





# A Tale of Two Towers

The annual celebration of the abolishment of the Great Law of Humanity is happening in Hillsfar. As the leader of the factions in the region, Elanil Elassidil must attend the event, however, she has a guest with her. Elanil is looking after a young girl, who the adventurers may have met before, and has summoned adventurers to Elventree to watch over the girl while she is tending to the celebration. A simple babysitting task shouldn't be too difficult for mighty adventurers, right?

*A 4-Hour Adventure for 11-16 Level Characters*



Jia Jian Tin  
*Writer*

**Adventure Code:** CCC – BWM – 003

**Optimized For:** APL 13

**Version:** 1.2

**Living City Adventure By:** Bill Kerney

**Edited by:** Christine Weidenbach

**Playtested by:** Adam Dowdy, Jawsh Murdock, James Sanford, The Seer, Ruthany Hour, Cindy Barton, Willow Corson

**Special Thanks to:** Greg Dreher and all the other people that made Living City memorable

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CCC – FRS – 003 A Tale of Two Towers

## Introduction

Welcome to *A Tale of Two Towers*, a D&D Adventurers League™ adventure, part of the official D&D Adventurers League™ organized play system and a standalone module written for Bookwyrms 2018 in Fresno, California.

This adventure is designed for **three to seven 11-16 level characters** and is optimized for **five characters with an average party level (APL) of 13**. Characters outside this level range cannot participate in this adventure.

This adventure is set in the Moonsea region of the Forgotten Realms, near the city of Hillsfar.

## Adjusting This Adventure

This adventure provides suggestions in making adjustments for smaller or larger groups, characters of higher or lower levels, and characters that are otherwise a bit more powerful than the adventure is optimized for. You're not bound to these adjustments; they're here for your convenience.

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

### Determining Party Strength

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

Some encounters may include a sidebar that offers suggestions for certain party strengths. If a particular recommendation is not offered or appropriate for your group, you don't have to make adjustments.

## Before Play at the Table

Before you start play, consider the following:

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

## Playing the Dungeon Master

You have the most important role—facilitating the enjoyment of the game for the players. You provide the narrative and bring the words on these pages to life.

To facilitate this, keep in mind the following:

**You're Empowered.** Make decisions about how the group interacts with the adventure; adjusting or improvising is encouraged, so long as you maintain the adventure's spirit. This doesn't allow you to implement house rules or change those of the Adventurers League, however; they should be consistent in this regard.

**Challenge Your Players.** Gauge the experience level of your **players** (not the characters), try to feel out (or ask) what they like in a game, and attempt to deliver the experience they're after. Everyone should have the opportunity to shine.

**Keep the Adventure Moving.** When the game starts to get bogged down, feel free to provide hints and clues to your players so they can attempt to solve puzzles, engage in combat, and roleplay interactions without getting too frustrated over a lack of information. This gives players "little victories" for figuring out good choices from clues. Watch for stalling—play loses momentum when this happens. At the same time, make sure that the players don't finish too early; provide them with a full play experience.

# Adventure Primer

## Adventure Background

After the fall of the brutal regime of Hillsfar's First Lord Torin Nomerthal, an annual celebration was put into place to remember those who suffered and those who were sacrificed during his reign. It is required for Elanil Ellassidil to attend this celebration, because she is the main faction leader in the region.

However, Elanil has a guest. This guest is Elisande, a girl who has appeared in several modules who the adventurers may already be acquainted with, and a little too wild to attend such a celebration, so Elanil decided to hire some adventurers to take care of her while she is busy attending the festivities. She invites them to meet at the Plodding Plow in The Stop. Upon meeting the characters Elisande decides to bring the party on a '*greet avontuur!*'

### Location and NPC Summary

The following NPCs and locations feature prominently in this adventure:

**Ritifin Chraston.** This cowardly human archmage is a self-proclaimed Sage of the Highest Order. He is the leader of *Grovenson*, which is the village which the characters will hopefully save over the course of the module.

**Elisande.** Elisande is a 12-year-old human girl that appears randomly in multiple DDEX/DDAL adventures. She is famously followed by a blind goat. In this adventure, she is a guest of Elanil Ellassidil in Elventree, and Elanil has hired the party to babysit her. Elisande proclaims she will bring the party on a '*greet avontuur!*'

**Grishneck Oplehfang, Shadow Mage.** Grishneck is the half-ogre ruler of the Shadow Keep, and a Shadow Mage. He is of Lawful Good alignment, with an emphasis on lawful part of that. On his home plane he helps people by offering to raise them from the dead for free, should they die somewhat near his keep. His only demand? Seven years of service for being raised. Creatures raised by him are still dead, but they act on their own free will and suffer none of the other side effects of being dead. They are unaffected by turn effects, and divine spells that are more effective against undead do not gain extra benefit against them.

**Gorgash, an Undead Stone Giant.** Gorgash is a former Stone Giant adventurer that has been raised by Grishneck after his untimely death. After serving the agreed seven years, Gorgash decided to continue working for Grishneck because he is a good employer. Gorgash is sent to speak with the party and clarify any misunderstandings they may have about the Shadow Keep.

**Thistle Twom and Thwom, The Twin Gnomes.** Thistle Twom and Thwom are a pair of gnomes from the Grey

Keep. The strange thing about them is that they are the same person, only he has been split into two people. He lived on the Plane of Law, which is basically one giant machine. The incredible orderliness of the plane drove him insane, and his illness got so severe he ended up splitting into two different entities. One half assuming the identity of an Archpriest and the other half an Archmage.

## Adventure Overview

As the adventure begins in the *Introduction*, the characters arrive at The Stop a little early for their meeting with Elanil. Glenna Moonsmith provides them with warm food and all the drinks they need. Mid-day, Elanil arrives with Elisande. After Elanil leaves to get to her duties, Elisande declares the party is going on a '*greet avontuur*' and pulls out a bottle of Dragon's Breath from her dusty bag and starts serving everyone.

In *Part One*, characters receive a plea from *Ritifin Chraston the Sage of the Highest Order* from *Grovenson*. *Ritifin* requests some diplomatic assistance, and, if necessary, a little bit of violence. Upon arriving to *Grovenson*, the adventurers learn two mage towers have magically appeared outside of town and need to send one back from whence it came to prevent an all-out war from breaking out in the area.

In *Part Two*, the adventurers can explore the two towers and interact with a representative from the Shadow Keep. Characters may also visit the Shadow Keep and meet with the half-ogre Shadow Mage. By the end of this chapter, characters should have decided which tower to send back – either the Grey Keep which is full of insane gnomes, or the Shadow Keep which is filled with intelligent (but not evil, in fact most have a good alignment) undead.

In *Part Three*, the adventurers will explore the tower they have chosen to send back and work their way through puzzles and traps before meeting with the 'Big Bad' in the final room. If the characters successfully send one of the towers back, they will have succeeded in saving the city from a potentially devastating war between mages.

## Adventure Hooks

*A Tale of Two Towers* is a standalone adventure that can be inserted into any campaign a DM might be running. As a DM you can simply change the reason characters are in Hillsfar or change the location in which they meet *Elisande*.

**Suggested Story Hook.** Elanil Ellassidil, the Moonsilver Herald, is a bard of some renown in the area around Hillsfar. She is also the main faction contact in the region. She contacts the characters with an apology for the short notice, but asks if they could help babysit a 12-year-old for three days as a favor to her? Hopefully this contact with someone so prominent within the factions will lead to better jobs in the future for the adventurers.

### Unique but the Same

This module is slight different from the general Adventurers League module. The whole module is a puzzle and the puzzling nature of the module is somewhat intended. If you are DMing for a combat heavy group who typically struggle with puzzles, you may want to provide more hints. Otherwise, keep certain information from the players to have them thinking and questioning things all the time. Playtest feedback has suggested players love the module because they are intrigue by the puzzle style of the modules or hate the module because they are frustrated by all the puzzles (even the fights are puzzles). Use DM discretion to release extra information to your players. Feel free to contact me at [bouncytoufu@gmail.com](mailto:bouncytoufu@gmail.com) if you are struggling to understand any part of the puzzles.

It is important that you record these following attributes about their characters before the game starts:

- 1. Their Strength modifier.** This will be used to secretly calculate weapon damage (2 per dice + half of Strength modifier)
- 2. Their spellcasting attribute modifier.** This is only relevant for classes which adds the modifier to spell damage (Warlock with invocation, Evokers, etc).
- 3. Whether their character can see in the dark naturally.** This is mainly important for the description of the Aegis of the Raven Queen in the Shadow Keep since the room is dark.

## Introduction: The Guest

**Estimated Duration:** 15 minutes

The Stop is a small town halfway between Hillsfar and Yûlash that has grown from a waystation into a hamlet devoted to servicing caravans and providing a market for the many surrounding farms to sell their produce. Due to the frequent passing caravans, The Stop has become quite cosmopolitan despite it being so close to the larger city of Hillsfar. Many of the Phlan refugees have relocated here following the elemental devastation of Mulmaster in hopes of finding supplies to aid their families left back in the City of Danger. But today the traffic is slow, with only a few Red Plume soldiers trotting around. It is likely most people are back in the city of Hillsfar for the pending celebration.

The Plodding Plow is a pleasant inn and tavern that caters to all kinds. Here many a trade deal is cemented over a tankard of ale. It has the following general features:

**Ceilings.** Fifteen feet to a high, open ceiling with exposed joists and struts.

**Light.** It's midday, and sunny with ample light coming through the windows.

**Fireplace.** The fire is currently lit, and roaring. Those entering or ending their turn in the fireplace take 4 (1d8) fire damage.

The characters are currently sitting down to a midday meal at the Plodding Plow. Glenna Moonsmith, the owner of the tavern, gladly serves the adventurers any food or drinks they require, after all Elanil told her to put everything on her tab. There is no one in the tavern right now besides the adventurers and Glenna, because it is midday and most people are either busy working or headed to the Hillsfar celebration. Allow some time for the characters to introduce themselves to each other.

### My Little Guest

When the party is ready, read or paraphrase:

The Plodding Plow is empty, partly due to the time of the day and partly because of the huge celebration about to happen in Hillsfar. Glenna Moonsmith is happily attending to you and your party members. She offers endless trays of drinks to compliment your hearty meal.

About an hour after you are served, Elanil Elassidil arrives with a grinning girl with wild and messy hair, and a pock-marked face. The little girl is dressed up in a clean white dress and carries a dusty sling bag. She holds onto the fine fabric of Elanil's dress with one hand while her other hand clutches a bloodied kitchen knife tightly.

"Thank you for watching after her while I am occupied. I'm grateful you are willingly to accept such a mundane task! Here she is, Elisande. I have tried my best to clean her up, but we've been running late all morning. Here are the keys to the Hall of the Unicorn. I must be off, busy day, and thank you once again for the help. Don't get into trouble, Elisande."

Elanil turns around and leaves before you have time to swallow your food. The little girl stares after Elanil as she leaves the tavern. Once the faction leader has exited, she turns back to the party with a wide beaming smile that send shivers down your spines. She jumps on the table with all the food and crouches down. She sets her knife down and opens her dusty bag, as she rummages through it she sends wisps of dust flying around her, causing you to cough.

When the dust settles, and your coughing dies down, she is holding a bottle of Dragon's Breath. She rolls it between her hands a few times before she yells out at the top of her lungs, "Outsides! Eyes wishin' to be on greet avontuur wit youse! Wese hab greet fun!"

Elisande begins serving each of the characters some of the Dragon Breath, dumping any of the remaining contents of their tankards out before refilling them with the strong liquid. She does not drink any herself and will refuse any alcohol if the characters offer any to her because she "be unde'age." Allow the characters to finish their meals and have some fun with Elisande and her eccentricities. During the conversation she demands tales from the adventurers while sharing her own tale of slaying the six-fingered demon prince with the help of a group of other great adventurers. If Elisande recognizes any character, she attaches herself to them, sitting closer to them and being more focused on their stories than those she is unfamiliar with.

### Roleplaying Elisande

Elisande is an orphaned 12-year-old human girl. She is vastly fascinated with outsiders (anyone not from her village). She left her tiny home island near Phlan with the



help of adventurers before the destruction of Phlan. Since then, she and her goat are famous (or some say infamous) for helping adventurers out of unexpected situations in unexpected ways. Now she just yearns to visit new places and explore the world. She has few morals and due to her upbringing, no true concept of right or wrong.

**Don't touch me!** Have some fun roleplaying Elisande. If any players who don't know who she is, have her stab them with her bloody kitchen knife. Just fake a die roll (auto hit/never crits) and deal 1 piercing and 70 (20d6) Necrotic damage. It should not kill a Tier 3 character, but it would emphasize not to mess with her. The point to get through is Elisande is the boss not the characters.

## The Plea for Help

When the party is ready, read or paraphrase:

You spend a good amount of time telling tales and having fun with Elisande, who is as charming as she is strange. Before you know it, the sun has set. The group decides to spend the night here at the Inn in The Stop instead of traveling at night with a little girl.

After a good night rest, you all wake up in the morning to find yourself in a much classier room than you went to sleep in. You look around the room, your fellow party members are all here and appear to have just woken up as well. In the center of the room is a table, Elisande sits on top of it, dangling her legs, holding a letter in her hand.

As you each start rolling out of bed, she leaps down off the table, feet thudding on the wooden floor, and yells, "Outsides! Adventuur for outsides!"

Give players the Player Handout #1 or read the letter:

*Greetings my friends!*

*My name is Ritifin, a seer of high repute and renown who is currently residing in the charming little town of Grosvenson. The people of my town, being mainly farmers and backwards folk, have turned to me for guidance and leadership during these rather trying times. I, with great humility, accepted their charge and have been scouring the realms for men and women of action and wit to assist me in resolving Grosvenson's problem. We have a matter of an unusual political succession to determine, and we need your assistance.*

*I, being a mere sage and expert on all things magical, have no money to offer you -- but I think I have something far better than gold to offer as a reward for your aid in this important matter.*

*As always,  
(Signed and notarized)  
Ritifin Chraston  
Sage of the Highest Order  
Duly Chosen Regent of Grosvenson*

The characters have never heard of Ritifin, the Sage of the Highest Order, or the town of Grosvenson. This part is meant to be confusing, but the characters will slowly gather more and more information as time passes. Play out the confusion and proceed to the next part when the group is ready.

# Part 1: The Shadow Mage and the Gnomish Twins

**Estimated Duration:** 45 minutes

## Arrival in Grosvenson

When the party is ready, read or paraphrase:

When you open the tavern doors, you're greeted by a completely different view than you were expecting.

Rather than familiar sight of The Stop, you see a different town of approximately 10,000 people bustling with activity. Carts are carrying produce in from the outlying farms, vendors are selling their wares along the streets.

There is something unusual to note though. Just on the outskirts of town, in the middle of the corn fields, rise two enormous towers sitting on huge slabs of rock. One of the towers lies to the north of the town, and one to the east. Something about their appearance makes it seem as if they were actually dropped there from somewhere else. You can even see a barn half-crushed by the east tower. The townspeople keep glancing warily at the towers as they go about their daily business, never looking for too long, but each with a strange worry furrowing their brows.

The town of Grosvenson has all the amenities one would expect in a small country community: taverns, weapon shops, temples, etc. When the characters step out of the tavern, the local head of the city watch greets them courteously and takes them immediately to see **Ritifin (Lawful Neutral, Archmage)**. Ritifin is in a building that vaguely resembles the Parthenon – it is made out of pure marble and has sculptures and engraving covering it. A sign outside the it reads “Grosvenson Hall of Knowledge.” The Hall of Knowledge is nothing more than an ornate library that Ritifin has converted into his headquarters.

### Roleplaying Ritifin Chraston

Ritifin Chraston was a student under Fulstrom, the previous Sage of Grosvenson. All Ritifin wanted was to study magic for the rest of his life in the quiet town of Grosvenson, far away from all the politics of the world. Unfortunately for Ritifin, when Fulstrom perished he was the only man fit to be the Sage for the town. He doesn't hate the job. He especially enjoys how much the townspeople respect him, but he prefers spending his time studying rather than giving less than authentic sage advice and counseling to the people in the city. And as for this

potentially threatening situation, he really wishes he wouldn't have to be involved.

He is a coward and avoids engaging in combat at all costs. He should never even provoke people into a fight, and always be immediately apologetic when offending those stronger than himself. He has all non-combat and non-mind-altering spells. He tries very hard to hide the fact that he is a **coward** and is likely unable to defend himself, hiding these facts behind verbose statements of his grand abilities.

\*He has a Contingency spell prepared to teleport him to the Barracks if any combat breaks out. He would then cast *Expeditious Retreat* and run.

Ritifin has a phobia for halflings, gnomes, dwarves, and other short races due to his recent interaction with the gnomes from the Grey Tower “attacking” him (mentioned below during his story). If there are any smaller characters in the party, then he will react much like the elephant seeing the mouse – he will jump up on table, shudder visibly and demand that the smallfolk leave. If they refuse to leave, Ritifin will become miffed and will not tell the party about the *Estate Transference Spell*, leaving it to the party to figure it out on their own. The short characters can easily eavesdrop from the outside, since Ritifin will talk in a loud and self-aggrandizing manner.

As Elisande enters the room, she walks about picking up random books. She flips through the pages of several tomes and drops them to the marble floor. This clearly irritates Ritifin. After a few books, she appears to find one that interests her. She sits down in a nearby chair, gets comfortable, and begins carefully tearing out its pages and shoving them into her mouth, attempting to eat them.

Ritifin's face is one of horror, but he composes himself, managing not to yell at the young girl. While he tries his best to ignore her, the slow rip of each tearing page causes his right eye to twitch ever so slightly.

When the party is ready, Ritifin will use his magic to create an illusion that is like a live movie playing in front of the characters as he tells his story:

Hello my new friends. I'm so glad you are here to help us, and not a minute too soon! I am Ritifin, Sage of Grosvenson, Master of Arcane Lore, and presently in charge of this unhappy town. I'm sure you have seen the towers outside in the fields. Let me satisfy your curiosity about them a bit.



It was a day like any other in Grosvenson. The sun was shining, the crops were growing, and I was free to pursue my studies. See, I am interested in... I'm interested in matters that are probably too complex for you lot to understand. I mean, if it doesn't involve killing ogres, mindlessly stomping down foes, or other brutish and violent machinations, then you adventuring types probably wouldn't be able to comprehend any of it anyway.

Anyhow, around four ten-days ago, there was a mighty shudder in the air and that's when our town's first... visitor arrived. I ran out of the Hall and saw that famer McCully's chicken coop had been completely crushed by what looked like a large rock with a castle on top if it! The unlucky animals inside were all crushed to death, I'm afraid.

After a few minutes, I saw, walking out of the still-settling cloud of dirt and dust, what appeared to be a giant shadow. As it came closer, the figure resolved into the shape of a half-ogre. He seemed to radiate darkness from his very clothing. Our town's patrol officer took one look and fled, and he's normally quite a brave man.

The half-ogre looked around and asked to speak to the town's sage. I, being new to the job and all, was reluctant to raise my hand, but several of the villagers pointed at me. So, I carefully approached him and asked what his business was in Grosvenson.

'Hmm... you are not the Sage Fulstrom. Where is he?'  
The half-ogre practically growled at me.

'Dead, my lord.'

'How?'

'He was hit by a Disintegration Spell as he was planeshifting back home. He exploded into ashes before my eyes!'

The half-ogre thought for a bit, waiting a while before he spoke, "I suppose he will not be returning, then? You are the new sage?"

'Yes, my lord. They call me Ritifin,' I said as politely as I could under the stress of the situation. I feel it is always best to be polite when dealing with creatures that may just be able to destroy your town.

'Very well, Ritifin. I am Grishneck Oplehfang, Shadow Mage and the new ruler of this town.'

'Of course.'

'I'm sure you will let the townspeople know. I have only two commands. One: leave my tower and me alone. Two: pay a tribute to me of 100 gold a month. Beyond these two commands you are free to do as you wish with your time and my town. The first tribute will be due in forty days.'

He looked at me carefully, examining me for what felt like half an eternity, then turned and walked back into his tower. We feared an attack from the dark creatures residing in the tower for several days, but nothing came to bother us, and it just continued to sit silently on the east side of town. So, with that settled, we relaxed and began to ignore our new lord.

Then, a ten-day later, which would make it three ten-days ago to the day, one of the stranger things I've ever seen happened in all my years of being a Sage, again. There was another shudder and another rock with a tower on top appeared, but this time on the north side of the town.

A pair of beastly identical gnomes walked out and introduced themselves as "Thistle Twom and Thwom the Twins." Thistle Twom said he was an illusionist, Thwom claimed he was a cleric. Both asked while alternating every other word between each other, "Where - is - the - sage - of - this - town?"

Since I was beginning to get used to dealing with visitors to our town arriving on large rocks, or as acclimated as one can be, I boldly told them that I was the town's sage and spokesmen, and any thing they needed to say they could say to me. I said that I'd do anything in my power to help them as long as it didn't conflict with the wishes of our current lord, the Shadow Mage, Grishneck.

This didn't please the ghastly creatures one bit. Before I knew what had even happened, Thistle Twom hit me with a Ray of Enfeeblement and then a Reduce Spell. A Reduce Spell. Imagine the audacity! Then Thwom threw a Command: Disrobe at me, and they carried me through the town on a Dust Devil...

I don't want to think about it... The nerve! The discourtesy! I was barely able to drag myself back into my house... looking like some kind of ridiculous child, unable to walk properly.

*\*[If there are any short characters in the party, at this point he will explain why seeing them disturbed him initially.]*

*[Elisande points at the illusion of Ritifin, reduced, clumsily trying to make his way to the safety of his home, and laughs.*

*Once again, Ritifin attempts to compose himself.]*

The gnomes sent a messenger into town shortly after, some sort of clockwork automaton, and it posted a message in the town square saying that they were claiming ownership of Grosvenson, and anyone who disobeyed their wishes would be put to death.

Attached to the bottom of the flyer was a caricature of myself as a little gnomish person limping away, clinging to my robes. Can you imagine the audacity of them mocking a sage as powerful as myself? How boorish! How completely devoid of decorum!

Since then, the two towers have been threatening each other with messages posted in the town square almost every day. Every message posted by the gnomes is carried into town by an automaton; every message by Grishneck the Shadow Mage appears on the board in the evening, carried by what looks like tendrils of the night itself. The shadowy vines would be quite beautiful to behold if the situation weren't so troublesome and frightening.

Now all the townspeople are worried what will happen when the tribute to Grishneck comes due. The gnomes have stated that they will see us paying the tribute as an act of treason on our part. No matter what we do, we will offend one party or the other... The whole town could easily be wiped out as a result.

The tribute is due tonight.

I scried far and wide for adventurers, and finally found you... though at first my spell seemed focused on that beastly young girl of yours... Needless to say, a battle between four very powerful spellcasters... the twins, Grishneck, and myself... would likely leave the battlefield completely destroyed, the battlefield of course being Grosvenson.

Thus, I present you all with the task of sending one of the towers back to their home plane, wherever that may be. Personally, I hate the rotten little gnomes, but the thought of a Shadow Mage with an army of darkness residing at the edge of our town isn't very comforting either.

Please, send one or the other one back and let this whole rotten mess be finished so I can get back to my studies.

At this point, the PCs will probably have some questions, whether it be asking about the two mages, why they came to Grosvenson, how they ended up there, or who the Sage's predecessor was.

Ritifin will be reluctant to talk about Fulstrom (since his predecessor was powerful and helpful, while he isn't either or those things), but if pressed he will answer the question to the best of his capabilities. The amount of information Ritifin gives is dependent on a Charisma (Persuasion) check. Ritifin would disclose everything he knows if the person asking makes a DC17 or higher roll. If the short characters in the party leave, then the

person asking (as long as he or she isn't a short demihuman as well) gets advantage on the check.

Q: How did we get here?

A: **I scried far and wide for capable adventurers and used my powerful magics to bring you here!** (Though this isn't true, this isn't a lie either. Ritifin truly believe he managed to bring the characters here.)

Q: How do we get back?

A: **I don't know. I have never tried such a spell, give me some time to figure this out. In the meantime, send one of the towers back.**

Q: How do we send a tower back?

(If they haven't found out about Estate Transference yet.) A: **By the reverse of how they got here.**

(If they have found out)A: **By destroying the keystone in the center of their tower. The mages will probably keep it close by and have it well protected. It will be reasonably accessible since the mages must visit the keystone periodically to renew the spell.**

Q: How did they (the Shadow Mage and the gnomes) get here?

A: **It's a good thing you are asking a bona fide sage this question and not your garden-variety village wizard. I happen to know of a very powerful spell that has effects very similar to what we see here. Give players Handout #2. The spell is not this exact one though – there are a number of important differences between Estate Transference and the one used here. I haven't pegged down all the modifications made to the spell yet, but the most obvious one is their spell is not permanent – the tower can be sent back! Also, I've determined that spells from one school of magic will not work inside of it, though I unfortunately don't know which one. And remember, inside of the spell's area of effect you will be in a different plane, so physics will probably be different.**

Q: What happens when the tower gets sent back?

A: **The whole thing will probably start to fade from existence. It would probably be a good idea to leave the tower quickly before it disappears and leaves you aloft in the air.**

Q: What will you pay us for this?

A: **I'm just a poor sage. I have no money, as I'm sure you can see.** (He looks uncomfortably at his fine clothing) **Don't you want to do this out of the kindness of your hearts? I mean... you can't get home, anyway, right?**

Q: No, we want money!

A: **Oh, very well, I'll give you 1500 gold pieces each.** (Persuading him for more is impossible, while he doesn't know the "market rate," he is intelligent enough to know 1500 gold pieces is a substantial amount of gold.)

Q: You're a Sage, right? Any magic items?

A: **Well, like I said I have nothing to offer, but as these mages are quite powerful, and I know for a fact they have powerful magical items in their towers. I have cast several powerful spells on the towers and have found that the twins have, lying in a room on the third floor of their tower, a Shortsword of Sharpness, a Periapt of Wound Closure and a Defender Shortsword. The Shadow Mage has a Frostbrand Greatsword, Cloak of Protection, and a Holy Avenger Greatsword. They have other magical items lying around their towers, as well, but I have not divined their nature yet. I think that should be enough to whet the appetite of you troll-killing types.**

DM Note: Characters **can** find these items within the towers, and they work correctly. However, due to the nature of the Estate Transference Spell, anything removed from the sphere will automatically be returned to the spot they came from inside. If they unsummon the tower, the items will vanish along with it. It will be **impossible** for the PCs to walk away with these items, but at least they will be able to use them for a while. ☺ Ritifin doesn't know this, so he isn't lying. (This means they can **salvage nothing** from the towers. Nothing at all. Not even dirt.)

Q: Who is Fulstrom?

A: **I don't want to talk about him.**

(If pressed) A: **He was my predecessor, the previous Sage of Grosvenson. That is, he was until two months ago when he died on his way back from one of his many exploratory outings to the demi-planes. He planeshifted back here**

**right when a Disintegrate Spell hit him, or at least that is what it looked like to me. I saw him burst into dust right before my eyes... I don't know who or what killed him exactly. His main research interests concerned very powerful extraplanar creatures, so it could have been anything. And his soul cannot be contacted either, so I doubt I'll ever find out for sure what did it in the end.**

Q: Why are these extraplanar creatures constantly coming to this small town?

A: **My predecessor, may his soul rest in peace, was a fool and gave out planar forks tuned to this location to several creatures he felt were friendly and worth studying more. I never should have taken over for a guy whose specialty was studying such creatures and giving them free passes to our town... Creatures powerful enough to planeshift whole keeps here...**

Q: How did these mages here know Fulstrom? (Alternatively) Why are they claiming ownership over this town?

A: **I have no idea. I don't know why they were asking about Fulstrom, or what they expected to find when they got here. For all I know, he promised them lordship over this town if they would just come here and let him study them. He died when visiting another plane two months ago, his soul can't be contacted, so it will be impossible to ask him and know for sure. It was a rather inconvenient time for him to die, if you ask me.**

Q: Are you faking?

A: **No.**

(DM Note: You should be roleplaying him as a wizard with grandiose notions of his own power, and not as an outright fraud.)

Q: Prove it!

A: (Casts Telepathy on the character questioning him.)

Q: Did both mages use the same spell?

A: **Yes. It might be a common spell on the various demi-planes for transporting their strongholds to the prime material plane, but that's just speculation.**

Q: What is the timeline of events?

A: I came here four years ago. The town needed a scholar of high repute to promote the Hall of Knowledge. I did my own studies on powerful magics like Estate Transference, while Fulstrom studied his extraplanar creatures from the demi-planes. We had visitors from other planes every other month or so, but they were always friendly folk.

Then, two months ago Fulstrom got disintegrated by something as he was planeshifting back here.

A month ago the Shadow Mage, Grishneck, claimed ownership of this land and no one opposed him.

Three ten-days ago those two gnomish mages appeared and claimed Grosvenson as well.

Since then, we've been waiting for adventurers to arrive and deal with the situation, but I've also been putting my considerable intellect to work trying to figure out a way of resolving this matter.

Q: Do you have a solution to this problem?

A: **Yes, you should choose one of the Towers and send it back. Or I guess you could try asking nicely.** ☺

Q: Who would you recommend sending back?

A: **The gnomes since they are obviously evil incarnate.** (He shudders) **Grishneck the Shadow Mage is rather frightening, but he seems content to leave us alone as long as we follow his two rules.**

Q: Will physics be different when we are within the towers?

A: **The spell brings with it the physics of whatever plane they came from. Thus, it's highly likely that some spells will work differently or not at all and that the tower and everything from the other plane will have a "Protection from Material Plane" effect on it.** (see Fire Plane example in Estate Transference spell, Ritifin isn't sure how that will work on the Material Plane.)

Q: Explain? (if the party is on good terms with Ritifin, he will emphasize this point even if the characters does not ask him about it)

A: **The spell, at least as it is used here, grants the estate protection from whatever plane it is currently on. If I were to cast this spell, which I will surely be able to do soon, and I took my building to, say, the Elemental Plane of Fire, my building and everything inside of it would be protected from fire, and immune to the ravages of that world. I'm assuming a few things here, but consider what sort of protection might work best against the Prime Material plane? I'd theorize that it has *Protection From Material!* So if you threw a rock from here and hit a window on their tower, the glass would not break. It's more than likely that you will still be able to open the doors there, but even your strongest fighter will NOT be able to *break* the door down. I bet anything inside of there will not be able to be damaged with anything from the Prime Material plane. All your magic items and weapons would work as nothing more than a glorified club inside of that tower.**

(DM Note: They could break a window if they threw a chair from the tower at it, and they can fight effectively with weapons they find inside of there, but don't tell them that. *Only let them know that exceptions exist if they are getting too far astray or are really clueless.* But don't make it seem like all combat inside of there would be hopeless, we want them to get clever, not despondent.)

**If the party is divided on which tower to send back:**

Ritifin will remember that a note was delivered by a gnomish automaton earlier in the afternoon addressed to the "Arriving Party of Adventurers Who Might Believe That We Don't Know All." Inside is a note enchanted with an illusionary script spell.

Basically, give Player Handout #4 to a character that wants to send the gnome tower back. The character automatically believes everything the note reads (i.e., that the gnomes are good and that the party should attack the shadow mage). If other party members want to see the note, give them Player Handout #3. This works best if the player is good at roleplaying.

If the parties decision is unanimous then skip this part.

## Section Reminder # 1

A lot of information was given out here, so it is possible the group may miss some or forget them. There will be list like this at the end of most sections to serve as a reminder you could provide to your players or a reminder for yourself:

- The party must find the keystone and destroy it or convince the owner of the towers to go back
- The party's weapons, armor, magical items, and spells may not function properly in the towers.
- Ritifin doesn't know much about the owners of either towers but is sure Fulstrom has some connections to them.
- The party is stuck here in Grosvenson. If they don't send one town back, war will break out and they will likely die.

## DM's Guide

The whole adventure is a puzzle. This includes combats. Nearly every single combat in this module can be avoided. With that said, there is a list of information you as the DM should get from your players before the game starts.

- Strength modifier (without magic items): This is used to calculate weapon damage. **2 + half of Strength modifier rounded down.** Inform the players their weapons are bouncing off enemies as if it were foamed sticks. But do not let them know the actual effect. Sharpshooter and Great Weapon Master +10 damage is ignored as well.
- If there is a spellcaster around, remember to record their modifiers too (Charisma for Warlocks (Invocation), Dragon Sorcerers, or Evocation Wizards). The modifier is also halved. **Each damage dice does 2 damage (+ modifiers if applicable).** For example, a 3rd level Fireball would do 16 damage, save for half.

## Part 2: Grishneck, the Shadow Mage

**Estimated Duration:** 30 minutes

### Big Friendly Giant

When the party is ready to head out to any of the towers, read or paraphrase:

You hear stirring outside. Looking out of the window you see townspeople parting like a wave in front of an enormous black figure. What appears to be an undead stone giant in full plate armor carrying a giant greatsword walks towards the Hall of Knowledge. The giant does not appear to be hostile. To the contrary, in fact, he seems to be humming a cheerful song.

Elisande rushes forward towards the giant. The giant extends his hand and Elisande climbs up to his shoulder and sits there, whistling the same tune as the giant, albeit completely off-key.

The party should NOT fight this guy. Gorgash, the Raised Stone Giant uses the **Stone Giant Dreamwalker** statblock and has an AC of 24, Melee Weapons Attack: +15 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. Hit: 30 (6d6 + 9) slashing damage. He is not considered undead for the purposes of spells and abilities.

He's in a good mood for a Stone Giant that's been dead for several years, but as he walks down the street the villagers scream in terror and run out of his way. He ignores them and whistles a merry tune as he approaches the Hall of Knowledge.

He will walk up to the characters and tell them that he is here to clear up any worries they have about the Shadow Mage and his tower.

Depending on their reaction, the undead stone giant may explain that the Shadow Mage is quite a decent chap who cast *Raise Dead* for anyone who wants it, provided that that person is willing to work for seven years in indentured servitude to Grishneck. Gorgash (the giant) himself is very friendly and will speak to everyone in a cheerful tone of voice. Every once in a while, he will brush some mold off his arm, but besides that he will wait patiently for the characters to ask him any questions before returning to his employer's keep.

Clerics and Paladins will be confused by his presence: they do not feel the emanations of evil like they do from normal undead creatures. They

will become even more confused if they try to turn him. If they attempt turn him, he just chuckles. (He's not actually an undead, at least not like the undead on the Prime Material Plane.)

Q: Who are you? What do you do for Grishneck?

A: **My name is Gorgash. I was a stone giant warrior and adventurer, not unlike yourselves... well, except for the stone giant part.** (He laughs.) **I was killed fighting a greater basilisk and, due to a prior arrangement with Grishneck, he removed the curse on my body and animated me. You might say he saved me from turning into a *real* Stone giant.** (He chuckles to himself.) **I served my seven years with him already, but he's really fun to work for, so I ended up staying on as his steward, managing his servants and whatnot.**

Q: What does he do in his tower?

A: **He works on spell research for the most part. His servants gather spell components and protect his keep so he can keep focused.**

Q: Why would anyone want to be animated?

A: **Why wouldn't you? When you have a contract with Grishneck Oplehfang, you never need to worry about death. If you're anywhere near his tower and you have an agreement with him, he'll find your body and animate it for you. It seems risky to me to be adventurers and not have a deal in place like that.**

Q: Why doesn't he *Raise Dead* or *Resurrect* you?

A: **Resurrect? They don't have that spells where we come from.**

Q: What plane are you from?

A: **I've heard it described as a demi-plane of something or other, but all I know is that it's home, and a lot of the things we took for granted there don't hold up here. Did you know that elves here aren't bloodthirsty cannibals? How fascinating to me... I never considered the fact that an elf could be anything other than an evil tribesman living in the forest somewhere, preying on caravans who are too poor to buy Amulets of Elf Protection.**



Q: How are *you* still *you*? Aren't you an automaton? Isn't that how Animate Dead works?  
A: **I'm not sure what your spells work like here, but I'm not liking the sound of them. Of course, I'm still me. Sure, my body is a little slower than it was before, but all round it's pretty much like life except I look like an 'undead' to you.**

Q: Isn't animating dead, well, evil?  
A: **Not if you agreed to it beforehand like me. He'd never animate someone against their will. But if you have a lot of deeds left to do in your life, nothing beats making a deal with a Shadow Mage to trade seven years for an animate.**

Q: Aren't you evil? (OR) Why can't I turn you?  
A: **I'm still me, I'm good just like all the other giants where I come from. I guess magic works differently from where I came from.**

#### Section Reminder # 2

Characters learn some information about Ghrishneck, owner of the Shadow Tower.

- Ghrishneck is lawful good and doesn't *Raise* creatures who do not want to be raised.
- The 'Undead' have their own free will, the physical appearance of lifelessness is just a benign side effect
- Gorgash, the Stone Giant is willingly to show the characters around the Shadow Tower.

## Examining the Towers

Throughout the playtest and the premiere this section was only used once. So you may not need to prep this part and can just railroad them to the tower.

If the characters examine the towers before talking with Ritifin, the gates will be shut and no guards will answer the characters if they attempt to talk to them.

There are two towers, one on the northside of town, the other on the east. The villagers have rather unimaginatively named them "The Grey Keep"(NORTH) and "The Shadow Keep"(EAST)based on their colors. Ritifin or a random townspeople will tell the party they should examine the towers from the mountain on the west side of town, so that they can see above the

rock's cliff at the base of the towers. Depending on how closely the characters examine the two towers, adjust how much of these descriptions you read. For example, if the party looks at the towers from ground level, they probably wouldn't be able to see the second level of walls in the Grey Keep.

This is some of the information they can obtain from observing both of the towers with a Wisdom (Perception) check:

- DC10: The most obvious thing noticeable about the tower is that it is built on a perfectly smooth hemisphere of rock, somewhat resembling a bowl turned upside down on a table. The top of the hemispheres is flat, upon which the keep and fortifications are built.
- DC15: The hemisphere is 600 feet in diameter and is 150 feet high, so the base of the rock is very sheer and would be hard to climb by characters (DC 25 Athletics check.)  
\*Also, there are no free stones for PCs to pick up and use as weapons.
- DC15: The plateau is 300 feet wide. There is a path cut into the rock that spirals once around the outside, starting at ground level and arriving at the plateau. The rock is completely smooth but not entirely uniform. Characters can make out different strata in the rocks. It is as if the hemisphere had been cut out of the ground by an impossibly fine edge.
- DC 18: Both of the towers are surrounded by a faint iridescent shell that seems to stop outside elements from entering them. A slight breeze running through the town does not seem to move the pennants on either keep. Birds will not fly near the towers nor will any other creature willingly approach.
- DC18: Animals will react badly to the unnatural boundary between the planes and will become agitated if brought near, but may be calmed by a successful Wisdom (Animal Handling) check at DC 15. If failed, the animal will dig its heels into the ground and completely refuse to enter the barrier.

If the party examines the Grey Keep [North] from the hill, this is what they would see:

- DC10: The Grey Keep to the north is a central keep surrounded by a wall built out of grey

stone. The outer ring is 25 feet high and runs along the edge of the plateau.

- DC10: It has 8 towers spaced evenly along the wall, every 120 feet. It has a double gatehouse on the southernmost part of the wall where the path meets the plateau.
- DC15: 60 feet inside the first ring is a second circle of walls and towers, 50 feet high. This wall has 6 towers, spaced every 120 feet along the wall. It also has a gatehouse facing south.
- DC15: Inside the wall stands an enormous keep, 120 feet in diameter. The tower is 100 feet high (approximately 10 stories). It looks odd though – the top of the keep splits at the eighth story and ends in two crenellated, conical turrets.
- DC18: A large rod with a ball on top of it extends out of the gap between the two turrets.
- DC18: Pennants fly on the gatehouse: they appear to be grey from far off, but examined more closely can be seen to be a pattern of interweaving white and black lines.

If the party examines the Shadow Keep [East] from the hill, this is what they would see:

- DC10: The tower to the east is built on a hemisphere of stone identical to the Grey Keep's in every way except it is made out of basalt (a black rock) and obsidian instead of granite and sandstone.
- DC10: The walls of the keep are completely black. In fact, the entire place almost seems to radiate shadows, as if the sunlight reflecting off it has been absorbed and transformed to darkness by the stones.
- DC15: The keep appears to be in twilight even under the brightest noonday sun.
- DC15: There is only one layer of walls surrounding the keep – they are 50 feet tall and enclose around half the area of the plateau. The walls have one massive pair of doors facing the path (which arrives from the west).
- DC18: Inside the wall is a single monolithic tower 100 feet high made of pure obsidian with no windows or arrow slits visible. Pure black pennants fly from the tower.

If the party uses magic, look to Part 3 for the details on guard patrol patterns, etc.

If the party call on their deity, spells like *Divination* or *Commune* functions normally. These are the additional information the deity can provide

- The deity believes the character is still on the material plane, but trapped in some form of magical seal. Sending one of the towers back seems to be the trigger to break the seal.
- The Shadow Keep is from the Plane of Shadow.
- Grishneck is not evil and Gargosh was telling the truth.
- It is unlikely that Grishneck is willing to leave the town. He has made a promise with Fulstrom to protect the town if Grishneck was unable to raise him. He will not leave until a worthy successor it found. Ritifin is supposedly not worthy.
- Grishneck is extremely good and honest at writing contracts. His never tries to cheat his customers.
- The Grey Keep is from the Plane of Law
- The Gnome Twins don't actually own the Grey Keep. They appear to be occupants of the keep and do not represent anyone else in the keep besides themselves.
- The keystone is in the office with the Twins on the highest fall of the tower.
- There are some puzzles and illusions in the Grey Keep.
- Sending the tower back without defeating the gnomes will likely cause chaos in the plane they came from, though this fact may not be a concern for the party.
- Combating the gnomes should be a last resort. They are under some form of magical protection making defeating them more complicated than usual.
- The gnomes are willing to negotiate, but the deity can't sense what they might be interested in right now.

### Section Reminder # 3

If the characters scout the towers out they learn the following info depending on the DC.

- Both towers are surrounded by some kind of magical or planar energy. Animals seem to react badly to the barriers.

- Both towers have guards patrolling them. But the routine is very precise, so it should be easy to sneak by.
- *Through divination or aid from a deity*: Characters are on the Prime Material Plane but trapped by some form of magic. Sending a tower back is likely to break the seal and allow them to go home.

## Part 3: Send it Home!

**Estimated Duration:** 2 Hours 15 minutes

### Entering the Tower Grounds

Basically, all descriptions in this section apply to both the Grey Keep and The Shadow Keep, except where explicitly noted.

You can feel everything you do happens more quickly than normal. Your heart rate starts increasing rapidly and you can whirl your arms and legs so fast that it becomes impossible to walk since your legs have a tendency to run out from under you. After a while of getting used to it, you become acclimated and can move normally, but you can feel the strain that it is putting on your system...

Elisande looks a little stressed, but calms quickly. She appears to be enjoying her new found agility and runs around the party consistently.

- Nothing from the Prime Material plane can break any molecular bonds within this other plane, as that is part of the protection provided by the *Estate Transference* spell. In other words, a fighter with a 29 strength score cannot even tear a sheet of paper with his bare hands here, and a mage would be unable to *Mold Earth* the stone under the walls with his spells. (Although, if it were loose dirt, the mage would be able to since it would not break molecular bonds.)
- The entire keep is spell-proofed against teleportation. Any attempt to teleport (*dimension door*, *misty step*, *teleport*, *planeshift* etc) **in** to any point in the keep meets with failure: the spell fizzles, and a backlash deal 19 (3d12) points of psychic damage to the spellcaster. Characters are allowed to teleport **out** of the area if they wish. \**Teleport* works – they don't need to use *Planeshift*.

- All magic items from the material plane do not work. (Except for Manuals and Tomes that adds to their base stats)
- All buffs gained from the *Material Plane* is removed. The *Heroes Feast* from the Shadow Keep is kept because it is not from the Material Plane.
- Weapons from the material plane only do 2 bludgeoning damage plus half of the damage modifier rounded down, ie. A fighter with 20 Strength and a longsword does 2 + 2 bludgeoning damage. Sneak Attack does 2 damages per dice. Flat bonuses like Barbarians rage, Sharpshooter are ignored.
- Shoving someone into a wall etc., does 1d6 + Strength modifier. \*Don't tell the players this until they try it, let them discover it themselves.
- Spells casted using materials from the material plane do significantly less damage. The spells do 2 points of damage for every die and half of the damage modifier rounded down when applicable, ie. A Level 11 Dragon sorcerer with 20 Charisma cast firebolt does 6 + 2 fire damage. A level 3 fireball (8d6) does 16 damage.
- Characters cannot benefit from resting as their body is too agitated with the plane's effects. They don't know this until their take a rest.

#### Section Reminder # 4

Side effects of entering the planes:

- All characters are hasted.
- Abjuration magic does not work properly (DC 17 Con save to cast).
- Magic items do not work.
- Weapons from the material plane only do 2 damages + half the damage modifier rounded down.
- Magic casted does 2 point of damage per dice + half the damage modifier rounded down (if applicable).
- Characters do not benefit from rest.
- It is likely more interesting to not inform the players about the reduced damage directly, but through descriptions. But if you find the extra book keeping too troublesome, go ahead to let the players know the formula for their new damage.

#### Designer's Note

The combat limitations added to the adventure is to help challenge Tier 3 characters. The module is designed as a puzzle/problem solving adventure rather than a hack and slash killing spree. Grappling and shoving work fine and

trying to shove enemies into walls would be more effective than smashing them with their ineffective weapons. Similarly, offensive spells are less effective, but creative uses of non-damage dealing spell should be encouraged, and even rewarded if done correctly.

## Option A: Shadow Keep

It is likely the characters will approach the Shadow Keep with Gorgash as their guide.

As you follow Gorgash towards the Shadow Keep, you observe the looming clouds around the town. From time to time, bright red lightning strikes the barrier separating the tower's plane from the Prime Material plane. You also see squads of zombies patrolling the castle walls.

Around the keep, you can see shadow dragons flying in the sky, humanoid workers fixing the walls of buildings, and other undead creatures roaming the area. The large gate opens as Gorgash and your party approach. You are greeted by groups of undead humanoids and giants who are unusually friendly, much like Gorgash himself.

When they enter, the following effect occurs: All characters are affected by the *Haste* spell. A character's casting of the *Haste* spell will not combine with this effect.

If the party did not follow Gorgash here, they will be welcomed into the keep if they knock on the front door. If they are caught fighting the zombies or trying to break into the keep, the guards that arrive on the scene will simply invite them into the castle. Only if the party refuses to parley will the guards fight the party.

The Shadow Keep has Undead Sentries as its patrol. Each patrol has eight sentries. Use the **Berserker** statblock for these guards. Each undead sentry look like the animated skeleton of a creature with very thick bones. If a fight breaks out, the shadow dragons in the sky will spot it and sound an alarm for reinforcements. Three rounds later one **Young Shadow Dragon**, one **Warlord**, and three **Blackguard** arrives where the party it.

The Shadow Keep has a single wall. While the characters are in the area between the wall and the tower, they should be scared of being detected even though there isn't much chance of that since the sentries only look directly forward. If the characters make an effort to stay out of sight, they won't be noticed. The area between the two walls is filled with crates and barrels of various types that can be hidden behind. This isn't an issue if they aren't hostile to the tower yet.

There isn't much of interest outside the tower. The characters should be invited straight to the main door to the tower.

## Floor 1: Research Lab

The first floor looks like a large research lab with spell components, scrolls, and books all over the place. There is a group of orcs in workman's leather in the middle of the room surrounding a large tome set on a table. On the floor of the west side of the room you see a great trap door leading down. From the east side of the room, you hear an occasional pounding sound coming from the wall. Right in front of you are the stairs to go up the tower.

Elisande becomes excited and begins exploring the area, picking up spell components before tossing them away. None of the orcs seem to be bothered by her actions, they simply pick the items up that she has tossed and kindly pat Elisande on her head.

The 20'x20' steel trap door leads down into a large cafeteria where the large amount of undeads are eating. If the characters ask Gorgash about it, he tells them about the cafeteria. Down here, characters see hundreds of undead feasting in a strangely civil manner. They also appear to be eating regular food. If the characters ask Gorgash how the undead eat normal humanoid food, Gorgash just say, "I've told you it is quite confusing. This is how it has always been for us. I've only recently read about undead here, and we are nothing like those beings." Gorgash invites characters to feast if they would like to. Characters who eat the food here gains the benefit of *Heroes' Feast*.

## Floor 2: The Armory

The second floor is an armory. The whole 120 feet diameter area is filled with racks of weapons, supplies and armor. There are two guards (**Berserkers**) that patrol the room in a circle every 10 rounds. Gorgash is willing to spend some time showing the characters around this room. They are also allowed to take any weapons and armor if they like to. In the middle of the room on display is a *Frostbrand Greatsword*, a *Cloak of Protection*, a *Holy Avenger Greatsword*, a *+3 Plate*, and a *+3 Shield* each with the symbol of a raven head engraved into them. A DC 17 Intelligence (Religion) check identifies the symbol as that of

the Raven Queen. They are not labeled but Gorgash will tell the players what the items are.

The items are fitted onto a mannequin of what looks like a half-ogre. If characters ask about this, Gorgash explains these are the family treasure of Grishneck. They are passed down from generation to generation. Grishneck's family were famed Paladins and Clerics of Raven Queen. Grishneck took a rather different path, but still cherishes these treasures. Only a Paladin or Cleric who served the *Raven Queen* are allowed gears from this armory. If a Paladin or Cleric the character plays does indeed worship the *Raven Queen*, Grishneck is willingly to provide his armor and weapon for the module, casting a spell on it that returns the items to the keep after two hours. (\*\*This makes the modules a lot easier but I doubt there are too many Paladins or Clerics of Raven Queen out there.)

The ascending staircase is right next to the staircase they entered on, so a party can continue on up immediately, if they wish to.

### The Raven Queen

The Raven Queen is an unaligned deity in the core pantheon. The name of the god of death is long forgotten, but she is called the Raven Queen. She is the spinner of fate and the patron of winter. She marks the end of each mortal life, and mourners call upon her during funeral rites in the hopes that she will guard the departed from the curse of undeath. She expects her followers to abide by these commandments:

- Hold no pity for those who suffer and die, for death is the natural end of life.
- Bring down the proud who try to cast off the chains of fate. As the instrument of the Raven Queen, you must punish hubris where you find it.
- Watch for the cults of Orcus and stamp them out whenever they arise. The Demon Prince of the Undead seeks to claim the Raven Queen's throne.

### Section Reminder # 5

Magical Items found here:

- First character that touches the item is attuned to them, the items do not reattune when passed to another character. Character cannot benefit from short rest, so the items can never be "reattuned."
- Even when not attuned, the weapon can still function as a regular weapon and will go through resistance. (Character just loses modifiers and other special effects)
- Characters cannot keep the items, but they don't know this right now.

## Floor 3: Living Quarter

When you reach the top of the stairs you notice that the floor is now covered with a dark tiled slate. There are three passageways leading away, you can smell rotting flesh from both of them.

On the third floor, the passageway forks left, right, and straight ahead.

Each passageway bends a few times and arrives at stairs going up. These passageways are filled with living quarters. There is nothing here that would interest the characters.

## Floor 4: Doom Puzzles Room

As you walk up this flight of stairs, you begin to realize it seems to be longer than the previous stairs. As you finally arrive at the top, you see a wide path in front of you leading to a mammoth, 15' tall dark-steel double-door with the word "DOOM" stamped on it in silver. It has four bars across it holding it closed, and each bar has one of the letters on them.

Gorgash pressed on the two 'O's and the door opens. He explains to the party that the next level contains some more disturbing 'friends' and warns them to not be shocked. He says that as long as they stay with him, they should be safe.

## Floor 5: The Asylum Ward

This floor will be filled with the insane Animated, who mentally snapped after dying. They are all locked up in comfortable chambers and have other undead attending to their needs.

When you come to the top of this floor, you notice it is almost pitch black in here and the walls take on the texture and feel of linen. You can hear nonsensical murmuring of several voices in the distance – hysterical murmuring – as if they were being chased by the demons of hell, but couldn't work up the energy to vocalize their fears clearly.

A 10-foot wide corridor stretches to the North. Another one leads to the East. Vague figures dart around in each direction, but you can't quite make them out.

This floor has two corridors in it, in the shape of a circle – one starts out to the north and curves around to the east, the other starts to the east and curves around to the north. The entrance is on the southwest side of the tower. Gorgash would



explain that not all who are *Raised* keep their sanity, and that this is why Grishneck is working hard to find a way to fix the *Raise* spell so that doesn't happen and hopefully so he can find a way to cure the people here.

This is some of the information Gorgash can give the characters as they walk:

- Grishneck signs contracts with people in his area to *Raise* them if they die, in exchange for seven years of service. He chooses this room as a place to sign said contracts, because he wants his clients to know the potential side effects.
- He won't sign such a contract with the characters. This place is a vacation for him, he wants to leave as soon as he finds a proper replacement for Fulstrom.
- All these lunatic undead are the results of failed attempts of the variant of *Raise* spell that Grishneck uses to bring people back to life (well, mostly back to life). There's a small percent chance that something goes wrong with the spell and they come back to life insane.
- Grishneck is a pretty decent guy, who wants the best for people. He won't kill the people that come back crazy, so he allows them to live on this floor. He is also keen on finding a cure for them, after all they are still living beings.
- He gives them free reign of this floor, because he knows they won't dare attack him, and they also serve as a way of enforcing his privacy.
- Grishneck's primary interests are research and being left alone. He has been trying to improve his resurrection abilities. "His pantheon isn't too happy with the side effects."
- He came here because the Sage of Grosvenson offered him the town in exchange for some high-level knowledge related to the sage's research.
- Grishneck can see in pure darkness.
- Necromancy is a hobby for him. His real studies are about the theory of shadow evocation.

Character can cure these people with a *Greater Restoration* spell. (I allowed *Modified Memory* as well when a player properly described he was

wiping the memories of death and returning back to life). If this happens, Gorgash gets extremely excited and picks the character up and sprints upstairs to meet Grishneck. Grishneck will offer the character 2500 gold for notes on the spell they used to cure his friends. The character can spend 1 hour in the cafeteria feasting and writing notes.

## Floor 6: The Shadow Dome

The stairway leads into pure darkness. Darkness as thick and tangible as water, spills out of the doorway and washes over you. "Please, enter my sanctum," a voice growls from within.

Elisande becomes scared and hides behind [insert the strongest looking character of the party here].

The Sanctum is affected by an environmental effect similar to a *Darkness* spell. This effect cannot be dispelled by any spells.

Grishneck is rather irritated at being disturbed and will initially treat the characters with minimal politeness.

The thing to keep in mind is that even though Grishneck should act like a jerk to the characters, if the characters reveal they have noble motives at heart he will sympathize with them and treat them with friendship. In other words, he's lawful good, but will act like lawful neutral until their good intentions have been established. Trying to kill him is not a good intention.

If asked, he will refuse to leave. He sees it as his duty to his friend to protect this city and enjoy a nice long vacation. Grishneck will provide the characters with the details contract he has with Fulstrom. Basically, Grishneck would raise Fulstrom if he dies, but if Grishneck for some reason couldn't raise him, Grishneck was to take control of Grosvenson until a suitable replacement Sage is found. (The potential sage must be able to defeat Grishneck in a 1 vs 1 duel).

"Well, this town was promised to me by the Sage of Grosvenson, and this is the fulfillment of the contract. If you have a problem with this deal, I suggest you take it up with the gnomes who are intruding upon my lawful domain. I arrived first, after all. Besides, I will be able to protect this city better than either the gnomes or that human, what was his name? Ritifin, yes. If I leave, I am breaking an important contract."



In other words, he'll try to explain how it's The Twins that are really causing all the problems around here, how he just wants to be left alone, and that the best course of action for the characters would be to deal with The Twins. Grishneck explains that he is fascinated by the 'local' *Resurrection* spell and is researching to see if he could improve his *Raise* spell. In order to save time, he is willing to *Teleport* the characters right outside the Grey Keep to take care of those horrible gnomes. If the party takes him up on this offer, go to option B.

If the characters request for a copy of the contract, Grishneck is happy to provide them with one. He asks the characters to wait in the cafeteria and enjoy a feast while his servants copy the contract for them.

If the characters decide to attack, Grishneck (**Archmage**) is also protected by twenty **Blackguards**, four **Warlords**, and an Ancient Shadow Dragon (Use **Ancient Red Dragon** statblock but it does Necrotic damage instead of Fire; this is its lair). If a character could see in magic darkness, they can warn the party about starting a fight here as they are vastly outnumbered. Otherwise, you can also warn characters with passive perception 17 or higher that Grishneck is definitely not alone. Grishneck and his bodyguards can see through magic darkness. At the beginning of each of their turns any negative effect on them are dispelled with a 9<sup>th</sup> level *Dispel Magic*.

There are more than enough warnings for the party to know they are not meant to fight Grishneck. But, if the party decides to fight a perfectly lawful good NPC, they will die. Upon death, Grishneck will banish their souls into oblivion and they cannot be brought back even by a *Wish* spell.

### Fighting the Shadow Mage

This is some notable changes to the creatures statblocks in this fight

- This is the Shadow Dragon's Lair. The Shadow Dragon uses the Lair Action of an **Ancient Red Dragon** (page 99 of the Monsters Manual) on initiative count 20.
- The Shadow Dragon's Lair Actions do not affect Grishneck or his guards. Any fire damage from a Lair Action is replaced with necrotic damage instead.
- Grishneck can take 3 legendary actions per round. Only one legendary action can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. Grishneck regains

spent legendary actions at the start of his turn. As a legendary action, Grishneck can cast a spell.

- Grishneck gains a Lair Effect. Any hostile creature within 120 feet of Grishneck can not regain hit points. Grishneck regains 15 hitpoints at the beginning of every turn.

### Option B: Grey Keep

There are six moderately big peasant houses just inside the boundary; they appear to be deserted. It looks like whatever magic brought the keep here grabbed a few houses with it as well. Looking at the ground, you can see crops crushed flat under the weight of the faint iridescent sphere marking the boundary between the two planes. You walk easily atop the glowing ground – it feels as firm as stone beneath your feet.

When they enter, the following effect occurs: All characters are affected by the *Haste* spell. A character's casting of the *Haste* spell will not combine with this effect.

If the characters are entered the Grey Keep area, the first house they enter will have a malfunctioned mechanical gnome (**Bandit Captain**). The mechanical gnome attacks them immediately. This should be a simple fight for the characters to better understand the effects of the new plane.

Elisande (+5 to initiative) will participate in this combat. The mechanical gnome will ignore her as if she wasn't there and her attacks are affected by the plane as well – Melee Weapons Attack: +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 4 (2 + 2) bludgeoning damage. After the first attacks, she is extreme dissatisfied, she throws her bloodied knife away and searches the house for a new weapon. On her next turn, she returns with a fork which she will use for the rest of the adventure – Melee Weapons Attack: +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d4 + 5) piercing damage. You should describe how ineffective Elisande's first attack was and emphasize how the fork is able to pierce and damage the mechanical gnome. Elisande doesn't have a health pool and cannot be killed. Later on, she only participates in fights if you believe the party needs a little backup. The characters can find a leg of a broken chair in this house which can be used as a *Mace (1d6)*.

There are various ways that the party can attempt to enter the keep.

They can try to sneak in via grappling hooks and stealth (*invisibility* if the party is more magically inclined). If they both don't walk up the main path and watch for the pattern of the guards, they will be guaranteed success. Walking up the main path first gives a +25% chance of being noticed if they try to sneak over the walls, and failing to take into consideration the timing patterns is also a +25% chance of being noticed. So, if they do both blunders, there is a 50% chance the guards will catch them in the act, and attack.

If a mage casts *fly* on himself and flies about in an unsubtle manner, he will have lightning bolts launched at him from the top of the tower via the contraptions they might have seen during their observing the towers. See below for details on the mage's attack.

They can assault the walls, kill the sentries and storm the keep if the party so desires. This isn't very subtle and the gnome twins will shoot at the party from the top of the keep if they notice the group. You must make a judgment call as to if the mages will notice or not. Basically, assume the mage will occasionally glance out of his 10<sup>th</sup> story window and if he sees party murdering his guards or assaulting his castle, he will start launching lightning bolts down at them. Any wholesale slaughter of the guards will definitely result in the gnomes noticing and attacking from a protected balcony.

Both gnomes have magical devices built into the keeps that allow them to launch *chain lightning* at 9<sup>th</sup> level from the top of the tower. Spell save DC is 17 and the gnome and use it every turn. This is the primary defense mechanism of the keep besides the guards, used against frontal attacks. The mechanism looks like a lightning rod extending from the roof of the building. Improvise other siege weapon defenses as needed, ballistae, boiling oil, etc. The gnomes control the system, so if they are otherwise occupied, it will not function. The rod cannot shoot at targets inside of the tower, and has a range of 600 feet (which, coincidentally enough, is the maximum range of a catapult).

If the party is caught trying to break into the place and combat with the guards lasts longer than 3 rounds, an alarm will be sounded, and the gnomes will attack.

The party can also knock on the front door and ask to speak with the gnomish twins. A gnome sits behind the main gate and will ask the character if they want to be let in. If the characters say yes, the gnome opens the door. The gnome's job here is simply to let people in when they ask and let people out when they ask. He has an order in his back pocket which details his orders for the day. This includes time to wake up, clean up, have breakfast, walk to the gate, sit by the gate, open the gate when asked, have lunch, back to the gate, back home to watch 'Gnome News', have dinner, and then head to bed.

Clockwork Gnomes patrol the walls here. Each patrol has eight sentries. Use the ***Berserker*** statblock for the guards. The clockwork gnomes look like robotically shambling gnomes with thick metallic skin.

The guards will start their patrol, one in each of the eight watch towers, staring blankly outwards. Every ten rounds, they will all march clockwise for three rounds until they reach the next tower. They repeat this pattern indefinitely. As automatons, they do not have a changing of the guard. The guards should be fairly hard to kill since the characters will be unlikely to have any weapons which can really hurt anything from the Plane of Law at this point in the session. The guards are mainly there to discourage a full-frontal assault. They are mindless creatures that will attack until destroyed.

If an alarm is sounded, add eight guards to the fight at the end of every 3 rounds of combat. If thrown or knocked off a wall, the guards will die instantly. If they see a character sneak into a base, they will sound the alarm.

Once over the inner wall, there will be a large courtyard with a well, stables, and blacksmithy. The characters might be afraid of detection, but the sentries only look out, not inwards. And the gnomish twins cannot see from their office straight down.

Once in the front gate, read and paraphrase:

<p>The gnome sits still, staring into the distance, ignoring you. In front of you, in a path with a yellow line painted right in the middle of it. The yellow line spreads to the warehouse nearby and a double door leading into the tower. The lines are painted exactly in the middle of all path ways. Occasionally, you see gnomes leaving the warehouses and walking on the lines. All the gnomes have</p>
--

a paper stuffed in their back pocket which they look over every now and then.

Whether or not the characters walk on the yellow line does not matter. It is just there to symbolize how orderly everything is in this tower. At the double door, the character simply needs to knock. A gnome from inside will ask if they want to be let in.

There are six levels inside the tower, each with roofs approximately 25 feet high with the ascending stairway normally on the other side of the keep from the descending stairway (so the party has to pass through the entire floor).

## Floor 1: Fighting a Haywire Guard

The first floor looks like a large warehouse with boxes of parts scattered throughout. There is a group of gnomes in workman's leathers in the middle of the room, working on a number of clockwork automatons in various states of disrepair. On the floor of the west side of the room you see a great trap door leading down. From the east side of the room, you hear an occasional pounding sound coming from the wall. There appears to be no way to the next floor. The yellow lines lead to each workstations, the trapdoor, and into the wall at the back.

Elisande becomes excited and begins exploring the area, picking gears up and inspecting them before tossing them away. This action seems to annoy the gnomes in the area, but none of them speak up.

The 20'x20' steel trap door leads down into the storage area where the gnomes keep their really nasty stuff – giant golems used in the situation where an all-out war is necessary. The characters shouldn't be able to get down there on their own, but if they do, there are twenty **Iron Golems** there. They are all deactivated, but there are forty workman gnomes (use **Commoner** statblock) clambering around on them. The gnome can either use a command word or a switch to activate the golems.

If the characters talk with the gnomes, they will ask the party to destroy a tower guard that has gone haywire, with the incentive that they will tell the characters how to get to the next level of the tower.

If the party agrees to destroy the guard, the gnomes bring them to the location it is stored.

In the room, you find one lone guard. For a moment, it marches normally like the other guards you saw. The next

moment, it is scrubbing the floor with a broom, then the next it is spinning around like a top.

Elisande runs forward and attempts to imitate every action of the haywire guard.

Use the **Gladiator** statblock for this guard. The guard attacks the party only when it is attacked. On every even-numbered round, it will instead do something completely random, such as washing the walls or spinning around like a top.

If the haywire guard is killed, the gnomes will thank the party, disassemble the guard, and turn off the illusionary wall on the north-east side of the room, revealing a stairway up. If the party refuses to kill the guard, the gnomes simply won't tell them anything. The wall is easy to find because of the yellow line. However, the wall requires a level 5 *Dispel Magic* to remove.

If the party acts hostilely, or fights their way in, the gnomes might attack – make a judgment call as to if the party is actively threatening the lives of the gnomes or not.

Alternatively, the parties could come up with creative ideas to find a way up. For example, characters could steal a gnome's order for the day and modify it to help them. There are some simple rules to this. The gnomes on this floor return home to the warehouses outside the tower. They have little authority to allow characters upstairs. The gnomes under the trapdoor working on the **Iron Golems** are "engineers" and thus have more authority. They return to the living quarters on the third floor and thus can give access to the characters. If the characters modify the orders of the gnome to something that is impossible to complete, the gnome ponders for a bit before drawing a dagger and stabbing themselves in the head and dies.

One of the gnomes beckons you over to the northeastern corner of the large room on the ground floor. He 'cleans' each of your faces with his dirty handkerchief, and the wall vanishes, revealing a staircase leading upwards. He asks you, "Going to the top? Good luck." He grimaces as you leave.

The gnomes, if pressed for information, can tell the characters that they come from the demi-plane of Law, where the entire world is one large machine, and that this keep is an insane asylum, mostly for dangerous spellcasters as well as for

those who have gone crazy from the incredible orderliness of the plane. These gnomes are in charge of maintaining the guards who patrol the institution. They have noticed a change in the tone of the administrative decrees coming down from the seventh floor, but as they are creatures of Law, they still serve them without question. (The crazy twins have taken over the tower from the administrators that normally run the place, but the gnome workers don't know this). They will not volunteer any of this information – it must be asked.

## Floor 2: Living Quarters and Baths

When you reach the top of the stairs, you notice that the floor is now covered with tiled marble, and the sound of water running fills the air. There are three passageways leading away – one to the right that smells faintly like moss, the left and the middle smells like dust. The yellow line continues to the path of the left and middle but turns red for the path to the right. When you step forward onto one of the tiles, a twelve-foot-long axe swings down from the ceiling cleaving **[insert the name of the party member in front here]** in half. As the blood pools on the floor, you realize **[insert the name of said character here]** is standing there completely unhurt, looking only slightly confused by what has just occurred.

Elisande rolls on the floor, clutching her sides as she laughs at the illusory tragedy.

On this floor the passageway forks left, right, and straight ahead.

The sound of running water comes from the right passageway. The right passageway bends a few times, and arrives at a pool with an illusory nymph standing beside it.

You arrive at a pool with a beautiful nymph in a golden ball gown sitting on the marble floor beside it. The gown has a simply designed bodice, wrapped off-the-shoulder sleeves, long yellow opera gloves in a matching silk. The skirt cascades down to the floor in a waterfall of gold fabric that catches the light. She is twirling her smooth brown hair around in her fingers while singing a song in a language you cannot understand. Beside her is a horrible mechanical beast. It looms over her, his head resembling something vaguely like that of a buffalo. His arms and body are immense, covered all over in furs so that his shape almost resembles that of a bear. The hair on his head is that of a lion's mane, and his teeth jut out of his mouth, jagged bits of metal. Behind him there is a tail much like a wolf's, flicking robotically back and forth.

Covering the fur of his body, the beast dons a golden vest over a white dress shirt with a white kerchief, black dress pants, and a navy-blue ballroom tailcoat, all of which is trimmed with gold in a way that complements his beautiful companion.

The beast strikes a protective stance beside the nymph and stares in your direction, carefully watching your movements.

On the other side of the pool are the stairs that lead up.

Elisande runs forward and sits on the floor by the nymph, appearing to be enjoying her song. The beast seems to ignore her when she does this.

The beast (Use **Storm Giant Quintessent**) will attack anyone that steps into the room, though it stares aggressively at the characters when they make their first step into the room. Make it quite clear this is a puzzle to solve rather than a combat encounter. If attacked, the nymph (Use **Unicorn**) is an illusion created by the tower. The nymph will focus on healing herself and aiding the beast but this is just to create an illusion that the creatures can be damaged. At the end of each turn, the creatures regenerate to full health. The nymph will not attack the characters. If the characters just try to run to the other side of the room, there is a **Wall of Force** blocking their way out. They could still just run across and destroy the wall but it will cost them quite a bit of HP and resources. Remember, teleportation is blocked and characters trying to teleport takes psychic damage.

Character can make a DC 17 Intelligence (Investigation) check to identify the dress of the nymph is an illusion. A 5<sup>th</sup> level **Dispel Magic** will dispel the dress. The nymph's yellow dress transforms into a medium-length blue sleeveless dress with a white long-sleeved button-up shirt underneath and a white apron on her waist. If the nymph drops to 0 hit points the illusion disappears as well.

The beast will cease attacking and transforms into a mechanical humanoid that resembles a human male in the same clothing. There are lockers and bathrooms here that contain nothing of note beyond a couple towels.

### La Belle et La Bête

This is a reference to Beauty and the Beast. You may add additional description to bring the reference to life if you see fit. It is meant to be a fun encounter.

The left fork of the passageway leads to the stairway. It appears to be leading up though the sign next to it reads “Stairs down”. The stairs are an illusion that can be spotted by characters with passive Investigation of 20 or higher. This illusion cannot be dispelled. Walking into it, however, teleports the character back to the illusionary wall on the first floor. The other characters just see the teleported character disappear. This can be especially problematic if the party did not play nice with the workman gnomes on the first floor.

The middle fork of the passageway leads to living quarters for all the workman gnomes. The characters can search the rooms if they want, but the four or five gnomes sleeping on this floor might not welcome such an intrusion, and they won’t find anything useful. At the end of the corridor is a sign marked “stairs up.” There is an illusion here as well. It can be spotted by characters with passive Investigation of 20 or higher. This illusion cannot be dispelled. Walking into these stairs, teleports the character to the beginning of Floor 3.

If the characters ask the gnomes about the nymph and the mechanical beast, they tell the characters, “The supervisors turn the Beauty off so the Beast will turn itself off.”

### Floor 3: The Armory

The second floor of the Grey Keep is an armory. The whole 120’ diameter area is filled with racks of weapons, supplies, and armor. There are two guards (*Berserkers*) that patrol the room in a circle every 10 rounds. If the party ducks behind a rack whenever a guard passes, they should be able to avoid a confrontation and be hidden. In the middle of the room on display are a *Shortsword of Sharpness*, *Defender Shortsword*, a *Periapt of Wound Closure*, and *+3 Studded Leather*. The weapons are clearly labeled in multiple languages, this tower is from the plane of law, after all. The characters will not be able to keep these items at the end of the adventure, since they cannot be removed from this plane, and they will disappear along with the keep. However, the party can use them during this module. The same rules as the Shadow Keep apply: the first character who touches the item automatically attunes to it. The party cannot benefit from a short or long rest in this plane; therefore they cannot re-attune to any

of the items. This may create some rather funny situations.

There are large number of *Daggers* (labeled Shortsword), *Shortswords* (labeled Longsword), and *Hand Crossbows* (labelled Heavy Crossbow) here.

The ascending staircase is right next to the staircase the characters enter the floor on, so a party can continue up immediately and forego the contents of the armory if they so choose. But it should be made very clear that this is an armory and the characters can find necessary weapons that they desperately need considering their normal items are so ineffective.

#### Section Reminder # 6

Magical Items found here:

- First character that touches the item is attuned to them, the items do not re-attune when passed to another character. Characters cannot benefit from short rest here, so the items can never be “re-attuned.”
- Even when not attuned, the weapons can still function as a regular weapon and will go through magic resistance and the protection granted by *Estate Transference*. (Character just loses modifiers and other special effects the piece may have.)
- Characters cannot keep the items as they are tied to this plane, but they won’t know this unless they have had a similar experience at the Shadow Keep already.

### Floor 4: Asylum Puzzle Room

As you walk up this flight of stairs, you begin to realize it seem to be longer than the previous flights. When you finally arrive at the top of the stairs you see a wide path in front of you leading to a mammoth 15’ tall bronze double-door. The door has six bars across it that hold it closed, and each bar has one letter of the word “ASYLUM” stamped on it with contrasting silver inlay.

There is a landing directly in front of you that has two torches burning, one on the left side and one to the right. There are bronze plaques beneath the torches with something written on them that you can’t make out from this distance. There is also a fountain in the middle of the landing that has a small pool of water with an empty bucket resting on the basin’s edge. In front of the fountain is a small puddle of dark black water with a torch sticking out of it.

Two paths lead out from the landing, one to the left and one to the right. Each path leads to another landing with one torch on it. More paths and more landings are visible in the darkness beyond. A dark pit looms beneath



the landings and paths. You can't see the bottom of it, but it looks to be quite a ways down.

The black puddle with a torch has a unique interaction with the characters. If they spend time investigating the puddle and the torch, the puddle is just a puddle of water. The torch is stuck to the ground as if it was part of the ground. If the characters ignore the puddle without any attempt to investigate it, a **Black Pudding** will surprise the party when they are solving the puzzle causing a reasonable amount of chaos.

If a character drops anything into the inky blackness, it will appear to stretch and accelerate towards the floor, hitting approximately 600 feet down. Any object without a platform beneath it will get sucked downwards by the impossibly-strong gravity field, so throwing a grappling hook from platform to platform won't work. Magically flying is possible though the character must still follow the designated path or risk being struck by lightning that does 28 (8d6) Radiant damage and will be returned to the main landing.

The way this puzzle works is as follows:

- Each plaque has a letter marked on it. The letter is not visible until someone puts their head close to it.
- Pushing on the plaque or extinguishing the flame above it with the fountain water will select that letter. If the letter is one of A S Y L U M, one of the bars of the door will open.
- When all six are pushed, the bronze door will open. A *knock* spell will open only one of the bars and will extinguish the corresponding letter's flame. But the flame lights back up after two rounds. This means it is nearly impossible to open it with only *Knock* spells, but their use could provide the characters with hints as to how the puzzle works.
- It is impossible to lockpick the door.

If a plaque or flame is triggered that is not one of the correct letters, a trap door will open beneath the character triggering it regardless of where the character is. The character will fall, unless they make a DC 17 Dexterity saving throw. A character that fails the saving throw falls into the darkness below.

What keeps the party from simply pushing all the plaques? Simple – not all of the paths above

the pit are solid. If a character tries to walk on a path that does not lead to any valid letters, when he reaches the middle of the path it will retract instantly – the character must make a Dexterity saving throw at DC 17 or fall. The invalid paths are not illusions. None of the gnomes regularly use this door, thus it is impossible to identify which path is more frequented. The platforms are mechanical, but cannot be disabled. All the platforms and paths have the same mechanism so the characters cannot tell which is right or wrong just from looking at the paths or landings.

Reward creativity. If the party uses magic like *Telekinesis*, allow it to work. Though, even with such magic it is not possible to observe what word is on the plaque and the spell range is not far enough to reach the final platform. If the bucket is dropped off the edge, it teleports back to the fountain. The flames only extinguish if water from the bucket is poured onto them.

DM Note: There is a crudely drawn map for you to know the right paths they can take (Sorry, I'm not artistic :/). Consult the overhead view of the paths and letters in the appendix. The letters are arranged on platforms so that the lower alphabetical ones are to the left of the higher-alphabetical ones. So, from the "B" platform, the left path leads to the "A" platform, and the right path leads to the "C" platform. The general rule is this: if a path doesn't lead to any letters found in the word "ASYLUM," it will cause the character to fall. Provide characters with Map #1 to help them visualize the layout of this puzzle room.

### Falling

When a character falls, they are teleported back to the main landing. Elisande is unwilling to be the first to walk towards any landing or effect the plaque or the flame. The falling character takes 28 (8d6) bludgeoning damage.

Allow characters can use magic to prevent this damage. Spells like *Feather Fall* or even *Telekinesis* will help, use your discretion. And yes, they fall every time they select an incorrect letter or walk on an invalid path.

If a character falls when crossing a path, they can decide to jump forward towards the intended landing (though it is a wrong landing). If they succeed, they will be struck by lightning and be returned to the main landing as well. The lightning does 28 (8d6) Radiant damage.



## Puzzles Logic

With a few trial and error, the players should be able to figure the puzzles out. The logic behind it is quite simple. Players have access to M and N. Every letter before M is to the left of M and every letter after M is to the right of M. With this logic if a character is looking for A, A is before M, so they take the left path. A is before G, so they take the left path, A if before D, before B, and they arrive at the right landing.

## Nico, A Torch, and the Black Pudding

This is a tribute to Nico Diego Escobar. During the Out of the Abyss campaign, the DM said, “there’s a black puddle on the ground.” Nico ignored it and his character was consumed by a Black Pudding. Later, in Curse of Strahd, the DM said, “there’s a black puddle on the ground.” Nico, with the same character spend nearly 10 minutes investigating the puddle, throwing weapons and object, and finally “poking” it with his torch... turns out the second time it was just a puddle.

## Floor 5: The Asylum Ward

This is the main floor of the insane asylum. All the patients were put in here, because they were too powerful to be destroyed outright, and their presence affected the ongoing sanity of their neighbors in the Plane of Law.

When you come to the top of this floor, you notice that the lights become almost glaringly bright to where there is not an ounce of shadow in the whole place. The walls take on the texture and feel of linen as well, and you can hear nonsensical and hysterical murmuring of voices in the distance.

A 10-foot wide corridor stretches to the north. Another one leads to the east. Vague figures dart around in each direction just outside of clear view. Elisande also becomes hysterical when she hears this, and runs off into the crowd of people [*If she has the Blink Dog, it joins her in running off*].

This floor has two corridors in it, in the shape of a circle: one starts out to the north and curves around to the East, the other starts out to the east and curves around to the north. The entrance is on the southwest side of the tower. The stairway up to the “Administrator’s Office” is on the northeast side. Depending on whether the party heads through the north or east passageway, the party will encounter a different sets of people. If there isn’t much time left to finish the module, you may

want to just describe the NPCs, and not have the characters interact with them.

These NPCs will be in hospital rooms off to either side of the corridor and will wander out when the party walks by. Feel free to improvise harmless patients of your own. Characters earn 500 XP for each patient they cure or entertain. Patients can be cure with a *Greater Restoration* spell.

### East Corridor:

1. (Harmless) Elven male **Martial Arts Adept** who thinks he is a chair and will ask the characters to sit on him. If they do not sit on him, then he will follow them around on all fours and pester them. His name is “Oak Wood, the animated chair.”
2. (Harmless) Phalt, a gnomish male (**Enchanter**) who stands on his head, constantly. He’s worried that his thoughts will drain out of him if he’s right side up. If the characters flip him over, he’ll cover his head with his hands to keep the “brain-juice” from leaking out. He has an arcane focus which allows spellcasters to negate the protection granted by the *Estate Transference* spell.
3. (Dangerous) Rock, a half-orc male **War Priest** who thinks he really is a rock. He will lie perfectly still in the middle of the corridor, preventing characters from passing. He will not speak to the characters at all. He has resistance to all damage (after calculating for protection from *Estate Transference*) so he isn’t too bothered by damage. He refuses to move unless the characters cure him or act out the use of spells that could move earth to “move” him (e.g., *mold earth*, *transmute rock*).

### North Corridor:

1. (Harmless) Cru-Cru, an Elven female **Veteran**, who believes that she’s a chicken. As she walks around, pecking the ground, she will tell the party that her main complaint is that she is given food on a plate, instead of cornmeal on the ground, as is proper for a chicken..
2. (Harmless) Simsa is a gnomish female **Illusionist** who is always perceives herself to be five feet to the left of her actual position. She has trouble running into walls by

accident, and when dealing with the party she consistently tries to “move out of the party’s way” by blocking their path over and over again. A *Greater Restoration* spell will cure her, but she refuses to be cured due to the fact that she “doesn’t have a problem.” She needs to be incapacitated, otherwise the caster must make a melee spell attack roll to hit her with the spell. She has mage armor on and will cast shield to prevent the touch. She has an arcane focus hidden away somewhere and will reward the characters for curing her with it.

3. (Dangerous) Smitty, a dwarven female dance instructor (*Diviner*). She considers herself one of the most beautiful beings in existence. She is dressed in a bright red *Cape of the Mountebank* with a high collar covered in sequins, and will antagonize the characters mercilessly, challenging them to duels. If the character ignores her, she initiates combat with her *Maze* spell on the most arrogant player (and the party is considered surprised if they ignored her). Smitty’s Portent rolls are 1 and 1.

If it becomes clear she has the upper hand in combat, she begins casting *Otto’s Irresistible Dance* on the characters that are still conscious and she screams out, “Dance for me, my precious! Dance! Dance I say!”

### Where both corridors end:

No matter which route the party takes, they will end up on the northeast side of the tower. If the party wants to, they can just walk up the stairs and skip this section.

As you approach the stairway, you hear a faint voice call out “..help...help me...”

Behind a partially open curtain, you can see the figure of a man in a white suit struggling against chains binding him to a bed.

“Please... I am the Asylum’s administrator. Let me out... I can tell you all about this place.”

Unfortunately for the party, this guy is just a delusional lunatic who believes that he is the Administrator. He is a human male *Conjurer*. He isn’t lying, he truly believes he is the administrator of the Asylum. However, he also believes the

characters are escaped patients of the Asylum. If the characters free him, he will leap up and attack them while cackling maniacally. Once the characters open the seal on his chains, he immediately casts *Cloudkill*, catching as many characters as possible.

If the party tries to interrogate him without releasing him, he will answer them in plausible, though completely false statements, like “the Grey Keep is actually capable of flying around on its own, and we’re just here in Grosvenor for a holiday.” If the party is not interested in helping the Administrator, let the characters make a DC13 Wisdom (Perception) check to notice two more similarly dressed people chained to beds at the back of this room.

After they deal with the first guy, they will encounter two more humans chained to beds. Both will claim to be the Administrator and will give similar sorts of answers. Unless the party is particularly clever about their line of questioning, they will not be able to find out that the person on the left is the real one, and the person in the right bed is an illusion.

The party should remember that this is an asylum for insane spellcasters. If they approach the bed on the right and get within touching distance of the illusion, the image will disappear. A DC 17 Wisdom (Perception) check at the beds reveals the person on the left bed appears to be the real person. If the party shows no interest in helping, then the Administrator will yell out, “I can help you defeat the gnomes!” The illusion claims the same thing, but cannot give any useful information. The Administrator tries not to give too much help until he is freed.

If they free the real Administrator or question him, he will reveal the following information:

- This tower came from the Plane of Law, a Plane that is essentially a machine, with cities built on enormous gears.
- This was an asylum for people who couldn’t take the rigidity of society in that plane.
- The Twins used to be inmates of the asylum.
- They led a revolt and murdered all the sane workers that kept the Asylum functioning except for him, whom they have kept chained and have even tortured during their reign.
- The workman gnomes on the lower levels of the tower don’t know anything about what has transpired. The ASYLUM puzzle room

keeps them out of the upper levels, and they don't question authority.

- The workman gnomes continue to follow orders and don't question the change in tone because, well, they're from the Plane of Law.
- The guards are the essence of Law – they do exactly what they're told, and do not burden themselves with worries of what's right or wrong. They're maintained by the workman gnomes.
- In a desperate attempt to save the Plane of Law, the Administrator activated the *Estate Transference* spell and brought the tower to this location.
- The Sage of Grosvenson gave the Administrator a tuning fork to this location and told him to come here whenever he needs help. "Are you guys the help he sent?"
- He explains, destroying the twins is the only way to send the tower back. (This is a lie. He doesn't want the characters to just destroy the keystone and send the gnomes back with him. He wants to be free of the whole mess).
- If it becomes clear to him that the characters know about the keystone, he pleads for them to help him destroy the crazy gnomish twins and provides them with a potion that provides the benefit of *Foresight*. This potion only works in Grey Keep. He also provides each character with a magical potion and restores all their hit points when consumed.
- He also clarifies the twin's 'illness' has led to some unique side effects. Both gnomes must be damaged at the same time (same turn) for them to sustain any damage. That is why the Administrator himself was not able to deal with the twins.

## Floor 6: The Twins' Office

You walk up yet another flight of stairs. This time, it leads you to an enormous circular room, 120 feet in diameter. Directly on the other side of the room is an altar with a multicolored block of glass resting upon it... the keystone!

Two gnomes sit behind two desks on opposing sides of the room. One is flipping through a spellbook, the other flips through some form of religious text. They notice you as you enter and addresses the party, alternating speaking each word as they continue.

"What brings you to my Asylum? Someone isn't being LAWFUL?!?"

When you look around to your party-mates, you realized Elisande is missing!

The party enters from the northeast side of the room. The gnomes will 'judge' the characters based on their actions so far. If the party has been killing guards, workers, and the lunatics, the twins attack immediately. The gnomes consider the lunatics friends, the guards as a key part of their keep, and the workmen important, but also as the least valuable.

If the party did not kill more than three 'innocent' people in the keep (the beast in the bathroom does not count), and if they did not steal from the armory, then the gnomes are in a good mood and is extremely willing to discuss any matter or solution with the party. The party is treated politely and served with light food and gnomish tea by some mechanical servants. Anyone negotiating with the gnomes' gains advantage in this scenario.

If the party still did not kill more than three 'innocent' people in the Grey Keep (again, the beast does not count), but stole from the armory. The gnomes are not too pleased. But they are willing to negotiate. The party does gains *NO advantage* in this scenario.

If the party has killed more than three but not too many people throughout the keep, the gnomes are obviously irritated and not too keen on a negotiation. The party will have disadvantage on all Charisma based checks with the gnomes in these scenarios.

Intimidating the gnomes leads to immediate combat.

**Negotiation:** Given suitable recompense, the Twins will agree to leave Grosvenson. Roleplay the situation. Allowed the party to make a Charisma (Persuasion) check. If the party rolls above 20, the gnomes will demand 3 magical items or 30,000 gold, otherwise they demand 5 magical item or 50,000 gold. Any item with chaotic or random properties will be highly valued by them (considered as two; eg. *Wand of Wonder*). The gnomes do not know they can't keep the magic items or the gold, but the characters also don't know they wouldn't lose their item (provided they haven't put that together after the Shadow Keep situation).

If negotiations succeed, the gnomes will keep their word and will immediately destroy the keystone. Go to the **Going Home** section.

**Sneakiness:** If a character managed to sneak up the stairs (Archdruid's passive perception of 24, there is nothing to hide behind), the rest of the party can attempt to distract the gnomes while the character in question tries to destroy the stone. The keystone has an AC of 20 and 25 hitpoints. It must be destroyed in one hit otherwise it regenerates all its hitpoints by the end of each creatures turn. If the stone is destroyed, go to the **Going Home** section. If the character misses or fails to do 25 damages in one turn, the twins will instantly know what is happening, and attack.

### Going Home:

If the keystone is destroyed by a character, read:

The Tower shakes as if it was struck by a giant hand. The twins are shocked, but only for a second. The next moment, they are already throwing spells at you.

If the negotiations were successful, read:

The Tower shakes as if it was struck by a giant hand. The twins examine the new items they have acquired (or they count their new gold pieces).

The instant the keystone is destroyed, the keep starts heading back to its home plane. The entire structure shudders, then begins melting as if it were made of wax. It disappears into the ground as if there was a drain sucking all the material out. It takes 18 seconds (3 rounds) for the keep to fully disappear, so the Twins can attack during that time (They will of course not attack if the negotiation was successful).

At the end of the third round, the twins melt away alongside everything else, and the characters begin to fall 100 ft. Unless the characters are *flying*, *Feather Falling*, or have some way to prevent the fall, they take 30 (10d6) damage from falling.

## The Final Battle with the Twins

A feral glint flashes across the Twins' eyes when they realize that combat has reached them. As they begin casting spells, you realize that they are going to try to kill you as quickly as possible.

Combat with the gnomes can be pretty brutal. One twin is an **Archmage** and the other is an **Archdruid**.

The twins are also affected by the following condition:

The twins share a health pool of 132.

- Any buffs placed on one of them affects both of them. The Archdruid always have *Foresight* cast on himself and the Archmage has *Mindblank* casted.
- The twins are in their lair. Every round, on initiative count 20 (losing ties) as a lair action a random character is targeted with a *Polymorph* spell. The character must make a DC 20 Wisdom saving throw or be turn into a sheep, fish, or chicken. The twins will not purposefully target the polymorphed character. The character has 1 hit point in their new form for the purpose of Area of Effect spells.
- In order to take damage, both of the twins must be attacked in the same turn. Therefore, one character will have to hold an action and damage one of the twins while another hits the other twin on the same turn. When this happens, the twin sustains the lower of the two damage totals. (ie. If a fighter strikes one twin for 13 damage, and the wizard cast *Finger of Death* on the other dealing 30 necrotic damage, the twins only take 13 damage).
- The twins always stay away from each other to prevent getting hit by area of effect spells.
- The twins each have 3 legendary resistances.
- The twins can not be banished or planar transferred. This is because they are actually one single being though appearing as two. Any spell attempting to transport the gnomes to another plane simply fails. (e.g., *Banishment*, *Maze*, etc).

## Conclusion

**Estimated Duration:** 15 minutes

### The Grey Keep is successfully sent back:

As you get up off the the ground and begin collecting your gear, you see Ritifin walking beside Grishneck as they approach you. Grishneck is flanked by a squad of undead humanoids and giants.

Ritifin rushes forward as they get nearer. "Thank you so much heroes! As I, the Sage of the Highest Order, have agreed, here is your payment and some extra rewards I cooked up while you were busy!" He hands you a bag of gold coins and a sack containing several potions.

As Ritifin turns and leave, Grishneck approaches you. "You have done a great deed, both for Fulstrom and the people of this town. And you helped my people too, I would wager. From where I come, it is traditions to reward those like you with a treasure, so I will give you one that I would cherish." He turns around and one of his undead hands him what looks like a shield and.

"I come from a line of great Paladins who serve the Raven Queen. While I cherish it merely as a family treasure, I believe it will serve you better than it can serve me sitting on a shelf in my armory. Besides, the Raven Queen isn't too happy with my *Raise* spell anyway." He looks awkwardly at the raven symbol adorning the shield before he hands it to your group. "I don't have much use of this helm either." Grishneck takes off the helm on his head revealing a kind and gentle looking half-ogre. "While Fulstrom spent the last of his power to bring you here, I will send you home with some of my own..."

The image of Grishneck and the town of Grosvenson slowly fades in front of you, turning into shadow, into blackness.

...

You awaken in the Plodding Plow in the room your group was sharing.

Elisande's familiar voice exclaims, "That was greet avontuur!"

When you look over you see that her once clean dress is all dirty, covered in mechanical oil and dirt from when you aren't entirely sure was Grovenson. The bag of gold, several potions, the helm and the shield with the image of a raven shrouded by dark shadows adorning it lay on the table.

You are unsure what just happened, but whatever it is, you feel accomplished, as though you just prevented the mass carnage of innocent lives.

You suppose you should feel good about that at least.

Due to being *Hasted* for too long, all the characters gain 4 levels of exhaustion. The bag contains the promised amount of gold (1500 gold pieces per character), three *Potion of Superior Healing*, and a *Potion of Fire Breath*. At this moment Elanil returns and opens the door to the room to the sight of Elisande covered in dirt and mechanical oil and a group of completely exhausted adventurers.

#### Designer's Note

The introductory location and NPCs of the module can be changed to suit your campaign needs. This adventure is designed to be a one-shot that can easily be dropped into any campaign. Your group is resting in a tavern in Mulmaster? Wakes up with Ritifin's note. All you need is to get your players into a tavern, which isn't too difficult. After all, Elisande tends to just appear in places where there are great adventures.

## Rewards

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

## Experience

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

### Combat Awards

Name of Foe	XP Per Foe
Ancient Red Dragon	62,000
Archdruid	8,400
Archmage	8,400
Bandit Captain	450
Berserkers	450
Blackguards	3,900
Blinkdog	50
Commoner	10
Diviner	3,900
Enchanter	1,800
Gladiator	1,800
Illusionist	700
Iron Golem	15,000
Martial Arts Adept	700
Veteran	700
Stone Giant Dream Walker	5,900
Storm Giant Quintessent	15,000
Unicorn	1,800
Warlord	8,400
War Priest	5,000

### Non-Combat Awards

Task or Accomplishment	XP Per Character
Destroying the Haywire Guard	500
Curing Asylum Patient	500 each cured
Sending One Tower Back	2,500

The adventures minimum and maximum XP awards are located on the Adventure Rewards document. Note that DDAL adventures award a maximum of the “target XP” award. Only epics may grant the “maximum” amount.

The **minimum** total award for each character participating in this adventure is 10,125 **experience points**.

The **maximum** total award for each character participating in this adventure is 13,500 **experience points**.

## Treasure

The characters receive the following treasure, divided up amongst the party. Treasure is divided as evenly as possible. Gold piece values listed for sellable gear are calculated at their selling price, not their purchase price.

### \*\*Guidance on Season 8 Reward\*\*

Only two magic items are unlocked in this module. The Aegis of the Raven Queen (+3 Shield) and the Dread Helm (Common Magic Item). While the characters may come across other magic items in this module, none of those were intended to be unlocks.

### Treasure Awards

Item Name	GP Value
Ritifin’s Reward	1,500 per character
Selling a scroll	2,500

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

*Permanent magic items* are divided according to a system detailed in the *D&D Adventurers League Dungeon Master’s Guide*.

### Potion of Superior Healing

*Potion, Rare*

You regain hit points when you drink this potion. The number of hit points depends on the potion’s rarity, as shown in the Potions of Healing table. Whatever its potency, the potion’s red liquid glimmers when agitated.

### Potion of Fire Breath

*Potion, uncommon*

After drinking this potion, you can use a bonus action to exhale fire at a target within 30 feet of you. The target must make a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw, taking 4d6 fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. The effect ends after you exhale the fire three times or when 1 hour has passed.



This potion's orange liquid flickers, and smoke fills the top of the container and wafts out whenever it is opened.

### Dread Helm

*Wondrous item, common*

This fearsome steel helm makes your eyes glow red while you wear it.

### Aegis of the Raven Queen (Shield, +3)

*Armor (shield), Very rare*

This shield appears as a shroud of shadow with the symbol of the Raven Queen glowing in dim red light.

While holding this shield, nonmagical flames are extinguished within 30 feet of you as the shadow lashes out at the flame. The shield encourages you to hold no pity for those who suffer and die, for death is the natural end of life.

While holding this shield, you have a bonus to AC determined by the shield's rarity. This bonus is in addition to the shield's normal bonus to AC.

## Downtime Activities

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Characters have the opportunity to earn the following alternate downtime activities during this adventure:

**Grosvenson?** With access to the libraries of Hillsfar and the knowledge of the citizens of Elventree, you may spend 15 downtime days engaged in research in attempts to locate the town of Grosvenson. Though you failed to locate the town, you learn plenty regarding towns around Hillsfar. In future session, your character gains advantage on all History (Intelligence) checks make to remember details about locations around Hillsfar. This story award is permanent.

## Renown

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Each character receives **one renown** at the conclusion of this adventure.

## DM Reward

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In exchange for running this adventure, you earn DM Rewards as described in the *D&D Adventurers League Dungeon Master's Guide* (ALDMG).

# Appendix. Monster/NPC Statistics

## Big Friendly Giant

### Gorgash, the Raised Stone Giant (Stone Giant Dreamwalker)

*Huge giant (stone giant), lawful good*

**Armor Class** 24 (Plate)

**Hit Points** 161 (14d12 + 70)

**Speed** 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
23 (+6)	14 (+2)	21 (+5)	10 (+0)	8 (-1)	12 (+1)

**Saving Throws** Dex +8, Con +11, Wis +5

**Skills** Athletics +16, Perception +5

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

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

**Languages** Common, Giant

**Challenge** 10 (5,900 XP)

**Dreamwalker's Charm.** An enemy that starts its turn within 30 feet of the giant must make a DC 13 Charisma saving throw, provided that the giant isn't incapacitated. On a failed save, the creature is charmed by the giant. A creature charmed in this way can repeat the saving throw at the end of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. Once it succeeds on the saving throw, the creature is immune to this giant's Dreamwalker's Charm for 24 hours.

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## Actions

**Multiattack.** The giant makes two attacks with its greatsword

**Greatsword.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +15 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 30 (6d6 + 9) slashing damage.

**Petrifying Touch.** The giant touches one Medium or smaller creature within 10 feet of it that is charmed by it. The target must make a DC 17 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the target becomes petrified, and the giant can adhere the target to its stony body. *Greater restoration* spells and other magic that can undo petrification have no effect on a petrified creature on the giant unless the giant is dead, in which case the magic works normally, freeing the petrified creature as well as ending the petrified condition on it.

**Rock.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, range 60/240 ft., one target. *Hit:* 28 (4d10 + 6) bludgeoning damage. If the

target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 17 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

## Entering the Tower Ground

### Malfunctioned Mechanical Gnome (Bandit Captain)

*Medium gnome, lawful neutral*

**Armor Class** 15 (studded leather)

**Hit Points** 65 (10d8 + 20)

**Speed** 30 ft.

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

**Saving Throws** Str +4, Dex +5, Wis +2

**Skills** Athletics +4, Deception +4

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

**Senses** passive Perception 10

**Languages** any two languages

**Challenge** 2 (450 XP)

---

#### Actions

**Multiattack.** The Malfunctioned Mechanical Gnome makes three melee attacks: two with its scimitar and one with its dagger. Or the captain makes two ranged attacks with its daggers.

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

**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.

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#### Reactions

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

### Mechanical Gnome Guard (Berserker)

*Medium gnome, lawful neutral*

**Armor Class** 13 (hide armor)

**Hit Points** 67 (9d8 + 27)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
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16 (+3) 12 (+1) 17 (+3) 9 (-1) 11 (+0) 9 (-1)

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

**Senses** passive Perception 10

**Languages** any one language (usually Common)

**Challenge** 2 (450 XP)

**Reckless.** At the start of its turn, the Mechanical Gnome Guard can gain advantage on all melee weapon attack rolls during that turn, but attack rolls against it have advantage until the start of its next turn.

---

#### Actions

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

### Blink Dog

*Medium Fey, lawful neutral*

**Armor Class** 13

**Hit Points** 22 (4d8 + 4)

**Speed** 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	17 (+3)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	13 (+1)	11 (+0)

**Skills** Perception +3, Stealth +5

**Senses** passive Perception 13

**Languages** Blink Dog, understands Sylvan but can't speak it

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

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

---

#### Actions

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

**Teleport (Recharge 4-6).** The dog magically teleports, along with any equipment it is wearing or carrying, up to 40 feet to an unoccupied space it can see. Before or after teleporting, the dog can make one bite attack.

### Workman Gnomes (Commoner)

*Small gnome, lawful neutral*

**Armor Class** 10

**Hit Points** 4 (1d8)

**Speed** 30 ft.

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

**Senses** passive Perception 10

**Languages** any one language (usually Common)

**Challenge** 0 (10 XP)

## Actions

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

## Iron Golem

*Large construct, unaligned*

**Armor Class** 20 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 210 (20d10 + 100)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
24 (+7)	9 (-1)	20 (+5)	3 (-4)	11 (+0)	1 (-5)

**Damage Immunities** fire, poison, psychic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks not made with adamantite weapons.

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

**Senses** darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 10

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

**Challenge** 16 (15,000 XP)

**Fire Absorption.** Whenever the golem is subjected to fire damage, it takes no damage and instead regains a number of hit points equal to the fire damage dealt.

**Immutable Form.** The golem is immune to any spell or effect that would alter its form.

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

**Magic Weapons.** The golem's weapon attacks are magical.

## Actions

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

**Slam.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +13 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 20 (3d8 + 7) bludgeoning damage.

**Sword.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +13 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 23 (3d10 + 7) slashing damage.

**Poison Breath (Recharge 6).** The golem exhales poisonous gas in a 15-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC

19 Constitution saving throw, taking 45 (10d8) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

## Haywire Guard (Gladiator)

*Medium Gnome, unaligned*

**Armor Class** 16 (studded leather, shield)

**Hit Points** 112 (15d8 + 45)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	15 (+2)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	15 (+2)

**Saving Throws** Str +7, Dex +5, Con +6

**Skills** Athletics +10, Intimidation +5

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

**Senses** passive Perception 11

**Languages** any one language (usually Common)

**Challenge** 5 (1,800 XP)

**Brave.** The gladiator has advantage on saving throws against being frightened.

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

## Actions

**Multiattack.** The Haywire Guard makes three melee attacks or two ranged attacks.

**Spear.** *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft. and range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) piercing damage, or 13 (2d8 + 4) piercing damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack.

**Shield Bash.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 9 (2d4 + 4) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a Medium or smaller creature, it must succeed on a DC 15 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

## Reactions

**Parry.** The Haywire Guard adds 3 to its AC against one melee attack that would hit it. To do so, the Haywire Guard must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.

## Floor 2

### Mechanical Gnome Guard (Berserker)

*Medium gnome, lawful neutral*

**Armor Class** 13 (hide armor)

**Hit Points** 67 (9d8 + 27)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	12 (+1)	17 (+3)	9 (-1)	11 (+0)	9 (-1)

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

**Senses** passive Perception 10

**Languages** any one language (usually Common)

**Challenge** 2 (450 XP)

**Reckless.** At the start of its turn, the berserker can gain advantage on all melee weapon attack rolls during that turn, but attack rolls against it have advantage until the start of its next turn.

---

#### Actions

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

## Floor 3

### The Beast (Storm Giant Quintessent)

*Huge Giant, unaligned*

**Armor Class** 12

**Hit Points** 230 (20d12 +100)

**Speed** 50 ft., fly 50 ft. (hover), swim 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
29 (+9)	14 (+2)	20 (+5)	17 (+3)	20 (+5)	19 (+4)

**Saving Throws** Str +14, Con +10, Wis +10, Cha +9

**Skills** Arcana +8, History +8, Perception +10

**Damage Resistance** cold; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

**Damage Immunities** lightning, thunder

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

**Senses** truesight 60 ft., passive Perception 20

**Languages** Common, Gnome

**Challenge** 16 (15,000 XP)

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#### Actions

**Multiattack.** The Beast makes two Lightning Sword attacks or uses Wind Javelin twice

**Lightning Sword.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +14 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 40 (9d6 + 9) lightning damage.

**Wind Javelin.** The Beast coalesces wind into a javelin-like form and jurls it at a creature it can see within 600 feet of it. The javelin is considered a magic weapon and deals 19 (3d6 + 9) piercing damage to the target, striking unerringly. The javelin disappears after it hits.

---

#### Legendary Actions

The Beast can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The Beast regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

**Gust.** The Beast targets a creature it can see within 60 feet of it and creates a magical gust of wind around it. The target must succeed on a DC 18 Strength saving throw or be pushed up to 20 feet in any horizontal direction the Beast chooses.

**Thunderbolt (2 Actions).** The Beast hurls a thunderbolt at a creature it can see within 600 feet of it. The target must make a DC 18 Dexterity saving throw, taking 22 (4d10) thunder damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

### Nymph (Unicorn)

*Medium Fey, unaligned*

**Armor Class** 12

**Hit Points** 67 (9d8 + 27)

**Speed** 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	14 (+2)	17 (+3)	11 (+0)	17 (+3)	16 (+3)

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** charmed, paralyzed, poisoned

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

**Languages** Celestial, Elvish, Sylvan, telepathy 60 ft.

**Challenge** 5 (1.800 XP)

**Charge.** If the Nymph moves at least 20 feet straight toward a target and then hits it with a horn attack on the same turn, the target takes an extra 9 (2d8) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 15 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

**Innate Spellcasting.** The Nymph's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 14). The unicorn can innately cast the following spells, requiring no components:

*At will:* *detect evil and good*, *druidcraft*, *pass without trace*  
*1/day each:* *calm emotions*, *dispel evil and good*, *entangle*

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

**Magic Weapons.** The Nymph's weapon attacks are magical.

---

#### Actions

**Multiattack.** The Nymph makes two attacks: one with its hooves and one with its horn.

**Hooves.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

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

**Healing Touch (3/Day).** The Nymph touches another creature with its hand. The target magically regains 11 (2d8 + 2) hit points. In addition, the touch removes all diseases and neutralizes all poisons afflicting the target.

**Teleport (1/Day).** The Nymph magically teleports itself and up to three willing creatures it can see within 5 feet of it, along with any equipment they are wearing or carrying, to a location the unicorn is familiar with, up to 1 mile away.

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#### Legendary Actions

The unicorn can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The unicorn regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

**Hooves.** The unicorn makes one attack with its hooves.



**Shimmering Shield (Costs 2 Actions).** The unicorn creates a shimmering, magical field around itself or another creature it can see within 60 feet of it. The target gains a +2 bonus to AC until the end of the unicorn's next turn.

**Heal Self (Costs 3 Actions).** The unicorn magically regains 11 (2d8 + 2) hit points.

## Floor 4

### Black Pudding

*Large ooze, unaligned*

**Armor Class** 7

**Hit Points** 85 (10d10 + 30)

**Speed** 20 ft., climb 20 ft.

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

**Damage Immunities** acid, cold, lightning, slashing

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

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

Perception 8

**Languages** -

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

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

**Corrosive Form.** A creature that touches the pudding or hits it with a melee attack while within 5 feet of it takes 4 (1d8) acid damage. Any nonmagical weapon made of metal or wood that hits the pudding corrodes. After dealing damage, the weapon takes a permanent and cumulative -1 penalty to damage rolls. If its penalty drops to -5, the weapon is destroyed. Nonmagical ammunition made of metal or wood that hits the pudding is destroyed after dealing damage. The pudding can eat through 2-inch-thick, nonmagical wood or metal in 1 round.

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

---

### Actions

**Pseudopod.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) bludgeoning damage plus 18 (4d8) acid damage. In addition, nonmagical armor worn by the target is partly dissolved and takes a permanent and cumulative -1 penalty to the AC it offers. The armor is destroyed if the penalty reduces its AC to 10.

---

### Reactions

**Split.** When a pudding that is Medium or larger is subjected to lightning or slashing damage, it splits into two new puddings if it has at least 10 hit points. Each new pudding has hit points equal to half the original pudding's, rounded down. New puddings are one size smaller than the original pudding.

## Floor 5

### Oak Wood – an animated chair (Martial Arts Adept)

*Medium humanoid (Elf), chaotic good*

**Armor Class** 16

**Hit Points** 60 (11d8 + 11)

**Speed** 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	17 (+3)	13 (+1)	11 (+0)	16 (+3)	10 (0)

**Skills** Acrobatics +5, Insight +5, Stealth +5

**Senses** passive Perception 13

**Languages** Common and Elvish

**Challenge** 3 (700 XP)

**Unarmored Defense.** While Oak Wood is wearing no armor and wielding no shield, its AC includes its Wisdom modifier.

---

#### Actions

**Multiattack.** Oak Wood makes three unarmed strikes or three dart attacks.

**Unarmed Strike.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a creature, Oak Wood can choose one of the following additional effects:

- The target must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or drop one item it is holding (Oak Wood's choice).
- The target must succeed on a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw or be knocked prone.
- The target must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or be stunned until the end of Oak Wood's next turn.

**Dart.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 20/600 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) piercing damage.

---

#### Reactions

**Deflect Missile.** In response to being hit by a ranged weapon attack, Oak Wood deflects the missile. The damage it takes from the attack is reduced by 1d10 + 3. If the damage is reduced to 0, Oak Wood catches the missile if it's small enough to hold in one hand and Oak Wood has a hand free (Which is doesn't, he has four legs).

### Phalt, the Half Orc Enchanter

*Medium humanoid (Half Orc), neutral good*

**Armor Class** 12 (15 mage armor)

**Hit Points** 40 (9d8)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	17 (+3)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)

**Saving Throw** Int +6, Wis +4

**Skills** Arcana +6, History +6

**Senses** passive Perception 11

**Languages** Common, Orcish, Dwarvish, Giant

**Challenge** 5 (1,800 XP)

**Spellcasting.** The enchanter is a 9<sup>th</sup>-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks). The enchanter has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *friends, mage hand, mending, message*

1st level (4 slots): *charm person, mage armor, shield*

2nd level (3 slots): *hold person, invisibility, suggestion*

3rd level (3 slots): *fireball, haste, counterspell*

4th level (3 slots): *dominate beast, stoneskin*

5th level (2 slots): *hold monster*

---

#### Actions

**Quarterstaff.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 2 (1d6 - 1) bludgeoning damage, or 3 (1d8 - 1) bludgeoning damage if used with two hands.

---

#### Reactions

**Instinctive Charm (Recharges after the Enchanter Casts an Enchantment Spell of 1st Level or Higher).** The enchanter tries to magically divert an attack made against it, provided that the attacker is within 30 feet of it and visible to it. The enchanter must decide to do so before the attack hits or misses.

The attacker must make a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, the attacker targets the creature closest to it, other than the enchanter or itself. If multiple creatures are closest, the attacker chooses which one to target.

### Rock, the Half Orc War Priest

*Medium humanoid (Half Orc), neutral*

**Armor Class** 18 (Plate)

**Hit Points** 117 (18d8 + 36)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	17 (+3)	13 (+1)

**Saving Throw** Con +6, Wis +7

**Skills** Intimidation +5, Religion +4

**Senses** passive Perception 13

**Languages** Common, Orcish

**Challenge** 9 (5,000 XP)

**Spellcasting.** The priest is a 9<sup>th</sup>-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). The priest has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *light, mending, scared flame, spare the dying*

1st level (4 slots): *divine favor, guiding bolt, healing word, shield of faith*

2nd level (3 slots): *lesser restoration, magic weapon, prayer of healing, silence, spiritual weapon*

3rd level (3 slots): *beacon of hope, crusader's mantle, dispel magic, revivify, spirit guardians, water walk*

4th level (3 slots): *banishment, freedom of movement, guardian of faith, stoneskin*

5th level (2 slots): *flame strike, mass cure wounds, hold monster*

---

## Actions

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

**Maul.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) bludgeoning damage.

---

## Reactions

**Guided Strike (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest).** The priest grants a +10 bonus to an attack roll made by itself or another creature within 30 feet of it. The priest can make this choice after the roll is made but before it hits or misses.

## Veteran

*Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment*

**Armor Class** 17 (splint)

**Hit Points** 58 (9d8 + 18)

**Speed** 30 ft.

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

**Skills** Athletics +5, Perception +2

**Senses** passive Perception 12

**Languages** any one language (usually Common)

**Challenge** 3 (700 XP)

---

## Actions

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

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

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

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

## Simsa, the Gnome Illusionist

*Small humanoid (gnome), lawful good*

**Armor Class** 12 (15 mage armor)

**Hit Points** 38 (7d8 + 7)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)	16 (+3)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)

**Saving Throw** Int +5, Wis +2

**Skills** Arcana +5, History +5

**Senses** passive Perception 10

**Languages** Common, Gnomish, Elvish, Sylvan

**Challenge** 3 (700 XP)

**Spellcasting.** The illusionist is a 7<sup>th</sup>-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). The illusionist has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *dancing lights, mage hand, minor illusion, poison spray*

1st level (4 slots): *color spray, disguise self, mage armor, shield*

2nd level (3 slots): *invisibility, mirror image, phantasmal force*

3rd level (3 slots): *major image, counterspell*

4th level (1 slot): *phantasmal killer*

**Displacement (Recharges after the Illusionist Casts an Illusion Spell of 1<sup>st</sup> Level or Higher).** As a bonus action, the illusionist projects an illusion that makes the illusionist appear to be standing in a place a few inches from its actual location, causing any creature to have disadvantage on attack rolls against the illusionist. The effect ends if the illusionist takes damage, it is incapacitated, or its speed becomes 0.

---

## Actions

**Quarterstaff.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 2 (1d6 - 1) bludgeoning damage, or 3 (1d8 - 1) bludgeoning damage if used with two hands.

## Smitty, the Dwarven Diviner

*Medium humanoid (Dwarf), chaotic neutral*

**Armor Class** 12 (15 mage armor)

**Hit Points** 67 (15d8)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)

**Saving Throw** Int +7, Wis +4

**Skills** Arcana +7, History +7  
**Senses** passive Perception 11  
**Languages** Common, Dwarvish, Elvish, Giant  
**Challenge** 3 (700 XP)

**Spellcasting.** The diviner is a 15<sup>th</sup>-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). The diviner has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *firebolt, light, mage hand, message, true strike*  
1st level (4 slots): *detect magic, shield, mage armor*  
2nd level (3 slots): *detect thoughts, locate object, scorching ray*  
3rd level (3 slots): *counterspell, fly, fireball*  
4th level (3 slots): *arcane eye, ice storm, stoneskin*  
5th level (2 slots): *Rary's telepathic bond, scrying*  
6th level (1 slot): *mass suggestion, Otto's irresistible dance*  
7th level (1 slot): *delayed blast fireball, teleport*  
8th level (1 slot): *maze*

**Portent (Recharges after the Diviner Casts an Illusion Spell of 1<sup>st</sup> Level or Higher).** When the diviner or a creature it can see makes an attack roll, a saving throw, or an ability check, the diviner can roll a d20 and choose to use this roll in place of the attack roll, saving throw, or ability check

---

## Actions

**Quarterstaff.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 2 (1d6 - 1) bludgeoning damage, or 3 (1d8 - 1) bludgeoning damage if used with two hands.

# The Administrator

*Medium humanoid (human), chaotic neutral*

**Armor Class** 12 (15 mage armor)  
**Hit Points** 40 (9d8)  
**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	17 (+3)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)

**Saving Throw** Int +6, Wis +4  
**Skills** Arcana +6, History +6  
**Senses** passive Perception 11  
**Languages** Common, Elvish, Gnomish, Orcish  
**Challenge** 6 (2,300 XP)

**Spellcasting.** The Administrator is a 9<sup>th</sup>-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks). The Administrator has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *acid splash, mage hand, poison spray, prestidigitation*

1st level (4 slots): *mage armor, magic missile, shield*  
2nd level (3 slots): *cloud of daggers, misty step, web*  
3rd level (3 slots): *fireball, counterspell*  
4th level (3 slots): *Evard's black tentacles, stoneskin*  
5th level (2 slots): *cloudkill, conjure elemental*

**Benign Transportation (Recharges after the Administrator Cast a Conjunction Spell of 1<sup>st</sup> Level or Higher).** As a bonus action, the Administrator teleports up to 30 feet to an unoccupied space that it can see. If it instead chooses a space within range that is occupied by a willing Small or Medium creature, they both teleport, swapping places.

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## Actions

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

## The Office

### Thwom the Archpriest

*Small humanoid (gnome), lawful neutral*

**Armor Class** 16 (hide armor, shield)

**Hit Points** 132 (24d8 + 24)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	20 (+5)	11 (+0)

**Saving Throws** Int +5, Wis +9

**Skills** Medicine +9, Nature +5, Perception +9

**Damage Resistance** damage from spells; nonmagical bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing

**Senses** passive Perception 24

**Languages** Common, Gnomish, Druidic

**Challenge** 12 (8,400 XP)

**Spellcasting.** Thwom is a 18th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 17, +9 to hit with spell attacks). Thwom has the following druid spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *druidcraft, mending, poison spray, produce flame*

1st level (4 slots): *cure wounds, entangle, faerie fire, speak with animals*

2nd level (3 slots): *animal messenger, beast sense, hold person*

3rd level (3 slots): *conjure animals, meld into stone, water breathing*

4th level (3 slots): *dominate beast, locate creature, stoneskin, wall of fire*

5th level (3 slot): *commune with nature, mass cure wounds, tree stride*

6th level (1 slot): *heal, heroes' feast, sunbeam*

7th level (1 slot): *fire storm*

8th level (1 slot): *animal shapes*

9th level (1 slot): *foresight*

**Spell Buff:** Thwom is affected by *Foresight, Mind blank, and Stoneskin*

---

### Actions

**Scimitar.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft. one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) slashing damage.

**Change Shape (2/Day).** Thwom magically polymorphs into a beast or elemental with a challenge rating of 6 or less, and can remain in this form for up to 9 hours. Thwom can choose whether its equipment falls to the ground, melds with its new form, or is worn by the new form. Thwom reverts to its true form if it dies or falls unconscious. Thwom can revert to its true form using a bonus action on its turn.

While in a new form, Thwom retains its game statistics and

ability to speak, but its AC, movement modes, Strength, and Dexterity are replaced by those of the new form, and it gains any special senses, proficiencies, traits, actions, and reactions (except class features, legendary actions, and lair actions) that the new form has but that it lacks. It can cast its spells with verbal or somatic components in its new form.

The new form's attacks count as magical for the purpose of overcoming resistances and immunity to nonmagical attacks.

### Thistle Twom the Archmage

*Small humanoid (gnome), lawful neutral*

**Armor Class** 12 (15 with mage 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 Resistance** damage from spells; nonmagical bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing

**Senses** passive Perception 17

**Languages** All languages

**Challenge** 12 (8,400 XP)

**Magic Resistance.** Thistle Twom has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

**Spellcasting.** Thistle Twom is a 18th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 17, +9 to hit with spell attacks). Thistle Twom has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *fire bolt, light, mage hand, prestidigitation, shocking grasp*

1st level (4 slots): *detect magic, identify, mage armor\*, magic missile, shield*

2nd level (3 slots): *detect thoughts, mirror image, misty step*

3rd level (3 slots): *counterspell, fly, lightning bolt*

4th level (3 slots): *banishment, stoneskin\**

5th level (3 slot): *cone of cold, scrying, wall of force*

6th level (1 slot): *globe of invulnerability*

7th level (1 slot): *teleport*

8th level (1 slot): *mind blank\**

9th level (1 slot): *time stop*

*\*Thistle Twom casts these spells on itself all day*

**Spell Buff:** Thistle Twom is affected by *Foresight, Mind blank, and Stoneskin*

---

### Actions

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



## The Final Battle with the Shadow Mage

### Grisneck the Half Ogre Shadow Mage

*Large giant (half-ogre), lawful good*

**Armor Class** 19

**Hit Points** 99 (18d8 + 18)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
29 (+9)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	22 (+6)	15 (+2)	16 (+3)

**Saving Throws** Str +13, Dex +6, Con +5, Int +14, Wis +10, Cha +7

**Skills** Arcana +14, History +14

**Damage Resistance** damage from spells; nonmagical bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing

**Senses** passive Perception 17

**Languages** All languages

**Challenge** 12 (8,400 XP)

**Magic Resistance.** Grisneck has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

**Spellcasting.** Grisneck is a 18th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 20, +14 to hit with spell attacks). Grisneck has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *fire bolt, light, mage hand, prestidigitation, shocking grasp*  
1st level (4 slots): *detect magic, identify, mage armor\*, magic missile, shield*  
2nd level (3 slots): *detect thoughts, mirror image, misty step*  
3rd level (3 slots): *counterspell, fly, lightning bolt*  
4th level (3 slots): *banishment, stoneskin\**  
5th level (3 slot): *cone of cold, scrying, wall of force*  
6th level (1 slot): *globe of invulnerability*  
7th level (1 slot): *teleport*  
8th level (1 slot): *mind blank\**  
9th level (1 slot): *time stop*

**Spell Buff:** Grisneck is affected by *Mind blank*, and *Stoneskin*

**Magic Items:** *Robe of the Archmagi, Staff of Power, Belt of Storm Giant Strength, Tome of Clear Thought (Used)*

---

### Actions

**Staff of Power.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +13 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (1d6 + 11) bludgeoning damage, or 16 (1d8 + 11) bludgeoning damage if used with two hands.

## Ancient Shadow Dragon

*Gargantuan dragon, lawful good*

**Armor Class** 22 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 546 (28d20 + 252)

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

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
30 (+10)	10 (+0)	29 (+9)	18 (+4)	15 (+2)	23 (+6)

**Saving Throw** Dex +7, Con +16, Wis +9, Cha +13

**Skills** Perception +16, Stealth +7

**Damage Immunities** Necrotic

**Senses** blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 26

**Languages** Common, draconic

**Challenge** 24 (62,000 XP)

**Legendary Resistance (3/Day).** If the dragon fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

---

### Actions

**Multiattack.** The dragon can use its Frightful Presence. It then makes three attacks: one with its bite and two with its claws.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +17 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 21 (2d10 + 10) piercing damage plus 14 (4d6) fire damage.

**Claw.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +17 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 17 (2d6 + 10) slashing damage.

**Tail.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +17 to hit, reach 20 ft., one target. *Hit:* 19 (2d8 + 10) bludgeoning damage.

**Frightful Presence.** Each creature of the dragon's choice that is within 120 feet of the dragon and aware of it must succeed on a DC 21 Wisdom saving throw or become frightened for 1 minute. A creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. If a creature's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the creature is immune to the dragon's Frightful Presence for the next 24 hours.

**Fire Breath (Recharge 5-6).** The dragon exhales fire in a 90-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 24 Dexterity saving throw, taking 91 (26d6) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

---

### Legendary Actions

**Legendary Actions (3/Turn).** The dragon can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The dragon regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

**Detect.** The dragon makes a Wisdom (Perception) check.

**Tail Attack.** The dragon makes a tail attack.

**Wing Attack (Costs 2 Actions).** The dragon beats its wings. Each creature within 15 ft. of the dragon must succeed on a DC 25 Dexterity saving throw or take 17 (2d6 + 10) bludgeoning damage and be knocked prone. The dragon can then fly up to half its flying speed.

## Blackguard

*Medium humanoid (any race), neutral*

**Armor Class** 18 (Plate)  
**Hit Points** 153 (18d8 + 72)  
**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	11 (+0)	18 (+4)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)

**Saving Throw** Wis +5, Cha +5  
**Skills** Athletics +7, Deception +5, Intimidation +5  
**Senses** passive Perception 12  
**Languages** Common, Undead  
**Challenge** 8 (3,900 XP)

**Spellcasting.** The blackguard is a 10<sup>th</sup>-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). The blackguard has the following paladin spells prepared:

1st level (4 slots): *command*, *protection from evil and good*, *thunderous emite*

2nd level (3 slots): *branding smite*, *find steed*

3rd level (2 slots): *blinding smite*, *dispel magic*

---

### Actions

**Multiattack.** The blackguard makes three attacks with its glaive or its shortbow.

**Glaive.** Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. Hit: 9 (1d10+4) slashing damage.

**Shortbow.** Ranged Weapon Attack: +3 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d6+2) piercing damage.

**Dreadful Aspect (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest).** The blackguard exudes magical menace. Each enemy within 30 feet of the blackguard must succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened for 1 minute. If a frightened target ends its turn more than 30 feet away from the blackguard, the target can repeat the saving throw, ending the effect on itself on a success.

## Warlord

*Medium humanoid (any race), lawful good*

**Armor Class** 18 (Plate)  
**Hit Points** 229 (27d8 + 108)  
**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	16 (+3)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)

**Saving Throw** Str +9, Dex +7, Con +8  
**Skills** Athletics +9, Intimidation +8, Perception +5, Persuasion +8  
**Senses** passive Perception 15  
**Languages** Common, Undead  
**Challenge** 12 (8,400 XP)

**Indomitable (3/day).** The warlord can reroll a saving throw it fails. It must use the new roll.

**Survivor.** The warlord regains 10 hit points at the start of its turn if it has at least 1 hit point but fewer hit point than half its hit point maximum.

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### Actions

**Multiattack.** The warlord makes two weapon attacks.

**Greatsword.** Melee Weapon Attack: +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 12 (2d6+5) slashing damage.

**Shortbow.** Ranged Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d6+3) piercing damage.

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### Legendary Actions

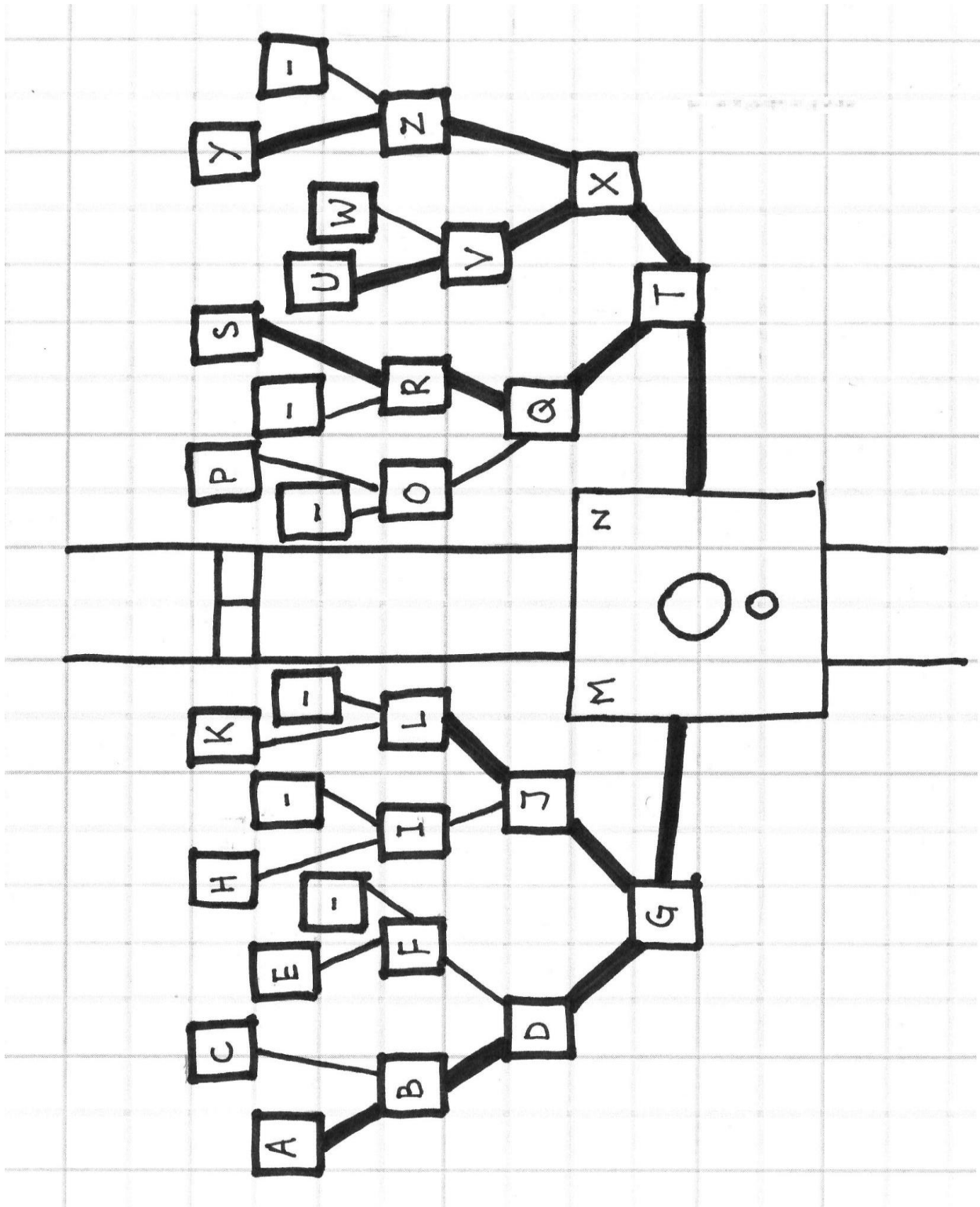
**Legendary Actions (3/Turn).** The warlord can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The warlord regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

**Weapon Attack.** The warlord makes a weapon attack.

**Command Ally.** The warlord targets one ally it can see within 30 feet of it. If the target can see and hear the warlord, the target can make one weapon attack as a reaction and gains advantage on the attack roll.

**Frighten Foe (Costs 2 Actions).** The warlord targets one enemy it can see within 30 feet of it. If the target can see and hear it, the target must succeed on a DC 16 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened until the end of warlord's next turn.

# Appendix. DM Handout #1: Guide to Asylum Puzzle



## Player Handout # 1

*Greetings my friends!*

*My name is Ritifin, a seer of high repute and renown who is currently residing in the charming little town of Grosvenson. The people of my town, being mainly farmers and backwards folk, have turned to me for guidance and leadership during these rather trying times. I, with great humility, accepted their charge and have been scouring the realms for men and women of action and wit to assist me in resolving Grosvenson's problem. We have a matter of an unusual political succession to determine, and we need your assistance.*

*I, being a mere sage and expert on all things magical, have no money to offer you -- but I think I have something far better than gold to offer as a reward for your aid in this important matter.*

*As always,*

*(Signed and notarized)*

*Ritifin Chraston*

*Sage of the Highest Order*

*Duly Chosen Regent of Grosvenson*

## Player Handout # 2

Estate Transference (Alteration)

Duration: Permanent

Area of Effect: 1,000 square feet/level

This powerful spell allows a caster to transfer a large area of land in the Prime Material plane to any of the **elemental planes**. All buildings, people, and wildlife within the area of effect are also transported. The land forms a pocket of the Prime Material plane within the **elemental plane**. The pocket is a sphere with a diameter equal to the diameter of the land. The surface of the pocket allows creatures to enter or exit the pocket, but prevents the elements from entering the pocket.

Inside the pocket, the land is surrounded by air of a temperature matching that of the Prime Material plane at the moment the land was moved. In addition, a source of water is created within the pocket. Before the spell is cast, the area to be moved must be surrounded by solid markers of material from the destination plane. Thus, if a wizard wants to move his castle to the **Elemental Plane** of Fire, he must first surround the area with solid blocks of matter from the **Elemental Plane** of Fire, such as hardened magma or magically-crystallized fire. The blocks must be spaced no more than five feet apart and may be placed above ground or under the surface (at a depth of no more than three feet). The mage casting this spell may augment the magic to give additional **protection** to the keep, such as by adding a **Protection** from Fire to all objects inside, or measures to dissuade thieves – spells that are cast on the blocks gain *permanency*, and will surround the entire area.

The wizard must be within the area to be moved when he casts the spell. When the land moves, a hemispherical crater is left behind in the Prime Material plane. Inside its pocket on the desired plane, the land continues its existence as if nothing changed, with the exception of occasional visits from planar creatures.

Any land that is moved in this manner can never again be moved with this spell.

The material component (in addition to the markers) is the appropriate magical **device** to control elementals of the desired plane (bowl commanding water elementals, brazier commanding fire elementals, censer controlling air elementals, or stone controlling earth elementals). The item must be permanently placed at the heart of the area of effect and cannot be used for any other purpose. If the **device** is disturbed in any way, the spell fails, sending the pocket back to the Prime Material Plane. The spell must be renewed every week by casting the magic of any 1<sup>st</sup> level spell directly into the **device**. If not renewed, the pocket returns to the Prime Material Plane.

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There are scribbles on the paper from the sage indicating that the spell that the mages used to come here wasn't exactly the same as the spell described in the library here.

There are small question marks drawn next to

- "**protection**,"
- "**device**," and
- "**Elemental Plane**."

## Reversible???

## Player Handout # 3

Greetings from *Thistle Twom and Thwom the Twins!*

We're pleased as punch that you guys are here to smite evil and send that nasty Shadow mage back home.

He's Evil! Eeeevil! E V I L! He's a Shadow Mage,

what do you expect?

EVIL EVIL EVIL EVIL with little pointy horns on top.

We are happy that this EEEvillll presence will soon be removed from this town. Towns are too fragile to be left next to a SHADOW MAGE for too long, you know. Shadow Mages are evil, you know. Evil things happen to evil people, you know. He's dark, he's evil! We're good. We're good people. We're two good people and we both like you and hope you understand that our **WILLFUL DOMINATION OF THE TOWN** is a really good act. We come from the plane of law. Things that are lawful live in the light. Lawfulness is goodliness. Shadows are evil. Inherent. It's a truth that is truth. IT IS TRUTH. **IT IS TRUTH THAT PROVES ITSELF**. We are correct. Support us.

We want this town, because every town has a hierarchy, and who better to hierarch the archy than a pair of hierophant gnomes? And who better to put us there than some heir-lings? Eh? Ah? Law is good, law is beauty. We are law. We are good. We are beautiful.

**DESTROY THE SHADOW MAGE BEFORE HE CONSUMES THE WORLD IN DARKNESS.**

That is all.

Oh, and "we're Good"? That too!

Cheerio,  
Thistle Twom and Thwom the Twins

---

PS He's EVIL KILL HIM KILL HIM KILL HIM. Support us!



## Player Handout # 4

Greetings from *Thistle Twom and Thwom the Twins!*

We're pleased as punch that you guys are here to smite evil and send that nasty Shadow mage back home.

He's Evil! Eeeevil! E V I L! He's a Shadow Mage,

what do you expect?

EVIL EVIL EVIL EVIL with little pointy horns on top.

We are happy that this EEEvillll presence will soon be removed from this town. Towns are too fragile to be left next to a SHADOW MAGE for too long, you know. Shadow Mages are evil, you know. Evil things happen to evil people, you know. He's dark, he's evil! We're good. We're good people. We're two good people and we both like you and hope you understand that our **WILLFUL DOMINATION OF THE TOWN** is a really good act. We come from the plane of law. Things that are lawful live in the light. Lawfulness is goodliness. Shadows are evil. Inherent. It's a truth that is truth. IT IS TRUTH. **IT IS TRUTH THAT PROVES ITSELF**. We are correct. Support us.

We want this town, because every town has a hierarchy, and who better to hierarch the archy than a pair of hierophant gnomes? And who better to put us there than some heir-lings? Eh? Ah? Law is good, law is beauty. We are law. We are good. We are beautiful.

**DESTROY THE SHADOW MAGE BEFORE HE CONSUMES THE WORLD IN DARKNESS.**

That is all.

Oh, and "we're Good"? That too!

Cheerio,  
Thistle Twom and Thwom the Twins

---

*PS He's EVIL KILL HIM KILL HIM KILL HIM. Support us!*

Your character has failed a Wisdom Saving Throw. You are now under the influence of an enchantment spell. It's not that bad, the only effect is that your character believes everything this letter says. You will try to argue convincingly that your party should attack the shadow mage even if you previously argued against it. You only need to talk and will not physically threaten anyone if they disagree with you.

## Player Handout #5

### Aegis of the Raven Queen (Shield, +3)

*Armor (shield), Very rare*

This shield appears as a shroud of shadow with the symbol of the Raven Queen glowing in dim red light.

While holding this shield, nonmagical flames are extinguished within 30 feet of you as the shadow lashes out at the flame. The shield encourages you to hold no pity for those who suffer and die, for death is the natural end of life.

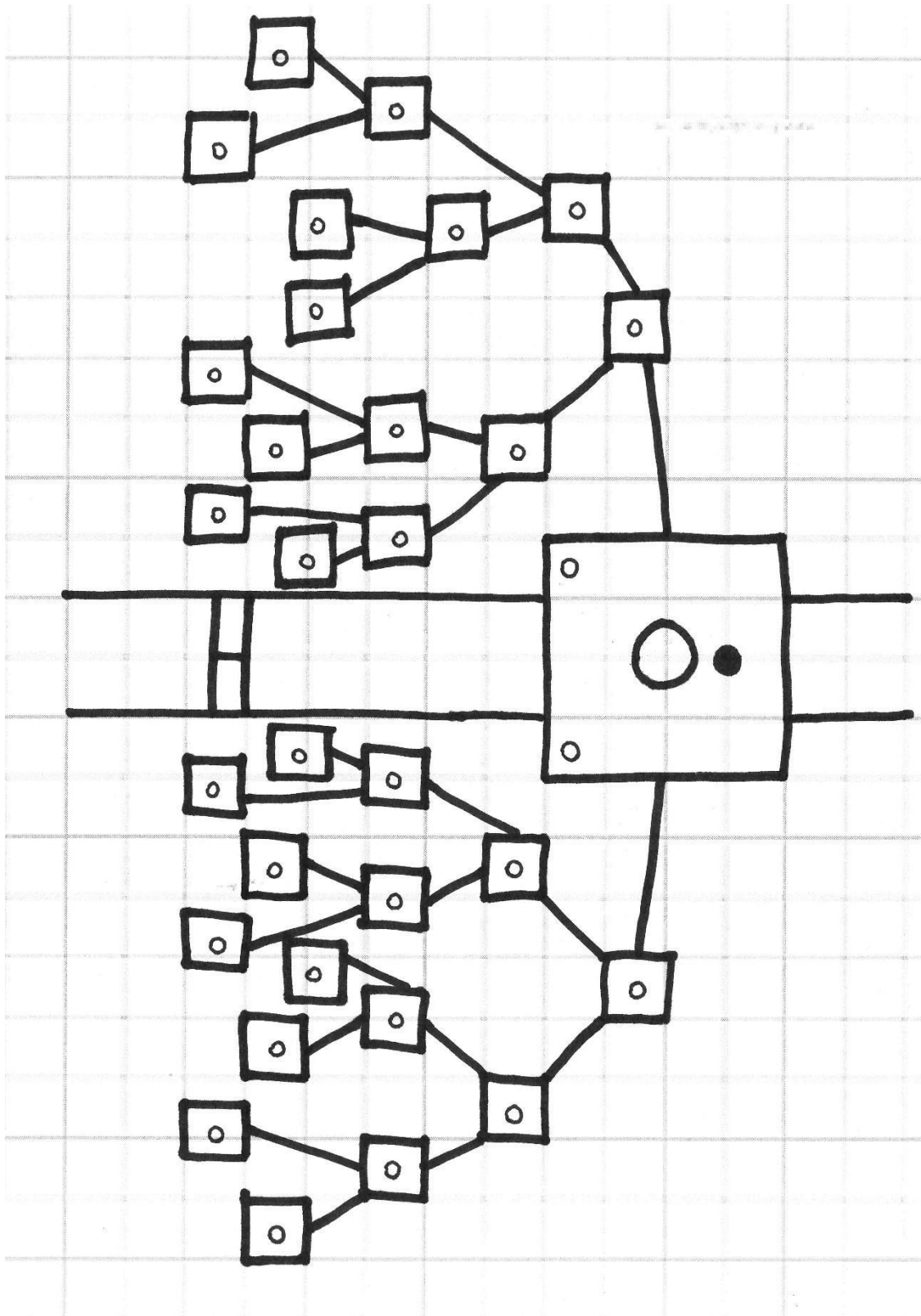
While holding this shield, you have a bonus to AC determined by the shield's rarity. This bonus is in addition to the shield's normal bonus to AC.



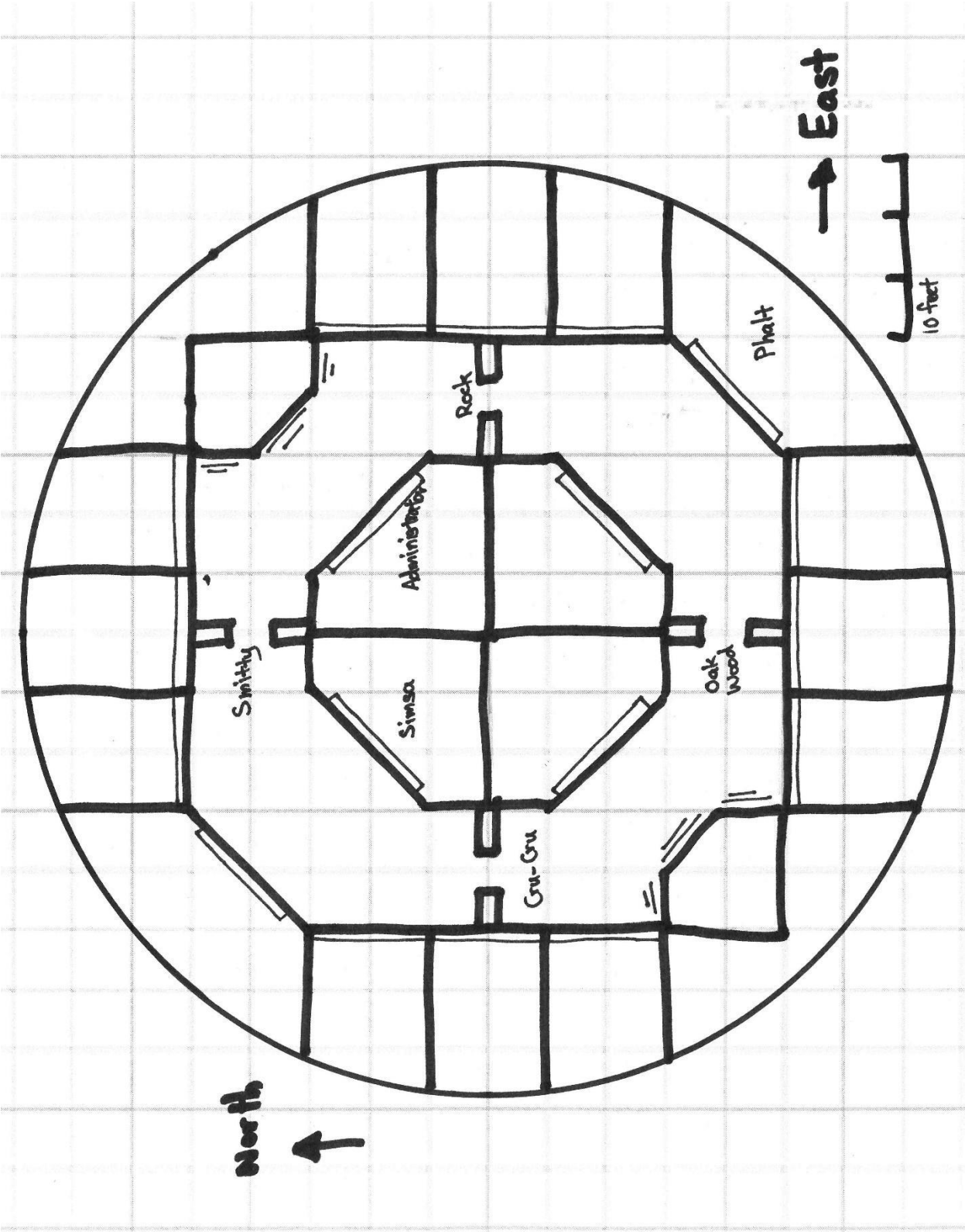
Player Handout #6: Artist Illustration of Elisande



# Map # 1: Asylum Puzzle



# Map # 2: Floor 5 – The Asylum Ward





### Map # 3: Floor 6 – The Twin’s Office

