

SECRETS OF THE MOON



CCC-BFG01-02

Part two of the **Avatar of Shar** series

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Secrets of the Moon

An Avatar of Shar Adventure



A mysterious map hints at the gathering of sinister forces near Thentia. The temple of Selûne fears that the cryptic map, and the strange artifact discovered along with it, may signal involvement of the cult of Shar, and hires adventurers to investigate.

Part 2 of the Avatar of Shar Adventures

A Two to Four-Hour Adventure for Tier 2 Characters. Optimized for APL 8.

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Adventure Primer

This adventure is designed for **three to seven 5th – 10th level characters** and is optimized for **five characters with an average party level (APL) of 8**. Characters outside this level range cannot participate in this adventure.

This adventure begins in Thentia and proceeds to the wilds of Thar.

Background

Long ago an **AVATAR OF SHAR** began uniting a formidable force of **DARK MOON SECTS** across the heartlands. The avatar was given the gift of the **SHADOWWEAVE**, and with it they forged a powerful artifact capable of storing its power. The avatar was directed to build a secret Temple in the Underdark and began the plan to bring forces from the Shadowfell to Ferûn with an intricate network of teleportation portals: **THE SHADOW WAY**. While many searched for the growing force in the heartlands, a band of adventures led by a paladin of Selûne, **CASSIUS VALEN**, discovered the temple in the Underdark beneath Thar. With the aid of a tenuous alliance from Thar and the Underdark, Cassius and his companions defeated the avatar and razed the Dark Moon Temple to the ground. With a powerful strike, blessed by Selûne herself, Cassius slew the avatar and discovered the magic shard that aided their power. Unable to destroy the object, Cassius kept the artifact for safekeeping. He thought the temple's location might one day hold the answer to destroying the shard. What Cassius didn't know is the avatar's essence had entwined with the shadow artifact's power and was slowly possessing him. In time Cassius fell into madness.

Overview

The adventure's story is spread over **three parts** and takes approximately **2 hours** to play. The adventure begins with a Call to Action scene. It also contains **two optional bonus objectives**—each taking **an additional hour** to play.

- **Call to Action: Dark Side of the Moon.** An artifact bearing symbols holy to Shar was

recently discovered along with a map. The characters are hired by the temple of Selûne in Thentia to investigate the map and report what they find.

- **Part 1: To the Moon and Back Again.** The characters must solve the riddle of the map to find the location of the Dark Moon temple ruins in the Underdark. This is **Story Objective A**.
- **Part 2: Dark Moon Rising.** Investigating the ruins reveals an intact lower level. The characters must find the dangerous secret hidden deep below the ruins. This is **Story Objective B**.
- **Bonus Objective A: The Killing Moon.** The discovery of the map is noted by a secret agent of Shar in Thentia. Assassins track down the characters in order to steal the map: The chase is on! This objective is found in **Appendix 1**.
- **Bonus Objective B: Big Fomorian Green.** The characters meet a forgetful old gnome who offers to help them find the ruins, in exchange for retrieving a small sample of exotic mushrooms. The mushrooms grow in a small hidden grove that is home to a pair of oddly colored fomorian giants. This objective is found in **Appendix 2**.

Adventure Hooks

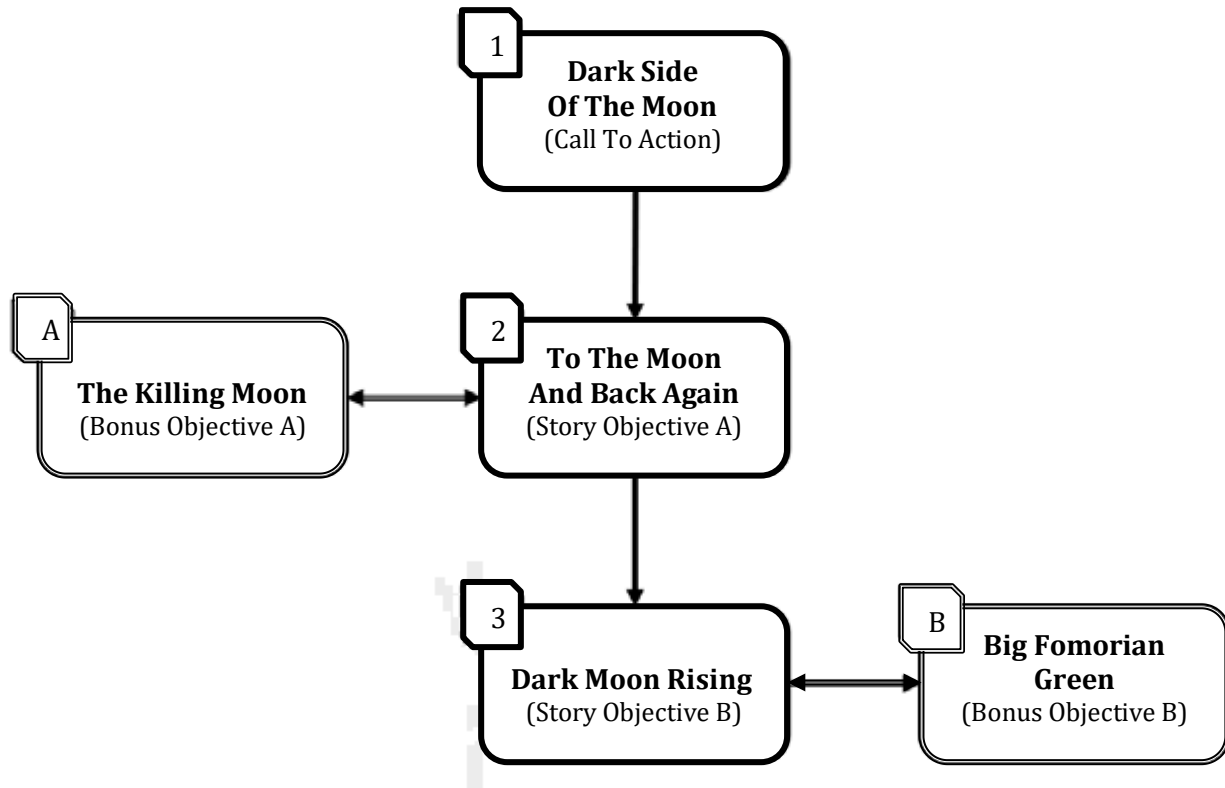
If the characters played *CCC-BFG01-01: A House Divided*, it is shortly after those events the characters are called again to aide in resolving the mysteries surrounding Cassius Valen. If the characters did not play the previous adventure in the series, consider the following alternatives to invest the players in the current adventure:

Houses of the Holy. Characters with connections to religious institutions (Clerics, Druids, Paladin, Acolyte background) hear about trouble at the Temple of Selûne in Thentia.

Factions. The recent discovery of a rare and powerful (if the reports are true) shadow artifact near Thentia is news all of the factions would be aware of.

Adventure Flowchart

This section provides a basic understanding of not only the flow of the adventure, but also the outline of the different paths that your players may take in reaching their stated objective.



Call to Action: Dark Side of the Moon

Estimated Duration: 15 minutes

A mysterious shard composed of opalescent black stone was recently discovered in the manor house of Cassius Valen, a retired paladin of Selûne. A map showing several locations in Thar was discovered with the shard. Both are being held at the temple of Selûne in Thentia. The shard was engraved with many strange arcane engravings, but one symbol was instantly recognized: The unholy symbol of Shar.

Setting Information

This scene takes place in the Temple of Selûne in Thentia. The characters are asked to meet with Miri, the acting high percept in her office. The meeting is in the early hours before dawn.

A. The meeting

Miri has spent the last two days researching the glyphs on the strange shard found at the Manor and is eager to speak with the adventurers. If they played CCC-BFG01-01, she greets them again warmly, and they can tell she is exhausted.

Area Information

The area has the following features.

Dimensions & Terrain. The 30 x 30 office is outfitted with a large desk, two button tufted leather covered chairs, and floor to ceiling bookshelves along the east and west walls. A large ornamental rug covers most of the floor. Several statues and items holy to Selûne are found throughout the room including her symbol (see Appendix 13). Many books are strewn upon the desk, along with writing implements and pages of copious notes.

Lighting. Several candles that have obviously been burning through the night provide dim light everywhere in the room but near the desk, which is bright light.

Creature Information

Miri is pacing back and forth in her office, having just completed her research on the map.

What Do They Want? Miri is deeply concerned about the significance of the artifact recovered at Cassius' Manor. The reports of his wife's pact also weigh deeply on Miri's conscious as Cassius was once a close friend. Miri wants to know what the artifact does, and if the followers of Shar are active in the region. If they are, she wants to know what they are planning. Miri is also worried about the fate of Cassius; she thinks the answers to these questions will be revealed by the map (See Appendix 14).

What Do They Know? Miri has been studying the artifact nonstop since its recovery. She knows that shadow is somehow infused with the shard and that it has access to an immense amount of magic energy. The map seems to depict areas known in the wilderness of Thar. Miri thinks the locations with Xs must be important, and spent time researching the map (see Appendix 15).

Development. Miri works with the characters to solve the map. Give the characters 5 minutes to solve it with the handouts. Have Miri point out the solution (see Appendix 9) to the first line if the players don't come up with it on their own; when solved proceed.

Call to Action

The characters are tasked with investigating the location discovered on the map and reporting any relevant information about the Cult of Shar, the shadow artifact, or Cassius. Miri warns the characters Thar is dangerous and ruled by lawless tribes of warring orcs. The location on the map likely depicts some lost orc ruin or even a tribal encampment.

Part 1: To the Moon and Back Again

Estimated Duration: 45 minutes

Travel in Thar

The characters should be headed for the location revealed on the map: The ruins of Xûl-Jarak. If using **Bonus Objective A** begin that here. Otherwise, narrate the journey as convenient. If time allows, use an optional random encounter to make the journey memorable.

Setting Information

Thar is characterized by endless steppelands covered in wild grass and punctuated by wetlands, pines, and rugged rocky outcroppings. The foul wilderness is home to quarreling bands of Ogres and Orcs, ranging in numbers from 30 to 100s. The location-based scenes are listed below; random encounters follow.

Story Objective A

The characters must discover an entrance to the Underdark deep beneath Xûl Jarak, the grey citadel, which leads to the ruins of a Dark Moon Temple. **This is story objective A.**

A. Xûl Jarak

Setting Information

Dimensions and Terrain. Xûl Jarak is a ruin (see Appendix 5 for maps). Long since forgotten, the ruins have taken on a sinister character and sit atop of a 20ft crag. The ground floors have suffered deterioration, and only the central area is accessible. All of level two and many of the rooms in the ruins are inaccessible due to structural damage. Every turn the characters travel between the ground level and the fourth level has a 10% chance to cause further collapse (DC 11 Dexterity save, suffering 5 (1d10) bludgeoning damage on a failure).

Central Shaft. The underground levels feature a central unadorned shaft extending all the way through to level four. It is possible to climb down the shaft with a successful DC 16 Strength (Athletics) check for each level traversed. Grant advantage for clever climbing schemes with

gear. Characters falling down the shaft suffer 6 (2d6) bludgeoning damage from the fall for each level they fall through.

0. Ground Level Courtyard

Area Information

Terrain. This level suffered a recent collapse and the formerly secret staircase leading to the lower levels is now exposed. A successful DC 12 Strength (Athletics) check is required to safely navigate the loose stone and climb down. Any character that fails the check must make a DC 16 Dexterity save or suffer 10 (2d10) bludgeoning damage or half as much damage on a success as they find the express way down to level one.

Creature Information

The intact guard tower on this level has become home to spiders: two **giant spiders** and two **giant wolf spiders**. This should be an easy difficulty combat encounter.

Adjusting the Scene

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

- **Strong:** Add 2 **giant spiders**
- **Very Strong:** Add 4 **giant spiders**

The spiders are animals and just want to eat.

1. Level One

Area Information

Dimensions and Terrain. Once past the collapse, the stairwell leading to this level is relatively intact and opens to a large octagonal shaped room featuring a 20ft well in the center. Three statues of drumming war orcs stand in four corners of the room, while a third statues lays in ruin in the northeast corner. While there were once multiple exits from the room, now only a stone stairwell leading to lower levels remains.

Treasure. An unpolished gem lay hidden in the rubble of the fallen statue.

2. Level Two

Area Information

This level is no longer accessible and empty.

3. Level Three

Area Information

Dimensions and Terrain. A recent collapse in the stairwell blocks further travel. The room, similar to level one, features a 20ft shaft in its center and four intact statues in the corners of the room. Intact double door in the north lead to a room that contains three damaged sarcophagi, engraved with symbols holy to Grummish.

Central Shaft. The shaft has water flowing down the west side, making it slippery (DC 18 Strength (Athletics) check to climb down), climbing down any other side is normal.

Doors. The doors are stuck, requiring a successful DC 12 Strength (Athletics) check to force it open. This causes more structural damage, requiring a successful DC 11 Dexterity save, suffering 5 (1d10) bludgeoning damage on a failure, or half as much on a success.

Treasure. The bodies in the sarcophagi bear amulets of jade engraved with a bestial eye.

Creature Information

The room is haunted by two **deathlock wright** bound to the sarcophagi, an unusual punishment cast upon the unworthy of Grummish. This should be an easy combat encounter.

Adjusting the Scene

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

- **Weak or Very Weak:** Remove 1 **deathlock wright**
- **Strong:** Add 1 **deathlock wright**
- **Very Strong:** Add 2 **deathlock wright**

What do they want? The **deathlock wrights** have suffered in isolation for over 100 years. Driven mad, they only want someone to share in their suffering.

What do they know? These creatures know of the **froghemoth** that has taken residence below as well as the old gnome (who they fear). This information comes out in incoherent ramblings.

4. Level Four

Area Information

Dimensions and Terrain. The temple areas have several intact statues of leering orc warpriests. The east side of the ruin features a natural staircase to a large open cavern with two exits: the north one leading to the Underdark and a south exit leading to a cave and grotto that is home to **Melrond**. A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check searching the walls along the northern exit reveals the same symbol as found in the mural.

Murals. The walls of the temple depict crude murals of orc in combat and in a various deed of strength. A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check can discover a cleverly hidden symbol (see Appendix 13) drawn on the mural, clearly by a different artist long after the original mural was created.

Treasure. At the bottom of the lake are several, mostly digested, corpses. Scattered amongst the remains are gold and silver coins, a few small gems and ivory jewelry.

Creature Information

The main room is home to a **froghemoth** that lives in the pool. A successful DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) check could spot signs of the creature's presence such as movement or the extended eyes of the **froghemoth** in the water. The creature will attack anyone trying to move past it to the caverns in the east. This is a medium difficulty combat encounter. A seemingly mad old gnome named **Melrond** lives in the lower cave beyond the grotto to the south. He will investigate anyone that makes it past the **froghemoth**. If he thinks they are of good alignment he will make himself known. If using the **Bonus Objective B** start the scene here.

Adjusting the Scene

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

- **Very Weak:** Replace the **froghemoth** with 1 **giant crocodile** and 2 **giant frogs**.
- **Weak:** Reduce the **froghemoth** hit points by 50
- **Strong:** Add 2 **giant frogs**
- **Very Strong:** Add 5 **giant frogs**

What do they want? The froghemoth is hungry but likes to sleep. There is a 50% chance it is napping in the tunnel between the pool and the grotto when the characters arrive. Someone descending the well can escape its notice if they make their descent along the side where the water falls from above. Otherwise, descending into the pool alerts the beast and it will arrive to investigate in 1d3 rounds if it is not in the pool. It can be appeased with a successful DC 16 Wisdom (Animal Handling or Persuasion) check along with a substantial amount of easily digestible food (stripped of non-edible materials). It flees if reduced by more than half of its hit points. **Melrond** is very curious about visitors and wants to know all about them. Though he keeps forgetting things.

What do they know? The froghemoth knows food usually comes from the pool in the other cave. Melrond (see *Dramatis Personae* for more details on his personality) knows about the symbols left behind by Cassius, but his memory has deteriorated and doesn't remember what they mean, where they lead, or how many there are; only that there are two on level 4.

Playing the Pillars

Here are some suggestions for this **encounter**:

Combat. The combats in Xûl-Jarak are meant to be quick and thematic. If you players want more of a challenge (and time allows) consider using the adjustments to increase the challenge.

Exploration. The ruins emphasis exploration, add more details if the players are enjoying the scene.

Social. Use the details about the monsters to facilitate characters that want more social exchange to solve the challenges of Xûl-Tharak

B. Underdark travel

The passage that leads out of Xûl-Jarak begins with a slight upward grade, but gradually turns down, and meanders deep to the Underdark. The characters must find their way to the hidden cave with the ruins of a Dark Moon Temple.

Area Information

Dimensions and Terrain. The Underdark is ripe with mushrooms and vegetation. If the party found Cassius' mark previously, they spot it at

intervals on their journey with no check. Otherwise, remind them of the last stanza on the map. Use a DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check to find the marks to guide them. Narrate the journey as a wonderous, exotic travel through the Underdark to a hidden cave where the characters spot the ruins. If the party completed **Bonus Objective B**, Melrond guides them.

Lighting. Lighting is dim from bioluminescent fungi and lichen growing in the caverns.

Dark Moon Ruins. The cave containing the ruins is large (greater than 100 ft in diameter). A casual inspection of the ruins and area reveal a great battle took place here. Broken arrows, bolts, weapons, and skeletal remains litter the area. The remains are from multiple races. A careful inspection also discovers an intact stone trapdoor hidden by fallen debris leading to an intact level described in Part 2. Melrond takes his leave once they enter the cave.

Treasure

As the players part from Melrond and start **Part 2**, he suddenly remembers his manners that he should have a gift for his visitors. He digs through his pockets and produces a *Deck of Illusions* (**Appendix 17**) that he gives them.

Random Encounters in Thar

The following encounters are optional and can be used to randomly provide a scene during travel. Use these scenes as time permits. Roll on the following table and consult the appropriate entry or pick one that sounds fun.

Roll (1d6)	Encounter	Type
1	Leucrotta my reflection	Combat
2	Bulette me show you	Combat
3	No party like a raiding party	Combat/Chase
4	Ibrandlin troubles	Combat/Chase
5	The Kar-Tharsu	Exploration
6	Two in the bush	Social

1. Leucrotta my refection

A pack of four **Leucrotta** hunt orcs inhabiting the area. This should be a medium difficulty combat encounter.

Area Information

This encounter can occur anywhere the pack can break line of sight to the characters: in a copse of trees, within tall grass, nestled in hills or any other such location.

Adjusting the Scene

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

- **Very Weak:** Remove 2 **leucrotta**
- **Weak:** Remove 1 **leucrotta**
- **Strong:** Add 2 **leucrotta**
- **Very Strong:** Add 3 **leucrotta**

What do they want? The pack is hunting orcs. They are hungry and clever enough to know when to find an easier meal.

What do they know? The leucrotta know the local orcs and their fondness for raiding human travelers. The pack mimics human survivors seeking aide to attract patrolling orcs.

2. Bulette me show you

A mated pair of hungry **bulette** are attracted by the characters overland movement. This should be a medium difficulty combat encounter.

Area Information

This encounter occurs as the characters travel through clear dry areas: grasslands and hills.

Creature Information

The bulette attack, expecting easy prey. Grant them advantage on a stealth check to compare to the characters passive perception to decide if anyone is surprised by the attack.

Adjusting the Scene

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

- **Very Weak:** Remove 1 **bulette**
- **Weak:** The **bulette** flee if reduced to half hit points.
- **Strong:** Increase the **bulette** hit points to 120 each

- **Very Strong:** Add 1 **bulette**

What do they want? The creatures are looking for an easy meal and flee if reduced to less than two-thirds of their hit points.

What do they know? They are very hungry. They do tend to steer away from large grouping of creatures, so flee in the opposite direction of any large settlements.

3. No party like raiding party

A group of rangers from Glister have been overcome by a band of marauding orcs. With most of their company slayed, the rangers try to outrun the orcs, and cross paths with the characters. This scene can be a medium difficulty combat scene or/and a chase.

Area Information

This encounter can occur in any convenient area. The rangers make no attempt at stealth and can be heard coming towards the party one round prior to their arrival for characters with a passive perception greater than 10.

Creature Information

The raiding party consists of three **orcs**, two **orc red fang of shargraas**, and one **orc blade of lleneval**. The hunting group fights until they lose half their numbers or the blade of lleneval. This should be a medium combat encounter.

Adjusting the Scene

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

- **Very Weak:** Remove 2 **orc red fang of shargraas**
- **Weak:** Remove 1 **orc red fang of shargraas**
- **Strong:** Add 1 **orc red fang of shargraas**
- **Very Strong:** Add 2 **orc red fang of shargraas**

What do they want? The rangers are trying to survive. They lost three of their company in the initial ambush and were wounded before attempting to flee. When they run into the characters the orcs are 60 feet behind. They will try to convince the characters to run but will stand and fight if they see them take a stand. The raiding party is looking for wealth and prisoners. If combat is going against them, they are likely to

cut their losses and try to take off with a prisoner if possible.

What do they know? The rangers are skilled and knowledgeable about the region and can grant advantage on navigation checks. The raiding party knows the major locations in their tribe's area and have some chance to know about prominent locations elsewhere.

4. Ibrandlin Troubles

The characters encounter a scouting party of Orcs (three **orcs** and two **orc red fang of shargraas**) who have been ambushed by an Ibrandlin (see side bar). This should be a medium difficulty combat encounter, and/or chase if the characters leave the orcs to their fate.

Ibrandlin

A large red wingless firebreathing lizard. Use the stat block for a **young red dragon**.

Area Information

This encounter should occur near a rocky outcropping where Ibrandlin typically hide and hunt. Geographic terrain features should allow for hiding and places to maneuver.

Creature Information

The orc scouting party should be from a tribe not dominant in the area (see Appendix 4). The characters need to decide whether to intervene.

Adjusting the Scene

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

- **Very Weak:** Replace with 1 **red dragon wyrmling**
- **Weak:** Replace with 2 **red dragon wyrmling**
- **Strong:** Add 1 **red dragon wyrmling**
- **Very Strong:** Add 1 **Ibrandlin**

What do they want? The Orcs want to live and find themselves outmatched and flat footed. The Ibrandlin are hungry and fight to keep their meal. If the party decides to leave the orcs to their fate, a second Ibrandlin ambushes the party shortly thereafter. Characters with a passive perception of 14 or greater can hear the animal preparing to pounce. Provide the opportunity for an exciting chase (see Appendix 11) if the

characters decide to flee. This Ibrandlin is not attached to a particular meal and will flee if the prey proves too difficult a snack.

What do they know? If the players assist the orcs in escaping the Ibrandlin, they believe they owe the characters an honor debt, and pledge aide to the party. The orcs know the general terrain and can provide advantage on any checks to navigate, as well as information about any prominent locations. The lizards are animal like.

5. The Kar Tharsu

The characters happen on a cave containing a prisoner under powerful magical wards. The prisoner is an **Oni**, descended from the ancient lines that once ruled over Thar. This encounter features social interaction and exploration.

Area Information

This scene should occur around a rocky outcropping near Ogre dominated territory (see appendix 4). The cave complex holding the Oni should require some effort to find and is detailed in Appendix 8.

Area A Entrance: This cave is illuminated by dim light from torches burning in sconces on the wall. A tunnel to the north provides the only exit, while a there is a natural font in the east wall, with a small wooden bowl etched with symbols sitting on the floor next to it.

Area B The Guard: The cave is marked by holes drilled at regular intervals (~2") in a grid like pattern on every wall. The walls also contain writing (Giant) that tells of the ancient kingdoms of Thar, ruled by powerful and wise magic blessed Ogres. The writing described heroic deeds and successful battles, descriptions of powerful strongholds and powerful magic. A careful examination and reading of the runes along with a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals that while these ancient kingdoms were defeated, prophecies describe the descendants of these rulers one day bringing back the glory of Thar. These descendants are described as the Kar-Tharsu. The only exit from the room is a tunnel in the south wall which is currently blocked by an iron portcullis requiring a successful DC 25 Strength

(Athletics) check to open. The center of the room contains an empty font. If water from Area A is placed in the font, the portcullis opens. Opening the gate without placing the water in the font, releases Burnt Othar Fumes into the room (see sidebar).

Burnt Othar Fumes

A creature subjected to this poison must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or take 10 (3d6) poison damage and must repeat the saving throw at the start of each of its turns. On each successive failed save, the character takes 3 (1d6) poison damage. After three successful saves, the poison ends.

Area C The hallway trap: When the gate is opened, a passive perception of 10 or higher notices a trip wire across the entrance to tunnel. There are no sconces. Examination of the tunnel with a light source reveals it is worked stone. The tunnel floor is balanced on a pivot in the center of the hallway. Below the tunnel is a 20ft pit trap, lined with spikes, causing 11 (2d10) piercing damage and coated with serpent venom (A creature must succeed on a DC 11 Constitution save, taking 10 (3d6) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one). If the trip wire is activated, iron spikes are shot into the walls just above/below the floor on either side of the hallway, securing the floor and allowing safe passage across the tunnel.

Area D The prison: This large cave has dim light emanating from a softly glowing magic circle in the floor to the north. Thrak-Mu, an **Oni**, is imprisoned here by shackles that resize from small to giant size (the shackles cease to function if removed from the circle). If combat occurs, this should be an easy combat encounter.

Adjusting the Scene

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

- **Very Weak:** Remove 50 hit points from the **oni**
- **Weak:** no adjustments
- **Strong:** Add 1 **deathlock**
- **Very Strong:** Add 2 **deathlock**

What do they want? The Oni wants to be set free, and while the circle prevents his use of his innate spell casting, he can still polymorph. Mu

was imprisoned when the Ogre clan he ruled over was incited to betray him over his recent dealing with humans and provoked by a rival Oni. He will start by trying to trick the characters into releasing him by using his polymorph and playing to their good natures. If that fails and he senses he is losing the opportunity to escape, he will seek to entreat more honestly with the characters. Releasing him at this point will put Mu in the character's debt, otherwise he attacks in order to cover his escape.

What does he know? Mu has been imprisoned for many years. His knowledge of the area is not reliable. He does know of the entrance to the Underdark in Xûl Jarak but cannot provide reliable directions to the citadel.

6. Two in the bush

The adventurers encounter a scout leading two young abusive nobles through the area. The scout intends to betray his wards for pay day by handing them over to a local orc chief to ransom.

Area Information

This encounter can occur in any convenient area.

Creature information

The scout is moving through the wilds of Thar as the two nobles loudly bicker and complain.

What do they want? The scout (Phineas Day) suffers constant abuse from the two younger nobles Tanner Bruil, and Ronan Marsk. He was hired by Bruil's father to teach them survival skills. The orc tribe will pay quite a tidy sum for these two, after which he plans to make his way north. The two younger men (Tanner and Ronan) are nobles from important houses in Meluvant. They are arrogant and impulsive; they believe they are on their way home after some stupid training their fathers forced them to take. A successful DC 12 Wisdom (Survival) check realizes they are headed in the wrong direction. The nobles are tired and want to go home.

What do they know? Phineas has been leading the pair in circles through rough terrain, as he makes his way to the Orcs. The nobles think Phineas is incompetent and threaten and berate him, even in front of the characters.

Part 2: Dark Moon Rising

Estimated Duration: 1 hour

Setting Information

Discovering an intact hidden level in the ruins (see Appendix 6), the players must thwart the traps and defeat the guardians of Shar's forgotten temple to discover its lost secret: A teleportation network capable of transporting all around the Moonsea through the Shadowfell. The hidden level had been undisturbed since the shrine was razed by Cassius and his adventuring company long ago. It remains dark and cold.

Story Objective B

Discovering that the shard found in Valen Manor powers the shadowweave teleportation system in the hidden level is **Story Objective B**.

1. The Entrance

The entrance contains a puzzle to unlock the door (see Appendix 10/17), which also hints at what can be offered at the shrine in Area 2.

Area Information

Dimensions and Terrain. The 30 x 30 room is frigid and contains one closed set of stone double doors leading out in addition to the stairway that led into the room. The doors are covered in strange glyphs. There are four statues, one in each corner. Each statue depicts one of Shar's graces: Forgetfulness, Darkness, Night, and Loss. The figures are serene, blind, with arms spread, and in mourning respectively. Additionally, the most prominent feature in the room is a set of four circular concentric dials upon the floor, covered in the same strange glyphs that are on the door (see Appendix 16).

Puzzle Trap. The circular disks are a puzzle that will provide the symbols to touch on the door to open it when solved. If the door is tampered with in anyway, or if the wrong symbol on the door are touched, a necrotic wave of energy emanates upwards from the floor (DC 12 Constitution saving throw, 12 (3d6) necrotic damage on a failed save, half on a success).

2. Shrine to Shar

This area is an alcove with an elaborate shrine to Shar. The characters can interact with the shrine, possibly gaining a boon.

Area Information

Dimensions and Terrain. This 20 x 20 area has a stunningly beautiful statue of Shar carved in black obsidian. At her feet is a large font that contains a pool of a shadowy substance. The font is decorated with effigies of the same four figures depicted in the statues of the previous room. The shrine sits at a T-intersection of a 10ft hallway. The hallway extends to the north and south. Upon inspection the walls, floors and ceilings are covered in glyphs and symbols.

Shrine. The shrine bears the inscription: *My gifts are the offerings, and my secret grace.* Each item of value left in the font that represents one of Shar's graces to the character provides the following boon in addition to 5 points of necrotic damage: *Boon of Shar: you gain an advantage die.* The boons are cumulative, and any number may be used on a single roll. The boon is only active in the shrine. Leaving items for all four graces also causes an ornate key to appear at the foot of the statue. This key opens the door to Area 6.

3. The Den of Fear

This area was used to hold prisoners. When the temple fell, the souls here were left to die.

Area Information

Dimensions and Terrain. This 30 x 50 room has alcoves that line each wall. Most of the alcoves have thick iron chains holding desiccated and skeletal remains. The room has no exit, but the adjacent corridor has been smashed through, revealing a cavern trailing down on a steep slope into darkness on the west wall.

Creature Information

The poor souls that died here were corrupted by the latent shadow magic from Area 6. They now exist as tormented shades. There are 15

Shadows that attack until defeated. They appear in waves in response to any interaction with the alcoves; the first five appear immediately. Five more appear every three rounds thereafter. The undead move to support Balerion in Area 4 or wander the dungeon if no one is their area. This should be an easy difficulty combat encounter.

Adjusting the Scene

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

- **Very Weak:** Remove 5 **shadows**
- **Weak:** Remove 2 **shadows**
- **Strong:** add 5 **shadows**
- **Very Strong:** add 10 **shadows** in round two

What do they want? The shadows burn with rage and seek only destruction.

What do they know? They know only pain.

4. The Dragon's Lair

Dimensions and Terrain. This large cavern has a sloping passage descending from the north to a series of plateaus exiting in the south. The cave has a height of 60-70 ft. The northern end of the cavern is a plateau that rises 20ft from the base. Large natural stone pillars extend floor to ceiling in a few areas of the cave. There is an underground lake extending from under the southwest wall that reaches a depth of 40ft.

Creature Information

Balerion the Young, once a red dragon, has been corrupted by the shadow magic emanating from area 6. Balerion is a **young red shadow dragon**. This should be a hard difficulty combat encounter.

Adjusting the Scene

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

- **Very Weak:** Reduce **Balerion's** hit points by 75 and his breath weapon doesn't recharge.
- **Weak:** Reduce **Balerion's** hit points by 75.
- **Strong:** add 1 **shadow**
- **Very Strong:** add 1 **sword wraith warrior**.

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What does he want? Balerion has gone mad from the touch of the shadow. He has forgotten any life outside the shrine, and desires to rest in its presence, which is exclusively for him.

Anyone here must want what is his. He currently slumbers, as no one has disturbed him in over a century. Any movement in the cavernous area of his lair invokes a stealth check. A stealth check that successfully beats his Passive Perception does not disturb his slumber.

What does he know? Balerion knows something powerful lays beyond his cave, just out of reach, and yet that's ok. It belongs to him. He is content to lay at its feet and bathe in its embrace. Can you not feel its touch? He also knows it longs to be more powerful than it is. It is not complete. Balerion is not above conversation, as long as it keeps his interest. He longs to hear his name spoken reverently on the lips of another, even if it's a final utterance before his breath.

Treasure Information

Balerion has collected a small hoard of coins, gems, and art objects.

5. The Shadow Way

The room contains the shrine's long forgotten secret, a magical construct that creates a teleportation network.

Area information

Dimensions and Terrain. This 50 x 50 room contains two large alcoves that occupy the north and south walls of the room, as well as a raised dais to the west. Two large wheel-like disks stand in the alcoves. The room is covered in glyphs. Inspection of the glyphs can discern that there is enough similarity to elvish that a rough translation is possible. The script seems to be hymns (many repetitions) or devotionals to Shar, describing the coming of "the one" to unite her children and bring her blessing to this world from the "other."

Lighting. The room has no light source. A soft violet glow emanates from glyphs on the disks in the north and south wall, providing a dim light in a 5 ft. area around each disk.

Entrance. The stone double doors to this room are locked and bear glyphs and symbols similar to the doors in Area 1, though no disk mechanism occupies the vestibule to the room. If the characters do not possess the key, they must force the door open (AC 15, HP 100). Each time the door is touched it delivers a charge of energy for 4 (1d8) necrotic damage in a 60 ft cone that extends into the hallway targeting the source of the damage.

Alcoves. Two large wheel-like disks occupy the alcoves in the north and south walls. The wheels have no center and are a dark purplish stone with several arcane symbols carved along the outer rim. Anyone trained in Arcana can discern that the wheels are permanent teleportation portals, but the arcane symbols are strange and not-familiar—requiring substantial research to gain any insight. A successful DC 18 Intelligence (Arcana) or DC 20 Intelligence (History) check recognizes that the symbols bear a striking resemblance to corrupted form of ancient Netheresse. Additionally, the symbols are corrupted in such a way that they could not possibly draw arcane energies from the weave.

Dais. The raised area in the west contains a large altar like construction maybe similar in shape to a pipe organ. A web of crystal-like shards line the back of the object. Inspection of the device reveals glyphs, similar to the ones on the disks, covering the device. A pattern is also discernable along the top of the device, revealing a map of the Moonsea. Hundreds of small crystals dot the map, with concentrations in areas that can only be Hillsfar, Yulash, Meluvant,

Phlan, Thentia, and Mulmaster. A DC 12 Intelligence (History) check recognizes the locations correspond to what must have been a map from at least a century ago, with some areas likely corresponding to settlements abandoned or different from the current time. A slot dominates the lower center of the device. The slot is surrounded by smaller crystals that extend from the top. The central slot seems to accommodate a larger crystal, roughly the size and proportion to the one found in Valen Manor.

Development

After one round of entering the room, the latent Shadow magic begins to affect any living being in the area. Each round of exposure to the room causes 1 point of necrotic damage. On the steps of the dais the characters find a shattered platemail helm bearing the Valen crest, as well as a broken and discarded holy symbol of Selûne.

Playing the Pillars

Here are some suggestions for this encounter:

Combat. The Shadows in Area 3 work with the young red shadow dragon in Area 4 and enter the combat as a reinforcement wave.

Exploration. Reward exploration with added details to flesh out the temple.

Social. Reward players that enjoy more socially focused encounters interaction with Addrax

Wrapping it up. Having found the portal system in the final room and realizing the shard found in Valen Manor is the key to operating the device, the players return to Thentia to relay their discovery to the Temple of Selûne.

Rewards

At the **end of the session**, the characters receive rewards based upon their accomplishments.

Character Rewards

The characters earn the following rewards:

Advancement

Upon successfully **completing** this adventure, each character gains a level. At their discretion, they may choose to decline advancement. Remind your players that the amount of gold that their characters can earn per level is limited; declining advancement means that they may reach a point where they earn no gold.

Gold

Award each character gold for each hour of the session. Adventures typically features cues for this, but you can add it where you see fit. The maximum gold that you can award a character per hour is determined by their tier, as follows:

Tier	Hourly GP Award	GP Limit per Level
1	20 gp	80 gp
2	30 gp	240 gp
3	200 gp	1,600 gp
4	750 gp	6,000 gp

Magic Item(s)

If found during the adventure, the characters can keep the following magic items; these items are described in **Appendix 17, 18 & 19**:

- *Deck of Illusions*
- *Master Key*
- *Potion of Superior Healing*

Dungeon Master Rewards

For running this adventure, one of your character gains a level. That character receives gold based on their tier prior to advancement:

Tier	GP Earned
1	80 gp
2	240 gp
3	1,600 gp
4	6,000 gp

You may also complete DM Quests for running this adventure. See the *Adventurers League Dungeon Master's Guide* for more information.

Dramatis Personae

The following NPCs feature prominently in this adventure.

Miri (Mer Ee). Priestess of Selûne.

- **What They Want:** Miri wants to know what Cassius was up to with the shard, she will not believe her friend could have turned to Shar.
- **I seek to know in order to serve:** Miri has dedicated her life to Selûne and seeks to be the best vessel of her will in the service to her fellows as she can.

Melrond (Mel ROND). An eccentric old gnome and former companion of Cassius from his adventuring days.

- **What They Want:** Melrond is inscrutable, and he often forgets what he wanted. Except the temple. Need to keep an eye on that.
- **Have you heard about my washing machine?** Melrond is quite curious and having spent so much time alone, he often doesn't need an answer when he interacts with people. He often mumbles the story of how his apprentice stole his research on using puddings to wash tavern ware. Made lots of money on that he did too.

Zar-Thrug (ZAR THrug). An Ettin and current chief of the skullsmasher ogre clan in fangjaw hold.

- **What They Want:** Thrug is ambitious and seeks to increase his power and prestige, while Zar seeks to indulge his hedonistic desires.
- **Give it to me now!** Thrug is arrogant and cruel. He believes his magical hammer provides him the power that sways others to his will. Zar think the only time to live is now!

Thrak-Mu (TH RAK Muh). A Kar-Tharsu (Oni), Thrak had controlled the powerful Falling Star Tribe of Ogres. A rival Oni incited a coup and has imprisoned Thrak for last 100 years.

- **What They Want:** Thrak wants revenge. He also wants control of his tribe again. One hundred years is a long time to plan.
- **Everything happens in its own time:** Thrak has learned patience in his captivity and plans on the long game.

Indech and Dot (In Deck and DOT). These two fomorians are noted by their green skin. They currently rule a kingdom of xvarts, hidden away in the Underdark called New Hebrid.

- **What They Want:** The pair want to be treated as royalty and live for the adulation of their subjects.
- **I did it, my way:** Having lived as outcasts among fomorians, the pair have found their perfect situation, and are "living the dream."

Creature Statistics

Bulette

Large monstrosity, unaligned

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 94 (9d10 + 45)

Speed 40 ft., burrow 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	11 (+0)	21 (+5)	2 (-4)	10 (+0)	5 (-3)

Skills Perception+6

Senses Darkvision 60 ft., Tremmorsense 60 ft., Passive Perception 16

Languages --

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Standing Leap. The bulette's long jump is up to 30 feet and its high jump is up to 15 feet with or without a running start.

Actions

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 30 (4d12 + 4) piercing damage.

Deadly Leap. If the bulette jumps at least 15 feet as part of its movement, it can then use this action to land on its feet in a space that contains one or more other creatures. Each of those creatures must succeed on a DC 16 Strength or Dexterity saving throw (target's choice) or be knocked prone and take 14 (3d6 + 4) slashing damage. On a successful save, the creature takes only half the damage, is not knocked prone, and is pushed 5 feet out of the bulette's space into an unoccupied space of the creature's choice. If no unoccupied space is within range, the creature instead falls prone in the bulette's space.

Deathlock Wright

Medium undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 12 (15 with mage armor)

Hit Points 37 (5d8 + 15)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws WIS +4

Skills Arcana +3, Perception +4

Damage Resistances Necrotic; Bludgeoning, Piercing, and Slashing from Nonmagical Attacks

Damage Immunities Poison

Senses Darkvision 60 ft., Passive Perception 14

Languages the languages it knew in life

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Innate Spellcasting. The wright's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 13). It can innately cast the following spells requiring no verbal or material components:

At will: detect magic, disguise self, mage armor

1/day each: fear, hold person, misty step

Sunlight Sensitivity. While in sunlight the wright has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

Actions

Multiattack. The wright attacks twice with Grave Bolt

Grave Bolt. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 120 ft., one target. *Hit* 7 (1d8 + 3) necrotic damage.

Life Drain. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (2d6 +2) necrotic damage. The target must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or its hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the damage taken. This reduction lasts until the target takes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to zero.

A humanoid slain by this attack rises 24 hours later as a zombie under the wright's control unless the humanoid is restored to life or its body is destroyed. The wright can have no more than twelve zombies under its control at one time.

Fungai, Violet

Medium plant, unaligned

Armor Class 5

Hit Points 18 (4d8)

Speed 5 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
3 (-4)	1 (-5)	10 (+0)	1 (-5)	3 (-4)	1 (-5)

Senses Blindsight 30 ft. (blind beyond this) Passive Perception 6

Languages --

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

False Appearance. While the violet fungus remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from ordinary fungus.

Actions

Multiattack. The fungus makes 1d4 Rotting Touch attacks

Rotting Touch. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d8) necrotic damage.

Fomorian

Huge giant, chaotic evil

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 149 (13d12 + 65)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
23 (+6)	10 (+0)	20 (+5)	9 (-1)	14 (+2)	6 (-2)

Skills Perception+8, Stealth +3

Senses Darkvision 120 ft. Passive Perception 18

Languages Giant, Undercommon

Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Actions

Multiattack. The fomorian attacks twice with its greatclub or makes one greatclub attack and uses its evil eye once.

Greatclub. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 19 (3d8 +6) bludgeoning damage.

Evil Eye. The fomorian magically forces a creature it can see within 60 feet of it to make a DC 14 Charisma saving throw. The creature takes 27 (6d8) psychic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Curse of the Evil Eye (Recharges after a short or Long Rest). With a stare, the fomorian uses Evil Eye, but on a failed save, the creature is also cursed with magical deformities. While deformed, the creature has its speed halved and has disadvantage in ability checks, saving throws, and attacks based in Strength or Dexterity.

The transformed creature can repeat the saving throw whenever it finishes a long rest, ending the effect on a success.

Froghemoth

Huge monstrosity, unaligned

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 184 (16d12 + 80)

Speed 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
23 (+6)	13 (+1)	20 (+5)	2 (-4)	12 (+1)	5 (-3)

Saving Throws Con +9

Skills Perception+8, Stealth +5

Senses Darkvision 60 ft. Passive Perception 19

Languages --

Challenge 10 (5,900 XP)

Amphibious. The froghemoth can breathe air and water.

Shock Susceptibility. If the froghemoth takes lightening damage, it suffers several effects that last until the end of its next turn: its speed is halved, it takes a -2 penalty to AC and Dexterity saving throws, it can't use reactions or Multiattack, and on its turn, it can use either an action or a bonus action, not both.

Actions

Multiattack. The froghemoth makes two attacks with its tentacles. It can also use its tongue or bite.

Tentacle. Melee Weapon Attack: +10 to hit, reach 20 ft., one target. **Hit:** 19 (3d8 +6) bludgeoning damage and the target is grappled (escape DC 16) if it is a Huge or smaller creature. Until the grapple ends, the froghemoth cannot use this tentacle on another target. The froghemoth has four tentacles.

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. **Hit:** 22 (3d10 +6) piercing 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 froghemoth, and takes 10 (3d6) acid damage at the start of each of the froghemoth's turns.

The froghemoth's gullet can hold up to two creatures at a time. If the froghemoth takes 20 damage or more on a single turn from a creature inside it, the froghemoth must succeed on a DC 20 Constitution saving throw at the end of that turn or regurgitate all swallowed creatures, each of which falls prone in a space within 10 feet of the froghemoth. If the froghemoth, dies, a

swallowed creature is no longer restrained by it and can escape from the corpse using 10 feet of movement, exiting prone.

Tongue. The froghemoth targets one Medium or smaller creature that it can see within 20 feet of it. The target must make a DC 18 Strength saving throw. On a failed save, the target is pulled into an unoccupied space within 5 feet of the froghemoth, and the froghemoth can make a bite attack against it as a bonus action.

Giant Frog

Medium beast, unaligned

Armor Class 11

Hit Points 18 (4d8)

Speed 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	13 (+1)	11 (+0)	2 (-4)	10 (+0)	3 (-4)

Skills Perception +2, Stealth +4

Senses Darkvision 30 ft., Passive Perception 12

Languages --

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Amphibious. The frog can breathe air and water.

Standing Leap. The frog's long jump is up to 20 feet and its high is up to 10 feet with or without a running start.

Actions

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. **Hit:** 4 (1d6 +1) piercing damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 11). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained, and frog cannot bite another target.

Swallow. The frog makes one bite attack against a Small or smaller target it is grappling. If the attack hits, the target is swallowed, and the grapple ends. The swallowed target is blinded and restrained, it has total cover against attacks and other effects outside the frog, and it takes 5 (2d4) acid damage at the start of each of the frog's turns. The frog can have only one target swallowed at a time. If the frog dies, a swallowed creature is no longer restrained by it and can escape from the corpse using 5 feet of moving, exiting prone.

Giant Spider

Large beast, unaligned

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 26 (4d10 + 4)

Speed 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	2 (-4)	11 (+0)	4 (-3)

Skills Stealth +7

Senses Blindsight 10 ft., Darkvision 60 ft. Passive Perception 10

Languages --

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Spider Climb. The spider can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings without needing to make an ability check.

Web Sense. While in contact with a web, the spider knows the exact location of any other creature in contact with the same web.

Web Walker. The spider ignores movement restrictions caused by webbing.

Actions

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 +3) piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 11 Constitution saving throw, taking 9 (2d8) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. If the poison damage reduces the target to 0 hit points, the target is stable but poisoned for 1 hour, even after regaining hit points, and is paralyzed while poisoned in this way.

Web (Recharge 5 -6). *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 30/60 ft., one creature. *Hit:* The target is restrained by webbing. As an action, the restrained target can make a DC 12 Strength check, bursting the webbing on a success. The webbing can also be attacked and destroyed (AC 10, hp 5, vulnerability to fire damage, immunity to bludgeoning, poison and psychic damage).

Giant Wolf Spider

Medium beast, unaligned

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 11 (2d8 + 2)

Speed 40 ft., climb 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	16 (+3)	13 (+1)	3 (-5)	12 (+1)	4 (-3)

Skills Perception +3, Stealth +7

Senses Blindsight 10 ft., Darkvision 60 ft., Passive Perception 13

Languages --

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Spider Climb. The spider can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings without needing to make an ability check.

Web Sense. While in contact with a web, the spider knows the exact location of any other creature in contact with the same web.

Web Walker. The spider ignores movement restrictions caused by webbing.

Actions

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 +1) piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 11 Constitution saving throw, taking 7 (2d6) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. If the poison damage reduces the target to 0 hit points, the target is stable but poisoned for 1 hour, even after regaining hit points, and is paralyzed while poisoned in this way.

Hobgoblin Iron Shadow

Medium humanoid (goblinoid), lawful evil

Armor Class 15

Hit Points 32 (5d8 + 10)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	16 (+3)	15 (+2)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	11 (+0)

Skills Acrobatics +5, Athletics +4, Stealth +3

Senses Darkvision 60 ft. Passive Perception 12

Languages Common, Goblin

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Spellcasting. The hobgoblin is a 2nd-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is intelligence (spell save DC 12, +4 to hit with spell attacks). It has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): minor illusion, prestidigitation, true strike

1st level (3 slots): charm person, disguise self, expeditious retreat, silent image

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

Actions

Multiattack. The hobgoblin makes four attacks, each of which can be an unarmed strike or a dart attack. It can also use Shadow Jaunt once, either before or after one of the attacks.

Unarmed Strike. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 +3) piercing damage.

Dart. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5

Shadow Jaunt. The hobgoblin magically teleports, along with any equipment it is wearing or carrying up to 30 feet to an unoccupied space it can see. Both the space it is leaving, and its destination must be in dim light or darkness.

Leucrotta

Large monstrosity, chaotic evil

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 67 (9d10 + 18)

Speed 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	9 (-1)	12 (+1)	6 (-2)

Skills Deception +2, Perception +3

Senses Darkvision 60 ft. Passive Perception 13

Languages Abyssal, Gnomish

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Keen Smell. The leucrota has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

Kicking Retreat. If the leucrota attacks with its hooves, it can take the Disengage action as a bonus action.

Mimicry. The leucrota can mimic animal sounds and humanoid voices. A creature that hears the sounds can tell they are imitations with a successful DC 14 Wisdom (Insight) check.

Rampage. When the leucrota reduced a creature to 0 hit point with a melee attack on its turn, it can take a bonus action to move up to half of its speed and make an attack with its hooves.

Actions

Multiattack. The leucrota makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its hooves.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) piercing damage. If the leucrota scores a critical hit, it rolls the damage dice three times, instead of twice.

Hooves. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

Oni

Large giant, lawful evil

Armor Class 16 (chain mail)

Hit Points 110 (13d10 + 39)

Speed 30 ft., fly 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	11 (+0)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	15 (+2)

Saving Throws Dex +3, Con +6, Wis +4, Cha +5

Skills Arcana +5, Deception +8, Perception +4

Senses Darkvision 60 ft., Passive Perception 14

Languages Common, Giant

Challenge 7 (2,900 XP)

Innate Spellcasting. The oni's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 13). The oni can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: darkness, invisibility

1/day each: charm person, cone of cold, gaseous form, sleep

Magic Weapons. The oni's weapon attacks are magical

Regeneration. The oni regains 10 hit points at the start of its turn if it has at least 1 hit point.

Actions

Multiattack. The oni makes two attacks, either with its claw or its glaive.

Claw (Oni Form Only). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (2d10 + 4) slashing damage.

Glaive. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (2d10 + 4) slashing damage, or 9 (1d10 + 4) slashing damage in Small or Medium form.

Change Shape. The oni magically polymorphs into a Small or Medium humanoid, into a Large giant, or back into its true form. Other than its size, its statistics are the same in each form. The only equipment that is transformed is its glaive, which shrinks so that it can be wielded in humanoid form. If the oni dies, it reverts to its true form, and its glaive reverts to its normal size.

Orc

Medium humanoid (orc), chaotic evil

Armor Class 13 (hide armor)

Hit Points 15 (2d8 + 6)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	7 (-2)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

Skills Intimidation +2

Senses Darkvision 60 ft. Passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Orc

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Aggressive. As a bonus action, the orc can move up to its speed toward a hostile creature that it can see.

Actions

Greataxe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d12 +3) slashing damage.

Javelin. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., or range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage.

Orc Blade of Ilneval

Medium humanoid (orc), chaotic evil

Armor Class 18 (chain mail, shield)

Hit Points 60 (8d8 + 24)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	16 (+3)	13 (+1)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Wis +3

Skills Insight +3, Intimidation +4, Perception +3

Senses Darkvision 60 ft., Passive Perception 13

Languages Common, Orc

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Aggressive. As a bonus action, the orc can move up to its speed toward a hostile creature that it can see.

Foe Smiter of Ilneval. The orc deals an extra die of damage when it hits with a longsword attack (included in attack).

Actions

Multiattack. The orc makes two melee attacks with its longsword or two ranged attacks with its javelins. If Ilneval's Command is available to use, the orc can use it after these attacks.

Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d8 +3) slashing damage, or 14 (2d10 + 3) slashing damage when used with two hands.

Javelin. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., or range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage.

Ilneval's Command (Recharge 4 - 6). Up to three allied orcs within 120 feet of this orc that can hear it can use their reactions to each make one weapon attack.

Orc Red Fang of Shargaas

Medium humanoid (orc), chaotic evil

Armor Class 15

Hit Points 52 (8d8 + 16)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	16 (+3)	15 (+2)	9 (-1)	11 (+0)	9 (-1)

Skills Intimidation +1, Perception +2, Stealth +5

Senses Darkvision 60 ft. Passive Perception 12

Languages Common, orc

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Cunning Action. On each of its turns, the orc can use a bonus action to take the Dash, Disengage, or Hide action.

Hand of Shargaas. The orc deals an extra 2 dice of damage when it hits a target with a weapon attack (included in the attack).

Shargaas's Sight. Magical darkness does not impede the orc's darkvision.

Slayer. In the first round of combat, the orc has advantage on attack rolls against any creature that hasn't taken a turn yet. If the orc hits the creature that round who was surprised, the hit is automatically a critical hit.

Actions

Multiattack. The orc makes two scimitar or dart attacks.

Scimitar. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (3d6 +3) slashing damage.

Dart. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (3d4 + 3) piercing damage.

Veil of Shargaas (Recharges after a short or long rest).

The orc casts darkness without any components.

Wisdom is its spellcasting ability.

Red Dragon Wyrmling

Medium dragon, chaotic evil

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 75 (10d8 + 30)

Speed 30 ft., climb 30 ft., fly 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	10 (+0)	17 (+3)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	15 (+2)

Saving Throws Dex +2, Con +5, Wis +2, Cha +4

Skills Perception +4, Stealth +2

Senses Blindsight 10 ft., Darkvision 60 ft., Passive Perception 14

Languages Draconic

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP).

Actions

Multiattack. The hobgoblin makes four attacks, each of which can be an unarmed strike or a dart attack. It can also use Shadow Jaunt once, either before or after one of the attacks.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d10 + 4) piercing damage plus 3 (1d6) fire damage.

Fire Breath (Recharge 5–6). The dragon exhales fire in a 15-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw, taking 24 (7d6) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Young Red Dragon

Large dragon, chaotic evil

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)

Hit Points 178 (17d10 + 85)

Speed 40 ft., climb 40 ft., fly 80 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
23 (+6)	10 (+0)	21 (+5)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	19 (+4)

Saving Throws Dex +4, Con +9, Wis +4, Cha +8

Skills Perception +8, Stealth +4

Damage Immunities Fire

Senses Blindsight 30 ft., Darkvision 120 ft., Passive Perception 18

Languages Common, Draconic

Challenge 10 (5,900 XP)

Actions

Multiattack. The dragon makes three attacks: one with its bite and two with its claws.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 17 (2d10 + 6) piercing damage plus 3 (1d6) fire damage.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d6 + 6) slashing damage.

Fire Breath (Recharge 5–6). The dragon exhales fire in a 30-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 17 Dexterity saving throw, taking 56 (7d6) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Young Red Shadow Dragon

Large dragon, chaotic evil

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)

Hit Points 178 (17d10 + 85)

Speed 40 ft., climb 40 ft., fly 80 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
23 (+6)	10 (+0)	21 (+5)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	19 (+4)

Saving Throws Dex +5, Con +10, Wis +5, Cha +9

Skills Perception +8, Stealth +8

Damage Resistances Necrotic

Damage Immunities Fire

Senses Blindsight 30 ft., Darkvision 120 ft., Passive Perception 18

Languages Common, Draconic

Challenge 13 (10,000 XP)

Living Shadow. While in dim light or darkness, the dragon has resistance to damage that isn't force, psychic, or radiant.

Shadow Stealth. While in dim light or darkness, the dragon can take the Hide action as a bonus action.

Sunlight Sensitivity. While in sunlight, the dragon has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight,

Actions

Multiattack. The dragon makes three attacks: one with its bite and two with its claws.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 17 (2d10 + 6) piercing damage plus 3 (1d6) necrotic damage.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d6 + 6) slashing damage.

Shadow Breath (Recharge 5–6). The dragon exhales shadowy fire in a 30-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 18 Dexterity saving throw, taking 56 (7d6) necrotic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. A humanoid reduced to 0 hit points by this damage dies, and an undead shadow rises from its corpse and acts immediately after the dragon in the initiative account. The shadow is under the dragon's control.

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

Damage Vulnerabilities Radiant

Damage Resistances Acid, Cold, Fire, Lightning, Thunder; Bludgeoning, Piercing, and Slashing from Nonmagical Attacks

Damage Immunities Necrotic, Poison

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 target. *Hit:* 9 (2d6 +2) necrotic damage, and the target's Strength score is reduced by 1d4. The target dies if this reduces the 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.

Shadow Dancer

Medium humanoid (elf), neutral

Armor Class 15 (studded leather)

Hit Points 71 (13d8 + 13)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	16 (+3)	13 (+1)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Dex +6, Cha +4

Skills Stealth +6

Damage Resistances Necrotic

Senses Darkvision 60 ft., Passive Perception 11

Languages Common, Elvish

Challenge 7 (2,900 XP)

Fey Ancestry. The shadow dancer has advantage on saving throws against being charmed, and magic can't put it to sleep.

Shadow Jump. As a bonus action, the shadow dancer can teleport up to 30 feet to an unoccupied space it can see. Both the space it teleports from and the space it teleports to must be in dim light or darkness. The shadow dancer can use this ability between the weapon attacks of another action it takes.

Actions

Multiattack. The shadow dancer makes three spiked chain attacks

Spiked Chain. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 +3) piercing damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw or suffer one additional effect of the shadow dancer's choice:

- The target is grappled (escape DC 14) if it is Medium or smaller creature. Until the grapple ends, the target is restrained, and the shadow dancer can't grapple another target.
- The target is knocked prone.
- The target takes 22 (4d10) necrotic damage.

Xvart

Small humanoid (xvart), chaotic evil

Armor Class 13 (leather armor)

Hit Points 7 (2d6)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	8 (-1)	7 (-2)	7 (-2)

Skills Stealth +4

Senses Darkvision 30 ft., Passive Perception 8

Languages Abyssal

Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

Low Cunning. The xvart can take the disengage action as a bonus action on each of its turns.

Overbearing Pack. The xvart has advantage in Strength (Athletics) checks to shove a creature if at least has one of the xvart's allies is within 5 feet of the target and the ally isn't incapacitated.

Raxivort's Tounge. The xvart can communicate with ordinary bats and rats, as well as giant bats and giant rats.

Actions

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

Sling. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit* 4 (1d4 + 2) bludgeoning damage.

Xvart Speaker

Small humanoid (xvart), chaotic evil

Armor Class 13 (leather armor)

Hit Points 7 (2d6)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	8 (-1)	7 (-2)	7 (-2)

Skills Stealth +4

Senses Darkvision 30 ft., Passive Perception 8

Languages Abyssal, Common or Goblin

Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

Low Cunning. The xvart can take the disengage action as a bonus action on each of its turns.

Overbearing Pack. The xvart has advantage in Strength (Athletics) checks to shove a creature if at least has one of the xvart's allies is within 5 feet of the target and the ally isn't incapacitated.

Raxivort's Tounge. The xvart can communicate with ordinary bats and rats, as well as giant bats and giant rats.

Actions

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

Sling. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit* 4 (1d4 + 2) bludgeoning damage.

Appendix 1: Bonus Objective A, Goodnight Moon.

Estimated Duration: 60 minutes

A spy for the Cult of Shar has learned of the artifact found at Valen Manor and the character's mission. A group of assassins has been sent to ambush the characters and recover the map. This bonus objective has two scenes. The assassins trail the adventurers through Part 2 of the adventure, this is essentially a chase (see the **It's a trap!** Sidebar). If the characters are caught, use the second scene to run the ambush.

Bonus Objective A

Defeat, or otherwise stop, the pursuit of a Dark Moon sect is **Bonus Objective A**.

A. The Chase is On!

Area Information

Consider the cult stalking the characters as a chase and use the **It's a Trap!** sidebar below and the **Chase is On!** complications table (see Appendix 12) to spice up the narrative.

It's a Trap!

Bonus Objective A can be run like a chase. After each hour of travel in Thar, players make a Wisdom (Survival) check. Set the DC based on terrain type: DC 10 road, DC 14 Grassland, DC 12 Rocky outcropping, and DC 16 Hills. A success means full movement, while failure is half. Use the following movement rates for simplicity. Road: 1/2/3/6 hexes per hour for slow/normal/fast/ mounted movement. Grant advantage or disadvantage on the navigation check for slow/fast movement rate. Adjust the rates for other terrain as you see fit. Remember horses can only travel at full rate for one hour before needing a rest (p181 *PHB*). Additionally, roll on the **It's a Trap!** Complication table (Appendix 12) to spice up the narrative. Add five to this roll if the party travels on a road. The assassins begin one hour behind the party and pursue them until they enter Xûl Jarak or are caught. If the assassins catch the characters have them make a stealth check with advantage. If they beat all of their passive perceptions, they catch the players and can set up an ambush (at any time from then on). If they don't, the players catch sight of them following. Chase? Stand and fight? What ever will they do?

B. The Killing Moon.

The cultists wait for an opportune moment to spring their ambush. After the characters complete a combat, for example. This scene also triggers if the sect were spotted and the party decides to take the fight to their pursuers.

Creature Information

The Dark Moon Temple sect specialize in stealth and deception. The assassination team consists of one **Shadow Dancer** and four Dark Moon Cultist (use the stats for **Hobgoblin Iron Shadow**). If they have caught up to the characters, have them ambush the party in some spectacular fashion, perhaps waiting in disguise.

Adjusting the Scene

The combat should be hard. Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

- **Very Weak:** Remove 4 **Dark Moon Cultists**.
- **Weak:** Remove 2 **Dark Moon Cultists**.
- **Strong:** Add 2 **Dark Moon Cultists**.
- **Very Strong:** Add 1 **Shadow Dancer**.

What do they want? The cultists want to obtain the map from Cassius Valen's manor. Secondly, they want to hide the existence of the Dark Moon Temple. To this end they will try to escape with the map if the combat is turning against them.

What do they know? The sect is loyal and fanatical to Shar. They will only divulge their mission with a successful DC 22 Charisma (Intimidation) check but leave unanswered any information of their affiliation. A successful DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check will notice the symbol of Shar tattooed somewhere on their body.

Treasure

The Cultist carry coins minted in a strange black metal. The **Shadow Dancer** also carries a *Potion of Superior Healing* stored in a thin vial in a leather notch on his belt.

Appendix 2: Bonus Objective B, Big Fomorian Green

Estimated Duration: 60 minutes

While in the Underdark, the characters meet with Melrond a friendly, yet seemingly mad, and very forgetful old gnome. Melrond knows the mark the players are searching for, yes! If only he could remember what it was? He will gladly show them if they could bring back a small portion of Mnemosyne Cap, a rare mushroom that grows but a short walk from here in a grove to the north.

Setting Information

Melrond's "short walk" turns out to be a few hours hike through treacherous terrain. Use appropriate DC 15 ability checks to narrate the travel through terrain features such as thick stalked vegetation, slippery boulders, and sheer embankments. Eventually, the characters discover a cave hidden deep in a forest of thick stalked mushrooms. The cave is home to a pair of cruel green fomorians named Indech and Dot, who rule a self-proclaimed kingdom called New Hebrid. Their subjects are a tribe of **Xvarts**, who fled to the Underdark some time ago, and now speak broken, rudimentary undercommon. The tribe was doing very poorly, so they captured a boggle they found and sacrificed it to Raxivort. At that very moment, Indech and Dot came searching for their boggle servant. The tribe saw the giants as a direct response from Raxivort and fell to their knees in awe. All the **xvarts** except the royal guard are non-combatants and flee at any sign of trouble. See the map in Appendix 7.

The following features characterize the cave complex:

Dimensions & Terrain. The cave complex is somewhat damp and lush with mushroom vegetation. Travel off the pathways are difficult terrain. The ceiling range in height from 70 ft at the lowest to 120 ft in height.

Lighting. Dim lighting is found throughout the cavern complex due to the abundant presence of luminescent lichen that clings to the walls and ceilings.

Story Objective

The characters must retrieve a sample of the Mnemosyne Cap mushroom for Melrond.

1. Outer Regions

Area Information

Dimensions and Terrain. The entrance is spread wide (180 ft.) and densely vegetated by various mushroom species. **Shriekers** and **violet fungi** grow randomly near the cave entrance. These serve as alarms to the cave inhabitants. Nestled among the vegetation are **Xvart** "farmers." A well-trodden pathway marks a winding road towards a series of rising plateaus (Area 2).

Creature Information

Several **Xvarts** cultivate mushroom crops for their "Lord and Lady." They seem quite unhappy with their tasks, but they speak praise about the Lord and Lady, each trying to outdo the other, while casting sidelong glances.

What Do They Want? These **Xvarts** are not happy that they were chosen to be farmers, while others were chosen to be nobles or guards, designated by a colored hat. If the characters could obtain colored hats for them, they would be very pleased. The farmers are not used to visitors and **Xvarts** don't generally like non-**Xvarts**. They figure that the adventurers will soon die so they don't mind trying to help themselves to some of their belongings, if an opportunity arises.

What Do They Know? The **Xvarts** are dim, and don't travel much, but they do know about the tribe's practices. They say that sometimes royal servants get demoted, when this happens, they pick new ones from the farmers. They await this opportunity. If asked about Mnemosyne Cap, none of them know anything, unless the mushroom is described. Nexel and Pixit (two Xvarts that live near the secret door) say they have seen such mushrooms growing by the lake near court. They offer a trade: A royal servant

hat (white) for the mushrooms. If provided they will share the location of the secret tunnel that leads to where the mushroom grows (they won't go themselves). While dim-witted, they are greedy and conniving.

2. The Great Steps

Area Information

Dimensions and Terrain. Large step like formations gently rise to the main cave area. Crude and worn stairs have been carved into the rock and continue the main pathway from Area 1. The area around the path is filled with various mushrooms including several **violet fungi**. Travel off the path is difficult terrain.

Lost Corpse. On the second rise, nestled under a rock cropping off the path, is the desiccated corpse of a dead adventurer. The corpse can be spotted with a successful DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) check. The corpse, now home to a strange yellow mushroom like growth, has rusted and worthless armor and weapons. A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals a pouch tucked into the belt. Disturbing the corpse releases **yellow mold**.

Creature Information

Off the path reside several **violet fungi** (2 -3/ level, total of 8) that attack anyone wandering off the path.

Yellow Mold

Yellow mold grows in dark places and one patch covers a 5-foot square. If touched, the mold ejects a cloud of spores that fills a 10-foot cube originating from the mold. Any creature in the area must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or take 11 (2d10) poison damage and become poisoned for 1 minute. While poisoned, the creature takes 5 (1d10) poison damage at the start of each of its turns. The creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

Treasure

The pouch disintegrates on touch, but inside is a **Mystery Key** (Appendix 18). The key is made of a black metal with intricate designs on the base.

3. Court Entrance

Area Information

Dimensions and Terrain. This large flat area is home to a well-tended mushroom garden. The entranceway borders the main cave (Area 4) where the court proper resides. The garden pathways provide ample cover for a stealthy party to travel around to the main cave (Area 4) if they can avoid the court nobles and gardeners.

Creature Information

Bustling around are several **xvart** dressed in a frumpish livery bearing green hats. More **xvart** adorned in a mockery of noble attire and red hats walk the garden engaged in conversation.

What Do They Want? The gardeners tend to their section of the garden, lest they become the target of the Lord and Lady's ire. The Nobles are engaged in court intrigue mostly surrounding plots to unseat Pylax, the current royal foot washer. Contact by the characters will likely result in alarm unless the characters can provide a suitable incentive to do otherwise.

What Do They Know? The Nobles in this area know that Jax, the former high cook, was recently made the court jester (a lowly 'temporary' position thrust upon Pax after the Lady found his bluestalk flambee displeasing), after the demise of the previous court jester (a position with frequent openings in the court). The Lord and Lady are currently enjoying entertainments, and bets are being taken as to how long the jester will last. Plots are being discussed to help the current royal foot washer into the position of Court Jester when it becomes open again (probably today).

4. The Royal Court

Area Information

Dimensions and Terrain. The royal court consists of a raised area to the north of the cave that contain two elaborate thrones. Several large tables ring the area in front of the thrones where the assembled nobles are seated. The main cave has two further exits. On the west end of the cave is the entrance to the Royal Chambers (Area

6) and along the far east end of the main cave is the entrance to the noble quarters (Area 5).

Creature Information

The main cave serves as the court for Lord Indech and Lady Dot (two male **fomorian** giants with a strange green skin color). The pair wear foppish and ill-fitting royal attire. Lady Dot wears a wig of long “hair” and speaks in a gravely falsetto. The pair constantly make exaggerated physical gestures and (to emphasis their royal position). In addition to the Lord and Lady, there are 14 nobles, Jax (the royal jester), 12 royal servers, and 4 royal guards (all **xvarts**). Lord Indech, Lady Dot, and the assembled court are currently observing a performance by the court jester.

Adjusting the Scene

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

- **Very Weak:** Remove the royal guard. Lady Dot does not engage in combat, instead fanning herself and screaming for Lord Indech to “kill them all.”
- **Weak:** Remove the royal guard. Indech and Dot have already used their Curse of the evil eye power.
- **Strong:** Add 2 more **xvart** royal guards
- **Very Strong:** Add 4 more **xvart** royal guards

What do they want? Lord Indech and Lady Dot want to be entertained and want a reason to smash Jax, with whom they are displeased. They watch his performance with disdain and demand more “jestering” after each act. Should some new entertainment present itself (like the characters) the **fomorians** will giddily hear out any requests. All things in the court are done with comic formality. The nobles are curious as visitors to court are rare.

What do they know? Any requests of Indech and Dot (such as for a sample of the Mnemosyne Cap), are met with credulity. They know about the Mnemosyne Cap that grows in their quarters, but do not know about any special qualities the mushroom may have. The fomorians believe themselves shrewd deal makers and will offer the following bargain for any such requests: Provide entertainment in exchange for the sample, as the previous jester had just been terminated (after which the pair smash Jax). Have the characters come up with a plan for

their performance, where each player must contribute. Use a group check, where at least half of the character must succeed on DC 16 ability check that best compliments their narrative. Grant advantage for particularly entertaining ideas. If the check is a failure, the **fomorians** mock the characters and order their deaths as entertainment in recompense.

5. Nobles Quarters

Area Information

Dimensions and Terrain. This cave houses the noble quarters. The area is divided into “houses” for six noble clans. The houses are really nothing more small huts. A cleared path traces through the cave leading to a small pool of water that leaks through the east wall.

Creature Information

There are currently 20 **xvart** in the area, mostly servants (as most nobles are at court).

What do they want? The xvart in this area pretend to work, but really try to do as little as possible. If they see the characters, they are curious, and try to learn who they are and what they might have that would be valuable (to a xvart), in order to take it before turning them in for some (hoped for) reward, unless the characters can offer a suitable incentive to do otherwise.

What do they know? Any servant will know the location of more servant and noble sashes. None of the inhabitants know anything about the Mnemosyne Cap or the royal quarters.

6. Royal Quarters

Area Information

Dimensions and Terrain. This cave serves as living quarters for Indech and Dot. A crude bed formed of mushroom stalks is in the north. Whenever the Lord and Lady are in, they are accompanied by an entourage of royal servants. A tunnel with a hidden entrance leads to the Outer regions (Area 1). A large exit to the cave leads to the royal court (Area 4).

Mnemosyne Cap. The cave has a small lake that flows in and out of the cave, creating an inlet

where the Mnemosyne cap along with several other type of fungi grows. A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Survival) check can identify the inlet as the likely place for the Mnemosyne cap to grow, while a successful DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) check can spot the mushroom among the fauna. Give the characters advantage on these checks if they learned about the fauna's location from the Nexel and Pixit.

Creature Information

If the characters are here during the events in Area 4, the room is empty. Otherwise the **fomorians** are likely to be here being waited upon by their royal entourage which includes four guards (use the combat adjustments from Area 4).

Development

Melrond is delighted by the mushrooms and after consuming them takes on a flash of alertness and vitality. In his recovered state, Melrond can recall the way to the ruined Dark Moon Temple. He can also relay information from the background. He has not seen Cassius in many years, and always felt that it was a bad idea for him to safeguard the shard.

Playing the Pillars

Here are some suggestions for this encounter:

Combat. If the players decide to attack the Fomorian rulers, the nobles and servants flee. The guards will come to their leader's assistance but flee if they see either of the Fomorians fall.

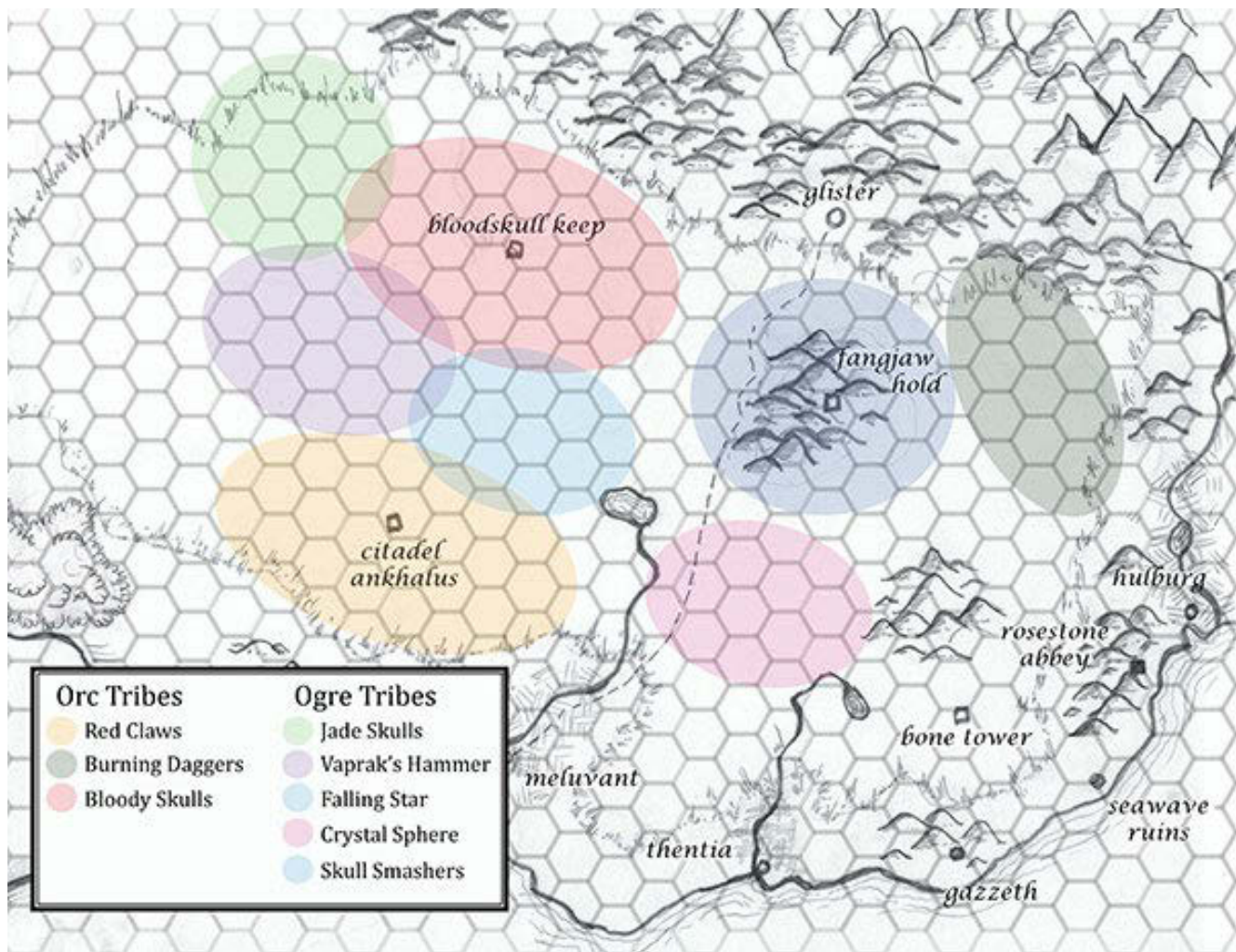
Exploration. The characters can find, or be told about, the hidden tunnel leading to the royal living quarters, allowing a stealthy group to obtain a sample of the Mnemosyne cap.

Social. If the characters please the Fomorians with an entertaining performance, they are true to their word and allow the characters to take a sample of the Mnemosyne cap.

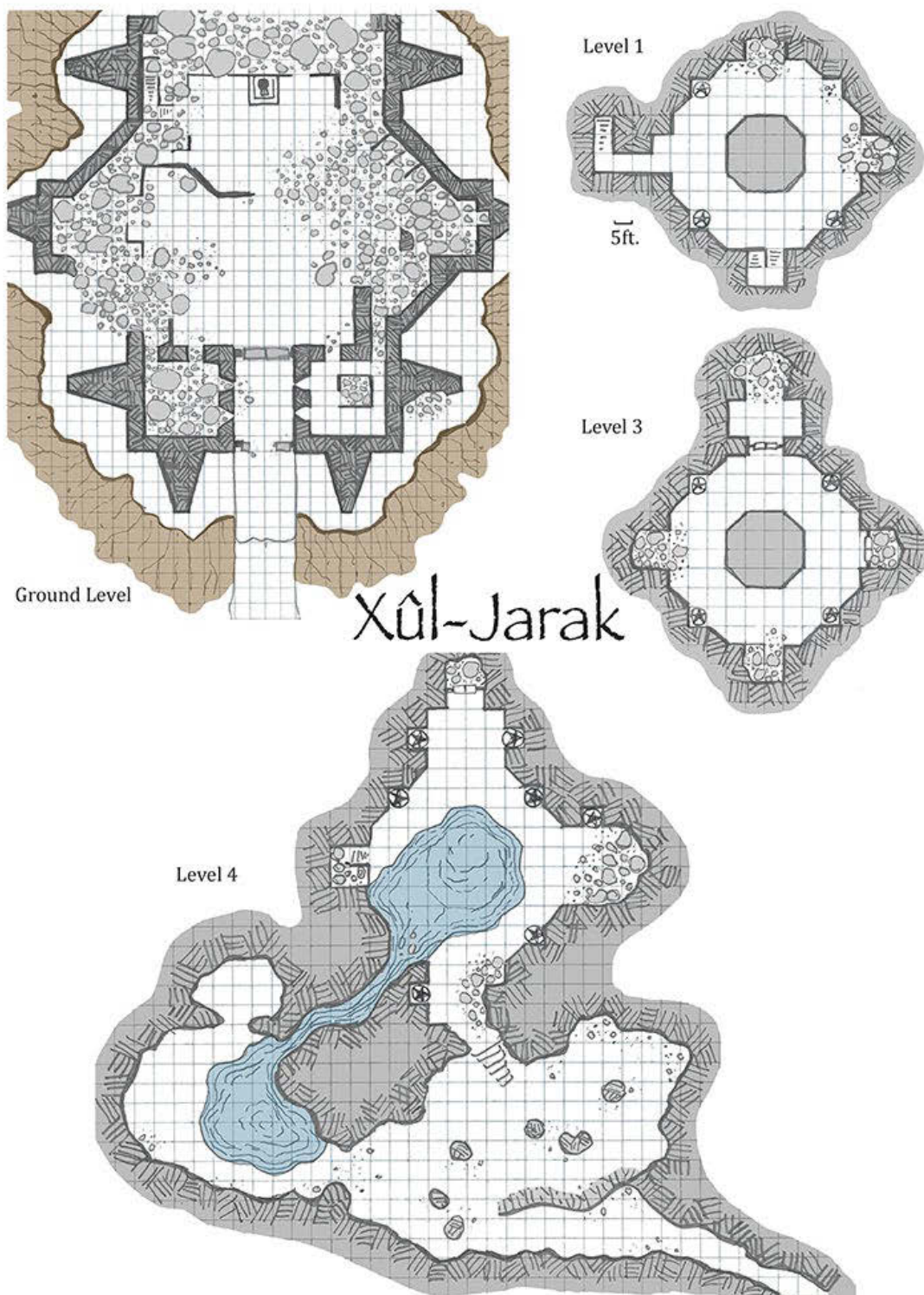
Appendix 3: Map of Thar



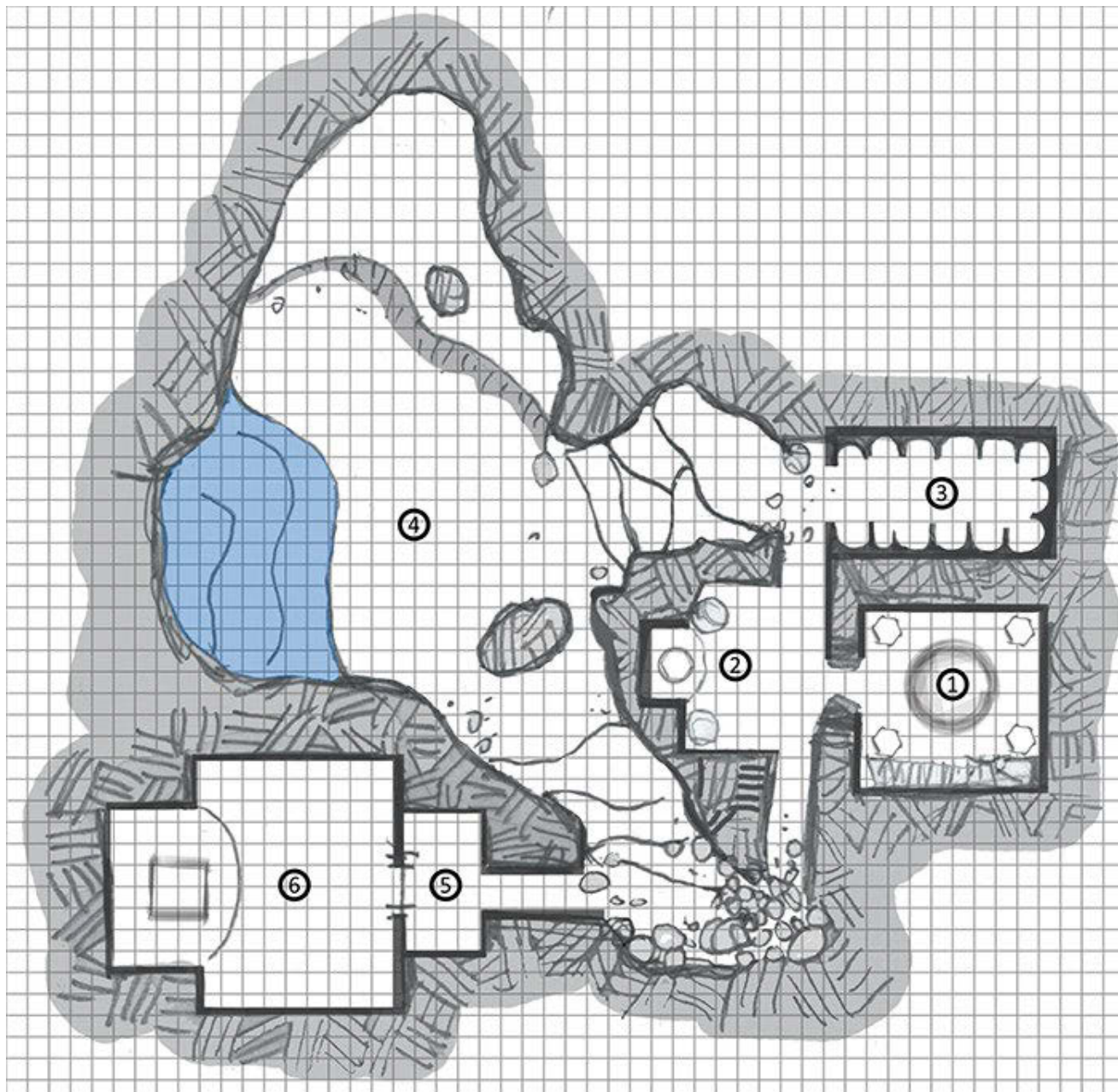
Appendix 4: Map of Thar (Social/Political)



Appendix 5: Map of Xul-Jarak



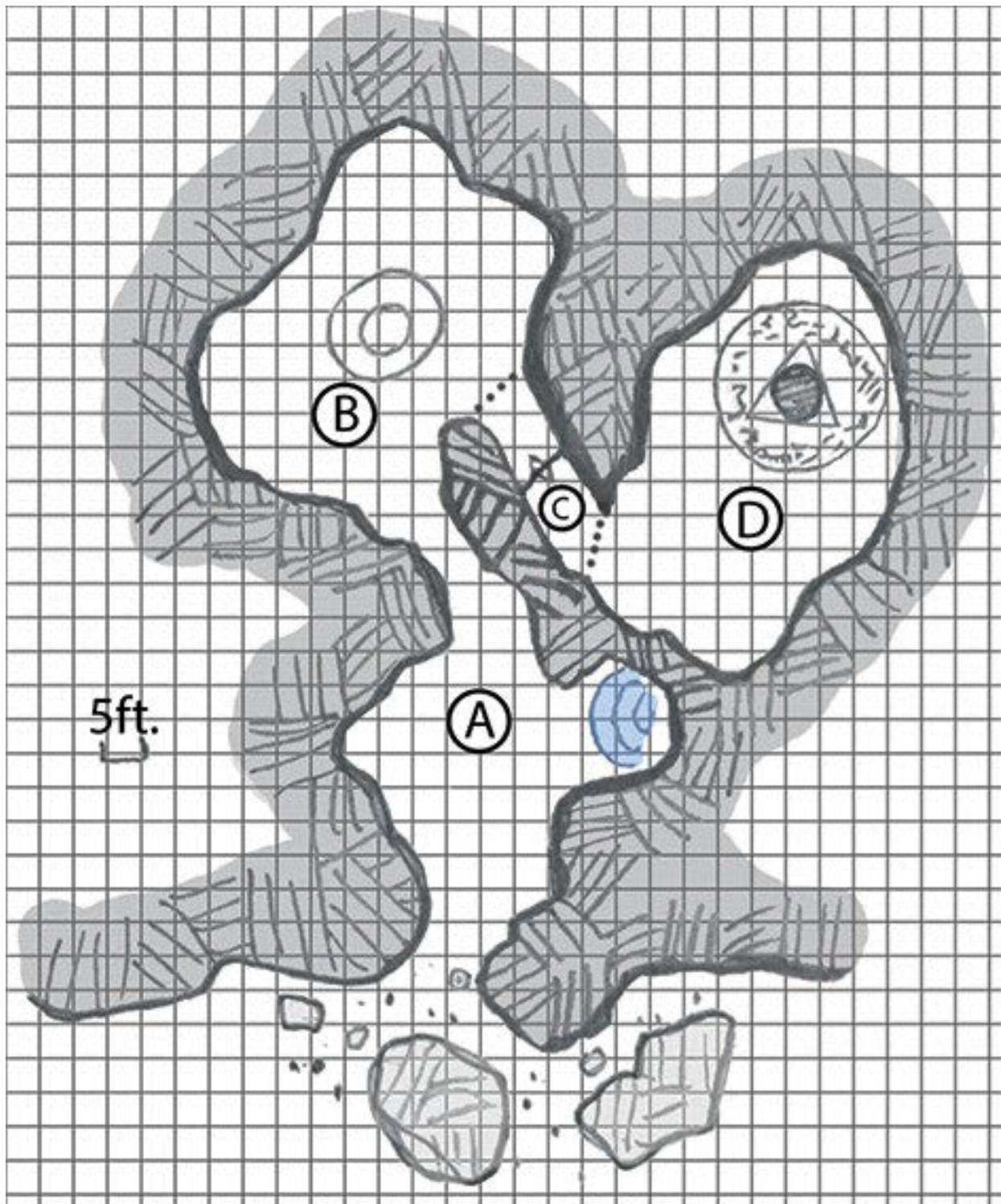
Appendix 6: Map of Dark Moon Ruins



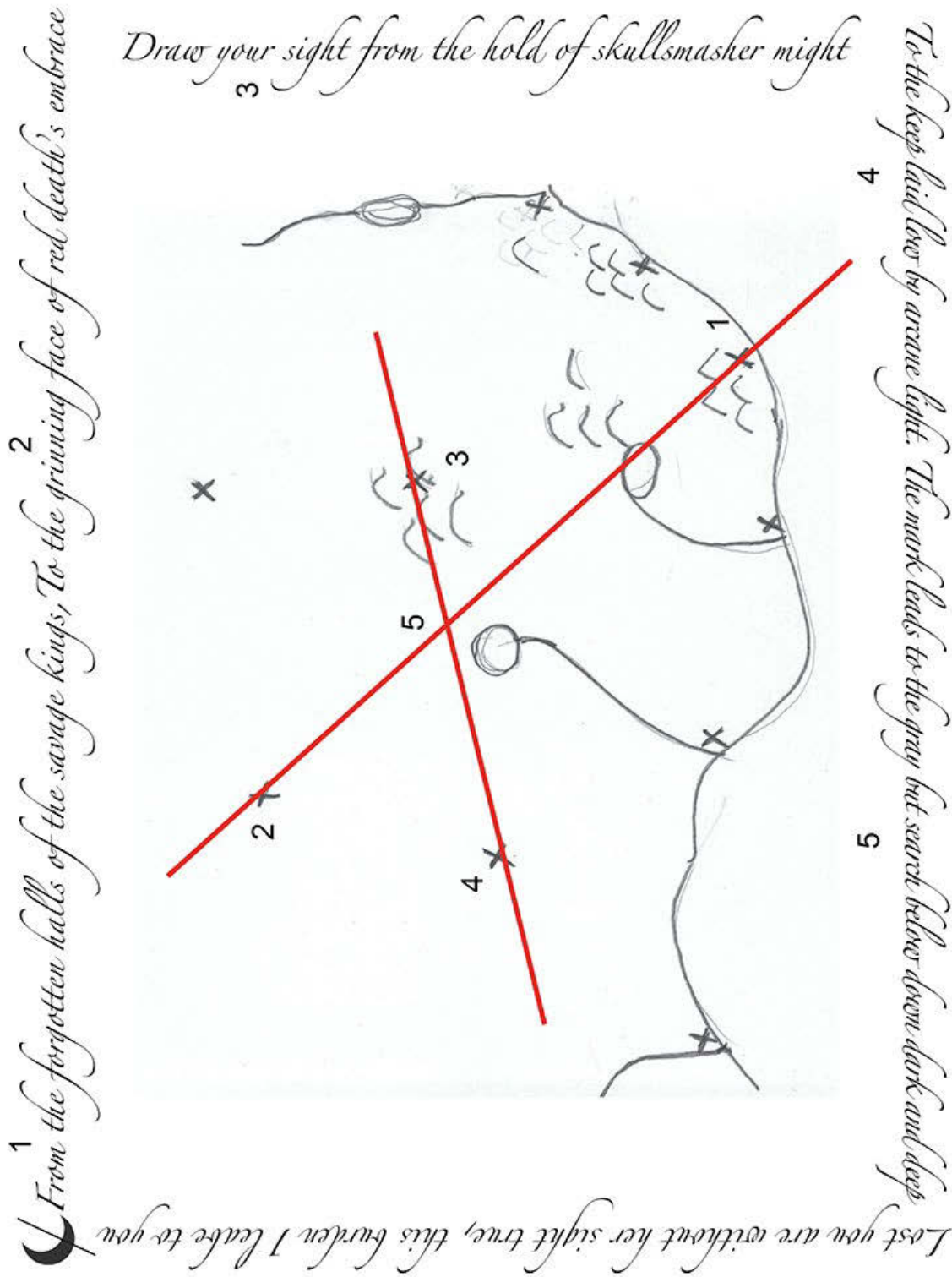
Appendix 7: Map of New Hebrid



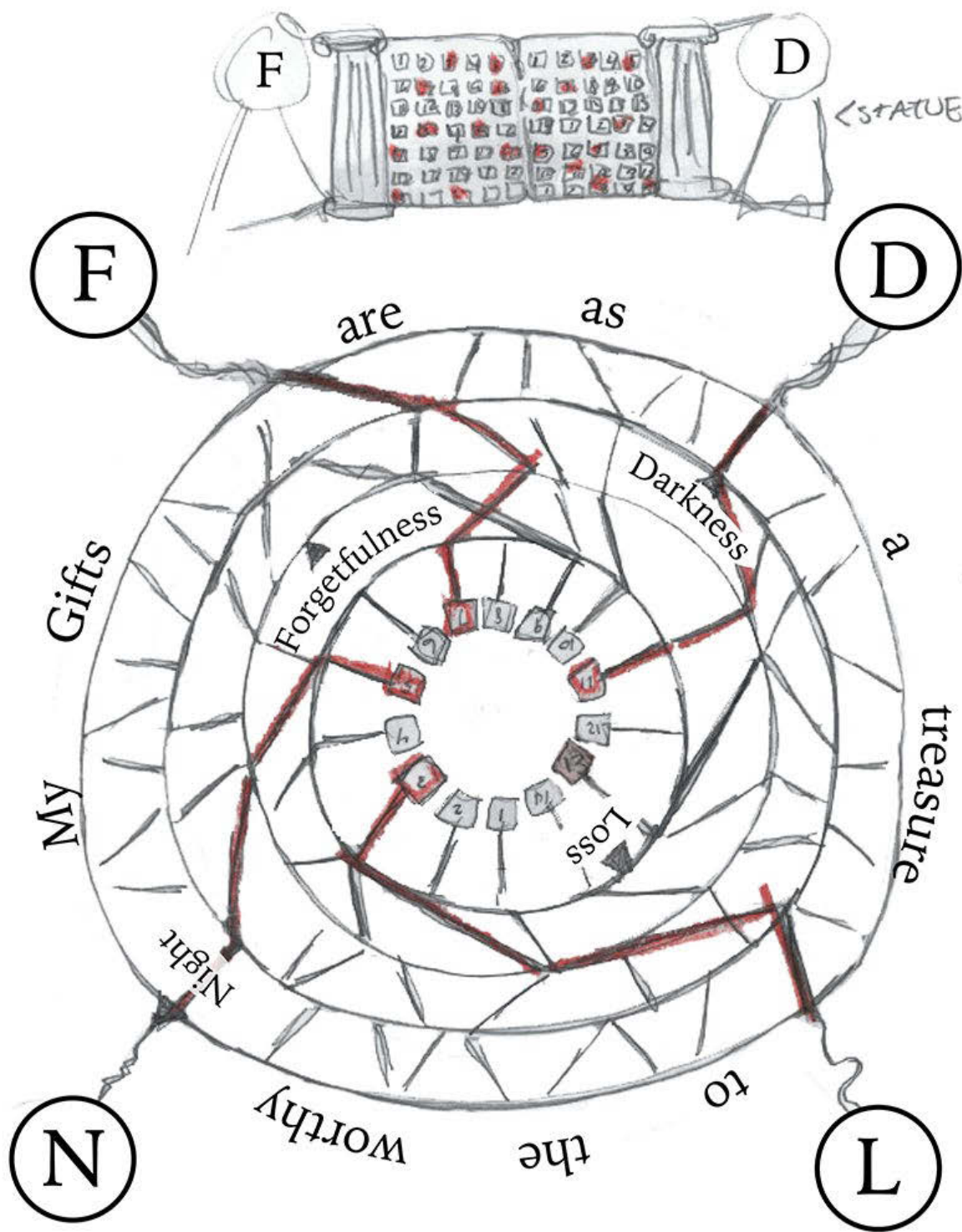
Appendix 8: Map of Kar-Tharsu Encounter



Appendix 9: Valen Map Key



Appendix 10: DM Floor Puzzle



Appendix 11: Thar Chase Complication Table

Consider using the chase rules on p57 of the *Dungeon Masters Guide* with the following complication table

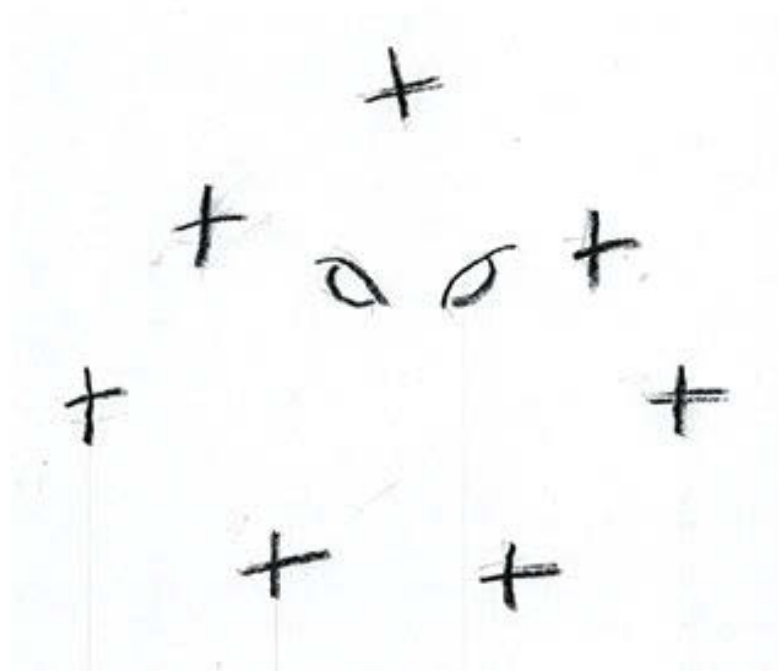
Roll (1d20)	Complication
1	Hilly terrain provides the opportunity to hide. Make a DC 15 Dexterity (Stealth) check. On a success your pursuer loses 60ft. of movement. On a failure you lose 60ft. of movement.
2	Marsh occupies the area ahead. Make a DC 12 Constitution check to power through the marsh. On a failed check the terrain is difficult, and you gain one level of exhaustion
3	Rocky outcropping with a deep gorge. Make a DC 12 Strength (Athletics) check to leap safely over. On a failed save take 5 (1d10) bludgeoning damage and get knocked prone.
4	Tall grasses provide the opportunity to confuse your pursuer. Make a DC 12 Intelligence (Nature) check. On a failure you waste time, move half movement this turn. On a success your pursuer loses 30ft of movement in confusion.
5 - 6	Broken unstable terrain occupies the next stretch of movement. Make a DC 12 Wisdom (Survival or Perception) check to navigate safely through. On a failed check the terrain is difficult terrain and you suffer 5 (1d10) bludgeoning damage from a bad foothold.
7 - 8	Low thorny brush makes an obstacle course ahead! Make a DC 15 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check to maneuver through. On a failed check the patch becomes difficult terrain.
9 - 10	Large boulders and scree block your path. Make a DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check to scramble over the rocks. On a failed check the scree become difficult terrain.
11-20	No Complication

Appendix 12: It's a Trap! Complication Table

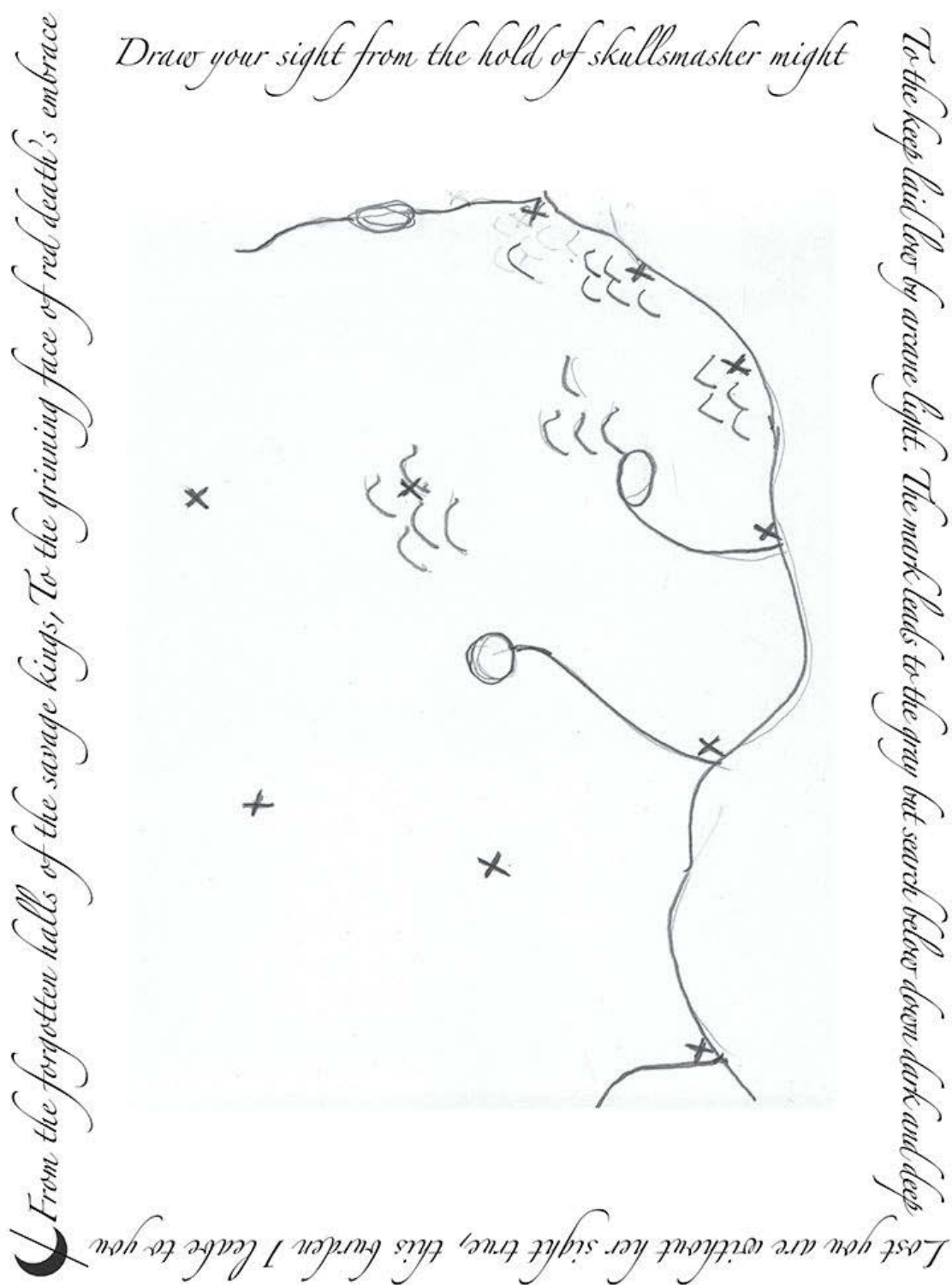
Use the following movement rates for simplicity: Road: 1/2/3/6 hexes per hour for slow / normal / fast / mounted movement. Steppes/Grasslands: 0.5/1/2/4 hexes per hour. Hills: 0.25/0.5/1/2 hexes per hour. The assassins begin three hours behind the party in pursuit and move at a medium rate as they track the players. Count the starting distance based on how far the party moves, and then track the distance between the players and the assassins each turn. The assassins pursue the party until they enter Xul Jarak or they are caught. Include short or long rest times in the pursuit. At the end of each hour of movement have the party make a Wisdom (Survival) check. Set the DC based on terrain type: DC 10 road, DC 14 Grassland, DC 12 Rocky outcropping, and DC 16 Hills. On a success the group moves at full speed, on a failure the party moves at half speed. Additionally, roll on the **It's a Trap!** Complication table below to spice up the narrative. Add five to this roll if the party travels on a road.

Roll (1d20)	Complication
1	Severe and sudden winds rip through the area. Make a DC 12 group Constitution check. On a failed check the party gains 1 level of exhaustion and moves half speed.
2	You have spotted ancient remains of Thar's past. Make a DC 12 group Intelligence (History) check. On a success you recognize the ruins and reckon your position, double your movement this turn.
3	Orc wardrums sound off in the approaching distance. Make a group DC 12 Dexterity (Stealth) check to avoid any entanglements. On a failed check reduce movement by half.
4	Flash thunderstorm reduces visibility. Make a DC 15 group Wisdom (Perception) check to navigate the storm. On a failed check reduce movement by half.
5 - 6	You meet rangers scouting the area for orc marauders. Make a group DC 12 Charisma (Persuasion) check. On a success gain advantage on your next navigation check from helpful advice about the area.
7 - 8	Heavy fog rolls through your path. Make a DC 12 group Wisdom (Survival) check. On a failure reduce movement by half this turn.
9 - 10	A flock of viscous wild birds harry you from above! Make a DC 12 group Strength (Athletics) check to outrun the dangerous flock. On a failed check take 5 (1d10) piercing damage.
11-20	No Complication

Appendix 13: Symbols of Selûne: Cassius' Mark



Appendix 14: Player Handout A (Valen Map)



Appendix 15: Player's Handout B (Miri's Research)

Research Notes on the Valen Map

The map shows the major cities on the north coast of the Moonsea including: Phlan, Meluvant, Thentia, and Hulburg. Also on the map is the city of Glister, far north above Thar. Additionally, the map shows what I believe is the location of an ancient orc city called Grazzeth (folktales say that the name was long forgotten and that if the name were ever spoken again the remains of the inhabitants would rise again and march on Thentia!), and the seawave ruins. Once a colony of Thentia many years ago, that was abandoned and overrun by orcs.

The mark just outside of Hulburg, I am sure is the ruins of Rosestone Abbey, a place once holy to Amaunator.

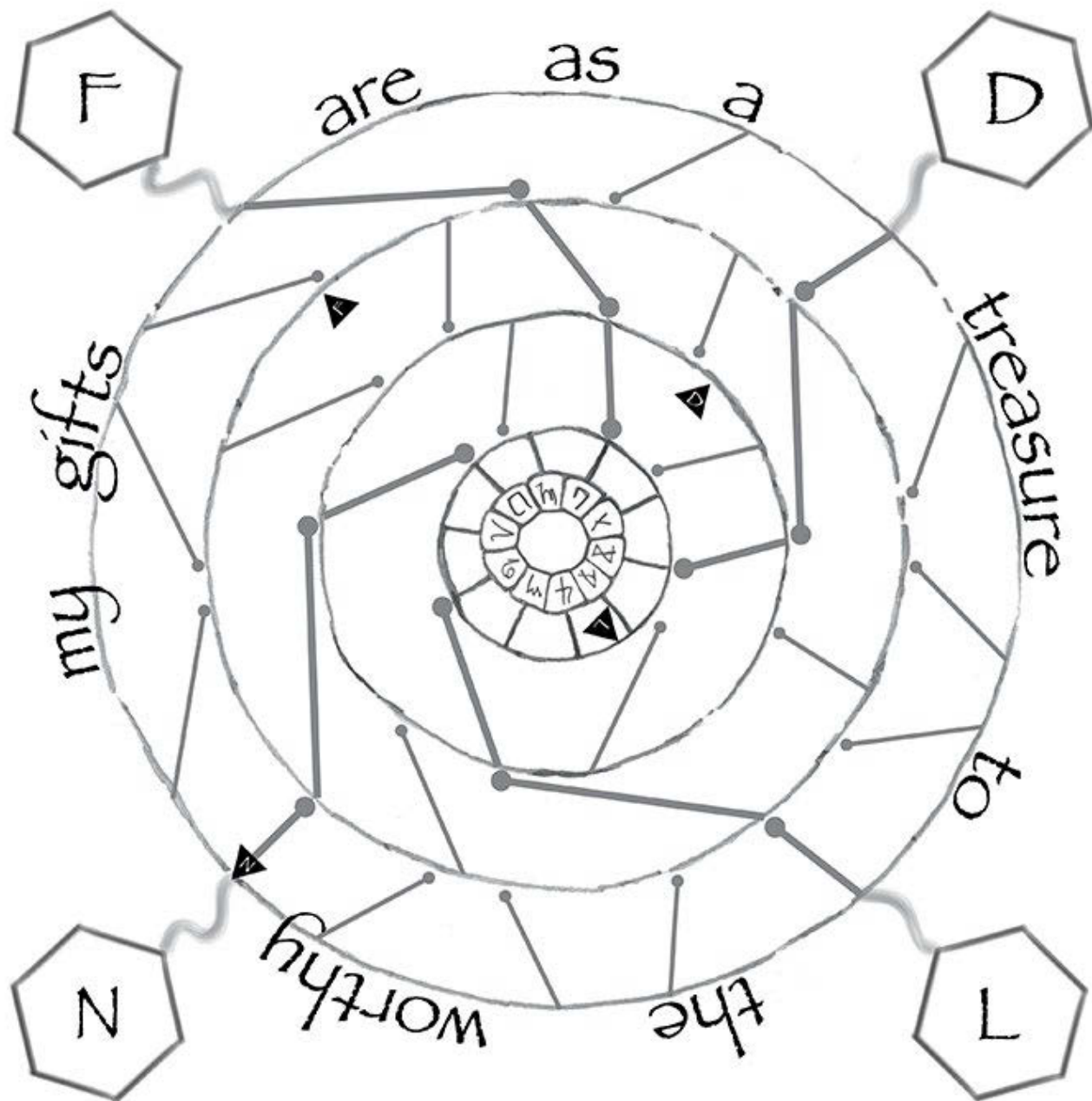
The X just east of the smaller lake is Bone Tower? Little information exists about this location.

The X located in the hills, I believe is Fangjaw Hold, a fortress for a clan of Ogres known as the Skullsmashers. Their leader is rumored to be ruthless and made powerful by a magical hammer.

The X North and West I believe is called Bloodskull Keep. A fortress of the Blood Skull Orc Tribe. Apparently, they get their name from the practice of dying the skulls of their defeated enemies and mounting the on the wall of their keep!

The mark furthest south and west is likely the ruins of Citadel Ankhalus, apparently it was a stronghold of a group of wizards. The keep was utterly destroyed in a battle with powerful magic.

Appendix 16: Player Puzzle Handout



Print four copies, cutting away each outer circle. Lay the cut outs on top of each other and place a tac at the center.

Appendix 17: Character Rewards

If found during the adventure, the characters can keep the following magic items; it's suggested that you print off enough copies of this page to be able to give one to each of your players (crossing out rewards they didn't receive during the session):

Deck of Illusions

Wonderous Item, uncommon

This box contains a set of parchments cards. A full deck has 34 cards. This deck is missing the following 10 cards: Ace of Hearts, Queen of Hearts, Jack of Hearts, Eight of Hearts, Two of Hearts, Nine of Diamonds, Two of Diamonds, Queen of Spades, Jack of Clubs and Ten of Clubs.

The magic of the deck functions only if cards are drawn at random (you can use an altered deck of playing cards to simulate the deck). You can use an action to draw a card at random from the deck and throw it to the ground at a point within 30 feet of you.

An illusion if one or more creature forms over the thrown card and remains until dispelled. An illusory creature appears real, of the appropriate size, and behaves as if it were a real creature except that it can do no harm. While you are within 120 feet of the illusory creature and can see it, you can use an action to move it magically anywhere within 30 feet of the card. Any physical interaction with the illusory creature reveals it to be an illusion because objects pass through it. Someone who uses an action to visually inspect the creature identifies it as illusory with a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check. The creature appears translucent.

The illusion lasts until its card is moved or the illusion is dispelled. When the illusion ends, the image on its card disappears, and that card cannot be used again. This item is found in the Dungeon Master's Guide.

Each card of this deck bears the image of an old gnome, whose facial expression randomly changes each time a card is looked at. Sometimes these expressions can be quite rude! In fact, whenever a card is used, a sound matching the expression (audible only to the user) seems to emanate from the card prior to its effect.

Appendix 18: Character Rewards

If found during the adventure, the characters can keep the following magic items; it's suggested that you print off enough copies of this page to be able to give one to each of your players (crossing out rewards they didn't receive during the session):

Mystery Key

Wonderous Item, common

A question mark is worked into the head of this key. The key has a 5 percent chance of opening any lock into which it is inserted. Once it unlocks something, the key disappears

Appendix 19: Character Rewards

If found during the adventure, the characters can keep the following magic items; it's suggested that you print off enough copies of this page to be able to give one to each of your players (crossing out rewards they didn't receive during the session):

Potion of Healing (Superior)

Potion, rare

You regain 8d4+8 hit points when you drink this potion. The potion's red liquid glimmers when agitated.

Appendix 20: Dungeon Master Tips

To DM an adventure, you **must** have 3 to 7 players—each with their own character within the adventure’s level range (see Adventure Primer). Characters playing in a **hardcover** adventure may continue to play to but if they play a different hardcover adventure, they **can’t return** to the first if outside its level range.

New to D&D Adventurers League?

<http://dnd.wizards.com/playevents/organized-play>

Preparing the Adventure

Before you start play, consider the following:

- Read through the adventure, taking notes of anything you’d like to highlight or remind yourself of while running the adventure, such as a way you’d like to portray an NPC or a tactic you’d like to use in a combat. Familiar yourself with the adventure’s appendices and handouts.
- Gather any resources you’d like to use to aid you in running this adventure--such as notecards, a DM screen, miniatures, and battlemaps.
- Ask the players to provide you with relevant character information, such as name, race, class, and level; passive Perception score, and anything the adventures specifies as notable (such as backgrounds, traits, flaws, etc.)

Players can play an adventure they previously played as a Player or Dungeon Master but may only play it once with a given character. Ensure each player has their character’s adventure logsheet (if not, get one from the organizer) with their starting values for level, magic items, gold and downtime days. These are updated at the conclusion of the session. The adventure information and your information are added at the end of the adventure session—whether the completed the adventure or not.

Each player is responsible for maintaining an accurate logsheet. If you have time, you can do a quick scan of a player’s character sheet to ensure that nothing looks out of order. If you see magic items of very high rarities or strange arrays of

ability scores, you can ask players to provide documentation for the irregularities. If they cannot, feel free to restrict item use or ask them to use a standard ability score array.

Point players to the D&D Adventurers League Players Guide for reference. If players wish to spend downtime days and it’s the beginning of an adventure or episode, they can declare their activity and spend the days now, or they can do so at the end of the adventure or episode. Players should select their characters’ spells and other daily options prior to the start of the adventure, unless the adventure specifies otherwise. Feel free to reread the adventure description to help give players hints about what they might face.

Adjusting This Adventure

To determine whether you should consider adjusting the adventure, add up the total levels of all the characters and divide the result by the number of characters (rounding .5 or greater up; .4 or less down). This is the group’s average party level (APL). To approximate the **party strength** for the adventure, consult the table below.

Determining Party Strength

Party Composition	Party Strength
3-4 characters, APL less than	Very weak
3-4 characters, APL equivalent	Weak
3-4 characters, APL greater than	Average
5 characters, APL less than	Weak
5 characters, APL equivalent	Average
5 characters, APL greater than	Strong
6-7 characters, APL less than	Average
6-7 characters, APL equivalent	Strong
6-7 characters, APL greater than	Very strong