



ADVENTURERS LEAGUE™

EMBERS OF ELMWOOD

A derelict raft drifts into Mulmaster's harbor carrying a young woman. Delirious with hunger, the only words she seems able to speak so far have been "ash and fire." The only other clue to her identity is an ornate tattoo. Is the woman insane, or is something nefarious at play? An adventure for 1st-4th level characters.

Adventure Code: DDEX2-2

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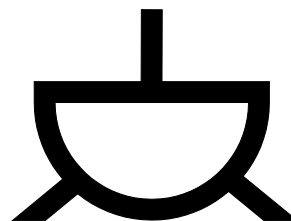
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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to *Embers of Elmwood*, a D&D Expeditions™ adventure, part of the official D&D Adventurers League™ organized play system and the *Elemental Evil*™ storyline season.

This adventure is designed for **three to seven 1st-4th level characters**, and is optimized for **five 2nd-level characters**. Characters outside this level range cannot participate in this adventure. A player with an ineligible character can create a new 1st-level character or use a [pregenerated character](#).

The adventure is set in the Moonsea region of the Forgotten Realms, in the city of Mulmaster.

THE D&D ADVENTURERS LEAGUE

This adventure is official for D&D Adventurers League play. The D&D Adventurers League is the official organized play system for DUNGEONS & DRAGONS®. Players can create characters and participate in any adventure allowed as a part of the D&D Adventurers League. As they adventure, players track their characters' experience, treasure, and other rewards, and can take those characters through other adventures that will continue their story.

D&D Adventurers League play is broken up into storyline seasons. When players create characters, they attach those characters to a storyline season, which determines what rules they're allowed to use to create and advance their characters. Players can continue to play their characters after the storyline season has finished, possibly participating in a second or third storyline with those same characters. A character's level is the only limitation for adventure play. A player cannot use a character of a level higher or lower than the level range of a D&D Adventurers League adventure.

If you're running this adventure as a part of a store event or at certain conventions, you'll need a [DCI number](#). This number is your official Wizards of the Coast organized play identifier. If you don't have a number, you can obtain one at a store event. Check with your organizer for details.

For more information on playing, running games as a Dungeon Master, and organizing games for the D&D Adventurers League, please visit the [D&D Adventurers League home](#).

PREPARING THE ADVENTURE

Before you show up to Dungeon Master this adventure for a group of players, you should do the following to prepare.

- Make sure to have a copy of the most current version of the [D&D basic rules](#) or the *Player's Handbook*™.
- Read through the adventure, taking notes of anything you'd like to highlight or remind yourself 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.
- Get familiar with the monster statistics in the Appendix.
- Gather together any resources you'd like to use to aid you in Dungeon Mastering, such as notecards, a DM screen, miniatures, battlemaps, etc.
- If you know the composition of the group beforehand, you can make adjustments as noted throughout the adventure.

BEFORE PLAY AT THE TABLE

Ask the players to provide you with relevant character information. This includes:

- Character name and level
- Character race and class
- Passive Wisdom (Perception)—the most common passive ability check
- Anything notable as specified by the adventure (such as backgrounds, traits, flaws, and so on)

Players that have characters outside the adventure's level range **cannot participate in the adventure with those characters**. Players can play an adventure they previously played or ran as a Dungeon Master, but not with the same character (if applicable).

Ensure that each player has an [official adventure logsheet](#) for his or her character (if not, get one from the organizer). The player will fill out the adventure name, session number, date, and your name and DCI number. In addition, the player also fills in the starting values for XP, gold, downtime, renown, and number of permanent magic items. He or she will fill in the other values and write notes at the conclusion of the session. 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 Player's 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 THE ADVENTURE

Throughout this adventure, you may see sidebars to help you make adjustments to this adventure for smaller/larger groups and characters, of higher/lower levels that the optimized group size. Most of the time, this is used for combat encounters.

You may adjust the adventure beyond the guidelines given in the adventure, or for other reasons. For example, if you're playing with a group of inexperienced players, you might want to make the adventure a little easier; for very experienced players, you might want to make it a little harder. Therefore, five categories of party strength have been created for you to use as a guide. Use these as a guide, and feel free to use a different adjustment during the adventure if the recommended party strength feels off for the group.

This adventure is **optimized for a party of five 2nd-level characters**. To figure out whether you need to adjust the adventure, do the following:

- Add up the total levels of all the characters
- Divide the total by the number of characters
- Round fractions of .5 or greater up; round fractions of less than .5 down

You've now determined the **average party level (APL)** for the adventure. To figure out the **party strength** for the adventure, consult the following table.

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

Average party strength indicates no recommended adjustments to the adventure. Each sidebar may or may not offer suggestions for certain party strengths. If a particular recommendation is not offered for your group, you don't have to make adjustments.

DUNGEON MASTERING THE ADVENTURE

As the DM of the session, you have the most important role in facilitating the enjoyment of the game for the players. You help guide the narrative and bring the words on these pages to life. The outcome of a fun game session often creates stories that live well beyond the play at the table. Always follow this golden rule when you DM for a group:

Make decisions and adjudications that enhance the fun of the adventure when possible.

To reinforce this golden rule, keep in mind the following:

- You are empowered to make adjustments to the adventure and make decisions about how the group interacts with the world of this adventure. This is especially important and applicable outside of combat, but feel free to adjust the adventure for groups that are having too easy or too hard of a time.
- Don't make the adventure too easy or too difficult for a group. Never being challenged makes for a boring game, and being overwhelmed makes for a frustrating game. Gauge the experience of the players (not the characters) with the game, try to feel out (or ask) what they like in a game, and attempt to give each of them the experience they're after when they play D&D. Give everyone a chance to shine.
- Be mindful of pacing, and keep the game session moving along appropriately. Watch for stalling, since play loses momentum when this happens. At the same time, make sure that the players don't finish too early; provide them with a full play experience. Try to be aware of running long or short. Adjust the

pacing accordingly.

- Read-aloud text is just a suggestion; feel free to modify the text as you see fit, especially when dialogue is present.
- Give the players appropriate hints so they can make informed choices about how to proceed. Players should be given clues and hints when appropriate so they can tackle puzzles, combat, and interactions without getting frustrated over lack of information. This helps to encourage immersion in the adventure and gives players “little victories” for figuring out good choices from clues.

In short, being the DM isn't about following the adventure's text word-for-word; it's about facilitating a fun, challenging game environment for the players. The *Dungeon Master's Guide*™ has more information on the art of running a D&D game.

DOWNTIME AND LIFESTYLE

At the beginning of each play session, players must declare whether or not they are spending any days of downtime. The player records the downtime spent on the adventure logsheet. The following options are available to players during downtime (see the [D&D basic rules](#) or the [D&D Adventurers League Player's Guide](#) for more information):

- Catching up
- Crafting (exception: multiple characters cannot commit to crafting a single item)
- Practicing a profession
- Recuperating
- Spellcasting services (end of the adventure only)
- Training

Other downtime options might be available during adventures or unlocked through play, including faction-specific activities.

In addition, whenever a character spends downtime days, that character also spends the requisite expense for his or her lifestyle. Costs are per day, so a character that spends ten days of downtime also spends ten days of expenses maintaining his or her lifestyle. Some downtime activities help with lifestyle expenses or add lifestyle expenses.

SPELLCASTING SERVICES

Any settlement the size of a town or larger can provide

some spellcasting services. characters need to be able to travel to the settlement to obtain these services. Alternatively, if the party finishes an adventure, they can be assumed to return to the settlement closest to the adventure location.

Spell services generally available include healing and recovery spells, as well as information-gathering spells. Other spell services might be available as specified in the adventure. The number of spells available to be cast as a service is limited to a **maximum of three per day total**, unless otherwise noted.

SPELLCASTING SERVICES

Spell	Cost
<i>Cure wounds</i> (1st level)	10 gp
<i>Identify</i>	20 gp
<i>Lesser restoration</i>	40 gp
<i>Prayer of healing</i> (2nd level)	40 gp
<i>Remove curse</i>	90 gp
<i>Speak with dead</i>	90 gp
<i>Divination</i>	210 gp
<i>Greater restoration</i>	450 gp
<i>Raise dead</i>	1,250 gp

ACOLYTE BACKGROUND

A character possessing the acolyte background requesting spellcasting services at a temple of his or her faith may request **one spell per day** from the Spellcasting Services table for free. The only cost paid for the spell is the base price for the consumed material component, if any.

Faiths that can call upon spellcasting services in Mulmaster include the following: Bane, Leira, Loviatar, Mystra, Savras, Tempus, Tymora, Velsharoon, and Waukeen.

CHARACTER DISEASE, DEATH, AND RECOVERY

Sometimes bad things happen, and characters get poisoned, diseased, or die. Since you might not have the same characters return from session to session, here are the rules when bad things happen to characters.

DISEASE, POISON, AND OTHER DEBILITATING EFFECTS

A character still affected by diseases, poisons, and other similar effects at the conclusion of an adventure can spend downtime days recuperating until such time as he or she resolves the effect to its conclusion (see the recuperating activity in the D&D basic rules).

If a character doesn't resolve the effect between sessions, that character begins the next session still affected by the debilitating effect.

DEATH

A character who dies during the course of the adventure has a few options at the end of the session (or whenever arriving back in civilization) if no one in the adventuring party has immediate access to a *raise dead* or *revivify* spell, or similar magic. A character subject to a *raise dead* spell is affected negatively until all long rests have been completed during an adventure. Alternatively, each downtime day spent after *raise dead* reduces the penalty to attack rolls, saving throws, and ability checks by 1, in addition to any other benefits the downtime activity might provide.

Create a New 1st-Level Character. If the dead character is unwilling or unable to exercise any of the other options, the player creates a new character. The new character does not have any items or rewards possessed by the dead character.

Dead Character Pays for Raise Dead. If the character's body is recoverable (it's not missing any vital organs and is mostly whole) and the player would like the character to be returned to life, the party can take the body back to civilization and use the dead character's funds to pay for a *raise dead* spell. A *raise dead* spell cast in this manner costs the character 1,250 gp.

Character's Party Pays for Raise Dead. As above, except that some or all of the 1,250 gp for the *raise dead* spell is paid for by the party at the end of the session. Other characters are under no obligation to spend their funds to bring back a dead party member.

Faction Charity. If the character is of level 1 to 4 and a member of a faction, the dead character's body can be returned to civilization and a patron from the faction ensures that he or she receives a *raise dead* spell. However, any character invoking this charity forfeits all XP and rewards from that session (even those earned prior to death during that session), and cannot replay that episode or adventure with that character again. Once a character reaches 5th level, this option is no longer available.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

The city of Mulmaster can best be described as a city of pessimistic dynamism. There is a strong negative energy about the city despite the industrious, hardworking attitude of its people. Mulmasterites are patient, relentless, exploitative people struggling to live as well as they can within a dog-eat-dog city where corruption is widespread and life is cheap.

The farming community of Elmwood is two hours' travel west from Mulmaster. The majority of the holdings in Elmwood were owned by House Culkin, a Mulmasterite noble house.

Prior to the events of the adventure, the Cult of the Eternal Flame made plans for a *devastation orb*—a powerful and destructive magical item—to be delivered to a secret cult chapterhouse in the Zhent ghetto of Mulmaster. While en route to the city, the *devastation orb* prematurely detonated within the village of Elmwood, laying the village low. Ironically, the cultist who was overseeing the orb's transportation was the sole survivor of its destruction. In one fell swoop, the entire village of Elmwood was wiped from the map, and for the next five days, Ravia would drift in and out of consciousness aboard a pile of drifting debris from a destroyed home. Eventually, she would drift into the Bay of Mulmaster and be rescued by the City Watch.

After coming to the attention of the corrupt City Watch, a report describing the injured young woman eventually made its way to the Hawks—the secret police of Mulmaster. One Hawk in particular, Sark Tolliver, recognized the description of the unconscious cult fanatic, as Tolliver secretly paid homage to the Eternal Flame. After sending her to a hospice run by lay priests of Ilmater, Tolliver arranged for a guard detail to prevent anyone from reaching or speaking to Ravia until she is deemed healthy enough to be remanded to Tolliver's custody.

Chafing at the lack of information coming out of Elmwood and knowing full well that captives of the Hawks have a nasty habit of disappearing, Zora Rosealine Culkin hatches a scheme to free the survivor of Elmwood from the Hawks, completely oblivious to the fact that the person she wishes to save is the malefactor to the destruction which has cost Zora Culkin so much already.

OVERVIEW

Embers of Elmwood is divided into three parts.

Part 1. Breaking the Law. The adventurers have been asked by Zora Culkin to liberate the unconscious Ravia from her captors/healers at the House of Suffering near Southroad Keep, so that her account can be heard before the Hawks have a chance to make her disappear. After conning or defeating the guard detail set to watch over Ravia, the adventurers are spotted by members of the City Watch in the employ of Sark Tolliver, a traitorous Hawk who is working for the Fire Cult. Returning to Culkin Manor, Zora Culkin and the adventurers work to revive Ravia, and find that she is all but insensible and requires more rest before answers are forthcoming.

Part 2: A House Divided. Tolliver sends a group of spies and bandits to abduct the recovering Ravia in the dead of night. A protracted battle takes place throughout the manor house, with no less than three groups of operatives seeking to abscond with the lone survivor of Elmwood. It is all but impossible to prevent Ravia's abduction at this point, but tracking or interrogation of a captured kidnapper yields a location in the Zhent Ghetto where the hirelings were directed to take the convalescing woman.

Part 3. Fire in the Underbelly. The adventurers track the kidnappers to a burnt-out temple formerly dedicated to Cyric. A thorough investigation reveals a hidden temple within the temple. After defeating the guardian of the hidden Fire Cult temple, a powerful azer, the adventurers move to confront the head of the temple themselves: Ravia, now revived and in the regalia of a fanatic of the Elemental Cult of Fire. It is only now that the adventurers are introduced to the deadly threat of the Elemental Cult in Mulmaster.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

The player characters can become involved in the story in several ways, some of which involve their character factions.

A Call, A Call! Most adventuring companies native to Mulmaster are already in the pay of one group or another. Zora Culkin finds herself in the contradictory position of being unable to trust anyone known to her. For this reason, she would prefer to hire an adventuring group from out of town, as it is less likely that they have any stake or involvement in the destruction of Elmwood. Culkin has visited taverns and inns throughout the city, putting up posters asking interested freelancers to meet

her at the Traveler's Cloak Inn, reasoning that the steep prices to keep out the lower rungs of the adventuring crowd.

Work Release. During an earlier adventure in Mulmaster, one of the arcane spellcasters in the party might have been seen casting spells within the city limits without being a member of the Cloaks. Zora Culkin has just enough clout to pull a few strings and have the charges dropped, with a promise of no more unauthorized arcane magic in the city proper.

Tradition of Nobility. Zora Rosealine Culkin is a member of the **Lords' Alliance**, like her father and grandfather before her. Though not expressly outlawed within Mulmaster, members of the faction know to keep their dealings quiet, as the High Blade traditionally disapproves of his Blades and nobles swearing allegiance to any non-Mulmasterite organizations. Zora Culkin, upon deciding to hire outside help, goes immediately to her contacts in the Lords' Alliance to provide her with the name of any reputable adventuring parties in the area. Naturally, the player adventurers are the party chosen.

Faction assignment: Bring those responsible for the destruction of Elmwood to justice. **Success condition:** The defeat of the cultists at the hidden Chapterhouse of Eternal Flame in the Zhent Ghetto.

Those Who Watch. Due to the devastation wrought over Elmwood and the destruction of the outlying forest area, the **Emerald Enclave** is concerned with the power such a holocaust would require, and the possibility that it could happen again. As Zora Culkin is the legal owner of most of the private holdings within the village, the higher-ups in the Enclave requests any party members from the Enclave to look for answers, perhaps suspecting the involvement of the Zora herself. **Faction assignment:** Find out how the destruction of Elmwood came about, and who was responsible. **Success condition:** The discovery of Ravia's journal outlining the Cult of Elemental Fire's involvement and the use of a *devastation orb*.

PART 1: BREAKING THE LAW

The adventure begins as the heroes are met in the Traveler's Cloak Inn by Zora Rosealine Culkin, a noble of Mulmaster. (Male and female heads of noble houses in Mulmaster are referred to as *zor* and *zora*, respectively.)

MULMASTER AT NIGHT

It is early evening in Mulmaster when the adventure begins.

GENERAL FEATURES

The general features of the streets of Mulmaster at this time of night are as follows:

Light. In the main streets and boulevards of the city, the combination of oil-fueled streetlights and the starlight of the open night sky provide dim to bright light, depending on the neighborhood. If the adventurers adhere only to alleyways and side streets, the light is either dim or completely dark, depending on the situation you describe.

Sounds. For all of its shortcomings, the city of Mulmaster never sleeps. Crime is everywhere, but wisely kept out of sight. The wealthier residential areas are kept very quiet at night, but the market districts and poor parts of the dock have business and pleasure featured all night. Raucous laughter, loud dancehall music, and merchants hawking wares are all possibilities depending on the route the adventurers choose. Of course, establishments that are fully paid up with the City Watch have guardsmen in the streets outside. The poorer districts have no such luxury.

THE TRAVELER'S CLOAK

The Traveler's Cloak is a high-end inn on the edges of the Docks Quarter that rubs up against the wealthier holdings of Mulmaster. It caters to wealthy merchants and foreign dignitaries, and the prices reflect this—single rooms cost 12 gp a night, and the price for one of the inn's two suites are five times that.

Entering the Traveler's Cloak is like stepping into a different world from the squalor of the Docks. The bar is a single slab of polished marble, and the furnishings within the common room are finely carved and stained oak of the highest quality.

Bordering the common area of the Traveler's Cloak are a dozen booths, the benches of which are bedecked in plush upholstery. Each booth features a set of heavy velvet curtains for the sake of privacy, and a small bell that can be rung from inside the booth to summon the wait staff.

At this time of day, the booths are usually empty. Today is no different; at the far side of the room, surrounded on both sides by empty booths, the adventurers are directed by the slender, smooth-faced young bartender to a booth with the curtains drawn, where a single dark-haired figure sips calmly from a goblet of red wine.

This is Zora Rosealine Culkin. A tall, lean woman in her mid-thirties, Zora Culkin has short, jet-black hair that frames her pale face. She typically wears an ornate breastplate enameled in the colors of her house; red and cream, with an equally impressive rapier at her hip. Over her armor, she wears a long, fur-trimmed coat of fine red and cream leather. On this occasion, the weather has given her an excuse to go without the cloak she typically wears. She is polite, but distant; friendly, but impersonal; and above all, striking to look at.

ROLEPLAYING ZORA ROSEALINE CULKIN

Zora Culkin epitomizes the distant grandeur of an old-world Mulmaster noble. She is quite insightful, able to paint a surprisingly detailed picture of a person after only a brief conversation.

One does not live to a ripe old age in Mulmaster without a healthy dose of suspicion, and Culkin intends to live a long, long time. That said, she feels a true responsibility to the people who populate her holdings, and she is horrified at the deaths that have occurred.

Players who succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check notice that there are tiny gold runes sewn into the collar of her blouse. If these are pointed out, Zora Culkin explains that she was a member of the Cloaks in her youth, but upon her ascension to the head of House Culkin, she chose to leave the Cloaks and the use of magic (though she does admit to a cantrip now and then). However, she still enjoys studying magical theory and lore, and she continues to use her personal sigils as her signature.

After pouring wine for her guests, Culkin outlines the situation, stressing the following points:

- The village of Elmwood, of which her House owns a fair amount, has been reduced to ash and cinders. No physical or magical sign of what caused the destruction has been found. No natural cause was found to be the cause of the destruction, so it is assumed that the damage was caused by party or parties unknown.
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- A single young woman drifted into Mulmaster Bay via the western docks on a makeshift raft made from logs, timbers, and other materials clearly salvaged from the ruined town. Capable only of feverish, disjointed muttering, she was taken into custody by the Soldiery and brought to the House of Suffering—a hospice operated by priests of Ilmater near the Southroad Keep.
- One of Zora Culkin's contacts in the City Watch has indicated that a high-ranking Hawk, one of Mulmaster's secret police, has set a guard over the convalescing woman until she revives. At that point, she is to be remanded into their custody. Time is of the essence; she must be secreted away tonight or else it is unlikely that Zora Culkin will ever learn the truth of Elmwood's destruction.
- Zora Culkin suspects that once the woman is brought into Hawk custody, she won't be heard from again. This is not groundless paranoia; it is well-known to the citizens of Mulmaster that the Hawks regularly "disappear" undesirables judged to be destabilizing elements.
- Any guards of the City Watch are not relieved of their charge easily. Despite this, Zora Culkin would prefer if none were slain, as it would not be worth the unimaginable hassle it would cause.
- While they may protest, Zora Culkin believes that the priests are easier to convince. In fact, they know what fate likely befalls this woman in the hands of the Hawks, and are likely to cooperate with requests that are in the woman's best interests. Regardless, they should be spared from any harm at all costs.
- Zora Culkin is motivated to discover the truth behind the destruction by any means necessary, as she viewed the people of the community as her wards, and the malefactors should be brought to justice.

Zora Culkin offers the group a total of 150 gp if they retrieve the young woman and bring her to Culkin Manor—near the Tower of Arcane Might—before the Hawks take her into custody for questioning. She also suggests that once they have liberated the woman they should do their best to move through the city discreetly.

MY CHARACTER WOULDN'T DO THAT!

Characters that are lawful in alignment may take issue with the mission. In such a case, stress the fact that Mulmaster's key organizations maintain their power through the exquisite application of fear upon its citizenry. Lawful good and lawful neutral characters are generally disposed to uphold laws that serve justice and the common weal, not those enacted for the sole purpose of lining the pockets of the rich.

Similarly, feel free to show the party firsthand the depth of the corruption that is prevalent among the City Watch, who regularly engage in extortion through protection rackets, shaking down citizens according to profile rather than action, and generally solving problems through mindless, brute force as they move through the city on their way to the hospice.

THE HOUSE OF SUFFERING

The House of Suffering has the following general features:

GENERAL FEATURES

The general features of the hospice are as follows:

Area. The hospice is a large rectangular building 30-feet wide by 50-feet long with a 15-foot high ceiling. The floor consists of planks over hard, packed earth.

Furnishings. The entire space of the building is littered with cots and other makeshift beds. More than half of these are full with the injured and infirm. There is little in the way of sophisticated healing equipment here, though if the characters wish, they can scrounge up enough materials to make two *potions of healing*, two healing kits, and two herbalism kits. Not without arousing suspicion, of course.

Light. The light inside the hospice comes mainly from candles in six iron stands, strategically placed throughout the building. It is brightly lit inside. It's evening, but the dark, narrow streets are lit with an occasional gaslamp.

Sounds. There are a good number of patients here, the building's silence is occasionally broken by the sound of a lay priest attending to one of the patients, or a raucous bout of snoring from a sleeping City Watchman. Groaning and crying of the sick and wounded.

Smells. The smell of sickness is countered by burning incense at the small shrine to Ilmater along the southern wall of the hospice. Though it is poor, the shelter is as clean as the lay priests can make it.

The doors of the squat, brick building ahead of you are open, welcoming all into the meager comfort offered within. The two City Watch standing near the entrance show only minor interest in your group as you enter.

Within are numerous cots and makeshift beds, more than half of which are occupied. Six tall iron candelabras provide bright light in the scrupulously clean if sparsely furnish room. Several people dressed all in grey with grey skullcaps move about the room. A City Watch guard leans against the wall next to the bed of one of the patients while his partner has commandeered one of the few chairs in the room, with his feet up on the patients' bed his snores are an odd counterpoint to the groans coming from other areas of the room.

THE BUILDING

The hospice run by the priests of Ilmater (God of Martyrdom and Suffering) is a slapdash, but clean, shelter. The accommodations for the patients are quite spare, with little more than a bed and a chamber pot. At the far end of the building are a number of a 5-foot-by-5-foot cells that house the resident priests. Anyone can plainly see that the priests outnumber the cells two to one; likely indicating that the cells are shared and they alternatively sleep and work in shifts. Beyond the cells, a rear door exits into a narrow alley a mere five feet away from the city wall. Piles of soiled bandages are in tidy bundles—likely waiting to be taken away to be laundered—are stacked neatly beside the door.

THE GUARDS

A total of four **guards** are stationed at the House of Suffering. Two stand near the entrance facing Southroad Keep while the other two are posted at the bed of one patient in particular. One of them fiddles with a deck of playing cards while the other snores loudly with his feet propped up on the bed's frame. Suffice to say, this patient is likely who the characters are looking for.

Convincing the guards to relinquish their charge can be tricky; they're under strict orders to keep an eye on her until she is well enough to be taken to the Southroad Keep and remanded to the custody of the Hawks. Any character succeeding at a DC 12 Charisma (Deception) check successfully manages to dupe the guards into turning her over. The DC is the same for those attempting to use honeyed words or threats, but such characters have disadvantage on such checks; the guards know better than to disobey orders, even if asked nicely. Luckily for the adventurers, however, the members of Mulmaster's City Watch are not particularly principled;

they are well known for their corruption. Any Charisma check attempted by a character offering a bribe in excess of a gold piece is made with advantage. If successful, the guards leave the House of Suffering. However, they return 15 minutes later after being admonished for abandoning their post. If the characters are there when they return, the guards attempt to subdue them. If successful, they are taken to Southroad Keep where Zora Culkin bails them out the following morning.

Otherwise, the guards stationed here absolutely do not expect any trouble. However, if trouble should arise, they shout an alarm, calling for reinforcements from a watch shack across the street. Backup, consisting of an additional six **guards**, arrives and enters initiative at the beginning of the third round.

ADJUSTING THE ENCOUNTER

Here are recommendations for adjusting this combat encounter. These are not cumulative.

- **Very weak party:** No backup arrives
- **Weak party:** Only four guards arrive as backup
- **Strong party:** Replace the two guards standing guard at the door with two thugs
- **Very strong party:** Replace the two guards standing guard at the door with two thugs; replace two guards in backup patrol with two thugs

THE STAFF

The lay clergy of Ilmater working at the hospice (eight **commoners**) are kind and gentle. They care only for the well-being of those in their care. That said, they are in favor of the characters' plans to retrieve the patient. Once the guards have been either slain, subdued, or otherwise dealt with, they assist the characters in preparing the young woman for travel. They are willing to provide a litter with which to carry the woman through town, but if the characters have made other plans or arrangements, they assist to the best of their ability. However, they do not leave the hospice with the characters; they provide what help they are able and remain behind. The Ilmatari use no titles other than Brother or Sister. All wear the symbol of Ilmater (two pale hands with a red cord wrapped around the wrists) either as a pin over the heart or a chain around their neck.

As easy as convincing the priests to release the woman might be, the characters must assuage their concerns over the harm that she might incur in moving her. The priests insist that, at the very least, she be carried through the street on a litter. Allow the characters to come up with creative ways to convince the priests otherwise. Rolls shouldn't supplant ingenuity here.

In the unlikely event that the characters attack the unarmed and unarmored clergy, the fight is over quickly, the priests make no attempts to defend themselves or attack the characters—they only interject themselves between the adventurers and their patients to ensure that no harm befalls those in their care. Any situation that involves the death of the priest at the hand of a character is likely one of outright murder.

THE PATIENT

The patient is a young human woman who, in addition to many cuts and bruises, has suffered extensive burns over much of the right side of her body. Worse still, it is likely that she has lost her right eye, judging by the bandages that cover it. Any of the staff questioned about the young woman explains that she is in a deep state of shock and was badly dehydrated when found.

A close examination of the woman's body also reveals the remnants of a curious tattoo, partially burned away. A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check reveals that the tattoo appears to be a modified version of the Old Chondathan rune for “*flame*.”

The woman, Ravia, can be revived. If healed through the use of *cure wounds*, a healing kit, or any other ability, she wakes up. However, she is still very weak and quite disoriented due to the trauma she has experienced over the last few days. She seems oblivious to what is going on and speaks little. When she does speak, she utters only the words “*fire and ash*” in little more than a whisper. Despite this, she is able to walk with assistance—albeit rather slowly. This allows the adventurers to transport her to Culkin Manor with a minimum of suspicion, provided they conceal her very, very obvious wounds.

TREASURE

If slain or subdued, the guards have a total of 25 gp among them and one of them wears a gold chain worth 50 gp. Two *potions of healing*, two herbalism kits, and two healing kits can be looted from the hospice, though the potions and kits are likely meant for the patients at the hospice and the Ilmatari frown on the act. Additionally, if the characters did not kill any of the guards at the hospice, Zora Culkin rewards them with an additional 25 gp.

XP AWARD

If the characters are extraordinarily clever in dealing with the guards or manage to avoid combat with the guards, award each character 25 XP.

IN TRANSIT

The adventurers, in possession of the unconscious Ravia, must move her across town to Culkin Manor. Zora Culkin resides more or less on the opposite side of town from the House of Suffering. This represents quite the trek through neighborhoods of various social strata, including passing within eyeshot of the Tower of the Blades and the Black Lord's Altar.

HOW DID THEY SEE US?

Despite all precautions, the adventurers are eventually spotted as they make their way toward Culkin Manor. There are just simply many eyes in the city to escape all notice, and too many people on the Hawks' payroll providing surveillance to the state. Anyone might be taking money from the Hawks, Cloaks, or Blades in exchange for information. Anyone. This is an underlying theme that should begin to color very nearly every NPC interaction in the game.

The trip from the hospice to Culkin Manor should feel dicey and dangerous regardless of any precautions taken. Describe the gaze of strangers passing across the group no matter their appearance or method of conveyance. If they travel on foot, other pedestrians and guardsmen take notice of the girl shuffling along or carried as if in a stupor. If they hire a carriage or wagon, describe undesirables sizing them up—as if aiming to rob or follow them.

When you are ready, proceed to Part 2, below.

PART 2: A HOUSE DIVIDED

As the adventurers travel from poorer districts into richer districts, they notice that the ranks of the City Watch are replaced more and more by members of the Soldiery, cool and professional in their polished armor and weapons.

At this point, word of the adventurers's whereabouts has found its way to the hands of Sark Tolliver, who is now preparing an attack on Culkin Manor during the wee hours of the night.

CULKIN MANOR

Culkin Manor is located in a wealthy neighborhood just near the Tower of Arcane Might in the northwest part of Mulmaster.

When the characters arrive at Culkin Manor, read the following.

Despite the dim light of the evening and your unfamiliarity with the neighborhood, you easily find Culkin Manor. The three-story manor house features large cream and red banners on each wall, emblazoned with the crest of House Culkin.

As you set foot on the Culkin grounds, you notice that the interior of the manor house is well lit. A pair of guards at the front of the house nod and open the heavy oak doors for you, stepping aside to let you pass. You are obviously expected.

Upon arriving at the manor, the adventurers are greeted by Zora Culkin's servant, Dawsom. He escorts the characters to Zora Culkin's private study on the second floor. He engages in idle banter, but speaks nothing about their arrangement with his mistress.

ROLEPLAYING DAWSOM

Dawsom, by all outward appearance, is a model servant, referring to his mistress as "my lady" and everyone else as "sir," "madam," or "miss." Dawsom is a human male in his early sixties, a shade under six feet, with receding, white hair cut short.

However, Dawsom has a secret. He has grown resentful of his family's legacy and wishes for something more. To that end, he has accepted an offer from the Hawks to spy on his mistress and her dealings with the Lords' Alliance. Because of this, his typical cordiality is cut with an edge of suspicion and unease.

Despite his betrayals, he still loves Zora Culkin like a family member and is protective of her physical well being.

ZORA CULKIN

Zora Rosealine Culkin is currently in her library, pouring over a book when the adventurers arrive.

This room has tall bookshelves lining the walls, each full of hundreds of books, tomes, and scrolls covering hundreds of different subjects. An oversized chair sits in corner beside a table set with an ornate oil lamp.

Zora Culkin is reclining in the chair, pouring over a book when you arrive. "I'm glad you returned." She says, setting the book on the table. "Dawsom, please prepare rooms for the young woman and our guests. Once you've done that, I am sure you could find something for them to eat."

Dawsom shuffles away to do as he was bid, and Zora Culkin asks that one or more of the adventurers accompany him with the unconscious woman and secure a place for her to rest. If any of the adventurers stay behind, she briefs them on her expectations, otherwise, she waits until the adventurers return.

Because of the lateness of the hour, Zora Culkin invites the adventurers to stay in one or more of the three other disused bedrooms on the second floor as her guests. She had the rooms prepared in anticipation of the success of her plans before her staff left for the day. She doesn't anticipate any trouble with the Elmwood survivor, but would like them on hand in case she is upset when she recovers. Zora Culkin also assures them that their reward will be settled up in the morning.

Given the hour, Dawsom prepares a light meal of meats and cheeses for Zora Culkin and the adventurers; it is complete with wine, ale, or whatever else they might like to drink. He even has a bottle of chilled cow's milk—quite the rarity.

For the remainder of the evening, the characters have idle time that they may spend as they choose. Here are some suggestions.

- Any character with the Medicine skill or access to magical healing can tend to Ravia, now worn out from her trip to the manor and fast asleep. Regardless of the extent of their success, she is still suffering from her ordeal; at best, she wakes up and whispers the words *"fire and ash"* before succumbing to sleep once more.
- Zora Culkin is a skilled wizard and enjoys discussing magical theory. Those who wish to indulge her

endless talking find her an engaging participant in such conversation.

- Similarly, the home has a well-appointed library and characters can find no end of interesting things to read.
- The kitchen is similarly well-stocked and Dawsom is happy to prepare for them whatever they might like to eat or drink.

Regardless of how they spend their evening, Zora eventually retires to her chambers for the night. She ensures that the characters know they have free reign of her grounds, but asks only that they keep the noise to a minimum.

The adventurers may be expecting trouble. If so, they are free to set a watch. Note where they are when the do so, as it may be important during beginning of the attack on the manor.

Once the adventurers have bedded down for the night, proceed to Welcome Intruders, below.

WELCOME, INTRUDERS

Three hours after bedding down for the night, agents of Sark Tolliver and the Cult of the Eternal Flame lay siege to Culkin Manor in an attempt to retrieve Ravia from within. While Tolliver has a cadre of his own thugs and ruffians in his employ, the Cult of the Eternal Flame has lent their aid in recovering Ravia.

GENERAL FEATURES

Culkin Manor has the following general features.

Area. The mansion itself is a rather large, two-story manor, perhaps 100 feet side—including the front landing.

Light. The interior of Culkin Manor is well-lit by oil lamps in sconces lining the main hall and staircases.

Sounds. None. Zora Culkin resides in the large home alone. Save for her activity and the shuffling feet of Dawsom, her servant, the home is usually utterly silent.

Smells. Dusty air. Cooking. Alchemical odors.

Furnishings. Couches, chairs, and a variety of tables. Chandeliers hang from the ceilings, and a number of large tapestries from the walls. Any number of these items can be used to thematic effect during combat.

Fire. Each encounter area has a few areas of burning debris. These areas are treated as difficult terrain. Additionally, any creatures that enter or starts their turn within the area must succeed at a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw or suffer 3 (1d6) fire damage.

During the wee hours of the night, the Cult of the Eternal Flame strikes.

The night's silence is shattered by a loud crash elsewhere in the manor. The sounds of shouting and clomping boots can be heard reverberating through the home.

This is the sound of the agents of Sark Tolliver and the Cult of the Eternal Flame coming to retrieve Ravia. During this siege, the characters engage in three successive encounters, chosen by the DM at random or by preference. Once an encounter has been chosen, the characters are able to determine where it is occurring without the need for a check.

THE ADVENTURERS

The characters begin this part of the adventure either asleep in one of the three unused bedrooms in the manor or awake in a location of their choosing. However, due to the exceptionally late hour, players should be asked to rationalize what their character is doing if not asleep in bed. When the siege begins, the characters have not yet rested enough to receive the benefit of a long rest. Note that there is no penalty for the characters to sleep in their armor, it is reasonable to assume that they would be doing so while on the job.

RAVIA'S ROOM

One or more characters may wish to remain behind with the woman. Allow this, but in-so-doing, they must "split the party" if they wish to stop Tolliver's agents.

In such a case, Dawsom shows up accompanied by a pair of house guards wearing the red and cream of House Culkin. After instructing the adventurers to go and fend off whomever is downstairs, he and the guards hurry into Ravia's room. The characters can hear the click of the door's lock and what sounds like furniture being moved to further safeguard Ravia.

What the characters don't realize, however, is that the two guards are actually two **spies** in the employ of Sark Tolliver. They are here to rescue Ravia. And while they would prefer to do so without being noticed by the adventurers, they are not above attacking at an opportune time (such as would arise if the group splits up to both guard the woman and combat the intruders downstairs, simultaneously).

The spies's weapons are equipped with *slumber resin* (see Sidebar, below). If the characters manage to avoid the poison's effects, the spies do not kill them—only

incapacitate them. As detailed in "Traveling between Encounters", above, characters must succeed on Wisdom (Perception) checks to hear one another if separated by area.

If the entire party hunkers down and stays in Ravia's room, the two spies accompanying Dawsom attack. At the same time, the foes contained in an encounter chosen by the DM burst through the door or the room's window (if a flying creature). At the end of the fourth round, the foes in the second encounter follow suit, followed by the foes from the third encounter four rounds after that.

Once the spies are alone with Ravia, They flee with her through the room's window and scale a rope down to the street below to a waiting wagon.

SLUMBER RESIN

The spies's weapons are coated with a thick, viscous poison called slumber resin. When the target takes at least 1 point of slashing or piercing damage from the weapon used to deliver the poison, the target must succeed at a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 10 minutes. The target is also unconscious while poisoned in this way. The creature wakes up if it takes damage or if another creature takes an action to shake it awake.

ENCOUNTERS

Most of the rooms in the manor contain an encounter option once the siege begins. The characters should not encounter each of them. Instead, the DM should choose 3 encounters adjusted as follows. Shortly after the adventurers complete an encounter, the next begins. Due to the amount of noise caused by the creatures in the next encounter, the characters are able to figure out what area of the house to travel to next.

ADJUSTING THE ENCOUNTER

Here are recommendations for adjusting this series of combat encounters. These are not cumulative.

- **Very Weak:** 3 easy encounters
- **Weak:** 2 easy encounters, 1 medium encounter
- **Average:** 3 medium encounters
- **Strong:** 2 medium encounters, 1 hard encounter
- **Very Strong:** 3 hard encounters

TRAVELING BETWEEN ENCOUNTERS

As Tolliver's agents enter the home from different places, the characters have to move throughout the home throughout the raid. Any character that leaves one room to go to another spends 2 full rounds doing so. If the destination is on a different floor, the time is doubled. This is also an opportunity for the characters to get creative. If, for example, a character is on the 2nd floor

and is racing to an encounter on the first, he may attempt to slide down the bannister or simply leap off the 2nd floor landing. In either case, dispense ability score checks or damage where necessary, but not to excess. If successful, the amount of time needed to get to the next area is cut by half.

When dealing with groups that have split their forces, any characters located in a different area than another must succeed at a DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check, due to the distance between the areas. This check is made with disadvantage due to the sheer amount of noise being made during the siege.

CULKIN MANOR (GROUND FLOOR)

The ground floor of the manor is a series of rooms surrounding a large, central gallery.

1. THE GALLERY (EASY)

This large room is decorated with busts, paintings and hangings depicting the lives and times of House Culkin. A large, central staircase leads to the second floor landing. An ornate crystal and brass chandelier hangs in the center of the room near the second floor landing.

A group of four **bandits** entered the manor through the front door. Aside from their normal weapons, each of them also carries a torch (treat as a club). When the characters arrive, they are busy lighting wall-hangings and curtains on fire. There are no signs of the guards that had been guarding the doors when the characters entered the manor.

2. THE GRAND ROOM (EASY)

This open room is empty save for a grand piano in one corner beside a large hearth. It is decorated in the typical trappings of wealth.

A **thug** is here with two **mastiffs**. The mastiffs are wearing leather barding which increases their AC to 13.

3. THE KITCHEN (MEDIUM)

A fire burns in the huge hearth on the far wall of this room. A wide counter winds around the wall, with a number of pots, pans, and other cooking implements stacked and hung neatly within reach. A door to the left leads to a modest pantry, well-stocked with food. A trapdoor in the floor of the pantry leads to a cellar, with a number of wine racks.

Cultists of the Eternal Flame have summoned five **smoke mephits** from the burning kitchen. They are torching the place and generally causing mayhem.

4. THE DINING HALL (HARD)

This extravagant dining hall features a large hearth on the far wall and a long table of dark wood in its center. Tapestries of red and cream hang from the wall. An ornate crystal and brass chandelier hangs in the center of the room.

An iron-bound wagon carrying three **fire snakes** and led by two panicking horses has smashed through the wall of the dining hall. The fire snakes emerge from the wagon and begin wreaking havoc on the place.

5. THE LIBRARY (MEDIUM)

This room has tall bookshelves lining the walls, each full of hundreds of books, tomes, and scrolls covering innumerable different subjects. An oversized chair sits in corner beside a table set with an ornate oil lamp.

A **cult fanatic** and four **cultists** are here, searching the books for anything of importance and setting the rest on fire. When the characters arrive, many of the shelves and their contents are on fire. The flaming books can be used as an improvised thrown weapon (1d4 bludgeoning damage plus 1 fire damage).

6. THE GARDEROBE (MEDIUM)

This small, cramped room contains a typical privy and a handsome copper wash basin on a table, full of clean water. Pungent, dried herbs and perfumed wall hangings mask any unpleasant odors one would usually find in such a room.

Three **magmins** have climbed out of the garderobe and are in the hallway separating the library from the parlor. They are covered in the stinking, burning remnants of whatever muck they crawled through to arrive here. Any creature within 5 feet of one of magmin must succeed at a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned until they are no longer adjacent.

7. THE PARLOR (HARD)

This room is furnished with a number of comfortable looking couches and chairs, all of which are covered in sheets to keep the dust away. It is obvious that Zora Culkin hasn't had company in a good while.

A **veteran** and a **thug** are here, hacking away at whatever they can find. Each is armed with a torch in addition to their primary weapon (treat as a club). They ignore the sleeping noblewoman, but the characters must exercise care in not injuring her themselves in the fight.

CULKIN MANOR (2ND FLOOR)

The second floor of the manor is similar to the first, though slightly less used.

1, 2, 3, OR 4. UNUSED BEDROOMS (EASY)

This modestly-sized bedroom is full of furniture, all of which is covered by sheets, likely to protect it from dust and vermin. Unlike previous rooms, no decorations are present.

Three **steam mephits** are here, each carrying a torch and gleefully lighting things on fire.

5. ZORA CULKIN'S CHAMBERS

This large room has a beautiful canopy bed of dark wood with fine dressings. A table rests to each side set with an oil lamp. A book lay open, face down on one of the tables.

Zora Culkin is asleep in her bed when the characters arrive. Despite their best efforts, they are unable to wake her. Unbeknownst to the adventurers, Dawsom slipped a potion into her wine at dinner that has placed her in a deep, deep slumber. No amount of jostling can wake her. Neither will any spell or ability that removes poison or disease.

It is Dawsom's hope that she sleeps through the siege and be spared any violence.

6. ZORA CULKIN'S OFFICE (HARD)

This well-furnished room features a desk beside its only window—cramped with piles of paper and books. A large table also sits in the center of the room.

A **flameskull** has been called into support Sark Tolliver's assault on Culkin Manor. The creature is using its *fire ray* to torch the contents of the room.

BURNING DOWN THE HOUSE

As the encounters progress, the fires within the manor begin to burn in earnest. Walls are soon engulfed in flame, the higher spaces near the ceiling are clouded in smoke, etc.

Once the characters have succeeded at all three encounters, upon returning to Ravia's room, they find the door (still) locked and barred. No amount of knocking yields any response. After a fair amount of banging and lock picking, they find that she is gone (along with Dawsom and the two house guards that accompanied him, if they were used). If the characters go back for Zora Culkin, they find her safe in her bed—sound asleep.

Five minutes (50 rounds) after the commencement of the attack, the house begins to collapse. If, for some reason, the characters are still within the manor, they suffer 3 (1d6) fire damage each round and must succeed at a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or suffer one level of exhaustion from smoke inhalation so long as they are within. If the adventurers do not go back for Zora Culkin by this point, she is consumed in the fire and slain.

Once everyone is free from the blazing inferno, the characters need to decide what to do next. It is shortly after 3 bells, so finding a safe place to bed down and finish their long rest would be ideal. Allow them to decide before moving on—it has little impact.

If, miraculously, the characters managed to prevent the Tolliver's agents or the cult from reclaiming Ravia, she simply disappears during the confusion following the fire. The last character to see her finds only a pile of smoldering cinders in her place.

STOPPING THE FIRE

The most pressing concern for the characters is if they take too much time trying to stop the fire before continuing on to the next encounter, advancing the destruction of the house. Also at this level there is not much beyond the spell *create water* that might assist them and using that often means less available healing. That said award those who think of quick or imaginative ways to slow/stop the fire with an additional minute per successful attempt before the house collapses.

XP AWARD

If the characters managed to prevent Tolliver's agents or the cult from reclaiming Ravia, award each character 25 XP.

WHERE TO, NOW?

The following morning, Zora Culkin (if dead, Pieron Ramdon) rewards the party an additional 100 gp for their part in defending her manor.

Zora Culkin (Pieron) presents the following information.

- Culkin (Pieron) is determined to retrieve Ravia. Unfortunately, between the drug administered to her and smoke inhalation (or, in Pieron's case, his crippled leg), she (he) is in no shape to track down the attackers herself.
- A series of wagon tracks indicate that a wagon was parked beneath the window of Ravia's room. They lead away from Culkin Manor. Other members of the

Lords Alliance have tracked the wagon's passage to the Zhent Ghettos on the southern edge of town.

- The trail went cold there, though. Despite a couple hours of searching, they were unable to find the wagon, let alone its occupants.
- The two most obvious methods of tracking down the kidnappers' destination are following the tracks left by the wagon, or questioning any of the saboteurs that the adventurers took alive during the melee.

If the characters spared one of the raiders, she divulges the following information.

- She was paid in coin by a middle man and has no idea who she was working for. She was terrified when she saw some of the monsters that joined in the attack.
- She and the other kidnappers were instructed to simply dump the unconscious woman on a trash midden in the alley behind the disused temple to Cyric.
- The captive doesn't know why they were sent to fetch the girl, only that they were to torch the place once they did. The "old butler" was supposed to help them get in the manor house.

WHAT? ZORA CULKIN IS DEAD?

If Zora Culkin was slain in the attack, the adventurers are approached by a representative of the Lords Alliance; Pieron Ramdon.

ROLEPLAYING PIERON RAMDON

Pieron Ramdon is a former soldier from Cormyr who relocated to the Moonsea region to find his fortune. An imposing figure of a man, Pieron walks with a noticeable limp acquired in his more violent years.

The years since those have been well enough. He looks more or less like the striking man with dark hair and eyes that he was in his youth, except his hair is a bit greyer and his midsection a bit more round. He has a booming voice that is sure to demand obedience.

Proceed to "Part 3: Fire in the Underbelly" when the adventurers are ready to enter the Zhent Ghetto.

PART 3: FIRE IN THE CHAPTERHOUSE

The adventurers travel to the gritty, squalid streets of the Zhent Ghetto in order to find the sole survivor of the destruction of Elmwood.

THE ZHENT GHETTO

When Zhentil Keep was destroyed, many Zhents fled to Mulmaster, seeking refuge. Mulmaster, however, had little interest in maintaining their alliance. Despite this, the Council of Blades eventually permitted the refugees to take up residence in the city, though to this day, they are still treated as outsiders. For the most part, they reside in the southern-most part of the city in sprawling ghettos that hug Mulmaster's outer walls. They are heavily taxed, denied the rights of citizenship, and persecuted by the city's government and its populace.

Whether the adventurers found out about the old temple of Cyric or are simply on the hunt for clues to the kidnappers's destination, they have to talk to the locals to find what they are looking for, even if it's just directions to the temple. The streets of the Zhent Ghetto are all but impossible for any outsider to navigate.

Getting the locals to open up can be difficult, but the characters eventually figure out where to go. However, if time permits, this is an excellent opportunity to introduce the characters to this area of Mulmaster. Here are some suggestions for possible roleplaying encounters.

Non-Zhentish Characters, Nobles, Outlanders. Trying to pry loose answers from the populace earns the characters foul looks and even a glob of spittle or two. Even bribery does not seem to make things better; the locals tell any lie they can dream up for a chance at some quick money. If the adventurers flash too much gold while trying to grease the locals, they may even be led into an ambush, where they can expect to be jumped by a gang of three **bandits** in a dark alley.

Zhentarim Members, Criminals, Urchins. These characters might find that they are treated remarkably well—by everyone but the City Watch, that is.

Others. Individuals of this ilk find a comfortable middle ground. It takes a bit of asking around, but once a few coins have been dropped and debts exchanged, these characters are led to the former temple of Cyric without incident.

When the party is ready to move on the ruined temple of Cyric and the hidden Chapterhouse of the Eternal Flame located within, go to the section titled “House of Lies” to proceed.

HOUSE OF LIES

The small temple dedicated to Cyric has been ruined for decades. Gaining entry into the temple of Cyric is as simple as walking through the front door. Every window was broken decades ago and boarded over, before the boards themselves were removed for firewood, allowing daylight into the ruined structure. The pews suffered a similar fate. Now only braces in the floors indicate where any seating had ever existed.

Only one remnant of Cyric's worship remains: the sacrificial altar to the former Lord of Murder is still there. Destroying pews is one thing, but none are desperate or crazy enough to try stealing the marble altar. It is because of the weight of Cyric's unholy reputation that the hidden temple beneath the temple has escaped scrutiny for so many years.

Finding the secret passage beneath the altar is surprisingly simple. Any character searching around the altar finds sign of recent passage. The dust surrounding it has been disturbed by footprints and what looks like the altar itself sliding to the side. From there, all that remains is to spot the secret catch on the back of the marble altar. Activating it causes the massive altar to slide to one side, revealing a staircase leading down into the depths.

THE CHAPTERHOUSE OF ETERNAL FLAME

Immediately after laying eyes on the hidden chamber beneath Cyric's temple, it is immediately apparent that the construction is completely different.

GENERAL FEATURES

The chapterhouse has the following general features.

Area. The chamber is 40-by-40-foot chamber of exquisite construction. Though it seems to be of dwarven manufacture, it is not—something that dwarves immediately recognize. A number of braziers are set around the room, unlit and empty.

Runes. Foot-wide runes cover the wall in orderly rows. Although they appear to have been carved into the wall, closer examination reveals that they have been burned into the stone with remarkable precision. The runes are a form of Ignan; anyone who can read the characters interprets them to be a recounting of a number of different aspects of fire.

Light. As the player characters enter the hidden Chapterhouse, the entry chamber is pitch black, so the only light is what they bring in with them. Later, as the encounter here unfolds, the elemental symbols of Fire begin to glow dully, casting dim light throughout the temple.

Sound. Falling dust. Chittering vermin. Crackling Flame.

Smells. Burnt flesh and hair. Smoldering coals.

1. THE BURNING INDOCTRINATION

As the adventurers approach the far end of the chamber, they immediately spot one enormous, three-foot-tall rune covering what appears to be a door hewn from a single sheet of volcanic glass, so thin that it is nearly translucent. Anyone able to read Ignan identifies the symbol, which reads “Eye of Flame.”

If the characters attempt to touch or otherwise interact with the stone slab, the altar in the temple above suddenly slides smoothly back into place, blocking the exit at the top of the staircase.

On cue, a low, gravelly voice echoes throughout the chamber, speaking in Common. “WHO WATCHES THE WORLD BURN?”

The only correct answer to this riddle is the passphrase used by the Cult, “Imix, servant of the Elder Eye,” spoken in Ignan. Any other answer triggers the manifestation of a group of mephits bound to protect the hidden temple.

The braziers in the room burst into flame and the air fills with choking smoke. From the now smoldering bowls, a handful of small, winged figures of fire claw their way free and move towards you, malice burning in their glowing eyes.

Using the wrong passphrase summons three **magma mephits** and two **smoke mephits**, who attack the party.

ADJUSTING THE ENCOUNTER

Here are recommendations for adjusting this combat encounter. These are not cumulative.

- **Very weak party:** Remove two magma mephits, one smoke mephit
- **Weak party:** Remove two magma mephits
- **Strong party:** Add one magma mephit, two smoke mephits
- **Very strong party:** Add three magma mephits, one smoke mephit

Once the mephits are defeated, the fiery essence of the runes dull back down to the color of normal stone, and

the stone slab unseals of its own accord, leading further into the Chapterhouse.

TREASURE

Oddly enough, when slain, gems are recoverable amongst the mephits remains. Warm to the touch, they are worth a total of 50 gp.

2. THE CELLS

The door leads into a 10-foot-wide hallway, with three rooms on each side, and a set of iron double doors at the end of the hallway.

An investigation of the rooms reveals that they are currently being used as living quarters. Every room contains a crude bunk of wood and hay, a weapon rack, an armor stand, and a metal chest. Three of the chests are empty. Two of the chests are unlocked, revealing nothing more than clothing and a total of 5 gp. However, the iron chest in the last room is locked. Any character using a set of thieves' tools that succeeds at a DC 20 Dexterity check unlocks the chest.

TREASURE

Inside are several sets of clothing, a journal bound in oiled leather, 95 gp (neatly stacked), and a *potion of healing*. Ravia (see Area 3, below) carries the sole key to this chest. The characters may choose to break the chest open, but it is very difficult and makes a tremendous amount of noise (AC 19, 18 hit points).

In addition to the chest, Ravia's *staff of charming* is leaned against the wall of this cell.

The journal makes for interesting reading. The property of Ravia herself, it describes several important entries.

- Two pages make reference to a *devastation orb*. Ravia did not know much about the orbs, so the journal is silent on their creation or use, but she does mention the rumor that the items can supposedly summon destructive energies equal to that of a large firestorm or even a volcano.
- One page describes Ravia's plans to receive cargo in Elmwood and transport it into Mulmaster. The timetable fits in with the destruction of Elmwood during Ravia's visit.
- Several entries mention a plan to forcibly recruit worshipers of the Eternal Flame through the use of a magical staff and a ritual circle. Early experiments apparently resulted in the complete annihilation of the subject's consciousness, but later entries indicate that the process may have finally been perfected.

- One entry mentions a “pet Hawk”, implying that there is a traitor within the organization that may work with the Cult of the Eternal Flame.

All that remains is the temple proper, located behind the double doors at the end of the hall. The iron doors do not allow much in the way of eavesdropping, but a woman can be heard speaking loudly on the other side, though the words remain indistinct.

3. THE TEMPLE OF IMIX

This chamber serves as the main body of the temple to Imix. The room is expertly hewn from the same stone, but covered in beaten brass plates.

The adventurers emerge into the heart of the Chapterhouse, a temple dedicated to Imix. There, a number of cultists wearing the leather aprons and breeches typical of smiths surround the brazier. On the platform beside Ravia is their life's work: what appears to be a suit of stylized bronze armor.

This immense chamber is oddly-shaped, almost like a flame. At the far end, an enormous, 10-foot-wide brazier burns fiercely. Surrounding the brazier, a group of people stand chanting—wearing nothing but heavy leather breeches and aprons, and sporting thick, opaque goggles. Sweat courses from their bare shoulders in the stifling room. A familiar-looking woman stands on a raised platform on the far side of the brazier. Beside her on the platform is what appears to be a set of unusually large, bronze armor. Seemingly fresh from the forges, it still glows red with heat.

A man takes a cautious step toward the armor, but recoils in pain at the last moment—likely from the intense heat. The two workers behind him, however, anticipate the move and shove him bodily into the suit.

The gut-wrenching sound and smell of burning flesh and hair fills the air as the suits occupant screams in unfathomable agony. Smoke roils and curls from gaps in the armor as tendrils of flame begin to rise from the neck. Within moments, the cultist's entire head is wreathed in flame.

After a dozen terrible heartbeats the last of his screams fade away. However, to your surprise, the unholy creation animates, and leaps into the brazier—drawing a huge red-hot warhammer from within it before moving in your direction!

The cultist has been “blessed” by Imix and has become an **azer**. The azer attacks the party alongside the five **cultists** (including Ravia), that are present here. Any cultists present attack until slain.

CREATING AZER THE EASY WAY

Typically, azer are created with a portion of their creator's inner flame, which is then imbued into a body that the creator has, itself, created. In this case, however, Imix has gifted his cult with the ability to encase the spirits of long-dead azer into such bodies through sacrifice and prayer. This is the roughly the equivalent to an *animate dead* spell—a blasphemy of the natural order of things. Were any azer to bear witness to this atrocity, their rage would be unquenchable.

ADJUSTING THE ENCOUNTER

Here are recommendations for adjusting the combat encounter. These are not cumulative.

- **Very weak or weak party:** Remove five cultists as they are consumed in flame as the azer animates
- **Strong party:** Replace one cultist with one cult fanatic
- **Very strong party:** Remove five cultists, add two cult fanatics

TREASURE

The characters find an iron key that unlocks Ravia's chest on one of the cultist's (or cult fanatic's) bodies.

ROLEPLAYING RAVIA

Ravia is cruel, pernicious, and utterly convinced that she cannot be stopped. Now that she is back within her element, she delights in cruelly taunting the adventurers for their wasted efforts, particularly if Zora Culkin was killed during the attack on Culkin Manor.

Hoping to rattle them, she also describes, in graphic detail, the destruction wrought on Elmwood by the *devastation orb* she had in her possession.

CONCLUSION

The discovery and defeat of Ravia and her cultists, as well as the revelations contained within her journal, are viewed with hesitant cheer by the adventurers' patron, whether that patron is Zora Culkin or Pieron Ramdon.

- If Culkin is alive, she invites the adventurers to stay with her for the night so they can relate to her every detail of their investigation they feel comfortable with sharing. If Culkin Manor survived, she doubles the agreed-upon reward for the liberation of Ravia from the hospice.
- In addition, Zora Culkin is thankful for the characters's parts in saving her. Any characters that are arcane spellcasters earn the story award “*To Wear the Cloak*” (see Favors and Enmities, below).
- If Culkin Manor did not survive, or Ramdon is handling the party, the Lords' Alliance furnishes Culkin or Ramdon with enough funding to cover the initial cost of the rescue.
- Scarcely fifteen minutes after the party sits with their

patron to discuss the best use of the journal, Sark Tolliver arrives at their location with fifteen members of the Soldiery (all veterans) accompanying him. He immediately demands that they turn over the journal, claiming that it is for an internal investigation into the Hawks. Zora Culkin, as frightened as the party has ever seen her, turns it over immediately. In reality, as soon as he leaves, he destroys the journal, erasing all evidence of his involvement.

ROLEPLAYING SARK TOLLIVER

Sark Tolliver works for the Elemental Cults, but is not truly a member. He has a younger half-brother who was brainwashed into the Fire Cult, and he has received assurances that the younger Tolliver will only survive if Sark cooperates with the Cult's leadership. This means that he works actively to send reports to the Cult's leadership and to suppress information that may lead to discovery of the Cult's existence, whereabouts, and motives.

Sark Tolliver is not one to shout threats or mince words. Any threats he deigns to make are delivered in his customarily soft voice, though he rarely needs to resort to threats, with the weight of his office behind him. His eyes are hard and bespeak years of horrific sights. Though he has lines in his grim, gaunt face, it is difficult to pinpoint his exact age, partially due to his shaved head and bare face. His weapons evidence years of wear and are practical rather than exotic.

REWARDS

Make sure the players note their character's rewards on the adventure log sheets. Give your name and DCI number (if applicable) so players can record who ran the session.

EXPERIENCE

Total up all **combat experience** earned for defeated foes, and divide by the number of characters present in the combat. For **non-combat experience**, the rewards are listed per character. Give all characters in the party non-combat experience awards unless otherwise noted.

COMBAT AWARDS	
Name of Foe	XP per Foe
Guard	25
Commoner	10
Thug	100
Spy	200
Bandit	25
Smoke mephit	50
Fire snake	200
Mastiff	25

Cult fanatic	450
Cultist	25
Magmin	100
Veteran	700
Steam mephit	50
Flameskull	1100
Magma mephit	100
Azer	450

NON-COMBAT AWARDS	
Task or Accomplishment	XP per Character
Spared guards at hospice	25
Kept Ravia safe throughout raid	25
Kept Zora Culkin alive	25

The **minimum** total award for each character participating in this adventure is **450 experience points**. The **maximum** total award for each character participating in this adventure is **600 experience points**.

TREASURE

The characters receive the following treasure, divided up amongst the party. Characters should attempt to divide treasure evenly whenever possible. Gold piece values listed for sellable gear are calculated at their selling price, not their purchase price.

Consumable magic items should be divided up however the group sees fit. If more than one character is interested in a specific consumable magic item, the DM can determine who gets it randomly should the group be unable to decide.

Permanent magic items are divided according to a system. See the sidebar if the adventure awards permanent magic items.

TREASURE AWARDS	
Item Name	GP value
Payment from Zora Culkin	150
Looting guards at the hospice	25
Gold chain on guard at the hospice	50
Not killing the City Watch at the hospice	25
Defending the manor	100
Mephits's gems	50
Cultists's cells	5
Hoard of coins in Ravia's room	95

POTION OF HEALING

Potion, common

A description of this item can be found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

STAFF OF CHARMING

Staff, rare (requires attunement)

This staff is fashioned from a piece of pale, white wood, capped with a falcon made of silver. A description of this item can be found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

PERMANENT MAGIC ITEM DISTRIBUTION

D&D Adventurers League has a system in place to determine who is awarded permanent magic items at the end of a session. Each character's logsheet contains a column to record permanent magic items for ease of reference.

- If all the players at the table agree on one character taking possession of a permanent magic item, that character gets the item.
- In the event that one or more characters indicate an interest in possessing a permanent magic item, the character that possesses the fewest permanent magic items gets the item. If there is a tie in the total number of permanent magic items owned by contesting characters, the item's owner is determined randomly by the DM.

RENOWN

All faction members earn **one renown point** for participating in this adventure.

Lords' Alliance characters earn **one additional renown point** for defeating the cultists at the hidden Chapterhouse of Eternal Flame in the Zhent Ghetto.

Emerald Enclave characters earn **one additional renown point** for reporting the information in Ravia's journal outlining the Cult of Elemental Fire's involvement and the role of a *devastation orb* in the destruction of Elmwood.

FAVORS AND ENMITIES

The characters have the opportunity to earn the following story reward during the course of play.

To Wear the Cloak. If your character is an arcane spellcaster, Zora Culkin has offered to sponsor your admittance into the Brotherhood of the Cloak. Though joining the Cloaks is mandatory for any arcanists seeking to stay in Mulmaster for an extended period of time, and sponsorship is not required, Zora Culkin's sponsorship will definitely have its perks.

DOWNTIME

Each character receives **ten downtime days** at the conclusion of this adventure.

DM REWARDS

You receive **200 XP**, **100 gp**, and **ten downtime days** for running this session.

APPENDIX: MONSTER/NPC STATISTICS

GUARD

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 16 (chain shirt, shield)

Hit Points 11 (2d8 + 2)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

Skills Perception +2

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

ACTIONS

Spear. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) piercing damage.

COMMONER

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 10

Hit Points 4 (1d8)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 0 (10 XP)

ACTIONS

Club. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 2 (1d4) bludgeoning damage.

THUG

Medium humanoid (any race), any non-good alignment

Armor Class 11 (leather armor)

Hit Points 32 (5d8 + 10)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)

Skills Intimidation +2

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Pack Tactics. The thug has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the thug's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The thug makes two melee attacks.

Mace. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature.

Hit: 5 (1d6 + 2) bludgeoning damage.

Heavy Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, range 100/400 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d10) piercing damage.

SPY

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 27 (6d8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)

Skills Deception +5, Insight +4, Investigation +5, Perception +6, Persuasion +5, Sleight of Hand +4, Stealth +4

Senses passive Perception 16

Languages any two languages

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

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

Sneak Attack (1/Turn). The spy deals an extra 7 (2d6) damage when it hits a target with a weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 feet of an ally of the spy that isn't incapacitated and the spy doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The spy makes two melee attacks.

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

Hand Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

BANDIT

Medium humanoid (any race), any non-lawful alignment

Armor Class 12 (leather armor)

Hit Points 11 (2d8 + 2)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

ACTIONS

Scimitar. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.

Hit: 4 (1d6 + 1) slashing damage.

Light Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, range 80 ft./320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d8 + 1) piercing damage.

SMOKE MEPHIT

Small elemental, neutral evil

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 22 (5d6 + 5)

Speed 30 ft., fly 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6 (–2)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)

Skills Perception +2, Stealth +4

Damage Immunities fire, poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Auran, Ignan

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Death Burst. When the mephitis dies, it leaves behind a cloud of smoke that fills a 5-foot-radius sphere centered on its space. The sphere is heavily obscured. Wind disperses the cloud, which otherwise lasts for 1 minute.

Innate Spellcasting (1/Day). The mephitis can innately cast *dancing lights*, requiring no material components. Its innate spellcasting ability is Charisma.

ACTIONS

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature.

Hit: 4 (1d4 + 2) slashing damage.

Cinder Breath (Recharge 6). The mephitis exhales a 15-foot cone of smoldering ash. Each creature in that area must succeed on a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw or be blinded until the end of the mephitis's next turn.

FIRE SNAKE

Medium elemental, neutral evil

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 22 (5d8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	7 (–2)	10 (+0)	8 (–1)

Damage Vulnerabilities cold

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons

Damage Immunities fire

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages understands Ignan but can't speak

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Heated Body. A creature that touches the snake or hits it with a melee attack while within 5 feet of it takes 3 (1d6) fire damage.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The snake makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its tail.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d4 + 1) piercing damage plus 3 (1d6) fire damage.

Tail. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d4 + 1) bludgeoning damage plus 3 (1d6) fire damage.

MASTIFF

Medium beast, unaligned

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 5 (1d8 + 1)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	3 (–4)	12 (+1)	7 (–2)

Skills Perception +3

Senses passive Perception 13

Languages —

Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

Keen Hearing and Smell. The mastiff has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 11 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

CULT FANATIC

Medium humanoid (any race), any non-good alignment

Skills Deception +4, Persuasion +4, Religion +2

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Dark Devotion. The fanatic has advantage on saving throws against being charmed or frightened.

Spellcasting. The fanatic is a 4th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 11, +3 to hit with spell attacks). The fanatic has the following cleric spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *light*, *sacred flame*, *thaumaturgy*

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

2nd level (3 slots): *hold person*, *spiritual weapon*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The fanatic makes two melee attacks.

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage.

CULTIST

Medium humanoid (any race), any non-good alignment

Armor Class 12 (leather armor)

Hit Points 9 (2d8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

Skills Deception +2, Religion +2

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

Dark Devotion. The cultist has advantage on saving throws against being charmed or frightened.

ACTIONS

Scimitar. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) slashing damage.

MAGMIN

Small elemental, chaotic neutral

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 9 (2d6 + 2)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
7 (–2)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	8 (–1)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons

Damage Immunities fire

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Ignan

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Death Burst. When the magmin dies, it explodes in a burst of fire and magma. Each creature within 10 feet of it must make a DC 11 Dexterity saving throw, taking 7 (2d6) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. Flammable objects that aren't being worn or carried in that area are ignited.

Ignited Illumination. As a bonus action, the magmin can set itself ablaze or extinguish its flames. While ablaze, the magmin sheds bright light in a 10-foot radius and dim light for an additional 10 feet.

ACTIONS

Touch. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (2d6) fire damage. If the target is a creature or a flammable object, it ignites. Until a creature takes an action to douse the fire, the creature takes 3 (1d6) fire damage at the end of each of its turns.

VETERAN

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 17 (splint)

Hit Points 58 (9d8 + 18)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

Skills Athletics +5, Perception +2

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The veteran makes two longsword attacks. If it has a shortsword drawn, it can also make a shortsword attack.

Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) slashing damage, or 8 (1d10 + 3) slashing damage if used with two hands.

Shortsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage.

Heavy Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, range 100/400 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d10) piercing damage.

STEAM MEPHIT

Small elemental, neutral evil

Armor Class 10

Hit Points 21 (6d6)

Speed 30 ft., fly 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
5 (−3)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)

Damage Immunities fire, poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Aquan, Ignan

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Death Burst. When the mephit dies, it explodes in a cloud of steam. Each creature within 5 feet of the mephit must succeed on a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw or take 4 (1d8) fire damage.

Innate Spellcasting (1/Day). The mephit can innately cast *blur*, requiring no material components. Its innate spellcasting ability is Charisma.

ACTIONS

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 2 (1d4) slashing damage plus 2 (1d4) fire damage.

Steam Breath (Recharge 6). The mephit exhales a 15-foot cone of scalding steam. Each creature in that area must succeed on a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw, taking 4 (1d8) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

FLAMESKULL

Tiny undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 40 (9d4 + 18)

Speed 0 ft., fly 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
1 (−5)	17 (+3)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)

Skills Arcana +5, Perception +2

Damage Resistances lightning, necrotic, piercing

Damage Immunities cold, fire, poison

Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, paralyzed, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Common

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Illumination. The flameskull sheds either dim light in a 15-foot radius, or bright light in a 15-foot radius and dim light for an additional 15 feet. It can switch between the options as an action.

Magic Resistance. The flameskull has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Rejuvenation. If the flameskull is destroyed, it regains all its hit points in 1 hour unless holy water is sprinkled on its remains or a *dispel magic* or *remove curse* spell is cast on them.

Spellcasting. The flameskull is a 5th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). It requires no somatic or material components to cast its spells. The flameskull has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrip (at will): *mage hand*

1st level (3 slots): *magic missile*, *shield*

2nd level (2 slots): *blur*, *flaming sphere*

3rd level (1 slot): *fireball*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The flameskull uses Fire Ray twice.

Fire Ray. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +5 to hit, range 30 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (3d6) fire damage.

MAGMA MEPHIT

Small elemental, neutral evil

Armor Class 11

Hit Points 22 (5d6 + 5)

Speed 30 ft., fly 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (−1)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	7 (−2)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

Skills Stealth +3

Damage Vulnerabilities cold

Damage Immunities fire, poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Ignan, Terran

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Death Burst. When the mephit dies, it explodes in a burst of lava. Each creature within 5 feet of it must make a DC 11 Dexterity saving throw, taking 7 (2d6) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

False Appearance. While the mephit remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from an ordinary mound of magma.

Innate Spellcasting (1/Day). The mephit can innately cast *heat metal* (spell save DC 10), requiring no material components. Its innate spellcasting ability is Charisma.

ACTIONS

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 3 (1d4 + 1) slashing damage plus 2 (1d4) fire damage.

Fire Breath (Recharge 6). The mephit exhales a 15-foot cone of fire. Each creature in that area must make a DC 11 Dexterity saving throw, taking 7 (2d6) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

AZER

Medium elemental, lawful neutral

Armor Class 17 (natural armor, shield)

Hit Points 39 (6d8 + 12)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	12 (+1)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Con +4

Damage Immunities fire, poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses passive Perception 11

Languages Ignan

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Heated Body. A creature that touches the azer or hits it with a melee attack while within 5 feet of it takes 5 (1d10) fire damage.

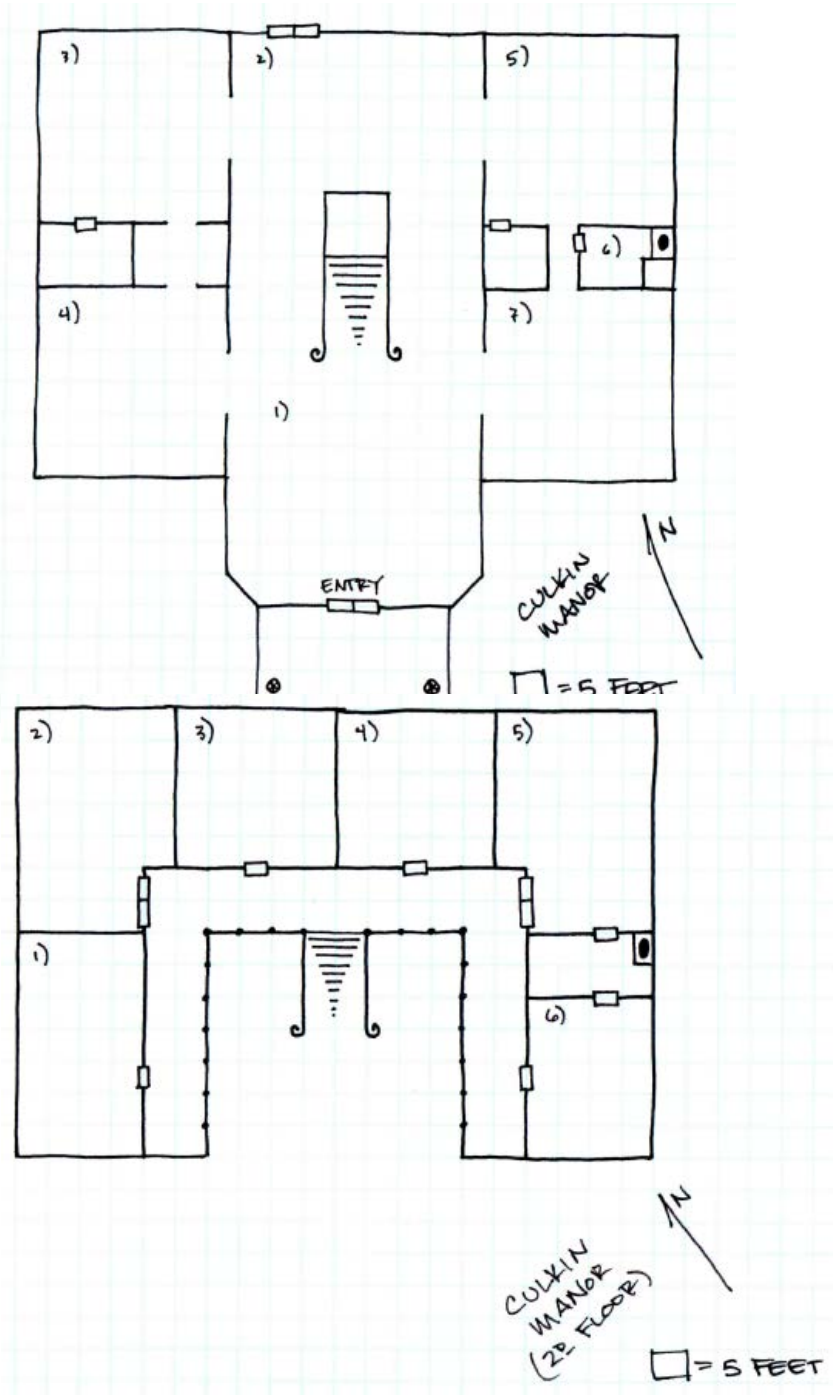
Heated Weapons. When the azer hits with a metal melee weapon, it deals an extra 3 (1d6) fire damage (included in the attack).

Illumination. The azer sheds bright light in a 10-foot radius and dim light for an additional 10 feet.

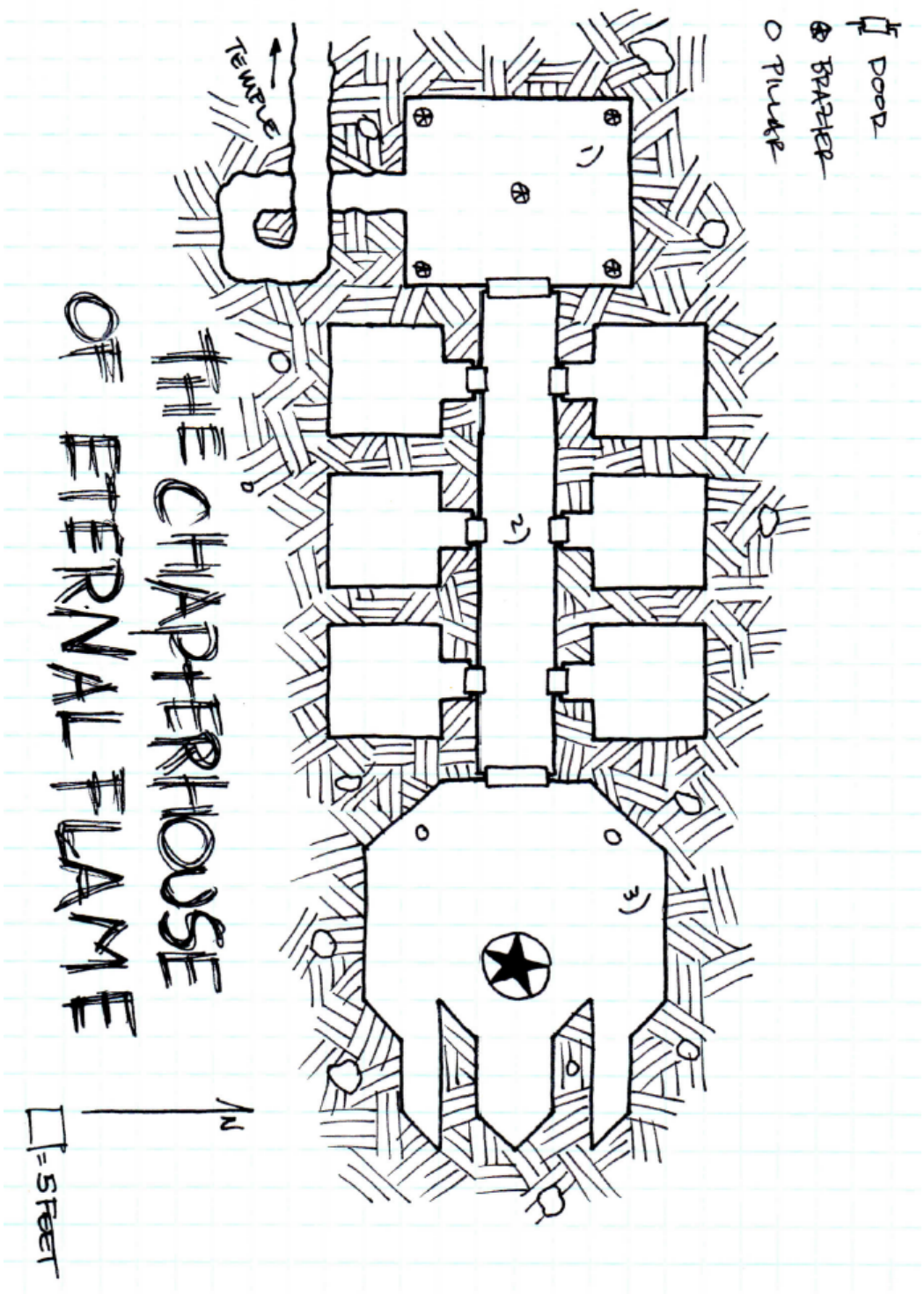
ACTIONS

Warhammer. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) bludgeoning damage, or 8 (1d10 + 3) bludgeoning damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack, plus 3 (1d6) fire damage.

MAP 1: CULKIN MANOR



MAP 2: THE CHAPTERHOUSE OF THE ETERNAL FLAME



DM APPENDIX: NPC SUMMARY

This section is provided to the Dungeon Master to help keep track of the various NPCs present in the adventure.

Zora Rosealine Culkin (ZORE-uh rose-uh-LEEN KULL-kin). Female human head of a Mulmaster noble house with extensive holdings in the now destroyed village of Elmwood. House colors are cream and red. She is in her mid thirties, tall with short jet black hair and pale complexion, formerly a member of the Cloaks before ascending to head of her house.

Ravia (rah-VEE-uh). Female human badly wounded member of the Cult of Eternal Flame. She was transporting an *devastation orb* when it prematurely detonated in the village of Elmwood. She was found floating on debris and unconscious.

Dawsom (DAW-sum). Male human butler for the Culkin family. Despite being devoted to Zora Culkin, he has accepted an offer from the Hawks to spy on the family and its dealings with the Lord's Alliance. This puts him under the power of Sark Tolliver (see below)

Pieron Ramdon (PEER-un RAM-dun). Human male, originally from Corymr, member of the Lord's Alliance. Only appears if Zora Culkin dies. Has a limp and his dark hair is beginning to grey and has a booming voice.

Sark Tolliver (SARK TOLL-ih-ver). Human male member of the Hawks (secret police), his work for the Elemental Cults is done because of coercion rather than belief. His shaved head and gaunt bare face make determining his age difficult, but his eyes are hard. His soft voiced commands usually get instant compliance without resorting to threats.

RESULTS CODE: MARCH-APRIL 2015

If you are DMing this adventure during the months of March or April 2015, please show your players this page. The QR code below can be scanned, and will allow them to give feedback and results on the adventure to influence the storyline in the future!

If a player does not have a mobile device, please tell them to head to dndadventurersleague.org/results to enter their results.

