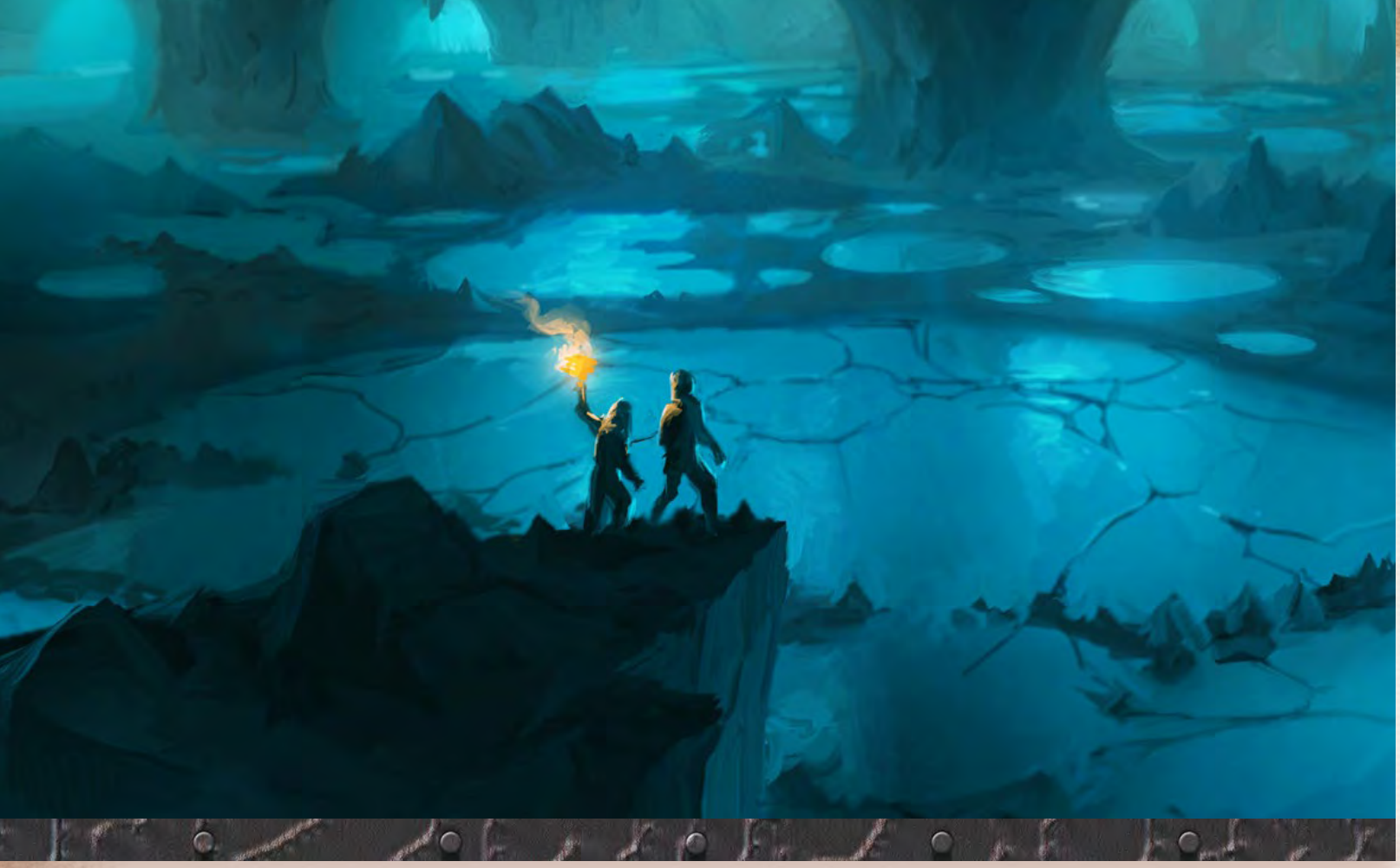
Did They Make It?

At the end of phase three add up the total amount of time it took to travel each phase, including all short or long rests. If the total is less than 72 then the group beat the agents of Maghiel to the entrance. If it was more than 72 then the group arrived after Maghiel's forces. If it took exactly 72 hours, then they have few moments before Maghiel's forces show up. If the group left for the caves immediately, they have 80 hours instead of 72.

If the adventurers have beat the necromancer's forces to the entrance, then they can regroup and plan their next action. Do they press on and find the artifact? Do they setup an ambush to neutralize the antagonists? Or do they let the enemy slip buy, get the artifact and then ambush them on the way out (assuming there is only one way in and out).

If the adventurers are late, they can catch up to the enemy or take the chance that they'll be coming back this way after finding the artifact.

Let the players be creative and reward them!



CHAPTER THREE

As the adventurers plan what to do, they encounter an environment that is extremely strange to find in the mountains. Just inside the cave entrance are blooming plants and fragrant flowers that should not bloom in the cold, much less the mountain peaks this high up. The cave seems strangely warm, almost humid. This continues on into the rest of the cavern with the flora changing to varieties that can survive the pitch-black interior of the mountain. There are even plants that glow scattered throughout the cave system. A successful **DC 12 Wisdom (Perception)** or **Intelligence (Nature)** check reveals there are strangely no signs of other creatures in the cave. A ranger, druid, or someone with a background that would allow them to be familiar the natural ebb and flow of nature have advantage on either check.

GENERAL FEATURES

Light. Completely dark except for a few plants that glow softly and provide no light of use unless something is right next to the plant.

Terrain. Somewhat easy terrain on the main path. Rocky and dangerous on the side paths.

Flora and Fauna. No fauna seems to be in the area, however, there are warm weather plants and other unusual plants that don't seem to belong in this environment.

Cave's Magical Influence

Once they enter the caves, they will need to make checks to resist the magical influence of the cave. As soon as they enter the caves and once per hour after that, the adventurers will need to succeed on a **DC 14 Charisma saving throw** to avoid the magical influence of the caves and be immune to the effect for 24 hours. On a failure, the adventurer becomes confused and will act randomly for 10 minutes as outlined below on the Confused Action chart. This is considered an enchantment effect. If the saving throw fails by 5 or more the character also gains a long-term madness. Roll a d100 and consult the long-term madness chart below. This particular cave system has a number of off-shoot trails, they either dead end, are collapsed, or branch back to the main tunnel that a confused character can get lost in. Every 24 hours spent in the cave systems increases the DC by 1. A character that is stricken by the confusion effect can be restrained or led by other characters, but this will take time and slow down the party's progress.

Confusion

How Maghiel's agents are affected by the confusion is a tool you can use to increase dramatic tension. If you want to apply more pressure to the adventurers, then have the agents not be affected or only slightly slowed by the effects. If you want to give the adventurers more breathing room have the agents more significantly slowed. If you have time and want to increase verisimilitude, then have the agents make saves as the adventurers have to do.

Ominous Tidings

About 30 minutes into the cave system the adventurers will start to notice that something isn't quite right. They are within 3 miles of the **Gloom Womb** and regional affects from the Gloom Womb's presence start to be felt. Shadows are deeper and darker, areas of dim light grant advantage on **Dexterity (Stealth)** checks. Non-magical flames are extinguished and cannot be relit. Magical light sources or spells of lower than 3rd level product light of one category less. Bright light is reduced to dim light, and dim light becomes darkness.

The light from the sending stone will shed dim light for 10 feet once it is in range of the artifact. As it gets closer to the artifact it emits the same categories of light that a torch would emit.

Confused Actions

D20	RESULT
1 – 5	Can act normally but extremely paranoid while in the caves, they have disadvantage on ability checks and attacks.
6 – 10	Runs screaming in a random direction as fast as they can and will attempt to evade pursuit.
11 – 15	Goes berserk and thinks everything around them is trying to kill them. Randomly attacks someone within 10 feet of them. Otherwise take a hostile stance towards anyone coming nearer to them.
16 – 18	Becomes paralyzed with fear and gains the Paralyzed condition.
19 – 20	Cries uncontrollably and refuses to leave the area.

After two hours of travel the tunnel takes a turn to the right and the left. The pendant starts to glow faintly blue if they turn down the path to the right. If the adventurers take the path to the left then after 30 minutes, they find a dead end because this section of the cavern has collapsed, barring the way through. Travelling down the path to the right the party will see a group of elves standing guard, blocking further progress in traveling down the tunnel. The pendent glows more intensely if they move closer to the elves.

If the adventurers approach the elves, they will become alerted but not hostile. These humanoids are clones that were created by the Gloom Womb that has taken up residence in this tunnel. They will appear to be cautious and are willing to negotiate access with the group. Ultimately, they want to bring the group back to their master so she can clone them too. They will fight if attacked with one blowing a horn to warn the main brood. After 5 rounds of combat, 5 more drendali guards will appear from deeper in the cave to fight the group. If the adventurers defeat both waves, then they will only have one option when encountering the Gloom Womb since the forces deeper in the cave will attack the party as soon as they enter the chamber.

If the adventurers didn't beat Maghiel's agents to the cave or chose to let them pass and follow them in, then Maghiel's agents will negotiate with the clones to gain an audience with their master.

When the adventurers enter the tunnels, they travel ½ mile down a carved-out path, laden with lush under dark vegetation. The path opens up into a giant underground cave that looks to be carved into coliseum style audience chamber.

A grand chamber stretches out before you, the chamber is a least 100 feet across. 50 feet from you is a huge gluttonous creature looking down on you from a rocky ledge that is 30 feet in the air. Standing next to the creature is a hooded figure in red robes. A mix of elves and dwarves also stare at you from across the chamber.

The gluttonous creature is a **Gloom Womb** that has been corrupted by the Gluttonous Caves after establishing her lair here. A successful **DC 18 Intelligence (Arcana)** or **Intelligence (History)** will indicate to the character what this creature is and that they can clone people.

The creature next to the Gloom Womb is her trusted protector and clone, **Chissen**. The other creatures are all clones that were created by the Gloom Womb. All of them are fiercely loyal to the Womb.

There are 4 drendali **guards** and 10 **Kelder berserkers** on the chamber floor.

Gloom Womb

There are a couple of ways the adventurers can obtain the artifact they are seeking. They can Negotiate with the Gloom Womb or attack the Gloom Womb and her encampment.

Negotiations

The Gloom Womb knows where the artifact is and will tell the group for a price (at least half of the party must pay the price). The price being a piece of them, be it a bit of blood, a lock of hair, a fingernail, etc. If both Maghiel's forces and the adventurers end up in front of her, she will take the best offer and beset her minions on the other group. She will be vague about why she wants the offering and about what will happen. She reassures them that they won't miss the offering and it won't have any effect on them beyond this pact. To dodge questions about why she wants an offering she'll say things like, "Your hardiness will help bolster my children", or, "This small piece of vitality you offer will help me and my children, you won't even miss it". If negotiations are successful, then the Womb will instruct her clones to bring a steel box and place it on the chamber floor. The box will contain the artifact and a circlet. At least half of the group needs to make an offering to be successful.

Fight it Out

The Gloom Womb feels confident while her clones are around but if they are destroyed or chased off, she will try to end the fight with a negotiation that allows her to live. If the fighting doesn't stop, she is also not above leaving her clones to fend off the group and make an escape through teleportation. Her clones will defend her to the death and will assist in her escape, however possible.

Long-Term Madness

D100	Effect (Lasts 1d10 × 10 hours)
01–10	The character feels compelled to repeat a specific activity over and over, such as washing hands, touching things, praying, or counting coins.
11–20	The character experiences vivid hallucinations and has disadvantage on Ability Checks.
21–30	The character suffers extreme paranoia. The character has disadvantage on Wisdom and Charisma Checks.
31–40	The character regards something (usually the source of madness) with intense revulsion, as if affected by the antipathy effect of the Antipathy/Sympathy spell.
41–45	The character experiences a powerful delusion. Choose a potion. The character imagines that he or she is under its Effects.
46–55	The character becomes attached to a "lucky charm," such as a person or an object, and has disadvantage on Attack rolls, Ability Checks, and Saving Throws while more than 30 feet from it.
56–65	The character is Blinded (25%) or Deafened (75%).
66–75	The character experiences uncontrollable tremors or tics, which impose disadvantage on Attack rolls, Ability Checks, and Saving Throws that involve Strength or Dexterity.
76–85	The character suffers from partial amnesia. The character knows who they are and retains Racial Traits and Class Features, but doesn't recognize other people or remember anything that happened before the madness took effect.
86–90	Whenever the character takes damage, they must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or be affected as though they failed a saving throw against the Confusion spell. The Confusion effect lasts for 1 minute.
91–95	The character loses the ability to speak.
96–100	The character falls Unconscious. No amount of jostling or damage can wake the character.

The artifact is in a side tunnel off the main audience chamber and is in a steel box after searching the area but will likely take 1d4 hours to find.

Gloom Womb Tactics

The Gloom Womb and Chissen will hold off immediately engaging. If attacked they will move to a defensive position and use their defensive magic and the Womb will use her lair actions. Once half of the Womb's clones on the chamber floor have been defeated, Chissen will fully engage along with the Gloom Womb.

Very Weak party – There are only 4 Kelder berserkers and the Gloom Womb doesn't use lair actions.

Weak party – Remove the drendali guards.

Strong party – Add 1 more drendali guard and the Gloom Womb and Chissen will engage in combat as soon as hostilities break out.

Very Strong party – Give each creature 20% more hit points.

If the adventurers are defeated, they are left unconscious for the Gloom Womb to devour. This is an excellent opportunity to extend the encounter to give the adventurers a chance to escape from the Gloom Womb.

Conclusion

If Maghiel's agents recover the artifact, then it will be used in The Fall of Durgan's Rest to make Maghiel's ritual in that adventure more powerful.

If the adventurers recover the artifact, then Dremen will meet them near Artemisia. Once at the meeting spot 5 miles north of Artemisia. Dremen will inform them that something isn't right in the town and he believes Maghiel's forces are working evil magic nearby. Dremen will let them keep the circlet as payment for their services.

GM Option: If you wanted to add in your own side adventure this would be the opportunity for it. You could give the Necromancer's agents the opportunity to ambush the players on the way to deliver the artifact.

Rewards

Found on the Clones

The clones will have standard quality weapons and armor as listed on their stat blocks

Found on the Necromancer's Agents

Maghiel's agents will have 1d10 x 10 gold pieces on them as well as the standard quality weapons and armor indicated on their stat block as well as traveling clothes and other necessary items suited for extended travel on the road.

Milestone

Regardless if the players recovered the artifact, they have overcome environmental challenges and learned important information that allows them to better engage with Maghiel's plans. Award them a milestone to the next level.

Appendix: Random Encounters & Discoveries

These charts are used to determine random encounters or discoveries.

Random Monster Encounters*

If the party is travelling at a fast pace or are particularly noisy in their actions or combat, then feel free to roll the results with a +5 modifier. Otherwise, roll a 1d20 for the results of the check. Details of the encounter can be found below the chart. You can present them as written or weave them into the narrative based on your specific group's situation.

Below are the suggested monsters, feel free to make the adventure your own and add your own ideas. Some of the entries have a monster in parenthesis, these monsters are from the Scarred Lands Players Guide for 5e and you can really charge the encounter with a Scarred Lands flavor. Just directly substitute the creature in parentheses in the encounter.

D20	RESULT
1 – 4	No Encounter
5 – 6	Owlbears (Blade Beasts)
7 – 8	Phase Spiders
9 – 10	Winter Wolves (Carrion Hounds)
11 – 12	Wights
13	Bulette Pod (Vengaurak Pod)
14	Earth Elemental
15 – 16	Hill Giants
17	Cloud Giant
18	Storm Giant
20	Adult White Dragon (Icewrack Dragon) (recommended only 1 time)

*All of these monsters can be found in the 5e SRD, the variant in parenthesis are from the **Scarred Lands Player's Guide (5e)**

Owlbears (Blade Beasts)

An owlbear hunting party is hiding along the trail. There are 2 owlbears per party member.

Phase Spiders

The adventurers come upon a nest of Phase Spiders feasting upon a dead bear. Unless they are stealthy the phase spiders will notice them and attack. There are 2 phase spiders per party member.

Winter Wolves (Carrion Hounds)

A roving pack of winter wolves have picked up the adventurer's scent and will attempt to ambush them using stealth. There are 2 winter wolves per party member.

Wights

The Titanshome mountains are packed with strange creatures. Sometimes, not even the dead make it out. A band of wights will try to waylay the adventurers along their trail. There are 2 wights per party member.

Bulette Pod (Vengaurak Pod)

Bulettes love the mountains and will attack just for the sport of it. A pod of Bulettes will attack and toy with the party. There are 1 bulette per party member.

Earth Elemental

At times, the Titanshome mountains seem alive and vindictive. As the adventurers pass through particularly rocky terrain a group of earth elementals will attack from all sides. There is one earth elemental per party member.

Hill Giant

Right along the path the party takes, there is an encampment of hill giants. The party could sneak around them but would lose an hour. There is one hill giant per party member.

Cloud Giant

Cloud giants frequent the Titanshome mountains to find food, ancient artifacts, and adventurers. This set of cloud giants are running down the side of the mountain when the adventurers notice them. They have one round before the giants are on top of them. The giants don't seem to have noticed the party yet. There is 1 giant per 2 party members (rounding down).

Storm Giant

As the adventurers round a blind turn on their trail they see two rocky spires jutting up from the earth 20 feet from them. On top of the spires is a storm giant hurling lighting into the sky, as they take stock of him, he looks down upon them, his lips turning up into a silent challenge. There is 1 storm giant. If there are more than 4 characters add an additional 50 hit points per character beyond 4. If there is less than 4 characters cut the average hit points in half.

Adult White Dragon (Icewrack Dragon)

The Titanshome mountains are a favored roosting area for dragons, especially white dragons in the higher peaks. The adventurers encounter this dragon while it is out hunting far from its lair. It will attack them as soon as it sees them. There is 1 adult white dragon. If there is more than 4 party members then add an additional 50 hit points per character beyond 4. If there is less than 4 characters cut the average hit points in half.

Random Discoveries

If the party is travelling at a fast pace or their actions would make them particular unobservant then feel free to roll the results with a -5 modifier. Otherwise, roll a 1d20 for the results of the check. Details of the discovery can be found in the below chart. You can present them as written or weave them into the narrative based on your specific group's situation.

D20	RESULT
1 – 5	No Discovery
6 – 10	Dead Adventurers
11 – 15	Supplies and Tools
16 – 20	Treasure

Dead Adventurers

The adventurers find dead bodies of those that have come before them. Roll 1d4 to determine the specific find.

D20	RESULT
1	The adventurers have come across an old rockslide, they see a skeletal hand extending out from a pile of rocks that have slid to partially expose the body. The body has a pouch with 1d20X5 gold pieces and 1d4 gemstones that are worth 10 gp each.
2	The desiccated bodies of a group of elves. They look to have died from exposure to the elements in the past 1d4 days. The adventurers find 1d10 silvered arrows, 1 pouch of rations, 1 healers kit, 4 daggers.
3	Tucked inside a rocky alcove near the trail the adventurers find what appears to be four dwarves partially wrapped in a spider's web. The parts you can see seem to have had their moisture drained and the skin is sunken in around the joints and eyes. They each have an explorer's pack and a fist sized nugget of gold worth 50 gp each.
4	On a ledge just below the adventurers, they see an Asaatthi that appears to have been frozen solid. The surrounding area is covered in thick ice crystals that don't seem to have been formed by the weather. They find two silvered daggers on the body and 1 explorer's pack.

SUPPLIES AND TOOLS

The mountains are home to explorers, adventurers, miners, and ruffians. Sometimes they hide things for later use. Roll 1d6 to determine the type of stash found.

D6	RESULT
1	The adventurers find a set of tracks that lead to a shallow cave. They find crates with 1d4 sets of winter clothing, navigators' tools, and 1 barrel of wine.
2	A small, one room structure appears at the top of an incline that lies beside the path the adventurers are taking. In the structure they find a 30-day supply of rations, and 4 climbers kits.
3	Crossing a shallow fissure the adventures catch sight of a crate at the bottom. The crate contains 40 arrows and 6 long swords.
4	The adventurers spot a makeshift shelter as they travel. This shelter has 4 2-person tents, 6 folding stools, and a bundle of firewood.
5	The adventurers find a bag along their path that contains a compass, a magnifying glass, and a folded-up map for a range of mountains far to the north. In big letters are the words DRAGON written between their current location and the mountain range to the north.
6	As the adventurers come to a level spot to rest or get their bearings, they notice a camouflaged alcove nestled among the rocky terrain of the mountain. They find a backpack that contains 2d4 potions of greater healing.

TREASURE

Even in the mountains you can find a treasure where you least expect it. Roll 1d6 to determine what treasures the adventurers have found.

D6	RESULT
1	The adventurers find a camping spot that seems to get semi-frequent use. Nearby they find a pouch that appears to have been torn off when someone passed too close to a thorny thicket. Inside the pouch they find 100 gp and a platinum ring (50gp) that has the symbol of Corean on it.
2	The party spots what appears to be a dwarf sitting next to a tree. There is an open potion bottle in his hand and a green fluid mixed with foam coming from his mouth. There is an acrid smell in the air. He appears have been dead for a few hours. Next to him are three more potion bottles that are unopened. All of them are marked in a script that indicates that they are healing potions. In reality these are potions of poison.
3	As the adventurers stop to camp, they find a rotting backpack. Inside they will find a 2 spell scrolls with 1 3rd-level spell each and a potion of cold resistance.
4	They find in a small opening in the rocky terrain 2 jars of restorative ointment.
5	Embedded in a dead animal they find a dagger with an emerald pommel (25 gp).
6	A dead adventurer that has been partially eaten by local creatures. Near the body is a +1 short sword.

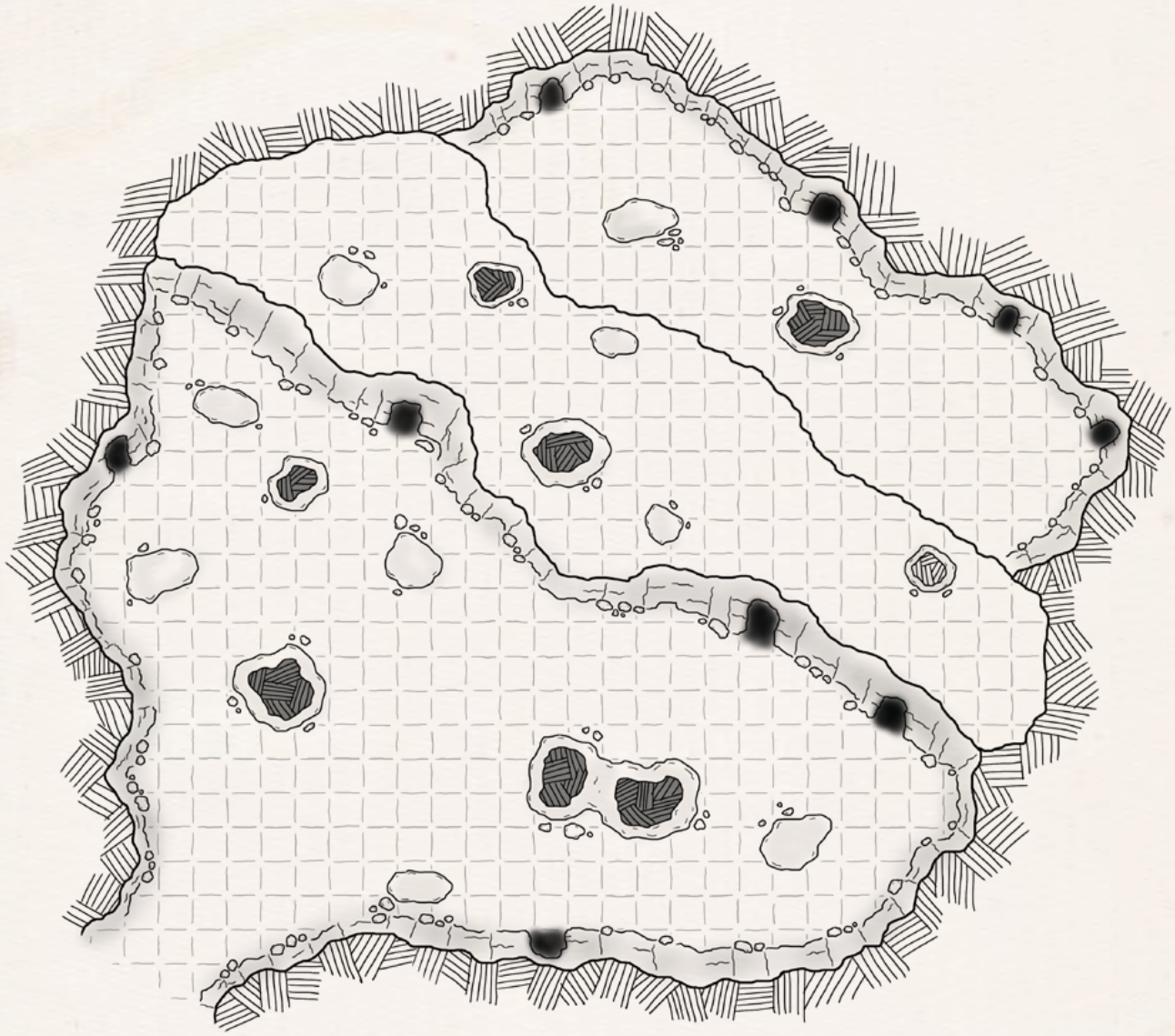
Appendix: Magic Items

Circlet of Blasting

Wondrous Item, uncommon

While wearing this circlet, you can use an action to cast the Scorching Ray spell with it. When you make the spell's attacks, you do so with an Attack Bonus of +5. The circlet can't be used this way again until the next dawn.

Map: Audience Chamber



The Temple of Madriel

Elise Cretel

INTRODUCTION

The night sky glows in a heavy orange as ash rains down on the small town of Artemisia. The heat of the day lingers and only the ale of the local tavern seems to distract from the intolerable heat and the acrid smell of burning rubble. Rumors quickly fill the town of angry gods, mad sorceresses, and hidden death cultists in the woods. Some have fled the city while local adventurers plot their next move after a great explosion ripped through the town walls only hours ago.

BACKGROUND

As the adventurers approach Artemisia, they see horrific destruction before them, confirming the suspicions conveyed by Dremen at the end of *Expedition to the Gluttonous Caves*. Maghiel's cultist spies have staked out the town of Artemisia and are posing as adventurers passing through. They spent weeks scouting the temple and the priestesses' activities until they could slip into the altar room when the sky was moonless. They practiced their ritual and deemed it a flawless endeavor. During the unholy day of Mesos, they commenced the ritual at the Madriel's altar with confidence. An awakened avatar of Madriel rose from the grounds and unleashed the arcane energies of the universe to destroy the ritual. Only a few of the cultists escaped with their lives. Maghiel slipped away, unnoticed, with a single option remaining to gain the power she seeks.

Town of Artemisia

Small town, neutral good

A small town with farmers, craftsmen, and a small market. Artists and writers have also made this their home in the quiet outskirts of the town walls. Adventurers frequently pass through on their way to share news and to stock up for their next journey. Artemisia is home to several small temples and the prominent Temple of Madriel. Sculptures of deities and regional history can be seen throughout the area.

The Tipsy Horse Tavern

The busiest place in the evening. Local adventurers and farmers come in to share the latest small town gossip. Centaur guards stand watch at the tavern entrances as the local barkeeps serve wine, ale, and bread to the boisterous patrons. Antheia and Durga have maps of the burning temple's layout spread across ale stained tables as they discuss with the locals who could have possibly caused this level of destruction and flee unnoticed.

Temple of Madriel

A prominent landmark on a hill right outside of the town which is run by a small cloister of local priestesses. Great stone towers rise into the sky as cracks reach into the earth. Far travelers occasionally visit, but it is mostly a quiet place. Many of the local towns people visit the more modern temples in the area. The temple is well known for its extensive libraries, small gardens, and peacocks that roam the premises.

Cabin of Eos

A large lodge that houses the apartments of the priestesses of Madriel. The cabin has a kitchen, large dining area, and a front room with seating and a fireplace. The cabin is about a thirty minute walk from the temple.

Antheia

A local adventurer who commonly helps hunt and provides protection to the local villagers. She is an adept ranger who has studied the druidic arts. She has assisted and befriended the Madriel priestesses by bringing them food and firewood during the harsh winters to their cabin not far from the temple. She is deeply concerned about the well-being of the peaceful priestesses and is determined to investigate the incident.

Durga

A seasoned barbarian who is the leader of the town's guard and Antheia's best friend. She is a veteran of past wars and wears plated armor with a lion and tiger emblem. She is not afraid to jump into battle, especially during times of injustice.

Lady Helena

Lady Helena is an elf and the cloister mother at the Temple of Madriel. She studies arcane history and practices sorcery and druid craft. She is the last of the priestesses in the Cabin of Eos after everyone fled from the fire.

Lovinia

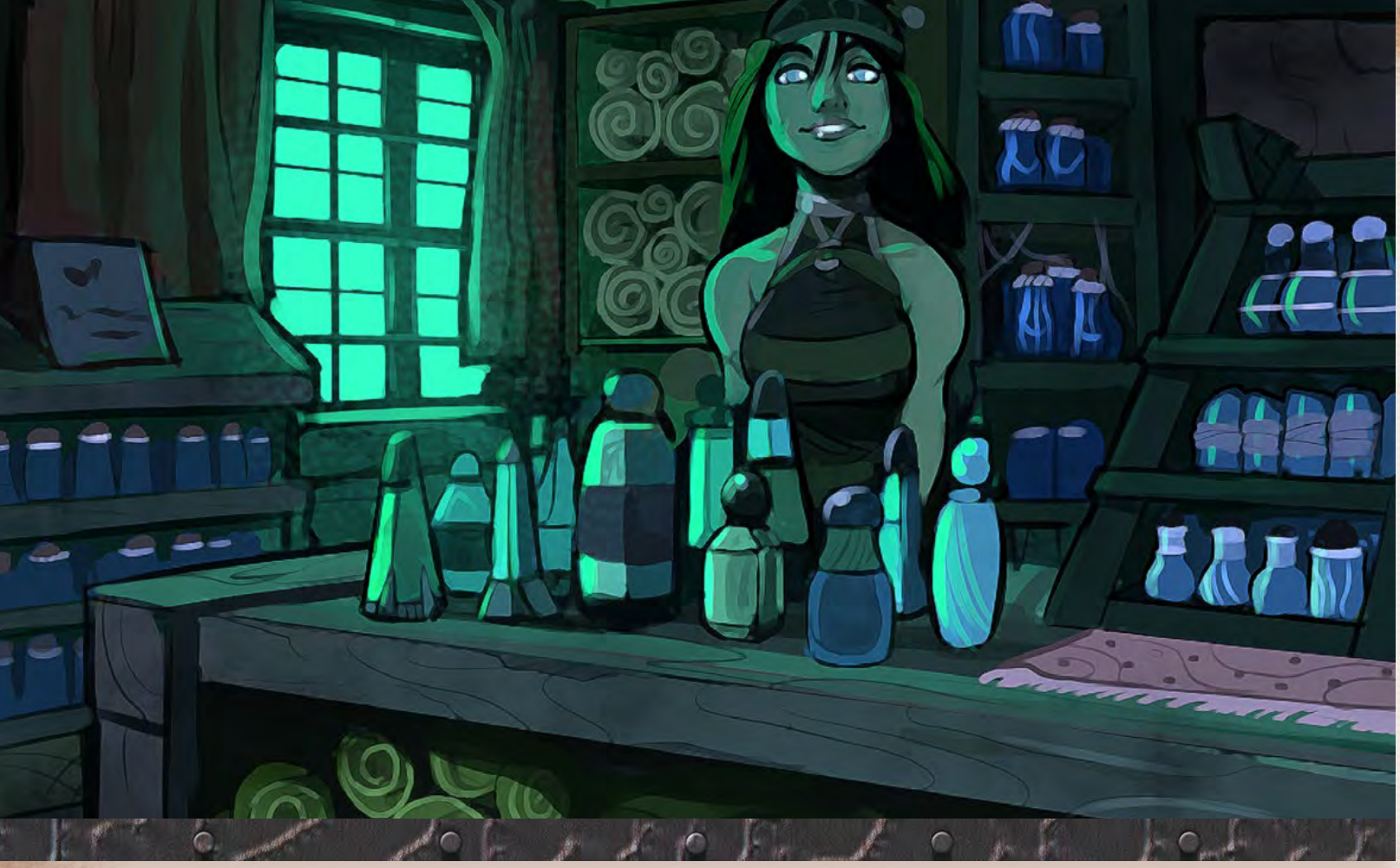
A young human priestess of Madriel. She studies history, herbalism, and sorcery at the temple. She helps maintain the community garden outside of the temple.

Giannos

A young dwarven child kidnapped by cultists of Mesos from the town of Ontenazu. He is the son of local merchants who run a stall in the small market.

Antia

A priestess who has disappeared from the temple and secretly studies dark arcana.



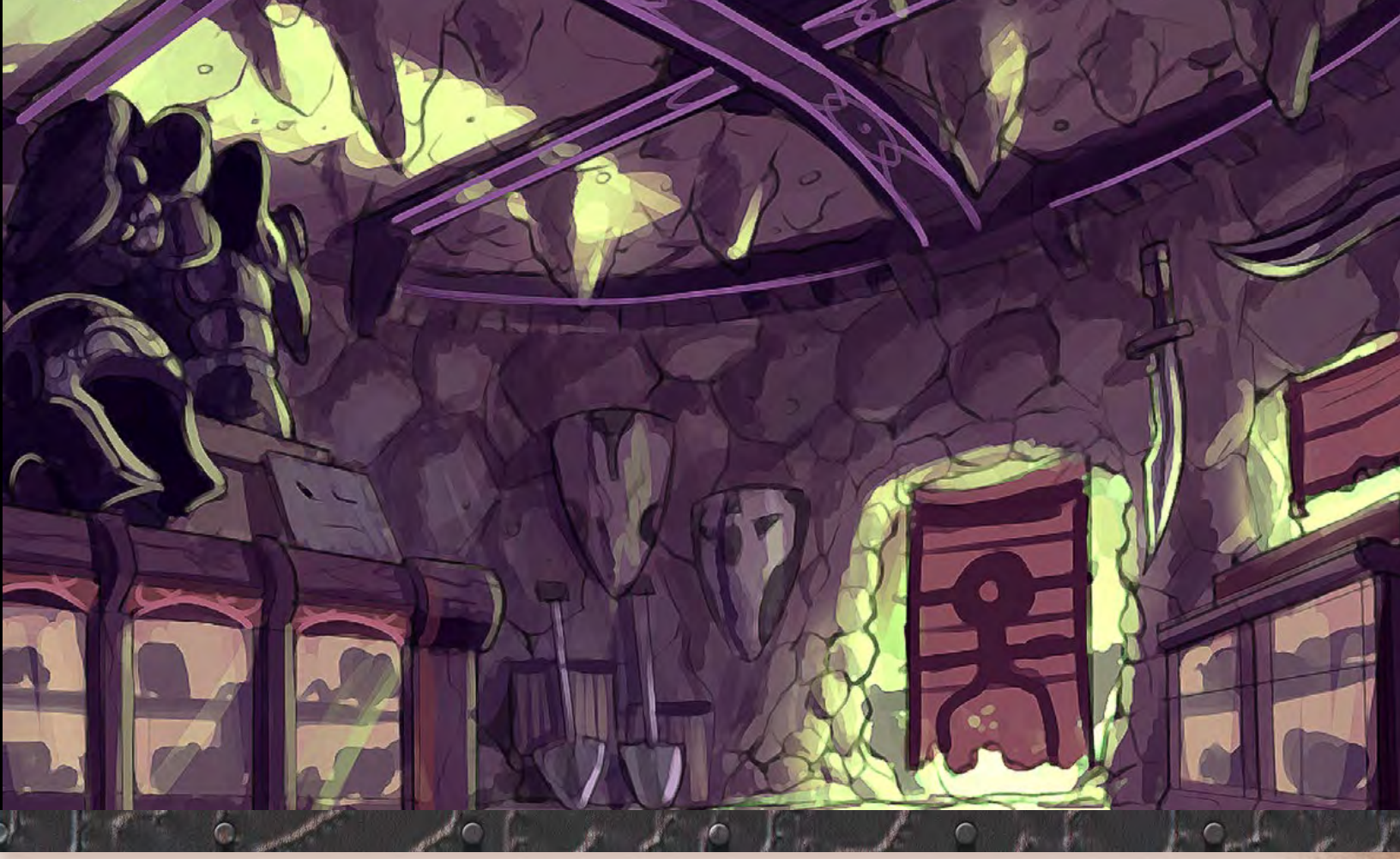
CHAPTER 1

THE TIPSY HORSE TAVERN

Normally the town of Artemisia is bustling with small markets and artists selling their wares. After the explosion, most have hunkered down in their homes or have fled to nearby towns.

The tavern is packed full of adventurers, towns guard, and concerned townsfolk. Rumors grow more elaborate by the minute. Farmers speak of death cultists infiltrating the town. One bystander speaks of a possessed demon child stalking the burning ruins while others gossip about a mad sorceress.

A large table in the center of the tavern is led by the head of the town guard, Durga, and her best friend, a ranger named Antheia. They are questioning town folk about who they have seen out of the ordinary in the area and asking the guard if anyone strange has been seen leaving town. They have town maps and temple blueprints strewn across the table in varying levels of quality. They are looking for help to investigate the temple and give a general description of what is left of the crumbling temple if spoken to.



CHAPTER 2

TEMPLE ENTRANCE

Small fires burn through the wooden beams supporting stories of stone walls. The night air engulfs the area with smoke and no relief from the summer heat. A massive, peaceful statue of a female angel in full armor readies her spear, silhouetted by the fiery temple. Peacocks scatter the grounds pecking at ash and deep red petals from the flowering trees. Ash raining down as if it were a winter's day with embers rising into the hazy night sky as your eyes scale the heights of the smoldering temple.

The temple doors have burned away. The fire's shadow heavily coats the stones of the temple entrance. Ash and heat push past the adventurers as small, falling rocks echo from the depths of the crackling temple. Charred earth crunches beneath the adventurer's feet.

Inside, heavy smoke fills the entrance. The lighting is dim with a normal light source and dark with a dim light source. Large beams smolder as black smoke billows into the night air.

THE PEACOCKS

A large flock of peacocks flutters and roosts at the entrance of the temple. They scatter if anyone gets close and land nearby squawking loudly. If the party gifts or feeds the birds, they begin circling and pecking on a spot

of earth. Anyone who digs there finds a latched chest containing a pearl necklace, fifty gold, and a silver statue of the winged goddess Madriel. If attacked, the peacocks scatter as a portal opens. A hostile **flailing dreadnought** appears, and the portal closes.

Altar Room

A fiery rafter falls sending splinters and sparks into the air. A cleaved altar stands in a pile of rubble that has poured into the level below. A ghastly child hovers over the altar glowing in blue translucence. "No!" The apparition sneers. "Stop!" it cries out in anger before disappearing. The room is silent except for the crackling of fire and the occasional sound of falling debris.

What was once the vaulted altar room is now piles of rubble that pours into an old dungeon below. This area is rough terrain. The splintered altar lies decimated. A **DC 14 Intelligence (Arcana) check** reveals both radiant and necrotic energy streaking the shattered marble altar as if magic energy has struck the stone. It appears the radiant magic came from a powerful source. A **DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check** in this room reveals an amber stone with the symbol of Madriel within the ashes on the floor.

On the second level above, the wall has fallen to reveal the remains of the Quarter's Hall. The blast destroyed the stone stairs that once climbed up along the west call. Players who make a **DC 19 Strength (Athletics) check** are be able to scale the wall using small holds between the masonry of the stones. Players making a **DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check** are be able to catch a grappling hook or looped rope along the broken stone pillars on the second level.

The Sanctuary

Pillars layered with soot, line the vast expanse of the room. The fragile charcoal remains of wooden seating fill the corners of the room as broken glass glistens on the floor. The night air pours in from the fallen south wall. A lone stained glass remains reflecting the last remnants of the fire.

Anything not stone in this room has been reduced to charred wood and ash. Several bodies are strewn across the floor.

Charred Corpses. A cultist's remains are seen on the ground. Players who make a **DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check** reveals the following items: Two broken potion bottles, a simple dagger, and a tarnished pendant with a symbol. A **DC 14 Intelligence (Religion) check** reveals this symbol as the symbol of Mesos.

Corpses. Three cultists with gold trimmed black robes lie dead on the ground. A **DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) check** reveals that these cultists were hit by arcane bolts.

Tile. There is a large clay tile with the symbol of Madriel on the wall. Smashing the tile reveals a roped mechanism. A **DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) check** reveals cutting the rope causes a counterweight to fall and aida in lifting the sealed door below.

The Oratory

A door untouched by the flames gently moves in the wind from outside. Charred bits of paper race across the floor and out into the night air. The smell of fresh lavender and smoke fill your senses.

The family chapel has three modest altars that each have the symbol of the angelic and powerful Madriel carved into the marble. The humble altars are covered in candles and offerings to the goddess. Each altar has a diminutive statue of Madriel holding a dish. Books lie haphazardly on the ground as ash blows across the floor due to the open back door. The altars have three small crystal cones, incense, holly berries, and small bells.

Statues of Madriel When a player places an amber stone with the symbol of Madriel on a dish, the wings of the angel mechanically fan out, and a mechanism in the floor clicks. If the players place three amber stones with the symbol of Madriel on each statue's dish, magic fills the air with electricity and a decorative stone in the center of the room slides open. Inside is a leather satchel containing a book of ancient philosophy, a small leather bag with seven small, decorative fossilized bones, a small pouch of ruby dust, and an obsidian steed *figurine of wondrous power*.

The North Transept

Shadows flicker across the white stone of Madriel's features. Her angelic wings stretched wide in flight as she grips her great lance. The destruction of evil beneath her feet as shattered temple windows loom above.

This open enclosure contains a small altar covered in candles. At the base of the statue is a smooth marble bowl. The east wall has a large spiral staircase leading down into the dark.

Statue of Madriel. Pouring water into this bowl creates a potion that restores +15 hp and +2 temporary AC. This creates 1d6 worth of potions. The bowl produces this potion once per day.

The Cathedral

Sections of stone have fallen from the grand entrance to the Cathedral. Splintered benches cascade across the vast floor from the blast. Shadowy creatures lurk around a stormy portal looming above a marble altar. The red glow of **sea sparks** *gently wander outside of the swirling void which has ripped through reality*

This large sanctuary is 75 ft long and 30 ft in width. Three **cave shrikes** lurk on the floors and walls. The cave shrikes become hostile to creatures coming within 30 ft of them. When approached, the 1d10+15 sea sparks scatter, but attack if cornered. A **DC 13 Intelligence (Nature) check** reveals that sea sparks normally hail from the sea, but these move through the air like water due to their planar origin. A **DC 17 Intelligence (Arcana) check** reveals that the ritual has caused a cosmic shift in this area. When the party has to roll for initiative, a **slarecian dragon** rushes out of the portal causing the portal to close.

Note: The DM can use the fleeing sea sparks to lure the party to missed areas.

Burning Rafters. During combat, the rafters in the ceiling catch fire. The fiery rafters have a DC of 19 if players try to knock them down. If a rafter falls, players within 20 ft must make a Dexterity saving throw with a DC 18 or take 3d8 Bludgeoning damage and 2d10 fire damage.

The Sealed Door

A drift of ash collects at the bottom of the stone steps. A massive stone slab depicting the divine goddess appears under a layer of ash and dust. A very large brass candle holder lies next to a shattered mechanism

The large stone door is sealed by a mechanism and cannot be opened by normal means. This slab of stone has an AC of 40. Beside the door a decorative tile has been smashed along with the lever that controls the door. A **DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) check** reveals that the ropes of the mechanism in the wall lead to the second floor to the room above and the other goes toward the Sanctuary. A **DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check** reveals the pieces of a large clay tile with a picture of the winged goddess Madriel. It appears the tile was once in the wall below the broken lever.

The Quarters Hall

Pieces from the jagged remains of the hall bounce and crumble below. Frescoes depicting good aligned deities are tarnished from flames. Simple wooden doors battered from the recent explosion line the crumbling walkway.

The Prayer Room

Water gently trickles into a bowl mounted on a large statue. Debris from the air slowly collecting in gentle ripples as ashen water stains the valleys of the carved angelic stone.

A stone table sits before the statue with small offerings to the goddess. There are dried flowers, colorful beads, and rounded stones on the altar. A **DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check** of the table reveals 1d10 gold coins and an amber stone with the symbol of Madriel under the table.

The Small Guest Room

Orange light flickers on the walls of the untarnished guest room. Bed sheets perfectly encase a bed of a guest who never returned.

A simple tidy guest room. The blankets are perfectly tucked in around the bed and a small suitcase lies underneath. On the side table is a wash basin and pitcher full of fresh water. If the door is left open, the basin begins to be contaminated with ash. The side table has a candle and a small painting of the goddess.

Tile. There is a large clay tile with the symbol of Madriel in the north wall. Smashing the tile reveals a roped mechanism. A **DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation)** check reveals cutting the rope causes a counterweight to fall and aids in lifting the sealed door below.

Suitcase. A **DC 16 Dexterity (Sleight of Hand)** check is required to open the lock. Inside is a change of common clothing, a small aquamarine stone, a book of the occult, and letter to a girl named Antia. The book details the theory and practice of dark magic as well as prominent practitioners throughout history.

The Abandoned Quarters

Singed cobwebs encrust the stagnant furniture. The world ebbed and changed everywhere except for in this room. The stained sheets still lay as they had centuries ago and time has covered every inch of the room. Abandoned towels covered in old blood and washbasins surround the empty bed.

The door to this room is boarded up. Anyone who goes into this room and touches anything must make a **DC 16 Constitution saving throw**. Those who fail the save are infected with Bleeding Sickness. The wash basins are stained with bloodied water that has long since evaporated.

Keyhole. The party can peek through the keyhole and see a room covered in dust. The stained blanket on the bed is

down turned and water pitcher and cup sit on the bedside table. Players who make a **DC 13 Wisdom (Medicine) check** deduce that this room was likely a quarantine room for some type of illness.

Bedside Table. The drawer of the table contains a journal with entries describing an adventurer who had come down with a deadly illness called the Bleeding Sickness. The priestesses had found them on the road and tried to nurse them back to health centuries ago.

The Hidden Garden

The wind carries glowing embers across a razed garden. The plants and trees that once filled the garden are now slivers of charcoal trembling in the summer night air. The small wooden home of the temple's sacred peacocks now lay in fine ash as it slowly drifts away to oblivion. A lone flowering tree stands unharmed in the center of the garden. Its red blossoms radiant amongst the despair.

A midsized garden once graced this area. Everything is burned except for a small flowering tree covered in deep red flowers. A **DC 18 Arcana (Intelligence) check** reveals that this tree is sacred to Madriel and serves as a gateway of power from Madriel's home plane. The tree sparks with gentle arcane power. Anyone who lays a hand on the tree gets a sense of warm arcane energy filling their being and regains 2d10+3 hp. (This can be done once per day for each character.) Anyone who harms the tree is struck with a bolt of radiant energy dealing 8d10+6 radiant damage with no chance to make a saving throw. (No one can react in time to the power of the goddess.)

Rubble. Toward the back of the garden is the remains of the peacock home and pen. Anyone making a **DC 17 Investigation (Intelligence) check** discovers a small silver key decorated with roses as well as an amber stone with the symbol of Madriel.

The Crypt

Sealed tombs marked with sandstone plaques rise into the vaulted crypt. Shelves are carved out of the stone scale the walls housing ever burning lamps, candles, and tokens from loved ones. The stagnant air is thick with the smell of dead roses and damp sandstone.

The crypt is vast with small altars and statues along its wall. The center of the room has mismatched furniture such as a table with chairs and a couple of shelves. Several bedrolls line the walls. A **DC 14 Intelligence (Investigation) check** of the bedrolls reveals a silver signet ring with the symbol of Mesos and six copper pieces.

In the center of the room a small child (Gianos, dwarf, good alignment) sleeps. In his sleep he cries out "No! No! Stop!" as if he is having a bad dream. He sleeps in a blue beam of light cast from a magic crystal, the Lich's Stone, on a stand surrounded by ritual. A woman, in clothing common of the priestesses of Madriel, sleeps in a chair. It appears she has been caring for the child.

Lich's Stone A black swirling arcane gem placed on a stand 15 ft high casts a ray of ethereal light onto the floor. The small child lies partially in the ray while sleeping. Anyone who stands in this ray has their image cast above the altar near the entrance to the temple. Their appearance and voice is altered into an evil visage cast above the altar. This stone is 60 pounds with an AC of 16 and has 66 hp. Any creature of good alignment who physically touches the stone is struck with a bolt dealing 1d10 necrotic damage. (This damage is halved for creatures with neutral alignments. Evil alignments are unaffected.) When the stone reaches zero hp, it sends out a wave of necrotic energy. Players must make a **DC 15 Constitution saving** throw. Those failing the save take 3d10+5 necrotic damage. (If the final blow to the stone is radiant damage, this effect will not occur.) Maghiel has established a psychic connection to the Lich's Stone. If it is destroyed, she realizes that this has happened immediately.

Thunder Orbs Thunder Orbs are attached to each stone slab covering the tombs. If someone attempts to tamper with the orbs or unseals a tomb, 1d10 Thunder Orbs attack.

Lovinia If awoken, she explains that she knocked out three cultists who were trying to sacrifice the child with her arcane abilities. She took the child to the crypt and smashed the mechanism outside of the stone door before it closed to prevent the cultists from attacking them. She insists that everyone should go to the Cabin of Eos for safety.

Giannos is extremely frightened by the traumatic experience of the kidnapping. He repeatedly asks to see his parents. He cries if questioned about the kidnapping but does volunteer that the cultists had a leader, a "mean lady" who seemed very angry about the cult's failure. Giannos recalls that the lady said something about "bringing things full circle" and "putting Durgan to sleep." If it doesn't become immediately obvious to the party that Maghiel was referring to Durgan's Rest with that statement, permit each character a DC 10 Intelligence (History), Intelligence (Arcana), or Wisdom (Religion) check made with Advantage. If this check is successful, the character realizes this obvious connection.

Stone Shelves. A **DC 16 Intelligence (Investigation) check** of one of the carved shelves with candles and offerings reveals 2d10 gold coins, a shard of aquamarine, and an amber stone with the symbol of Madriel.

The Stone Vault. A large slab of carved stone with angel wings is seen in the wall. It has a keyhole with a

complex lock and arcane lock. This lock has a DC of 40. Only the Winged Key found in Area 1: Savila's Study during *A Scholarly Schism* opens this lock. Inside the vault is a spell book containing the following spells: *firebolt, chromatic orb, wall of fire,* and *sunburst.* a *staff of power*, and a 1,000 gp diamond arcane focus with the symbol of Madriel.

THE CELLAR

Windchimes gently tinkle and shine in the hazy moonlight as the cellar door opens. Vines of flowering plants wrap around the rafters and hang toward the ground. Crickets hidden in large potted plants chirp harmoniously. Flowers cover the mossy floors and tables as foliage wraps around anything in its path. Large crystals begin to glow as creatures get close to them.

The cellar is well kept and full of plants, jars of preserves, and a collection of large crystals, some the size of boulders. Herbs and gardening tools hang from the low rafters. A **DC 17 Intelligence (Investigation) check** of the desk reveals a locked stone box beneath the gardening schematics containing an amber stone with the symbol of Madriel, an amethyst stone, and multicolored glass beads. This lock can be opened with a successful **DC 25 Dexterity** check using thieves' tools. The decorative rose key on it from the Hidden Garden opens this box.

CHAPTER 3

CABIN OF EOS

An elderly elf opens the cabin door and welcomes weary travelers to sit by the roaring fire. She hugs Lavinia and express her happiness to see her safe. If she sees Giannos, she gives him food and a wooden rabbit to comfort him.

She tells the party she has decided to remain there in case any of the priestesses return or weary travelers seeking the Temple of Madriel arrive. She is not sure who started the arcane explosion. She did see someone unfamiliar in robes slipping out of the temple the night before while she was on an evening walk with fellow priestesses. She tells the party that the guest in the guest room was a traveling scholar who came to visit the priestess Antia. She explains that her fellow sisters have found her hiding literature of the dark arts when they have walked in.

If shown the symbols of Mesos, she concludes that it was likely evil cultists of Mesos who have caused the destruction. She explains that a traveler passed through recently discussing destruction and chaos across the land, caused by a rumored lich.

CONCLUSION

The next morning, the towns folk begin pouring buckets over the embers and exhuming the corpses for burial. Everyone pitches in to clean what is left of the temple and flowers are placed around the building in remembrance. Nearby farmers help house the peacocks and the priestesses slowly start returning to the Cabin of Eos to discuss their options for repairing the temple. That evening everyone brings candles and a memorial is held for the temple that has long been a symbol of the town.

This adventure can be a step toward a milestone, or a level can be rewarded. The following XP can be rewarded.

Completing the Peacock Encounter 1,000 XP per player.

Completing the Cathedral Encounter 5,000 XP.

Finding the Rose Key and Opening the Stone Chest 1,000 XP per player.

Solving the Temple of Madriel Statue and Amber Stones Puzzle 3,000 XP per player.

Opening the Stone Slab and helping NPCs home 5,000 XP per player.

Opening the Vault 5,000 XP per player.

Appendix: Magic Items

Staff of Power

Staff, very rare (requires attunement by a sorcerer, warlock, or wizard)

This staff can be wielded as a magic quarterstaff that grants a +2 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with it. While holding it, you gain a +2 bonus to Armor Class, saving throws, and spell attack rolls.

The staff has 20 charges for the following properties. The staff regains 2d8 + 4 expended charges daily at dawn. If you expend the last charge, roll a d20. On a 1, the staff retains its +2 bonus to attack and damage rolls but loses all other properties. On a 20, the staff regains 1d8 + 2 charges.

Power Strike. When you hit with a melee attack using the staff, you can expend 1 charge to deal an extra 1d6 force damage to the target.

Spells. While holding this staff, you can use an action to expend 1 or more of its charges to cast one of the following spells from it, using your spell save DC and spell attack bonus: *cone of cold* (5 charges), *fireball* (5th-level version, 5 charges), *globe of invulnerability* (6 charges), *hold monster* (5 charges), *levitate* (2 charges), *lightning bolt* (5th-level version, 5 charges), *magic missile* (1 charge), *ray of enfeeblement* (1 charge), or *wall of force* (5 charges).

Retributive Strike. You can use an action to break the staff over your knee or against a solid surface, performing a retributive strike. The staff is destroyed and releases its remaining magic in an explosion that expands to fill a 30-foot-radius sphere centered on it.

You have a 50 percent chance to instantly travel to a random plane of existence, avoiding the explosion. If you fail to avoid the effect, you take force damage equal to 16 × the number of charges in the staff. Every other creature in the area must make a DC 17 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save, a creature takes an amount of damage based on how far away it is from the point of origin, as shown in the following table. On a successful save, a creature takes half as much damage.

DISTANCE FROM ORIGIN	DAMAGE
10 ft. away or closer	8 x the number of charges in the staff
11 to 20 ft. away	6 x the number of charges in the staff
21 to 30 ft. away	4 x the number of charges in the staff

Figurine of Wondrous Power (Obsidian Steed)

Wondrous Item, Very Rare

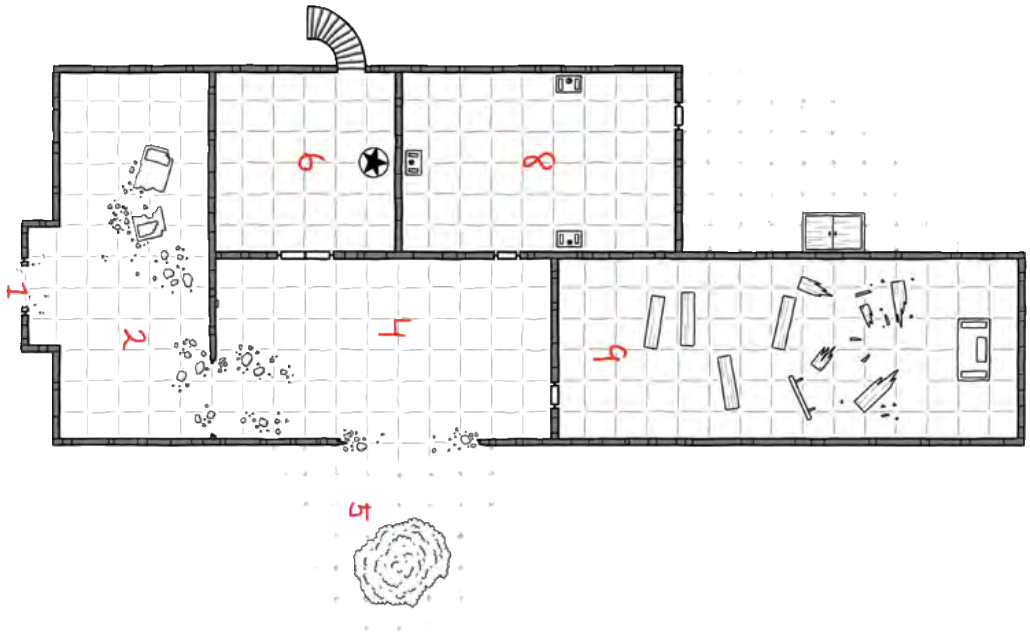
A figurine of wondrous power is a statuette of a beast small enough to fit in a pocket. If you use an action to speak the command word and throw the figurine to a point on the ground within 60 feet of you, the figurine becomes a living creature. If the space where the creature would appear is occupied by other creatures or objects, or if there isn't enough space for the creature, the figurine doesn't become a creature.

The creature is friendly to you and your companions. It understands your languages and obeys your spoken commands. If you issue no commands, the creature defends itself but takes no other actions.

The creature exists for a duration specific to each figurine. At the end of the duration, the creature reverts to its figurine form. It reverts to a figurine early if it drops to 0 hit points or if you use an action to speak the command word again while touching it. When the creature becomes a figurine again, its property can't be used again until a certain amount of time has passed, as specified in the figurine's description.

This polished obsidian horse can become a nightmare for up to 24 hours. The nightmare fights only to defend itself. Once it has been used, it can't be used again until 5 days have passed.

If you have a good alignment, the figurine has a 10 percent chance each time you use it to ignore your orders, including a command to revert to figurine form. If you mount the nightmare while it is ignoring your orders, you and the nightmare are instantly transported to a random location on the plane of Hades, where the nightmare reverts to figurine form.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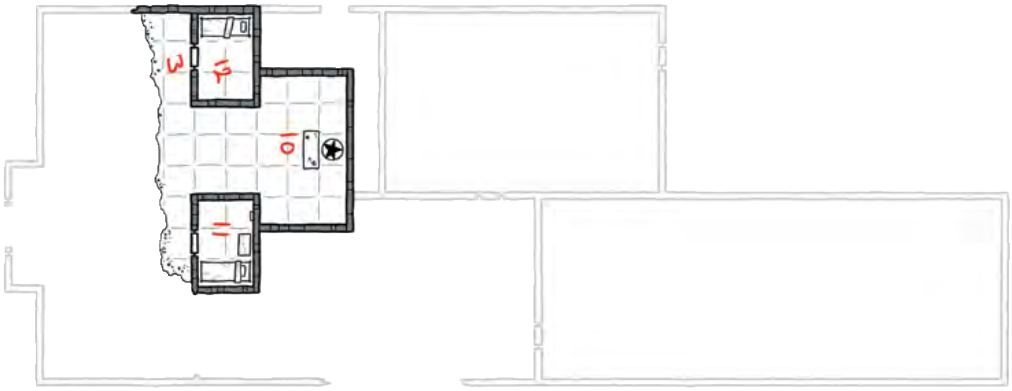
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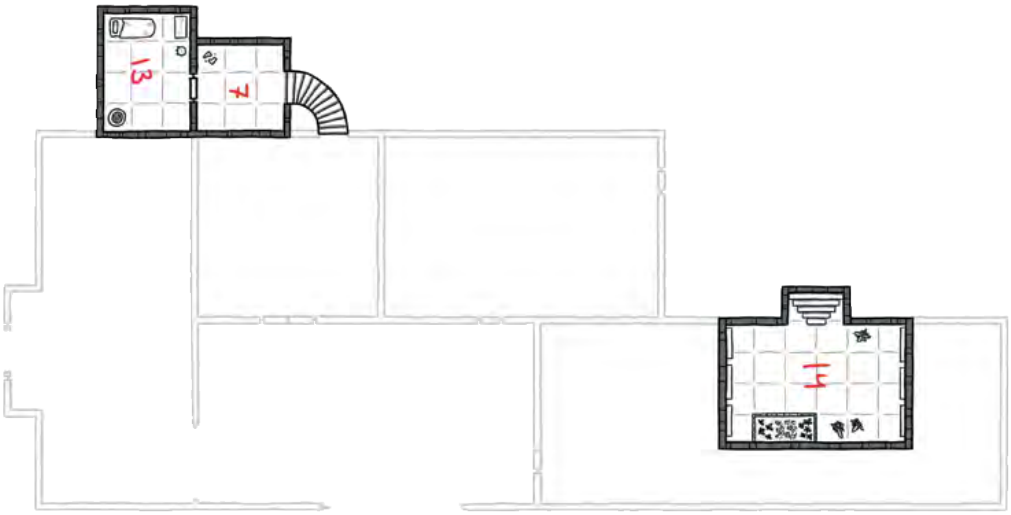
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The Fall of
Durgan's Rest
Beatriz T. Dias

INTRODUCTION

This adventure was designed for four to six characters of average level 14. Guidelines are included to help increase or decrease the difficulty of the encounters for APL 13-15.

The Fall of Durgan's Rest is intended to take place after the events of **The Temple of Madriel** in the **Vengeance of the Shunned** campaign but can be played independently.

Though she has failed to absorb the power of the titan Mesos, **Maghiel the Shunned's** actions have brought her to the precipice of godhood. Her rampage of slaughter and blasphemy has caught the attention of **Vangal the Ravager**. Maghiel's activity has awakened a hunger within the God of Destruction. As reward for her unintentional service, Vangal has provided Maghiel with a path to apotheosis. To achieve this goal, she must to appease Vangal so that he opens a portal for her. Appeasing him requires the lives of innocents to be sacrificed to otherworldly horrors known as the **mouths of Vangal**. Maghiel chooses the village of Durgan's Rest as the target for this horrific attack, and the villagers won't be able to defend it by themselves.

SYNOPSIS

As Maghiel summons the Mouths of Vangal the party arrives at Durgan's Rest. They can choose to ignore the monsters and take the fight directly to Maghiel or put all their might into protecting the village. Or maybe they can try both. But the amount of lives Maghiel takes today has direct consequence in her attempt at apotheosis.

BACKGROUND

The village of Durgan's Rest is not unfamiliar with Maghiel. The fallen wizard caused chaos in the village before, by stealing a powerful artifact from Tsendur, the village's wizard.

FULL CIRCLE

If the party already played through **A Mishap of Ill Portent** they may be acquainted with some villagers and be aware of the village's layout, Tsendur may also be dead. In that case please refer to the sidebar "Tsendur died" for clarification on the changes that need to be made

DURGAN'S REST

For settlement information about Durgan's Rest, see **A Mishap of Ill Portent** p.7, and update the following entries to reflect the current state of things in the small village:

Notable NPCs

Sheriff Isi (F NG manticora **veteran**) Isi is well liked by the population, she wants things calm in the village and doesn't care much on how that is achieved.

Tsendur (M N orc **mage**) reclusive, since the events of **A Mishap of Ill Portent** the villagers are a bit worried about his arcane pursuits.

TSENDUR DIED

If, during the events of **A Mishap of Ill Portent** or **A Scholarly Schism**, the party failed to save or revive Tsendur, then he is dead.

A couple of weeks after that a **mage** from the Academy of Magic and Engineering in Bridged City arrived at Durgan's Rest, in order to catalogue all of what remained from Tsendur's research, and to continue some of his projects. Every time Tsendur is mentioned in the adventure, substitute him with the following NPC.

Kam (M human **mage,** use **Tsendur's s**tat block, remove **Aggressive** and **Savage Attacks**) very quiet, regards his magic work as the most important thing on the continent.

PREPARATION

Text included in a plain box should be read aloud or paraphrased for the players. Sidebars and other shaded text are provided, where applicable, to call attention to important points for the GM to consider and should not be read aloud. Creature and NPC names are provided in bold text where they appear in the adventure, and their stat blocks are provided in **Book 11: Peril Primer**

INVOLVING THE PCS

If the party has been following the **Vengeance of the Shunned** campaign, they should have all the incentive needed to pursue this adventure. Otherwise, assuming the player characters arrive at Durgan's Rest they are met with Tsendur, the village's wizard, asking for help against an impending attack he discovered through divination magic. If the party requires a reward, Tsendur offers 5,000 GP in exchange for help.

MESOS' BANE

Due to the presence of the *Clasp of Vergren*, any character who casts a spell using a bard, sorcerer, warlock, or wizard spell slot must roll a 1d6 and consult the following chart.

Mesos' Bane

1D6	RESULT
1	**Bane of Heat:** You generate heat when you cast an arcane spell. You must make a Constitution saving throw against your own spell save DC or suffer 1 point of fire damage. For 2 rounds per level of the spell you cast (one round for a cantrip), you have advantage on saving throws against cold spells or effects, as well as resistance to cold damage. However, due to your discomfort, you also have disadvantage on Strength and Dexterity checks during that time.
2	**Bane of Luminance:** You generate light when you cast an arcane spell. You must make a Constitution saving throw against your own spell save DC or suffer 1 point of radiant damage. For 2 rounds per level of the spell you cast (one round for a cantrip), your body sheds bright light in a 20-foot radius and dim light for another 20 feet. During this time, you have disadvantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks (and the light might make some such checks impossible).
3	**Bane of Lightning:** You generate an aura of lightning when you cast an arcane spell. You must make a Constitution saving throw against your own spell save DC or suffer 1 point of lightning damage. For 2 rounds per level of the spell you cast (one round for a cantrip), you have advantage on saving throws against lightning effects, and you also have resistance to lightning damage. However, during the same period, you also have disadvantage on Strength and Constitution checks.
4	**Bane of the Mind:** You generate an aura of psychic dissonance when you cast an arcane spell. You must make a Constitution saving throw against your own spell save DC or suffer 1 point of psychic damage. For 2 rounds per level of the spell you cast (one round for a cantrip), you have advantage on saving throws against psychic effects, and you also have resistance to psychic damage. However, during the same period, you also have disadvantage on Intelligence and Wisdom checks.
5-6	**No effect.** Mesos' Bane does not flare up for you any more than normal.

CHAPTER ONE: DESTRUCTION HAS COME

Dark clouds cover the sky, creatures surround the village, on a hill overlooking Durgan's Rest stands a robbed figure, she prepares. And what once was a beautiful sunny day starts turning dark, foreboding the chaos ahead.

Maghiel wastes no time in summoning the mouths of Vangal. If the party succeeded in keeping her minions from retrieving the unnamed artifact in **Expedition to the Gluttonous Caves**, Maghiel is only able to summon 4 Mouths. if Maghiel has the artifact she is able to summon 6.

CENSURED

If the party successfully played through **The Queen's Gambit**, Maghiel may still be under the effect of the *Censure of Mesos* spell. If she is, this severely hinders her ability to help the mouths of Vangal, and they suffer a -2 penalty to AC when summoned.

If the party completed all of their objectives in **The Temple of Madriel** and managed to question **Giannos** (see **Book 8: Temple of Madriel**, Chapter 2) they have some idea of Maghiel's plan to attack the village. Otherwise, Tsendur approaches the party asking for help, explaining that he foresaw the attack through divination magic.

When the party reaches Durgan's Rest they have but 120 minutes until the mouths of Vangal and Maghiel's minions arrive.

The party can try to set up some defenses in the village with the time they have before the Mouths and minions attack the village.

Setting Up Defenses

The party receives a bank of minutes to spend on preparation activities. Each activity costs a set number of minutes and the presence of at least one party member. More than one party member can oversee an activity, improving the effectiveness of said activity. Below is a table with suggested defense activities, their time cost, and what rolls affect their effectiveness.

Maghiel stays away from the village since she wants to see everything happen and is not needed in the fray.

The Battle

The main point of this adventure is this battle. It ends when all the mouths of Vangal are killed, or when all the villagers are eaten. In order to help the DM here are the basic strategies the mouths and Maghiel's minions follow:

Magic Traps

Paralyzing magic traps. Passive Perception 18 to be detected, 5 ft. symbol. If a creature touches the symbol the trap is triggered causing a magic explosion that causes all creatures in a 20 ft. radius to be paralyzed, unless they succeed on a **DC 17 Dexterity** saving throw. The paralyzed condition lasts for 3 turns.

Bomb magic traps. Passive Perception 18 to be detected, 5 ft. symbol. If a creature touches the symbol the trap is triggered causing a magic explosion that causes all creatures in a 20 ft. radius to take 4d6 fire damage and 3d10 force damage, if they succeed on a **DC 15 Dexterity** saving throw the damage is halved. Furthermore, all creatures whose saving throw result was 12 or less are pushed back 10 ft. and knocked prone.

The mouths of Vangal have no interest in attacking powerful fighters, so they ignore the party and just try to eat as many villagers as possible. Maghiel's minions are the ones trying to kill the adventurers and keep the Mouths safe.

The mouths of Vangal spread out to cover as much ground possible, they destroy the buildings in their way and feed on everyone they can get their tentacles on.

Every mouth of Vangal has 5 **cult fanatics** and 10 **cultists** with them.

ACTIVITY	MINUTE COST	RESULT
Rally farmers to create a militia	30 minutes	Turns 5 farmers (commoners) into 5 militia, if a party member overseeing this activity succeeds in a DC 13 Charisma check, 10 farmers are inspired instead.
Create barricades	60 minutes	Difficult terrain surrounding half the village, if a party member overseeing this activity succeeds in a DC 14 Strength check all of the village is surrounded by a ring of difficult terrain.
Construct nets	30 minutes	Construct 2 Nets to use in the battle, if a party member overseeing this activity succeeds in a DC 13 Dexterity check, 4 nets are created instead.
Set up burning oil traps	40 minutes	Set up 2 pots of burning oil in specific areas, ready to drop the oil on a 10 ft. radius. If a party member overseeing this activity succeeds in a DC 12 Dexterity Saving throw, 3 pots can be set up instead.
Set up paralyzing traps	60 minutes	With scrolls provided by by Tsendur, a party member is able to place a paralyzing magic trap. If the party member succeeds on a DC 15 Arcana check, 3 magic traps can be placed instead.
Help archers get to the roofs	20 minutes	Help a group of 3 guards with bows to get unto a rooftop. If a party member overseeing this activity succeeds in a DC 15 Strength or Dexterity saving throw this activity only takes 10 minutes.
Set up bomb traps	60 minutes	With scrolls provided by Tsendur, a party member is able to place a bomb magic trap. If the party member succeeds in a DC 16 Arcana check, 2 magic traps can be placed instead.

Feast of Destruction

To easily track the count of villagers the mouths are able to kill, the GM can assume that any mouth of Vangal that is not destroyed or being engaged by the party eats 3 villagers per turn.

Maghiel

Maghiel remains 1 mile away from the village, overlooking the destruction with 7 cult fanatics beside her, in case the party ignores the village to attack her.

As the battle occurs, other events occur, complicating the situation. At the end of every round roll 1d10 and check the table below.

Battle Events

1D10	RESULT
1	A family trying to run away from the destruction is unfortunately caught, a Mouth of Vangal eats 1d6 villagers.
2	Fire has spread out over a 15 ft. radius on the ground.
3	A building is razed to the ground, the area of 40 ft. by 40 ft. is now difficult terrain
4	Mesos' Bane is triggered by the battle events and a random spot on the map is hit by lightning. Every creature in a 5 ft. radius of that spot takes 4d6 lightning damage.
5	A guard watches the destruction and becomes terrified for 2 turns.
6	A Mouth of Vangal makes a poorly timed tentacle swipe and makes the Cultists near it prone.
7	2 of Maghiel's minions get trapped in a shop's street advertising.
8	A group of terrified cattle storms by knocking down everyone that doesn't succeed on a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw.
9	A brave guard manages to kill 3 Cultists.
10	One Mouth tried to pass through a building, but it collapsed on top of it. That Mouth is stuck and unable to move or attack for 2 turns.

Chapter Two: Consequences

If the party fails to save the villagers and the mouths manage to eat them all:

The mouths dissipate and Maghiel's minions retreat.

Vangal rewards Maghiel with a portal to the Mirovan Henge. The portal immediately transports any and all who step into it to the Mirovan Henge in the Pestilential Abyss and closes one round after Maghiel enters it. The adventurers have one round to decide whether or not to follow her. Due to Maghiel's exceptional performance, she gains advantage on all rolls for the next hour once she is on the other side of the portal. The portal is big and lights up the area around it and the village, a character that succeeds on a **DC 24 Intelligence (Arcana)** check knows where the portal leads.

If the party manages to kill all the mouths and save some villagers:

As soon as the last mouth is killed, Maghiel's minions retreat.

Vangal still gifts Maghiel with a portal to the Mirovan Henge, but not a perfect one. Consult the table below to know how long the portal Maghiel receives takes to transport her. The god is also be impressed with the party, and should they choose to also pass through the portal they receive a boon. The adventurers have one minute to decide whether or not to follow her.

The party is rewarded with 1000 GP each by the remaining villagers, provided they survive and return.

VILLAGERS EATEN	TIME FOR THE TRANSPORTATION	BOON FOR THE PARTY
Minimal Casualties	Near Instantaneous	Advantage on all rolls for 30 minutes after arriving at the Mirovan Henge
Around half the population killed	1 day	Advantage on saving throws for 15 minutes after arriving at the Mirovan Henge
Most of the population killed	2 days	Advantage on attack rolls for 10 minutes after arriving at the Mirovan Henge

If the party manages to kill all the mouths and save all the villagers (if the only villagers that died were from the battle events, the DM can choose if this ending applies or not).

Vangal's disappointment in Maghiel echoes through the region and the Ravager refuses to gift her with a portal to the Mirovan Henge, this leaves Maghiel stuck near the village, with only her remaining followers nearby, and the party can take the opportunity to end Maghiel and save Ghelspad from her ambition.

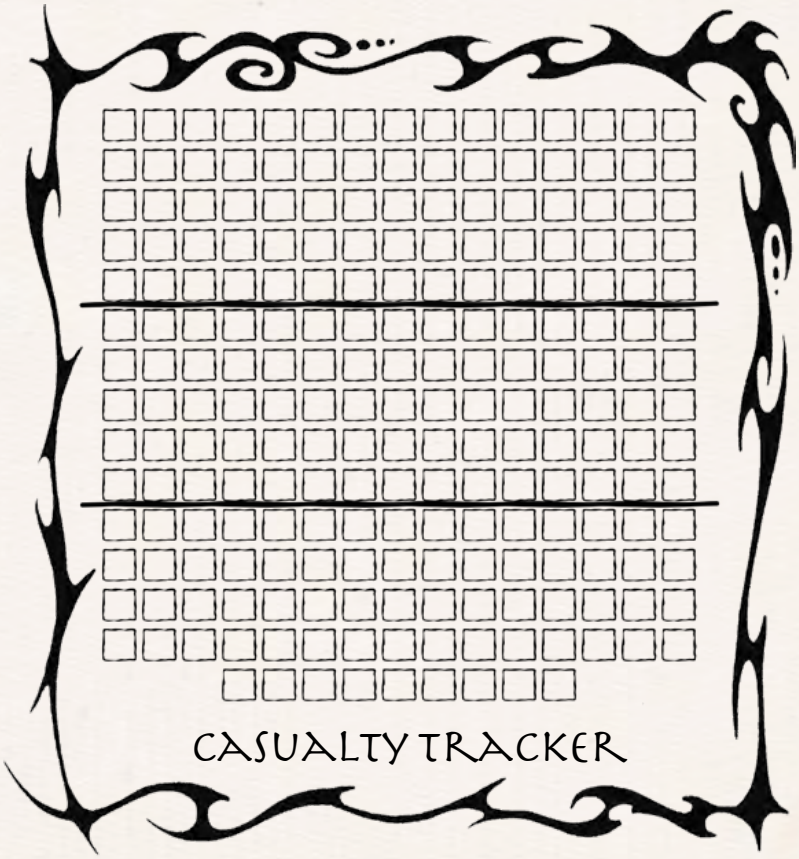
THE PORTAL OPENS

Read or paraphrase the following

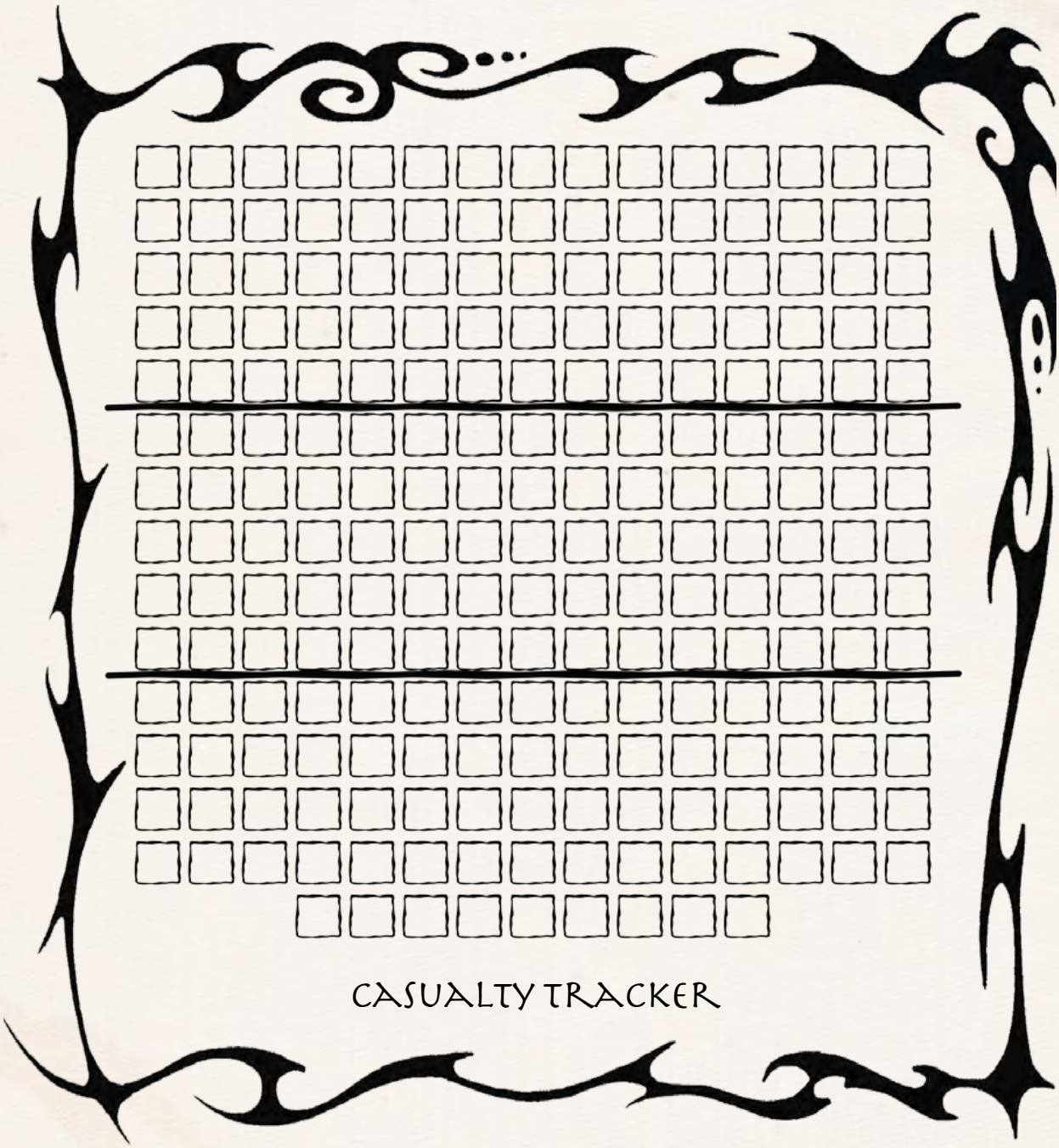
The sky above splits open with a thunderous crash that makes the earth quake. Where Maghiel stands, a ragged tear forms in the fabric of the planes. A sulfurous odor washes out of this hole in reality, and those brave enough to look into the portal see a bloody, black altar covered in entrails and viscera. Maghiel gets her portal, and she wastes no time in crossing it.

The party can choose to follow Maghiel, and to continue this adventure path in **The Mirovan Henge**.

But they can also choose not to, and instead stay in Durgan's Rest, help rebuild it, and wait for Maghiel to return. Which she never does, maybe her plans were foiled, but appearances are deceiving, and maybe she got what she wanted.

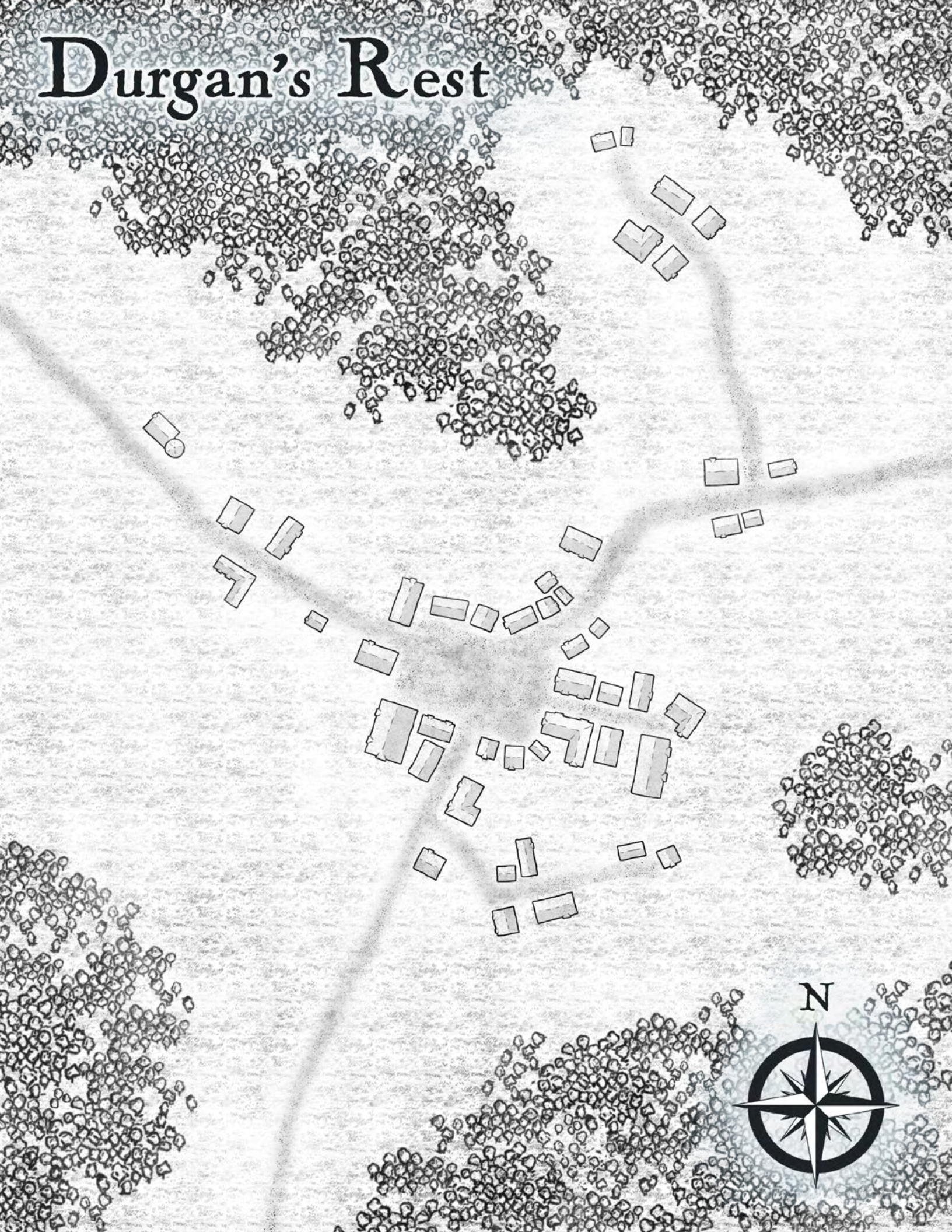


APPENDIX HANDOUTS



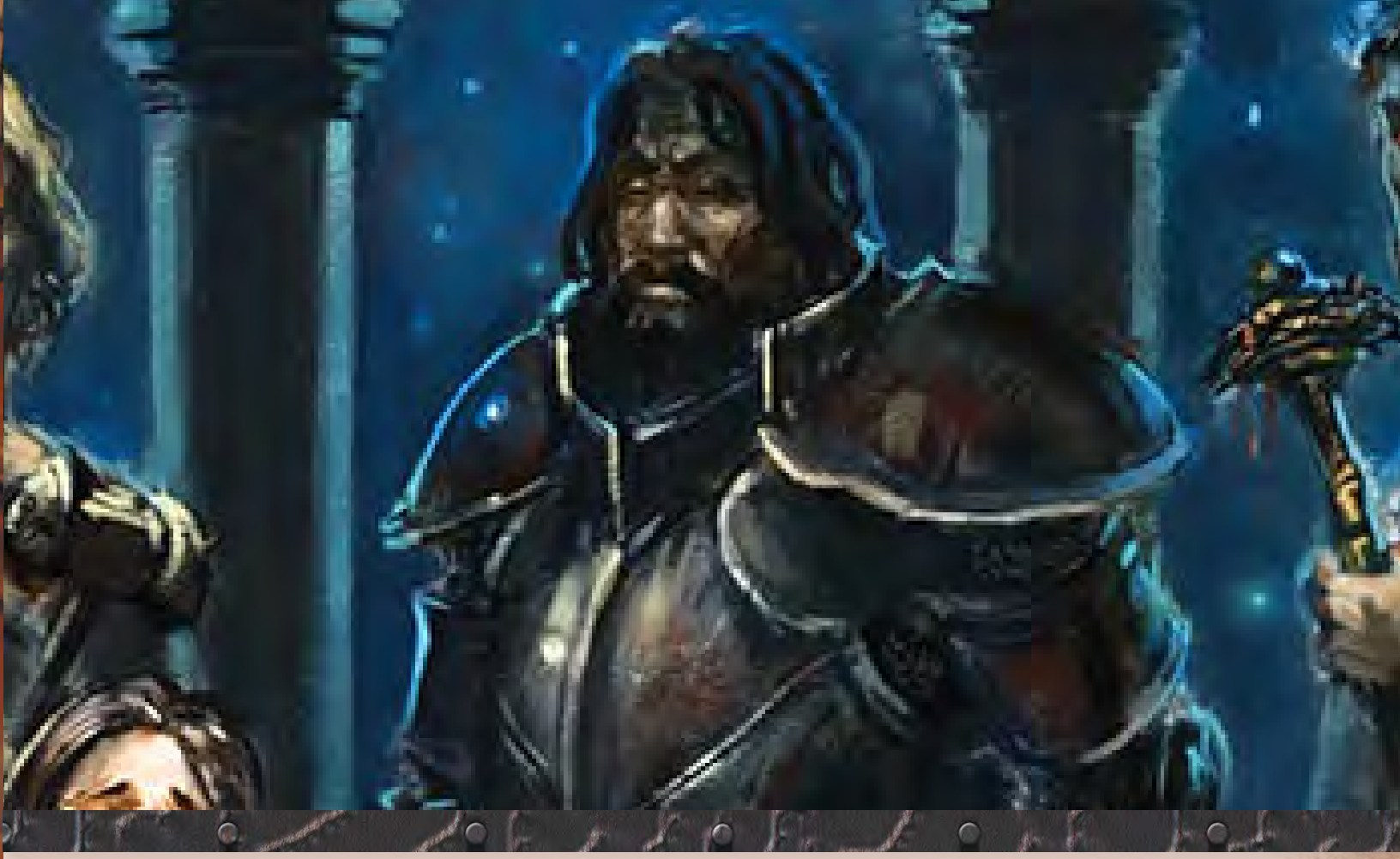
CASUALTY TRACKER

Durgan's Rest
A2
A4
A1
A3
A5
N


Durgan's Rest
N

The Mirovan Henge

Travis Legge



INTRODUCTION

The Mirovan Henge is an adventure designed for four to six characters of 15th level, though it can easily accommodate larger or smaller groups, or a group of APL as high as 20th level.

This adventure takes place within the Pestilential Abyss, in the region known as the Mirovan Henge. The Mirovan Henge is a circle of black basalt pillars set upon a vast and desolate volcanic plain deep within the horrific realm. At the center of this circle of igneous rock stands a stone altar covered in splatters of blood and viscera. The only way to enter the Mirovan Henge is by the direct invitation of Vangal the Ravager. After completing a series of sacrifices, including a massive slaughter in the name of Vangal, the god of destruction, a portal opens, permitting the petitioner to enter the Mirovan Henge.

One such portal was opened as a result of the wizard Maghiel's actions in the adventure The Fall of Durgan's Rest. The Mirovan Henge details Maghiel's reward for her service to Vangal and presumes that the adventurers were able to follow Maghiel through the portal. For their trouble, they will soon discover the cost of following their quarry into the Abyss.

SYNOPSIS

As Durgan's Rest burns behind them, the party casts aside all caution, following Maghiel through the mysterious portal. As they pass through the membrane between planes, they are inundated with visions of the raw chaos of the cosmos. For the fortunate, this may unlock insight that serves as a bulwark against the horrors that await in the Pestilential Abyss. Those less lucky find only madness in the journey.

Upon arriving in the Mirovan Henge, they watch in horror as the god Vangal approaches the altar and beckons Maghiel to join him. Scooping up a handful of grisly entrails, Vangal turns to Maghiel, commanding her to eat. As the party looks on, Maghiel consumes the fleshy offering and is overwhelmed by divine power. Maghiel's eyes turn deep crimson and waves of energy wash forth from her. Vangal

smiles at his new child, who returns his gaze, her face dripping with drool, mucous, and the sanguine remnants of her apotheotic meal. The god of slaughter then leans in and whispers a single word in Maghiel, the newborn demi-god's ear.

"Run."

As Maghiel flees, Vangal pursues. As he has done so many times over the years. Hunting a newborn god for sport.

The party must now choose what to do. They are stranded in the Pestilential Abyss, their nemesis has been turned into a demi-god, and is about to become fodder for Vangal the Ravager. So far, they appear to be beneath the notice of the players in this macabre melodrama. Will that last? What will they do?

Background

This is not the first time that Vangal has played out this scenario. Since his imprisonment in the Pestilential Abyss, Vangal has taken up the hobby of bringing the vilest and most depraved souls from Ghelspad to serve as divine sport. Maghiel's violent trek across Ghelspad caught the attention of the evil god, and he decided that she would make excellent prey. Through proxies, Vangal communicated the means by which Maghiel could summon the Mouths of Vangal to rain destruction on Durgan's Rest. This sacrifice allowed Vangal to open the portal to the Mirovan Henge. Unfortunately for the party, this portal is one-way. The party must make some tough choices in order to survive.

Preparation

Text included in a plain box should be read aloud or paraphrased for the players. Sidebars and other shaded text are provided, where applicable, to call attention to important points for the GM to consider and should not be read aloud. Creature and NPC names are provided in bold text where they appear in the adventure, and their stat blocks are provided in **Book 11: Peril Primer**.

Outside the Campaign

It is possible that a Game Master may wish to use the Mirovan Henge outside the auspices of the greater campaign. This will require little modification to the actual adventure as presented, apart from finding a reason for the party to be brought here in the first place. Opening a gate into the Mirovan Henge is nearly as difficult as opening a gate that leads out of it. However, if the Game Master wishes to pit their players against one of the greatest threats in the Scarred Lands, this adventure will serve to do just that, with a little prep work.

Involving the PCs

This adventure assumes that the player characters were in the village of Durgan's Rest when Maghiel laid waste to the place. It also assumes that the party was able to follow Maghiel into the portal and arrive in the Mirovan Henge. If neither of these occurred, the party will avoid being embroiled in Vangal's game. Instead, they will remain on the Material Plane, ever unaware of the elven necromancer's fate.

Mesos' Bane

The moment Maghiel crosses into the Mirovan Henge, the amplified effects of Mesos' Bane ends on Scarn. The *Clasp of Vergren* is no longer on the Material Plane and therefore no longer affects magic there. The instant Maghiel attains apotheosis, the Clasp becomes inert. It's energy and power are absorbed in the birthing process of the newborn goddess. In this moment, the threat of Mesos returning is neutralized. Characters with **a passive Perception** score of 20 or higher will notice a new pile of viscera appear on the altar in the center of the Hedge at this exact moment. This titanic viscera belongs to Mesos and confers blessings accordingly.

Chapter One: Vangal's Game

This section of the story is relatively straightforward. Vangal grants apotheosis to Maghiel as described in the synopsis. Once he commands the newborn goddess to run, he watches with a smirk for about one minute as she stumbles, terrified, into the blackened and cracked plains. This gives the party a few options.

The adventurers may attempt to gain Vangal's attention. He ignores any verbal contact, simply watching Maghiel run. Short of attacking or casting a spell at him, nothing the party does will grab Vangal's attention. They are simply beneath his notice.

The adventurers may attempt to gain power by consuming some of the titanic viscera themselves. If they do, they receive a massive power boost, though this comes along with significant side effects. It is worth noting that while boons, blessings, and charms may be gained by consuming the viscera, apotheosis may not. Divinity may only be granted by a titan or god gifting viscera to a mortal. Simply consuming it offers a pale shadow of true apotheosis. Still, adventurers who are power hungry, or simply looking for an edge that will give them some hope of survival, may attempt to consume some viscera. If this occurs see the **Titanic Viscera Effects** on p. xx.

The party may also attempt to escape from the Mirovan Henge. Though the party may have access to magics that allow for planar travel by this point in their careers, or may gain such from consuming titanic viscera, escaping the Mirovan Henge is not so simple. Any spell that includes any sort of planar travel as a part of its effects simply fails within 500 feet of the altar within the Henge. An attempt to cast such a spell in the area is immediately countered by the altar's power and the spell slot is wasted. Only Vangal is capable of opening planar gates in the Mirovan Henge, and even he can only open them leading into the Henge. Once outside of this 500 foot radius, planar travel spells function normally. Any character who is actively detecting and discerning the school of magical effects in the area can recognize this effect with a successful **DC 22 Intelligence (Arcana)** check. A character who wastes a spell slot trying to cast an affected spell may also make a **DC 22 Intelligence (Arcana)** check, discerning the nature and radius of this suppressive effect if successful.

The party may try to win Maghiel to their side to confront Vangal. Reasoning that they stand a better chance of surviving through cooperation, the party can persuade Maghiel to join forces with a successful **DC 16 Charisma (Persuasion)** check. A particularly impassioned and well role-played plea grants advantage on this check. This is a dangerous gambit, as it pits the party in the direct line of fire of the god of slaughter.

Finally, the adventurers may decide to try and take down Vangal themselves, steal his kill by taking Maghiel out, or wait for the fight between the deities to end and take down whoever is left standing. None of these options are particularly wise, but they are on the table.

Vangal's Hunt

If the party does not intervene, Maghiel casts Mirror Image in the hopes of confusing Vangal. Vangal chuckles before bellowing his rage and rushing the newborn demi-god. Without intervention by the party, Vangal rips Maghiel to shreds in just under two minutes. At the end of the fight, Vangal has the following changes to his stats:

Hit points: 400

Legendary Resistance (3 remain)

The Better Part of Valor

If the adventurers choose to leave Maghiel to Vangal, they get approximately two minutes to find a means of escape. It is possible that they discern the nature and radius of the effect preventing planar travel and simply run outside of that radius. From there they are free to use *banishment*, *planar travel*, or any other spell or effect that might normally get them out of the Pestilential Abyss. If the party chooses this route, allow it. They have emerged victorious and shown great wisdom this day. They may now move to the Aftermath with their lives and the knowledge that Maghiel has paid the ultimate price for her hubris.

If the adventurers lack the proper magics to escape the Pestilential Abyss, they have two options. They can steal some titanic viscera in the hopes that consuming the bloody flesh will grant such abilities, or they can escape deeper into the Abyss in the hopes of finding an alternate means of egress. If they can make it to the Blistered Plain, or the shore of the Sea of Sacrilege, they might be able to find a demon who can be bartered with in exchange for escape.

The Folly of Inaction

If the adventurers have not left by the time Vangal kills Maghiel, he turns his attention toward them.

"You come to challenge a god." He does not phrase it as a question.

With that, Vangal begins running toward the party, his blood-slick axes flailing before him.

At this point, the party should roll initiative.

Vangal's Tactics

Vangal does not come to the Mirovan Henge to flex his magical muscles. He comes here to hunt and kill powerful beings with his hands and axes. As such, he will not cast any spell using his *spellcasting* trait until he is reduced to 100 hit points or less. He will not use his summon cannon fodder feature until he is reduced to 50 hit points or less. These limitations do not stem from any code of honor or sense of fair play. He gleefully uses legendary actions to destroy the party's magic items, chop his prey to bits, or close incredible distances between enemies. He simply avoids magic because killing with a spell is less fun than gutting your opponent. This tactical preference is something of a weakness that a very clever party might exploit, hopefully to create an opportunity for escape.

Vangal does not surrender, nor does he show mercy. Though he refrains from casting magic early in the fight, he is free with his *frightful presence*, and not above healing himself if he feels his life is imperiled. Vangal knows that to die in the Pestilential Abyss would be a permanent prospect, and he has no interest in losing his life.

Chapter Two: Aftermath

Maghiel's quest to attain divinity has come to an end. Though the elven necromancer cut a bloody swath across Ghelspad in her profane pursuit, the adventurers stood against her. Perhaps they barely mitigated the damage brought about by Maghiel's crusade. Perhaps they foiled her at virtually every turn. Whatever the case, Maghiel lies dead in the Pestilential Abyss and the party must deal with the aftermath of her actions.

Return to Durgan's Rest

Whether they immediately solved the conundrum of escaping the Mirovan Henge, or they had to fight tooth and nail to return to the Material Plane, the adventurers are now back where it all began. Depending on the events of **The Fall of Durgan's Rest**, the adventurers could be returning to a lifeless ruin; a skeletal husk that stands as a reminder of their failure to successfully oppose Maghiel's genocidal schemes. If they performed well in the previous parts of the campaign, they may return to a vital village that is battered, bruised, and burnt, but not beaten. Lives have undoubtedly been lost and property massively damaged but hope springs from the survivors. Perhaps a young child greets the returning heroes with a flower they were able to save from their parents' garden. Or members of the city guard begin loud cheers upon seeing the adventurers return from the maw of hell itself, their lives intact. This moment is a win, though the cost of that win may be immeasurably steep.

Marooned in the Abyss

It is possible that the adventurers survive but are unable to escape the Pestilential Abyss under their own power. The quest to get free could be handled over several sessions of play as the party wanders the hellscape, avoiding or consorting with demons and seeking a means of escape. If the adventurers left the titanic viscera on the altar in the Mirovan Henge alone, they will have little to fear from Vangal himself. However, if viscera was stolen and consumed, Vangal will take the insult personally, tracking the party down to rain retribution upon them.

Victims of Vangal

If the party stood their ground against the god of destruction, chances are very good that few, if any of them survived to tell the tale. Though their lives were snuffed out in one final, doomed battle against the ultimate adversary, no one will know the truth of their loss. No songs will be sung of the final battle, though the heroic deeds of the adventurers before entering the portal will inspire a generation of bards. Despite their losses, the heroes stood fast in the face of certain doom and did not waver. For that, they should be proud.

Vangal Destroyed

While it is incredibly unlikely, it is not impossible that Vangal the Ravager could fall in battle with the party. If Vangal dies in the Pestilential Abyss, the death is permanent. As soon as word spreads of Vangal's fate, the demon lords begin tearing each other to shreds in a bid for supremacy over the plane. If Maghiel survives the fray, and is not subsequently put down by the party, she declares herself the new goddess of destruction. Her reign lasts for mere hours after she announces herself to the demon lords, as the demon lord Tzzt cooks her to cinders before devouring her.

Appendix: Titanic Viscera

Consuming the titanic viscera from the altar in the Mirovan Henge can create a number of effects. First, the Game Master should determine which titan's viscera has been acquired. This choice can be made by GM fiat or determined randomly by rolling on the table below.

D6	TITAN
1	Chern
2-3	Gormoth
4	Mormo
5	Kadum
6	Mesos

Once the titan of origin is determined, the Game Master must then determine the effect granted by consuming the viscera. Each action spent consuming a titan's viscera grants an additional effect, though each round after the first, the devourer must succeed on a DC 24 Constitution saving throw or become poisoned until they complete a long rest. A character poisoned in such a fashion can no longer consume viscera, even if the condition is cured. The assignment of features from consuming viscera can be made by GM fiat or determined randomly by rolling on the tables below. Additionally, there is a a 10% chance that consuming any of the titanic viscera will grant the consumer the ability to cast *plane shift* once without expending a spell slot or using material components.

Chern's Viscera

D8	EFFECT
1	Mark of Chern (SLPG p. 112)
2	Blighter's Boon (SLPG p. 157)
3	Death's Boon (SLPG p. 159)
4	Poisoner's Boon (SLPG p. 164)
5	Divine Champion's Boon, Legendary (SLPG p. 159)
6	Resistance Boon (SLPG p. 165)
7	Legendary Resistance (2/day)
8	Legendary Action (1/turn, either make an Attack or Cast a Spell)

Gormoth's Viscera

D8	EFFECT
1	Mark of Gormoth (SLPG p. 112)
2	Flesh-Warper's Boon (SLPG p. 160)
3	Divine Champion's Boon, Legendary (SLPG p. 159)
4	Resistance Boon (SLPG p. 165)
5	Legendary Resistance (2/day)
6	Legendary Action (1/turn, either make an Attack or Cast a Spell)
7	Boon of Eternal Stench. You exude a horrific odor. Any creature that starts its turn within 10 feet of you must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned until the start of its next turn. On a successful saving throw, the creature is immune to your stench for 24 hours.
8	Mark of Kadum (SLPG p. 112)

Mormo's Viscera

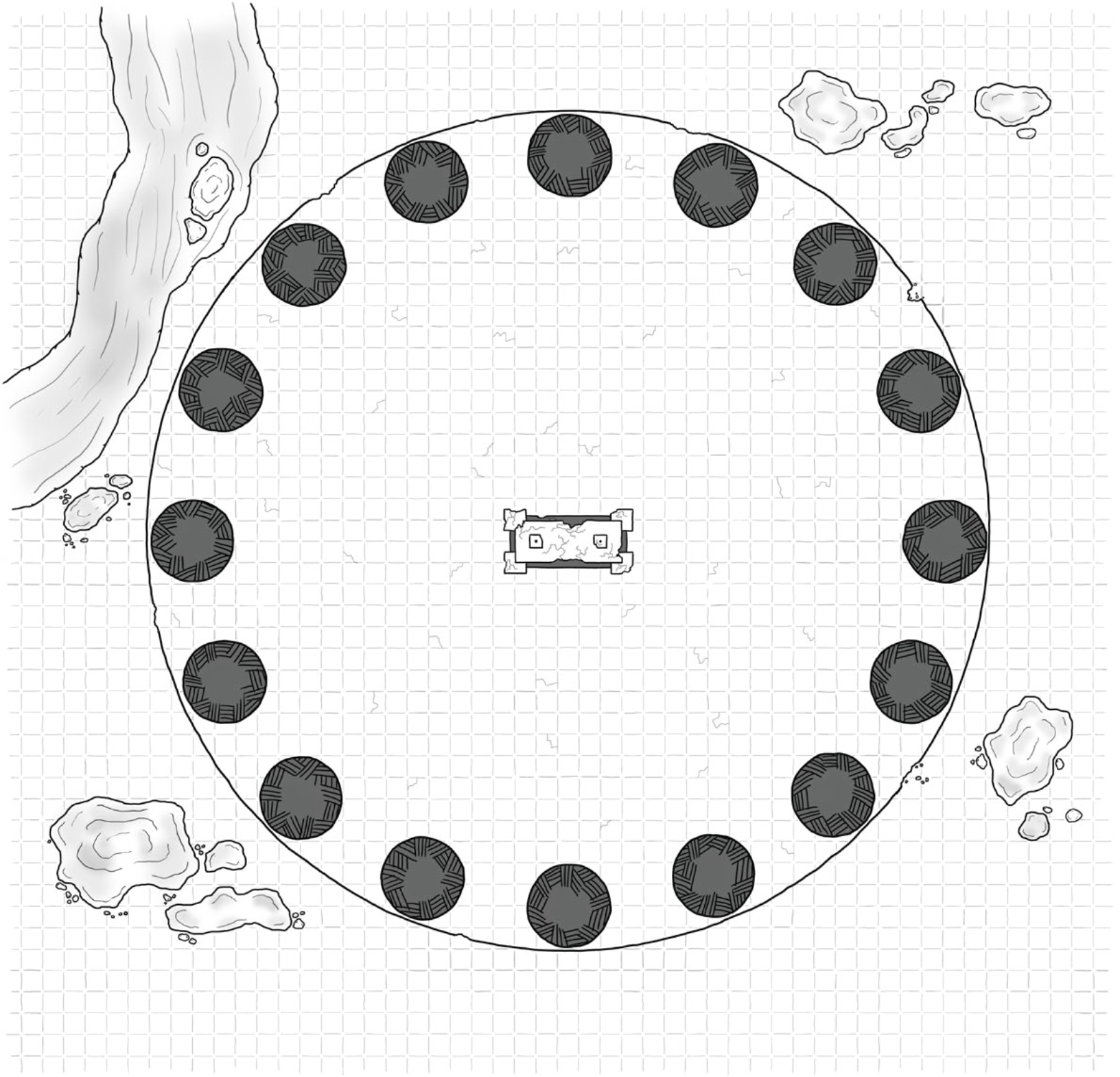
D8	EFFECT
1	Mark of Mormo (SLPG p. 112)
2	Death's Boon (SLPG p. 159)
3	Oracle's Boon (SLPG p. 164)
4	Poisoner's Boon (SLPG p. 164)
5	Serpent-eyes Boon (SLPG p. 166)
6	Divine Champion's Boon, Legendary (SLPG p. 159)
7	Resistance Boon (SLPG p. 165)
8	Legendary Resistance (2/day)

Kadum's Viscera

D8	EFFECT
1	Mark of Kadum (SLPG p. 112)
2	Brutality Boon, Very Rare (SLPG p. 158)
3	Rage Boon (SLPG p. 164)
4	Divine Champion's Boon, Legendary (SLPG p. 159)
5	Resistance Boon (SLPG p. 165)
6	Legendary Resistance (2/day)
7	Legendary Action (1/turn, either make an Attack or Cast a Spell)
8	Boon of Wounding. When you hit a creature with a melee weapon attack, you can wound the target. At the start of each of the wounded creature's turns, it takes 1d4 necrotic damage for each time you've wounded it, and it can then make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, ending the effect of all such wounds on itself on a success. Alternatively, the wounded creature, or a creature within 5 feet of it, can use an action to make a DC 15 Wisdom (Medicine) check, ending the effect of such wounds on it on a success.

Mesos' Viscera

D8	EFFECT
1	Mark of Mesos (SLPG p. 112)
2	Antimagic Boon (SLPG p. 155)
3	Arcanist's Boon, Legendary (SLPG p. 155)
4	Spell-reflection Boon (SLPG p. 168)
5	Spell-shield Boon (SLPG p. 168)
6	Divine Champion's Boon, Legendary (SLPG p. 159)
7	Resistance Boon (SLPG p. 165)
8	Legendary Resistance (2/day)



Book 11:
Peril Primer

Jeremy Hochhalter

INTRODUCTION

Rarely is there an adventure that sends heroes forth to encounter no one. Sure, it's possible, with puzzles and traps to keep a group of adventurers busy, and they always have each other to talk with. Or themselves. But really, where is the fun in that?

This compendium brings to light the people and creatures that players are likely to meet, and potentially do battle with, during the Vengeance of the Shunned campaign arc fot the Scarred Lands setting. That does not mean they are restricted to that set of adventures, however, and many can be dropped into any 5E setting with little to no tweaking. The races refelcted by humanoid NPCs do use the Scarred Lands Player's Guide for 5th Edition, which takes into consideration that the peoples of Scarn could be considered a bit hardier than those of other worlds. They've lived through an apocalypse recently, after all.

The Vengeance of the Shunned campaign was started by a handful of people that have true passion for the Scarred Lands setting, and the project only grew from there. We hope we've done the people of Scarn proud with the updates of older edition creations, and that the folks that sprang from our minds to live in the grimbright world manage to entertain your players for years to come.

NOT NECESSARILY FOES

The nonplayer characters presented in this compendium may not always be working against the adventurers. Indeed, several are presented which are meant to help hook the players and direct them where they need to go. Some may be friend or foe, depending on how the heroes interact with them.

Without further ado, may I present you with monsters and characters galore! Happy gaming!

~Jeremy Hochhalter

ACID SHAMBLER

Only one of innumerable horrors that rose up from the wild energies released by the death and downfall of the titans, acid shamblers have been encountered by adventurers and explorers since the end of the Divine War. Almost always, reports of these terrible undead note that when shamblers are seen, a bane cloud is nearby, leading to rumors that the two are connected somehow, perhaps a side effect of the elemental's deadly and poisonous vapors that causes its victims to reanimate.

Acid shamblers do not last long after creation, their own blood turned to an acidic ichor that breaks down their bones and tissue in a matter of days. During that time, however, shamblers lash out at anything living, reduced to mindless and crazed abominations that seek only to release their own pain upon others. They have no concept of self-preservation, mindlessly attacking any living creature, no matter what size.

ACID SHAMBLER

Medium undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 10
Hit Points 18 (4d8)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	6 (-2)	4 (-3)	15 (+2)

Damage Immunities acid, fire, necrotic, poison, psychic
Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, paralyzed, poisoned, stunned, unconscious
Senses passive Perception 7
Languages -
Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Acidic Blood. A creature that touches the acid shambler or hits it with a melee attack while within 5 feet of it takes 4 (1d6) acid damage. Any nonmagical weapon that hits the acid shambler is damaged by the acid, taking a permanent and cumulative -1 penalty to damage rolls. If its penalty drops to -5, the weapon is destroyed. Nonmagical ammunition that hits the acid shambler is destroyed after dealing damage.

Undead Nature. The acid shambler doesn't require air, food, drink, or sleep.

ACTIONS

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 1) slashing damage and 3 (1d4) acid damage.

Acidic Vomit (1/day). The acid shambler spews forth a 15 foot line of acidic goo. Creatures in the line must make a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw, taking 7 (2d6) acid damage on a failure or half as much on a success.

AKESHETH ABHORRENCE

The akesheth are children of a titan of chaos, Keshe, and though much of their chaotic nature has been lessened throughout the generations, there are those that are born in a form closer to that of their progenitor. Such creatures are called abhorrences, and they are often cast out from akesheth settlements. There are those amongst the akesheth who believe these creatures are a more pure and truthful form of what they should be as a people, and revere the abhorrence as a gift from the Fragments of Keshe.

AKESHETH ABHORRENCE

Huge aberration, chaotic neutral

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)
Hit Points 207 (18d12 + 90)
Speed 40 ft., climb 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
23 (+6)	15 (+2)	21 (+5)	15 (+2)	17 (+3)	21 (+5)

Saving Throws Str +11, Con +10, Cha +10
Skills Perception +8
Damage Resistances acid, cold, fire, force, lightning, necrotic, poison, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons
Damage Immunities psychic
Condition Immunities prone
Senses darkvision 120 ft., truesight 60 ft., passive Perception 18
Languages Titan Speech; telepathy 120 ft.
Challenge 16 (15,000 XP)

Superior Magic Resistance. The creature has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects. If subjected to an effect that allows the creature to make a saving throw to take only half damage, it instead takes no damage if it succeeds on the saving throw, and only half damage if it fails.

Chaotic Bulwark. At the start of a combat, the Fragment is immune to a random energy type. (d8) 1. Acid, 2. Cold, 3. Fire, 4. Force, 5. Lightning, 6. Necrotic, 7. Poison, 8. Thunder

The DM may choose to re-roll this resistance at any time during a combat, though may never choose the resistance type.

Innate Psionics. The abhorrence's innate psionic ability is Charisma (save DC 18, +10 to hit with spell attacks). It can innately use the following abilities:

4/day: crystal curse, psychic disruption

Spider Climb. The abhorrence can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The abhorrence uses Baleful Psychoportation or True Colors if available, and makes three tendril attacks.

Tendril. Melee Weapon Attack : +11 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. Hit : 11 (1d10 + 6) bludgeoning damage.

Baleful Psychoportation (Recharge 5-6). The abhorrence targets up to three creatures it can see within 15 feet of itself. Those creatures must succeed on a DC 15 Charisma saving throw or suffer 11 (2d10) psychic damage and are teleported up to 200 feet away to an unoccupied space the abhorrence is familiar with.

True Colors (Recharge 5-6). The abhorrence reveals aspects of its nature that are beyond the limited comprehension of mortal minds, releasing a wave of unimaginable colors. Creatures within 120 feet of the abhorrence that can see it must make a DC 15 Charisma saving throw. On a failed save, a creature suffers 11 (2d10) psychic damage and is stunned until the end of their next turn. Creatures who fail three saving throws gain a long term madness.

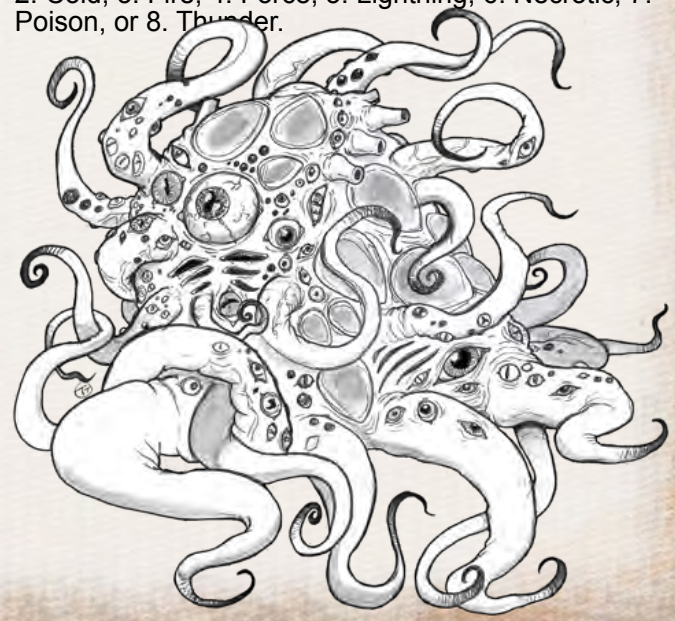
LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The abhorrence can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The abhorrence regains legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Tendril. The abhorrence makes a tendril attack.

Psychoportation (2 Actions). The abhorrence teleports to a location within 200 feet that it is familiar with.

Havoc Aura (3 Actions). A wave of energy blasts forth from the abhorrence in a 30 foot radius, dealing 13 (3d8) damage, or half as much if a target succeeds on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw. The type of damage is random as follows: (d8) 1. Acid, 2. Cold, 3. Fire, 4. Force, 5. Lightning, 6. Necrotic, 7. Poison, or 8. Thunder.



BANE CLOUD

Combantants in the Divine War first encountered bane clouds on the battle field and thought them to be nothing more than a side effect of the death and decay of titanspawn. Though deadly, it was assumed that the clouds would disperse over time, and so were considered a localized hazard.

In truth, these creatures were once air elementals that fused with the poisonous gases released by certain rotting titanspawn, twisted and tainted by the wild energies of the dying and imprisoned titans. Now the elementals are malevolent and cruel beings, seeking only to fill the lungs of the living, feeding upon their prey's liquefying flesh.

Often mistaken for low-lying fog, an astute observer may notice a bane cloud has a greenish-yellow tinge, and may be moving against the wind.

Gloom Lurkers. Slow and damaged by the mere touch of sunlight, bane clouds tend to be found within buildings or ruins, or in caves or tunnels that lead into the underworld. There, a bane cloud can avoid deadly sunlight while lying in wait for prey, and can sneak upon and flood over an unsuspecting victim, incapacitating them before the creature can escape.

Shambling Ties. Since the Divine War, it can become apparent that the bane cloud has some connection to the undead commonly called acid shamblers. Many believe that the cloud's energies reanimate its victims, causing them to rise, hideous and twisted, only to seek out victims of their own. Scholars cannot find the rhyme nor reason as to why this occurs, however.

BANE CLOUD

Medium elemental, chaotic evil

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)
Hit Points 39 (7d8 + 7)
Speed 0 ft., fly 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)	9 (-1)	15 (+2)	9 (-1)

Skills Perception +4
Damage Immunities acid, poison; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage
Condition Immunities exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained, unconscious
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14
Languages text
Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Sunlight Hypersensitivity. The bane cloud takes 1d4 radiant damage when it starts its turn in sunlight. While in sunlight, it has disadvantage on attack rolls and ability checks.

Actions

Multiattack. The bane cloud makes 2 slam attacks.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (2d8 + 1) bludgeoning damage.

Poison Cloud. The bane cloud exudes a 30 foot radius cloud of poisonous vapor. Creatures within the cloud must succeed on a DC14 Constitution saving throw or suffer 4 (1d6) poison damage and 1d2 points of Constitution and Dexterity ability loss. A creature dies if this effect reduces its ability score to 0. The ability score loss lasts until the target finishes a Long rest.

BANEWARPED

Banewarped Creature Template

A beast, humanoid, fey, giant, or monstrosity can become a banewarped creature if exposed to the mutating effects of an alien artifact such as the Slarecian *Sidereon* as it interacts with the magical warping of Mesos' Bane. The effects of this can vary greatly, but an easy way to represent this is to apply the following template. The creature keeps its statistics, except as follows:

Creature Type. The creature's type changes to aberration, and it gains the banewarped tag.

Alignment. If the creature has an alignment and isn't already chaotically aligned, its alignment shifts one step towards chaotic.

Ability Scores. The creature's Intelligence score becomes 4 if It was previously 3 or lower, and its Wisdom score becomes 12 if it was previously 11 or lower.

Senses. The banewarped creature gains darkvision to a range of 90 feet.

Damage Resistances. The banewarped creature is resistant to acid and poison damage.

Languages. The creature gains the ability to understand Titan Speech, and can read, write, and speak it if it previously had the ability to speak a language.

Unnatural Fortitude. If damage reduces a banewarped creature to 0 hit points, it must make a Constitution saving throw with a DC of 5 + the damage taken, unless the damage is from a critical hit. On a success, the creature drops to 1 hit point instead.

Mutations. The banewarped creature has one or more cosmetic mutations and one or more useful mutations, chosen by the GM or determined at random.

Cosmetic Mutations

These mutations have no mechanical effect but provide flavor as to the nature of the banewarped creature's horrible appearance. The GM is free to choose from the list below, roll for 1d4 random mutations (ignoring contradictory or unsuitable results), or invent further features inspired by these.

D10	MUTATION
1	***Extra Vestigial Limbs.*** The creature has one or more small, useless arms or legs protruding from its body, which may or may not match its original limbs.
2	***Extra Vestigial Mouths.*** The creature has one or more half-formed mouths on its body, possibly in unlikely places. These mouths may be toothy maws, beaks, insectile mandibles, lamprey-like suckers, or another mouthlike structure. The mouths cannot speak or eat, but may drip saliva, blood, or other unsavory fluids.
3	***Insectile Eyes.*** The creature's eyes have mutated into the multifaceted orbs of an insect. It may sport clusters of multiple such eyes.
4	***Tail.*** The creature gains a tail of some sort – lizardlike, ratlike, forked, devilish, or some other shape – if it didn't have one already. If it already had a tail, it gains a second one.
5	***Twisted Limbs.*** The creature's arms or legs (or both) are misshapen in some way – perhaps it has extra joints, or the joints bend the wrong way, or its limbs are withered or gnarled, or it has too many digits (or not enough) on each hand or foot.
6	***Covered in Boils.*** The creature's skin is wholly or partially covered in pustules, buboes, blisters, tumors, or some other diseased-looking growth.
7	***Lopsided.*** The creature has wildly asymmetrical features – one side of its face seems to droop as if half-melted, or it has a hunchback pulling up one shoulder, or it has one muscular arm and one withered one.
8	***Squamous.*** The creature's skin looks reptilian or fishlike, or perhaps resembles the mottled hide of a toad or frog.
9	***Exposed Viscera.*** The creature's belly hangs open in one or more places, exposing its entrails. They may seethe and burble behind open wounds or hang out in dripping loops.
10	***Oozing Sores.*** The creature's flesh erupts in open wounds that drip blood or pus.

Useful Mutations

These mutations provide mechanical benefits to the creature's ability checks, defenses, or attack options. The GM can choose from the list below, roll for 1d3 random features (ignoring unsuitable or contradictory results), or invent further mutations inspired by these choices. Some of these options can be reskinned as the GM desires; a tentacle could just as easily be a crablike claw, for instance, or chitinous hide could instead be a covering of thick scales.

If a mutation gives the creature an attack option, assume it is proficient with this attack. These attacks can use either the creature's Strength or Dexterity bonus, at the GM's discretion. Roll damage on a hit using the damage dice listed for the creature's size. If the attack deals bludgeoning, piercing, or slashing damage, add the creature's Strength or Dexterity modifier as appropriate.

If a feature calls for a saving throw or ability check (such as Acid Spray, or to escape a Tentacle's grapple), calculate the save DC as follows: 8 + the banewarped creature's proficiency bonus + its Constitution modifier

D12	MUTATION	DAMAGE DIE BY SIZE				
		T/S	M	L	H	G
1	***Covered in Eyes.*** The creature's body sports multiple eyes that face in all directions. It has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.					
2	***Chitinous Hide.*** The creature is covered in chitinous plates that give it an AC of 13 + its Dexterity modifier.					
3	***Spider Climb.*** The creature can move up vertical surfaces without needing to make an ability check.					
4	***Acid Spray (Recharge 6).*** The creature spits acid in a 15-foot line that is 5 feet wide. Each creature in that line must make a Dexterity saving throw, taking acid damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.	3d4	4d4	4d6	5d8	6d10
5	***Tentacle.*** The creature's body sprouts one or more tentacles, which may replace an existing limb at the GM's discretion. It gains a tentacle attack dealing bludgeoning damage; a creature hit by this attack that is no more than 1 size larger than the banewarped creature is also grappled, and until the grapple ends, the banewarped creature can't use its tentacle attack on another target.	1	1d4	2d4	3d6	4d8
6	***Acidic Bite.*** The creature has sharp teeth that drip acidic spittle. It gains a bite attack if it didn't have one already, dealing both piercing and acid damage on a hit. If it already had a bite attack, this replaces it.	1 + 1d4	1d4 + 1d6	2d4 + 1d8	3d6 + 1d10	4d8 + 1d12
7	Amphibious. The creature has working gills and can breathe both air and water.					
8	***Spiny Growths.*** The creature is partially covered in sharp spines, horns, or spikes. It gains a slam attack that deals bludgeoning and piercing damage on a hit. The piercing damage is not modified by the creature's ability score bonus.	1 + 1d4	1d4 + 2d4	2d6 + 2d4	3d6 + 2d6	4d6 + 2d8
9	***Slimy Skin.*** The creature is covered in a thick slime or mucous. It gains resistance to fire damage and has advantage on ability checks it makes to escape a grapple.					
10	***Toxic Cloud.*** The creature exudes poison gas in a 15-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a Constitution saving throw, taking poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.	2d6	2d8	3d8	4d10	5d12
11	***Eyeless.*** The creature's eyes have withered away. It loses its darkvision and instead gains blindsight to a range of 40 feet. It is blind beyond this radius.					
12	***Two Heads.*** The creature gains a second head. It has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks and on saving throws against being blinded, charmed, deafened, frightened, stunned, and knocked unconscious.					

BANEWARPED HOG

The banewarped hog is one of the more terrifying examples of a creature mutated by the Sidereon's reality-bending effects. Each of these pigs has swelled to twice its original size and is covered in cancerous-looking boils. A banewarped hog has six legs, while its eyes have vanished, its sockets covered in tumorous skin. Its tusks are scimitars of serrated bone, and its mouth opens as wide as a crocodile's, bearing rows of saw-edged, sharklike teeth.

Indiscriminate Omnivores. Banewarped hogs will eat almost anything organic, but they vastly prefer meat and go after it with a single-minded viciousness. Absent other easy prey, a group of banewarped hogs will sometimes turn cannibal, devouring each other until only the strongest are left.

BANEWARPED HOG

Large aberration (banewarped), unaligned

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)
Hit Points 42 (5d10 + 15)
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	10 (+0)	16 (+3)	4 (-3)	14 (+2)	5 (-3)

Damage Resistances acid, poison
Senses blindsight 40 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 12
Languages understands Titan Speech but can't speak
Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Keen Smell. The banewarped hog has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

Unnatural Fortitude. If damage reduces the hog to 0 hit points, it must make a Constitution saving throw with a DC of 5 + the damage taken, unless the damage is from a critical hit. On a success, the hog drops to 1 hit point instead.

Actions

Tusk. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (2d10 + 4) slashing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) piercing damage plus 3 (1d6) acid damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 13). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained, and the hog can't use its tusk, bite, or acid spew on another target.

Acid Spew (Recharge 6). The hog vomits acid in a 15-foot line that is 5 feet wide. Each creature in that line must make a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw, taking 13 (3d8) acid damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Banewarped Mutant

A banewarped mutant is one of the possible results of a humanoid being subjected to the unleashed forces of the Sidereon (or another source of alien magical energy) combined with the unpredictable effects of Mesos' Bane. Banewarped mutants still more or less wear the features of the people they once were, but have become creatures of rage and appetite, their bodies horrifically twisted and their minds seized with hate for other living things.

Cunning and Cruel. Banewarped mutants crave raw flesh and like it better when it's seasoned with fear, leading them to sometimes choose sadism over efficiency when pursuing – and playing with – their quarry. That said, a banewarped mutant isn't a mindless brute, and they can be clever hunters, stalking and flanking prey with grim patience until they can cut off its escape at the last moment.

BANEWARPED MUTANT

Medium aberration (banewarped), chaotic evil

Armor Class 11 (natural armor)
Hit Points 26 (4d8 + 8)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	8 (-1)	12 (+1)	7 (-2)

Damage Resistances acid, poison
Skills Stealth +2, Survival +3
Senses darkvision 90 ft., passive Perception 11
Languages Common, Titan Speech
Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Brute. The banewarped mutant deals an extra die of damage when it makes a melee attack (included in the attack).

Unnatural Fortitude. If damage reduces the mutant to 0 hit points, it must make a Constitution saving throw with a DC of 5 + the damage taken, unless the damage is from a critical hit. On a success, the mutant drops to 1 hit point instead.

Mutations. The banewarped mutant has one or more of the following mutations, chosen by the GM or determined at random:

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The mutant makes two melee attacks.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (2d4 + 2) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 10 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

Cleaver. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft.or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (2d6 + 2) slashing damage.

Mutations

The banewarped mutant has one or more of the following mutations, chosen by the GM or determined at random:

D8	MUTATION
1	***Covered in Eyes.*** The mutant has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.
2	***Chitinous Hide.*** The mutant is covered in chitinous plates that give it an AC of 13 when it is not wearing armor.
3	***Extra Arm.*** The mutant gains an additional arm, and can make one additional melee attack when it uses Multiattack.
4	***Poison Spittle (Recharge 6).*** The mutant spits poison in a 15-foot line that is 5 feet wide. Each creature in that line must make a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw, taking 9 (2d8) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.
5	***Tentacle Arm.*** One of the mutant's arms is replaced by one or more tentacles. Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (2d4 + 2) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a Large or smaller creature, it is grappled (escape DC 12). Until this grapple ends, the mutant can't use this attack on another target.
6	***Vicious Bite.*** The mutant has sharp teeth that drip acidic spittle. Melee Weapon Attack: +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage plus 3 (1d6) acid damage.
7	***Centauroid Form.*** The mutant has four lower limbs, which might be clawed, hooved, insectile, or another shape chosen by the GM. It has advantage on ability checks and saving throws it makes to avoid being knocked prone.
8	***Spiny Growths.*** The mutant is partially covered in sharp spines, horns, or spikes. Its slam attack deals an additional 4 (2d4) piercing damage on a hit.

Blood Moth

The wings of a blood moth are a work of macabre art, with brightly colored designed that seem to morph from abstract images into demonic faces, leering skulls, and monstrous eyes as the moth flits about. Before his fall, Gaurak the Voracious One created the blood moths to go out into the world and feed. When they would return to the Glutton, Gaurak would in turn feast upon the moths, taking delight in the varying tastes created by the swarm's dining.

Though Gaurak is gone, the blood moths continue to thrive on their own. While becoming dinner to a swarm is never preferable, many local artisans near the Plains of Lede will hire adventurers to capture swarms of the moths, using their unique wings to make jewelry and other pieces of art. Swarms are known to frequent other places on Ghelspad, including the Hornsaw Forest and the Perforated Plains.

SWARM OF BLOOD MOTHS

Medium swarm of Tiny beasts, unaligned

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)
Hit Points 13 (3d8)
Speed 5 ft., fly 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
3 (-4)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	1 (-5)	10 (+0)	15 (+2)

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing
Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, prone, restrained, stunned
Senses passive Perception 10
Languages -
Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Armor Penetration. Blood moths are able to wiggle into the vulnerable spots in armor and clothing, ignoring all modifications to AC due to armor when attacking. Natural armor and magical defenses that bolster AC protect the target normally.

Swarm. The swarm can occupy another creature's space and vice versa, and the swarm can move through any opening large enough for a Tiny insect. The swarm can't regain hit points or gain temporary hit points.

ACTIONS

Blood Drain. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 0 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage, and several moths in the swarm attach to the target. At the start of the swarm's turn, the target loses 5 (1d4 + 2) hit points due to blood loss. During this time, the swarm cannot make another attack.

The swarm can detach itself by spending 5 feet of its movement. It does so after draining 20 hit points of blood from the target or the target dies. A creature, including the target, can use its action to brush the moths off.

BONE LORD

A bone lord appears as a nonsensical collection of bones and skulls, held together by a grayish-pink flesh. Though it seems cumbersome, few are the adventurers who have underestimated a bone lord's speed and power and lived to tell about it.

While the creature appears to be a loathesome undead, the bones of its body are not truly part of its natural form, but rather the vehicle which the pink-gray "flesh" uses to move about and hunt. In truth, the flesh is a strange type of fungus, which simply makes due with what bones are available to it as it moves about, often adding new bones to its form, or replacing those it may lose or that become damaged.

The nature of the bone lord has been a topic of debate for scholars and mages that study such things, as it does not behave in a way expected for carnivorous plants. Its origins are also deliberated, with many postulating that the creatures are the result of some powerful experiment gone wrong, or that the fungus was spawned from various battlefields during the Titanswar. This latter hypothesis has some merit, as bone lords had not been encountered until after the fall of the titans.

The fungus requires fresh blood for nourishment, and absorbs the fluid from its prey. Rather than wasting the bones of its victim, however, a bone lord will often wait in an area of cool shade while the bones become bleached and freed of remaining flesh. Then the bone lord adds them to itself and continues on with its hunt.

BONE LORD

Large aberration, neutral evil

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)
Hit Points 94 (11d10 + 33)
Speed 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	10 (+0)	16 (+3)	9 (-1)	20 (+5)	5 (-3)

Saving Throws Wisdom +8
Condition Immunities Sleight of Hand +8
Damage Resistances cold
Damage Vulnerabilities fire
Senses passive Perception 15
Languages -
Challenge 7 (2,900 XP)

Immutable Form. The bone lord is immune to any spell or effect that would alter its form.

Multiple Natural Weapons. When the bone lord begins combat, it has 1d4 bony appendages with which it may attack, such as jaws, claws, bone clubs, dagger-like ribs, and so on. Each subsequent round, it produces one more appendage with which it may attack, up to fourteen total.

Shape Control. Once per round, the bone lord may alter its shape with a successful DC 20 Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check in order to conform its body to take advantage of the surrounding terrain, allowing the bone lord to act as though it were up to two sizes larger or two sizes smaller than its actual size. This change does change any numeric or combat statistics, though it allows the bone lord to move through small spaces or reach heights it may otherwise be unable to.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The bone lord makes an attack with each available natural weapon.

Natural Weapon. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d4 + 4) damage. The type of damage is dependent on the form of the natural weapon; bludgeoning for clubs or slam attacks, piercing for ribs or a bite, slashing for claws or a raking attack.

BOTTLE IMP

Rumored to be the result of dark rituals that twisted and darken the ghosts of children, bottle imps are not fiends at all, but a form of created undead. Made of shadow and smoke, a bottle imp's form is covered in strange markings, probably as a result of its creation, and each is bound to a small bottle, ink well, or other similar container.

Bottle imps are often kept by necromancers and other dark sorcerers, who use them as servants and sometimes as assassins. Many are the nobleperson who have received the gift of an ornate vase or vintage bottle of wine, only to find their deaths lurking within.

Vicious and malevolent, bottle imps balk at being summoned from their bottles in the daylight, and will refuse to do so, even when threatened with their own destruction.

BOTTLE IMP

Tiny undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 22 (natural armor)
Hit Points 30 (12d4)
Speed 0 ft., fly 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	25 (+7)	10 (+0)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Dexterity +9
Skills Stealth +9
Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons
Senses passive Perception 10
Languages one language spoken by its creator
Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Innate Spellcasting. The bottle imp can cast the following spells requiring no components:
At will: *gaseous form* (self only)

Retreat. A bottle imp that is reduced to 0 hit points automatically and instantaneously becomes gaseous and teleports back into its bottle, pulling the stopper of the bottle closed. After 24 hours, the bottle imp returns to its full strength and may exit its bottle. The only way to destroy a bottle imp is to smash its bottle, which has the following statistics: AC 13, 5 (2d4) hit points, damage threshold 10. The bottle can be crushed with a successful DC 26 Strength (Athletics) check.

Undead Nature. A bottle imp doesn't require air, food, drink, or sleep.

Vanishing Bottle (3/day). As an action or reaction, the bottle imp teleports its bottle to any location up to 300 feet away. When it does so, the imp travels with it.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The bottle imp makes one tiny sword and one bite attack.

Tiny Sword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d4 + 7) piercing damage.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1 piercing damage and the target must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or fall into a deep slumber for 10d6 minutes. If a victim takes damage or another creature uses and action to attempt to rouse it, they may repeat the saving throw, waking up on a success.

BUILDER BEETLE

Long before the Titanswar, far before the gods themselves were created by the titans, the slarecians held domain over much of the world of Scarn. Though they viewed many creatures as pests, they found a special affinity for a species of beetle which they found were surprisingly susceptible to psionic control. Further more, they discovered the beetles secretions could be psionically molded into many shapes, able to become steel-hard chitin, or remain soft and pliable.

Though the slarecians have long since vanished from the world, the builder beeteles are still encountered in the underworld, where much of the slarecian empire now lies in ruin. Hives are controlled by a surprisingly intelligent queen, which is much larger than the worker beetles, and is imbued with powers to dominate other lifeforms as well. Without the guidance of the slarecians, the builder beetles returned to their previous habits, which includes refining their hive, hunting and retrieving food, and the propagation of more workers.

Queens and workers both have iridescent blue-black carapaces. Their secretions are similarly colored. The walls, floors, and ceilings of slarecian ruins are more often than not coated by this organic material, and adventurers may often find domestic objects, such as bowls, tools, and even weapons, that are made of harden blue-black chitin.

BUILDER BEETLE QUEEN

Medium aberration, chaotic neutral

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)
Hit Points 65 (10d8 + 20)
Speed 10 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	9 (-1)	9 (-1)	17 (+3)

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 9

Languages -

Challenge 4 (1,110 XP)

Direct Beetles. The queen is able to put out a telepathic call to any builder beetles within one-half mile, summoning 1d4 builder beetle swarms to her within 1d4 rounds.

Resistance to Domination. The queen has advantage on saving throws against being charmed.

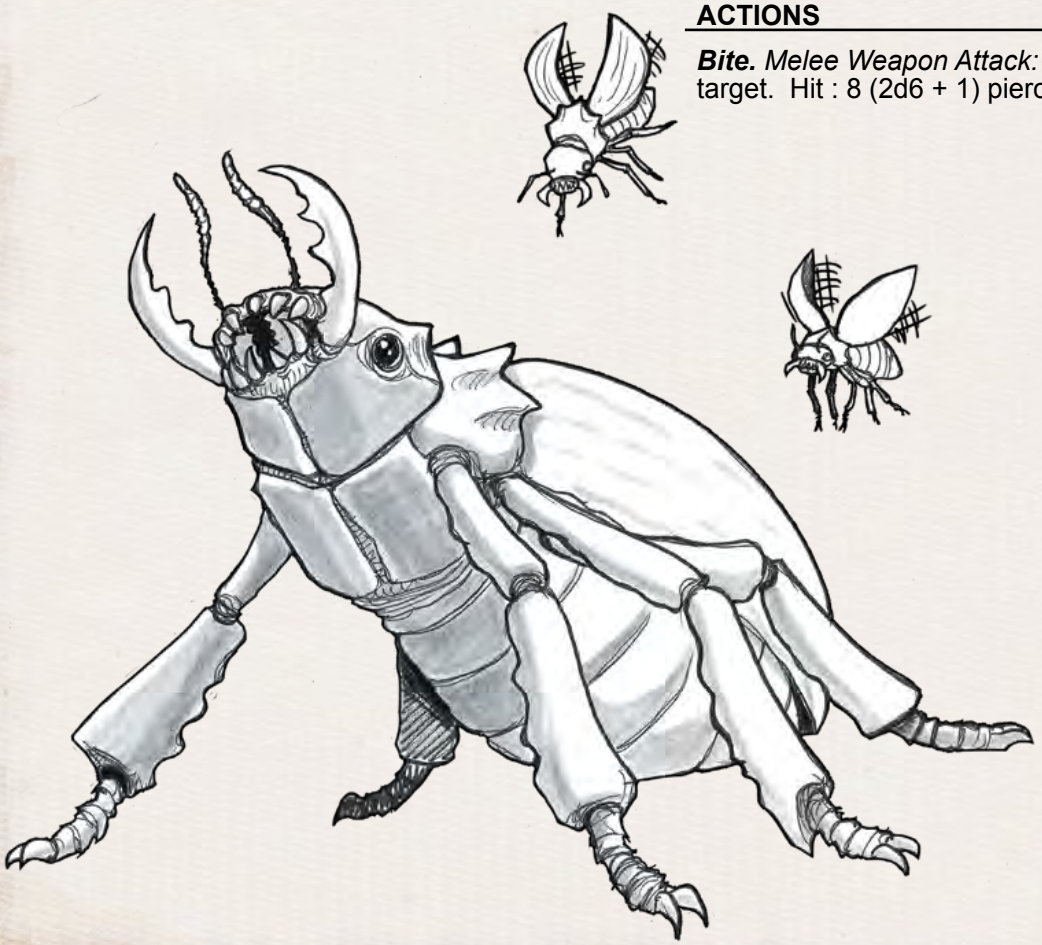
Innate Spellcasting. The queen's spellcasting ability is Charisma (save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks). She can innately cast the following spells without components:

At will: *charm person, shatter* (3d8)

3/day: *dominate monster*

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit : 8 (2d6 + 1) piercing damage.



SWARM OF BUILDER BEETLES

Large swarm of Tiny aberrations, unaligned

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)
Hit Points 63 (14d10 - 14)
Speed 20 ft., climb 20 ft., fly 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
1 (-5)	19 (+4)	9 (-1)	6 (-2)	6 (-2)	9 (-1)

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing.
Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, prone, restrained, stunned
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 8
Languages -
Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Engulf. Creatures that occupy the swarm's space are grappled and must succeed on a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw in order to move out of the swarm's space. If a swarm is below half its hit points, creatures within it have advantage on the escape attempt. Each round a creature ends its turn within the swarm, the escape DC increases by 1 as the beetle's excretions build up on the target. If the target remains in the swarm's space for 10 rounds, the target is completely encased in hardening chitin and is paralyzed and suffocating. An entombed creature may be freed with a DC 18 Strength (Athletics) check from another creature, or by doing 25 points of damage (AC 18) to the chitin.

Fearful Presence. Creatures within 120 feet of the swarm that is above half its hit points and is aware of the swarm must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or become frightened for 1 minute. A creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. If a creature's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the creature is immune to the swarm's Fearful Presence for the next 24 hours.

Swarm. The swarm can occupy another creature's space and vice versa, and the swarm can move through any opening large enough for a Tiny beetle. The swarm can't regain hit points or gain temporary hit points.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The swarm makes one bite attack against any number of creatures in its space.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 0 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) piercing damage and 7 (2d6) poison damage, or 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage and 3 (1d6) poison damage if the swarm has half its hit points or few. The target must succeed on a DC 16 Constitution saving throw or be paralyzed for 1 minute. The target may repeat the saving throw at the end of its turn, ending the effect on a success. A creature who succeeds on the saving throw is immune to the swarm's poison for 24 hours.

CAVE SHRIKE

Horrid and rare creatures, cave shrikes dwell in the deepest depths of the underworld. There, they creep along cavern ceilings in search of prey, which they reach down and snatch up with their multitude of tentacles and then dropping them, smashing them upon stalagmites and the rocky cavern floor below. Once its prey is dead, the cave shrike lifts it up, dissolving and absorbing the corpse with its jelly-like central body. The shrike has three large, oddly shaped eyes which are set equidistantly across its body, which are constantly searching for prey.

Stories tell of clans of subterranean dwellers that worship cave shrikes as divine beings. It is said that kobolds and goblins come to the surface world to steal away children, as well as the weak and weary that can be found living on the streets of many towns and cities, to take them deep into the underworld, offering them up as sacrifices to a cave shrike.

CAVE SHRIKE

Huge ooze, unaligned

Armor Class 8
Hit Points 126 (12d12 + 48)
Speed 15 ft., climb 15 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
21 (+5)	6 (-2)	18 (+4)	1 (-5)	6 (-2)	2 (-4)

Skills Perception +1
Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, deafened, exhaustion, frightened, prone, unconscious
Damage Vulnerabilities lightning
Senses blindsight 120 ft., passive Perception 11
Languages -
Challenge 7 (2,900 XP)

Amorphous. The cave shrike can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing.

Immutable Form. the cave shrike is immune to any spell or effect that would alter its form.

Spider Climb. The cave shrike can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

Tentacles. Each tentacle is easily strong enough to lift 200 pounds, and more than one can lift heavier prey. Tentacles can be attacked individually, and each must suffer 25 damage before it is severed or becomes useless. A creature who succeeds on a melee attack against a tentacle must then succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or their weapon becomes stuck to the tentacle.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The cave shrike makes four tentacle attacks and uses its Pull Up ability on any creature already grappled at the start of its turn.

Sticky Tentacle. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 100 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d6 + 5) bludgeoning damage and the target is grappled (escape DC 15).

Pull Up. The cave shrike lifts a grappled creature 30 feet into the air. The cave shrike may drop the target whenever it chooses.

DEMON, BLADE

Among Vangal's most depraved and vicious creations, some of most brutal are the blade demons. Its twisted form is humanoid only in the most mocking of ways, its arms ending in long, scythe-like hands meant for rending flesh. The demon's wings are stretched over a structure of vertebrae and bone, and its face is thankfully covered by a visor that contstantly burns with unholy light.

Created solely for combat, those summoned to Scarn are prone to random acts of violence, even when commanded to remain calm. Fortunately, blade demons are rarely seen outside the presence of the Herald of Vangal, whose commands the demon's follow abidingly. When encountered after being summoned by priests or warlocks beholden to the Ravager, they are more likely to be impatient, with bloodshed more likely, even if the summoner does not wish it.

BLADE DEMON

Medium fiend (demon), chaotic evil

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)
Hit Points 110 (17d8 + 34)
Speed 35 ft., fly 70 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	17 (+3)	15 (+2)	9 (-1)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Dex +7, Con +6, Int +3, Wis +4, Cha +4
Skills Insight +8, Perception +4, Stealth +7
Damage Resistances acid, cold, fire; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons
Damage Immunities lightning, poison
Condition Immunities poisoned
Senses blindsight 60 ft., passive Perception 14
Languages telepathy 120 ft.
Challenge 12 (8,400 XP)

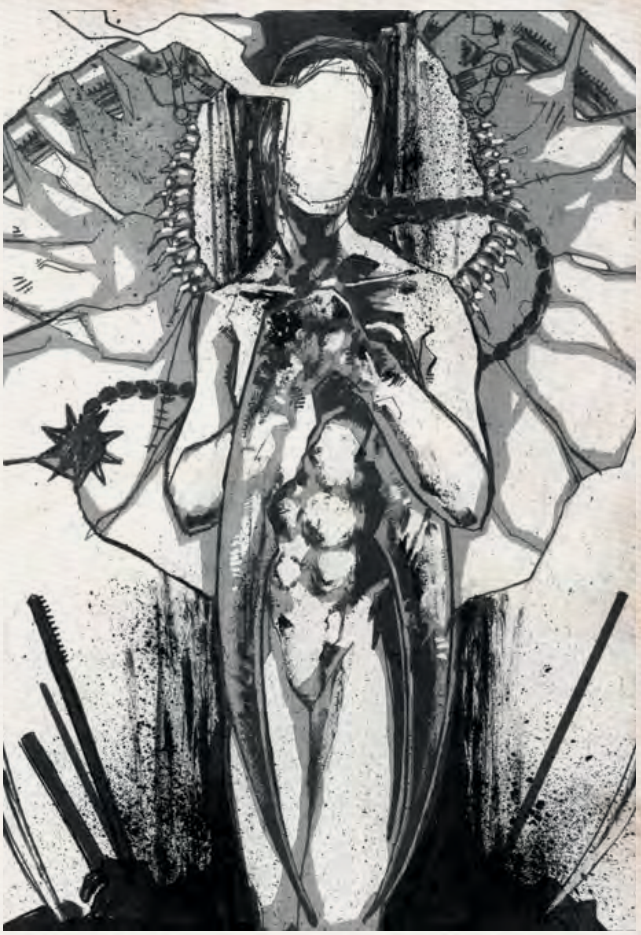
Battle Soul. Once the demon has acted in combat, it is immune to charm spells and effects and other mind-altering magic.

Empowered Scythehands. The demon is able to shift the empowered damage type of its scythehands as a bonus action, which it typically does after sensing an opponent's weakness. It can choose acid, cold, fire, force, lightning, necrotic, poison, psychic, radiant or thunder. Each scythehand may be empowered with a different damage type.

Magic Weapons. The demon's attacks are magical.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The demon makes two scythehand attacks and one braid flail attack.



Scythehand. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) slashing damage and 13 (3d8) empowered damage (see above).

Braid Flail. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

Wing Attack (Recharge 5-6). The demon beats its wings, launching piercing shards at creatures before it. Each creature in a 15-foot cone must make a DC 17 Dexterity saving throw, taking 11 (2d6 + 4) piercing damage and falling prone on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. The demon can then fly up to half its flying speed without provoking an attack of opportunity.

Creatures who are damaged suffer 1d4 piercing damage at the end of each of their rounds, as the shards continue to do harm. This may be halted with a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Medicine) check, or once the target receives magical healing.

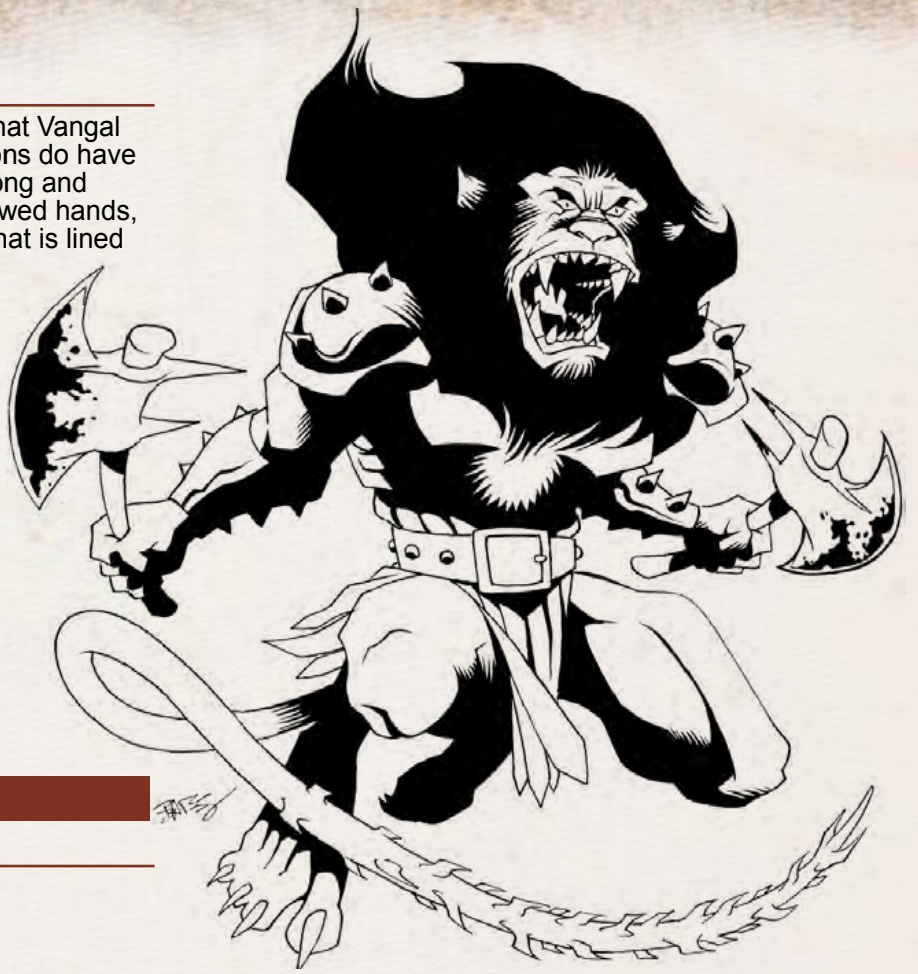
Sense Weakness. The demon studies its target and then makes a DC 20 (or 25 if the target is concealed by illusion or similar magic) Wisdom (Insight) check. If it is successful, it can determine if the target is susceptible to a specific damage type, and whether the target can shrug off any effectiveness of specific damage types.

Summon Demons (1/Day). The demon chooses what to summon and attempts a magical summoning. It has a 50 percent chance of summoning 2d10 dretches or 1 hezrou. It has a 20 percent chance of summoning a Herald of Vangal.

DEMON, LEONINE

Often held to be the spirits of manticora that Vangal has warped and empowered, these demons do have a strong resemblance to the lionfolk. Strong and powerfully built, with large manes and clawed hands, the demon sports a long, serpentine tail that is lined with flesh-rending barbs.

Though originally created by the Reaver to be shock troops in his armies against the titans, leonine demons have rarely been encountered on Scarn since the Titanswar. When they are seen, it is often at the command of priests of Vangal, or serving as trackers for the Horsemen of Vangal.



LEONINE DEMON

Medium fiend (demon), chaotic evil

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)
Hit Points 76 (9d8 + 36)
Speed 35 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	16 (+3)	19 (+4)	8 (-1)	11 (+0)	15 (+2)

Saving Throws Str +8, Dex +6, Wis +3, Cha +5
Skills Perception +3
Damage Resistances acid, cold, fire; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons
Damage Immunities lightning, poison
Condition Immunities poisoned
Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 13
Languages Infernal; telepathy 120 ft.
Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The demon roars if able, then makes one bite and two claw or battleaxe attacks.

Battleaxe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d8 + 5) slashing damage, or 10 (1d10 + 5) slashing damage if used with two hands.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d6 + 5) piercing damage.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d8 + 5) slashing damage.

Barbed Tail. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d6 + 5) piercing damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or its Strength, Dexterity and Constitution scores are each reduced by 2. At the end of the target's next turn, it must repeat the Constitution saving throw, with those abilities reduced by 2 again on a failed save. A creature that succeeds on either saving throw is immune to that demon's poison for 24 hours. Ability score loss lasts until the target finishes a Long rest.

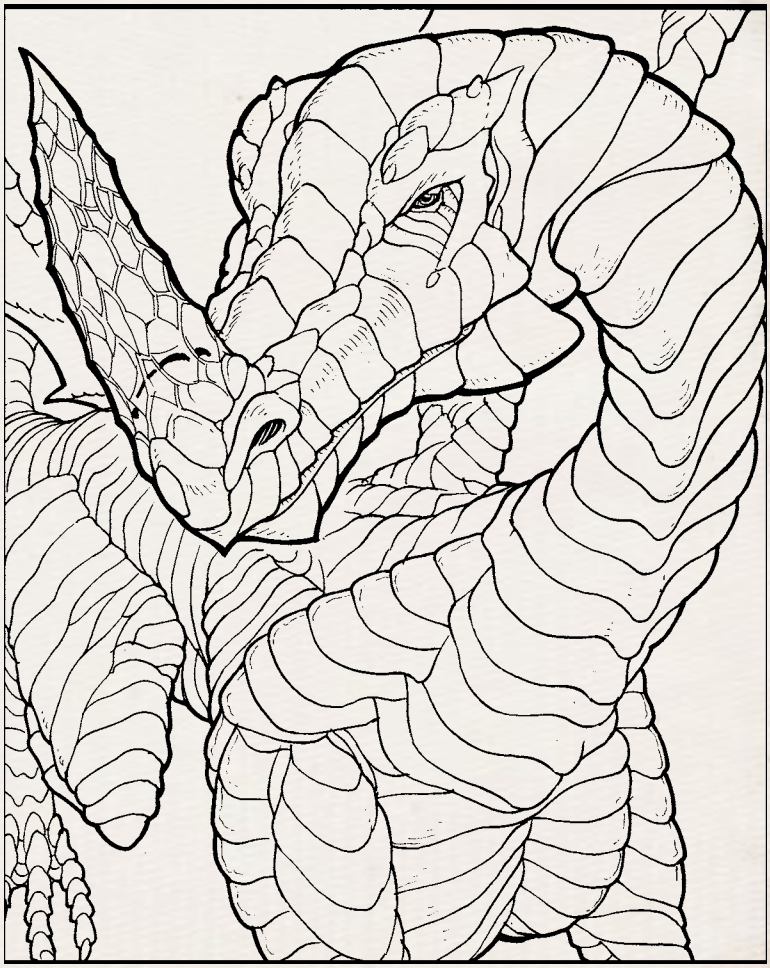
Summon Demon (1/Day). The demon attempts to summon other fiends. It has a 50 percent chance of summoning 3d10 dretches, 1d4 leonine demons, or 1 hezrou. It has a 10 percent chance of summoning a Herald of Vangal.

Roar (Recharge 5-6). Each creature in a 30-foot cone must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or be deafened for 2d6 minutes. In addition, they must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened for 1 minute. A frightened creature may repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turn, overcoming the fear on a successful save. A creature that succeeds on the Wisdom saving throw is immune to being frightened by that demon's roar for 24 hours.

Dragon, Slarecian

Though the slarecian empire once spread across the face of Scarn, the slarecians themselves are all but gone from the world. Remnants of their civilization are rare, but still linger to this day. Perhaps the closest thing to a true slarecian that one may encounter in the modern era is a slarecian dragon. These creatures were once slarecians themselves, beings imbued with powerful psionic abilities which they paired with strange and dark magics in order to change their shapes to resemble those of the true dragons they encountered. Over time, these slarecians spent more and more time in their draconic forms, until they finally shrugged off their former existences completely. Those who survive today have little recollection of being anything other than a dragon, something that the world is silently thankful for. Wyrmlings are told stories of long ago, when their forebears ruled the entirety of Scarn, though these myths have become intermingled with legends of true dragons.

A slarecian dragon is a bane to those that rely on magic. Able to nullify magic in a variety of ways, the dragon is a fierce combatant. Its crystalline horn is prized amongst collectors and adventurers alike, as it acts as a *rod of absorption* when removed from the body of a dragon.



MATURE ADULT SLARECIAN DRAGON

Huge dragon, neutral evil

Armor Class 19 (natural armor)
Hit Points 207 (18d12 + 90)
Speed 40 ft., fly 90 ft., swim 40 ft., burrow 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
25 (+7)	10 (+0)	21 (+5)	20 (+5)	21 (+5)	20 (+5)

Saving Throw Dex +5, Con +10, Wis +10, Cha +10
Skills Insight +10, Perception +10
Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons
Damage Immunities cold
Senses blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 20
Languages Ledean, Draconic, telepathy 120 ft.
Challenge 15 (13,000 XP)

Magic Reservoir. The dragon's gem-like horn acts as a magical reservoir, storing the magical energies of spells cast against the dragon. As a reaction, the horn absorbs a spell that is targeting only the dragon and not within an area of effect. The absorbed spell's effect is canceled, and the energy - not the spell itself - is stored in the horn, with the same level as the spell when it was cast. The horn can absorb 20 levels of energy at a time. The dragon can convert energy stored in the horn in order to cast spells it can innately cast, using stored levels in place of its number of times per day to cast that spell.

The horn from a slain dragon continues to function in the same fashion if a spell caster attunes to the object, the horn acting as if it were a rod of absorption.

Innate Spellcasting. The dragon's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (save DC 18, +10 to hit with spell attacks). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *detect magic*
3/day: *polymorph* (self only)
2/day: *anti-magic field*
1/day: *foresight*

Legendary Resistance (3/Day). If the dragon fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

Magical Weapons. The dragons melee attacks are magical.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The dragon makes one bite attack and two claw attacks.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 18 (2d10 + 7) piercing damage.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (2d6 + 7) slashing damage.

Tail. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 16 (2d8 + 7) bludgeoning damage.

Disjunction Breath (Recharge 5-6). The dragon exhales a 30-foot cone of magic-nullifying energy. All spell and spell-like effects in the affected area are ended. Each magic item within the area must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw (its own or its owners, whichever is higher). Those that fail have their magical properties subdued for 24 hours. Magic items that fail three consecutive Wisdom saving throws permanently become nonmagical items.

The breath weapon has a 1% chance of destroying an antimagic field. If the antimagic field survives, spells, effects, and items within it are not affected by the breath weapon.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The dragon can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The dragon regains legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Detect. The dragon makes a Wisdom (Perception) check.

Tail Attack. The dragon makes a tail attack.

Wing Attack (Costs 2 Actions). The dragon beats its wings. Each creature within 10 feet of the dragon must succeed on a DC 20 Dexterity saving throw or take 14 (2d6 + 7) bludgeoning damage and be knocked prone. The dragon can then fly up to half its flying speed.

DRAGON, TAR

True dragons are rare to come by on Ghelspad, and to encounter a tar dragon is almost unheard of. While most of the true dragons fled back to the Dragon Lands prior to the Divine War, there are those tar dragons who remained to fight, and die, in the battle between titans and gods. After the war was over, only two of these dragons were known to have survived, one of which was slain in the following years. Tales tell, however, of adventurers who have seen such dragons in recent years, a sign that perhaps their population is once again increasing.

Reeking of the acrid, hot tar, the dragon's features are obscured by the dark muck that covers its body. Only the horns that sweep back from its skull, and its flat jawline which is filled with razor-sharp teeth, are distinguishable in the black ooze. The dragon's wings appear stunted, but are capable of keeping it in flight long enough to immobilize its victims before landing and entering into melee combat.

YOUNG TAR DRAGON

Medium dragon, lawful evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)
Hit Points 72 (11d8 + 22)
Speed 40 ft., fly 80 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	10 (+0)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Dex +2, Con +4, Wis +3, Cha +3
Skills Arcana +3, Athletics +5, Insight +3, Intimidate +3, Nature +3, Perception +3, Survival +3
Damage Immunities acid, fire
Senses blindsight 30 ft., darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 13
Languages Draconic and one common language according to its region
Challenge 4 (1,110 XP)

Fearsome Bite. The tar dragon's bite scores a critical hit on a roll of 18-20.

Tarred Skin. If an opponent successfully hits the dragon with a melee weapon attack, they must succeed on a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw or the weapon becomes stuck to the dragon's sticky body. The weapon may be pulled free with a successful DC 14 Athletics (Strength) check.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The dragon makes two attacks, one with its bite and one with its claws.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d10 + 3) piercing damage plus 3 (1d6) acid damage.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) slashing damage.

Sticky Vomit (Recharge 5-6). The dragon exhales a cone of inky black bile in a 30-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw or be held immobile within the adhesive vomit and is considered restrained and suffocating. A trapped creature must succeed on two consecutive DC 14 Strength (Athletics) checks in order to extract itself from the sticky substance. A creature who succeeds on the first check may take actions, but is considered grappled.

Swallow. The dragon makes one bite attack against a Small or smaller target. If the attack hits, the target is also swallowed. While swallowed, the target is blinded and restrained, it has total cover against attacks and other effects outside the dragon, and takes 3 (1d6) bludgeoning and 7 (2d6) acid damage at the start of each of the dragon's turns.

If the dragon takes 15 damage or more on a single turn from the swallowed creature, the dragon must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw at the end of that turn or regurgitate that creature, which falls prone in a space within 10 feet of the dragon. Alternately, the trapped creature may escape the dragon's gut by succeeding on two consecutive Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) checks. If the dragon dies, a swallowed creature is no longer restrained by it and can escape from the corpse by using 15 feet of movement, exiting prone.

The dragon can swallow up to one Small creature or two Tiny creatures.

JUVENILE TAR DRAGON

Large dragon, lawful evil

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)
Hit Points 102 (12d10 + 36)
Speed 40 ft., fly 80 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	10 (+0)	17 (+3)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws Dex +3, Con +6, Wis +5, Cha +5
Skills Arcana +5, Athletics +7, Insight +5, Intimidate +5, Nature +5, Perception +5, Survival +5
Damage Immunities acid, fire
Senses blindsight 30 ft., darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 15
Languages Draconic and one common language according to its region
Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

Fearsome Bite. The tar dragon's bite scores a critical hit on a roll of 18-20.

Tarred Skin. If an opponent successfully hits the dragon with a melee weapon attack, they must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or the weapon becomes stuck to the dragon's sticky body. The weapon may be pulled free with a successful DC 15 Athletics (Strength) check.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The dragon makes three attacks, one with its bite and two with its claws.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d10 + 4) piercing damage plus 3 (1d6) acid damage.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) slashing damage.

Sticky Vomit (Recharge 5-6). The dragon exhales a cone of inky black bile in a 30-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or be held immobile within the adhesive vomit and is considered restrained and suffocating. A trapped creature must succeed on two consecutive DC 15 Strength (Athletics) checks in order to extract itself from the sticky substance. A creature who succeeds on the first check may take actions, but is considered grappled.

Swallow. The dragon makes one bite attack against a Medium or smaller target. If the attack hits, the target is also swallowed. While swallowed, the target is blinded and restrained, it has total cover against attacks and other effects outside the dragon, and takes 3 (1d6) bludgeoning and 7 (2d6) acid damage at the start of each of the dragon's turns.

If the dragon takes 20 damage or more on a single turn from the swallowed creature, the dragon must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw at the end of that turn or regurgitate that creature, which falls prone in a space within 10 feet of the dragon. Alternately, the trapped creature may escape the dragon's gut by succeeding on two consecutive Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) checks. If the dragon dies, a swallowed creature is no longer restrained by it and can escape from the corpse by using 15 feet of movement, exiting prone.

The dragon can swallow up to one Medium creature, two Small creatures, or four Tiny creatures.

DUNE CRAWLER

Covered in overlapping chitinous plates, dune crawlers, also known as pillbugs, resemble elongated wood lice. The remaining essence left from a fallen titan mutated these creatures into the enormous, carrion-eating desert dwellers they have become. A full-grown crawler can be up to 20 feet long and be six feet high at the top of its back. They are not temperamental creatures and tend to be easy to handle. Combined with their stamina, they are ideal pack animals for long desert voyages.

Because of their adaptation to desert living, they are commonly used as transportation through arid areas for caravans. A single dune crawler can carry two human-sized riders and 500 pounds of cargo without straining. More riders can be added (up to a total of four) by sacrificing the cargo capacity. A crawler with no riders could carry up to 1,000 pounds of cargo, as long as someone walked or rode alongside to lead the beast.

Dune crawlers have resistance to slashing damage because of the hard, chitinous plates covering nearly their entire upper body. Their body is segmented, and each segment has a pair of legs - one leg on each side - that propel the crawler along at a steady rate. While not fast, these creatures are highly prized for their endurance, capable of traveling at the same rate for up to twelve hours a day with no ill effects. Their water consumption is minimal: they gain most of the liquid they need from their food. Because they have adapted to a diet of carrion, they are not interested in eating anything freshly killed. If there is a difficulty in using these animals for long-range transport, it is keeping them supplied with rotting meat for the entire journey, though their diet can be supplemented with rotting wood or vegetation for a few days with no ill effects. They typically eat 10 pounds of meat per day. Though they can go without eating for up to two days, they will need to eat enough in one sitting to “catch up” with the food they missed.

Crawlers tend to wiggle down into the sand, with only the tops of their backs exposed, to stay warm during the cold desert nights. When attacked, they thrash the front half of their bodies back and forth, smashing anyone not able to dodge or move out of the way. Riders on a crawler defending itself in this way must make a DC 13 Dexterity save to hang on and can do nothing else until the beast is dead or no longer being attacked. Riders flung off will take 2d4 bludgeoning damage from hitting the ground.

DUNE CRAWLER

Large beast, unaligned

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)
Hit Points 75 (10d8 + 30)
Speed 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
24 (+7)	10 (+0)	16 (+3)	3 (-4)	3 (-4)	3 (-4)

Damage Resistances slashing from nonmagical weapons
Senses darkvision 30 ft., passive Perception 6
Languages -
Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Keen Smell. The dune drawler has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

ACTIONS

Thrash. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 21 (4d6 + 7) bludgeoning damage.

EKNETHRYN

Prior to the fall of the slarecian empire, long before the Divine War, there were those humanoids who did not look upon their alien masters with distrust, but rather bowed before them in wonton supplication. Zealous devotees to the mysterious beings, many cults arose across the face of Ghelspad. In the Kelder Mountains, deep within the Canyon of Souls, one such sect arose, the Eknethryn. These priests and their followers kidnapped natives to the area, Ontenazans that had settled on either end of the Canyon, offering their victims up as sacrifices to the slarecians. But their deeds drew the attention of the Ontenazans, who tracked the cultists into the Canyon to their hidden temple. There they buried the leaders of the cult alive in their own shrine, sealing off its entrance to protect the world outside.

Trapped, the cultists were not without power. Calling upon dark shadow magics, Tauza, the leader of the Eknethryn, veiled himself from death by becoming a mummy lord, while his magics similarly "blessed" his followers with undeath.

TAUZA

Medium undead, lawful evil

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)
Hit Points 97 (13d8 + 39)
Speed 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	10 (+0)	17 (+3)	11 (+0)	18 (+4)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Con +8, Int +5, Wis +9, Cha +8
Skills History +5, Religion +5
Damage Vulnerabilities radiant, fire
Damage Immunities necrotic, poison; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons
Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, poisoned
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14
Languages Ledean, Ontenazu, Abyssal
Challenge 15 (13,000 XP)

Magic Resistance. Tauza has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Spellcasting. Tauza is a 9th-level spellcaster. Their spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 17, +9 to hit with spell attacks). Tauza has the following cleric spell prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *sacred flame, thaumaturgy*
1st level(4 slots): *bane, inflict wounds, shield of faith*
2nd level(3 slots): *hold person, silence*
3rd level(3 slots): *animate dead, bestow curse*
4th level(3 slots): *banishment, guardian of faith*
5th level(1 slot): *flame strike*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Tauza can use their Dreadful Glare and makes two attacks with its cursed fist.

Cursed Fist. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) bludgeoning damage plus 10(3d6) necrotic damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or be cursed with Eknethryn rot (see sidebar, page #).

Dreadful Glare. Tauza targets one creature they can see within 60 feet of it. If the target can see Tauza, it must succeed on a DC 16 Wisdom saving throw against this magic or become frightened until the end of Tauza's next turn. If the target fails the saving throw by 5 or more, it is also paralyzed for the same duration. A target that succeeds on the saving throw is immune to the Dreadful Glare of Tauza and the Buried Cultists for the next 24 hours.

Legendary Actions

Tauza can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. Tauza regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Attack. Tauza makes one attack with its Cursed Fist or uses its Dreadful Glare.

Blinding Winds. Blinding winds from the Canyon of Souls swirl around Tauza. Each creature within 5 feet of the mummy lord must succeed on a DC 16 Constitution saving throw or be blinded until the end of the creature's next turn.

Blasphemous Word (Costs 2 Actions). Tauza utters a blasphemous word from its service of the Slarecians. Each non-undead creature within 10 feet of Tauza that can hear the magical utterance must succeed on a DC 16 Constitution saving throw or be stunned until the end of Tauza's next turn.

Channel Negative Energy (Costs 2 Actions). Tauza magically unleashes negative energy. Creatures within 60 feet of Tauza, including ones behind barriers and around corners, can't regain hit points until the end of Tauza's next turn.

Whirlwind of Sand (Costs 2 Actions). Tauza magically transforms into a whirlwind of sand, moves up to 60 feet, and reverts to its normal form. While in whirlwind form, Tauza is immune to all damage, and it can't be grappled, petrified, knocked prone, restrained, or stunned. Equipment worn or carried by Tauza remain in its possession.

BURIED CULTIST

Medium undead, lawful evil

Armor Class 11 (natural armor)
Hit Points 58 (9d8 + 18)
Speed 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	8 (-1)	15 (+2)	6 (-2)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Wis +2
Damage Vulnerabilities fire, radiant
Damage Immunities bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks
Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, poisoned
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10
Languages Common, Ontenazu, Abyssal
Challenge 3 (700 XP)

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The buried cultist can use their Dreadful Glare and makes one attack with its Cursed Fist.

Cursed Fist. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) bludgeoning damage plus 10 (3d6) necrotic damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or be cursed with Eknethryn rot.

Dreadful Glare. The buried cultist targets one creature it can see within 60 feet of it. If the target can see the buried cultist, it must succeed on a DC 16 Wisdom saving throw against this magic or become frightened until the end of buries cultist's next turn. If the target fails the saving throw by 5 or more, it is also paralyzed for the same duration. A target that succeeds on the saving throw is immune to the Dreadful Glare of Tauza and the Buried Cultists for the next 24 hours.

EKNETHRYN ROT

A horrid wasting curse, those who contract Eknethryn rot begin to feel thirsty, their skin itching as it begins to flake. Over the coming days, the creature's flesh begins to dry up and crumble away like loose sand. Symptoms begin to manifest 1d4 hours after the curse takes hold. At the end of every long rest, a cursed creature suffers 10 (3d6) necrotic damage and has its maximum hit points reduced by an equal amount. The victim cannot regain hit points, and if its maximum hit points are reduced to 0, it dies and its body crumbles into dust.

Eknethryn rot can be ended by the remove curse spell, though the caster must succeed on a DC 13 spellcaster ability check for the spell to take hold. Once freed of the curse, a creature's hit point maximum returns to normal after a long rest.

FLESH STRIPPER

While vermin are often problematic, flesh strippers are a bane upon domesticated livestock and wild animal herds across the face of Scarn. Though they appear much like typical rats, the bite of a flesh stripper has an anesthetic quality, its poison numbing the flesh of its prey.

The rodents were named so after witnesses claim to have seen the majority of a grazing animal's body, which simply continued eating as though nothing was wrong, until it finally succumbed and fell lifeless where it stood. The entire process took a matter of moments, as the swarm engulfed the creature, leaving behind only bone and scraps of viscera.

SWARM OF FLESH STRIPPERS

Medium Swarm of Tiny beasts, unaligned

Armor Class 11
Hit Points 28 (5d8 + 5)
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)	2 (-4)	10 (+0)	2 (-4)

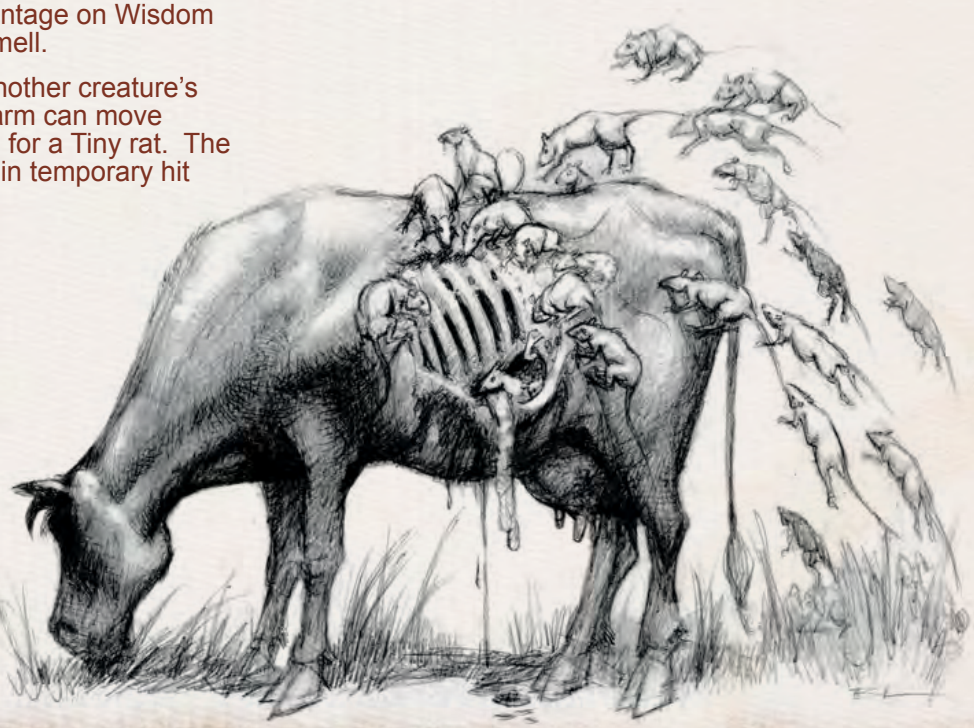
Skills Stealth +3
Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing.
Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, prone, restrained, stunned
Senses darkvision 30 ft., passive Perception 10
Languages -
Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Keen Smell. The swarm has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

Swarm. The swarm can occupy another creature's space and vice versa, and the swarm can move through any opening large enough for a Tiny rat. The swarm can't regain hit points or gain temporary hit points.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 0 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (2d6 + 1) piercing damage, or 4 (1d6 + 1) piercing damage if the swarm has half of its hit points or fewer, and the target must succeed on a DC 11 Constitution saving throw or suffer from 1d4 Dexterity ability score loss and become affected by the flesh strippers poison. The ability score loss lasts until the target finishes a Long rest. The poison completely numbs the target to pain, touch, and even temperature. For 2d4 hours, they do not notice when they are injured unless they witness or hear the occurrence, are do not fall unconscious when reduced to 0 hit points. If the target is reduced to 0 hit points, they may take only their movement or standard action, and lose 1 hit point per round automatically. The target dies if their hit point total reaches a negative amount equal to its Constitution score, or if they are below 0 hit points when the poison wears off.

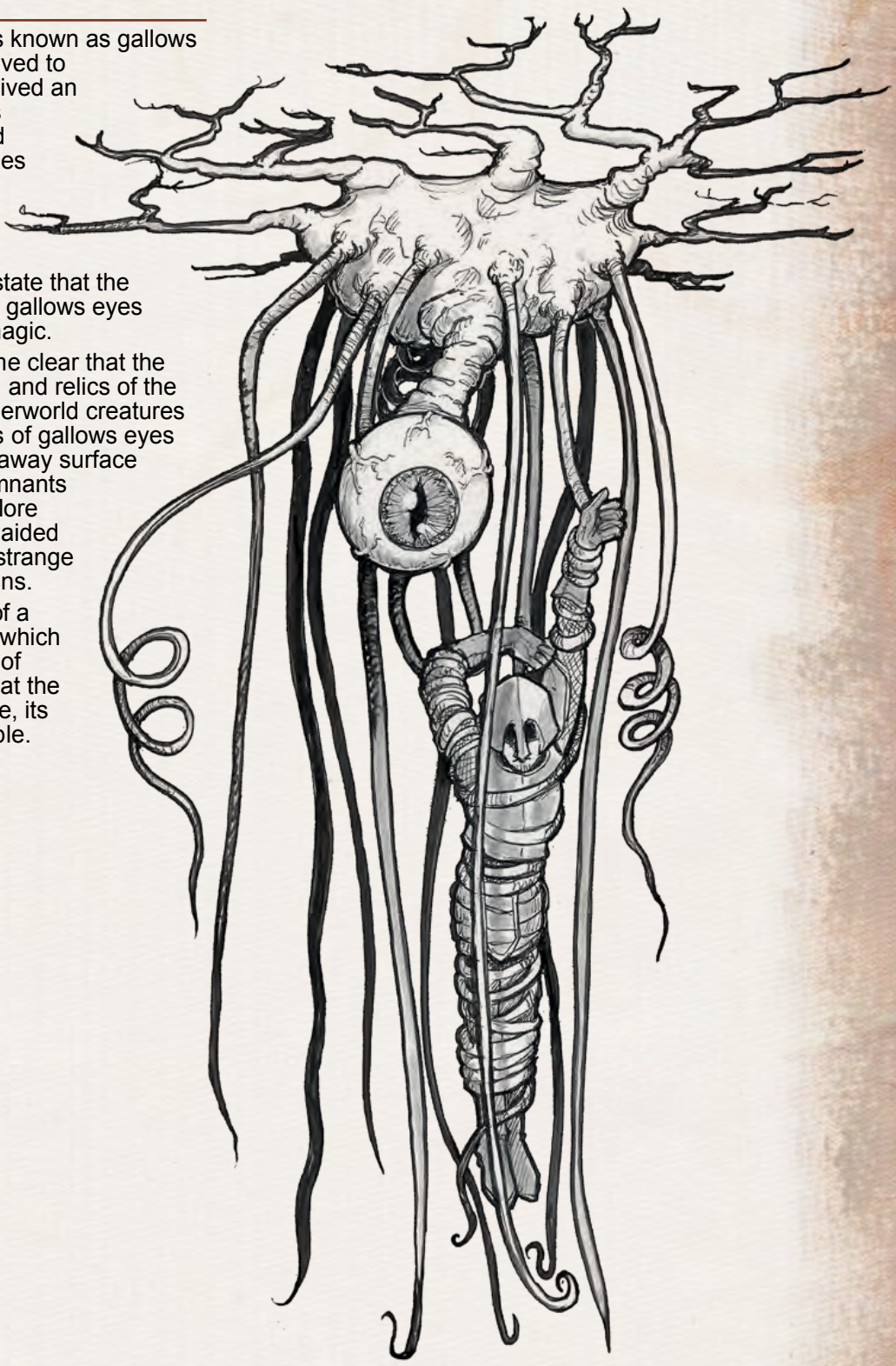


Gallows Eye

LIttle in known about the creatures known as gallows eyes, for few have seen one and lived to tell about it. Those who have survived an encounter with the strange entities have always been exploring in and around slarecian ruins. Some sages believe the creatures were created by the titan Mesos in order to keep other creatures out of such ruins, where far worse things still remain. Others state that the slarecians themselves created the gallows eyes through dark rituals and strange magic.

Whatever their origin, it has become clear that the gallow's eyes covet the ruins, lore, and relics of the slarecians. Goblins and other underworld creatures have reported seeing small groups of gallows eyes working together to not only drive away surface world interlopers, but to gather remnants left behind by the fallen empire. More disturbing, these groups are often aided by skeletons, zombies, and other strange undead that are unique to such ruins.

A gallows eye's body is made up of a bulbous mass of black flesh, from which several tentacles emerge. A stalk of veiny flesh sprouts from the body, at the end of which is a large reptilian eye, its iris faintly glowing a sickening purple.



GALLOWS EYE

Medium aberration, neutral evil

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)
Hit Points 110 (17d8 + 34)
Speed 45 ft., climb 30 ft., fly 90 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	12 (+1)	15 (+2)	18 (+4)	17 (+3)	17 (+3)

Saving Throws Constitution +5, Wisdom +6
Skills Arcana +7, Perception +8, Stealth +4
Damage Immunities necrotic
Condition Immunities prone
Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 18
Languages telepathy 120 ft.
Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Magical Flight. The gallows eye's ability to fly does not function in areas where magic is negated or suppressed, such as in an antimagic field. Spells such as dispel magic cause the effect to stop working for 1 minute.

Innate Spellcasting. The gallows eye's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit will spell attacks). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no components:

At will: *disrupt undead, fear, ray of enfeeblement*

3/day: *animate dead, ghoul touch †, inflict wounds* (3d10), *shadow touch †, vampiric touch*

† see **Scarred Races** player options guide.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The gallows eye makes six tentacle attacks. The gallows eye may make a Constrict or Death Touch attack, if available, against a grappled creature in place of one of its tentacle attacks.

Tentacle. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) bludgeoning damage and the target is grappled. A target grappled by more than one tentacle rolls at disadvantage to escape the grapple, and is able to break free of all tentacles on a success.

Constrict. The gallows eye inflicts 5 (1d6 + 2) bludgeoning damage to a grappled creature, and squeezes the creature so they may not speak or cast spells with verbal components if the target fails a DC 16 Constitution saving throw.

Death Touch (1/Day). The gallows eye channels necrotic energy through a grappled creature, who must succeed on a DC 16 Constitution saving throw or be reduced to 0 hit points. On a success, the creature takes 16 (3d6 + 6) necrotic damage.

Enervation Gaze. A targeted creature within 120 feet of the gallows eye must succeed on a DC16 Constitution saving throw or take 27 (6d8) necrotic damage on a failed save, or half as much on a successful one. The target's maximum hit points are reduced by the amount of damage taken. This reduction lasts until the target finishes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0. If the target is a spellcaster, they also lose one spell slot from their highest available level if they fail their saving throw.

Leech Field (2/Day). A haze of purple mist surrounds the gallows eye in a 10-foot radius. All living creatures must make a DC 14 Consitution saving throw, taking 14 (4d6) necrotic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. The gallows eye gains hit points equal to the total lost by all living creatures within the field, though it may not absorb more hit points from a single creature than the creature has available, gaining no temporary hit points after a target falls to 0. Hit points gained above the gallows eye's hit point maximum are gained as temporary hit points that remain for one hour. The maximum number of temporary hit points the gallows eye may gain are equal to its standard hit points.

If undead are caught in the leech field, they take no damage from the effect. Instead, the gallows eye suffers 14 (4d6) psychic damage for each undead within the field, with a DC 14 Constitution saving throw to halve the damage. Undead are healed by an amount of hit points equal to those lost by the gallows eye, though they may not gain temporary hit points if healed to maximum. The gallows eye suffers this damage before absorbing damage from living creatures. If this causes the gallows eye to die, the leech field ends before harming living creatures within it.

GHOUL HOUND

Relentless predators, ghoul hounds are created by dark rituals. While any canine can be corrupted by the foul necromancy, often the largest and strongest are chosen for conversion into cunning and sadistic hunters. The dark masters of Glivid-Autel have packs of ghouls hounds which they use to track down escaped slaves, and to hunt down those who would trespass in their territory.

No witness would claim a ghoul hound to be amongst the living, with bones poking through dessicated skin and withered flesh, the hound's eyes glowing a baleful green.

GHOUL HOUND

Medium undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)
Hit Points 36 (8d8)
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	11 (+0)	10 (+1)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)

Skills Perception +4, Stealth +4
Damage Immunities poison
Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, poisoned
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14
Languages -
Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Keen Senses. The ghoul hound has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

Pack Tactics. The ghoul hound has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the hound's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 9 (2d6 + 2) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 12 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

If the target is a creature other than an undead, it must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or be paralyzed for 1 minute. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

In addition, if the target is a creature other than undead, it must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or be infected with ghoul fever.

Howl (Recharge 5-6). The ghoul hound emits a bloodcurdling howl. Each creature within 180 feet that can hear the howl must succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or be stunned until the end of their next turn, and frightened for 2d4 rounds thereafter. A creature who succeeds on the saving throw is immune to that ghoul hound's Howl for 24 hours.

GHOUL FEVER

When a creature that isn't undead is bitten by a creature that carries the disease, the target creature must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or become infected.

One day after the infection, the target's Dexterity and Constitution ability scores are reduced by 1d3. At the end of each long rest, the infected creature may make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw. On a successful save, it recovers 1 to both Dexterity and Constitution. A creature that fails three consecutive saving throws permanently loses 1 point of Dexterity and Constitution.

An afflicted humanoid that dies of ghoul fever rises as a ghoul at the next midnight. A creature that becomes a ghoul in this way does not retain any of its racial or class abilities.

GHOUL, OVERGHAST

Horrific undead, an overghast has a terrifying gleam of intelligence in its eyes. Twisted and mishapen during its transformation from a humanoid into its new, powerful form, the overghast's innards spill forth and become grasping tentacles, spikes erupting from its skin, and its jaw extending hideously to make room for an engorged tongue that it can use to lash out with.

The origin of these creatures is a mystery, though many attribute their creation to bursts of necrotic energies that were released during the Divine War, the same energies which created the Isle of the Dead. Since then, however, overghasts have been created by powerful necromancers, transforming typical ghouls and ghasts, and even living humanoids. The dark rituals used in this corruption are often attributed to the nefarious wizards of Glivid-Autel.

GHOUL, OVERGHAST

Large undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)
Hit Points 77 (14d10)
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	15 (+2)	10 (+1)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)

Skills Athletics +7, Perception +5, Stealth +5
Damage Resistances necrotic
Damage Immunities poison
Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, poisoned
Senses passive Perception 15
Languages regional Common
Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Grappling Tendrils. If the overghast starts its turn grappling an opponent within 5 feet of itself, it may transfer the creature to its abdominal tendrils with a successful grapple check as a bonus action. Until this grapple ends (escape DC 15), the target is restrained and the overghast can automatically hit the target with its bite, and the overghast can't grapple another target with its tendrils.

Heightened Scent. The overghast can sense creatures that have a scent within 30 feet of it as though the overghast has blindsight.

Keen Senses. The overghast has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

Spines. At the start of each of its turns, the overghast deals 3 (1d6) piercing damage to any creature grappling it.

Stench. Any creature that starts its turn within 15 feet of the overghast must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 10 minutes. On a successful saving throw, the creature is immune to the overghast's Stench for 24 hours.

Turning Defiance. The overghast and any ghouls within 30 feet of it have advantage on saving throws against effects that turn undead.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The overghast makes one bite or tongue attack and two claw attacks.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) piercing damage. If the target is a creature other than an undead, it must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or be paralyzed for 1 minute. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

In addition, if the target is a creature other than undead, it must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or be infected with ghoul fever.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) slashing damage. If the target is a creature other than an undead, it must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or be paralyzed for 1 minute. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

Tongue. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 20 ft., one creature. *Hit:* The target is grappled (escape DC 15) and must succeed on a DC 15 Strength saving throw or be pulled 20 feet straight toward the overghast. Until the grapple ends, the target is restrained and has disadvantage on Strength checks and Strength saving throws, and the overghast can't use its tongue on another target.

GIANT ANT

Colonies of these oversized ants have been known to devastate farmlands and even cause sinkholes to collapse buildings.

WARRIOR, GIANT ANT

Medium beast, unaligned

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)
Hit Points 59 (7d10 + 21)
Speed 30 ft., burrow 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)	3 (-4)	10 (+0)	3 (-4)

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10
Languages -
Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The giant ant makes two bite attacks.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or suffer an additional 7 (2d6) poison damage.

WORKER, GIANT ANT

Medium beast, unaligned

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)
Hit Points 59 (7d10 + 21)
Speed 30 ft., burrow 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)	3 (-4)	11 (+0)	2 (-4)

Senses passive Perception 10
Languages -
Challenge 2 (450 XP)

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

Giant Praying Mantis

Giant praying mantises are fearsome predators, remaining motionless until their prey is within reach. Their amazing speed and dexterity help them to capture their prey, while their remarkable strength helps hold the prey motionless while they dine on their still-living victim.

Many mantis species are fantastic mimics; they adopt camouflage coloration and body shape to imitate sticks or leaves. Mantises of all sizes are all ambush predators: they hold very still and attack unsuspecting prey. They will eat anything that they can catch and hold, including creatures larger than themselves.

The female of this giant species lays between 10 and 30 eggs in a purse-like sack that hardens as it dries. Giant praying mantis eggs can fetch as much as 10 gold pieces each to collectors and to those who would use them for darker purposes.

GIANT PRAYING MANTIS

Large beast, unaligned

Armor Class 14
Hit Points 75 (10d8 + 30)
Speed 30 ft., fly 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	3 (-4)	10 (+0)	3 (-4)

Skills Acrobatics +3, Stealth +3
Damage Resistances slashing from nonmagical weapons
Senses darkvision 30 ft., passive Perception 10
Languages -
Challenge 3 (700 XP)

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The giant mantis makes two claw attacks and a bite attack.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d6 + 5) piercing damage.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d6 + 5) slashing damage. If the mantis hits a single creature with both claw attacks, the creature is grappled (escape DC 15).

GLOOM WOMB

It is said that as the creatures known as dark wombs grow older, their abilities are empowered, granting them and their clone children expanded knowledge and talents. Some sages have noticed this phenomenon occurs only in the Titanshome mountains, and hypothesize that the strange new powers are a result of the dark womb's exposure to the titanic corruptions in that region. Whatever the cause, these empowered beings, called gloom wombs, create clones so close to the original in thought and form, they are able to fool even the closest of friends and allies.

GLOOM WOMB

Huge monstrosity, neutal evil

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)
Hit Points 168 (16d12 + 64)
Speed 15 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	6 (-2)	19 (+4)	21 (+5)	14 (+2)	19 (+4)

Saving Throws Str +9, Int +10, Wis +7, Cha +9
Skills Arcana +10, Deception +9, Insight +7, Perception +7
Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from non-magical weapons
Damage Immunities poison
Condition Immunities paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone
Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 17
Languages Infernal, Primordial, Titan Speech, plus any two other tongues
Challenge 14 (11,500 XP)

Apathy Aura. The gloom womb is surrounded by a 30-foot aura of psychic energy that saps the will of creatures within it. Undead and constructs are not affected by the aura. When a creature first enters the aura or starts its turn within it, it must succeed on a DC 17 Charisma saving throw. If it fails, it may not take actions other than to move until the start of its next turn. A creature that succeeds is immune to the gloom womb's aura for 24 hours.

Clone Child. The gloom womb can consume any morsel (blood, flesh, hair, nail cuttings, etc.) of any creature that is alive or has been dead for less than one week. One day later, the gloom womb gives birth to a cloned version of the creature that appears virtually identical to the original. The gloom womb may not clone a creature of greater than Large size, and in any case the creature cannot have more than half the gloom womb's Hit Dice. When birthed from the gloom womb, the cloned creature is of the same age as the original was at the time the tissue sample was taken.

Cloned creatures are typical members of their race, with natural armor, natural weapons, traits, skills, and statistics as appropriate. If the original creature is living, the gloom womb may connect the mind of the clone to that of the living creature, granting the clone access to memories, class levels, spell casting, innate casting, and supernatural abilities of the original creature. If the original creature succeeds on a DC 17 Charisma saving throw, they may prevent the connection, and are immune to the effect for 24 hours.

The gloom womb may, once per day, attempt to update the clone's memories with that of the original's, no matter the distance between the clone and the original. If the original creature fails on a DC 17 Charisma saving throw, the memories it has gathered since the last time the gloom womb connected it with its clone. These memories do not override the clone's own experiences, but add to them.

A gloom womb may not have more than one living clone child at a time derived from the same original creature. She cannot clone a clone.

Innate Spellcasting. The gloom womb's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 17). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components.

At will: *detect good and evil, detect magic*

3/day each: *charm monster, sleep* (as 6th-level spell; 15d8 hit points.)

Legendary Resistance (3/Day). If the gloom womb fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

Spellcasting. The gloom womb is a 13th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 18, +10 to hit with spell attacks). It has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *acid splash, chill touch, mage hand, message*

1st level (4 slots): *charm person, comprehend languages, shield, spectral hand**

2nd level (3 slots): *blindness/deafness, detect thoughts, misty step, shadow bolt**

3rd level (3 slots): *counterspell, penumbral trap*, slow*

4th level (3 slots): *arcane eye, wall of darkness**

5th level (2 slots): *mislead, modify memory*

6th level (1 slot): *globe of invulnerability, mass suggestion*

7th level (1 slot): *forcecage*

* see **Scarred Lands Player's Guide**.

Spittle Web. The gloom womb's spit hardens in a short amount of time. She is able to use the spit to restrain a non-moving creature in a web or cocoon. The process takes several minutes and once restrained, the web keeps the entrapped creature unconscious until it is freed. If a creature is trapped within the gloom womb's spittle web, it automatically

fails any Charisma saving throws against her ability to connect its mind with her clone's.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The gloom womb makes two slam attacks.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 22 (4d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

Spit Poison. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, range 15/30 ft., one target. *Hit:* The target must make a DC 17 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the target takes 49 (9d10) poison damage and is poisoned for 1 minute. On a successful save, the target takes half damage and is not poisoned. A creature that is reduced to 0 hit points by the poison is stable and remains unconscious until it receives healing or 1d4+1 hours has passed.

Legendary Actions

The gloom womb can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. It can use only one legendary action option at a time, and only at the end of another creature's turn. The gloom womb regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Impose Drowsiness. The gloom womb casts sleep as a 3rd-level spell (affecting 9d8 hit points), requiring no material components and without expending any spell slots.

Shadowy Escape. The gloom womb teleports up to 60 feet, along with any equipment it is wearing or carrying, into an unoccupied space it can see. The destination cannot be in an area of bright light.

Poison Spittle. The gloom womb makes a Spit Poison attack.

Wave of Apathy (3 points). The gloom womb's apathy aura flares momentarily, extending to 60 feet, and causing all those within it to save against its effects, even if they are immune from a previous successful save.

Lair Actions

On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), the dark womb takes a lair action to cause one of the following effects:

• The dark womb creates a small oil slick as though it had cast grease (save DC 18).

• The dark womb creates a cloud of reeking, sickening vapor as if it had cast the stinking cloud spell (save DC 18). The fog lasts until initiative count 20 on the next round, and the dark womb need not concentrate to maintain it.

GOLEM, CRYSTAL

A marvel to behold, crystal golems are towering constructs of ice, standing over 9 feet tall, with massive mace-like fists.

Deadly adversaries, it is thought the golems were fashioned by the slarecians, long before the Divine War, and they are often seen around slarecian ruins in the frigid mountain heights of Albadia. These guardians still carry out the orders they were given centuries ago; to protect their warded domain, often by killing whatever dares to intrude. The method of their creation lost with the slarecians, no new crystal golems have been fashioned since that mysterious race disappeared from Scarn.

CRYSTAL GOLEM

Large construct, unaligned

Armor Class 19 (natural armor)
Hit Points 178 (17d10 + 85)
Speed 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
25 (+7)	9 (-1)	20 (+5)	3 (-4)	11 (+0)	1 (-5)

Damage Immunities cold, poison, psychic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons that aren't adamantine

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages understands the languages of its creator but can't speak

Challenge 11 (7,200 XP)

Chill Aura. The golem emanates an aura of extreme cold in a 15-foot radius. When a creature first enters the affected area, or begins its turn there, it must make a DC 17 Constitution saving throw, suffering 1d6 points of cold damage on a failed save, or half as much on a successful one.

Ice Walking. The golem does not treat ice or snow as difficult terrain, and cannot fall prone due to slipping on them.

Immutable Form. The golem is immune to any spell or effect that would alter its form.

Magic Immunity. The golem is immune to all spells, spell-like abilities except as follows:

Fire-damage spells or other effects affect the golem normal, though the golem ignores the first 10 points of damage done from any source.

Shatter and similar effects affect the golem normally.

Magic Weapons. The golem's weapon attacks are magical.

ACTIONS

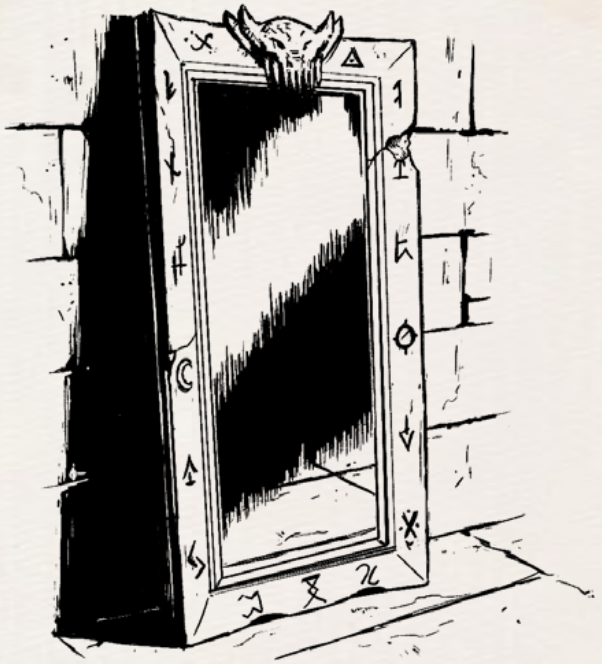
Multiattack. The golem makes two slam attacks.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 16 (2d8 + 7) bludgeoning damage and 3 (1d6) cold damage, and the target must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw. On a successful save, the target is chilled to the bone, taking 14 (4d6) cold damage. On a failed save, the target is frozen solid and considered petrified until the ice melts, 1d4 minutes later in warm climates, or 1d4 hours later in cold climates. If the target takes 5 or more damage while frozen, they shatter and die instantly.

Golem, Quicksilver

These craftily constructed golems appear as nothing more than a typical mirror, usually mounted to a wall where it has the best view of the room before it. The golem rarely acts of its own accord, having been given specific instructions that would activate it. When triggered, the golem springs into action, and the reflection of whatever creature that is reflected by the mirror leaps forth from the frame. Often, such commands will be to attack any intruder that passes through the golem's area, though some quicksilver golems have been encountered which step forth from their frame in order to serve dinner, or to aid in the carrying of heavy objects.

The city of Mithril is well known to employ such creations. It is rumored that Derigesh had an ornate mirror installed in the bath house, and there are whispers it is a quicksilver golem put in place to prevent the abduction of his daughters. It is also said that the high priest of Mithril has a quicksilver golem that hangs at the head of his bed, guarding against uninvited intruders. These rumors are unproved, however, as in their resting state, the golems are indistinguishable from any other ornate mirror.



QUICKSILVER GOLEM

Medium construct, unaligned

Armor Class 20 (natural armor)

Hit Points 68 (8d8 + 32)

Speed 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	18 (+4)	18 (+4)	6 (-2)	14 (+2)	1 (-5)

Damage Immunities poison, psychic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons that aren't adamantine

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages understands the languages of its creator but can't speak

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Immutable Form. The golem is immune to any spell or effect that would alter its form.

Fire Absorption. Whenever the golem is subjected to fire damage, it takes no damage and instead regains a number of hit points equal to half of the fire damage dealt. Fire-based damage counteracts the slowing caused by lightning attacks.

Magic Immunity. The golem is immune to all spells and spell-like abilities except as follows:

Though lightning-based spells cause no damage to the golem, they do remove the golem's mercurial speed for three rounds, and reducing its AC by 2.

Magic Weapons. The golem's weapon attacks are magical.

Mercurial Speed. The golem has advantage on Dexterity saving throws and can uses its slam attack as a bonus action.

Mirror Dependency. The golem's humanoid form can only move into spaces that can be reflected by its mirror, and is unable to exist in areas that are out of the mirror's view. If the mirror is covered, the humanoid form disappears, and must be reformed as a bonus action if the mirror is uncovered and a new humanoid is reflected. If the mirror is shattered, the humanoid form likewise vanishes. The mirror shares the hit points of the humanoid, though its AC is 16. If the humanoid is destroyed, the mirror also shatters.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The golem makes two slam attacks.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) bludgeoning damage.

INN WIGHT

A ghost of a child who does not realize it is dead, an inn wight appears as the child did in life, though it is now made up of semi-transluscent, ethereal flesh. These spirits wander the city and countryside, seeking comfort, and often will be drawn to inns, where the warmth of the living grants them a measure of peace. One may encounter an inn wight as it appears suddenly within their room, seemingly lost and confused. Many have reported waking to the apparition of a child next to them, only to have the child suddenly begin crying as objects begin to hurl themselves across the room.

While not intentionally malicious, inn wights are easily upset, and their emotions lend them a strange ability to defend themselves. If attacked or provoked, the ghost child can telekinetically throw objects in the room, striking those who have offended it that aren't quick enough to dodge out of the way.

INN WIGHT

Small undead, neutral

Armor Class 10 (natural armor)
Hit Points 24 (9d6)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	9 (-1)	10 (+0)	8 (-1)	9 (-1)	9 (-1)

Damage Resistances acid, fire, lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons

Damage Immunities cold, necrotic, poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained

Senses passive Perception 9

Languages can understand the common regional language, but cannot speak

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Energy Drain. Over the course of a night, an inn wight draws the life force from sleeping mortals it is in contact with. It must maintain contact for at least six hours, during which time the victim suffers from terrible nightmares and may wake up with a successful DC 13 Wisdom saving throw, ending the inn wight's attempt to drain their energy. If the drain is successful, the victim suffers 7 (2d6) necrotic damage, and its hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the damage taken. This reduction lasts until the target finishes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0.

Undead Nature. An inn wight doesn't require air, food, drink, or sleep.

ACTIONS

Hurl Objects. The inn wight, through sheer force of will and anger, causes objects within 30 feet of itself to hurl towards one or more targets within 60 feet of the object's location. It can use 1d6 objects weighing up to 5 pounds each (1d4 damage per object) to throw at multiple targets, or a single object weighing up to 30 pounds (3d4 damage) to hurl at a single target. Targets must succeed on a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw or suffer from the affiliated damage. The damage type is bludgeoning or piercing, depending on the object being hurled.

Maerella Twigmouth

Maerella is a powerful and reclusive swamp hag who built her home above a piece of Mesos, according to rumor. And with that piece of Mesos is a cache of powerful artifacts, but unable to get past Maerella, no one has laid eyes on the stash or been able to confirm its existence.

Always the oppontunist, "Auntie" Maerella Twigmouth, like many hags, recruits new hags when she has the chance. Her cottage in the Soporatra Swamp is home to a menagerie of unsual beasts.

MAERELLA TWIGMOUTH

Large fey (titanspawn), neutral evil

Armor Class 14 (natural armor, 16 with *barkskin*)
Hit Points 136 (13d10 + 65)
Speed 30 ft., swim 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	11 (+0)	21 (+5)	16 (+3)	19 (+4)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Wisdom +7, Charisma +6
Skills Nature +4, Perception +7
Damage Resistances acid, necrotic
Damage Immunities poison
Condition Immunities poisoned
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 17
Languages Ancient Ledean, Druidic, Ledean, Giantish, Sylvan, Titan Speech
Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Amphibious. Maerella can breathe air and water.

Horrific Appearance. Any humanoid that starts its turn within 30 feet of Maerella and can see her true form must make a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, the creature is frightened for 1 minute. A creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, with disadvantage if Maerella is within line of sight, ending the effect on itself on a success. If a creature's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the creature is immune to Maerella's Horrific Appearance for the next 24 hours. Unless the target is surprised or the revelation of the hag's true form is sudden, the target can avert its eyes and avoid making the initial saving throw. Until the start of its next turn, a creature that averts its eyes has disadvantage on attack rolls against Maerella.

Spellcasting. Maerella is a 12th-level spellcaster. Her spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 15, or +7 to hit with spell attacks). Maerella knows the following druid spells:

Cantrips (at will): *poison spray, druidcraft, shillelagh*
1st level (4/day): *animal friendship, charm person, entangle, fog cloud*
2nd level (3/day): *barkskin, spike growth, gust of wind*
3rd level (3/day): *acid arrow, wind wall, plant growth*
4th level (3/day): *blight, giant insect*
5th level (2/day): *conjure animals* (reptiles only)
6th level (1/day): *conjure fey*

Swamp Witch. Maerella can move across swampland without needing to make an ability check. Additionally, difficult terrain composed of earth or rocks doesn't cost her extra moment. In swampy terrain, Maerella leaves behind no tracks or other traces of her passage unless she wishes to; if she does not, she can't be tracked except by magical means.

ACTIONS

Quarterstaff. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) bludgeoning damage, or 5 (1d8 + 1) bludgeoning damage if used with two hands.

Claws (Hag Form Only). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (2d6 + 1) slashing damage plus 7 (2d6) poison damage.

Illusory Appearance. Maerella covers herself and anything she is wearing or carrying with a magical illusion that makes her look like an ugly creature of her general size and humanoid shape. The effect ends if Maerella takes a bonus action to end it or if she dies. The changes wrought by this effect fail to hold up to physical inspection. For example, Maerella could appear to have no claws, but someone touching her hand might feel the claws. Otherwise, a creature must take an action to visually inspect the illusion and succeed on a DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check to discern that Maerella is disguised.

Miser Jackal

Common across the plains and savannahs of Scarn, the miser is a cunningly clever breed of jackal. Its keen sense of smell allows it to track down objects made of metal, which is pilfers from the unwary, dashing away with its prize which it hides away in a secret cache.

Though miser jackals have never been successfully domesticated, the lure of metal treasures have allowed treasure hunters and quick-thinking adventurers to coax miser jackals long enough for their unique talent to be of use. Trackers seeking large groups of armed invidivuals have even used miser jackals to hone in on the metal armor and weapons carried by the group.

Particularly devious miser jackals have been known to lead adventurers on a wild chase, having stolen some precious item from them, only for the trail to end at the lair of some other creature that hordes coins and metal goods. While the adventurers are busy taking care of the sudden threat, the miser jackal makes off with bits of the creature's horde.

MISER JACKAL

Small beast, unaligned

Armor Class 13
Hit Points 21 (6d6)
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	17 (+3)	11 (+0)	3 (-4)	13 (+1)	13 (+1)

Skills Athletics +1, Acrobatics +5, Perception +3
Senses passive Perception 13
Languages -
Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Keen Hearing and Smell. The miser jackal has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

Smell Metal. The miser jackal can smell sources of metal within 60 feet. This increases to 120 feet if the target is upwind, and decreases to 30 feet if the target is downwind.

ACTIONS

Narcotic Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +1 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 2 (1d4 - 1) piercing damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or suffer 2 Dexterity and 2 Intelligence ability score loss, becoming disoriented and wobbly on their feet. The following round, the target must succeed on another DC 13 Constitution saving throw or suffer the ability score loss again. A target whose ability score is reduced to 0 does not die, but falls unconscious for 1d4 hours. The ability score loss lasts until the target finishes a Long rest.

Moon Cat

Though a moon cat's shape and form resemble that of an ordinary house cat, the feline's luminous, pale silver fur glows with a faint nimbus, not unlike the aura the encircles the moon.

A rare sight, a moon cat appears when a crisis is at hand. Moon cats have been seen at the birth of children who would grow to be terrible villains, have rubbed against the legs of two lovers in a budding romance whose future will require them to be strong, and have strolled down the cobbled streets of a village that was soon leveled by an earthquake. Some people have a moon cat show up more than once in their lives, signifying a series of events that intertwine before their ultimate outcome. Why the feline appears when it does is never known, but in the hours, days, or weeks after, events arise that make the moon cat's presence felt long after it has disappeared.

No moon cat has ever been successfully domesticated, though many an entrepeneur and mage have tried. Those cats who have been caught always have a knack for appearing just before the sunrise.

MOON CAT

Tiny monstrosity, unaligned

Armor Class 12
Hit Points 14 (4d4 + 4)
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6 (-2)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	5 (-3)	17 (+3)	16 (+3)

Skills Perception +5, Stealth +4
Senses passive Perception 15
Languages -
Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Charming Kitty. Upon arrival, all creatures that can see the cat must succeed on a DC 21 Charisma saving throw. Those who fail view the cat as a friend and ally, and their emotional state becomes indifferent to those who there were hostile with, for nine hours. A creature may repeat their saving throw every hour, ending the effect upon them on a success. In addition, creatures that were charmed or frightened have those effects suppressed for the duration of the cat's charm. Those effects begin again as though no time has passed when the duration ends.

No Touch. Any creature who attempts to touch the cat, as opposed to the cat choosing to touch another creature, must succeed on a DC 11 Fortitude saving throw or be paralyzed for 7 (1d6 + 4) minutes.

Portent. The cat rubs against a creature of its choice, gifting it with a portent. The DM rolls 1d8 to determine the effect based on the current moon phase:

MOON PHASE	MIRACLE	CURSE
Full Moon	1-7	8
Waning Moon	1-5	6-8
New Moon	1	2-8
Waxing Moon	1-3	4-8

Miracle: The creature gains a +1 to all skill rolls, saving throws, or attack rolls for 6d4 hours.

Curse: The creature suffers a -1 to all skill rolls, saving throws, or attack rolls for 6d4 hours.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The cat makes one bite and two claw attacks.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1 piercing damage.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1 slashing damage.

Teleport. The cat teleports to a site where it feels drawn. Once its task is complete, or it is attacked, the cat teleports back to its lair.

MOON KITTEN

Tiny monstrosity, unaligned

Armor Class 11
Hit Points 3 (1d4)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6 (-2)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)	5 (-3)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)

Skills Perception +4, Stealth +3
Senses passive Perception 14
Languages -
Challenge 0 (10 XP)

Charming Kitty. Upon arrival, all creatures that can see the kitten must succeed on a DC 21 Charisma saving throw. Those who fail view the kitten as a friend and ally, and their emotional state becomes indifferent to those who there were hostile with, for nine hours. A creature may repeat their saving throw every hour, ending the effect upon them on a success. In addition, creatures that were charmed or frightened have those effects suppressed for the duration of the kitten's charm. Those effects begin again as though no time has passed when the duration ends.

Portent. The kitten rubs against a creature of its choice, gifting it with a portent. The DM rolls 1d8 to determine the effect based on the current moon phase:

MOON PHASE	MIRACLE	CURSE
Full Moon	1-7	8
Waning Moon	1-5	6-8
New Moon	1	2-8
Waxing Moon	1-3	4-8

Miracle: The creature gains a +1 to a single skill roll, saving throw, or attack roll in the next 6d4 hours.

Curse: The creature suffers a -1 to a single skill roll, saving throw, or attack roll in the next 6d4 hours.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The kitten makes one bite or one claw attack.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1 piercing damage.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1 slashing damage.

Teleport (Recharge 4-6). The kitten teleports to an unoccupied space it can see within 120 feet.

Mouth of Vangal

It is said that the god Vangal has a voracious appetite for the hunt. That hunger was given form when he created the fiends known as the mouths of Vangal. Summoned only to feed upon the enemies of the Ravager, the mouths are terrible to behold. Enormous maws lined with rows of spikey teeth, the chasm the leads down into the mouth of the fiend seems to go on forever. Large, grasping tendrils sprout from the mouth's body, always reaching for food to appease its neverending hunger.

MOUTH OF VANGAL

Huge fiend, chaotic evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)
Hit Points 222 (16d12 + 120)
Speed 10 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
23 (+6)	4 (-3)	24 (+7)	4 (-3)	4 (-3)	3 (-4)

Saving Throws Str +10, Con +11
Skills Athletics +10, Perception +1
Damage Resistances cold, fire, lightning
Damage Immunities necrotic, poison
Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, poisoned, deafened, blinded
Senses blood sense 100 ft. (see below), passive Perception 11
Languages -
Challenge 14 (11 500 XP)

Summoner's Bond. A Mouth of Vangal can receive mental commands from who ever summoned it, no matter the distance.

Blood Sense. Incapable of hearing or seeing, a Mouth of Vangal detects food by being able to pinpoint the location of all living creatures in a 100 ft. radius. But it's unable to sense things like buildings, traps or changes in terrain until it crashes unto them with its tentacles or body.

Feed to Vangal. Any creature that is inside the Mouth of Vangal takes 20 necrotic damage at the start of the Mouth's turn. When the creature reaches 0 HP its body disappears, and Vangal receives a small amount of power.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The mouth of Vangal makes a Swallow attack if possible, then makes three melee weapon attacks.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (1d10 + 6) piercing damage.

Tentacle Strike. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 20 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (1d12 + 6) bludgeoning damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw or be grappled by the tentacle and pulled up to 20 feet toward the mouth of Vangal.

Swallow. The mouth of Vangal makes one bite attack against a Large or smaller creature it is grappling. If the attack hits, the creature takes the bite's damage and is swallowed, and the grapple ends. While swallowed, the creature is blinded and restrained, it has total cover against attacks and other effects outside the mouth of Vangal, and it takes 14 (4d6) necrotic damage at the start of each of the mouth of Vangal's turns. The creature must succeed on a DC 18 Strength saving throw to escape. A creature that is reduced to 0 hit points by this damage dies, its body disappearing, and the energy is transferred to Vangal, who may make one attack on his next turn with advantage.

The mouth of Vangal may swallow up to one Large creature, two Medium creatures, or four Small or smaller creatures. If the mouth of Vangal dies, a swallowed creature is no longer restrained and it can escape from the corpse using 15 feet of movement, exiting prone.

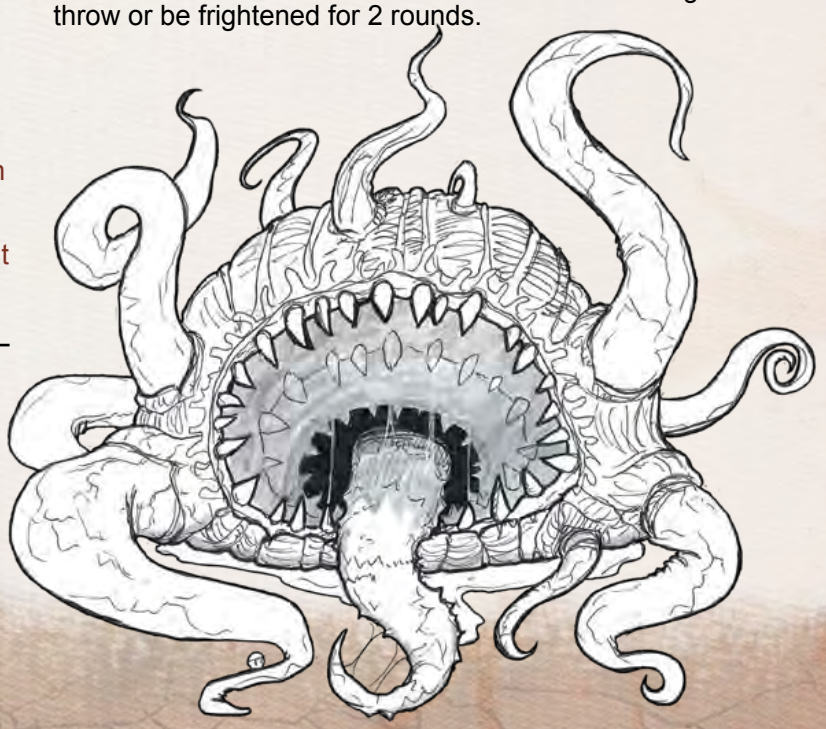
LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The Mouth of Vangal can take 2 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action can be taken at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The mouth of Vangal regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Tentacle Swipe. The Mouth makes a Tentacle Strike attack that targets all creatures in a 20-foot cone.

Launch (costs 2 actions). By using its tentacles as impulsion, the Mouth can launch itself 30 ft. forward, all creatures in the space the mouth hits must succeed a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw or take 50 (7d12 + 8) bludgeoning damage.

Scream of Terror (Recharge 5-6). The Mouth makes a terrifying scream, every creature within 50 feet that can hear it must succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened for 2 rounds.



NECRONDUIT

Created by powerful necromancers, necronduits are nothing more than useful tools for these dark mage, which are able to cast their spells through the undead. Though it retains some semblance of intelligence, a necronduit takes no action without being commanded to do so by the spellcaster attuned to it.

When attuned to a spellcaster, the necronduit's eyes seem to leak dark magical energy, and a nimbus of necrotic magic wraps around the undead's hands. A necronduit can be created from any dead humanoid, which slowly wastes away over the years, much like a zombie.

NECRONDUIT

Medium undead, neutral

Armor Class 14 (natural)
Hit Points 63 (14d8)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	15 (+2)	11 (+0)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)

Skills Perception +4, Stealth +4
Senses passive Perception 14
Languages understands the languages it knew in life, and those of its creator, but cannot speak
Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Eldritch Healing. The caster that is attuned to the necronduit may expend spell slots to heal its wounds. The necronduit regains 1d4 + the caster's spellcaster modifier hit points per spell level. If the spellcaster is a necromancer, the necronduit regains 1d6 + the caster's spellcaster modifier hit points instead.

Arcane Conduit. A spellcaster may spend 1 hour to attune to the necronduit. After doing so, they may cast spells through the undead creature so long as the necronduit is within 300 feet of the caster. Spells with a Range of Self can target the necronduit instead of the caster. In addition, the caster may use a bonus action to extend their senses out through the necronduit, seeing and hearing through the undead's form. The caster continues to see and hear from their own body as well, though they roll Perception (Wisdom) checks at disadvantage (-5 to passive Perception). The caster may end the sense connection at any time.

If the necronduit dies, the spellcaster may continue to cast spells through its body. If the body is reduced to negative 20 hit points, it is destroyed and is no longer of use to the spellcaster.

Magic Weapons. The necronduit's claw attacks are magical.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The necronduit makes two claw attacks.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 2) slashing damage and 9 (2d8) necrotic damage.

REACTIONS

Necrotic Lash. If a creature within 60 feet of the necronduit succeeds on an attack against it, the necronduit unleashes a blaze of necrotic energy at that creature. The target must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw, taking 16 (3d10) necrotic damage on a failed save, or half as much on a successful one.

PAVLAS KYRILLOU

Pavlas Kyrillou was a windwalker that made a living guiding groups through the treacherous Canyon of Souls. Hired by the mad necromancer, Maghiel, Pavlas led the wizard and her group deep into the Canyon, where they found a previously unknown entrance into the underworld beneath the surface of Scarn. There, Maghiel had Pavlas murdered, and using a surge of strange, chaotic magic that the wizard had drawn from the corpse of a titan, she raised Pavlas as a horrid and unique undead.

The blood that poured from multiple stab wounds on her torso took on form, becoming grasping tendrils, while Pavlas' hands became terrible claws, and sickly green flame danced around her. Now, Maghiel's unique creation exists only to serve her mistress and to destroy Maghiel's enemies.

PAVLAS KYRILLOU

Medium undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 150 (20d8 + 60)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	15 (+2)	17 (+3)	15 (+2)	16 (+3)	17 (+3)

Saving Throws Dex +6, Con +7, Wis +7

Skills Athletics + 6, Perception +7

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons

Damage Immunities necrotic, poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 17

Languages Ledean, Ontenazu

Challenge 12 (8,400 XP)

Devil's Sight. Magical darkness doesn't impede Pavlas' darkvision.

Grasping Tendrils. Pavlas can have up to six blood whips at a time. Each whip can be attacked (AC 20; 15 hit points; immunity to poison and psychic damage). Destroying a blood whip deals no damage to Pavlas, who can extrude a replacement whip on her next turn. A whip can also be broken if a creature takes an action and succeeds on a DC 16 Strength check against it.

Burning Necrosis. Creatures within 10 feet of Pavlas at the start of their turn must roll a DC 17 Constitution check, suffering 3 (1d6) necrotic and 3 (1d6) fire damage from the energy that surrounds Pavlas on a failure.

Innate Spellcasting. Pavlas' spellcasting ability is Charisma (save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). She can innately cast the following spells without components:

At will: *darkness, ray of sickness* (5d8)

3/day: *confusion, insect plague*, slow*

*inflicts necrotic damage instead of piercing

Magic Resistance. Pavlas has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Shifting Image. Pavlas is wreathed in green flame and energy, causing the view of her body to shift. Each time an enemy targets Pavlas with an attack, roll a d20 to determine if the attack instead hits the shifting image instead. The shifting image has an AC of 12, and it lessens each time it is successfully hit. The effect is subdued after it has been successfully hit three times, and Pavlas regains this ability after a long rest.

A creature is unaffected by this effect if it can't see, if it relies on senses other than sight, such as blindsight, or if it can perceive illusions as false, as with truesight.

Turn Immunity. Pavlas is immune to effects that turn undead.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Pavlas makes four blood whip attacks, uses Reel, and makes one claw attack.

Blood Whip. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 50 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) necrotic damage and the target is grappled (escape DC 16). Until the grappled ends, the creature is restrained and has disadvantage on Strength checks and Strength saving throws, and Pavlas can't use the same blood whip on another target.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d6 + 2) slashing damage and 7 (2d6) necrotic damage.

Reel. Pavlas pulls each creature grappled by her up to 25 feet straight toward her.

REACTIONS

Spell Turning. When targeted with a spell or caught in a spell's area of effect, Pavlas makes a Charisma saving throw (DC equal to the original caster's spell save DC). If she succeeds she reflects the spell back at its caster if it is a single target spell, or redirects the area of effect to a space within the spell's range that she can see.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

Pavlas can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. Pavlas regains legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Claw. Pavlas makes a claw attack.

Detect. Pavlas makes a Wisdom (Perception) check.

Sap Magic (Costs 2 Actions). Pavlas targets a magic item or an ongoing magical effect within 30 feet. The wielder of the item, or the source of the ongoing magical effect must make a DC 15 Charisma saving throw. On a failed save, Pavlas gains 20 temporary hit points. In addition, an item's magic is subdued for 1 minute or the ongoing magical effect ends.

QUILLWOLF

Lean and lupine in appearance, the quillwolf gets its name from the multitude of heavy quills that grow along its body. These quills raise when the quillwolf is agitated, and it can launch them at predators that would hunt it.

Sages debate the origins of the quillwolf, with some stating there are reported sightings of the creatures going back centuries, while others claiming they have proof the creatures were designed by some mad mage in a secret laboratory. Whatever their origin, one may encounter packs of quillwolves in the thickest forests of Scarn.

QUILLWOLF

Medium best, unaligned

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)
Hit Points 16 (3d8 + 3)
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	2 (-4)	12 (+1)	5 (-3)

Skills Perception +3, Survival +3
Senses passive Perception 13
Languages -
Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Keen Hearing and Smell. The quillwolf has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

Pack Tactics. The quillwolf has advantage on attack rolls against a creature if at least one of the quillwolf's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and isn't incapacitated.

Quills. A creature that hits the quillwolf with a melee attack while within 5 feet of it takes 2 (1d4) piercing damage.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (2d4 + 2) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 12 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone and take an additional 2 (1d4) piercing damage.

Quill Burst (1/Day). The quillwolf vigorously shakes its body, launching quills in all directions. All creatures within 15 feet of the quillwolf must succeed on a DC13 Dexterity saving throw or take 2 (1d4) piercing damage.

ROSA MALDITA

The rosa maldita is a beautiful, but deadly sentient rose bush. It stands 9 feet tall and 8 feet wide, and has shiny dark purple foliage. It has 3-inch long needlelike thorns, and dinner plate sized crimson flowers. It has a delicious fragrance, and oozes blood from any wounds. The rosa maldita can't move, but it can quickly spread out of control, leaving those who encounter it to consider it the most noxious of weeds.

ROSA MALDITA

Large plant, unaligned

Armor Class 12 (natural armor)
Hit Points 95 (10d10 + 40)
Speed 0 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	8 (-1)	18 (+4)	7 (-2)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)

Skills Athletics +3, Perception +3
Damage Resistances psychic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks
Condition Immunities blinded, deafened, frightened, prone
Senses blindsight 30 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 13
Languages –
Challenge 5 (1800 XP)

Deadly Embrace. The rosa maldita can occupy another creature's space and vice versa. Any space occupied by the rosa maldita is difficult terrain, and creatures that move through it suffer 2 (1d4) piercing damage for every 5 feet traveled.

Germinate. As a bonus action, the rosa maldita may spread into an adjacent 10 foot x 10 foot space. Once the rosa maldita falls below half its hit points, it can no longer use this ability to spread and shrinks back to its original size.

Intoxicating Perfume. Any creature that starts its turn within 15 feet of the rosa maldita or moves within 15 feet of it for the first time, and can smell it, must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or be lured closer to it by its intoxicating perfume. On a failure, the creature must immediately use its reaction to move as far as its speed allows toward the rosa maldita until it shares a space with the the plant, and is unwilling to move away from the plant. The saving throw can be repeated at the end of each of the target's turns, ending the compulsion on a success. A creature that succeeds on the saving throw is immune to that rosa maldita's perfume for the next 24 hours.

Magic Weapons. The rosa maldita's weapon attacks are magical.

Rejuvenation. If the rosa maldita is destroyed, it regains all its hit points in 1 hour unless it is dug up by its roots and burned.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The rosa maldita makes three thorn attacks.

Thorn. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 0 ft., one creature in the rosa maldita's space. *Hit:* 10 (4d4) piercing damage.

REACTIONS

Deceptive Demise. The first time the rosa maldita takes damage, any creature within 30 feet of the rosa maldita that can see it is subjected to violent images of its or a loved one's death. The creature's or a loved one's face appears in one of the rosa maldita's blooms, and is then killed in one of the following ways (d6 or choose):

D6	HALLUCINATION
1	The bloom withers and dies from a lack of water. As the outer petals of the flower fall off one by one, the creature's skin is slowly peeled off from the outside in. The face is stripped of its skin until all that's left is muscle and finally a skull, all the while it screams in agony.
2-3	The creature's face is slowly covered in white powdery mildew or black spot that covers its eyes, nose, and mouth blinding it and preventing it from speaking. Pieces of the face then rot and fall off.
4-5	Small green beetles swarm over the creature's face eating it alive.
6	A loop of bindweed snakes up to the creature's neck and throttles it.

Affected creatures must succeed on a DC 15 Charisma saving throw, taking 16 (3d10) psychic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

SCORCH ZOMBIE

Elemental-empowered undead, scorch zombies are the creations of mad wizards and dark necromancers. Often used to strike terror into commoners or to deal with pesky adventurers who come seeking answers to questions a wizard may not wish to answer, scorch zombies are rarely seen guarding anything of value, especially if it is combustible.

SCORCH ZOMBIE

Medium undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 8
Hit Points 22 (3d8 + 9)
Speed 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	6 (-2)	16 (+3)	3 (-4)	6 (-2)	5 (-3)

Saving Throws Wis +0
Damage Immunities fire, poison
Condition Immunities poisoned
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 8
Languages Understands the languages of its creator but can't speak
Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Death Burst. When the scorch zombie dies, it explodes in a burst of smoldering flesh. Each creature within 5 feet of it must make a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw, taking 4 (1d8) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Illumination. The scorch zombie sheds bright light in a 5-foot radius and dim light in an additional 5 feet.

Scorching Touch. A creature that touches the scorch zombie or hits it with a melee attack while within 5 feet of it takes 2 (1d4) fire damage.

Undead Fortitude. If damage reduces the scorch zombie to 0 hit points, it must make a Constitution saving throw with a DC of 5 + the damage taken, unless the damage is radiant or from a critical hit. On a success, the zombie drops to 1 hit point instead.

ACTIONS

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) bludgeoning damage plus 2 (1d4) fire damage.

Sea Spark

A conundrum for many scholars, so-called sea sparks are fire elementals that thrive in water, and they can be found in many large bodies of water, floating gently on the surface or floating peacefully beneath its waves. It is often a wonder to see a group of sea sparks, unless that group is speeding toward the wooden ship you are sailing on.

Though the creatures are benign, they are easily riled up if attacked, when a ship sails through their midst, or if another creature attempts to remove one or more of the sparks from their group. Once angered, the elementals are capable of causing great damage to ships or to those that attack them.

Some talented wizards, with a knack for the care of magical creatures, are able to gather swarms of sea sparks, which they place around their islands and homes for decoration, and often for security purposes as well.

SWARM OF SEA SPARKS

Medium Swarm of Tiny elementals, neutral

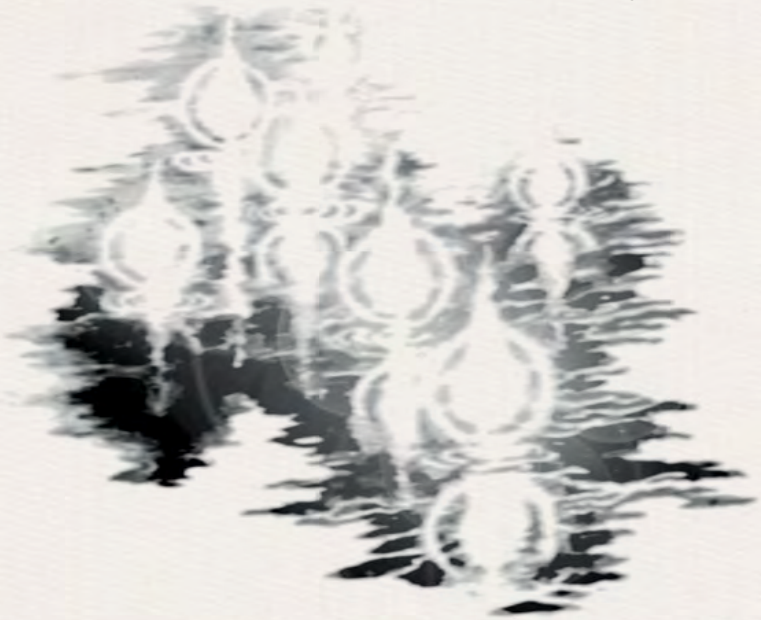
Armor Class 15
Hit Points 22 (5d8)
Speed 0 ft., swim 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
3 (-4)	20 (+5)	10 (+0)	6 (-2)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons
Damage Immunities fire, poison; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from water-based attacks
Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, prone, poisoned, restrained, stunned
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10
Languages Aquan
Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

ACTIONS

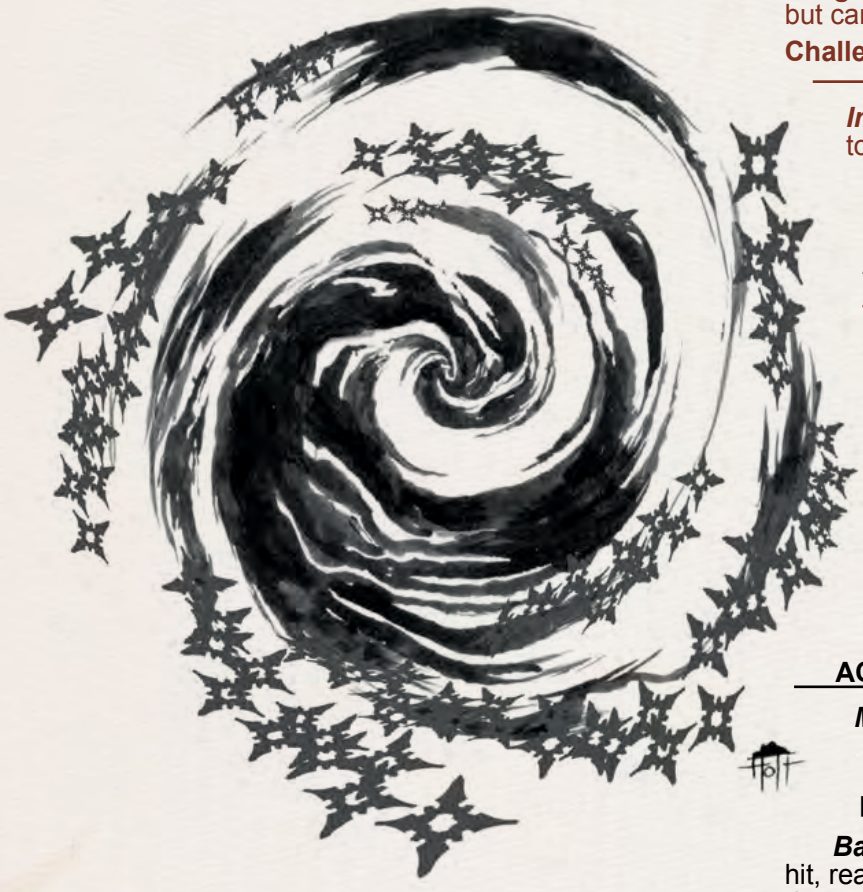
Flare. The seasparks attack with a white-hot lash of flame. A target within 5 feet of the swarm must roll against a DC 10 Dexterity saving, taking 5 (2d4) fire damage on a failed saving throw, or half as much damage on a successful one.



SEARING WIND

Created to be guardians, searing winds are collections of small weapons such as throwing knives or shuriken, imbued with the energies of trapped beings from other planes. The weapons become animated, and moved together as a single, swirling maelstrom of keen edges, ready to serve their master.

During the Divine War, many wizards utilized searing winds as warriors, as well as protectors for themselves and their allies. Tales tell of Gest Ganest, who called upon his searing wind to storm and rage about him. When the titan Gaurak went to eat the wizard, the Glutton was served a mouthful of wounds instead.



SEARING WIND

Huge construct, unaligned

Armor Class 19 (natural armor)
Hit Points 105 (10d12 + 40)
Speed 0 ft., fly 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
22 (+6)	16 (+3)	18 (+4)	3 (-4)	10 (+0)	1 (-5)

Damage Immunities poison, psychic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons that aren't adamantine
Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10
Languages understands the languages of its creator but can't speak
Challenge 10 (5,900 XP)

Immutable Form. The searing wind is immune to any spell or effect that would alter its form.

Magic Immunity. The searing wind is immune to all spells, spell-like abilities except as follows:

Though cold-based spells cause no damage to the searing wind, it does halve the number of attacks the searing wind can take on its next turn.

Magic Weapons. The searing wind's weapon attacks are magical.

Swarm. The searing wind can occupy another creature's space and vice versa, and the swarm can move through any opening large enough for a Tiny weapon. The swarm can't regain hit points or gain temporary hit points.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The searing wind makes 1d12 barbed whirl attacks, or 1d6 barbed whirl attacks if the searing wind has have its hit points or less.

Barbed Whirl. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d6 + 6) slashing damage.

SEEKER'S BANE

Malicious spirits that haunt forgotten ruins and darkened caves, the undead known as seeker's bane were once hearty adventurers before meeting their untimely deaths. Slain by monsters or lethal traps, these spirits are twisted and embittered by their failures, the choices that led them to such a demise. Now they linger, seeking to trick other adventurers into the suffering the same fate.

Through the long, lonely years of its existence as a spirit, the seeker's bane becomes intimately familiar with the environment in which its life was snuffed out. It knows where traps are laid, secret doors are hidden, and what monsters make their lairs nearby. The angered spirit uses its powers of illusion to fool explorers, leading them toward dangers they may not see until it is too late.

SEEKER'S BANE

Medium undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 11
Hit Points 32 (7d8)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
7 (-2)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	15 (+2)

Skills Deception +4
Damage Resistances acid, fire, lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons
Damage Immunities cold, necrotic, poison
Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10
Languages any languages it knew in life
Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Incorporeal Movement. The seeker's bane can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. It takes 5 (1d10) force damage if it ends its turn inside an object.

Innate Spellcasting. The seeker's bane spellcasting ability is Charisma (save DC 12, +4 to hit with spell attacks). It can innately cast the following spells without components:

At will: *alter self* (change appearance only), *chill touch* (1d8)
1/day: *major image*

ACTIONS

Withering Touch. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (2d6 + 2) necrotic damage.

SHADOW

These undead creatures are often the result of foul magics and dark necromancy.

SHADOW

Medium undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 12
Hit Points 16 (3d8+3)
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6 (-2)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)	6 (-2)	10 (+0)	8 (-1)

Skills Stealth +4 (+6 in dim light or darkness)
Damage Vulnerabilities radiant
Damage Resistances acid, cold, fire, lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks
Damage Immunities necrotic, poison
Condition Immunities exhaustion, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10
Languages —
Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Amorphous. The shadow can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing.

Shadow Stealth. While in dim light or darkness, the shadow can take the Hide action as a bonus action.

Sunlight Weakness. While in sunlight, the shadow has disadvantage on attack rolls, ability checks, and saving throws.

Actions

Strength Drain. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 9 (2d6+2) necrotic damage, and the target's Strength score is reduced by 1d4. The target dies if this reduces its Strength to 0. Otherwise, the reduction lasts until the target finishes a short or long rest. If a non-evil humanoid dies from this attack, a new shadow rises from the corpse 1d4 hours later.

Sidereal Servitor

The creatures known as sidereal servitors are native to the far reaches of the Astral Plane, where the influence of other, more alien dimensions creates strange border realms. Very little is known about what sort of lives they lead in their native environments, or indeed anything else about their origins. Given their usefulness to practitioners of the arcane arts, it's speculated that they may have been bred or otherwise engineered by alien intelligences to serve some mysterious purpose.

A sidereal servitor looks like a horrific fusion of a giant frog and an octopus, with a pulpy, tumorous sack of a body sporting a gaping mouth lined with needle teeth, its limbs a ring of ropy, writhing tentacles. The servitor's body is covered in eyes, giving it the ability to see in every direction. Sidereal servitors seem to be especially at home in fluid or gravity-less environments, though they do almost as well on land, and the sticky slime they secrete allows them to easily scale walls and other vertical surfaces.

Arcane Guardians. Certain occult rituals can summon a sidereal servitor and bind it to a task chosen by the summoner – often to watch over a treasure or guard a secret chamber. A servitor is effectively immortal and, even if slain, returns to the place where it was bound as long as its task is possible to perform. It can't be tricked or bargained out of its assigned task, and not even the death of its summoner frees it from its obligation once it is ritually bound. However, if circumstances change so that the servitor is no longer able to carry out its task, it returns to the Astral Plane and considers its obligation fulfilled – meaning that a thief who manages to steal a treasure a sidereal servitor is guarding and evade the servitor long enough to get away effectively dispels it from the Material Plane until it can be summoned again.

Alien Nature. A sidereal servitor doesn't need to breathe, eat, or sleep – though it does seem to enjoy eating while it is on the Material Plane (and can only digest food while it is away from the Astral).

SIDEREAL SERVITOR

Large aberration, chaotic neutral

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 60 (8d10 + 16)

Speed 30 ft., climb 30 ft., swim 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	19 (+4)	7 (-2)

Damage Resistances acid, cold, poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, poisoned

Skills Perception +8

Senses darkvision 90 ft., truesight 30 ft., passive Perception 18

Languages understands Celestial, Primordial, and Titan Speech but can't speak

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Anaerobic. The sidereal servitor doesn't breathe, and can survive in airless environments, including underwater and in the vacuum of space.

Astral Resurrection. When the servitor is reduced to 0 hit points, it dissolves and reforms on the Astral Plane in 1d4 days. If it is still able to fulfill a task it is bound to, it returns immediately to the site where it was bound.

Ethereal Shift. The servitor can magically shift from the Material Plane to the Ethereal Plane, or vice versa, as a bonus action. Any objects or creatures it is carrying or grappling, or has swallowed, are shifted with it.

Partially Amorphous. The servitor can move through a space as small as 2 feet wide without squeezing.

Spider Climb. The servitor can climb difficult and vertical surfaces without needing to make an ability check.

Task-Bound. A sidereal servitor that is summoned by a ritual is bound to the place where it is required to fulfill its task. It cannot willingly move more than 100 feet away from this place, though it can use its Ethereal Shift ability to move to the corresponding area on the Ethereal Plane. If somehow forced to move outside of this boundary, or if conditions change so that it is no longer able to fulfill its task, it drops to 0 hit points.

Actions

Tentacles. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a creature, it is grappled (escape DC 13). Until this grapple ends, the servitor can't use this attack on another target.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (2d4 + 3) piercing damage plus 4 (1d8) acid damage, and the target is swallowed if it is a Medium or smaller creature. A swallowed creature is blinded and restrained, has total cover against attacks and other effects outside the servitor, and takes 9 (2d8) acid damage at the start of each of the servitor's turns. The servitor can only have one creature swallowed at a time. If the servitor takes 10 or more damage on a single hit from a creature inside it, the servitor must succeed on a DC 20 Constitution saving throw or regurgitate the swallowed creature, which falls prone in a space within 5 feet of the servitor. If the servitor is reduced to 0 hit points while a living creature is inside it, it dissolves, leaving the creature behind lying prone.

SKELETON, UNITAUR

Undead created from the corpses of the rhinoceros-folk, these skeletons are terrible to behold. Their massive forms and deadly horns make unitaur skeletons much more formidable than the frail, brittle bones of lesser skeletons.

SKELETON, UNITAUR

Large undead (unitaur), lawful evil

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)
Hit Points 67 (9d10 + 18)
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	11 (+0)	15 (+2)	6 (-2)	8 (-1)	5 (-3)

Damage Vulnerabilities bludgeoning
Damage Immunities poison
Condition Immunities exhaustion, poisoned
Senses darkvision 60 Ft., passive Perception 9
Languages understands Abyssal and Titan Speech but can't speak
Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Charge. If the skeleton moves at least 10 feet straight toward a target and then hits it with a gore attack on the same turn, the target takes an extra 9 (2d8) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 14 Strength saving throw or be pushed up to 10 feet away and knocked prone.

ACTIONS

Greataxe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* (2d12 + 4) slashing damage.

Gore. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* (2d8 + 4) piercing damage.

SLARECIAN GARGOYLE

Constructs of ages past, when the slarecian empire stretched across the face of Scarn, these gargoyles once protected the subterranean strongholds of their slarecian creators. Now that empire has long since fallen, and most of the gargoyles remain as dust-covered sentries in forgotten ruins. Occassionally, there are tales of gargoyles that have clawed their way up through earth and stone, only to run rampant through the town they appeared in until the guards or adventurers put an end to it.

A slarecian gargoyle is carved with a strong likeness to the race that it is named for, with ridged foreheads and long faces. Unique to them, however, are the horns that sprout from their foreheads, always a crystal of red, blue, or yellow.

SLARECIAN GARGOYLE

Large construct, neutral

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)
Hit Points 76 (8d10 + 32)
Speed 30 ft., fly 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	13 (+1)	18 (+4)	6 (-2)	9 (-1)	7 (-2)

Skills Stealth +4
Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons that are not adamantine
Damage Immunities poison, special (see below)
Condition Immunities exhaustion, petrified, poisoned
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 9
Languages text
Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Constructed Nature. The gargoyle doesn't require air, food, drink, or sleep.

False Appearance. While the gargoyle remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from an inanimate statue.

Immunity to Magic. Slarecian gargoyles are immune to any spell or spell-like ability except as follows:

Red-horned gargoyles take damage normally from cold-based damage.

Blue-horned gargoyles targeted by the haste spell instead suffer the effects of the confusion spell, receiving no saving throw against the effects.

Yellow-horned gargoyles take damage normal from acid-based damage.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The gargoyle makes one bite and two claw attacks.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) piercing damage.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) slashing damage.

Horn. The effect of the gargoyle's horn attack is based on the color of the crystal horn as follows:

Red horn: The gargoyle radiates tremendous heat, damaging creatures and objects around it. Any creature within 5 feet of the gargoyle must succeed on a DC15 Constitution saving throw, suffering 1d4 fire damage on a failed save, or half as much on a success. In addition, metal objects, including weapons and armor, are affected as if by the heat metal spell. The red-horned gargoyle can initiate this heat as a bonus action, and may maintain it without concentration.

Blue horn (3/day): The gargoyle targets a creature it can see within 120 feet, and attempts to freeze it in place. The target must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or be frozen and is considered restrained for 1 minute. If the target succeeds, they are affected as if by the slow spell. A gargoyle may choose to target a frozen creature with its horn ability again. A frozen target that fails three consecutive Constitution saving throws becomes a statue of ice, and is considered petrified. The petrification lasts until the creature is freed by the greater restoration spell or similar magic.

Yellow horn (3/day): The gargoyle emits a beam of lightning at a target within 60 feet. The target must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw, suffering 21 (6d6) lightning damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

SLARECIAN GATEKEEPER

An arch made up of ever-shifting wires, gears, gems, spheres, and other unrecognizable shapes, it is unknown if the gatekeeper is a sentient being, or an extraordinary extradimensional object. It is known that the first to call upon it were the slarecians, however, and the construct has retained the name of those to first summon it on Scarn.

Called to Scarn by true ritual, the gatekeeper requires payment from its summoner. Often, this is in the form of gold, silver, or mithril coins. If the summoner does not produce such offerings to the gatekeeper, the otherworldly construct attacks the summoner. Whether this is out of anger or a pre-programmed response, sages debate to this day.

Once they have appeased the gatekeeper, the offering is absorbed by the gatekeeper, and the summoner can focus on the roiling darkness that fills the construct's archway, giving the gatekeeper a clear location it is to send the summoner and their allies.

SLARECIAN GATEKEEPER

Huge elemental, lawful neutral

Armor Class 20 (natural armor)
Hit Points 184 (16d12 + 80)
Speed 5 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
26 (+8)	4 (-3)	20 (+5)	14 (+2)	25 (+7)	20 (+5)

Saving Throws Constitution +9, Wisdom +11
Skills Arcana +6, History +6, Nature +6, Perception +11
Damage Immunities poison, psychic
Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, unconscious
Senses blindsight 200 ft., passive Perception 21
Languages telepathy 200 ft.
Challenge 12 (8,400 XP)

Immutable Form. The gatekeeper is immune to any spell or effect that would alter its form.

Innate Spellcasting. The gatekeeper's spellcasting ability is Wisdom (save DC 19). It can cast the following spells requiring no components:

At will: *gate*

Portal to Beyond. The archway of the gatekeeper is filled with roiling shadow. When appeased, however, the gatekeeper communes telepathically with the summoner, seeking an image of their desired destination or request. To transport, the summoner must succeed on an Intelligence check, the DC depending on if the summoner is more or less familiar with the destination. If successful, they, and up to 8 other creatures of their choice, are automatically teleported to their specified location when they walk through the gatekeeper's arch. If the summoner fails the ability check, they are teleported to a random location on the same plane.

DC	FAMILIARITY
Permanent Circle (Automatic Success)	The summoner knows the sigil sequence to the teleportation circle destination.
Associated Object (Automatic Success)	The summoner has an object in their possession that was taken from the desire location within the last six months.
Very Familiar (DC 5)	A location the summoner has been to often, has carefully studied, or a place they can see when the summoner makes the request of the gatekeeper.
Seen Casually (DC 10)	A location the summoner has been to more than once, but with which is not very familiar.
Viewed Once (DC 15)	A location that the summoner has seen once, possibly using magic.
Description (DC 20)	A place whose location and appearance the summoner knows about only from someone else's description, perhaps from a map.
False Destination (Automatic Failure)	If given a location that does not exist, such as one the summoner viewed that was an illusion, or a location that has been destroyed, the gatekeeper teleports all targets to a random similar location on the same plane.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The gatekeeper makes two club attacks.

Club. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 20 ft., one target. Hit: 24 (3d10 + 8) bludgeoning damage.

Electrical Field (Recharge 5-6). The gatekeeper unleashes a field of electrical energy with a 50-foot radius. All creatures within the affected area must make a DC 17 Dexterity saving throw, taking 27 (5d10) lightning damage on a failed save, or half as much on a successful one.

Forcewall. The gatekeeper creates a *wall of force*, as per the spell. It may maintain up to three of these walls, not requiring concentration.

SLARECIAN GHOUL

Some sages say that slarecian ghouls are all that remain of a once-great empire, the last of the slarecians who chose undeath over annihilation when the titans and gods set upon them. Others believe that the ghouls are simply undead creations of a mad people who were willing to corrupt their own kind. There is little debate, however, that these ghouls were once slarecians, now emaciated and rotting.

Though lessened in power, slarecian ghouls have lost none of their desire to dominate the other races of Scarn. Entire villages have fallen to groups of the ghouls, who use their fetid touch to transform and enslave the inhabitants. Others are simply slain and left to rot, creating the carrion that the ghouls require for sustenance.

Slarecian ghouls retain the ability to speak, and often know the regional common language. They are also able to speak their own tongue, Slarecian, which is unintelligible to those that do not speak it, even through magical means.

SLARECIAN GHOUL

Medium undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 12
Hit Points 50 (11d8)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	15 (+2)	10 (+1)	15 (+2)	15 (+2)	16 (+3)

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons that aren't adamantine
Damage Immunities poison
Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, poisoned
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12
Languages telepathy 120 ft., Common, Slarecian
Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Fetid Touch. A living creature that is damaged by the ghoul must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw. A target who succeeds on the saving throw is immune to the ghoul's Fetid Touch for 24 hours. On a failed save, the target is stunned for 2d4 rounds, as its flesh acquires an ashen appearance, with spots of it rotting away. At the end of this time, the victim's life force is whisked away, trapped in a limbo between life and death, and its body becomes a shambling undead with no awareness of its previous life, or understanding of who is friend or foe. The victim can be controlled by any slarecian ghoul, who telepathically can give orders to the new undead. Otherwise, the creature must succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw whenever it sees a creature, attacking that creature on a failed save. The target may repeat the saving throw every 24 hours, ending the effect on itself on a successful save. Spells such as greater restoration, heal, and wish do not cure the condition, though they do give the target advantage on the saving roll to end the effect that day. The victim takes on the following traits:

- The target's creature type becomes Undead.
- They retain their Strength, Constitution, and Dexterity scores, but have their Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma scores changed to 10.
- The victim may only make melee attacks, as they would normal, but may not employ spells or special abilities, such as class features or racial traits.
- The victim does not heal naturally, and magical healing has no effect.
- **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.
- **Damage Immunities** poison
- **Condition Immunities** charmed, exhaustion, poisoned

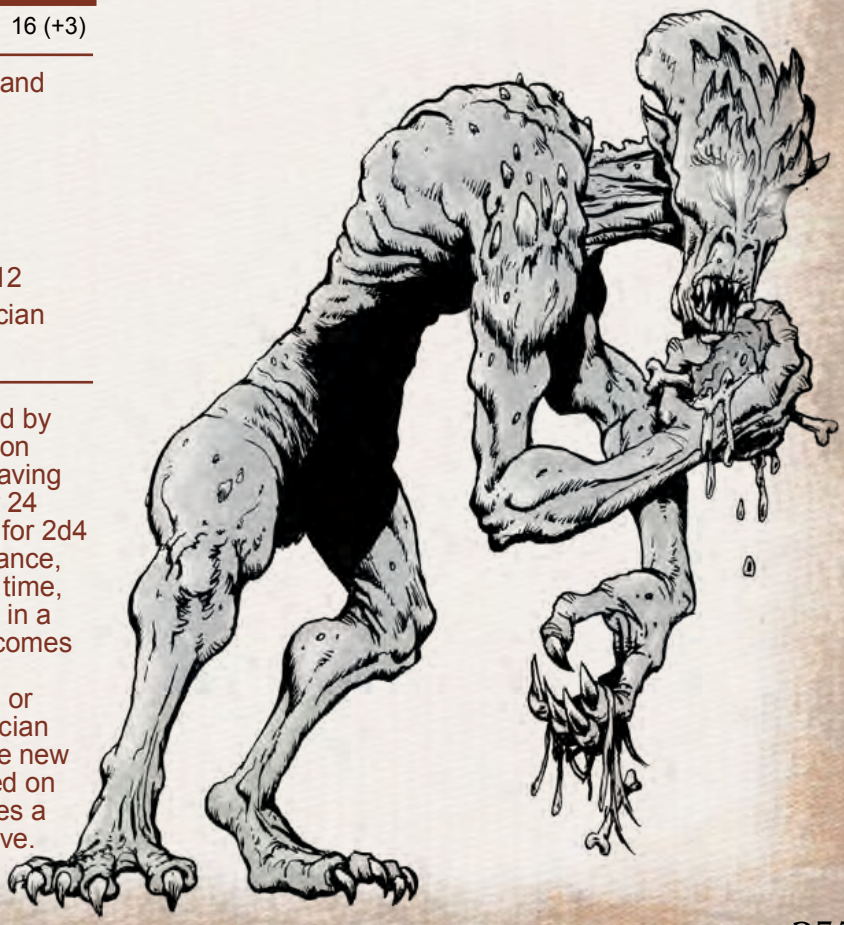
Turn Immunity. The ghoul is immune to effects that turn undead.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The ghoul makes one bite attack and two claw attacks.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) piercing damage.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) slashing damage.



Slarecian Language Virus

Magical hazard

The slarecian empire once stretched across the majority of Scarn, though the slarecians themselves often dwelled far below its surface. Now only ruins remain, barely remembered hints that the alien beings even existed. Many terrors and dangers still lurk in those ruins, though perhaps none more insidious than the slarecian language virus.

Many sages and explorers have sought to learn more about the lost empire, digging up texts and delving into ruins where the very walls themselves may be inscribed with the slarecian's strange language. Unintelligible to most, those who have managed to read the messages left behind by the slarecians, via powerful magics or other methods, have succeeded only in afflicting themselves with a bizarre disease known as a language virus.

When one attempts to read an affected slarecian text, and many of those texts are so infected, they must succeed on a DC 22 Charisma saving throw, or fall under the effects of the infection. Whenever they attempt to speak, their words come out as a sing song of garbled gibberish. Likewise, when they attempt to write, though they try to write the symbols of their known languages, instead they draw strange symbols, scribbles, and otherwise indecipherable nonsense. A victim may still think clearly in any language that they are fluent, but they are unable to communicate verbally with any languages. Comprehend languages and other similar magic does not help, revealing that what the victim is saying is pure gibberish. Spells that require verbal components are impossible to cast for the infected.

Worse yet, those who encounter the afflicted may fall under the power of the language virus as well. Anyone that can hear a victim speak, or who attempt to read the scrawling gibberish of an afflicted person's writing, must succeed on a DC 18 Charisma saving throw or become infected by the language virus.

Magic such as the heal spell is capable of removing the effects of the language virus. Divine casters, however, must succeed on a DC 18 spellcaster ability check in order for their magical healing to overcome the infection.

SPECTER, PROUD

Whereas they once roamed and hunted the savannahs and plains of Ghelspad, proud who have risen as specters after their deaths are cursed to haunt the location of their demise.

SPECTER, PROUD

Large undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 12 (natural armor)
Hit Points 27 (5d10)
Speed 0 ft., fly 50 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
1 (-5)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)

Damage Resistances acid, cold, fire, lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks
Damage Immunities necrotic, poison Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained, unconscious
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10
Languages understands Leonid, Titan Speech
Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Incorporeal Movement. The specter can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. It takes 5 (1d10) force damage if it ends its turn inside an object.

Overbearing Charge. If the specter moves at least 20 feet straight toward a creature and then hits it with a melee attack on the same turn, that target must succeed on a DC 10 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

Sunlight Sensitivity. While in sunlight, the specter has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

ACTIONS

Life Drain. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 10 (3d6) necrotic damage. The target must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or its hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the damage taken. This reduction lasts until the target finishes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0.

STEEL BEETLE

Deep in the Kelder Mountains lies an abandoned workshop, where once the magician Gest Ganest created wondrous marvels. It was in this workshop that he created the first steel beetle, an automaton the size of a bull. Originally designed for security around the workshop, Gest soon came to build them on a commission basis, sending his creations out in the world and turning a hefty profit. The steel beetles were used as bodyguards, war machines, and some very intricately designed ones were placed in the homes of noble families and art collectors, a centerpiece for conversation.

Over the years, metal parts rusted and gears wore down, but some of the steel beetles still remain active at their posts. Those that have been well cared for appear as new as the day they crawled off the assembly table in Gest's workshop.

Unfortunately for many, apperances can be deceiving, as the fuel required for a steel beetle to function is often hard to come by. The constructs are energized by blood sacrifices, with one creature creating enough power for the beetle to operate for one month. Needless to say, many owners stop sustaining the functions of their steel beetles, though the constructs stand ready to spring to life again when the price is paid.

A steel beetle is incapable of making complex plans or judgement calls of its own, though it is able to understand and carry out complex and extensive orders given to it by its owner.

STEEL BEETLE

Large construct, unaligned

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)
Hit Points 76 (8d10 + 32)
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
21 (+5)	14 (+2)	18 (+4)	3 (-4)	11 (+0)	1 (-5)

Damage Immunities poison, psychic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons that aren't adamantine

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages understands the languages of its creator but can't speak

Challenge 7 (2,900 XP)

Immutable Form. The steel beetle is immune to any spell or effect that would alter its form.

Magic Immunity. The steel beetle is immune to all spells, spell-like abilities except as follows:

The steel beetle takes damage as normal from sources that deal necrotic damage, and its maximum hit points are reduced by the amount of necrotic damage done. In addition, the steel beetle becomes inert if it is dealt necrotic damage, and it remains this way until re-energized by the sacrifice of a living creature to fuel it.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The steel beetle makes two claw attacks.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 16 (2d10 + 5) slashing damage.

SUNDERED MAGE

Beings ofmagic created by the Sire of Sorcery, the titan Mesos, the sundered mages were once single creatures. It was Gormoth, who suffered terribly by the poison given to him by his sister, Mormo, that rent the mages in two. Seeking a way to relieve his ongoing torment, Gormoth took Mesos' creations and poured his agony into them, a torrent of psychic pain and force so great, it split each mage in two, both physically and spiritually.

And so they endured for uncountable years, the balm to Gormoth's pain, each half suffering not only the titan's torment, but the anguish of being rent apart, unable to become whole again.

When the titan's fell before the gods, Chardun and Vangal split Gormoth in two, and the titan's connection to the sundered mages had an unexpected side effect. Once again, the mages could rejoin their bodies, becoming one. Their spirits, on the other hand, remained split in twain, granting them the surprising ability to split or rejoin their bodies as they choose.

Now, the sundered mages hide from civilization, building lairs in ruins, caverns, and forests. Though physically able to reunite, they are still tormented by Gormoth's ongoing agony, and they have become callous and grim. Inflicting pain upon others no longer gives them pause as they seek to sever their tie to Gormoth by any means necessary.

When joined as one, a sundered mage resmbles a genderless humanoid, though its face continues to reveal its connection to Gormoth. Twin faces, contorted in pain and anger, shift constantly about the mage's head.

SUNDERED MAGE

Medium aberration, neutral evil

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)/14 (natural armor)*
Hit Points 95 (10d8 + 50) / 48 (5d8 + 25)*
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	14 (+2)	20 (+5)	15 (+2)	11 (+0)	18 (+4)

Saves Wisdom +4/+3*, Charisma +8/+7*
Skills Arcana +6, Perception +4, Survival +4
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14
Languages Ancient Ledean, Titanspeech
Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)
*All statistics after the slash refer to the sundered mage's separated bodies, while the first number refers to its combined form.

All-Around Vision. When united, the sundered mage's facial features morph constantly, each face able to look in different directions, granting it advantage on Intelligence (Investigation), Wisdom (Perception), and Wisdom (Survival) checks. In addition, the sundered mage cannot be flanked if using that optional rule.

Otherwordly Sight. The sundered mage can see all invisible and ethereal creatures and objects within 60 feet.

Regeneration. While the sundered mage has at least 1 hit point, it regains 6 hit points at the start of its turn. When in its dual-form, each body regenerates hit points separately. However, if one form perishes, the regeneration does not keep the other body from dying.

Sorcery Points. The sundered mage has a pool of 12 sorcery points which it may call upon to twist its magic to fit its needs as follows.

Distant Spell. The sundered mage may spend 1 sorcery point to double the range of the spell. When it uses the ability on a spell that has a range of touch, the range increases to 30 feet.

Maximize Spell. When the sundered mage spends 3 sorcery points, all variable, numeric effects of the spell are maximized, requiring no roll to determine damage, hit points affected, number of targets, etc., as appropriate.

Create Spell Slots. As a bonus action, the sundered mage may expend sorcery points to gain a spell slot. It can create spell slots no higher than 5th-level. Alternately, the sundered mage may, as a bonus action, expend one spell slot to gain a number of sorcery points equal to the slot's level.

SPELL SLOT LEVEL	SORCERY POINT COST
1st	2
2nd	3
3rd	5
4th	6
5th	7

Spellcasting. The sundered mage is a 12th-level sorcerer. It's spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 16, +8 to hit with spell attacks). It has the following spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *chill touch, fire bolt, friends, mage hand, message, true strike***

1st level (4 slots): *magic missile, sleep*

2nd level (3 slots): *ray of sickness*

3rd level (3 slots): *counterspell, fireball, haste****

4th level (3 slots)*: *blight, greater invisibility****

5th level (2 slots)*: *animate objects, dominate person*

6th level (1 slot)*: *disintegrate, globe of invulnerability*

* When in its dual-form, the sundered mage loses all 5th- and 6th-level spell slots, and its number of available 4th-level spell slots is reduced to 2.

** When in its dual-form, the effects of true strike may be used by either of the sundered mage's bodies, allowing it to gain its benefits on the same turn.

*** The effects of these spells are shared by both bodies if the sundered mage is in its dual-form.

War Caster. The sundered mage has advantage on Constitution saving throws to maintain its concentration on a spell when it takes damage.

The mage can perform somatic components of spells even when it has weapons in one or both hands.

When a hostile creature's movement provokes an attack of opportunity from the sundered mage, the mage may use its reaction to cast a spell at the creature, rather than making an opportunity attack. The spell must have a casting time of 1 action and must target only that creature.

ACTIONS

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage.

Quarterstaff. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6) bludgeoning damage, or 5 (1d8) bludgeoning damage if used with two hands.

Dual-Form. The sundered mage splits itself into two separate bodies, or re-unites from its dual-form into a single body.

The two bodies act independently from one another, though they share a single mind, which allows them to communicate with one another instantly. The dual-forms share experiences, feelings, and have full use of each others' vision and other senses. As long as both forms are on the same plane of existence, there is no limit to the range of this effect.

When a wounded mage reforms into a single body, its total hit points are added together. A subsequent split divides its remaining hit points in half for each body. If one of the dual-forms is slain, the other body dies instantly. Spells that affect the ability scores, skills, or abilities of one body affects the other body automatically.

THUNDER ORB

Created by entrapping an elemental spirit within a specially prepared sphere of basalt stone, thunder orbs are often found guarding vaults, tombs, and other similar locations.

Once tasked, a thunder orb takes its charge very seriously, and is bold and fearless in combat. This could be, in part, to the fact that when a thunder orb is destroyed, the elemental held within is freed and returns to the plane of its origin. That being said, thunder orbs do not typically display signs of aggression toward those who created them.

The surface of the basalt sphere is inscribed with sigils of power, signs that bind and contain the spirit within. The markings glow with elemental power, and will release small sparks of lightning when a stranger comes too close, or danger is imminent.

THUNDER ORB

Medium construct, unaligned

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)
Hit Points 52 (8d8 + 16)
Speed 0 ft., fly 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	1 (-5)	3 (-4)	10 (+0)

Damage Immunities lightning, poison; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons that aren't adamantine
Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, deafened, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned
Senses blindsight 90 ft., passive Perception 6
Languages -
Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Lightning Absorption. Whenever the thunder orb is subjected to lightning damage, it takes no damage and instead regains a number of hit points equal to half the lightning damage dealt.

Magic Immunity. The thunder orb is immune to all spells, spell-like abilities except as follows:

Dispel magic (caster ability check DC 16) blinds the thunder orb for 5 (2d4) rounds.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The thunder orb makes two lightning strike attacks.

Grand Lightning (Recharge 5-6). The thunder orb unleashes a bolt of lightning 50 feet long and 5 feet wide. Each creature in that area must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw, taking 21 (6d6) lightning damage on a failed saving throw, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Lightning Strike. The thunder orb strikes a creature within 30 feet with an arc of lightning. That creature must make a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw, taking 7 (2d6) lightning damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

VANGAL THE RAVAGER

Destruction and evil incarnate, the Ravager is considered the most terrifying, and the least openly worshipped of the gods. The eldest of the gods, Vangal is more like the titans that he will admit, and it was probably due to this that he helped to destroy the titans with such vehemence during the Divine War. There are those who call upon the Reaver, however, whether in dark cults or when the bloodlust has taken over on the battlefield.

Vangal appears as a massive, powerfully built human, with wild dreadlocks of gore-soaked hair, the viscera of victims clinging to his black, bushy beard and mustache. Armored in black plate, the skulls of victims dangle from a belt at his waist. In each hand, the Ravager wields wicked battleaxes, their blades marked with intricate patterns that resemble suffering faces.

VANGAL THE RAVAGER

Medium celestial, chaotic evil

Armor Class 25 (natural armor)
Hit Points 580 (40d8 + 400)
Speed 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
30 (+10)	22 (+6)	30 (+10)	20 (+5)	22 (+6)	22 (+6)

Saving Throws Str +19, Dex +15, Con +19, Int +14, Wis +15, Cha +15
Damage Resistances acid, cold, lightning, necrotic, radiant, thunder
Damage Immunities fire, poison; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks
Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, stunned
Senses truesight 120 ft., passive Perception 26
Languages all languages
Challenge 30 (155,000 XP)

Legendary Resistance (5/Day). If Vangal fails a saving throw, he can choose to succeed instead.

Lethal Multiattack. If Vangal successfully strikes the same target four or more times in a single round, the target suffers the effects of a power word kill spell. If the target dies from this spell, they may not be returned to life by any means short of a wish without Vangal's permission.

Magic Resistance. Vangal has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Spellcasting. Vangal is a 20th-level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Wisdom (save DC 24, +16 to hit with spell attacks). Vangal can cast any cleric spell up to 9th level at will.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Vangal can use his Frightful Presence. He then makes six battleaxe attacks.

Battleaxe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +23 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 39 (4d12 + 13) slashing damage. If Vangal rolls an 18 or higher on the attack he deals a critical hit, doubling the die roll result when calculating damage.

Frightful Presence. Each creature of Vangal's choice within 120 feet of him and aware of his presence must succeed on a DC 24 Wisdom saving throw or become frightened for 1 minute. A creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, with disadvantage if Vangal is within line of sight, ending the effect on itself on a success. If a creature's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the creature is immune to Vangal's Frightful Presence for the next 24 hours.

Summon Cannon Fodder (3/Day). Vangal magically calls 3d4 leonine demons or 1d4 blade demons. The summoned fiends arrive at the end of Vangal's turn, acting as allies of the god and obeying his spoken commands. The summoned creatures remain for 1 hour, until Vangal dies, or until he dismisses them as a bonus action.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

Vangal can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. Vangal regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Attack. Vangal makes one melee attack.

Move. Vangal moves up to his speed.

Cast a Spell (Costs two actions). Vangal casts one cleric spell.

Curse Item. Vangal curses one magical item that has touched him since his last turn. Vangal may choose any major or minor detrimental property or may permit the curse to be determined at random. Any item cursed in such a fashion remains cursed permanently.

WINTER WOLF PUP

Intelligent creatures, winter wolves are highly protective of their pups, and will often hide them away from danger until they are large enough to fend for themselves. When a winter wolf pup can blast an enemy with a gust of freezing ice, they are considered old enough to travel with the pack on hunting raids.

WINTER WOLF PUP

Medium monstrosity, neutral

Armor Class 11
Hit Points 22 (4d8 + 4)
Speed 35 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)	6 (-2)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

Skills Perception +2, Stealth +3
Damage Immunities cold
Senses passive Perception 12
Languages Common, Winter Wolf
Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Keen Hearing and Smell. The pup has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

Pack Tactics. The pup has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the pup's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

Snow Camouflage. The pup has advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks made to hide in snowy terrain.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 12 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

Cold Breath (Recharge 6). The pup exhales a blast of freezing wind in a 10-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw, taking 9 (2d8) cold damage on a failed save, or half as much on a successful one.

ZRYX

The zryx are a species of tube worms that live in high altitude, boiling acid pools. A zryx has no discernible eyes or nose, and has a slit at one end of its body that functions as a mouth. It expels waste through the same opening. A zryx has slippery, maroon skin, and can alter its coloring to blend in with its surroundings. A zryx feeds on algae and bacteria that live in its acid pools, and it builds tube shelters out of calcium dissolved from the bones of hapless creatures that fall into the pools.

ZRYX

Small beast, unaligned

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)
Hit Points 78 (12d6 + 36)
Speed 15 ft., swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	8 (-1)	16 (+3)	7 (-2)	13 (+1)	7 (-2)

Damage Immunities acid, fire
Condition Immunities blinded, deafened, prone
Senses blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 11
Languages -
Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Acrid Understanding. The zryx can communicate basic concepts with other zryx by subtly altering the acidity of the water in their pools.

Amphibious. The zryx can breathe air and water.

Natural Chameleon. The zryx can alter the pigment of its skin to blend in with its natural surroundings. It has advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks to hide in water. The zryx can hide as a bonus action, and can attempt to hide in plain sight when in water.

Slippery. The zryx's smooth skin gives it advantage on Strength (Athletics) checks made to escape a grapple.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The zryx makes two spew water attacks.

Spew Water. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (2d6) acid + 7 (2d6) fire damage and the target must succeed on a DC 14 Strength saving throw or be pushed up to 10 feet away from the zryx.

Generate Geyser (1/Day). The zryx causes 1 water pool or mud pot within 60 ft. of it to erupt, jettisoning scalding water or mud into the air in a 20-foot-radius sphere centered on the pool. Any creature in the area must make a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw, taking 10 (3d6) acid and 10 (3d6) fire damage and being blinded until the end of the creature's next turn on a failed save, or half as much damage and not being blinded on a successful one.

Appendix: Nonplayer Characters

This section details statistics for various humanoid characters that one may encounter in the Scarred Lands setting, with named characters that appear in the Vengeance of the Shunned campaign arc.

Asaatthi Mage

Many asaatthi avoid the path of divine, or titanic, worship, choosing instead of revere their ancestors. This leaves many of them open to the study of the arcane arts, and the serpentfolk have seen a rise in powerful mages in recent years.

ASAATTHI MAGE

Medium humanoid (asaatthi, titanspawn), any alignment

Armor Class 12 (15 with *mage armor*)
Hit Points 40 (9d8)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	17 (+3)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)

Saving Throws Int +6, Wis +4
Skills Arcana +6, History +6
Damage Resistances poison
Senses darkvision 30ft., passive Perception 11
Languages Asaatth, plus any three languages
Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

Asaatthi Resistance. The asaatthi mage has advantage on saving throws against poison.

Reptilian Mind. The mage has advantage on saving throws against being charmed.

Spellcasting. The mage is a 9th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks). The mage has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *fire bolt, light, mage hand, prestidigitation*
1st level (4 slots): *detect magic, mage armor, magic missile, shield*
2nd level (3 slots): *misty step, suggestion*
3rd level (3 slots): *counterspell, fireball, fly*
4th level (3 slots): *greater invisibility, mana spear**
5th level (1 slot): *lavaform**

ACTIONS

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

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4+2) piercing damage.

*see Scarred Lands Players Guide (5e)

Bandit

This stat block represents bandits commonly encountered across Ghelspad.

BANDIT

Medium humanoid (human), neutral

Armor Class 12 (leather armor)
Hit Points 11 (2d8+2)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

Senses passive Perception 10, Stealth +3
Languages Veshian
Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

Actions

Shortsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6+1) slashing damage.

Light Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, range 80 ft./320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d8+1) piercing damage.

CHARMOK

A distant cousion of Tsendur from Durgan's Rest, Charmok is an orc farmer from a settlement in the Bleak Savannah. Prone to strange dreams that seem to be portents of the future, Charmok watches for signs that his visions are true.

CHARMOK

Medium humanoid (orc, titanspawn), lawful neutral

Armor Class 13
Hit Points 15 (2d8 + 6)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	16 (+3)	17 (+3)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)

Skills Athletics +5, Intimidation +3
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10
Languages Ledean, Orcish
Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Aggressive. As a bonus action, Charmok can move up to his speed toward a hostile creature that he can see.

Savage Attacks. When the Chamork scores a critical hit with a melee weapon attack, he can roll one of the weapon's damage dice one additional time and add it to the extra damage of the critical hit.

ACTIONS

Greataxe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d12 + 3) slashing damage.

Javelin. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage.

CHISSEN

CHISSEN

The first of many, Chissen is a clone created by the gloom womb, Vulzala, whose lair is in the Titanshome Mountains. Chissen only vaguely recalls his original's name, as his years of willing servitude to his "mother" have clouded those old memories.

CHISSEN

Medium humanoid (asaatthi, titanspawn), lawful evil

Armor Class 12 (15 with *mage armor*)
Hit Points 40 (9d8)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	19 (+4)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)

Saving Throws Int +7, Wis +4
Skills Arcana +7, History +6, Perception +4
Damage Resistances poison; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from non-magical weapons (from stoneskin)
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14
Languages Asaatth, Darakeene, Ledean, Titan Speech
Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

Boots of Elvenkind. These boots give Chissen advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks that rely on moving silently.

Spellcasting. Chissen is a 10th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). Chissen has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *fire bolt, light, mage hand, poison spray*
1st level (4 slots): *force blast*, mage armor, magic missile, shield*
2nd level (3 slots): *misty step, suggestion*
3rd level (3 slots): *counterspell, haste, fireball*
4th level (3 slots): *greater invisibility, stoneskin*
5th level (2 slot): *aura of death**

ACTIONS

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage.

*see Scarred Lands Players Guide (5e)

COMMONER

This stat block represents average folk encountered across Ghelspad.

COMMONER

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 10
Hit Points 4 (1d8)
Speed 30 ft.

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

Senses Passive Perception 10
Languages Ledean or Veshian
Challenge 0 (10 XP)

Actions

Club. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 2 (1d4) bludgeoning damage.

CYCLOPS

This stat block represents the rare Cyclops that makes its home on Ghelspad.

CYCLOPS

Huge giant, chaotic evil

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)
Hit Points 105 (10d12 + 40)
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
21 (+5)	8 (-1)	19 (+4)	5 (-3)	9 (-1)	6 (-2)

Skills Perception +2
Senses passive Perception 12
Languages Giant
Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Bad Eyesight. The cyclops has disadvantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks relying on sight as well as on ranged attack checks.

Actions

Multiattack. The giant makes two greatclub attacks.

Greatclub. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 18 (3d8 + 5) bludgeoning damage.

Rock. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, range 60/240 ft., one target. *Hit:* 21 (3d10 +5) bludgeoning damage.

DAIN IRONHEART

A cleric of Goran and a defender of Burok Torn, Dain Ironheart was corrupted by the quest to stop Maghiel the Shunned. Now, the ends justify the means, and he will stop at nothing to save his people.

DAIN IRONHEART

Medium humanoid (Kelder dwarf), lawful evil

Armor Class 20 (plate, shield)
Hit Points 83 (10d8+30)
Speed 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)	13 (+1)

Saving Throws Wis +8, Cha +5
Skills Perception +8, Persuasion +8
Damage Resistances poison
Senses darkvision 60ft., passive Perception 18
Languages Common, Dwarf
Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Divine Strike. Once on each of Dain's turns when he hits with a weapon attack, he can cause the attack to deal an extra 1d8 fire damage to the target.

Spellcasting. Dain is a 10th-level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 16, +8 to hit with spell attacks). He has the following cleric spells prepared:

Cantrips: *light, mending, sacred flame, spare the dying*
1st level (4 slots): *bless, cure Wounds, shield of faith, searing smite, inflict wounds, guiding bolt*
2nd level (4 slots): *heat metal, spiritual weapon*
3rd level (3 slots): *daylight, elemental weapon, protection from energy*
4th level (2 slots): *guardian of faith, wall of fire*
5th level (2 slots): *animate objects, mass cure wounds*

Magic Weapon. Dain wields a +2 magical battleaxe (included in attacks below).

Resilient. Dain has advantage on saving throws against being poisoned.

Steadfast. Dain has advantage on saving throws against being charmed or frightened.

Turn Undead (2/day). All undead creatures within a 30ft radius must make a Wisdom Save (DC16). CR 1 or lower undead are destroyed on a failed save. Creatures over CR 1 are turned on a failed save for 1 minute.

ACTIONS

Battleaxe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (d8 + 4) slashing damage.

DRENDALI GUARD

Tall and powerfully built, Drendali guards tend to stand out in a crowd of other deep elves. These guards take their responsibilities seriously, and their training and fortitude is obvious to any observer.

DRENDALI GUARD

Medium humanoid (drendali elf), any alignment

Armor Class 16 (studded leather, shield)
Hit Points 112 (15d8 + 45)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	15 (+2)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	15 (+2)

Saving Throws Str +7, Dex +5, Con +6
Skills Athletics +10, Intimidation +5, Perception +4
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14
Languages Drendali and one other common language
Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Brave. Drendali guards have advantage on saving throws against being frightened.

Brute. A melee weapon deals one extra die of its damage when the guard hits with it (included in the attack).

Drendali Magic. Drendali guards know the cantrips *mage hand* and *minor illusion*.

Fey Ancestry. The guard has advantage on saving throws against being charmed, and magic can't put them to sleep.

ACTIONS

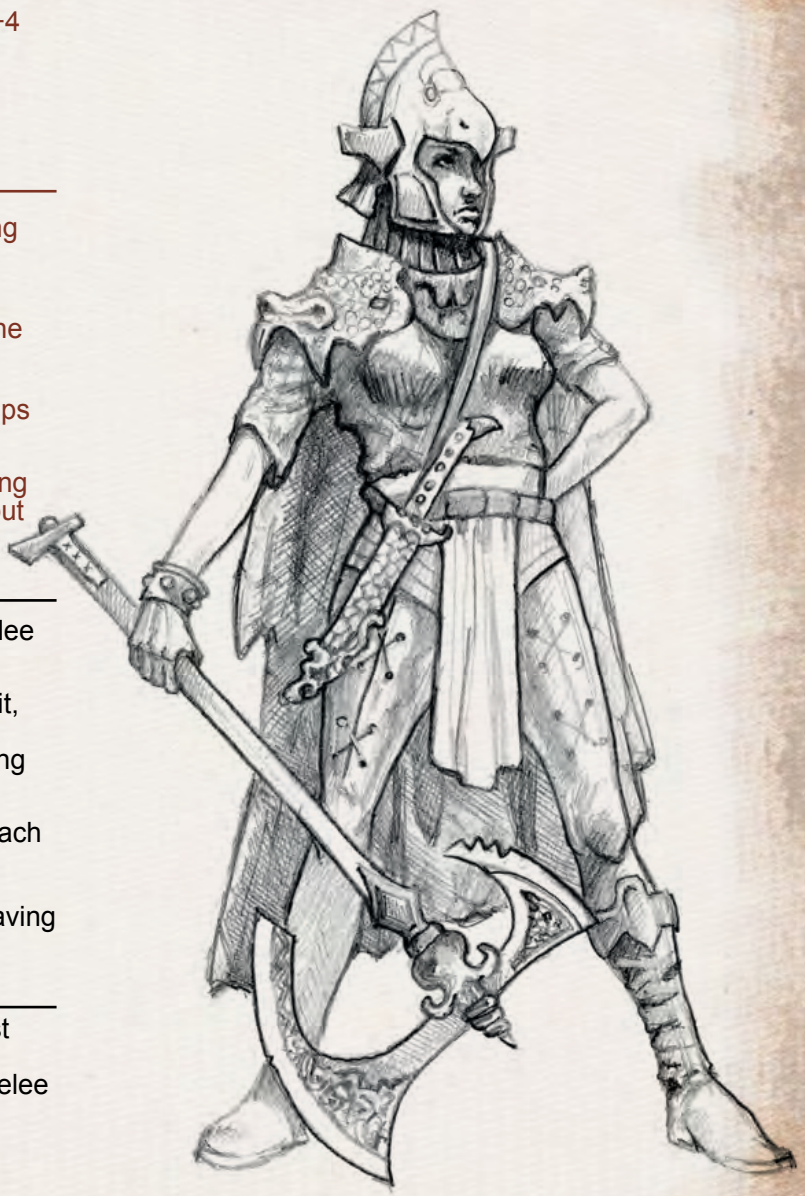
Multiattack. The drendali guard makes three melee weapon attacks or two ranged weapon attacks.

Spear. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) piercing damage, or 13 (2d8 + 4) piercing damage when wielded with two hands.

Shield Bash. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 9 (2d4 + 4) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a Medium or smaller creature, it must succeed on a DC 15 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

REACTIONS

Parry. The drendali guard adds 3 to its AC against one melee attack that would hit it. To do so, the guard must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.



EIRENE MALIKEIA

Eirene is a geomancer from the Academy in the Bridged City. She's a recognized expert in her field, and a prominent scholar. She can be cold and rude if her authority is challenged.

EIRENE MALIKEIA

Medium humanoid (human), lawful good

Armor Class 12 (15 with *mage armor*)
Hit Points 40 (9d8)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	17 (+3)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)

Saving Throws Int +6, Wis +4
Skills Arcana +6, History +6
Senses darkvision 30ft., passive Perception 11
Languages Veshian, Common, Slitherin, Ancient Ledean
Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

Spellcasting. Eirene is a 9th-level spellcaster. Her spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks). She has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *light, mage hand, mending, prestidigitation*
1st level (4 slots): *comprehend languages, detect magic, grease, unseen servant*
2nd level (3 slots): *enlarge/reduce, gust of wind*
3rd level (3 slots): *counterspell, dispel magic, sending*
4th level (3 slots): *control water, secret chest*
5th level (1 slot): *wall of stone*

ACTIONS

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

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5ft., one target. *Hit:* (1d4+2) piercing damage.

ELRUEN

Elruen was once a soldier, and he took part in the Battle of Gambedel alongside Maghiel. This connection may prove to be deadly for the elf as he tries to live a life after the Titanswar.

ELRUEN

Medium humanoid (Drendali elf), neutral

Armor Class 12 (15 with *mage armor*)
Hit Points 28 (6d8)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	17 (+3)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)

Saving Throws Int +6, Wis +4
Skills Arcana +6, History +6, Perception +4
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14
Languages Ahnae, Drendali, Ledean, Veshian
Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Fey Ancestry. Elruen has advantage on saving throws against being charmed, and magic can't put him to sleep.

Spellcasting. Elruen is a 6-level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks). He has the following wizard spells prepared.

Cantrips (at will). *fire bolt* (2d10), *light, mage hand, minor illusion, prestidigitation*

1st level (4 slots). *detect magic, mage armor, magic missile, shield*

2nd level (3 slots). *locate object, misty step*

3rd level (3 slots). *counterspell, magic circle, tongues*

ACTIONS

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage.

ERLEK

Master Builder Erlek is an engineer from the Walled Warren, supporting Eirene's magical research with his own scientific approach. He is a kindly elderly slitherin with a wry sense of humor.

ERLEK

Medium humanoid (slitherin, titanspawn), neutral good

Armor Class 12
Hit Points 40 (9d8)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	17 (+3)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)

Saving Throws Int +5, Wis +3
Skills Arcana +5, History +5, Medicine +5, Nature +5
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11
Languages Ancient Ledian, Ledean, Slitherin, Veshian
Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Contortionist. Erlek has advantage on Dexterity checks to escape from bonds or being grappled, as well as Dexterity checks to squeeze through tight spaces.

Disease Resistance. Erlek has advantage on saving throws against disease.

Rodent Empathy. Erlek can converse with rodents through body language and simple sounds, communicating simple ideas to such beasts.

ACTIONS

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

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5ft., one target. *Hit:* (1d4+2) piercing damage.

FOOTPAD

Warriors, often for-hire, footpads are fierce hand-to-hand combatants, though they will just as gladly smash in an opponent's skull with their maul. When circumstances are right, the footpad's ability to strike an opponent's weak spot can be devastating.

FOOTPAD

Medium humanoid (any), any alignment

Armor Class 16 (unarmored defense)
Hit Points 187 (22d8 + 88)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
22 (+6)	14 (+2)	18 (+4)	10 (+0)	8 (-1)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Con +7
Skills Athletics +9, Intimidation +4
Senses passive Perception 9
Languages Ledean
Challenge 7 (2,900 XP)

Dead Shot. The footpad does an extra die of damage with hand crossbows (included in its attack.

Hand-to-Hand Expert. The footpad is proficient with improvised weapons and unarmed strikes and it rolls a d6 in place of the normal damage of unarmed strikes. When the footpad uses the Attack action with an unarmed strike or improvised weapon, it can make one unarmed strike or a grapple as a bonus action.

Great Fortitude. If the footpad has 20 or less hit points remaining, it has advantage on all attack rolls.

Reckless. At the start of its turn, the footpad can gain advantage on all melee weapon attack rolls it makes during that turn, but attack rolls against it have advantage until the start of its next turn.

Sneak Attack. Once per turn, the footpad deals an extra 10 (3d6) damage when it hits a target with a weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 feet of an ally of the footpad that isn't incapacitated and the footpad doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

Sure Grip. The footpad wields its maul in one hand and its hand crossbow in the other without disadvantage.

Unarmored Defense. When not wearing any armor and not wielding a shield, the footpad's Armor Class equals 10 + its Dexterity Modifier + its Constitution Modifier.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The footpad makes two melee weapon attacks and one with its hand crossbow.

Maul. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d6 + 6) bludgeoning damage.

Unarmed Attack. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d6 + 6) bludgeoning damage.

Hand Crossbow. *Range Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (2d6 + 2) piercing damage.

GRUSHENK

Grushenk is a younger orc but has an active following among the crafters and artisans of her caravan. She is tired of having to travel between customers and wants to set up a shop in a wealthy neighborhood where she can make a regular income. She does not believe in the gods but will not speak out against them for fear of alienating the older orcs in the caravan.

GRUSHENK (ORC TATTOO ADEPT)

Medium humanoid (orc), chaotic good

Armor Class 16 (chain shirt, buckler)
Hit Points 65 (10d8 + 20)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	15 (+2)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Dexterity +5, Charisma +6
Skills Arcana +4, Perception +3, Performance +9, Persuasion +9
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13
Languages Ledean, Orcish
Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Aggressive. As a bonus action, Grushenk can move up to her speed toward a hostile creature she can see.

Bardic Inspiration (3/Short Rest). Grushenk uses her bonus action to grant one creature other than herself one Bardic Inspiration die, a d8. Within the next 10 minutes, the target can roll the die and add the number rolled to one ability check, attack roll, saving throw, or damage roll it makes. The target can wait until after it rolls the check, but before the DM says whether the roll succeeds or fails. Alternatively, when an attack roll is made against the target, it can use its reaction to roll the Bardic Inspiration die and add the number to its AC against that attack, after seeing the roll but before knowing whether it hits or misses. A creature can have only one Bardic Inspiration die at a time.

Dancing Ink. Grushenk has vibrant white magical tattoo. She may cast shield from the tattoo up to three times, without consuming a spell slot. Once she has done so, the Dancing Ink tattoo fades away. Grushenk may apply a new Dancing Ink tattoo with any spell she knows after a long rest.

Jack of All Trades. Grushenk adds +1 to any ability check she makes that she is not proficient in.

Savage Attacks. When she scores a critical hit with a melee weapon attack, Grushenk can roll one of the weapon's damage dice one additional time and add it to the extra damage of the critical hit.

Song of Rest. Grushenk can perform a song while taking a short rest. Any ally who hears the song regains an extra 1d6 hit points if it spends any Hit Dice to regain hit points at the end of that rest. Grushenk can confer this benefit on herself as well.

Spellcasting. Grushenk is an 8th-level spellcaster. Her spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks). She has the following bard and wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *blade ward, fire bolt, friends, message, vicious mockery*

1st level (4 slots): *charm person, comprehend languages, disguise self, faerie fire, shield, Tasha's hideous laughter, unseen servant*

2nd level (3 slots): *detect thoughts, hold person, rend the sovereign soul*

3rd level (3 slots): *hypnotic pattern, major image*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Grushenk makes two scimitar attacks or two shortbow attacks.

Scimitar. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) slashing damage.

Shortbow. *Range Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

Countercharm. Grushenk starts a performance that lasts until the end of her next turn. During that time, she and any allies within 30 feet of her that can hear the performance have advantage on saving throws against being frightened or charmed. The performance ends if Grushenk is incapacitated, silenced, or she voluntarily ends it.

HAPLO YELGRIN

A halfling knife fighter rogue (see **Scarred Lands Players Guide** p. 70) in the service of Maghiel the Shunned, Haplo is encountered in the Festering Fields during *The Queen's Gambit*.

HAPLO YELGRIN (ROGUE)

Small humanoid (halfling), lawful evil

Armor Class 16 (studded leather armor)
Hit Points 48 (9d8)
Speed 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	18 (+4)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws DEX +8, INT +5
Skills Acrobatics +8, Deception +11, Insight +5, Perception +5, Performance +7, Persuasion +11, Sleight of Hand +12, Stealth +12, Thieves' Tools +8
Senses passive Perception 15
Languages Calastian, Drendali, Ledean
Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Haplo is a 9th level rogue knife-fighter.

Lucky. When Haplo rolls a 1 on the d20 for an attack roll, ability check, or saving throw, he can reroll the die and must use the new roll.

Brave. Haplo has advantage on saving throws against being frightened.

Halfling Combat Training. Haplo is proficient with the blowgun, dart, sling, and spear.

Halfling Nimbleness. Haplo can move through the space of any creature that is of a size larger than his.

Halfling Stealth. Haplo can attempt to hide even when he is obscured only by a creature that is at least one size larger than he is.

Cunning Action. On each of his turns, Haplo can use a bonus action to take the Dash, Disengage, or Hide action.

Evasion. When Haplo is subjected to an effect that allows him to make a Dexterity saving throw to take only half damage, he instead takes no damage if he succeeds on the saving throw, and only half damage if he fails.

Sneak Attack. Once per turn, Haplo deals an extra 17 (5d6) damage when he hits a target with a weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 feet of an ally of Haplo's that isn't incapacitated and Haplo doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

Uncanny Dodge. When an attacker that Haplo can see hits him with an attack, Haplo can use his reaction to halve the damage against him.

Deceptive Grace. Haplo has advantage on **Dexterity (Sleight of Hand)** checks made to conceal a dagger on his person. In addition, he can use the bonus action granted by his Cunning Action to make a **Dexterity (Sleight of Hand)** check.

Knife Mastery. Haplo is proficient with the roundknife. When he is wielding a dagger or a roundknife and not other weapons, he gains a +2 bonus to damage rolls with the weapon (Included in damage). When Haplo is wielding two daggers or roundknives, or a dagger and a roundknife, he can add his ability modifier to the damage of the second attack.

ACTIONS

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d4 + 6) piercing damage.

Roundknife. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d4 + 6) slashing damage.

K'RGZUTH

A unitaur who fought in the Titanswar, K'rgzuth has lived much longer than his comrades. After being trapped in a subterranean labyrinth during a retreat from the battlefield, the unitar and his fellows wandered the unending tunnels for many weeks before finding a magical stone that prolonged their lives. Decades passed, ultimately leading to the demise of all of the unitaurs save K'rgzuth, who raised his companions as undead to help him and keep him company within the labyrinth. Recently, K'rgzuth discovered an exit from the underworld prison he had been trapped in for so long, but chose to remain, knowing that the strange magic that keeps him alive is tied to the stone within the labyrinth.

K'RGZUTH

Large giant (unitaur, titanspawn), neutral evil

Armor Class 16 (19 with *mage armor*)
Hit Points 54 (6d10 + 21)
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	11 (+0)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	9 (-1)

Skills Perception +2, Survival +2
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12
Languages Giantish, Titan Speech
Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

Charge. If K'rgzuth moves at least 20 feet straight toward a target and then hits it with a gore attack on the same turn, the target takes an extra 14 (4d6) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

Spellcasting. K'rgzuth is a 9th-level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 12, +4 to hit with spell attacks). K'rgzuth casts mage armor on himself before combat and has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *chill touch, fire bolt, mage hand, prestidigitation*
1st level (4 slots): *detect magic, mage armor, magic missile, shield*
2nd level (3 slots): *misty step, suggestion*
3rd level (3 slots): *counterspell, fly, lightning bolt*
4th level (3 slots): *greater invisibility, ice storm*
5th level (3 slots): *dream*

ACTIONS

Gore. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) bludgeoning damage.

Greatclub. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d8 + 3) bludgeoning damage.

Javelin. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) piercing damage.

KALYX MALIKEIA

Eirene's fourteen year old daughter. Tough, independent, and tenacious, but reaching the limits of her ability to endure horror.

KALYX MALIKEIA

Medium humanoid (human), lawful good

Armor Class 12
Hit Points 6 (1d8+2)
Speed 30 ft.

STR DEX CON INT WIS CHA
10 (+0) 14 (+2) 14 (+2) 10 (+0) 13 (+1) 10 (+0)

Skills Athletics +2, Stealth +4
Senses Passive Perception 11
Languages Ledean, Veshian
Challenge 0 (10 XP)

ACTIONS

Club. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 2 (1d4) bludgeoning damage.

KELDER BERSERKER

For some dwarves, the path of the warrior does not mean heavy armor and shields. There are those that embrace the rage inside them, which is often armor enough for them.

KELDER BERSERKER

Medium humanoid (Kelder dwarf), any chaotic alignment

Armor Class 13 (hide armor)
Hit Points 67 (9d8+27)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	12 (+1)	17 (+3)	9 (-1)	11 (+0)	9 (-1)

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10
Damage Resistances poison
Languages Dwarvish, Ledean
Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Dwarven Resilience. The berserker has advantage on saving throws against poison.

Reckless. At the start of its turn, the berserker can gain advantage on all melee weapon attack rolls during that turn, but attack rolls against it have advantage until the start of its next turn.

Steadfast. Kelder dwarves have advantage on saving throws against being charmed or frightened.

ACTIONS

Greataxe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (1d12 + 3) slashing damage.

KELDER SOLDIER

Elite dwarven warriors, Kelder soldiers gain defensive bonuses by working as a tactical unit.

KELDER SOLDIER

Medium humanoid (dwarf), any lawful alignment

Armor Class 20 (plate, shield)
Hit Points 65 (10d8+20)
Speed 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

Skills Athletics +6, Perception +3, Persuasion +3
Damage Resistances poison
Senses darkvision 60ft., passive Perception 13
Languages Dwarvish, Ledean
Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Dwarven Resilience. Kelder soldiers have advantage on saving throws against being poisoned.

Steadfast. Kelder soldiers have advantage on saving throws against being charmed or frightened.

Shield Wall. When a Kelder soldier is using a shield and fighting side by side with another Kelder soldier, they each get +2 to their AC.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Kelder soldiers make two melee attacks per round.

Battleaxe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (d8 + 3) slashing damage.

Myrnev

Myrnev is the current leader of the Shumosh Caravan. A devout believer in Denev, she finds value in tradition, and teaches that orcs have been given the gift of Redemption. She knows that orcs are feared by other races and prefers to maintain the safety of her tribe by staying on the outskirts of civilization, consistently on the move.

MYRNEV (ORC INCARNATE)

Medium humanoid (orc), neutral good

Armor Class 15 (leather armor, Defense fighting style)

Hit Points 110 (17d8 + 34)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Int +5, Wis +8

Skills Nature +5, Survival +8

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14

Languages Druidic, Ledean, Orcish

Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Aggressive. As a bonus action, Myrnev can move up to her speed toward a hostile creature she can see.

Land's Stride. Myrnev can move through nonmagical difficult terrain without having to use extra movement. She can pass through nonmagical plants without be slowed by them and without taking damage from them if they have thorns, spines, or a similar hazard. She has advantage to saving throws against plants that are magically created or manipulated to impede movement.

Savage Attacks. When she scores a critical hit with a melee weapon attack, Myrnev can roll one of the weapon's damage dice one additional time and add it to the extra damage of the critical hit.

Spellcasting. Myrnev is a 12th-level spellcaster. Her spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 17, +9 to hit with spell attacks. She has the following druid and ranger spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *guidance, produce flame*

1st level (4 slots): *animal friendship, call animal, create or destroy water, cure wounds, detect poison and disease, entangle, multiply missile, purify food and drink, speak with animals*

2nd level (3 slots): *beast sense, gust of wind, lesser restoration, pass without trace, spike growth*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Myrnev makes two melee or ranged weapon attacks.

Javelin. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) piercing damage.

Scimitar. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) slashing damage.

Wild Incarnation. Myrnev polymorphs into one of her available shapes, and can remain in this form indefinitely. Myrnev can choose whether her equipment falls to the ground, melds with her new form, or is worn by the new form. Myrnev reverts to her true form if she dies or falls unconscious. She can revert to her true form by using an action on her turn.

While in a new form, Myrnev retains her game statistics, but her AC, movement modes, Strength and Dexterity are replaced by those of the new form, and she gains special senses, proficiencies, traits, actions, and reactions (except class features, legendary actions, and lair actions) that the new form has but she lacks. Her ability to speak and take any action that requires hands is limited to the capabilities of her new form. She can cast any innate spells of the new form, but cannot cast her own spells. Transforming doesn't break her concentration on a spell she's already cast, or prevent her from taking actions that are part of a spell that she's already cast.

Myrnev is able to change form into a pilfer pixie, a quillwolf, a sutak, or a trogodon.

ORC VETERAN

Those orcs who manage to live long enough on the battlefield learn to fight with a skill beyond that of the berserkers that simply fling themselves against their opponents. Such veterans are deadly tacticians as well as fighters, though they can be just as aggressive as the rest of their kin.

ORC VETERAN

Medium humanoid (orc, titanspawn), any alignment

Armor Class 17 (splint)
Hit Points 58 (9d8 + 18)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	11 (+2)	10 (+0)

Skills Athletics +5, Intimidation +2, Perception +2
Senses darkvision 30 ft., passive Perception 12
Languages Orcish and one additional common language
Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Aggressive. As a bonus action, the orc veteran can move up to its speed toward a hostile creature it can see.

Savage Attacks. When the orc veteran scores a critical hit with a melee weapon attack, it can roll one of the weapon's damage dice one additional time and add it to the extra damage of the critical hit.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The orc veteran makes two longsword attacks. If it has a shortsword drawn, it can also make a shortsword attack.

Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) slashing damage, or 8 (1d10 + 3) slashing damage if wielded with two hands.

Shortsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage.

Heavy Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 100/400 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d10 + 1) piercing damage.

SAVILA NEBEGA

Savila is an accomplished mage and engineer, but she's equally well-schooled in history. She is originally from Lokil (Alliki Nebega, Master of Lore, is her uncle). She enjoys teaching and will respond positively to characters who are curious and ask smart questions. She is also fond of asking pointed questions and encouraging people to draw their own conclusions.

SAVILA NEBEGA

Medium humanoid (human), neutral good

Armor Class 12 (15 with *mage armor*)
Hit Points 40 (9d8)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	17 (+3)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)

Saving Throws Int +6, Wis +4
Skills Arcana +6, History +6
Senses passive Perception 11
Languages Ancient Ledean, Dunahn, Elzan, Ledean
Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

Spellcasting. Savila is a 9th-level spellcaster. Her spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks). Savila has the following wizard spells prepared.

Cantrips (at will): *fire bolt, light, mage hand, prestidigitation*
1st level (4 slots): *detect magic, comprehend languages, identify, mage armor*
2nd level (3 slots): *misty step, suggestion*
3rd level (3 slots): *counterspell, fireball, fly*
4th level (3 slots): *greater invisibility, ice storm*
5th level (1 slot): *cone of cold*

ACTIONS

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage.

SHERIFF ISI

Isi is the well-liked sheriff of Durgan's Rest. She is just trying to preserve the calm nature of the village and doesn't much care how that is achieved. Just as likely to drag a few rowdy folks to the village limits to "have it out" as she is to arrest anybody. The manticora sheriff just wants things calm in her little piece of the world.

SHERIFF ISI

Medium humanoid (manticora), neutral good

Armor Class 17 (splint)
Hit Points 58 (9d8 + 18)
Speed 30 ft. (40 ft. if on all fours)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	15 (+2)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	11 (+0)

Skills Athletics +5, Perception +2
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12
Languages Leonid, Ledean
Challenge 3 (700 XP)

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Isi makes two longsword attacks. If she has a shortsword drawn, she can also make a shortsword attack.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) slashing damage.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) piercing damage.

Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) slashing damage, or 8 (1d10 + 3) slashing damage if used with two hands.

Shortsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage.

Heavy Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, range 100/400 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d10 + 1) piercing damage.

SINVAR

A proud who was slain while the Divine War raged on, Sinvar became a wraith and slew her own companions, who then rose as specters. Killed by K'rgzuth and the undead he commands within the labyrinth prison they were both sentenced to, Sinvar chose to spare the unitaur, instead blaming an encampment of orcs for her fate. Leading her fellow undead proud, she attacked the orcs, but Sinvar and her minions were driven back, and were trapped in the labyrinth when the orcs sealed its entrance.

SINVAR

Large undead (proud wraith), chaotic evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)
Hit Points 76 (9d10 + 27)
Speed 0 ft., fly 60 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6 (-2)	16 (+3)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)

Damage Resistances acid, cold, fire, lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks that aren't silvered
Damage Immunities necrotic, poison
Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12
Languages Leonid, Titan Speech
Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

Incorporeal Movement. Sinvar can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. She takes 5 (1d10) force damage if she ends her turn inside an object.

Overbearing Charge. If Sinvar moves at least 20 feet straight toward a creature and then hits it with a melee attack on the same turn, that target must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

Sunlight Sensitivity. While in sunlight, Sinvar has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

ACTIONS

Life Drain. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 21 (4d8 + 3) necrotic damage. The target must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or its hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the damage taken. This reduction lasts until the target finishes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0.

Create Specter. Sinvar targets a humanoid within 10 feet of it that has been dead for no longer than 1 minute and died violently. The target's spirit rises as a specter in the space of its corpse or in the nearest unoccupied space. The specter is under Sinvar's control. Sinvar can have no more than seven specters under its control at one time.

SLITHERIN ASSASSIN

The predatory nature that resides within all slitherin, whether they embrace it or not, makes the ratfolk perfect assassins.

SLITHERIN ASSASSIN

Medium humanoid (slitherin, titanspawn), any non-good alignment

Armor Class 15 (studded leather)
Hit Points 78 (12d8 + 24)
Speed 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Dex +6, Int +4
Skills Acrobatics +6, Athletics +3, Deception +3, Perception +3, Stealth +9
Damage Resistances poison
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13
Languages Thieves' Cant, Slitherin, and one addition language
Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Assassinate. During its first turn, the assassin has advantage on attack rolls against any creature that hasn't taken a turn. Any hit the assassin scores against a surprised creature is a critical hit.

Contortionist. The assassin has advantage on Dexterity checks to escape from bonds or being grappled, as well as Dexterity checks to squeeze through tight spaces.

Disease Resistance. The assassin has advantage on saving throws against disease.

Evasion. If the assassin is subjected to an effect that allows it to make a Dexterity saving throw to take only half damage, the assassin instead takes no damage if it succeeds on the saving throw, and only half damage if it fails.

Rodent Empathy. The assassin can converse with rodents through body language and simple sounds, communicating simple ideas to such beasts.

Sneak Attack (1/Turn). The assassin deals an extra 14 (4d6) damage when it hits a target with a weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 feet of an ally of the assassin that isn't incapacitated, and the assassin doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The assassin makes two melee attacks.

Shortsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6+3) piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, taking 24 (7d6) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Light Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, taking 24 (7d6) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4+3) piercing damage.

Tivex

TIVEX

While many akesheth* exhibit a stoic restraint when it comes to dealings with the world beyond their homes, Tivex has always been a curious creature. It believes the akesheth should strive for more, and should be free to walk in the world without fear.

Tivex's hide is pure white, his head carapace and tentacles a deep shade of red, marking him as an akesheon'sul.

TIVEX (AKESHETH BARD)

Medium humanoid (akesheon'sul), chaotic good

Armor Class 15 (studded leather)

Hit Points 83 (15d8 + 15)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	20 (+5)

Saving Throws Dex +7, Cha +9

Skills Arcana +10, Athletics +3, History +10, Insight +4, Investigation +6, Perception +8, Persuasion +13, Stealth +7

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 18

Languages Akesheth, Ledean, Titan Speech

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Bardic Inspiration (3/Short rest). Tivex uses its bonus action to grant one creature other than itself one Bardic Inspiration die, a d10. Within the next 10 minutes, the target can roll the die and add the number rolled to one ability check, attack roll, saving throw, or damage roll it makes. The target can wait until after it rolls the check, but before the DM says whether the roll succeeds or fails. Alternatively, when an attack roll is made against the target, it can use its reaction to roll the Bardic Inspiration die and add the number to its AC against that attack, after seeing the roll but before knowing whether it hits or misses. A creature can have only one Bardic Inspiration die at a time.

Alternately, if a creature within 60 feet of Tivex that it can see makes an attack roll, an ability check, or a damage roll, Tivex can use its reaction to expend one Bardic Inspiration, rolling the Bardic Inspiration die and subtracting the number from the creature's roll. The creature is immune if it can't hear Tivex or if it's immune to being charmed.

Percipient. At the end of a Long rest, Tivex rolls 1d6, gaining the following benefit until it completes another Long rest:

1-2: Tivex has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks.

3-4: Tivex has advantage on Wisdom (Insight) checks.

5-6: Tivex can see when something appears to be other than it truly is, though Tivex cannot see its true shape. Tivex can see glimpses of things moving in the Border Ethereal nearby.

Song of Rest. Tivex can perform a song while taking a short rest. Any ally who hears the song regains an extra 1d8 hit points if it spends any Hit Dice to regain hit points at the end of that rest. Tivex can confer this benefit on itself as well.

Spellcasting. Tivex casts spells as a 12th-level bard (save DC 17, spell attack +9). Its spellcasting ability is Charisma, and it has the following spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *mage hand, message, minor illusion, vicious mockery*

1st-level (4 slots): *cure wounds, guiding bolt, healing word*

2nd-level (3 slots): *knock, misty step, shatter, zone of truth*

3rd-level (3 slots): *counterspell, dispel magic, tiny hut, nondetection, mass healing word*

4th-level (3 slots): *dimension door, greater invisibility*

5th-level (2 slots): *dominate person, mass cure wounds*

6th-level (1 slot): *irresistible dance*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Tivex makes one attack with its rapier and one with its hand crossbow.

Rapier. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage.

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20 / 60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) piercing damage.

Hand Crossbow. *Range Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, range 30 / 120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage.

Countercharm. Tivex starts a performance that lasts until the end of its next turn. During that time, it and any allies within 30 feet of its that can hear the performance have advantage on saving throws against being frightened or charmed. The performance ends if Tivex is incapacitated, silenced, or it voluntarily ends it.

Damage Aura (1/short rest). Tivex releases a wave of energy in a 10-foot radius around itself. All creatures in the area must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw, suffering 14 (4d6) force damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

REACTIONS

Presence of Chaos (2/day). When a creature within 30 feet of Tivex that it can see makes an attack roll, saving throw, or skill check, Tivex can use its reaction to force the creature to make a new roll. The creature must use the new result.

* see Scarred Races: Player Options for the Scarred Lands

TSENDUR

Somewhat of a recluse, Tsendur calls Durgan's Rest home. Though he is not seen much around town, the villagers regard him as kind and generous when he makes an appearance to pick up supplies or to simply get outside for some fresh air.

TSENDUR (ORC MAGE)

Medium humanoid (orc), neutral

Armor Class 12 (15 with *mage armor*)
Hit Points 49 (9d8 + 9)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	17 (+2)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)

Saving Throws Int +6, Wis +4
Skills Arcana +6, History +6, Intimidation +3
Senses darkvision 30 ft., passive Perception 11
Languages Ahnae, Ancient Ledean, Ledean, Orc
Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

Aggressive. As a bonus action, Tsendur can move up to his speed toward a hostile creature he can see.

Savage Attacks. When Tsendur scores a critical hit with a melee weapon attack, he can roll one of the weapon's damage dice one additional time and add the result to the critical hit.

Spellcasting. The mage is a 9th-level spellcaster.

Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks). The mage has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *filch, fire bolt, mage hand, prestidigitation*

1st level (4 slots): *detect magic, mage armor, magic missile, multiply missile*

2nd level (3 slots): *aegis, metamagic mimicry*

3rd level (3 slots): *counterspell, fireball, penumbral trap*

4th level (3 slots): *lightning shield, scrying feedback*

5th level (1 slot): *legend lore*

ACTIONS

Handaxe. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 2) slashing damage.

VANGAL'S PRIDE

Tribes of manticora who have not allowed themselves to become weak joining those who have chosen to become "civilized". Vangal's Pride often go on hunts, seeking powerful creatures to slay in order to prove themselves worthy of Vangal's pride.

CLAW OF VANGAL

Medium humanoid (manticora), chaotic evil

Armor Class 16 (studded leather)
Hit Points 120 (16d8 + 48)
Speed 30 ft. (40 ft. if on all fours)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	19 (+4)	16 (+3)	11 (+0)	18 (+4)	17 (+3)

Saving Throws Dexterity +7, Wisdom +7
Skills Insight +7, Perception +7, Stealth +7, Survival +7
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 17
Languages Ledean, Leonid
Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Assassinate. During its first turn, the claw of Vangal has advantage on attack rolls against any creature that hasn't taken a turn. Any hit the claw of Vangal scores against a surprised creature is a critical hit.

Evasion. If the claw of Vangal is subjected to an effect that allows it to make a Dexterity saving throw to take only half damage, the claw of Vangal instead takes no damage if it succeeds on the saving throw, and only half damage if it fails.

Sneak Attack (1/Turn). Once per turn, the claw of Vangal deals an extra 17 (5d6) damage when it hits a target with a weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 feet of an ally of the claw of Vangal that isn't incapacitated and the claw of Vangal doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

Spellcasting. The claw of Vangal is a 5th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). The claw of Vangal has the following cleric spells prepared.

Cantrips (at will): *guidance, light, mending, thaumaturgy*
1st level (4 slots): *bane, inflict wounds, shield of faith*
2nd level (3 slots): *bleeding sickness±, blindness/deafness, hold person, silence*
3rd level (2 slots): *bestow curse, meld into stone*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The claw of Vangal makes two claw gauntlet attacks.

Claw Gauntlet. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) slashing damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or be paralyzed for 1 minute. The target may repeat their saving throw at the end of each of their turns, ending the effect on a success. A creature that succeeds on the saving throw is immune to the claw's poison for 24 hours.

Shortbow. *Range Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage.

REACTIONS

Uncanny Dodge. When an attacker the claw of Vangal can see hits it with an attack, the claw of Vangal can choose to take half the damage instead.

FIST OF VANGAL

Medium humanoid (manticora), chaotic evil

Armor Class 18 (unarmored defense)
Hit Points 175 (27d8 + 54)
Speed 40 ft. (50 ft. if on all fours)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Constitution +5
Skills Athletics +8, Intimidation +9, Perception +7
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 17
Languages Ledean, Leonid
Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Mighty Blow. When the fist of Vangal scores a critical hit, it automatically deals maximum damage for the attack.

Reckless. At the start of its turn, the fist of Vangal can gain advantage on all melee weapon attack rolls it makes during that turn, but attack rolls against it have advantage until the start of its next turn.

Unarmored Defense. While the fist of Vangal is wearing no armor and wielding no shield, its AC includes its Wisdom modifier.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The fist of Vangal makes three unarmed strikes.

Unarmed Strike. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d8 + 5) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a creature, the fist of Vangal can choose one of the following additional effects:

- The target must succeed on a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw or be knocked prone.
- The target must succeed on a DC 16 Constitution saving throw or be stunned until the end of the fist of Vangal's next turn. The next round the target must attempt another save, remaining stunned on a failure.

REACTIONS

Deflect Missile. If the fist of Vangal is hit by a ranged weapon attack, it deflects the missile. The damage it takes from the attack is reduced by 1d10+5. If the damage is reduced to 0, the fist of Vangal catches the missile if it's small enough to hold in one hand and it has a hand free. It may then make a ranged attack with that missle on a target within range. The fist of Vangal is considered proficient with this attack.

RASP OF VANGAL

Medium humanoid (manticora), chaotic evil

Armor Class 15 (chain shirt)
Hit Points 99 (18d8 + 18)
Speed 30 ft. (40 ft. if on all fours)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws Dexterity +4
Skills Perception +3, Performance +6
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13
Languages Ledean, Leonid, Titanspawn
Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Combat Inspiration. The rasp of Vangal grants one creature a 1d8 Inspiration die and it can roll that die and add the number rolled to a weapon damage roll it just made. Alliteratively. when an attack roll is made against the inspired creature, it can use its reaction to roll the Inspiration die and add the number rolled to its AC against that attack after seeing the roll but before knowing whether it hits or misses.

Dead Shot. The rasp of Vangal does an extra die of damage with hand crossbows (included in its attack).

Song of Rest. When the rasp of Vangal plays music during a short rest, at the end all friendly creatures who regain hit points regain an extra 1d6 hit points.

Spellcasting. The rasp of Vangal casts spells as a 7th level bard (save DC 14, spell attack +6). Its spellcasting ability is Charisma, and it has the following spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *mending, prestidigitation, vicious mockery*

1st-level (4 slots): *charm person, disguise self, sleep, thunderwave*

2nd-level (3 slots): *cloud of daggers, enthrall, suggestion*

3rd-level (3 slots): *dispel magic, sending*

4th-level (1 slot): *greater invisibility*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The rasp of Vangal makes one attack with its scimitar and one with its hand crossbow.

Scimitar. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) slashing damage.

Hand Crossbow. *Range Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 30 / 120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (2d6 + 2) piercing damage.

VANGAL'S ROAR

Medium humanoid (manticora), chaotic evil

Armor Class 17 (half plate)
Hit Points 90 (12d8 + 36)
Speed 30 ft. (40 ft. if on all fours)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	17 (+3)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)	15 (+2)

Saving Throws Str +5, Wis +4, Cha +5
Skills Athletics +7, Intimidation +5, Perception +4, Stealth +6
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14
Languages Ledean, Leonid
Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Charge. If the Vangal's roar moves moves on all fours at least 30 feet in a straight line toward a target and then hits it with a melee attack on the same turn, the target takes an extra 10 (3d6) damage.

Hateful Aura. The Vangal's roar and allies within 10 feet of the commander add its Charisma modifier to weapon damage rolls (included in damage below).

Magic Weapons. The Vangal's roar's weapon attacks are made with magical (+1) weapons (included in attacks below).

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The Vangal's roar makes two melee attacks.

Mace. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d6 + 5) bludgeoning damage.

Spear. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d6 + 5) piercing damage, or 9 (1d8 + 5) if wielded with two hands.

Frightful Charge (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). The Vangal's roar lets loose a terrifying cry and makes one melee attack at the end of a charge. Whether the attack hits or misses, all enemies within 15 feet of the target and aware of the Vangal's roar's presence must succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or become frightened for 1 minute. A frightened creature repeats the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

VARANESI SILPATUR

A guard in the Bridged City, Varanesi takes her duties very seriously. She is wary and cold towards outsiders, particularily if they could be considered "country blumpkins" and is very throrough when questioning strangers about their business in the city. Varanesi does not tolerate shenanigans, and will gladly arrest those who attempt to bribe her to look the other way. Varnesi uses the **guard** template.

VARANESI SILPATUR

Medium humanoid (half-elf), lawful good

Armor Class 16 (chain shirt, shield)
Hit Points 11 (2d8 + 2)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	10 (+2)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)

Skills Perception +4, Insight +4, Investigation +2
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14
Languages Drendali, Ledean, Veshian
Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

Fey Ancestry. Varanesi has advantage on saving throws against being charmed, and magic can't put them to sleep.

ACTIONS

Spear. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) piercing damage, or 5 (1d8 + 1) piercing damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack.

WINDWALKER

Windwalkers are typically long term residents of either West or East Ontenazu, the settlements on either end of the Canyon of Souls. The path through the virtually impassable Kelder Mountains is a dangerous one, and windwalkers spend many years training to become guides that lead others through the deadly Canyon. Windwalkers worth their salt understand the way the Canyon speaks to them, the horrific winds that threaten to destroy anything in their path only the whispers of a close friend. Once they have found their way through the Canyon, most windwalkers feel at home nowhere else on Scarn.

WINDWALKER

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 13 (leather armor)
Hit Points 61 (11d8 + 11)
Speed 35 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	15 (+2)	13 (+1)	15 (+2)	16 (+3)	13 (+1)

Saving Throws Dex +4, Con +3, Wis +5
Skills Nature +4, Perception +7, Survival +7
Senses passive Perception 17
Languages Ledean, Ontenazu
Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Adapted Senses. The windwalker has advantage on Intelligence (Nature) and Wisdom (Perception and Survival) checks while in the Canyon of Souls.

Canyon Traveler. While traveling in the Canyon of Souls, difficult terrain doesn't slow the windwalker's group's travel. In addition, the windwalker can cover the tracks of a group, making tracking them impossible except by magical means.

Evasion. When the windwalker is subjected to an effect that allows it to make a Dexterity saving throw to take only half damage, it instead takes no damage if it succeeds on the saving throw, and only half damage if it fails.

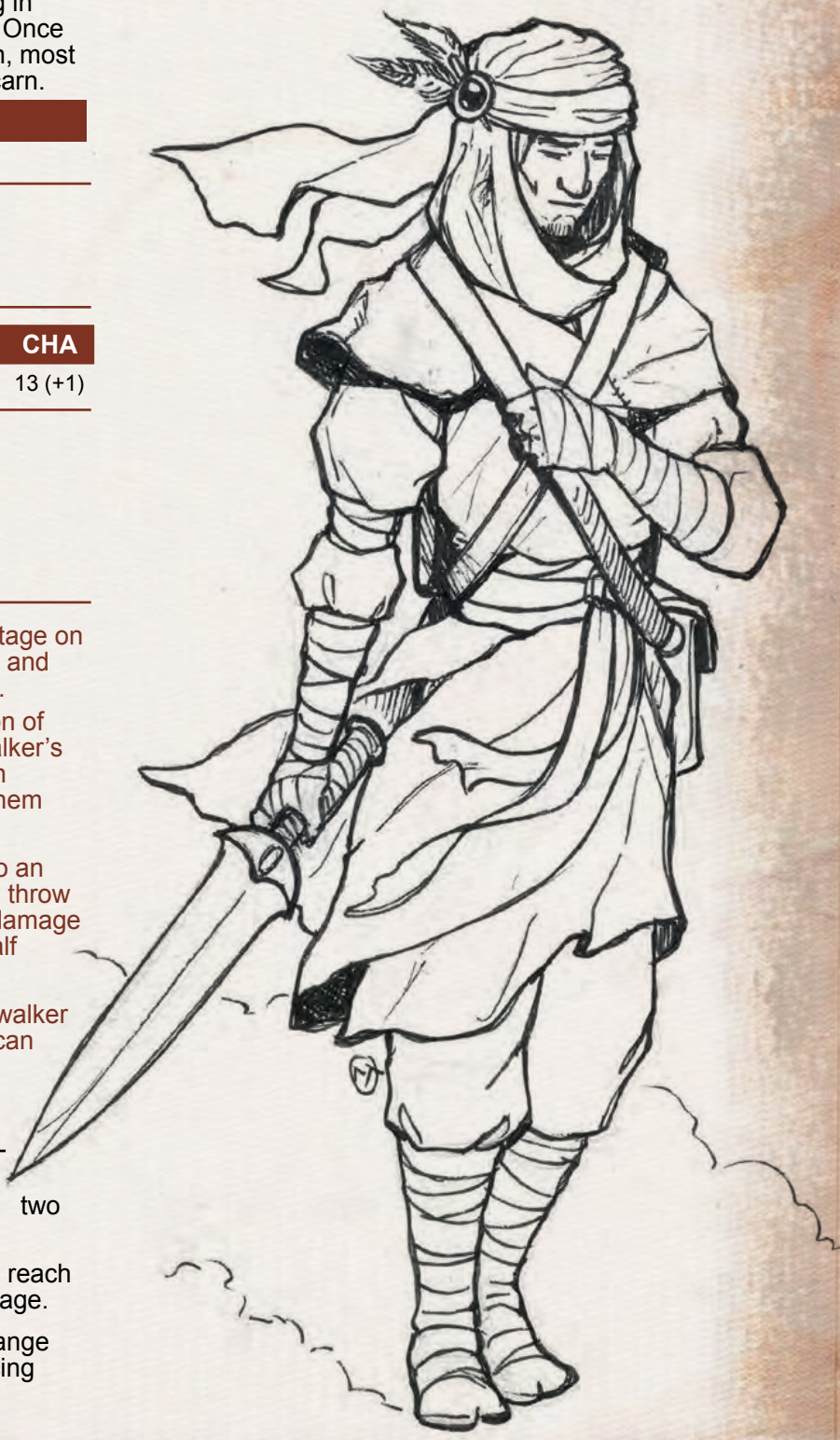
Uncanny Dodge. When an attacker the windwalker can see hits it with an attack, the windwalker can use its reaction to halve the attack's damage done to it.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The windwalker makes two melee weapon attacks or two ranged weapon attacks.

Shortsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

Longbow. *Range Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 150 / 600 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage.



XURXOS

At the time of the Divine War, Xurxos was the caretaker of a pine grove in the mountains west of Lapo. The locals thought fondly of him, leaving offerings near the trees he tended and daring each other to try and catch a glimpse of the wily satyr as he went about his work.

When the war came to Lapo, titanspawn razed his grove and destroyed his life's work in a moment. Heartbroken and lost, he did what he could to support the followers of the gods who fought against the defilers of his trees. After the war, when the temple of Madriel was built not far from his old home, he became a sort of unofficial groundskeeper, making sure the sanctuary and the woodlands around it were kept in harmony.

When the temple fell into decline under Magister Yama, Xurxos became the arcanist priest's last true friend, assisting him as the Sidereon's energies twisted his failing body and even helping hollow out the secret chamber in the temple well where the Magister stored his most important treasure. But Xurxos himself could not escape a similar fate as his friend, and his own flesh was warped by the same forces even as it seemed to unnaturally extend his life.

Xurxos has never entirely recovered from the loss of his grove – a grief that has eaten away at him for a century and a half now, and that long since pushed him just over the edge of madness. He considers looking after the temple his sacred duty and preserving his old friend's chambers in particular is a point of obsession for him. Deep down, he feels that he failed in his charge as a steward of the local land, and everything he's experiencing now – his custodianship of the temple, his mutation, his self-imposed exile – is just penance for that failure.

Though banewarped, Xurxos remains more or less recognizable as a satyr: horned and hooved, with much of his body covered in patchy dark wool. But his right arm has been replaced by a cluster of fleshy, twitching tentacles, and his left shoulder is a hunched mass of tumors and bony spikes. In contrast, his face is particularly comely even for a fey creature, and his voice is beautiful and melodious.

XURXOS

Medium aberration (banewarped), chaotic neutral

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)
Hit Points 26 (4d8+8)
Speed 40 ft.

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

Damage Resistances acid, poison
Skills Arcana +3, Perception +3, Performance +6, Stealth +5
Senses darkvision 90 ft., passive Perception 13
Languages Common, Elvish, Sylvan, Titan Speech
Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Magic Resistance. Xurxos has advantage on saving throws to resist spells and other magical effects.

Unnatural Fortitude. If damage reduces Xurxos to 0 hit points, he must make a Constitution saving throw with a DC of 5+ the damage taken, unless the damage is from a critical hit. On a success, he drops to 1 hit point instead.

ACTIONS

Ram. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (2d4 + 1) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 10 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

Tentacles. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a Medium or smaller creature, it is grappled (escape DC 10). Until this grapple ends, Xurxos can't use this attack on another target.

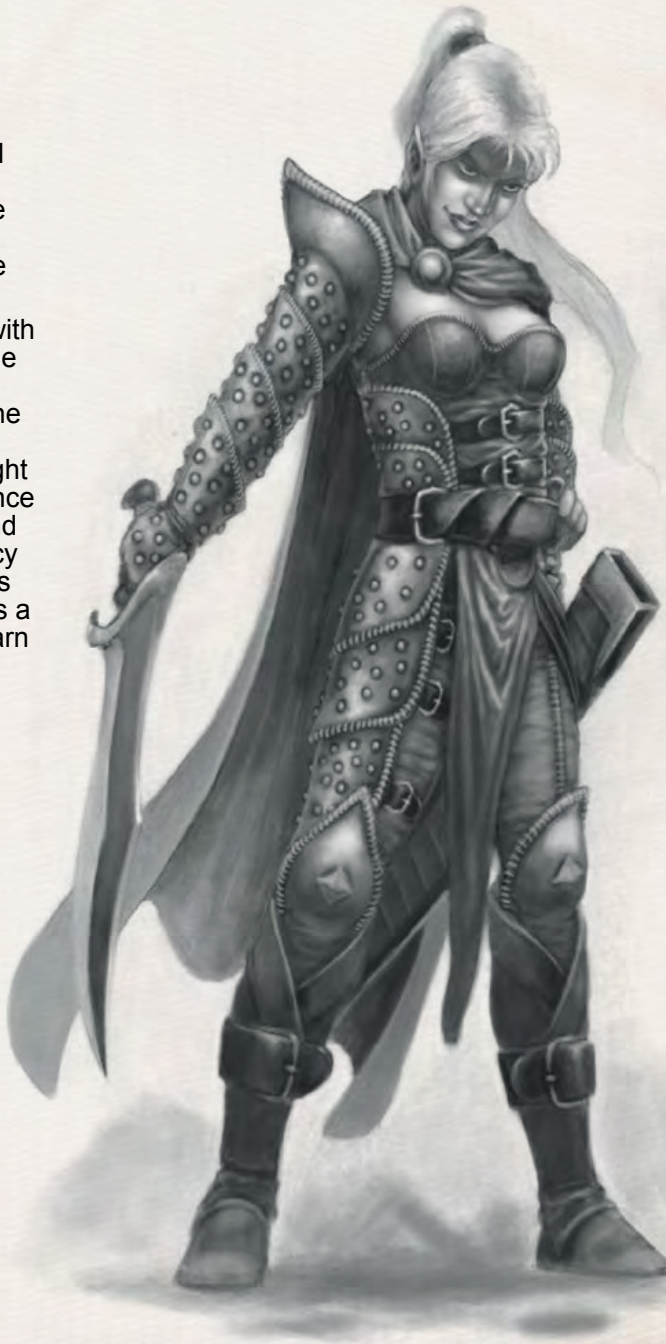
Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d4 + 1) bludgeoning damage plus 4 (2d4) piercing damage.

Appendix: Maghiel the Shunned

Maghiel, called the Shunned by the drenali elves, is a 475 year old drendali Battlemage and a veteran of the Titanswar. In her youth, Maghiel studied in the finest arcane colleges in Dier Drendal and Burok Torn. Maghiel fought alongside elves and dwarves as brothers and sisters in arms until the Battle at Gambedel's Bridge (see Scarred Lands Player's Guide, p. 190). When the drendali began taking severe losses in battle against Chern and his minions, Maghiel abandoned her post, making haste toward Burok Torn to see what was delaying the dwarven reinforcements. Soon she found the dwarven forces retreating. Overwhelmed with anguish at the perceived betrayal by some of her staunchest allies, Maghiel rode back to the Bridge of Betrayal just in time to see the goddess Madriel leaving the battlefield as the priests of Nalthalos worked to try and save their fallen god-king. When Maghiel returned, she was called a deserter and traitor by the drendali warriors. The pain of betrayal soon festered into rage. The gods could not be trusted, her own people could not tell the difference between tactical action and cowardice, and the dwarves were not the steadfast allies she had once believed.

Seeing the world as a broken, chaotic mess filled with short-sighted, self-serving fools, Maghiel soon came to the only conclusion that made any sense: order needed to be restored. The titans had fallen, and the gods were incapable of managing themselves, let alone the rest of the world. If order was to be brought to Scarn it would have to be by Maghiel's hand. Since that time, she has researched, plotted, planned, and schemed to amass power. The study of necromancy has given her much insight into resurrecting powers thought long dead and destroyed, and now she has a plan to claim the might of a fallen Titan, so that Scarn may be brought to heel under the rule of the only being fit for the responsibility: herself.

Following are the stat blocks for Maghiel as she appears in different adventures throughout the Vengeance of the Shunned campaign arc. In addition, the necromancer may gain powers along the way, during the events of VOS-5, A Titanic Feast. Those powers are listed separately, for use only if characters played through that adventure.



MAGHIEL (VOS-2)

Medium humanoid (half-elf), neutral evil

Armor Class 19 (half-plate +3)
Hit Points 71 (11d8 + 22)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	20 (+5)	11 (+0)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Constitution +5, Intelligence +8, Wisdom +3
Skills Animal Handling +3, Arcana +8, Athletics +4, History +8, Perception +3, Stealth +4
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13
Languages Drendali, Dwarvish, Elvish, Ledean, Veshian
Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Arcane Recovery. Once per day when she finishes a long rest, Maghiel can choose to recover up to 3 levels of expended spell slots to recover.

Battlefield Magic. When Maghiel casts an Evocation spell that affects other creatures she can see, she can choose a number of them equal to 1 + the spell's level. The chosen creatures automatically succeed on their saving throws against the spell, and they take no damage if they would normally take half damage on a successful save.

Battlemage's Fortitude. Maghiel adds her proficiency bonus (+3) to Constitution saving throws to maintain concentration on a spell when she takes damage.

Fey Ancestry. Maghiel has advantage on saving throws against being charmed, and magic can't put her to sleep.

Magic Weapons. Maghiel's battleaxe and light crossbow attacks are magical.

Spellcasting. Maghiel is a 6th-level spellcaster. Her spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 16, +8 to hit with spell attacks). She has the following wizard spells prepared.

Cantrips (at will): *chill touch, filch†, light, message, mage hand, minor illusion*

1st level (4 slots): *animate undead minion†, force blast†, shield*

2nd level (3 slots): *darkness, alter self*

3rd level (3 slots): *adamantine undead†, animate dead, bestow curse, counterspell, dispel magic, fear, fireball, haste, slow*

† see Scarred Lands Player's Guide.

Trance. Maghiel does not need to sleep but meditates semiconsciously for 4 hours a day to gain the same benefits a human does from eight hours of sleep.

ACTIONS

Battleaxe +2. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) magical slashing damage.

Light Crossbow +3. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) piercing damage.

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

Sign of the Juggernaut. Maghiel can use her Action to activate her magical tattoo, becoming resistant to non-magical bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage for 10 minutes.

REACTIONS

Spell Absorbtion. While Maghiel's lilac ioun stone of absorbtion circles her head, she can use her Reaction to cancel a spell of 4th level or lower cast by a creature she can see and targeting only her. Once the stone has canceled 20 levels of spells, it burns out and turns dull gray, losing its magic. If Maghiel is targeted by a spell whose level is higher than the number of spell levels the stone has left, the stone can't cancel it.

MAGHIEL (VOS-9)

Medium humanoid (half-elf), neutral evil

Armor Class 19 (half-plate +3)
Hit Points 161 (17d8 + 85)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	12 (+1)	20 (+5)	20 (+5)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Constitution +11, Intelligence +11, Wisdom +7
Skills Animal Handling +7, Arcana +11, Athletics +7, History +11, Perception +7, Stealth +7
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 17
Languages Drendali, Dwarvish, Elvish, Ledean, Veshian
Challenge 10 (5,900 XP)

Arcane Recovery. Once per day when she finishes a long rest, Maghiel can choose to recover up to 3 levels of expended spell slots to recover.

Battlefield Magic. When Maghiel casts an Evocation spell that affects other creatures she can see, she can choose a number of them equal to 1 + the spell's level. The chosen creatures automatically succeed on their saving throws against the spell, and they take no damage if they would normally take half damage on a successful save.

Battlemage's Fortitude. Maghiel adds her proficiency bonus (+4) to Constitution saving throws to maintain concentration on a spell when she takes damage.

Battlemage's Reach. When Maghiel casts a spell that has a range of 5 feet or greater, she can double its range. Alternately, if she casts a spell that has a range of touch, she can make the range of the spell 30 feet. She can use this feature 5 times and regains all expended uses when she finishes a long rest.

Fey Ancestry. Maghiel has advantage on saving throws against being charmed, and magic can't put her to sleep.

Magic Resistance. Maghiel has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Magic Weapons. Maghiel's battleaxe and light crossbow attacks are magical.

Overchannel. When Maghiel casts a wizard spell of 1st through 5th level that deals damage, she can deal maximum damage with that spell. If she uses this feature again before she finishes a long rest, reduce her current hit points by 2d12 per level of the spell immediately after she casts it. Each time she uses this feature again before finishing a long rest, the hit point reduction per spell level increases by 1d12.

Spellcasting. Maghiel is a 20th-level spellcaster. Her spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 19, +11 to hit with spell attacks). She has the following wizard spells prepared.

Cantrips (at will): *chill touch, filch†, friends, light, mage hand, message, minor illusion, shocking grasp*
1st level (4 slots): *animate undead minion†, force blast†, shield**
2nd level (4 slots): *alter self, arcane lock, darkness**
3rd level (4 slots): *bestow curse, counterspell, dispel magic‡, fear, fireball§, haste‡, slow*
4th level (4 slots): *black tentacles, locate creature, wither object*
5th level (3 slots): *aura of death†, cloudkill, contact other plane, dominate person*
6th level (2 slots): *circle of death, create undead, true seeing*
7th level (2 slots): *delayed blast fireball§, finger of death*
8th level (1 slot): *antipathy/sympathy, feeblemind*
9th level (1 slot): *gate, power word kill, time stop*

† see Scarred Lands Player's Guide.
‡ Signature spells. May cast once without spending a spell slot.
* Spell mastery. May cast without expending a spell slot.
§ Evocation spell.

Trance. Maghiel does not need to sleep but meditates semiconsciously for 4 hours a day to gain the same benefits a human does from eight hours of sleep.

ACTIONS

Battleaxe +2. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) magical slashing damage.

Light Crossbow +3. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) piercing damage.

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d4 + 1) piercing damage.

Sign of the Juggernaut. Maghiel can use her Action to activate her magical tattoo, becoming resistant to non-magical bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage for 10 minutes.

REACTIONS

Spell Absorbtion. While Maghiel's lilac ioun stone of absorbtion circles her head, she can use her Reaction to cancel a spell of 4th level or lower cast by a creature she can see and targeting only her. Once the stone has canceled 20 levels of Spells, it burns out and turns dull gray, losing its magic. If Maghiel is targeted by a spell whose level is higher than the number of spell levels the stone has left, the stone can't cancel it.

MAGHIEL (VOS-10)

Medium fiend (demon), chaotic evil

Armor Class 19 (half-plate +3)
Hit Points 262 (25d8 + 150)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	12 (+1)	20 (+5)	20 (+5)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Con +12, Int +12, Wis +8
Skills Animal Handling +7, Arcana +11, Athletics +7, History +11, Perception +7, Stealth +7
Damage Resistances acid, cold, fire; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks
Condition Immunities charmed, unconscious
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 17
Languages Drendali, Dwarvish, Elvish, Infernal, Ledean, Primordial, Veshian; telepathy 120 ft.
Challenge 20 (25,000 XP)

Battlemage's Reach (6/day). When casting a spell with a range of 5 feet or greater, Maghiel may choose to double the spell's range.

Divine Overchannel (3/day). Maghiel can choose to do maximum damage with any spell of levels 1-5. There is no adverse effect for using this ability.

Innate Spellcasting. Maghiel's spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 20, +12 to hit with spell attacks). She can cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will (Cantrips): *chill touch, friends, light, message, shocking grasp, mage hand, minor illusion*

1st Level (5 slots): *shield, sleep*

2nd Level (4 slots): *arcane lock, alter self, darkness*

3rd Level (4 slots): *bestow curse, corpse armor, counterspell, dispel magic, fear, fireball, fly, haste, slow*

4th Level (4 slots): *black tentacles, locate creature, wither object*

5th Level (3 slots): *cloudkill, contact other plane, teleportation circle*

6th Level (3 slots): *circle of death, create undead, true seeing*

7th Level (3 slots): *delayed blast fireball, finger of death*

8th Level (2 slots): *antipathy/sympathy, clone, feeblemind*

9th Level (2 slots): *gate, power word kill, time stop*

Legendary Resistance (2/Day). If Maghiel fails a saving throw, she can choose to succeed instead.

Magic Resistance. Maghiel has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Magic Weapons. Maghiel's battleaxe attacks are magical.

ACTIONS

Battleaxe +2. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (1d8 + 8) slashing damage, or 14 (1d10+8) if used two-handed. On a critical hit, Maghiel may roll 3 additional damage dice for her axe, adding the result to the total damage dealt.

CONNECTED FRAGMENTS

If the adventurers play through VOS-5, A Titanic Feast, Maghiel has subsumed power from a Fragment of Keshe, a piece of a fallen titan whose very essence is chaos. This connects her to surviving Fragments of Keshe, granting Maghiel the following powers, which adventurers may experience in future encounters with the mad mage. Maghiel continues to draw power from the titan's pieces unless the adventurers are able to sever her connection to them in some way. If allowed to continue, this connection remains once she ascends to become a demi-goddess as well.

Intrinsic Armor. Whenever Maghiel is the subject of an attack that requires a roll to hit her, roll 1d10 and add it to her base armor class. This is not cumulative, and visually appears as energy that coalesces where a strike would hit but keeps her from harm.

Havoc Aura (Recharge 5-6). A wave of energy blasts forth from Maghiel in a 20-foot radius, dealing 21 (6d6) damage, or half as much if a target succeeds on a DC 16 Constitution saving throw. The type of damage is random as follows: (d8) 1. Acid, 2. Cold, 3. Fire, 4. Force, 5. Lightning, 6. Necrotic, 7. Poison, 8. Thunder. Maghiel may do this in addition to her Action as though she had the Multiattack action.

Presence of Chaos [Reaction]. When a creature within 30 feet of Maghiel makes a successful attack, saving throw, or skill check, she can force them to re-roll that action, and they must use the new roll.

Chaotic Bulwark. At the start of a combat, Maghiel is resistant to a random energy type. (d8) 1. Acid, 2. Cold, 3. Fire, 4. Force, 5. Lightning, 6. Necrotic, 7. Poison, 8. Thunder. The DM may choose to re-roll this resistance at any time during a combat, though may never choose the resistance type.

Regeneration. Maghiel regains 1d10 + her Con modifier hit points at the start of her turn. If she takes damage from (d8) 1. Acid, 2. Cold, 3. Fire, 4. Force, 5. Lightning, 6. Necrotic, 7. Poison, 8. Thunder, this trait doesn't function at the start of her next turn. Maghiel only dies if she starts her turn with 0 hit points and doesn't regenerate.

Turbulent Boon. Maghiel starts a combat with 10d10 temporary hit points, which cannot be healed if lost. She regains 10d10 temporary hit points after a Short or Long Rest.

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