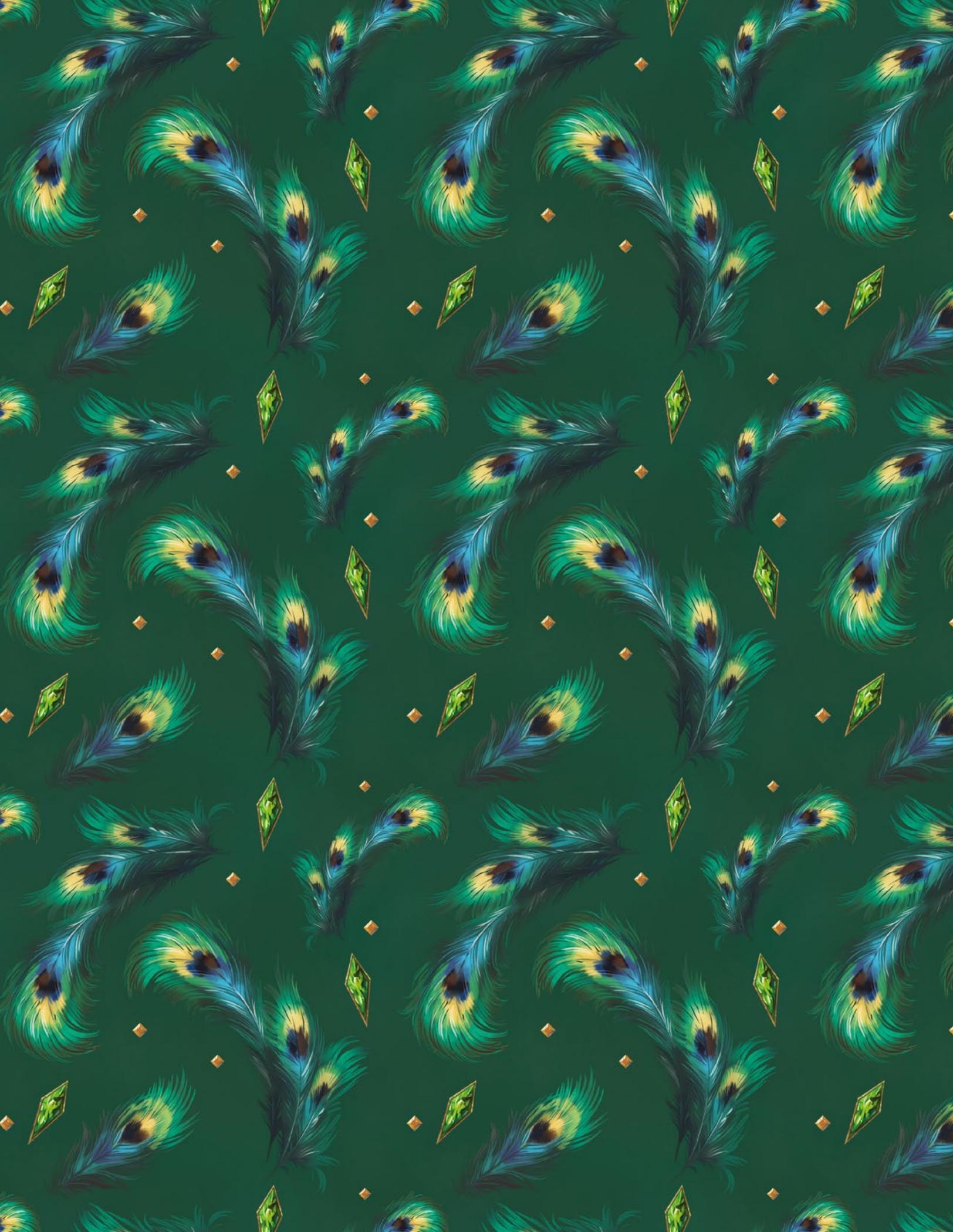


Quest · o · Nomicon



XP
to level 3

5th
Edition Fantasy





Quest
.O.
Nomicon



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Welcome to the *Quest-O-Nomicon*! A multi-part, customizable adventure book. The goal of this book is to get you and your friends rolling dice, telling stories, and roleplaying as quickly and easily as possible. Each adventure in the *Quest-O-Nomicon* is designed to be played in three separate game sessions, though you do not need to follow the preset structure detailed in each adventure. Perhaps you want to end “The Lost Spirits” adventure after the first part, or to continue past part 3 in “The Heist,” into a different module—each story has an open or closed ending, allowing you to decide when these adventures end. Throughout the book are also notes from Ser Nominus, who has lived these adventures in the vast multiverse and can provide lots of help!

GM TIPS WITH SER NOMINUS:

Good to meet you. I’m Ser Nominus, famous adventurer. I’ve braved dragons, found ancient treasure, discovered the secrets of lost souls, and even seen the apocalypse. I’d like to help you make these stories fun for all of your players, and that starts here. GMing can be a difficult and seemingly monumental task, but with the right direction, you can be a great GM in no time!

Balance for Early Levels

The stories of the *Quest-O-Nomicon* are designed to be run for 1st-level characters, who level up after each adventure-part. The monsters, encounters, and various other “character-killing things” have been heavily modified to ensure that you don’t TPK (Total Party Kill) in your first game. Many monster stat blocks have flat damage instead of dice rolls, saving throw DC’s are relatively low, and puzzles are simple to solve. It is also highly recommended to play with the following variant rule, “Limited Enemy Crits.”

Limited Enemy Crits

When you roll a critical hit on a d20 attack roll, you do not roll any extra damage against any player characters, unless a monster’s stat block reads otherwise.

SER NOMINUS NOTE:

Removing GM crits really paves the way for 1st-level adventures not to be the most deadly things in the world. A skeleton, like myself, dealing 20 damage to the brand new party wizard, instantly killing them, can certainly take the wind out of the sails in your adventure!

Running the Adventures

Each adventure is structured to provide information in a simple and efficient way to you, the GM.

“Any text in a box like this is meant to be read out loud for your players. Whenever they enter the designated area, or you’d like to set the scene, read the text in these boxes.”

THEME TAGS

These tags provide a basic description of what to expect out of the adventure. They express a theme, type of story, and overall feel.

CONTENT WARNING

This section provides a list of potentially sensitive subjects and imagery written into the adventure. Inform your players of the listed content before running the adventure to ensure that they are willing to engage with such subjects.

Description

Written here is a basic synopsis of the adventure. Not many of the choices or customizations are listed here, only the “skeleton” of the adventures. It’s up to you to fill in the blanks, and to your players to become heroes! (Or villains...)

Background

The background information covers the events that have led up to the adventure. What happened before, and what will set the plot into motion? This information should be referenced for the future, but only certain NPCs know the background of the adventures. This information should be context for the GM only, unless the characters start asking questions.

Character Hooks and Motivation

To help involve their characters in the story, a question is posed for each player to answer in-character. Alternatively, any player can choose from the list of character motivations provided to fit themselves into the narrative.

SER NOMINUS NOTE:

This step is very important! Ensure that the characters have a place and proper motivation linked to them, personally. Otherwise, you may have a party constantly asking themselves, “Now what?”

Villains

Each adventure has two possible villains that change the story, encounters, and monsters. Before running the adventure, decide which villain you’d like to use. Some villains have connections to each other, while others are completely separated. Be sure to read up on how they change the adventure as a whole and to keep a lookout for any text that reads, “If your chosen villain is...,” as the details that follow are what alter the adventure. There are major alterations and multiple paths in these adventures—ensure you’re running the correct variation, as they are all listed in each adventure.





The Worlds of the Quest-O-Nomicon

The settings, locations, and world are deliberately not detailed. These adventures could take place wherever you want! All of the named locations are simply placeholder names that could be changed to fit any setting. Or maybe all of these locations take place in one weird, wacky world. The Town of Tombflats in “The Heist” could be adjacent to Larson’s Landing in “Treasure of Obsidian Cove.” Or the city of Cathair, with its blasted wasteland in “The Doomed Heroes,” could be north of the Wispy Peak Mountain in “Whispers of Wispy Peak.” The choice is up to you!

SER NOMINUS NOTE:

I’m here to pop in and give some advice on these quests! I can provide rule clarification, writers’ intent, or some GM advice to help YOU run this adventure!

Preparation and Session Zero

Before jumping headfirst into these adventures, make sure you know what you’re getting yourself into. Everything you need to know about each adventure is listed above, but once you have one adventure selected, make sure to read ahead. Be fully prepared regarding what’s to come on game day. On top of that, have a “session zero” with your players. If you can’t afford to set aside an entire day for this, then have a quick one before your first game. Explain the basics of the adventure, set expectations, and communicate what you want the game to be, and allow the players to do the same. This is also a great opportunity to have the players add their characters into the narrative. Pose to them the question listed in each adventure; allow the players to even intertwine other characters into their backstory. That way, once you’re ready to go, everyone knows what they’re getting into. The goal here is to have fun!

Play to Your Players

It’s important to know what the adventure is about, and we know you’re probably excited to tell your players all the secrets, show them art, explain backstories, talk about lore, etc. But the most important part of any game is the people sitting around the table. The players are here to *play the game*, and thus they should be doing so. This really goes without being said, but honestly, it can be easily forgotten: Make sure that *every* character gets to share the spotlight. What we like to do is have a piece of paper with each character’s name written on it, then make a checkmark each time they get to do something cool or have the spotlight for a moment. By the end of the game, each character should have at least one checkmark, or an amount equal to the others—that way, no one feels left out!

Keep the Story Moving

The adventures in the *Quest-o-Nomicon* are each written to be played within one sitting, with each story having three adventures—there’s basically thirty-nine game sessions in this book. If you are finding that the game is going on too long, move things along! The players’ roleplaying is always important, but sometimes they can get lost in the moment when deciding what to do. If this happens, don’t rudely request they hurry up. Instead, have something happen. An example: If you’re running “The Heist” and the players are spending hours planning their scenario, have Huck (the NPC that recruits them) give them a little push, saying, “The train will be leaving soon; let’s get a move on!” This is enough of a gentle reminder to the players of the time they’re spending and can speed up

the process. Interrupting the players with the events in-game is a simple way to keep them on their toes and continuously moving forward. If all else fails, give them a hint on what they could do next! No one wants to feel stuck, and you should always provide options.

Confused? Make it Up!

Is there a rule you don't understand? Are you trying to make sense of the manic scribbles of "The Sunderdome?" Are your players arguing over some tiny detail? Make it up! Just come up with a reason, or a ruling, or whatever you want. This book is not law—your fun with your friends is. You should never sacrifice fun in favor of the nitty-gritty. If your players ask a question that isn't answered here, feel free to come up with what *you* think it is. These adventures are made to be malleable!

You're a Player, Too!

Don't forget that you are sitting at the table as well, and your enjoyment is just as important as everyone else's. If there's something you don't like, then you

have the freedom to change it. If you aren't having fun, step away and take a moment to think about how you could play differently, if at all. Having no game is better than playing a bad one. If the players have somehow found a way to completely break the game and you are panicking about what to do next, take a break and think about what you could realistically do. You can always go back and tell the players that you're not enjoying where the story is going. Communication is key!

Relax

At the end of the day, games are all about having fun. Don't stress yourself too hard for these adventures. Just remember to breathe, relax, and participate in the cooperative storytelling. Everyone wants to enjoy the game; make sure you remember that!

Let's Jump in!

If you're ready to start exploring the *Quest-O-Nomicon*, then turn this page! Dragons, treasures, cities, villains, and deadly domes await. Pick your story, choose your villain, and prepare for adventure!





THEME TAGS

Fantasy, adventure, epic.

CONTENT WARNING

Corpses, skeletons, city destruction, flame explosions.

Description

The city of Byriver was recently attacked by a red dragon known as Haldraxis. King Dirion has issued a bounty for the dragon's head. The adventurers must brave the frontier and deep dungeons to defeat Haldraxis and save Byriver from future attacks. The first adventure ends with the characters fighting the dragon, who eventually flees to his lair. The second adventure involves the characters braving Haldraxis's lair and attacking him where he rests. In the third adventure, Haldraxis attacks Byriver again, and the characters must save the city and defeat him once and for all.

Background

Not but yesterday, a red dragon flew from the mountains and attacked the city of Byriver in the night. Orange flame painted the south side of the city, resulting in the burning of three fields and two homes. Four people were killed, and eleven were gravely injured. The dragon then bellowed his demands to the city from the top of the castle: "In four days, leave me all your gold and jewels in the temple ruins in the mountain, and your city will be safe from the wrath of I, Haldraxis." He then flew back into the mountains to await his payment. The king, unwilling to bargain with a dragon, knows that there are heroes in his midst who could save Byriver from destruction.



Character Hooks and Motivations

To help better involve your players and their characters in the story, have each character answer the following question: *Why do you want to help the city of Byriver?*

Alternatively, you can use the table below to give your players ideas for their characters' motivation in the adventure.

- 1 You were born in Byriver, and Haldraxis's attack nearly killed your mother. He must answer for this.
- 2 You've recently moved to Byriver and have found peace within its walls. The dragon disturbs that peace.
- 3 You've been following the dragon Haldraxis for weeks now, anticipating his movements. You were too late to warn the city of Byriver of his coming, but now you have the chance to bring him down.
- 4 Haldraxis proves to be an interesting subject to study. You want to get an up-close look at a real, live dragon—maybe you could even nab a scale!
- 5 Dragons have hoards, right? That's a fair amount of coin you could stand to gain out of this whole mess.
- 6 A dragon attacking a city in broad daylight is sure to send the whole kingdom into chaos. You've secretly been sent on this mission by the king to ensure that word about this attack doesn't get out to other cities.

Villains

The obvious villain for this adventure is unavoidably Haldraxis—however, he is not alone. Haldraxis has allies whose goals are aligned. Choose one of the following that will act as his minions and alter some of the encounters in the adventure.

Kobolds

(Villain Option #1)

The kobolds serve Haldraxis with fear, piety, and malevolence. They see Haldraxis as a greater being who deserves to destroy all those beneath him. They are willing to do anything for him—even die. The kobolds are a bit of an easier threat that won't pose too much of a challenge for players.

Mountain Giants

(Villain Option #2)

These giants are natives to the mountains. They were attacked and raided by knights from Byriver and want revenge against the city and its "tiny folk." Haldraxis only cares for Byriver's gold—once the citizens have paid up and the city is weakened, the giants are permitted to invade and destroy it. The giants are formidable foes that aren't wholly loyal to Haldraxis. They only care about destroying Byriver.

The Hunt Begins

(Adventure #1)

Synopsis

The characters are brought together by Phillip, a royal guard who gives them details on Haldraxis and how to get to the ruins, where Haldraxis said he would be. He gives them a map with two possible paths: a mountain path and a forest path. The mountain path is quicker but more treacherous, and the forest path is safer but not as fast. Once the characters choose their path and head to the old ruins, they face off with the dragon in hopes of preventing his attack on Byriver.

Introduction

The characters each meet Phillip, who tells them to meet him at the Flaming Wizard tavern if they are interested in defeating Haldraxis. Phillip is a drow **guard**. He explains to the party that the king has no intention of bargaining with the dragon and is grateful for their heroic intention to confront Haldraxis. He then gives them a map to where the Old Temple Ruins are located. He explains that it will take exactly three days to reach the ruins, and there are two trails that lead up to them: one a steep mountain trail, and the other a low forest trail. He answers as many questions as he can, but ultimately doesn't know much about Haldraxis or what they will encounter on the journey.

Information Phillip knows is as follows:

- Haldraxis is a red dragon, meaning he likely has fire breath. He's on the younger side, but he's still a major threat.
- If they want to catch Haldraxis off guard, the party will need to move quickly.
- The mountain path is dangerous. Merchants and travellers avoid it to stay safe.
- The forest path is safer, but much slower.
- The Old Temple Ruins used to be a part of Byriver, but their history is lost to time.

After answering any further questions, Phillip gives the party enough food and water for the journey, including one *potion of healing* per adventurer. (These potions can be used as an action to heal 2d4+2 HP)

Phillip also reminds the characters that if they return after defeating Haldraxis, they will each be rewarded with 300 gp.

SER NOMINUS NOTE

Sometimes adventures are about the action and deeds of the characters. One may not need to track if the characters are starving or dehydrated; this adventure assumes as much. If you'd like to, however, note that Phillip only gives the players enough food and water for five days.

At this point in time, have the players decide which path they are going to take.

Travel to the ruins via the forest path will take three days, at which point, Haldraxis will be waiting. If the characters take the more dangerous mountain path, they may catch Haldraxis off guard with an ambush.

The Mountain Path

If the characters decide to go via the mountain path, read the following text:

"Above you is a steep trail that ascends into white-capped peaks. The air stings your lungs, the snow crunches underneath you—this climb won't be easy."

This path up the mountain is a steep and difficult climb. The first day is relatively uneventful. Roll on the table below to determine what the characters could encounter on the first day. Regardless of what you choose, on the second day of travel, the characters encounter one of the adventure villains.

1	Abandoned camp
2	Ice flower grove
3	Passing herd of deer
4	Haldraxis flyby

Abandoned Camp. The party stumbles upon an abandoned camp, containing a tattered tent and bedroll, along with the remains of a campfire.

Ice Flower Grove. The party finds a small meadow filled with blue-white flowers, their petals cold to the touch. If a character walks upon the flowers, they take 1 cold damage. If a character eats a flower, they regain 1d8 hit points.

Passing Herd of Deer. A group of deer meander their way in front of the party, giving them curious looks before moving on. One of the deer is secretly a wild shaped druid by the name of Jeremy, who shepherds their flock whilst living amongst them.

Haldraxis Flyby. A dark shadow falls upon the party as the form of Haldraxis flies overhead, disappearing above the mountain peaks. He does not seem to notice them.

KOBOLD ENCOUNTER

If your chosen villains are the kobolds, read the following text:

"Dense fog has slowly settled in this morning. It's extremely quiet, all sound being dampened by the trees and snow."

If no one in the party has a passive Perception score higher than 14, they trigger one of the traps described below. Otherwise, read the following text:

"You nearly run into a long, stretched cord running between two trees. Some sort of tripwire—and beyond this one, you notice even more. Surrounding you is a whole web of tripwires. From the trees you hear, 'Aww, so close! Get 'em!' as three red, scaly creatures drop to the ground, weapons at the ready."

Three **Haldraxis kobolds** (see appendix B) have laid traps in the mountains and plan on ambushing anyone that comes by. The kobolds are hoping to claim the gold, give it to Haldraxis personally, and gain his favor. They fight to the death and scream, "For the glory of the mighty red wyrm!" when they die.

Each trap is a swinging log, located at head height for a medium creature, that triggers at the snap of a tripwire. When anyone of medium size walks into one of the tripwires noted on Map 1, they must succeed a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw, or else take 1d4 bludgeoning damage and fall prone. Once a trap has been triggered, each tripwire is easily noticed by any character.

After all the kobolds have been defeated, characters who investigate the kobolds' bodies find a red dragon scale on each kobold, along with their weapons.

GIANT ENCOUNTER

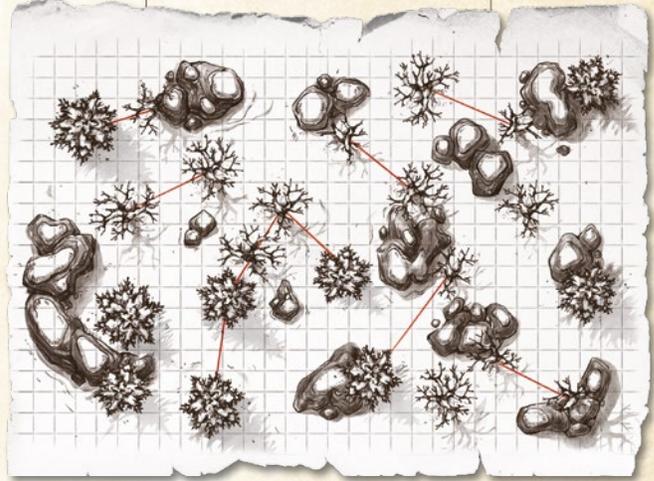
If your chosen villains are the giants, read the following text:

"Around a rocky bend, a sheer cliff on your right descends into fog. It's impossible to know how deep it goes, but as you examine it, you hear the loud crunching of snow behind you. Stepping out of the fog, an enormous person ogles you and your gear. This is one of the famed mountain giants, and he's looking to loot your corpses. He takes off in a wild sprint toward you, and his bounding footsteps cause the rocks and snow to begin tumbling toward you from the cliff above."

One mountain giant (see appendix B) sees the characters traveling up the mountain and doesn't think twice before attacking them. The mountain giants have grown accustomed to attacking anyone from Byriver, and unfortunately, having been so far from his lair, this giant was not informed of Haldraxis's plan for Byriver and its gold.

The **mountain giant** is a dangerous foe, and if he catches up to any of the characters, they will sustain serious wounds and could possibly die. His enormous footsteps cause a rockslide during the fight. On initiative count 10, the rock slide grows closer, and after 2 rounds, it will engulf the mountain giant, who will tumble off the cliff.

MAP 1: KOBOLD ENCOUNTER



SER NOMINUS NOTE

It's the best option to run from this giant and let the mountain take care of him. Hint to your players—or inform them outright—that fighting him directly is a losing battle! If they don't get the memo, don't kill the first character that swings at the giant. Make an example and reduce the character to 1 hit point. If they continue to fight, it's their own loss!

The Forest Path

If the characters decide to go via the forest path, read the following text:

"The old forest trail meanders beyond the green trees and dark woods, to the base of the mountains. The smell of pine and grass overtakes your senses as the dirt scrapes underneath you. This path may take longer, but it's safer."

This path through the forest is peaceful. The first and second day are relatively uneventful. Roll on the table below to determine what the characters could encounter on each day, ignoring duplicates. On the third day during their travel, the characters encounter something left behind by one of the adventure villains.

- 1 Spring of Forgotten Tales
- 2 Travelers from Wispy Peak
- 3 Peaceful bear
- 4 Haldraxis flyby

Spring of Forgotten Tales. The party stumbles upon a small spring bubbling up from beneath an old oak tree. Drinking from the spring grants the characters 4 temporary hit points. The hit points last 24 hours.

Travelers from Wispy Peak. The party runs into a group of travelers along the road. This group says they have come from the town of Wispy Peak and are looking to settle in Byriver to get away from a famine that has plagued their home.

Peaceful Bear. A peaceful bear exits a small cave, approaching the party in search of scratches and treats. The bear was once the companion of a ranger who died some time ago, and whose skeleton still sits in the cave.

Haldraxis Flyby. A dark shadow falls upon the party as the form of Haldraxis flies overhead, disappearing above the treeline. He does not seem to notice them.

KOBOLD AMBUSH

If your chosen villains are the kobolds, read the following text:

“As you move through tall grass, you run into something made of metal: an old, rusted trap. You look around and notice snapped wires clinging to trees, nets thrown on the ground, and two unlucky skeletons lying in the grass. It seems to be an abandoned ambush site.”

These old traps have been left to rot and are a reminder of what’s to come for the players. There are no tracks, only the remnants of an old kobold ambush. Any character who succeeds on a DC 10 Intelligence (History) check can recall information about kobolds and determine that they were responsible. If any of the characters investigate the skeletons, they find a *grounding chain* (see appendix A).

GIANT AMBUSH

If you have chosen the giants as your villain, read the following text:

“You begin to hear voices beyond the trees, as well as the sound of large, heavy movements. The smell of cooking meat and unwashed feet permeates the area. A few mountain giants have made camp in these forests. One says, ‘Ugh, if only we had some salt!’ paying little mind to your group as you pass by.”

The characters can easily sneak by the giants so long as they are quiet, but if the characters decide to attack the giants, they will be in for a losing fight. Unless provoked, the **mountain giants** (see appendix B) will only attack the party if they learn that they are from Byriver. Retreating from the giants is always an option and can be easily done—the giants are slow, and the trees of the forest block their movement and line of sight.

SER NOMINUS NOTE

This is a time for the players to learn more about the giants! If they attack, show off the giants’ strength by having them completely resist the attacks. Have a moment of roleplay with the giants where they ask the players who they are. If all else fails, let the players run! No one should die for being curious.

The Temple Ruins

On their final day of travel (the second day for the mountain path, or the third day for the forest path), the characters arrive at the temple ruins.

“The ruins of the old mountain temple stand before you; it’s a surprise that the building’s still standing. The foundation remains, but the ceiling and walls have almost all collapsed. Rubble litters the clearing, providing lots of cover.”

The temple is covered in dust, snow, and rubble. Inside, the characters find destroyed religious iconography, crumbling stone, and lots of rope. On the altar in the back of the temple is a *scorch shield amulet* (see appendix A).

If the characters have arrived at the temple early via the mountain path (or some other way), run the temple as described in the “Arriving Early” section.

If the characters have arrived late via the forest path (or for some other reason), run the temple as described in the “Arriving Late” section.

Arriving Early

The characters can set an ambush for Haldraxis if they would like. They can use the crumbling ruins to their advantage by finding cover, breaking pieces of it to drop onto Haldraxis, or obscuring an escape. Allow the characters to be creative and clever with how they want to handle the fight with the dragon.

Regardless, when Haldraxis eventually arrives, read the following text:

“Wind gusts from above as the flapping of enormous leathery wings precedes a red dragon the size of a house. Haldraxis has arrived. He lands on top of the crumbling structure, his claws clutching the stone. His sharp orange eyes dart around, looking for anyone who might be coming.”

Haldraxis (see appendix B) will be surprised, allow the characters one round of attacks against him before he can act or react. Haldraxis also has a secret weakness, he hates loud noises. If a character casts a spell or uses an ability that creates a loud noise, Haldraxis becomes frightened of that character until the start of his next turn.

Because he’s a coward, the dragon will only fight for one turn after the surprise attack. He spends his turn to Dash and retreat back up into the mountains to his lair.

SER NOMINUS NOTE

How the heck does surprise work? Simple! While Haldrax is surprised, he cannot move or take actions during the first round of combat.

Arriving Later

Read the following text if the characters took the forest path, or just generally took longer to arrive at the temple:

"Wind gusts from above as the flapping of enormous leathery wings precedes a red dragon the size of a house. Haldrax has arrived. He lands on top of the crumbling structure, clutching the stone with his claws. He bellows out to you, 'Ah, so King Dirion isn't as pathetic as I had assumed. Good... Bring forth your offering and I will consider sparing your tiny lives.'"

If the characters offer anything less than 10,000 gp, **Haldrax** (see appendix B) grows furious and attacks. Haldrax also has a secret weakness, he hates loud noises. If a character casts a spell or uses an ability that creates a loud noise, Haldrax becomes frightened of that character until the start of his next turn. When Haldrax starts his turn with 80 hit points or less, he spends his turn to Dash and retreat back up into the mountains to his lair.

SER NOMINUS NOTE

This combat should feel victorious for the players. Describe their actions; make them feel epic! Allow them to show the dragon what-for as he retreats with his tail between his legs! Nothing will make them feel more like heroes than standing up to a dragon.

Conclusion

Haldrax retreats to his lair to lick his wounds. If you want to conclude the adventure here, Haldrax flees permanently and vows to never again attack Byriver. Read the following text:

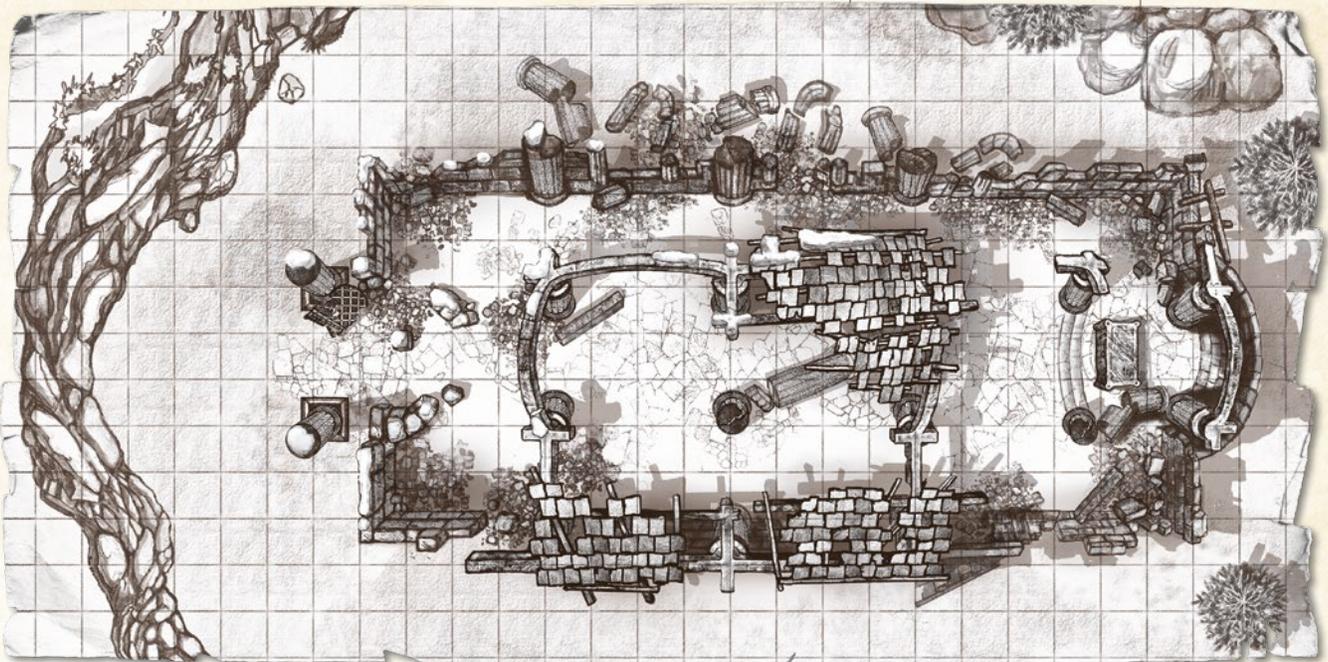
"The dragon takes off into the air, soaring past the mountain peaks and disappearing into the fog. 'You win!' he bellows. 'I'll not fall to the likes of you! Byriver is safe... for now'. You let out a sigh of relief—Haldrax is gone. You have defeated the dragon and saved Byriver. Time to return home and collect your reward."

The characters can return to the city, welcomed as heroes. They are rewarded with their promised money. The story does not need to end here, however—perhaps Haldrax still has a vendetta, scheming with another dragon to help take down the characters as revenge for his humiliation. You decide!

If you want to continue this adventure into part 2, "Into the Maw," allow the characters to advance to 2nd level, and read the following text:

"The dragon takes off into the air, soaring past the mountain peaks and disappearing into the fog. 'Fools!' he bellows. 'The city of Byriver will pay for this!' Haldrax is wounded, but far from defeated. His lair must be nearby; if you find it, you could possibly end him once and for all."

THE TEMPLE RUINS





Into the Maw

(Adventure #2)

Synopsis

Haldraxis flies back to his lair to lick his wounds. The characters journey to his lair and can enter it through the main entrance or sneak into the minions' sleeping area. Inside they find traps, Haldraxis's minions, and a puzzle in the middle of the Steaming Tunnels, which leads to Haldraxis' hoard, where he sleeps and recovers from their first fight. The characters can procure items from his hoard or take the opportunity to land a sneak attack on Haldraxis. The party can defeat him there, or you can continue the adventure in part 3 "The Fate of Byriver" where Haldraxis attacks the city.

Introduction

After the characters' first victory against Haldraxis at the ruins, the dragon flies back to his lair to recover from the battle. The characters can easily follow his direction and find his lair in the mountains. Haldraxis's lair is known as the Steaming Tunnels and is very dangerous. The characters may want to rest before heading into the lair, which they can do without interruption.

The Steaming Tunnels

These tunnels were carved hundreds of years ago by an ancient mountain civilization who worshipped dragons in hopes of avoiding their wrath. The civilization disappeared long ago, and for seemingly no reason. Haldraxis made these tunnels his home a few weeks ago when he caught sight of the steaming entrance during a flight. Inside he found his minions (giants or kobolds) and two rivers, one

of lava and one of water, that nearly converged at the center of this lair, filling the caves with hot steam. Here, he brought all his treasure in barrels and prepared for his attack on Byriver. In the tunnels, visibility is greatly reduced. Each area (except 2 and 6) is lightly obscured and all creatures are blinded past 20 feet. Additionally, the air inside the caves is scorching to linger in. For every 10 minutes the characters spend in rooms with steam, they must succeed a DC 12 Constitution saving throw. If they fail, they take 2 fire damage. Any character that is resistant to fire damage automatically succeeds.

Alternate Entrance. The characters could also enter the Steaming Tunnels via a secret entrance that leads into the Feasting and Sleeping cave (room 4). If they explore around the mountain and succeed on a DC 8 Intelligence (Investigation) check, they find this entrance.

1: STEAMING SKULL ENTRANCE

"Carved into the mountainside is an enormous skull. As if the carved rock can somehow breathe, the gaping maw exhales a blast of hot steam every five seconds—hot enough to be burning flames."

If any characters enter the skull without a second thought, they take 5 fire damage as they are blasted with hot steam. If any of the characters try to time their entrance, they must make a DC 8 Dexterity (Acrobatics) or Wisdom (Perception) check. On a success, they enter without being hurt by the steam.

Once inside, read the following text:

"Inside the skull's mouth is a cave, hazy with mist. In the center of this room, you see an automatic, accordion-like machine with a rotating mechanism. Every five seconds, it builds up, then quickly reverses, bellowing all of the built-up steam into the entrance."

Haldraxis's minions built this trap to keep people out of his lair. There are two exits from this room: a rusty metal door, leading west into room 2, and a northern exit leading to room 3.

2: TRAP BUILDING ROOM

This room is different based on which villains you've chosen. If your chosen villains are the kobolds, read the following text:

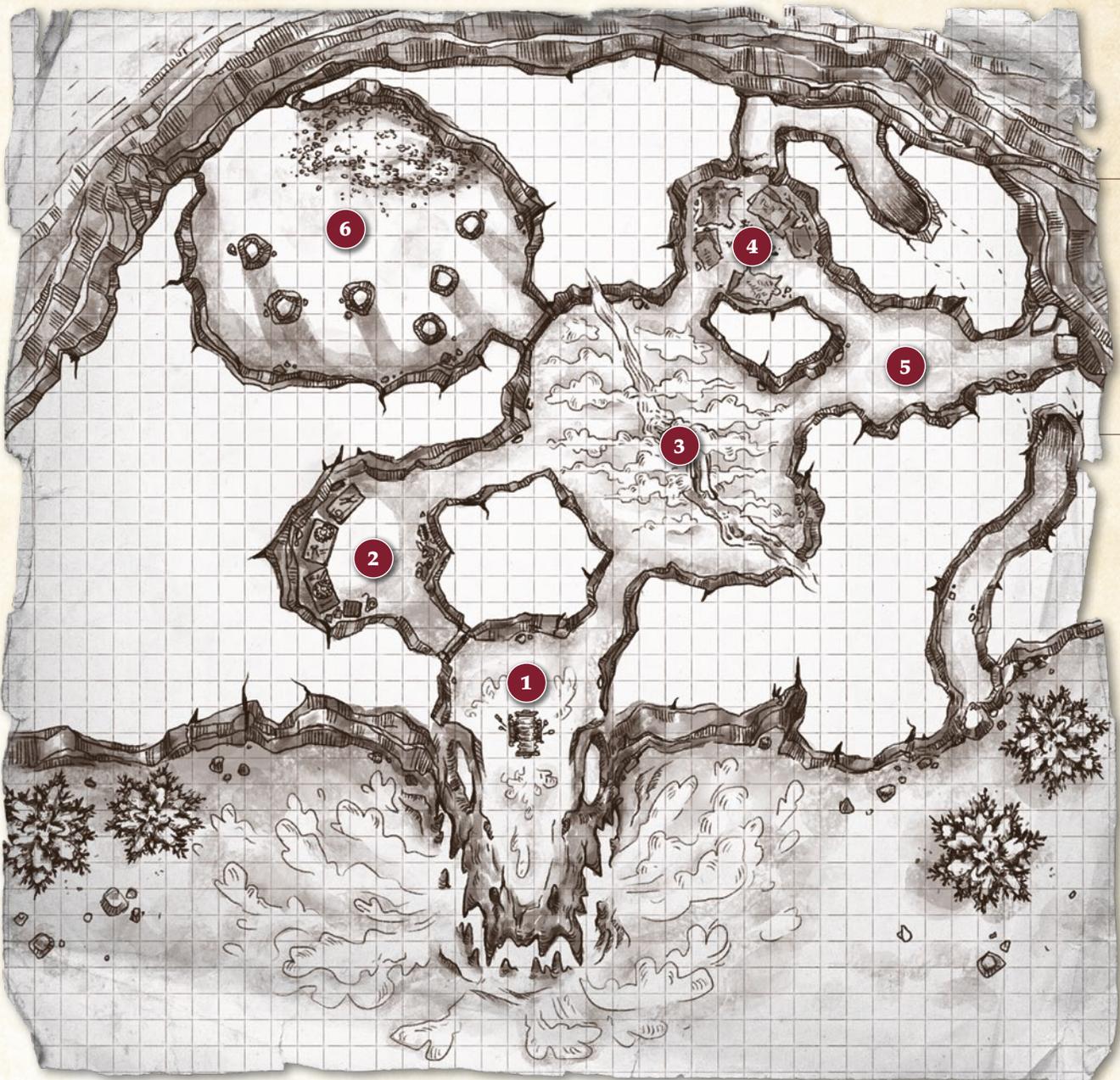
"A hole in the ceiling allows any steam built up in this room to escape. You see tables and workbenches that are covered with metal contraptions and designs—some of which are still being built by four kobolds that don't seem to notice you amidst their work."

Four **Haldraxis kobolds** (see appendix B) are building new traps to prepare for anyone who might enter the caves. Unfortunately, they are a little too late, as the characters arrive before they're finished. If the kobolds notice the party, they fight to the death to protect the "mighty hoard."

If your chosen villains are the giants, read the following text:

"A hole in the ceiling allows any steam built up in this room to escape. You see tables and workbenches that are covered with metal contraptions and designs—some of which are still being built by a giant that doesn't seem to notice you amidst his work."

One **mountain giant** (see appendix B) is building new traps to prepare for anyone who might enter the caves.



Unfortunately, he is a little too late, as the characters arrive before he's finished. If he notices the party, he fights until his hit points are reduced by half or more, then retreats to the Escape Room (room 5).

Regardless of your chosen villains, on the tables are a few unfinished traps: a hunting trap and a leg snare trap. Each trap can be repaired with the materials in the room with a successful DC 10 Intelligence check using tinker's tools.

Hunting Trap. As an action, you can set this trap into the ground. This trap clamps its spiked teeth onto a creature who steps onto the pressure plate in the center. A creature that steps on the plate must make a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw. On a success, the creature passes unharmed; on failure, they take 1d4 piercing damage and their speed is reduced to 0. A creature can use its action to make a DC 13 Strength check, freeing itself or another creature within its reach on a success. Each failed check deals 1 piercing damage to the trapped creature.

Leg Snare Trap. Over the course of a minute, you can set this trap in a 5-foot radius using pulleys, hooks, cord, and rope. The trap triggers when a creature moves into the trapped radius. That creature must succeed on a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw or be pulled into the air by the rope and hung upside down. Any creature caught by the trap in this way is considered restrained. If the set rope takes 5 or more damage, the trap breaks and the restrained creature is set free.

3: THE FUMING RIVERS

"The sound of a roaring waterfall and sizzling steam emanates from ahead of you. This room's walls are impossible to see due to the sheer amount of steam. The hot air is difficult to breathe, and every part of your body feels wet."

This room has both a waterfall and lava fall that do not converge, but due to the heated lava merging with the wet ground, steam consistently plumes inside this room. If the characters somehow get the streams to converge, rock is formed in the center as the lava cools, and the room floods with both liquids, causing more steam to build up in the process.

In the west-most part of the wall is the outline of a door, but it's blocked by stone. Pressed into indentations in this stone are small, circular tablets. There are two tablets in total; it looks like a third one might fit into an empty slot. The first tablet has a claw, and the second has a tail. The third tablet is held by one of the sleeping minions in room 4 and has the head of a dragon on it.

Currently, the tablets are out of order. If the other two tablets are removed and, with the addition of the third tablet, put back in the proper order (head first, then claw, then tail), then the stone door will rumble open and lead to room 6.

4: FEASTING AND SLEEPING CAVE

If your chosen villains are the kobolds, read the following text:

"Scattered around the floor of this room are tiny mats, three of which are occupied by sleeping kobolds. Two large holes in the walls lead to more rooms that are filled with steam."

If your chosen villains are the giants, read the following text:

"Scattered around the floor of this room are four enormous mats, one of which is occupied by a sleeping giant. Two large holes in the walls lead to more rooms that are filled with steam."

This room serves as an alternate entrance—it contains, depending on your chosen villain, three **Haldraxis kobolds** who are asleep, or one **mountain giant** who is also asleep (see appendix B for these creatures' stat blocks). The mountain giant or one of the kobolds holds a tablet, which has a dragon's head carved into it. It can be easily taken from their sleeping bodies. The characters can sneak by the sleeping minions with a successful DC 5 Dexterity (Stealth) check. If any characters fail, the minions wake up and attack the party.

5: ESCAPE ROOM

"This room features a small hole that overlooks the nearby mountains and forests."

This room contains either two **mountain giants** or six **Haldraxis kobolds**, depending on your chosen villains (see appendix B for these creatures' stat blocks). These minions do not fight to the death, and if more than half are killed, or they take damage that reduces them to half their hit points or less, they make an escape. The kobolds spend their turns flinging themselves out of the hole with a catapult and can fly away with gliders. One of the giants will slam a larger hole in the wall, allowing each of them to grab a rock and slide down the mountain, away from the characters.

6: THE HOARD

"Glimmering gold reflects light across this cavern. Bas-reliefs of dragons are carved into the walls. Near the pile of gold is the sleeping Haldraxis, who still bears the wound you dealt him earlier. With each snore, he blows a puff of smoke into the room."

The hoard room is filled with gold—but not nearly as much as a typical dragon might have. Haldraxis sleeps in this cavern, and the characters can stealthily steal from his hoard if they want. Or they can attack while he's asleep to surprise him.

Whenever **Haldraxis** (see appendix B) wakes up, he will fight the characters, frustrated that they won't cede to him. Haldraxis still retains the injuries from their previous fight and is limited while inside his treasure room, as he cannot fly and gain the aerial advantage.

If you would like to conclude "Hunt For Haldraxis" here, read the following text when Haldraxis is defeated:

"Haldraxis rears back in fear. 'No!' he exclaims, as his enormous body falls to the ground. The fiery orange glow in his eyes slowly fades to dark. He lets out a final exhale of smoke, and his body goes limp. Haldraxis is dead."

The characters can loot Haldraxis's hoard after he has been defeated. This concludes the adventure. The characters can return to Byriver and receive their rewards. They are considered heroes by the citizens and are given free rooms and discounts at the stores.

If you would like to continue this adventure into part 3, "The Fate of Byriver," read the following text when Haldraxis begins his turn with less than 55 hit points:

"The dragon bellows, 'I won't fall here! Not before your precious city burns!' He then disengages and flies out of the hole in his lair, headed toward Byriver."

SER NOMINUS NOTE

If you'd like to make this part less of a challenge, or even more of a challenge: feel free to change how much damage Haldraxis must take in order for him to retreat!

Treasure. The hoard contains 5000 gp. (Haldraxis couldn't be bothered to keep silver or copper...or electrum.)

The Final Chase

As Haldraxis escapes his lair and heads toward Byriver, the characters will need to move quickly in order to reach the city in time. They can certainly walk back, but the city will have been destroyed by the time they reach it. In Haldraxis's lair are two possible options to reach Byriver quickly: a set of hang gliders, and a river with barrels.

The Hang Gliders. Near the hole in Haldraxis's lair is a set of ten hang gliders. If your chosen villains are the kobolds, they crafted the hang gliders. If your chosen villains are the mountain giants, they found them on adventurers that they killed a few weeks ago.

The characters can strap on these hang gliders with ease and jump out of the hole towards Byriver, gliding down the steep mountainside toward the city.

If the characters make this choice, read the following text:

"Your stomach lurches for a moment as you drop out of the cave, plummeting toward the ground before you are suddenly pulled back up as the glider catches the air. You hang there, suspended, as you begin to gently glide away from the mountain, your compatriots at your side. The world opens up below you as the mountain falls away, giving you a breathtaking view of the snow-covered peaks and the forested valley below. After you spend a few minutes drinking in the sight, your gliders eventually lead you back to the ground, your feet gently landing in the soft earth of a farmer's field. The city of Byriver lays before you, smoke rising as the roar of the dragon can be heard beyond its gates."

The Barrels. Just outside the hole in Haldraxis's lair is a river that descends down the mountain and directly into Byriver. Next to it are a bunch of empty barrels that were used to hold Haldraxis's hoard when he last moved it. The river is swift and could carry the party if they rode the barrels downriver, toward the city.

If the characters make this choice, read the following text:

"The world bobs for a moment as you and the barrel drop into the rushing river with an audible 'kasploosh.' The white water of the river splashes in your face as you fight to keep yourself upright, dodging rocks and fallen logs. You nearly become sick until the river finally settles, allowing you to drift along the stream. The forest opens up, giving you a clear view of the city of Byriver, smoke already beginning to rise beyond its walls."

Conclusion

Whichever escape they choose, the characters arrive in Byriver a few minutes after Haldraxis has begun his raid. His minions attack the gates while he takes control of the keep. This is where part 2 ends. Part 3, "The Fate of Byriver," picks up with the characters trying to determine how they can save the city from total annihilation. Allow the characters to advance to 3rd level before beginning the next adventure.



Scorch Shield Amulet

The Fate of Byriver

(Adventure #3)

Synopsis

Haldraxis has had enough and now seeks to burn Byriver to the ground. The characters must save the city by defeating his minions at the front gate, saving guards, merchants, and entertainers. And finally, taking the final fight to Haldraxis at the keep.

Introduction

When the party arrives at Byriver, they find that all the entrances are blocked and the main gate is being attacked by Haldraxis's minions. The minions were able to launch their assault on Byriver so quickly because they were prepared for the attack on the city from Haldraxis' first assault. The city militia has barred the gate and is trying their best to hold the creatures back, but it's only a matter of time until they break through. If the party arrived via the hang gliders, they arrive early and the minions are surprised. If the party arrived via river barrels, they arrive a little later and can instead benefit from a short rest. The characters can also ignore the militia and scale the 40-foot wall, avoiding the encounter all together but leaving the guards (including Phillip) to perish.

KOBOLDS ATTACK THE MAIN GATE

The kobolds have formed a small attack force from their inventions and crude kobold artillery weapons. Eight **Haldraxis kobolds** (see appendix B) are attacking the main gate, four of which are busy operating two separate catapults that launch rocks into the gate. Once the characters arrive, roll initiative. Four kobolds try to keep the party away from the other four, who operate the catapults; these catapults act on initiative count 0. The catapults are large machines that have an AC of 12 and 15 hit points each, and deal 2d10 bludgeoning damage if they hit a creature. They require two creatures to operate. For every round in which there are still kobolds manning the catapults, a rock slams into the gate. If four rocks hit the gate, it falls, leaving the city vulnerable to more attacks.

GIANTS ATTACK THE MAIN GATE

Three **mountain giants** (see appendix B) are attempting to break down the gate to cause chaos in the streets. Two of these giants are throwing rocks at the gate while one attempts to lift it. The giant attempting to lift the gate has taken a beating from the guards and only has half of his total hit points. Once the characters arrive, roll initiative. The giants attempt to kill the characters before they can stop their breach. The third

giant, the one who is attempting to lift the gate, spends his turn lifting; at the end of his third turn, he manages to lift the gate and enter the city. If the other two giants are defeated before then, he stops lifting and attacks the characters.

Securing the Main Gate

After the threat has been defeated, the city guards are grateful and let the characters in.

"The gate opens, and you are quickly ushered inside. The city is still standing, yet flaming buildings throw plumes of ash into the purple sky, slowly painting it a deep gray. The streets are devoid of citizens, and in the distance, the imposing form of Haldraxis clings to the side of the king's fortress, his orange eyes glaring down at the town below. His assault has paused, but he takes great effort to ensure it could resume at any moment. The uncertainty fills you with anxiety as Haldraxis jumps from tower to tower, waiting."

A now battered and tired Phillip finds the party again and informs them of the situation in the city. Earlier in the day, the militia escorted the citizens to safety in an underground safehouse in case of another attack, though some remained above ground for their own reasons. Phillip believes that the best course of action is to ally the remaining people of Byriver against Haldraxis who has taken the fortress. Phillip gives them three possible leads: a group of missing guards that could man the ballistas, some entertainers pinned down in the tavern that could use fireworks as a distraction, and the merchant with valuables that could provide help in defeating the dragon. Phillip has been perceptive enough to learn of Haldraxis' weakness against loud noises. Phillip will inform the party of this weakness if they haven't already discovered it. Phillip then continues to guard the main gate.

The Missing Guards

A group of guards went to secure supplies of arrows at the barracks but haven't returned. If the characters can rescue them, they could man their ballistas and keep Haldraxis out of the air.

The party can make their way to the barracks and find that it is nearly in flames. Haldraxis used his breath weapon to burn the building just as he arrived, and the guards are trapped inside. The party will need to remove the rubble from the exits in order to allow them to escape. You can decide to run this as a skill challenge or by allowing the players to solve this situation with their own creativity. If you want to run a skill challenge, have each player make a skill check and describe what they do in order to help the guards escape from the burning barracks. Set the DC at 12 and describe what each character does as they work



together to free the guards. The outcome lies in how many members of the party succeed or fail.

Total Success. The characters rescue all of the guards without a moment to lose. The guards are so grateful that they reward the party with two potions of healing.

Success. The characters rescue the guards at the last second; many of the guards are hurt but alive.

Failure. The characters save half of the guards, and the barracks come crashing down. With only a few able bodies, many of which are injured, the ballistas cannot be properly manned.

The Entertainers

Two entertainers named Osten Tacious and Quinton Dale recently came into town to play shows at taverns and earn some coin. During the evacuation, they were too busy packing up their instruments and since the attack, they've been pinned down in the Flaming Wizard tavern. If the party can help them out of the tavern, they can use their fireworks to distract Haldraxis.

When the players reach the tavern, Haldraxis is blasting motes of flame from afar, targeting near the taverns to keep anyone from entering. Haldraxis hates fireworks and actively keeps anyone from getting to them.

Have the characters roll initiative. Tell them the tavern is 100 feet away. On each of their turns, they can either attempt to run towards the tavern, or attempt to hide behind buildings. At the end of each of their turns, Haldraxis blasts a mote of flame on their location if he can see them. The blast has a 10-foot radius, and any creatures in the area must succeed on a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw or take 2d6 fire damage.

SER NOMINUS NOTE:

Haldraxis won't blast any characters he can't see! Characters can stealth, so long as they don't take the Dash action (unless they've got Cunning Action). Haldraxis's passive Perception is 14. So as long as their Dexterity (Stealth) check beats a 14, the characters are hidden from his sight.



Haldraxis won't fire at the tavern for fear of setting off the fireworks, so any character inside is safe. Hiding under a few windows inside are Osten Tacious and Quinton Dale. Osten is a tiefling with grey skin, golden eyes, and a set of bongos on his back.

He wears a blue and gold cloak over his white shirt and leather pants. Quinton is a human commoner with blonde hair, a neatly trimmed goatee, a lute on his back, and a flowery pink entertainer's vestment. The two are beyond grateful to see another person in the tavern. Quinton asks the characters how they made it past the fiery blasts, while Osten asks if there is a way out. If they are informed about the dragon's aversion to fireworks, Quinton proposes hiding behind the cart of fireworks and using it as cover to escape.

This plan works; Haldraxis is far too afraid to set off the fireworks and ceases his attacks on the tavern once the fireworks are recovered. Quinton and Osten thank the characters and give them a small firework that glows blue when lit. They tell the party that when they light it, the entertainers will send their firework brigade into the night sky.

The Merchant

A halfling merchant by the name of Sybbyl refuses to go underground and is defending his storefront, The Bad Bag, if the characters can convince him to help, he may offer some items to help defeat Haldraxis.

Sybbyl (who uses the **commoner** stat block) has trapped both entrances to his store and keeps his crossbow handy. He is afraid that desperate villagers will raid his store during the chaos, and he doesn't want to lose anything.

The front entrance to the Bad Bag is locked and trapped with a magical explosive. This trap can be noticed with a successful Intelligence (Investigation) check of 14. A successful DC 14 Dexterity check using thieves' tools will unlock the door but will trigger the explosive. Each creature within 5 feet of the door when the explosive triggers takes 1d10 fire damage and is blown back 20 feet from the door. A successful DC 18 Dexterity check using thieves' tools will unlock the door and disarm the trap.

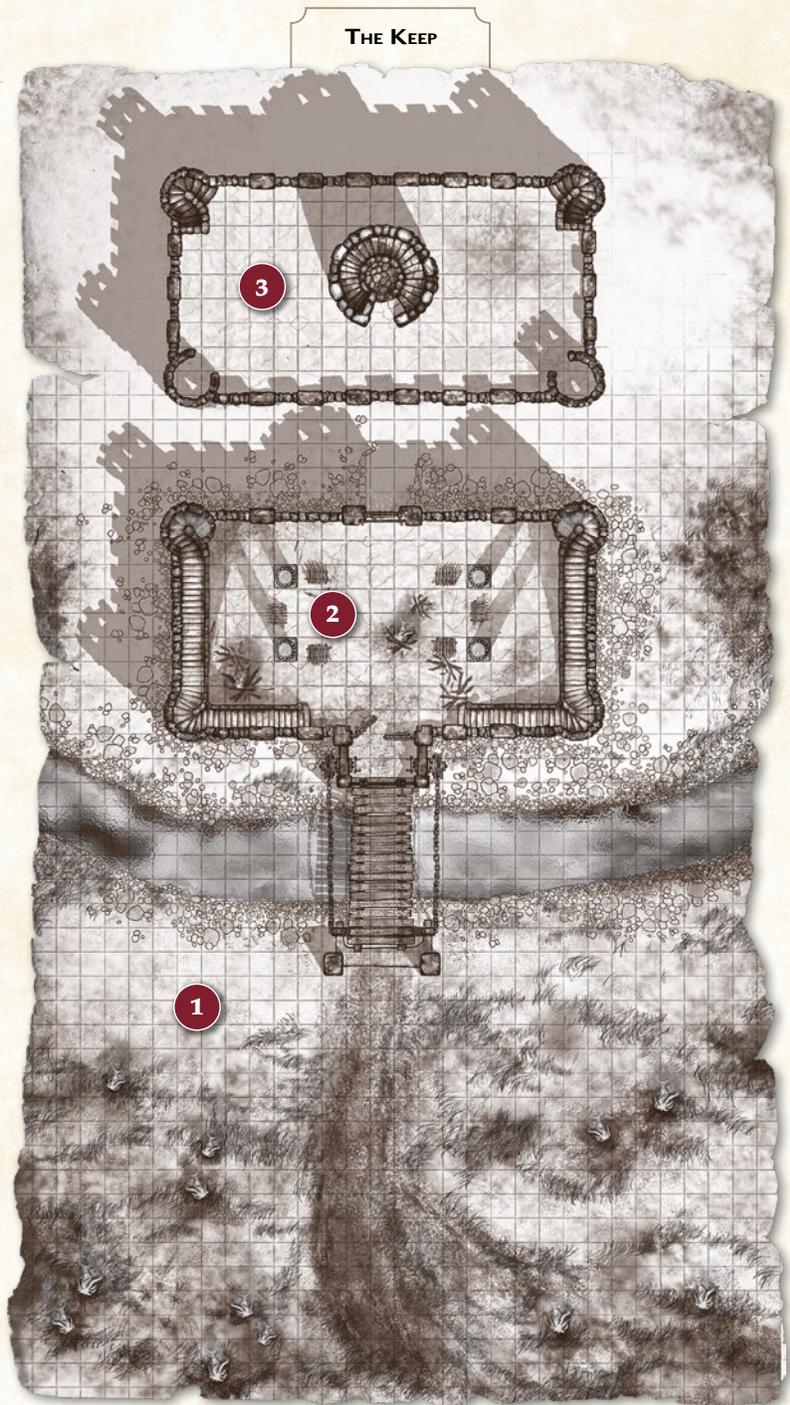
The back door is also trapped with spring-loaded floor boards. This trap can be noticed by any characters with a passive Perception higher than 15, or who make a successful DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check. Any character who steps within 5 feet of the door is launched 15 feet into the air and takes 1d6 bludgeoning damage as they hit the ground.

Sybbyl won't come out for any reason—he thinks the characters want to rob his store. However, any character can make a Charisma (Persuasion) check of 15 to convince Sybbyl that they need his help to defeat Haldraxis. In which Sybbyl gives in and unlocks the doors and disarms the traps.. if the characters successfully break in past the traps, he gives up, too cowardly to fight them. He gives them whatever they ask for. However, if the characters explain the situation to Sybbyl, he'll be far more compliant, willing to lend items to defeat the dragon without giving away his entire stock.

Sybbyl gives the party one vial each filled with *potions of invisibility* (see below), then stays to guard his store.

Treasure. If the characters decide to loot Sybbyl's store, or even kill him to do so, they find 250 gp, 500 sp, and 1,000 cp, along with eight *vials of invisibility* (see below), five crossbows, five bundles of bolts, five explosive bombs, two 50-foot coils of rope, five daggers, a vial of antitoxin, three sets of studded leather armor, and two barrels of foodstuffs.

Vials of Invisibility. This impossibly clear liquid is stored in a glass vial. When consumed as an action, it makes you become invisible. Anything you are wearing or carrying is invisible as long as it is on your person. The invisibility lasts for 1 minute, or ends early if you attack or cast a spell.



The Keep

At any time, the characters can storm the keep to defeat Haldraxis. Haldraxis sits at the top of the highest tower, watching the village and raining fire down on anyone who gets too close to the keep's entrance.

"The keep rises into the night sky, its stone bricks blackened and charred in places from Haldraxis's rampage. The dragon clings to the structure's highest peak, waiting."

1: ENTRANCE

“Just beyond the main gate of the keep’s grounds, a once-green field of grass is now blackened and charred, areas of it still smoking slightly from the dragon’s fire. At the far end of the field, a wooden drawbridge is lowered over a water-filled moat, almost beckoning you to try to cross it.”

The entrance to the keep is 200 feet of grassy fields that have been burned, ending with a drawbridge with a moat underneath. **Haldraxis** (see appendix B) fires motes of flame on anyone that enters this area. Unlike at the tavern, there is nowhere to hide in this open entrance.

When the characters reach this area, roll initiative. At the end of each of their turns, Haldraxis blasts a mote of flame on their location if he can see them. The blast explodes over a 10-foot radius, and any creatures in the area must succeed a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw or take 2d6 fire damage. Haldraxis ceases fire once the characters are past the drawbridge.

If the characters helped the guards escape from the barracks, they man the ballistas, which forces Haldraxis back into the keep. The characters will not be blasted with flame when entering this area.

If the characters helped the entertainers escape from the tavern, they can light their fireworks to set off the barrage of bright lights and loud explosions into the sky. Haldraxis will be blinded for a few minutes, allowing the characters to quickly slip inside.

If the characters convince the merchant to give them supplies, they can quaff their *vials of invisibility* to stealthily enter the keep. Haldraxis won’t attack what he can’t see, and they slip in unnoticed.

2: MAIN INTERIOR

“All you can hear in this large, ruined chamber are the sounds of your own footsteps—and those of the dragon, as it paces anxiously above you. Two stone staircases on either side of the main entrance make their way up towards the structure’s roof.”

This main interior is 80 feet in height and has a staircase that leads to the roof. **Haldraxis** (see appendix B) will attempt to bring the roof down on top of the characters as they ascend. The characters must make it up the stairs within 3 rounds, or the roof will be destroyed. If the characters fail to climb the stairs in time, each character must make a DC 12 Dexterity or Strength saving throw as rubble falls on top of them. On a failed save, they take 1d10 bludgeoning damage; on a success, that damage is halved.

If Haldraxis caved in the roof, the ground floor is covered in rubble and the rooftop can no longer be accessed. The floor of the main interior is difficult terrain and Haldraxis makes his final stand in this

room, still sustaining any injuries he received during the fight in his lair. He uses the 80 feet of space to his advantage, staying airborne as much as possible.

If the characters used their *vials of invisibility* to enter the keep interior, Haldraxis does not attempt to bring down the roof. The party can stealthily ascend the stairs, and if their Dexterity (Stealth) checks beat Haldraxis’s passive Perception score of 14, he is surprised.

3: ROOFTOP

“The roof of the keep is just as damaged as the rest of it, with ash and scorch marks darkening the stones. The imposing form of Haldraxis curls around the building, snarling at you. ‘You again? This time I’ll ensure to burn you each to cinders!’”

If the characters stealthily made their way to the rooftop, and it was never caved in; **Haldraxis** (see appendix B) makes his final stand here instead, still sustaining any injuries he received during the fight in his lair. He attempts to go airborne if possible, but each turn Haldraxis ends while flying more than 10 feet above the ground, he is attacked by a ballista and takes 2d10 piercing damage (only if the characters saved the guards).

If the characters haven’t yet fired the signal for the entertainers to set off the fireworks, they can do so here—in which case, Haldraxis will become stunned for 1 round, and will have disadvantage on attack rolls for all continuous rounds, as the fireworks go off in the sky above him.

Once Haldraxis is defeated, read the following text:

“Haldraxis rears back in fear. ‘No!’ he exclaims, as his enormous body falls to the ground. The fiery orange glow in his eyes slowly fades to dark. He lets out a final exhale of smoke, and his body goes limp. Haldraxis is dead.”

Conclusion

With Haldraxis defeated, the city of Byriver is safe. The party will be rewarded double their promised gold and deemed “Heroes of Byriver,” granting them free rooms and drinks at the Flaming Wizard tavern, as well as discounts at stores in the city. The adventures do not have to end here, however! Perhaps Haldraxis had a mate who is planning on taking on an even bigger city, or maybe the minions still lurk in the mountains? Maybe King Dirion has other tasks for this newly formed adventuring party. Whatever it may be, adventure can continue on past this point! It’s up to you.

Vial of
Invisibility





THEME TAGS

Fantasy, mystery, bleak.

CONTENT WARNING

Attempted murder, burning building, alcohol, corpses, wolf attacks, starvation.

Description

The village of Wispy Peak has a problem. Food is disappearing, driving its people to near starvation. Adventurers arrive as the villagers scramble to plant the next harvest. A village guard offers the adventurers a bounty of gold and magically-enhanced items to solve the mystery of the missing food. The first adventure involves the characters locating the thieves and their hideout. In the second adventure, the characters return to Wispy Peak to find the tavern set ablaze and are tasked with finding the culprits. Then in the final adventure, the characters confront the mastermind behind the crimes against the village, resulting in the final hunt—and eventual defeat—of the main villain(s)

Background

Over the last few tendays, the village farmers have awoken to a quickly-escalating issue: the disappearance of their food. First, it started with foodstuffs being taken from the local general store; then the theft migrated to the food storage building. Though none of the thieves have been caught, one was recently spotted escaping from the village's food stores. Anyone who has attempted to discover who is committing these crimes has failed to return, and the village's two guards cannot properly guard both locations at once. The party arrives a day after the farmland in the village was ransacked, the crops all prematurely picked and destroyed—but strangely left behind instead of taken. The farmers, distraught, have cleared most of the fields and planted what seeds they have left. As the party enters the village, the guards know that these people may be the solution to their problem, and request their assistance.

The townspeople all believe that they have been cursed, and will only speak of ghosts haunting the village and destroying their crops, but the guards know better, and suspect a thief or thieves. The villagers are wrong, of course, and there are no ghosts, but that doesn't stop rumors from spreading.



Character Hooks and Motivations

To help involve your players and their characters more in the story, have each character answer the following question: *Why do you want to help the village of Wispy Peak?*

Alternatively, you can use the table below to give your players ideas for their characters' motivations in the adventure.

- 1 You were born in Wispy Peak and don't believe the rumors of ghosts.
- 2 The town of Wispy Peak requested help in finding some thieves. You were all the local government could spare.
- 3 You have been hunting ghosts and have had no luck. Maybe Wispy Peak will be your big breakthrough!
- 4 You stumbled across this small village while traveling through the forests. The people look desperate, and you've decided to help.
- 5 You're a mercenary for hire, and that reward for finding the thieves is mighty enticing.
- 6 This could be a way to get your name known, even by a small local village such as this—you'd be their hero!

Villains

The villains for this adventure are the people who are stealing/burning the food of Wispy Peak. Though there are not many people that would have reason to starve out a village, there are various motivations for doing so—in this case, either a vendetta against the villagers, or an attempt to gain a warfront advantage.

Felrond Spies

(Villain Option #1)

Spies from the bordering land of Felrond are attempting to steal food from the villagers, with the intention of poisoning what they've stolen and returning it. Felrond wants to take Wispy Peak because they wish to declare war, and the village would be a good vantage point to hold for potential attacks, as it has an elevation advantage over the surrounding area.

The Minstrel

(Villain Option #2)

A local minstrel feels "wronged" by the town after being kicked out of the inn for singing songs disparaging the local nobility. He seeks revenge on the people of Wispy Peak by stealing their food to make them believe the town is haunted. He rarely shows his face in town, and instead sends two of his bandmates to steal the food for him.

A Dangerous Supply

(Adventure #1)

Synopsis

Upon entering the village of Wispy Peak, the party is tasked by a guard named Kenny Wallace to find the truth of the missing food. The characters can investigate the field or the storage to find a clue leading to the forest which leads to a cave where the culprits are located.

Introduction

“Dusk falls across the horizon, the sky a yellow hue over the village of Wispy Peak. Whether you were traveling together in the first place or ran into one another along the road, you all have the same destination, each with your own reasons. As you enter the town, you are met with a dreary sight. The village appears worse for wear, as a path opens up onto a small batch of poorly-maintained homes. The few individuals you see outside seem gloomy, shrinking back at the sight of strangers. As you take this in, you’re approached by a man in tattered leather armor, a longsword at his side.”

The party, making their way into the village of Wispy Peak, is met with low spirits. As they enter, Lenny Wallace, a guard with a slightly gaunt face and worn armor, approaches the characters and requests that they come to the Bronzed Brew, a local tavern. Upon arriving, the guard buys the party drinks, though not food, and tells them the following:

- The town’s food has been disappearing, seemingly at random.
- The townspeople believe the trouble to be caused by ghosts, or a curse placed on them. Even their leader believes these rumors!
- Wispy Peak’s few guards don’t believe this, and instead believe someone is stealing the food.
- Their people have enough food to survive until the next crop, and need to make sure what they currently have stays in their storeroom.
- They are desperate for assistance, as there aren’t enough guards to both investigate and also properly protect the town from wild animals at night.

The party is asked to investigate the areas the food is being taken from to discover who is burning and stealing the village’s food. These areas of interest are The Fields and The Storage. Whichever location the party chooses to visit, it contains a way to discover who is stealing the food. They are offered 15 gp each, two potions of healing, and a cold runic sword (see appendix A) for finding the culprit and bringing them to the guard, alive or dead.

SER NOMINUS NOTE

The runic sword intentionally does not have a weapon type associated with it. Feel free to offer a weapon of the same type that a character is currently using, so it feels like an upgrade to what they already have!

The Fields

“As you make your way toward the fields, you notice a rickety fence, barely standing, protecting what small crop remains. Though not all harvestable wheat has yet been reaped, the telltale sign of a new crop can be spotted as close to the full-grown wheat as possible. This crop has barely begun to grow, and has months yet to finish its maturing process. As you pass through the gate, you notice a small halfling child tightly grasp and pull some stalks from the ground.”

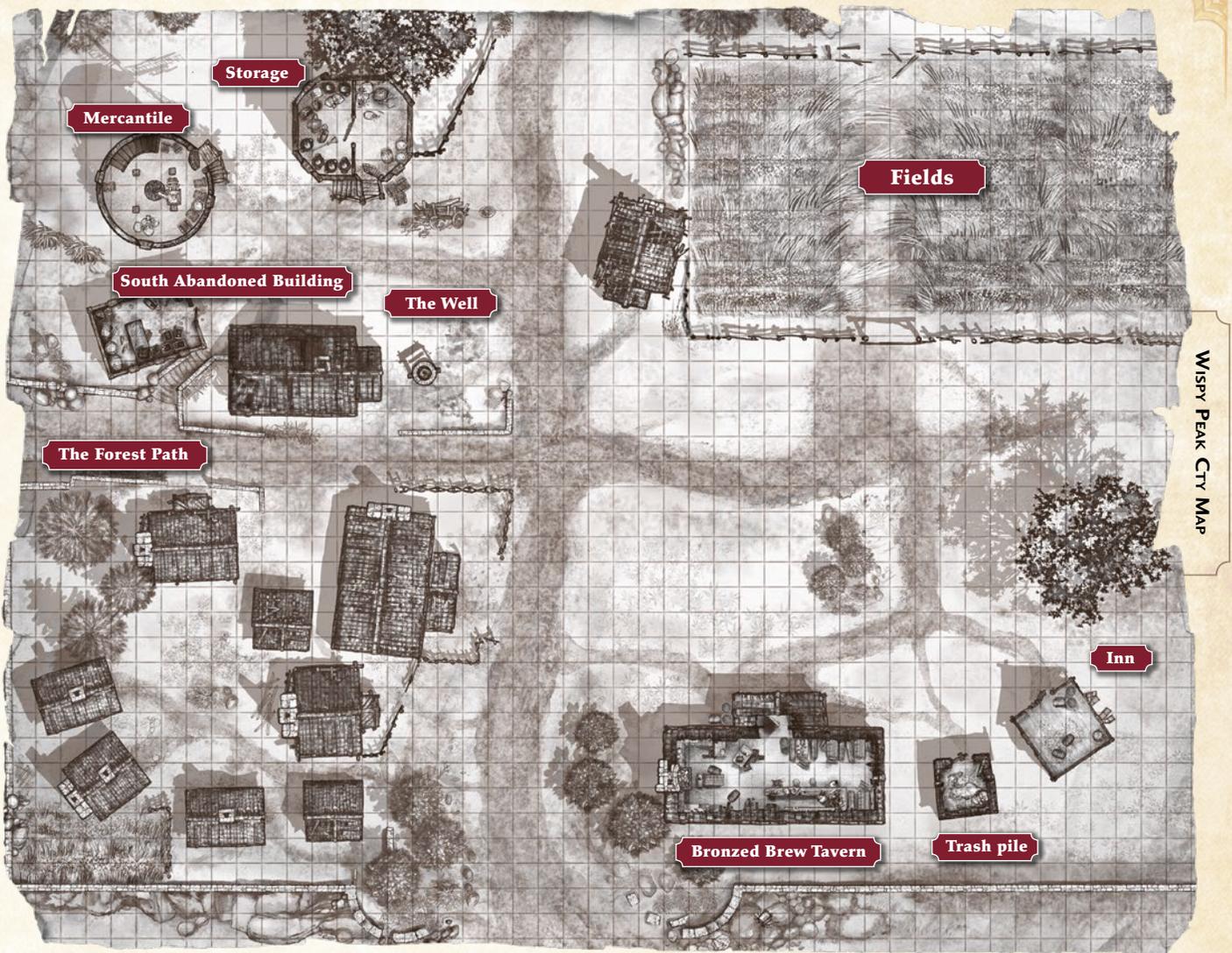
A small child, a male halfling, has been taking food as well, and is currently picking grains of wheat from the little that remains in the field. This child, named Anner Longrabbit, is taking the small pieces to feed himself, but he is not the one burning or stealing significant amounts of food. The boy is timid and afraid, but explains to the party that he only takes enough to survive if given the chance.

If the party takes Anner to the guards, they will grant them a portion of the reward, as the guards are aware that Anner is not the likely culprit. Alternatively, the party can keep him safe and, with a successful DC 13 Charisma (Persuasion) check, make him feel comfortable enough to share that he saw some figures going into the forest a few nights ago, with large sacks over their backs, though he can’t remember exactly where the figures left from.

The Storage

“As you step over to the splintered wooden storage shed, you are met with a surprisingly dreadful sight. A mediocre amount of wheat sits neatly in a pile in the back of this small room, and appears to be barely enough to feed this modest town. The only light in the building comes through the open doorway and a small window in the top left corner of the room.”

There is not much in the storage besides a mediocre pile of wheat in the back. If a character decides to investigate the storage, they find a small piece of cloth hanging on the entrance with a successful DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) or Wisdom (Perception) check. Below



WISPY PEAK CTRY. MAP

the cloth is a bit of dried blood. These droplets of blood form a trail that leads all the way to the forest,, toward what appears to be a small, man-made path about 20 feet into the treeline. Men sent by the villain(s) to steal food from the stores accidentally cut themselves on the entrance as they were leaving, as they could not see well within the darkness of the building.

The Forest Path

“As you begin down this forest path, you notice that it disappears sporadically and must be followed carefully as the density of the trees increases. A hazy fog provides a sense of unease about going deeper in, encouraging you to keep your guard up.”

The party needs to follow the path to find their way to the cave. If the party fails a DC 17 Wisdom (Survival check) while following footprints/bloodstains to the cave, they encounter one complication from the following table while on the way there.

SER NOMINUS NOTE

Whatever happens here, use theater of the mind for the encounter. Theater of the mind involves using—you guessed it—your mind, instead of a map. Sometimes theater of the mind can be a little tricky to manage, so feel free to be a little loosey-goosey on how far away one creature is when compared to another. It’s okay to make the calls on the fly, as long as it’s within reason.

1D4	RESULT
1	Wolves
2	Pit trap
3	Rough brush
4	Multicolored flower

Wolves. Two wolves (see appendix B) stalk the party. They can be seen with a passive Perception of 13 or higher. Otherwise, the wolves attack the characters, catching them by surprise.

Pit Trap. A 10-foot-deep pit trap has been set by the villain(s). The party member in the lead must succeed on a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw to avoid falling into it. If a creature does fall into the trap, they take 1d4 bludgeoning damage.

Rough Brush. The characters come across rough brush on the path. They must continue at half speed through the brush, and must succeed on a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw or take 2 piercing damage while moving through.

Multicolored Flower. The party encounters a large, mysterious, multicolored flower that seems to be following them. Years ago, this flower was awakened by a druid named Old Long Logan and is not dangerous in any way. It has an AC of 10 and 3 hit points. Old Long Logan is an old druid who is living in an old wizard's dungeon, the portal to which is within the town's well. If the party is nice to the flower and allows it to follow them, it appears in part 3, "Secrets Revealed," and Old Long Logan will give the party his key instead of

forcing the party to solve his riddle. If the party is outwardly mean to the flower, then Old Long Logan will force the party to solve his riddle.

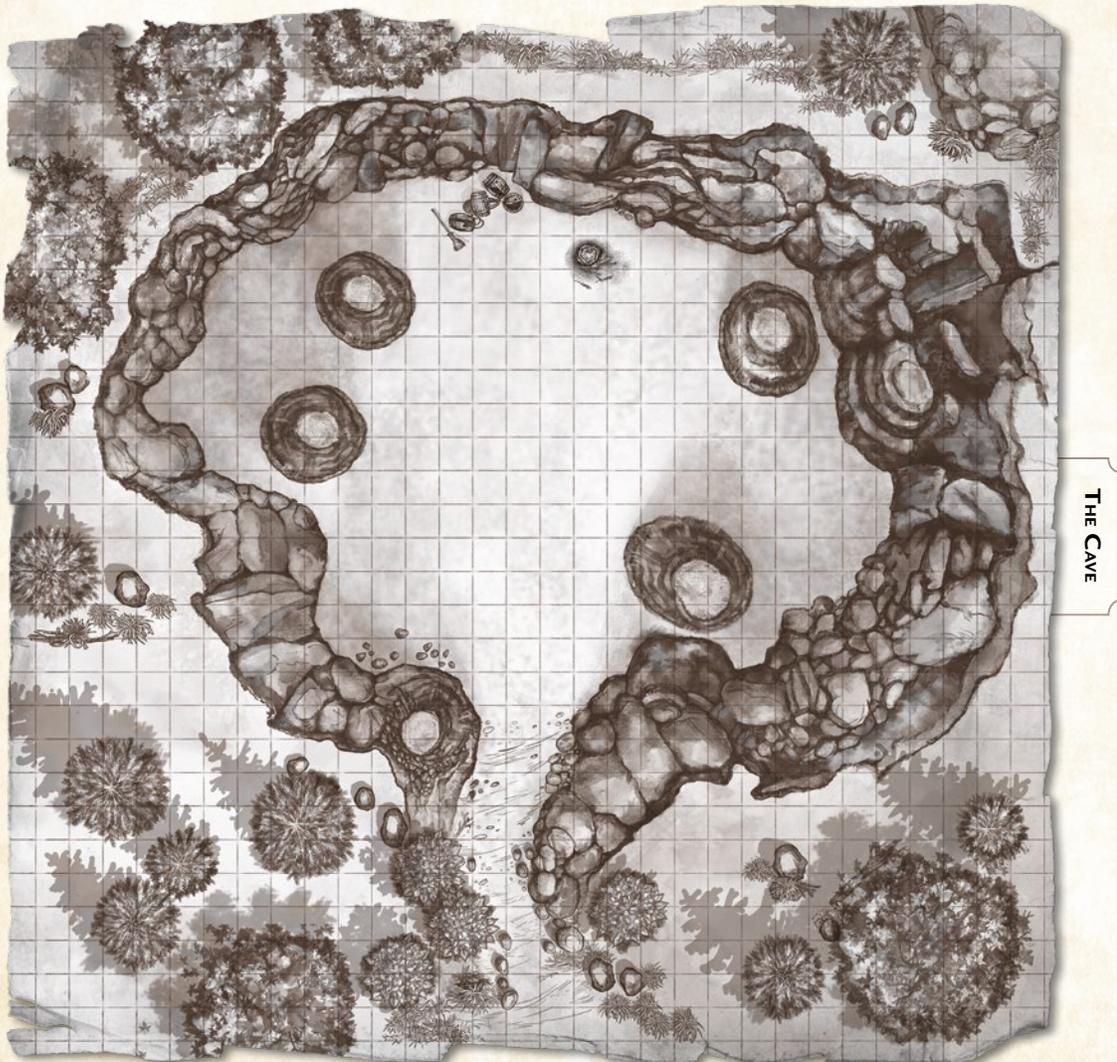
If the party does not face this encounter, then Old Long Logan will give the party the riddle as normal.

The Cave

"As you come to the end of this pathway, you find, hidden behind brush and plant life, the entrance to a cave. The inside of this cave appears to be lit from the back, the glow of a small lantern revealing what is inside."

If your chosen villain is the minstrel, read the following text:

"You notice the telltale strumming of a lute, alongside some humming. On the right side of the cave, you see one man and one woman, both in performance wear. Next to them is a cut-open sack of ruined wheat."



THE CAVE



The man and woman are the minstrel's **bandmates** (see appendix B).

If your chosen villains are the Felrond spies, read the following text:

"You notice, on the right side of the cave, two individuals in dark clothing, faces covered, holding a flask. They appear to be pouring the flask's liquid contents into a sack. Out of the sack falls a few stalks of wheat."

The disguised individuals are two of the **Felrond spies** (see appendix B).

The inside of the cave is wide open, aside from some bags thrown into the back corner of the room, and natural stone pillars scattered about, rising from floor to ceiling. The bandmates are celebrating their victory in stealing the food, while the spies are pouring a potentially deadly poison into the wheat bag, intent on taking it back to the town and leaving it in their storage.

Conclusion

If you want to end the adventure here and your villain is the minstrel, then he replaces the bandmates.

The party can capture or kill the villain(s) in the caves and return to the guards. The guards give the party their reward and wish them well on their next journey.

If you would like to continue the adventure into part 2, "A Burning Concern," the party captures or kills the individuals found in the caves, and returns to the village to find the tavern on fire. They also advance to 2nd level.

SER NOMINUS NOTE

You could read the flavor text from the introduction of part 2 to set the scene!

Rewards

The town guards that gave the party the job offer the party 15 gp each, one *potion of healing* (These potions can be used as an action to heal 2d4+2 HP), and a runic sword that deals an extra 2 cold damage on a hit (see appendix A) for finding the culprit and bringing them back, alive or dead.

SER NOMINUS

If you plan to continue to part 2, "A Burning Concern," the rewards from the guards will instead be granted to the party following the fire event in the next adventure, as they will be returning to a village in chaos.

A Burning Concern

(Adventure #2)



Synopsis

The party returns to Wispy Peak and finds the tavern aflame. Upon putting the fire out, they find a scroll tube among the wreckage with a delivery receipt from the mercantile to an abandoned house. Depending on which they visit first, they encounter an assassin and discover the villain is hidden in the village in disguise.

SER NOMINUS NOTE

Though this adventure is happening directly following the previous adventure, allow the party to benefit from the effects of a long rest as part of their subsequent level-up, as this adventure opens up with a combat scenario.

Introduction

When you're ready to begin the adventure, read the following text:

"As you step through the forest, making your way back toward Wispy Peak, you smell a hint of smoke in the air. After a few more steps, a soft light—glowing, burning—appears in the direction of the village. Breaking through the treeline reveals a devastating sight: The tavern is ablaze, as the few guards and capable citizens grab buckets from the well, frantically trying to save the building."

When the party makes it back to Wispy Peak, have the characters roll initiative. Any number of characters can help put the fire out by grabbing a bucket of water as an action and dumping it on the fire. If five buckets of water are poured onto the tavern, the fire is successfully put out. If 6 rounds pass before five buckets of water are poured, the tavern is lost to the flames.

If your chosen villains are the spies, the party also encounters two **mini fire elementals** (see appendix B), created by a *spell scroll of summon elemental (mini fire)* (see appendix A), as they work to put the fire out.

If your chosen villain is the minstrel, the party also encounters two **arsonist pixies** (see appendix B), created by a *spell scroll of summon fey (arsonist pixie)* (see appendix A), as they work to put the fire out.

The creatures were summoned by the culprit, via a spell scroll, to start the fire.

SER NOMINUS NOTE

If characters want to make skill checks instead of grabbing a bucket, they should be allowed to, as long as it makes sense! Reward them by allowing these checks to count as two or three bucket dumps. These can be things such as making a Strength (Athletics) check to run water from the well to the tavern, or a Charisma (Intimidation) check to frighten the villagers into working harder. You can even grant successes if a player thinks on their feet and casts a spell, such as create water! Let your players be creative, as long as it fits the situation at hand.

Immediately after the fire subsides, regardless of whether or not the tavern burns down, the guards round up those in the village, as they believe the fire must have been set intentionally. While the villagers speak once again of ghosts and hauntings, the guards know better, and request that the party, as the only people who were absent when the fire started, discover who set it. In exchange for completing this quest, they offer the party 20 gp each and a *spell scroll of dispel magic* they have locked away. The guards do not know what spell is on the scroll, as the only scribe who was capable of casting it left long ago.

The Bronzed Brew Tavern

If the tavern burned down, read the following text:

"As you go to investigate the charred remains of the tavern, you stare upon the blackened wood and caved-in roof. Though some walls remain partially standing, the tavern's insides have become a pile of ash and shattered glass. You note a small tankard lying in the corner of the building, its contents likely spilled earlier in the day, alongside other small trinkets that remain, miraculously, mostly-untouched by the fire."

Here the party finds a scroll tube buried in some of the ash and glass. A party member searching through the pile must succeed on a DC 10 Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check to avoid injuring themselves on the glass, taking 1 slashing damage on a failure. With a successful DC 16 Intelligence (Investigation) check on the scroll tube, the party finds a receipt to the mercantile inside it. On this receipt it reads "From the Wispy Peak Mercantile: Deliver to South Abandoned Building". The characters also notice that this tube is strangely pristine, compared to nearly everything else in the tavern. The culprit threw the scroll tube and its contents down after starting the fire, unaware that the tube was fireproof because of the volatile nature of the scroll inside.

Outside of this tube, there is nothing of note that remains standing in this tavern, aside from a few tankards, some wooden bowls and tableware, and a bottle of red wine from behind the counter.

If the tavern was saved, read the following text:

"Stepping into the tavern, you smell blackened wood, and portions of the walls appear unmistakably more charred than others. While some tankards, bowls, and tableware are scattered across the floor, the tavern itself remains standing."

Here the party finds a *spell scroll* tube while searching the building. Upon succeeding on a DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) or Wisdom (Perception) check, the party finds a receipt to the mercantile inside the tube. On this receipt it reads "From the Wispy Peak Mercantile: Deliver to South Abandoned Building". The characters also notice that the tube is completely untouched by the fire. Outside of this tube, there is nothing of note that remains standing in this tavern, aside from a few tankards, some wooden bowls and tableware, a bottle of red wine from behind the counter, and a barrel of ale beside it.

The Wispy Peak Mercantile

"As you enter the mercantile, you find it to be a small store with barren shelves. Though there is some meager adventuring gear left on the walls, the absence of food can't go unmissed."

Option 1

Visiting the Mercantile First

If the party goes to the mercantile first, before going to the south abandoned building, read the following text:

"At the front of the store, a cloaked individual turns toward you as you enter, brandishing a dagger. He lets out a gasp as the merchant behind the counter cries out to you, 'Assassin! Help, please!'"

The villain has hired an **assassin** (see appendix B) with the intent to murder the mercantile owner, as the merchant is aware that expensive scrolls were stolen from his shop not too long ago. Have the characters roll initiative to deal with the assassin. The party enters as the assassin is about to murder the owner. If they stop the assassin, the shop owner thanks the party for everything, and gives them a *potion of healing* in gratitude. If questioned about the matter of the spell scrolls, the merchant knows the following:

- A week ago, he got an order for an imported scroll.
- If your villains are the Felrond spies, the scroll in question was a *spell scroll of summon elemental (mini fire)*.
- If your villain is the minstrel, the scroll in question was a *spell scroll of summon fey (arsonist pixie)*.

- Though the merchant was confused by the nature of the purchase, the scroll was very expensive, and a delivery was set for a few days from now.
- Yesterday, he had four people enter his shop at different times: a guard, a bard, a farmer, and a peasant. Sometime before the day was over, the scroll was stolen.
- The merchant does not know which person took the scroll, and he wouldn't be able to identify them individually.

If the party decides to search the assassin, they find 100 gp on his person, and a letter telling him to meet at the same address listed on the spell scroll. The letter is signed, "A rich benefactor."

Option 2

Visiting the Mercantile Second

If the party goes to the mercantile second, after going to the south abandoned building, read the following text:

"As you enter the store, you are met with an uneasy silence. Each step can be heard on the wooden floors, the counter void of any shopkeep. Stepping up, you can see a smear of dark red liquid across the countertop. As you look over the counter, you see the owner of the shop, lying in a pool of his own blood, eyes staring vacantly at the ceiling. Dead."

The merchant has been killed by an assassin, hired by the culprit to silence him. If the party comes across this scene, there is no evidence of who may have killed him. With a successful DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check, the party finds a *spell scroll of speak with dead* in the shop. If they cast this spell to speak with the merchant, he knows the following:

- He was murdered by a cloaked, masked individual. He did not get a name nor see his face.
- A week ago, he got an order for an imported scroll.
- If your villains are the Felrond spies, the scroll in question was for *summon elemental (mini fire)*.
- If your villain is the minstrel, the scroll in question was for *summon fey (arsonist pixie)*.
- Though the merchant was confused by the nature of the purchase, the scroll was very expensive, and a delivery was set for a few days from now.
- Yesterday, he had four people enter his shop at different times: a guard, a bard, a farmer, and a peasant. Sometime before the day was over, the scroll was stolen.
- He does not know which person took the scroll, and he wouldn't be able to identify them individually.



Arsonist Pixie



Runic
Sword

The South Abandoned Building

“The building looks to be falling apart, the windows boarded up to replace the broken glass, and the wooden walls splintered and cracking. When you approach the front door, it swings open at the slightest touch. Once inside, you see an empty house illuminated only by the sunlight peeking through gaps in the boarded windows and splintered walls. A small bundle of clothing is laid out on the floor.”

This abandoned building is the halfway point the culprit has been using to swap disguises during their voyages into town. There are currently three sets of clothing in the home: the garb of a guard, a peasant, and a farmer. The villain (whether it is the minstrel, or the Felrond spy who snuck into Wispy Peak to set the fire) is currently in bardic clothing, attempting to make their escape through the town, but unable to due to the guards keeping an eye on the border. They do not want to use the well exit unless absolutely necessary.

Option 1

Visiting the South Abandoned Building First

If the party comes here before going to the mercantile, an **assassin** (see appendix B) enters while they are investigating the house, and attempts to attack the party. This assassin was hired by the culprit to kill the mercantile owner, and is returning to the south abandoned building after doing so. He knows the party is not part of the larger plan, and intends on silencing them—and perhaps getting a little more gold out of his benefactor. If the party decides to search the assassin after defeating him, they find 100 gp on his person, and a letter telling him to meet at the same address listed on the spell scroll. The letter is signed, “A rich benefactor.”

Option 2

Visiting the South Abandoned Building Second

If the party comes here after going to the mercantile, they are uninterrupted as they search the house, the assassin having been previously defeated in the mercantile.

Conclusion

When the party returns to the guards and shares both the evidence from the tavern and the mercantile’s testimony, the guards move to gather up any bardic-looking individuals they can find in town.

If you would like to end the adventure here, the culprit responsible for the fire (whether it is the minstrel or one of the Felrond spies) is found and arrested by the guards, and the town isn’t attacked again. The party is rewarded for their efforts.

If you would like to continue to part 3, “Secrets Revealed,” as the guards move to arrest the villain in disguise—whether it is the minstrel or one of the Felrond spies—they slip out of the guards’ grip and jump down the well, grabbing the rope that falls down to the bottom as they do. The guards run over towards the well and look down to the bottom of it, before turning back towards the party. “They’re gone,” is all they say, a look of surprise on their faces. The party also advances to 3rd level.

Rewards

The town tavern-keeper will grant each of the party members a special *stamina potion* (see appendix A) that allows the party to take a long rest in the time they would normally spend on a short rest, while the guards grant the party an extra 20 gp each and a *spell scroll of dispel magic* for helping to keep the village from burning down.

SER NOMINUS NOTE

If you are running the open ending, grant the players these items and gold at the start of the next game.

Secrets Revealed

(Adventure #3)

Synopsis

With the guards preoccupied with protecting the city, the characters must descend down the well where they find a puzzling dungeon with locked doors and hidden keys. Once they find a way into the villains headquarters, they face off in a duel in hopes to finally save the village of Wispy Peak.

Introduction

In the previous adventure, the party discovered who was responsible for the tavern fire. The culprit was found, but retreated into the dungeon via a well. The guards request the party's assistance in ending the assault on Wispy Peak once and for all. Offering the

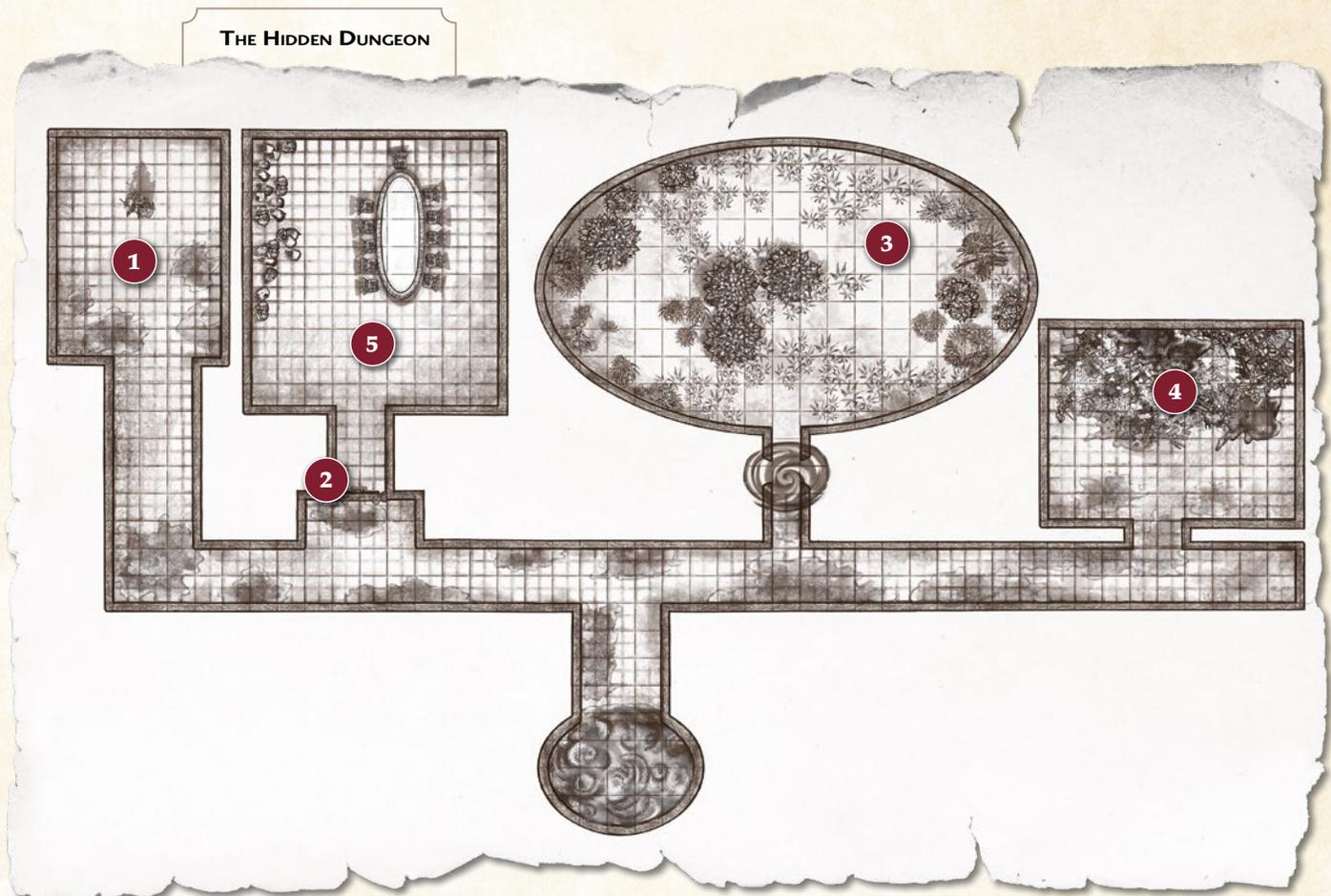
characters ownership of a small keep just outside of town, as it's all they have left to give.

The Well. The well descends 30 feet into the water, and the party can use the rope the bucket is attached to to get down.

The Dungeon

"As you descend into the well, you feel weightless for a moment. Then you fall into a puddle of water in a small circular room. You've seemingly teleported! You notice an ascending cobbled pathway that leads further on into a strange stone dungeon."

These paths act as the go-between for each of the rooms in these dungeon. There is not much here except for foot-high water and stone corridors.



Animated
Armor



1: ENCHANTED ARMORY

“As you step into the leftmost room of this dungeon, you find yourself in an almost-barren stone room. Devoid of water outside of small puddles scattered about, the main item of note is a suit of armor levitating slightly off the ground in the center of the room. The eyeholes of this armor glow a pale red color. A hole in the chest piece seems to contain a floating key.”

This room is clear, aside from small, scattered pools of water. In the center of the room stands a suit of armor with a hole in its chest. In its chest is a key, freely floating and visible through the hole. The armor is held up by enchantment magic, which activates the suit of armor if the key is removed. If *dispel magic* is cast on the armor, it falls to the ground, inanimate. The suit of **animated armor** (see appendix B) fights any creatures in the room when the key is removed, focusing its attacks on whichever member of the party holds the key.

2: STEEL DOOR

“As you look down the left of the two center pathways, you find yourself faced with a closed steel door, with two keyholes, one on each side. These two keyholes have small runes spilling out of them and onto the door itself.”

The center left pathway leads to a steel door, with two keyholes. The keyholes seem to be unable to be picked, and if anything but two of the three identical keys located elsewhere in the dungeon is placed inside in an attempt to force open the lock, the creature holding the items takes 1 force damage and is blown back 5 feet by a magical ward. If *dispel magic* is cast on the door, it removes the runes, but it is still impossible to pick the lock with thieves' tools.

When the door opens, it reveals the base of operations for the adventure's main villain(s) (“The Headquarters”).

3: THE ILLUSORY GLADE

“This room is overgrown with foliage and brush. Vines and ivy cover the walls and flowers bloom in the grass underneath. A tall human man in scrub-like garb steps from behind some bushes, looking intently upon the party. Around his neck, hanging from a vine necklace, is a key.”

The man is a middle-aged druid who calls himself Old Long Logan. He does not remember if that is a nickname that was given to him, or just what he calls himself. The glade is something he has created over time, magically forced to grow in the dungeon and hidden via illusion magic. He will give the party the key to the locked steel door if they encountered the Multicolored Flower in adventure 1 and did not harm it. Old Long Logan is illusory, thus anything physical to come in contact with him phases right through.

Read the following text to offer the riddle to your players to solve:

*“Love and torment follow its days,
Ignorance and bliss shadow its plays,
Fulfillment and joy mark its stays,
Encounters and words mark its ways.
What am I?”*

The riddle's answer? Life.

4: TRASH HEAP

“As you step into this room, you almost gag at the rancid smell that emanates from it. The back of this large chamber is composed of a huge pile of rubbish, towering overhead. The sound of snoring seems to be coming from inside the trash heap. Poking out of it, you see the slight golden sheen of a key.”

This path leads to a large room containing a pile of trash and sewage. The party must dig through the sewage to find one of the keys. When they investigate the sewage, they must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check, or risk waking up the **trash pile** (see appendix B). The trash pile is magically alive, and will trade the key in return for other garbage, which it calls “food,” or whatever the party has on them that they’re willing to give up. If the party attempts to fight the trash, it will gobble up one of the members, and not spit them out until given trash of similar size. Characters consumed by the trash pile are suffocating and can survive a number of minutes equal to their Constitution modifier (minimum 1). If the party decides to further antagonize the pile of trash, it will attack them.

5: THE HEADQUARTERS

“As you insert the golden keys into the steel door, they twist into the locks by themselves. The door slowly splits in the center, grinding on the stone flooring. You see before you another stone room, this one nearly pristine compared to the others, and almost empty, outside of some burlap sacks in the back left corner and a table and chairs to the right. Sitting at the table are four individuals who look your way immediately, eyes wide with surprise.”

In this room the villain(s) were celebrating their successful endeavor against the town of Wispy Peak. A magical mirror is their way of escape (described below), and one member of their troupe has already used it for the day. In this moment of surprise, they realize that the only option they have to truly stand a chance of getting away with their endeavors is to get rid of the party. They grab their weapons and attack unyieldingly.

If your chosen villain is the **minstrel**, the four individuals in the room are himself and **three bandmates** (see appendix B for these characters’ stat blocks). The minstrel will attempt to plead for his life if he should be reduced to 9 hit points or less. He will betray the party if they lower their weapons. Grant him a surprise attack if the party relents.

If your chosen villains are the **Felrond spies**, the four individuals in the room are four Felrond spies (see appendix B), one of them still dressed in bardic clothing—the firestarter from part 2. At the beginning of the fight, the spies remark “You’ll

Trash
Pile



bring about the death of many, Wispy Peak must fall for the glory of Felrond!”

In the back of the room, the party finds the burlap sacks of food, along with another sack with some items in it. The items are as follows: *two potions of healing* and a *ring of health* (see appendix A).

Homebound Mirror. This four foot tall, two foot wide mirror is made of a magic glass. When you gaze into it, you see a place you would consider to be “home”. Upon touching the mirror, you teleport to this location. Once this is done, the magic of the mirror does not return until the next dawn.

Conclusion

When the party returns to the guards after dealing with the villain(s), the guards thank the party for their work on the village’s behalf, and give them the deed to the keep just outside of town. (see Appendix C: The Keep Inn).

If you wish to end the adventure here: The guards offer the party free drinks—if the tavern is still standing—and wish them well on their way.

If you wish to continue on to your own adventures: Maybe the party finds a letter on the villain’s person describing a larger organization they work for, setting the stage for the next, more dangerous, villain.



THEME TAGS

Fantasy, mystery, urban intrigue.

CONTENT WARNING

Corpses, murder, suffocation, body horror, carnival workers, religious cult, fire, explosion.

Description

The annual festival celebrating the founding of the city of Midhallow has been interrupted by murder. The party must discover the murderer, and, in doing so, uncover a conspiracy, track down the leaders, prevent the destruction of an opera house, and stop the assassination of the city council.

Background

Every year, the city of Midhallow throws a city-wide festival, the Masquerade of the Hollow, to celebrate the city's founding. All citizens are invited to take to the streets, wearing finery, costumes, and masks while partaking in the night's various activities, including festival booths, entertainment, fireworks, and more. It is the highlight event of the year for the citizens of Midhallow. However, this year is different, as rumors begin to swirl that someone was murdered soon after the festival began. The town guard has locked down a building in central Midhallow to begin an investigation, but with their numbers spread thin due to their duties providing security for the festival, they are more than happy to accept outside aid.



Character Hooks and Motivations

To help better involve your players and their characters in the story, have each character answer the following question: *Why are you taking a delivery job for 600gp?*

Alternatively, you can use the table below to give your players ideas for their characters' motivation in the adventure.

- 1 With festivities galore, you're happy to make a simple delivery for the betterment of everyone!
- 2 You're in a bad way, a 100gp debt is no joke in Midhallow. This delivery could save your skin
- 3 There's so much to do tonight! The Masquerade of the Hollow would be even more magical with some spending money
- 4 You've heard of a conspiracy surrounding the private Gala, you've taken this job to possibly investigate.
- 5 Amidst the chaos there's been shady individuals operating near the opera house, something is off and you've taken this job to get to the bottom of it.
- 6 You don't know why you have this job, you just kept saying yes to things and now you're delivering someone's mail? Who knows, it could be fun.

Villains

The villains of "A Night in Midhallow" are two groups of conspirators with their own unique goals and motivations for the killings they're planning. The Carnival, though their deeds are reprehensible, have a more morally grey motive for their actions, whilst the Cult are far more nefarious.

The Carnival

(Villain Option #1)

The Carnival is a traveling circus troupe, the Cirque Eclipse, led by Master Sue Do'nym Eclipse, a female tiefling. Under her command, the Cirque Eclipse is attempting to right a wrong inflicted upon her—by getting revenge against the council who turned their backs on her. Sue has radicalized the members of the circus to her side, bonding through their need for redemption and recognition after years of being outcasts.

The Cult

(Villain Option #2)

The Cult is a group of zealot followers of the Dusk Lord, led by High Prophet Abraham d'Coil. The Cult previously attempted to convert the city into a theological system, but were rebuffed by the city council and forced out. However, the group is undeterred, now switching tactics from persuasion to force. Abraham plans to stage a coup, eliminating the council and taking the city for himself and for the Dusk Lord.

Murder on the High Street

(Adventure #1)

Synopsis

After being hired to deliver a mysterious letter, the party arrives only to find that the intended recipient has just been murdered. With the town guard stretched thin, the characters must search for clues, talk to witnesses, and interrogate suspects before they ultimately face the culprit.

Introduction

When the adventure starts, the party should already know each other, having been brought together by their employer to deliver the letter. Have the players introduce their characters first, before reading the following text:

“The city of Midhallow is in a buzz. The streets are crowded with people, dressed in their best outfits and sporting masks of various shapes, sizes, and designs. Various merchants, from street vendors to blacksmiths, have set up shop along the streets, offering their finest wares, while guilds, such as the Hatmakers and Mercers’ guilds, and religious organizations, such as the Confraternity of the Dusk Lord, have their own booths to entice new recruits. Entertainers, including bards and circus performers, delight the crowds with their performances, while fireworks periodically launch into the sky. Tonight is the annual masquerade, a citywide celebration of Midhallow’s founding.”

Amidst the festivities, you have all been given a job to do. An individual in a black cloak and a gold-and-white coyote mask approached you earlier, offering you a rather large sum of money—600 gold pieces—to deliver a letter to an associate of theirs in Apartment 1408C on the High Street, the main commerce and living area of the city, in exactly an hour, at 6:00 p.m. sharp. The masked individual did not give you their name, and said that they would compensate you upon successful delivery. Of course, you gladly took the letter, happy to make some coin, especially with all of the festivities you could partake in afterward. However, the streets are crowded and congested, forcing you to stop and wait as parades and groups of revelers block your path. By the time you reach the address, you’re nearly thirty minutes late, the clock striking 6:28 p.m.

And that’s not the only problem—this night of cheer and celebration has taken an even darker turn. As you reach your destination, you find the building cordoned off by a group of town guards. Rumors of murder are whispered amongst the gathered crowd, though no one seems to know for sure what’s happened. All that you know is that this delivery has just become more complicated.”

The letter in the party’s possession is an invitation to the Gala of Masks, a very exclusive event held in the Governor’s Manor.

When the party first arrives at the apartment, the town guard, led by Captain Hercule Facilier, will be guarding the premises, preventing anyone from entering. However, Captain Facilier will quickly recognize the party as adventurers, and will just as quickly ask for their help. Due to the night’s festivities, the town guard has been spread across the city, and so doesn’t have the manpower to both thoroughly investigate the apartment and keep the peace at the same time.

Information the guard captain knows is as follows:

- A murder was committed in apartment 1408C.
- Lena Brennan, a supposed witness and the woman who reported the murder, is currently in her apartment in 1306B.

Once the guard captain gives the party this information, he requests that they return to him with any evidence or information they gather so they can figure out next steps. He then allows them to enter the building, where they climb a few flights of stairs before reaching the correct floor.

SER NOMINUS NOTE

Depending on your chosen villain, the culprit, their motives, and their actions vary! If your chosen villain is the Carnival, then the culprit is a half-construct acrobat named Amity Eclipse, who used her skills in tightrope walking to enter the room and slay the victim using a knife that she crafted out of a piece of her own soul. If your chosen villain is the Cult, then the culprit is a priest of the Dusk Lord named Fernando Barbero, who broke the lock on the front door and strangled the victim with a rope.

Apartment 1408C

Once the party enters the room, read the following text:

"The interior of this apartment is small but well furnished, with mahogany tables and chairs, a rich rug over hardwood floors, a fireplace with a large mantel, and hanging above the mantle, a portrait of a well-dressed man. The walls are decorated with baseboards, molding, and intricate wallpaper. A writing desk is pushed up against one of the walls, while an open door leads to what appears to be a bedroom."

If your chosen villain is the Carnival, then any character with a passive Perception score of 14 or higher notices that the window has been left open. If they investigate the open window, they easily find an arrow with an attached rope lodged into the windowsill. The rope itself has been cut at the end and left to drop to the street below. If a character succeeds on a DC 12 Wisdom (Survival) check to examine the arrow, they gather that it was shot from the building across the street, from an apartment one story above the one-level apartment they're currently investigating. (This building is the "Abandoned Apartment" found on page 39.)

"The finery of the room, however, is spoiled by the sight of a body, bloodied and clearly dead. The chair of the writing desk has been knocked to the ground next to him. The deceased appears to be a human man in his thirties, dressed in fine clothing, including a tailcoat, white gloves, and a white mask in the shape of an elephant. He lies on his side, with deep red blood pooled around his head and neck."

If your chosen villain is the Cult, also read the following text:

"The finery of the room, however, is spoiled by the sight of a body, a noose strung around the neck, the chair of the writing desk knocked to the ground next to him. The deceased appears to be a human man in his thirties, dressed in fine clothing, including a tailcoat, white gloves, and a white mask in the shape of an elephant."

If your chosen villain is the Cult, as the party goes to enter the apartment, any character with a passive Perception score of 14 or higher notices that both the lock and the door handle mechanism seem to be broken and partially melted.

If the characters search the desk, they find a letter addressed to William Battier. The letter reads as follows:

Congratulations!

You have been chosen by a lottery system to receive a special invitation to the annual Gala of Masks, hosted at the Governor's Manor, the grandest and most exclusive party in Midhallow during the Festival of Masks!

A courier will deliver an invitation to your place of residence at 6:00 p.m. sharp.

*Enjoy the Gala!
Midhallow City Council*

If the characters make a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) or Wisdom (Perception) check, they find the remnants of a half-burned note in the still-hot fireplace. What's left of the note reads as follows

*"...Apartment 1408C, High Stre....
...eliminate the courier, take invita....
...entrance to the Gala....
...hope this helps the cause
The Snake"*

Apartment 1306B

Apartment 1306B is the residence of Lena Brennan, a human woman in her late sixties who works as a weaver. When the party arrives, Lena is in the midst of a full-blown panic attack. Before the party questions her about the events, they must calm her down, either via a successful DC 14 Charisma (Persuasion or Intimidation) check, or by using a spell with a charm effect, such as *charm person*.

The information Lena knows is as follows:

- The apartment's owner was William Battier, who was a tailor. He would have no reason to be invited to the Gala of Masks. She was close with William, who took care of her as if she were his own mother.
- If your chosen villain is the Carnival, then Lena did not hear anyone enter William's home. However, she did hear a cry of anguish before a crash and thud, all coming from the apartment. That is when she made her way over, calling through the door. When she did not get a reply, she entered the apartment using a spare key given to her by William himself. This is when she found the body.
- If your chosen villain is the Cult, then Lena heard someone enter William's apartment just before she heard something from inside. She attempted to use a spare key that William gave her to enter the apartment, but the lock was broken. If any character makes a successful Wisdom (Insight) check of 8, they realize she is lying. She also gives in to any amount of pressure about her accounts. In truth, she let the culprit escape after he committed the murder. He threatened Lena with "divine retribution" and she backed down, allowing his escape. She feels guilty about this which is why she keeps this information from the party. But from this encounter she can provide the details of the culprit's limp and fox mask.

The Vendor

When the characters exit the building and end up back on the High Street, they are approached by a gnomish street vendor by the name of Quinen Abershire. He says he may have some information that could help the party find the murderer—however, this information is not free. He asks for 100 gp in exchange. If a character makes a successful DC 10 Charisma (Persuasion) check, Quinen is convinced to lower the price to 50 gp. A successful DC 15 Charisma or Strength (Intimidation) check convinces him to give up the information for free.

If your chosen villain is the Carnival, he says that he saw an acrobat walking across a tightrope that stretched between the building in which the murder occurred and the one directly across the street. He also recalls that, although the acrobat was graceful, their movements also seemed rather rigid.

If your chosen villain is the Cult, then he says that he saw a figure dressed in a priest's black robes and a fox mask enter and exit the building. However, he wasn't able to make out any religious insignia. He did make note of a pronounced limp in the figure's walk.

The Suspects

When the characters leaves the apartments, Captain Facilier approaches them, inquiring into what evidence they had found, while also believing he can name a few possible suspects that might match. He suggests to the party that they should investigate all three, find out their alibis, and determine whether or not they could have committed the murder.

CARNIVAL SUSPECTS

Amity Eclipse. A construct who performs as an acrobat for the Cirque Eclipse. She is an expert in acrobatics, especially high-wire walking and other aerial skills. She can be found amongst the various performers in the Cirque Eclipse's stage area of the High Street.

The details of Amity's alibi are as follows:

- Amity says that at the time of the murder, she was preparing for her show, which takes about 10 minutes to do.
- A character who makes a successful DC 14 Wisdom (Insight) check is able to tell that she is not being truthful.
- A character with a passive Perception score of 13 or higher sees a chalkboard outlining the day's performances, which has Amity scheduled for her last performance at 5:00 p.m.

Fallon Fleetfellow. A halfling jester for the Starr Carnival. She primarily does fool's work, including juggling and jokes, but also does some acrobatics. She can be found relaxing at the Donkey's Hoof Taverne having drinks after a long performance.

The details of Fallon's alibi are as follows:

- Fallon says she was on stage from 5:45 until 6:15, making it impossible for her to have been in Battier's building when the murder occurred.
- Audience members and the Carnival's show schedule corroborate her story.

Cherry Rousselot. A tiefling acrobat for the Fire Breathers. She does a mixture of tightrope work and flame dancing. She can be found inside of the Fire Breathers' backstage tent

The details of Cherry's alibi are as follows:

- Earlier in the week, Cherry had an accident and broke her leg, restricting her from performing her usual tightrope and acrobatics routines.
- If a character makes a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Medicine) check to examine Cherry, it confirms not only that her leg is indeed broken, but that it has been for at least a few days.

CULT SUSPECTS

Fernando Barbero. A human priest of the Dusk Lord. He is very gruff, barely speaking more than a few words with the party. His mask is a fox. He can be found in the back row of the outdoor audience, partially watching a fire breathing performance. He remains sitting as to not give away his limp.

The details of Fernando's alibi are as follows:

- Fernando claims that he was cleaning the Temple of the Dusk Lord at the edge of town when the murder was committed.
- If the party goes to the Temple of the Dusk Lord, they find that it has been condemned and boarded up, its shrine in ruins.
- If a character succeeds on a DC 14 Wisdom (Insight) check, they know that Fernando is not being truthful about what he was doing at the time of the murder.

Lucien Dumont. A high elf priest of the Moon Goddess. He is a bit standoffish and doesn't much care to converse with those outside of his coven. His mask is a wolf. He can be found organizing texts in the temple to the moon goddess

The details of Lucien's alibi are as follows:

- Lucien says he was working on counting and organizing the offerings to the Moon Goddess and his Confraternity when the murder occurred.
- When the party finds Lucien, he is at the desk in the temple of the Moon Goddess. He has with him stacks of coins and other offerings, along with a ledger, written entirely in his own hand, that not only details the items given, but also the date and time of their donation. According to the ledger, some of those items were donated and recorded around the time that the murder occurred.

Lukas Crowe. A dwarf priest of the Lady of the Lake. He is a kind and gentle soul, refusing to hurt even a fly. His mask is a fox. He can be found stop his soap box, preaching to uninterested passerbys.

The details of Lukas' alibi are as follows:

- According to Lukas, he was on a soapbox at the time of the murder, preaching about how special all living beings are to the Lady of the Lake, and how each must live long and fulfilling lives.
- If asked, plenty of passersby corroborate the story.

Accusation

Once the party thinks they've figured out who the culprit is, they can return to Captain Facilier and tell him what they have found or they can confront the culprit themselves. If the party accuses the right culprit, then they (Amity or Fernando) attempt to escape, running into an abandoned apartment, which is just down a side alley called Lawnmarket Close. As the culprit tries to escape, other members of their organization create a distraction.

If your chosen villain is the Carnival, they use a card from a *deck of illusions* to create an illusory image of a troll in the middle of the High Street. Captain Facilier insists that the party catch the fleeing Amity while he and his guards take on the troll.

If your chosen villain is the Cult, then a nearby building is set on fire. Captain Facilier orders the

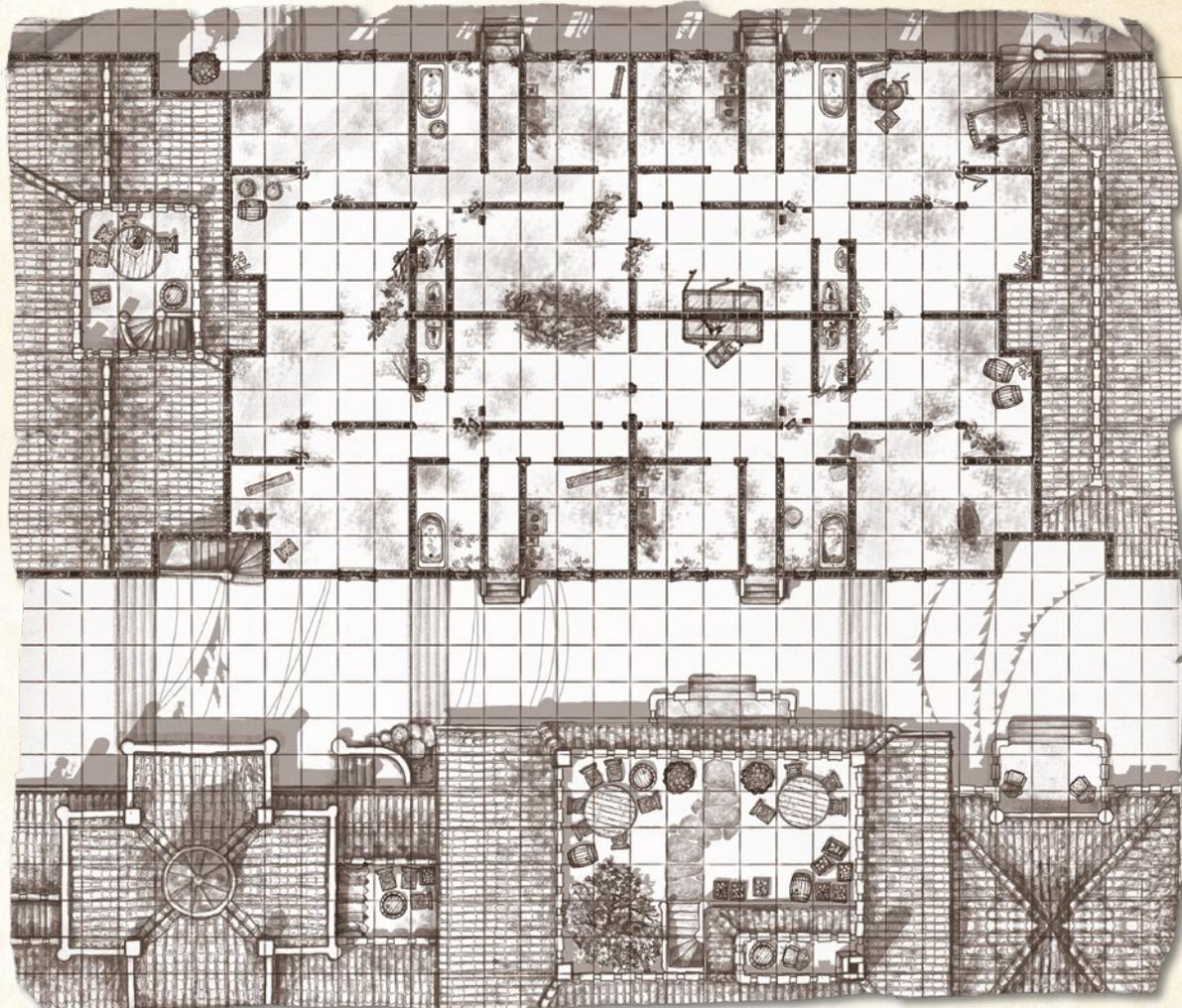
guards to start extinguishing the blaze and tells the party to catch Fernando.

When the party begins their chase after the culprit, read the following text:

"As you chase your quarry, they are able to stay just outside of your reach, pushing past the crowds of people and jumping over barrels and other obstacles before suddenly turning down an alleyway. Dashing into the area, you can see your target for only a moment before they run into a boarded up building, closing the door behind them."

Abandoned Apartment

Lawnmarket Close is a long, tight alleyway. Since most people are on the main streets of the city, partaking in the festivities, there is very little foot traffic in this area. The culprit has ducked into a condemned apartment block, its windows and entrances boarded up. However, the door's boards have been removed, allowing for easy access to the building. The inside of the apartment has been almost completely gutted, leaving it bare and empty. It is here that the murderer waits for the party.



The Acrobat

If your chosen villain is the Carnival, then the killer is **Amity Eclipse** (see appendix B). Amity is an acrobat who performs with the Cirque Eclipse. She's a construct built like a human-sized porcelain doll, with the soul of an eighteen-year-old girl. She joined the carnival after being cursed into this form, when the soul previously trapped within this body traded places with hers. She was one of the first people Sue radicalized, propelled by a hatred for all who believe that they can ruin someone's life with no consequence.

Roleplaying Amity Eclipse. Amity doesn't want to kill the party; she's far more focused on trying to escape, either using her acrobatic skills or via conversation. In fact, if the party allows her to talk, she tries to recruit them to the Carnival's cause, pushing them to see the corruption in Midhallow. She can't be budged from her beliefs, but lets the party leave if they allow her to do the same. However, she's ready to defend herself if it comes down to it, using her conjured Soul Daggers to take out anyone who attempts to harm her. She says that William's death, and even the plan to kill him, was nothing personal, just what needed to be done. However, she will offer the party a trade. If the party hands over the invitation to the Gala and lets her go, she will give them the location of her co-conspirators' hideout in the basement of the Opera House. She won't say it, but she knows that the party will only find a few people in the hideout, giving the rest of the Carnival time to get a head start toward their ultimate goal.

The Cult Fanatic

If your chosen villain is the Cult, then the killer is **Fernando Barbero** (see appendix B). Fernando is a zealot follower of High Prophet Abraham, who took him in at a young age. Fernando's home village of Old Redwick mysteriously disappeared one day while he was out playing in the forest, taking his family along with it. He fully believes in the Cult's cause, and will do anything to see it come to fruition. Fernando sees everyone he has to kill as being guilty of corruption.

Roleplaying Fernando Barbero. It is very unlikely that the encounter with Fernando will end with anything but bloodshed, as Fernando sees any slight against the Dusk Lord as heresy. He has no qualms about killing the party. In fact, he believes it is the righteous thing to do; if the party is going to try to stop him and his cult from bringing the Dusk Lord's power to Midhallow, then they deserve to face judgement by his noose. However, he may be willing to offer the party a deal. If the party hands over the invitation to the Gala and dedicates their lives and souls to the Dusk Lord, he will welcome them into the fold and give them the location of his co-conspirators' hideout in the basement of the Opera House.

Conclusion

If you want to conclude the adventure here, then the party has solved the mystery surrounding William's murder and dealt with the culprit, either by killing them or accepting their deal.

If you want to continue the adventure into part 2, "Peril at the Opera," the characters advance to 2nd level, and the party discovers via a note on the killer's person—or learns from the killer directly, if they took the deal—that the villains have set up a hidden base of operations in the basement of the Opera House.

Amity
Eclipse



Peril at the Opera

(Adventure #2)

Synopsis

After finding the murderer in the apartment on High Street, the characters have reason to believe that there is a larger conspiracy afoot, and know that the villains have a hideout located somewhere beneath the Midhallow Opera House. The party must search the Opera House, find the key, prevent a disastrous fire from consuming the building, and finally get to the sewer hideout.

Introduction

After their encounter with the culprit in the first adventure, the party makes their way to the Midhallow Opera House, which is located on the High Street. When they reach the building, read the following text:

“Fireworks flash in the sky as the grand Opera House stands before you, a beautiful landmark on the High Street. The courtyard in front acts as the center of the night’s festivities. The building’s facade is covered by stone columns and intricately carved statues, some of which are gilded and sparkling. Its large doors, an impressive combination of wood and stained glass, beckon you inside.”

Backstage areas of the Opera House are off-limits to visitors, and guards routinely patrol the area. These areas include the orchestra pit, dressing rooms, stage catwalks, prop and set storage, and workshop. Each area is marked on the map on page 43. When a character enters one of these areas, roll a d4. On a roll of a 1, one **Midhallow guard** (see appendix B) is present in the room. If the guard notices the party, they attempt to remove them from the area. These guards are private security hired by the Opera House, and so do not care whether the characters are investigators or not—the guards are focused solely on their mission to protect the building from trespassers. The guard can be convinced that the party is supposed to be in these areas with a successful DC 13 Charisma (Deception or Performance) check.

1: FOYER

“The grand foyer of the Opera House opens up before you, its marble floors and walls covered in intricate bas-reliefs of floral patterns. The roof arches into a high ceiling, where divine creatures fly through the sky in a vivid fresco. In the center of the space is a grand staircase, forming a Y-shape that leads to the second level.”

This room allows for access to either the bar on the first level or the VIP lounge on the second level. Some attendees may be milling about the space, gossiping about the night’s activities.

SER NOMINUS NOTE

Perhaps the characters can hear whispers about what happened at Battier’s apartment. Perhaps people aren’t feeling very safe and are on edge. Foreshadow future events with this gossip!

2: BAR

“This area of the Opera House acts both as the entryway for the main auditoriums, and as a bar where attendees may get a drink or light snack.”

The bar is attended to by a barman, Anton Buquet, who sells glasses of wine for 1 gp each, or a small bowl of nuts for 5 cp. If asked if he has noticed anything out of the ordinary happening around the theater, Anton reveals the following information:

- He has heard that the stagehands who operate the backdrops for the sets haven’t been seen all night. He wouldn’t be surprised if they are drunk in their machinery room on the second floor.
- Mysterious figures are supposedly lurking around the storeroom in the basement. There are whispers amongst the cast that the figures are actually ghosts! Though, Anton doesn’t believe this conspiracy.

If your chosen villain is the Cult, Anton also knows the following information:

- He’s heard several complaints from tonight that the backdrops for the sets have not been operating correctly.
- The show underwent a few last minute changes. A “gleaming sun and holy symbol” were added to the backdrop. A strange addition that wasn’t present in previous performances.

3: AUDITORIUM

“The room before you is a massive auditorium, the floor covered in velvet seats and gently sloping towards the back of the room, where the orchestra pit and stage are located. Along the second story are rows of private box seats. A large crystalline chandelier hangs in the center of the room, illuminating the painted ceiling. Hundreds of people are currently transfixed on the stage as the performers go about telling their story —a musical about a skeletal dragon slayer.”

Moving about this room can be difficult for the characters, considering most of the floor space is taken up by rows of seats filled with members of the show’s audience, who do not wish to be interrupted. If a character

annoys one of these attendees by blocking their view, making loud noises, or via other such activities, then they tell the character off, warning that they will get a guard. If the characters continue with their activities, then the attendee leaves for a few minutes, returning with two **Midhallow guards** (see appendix B), who ask the party to either quiet down or leave.

4: STAGE

This large stage is where the performance takes place, which the audience pays close attention to. A character can sneak across the stage with a successful DC 10 Charisma or Dexterity (Stealth) check, on a failure the actors on stage continue the performance and nervously attempt to shoo the characters off stage. Meanwhile the stagehands get four **Midhallow guards** (see appendix B) and escort the characters out of the opera house. If the characters fail to leave the stage, the performance is halted and the four guards attempt to arrest the disruptive characters. All while the audience watches in disbelief and cheers on the guards.

5: ORCHESTRA PIT

This area of the theater is a sunken pit just before and underneath the stage, where rows of musicians are set up to provide the music for the onstage performance. This area offers access to the basement areas of the building.

6: DRESSING ROOMS

"These rooms are filled with performers making mad dashes to quickly pull costumes from hangers at the back wall while also resetting their makeup."

This area of the Opera House is set aside for the performers, with anything they might need to prepare themselves for their various roles in the production. A few of the performers openly discuss their annoyance at stagehands' "sloppy" work, that the timings for the background set curtains have been off. Should a character succeed a DC 10 Charisma (Persuasion) check, the performers inform them that the background set curtains are all operated out of the stage backdrop mechanism area on the second story, and that no one has been able to get into proper contact with the stagehands all night—the door is locked.

7: VIP LOUNGE

"This VIP lounge offers a smoking area for attendees, as well as a bar stocked with fine alcohol and hors d'oeuvres."

The lounge does not have anyone attending to it. Instead, the products magically serve themselves up, the ingredients and dishes floating about the space in perfect unison. In order for a dish or drink to be made, someone must deposit the appropriate payment into a slot in the bartop whilst calling out the name of the dish or drink they desire.

8: VIP BOXES

These exclusive rooms overlook the auditorium and stage below, offering a private place to meet and enjoy the show. Each room is equipped with four velvet-lined chairs and a small bucket that has been enchanted to keep a bottle of champagne cool inside.

9: STAGE CATWALKS

"Rickety wooden catwalks span the area over the stage, offering a unique angle of the show down below, but also of the pulleys and mechanisms that operate the lights and some of the scene shifts."

These unstable, mobile platforms are suspended above the stage and act as a means for stagehands to manipulate various lights or equipment during different acts. A character can move safely around these platforms at half their standard walking pace; they must make a successful DC 14 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check to move any faster than that. If a character fails the Acrobatics check, they must make a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw, as they lose their balance and begin to fall off of the platform. On a success, they catch themselves; on a failure, they fall off of the catwalk to the stage below, taking 4d6 bludgeoning damage.

Depending on your chosen villain, either one **Eclipse carnie** or **Dusk Lord cultist** is asleep in a chair in the middle of the Catwalk area (see appendix B for these characters' stat blocks). The party can attempt to sneak past via a DC 11 Dexterity (Stealth) check, doing so easily on a success. If even one of the characters fails this check, the carnie or cultist wakes up and attacks the party.

10: STAGE BACKDROP MECHANISMS

The door to this area is locked, requiring a successful DC 12 Dexterity check using thieves' tools to pick the lock, or a DC 14 Strength check to break down the door itself. Once the door is open, read the following text:

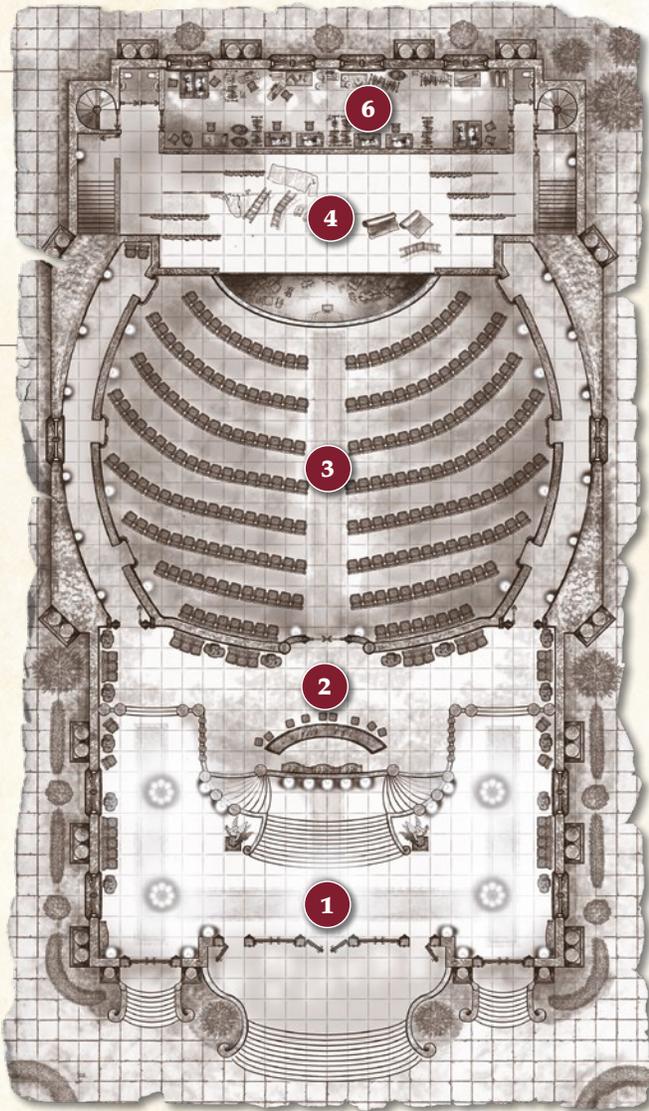
"This room is filled with large wooden gears, pulleys, and other mechanisms that operate the technical aspects of the stage below."

If your chosen villain is the Carnival, then three **Eclipse carnies** (see appendix B) are in this room, playing cards. None are operating the machinery. The two actual stagehands are tied up in the corner.

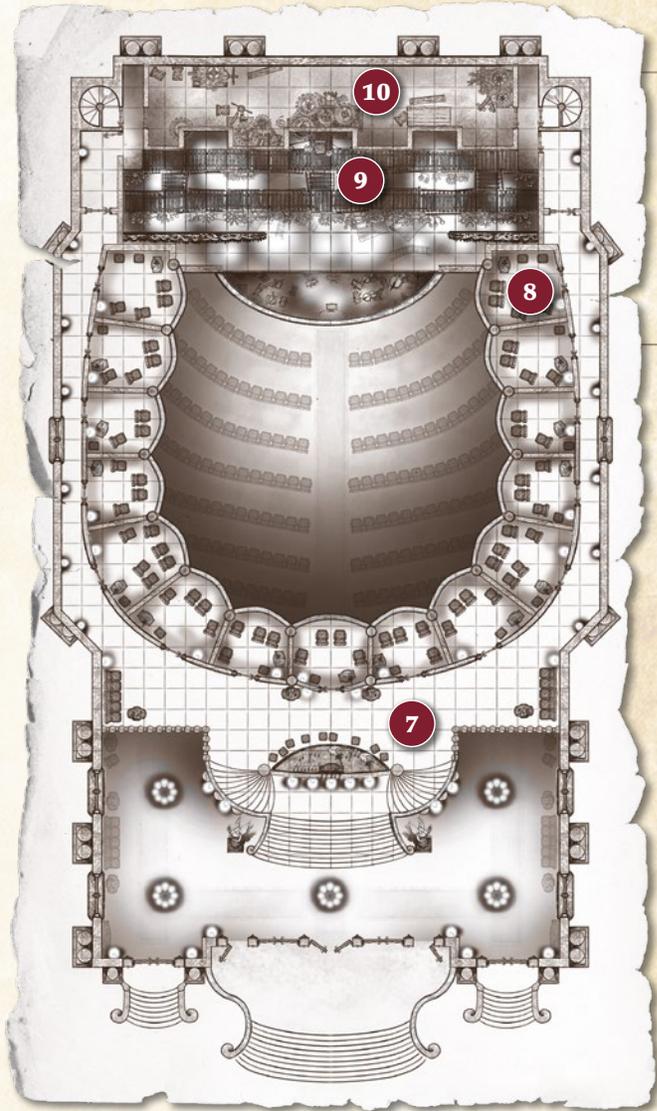
If your chosen villain is the Cult, then three **Dusk Lord cultists** (see appendix B) are in this room, preaching about the "hand and sword of the Dusk Lord" to two captive stagehands.

Before a fight breaks out, one of the carnies or cultists warns the party to leave them, or else they will kill the hostages. If the party doesn't heed their warning and attacks, the carnie or cultist with the highest

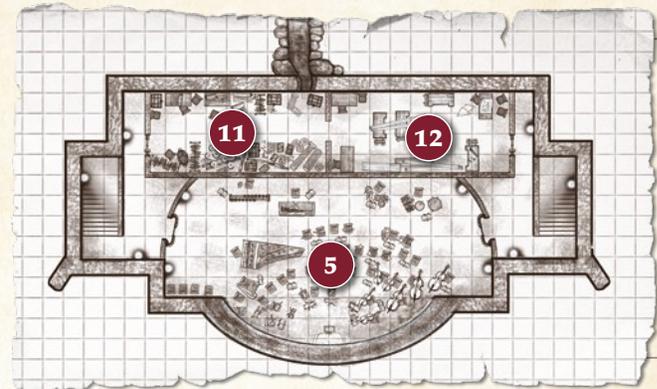
OPERA HOUSE - FLOOR 1



OPERA HOUSE - FLOOR 2



OPERA HOUSE - UNDER STAGE



initiative uses their first action to kill one of the hostages. However, if the party doesn't attack them, then the carnies or cultists offer them a deal: the characters can speak with one of their leaders to learn about what they are doing and why, and the hostages will remain safe. If the party agrees to this meeting, then the carnies or cultists tell them to head to VIP Box 3 and wait there. When the characters leave, one of the carnies or cultists casts message to either Strongman Mike (the Carnival) or Prophet Ellie (the Cult), telling them that investigators have discovered their plan, and that they are waiting in VIP box 3 (Area 8).

11. PROP AND SET STORAGE

"This space acts as a storage area, filled with dozens of half-assembled scenery set pieces, shelves lined with various props, and other sundry items for the different productions put on by the Opera House."

Any character with a passive Perception score of 17 or higher, or who makes a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check, notices that one of the bricks in the back wall has an indent in it that would fit something small—perhaps the size of a coin. If a character places the enchanted coin that previously belonged to either Strongman Mike or Prophet Ellie inside the indent, the wall around the brick shifts and pulls back, revealing a secret entrance to the sewers.

12. WORKSHOP

"Everything in this room is covered in a layer of plaster and sawdust. A dozen workstations fill the space, covered in a variety of different artisan and construction tools."

This space is filled with various workstations where a few stagehands build and repair props, sets, and costumes. A few artisan's tools are scattered about the room, including carpenter's tools, cobbler's tools, leatherworker's tools, painter's supplies, weaver's tools, and woodcarver's tools.

The character with the highest passive Perception score overhears a couple of the stagehands discussing a "ghost," which they believe resides down here in the basement of the Opera House. Should the party ask them about it, the stagehands share that dark figures have been spotted going into the "Prop and Set Storage" area and then vanishing. They also mention that these figures bear a glowing orb at the center of their chests, which seems to be the way they disappear. Some of the workers believe the orbs to be the creatures' souls.

The Meeting

If your chosen villain is the Carnival, then the characters are ambushed in the box by Strongman Mike, who is a half-orc man, and two **Eclipse carnies** (see appendix B). Strongman Mike is an **Eclipse carnie**, with the following changes:

- Strongman Mike's Strength score is 20.
- He knows Orcish and Common.
- Strongman Mike has no weapons. Instead, he has a Punch attack, with a +4 to hit, with a reach of 5 feet and one target. On a hit, Strongman Mike either deals 4 bludgeoning damage, or can choose to do no damage and grapple the target instead.

Should Strongman Mike drop to less than 8 Hit Points, he will surrender, and is willing to give the following information in exchange for his life:

- The city council of Midhallow is corrupt and has hurt members of the Carnival before. The Carnival is simply getting retribution.
- Their hideout was in the basement of the Opera House, though a secret door locked with a special arcane lock key, which they have the key for as a coin on a necklace they wear.
- The Gala of Masks held at the Governor's Mansion is the target for the attack.
- The attack will come in the form of alchemist's fire.
- The leader of the Carnival has already left to begin preparations for the "grand finale."

If your chosen villain is the Cult, the characters are ambushed by Prophet Ellie, who is a female elf, and two **Dusk Lord cultists** (see appendix B). Prophet

Ellie is a **Dusk Lord cultist** (see appendix B), with the following changes:

- Prophet Ellie cannot be put to sleep by magical means.
- She knows Elvish, Celestial, and Common.
- Prophet Ellie knows the bestow curse spell, which she can cast once a day.

Should Prophet Ellie drop to less than 8 Hit Points, she will surrender, and is willing to give the following information in exchange for her life:

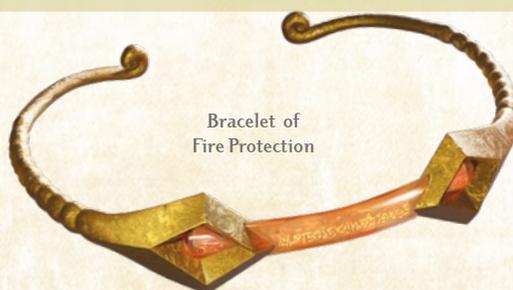
- The city council has rejected the Dusk Lord's embrace and rebuffed the "Cult's" kind offering of leadership. The Cult is only doing His bidding and ridding the city of these heretics.
- Their hideout was in the basement of the Opera House, though a secret door locked with a special arcane lock key, which they have the key for as a coin on a necklace they wear.
- The Gala of Masks held at the Governor's Mansion is the target for the attack.
- The attack will come in the form of alchemist's fire.
- The leader of the Cult has already left to begin preparations for the "final verse."

Conclusion

If you want to conclude the adventure here, and the characters had interrogated either Strongman Mike or Prophet Ellie, they can take this information to the city guard which foils the villains plans. If they killed the contact, then they simply find this information written in a journal on their body. This information can be given to the city guard which still foils the villains plans. They are rewarded as heroes of Midhallow and given the deed to a keep (see Appendix B: The Keep Inn)

If you want to continue the adventure into part 3, "Death at the Gala," the characters advance to 3rd level after the fight. They also find a key on the bodies (if they were killed) or the contact gives it to them in exchange for their lives. This key unlocks the arcane lock to the sewers in area 11. Then, read the following text.

"Suddenly, screams of terror fill the opera hall as an explosion of orange flame tears across the stage. Panic ensues as everyone in the audience cram into the exits. The opera hall has been set on fire, the pathway to the flame is clear from this VIP box. You have a chance to prevent this place from burning to the ground."



Death at the Gala

(Adventure #3)

Synopsis

The party must confront the fire spreading through the Opera House, to save both the building and the innocent civilians inside. Once that problem has been dealt with, they must venture into the tunnels underneath the Opera House and investigate the villain's hideout. Once they have the information they need, the party has to rush to the Gala of Masks at the Governor's Manor and try to prevent the deaths of the attendees at the villain's hands.

Introduction

This adventure opens right where the last one ended, with the Opera House beginning to burn, the fire spreading quickly. Have the players roll initiative. Any number of characters can help put the fire out by grabbing a bucket, each holding one gallon of water, from the bar, VIP lounge, VIP boxes, or the workshop, and dumping it on the fire as an action. If ten gallons of water are poured onto the stage, the fire is successfully put out.

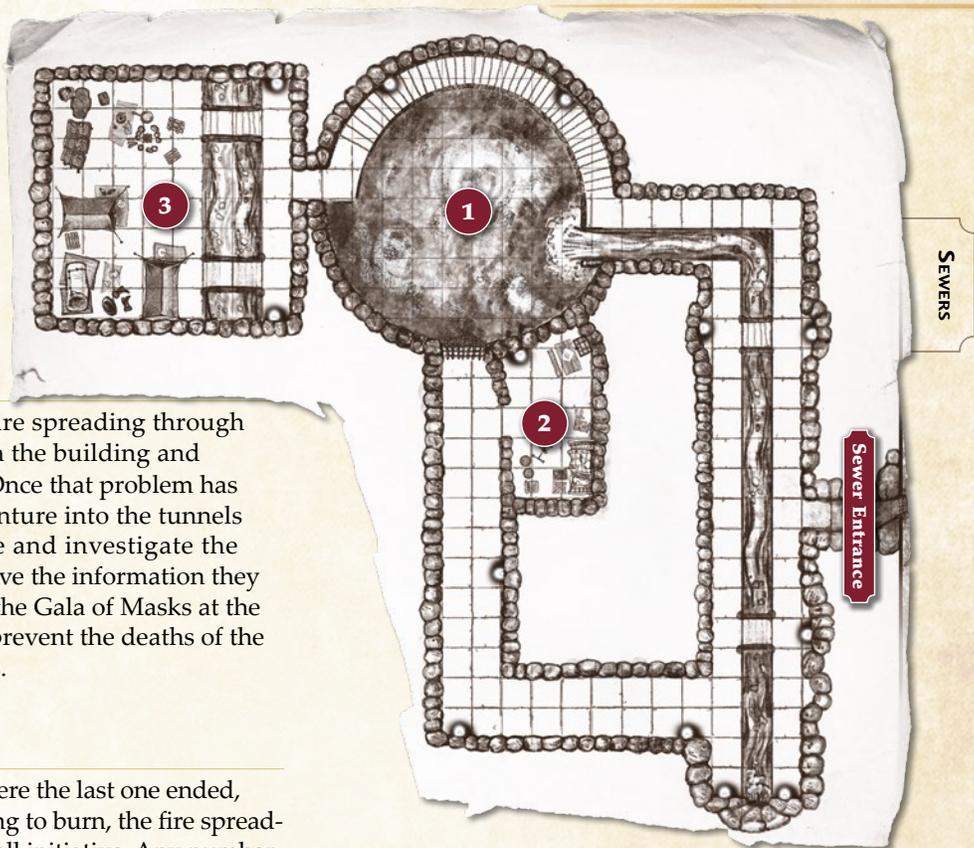
If 13 rounds pass before ten gallons of water are poured, the fire gets out of control and the party must make it out of the building within 5 rounds, or else be consumed by the fire and falling debris. During the escape, characters must succeed on a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw at the start of each of their turns, or else take 1d4 fire damage.

Saving the Civilians

The stagehands held hostage in the "Stage Backdrop Mechanisms" area will have been left behind and can be released if a character uses an action to cut their bonds. There are also injured and trapped civilians in the building. When a character enters a room during the fire, roll a d4. On a 1-2, the room is empty. On a 3, there are trapped civilians present, and any character who uses an action to save them can do so with a successful DC 12 Strength (Athletics) check. On a 4, there is an injured civilian, who can be saved if a character uses an action to make a DC 10 Wisdom (Medicine) check, gives the victim a *potion of healing*, or casts a healing spell on them.

Finding the Hideout

The characters can return to the Prop and Set Storage room, where, if they haven't already found the secret door in in the second adventure, a passive Perception score of 11 or higher or a successful DC 10 Intelligence



(Investigation) check will uncover it, utilizing the coin necklace from either Strongman Mike or Prophet Ellie.

If the Opera House does burn down, it will be an hour before the party can safely return to the ruins and find the entrance to the hideout.

1: CISTERN

"The sewer opens up, revealing a cylindrical, two-story chamber. The sewer water falls into a pool at the bottom. The walkway becomes a slippery-stepped staircase as it rounds the wall. An arched doorway is set into the wall at the lower part of the room, while a large grate overlooks the room from above."

If the party has not gone to the Outcast's Lair (by taking the left-hand path from the hidden sewer entrance in the "Prop and Set Storage" area) before arriving at the cistern, then any character with a passive Perception score of 14 or higher notices a pair of beady yellow eyes watching them from the grate overhead.

2: OUTCAST'S LAIR

"This stone room has been turned into a makeshift camp, set up using junk tossed into the sewers. A few items have been strategically placed around the chamber in an attempt at decoration—they look to have been pilfered from the Opera House's storeroom. Amongst the squalor lurks a hunched figure, who seems to be singing to themselves songs that have echoed down from the theater above."

This room is the lair of Erik Leroux, a man who has been cast out of society because of his curse: he was afflicted with lycanthropy as a child, and turned into a wererat as a result. Erik has always had a love for theater and song, and always wanted to be a performer for the opera. In light of his curse, however, he resigned himself to living in the squalor of the sewers underneath the Opera House, occasionally stealing props and decorations to furnish his space. If you need to represet Erik in combat, use the following statistics.

Erik uses the **wererat** statblock, with the following changes:

- Erik is chaotic neutral.
- He has a +3 in the Performance skill.
- Erik has no weapons.

Roleplaying Erik. Erik is nervous and scared of the party at first, afraid that they may mock or even beat him, as others have done before. However, if the party shows that they are not going to harm him, he relaxes, excited to talk with them, especially about his love for performance, song, and the opera. If the characters ask Erik about the villains and their hideout, he offers the information easily.

The information Erik reveals is as follows:

- The villain has a hideout at the bottom of the cistern, which currently is unoccupied since Erik saw everyone leave.
- Erik saw someone hide an item behind a loose brick within the wall of the hideout, marking the spot with a small X.

If your chosen villain is the Carnival, Erik also reveals the following information.

- Erik describes how the members of the group actually treated him well, even offering him a place amongst them. Although he was tempted, his heart is bound to the grandeur and opulence of the opera, and he couldn't bring himself to leave it behind.

If your chosen villain is the Cult, Erik also reveals the following information.

- Erik describes how the members mistreated him, calling him a "blight on the Dusk Lord's world," and chased him off with weapons.

3: THE HIDEOUT

"This stone room has been turned into a makeshift camp, with a few tents, sleeping bags, crates, and barrels of equipment scattered about. Bisecting the room is another river of sewer water with a couple of stone bridges connecting the two sides."

This area was the villain's primary hideout, where they prepared for their assassination scheme.

When the party investigates the area, they find thirty-five rations, four barrels of water, ten sleeping bags, two light crossbows, 15 crossbow bolts, three

potions of healing (These potions can be used as an action to heal 2d4+2 HP), and four rapiers.

They also find a manifesto, written by either Sue Do'nym Eclipse or High Prophet Abraham d'Coil, detailing their motives, along with how they will assassinate the city council—at the annual Gala of Masks at the Governor's Mansion, noting the manor's address, during the toast.

With a successful DC 14 Intelligence (Investigation) check, any character can find a receipt for a crate of alchemist fire and *bracelets of fire protection*. The receipt also reveals that the group has someone working with them from the inside, going by the name "The Snake." The Snake is the one who sent the invitation that the party was supposed to deliver.

With a successful DC 17 Intelligence (Investigation) check, a character can find a *bracelet of fire protection* hidden away behind a loose brick. (The characters can also easily find the loose brick if Erik told the party where to find it.)

The manhole leads out onto the street behind the Opera House.

Governor's Manor

As the party makes their way to the Governor's Manor, read the following text:

"Sitting atop the highest hill, overlooking the city, is a large manor house, the Chateau de Mil'Valle—the Governor's Manor. This breathtaking edifice dominates the skyline, its spires and stone structure serving a mixture of defensive and luxury purposes. As you get closer to the building, you notice that the grounds have been converted into festival grounds, with the sound of music and smells of food wafting over the complex's stone walls. At the front gate stands a group of guards, checking each attendee for their invitations."

In order for the party to enter the palace grounds, they must get past the guards, which they can do by either scaling the stone wall with a successful DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check, pretending to be members of a larger group entering the event with a successful DC 15 Charisma (Stealth) check, sneaking past the guards through a service entrance with a successful DC 15 Dexterity (Stealth) check, or convincing another group to allow the party to enter with them with a successful DC 14 Charisma (Persuasion) check. They can also present the invitation from part 1 to the guards, who will let them in without delay.

The *Chateau de Mil'Valle*, known colloquially as the Governor's Manor, is a palace and the primary residence for the governor of Midhallow and their family. It overlooks the city from atop a hill at the end of the High Street. It is also the location of the Gala of Masks. The structure's garden courtyard has been converted into a festival space, the ballroom set up

for dancing, and the grand dining room prepared for a feast. Members of the city council, their families, visiting nobility, and other members of Midhallow's high society have made their way to the manor, dressed in their finest clothing and jewelry, each wearing a mask made of gilded ivory. Each area of the palace has one to two **Midhallow guards** (see appendix B) keeping watch.

The City Council

The city council is made up of five members, each acting as the voice for a different section of the city, with one serving as the primary administrator in the form of the governor. If these five individuals should all be killed, the entire city's government will fall, and its operations will grind to a halt as the citizens succumb to fear and anarchy. The members of the city council are:

Governor Elodie Perrot-Tremble. She is a human woman in her late thirties with black hair that she keeps tied up in a twisted plait. Her family, the Perrots, are part of a long line of governorships for Midhallow. Elodie takes her job very seriously, seeing it as a means to honor her family's legacy. Her immediate family consists of her husband, Lord Emilien Tremble, and her two children: twelve-year-old Sylbiane Perrot-Tremble, and her nine-year-old brother, Olivier Perrot-Tremble. Elodie wears a mask shaped like an eagle.

Elodie is a **commoner**, with the following changes:

- Elodie is lawful neutral.

Councilman Godfrey Faure. He is a human man in his late fifties, his hair gray and balding. Godfrey acts as the council's theological voice, speaking for the various religious groups within the city. He has never married and has no immediate family, though his ancestors were very closely associated with the various churches in the region. If your chosen villain is the Carnival, then Godfrey's mask is a sheep. If your chosen villain is the Cult, then his mask is a snake, and he tipped off the Cult on who would receive the lottery gala ticket in Adventure #1. Although he speaks for all of the religious groups in the city, Godfrey has maintained connections with the Cult of the Dusk Lord, and is assisting them in their attempted coup.

Godfrey is a **commoner**, with the following changes:

- Godfrey is neutral evil.
- Godfrey can cast the *sanctuary* spell once per day.

Councilman Severin Procher. He is a male half-elf in his early sixties, though his appearance makes him look like he could be as young as thirty. Severin was elected decades ago to act as Midhallow's leading prosecutor and lawman. The election, however, was rigged by the city's nobility, who wanted Severin as a councilman to further their own goals, which he is

willing to do by any means necessary. He personally works with criminal organizations to procure wealth and valuable items for himself and his supporters. If your chosen villain is the Carnival, Severin is responsible for the kidnapping of Sue Do'Nym's family, having struck a deal with the local bandits to target and abduct poorer travelers while leaving the higher class caravans alone. Severin's own family consists of his wife, Lady Pascale Procher, and son, fifteen-year-old Bernard Procher. Bernard and Sylbiane Perrot-Tremble are close friends, though Severin does not approve. Severin wears a crocodile mask.

Severin is a **commoner**, with the following changes:

- Severin is lawful evil.
- He has these racial traits: He has advantage on saving throws against being charmed, and magic can't put him to sleep. He has darkvision out to a range of 60 feet. He speaks Common and Elvish.
- Severin has a +4 to Charisma (Deception) checks.

Councilman Sandrine Fay-Larue. She is a female elf, well over three hundred years of age. Sandrine wears simple clothing compared to her peers, with little to no frills or jewelry. She is the council's speaker for education and health, working closely with teachers, professors, doctors, nurses, apothecaries, and students, as well as with local farmers and foresters. Her family has lived on the land that is now Midhallow for thousands of years, since well before the city itself was founded. Sandrine sees it as her life's goal to keep her people's heritage and land alive and well-maintained. Her immediate family consists of her human wife, Dione Fay-Larue, and their sixteen-year-old twins, Veronique and Dominique. Sandrine wears a rabbit mask.

Sandrine is a **commoner**, with the following changes:

- Sandrine is neutral good.
- She has these racial traits: She has advantage on saving throws against being charmed, and magic can't put her to sleep. She has darkvision out to a range of 60 feet. She speaks Common and Elvish.

Councilman Rogier Marchand. He is a human man in his mid-thirties. He is fairly new to the council, having only served for a few months, and acts as the voice for Midhallow's tradesmen. Rogier is a widower, his family having supposedly died a couple of years ago. If your chosen villain is the Carnival, then his mask is a snake, and he tipped off the Carnival on who would receive the lottery gala ticket in Adventure #1. His family fell prey to the same bandits as Sue Do'Nym's family, and so he is out for revenge in a very similar manner, acting as a mole to serve the Carnival's plans. If your chosen villain is the Cult, then Rogier's mask is a mouse.

Rogier is a **commoner**, with the following changes:

- Rogier is chaotic good.
- Once per day, as a bonus action, Rogier can give a creature within 60 feet that can hear him a Bardic Inspiration die (a d6 to be added once to an attack roll, saving throw, or ability check).

Preventing the Assassination

If the characters managed to save the Opera House, then they arrive at the Governor's Manor an hour before the councilmen's toast is scheduled to occur. Allow the characters time to meander through the festivities, mingling with the guests—including some of the councilmen—or time to prepare a plan to prevent the assassination attempt.

SER NOMINUS NOTE

Let the players be creative here! They should really play into their characters' builds and backstories.

Perhaps the bard can draw a crowd, creating a distraction for other party members, or maybe the rogue can sneak up to the roof of the chateau. You're the GM; you can decide what they can and cannot do! The characters can also hunt down the Snake and try to deal with them. Perhaps they eliminate the Snake before everything happens, or maybe they find a way to lock them up. Or perhaps the characters even convince the Snake that what they are doing is a bad thing, and instead figure out a way to stop the assassination without bloodshed.

The possibilities are endless!

If the characters were not able to save the Opera House, and waited out the hour to reenter the area safely, then the party arrives just as the toasts begin.

Once the time is right, Governor Elodie steps forward, getting everyone's attention for the toast. She begins by congratulating everyone on another great year for the city, but is soon cut off by the appearance of the villains, who step out of the manor house.

If your chosen villain is the Carnival, **Master Sue Do'Nym Eclipse** approaches the governor, flanked by two henchmen—one of whom is Strongman Mike, the other being either **Amity Eclipse** if she survived, or an **Eclipse carnie** if she did not (see appendix B for these characters' stat blocks). Each of them is wearing a bracelet of fire protection (see appendix A) and possesses an alchemist's fire (As an action, the wielder makes a ranged attack against a creature or object, the target takes 1d4 fire damage at the start of each of its turns. A creature can use its action to make a DC 10 Dexterity check to extinguish the flames).

As she approaches the governor, Sue delivers the following monologue:

"A great year indeed for a corrupt and disturbed city. What a time of wealth and prosperity for a place built on the backs of slavers and kidnappers, bandits and highwaymen. Funny that some of you know what I'm talking about, and either turned a blind eye to it, or actively approved of it. Well, it's about time you reaped what you sowed. Let's all give it up for your city council's grand finale! Let's end it with a bang!"

If your chosen villain is the Cult, **High Prophet Abraham d'Coil** approaches the governor, flanked by two henchmen—one of whom is Prophet Ellie, the other being **Fernando Barbero** if he survived, or a **Dusk Lord cultist** if he did not (see appendix B for these characters' stat blocks). Each of them is wearing a bracelet of fire protection (see appendix A) and possesses an alchemist's fire (As an action, the wielder makes a ranged attack against a creature or object, the target takes 1d4 fire damage at the start of each of its turns. A creature can use its action to make a DC 10 Dexterity check to extinguish the flames)

As he approaches the governor, Abraham delivers the following monologue:

"What a night of sinful splendor and revelry. My, how the Dusk Lord despises it. You shun His light, and instead think that your own is most holy. Well, I say it is time—it is time He shines His light down upon all of the sinners here, and we shall see who He deems righteous."

When the villain pulls out the alchemist fire at the end of their monologue, or when a character interrupts them, roll initiative. Do not roll for the villain. Instead, they take their turn on initiative count 10, and use their action to throw the alchemist's fire at the governor.

Master Sue Do'Nym Eclipse

Sue Do'Nym Eclipse is the charismatic leader of the Cirque Eclipse. Years ago, when Sue was very young, she and her family were kidnapped by a group of bandits while traveling on the road to the city. Sue managed to escape, and was able to make it to Midhallow, and begged the city council for help in saving her family. Not only did they refuse, but she later discovered that the leader of the council, Alfred Harding, was in league with these bandits himself, being paid to prevent the city guard from investigating their crimes. Sue never saw her family again. Eventually, she was brought into the Cirque Eclipse by its former master, who raised her and taught her the ropes of circus life, including how to perform and to defend herself. She inherited the circus when the former master passed.

Roleplaying Sue. Sue is a charismatic and charming woman, though her personality has been tainted by bitterness and hatred. There is very little that will stop her from getting the justice she seeks, and she's willing to go to extreme lengths to punish those who she deems guilty for—or at the very least complacent about—what happened to her family and others like them.

High Prophet Abraham d'Coil

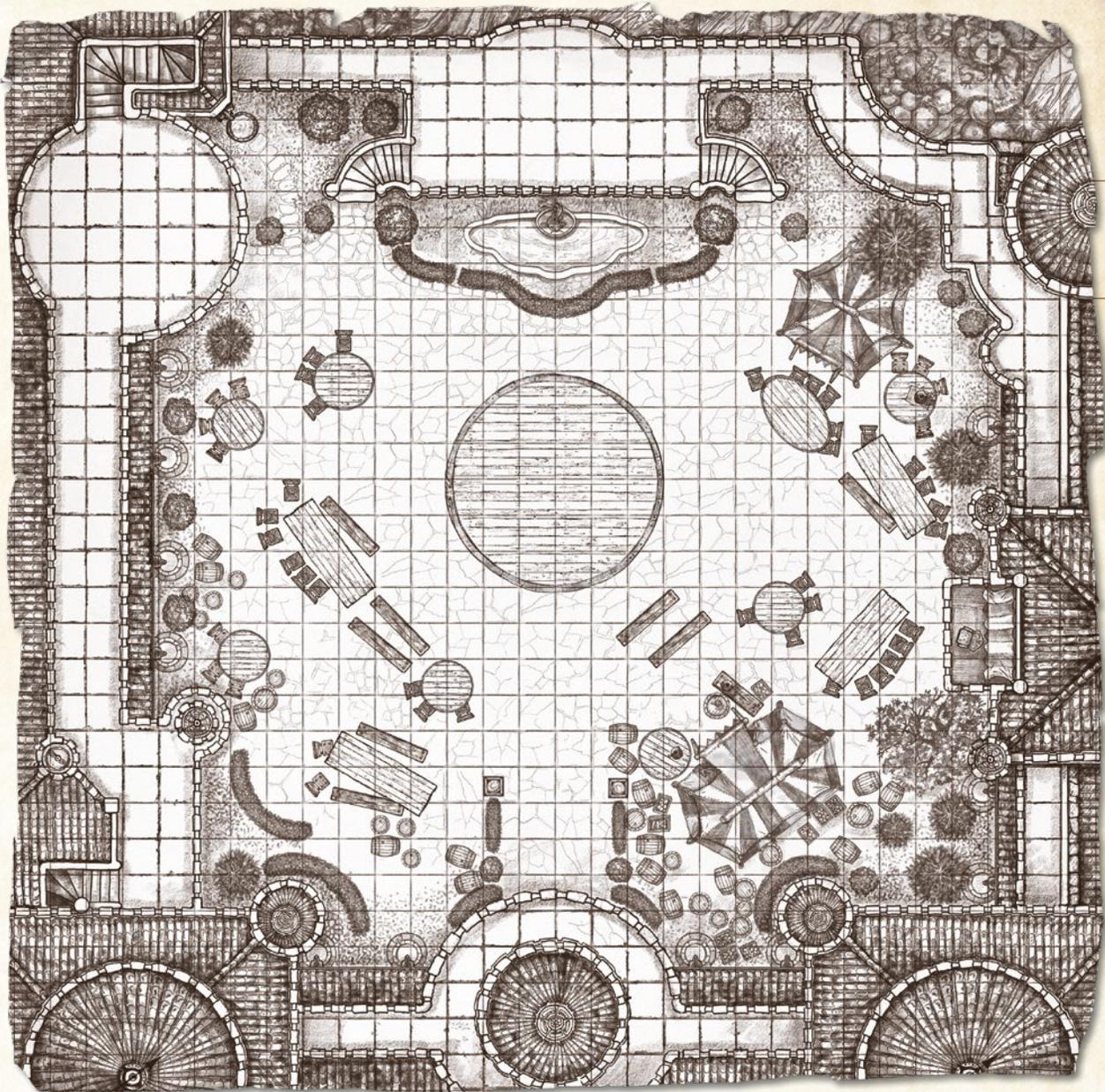
High Prophet Abraham d'Coil is the intimidating leader of the Cult of the Dusk Lord, an extremist offshoot of the Confraternity of the Dusk Lord. This group of religious fanatics approached the city council of Midhallow, proposing that they turn the city into a theocratic state, dedicating it to the Dusk Lord and his magnificence and building a massive cathedral and statues in his honor, whilst outlawing "sins," such as the indulgent Gala of Masks. The council rebuffed them, of course, laughing at the group as they were removed from the city council chambers.

Roleplaying Abraham. Abraham is intimidating and stoic, with little to no warmth to his presence.

He rules his group of fanatics through fear and coercion, believing that he has been granted absolute power and righteousness by his god, and that anyone who disagrees with him is a sinner and heretic, and deserves to be judged swiftly and harshly.

Conclusion

Whether the party apprehends the Carnival or Cult members, or kills them, the adventure ends here. The journey doesn't have to be the conclusion to your party's story, however. Perhaps there are other nefarious organizations operating in the area around Midhallow. Or maybe this group of extremists was only a part of a much larger and more formidable organization. You can always continue the story onwards!





THEME TAGS

Western, Heist, Industrial.

CONTENT WARNING

Abuse, alcohol, building explosion, gambling, incrimination, firearms.

Description

The characters have been brought together to pull off a heist. A train filled with valuables is crossing through a remote part of the Roaring Badlands desert, and it's up to the adventurers to bag the goods. However, what the adventurers don't know is that it's a setup. The characters will have to escape from jail, track down the loot, and settle the score.

Background

Huck, a construct and former adventurer, keeps his eyes on the Roaring Badlands, a desolate place where a few towns keep to themselves, and recently he's heard of a big score making its way over the old railroad tracks. He'd go loot the train himself, but his adventuring days are over and he's heard about new folks he could bring together to catch the score. The train will be passing through the deserts, which makes it easy pickings. Little does he know that the villain has set up this train as a catch to lure in criminals from the Badlands.



SER NOMINUS NOTE

Both the score and Huck's motivations are completely dependent upon the villain you choose! That's why the villains are put first, before the character hooks and motivations. I highly recommend taking a look at the villains before getting the characters introduced; it'll help them decide why they want to rob a train in the first place.

Villains

The two villains for this adventure determine who guards the train and what sort of score is on the train. Eddie Van Patten isn't a good person, but Azeraphis is a conniving, evil devil. If you want the adventure to feel more "noble," Azeraphis is a good choice. However, if you want the ramifications of morality to be present in the adventure, Eddie can make that possible.

Eddie Van Patten

(Villain Option #1)

Mr. Van Patten is a rich loan shark. He was once a criminal himself, until he ousted his entire gang and gained his freedom for it. He now lends money to those less fortunate and sends collectors to ensure that he is paid back in full. Eddie is ruthless and rich, and he hates being stolen from. He has a militia of mercenaries who do his bidding. Choose Eddie as your villain if you want the treasure aboard the train to be gold, and the party's motivations to be more neutral.

Azeraphis

(Villain Option #2)

Azeraphis is a devil who has made countless contracts with mortals. He is known in the Badlands as "The Devil" and can make any wish come true, so long as you're willing to offer up your soul. Azeraphis is moving his base of operations across the Badlands to get more customers and has outfitted a train to carry a portion of his contracts. Choose Azeraphis as your villain if you want the party's motivations to be more good-aligned, and the treasure to be of no monetary value.

Character Hooks and Motivations

To help involve your players and their characters more in the story, have each character in the adventuring party answer the following question. If your chosen villain is Eddie Van Patten: Why are you willing to steal his gold?

Alternatively, you can use the table below to give your players ideas for their characters' motivations in the adventure.

- 1 You were once a part of Eddie's old gang. You want revenge on him for selling you out.
- 2 A good score could set you up for life. You're willing to take the risk to have it all.
- 3 You once took a loan out with Van Patten, one which you never paid back. His merces came to your home and took everything. You're going to take back what they stole.
- 4 Your family is struggling. Life in the Badlands is hard as it is, and if you had a little bit of money, they could survive. This is your chance.
- 5 You're a criminal who's been in jail for years. Huck paid your bail but wants to be paid back. This heist will cover your debt and, if you don't get caught, buy your freedom.
- 6 Honestly? Robbing a train just sounds plain cool, and not only would getting paid for it be worth it, but it'd be one hell of a story.

If your chosen villain is Azeraphis, have your party answer the following: *Why do you want to destroy the soul-binding contracts?*

Alternatively, you can use the table below to give your players ideas for their characters' motivations in the adventure.

- 1 Preying on desperate people to claim their souls isn't right. You're going to save all of those people from an eternity of suffering.
- 2 Years ago you made a deal with Azeraphis. You went from rags to riches. But now you're going back on your bargain to save your soul.
- 3 A friend of yours named Violet went to Azeraphis, against your advice, to bring back her sister. She never returned. You're going to find out what happened.
- 4 All those from the Hells must be vanquished. You're going to thwart this devil's plans and then destroy him.
- 5 You once shamed Azeraphis publicly. He found you and tried to silence you. You survived and woke up the next day craving vengeance.
- 6 You want to win the favor of the people, the gods, whom-ever! This is your chance to do it.

The Train Job

(Adventure #1)

Synopsis

Huck invites the characters to his headquarters in an abandoned town, where the characters must decide their plan of action. There are three possible choices, including disguises, a bridge jump, or just plain chasing down the train. Once aboard the train, the characters must find a way into the vault car to get the score and get out. For the closed ending, the characters are picked up by Huck and escape. For the open ending, the train pulls into a station as soon as they finish packing up, and they're arrested by guards.

Introduction

Huck is a construct and retired adventurer. He's sent out letters, watched each character, and knows why they want to rob this train. He's repurposed an old sheriff's house in an abandoned town in the Badlands as his personal headquarters. When you're ready to begin the adventure, read the following text:

"Another blazing hot day in the Roaring Badlands. Nothing but dust, old mines, and deserted towns this far out. The letters you've each received gave directions to a sheriff's house in an abandoned town. As you arrive, you see other adventurers standing in the dust, each clutching a letter. The doors to the sheriff's house burst open, and a man made of metal with glowing blue eyes, a hat, leathers, and spurs on his boots yells out, 'Good, you all made it! Come on inside.'"

Have the players each describe their characters, and when they're ready, they can enter the sheriff's house.

The Plan

Huck sits the characters down in his headquarters, with a map of the train drawn on the wall. (This map can be found on page 55, feel free to show it to your players.) Huck explains that they've all been brought together because of their experience and their individual motivations to rob this train. He explains where the score is held, where the likely enemies will be, and the three options to ambush the train:

- Obtaining disguises and boarding the train when it makes a brief stop in the town of Flintfall.
- Jumping onto the train from above when it passes under the Venompoint Bridge.
- Chasing after the train on horseback.

It will be up to the characters to decide how they want to execute the heist—each option is detailed below, along with how to run each scenario.

The characters could also come up with their own plan, or even make modifications to one of the already-existing ones. The possibilities are endless!

Scenario 1

Flintfall Disguises

The train is going to make a quick planned stop in Flintfall to resupply. The party could sneak aboard with disguises in order to go undetected. Huck lays out the pros and cons listed below.

Pros: This approach is quiet and efficient. It allows the characters to utilize stealth to board the train.

Cons: The train will be guarded while it stops, meaning if the disguises fail, the only way on is a huge fight. One wrong step, and it's all over.

The characters must wait near the station until the train arrives at noon. If the characters decide to run with this plan, read the following text:

"As you make your way toward the station to wait for the train, you hear the telltale sound of a horn coming from over the horizon. A large locomotive, four cars long, rolls into the station and grinds to a halt. As it does, the doors on the second car slide open. Two guards, weapons in hand, make their way out and position themselves on either side of the car, surveying the area."

Each character must succeed on a DC 12 Dexterity (Stealth), Charisma (Deception), or Charisma (Performance) check to make it past the guards and board the train. If any characters come up with a convincing lie to allow them on board, allow the checks to be made at advantage.

If your villain is Eddie Van Patten, there are two **Van Patten mercenaries** (see appendix B) guarding the train entrance, adorned in their typical black and red outfits.

If your villain is Azeraphis, there are two **Badlands devils** (see appendix B) guarding the train entrance, both under illusory disguises to make them appear as tieflings.

If the characters succeed in their attempt to board the train, the guards allow them on and they are placed in the second car, the only car with exterior doors, where more guards are waiting inside. The train takes off after a few minutes.

If the characters fail, the guards become suspicious and tell them to leave. The party will have to fight their way on board or leave, turning this mission into a bust. If they choose to fight, more guards come out of the train car to assist the others. The train also takes off, leaving the station at the end of the third round.

If your villain is Eddie Van Patten, there are two **Van Patten mercenaries** (see appendix B) inside the second car.

If your villain is Azeraphis, there are two **Azeraphis imps** (see appendix B) inside the second car.

Once all the guards are dealt with, the party can make their way to the treasure room.

Or, if the characters avoided combat altogether, they

can attempt to sneak into the vault car. However, the guards on the train will question why they don't stay put—the characters will need another convincing lie and a successful DC 15 Charisma (Deception) check to not tip off the guards aboard the train as to why they are heading to the vault car.

SER NOMINUS NOTE

The lie doesn't have to be perfect! So long as it suffices as a reasonable excuse, allow any characters to attempt that Charisma (Deception) check.

Scenario 2

Venompoint Bridge Jump

This scenario sees the characters jumping onto the moving train from above on a bridge. Huck lays out the pros and cons listed below.

Pros: This approach is quick, simple, and more guaranteed than the disguises.

Cons: The guards will hear the characters coming, meaning they'll have a fight on their hands as soon as they jump on board.

If the characters decide to run with this plan, read the following text:

"A wooden trestle bridge spans over the dusty track, its timbers beginning to rumble as the train quickly approaches. You and your posse are stationed on the bridge above, prepared to make the jump as soon as the train passes underneath you."

The characters must wait on the bridge, which the train will pass under around 12:30 p.m. Once the train arrives, each character attempting to jump onto the train must make a DC 10 Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) check. On a success, they land without issue. On a failure, a character lands but takes 2 bludgeoning damage, as they don't stick the landing. If a character fails by 5 or more, they slip and nearly fall off the train. They must then succeed a DC 10 Strength or Dexterity saving throw in order to save themselves from falling off the train completely. Any character who has already landed can try to help a character who failed the initial check by succeeding on a DC 10 Strength or Dexterity saving throw.

If a character fails all of these checks, the character falls off the train, taking 1d6 bludgeoning damage and losing their chance to join the heist.

Characters with the ability to teleport magically can do so without rolling a check to stay on the train.

SER NOMINUS NOTE

While this spectacular failure is realistic and provides a threat to this scenario, it would be pretty disappointing for someone to no longer be able to play this part of the game because they failed. If this happens, maybe they grab onto the back of the train as they fall? Or perhaps Huck, on the back of a horse, picks up the fallen character and brings them back on board. In any case, let that character succeed anyway!

Once all of the characters have landed, the guards are alerted and make their way up to stop them from getting any further.

If your villain is Eddie Van Patten, there are two **Van Patten mercenaries** (see appendix B) that climb on top of the train to thwart the characters.

If your villain is Azeraphis, there are two **Azeraphis imps** (see appendix B) that fly out and attempt to stop the characters.

Inside the second car are more guards. The party can either fight them, or avoid them entirely by going into the storage car. However, the characters will be unable to unlock the vault car until they get the key from the conductor.

If your villain is Eddie Van Patten, there are two **Van Patten mercenaries** (see appendix B) in the guard car awaiting the characters.

If your villain is Azeraphis, there are two **Badlands devils** (see appendix B) in the guard car awaiting the characters.

Scenario 3:

Chase Down the Tracks

This scenario sees the characters chasing down the train on horseback. **Huck** lays out the pros and cons listed below.

Pros: This approach is straightforward, less complicated, and leaves more time to deal with the guards.

Cons: This is the least stealthy approach and will result in an immediate fight.

If the characters decide to run with this plan, read the following text:

"The line of cars snakes its way through the rocky desert landscape as the train rushes to get to its destination. You are in hot pursuit, slowly gaining on it as the horse upon which you ride gallops as fast as your spurs can encourage it to go."

Have the characters roll initiative, and assume they are 60 feet away from the train. Their horses move them 20 feet closer at the start of each of their turns. When a character is within 5 feet of the train, they can easily grab onto the side and pull themselves up on top of

Hellfire
Conductor



the train or into the back of the storage car with their movement, so long as nothing is stopping them.

If your villain is Eddie Van Patten, there are three **Van Patten mercenaries** (see appendix B) on top of the train. They use their crossbows to try and shoot down the characters before they get on board.

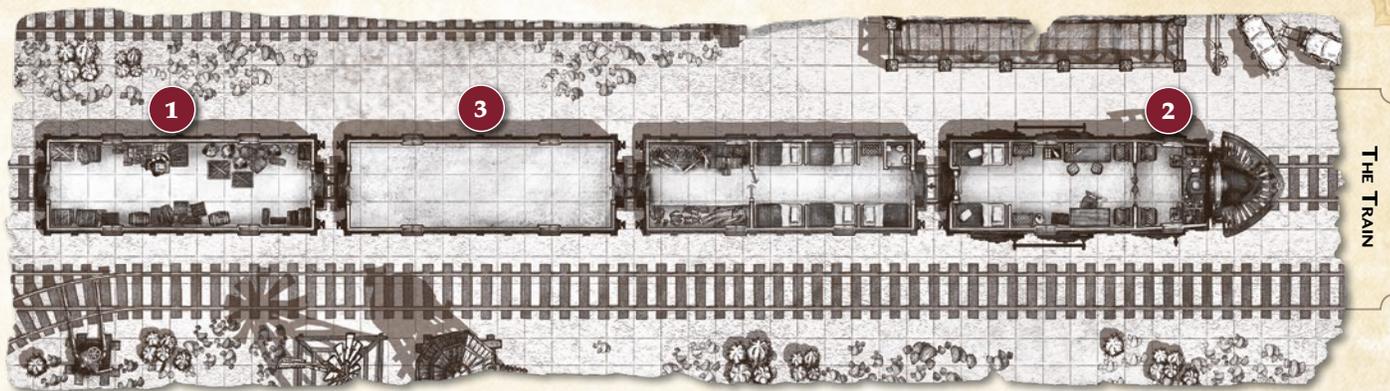
If your villain is Azeraphis, there is one **Badlands devil** (see appendix B) on top of the train, trying to prevent the characters from boarding, and there are two **Azeraphis imps** (see appendix B) flying above who will try to do the same. The devil will try to use flame sparks to hit the characters from a distance, while the imps fly down and engage them with melee attacks. The imps have disadvantage on attacking targets while they fly.

SER NOMINUS NOTE

The guards purposefully have low bonuses and disadvantage to attack the players. This should be relatively easy for the players to pull off! Describe how they narrowly manage to board the train, or how close the attacks hit! Make them feel epic for boarding the train. It would be really disappointing for a character to get hit with a lucky attack and be out of the game in the first scenario. Also, I know it's not the most realistic, but don't attack the players' horses! Unless you really, really want them to fail. Maybe the baddies are evil creatures, but draw the line at animal cruelty.

If your villain is Eddie Van Patten, there is one **Van Patten mercenary** (see appendix B) in the guard car.

If your villain is Azeraphis, there is one **Badlands devil** (see appendix B) in the guard car.



The Train

Listed below is each area of the train; adjust these accordingly to the approach the characters have taken.

1: THE STORAGE CAR

"This car is a simple storage car, filled with stacked boxes containing various types of equipment and supplies."

This car is filled with boxes of weapons, equipment, and uniforms. The characters can find shortswords, crossbows, bolts, leather armor, and daggers in this car. If the characters stealthily made it on board, the guards would not be alerted to their presence, as the only entrance is blocked by the locked vault car. In order to board the other cars, the characters must walk on top of the train. This doesn't require any successful checks, but the top of the train is considered difficult terrain.

If your villain is Eddie Van Patten, the characters also find papers inscribed with runes and arcane drawings in this car. Any character can make a DC 10 Intelligence (Arcana) check to understand what's written on the papers, realizing on a success that these are schematics for explosive runes. (These schematics foreshadow Eddie's saloon being rigged to explode in part 3, "Saloon Showdown.")

2: THE LOCOMOTIVE

"The locomotive sits at the head of the train, an engine of steam and magical instruments groaning and whining as the complex machine pulls the rest of the cars at a breakneck speed."

In the frontmost car is the conductor. The conductor has the key to the vault car on their person. The characters can try to stealthily take it by rolling Dexterity (Stealth) and Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) against the conductor's passive Perception score. (No matter which villain you chose for this adventure, the corresponding conductor has a passive Perception score of 10.)

If the characters fail, the conductor turns around and attacks, even if the characters are disguised. The conductor is familiar with everyone on the train and will not recognize the characters (unless any of them

has a magical illusory disguise to perfectly look like another member of the train's crew). If the characters are disguised with illusions, the suspicious conductor will ask the characters what his name is. If they answer incorrectly, he attacks. (His name is Billy).

If your villain is Eddie Van Patten, the conductor is a **Van Patten conductor** (see appendix B).

If your villain is Azeraphis, the conductor is a **Hellfire conductor** (see appendix B).

3: THE VAULT CAR

Made from a metal alloy that is indestructible, the door to the vault car is locked and requires the key to open. Alternatively, it can be opened using thieves' tools with a successful DC 25 Dexterity check.

If your villain is Eddie Van Patten, inside the vault car is over 50,000 gp. The characters can fill their bags with the gold, taking as much as possible.

If your villain is Azeraphis, inside the vault car are over two hundred soul contracts. The contracts are inside black scroll tubes and sealed with a glowing bronze stamp. The characters can fill their bags with the scrolls, or simply set about destroying them. The tubes and contracts can be easily smashed.

Conclusion

If you would like to conclude the story and end the adventure here, read the following text:

"The clattering of wooden wheels can just barely be heard over the groans of the train's own wheels. Huck pulls up in a wooden cargo wagon, pulled by two speckled brown horses. He motions for you to quickly jump, which, with maybe a moment's hesitation, you do, landing with a thud in the back of the wagon. Once everyone is off the train, Huck pulls away from the tracks, carrying you to safety, your heist now complete."

If you would like to continue the story into part 2, "A Dry Trail and Jail," the characters advance to level 2 then read the following text:

"As the train comes to a stop, it falls under the shadow of a nearby building. You peer out the window to see the interior of a train station, and a dozen guards waiting to arrest you."



A Dry Trail and Jail

(Adventure #2)

Synopsis

As the party finishes up their heist job, they are caught by a dozen guards who lead them to the Dry Trails Jail. There the party must discover a way to escape (of which there are many) before sunrise, or else they'll be sentenced to certain death.

Introduction

When you are ready to begin the adventure, read the text associated with your chosen villain.

If your chosen villain is Eddie Van Patten, read the following text:

"So, you thought you're all smart, eh?" a voice calls out as the train slows down, pulling into a station. "Why don't you make this easy for us and come out with yer hands up. Maybe, might not shoot ya if ya do."

The person speaking to the characters is **Sheriff Reardon**. He has with him twelve **mercenary jail guards** that are there to ensure the capture and imprisonment of the characters (see appendix B for these NPCs' stat blocks). They all have been paid off by Eddie, and plan on executing the characters the following day.

If your chosen villain is Azeraphis, read the following text:

"Alright, dogs, come out. We know you're in there; we can smell you," a gravelly voice calls from outside of the train. "Me and the boys have been wanting a good hunt. Just a shame we are supposed to take you in alive this time."

The person speaking to the characters is Sheriff Loch, who has with him twelve infernal jail guards that are there to ensure the capture and imprisonment of the characters (see appendix B for the sheriff and guards' stat blocks). They are all secretly devils from the Hells, loyal to Azeraphis, and plan on teleporting the characters into their lair of torment the following day—they need time to get the portal up and working.

The characters can attempt an escape here, though it would be wiser for them to follow along with the sheriff for now. If the characters comply, read the following text:

"The guards walk forward, one appearing to cast a spell on himself and the rest. They cuff each of you and gag any mages. They also pat down and disarm you of your gear, except for your armor."

Each character is fitted with a set of manacles behind their back, and if there are any spellcasters in the party they have been gagged to prevent them from casting any spells with verbal components. These manacles can be picked with a successful DC 15 Dexterity or Wisdom check using thieves' tools. They can be broken with a successful DC 20 Strength (Athletics) check—however, for a bit of added challenge, the manacles *only* break if they take more than 10 damage from a single attack or spell! Any attack or spell that would normally deal less than 10 damage does no damage at all.

The manacles can also be slipped off via dislocation of joints—any character who either is proficient in Medicine or has a Dexterity score of at least 15 can pull this trick and escape their manacles. Any character who is gagged cannot remove the gag unless they have their hands free, or unless another creature removes them as an action.

SER NOMINUS NOTE

All spells require one or more somatic (hand gestures), verbal (words), or material (a spellcasting focus or other ingredients) components. With the restraints above, your spellcasters should be mostly nullified... Mostly.

Withholding Items

Any character can try to hide a weapon or similar item in their clothing or armor before getting arrested. That character must succeed on a Dexterity (Sleight of Hand), Dexterity (Stealth), or Charisma (Deception) check with a DC corresponding to the size of item they are trying to hide. See below.

- Tiny Item (coin, dice, ring): DC 10
- Small Item (dagger, bottle, wand) DC 15
- Large Item (sword, crossbow, book): DC 20

If a character succeeds, they keep the item from the guards' attention. If they fail, the guards confiscate the item and taunt the character with a, "Gonna have to try harder than that," or, "Nice try, thief."

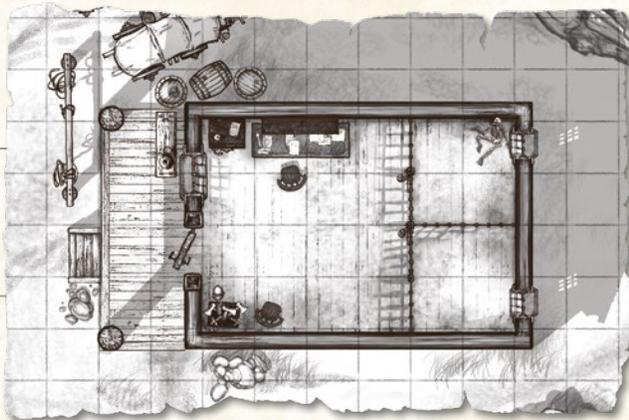
Once the characters' items have been removed, the thirteen guards lead them to their cells, which are next to the train station.

SER NOMINUS NOTE

If the players at any time want to attempt an escape, they can take some advice from my mercenary friend and "certainly try!"

The sheer number of guards may overwhelm the players, and rightly so. If you want to allow them to escape during this segment, be open to any creativity! You could have fewer guards accompany the characters to their cells, or allow them to distract and/or sneak away from the guards with ease. Or, you know, just throw them in the cell and continue with the pre-written adventure.

THE JAIL



The Dry Trails Jail

The characters are brought to the jail around 9:00 p.m.

"Slivers of moonlight break into the dark room you are forced into, the only other source of light coming from a single candle placed upon a desk by the front door. Two cells made from metal bars have been built into the stone walls. The guards who apprehended you gruffly shove you inside, slamming and locking the doors behind you."

The jail is one major room with two cells in it. The foundations and walls are made of stone, and the room is occupied at all times by two **infernal guards** or **mercenary guards**, depending on your chosen villain (see appendix B for more details on the respective guard types). These guards swap shifts every six hours, never leaving the jail unattended. If any characters escape, the guards blow their whistles and the other ten guards appear at the end of the first round to put the characters back in their cells. Escape from this place will be tricky, but the characters will need to figure out how to do so before the sun rises, or else they'll be executed.

Where's All Our Stuff?

The characters' things have been stored in a crate outside the jail, guarded by the exterior guard, as described below in "The Guards." The crate is locked, but the keys on each guard's person can unlock it, or it can be opened with a successful DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check or Dexterity check using thieves' tools. If the characters are using Strength, just like with the manacles, the lock can only be broken when a single attack deals 10 or more damage.

The Cells

Each cell is 10 feet long and 10 feet wide. The guards would have split the party between these two cells. One cell is empty, aside from a chamber pot and a window. The other is about the same, but also includes the remains of the previous inhabitant, now a skeleton, in the corner. The guards refer to him as "Dreadwood Red." He still wears his leather cowboy hat, which has a rusty spoon tied inside the brim.

The Cell Doors. The locks on the cells are tight and have three different locking mechanisms. They can be picked using thieves' tools with three successful Dexterity or Intelligence checks. The DC for these checks is 18 and increases by 2 for each successful check. If a character fails a check, the locking mechanism resets and they must start all over again from the first check.

If they didn't smuggle any thieves' tools in with them, any character in the party who succeeds on a DC 16 Intelligence (Investigation) check can craft makeshift picks from the finger bones of the skeleton.

The bars can also be bent open with a combined Strength score of 60. Alternatively, any character who makes a successful DC 18 Strength (Athletics) check can bend a weak bar to allow a small creature to escape.

The Pipes Under the Jail. Any character with a passive Perception score of 13 or higher notices a noise underneath the cell. Further investigation reveals it to be the sound of water running through an unseen pipe, as well as revealing a small hole in the middle of the side where the two cells intersect. It was seemingly dug a long time ago. . When a character first discovers this hole, they'll hear a disembodied voice whisper in their ear, "*The hole! The cold goal! Dig the hole, cold the goal, blow the hole!*" Each time a character touches the skeleton in the corner of the room, his eyes glow green and they hear the voice again.

If any character spends an hour digging into this hole (using the spoon from Dreadwood Red's hat), they find it opens up to a pipe with running water. They can speed up this process with a successful DC 12 Strength or Constitution check. If this pipe takes any cold damage, it bursts, creating a small gap in the bars, but big enough for anyone to crawl through and escape. Any character with an Intelligence score of 13 or higher will be able to figure this out and could use it to their advantage by casting any spell on the pipe that deals cold damage.

The Guards

Since the characters have a maximum of 12 hours to escape, only two shifts of guards will ever guard their cell. In the first 6 hours, the two guards are a human named Tomás and a half-elf named Milan. Tomás stays inside the jail while Milan guards the entrance. Milan's nose was burned off in an attack, and he uses his scarred face as a pure intimidation tactic.

Three hours in, the other guards bring them a meal of corn, mashed potatoes, and greens. This is the only time Tomás is truly distracted— —if the characters want to attempt to pick a lock, stay out of sight, or craft an item, they will have advantage on any check made while Tomás is eating. Have the characters make a DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) or Wisdom (Insight) check; on a success, they figure out this advantage.

Any character with a passive Perception score of 13 or higher will notice that Milan is distracted by a wandering dragonborn, who plays his pan flute at random hours of the night. Milan barks angrily at the dragonborn to leave the premises whenever it happens. With a successful DC 8 Charisma (Persuasion) check, the characters can speak to the dragonborn from their side of the window and ask him to play the pan flute loudly—perhaps they compliment him, as they "enjoy" the music. If they succeed, Milan will leave his post and chase the dragonborn for about a minute, in which the dragonborn gets away, playing his pitchy toots of

agony into the night. Milan's brief absence removes one more obstacle to the characters' escape, though they'll still have to get past Tomás.

At midnight, the first two guards are replaced by a human named Susana and a dwarf named Bukhon. Susana stays inside, and Bukhon guards the entrance. Susana is very talkative and loves to hear about the characters to pass the time, but stubbornly doesn't allow them to escape, no matter what they tell her. However, she can be bribed—she willingly takes any offering of gold or valuables and, in return, "leaves to use the restroom" for a minute. Bukhon responds to anything said to him with a "*hmph.*"

If your villain is Eddie Van Patten, Susana also talks about how tired she is from moving a bunch of chalk and "dangerously explosive" spells to Eddie's saloon.

Taunting the Guards. Any of the guards can be taunted with a successful DC 13 Charisma (Performance, Intimidation, or Persuasion) check, or by anything that would really upset them—the characters could also stage a fight, for example, with a Charisma (Performance) or Constitution check. In any case, the guards will come closer to the bars to chew out and threaten anyone taunting them. When a guard is within 5 feet of the bars, a successful DC 15 Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check will allow any character to pickpocket the keys. Alternatively, a successful DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check allows any character to bash the guard's head into the bars to knock them out.

Catching a Ride Out of Town

A caravan of goods is scheduled to head out of a nearby store, toward the town of Tombflats, where a saloon owned and operated by the villain resides. This saloon is where the villain has relocated the train's score.

If your chosen villain is Eddie Van Patten, it's called the Royal Pig saloon.

If your chosen villain is Azeraphis, it's called the Heat Spike saloon.

Any character with a passive Perception score of 13 or higher will have noticed the caravan and the logo imprinted on the side when they were being brought to the jail. Any character who makes a successful DC 12 Intelligence (Survival) or Wisdom check learns that that caravan will likely leave around 10:00 p.m. in order to arrive before midnight, and that it will be headed right to the villain's base of operations.

If the characters have escaped before the caravan has left, they can sneak aboard as stowaways, destined for the villain's lair and a chance to reclaim their score. The driver is tired and takes off without checking to ensure that everything is in order, meaning none of the characters have to make a Dexterity (Stealth) check to go unnoticed.

The characters could also take the next outgoing train. Any character who makes a successful DC 10

Intelligence (History) check learns that the next train will be arriving at midnight, followed by another at 3:00 a.m.

The party will need to either bolt through the train station with a successful DC 10 Dexterity check, or sneak in with a DC 10 Dexterity (Stealth) or Charisma check, passing through unnoticed or unremarked on a success. This train is more passenger-friendly than the last, and contains a few people who are traveling from place to place.

Once they board the train, it's next stop is in one hour: the town of Tombflats.

The characters could also just hoof it on foot! However, the guards will hunt them for the better part of two hours.

SER NOMINUS NOTE

Let your players be creative with how they escape, but never let it be too easy, unless they've truly thought of everything and planned it all out. If they decide to run, but end up scattered in the desert, then maybe it works! Roll with the punches!

Also, if they escaped that jail super fast and you're currently flipping to the end here, panicking on what to do next... run a chase encounter with four of the prison guards as they rush the players! Or maybe the caravan driver checks the backseat, and they've got to convince him to let them ride along. Or maybe the train is arriving behind schedule. Anything is possible!

Conclusion

There are a variety of ways the characters can escape, but if your villain is Eddie Van Patten and they fail to escape, they are brought out to town square at first light and hanged. The execution could be another chance for them to escape, but the odds are low with thirteen **mercenary jail guards** (see appendix B) keeping watch.

If your villain is Azeraphis, the party is brought out to the deserts and pushed into a fiery, glowing obsidian portal, where they will be tormented for the rest of their lives and eventually serviced into fiendish wars—or it could be the start of a whole new adventure!

If the characters get away, they advance to 3rd level. Read the whichever of the following texts corresponds to their escape:

"Dust rustles up in the caravan's wake as you leave the town and jail behind. The sun is just beginning to rise above the rocky mesas as you head into the desert, turning your attention away from your imprisonment and toward what comes next."

"You once again feel the ground rumble beneath you as the train whistles one more time before it departs from the station, leaving the town—and your immediate worries—behind."

"You look back towards the town you just left, the sun just beginning to rise above the rocky mesas in the distance as you run as fast as you can, crossbow bolts whizzing past and into the dirt nearby as you disappear into the desert."

If you'd like to end the adventure here, the characters can go off into the unknown, free from execution or teleportation, but the law (and perhaps bounty hunters!) will always be on their tail.

If you'd like to continue the adventure into part 3, "Saloon Showdown, the characters advance to 3rd level before heading to Tombflats to reclaim their lost prize—and get their revenge on the villain who set them up.



Saloon Showdown

(Adventure #3)

Synopsis

After escaping the Dry Trails Jail, the party heads to the villain's saloon, where they can confront the villain and settle the score. The saloon, however, is guarded and won't be an easy place to break into. But with the right amount of planning, and a good amount of luck, they'll be in and out in no time!

Introduction

This adventure begins with the characters arriving in Tombflats. When you are ready to begin the adventure, read the following text:

"A polluted, overcast sky provides the backdrop for the city before you. Buildings made of brick, stone, and iron are shadowed by a tall cliff that wraps around the east half of the city, where an enormous waterfall covers everyone in a layer of mist. Carriages full of rich folk clatter by on paved roads. It stinks of grime and mud. Welcome to Tombflats."

Tombflats

The city of Tombflats is one of industry and money. Rich mine owners, politicians, and gang members live in Tombflats's high society. Meanwhile, everyone else sifts through the wet mud covering the ground, in search of a single silver piece. Work is hard to find in Tombflats, and the only people who make money are those who scheme and cheat to get it. Still, typical folk make lives in this town whether they've got something to sell or a service to provide. Just don't expect to meet friends in this city—everyone's already got three, and they're all in wealthy business contracts.

Guards do their best to keep order in Tombflats, but with the large amount of crime already at large in the city, it's difficult to keep up with petty theft or break-ins. The mayor of Tombflats is a human named Gordyn Alwhick. He puts on a pleasant face and speaks of the city's marvels, but rarely ever addresses its problems. The city guards won't be looking for the characters, and if they start trouble in a local saloon, it's likely they'll get out of it.

Searching for the Saloon

If the party entered the city by any means other than the caravan, they'll have to look for the saloon (named The Royal Pig if it belongs to Eddie Van Patten, or the Heat Spike if it belongs to Azeraphis).

Any character can ask around or simply look for the saloon, finding it easily enough without making any

skill checks. Most citizens of Tombflats know where it is, which is on the northside, near the road out of town that heads due west.

The Bee In Your Bonnet

While the party travels through Tombflats, they notice a store at which they can resupply if necessary. This store is an old pawn shop that's also got a stock of goods and supplies. The owner, Bee, is a halfling who takes kindly to the characters. She helps them as best she can, but asks if they are associates of the villain. If they tell her that they aren't, and of their plan to take him down, she offers up anything at her store at a 50% discount and wishes them well on their mission. Her father, Sanlos, got into some bad business with the villain and owes him an enormous debt.

SER NOMINUS NOTE

So what should Bee have in her store? Well, without listing every single possible item that she could ever sell, have the players prompt you on what they need, and you can either make up some prices or look them up. If any players ask what they see around, you can always make up whatever she's got in her shop!

Arriving at the Saloon

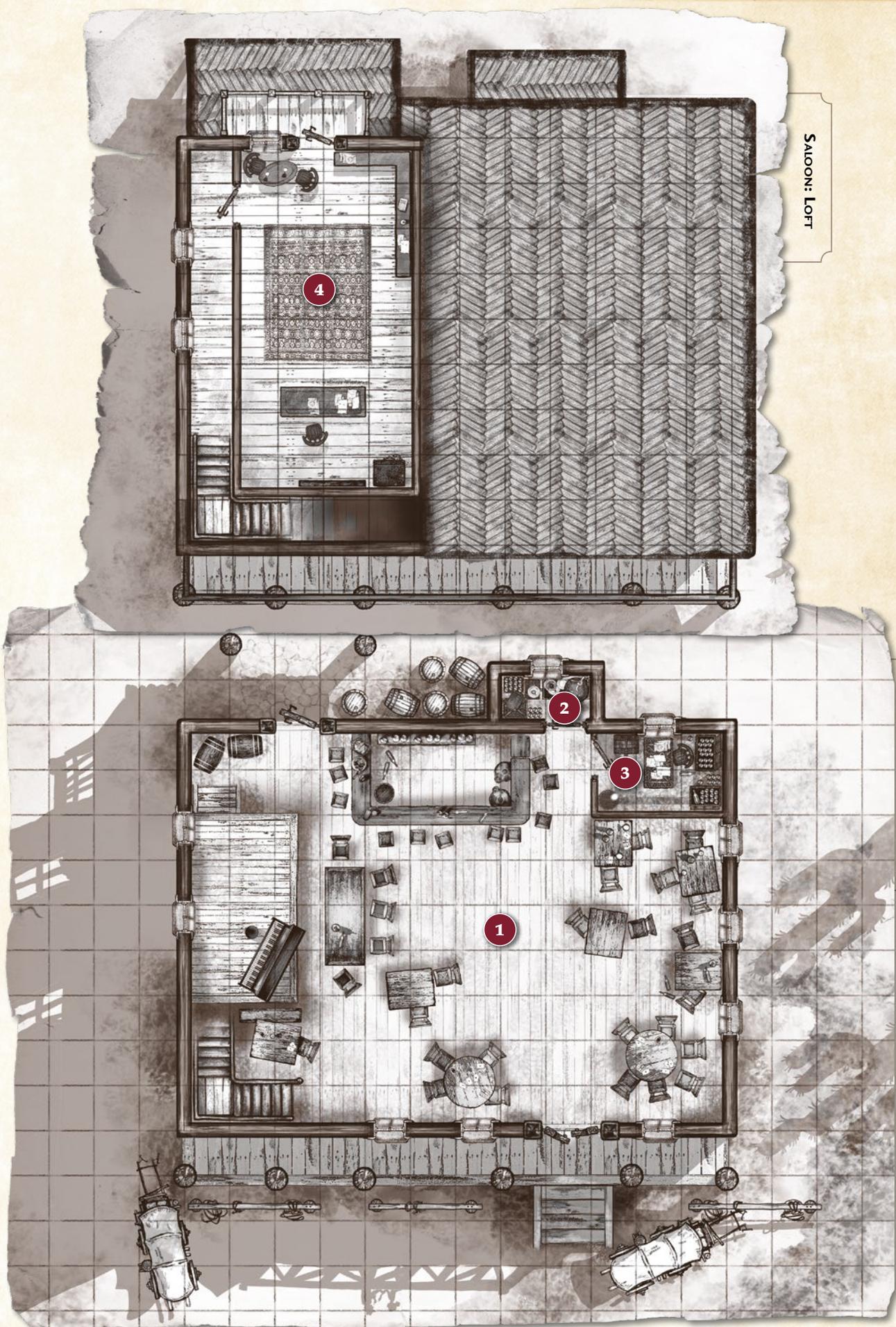
Whether the characters have arrived via caravan or on foot, read the following text:

"Nestled amongst the commerce buildings of downtown Tombflats, sitting at the corner where two streets intersect, is a tired, two-story wooden building. A balcony and porch wrap around two of its sides, with a main entrance in the corner facing the intersection, a pair of small, chest height doors swaying in the doorway. A sign that reads 'Saloon' is nailed above the entrance, into the wooden frame of the balcony."

If the characters have arrived via caravan, the driver (a commoner named Wesley Colter) pulls up to the front of the saloon, where a guard from inside unloads the cargo into the tavern. The characters can jump out at any time, but if the guard finds them in the back of the caravan, he is surprised at first but only cares about the shipment of drinks to be carried inside. He tells the driver, "Looks like you've got some stowaways," at which point, Wesley yells at the characters to get out and scam.

From noon to midnight, patrons visit the saloon. They drink, play card games, dance, and share rumors. From midnight to noon, the saloon is closed and doubles up on its usual guards.

The characters can decide whether they infiltrate while it's open or closed, which can yield different encounters altogether.



SALOON: LOFT

SALOON: GROUND FLOOR

The Royal Pig Saloon

If your villain is Eddie Van Patten, the saloon is named The Royal Pig. It is run by Eddie's secondhand man, Klot. Klot is a goblin and a cunning negotiator; he's loyal to Eddie and owes him for his freedom. Eddie paid off Klot's bounty and had him released from jail so that Klot would work for him. Eddie needed Klot to negotiate terms with another mercenary group of goblins to work with one of his associates—one Alonzo Alwood—to rob a town of its resources and gold. Klot succeeded and was rewarded with the Royal Pig Saloon.

Roleplaying Klot. Klot is charismatic, suave, and a swindler. He does his best to ensure the patrons of the saloon are enjoying themselves, feel comfortable, and most of all: cause no trouble. He feels very fortunate to be in the position he's in and doesn't want to lose it. He runs a tight ship with Eddie's mercenaries, who guard the saloon day in and out. **Klot** (see appendix B) is very matter-of-fact and will waste no time on entertaining the characters if they seem suspicious. The only way to compel Klot's attention is either to offer gold, or to threaten him with baseless blackmail.

SER NOMINUS NOTE:

The characters would have no idea whether or not Klot has a criminal past, nor would he know if they have dirt on him. Perhaps an Insight check could warrant a character having this knowledge.

If the characters enter the saloon during operating hours, roll a d4. On a 1-3, Klot is in the common room, either serving drinks, keeping watch, or chatting up the patrons. On a 4, he is in his office, filing paperwork.

The Royal Pig saloon also has a failsafe: it is rigged to explode at Eddie's command, with magical runes drawn in chalk on the exterior of the building. If the characters search around the sides of the saloon, they can easily spot these chalk drawings. Any character can make a DC 10 Intelligence (Arcana) check to examine the drawings, realizing on a success these are explosive runes, and if washed away, they will be rendered inert.

1: COMMON ROOM

If the party enters during operating hours, read the following text:

"The double doors to this establishment swing open as you enter. The lively saloon smells of mildew and alcohol. Patrons gamble at card games on wooden tables. Some sip on drinks at the bar. And an uppity tune is plinked away on a piano. Two armed mercenaries flank the entrance and aren't too worried by your arrival. A staircase ascends to a second level directly to the left of you, and an entrance to a back room can be seen behind the bar."

During operating hours, the saloon features six **commoners** who drink, play card games, and socialize in the common room. One of these commoners is the bartender. Two **Van Patten mercenaries** (see appendix B) are always present and swap shifts every four hours. If **Klot** (see appendix B) is present in the common room, the mercenaries are sharp and attentive. If Klot is in his office, the mercenaries are drunk and have disadvantage on all their skill checks (including a -5 to their passive Perception). Anyone who attempts to go back behind the bar or up the staircase is stopped by either the mercenaries or Klot himself. Any character can make a DC 15 Charisma (Deception) check to lie about being new hires, or customers of Eddie's loan shark business, who were told to meet with Eddie directly. On a success, this would easily fool the mercenaries, but Klot would have more suspicion and follow the characters wherever they go.

If a fight breaks out in the common room during operating hours, the Van Patten mercenaries try their hardest to apprehend the characters, but if the party is out for blood, then the mercenaries will not hesitate to kill them. The patrons of the saloon will try their best to escape, but it's not below these scummy mercenaries to use them as hostages to stop the party.

If the party enters during closed hours, read the following text:

"All is quiet. The saloon's common room smells of mildew and alcohol. Two armed mercenaries flank the entrance, and two more sit at the tables. A staircase ascends to a second level, and an entrance to a back room can be seen behind the bar."

During closed hours, four **Van Patten mercenaries** (see appendix B) are always present, and **Klot** (see appendix B) is always in his office, dozing off. Eddie Van Patten has forced everyone to stay awake during the off hours, and not everyone is happy with the decision. The mercenaries have no time for funny stuff and tell anyone who comes into the saloon that it's closed and that they should "shove off." If an audible fight breaks out, the two other mercs from upstairs will join the fray, along with Klot.

2: BACK ROOM

"This back room contains crates filled with bottles of drinks, casks of ale, and a washing area with a pump for water."

This room is mostly empty, aside from a couple of bottles of various alcohol. If a fight breaks out in the common room during operating hours, the bartender (who uses the **commoner** stat block) hides in this room, where he has hidden a light crossbow with 20 bolts under a shelf. It can be found with a successful DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check.

3: KLOT'S OFFICE

"This small room features a desk, a candle-lit lamp, scattered papers, and sealed boxes of various bottles."

During operating hours, if **Klot** (see appendix B) isn't in this room, the door is locked. It can be opened with a DC 14 Dexterity check using thieves' tools, or can be broken down with a successful DC 16 Strength (Athletics) check.

If Klot is in his office, he will be staring down at papers and writing with an ink pen. Too busy to look up, he'll confuse the characters for the mercenaries and tell them, "For the last time, no. I'm not letting you guys 'taste test' any of that Von Holland beer cheese! It was expensive!" Once he notices that the characters are not his employees, he politely apologizes and redirects them back to the common room. If the characters do anything besides follow Klot's instructions, he grows increasingly angry and demands they leave.

During closed hours, Klot is dozing off in his chair. He has a -5 penalty to his passive Perception while asleep.

Treasure. Nothing but letters to clients and family are on Klot's desk, and the crates are filled with bottles of beer. The drawer in Klot's desk has a false bottom, which can be discovered with a successful DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) or Wisdom (Perception) check. Inside is a pouch filled with 348 gp, 210 sp, and a small square of cheese, along with a deed to a small house in the town of Flintfall that bears the name "*My Lil' Goblin Home.*"

4: OUTFITTED LOFT

Up the stairs is a long hallway that has a single door to the right.

During the operating hours one **Van Patten mercenary** (see appendix B) guards the entrance. She lets no one beyond the door unless they're being followed by Klot and have already deceived him into thinking they're there to meet Van Patten. Otherwise, convincing her to let them in will require another lie. The characters could also try to silently knock out or assassinate this guard if they've made it up the stairs stealthily. There would be no other witnesses if they choose to do so.

During closed hours, two **Van Patten mercenaries** (see appendix B) guard the entrance. They let no one beyond the door unless they're dressed in mercenary garb and have a good reason to see Eddie. They can be deceived or persuaded with a successful DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion or Deception) check.

The main room in the loft is a temporary office with Eddie Van Patten himself sitting inside, regardless of if the saloon is open or closed. He writes up new contracts and loans in this office and isn't expecting any visitors except for the "Aces Family," who will be signing a new

loan with him. Fortunately for the characters, and unfortunately for Mr. Van Patten, his schedule is written out on a chalkboard directly behind his desk. In clear view of any character with a passive Perception score of 8 or higher, it reads, "*Today: Meeting with the Aces Family.*"

SER NOMINUS NOTE

If the characters manage to get so far as to kill no one, and sit down with Eddie as the "Aces" family, let them take out the cheatin' scumbag however they like. Don't initiate some sort of combat that brings the action to a halt. Roleplay a confused Eddie who slowly realizes who he's dealing with and fears for his life. Let the players have their moment of triumph and sweet revenge!

If a fight breaks out in the common room, or anywhere in the saloon, **Eddie Van Patten** (see appendix B) aims his crossbow at the door and fires at the first person that opens the door, unless it's one of his mercenaries. If he fails in his first attack, or is outnumbered, he will surrender, drop his weapon, and make a deal with the characters, offering them double the score they tried to steal from his train. Any character can make a DC 15 Wisdom (Insight) check, realizing on a success that Eddie is bluffing and it's impossible for him to have all that money here and now. What Eddie truly wants is to get into his safe, where he keeps the magical locket that will ignite the runes on the outside of the saloon (see "There She Blows!" below).

Treasure. Behind Eddie's desk is a very large safe, which either requires the key that Eddie keeps on his person at all times, or a successful DC 20 Dexterity check using thieves' tools, to open. Inside is 51,345 gp and a locket with a gold switch. This locket's switch ignites the explosive runes (see "There She Blows!" below).

There she blows!

The explosive runes on the outside of the saloon are ignited by the locket in Eddie's safe. Eddie only needs to use his bonus action in order to make the call if he has the locket, in which case everyone in the saloon is blown to smithereens, leaving nothing but ash behind—and thus this outcome would conclude the adventure.



Hellfire
Pistol



Violet

The Heat Spike

If your villain is Azeraphis, the saloon is named The Heat Spike. It is run by Azeraphis' second-hand woman, Violet. Violet is a half-elf loyal by circumstance to Azeraphis. Violet's sister, Rosie, made a deal with Azeraphis to kill her own husband in exchange for her soul. Azeraphis accepted, but Rosie's husband was the leader of a gang, and he nearly killed Azeraphis and his army of devils. After such a loss, he threatened to send Rosie to the Hells as punishment, but Violet struck a deal of her own with Azeraphis to protect her sister. Now she runs and operates his saloon, and will until she dies.

Roleplaying Violet. Violet schemes every day on a way to kill Azeraphis once and for all, to get herself and Rosie out of his grasp for good. However, any hint of treachery would see her in a dungeon rather than operating a saloon. So she deals with what she has. Violet is stoic and tired, but sees opportunity in the characters. She'll willingly offer up any helpful information to kill Azeraphis, so long as she gets her sister free.

If the characters enter the saloon during operating hours, roll a d4. On a 1-3, Violet is in the common room, cleaning. On a 4, she is in her office.

1: COMMON ROOM

If the party enters during operating hours, read the following text:

"The double doors to this saloon swing open as you enter. The saloon smells of alcohol and sweat. It feels like a furnace on the inside. Patrons gamble at card games on wooden tables, some sip on drinks at the bar, and a bard strums uppity tunes in a corner of the room. Two armed tieflings flank the entrance, and a staircase directly to your left ascends to a second level. An entrance to a back room can be seen behind the bar."

During operating hours, the saloon features six **commoners** who drink, play card games, and socialize in the common room. One of these **commoners** is the bartender, a human man by the name of Dom. Another is the bard, an androgynous halfling by the name of Kurt Savory. The latter is dressed in bright clothing, sports an enormous mustache, and wears a teal wig. Kurt requests to be referred to as "they," "them," or by name in conversation. They play lots of upbeat tunes, including one where Kurt tells a story about a "little boy who turned to stone."

Two **Badlands devils** (see appendix B), disguised as tieflings, are always present and ensure no one trespasses upstairs unless invited by Azeraphis, something of which they are always informed. If Violet is present in the common room, the devils keep a close eye on her, thus giving them a temporary -2 to their passive Perception score. Anyone who attempts to go back behind the bar or up the staircase is stopped by the devils. Even if the characters attempt to lie about meeting with Azeraphis, the devils simply smile and say, "Azeraphis isn't seeing anyone right now," and direct them back into the common room.

If a fight breaks out in the common room during operating hours, the devils try their hardest to throw the characters out of the saloon. If the characters are attempting to kill the devils, they will retaliate with a more deadly approach.

If the party enters during closed hours, read the following text:

"All is quiet. The common room of the saloon smells of mildew and alcohol. Two armed tieflings flank the entrance, and two more sit at the tables. A staircase ascends to a second level, and an entrance to a back room can be seen behind the bar."

During closed hours, four **Badlands devils** (see appendix B) are always present and Violet is always in the loft, asleep. The devils keep a sharp eye and turn away anyone who tries to enter the saloon. If an audible fight breaks out, **Azeraphis** (see appendix B) and the two other devils will come downstairs to join the fight. Violet remains upstairs.

2: BACK ROOM

"This backroom contains crates filled with bottles of drinks, casks of ale, and a washing area with a pump for water."

The room is mostly empty, aside from a couple of bottles of various alcohol. If a fight breaks out in the common room during operating hours, Dom, the bartender (who uses the **commoner** stat block), hides in this room, where he has hidden a light crossbow with 20 bolts under a shelf. It can be found with a successful DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check.

3: VIOLET'S OFFICE

"This small room features a desk, a candle-lit lamp, and sealed boxes of various bottles."

During operating hours, if Violet isn't in this room the door is locked. It can be opened with a successful DC 12 Dexterity check using thieves' tools, or can be broken down with a successful DC 16 Strength (Athletics) check.

If **Violet** (see appendix B) is in her office, she will be mindlessly drawing on a scrap of paper, bored out of her mind. When she spots the characters, she tells them to close the door and asks if they're here to rescue her. She explains her predicament and begs the party to take Azeraphis down. She tells them she can provide a distraction for the devils guarding the staircase to allow them up. If they agree to this, Violet calls the two **Badlands devils** (see appendix B) who are always keeping an eye on her over into her office with the words, "I've altered the deal!" This will bring them both running, allowing the characters up the stairs unchecked.

During closed hours, the office is locked and contains nothing of value besides a few of Violet's drawings. The drawings are of ships, cities, and the ocean.

4: OUTFITTED LOFT

Up the stairs is a long hallway that has a single door to the right.

During the operating hours, the door is not guarded and opens with ease.

During closed hours, one **Badlands devil** (see appendix B) guards the entrance. They let no one beyond the door unless they are charmed or frightened.

The main room in the loft is a temporary office with Badlands devils sitting inside. If the saloon is open, Azeraphis lounges around and occasionally speaks to other devils with *sending*. If the saloon is closed, Azeraphis writes contracts, drinks wine, smokes, and keeps a close eye on Violet, who sleeps on his couch.

When the characters first enter this room, Azeraphis immediately recognizes them. He commends their resolve in making it so far to take him down, but alas, he cannot allow them to get away with such treachery. Azeraphis cannot be dissuaded from fighting—that is, unless a character offers up their soul for a new contract. Azeraphis happily agrees and considers their rivalry forgotten, though the character who made the deal will descend to the Hells in the afterlife and be made an eternal soldier in Azeraphis's army.

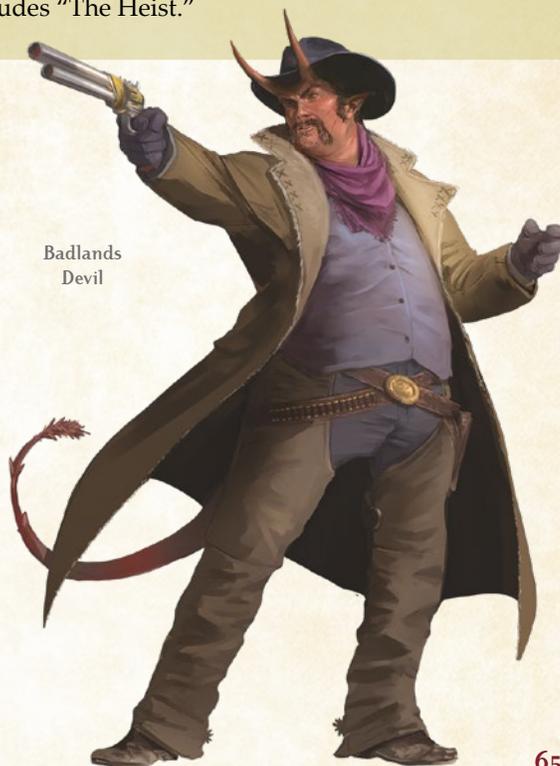
If **Violet** (see appendix B) is in the room, she joins in on the fight if the characters appear to be winning.

If Azeraphis is defeated, he crumbles to ash and exclaims, "No... no! She'll kill me!"

Treasure. Behind Azeraphis's desk is a very large safe, the opening of which either requires the key that Azeraphis keeps on his person at all times, or a successful DC 20 Dexterity check using thieves' tools. Inside are 346 soul contracts and 4,999 gp.

Conclusion

Whether the characters kill Eddie or Azeraphis and loot their treasure hoard, or they fall during the course of their mission, the adventure comes to a close here— though the journey doesn't have to end here. This saloon wasn't the villain's only seedy enterprise; perhaps they have another base of operations with a second-in-command who steps up as its new leader. Maybe the law hunts the characters down for trying to steal from the villain? The story can always continue on! But for the purposes of this adventure, thus concludes "The Heist."



Badlands
Devil



THEME TAGS

Western, showdown, old-timey.

CONTENT WARNING

Alcohol, description of blood, corpses, city destruction, explosions, firearms.

Description

The town of Bullthorne has been relentlessly attacked by a group of individuals who want to see it burned to the ground, or else with them as the leader. While the town has been resisting the attacks, morale is running low and most of the citizens are ready to give up. The party must defend the town of Bullthorne, save hostages from turncoat citizens, and put an end to the villains' tyranny once and for all.

Background

Your chosen villain changes why the town is being attacked.

If your chosen villain is Alonzo Alwood: The town of Bullthorne recently came across an exciting revelation: the mountain it is placed near is chock full of gold! Unfortunately, that type of information spreads quickly, and infamous outlaw Alonzo Alwood has caught word of it. Using his goblin henchmen, Alonzo intends to forcibly take control of Bullthorne and take the mine for himself, bringing in enough riches for him to make his gang the largest the land has ever seen.

If your chosen villain is Old Man Johnny: The town of Bullthorne has recently been set upon by demonic, bull-like creatures. These creatures have been loosed by Old Man Johnny, an elderly wizard who went insane studying demonology. In the grip of this madness, he's found himself desiring to know more about the demons he can summon, no matter the consequences for the town and people of Bullthorne. The only evidence he left behind of the summonings is the runic engravings on many of the buildings of Bullthorne.



Character Hooks and Motivations

To help involve your players and their characters more in the story, have each character answer the following question: *Why are you willing to step up and help save the town of Bullthorne?*

Alternatively, you can use the table below to give your players ideas for their characters' motivations in the adventure.

- 1 You were born in Bullthorne, and you will defend it to your last breath.
- 2 You just rolled into town after being hired as muscle for the bar, and it's your duty to protect it.
- 3 You are a protege of the sheriff, one of his newest deputies.
- 4 If the villain is Alonzo Alwood: One of your parents was a bounty hunter who turned up dead by his hand. You're going to get your revenge, whether it kills you or not.
- 5 If the villain is Old Man Johnny: You've heard rumors of demonic activity in the town of Bullthorne, and you've come to rid it of such evils.
- 6 You're a prisoner in the Bullthorne jail, and this task will pay off your bail.

Villains

Alonzo Alwood

(Villain Option #1)

All know Alonzo Alwood by his curly black mustache and large, stark white hat. After his many years as an outlaw, his face has started to show its age, if only slightly, and his hair has receded on him, making the curly mustache the only hair on his head. Known for his goblin henchmen and quick draw, Alonzo wants control of Bullthorne for its newly-opened gold mine, as a way to get rich and to recruit even more to work under him.

Old Man Johnny

(Villain Option #2)

Bullthorne lies on demon-cursed land, and demons periodically appear out of thin air to attack the citizens. The demons go back to their home plane upon dying, so their only goal is to cause destruction. Old Man Johnny, an old wizard who went crazy studying demonology, is the only person in town with a connection to the demons, upon whose death the curse might be broken.

The Calm Before the Storm

(Adventure #1)

Synopsis

The party comes into town and discovers an attack on Bullthorne is imminent. They must convince the townspeople to provide whatever assistance they can to hold off the villain and his henchmen.

Introduction

When you are ready to begin the adventure, read the following flavor text:

“You step into one of the largest buildings in Bullthorne, a dusty old town that is seemingly empty. Swinging open the doors of this bar, you find yourself faced with the citizens of Bullthorne, fear in their eyes. In the back of the room is a large counter, reaching almost the entire length of the building, and behind it a tiefling woman inquisitively watches you while cleaning a mug. All but one table in this room is taken, and you hear loud footsteps on the wood floor as a dwarven man makes his way towards you.”

The male dwarf approaching the party is Bullthorne’s mayor. The mayor is in his mid-20s and dressed in a fairly nice suit and hat. His name is Bogar. He’s searching for individuals who can help the town against the upcoming attack and requests the characters’ assistance.

Bogar provides the characters with the following information:

- Bullthorne has been getting attacked every week for the last month, and is just barely holding back the aggressors. The people that still seem intent on holding their ground are the bartender, Zelia; the gunsmith, Adelaide Clark; the doctor, Hogan; and the sheriff, Lawrence Waters.
- Most in the town have given up hope that it can be saved, and some have even begun to pack up to leave after this upcoming attack.
- Bogar offers the party 50 gp each for helping push back the attack on the town.

If your chosen villain is Alonzo, Bogar shares the following information:

- The attack is commenced by goblin outlaws, a telltale sign that the notorious Alonzo Alwood, famed for his quick shot and goblin underlings, is behind it.

If your chosen villain is Old Man Johnny, the mayor shares the following information:

- Nobody really knows why, but demonic bulls seem to appear almost as if out of nowhere lately. Some citizens recently reported seeing carvings in some of the stones by the hotel that look demonic, and they have figured out that the markings gradually light up when an attack is imminent. (These carvings are currently lit.)

The party can go to the few workers that stayed at their places of business to convince them to help defend Bullthorne, though the mayor warns them that they don’t have much time.

Once the party has visited two of the four potential allies described below, begin the “Face Off” encounter, regardless of whether or not the characters convinced anyone to help.

SER NOMINUS NOTE

With the battle looming, the party basically has enough time to try to convince two of the four people to help them—so make those choices count!

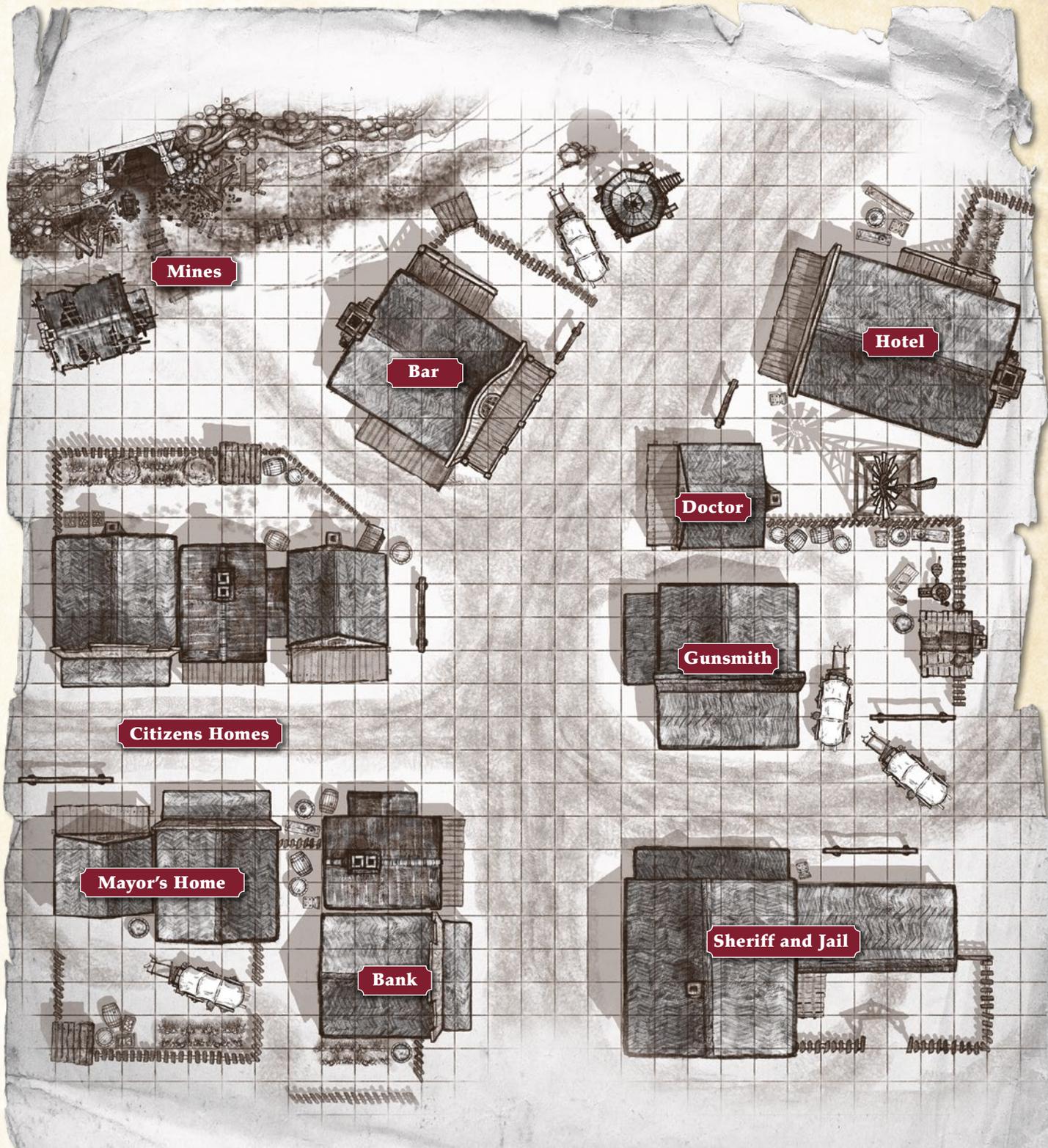
The Bartender

“The bartender nods to you as you approach her. ‘Howdy, what can I do for y’all?’ she asks as she cleans yet another mug, her golden eyes inspecting you as you approach.”

The bartender, who goes only by **Zelia** (see appendix B), is a young tiefling woman with soft purple skin. She has golden eyes and small, ram-like horns that protrude from her forehead. She stands around 5’8” tall and is dressed in common western dress: a light blue long-sleeved button-down shirt, sleeves rolled up to the elbow; well-fitting blue jeans; and brown boots. She regards the party as just another group of upstarts getting in over their heads, but she is open to hearing what they have to say. A successful DC 14 Charisma (Persuasion or Intimidation) check will convince her to aid the party. If the characters do convince Zelia to help them fight the bandits, she will provide each of them with one *enchanted whiskey* (see appendix A).

The Sheriff’s Office

“This office is a small, square room, built from dark wood planks. There is a small window beside the swinging door, allowing the sheriff to see whoever might be entering before they do, and a large wooden desk towards the back of the room. Behind the desk, a set of keys hangs from a nail driven into the wood. An opening to the right reveals a larger room, holding three jail cells, all empty at the moment. Behind the desk, sitting on a chair, is the town sheriff.”



Mines

Bar

Hotel

Doctor

Gunsmith

Citizens Homes

Mayor's Home

Bank

Sheriff and Jail

1 square = 10ft

Bullthorne City

(If one of the party members used the “sheriff’s protege” hook, the sheriff regards them as they would a respected student.) The town sheriff is **Lawrence Waters** (see appendix B), an aged human man with short, well-kept grey hair and a large grey beard. He approaches the party with a bit of apprehension, as he’s been fighting against this threat for a while and has been getting closer to losing each time. He’s close to giving up on saving the town. If the party convinces Lawrence to help them fight the bandits, he will fight alongside them as an NPC, using his stat block. The sheriff requires the party to prove that they are willing to fight to the last breath, as he believes they will fail. They can convince him of this by succeeding a DC 12 Charisma skill check of each member’s choice. If at least half of the party succeeds, the sheriff will assist in the fight.

SER NOMINUS NOTE

Give the party a chance to explain what they will say to the sheriff with their Charisma check to convince him, but don’t require it. Not every player is going to be able to come up with something quick and witty off the top of their heads, but if the Charisma skill makes sense, then allow them to make the roll.

Adelaide
Clark



The Doctor’s Office

“Stepping into this building, you find yourself faced with an oddly pristine front counter. Behind the counter is a single chair, with various doctors’ tools hanging on the wall beside it. ‘One moment,’ you hear a gruff voice say from behind the counter, before a male half-orc rises up from behind it, holding a hammer in his hands. ‘Okay, what can I do for you?’”

The half-orc behind the counter is the town doctor, Hogan. He is a middle aged half-orc with short black hair, sprinkled with grey. He approaches the party with a firm kindness. If the party convinces the doctor to help them fight the bandits, he will provide them with a medical kit. This medical kit can be used, as an action, to bring an unconscious creature back up to 1 hit point. To convince the doctor to assist, the party must show that they can properly use the medical kit. This requires a successful DC 12 Wisdom (Medicine) check from one of the party members, to show that they have a skill in the medical arts.

The Gunsmith’s Shop

“As you enter the gunsmith’s shop, you find yourself in a small wooden workshop. Set up less like a store and more like a building space, there are scraps of metal and bare wood lying about, alongside a table covered with various metalworking tools. Currently sitting at the table, carving into a block of wood, is an elven woman, the tip of her left ear missing, face scarred. She looks up at you and nods. ‘Haven’t seen your faces here before,’ she says. ‘Friend or foe?’”

Adelaide Clark (see appendix B) is the town gunsmith, a rifle-wielding half-elven woman. She stands at 5’6” and has medium-length black hair. She wears a light-brown leather duster over a grey shirt and light-blue pants. On the left side of her face, she has a scar reaching up from her left cheek to her left ear, the tip of which seems to have been cut off by whatever caused the scar. She regards the party with curiosity, as she’s looking for that extra thing Bullthorne needs to be able to finally rid the town of its issues. If the party convinces the gunsmith to help them defend Bullthorne, she will offer to provide cover fire for the party while they fight. Adelaide will ask the party to show that they are skilled in combat. Each member of the party must make a DC 13 skill check of their choice to show their prowess. If half or more of the characters succeed, the gunsmith will help.

SER NOMINUS NOTE

Have the party describe what they do with their check to show off their combat ability! This is a perfect opportunity to allow your players to express their characters in their own way, by asking what skill they want to use and having them give you a basic description of what their character is doing with that skill.

The Face Off

If your chosen villain is Alonzo Alwood, read the following text:

“As you exit, you see a crossbow bolt fly past your face and embed itself in the wood of the building behind you. In the streets, facing you and reloading its weapon, is a goblin. As you ready your weapons, three more catch up to their companion and line up, ready to end you.”

If your chosen villain is Old Man Johnny, read the following text:

“As you exit, you step toward your next location—and chaos suddenly ensues. The sound of demons rampaging through the town echoes down the streets, and you are beset by four bull-like creatures, their red bodies offset by a flowing orange mane, almost as if they themselves are on fire.”

The fight in the middle of the town involves the party and any of their allies who have agreed to fight alongside them. Begin combat with the players near the building that they most recently stepped out of, and the opponents scattered along the road they're on.

If your villain is Alonzo Alwood: four **goblin outlaws** (see appendix B) stand in their way. The party notices that the goblins have set up TNT crates next to some of the buildings along the road, and must make sure they don't get set off while fighting. Pick four locations alongside the road the party is on—this is where the TNT is located. The goblins have not yet prepared the fuses for the explosion, but if they lose more than half of their hit points, they will use their turn to move towards a TNT crate and attempt to blow it up themselves, sacrificing themselves for the cause. If a goblin starts its turn next to a TNT crate, they make it explode. Any creature within 20 feet of the explosion takes 1d4 fire damage and 1 bludgeoning damage, and any building immediately adjacent to the explosion is destroyed.

If your villain is Old Man Johnny: four **Bullthorne demons** (see appendix B) run at the group. Behind the demons, there appear to be two large red portals, with runic chalk sketched underneath them.

The portals' initiative count is 20. Whenever there are fewer than three Bullthorne demons in combat and it is the portals' turn, one additional Bullthorne demon appears in a location within 5 feet of either portal. The portal can be destroyed by using an action to wipe away the runic chalk underneath it.

After defeating the invading force, the party is unable to find Bogar. If they search the town for him, they find him held hostage in his own home.

If your villain is Alonzo Alwood: two **goblin outlaws** (see appendix B) hold their position inside of the house. The goblins will attack the party from inside the building, through the windows.

SER NOMINUS NOTE

If you're confused on how surprise works, just remember: a character cannot move or take actions during the first round of combat.

If your villain is Old Man Johnny: two **Bullthorne demons** (see appendix B) ram their horns into the mayor's home, attempting to break in and kill him. The demons are unaware of the characters and are considered surprised unless the characters actively make themselves known.

After the minions (be they goblin or demon) are defeated, the mayor hesitantly leaves his home.

If you would like to end the adventure here, use the following: Bogar thanks the party for saving him, and for their work defending the town. He gives the party their reward of 50 gp each and offers them a round of drinks.

If you would like to continue on to part 2, "Internal Strife," use the following: Bogar thanks the party for saving him, and for their work defending the town. He offers to buy the party a round of drinks, and sends a deputy to retrieve the rest of the reward. While the party is enjoying drinks with the mayor, the deputy returns—with the promised 50 gp for each party member, but also with dire news: Some of the townspeople have turned against the good of the city and are holding other citizens hostage.



Bullthorne Demon



Internal Strife

(Adventure #2)

Synopsis

While the party was defending the town from the attack, turncoats (townies loyal to the villain) from inside Bullthorne kidnapped other citizens and are holding them in two different locations. The party must decide which group to help and send remaining lawmen (a couple deputies and the sheriff, if they helped the party originally) to the other location. The two locations are the hotel and the mine. The hotel is safer, as the mine has plenty of dynamite that the villains may use to create traps, but if the deputies go to the mine, they are in much more danger.

Introduction

After defending the town from the demons/outlaws, the mayor of Bullthorne offers to buy them a drink as thanks. As they return to the bar to get their drinks, a sheriff's deputy alerts the party that minions have kidnapped citizens during the attack, and requests their assistance. The lawmen can go into one of the two locations where the hostages are kept, but not into both of them at the same time. They offer the party a custom-built lightning rifle (see below) to help bring these villains to justice. The deputies will go to whichever location the party doesn't choose.

The hotel is slightly safer. The turncoats are holed up in the attic, after having knocked out the hotelier.

The party must climb up to the attic of the hotel and save the hostages.

The mines are more straightforward, but much more dangerous. The turncoats are holed up in the large man-made cave in the back of the mine, and have stolen TNT, intent on blowing the mine up should the situation get too dicey.

Lightning rifle. This rifle appears as any other weapon, at first. However, the rubberized stock and modified barrel allow it to fire bursts of electricity instead of regular ammunition. Once per day, a player may fire a 5-foot-wide line of lightning at a creature it can see within 60 feet of itself. The target must make a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw, taking 2d8 lightning damage on a failed save, or half as much on a success. Any creature in the line between the rifle and the target must also succeed on the saving throw, or take 1d8 lightning damage.

The Hotel

1: THE HOTEL LOBBY

"You enter into the hotel's dimly-lit lobby, a respite from the dust and unyielding heat of the outdoors. Rays of sunlight creep in through the slits of the blinds, casting patches of light on the well-worn wooden floor. The lanterns dimly flicker to illuminate the darker corners of the room, tables empty of any patrons. An eerie silence is only disrupted by the creaking of old floorboards. On the counter, slumped over with a crossbow still loosely grasped in his limp hand, is a human, the back of his head red with drying blood. Even in the dim light of the room, you can make out the slow rise and fall of his chest."

This room appears to be cleaned out, outside of a few tables, the front counter, and the unconscious form of the hotelier, Kimley Jim. He was caught by surprise when the turncoats burst in, and was smashed over the head with a bottle before he could draw his crossbow. The party can stop his bleeding with a successful DC 12 Wisdom (Medicine) check, and can wake him up with any form of healing. If they wake him up, he expresses gratitude to the party in a deep, gruff voice. He tells them that before he lost consciousness, he saw people being dragged up to the second floor, but not much else. If the party attempts to stealth upstairs, they have disadvantage due to the shattered remains of the bottle smashed over the hotelier's head. Any character with a passive Perception of 12 or higher will notice the broken glass—and, if noticed, the glass can be cleared away before stealthing.

2: THE HOTEL SECOND FLOOR

“As you climb up the squeaking stairs, a long hall opens up before you. Three closed doors line the sides of the hall, the floorboards worn by the coming and going of patron after patron. Down the middle lies a decently kept carpet, lining the path towards the next set of wooden stairs to the next floor.”

This hallway appears to be untouched, though if the party succeeds a DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) check, they note that the carpet has run up on itself and is folded over carelessly in places, as if someone was dragged across it. They also notice that the two central doors appear to be ever so slightly open. If the

party attempts to pass those rooms without checking what's inside, they are attacked by a hidden **turncoat** (see appendix B for the outlaw turncoat and demon turncoat stat blocks). If the turncoat is not noticed before they attack, the characters are surprised.

If the lawmen went to the mines before the party, they managed to knock out this turncoat before the party arrived, but were bested by the turncoats in the attic. If this is the case, the lawmen's unconscious forms are shoved in the barrels in the attic.

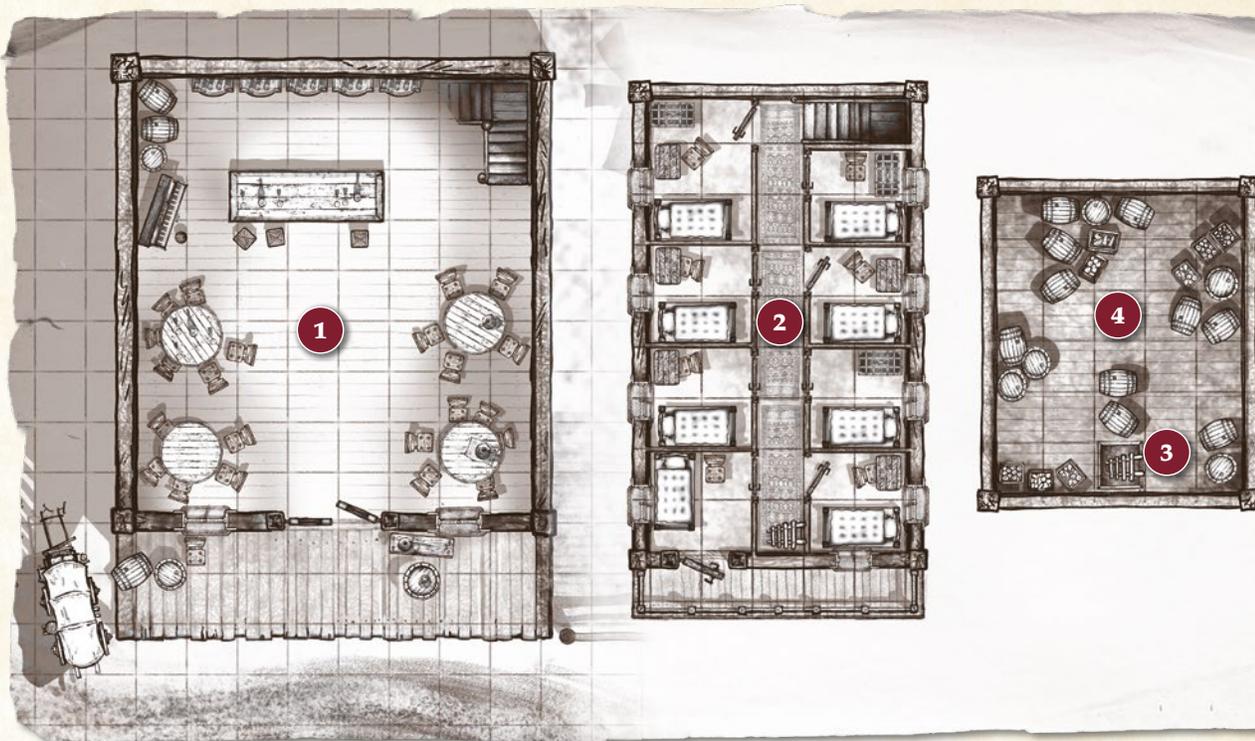
SER NOMINUS NOTE

If you're confused on how surprise works, just remember: a character won't do anything on their first turn because they're surprised.

3: THE STAIRS TO ATTIC

“As your group goes to climb the next set of stairs, you come across a trap door, the lock carelessly broken off.”

The turncoats have attached an alarm bell to the trapdoor that can be noticed with a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) or Wisdom (Perception) check. If noticed, it can be disabled with a successful DC 13 Dexterity check using thieves' tools. If the trap is not disabled before the characters open the trap door, the sound of a ringing bell is heard, alerting the turncoats.



4: THE ATTIC

"The attic of the hotel is full of scattered sheets and knocked over barrels. Several figures stand near the middle of the room, the lower halves of their faces obscured by worn bandanas. In the corner of the room is a bound individual, a burlap bag pulled over their head."

If the party successfully finds and disarms the trap, use the following:

"The captors seem to be in quiet conversation, unaware of your presence. Several barrels provide you with some cover as you enter."

If the party does not find and disarm the trap, use the following:

"The captors turn to look towards the trap door, their conversation coming to an abrupt stop as they draw their weapons."

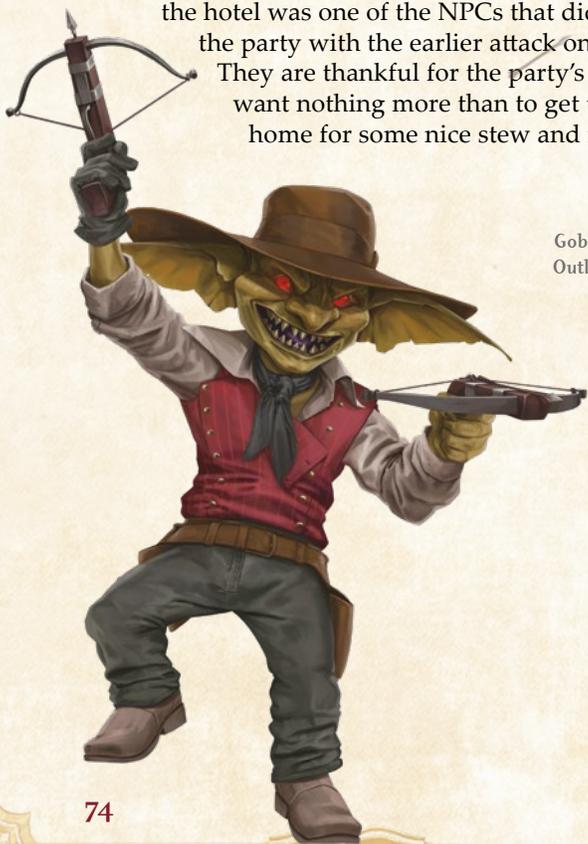
If your chosen villain is Alonzo Alwood, the party finds themselves faced with three **outlaw turncoats** (see appendix B).

If your chosen villain is Old Man Johnny, the party finds themselves faced up against three **demon turncoats** (see appendix B).

If the party has not triggered the bell trap, and half or more succeed on a Dexterity (Stealth) check with the DC being equal to the enemies' passive Perception, they are able to sneak in and potentially attack the now-surprised turncoats. After clearing out any enemies in the room, they find that the hostage in

the hotel was one of the NPCs that did not help the party with the earlier attack on the town.

They are thankful for the party's help, and want nothing more than to get to their home for some nice stew and rest.



Goblin
Outlaw

THE MINES



The Mines

1: THE ENTRANCE TO THE MINE

"As the lawmen race to the hotel, you find yourselves looking at the opening of a mine shaft. The cavern quickly descends into darkness, a lantern flickering from deeper within. A box labeled 'TNT' lies open and empty near the entrance, foreboding. A few piles of rubble are gathered to the side of the opening, the grey quartz dust lining the ground. There's a ramshackle shed off to your right, door ajar, as the hinges seem to be broken."

The entrance to this mine is a man-made carving into the side of this rock formation. While not much can be found at the entrance, a successful DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check on the area reveals that a small lock on the crate of TNT appears to have been forcibly opened.

2: EQUIPMENT ROOM

“The lightest of tugs finally breaks the damaged hinges, leaving the door to fall to the side, revealing the interior of the equipment shed. Several boxes of tools line the haphazardly-installed shelves, some empty, some with a few broken items inside. A singular ray of light catches the specks of dust that float through the air.”

The inside of this shed appears to hold equipment useful for surviving in a mine. Inspection of the wall notes a shoddily drawn map of the inside of the cave, marking a room deeper in as the primary mining location for the moment. If the party chooses to rifle through the rest of the materials inside the shed, they find the following: two lanterns with no oil, an empty oil tin, five miners’ hats, two pickaxes, and three waterskins.

3: THE MINE SHAFT PATH

“As you enter the passageway, you are engulfed by the cool and dusty air of the mine, the stone untouched by the sun. The quiet echo of shifting gravel underneath you can be heard as you follow the barely-lit path down. A few of the lanterns seem to be drenched in water, dripping down in small puddles below them.”

While the turncoats were preparing to set up the TNT trap in room 4, they accidentally spilled the oil out of their flasks leading to it. If the party notices the oil with a successful DC 16 Intelligence (Investigation) check, they can light it on fire to light a path to the turncoats’ room, and set off the TNT. Setting off the TNT in this way will kill both the turncoats and the hostage, causing a partial collapse of the mine.

4: HOSTAGE CAVE ROOM

“A large, man-made cave opens before you, several alcoves dug out as the beginning of branches for further expansion. Several notches seem to be drilled out as slots for mining explosives. Open boxes labelled ‘TNT’ are scattered about, their contents visibly piled in the four walls of the cave. Near one, you notice a bound figure with a burlap sack pulled over their head. A rope seems to tie them to the dangerous materials. On the other side of the cave, a comfortable distance away from the dynamite, the low light of a single lantern illuminates a group of masked humanoids, talking quietly.”

If your chosen villain is Alonzo Alwood, the party encounters three **outlaw turncoats** (see appendix B).

If your chosen villain is Old Man Johnny, the party encounters three **demon turncoats** (see appendix B).

In this expansive, man-made cave, the party notices the turncoats and the one hostage. When the characters enter the room, a turncoat will use their

action to push down the TNT trigger, lighting four separate fuses spread across the mine. The criminals attempt to escape while the fuses are burning. The fuses can be put out with an action. If the fuses are not put out by the end of the third round, each creature in the room takes 1d6 bludgeoning damage and 1d6 fire damage per lit fuse.

If the lawmen went to the mines before the party, the turncoats appear already slightly injured from the previous fight and start the combat with 3 fewer hit points than normal. If this is the case, the lawmen’s unconscious forms are shoved into the back of the cave, behind the hostage.

Returning to the Town Center

When the party completes one of the two areas and returns to the town center, they find that the lawmen have not yet returned from the location they were sent to. If the party hasn’t decided to do so themselves, Bogar approaches and asks them to go to the location the lawmen went to investigate, as he is concerned that they themselves have failed and been captured.

Conclusion

As the party returns to Bullthorne, they are met by the mayor.

If you want the adventure to end here, the party is either thanked for their service to the town and granted the lightning rifle (see appendix A), or are kicked out by the lawmen for rescuing no one and causing further destruction.

If you want to continue to part 3, “Battle in the Gorge,” the characters advance to level 3, then read the following text:

“You turn quickly as the doors of the bank burst open, dust and sand tossed up into the air by the group that rapidly vacates the building. Each figure carries with them a large sack, filled to the brim. Even from where you stand, you can hear the jingling of coins. Without time for you to react, the thieves make their getaway, the leader jumping on the back of a horse, his goons close behind. He digs in his heels; the mount rears with a squeal and flees toward the edge of town, flanked by the villain’s allies.”



Battle in the Gorge

(Adventure #3)

Synopsis

The villain takes off after robbing the bank. The party, if they so choose, gives chase on horseback and attempts to stop the villain and his minions. This results in a standoff in the gorge, where the characters face the villain once and for all.

Introduction

As the villain bursts out of the bank, the sheriff and gunsmith (or a deputy if both are dead) ride up on horses, with a few free for the party. If the characters choose to chase down the villain, the villain's underlings try to slow the party. Have each party member roll initiative. On the backs of horses, they move at the same speed every turn.

SER NOMINUS NOTE

No need to keep track of how much each creature moves, just detail the distance between—unless a creature decides to stop moving or jumps off their horse. In that case, have them fall behind at a rate equal to the speed everyone is moving, which would be 60 feet per round.

If the villain is Alonzo Alwood, he sends two **goblin outlaws** (see appendix B) on horseback to slow down the party.

If the villain is Old man Johnny, he sends two **Bullthorne demons** (see appendix B) to slow down the party.

The Gorge Entrance

"As you break through the tall-grassed plains, you come up to a large gorge, a wide gap of rock and dust sitting between two massive, jagged stone faces that loom above you. As you take in the size of the formations around you, you note tracks leading into the gorge."

If your chosen villain is Alonzo Alwood, read the following text:

"Suddenly, a bolt lands at your feet, and as you look up, you see goblins peeking out from behind the rocks on the gorge, firing down upon you."

If your chosen villain is Old Man Johnny, read the following text:

"The distinct sound of a bull's snort can be heard from your left, as a pack of demons charge from behind a rock, attempting to gore the party."

If the party decides to stealth before coming up to the gorge, read the following text:

"As you quietly investigate the clues before you, you swear you can hear the sound of shuffling behind some rocks in front of you."

The gorge cuts between two large rock walls, rising 40 feet above the characters' current location.

If your chosen villain is Alonzo Alwood: Stationed on top of the gorge are three **goblin outlaws** (see appendix B) firing down on the characters. Approaching from behind the party are five more goblin outlaws, who flank the assault.

If your chosen villain is Old Man Johnny: three **Bullthorne demons** (see appendix B) run down the gorge. Charging from behind the party are five more Bullthorne demons, flanking the assault.

The sheriff, lawmen, or any friendly NPCs the party has with them call out, "Run ahead! We'll hold them off!"

The characters can run ahead without being attacked by any of the minions, though they could still stay behind and help their friends. If they stay behind, however, the villain will have enough time to prepare and have the upper hand against the party.

Inside the Gorge

"You feel a draft of cool air as you step into the gorge. Rocks around you reveal nothing as you peek around them, and as you step forward, you hear a voice call out to you."

If your chosen villain is Alonzo Alwood, read the following text:

"'You've come all this way to stop me, the great Alonzo Alwood! I'm impressed, if not annoyed. Bullthorne will be mine, and this gold will be the key.' As he says this, Alonzo motions to a large bag of gold. 'Now turn around and be on your way. If you fight, I won't hesitate to blow open the lock instead.'"

If your chosen villain is Old Man Johnny, read the following text:

"'Ah, you've come. I must say thank you for your work here. Seeing my demons in action has helped me make much progress in my—ahem—research. If you'll excuse me, I'm taking this gold to finish what I started.'"

Alonzo Alwood or **Old Man Johnny** attempts to stay where they are and fight off the party (see appendix B for more details on either villain). Their plan is to explode the TNT to collapse the walls of the gorge and get away. This blocks the party from following them.

Have the characters roll initiative. If the villain is not defeated by the end of the third round, the TNT explodes and the villain escapes. If the characters stayed behind to fight the minions in the gorge, they will instead only have until the end of the first round to stop the villain.

The TNT has an AC of 10, and if it takes any damage, it is set off early, surprising the villain and blowing them to bits. This also causes the rocks to fall, burying both the gold and the villain's corpse in the gorge. While not the best way to handle the situation, the town will accept it as the *only* way to end the villain's tyranny.

If your chosen villain is Alonzo Alwood, the party finds two auto-firing hand crossbows (see appendix A) on his person.

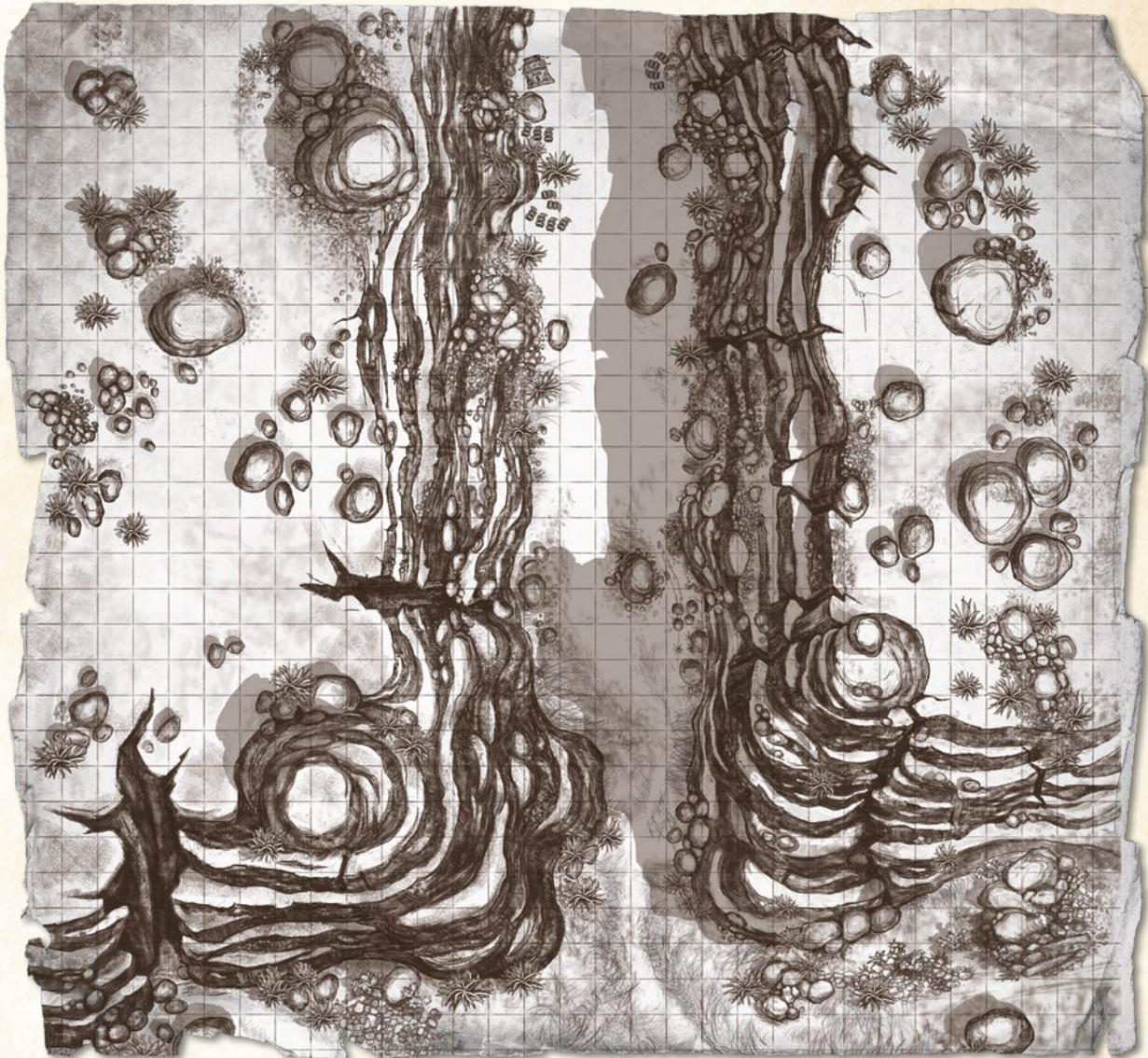
If your chosen villain is Old Man Johnny, the characters find a *staff of demonic summoning* (see appendix A) on his person, along with a *spell scroll of burning hands*, if he did not use it during the combat.

Conclusion

When the party returns to town, the sheriff (or deputy, if the sheriff is dead) thanks the party for their work in protecting Bullthorne, and tells them they are always welcome to stay as heroes of Bullthorne.

If your chosen villain is Alonzo Alwood: The party defeats the villain and saves the town, but learns of a greater threat through a calling card left behind in the bank by Alonzo Alwood. The card belongs to a Mr. Eddie Van Patten.

If your chosen villain is Old Man Johnny: The party defeats the villain and saves the town, but learns of others studying demonology with the intent of destroying the world.





Wild Wild Wilderness

THEME TAGS

Western, journey, wilderness.

CONTENT WARNING

Starvation, disease, injuries, animal attacks, animal hunting, skeleton, petrification, cannibals.

Description

A land far to the west is said to contain a great treasure. Adventurers are needed to set out and recover these riches...if they can survive the journey. The party will have to travel across plains, canyons, and mountain passes, all while facing encounters, creatures, and the hardships of surviving in the wild wilderness.

Background

The party begins their adventure in the Sovereign City, a place ripe with opportunity. They may have different reasons to travel west, though they have all heard the rumors of the riches that can be found there. It is here in the city that the party can stock up on the supplies and equipment to take with them on the rest of the journey. A retired Trail-Master, Kit Boone, gathers the characters together to form a traveling caravan. Kit himself, however, is too old to continue making the trek, so he is only able to provide guidance, advice, and warnings about the journey ahead.



Character Hooks and Motivations

To help better involve your players and their characters in the story, have each character answer the following question: *Why does your character want to leave civilized life for the new, wild frontier?*

Alternatively, you can use the table below to give your players ideas for their characters' motivations in the adventure.

- 1 You hail from a poor background. Starting a new life out west may give you the chance you need to improve your station.
- 2 You are a merchant, interested in forging trade routes between the settled regions and the Golden Territories.
- 3 You are an experienced outdoorsman. The challenge of the trail is what drives you.
- 4 A family member set out west, but never returned. You mean to find what happened to them.
- 5 You are a treasure hunter. The rumored riches of the Golden Territories are something you can't pass up.
- 6 You are an outlaw, running from the law. Getting some distance from civilization may give you your freedom.

Villains

Rather than creatures or humanoids, the wilderness's villains are the environments themselves, where the party has to battle the elements in order to reach their destinations. The different "villains" will shift how the various encounters and events play out. Choose the climate you want your party to face throughout the journey, or mix and match between adventures!

Drylands

(Villain Option #1)

The landscape is dry and hot as the party journeys west, crossing over deserts and prairies. Food and water are harder to gather naturally, though when a source is found, its bounty is a beautiful sight to behold.

Frostlands

(Villain Option #2)

The party must face icefields and snowy forests as they journey west via a frozen wilderness. Water is easy to gather—food, however, is much harder to find.

Wilderness

Trekking Rules

Traveling across rural and wild terrain is often one of the most important—and just as often overlooked—challenges an adventuring party will have to face. Whether they are simply making their way through farmlands from one city to another, crossing rugged wilderness, or scaling mountain peaks, the journey itself can be a mighty adventure worthy of a bard's tales.

The traveling rules that follow not only apply to this adventure, but have been designed to apply to any setting a Game Master may want to use them in. These rules are a guide, to be used and modified to your setting and gameplay needs.

Any journey can be broken down into three stages: "Settin' Off," "Encounters," and "Reaching the Destination."

SER NOMINUS NOTE

Quick Reference! Here's a quick summary of the Wilderness Trekking rules:

- The players decide what jobs each person will take as a part of the trek.
- The players decide their route.
- The GM decides how dangerous the route will be, using the Danger Tier table.
- The GM determines the climate, or randomly rolls for it.
- The GM determines the number of encounters and resolves them one by one.
- The GM then rolls on the "End of the Road" table to determine how the trek ends.

Each of these rules will be described in detail in their sections below.

Settin' Off

The first step to any adventure is deciding on a destination and route. Once the players have discussed and decided on this, it is up to the Game Master to determine the length and difficulty of the trek. The party then must decide, before they depart, on what jobs they want to fulfill during the trek.

Jobs

Every journey requires certain tasks to be completed in order for smooth and problem-free travel. The party must decide who will take on which tasks before setting

off for their trek. The jobs, their descriptions, and their associated skills and abilities are as follows:

Trail-Master. Trail-Masters use Wisdom to lead the party through the wilderness. They are in charge of everything concerning the route and physical travel of the group.

Hunter. Hunters use Dexterity to hunt animals for food and rations. They can also act as scouts for the party. Once a day, a Hunter can make a DC 13 Dexterity (Stealth) check, obtaining two rations' worth of food on a success.

Forager. Foragers use Intelligence to find edible plants and mushrooms, and to locate sources of water for the group. Once a day, a Forager can make a DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) or (Nature) check, gathering one ration's worth of food and discovering a source of freshwater on a success.

Quartermaster. Quartermasters use Constitution to manage the party's supplies and equipment, ensuring that everyone has what they need for the journey.

Envoy. Envoys use Charisma to be the face of the group, managing social interactions while also keeping the party in good spirits.

Guard. Guards use Strength to defend the party, ensuring that they aren't robbed by bandits or ambushed by predators.

Multiple party members can fill each job. Any checks necessary to each particular job get +2 for every additional character who assists in making them. If no one takes a specific job, then the corresponding check automatically fails.

SER NOMINUS NOTE

The lie doesn't have to be perfect! So long as it suffices as a reasonable excuse, allow any characters to attempt that Charisma (Deception) check.

Route Length

Before setting out on their trek, the party must choose their route. Once the route has been chosen, the GM determines how long it will take, along with the number of possible encounters. If the length of a trek increases during its duration, two encounters are added to the total. If the length of the trek decreases during the journey, two encounters are removed from the total.

Short. Less than a week of travel, with 1d4 encounters.

Medium. A week to two weeks of travel, with 2d4 encounters.

Long. Three or more weeks of travel, with 3d4 encounters.

During the "Encounters and Events" stage, the length of the trek may be modified by adding days to the travel time. If 5 additional days accumulate, the trek's duration may be raised to the next level,

to a maximum of a “long” journey, with additional encounters added. (Example: If a “short” trek has 5 days added to its duration, it increases to a “medium” trek, and the GM may roll an additional four encounters.)

SER NOMINUS NOTE

These trek rules do not follow the party from day to day. Instead, the encounters occur throughout the period of time that the party travels. While you can still track every day, you don't have to.

Difficulty

After the length of the journey has been determined, the GM should determine its difficulty. You can decide for yourself, or you may consult your map (The difficulty and length are pre-determined for this adventure later in this chapter). Whichever area the characters will be trekking through the longest determines the difficulty. The difficulty also determines the DC for all checks made during encounters. Refer to these DCs when running encounters.

Peaceful. The terrain is easy to navigate, familiar to the Trail-Master, or well mapped out—or it contains frequent settlements and outposts. All encounter DCs are 10.

Average. The terrain isn't too difficult to navigate, broken up by geographical features such as rocks, small valleys, or forests. The Trail-Master may have some knowledge of the terrain, having traveled through it before, or know of a few landmarks. There are fewer outposts in these areas, settlements becoming few and far between. All encounter DCs are 12.

Strenuous. These areas are unfamiliar to the Trail-Master, with no maps or knowledge. The terrain itself is difficult to traverse, being filled with deep forests, deserts, and other areas of wilderness. The only settlements in this area are small outposts. All encounter DCs are 15.

Intense. These areas are extremely difficult to traverse, made up of high mountains, deep canyons, dark swamps, etc. There are almost no settlements in these areas. All encounter DCs are 18.

Bastions

The world is dangerous, and camping out on the open road doesn't always provide the best sleep. Trekking in the wilderness should feel long and tiring. Spells and abilities will have to be strategically used. Because of this, the characters cannot gain the benefits of a long rest while trekking. They can only take a long rest once they've reached a location deemed a “Bastion.” Bastions are places that have access to water, food, safety, and comfort. The characters can, however, still benefit from a short rest each night.

SER NOMINUS NOTE

Often, a journey will be about traveling between Bastions, such as moving between cities. Who wants to be out on the open road for weeks? Sounds exhausting! Especially for these creaky old bones.

Climate and Weather

Once the party sets out on their trek, choose the climate, or roll a d20 and consult the table below.

1	Heavy storms
2-4	Extreme temperature
5-9	Less than savory
10-14	Average skies
15-19	Fine weather
20	Perfect climate

Heavy Storms. All members of the party gain one level of exhaustion.

Extreme Temperature. The difficulty level for all terrain escalates by one level. (If “average,” then it's now “strenuous” instead, etc.)

Less than Savory. All ability checks made during the journey are made with disadvantage.

Average Skies. No change!

Fine Weather. The terrain difficulty is considered one level easier. (If “strenuous,” then it's now “average” instead, etc.)

Perfect Climate. All ability checks made during the journey are made with advantage.



Supplies

Encounters

Throughout the journey, the party will be faced with challenges they will need to overcome. Sometimes, these challenges will need to be faced together, working as a team, or they may be solo, where a character with a specific job may have to deal with the event alone. The number of challenges depends on the length and difficulty of the journey.

SER NOMINUS NOTE

The Game Master should keep the result of this roll secret from the players, allowing them to experience the encounters naturally as they venture forth!

Roll a d20 for each encounter, or choose one yourself. The following table gives some possible encounters that can occur along the journey.

1	Lost the path	11	Downtrodden spirits
2	Empty lands	12	Infighting
3	Poisonous plants	13	Shortcut
4	Forgotten backpack	14	A hidden cache
5	Angry nature spirits	15	Delicious seasoning
6	Thieves in the night	16	Leading by example
7	This wasn't on the map...	17	A song for the road
8	Venison? ...Again?	18	A peaceful night
9	Everyone's thirsty	19	Friendly meeting
10	Can we take a break?	20	Ambush!

Lost the Path. Despite following the map, the trail the party is following disappears. The Trail-Master must make a Wisdom (Survival) check to find the trail again. On a failure, the trek's length increases by 1 day. If the check is failed by 5 or more, the number of encounters increases by one.

Empty Lands. The lands the party travels through appear to be devoid of wild game. When the Hunter makes their check to hunt for food, instead of finding any, they find the tracks of a predator. The party can decide to either fight these creatures for their meat, or go without finding rations. If they decide to fight, the party must fight three wolves (see appendix B, under "Whispers of Wispy Peak").

Poisonous Plants. One of the characters, chosen at random, has mistakenly eaten a poisonous mushroom instead of a regular one. The Forager must make an Intelligence check in order to craft an antitoxin. If they have access to an herbalism kit, they make this check with advantage. On a failure, the character suffers the effects of the poisoned condition until they complete a long rest.

Forgotten Backpack. It's only just now been discovered that during the commotion of packing up camp, a few pieces of equipment were left behind. The GM chooses 5 items at random to be missing from the party's inventory. The Quartermaster can decide to try to go back for these items, or to leave them behind. If they are left behind, they are lost. If the Quartermaster decides to go back for the missing equipment, have them make a Constitution (Athletics) check. On a success, they return with the items with no complications. On failure, finding the items takes longer than expected, and the trek length goes up by 1 day.

Angry Nature Spirits. While traveling through the wilderness, the party is suddenly beset by fey spirits. These spirits are upset that the party has intruded upon their territory. The Envoy can attempt to talk the spirits out of a fight with a Charisma (Persuasion or Intimidation) check. On a success, the spirits begrudgingly let the party pass through. On a failure, two **moss dryads** and one **sprite** attack the party (see appendix B, under "Shipwrecked!").

Thieves in the Night. In the middle of the night, the Guard notices a group of three bandits attempting to pilfer some of the party's equipment. The Guard can attempt to wrestle the items out of the thieves' hands with a Strength (Athletics) check, or scare them off with a Strength (Intimidation) check. On a failure, the thieves will attempt to run off with 5 of the most valuable items the party owns, chosen at random by the GM. The party can chase them down, in which case, they must fight three **Outlaw turncoats**. (see appendix B, under "Bulwarks of Bullthorne").

This Wasn't on the Map... The path ahead has become obstructed by a boulder, fallen tree, or other such hazard. The Trail-Master has to make a choice: attempt to get through the obstruction, or go around. Moving the obstruction requires the party to make a combined Strength (Athletics) check. If all of the party members succeed on this check, or all but one, the obstruction is moved and the characters may pass as normal. If two or more characters fail the check, then the obstruction is not moved, and the party must go around. If all of the characters fail the check, then each takes 1d6 bludgeoning damage as the obstruction falls back onto them. To go around, the Trail-Master must make a Wisdom (Perception) check to find a new path around the obstacle. However, this will add 1 day to their journey. If the check is failed by 5 or more, the number of encounters increases by one.

Venison? ...Again? The characters grow tired of eating the same cured meat every single day. The Hunter must make a Dexterity (Stealth) check to find food, but their DC 13 hunting check is increased by +1 for every level of difficulty of the journey. If the Hunter fails the check, then all of the characters gain a level of exhaustion.

Everyone's Thirsty. Water in this area has been hard to find. The Forager must make an Intelligence (Investigation) or (Nature) to find food, but their DC 13 foraging check is increased by +1 for every level of difficulty of the journey. If the Forager fails the check, then all of the characters suffer a level of exhaustion.

Can we Take a Break? After what feels like an extremely long day of travel, everyone is exhausted as they set up camp. The Quartermaster must make a Constitution check to assess everyone's needs and wants. On a failure, all of the characters suffer a level of exhaustion.

Downtrodden Spirits. After a day of arduous travel, the party sets up camp in a gloomy and grumpy mood. The Envoy must make a Charisma (Performance) check to lift everyone's spirits with a song, dance, or story, or with simple, friendly conversation. On a failure, all of the characters gain a level of exhaustion.

Infighting. After a long day of travel, tempers are running high, and a couple characters are close to coming to blows over a petty argument. The Guard must make a Strength (Intimidation) check to force the characters to stand down—otherwise, two characters, chosen either by the GM or by the party, must roll a d4, the result being one injury each from the Injury table in the “Additional Travel Rules” section of this adventure.

Shortcut. The Trail-Master may have found a possible shortcut to help the party along their path. The Trail-Master must make a Wisdom (Survival) check. On a success, the number of encounters the party faces on their trek is reduced by one.

A Hidden Cache. While out chasing game, the Hunter stumbles upon a hidden cache of supplies locked away. The Hunter must make a Dexterity check using sleight of hand or thieves' tools. On a success, have them roll a d20, and consult the table below for the result.

HIDDEN LOOT TABLE

1-4	1d4 rations
5-9	5d10 gp
10-14	3d4 gold bars, worth 50 gp each
15-19	A common wondrous magic item, GM's choice
20	A +1 weapon of any kind, GM's choice

Delicious Seasoning. During their search for herbs, the Forager stumbles upon a small bunch of spices. The Forager must make an Intelligence (Survival) check, or an Intelligence check using cook's utensils. On a success, all of the characters are relieved of one level of exhaustion. If a character does not have a level of exhaustion, then they gain 2d6 temporary hit points that last until the end of the trek.

Leading by Example. The Quartermaster is working

above and beyond what is asked of them, setting an example of efficiency and diligence. The Quartermaster must make a Constitution (Athletics) check. On a success, all of the characters are inspired by this display of hard work, and gain advantage on their next ability check.

A Song for the Road. At the end of the day, the party gathers around the campfire for some nightly entertainment from the Envoy. The Envoy must make a Charisma (Performance or Acrobatics) check. On a success, all of the characters remove one level of exhaustion. If a character does not have a level of exhaustion, then they gain 2d6 temporary hit points for the next 24 hours.

A Peaceful Night. During the night, the Guard ensures no threats disrupt the party's much-needed rest. The Guard must make a Strength (Perception) check. On a success, all of the characters remove one level of exhaustion. If each character does not have a level of exhaustion, then the End of the Road roll gains a +1 bonus.

Friendly Meeting. While traveling down the road, the party runs into another band of travelers. The GM rolls a d4. On a 1 or a 2, the other group is in good spirits and wishes the party luck on their journey, offering them supplies, and the characters gain advantage on their next ability check. On a 3 or a 4, the other group is injured and in need of assistance. The party can choose to give them some supplies, gaining disadvantage on their next ability check—but the End of the Road roll gains a +1 bonus.

Ambush! The party is attacked by a monster, or a group of bandits or beasts. The GM rolls a d20, consulting the table below for the result.

AMBUSH TABLE

4 (or less)	Three wolves (see appendix B, under “Whispers of Wispy Peak”).
5-9	Three Outlaw turncoats . (see appendix B, under “Bulwarks of Bullthorne”).
10-14	Three swarming nettle (see appendix B, under “The Sunderdome”).
15-19	Two ember elementals or two icicle elementals , depending on the terrain (see appendix B, under “the Sunderdome” for these creatures' stat blocks).
20	One sandstone worm or one white dragon hatchling , depending on the terrain (see appendix B, under “The Sunderdome” for these creatures' stat blocks).

SER NOMINUS NOTE

You can also make up your own encounters! These are just examples for you to use as a guide!

End of the Road

As the party arrives at their destination and reaches their journey's end, the GM must roll a d6 to determine what their overall mood and condition is. Each level of the trek's difficulty and length add a -1 to the roll, while each level of the climate adds a +1. If any character has any levels of exhaustion, a -1 modifier is added. If any character has temporary hit points, a +1 modifier is added.

PARTY CONDITION TABLE

1 (or less)	In despair
2	Exhausted
3	Sore and grumpy
4	Content
5	At peace
6 (or more)	Determined

In Despair. Party members have disadvantage on all rolls (of any kind) until they spend a day to recuperate. Recuperation, in this case, includes eating a filling meal, taking a bath, washing clothes, and getting a full night's sleep.

Exhausted. All party members gain a level of exhaustion.

Sore and Grumpy. All party members have disadvantage on all Charisma ability checks until they succeed on one.

Content. If a character has a level of exhaustion, they can remove it upon reaching their destination.

At Peace. All party members have advantage on all Charisma ability checks until they fail one.

Determined. All party members gain a point of Inspiration given by the GM (granting them advantage on one future attack roll, ability check, or saving throw of their choice).

Additional Travel Rules

In addition to the rules pertaining to events that occur in the base "Trekking Rules," this adventure has additional rules that alter the way the party travels across the wild wilderness. When the party sets off for their treks across the wilderness, the following rules apply:

- If your chosen villain is the Drylands, then the DC for checks used by the Hunter and Forager to find food is 18, but the yields are doubled. The trek's length is "medium," taking about two weeks to complete, and the difficulty is "moderate."
- If your chosen villain is the Frostlands, then the Forager doesn't have to roll to find water. However, the food yields for both the Hunter and Forager are halved. The trek's length is "long," taking about four weeks to complete, and the difficulty is "hard."
- Add a +2 to the number of encounters the party faces along the journey west. In addition, the trek also adds special encounters, the number of which is set in the adventure information. Roll a d6 for each event, and consult the table below for the result:

1-2	Injury
3	Wildfire or snowfire
4	Extreme heat or snowstorm
5	Quicksand or snow drifts
6	Sickness

Injury. Sometimes, through no fault on anyone's part, accidents happen and people get injured. Have the entire party make Dexterity saving throws. The character with the lowest result must roll a d4, sustaining an injury from the table below. This injury persists until the character takes a long rest, or until magically healed.

- 1 **You broke your leg.** Your speed is halved, and you have disadvantage on Dexterity checks.
- 2 **You broke your arm.** You can no longer hold an item with two hands, and can only hold a single object at a time.
- 3 **You broke a rib.** You cannot take reactions. In addition, whenever you take an action in combat, you must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw. On a failure, you lose the action.
- 4 **You have a concussion.** You have disadvantage on all Intelligence and Wisdom ability checks, and cannot cast any spells that require concentration.

Wildfire. If your chosen villain is the Drylands, then the party finds themselves having to outrun a quick-spreading wildfire, perhaps caused by a lightning strike or summoned by a fire elemental or pheonix. Have the characters roll initiative. The wildfire begins 70 feet from characters and moves 50 feet per round on initiative count 10. Characters caught by the flames must succeed



on a DC 16 Constitution saving throw or take 1d6 fire damage. The wildfire continues for 1d6 rounds, moving at a consistent pace towards the characters

Snowfire. If your chosen villain is the Frostlands, then the party finds themselves having to outrun a quick-spreading snowfire, perhaps caused by a magical effect on the land or summoned by an ice elemental. Have the party roll initiative. The snowfire begins 30 feet from the party and moves 40 feet per round on initiative count 10. Characters caught by the icy flames must succeed on a DC 16 Constitution saving throw or take 1d6 cold damage. The snowfire continues for 1d6 rounds, moving toward the party at a consistent pace.

Dust Storm. If your chosen villain is the Drylands, a dust storm is kicked up by the winds. All vision is obscured past 15 feet. The Trail-Master must make a DC 11 Wisdom (Survival) check to keep the party on the right course. On a failure, the party gets off track, and the length of the journey increases by 3 days. In addition, all characters must make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw. On a failure, they suffer 1d4 bludgeoning damage from the dust and debris in the air.

Snowstorm. If your chosen villain is the Frostlands, a snowstorm kicks up. All vision is obscured beyond 15 feet. The Trail-Master must make a DC 11 Wisdom (Survival) check to keep the party on the right course. On a failure, the party gets off track, and the length of the journey increases by 3 days. In addition, all characters must make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw, or suffer 1d4 cold damage from the icy winds.

Quicksand and Sinking Snow. The ground in this area is loose—sandy, if your chosen villain is the Drylands, or covered in loose snow, if your villain is the Frostlands. Creatures and equipment easily sink into the sand or snow. Each character must succeed on a DC 12 Strength saving throw, or else get stuck in the sinking ground, where they become restrained and begin to suffocate. A character who succeeds on the saving throw can attempt to rescue the stuck creature via a successful DC 14 Strength (Athletics) check, or a combined Strength score of 24. If the party has a land vehicle, the driver of that vehicle must instead make a DC 15 Wisdom check (adding their proficiency bonus if applicable), or else the vehicle gets stuck, and can only be recovered with a DC 20 Strength (Athletics) check or a combined strength score of 50.

Sickness. It is not uncommon for someone to become sick while on the trail. Have the party make a Constitution saving throw. The character with the lowest result must roll a d4, contracting one of the illnesses from the table below, unless the character is immune to disease. It takes a successful DC 13 Wisdom (Medicine) check to identify the disease by its symptoms. This illness persists until the disease is cured via the treatment described, or via a paladin's Lay on Hands. Most of the ingredients for these treatments can be purchased or found at occupied Bastions.

1 **You have "grimace disease."** Symptoms include loss of appetite, muscle aches, and tiredness. You have disadvantage on all Strength ability checks. The treatment for this illness is to take a few sips a day of a mixture of white vinegar and laudanum for 3 days. Alternatively, the illness goes away after a long rest.

2 **You have crimson fever.** Symptoms include a high fever, along with a red skin rash that feels sandpapery to the touch. You cannot travel by foot, as the effort is too much. The treatment for this illness is to gargle a mixture of turpentine and pulverized charcoal. Alternatively, the illness goes away after a long rest.

3 **You have Catarrh disease.** Symptoms include chills, a cough and sore throat, and shortness of breath. You can only travel on foot for half the normal amount of time before you gain a level of exhaustion. The treatment for this illness is to boil a handful of the plant Hound's Hair, which the Forager can find with a successful DC 12 Wisdom (Survival) check, into a tea to drink.

4 **You have "Angry Lord's Revenge" disease.** Symptoms include bellyaches, nausea, and vomiting. While you have this disease, you can only travel on foot for half the normal amount of time before you gain a level of exhaustion. In addition, your hit point maximum is reduced by 1 every day that you are ill. The treatment for this disease is to take a handful of salt, put it into a bottle of red vinegar, and let it ferment for a day before drinking it.

Basigoat



Across the Plains

Adventure #1

Synopsis

The party sets off from Sovereign City, the last city before the land turns to unclaimed wilderness, journeying across the Open Plains to the outpost of Fort Bridge. The party will have to choose their route, either traveling along the longer Dragon's Path or through the more dangerous Cerro Region. Along the way, they will have to work together, using their skills and careful preparations to survive as they run into encounters and obstacles along the way.

Introduction

The party meets in Sovereign City, whether they traveled here by riverboat or over land, or simply lived here to begin with. The city is the starting point for expeditions westward into the unclaimed wilderness, which many adventurers and prospectors travel through to reach the Golden Territories, seeking riches said to be found within the region's very soil. A seasoned Trail-Master, an elderly male dragonborn named Kit Boone, has gathered the party in a traveling caravan. Kit has made the journey westward a few times now, and is able to give the party advice and basic information about the routes that they can take. Kit himself isn't going to make the journey; he is getting too old and wants to retire in Sovereign City, where he can help other settlers make the same trip. He says that the party's first destination will be

Fort Bridge, a decently-sized outpost in the Open Plains region. He makes the party aware that the distance to the fort is about a two-week journey on foot.

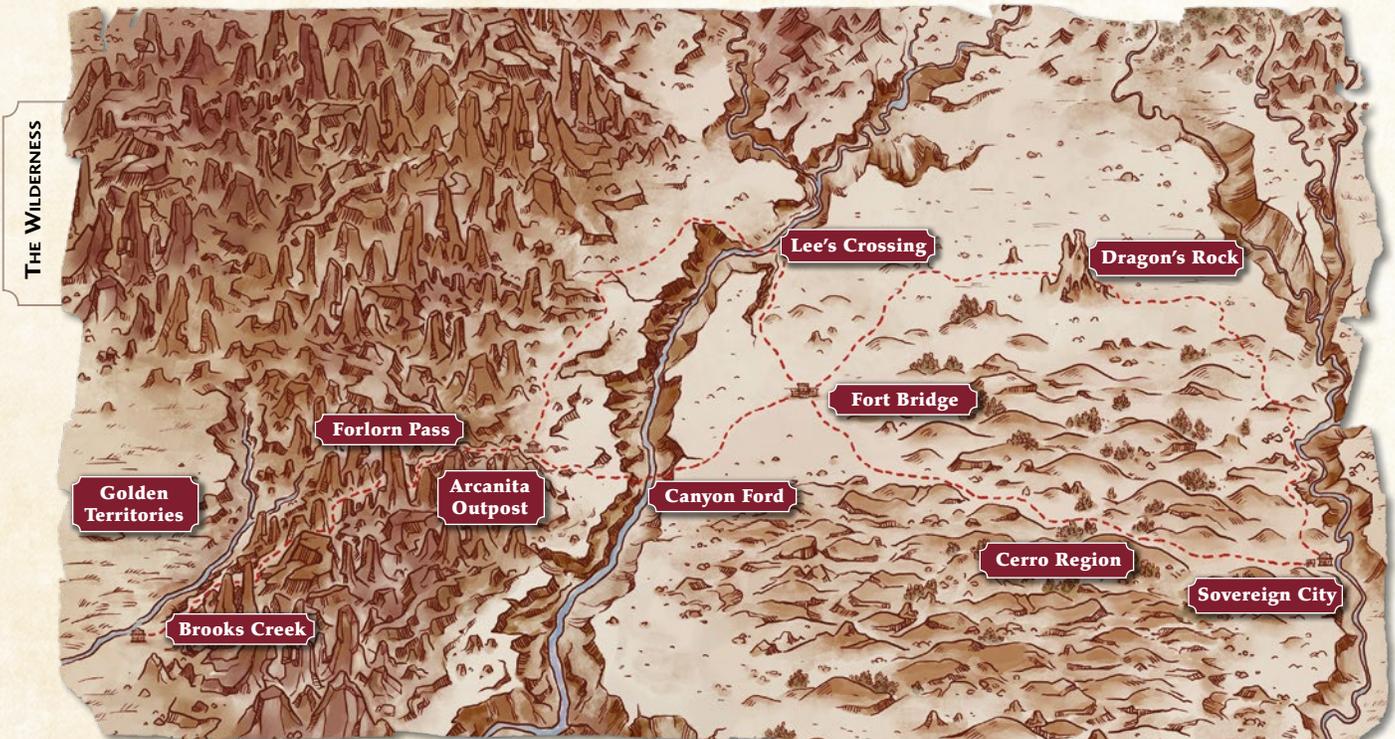
Kit also tells the party that they will need to stock up on their supplies, which can be purchased at the various shops in town. Instead of starting equipment, the party has a total of 100 gp per character to spend, which they will have to balance between survival and other needs.

SER NOMINUS NOTE

Perhaps the party focuses more on weapons and armor, deciding to purchase less food in the hope that they can hunt and forage instead. Or perhaps the party all purchases horses, hoping to speed up their travel time. Don't give them any hints. They should be the ones having to make those tough choices!

Sovereign City

"Dust fills the air as you walk down the cobblestone streets of Sovereign City. Storefronts are plastered with signs advertising deals and sales for new settlers and caravans. A handful of such prospective customers mill about, some heading into stores to stock up on supplies, others looking over wagons and animals in preparation to leave. The atmosphere is electric, with many excited for what new opportunities will arise in the unclaimed wilderness."



Sovereign City is an agricultural and residential settlement, acting as the last taste of civilization for settlers heading westward, who often arrive via riverboats at the city's docks along the bank of the Bailey River. The city has all of the amenities one could ask for: general stores stocked with supplies, apothecaries selling their potions, tailors hawking their wares, and stables to outfit the numerous caravans that leave the city every week. Almost anything the party may want, with the exception of magic items, can be found in and bought from the numerous shops in the city, so long as they have the money.

SER NOMINUS NOTE

Prices for equipment and items can be found in the core books, or you can make them up! If you make them up, make sure they aren't too low or too high; you want the party to be outfitted just enough to make the trip, but not overprepared to the point that the journey's challenges are trivial.

Traveling to Fort Bridge

There are two routes the party can take to get to Fort Bridge. One is the Dragon's Path, which will bring the party past the Dragon's Rock. It's a safer journey, but will add an extra week to the journey, moving the journey length up one level ("short" to "medium," or "medium" to "long"). The second path would take the party through the Cerro Region, where the route is quicker, but more treacherous. Many of the townsfolk of Sovereign City claim that dangerous creatures lurk amongst the hills.

SER NOMINUS NOTE

The party can also set up their own path! Consult the Western Wilderness map to get a sense of the length of the route they will take, and of the dangers along it.

Dragon's Path

If the characters take the Dragon's Path, at about the midway point of the trek, read the following text:

"A towering stone mesa rises from the flat landscape, easily spotted from miles away. The ancient stone landmark almost looks like a massive dragon's head erupting from the earth itself. At the base of this formation, you can see the glow of a campfire."

A dragon (use the **Haldraxis** stat block in Appendix B: Hunt for Haldraxis, adding the following trait.

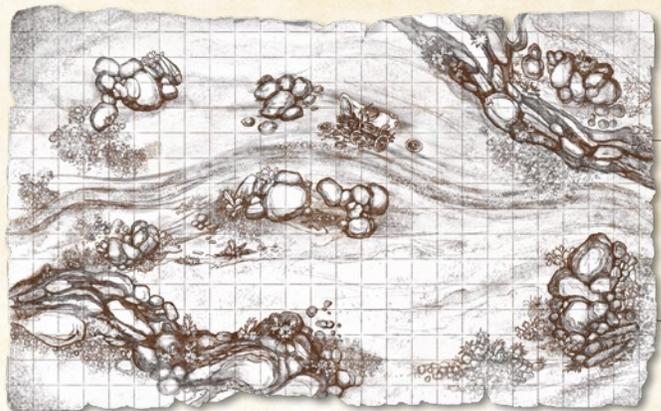
Shapeshifter. The dragon uses its bonus action to magically polymorph into a humanoid.) Dererth takes on the appearance of an androgynous gnome, using they/them pronouns for themselves, and claims to be a simple outdoorsman. At first, Dererth is dismissive of the party, not particularly eager to interact with them. However, they do tell the party that if they can provide Dererth with some sort of work of art, then Dererth may be able to provide them with a gift. If a character succeeds on a DC 15 Charisma check using artisan's tools or an instrument, then Dererth casts the spell *heroes' feast* for the party. If they fail, then Dererth simply ignores them, declaring the party not worth their time.

Cerro Region

If the characters took the Cerro Region path, at about the midway point of the trek, read the following text:

"The flatlands you have been traveling across begin to shift into rolling hills, with a few scattered trees and scrub brush. Although this area appears quiet, you almost get the feeling that you're being watched..."

The hills in this area are the hunting grounds for a **Cerro hawk** (see appendix B), which will slowly circle the party for a few minutes from a very high altitude before diving at them, attempting to pick out the weakest, sickest, or most injured character

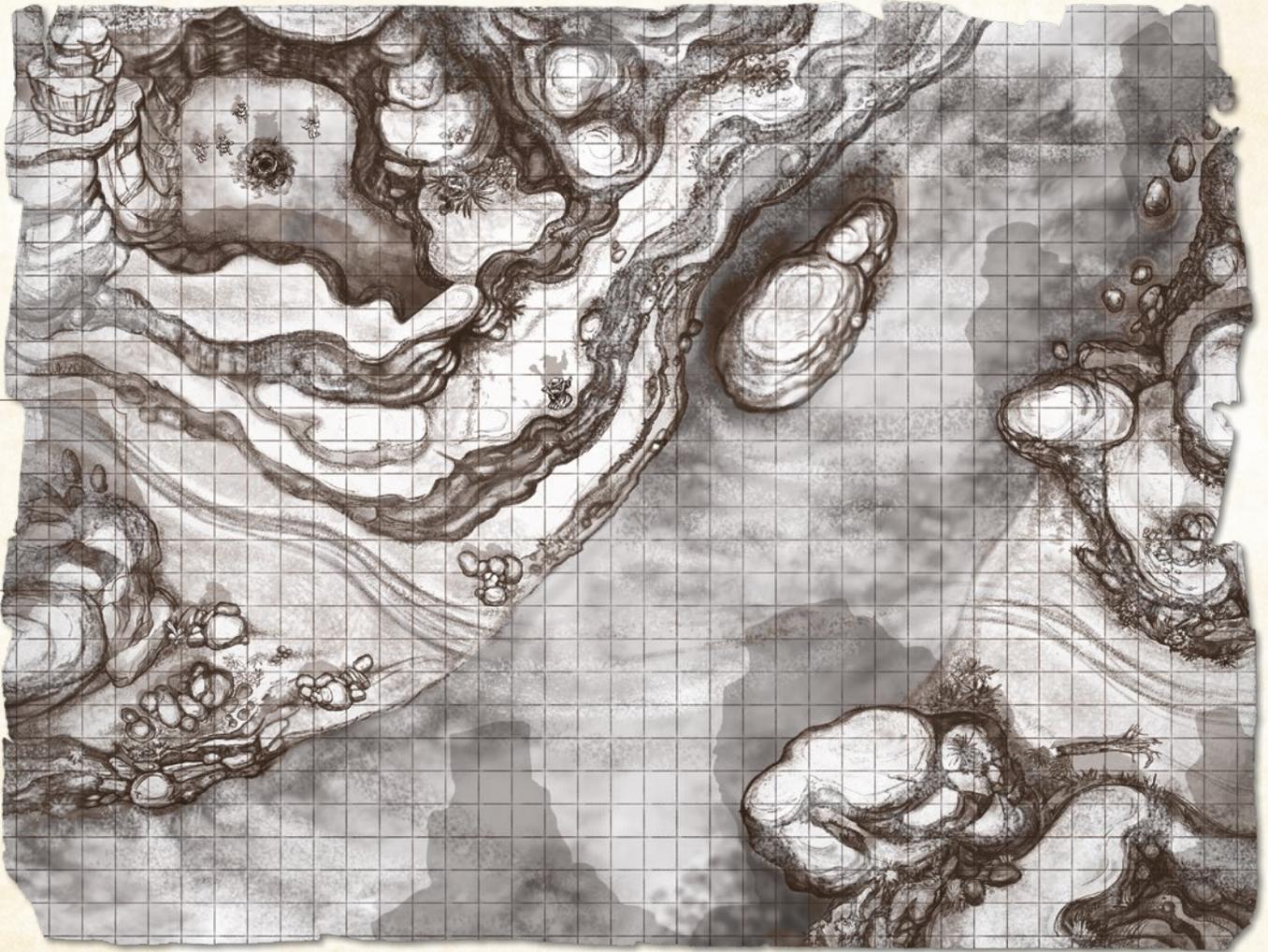


HILLS BATTLE

Conclusion

If you want to conclude the adventure here, then the party reaches Fort Bridge, ready to start whatever life they want on this new frontier.

If you want to continue the adventure into part 2, "Down the Canyons," the characters advance to 2nd level. They arrive at Fort Bridge, where they can rest up, gather some supplies, and prepare for the next leg of their journey.



Down the Canyons

(Adventure #2)

Synopsis

The party has reached Fort Bridge, the next Bastion they can rest in before reaching the settlements in the Golden Territories. The characters can recuperate and gather supplies in the fort before they start the next leg of their journey. A massive canyon blocks their path, and the party will have to either risk venturing down into the gorge and fording the river, or go the long way around and face down a deadly beast.

Introduction

As the adventure opens, read the following text:

"Nestled amongst a small thicket of trees sits a military compound, its plaster buildings fortified by a rectangular wooden wall on all sides. A large gate stands open, with a painted sign reading 'Fort Bridge: Settlers Welcome.'"

Fort Bridge is a fairly small military fortification consisting of a walled compound with a central training yard, barracks, stables, and an exchange where basic provisions can be purchased. The fort is commanded by Commandant William Lewis, a male half-elf in his early fifties. Commandant Lewis will allow the party to rest in the fort's barracks for a night or two for free, as well as give them access to the exchange and stable services so long as they can pay or trade.

The stables are able to provide basic provisions for any horses the party may have, as well as repair any damage a wagon may have taken. The exchange is able to sell traveling basics such as rations, ammo for ranged weapons, and basic craftsmen's tools.

Commandant Lewis is willing to give the party basic information on what they can expect along their travels between Fort Bridge and the next Bastion along the trails, Arcanita Outpost. The paths between Fort Bridge and Arcanita Outpost are separated by a massive gorge known as Clarke Canyon. The gorge is infamously difficult to cross, with settlers having to scale the canyon walls before fording the Clarke River and then scaling the walls on the other side, which is practically impossible for horses or wagons.

There is another path, known as Lee's Crossing, which will take the party to a much easier crossing on the north end of the canyon; however, the route is significantly longer, and settlers are known to be attacked by monsters there as well.

Traveling to Arcanita Outpost

There are two routes the party can take to get to Arcanita Outpost. The first is the Canyon Ford, which forces the party to scale the cliffs of Clarke Canyon, make it across the Clarke River, and scale back up the far side. It is the quicker of the two journeys, but its terrain is dangerous and difficult. The second route is Lee's Crossing, where the terrain is easy to navigate, but the route is longer, increasing the trek length by one level, and a monster is known to hunt travelers in the area.

When the party is ready to set out for their trek, use the information provided in the "Trekking Rules" and "Additional Travel Rules" sections to determine how the journey goes, with two additional special events from the "Additional Travel Rules" list. The base trek is "short" length and "strenuous" difficulty.

Canyon Ford

If the characters took the Canyon Ford path, at about the midway point of the trek, read the following text:

"The ground opens up before you to reveal a massive canyon. Its stone walls plummet hundreds of feet down to a swollen river below. You spot a place along the cliffside where an incredibly narrow path begins to zig-zag its way down the canyon wall."

The Canyon Ford is a treacherous pathway to take. It is impossible for any creature or vehicle larger than medium size to fit on the path. In order to safely make it to the canyon floor, the party must scale down the cliffside via a successful DC 13 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check, taking 2d6 bludgeoning damage on a failure as they slip and fall to a lower level of the pathway. Once on the canyon floor, the party must make a DC 12 Strength (Athletics) check to ford the river. On a failure, have the character roll a d4. On a result of a 1 or a 2, the character takes 1d6 bludgeoning damage as they are swept off of their feet. On a result of a 3 or a 4, have the character roll a d6. The result determines how many items, chosen at random by the Game Master, that they lose in the river as it sweeps them away. Once on the other side, the party must make a DC 14 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check to scale the far cliffside, taking 1d6 bludgeoning damage on a failure, at which point they will have to make the check again. Once on the far side

of the canyon, each of the characters must make a DC 8 Constitution saving throw, with a -1 modifier for every failed check they made in the course of fording the river. If they fail the saving throw, they gain a level of exhaustion as the strain overwhelms their body.

SER NOMINUS NOTE

The process of crossing the canyon should be tough—however, the party may get creative and try to find ways of circumnavigating the checks. Let them! The players getting creative in solving problems is always a good thing. Ultimately, it's up to you as the GM to decide whether their plan succeeds or fails!

Lee's Crossing

If the characters took the Lee's Crossing path, at about the midway point of the trek, read the following text:

"The steep cliffsides further downstream have leveled out in this area, and the river itself is shallow and easy to navigate, making it a simple task to get to the other side. However, as you get about halfway across the river, the clip-clop of hooves and the hiss of a snake can be heard echoing from across the way. A strange creature appears at the top of the embankment, looking at you hungrily."

The river crossing in this area is the lair for a basigoat, an unnatural monster combining the body of a goat and the head of a basilisk. This monstrosity was the creation of a long-dead wizard who traveled out to this region decades ago in his pursuit of creating the ultimate hybrid species. However, he fell prey to his own creation, and his stone body is still frozen in place on the cliffside, overlooking the river crossing. When the party enters this area, one **basigoat** (see appendix B) emerges from its lair and attacks them. Anywhere in the river is considered difficult terrain.

Conclusion

If you want to conclude the adventure here, then the party reaches Arcanita Outpost, where they can start a new life deep in the wilderness on the edge of a picturesque mountain range.

If you want to continue the adventure into part 3, "Over the Mountains," the characters advance to 3rd level. The party reaches Arcanita Outpost, where they can rest and prepare themselves for the final push to the riches that may await them in the Golden Territories.

Over the Mountains

(Adventure #3)

Synopsis

The party has reached the Bastion of Arcanita Outpost, a small homestead run by frontierswoman Mary Oakly. Once the party has rested, they must make the ascent to the peaks of the Madre Muerte Mountains, and traverse the infamous Forlorn Pass, where they must brave the elements and face deranged cannibals before they can make their way to the other side and descend to the Golden Territories.

Introduction

As the adventure opens, read the following text:

"A small, rustic cabin sits at the base of a massive mountain range. Racks of deer antlers and skinned animals are scattered about the site. A woman with a bow slung over her shoulder kneels before one of the racks, using a large knife to work the hide. She looks up as you approach, sheathing her blade as she stands, waving you down in greeting."

Arcanita Outpost is a modest homestead owned by Mary Oakly, a hunter, trapper, and experienced outdoorswoman. The outpost is made up of a single building, which acts as Mary's home and workshop. Mary welcomes traveling settlers to rest on her property, where they can set up camp in the open land adjacent to her home, and offers them a warm meal. However, Mary does not have a proper store of provisions; her food consists only of what she is able to hunt and bring back for her own meals. The party will not be able to restock on any of their supplies here, but they do gain the benefits of being in a Bastion.

Mary warns that the path to the Golden Territories and the town of Brooks Creek is tough. In order to make it, the characters will have to pass through the infamous Forlorn Pass in order to reach the far side of the Madre Muerte Mountains. Not only is the climb treacherous, where many caravans have succumbed to the elements, but there is a rumor that some of the surviving settlers never left the pass, and have devolved into a posse of cannibals who prey on other settler caravans. She warns the party not to stop for anything while in the pass. Otherwise, they may become just another group of souls lost to the mountains.



Cerro Hawk

Traveling to Brooks Creek

There is only a single path to get to the boomtown of Brooks Creek: the deadly Forlorn Pass. The party must first ascend the dangerous and mostly uncharted Madre Muerte Mountains. Once they reach the highest peaks, they must venture through the Forlorn Pass, before emerging on the other side and making their way back down.

When the party is ready to set out for their trek, use the "Trekking Rules" and "Additional Travel Rules" sections to determine how the journey goes, with three additional special events from the "Additional Travel Rules" list. The base trek is "medium" length, and the difficulty level is "intense."

One of the events from the "Trekking Rules" and "Additional Travel Rules" lists occurs on the ascent; the rest of the encounters occur while the party travels through the Forlorn Pass.

Forlorn Pass

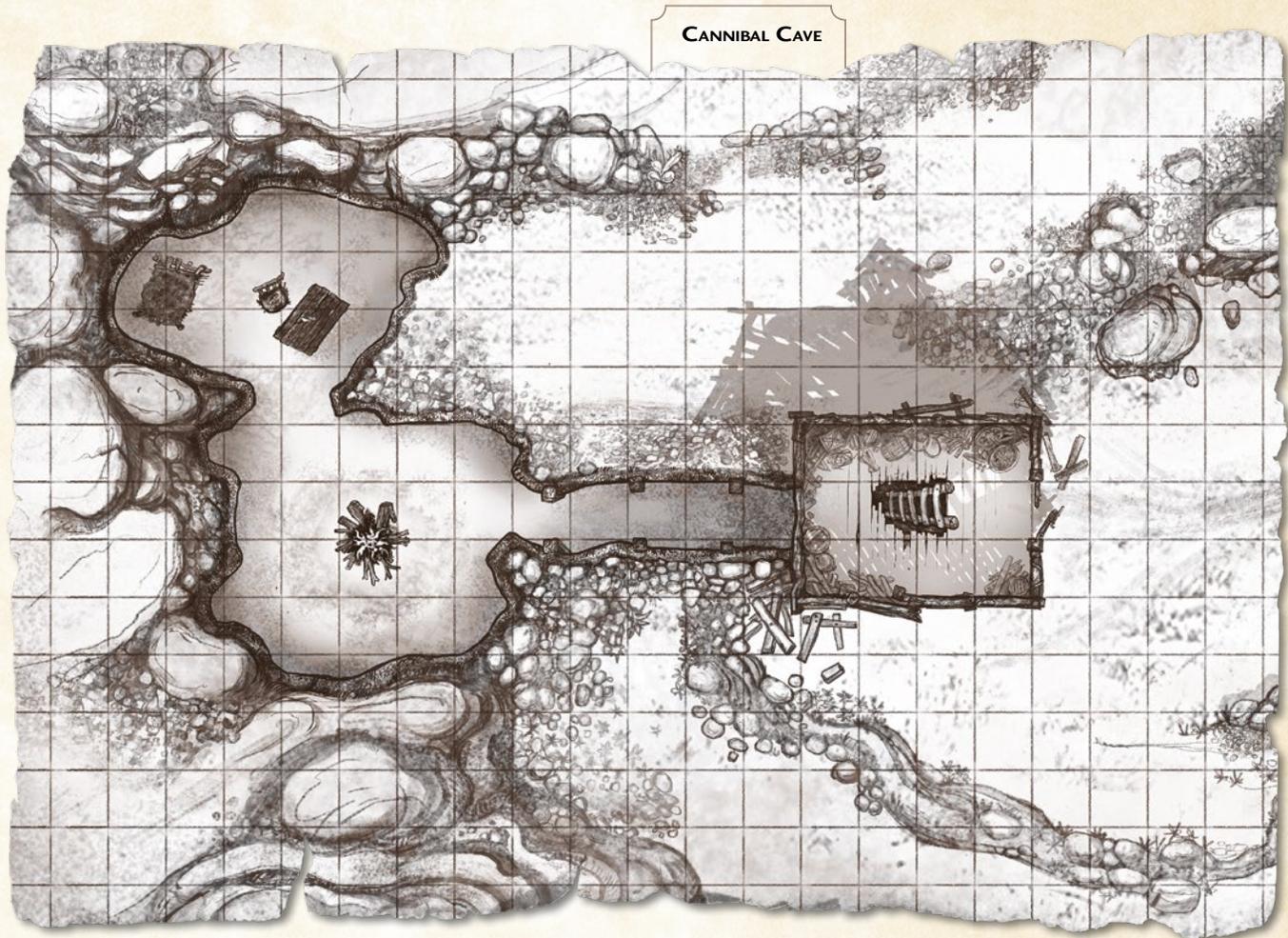
During the last third of the party's journey, read the following text:

"As you near the summit of the mountain peaks, a small valley forms between two lines of ridges. The air here is clouded, the wind kicking up the sand and snow on the ground. A few broken and abandoned wagons can be spotted just inside of the valley, an ominous warning sign. You have made it to Forlorn Pass."

Travel through Forlorn Pass is incredibly difficult, as a perpetual storm hangs over the valley. All vision is limited to within 15 feet while inside the valley, and movement is slowed to one-fourth speed. The pass is 40 miles long, meaning it will take nearly four days to travel through. Each morning, the Trail-Master must make a DC 11 Wisdom (Survival) check to ensure that the party is on the right course. On a failure, the Trail-Master is unable to find the right path, and must spend the day trying to find it. Should the result of the Trail-Master's roll be 5 or less, then the Trail-Master does not know that they are lost, and may lead the party away from the trail and become even more lost. They will only find out that they led the party astray should they succeed the check on a subsequent day, and must backtrack.

If your chosen villain is the Drylands, then the storm is a fierce dust storm. In addition to struggling with limited sight and movement, each party member must make one DC 14 Constitution saving throw for each day that they are in the pass. On a failure, the character is blinded for the day.

If your chosen villain is the Frostlands, then the storm is a smothering snowstorm. In addition to struggling



with limited sight and movement, each party member must make one DC 12 Constitution saving throw for each day that they are in the pass. On a failure, the character gains one level of exhaustion.

Soon after the party enters the pass, the characters can all hear what sounds like a woman crying out for help, just off of the trail. Should the party investigate the sound, they find a small, makeshift shack, obviously worn down by the environment. Should they enter the shack, they find it to be a mess, with refuse scattered about, while the furniture has been smashed. At the center of the room, the floorboards have been torn up, leading into a small man-made cave. This cave is the lair for the cannibals of Forlorn Pass, where they sleep away from the elements and prepare their disturbing meals. Three **cannibal settlers** (see appendix B) attack the party—two from inside the cave itself, one having followed the characters into the shack from the outside. The cannibals, who have lived in the pass for a good while, have crafted makeshift equipment for their use in traveling around the area. If your chosen villain is the Drylands, then the cannibals all wear makeshift goggles and face masks. If your chosen villain is the Frostlands, then they wear makeshift heated under-armor gear. In both cases, if the

party takes these items and equips them, then they automatically succeed on the daily Constitution saving throws they must make to avoid ill effects from the pass's storm.

Conclusion

Once the party has reached the end of Forlorn Pass, read the following text:

“As you step out of the pass, the sky opens up for you, showcasing a beautiful view: a wide, fertile land of forests, rivers, and grasslands, where you can make out the distinctive glow of far-off towns and settlements. Your ordeal is over; you have made it across the wilderness and through Forlorn Pass. You have made it to the Golden Territories.”

The story can end here, with the party going out and making a new life for themselves in this land of abundance and opportunity. But it does not have to! Perhaps the party heads into the town of Bullthorne and learns that it is under siege. Or perhaps the treasures that were said to await them were not what they expected them to be. The choice is up to you!



Escape From Old Redwick

THEME TAGS

Horror, survival, dark.

CONTENT WARNING

Body horror, building destruction, mass death, corpses, hanging, spiders, scary monsters, torture reference, being hunted, fire, sacrifice, violent descriptions.

Description

The village of Old Redwick has been cursed with magical darkness. Overnight, for seemingly no reason, the curse spread so quickly, very few had time to react before terrifying creatures began hunting the people of Redwick. It's up to the adventurers to discover the way to escape. The villagers are desperate to survive and some may even hinder the party to save themselves. Will the adventurers try to save everyone? Will they save themselves? Or will they succumb to the darkness...

Background

Old Redwick is a village in the middle of nowhere. The nearest settlement is a day's walk away, through forests and fields. Old Redwick has never been the home to mighty adventurers or legendary heroes; it's no more than a simple farming village full of people just trying to get by. Not much is known about the creatures or what they want from this village.

SER NOMINUS NOTE

The background of the creatures isn't explained here because it's not important! The less your players know about these monsters, the scarier they'll be. Even you don't know what they are or where they came from. But if you'd like to fill in your own details to the mystery surrounding the creatures, by all means, do so!



Character Hooks and Motivations

To help involve your players and their characters more in the story, have each character answer the following question: *Why are you in the village of Old Redwick?*

Alternatively, you can use the table below to give your players ideas for their characters' motivation in the adventure.

- 1 You were hired to guard a shipment of goods heading to Old Redwick.
- 2 You were born in Old Redwick and have lived here your whole life.
- 3 You are a student of planar anomalies, and your studies have predicted one in this old village.
- 4 You are a cartographer, and you are in Old Redwick to place it on some newer maps.
- 5 You're looking for your long-lost lover, whose trail has ended in Old Redwick.
- 6 You woke up in the fields outside Old Redwick. You have no idea who or where you are.

Villains

The two villains for this adventure are the mysterious planar invaders who have created the curse of darkness around the city. Neither of them are intended to be “challenged” directly. Your characters will likely die if they try to face these monsters. However, the party is still capable of weakening their forces. The undead plants can die easily, though they never stop getting back up. The creatures known simply as “Them” are nearly indestructible, but can be slowed.

“Them”

(Villain Option #1)

These creatures are enormous beings made of solidified shadow. Their long, spider-like appendages walk along the ground, attached to a greater body that is always out of sight and covered in dark fog. They seem to be able to float and leap great distances, often appearing suddenly out of the black to snatch villagers and draw them up into the darkness, never to be seen again.

The Hangman's Tree

(Villain Option #2)

In the center of Old Redwick is a hangman's tree. Prior to the curse, only two bodies were hung from it: a man who kidnapped a child from the village but was thwarted, and an arsonist who tried to burn down a field of crops. Recently, this tree has come alive with malice, its branches moved by an enormous well of shadow that pours from the sky. The shrubs, foliage, and other surrounding plant life have also been viciously animated—pulling people into the ground, twisting their bodies, and transforming them into plant-hybrids that never seem to die.

A Night of Terror

(Adventure #1)

Synopsis

Darkness has shrouded the village of Old Redwick, and the characters find themselves seeking shelter in a windmill. Crazy villagers attack them, which draws the monstrous villains to the windmill. The characters must escape and find their way back to the town square, where they find an old adventurer who has been mortally wounded. He gives them a map of the town, noting a few places of interest. The party can explore the rest of Old Redwick, or make their way to one of the two exits to try and escape its curse.

Introduction

When you are ready to begin the adventure, read the following text:

“The villagers of Old Redwick knew a simple and peaceful life—farming, working, and keeping to themselves. Rumors of stars disappearing the past few nights were dismissed. Then, without warning, the villagers woke up to screams and panic. Complete darkness had shrouded their entire village. No light could illuminate more than twenty feet in any direction. And then came the monsters. No one knows how many people are still alive, it’s impossible to count the sheer amount of screams that eventually go quiet. In the wake of this panic, you have all found yourselves in Bastian’s Windmill. It seems to be the safest place to catch your breath and figure out what is going on and what to do... for now.”

Have the players introduce and describe their characters. Ask each of them what they are currently doing as they hide from the terrors outside, or perhaps what they plan to do to escape.

The Darkness. The magical darkness brought upon the village is inherently magical and otherworldly in nature. No light can pierce more than 20 feet into its veil. Even creatures with darkvision (or even the ability to see into magical darkness) cannot see beyond 20 feet.

Circlet of Light



Bastian’s Windmill

This windmill is on the outskirts of town and was once used to make grain, though the rotating mechanism has been out of use for years. The windmill’s true purpose is as a secret meet-up spot for some of the villagers. The interior is furnished and contains crates of food and ale.

After the characters spend time exploring the windmill, a group of three **Redwick villagers** (see appendix B) by the names of Corvin, Anne, and Edmund burst in through the door. The frightened townspeople demand the space to themselves. They know the windmill is a safe hiding place, possibly their best chance to survive, and don’t want to gamble with outsiders. They fight to the death, hoping to take both the windmill and the characters’ gear.

If your chosen villain is “Them,” read the following text after the fight:

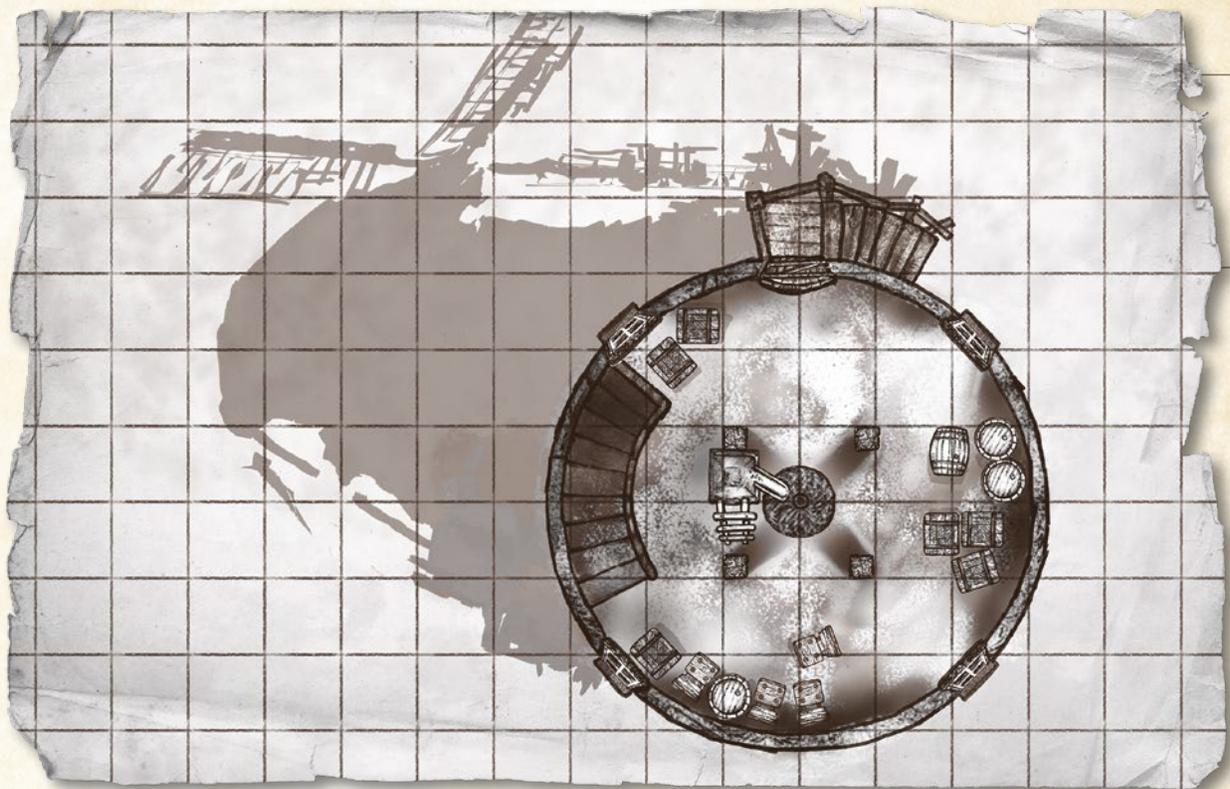
“As the crazed villagers are defeated, all goes silent. Suddenly, the door to the windmill is slammed open by a gust of wind. You peer into the endless darkness outside. Then something moves—you think it to be a tree branch, but it clasps together like the fingers of an enormous hand and disappears upwards. Unintelligible whispers echo from outside and then are silenced by something slamming against the walls. This place is no longer safe.”

If your chosen villain is the hangman’s tree, read the following text after the fight:

“As the crazed villagers are defeated, all goes silent. Suddenly, the door to the windmill is slammed open by a gust of wind. You peer into the endless darkness outside. Then something moves—the ground opens up, and a twisted arm covered in vines climbs out. Then two more plant-like bodies emerge. Wailing sounds echo from the creatures as they crawl closer to the windmill, almost as if they are crying out for help. However, the vines and roots around the body seem to be in control. This place is no longer safe.”

At this point, the party must try to escape the windmill, or else be killed by the monsters. This escape can be run as a skill challenge or in initiative order.

This tunnel can only be accessed if the floorboards take a total of 50 damage. If the characters, somehow, find a way to reveal these tunnels; three spawn or three corpse bushels (see appendix B for these creatures stat blocks) attack the invading players. If they defeat these creatures and enter the tunnels, see the “Escape Tunnel” section later in the chapter.



THE WINDMILL

SER NOMINUS NOTE

The skill challenge is more of a narrative take on escaping the windmill. If the party completely fails, narrate an epic sacrifice as one character stays behind to save everyone... Then perhaps take a break and let that player make a new character to continue playing. And if any of the characters go unconscious during this skill challenge, let other characters pick up their bodies as they escape. If somehow everyone goes unconscious from being so battered in the villager fight, maybe they wake up in the next area, saved by the old adventurer.

Keep the story going!

Total Success. The party escapes the monsters without a moment to lose.

Success. Success. The party escapes, but the monsters nearly kill one of the members. The characters who fail take 2 damage.

Failure. The party escapes but are battered and nearly killed by the monsters. Each party member takes 2 damage.

Total Failure. A scenario occurs where one party member must stay behind in order for everyone to escape. Allow the players to decide who makes the sacrifice.

Initiative Escape

In this scenario, the characters escape in initiative order, much like during combat. With this approach, the windmill will be overwhelmed after 3 rounds. The characters must spend these 3 rounds escaping, or they will die. Make judgement calls based on what you think best. The windows could break with a successful attack roll or spell. The door could be barricaded to give the characters an extra round. This scenario allows the escape to be more freeform.

Skill Challenge Escape

In this scenario, the party describes what they'd like to do and their collective rolls determine their degree of success. No matter what, the party will escape, though there may be some side effects if they fail. Have each player describe what they'd like to do in order to escape. Perhaps they want to break open a window and leap out, or climb to the roof and jump. Maybe they want to sneak out, or throw one of the villagers' corpses as a distraction. Each character must make a DC 18 skill check for the skill best associated with what they are trying to do. Consult the following text to determine the outcome, based on the party's average level of success:

SER NOMINUS NOTE

The initiative escape is choosing "manual mode." Still allow the party to escape easily, but not without some tense description of their near-death encounter.



Town Square

After the party escapes, read the following text:

"Nearly out of breath, you bolt into the dark. The only thing lit is the grass beneath you, which eventually turns to cobblestones as you find yourselves in the town square. It is completely void of sound and light. A weak voice calls to you from across the square: 'You there, if you want to live, I know the way.' A scraggly older man with white hair and an unkempt beard lies against a well. His leather armor is ruined, and he's clutching at a wound on his chest."

The man is Connor Graham. He was recently attacked by one of the monsters and is dying. The wound on his chest has turned his blood black and is corrupting his body. No amount of healing can save him, but it can ease his passing. He doesn't know how he got his wound, or what's wrong with him. If the characters ask about it, he tells them it's not important, and his time is running out.' as a piece of information Connor gives the party if asked

In his hand is a crudely drawn map of Old Redwick in which buildings with supplies are marked, and two possible escapes are noted

Connor answers two questions before he succumbs to his wounds. He knows a bit about the monsters, but not enough to truly know what they are. The information he gives the party is as follows:

- If your chosen villain is “Them,” he shares the knowledge that they create webs and snatch people up into the sky.
- If your chosen villain is the hangman’s tree, he knows that the tree is the source of the town’s troubles, but there’s seemingly no way to bring it down. Fire wouldn’t even leave a mark.
- The two possible escapes include the escape tunnel in the windmill, or the fields. Connor explains the tunnel isn’t a guaranteed escape, but it’s safer. The fields are more dangerous, but it’s possible that the party may find survivors—or their bodies, which will have supplies on them.

After answering the party’s questions, Connor lets out a final breath, saying, “Go now. I’m going to find my own way out...” He has a lantern with oil on his person.

At this point, the characters must decide which route they’d like to take.

1: BARON’S HOUSE

“The baron’s house is the most lavish building in Old Redwick, with two stories, and a garden that surrounds the perimeter.”

The doors to the baron’s house are locked, requiring a successful DC 10 Dexterity check, using thieves’ tools, to open.

The doors can also be broken down with a successful DC 12 Strength (Athletics) check. However the sound of the doors being broken down attracts one **Spawn** or **Corpse bushel** (see appendix B for these creatures stat blocks)

Once the party is inside, read whichever text below applies to your chosen villain.

If your chosen villain is “Them,” read the following text:

“The interior of the home is silent. Above you is an amassment of webs, emanating a strange light from within. Tangled in the center of the webs is a corpse.”

If your chosen villain is the hangman’s tree, read the following text:

“The interior of the home is silent, save for a creaking from the ceiling. Above you is the corpse of the baron, hung by a leafy vine around his neck. His body is aglow with light, emanating from a device on his forehead. A gleaming key is clutched in his hands.”

The characters can retrieve the body from the ceiling by cutting down the vine or the webs. A circlet of light (see Appendix A) glows around the late baron’s forehead. In his hands is a key to his safe.

The rest of the house has been completely looted by other villagers, except for a heavily locked safe.

The safe can be opened in a number of ways, the simplest being with the key on the baron’s person. It can also be accessed with a successful DC 15 Dexterity check using thieves’ tools, or by breaking it open with a successful DC 20 Strength (Athletics) check. Inside is 300 gp and a pearl necklace worth 400 gp.

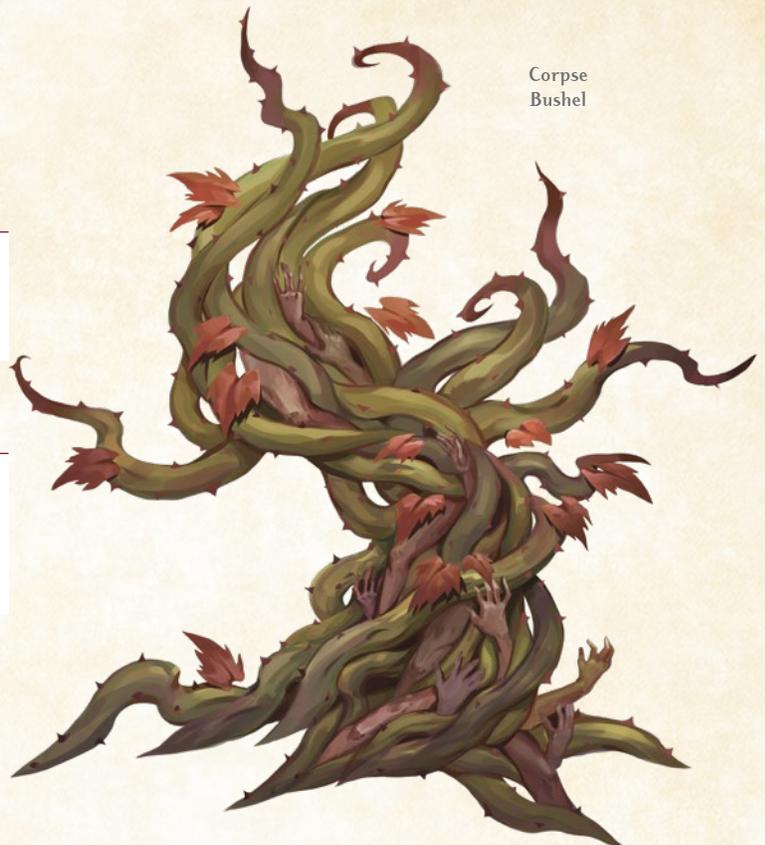
SER NOMINUS NOTE

Unfortunately, this circlet’s light is still limited to a reach of 20 feet by the magical darkness!

2: MERCANTILE SUPPLY

“The Mercantile Supply is an old wooden shop built a hundred or so years ago. It’s barely standing after the amount of wear it’s withstood. The door is cracked open—a single boot lying on the floor stops it from closing.”

Attached to the boot is a leg that is cut off at the thigh. Blood is splattered across the floor of the mercantile. The entire store is completely looted, and there appear to be no supplies here. However, with a successful DC 14 Intelligence (Investigation) or Wisdom (Perception) check, any character can find a loose wooden floor board, revealing a secret stash. The stash contains a potion of ghost step (see appendix A, under “The Lost Spirits”), a *vial of invisibility* (see appendix A, under “*Hunt for Haldraxis*”), and two daggers.



Corpse
Bushel

3: ESCAPE TUNNEL

If the characters return to the windmill to find the escape tunnel, read the following text:

“Aside from its foundations, the windmill has been completely destroyed. Nothing remains of the building save for a hole in the center of all the rubble.”

This hole is five feet deep, leading to a shaft that is held up by wooden beams and hardened mud. This underground tunnel leads outside the city. As the characters make their way through the tunnel, they are stalked by one of the monsters.

If your chosen villain is “Them”, one **spawn** (see appendix B) follows the characters.

If your chosen villain is the hangman’s tree, one **corpse bushel** (see appendix B) follows the characters. The party will also need to navigate the tunnel safely. After a few minutes of walking, read the following:

“You come to an intersection, with paths extending to the left, straight forward, and to the right. Which way do you go?”

A successful DC 12 Wisdom (Survival) or Intelligence (History) check will allow a character to figure out that going right would lead them back to town. If the party

chooses to go forward or left instead, read whichever segment below corresponds to your chosen villain.

If your chosen villain is “Them,” read the following text:

“As you push forward through the dark tunnels, you notice webs strung across the walls. You come to another intersection, with one path going forward, and another to right.”

Whichever way the party decides to go, the spawn runs at them from the other hallway. Roll initiative at this point, and have the characters either fight the creature or run through the tunnels.

If your chosen villain is the hangman’s tree, read the following text:

“As you push forward through the dark tunnels, you notice roots have wormed their way through the dirt walls. You come to another intersection, forward and right.”

Whichever way the party decides to go, the corpse bushel charges them from the other hallway. Roll initiative at this point, and let the characters either fight the creature or run through the tunnels.

The characters escape the tunnels if they defeat the creature, or if they run down the tunnels for at least 3 rounds.



4: THE FIELDS

The fields outside of Old Redwick are completely dark, except for the grass lit underneath them. Read the following text after the characters start walking through the fields:

"Pitch black in every direction, nothing pierces this veil of shadows. At any moment, something could jump out of the darkness, but nothing comes...until you hear a scream from up ahead."

If the characters follow the sound of the scream, they find nothing but a pair of shoes. As they continue on, they are stalked by the monsters.

If your chosen villains are "Them", the party must avoid being plucked out of the sky by the monsters.

Choose a random character in the party to be the target of the attack.

Any other character that has a passive Perception score of 16 or higher feels a small gust of wind just before the monster strikes. If they warn the party about this, everyone has advantage on Dexterity or Strength saving throws.

The targeted character must make a DC 18 Dexterity or Strength saving throw. If the save is successful, the character is nearly snatched up by the monster's limbs, but they manage to dodge. On failure, the character is grabbed by the monster and pulled up into the air. Roll initiative at this point. The character being snatched is considered grappled and restrained. The characters must act quickly, or else their friend will be gone forever. The monster and the snatched character is 10 feet in the air, the monster has an AC of 12, and if it takes at least 15 damage, it will let go of the character. If the monster doesn't take this damage by the end of the first round, the character will be pulled into the sky, their screams echoing into the night, never to be seen again.

If your chosen villain is the hangman's tree, the characters must avoid being pulled into the ground by sentient roots. Read the following text:

"The ground ahead becomes a rough bramble of tangling vines and brush. However, you notice it beginning to move, creeping closer—and then lashing out at you."

Each character must succeed a DC 12 Dexterity or Strength saving throw or else be pulled into the roots.

A character that gets pulled in is considered grappled and restrained. If a character is pulled in, have the party roll initiative. The grappled characters must spend their action attempting to free themselves. They can be freed either by making the saving throw again and succeeding, or by dealing at least 5 damage to the roots. Once all of the characters have been freed, they can run from the roots, toward the edge of the fields. If they do not free themselves by the end of the second round, each

grappled character is pulled into the earth, their screams muffled by the dirt filling their lungs.

Once this encounter is over, the characters can run to the edge of the city, finding the survivors—or what is left of them. The party finds four corpses, either covered in webs if your chosen villain is "Them", or battered and covered in roots if your chosen villain is the hangman's tree. In this mess they can find two long swords, two shortswords, a longbow, twenty arrows, three *potions of healing* (These potions can be used as an action to heal 2d4+2 HP), three sets of studded leather armor, a tinderbox, a lantern, and 50 gp.

Conclusion

If the characters have reached the edge of Redwick, and you'd like to end the adventure here, read the following text:

"Before you is a wall of pure darkness. It roils with smoke and shadow, but as you step closer, it spreads open. You see rays of sunlight beyond the barrier, spilling over grass, forests, and mountains. The way is clear, and you are free. The nightmare is over—you have escaped Old Redwick."

If you'd like to continue the adventure into part 2, "Those Without Sin," read the following text:

"Before you is a wall of pure darkness, with strange sigils at its base. The sigils glow a deep violet and grow brighter as you approach."

The wall of shadow is impermeable without a holy symbol of the Dusk Lord. Any character who succeeds on a DC 8 Intelligence (Religion) check will recognize the symbols and know what they require. If any characters touch the wall, they hear a voice echo, "You will only find a way in, with his blessing and ward, those without sin, in the eyes of the Dusk Lord. Show thine holy symbol!" There is a church to the Dusk Lord just outside the town, not too far from where the players currently are. This church is the only hope for the characters to escape.

Thus concludes part 1. The characters advance to 2nd level and continue the story in part 2.



Snatcher



Those Without Sin

(Adventure #2)

Synopsis

After nearly escaping Old Redwick, the party finds a church near the edge of the shadow border. The church is being attacked by minions of the villain; inside, however, they find that the church is hallowed and safe from the monsters. A priest informs the characters that holy symbols may be below the church in the catacombs. As the party begins their search, they are hunted by a nearly indestructible monster. The characters must find the symbols and hopefully escape with their lives.

Introduction

In the previous adventure, the characters nearly escaped Old Redwick but discovered that they need holy symbols of the Dusk Lord in order to breach the barrier surrounding the town. The characters can easily find the eerie, colorful glow of the church from a distance. It is seemingly unaffected by the darkness. Read the following text to begin the adventure:

“At the edge of night and all darkness, you see a distant glow, a range of colors emanating from a building not too far from where you are. The old church outside Redwick still stands, and appears to be in danger.”

If your chosen villain is “Them,” read the following text:

“The church is surrounded by spawn. The hand-shaped creatures descend upon the church on strings of web, slamming into its walls and shattering glass.”

Four **spawn** (see appendix B) are attacking the church to get to the survivors inside. The party can try to fight their way through, but at the end of every round, two more spawn descend from the sky and continue the assault. The characters must retreat into the church or risk death.

If your chosen villain is the hangman’s tree, read the following text:

“The church is surrounded by plants. They wrap around the building as corpse bushels slam into the walls and glass.”

Four **corpse bushels** (see appendix B) are attacking the church to get to the survivors inside. The party can try to fight their way through, but at the end of every round, two more corpse bushels sprout from the ground and continue the assault. The characters must retreat into the church or risk death.

The church has enormous wooden doors that are barricaded on the other side. If the characters bang on the door, it will be opened by a priest, Father Samael, and they can step inside.

The Church of the Dusk Lord

Read the following text when the party first enters the church:

“As you rush into the church, the enormous building is a sight for sore eyes. Dim rays of purple, red, and yellow light stream in through the windows, one of which has been smashed. The darkness does not seem to have a hold over this place—the whole of the church is visible from where you stand. Pews, podiums, and shelves have been pushed up against all exits besides the main door. A worried, baggy-eyed priest stares at you sheepishly. Blood and grime have stained his white-and-yellow robes. ‘You came from out there?’ he asks. ‘May the Dusk Lord bless your souls.’ He touches the pendant on his chest—one bearing the image of a rising sun.”

Father Samael (see appendix B) is a human man and the only surviving priest in the church. The other priests died defending the church while he finished casting a holy ritual to protect it from monsters. He believes the only safety they have is inside the church, and that it's hopeless to try to go anywhere else. If the characters explain to him that it's possible to escape with holy symbols of the Dusk Lord, he will question the party at first, but ultimately believe that they must be right. Unfortunately, the other holy symbols that once belonged to the church were on the bodies of the priests, which have all been taken.

Father Samael informs the party that the only other holy symbols are buried with previously dead priests in the catacombs underneath the church. He warns them that the catacombs are not hallowed, and will likely have monsters lurking below.



The Catacombs

The stairway down the catacombs is inside the church, and locked. Only Father Samael can open the door with his key. He locks the door behind them, and tells the characters to knock twice in patterns of four to let him know it is them.

As the party explores the catacombs, they are hunted by either the **Snatcher** (see appendix B) if your villain is "Them," or the **Barkwood Stalker** (see appendix B) if your chosen villain is the hangman's tree.

Each time a character goes down a corridor, roll a d4. On a 1 or 2, the monster appears at the opposite end and gives chase. The first time a character encounters the monster, they also encounter a villager who fled down here to hide. The monster then attacks this villager first and deals full damage to them. Then it gives chase to everyone else. The monster is a bit slower than the characters, and the characters must hide, break line of sight, or distract the monster to

escape it. As an action, they can dig through old corpses in the corridors. Each corridor has a burial mound that has a 25% chance of containing a holy symbol. Once a number of holy symbols have been found—equal to one less than the total number of party members—they can find no more. (For example, if the party is made up of four characters, they can only find three holy symbols).

SER NOMINUS NOTE

When the monster kills that villager, this is the moment for a peak scary introduction. Describe to the players how much damage it deals to the villager. That way, they know how much mortal danger they are in if the creature gets to them.

Conclusion

Once the party has gathered all the holy symbols they can, they can escape back up to the church.

Unfortunately, there are only enough holy symbols for the party minus one, while Father Samael holds the final one. He selfishly refuses to give up his own holy symbol. The party will either have to convince the priest to give up his symbol, steal it from him, or kill him for it. Regardless, someone must stay behind.

If you'd like to conclude the adventure here, this is how it ends. Someone must sacrifice themselves in order for the rest of the party to leave. No other holy symbol or artifact will allow them to do so.

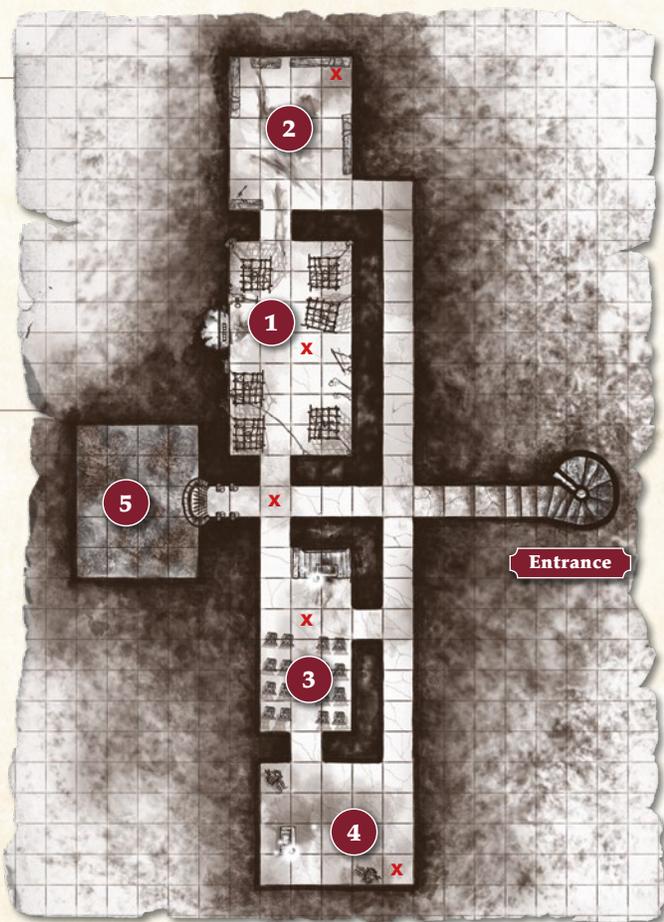
If you'd like to continue the adventure into part 3, "Slaughter in the Sepulchre," read the following text:

"You suddenly hear knocking against the door you just escaped through, followed by a desperate plea for help. Father Samael opens the door and a terrified boy runs in, wearing a holy symbol of the Dusk Lord. 'You all, please! You must help us. My family is trapped below the catacombs. There's some sort of dungeon down there. Please!'"

With that, the characters advance to 3rd level and can decide to go down and help the rest of the villagers escape.



Dusk Lord Symbol



Slaughter in the Sepulchre

(Adventure #3)

Synopsis

After the characters return to the church, a young boy informs the party that his family is trapped beneath the catacombs. The party can venture down into the dungeons while avoiding the lurking monster, finding keys, and saving the boy's family—but not before convincing an angel of the Dusk Lord not to destroy the entirety of the town and its people.

Introduction

In the previous adventure, the characters gathered holy symbols of the Dusk Lord from the catacombs to grant them the ability to escape. They have now learned from a young boy (whose name is Tommy) that his family is stuck beneath the catacombs.

Tommy tells the party that there is a secret hatch in a corner of the catacombs that leads further into the dungeons. Even Father Samael is surprised at this; he had no idea that there was a dungeon beneath the catacombs.

When the party heads down to the hatch, they find the catacombs empty of their previous rival (the Snatcher or Barkwood Stalker), and that the hatch has been left open.

Dungeons of the Sepulchre

These dungeon hallways are stalked by the monster from the catacombs: either **the Snatcher**, if your chosen villain is "Them," or the **Barkwood Stalker**, if your chosen villain is the hangman's tree (see appendix B for more details on either creature). Each X marked on the map is a possible area in which the monster can be encountered. Each time a character can see an X, roll a d4. On a 1, the monster is there, ready to chase the characters down. From that point on, the monster hunts the characters and does not appear on any other X's.

The monsters can only be killed if they are brought to the furnace and trapped inside.

1: PRISON

"This dark stone room smells of must, mildew, and rot. Six cages line the walls, and skeletons hang by their arms in chains."

There is a lever on the wall of this room that is in the "down" position. It has a fire symbol above it. If the lever is raised, a steel door closes in the furnace as it is filled with flame. If any creatures are in area 5 when the level is pulled they take 200 fire damage. If any creatures try to pull the lever while the family still resides in area 5 they hear them yell out "Stop!". There is a skeleton in each cage. One skeleton, which you can choose at random, has a red key in its ribcage. Any character that makes a successful DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check will be able to see it hanging there. The cages, however, will only open with the blue key located in the Torture Chamber.

2: TORTURE CHAMBER

"The foul stench of death reeks in this room. Several wooden racks, decorated with leather straps and sharp tools, sit in its corners. Old dried blood is spattered on the floors. Though impossible, you swear you can still hear the echoing screams of all the victims who were tortured here."

The blue key hangs from a string at the center of this room. Any character that removes it is attacked by some of the torture devices, which act as two **icicle elementals**, (see appendix B: "The Sunderdome" however they aren't immune to cold damage and appear as swords.) The sharp tools spring to life and attempt to shred the one that holds the key.

3: INITIATION ROOM

"In this room, several old wooden chairs are neatly set into four rows. In front of the chairs stands a pedestal, with a chalkboard behind it."

On the pedestal is a green key. When it is grabbed, all of the chairs fall over backwards, clattering to the ground. The sound of this alerts the **Snatcher**, if your chosen villain is “Them,” or the **Barkwood Stalker**, if your chosen villain is the hangman’s tree. (See appendix B for more information on either monster.)

4: HOLY ROOM

“This small room contains rusty sets of armor that bear the insignia of the Dusk Lord—one of which holds a key in its hands. On a pedestal at the opposite side of the room is an old tome. It is open to a page somewhere in the middle that reads, in large text, ‘Read me, and the Dusk Lord shall come to your aid.’”

In the hands of one of the suits of armor is a yellow key. But as soon as any characters enter this room, the armor springs to life, as two sets of **animated armor** (see appendix B: Whisper’s of Wispy Peak) attack the characters. The holy symbols of the dusk lord emblazoned on the sets of armor could work as a way to escape the darkness without requiring a holy symbol.

THE ANGEL OF DEATH

If the party reads the holy texts on the pedestal, read the following text:

“A bright, brilliant light shines in front of you. It’s nearly blinding, but through it you see a figure appear: a celestial being in golden armor, bearing white wings and a sword. She points at you and declares, ‘Those who wear the symbols of the Dusk Lord, you have been forsaken. This place known as Redwick has committed crimes against the Dusk Lord and must be extinguished. I have been granted the capability to destroy everything in this place in a holy, cleansing fire—including you all. Say your prayers, and prepare for death.’”

This angel has appeared to perform the Dusk Lord’s will and destroy all of the people and corruption in Redwick. The characters will either need to convince the angel to disobey the Dusk Lord and keep everyone alive, or allow her to follow through with her mission.

There are no rolls, magic, or special abilities that can convince the angel. She will need to be given good reason as to why the town of Redwick should continue to thrive, and why the lives of a few innocents should be spared when compared to the horrors that have appeared in the night. The angel believes that the sacrifice of the townspeople, and the party, is worth the destruction of the horrible creatures in the darkness.

The angel can be convinced if the characters talk about everything they’ve done and sacrificed to save these people, or how the city was innocent in the coming of these dark monsters, or how destruction isn’t the answer to why these creatures appeared.

The angel will not have it both ways, however; she will either refuse to destroy the city, or leave without acting

upon anything—leaving the people and town to their fate. If she is convinced, she disappears, saying, “This is your choice, heroes. Let’s hope it was for the best.”

However, as a parting gift, the angel destroys all of the monsters outside the church. They burn away in radiant, holy fire.

5: FURNACE

“A wrought iron gate blocks the way into what looks like a scorched and blackened room. Six people sit in the corners, cowering in fear.”

These six people are Tommy’s family. They include Techomir (Tommy’s father), Darina (Tommy’s mother), Radik and Oleg (Tommy’s brothers), and Boyka and Vladmira (Tommy’s sisters). They are cowering from the monster that chased them into this room. Luckily, Tommy’s father was smart enough to close the gate. But now they can’t open it. The family also found the rest of the holy symbols—they each have one.

Just before the gate are four keyholes in the walls, each with a different color: red, blue, yellow, and green. If all of the keys are found and placed into these holes, the gate opens, freeing the people—though the monster will still give chase, killing anyone in its path. The characters can kill the monster by luring it into the furnace and pulling the lever, burning it to ash.

Conclusion

Once the characters have brought all the survivors back to the church, one person will still have to remain behind. That is, unless any of the family members were killed or convinced to give up their symbols. There are only enough holy symbols for everyone minus one to escape. Should anyone decide to make that sacrifice, ensure that they have a victorious finale as they bring the party to safety at the wall of shadow outside the church.

When the characters reach the wall of shadow, read the following text:

“The dark wall of roiling shadow stands before you, twisting and shifting. The glowing sigils disappear as you grow closer, and your hand pushes through the barrier. On the other side, you see rays of light from the morning sun piercing through rain clouds. Glades of grass and distant mountains bring you relief. You’ve survived Redwick. The nightmare is over.”

Thus, this adventure is concluded. However, this does not have to be the end! Old Redwick is still cursed into darkness. Perhaps the characters could look to uncover more answers as to why this happened. Maybe another city was also cursed—or, in the event of a very dark turn... maybe they escape Old Redwick only to discover that this curse has affected *the entire world*.



THEME TAGS

Horror, mystery, occult.

CONTENT WARNING

Skeletons, ghosts, blood, scary monsters, abuse, mind control, decayed humanoids and alligators, hurricane reference, being hunted, madness.

Description

The small town of Mirewood has suddenly gone quiet. Those who venture there tend to never return, and the few who do are seemingly struck with madness, ranting about curses and undead. The Council of the Kingdom has put up a bounty for adventurers to venture to the Mirewood swamps and discover what has occurred there. The first adventure ends with the characters breaking the curse on the town, freeing the captured spirits within. The second adventure ends with the characters facing a deadly creature, a former resident of the town who has been corrupted by dark magics. The last adventure ends with facing down the villain of the story and preventing them from expanding their machinations to the rest of the kingdom.

Background

It has been a couple of months since the small swamp town of Mirewood went silent. No signs of life have been seen coming out of it, and those who dare to venture in either disappear or fall to madness, claiming the place is cursed into undeath. Military expedition teams have already fallen prey to this malevolent force—the Council has run out of options. In a desperate attempt to save their own troops and keep whatever is in the town at bay, the Council has set up watch posts around the Mirewood swamps and put out a bounty for any adventurers willing to enter Mirewood and put a stop to whatever is going on there.

Character Hooks and Motivations

To help involve your players and their characters more in the story, have each character answer the following question: *Why does your character want to free the spirits of Mirewood?*



Alternatively, you can use the table below to give your players ideas for their characters' motivation in the adventure.

- 1 You research the occult, possessing an extensive knowledge of esoteric information.
- 2 You have dedicated your life to wiping out undead scourges throughout the lands.
- 3 You are a professor, skeptical of the nature of curses and undeath, looking for more rational answers.
- 4 You are an investigative journalist, looking for a mystery to uncover, and to share the answer with the world.
- 5 Someone you know, a family member or friend, resided in Mirewood, and is now among the vanished. You wish to find them.
- 6 You are a mercenary, and the Council is offering more coin than your typical mission. Seems like a good profit.

Villains

The villains for “The Lost Spirits” are inhabitants of the Mirewood swamps, each having ties to the land and their own motivations as to why they would want to curse and kill the townspeople of Mirewood. Both lean into necromancy, but from two very different ways.

Thatticus Shorn

(Villain Option #1)

Thatticus is a necromancer who has dreams of becoming an all-powerful lich. Though he is not powerful enough to become one yet, his cursing of Mirewood is his first step toward achieving that goal. Due to childhood traumas, he sees himself as a hero and desperately wants to achieve that. However, in the process, he has succumbed to the madness that is the cost of his necromantic knowledge, and has become a cruel man with no care for the living anymore. He cannot be reasoned with, his mind solely devoted to bringing every living being under his control and into perpetual undeath. Choose Thatticus if you want a more technological, unreasoning madman as your villain.

Beria the Vile

(Villain Option #2)

Beria is an ancient hag of the Mirewood swamps, with deep ties to the history of the land. The townsfolk have angered her by disturbing her territory and hunting grounds, and her curse is a retaliation for that. She is a petty and vain creature, more than happy to cause misery to others just for the fun of it. Unlike Thatticus, Beria can be reasoned with, and may be convinced to put a stop to her plans if the characters are persuasive enough. Choose Beria if you want the adventure to lean into dark magic and the occult, with a villain who is thoroughly evil, but not unreasonable.

Mystery of Mirewood

(Adventure #1)

Synopsis

The party will be sent to investigate the remains of the cursed town of Mirewood, where every living soul has suddenly dropped dead, and now their restless spirits roam in anger. The party must discover the source of the curse, confront the last living resident of the town, and free the spirits from the purgatory they are currently trapped in.

Introduction

The party meets up at a military checkpoint on the outskirts of the swamp, along the bank of a large river, coming together to assist in the investigation of the disappearances in Mirewood. Soldiers at the checkpoint, which are led by a half-elf named Corporal Alcot, are able to tell the party what has been reported about the town so far—namely, the disappearances, as well as the stories of the few escapees, and their descent into madness and ravings about curses and the undead. After the brief is given, the guards will give the party a small, 30-foot-long steamboat to travel down the river that bisects the swamp, and upon which the town is built.

Wandering Spirit



Navigating the Swamp

Traveling in the swamp is always dangerous, although if the party is able to remain on the river's path, it is generally easy to navigate. However, if they stray from the river's waters and into the thicker swampland, it's incredibly easy to become lost in the maze of waterways and seemingly endless cyprus trees. Finding the path again requires a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Survival) check.

SER NOMINUS NOTE

And make sure to tempt the party to stray from the safe path! Who knows what sort of strange things can be seen through the trees, like will-o'-wisps, or ghostly figures that aren't actually there...

On a failed check, a cursed wisp, controlled by the main villain for the adventure, will attempt to give the *Curse of Drained Vitality* to one of the characters, chosen at random. When targeted by the *Curse of Drained Vitality*, the character must make DC 12 Constitution saving throw. On a failure, whenever the character makes a Strength or Constitution ability check or saving throw, they must subtract a d4 from the roll. This curse ends after 12 hours, or ends early if *remove curse* is cast on the cursed creature. The wisp is impervious to all damage, and, after attempting its curse, it will disappear, leaving the party completely alone in the swamp. Whichever way the party goes after the encounter, they will find themselves in the town of Mirewood.

The Town of Mirewood

When the characters reach the town, read the following text:

"The town of Mirewood is a small hamlet made up of a couple dozen ramshackle buildings, built on both soft earth and on stilts above the murky water, with elevated wooden bridges connecting the different buildings. Amongst the varied structures are a fisher's wharf and a market area, as well as dozens of residential buildings. All of these buildings are made from weathered wood and scavenged pieces of flotsam."

The only other structures, aside from the shacks, are a three-story-tall inn and tavern (Area 3, Lothbrook's Tavern and Inn); an ancient, ruined stone tower (Area 4, Magdalene's Tower); and a small stone church with an adjacent above-ground graveyard (Area 5, Old Mirewood Church).

The Spirits. Scattered around the area are the bones of Mirewood's residents, who seemingly dropped dead all at once. Some are still propped up, frozen mid-action in whatever they were doing when their souls left their bodies; others have simply crumpled to the ground, the bones scattered into small piles. Whenever



the characters enter an area marked on the map (1 - 5) roll a d4. On a 1 or 2 a **wandering spirit** (see appendix B) of a former resident will emerge from their skeleton and attack the characters.

SER NOMINUS NOTE

You can use these restless spirits as a way to build tension for the players, keeping them on their toes while they explore the various areas of the town!

3: LOTHBROOK'S TAVERN AND INN

When the characters approach this building, read the following text:

"This modest three-story building is situated on one of the few bits of dry land in the Mirewood swamps. A wooden sign hanging above the door frame is lazily swinging and barely holding onto its wrought iron post. It reads "Lothbrook's Tavern and Inn". It certainly doesn't look open for business."

Lothbrook's is a family-owned Tavern and Inn and was operated by the once living family, before the curse. The door is unlocked and if the characters enter inside, read the following text:

"The interior of the first floor is made up of a dining area and bar in one large, open space, followed by an enclosed kitchen and store room. The smell of old, rotten food and vinegared wine hangs in the air."

Nothing of interest remains, the food and drinks have long spoiled. A staircase in the dining area leads to the second story. When the characters ascend, read the following text:

"The second story consists of a balcony which wraps around the building, along with doors leading to small accommodations. The tilt of the sagging floorboards only adds to the sad state of the building.."

Access to the third floor is found on a tucked away staircase. When the characters reach the third floor, read the following text:

"This small living space hosts a private kitchen and three bedrooms. The dry scent of decay fills the air as you notice, scattered on the floor, a group of skeletons. Suddenly, humanoid forms lurch out of the skeletons. They cast a deep, sparkling, indigo light across the room. An elven couple and what appears to be their son. Instead of anger, these three individuals eye you with confusion. "Welcome..." one of them whispers."

The ghosts of the third floor of Lothbrook Tavern are the spirits of (most) of the Lothbrooks, a family of wood elves, consisting of parents Vulmer and Vianola, and their young son, Sylvar, who is about nine years old. All three are non-hostile **wandering spirits** (see appendix B).

The Lothbrooks are scared and confused as to what has happened, and do not truly understand that they are dead. Time seems to move strangely for them; they believe it is still the same day they died, despite the fact that in reality it has been months.

Information the Ghosts Know. The Lothbrook spirits share the following information with the party.

- There was a sudden, freezing chill and a bright green light outside, likely coming from the old church. The Lothbrooks were in the living room when this happened, this is when they suddenly became spirits.
- They cannot leave these rooms—the threshold of the door to the lower levels of the tavern is blocked by a strange mist that only they can see, which forces them back into the room should they try to exit.
- When they were alive, they heard about some creature having moved into Magdalene’s Tower a few weeks before the curse fell over the town.
- They have another daughter, Aemily, aged fifteen, who “this morning” left aboard a riverboat, headed to the city for boarding school. Though they believe their daughter to be safe and are more focused on the curse affecting Mirewood.

Magdalene’s
Armor



4: MAGDALENE’S TOWER

Magdalene’s Tower is an ancient and partially ruined edifice located on the outskirts of Mirewood. It was originally built centuries ago by the Holy Witches (see below). The interior of the tower is made up of two levels: the Ground Level and the Upper Floor.

When the characters enter the tower, read the following text:

“The ground level is a large, empty chamber. Faded frescoes decorate the curved walls, depicting mages defending a tower. A hole in the stone ceiling, where a staircase would have led, leads upwards thirty feet. The staircase has crumbled, leaving no obvious way to ascend.”

Any character with a passive Perception score of 11 or higher notices a length of rope coiled up at the top of the hole in the ceiling, kept in place by a piece of wood. The board, which has an AC of 15 and only 1 hit point, can be removed either via a ranged attack, or using another method, such as *mage hand*.

When the party first enters this area, read the following text:

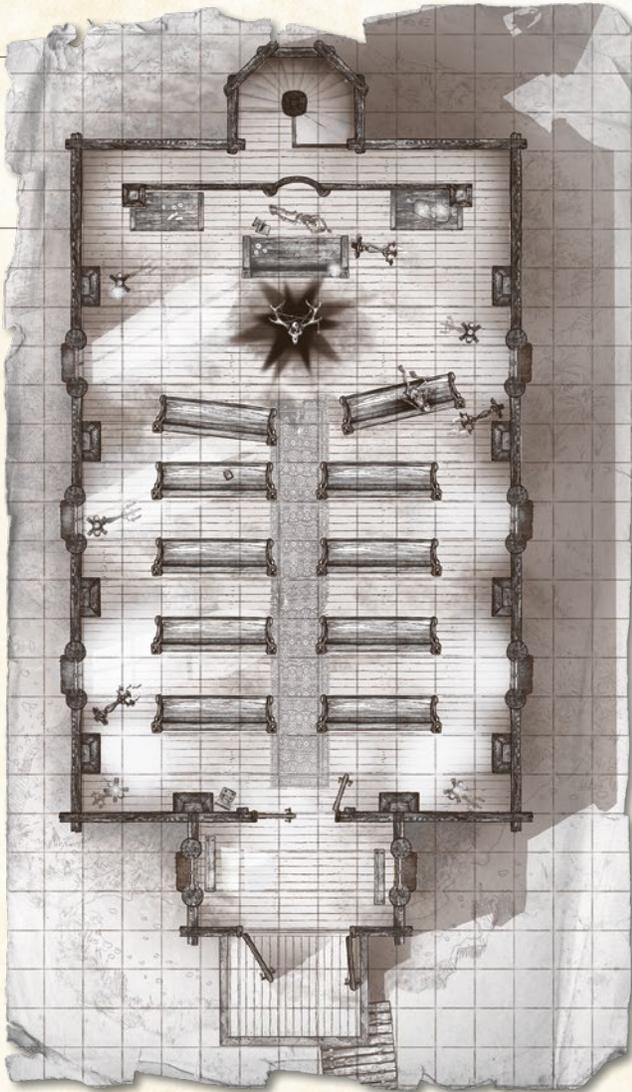
“This upper floor consists of a singular room the size of the tower itself. Most of the walls have crumbled with age, opening the space up to the outside elements. Leaves, mildew, and detritus cover the floors. A makeshift camp has been set up inside, including a bedroll, the remains of a small campfire, and a pile of notes. Slumped against the wall is a skeleton wearing ancient armor, similar to that of the figures in the paintings on the lower level.”

This camp was set up by Marie Anchester, and the pile of soiled notes are diary entries from Marie, one of which is a barely legible letter. Any character can roll a DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check, on a success they find an old bronze key hidden amongst the refuse. On the skeleton is the magical item *Magdalene’s Armor* (see appendix A).

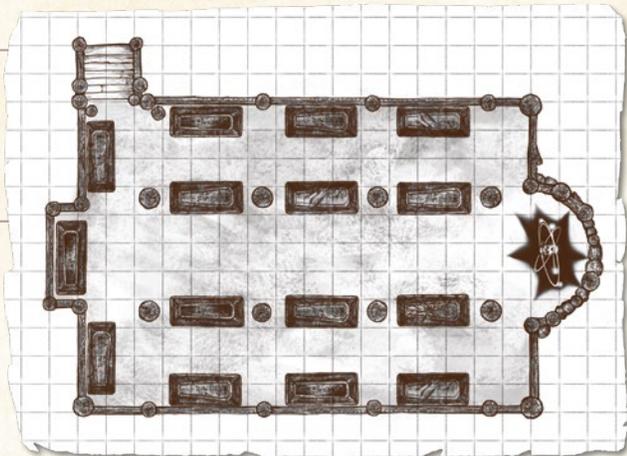
The Letter. Depending on your chosen villain; this letter is written by either Thatticus Shorn or Beria the Vile. The letter has been left exposed to the elements for so long, very little remains legible. However, a character who succeeds on a DC 11 Intelligence (Investigation) check can make out the words “acceptance,” “toil,” “skull,” “bell tower,” and “catacombs.”

The Holy Witches. The Holy Witches were an ancient sect of warrior witches and spiritualists living in the region of the Mirewood swamps a thousand years ago. They were led by the twin sisters Lady Magdalene and Lady Beria, before Beria began using darker rituals and falling to necromantic corruption, becoming the hag she is today. Soon after the fall of Beria, the Holy

CHURCH MAP



CATACOMBS



Witches fell apart, as Beria cursed and killed them all, leaving her twin sister in the order's tower to die alone. Thatticus Shorn is a descendant of one of the few Holy Witches who escaped the destruction of the order, although he himself has begun to fall to the same corruption as Beria.

SER NOMINUS NOTE

In this adventure, both villains can technically exist at the same time, with both having connections to the history and lore of the area. This isn't really important unless you want to make it so. It's highly suggested that only one villain should be the focus of the adventures. However, if you wanted to continue playing after part 3, maybe the party could face the other villain!

5: OLD MIREWOOD CHURCH

The Old Mirewood Church is a stone abbey built a century and a half ago, and is the oldest building in the town aside from Magdalene's Tower. When the party enters this area for the first time, read the following text:

"The central room of the church is the main sanctuary, with a shrine to the gods located at the back, while wooden pews flank the sides of a central aisle. A few skeletons of priests and townsfolk are strewn about the room. A wooden door sits just behind the shrine, likely leading into the bell tower."

A **wandering spirit** (see appendix B), the ghost of Bishop Wirich, wanders the main sanctuary room. He will not converse with anyone, and will immediately become hostile and attack any living being he can sense nearby, crying out, "Blasphemers!"

The door to the bell tower is locked. It can be opened by either using the key found in Madalene's Tower, or with a successful DC 14 Dexterity check using thieves' tools. In the back of the church is a spiral staircase leading to the top of the tower.

When the party reaches the top of the tower, read the following text:

"From this vantage point, the town of Mirewood spreads out before you, its maze of bridges and shacks nestled amongst the dense trees and flowing river. The menacing red glow of angry spirits appears and disappears among the structures, reminding you that you are not completely alone in this place. Hanging above you is an old bronze bell, its toll silent."

If your chosen villain is Thatticus Shorn, then a scroll with glowing green runes has been attached to the bell, stabbed through with a *dagger of the occult* (see appendix A) that holds it in place.

If your chosen villain is Beria the Vile, then a doll made of wicker, cloth, and bone, made to look like Marie Anchester, has been attached to the bell, stabbed through with a *dagger of the occult* (see appendix A) that holds it in place.

Once the dagger is removed from the bell, the item it has pinned there will turn to dust, breaking the hold the villain has over Marie Anchester.

MIREWOOD GRAVEYARD

Located next to the church is a graveyard made up of a couple dozen above-ground tombs. Attached to the church itself, within the graveyard grounds, is a crypt leading down into the catacombs of the church.

In order to end the curse on the town, the party must destroy the skull and crystal. What happens next in this area is heavily dependent on your chosen villain. If your chosen villain is Thatticus Shorn, run the “Marie Anchester: Undead” section. If your villain is Beria the Vile, run the “Marie Anchester: Cursed” section. For more information on Marie, see “The Last Mortal” section below.

MARIE ANCHESTER: UNDEAD

When the characters enter the catacombs for the first time, read the following text.

“You descend into the cramped stone room, its ceiling and walls held up by arched pillars. Nestled in the recesses of the walls are ancient sarcophagi, their sides intricately carved with reliefs depicting warrior spellcasters in battle against dark forces. Their lids feature sculptural reliefs of the person whose body resides inside. At the back of the room is an old shrine, the centerpiece of which is a sculpture of a star flanked by two crescent moons. However, the shrine has been desecrated. Instead of offerings, a dark idol has been placed upon it. The idol looks to be some strange contraption, a skull with a black gem embedded in its forehead, with wires and machinations twisting in and out of bone, emanating a deep hum as it creates its dark magic.”

If the party has not removed the *dagger of the occult* from the bell tower at the top of the Old Mirewood Church, read the following text:

“A young woman sits on the ground before the shrine, rocking back and forth, muttering to herself in a hushed whisper. As you draw near to her, she spins around and jumps to her feet. You notice that her face and body look emaciated and withered. In fact, she looks like a corpse, her face skull-like and rotted. Her eyes are noticeably two different colors—blue on the left, amber on the right. Her surprised expression quickly shifts to one of relief as she calls out, ‘Help! The bell tower! I can’t...’ She stops, suddenly, and her entire demeanor changes. Her body stiffens, and her face goes expressionless. With a cold, empty stare, she speaks again, all emotion drained from her voice. ‘Come any closer, and you will die.’”

Marie Anchester (see appendix B, her creature type is changed to undead) defends the idol with her life, attacking the party while they are in the catacombs, but letting them go if they leave. For more information on Marie, see “The Last Mortal” section below.

However, if the party has removed the *dagger of the occult* from the bell tower of the church, read the following text:

“A young woman paces back and forth by the shrine, muttering to herself. As you draw near to her, she quickly spins toward you, surprised. You notice that her face and body are emaciated, withered. In fact, she looks like a corpse, her face skull-like and rotted. Her eyes are noticeably two different colors—blue on the left, amber on the right. Her surprise shifts to relief, and she runs over to you. ‘Mortals! Thank the gods! He’s not in my head anymore. Did you do that? Doesn’t matter, you’ve got to break the idol! I still can’t get myself to do it, but it must be done!’”

Marie will no longer be under the villain’s control, and will allow the party to destroy the idol. In fact, she insists on it, as she did not know what it did and feels horrible for what she and the rest of the town have suffered.

The party can find a *potion of ghost step* (see appendix A) nestled within the shrine, an old offering to the forgotten god of the Holy Witches.

MARIE ANCHESTER: CURSED

When the characters enter the catacombs for the first time, read the following text.

“You descend into the cramped stone room, its ceiling and walls held up by arched pillars. Nestled in the recesses of the walls are ancient sarcophagi, their sides intricately carved with reliefs depicting warrior spellcasters in battle against dark forces. Their lids feature sculptural reliefs of the person whose body resides inside. At the back of the room is an old shrine, the centerpiece of which is a sculpture of a star flanked by two crescent moons. However, the shrine has been desecrated. Instead of offerings, a dark idol has been placed upon it. The idol looks to be a dark totem, consisting of a skull with a dark black gem embedded into its forehead, placed between the antlers of deer’s skull, held aloft by twine and sinew.”

If the party has not removed the *dagger of the occult* from the bell tower at the top of the Old Mirewood Church, read the following text:

“A young woman sits on the ground before the shrine, rocking back and forth, muttering to herself in a hushed whisper. As you draw near to her, she spins around and jumps to her feet. She holds a staff made of gnarled wood with various talismans hanging off of it, including bones and feathers. Her eyes are noticeably two different colors—blue on the left, amber on the right. Her surprised expression quickly shifts to one of relief as she calls out, ‘Help! The bell tower! I can’t...’ She stops, suddenly, and her entire demeanor changes. Her body stiffens, and her face goes expressionless. With a cold, empty stare, she speaks again, all emotion drained from her voice. ‘Come any closer, and you will die.’”

Marie Anchester (see appendix B, her creature type is changed to humanoid) defends the idol with her life, attacking the party while they are in the catacombs, but letting them go if they leave. For more information on Marie, see “The Last Mortal” section below.

However, if the party has removed the *dagger of the occult* from the bell tower of the church, read the following text:

“A young woman paces back and forth by the shrine, muttering to herself, while a staff lays on the ground next to her. As you draw near to her, she spins towards you, surprised. Her eyes are noticeably two different colors—blue on the left, amber on the right. Her surprise shifts to relief, and she runs over to you. ‘Mortals! Thank the gods! She’s not in my head anymore. Did you do that? Doesn’t matter, you’ve got to break the idol! I still can’t get myself to do it, but it must be done!’”

Marie will no longer be under the villain’s control, and will allow the party to destroy the idol. In fact, she insists on it, as she did not know what it did and feels horrible for what she and the rest of the town have suffered.

The party can also find a *potion of ghost step* (see appendix A) nestled within the shrine, an old offering to the forgotten god of the Holy Witches.

The Last Mortal

Marie Anchester is the last surviving mortal in Mirewood. Marie was a resident of the town of Mirewood a few years ago, although a social outcast—many of the other townspeople saw her as “tainted by dark spirits” because of her heterochromatic eyes. Of course this was not the case at the time; her unusual eyes were simply the product of a genetic mutation and caused no actual issues. However, due to this mistrust and ostracism, Marie was forced out of the community as a teenager, living alone in the harsh swamps for a few years before being approached by either Thatticus Shorn or Beria the Vile, depending on your chosen villain. They convinced her to work for them with promises that if she did so, she would earn the respect that she so craved from the village. However, this was a lie, merely a way to gain her trust before the villain slowly corrupted her mind, forcing her to fall to their own magic, turning her into their puppet. She moved back into Mirewood for a few weeks while preparing the effigy that would curse the town, hiding away in Magdalene’s Tower.

Roleplaying Marie. Marie herself is shy and awkward, having had little to no socialization due to being an outcast from society. She herself also feels incredibly bad for what she was convinced and forced to do to the town, and puts all of the guilt on herself.

By the time the party finds her, if she is still under the effects of the villain’s magic, she is a puppeted servant for them, though an unwilling one. If your chosen villain is Beria the Vile, Marie has been charmed into

following her orders. If your chosen villain is Thatticus Shorn, Marie is an undead puppet, though only loosely under his control. In either case, while under either villain’s control, Marie is forced to do exactly as the villain compels her to, losing all sense of self and emotion, willing to defend with her life the shrine she was made to construct. Upon meeting the characters, she is only able to get out a few words of her own before the control takes over, leaving her helpless and only able to act at the whim of her master.

Conclusion

If you want to conclude the adventure here, read the following text:

“As the curse lifts from the town, the spirits of Mirewood break away from their purgatory and are free to leave the mortal plane, now able to rest peacefully.”

If you want to continue the adventure into part 2, “*Hunt for the Lost Daughter*,” let the characters advance to 2nd level, and read the following text:

“As the curse lifts from the town, most of the spirits of Mirewood break away from their purgatory and are free to leave the mortal plane. However, a group of spirits exit the town’s tavern, looking around, confused, before hurrying toward you, calling out for assistance once more...”

Marie Anchester





Hunt for the Lost Daughter

(Adventure #2)

Synopsis

After releasing most of the spirits of the town of Mirewood from their cursed purgatory, the party is approached by a group of spirits, the Lothbrook family, asking for help in finding their lost daughter, Aemily. However, Aemily has been Mire-Cursed (see her stat block in appendix B), and now stalks the crashed riverboat she left town on, hunting down anyone who steps aboard.

Introduction

When you are ready to begin the adventure, read the following text:

“As the party exits the catacombs of the Old Mirewood Church, they are greeted with the sight of dozens of ghostly figures moving about the town, embracing each other in joyous celebration of being released from their bonds. Over time, each ghost disappears, moving on and leaving the mortal plane. However, one family continues to wander, faces etched with concern.”

The Lothbrook family, owners of the Lothbrook Tavern and Inn, are searching for their eldest child, Aemily Lothbrook. As soon as they spot the party, they quickly approach them, asking for assistance in discovering her whereabouts. The group of three spirits innately feel that there is something wrong with Aemily, and they are stuck in the mortal plane until they can find her. They tell the party that the day the town fell to the curse, Aemily left a few hours before it struck. She did

so aboard a riverboat named the *Belle of Orlea’s*, headed downstream, where she was going to get a private education at a boarding school in the city.

If Marie Anchester is still alive, she will sheepishly admit to placing an idol on the ship, another of her orders from the main villain. She doesn’t know what the idol does, but says that she put it in the storage room of the riverboat, and that whatever happened there would only be stopped by destroying the idol, just like in the catacombs.

The Lothbrook family also suggests that they could assist the party in helping find Aemily. If the party allows it, the three ghosts will each possess one of the characters, supplying them with the following traits:

Ghost of Vulmer Lothbrook

Father’s Guidance. Once per turn, you can use your reaction to give another creature within 30 feet of you an additional d4 to be used on an ability check or saving throw.

Flaw. Your temper flares easily when your authority is questioned.

Ghost of Vianola Lothbrook

Mother’s Hand. You can use the Help action as a bonus action.

Flaw. You want to protect your party from all that could harm them, getting in the way of their ability to do anything themselves.

Ghost of Sylvar Lothbrook

Brother’s Play. When you take damage from a non-magical source, you can reduce the damage by 1d6. You can use this ability up to three times before you must complete a long rest to use it again.

Flaw. You are afraid of the monsters, real and imaginary, that hide in the dark.

The Belle of Orlea's

This riverboat can be found half-sunken into the murky water of the Mirewood swamps, just an hour and a half travel downriver from the town. When the characters arrive, read the following text.

"As you round a bend in the river, you come upon your quarry. Nestled amongst the trunks of the cyprus trees in the shallow, murky water at the river's edge are the remains of a riverboat, half-sunken where it crashed. The white paint of the layered patio decks is stained brown where the water has lapped up against it. Its metal smokestacks have bent and become twisted amongst the branches of the nearby trees, while the large side paddlewheel has snapped in half."

The characters can board the ship from the Landing Deck, and must make their way to the Storage Deck. Each X marked on the map is a possible area in which Aemily can be encountered. Each time a character can see an X, roll a d4. On a 1 or 3, Aemily is there, lying in wait to ambush one of the characters if they stray too far from the rest of the group.

If the characters have allowed the spirits of the Lothbrook family to possess them, they will immediately feel anxious as they board the ship, and feel the presence of the creature their daughter has become as it gets near to them.

What happened? The *Belle of Orlea's* did not get far from Mirewood before it crashed. When the curse transformed the residents of Mirewood, it also transformed Aemily Lothbrook. Effects of the idol aboard the ship left Aemily "Mire-Cursed" into a twisted and deadly creature. As soon as Aemily transformed into this horrific beast, she began to hunt down and kill everyone on board the vessel, eventually causing it to crash. The creature has now turned the *Belle of Orlea's* into its lair and hunting grounds.

The Mire-Cursed. This creature, a transformed Aemily Lothbrook, will hunt the party as they make their way through the ship, keeping to the shadows and trying to pick off the characters one by one.

However, she cannot be truly killed until the cursed idol is destroyed, taking 2 rounds, or 12 seconds, to reform from the dark magic every time she is reduced to 0 hit points.



Dagger of the Occult

SER NOMINUS NOTE

Make sure the players really feel like they are being hunted! Describe to them the feeling of being watched, of distant sounds like footsteps or a door creaking open, and occasionally the sight of a dark, eerie figure with white pinpricks for eyes, moving across a hallway in their peripheral vision.

1: LANDING DECK

"This deck is mostly empty, aside from a handful of overturned wicker chairs and tables. A staircase takes up the central part of the ship, leading to the upper decks. The forward part of the ship is uncovered, giving open air access to the bow. Toward the back of the ship is an enclosed room with a door to its left. Thick streaks of blood cross the floor from the central staircase to this door."

The door to the back of the boat, leading to the stairway to the Storage Deck, is located here. It can only be opened with the key found in the Wheelhouse, or via a successful DC 20 Dexterity check using thieves' tools.

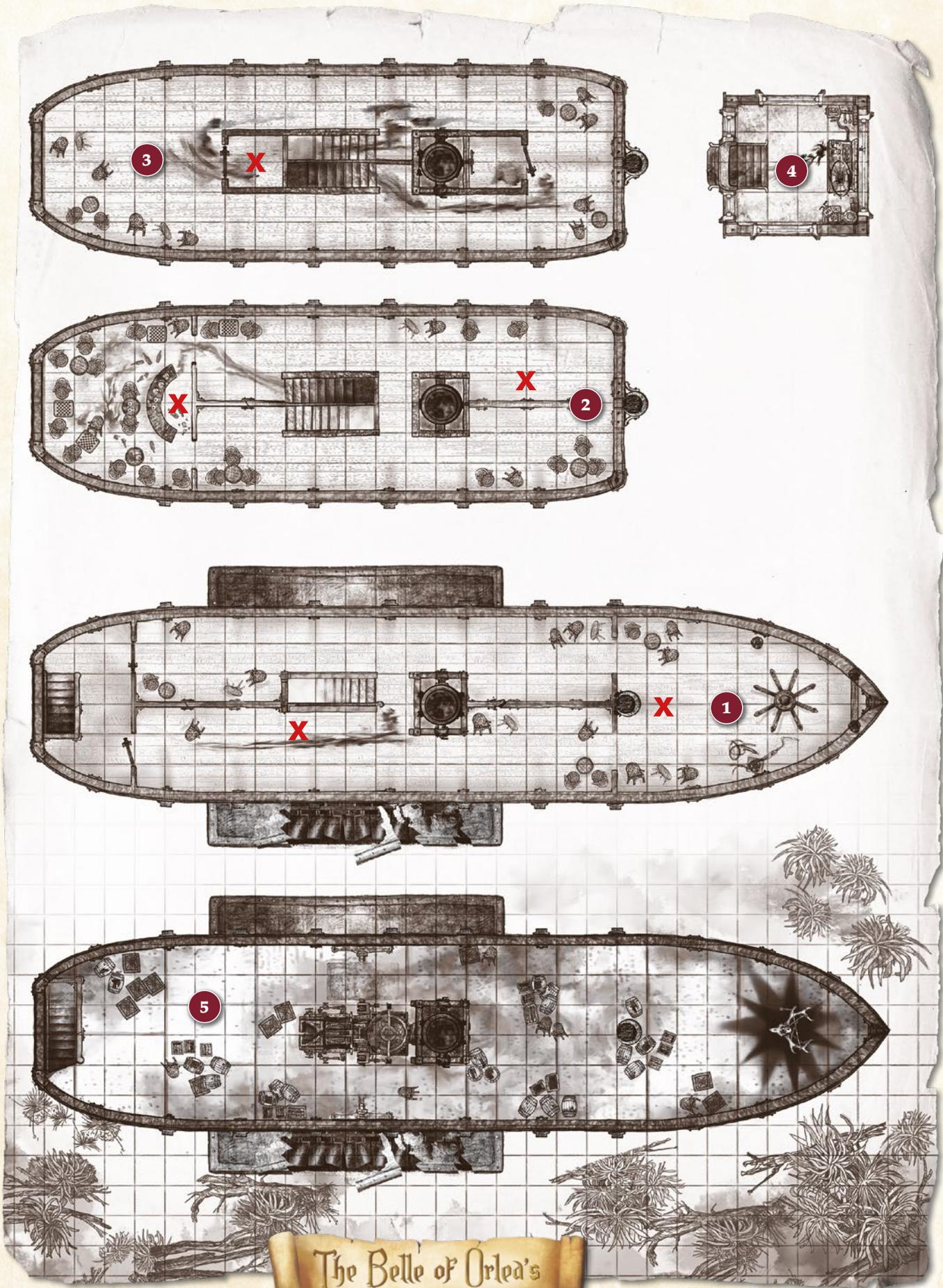
2: LOUNGE DECK

"Most of this deck is a wraparound patio, with overturned tables and chairs scattered about. At the back of the ship is a bar area, including a counter with dozens of bottles of alcohol behind it. Drinking glasses and ingredients for mixers are also kept here, though many of the bottles are shattered and have spilled their contents. Tables with various board games, including a chess and checkers set, fill the space, along with a few lounge chairs. Blood is smeared throughout the bar, trails of it leading down the stairs, toward the level below."

This deck was the lounge deck for the ship, where guests would relax by the bar, drink, play games, and smoke cigars. If **Aemily** (see appendix B) appears at the ambush location at the bar, she will hide beneath the counter, waiting for almost all of the characters to leave before attacking the last one. If any fire touches the floor around the bar, the area alights with flames as the spilled alcohol ignites. Any creature which moves within 5 feet of the bar takes 3 (1d6) fire damage.

3: TOP PATIO DECK

"This deck is mostly empty, aside from a few wicker chairs that have been knocked over. A small hallway with two doors on either side is located towards the front of the deck. Streaks of blood run from both doors, leading to the stairway and back down."



The Belle of Orleans

This deck was primarily an observation deck for the guests aboard the ship. The room closest to the front of the ship is a janitor's closet that contains various cleaning supplies, such as a mop, bucket, and broom. If **Aemily Lothbrook** (see appendix B) appears in this location, she will be waiting above the character nearest to her, holding onto the ceiling before dropping down behind them and closing the door, attempting to isolate the character. The second room on this level is completely empty, aside from a ladder that leads up to the Wheelhouse.

4: WHEELHOUSE

"This deck is only made up of a small room overlooking the rest of the ship. The ship's steering wheel and an engine speed control are the only objects in the room. Dried blood splatters the floor and wheel, while a bloody handprint marks one of the windows. Hanging off of one of the wheel's handles is a key."

The top deck is the smallest deck, made up only of the Wheelhouse, where a skeleton key for the ship is located.

5: STORAGE DECK

"Behind the door is a staircase that leads down to an area below the waterline of the ship. The blood streaks continue down the steps, leading deeper into the hull. Carefully, you follow them to the deepest part of the ship. Much of the room is partially flooded, going up to three feet deep in some spaces. Large crates and barrels are stacked upon one another, scattered about the room. This cargo, along with the machinery and engines that power the giant wheels on the sides of the ship, forms a zig-zagging maze. At the far end of the storage hold, towards the bow of the ship, a faint glow, the only light down here, can be seen emanating from behind the boxes."

The lowest deck is the storage deck, which is completely open and filled with crates and boxes. This is where the cursed idol is located.

If your chosen villain is Thatticus Shorn, the idol appears as a black crystal wrapped in wires and bits of feathers and human flesh.

If your chosen villain is Beria the Vile, the idol appears as a claw doll which has been wrapped in feathers and human flesh. The idol is nestled amongst the storage crates toward the back of the space, and hidden within Aemily's nest: a collection of gnawed bones and piles of refuse.

When the party reaches this deck, the creature that was once **Aemily Lothbrook** (see appendix B) starts to become desperate, throwing itself at the characters as a group instead of taking the time to hunt them down separately.

Destroying the Idol. The idol itself is easy to destroy; any damage done to it will break it. However,

the cursed creature Aemily that has become knows that the idol is sustaining it, and so will protect the idol at all costs. Once the idol is broken, the creature shrieks in pain as its life force is ripped away. It falls to the ground and shrivels up. Once the creature is dead, the true spirit of Aemily Lothbrook rises from its body, confused and disoriented, with her memories of what happened feeling more like nightmares than reality. The rest of the Lothbrook family will appear with her as well, leaving the characters if they were possessing them, and happily reunite with Aemily, thanking the party profusely. In return for saving her, the Lothbrooks grant each of the characters a choice of a piece of their essence, allowing them to take on one of the ghosts' special traits—without the flaw—as a permanent feat.

Rewards

The party has a choice of receiving a part of the essence of one Lothbrook, gaining one of these traits:

- **Father's Guidance:** Once per turn, you can use your reaction to give another creature within 30 feet of you an additional d4 to be used on an ability check or saving throw.
- **Mother's Hand:** You can use the Help action as a bonus action.
- **Brother's Play:** When you take damage from a non-magical source, you can reduce the damage by 1d6.
- **Sister's Thanks:** Once per long rest, when you are reduced to 0 hit points, roll a d20. On a 15 or higher, you come back up to 1 hit point.

Conclusion

If you want to conclude the adventure here, read:

"The ghostly apparitions of the family give you all one last smile and a thankful wave. They hold each others' hands before turning away from you and walking forward, disappearing into thin air for parts unknown."

If you want to continue the adventure into part 3, "Vortex of Souls," allow the characters to advance to 3rd level, and read the following text:

"The ghostly apparitions of the family give you all one last smile and a thankful wave. They hold each others' hands before turning away from you, about to leave for parts unknown. However, suddenly, an icy wind picks up, and they lose their footing. Looking around in terror, the Lothbrooks are whisked away. Rushing outside after them, you can see dark clouds forming in the sky, spinning and twirling in the air. Other apparitions can be seen rising from the ground and into this vortex, which is quickly gaining power and strength. The spirits aren't free just yet..."

Vortex of Souls

(Adventure #3)

Synopsis

The villain enacts their final plan and creates a Vortex of Souls, where the Mortal Plane and the Realms of the Dead merge and become one, the party must find their way through the swamps of Mirewood to reach the villain's lair and stop them. In order to do so, a ghostly figure known only as the Ferryman appears, offering to take them to one of two paths, either the Deep Swamps or the Cave of Sorrow. The Ferryman warns the party that each path has its own challenges—one challenges them physically, the other mentally. Once the party makes it through their chosen path, they reach their destination: either the castle laboratory of Thatticus Shorn, or the swamp shack of Beria the Vile. Here they face their foe to cease the Vortex of Souls.

Introduction

After their two curses have been lifted, the villain enacts their final step: they conjure a vortex between the Mortal Plane and the Realms of the Dead, fusing the two, causing the planes to collide and warp one another. Because of this, not only does the world around the characters shift between the material and ethereal, but they must also contend with the denizens of these realms. This vortex originates from an epicenter within the swamps.

If your chosen villain is Thatticus Shorn, the vortex epicenter is the ruins of an ancient castle, which he has turned into his laboratory and lair.

If your chosen villain is Beria the Vile, the vortex epicenter is her own lair, a witch's hut located within the deepest parts of the swamps.

When you are ready to begin the adventure, read the following text:

"As the ghosts of the Lothbrooke family fade away; suddenly a strike of lightning explodes above you and the world around you spins and shifts. For a moment you see an ethereal duplication of the world, layered on top of the real one until it all combines together, forming a new plane around you. The trees become ghostly, gnarls in the wood become twisted faces, and branches become grasping hands for a moment before shifting back into their regular states. A storm of raging souls cascades overhead originating deeper into the swamps."

The direction of the epicenter is easy enough for the party to follow, since the swirling vortex of magic and souls reaches all the way up into the clouds. Unfortunately the party's steamboat was crushed

by a falling cyprus tree during the conjunction of planes, leaving them unable to traverse the swamps easily. However, the Ferryman (see below) is willing to take them further in if they so wish. If the party would rather trudge through the swamps on foot, it takes them little over 3 hours to do. At the end of which, each character must succeed a DC 18 Constitution saving throw or else take one level of exhaustion (disadvantage on all ability checks) until they complete a long rest. In this scenario, they travel through both the Deep Swamp *and* the Caves of Sorrow in order to reach the lair of the villain.

The Ferryman

Read the following text to introduce the Ferryman to the players:

"Paddling up to the shoreline in a large wooden gondola, you see a semi-spectral figure draped in tattered black robes that are adorned with golden edging and filigree. They wear a large black hat with a wide brim which messy hair dangles from underneath. You can only see the shadowy silhouette of their face, though their left eye pierces through that shadow, glowing a deep green."

This individual is the Ferryman. They are an enigmatic character who uses all pronouns. They have no identity other than simply being the Ferryman, or at least none that they can remember. A few rings adorn the Ferryman's hands, including a signet ring, the emblem of which is unfamiliar to the party. The Ferryman stands upon a boat that they push along with a very long staff. They offer the characters a ride aboard their boat to get closer to the vortex, though they can only go so far for the sake of their own safety—the Ferryman does not want to risk being pulled into the vortex himself.

The Ferryman provides the party with the following information:

- There are two paths to the epicenter of the vortex (the villain's lair), and each has its own unique dangers.
- The first path is the Deep Swamps, where vile creatures of the Realms of the Dead lurk. They note: *"All who fail to navigate her twisting roots and splintering vines fall victim to pain."*
- The second path is the Cave of Sorrow, where one might just lose themselves if they are not careful. They note: *"Your minds will be tested in the pitch black of the ethereal void."*

Roleplaying the Ferryman. The Ferryman's general demeanor is serious, yet soft-spoken and chillingly calm. Their voice has an ethereal echo, as if multiple people are speaking in unison. They will refer to themselves using "they," but will not comment if they are addressed as "he" or "she." Once the party decides on a destination, they will take them there, offering only light and cryptic conversation if prompted.

Deep Swamps

When the party reaches the swamps, read the following text:

"The shadows grow deeper and darker the further into the murky swamp you go. The trees grow in height, towering above you, their gnarled branches reaching out like clawed hands, as if trying to grab you. The wind howls through the canopy, making the swamp itself moan in anguish."

If the party arrives via the Ferryman, they bring the party deeper into the swamp, until they reach a denser portion where the Ferryman's boat cannot travel any further. They usher the characters off, wishing them good luck one last time before pushing their boat off of the riverbank and disappearing. As the Vortex of Souls grows stronger, the swamp itself comes increasingly alive, possessed by anguished spirits.

As the party moves through this area of land, have them each roll a DC 15 skill check and have them describe what they do in order to traverse the dangerous swamps. Their level of success depends on how many characters succeed.

Total Success. The party makes it through the Deep Swamps unscathed and unhindered. Each character gains 3 temporary hit points.

Success. While they manage to make their way out of the swamps, each character takes 1d6 slashing damage from branches that clawed at them during the travel. If this damage would bring a character to 0 hit points, they are instead brought to 1.

Failure. The party still manages to traverse through the swamps, but each character takes 2d6 slashing damage from the clawed branches. If this damage would bring a character to 0 hit points, they are instead brought to 1.

Total Failure. Each character takes 1d6 slashing damage from clawing branches and 2d6 psychic damage, as the endless swamps addled their minds and they witness horrors beyond comprehension. If this damage would bring a character to 0 hit points, they are instead brought to 1.

SER NOMINUS NOTE

Make sure to really play up how warped the world around the characters is. Describe how the trees have faces, and their branches are hands trying to grab at them; how figures emerge from the murky water to try to drag them down into the mud; or how the wind itself sounds like whispering in their ears.

After they finish traversing this area, the party makes it to the villain's lair and the epicenter of the vortex.

Cave of Sorrow

If the party arrives at the cave via the Ferryman, they bring the party down the river a ways before reaching a grassy hillock, where large boulders form the entrance to a cave system. They usher the characters off, wishing them good luck one last time before pushing their boat off of the riverbank and disappearing.

When the characters enters the cave, read the following text:

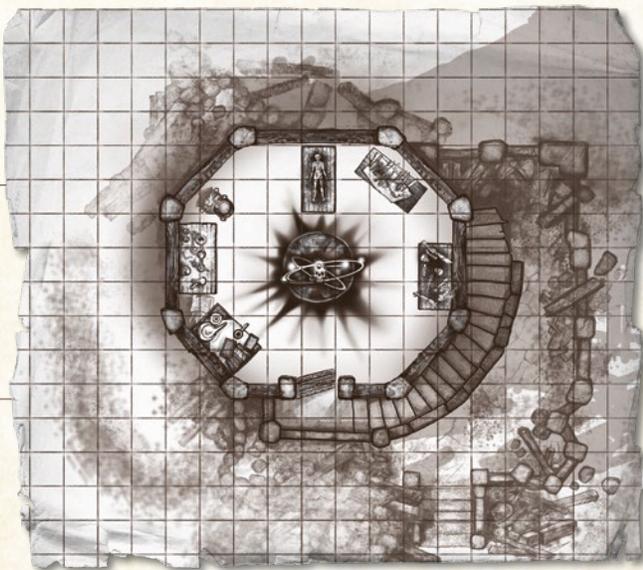
"Dug into the grassy hillock is a small opening, where large stones hold up the earth above it. Etched into these stones are ancient symbols, looking almost like swirling mazes. As you travel deeper, the world gets darker and darker, until everything becomes pitch black. In fact, you cannot see your party members beside you. All you can make out is your own body, and the darkness surrounding you..."

The cave and hillock are actually a burial mound for a long-lost ancient people. The deepest portions of the cave become an opening to an "ethereal void," where visions of nightmarish creatures and scenarios play out before the characters, attempting to render them mad. While they are in this void, the characters will not be able to find an exit, nor each other, until they encounter the nightmare within. While the party traverses the void, have them make a Wisdom saving throw. Consult the madness table below to determine each character's outcome. This madness lasts for 1d10 hours.

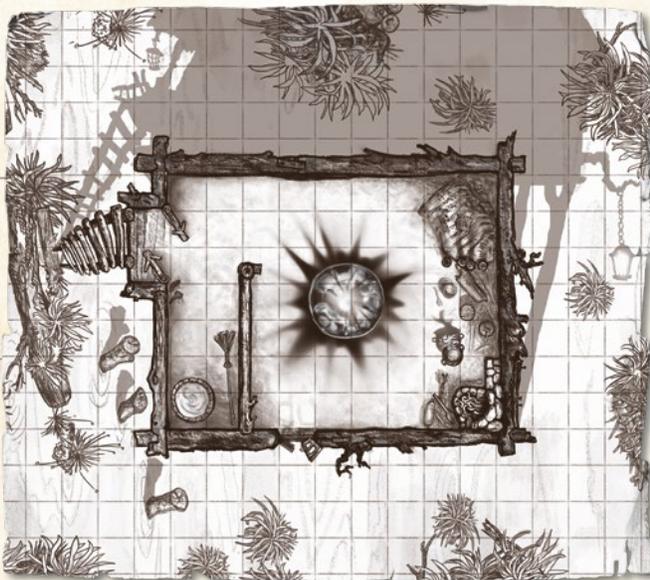
ROLL	OUTCOME
20 or above	The character is completely fine, and carries on as normal.
15-19	The character feels compelled to repeat a specific activity over and over, such as washing hands, touching things, praying, or counting coins.
10-14	The character becomes paranoid about everything, and attaches to a "lucky charm," such as a person or an object. They have disadvantage on attack rolls, ability checks, and saving throws whenever the "charm" is more than 30 feet away from them.
5-9	The character suffers from partial amnesia. They know who they are and retain racial traits and class features, but don't recognize other people or remember anything that happened before the madness took effect.
Less than 5	The character loses the ability to speak.

Once each character has encountered their nightmare, they all emerge from the void together and on the far side of the cave. The cave's exit leads the party right to the villain's lair and the vortex's epicenter.

THATTICUS'S BASE



BERIA'S LAIR



Thatticus's Vortex's Epicenter

The Vortex of Souls whirls from the center of Thatticus's base, where he has built a technological effigy from which the vortex emerges and draws its power.

When the characters reach this area, read the following text:

"The dense treeline opens up before you into a marshy wetland. In the distance, the ancient ruins of a castle stand upon a small hill, with crumbling walls wrapping around a large central tower. From the tower emanates the swirling Vortex of Souls. Rising into it are the twisted spectral figures of spirits in anguish, clearly visible even from this distance. Traversing the marsh isn't difficult, but it is slow going. Inside the compound, an old wooden door stands open at the base of the tower, leading further in."

When the characters enter inside Thatticus's base, read the following text:

"You are greeted with what appears to be a sort of laboratory. Along the sides of the room are desks covered with alchemical equipment, as well as the bones of various creatures—predominantly humanoid ones. An operating table with a humanoid corpse is pushed to the back of the room, though each of its limbs looks like they came from a different creature and were stitched together. In the middle of the room, and seemingly at the epicenter of the vortex, is a machine of sorts, with a metallic structure holding a black crystal skull at its center. Bolts of black and green electricity arc from the skull and into the metal casing, which redirects it upwards and into the sky above. Surrounding this machine is a bubble of shifting and swirling figures—more anguished spirits, forced and layered atop each other, a few hands and faces sticking out of this awful shield. And, before all of this, is a figure. He turns around to face you as you enter the room, a crooked, menacing smile on his pale face. His clothing must have, at one point, been well made, something a nobleman would have worn, but it has now become soiled and tattered and, in some places, blood-stained. Over the top of his clothing, this man has constructed a sort of armor with what appear to be bones. His hair is long and messy, brown streaked with white. However, his most outstanding feature is his face. Most of it appears normal, if a little gaunt; however, a large portion of his left side is rotted and decayed, as if he is himself partly a corpse. He looks upon you with menacing amusement before opening up his arms and proclaiming, 'Welcome, foolish mortals! Prepare to die!'"

Thatticus (see Appendix B) attacks any intruders into his base. He is beyond reasoning, deeply entrenched in madness, and sees himself as the only rightful ruler of the dead. As he wants *everyone* under his rule, everyone must die. In order to close off the vortex, the party must defeat Thatticus, which allows the spirits to escape and the effigy vulnerable to destruction.

The Effigy. In the center of this room is the effigy. It is protected by a shield of tormented souls that surrounds it. If a character attempts to pass through this shield, or attack it with a melee weapon, they are unable to, and take 15 necrotic damage. All ranged attacks that target the effigy are knocked out of the air. If Thatticus is defeated, the souls are released and the shield no longer functions. With the shield gone, any amount of damage destroys the effigy.

Beria's Vortex's Epicenter

The Vortex of Souls whirls from the center of Beria's base, where she has built a cursed effigy from which the vortex emerges and draws its power.

When the characters reach this area, read the following text:

“Through the trees, you spot a small shack, raised above the murky water of the swamps. Alligators circle around this shack, though most look strange, with disparate, decomposing parts.”

Three **undead alligators** (see appendix B) swim around the shack. These alligators are undead servants to Beria, and will try to defend her from the party if they get too close to the shack. They can either be fought, or the characters can attempt to avoid the alligators by dashing past them to jump up onto the ladder, climbing up to the balcony themselves. If they attempt to sprint to the ladder, each character must make a successful DC 13 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check to avoid the alligators and get to the ladder safely. Any characters who fail take 7 damage and are grappled by one of the undead alligators.

When the characters enter the shack, read the following text:

“The interior of the shack is fairly small and cramped, especially considering its inhabitant is so large. Piles of refuse and various bits of materials are strewn about, including alligator teeth, bird bones and feathers, and bits of flesh from various creatures—including some that look worryingly human. At the back of the room is a firepit with a large cauldron atop it. Next to that is a small brick oven. Occupying the center of the room is a disturbing effigy made out of the bones of various creatures, including alligators, deer, and humanoids. The effigy seems to pulse with malicious energy, feeding the vortex above with each burst. Surrounding this creation is a bubble of shifting and swirling figures—more anguished spirits, forced and layered atop each other, a few hands and faces sticking out of the shield. The creature which resides in this decrepit dwelling is a large, warped, and ancient woman. She stands well above you, easily 10 feet tall, though her back is continuously hunched over. Her light gray hair is long and thin, reaching to her knees. Her skin is also gray in color, and covered in wrinkles, despite the way it is stretched tightly over her bones. Her face is almost skull-like, and her nose is practically gone. Large horns protrude from her forehead just above her eyes, which are pure white and clouded, though she still seems to be able to see you just fine. She wears a tattered canvas dress adorned with furs, bones, talons, and feathers. She glares down at you with malice but also curiosity for a moment before she speaks. ‘So... you are the ones who have been messing with my plans... I should really punish you for that. But I must be a gracious host. I am Beria the Vile; welcome to my home...’”

Though **Beria** (see appendix B) is malicious and evil to the core, having been fully corrupted by the dark magic she wields, she does still have a sense of self and of self-preservation. Her entire motivation for planning to merge the Mortal Plane and the Realms of the Dead is quite petty—residents of the town of Mirewood disturbed her and encroached on her territory, so she killed them all, and wants to be left alone from now on. Creating the vortex was to be the ultimate deterrent.

Although she is vain and believes she can easily kill the party, there is a chance that they can convince her that this plan will only draw more attention to herself, meaning she will never find peace. If the party does attempt to reason with her, give them time to explain their reasoning and truly convince her. At the end of it, have one of the characters, the one who did the most talking, make a Charisma (Persuasion) check.

Depending on how well you as the GM think they stated their case, choose a DC between 15 and 25. The better their argument, the lower the DC. If the character beats your chosen DC, then Beria will agree with them and dispel the vortex herself, allowing the party to leave if they promise to never come back, and to spread the word that the Mirewood Swamps are hers and hers alone. If the party fails the Charisma (Persuasion) check, or if they do not try to convince her to abandon her plans, then Beria will give them two options: die here, or leave and never come back. If they choose the latter, they can leave the swamps the way they came, and the vortex will remain, slowly spreading, until it envelops all of the Mirewood Swamps and much of the kingdom beyond. If they choose the former, however, the party will have to defeat her in combat before they can dispel the vortex.

The Effigy. In the center of this room is the effigy. It is protected by a shield of tormented souls that surrounds it. If a character attempts to pass through this shield, or attack it with a melee weapon, they are unable to, and take 15 necrotic damage. All ranged attacks that target the effigy are knocked out of the air. If Beria is defeated, the souls are released and the shield no longer functions. With the shield gone, any amount of damage destroys the effigy.

Conclusion

If you want to conclude the adventure here, read the following text:

“As the effigy is destroyed, there is a whirling howl before... silence. The ethereal winds above you come to a halt as the vortex is dispelled. The once warped and shifting landscape settles down and returns to its natural state. It is over, and the spirits that were trapped and lost are now free.”

If you want to continue the adventure past this point, read the following text:

“As the effigy is destroyed, there is a whirling howl before... silence. The ethereal winds above you come to a halt as the vortex is dispelled. The once warped and shifting landscape settles down and returns to its natural state. However, it is not fully over. Once you are able to travel back out of the swamps and reach civilization, rumors of ghosts roaming the lands are on everyone’s lips. It seems that, although the Vortex of Souls is gone, many spirits are still lost in the Mortal Plane. But at least they have hope: you.”



THEME TAGS

Gothic horror, exploration, survival.

CONTENT WARNING

Being hunted, corpse revival, disembodied hands, dismemberment, grotesque transformations, skeletons, suspense, vampires, werewolves.

Description

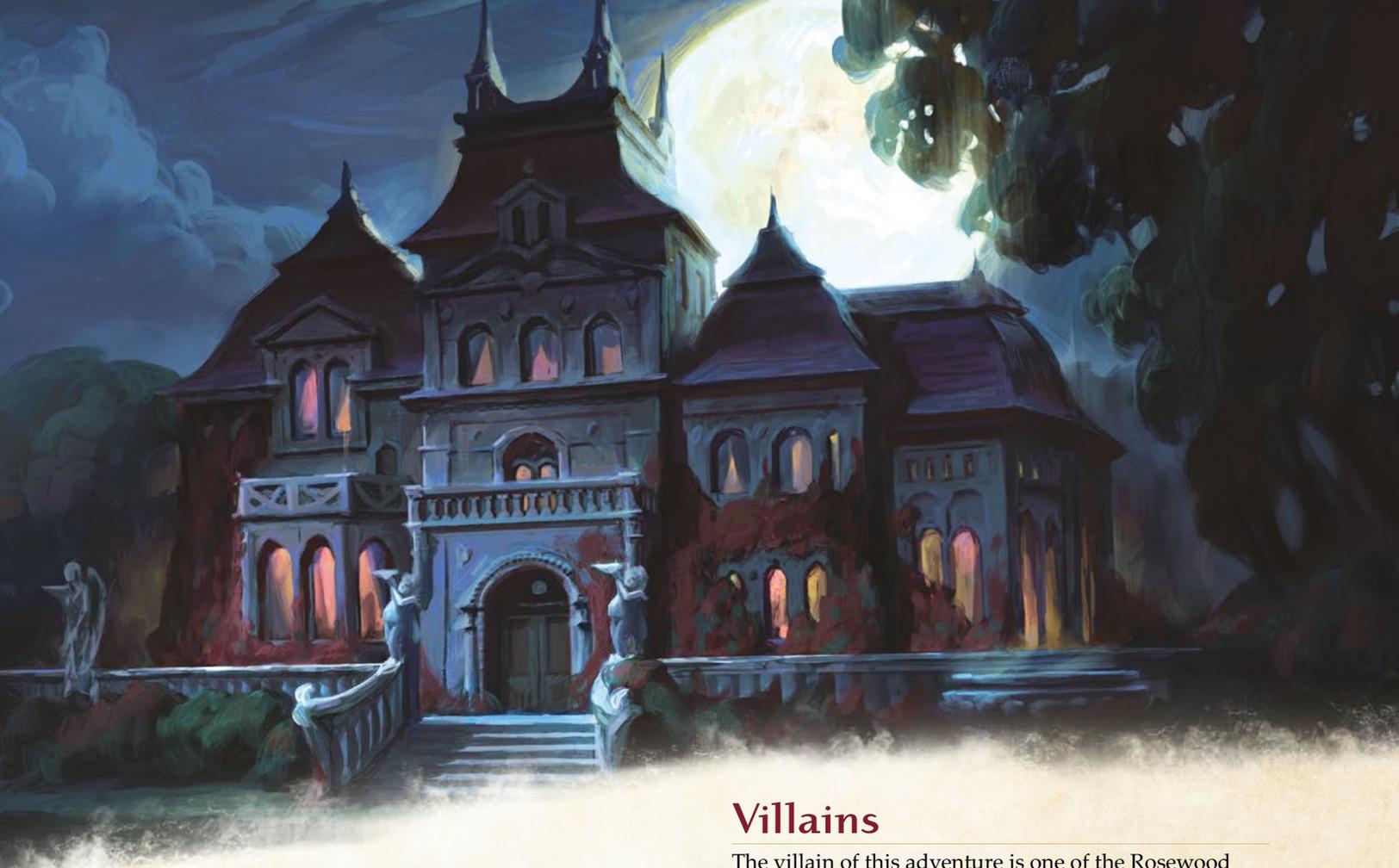
Baroness Rosewood of Ostrova, based in the small land of Dosna, invites the characters to a dinner, and to hear a job offer. When they arrive, they learn not everything is as it seems, and must escape from Rosewood's manor. After escaping, the characters must make their way through the town, avoiding or fighting Rosewood's minions, while in search of an item that will give them the upper hand: the means to resurrect Rosewood's sister. The third part of the adventure is a climactic battle between the party and Baroness Rosewood for the fate of Ostrova and Dosna.

Background

In the land of Dosna, Baroness Rosewood has been keeping tabs on adventurers. She is looking to raise an army large enough to take over the kingdom, elevating her rank from simple Baroness of Ostrova to Duchess of Dosna. She's been turning adventurers into either vampire spawn or werewolves under her control. She sees the characters as her next victims. Little does the party know, they are part of a prophecy made by Rosewood's grandmother. The prophecy foretells that, when Baroness Rosewood takes control of the kingdom, a group of adventurers will end her life. Baroness Rosewood intends on turning them all into her soldiers, wholly subservient to her, in order to avert this prophecy.

SER NOMINUS NOTE

Rosewood's letter to each player mentions wanting the party's help because of their unique abilities. As you are preparing this game, make sure to ask each player for at least one thing that their character might specialize in, whether it be charm, close-quarters combat, spellcasting, or something else.



Character Hooks and Motivations

To help better involve your players and their characters in the story, have each character answer the following question: Why would you have accepted Rosewood's invitation?

Alternatively, you can use the table below to give your players ideas for their characters' motivations in the adventure.

- 1 You've heard of people going to Rosewood's and not returning from the jobs she gives them. You're curious as to what happened to them, and what her job entails.
- 2 You're a mercenary for hire, and completing a Rosewood job would be incredible for your reputation.
- 3 You're using this job offer as an opportunity to end her yourself.
- 4 You have an enormous debt, and though people have been disappearing from Rosewood's manor, the job pays better than any other. What else could you lose?
- 5 You're a minor noble in the land of Dosna, and you believe that doing a favor for Baroness Rosewood might reflect well on your family.
- 6 You lived in poverty your entire life, and this might be your one opportunity to get back on your feet.

Villains

The villain of this adventure is one of the Rosewood sisters. Both of whom exist within this adventure, however your choice determines which sister betrayed the other. For example, if you choose Catalina Rosewood as your villain, then her sister, Althea, was killed (and vice-versa). However, both Rosewoods are cursed in different ways. As such they have built a different army to act as their subordinates.

Althea Rosewood

(Villain Option #1)

Althea Rosewood is a vampire empress, jaded by an old betrayal. She aims to turn any adventurers coming near Ostrova into vampire spawn both to avert a prophecy that tells of her demise, and to raise them as an army to take what she considers hers: the land of Dosna. Choose Althea as your villain if you want a vampiric, more traditionally power-hungry villain.

Catalina Rosewood

(Villain Option #2)

Catalina Rosewood is a werewolf who wants to gain power to destroy the land of Dosna. She blames the duke for the death of her lover, Wesley, and of her sister, Althea. Catalina intends on destroying his kingdom in recompense. She cares not for the prophecy, but intends to use the adventurers to fuel her army of lycans. Choose Catalina as your villain if you want a more emotional motivation behind your villain's destructive desires.

One Bloody Night

(Adventure #1)

Synopsis

The party has been called to dinner by one Baroness Rosewood. Though the party believes this to be simply a dinner, the Baroness has different plans: to turn them into her subordinates. During the meal, a man who traveled with the party is attacked by the baroness, and the party must escape the mansion, using the baroness's weaknesses to keep her at bay while they gather their equipment and find their escape.

Introduction

“Rain falls on this quiet night. You have each been called to Rosewood’s Manor for the opportunity of a simple job. The carriage comes to a stop in front of a huge home. This two-story stone building towers over the rest of the small town of Ostrova. The black wooden double doors are intimidating, and the barred windows are stained red. The driver of the carriage steps off and says, ‘Well, c’mon then. Baroness Rosewood is waiting for ya.’ He walks ahead, ushering you to the doors.”

The carriage driver is **Zenrick Bramblevale** (see appendix B), a shaggy-haired, middle-aged halfling under the employ of Baroness Rosewood. Zenrick is a family friend of Rosewood, and once saved her from being kidnapped long ago. He has remained loyal to the woman since, and she has let him remain unturned in exchange for his service. He is aware of Rosewood’s plans, and—blinded by their shared past—he would like to see them through for her. He leads the party through the foyer and into the dining room, where the party will meet the baroness. If the party inquires as to why specifically the baroness has called for them, he responds, “She has a need for a talented bunch like you; I don’t know specifics, but yer exactly who she’s looking fer.” A successful DC 18 Wisdom (Insight) check reveals that, while he isn’t lying, his loyalty to Rosewood seems incredibly strong, and he’s sure that your arrival will benefit her.

Alongside Zenrick, the party is accompanied by Leo (who uses the **commoner** stat block), a young male half-orc who wields a greatsword and crossbow. Leo is unsure of Rosewood’s intentions, but wants to hear her out, hoping her offer will be a way to provide for his family after his father’s death.

1: THE FOYER

“As Zenrick leads you into the foyer, you marvel at the height of the ceiling. All around the room, stone pillars rise all the way up to meet it. On the pillars are large tapestries which depict bloody battlefields, with paintings of mangled corpses. Wall sconces cast a dim, sickly light around the room. A bored woman, clad in what appears to be guard’s armor, approaches you as you enter. ‘Please leave your weapons with me. They will be returned to you upon your exit,’ she states. This is clearly her only task in this mansion.”

If your chosen villain is Althea Rosewood, the bored woman is a **spawn of Althea** (see appendix B). She confiscates any weapons on the characters, including spellbooks and arcane focuses. She takes them upstairs to the storage room (Room 5) and locks them in a chest. She only retrieves them if explicitly asked by Althea Rosewood.

If your chosen villain is Catalina Rosewood, the bored woman is a **lycan of Catalina** (see appendix B). She confiscates any weapons on the characters, including spellbooks and arcane focuses, and keeps them on her person. She stores everything in her *bag of holding* (a magical bag with an extra-dimensional storage space that can hold up to 500 pounds of equipment without getting heavier) and only returns them to the characters if explicitly asked by Althea Rosewood.

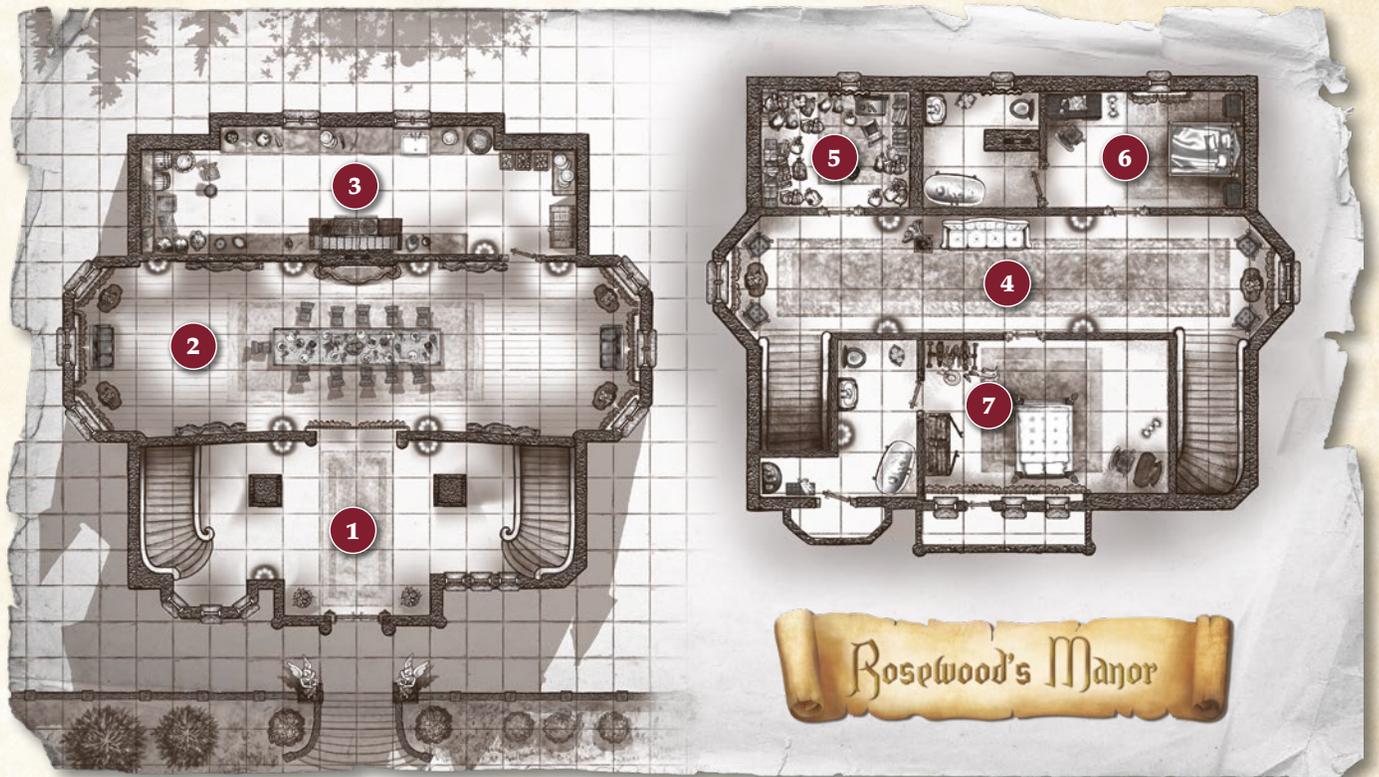
Any character can try to hide a weapon or similar item in their clothing or armor. In order to keep it, that character must succeed on a Dexterity (Sleight of Hand), Dexterity (Stealth), or Charisma (Deception) check, with the DC that corresponds to the size of the item they are trying to hide:

- Tiny item (coin, dice, ring): DC 10
- Small item (dagger, bottle, wand) DC 15
- Large item (sword, crossbow, book): DC 20

Meeting Baroness Althea Rosewood

If your chosen villain is Althea Rosewood, read the following text:

“Sitting at the head of the large wooden table in the center of the room is a beautiful elven figure, her long red hair styled into intricate loops and coils along the end of her jaw. A green gem pendant that matches her eyes hangs on a shimmering golden chain around her neck. Her lips are painted a deep maroon, making her pale skin appear even more like smooth porcelain. A black corseted lace dress envelops her from collar to floor, where the train gently brushes the ground. She smiles warmly to greet you, lifting a gloved hand toward the remaining seats at the table.”

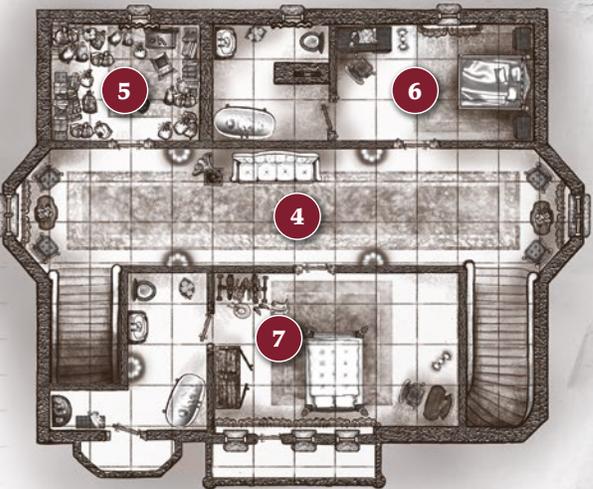


Althea Rosewood (see appendix B) sits at the table. The grin on her face appears genuine, and she welcomes the party to her manor, motioning for them to sit for dinner. Leo takes up one of the seats closest to Baroness Rosewood. Offering the party a large banquet of meats and drinks, she lauds their skills and avoids speaking of the job she has in store for them, telling her guests that she'll gladly discuss it after dinner, and not to worry about it for the moment.

One of the plates brought out with the food is made up of a glassy, reflective material. As soon as Rosewood sees it, she shoves it back into the hostess' hands, bellowing, "Get that foul thing away from me; I can't bear reflections!" The hostess hurries back to the kitchen. Althea sees shame in the fact that she can no longer see her own reflection, and mirrors are a terrible reminder of that.

There are a few ways a character can pinpoint something off about the whole situation:

- With a successful DC 17 Wisdom (Insight) check, they note a cold and calculating confidence behind Althea's words.
- With a successful DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check, they realize that there are no guards in the room.
- With a DC 15 Investigation (Intelligence) check, they notice the room's blackout curtains, which match those in the foyer.
- With a DC 15 Wisdom (Survival) check, they notice small bloodstains on the floorboards.



"As the meal comes to a close, Leo speaks up: 'Alright, dinner has been nice and all, but I have a family back home. Why the hell are we here?' As he puts his hands on the table and stands, he flinches—he's accidentally sliced his finger on a knife. Althea looks toward Leo, and her smiling expression turns wild-eyed as she sniffs, grabs his hand, and bites down. Leo screams out in pain and attempts to stab Althea with his dinner knife in a panic. The knife simply recoils off her skin, and he falls to the ground, unconscious."

At this point, Althea turns on the party. Have the characters roll initiative.

SER NOMINUS NOTE

Make sure to emphasize the fact that the knife stabbing into Baroness Rosewood did nothing to her. This is not a fight the party can win yet! They need to exit the dining room, find their stuff, and attempt an escape. Try to make the party aware of just how dangerous Rosewood is. If the characters decide to fight her anyway, have her take down the first aggressor and allow the party a chance to drag them out, perhaps as she takes a moment to investigate Leo's body.

Meeting Baroness Catalina Rosewood

If your chosen villain is Catalina Rosewood, read the following text:

“At the head of the large wooden table in the center of the room sits a beautiful elven figure, her fingers playing with hair that falls past her shoulders in smooth red waves. Her green eyes take you all in as you approach. A silvery drape of fox fur covers her shoulders. Tufts of that same luxurious fur decorate the well-crafted, deep brown leather garments that hug her form. An ornate golden dagger sits sheathed on her hip, catching the light like the many polished buckles and studs adorning her armor. She smiles warmly to greet you, lifting a gloved hand toward the remaining seats at the table.”

Catalina Rosewood sits at the table, bearing a smile that appears a bit sad, and she welcomes the party to her manor, motioning for them to sit for dinner. Leo takes up one of the seats closest to Baroness Rosewood. Catalina greets the party warmly, offering up a large banquet of meats and drinks, seemingly excited to make their acquaintance. Any character who makes a successful DC 13 Wisdom (Insight) check, however, discerns that she is feigning this excitement, and couldn't really care less about their presence in the manor.

As the food is brought out, Catalina seems to recoil as one of the plates is placed. She motions to the hostess, calling out, “Who brought a silver plate in here? You know I can't stand those! Get it out!”

A different hostess rushes in from the kitchen and grabs the plate, hurrying away.

The baroness turns to the party. “Apologies, but the hostess knows not to bring that here, and rules are rules after all.”

She avoids speaking of the job she has in store for the party, telling them she'll give them more details after dinner, and not to worry about it for the moment. There are a few ways a character can pinpoint something off about the whole situation:

- With a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Insight) check, they detect a sad but calculating tone to Catalina's words.
- With a successful DC 17 Wisdom (Survival) check, they notice claw marks scattered about the room.
- With a successful DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check, they catch the smell of wet dog.
- With a successful DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) check, they realize that nothing in the dining room is silver.

“As the meal comes to a close, Leo speaks up: ‘Alright, dinner has been nice and all, but I have a family back home. Why the hell are we here?’ As he puts his hands on the table and stands, he flinches—he's accidentally sliced his finger on a knife. Catalina's smiling expression turns wild-eyed as she sniffs the air and wolf-like hair grows across her entire body. Leo screams out in pain as Catalina grabs his hand and bites down. In a panic, Leo attempts to stab her with his dinner knife, but it simply recoils off her skin. Catalina rips Leo's hand from his body, and he falls to the ground, unconscious.”

At this point, Catalina turns on the party. Have the characters roll initiative.

SER NOMINUS NOTE

Make sure to emphasize the fact that the knife stabbing into Baroness Rosewood did nothing to her. This is not a fight the party can win yet! They need to exit the dining room, find their stuff, and attempt an escape. Try to make the party aware of just how dangerous Rosewood is. If the characters decide to fight her anyway, have her take down the first aggressor and allow the party a chance to drag them out, perhaps as she takes a moment to investigate Leo's body.



Escaping Rosewood

If your chosen villain is Althea Rosewood, she will pursue the party. She is not concerned with moving quickly, as she knows that Zenrick has chained the front door with a *magical lock* (see appendix A), but she is certain to keep them in her sight, intending to corner them. Have her move half her speed towards the party on each of her turns. Scattered throughout the building are sheet-covered mirrors that have not yet been removed from the manor by Althea's handmaidens. Any character can reveal a mirror as a bonus action on their turn. Whenever Althea is able to see a mirror, she reels back and tries to find another way around to chase the characters.

If your chosen villain is Catalina Rosewood, she will quickly pursue the party. She uses her entire movement each round to catch up to the party, as she intends to corner them wherever they may go. Scattered in drawers throughout the manor are silver trinkets that, like the mirrors, have not yet been cleared out by Catalina's handmaidens. When Catalina is within 20 feet of silver that she can see, she recoils at the idea of it touching her and tries to find another way around to chase the characters.

Once the party has repelled either Rosewood three times, she retreats to whichever floor of the manor the party is not on. If Rosewood and the party once again wind up on the same floor, she finds them after a short time, and resumes the chase.

Whichever Rosewood sister you have chosen as your villain, she perks up at the smell of blood. If any creature within the manor takes damage, Baroness Rosewood will enter a frenzy, immediately rushing toward the bleeding individual.

Finding Zenrick

Zenrick has the key to the locked door. The door is magically locked and cannot be opened except with this specific key. Zenrick hides in Baroness Rosewood's room, hoping the party will not find him there.

2: THE DINING ROOM

"The dining room contains a large dining table, surrounded by eleven chairs, and is dimly lit by sconces on the walls. Tapestries of previous barons and baronesses of Ostrova hang on the walls, draping all the way to the ground. Unfinished plates of food sit on the table, growing cold."

If the party is being chased by Rosewood when they enter this room, they can attempt a Dexterity (Stealth) check against her passive Perception score to hide from her behind the tapestries. They can also find tableware and glassware.

3: THE KITCHEN

"The kitchen is brightly lit by sconces along the walls. A freezing chest can be found on the right side of the room. A large counter space holds various produce and stacks of plates. A water basin sits in the corner. It appears to have been recently filled. You see butcher knives hanging on the wall, some of which appear to have been recently used."

If a character drinks from this basin, they find that the water tastes bitter, but raises their senses, granting them advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks for the next hour. The butcher knives hanging on the wall can be used as daggers if a character decides to take one.

If your chosen villain is Althea Rosewood, a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) or Intelligence (Investigation) check enables any character who goes looking to find the reflective plate used to serve meats earlier in the day.

If your chosen villain is Catalina Rosewood, a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) or Intelligence (Investigation) check enables any character who goes looking to find the silver platter used to serve meats earlier in the day.

4: THE LOUNGE

"Coming up the stairs to the second floor, you find yourself in a lounge area. The oakwood floor is covered by a long, velvety red carpet that runs the length of the room. A couch sits against the wall between two of the doors, a record player beside it. Two windows, one on either side of the room, let in a small amount of light, but appear to be barred shut."

The lounge acts as a large living room and leads to the three rooms on the second floor. If the record player is played, the music alerts Rosewood to the party's location, and she immediately heads that way. The party can use this as an opportunity to sneak past her and move to the first floor.

5: THE STORAGE

"This unlit storage room contains a scattering of dusty burlap sacks. You can tell nobody has been through the contents of this room in ages, and in the back you spot a large object covered by a sheet."

This unlit storage room contains various bags of clothing and basic survival gear. A large window in the back of the room has been barred shut. In this room is also a mirrored vanity desk covered by a sheet. Inside this vanity desk are a silver necklace and 48 cp. If your chosen villain is Althea Rosewood, the characters' gear sits alongside these bags in a pile, carelessly thrown in. Any gear that the party handed over to the guard at the door is in this pile.

6: THE GUEST ROOM

“As you enter the guest bedroom, one of the first things you notice is a comfortable-looking bed just before you. The silken sheets are currently being cleaned by a very unenthusiastic guard. To one side, there is an end table topped with a small assortment of objects, including a glittering item and, beside it, a crumpled piece of parchment. A small sliver of falling light struggles to pierce through the heavy curtains, while the rest of the room is kept lit by flickering candlelight.”

The guest room, lit by sconces, appears to be a simple bedroom. A large bed sits beside an end table. The bed is soft, and the drawers on the end table are empty, though on the top sits 10 gp, a hand mirror with a silver handle, a crumpled note, and a quill and ink.

The same bored guard the party encountered earlier is currently cleaning this chamber. Though they do not care much for the party being here, they know there will be trouble if the characters are allowed to move freely, so they move to restrain them.

If your chosen villain is Althea Rosewood, the bored guard is a **spawn of Althea** (see appendix B), and the note on the table reads the following:

“She is dangerous. We didn’t know that she was a monster. A vampire. The moment she caught a whiff of blood, she was on him. It seems to draw her near. They are dead, bled dry, gods save us. The only thing that seems to hold her at bay are mirrors, so if anyone finds this, I hope your luck is better than my own. I fear I am already a dead man. — H”

If your chosen villain is Catalina Rosewood, the bored guard is a **spawn of Catalina** (see appendix B), who carries a **bag of holding** with the party’s equipment inside. The note in the drawers reads the following:

“She is dangerous. We didn’t know that she was a monster. A werewolf. The moment she caught a whiff of blood, she was on him. It seems to draw her near. They are dead, torn apart, gods save us. The only thing that seems to hold her at bay is silver, so if anyone finds this, I hope your luck is better than my own. I fear I am already a dead man. — H”

7: THE BARONESS’S ROOM

“As you step into this chamber, you find what you imagine to be the baroness’s room. In the center is a large bed, surrounded by curtains hanging from the posts. A vanity table sits in the back corner, the mirror removed. A black wardrobe stands in the corner to the right of the bed.”

The baroness’s room contains a large bed, surrounded by curtains. A vanity table can be seen in the back corner, a large mirror over it. A black wardrobe to the right of the bed holds her clothing.

If the party succeeds on a DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check, they find that the wardrobe appears to have been moved recently. If they move the wardrobe, they find Zenrick behind it. He attempts to escape, but gives up if he is injured, and panics, begging the party to protect him from Rosewood’s incoming frenzy, even going so far as to offer the key to the foyer if they promise to protect him.

If the party searches the vanity table, they find a necklace with a pearl pendant, worth 110 gp.

If your chosen villain is Althea Rosewood, they also find a compass that seems to point in a random direction, with a small clock on the inside. In reality, this compass points towards Althea’s coffin, located in her grandmother’s crypt.

If your chosen villain is Catalina Rosewood, they also find a coin that appears silver but isn’t on one side. The heads side of the coin depicts a wolf, and the tails side depicts a moon. This coin, when flipped, reveals to the party which form Catalina Rosewood is currently in, landing on the heads side if she is in her werewolf form and tails if in her human form. A character can discover what the artifact does by succeeding on either a DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) or Intelligence (Investigation) check.

Conclusion

After getting the key from Zenrick, the party must return to the foyer and unlock the chains, earning their freedom.

If you would like to end the adventure here, read the following text:

“As you exit the manor, you find the carriage still parked out front, horses still hitched. You get in and ride away from the manor and the city of Ostrova, hopefully to never confront Baroness Rosewood again.”

If you would like to continue the adventure into part 2, “Home Free?” the characters advance to level 2, then read the following text:

“After you exit the manor, you cross the bridge to enter the town of Ostrova proper, rain falling above you. Ducking into an alleyway, you have a moment to briefly collect yourselves as you survey the city. You may have escaped the manor, but you are not yet home free.”





Home Free?

(Adventure #2)

Synopsis

Free of the baroness's manor, the party has made their way into the small village of Ostrova. The village has been overrun by monstrous hands created by a deceased mad wizard, and a skeleton named Merret holds the key to the party's salvation, a way to defeat Baroness Rosewood for good. The party must survive the onslaught of hands, explore the town of Ostrova, and complete the ritual to summon Rosewood's sister, the one thing that can kill her.

Introduction

"Ducked in the alleyway, scanning the terrain, you find yourself wondering where to move next. As you peek out and look on the roads, you notice that they seem suspiciously empty, as if the entire village has been abandoned. As you come to this realization, you notice a small hand, cut off at the wrist, scurry across the intersection."

The adventure begins with the party located at point 'X' on the map of Ostrova. Every time the characters move from building to building, roll a d20. With a result of 10 or higher, 1d4 **monstrous hands** (see appendix B) rise up from the ground and attack the party. If the party is in combat with the hands, 1d6 more scurry out at the start of every round. Should the party enter a building, the hands will not follow, as they cannot open the door.

The hands are the creation of one "Zeia Blackthorne," a wizard who attempted to clone herself. The cloning went horribly wrong and, upon her death, recreated only her hand, now sentient in nature. This hand magically duplicates into two once it is killed, making the hands truly limitless in number.

SER NOMINUS NOTE

Have the hands scurry out within 30 feet of the party each round to make it feel like they exist throughout the city, an overwhelming force. The party needs to run from this fight, and making the hands seem limitless is a good way to lead them to that conclusion!

1: WEAPON SHACK

"As you open the door to this dilapidated wooden building, you're greeted by nothing but darkness. A small amount of light from the cloudy sky enters into the single room, revealing a weapon storage. Lines of old weaponry hang on the walls, appearing worse for wear but wieldable."

This building contains most of the weaponry Baroness Rosewood has collected from those she has transformed into her subordinates. Inside, the party can find two longswords, two shortswords, five spears, three clubs, four shortbows, one longbow, two sets of 20 arrows, one crossbow, and one set of 20 crossbow bolts.

2: THE MAUSOLEUM

"As you climb the steps into the old stone mausoleum, you find partially-ruined pews and a shattered stained glass window. The building is dirty, covered in dust, the many tomb doors closed. Sitting in the middle of the room, a shovel beside him, is the skeleton of a man. The skeleton perks up as you enter, and says, 'Hello there! Nobody has come to visit me in ages. Merret Osamin at your service. What can I do for you?'"

The skeleton in the mausoleum belongs to an old adventurer, **Merret Osamin** (who uses the **glowgill skeleton** stat block; see "Shipwrecked" in appendix B). He is a kind undead who welcomes the party with open arms, giving them a place to rest. He asks the characters how and why they've come to the small village of Ostrova. If the party tells him what they're doing there, he will perk up and grab the shovel, digging into a portion of the mausoleum. As he digs, he tells the characters the following:

"There is an old prophecy, one told to me by a friend long ago. A group of adventurers would come to Ostrova and defeat the evil baroness. This would require the resurrection of her sister, to fight alongside the heroes. I happen to have the key to doing so, granted to me by the prophet themself. Please, take it, so I may rest."

The prophecy Merret describes is one told by Baroness Rosewood's grandmother. Merret knows that Baroness Rosewood's old childhood home holds a chest that contains a book dedicated to a single spell: the resurrection of her sister. He does not know more than that, though if asked, he believes the reason the baroness has neither retrieved the book herself nor yet taken the key is because of the countless monstrous hands that roam Ostrova.

If the party asks about Baroness Rosewood's past, Merret has the following information:

If your chosen villain is Althea Rosewood, Merret knows that when she was young and naive, she gave

her heart to a powerful vampire who manipulated her into drinking his blood to join him in immortality. He intended instead to use her status to rise in power. This required the death of her sister, Catalina. Once Althea was turned, he forced her to kill her sister. In her anguish, Althea broke free of his control and killed the one who turned her. Refusing to accept what she had done, she began to gather strength and power as a way to avoid her history. Hearing of the prophecy that foretold her destruction was the last straw, turning her into a selfish creature just like the man that had cursed her into this state of undeath.

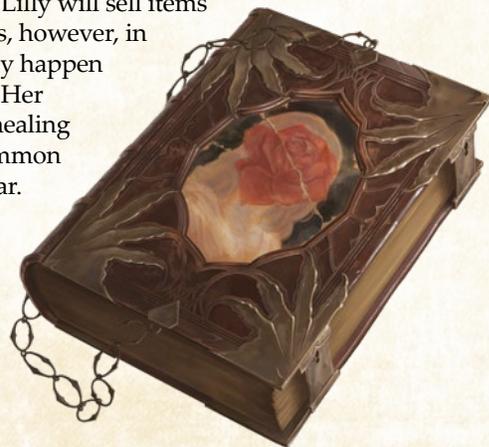
If your chosen villain is Catalina Rosewood, Merret knows that Catalina was close with the duke's son, Wesley, though she was turned away once his father learned of their connection. One day, Wesley left his home to visit Catalina in secret. The two were attacked by a werewolf hired by the duke. The duke's intention was to rid of his family of any dishonor by killing Catalina Rosewood—and his own son. While Wesley died, Catalina was turned into a lycanthrope. In a blind rage, and unable to control her new form, she killed her twin sister, Althea. Catalina blames the duke for Wesley's death and Althea's. She intends to destroy his kingdom in recompense.

4: OSTROVA SHOP

"As you step into this small mercantile, you find a quaint, well-maintained shop. A female gnome stands behind the counter, a smile on her face. 'W-welcome to the Ostrova M-mercantile. What... wh-what can I do for you?'"

The shopkeeper is Lilly Yilly, a forest gnome who has taken up residence in Ostrova. She supplies Baroness Rosewood with anything she needs for her soldiers, though Lilly has no love for the baroness herself. She rarely leaves her shop, for fear of the monstrous hands, and the baroness makes sure that Lilly has food as long as she cooperates. As she's been distanced from other people for some time, with her only interaction occurring during order pickups, Lilly's a bit concerned by the party's appearance, unsure of their purpose. Her anxiety can be detected with a successful DC 12 Wisdom (Insight) check. Lilly will sell items to the characters, however, in fear of what may happen should she not. Her stock includes healing potions and common adventuring gear.

Book of
Summoning



Rosewood's Invitation

Monstrous
Sister



5: ROSEWOODS' CHILDHOOD HOME

"As you approach this building, you find yourselves looking upon a decrepit, abandoned wooden structure. The door is hanging on by its lower hinge, and seems to be slightly open. What was once a collection of paned windows is now space for open air to flow in. You open the door to reveal a one-room building covered in dust, with counters in the back and a ruined mattress to your right."

This building was once the home of Baroness Rosewood, her sister, and their grandmother. If a character succeeds on a DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check while investigating the room, they find a rope to a trap door peeking out from underneath the bed. Any character with a passive Perception score of 15 or higher, or who makes a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check to examine the door, notices that it is trapped with a poison dart. The trap can be disabled with a successful DC 10 Dexterity check using thieves' tools. If the trap is not disabled and the door is opened, the character who opened it must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or take 4 poison damage and become poisoned for 1 hour.

The Chest. Beneath the trapdoor is a medium-sized wooden chest, with an inset lock. This chest is locked by a magical lock (see appendix A), and cannot be opened except by using the key held by Merret Osamin for the party. If the lock is opened, it reveals a book that rests on a small, pillowy casing. This book is a book of summoning (see appendix A) and can summon one being: the grotesque, undead form of Rosewood's sister.

Summoning Her Sister

Summoning Baroness Rosewood's sister takes time, and is a very loud and noticeable process. The summoning takes a total of 5 rounds once begun, and explodes with bright light and magical, ominous chants that can be heard by any creatures within 120 feet. When the summoning begins, three **monstrous hands** (see appendix B) climb through the windows and attack the party. One more hand climbs in at the end of each round. At the end of 5 rounds, the hands scurry away in fear and the Baroness's sister is recreated before the party's eyes.

Conclusion

If you would like to end the game with the party escaping Ostrova, read the following text:

"As you cast the spell, you feel immense power overcome you. Out of nothingness, a large figure forms, appearing as a horrifically mauled version of Baroness Rosewood. One eye is missing, one arm is swollen to three times the size of the other, and the creature stands hunched over, nearly on all fours. The scarred face bellows a deep, distorted scream, and the creature heads toward the village gates. The hands scurrying countlessly around it don't seem to leave a scratch. The figure bursts through the gates, before turning around and heading toward Rosewood's manor, granting you an escape. You have found your way out, and live to tell the tale."

If you would like to continue to part 3, "Mind Your Manors," the characters advance to level 3, then read the following text:

"As you cast the spell from the book, you feel immense power overcome you. Forming, as if out of nothingness, is a large figure, appearing as a horrifically mauled version of Baroness Rosewood. One eye is missing, one arm is grown to three times the size of the other, and it stands hunched over, almost as if on all fours. The scarred face bellows a deep, distorted scream, and begins to move towards the manor."

Lycan
Catalina



Mind Your Manors

(Adventure #3)

Synopsis

After summoning the Baroness's sister, the party must infiltrate Rosewood's manor, overcome her soldiers, and face the Baroness herself. Rosewood will attempt to escape when near death, and the party must chase her down, ending the threat for good.

Introduction

"As you cross the bridge to the manor, following the monstrous form of Rosewood's sister, you find yourselves set upon by her guards. A number of individuals surround you, jumping onto the creature, and are promptly thrown off with a bellowing roar. You watch as the creature that was once Rosewood's sister leaps for a guard."

The party is set upon by four **spawn of Althea** or four **lycans of Catalina** as they make their way to the manor (see appendix B for these creatures' stat blocks). Once two of the four have been defeated, the remaining guards attempt to flee, recognizing that they have no chance to win this fight. Use the **monstrous sister** stat block (see appendix B) for the Baroness's sister.

Inside the Manor

When the characters enter the manor, they find it mostly unchanged from their last visit. The baroness, aware of her sister's summoning, has her guards posted in each room. The baroness herself is located in her own room, ready to defend herself should her guards be unable to stop the party.

Finding Baroness Rosewood

As the party makes their way through the manor, they will come in contact with groups of **spawn of Althea** or **lycans of Catalina** (see appendix B for these creatures' stat blocks). Every time the party enters a new room, they encounter 1d4 spawn of Althea or 1d4 lycans of Catalina. Each group of guards will flee once half of their numbers have been defeated.

Facing Baroness Althea Rosewood

If your chosen villain is Althea Rosewood, read the following text:

"As you step into Baroness Rosewood's room, a flash of lightning passes across the window. She stands beside her bed, baring her fangs. 'How dare you bring my sister back!' she snarls. 'No matter. She cannot stop me, and neither can you.'"

Althea Rosewood will first attempt to attack her sister, angry that she has returned, though her attention will turn to the party members once the situation becomes dire. Once Baroness Rosewood is reduced to 0 hit points, she turns to mist, floating towards the mausoleum. Her coffin rests in her grandmother's crypt, and her body will recover there. The party can see out the bedroom window, and can tell where she is headed. They can also locate the mausoleum with the magical compass in her room. With Althea gone, the magic of the ritual fades and the monstrous form of Catalina returns to death. If the party follows after Althea, they find the Crypt of Martha Rosewood.

Crypt of Martha Rosewood. The door of the crypt opens easily. Inside, they find a small, dusty chamber, a coffin in its center. The coffin can be opened with a successful DC 12 Strength (Athletics) check. Alternatively, multiple characters can work together to open the coffin with a combined strength score of 25 or higher. Inside the coffin is the form of Althea Rosewood. Stabbing her chest with any sharp wooden object will result in her death (see conclusion).



Lycan of
Catalina

Facing Baroness Catalina Rosewood

If your chosen villain is Catalina Rosewood, read the following text:

"As you step into Baroness Rosewood's room, a flash of lightning passes across the window. She stands beside her bed, hair spreading over her body as her face shifts to that of a wolf. 'How dare you bring my sister back?' she snarls. 'I can't stop now, so I'll do what I must.'"

Catalina Rosewood is mostly concerned about her sister's presence, and as such will focus most of her attacks on her, only attacking the party when her sister isn't a priority. When Catalina Rosewood loses more than half of her hit points, she will attempt to escape to the foyer, in order to regroup with her soldiers. If she makes it to the foyer, the party faces her alongside two **lycans of Catalina** (see appendix B).

When Catalina Rosewood starts her turn with 20 hit points or fewer, she spends her turn transforming into a wolf and attempting to escape into the forest, her sister giving chase. The party can follow behind them freely, should they choose to.

The Forest. If the characters follow after the escaping Catalina, end the combat and read the following text:

"As you follow behind Catalina Rosewood and her sister, they speed ahead of you between the trees. Following their steps, you hear two distinct yelps and quicken your pace. Stepping around a couple of trees, you see the form of Rosewood's sister motionless on the ground, with Baroness Rosewood in her human form, clutching at a wound at her side. She looks up at you all, face impassive. 'Go ahead, then... Do what you came to do.'"

When the party finds Catalina Rosewood, she seems to have given up on surviving. Her wounds are fatal. The characters can easily strike down Catalina, or leave her to die of her wounds. However if any character heals Catalina, she is confused by the sudden act of mercy (see conclusion).

Conclusion

If your chosen villain is Althea Rosewood, read the following text:

"As Baroness Rosewood takes in one last gasp, her form begins to melt away, as if into nothing. Taking a deep breath yourselves, you look out of the crypt and notice the rain quickly petering off. You see the sun shining through the cloudline. You have survived, and saved Dosna from a horrific end."

If your chosen villain is Catalina Rosewood, and she was killed, read the following text:

"After Baroness Rosewood breathes her last breath, you let out a sigh of relief when she doesn't rise again."

If Catalina Rosewood was spared, instead read the following text:

"Baroness Rosewood quickly stands, regaining much of her strength. She eyes you with confusion, yet a hint of compassion lingers behind her emerald eyes. In a flash she darts into the trees behind her. Never to be seen again."

Regardless of the fate of Catalina, read the following text after reading the above texts:

"You see light begin to pierce through the treeline. You all hear a soft, 'Thank you,' in your minds, as the still form of Althea Rosewood begins to fade away to nothingness, alongside that of her sister. Soon, nothing remains in the forest besides yourselves. You have survived, and saved Dosna from a horrific end."

Though this might be the end of Baroness Rosewood, the adventure doesn't have to end here! Perhaps the Baroness had accomplices that wouldn't take kindly to her defeat. Or some of her soldiers are still loyal to her cause, and the party will have to hunt them down to ensure they don't follow in her footsteps. The choice is up to you!



THEME TAGS

Seafaring, survival, isolation.

CONTENT WARNING

Mass death, hurricane, skeletons, corpses, scary monsters, heights.

Description

A merchant company is looking to hire adventurers to map uncharted waters for trade routes. However, a sudden storm destroys their ship and the adventurers awaken on a strange magical island filled with otherworldly creatures, secrets, and hopefully; a way out.

Background

An ancient island in the middle of the ocean was once the prison of a gnome artificer by the name of Solomon. What his crimes were and who sentenced him to the island are lost to history. With his arcane prowess, Solomon opened portals to other planes to try and escape. However, the portals remain open. They have

caused creatures of the border planes to invade and spread their influence to the surrounding ocean, sinking any vessels that happen to be nearby. The merchant company known as “Grudd ‘n’ Budd’s” is looking to expand their tea business by finding an easier way across the ocean and through these dangerous waters. They hire the party to take one of their ships along the new route to ensure its safety. However, unbeknownst to any of them, a storm that seems to have originated from the strange island now awaits the ship, meant to keep it away from this new route.

Character Hooks and Motivations

To help involve your players and their characters more in the story, have each character in the party answer one or both of the following questions:

Why do you want to sail the ocean? What do you have to gain from making a bit of coin from a simple scouting job?

Alternatively, you can use the table below to give your players ideas for their characters’ motivation in the adventure.



- 1 You've taken up sailing, working for hire to make money for your family.
- 2 It was always your dream to follow in the footsteps of legendary sailors. This will be your first time leaving your hometown of Windwillow.
- 3 You've recently escaped prison, and there's no better way to evade pesky guards than hopping on a boat.
- 4 Making sure the seas are safe for merchant vessels is something to be lauded for, at least in your eyes.
- 5 You're here as a favor to Grudd, an old family friend.
- 6 You're an employee of Grudd 'n' Budd's, and you're meant to sell tea once you get to your destination.

Villains

The villains for “Shipwrecked!” are the inhabitants of the mysterious island the party will be marooned on. These villains are near opposites in terms of motivations, minions, and leaders. However, they have one distinct thing in common: they are both otherworldly.

Lysander, The Fey Prince

(Villain Option #1)

If Lysander is your chosen villain, the island is inhabited by creatures of the feywild. Sprites, satyrs, and dryads are his royal subjects. Lysander is chaotic, mischievous, and believes himself invincible. He sees the island as his birthright and the party as his playthings. He is more inclined to trick, annoy, and prank the party, rather than kill them—though if they do happen to die along their adventure, he finds it endlessly amusing. Choose Lysander as your villain if you want a more lighthearted story.

Ilvain, The Shadow Queen

(Villain Option #2)

Ilvain inhabits the island with dark beings of the shadowfell. Ilvain is ruthless and violent, and she hates trespassers. She sees the island as her fortress, and anyone from the outside stains and ruins it. She hopes to reap the souls of the characters to make them her eternal servants. Choose Ilvain as your villain if you want to challenge your players and add a touch of horror to this adventure.

Shores of the Border

(Adventure #1)

Synopsis

After shipwrecking on a strange island, the party follows the footprints of a mysterious figure who saved them from the wreck. They are led to an old hut, a stone door, and the aftermath of the battle. Using these three locations, they must uncover the password to the riddle on the stone door. Once inside, they'll defend against a barrage of outsiders under the villain's control, as they attempt to get a portal functioning to escape.

Introduction

When you're ready to begin the adventure, read the following text:

"It's been two days at sea. You are all aboard the Rose Petal, a sailing ship that works out of the tea trading company known as Grudd 'n' Budds. Budd Brighteyes, a dwarf tea merchant, met you all in his offices in the dock town of Windwillow and explained you'd be accompanying the crew to the port city of Larson's Landing. Upon your return, he would reward you each with 800 gold pieces. The route is new, and no one has any idea if it is safe or not. Which is why you're here, with six more days 'til land, according to the navigator. But over the course of the day, dark storm clouds roll in from the horizon, and not long after, a raging storm has thrown the ship off course. The crew, in a panic, tries their best to keep the ship together. But waves as big as mountains batter the hull, and lightning strikes the mast, setting the Rose Petal ablaze. Through the chaos, you see an island in the distance, with what appear to be glowing lights. This moment is interrupted by a sudden slam as the ship topples sideways into rocks. You each are launched from the deck and into the cold ocean."

Have each player roll a DC 14 Constitution saving throw. Keep note of who succeeds and who fails. Then read the following text:

"You each awake on the beach of an island, your skin baking in the hot sun. Someone seems to have saved you from the wreck. A swirling mass of cloud covers the sky— everywhere except for directly above you. The island appears to be in the eye of a storm."

The characters who failed the previous Constitution saving throw are all reduced to 1 hit point. Those who succeeded are unaffected.

SER NOMINUS NOTE

The introduction to this adventure is not the most important part, as the true adventure lies in escaping the island— which is why the introduction is made up of flavor text explaining the backstory. Hopefully, this should provide the players with enough context to put them on the right path. There's an island to explore! And... crash on.

The Beach

On the beach, the characters awaken to find that most of their equipment is gone. Allow each character to keep five items from their inventory that would have been kept on their person. Along the beach, they find heavy set tracks, made by a creature who dragged them from the ocean back to the shore. The prints lead into the island's jungle.

Nothing else of note is on the beach, other than a large wooden crate, fifty feet away and half-buried in the sand. The crate is partially opened and contains an assortment of brass gears, screws, and metal pipes, all of which are covered in a black dust.

SER NOMINUS NOTE

Your players may be asking, "Where's all my stuff?!" This adventure is all about survival and being practical—and resourceful! The characters did get shipwrecked, after all. Allowing them five items from their inventory lets certain classes keep their essentials. If you'd rather not run the adventure this way, no problem. Keep in mind that if the characters are in possession of all of their belongings, the adventure moving forward may be a bit easier than normal—but if that's fine with you, then go for it!

Finding food. Characters can catch crabs or fish along the beach with a successful DC 10 Wisdom (Survival) check. There aren't many options for shelter or clean drinking water on the beach, however. The party will have to move into the jungle to find such things.

The Jungle

The footprints in the jungle are not difficult to track and do not require any checks to follow. They push so deep into the ground that they've trampled everything they walk across. They eventually lead past, but do not enter, an old, dilapidated wooden hut.

Solomon's Old Hut

"This old building is built with reeds, chopped wood, and bramble. The stilts that keep it off the ground are still intact. The same cannot be said of the roof. The entirety of this hut has been nearly destroyed by the elements. With a little bit of fixing however, it could provide shelter for the night."

Solomon, the artificer who was banished to this island, built this hut years ago. Solomon is seemingly no longer on the island, and his method of escape may be the characters' only hope. The hut is on support stilts that protect it from the wet ground when it rains. There is a ladder that leads up to the deck. The first character to climb that ladder must succeed on a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw to make it all the way up, as the ladder collapses beneath them in the process. Unless the characters can jump or maneuver 15 feet upwards to reach the deck, they will have to come back later with proper equipment.

When the characters first enter the hut, read the following text:

"Inside this half-wrecked hut are soggy papers, covered with writing and drawings that are half legible; rusted metal building tools; and an old, small bed. On the bed is a strange metal pyramid. It is small enough to fit in the palms of most humanoid hands and is crossed over with indentations, markings, and lines."

A character can pour over the papers and, with a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check, can learn that the papers are schematics to a portal. Whoever drew these up did so to escape the island.

The pyramid on the bed is a magically locked container that can only be opened via the number panel on one side. The combination, the clues to which can be found in other locations, is 1024. Inside the pyramid is a golden key with three teeth and a white cube in its handle, along with a piece of paper that reads, *"Say friend and enter."*

When the characters exit the hut (after investigating its interior), they are stalked by some of the creatures in the jungle.

If your chosen villain is Lysander the fey prince, there is a **satyr** (see appendix B) who plays a tune on his pan flute to entrance and divert the party. Each character that isn't immune to being charmed must succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw, or else dance and fall off the deck, face-planting into the ground and taking 1d6 bludgeoning damage. The satyr laughs hysterically and runs into the jungle after playing his flute.

If your chosen villain is Ilvain the shadow queen, the jungle becomes dark and gloomy, and thousands of eyes stare the party down as they head out. The characters hear many tiny voices whisper their deepest fears. Each character that isn't immune to being frightened must succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw, or become so weary and paranoid that they gain one level of exhaustion.

Following the Tracks

The mysterious tracks continue past the hut and further into the jungle. The characters can continue following them and, over the course of 15 minutes, come to the base of a cliff.

The Cliff and Door

"The jungle breaks to reveal the base of a stone cliffside. The cliff face rises upwards to a height of over three hundred feet. Embedded into the cliff face is a stone door, etched with arcane runes."

The door does not budge if the characters try to open it, but when first touched, magical writing appears upon it. It reads, *"Good afternoon! If you find this door unable to open, then return to the hut. The pyramid will have the key. You know the first digits, and the last are in this message."*

The clue gathered from this message is that there's only one way for the message to know what time it is. If the message is instead read under the cover of darkness it reads, *"Good evening! If you find this door unable to open, then return to the hut. You know the first two digits, and the last are in this message. The four-sided device will have the key."*

The door will only open if someone speaks the words "friend and enter."

Once the doors are open, they lead to the cave interior.

Following the Tracks, Continued

The tracks seem to get deeper near the door, and move west. After five minutes of following, the party comes upon the aftermath of a battle.

"In a small clearing, you see the remains of many strange, otherworldly creatures, along with a large person made of metal. The figure lies on the ground, torn apart and nearly destroyed. Sparks and small fires burn across its body."

One of Solomon's constructs, **SP1RIT** (see appendix B), was left behind on the island and has been dormant for years. After the characters' ship crashed nearby, SP1RIT awoke and saved them from the wreck. To continue to protect them, it walked into the jungle to fight off threats. SP1RIT fought many creatures but was ultimately bested.

SP1RIT is shorting and will cease to function soon, but repeats the following message: *"One... zero... one... zero... one... zero..."* These are the first two digits to the code on the pyramid. If any of the characters thank it for saving them, SP1RIT will add, "Finish what Solomon started."

Slung around SP1RIT's body is also 50 feet of rope, which the characters could use to climb into the shack. If your villain is Lysander, the creatures on the ground are dead moss dryads.

If your villain is Ilvain, the creatures on the ground are dead soul shades.

The Solution

The solution to opening the cave entrance is to first find the numbers “2” and “4,” which make up the second half of the code, by reading the message on the wall under cover of darkness. The first two numbers are “1” and “0,” which are repeated by the dying SP1RIT. This combination opens the pyramid in Solomon’s hut, which contains the paper reading, “*Say friend and enter.*” Saying “friend and enter” opens the stone door.

Cave Interior

“Beyond the door is a large, open cave with a waterfall illuminated by (either moonlight or sunlight). An enormous and clearly aged stone bridge connects the stone from the entrance to a flattened stone pillar. On this pillar is a circular structure made of obsidian.”

This is the portal Solomon created to escape the island. The party must find a way to power it in order to use it. When the party reaches the other side of the bridge, enemies from the jungle attack them.

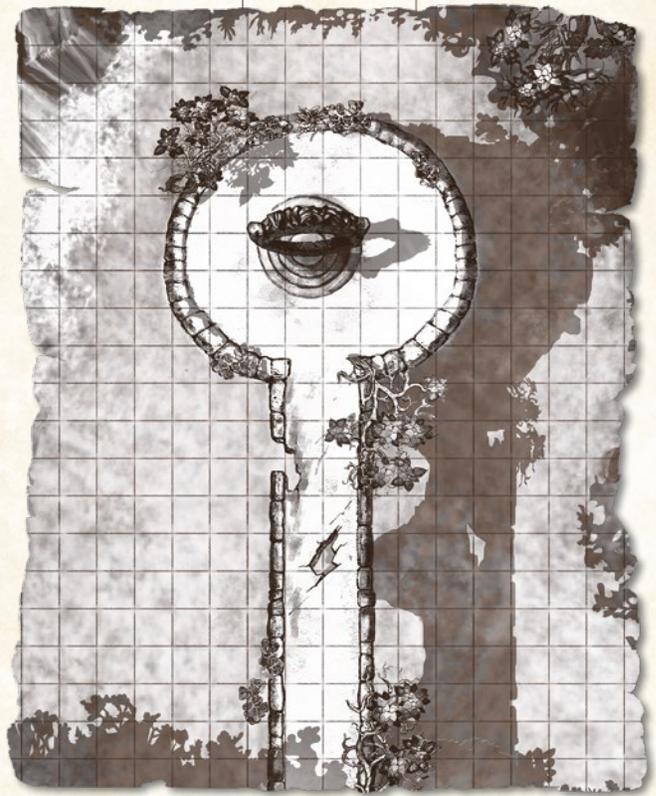
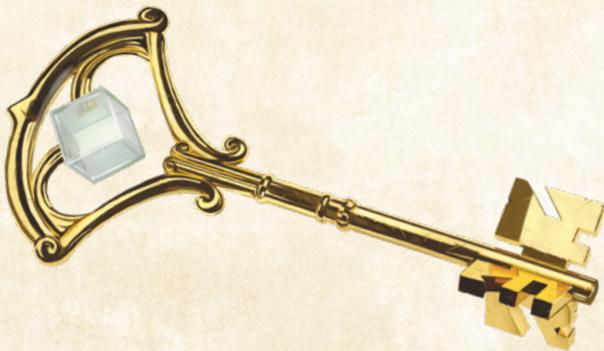
If your chosen villain is Lysander, one **moss dryad** (see appendix B) attacks the party. They see the party as trespassers on the forsaken island and must be killed.

If your chosen villain is Ilvain, one **soul shade** (see appendix B) attacks the party. These shades are tormented beings who take pleasure in killing.

At the end of each round, one additional monster of either type enters the room, crossing the bridge to attack the characters.

The portal can only be activated via the golden key found in Solomon’s Hut. Using the key requires an action, however, due to the complicated nature of the portal and the triple-edged key; the character must also succeed a DC 10 Wisdom or Intelligence check each time they use the key. Once this is successfully done three times, the portal activates.

When the portal activates, a lever springs up on the panel behind the portal. It has a number 1 above it, and a number 2 set below. The party must choose whether they set it to 1 or 2. Keep track of which number they choose.



Conclusion

When the portal comes to life, the characters can step through and escape!

If you’d like to conclude the adventure here, then the characters successfully escape the island. They teleport back to Windwillow, free from maroonment.

If you’d like to continue the adventure into part 2, “Marooned Mysteries,” the characters advance to level 2.

If the party chose “1” on the lever, read the following text:

“You step through the glowing portal, a bright light washing over you. As your vision slowly adjusts, you find yourselves in a large sea cave. A wooden dock lies before you, housing ruined ships. Light from outside pours in, spilling over equally-ruined buildings, covered in foliage. A wooden sign reads, ‘Welcome to Black Sail Skipper.’ You’re not closer to getting off the gods-forsaken island.”

If the party chose “2” on the lever, read the following text:

“You step through the glowing portal, a bright light washing over you. As your vision slowly adjusts, you find yourselves in a small cave. Soft orange lanterns light the slick, stony walls, the floor filled with half an inch of sea water. You’re not closer to getting off the gods-forsaken island.”

Thus concludes the adventure—the story continues in part 2!

Marooned Mysteries

(Adventure #2)

Synopsis

After nearly escaping the island, the party finds themselves either in a small laboratory cave, or in a large sea cave with the remnants of an old village. The characters must find the remaining magical pieces to the portal in order to get it functioning again. The first is a conductor located in the small cave, and the second is a catalyst at the bottom of the ocean, hidden in a sunken ship with a mysterious backstory.

Introduction

In the previous adventure, the party crashed on an island and followed clues left behind by an old artificer who had seemingly escaped the island. They made their way through a portal to escape themselves, but only wound up deeper inland, in either a small laboratory, or a giant cave with a village on the inside.

Whether the party begins their adventure in the village or in the laboratory, they will eventually build a portal to the other of the two locations. They will need artifacts from both to escape the island entirely.



Shadowborn Skeleton

The Village of the Black Sail Skipper

The characters are teleported here if they chose "1" on the portal in the cave from adventure 1. They also teleport here if they teleported from the Laboratory Cave without the catalyst. This village inside the mouth of a huge sea cave was built by the crew of the *Black Sail Skipper*, a pirate vessel. Their ship nearly sank when they were attacked by a privateer ship by the name of the *Brass Phoenix*. They lived in this cave for months, fishing for food and boiling seawater to drink it. The crew started to get sick and hungry, and some of them started having delusions when eating a certain type of fish called a "Glowgill." The Glowgills are fish who ate the phosphorus mushrooms Solomon used to power his portals, which grew underwater in this cave after he left.

When the crew discovered the remnants of Solomon's portal, they tried to get it working. However, the delusional captain was angry at his crew for abandoning their sunken ship, and the crew was subsequently divided by a bloody civil war. In the end, no one ever got the portal working and the crew of the *Black Sail Skipper* died here in this cave.

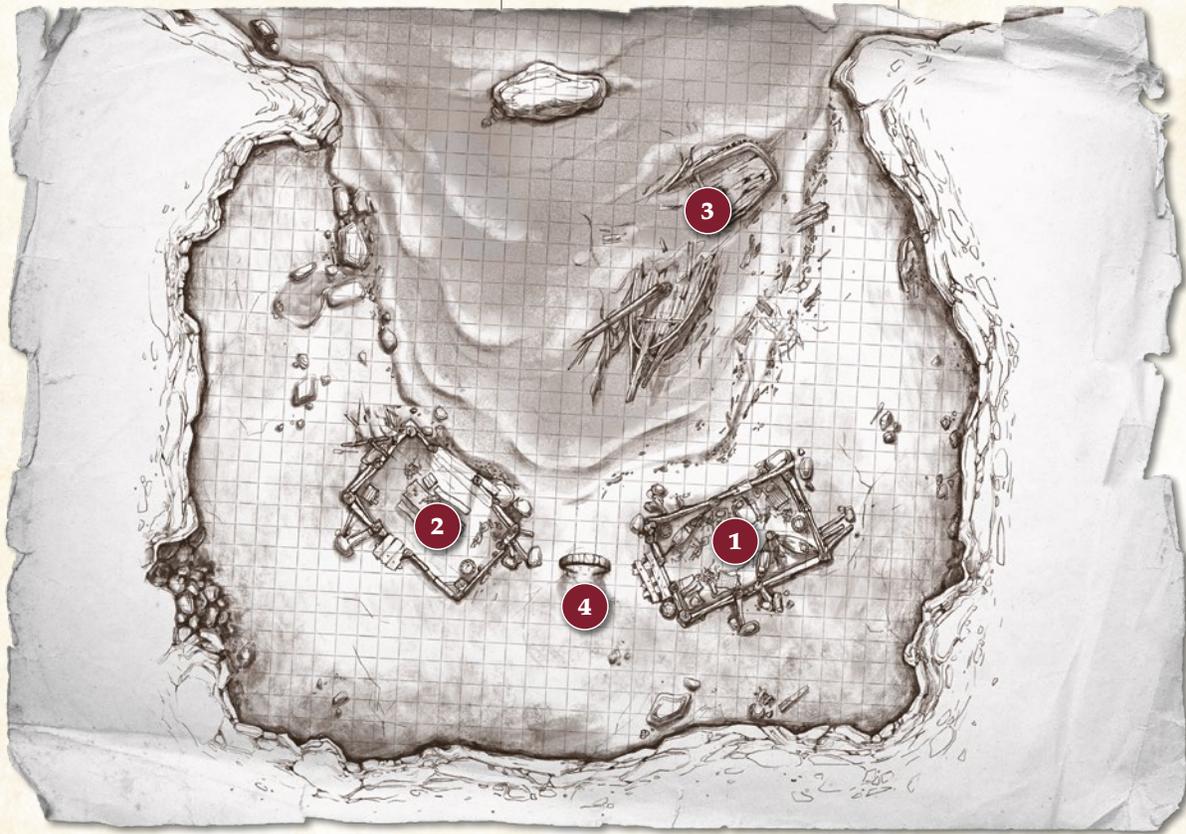
The party will need to find the magical "catalyst" component to power the portal in the center of the town. A crew member by the name of Thurlow tried powering the portal, but the delusional crew killed him. Captain Ulrich "Albatross" Smithe took the catalyst to the bottom of the cave, into his ship, where he drowned.

1: SLEEPING QUARTERS

"Old cots line the walls of this building, and eight skeletons are littered across the floor. The skeletons are pierced through with swords, arrows, and spears, but some of their raggedy clothing remains. Bugs and vermin scatter across the floor when you enter. Etched into the wall of this shack are the words, 'CAPTAIN'S ORDERS.'"

In the hands of one of the skeletons is a note. It reads,

"Day 32, knee finally healed. Found an old portal and some notes left by its constructor. A 'catalyst' powers it which may be this crystal I found. The notes mention a 'conductor'. Yet to find that. Don't have much time, crew's gone crazy. Even Elmond, Greely, and Tillis. It's those glowing fish they all ate. If anyone finds this, stay away from the glowing fish. And if you found this on my corpse, I hope I helped you escape. If not, see you in the great ocean beyond. - Woodstock."



2: EATING HOUSE

The eating house contains the remains of the pirates who ate the Glowgill fish. There are five skeletons in this room, all of which glow a bright blue from the phosphorescent fungus growing off of them. A note is stuck to the wall, pinned there by a dagger:

"THE BLACK SAILS WILL RISE! SOON SEE THE SKIPPER! THE BLACK SAILS WILL RISE, AND WE'LL ALL BE WITH 'ER." Scrawled on the bottom in small text are the words, *"Captain's gone to the ship, he says he's gonna bring back the ship! I wish my stomach would stop hurting..."*

When the characters leave the eating house, the skeletons rise and attack them.

If your chosen villain is Lysander, the characters encounters two **Glowgill skeletons** (see appendix B).

If your chosen villain is Ilvain, the characters encounters two **Shadowborn skeletons** (see appendix B). These skeletons rise from the ground, puppeted by shadows which immediately dull the blue glow of the mushrooms.

3: THE BLACK SAIL SKIPPER SHIP

Deep in the sea cave lies the resting place of both the Black Sail Skipper and its captain. If the characters dive down to the ship in hopes of finding the catalyst, read the following text:

"The clear water is illuminated by dozens of glowing blue fish that erratically swim past you and deeper into the ocean. At the bottom, you see a massive wooden vessel—warped, damaged, and in two pieces. A faint blue glow emanates from what would have been the captain's quarters."

The characters can swim down and find Captain Albatross in the captain's quarters, where his name is written in gold above the door. In his chest cavity is the crystal catalyst that they need to power the portal. If a character catches and eats any of the glowing fish, they become poisoned for 24 hours.

4: THE PORTAL

Once the characters have the catalyst, they can insert it into a slot on the side of the mechanical portal, which brings it whirring to life. If they enter the portal only using the catalyst, they are teleported to the Laboratory Cave.



Spell Cannon



The Laboratory Cave

The characters are teleported here if they chose “2” on the portal in the cave from adventure 1. They also teleport here if they teleported from the Village of the Black Sail Skipper without the conductor. This cave was Solomon’s second makeshift laboratory that he used to build a conductor to evenly spread out the heat from the catalyst, to properly teleport himself away from the island.

However, Solomon already had the catalyst when he teleported out, meaning the characters will have to manually destroy one of the walls in this room in order to escape.

Solomon’s actions here also created a ripple in the magical weave, causing certain wizards to become interested in the anomaly. One such wizard teleported here directly, but his arm was spliced and landed in water, which ruined his spellbook and all his spell scrolls—save for one. He was trapped and died here.

The characters will have to fix Solomon’s “spell cannon” and use the dead wizard’s scroll in the cannon to blast open the wall.

1: LABORATORY

This laboratory has lots of broken old equipment, including tinker’s tools, beakers, glasses, broken goggles, and a prototype spell cannon (see appendix A). Solomon’s notes are also scattered on the table. Two of them are legible. One reads:

“The prototype spell cannon is nearly complete, though I’m still trying to find some gold. If I had that, I could finish the conduit-plating!”

Update: I have not found gold. Oh, well. To whoever finds this: I hope you brought some gold.”

The other reads:

“I’ve finally been able to grow the novae-zelandiae! They aren’t for eating, though; that would cause some serious violent delusions. Their magical glowing properties are exactly what I need for the catalyst. Home, here I come!”

Any character who makes a DC 12 Intelligence (Nature) check to identify the novae-zelandiae will, on a success, recognize them as a type of glowing mushroom.

Any character can also open up the spell cannon and, with a successful DC 8 Intelligence (Investigation) or Intelligence (Arcana) check, find where the missing gold should go.

2: THE PORTAL

The portal in this room has the conductor attached to the side of it.

3: EXTERIOR CAVES

A small ray of light shines through a crack in a pile of boulders, through which any character can peer to see a sea cave, an overgrown village, and another portal. If a *fireball* spell is cast on the pile of boulders, it blows open, allowing the characters to access the village of the *Black Sail Skipper*.

These caves are soaked with water, and a skeleton is slumped against one of the walls. His arm is missing but long grey hair and a matching beard remain. He wears a pointy blue hat, decorated with gold stars, and a brown robe. In the pockets of this wizard’s robes are a soggy spellbook, a *spell scroll of fireball*, and 3 gp. Characters can either attempt to cast the *fireball* spell, or load the scroll into a repaired spell cannon to blast at the wall.

Conclusion

If you’d like to conclude the adventure here, the characters use the conductor and catalyst to activate the portal and teleport off the island, back to Windwillow. If you’d like to continue the adventure into part 3, “Mutually Assured Disposition,” the characters level up to 3, then read the following text:

“The portal whirls to life, the ebb and flow of a magical soup glowing in front of you. As you step in, light washes over you, and you see the rest of the island from atop a tall peak. You’re still here; there’s more to this story. Did Solomon ever truly escape?”

In the likely event that the party ignores the villain’s threats, this concludes the adventure. The final chapter of this story involves the party escaping the island once and for all. Before continuing, the characters advance to 3rd level.



Mutually Assured Disposition

(Adventure #3)

Synopsis

The party has found themselves upon one of the spires that tower over the island. Travelling up, they'll find either the lair of the villain, or Solomon himself. The villain wants Solomon dealt with, while Solomon wants the villain dealt with. The party will need to pick a side, or make the two groups get along for everyone's sake.

Introduction

As the party steps through the portal, they find themselves atop one of the island's highest peaks. Read the following text when you are ready to begin the adventure:

"The light and cold air wash over you as you enter the portal. Your vision goes white as your eyes adjust. You're standing on a tall, grassy cliff, with a wall of natural stone behind you. You can see the entire island from this viewpoint: the green foliage of the jungle, the sun-soaked sand, and the deep blue ocean. The spire-like mountain you stand on continues upwards to even higher peaks, and appears to be the only way forward."

Unlike with the other portals, there is no way back from where the characters have now found themselves. They must move forward if they have any hope of escaping. As per the description, the only way forward is up the spire. As the party climbs the spire, read the following text:

"As you ascend the steep, grassy spire, twisting around the mountainous peak, a rickety wooden bridge hangs above you. It extends to another spire, a hundred feet away. This spire is identical to the one you are currently climbing, though the tip of it is covered by the wooden hull of an airship. The ship, now overgrown with foliage, looks as if it was pierced from underneath, mid-flight, by the island itself. Below the bridge, you see a chasm filled with ocean water that splashes up the sides, creating a mist in the air."

At this point, allow the party to choose whether they go across the bridge or continue up the spire. Going across the bridge will lead them directly to the lair of the villain, where they make an offer to the party involving escape. Continuing up the spire will lead them to Solomon, who will also have an offer to escape the island.

The Bridge

The wooden bridge is aged, made from thick rope and old jungle planks. Though it appears nearly broken, it is not too difficult to cross. The bridge is considered difficult terrain for any creature without a climbing speed. Each character crossing the bridge must make a successful DC 2 Dexterity (Acrobatics) or Wisdom (Perception) check to cross safely. If a character fails the check, a plank breaks underneath them as they nearly fall. The falling character must succeed a DC 18 Dexterity saving throw or fall 150 feet into the chasm below, taking 8d6 damage upon hitting the water. Any character within 5 feet of the falling character can make a DC 10 Dexterity or Strength saving throw, catching the falling character on a success and pulling them to safety.

Once the characters have crossed to the other side, they can continue up the spire to the villain's lair.

Lair of Lysander

If your chosen villain is Lysander, run the following section. When the party first arrives here, read the following text:

"The steep mountain walkway finally flattens at the peak. Above you is an archway made from carved stone, adorned with colorful flowers in shades of red, pink, and white. The wreckage of an enormous wooden airship is held up by the tip of the spire and acts as a roof to this archway. The mountain walls have combined with that of the airship's, where natural holes in the rocks are filled by the wooden beams and floors of the ship. Every gust of wind causes the ship to creak and moan, as if it could shatter and fall away at the slightest push. Inside the archway is a grove of floating yellow lights—small creatures with translucent wings zip by and giggle as they point at you. The whole of the airship is visible from the interior of this place. The smell of mildew, grass, and sea air permeates the lair. Above you, sitting on top of a wooden platform jutting from the insides of the airship, is an elegantly dressed elven woman."

Inside Lysander's lair are four **sprites**, two **satyrs**, and two **moss dryads** (see appendix B for the stat blocks of all three creatures). These creatures are loyal to Lysander and defend him at all costs. The airship that his lair is made out of was there before he arrived, and is a complete mystery.

Lysander (see appendix B) holds an audience with the party, and hopes to make a deal with them.

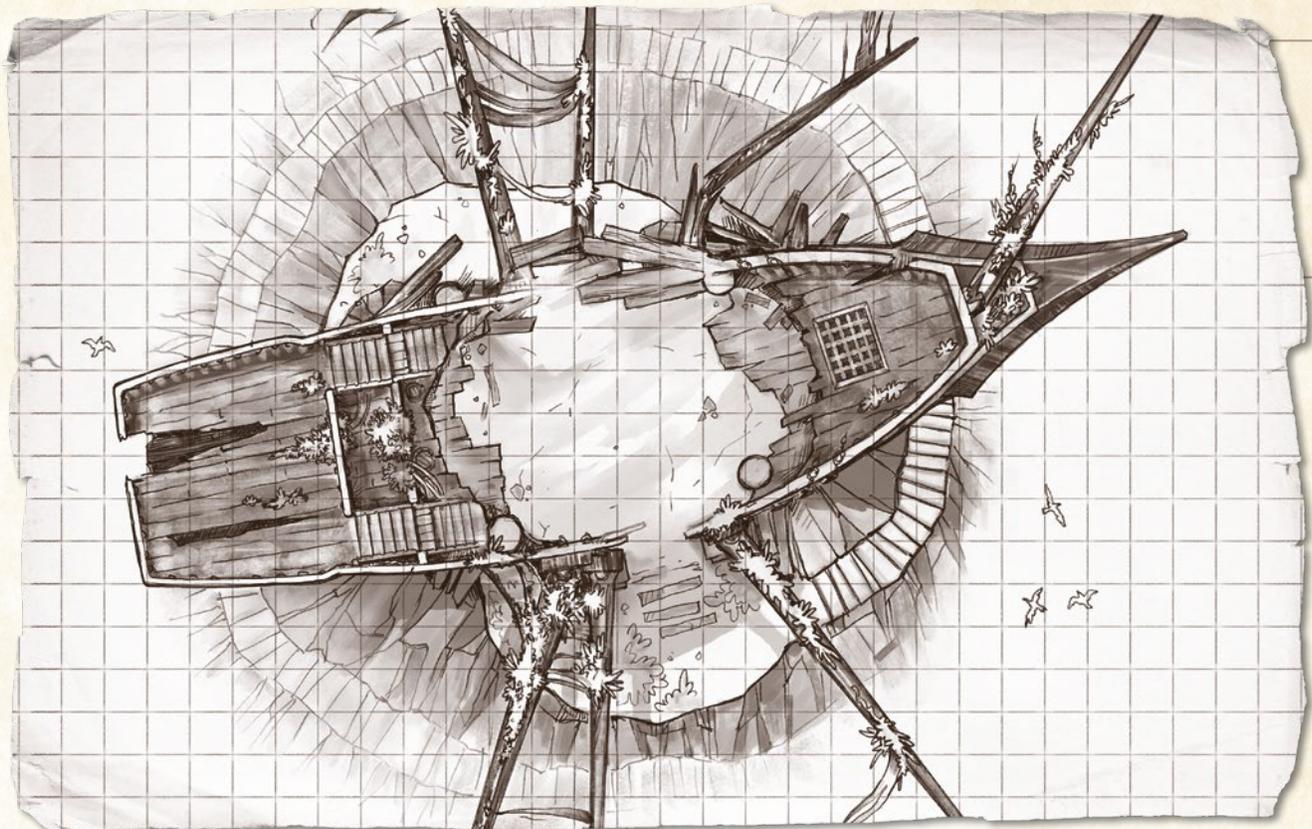
He tells them that a large crystal is dampening his magical connection to the Fey and he wants it destroyed, allowing him to transform the island into his new kingdom. The crystal is guarded by Solomon, who Lysander refers to as "the old prisoner."

Lysander and his subjects have tried to take the crystal for themselves, but Solomon's defenses have been formidable, to say the least. He tells the party that he wants to be out of their hair as much as they want to be out of his—if they can find a way to destroy the crystal, he will have the capability to teleport them back to their homes. Lysander does not care whether or not they kill Solomon. Just as long as he gets what he wants and Solomon is out of the way, he is happy.

If the party agrees, Lysander will not attack and allows them to complete their agreement. If they refuse or fail to destroy the crystal, he chastises the party and has them thrown from the spire as punishment. The characters will be taken by his subjects and, one by one, pushed from the ledge. Each character that falls takes 20d6 bludgeoning damage as they plummet into the jungle.

SER NOMINUS NOTE

Hopefully, the party doesn't let it get that far and they either escape or fight Lysander. If you most definitely do not want your characters to die here, maybe they land in the water instead and only take 3d6 damage.



LAIR OF LYSANDER

Lair of Ilvain

If your chosen villain is Ilvain, run the following section. When the characters first arrive here, read the following text:

“The steep mountain walkway finally flattens at the peak. Above you is an archway made from carved stone. Blackened roots that drip a deep crimson liquid cling to the archway. The wreckage of an enormous wooden airship is held up by the tip of the spire and acts as a roof. The mountain walls have combined with that of the airship’s, where natural holes in the rocks are filled by the wooden beams and floors of the ship. Every gust of wind causes the ship to creak and moan, as if it could shatter and fall away at the slightest push. Beyond the archway is a dark, lifeless lair containing grey stones, moving shadows, and dead trees. The whole of the airship is visible from the interior of this place. The smell of mildew, rot, and sea air permeates the lair. Above you, sitting on top of a wooden platform jutting from the insides of the airship, is Ilvain.”

Inside Ilvain’s lair is her pet, a blight drake by the name of **Osvithis** (see appendix B), along with two **soul shades** (see appendix B). These creatures are loyal to Ilvain and defend her at all costs. The airship that her lair is made out of was there before she arrived, and is a complete mystery.

Ilvain (see appendix B) holds an audience with the party and demands that they obey her, unless they want to become Osvithis’s lunch. She tells them that a large crystal is dampening her magical connection to the Shadows. She wants it destroyed, which would allow her to transform the island into her new kingdom. The crystal is guarded by Solomon, whom Ilvain refers to as “the mad gnome.” She tells the party that helping her is their only option, and she is allowing them a shred of mercy because she can benefit from their services. She and her creatures have tried to destroy the crystal, but Solomon’s defenses have been formidable, to say the least. If the party can destroy the crystal, she will have the capability to teleport them back to their homes. Ilvain will also want the characters to kill Solomon if he is still alive—he’s killed many of her creatures, and she wants him to pay.

If the party agrees, Ilvain will not attack the party and allows them to complete their agreement. If they refuse or fail to destroy the crystal, she attacks the characters for their insolence.

Shade



Solomon’s Last Stop

If the party continues up the spire, read the following text:

“The steep mountain walkway finally flattens at the peak. A partially crumbled ruin houses a large glowing crystal that floats and spins above a stone pedestal. Surrounding it are three beings of pure metal, identical to the broken construct you found in the jungle. They each turn their heads and lock onto you, holding up their arms and aiming some sort of glowing device toward you. You hear a voice from behind them yell, ‘Stop!’ An old gnome sits up from a swaying hammock. His enormous white beard nearly covers the sunburnt wrinkles across his face. He wears old, raggedy clothing, with a leather bandolier across his chest filled with tools, vials, and devices. A gleaming golden crown rests on his forehead, atop his long white hair. ‘You aren’t one of those creatures! Who the hells are you?’”

Solomon, still on the island, is guarded by three **SPiRITs** (see appendix B). He is surprised to see anyone here. He’s been on the island for eighty-six years, building, planning, and trying his hardest to escape. He built all the portals, but failed in ever making one that would go to the mainland. He believes that if the crystal, which he calls the catalyst, were to remain in sunlight for another thirty years, it would have the capability to create a portal to wherever he wanted. The crystal has an AC of 20 and 10 hit points. If the crystal is destroyed, Solomon angrily attacks the party for destroying his work-in-progress of eighty-six years—his only hope of escape.

Roleplaying Solomon. Unfortunately, the once artifice genius has lost a good portion of his sanity due to his isolation. He speaks in riddles, exclaims equations and formulae that make no sense, and behaves very strangely toward the characters, who are the first people he’s seen in decades. He *hates* the inhabitants of the island, who have only gotten in his way or made his life worse, and who once broke a valuable piece of equipment that would have had him off the island already.

Solomon is aware that he is the reason for the inhabitants of the island being here in the first place, as it’s his own fault for opening so many portals, but he “did what he did to survive.” Solomon won’t let anyone near the crystal and says, “I’m happy to have some company for the next thirty years!”

If the party explains their situation to Solomon, including that they don’t want to remain on the island for such a long time, he’ll mention that the only other way to get the crystal to speed up its process is to defeat the being that rules the island. Their magical presence dampens the crystal’s power. If either Ilvain or Lysander—depending on which is your chosen villain—is defeated, Solomon can use the crystal to create a portal to anywhere.

Resolving the Island's Issues

Solomon wants either Ilvain or Lysander destroyed, depending on whom you chose for the villain, and the villain in turn wants the crystal destroyed. Solomon won't lead an assault on the villain's lair. He'd rather wait out the thirty years and play it safe than risk his only hope of survival. The villain doesn't want to assault Solomon, as his construct guards have the defensive advantage. The party can side with either group and fulfill their wishes, which would allow them to escape the island.

There is a third option, which allows the party to kill no one and to resolve the two groups' issues. If the party can convince Solomon that destroying the crystal would allow either Lysander or Ilvain to open the portals up, thus allowing them to escape, he'll consider the option—but only if the villain agrees to allow him to leave as well.

However, Solomon will warn the party that the hurricane surrounding the island will only grow bigger. Ships could never travel this way, and their wreck is proof of this.

The villain will agree to allow Solomon to escape, but only if the party has first earned their trust by helping them.

Aiding Lysander

If the party returns to Lysander and asks him to allow Solomon to escape, he'll laugh and refuse, saying, "The old prisoner has done enough damage to us. I'd rather watch him thrown into the jungle and hunted by my blink dogs." However, seeing that the party is desperate to escape, Lysander could use them one last time. A portal to a border shadow plane has opened. Creatures from inside are attacking his subjects. If the party can deal with them, he'll trust them enough and allow Solomon to escape.

Two sprites (see appendix B) lead the characters down the spire, into the jungle and to the portal. This portal is another one of Solomon's creations. When the characters arrive, there are two **soul shades** (see appendix B) outside of it already. At the end of each round, two more soul shades escape and attack anyone nearby. The portal has an AC of 18, resistance to all non-magical damage, and 50 hit points. If the party destroys the portal, no more soul shades come from it. Once the creatures and the portal have been dealt with, Lysander agrees to help Solomon.

Aiding Ilvain

If the party returns to Ilvain and asks her to allow Solomon to escape, she'll angrily refuse, saying, "The mad gnome has slain many of my pets. I'd rather slit his throat than help him." However, seeing that the party is desperate to escape, Ilvain could use them one

last time. A portal to a border "fey plane" has opened. Creatures from inside are attacking her forces. If the party can deal with them, she'll trust them enough and allow Solomon to escape.

Two soul shades (see appendix B) lead the characters down the spire, into the jungle and to the portal. This portal is another one of Solomon's creations. When the characters arrive there are two **moss dryads** (see appendix B) outside of it already. At the end of each round, two more moss dryads escape and attack anyone nearby. The portal has an AC of 18, resistance to all non-magical damage, and 50 hit points. If the party destroys the portal, no more moss dryads come from it. Once the creatures and the portal have been dealt with, Ilvain reluctantly agrees to help Solomon.

Conclusion

Whether the party attacks the villain's lair in full force and helps Solomon, helps the villain by destroying the crystal, or helps both and makes them put aside their differences, they are eventually teleported back to Windwillow. Read the following text when this happens:

"You feel weightless for a moment, the ground disappearing as a bright white light surrounds you all. Then you slowly drift back down again. You look around to see the familiar dock of Windwillow. A feeling of relief washes over you as you return to civilization. You're overcome by the sea breeze blowing in from the ocean and the sounds of bells, dock workers, and patrons. It's almost as if you never left, the island no more than a bad dream. Maybe it's time to stay away from the sea for a while."

Thus concludes the adventure. But the story does not need to end there. Perhaps Grudd n' Budds wants the party to explore other routes across the ocean, or the villain's expansion begins spreading to the mainland, or Solomon wants the party to help him rebuild his creations. It's up to you!



Dryad



THEME TAGS

Seafaring, mystery, treasure hunt.

CONTENT WARNING

Corpses, body horror, skeletons, ghosts, drowning, entrapment, thalassophobia, heights, explosion, firearms.

Description

A derelict ship has run aground a few leagues from the port town of Larson's Landing, sparking confusion and rumors of pirates or sea monsters. A mercenary guild requests the services of a group of adventurers to investigate the dilapidated ship. The first adventure ends with the party discovering the cause of the destruction aboard the ship, the second adventure ends with the party killing a great sea creature, and the final adventure ends with the party uncovering the treasure hoard.

Background

Rumors have always swirled amongst the tavern-goers in the port town of Larson's Landing, rumors of a grand treasure hoard secreted away by Crazy Kelley Roland—an infamous pirate, now long-dead. However, those rumors have gone from a murmur to outright calls for action. A ship named *Scarlet's End*, badly beaten by the elements and devoid of all obvious signs of life, has recently been spotted nearby, run aground on an uninhabited island. Many believe the ship may have been a pirate vessel and that the crew, in search of Kelley's treasure, were killed by some monstrous beast before they could find their spoils. Others think the crew just abandoned ship during a storm. All that is known is that the mercenary's guild named "The Skeleton Crew" has put out a call for skilled adventurers to board the ship, discover what happened, and, if anything dangerous is aboard, kill it



Character Hooks and Motivations

To help involve your players and their characters more in the story, have each character answer the following question: *Why are you interested in the prospect of treasure and pirate riches?*

Alternatively, you can use the table below to give your players ideas for their characters' motivation in the adventure.

- 1 A close friend or family member of yours has been taken hostage by bandits. You need the treasure to deliver as ransom money.
- 2 You hail from a noble family that has lost its wealth and prestige. You hope the treasure can redeem your family and restore them to their rightful place.
- 3 You grew up in the slums, always dreaming of the day you could make it big and pull yourself out.
- 4 You are a mercenary, hired by a shady individual to go out and hunt for the treasure, having been promised a portion of the profits.
- 5 You are a researcher and scholar interested in the mysteries of the world and the histories surrounding them.
- 6 You are an adventurer at heart; the money holds little value to you. It's the thrill of the hunt that drives you.

Villains

The villains for "The Treasure of Obsidian Cove" are both pirate captains and both related. Captain Sirce Avalon being the great granddaughter of the long dead "Crazy" Kelley Roland. Whichever villain you chose is the villain who chases after their long lost treasure!

Captain Sirce Avalon

(Villain Option #1)

Captain Sirce Avalon is a half-siren captain of the *Dread Muse* pirate ship, and the descendant of Captain Kelley Roland. She wants to claim the treasure for herself, seeing it as her birthright and legacy. She and her crew provide a more contemporary and corporeal threat to the characters.

The Ghost of Kelley Roland

(Villain Option #2)

The undead and tormented spirit of Kelley Roland obsessively guards his treasure even in the afterlife. His undead crew presents a more challenging threat to the characters, and gives the adventures a horrorresque flavor.

The Ghost Ship of Larson's Landing

(Adventure #1)

Synopsis

The party is led to a derelict ship just a few hours' sail from the docks of Larson's Landing. The ship contains the remains of its former pirate crew, along with a few enemies who are hunting for survivors. The villain you have chosen for the adventure will determine who these enemies are. There is also a "puzzle cube" hidden somewhere onboard by the former captain. The party must navigate the ship, fight off the enemies, and find both the captain's map, which details the path to the beast Scylla, and the puzzle cube.

Introduction

The adventure begins with the characters arriving in Larson's Landing and being recruited for their work by a mercenary guild named "The Skeleton Crew". Read the following text when you are ready to begin the adventure.

"It's a dark and overcast day in Larson's Landing, though a stretch of golden sunlight pierces through the black storm clouds some leagues off, giving the shabby port town a bright glow. Ships bob in the harbor and the acrid scent of fish wafts from the southern wharf. Across the dock you spy the building you're looking for, "The Skeleton Crew". Inside, it's a simple wooden building with a halfling sitting behind a desk. His sunken eyes reading over paperwork. He slowly looks up at each of you and a smile forcibly cracks.

"Ahoy there, you're in luck. I've got a job for ya. Ship named 'Scarlett's End' ran aground, supposedly it had treasure aboard. No one's claimed it and the whole crew vanished. Sounds like dangerous machinations that I'd rather not pursue. You can keep anything on board just keep the vessel from becoming smithereens! I'd like to repurpose it once it's dealt with. There's one hundred shiny ones if you do the job right!" The halfling then hands you a chart with directions to the derelict ship."

This halfling's name is Sheffield Woodwer, and he's only interested in a ship with no dangerous monsters on board. Though he won't use any kind of language to scare off the party, he desperately needs them. If the characters agree he lends them a small merchant vessel to get to their destination: a one-deck, two-masted schooner named the *Billy O'Tea*. The schooner has a crew of five and is captained by Johnathan Weller, a half-elf merchant who works for Sheffield. The ship

uses the schooner stat block, the crew members are each non-combatant humanoids with 4 hit points.

It takes no more than two hours to reach the Scarlet's End aboard this schooner.

The Dockworker. Before the party can set off on their adventure, a tiefling dockworker tries, subtly, to get the party's attention. He introduces himself as Discord Menage. Discord warns the party that the treasure aboard the Scarlet's End is, in his eyes, cursed, and that those that go after it become obsessed with it, only to be led to their doom. Rather than uncovering what happened or going after the gold for themselves, he urges the party to "For the good of everyone, sink the ship and let its mysteries go down with it."

Discord used to be a rigger for the Scarlet's End, but jumped ship due to the obsession of the captain, Jack Roscow, with finding Crazy Kelley's treasure. Discord is hesitant to tell the party all of this in their first meeting, considering he is a wanted criminal, but a successful DC 13 Charisma (Persuasion) check can get him to spill this information.

If your chosen villain is Captain Sirce, Captain Roscow was in love with her and wanted to impress her.

If your chosen villain is the Ghost of Kelley Roland, then Captain Roscow had an unruly obsession with the treasure.

Discord has the statistics of a Dread Muse crewman (see appendix B) with the following changes:

- Discord is chaotic neutral.
- He has these racial traits: He has resistance to fire damage. He knows the thaumaturgy cantrip. He has darkvision out to a range of 60 feet. He speaks Common and Infernal.

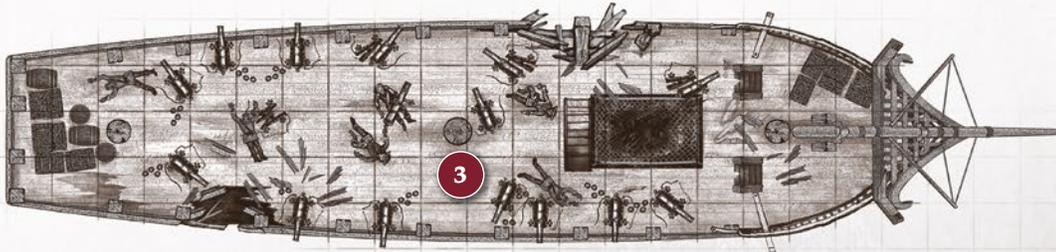
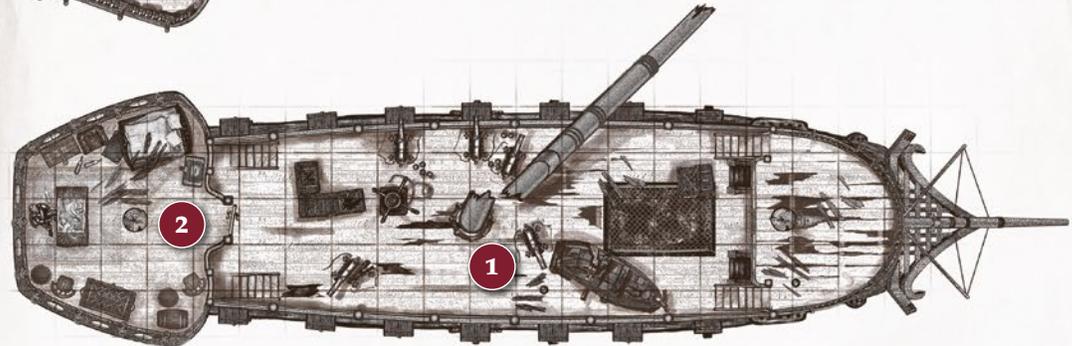
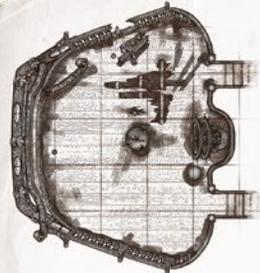
The Scarlet's End

"As you reach the location marked on your map, the silhouette of a sailing ship appears before you, crashed upon the jagged coastal rocks. It lists heavily to one side, the masts toppled over and partially-submerged. It seems almost miraculous that this corpse of a vessel did not sink to the bottom of the ocean before it washed up on the rocks."

The party can enter the *Scarlett's End* in two different ways: by climbing the side ladders to the topside decks, or by diving underwater and navigating the submerged hold.

If your chosen villain is Captain Sirce, then a schooner, much like the one the party arrives on, will be pulled up alongside the abandoned vessel, indicating that they aren't the first ones to have come looking for the wreck. The schooner waves a black flag with a white emblem of a skull with wings—the official flag for Captain Sirce.

The Searlet's End



1: TOPSIDE DECKS

When the party first steps aboard the *Scarlet's End*, read the following text:

"The top deck of the ship is completely deserted. The only movement is the swaying of the rigging in the sea breeze. Numerous barrels and crates are littered about, many of which have been cracked open, spilling their contents across the weathered deck. A number of cannons are positioned along the outside edges of the ship, many of which have had their mountings shattered and tossed about with great force. Toward the back of the central deck is a grate that leads to the lower levels of the ship. Toward the aft is a door labeled 'Captain's Quarters'."

The ship's uppermost deck is covered with scattered debris and little else. This area serves as an access point to other important locations, which are described below.

2: CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS

The door to the captain's quarters is locked, but can either be opened with the key located on the gun deck, or lockpicked with a successful DC 20 Dexterity check using thieves' tools. The door also has an AC of 17 and 100 hit points, and breaks open when reduced to 0 hit points. When a character enters the room for the first time, read the following text:

*"The room itself is spacious, taking up the entire back quarter of the ship. It is decorated with rich silk drapes and a large woven rug. A wardrobe stands to one side of the room, with a set of mirrors above it. On the other is an impressive bed, flanked by sets of bookshelves. The line of floor-to-ceiling windows that make up the back wall offers a stunning view of the sea from the stern of the ship, although some of the glass has cracked, even shattered in places. At the center of the room is a large table, atop of which is an extensive map of the coastline, with a small replica of the *Scarlet's End* placed upon it."*

The Wardrobe. The top part of this wardrobe contains an assortment of knickknacks, including a small chest filled with 6d10 gp, while its drawers house a variety of fine clothing appropriate for a captain.

Bookshelves. Across the room from the wardrobe is a large bed flanked by sets of bookshelves, the contents of which range from purely informational tomes—covering topics such as nautical and navigational studies—to novels and other forms of entertainment.

The Table. Along with the map on the table is a *Scylla's eye* (see appendix A). A successful DC 11 Wisdom (Survival) check allows any character to see that the map shows the course taken by the *Scarlet's End*, and that its last marked location was in the middle of the open ocean, about 50 miles northeast of its current one. Sitting in the largest of the chairs

surrounding this table is the corpse of the captain, a sword at his side (see the "Captain's Sword" in appendix A) and an envelope in his hand. Within the envelope is a bronze key, along with a note that was obviously written in hurry:

"This is the end for the End. We will not survive this battle; this creature is too dangerous for us to beat. Whoever finds this, know that our greed was our folly. The Cube is sealed away within the powder store. This key opens the door. If you wish to open it, you've got to face the beast, and unlike us, you must best it. Its gut holds the final gems."

3: GUN DECK

"Rows and rows of cannons run along the walls of this deck, pointed out of small hatches. A few of the cannons have been broken and seemingly tossed aside with great strength, their hatches blown open. Barrels of cannonballs sit half-empty, some tipped over, spilling their contents across the deck. A number of bodies are strewn about, some on the floor, some slumped over barrels, some even crushed by the displaced cannons."

If your chosen villain is Captain Sirce Avalon, there are three **Dread Muse crewmen** (see appendix B) searching amongst the bodies, looking for the key to either the gunpowder vault or the captain's quarters.

If your chosen villain is the Ghost of Kelley Roland, there are three **pirate wraiths** (see appendix B) searching the bodies, slicing the neck of each one to ensure that they are dead.

If a character investigates any of the bodies of the crew, read the following text:

"A quick glance over the body reveals many broken bones and extensive bruising. However, the most extreme injury is to their face, which is completely gone. All that remains is welted, scab-like skin."

The crew are victims of the Scylla that weren't tossed off the ship during the fight, their faces torn off by the creature's tentacles while their bodies were tossed around like rag dolls. If a character succeeds on a DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) check, they find the key to the captain's quarters in the pocket of the quartermaster, whose upper body has been crushed by a broken cannon barrel.

4: BERTH DECK

"Dozens of canvas hammocks are hung from the ceiling of this deck, each row accompanied by a chest of personal effects, the contents of many of which—clothing, books, and other personal items—have been scattered about the floor."

This deck is where the crew of the *Scarlet's End* slept and kept their personal belongings. Here the party finds a random assortment of personal effects, such as clothing, books, and the like, along with 10d10 cp and 3d8 gp.

5: ORLOP DECK

"Much of this deck is dedicated to storing various lengths of rope and other rigging materials. Toward the aft of the hold is a large, vault-like structure made of copper sheeting, and an iron door with a reinforced locking mechanism."

The vault-like structure is the gunpowder store, the door to which can only be unlocked with the key found in the captain's cabin. Its locking mechanism is too complicated to pick and too sturdy to break down.

If your chosen villain is Captain Sirce Avalon, there are two **Dread Muse crewmen** (see appendix B) trying to find a way inside the gunpowder store. They are unable to, as they do not possess the key.

If your chosen villain is the Ghost of Kelley Roland, there are two **pirate wraiths** (see appendix B) guarding the vault door, silently standing watch.

Within the gunpowder store are six empty gunpowder barrels and five full ones. If ignited, the full barrels each deal 10d6 fire damage, more than enough to sink the ship. Placed atop one of the barrels is a cube with a reflective metallic surface and a symbol on each side, alongside a small slot. The respective symbols are a flame, a tree, a wave, a rock, a gust of wind, and an island. There are also four small gems, three of which have each been placed in a slot on the cube. The fire symbol is paired with a red gem, the wave with a blue gem, and the wind with a white gem. The fourth gem is green, and sits next to the cube. This is the Puzzle Cube, which can be unlocked by acquiring the remaining slot-appropriate gems from the beast in part 2, "Beast of the Seas."

6: THE SUBMERGED HOLD

"The entire lower bilge and hold of the ship has been completely flooded with seawater coming in from a large hole in the hull, big enough for a medium-sized creature to swim through. Destroyed crates float about in the water, making it even harder to navigate the space as they shift around with the movement of the tide."

While in the waters of the hold, the party will have to hold their breath to avoid drowning. A character who can breathe underwater is not at risk of suffocating. Start an initiative counter for the party.

The hole in the side of the ship is 90 feet from the ladder to the orlop deck. On each of the characters' turns, have them make a DC 10 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check — on a success, they manage to avoid the floating debris in the hold. On a failure, they move at only half of their swimming speed.

SER NOMINUS NOTE

Remember, unless a creature is a skeleton like me, they can hold their breath for a number of minutes equal to 1 + their Constitution modifier (minimum of 30 seconds). When a creature runs out of breath, it can survive for a number of rounds equal to its Constitution modifier (minimum of 1 round). At the start of its next turn, it is reduced to 0 hit points and is dying, and it can't regain hit points or be stabilized until it can breathe again.

If a character succeeds on a DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check to search the crates, they will find that one contains the corpse of a stowaway who hid inside one of the crates before the ship was attacked.

Rewards

If the characters return to Larson's Landing and tell Sheffield the ship is clear of danger, they are each awarded 150 gp. If the ship was destroyed, he gives them nothing. However, Discord will thank the party for sinking the vessel and give them each a *Stamina Potion* (see Appendix B, Whispers of Wispy Peak) and a *Potion of Lookouts Sight* (see Appendix B: Ser Nominus' Magical Item Collection)

Conclusion

If you want to conclude the adventure here, and the party kept the ship intact, read the following text:

"You sail away from the cursed vessel, heading back to Larson's Landing, ready to report on the ship's condition and your success in clearing it of enemies."

If you want to conclude the adventure here, but the party destroyed the ship, read the following text:

"You sail away from the cursed vessel, the flames reaching into the darkening sky as you head towards Larson's Landing, thankful to have gotten out alive."

If you want to continue the adventure into part 2, "The Beast of the Seas," allow the characters to advance to 2nd level, and read the following text:

"You sail away from the cursed vessel, making a heading for the open ocean, the puzzle cube in hand, ready to find what the sea has in store..."

Puzzle
Cube



Beast of the Seas

(Adventure #2)

Synopsis

Following the discoveries aboard the *Scarlet's End* and of its mysterious puzzle cube, the party must venture to the last known location of the ill-fated ship to face the creature that brought it low: a monstrous sea beast known as the Scylla (see appendix B).

Introduction

The party has discovered that the *Scarlet's End* met its fate at the hands of a great beast, one which still holds the final keys to unlock the mysterious puzzle box they recovered from the depths of the derelict ship. In order to recover the gemstone keys, they must venture to the ship's last known location before its demise and face the beast. The battle will be epically tough, one no other company has been able to accomplish. The location of the Scylla can be found by looking at the map in the Captain's Quarters of the *Scarlet's End* and venturing to the last marked location of the ship from before it was attacked.

Remnants of the Oceanrotter

As the party nears the last known location of the *Scarlet's End* prior to its wreck, detailed on the map, a deep fog rolls in, limiting their view to only a couple dozen feet from their ship on all sides. As they venture deeper into the fog, bits of flotsam appear out of the mist, gently drifting past in the waves. Eventually, the half-sunken wreck of another sailing ship, a merchant slaving vessel by the name of the *Oceanrotter*, appears from the fog as well, cracked in half and partially on fire.

SER NOMINUS NOTE

Make sure to play up the creepy factor here! Describe the groans of the wreck as it continues to break apart in the waves!

Bodies can be found amongst the wreckage, most of which have the same faceless scars as the bodies aboard the *Scarlet's End*. However, one body, clinging to a piece of flotsam, is still alive, if only just. If the party and crew bring them aboard and attempt to heal them up, it's easily accomplished via any form of magical healing, or with a successful DC 10 Wisdom (Medicine) check.

The Survivor. The sole survivor of the wreck is a young halfling crewman by the name of Flynnian Forewillow. He was in the crow's nest when the **Scylla**

(see appendix B) attacked the ship, and only survived through the sheer luck of the mast falling into the water away from the beast, putting distance between himself and the ship. He is very grateful to the party for saving him, and will describe what the beast looks like and how it attacked the ship in great detail, though he urges them to leave the area immediately, and panics if they refuse.

The Scylla

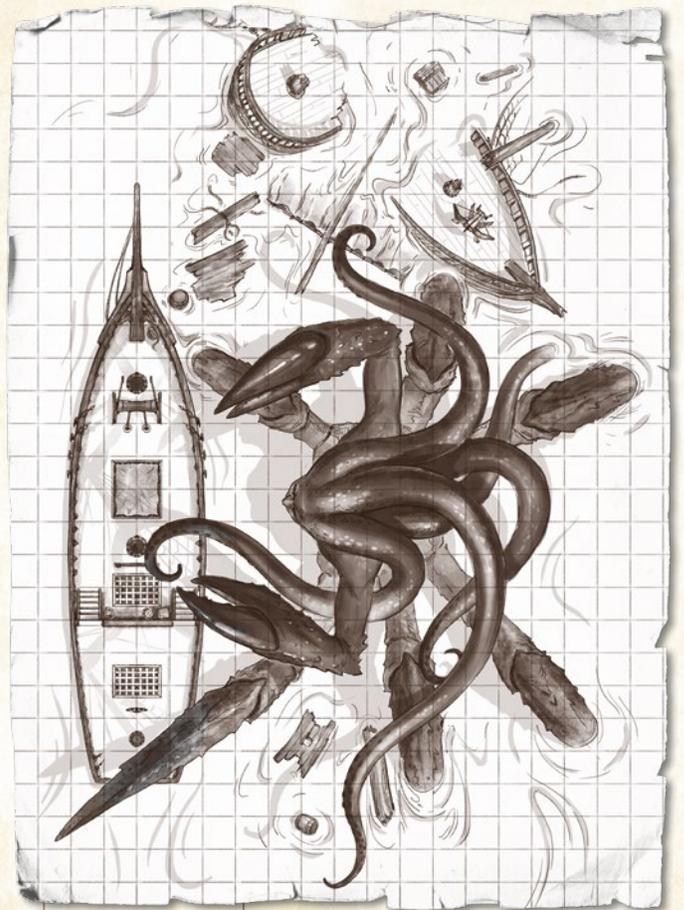
After the party has been in the area for a while—about 10 minutes of in-game time—read the following text:

"Suddenly, the groaning of the wreckage grows louder as large waves ripple out from a point between you and the ship. With a sudden explosion of water, a massive creature emerges from the depths, towering over your vessel, glaring down at you with one glowing eye."

The party now must defeat the **Scylla** (see appendix B) in battle. This should be a tough match, considering the party is fighting a creature of mythic proportions.

If your chosen villain of this adventure is Captain Sirce Avalon, the Scylla is a monstrosity.

If your chosen villain is the Ghost of Kelley Roland, the Scylla is undead.



SCYLLA AMBUSH



SER NOMINUS NOTE

Really play into the epicness of the fight! Have the Scylla take out at least a couple members of the crew each turn, along with attacking the party. Allow the party to get creative, and again, play into it! For example: if the party took the gunpowder barrels from *Scarlet's End*, make sure they have the opportunity to use them, perhaps by having the Scylla grab onto one. Make the fight tough, but rewarding!



Scylla Tactics and Strategy

The Scylla has six tentacles, and focuses three of its tentacles on destroying the ship, and three on fighting the party and crew. It focuses its attacks on the crew until it starts to feel threatened by one of the party members, at which point, it focuses one tentacle on them.

If the party took the gunpowder barrels from the *Scarlet's End*, they can try to use them against the Scylla. The characters can bait the Scylla into grabbing one of the barrels by standing next to one when the Scylla attacks them, or by tossing one at its head somehow. When the Scylla takes damage from one of these barrels, the creature will shift its tactics, changing its focus from attacking the crew and characters to knocking the barrels off of the ship and into the water, rendering them unusable.

On the wreck of the *Oceanrotter* is an operational mortar. In order to get to the wreck, a character must either swim, which is done at half their walking speed through what is considered difficult terrain, or try to use the floating debris to run over the water. In order to use the debris, the character must make a successful DC 16 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check, or else fall into the water. The mortar requires two characters to operate,

has an attack bonus of +6, a range of 80/1600 feet, a minimum range of 20 feet, and does 6d12 fire damage. It has an AC of 12 and 45 hit points. When the mortar hits the Scylla for the first time, the creature turns its attention to it, attempting to break the mortar before it can be used against it again.

Conclusion

If you want to conclude the adventure here, read the following text:

"Having defeated the beast, you have forged your names into legend, one which tavern-goers will be telling for many years to come."

If you want to continue the adventure into part 3, "Obsidian Cove," allow the characters to advance to 3rd level, and read the following text:

"Having defeated the beast, you have forged your names into legend, one which tavern-goers will tell for many years to come. However, the story is not yet over, for a great treasure still awaits to make you the true stuff of legends..."

Rewards

Once the beast is defeated, its body remains floating on the surface of the water, allowing the party easy access to retrieve items from it. Within its gut are a couple of harpoons, a rusted helmet, and two gems, one brown and one black—both of which are used in the puzzle cube. Embedded into the shell of one of its legs is a *javelin of lightning*.



The Cursed Treasure

(Adventure #3)



The Figure
Head

Synopsis

After having survived the encounter with the Scylla, the party goes to the island of Obsidian Cove. They must brave the ancient temple and find the protected vault that is locked behind many puzzles and traps, eventually claiming their reward—all before they become trapped on the island forever.

Introduction

Once the party solves the puzzle box (see below) they find a circular stone object, etched with a symbol in the same style as the markings on the cube, this time in the shape of a skull. This is the temple vault key. Etched into the inside of the puzzle cube is a map, leading to an uncharted island not far from the Scylla's location. Sailing the short distance away, the party arrives at the island of Obsidian Cove.

Solving the Puzzle Cube. The party can unlock the puzzle box by matching the gemstones they have found with the correct emblems on the box's surface and then inserting the stones.

- The green gem connects to the tree.
- The white gem connects to the wind.
- The red gem connects to the flame.
- The blue gem connects to the wave.
- The brown gem connects to the rock.
- The black gem connects to the island.

Once the gems have been inserted into the correct slots, the symbols along the sides of the cube begin to glow as it unlocks and unfurls itself, revealing its contents.

The Island of Obsidian Cove

When the characters arrive at the island, read the following text:

"As your ship crests its final wave, you see on the horizon a small island. The island's beaches are glimmering in the sunlight, a deep black sand surrounds the lush palm jungles further in. Decorated around the island are pillars and arches formed from volcanic rock breaking the stretches of onyx sand into smaller sections. This is unlike any island you've ever seen, this is Obsidian Cove."

The island itself is fairly small—about five miles across and ten miles long. The beaches are made of pure black sand from crushed obsidian, which gives the island its name.

If your chosen villain of the adventure is Captain Sirce, then her ship, the *Dread Muse*, is anchored just off shore, left alone in the waves. Its layout is very similar to that of the *Scarlet's End*, but bears no damage. Aboard the *Dread Muse* are seventeen **Dread Muse crewmen** (see appendix B), left behind while Captain Sirce went ashore. They are currently being led by the ship's quartermaster, a **hobgoblin** by the name of Sharkod Hook. While the captain is on land, the crew is far too focused on throwing themselves a party full of grog and rum to pay attention to the characters, unless they make themselves known.

Captain Sirce's Plan. Sirce knows the island's location from tales of her great grandfather, Crazy Kelley Roland. She sent a few members of her crew to find the puzzle cube aboard the *Scarlet's End* while she went to the island itself ahead of them.

If your chosen villain of the adventure is Crazy Kelley Roland, then the shore and beaches are empty.

Temple of Obsidian Cove

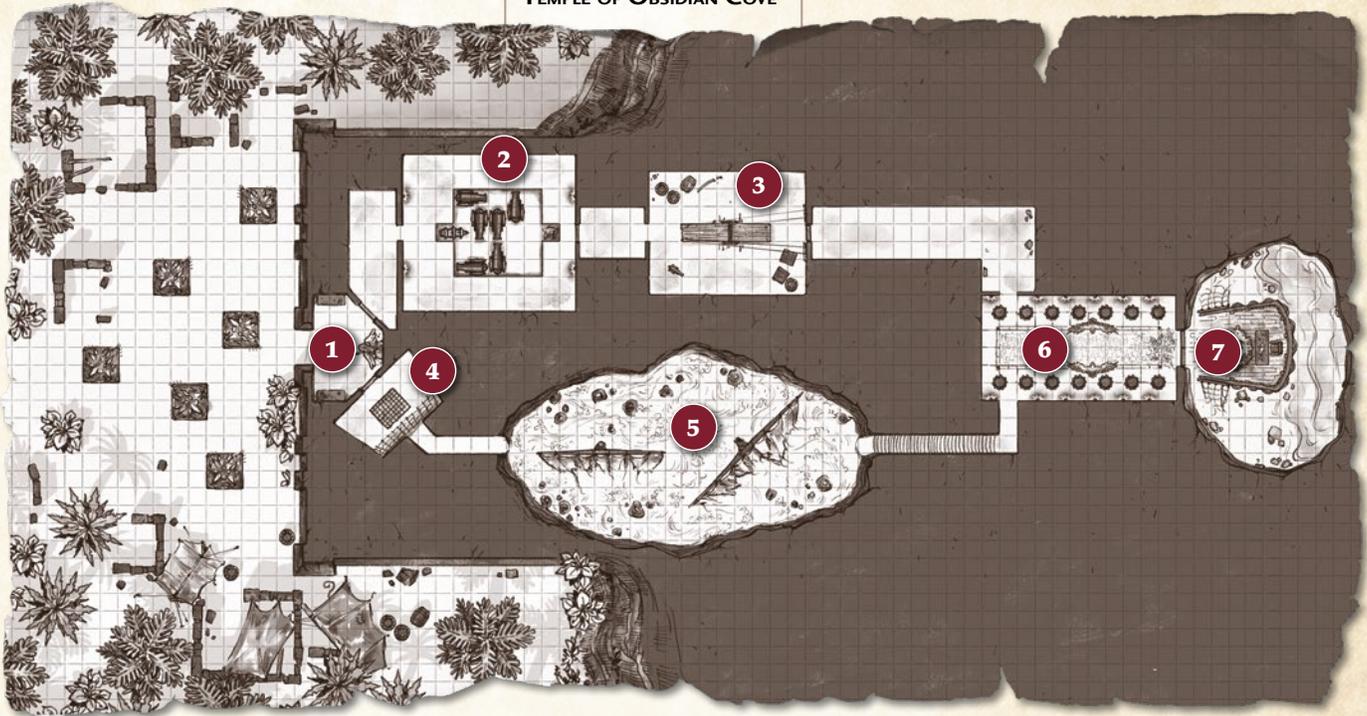
With a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Survival) check, the party easily finds the Temple of Obsidian Cove, hidden within the jungle at the base of the mountain. On a failure, the party still finds the temple, but one character immediately activates one of the pit traps outside its entrance. When they find the temple, read the following text:

"The palm jungle opens up, revealing a clearing with a large, ancient structure made up of chiseled black stone. The stones have been worn down with age, some pieces crumbling into rubble. Scattered amongst the clearing are other, smaller stone structures, forming what would have been a village, though it, too, has mostly crumbled, reduced to shelter for plants and animals. However, there are signs of more recent occupation: various parts of the structure have been reinforced with wood and metal supports, and you can see the remnants of some sort of temporary camp, with canvas tents, crates, and barrels scattered about."

There is no door to the temple, but rather a large entryway that leads directly into the temple entrance. However, around the entrance are six spike trap pits hidden under layered foliage. The traps are each 10 feet wide, 10 feet long, and 5 feet deep. A character who succeeds on a DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check discovers the traps. If a character steps onto a trap, they must make a successful DC 13 Dexterity saving throw or fall into the trap, taking 10 piercing damage on a fail.

The Temple. The temple itself was once a holy place for the ancient inhabitants of the island, who praised the volcano as a god who gave them their island home and its fertile soil—but the island's denizens also lived in fear of the very real possibility that the same volcano could destroy their homes at a moment's notice, should it erupt. Parts of the modern construction were set up by Crazy Kelley when he

TEMPLE OF OBSIDIAN COVE



took over the island fifty years ago. He deconstructed his own ship and rebuilt portions of it into the temple itself as reinforcements to the structure, along with traps and puzzles.

1: TEMPLE ENTRANCE

“The room before you appears to be some timeworn shrine to a forgotten god, now in ruins and weathered with age.

At the center of the back wall, where the shrine would have been when whole, is a large wooden sculpture—the figurehead of a ship, in the shape of a young woman with long, flowing hair, pointed ears, and feathery wings. Paint and gold leaf have flaked off of the figure with age, leaving most of the wood bare. A golden sword hilt protrudes from the woman’s chest, as if piercing right where her heart would be. Flanking the figurehead are two big copper doors, their faces covered with hammered sculptural reliefs of ships in battle, their coloration now a greenish hue.”

One the party enters the room, the figurehead at the center of the space comes to life, engaging them in conversation (see the section titled “Roleplaying Marion Anker”).

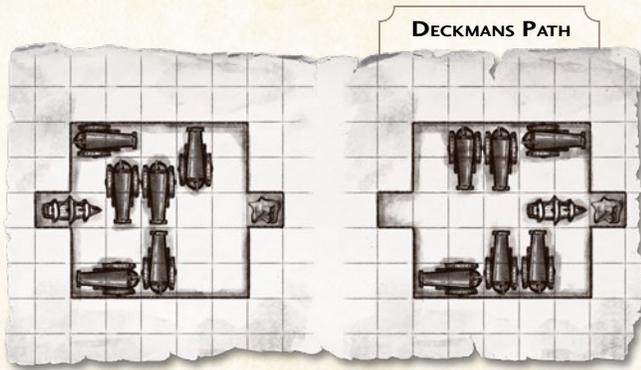
There are two directions the party can go from this room: heading left leads to the lower path, which the figurehead calls the “deckman’s path,” and which requires “someone who is quick of thought;” heading right leads to the upper path, which the figurehead calls the “rigger’s path,” and which requires “someone who is quick of foot.” The figurehead makes a request of the group: to break the sword, and in doing so, release her soul from being bound here.

This leaves the characters with three choices. If the party chooses to break the sword just as she asks, the figurehead will crack and splinter, transforming Marion back into a flesh-and-blood human, her body fully restored. Afterwards, she joins them (see the **Marion Anker** stat block in appendix B). However, if the party chooses to simply take the sword for themselves, Marion’s soul remains bound, though not to the same anchor. The figurehead goes static as her trapped soul transfers to the sword, and the characters now possess the *Sword of the Figurehead* (see appendix A). The party can also decide to not do anything with the sword, which will leave Marion bound to the figurehead.

THE FIGUREHEAD

The living figurehead was once a human sailor by the name of Marion Anker. The ship she served on was a victim in Crazy Kelley’s rampage. Although she was only a deckhand, Marion was the only member of her crew to survive, and managed to defend herself for an extended period of time, even managing to take the eye of Kelley’s pet, the Scylla, in the process. In a rage, Kelley captured Marion and, instead of simply killing her, bound her soul to the figurehead of his ship, to be forever trapped in servitude to him.

Roleplaying Marion Anker. Despite her decades of imprisonment, Marion (see appendix B) is as feisty as ever and very willing to take on the world. She is quick-witted and sarcastic, and has a sailor’s vocabulary to match. However, her long time stuck within the figurehead has left her grasp on reality tenuous and inconsistent. Her sanity is questionable, and her knowledge of the modern outside world practically non-existent. Marion speaks in roundabout ways, almost in riddles, even if she’s not intending to.



2: DECKMAN'S PATH - CHAMBER 1

"This stone chamber is filled with a dozen wheeled cannons, contained within a region of the floor surrounded by a stone lip, each facing different directions. At the far side of the region is a stone sculpture that appears to be a recreation of the island itself, while on the side closest to you is a large statue of a sailing ship. A closed door, also made of stone, faces you on the far wall."

The party's goal is to push the ship sculpture to the spot adjacent to the island sculpture. However, the cannons block their path, and must be moved out of the way. The cannons and ship sculpture can only move forwards and backwards, and take a combined Strength score of 23 to move. Use the map as a reference for the starting positions of the cannons and sculptures. Once the ship statue is in place, the stone doors open to chamber 2 of the deckman's path.

3: DECKMAN'S PATH - CHAMBER 2

"This stone room contains what appears to be a large balance scale, cobbled together from pieces of a ship's deck. Scattered about are other items, including crates, more barrels, and a miniature cannon. A complex system of ropes and pulleys is attached to the balance scale, and then up to the ceiling, disappearing through holes in the far wall, just above another stone door."

The party's goal in this room is to balance out the scales. There are three barrels, one empty, one filled with iron swords, and one filled with water; two crates, one filled with obsidian stones, and one filled with leather shoes; and a single swivel gun. In order to balance out the scales, one side must have the empty barrel, water, and the swivel gun, while the other has the obsidian stones, swords, and leather shoes. The set of scales requires at least 300 pounds of items to be placed upon them before it activates. Once the scales balance, the stone door opens to the vault entrance. The characters can try to tamper with the pulley system, but this is difficult due to the complexity of the mechanism. A successful DC 20 Intelligence check using tinker's tools allows a character to jury rig the mechanism, bypassing the lock

and opening the stone doors. However, if the result of the check comes out to 5 or lower, the character tampers with the mechanism too much and breaks it, rendering the doors unusable, and the party is forced to backtrack and take the rigger's path instead. Any result between 6 and 19 has no consequences, save the character not understanding the mechanism enough to bypass it.

4: RIGGER'S PATH - CHAMBER 1

"This stone chamber is fairly small at first glance, only about ten feet long and twenty feet wide. However, it is incredibly tall, reaching up easily a hundred feet. The ground is damp and slopes toward a metal grate in the center, the sounds of waves emanating from beneath it. Along the back wall are rope ladders, much like those that make up the rigging of a ship. At the top of the ropes is an open archway."

In order to progress through this room, the party must climb up the rope ladder to the archway above them. However, as soon as any weight is placed onto the ladder, a mechanism is activated, releasing water to flow out of the arch and down upon the party, making the climb treacherous. Each character must make a DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check to climb the ladder. On a success, they make it to the top without issue; on a failure, a character falls back to the bottom, taking 1d6 bludgeoning damage, and is forced to attempt the climb again. The water exits the room through the grate in the floor, flowing back out to the ocean. The water continues to pour so long as at least one person is on the rope ladder. The archway at the top leads to chamber 2 of the rigger's path.

5: RIGGER'S PATH - CHAMBER 2

"The room before you consists of two balconies: one you are on, and another on the other side of the room, 100 feet away, protruding out into a cavernous space. Between you and the other balcony is a sheer drop of 150 feet, down to jagged rocks and crashing waves, which seem to be flowing from some tidal cave. Rising from the water are a pair of ship masts, their sails torn and tattered, but the rigging intact. With each crash of the waves below, the masts shift and groan, rocking back and forth. They also turn in place, causing their yard arms to spin."

In order to progress through the temple, the party must make it to the other side of the cavern. A character can attempt the jump between and balance upon the unstable masts, making two individual DC 12 Dexterity (Acrobatics) or Wisdom (Perception) checks, one for each mast. Upon a success on both checks, the character makes it to the other balcony easily. However, if the character fails either check, they must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw to catch themselves on the

mast as they slip off of it. On a success, they can pull themselves back up and try to make the failed check again. If they fail, however, they fall the 150 feet to the water below, taking 7d6 bludgeoning damage as they do. If they survive the fall, they can swim out of an underwater cave at the base of the cavern and find themselves back on the beach of the island.

6: VAULT ENTRANCE

“The pathway opens up into a large space, its ceiling held up by two rows of intricately carved columns. Two large sculptures of fiery birds sit to either side of the space. At the center of the back wall is a large door, made of solid copper, turned a greenish hue by moisture in the air. In its center is a circular slot. Before the door are dozens of skeletons, piled up together.”

The door is the way to the temple’s vault, which can be opened when the vault key, found in the puzzle cube, has been placed within the slot at its center. The skeletons in front of the door are those of Crazy Kelley’s former crew, whom he had killed before sealing himself into the vault.

If your chosen villain is Captain Sirce, three **Dread Muse seamen**, along with **Captain Sirce Avalon** herself are present, trying to force their way into the vault, with no luck so far (see appendix B for these creatures’ stat blocks).

If your chosen villain is the Ghost of Kelley Roland, three **pirate wraiths**, along with the **Ghost of Kelley Roland** himself, will be present in the room, standing guard at the vault entrance, ready to defend his treasure from the party (see appendix B for these creatures’ stat blocks).

Both villains are so obsessed with the treasure that neither can be talked out of just giving it up. However, Captain Sirce can be convinced to let the party help her reach the treasure (with the assumption that she will share), while quietly planning on betraying them—she’ll attempt to get them trapped within the vault when it closes. Kelley Roland will refuse to even talk to them, attacking the characters if they approach him.

7: THE VAULT

“The door shifts and opens with a great scrape of metal against stone, revealing a chamber beyond. Before you is a strange sight: what would have been the inner sanctum and shrine of the temple has been modified into a recreation of a captain’s quarters, as if the room from a ship has been transplanted to this spot. At the center of the room is a treasure hoard—a huge mound of gold, silver, and platinum coins; gems of many colors; and pieces of art, along with many other gleaming items. Atop this mound of treasure is a skeleton, still draped in the garb of a pirate captain.”

The treasure hoard consists of platinum, gold, silver, and copper pieces, miscellaneous gems worth 50 gp each, and miscellaneous pieces of art worth 25 gp each, as well as one randomly determined magic item of uncommon quality per character. However, as soon as a character touches a single item in the treasure hoard, have the party roll initiative, as the temple is magically set to spring one last trap. Give the party 3 full rounds to attempt to grab as much of the treasure as they can hold, using an action either to take one of the magic items, or to shovel treasure worth gp equal to 5d100 × the character’s Dexterity modifier (minimum of 1). At the start of the fourth round, the door closes and water fills the chamber, trapping anyone left inside.

SER NOMINUS NOTE

Make sure to describe the door slowly closing on the group! Give the players a good sense of urgency, as well as how much time they have left before certain death!

If any character is left inside of the vault when the door closes, the room completely fills with water after 3 rounds. Once the room fills up, any character with a passive Perception score of 14 or higher notices that a section of the cave wall is weak and cracked, the water beginning to be pulled to it in a strong current. The wall has an AC of 13 and 30 hit points. If the wall is reduced to 0 hit points, it crumbles into pieces, revealing a secondary tunnel. The water’s current becomes impossible to fight, and all characters that were still inside the vault are pulled through this tunnel, taking 2d6 bludgeoning damage before exiting the cave over a waterfall and into a shallow pool on the far side of the mountain from the entrance of the temple.

Conclusion

If you want to conclude the adventure here, read the following text:

“You sail away from Obsidian Cove with your hard-earned riches, dreaming of all of the ways in which you are going to spend them.”

If you want to continue the adventure past this point, allow the characters to advance to 4th level. Perhaps the Port Authority has a need for expert adventurers or sailors to help in strengthening their trade routes to and from the town of Windwillow. Or perhaps the party becomes a group of privateers, sailing the seas for adventure. The choice is yours!



THEME TAGS

High fantasy, survival, battle arena.

CONTENT WARNING

Heights, murder, scary monsters, giant insect, fire.

Description

Are you looking to pit your players against other adventurers to claim the title of Champions? The Sunderdome is an arena where the strongest and bravest battle! Who will die? Who will survive? Will your players die a brutal death? Or will they venture through the dome and slaughter their way to victory!

Background

The Sunderdome is a magical battle arena with varying terrains, monsters, and locations. Adventurers, criminals, glory seekers, and athletes either are forcibly drafted into or choose to enter the arena, where they must do their best to survive, and fight to the death. The last party standing is the winner, and claims their prize: their lives. Depending on your chosen villain, the arena is either a “survival of the fittest” testing ground for a devil’s army, or the divine punishment of some misguided celestials.

Character Hooks and Motivations

To help involve your players and their characters more in the story, have each character in the party answer the following question: *Why have you been drafted into the Sunderdome?*



Alternatively, you can use the table below to give your players ideas for their characters' motivation in the adventure.

- 1 You are a wanted criminal. Instead of a lifetime of prison, you gambled and chose to be drafted into the Sunderdome. This is your one chance at freedom.
- 2 You've angered the members of some powerful guilds, and this is how they take care of business. Luckily for you, entertainment is your forte.
- 3 You've entered the Sunderdome to take it down. It's hurt countless people, and you want to see an end to it.
- 4 You've tracked down an old enemy of yours who is looking to gain his freedom in the Sunderdome. You're more than willing to risk your life to ensure that his ends.
- 5 You have no idea why you're here; you just suddenly woke up one morning, and now you're fighting in the pits.
- 6 One of your childhood friends is here, and you intend on helping them get out, however you can.

SER NOMINUS NOTE

Option 6 could be a good hook to use to connect one player character to another.

Villains

The villains of the Sunderdome are the ones who own and operate it. Your choice of villain will change what kinds of monsters inhabit the dome, what kind of challenges the characters must overcome, and the details of the final battle.

Rapture

(Villain Option #1)

Rapture is an archdevil who drafts the winners into her army in the Hells. She takes great pleasure in watching the competitors kill one another and always tries to make the battles challenging. Choose Rapture if you want a cut-and-dry "evil" villain and want to make the Sunderdome more brutal and unforgiving.

Apsinthos

(Villain Option #2)

Apsinthos is an archangel who sees the Sunderdome as proper punishment for all those inside. He has a very black-and-white view of the world and believes the winners of the Sunderdome have been blessed by the gods and deserve a second chance. He takes no pleasure in what he does, but understands the divine judgement in its barbarity. Choose Apsinthos if you want a more nuanced villain that won't be too brutal towards the players.

Areas of the Dome

The Sunderdome is split into four quadrants: the Frozen Spires, the Ashen Wastes, the Empty Badlands, and the Butchering Woods as shown on the map. Each quadrant behaves differently and harbors different monsters, depending on your chosen villain.

Towers. Each quadrant also has a tower at the intersections that rise to the top of the dome. The towers act as landmarks but also have supplies at their bases.

Distance. Each square is 880 feet. If the party moves at a typical speed of 3 miles per hour, they can move one square in about 3 minutes and 20 seconds. The easiest method to keep track of the party's movement is to have them move in 3 square increments, which is 10 minutes of travel. However, if the party moves diagonally with all 3 spaces, then their travel time is 15 minutes instead of 10.

SER NOMINUS NOTE

Basically, how this whole thing will go down is this: You'll be keeping track of where the party goes throughout the day on a timeline of one-hour increments. You'll either roll for or decide what they encounter and how they survive. You'll roll on other tables to determine the fate of the other three parties, and whether or not they run into your party. Once the characters defeat the other parties, they've won the Sunderdome! Or maybe they die a horrible death... That's also an ending!

The Dome's Doom Wall

This enormous dome is a giant arena built by powerful wizards who smashed different pieces of the planes together. When this was done, the elemental chaos caused a permanent storm to close in on the island throughout its days.

If your chosen villain is Rapture, the storm, known as the dome's "Doom Wall," is a fiery orange wall that incinerates all that pass through it.

If your chosen villain is Apsinthos, the dome's "Doom Wall" is a radiant barrier of divine energy that dematerializes all in its path.

SER NOMINUS NOTE

The dome's Doom Wall ONLY disintegrates creatures—not items, terrain, or anything of the like! It could also disintegrate Apsinthos or Rapture!

Any creature that enters the Doom Wall immediately disintegrates, leaving all their items behind.

The monsters in the Sunderdome are all magical creations of the villain; they can be remade within a week. Throughout the day, as the party battles in the arena, keep track of their time spent. Then, when they pass each hour mark, the dome shrinks. The dome closes in 3,000 feet on every hour mark and then stops. The dome covers this distance in 5 minutes each time. (It moves about 7 miles per hour, or 60 feet each round.) Refer to the maps on the timeline of where the dome will shrink on each hour mark.

SER NOMINUS NOTE

Basically:

- Keep track of where the party goes throughout the day on a timeline of one-hour increments.
 - Roll possible encounters (see below)
- Roll to determine the fate of the other three parties, and whether or not they run into your party (see further into the adventure sections).

Once the characters defeat the other parties, they've won the Sunderdome! Or maybe they die a horrible death... That's also an ending!

Encounters

Encounters are the bread and butter of the Sunderdome. Each quadrant has a different table of encounters that fit the area. Check for a random encounter every 3 squares that the party moves, or after every 20 minutes they spend in one area, depending on where they are.

Encounters can occur based on a d8 roll and the current hour:

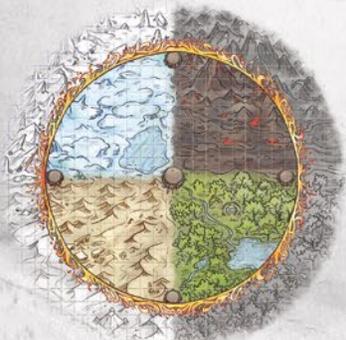
- If it is hour 1, with the dome at its largest, encounters only occur if you roll a 1 on a d8.
- If it is hour 2, encounters only occur if you roll a 1 or a 2 on a d8.
- If it is hour 3, encounters only occur if you roll a 1 - 4 on a d8.
- And if it is hour 4, the final hour, encounters always occur at the appropriate 10- and 20-minute intervals.

SER NOMINUS NOTE

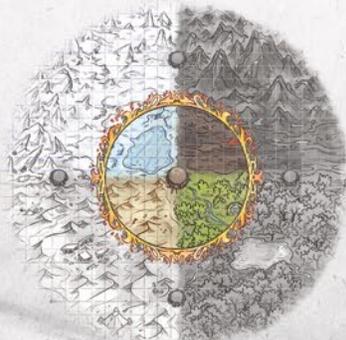
It's best and easiest to keep track of everything in equal measurements of time! Every 10 minutes of walking is an encounter, every 20 minutes of standing still is an encounter, and every 60 minutes, the dome shrinks to its next level. Whenever the characters do something, try to keep it in measurements of 5 or 10 minutes. Otherwise, you run the risk of overcomplicating your time tracking.



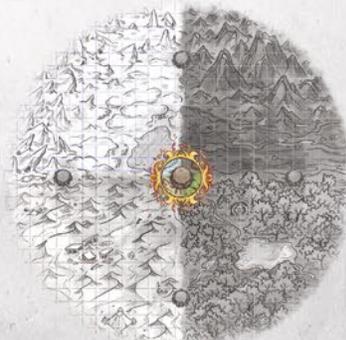
The Sunderdome



Hour 1



Hour 2



Hour 3

Let the Games Begin

(Adventure #1)

Synopsis

The characters are drafted into the Sunderdome and must fight to the death to claim their freedom... so they think. After preparing in a training room, they are dropped into the dome. The characters must then travel through the dome—surviving, or hunting.

Introduction

The introduction of this adventure has the characters meeting in a training room, where they can make necessary preparations before the battle. They will be given a map and general knowledge of the area via a spectral celestial or imp. Ensure each player understands why their character is about to participate in a deadly game of survival. When you are ready to begin the adventure, read whichever text corresponds to your chosen villain.

If your chosen villain is Rapture, read the following text:

“Hey, you—you’re finally awake!” someone yells at you from across a small room. This room has weapons lining the walls, targets set up for sparring, and hanging cots to sleep in...which is where you find yourself this morning. The creature flaps his small red wings around the room exclaiming, ‘Get up! Get up!’ He has horns, yellowed teeth, a small body, and a devilish grin. Something seems off about him, however: his body is slightly transparent, as if he isn’t truly here. ‘Today’s your big day!’ he yells. ‘You terrible bunch of no-good eggs get to try for your chance at freedom in the Sunderdome! Who will win? Who will die? Probably you! Statistically, it’s very likely! Now get prepared, because you only get one shot. Oh, by the way, this is your party. You’ll be fighting against three other parties; whichever party wins gains the glory of being in the armies of Rapture herself! Good luck!’ The imp disappears into thin air. You are all left in this quiet room, awaiting the storm.”

If your chosen villain is Apsinthos, read the following text:

“Good morning.’ You wake in a small room, at the sound of a gentle voice. This room has weapons lining the walls, targets set up for sparring, and hanging cots to sleep in... which is where you find yourself this morning. The source of the voice is a tall, hooded humanoid with golden wings and white robes. Something seems off, however: her body is slightly transparent, as if she isn’t truly here. ‘The time is 7 o’clock. You have all been brought here to compete in the Sunderdome, a divine battle amongst you petty criminals. Behold—the others in this room are your party. You will be slaughtered—ahem—competing against three other parties. May the Dusk Lord’s chosen win.” The angel disappears from thin air. You are all left in this quiet room, awaiting the storm.

Once the characters have been introduced, allow them to make any preparations they may need. Show them the map, but do not explain what everything on this map is; let them make assumptions and plan out their attack. The characters are not allowed to take any of the equipment with them when they enter the dome, aside from anything you may deem too important for them to go without—arcane focuses, spellbooks, artificer creations, wheelchairs, etc.

Once the party is ready, read the following text to begin the games:

“A loud ringing echoes through your room, and you hear a sourceless voice: ‘The Sunderdome is about to commence. Please remember that the dome’s Doom Wall will be slowly shrinking throughout the day. By noon, the dome will be no bigger than the room you are standing in. Good luck! And try to die quickly; a slow death may get you caught in the Doom Wall, which is an excruciating way to go. Let the games begin!’ The floor underneath you flaps open like a trap door, and you each feel a sinking sensation in your stomach as you go into freefall. Blue skies and clouds surround you, and you are falling down into a circular landscape, similar to the map you just viewed.”

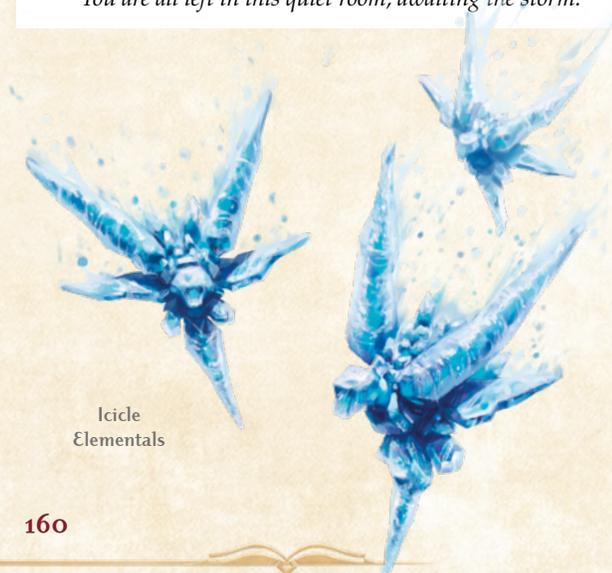
Have the party decide where they want to land. Anywhere inside the dome is possible. Roll a d4 to determine where the other three parties land:

- 1 will land them in the Frozen Spires
- 2 will land them in the Ashen Wastes
- 3 will land them in the Empty Badlands
- 4 will land them in the Butchering Woods

A character can see where the other parties are landing by making a successful DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check.

Eventually, the party’s descent is magically slowed and they float gently to the ground.

Remember: The characters can move 3 squares over the course of 10 minutes.



Icicle
Elementals

The Other Groups

The other three groups competing against the characters are the Iron Companions, the Endless Wreckers, and the Wraith Company.

The King Ring Companions. This group consists of three adventurers: **Yor**, a male half-elf; **Vel**, a female tiefling; and **Jaximus LeCoux**, a male human (see appendix B for these characters' stat blocks)

The Endless Wreckers. This group consists of four brothers, all of whom are human barbarians: Chad, Brad, Lad, and Clad. They each use the **endless wrecker** stat block (see appendix B).

The Wraith Company. This group consists of two adventurers. One is **Hilmar**, a male half-elf ranger, and the other is **Zorra**, a female dragonborn sorcerer (see appendix B for these characters' stat blocks). The two are in love, which allows them to play to each other's strengths.

There's no need to track the progress of the three groups while already tracking the party. Whenever the party encounters one of the other groups, roll a d4 on the table below to determine that group's status.

- | | |
|---|----------------|
| 1 | Not too shabby |
| 2 | Scraped up |
| 3 | Badly hurt |
| 4 | Lost a friend |

Not too Shabby. Each member of the group is unhurt and ready to kill.

Scraped Up. The group has encountered some monster out in the dome. Each member is down 2 hit points.

Badly Hurt. The group has encountered multiple monsters out in the dome; each member has been reduced to half of their total hit points.

Lost a Friend. The group either encountered another group, or had a bad run-in with a monster. They're missing one member, and each remaining member is down 2 hit points.

Fire Bomb



The Resupply Towers

Five stone towers that are as tall as the dome itself spread between the quadrants, acting as landmarks and places to resupply.

Whenever a party reaches a resupply tower, roll a d6 and consult the table below. If any of the three groups have been defeated, roll a d4.

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| 1 | The party finds a full supply |
| 2 | Some of the supply has been taken |
| 3 | Most of the supply has been taken |
| 4 | Run-in with a group |
| 5 | The supply is empty |
| 6 | The supply is trapped |

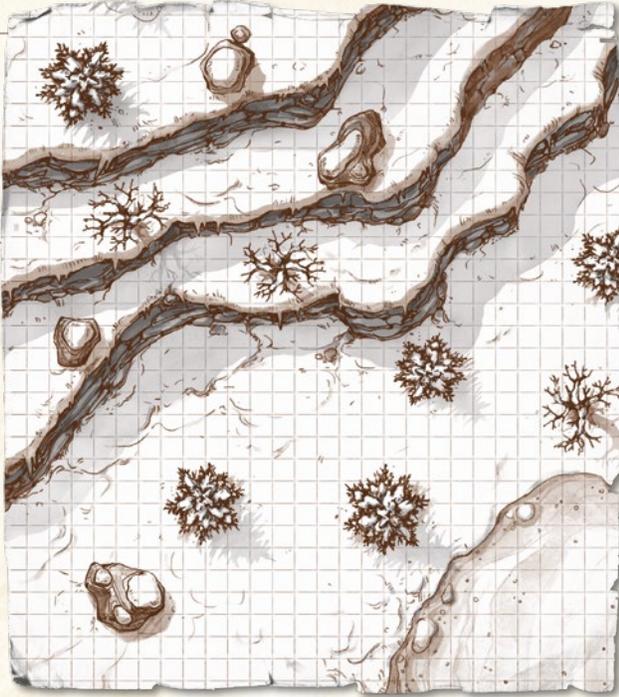
Supplies Found

If the characters find any supplies, roll on the table below to determine what they find. If it's a full supply, they find everything on the table. If some of the supply has been taken, roll 5 times on the table to determine what is there. If most of the supply has been taken, roll twice on the table to determine what is there.

If the supply is trapped, then roll 3 times on the table to determine what is there. If a character tries to take an item, a fire bomb explodes in the area. Any character with a passive Perception score of 10 or higher notices the trap. A successful DC 10 Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check will disarm the trap and net the party a single fire bomb.

Fire Bomb. This metal sphere can be thrown up to 30 feet as an action and explodes with fire in a 10 foot radius. Each creature within 10 feet of the explosion must succeed a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw or take 2d6 fire damage.

- | | |
|----|---|
| 1 | A longsword |
| 2 | A greatsword |
| 3 | Two clubs and a spell focus staff |
| 4 | Leather armor |
| 5 | A map of the Sunderdome |
| 6 | A potion of healing |
| 7 | A longbow and a shortbow |
| 8 | A light crossbow and a spell focus wand |
| 9 | 1d10 arrows and 1d10 bolts |
| 10 | A chain shirt |



Quadrant 1

The Frozen Spires

The Frozen Spires are a snow-covered landscape with some of the deadliest and stealthiest monsters in the Sunderdome. Not many survive long here.

Encounters in the Frozen Spires

Roll a d4 to determine the encounter. If another party landed in this quadrant, roll a d6 instead of a d4. If two or three parties landed in this quadrant, roll d6 and ignore rolls of 1 and 2.

- | | |
|---|---------------------------|
| 1 | Icicle elementals |
| 2 | Ice spire |
| 3 | Snow stalker |
| 4 | Abandoned camp |
| 5 | A party nearby |
| 6 | Run-in with another party |

Icicle Elementals. These flying spikes of pure ice prey around the dome, looking for anyone they can impale. In this encounter, there is one icicle elemental (see appendix B) per party member. They try their best to stealth 30 feet above the party before striking, hoping to catch them by surprise.

Ice Spire. These enormous and very sharp spires of ice rise out of the tundra everywhere. Each spire can

be climbed to gain a look of the nearby areas. If a character climbs a spire, show them where they are on the map and what they can see.

Snow Stalker. These pale-skinned hunters are the angry souls of previous competitors who have died in the Sunderdome. They rise out of the snow and are out for blood. They are also completely immune to the dome's Doom Wall. Only one snow stalker (see appendix B) should be encountered at a time.

Abandoned Camp. An ashy campfire, tents, and bedrolls are all covered in snow: These are the remains of a camp that belonged to a different party in a previous game. The camp looks weeks old. If the characters search the camp, they find one potion of healing.

A Party Nearby. Any character with a passive Perception score of 10 or higher notices foot traffic on the ground. Any character who makes a successful DC 8 Wisdom (Survival) check is able to follow the tracks, which lead them to one of the other groups of adventurers.

Run-in with Another Party. The characters are hunted or ambushed by another party who has been following them. Have the attackers make a Dexterity (Stealth) check against the party's passive Perception scores. Any character whose passive Perception score is lower than the result of the Dexterity (Stealth) check is surprised by the attack.

SER NOMINUS NOTE

If you don't want to roll for the encounters, feel free to just pick whichever you want!

Points of Interest in the Frozen Spires

There are two main locations the party could travel to in this area. The ice caves are on the outskirts of the quadrant, meaning the characters couldn't stay there for long (as the dome is ever-shrinking), while the frozen lake is closer to the center.

The Frozen Lake. This slippery lake is completely frozen. It provides a large amount of flat ground from which to see any incoming threats. If the party stays here, they have advantage on all Wisdom (Perception) checks. The frozen lake is considered difficult terrain for any character that doesn't have a climbing speed. If a creature takes the Dash action on the lake, they must succeed on a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw, or fall prone, their speed dropping to 0 for the rest of the round.

The Ice Caves. These mazes of ice provide good cover for hiding. While the characters are in these caves, the only creature they can possibly encounter is a **snow stalker** (see appendix B). Ignore all other potential encounters. After hour 1, however, it is impossible to stay in these caves because the dome is closing in.



Quadrant 2

The Ashen Wastes

The Ashen Wastes are filled with smokey air, lava rivers, and blackened, razor-sharp rocks. It can be a good place to hide if you stay away from the monsters.

Encounters in the Ashen Wastes

Roll a d4 to determine the encounter using the table below.

If another party landed in this quadrant, roll a d6 instead of a 1d4. If two or three parties landed in this quadrant, roll d6 and ignore rolls of 1 and 2.

1	Lava elemental
2	Lava river
3	Imps or a cleanser
4	Firestorm
5	A party nearby
6	Run-in with another party

Lava Elemental. One lava elemental (see appendix B) chases the party. This slow-moving creature tries to engorge any creatures it comes across. The characters are more likely to outrun a lava elemental than to successfully fight it if they stay.

Lava River. A river of lava 1d20×10 feet in width comes into the party's path. They can either try to cross it, or go around it. Going around it requires an extra 10 minutes of side-stepping.

Imps. If your chosen villain is Rapture, two imps of Rapture (see appendix B) swoop down and antagonize the characters, trying to poison them with their stingers and hurling insults at them.

Cleanser. If your chosen villain is Apsinthos, one cleanser (see appendix B) spots the party and attempts to exterminate them with its built-in flamethrower of justice.

Firestorm. The nearby volcanoes erupt, sending embers, smoke, falling rocks, and flame into the sky. The characters must either move to a different quadrant, or survive the firestorm, which lasts for 1 minute. Each character must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or take 1d6 fire damage.

A Party Nearby. Any character with a passive Perception score of 10 or higher notices foot traffic on the ground. Any character who makes a successful DC 12 Wisdom (Survival) check is able to follow the tracks, which lead them to one of the other groups of adventurers.

Run-in with Another Party. The characters are hunted or ambushed by another party who has been following them. Have the attackers make a Dexterity (Stealth) check against the party's passive Perception scores. Any character whose passive Perception score is lower than the result of the Dexterity (Stealth) check is surprised by the attack.

SER NOMINUS NOTE

If you don't want to roll for the encounters, feel free to just pick whichever you want!

Points of Interest in the Ashen Wastes

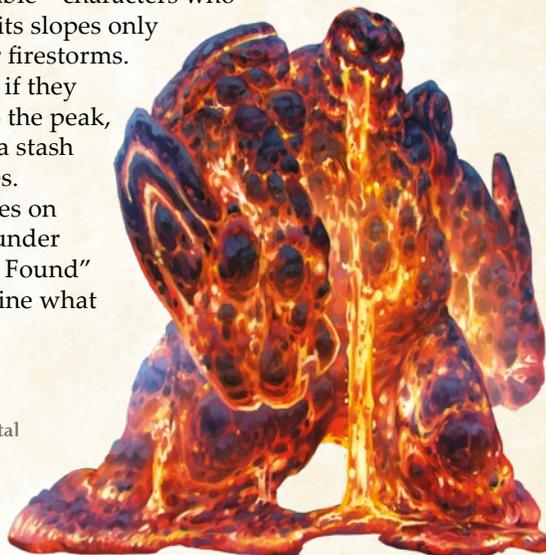
There is only one point of interest in the Ashen Wastes, that being the top of Mount Zephyr.

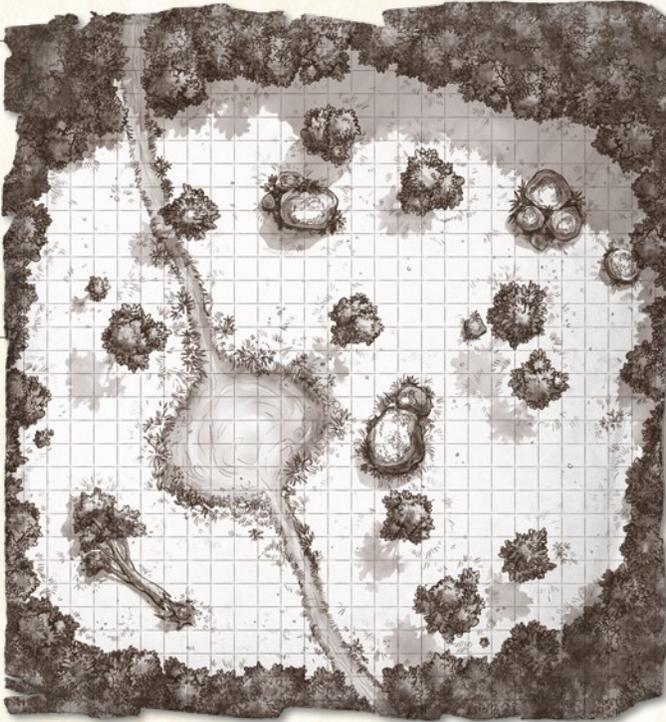
Mount Zephyr. This burning mountain is nearly unsurvivable—characters who travel up its slopes only encounter firestorms.

However, if they make it to the peak, they find a stash of supplies.

Roll 5 times on the table under "Supplies Found" to determine what they find.

Lava Elemental





Quadrant 3

The Butchering Woods

The Butchering Woods are a mostly serene place that provides the most comfort, compared to the other quadrants. Which is why it could be considered the most deadly: every creature battles to stay in this quadrant. Woodlands, lakes, rivers, and glades harbor ambushers and killer plants.

Encounters in the Butchering Woods

Roll a d4 to determine the encounter.

If another party landed in this quadrant, roll a d6 instead of a d4. If two or three parties landed in this quadrant, roll a d6 and ignore rolls of 1 and 2.

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------|
| 1 | Swarming nettle |
| 2 | River |
| 3 | Barbed hunters or executioner |
| 4 | A portal |
| 5 | A party nearby |
| 6 | Run-in with another party |

Swarming Nettle. One swarming nettle (see appendix B) comes to life and attacks the party. These plants are a semi-sentient hivemind and attack with intent to feed.

River. The party comes across a river, 80 feet in width. They can either try to cross it, or go around it. Going around it requires an extra 20 minutes of side-stepping.

Barbed Hunter. If your villain is Rapture, one barbed hunter (see appendix B) stalks the characters and tries to kill one of them for the glory of Rapture.

Executioner. If your villain is Apsinthos, one executioner (see appendix B) confronts the party. He chooses one character, lists their crimes, and then attacks them.

A Portal. The party comes to an archway lined with runes, with a swirling, colorful portal inside. This portal leads to any of the locations listed in any quadrant's "Points of Interest" section that have not already been taken by the dome's Doom Wall. Once a character goes through, they have no way to get back.

A Party Nearby. Any character with a passive Perception score of 10 or higher notices foot traffic on the ground. With a successful DC 14 Wisdom (Survival) check, they can follow the tracks, which lead them to one of the other groups of adventurers.

Run-in with Another Party. The characters are hunted or ambushed by another party who has been following them. Have the attackers make a Dexterity (Stealth) check against the party's passive Perception scores. Any character whose passive Perception score is lower than the result of the Dexterity (Stealth) check is surprised by the attack.

SER NOMINUS NOTE

If you don't want to roll for the encounters, feel free to just pick whichever you want!

Points of Interest in the Butchering Woods

There is only one point of interest in the Butchering Woods, that being Lake Olivier.

Lake Olivier. (Pronounced OH-LIVE-EE-AY) This serene, gleaming lake provides fresh water, fish, and a moment of peace and quiet. Any characters who journey to this lake and see it feel calm and inspired. They gain 3 temporary hit points.



Giant Wasp



Quadrant 4

The Empty Badlands

The Empty Badlands are a landscape of deserts, sandy dunes, and gorges. Barely anything exists out here, making it one of the safest quadrants—if you manage to avoid the traps.

Encounters in the Empty Badlands

Roll a d4 to determine the encounter.

If another party landed in this quadrant, roll a d6 instead of a d4. If two or three parties landed in this quadrant, roll a d6 and ignore rolls of 1 and 2.

- | | |
|---|---------------------------|
| 1 | Sandstone worm |
| 2 | Ruins |
| 3 | Monument |
| 4 | A crashed airskiff |
| 5 | A party nearby |
| 6 | Run-in with another party |

Sandstone worm. One sandstone worm bursts from the sand and attacks the party with the intent to suffocate them in the sand and eat them.

Ruins. The characters come across an old stone building, half-sunken into the sand with its walls fallen apart. It can provide good cover if the characters stay in it.

If they do, they have advantage on their Dexterity (Stealth) checks. However, spike pit traps are hidden in the sand, noticeable only by characters with a passive Perception score of 14 or higher. The first time a character enters the ruins, they must succeed on a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw or fall into the pit trap, taking 1d10 piercing damage from the fall.

Monument. If your villain is Rapture, this monument is a statue of her. She wields a mighty whip and stands menacingly over the characters, half-sunken into the sand.

If your villain is Apsinthos, this monument is a statue of him. He holds a greatsword, pointed downwards, as he looks down solemnly at the players, half-sunken into the sand.

Regardless of the villain, the monument bears a small amount of writing that is still legible. It reads, “Look upon my works, ye mighty, and despair!”

Crashed Airskiff. A partially sunken, completely broken airskiff sticks out of the sand. Its pilot was caught in the dome’s Doom Wall in a previous game. The skiff can be salvaged, in which case, the characters find a flash bomb.

Flash Bomb. This small metal sphere, once activated, can be thrown up to 30 feet. Creatures within 10 feet of the explosion must succeed on a DC 18 Constitution saving throw or become blinded and deafened until the end of their next turn.

A Party Nearby. Any character with a passive Perception score of 10 or higher notices foot traffic on the ground. With a successful DC 8 Wisdom (Survival) check, they can follow the tracks, which lead them to one of the other groups of adventurers.

Run-in with Another Party. The characters are hunted or ambushed by another party who has been following them. Have the attackers make a Dexterity (Stealth) check against the party’s passive Perception scores. Any character whose passive Perception score is lower than the result of the Dexterity (Stealth) check is surprised by the attack.

SER NOMINUS NOTE

If you don’t want to roll for the encounters, feel free to just pick whichever you want!

Points of Interest in the Empty Badlands

There is only one point of interest in the Empty Badlands, that being the Temple of the Diviner.

Temple of the Diviner. This large sandstone temple provides an enormous amount of cover and many places to hide—though it is taken by the dome’s Doom Wall after hour 1. Inside, the characters find dust,

Sandstone
Worm

sand, and empty hallways. In the center of this temple, however, is a pedestal with a large crystal ball. This crystal ball swirls with colorful magical energy. Any character that touches the ball sees a small glimpse of the future. Have the player roll a d20 and remember the result. They can replace one future d20 roll (of any kind) with this result. Once a character touches the crystal ball, it stops glowing and ceases to function.

SER NOMINUS NOTE

A character could take this crystal ball as a spellcasting focus if they wanted to!

Conclusion

Eventually, the party will need to seek out the other groups, or wait for them to meet up once the dome gets dangerously close to closing. If they win, however, the characters are teleported away from the dome by either an imp or an angel.

If you would like to end the adventure here, the characters are teleported back to either a major city or their homes, where they enjoy their freedom and never have to think about the Sunderdome again.

If you'd like to continue this adventure into part 2, "The Finalists," the party is brought to a large banquet hall with a feast of all kinds of food waiting for them. Read the following text:

"A feast of meats, soup, breads, and hearty drinks covers a long table. You hear a sourceless voice speak once again. 'Congratulations! You've won the Sunderdome! Eat, drink, and enjoy yourselves while you can. Tomorrow morning you'll be competing against the other finalists! How exciting! Now, that deep sense of dread you're currently feeling, that's good! Let it fuel your will to live in the second game! Because the winners of game 2 get a special audience with [either Rapture or Apsinthos] themselves! Along with a very special prize. Good luck and see ya next time!'"

The characters then advance to 2nd level. This concludes part 1 of "Sunderdome Showdown."





The Finalists

(Adventure #2)

Synopsis

After their victory in the first round of the Sunderdome, the party is drafted into round 2, where they face off against other victors. The battles are tougher, there are new enemies, and airskiffs are readily available to all contestants, which allows them to zip around the map at great speeds. The party must once again survive to victory.

Introduction

With the characters securing victory in round 1, they move onto round 2, where they'll compete against other finalists. This adventure plays very similarly to adventure 1, except with some additives and changes to spice up the game, along with three new groups of competitors.

Refer to the locations, encounters, and movement described in part 1, but make sure to add in any changes listed below.

After the characters have their victory feast, they are teleported back to a similar small room with cots and training equipment. As before, the characters are not allowed to take any of the equipment with them when they enter the dome, aside from anything you may deem too important for them to go without—arcane focuses, spellbooks, artificer creations, wheelchairs, etc.

The second round takes place at sunset and continues into nighttime. Once the party is ready, read the following text to begin the games:

"A loud ringing echoes through your room. You hear a sourceless voice speak. "The Sunderdome is about to commence. Please remember that the dome's Doom Wall will be slowly shrinking throughout the day. But you should know that already! In today's games, airskiffs will be readily available to all parties. They're not too difficult to pilot, unless you're a complete idiot. Good luck, and let the games begin!" Once again, the floor underneath you flaps open like a trap door, and you each feel a sinking sensation in your stomach as you go into freefall. Orange and purple skies surround you, and as you fall, you look down upon the familiar Sunderdome—ready to fight."

Have the party decide where they want to land—anywhere inside the ring is possible. Roll a d4 to determine where the three other parties land, with 1 being the Frozen Spires, 2 being the Ashen Wastes, 3 being the Empty Badlands, and 4 the Butchering Woods. With a successful DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check, any character can see where the other parties are landing.

Eventually, the party's descent is magically slowed as they float gently to the ground. At this point, do not show the characters the map. Have them decide where to go based on landmarks that you describe to them.

Remember: the characters can move 3 squares over the course of 10 minutes.

The Sunderdome at Night

The contestants will only have an hour of sunlight before the dome falls into darkness. Due to the soft glow of the dome's Doom Wall, the entire arena is filled with dim light after sundown. All creatures have disadvantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks unless they have darkvision. On top of this, all creatures have advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks against Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

SER NOMINUS NOTE

Remember that darkvision has a range. Creatures with it will still have disadvantage on Perception checks outside their normal range.

The Other Groups

The other three groups competing against the characters are The Lillies, Group Two, and Turk and the Tall Boys.

The Lillies. This group consists of three hunter-adventurers. They won the last game by tracking each group and hunting them down. They are: Scotty, a nonbinary elven ranger; Jozen, a female halfling ranger; and Osmorn, a nobinary half-elf ranger. Use the **Lilly** (see appendix B) stat block for each of them.

Group Two. This group consists of two adventurers who didn't care to have a cool group name. They won the previous game via a war of attrition. The other three groups killed each other; Group Two didn't fight a single person. Group Two consists of two human men named Ergid and Kelma. Both use the **commoner** statblock.

Turk and the Tall Boys. This group consists of three adventurers, all of whom are spellcasters. They won because their magic proved to overpower the other groups. Their group name is an inside joke, a reference to a book they all read. Turk and the Tall Boys consists of a male gnome wizard named **Papos**, a female halfling sorcerer named **Sylmie**, and a male kobold warlock named **Grass** (see appendix B for these characters' stat blocks).

There's no need to track the progress of the three groups while already tracking the party. Whenever the party encounters one of the groups, roll a d4 on the status table in part 1 to determine their status.

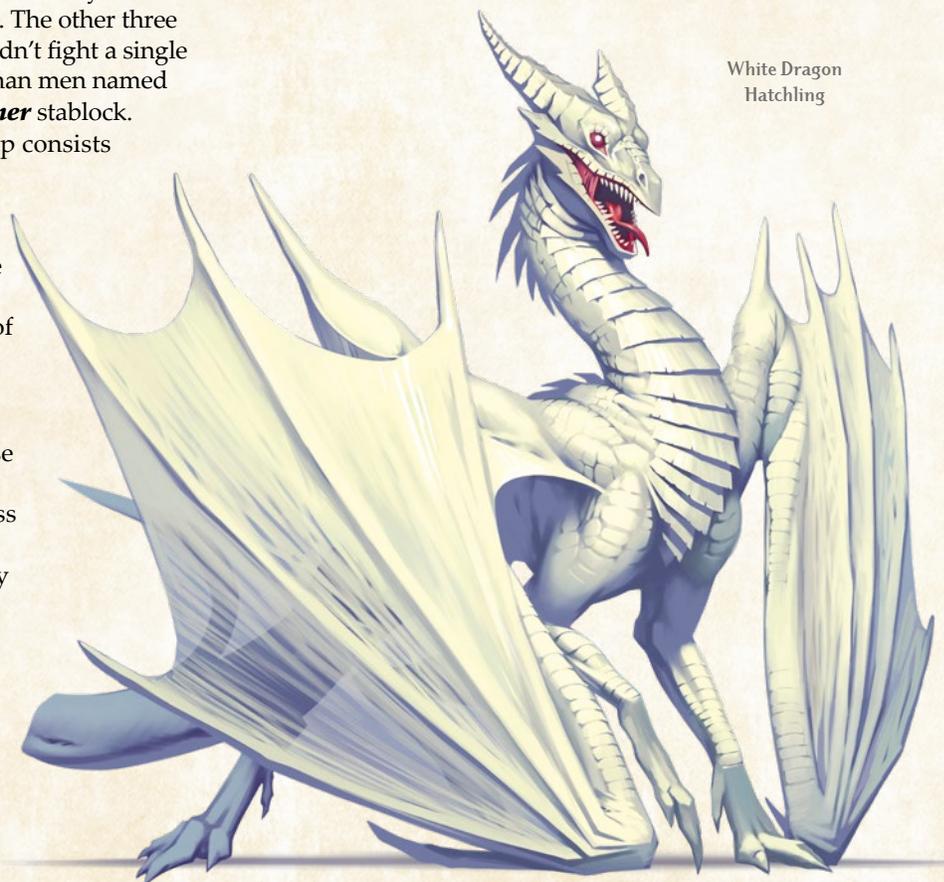
Airskiffs

Including what's already at the other five Resupply towers, there are also two airskiffs. These airskiffs require one pilot, who can control the skiff as a bonus action on their turn. It can hold up to eight creatures and has a flying speed of 100 feet, and can travel 1 square in a minute. However, the skiffs cannot travel any higher than 15 feet off the ground. Each airskiff can operate for 1 hour; after that hour, it slows to a stop and powers down, ceasing all functionality.

Boosting. Each airskiff can be boosted as an action. This boost increases its speed to 250 feet for 4 rounds, or 36 seconds. This boost can cover up to one square in that time. Once an airskiff has used its boost, it cannot be boosted again.

Crashing. Each airskiff has an AC of 15 and 15 hit points. If an airskiff is reduced to 0 hit points, it is broken and cannot be repaired, except with a casting of mending, which heals it 1d6 hit points. If an airskiff is reduced to 0 hit points while in motion, it crashes into the ground. Each creature on the airskiff must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity or Constitution saving throw, taking 2d6 bludgeoning damage on a failed save or half as much on a success. If the airskiff was boosting when it fell, the damage is increased to 4d6. If an airskiff crashes into anything while flying, it takes 2d10 bludgeoning damage, or 4d10 if it was boosting.

Whenever the party encounters another group, roll a d4. If you roll a 1 or 2, the group is on an airskiff.



White Dragon
Hatchling

Quadrant 1:

The Frozen Spires

In addition to what is detailed in part 1, the Frozen Spires also include the following.

WHITE DRAGON HATCHLING

Instead of encountering icicle elementals, the characters encounter a **white dragon hatchling** (see appendix B), who attacks the party out of desperation. Instead of fighting the dragon, the party can try to befriend the creature by rolling a DC 12 Wisdom (Animal Handling) check—if they succeed, the dragon leaves them alone. If the check succeeds by 5 or more, the dragon instead follows the party and helps them in their advances toward victory.

Quadrant 2:

The Ashen Wastes

In addition to what is detailed in part 1, the Ashen Wastes also include the following.

EMBER ELEMENTAL

Instead of encountering a lava elemental, the party encounters an **ember elemental** (see appendix B). This hulking creature of burning ash, smoke, and embers attempts to engulf other creatures in its burning aura. However, it will favor attacking a group aboard an airskiff.

Quadrant 3:

The Butchering Woods

In addition to what is detailed in Adventure 1, the Butchering Woods also includes the following.

GIANT WASPS

Instead of encountering swarming nettle, the party encounters two **giant wasps** (see appendix B). The wasps are territorial, and their loud buzzing can be heard just before they attack.

Quadrant 4:

The Empty Badlands

In addition to what is detailed in part 1, the Empty Badlands also include the following.

WANDERING GOLEM

Instead of encountering the crashed airskiff, the party encounters a **wandering golem** (see appendix B). This golem is not particularly hostile toward any creatures; it won't outright attack a contestant. But it tries to destroy any airskiffs it sees.

Conclusion

Second verse, same as the first. The party will need to defeat the other groups in order to secure their victory. Once this is done, they are once again teleported away by an imp or angel.

If you would like to end the adventure here, the characters are teleported back to their training room and met with a spectral illusory image of either Rapture or Apsinthos. They are congratulated for becoming the winners. Rapture doesn't see much use for them in her army, so she lets them loose. Apsinthos gives them his blessing, remarking how they have been given a chance at redemption by the Dusk Lord. They are then teleported to either a major city or their homes with over 1,000 gp in their pockets. There they can enjoy their freedom and never have to think about the Sunderdome again.

If you would like to continue the adventure into part 3, "Down with the Dome," the party is once again brought to a large banquet hall with a feast of all kinds of food waiting for them.

If your chosen villain is Rapture, read the following text:

"Another lavish feast of meats, soup, breads, and hearty drinks covers a long table. You see the spectral image of a beautiful red-skinned arch-devil. She stands over you at 10 feet tall, with her horns adding even more to her height. Her sleek armor fits around every curve of her body. She carries a braided whip and smirks down at each one of you, eyes aglow with flaming intensity. 'So here you are. The formidable champions of my Sunderdome. You've fought very well; you seem to have a knack for war. I'd like you to face the ultimate challenge, however, for you all to be truly worthy of my army. Tomorrow you'll be competing in the final round of the Sunderdome—a fight against me! I want to see your form, strategy, and fighting prowess up close. If you win, I'll let you have whatever you want. If I win, your souls belong to me!' She disappears in a fit of laughter. You are left alone in the banquet hall."

If your chosen villain is Apsinthos, read the following text:

"Another lavish feast of meats, soup, breads, and hearty drinks covers a long table. You see the spectral image of a hooded, faceless angel. He floats over you at 10 feet tall, with his golden wings keeping him aloft. His pure white robes are reflective and gleaming, and he carries an enormous greatsword in his hands. 'Blessed souls, you have suffered much to be where you are. Please, rest while you can. For the Dusk Lord has chosen you not once, but twice. You are righteous warriors, ready for redemption. But I cannot allow you to leave. I must see to this personally. Tomorrow you will enter the Sunderdome for the final time, matching against me. May the Dusk Lord light your path, and for what it's worth, I am sorry.' You are left alone in the banquet hall."

The party advances to 3rd level and is teleported back to their training room...for the final time.

Down with the Dome

(Adventure #3)

Synopsis

The characters have become the true victors of the dome, but not if the villain has anything to say about it. They want to see the party's skill for themselves and personally become their only adversary in the third and final round of the Sunderdome. The party will have limited time and more monsters to fight, along with the ruler of the dome. Will the villain take them down, or spare their lives? It's up to them in the end.

Introduction

In the final round inside the Sunderdome, the party is pitted against the villain. There are no groups in this part, just a war of attrition between the party and the villain.

Refer to the locations, encounters, and movement described in part 1, but make sure to add in any changes listed below.

As before, the characters are not allowed to take any of the equipment with them when they enter the dome, aside from anything you may deem too important for them to go without—arcane focuses, spellbooks, artificer creations, wheelchairs, etc.

The final round begins at 4:00 p.m. and is only 2 hours in length, taking place as the sun sets.

When you are ready to begin the adventure, read the following text:

"A loud ringing echoes through your room. You hear a sourceless voice speak. 'The Sunderdome is about to commence. Please remember that the dome's Doom Wall is—Psh, you know that already! Also remember the airskiffs will be readily available, and be careful out there. The whole dome's in a craze! Those monsters might be a lot meaner than before! Let the games begin!' Once again, the floor underneath you flaps open like a trap door and you each feel a sinking sensation in your stomach as you go into freefall. Orange and purple skies surround you, and as you fall, you look down upon the familiar Sunderdome—ready for the final fight, once and for all."

Have the party decide where they want to land; anywhere inside the ring is possible. Roll a d4 to determine where either Rapture or Apsinthos is lurking.

Eventually, the party's descent is magically slowed as they float gently to the ground. At this point, do not show the characters the map. Have them decide where to go based on landmarks that you describe to them.

Remember: the characters can move 3 squares over the course of 10 minutes.

The Final Sunderdome

The party will need to hunt down the villain, who resides in one of the quadrants and will be waiting for them there.

The characters can still find supplies at the resupply towers. They will always find full amounts of equipment, but only one airskiff at each.

Additionally, this final round takes place over the course of 2 hours instead of 4, and the dome shrinks every 30 minutes instead of every hour.

Encounters

All encounters in this adventure are the same as they were in round 1; however, the number of creatures encountered is doubled.

SER NOMINUS NOTE

Feel free to use any encounters from part 2 as well—make this final Sunderdome a real challenge for the players. Throw everything you've got at them. The more they endure, the more victorious their ending will be!

Fighting Rapture

Rapture is guarded by four **imps** (see appendix B) who do her bidding. Each time the characters face **Rapture** (see appendix B), she taunts them and remarks on their fighting prowess. If she takes 25 damage, she uses her teleport ability at the start of her turn, retreating into a different quadrant.

Fighting Apsinthos

Apsinthos has no guards and duels the characters alone. Each time the characters face **Apsinthos** (see appendix B), he exclaims holy proverbs and is impressed by their fighting ability. If he takes 25 damage, he uses his teleport ability at the start of his turn, retreating into a different quadrant.

Conclusion

Once the characters reduce either Rapture or Absinthos to 0 hit points, their Death Ward is triggered, leaving them at 1 hit point. (That is, unless the party defeats them via the dome's Doom Wall, in which case, they disintegrate immediately and the Death Ward fails.)

If your chosen villain is Rapture, read the following text:

"The archdevil falls to the ground, holding up her hands in defense. 'Wait! Wait! You've proven your worth! Truly you are each a champion of the Sunderdome. But if I die, then this whole place goes, and you will not get your reward. I can give you anything your heart desires... I need this place, as did you. Look at the warriors it's turned you into. You know what to do."

If the characters choose to kill Rapture, they can easily cut her down in any way they desire. She screams as she crumbles to ash and bits. The Sunderdome then begins to shake, explode, and fall apart. Just when the characters think they'll be going down with it, they are teleported out.

If the characters choose to spare Rapture, she thanks them and stays true to her word, offering each character a casting of the wish spell. Once they've each been granted what they want, they are teleported out of the dome.

If your chosen villain is Apsinthos, read the following text:

"The angel falls to the ground, kneeling and looking up to you. From this vantage point, he seems helpless. 'You possess the capability to strike me down. If this is your wish, then so be it. I have now realized that this dome is not the arbiter to determine who is to live and who is to die. Who can truly make that judgement? I do not know if I can live with the fact that I may have sent countless souls to their doom because this game was unjust. Can you make that judgement? Can you decide who deserves to live?'"

Ser Nominus
aboard an Airskiff

If the characters choose to kill Apsinthos, they can easily cut him down in any way they desire. He falls to the ground, and his body disappears, leaving his robes and sword behind. The Sunderdome then begins to shake, explode, and fall apart. Just when the characters think they'll be going down with it, they are teleported out.

If the characters choose to spare Apsinthos, he does not understand their mercy, but still offers each character a casting of the wish spell. Once they've each been granted what they want, they are teleported out of the dome.

SER NOMINUS NOTE

If you'd rather not give each character the casting of a wish spell, you can instead change the reward to something that they want "within reason." Or you can give them a bunch of gold and call it a day!

As the characters are teleported back home, the adventure is concluded. But this does not need to be the end! Maybe they are teleported back home, only to find that they must travel back to where they came from? Maybe there are other associates of the villain who plan on recreating the dome? Or the characters are approached by a company who wants to use their victory as a way to start a new fighting arena? Or the characters could even become the new owners of the Sunderdome, and pit whoever they want against one another as maniacal overlords of a super dangerous fighting arena. The choice is up to you!





THEME TAGS

Post-apocalyptic, adventure, warfare.

CONTENT WARNING

Corpses, mass destruction, scary monsters, repeated death, body horror, violent description, explosions.

Description

Following an apocalyptic disaster in the center of the city of Cathair, a band of scientists, military personnel, and government officials—working under the name “Cathair Incident Rescue, Recovery, and Research,” or CIR3—wants answers and needs assistance in their recovery efforts. The first adventure ends with the party venturing into the city and rescuing a group of

trapped survivors, the second adventure ends with the party recovering data on the “Incident” from a group of CIR3 recon scouts, and the final adventure ends with the party defeating the main villain and destroying the “Anomaly.”

SER NOMINUS NOTE

WARNING! “The Doomed Heroes” has a ‘respawn’ game mechanic, thus this adventure is designed to be deadly. The characters are intended to die... and come back. Then die, and come back, a lot. This adventure isn’t recommended for first-time GM’s or players, due to its challenging nature. But don’t let that stop you! If you are confident and are eager to run this adventure, go for it.



Background

The grand city of Cathair has fallen. The once bustling and prosperous metropolis is now nothing more than a ruin, twisted by dark magics that have brought down its shimmering towers and decimated its people. After the “Incident,” few people have gone in, and fewer people have come back out. Those who do return tell of strange beings who prowl the rubble in search of survivors. What remains of the government and military—a team made up of scientists, doctors, and military personnel, calling themselves the Cathair Incident Rescue Recovery and Research, or CIR3 (often pronounced SEER-THREE)—has set up a base camp on the outskirts of the city, intent on helping any survivors they can find, as well as figuring out what happened and how to stop the spreading corruption. Low on resources and manual assistance, CIR3 has had to turn to adventurers in order to address their needs.

Character Hooks and Motivations

To help involve your players and their characters more in the story, have each character answer the following question: *Why is your character willing to venture into an apocalyptic city?*

Alternatively, you can use the table below to give your players ideas for their characters’ motivation in the adventure.

- 1 You are a convicted criminal and have been given a deal: your freedom from prison in return for working for CIR3.
- 2 You are a junior member of CIR3 and want a more hands-on assignment, rather than sitting around and waiting in the base camp.
- 3 You owe an enormous debt to a noble family. CIR3 is willing to pay it off in exchange for your service on this mission.
- 4 The source of the disaster in Cathair is of great interest to you. Why did it happen? What’s inside? You want answers!
- 5 A friend or a family member lived in the city of Cathair, and you want to find them.
- 6 You are a survivor of the “Incident” and want to aid CIR3 in resolving it.

Villains

The villains for “The Doomed Heroes” are both corrupted creatures. However, their origins are very different, meaning the corruption they spread throughout the city of Cathair is also different.

Henry Blackcroft

(Villain Option #1)

An eccentric inventor and entrepreneur, Henry Blackcroft is the owner of the Blackcroft Industrial Complex, and a former member of the city council. Blackcroft was removed from his position after he attempted to expose a fellow councilman as corrupt, but was instead framed for corruption himself. In the wake of this scandal, his eccentricity turned to malice as he began his quest for revenge. Utilizing his automata, he planted a magic energy bomb in the city chambers and detonated it, causing mass destruction that resulted in unlucky citizens being fused with his machines, creating strange hybrid creatures. He himself is more machine than man now, sending his mechanical abominations to hunt down the last survivors of the city he believes to have forsaken him. Choose Henry if you want the adventure to lean into a technological threat.



Animatium

The Othkotha

(Villain Option #2)

Othkotha is an unnatural and unfeeling demon lord of corruption, one whose mere presence causes living creatures in the area to morph and mutate into twisted abominations. Othkotha has no real goals beyond spreading its corruption to every living being in existence. It came into the material world when a large bomb of pure magical energy was detonated within the city chambers by a disgruntled former council member, Henry Blackcroft. Choose the Othkotha if you want the adventure to have a more monstrous, zombie-apocalypse threat.

SPAWN and Animatium

The System for Perpetual Animation Within a Network, or SPAWN, is a network of devices which store the data of a person’s biological makeup and create a copy of the body. The person’s consciousness is then moved into this new “shell” at a “Nexus Node.” More or less, it’s a respawn system for the characters for when they inevitably die. Due to the amount of power and resources it takes to integrate someone into the network, the procedure is only performed on a select few people—namely members of the recon teams that venture into the most dangerous areas of the city.

When a character dies, they respawn from a device called a Nexus Node. There are two types of these nodes. The first is a Stationary Node, which is permanently connected to SPAWN and acts as a central hub for the entire system. If a character cannot be respawned from another node, they will respawn at the Stationary Node instead by default. This Stationary Node is located within the Terminal building at the CIR3 base. The second type of Nexus Node is the Portable Node. This node allows the characters to respawn in a location other than the CIR3 base. However, the Portable Node has some limitations. First, while being carried, it only has 3 respawn charges, which reset daily at dawn. If the party has four deaths, the first three can be respawned at the Portable Node, but the fourth would respawn at the Stationary Node in the CIR3 base camp. However, if the party takes time to “ground” the Node, it can act just like the Stationary Node and respawn an unlimited number of times. “Grounding” the node takes 5 minutes of work to set up and another 5 minutes of work to take down. Only the Stationary or Grounded nodes allow for the characters’ equipment to respawn with them; equipment is left behind if the Portable Node is ungrounded.

There is one thing that causes the entire system to shut down: an element known as Animatium. This element originates from beyond the Anomaly at the center of the Incident. Its presence gives off a level of

magical radiation that interrupts connection between the characters' SPAWN device and the network itself. So if a character dies within an area being affected by Animatium, their consciousness is not able to be transferred into a new shell until their personal SPAWN device is removed from the area.

Each SPAWN device has an AC of 20 and 50 hit points. If a SPAWN device is broken, it cannot be fixed except via the casting of a mending spell. A broken SPAWN device must also reconnect to a node in order to operate.

SER NOMINUS NOTE

Make sure the players are aware when they are not connected to the network! Tell them that their device seems to shut down when they step into the area, but turns back on when they leave. Also, the statistics for the SPAWNs are only available if the players inquire about them. Attempting to break the characters' SPAWN systems is a sure way to bring this adventure to a grinding halt.

Navigating the City

The city of Cathair has become an incredibly dangerous place. It is a labyrinth of ruined buildings where creatures may lurk around every corner. For each hour of travel, have one of the characters make a DC 18 Wisdom (Survival) check. On a success, they reach their destination with no issues. On a fail, have them roll on the encounter table below.

- 1 Lost in the ruins
- 2 Road block
- 3 Crumbling structures
- 4 Hostile survivors
- 5 Small group of enemies
- 6 Large group of enemies

Lost in the Ruins. The party gets lost in the maze of ruins, and now must figure out where they are. Have the characters make either a Wisdom (Perception or Survival) check. If the result is 9 or below, they encounter two additional encounters, rolling 2d3 instead of 1d6, and then must make the initial check again. On a 10-14, they encounter an additional encounter, rolling a 2d3 instead of a 1d6, finding the correct path afterwards. If the result is higher than 15, they reach their destination without issue.

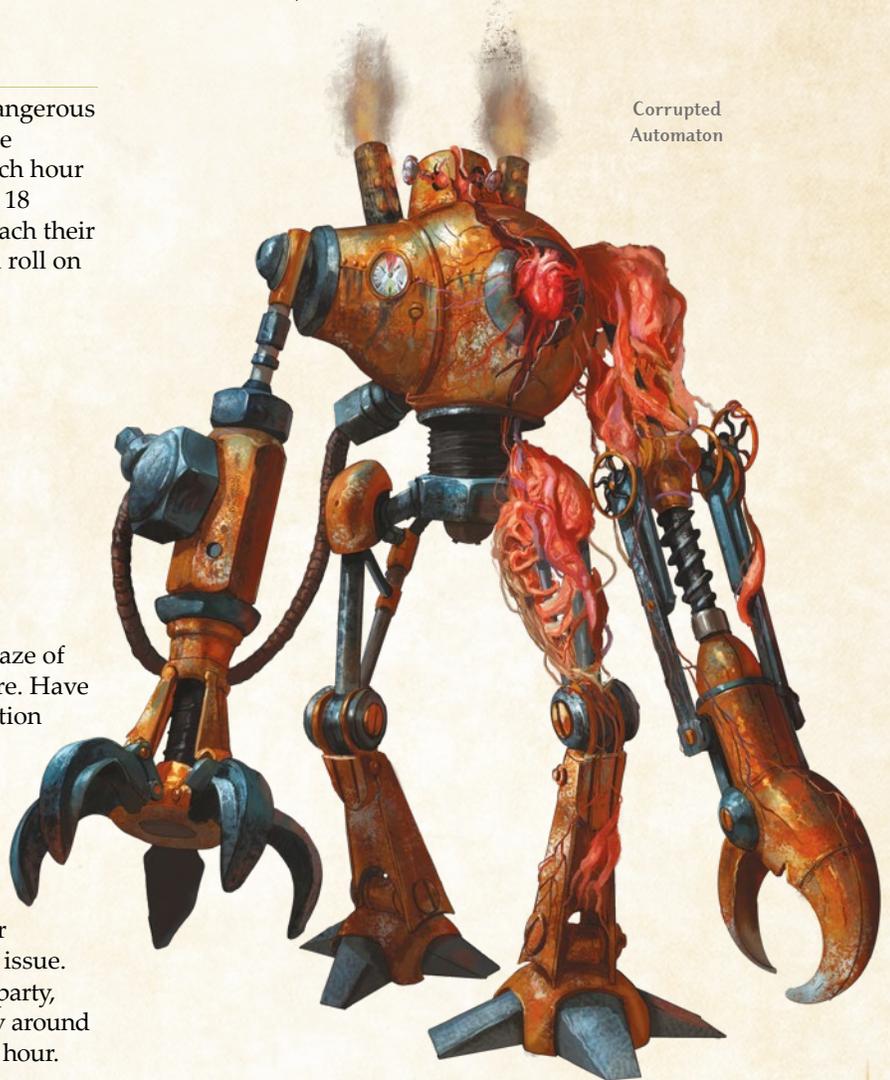
Road Block. A building crumbles in front of the party, blocking their route. They must now find a way around this obstacle. Their travel time is increased by 1 hour.

Crumbling Structures. A chunk of a ruined building falls above one of the characters, chosen at random. Have the character make a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw. On a failure, they take 3d6 bludgeoning damage and become restrained. The restrained character can escape with a DC 15 Strength or Dexterity check, or with the help of the other characters with a combined Strength score of 25 or higher.

Hostile Survivors. The party runs into a group of five hostile survivors (using the **commoner** stat block) who want to forcibly take their stuff.

Small Group of Enemies. The party runs into a group of three creatures—either **corrupted automatons**, if the main villain is Henry Blackcroft, or **mutated citizens**, if the main villain is the Othkotha—which ambush them amongst the ruins (see appendix B for these creatures' stat blocks).

Large Group of Enemies. The party runs into a group of eight creatures—either **corrupted automatons**, if the main villain is Henry Blackcroft, or **mutated citizens**, if the main villain is the Othkotha—who ambush them amongst the ruin (see appendix B for these creatures' stat blocks).



Corrupted Automaton

Search and Rescue

(Adventure #1)

Synopsis

CIR3 has received communication from a group of survivors that are holed up in the Blackcroft Industrial Complex, located in the industrial sector of Cathair. In a bid to save as many citizens as possible, CIR3 gathers the party shortly after their arrival at the CIR3 base, and prepares them to go into the city, find the survivors, and get out.

Introduction

The game opens up in medias res with a small combat where the party has to fight off a group of creatures—**corrupted automatons**, if the main villain of the story is Henry Blackcroft, or two **mutated citizens**, if the main villain is the Othkotha—just as they reach the main gates of the CIR3 base camp (see appendix B for these creatures' stat blocks). Two camp guards, **CIR3 recon scouts** (see appendix B), will assist the party with ranged weapons from atop the base's wall, but will not open the gate until the creatures have been slain. Once they do, the party is escorted into the base, and the gate closes behind them. The party is led through the base and to the control tower, where the Operations Council is meeting. The council welcomes them to the base, and informs them of the current situation, both in regards to the city in general, and more specifically for a mission they have for the party personally. Some of the researchers picked up a transmission from within the city, seemingly coming from a band of survivors. The only discernible words were, "Help...Stuck...Creature...Storage...Blackcroft factory..." The council believes that the phrase "Blackcroft factory" is in reference to the Blackcroft Industrial Yard, which is located in the industrial sector of the city. They task the party with going to the factory to investigate the source of the transmission and to save any survivors that might be there.

Preparing to Leave

The leader of the Research Division, Anton Albreck, offers the party access to the SPAWN Network, as well as their own Portable Node, should they take on this mission. After the characters accept, they are led down to the Terminal Building of the base, where they are processed into the SPAWN Network and a device is surgically attached to each character's chest. This device is their connector to the SPAWN. Anton gives them a rundown on how the network works, how to use it, and what to expect from it. He also warns them about Animatium, and to always keep an eye on the

indicator light for the SPAWN device to make sure they are connected to the network. Once they have been added to the network, the characters are offered any last amenities like food, water, or ammo that they may need at the moment, before being ushered out of the base and into the city proper.

SER NOMINUS NOTE

Try to make sure the players do not take advantage of the access to the base's supplies. This is a makeshift camp where the populace is just trying to survive. They can't and won't give up their entire supply of food, water, and ammunition—just what they can spare.

CIR3 Base Camp

If the characters want to explore the CIR3 base, use the following information to fill them in on its background and operation. The CIR3 base camp is located on the outskirts of the city, set up around the tarmac and hangars of an airship airstrip. The base is the center for the response services that are focused on the "Incident."

Medical Hangar. A hangar has been turned into a medical services base, with a triage area, emergency rooms, surgery center, and morgue.

Barracks Hangar. Another hangar has been converted into a military barracks and base of operations, where recon units and soldiers operate and can find their amenities.

Terminal and Control Tower. The main terminal of the airstrip has been turned into a makeshift research station, where scientists conduct various tests and delve into data gathered from the few recon units that make it back. The terminal also houses the Stationary Node and all of the equipment for the SPAWN. The control tower is a recon point, as well as the base's command spot, where recon soldiers can have a 360-degree view of the entire area to keep watch on the city and its surroundings, and where division leaders meet to make decisions on various operations.

Tarmac. The tarmac of the airstrip is covered by canvas tents that act as a shelter for survivors, as well as spaces for their own amenities, including a cafeteria. The entire airstrip is surrounded by a makeshift wall made up of scrap taken from crashed airships found on the base. This wall is necessary because the base is occasionally assaulted by creatures straying out from the city proper and attempting to attack the people inside.

Operations Council. The operations of the base are split up into three divisions, each with their own leaders. These leaders together make up the Operations Council, with each division giving input on what they think is best for the overall health of the

base, its people, and operations within the city itself. Each of the leaders truly believes what they are doing is what is best for the people, though they do not always agree.

The Military Division is led by Commander Geccen Hinrish, a bronze dragonborn general of the Cathair military. He leads the military guard and recon teams of the base. He is hot-blooded, willing to pick up arms quickly and jump into battle, but also does not like any plan that would risk his men needlessly. Because of this, he is the one who is fully on board with bringing adventurers in to supplement CIR3's own incursions into the city.

The Research Division is led by Professor Anton Aubreck, a high elf scientist and former professor at the Cathair University. He leads the researchers, scientists, and medical staff of the base. He is cool and calm, focused on the logical aspects of the situation. Aubreck is completely willing to sacrifice people if it means they can get a step closer to discovering the cause of the Incident and bring it to an end—a sort of “sacrifice the few for the good of the many” mentality.

The Cooperative Division is led by Morigian Hillock, a lightfoot halfling and former bar owner. She was elected by the people to speak for the survivors and citizens of the base. She is warm and open, very much focused on taking care of people first, everything else second.

The Yammering Yokel

While en route to the Blackcroft Industrial Yard, the party runs into a vagabond within the ruins of the city. The vagabond, All-Bite Austin, lost most of his sanity following the “Incident,” and he speaks in riddles and conspiracy theories, most of which are absurd. However, hidden amongst the nonsense are a few grains of truth. Austin hints at who the main villain of the campaign is, as well as the location of the recon team for part 2.

SER NOMINUS NOTE

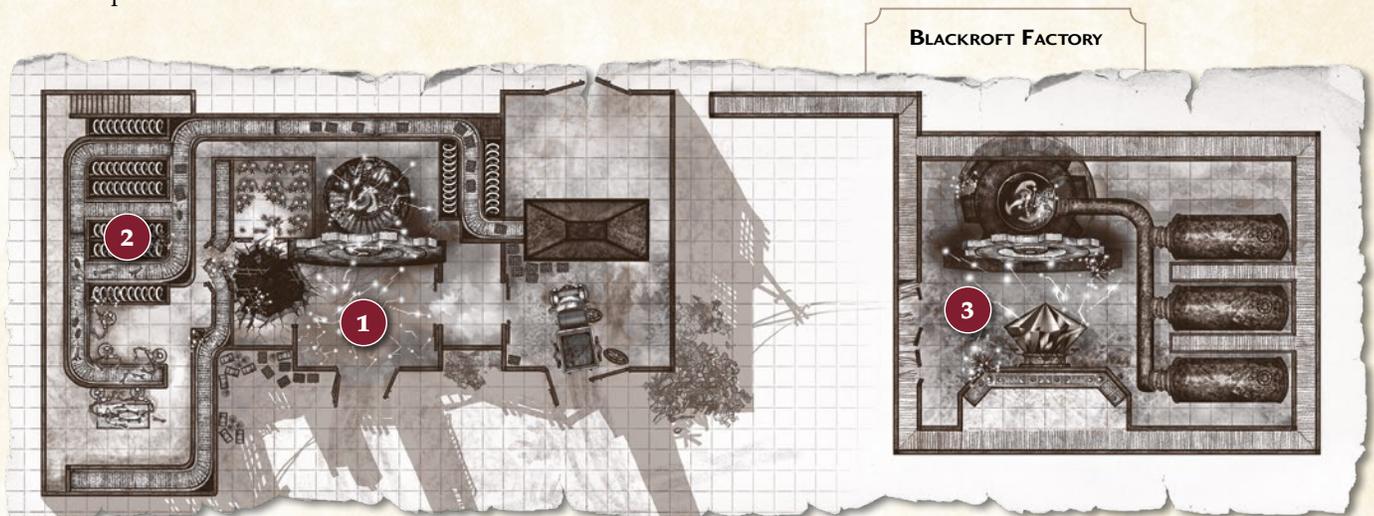
Try to sandwich the nuggets of truth between the false conspiracies to ensure that the characters do not trust everything Austin says. Even better, give them half-truths! Really have fun playing around with how you present the information.

Blackcroft Industrial Yard

It takes 2 hours to travel to the Blackcroft factory from the CIR3 base camp. Once the party reaches the factory, read the following text:

“Rising above the ruined warehouses and shipping yards, a large factory stands ominously. Its smoke stacks reach high into the sky, though many are cracked and damaged. Some have completely toppled over. To one side of the gated compound, where vehicles would come inside and unload their goods, is a pair of large warehouse doors. Another pair stands at the center of the building, acting as the main entrance to the facility. A sign reading ‘Blackcroft Industries’ is painted above the doors, lit up with artificial lights.”

The Blackcroft Industrial Yard is a factory complex that once processed raw ores and turned them into Automata—robot servants and soldiers. Since the Incident, it has been left damaged and mostly abandoned, though a lot of its production lines are still operational, creating a very hazardous environment to traverse. The factory has two floors: the Factory Floor, which houses both the main production lines and the Storage Room, and the Basement, which houses the facility's power station.



1: FACTORY FLOOR

“As you enter the structure, you see that most of the space is taken up with the production lines for the factory itself. Materials and half-built Automata line the conveyor belts. Most the lines are broken and shut down, though the furnaces and some machinery are still operating. In the center of the building is half of a large cog wheel, which is still turning. The ground around the wheel—and directly in front of you—looks to be electrified, with arcs of lightning jumping to the machines and other metal structures nearby.”

The floor around the cog wheel, as well as around the Storage Room, is electrified, which will immediately kill any character who steps onto it. The areas within the furnaces are incredibly hot. If a character enters a furnace or fabricator, they must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw, taking 10 fire or lightning damage on a failure, or half as much on a success. There is a hole in the ground where the floor has given way, creating a large pit just in front of the Storage Room, leading down into the Basement level of the factory. At the far northwest corner of the building, behind the rows of fabricators, is a staircase that leads down into the Basement level as well.

2: STORAGE ROOM

The Storage Room is an enclosed space on the main floor of the factory. It can only be accessed either via the broken overhead conveyor belt, or by the “main door,” which opens up to the electrified floor and the pit that goes down to the Basement level of the factory. This room used to be the storage area for the completed Automata, and a few inoperable ones are still left inside. Now, however, it has become a hideout for a small group of survivors, consisting of these five members:

Goro. He is a male half-orc and former factory worker at the Blackcroft Industrial Yard. He was at the factory when the “Incident” occurred, and used his knowledge of the factory’s layout to keep himself safe, along with any other survivors he encountered. He is a **commoner**, with the following changes:

- Goro is neutral good.
- He has these racial traits: When he is reduced to 0 hit points but not killed outright, he drops to 1 hit point instead. Goro can’t use this feature again until he finishes a long rest. He has darkvision out to a range of 60 feet. He speaks Common and Orc.

Harriet Adams. She is a female half-elf and a former shift manager for a nearby warehouse. Harriet and her girlfriend, Harmony, took cover here with Goro’s help, after being chased alongside the twins by a creature resembling a colossus. Harriet is a **commoner**, with the following changes:

- She is lawful neutral.
- She has these racial traits: She has advantage on

saving throws against being charmed, and magic can’t put her to sleep. She has darkvision out to a range of 60 feet. She speaks Common and Elvish.

Harmony. She is a female tiefling and former waitress at the Blinking Rat bar. Harmony and her girlfriend, Harriet, took cover here with Goro’s help, after being chased alongside the twins by a creature resembling a colossus. She is a **commoner**, with the following changes:

- Harmony is chaotic good.
- She has these racial traits: She has resistance to fire damage. She knows the thaumaturgy cantrip. She has darkvision out to a range of 60 feet. She speaks Common and Infernal.

Hans Fairwind. He is a male gnome and former pastry chef, alongside his twin sister, Greta. He and Greta took cover here with Goro’s help, after being chased alongside Harriet and Harmony by a creature resembling a colossus. Hans is a **commoner**, with the following changes:

- Hans is neutral.
- He has these racial traits: He has advantage on all Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma saving throws against spells and other magical effects. He has darkvision out to a range of 60 feet. He speaks Common and Gnomish.

Greta Fairwind. She is a female gnome and former pastry chef, alongside her twin brother Hans. Greta and Hans took cover here with Goro’s help, after being chased alongside Harriet and Harmony by a creature resembling a colossus. She is a **commoner**, with the following changes:

- Greta is neutral.
- She has these racial traits: She has advantage on all Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma saving throws against spells and other magical effects. She has darkvision out to a range of 60 feet. She speaks Common and Gnomish.

By this point, all five survivors have been trapped in this storage room for a couple of days, with no food or water, after being chased by a creature that fell through the ground, into the basement.

WHAT GORO KNOWS

Goro, who worked for the factory before the Incident, says that the basement level of the factory contains the facility’s power generators. He knows how the generator works and has accepted that someone may have to sacrifice themselves for the others to safely escape. He shares the following information with the party:

- The only way to turn off the furnaces and electrified floor would be to shut down the generator.
- He fears that the creature would be able to escape should they turn off the power.
- Overloading the generator would cause an explosion big enough to destroy the entire basement, collapsing the factory in on itself.

Goro knows how to turn the crystal off, as well as how to cause the overload. He doesn't want to die, nor is he in any way capable of fighting the creature himself to get to the control center, but he's willing to sacrifice himself for the other survivors if he has to.

3: BASEMENT

The basement section of the Blackcroft Industrial Yard is the power station for the entire facility, where a large crystal is used to generate magical lightning, which heats water inside of boilers, which then turns the massive gears that operate the factory's machinery. The room is 50 feet tall, and all of the machinery is built halfway up, accessible via a catwalk that circumnavigates the room. However, the room has sustained damage from the "Incident," as well as from the creature that has fallen into this area from the floor above. The floor of the pit is covered with Animatium, making it so any character using the SPAWN will not be able to respawn immediately if they enter the area. However, the catwalks around the machinery are clear of Animatium, and the network works there.

Overlooking the power station is the Control Room. Within this room is an "Emergency Shutdown" switch. In order for the power generator to be shut down, the switch must be held down for 2 rounds of combat. When the generator shuts down, so will the electrified floor of the upper level, allowing the trapped survivors to escape.

The Colossus

If your chosen villain is Henry Blackcroft, a **corrupted colossus** (see appendix B) is stuck in the pit beneath the power generators.

If your chosen villain is the Othkotha, a **mutated colossus** (see appendix B) is stuck in the pit instead.

The colossus is tall, and strong enough to pull itself out of the room, but cannot do so while the power generator is still running—if it tries, it will be electrocuted. Instead, the colossus lashes out at anyone on the catwalks with its Tentacle or Bionic Arm attacks.

Shutting Down the Crystal

As soon as the power is shut off, the colossus attacks. The power generator can also be overloaded, causing the crystal to detonate and destroy the entire room and the floor above it. In order to cause the overload, a character must hold both the Emergency Shutdown switch and the Power Up button at the same time for a full round. Once they do that, the crystal will detonate, killing everyone in the room, including the colossus. If the party is still in the room when that happens, they will be respawned at the Stationary Node, or at the Portable Node if they grounded it outside of the factory building.

Who Survives?

If the party sacrifices themselves to overload the power station, and they did not ground their Portable Node outside of the building, the survivors will have to navigate the city on their own. Have them make the same Survival check as described in the "Navigating the City" section. If they run into the small group of enemies, have one member of the group, chosen at random, die in the encounter. If they run into the large group of enemies, have three members of the group, chosen at random, die. If the party lets Goro sacrifice himself instead, or if they respawned from a grounded Portable Node outside of the factory, they can lead the survivors back to safety themselves, with no more casualties.

Rewards

Upon the party's return to the CIR3 camp, the Operations Council offers them each a reward of 50 gp, as well as a choice between a bolt thrower (see appendix A) and an augmentation to their equipment. If they opt for an augmentation, each character can choose either one of their weapons or their armor to upgrade. An augmentation to a weapon adds 1d6 force damage to its attacks, though it does not make the weapon magical. An augmentation to their armor will grant the characters resistance to either lightning or acid damage, their choice.

Conclusion

If you want to conclude the adventure here, read the following text:

"Although the troubles in Cathair are far from over, you feel a sense of small comfort as you watch the survivors you rescued breathe a sigh of relief. Maybe there is some hope in their world after all."

If you want to continue the adventure into part 2, "Into the Blast Zone," allow the characters to advance to 2nd level, and read the following text:

"Although the troubles in Cathair are far from over, you feel a sense of small comfort as you watch the survivors you rescued breathe a sigh of relief. Maybe there is some hope in their world after all. In fact, you may just have the opportunity to do more, as a transmission comes on over the intercom system, calling for your group to report to Professor Aubreck immediately."

Into the Blast Zone

(Adventure #2)

Synopsis

The CIR3 Research Division has been trying to gather data on the source of the corruption within the city, sending recon teams into the city center. However, the latest of these teams has gone dark. The leader of the Research Division needs the party to dive into the ruins of the city, locate the recon team, and bring them back.

Introduction

Following the mission to the Blackcroft Factory, the characters return to the CIR3 base camp and are summoned for a meeting with Professor Aubreck. He informs them that he has another mission for them. He sent a recon team to collect data on the Anomaly at the center of the city, but they have lost contact. A major increase in creature activity in the region has Aubreck worried about their whereabouts. He needs the party to infiltrate the area, find the recon team, and get them back to base if they are alive, or at least retrieve whatever data they collected if they aren't.

Professor Aubreck also shares that the route to the recon team's last known location will have to be unconventional. Due to the increase in creature activity, it is practically impossible for the party to simply walk to the coordinates. Instead, they are going to have to rely on the SPAWN to get there. They have identified the recon team's Portable SPAWN Node, which has been grounded two city blocks from the team's last known location. In order to get to the party to the recon team, Aubreck says they will need to respawn from this node. However, in order to spawn from it, they will have to die near it. Aubreck, sheepishly, passes on a suggestion from Commander Hinrish: to launch the party from a railgun that the Military Division has been working to restore, and land them in the vicinity of the node. Landing on concrete and metal at hypersonic speeds, the party will die on impact, but they will be fully restored right away from the SPAWN, with no complications... hopefully. When the party is ready to leave, read the following text:



Portable
Respawn Node

"You're led to the roof of the terminal building, where a contraption that looks like an enlarged version of the weapons used by the military members of the base has been set up, mounted to the roof of the building itself. A few CIR3 soldiers work about it, getting it prepared. Large metallic tubes have been laid out next to the contraption, each of which is big enough for only one person. You are each led to a tube and instructed to lay down in the open hatchway in its side, where straps and cushioning keep you locked in place before the hatch is closed and you are thrown into darkness. One by one, you feel the tube be lifted and slotted into position, before you hear calls of, 'Clear! Fire!' Suddenly, you're jerked violently forwards, your bones thrown against the back of the tube where you can feel and hear many of them shatter to pieces as you are shot out of the railgun. This extremely painful situation only lasts a few moments, though the pain grows exponentially for a fraction of a second as the tube crumples in on itself. The world goes black for a moment before you open your eyes again. You are no longer laying in the tube, but rather standing inside of a ruined clothing store of some sort, its windows shattered. Outside, you can see where the tubes impacted the pavement, leaving large craters and very little of the tubes themselves."

The Ruined Streets

The remaining members of the recon team are trapped in a ruined shop, only a two-block walk from the nexus that the party respawns from. The streets around their location are filled with hostile enemies.

If your chosen villain is Henry Blackcroft, then four **corrupted automatons** (see appendix B) are present, currently wave-assaulting the team.

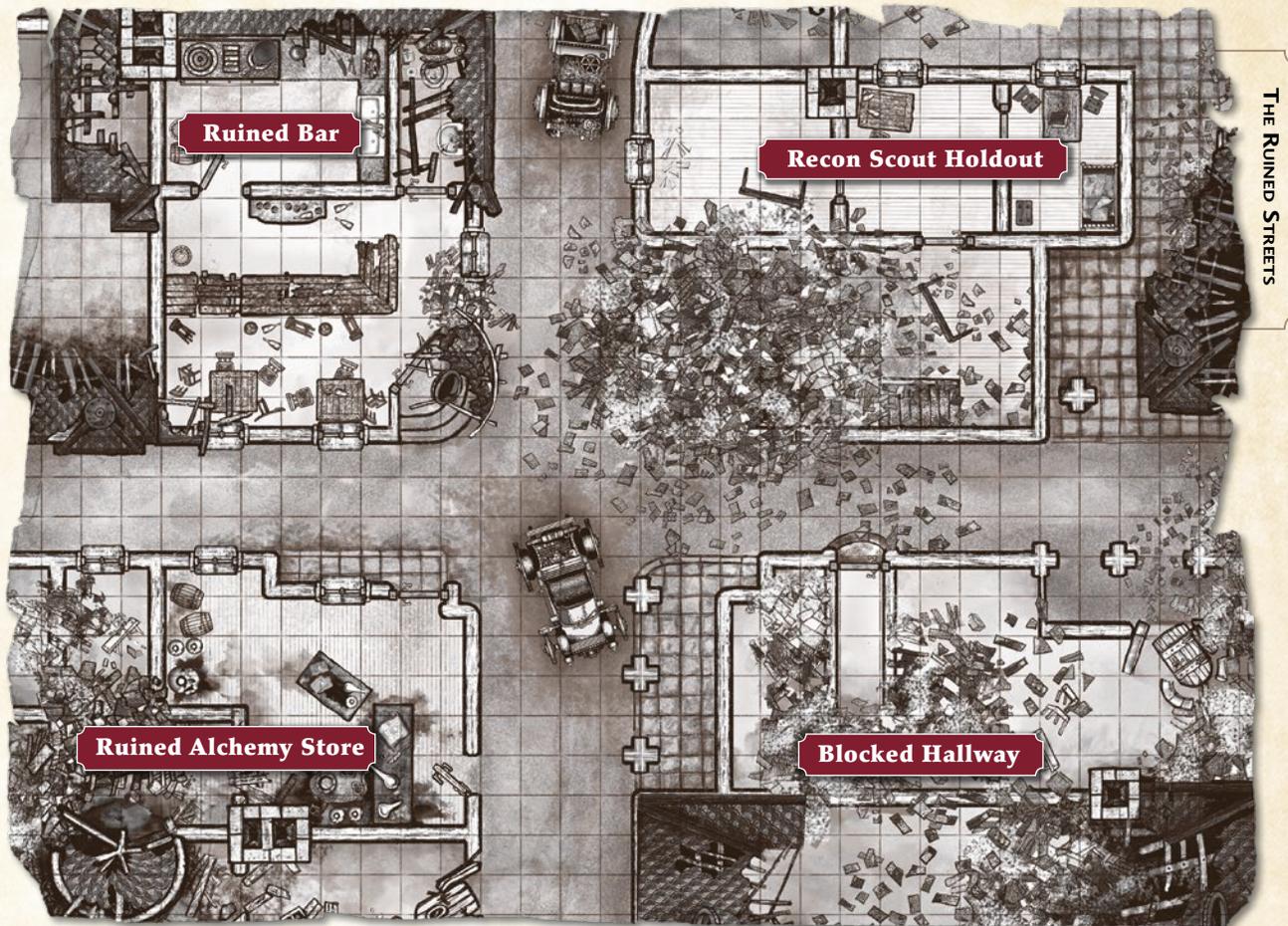
If your chosen villain is the Othkotha, then four **mutated citizens** (see appendix B) are present, currently wave-assaulting the team.

The creatures have also set up a minefield around the recon team's position. These mines are triggered if any creature comes within 5 feet of them, and deal damage depending on the main villain of the story — 4d6 lightning damage if the villain is Henry Blackcroft, or 4d6 acid damage if the villain is the Othkotha. The villain's minions do not set off the mines themselves, and are completely immune to their damage.

Reaching the Team

The party has a few options on how to get past the group of enemies and to the recon team: sneaking in, the roof and elevator, or making a path.

Sneaking In. The simplest and most dangerous way into the shop would be to go through the minefield itself, avoiding the mines and getting past the hostile creatures, either via combat or stealth. The characters can try to sneak around by making a



Dexterity (Stealth) check against the minions' passive Perception score. However, if they get too close to a mine, it will go off, and the creatures will be alerted to their position regardless.

The Roof and Elevator. Near the node the party spawned from is the body of a dead recon team member. While his SPAWN device is broken and non-functional, the parachute strapped to his back is still intact. In his pocket is a set of tinker's tools, easily found.

Because his soul was never transferred, the recon scout will remain dead even if the SPAWN device is repaired. It's also clear that he died of blunt force trauma.

The room containing the node and the late team member is located at the bottom of a skyscraper. There is an elevator in the same room that reaches all the way to the top. With a successful DC 13 Intelligence check using tinker's tools, it's possible to get the elevator operational again, allowing the characters to access the roof of the building. From the roof, a single character can parachute over the minefield to where the recon team is set up.

Making a Path. The final way the party can attempt to make it to the recon team is by utilizing a precariously positioned ruined building facade. A successful DC 13 Strength check—or a combined Strength score of 40, if multiple characters work together—will cause the front of the building to crumble, creating a path of rubble across the intersection and into the building. The crumbling

facade will crush a few of the mines and enemy creatures, along with the character(s) who pushed it over, who will respawn at the nearby grounded SPAWN node.

The Recon Team

Out of a team of six members, there are only four left. Two of their comrades died permanently after their SPAWN devices were damaged, causing them to be disconnected from the SPAWN network. The surviving members of the group are listed below.

Lieutenant Alistair L'Fay. He is a male half-elf with short blonde hair. As the leader of the group, Alistair is calm and collected under pressure, though the responsibility of trying to get everyone under his command safely back to base weighs heavily on his mind. He feels terrible for having lost two of his comrades. He is a **CIR3 recon scout** (see appendix B), with the following changes:

- Alistair is lawful good.
- He has these racial traits: He has advantage on saving throws against being charmed, and magic can't put him to sleep. He has darkvision out to a range of 60 feet. He speaks Common and Elvish.
- As an action, Alistair can grant advantage on their next attack roll or skill check to one ally he can see within 60 feet of him.

Specialist Paige MacNamara. She is a feminine-presenting human with an androgynous face and figure. MacNamara acts as the group's demolitions expert. She is generally quiet, but can be cheeky and sarcastic when she does speak. She is a **CIR3 recon scout** (see appendix B), with the following changes:

- Paige is chaotic good.
- Instead of a bolt thrower (see appendix A), she has an explosive launcher. As an action, Paige chooses a spot within 30 feet of her. Each creature within 5 feet of the spot must make a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw, taking 1d8 force damage on a failed save, or half as much on a successful one.

Specialist Alexif Palefield. He is a male gnome and the group's researcher and data analyst. Alex is a talkative individual, ready at a moment's notice to dive into a conversation about ways to store information long-term, the best of which he believes to be in mechanical tape format. He is a **CIR3 recon scout** (see appendix B), with the following changes:

- Alexif is lawful neutral.
- He has these racial traits: His speed is 25 feet. He has advantage on all Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma saving throws against spells and other magical effects. He has darkvision out to a range of 60 feet. He speaks Common and Gnomish.

Specialist Fragi Alwhip. She is a female dwarf and the group's weapon's expert. Fragi is fairly hostile to those outside of her circle of friends, her demeanor gruff and uncouth. However, once you have her trust, she is incredibly loyal and fun-loving, always down to grab a beer together. She is a **CIR3 recon scout** (see appendix B), with the following changes:

- Fragi is chaotic neutral.
- She has these racial traits: Her speed is 25 feet. She has advantage on saving throws against poison, and has resistance against poison damage. She has darkvision out to a range of 60 feet. She speaks Common and Dwarvish.
- She has a multiattack, able to use the bolt thrower (see appendix A) three times per Attack action.

The group has with them a datalith shard, a device that contains a huge amount of numerical and written data. This data is invaluable to CIR3, and can hopefully help them identify the cause of the Incident and the source of the Anomaly, and determine how to potentially stop it. It is the recon team's priority to get this datalith shard to the CIR3 base camp.

Escape

Reconnecting to the SPAWN network and returning to the CIR3 base is the only way to save the recon team. However, this will take time, as Specialist Palefield will have to ground the party's Portable Node and connect the four recon team members' SPAWN devices

to the network. In total, this will take 30 seconds, or 5 rounds of combat. As the devices are being connected, waves of minions will launch themselves at the group. At the start of each round of combat, three more minions are added to the fray, randomly placed on the outskirts of the battle area and taking their turns on initiative count 0. At the beginning of the sixth round, Specialist Palefield will announce that the SPAWN Network has been successfully connected, and tell the group to let themselves be killed in order to activate the transport. Each of the recon team members will one by one rush into the minefield, allowing themselves to be killed and transported back to the CIR3 base. When a party member dies at this point, they, too, will be transported back to the CIR3 base, where they are approached by members of the Research Division, including Professor Aubreck, who congratulates them on a mission well done.

Rewards

Upon their return to the CIR3 camp, the party will be offered the same reward as with the first adventure: 50 gp each and an augmentation to their equipment. However, this time, the damage types for both the weapon and the armor can be any magical damage type, including acid, cold, fire, force, lightning, necrotic, poison, psychic, radiant, or thunder.

Conclusion

If you want to conclude the adventure here, read the following text:

"As the recon team is quickly ushered away to the infirmary to ensure their health, Lieutenant L'Fay gives you a smile of appreciation and respect, and Specialist Fragi calls out that she owes you all a beer. Hopefully someday you can take her up on that offer. For now, though, you're just happy with a job well done, and one step closer to helping Cathair's people and resolving its problems."

If you want to continue the adventure into part 3, "Center of the Anomaly," allow the characters to advance to 3rd level, and read the following text:

"As the recon team is quickly ushered away to the infirmary to ensure their health, Lieutenant L'Fay gives you a smile of appreciation and respect, and Specialist Fragi calls out that she owes you all a beer. Hopefully someday you can take her up on that offer. For now, though, you're just happy with a job well done, and one step closer to helping Cathair's people and resolving its problems. In fact, as you leave the Terminal building, you can also see researchers running around, frantically looking over printouts of the data you were able to save, seemingly agitated yet excited by something therein..."



Center of the Anomaly

(Adventure #3)

Synopsis

Following the recovery of the datalith from the recon team, the Research Division has identified the location of the center of the Anomaly: the City Hall of Cathair. They also believe that they know a way to halt the city's corruption. It seems a physical being is acting as a tether for the Anomaly to remain connected to the Material Plane, allowing it to continue to spread its corruption through Cathair. CIR3 implores the party to get to City Hall and end the threat once and for all.

Introduction

After a few days of rest, the party is once again approached by the heads of CIR3. Professor Aubreck informs them that the Research Division, using the data lifted from the datalith shard, has identified the center of the corruption, as well as a possible means of disabling it once and for all. The corruption appears to be centered on Cathair City Hall. It also appears that an Anomaly, a bundle of dark energy creating a tear in the fabric of reality, has latched itself onto a living being to act as a stability anchor. If the party can go in and kill this living anchor, the Anomaly should dissipate, taking the corruption—and all of the creatures tied to it—with it. However, Professor Aubreck also warns that, in all likelihood, the Anomaly will erupt violently upon the anchor's destruction, annihilating everything nearby, including the party. The SPAWN system will be overloaded with energy from the Anomaly, preventing it from registering their deaths. Essentially, he warns that this is likely a suicide mission. All three Division Heads desperately want this corruption to end, and implore the party to give their lives for Cathair and its people, but they also know that it is a big sacrifice to ask for.

SER NOMINUS NOTE

It's likely that the players may not be open to the idea of their characters just dying. If they express hesitation, go with the open ending for this adventure, and let the players know that you have a plan for their characters' stories to continue after this one.

Approaching the Anomaly

It takes 5 hours of travel time to reach Cathair City Hall and the Anomaly. The approach to City Hall is incredibly dangerous, as the Anomaly's power grows in strength the closer the party gets. In addition to the usual encounters the party may face (as detailed in the "Navigating the City" section of this questline), they may also face the following challenges.

SER NOMINUS NOTE

As the GM, you can decide how you want to implement these encounters. Do you want the party to roll for them? Do you want to just pick the ones that interest you? Also, how many do you want the party to face? The more encounters the party goes through, the tougher the game will be. Let the players be creative in how they approach each encounter. The skill checks here are just base rules if the party goes for the "straightforward" path, but the players should really be looking for interesting solutions!

Makeshift Bridge

“The street before you ends where a massive chasm begins, splitting the earth and the city in two. Looking left and right, you can see no end to the abyss. However, the ravine isn’t impossible to traverse, as a metal girder from a nearby ruined building lays across the chasm, acting as a sort of rickety makeshift bridge.”

The bridge is very unstable and can only hold one character’s weight at a time. In order to cross the bridge safely, each character must succeed on a DC 16 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check. On a failure, the character falls 200 feet into the ravine, taking 20d6 bludgeoning damage.

Fallen Tower

“The street before you is filled with rubble and debris, as one of the skyscrapers has collapsed and fallen into the road. Its interior is completely exposed and ruined, though the outer walls of the building are mostly intact, forming an enclosed ramp hundreds of feet long.”

Although it will be difficult, the party can navigate the fallen tower. In order to scale its interior, they must succeed on a DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check or risk sliding back down the tower, taking 5d6 bludgeoning damage from debris on the way.

Corrupted Storm

“The sky shades into a dark gray, purple lightning streaking through the clouds. As the storm gathers, raindrops begin to fall, slowly at first, but picking up quickly. However, these are not ordinary raindrops—they sting and sizzle as they hit your skin.”

The storm is a manifestation of the Anomaly, the clouds shedding a deadlier version of acid rain. The characters must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, taking 4d6 acid damage on a failure, or half as much on a success. They must continue to make this saving throw once every 30 seconds for as long as they stand in the rain. The rain lasts for 1d6×10 minutes.



Bolt
Thrower

City Hall

“As you reach the city center, the Anomaly’s point of origin becomes clear. A magical swirl of dark grey clouds and purple lightning rises into the sky from the bombed-out shell of the City Hall building. The block face built into the building’s facade is spinning out of control.”

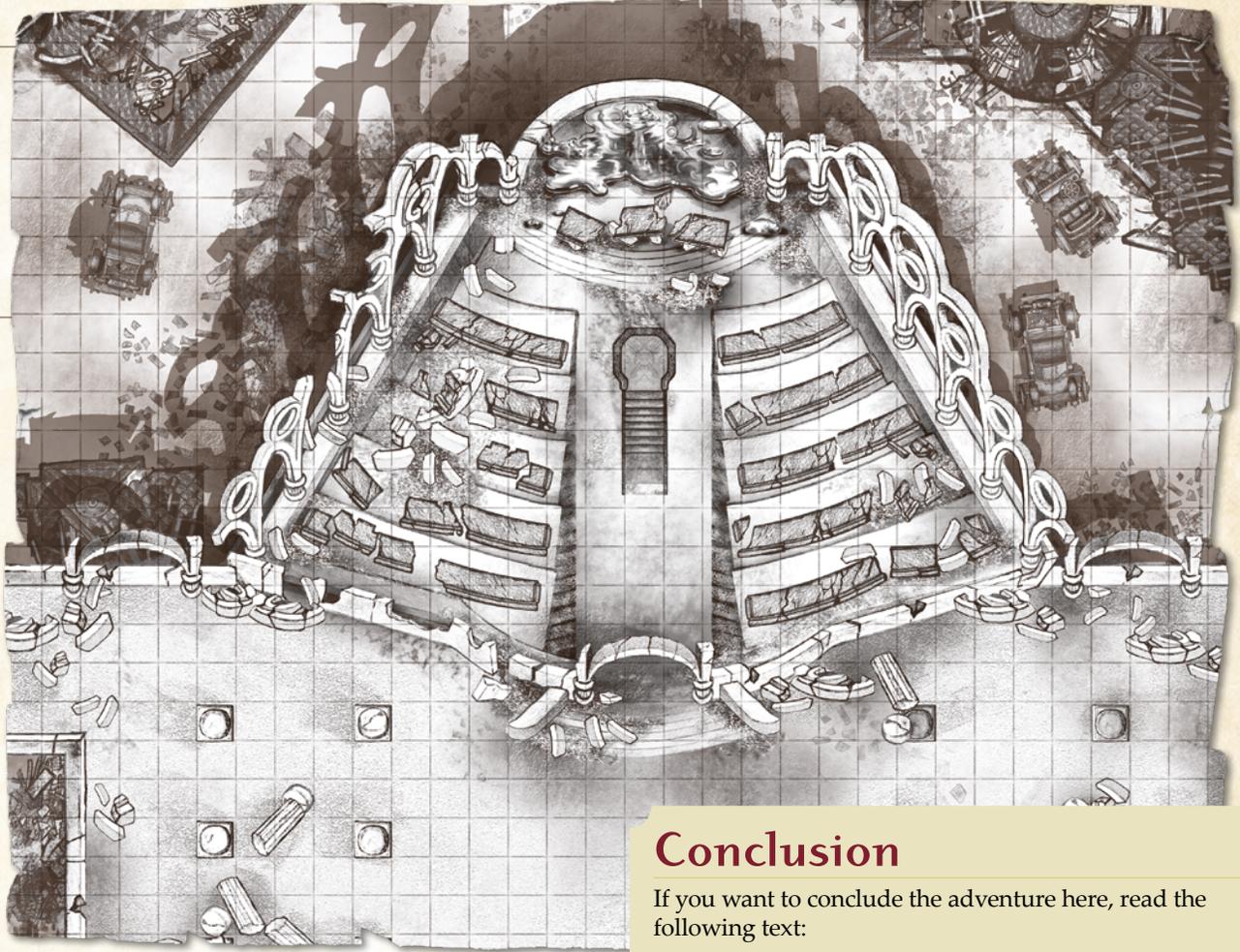
The City Hall is a bombed out shell of what once was a grand building acting as the seat of government for the region. Much of the interior of the building is completely destroyed, leaving only the entrance lobby and the City Council Chambers at least partially intact, though badly damaged. The lobby is a large room where civil service workers and members of the public would enter the building and find their way into more specialized sections. Once a display of Cathair’s wealth and grandeur, the City Hall is made up of marble slabs decorated with reliefs of different sectors of government, including the Legislative, Judicial, and Executive divisions. It is all cracked and crumbled now, left as a ruined testament to the destruction caused by the Anomaly.

City Council Chambers

“The central City Council Chambers is a large trapezoidal room. Most of the room is sloped downwards, with amphitheater chairs lined up for multiple rows of audience seating. Down the center aisle is an elevated platform and a podium, where citizens of the city would once have addressed the council. At the back of the room is a stage where the members of the City Council would have been seated during their sessions. The stage, however, has been almost completely destroyed, and the City Council table has been smashed to pieces, replaced by a pool of liquid Animatium. Much of the roof is missing, furniture is broken, and support pillars are cracked and bent. Hovering over the pool of Animatium, humming and glowing, is a floating mass of dark magical energy, a stationary tear in reality. It pulses with corrupting flares of magical radiance, expelling chunks of Animatium. Standing before the tear is a figure who seems focused on the Anomaly...until they turn their attention to you.”

The figure is the main villain of the campaign, either **Henry Blackcroft** or the **Othkotha** (see appendix B for these characters’ stat blocks). The villain is a slave to the tear, acting as its source of stability and its connection to the Material Plane. The villain will attempt to protect it with everything they have.

The Animatium covering the stage area will prevent the SPAWN system from working. If someone dies in this area, they can only respawn if their body is pulled free of the Animatium.



The Anomaly

The Anomaly itself can be targeted with attacks, but redirects any damage dealt to it to the villain. The Tear has an AC of 17, and automatically fails all Strength and Dexterity saving throws, but automatically succeeds all Constitution, Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma saves. If the damage dealt to the Tear is magical in nature, then the villain is vulnerable to the damage, regardless of their stat block. If the damage dealt is non-magical, the villain is resistant instead. However, if the attack used against the Tear is a melee attack, the attacker must make a DC 20 Constitution saving throw, taking 4d10 force damage on a failure, or half as much on a success. Once the villain is killed, the Anomaly becomes unstable, pulsing multiple times before exploding in a massive aura of annihilation, disintegrating everything within a 500-foot radius, including the party.

SER NOMINUS NOTE

This fight is a battle of attrition. The party will likely die many, many times. Also, if the combat is taking too long for your liking, go ahead and lower the villain's health points.

Conclusion

If you want to conclude the adventure here, read the following text:

“Energy rips through your body as the Anomaly erupts, instantly disintegrating everything around it—including you. The explosion can be seen and heard for miles. The creatures which once stalked the ruins all drop dead, one by one, their connection to the Anomaly severed. With the Anomaly gone, the city of Cathair can look towards the future with hope, praising you as heroes for your sacrifice.”

If you want to continue the adventure past this story, allow the characters to advance to 4th level, and read the following text:

“Energy rips through your body as the Anomaly erupts, instantly disintegrating everything around it—including you. After what feels like an eternity, you open your eyes slowly, and see that you’re all still alive, though you’ve been knocked to the ground. Looking around, you’re still in the City Council chambers, the Anomaly now gone. However, the air feels weird, almost heavy. Through the holes in the roof, you see that the sky is no longer clouded, but rather a twisting mass of dark magic, where rock formations float above, purple lightning arcing from their surfaces. Rushing out of the room, it’s clear to you: you’re no longer in Cathair, or anywhere familiar. You’ve gone beyond the tear in reality and into a world of corruption. How will you escape?”



Appendix A Magic Items

Hunt for Haldraxis

Grounding Chain

Wondrous item, uncommon

These three metal ball bearings are connected by small chains. As an action, you can throw the *grounding chain* at any creature within 60 feet. The target must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or immediately be knocked prone and pinned to the ground until the end of their next turn. Once the *grounding chain* has been used in this way, it cannot be used again until the next dawn.

Scorch Shield Amulet

Wondrous item, rare

This golden amulet is always warm to the touch. It has a red ruby in its center that flickers like torchlight. This amulet does not require attunement and grants you protection from flames for as long as you are wearing it. Whenever you take fire damage while wearing this amulet, the damage is reduced by 1d10.

Vial of Invisibility

Potion, uncommon

This impossibly clear liquid is stored in a glass vial. When consumed as an action, it makes you become invisible. Anything you are wearing or carrying is invisible as long as it is on your person. The invisibility lasts for 1 minute, or ends early if you attack or cast a spell.

Whispers of Wispy Peak

Ring of Health

Ring, uncommon (Requires Attunement)

When worn, this ring provides you with unnatural constitution. Each day, at dawn, this ring grants you 2d4+4 temporary hit points. These hit points last either until they are expended or until the following dawn.

Runic Sword, Cold

Weapon, common

This sword has been enhanced with old magical runes, adding a chilling frost to the blade. When you hit with an attack using this weapon, the target takes an extra 2 cold damage.

Stamina Potion

Potion, common

This potion restores energy to a creature who drinks it. When you consume this potion and rest for at least one hour immediately afterward, you benefit from the effects of a long rest. If this resting time is interrupted for any reason, you instead gain the benefits of a short rest.

A Night in Midhallow

Bracelet of Fire Protection

Wondrous item, rare (requires attunement)

While attuned to this bracelet, you are immune to fire damage. However, if you take more than 10 fire damage at a time from a single source, the bracelet will prevent the damage, but break immediately afterward, becoming unusable.

The Heist

Hellfire Pistol

Weapon (firearm), uncommon

In this pistol, the craftsmanship and magic of the hells created a devastating weapon. The *hellfire pistol* has a range of 40/80 feet and deals 1d10 fire damage on a hit.

Bulwarks of Bullthorne

Auto-firing Hand Crossbow

Weapon, uncommon

Whenever a bolt is fired from this crossbow, a new, magically-formed bolt appears, loaded and ready to fire. This crossbow reloads as a free action. In addition, when you fire a bolt from this crossbow as part of your attack, you may make an additional attack with this crossbow as a bonus action.

Enchanted Whiskey

Wondrous item, common

This small vial of whiskey has been enchanted to dull pain. Drinking this whiskey grants you 1d4+2 temporary hit points that last until they are expended or until you complete a long rest.

Lightning Rifle

Weapon, uncommon

This rifle is modified to fire bursts of electricity instead of regular ammunition. Once per day, you can fire a 5-foot-wide line of lightning at a creature you can see within 60 feet of you. The target must make a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw, taking 2d8 lightning damage on a failure, or half as much on a success. Any creature in the line between the rifle and the target must also succeed on the saving throw, or take 1d8 lightning damage.

Staff of Demonic Summoning

Staff, rare (requires attunement by a spellcaster)

This wooden staff is warm to the touch, and appears to have small lines of flame running through it. When you are attuned to this item, you may expend a charge as an action to summon a **Bullthorne demon** (see appendix B) in a location you can see within 10 feet of you. This staff has 3 charges, and regains all used charges at dawn. If all of the charges in the staff are used in one day, roll a d20. On a 1, the item falls to dust, destroyed, as the fire inside overtakes it.

Escape from Old Redwick

Circlet of Light

Wondrous item (circlet), uncommon (requires attunement)

This gold circlet has a white pearl at its crest. As a bonus action you can touch the pearl, causing it to glow with bright light out to 30 feet, and dim light out to another 30 feet. Touching the pearl again causes the light to go out. While this light is active, you cannot be targeted by the villains of Old Redwick, nor by their minions.

The Lost Spirits

Dagger of the Occult

Weapon (a dagger), rare (requires attunement)

You gain a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this magic weapon.

While attuned to the dagger, you have advantage on saving throws against being charmed or frightened. As an action, you can cast the *inflict wounds* spell without using a spell slot or components. This property of the weapon can't be used again until the next dawn.

Curse. This dagger is cursed, a fact that is revealed only when an *identify* spell is cast on the dagger, or when you attune to it. The curse takes effect immediately when you attune to the dagger and can only be dispelled via the *remove curse* spell or similar magic. Discarding the dagger does nothing to dispel the curse. While cursed, you suffer a long-term madness. When you attune to the dagger, roll a d6, and consult the madness table below to determine the outcome.

ROLL	OUTCOME
1	You suffer from extreme paranoia. You have disadvantage on Wisdom and Charisma checks.
2	You become attached to a "lucky charm," such as a person or an object, and must stay within 30 feet of it or have disadvantage on attack rolls, ability checks, and saving throws.
3	Roll a d4. On a 1, you are blinded. On a 2-4, you are deafened. This condition lasts until you are no longer cursed.
4	You suffer from uncontrollable tremors or tics, which impose disadvantage on attack rolls, ability checks, and saving throws that involve Strength or Dexterity.
5	You suffer from partial amnesia. You know who you are and retain racial traits and class features, but you don't recognize other people or remember anything that happened before the madness took effect.
6	You lose the ability to speak.

Magdalene's Armor

Armor (half plate), legendary (requires attunement)

You have a +1 bonus to AC while wearing this armor. While wearing this armor, you can cast the *augury* spell without using a spell slot or components. This property of the armor can't be used again until the next dawn.

Potion of Ghost Step

Potion, uncommon

This light blue liquid glows softly as it swirls around its glass container. When you drink this potion, you can cast the *misty step* spell at will for 1 hour.

Rosewood's Invitation

Book of Summoning

Wondrous item, rare

This book can be used to summon a designated creature, chosen at the book's creation. When you read the incantation inside the book, the book falls to the ground, bursting with bright light and ominous chanting. The summoning takes 30 seconds, in which time the summoned creature will appear in a free space nearest to the book. Once the *book of summoning* is used, it cannot be used again.

Shipwrecked!

The Spell Cannon

Wondrous item, very rare

The large, round metal cask on this cannon has a handle and hole in the back. If you feed the cannon a *spell scroll* as an action, the cannon automatically fires this spell wherever you are aiming.

The Treasure of Obsidian Cove

The Captain's Sword

Weapon (any sword that deals slashing damage), rare (requires attunement)

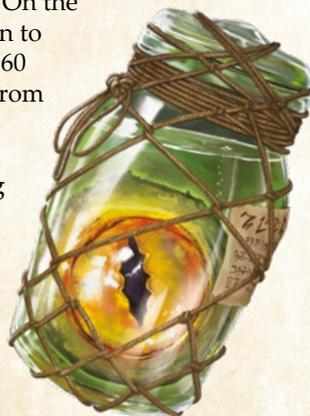
On a hit, this sword deals an extra 1 cold damage. It also has 3 charges, which reset daily at dawn. You can use one of its charges to dispel all magic darkness within 30 feet of you.

Scylla's Eye

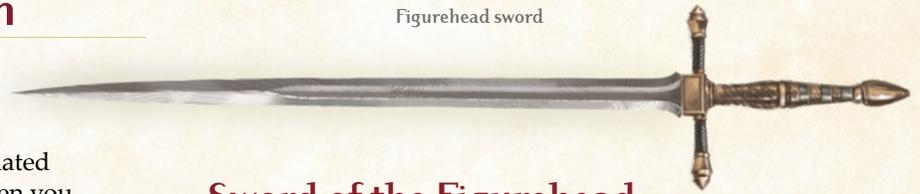
Wondrous item, very rare (requires attunement)

This item is a pickled and preserved eyeball locked away within a glass-topped case. This object acts as an arcane focus. In addition, once per day, you can use your reaction to become resistant to lightning damage for a round. On the next turn, you can use an action to cast a lightning bolt forming a 60 feet line and 5 feet wide blast from you in a direction you choose. Each creature in the line must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw, taking 3d10 lightning damage on a failure, or half as much on a success.

Scylla's
Eye



Figurehead sword



Sword of the Figurehead

Weapon (longsword), legendary (requires attunement)

The *Sword of the Figurehead* is the cursed sword which has bound Marion's soul to eternal imprisonment within it. Captain Kelley Roland had the sword commissioned as his personal weapon, before using it to curse Marion in his rage.

The blade has the following features:

- It has the finesse property.
- Attacks made with the *Sword of the Figurehead* have a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls. The weapon is considered magical. When the sword hits a creature, they must make a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw, taking an additional 2d6 psychic damage on a failure.
- When unsheathed, the sword glows bright light in a 10 foot radius and dim light for an additional 10 feet.

Wall of Water. Once per long rest, as an action, you can cause a wall of water to spring into existence over a solid surface within 120 feet of you. You can make the wall up to 60 feet long, 20 feet high, and 5 feet thick, or create a ringed wall up to 20 feet in diameter, 20 feet high, and 5 feet thick. The wall lasts up to 1 minute and relies on concentration.

When the wall appears, each creature occupying the same space must make a DC 14 Strength saving throw. On a failure save, a creature takes 2d6 bludgeoning damage and is pushed to one side of the wall. On a success, a creature takes half as much damage and is not pushed. A creature can attempt to pass through the wall, but it is considered difficult terrain and requires them to make the same saving throw.

Sentience. The *Sword of the Figurehead* contains the soul of Marion Anker (see her stat block in appendix B). Marion has hearing and normal vision out to 30 feet. Marion can communicate telepathically with the character attuned to the sword.

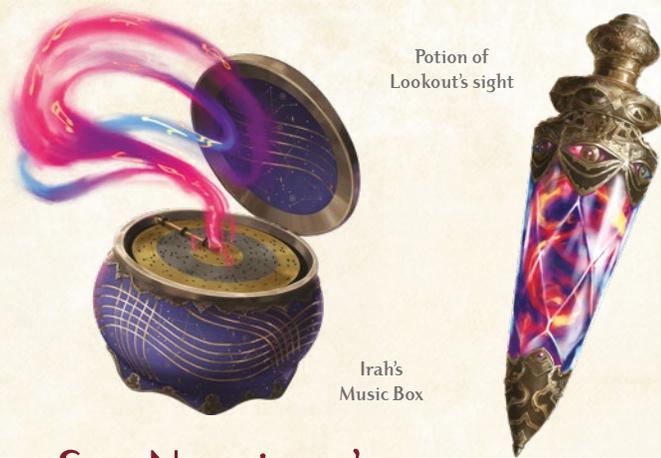
Marion is incredibly angry that her soul is still bound to the sword, and will argue with and berate the character she is attuned to.

The Doomed Heroes

Bolt Thrower

Weapon (crossbow, light), common

This ranged weapon does not use tension to fire its projectiles, but rather uses magic to force the bolt down a trail at extreme speeds. It has double the range of an ordinary light crossbow. On a hit, this weapon deals an extra 1d4 force damage.



Potion of Lookout's sight

Irah's Music Box

Ser Nominus' Magical Item Collection

Deck of Shifting

Wondrous item, uncommon

This box contains a set of parchment cards. A full deck has 18 cards. A deck found as treasure is usually missing 1d20-2 cards. (You can use an altered deck of playing cards, as demonstrated in the table below, to simulate the deck.)

The magic of the *deck of shifting* functions only if cards are drawn at random. You can use an action to draw a card.

When you draw a card, your body is transformed into a new form that holds up under inspection via sight or touch. However, none of your game statistics change, you do not gain any special abilities, and your gear is unaffected.

This form lasts for 8 hours, or until it is dispelled. When the transformation ends, the image on the corresponding card disappears, and that card can't be used again.

Ace of hearts	Lich
King of hearts	Vampire
Queen of hearts	Wraith
Jack of hearts	Skeleton
Ace of diamonds	Bugbear
King of diamonds	Orc
Queen of diamonds	Hobgoblin
Jack of diamonds	Goblin
Ace of spades	Rakshasa
King of spades	Erinyes
Queen of spades	Succubus/Incubus
Jack of spades	Bearded devil
Ace of clubs	A humanoid you have met, your choice
King of clubs	The last humanoid you met
Queen of clubs	A family member or friend, your choice
Jack of clubs	You, but a different race, chosen at random
Joker (2)	Your choice

Irah's Music Box

Wondrous item, common

This small box plays a magical tune when opened. When holding the box, you may choose a target you can see within 60 feet of you and bombard them with high-pitched music that only they can hear. The target must succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or become distracted by the music, giving them disadvantage on their next attack roll or saving throw. After the music box has been used in this way, it cannot be used again until the next dawn.

Potion of Lookout's Sight

Potion, uncommon

As an action, you can drink this potion to gain a +5 bonus to your passive Perception score for eight hours. While under the effects of this potion, you are vulnerable to thunder damage. If you are under the effects of this potion and you drink another *potion of lookout's sight*, it does not increase the duration of the potion's effect, but the bonus to your passive Perception score increases to +10. Additionally, after consuming the second potion, you must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or become stunned for the potion's duration. If stunned, you can remake the saving throw every 10 minutes.

Ring of Exerted Swiftswiss

Ring, uncommon (requires attunement)

When attuned to this ring, you may use its single charge to take a reaction when they would not have one available. This ring can only be used in situations where a reaction could be used, and has no effect if the attuned creature is surprised. Once this ring is used in this way, it cannot be used again until the next dawn.



Ring of Exerted Swiftswiss

Wand of Disarming

Wand, common

This wand has 3 charges. While holding it, you can use an action and expend 1 charge to speak a command word of your own choosing. A creature of your choice within 30 feet of you must succeed a Strength saving throw (DC 15) or drop one item it is holding to the ground. The wand regains all expended charges each day at dawn.



Band of Might

Watch of Forgetfulness



Boots of Finesse

Belt of Vigor



Watch of Forgetfulness

Wondrous item, uncommon

This brass pocket watch tells the time and allows you to make people forget small moments. As an action, you can spend 1 charge and flash the watch at a creature within 5 feet of you. The target must succeed on a DC 12 Wisdom saving throw or become dazed and confused for the next minute. After this minute ends, the dazed creature will have no memory of what happened in the previous minute. This item has 3 charges, and regains 1 charge every subsequent day at dawn.

The Band of Might

Wondrous item, common (requires attunement)

This metal band can magically adjust to fit around any limb. You gain a +1 to all Strength checks made while wearing *the band of might*. If you make 20 successful Strength checks while attuned to this item, you gain a +2 to your Strength score for as long as you remain attuned to the band.

The Boots of Finesse

Wondrous item, common (requires attunement)

These boots fit snugly to your feet, and could be altered and repurposed as bracers. While wearing these boots, you gain a +1 to all Dexterity checks. If you roll ten 20's on any d20 roll while attuned to these boots, you gain a +2 to your Dexterity score for as long as you remain attuned to the boots.

The Belt of Vigor

Wondrous item, common (requires attunement)

This leather belt has a silver buckle bearing the emblem of a dragon. While wearing this belt, you gain a +1 to all Constitution checks. If you fall to 0 HP a total of ten times while attuned to this belt, you gain a +2 to your Constitution Score so long as you stay attuned to the belt.

The Journal of Knowledge

Wondrous item, common (requires attunement)

This leather-bound journal contains empty pages. You gain a +1 to all Intelligence checks while attuned to this item, and if you use this journal to document fifteen different creatures or locations you've seen, you gain a +2 to your Intelligence score for as long as you remain attuned to the journal.

The Spectacles of Sagacity

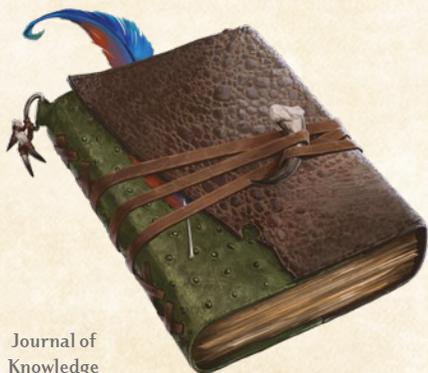
Wondrous item, uncommon (requires attunement)

These glasses can magically adjust to fit over your eyes. You gain a +1 to all Wisdom checks made while wearing the glasses, and can add your Wisdom bonus to initiative rolls. If you are the first to act in five different combat initiatives, you gain a +2 to your Wisdom score for as long as you remain attuned to the spectacles.

The Ring of Allure

Wondrous item, common (requires attunement)

This ring can magically adjust to fit around any finger or toe. You gain a +1 to all Charisma checks made while wearing this ring. If you ever possess more than eight thousand gold pieces at once, you gain a +2 to your Charisma Score for as long as you remain attuned to the ring.



Journal of Knowledge

Spectacles of Sagacity



Ring of Allure





This is where you can find all the stat blocks to the monsters and NPC's found in the adventures! Now, you may notice some deviation from other, more typical stat blocks. Since these adventures are built for early level characters, many of the stat blocks have been precisely built to feature abilities or create a narrative within the story of the adventure. Some creatures may have lots of HP so they stick around for a few rounds while others may have less to encourage the glory of defeating them in one hit. Some creatures deal lots of damage to feel scary while others deal less to ensure a fun fight without many consequences. You may notice that challenge ratings are missing from the monsters, this is because it's not entirely useful here! Instead, we've included tactics to help you play these monsters and NPC's optimally in combat, as well as a quote that summarizes

their character. Feel free to take creative liberties with these stat blocks, yours and your group's fun is most important! Enemies should feel fun for you to play while also fun for your characters to fight.

SER NOMINUS NOTE:

If a TPK is imminent; knock off a few hit points from its total, or perhaps the creature grows weaker when it's below half its HP and deals -3 damage. You have the full reign to adjust, adapt, and tweak what you need to play up the themes we've presented here in the Quest-O-Nomicon.

The stage is yours!

Hunt For Haldraxis

HALDRAXIS

Huge dragon, chaotic evil.

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 103 (9d12 + 45)

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

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
22 (+6)	10 (+0)	20 (+5)	16 (+3)	13 (+1)	19 (+4)

Saving Throws Dex +3, Con +8, Wis +5, Cha +7

Skills Perception +5, Stealth +3

Damage Immunities fire

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

Languages Common, Draconic

Tactic: Haldraxis remains in the sky as much as possible, but he will land to attack creatures that have retreated behind cover. He takes off as soon as things look bad. He also becomes frightened of any creature that makes an extremely loud noise.

Quote: "I'll burn you all to cinders!"

Actions

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 piercing damage plus 1 fire damage.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 slashing damage.

Tail. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 bludgeoning damage and target creature must succeed a DC 15 Strength saving throw or fall prone.

Fire Breath (Recharge 5–6). Haldraxis exhales fire in a 20-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw, taking 10 fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

MOUNTAIN GIANT

Huge giant, typically chaotic evil.

Armor Class 12 (natural armor)

Hit Points 21 (2d12 + 8)

Speed 35 ft

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
21 (+5)	8 (-1)	19 (+4)	6 (-2)	9 (-1)	6 (-2)

Skills Perception +2

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages Common, Giant

Tactic: Mountain giants like to chase their prey and slam them with their greatclubs. They only use their rock if their target is getting away. They always go for the shiniest creatures.

Quote: "Ooh, shiny..."

Actions

Greatclub. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 bludgeoning damage.

Rock. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +0 to hit, range 60/240 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 bludgeoning damage.

HALDRAXIS KOBOLD

Small humanoid (kobold), typically chaotic evil.

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 5 (2d6 – 2)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
7 (-2)	15 (+2)	9 (-1)	8 (-1)	7 (-2)	8 (-2)

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 8

Languages Common, Draconic

Tactic: Haldraxis kobolds love using traps to their advantage. They only ever continue fighting if more than half of their group is still alive. Otherwise, they take off screaming.

Quote: "For the glory of Haldraxis! Nyaaaahhh!"

Actions

Dagger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 piercing damage.

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

ANIMATED ARMOR

Medium construct, unaligned

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)

Hit Points 33 (6d8 + 6)

Speed 30 ft., fly 30 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 60ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 6

Tactic: The animated armor will only attack once the key it guards is removed, and directs its attacks at whichever creature holds the key.

Quote: metallic clanking and whining.

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.



ARSONIST PIXIES

Tiny fey, typically chaotic neutral

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 13 (3d4 + 6)

Speed 30 ft., fly 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	8 (-1)	10 (+0)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Dex +5, Cha +5

Skills Athletics +1, Acrobatics +5

Damage Immunities fire

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Common

Tactic: The arsonist pixies by default fire a mote of flame at the target closest to them.

Quote: "Heeheehee! Ashes to ashes!"

Actions

Mote of Flame. *Ranged Attack:* +5 to hit, range 40/80 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 fire damage. On a hit, the target creature bursts into flames. A creature on fire takes 2 fire damage at the start of each of its turns, and the fire can be put out using an action.

ASSASSIN

Medium humanoid (human), neutral evil

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 22 (5d8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	17 (+3)

Saving Throws Dex +4, Cha +5

Skills Deception +5, Insight +4, Perception +4, Persuasion +5

Senses passive Perception 14

Languages Common

Tactic: In an attempt to gain an early advantage, the assassin will first attack the party member who appears the weakest.

Quote: "You won't get in the way of my target."

Actions

Dagger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 slashing damage.

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

Bonus Actions

Cunning Action. The assassin can take the Dash, Disengage, or Hide action.

BANDMATES

Medium humanoid, typically neutral evil

Armor Class 13 (leather armor)

Hit Points 11 (2d8 + 2)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)	9 (-1)	10 (+0)	17 (+3)

Saving Throws Dex +4, Cha +5

Skills Deception +5, Persuasion +5

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Common

Tactic: The minstrel's bandmates avoid ending their turn within 5 feet of an enemy, and they attack whoever is closest to them.

Quote: "This'll be your final show."

Actions

Pluck Strings (Recharge 5-6) The bandmate plucks their lute strings which emanates a painfully dissonant musical tone. Each creature of the bandmate's choice within a 30-foot radius of them must make a DC 11 Constitution saving throw or take 2 psychic damage and have disadvantage on their next attack roll.

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 slashing damage.



Bandmate

FELTROND SPIES

Medium humanoid (human), typically neutral evil

Armor Class 15 (studded leather armor)

Hit Points 9 (2d8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Dex +5, Int +4

Skills Acrobatics +5, Deception +2, Investigation +4

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Common

Tactic: The spies will try to group around a single target and hit any long range attacker with their poison vials.

Quote: "No witnesses. Silence them!"

Actions

Dagger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 slashing damage. If the characters are level 3, the spies' daggers are poison-laced, and do an additional 7 (3d4) poison damage on a hit.

Throw Poison Vial. The spy throws a poisonous vial at a target they can see within 25 feet of them. The creature must succeed on a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw or get splashed by the vial's contents, becoming poisoned for 1 minute.

Bonus Actions

Cunning Action. The spies can take the Dash, Disengage, or Hide action.

MINI FIRE ELEMENTAL

Small elemental, typically neutral

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 16 (3d6 + 6)

Speed 35 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	8 (-1)	7 (-2)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Str +4, Con +4

Skills Athletics +4, Acrobatics +5

Damage Immunities fire

Senses passive Perception 8

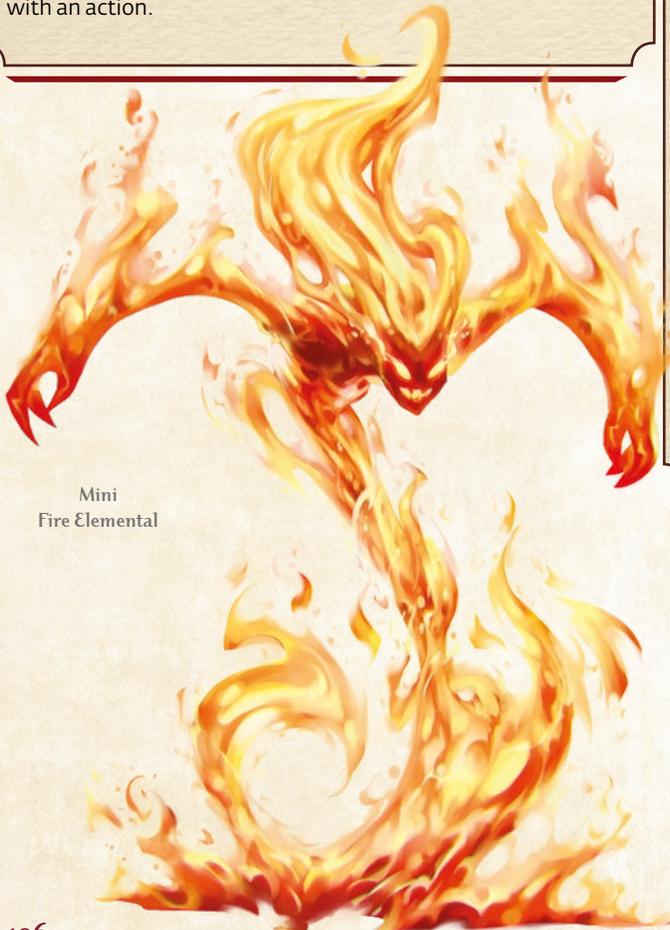
Languages Ignan

Tactic: The mini fire elemental uses its flame touch at the closest non-burning target. They attempt to spread as much fire as possible.

Quote: *fire crackling*

Actions

Flame Touch. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5ft., one target. Hit: 5 fire damage. On a hit, the target bursts into flames. A creature on fire takes 1d4 fire damage at the start of each of its turns, and the creature or an ally can put the fire out with an action.



Mini
Fire Elemental

THE MINSTREL

Medium humanoid (human), chaotic neutral

Armor Class 15 (studded leather)

Hit Points 45 (7d8 + 14)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	8 (-1)	8 (-1)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws Dex +6, Cha +7

Skills Acrobatics +6, Deception +7, Persuasion +7

Senses passive Perception 9

Languages Common

Tactic: The minstrel will attempt to charm a party member with Control Creature, or will alternatively use his Pluck Strings action if he already has control of a creature. He only uses his dagger in a circumstance where he cannot use the other two abilities.

Quote: "You won't stop my greatest performance!"

Appearance. The minstrel is athletically built, with a narrow face and shoulder-length brown hair. He wears a fitted, striped red shirt with puffy sleeves, and loose-fitting pants of a solid black.

Actions

Multiattack. The minstrel makes two dagger attacks.

Pluck Strings (Recharge 5-6). The minstrel plucks their lute strings which emanates a painfully dissonant musical tone. Each creature of the minstrel's choice within a 30-foot radius of him must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or take 7 (2d6) psychic damage and have disadvantage on their next attack roll.

Dagger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d4 + 3) slashing damage.

Bonus Actions

Eloquent Hypnosis (Recharge 3-6). The minstrel commands a creature he can see within 60 feet of himself to perform an action of his choosing. The target creature must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or they must spend their next action performing said action.

TRASH PILE

Huge monstrosity, neutral

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 39 (6d12)

Speed 10 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	8 (-1)	10 (+0)	5 (-3)	7 (-2)	5 (-3)

Damage Immunities poison

Senses sight 45ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 10

Languages Common

Tactic: The trash pile will consume a creature if it has not consumed one yet. Otherwise, it attacks the nearest creature.

Quote: "My food! Mine!"

Actions

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.

Hit: 6 (1d4 + 4) bludgeoning damage. If the slam hits a Medium or smaller target, the target is grappled (escape DC 13), and the trash pile uses Consume on it.

Consume. The trash pile consumes a Medium or smaller creature grappled by it. The engulfed target is blinded, restrained, and unable to breathe, and it must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw at the start of each of the trash pile's turns or take 7 (2d6) bludgeoning damage. If the trash pile moves, the consumed target moves with it. The trash pile can have only one creature consumed at a time.

Trash Pile



Wolf

WOLF

Medium beast, typically unaligned

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)

Hit Points 11 (2d8 + 2)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	3 (-4)	12 (+1)	6 (-2)

Skills Perception +3, Stealth +4

Senses passive Perception 13

Languages —

Tactic: Wolves will attack the nearest creature.

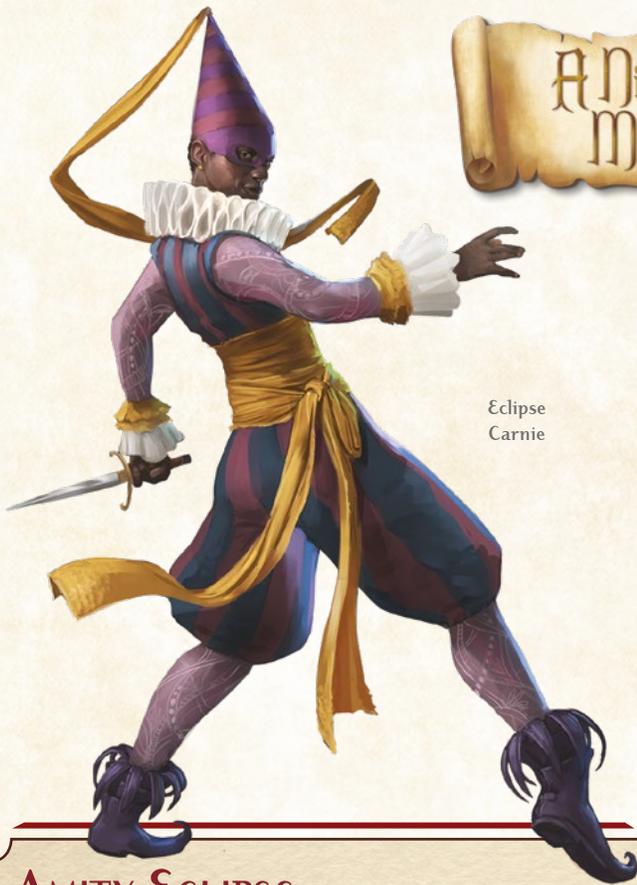
Quote: *growl*

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

Actions

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

A Night in Midhallow



Eclipse
Carnie



Dusk Lord
Cultist

AMITY ECLIPSE

Medium construct, chaotic neutral

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 26 (4d8 + 8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	17 (+3)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	15 (+2)

Saving Throws Dex +5, Cha +4

Skills Acrobatics +5, Athletics +2, Deception +4, Performance +4

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Languages Common, thieves' cant

Tactic: Amity will focus more on staying alive and trying to get the invitation, rather than outright killing the party.

Quote: "Life is a tightrope: lean too much to one side, and you are bound to fall."

Actions

Soul Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 force damage.

Bonus Actions

Cunning Action. Amity can take the Dash, Disengage, or Hide action.

DUSK LORD CULTIST

Medium humanoid (any race), typically neutral evil

Armor Class 11 (leather armor)

Hit Points 22 (5d8)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Skills Intimidation +2, Religion +4

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages Common, Celestial

Tactic: The cultist will rush into battle, caring little about protecting themselves from hits, as they believe the Dusk Lord will protect them.

Quote: "By the light of the lord!"

Actions

Mace. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 bludgeoning damage.

Bonus Actions

Divine Eminence. The cultist can cause their melee weapon attacks to magically deal an extra 3 (1d6) radiant damage to a target on a hit. This benefit lasts until the end of the cultist's turn. This feature cannot be used again until the cultist takes a long rest.

ECLIPSE CARNIE

Medium humanoid (any race), chaotic neutral

Armor Class 13 (leather armor)

Hit Points 21 (6d8 - 6)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	14 (+2)	8 (-1)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	13 (+1)

Skills Acrobatics +4, Athletics +4, Performance +3

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages Common, thieves' cant

Tactic: The carnies will attempt to keep their distance from the characters, using their cunning action to reposition themselves.

Quote: "Let's put on a show!"

Actions

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 piercing damage.

Bonus Actions

Cunning Action. The carnie can take the Dash, Disengage, or Hide action.

FERNANDO BARBERO

Medium humanoid (human), neutral evil

Armor Class 11 (leather armor)

Hit Points 22 (4d8 + 4)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Skills Athletics +5, Intimidation +3

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Celestial

Tactic: At first, Fernando will attempt to use his Rope action on one of the characters, holding them hostage while he and the rest of the party talk. If the negotiations fall through, he will attempt to finish off the hostage before attacking the rest.

Quote: "Heresy!"

Actions

Rope. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 bludgeoning damage, and Fernando grapples the target. The target is unable to breathe while grappled in this way.

While he has one creature grappled, Fernando can only attack that creature, but has advantage on his attack rolls. Fernando's speed is also halved.

A creature can escape the grapple by making a successful DC 13 Strength check as an action. On his turn, Fernando can release the grapple by using a bonus action.

HIGH PROPHET ABRAHAM D'COIL

Medium humanoid (half elf), neutral evil

Armor Class 16 (chain mail)

Hit Points 39 (6d8 + 12)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	9 (-1)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)	16 (+3)	13 (+1)

Saving Throws Wis +6

Skills Intimidation +4, Persuasion +4, Religion +6

Senses passive Perception 13

Languages Common, Elvish, Celestial

Tactic: Abraham will keep his distance, throwing alchemist's fire. Then he'll support his allies with spells.

Quote: "The Dusk Lord's light will judge you."

Actions

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d4) piercing damage.

Radiant Bolt (Recharge 5-6). *Ranged Spell Attack:* +5 to hit, range 120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (4d6) radiant damage.

Alchemist's Fire. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, range 20ft., one target. *Hit:* The target takes 1d4 fire damage at the start of each of its turns. A creature can use its action to make a DC 10 Dexterity check to extinguish the flames

Spellcasting. Abraham casts one of the following spells, requiring a holy symbol and using Wisdom as his spellcasting ability (spell save DC 13).

At will: *light*

3/day: *command*

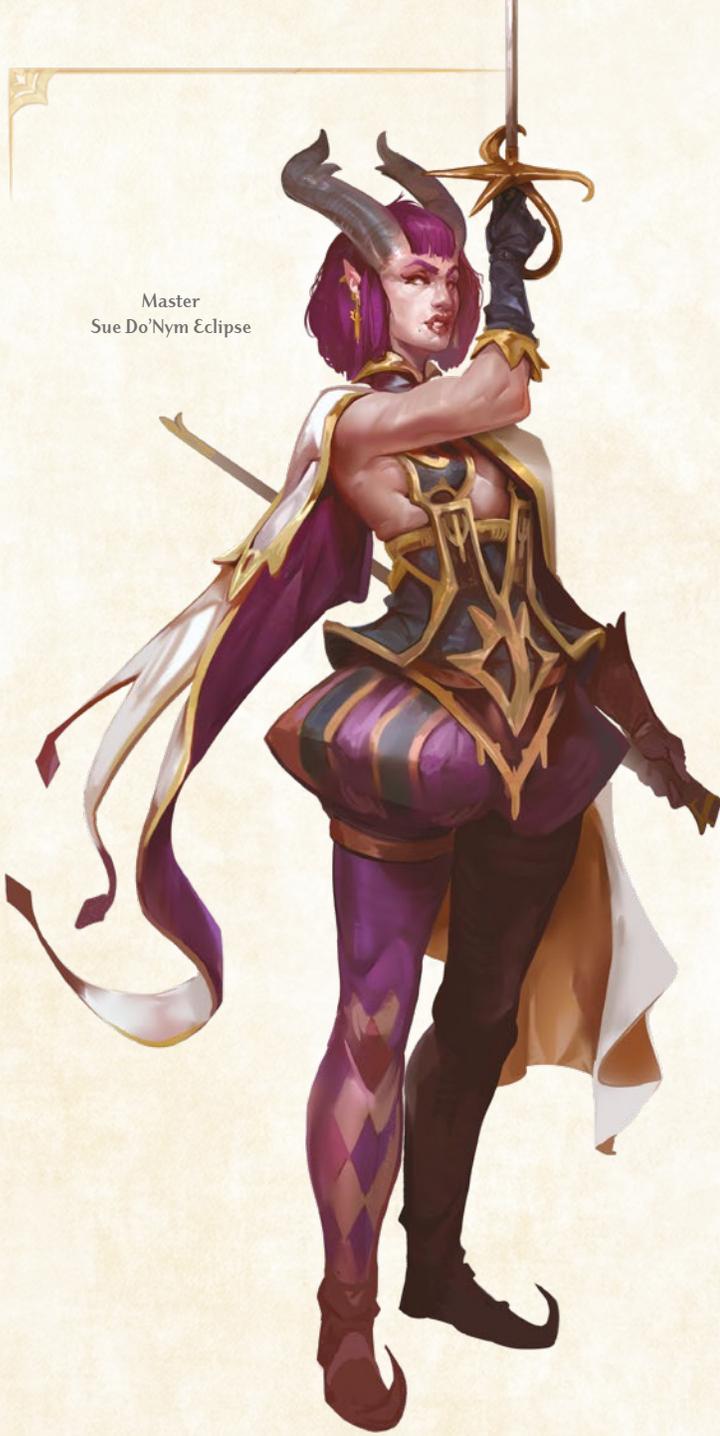
1/day each: *animate dead*, *spiritual weapon*

Bonus Actions

Divine Eminence. Abraham can cause his melee weapon attacks to magically deal an extra 7 (2d6) radiant damage to a target on a hit. This benefit lasts until the end of his turn. This feature cannot be used again until Abraham takes a long rest.

Word of Resolve (Recharge 4-6). Abraham chooses a creature within 60 feet of him to regain 5 (1d4 + 3) hit points.

Master
Sue Do'Nym Eclipse



MASTER SUE DO'NYM ECLIPSE

Medium humanoid (tiefling), neutral

Armor Class 15 (breastplate)

Hit Points 33 (6d8 + 6)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	17 (+3)

Skills Deception +6, Insight +5, Persuasion +6

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages Common, Infernal, thieves' cant

Tactic: Sue will throw Alchemist's Fire before dealing with the party, though she will defend herself if they are too close.

Quote: "It's time for the grand finale!"

Sneak Attack (1/Turn). Sue deals an extra 10 (3d6) damage when she hits a target with a weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 feet of one of Sue's allies that isn't incapacitated and Sue doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

Actions

Multiattack. Sue makes two rapier attacks.

Rapier. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5ft., one target.

Hit: 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage.

Alchemist's Fire. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, range 20ft., one target. *Hit:* The target takes 1d4 fire damage at the start of each of its turns. A creature can use its action to make a DC 10 Dexterity check to extinguish the flames

Bonus Actions

Cunning Action. Sue can take the Dash, Disengage, or Hide action.

Reactions

Parry. Sue adds 2 to her AC against one melee attack that would otherwise hit her. To do so, Sue must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.

MIDHALLOW GUARD

Medium humanoid (any race), neutral

Armor Class 16 (chain shirt)

Hit Points 11 (2d8 + 2)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Skills Perception +2

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages Common

Tactic: The guard will attempt to order the characters before they try to subdue them, focusing on nonlethal attacks, only attempting to kill the party if they fear for their lives.

Quote: "Halt!"

Actions

Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 slashing damage, or 6 if used with two hands to make a melee attack.

Heavy Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, range 100/400 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 piercing damage.



Azeraphis
Imp

AZERAPHIS

Medium fiend (devil), lawful evil

Armor Class 14 (leather armor)

Hit Points 76 (9d8 + 36)

Speed 30 ft., fly 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	18 (+4)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws Dex +8, Con +8, Wis +6, Cha +8

Damage Resistances cold

Damage Immunities fire, poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses truesight 120 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Common, Infernal

Tactic: Azeraphis thinks himself above most mortals; he underestimates the characters and thinks they'll easily succumb to his power and sign a contract to bind their souls to him.

Quote: "Your tenacity is admirable, but better suited elsewhere. Sign your name at the bottom and we'll get started."

Actions

Multiattack. Azeraphis makes three dagger attacks.

Dagger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d4 + 4) piercing damage.

Hellfire Pistol. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, 40/80 feet., one target. *Hit:* 15 (2d10 + 4) fire damage.

Legendary Actions

Azeraphis can take 1 legendary action. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. Azeraphis regains spent legendary actions at the start of his turn.

Infernal Rebuke. Azeraphis expels flame in an aura surrounding himself. Each creature within 10 feet of Azeraphis must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or take 7 (2d6) fire damage, or half as much on a success.

AZERAPHIS IMP

Tiny fiend (devil), typically lawful evil

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 10 (3d4 + 3)

Speed 20 ft., fly 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6 (-2)	17 (+3)	13 (+1)	11 (+1)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)

Damage Immunities fire, poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages Infernal, Common

Tactic: The imp will try to knock intruders off of the train.

Quote: "You're more annoying than a lemur out of the maggot pits!"

Devil's Sight. Magical darkness doesn't impede the imp's darkvision.

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

Actions

Sting. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 11 Constitution saving throw, taking 2 poison damage on a failure, or half as much on a success.

Invisibility. The imp magically turns itself invisible until it attacks.

BADLANDS DEVIL

Medium fiend (devil), typically lawful evil

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)

Hit Points 11 (2d8 + 2)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws Str +5, Con +4, Wis +2.

Damage Resistances cold

Damage Immunities fire, poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Infernal

Tactic: Badlands devils try to apprehend characters that attempt to break into the train or saloon. They are not past killing anyone who proves to be too much to handle.

Quote: "Not even the carrion creatures will be interested in your corpse!"

Actions

Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 slashing damage.

Hellfire Blast. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, 40/80 ft., one target. *Hit:* 2 fire damage.

EDDIE VAN PATTEN

Medium humanoid (human), neutral

Armor Class 10

Hit Points 9 (2d8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	9 (-1)	14 (+2)

Skills Deception +4

Senses passive Perception 9

Languages Common

Tactic: Eddie thinks highly of himself and talks a big game, but will immediately surrender in a fight.

Quote: "There's no need to fight, we can cut a deal, instead."

Actions

Dagger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d4) piercing damage.

HELLFIRE CONDUCTOR

Medium fiend (devil), lawful evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 19 (3d8 + 2)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws Str +5, Con +4, Wis +2.

Damage Resistances cold

Damage Immunities fire, poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Infernal

Tactic: The hellfire conductor will try to remove any trespassers from his train.

Quote: "All aboard the pain train!"

Actions

Hellfire Wrench. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 bludgeoning and 2 fire damage.

HUCK

Medium construct, neutral

Armor Class 12 (leather armor)

Hit Points 9 (2d8)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Skills Athletics +3

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, poisoned

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Common

Tactic: Huck focuses on trying to save the players' hides.

Quote: "Say when."

Actions

Lever Action Firearm. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, range 5/20 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) piercing damage.

INFERNAL JAIL GUARD

Medium fiend (devil), typically lawful evil

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)

Hit Points 19 (3d8 + 6)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws Str +5, Con +4, Wis +2

Damage Resistances cold

Damage Immunities fire, poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Infernal

Tactic: Infernal jail guards try to apprehend the characters. They'll attack characters with their burning blades if they bring any other guards to o HP.

Quote: "Stay put!"

Actions

Burning Blade. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 slashing damage plus 1 fire damage.

Manacles. An infernal jail guard can try to manacle any creature within 5 feet of them. The target creature must succeed on a DC 20 Dexterity saving throw or become manacled, grappled, and restrained by the infernal jail guard.



Infernal Jail
Guard

KLOT

Small humanoid (goblin), neutral

Armor Class 13 (leather armor)

Hit Points 22 (5d6 + 5)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Skills Stealth +6

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 9

Languages Common, Goblin

Tactic: Klot protects the Royal Pig Saloon with his life and has a stern attitude toward everyone inside. He has no time for troublemakers.

Quote: "This fine establishment ain't taking kindly to you folk!"

Actions

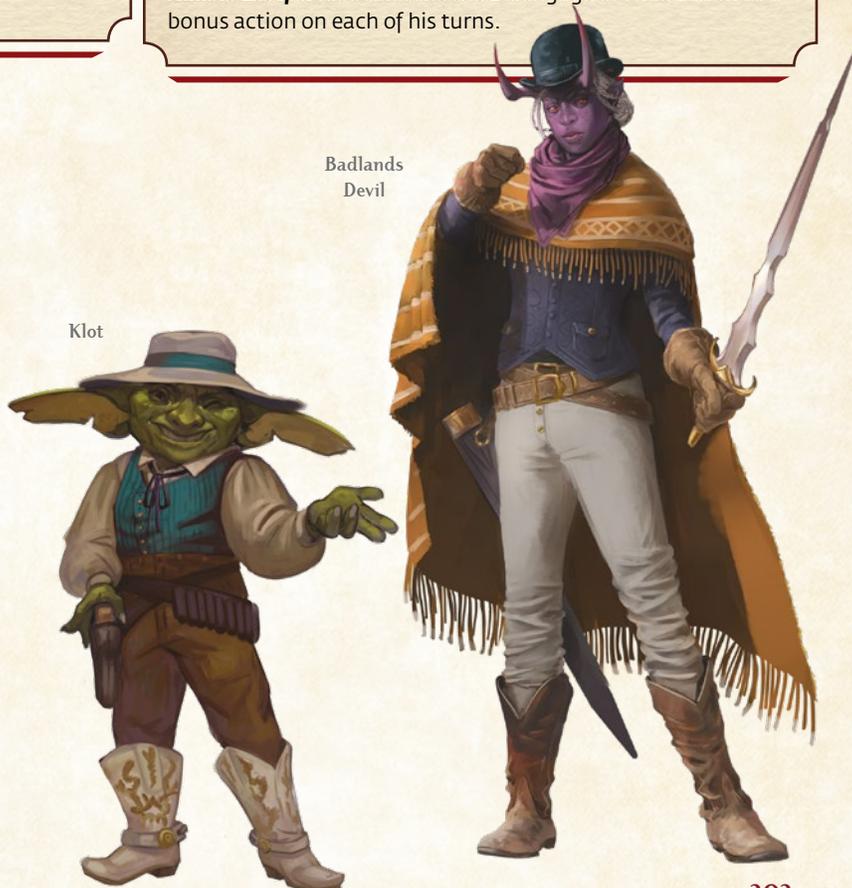
Multiattack. Klot makes two dagger attacks or two pepperbox attacks.

Dagger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 15/30 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage.

Pepperbox. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 15/30 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (2d6 + 2) fire damage.

Bonus Actions

Nimble Escape. Klot can take the Disengage or Hide action as a bonus action on each of his turns.



Badlands
Devil

Klot

MERCENARY JAIL GUARD

Medium humanoid (human), typically lawful neutral

Armor Class 13 (leather armor)

Hit Points 19 (3d8 + 6)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws Str +5, Con +4, Wis +5

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages Common

Tactic: Mercenary jail guards try to apprehend the characters. They'll attack characters with their knockout batons if they resist arrest. They won't kill any characters.

Quote: "Hold yer horses; where do you think you're goin'?"

Actions

Knockout Baton. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 bludgeoning damage and the target must make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or become stunned until the end of their next turn.

Manacles. A mercenary jail guard can try to manacle any creature within 5 feet of them. The target creature must succeed on a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw or become manacled, grappled, and restrained by the mercenary jail guard.

SHERIFF LOCH

Medium fiend (devil), lawful evil

Armor Class 15 (chain armor)

Hit Points 26 (4d8 + 8)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Damage Resistances cold

Damage Immunities fire, poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Common, Infernal

Tactic: Sheriff Loch commands other guards to apprehend the characters. However if any of his guards are killed by the characters, he uses his burning blade to kill those characters.

Quote: "Escape? Oh, I'd love to see you try!"

Actions

Multiattack. After Sheriff Loch makes a longsword attack or uses his Manacle action, then he uses his Command action.

Burning Blade. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 slashing damage plus 1 fire damage.

Manacles. Sheriff Loch can try to manacle any creature within 5 feet of him. The target creature must succeed on a DC 22 Dexterity saving throw or become manacled, grappled, and restrained by Sheriff Loch.

Command. Sheriff Reardon commands one infernal jail guard within 30 feet. The chosen guard uses their reaction to use any one of their actions.

SHERIFF REARDON

Medium humanoid (human), neutral

Armor Class 15 (chain armor)

Hit Points 26 (4d8 + 8)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws Str +5, Con +4, Wis +5.

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages Common

Tactic: Sheriff Reardon uses his command action to apprehend the characters. He does his best to protect his guards and won't kill any characters. He uses his longsword only as a last resort and in defense of any lives.

Quote: "I ain't gonna ask you twice..."

Actions

Multiattack. After Sheriff Reardon makes a longsword attack or uses his Manacle action, he uses his Command action.

Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 slashing damage.

Manacles. Sheriff Reardon can try to manacle any creature within 5 feet of him. The target creature must succeed on a DC 22 Dexterity saving throw or become manacled, grappled, and restrained by Sheriff Reardon.

Command. Sheriff Reardon commands one mercenary within 30 feet. The chosen mercenary uses their reaction to use any one of their actions.

VAN PATTEN CONDUCTOR

Medium humanoid (half-orc), neutral

Armor Class 13 (leather armor)

Hit Points 19 (3d8 + 2)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws Str +5, Con +4, Wis +2.

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Common

Tactic: The Van Patten conductor will try to remove any trespassers from his train.

Quote: "Last stop! Your death!"

Actions

Wrench. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 bludgeoning damage.

Van Patten
Conductor



VAN PATTEN MERCENARY

Medium humanoid (human), chaotic neutral

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)

Hit Points 7 (1d8 + 2)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws Str +5, Con +4, Wis +2.

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Common

Tactic: Van Patten mercenaries try to apprehend characters that attempt to break into the train or saloon. They, however, are only loyal to gold. They'll try to preserve themselves if things look sour.

Quote: "Settle down now! This'll be over quick."

Actions

Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 slashing damage.

Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 40/80 ft., one target. *Hit:* 2 piercing damage.

VIOLET

Medium humanoid (half-elf), neutral

Armor Class 11

Hit Points 9 (2d8)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Skills Deception +2

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Elvish, Infernal

Tactic: Violet stays out of the fight unless Azeraphis looks like he's losing.

Quote: "This is for my sister."

Fey Ancestry. Violet has advantage on saving throws against being charmed, and magic can't put her to sleep.

Actions

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

Bulwarks of Bullthorne

Sheriff



Outlaw Turncoat



Demon Turncoat



BULLTHORNE DEMONS

Large fiend (demon), typically chaotic evil

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)

Hit Points 15 (2d10 + 4)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	8 (-1)	15 (+2)	3 (-4)	7 (-2)	5 (-3)

Saving Throws Str +4, Con +3

Senses. passive Perception 8

Languages understands Abyssal but can't speak.

Tactic: Bullthorne demons will attempt to charge and gore the target furthest from their range, or will attempt to gore a character within 5ft. of them if they start their turn within 5ft of a target.

Quote: "Bellowwwwww"

Actions

Multiattack. The bullthorne demon uses its charge action and then uses its gore action.

Charge. The Bullthorne demon targets a creature that is at least 10 ft. away but within its movement range. As part of the demon's movement, it will attempt to trample the creature. The targeted creature must make a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw. On a failure, the creature is trampled by the Bullthorne demon, taking 3 bludgeoning damage, and is knocked prone.

Gore. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, one target. *Hit:* 5 piercing damage.

GOBLIN OUTLAW

Small humanoid (goblinoid), typically chaotic neutral

Armor Class 12 (leather armor)

Hit Points 13 (3d8 + 3)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws Dex +2

Senses. passive Perception 8

Languages Common, Goblin

Tactic: Goblin outlaws attack targets that are not currently being attacked by their allies, if they are any. If any creatures are brought to 0 hit points, Goblin outlaws try to loot them.

Quote: "Turn around and go back the way ya came! Bullthorne's ours!"

Actions

Multiattack. The goblin makes two hand crossbow attacks.

Hand Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, range 30/120ft., one target. *Hit:* 2 piercing damage.

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 piercing damage.

Bonus Actions

Nimble Escape. Goblin outlaws can take the Disengage or Hide action.

THE GUNSMITH: ADELAIDE CLARK

Medium humanoid (elf), neutral good

Armor Class 13 (leather armor)

Hit Points 9 (2d8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	8 (-1)

Saving Throws Dex +4, Wis +2

Skills Acrobatics +4, Insight +2

Senses. darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Common

Tactic: Adelaide Clarke tries to stay behind cover. Attacking the closest enemy, or anyone being attacked with her custom-built rifle.

Quote: "Bullthorne is our home. They won't take it from us."

Fey Ancestry. Adelaide has advantage on saving throws against being charmed, and magic can't put her to sleep.

Appearance. Adelaide Clark is a rifle-wielding elven woman, standing at 5' 6" tall. She has medium-length black hair and wears a light-brown leather duster over a grey shirt and light-blue pants. On the left side of her face, she has a scar reaching up from her left cheek to her ear, and the tip of her left ear has been docked, seemingly by whatever caused the scar.

Actions

Custom-Built Rifle. Ranged Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, range 60/240 ft., one target. Hit: 4 piercing damage.

Dagger. Melee Weapon Attack: +2 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one target. Hit: 3 piercing damage.

THE OUTLAW: ALONZO ALWOOD

Medium humanoid (human), neutral evil

Armor Class 16 (studded leather)

Hit Points 65 (10d8 + 20)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)	10 (0)	11 (0)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Dex +6, Cha +3

Skills Acrobatics +6, Deception +3, Persuasion +3

Senses. passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Goblin

Tactic: Alonzo Alwood will attack the two closest creatures with his auto-firing crossbows. If two or more enemies are within 5 feet of each other, he will instead throw a stick of dynamite at them.

Quote: "Yer in over yer head, upstarts!"

Appearance. All know Alonzo Alwood by his curly black mustache and large, stark white hat. After being an outlaw for many years, his face has started to show its age, if only slightly, and his hairline has gradually receded, leaving the curly mustache the only hair on his head.

Crossbow Expert. Alonzo does not gain disadvantage for attacking a creature within 5 feet with his auto-firing crossbows.

Actions

Multiattack. Alonzo attacks three times with his auto firing crossbows or throws two sticks of dynamite.

Auto-firing hand crossbow. Ranged Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, range 30/120ft, one target. Hit: 7 (1d6+4) piercing damage.

Dynamite. Alonzo chooses a point within 50 feet to throw a stick of dynamite. Any creatures within 10 feet of the dynamite must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or take 12 (5d4) fire damage or half as much on a successful save.

THE SHERIFF: LAWRENCE WATERS

Medium humanoid (human), lawful good

Armor Class 11 (+1 leather armor)

Hit Points 13 (2d8 + 4)

Speed 25 ft. (walks with a limp)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	9 (-1)	14 (+2)	10 (0)	16 (+3)	9 (-1)

Saving Throws Str +2

Senses. passive Perception 11

Languages Common, Elvish

Tactic: Lawrence Waters shoots at the closest enemy attacking an ally (or himself), but disengages from combat if an enemy is within 5 feet of him.

Quote: "I got one good fight left in me."

Appearance. Lawrence Waters is an aged human man with short, well-kept grey hair and a large grey beard.

Slow. Lawrence has disadvantage on Dexterity saving throws.

Sharp Eyes. Lawrence uses wisdom for his light crossbow attack modifiers and damage.

Actions

Light Crossbow. Ranged Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, range 60/180 ft., one target. Hit: 5 piercing damage.

DEMON TURNCOAT

Medium humanoid (any race), typically neutral evil

Armor Class 13 (mage armor)

Hit Points 25 (5d8)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws Int +5, Wis +3

Skills Investigation +5, Perception +3

Senses. passive Perception 11

Languages Common, Abyssal

Tactic: Demon turncoats attack the closest enemy with a Fire Blast

Quote: "For the demon lords!"

Actions

Fire Blast. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +5 to hit, range 80/160 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) fire damage.

OLD MAN JOHNNY

Small humanoid (gnome), neutral evil

Armor Class 13 (mage armor)

Hit Points 45 (10d6 + 10)

Speed 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (+0)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)

Saving Throws Int +7, Wis +5

Skills Investigation +7, Perception +5

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Common, Gnomish

Tactic: Old Man Johnny summons a Bullthorne demon using his staff if there are less than 3 on the map at any time, and otherwise attacks the closest enemy.

Quote: "You won't end me here, young'uns!"

Appearance. Old Man Johnny is an elderly man, dressed in ragged but fancy clothing, a remnant of a time when he was a well-respected wizard. His hairline is receding, though his grey hair is long, reaching down to mid-back, alongside a scraggly, unkempt grey beard.

Gnome Cunning. Old Man Johnny has advantage on all Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Actions

Fire Blast. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +7 to hit, range 120/240 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) fire damage.

Summon Bullthorne Demon. As an action, Old Man Johnny summons a Bullthorne demon in a space within 30 feet of himself. This Bullthorne demon uses the Bullthorne demon stat block.

OUTLAW TURNCOAT

Medium humanoid (any race), typically chaotic neutral

Armor Class 13 (leather armor)

Hit Points 20 (4d8)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws Dex +4

Skills Acrobatics +4, Perception +1

Senses. passive Perception 11

Languages Common, Goblin

Tactic: Outlaw turncoats attempt to pile onto one target, attacking the enemy closest to them.

Quote: "We're gettin' our cut of this!"

Actions

Multiattack. The turncoat makes two dagger attacks.

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

Light Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 60/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage.





BASIGOAT

Large fiend (demon), chaotic evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 19 (3d10 + 3)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)	3 (-4)	12 (+1)	6 (-2)

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages —

Tactic: The basigoat will focus its Petrifying Gaze on any spellcasters before using its Ram attack.

Quote: "Baaaaaaaahsssss."

Sure-Footed. The basigoat has advantage on Strength and Dexterity saving throws made against attacks or effects that would knock it prone.

Petrifying Gaze. If a creature starts its turn within 30 feet of the basigoat and the two of them can see each other, the basigoat can force the creature to make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw if the basigoat isn't incapacitated. On a failure, the targeted creature magically begins to turn to stone and is restrained. It must repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its following turns. After 3 failures, the creature is petrified until freed by the greater restoration spell or similar magic.

A creature that isn't surprised can avert its eyes to avoid the saving throw at the start of its turn. If it does so, it can't see the basigoat until the start of its next turn, when it can avert its eyes again. If it looks at the basigoat in the meantime, it must immediately make the saving throw.

If the basigoat sees its reflection within 30 feet of it in bright light, it mistakes itself for a rival and targets itself with its gaze.

Actions

Ram. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 bludgeoning damage.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 2 piercing damage plus 4 poison damage.

Charge. The basigoat targets a creature that is at least 20 ft. away but within its movement range. As part of the basigoat's movement, it will attempt to trample the creature. The targeted creature must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw. On a failure, the creature is trampled by the Basigoat, taking 3 bludgeoning damage, and is knocked prone.

CANNIBAL SETTLERS

Medium humanoid (any race), typically chaotic evil

Armor Class 12 (hide armor)

Hit Points 26 (4d8 + 8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	11 (+0)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	8 (-1)

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Common

Tactic: The cannibal settlers fight wildly with no real thought or plan.

Quote: "You will make a delicious stew!"

Brute. When the cannibal settlers makes a melee weapon attack, it deals an extra 2 damage if it delivers a critical hit.

Actions

Dagger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 slashing damage.

CERRO HAWK

Large beast, neutral evil

Armor Class 10

Hit Points 22 (3d10 + 6)

Speed 10 ft., fly 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	10 (+0)	15 (+2)	3 (-4)	12 (+1)	7 (-2)

Skills Athletics +4, Perception +3

Senses passive Perception 18

Languages —

Tactic: The hawk will target the creature that has taken the most damage, attempting to grapple them with their talons before flying into the air and dropping them from high up.

Quote: *rattling screech*

Keen Sight and Smell. The hawk has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight or smell, and a +5 to passive perception.

Actions

Beak. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 slashing damage.

Talons. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 slashing damage. The target must also make a DC 14 Dexterity (Acrobatics) or Strength (Athletics) check, becoming grappled on a failure.

Barkwood
Stalker



Corpse
Bushel



BARKWOOD STALKER

Large plant, chaotic evil

Armor Class 20 (natural armor)

Hit Points 190 (20d10 + 80)

Speed 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	18 (+4)	18 (+4)	3 (-1)	6 (-2)	5 (-3)

Damage Immunities bludgeoning, piercing, slashing, acid, cold, force, lightning, necrotic, poison, psychic, radiant, thunder

Condition Immunities charmed, frightened

Saving Throws Str +11, Con +11

Skills Athletics +11

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 8

Languages —

Tactic: The Barkwood Stalker is relentless and attempts to kill anything it can perceive. If anything leaves its vision however, it attempts to find a different path.

Quote: *creaking of wood*

Ser Nominus Note: "The Barkwood Stalker is obviously super strong and immune to everything except for fire—ensure that your players understand this! It's meant to be run from!"

Stalker. The Barkwood Stalker cannot use the Dash action

Actions

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit., one target.

Hit: 87 (15d10 + 5) bludgeoning damage.

Barkwood Stalker Description: The Barkwood Stalker is a large bi-pedal creature made of twisting roots and hardwood. It has two small slits for its eyes and a small amount of leaves drooping from its head.

CORPSE BUSHEL

Medium plant, typically chaotic evil

Armor Class 11 (natural armor)

Hit Points 41 (4d10 + 16)

Speed 20 ft.

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

Saving Throws Str +6, Wis +4

Skills Athletics +6, Stealth +2

Senses blindsight 30 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages —

Tactic: Corpse bushels try to drag down any nearby prey. If the targeted creature proves difficult to drag, the corpse bushels slam them until they go limp.

Quote: *pattering of hands, rattling of leaves, anguished voices from deep in the earth.*

Appearance. Corpse bushels are a tangle of vines, roots, and foliage which have consumed bodies of humanoids. The bushel only grows larger with each body it consumes, twisting and contorting the bodies into its own. Legs, arms, and other appendages stick out of the bushel when it surfaces from the ground.

Actions

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 2 bludgeoning damage and the creature is grappled (escape DC 14)

Drag Down. The corpse bushel pulls one creature it has grappled down into the earth. The grappled creature must make a DC 14 Strength or Dexterity saving throw. On a failure, the creature is pulled half-way into the ground and is restrained (escape DC 14), otherwise they remain grappled.

If the corpse bushel uses this ability again on a restrained creature, the restrained creature must make a DC 14 Strength or Dexterity saving throw. On a success, the creature remains restrained. On a failure, the creature is dragged down into the ground and engulfed by dirt. It can't breathe, is restrained, and takes 2 bludgeoning damage at the start of each of the bushels' turns.

An engulfed creature or anyone within 5 feet of the bushel can use their action to make a DC 18 Strength check. On a success, the creature is pulled free. If the engulfed creature is not pulled free from the ground after 3 rounds, they are lost forever.

FATHER SAMAEL

Medium humanoid (human), neutral

Armor Class 10

Hit Points 9 (2d8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Wis +5

Skills Religion +5

Senses passive Perception 9

Languages Common, Celestial

Tactic: Father Samael uses bless on his first turn, and then tries to heal wounded allies, but runs in fear if attacked.

Quote: "Come, allow the Dusk Lord's light to restore your vigor."

Actions

Club. *Melee Weapon Attack:* -1 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1 bludgeoning damage.

Spellcasting. Father Samael casts one of the following spells, requiring a holy symbol and using Wisdom as his spellcasting ability (spell save DC 13):

At will: *Light, Guidance.*

2/day each: *Bless, Cure Wounds.*

REDWICK VILLAGERS

Medium humanoid (human), typically neutral

Armor Class 10

Hit Points 4 (1d8 + 1)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	9 (-1)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Common

Tactic: The scared and ruthless villagers try to attack the biggest or wealthiest-looking characters, in hopes of overpowering the rest of the group and looting their corpses.

Quote: "It's either us or them!"

Actions

Handaxe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 slashing damage.

SNATCHER

Large aberration, chaotic evil

Armor Class 20 (natural armor)

Hit Points 190 (20d10 + 80)

Speed 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	18 (+4)	18 (+4)	8 (-1)	8 (-1)	5 (-3)

Damage Immunities bludgeoning, piercing, slashing, acid, cold, force, lightning, necrotic, poison, psychic, radiant, thunder

Condition Immunities charmed, frightened.

Saving Throws Str+11, Dex+11

Skills Athletics +11, Stealth +10

Senses Darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 9

Languages Understands all languages, but doesn't speak.

Tactic: The Snatcher is relentless and attempts to kill anything it can perceive. If anything leaves its vision however, it attempts to find a different path.

Quote: *Silence*

Ser Nominus Note: *The Snatcher is obviously super strong, and immune to everything except fire—ensure that your players understand this! He's meant to be run from!*



Appearance. The Snatcher is a large, featureless humanoid-shaped creature made of shadow, with a stretched and unnaturally open jaw that appears as if it smiles. Its arms drag along the ground as its elongated legs pull itself forward.

Stalker. The Snatcher cannot use the Dash action.

Actions

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 87 (15d10 + 5) bludgeoning damage.



SPAWN

Large aberration, typically chaotic evil

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 25 (3d10 + 9)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	19 (+4)	17 (+3)	5 (-3)	16 (+3)	3 (-4)

Saving Throws Dex +8, Wis +7

Skills Athletics +8, Stealth +8

Senses blindsight 30 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages —

Tactic: Spawn use their web first to restrain any nearby characters, then they grasp members of the party with the lowest HP.

Quote: *tapping of finger-like appendages*

Appearance. Spawn are alien beings that came from "Them." With their spiker-like appendages, they resemble massive hands skittering on the ground. They have no eyes, mouths, or any sort of obvious sense receptors. Nevertheless, they seem to unnaturally know where creatures are. They can spit webs from their "fingers," grasp victims, and move incredibly quickly.

Actions

Grasp. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 bludgeoning damage. If the target is a Large or smaller creature, it is grappled and restrained (escape DC 14).

Web (Recharge 5–6). *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 30/60 ft., one target of a Large or smaller creature. *Hit:* The creature is restrained by webbing. As an action, the restrained creature can make a DC 10 Strength check, escaping from the webbing on a success. The effect also ends if the webbing is destroyed. The webbing has AC of 10, 5 hit points, vulnerability to fire damage, and immunity to bludgeoning, poison, and psychic damage.

The Lost Spirits

BERIA THE VILE

Large fey, neutral evil

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 85 (10d10 + 30)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws Con +7, Wis +6

Skills Arcana +5, Deception +6, Perception +6

Senses darkvision 60ft., passive Perception 16

Languages Common, Sylvan

Tactic: Beria will attempt to cast *enthrall* on weaker minded characters into fighting each other. Failing this she uses her claw on the party member with the lowest HP. If she is below half her HP, she lures characters to her just to cast *entangle* and shadow step away. Using *fog cloud* to cover her escape.

Quote: "You would make wonderful snacks I can feed to my pets. Isn't that right, my beautiful little gators?"

Amphibious. Beria can breathe air and water.

Appearance. Beria the Vile is a warped creature of dark magic, her body having bloated in the swamp's environment. Her back is perpetually bent over by her body's own weight. Large horns sprout from her face, and spiky appendages protrude from her spine. She covers up most of her body with tattered rags and talisman, a ranging from bird feathers to the skulls of animals and humanoids.

Actions

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.

Hit: 13 (2d8 + 4) slashing damage.

Spellcasting. Beria casts one of the following spells, requiring no material components and using Wisdom as her spellcasting ability (spell save DC 13):

3/day each: *entangle*, *fog cloud*, *enthrall*, *bestow curse*

Legendary Actions

Beria can take 1 legendary action. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. Beria regains spent legendary actions at the start of her turn

Shadow Step. If Beria is in dim light or darkness, she can magically teleport 120 feet away to another area of dim light or darkness.

MARIE ANCHESTER

Medium humanoid (human) or undead, neutral

Armor Class 15 (leather armor, shield of faith)

Hit Points 33 (6d8 + 6)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	10 (-0)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)

Skills Deception +5, Persuasion +5

Senses passive Perception 11

Languages Common

Tactic: Marie will focus more on those who get close to the dark shrine she protects.

Quote: "No, stay away from that! Don't get any closer or I'll... I'll cut you!"

Appearance. Marie Anchester is a young woman who has clearly fallen upon hard times, her hands calloused and her skin scarred from her years of living in the Mirewood swamps. Her clothing is little more than burlap rags reinforced with pieces of leather. She keeps her faded brown hair mostly loose and messy, except for a small ponytail. Her eyes are striking—her left is blue, while her right is amber.

If Marie Anchester is her undead variant, then her skin is taut against her body, with parts of the skin missing, revealing bone underneath.

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

Undead Fortitude (Undead Only). If Marie is undead and she is reduced to 0 hit points, she must make a Constitution saving throw with a DC equal to the damage taken plus 5, unless the damage is radiant or from a critical hit. On a success, Marie Anchester is reduced to 1 hit point instead.

Actions

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 piercing damage.

Life Drain (Undead Only). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5ft., one creature. *Hit:* 2 necrotic damage. The target must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw, or its hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the damage taken.

This reduction lasts until the target completes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0.

Accursed Flame (Human Only). Marie targets one creature within 60 feet of her, that creature must make a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw or take 3 radiant damage.

Spellcasting (Human Only). Marie casts one of the following spells, requiring no material components and using Wisdom as her spellcasting ability (spell save DC 14):

At will: *light*, *thaumaturgy*.

2/day each: *command*, *hold person*

MIRE-CURSED AEMILY LOTHBROOK

Medium undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 45 (6d8 + 18)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	16 (+3)	16 (+3)	9 (-1)	13 (+1)	6 (-2)

Skills Perception +4, Stealth +6

Damage Resistances necrotic, poison

Condition Immunities exhaustion

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages —

Tactic: Aemily will try to keep her distance from the party, staying in the shadows, only striking when a character is separated from the others. She uses Channel Negative Energy before any healer's turns if she has seen them heal before.

Quote: *hisssss*

Appearance. Because Aemily Lothbrook has been Mire-Cursed, she has taken on a new and horrifying appearance typical of others in her situation: that of a humanoid who has been twisted and corrupted by dark, vile magic, their form altered beyond recognition. Her limbs are elongated, her feet turning into hooves, her hands into piercing claws. Her body has become

emaciated, and twisted with foliage—vines and roots crawling along her skin. Her nose has shifted into a snout. Her mouth widens with needle-like teeth on display. Her eyes glow white, while large, antler-like horns sprout from her forehead.

Mire-cursed. Because of an accursed object, Aemily has been turned into an unfeeling, undead predator, preying upon any living creature that enters her grounds.

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

Sunlight Weakness. While in sunlight, Aemily has disadvantage on attack rolls, ability checks, and saving throws.

Turning Defiance. Aemily has advantage on saving throws against effects that turn undead..

Actions

Multiattack. Aemily makes two claw or bite attacks.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 slashing damage.

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

Legendary Actions

Aemily can take 1 legendary action. Only one legendary action can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. Aemily regains spent legendary actions at the start of her turn.

Channel Negative Energy. Aemily magically unleashes negative energy. Creatures within 60 feet of Aemily, including ones behind barriers and around corners, can't regain hit points until the end of Aemily's next turn.

UNDEAD ALLIGATOR

Large undead, typically neutral evil

Armor Class 12 (natural armor)

Hit Points 19 (3d10 + 3)

Speed 20 ft, swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	10 (+0)	13 (+1)	2 (-4)	10 (+0)	5 (-3)

Skills Stealth +2

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages

Tactic: The undead alligator will try to bite any creature that gets near it, grappling them in its jaws, and drag them beneath the surface of the water.

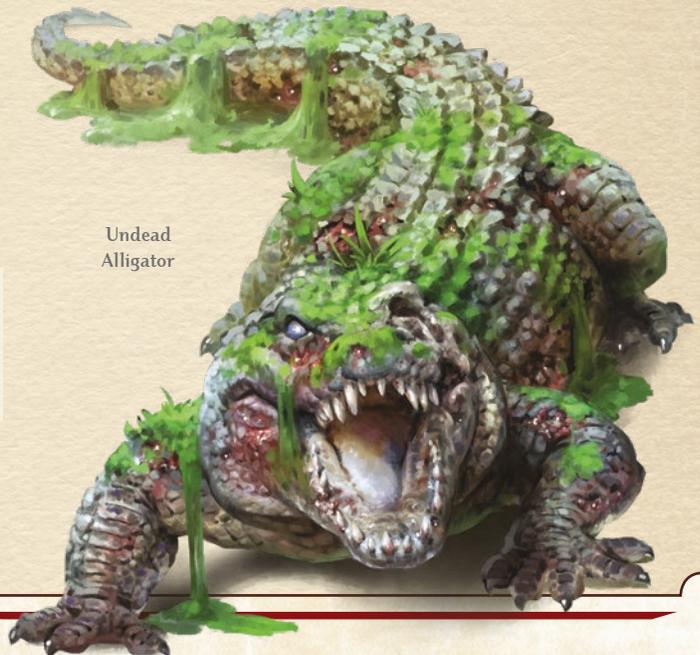
Quote: "Grrrrroooohhh."

Undead Fortitude. If damage reduces the undead alligator to 0 hit points, it must make a Constitution saving throw with a DC of the damage taken plus 5, unless the damage is radiant or from a critical hit. On a success, the undead alligator is reduced to 1 hit point instead.

Actions

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d10 + 2) slashing damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 12). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained, and the alligator can't bite another target.

Undead Alligator



THATTICUS SHORN

Medium undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 14 (leather armor)

Hit Points 82 (11d8 + 33)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws Int +8, Wis +6

Skills Arcana +8, Deception +6, Perception +6

Senses darkvision 60ft., passive Perception 14

Languages Common, Elvish

Tactic: Thatticus will monologue for as long as he can before the fighting starts. Once combat breaks out, he will try to keep his distance from the party, fighting a more defensive battle.

Quote: "All will bow before me in eternal servitude!"

Appearance. Thatticus Shorn was once a man, a wizard who used magic and technology to experiment with the boundaries between life and death. Now, he is barely a living being, kept alive by his own necromantic spells. The once fine clothing he took so much pride in has become soiled and tattered, while his body has withered and partially decayed, with half of his face rotted away.

Turn Resistance. Thatticus has advantage on saving throws against any effect that turns undead.

Actions

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit., reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d4 + 1) slashing damage.

Decaying Grasp. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +8 to hit., range 120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (2d8) necrotic damage.

Gashing Necrosis (Recharge 6). *Ranged Spell Attack:* +8 to hit., range 120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 16 (3d10) necrotic damage.

Soul Siphon (Recharge 5 - 6). *Melee Spell Attack:* +8 to hit., reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (3d6) necrotic damage and Thatticus heals 7 (2d6) hit points.

Spellcasting. Thatticus casts one of the following spells, requiring no material components and using Intelligence as his spellcasting ability (spell save DC 16):

At will: *animate dead*.

Legendary Actions

Thatticus can take 1 legendary action. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. Thatticus regains spent legendary actions at the start of his next turn.

Frightening Gaze. Thatticus fixes his gaze on one creature he can see within 10 feet of himself. The target must succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw or become frightened for 1 minute. The frightened target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. If a target's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the target is immune to Thatticus's gaze for the next 24 hours.

WANDERING SPIRIT

Medium undead (any race), typically neutral evil

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 15 (2d8+6)

Speed 0 ft, fly 50 ft (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6 (-2)	16 (+3)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)

Damage Immunities necrotic, poison

Damage Resistances acid, cold, fire, lightning, thunder

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained

Senses darkvision 60ft., passive Perception 12

Languages the languages it knew in life

Tactic: The wandering spirit will attempt to kill any living creature within 30 feet of it.

Quote: "Why...?? It hurts!!"

Incorporeal Movement. The wandering spirit can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. It takes 5 (1d10) force damage if it ends its turn inside of an object.

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

Actions

Consuming Touch. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 necrotic damage.



Vampire
Althea



ALTHEA ROSEWOOD

Medium undead (elf), lawful evil

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 144 (17d8+68)

Speed 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	15 (+2)	18 (+4)	15 (+2)	15 (+2)	17 (+3)

Saving Throws Dex +6, Wis +6, Cha +7

Skills Deception +7, Perception +6, Stealth +6

Damage Resistances necrotic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 16

Languages Common, Elvish

Tactic: Althea Rosewood makes an unarmed strike to the closest character, biting them until they die. She always focuses on the character who has the lowest current hit points.

Quote: "Come, little ones; it won't hurt for long."

Appearance. Althea Rosewood is a relatively tall elven woman, with strength and dexterity enhanced by her vampirism. She has deep red hair that runs down to her back and green eyes. Appearing fancier than one would expect from a citizen of Ostrova, she wears a traditional black Victorian-era dress with red accents.

Legendary Resistance (3/Day). If Althea Rosewood fails on a saving throw, she can choose to succeed instead.

Misty Escape. When she is reduced to 0 hit points outside of her resting place, Althea Rosewood transforms into a cloud of mist and flies to the Crypt of Martha Rosewood, instead of falling unconscious, provided she isn't in sunlight or running water. If she can't transform, she is destroyed.

Once in the crypt, she reverts to her vampire form. She is then paralyzed until she regains at least 1 hit point. After spending 1 hour in the crypt with 0 hit points, she regains 1 hit point.

Stake to the Heart. If a piercing weapon made of wood is driven into Althea Rosewood's heart while she is incapacitated in her resting place, she fades away into nothingness.

Mirror Aversion. If Althea Rosewood can see a mirror within 30 feet of herself, she becomes frightened of the mirror.

Actions

Multiattack. (Vampire Form Only). Althea Rosewood makes two attacks, only one of which can be a bite attack.

Claw. (Vampire Form Only). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage. Instead of dealing damage, Althea Rosewood can grapple the target (escape DC 18).

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) piercing damage plus 7 (2d6) necrotic damage. The target's hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the necrotic damage taken, and Althea regains hit points equal to that amount. The reduction lasts until the target completes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0. A humanoid slain in this way and then buried in the ground rises the following night as a Spawn of Althea under Althea Rosewood's control.

CATALINA ROSEWOOD

Medium humanoid (elf, shapechanger), neutral evil

Armor Class 13 in humanoid form, 14 in wolf or hybrid form.

Hit Points 117 (18d8+36)

Speed 25 ft in humanoid or hybrid form, 30 ft in wolf form

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

Saving Throws Dex +6, Cha +5

Skills Deception +5, Perception +4, Stealth +6

Senses Darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 14

Languages Common, Elvish (can't speak in wolf form)

Tactic: Catalina Rosewood makes dagger attacks at the closest character. If she is reduced to half her hit points, she uses her shapechanger ability to polymorph into her hybrid form. She always focuses on the character who has the lowest current hit points.

Quote: "Your deaths are inevitable, I'll avenge them all."

Appearance. Catalina Rosewood is a beautiful elven woman, with green eyes and long, loose hair that falls in smooth red waves past her shoulders. Her shoulders are covered in a silvery drape of fox fur. She wears well-fitting deep brown leathers, decorated with tufts of that same luxurious fur. An ornate golden dagger sits sheathed on her hip.

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

Legendary Resistance (3/Day). If Catalina Rosewood fails a saving throw, she can choose to succeed instead.

Silver Aversion. If Catalina Rosewood touches anything silver, she must succeed a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or become stunned until the start of her next turn.

Actions

Multiattack. (Humanoid or Hybrid Form Only). Catalina Rosewood makes two attacks: two with her dagger (humanoid form), or one with her bite and one with her claws (hybrid form).

Bite. (Wolf or Hybrid Form Only). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d8 + 3) piercing damage. If this damage brings a humanoid to 0 hit points, they must make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw. On a failure they regain 1 hit point and on the next full moon they become a *Lycan of Catalina*.

Claws. (Hybrid Form Only). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 8 (2d4 + 3) slashing damage.

Dagger. (Humanoid or Hybrid Form Only). *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) slashing damage.

Shapechanger. Catalina polymorphs into a wolf-humanoid hybrid or into a wolf, or back into her humanoid form. Her statistics, other than her AC and speed, are the same in each form. Any equipment she is wearing or carrying fades into her body when she transforms into her wolf form. She reverts to her humanoid form if she dies.

LYCAN OF CATALINA

Medium humanoid (any, shapechanger), typically neutral evil

Armor Class 11 in Humanoid form, 12 in Hybrid form.

Hit Points 11 (2d8+2)

Speed 35 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	9 (-1)

Senses Passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Elvish

Tactic: The lycan of Catalina will attack the closest character, or the character with the lowest AC.

Quote: "The Baroness commands I fight you."

Shapechanger. Lycans of Catalina can use their action to polymorph into a wolf-humanoid hybrid, or back into their true form, which is humanoid. Their statistics, other than their AC, are the same in each form. They revert to her true form if she dies.

Actions

Claws. (Hybrid Form Only). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 3 slashing damage.

Shortsword. (Human or Hybrid Form Only). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 2 slashing damage.

MONSTROUS HANDS

Tiny monstrosity, unaligned

Armor Class 12 (natural armor)

Hit Points 5 (2d4)

Speed 35 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
7 (-2)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)	5 (-3)	4 (-3)	2 (-4)

Senses passive Perception 7

Tactic: Monstrous hands attempt to surround one creature and pummel them to death.

Quote: *skittering around*

Actions

Pummel. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 Bludgeoning damage..

Spawn
of Althea



SPAWN OF ALTHEA

Medium undead (any race), typically neutral evil

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)

Hit Points 16 (3d8 + 3)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	9 (-1)	10 (+0)	15 (+2)

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Elvish

Tactic: The spawn of Althea will attack the closest character, or the character with the lowest hit points.

Quote: "You look delectable! *hiss*"

Actions

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, range 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 slashing damage.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1 piercing damage and 1 necrotic damage, and the spawn regains 1 hit point.

MONSTROUS SISTER

Large monstrosity, unaligned

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 127 (15d10+45)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	7 (-2)	16 (+3)	5 (-3)	7 (-2)	3 (-4)

Saving Throws Str +4, Con +6

Skills Athletics +7

Senses passive Perception 8

Languages Understands the languages she spoke in life.

Tactic: The monstrous sister attacks anything that attacks her, but will focus on Baroness Rosewood if she's visible.

Quote: "Roarrrrrrrrrr!"

Actions

Trampling Charge. If the monstrous sister moves at least 20 feet straight toward a creature and then hits it with a slam attack on the same turn, that target must succeed on a DC 14 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone and take an additional 9 (2d8) bludgeoning damage.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit., range 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 22 (4d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

ZENRICK BRAMBLEVALE

Small humanoid (halfling), neutral evil

Armor Class 13 (leather armor)

Hit Points 10 (3d6)

Speed 25 ft.

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

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Elvish, Halfling

Tactic: Zenrick only attacks to defend his life. Using his dagger up close and crossbow if the threat is further away

Quote: "Sorry, gotta run!"

Actions

Dagger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit., reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 slashing damage.

Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, range 30/90 ft., one target. *Hit:* 2 piercing damage.



Glowgill Skeleton

GLWGILL SKELETON

Medium undead, typically neutral evil

Armor Class 14 (hardened mushrooms)

Hit Points 11 (2d8 + 2)

Speed 30

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	6 (-2)	8 (-1)	5 (-3)

Damage Vulnerabilities bludgeoning

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities exhaustion, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 9

Languages understands all languages it knew in life but can't speak

Tactic: Glowgill Skeletons mindlessly attack anyone nearby, but if anyone claims themselves to be "Captain Albatross," they do not attack them.

Quote: "S-soon.... s-soon we'll all be with 'er."

Actions

Glowing Scimitar. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 slashing damage and target must make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw, on a failure they become poisoned for 1 minute.



ILVAIN

Medium humanoid (elf), chaotic neutral.

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 60 (8d8 + 24)

Speed 40 ft., fly 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	20 (+5)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws Dex +8, Wis +6, Cha +8

Skills Athletics +6, Intimidation +7

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages Abyssal, Elvish, Common

Tactic: Ilvain starts her turn casting *Bane*. Then keeps her distance, preferring her longbow. She disengages and flies away from anyone who attacks her within melee or casts *command* favoring grovel. If she is below half her hit points, she moves in closer, casting *Darkness* and uses her daggers. Ilvain enjoys suffering and will attack anyone who appears to be helpful or clearly beloved by other characters.

Quote: "All shall kneel before me and despair!"

Shadow Sight. Magical darkness doesn't impede Ilvain's darkvision.

Actions

Multiattack. Ilvain makes three dagger attacks, or two longbow attacks.

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit., reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d4 + 5) slashing damage.

Longbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, 150/600., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d8+5) piercing damage.

Spellcasting. Ilvain casts one of the following spells, requiring no material components and using Charisma as her spellcasting ability (spell save DC 15):
2/day each: *Command*, *Darkness*, *Bane*.

Reactions

Shadow Aegis (Recharge 3 - 6). Ilvain adds 3 to her AC until the start of her next turn.

LYSANDER

Medium fey, chaotic neutral.

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 52 (8d10 + 16)

Speed 40 ft., fly 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	20 (+5)	14 (+2)	18 (+4)	16 (+3)	20 (+5)

Saving Throws Dex +8, Wis +6, Cha +8

Skills Animal Handling +6, Persuasion +8, Deception +8, Performance +8

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages Common, Elvish, Sylvan

Tactic: Lysander starts his turn casting *faerie fire* and keeping his distance, using sparkle blast. Lysander prefers to annoy rather than kill, and uses *mirror image* and his staff when characters get close.

Quote: "Lets' dance!"

Actions

Multiattack. Lysander makes two staff attacks, or two sparkle attacks.

Staff. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d6+5) bludgeoning damage and target must succeed a DC 16 Strength or Dexterity saving throw or be knocked prone.

Sparkle Blast. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d8+5) radiant damage and target must make a DC 16 Constitution saving throw or become blinded until the end of their next turn.

Spellcasting. Lysander casts one of the following spells, requiring his staff as his arcane focus and using Charisma as his spellcasting ability (spell save DC 16):

3/day each: *charm person*, *faerie fire*

2/day: *mirror image*.

Bonus Actions

Word of Resolve (Recharge 4 - 6). Lysander chooses a creature within 60 feet of him to regain 7 (1d4 + 5) hit points.

OSVITHIS

Large dragon, chaotic evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 42 (4d10 + 20)

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

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	10 (+0)	20 (+5)	10 (+0)	13 (+1)	19 (+4)

Saving Throws Dex +3, Con +8, Wis +4, Cha +7

Skills Perception +4, Stealth +3

Damage Immunities necrotic

Senses blindsight 15 ft., darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 14

Languages Common, Draconic

Tactic: Osvithis serves Ilvain; he does whatever she tells him and protects her with his life. He will always attempt to use his flight to his advantage, but if necessary will land to attack characters with the lowest hit points.

Quote: "Finally... new flesh."

Actions

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 piercing damage.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 slashing damage.

Tail. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 2 bludgeoning damage and target creature must succeed a DC 15 Strength saving throw or fall prone.

Cone of Necrosis (Recharge 5-6). Osvithis exhales dark energy in a 10-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw, taking 8 necrotic damage on a failure, or half as much on a success.

MOSS DRYAD

Small plant, typically neutral

Armor Class 11 (natural armor)

Hit Points 7 (2d6)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	18 (+4)

Skills Perception +4, Stealth +5

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14

Languages Elvish, Sylvan

Tactic: Moss dryads project the fey realm, and they vigilantly attack intruders like weeding a garden. Focusing on the creature who attacked them last.

Quote: "Wilt and wither, parasite!"

Appearance. Moss dryads are little fey creatures that look like bundles of wood and moss. They have dark eyes, sticks they use as clubs, and a ferocity that is underestimated due to their size.

Actions

Club. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 bludgeoning damage.

Moss Bundle. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, range 30/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 2 bludgeoning damage

SATYR

Medium fey, typically chaotic neutral

Armor Class 14 (leather armor)

Hit Points 31 (7d8)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	16 (+3)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)

Skills Perception +2, Performance +6, Stealth +5

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages Common, Elvish, Sylvan

Tactic: Satyrs use their rams to defend any fey creatures, but if things start to look bad, they run.

Quote: "Tee-hee-hee!"

Actions

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

Hit: 3 bludgeoning damage.

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

SHADOWBORN SKELETON

Medium undead, neutral

Armor Class 13 (armor scraps)

Hit Points 11 (2d8 + 2)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	6 (-2)	8 (-1)	5 (-3)

Damage Vulnerabilities bludgeoning

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities exhaustion, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 9

Languages understands all languages it knew in life but can't speak

Tactic: Shadow skeletons mindlessly attack anyone nearby.

Quote: "For Captain Ilvain!"

Aura of Shadow: Any creature that starts their turn within 15 feet of the shadowborn skeleton takes 2 necrotic damage.

Actions

Marrow Spikes. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 30 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 piercing damage.

SOLOMON

Small humanoid (gnome), chaotic neutral

Armor Class 14 (leather armor)

Hit Points 36 (8d6 + 8)

Speed 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	20 (+5)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Int +8, Wis +4

Skills Arcana +8, History +8

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages Common, Gnomish

Tactic: Solomon protects the "Catalyst". He begins his first turn casting *faerie fire*, then he attempts to stun the closest character with his miniaturized lightning absorption rod. He'll cast *heat metal* on any weapons or armor of the characters if he hasn't taken damage yet. If things look bad, he'll cast *blur* and use his acidic concoction from a distance. Finally, if he thinks he'll die, he casts *levitate* and leaps off the spire. Using *jump* and *longstrider* to ensure his escape.

Quote: "I won't let you undo everything I've waited for!"

Actions

Acidic Concoction. *Range spell attack:* +8 to hit, range 60 ft, one target or two if they are adjacent. *Hit:* 7 (2d6) acid damage.

Miniaturized Lightning Absorption Rod. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) lightning damage. The target must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw, or become stunned until the end of their next turn.

Spellcasting. Solomon casts one of the following spells, requiring his tools as an arcane focus and using Intelligence as his spellcasting ability (spell save DC 16):

At will: *mending*, *detect magic*

2/day each: *jump*, *longstrider*.

1/day each: *blur*, *heat metal*, *levitate*.



Solomon

SOUL SHADE

Small undead, typically neutral

Armor Class 11 (natural armor)

Hit Points 7 (2d6)

Speed 30 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6 (-2)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	16 (+3)	18 (+4)	8 (-1)

Skills Perception +4, Stealth +5

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 16

Languages only the ones it knew in life

Tactic: Soul shades personify those it attacks, they often go for the most hopeful or cheery of the group to corrupt them.

Quote: "What a lovely soul you have..."

Appearance. Soul Shades are small, transparent beings of shadow. They have sad faces and clutch a small golden piece of energy, acting as remnants of their past soul. They hover towards their prey with the intent to steal from their souls.

Actions

Life Drain. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 necrotic damage.

Mimic (recharge 5-6). The Soul shade attempts to mimic an attack one creature performed in the last turn. If the action was an attack or spell, the Soul Shade makes the same attack or casts the same spell as if it had the exact same statistics as the creature it mimics, but deals half the damage they normally would

SP1RIT

Tiny fey, typically neutral good

Armor Class 19 (natural armor)

Hit Points 32 (5d10 + 5)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	10 (+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

Tactic: SP1RIT is a construct that obeys Solomon's commands.

Quote: "The Code is 1024."

Actions

Multiattack. SP1RIT makes two punch attacks, or makes one punch attack and uses recovery protocol if available.

Punch. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8+3) bludgeoning damage.

2/day: Recovery Protocol. SP1RIT regains 12 (3d6 + 2) hit points

SPRITE

Tiny fey, neutral good

Armor Class 15 (leather armor)

Hit Points 2 (1d4)

Speed 10 ft., fly 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
3 (-4)	18 (+4)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)	11 (+0)

Skills Perception +3, Stealth +8

Senses passive Perception 13

Languages Common, Elvish, Sylvan

Tactic: Sprites enjoy effortlessly annoying anyone who opposes them, using their small size and speed to keep from getting hit.

Quote: "Missed me! Ha ha!"

Actions

Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1 slashing damage.

Shortbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, range 40/160 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1 piercing damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or become poisoned for 1 minute. If the result of the saving throw is 5 or lower, the poisoned target falls unconscious for the same duration, or until it takes damage or another creature takes an action to shake it awake.

Heart Sight. The sprite touches a creature and magically knows the creature's current emotional state. If the target fails a DC 10 Charisma saving throw, the sprite also knows the creature's alignment. Celestials, fiends, and undead automatically fail the saving throw.

Invisibility. The sprite magically turns invisible until it attacks. Any equipment the sprite wears or carries is invisible with it.

The Treasure of Obsidian Cove

CAPTAIN SIRCE AVALON

Medium humanoid (half-siren), chaotic neutral

Armor Class 17 (splint armor)

Hit Points 55 (10d8 + 10)

Speed 30 ft., swim 30 ft., fly 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)	8 (-1)	11 (+0)	19 (+4)

Saving Throws Dex +4

Skills Acrobatics +4, Persuasion +8, Deception +8, Intimidation +8

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Common, thieves' cant

Tactic: Sirce will stay to the back of the battlefield, using *one of the crew* and *siren's call*. If the battle starts to turn from her favor, she will join her crew and surround the target with the most hit points, using her shortsword.

Quote: "Ha! You should have parlayed!"

Appearance. As captain of the *Dread Muse*, Sirce wears finery befitting a pirate captain. She has a natural charisma about her, which she leverages incredibly effectively, whether it be in making friends, inspiring infatuation, or causing fear through intimidation. She appears mostly human overall, though her siren ancestry does peek through via blue green scales that pepper her arms and cheeks, a pair of wings which sprout from her lower back, and well as a blue tinge to her hair, which she keeps in a braided undercut on her left side and loose on her right.

Amphibious. Sirce can breathe air and water.

Actions

Multiattack. Sirce makes three shortsword attacks.

Siren's Call (Recharge 3 - 6). Sirce casts *command*, requiring no material components and using Charisma as her spellcasting ability (spell save DC 16):

Shortsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d10 + 1) piercing damage.

Bonus Action

One with the Crew. Sirce chooses one ally she can see within 60 feet of her and gives them advantage on their next attack roll or skill check.

Dread Muse
Crewman



DREAD MUSE CREWMAN

Medium humanoid (any race), typically chaotic neutral

Armor Class 13 (leather armor)

Hit Points 16 (3d8 + 3)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)	8 (-1)	11 (+0)	9 (-1)

Skills Stealth +6, Survival +2

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Common, thieves' cant

Tactic: The *Dread Muse* crewmen will attempt to flank specific members of the party, as dictated by whoever seems to currently be leading them.

Quote: "O'er 'ere lads! We got them cornered!"

Appearance. The crew of the *Dread Muse* are made up of what many would consider more monstrous of the humanoid races, including bugbears, hobgoblins, minotaurs, and lizardfolk. They have no uniform—instead, each crewman provides their own clothing, creating a wide range of looks depending on their income and job upon the ship.

Brute. A melee weapon attack deals an extra 2 damage on a critical hit.

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

Actions

Shortsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit., reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 slashing damage.

GHOST OF KELLEY ROLAND

Medium undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 16

Hit Points 49 (9d8 + 9)

Speed 0 ft., fly 60 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)	8 (-1)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)

Damage Resistances acid, cold, fire, lightning, thunder

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Common, thieves' cant

Tactic: Kelley spends his first turn using his dreadful glare on the party member with the lowest wisdom. Then attacks wildly, targeting the closest character with his scylla's tooth pegleg. Then whittling them down with his cutlass. If any characters attack him from range, he uses his pistol on them as soon as he can.

Quote: "The treasure is mine, only mine, from now until eternity."

Appearance. Kelley Roland was at one point the most infamous and successful pirate on the sea, which was reflected in his appearance. His clothing was well-made and decorated, his tricorne hat embellished with plenty of plumage. He maintained a long beard which he kept tied up in bejeweled ringlets. At some point, he lost his left foot, though that did not slow him down at all—he had a tooth removed from his pet, the Scylla, and fashioned it into a pegleg.

However, Kelley's time of triumph and panache is long gone, and he's now a shell of himself, a malevolent ghost obsessively guarding his treasure. His body betrays his last moments in the mortal realm, his face and hands emaciated from his self-imposed starvation. His eyes stare into all who look upon him with crazed malice—without a hint of humanity left.

Incorporeal Movement. Kelley can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. He takes 5 (1d10) force damage if he ends his turn inside of an object.

Actions

Multiattack. Kelley makes two spectral cutlass attacks and can replace either attack with a spectral pistol.

Spectral Cutlass. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d10 + 1) necrotic damage.

Spectral Pistol. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 30/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d10) necrotic damage.

Scylla's Tooth Pegleg. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (3d4 + 1) lightning damage. The targeted creature must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or have their speed (and Kelley's) reduced to 0 until the start of the target's next turn.

Dreadful Glare. Kelley targets one creature he can see within 60 feet of him. If the target can see Kelley, it must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or become frightened until the end of Kelley's next turn. If the target fails the saving throw by 5 or more, it is also paralyzed for the same duration. A target that succeeds on the saving throw is immune to the Dread Glare for the next 24 hours.



Marion Anker

MARION ANKER

Medium humanoid (human), neutral

Armor Class 14 (leather armor)

Hit Points 13 (2d8 + 4)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	9 (-1)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)

Saving Throws Dex+5

Skills Acrobatics +5, Athletics +4, Perception +2

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages Common

Tactic: Marion will try to flank enemies with her newfound allies, the party members, or assist the party by using the Help action.

Quote: "Oi! Ya scallywags! Get o'er'ere and help me!"

Appearance. Once Marion Anker has been released from the figurehead, she is returned to her natural, human state. She is a woman in her mid-to-late twenties, wearing the uniform of a merchant ship, with a blouse, corset, a short, red spencer coat, and gloves. Her hair is stark red, kept in a messy ponytail.

Actions

Multiattack. Marion Anker makes two dagger attacks.

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

Bonus Action

One with the Crew. Marion chooses one ally she can see within 60 feet of her and gives them advantage on their next attack roll or skill check.

Pirate Wraiths



PIRATE WRAITH

Medium undead, typically neutral evil

Armor Class 14

Hit Points 15 (2d8 + 6)

Speed 0 ft., fly 60 ft. (hover)

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

Damage Immunities necrotic, poison

Damage Resistances acid, cold, fire, lightning, thunder

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages the languages it knew in life

Tactic: The pirate wraith works with its allies to surround their target.

Quote: "It's best ye start believin' in yer own death..."

Incorporeal Movement. The pirate wraith can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. It takes 5 (1d10) force damage if it ends its turn inside of an object.

Actions

Spectral Cutlass. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit., reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 necrotic damage.

Dreadful Glare. The pirate targets one creature they can see within 60 feet of them. If the target can see the pirate, it must succeed on a DC 11 Wisdom saving throw or become frightened until the end of the pirate's next turn. If the target fails the saving throw by 5 or more, it is also paralyzed for the same duration. A target that succeeds on the saving throw is immune to the Dread Glare for the next 24 hours.

SCHOONER

Gargantuan vehicle (70 ft. by 20 ft.)

Capacity 8 crew, 10 passengers

Travel Speed 5 miles per hour (120 miles per day)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	8 (-1)	14 (+2)	0	0	0

Damage Immunities poison, psychic

Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, deafened, exhaustion, frightened, incapacitated, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, stuned, unconscious

Actions

Move. The schooner can move to a spot within a 60 foot cone in front of it so long as someone is at the helm and someone is in the rigging. If the rigging is destroyed, the ship ceases to move.

Hull

Armor Class 15

Hit Points 75

Rigging

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 30

SCYLLA

Gargantuan monstrosity or undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 11 (natural armor)

Hit Points 130 (9d20 + 38)

Speed swim 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)	4 (-3)	5 (-3)	5 (-3)

Saving Throws Str +6, Con +7

Senses blindsight of 80 ft., passive Perception 7

Languages —

Tactic: The Scylla has six tentacles, and will focus three of her tentacles on destroying the ship, and three on fighting the party and crew. She will focus on the crew until she starts to feel threatened by one of the party members, and then focus them with one of its tentacles.

Quote: *angry, discordant, screeches*

Appearance. The Scylla is a great sea beast with the body of a woman, the head of a squid, and the legs of a spider crab. She is missing one of her dark eyes, and both her carapace and body are covered in old scars.

Amphibious. The Scylla can breathe air and water.

Freedom of Movement. The Scylla ignores difficult terrain, and magical effects can't reduce her speed or cause it to be restrained. She can spend 5 feet of movement to escape from nonmagical restraints or being grappled.

Siege Monster. The Scylla deals double damage to objects and structures.

Actions

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 30 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage.

Breath of Ink. As an action, the Scylla creates a cloud of inky darkness. Magical darkness spreads from a point of the Scylla's choice within 60 feet, where it forms into a 15-foot-radius sphere for the next three turns. The darkness spreads around corners. A creature with darkvision can't see through this darkness, and it cannot be illuminated by natural light.

Strike of Lightning (Monstrosity Only): (Recharge 5-6). The Scylla blasts a bolt of lightning. A line 100 feet long and 5 feet wide erupts out from her in a direction she chooses. Each creature in the line must make a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw. A creature takes 6 (1d10) lightning damage on a failure, or half as much damage on a success.

Strike of Death (Undead Only): (Recharge 5-6). The Scylla lashes out with necrotic energy, forming a 30-foot cone that blasts out from her in a direction she chooses. Each creature inside the cone must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw. A creature takes 2d4 + 3 necrotic damage on a failure. If a creature is killed by this attack, they come back next round as a Scylla skeleton (who uses the standard skeleton stat block) under the Scylla's control.

Horriying Screech. As an action, the Scylla lets out an ear-piercing roar, aimed in a 30-foot cone in the direction of her choice. Each creature within the cone must succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or become frightened for 1 round. While frightened by this spell, a creature must take the Dash action and move away from the Scylla by the safest available route on each of its turns, unless there is nowhere to move.

Legendary Actions

The Scylla can take 3 legendary actions. Only one legendary action can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. Scylla regains spent legendary actions at the start of her next turn.

Tentacle. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 30 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 2) bludgeoning damage. On a hit, the target is grappled (escape DC 13). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained. The Scylla has six tentacles, each of which can grapple one target.



The Sunderdome

APSINTHOS

Large celestial, chaotic good

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 94 (9d10 + 45)

Speed 40 ft., fly 120 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	20 (+5)	20 (+5)	18 (+4)	20 (+5)	20 (+5)

Saving Throws Con +8, Wis +8, Cha +8.

Skills Perception +11

Damage Resistances radiant

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened.

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 18

Languages all, telepathy 120 ft.

Tactic: Apsinthos will relentlessly remain in melee range, and will attack the most "evil" characters first. He uses his healing touch on himself one when he reaches half his total hit points, and once when he is below 15 hit points. If he takes 25 or more damage, he uses his reaction to teleport to a different quadrant in the Sunderdome.

Quote: "For what it's worth, I am sorry."

Angelic Weapons. Apsinthos' weapon attacks are magical. When he hits with any weapon, he deals an extra 1d6 radiant damage (included in the attack).

Divine Awareness. Apsinthos knows if he hears a lie.

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

Actions

Greatsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d6+5) slashing damage and 4 (1d6) radiant.

Healing Touch (2/Day). Apsinthos touches another creature. The target magically regains 12 (2d8 + 3) hit points and is freed from any curse, disease, poison, blindness, or deafness.

Reactions

3/Day: Teleport. Apsinthos magically teleports, along with any equipment he is wearing or carrying, to anywhere within the Sunderdome.

BARBED HUNTER

Large fiend (devil), typically neutral evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 26 (4d10 + 4)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Str +6, Cha +4

Skills Deception +5, Persuasion +5, Stealth +3

Damage Resistances poison, fire, cold

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Infernal

Tactic: The barbed hunter hides and attempts to surprise its prey.

Quote: "I'm gonna put a barb in your spine!"

Actions

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, one target. *Hit:* 7 piercing damage plus 3 fire damage.

Spiked Bone. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 piercing damage plus 2 fire damage.

CLEANSER

Medium celestial (construct), typically unaligned

Armor Class 15 (half-plate)

Hit Points 15 (2d8 + 6)

Speed 30 ft., fly 30ft

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	10 (+0)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	8 (-1)

Saving Throws Str +4, Con +5

Skills Athletics +4, Perception +2

Damage Immunities poison, radiant

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Common, Celestial

Tactic: CCleansers will attempt to charge their targets with the radiant flamethrower.

Quote: "For the Dusk Lord, you must burn!"

Actions

Radiant Flamethrower. The cleanser spews radiant fire. Every creature in a 10-foot cone originating from the cleanser must succeed on a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw or take 3 radiant damage.

EMBER ELEMENTAL

Huge elemental, typically neutral

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)

Hit Points 25 (3d12 + 6)

Speed 0 ft., fly 40 ft. (hover)

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

Damage Resistances lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Damage Immunities poison, fire.

Condition Immunities exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained, unconscious

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Auran, Ignan

Tactic: Ember elementals try to slam anything out of the air near them. They only attack grounded creatures if nothing airborne is nearby.

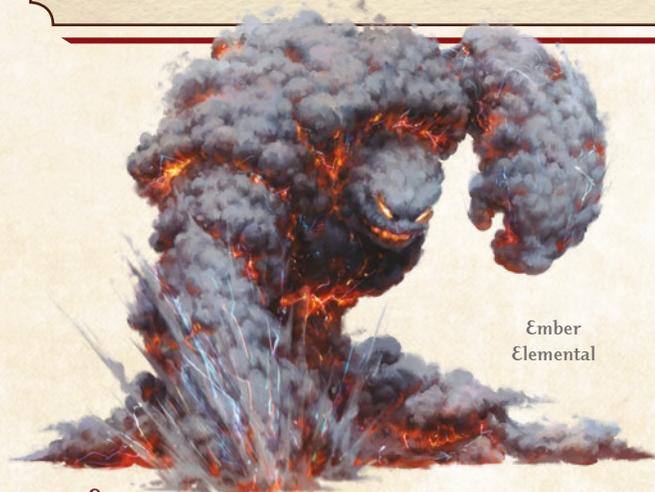
Quote: *howling winds and burning ash*

Smoke Form. The elemental can enter a hostile creature's space and stop there. It can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing. When a creature starts their turn in the ember elemental's space, that creature must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or take 5 fire damage.

Actions

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 bludgeoning damage.

Cinder Wind (Recharge 4–6). Each creature in the elemental's space must make a DC 13 Strength saving throw. On a failure, a target takes 5 bludgeoning damage and is flung up 20 feet away from the elemental in a random direction and knocked prone. If a thrown target strikes an object, such as a wall or floor, the target takes 2 bludgeoning damage for every 10 feet it was thrown. If the target is thrown at another creature, that creature must succeed on a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw or take the same damage and be knocked prone. If the saving throw is successful, the target takes half the bludgeoning damage and isn't flung away or knocked prone.



Ember Elemental

ENDLESS WRECKER

Medium humanoid (human), neutral

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 8 (1d8 + 4)

Speed 35 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	14 (+2)	18 (+4)	7 (-2)	7 (-2)	9 (-1)

Saving Throws Str +5, Con +5

Senses passive Perception 8

Languages Common

Tactic: The endless wreckers will attack whoever is closest to them that isn't already being attacked by an endless wrecker.

Quote: "My brothers, today we see victory!"

Sunderdome Equipped Weapon. The endless wreckers need no weapons, and attack only with their fists

Actions

Punch. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 bludgeoning damage.

EXECUTIONER

Large celestial, typically neutral

Armor Class 15 (leather cloak)

Hit Points 25 (3d10 + 9)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	13 (+1)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	8 (-1)

Saving Throws Str +3, Con +4

Skills Athletics +7

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Common, Celestial

Tactic: The executioner relentlessly hunts down any contenders in the Sunderdome to decapitate them.

Quote: "Die, criminal."

Actions

Axe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit., one target. *Hit:* 11 (1d12 + 5) slashing damage.

GRASS

Small humanoid (kobold), neutral

Armor Class 13 (15 with mage armor)

Hit Points 11 (2d8 + 2)

Speed 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
7 (-2)	15 (+2)	9 (-1)	9 (-1)	7 (-2)	17 (+3)

Saving Throws Cha +5

Skills Deception +5, Sleight of Hand +4, Stealth +4

Senses passive Perception 11

Languages Common, Draconic

Tactic: Grass uses his spells to attack those that Papos has hindered first, and targets others if nobody is hindered

Quote: "I'm sorry but, I have to win."

Sunderdome Equipment. Grass attacks with whatever he has. Use the table below to determine what he has. If he has a spellcasting focus, he can cast his spells.

1st hour: No weapon

2nd hour: Nothing

3rd hour: Spellcasting focus

4th hour: Spellcasting focus

Actions

Unarmed Strike. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +0 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1 bludgeoning damage.

Dagger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, one target. *Hit:* 3 slashing damage.

Eldritch Blast. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +5 to hit, range 120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 force damage.

Spellcasting. Grass casts *mage armor*, requiring an arcane focus.

HILMAR

Medium humanoid (half-elf), neutral

Armor Class 13 (leather armor)

Hit Points 5 (1d8 + 1)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	8 (-1)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws Dex +3, Wis +2

Senses darkvision 60 ft. passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Elvish

Tactic: Hilmar first attacks whoever is attacking Zorra.

Quote: "My love, we will see this battle through!"

Sunderdome Equipment. Hilmar attacks with a makeshift sling, or a shortbow if he has found one. Use the table below to determine what he has.

1st hour: No weapon

2nd hour: Sling

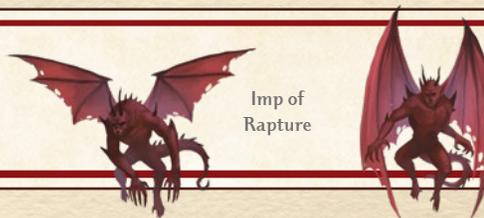
3rd hour: Shortbow

4th hour: Shortbow

Actions

Sling. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, range 30/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1 bludgeoning damage.

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



Imp of Rapture

IMP OF RAPTURE

Tiny fiend (devil, shapechanger), lawful evil

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 10 (3d4 + 3)

Speed 20 ft., fly 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6 (-2)	17 (+3)	13 (+1)	11 (0)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)

Damage Immunities fire, poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages Infernal, Common

Tactic: The imps protect Rapture at all costs. Using subterfuge and dirty tactics like going invisible or shape changing into a wasp.

Quote: "Rapture will have your souls!"

Shapechanger: The imp can use its action to polymorph into a beast form that resembles a weasel (speed 20 ft.), a wasp (20 ft., fly 60 ft.), or a centipede (20 ft., climb 20ft.), or back into its true form. Its statistics are the same in each form, except for the speed changes noted. Any equipment it is wearing or carrying isn't transformed. It reverts to its true form if it dies.

Devil's Sight. Magical darkness doesn't impede the imp's darkvision.

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

Actions

Sting (Bite in Beast Form). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 11 Constitution saving throw, taking 7 (2d6) poison damage on a failure, or half as much on a success.

Invisibility: The imp magically turns itself invisible until it attacks or until its concentration ends (as if concentrating on a spell). Any equipment the imp wears or carries is invisible with it.



ICICLE ELEMENTAL

Tiny elemental, typically neutral

Armor Class 14
Hit Points 3 (2d4 - 2)
Speed 0 ft., fly 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6 (-2)	18 (+4)	9 (-1)	4 (-3)	13 (+1)	3 (-4)

Saving Throws Dex +6
Condition Immunities exhaustion, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, unconscious
Skills Stealth +6, Perception +3
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13
Languages Aquan

Tactic: Icicle elementals swarm above their prey and swoop down to impale them. When their numbers are less than half; they flee.

Quote: *crackling of ice*

Actions

Impale. As a part of the icicle elemental's movement, it moves through another target creature's space. When it does so, the target creature must succeed on a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw or take 3 piercing damage.

JAXIMUS LECOUX

Medium humanoid (half-orc), neutral

Armor Class 15 (half-plate)
Hit Points 7 (1d8 + 2)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	8 (-1)	9 (-1)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws Dex Str +6, Con +3
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 9
Languages Common

Tactic: Jaximus LeCoux runs forward and attacks whoever is closest.

Quote: "My oath will guide me?"

Sunderdome Equipment. Listed below is the equipment Jaximus has available, depending on the hour in the Sunderdome:

1st hour: No weapon, No armor
2nd hour: No weapon, Half-Plate
3rd hour: Greatsword, Half-Plate
4th hour: Greatsword, Half-Plate

Actions

Greatsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit., reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 slashing damage

LAVA ELEMENTAL

Large elemental, typically neutral

Armor Class 10 (natural armor)
Hit Points 21 (2d10 + 10)
Speed 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	8 (-1)	20 (+5)	8 (-1)	8 (-1)	8 (-1)

Damage Immunities poison, fire.
Condition Immunities exhaustion, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, unconscious
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10
Languages Ignan

Tactic: Lava elementals are slow and prefer to consume their prey; they wait for targets to get close, but give up if they run away.

Quote: *molten earth spewing and splashing*

Molten Form. A creature that touches the elemental or hits it with a melee attack while within 5 feet of it takes 2 fire damage. In addition, the elemental can enter a hostile creature's space and stop there. The first time it enters a creature's space, that creature takes 2 fire damage and catches fire; until someone takes an action to douse the fire, the creature takes 2 fire damage at the start of each of its turns.

Illumination. The elemental sheds bright light in a 30-foot radii and dim light for an additional 30 feet.

Water Susceptibility. For every 5 feet the elemental moves in water, or for every gallon of water splashed on it, it takes 1 cold damage.

Actions

Touch. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 fire damage.

Lava Spit. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +1 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 fire damage.

LILLY

Medium humanoid, chaotic neutral

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 11 (2d8 + 2)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	9 (-1)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Dex +3, Wis +2

Skills Stealth +4

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Halfling, Gnomish

Tactic: The Lillies attack the nearest target, and attempt to stay away from any enemies if they don't have a melee weapon.

Quote: "We rise from the ground like flowers."

Sunderdome Equipment. Listed below is the equipment Grass has available, depending on the hour in the Sunderdome:

1st hour: No Weapon

2nd hour: Longbow

3rd hour: Longbow and shortsword

4th hour: Longbow and shortsword

Actions

Unarmed Strike. *Melee Weapon Attack:* -1 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1 bludgeoning damage.

Longbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 180/240 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage.

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

PAPOS

Small humanoid (gnome), neutral

Armor Class 12 (natural armor)

Hit Points 10 (3d6)

Speed 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	16 (+3)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Int +5, Wis +3

Skills Arcana +5, Insight +3, Perception +3

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages Common, Gnomish

Tactic: Papos uses his spells to hinder his enemies.

Quote: "Now we gotcha!"

Sunderdome Equipment. Listed below is the equipment Papos has available, depending on the hour in the Sunderdome:

1st hour: No weapon

2nd hour: Dagger

3rd hour: Dagger, Arcane focus

4th hour: Dagger, Arcane focus

Actions

Unarmed Strike. *Melee Weapon Attack:* -1 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1 bludgeoning damage.

Dagger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 slashing damage.

Spellcasting. Grass casts one of the following spells, requiring an arcane focus and using Charisma as his spellcasting ability (spell save DC 13):

At will: *minor illusion*, *prestidigitation*

1/day each: *color spray*, *hideous laughter*.



Lava
Elemental

RAPTURE

Large fiend (devil), lawful evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 84 (8d10 + 40)

Speed 40 ft., fly 120 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
22 (+6)	22 (+6)	20 (+5)	20 (+5)	18 (+4)	20 (+5)

Saving Throws Int +8, Wis +7, Cha +8.

Skills Intimidation +8, Perception +11

Damage Immunities fire, cold, necrotic, poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, poisoned.

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 17

Languages Common, Infernal, Abyssal

Tactic: Rapture takes pleasure in violent combat. She will attack the characters with the lowest hit points first. Being sure to stay away from any characters that deal radiant damage to her, if she is dealt radiant damage, she focuses her attention on that character. If she takes 25 or more damage, she uses her reaction to teleport to a different quadrant in the Sunderdome.

Quote: "I don't think you'll put up much of a fight, and watching you squirm is just as fun!"

Hellfire Weapons. Rapture's weapon attacks are magical. When she hits with any weapon, she deals an extra 1d8 fire damage (included in the attack).

Regeneration. Rapture regains 5 hit points at the start of her turn. If she takes radiant damage, this trait doesn't function at the start of her next turn. Provided that Rapture does not sustain radiant damage again, she regains her Regeneration trait after 1 round.

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

Actions

Hellwhip. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (3d4 + 6) slashing damage and 5 (1d8) fire damage.

Reactions

3/Day: Teleport. Rapture magically teleports, along with any equipment she is wearing or carrying, to anywhere within the Sunderdome.

SANDSTONE WORM

Huge monstrosity, typically unaligned

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 34 (3d12 + 15)

Speed 50 ft., burrow 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	7 (-2)	20 (+5)	1 (-5)	8 (-4)	10 (-3)

Saving Throws Con +7, Dex +0

Senses blindsight 30 ft., tremorsense 60 ft., passive Perception 9

Languages —

Tactic: The sandstone worm attempts to eat the largest creature it can sense, and otherwise wildly attacks

Quote: *guttural trill*

Actions

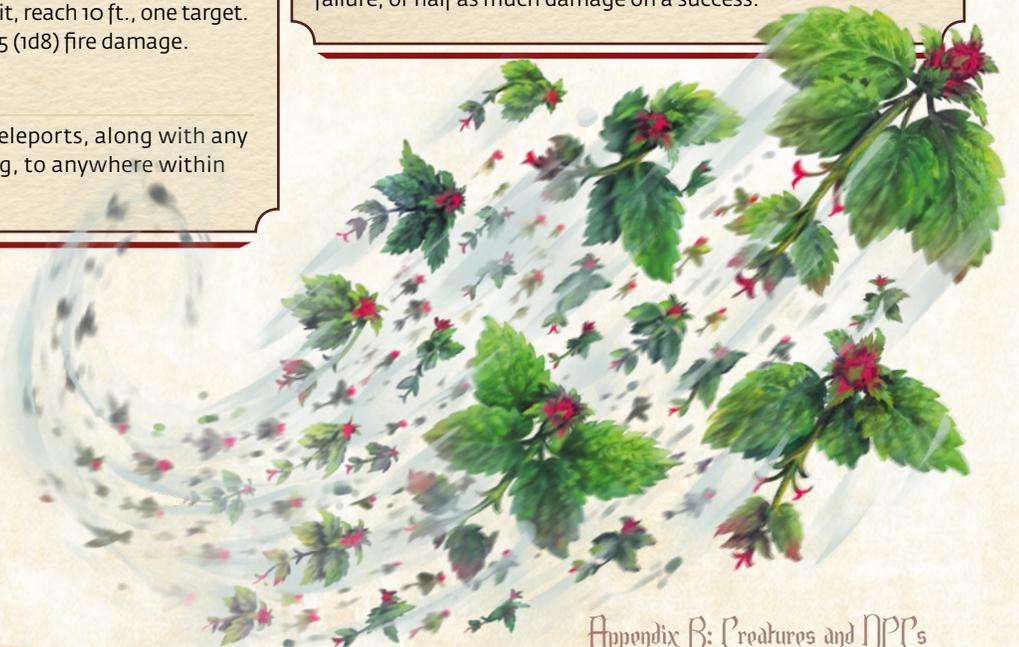
Multiattack. The worm makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its stinger.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 piercing damage. If the target is a Medium or smaller creature, it must succeed on a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw or be swallowed by the worm. A swallowed creature is blinded and restrained, it has total cover against attacks and other effects outside the worm, and it takes 2 acid damage at the start of each of the worm's turns.

If the worm takes 3 damage or more on a single turn from a creature inside it, the worm must succeed on a DC 20 Constitution saving throw at the end of that turn or regurgitate all swallowed creatures, which fall prone in a space within 10 feet of the worm. If the worm dies, a swallowed creature is no longer restrained by it and can escape from the corpse by using 20 feet of movement, exiting prone.

Tail Stinger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 3 piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw, taking 2 poison damage on a failure, or half as much damage on a success.

Swarming
Nettle



SNOW STALKER

Medium undead, typically neutral evil

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 22 (4d8 + 4)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	16 (+3)	13 (+1)	5 (-3)	9 (-1)	3 (-4)

Saving Throws Str +3, Dex +5

Skills Stealth +5, Perception +1

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages understands the languages it knew before death, but does not speak

Tactic: The snow stalker attempts to frighten a creature it can see, and then attacks them.

Quote: *crackling of ice*

Actions

Stab. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit., reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 piercing damage.

Terrifying Gaze. The snow stalker chooses a creature it can see within 30 feet of it. The target must succeed on a DC 12 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened for 1 minute. While frightened in this way, the creature's movement becomes 0, and the snow stalker has advantage on attacks against it. The targeted creature may remake the save if it takes damage, or at the end of each of its turns.

SUNDERDOME WASP

Medium beast, unaligned

Armor Class 12 (natural armor)

Hit Points 13 (3d8)

Speed 10 ft., fly 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	1 (-5)	10 (+0)	4 (-4)

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages —

Tactic: These large wasps sting any creatures that are either moving the fastest or are the loudest.

Quote: "BZZZZ"

Actions

Sting. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 4 piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw. On a failure the target is poisoned for 6 rounds and takes 1 poison damage at the start of each of the poisoned creatures turns.

SWARMING NETTLE

Medium swarm of tiny plants, unaligned

Armor Class 12 (natural armor)

Hit Points 22 (5d8)

Speed 20 ft., fly 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
3 (-4)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)	1 (-5)	7 (-2)	1 (-5)

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, slashing

Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, prone, restrained, stunned

Senses blindsight 10 ft., passive Perception 8

Languages —

Tactic: The swarming nettle will attempt to surround a living creature and feed on them.

Quote: *rapid rustling of leaves*

Swarm. The swarm can occupy another creature's space and vice versa, and the swarm can move through any opening large enough for a Tiny insect. The swarm can't regain hit points or gain temporary hit points.

Actions

Sting. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 0 ft., one target in the swarm's space. *Hit:* 5 piercing damage, or 3 piercing damage if the swarm has been reduced to half of its hit points or fewer.



Sunderdome
Wasp

SYLNIE

Small humanoid (halfling), neutral

Armor Class 12 (natural armor)

Hit Points 9 (2d6 + 2)

Speed 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	9 (-1)	13 (+1)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws Con +3, Cha +6

Skills Deception +6 Persuasion +6

Senses passive Perception 11

Languages Common, Halfling

Tactic: Sylmie uses her spells to attack those that Papos has hindered first, and targets others if nobody is hindered.

Quote: "Nice one, Papos!"

Sunderdome Equipment. Listed below is the equipment Grass has available, depending on the hour in the Sunderdome:

1st hour: *No weapon*

2nd hour: *Arcane focus*

3rd hour: *Arcane focus*

4th hour: *Dagger and arcane focus*

Actions

Unarmed Strike. *Melee Weapon Attack:* -1 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1 bludgeoning damage.

Dagger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 slashing damage.

Spellcasting. Sylmie casts one of the following spells, requiring an arcane focus and using Charisma as his spellcasting ability (spell save DC 14):

At will: *mending*

1/day each: *burning hands, thunderwave*

WANDERING GOLEM

Large construct, unaligned

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 84 (8d10 + 40)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	9 (-1)	20 (+5)	5 (-3)	14 (+2)	1 (-5)

Damage Immunities poison, psychic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Common

Tactic: The wandering golem only ever tries to destroy air skiffs, taking no interest in any other creatures.

Quote: "AIR-SKIFFS WILL BE TERMINATED."

Immutable Form. The golem is immune to any spell or effect that would alter its form.

Actions

Multiattack. The golem makes two slam attacks.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 bludgeoning damage.

WHITE DRAGON HATCHLING

Medium dragon, typically chaotic evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 26 (4d8 + 8)

Speed 30 ft., burrow 15 ft., fly 45 ft., swim 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	7 (-2)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)

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

Skills Perception +3, Stealth +2

Damage Immunities cold

Senses blindsight 10 ft., darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Draconic

Tactic: White dragon hatchlings attempt to burrow toward their prey, in an attempt to surprise them.

Quote: "Rawr."

Actions

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 piercing damage and 1 cold damage.

Cold Breath (Recharge 6). The dragon exhales an icy blast of hail in a 15-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw, taking 5 cold damage on a failure, or half as much damage on a success.

V&L

Medium humanoid (tiefling), neutral

Armor Class 12 (natural armor)

Hit Points 5 (1d6 + 1)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)	8 (-1)	9 (-1)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws Dex +3, Cha +5

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 9

Languages Common

Tactic: Nevari will make a ranged attack, attempting to keep her distance as much as possible.

Quote: "I've never known defeat!"

Sunderdome Equipment. Listed below is the equipment Vel has available, depending on the hour in the Sunderdome:

1st hour: No weapon

2nd hour: Greatsword

3rd hour: Greatsword

4th hour: Greatsword

Actions

Greatsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit., reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 slashing damage.

YOR

Medium humanoid (dwarf), neutral

Armor Class 14 (studded leather)

Hit Points 5 (1d8 + 1)

Speed 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)	8 (-1)	8 (-1)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Str +4, Dex +3

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 9

Languages Common, Dwarvish

Tactic: Thilgal will charge towards the closest enemy and attack them with whatever he has on him.

Quote: "This is almost as bad as that time I lost ten thousand gold!"

Fey Ancestry. Yor has advantage on saving throws against being charmed, and magic can't put him to sleep.

Sunderdome Equipment. Listed below is the equipment Yor has available, depending on the hour in the Sunderdome:

1st hour: no weapon

2nd hour: spellcasting focus

3rd hour: spellcasting focus

4th hour: spellcasting focus

Actions

Unarmed Strike. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit., reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1 bludgeoning damage.

Blast of Flame. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 Fire damage

Healing Touch. Yor touches a creature and blasts them with healing energy. The target creature regains 2 hit points.

ZORRA

Medium humanoid (dragonborn), neutral

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 7 (1d8 + 3)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	9 (-1)	10 (+0)	17 (+3)

Saving Throws Dex +2, Cha +4

Damage Resistances cold

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Draconic

Tactic: Zorra attacks whoever is attacking Hilmar.

Quote: "Indeed, our love will guide us to victory!!"

Sunderdome Equipment. Zorra attacks with her spellcasting focus. Use the table below to determine what he has.

1st hour: no weapon

2nd hour: spellcasting focus

3rd hour: spellcasting focus

4th hour: spellcasting focus

Actions

Unarmed Strike. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +1 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1 bludgeoning damage.

Mote of Cold. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +4 to hit, range 60/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 2 cold damage.

CIR3 RECON SCOUT

Medium humanoid, typically neutral

Armor Class 16 (splint armor)

Hit Points 11 (2d8 + 2)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Skills Perception +2

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Common

Tactic: The CIR3 recon scout will try to keep their distance from enemies, firing from cover with their bolt thrower.

Quote: "Get to cover!"

Appearance. A CIR3 recon scout wears a set of grey military fatigues, reinforced with layered, padded, and steel pauldrons and greaves, while a SPAWN device has been surgically attached to their chest. Often, they wear a handkerchief around their neck if they are not wearing a helmet. Each scout carries with them a shortsword and a bolt thrower, which is a ranged weapon that does not use tension to fire its projectiles, but rather uses magic to force a crossbow bolt down a rail at extreme speeds.

Actions

Shortsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit., reach 5ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 piercing and 2 force damage.

Bolt Thrower. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit., range of 160/640., one target. *Hit:* 5 piercing damage and 2 force damage.

The Doomed Heroes

Corrupted Colossus



CORRUPTED AUTOMATON

Medium construct, typically chaotic neutral

Armor Class 17 (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 psychic, lightning

Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, deafened, exhaustion, frightened

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

Languages Common

Tactic: The corrupted automaton will try to rush in and overwhelm their target before they get a chance to even react. Repairing as often as possible.

Quote: "Target acquired."

Actions

Multiattack. The corrupted automaton makes two sword arm attacks.

Repair (Recharge 5 - 6). The corrupted automaton regains 10 hit points.

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

CORRUPTED COLOSSUS

Large construct, chaotic neutral

Armor Class 20 (natural armor)

Hit Points 105 (10d10 + 50)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
24 (+7)	9 (-1)	20 (+5)	3 (-4)	11 (+0)	1 (-5)

Damage Immunities psychic

Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, deafened, exhaustion, frightened

Senses blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 10

Languages —

Tactic: The corrupted colossus will focus on trying to eliminate anything that is within its reach. Once the power is cut to the gem, it will try to pull itself up onto the machinery to kill the party before they can escape.

Quote: “*metallic groaning* Beep, beep, beep.”

Immutable Form. The corrupted colossus is immune to any spell or effect that would alter its form.

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

Actions

Multiattack. The corrupted colossus makes two melee attacks.

Repair. The corrupted colossus regains 20 hit points.

Bionic Arm. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +13 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 23 (3d10 + 7) slashing damage.

HENRY BLACKCROFT

Medium humanoid (half construct), neutral evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 99 (18d8 + 18)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	20 (+5)	15 (+2)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Int +9, Wis +6

Skills Arcana +13, History +13

Damage Immunities lightning

Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, deafened, exhaustion, frightened

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages Common, Elvish, Dwarvish, Gnomish, Draconic

Tactic: Henry protects the “Anomaly”. Henry spends his first turn casting jump for maneuverability, then from a vantage point casts faerie fire with his legendary action. If he was dealt damage, he stays out of sight while using Repair, then he casts animate objects with his legendary action to attack the characters. He uses heat metal or sword arm attacks on any characters who get close to him, and if he needs to retreat, he uses shocking grasp so as to not take opportunity attacks. When Henry has less than half his hit points, he uses his legendary action to cast haste. Then he moves into melee to attack the characters with multiple sword attacks

Quote: “They all betrayed me! This is only the beginning of their punishment!”

Appearance. Once a nobleman and extremely wealthy entrepreneur, able to afford the grandest and most expensive clothing, Henry’s finery has been torn and ripped where his body has been twisted, merging with the technology he created. It’s nearly impossible to tell if Henry Blackcroft is even truly alive anymore, or if he is now a mechanical puppet himself.

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

Actions

Multiattack. Henry Blackcroft makes three sword arm attacks, he can replace one of these attacks with a Shocking Grasp.

Repair (Recharge 5 - 6). Henry regains 25 hit points.

Shocking Grasp. *Melee Spell Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 18 (4d8) lightning damage and the target cannot take reactions until the start of their next turn.

Spellcasting. Henry casts one of the following spells, requiring no material components and using Intelligence as his spellcasting ability (spell save DC 17):

At will: mending

4/day: *detect magic, faerie fire, jump.*

1/day each: *heat metal, dispel magic, haste, animate objects.*

Sword Arm. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (2d6 + 2) piercing damage.

Legendary Actions

Henry Blackcroft can take 1 legendary action. Only one legendary action can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature’s turn. Henry regains spent legendary actions at the start of his next turn.

Augment Arcana. Henry casts a spell.

MUTATED CITIZEN

Medium abomination, typically chaotic evil

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 22 (5d8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)	7 (-2)	10 (+0)	6 (-2)

Damage Immunities acid

Senses tremorsense 30 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages —

Tactic: The mutated citizens mindlessly throw themselves at their enemies without thought of consequences.

Quote: *garbled yells*

Regeneration. The mutated citizen regains 10 hit points at the start of its turn if it has at least 1 hit point. If the mutated citizen takes radiant damage, this trait doesn't function at the start of its next turn. Provided it does not sustain radiant damage again, the mutated citizen regains its Regeneration trait after 1 round.

Actions

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (2d6 + 2) piercing damage. The target must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw, taking 9 (1d12 + 3) acid damage on a failure, or half as much on a success.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (2d6 + 2) slashing damage.



MUTATED COLOSSUS

Large abomination, chaotic evil

Armor Class 20 (natural armor)

Hit Points 110 (20d10)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
24 (+7)	9 (-1)	20 (+5)	3 (-4)	11 (+0)	1 (-5)

Damage Immunities acid

Senses tremorsense 30 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages —

Tactic: The mutated colossus will lash out at any creature that comes close enough to be within its reach, attempting to drag the creature down into the pit where the colossus is trapped. Once the power is cut to the gem, it will try to pull itself up onto the machinery to kill the party before they can escape.

Quote: "garbled groans."

Immutable Form. The corrupted colossus is immune to any spell or effect that would alter its form.

Regeneration. The mutated colossus regains 10 hit points at the start of its turn if it has at least 1 hit point. If the mutated colossus takes radiant damage, this trait doesn't function at the start of its next turn. Provided it does not sustain radiant damage again, the mutated colossus regains its Regeneration trait after 1 round.

Actions

Multiattack. The mutated colossus makes two melee attacks.

Tentacle. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, 20 ft. reach, one target. *Hit:* 16 (3d10) bludgeoning damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC of 15). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained. The corrupted colossus has two of these tentacles, each of which can grapple one target.

Crush. The mutated colossus attempts to crush a creature grappled by its tentacle. The targeted creature must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw, taking 10 bludgeoning damage on a failure.

THE OTHKOTHA

Huge fiend (demon), chaotic evil

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 115 (10d12 + 50)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
24 (+7)	9 (-1)	20 (+5)	3 (-4)	11 (+0)	1 (-5)

Damage Immunities acid

Senses tremorsense 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Abyssal

Tactic: The Othkotha spends its first turns using its tentacles to grapple the nearest characters, crushing them on its next turn. Any characters it kills, it uses its Animatium aura on as to slow their respawn. Then it focuses on attacking the characters that deal the most damage to it each turn.

Quote: **various screeches, wails, moos, and crunching**

Appearance. The Othkotha is a twisted abomination, where bodies, heads, and appendages of many animals, including cows, birds, and humanoids have been fused together to form a hulking beast with massive, whip-like arms.

Immutable Form. The Othkotha is immune to any spell or effect that would alter its form.

Regeneration. The Othkotha regains 5 hit points at the start of its turn if it has at least 1 hit point. If the Othkotha takes radiant damage, this trait doesn't function at the start of its next turn. Provided it does not sustain radiant damage again, the Othkotha regains its Regeneration trait after 1 round.

Actions

Multiattack. The Othkotha makes two tentacle attacks. If it successfully grabs a creature, it can use its crush instead of another melee attack.

Tentacle. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 20 ft., one target. *Hit:* 16 (2d10+5) bludgeoning damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC of 18). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained. The Othkotha has two of these tentacles, each of which can grapple one target.

Crush. The Othkotha attempts to crush a target grappled by its tentacle. The target must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw, taking 10 bludgeoning damage on a failure.

Animatium Aura. The othkotha sends out a wave of Animatium energy, preventing any characters who have died from respawning until the start of its next turn.

Legendary Actions

The Othkotha can take 3 legendary actions. Only one legendary action can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The othkotha regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Attack. The Othkotha makes one attack with one of its tentacles.



Othkotha

Appendix C

Player Bases

Introduction

Everybody needs somewhere to settle down, especially adventurers! Here you'll find a collection of player bases, homes, and sanctuaries to provide the characters a moment of respite from the harrowing world. These bases can easily be awarded to the party by the NPCs in each adventure, allowing you to give your players something special for completing their quests. Each of these bases can also be upgraded to allow special bonuses and abilities.

Management

So who exactly could present these bases to the characters? Well Ser Nominus, of course! He's collected all of these places from his years of adventuring and certainly doesn't need them anymore. He grants the characters the deed to whichever base they've earned and facilitates any upgrades they should need. You can read below to see how each adventure ties into the player base.

Hunt for Haldraxis. Phillip knows Ser Nominus from his past; the two are good friends. He rewards the characters with the deed to the Keep Inn, which is based in Byriver.

Whispers of Wispy Peak. The guard, Lenny Wallace, gives the characters the deed to the Keep Inn, which is just outside of Wispy Peak. When the characters first arrive, they find Ser Nominus there, ready to help!

A Night in Midhallow. Ser Nominus approaches the party himself, wearing a raven mask. In thanks for helping Midhallow, he offers them the deed to the Keep Inn, which is based in town.

The Heist. Amongst the villain's score, the characters find the deed to Flintfall Mine, which is located just outside of Tuckerbank. Once the characters find it, Ser Nominus is waiting for them, ready to help!

Bulwarks of Bullthorne. After the characters save the town of Bullthorne, Ser Nominus himself rewards them with the deed to Flintfall Mine. This mine is an hour's walk from Bullthorne.

Wild Wild Wilderness. After reaching the far lands beyond the Forlorn Pass, the characters stumble upon the abandoned Flintfall Mine. Ser Nominus is waiting for them, ready to help them upgrade the place.

Escape from Old Redwick. After escaping Redwick, the characters find a strange piece of chalk in their possession with a note tied around it. The note has a symbol and the instructions to "draw on any door." Upon following this instruction, the characters can enter the Wandering Mansion—and find Ser Nominus inside, ready to give them the tour!

The Lost Spirits. The characters are visited by the Ferryman one last time, who gives them a strange piece of chalk and a symbol. They instruct the characters to draw the symbol on any door. Upon following this direction, the characters can enter the Wandering Mansion—and find Ser Nominus inside, ready to give them the tour!

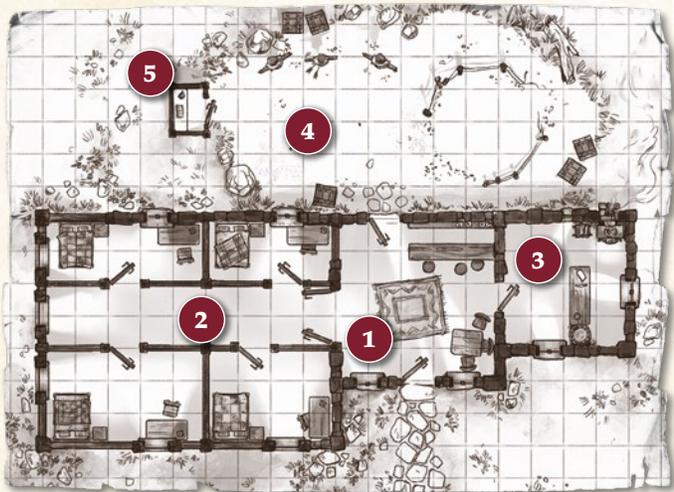
Rosewood's Invitation. After defeating Rosewood, the characters are visited by Merret, who gives them a strange piece of chalk and a symbol. He instructs the characters to draw the symbol on any door. Upon following this direction, the characters can enter the Wandering Mansion—and find Ser Nominus inside, ready to give them the tour!

Shipwrecked! After the characters return to Windwillow, they are rewarded by either Solomon or the villain with the *Windrunner*. The only sailor aboard is Ser Nominus, ready to help with her upgrades.

The Treasure of Obsidian Cove. Amongst the treasure of Obsidian Cove, the characters find the deed to the *Windrunner*, which is a ship sitting in port at Larson's Landing. When the characters claim it, they find Ser Nominus on board, ready to help with her upgrades.

Sunderdome Showdown. After escaping the Sunderdome, the characters are approached by Ser Nominus, who rewards them for their victory with Titan's Hollow.

The Doomed Heroes. If the characters return to CIR-3, they are rewarded with Titan's Hollow, where they find Ser Nominus waiting for them, ready to help with upgrades.



The Keep Inn

This worn-down keep has all of the basic amenities necessary to turn it into a working inn. A small courtyard in the back of the keep holds a training area with splintered training dummies. A small shed beside it contains racks that could hold various weapons. The living quarters are large, and there is a kitchen with a stove located near the bedrooms. Each of the four spacious bedrooms comes equipped with one bed, large enough for two people, and modest furnishings.

The Keep Inn: Grand Opening!

After receiving the deed to the Keep Inn, the characters can decide to open it up as a tavern. They will need to hire at least two skilled workers: a front desk man and a cook. Each skilled worker is paid 2 gp per day.

Each day, roll a d100 and use the tables below to determine how much money this small inn makes. The party has a modifier based on what upgrades they've given the inn, or if they've given none at all. The listed income assumes the inn already makes enough to sustain workers hired to run it.

UPGRADES	BONUS TO DAILY INCOME ROLL	ROLL RESULTS	GP ROLL
None	-10 (Min of 0)	0-20	1d4 gp
1 Upgrade	+0	21-40	3d4 gp
2 Upgrades	+10	41-60	3d6 gp
3 Upgrades	+15	61-80	6d6 gp
4 Upgrades	+20	81-100	6d8 gp
		100+	8d8 GP

Keep Inn Upgrades

Here is a list of available upgrades that can be purchased by Ser Nominus to upgrade the Keep Inn:

- New kitchen equipment: 100 gp
- Decorate the outside: 110 gp
- Renovate the front room: 120 gp
- Renovate the bedrooms: 150 gp

1: THE ENTRANCE/LIVING QUARTERS

The entrance to this keep contains a tattered rug, a bar to the north side (with ample space for drinks), and a table and chairs to the southeast. This room can be used for general rest and relaxation—or, alternatively, as the lobby of an Inn, should the players decide to open the keep to guests.

2: BEDROOMS

Each bedroom contains a large bed with a thin mattress, fit for two individuals; a small bedside table; and a desk with a single chair, and a small lantern beside it. These rooms double as both good sleeping areas for the party, and rooms to be rented out, should the players decide to open the keep to guests.

3: KITCHEN

This kitchen contains all the necessities for making food. A small stove and a water basin flank the counters. Inside the drawers, there are pots, pans, and silverware. A nice pile of wood, ready for burning, lies next to the stove.

4: BACKYARD TRAINING AREA

The backyard of the keep has been fitted to be a suitable training area for adventurers. In the middle of the large, grass-laden space are some wooden training dummies, splintered but still standing, ready to be battered. Large rocks and boxes sit on the ground nearby, and a small dirt arena is prepared for sparring.

5: THE STRANGE SHED

This wooden shed, located right next to the keep, looks to be nothing more than a small room. However, the front door opens to an interdimensional space, which appears as a small bar. At the counter is a large, ghostly hand that extends a menu to anyone who steps inside. Any alcohol or food requested in this shed is free, and any effects of inebriation dissipate upon exiting the interdimensional space.

Flintfall Mine

Flintfall Mine is an ore excavation site that has been abandoned for years. Just outside the mine is a watchtower that was once used as a lookout for incoming supplies and potential bandits. Inside are furnished barracks, an office space, and a mining area filled with tools. Flintfall Mine has five rooms that can be turned into a profitable base for any adventuring party.

1: LOOKOUT TOWERS

Just outside the entrance of the mines stand two guard towers. At the base of each tower is a small room that can fit a few crates of supplies. Inside each room is a ladder that leads to the top of the building. While standing in the lookout tower, a character can see the surrounding area for up to a 4-mile radius.

2: MAIN LOBBY

At the entrance, there is a set of minecart tracks that leads deeper into the mine, descending into a dug-out room with a 20-foot-tall ceiling. This room is lined with racks and tables. Each rack holds simple mining equipment such as pickaxes, hammers, shovels, and chisels. Each table has gloves, hardhats, lanterns, and rope. The north wall has empty crates that once held ore.

3: BARRACKS

Ten dusty beds line the walls of this crowded but functional room. At the foot of every bed is a small footlocker filled with tattered clothes and worn-out shoes. There is a large table in the middle of the room.

4: OFFICE

This small office is where miners documented ore collections and transactions when the mine was still functioning. A desk and a chair occupy the north corner of the room. Atop the desk sit a large scale and a log of payments.

5: MINING AREA

The minecart track continues into this 30-foot-tall area. The walls bear the marks of past mining endeavors. Several passages lead off from this room into dead ends. Any character can spend 4 hours mining into the walls. At the end of this time, they roll a d4—on a 3 or 4, the character finds ore worth 2d10 gp.

Flintfall Mine Upgrades

Here is a list of available upgrades that can be purchased from Ser Nominus to upgrade the Flintfall Mine.

Spyglass in Watchtower - 200 gp. A spyglass can be added to the lookout tower in Area 1. This upgrade will give a character advantage on any Perception checks made while using the spyglass. Additionally, it extends the distance a creature can see from the tower to an 8-mile radius. Once per day, any creature can gaze at the stars. Roll a d4 and consult the table below to determine the stargazer's benefit.

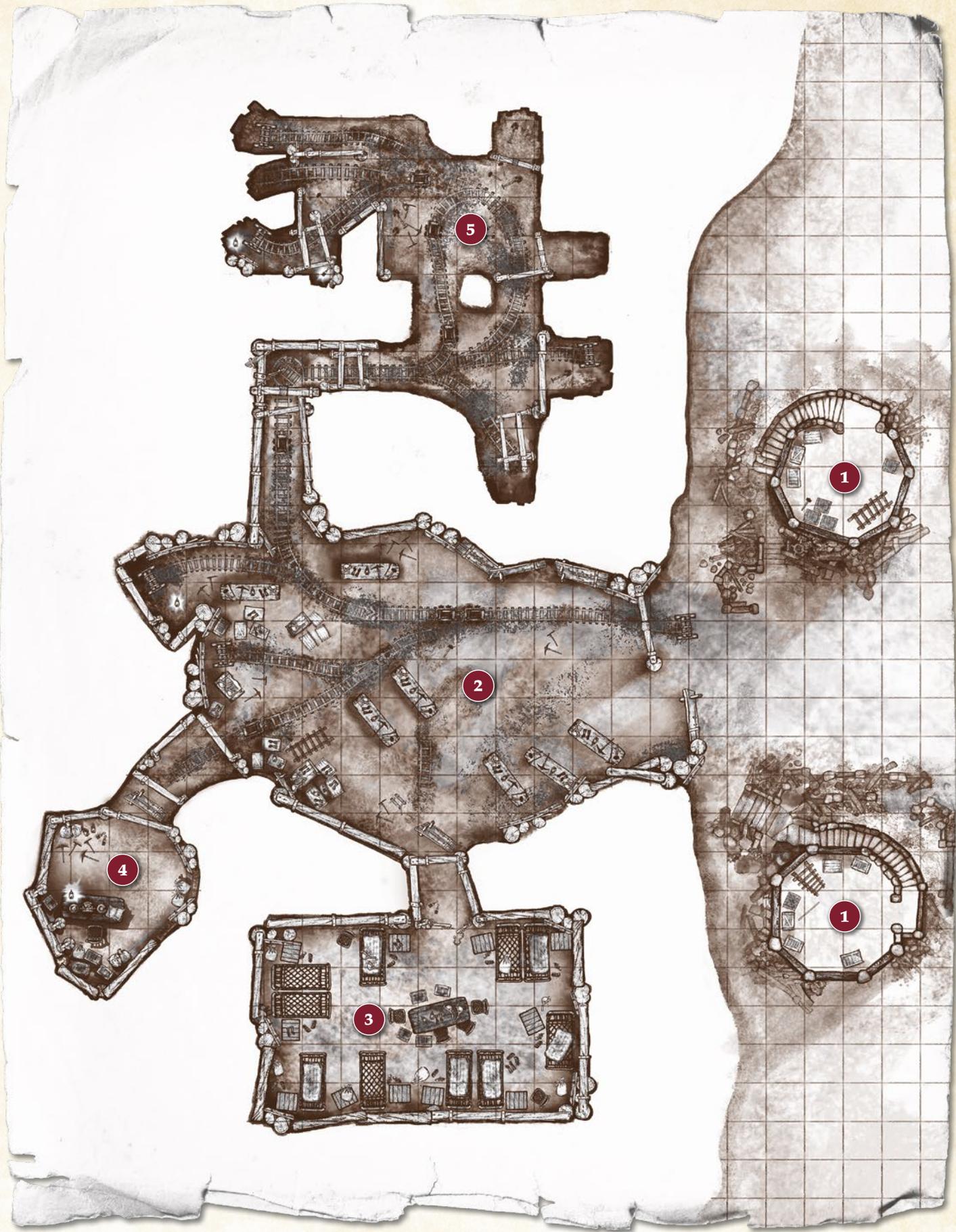
1	You gain an inspiration point.
2	You gain 1d4 temporary hit points.
3	Roll a d20 and record the roll. For the next 12 hours, you can replace any d20 roll with this roll.
4	You have advantage on the next Initiative check you make.

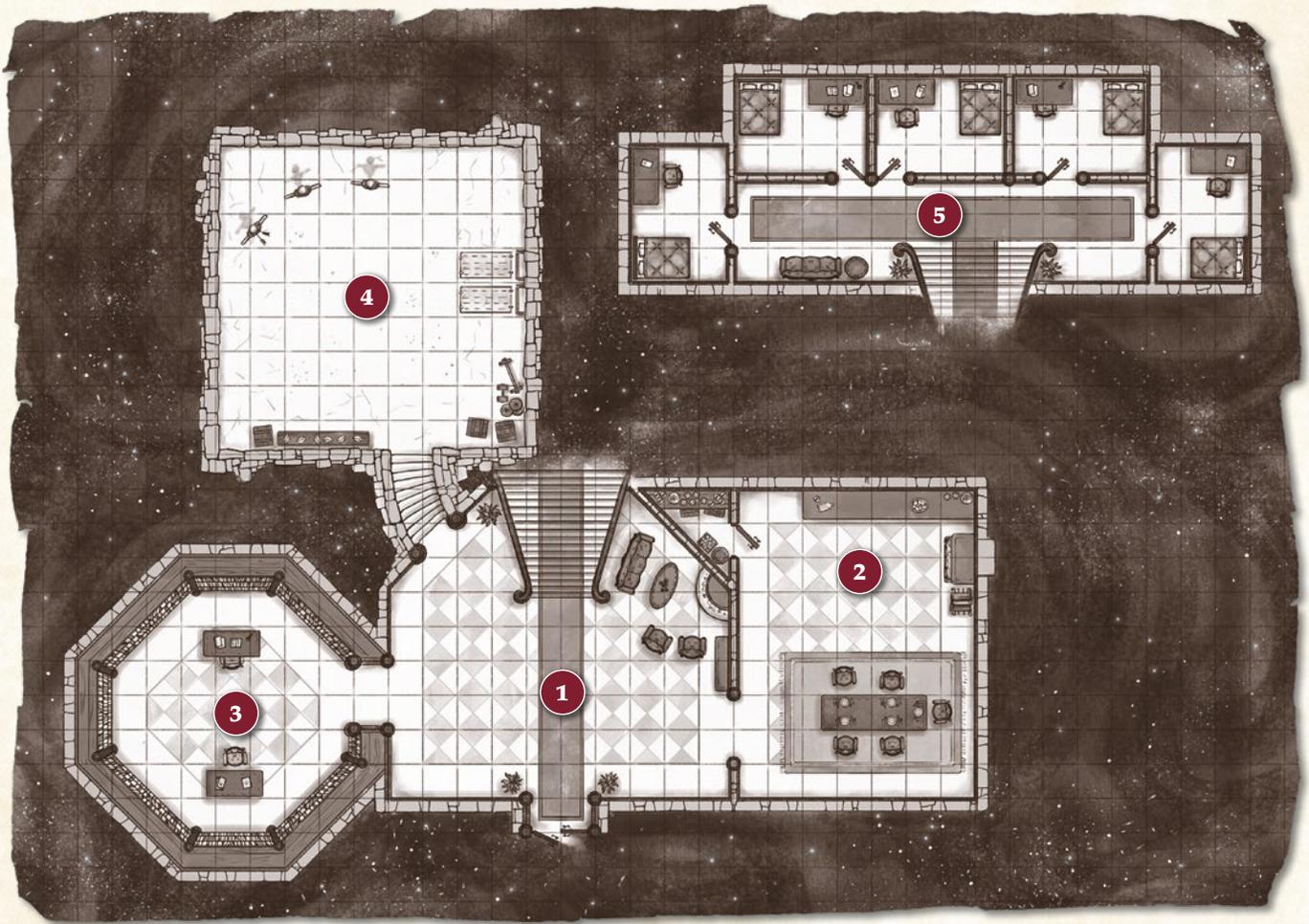
Hiring Crew - 55 gp per month. If the players wish to use the mine for its original purpose, they can hire one skilled worker and five unskilled workers to excavate the mine, sell ore, and manage payments. Alternatively, they can choose to only hire one skilled worker and spend the next four workweeks in the mines. This lowers the cost by 5 gp for every unskilled worker they replace. At the end of each month, roll a d6 and use the table below to determine the mine's revenue.

1 - 2	60 gp
3 - 4	60 gp + 3d10 gp
5	100 gp + 3d10 gp
6	150 gp + 3d10 gp

Minecart Repair - 500 gp. The players can pay to fix the minecarts, or anyone who has proficiency with blacksmithing tools can repair the mines in 10 days for half the listed price. When the minecarts are repaired, the crew gains a +1 on the Mine Revenue table at the end of each month, and the characters can use them as funtime roller coasters.







The Wandering Mansion

A special symbol, drawn onto any door with equally special chalk, brings the characters through a portal and into the Wandering Mansion. This large rustic home was the base for an old party of adventurers. After it was nearly burned down by their enemies, it was abandoned. The Wandering Mansion has a foyer, a kitchen, a library, a training room, and six bedrooms—all of which are managed by semi-sentient furniture, cookware, and utensils.

The Chalk

Unlike the other player bases, the Wandering Mansion exists inside an extradimensional space in between the planes. An endless stick of magical chalk either finds its way into the characters' hands, or is gifted to them by an ally. Anyone can draw the symbol on any functioning door as an action. Once this is done, that door opens into the Wandering Mansion. Anyone who passes through this door ends up in the mansion. The

mansion's door remains open for 10 hours, after which it shoves everyone out, pushing them within 5 feet of the front door with a faint popping sound. Any items the characters brought into the mansion remain inside, save anything they had on their person. The Wandering Mansion cannot be summoned via the chalk again for at least 24 hours. However, characters who have the ability to teleport into other planes of existence can use that ability to enter the mansion regardless of when the door was last opened.

1: FOYER

The entrance to this manor is tiled with obsidian stone, while the supports are a dark wood. The walls, also wood, are eye-catchingly patterned with rhombus shapes. Sofas, soft chairs, and mats surround a small magical fireplace, and a large crimson rug covers the staircase, which leads to the bedrooms.

May I Take Your Hat, Sir? - 250 gp. This upgrade enchants a coat rack to become a butler who will take the characters' things and organize them in their respective rooms. What exactly is taken and organized is up to the characters. This allows the characters to feel more relaxed and spend less time sorting their inventory whenever they enter the house—which takes one hour off of the time required for them to gain the benefits of a long rest.

2: KITCHEN

The kitchen and dining room are dimly lit by floating candle lights that provide a cozy ambience to these spaces. The knives, plates, and silverware can cook food for the characters on their own.

What's on the Menu? - 800 gp. This upgrade allows the dinnerware to cook the characters special food, for which the ingredients are magically summoned. When acquiring this upgrade, Ser Nominus will inform the characters that they only need to name four different foods and the dinnerware will make them. What he unfortunately fails to disclose is that when these four foods are named, they are the only foods the dinnerware will ever make. On top of this, the dinnerware will only listen to the first four foods listed. The previous owners of the Wandering Mansion discussed what foods they would like prepared, but in their discussion named, "bread, bread, eggs, and bread."

3: LIBRARY

This 40-foot-tall room has a fresco painted on its domed ceiling. The faded painting depicts various horned and winged creatures in flight. Unfortunately, the entirety of this room has been burned. The fire that nearly consumed the mansion was luckily put out here, but most of the library's stored knowledge was destroyed. The shelves are now blackened husks, and the tiled floors are scattered with ash.

What Wasn't There Before - 500 gp per upgrade. The characters can commission Ser Nominus to bring a collection of books into their library to restock its shelves. Each time the characters purchase this upgrade, have them choose between Strength, Dexterity, Constitution, Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma. The chosen ability will be the topic of the books Ser Nominus finds and stocks in the library. Any character can spend 1 hour in the library reading books on one available topic. When they do, they gain advantage on related ability and skill checks for 12 hours.

4: TRAINING ROOM

This large room is in the basement—behind the staircase is another staircase that leads to this room. The training room comes furnished with targets, dummies, weights, hanging bars, and moving floors for running, along with six magical crystals. Any character can take one of these crystals and name a weapon. The crystal then transforms into the named weapon. These crystals cannot physically leave the mansion. If a character tries to leave with one, it vanishes and reappears in the training room. Any character can use this room to train and hone their skills.

A Real Challenge - 800 gp. This upgrade grants all of the training equipment a limited sentience, allowing characters to train with moving targets and real fighters. Each time a character uses the training

room, have them record how long they spent in it. If a character spends a collective total of 30 hours in the training room, they gain a +1 in two different abilities of their choice. After gaining this benefit, the character can gain it again only if they spend a collective 90 hours in the training room—after which, they can no longer gain benefits from the training room.

5: BEDROOMS

These magical bedrooms are furnished exactly to the characters' likings. They can be sparse, clutter-filled, organized, or messy. The entire aesthetic is their choice!

Just Like Home - 1,000 gp. This upgrade allows special windows to be built into the walls of the bedrooms. These windows cannot be opened and are completely dark by default. However, any character can fog the window with their breath, and write either a specific place or a type of place with their finger. Once this is done, the windows display a view of the chosen place as if the character was really there. These places are not true renditions of the named locales, only illusory ones. For example: a character wants their windows to display their home village, but this village was burned to the ground—the village would appear as it did before it burned, and in its heyday. While the characters have this upgrade, they gain temporary hit points equal to their level each morning, thanks to the comfort brought to them via the landscapes. These temporary hit points last until they are spent or until the character gains temporary hit points from another source.



The Windrunner

The *Windrunner* is an old, two-masted brigantine vessel which has been laid-up in dock for some time. The ship was commissioned by the nobleman John Faraday as a pleasure yacht before his untimely assassination. The ship has four decks, each with its own uses.

The *Windrunner* has a speed of 5 miles per hour, or 120 miles per day (45 feet per round). The ship's hull has an AC of 15 and 500 hit points, while its rigging and masts have an AC of 13 and 150 hit points. Once the ship's hull is reduced to 0 hit points, the vessel begins to sink. If the ship's rigging and masts are reduced to 0 hit points, the ship's speed becomes 0.

1: TOP DECK

This deck is the topmost exterior deck of the ship, where much of the activity of sailing the vessel takes place. Cargo and passengers enter the ship from here via wooden gangplanks that can be placed to connect the ship to a stationary dock. The helm for the ship, as well as access to all of the rigging and sails, is located on this deck as well.

2: VOYAGER'S DECK

This deck is directly under the top deck. It acts as the living and working space for the owner of the ship and any guests aboard. There are six private guest cabins flanking the forward part of the ship, each equipped with a bed for one person, a nightstand, and a personal travel chest. There is also a captain's quarters, which is larger than the other guest rooms, and includes a large four-poster bed, a pair of nightstands, a wardrobe, a reading area with built-in bookshelves, and large stained glass windows with images of the *Windrunner* sailing at full speed. The windows look out over the back of the ship, providing a panoramic view of the ship's wake. At the center of the deck is a living area, with a couple of couches bolted to the floor, along with a large, multi-use table. This table can be a place for making navigational plans, serving dinners, and anything else the characters may think of.

3: CREW DECK

This deck sits directly below the voyager's deck. It's dedicated to the ship's crew and to the various workers needed to keep the ship running. Along one side of the hull are five bunk rooms, each equipped with a set of bunk beds, as well as a set of personal storage chests for each crewman. Along the other side of the hull are areas for specific utilities the ship needs. Towards the bow of the ship is the infirmary, where the doctor onboard can operate on crewmen and guests should they be injured. At the aft of the ship is the

quartermaster's workshop, where the quartermaster keeps all of their records of purchases and supplies, as well as tools and workspaces for any repairs the ship may need. At the center of the hull is the galley, where the cook prepares meals for both the crew and guests, so long as they are provided with proper provisions.

4: CARGO HOLD

The cargo hold is the lowest deck of the ship, consisting of one large room which is used to store equipment and supplies for the voyage. Barrels of food, clean water, alcohol, spare planks, ropes, and other miscellaneous items and equipment are kept down here.

Upgrades

Here is a list of available upgrades that can be purchased from Ser Nominus to upgrade the *Windrunner*.

Ballista - 200 gp. A ballista can be mounted on the top deck of the ship, allowing the ship to be used not just for sailing, but for naval combat. The ballista is a ranged weapon with a distance of 60/240 feet, has an attack bonus of +5, deals 4d6 piercing damage on a hit, and uses ballista bolts as ammunition. One ballista bolt can be bought for 3 gp each. In order to install the ballista, the ship must be in port for 1 day. This upgrade can be taken twice.

Swivel Gun - 800 gp. A swivel gun is an upgraded version of the ballista, using gunpowder and a metal ball as ammunition. The swivel gun is a ranged weapon with a distance of 120/480 feet, has an attack bonus of +8, deals 4d12 piercing damage on a hit, and uses swivel gun ammo as ammunition. Rounds of swivel gun ammo can be bought for 10 gp each. In order to install the swivel gun, the ship must be in port for one day. This upgrade can be taken twice.

Upgraded Rigging and Sails - 500 gp. The ship's sails and rigging can be upgraded to enhance the speed of the ship. The ship's speed increases by an additional mile per hour. In order to install the upgraded rigging, the ship must be in port for 3 days.

Steam Engine and Paddle Wheel - 1,000 gp. A large steam engine can be installed in the storage hold of the ship, connected to a paddle wheel mounted on the side of the exterior hull. This upgrade increases the speed of the ship by 5 miles per hour when the engine is operating, but takes fuel to do so. One full day of travel takes 1 barrel of engine fuel, and each barrel costs 15 gp. In order to install the engine and paddle wheel, the ship must be in port for 7 days.

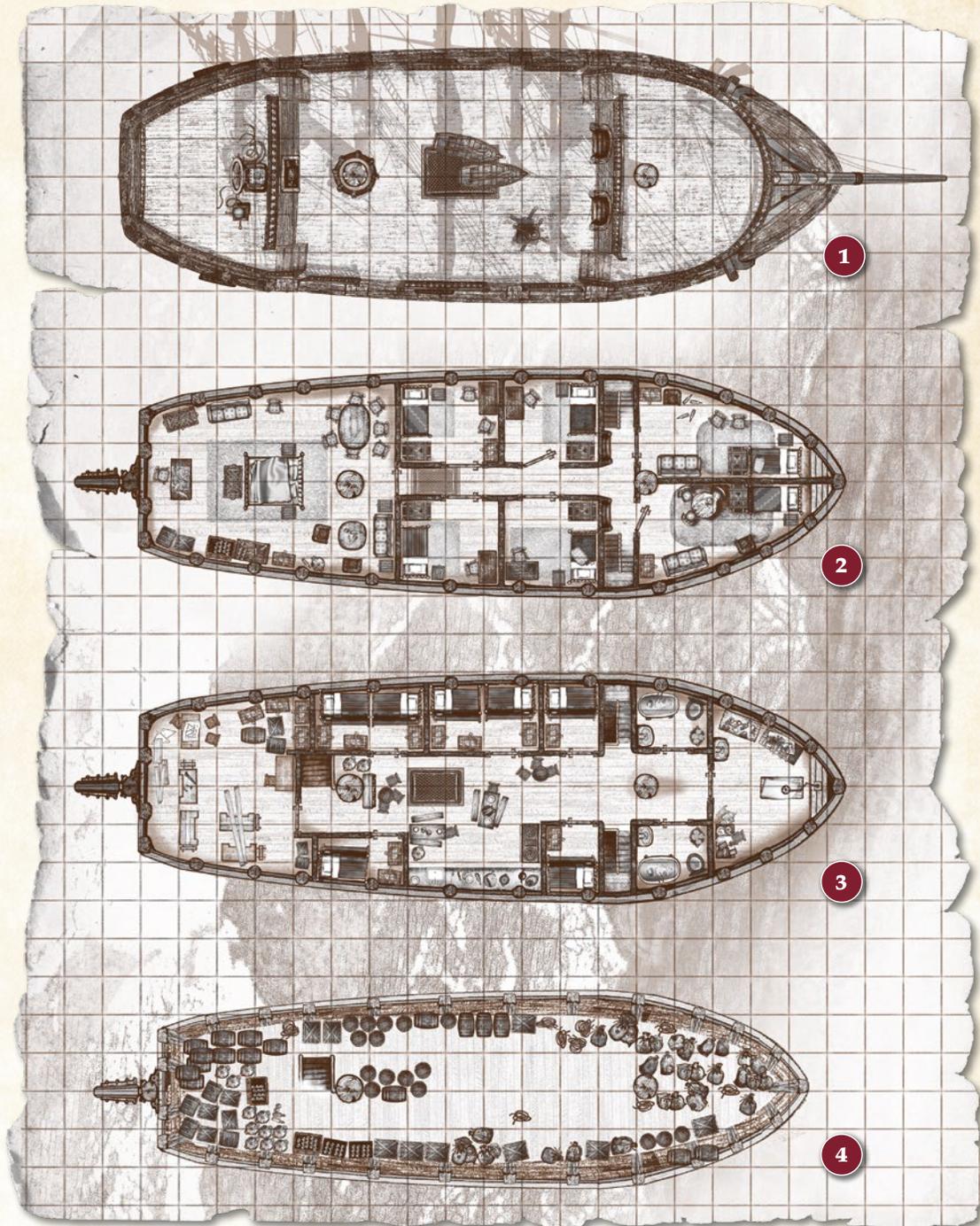
Armored Hull - 1,000gp. The exterior hull of the ship can be equipped with metal plating, allowing it to take more punishment in battle. The ship's hull AC increases by +3, but its speed is slowed by 2 miles per hour. In order to install the armored hull, the ship must be in port for 7 days.

Ship's Ram - 800 gp. A metal ram is attached to the bow of the ship, enabling the vessel to deal damage to enemy vessels by ramming into them. The ram automatically deals 6d12 piercing damage when the *Windrunner* rams head first into an enemy ship—however, when the ram is used, roll a d20. On a roll of 3 or below, the ram is destroyed in the process. In order to install the ram, the ship must be in port for 5 days.

Hiring Crew - 55 gp per month. If the players wish to send the ship out sailing without the characters present, they can hire one skilled worker and five unskilled workers to crew the ship.

Sails of Flying - 8,000 gp. This upgrade allows the *Windrunner* to rise into the air and take flight, granting it a flying speed of 5 miles per hour, 120 miles in a day (45 feet per round).

Hull of Submerging - 6,000 gp. This upgrade allows the *Windrunner* to cover itself in a protective bubble of air and submerge itself beneath the water. While underwater, the ship has a speed of 2.5 miles per hour, 60 miles in a day (25 feet per round). The pressure is magically regulated inside the bubble, allowing the ship to dive as deep as the characters desire.



Titan's Hollow

Titan's Hollow is a military fort built within the skeleton of an ancient titan, though the compound has been long abandoned and fallen into disrepair, its walls crumbling and defenses broken. The fort has a main gate and watchtower to spot incoming hostile forces, as well as a barracks, an armory, and a prison. Scattered about the fort are the remains of construct soldiers, their bodies weathered by the elements and their power sources having long since died.

1: MAIN GATE AND WATCHTOWER

The main entrance to the fort is a portcullis at the base of a watchtower, built out of the hollowed bone of the titan's enormous arm, and connected to the fort's outer wall, which was reinforced into the titan's ribcage. The portcullis has long been broken, its gate lodged within the lifting mechanism. A ladder to the upper levels of the watchtower is placed just within the portcullis. The room on the second floor of the watchtower has access to the parapet at the top of the fort's walls via giant fingerbones.

2: BAILEY FIELD

There is an open field within the walls of the fort, shadowed by the ribcage of the titan. The grass is dead and dry, the ground patchy with spots of dirt and mud. Around the field are a scattering of buildings, providing relatively easy access to the other sections of the fort.

3: BARRACKS

This confined room is built into the half-buried pelvis of the titan. It contains fifteen bunk beds, pushed up against the walls. Every bunk bed has two empty footlockers. An area at the far end of the room contains a table and a couple of wooden chairs.

4: ARMORY

This former armory is built into the skull of the titan. The skull was propped up and the jaw reinforced with steel to act as its doors. They have since rusted and partially fallen off of their hinges. Inside are a dozen steel shelves and weapon racks, with a handful of rusted shortswords left behind.

5: PRISON

The spine of the titan is buried underground. A staircase was dug down and the spine hollowed out to create a prison. Most of the space is taken up with old cells, with three of their walls made of solid bone. The fourth is made up of metal bars with an iron door. A small office space has been sectioned off near the entrance, containing little more than an old desk and chair.

Titan's Hollow Upgrades

Here is a list of available upgrades that can be purchased from Ser Nominus to upgrade Titan's Hollow.

Portcullis Repair - 300 gp. The portcullis for the main gate can be repaired, its grate and lifting mechanism corrected. This will allow the fort's main gate to be opened and closed at will. A character can control the main gate by using an action to pull the lever located in the watchtower, next to the ladder.

Jaw Door Repair - 300 gp. The door to the armory, and jaw of the titan, can be repaired. This door is controlled by a lever and opens with a gear and rope tension mechanism. It can also be slammed shut. Any creature caught in the jaw when it closes takes 10d10 piercing damage and is pinned in the teeth. While pinned, they are considered grappled and restrained. If this damage reduces a creature to 0 hit points, they are cut in half. A DC 18 Strength check will allow the character to escape. On each failed attempt, however, the creature takes an additional 5d10 damage.

Arcane Armory Door Lock - 100 gp. A skilled wizard can be hired to cast *arcane lock* on the jaw door that leads to the armory. The door can then only be opened by people the party designates, or if a password (chosen by the party) is spoken aloud within 5 feet of it. Otherwise, the door cannot be opened until the spell is dispelled or suppressed.

Revive Constructs - 1,000 gp. A skilled artificer can be hired to revive the dead constructs scattered about the fort. Ten construct soldiers, using the animated armor stat block, will be at the party's command. Characters can use a bonus action to give the constructs tasks, which the constructs will complete as long as they can hear the commands given. The constructs cannot pass beyond the fort's walls—their bodies are drained of all magic if they do.

Hiring Soldiers - 5-20 gp per month. The party may hire mercenary soldiers (who use the bandit stat block) to be stationed at the fort. The fort can comfortably house thirty soldiers in total. The mercenaries require at least one officer (who uses the bandit captain stat block) to lead them. The mercenary soldiers should be paid 5 gp a month per soldier. The mercenary officer—or officers!—should be paid 20 gp a month per officer.

The Eyes of the Titan - 1,000 gp. The eyes of the titan's enormous skull can be reignited with magical green flame. This allows any character in the armory to use their action to see through the skull's eyes. While using the skull's sight, a creature gains truesight and can see out to 5 miles.



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