



# ADVENTURERS LEAGUE

## QUELLING THE HORDE

The Red Plumes have increased patrols in the region surrounding Hillsfar, and a string of disappearances has followed in their wake. Naturally, this has roused the suspicion of the factions. Join your factions and find out the truth behind the missing farmers. A four-hour adventure for 1st-4th level characters.

**Adventure Code: DDEX3-10**

### CREDITS

**Adventure Design:** Rpn Lundeen

**Development and Editing:** Claire Hoffman, Chris Tulach, Travis Woodall

**Organized Play:** Chris Tulach

**D&D Adventurers League Wizards Team:** Adam Lee, Chris Lindsay, Matt Sernett, Chris Tulach

**D&D Adventurers League Administrators:** Robert Adducci, Bill Benham, Travis Woodall, Claire Hoffman, Greg Marks, Alan Patrick



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# EXPEDITIONS

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## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to *Quelling the Horde*, a D&D Expeditions™ adventure, part of the official D&D Adventurers League™ organized play system and the Rage of Demons™ storyline season.

This adventure is designed for **three to seven 1st-4th level characters**, and is optimized for **five 3rd-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, near the city of Hillsfar.

## 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 1st-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
<b>Cure wounds (1st level)</b>	<b>10 gp</b>
Identify	20 gp
Lesser restoration	40 gp
Prayer of healing (2nd level)	40 gp
Remove curse	90 gp
Speak with dead	90 gp
Divination	210 gp
Greater restoration	450 gp
Raise dead	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 and around Hillsfar include the following: Chauntea, Lliira, Mielikki, and Tempus.

## 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 not available.

## ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

As Graz'zt schemes in the Underdark, his many minions pursue their own plans to spread their lord's madness. One of these minions is the powerful goblin Agrak. A direct descendant of Graz'zt, Agrak was born of a hedonistic cambion and a goblin chieftain. Agrak resembles a tall, lean goblin with features of his demonic ancestor: obsidian skin, six fingers, and a crown of horns around his head. Agrak also embodies the madness, hedonism, and megalomania of his forebears.

Many years ago, Agrak was ousted from his haunts deep in the Underdark and came upon a clan of goblins living fairly close to the surface, in the Upperdark near Hillsfar. Agrak quickly established control, whipping the clan into shape around a twisted model of a liege-lord and his subjects. Lord Agrak promoted the most powerful goblins, dubbing them Knights of Graz'zt in his service, and commanded the other goblins to serve as "squires," capturing unusual creatures for the "knights" to ride into battle. Under Lord Agrak's leadership (and Graz'zt subtle influences) the tribe has swelled in numbers. Lord Agrak's madness has thoroughly infested the goblins, who now refer to themselves as the Skullspike clan. In imitation of their chieftain and his demonic progenitor, some of the more devoted members go so far as to pound iron spikes into their skulls to mimic a crown.

Lord Agrak commanded the Skullspike clan to raid the farms and ranches of the surface world to take treasure, building materials, and prisoners. Although the goblins were instructed to take prisoners and leave no survivors behind to tell the tale of what happened, two drunken ranch hands fled to The Stop, a village west of Hillsfar on the Tradeway. The frantic ranch hands told their wild tale of "goblin knights" to anyone that would listen, but only the proprietor of an inn and tavern called the Plodding Plow took them seriously. This proprietor, a good-hearted dwarf woman named Glenna Moonsmith, beseeches the heroes to find—and eliminate—the vicious goblins attacking the isolated settlements to the south.

## OVERVIEW

*Quelling the Horde* is divided into three parts:

**Part 1: Aftermath of Madness.** While resting in the Plodding Plow, an inn in the village known as The Stop, the adventurers hear about goblin attacks against three homesteads south of the village. The adventurers investigate the three locations, where they might rescue a survivor of the goblin raids, fight some murderous scarecrows, and gain clues about the goblin raiders. Two of the three locations have tracks that lead to the Upperdark entrance that the Skullspike goblins use.

**Part 2: The Passage Downward.** In the miles-long underground passage that leads from the surface to the Skullspike clan's caverns, the adventurers encounter some goblin guards and a detour through a patch of dangerous fungus.

**Part 3: Skullspike Caves.** The adventurers arrive at the caves occupied by the Skullspike clan, where they can make hit-and-run attacks against the goblins, their allies, and their powerful chieftain Lord Agrak. The adventurers must slay Lord Agrak to prevent his madness and terror from spreading further in the surface world.

## ADVENTURE HOOKS

Locals do not have the ability or the time to investigate wild claims made by frantic ranch hands, but quickly spread the news through word of mouth that danger might be afoot in the south. The following adventure hooks can be used to draw the characters into the story.

**Heard a Good Word.** Rumors of the adventurer's exploits, or of adventurer's in general have reached Gleena. When they visit The Stop during their travels, she makes a point of talking to them hoping to convince them to investigate the rumors of goblin attacks.

**Membership Drive.** The Arcrus family are wealthy and influential landowners in the area. Members of the Lords Alliance have been sent into the area to woo them into joining the Lords Alliance.

**Rust Monsters.** A hooded woman named Ymmeline catches the attention of Zhentarim members in The Stop, and asks to speak with them privately. The Zhentarim often have use for strange beasts, and particularly those that can be used to sabotage rivals. The Zhentarim had a contact in the area hunting a group of rust monsters, but the beast completely disappeared several weeks ago. Members of the Zhentarim are asked to locate the rust monsters and capture them alive. **Wild Rumors.** Although Gleena has the best information about the goblin attacks, she is not the only person with information to share. A busy, gnomish tinker named Vargush Cobbleiron saw excessive smoke rising from a farm to the south and thinks someone ought to know about it. So long as the characters look even somewhat competent, the tinker alerts them that he suspects trouble to the south, and they might want to ask around in the Plodding Plow, as it's the best source of local information.

**Witch Hunting.** Adventurers belonging to the Harpers have heard that a close-knit family living in the region south of The Stop is rumored to practice fell witchery. The characters' faction contacts suggest that they learn more from the well-connected Gleena Moonsmith at the Plodding Plow before checking out the isolated homestead. If it's true, report back.

## PART 1: AFTERMATH OF MADNESS

This adventure begins in the Plodding Plow, a comfortable inn and tavern in the small village called The Stop. The Stop, located halfway between Hillsfar and Yûlash on the Tradeway, primarily caters to travelers. Its markets are filled with agricultural and craft goods from the surrounding farms and artisans. Most of the villagers in The Stop are human, but they regularly deal with a few local non-humans (such as Glenna Moonsmith, proprietor of the Plodding Plow) and several non-humans that run the nearby farms, orchards, and ranches. Unlike residents of Hillsfar, the villagers of The Stop are usually friendly to non-humans.

The proprietor of the Plodding Plow, a genial dwarven woman, pushes a few drinks toward you. "These are on me, if you'll allow me to pass along a rumor that bears some looking into."

"South of here, but north of the forest of Cormanthor, are scattered several farms, ranches, and suchlike. Earlier today, I had a few frantic ranch hands rush in, saying their ranch had been attacked. These fellows work at the Arcrus ranch; the Arcrus family is highly regarded around here. These men might have been taken more seriously, but for two factors: first, they're known to drink a bit too heavily, and they claim the attackers were "goblin knights wearing crowns." I don't think anyone took them seriously before they went on their way, except for me. I've been a tavern mistress for a long time and I could tell these men were stone sober and scared out of their wits.

"I think someone should look into their story. I can't go myself, and I can't spare much by way of reward for those who do--but if you're interested, I can give you the details they told me."

The ranch hands that told Glenna their story, two humans named Arduro and Doster, are long gone from The Stop, as their terror compelled them to flee the region. The adventurers therefore have only Glenna's scant retelling to go on, although asking around reveals that Arduro and Doster told substantially similar stories to several other people in The Stop, including the Red Plume soldiers garrisoned in the village. Everyone other than Glenna considers their tale to be too wild a fabrication to be genuine. Instead most assume that they've slipped away from the Arcrus ranch after a drinking binge or petty theft and are making up a tale to cover their sudden flight. If pressed, most people agree that it's at least possible that some tragedy befell the Arcrus ranch, but although

"someone" should look into it, no one other than Glenna seems willing to press the issue.

If the characters ask for more information, Glenna relates the following:

- The ranch hands claim they were awakened early last night by shouting from the main house. When they rushed out with several other ranch hands, they saw the Arcrus ranch ablaze and, silhouetted in the firelight, goblins wearing plate armor and riding monsters: two-headed wolves, frogs the size of horses, and so on. Each of the armored goblins wore a black crown. In addition to these goblin knights, several other goblins capered about, slaughtering livestock and setting fires. A few of the ranch hands grabbed knives or shovels to run the goblins off, but a goblin riding a big centipede-like monster loomed out of the darkness and killed them with bolts of fire from his hands. Arduro and Doster turned and fled into the darkness.
- The ranch hands fled all night. They passed by two other neighbors--an isolated homestead and a halfling farm--but they witnessed goblins at those locations too, so they rushed on, arriving hours later at The Stop.
- Glenna speculates that the homestead is the one belonging to the Callidells, a reclusive family that foolish tongue-waggers call witches.
- The halfling farm would be the Lumbus family farm, a hardworking clan whose substantial profits mostly go to pay the heavy taxes levied on non-human enterprises around Hillsfar.

Glenna offers 50 gp to the characters if they look into the matter and report back. If the characters are persuasive, she offers to pay half of this amount up front.

### ROLEPLAYING GLENNA MOONSMITH

Glenna Moonsmith is a middle-aged female dwarf. She is charming and outgoing, but prefers to deal with locals rather than merchants. She is well connected in The Stop, but known to be a bit soft-hearted and fall for the occasional sob story. She is concerned that the ranch hands might be telling the truth about an attack at the Arcrus ranch. Even Glenna admits that tales of slug-riding goblin knights wearing crowns seem a little far-fetched, but she notes that scared folks are often prone to embellish.

Glenna, or anyone in The Stop, can provide directions to the Callidell homestead, the Arcrus ranch, and the Lumbus farm. Of the three, the Callidell homestead is closest at about 20 miles away; the Arcrus ranch and the Lumbus farm are each a few miles further south of the Callidell homestead.

### TREASURE

If the characters provide a sufficient reason, Glenna gives the character a silver trade bar worth 25gp—half of their promised payment.

## THE JOURNEY SOUTH

A network of wagon-roads and footpaths crisscross the terrain south of The Stop, as there are no destinations large enough to warrant wide, clear roads. Strangers can get lost without good directions (and sometimes, even with them).

### GENERAL FEATURES

The sparsely-settled lands south of The Stop have the following features.

**Terrain.** Gently rolling hills and meadows covered with scrub brush and wildflowers, with the occasional copse of ancient trees that seem more suited to Cormanthor than to this open territory.

**Weather.** Sunny and mild initially, with some light drizzling rain as the adventurers approach the settlements they are investigating.

**Travel Time.** Characters on foot can reach the Callidell homestead from The Stop with about seven hours of travel (heading directly to the Arcrus ranch or Lumbus farm requires eight hours of travel instead). The Callidell homestead, Arcrus ranch, Lumbus farm, and Upperdark entrance are all about an hour's travel from each other. The open terrain provides for easy riding; mounted characters cut these travel times by a third.

## CALLIDELL HOMESTEAD

Tucked behind a series of high hedges, this stone cottage and three wooden outbuildings enjoy a great deal of privacy. The roof of the cottage is badly burned and partially collapsed. Several human corpses, mostly hacked to pieces, are strewn about the yard between the cottage and the outbuildings. To the west spreads a large field of tall wheat, with tatterdemalion scraps of cloth poking up here and there above the wheat—apparently, the remains of scarecrows.

The seven bodies in the yard all belong to humans with thin, dark hair and wide-set eyes; all are plainly related, and they vary in age from 20 to 80. They were killed while fighting against the goblins, but none of the bodies carries any weapons; instead, they each carry strange knots of knurled wood wrapped in human skin. Two of the corpses each carry an identical iron key which is discovered in a hidden pocket by any character succeeding on a DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) check.

Local legends say that the Callidells are all witches, and this legend is true. The goblin's butchery put an end to the family's unholy rites, but the Callidells were too wicked to die easily. Instead, the souls of some of the Callidells were drawn into the family's scarecrows, bringing them to life. The wheat field currently contains **four scarecrows**, which are lightly obscured within the wheat. Animated by the spirits of the murdered Callidells, the scarecrows lurch forward to attack anyone entering the wheat field, or anyone that breaches the shed with the ritual circle inside of it.

### ADJUSTING THE ENCOUNTER

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

- **Very weak party:** Remove two scarecrows.
- **Weak party:** Remove one scarecrow.
- **Strong party:** Add two scarecrows.
- **Very strong party:** Add three scarecrows.

One of the outbuildings is a shed with a lock on it; the goblins were unable to get into this building before being driven off. A successful DC 15 Dexterity check made with a set of thieves' tools bypasses the lock; alternatively, a successful DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check bursts the door. The keys on the corpses in the yard both open this door as well.

The locked shed contains a stone floor carved with a ritual circle. Several fat black candles are carefully arranged around this circle, and two sets of rusty manacles are affixed to the floor within the circle. This is the room in which the Callidells have practiced their rites in secret for years, murdering drifters and vagabonds that would not be missed.

Obvious tracks all around the yard lead to and from the Arcrus ranch; the goblins came here from the Arcrus ranch and fled back the same way when the scarecrows chased them off. A successful DC 10 Wisdom (Survival) check reveals the tracks of large dogs and a giant toad among the small boot prints left by goblins on foot.

## FACTION ASSIGNMENT: HARPERS

The Harpers would be very interested to learn that commoners in out-of-the-way places are turning to dark witchery. Members of the Harpers who discover the ritual circle and report it to their superiors earn **one renown point**.

## ARCRUS RANCH

A smoldering foundation is all that remains of a large house at the top of a low hill. Corrals spread out to the north and west; the north corral contains a barn and several butchered horses. Several scorched human corpses lie near a bunkhouse to the east.

The goblins made their first and most ferocious attack of the night at this ranch, burning the main house and killing everything in sight. Lord Agrak personally set the house on fire and burned the ranch hands that fought back. The goblins took the six members of the Arcrus family prisoner. Characters that succeed in a DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check note that there are not enough bodies for a home this size, suggesting some may have been captured.

In addition to the five dead ranch hands and eight butchered horses, this massacre includes four dead goblins. All are equipped as normal goblins, without any of the heavy-looking armor or crowns of horns that the characters may have heard about. In fact, these goblins were the weakest and slowest participants in this raid; Lord Agrak barely considered them worthy to serve as squires, and he considers their deaths an advantage.

Many tracks lead from this ranch to the Callidell homestead and to a secluded cave a few miles to the south (see Upperdark Passage, below). A successful DC 10 Wisdom (Survival) check identifies the tracks of large dogs, a giant toad, and an oversized centipede-like creature (Lord Agrak's carrion crawler) among the booted tracks of goblins and human prisoners on foot.

## TREASURE

The manor house is burned, but characters examining the ruins find a metal strongbox. Within are a few lumps of silver-jewelry that did not survive the heat-and several small gems. The contents of the strongbox are worth a total of 90 gp. If the characters rescue the Arcrus family and attempt to return these valuables, the Arcruses insist that the characters keep them.

## LUMBUS FARM

Smoke rises from scorched fields and orchards around a low sod house and a barn with an attached paddock. The barn door is torn partway off its hinges and several holes have been chopped clumsily in the barn at waist level. A goat thrusts its head through a hole in the barn, bleats, and withdraws its head back into the barn.

This halfling farm was damaged in a separate attack made by the goblins on the same night as the attack on the Arcrus ranch and Callidell homestead. The goblins broke into the house while the halflings slept and killed them before they could effectively fight back. The sod house is a shambles and contains the bodies of nine halflings of various ages. The farm's fields and orchards are still smoldering from when the goblins set them on fire but, with the light drizzle, the fire is in no danger of spreading.

During the attack, the youngest Lumbus—a wiry halfling lad named Windon—managed to escape into the barn. Windon is still hiding in the barn with the family's three surviving goats.

If the characters enter the barn, the **halfling commoner** Windon (AC 10, 4 hit points) remains hidden beneath a handcart, assuming that the attackers from the night have come back. Characters with a passive Wisdom (Perception) of 14 or higher spot Windon hiding in the back of the barn, as do any characters that search the barn thoroughly. The **three goats** (AC 10, 4 hit points) make a show of charging at intruders in the barn, but they are mostly domesticated and do not actually attack (fleeing if attacked first). Windon is frightened if discovered, but he is easily convinced that the characters are not the ferocious goblins from the nighttime attack. Windon explains the following in a rush:

- Everyone in the house was asleep when a bunch of goblins burst in and started stabbing them all.
- The goblin in charge was tall and thin, with coal black hair and horns all around his head. (Windon waves his finger around his head to indicate a crown of horns.) He had six fingers on each hand. He looked as much like a demon as a goblin! He had on metal armor, like a knight. He pointed at the fields, and fire shot out and started the fields on fire.

- Two of the other goblins wore metal armor and had spikes in their heads, just like the boss goblin's horns. The other goblins were sneaky and stabby but didn't look like knights. The knight goblins bossed the others around.
- In the fight, Windon slipped out of a window and rushed to hide in the barn with the goats. The goblins came and took some of the goats, but Windon hid three of the goats with him, and the goblins didn't notice them. They haven't left the barn since then.
- The Lumbuses have good friends a few miles to the north—the Bitterwoods—who would like to hear about what happened. They would take care of Windon, now that there is no one here to do it.

#### ROLEPLAYING WINDON LUMBUS

Windon is a brave halfling lad. He is only 10 years old, but he was resourceful enough to survive the attack that killed his family. Windon is quick to trust humans and other halflings, but he is shy around other races. He knows a lot about goblins—he loved hearing "ugly goblin" stories at his uncle's knee—and he knows that the goblins that attacked his family show some very unusual traits.

**Quote:** "I tell ya wot. If a goblin poked 'is 'ead 'round 'ere, I'd stick 'im good!"

Tracks all around the yard lead to and from a secluded cave two miles to the south (see the Upperdark Passage, below). A successful DC 10 Wisdom (Survival) check reveals the tracks of large dogs, a giant toad, and an oversized centipede-like creature (Lord Agrak's carrion crawler) among the booted tracks of goblins on foot.

#### XP AWARD

If the characters discover Windon Lumbus and take him to safety (either with his family's friends nearby, or back to The Stop), award each character 25 XP.

### LITTLE GIRLS AND BLIND GOATS

As the characters travel to the Upperdark Passage, they encounter Elisande and her goat.

You see a waif of a girl picking at the mud with a large stick. Her dress is torn and covered in dirt and blood. Her bone thin legs end in uncovered feet. A muddy, black-furred goat with white eyes sits in a puddle near her. She sees you, offers you a wide yellow smile and waves.

Since leaving the isolated island where she was born two years ago, Elisande has since traveled south and now west with the rest of the Phlan refugees. Traveling where she will, she continues to show up at times of great import, frequently crossing paths with the characters.

Upon seeing the characters she runs up and greets them with a big, muddy, hug.

"Greetings Outside! Wut ist you doin'? The whispers gettin' looder. Do ya hear? I think dings to soon hebben. Schwescher goat says soon eyes have to do. Then we see real hebbens." The girl offers broad smile and continues. "Oh, almost vergaten. Goat says you need this stick. It special stick. You can hit with it! And it not fall 'part when it left in rain!" She smacks the ground with a smile before offering it. "Anyways, you beter hurry. Fancy man git bored and that bad for personens. If you'se groeien nuff, I see you in a few tendays, deep under the mud."

Elisande gives the long stick, usable as a quarterstaff, to the most heavily-armored character before running off. The goat waits just a moment, look at the characters with its milky white eyes before shaking its head in a nod and casually following her.

#### ROLEPLAYING ELISANDE

Elisande (CN) is a 13-year old orphan human girl and troublemaker from a disturbing, isolated island village in the Stormy Bay. Her years of malnourishment make her smaller than other children of her age and she is frequently mistaken for a younger age than her 13 years. She is fascinated with outsiders still despite her wanderings. She has few morals and due to her upbringing, no true concept of right or wrong. Elisande was encountered in *DDEX1-3 Shadows Over the Moonsea* when the characters rescued her and brought her to Phlan. Since then she has reappeared and disappeared with alarming frequency.

#### ROLEPLAYING THE BLIND GOAT

The Blind Goat was originally found on the same island as Elisande (also in *DDEX1-3 Shadows Over the Moonsea*). The black furred goat appears to be totally blind but for some inexplicable reason, seems able to see certain characters which it tends to follow; completely nonplussed by things that would bother a normal animal. It seems especially attracted to those who are "pure of heart." While nonthreatening, most find the goat a bit creepy.

## UPPERDARK PASSAGE

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A low cave hidden in a cleft between two scrub-covered hills opens into the Upperdark. The area has long been avoided by locals, although none of them realize the extent of the danger posed by this cave opening. The Skullspike goblins have come and gone from this opening several times, most recently to raid the settlements in the area.

Obvious tracks lead from this cave to the Arcrus ranch and to the Lumbus farm. A successful DC 10 Wisdom (Survival) check reveals the tracks of large dogs, a giant toad, and an oversized centipede-like creature (Lord Agrak's carrion crawler) among the booted tracks of goblins on foot.

When the characters enter this cave, proceed to Part 2.

## PART 2: THE PASSAGE DOWNWARD

Once the characters have determined where the Skullspike goblins emerged, they can follow the goblin's trail through the Upperdark passages back to their caves.

### GUARD CAVERN

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The entrance to the passages is a wide cleft 20 feet wide and 25 feet deep. The passage exits downward from the far side of this cavern, descending into the earth.

#### GENERAL FEATURES

This long series of subterranean passages runs for nearly two miles. The passages lead steadily downward at a shallow angle. Although a few side tunnels lead to caves or pools formed from water seepage, it is easy to determine the path the goblins took through the Upperdark. The passage varies from eight to fifteen feet wide, and six to twelve feet high. The floor is uneven and, like the walls and ceiling, made of natural stone.

**Light.** The passage is completely dark for its entire length, except for dim light that shines into the Guard Cavern from outdoors (if daytime).

**Sound.** Occasionally dripping water and the scuttling of some subterranean insect or reptile.

**Smell.** Lichen and fungus grow in patches along the passages, providing an earthy aroma.

The goblins have not left the entrance undefended. A **goblin boss**, believing himself to be a "Knight of Graz'zt," remains diligently on guard with his **goblin** squire. Both sit astride their **death dog** mounts. The goblins consider themselves to be the most important sentinels in Graz'zt's service. Each has riveted battered pieces of metal to their chain shirt armor to give the appearance of plate armor, although the metal does not provide much increased protection (+1 AC for a total of 18). The goblin boss has had several short, black iron spikes driven into his head to form a gruesome crown. The goblin boss and his mounts are spoiling for a fight and do not retreat from intruders. If the boss falls, however, his squire attempts to flee.

### ADJUSTING THE ENCOUNTER

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

- **Very weak party:** Remove the goblin squire and his death dog mount
- **Weak party:** Replace goblin boss with 1 goblin
- **Strong party:** Replace goblin with 1 goblin boss
- **Very strong party:** Add 1 goblin and 1 death dog

### DEVELOPMENT

The goblin boss is too confident of his superiority to deign to answer questions, but his squire is quick to talk to the characters in exchange for his life. Their clan is ruled by Lord Agrak; a mighty goblin and descendant of a powerful demon. As a mark of his demonic heritage, Lord Agrak can shoot fire from his six-fingered hands and possesses a ridge of horns around his head like a crown. Lord Agrak indoctrinates the strongest goblins as "Knights of Graz'zt" and he makes other goblins serve as squires and train powerful monsters to serve as mounts. In homage to their chieftain, the goblin knights pound iron spikes into their heads in the shape of a crown. Lord Agrak is an erratic leader, prone to grand plans that he changes on a whim; his "knights" aren't much more stable, due primarily to the spikes in their heads. Still, the goblins consider their lot substantially improved since Lord Agrak came to lead them several years ago.

### TREASURE

The goblin boss wears a bronze torc decorated with moonstones worth 60 gp.

### PASSAGE END

At the passage's end, the path splits into several connecting tunnels around four large caverns. When the characters reach the end of the passage, proceed to Part 3.

### MADNESS

At the best of times, the Underdark is a bizarre, alien, and inhospitable world, but the influence of the demon lords has transformed it into a domain of madness and chaos. *Faerzress* acts as a catalyst, spreading the demon lords' madness throughout the Underdark.

A creature's madness level starts at 0. When the creature fails a madness saving throw, its madness level increases by 1, and the creature immediately suffers the level's effect (as determined by rolling on the Short-Term Madness, Long-Term Madness, or Indefinite Madness table in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, as appropriate). When the effect ends, the creature's madness level doesn't change. Any time the creature's madness level increases, it suffers the effect of the new level.

If a creature with level 3 madness fails a madness saving throw, its madness level becomes 1. In this way, characters can potentially accumulate multiple forms of madness. If a character accumulates a form madness that they are already suffering from, reroll until a new result is reached.

Bouts of short- and long-term madness can be cured as described in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*. Given the demonic source of the madness, *remove curse* and *dispel evil* are also effective as cures. A *greater restoration* spell or more powerful magic is needed to cure indefinite madness and also resets a creature's madness level to 0.

In adventures set during *Rage of Demons*, madness is measured in three levels:

### MADNESS LEVEL

Level	Effect
1	Short-term madness (lasts 1d10 minutes)
2	Long-term madness (lasts 1d10 x 10 minutes)
3	Indefinite madness (lasts until cured)

### INDEFINITE MADNESSES OF GRAZ'ZT

Graz'zt influence on the region has manifested itself in the different forms of madness that characters may develop. Upon reaching madness level 3, instead of rolling on the Indefinite Madness table on page 260 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, roll on the following table and the character gains the madness listed below. Have the player note it on his or her character sheet.

If the roll results in a madness already possessed by the character, reroll until a new result is reached.

01-20	<b>Narcissism:</b> "There is nothing in existence that is more important than me."
21-40	<b>Megalomania:</b> "Anyone who doesn't do exactly what I say does not deserve to live."
41-60	<b>Infatuation:</b> "I will not rest until I have made someone else mine, and doing so is more important to me than my own life or the lives of others."
61-80	<b>Hedonism:</b> "My own pleasure is of paramount importance. Everything else, including social graces, is a triviality."
81-100	<b>Abomination:</b> "The mores of society are a lie, meant to shackle free thinking people. I will revel in that which others find shocking or disgusting to demonstrate my rebellion."

## PART 3: SKULLSPIKE CAVES

The Skullspike clan occupies a series of four connected caves in the Upperdark. The area is well-traveled, as the goblins come and go from their caves frequently on excursions to the surface.

### GENERAL FEATURES

The four caves were once natural caverns, but these caverns were expanded and smoothed centuries ago by dwarven settlers who died out or moved on long before the goblins moved in. As a result, the stone floors are fairly level, with only wide nubs to mark where stalagmites were long ago sheared off.

**Ceilings.** The connecting tunnels are all five feet wide and vary in height from six to ten feet. The ceiling in each cave rises to a rough dome about thirty feet above the floor. A few stalactites hang from the ceilings, but none reach closer than twenty feet from the floor.

**Light.** Dim yellow light fills the caves, but not the connecting tunnels. Although goblins can see in the dark, some of their war mounts cannot; as a result, the goblins cultivate a phosphorescent fungus along the walls and ceilings of their caves that gives a dim glow throughout all the caverns. Area 11 is lit with the dim red glow of the burning braziers located there.

**Sound.** The sound of many goblins echoes through the caves, along with the occasional drip of water from stalactites overhead.

**Smell.** The Skullspike goblins do not prioritize sanitation, so the stink of offal from goblins and their war beasts gives the caves an eye-watering stink.

#### RESTING IN THE SKULLSPIKE CAVES

Although wandering groups of goblins prevent the characters from taking an extended rest within the caves or the passages that connect them, the characters can hide out in the stable in area 1a or among the cages in area 7 for enough time to take a short rest, once the occupants of those areas are cleared out.

### 1. TRAINING CAVERN

The center of this wide cavern contains an open space with barrels and ropes marking out racing lanes. A makeshift stable at the northern end is surrounded by a low fence of scrap wood. Rows of foul-smelling mushrooms sprout in the southern end of this cavern.

#### 1A. STABLE

The stable is little more than a shed about 20-feet-square with large doors that latch closed. The stable is constructed of wood lashed with leather thongs; it contains no metal in its construction. The makeshift corral around the stable contains **three rust monsters** that have thus far proven recalcitrant mounts. If the rust monsters are attacked, hear combat in area 1b, or scent any ferrous metal within 30 feet of the corral (such as adventurers attempting to sneak past), they attempt to break free and attack. Pushing over the fence requires a successful DC 10 Strength (Athletics) check. If a creature within 30 feet of the corral is carrying 10 pounds or more of metal, the rust monsters make this check with advantage.

The stable also contains crude leather saddles and reins suitable for a goblin-sized humanoid to ride a variety of mounts. Most of these saddles are currently useless, as they once contained reinforcing metal rivets that the rust monsters have corroded and consumed.

#### 1B. TRAINING YARD

The Skullspike goblins use the yard to break the beasts that they have captured, in order to train them as mounts. Currently, **four goblins** are putting a **giant toad** through its paces. Two of the goblins ride the giant toad, while the other two goblins are rearranging the lanes to accommodate the beast's great bulk. All of these foes attack intruders immediately; although the goblins prefer to attack from a distance, hiding behind barrels for cover, the toad is trained to leap directly into combat and carry its riders along with it.

#### 1C. MUSHROOM GARDEN

Although the goblins do not prefer the taste of the foul-smelling mushrooms, they understand the value of a back-up food supply. This garden is only irregularly tended, but the mushrooms are quite fecund. The mushrooms vary in height from one foot to two feet tall, so the adventurers might be able to crawl among the rows and use the mushrooms as cover.

#### ADJUSTING THE ENCOUNTER

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

- **Very weak party:** Remove 1 goblin, 2 rust monsters, and the giant toad.
- **Weak party:** Remove 1 goblin and the giant toad.
- **Strong party:** Add 1 giant toad.
- **Very strong party:** Replace the goblins with goblin bosses.

## FACTION ASSIGNMENT: ZHENTARIM

If any of the characters are members of the Zhentarim, they have been tasked with ensuring that at least one rust monster remains alive so it can be recovered at a later date by Zhentarim agents. Zhentarim members must also report back on the rust monsters' location, and should endeavor to ensure the creatures do not wander off (such as by keeping them penned up). Those that do so earn an addition **renown point**.

### DAMAGED WEAPONS AND ARMOR

Some characters may have armor or weapons affected by the rust monsters's rust metal trait. As noted in the creature's stat block, these penalties are permanent. The character may:

**Repaired the Affected Equipment.** In order to repair a damaged suit of armor or weapon, the character must spend an amount of downtime equal to the total penalty of all of the character's affected items to be repaired. For example, if, at the end of the fight, a character's weapon has a -3 penalty and the character's plate armor has a modified AC of 13 (-5 penalty), repairing the armor requires 8 total downtime days in addition to appropriate lifestyle costs. Suits of armor and weapons destroyed by the rust monster may not be repaired.

**Replace the Affected Equipment.** Alternatively, the character may simply buy a replacement item. However, the damaged equipment is worthless and may not be sold.

## 2. CLIFF FACE

This steep wall ascends thirty feet to a wide opening. Knobs of rock and small outcroppings dot the cliff face. The lip of the opening has heaps of crudely mortared stones that resemble a crenellated battlement. A red glow, as of banked coals, illuminates the battlement above.

From the vantage point atop the cliff, Lord Agrak can look down into Area 1 and Area 3. He rarely chooses to do so, preferring to let his squabbling minions pursue the tasks he sets before them as they see fit, but if the characters are particularly noisy in Area 1, 2, or 3, Lord Agrak prepares for intruders, as described in area 11.

Although the cliff looks fairly easy to climb, the rocky knobs and outcroppings are **trapped handholds**. These convenient-looking handholds are rusty blades protruding from the cliff face and concealed with a thin layer of clay to resemble rock. Noticing this trap requires a successful DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) check. Attempting to climb the wall using the trapped handholds causes the clay to break away, dealing 4 (1d8) points of slashing damage. Injured creatures must make a DC 11 Constitution save, taking 3 (1d6) poison damage on a

failed save, or half as much damage on a successful save. Climbing the wall without using the handholds is difficult, requiring a successful DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check.

Characters ascending the cliff reach Area 11.

### XP AWARD

If the characters bypass the trapped handholds, award each character 50 XP.

## 3. GOBLIN WARRENS

This cavern contains the living quarters of the rank-and-file goblins in the Skullspike clan. These warrens have recently grown quite crowded due to the goblins's natural fecundity and Graz'zt influence in the area.

This large cavern contains several small ramshackle huts of stacked stones and wood. The shacks are scattered haphazardly throughout the cavern and often crowded together, as though construction has rapidly outpaced planning. A much larger wooden building dominates the center of this cavern. Garish pictures of goblin dancing girls are badly scrawled upon the cavern wall.

More than a dozen rickety shacks litter the cave. Made of salvaged wood and stacked stones crudely mortared together, these shacks rarely contain more than one room. Each contains 1d3 sleeping pallets and a few valueless trinkets, such as polished finger bones, shiny bits of shell, and plants knotted into interesting shapes. Many shacks are separated by narrow alleys that are spacious by goblin standards but cramped for larger creatures. Several shattered carts and barrels—most broken down for building material—are also scattered around the shacks.

**Twelve goblins** currently inhabit this cavern, but they are all hiding out of fear of the animals currently trapped inside the feast hall at the center of the cavern (Area 4). A passive Perception of 14 or higher notices the hiding goblins, as does a successful DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check if the characters look around. If confronted, the goblins attack to protect their home. If the goblins notice the characters before being noticed themselves, they remain hidden in the hopes that the characters investigate the feast hall; the opportunistic goblins plan to attack whichever group (the characters or the boars) survives that fight.

#### ADJUSTING THE ENCOUNTER

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

- **Very weak party:** Remove 8 goblins.
- **Weak party:** Remove 6 goblins.
- **Strong party:** Add 2 goblins.
- **Very strong party:** Add 6 goblins.

### 4. FEAST HALL

When the adventurers approach the building at the center of the profusion of shacks, read the following:

This large, central building is constructed of sturdy sheets of lumber nailed together. The double doors that serve as the building's only entrance are barred from the outside with a long metal beam. Angry grunts and snorts issue from within the building.

The Skullspike goblins use this large central building as a kitchen and feast hall. The goblins recently subdued **two giant boars** and brought them to the feast hall, planning to cook them in a celebratory feast for their successful surface raids. One savvy goblin thought to first ask Lord Agrak's permission, in case the chieftain wanted the boars trained as mounts rather than eaten. While the goblins were consulting with Lord Agrak (who ordered the boars to be cooked), the angry beasts awoke and trampled the goblins remaining here. The other goblins hastily barred the door, and now they aren't sure what to do about the creatures. They are terrified that the boars might get loose, but too afraid to inform Lord Agrak or open the doors and confront the irate creatures themselves.

The tables, crockery, barrels, and cooking implements within the feast hall have been stomped into pieces by the captive boars. The scattered detritus includes the mangled bodies of the three unfortunate goblins trapped inside with the boars by their kin. The floor is sticky with blood and beer.

#### ADJUSTING THE ENCOUNTER

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

- **Very weak party:** Replace 2 giant boars with 3 boars
- **Weak party:** Replace one of the giant boars with a normal boar.
- **Strong Party:** Replace 1 giant boar with 4 boars.
- **Very strong party:** Add 1 giant boar.

### 5. DEEP POOL

A small side cavern ends at a narrow fissure filled with water. This water seeps through the rock here from an underground aquifer. Although the water tastes of metal and rot, it is safe to drink, so the Skullspike goblins get their water from here. A few small, blind fish swim lazily in the water; these fish are quick to dart away from anything that disturbs the water, as they've learned to avoid the grasping hands of hungry goblins. The water in the fissure is about 12 feet deep. At the bottom of the pool lies the skeleton of a luckless goblin that drowned here quite some time ago.

#### TREASURE

The dead goblin at the bottom of the pool carries two *potions of healing* in water-tight rusty steel flasks.

### 6. NARROW TUNNEL

A wide tunnel once connected these caves to the deeper Underdark; this is the path Lord Agrak originally used to travel to these caverns. A minor cave-in collapsed part of the tunnel, rendering it now just barely wide enough for a goblin to squeeze through. While goblins very rarely use this tunnel to report to powerful patrons deeper in the Underdark, it is clear that this passage does not see much use. Exploration of this tunnel is outside the scope of this adventure.

### 7. PRISON

This cavern is split in half by a natural rock wall. The eastern half of the cavern is filled with makeshift metal cages, their inch-thick bars about a hands-width apart. Although most cages contain only bones, a few listless humanoids lie within some of the cages, staring vacantly.

The ten barred cages here are crude but effective; each closes with a simple hasp. Due to a large metal plate around the hasp, the hasp can't be unlatched from within the cage except with a rod or tool at least a foot long.

The Skullspike goblins keep their few prisoners here. Before Lord Agrak came, the goblins tended to neglect their prisoners until they died from malnourishment, although some prisoners died in horrid goblin games like "Most Blood" or "Deepest Stab."

Just after Lord Agrak arrived and seized control of this goblin clan, he was visited by an old friend, an **incubus** named Mardivec Gentlecut. Unlike many incubi, Mardivec prefers his natural, devilish form and only rarely assumes an alternate form. Mardivec enjoyed watching the madness spread amongst the Skullspike goblins, so he decided to move into the caverns permanently, along with his servant, a **dretch** named Noisome.

Humanoid skeletons remain in many of the cages because Mardivec has been unable to compel Noisome to perform the necessary labor to dispose of them. Despite Noisome's lack of domestic skills, Mardivec's quarters are the most comfortable in the complex. Silk sheets, ample pillows, and a wide selection of intoxicants can be found within.

Characters that are affected by Mardivec's draining kiss must succeed on an immediate DC 8 Wisdom saving throw or gain 1 level of madness. Those that fail are overwhelmed by the stench of flesh being burnt by white-hot pokers.

#### DEVELOPMENT

Eight prisoners currently languish in the cages. Two of these have been here for weeks and have had their minds thoroughly broken by Lord Agrak's abuses. The other six are members of the Arcrus family, who were brought here after the raid on their ranch. The goblins have been unpleasantly descriptive about how the prisoners will be used to slake Lord Agrak's erratic cruelties, so they are desperate for release and are effusively grateful to characters that free them. If led to the passage to the surface, they can return to their lands on their own.

If Mardivec is captured, he rakishly plays the smug captive who always seems like he knows something he isn't telling. Beyond the layout of caves however his useful information is limited and he simply hopes to be kept alive long enough to escape. He does know that he is one of many fiends that have been drawn here against their will from Azzagrat (the lair of Graz'zt) and teases this information if he thinks it might buy him more time.

#### TREASURE

The prisoners's possessions are held in a sack on a small table. Inside, the characters find a gold necklace worth 120 gp and a silver circlet worth 75 gp, both of which he recovered from the long-dead prisoners here. One of caged skeletons wears a fine ring worth 55 gp. If freed, the prisoners insist that the characters keep the treasure in exchange for their freedom, but are somewhat relieved if the characters refuse.

#### XP AWARD

If the characters rescue the Arcrus family, award each character 25 XP.

#### FACTION ASSIGNMENT: LORD'S ALLIANCE

Although the Arcrus house and livestock were destroyed, they remain wealthy and influential landowners. Members of the Lord's Alliance that suggest that the Arcruses join with their faction find a receptive audience and earn **one renown point**.

### 8. SMITHY

The western half of this chamber is unpleasantly warm and contains a few low walls around a crude forge. Piles of metal items, from rain gutters to serving platters, are stacked near the forge. Several goblin-sized mannequins stand nearby, dressed in armor hung with battered plates of salvaged metal. All but one of the mannequins are clad in this ersatz plate armor; the last wears a complete and nearly pristine suit of actual plate armor, sized for a small dwarf or a large halfling.

This smithy is where the most talented goblin crafters make the armor worn by the "Knights of Graz'zt" in Lord Agrak's service. As the characters have already noticed, this armor is merely scrap metal plates hung atop the chain shirt that the goblin bosses already wear.

A few weeks ago, goblin raiders brought the **two goblin bosses** laboring here a number of suits of heavy dwarven armor (complete with the rotting corpses of a dead dwarves still strapped into them). The goblins originally intended to reshape the armor for Lord Agrak's personal use but, struck with mad inspiration, they instead labored to make the plate armor an independent servant of the goblin. The goblins have recently completed their work, and have created four **animated armors** from the scavenged equipment. The animated armors wield blacksmith hammers (dealing normal damage). If a helmed horror is encountered here (see Adjusting the Encounter, below), it does not use a shield and instead fights with a blacksmith's hammer instead of a longsword (AC 18; deals bludgeoning damage instead of slashing damage). Replace the helmed horror's longsword attack with the following attack:

**Blacksmith's Hammer.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage, or 9 (1d10 + 4) bludgeoning damage if used with two hands.

## TREASURE

A tarnished silver platter worth 45 gp sits amid the scrap metal slated to be turned into armor plates. A successful DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check is required to spot the valuable platter amid the junk. Note that fighting the plate mail animated armor, destroys the armor and renders it useless.

### ADJUSTING THE ENCOUNTER

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

- **Very weak party:** Remove 3 animated armor and goblin bosses; add 2 goblins
- **Weak party:** Remove 2 animated armor and 1 goblin boss
- **Strong party:** Replace 4 animated armor with 1 helmed horror and replace goblin bosses with goblins
- **Very strong party:** Replace 4 animated armor with 1 helmed horror

## 9. KNIGHT BARRACKS

An opening in the cave wall leads to a passage that runs east and west. Several small cots litter the room, along with a few sturdy-looking chests. The wall opposite the entrance bears an oversized handprint with five fingers and a thumb, daubed in thick black paint.

Although this area was once part of the connecting tunnels around the cave, it has collapsed on both ends, leaving a long, narrow room. The "Knights of Graz'zt" in the Skullspike clan have claimed this defensible room as their barracks. This room is rarely occupied, as the goblins that sleep here are so often elsewhere on raids or performing other services for Lord Agrak. Scattered around are piles of badly tanned furs and garish pillows mad of various humanoid scalps. Bottles of wine are piled to one side, booty from one of their many raids.

The goblins have prepared a **flame gout trap** here, filled with alchemist's fire and grain alcohol, in order to protect their valuables from light-fingered squires. A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check identifies scorch marks on the walls and floor outside of this room that hint at the trap's effect. The trap is triggered by a pressure plate in the floor at the entry to this room; placing at least 20 pounds of pressure on the pressure plate activates the trap. A successful DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) check identifies the pressure plate by its uneven wear, as the goblins that bunk here step over the pressure plate to avoid triggering the trap. The painted handprint on the wall opposite the entrance conceals

nozzles that gout fire in a 30-foot cone toward the entry to this room and into the cave beyond. Each creature in the cone must succeed on a DC 11 Dexterity saving throw, taking 11 (2d10) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful save.

All of the Skullspike goblins are aware of the trap, as they've seen it kill a few unlucky thieves from time to time, but they are not aware that a pressure plate triggers it, or where the pressure plate is located.

### ADJUSTING THE ENCOUNTER

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

- **Very weak or weak party:** Reduce the flame gout trap's damage to 5 (1d10) fire damage on a failed save.
- **Strong or very strong party:** On a failed save, characters to continue to burn for 2 (1d4) fire damage per round until they douse the flames with a successful DC 11 Dexterity saving throw. Smothering the flames with water or a blanket gives the victim advantage on the saving throw.

## TREASURE

Although most of the bedding and personal effects here are valueless, the chests in this room contain an elegant ivory drinking horn worth 55 gp, two vials of alchemist's fire, and a stout wooden stick capped with silver. This latter item is a *wand of the war mage +1*; the goblins that stored it here aren't aware it is a magic item.

## XP AWARD

If the characters bypass or disarm the flame gout trap, award each character 50 XP.

## 10. CARRION CRAWLER STABLE

This cavern ascends in a series of wide, shallow stairs. A large kennel or stable stands against the west wall. Although constructed of thick wood, some sort of viscous slime seeps from the cracks between the boards, dripping down the exterior and warping the wood. The stench of rotten meat emanates from the stable.

This area is normally used to stable Vellicatus, Lord Agrak's mount, while he is sleeping. Other than a thoroughly chewed upon corpse, the stable is currently empty. Disturbingly, a cloth doll with stringy yellow yarn hair is clutched in the corpses arm.

## 11. LORD AGRAK'S CHAMBER

When the adventurers reach this area, read the following:

The southern half of this cavern has a smooth stone floor. Several braziers burning low provide an ominous red light throughout this area. To the east stands a squat blockhouse made of old stone, its windows hung with rugs and furs. To the south, a wide balcony looks out over the caves below, its crenellated battlements only two feet high on this side.

**Lord Agrak** spends much of his time here lost in his megalomaniacal madness. Vellicatus, his favored **carrion crawler** mount, relaxes here like a grotesque, oversized cat. A long pipe and a sizable pouch of tabac are on a small table next to a half-empty bottle of rum.

If Lord Agrak is not aware of intruders in his caverns, he is likely to be here (90%), scheming about how to lead his "knights" to greater victories or plotting carnal conquests of his goblin minions or his prisoners.

If the characters have been particularly overt about their assault on the Skullspike caverns, Lord Agrak prepares to confront them here. If there is no sign of the intruders after a few hours, he searches them out, riding his carrion crawler mount throughout the Skullspike caverns. If he cannot find the intruders, he assumes they've fled and he returns here.

Characters that succumb to Agrak's fiendish charm must succeed on a DC 8 Wisdom saving throw or gain 1 level of madness. Those that fail experience the feeling of iron spikes driven into their skulls.

### ADJUSTING THE ENCOUNTER

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

- **Very weak party:** Replace Lord Agrak with a goblin boss that has Lord Agrak's fire ray action and replace carrion crawler with a giant toad
- **Weak party:** Remove carrion crawler
- **Strong party:** Replace carrion crawler with 2 giant toads
- **Very strong party:** Add four goblin bosses

### AGRAK'S QUARTERS

Hugging the eastern wall of the chamber is a sturdy stone blockhouse; a remnant of the dwarves that originally resided here. Although its builders are long dead, the blockhouse remains in excellent condition. Lord Agrak took over this blockhouse when he came to the goblin tribe, and he has personalized it with ratty rugs, furs, and crude demonic symbols.

The blockhouse interior contains two rooms: a bedroom heaped with stained rugs and a simple shrine with a smoldering brazier atop a small altar.

Lord Agrak spends little time here, preferring to train and pray outside in the main chamber. If the caverns are not on alert, there is a 10% chance that the characters find Lord Agrak resting here.

### DEVELOPMENT

If Lord Agrak is taken alive, his megalomania is clear. He rants about how his father will soon march from the depths with his army of fire giants and demons and lay waste to all who do not bow to his whim. Soon the Dark Prince will rise and his servants will revel in fiendish pleasures that simple mortals cannot imagine!

### TREASURE

Amid the badly stained rugs in the bedroom lie several pieces of jewelry; these are gifts that Lord Agrak sometimes promises, but never delivers, to his consorts. The treasures include a platinum charm bracelet worth 50 gp, a gem-encrusted brooch worth 180 gp, and two silver rings worth 20 gp each.

## CONCLUSION

The Skullspike goblins remain a threat so long as Lord Agrak leads them. Once Lord Agrak is defeated, the remaining Skullspike goblins scatter over the course of the next few days, striking out on their own or in small groups. Goblins indoctrinated as "knights of Graz'zt" lose much of their fervor.

If the characters report their success to Glenna Moonsmith, she expresses surprise that so many goblins were so near to civilization, as well as undisguised pleasure that the adventurers have put a stop to the menace.

If rescued, the Arcrus family and the halfling Windon Lumbus know that they have the characters to thank and express their appreciation as best they can.

### TREASURE

Upon successfully completing their task, Glenna gives the characters their promised reward. If she gave the characters an advance on their payment, the outstanding balance is a silver trade bar worth 25gp. Otherwise, it is two silver trade bars worth 25gp each.

## REWARDS

Make sure the players note their rewards on their adventure log sheets. Give your name and DCI number (if applicable) so players can record who ran the session. If you are playing all of the missions as a single adventure, or playing multiple missions in one session, you can wait and give the rewards for all missions played at the end of 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 listed are per character. Give all characters in the party non-combat experience awards unless otherwise noted.

### COMBAT AWARDS

Name of Foe	XP per Foe
Scarecrow	200
Goblin	50
Death dog	200
Goblin boss	200
Giant boar	450
Boar	50
Rust monster	100
Giant frog	50
Dretch	50
Incubus	1,100
Animated armor	200
Helmed horror	1,100
Giant toad	200
Carriion crawler	450
Lord Agrak	1,100

### NON-COMBAT AWARDS

Task or Accomplishment	XP per Character
Rescued Windon Lumbus	25
Rescued the Arcrus family	25
Bypassed the trapped handholds	50
Bypassed or disabled the flame trap	50

The minimum total award for each character participating in this adventure is **900 experience points**.

The maximum total award for each character participating in this adventure is **1,200 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 up according to a system set forth in the sidebar.

### TREASURE AWARDS

Item Name	GP Value
Glenna's reward	50
Arcrus family jewelry	90
Bronze torc	60
Prisoners's valuables	250
Silver platter	45
Ivory drinking horn	55
Treasure from Lord Agrak's Quarters	250

### ALCHEMIST'S FIRE

A description of this item can be found in the basic rules or the *Player's Handbook*.

### POTION OF HEALING

*Potion, uncommon*

A description of this item can be found in the basic rules or the *Player's Handbook*.

### WAND OF THE WAR MAGE +1

*Wondrous item, uncommon*

Crafted of sturdy beech wood, this rather stout wand sports arcane runes etched in silver along its length and solid silver orbs capping each end. A description for 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 item 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

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

**Harper** characters earn **one renown point** for reporting evidence of the Callidells' hedge-witchcraft; the Harpers would want to know that such vile magic is being used in out-of-the-way places.

**Lord's Alliance** characters earn **one renown point** for rescuing the Arcrus family from the goblins and suggesting that the Arcruses combine their wealth and influence with the Lord's Alliance.

**Zhentarim** characters earn **one renown point** for successfully capturing a rust monster.

## DOWNTIME

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

## DM REWARDS

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

## APPENDIX: MONSTER/NPC STATISTICS

### SCARECROW

*Medium construct, chaotic evil*

**Armor Class** 11

**Hit Points** 36 (8d8)

**Speed** 30 ft.

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

**Damage Vulnerabilities** fire

**Damage Resistances** bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, poisoned, unconscious

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

**Languages** understands the languages of its creator but can't speak

**Challenge** 1 (200 XP)

**False Appearance.** While the scarecrow remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from an ordinary, inanimate scarecrow.

#### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The scarecrow makes two claw attacks.

**Claw.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (2d4 + 1) slashing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 11 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened until the end of the scarecrow's next turn.

**Terrifying Glare.** The scarecrow targets one creature it can see within 30 feet of it. If the target can see the scarecrow, the target must succeed on a DC 11 Wisdom saving throw or be magically frightened until the end of the scarecrow's next turn. The frightened target is paralyzed.

### GOBLIN

*Small humanoid (goblinoid), neutral evil*

**Armor Class** 15 (leather armor, shield)

**Hit Points** 7 (2d6)

**Speed** 30 ft.

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

**Skills** Stealth +6

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 9

**Languages** Common, Goblin

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

**Nimble Escape.** The goblin can take the Disengage or Hide action as a bonus action on each of its turns.

#### ACTIONS

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

**Shortbow.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

### GOBLIN BOSS

*Small humanoid (goblinoid), neutral evil*

**Armor Class** 17 (chain shirt, shield)

**Hit Points** 21 (6d6)

**Speed** 30 ft.

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

**Skills** Stealth +6

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 9

**Languages** Common, Goblin

**Challenge** 1 (200 XP)

**Nimble Escape.** The goblin can take the Disengage or Hide action as a bonus action on each of its turns.

#### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The goblin makes two attacks with its scimitar. The second attack has disadvantage.

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

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

#### REACTIONS

**Redirect Attack.** When a creature the goblin can see targets it with an attack, the goblin chooses another goblin within 5 feet of it. The two goblins swap places, and the chosen goblin becomes the target instead.

## DEATH DOG

Medium monstrosity, neutral evil

**Armor Class** 12

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

**Speed** 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	3 (–4)	13 (+1)	6 (–2)

**Skills** Perception +5, Stealth +4

**Senses** darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 15

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 1 (200 XP)

**Two-Headed.** The dog has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks and on saving throws against being blinded, charmed, deafened, frightened, stunned, or knocked unconscious.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The dog makes two bite attacks.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw against disease or become poisoned until the disease is cured. Every 24 hours that elapse, the creature must repeat the saving throw, reducing its hit point maximum by 5 (1d10) on a failure. This reduction lasts until the disease is cured. The creature dies if the disease reduces its hit point maximum to 0.

## RUST MONSTER

Medium monstrosity, unaligned

**Armor Class** 14 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 27 (5d8 + 5)

**Speed** 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)	2 (–4)	13 (+1)	6 (–2)

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 1/2 (100 XP)

**Iron Scent.** The rust monster can pinpoint, by scent, the location of ferrous metal within 30 feet of it.

**Rust Metal.** Any nonmagical weapon made of metal that hits the rust monster corrodes. After dealing damage, the weapon takes a permanent and cumulative –1 penalty to damage rolls. If its penalty drops to –5, the weapon is destroyed. Nonmagical ammunition made of metal that hits the rust monster is destroyed after dealing damage.

### ACTIONS

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d8 + 1) piercing damage.

**Antennae.** The rust monster corrodes a nonmagical ferrous metal object it can see within 5 feet of it. If the object isn't being worn or carried, the touch destroys a 1-foot cube of it. If the object is being worn or carried by a creature, the creature can make a DC 11 Dexterity saving throw to avoid the rust monster's touch.

If the object touched is either metal armor or a metal shield being worn or carried, it takes a permanent and cumulative –1 penalty to the AC it offers. Armor reduced to an AC of 10 or a shield that drops to a +0 bonus is destroyed. If the object touched is a held metal weapon, it rusts as described in the Rust Metal trait.

## GIANT TOAD

Large beast, unaligned

**Armor Class** 11

**Hit Points** 39 (6d10 + 6)

**Speed** 20 ft., swim 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	13 (+1)	13 (+1)	2 (–4)	10 (+0)	3 (–4)

**Senses** darkvision 30 ft., passive Perception 10

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 1 (200 XP)

**Amphibious.** The toad can breathe air and water.

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

### ACTIONS

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d10 + 2) piercing damage plus 5 (1d10) poison damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 13). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained, and the toad can't bite another target.

**Swallow.** The toad makes one bite attack against a Medium or smaller target it is grappling. If the attack hits, the target is swallowed, and the grapple ends. The swallowed target is blinded and restrained, it has total cover against attacks and other effects outside the toad, and it takes 10 (3d6) acid damage at the start of each of the toad's turns. The toad can have only one target swallowed at a time.

If the toad dies, a swallowed creature is no longer restrained by it and can escape from the corpse using 5 feet of movement, exiting prone.

## BOAR

Medium beast, unaligned

**Armor Class** 11 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 11 (2d8 + 2)

**Speed** 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)	2 (-4)	9 (-1)	5 (-3)

**Senses** passive Perception 9

**Languages** —

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

**Charge.** If the boar moves at least 20 feet straight toward a target and then hits it with a tusk attack on the same turn, the target takes an extra 3 (1d6) slashing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 11 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

**Relentless (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest).** If the boar takes 7 damage or less that would reduce it to 0 hit points, it is reduced to 1 hit point instead.

---

### ACTIONS

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

## GIANT BOAR

Large beast, unaligned

**Armor Class** 12 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 42 (5d10 + 15)

**Speed** 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	10 (+0)	16 (+3)	2 (-4)	7 (-2)	5 (-3)

**Senses** passive Perception 8

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 2 (450 XP)

**Charge.** If the boar moves at least 20 feet straight toward a target and then hits it with a tusk attack on the same turn, the target takes an extra 7 (2d6) slashing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

**Relentless (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest).** If the boar takes 10 damage or less that would reduce it to 0 hit points, it is reduced to 1 hit point instead.

---

### ACTIONS

**Tusk.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) slashing damage.

## INCUBUS

Medium fiend (shapechanger), neutral evil

**Armor Class** 15 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 66 (12d8 + 12)

**Speed** 30 ft., fly 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	17 (+3)	13 (+1)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	20 (+5)

**Skills** Deception +9, Insight +5, Perception +5, Persuasion +9, Stealth +7

**Damage Resistances** cold, fire, lightning, poison; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15

**Languages** Abyssal, Common, Infernal, telepathy 60 ft.

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

**Telepathic Bond.** The fiend ignores the range restriction on its telepathy when communicating with a creature it has charmed. The two don't even need to be on the same plane of existence.

**Shapechanger.** The fiend can use its action to polymorph into a Small or Medium humanoid, or back into its true form. Without wings, the fiend loses its flying speed. Other than its size and speed, its statistics are the same in each form. Any equipment it is wearing or carrying isn't transformed. It reverts to its true form if it dies.

---

### ACTIONS

**Claw (Fiend Form Only).** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) slashing damage.

**Charm.** One humanoid the fiend can see within 30 feet of it must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or be magically charmed for 1 day. The charmed target obeys the fiend's verbal or telepathic commands. If the target suffers any harm or receives a suicidal command, it can repeat the saving throw, ending the effect on a success. If the target successfully saves against the effect, or if the effect on it ends, the target is immune to this fiend's Charm for the next 24 hours.

The fiend can have only one target charmed at a time. If it charms another, the effect on the previous target ends.

**Draining Kiss.** The fiend kisses a creature charmed by it or a willing creature. The target must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw against this magic, taking 32 (5d10 + 5) psychic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. The target's hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the damage taken. This reduction lasts until the target finishes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0.

**Etherealness.** The fiend magically enters the Ethereal Plane from the Material Plane, or vice versa.

## DRETCH

*Small fiend (demon), chaotic evil*

**Armor Class** 11 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 18 (4d6 + 4)

**Speed** 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)	5 (–3)	8 (–1)	3 (–4)

**Damage Resistances** cold, fire, lightning

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** poisoned

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 9

**Languages** Abyssal, telepathy 60 ft. (works only with creatures that understand Abyssal)

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

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The dretch makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its claws.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d6) piercing damage.

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

**Fetid Cloud (1/Day).** A 10-foot radius of disgusting green gas extends out from the dretch. The gas spreads around corners, and its area is lightly obscured. It lasts for 1 minute or until a strong wind disperses it. Any creature that starts its turn in that area must succeed on a DC 11 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned until the start of its next turn. While poisoned in this way, the target can take either an action or a bonus action on its turn, not both, and can't take reactions.

## ANIMATED ARMOR

*Medium construct, unaligned*

**Armor Class** 18 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 33 (6d8 + 6)

**Speed** 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)	1 (–5)	3 (–4)	1 (–5)

**Damage Immunities** poison, psychic

**Condition Immunities** blinded, charmed, deafened, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned

**Senses** blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 6

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 1 (200 XP)

**Antimagic Susceptibility.** The armor is incapacitated while in the area of an *antimagic field*. If targeted by *dispel magic*, the armor must succeed on a Constitution saving throw against the caster's spell save DC or fall unconscious for 1 minute.

**False Appearance.** While the armor remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from a normal suit of armor.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The armor makes two melee attacks.

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

## HELMED HORROR

*Medium construct, neutral*

**Armor Class** 20 (plate, shield)

**Hit Points** 60 (8d8 + 24)

**Speed** 30 ft., fly 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	13 (+1)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

**Skills** Perception +4

**Damage Resistances** bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons that aren't adamantite

**Damage Immunities** force, necrotic, poison

**Condition Immunities** blinded, charmed, deafened, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, stunned

**Senses** blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 14

**Languages** understands the languages of its creator but can't speak

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

**Magic Resistance.** The helmed horror has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

**Spell Immunity.** The helmed horror is immune to three spells chosen by its creator. Typical immunities include *fireball*, *heat metal*, and *lightning bolt*.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The helmed horror makes two longsword attacks.

**Longsword.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) slashing damage, or 9 (1d10 + 4) slashing damage if used with two hands.

## CARRION CRAWLER

*Large monstrosity, unaligned*

**Armor Class** 13 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 51 (6d10 + 18)

**Speed** 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	13 (+1)	16 (+3)	1 (-5)	12 (+1)	5 (-3)

**Skills** Perception +3

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 2 (450 XP)

**Keen Smell.** The carrion crawler has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

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

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### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The carrion crawler makes two attacks: one with its tentacles and one with its bite.

**Tentacles.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 10 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) poison damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 1 minute. Until this poison ends, the target is paralyzed. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the poison on itself on a success.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (2d4 + 2) piercing damage.

## LORD AGRAK

*Medium fiend, lawful evil*

**Armor Class** 17 (studded leather, shield)

**Hit Points** 60 (11d6 + 18)

**Speed** 30 ft., fly 60 ft.

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

**Saving Throws** Str +6, Con +5, Int +4, Cha +6

**Skills** Deception +6, Intimidation +6, Perception +4, Stealth +6

**Damage Resistances** cold, fire, lightning, poison; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14

**Languages** Abyssal, Common, Goblin, Infernal

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

**Nimble Escape.** Lord Agrak can take the Disengage or Hide action as a bonus action on each of its turns.

**Fiendish Blessing.** The AC of Lord Agrak includes its Charisma bonus.

**Innate Spellcasting.** Lord Agrak's spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 14). He can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

3/day each: *alter self*, *command*, *detect magic*

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### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** Lord Agrak makes two melee attacks.

**Scimitar.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) slashing damage plus 3 (1d6) fire damage.

**Fire Ray.** *Ranged Spell Attack:* +5 to hit, range 120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (3d6) fire damage.

**Fiendish Charm.** One humanoid Lord Agrak can see within 30 feet of it must succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw or be magically charmed for 1 day. The charmed target obeys Lord Agrak's spoken commands. If the target suffers any harm from Lord Agrak or another creature or receives a suicidal command from Lord Agrak, the target can repeat the saving throw, ending the effect on itself on a success. If a target's saving throw is successful, or if the effect ends for it, the creature is immune to Lord Agrak's Fiendish Charm for the next 24 hours.

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### REACTIONS

**Redirect Attack.** When a creature Lord Agrak can see targets him with an attack, he chooses another ally within 5 feet of him. Lord Agrak and the ally swap places, and the chosen ally becomes the target instead.

## DM APPENDIX: NPC SUMMARY

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

**Glenna Moonsmith (GLEN-nuh MOON-smith).** Female dwarf. Proprietor of the Plodding Plow inn and tavern in The Stop.

**Ymmeline (IMM-muh-lean).** Female human Zhentarim agent. Provides a mission for Zhentarim characters in The Stop.

**Arcrus Family (ARK-rus).** Human family. Wealthy ranchers in the region south of The Stop.

**Windon Lumbus (WIN-dun LUM-bus).** Young male halfling farmer. Sole survivor of a goblin attack on his family farm.

**Lord Agrak (AG-rak).** Male goblin cambion. Spawn of the demon prince Graz'zt and chieftain of the Skullspike tribe.

MAP: SKULLSPIKE CAVES



## RESULTS CODE: NOVEMBER–DECEMBER 2015

If you are DMing this adventure during the months of November or December 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](http://dndadventurersleague.org/results) to enter their results.

