

XMH-3



MARK OF HEROES

THE UNEXPECTED GATE

A One-Round Dungeons & Dragons® MARK OF
HEROES™

Eberron Adventure for 7th level Characters

Winter Fantasy 2006 version

Design: Stephen Radney-MacFarland

Based on the original DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® rules created by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson and the new DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game designed by Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, Richard Baker, and Peter Adkison.

This game product contains no Open Game Content. No portion of this work may be reproduced in any form without permission of the author. To learn more about the Open Gaming License and the d20 system license, please visit www.wizards.com/d20

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS, D&D, GREYHAWK and RPGA are registered trademarks of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. LIVING GREYHAWK is a trademark of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. © 2006 Wizards of the Coast, ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. This scenario is intended for tournament use only and may not be reproduced without approval of the RPGA Network.

INTRODUCTION

The Unexpected Gate is optimized for 7th-level characters. This means that it's designed and balanced for a group of four to five 7th-level characters (PCs). If your group deviates from this size and strength, each encounter features a section titled "Scaling the Encounter" so that you, the Dungeon Master (DM), can create a more enjoyable and better balanced adventure. If there are only four of five PCs of the same level in your group, it's easy to use this section: just use the level entry that corresponds with the PCs' level (the optimized entry is given in the main adventure text). For groups of mixed levels and groups with six PCs, determine the average level of the PCs, and increase that average by one for groups of six PCs. Treat that level as the groups level. That said, as DM you have discretion when it comes to fitting the challenges of the adventure to your group. If your group finds the challenges too easy or too difficult, feel free to increase or decrease the level of challenge appropriately. The goal is to challenge the PCs and entertain the players, not to overwhelm or even underwhelm them. The most enjoyable D&D games are ones where failure and character death are possible, but success and reward are attainable through daring and smart play.

The Unexpected Gate has been designed to be part of the RPGA DUNGEON & DRAGONS CAMPAIGNS: MARK OF HEROES program. Like all DUNGEONS & DRAGONS CAMPAIGNS adventures, it's recommended that PCs undertaking its challenges have at least one arcane spellcaster, a divine spellcaster (preferably a cleric), a strong warrior, and a rogue. Parties missing these valuable adventuring components may find *Escape From Greata Tower* very challenging, and the chances of character death higher. Please warn the players of this before play starts. DUNGEONS & DRAGONS CAMPAIGNS allow players to "take one for the team"; that is to play a fastplay wizard, fighter, rogue, or cleric in place of one of their characters, and gain experience point for their character. If the group lacks one of these vital four classes, suggest to your players to take advantage of this option.

RPGA-SANCTIONED PLAY

Most likely you ordered this adventure as part of an RPGA even from the RPGA website, or as part of the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS CAMPAIGNS retail program. To play *The Unexpected Gate* as part of the MARK OF HEROES campaign—a worldwide, ongoing D&D campaign set in Eberron—you must sanction it as part of an RPGA event. This event could be as elaborate as a big convention, or as simple as a group of friends meeting at the DM's house.

To sanction an RPGA event, you must be at least a HERALD-LEVEL gamemaster. The person who sanctions the event is called the senior gamemaster, and is in charge of making sure the event is sanctioned before play, runs smoothly on the date sanctioned, and then reported back to the RPGA in a timely manner. The person who runs the game is called the table DM (or usually just DM). Sometimes (and almost all the time in the cases of home events) the senior gamemaster is also the table DM. You don't have to be a HERALD-LEVEL GM to run this adventure if you are not the senior GM.

By sanctioning and reporting this adventure you accomplish a few things. First, it allows the PCs participating in play to accumulate experience points (XP) and gold pieces (gp) to advance their MARK OF HEROES characters. Second, it allows the RPGA to track and record what character did during the

adventure, and future adventures a written with what the majority of player did in mind—in this way characters' action shape the future of the campaign. Lastly, player and DMs gain rewards for sanctioned RPGA play if they are members of the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS REWARDS program. Playing this adventure is worth four (4) points.

To learn more about the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS CAMPAIGNS: MARK OF HEROES character creation and development, RPGA event sanctioning, and DUNGEONS & DRAGONS REWARDS, visit the RPGA website at www.rpga.com.

PLAYERS READ NO FARTHER

If you are planning on playing this adventure, stop reading now. The rest of the information in this adventure is for the DM only. If you read farther than this section, you'll know too much about its challenges, which kills the fun. Also, if you're playing this adventure as part of an RPGA-sanctioned event, reading beyond this point makes you ineligible to do so.

PREPARING FOR PLAY

To get the most out of this adventure, you need copies of the following D&D books: *Player's Handbook*, *Dungeon Master's Guide*, *Monster Manual*, and the *Eberron Campaign Setting*. It is also a good idea to have a copy of the *Expanded Psionics Handbook*, as it is possible that some character playing in this adventure will be kalashtar utilizing the psionics rules.

Throughout this adventure, blocks of *italicized* text provide player information for you to paraphrase or read aloud when appropriate. Sidebars contain important information for you, including special instruction on running or expanding the adventure. Information on nonplayer characters (NPCs) and monsters appear in abbreviated form in the adventure text. Full information on NPCs and monsters are given in a section directly after each encounter in a section titled "Combat Statistics" or can be found in the *Monster Manual*.

This adventure may use material from various other D&D sourcebooks and other official sources. While many times the adventure text notes where this information came from, the adventure is designed so that you don't need to have those sources during play.

Either attached to the adventure, you'll find a special *RPGA Session Tracking Sheet* tailored for this adventure. If you're playing this adventure as part of an RPGA-sanctioned event, complete and turn in this sheet to your senior GM directly after play.

BACKGROUND

"In Oblivion Keep lies one split in four. When the four becomes one, Levistus's first will come."

- Devotional Chant in the City of Icerazer

The background of this adventure spans an eon. Understanding what the PCs are about to face hinges on understanding the fall of demons, and the rise of the Lords of Dust; especially a particularly active sect of that organization based in the Frostfell city of Icerazer.

End of the Age of Demons (c. -100,000 YK)

The end of the Age of Demons was marked by many history-shaping events. Arguably the most important is when the sacrifice of couatls combined with the power of dragons to ignite the Silver Flame and bind the demon lords and fiends deep in Khyber.

The land that became the frozen continent of Frostfell was not devoid of fiends, and at least one—a creature whose true name is lost to ancient history, but is known in the current age by the name Levistus—was bound there when the reign of demon lords ended.

Age of Monsters (c. -12,000 YK)

Though there are historians who still question the legend, there is strong evidence to suggest that the dwarven people came to Khorvaire from Frostfell during the Age of Monsters. A minor clan called Korari has long maintained that the dwarves came to Khorvaire via a great magical gate created by their ancestors. Other historians believe the dwarves traveled to Khorvaire by traversing the twisted tunnels of Khyber. Recent discoveries made by one Glankas Korari and member of the Diggers' Union suggest both theories are not mutually exclusive.

The Distant Past (c. 299 KY)

Even most member of the worshipers of the Sovereign Host and Dark Six know this was the year the paladin Tira Miron and a couatl companion defeated and bound a powerful demon lord on a Thrane hilltop. Through Tira's sacrifice, the modern world learned of, and began venerating, the Silver Flame. What is not commonly known outside of the fiend-populated Icerazer and the clans of the Toldun Nordorthak in Frostfell, is that at about the same time another demon lord slipped its bonds. This rajah, Levistus, wreaked havoc across the Frostfell. It was only through the sacrifice made by a group of Toldun Nordorthak heroes that Levistus was rebound in the icy Khyber under Frostfell. His release, though, has brought hope to his minions. That which can be freed once, can be freed again.

Recent Events (988 YK)

Almost a year ago Glankas Korari approached the Diggers' Union with a dwarven creation tale and loadstonelike family heirloom. The dwarf was desperate to complete what he believes to be his family's destiny: finding an ancient magical pathway that leads from the Mror Holds to Frostfell, the legendary homeland of the dwarven people.

Dangling his help to reopening negotiations with the Bankers Guild, the Union devoted some promising young adventurers to help him use the heirloom—the *Rod of Korari*—to find the waymarker path to an island in the Bitter Sea. There, beyond doors guarded by powerful dwarven ancestral guardians, Glankas and the adventurers found a spot of magical power—a complex gate large enough to transport hundreds of creatures to far off locations at once.

In the intervening months, the Korari family has spared no expense attempting to reactivate the and puzzling gate. Just three weeks ago they had some success.

After numerous failed attempts by dwarven wizards, runesmiths, and historians, all sure that they interpreted the archaic runes and symbols of the complex correctly, it was Glankas Korari's cousin, Beldur, who seemed to stumble upon the solution as if by accident. Fumbling with the *Rod of Glankas* while in the complex's main chamber, Beldur broke the heirloom, and its destruction opened an inky black gate. It seems that not only was

the rod the key to finding the gate's location, it was also the key for reopening it.

Excited, Glankas immediately arranged an expedition into the shadowy gate. He and a dozen dwarven adventurers, all equipped for the cold of the bitter Frostfell, entered the gate. They have not been seen since. That was almost two weeks ago.

The thing that only Beldur Korari knows is that while this gate may have once been used to transport the dwarven people, it was twisted centuries ago to help aid in the imprisonment of Levistus. And Beldur only knows it because he is not really Beldur Korari, but rather he is a rakshasha Claw of Khyber from Icerazer. Beldur was replaced over three decades ago, when the original Beldur ran afoul of the rakshasha while exploring Frostfell with Wayfinder Foundation founder, Boroman ir'Dayne.

The meeting between Claw of Khyber and dwarf was not by chance. Through powerful divination gained by the Overlord of Icerazer, the Lords of Dust learned of House Korari's connection to the dwarven gate twisted to imprison Levistus's old Overlord, the night hag Quingu. It is said that only Quingu knows the secret of how the Toldun Nordorthak rebound Livistu

Through years of patience and planning that are the hallmarks of the Lords of Dust, Beldur manipulated the finding and opening of the gate...and he manipulated Glankas's entry into the gate in the hopes that his "cousin" would merge the four to one and the start the process of freeing Levistus again.

As time passed, Beldur realized that Glankas's mission was unsuccessful. He knew that he could not enter the gate to pursue his machinations—only one unknowing and unaligned with Levistus can bring the four to one. Beldur needed to find others to help break his master's bonds. Luckily a missing cousin, and his family's close ties the Diggers' Union played right into his hands.

Glankas's Fate

Glankas's expedition pushed into the planar pocket, defeated the first of the four dwarven heroes, and absconded with the first *heartstone* fragment. That hereo's domain dissipated (see Troubleshooting). While the other dwarves proved too difficult for Glankas and his expedition, the Glankas was able to move through the domains and eventually reached Oblivions Fortress. There he bluffed his way through the hag's jailers, and presented the first fragment to the night hag.

And while he explained to Quingu that he was no great warrior or wizard, an lacked the power to retrieve the other fragments, he was an important man from an important house, and other would come looking for him.

SUMMARY

The PCs are sent by the Union to again aid the Korari family. When the PCs reach Korari Island (as the gateway island in the Bitter Sea that the PCs helped Glankas discover in *EMH-4 Finding the Path* has been dubbed) they're greeted by Beldur who details their new mission.

The PCs have some opportunity to gear up for the mission and do some investigation on their own, but their time on the island is brief as the Korari family is frantically worried about Glankas and his companions. The pushy dwarves make sure that the PCs enter the inky and dangerous-looking gate with all due haste.

Inside the gate is not what the PCs would likely expect. It does not lead to the frozen landscape of

Frostfell at all, but deposits PCs in a land that looks more like it's part of the Eldeen Reaches.

What the PCs will hopefully discover is that long ago the magic of the Korari gate was hijacked by a group of dwarven heroes to trap a night hag.

Three of Quingu's *heartstone* fragments lie in separate domains of the planar pocket, each guarded by one of the original heroes who helped bind Levistus all those centuries ago. Each hero has been twisted by exposure to the *heartstone* fragment and time spent in this unworldly prison. By the time the PCs enter the planar pocket, Glankas and his men have already defeated one of the heroes, and the corresponding domain has dissipated.

If her *heartstone* fragments ever reunite, the bindings will be sundered, the entire planar pocket will dissipate, and the night hag will again be free to pursue the reawakening of Levistus. The three remaining dwarves resist reuniting the fragments at all costs, and fight invaders with ruthless zeal.

As the PCs discover the history and the strange rules of the planar pocket, they may also discover a dilemma: the only way for them to escape the planar pocket, may be by freeing a night hag who could then unleash Lord of Dust rajah into the world. There is an alternative option, but its outcome is not certain.

There are four distinct areas of the planar pocket: The Forest of the Temple Ruin (maps 1 and 2, and encounters 1 and 2), The Shattered Palace (map 3, and encounters 3 and 4), The Frostfell Fragment (map 4 and encounter 5), and Oblivions Fortress (map 5 and encounter 6).

When the PCs enter the Korari gate they are transported to the Forest of the Temple Ruin. There they encounter a disguised Quingu who pleads for them to free her from three wicked dwarves. She gives them the misinformation they need to gather the *heartstone* fragments. While there, Vengozer the Mole, the first of the dwarves guarding Quingu's prison, assaults the PCs. Twisted into an insane derro by centuries of imprisonment. He and his chimera pet were responsible for the deaths of many of those in Glankas's expedition into the gate. This twisted necromancer fights the PCs without surrender or remorse. The PCs must defeat him to gain the first fragment of the *heartstone*.

From the Forest Temple Ruin, the PCs can proceed to Shattered Palace, domain of Horongul the Black, the bravest and most steadfast of the three heroes. This powerful psionic warrior can be reasoned with, but he will not compromise his duties. And it is likely the PCs will have to defeat him to gain his *heartstone* fragment.

From there the PCs pass on to the Frostfell Fragment, Xolmund is more philosophical about the PCs plight, and, if dealt with using respect and tact, suggests that if the PCs can both defeat Quingu and destroy the *heartstone* fragments, they might defeat the hag and gain their freedom.

From there, the PCs journey to Oblivion's Keep where they find a small army of dwarven jailers, Quingu, Glankas, and a serious moral dilemma.

TROUBLESHOOTING

Rules of the Planar Pocket

When it was created, the planar pocket consisted of five domains. One of these domains has already dissipated due to the actions of Glankas, so there are four left.

Moving Between Domains: While the domains are connected, getting from one to the next takes a specific action, but once the action has been completed, a creature can (and automatically knows how to) move from one area to the other at will.

For example, when one wanders off into the tundra of the Frostfell Fragment for 15 minutes, that person finds themselves at the gates of Oblivions Fortress. Once that occurs, the PC can move from the outer tundra to the gates of the fortress at will.

Domain Dissipation: When the hero of a domain is defeated, and the *heartstone* fragment is taken from the domain, that domain disappears from existence. If this cause a disconnect in the triggers that allow that allow travel between domains, the PCs moves to the next domain when triggering the travel.

For instance, if the Broken Palace dissipates because Horongul the Black is defeated and his *heartstone* fragment taken, but the *heartstone* fragment has not been taken from under the Forest Temple Ruin, when the PC attempts to move from the ice cave to the transport circle, they end up on the temple disk instead.

Other Strange Traits: While time passes in the Planar Pocket, creatures don't age. While in this place a creature does not need to eat or drink, and can't sleep (even if compelled by a sleep spell or some other sleep effect)

Because of this, PCs can't recover from exhaustion, don't regain hit points or heal ability score damage with rest, or regain arcane spells in the planar pocket. The only way around this is by using one of the special properties of a hearthstone fragment (see below).

Heartstone Fragment Powers

Each *heartstone* fragment is a powerful magic item. Each can be used once an adventure to induce a single willing creature to enter a sleeplike trance for 8 hours. This provides the rest a creature needs to recover from exhaustion, regain hit points and heal ability score damage like a normal night's sleep, or to refresh the mind to prepare arcane spells. Once a creature enters this trance it cannot exit it for 8 hours. The creature is helpless while it is in a trance.

The *heartstone* fragments also has the power to heal. Three times an adventure each fragment can cure 3d6+5 hit points to a creature it touches.

When the *heartstone* fragment is touched, it relays the existence and method of activation for both powers.

Raising the Dead

At this point the PCs may have gained enough renown, and hopefully enough gold and experience, to come back from the dead. Like many things that involve XP and gp cost, raise dead and other spells work differently in DUNGEONS & DRAGONS CAMPAIGNS. If a PC dies, and his or her companions are able to bring the body back to a temple with clerics powerful enough to cast *raise dead* within 11 days after the time of death, a character can be raised (assuming the soul is willing). This incurs a 1,100-gp debt, which may be divided up between the characters played during the session. This debt is forever subtracted from the equipment value of the characters, and reported in the "GP Debt" field of the Session Tracking sheet. Additionally, the character that came back from the dead has its experience points reduced. The amount of experience points reduced is dependent on the current character level (see the table below) of the PC raised. Record the proper amount on the "XP Drain" field of the Session Tracking sheet. These two costs are the only costs for the raise dead (even for 1st-level characters), and overrides the rules for the spell found in the *Player's Handbook*.

Please Note: When a character is brought back from the dead it is not recorded as a character death (so don't mark "Y" on the Session Tracking). Just record the gold debt and experience drain.

Experience Point Drain for Raised Characters

Character Level	XP Drain
7th	3,500 XP
8th	4,000 XP
9th	4,500 XP
10th	5,000 XP
11th	5,500 XP

INTRODUCTION

Here are the basics: The PCs are instructed by the Digger's Union to aid Glankas Korari, the dwarf responsible for clearing the way for the Union to settle its debt with the Banking Guild. The PCs are transported to Korari Island, the place some of them helped Glankas discover a few months past. There they are informed that the portal had been activated, and that Glankas and an expedition of dwarves entered the inky-black gate to explore far off Frostfell. They have yet to return. The family equips all the PCs with rings of warmth, and 2000 gp in potions or scrolls for their trip, and has them enter the gate. There, the PCs find something unexpected.

CONCLUSION: LEAVING NOT-SO WONDERLAND

If the PCs discovered one of the two ways to leave the planar pocket, they live on to adventure more. If not, they are trapped in the planar pocket, which is treated like a character death.

If the PCs allowed Quingu to escape, award them the Secured Quingu's Escape story object. If they defeated the hag, give them the Defeated Quingu story object.

If the PCs rescued Glankas, the Korari family is grateful (even if things didn't go Glankas's way in his extraction). Award the PC the Saved Glankas Korari.

[[start sidebar]]

DIGITAL STORY OBJECTS

Story objects are now digital. You'll notice on both your Session Tracking Sheet, and in the online reporting on the RPGA database, there's a section titled certification or cert. These sections allow you to enter up to two groups of five alphanumeric characters. At the end of each adventure, usually in a sidebar of in the Conclusion section, there is a list of story objects unique to the adventure. This list also features a description of the object, and the six alphanumeric character code you place on the Session Tracking Sheet and the online reporting to grant a character a particular story object. The story object then is reported with the adventure questions, and appears on the character's online character record after the session is reported.

Here are the story objects for this adventure:

Object ID: MH1012

Object Name: Secured Quingu's Escape

Object Description: You are among a group who made a deal to let the night hag Quingu escape the strange planar pocket you entered on Korari Island.

Object ID: MH1013

Object Name: Defeated Quingu

Object Description: You have defeated the night hag Quingu. It is rumored the hag was a favored minion of the Lords of Dusk of Frostfell. You act of heroism has made you an enemy of that strange sect.

Object ID: MH1014

Object Name: Saved Glankas Korari

Object Description: You've saved Glankas Korari from the strange planar pocket on Korari Island. The dwarf has rewarded you with a treasure in Mror Hold gems. Your EV has been increased by 2000 gp.

[[end sidebar]]

ADVENTURE QUESTIONS

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS CAMPAIGNS (of which MARK OF HEROES is part of) tracks character progress digitally. At the adventure's end, you report what the characters did, by answering a number of questions. The answers to those questions are tallied, and determine not only what happens in the campaign, but also the experience (XP) and gold piece (gp) value increase each characters gains.

At the end of this adventure, you'll find the RPGA Session Tracking form, tailored for this adventure. On the section titled "Adventure Questions" fill in the bubble that corresponds to the best answer for the questions below.

Many time the questions ask whether or not the PCs defeated an encounter. Defeating doesn't necessarily mean killing all the enemies, but many times such an event suffices as defeating an encounter. Sometimes the PCs merely bypass an encounter. Through luck or circumstance a group of PCs can avoid encounters unscathed. Does bypassing an encounter earn the XP that defeating it would? No. The reward for getting past an encounter without actually interacting with it is having extra resources to bear in the next encounter. Where is the line? You are going to have to make that decision, because you are the DM.

For traps, PCs get experience points just for encountering them, whether or not they have been disabled.

Sometimes the PC's actions don't really fit the actions of a particular adventure question perfectly. This especially happens when you play the adventure using the 'Scaling the Encounter' options. In these cases find the answer that best fits the spirit of their results.

1. Did the PCs defeat Vengozer the Mole and his chimera?

- Yes. The defeated Vengozer, and his pet, and then secured the first *heartstone* fragment.
- Yes. They defeated Vengozer, and his pet but didn't secure the fragment.
- Almost. They defeated the chimera, but didn't defeat Vengozer.
- Almost. They defeated the derro, but not the chimera
- No.

2. Did the PCs defeat the babbling spirits?

- Yes

- b. Yes, by bypassing the summoning circles.
 - c. No.
- 3. **How did the PC deal with Horongul the Black and his fiendish birds?**
 - a. They defeated both in battle
 - b. They defeated the duergar but not the birds.
 - c. They defeated the birds but not the duergar.
 - d. They were able to parley with the duergar, and didn't take his fragment.
 - e. Horongul defeated the PCs.
 - f. They didn't get this far
- 4. **How did the PCs deal with Xolmund and his polar bears?**
 - a. They defeated the bears, but were able to strike a deal with the glacier dwarf.
 - b. They defeated both in combat.
 - c. They dealt with the problem with tact and diplomacy rather than sword and evocations.
 - d. Xolmund defeated the PCs.
 - e. They didn't get this far.
- 5. **Did the PCs defeat Quingu's jailers?**
 - a. They defeated the dwarves and the arcane ballista.
 - b. They defeated the dwarves but not the arcane ballista.
 - c. They didn't defeat the dwarves but defeated the ballista.
 - d. The dwarf defenders defeated the PCs
 - e. They never got this far.
- 6. **How did the PCs deal with Glankas and Quingu?**
 - a. They struck a deal and freed the night hag.
 - b. They defeated the night hag and the treacherous dwarf.
 - c. They defeated the night hag and saved Glanka
 - d. The night hag defeated the PCs.
 - e. They didn't get this far.
- 7. **Rate the players' role-playing?**
 - a. Worthy of legend.
 - b. Good, they did some.
 - c. Fair, they did some, but most wanted to just roll dice.
 - d. Virtually none at all.

THE RUINED TEMPLE

SETUP This steamy temperate rainforest serves as entryway to Quingu's domain—at least by the PCs' method of entrance. When the PCs arrive, give them the first read-aloud text.

Vision is reduced to 60 feet due to the astonishingly dense humidity.

When the PCs get close enough to see the ruined temple, give them the second read-aloud text.

This domain stays quiet until the PCs interact with Quingu's statue on the ruined temple. The floor of the temple is covered with a layer of gravel, the remnants of those who have used Quingu's frightening method of transport between this domain and the Shattered Place (see below). Once the PCs approach, the face of the stature animates. At this point give them the third read-aloud text.

Once that read aloud text is done, the chimera screams from the mists above the temple, the monster's cries ruin its chance for a surprise round, but rouses Vengozer from his subterranean den (the derro pops up from the hole 3 rounds after the chimera attacks; see encounter 2).

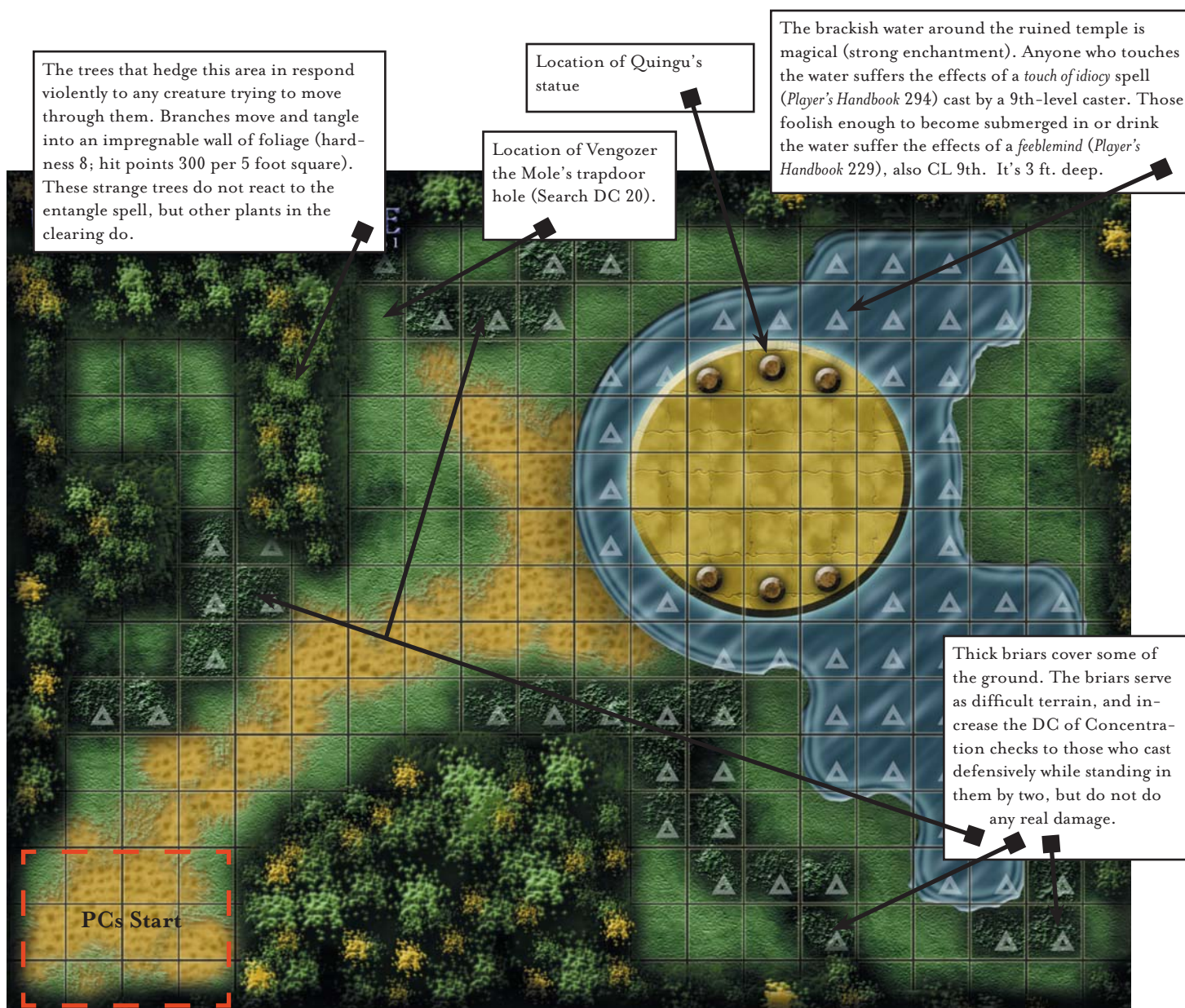
After the attack, Quingu says nothing more to the PCs, as her ability to communicate with them is spent.

Kissing the Statue

PCs who kiss the statue must succeed a DC 18 Fortitude save or be turned to stone as by a stone to flesh spell cast by a 11-level caster. Four rounds after the creature kisses the statue, it crumbles to rubble (of the same type and consistency that litters the temple's ground). When this happens, the PC is out of play, but only for a limited time. This is the way that a character is transported to the Shattered Palace (see Encounter 3), when it's statue crumbles to dust, the PCs can move at will between the first chamber in the Shattered Palace and the ruined temple of this area, and knows that he or she can do this.

Vengozer the Mole Pops Up

After the derro discovers the PCs presence, he starts his own assault by casting two *summon undead III* spells in quick succession from the bottom of his trap door hole. (The derro has the ghouls materialize on the topside, adjacent to the hole. He then moves deeper into the warrens under the ruined temple to guard the *heartstone* fragment (see Encounter 2).



READ-ALoud TEXT

When the PCs enter this area, read...

The tendrils of inky blackness recoil upon depositing you amid a landscape that is darkly verdant, but strangely desolate. Lush foliage covers all but a worn trail winding toward a larger clearing, and the air is thick with steamy humidity, but no fauna cries or chirps, and nothing moves as the entire place seems to be devoid of animal life and wind.

When the PCs get close enough to see the ruined temple, read...

In the middle of a lake filled with bubbling brackish water stands a circular stone ruin. Maybe once a temple, it lacks a roof, but fine rubble that sprinkles its floor gives some evidence to any covering's fate. What is left of six statues stand three-apiece on two sides of the ruin's disk. Each is of a person, but only one—the one standing in the middle of the far cluster—is still intact over the waist. It is of a beautiful half-elf maiden looking down sadly at what may have been her hands. The statue is missing both arms.

When the PCs approach the only intact statue, read...

The eyes of the statue fly open at your approach. Its eyes are violet and striking. And then its lips move, speaking in a pleasant voice.

"Beware heroes, you are in a dangerous place. This is the twisted domain of three mad and dangerous dwarves. They've trapped me here, and now you as well. If you can defeat him and his twisted minions, do so and you can win our freedom. If you can't, kiss me and I will transport you to a safe place."

CHIMERA (GREEN DRAGON HEAD)**CR 7**

Suggested Miniature: Chimera (War Drums 45/60)

CE Large Magical Beast

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent; **Listen** +9, **Spot** +9

Languages Draconic

AC 19, touch 10, flat-footed 18

hp 76 (9 HD)

Fort +9, **Ref** +7, **Will** +6

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares), fly 50 ft. (poor)

Melee bite +12 (2d6+4) and bite +12 (1d8+4), and gore +12 (1d8+4) and 2 claws +10 (1d6+2)

Base Atk +9; **Grp** +17

Attack Options Hover

Space/Reach 10 ft./ 5 ft.

Special Attacks breath weapon

Abilities Str 19, Dex 13, Con 17, Int 4, Wis 13, Cha 10.

SQ darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent

Feats Alertness, Hover, Iron Will, Multiattack

Skills Hide +5, **Listen** +9, **Spot** +9

Breath Weapon (Su): This chimera has a green dragon head. It spits a 20-foot cone of gas that deals 3d8 points of acid damage (Reflex DC 17 for half). It can do so once every 1d4 rounds.

GHOUL CR 2

Suggested Miniature: Ghoul (Harbinger 63/80)

CE Medium Undead

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; **Listen** +2, **Spot** +7

AC 14, touch 12, flat-footed 12

hp 13 each (2 HD; +2 turn resistance);

Immune mind-affecting effects, poison, sleep effects, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects

Fort +0, **Ref** +2, **Will** +5

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee bite +2 (1d6+1 plus paralysis) and 2 claws +0 (1d3 plus paralysis)

Base Atk +1; **Grp** +2

Combat Options Ghoul fever

Abilities Str 13, Dex 15, Con —, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 12.

SQ Darkvision 60 ft., undead traits, +2 turn resistance

Feats Multiattack

Skills Balance +6, Climb +5, Hide +6, Jump +5, Move Silently +6, **Spot** +7

Ghoul Fever (Su): Disease—bite, Fortitude DC 12, incubation period 1 day, 1d3 Con and 1d3 Dex.

An afflicted humanoid who dies of ghoul fever rises as a ghoul the next midnight.

Paralysis (Ex): those hit by a ghoul's bite or claw attack must succeed on a DC 12 fortitude save or be paralyzed for 1d4+1 rounds. Elves are immune to this paralysis.

VENGOZER THE MOLE**CR 8**

Suggested Miniature: Derro (War Drums 46/60)

Male derro dread necromancer* 6

CE Small monstrous humanoid

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; **Listen** +1, **Spot** +1

Languages Common, Dwarf

AC 22, touch 13, flat-footed 19

hp 48 (9 HD); **DR** 2/bludgeoning and magic (*brooch of shielding* 50 points)

SR 15

Fort +4, **Ref** +7, **Will** +11

Weakness vulnerability to sunlight

Speed 20 ft. (4 squares)

Melee +1 *Small keen scimitar* +9 (1d4+1/16-20 plus poison) or **melee touch** +8 (1d8+1, **chanel touch**)

Base Atk +6; **Grp** +2

Attack Options **Chanel touch**, fear aura, negative energy burst, poison use, rebuke undead, scabrous touch, sneak attack +1d6

Combat Gear

Dread Necromancer Spells Prepared (CL 6th)

3rd—□□□□ crushing despair, death ward, halt undead, inflict serious wounds, ray of exhaustion, speak with dead, summon undead III**, vampiric touch.

2nd—□□□□□□ blindness/deafness, command undead, darkness, death knell, false life, gentle repose, ghoul touch, inflict moderate wounds, scare, spectral hand, summon swarm, summon undead II**

1st—□□□□□□□ bane, bestow wound**, cause fear, chill touch, detect magic, detect undead, doom, hide from undead, inflict light wounds, ray of enfeeblement, summon undead I, undetectable alignment**.

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 3rd)

At will—darkness, ghost sound; 1/day—daze (DC 13), sound burst (DC 15).

Abilities Str 11, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 5, Cha 18

SQ Madness, spell resistance 15, vulnerability to sunlight

Feats Blind-Fight, Buckler Proficiency, Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse

Skills Bluff +11, Hide +16, **Listen** +1, Move Silently +8

Possessions +1 *Small chain shirt*, +1 *Small buckler*, +1 *Small keen scimitar*, *brooch of shielding* (50 points), spell component pouch.

Chanel Touch (Su): Negative energy flows through Vengozer's body concentrating in his hands. At will, but no more than once per round, he can make a **melee touch** attack against a living foe that deals 1d8+1 points of damage. This touch heals undead creatures, restoring 2 hit points per touch.

Rebuke Undead (Su): Vengozer can rebuke or command undead by channeling negative energy through his body. See the cleric class feature description on page 22 of the Player's Handbook.

Fear Aura (Su): Vengozer radiates a 5-foot-radius fear aura as a free action. Enemies in the area must succeed a DC 17 Will saving throw, or become shaken. A creature that succeeds the save cannot be affected by Vengozer's fear aura for another 24 hours.

Negative Energy Burst (Su): 1/day—emit a burst of negative energy from his body, haring living creature within 5 feet of him. The burst deals 6d4 points of damage (Will DC 17 for half). Undead creatures within this burst are healed the same amount of him points as the damage dealt to living creatures.

Madness (Ex): Derro use their Charisma modifier on Will saves, and are immune to confusion and insanity effects. A derro cannot be restored to sanity by any means short of a miracle or wish spell.

Mental Bastion: Vengozer gains a +2 bonus on saving throws made to resist sleep, stunning, paralysis, poison, or disease.

Poison Use (Ex): Vengozer carries 8 doses of Medium monstrous spider venom (injury DC 14; 1d4 Str initial and secondary), applying it to his blade. He does not risk poisoning himself when applying the venom of the weapon.

Scabrous touch (Su): 1/day—Vengozer can use his **chanel touch** to inflict disease on a creature she touches. This ability works like the contagion spell (see page 213 of the *Player's Handbook*) inflicting blinding sickness (DC 16 1d4 Str—each time the victim takes 2 or more points of Str damage, he or she must make a second save or be permanently blinded) with no incubation period unless the **gargol** makes a successful Fortitude save (DC 17).

Activating this ability is a swift action. The effect lasts until Vengozer makes a successful **chanel touch** attack. The spectral hand spell enables Vengozer to deliver a scabrous touch attack from a distance.

Vengozer takes 1 point of Constitution damage for every hour he is exposed to sunlight.

*The dread necromancer class is from *Heroes of Horror*. This statistic block gives all the information you need to run this member of the class.

**New spell from *Heroes of Horror*. See *New Rules* (Encounter 2).

SETUP When the PCs enter the warrens through Vengozer's trap door, they descend a small wood ladder down into the damp lower warrens. Like the forest above, these caves are moist with a misty humidity. Read the first read-aloud text.

Assuming Vengozer was able to retreat into his warrens, he moves back toward the pool and casts his *summon undead* judiciously, but saves a 2nd-level slot for a casting of *spectral hand*. As the PCs move into the warrens, Vengozer's undead and Medium monstrous spiders move forward. If he can find safety behind the front lines the derro uses his spectral hand to deliver his scabrous touch and any left over touch spells. As the PCs push on, Vengozer falls back to the debilitating waters around the heartstone fragment (Vengozer is immune to both of the water's debilitating effects) fighting to the death to protect the fragment.

No Diplomacy

Vengozer insanity rules out any chance of diplomacy. If the PCs try, he vents maniacally at them, but the information may prove useful to observant PCs. Present the second read-aloud text to the players.

Grim Find In the Cave

At the locations marked Medium monstrous spiders, the PCs also find their last meals—dwarves from Glankas Korari's expedition into this place. Present the players with the second bit of read-aloud text. There is magical treasure on two of the web-wrapped and desiccated corpses. One has a *ring of jumping*, and a *potion of shield of faith* (1st-level caster). The other has a *wand of cure light wounds* (CL 1; 10 charges).

If the PCs attempt to *Speak with Dead* with any of these corpses, they don't find out much more than they know. None of the dwarves are Glankas, nor do they know what became of him. They were just as shocked as the PCs to find this place, and have no idea what any of it means. They too talked to the "beautify half-elf damsel" and were convinced the only way out was to follow her advice.

The First Heartstone Fragment

The first heartstone fragment sits atop a pedestal made of human, elf and halfling bones (Heal DC 20 determines). When the PCs retrieve the fragment, the violet-eyed half-elf woman appears in its facets. She speaks to the PCs again, telling them the contents of the third bit of read-aloud text before disappearing without answering a single one of the PCs' questions.

READ-ALoud TEXT

When the PCs first enter the warrens, read the following...

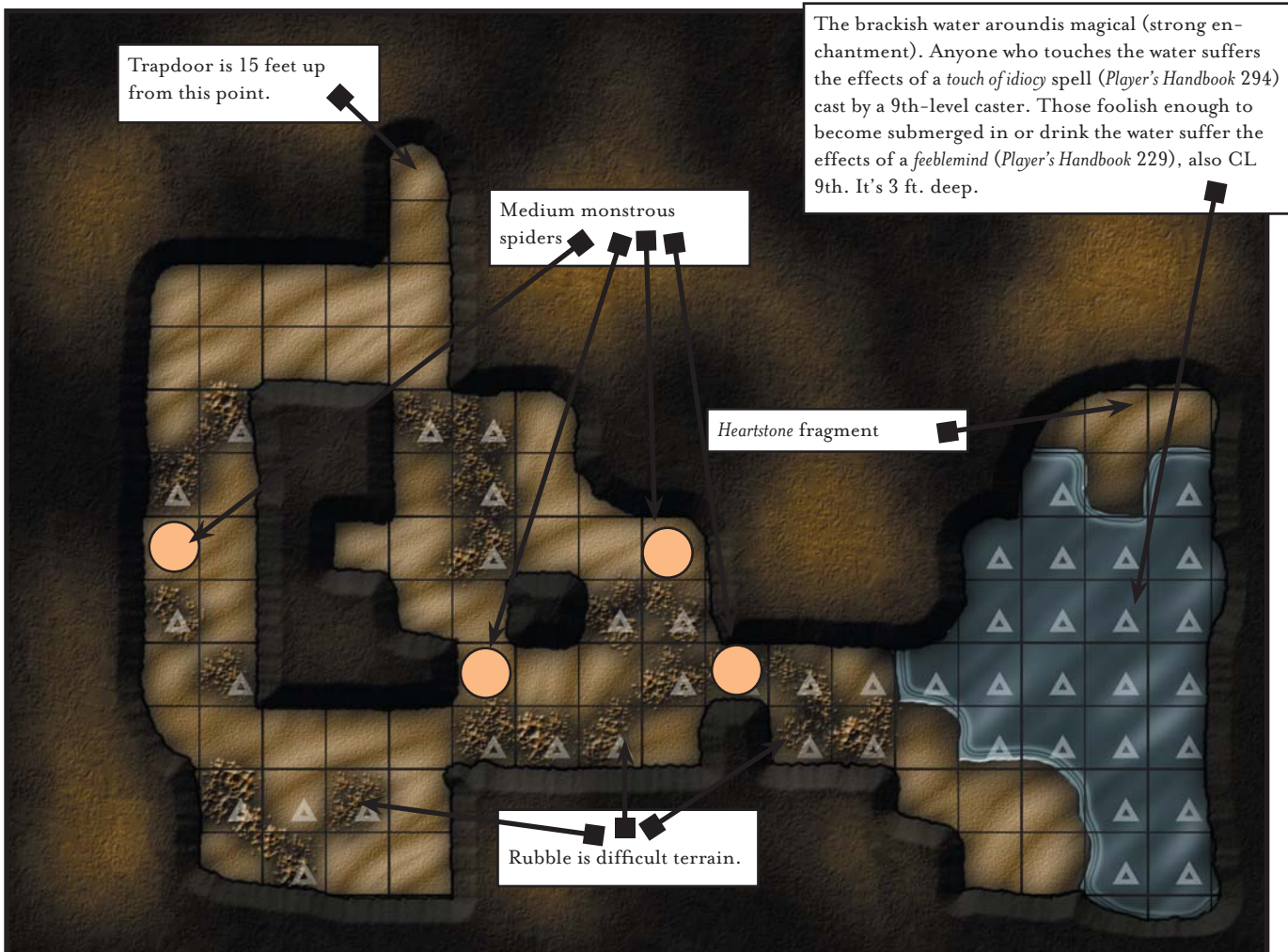
Slicked packed moist earth, stone, and moisture glistening webbing make up the wall of these warrens. The air is as thick with humidity as the upper forest, cutting the range of your light in half. In the distance you hear the sound of running water and a strange clicking sound, like the movement of large insects.

When the PCs find the spider's last meal read...

A moist bundle of webbing lies on the ground to your feet. It's large, and humanoid shape. Whatever is in it is as tall as a dwarf, but it seems to lack that race's sturdy build.

When the PCs pick up the heartstone fragment read...

"Good. Good. You've taken the first step. Now go and kiss the statue, and find the next key. This stone, and two more just like it is the key to our freedom."



MEDIUM MONSTROUS SPIDER**CR 1***Suggested Miniature:* Spider of Lolth (Underdark 74/60)

N Medium vermin

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 60 ft.; **Spot** +4**AC** 14, touch 13, flat-footed 11**hp** 11 each (2 HD)**Fort** +4, **Ref** +3, **Will** +0**Speed** 30 ft. (6 squares), climb 20 ft.**Melee** bite +4 (1d6 plus poison)**Base Atk** +1; **Grp** +1**Special Attacks** Poison**Abilities** Str 11, Dex 17, Con 12, Int –, Wis 10, Cha 2.**SQ** Darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 60 ft., vermin traits**Feats** Weapon Finesse**Skills** Climb +11, Hide +7, Jump +0, **Spot** +4**Poison (Su):** Injury DC 14; 1d4 Str initial and secondary**HUMAN WARRIOR SKELETON****CR 1/3***Suggested Miniature:* Warrior Skeleton (Archfiends 43/60)

NE Medium undead

Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; **Listen** +0, **Spot** +0**AC** 15, touch 11, flat-footed 14**hp** 6 each (1 HD); **DR** 5/bludgeoning**Immune** cold, mind-affecting effects, poison, sleep effects, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects.**Fort** +0, **Ref** +1, **Will** +2**Speed** 30 ft. (6 squares)**Melee** scimitar +1 (1d6+1/18-20)**Base Atk** +0; **Grp** +1**Abilities** Str 13, Dex 13, Con –, Int –, Wis 10, Cha 1.**SQ** Damage reduction 5/bludgeoning, darkvision 60 ft., immunity to cold, undead traits.**Feats** Improved Initiative**BUGBEAR ZOMBIE****CR 2***Suggested Miniature:* Blood Ghost Berserker (War Drums 44/60)

NE Medium undead

Init +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; **Listen** +0, **Spot** +0**AC** 16, touch 10, flat-footed 16**hp** 42 each (6 HD); **DR** 5/slashing**Immune** mind-affecting effects, poison, sleep effects, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects.**Fort** +2, **Ref** +2, **Will** +5**Speed** 30 ft. (6 squares; can't run)**Melee** battleaxe +6 (1d8+3/x3) or slam +6 (1d6+3)**Ranged** javelin +3 ranged (1d6+2)**Base Atk** +3; **Grp** +6**Combat Options** Single actions only**Abilities** Str 17, Dex 10, Con –, Int –, Wis 10, Cha 1.**SQ** Single actions only, damage reduction 5/slashing, darkvision 60 ft., undead traits**Feats** Toughness

Single Actions Only (Ex): Zombies have poor reflexes and can perform only a single move action or attack action each round. A zombie can move up to its speed and attack in the same round, but only if it attempts a charge.

NEW RULES**BESTOW WOUNDS**

Conjuration (Summoning) [Evil]

Level: Dread necromancer 1, sorcerer/wizard 1, Spite 1**Components:** V, S, M**Casting Time:** 1 standard action**Range:** Touch**Target:** Living creature touched**Duration:** Instantaneous**Saving Throw:** Fortitude negates**Spell Resistance:** Yes

If wounded, you can cast this spell and touch a living creature. The target takes damage equal to your wounds at the rate of 1 point of damage per your caster level, or the amount need to bring you to your maximum hit points, whichever is less. At the same time, you heal that much damage as if a cure spell had been cast on you.

Material Component: A small eye agate worth at least 10 gp.

SUMMON UNDEAD I

Conjuration (Summoning) [Evil]

Level: Blackguard 1, cleric 1, dread necromancer 1, sorcerer/wizard 1**Components:** V, S, F/DF**Casting Time:** 1 round**Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)**Effect:** One summoned creature**Duration:** 1 round/level**Saving Throw:** None**Spell Resistance:** No

This spell functions like *summon monster I* (see page 285 of the *Player's Handbook*), except that you summon an undead creature.

Summon undead I conjures one of the following creatures: human warrior skeleton, or a kobold zombie (Vengozers summons only human warrior skeletons). Summoned undead do not count toward the total Hit Dice of undead you can control with *animate dead*, *plague of undead*, or other command undead abilities. No undead creature you summon can have more Hit Dice than your caster level +1.

Focus: A tiny bag, a small candle (not lit), and a carved bone from any humanoid.

SUMMON UNDEAD II

Conjuration (Summoning) [Evil]

Level: Blackguard 2, cleric 2, dread necromancer 2, sorcerer/wizard 2**Effect:** One or more summoned creatures, no two can be more than 30 ft. apart.

This spell functions like *summon undead I*, except that you can summon one owlbear skeleton or bugbear zombie (Vengozers summons only bugbear skeletons) or two human warrior skeletons, or kobold zombies (Vengozers summons only human warrior skeletons).

SUMMON UNDEAD III

Conjuration (Summoning) [Evil]

Level: Blackguard 3, cleric 3, dread necromancer 3, sorcerer/wizard 3**Effect:** One or more summoned creatures, no two can be more than 30 ft. apart.

This spell functions like *summon undead I*, except that you can summon one ghoul, troll skeleton, and ogre zombie (Vengozers always summons ghouls), two owlbear skeletons or bugbear zombies (Vengozers summons only bugbear skeletons) or four human warrior skeletons, or kobold zombies (Vengozers summons only human warrior skeletons).

SETUP The PCs enter the first chamber (Area 1 on your map) by kissing the statue in the ruined temple. Once they reach this place, a character can move from area 1 of the Shattered Palace to the disk of the ruined temple at will, and knows that he or she can do so. Read the players the first bit of read-aloud text.

Throughout the Shattered Palace are scattered a number of warding circles. These are the blue circles on the map. The warding circles can be passed easily, but each time a creature enters a circle it summons a babbling spirit. The summoned spirit attacks intruders until it is destroyed.

In area 2, the PCs find the body of two dead dwarves, and a single still living dwarf banging his head on a wall. Driven insane by the babbling spirits and the achaierai's black cloud, the dwarf is a hopeless case, but he repeats something over and over again that the PCs might find helpful. Read the second bit of read-aloud text.

When the PCs enter area 3, they're confronted by Horogul the Black. Present the second section of read aloud text to the players. While not as crazed or zealous as Vengozer, reasoning with this stalwart defender will be difficult (see Diplomacy, below).

Aiding the duergar is a pair of achaierai that come from the red summoning circle.

Area 4 holds the heartstone fragment. When the PC pick it up, they are again called upon by the mysterious half-elf woman. Read the third bit of read-aloud text.

Area 5 contains a circle that when stand in transports the PC to the ice cave in the Frostfell Fragment.

Diplomacy

Horogul starts as hostile, and continues to fight if reduced to unfriendly or indifferent, but if the PCs can talk him to friendly, he tells the PCs why he is guarding the stones. He tells them that uniting the stones will destroy this place and probably

deposit them from where they came, but it would also free the night hag, and that is something that he can't allow. He will allow the PCs to proceed on (without his heartstone fragment).

Horogul in Combat

Horogul allows the achaierai to go out in front and keep the PCs busy while he readies himself for combat by manifesting as many power as he can (starting with *empathic feedback* and *force shield*). In combat he makes judicious use of his Psionic Weapon feat, regaining his focus as a move action with his Psionic Mediation feat. Horogul is immune to the effects of the achaierai black cloud.

READ-ALoud TEXT

Read this when a PC enters area 1...

The terrifying claustrophobic sensation of being turned to stone gives way to the comforting warmth of flesh and blood as you find yourself in this obviously once elegant and adorned room, now shattered and wrecked. This place is quiet and still. The air is stale and stuffy. There is an exit out of this chamber; a corridor heading deeper into the complex. At that opening floats a magic circle of azure radiance. It appears to be some kind of magical circle floating about three feet above the ground, head aloft by arcane forces.

Read this when the PC approach the insane dwarf...

The poor wretch repeats the same phrase over again, keeping time every three syllables with a painful rap of battered and bleeding forehead on wall. "If escap... is impos...sible death...is freedom."

Read this when the PCs pick up the heartstone fragment...

Again the half-elf's image appears in the facets of this new piece of the gem. "You all are my saviors, and you will have your due rewards. First you have to defeat the last dwarf. He is a cold man, but your heroism burns bright my saviors."

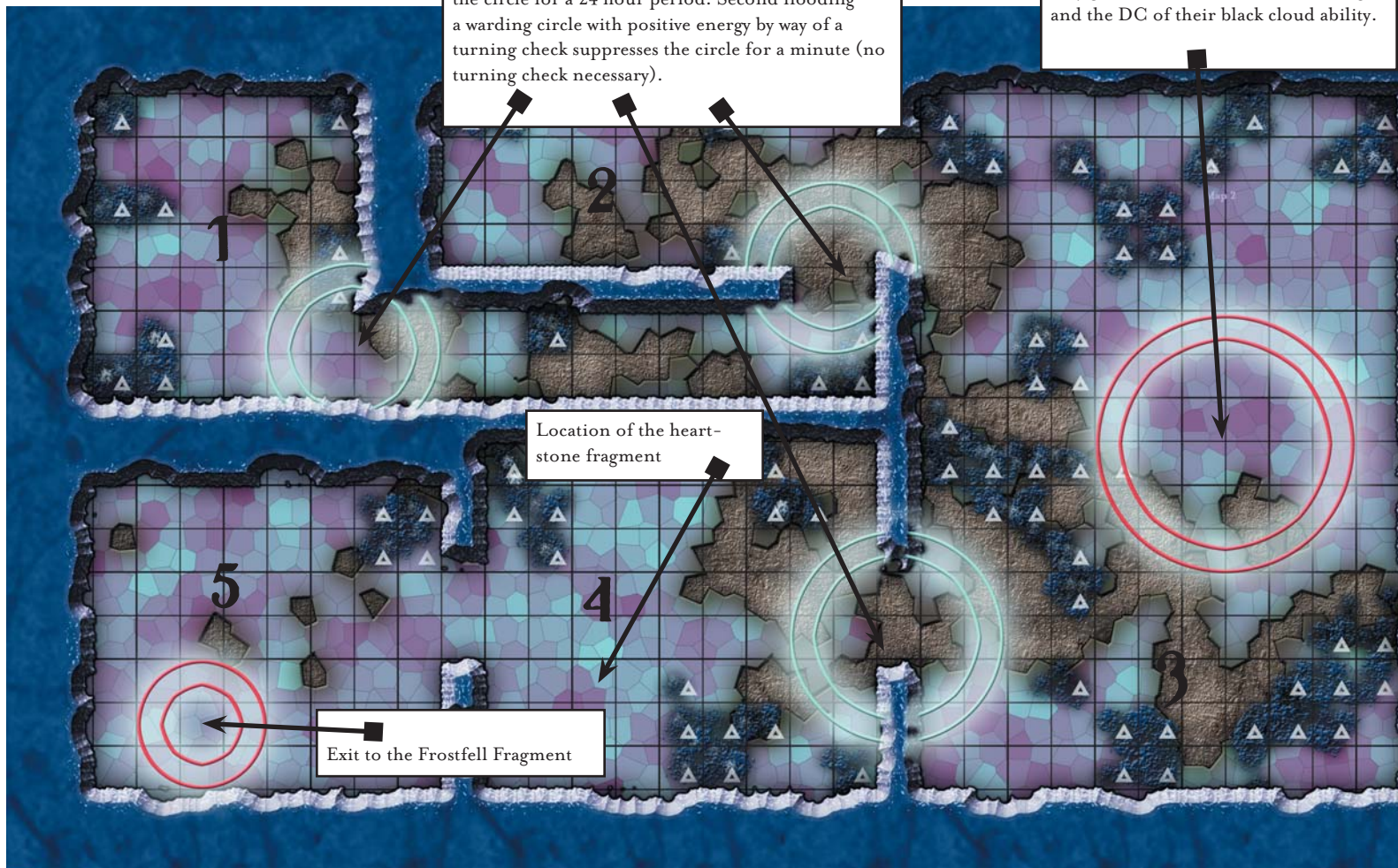
She then disappears again, answering no questions.

The blue warding circles can be suppressed two ways. First, a *dispel magic* caster level check DC 13 suppresses the circle for a 24 hour period. Second flooding a warding circle with positive energy by way of a turning check suppresses the circle for a minute (no turning check necessary).

As long as the Achaierai are in the circle they gain a +2 bonus to attacks, damage, and the DC of their black cloud ability.

Location of the heartstone fragment

Exit to the Frostfell Fragment



BABBLING SPIRITS**CR 3***Suggested Miniature:* Cursed Spirit (Archfiends 49/60)

NE Medium undead (incorporeal)

Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +7, Spot +7**Languages** Babbling confusion**AC** 15, touch 15, flat-footed 14**hp** 30 (4 HD; +2 turn resistance)**Immune** mind-affecting effects, poison, sleep effects, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects**Fort** +1, **Ref** +4, **Will** +4**Speed** Fly 30 ft. (perfect) (8 squares)**Melee** incorporeal touch +3 (1d4 Wisdom drain)**Base Atk** +2; **Grp** --**Special Attacks** Babbling, madness, Wisdom drain**Abilities** Str --, Dex 12, Con --, Int 11, Wis 11, Cha 18**SQ** darkvision 60 ft., incorporeal traits, +2 turn resistance, undead traits.**Feats** Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes**Skills** Hide +8, Intimidate +7, Listen +7, Search +4, Spot +7, Survival +0 (+2 following tracks)

Babble (Su): Babbling spirits constantly mutters and whines to itself, creating a hypnotic effects. All sand creatures within 60 feet of the babbling spirit must succeed a DC 16 Will save or be affected as though by a *hypnotism* (*Player's Handbook* page 242) spell for 2d4 rounds. This is a sonic mind-affecting compulsion effect. Creatures that successfully save cannot be affected by the same babbling spirit's babble for 24 hours.

Madness (Su): Anyone target a babbling spirit with a thought detection, mind control, or telepathic ability makes direct contact with its tortured mind and takes 1d4 points of Wisdom damage.

Wisdom Drain (Su): A babbling spirit cause 1d4 points of Wisdom drain each time it hits with its incorporeal touch attack. One a successful attack, it gains 5 temporary hit points.

ACHAIERAI**CR 5***Suggested Miniature:* Achaierai (Aberrations 26/60)

LE Large Outsider (Evil, Extraplanar, Lawful)

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +11, Spot +11**Languages** Infernal**AC** 20, touch 10, flat-footed 19; Dodge, Mobility**hp** 50 (6 HD)**SR** 19**Fort** +7, **Ref** +6, **Will** +7**Speed** 50 ft. (10 squares)**Melee** 2 claws +9 (2d6+4) and bite +4 (4d6+2)**Base Atk** +6; **Grp** +14**Attack Options** Spring Attack**Space Reach** 10 ft./ 10 ft.**Special Attacks** Black cloud**Abilities** Str 19, Dex 13, Con 16, Int 11, Wis 14, Cha 16**SQ** Darkvision 60 ft., spell resistance 19**Feats** Dodge, Mobility, Spring Attack**Skills** Balance +10, Climb +13, Diplomacy +5, Hide +6, Jump +21, Listen +11, Move Silently +10, Sense Motive +11, Spot +11

Black Cloud (Su): Up to three times per day and achaierai can release a choking, toxic black cloud. Living creatures other than achaierai within 10 feet instantly take 2d6 points of damage. They must also succeed on a DC 16 Fortitude save or be affected for 3 hours as though by an *insanity* spell (*Player's Handbook* page 244) CL 16.

HOROLGUL THE BLACK (ENLARGED)**CR 8***Suggested Miniature:* Large Duergar (War Drums 36/60)

Duergar psychic warrior 7

N Large humanoid (dwarf, psionic)

Init +0; **Senses** darkvision 120 ft.; Listen +3, Spot +3**Languages** Common, Dwarf**AC** 21, touch 9, flat-footed 21; +4 bonus against giants**hp** 53 (7 HD)**Immune** paralysis, phantasms, and poison**Fort** +7, **Ref** +2, **Will** +4 (+2 save against spells and spell-like effects)**Speed** 20 ft. (4 squares)**Melee** +1 Large warhammer +15 (3d6+8/x3)**Attack Options** +1 racial bonus on attack rolls against orcs and goblins, Cleave, *Power Attack (statistic block has a three-point power attack figured in)**Space/Reach** 10 ft./10 ft.**Base Atk** +5; **Grp** +14**Special Attacks** Psionic Weapon**Psi-Like Ability (ML 7th)**1/day—*expansion, invisibility*

Powers (ML 7th) pp 25 □□□□□ □□□□□ □□□□□ □□□□□ □□□□□

3rd—*empathic feedback*2nd—*body adjustment, hustle, prowess*1st—*biofeedback, force screen, thicken skin***Abilities** Str 22, Dex 10, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 4**SQ** light sensitivity, naturally psionic, stonecunning, stability**Feats** Cleave, Power Attack, Psionic Body, Psionic Meditation, Psionic Weapon, Stand Still**Skills** Appraise +1, Craft +1, Concentration +12, Jump +7, Listen +3, Spot +3**Possessions** +1 warhammer, +1 half-plate, +1 large steel shield, gauntlets of ogre power.

SETUP Upon entering the exit circle in the Shattered Place, a PCs is transported to the starting area of the Frostfell Fragment. The appearance of new creatures startles the polar bear in the ice cave, and it rears up and roars before attacking. (It does this for an entire round, giving a druid the opportunity to attempt to calm it. The polar bears starts out unfriendly.) Read the first section of read-aloud text.

If a battle ensues, the noise of it brings the other bears and Xolmund to investigate.

The glacier dwarf has a mystical connection with the bears, and can call them to attack or stop attacking as a free action.

Once the PCs exit the ice caves, they see the expanse of the Frostfell Fragment and the glowing standing stones in the distance. Read the second bit of read aloud text.

Diplomacy

Of the three dwarves, Xolmund is the one most open to diplomacy. The PCs suffer a -5 penalty to Diplomacy checks for each polar bear they've slain. If they are able to move Xolmund to indifferent, the glacier dwarf listens to them enough for a second Diplomacy check. Moving him to a friendly attitude gets him to stand down and actively help the PCs.

He explains why he and his three guard the heartstone fragments. He also tells them the half-elf who speaks with them is actually a night hag, and a dangerous servant of a demon lord that stays bound partly because his hag minion does. There is only one condition that Xolmund allows the PCs to take the *heartstone* fragment: proving to him that Quingu is dead. But he warns the PCs that there is a chance that reuniting the *heartstone* fragments after Quingu's death may not release them from this planar pocket—the PCs could be trapped in this "place between worlds" for an eternity. He does admit that reuniting the *heartstone* fragments while the night hag still lives frees the PCs, but it also frees Quingu, which Xolmund will die before he sees that happen.

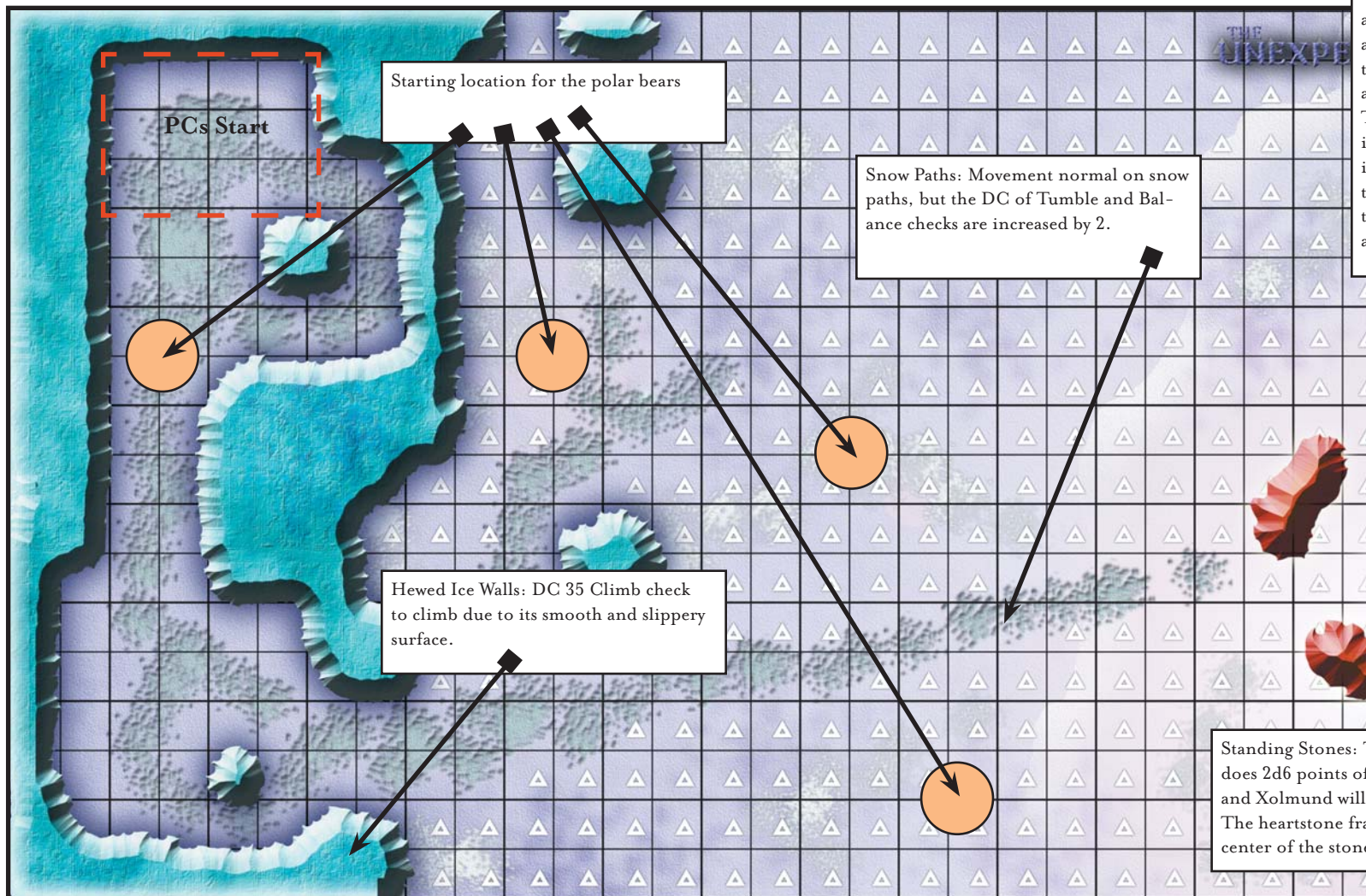
No matter the result of any diplomacy, if the PCs take Xolmund's *heartstone* fragment, he renews his attack and does not quit until the PCs or he is defeated.

Retrieving the Heartstone Fragment

Quingu calls out the PCs again in her pleasing form. Read the third section of read-aloud text.

Leaving the Frostfell Fragment

The snowy path that leads away from the ice caves and the standing stones, continues on to the great snowy expanse. After walking for 15 minutes, the PCs find themselves at the gates of Oblivions Fortress.



POLAR BEAR**CR 4***Suggested Miniature:* Dire Bear (Deathknell 26/60)

N Large Animal

Init +1; **Senses** Low-light vision, scent; Listen +5, Spot +7**AC** 15, touch 10, flat-footed 14**hp** 68 (8 HD)**Fort** +10, **Ref** +7, **Will** +3**Speed** 40 ft. (8 squares)**Melee** 2 claws +13 (1d8+8) and bite +8 (2d6+4)**Base Atk** +6; **Grp** +18**Attack Options** Improved Grab**Space Reach** 10 ft./ 5 ft.**Abilities** Str 19, Dex 13, Con 16, Int 11, Wis 14, Cha 16**SQ** Low-light vision, scent**Feats** Endurance, Run, Track**Skills** Hide +10, Listen +5, Spot +7, Swim +16**Improved Grab (Su):** To use this ability, a polar bear must hit with a claw attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity.**XOLMUND****CR 8***Suggested Miniature:* Frost Dwarf (War Drums 48/60)

Glacier dwarf fighter 8

LN Medium humanoid (dwarf)

Init +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +1, Spot +1**Languages** Common, Dwarf**AC** 19, touch 11, flat-footed 19; **Dodge**: +4 bonus against giants**hp** 98 (8 HD)**Fort** +7, **Ref** +2, **Will** +4 (+2 save against spells and spell-like effects and cold)**Speed** 20 ft. (4 squares)**Melee** +2 frost rimefire ice dwarven waraxe +11/+6* (1d10+16/x3 plus 1d6+1 cold)**Attack Options** +1 racial bonus on attack rolls against orcs and goblins, Cleave, *Power Attack (stat block assumes a +4 power attack), Power Critical (+4 to confirm criticals)**Base Atk** +8; **Grp** +11**Abilities** Str 17, Dex 13, Con 18, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 8**SQ** Cold tolerance, darkvision 60 ft., icecunning, stability**Feats** Cleave, Dodge, Greater Weapon Focus (battleaxe), Improved Toughness, Power Attack, Power Critical, Weapon Focus (battleaxe), Weapon Specialization (battleaxe)**Skills** Climb +14**Possessions** +2 frost rimefire ice axe, +1 half-plate, amulet of health +2, boots of the winterlands, bead of force.

Deep Powder Snow: Between 1-1/2 feet and three feet thick. Impassible to Tiny and smaller creatures that move along the ground. Difficult terrain for Small and Medium creatures, and the DC of Tumble and Balance checks through or in the deep snow for those creatures is increased by 5. Large and larger creatures movement is not hampered, but they still suffer from increased Tumble and Balance DCs.



Touching the standing stones of fire damage. The polar bears not enter the standing stone. The fragment is on a stone plinth at the circle.

READ-ALoud TEXT**When the PCs enter the Frostfell, read the following...**

The air turns crisp as you find yourself in an ice cave. Across the cave from you a great white bear lifts himself upright. Obviously startled, it throws its massive paws in the air as a roar leaves his great maw in a jet of misty warm breath.

When the PCs leave the ice cave, read the following...

A great wintry expanse spreads out in what seems to be an endless stream of white ground and vivid blue sky. The only thing breaking the monotony is a circle of red glowing standing stones maybe 100 feet or more away from the cave entrance.

When the PCs retrieve the heartstone fragment, read the following...

"You are almost there, the woman says. Beyond that icy expanse you'll find a dreary keep in the middle of a foul swamp. The dwarves keep me there. With the stones we will all escape this terrible place."

The woman then disappears. If the PCs try to talk to the stone, saying that they know the woman is a night hag, Quingu appears again in her natural form and says:

"And so what. It doesn't change the fact that bringing me the stones is the only way you or your friend Glankas will ever escape this place. Don't worry, he is still alive...for now."

SETUP Traveling out of the tundra the PCs find themselves at the gates of Oblivions Fortress, the prison of Quingu the night hag.

Whether the PCs have come to slay the hag or to bring her the heartstones, the PCs must face the last of the dwarf warriors sworn to guard her prison.

Tricked by Glankas Korari, the guards stubbornly refuse to be fooled again, and will offer the PCs no parley or quarter.

The dwarves, eight total, wait in areas 1 and 2 (half in one, and the other half in the other) watching approach by way of the hidden arrow slits on each side of the walkway. As the PCs approach, they pepper the PCs with crossbows from the arrow slits. The two dwarves nearest the exit doors can spend their attack action activating one of the four *lightning emitters* on the walkway.

Once inside, the dwarves have a weapon of last defense, a bizarre and powerful arcane ballista. The ballista fires on PCs in area 3, hopefully stopping them from throwing open the warded doors that lead to Quingu's prison chamber (area 4).

Just as the PCs defeat the ward, of if they can't defeat the ward, Glankas opens the door. He steps outside to talk to the PCs.

Glankas's Take on the Situation

Glankas Korari is glad to see the PCs, especially those who helped him find Glankas Island. He thanks them for coming to rescue him and apologizes for the trouble he's caused. He seems unfazed by any carnage the PCs have wrought, and will even try to help them defeat any remaining dwarves (though he never puts himself in any real danger). After the danger has passed, and the pleasantries are exchanged, he asks the PCs what they plan to do.

If the PCs are here to kill Quingu, Glankas tries to talk them out of it. He tells them there is no guarantee that killing the hag and then reuniting the heartstones will send them home. For all he or anyone else knows, that could be a death sentence as this place could just blink out of existence. The dwarf pleads passionately, invoking the circumstance of their past adventures: "I was right about the rod, I am right about this," he tells them. "The world can suffer one more night hag," he continues. "The Demon Wastes are supposed to be full of them."

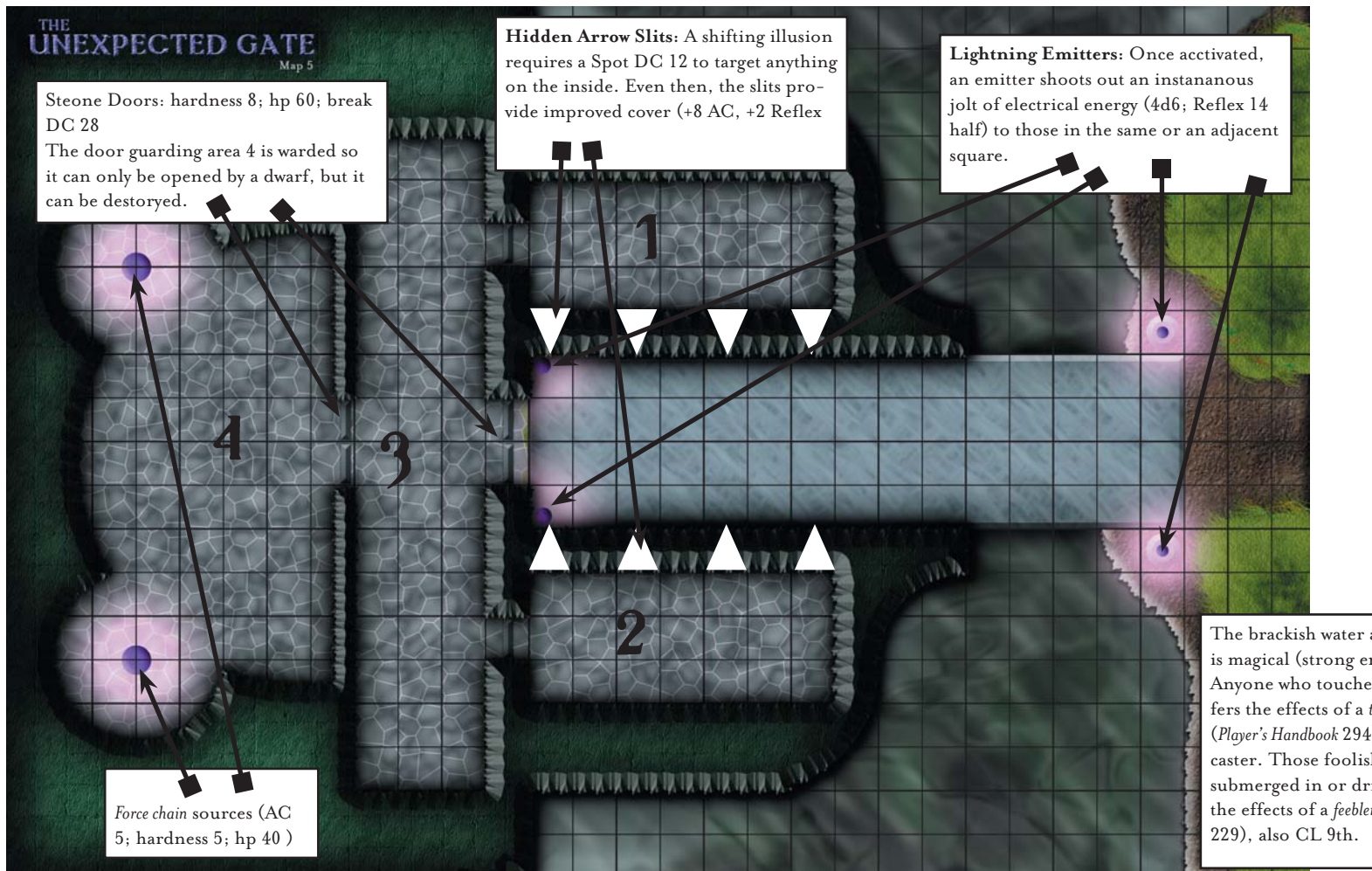
If the PCs have not learned of the hag's true nature, or have made the decision that keeping a night hag trapped in some demi-plane is not worth their life, Glankas introduces them to Quingu and if the heartstone pieces are brought together, go to the conclusion.

This is where the PCs get to meet the true Glankas Korari. If the PCs do what he wants there is no problem. On the other hand if the PCs want to risk all of their lives to make sure Quingu is defeated, Glankas aids the night hag—in combat if need be. Quingu promised to be a valuable ally to the Korari clan if Glankas aids her escape, and in Glankas's mind one hag is worth a hundred Diggers.

Facing Quingu

Unless she has already revealed her true form when the PCs confronted her image in the Frostfell fragment, Quingu appears as the striking half-elf she's been masquerading as. She is full of pleasantries and formal pleas for release until she is confronted about her true nature. Then here tactic turns to bargaining. She appeals to the PCs self-preservation, and even promises her service as a later date if the PCs help free her. She would much rather have the PCs gather and turn over the *heartstone* fragments, than risk herself, and her master's future, with pointless combat. If forced to fight, Quingu engages the PCs with all she has. She prefers to weaken fighter with *rays of enfeeblement* before engaging in melee. Note that her demon fever is not the standard variety. It is less powerful but it has an incubation period of one round.

Before Glankas came to the Oblivions Fortress and brought her the first fragment of her heartstone, the night hag was bound by two *force chains*. Now she controls the magic that once bound her to the walls of this room. Once a round, as a swift action, she can command one of the chains to lash out at a creature no more than 30 feet away from its origin. The chain is **Melee +10 (2d6+2)**. It does force damage and if it hits it can attempt a trip (+6) without provoking attacks of opportunity. The *force chains* can be dispelled (DC 20) or destroyed at their source. Once the PCs either bring the fragments of Quingu's *heartstone* together, go to the Conclusion.



DWARF GUARD**CR 2***Suggested Miniature:* Hill Dwarf Warrior (Aberrations 7/60)

N mix male and female dwarf fighter 2

Medium humanoid (dwarf)

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft, Listen +1, Spot +1**Languages** Common, Dwarven**AC** 19, touch 11, flat-footed 18; +4 dodge AC against giants.**hp** 22 (2 HD)**Fort** +6, **Ref** +1, **Will** +0; +2 saves against poisons and spells**Spd** 20 ft. (4 squares)**Melee** dwarven waraxe +5 (1d10+2/x3)**Ranged** +3 light crossbow +3 (1d8/19-20)**Base Atk** +2; **Grp** +4 (+4 to resist bull rush attempts)**Atk Options** Power Attack (+2), Cleave, +1 attack against orcs and goblins**Abilities** Str 14, Dex 12, Con 16, Int 11, Wis 10, Cha 10**Feats** Cleave, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (dwarven waraxe)**Skills** Climb +2, Intimidate +3, Listen +1, Spot +1, Profession (guard) +2, Sense Motive +2,**Possessions** Dwarven waraxe, heavy steel shield, banded mail, light crossbow, 20 bolts.**ARCANE BALLISTA****CR 5***Suggested Miniature:* Arcane Ballista (War Drums 1/60)

N Large construct

Init -1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Listen -5, Spot -5**AC** 18, touch 8, flat-footed 18**hp** 63 (6 HD); hardness 10**Fort** +7, **Ref** +6, **Will** +7**Speed** 20 ft. (4 squares)**Melee** Slam +7 (1d8+7)**Ranged** +5 ballista bolts +7 (3d6+5/19-20) or +3 flaming burst ballista bolts +5 (3d6+3/19-20) or +3 freezing burst ballista bolts (1d6+3/19-20)**Base Atk** +3; **Grp** -**Space Reach** 10 ft./ 5 ft.**Special Attacks** lightning sphere, trample (1d8+7; Ref 18 half)**Abilities** Str 20, Dex 8, Con -, Int -, Wis 1, Cha 1**SQ** Construct traits, darkvision 60 ft., hardness 10, low light vision**Possessions** Six +5 ballista bolts, +3 flaming burst ballista bolt, +3 freezing burst ballista bolt**Lightning Sphere (Su):** 640 ft.; 20-ft burst, 6d6 electricity; Ref 17 half**GLANKAS KORARI****CR 4***Suggested Miniature:* Dwarf Wizard (Angelfire 4/60)

Male dwarf aristocrat 5

LE Medium humanoid (dwarf)

Init -1; **Senses** Darkvision 60 ft.; Listen -1, Spot -1.**Languages** Common, Dwarven; Gnome**AC** 13, touch 9, flat-footed 13**hp** 27 (5 HD)**Fort** +2, **Ref** +0, **Will** +5; +2 bonus on saves against spells and spell-like abilities and poisons.**Spd** 20 ft. (4 squares)**Atk** Masterwork short sword +4 melee (1d6/19-20)**Atk Options** +1 bonus on attack rolls against orcs and goblins, +4 dodge bonus to AC against creatures of the giant type.**Base Atk** +3; **Grp** +3**Abilities** Str 11, Dex 8, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 9, Cha 12**Feats** Iron Will, Negotiator**Skills** Appraise +5 (+7 related to stone or metal), Diplomacy +16, Decoder Script +6, Knowledge (architecture and engineering) +6, Knowledge (geography) +6, Knowledge (history) +3, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +6, Search +1 (+3 for finding secret doors and similar compartments, +2 to notice unusual stonework, or +5 to notice stone secret doors and similar compartments), Sense Motive +6, Survival -1 (+1 from getting lost or avoiding hazards)**Possessions** Studded leather armor, masterwork short sword, noble's outfit, 8 copper rings (worth 10 cp each), magnifying glass, cartographer's kit, 5 potions of endure elements.**QUINGU (NIGHT HAG)****CR 9***Suggested Miniature:* Night Hag (War Drums 37/60)

NE Medium outsider (evil, extraplanar)

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +15, Spot +15**Languages** Common, Dwarf**AC** 22, touch 11, flat-footed 21**hp** 68 (8 HD); **DR** 10/ cold iron and magic**SR** 25**Immune** fire, cold, charm, sleep and fear**Fort** +12, **Ref** +9, **Will** +10**Speed** 20 ft. (4 squares)**Melee** bite +12 (2d6+6 plus disease)**Attack Options** Combat Casting**Base Atk** +8; **Grp** +12**Special Attacks** Disease**Spell-Like Abilities (CL 8th)**At will—*detect chaos, detect evil, detect good, detect law, detect magic, magic missile, ray of enfeeblement* (DC 12), *sleep* (DC 12).**Abilities** Str 19, Dex 12, Con 18, Int 11, Wis 15, Cha 12**SQ** Change shape, damage reduction 10/cold iron and magic, immunity to fire, cold, charm, sleep, and fear, spell resistance 25**Feats** Alertness, Combat Casting, Mounted Combat**Skills** Bluff +12, Concentration +15 (+19 cast def.), Diplomacy +5, Disguise +1 (+3 acting), Intimidate +14, Listen +15, Ride +12, Sense Motive +13, Spellcraft +11, Spot +15**Change Shape (Su):** A night hag can assume the form of any Small or Medium humanoid.**Disease (Ex):** Demon fever—bite, Fortitude DC 18, incubation period 1 round, damage 1d4 Constitution. This is a non-standard version of demon fever.**Dream Haunting (Su):** Due to the strange properties of the planar pocket, and the fragmentation of Quingu's *heartstone*, she cannot dream haunt.

around the fortress
(enchancement).
the water suf-
ouch of idiocy spell
cast by a 9th-level
enough to become
nk the water suffer
mind (Player's Handbook