

A HEART IN MOURNING

EPISODE 11



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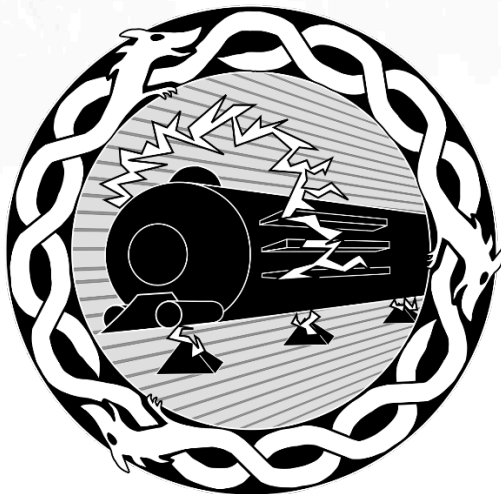
ACROSS EBERRON: CONVERGENCE MANIFESTO



A HEART IN MOURNING

RETRIEVE A LOST ARTIFACT IN THE MOURNLAND... IF YOU HAVE THE HEART FOR IT.

EPISODE 11 OF *CONVERGENCE MANIFESTO*



AN ACROSS EBERRON ADVENTURE

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Thanks from Chad to Wayne, the editors, and playtesters. Thanks from Aaron to my wife, an amazing person. Special thanks to Keith Baker for giving us the gift of Eberron, a world where we spend as much time as we can.

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to *A Heart in Mourning*, episode 11 of *Convergence Manifesto*, an Across Eberron adventure path. This adventure is the sequel to AE01-10: *At Death's Door*, [available on the Dungeon Masters Guild](#), using characters and story elements introduced in the previous adventure. This adventure plays best when used in conjunction with the [Wayfinder's Guide to Eberron \(WGtE\)](#) by Keith Baker. If your players are unfamiliar with either the Eberron setting or the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game, you may wish to use this set of [1st-level pregenerated characters, tailor-made for Eberron](#).

A Heart in Mourning is an adventure designed for **five 6th level characters** to explore the diversity and themes of the Eberron Campaign Setting. Player characters will have a chance to explore the Mournland, a former nation destroyed by a mysterious event known as the Mourning, where the bodies of the dead don't decay and strange things happen. The heroes are charged with traveling to a ruin called Ash Tower, where a powerful artifact is believed to reside.

SUMMARY

A Heart in Mourning is a dungeon crawl and survival adventure that takes the party through the mists into the strange and dangerous Mournland, where they encounter threats both environmental and living. The party has been given a map with the task of retrieving the *Steelheart* from Ash Tower, where the Provost's research has led them under direction by Guild Handler Lhara. Their destination lies in the middle of a manifest zone of Shavarath. Once there, the party will have to survive a tower climb filled with fiends, demons, and more in order to retrieve the *Steelheart*, a powerful artifact guarded by a powerful guardian. This adventure is split into the following scenes:

- **Scene 1.** The player characters are given their mission and warned of the dangers they might face in the Mournland.
- **Scene 2.** After entering the Mournland, the characters begin to experience the bizarreness of this twisted landscape.
- **Bonus Scene 1.** The party is attacked by a figure of the mists.
- **Bonus Scene 2.** Hazards continue through the night's watch.
- **Scene 3.** A strange storm threatens the party and their precious *goodberry wine*.
- **Scene 4.** A group of warforged stops the party from advancing. The party learns they share a similar goal.
- **Scene 5.** The party reaches Ash Tower, discovering it's going to take more than *goodberry wine* to reach the top.
- **Scene 6.** With the *Steelheart* in hand, the party must escape a falling tower and the Mournland to complete their mission.

RUNNING THE ADVENTURE

A Heart in Mourning is a tense survival adventure intended for five 6th-level characters and designed to take approximately 4-5 hours of game time. If you have additional time, the two bonus scenes add approximately 1 hour total, and travel through the Mournland can be extended as long as the DM desires by using the random encounter table from Scene 2.

All monster stat blocks needed for encounters in this adventure are contained in **Appendix A: Bestiary**. Battle maps of Ash Tower are contained in **Appendix B: Maps**.

While running the adventure, look for the following formatting:

Text like this is intended to be read aloud or paraphrased for your players.

Sidebar like this contain rules reminders, reveal background Eberron lore, or point you to sources to learn more.



CAST OF CHARACTERS

In *A Heart in Mourning*, the player characters travel to the broken land of the Mournland, where the dead lie frozen in time and the living fear to tread. The party encounters these unusual characters along the way.

MAJOR CHARACTERS

Anchor. A stocky warforged with carvings etched into his composite plating, each serving as a memento from his travels in his days as a pirate. The etchings vary from Kraken tentacles to sparrows and skulls, covering most of the visible areas of his body. He is the only surviving member of his crew, which capsized in Kraken Bay, to the south of Cyre, on the Day of Mourning. He wields a hooked spear from his days on the ship and can often be heard singing sea shanties.

Personality: Memories of major events are important to me. I have literally carved reminders of them into my body.

Ideal: The past is not to be forgotten, but to be learned from. It makes us who we are.

Bond: Loyalty to my leader, originally my captain and now the Lord of Blades, is unquestionable.

Flaw: My need to record events as etchings has become a coping mechanism to deal with loss, but it isn't filling the void.

Brutus. A towering warforged, nearly 7 feet tall, with no neck and broad shoulders. They wield no weapons, but have fists like boulders and deal damage like a mace. Prior to pledging loyalty to the Lord of Blades, Brutus enjoyed spending time in the kitchen. They have always been intrigued by food, despite not needing to eat it for nutrients. Their arm-maces, which are not removable, make cooking a difficult task, but it never stopped them. They often recount recipes of various Khorvarian regions they have visited.

Personality: I am not *just* a weapon, but I am one.

Ideal: I am built to destroy, but I can also create.

Bond: The Lord of Blades sees value beyond my design by the humans that made me.

Flaw: I am slow and get in my own way.

Spike. A small, dextrous warforged with spikes accenting her body and a mohawk atop her head. She wields a morningstar. Spike spent her years during the Last War as an adept combatant, mostly in the grasslands of Eastern Breland fighting in the name of King Boranel. At times, she was known to adorn her various spikes with the local foliage to compete in friendly stealth competitions with her military unit.

Personality: All things can be skewered, and if they cannot, I will tenderize them until they are soft enough to be skewered.

Ideal: My quips match my body: sharp and to the point.

Bond: Freedom cannot be given by those who enslave. The Lord of Blades will make all those who used us pay.

Flaw: I use my words to distance myself from others because I'm afraid of hurting those who get too close.

Last Star. The commander of the other warforged in this adventure, Last Star is a high-ranking officer of the Lord of Blades's army. She wields an adamantite morningstar and has star carvings on her chassis that resemble military rankings.

Personality: Order will lead us to success. Fall in line, or line up to fall.

Ideal: War never changes—and I wouldn't have it any other way.

Bond: The Lord of Blades leads the warforged to our true enemy in this never-ending war.

Flaw: I am so focused on my goals that I am blind to failure.

Mary. A Cyran human soldier and one of the few survivors of Ash Tower, she has left the tower to seek help for the only other survivor of her unit.

Personality: Helping others above myself is my goal in life.

Ideal: My country might be gone, but I will help preserve its memory in my actions.

Bond: I owe my life to my unit for being a family to me after my family perished in the Mourning.

Flaw: I would risk my own life to save another.

Gabriel. The leader of a unit of Cyran soldiers. His unit ventured into the Mournland to save anyone who might still be alive from the Day of Mourning and to retrieve relics from the fallen nation of Cyre. Gabriel is secretly a deva from the plane of Shavarath, guiding and protecting his unit from the horrors of the Mournland. In his true form, he has lustrous dark skin and enormous shimmering wings, but he prefers to keep an unnoteworthy human form.

Personality: Evil, unnatural things have tainted this world. I will lead others to rid this world of this evil.

Ideal: Saving this nation begins with its people and history.

Bond: My unit is made of pure souls who I would be proud to fight with in battle.

Flaw: War never ends, but I forget I fight this battle with mortals.



ACROSS EBERRON CHARACTERS

The following characters are recurring characters in the Across Eberron series, though Faurious does not appear directly in this adventure.

Guild Handler Lhara (LAHR-ah). Lhara is a shifter with white hair streaked with black. Her skin is pale, she has blue eyes, and wears an eyepatch over the left. She holds a middling position of authority within the Clifftop Guild. Lhara is the characters' handler inside Clifftop and is trying to increase the guild's coffers and reputation.

Personality: I am always calm, no matter what the situation. I never raise my voice or let my emotions control me.

Ideal: Clifftop Adventurers' Guild. The Guild is my home and its members are my family.

Bond: I will prove that Clifftop is the best group of skilled troubleshooters and that we can get any job done.

Flaw: I am very sarcastic, and it can be difficult for people to tell when I am being serious.

Provost Nigel Faurious (NIGH-jel FAR-ee-us). The Provost is very focused on his work and is often lost in thought. He seeks to prove his theories on planar bodies and is willing to spend the money required to build his strange device.

Personality: I am horribly, horribly awkward in social situations and have little patience for any conversation that doesn't have to do with my work.

Ideal: No Limits. Nothing should fetter the infinite possibility inherent in all existence.

Bond: My life's work is the study of planar bodies and their effects on Eberron. I must complete my work and be given the recognition I deserve.

Flaw: Unlocking an ancient mystery is worth every coin of my family fortune.

CLIFFTOP ADVENTURERS' GUILD

Eberron, of course, has its share of organizations dedicated to the support and employment of exceptional individuals. Professional adventurers in good standing might be invited to join the Clifftop Adventurers' Guild (*WGtE* 150, *Sharn: City of Towers* 52), based in the Clifftop district of Upper Dura, Sharn. It was founded 150 years ago by a dwarf named Shekkal Korranor. The current leader is Sumara Korranor, better known among her charges as Summer.

The reputation of the CAG is well earned, and members are expected to uphold the Guild's virtuous principles. Their long-standing rivals, the Deathsgate Guild, have no such inclinations.



SCENE 1: TARNISHED JEWEL OF GALIFAR

"War, what is it good for? Quite a few things, actually."
—fragment of Provost Nigel Faurious's Convergence Manifesto

The party begins by meeting Lhara, their guild handler, at the Clifftop Adventurers' Guild in Sharn. She tasks the party with entering the Mourmland on a four-day journey to recover an artifact known as the *Steelheart* for Provost Nigel Faurious. Read or paraphrase the following:

When you arrive at the Clifftop Guild offices, Lhara is waiting for you, leaning jauntily against the desk. "Glad you could make it. I wish I could say this is an easier mission than the last few, but...you know I wouldn't lie to you." She motions to the leather armchairs near the fire, for you to make yourself comfortable.

"The task will be a lucrative one, but it'll be hard-earned. You are to recover an artifact, the *Steelheart*, from Ash Tower within the Mourmland. The map should take you from the edge of the Mists to the Tower, though the last survey of this area is from before the Mourning. We do not know what might have changed since." Her demeanor becomes even more serious as she looks directly into your eyes, "I would not be asking this of you if there was any other way."

The shifter reaches down and produces a map, as well as a leather bag for each party member. Handing a clinking sack to each of you, she explains, "Your destination is an unnatural one that requires special provisions. These are bottles of *goodberry wine* from the hamlet of Hatheril, enough to last you for a four-day mission. Healing magic does not work normally within this broken land, so guard these with your life—they may be the only way to save it."

While Lhara seems to be slightly shaken at the idea of this mission, she is insistent that this highly skilled party is well-qualified to do so. She offers to pay the characters 800 gp each for the successful retrieval of the *Steelheart*.

GOODBERRY WINE

Each jug of *goodberry wine* contains enough wine for 5 doses. Each dose restores 20 hit points and provides enough nourishment to sustain a creature for one day.

While within any area of the Mourmland that inhibits healing, a creature that has drunk a dose of *goodberry wine* within the last 12 hours is able to regain half the normal hit points (rounded up) from any healing effect that otherwise would not function due to the nature of the Mourmland, and regains all hit dice and half the usual number of hit points at the end of a long rest.



THE MOURNLAND

In the year 994 YK on the Day of Mourning, the nation of Cyre ceased to exist when a magical explosion warped the nation and turned it into a bizarre wasteland where the laws of nature no longer hold sway. This dangerous, unpredictable land, known as the Mourmland, is surrounded by an ever-present dead-gray mist. Dead bodies from that fateful day show no signs of decay four years later. Adding to the other hazards, healing magic works unpredictably—and in many places, not at all—throughout the Mourmland.

What does Lhara know? Lhara will answer questions to the best of her ability, including the following.

- **Why the Mourmland?** Provost Nigel Faurious's research has uncovered evidence of a manifest zone of Shavarath. It lies within the Mourmland at Ash Tower.
- **What is the *Steelheart*?** Somewhere within the tower lies the *Steelheart*, an artifact that Faurious needs to further his research. A glowing metal orb, it is said to be the still-beating heart of a legionnaire devil from Shavarath. It can be attached to a warforged like a docent, or surgically implanted into another humanoid to replace their heart. Doing so is rumored to aid the bearer in combat, but the whispers of the devil slowly drive the bearer to sociopathy.
- **How do we get there?** The Foundation has arranged for travel by Orien caravan to Vathirond, just outside the Mourmland. After reaching the mists, however, the party will have to use the map to navigate on their own.
- **What will we face there?** The Mourmland is an unpredictable land where the environment is as dangerous as the creatures within. Foes run the gamut from dead that refuse to die to grotesque aberrant creatures, and even warforged with an antipathy toward other humanoids. With unimaginable dangers within the Mourmland, the party should not necessarily engage all perceived threats. The priority is to attain the *Steelheart* and to return alive.
- **Why doesn't healing magic work in the Mourmland?** Nobody knows. But whatever the cause, spells that usually heal creatures have no effect. A noteworthy exception is the *goodberry* spell. Lhara also relates that Provost Faurious suggests that a skilled artificer could briefly create an exit from the Material Plane and using healing magic in an extradimensional space.
- **What is *goodberry wine*?** Goodberry wine was first made by druids in the Greenhaunt forest of northern Breland. When the Mourning happened and healing magic ceased to work as usual in that land, exploration parties to the Mourmland found that the wine's healing properties still functioned, making it an invaluable resource for adventurers in the Mourmland. The party will need the *goodberry wine* in order to heal within the Mourmland, although still not as well as they could in another land.
- **Can we have some healing potions?** If the party presses for additional resources, Lhara apologizes that typical healing potions do not function in the Mourmland, so all that she can offer are rations and adventuring packs.

SCENE 2: BEYOND THE MIST

Once the party is done speaking with Lhara and ready to proceed on their mission, read or paraphrase the following:

Departing Sharn, the lightning rail crackles with blue lightning as it passes over the elemental nodes. Two days later, as the train pulls into Vathirond, you can't help but notice the rail line continues past a large wall of dead-gray mist. However, the Orien heirs aboard the rail explain that the train will not be able to move beyond it. On the Day of Mourning, many elemental nodes mysteriously moved or vanished entirely, and rail travel there has been entirely discontinued since.

ADVENTURING IN THE MOURNLAND

Before the party ventures into the Mourmland, the DM should be familiar with the following mechanics used in this adventure:

MOURNLAND RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

Travel in the Mourmland is never simple. The entire land is fraught with death, despair, and uncertainty. In addition to physical hazards, Mourmland travel should include a strong element of suspenseful horror. The following random encounter table will help set the tone for the two-day travel to Ash Tower.

When prompted in this adventure to “Roll on the Mourmland Random Encounters table,” roll 1d8 three times on the table below, once for each column, to create a random scene. To ensure variety, reroll any repeats, or create your own scenario from the options below:

TABLE: MOURNLAND RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

| d8 | There is... | ...that has... | ...and there is... |
|----|---|---|---|
| 1 | ...a child's doll missing the eyes... | ...dried blood smeared all over... | ...a faint smell of sulfur. |
| 2 | ...a stone just larger than a fist with a PC's name etched into it... | ...a torn piece of parchment attached. The only words that can be made out are “help me.” | ...the sound of a little girl singing a nursery rhyme, just out of sight, that fades away as soon as the party mentions hearing it. |
| 3 | ...a deck of cards depicting the royalty of Cyre on some cards... | ...a dagger covered in soot laying nearby... | ...an oddly copper taste in everyone's mouths. |
| 4 | ...concern that the party is now lost and doubt that the navigator is leading properly. The party comes across a compass sitting on a stump... | ...a severed finger laid upon it... | ...the foul smell of rotten meat coming from one of the character's bags. |
| 5 | ...a small pouch that contains several small cogs, gears, and springs. One is etched with the Cannith Gorgon... | ...a nearby bottle of a red, viscous liquid... | ...a single humanoid footprint pointing in the direction the party is headed. |
| 6 | ...a journal filled completely with anatomical drawings of humanoid hearts... | ...a music box that only one party member can hear... | ...a nearby tree that has the branches swaying and creaking despite the lack of a breeze. |
| 7 | ...a family sitting having a picnic that seems to be frozen in space and time. If touched, they shatter like glass. There is a basket... | ...a pile of the remains of sacrificial animals... | ...a small house cat that walks by, just at the edge of a character's vision...again. |
| 8 | ...a young human girl is sitting on the ground and crying. She seems unharmed, but once interacted with she disappears. However, the doll she was carrying remains... | ...a sketch of someone that looks like the person that picked up the sketch...and it changes to be whoever picks it up... | ...a sickeningly sweet smell of honey that, moments later, turns to the scent of rancid milk. |

HEALING IN THE MOURNLAND

Upon the Day of Mourning, the rules that govern reality seemingly ceased to function. In most places in the Mourmland, creatures do not heal normally, either naturally or magically. The bizarre nature of the Mourmland means that a DM could choose for healing to work differently from place to place within this land, or even from moment to moment. However, for the purposes of this adventure, the area the Clifftop adventurers explore in the next several scenes will be under the following healing restrictions.

Characters *may* regain hit points from the following:

- The *goodberry* spell and *goodberry wine* function as usual.
- A paladin's Lay on Hands ability functions as usual.
- A fighter's Second Wind ability functions as usual.
- Spells and abilities that give temporary hit points function as usual, as these are not healing nor true hit points.
- Hit dice may be spent to regain hit points as usual.

Characters *may not* regain hit points from the following:

- **Spells.** With the exception of the above, characters cannot regain hit points from any spells or other abilities that restore hit points, including the Mark of Healing.
- **Long rests.** Characters do not regain any hit points or hit dice from a long rest.
- **Healing potions.** Healing potions cannot restore hit points.

Note: Spells such as *rope trick* that allow characters to access an extradimensional space can provide a safe short rest outside the Mourmland, allowing healing to operate as normal.

INTO THE MISTS

Once the party disembarks from the lightning rail and follows Lhara's map into the Mourmland, they walk a worn path with remnants of travels from the years before Cyre was destroyed. Since the Mourning, however, it seems few feet have come this close to the mists, except perhaps the occasional Brelish patrol. Superstition and outright fear keep the townsfolk and half-hearted adventurers away.

As the characters enter the Mourmland's dead-gray mists, read or paraphrase the following:

Looming above you, and as far as you can see to either side to the horizon, there is a wrongness about the mists that tower ahead of you. Though there is a breeze blowing, causing the grasses you're standing among to sway and ripple, the dead-gray mists float in front of you, unmoved and untouched by the wind. As you step into the mist, you sense why—the winds do not penetrate at all, though the mist offered you no resistance. Light and sound become muted and the air feels heavy, stagnant. As you begin to move through the mists, everything seems deathly quiet and still, and the only sounds you hear are those of you and your companions. The stillness and quiet leave you with an oppressive feeling of unease.

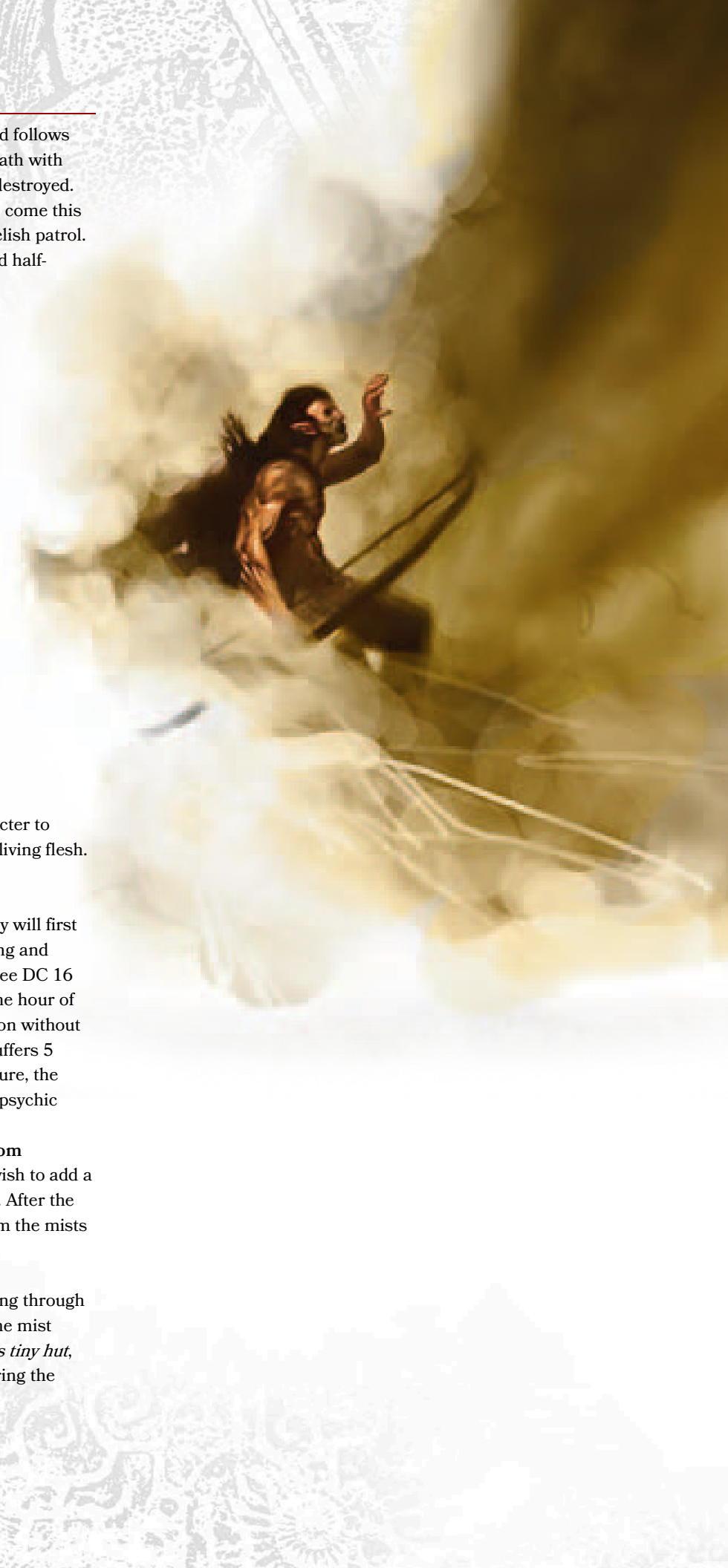
A successful DC 13 Perception check allows a character to notice that the mist seems to almost be reaching for living flesh.

NAVIGATING THE MISTS

As the characters travel toward their destination, they will first need to navigate through the Mourmland's disorienting and hazardous mist. The characters must succeed on three DC 16 Wisdom (Survival) checks. Each check represents one hour of travel. Upon a success, the party navigates that portion without getting turned around and lost, but each character suffers 5 points of psychic damage from the mists. Upon a failure, the party gets lost, each character suffering 10 points of psychic damage as they wander lost for an extra hour.

After the first failure, roll on the **Mourmland Random Encounters table**. After the second success, if you wish to add a bonus combat encounter, run **Bonus Scene 1** below. After the third success, some time after the party emerges from the mists into daylight, roll again on the **Mourmland Random Encounters table**.

If the party chooses to take a short rest while passing through the mists, they will need to shield themselves from the mist using a tent or spell, such as *rope trick* or *Leomund's tiny hut*, or take 5 points of psychic damage from the mist during the hour of rest.





BONUS SCENE 1: GONE BUT NOT FORGOTTEN

If you have additional time and want to add a bonus encounter after the party's second successful Wisdom (Survival) check to navigate through the mists, read or paraphrase the following:

While traveling through the oppressive mists, the sky above turns even darker and an eerie silence sets in. You feel an odd sense of longing and unease, manifesting as a sharp pain in the pit of your stomach. Just then, you see a figure over your shoulder that you are certain was not there a moment ago. It coalesces from the mists itself, dark swirls of gray and black and white intertwining into a humanoid with two long blades of pure shadow.

This creature, which uses the stats of a **shadow assassin**, appears out of the dead-gray mists. This shadow was an unlucky soul that was killed at the precise moment of the Mourning, and rather than its soul passing on, it has lingered in the mists in this form. If you wish, you may describe the mists swirling into a vaguely recognizable face, that of a party member's former acquaintance, perhaps from during the Last War.

Roll initiative. Any character with passive Perception 21 or lower is surprised by the shadow. Due to the mists and cloud cover, the whole area is dim light, and there is no danger of sunlight during the encounter unless the party creates their own with a spell or similar effect.

BONUS SCENE 2: EVENING AND MOURNING

If you have additional time and want to add a bonus encounter after the characters pass through the mists and make camp for the night, read or paraphrase the following to those keeping watch while the others sleep:

In the darkness, as your companions sleep, an uneven sloshing sound echoes around the campsite. A moment later and you realize the ground ten feet away from you has begun to melt into mud, quickly coalescing into two flowing forms of teeth, eyes and long, slaving tongues.

These two **gibbering mouthers** pose little threat to the party but must be dispatched before the characters can resume their long rest. Upon their defeat, the creatures melt back into the ground they came from, leaving no trace that they ever existed. The rest of the night's sleep is uneventful.

Shortly after the characters begin the second morning's travel, roll again on the **Random Mournland Encounters table**.

SCENE 3: RAINING TEETH

As midday approaches on the second day, the party faces a hazard that threatens not only their health, but if they have not taken measures to protect it, their source of restoring it. Read or paraphrase the following:

As the sun moves higher in the sky, you are passing two small cottages when you see an arachnid-like creature the size of a large bear approaching in the distance. The creature is transparent in color and seemingly made of living glass. As it skitters toward the party, the clouds above and behind it begin to darken quickly. The sky opens up, and it begins to rain...or is that hail? With a horrified sinking of your stomach, you realize the glass horror approaching is *fleeing* the storm, and those tiny projectiles hurtling toward the ground are teeth, humanoid and...otherwise.

The sound of bone repeatedly striking glass in the distance begins with a *'tink, tink'* but quickly intensifies. In mere moments, the glass horror chipped and then shattered completely. Only a matter of seconds passes before your party is bombarded with teeth as well.

The rain of teeth overtakes the party, lasting for 1 minute (10 rounds) and driving them to seek cover. There are two small single-story cottages 120 feet away from the party, and no other significant cover close by. For every round a character remains outside, they take 1d4 points of piercing damage from the rain of teeth. After the first round, the teeth crunching underfoot create hazardous footing, making the ground difficult terrain. Any time a character takes the Dash action, they must succeed on a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw, falling prone upon a failure. If a character falls and has any *goodberry wine* or other breakable potions on their person (that aren't stored in a *bag of holding* or other extradimensional space), they must roll 1d4; upon a roll of 1, the bottle shatters and the contents are lost.

Once the party finds cover within a cottage, they find a single room, 20 feet square. Each has a bed and a table with chairs. One of the two cottages have two eerily still bodies sitting at the table in front of plates of food that are still warm; the bodies have not begun to decompose despite the Mourning taking place years ago. The other home is void of people and food, but the characters do notice a framed picture on the wall depicting a young half-orc couple and their daughter holding a doll—the same doll that is now sitting on the rumpled bed.

TREASURE

If the party searches the cottages, upon a successful DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check, they find a small purse with 13 gp in one cottage, and a red Eberon dragonshard valued at 180 gp in the other.

THUNDER AFTER THE STORM

After the storm subsides and the party opens the door of the cottage to venture outside, they find two **living thunderwave** spells have followed in the wake of the storm. Living spells are semi-sentient creatures, formed from spells that were being cast at the moment the Mourningland was created. These living thunderwave spells look like undulating waves of force, and as they move across the blasted countryside, they are demolishing and powdering the fallen teeth as they go. The two creatures are currently 30 feet away from the cottage. While they only have a speed of 20 feet, they can use their Engulf action to move an additional 20 feet a round to close on and attack the closest character. If the party barricades themselves inside the cottage, the creatures will target the door with their attacks, easily breaking through in one round.



SCENE 4: THE NOT-SO-WELCOME PARTY

After the rain of teeth, the party continues following the map Lhara gave them, and in the late afternoon they approach the area where Ash Tower is supposed to lie. However, they instead find an empty valley. Read or paraphrase the following:

Weary from the time in the Mournland, your spirits lift as the map indicates you are drawing close to your destination. But when you crest the last hill, instead of seeing the tower you expect, you see only a gentle valley, cheery river bubbling through it. You search for any sign of the tower, making widening circles, to no avail.

Characters may attempt a DC 14 Wisdom (Survival) check. Upon a success, they are certain that they have followed the map correctly, but the landscape has changed, and Ash Tower is not where they expect. Upon a failure, they are unsure if they followed the map correctly, but there is certainly no tower in sight. Either way, read or paraphrase the following:

The only sign of civilization you find is a distant cluster of small cottages, with one figure standing outside—a towering warforged. They glance your way, raising an arm in acknowledgment. A moment later, two more 'forged emerge from one of the cottages.

These three warforged follow the Lord of Blades. They are patrolling through the Mournland with an eye out for trespassers and potential threats. One of them is nearly 7 feet tall with massive boulder-like fists, another is smaller with spikes accenting their body, and the third is covered in a variety of detailed and creative etchings. See the Cast of Characters for more information on each one's appearance.

If the party does not approach, the three warforged begin to confidently make their way toward them. If the party attempts to flee before even approaching the warforged, they pursue using the Chases rules in chapter 8 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

Once the party approaches the warforged, the one with decorative carvings speaks up in a gravelly, yet stern voice.

"Welcome to our homestead. We hope you have had a delightful journey thus far through our land. My name is Anchor. My friends, Spike and Brutus here will be relieving you of your weapons and belongings. If you comply, you are more than welcome to wander back off the way you came. This is best done with little resistance...if you would be so kind."

If the party resists, **Anchor**, **Brutus**, and **Spike** will initiate combat. Brutus is utilized as a central, nearly stationary combatant that knocks characters back as often as they can. Spike utilizes her movement capabilities to move in and out of the battle attempting to hit and run as often as possible. Anchor

focuses on tripping his foes and attempting to attack with his extended reach hooked spear, from behind Brutus if possible.

The warforged fight until one of them is felled, at which point the other two attempt to flee to Ash Tower to alert their commander, Last Star. The first warforged felled has a *final messenger*, a tiny construct with AC 26 and 6 hp. As soon as the warforged is knocked unconscious, it springs out of their chest, moving quickly at 120 feet per round, and flies away to alert the commander about the situation and the party's imminent approach.

If the warforged defeat the party, they tie them up and bring them by force to just outside Ash Tower to their commander. In Scene 5, see sidebar "Alternate Start: Prisoners."

If the player characters defeat the warforged, they find that one of the warforged's packs contains 18 gp, an *everbright lantern*, and a map to Ash Tower that was clearly made post-Mourning, with significant differences that will allow the party to easily navigate to the current location of Ash Tower.

THE LORD OF BLADES

This warforged is a messianic figure to the many warforged who feel betrayed by the Treaty of Thronehold. While the Treaty ended the Last War, it also forbade the creation of any more of their kind. The Lord of Blades calls out to these angry warforged to come to the Mournland. There, an army of dissident warforged grows by the week, enthralled by the promise that one day they will rise up and claim Khorvaire as their own.



SCENE 5: THE EPICENTER OF SHAVARATH

If the party escapes the warforged, the new map they found after the battle allows the characters to spend a couple hours navigating to the Shavarathan manifest zone and Ash Tower's true location without further incident. If they were captured, see the sidebar for an alternate start to this scene.

ALTERNATE START: PRISONERS

If the party was unable to defeat the warforged party from Scene 4, they will be brought to Ash Tower as prisoners, receiving the benefits of a short rest during the trip. Their weapons and equipment will be tossed into a pile of rubble out of reach. There, a warforged commander named Last Star waits, along with three other warforged. She wields an adamantine Morningstar and has star carvings on her chassis that resemble military ranking. The warforged that brought the party here will be told to leave them bound so the *vargouille* can feast on them. Last Star will then lead the other warforged into the tower to look for the *Steelheart* for the Lord of Blades.

Once the warforged leave, a wounded Mary will come out from hiding around the side of Ash Tower and free the party. As she does, three *vargouilles* will fly down and attack her and the party, which they should easily be able to dispatch. After that, continue the scene at "What does Mary know?"

As the characters approach at sunset, smoke billows from behind a large debris-piled hill. Once the party climbs the slope to the top, a smoking tower comes into view. Read or paraphrase the following:

The smoke rising over the hill becomes darker and thicker as you climb over the debris. An enormous octagonal obelisk appears as you make your way to the top of the hill. This tower reaches a hundred feet in the air, smoke billowing from its many imperfections. The setting sun glimmers through the pockmarked holes that riddle the stone. This valley, much like the hill, is filled with debris, but among the rubble, something else litters the landscape. Lifeless hands and feet buried beneath the debris reach out for nothing. At the base of the tower, a female figure with a sword and shield is fending off tiny flying creatures that shriek as they swarm her.

The tower is pockmarked with holes, revealing a well-worn structure scarred with the marks of war. From the top of the hill, the characters can see a field of debris and corpses. Near the entrance, one lone soldier appears to be fighting off small flying creatures that are attacking her.

The characters will need to get closer to the tower to see the soldier and what she's fighting. Characters with passive Perception 10 or higher will identify the soldier as Cyran by the uniform and crest on her shield. The creatures she is fighting appear to be more bat-like than bird-like. The characters can see that the bats have grotesque humanoid faces. A successful DC 16 Intelligence (Arcana or Religion) check identifies this

creature as a *vargouille*, a tiny fiend whose cursed kiss can transform a humanoid's head into one of their own within hours. Any character that succeeds on this check will easily be able to identify any humanoid in the transformation process, as well as recall that once cursed, it requires a spell such as *remove curse* or *greater restoration* to prevent the transformation, or constant exposure to sunlight to pause it.

The *vargouilles* fly off as the party approaches, the Cyran soldier killing a few more in the process. She collapses to one knee, gripping her side and dropping her shield and sword. The heavy doors to Ash Tower are open, about 50 feet from where Mary, the soldier kneels.

What does Mary know? She will answer questions to the best of her ability, including the following.

- Her name is Mary. She is one of two remaining members of her unit that took refuge in Ash Tower several days ago.
- The other living member is Gabriel, who was wounded by a monster, a giant metallic spider, at the top of the tower. Last night, Mary attempted to leave the tower in search of help, and left Gabriel tending to his wounds on the third floor of the tower. When she left, she was swarmed by *vargouilles*. Shortly after, a band of a half-dozen or so warforged arrived, including a leader with an adamantine morningstar and stars etched on their body. They scared off the *vargouille*, and Mary has been in hiding behind some debris all day. Some of the warforged left on a scouting mission, and the rest went inside less than an hour ago, at which point the *vargouilles* returned.
- Mary is mortally wounded and asks the party to leave her to die and go save Gabriel.

The characters will readily see that Mary has two bumps on her forehead that are slowly growing, and her teeth appear to sharpen the longer the party talks to her. If the characters are aware of the nature of *vargouilles*, they will recognize that Mary has been cursed and will turn into one herself if she is not kept in sunlight...and the sun is just now setting. Based on her guess as to when she was first attacked, she will realize she has very little time left, but refuses to go down without a fight. While the party may attempt to heal her wounds, the only way to end this curse is with *remove curse*, *greater restoration*, or the like.

The party can choose to abide by Mary's wishes or take her with them into the tower. If they take her with them, she will die when the party enters the second floor, her head tearing off her body and become a new *vargouille*. If the curse is ended on Mary through the means stated in the *vargouille*'s stat block (see Appendix), she will help the party until they reach Gabriel. Then, she will stay and help Gabriel, the two refusing to face the metallic creature in the tower again.

SHAVARATH

Shavarath, the Battleground, is the Plane of War. In this plane is an eternal battle of celestial archons, devils, and demons. Manifest zones of this plane tend to exhibit increased conflict and enhance spells and magics of battle.

SCENE 5A: ASH TOWER – FIRST FLOOR

The doors to Ash Tower's entrance are already ajar, wide enough for a medium creature to enter. They are heavy stone, and if the party wishes to open them wider, this will require a successful DC 10 Strength check, creating a loud, scraping sound that echoes inside the tower. Once inside, read or paraphrase the following:

Just past the stone door lies a macabre scene. Lifeless bodies of soldiers lay scattered across the floor. Crests and colors of different nations decorate the corpses. The smell of iron and death fills the air, but like the other corpses in the Mourland, there is no sign of decay. Rubble and debris fill the gaps that the bodies don't cover, creating a new 'floor' to this foyer. The dim light shining from flickering torches and through the pockmarked holes in the walls reveals more bodies and debris scattered up the stairs and across the overlook. This tomb of lifeless eyes and gaping maws seems to stare aimlessly at you as you move.

The interior of Ash Tower (on all floors) is dimly lit by ambient light from a couple flickering torches, as well as pockmarked holes to the outside (though the sun is quickly setting). The floor and stairs are covered with corpses and debris, so much so that characters will inevitably have to decide whether they will step on crumbling stone or a lifeless limb to advance further.

The foyer of the entrance is 30 feet by 20 feet with stairs leading up to a 10-foot-wide U-shaped overlook, and more stairs leading up into the tower further (see Appendix B: Maps for battle maps of each floor). The entire area is difficult terrain due to the corpses and rubble. Characters can make any check or interaction they want, but no encounter will happen here. A successful DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check will spot movement that looks like a small, grayish jellyfish moving in the shadows. A successful DC 16 Intelligence (Arcana or Religion) check identifies this creature as a dybbuk, a fiend that can possess and animate the bodies of corpses. It does not attack for the moment, quickly disappearing, but it will make another appearance on the second floor. If the party tries to follow it or find it, it will use its incorporeal movement feature to move through the walls of the tower and disappear.

This scene is meant to establish atmosphere for what lies ahead. The different crests and army colors are meant to add mystery to what might have happened here. Ash Tower has no discernible purpose, yet it is clearly a focal point of war at the center of the manifest zone. Shavarath is the plane of unending war, and war does not always have a clear purpose. Any descriptions given of the corpses and other narrations should create a sense of unease and dread in both the players and their characters. Imagine this as a scene from a horror movie where both the on-screen character *and* the audience expect a jump scare, the music building tension as that moment approaches but is never reached, leaving the audience on the edge of their seat waiting for the shoe to drop and release the built up tension. There will be no payoff on this level.

If characters search the corpses in the room, a successful DC 14 Intelligence (Investigation) check yields a set of *glamoured studded leather armor* and one *feather token*.

FEATHER TOKEN

Wondrous Item, Common

This small metal disk is inscribed with the image of a feather. While the token is in your possession, you can cast *feather fall* as a bonus action. A feather token only holds sufficient charge for a single use, after which it loses its power. While it's an expensive form of insurance, frequent airship travelers and citizens of Sharn often appreciate the security it provides.



SCENE 5B: ASH TOWER – SECOND FLOOR

Once the characters proceed up the flight of stairs to the second floor, read or paraphrase the following:

As you climb the crumbling stone stairs to the second floor, fragments of the structure tumble down to the debris below. Each step makes you question its stability, but you cling to confidence in the fact that the stairs are strewn with corpses and debris. If the bodies didn't break the stairs, perhaps you won't either. And indeed, you do not.

The second floor reveals greater destruction to the tower's structure. Large holes in the walls, exposing the setting sun, riddle each side of this octagonal obelisk. One of the two staircases to the next level has been completely destroyed. The other leads up but is blocked by several bodies that look as though they died attempting their own climb.

The corpses and debris continue on this floor. Chunks of stone from the floor, wall, and stairway are missing or gone entirely. Any damage dealt to any of the stonework will cause stone to crumble, speeding up the inevitable decay of the structure. One of the two staircases up is gone, leaving only one way up. If Mary is with the party but they did not end her curse, her head tears away from her body, turning into a vargouille, once they enter this floor, but before the characters begin to move up the stairs.

As characters approach the only stairs up, a corpse animates and blocks the stairway. This corpse was once a **knight**, now possessed by a **dybbuk** like the one the party likely noticed on the first floor. It will block the stairway until defeated or moved.

There are 10 dybbuks in the lower levels of the tower. On every odd-numbered round of initiative after the first, characters hear another knight's corpse animate on the first floor, taking one round to reach the second floor. There can be as many as 10 active corpses at any given time after the first few animate. This fight is not intended to be winnable. The dybbuks can animate an effectively endless stream of possessed bodies, and unless the party is able to destroy the dybbuks' incorporeal forms, they can continue possessing corpses to create a never-ending wave of zombies. The only escape will be up.



If Mary's curse was ended by the party and she came with them, she uses the stats of a **knight** and aids in fending off the attackers. She will urge the party to ascend to the third floor, as she knows there are rocks and rubble ready to block the stairs.

If the party shows no signs of retreating against the undead horde, after 5 corpses have been defeated, read the following:

The growing number of reanimated corpses continues on the floor below, quickly outnumbering you. Even the bodies you have already fought begin to twitch with life. A voice from the floor above yells out over the horde, "Up here! If you destroy the stairs, they cannot get to you!"

SCENE 5C: ASH TOWER – THIRD FLOOR

As the party flees the oncoming flood of corpses to the third floor, read or paraphrase the following:

As you climb up to the third floor, large rocks and debris line the floor near the crumbling stairwell. These rocks appear to have been strategically placed so that they can be pushed to destroy the stairs, preventing anyone from climbing up or down the tower.

The rest of the level appears to be a makeshift camp. Empty bedrolls and packs lie strewn about the floor, all marked with the Cyran crest. An almost-lifeless body is propped up against the wall, wrapped in bloody bandages around its waist.

“Push the rocks! Destroy the steps! It’s the only way!” As you approach, the dying man lifts a weak finger toward the stones at the top of the steps.

The party will find large rocks and debris at the top of the stairway that can be used to block the stairway, requiring a successful DC 20 Strength check. The party can also destroy the stonework of the crumbling stairs (AC 8, HP 1) with a simple melee attack, providing no accessible way for the corpses to climb up to this level. Any effect that deals force or thunder damage will also destroy the stairs automatically, stopping the horde.

On this floor, the characters see Gabriel’s makeshift camp. He leans against the wall, nearly dead. If the player characters mistake his form for one of the dybbuk’s corpses, he will yell out things like “I am not dead!” or “I am not one of those demons!” and try to defend himself.

This is Gabriel. If Mary is not with the characters, he will ask the characters if they saw her and inquire about her fate. If the characters are truthful, he will reveal his true form as a deva, an angelic creature with lustrous dark skin and glorious wings. He is clearly near death, and explains that the cursed land will not let him heal, or he would offer to heal them, and would not have sent Mary alone.

What does Gabriel know? He will answer questions to the best of his ability, including the following.

- **How were you injured? What lies above us?** Gabriel warns the characters of the retriever, a metallic ‘spider guardian’ on the top floor. His unit fought the beast and injured it by breaking off one of its mechanical legs, but it killed most of the unit in retaliation. Gabriel will also warn the party of a beast that moved into the next floor above. He speaks of its droning buzz and its large size, but it has left him alone on this level.
- **Why are you here?** Gabriel’s unit was sent to retrieve Cyran relics, encountering the retriever when they went to the top of the tower to retrieve the *Steelheart*. Gabriel was mortally wounded during the battle, and Mary was the only one to make it out unscathed. They waited until rations ran low in

the hopes that others might come find them, but Mary left for help when things seemed bleak. Gabriel remains, too injured to safely escape.

- **No, we mean, why is a deva here?** Gabriel and other celestials came to bring balance against the fiends in this manifest zone’s unending battleground. He deeply regrets not being able to protect his unit any longer.
- **Have you seen any warforged?** Last Star and the warforged under her command passed through not too long ago, but they have not returned. They spoke of a heart among themselves, and seemingly wished to strike a deal with its guardian. Gabriel feigned death and avoided interacting with them, because he knew they would have tried to kill him in his weakened state.
- **If we heal you, will you come help us fight?** The party can offer Gabriel some healing if they wish using their *goodberry wine*, but he will not follow them up into the tower to face the retriever again. He will wait for them on this floor if they return.
- **What are the flying bats with people’s faces?** If the party failed to identify the vargouilles earlier, Gabriel can explain the same information they would have learned with the check.
- **Can you heal our cursed party member?** In exchange for the party having helped Mary or honored her last wish, he can offer them aid if they have suffered a demonic curse or ailment caused by the vargouille’s kiss or the chasme’s proboscis attack (on a higher floor).



SCENE 5D: ASH TOWER – FOURTH FLOOR

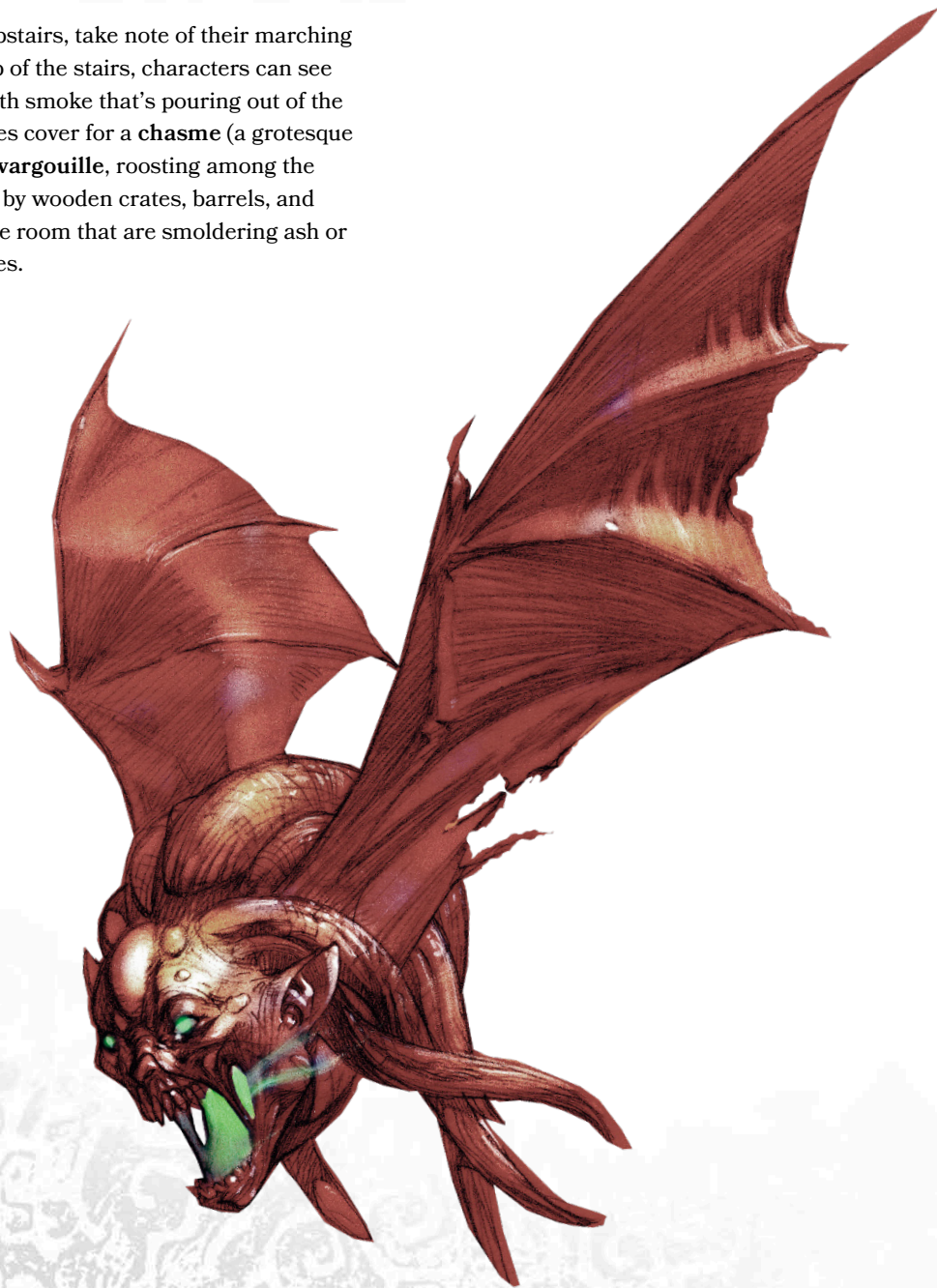
As the characters bid Gabriel farewell and head up the stairs, read or paraphrase the following:

One by one, you climb the steps toward the fourth floor of Ash Tower. A buzzing sound, like a large drone, begins to fill your ears just as the smell of smoke reaches your nose. Looking up, you see the ceiling covered in smoke. The droning buzz begins to rattle your senses, making you catch yourself from a brief sense of vertigo. The higher you go, the louder the buzz, like a swarm of mosquitoes flying into your mind.

As the characters proceed upstairs, take note of their marching order. Upon reaching the top of the stairs, characters can see that this level is half-filled with smoke that's pouring out of the windows. The smoke provides cover for a **chasme** (a grotesque fly-human hybrid) and three **vargouille**, roosting among the crates. The smoke is caused by wooden crates, barrels, and supplies scattered around the room that are smoldering ash or still burning with small flames.

Each character that reaches the top of the stairs must make a save against the chasme's drone ability or fall unconscious on the floor of this level.

The vargouille will use their kiss against any unconscious or incapacitated character and the chasme will focus on anything that attacks it. After two of the three vargouille are killed, two more **vargouille** fly through the windows in the following round. If the characters did not see Mary turn into a vargouille or save her from her fate, one of these will have the fiendish face of the former Mary. If the characters try to look for her after exiting the tower, they will find a headless body near the place where they left her.



SCENE 5E: ASH TOWER – FIFTH FLOOR

Once the chasme and vargouille are defeated, the party can proceed to the top floor of the tower. Read or paraphrase the following:

The smoke diminishes, seeping through the holes in the tower, as you walk up the steps to the top level. Above and around you, you see webbing everywhere. Across the floor are scattered metal remains with carved stars that resemble military ranking. An adamantine morningstar lies broken in half, the hilt still held by a dismembered metal hand. The former commander of the warforged lies broken on the floor.

The webbing concentrates about 15 feet above the floor and becomes thicker the closer to the peak of the tower. Through the webbing, you notice the glowing of a metal orb: the *Steelheart*. The webbing above moves and a metal, seven-legged spider peeks out at you down below, the webbing hiding most of its large body. Its eyes glow as it moves to block the view of the artifact. Around it, entangled in the web, you see several humanoid forms.

This level has a much higher ceiling due to the peak of the tower, all of which is covered in webbing which the retriever uses to hide and gain half cover. Near the very top of the tower, 35 feet above the floor, a metal orb glows through the webbing—the *Steelheart*.

There are several warforged entangled in the webbing—at least three from Last Star’s band, plus Anchor, Spike, and Brutus if they survived their first encounter with the players. As the characters approach, the retriever will kill one of them as a warning (perhaps whichever one gave the players the most difficulty in battle earlier). The warforged will plead for help and will fight the retriever if freed, though they will be at half health.

The **battered retriever** remains in the webbing to provide cover, using its force beam and paralyzing beam to attack characters. If it succeeds in paralyzing a character, it will attempt to scoop them up and bring them to the webbing to be restrained. During the battle, narrate that the tower is swaying as loose stone crumbles. It should be clear to the players that the tower is at risk of falling during the course of the battle.

The webbing can be burned away by fire, whether from a spell or using the smoldering supplies from the previous floor. This can be used to release a warforged or player character from the web, or to free the *Steelheart* to attempt an escape before the retriever is defeated.

If any warforged remain alive after the retriever is defeated, they will try to turn on the party to obtain the *Steelheart* for themselves. However, the tower will begin to fall before battle can start. Proceed to Scene 6: Falling Tower.



AVOIDING THE FINAL FIGHT

It is entirely possible that the party can avoid the fight with the retriever. Since their objective is to obtain the *Steelheart*, they can flee once they get it. A spellcaster with a fire spell, like *scorching ray* or *fireball*, can burn away the webbing so the *Steelheart* falls to the floor. Players may come up with another creative method that makes sense for avoiding the restraining webbing and obtaining the artifact. Use your best judgment in allowing them to attempt whatever method they decide on. If they succeed in releasing it but fail to pick up the artifact before the retriever’s next turn, the retriever will use its turn to grab the artifact and place it back up into the webbing. This object interaction will not use the retriever’s action.

If a party manages to avoid the final fight by getting the *Steelheart* before defeating the retriever, the retriever will angrily try to come after them, poking holes into the floor and the walls of the tower. However, this will cause the tower to begin falling. Proceed to Scene 6: Falling Tower. The retriever will die when the tower collapses.

SCENE 6: FALLING TOWER

The retriever does not need to be defeated for the Steelheart to be obtained. If any warforged are still alive, they will demand the characters give them the *Steelheart* or threaten to kill them for it. Before a battle can break out, the clear sounds of the tower crumbling and a distinct leaning of the tower will indicate the tower is indeed going to fall.

The tower will fall in 5 rounds, giving characters a chance to figure out a safe escape. An item giving characters *feather fall* could be found in an earlier adventure or part of this adventure. If the party returns to Gabriel and has healed any of his wounds, he can grasp two Medium or Small characters, gliding out a window and down to safety. If they do not return to him, they will find him outside after escaping the tower.

If any characters ride the tower down, they will take 10d6 bludgeoning damage. If they are inside the tower when it falls, add 8d6 more damage from the crumbling rocks falling on them. If a character that falls with the tower has any glass on their person (like *goodberry wine*), it all shatters.

AFTERMATH

After the tower falls, Gabriel meets the party near the rubble. Read or paraphrase the following.

Gabriel smiles to you, his dark skin seemingly glowing with divine light. "Thank you for destroying that creature that killed my people. I only wish I had not led them to their deaths. Please, take this token as a gift, so that you may escape this wretched place." Gabriel holds out his hand, in it a small, hand-crafted token decorated with runes and a large feather. "I will remain here to bury the dead, both of my own people and of those whose bodies were used by the evil fiends to attack you. Then this land shall be consecrated before I return to my home in Shavarath." Gabriel bids farewell to you and begins his long, arduous task.

Before the characters depart, Gabriel provides them with a gift: a small token with carvings of a bird on it. This *Quaal's feather token of a bird* was the planned means of escape for his unit, but they unfortunately won't need it. He hopes this will help the party escape the horrors of the Mournland.

Regardless of any healing the party offers Gabriel, he will choose to remain in the manifest zone to bury the dead and consecrate the land, and then he will return home to Shavarath. Mary will stay with him, if she survived the adventure.

Any warforged that remain in the tower will die in its fall. For a DM who wants to continue this plot thread beyond the scope of the Convergence Manifesto adventure path, the Lord of Blades could find the remains of the warforged and revive them, finding out what happened to the *Steelheart* and sending more agents after it.

QUAAL'S FEATHER TOKEN, BIRD

Wondrous item, rare

This tiny object looks like a feather. You can use an action to toss the token 5 feet into the air. The token disappears and an enormous, multicolored bird takes its place. The bird has the statistics of a roc, but it obeys your simple commands and can't attack. It can carry up to 500 pounds while flying at its maximum speed (16 miles an hour for a maximum of 144 miles per day, with a one-hour rest for every 3 hours of flying), or 1,000 pounds at half that speed. The bird disappears after flying its maximum distance for a day or if it drops to 0 hit points. You can dismiss the bird as an action.

RETURNING HOME

After Ash Tower, the party can make their return home without any lethal encounters in the Mournland. If desired, you can roll on the **Mournland Random Encounters table** to add more flavor. Otherwise, characters can navigate the way they came, avoiding any dangers they faced before, or use the *Quaal's feather token of a bird* that Gabriel gave them to fly most of the way back. While passing back through the dead-gray mists from Scene 2, the characters must succeed on two DC 14 Wisdom (Survival) checks. Upon a success, each character suffers 5 points of psychic damage. Upon a failure, each character suffers 10 points of psychic damage as they wander lost.

Upon their return home, Lhara pays the party 800 gp each.

THE CONVERGENCE MANIFESTO

With the adventurers returned safely home with Farious's newest artifact, the *Steelheart*, the Provost nears the completion of his *Convergence Manifesto*. Only two episodes remain in this adventure path, continuing with the penultimate AE01-12: *Lost in Dreams*.



APPENDIX A: BESTIARY

ANCHOR

Medium humanoid (warforged), lawful neutral

Armor Class 18 (composite plating)

Hit Points 60 (8d8 + 24)

Speed 30 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 16 (+3) | 13 (+1) | 16 (+3) | 14 (+2) | 11 (+0) | 15 (+2) |

Saving Throws Con +5, Wis +2

Damage Resistances poison

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Common

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Brave. Anchor has advantage on saving throws against being frightened.

Warforged Resilience. Anchor has advantage on saves against being poisoned, and is immune to disease. They also do not need to eat, breathe or drink, and do not suffer from exhaustion due to lack of rest and cannot be put to sleep magically.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Anchor makes two melee attacks.

Hooked Spear. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d10 + 3) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

Heavy Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, range 100/400 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d10 + 1) piercing damage.

Leadership (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). For 1 minute, Anchor can utter a special command or warning whenever a non-hostile creature that it can see within 30 ft. of it makes an attack roll or a saving throw. The creature can add a d4 to its roll provided it can hear and understand Anchor. A creature can benefit from only one Leadership die at a time. This effect ends if Anchor is incapacitated.

REACTIONS

Parry. Anchor adds 2 to their AC against one melee attack that would hit them. To do so, Anchor must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.

BRUTUS

Medium humanoid (warforged), lawful neutral

Armor Class 18 (heavy plating)

Hit Points 127 (15d8 + 60)

Speed 30 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|--------|--------|
| 20 (+5) | 10 (+0) | 18 (+4) | 10 (+0) | 6 (-2) | 8 (-1) |

Saving Throws Str +8, Con +7

Skills Athletics +8

Damage Resistances poison

Senses passive Perception 8

Languages Common

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Brute. A melee weapon deals one extra die of its damage when Brutus hits with it (included in the attack).

Warforged Resilience. Brutus has advantage on saves against being poisoned, and is immune to disease. They also do not need to eat, breathe or drink, and do not suffer from exhaustion due to lack of rest and cannot be put to sleep magically.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Brutus makes two melee attacks.

Mace Fists. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d6 + 5) bludgeoning damage.



BATTERED RETRIEVER

Large construct, lawful evil

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 168 (16d10 + 80)

Speed 40 ft., climb 40 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 22 (+6) | 16 (+3) | 20 (+5) | 3 (-4) | 11 (+0) | 4 (-3) |

Saving Throws Dex +7, Con +9, Wis +4

Skills Perception +4, Stealth +7

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

Damage Immunities necrotic, poison, psychic

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, poisoned

Senses blindsight 30 ft., darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14

Languages understands Abyssal, Elvish, and Undercommon but can't speak

Challenge 9 (5,000 XP)

Innate Spellcasting. The battered retriever's innate spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 12, +4 to hit with spell attacks). It can innately cast *web* 3 times per day, requiring no material components.

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

Web Walker. The battered retriever ignores movement restrictions caused by webbing.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The retriever makes two foreleg attacks and uses its force or paralyzing beam once, if available.

Foreleg. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (2d8 + 6) slashing damage.

Force Beam. The retriever targets one creature it can see within 60 feet of it. The target must make a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw, taking 16 (3d10) force damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Paralyzing Beam (Recharge 5-6). The retriever targets one creature it can see within 60 feet of it. The target must succeed on a DC 16 Constitution saving throw or be paralyzed for 1 minute. The paralyzed target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

If the paralyzed creature is Medium or smaller, the retriever can pick it up as part of the retriever's move and walk or climb with it at full speed.

DYBBUK

Medium fiend (demon), chaotic evil

Armor Class 14

Hit Points 37 (5d8 + 15)

Speed 0 ft., fly 40 ft. (hover)

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|--------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 6 (-2) | 19 (+4) | 16 (+3) | 16 (+3) | 15 (+2) | 14 (+2) |

Skills Deception +4, Intimidation +4, Perception +4

Damage Resistances acid, cold, fire, lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 14

Languages Abyssal, Common, telepathy 120 ft.

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Incorporeal. The dybbuk 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 an object.

Innate Spellcasting. The dybbuk's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (Spell Save DC 12). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At-will: *dimension door*

3/day each: *fear*, *phantasmal force*

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

Violate Corpse. The dybbuk can use a bonus action while it is possessing a corpse to make it do something unnatural, such as vomit blood, twist its head all the way around, or cause a quadruped to move as a biped. Any beast or humanoid that sees this behavior must succeed on a DC 12 Wisdom saving throw or become frightened of the dybbuk for 1 minute. The frightened creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. A creature that succeeds on a saving throw against this ability is immune to Violate Corpse for 24 hours.

ACTIONS

Tendrils. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) necrotic damage. If the target is a creature, its hit point maximum is also reduced by 3 (1d6). This reduction lasts until the target finishes a short or long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0.

Possess Corpse (Recharge 6). The dybbuk disappears into an intact corpse it can see within 5 feet of it. The corpse must be Large or smaller and be that of a beast or a humanoid. The dybbuk is now effectively the possessed creature. Its type becomes undead, though it now looks alive, and it gains a number of temporary hit points equal to the corpse's hit point maximum in life.

While possessing the corpse, the dybbuk retains its hit points, alignment, Intelligence, Wisdom, Charisma, telepathy, and immunity to poison damage, exhaustion, and being charmed and frightened. It otherwise uses the possessed target's game statistics, gaining access to its knowledge and proficiencies but not its class features, if any.

The possession lasts until the temporary hit points are lost (at which point the body becomes a corpse once more) or the dybbuk ends its possession using a bonus action. When the possession ends, the dybbuk reappears in an unoccupied space within 5 feet of the corpse.

CHASME

Large fiend (demon), chaotic evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 84 (13d10 + 13)

Speed 20 ft., fly 60 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 15 (+2) | 15 (+2) | 12 (+1) | 11 (+0) | 14 (+2) | 10 (+0) |

Saving Throws Dex +5, Wis +5

Skills Perception +5

Damage Resistances cold, lightning

Damage Immunities fire, poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses blindsight 10 ft., darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 15

Languages Common, Infernal

Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

Drone. The chasme produces a horrid droning sound to which demons are immune. Any other creature that starts its turn within 30 feet of the chasme must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or fall unconscious for 10 minutes. A creature that can't hear the drone automatically succeeds on the save. The effect on the creature ends if it takes damage or if another creature takes an action to splash it with holy water. If a creature's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, it is immune to the drone for the next 24 hours.

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

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

ACTIONS

Proboscis. Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach ??? ft., one target. **Hit:** 16 (4d6 + 2) piercing damage plus 24 (7d6) necrotic damage, and the target's hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the necrotic damage taken. If this effect reduces a creature's hit point maximum to 0, the creature dies. This reduction to a creature's hit point maximum lasts until the creature finishes a long rest or until it is affected by a spell like greater restoration.

GIBBERING MOUTHER

Medium aberration, neutral

Armor Class 9

Hit Points 67 (9d8 + 27)

Speed 10 ft., swim 10 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|---------|--------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 10 (+0) | 8 (-1) | 16 (+3) | 3 (-4) | 10 (+0) | 6 (-2) |

Condition Immunities prone

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages —

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Aberrant Ground. The ground in a 10-foot radius around the moulder is doughlike difficult terrain. Each creature that starts its turn in that area must succeed on a DC 10 Strength saving throw or have its speed reduced to 0 until the start of its next turn.

Gibbering. The moulder babbles incoherently while it can see any creature and isn't incapacitated. Each creature that starts its turn within 20 feet of the moulder and can hear the gibbering must succeed on a DC 10 Wisdom saving throw. On a failure, the creature can't take reactions until the start of its next turn and rolls a d8 to determine what it does during its turn. On a 1 to 4, the creature does nothing. On a 5 or 6, the creature takes no action or bonus action and uses all its movement to move in a randomly determined direction. On a 7 or 8, the creature makes a melee attack against a randomly determined creature within its reach or does nothing if it can't make such an attack.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The gibbering moulder makes one bite attack and, if it can, uses its Blinding Spittle.

Bites. Melee Weapon Attack: +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. **Hit:** 17 (5d6) piercing damage. If the target is Medium or smaller, it must succeed on a DC 10 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone. If the target is killed by this damage, it is absorbed into the moulder.

Blinding Spittle (Recharge 5-6). The moulder spits a chemical glob at a point it can see within 15 feet of it. The glob explodes in a blinding flash of light on impact. Each creature within 5 feet of the flash must succeed on a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw or be blinded until the end of the moulder's next turn.

KNIGHT

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 18 (plate)
Hit Points 52 (8d8 + 16)
Speed 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws Con +4, Wis +2
Senses passive Perception 10
Languages any one language (usually Common)
Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Brave. The knight has advantage on saving throws against being frightened.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The knight makes two melee attacks.

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

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

Leadership (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). For 1 minute, the knight can utter a special command or warning whenever a nonhostile creature that it can see within 30 ft. of it makes an attack roll or a saving throw. The creature can add a d4 to its roll provided it can hear and understand the knight. A creature can benefit from only one Leadership die at a time. This effect ends if the knight is incapacitated.

REACTIONS

Parry. The knight adds 2 to its AC against one melee attack that would hit it. To do so, the knight must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.

LIVING THUNDERWAVE

Large ooze, neutral

Armor Class 8
Hit Points 74 (7d10 + 35)
Speed 20 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|---------|--------|---------|--------|--------|--------|
| 16 (+3) | 6 (-2) | 20 (+5) | 1 (-5) | 8 (-1) | 1 (-5) |

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Damage Immunities thunder

Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, deafened, exhaustion, frightened, prone

Senses blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 9

Languages —
Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Flowing Form. The living spell takes up its entire space. Other creatures can enter the space, but a creature that does so is subjected to the living spell's Engulf and has disadvantage on the saving throw. Creatures inside the cube can be seen but have total cover.

A creature within 5 feet of the living spell can take an action to pull a creature or object out of the living spell. Doing so requires a successful DC 13 Strength check, and the creature making the attempt takes 13 (3d8) thunder damage.

The living spell can hold only one Large creature or up to four Medium or smaller creatures inside it at a time.

ACTIONS

Thunder Burst. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 16 (3d8+3) thunder damage.

Engulf. The living spell moves up to its speed. While doing so, it can enter Large or smaller creatures' spaces. Whenever the living spell enters a creature's space, the creature must make a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw. On a successful save, the creature can choose to be pushed 5 feet back or to the side of the living spell. A creature that chooses not to be pushed suffers the consequences of a failed saving throw.

On a failed save, the living spell enters the creature's space, and the creature takes 13 (3d8) thunder damage and is engulfed. The engulfed creature can't breathe, is restrained, and takes 27 (6d8) thunder damage at the start of each of the living spell's turns. When the living spell moves, the engulfed creature moves with it.

An engulfed creature can try to escape by taking an action to make a DC 13 Strength check. On a success, the creature escapes and enters a space of its choice within 5 feet of the living spell.

SHADOW ASSASSIN

Medium undead (chaotic evil), chaotic evil

Armor Class 14

Hit Points 78 (12d8 + 24)

Speed 40 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|--------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 6 (-2) | 19 (+4) | 14 (+2) | 13 (+1) | 12 (+1) | 14 (+2) |

Saving Throws Dex +8, Int +5

Skills Perception +9, Stealth +12

Damage Vulnerabilities radiant

Damage Resistances acid, cold, fire, lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons

Damage Immunities necrotic, poison

Condition Immunities exhaustion, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 19

Languages —

Challenge 9 (5,000 XP)

Amorphous. The assassin can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing.

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

Sunlight Weakness. While in sunlight, the assassin has disadvantage on attack rolls, ability checks, and saving throws.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The assassin makes two Shadow Blade attacks.

Shadow Blade. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage plus 10 (3d6) necrotic damage. Unless the target is immune to necrotic damage, the target's Strength score is reduced by 1d4 each time it is hit by this attack. The target dies if this reduces its Strength to 0. Otherwise, the reduction lasts until the target finishes a short or long rest. If a non-evil humanoid dies from this attack, a shadow (see the Monster Manual) rises from the corpse 1d4 hours later.

SPIKE

Medium humanoid (warforged), lawful neutral

Armor Class 16 (darkwood core)

Hit Points 67 (9d8 + 27)

Speed 30 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|--------|---------|---------|---------|---------|--------|
| 8 (-1) | 18 (+4) | 16 (+3) | 11 (+0) | 15 (+2) | 6 (-2) |

Saving Throws Dex +7, Wis +5

Skills Acrobatics +7

Damage Resistances poison

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages Common

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Armor Spikes. A creature that touches Spike or hits them with a melee attack while within 5 feet of them takes 9 (2d8) piercing damage.

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

Warforged Resilience. Spike has advantage on saves against being poisoned, and is immune to disease. They also do not need to eat, breathe or drink, and do not suffer from exhaustion due to lack of rest and cannot be put to sleep magically.

ACTIONS

Rapier. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) piercing damage.

VARGOUILLE

Tiny fiend, lawful evil

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 13 (3d4 + 6)

Speed 5 ft., fly 40 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|--------|---------|---------|--------|--------|--------|
| 6 (-2) | 14 (+2) | 14 (+2) | 4 (-3) | 7 (-2) | 2 (-4) |

Damage Resistances cold, lightning

Damage Immunities fire, poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 8

Languages Common, Infernal

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

ACTIONS

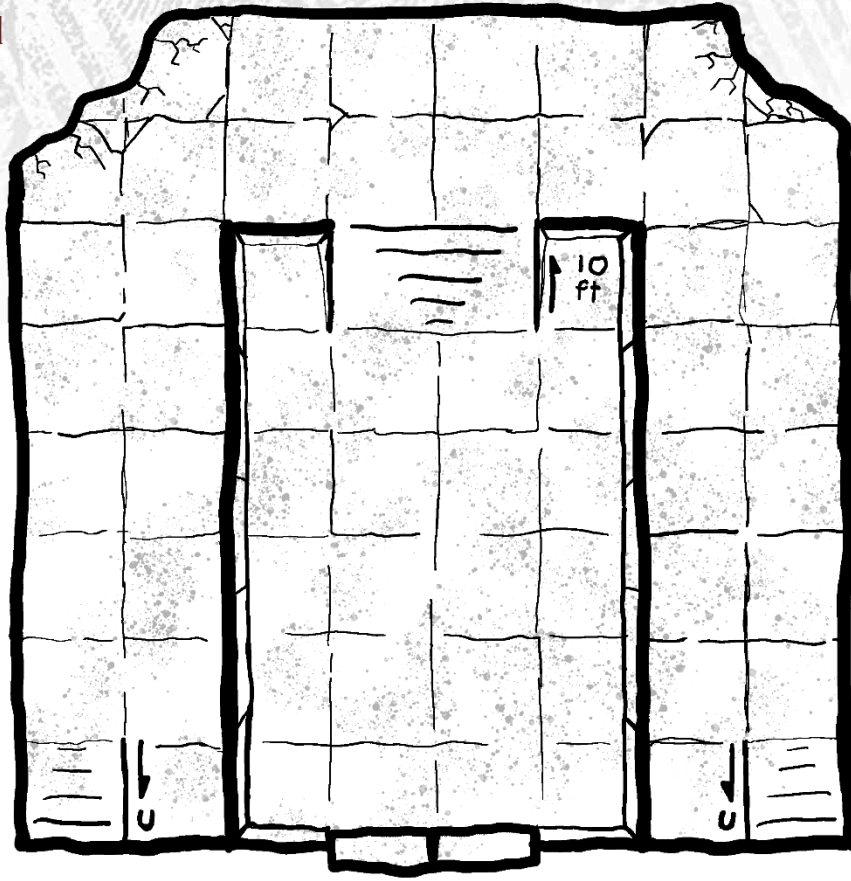
Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage plus 10 (3d6) poison damage.

Kiss. The vargouille kisses one incapacitated humanoid within 5 feet of it. The target must succeed on a DC 12 Charisma saving throw or become cursed. The cursed target loses 1 point of Charisma after each hour, as its head takes on fiendish aspects. The curse doesn't advance while the target is in sunlight or the area of a daylight spell; don't count that time. When the cursed target's Charisma becomes 2, it dies, and its head tears from its body and becomes a new vargouille. Casting *remove curse*, *greater restoration*, or a similar spell on the target before the transformation is complete can end the curse. Doing so undoes the changes made to the target by the curse.

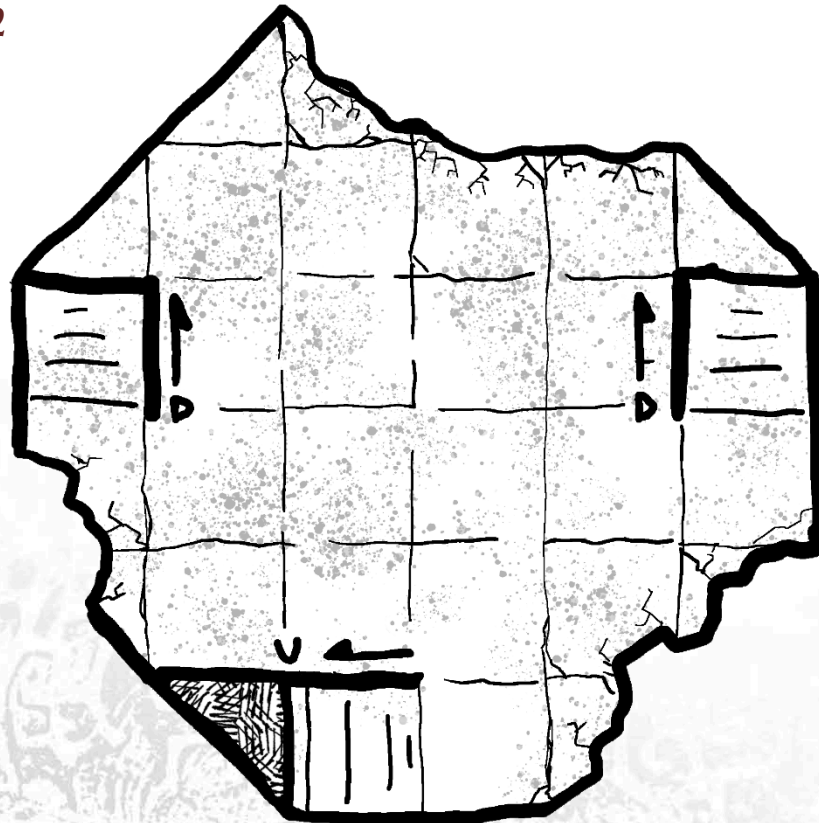
Stunning Shriek. The vargouille shrieks. Each humanoid and beast within 30 feet of the vargouille and able to hear it must succeed on a DC 12 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened until the end of the vargouille's next turn. While frightened in this way, a target is stunned. If a target's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the target is immune to the *Stunning Shriek* of all vargouilles for 1 hour.

APPENDIX B: MAPS OF ASH TOWER

LEVEL 1



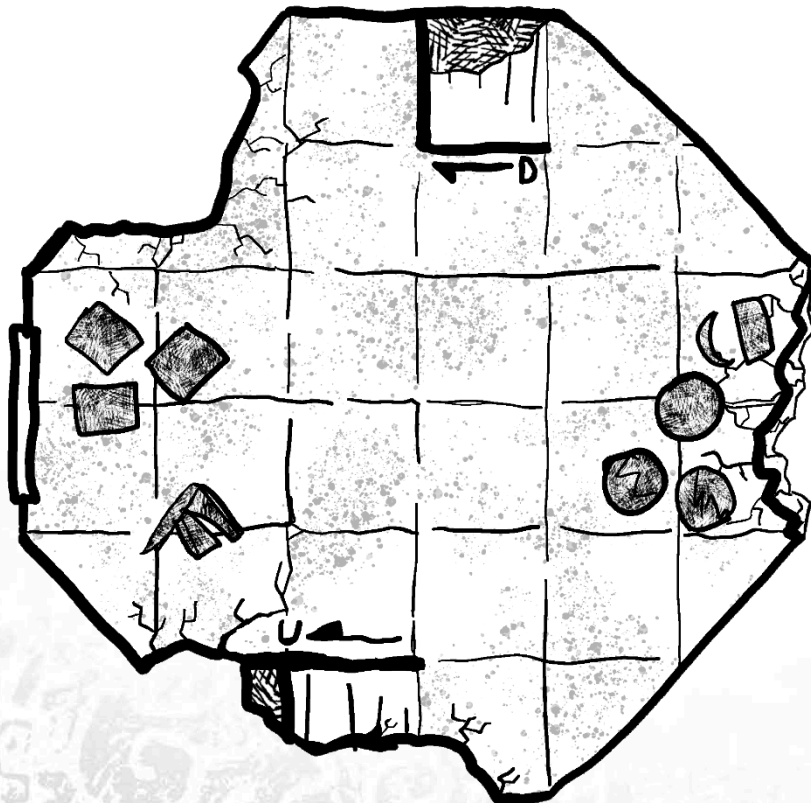
LEVEL 2



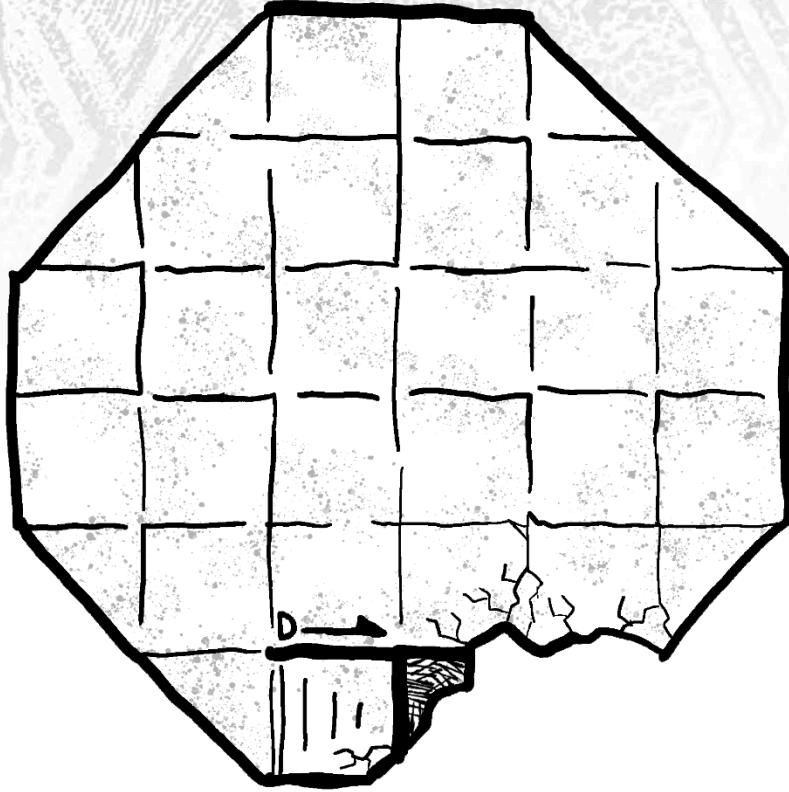
LEVEL 3



LEVEL 4



LEVEL 5



LEVEL 5 - SIDE VIEW

