

D&D

ADVENTURERS LEAGUE

SQUAMOUS WRITHINGS, PART 3

THE DREAMING RELIC



CCCTHENT01-03



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The call of fame and fortune has led the adventurers into the deep dark beneath the ruins near the city of Thentia. Facing off against unknown horrors, they have found both enemies and allies. Now, something from the beginning of the world stirs in the black...and it hungers.

A 4-hour adventure for 1st-4th level characters

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to *The Dreaming Relic*, a D&D Adventurers League™ adventure. It is part of the official D&D Adventurers League™ organized play system and Con Created Content Program.

This adventure is designed for 1st through 4th -level characters, and is optimized for five 3rd-level characters. Characters outside this level range cannot participate in the adventure.

The adventure takes place in the Moonsea region, and will take the players to the city of Thentia and the surrounding area in the Forgotten Realms campaign setting.

THE D&D ADVENTURERS LEAGUE

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

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

D&D Adventurers League play is broken up into storyline seasons. When players create characters, they attach those characters to a storyline season, which determines what rules they're allowed to use to create and advance their characters.

Players can continue to play their

characters after the storyline season has finished, possibly participating in a second or third storyline with those same characters. A character's level is the only limitation for adventure play. A player cannot use a character of a level higher or lower than the level range of a D&D Adventurers League adventure.

For more information on playing, running games as a Dungeon Master, and organizing games for the D&D Adventurers League, please visit :

www.dndadventurersleague.org

PREPARING THE ADVENTURE

Before running this module for your players, you should make sure you've taken the following steps to prepare.

- Make sure you have the most recent copy of the *D&D Basic Rules* or the *Player's Handbook*. Errata is available online.
- Read through this adventure to familiarize yourself with the storyline. Take notes or highlight areas you find important, or as a reminder during the game. Decide how you would like to portray NPCs, or choose tactics for use in combats.
- Be familiar with the monster statistics in the Appendix.
- If you want to use resources such as a DM screen, a battle map, miniatures, or other options, gather them together prior to running.
- If you can find out the composition of the group, you can make alterations as noted throughout the adventure.

BEFORE PLAY AT THE TABLE

Prior to game play, ask your players to provide you with relevant information about their characters.

- Character name and race
- Character class and level
- Passive Wisdom (Perception), which is the most commonly used passive ability check
- Other notes that you may like to have, or that are specified by the adventure, such as backgrounds, traits, fears, flaws, etc.

Ensure that each player has an official adventure logsheet for his or her character (if not, get one from the organizer). The player fills out the adventure name, session number, date, and your name and DCI number. In addition, the player also fills in the starting values for experience, gold, downtime, renown, and number of permanent magic items. He or she fills in the other values and writes notes at the conclusion of the session. Each player is responsible for maintaining an accurate logsheet.

If you have time or see the need to do so, you can do a quick scan of a player's character sheet to ensure nothing looks out of order. If you see magic items of very high rarities or strange arrays of ability scores, you can ask players to provide documentation for their irregularities. If they cannot, feel free to restrict item use or ask them to use a standard ability score array. Point players to the *D&D Adventurers League Player's Guide* for reference.

If players wish to spend downtime and it's the beginning of an adventure or episode, they can declare their activity and spend the days now. Alternatively, they can do so at the end of the adventure or episode. Players should select their characters' spells and other daily options prior to the start of the adventure, unless the adventure specifies otherwise. Feel free to reread the adventure

description to help give players hints about what they might face.

ADJUSTING THE ADVENTURE

Throughout this module, you will find sidebars provided that give information to assist you in making adjustments in encounters for weaker or stronger parties, as well as smaller or larger groups.

DETERMINING PARTY STRENGTH

Party Composition	Party Strength
3-4 characters, APL <	Very Weak
3-4 characters, APL =	Weak
3-4 characters, APL >	Average
5 characters, APL <	Weak
5 characters, APL =	Average
5 characters, APL >	Strong
6-7 characters, APL <	Average
6-7 characters, APL =	Strong
6-7 characters, APL >	Very Strong

A result of average party strength indicates that no adjustments should be made for encounters.

RUNNING THE ADVENTURE

You are the Dungeon Master, and so you have the most important role in the game; making it fun for your players! It's up to you to help guide the narrative and bring the words on these pages to life. The outcome of a fun game session often creates stories that live well beyond the play at the table. Always follow this golden rule when you DM for a group:

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

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

You Are Empowered. You get to make decisions about how the group interacts

with the NPC's and the environment within this adventure. It is okay to make considerable changes or engage in improvisation, so long as you maintain the original spirit of what's written.

Challenge Your Players. Never being challenged makes for a boring game, and being overwhelmed makes for a frustrating game. Gauge the experience level of the players (not the characters) in the game, try to feel out (or ask) what they like in a game, and attempt to give each of them the experience they're after when they play D&D. Everyone should have the opportunity to shine.

Mind the Time. Watch for stalling, since play loses momentum when this happens. At the same time, make sure that the players don't finish too early; provide them with a full play experience. Try to be aware of running long or short. Adjust the pacing accordingly.

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. *The Dungeon Master's Guide* has more information on the art of running a D&D game.

SPELLCASTING SERVICES

Any settlement the size of a town or larger can provide some spellcasting services. Characters need to be able to travel to the settlement to obtain these services.

Spell services generally available include healing and recovery spells, as well as information-gathering spells. Other spell services might be available as specified in the adventure. The number of spells available to be cast as a service is limited to a

maximum of three per day total, unless otherwise noted.

Spellcasting Services	Cost
Spell	
<i>Cure wounds</i> (1 st level)	10gp
<i>Identify</i>	20gp
<i>Lesser restoration</i>	40gp
<i>Prayer of healing</i> (2 nd level)	40gp
<i>Remove curse</i>	90gp
<i>Speak with dead</i>	90gp
<i>Divination</i>	210gp
<i>Greater restoration</i>	450gp
<i>Raise dead</i>	1,250gp
<i>Resurrection</i> *	3,000gp
<i>True Resurrection</i> *	50,000gp

*These spells require an additional expenditure of downtime days (150 for *resurrection* and 350 for *true resurrection*). This cost can be reduced by 50 days for each faction rank above 1 that the character possesses. This downtime is spent in community service for the church that provided the spell in question. The Acolyte Background feature does NOT reduce the gp or downtime cost for either of these spells.

ACOLYTE BACKGROUND

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

Acolytes can call upon spellcasting services in and around Thentia as follows: Selune, Tempus, Tyr, Chauntea, Umberlee, Liira, Mystra, Kelemvor.

DEATH AND RECOVERY

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

DEATH

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

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

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

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

Faction Charity. If the character is of level 1 to 4 and a member of a faction, the dead character's body can be returned to civilization and a patron from the faction ensures that he or she receives a *raise dead* spell. However, any character invoking this charity forfeits all experience and rewards from the session (both those earned prior to and after death during that session) and cannot replay that episode or adventure

with that character again. Once a character reaches 5th level, this option is no longer available.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Around the city of Thentia, the countryside is littered with the ruins of cities and civilizations older than those that now dominate the Moonsea. Recently, steam began rising from ruins to the east of the city, and adventurers were hired to investigate. Delving into the earth, they discovered a city inhabited by various living creatures, and some not living.

Vayu Ashvin, a wizard of Thentia, employed the adventurers to further explore the ruins, and report back to him with their findings. Following a map of the sunken city, they found their way deep beneath the surface of the world, to a place marked as the Vault. It is at the gates of this vault that the adventure begins.

The Vault itself was once a museum of sorts in a city now long since forgotten, only mentioned in the rarest of texts. Here, the inhabitants of the city collected and displayed objects of power and wealth, art, and even live specimens of creatures, fiends, and other even stranger beings.

Eons have passed, and the city was swallowed long ago by the earth. But the city still stands, and there are things within the Vault that still live, as well as something that has been long dead, but dreams still. A shard of bone from a primordial destroyed at the dawn of the world, locked away by the inhabitants of the city, for they knew that despite being dead, the bounds of mortality do not mean the same thing to primordials that they do to lesser creatures. Chained by magic and metal, they hoped to keep the sliver of will still present in the bone from creeping out into the world. But now those chains are losing their magic, untended for ages. And the dreaming relic of a bygone era begins to stir, calling the life force of lesser creatures

to itself, hoping to once again influence the world around it.

ADVENTURE OVERVIEW

The Dreaming Relic is divided into three parts:

Part 1. Missing Adventurers. (Optional) (15 minutes) Reginold Swifthand hires the adventurers to delve into the sunken city to the east of Thentia. Other adventurers had set forth days ago, but have not been seen since.

Part 2. Gates of the Vault. (30 minutes) The characters stand before the entrance of the sunken Vault, known to be part library, part museum. But the way forth is protected by ancient magic, and sentinels that allow for no trespassing.

Part 3. Within the Vault. (2 hours) Gaining access to the Vault, the adventurers realize that some defense system has been activated, moving walls and sealing them within. It will take careful planning and cunning to continue forward, for there is no way back now.

Part 4. Squamous Writhing. (1 hour) Reaching the center of the Vault, the adventurers find what has caused such havoc for the denizens of this subterranean city, and the minions that seek to awaken it.

Part 5. Conclusion. (15 minutes) Returning to Thentia, the characters meet with Reginold Swifthand and Vayu Ashvin.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

Any of the following hooks may justify the party's presence in Thentia during the start of the adventure.

Those That Dwell Beneath. The characters may have played CCCTHENT01-02, *Those That Dwell Beneath*, the module that leads up to the events of this game. If this is the case, begin with Part 2, Gates of the Vault.

From Thentia. One or more of the characters may call Thentia home. The summons of the wizard, Vayu Ashvin, would come as a welcome boon to such a character.

Odd Rumors. Rumors of the strange steam rising from the ruins may have traveled around the Moonsea, and curious adventurers may go to investigate what has been learned of this unusual circumstance.

City of Magic. Thentia is a city unlike many others, a place where wizards and other magic wielders go to live and practice their arcane arts. While not everyone in the city is a magician, tales tell of the wonders that can be witnessed just by walking down its streets.

Faction Requests. Rumors have spread like wildfire that an underground city has been found to the east of Thentia. All factions have some level of interest in finding out more information, and possibly staking claims before someone else does.

PART I. MISSING ADVENTURERS

If the players are not coming from CCCTHENT01-02, Those That Dwell Beneath, they begin in the city of Thentia. A local noble, Reginold Swifthand, has put out a call for adventurers willing to quest into the sunken ruins of the city to the east of Thentia. Their mission will be twofold; first, to explore the remainder of the city and report back what they have learned of what lurks within. Second, to find any signs of the adventurers that have gone before, and help them if help is needed.

GENERAL FEATURES

Terrain. The room is open and hazard free, as long as no one touches any of the magical experiments...

Light. Enormous windows around the round chamber allow bright sunlight into the room. In addition, several sources of magical light are spread throughout the room.

Sound. Liquid bubbling, a strange cooing and cawing from a covered cage, the shuffling of papers.

Smell. A hint of ozone, the tang of citrus, the scent of fresh rain...all smells coming from various tubes and vials on the tables in the room.

Answering the summons of the horselord, Reginold Swifthand, you stand listening to the nobleman talking about the strange occurrences around the city of Thentia recently. Rather than meeting you at his manor, Swifthand has come into the city, and you confer with him in the tower of the archmage, Vayu Ashvin. Indeed, the wizard listens intently to the horselord's words. They are a strange duo, the handsome noble in his mid-30's, and the strangely huge half-elf, his age indeterminable. The first calm and to the point, the second excitable and interrupting with random comments, as though he can't stop his mouth from speaking his thoughts out loud.

Reginold Swifthand and Vayu Ashvin tell the characters the following.

- A few days ago, another group of adventurers set forth to investigate strange happenings in some new found ruins east of Thentia.
- The ruins are underground, apparently a city that sunk long ago. They had discovered the ruins while trying to determine where some missing people had gone, and why sinkholes were appearing in the landscape. Steam had been rising from those sinkholes.
- The group had returned, having found a group of grungs were trying to change the sunken city into a tropical jungle, fit for them to survive here in the cold Moonsea region. Furthermore, the grungs were building what appeared to be a magical portal.
- Rescuing the missing people, the group had returned to Thentia, only to have their contracts extended to explore further into the ruins for Vayu Ashvin.
- The adventurers have not been seen since. Swifthand would like the characters to find the missing adventurers if possible, while Ashvin wants the ruins explored, and information on what lies within returned. They will pay the group **50**

gold pieces each, and will supply them with food and water for the excursion, as well as two **potions of healing**.

The group will not find the other adventurers, only signs of their passing as they venture through a strange underground jungle and the ruins of the sunken city, events that they would have played through in the first two modules. Because they are skipping those modules, this adventure fast forwards to the gate of the Vault.

PART 2. GATE OF THE VAULT

Having traveled through the rest of the underground city, the adventurers come to the gates of the Vault.

GENERAL FEATURES

Terrain. The area is mostly clear, though sections of the ceiling have collapsed, leaving rubble strewn around. In addition, at least one of the gigantic statues of armored warriors has collapsed beneath the weight of the cavern bearing down on them, adding to the stones crumbled on the ground.

Light. The golden door emits bright light for 30 feet and dim light for another 30 feet, the illumination moving about as runes dance across its surface.

Sound. A faint and deep humming noise can be heard as the characters near the gate, as though something were churning deep in the ground.

Smell. Very little odor, only a hint of the scent of the stone and earth around.

You've come to a chamber that appears to be on the verge of collapse. Three titanic statues of armored warriors seem to bend under the weight of the ceiling, and you can see large pieces of what look like other guardians who were crushed by the weight of the stone pushing in from above.

Across the chamber, you see a wall of white marble, with a massive golden door blocking intruders. Arcs of light seem to writhe through carvings and glyphs on the surface of the door. You feel a sudden rush of triumph, certain you have come to the entrance of the Vault.

As the group draws closer to the gate, those with a passive Perception of 13 or higher notice a good amount of what looks

like gold flakes littering the ground. If they take 10 minutes to collect the flakes, they could be sold for **50 gold pieces**.

The gate to the Vault is unlocked, but must be opened by pushing a hexagonal button the width of a large human's palm near the center of the door. Characters will notice that the button has a hole in its center, also hexagonal, as though something could be inserted. This is the keyhole, and while the door is unlocked, opening the door without the key causes the guardians of the gate to attack. Once pressed, the door will slowly grind open on its own, sliding to the left into the wall.

Read or paraphrase the following when the characters open the door.

Deep within the earth, something being to shudder and shift. The surface of the door begins to glimmer and a film of gold seems to separate from the sheen of the gate. With a grinding sound of metal on stone, the door begins to shift to the left, slowly opening and disappearing into the wall. Yet the film remains, hovering in the air between you and the room beyond. The top of the strange foil of gold leans forward, and you feel suddenly uncomfortable that it is watching you. Flowing like liquid, the thin sheet of gold moves forward toward you, reaching to enshroud and suffocate you.

Depending on the encounter adjustment, the **foil of smothering** separates into two or more at this point. When the city still stood above ground, the foils were used to detain intruders until guards could arrive. Now, however, there is no one to free a captive before they suffocate. Should a character fall unconscious, a foil will release them, and move on to the next intruder.

The foil separates into two for an Average APL party.

Adjusting the Encounter

These adjustments are not cumulative.

Very Weak: The foil separates into two, but each has 16 hp, and deals 6 (1d6+3) bludgeoning damage.

Weak: The foil separates into two, but each has 22 hit points.

Strong: The foil separates into three, each with 46 hit points.

Very Strong: The foil separates into four, each with 51 hit points.

Treasure. In addition to the gold flakes listed above, the group can collect the remnants of the foils of smothering, worth another **50 gold pieces**.

PART 3. WITHIN THE VAULT

The adventurers have breeched the Vault's doors and are nearing their goal. (Map 1.)

GENERAL FEATURES

Terrain. Unless noted otherwise, the Vault is free of debris. The walls, floors, and ceilings are made of white marble, and are mostly unaffected by the passage of time.

Ceilings. Unless noted otherwise, ceilings are 20 feet high.

Light. The Vault is unlit, though torch sconces can be found at regular intervals. These sconces once held magical lights, which have long since faded away.

Sound. The floor occasionally vibrates, and the constant low rumble of gigantic gears turning can be heard. When the walls are activated and are turning, this sound is much louder.

Smell. The un-oiled or maintained gears of the machinery below the Vault smell of hot metal. The smell becomes stronger if the walls are activated and are turning.

Lifeforce Drain. Such close proximity to the primordial, Achlyos, is draining on living creatures. Every four hours spent in the Vault requires creatures to succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw, or suffer one level of exhaustion. While Short and Long rests still restore hit points, they do not seem to replenish a creature's exhaustion level. *Lesser restoration* or similar magic will restore one level of exhaustion. Resting outside of the Vault will allow creatures to recuperate as usual.

Optional Rule: If a creature dies from exhaustion caused by this effect, their soul is absorbed by the fragment of primordial held within the Vault. That character

cannot be resurrected by anything less than a *wish* spell.

Doors. While there are no doors on the doorways in the Vault, the builders devised a creative way to seal off the facility if it were attacked, robbed, or if something within it escaped its cage. The walls of the Vault are doubled, with one set of walls built onto massive gears below. If the defensive system is activated, the geared walls spin to close off the doorways.

While the walls usually stop after they have moved aligning doorways away from one another by 15 feet, the eons have not been kind to the machinery of the Vault. When the characters open the doorway in Section 1, the walls will begin spinning uncontrollably. They are far too massive to stop, so jumping through as the doorways align is the only option. This requires a successful DC 13 Dexterity saving throw. A failure causes 1d6 bludgeoning damage to a creature, as they are clipped by the turning wall while moving through the doorway. Failing the save by 5 or more means the creature doesn't make it through the door, while also taking damage as they are smashed back into the room they are trying to leave.

Allow players who take the time to try to learn the timing of the spinning walls to roll their Dexterity saving throws at Advantage. With the number of doors within the Vault, it is recommended to only require a character to roll saves as they are moving through a doorway if they have not previously succeeded on a roll. You may choose to make players roll further saves as they enter a new ring of walls, as the rings are moving at different speeds.

Plan for doorways to take 4 rounds to reopen, while the moving walls spin around to align another opening with the doorway the characters are at.

Cages. Many areas have display cages, encasements that appear to be made from glass that the characters will not be able to break. In fact, they are formed from some kind of crystallized magic, almost completely clear, and nigh invulnerable. Which is good, considering some of the creatures that were held within them. If *detect magic* is used on them, they still radiate strong auras, though not auras recognizable to the characters.

Unnumbered Areas. Rooms not designated with a number have nothing of value, and no inhabitants. They may still be of interest to characters, as they have glass-like cages of creatures who have long since turned to dust. Some may sound familiar, even if they are impressive, such as a broken cage that has a bronze plate denoting a unicorn was held within. Others are strange names, creatures that might be long extinct, such as the Frzztvoock or the Lunlun Bird.

1. ENTRY ROOM

Read or paraphrase the following as the characters enter the Vault.

A plain room, its inner and outer walls slightly curved, sits quite empty in the darkness. Faintly, you notice what seems like the scent of heated metal, though you see no obvious source. The soles of your feet tickle slightly, as though the very ground were vibrating. Indeed, you hear the distant sound of something grinding continuously.

A doorway leading further into the Vault is blocked by a stone door with no hinges, handle, or other signs of a lock.

A panel of thin stone can be found on either end wall of the room. The panel swings open easily on a hidden hinge, revealing a set two metal knobs. One

controls the outer door, but the gears attached to it long ago broke deep down under the Vault. The other knob opens the inner door.

When the characters activate the inner door, read or paraphrase the following.

As you turn the knob, the ground shakes beneath you, and you hear metallic clanks and groans emanate from deep within the Vault. The inner door slides, slowly at first, then wrenching fully open to the right with a clank.

The machinery that operates the door system in the Vault is ancient and in major disrepair. As the first character passes through the doorway into the Vault, read or paraphrase the following.

The Vault shrieks and the ground trembles so violently, you almost fall. With a terrible cacophony of rending metal, another door, this one from the left, begins to slide over the open doorway. With another grinding roar, the outer door of the Vault slams shut.

The geared, inner walls that spin to close off the rooms of the Vault are now running out of control.

The curators of the Vault once had devices with which they could control the defenses of the museum. Those items have long since been lost, and once the entry control has ground to shards, the only way to stop the turning of the walls is to reach Section 9, the Control Room, and use the panel there to shut down the machinery beneath the complex. Or, if the characters have another century to wait, the gears will finally grind themselves apart...they could hope the doorways stop in an open alignment when that day finally arrives. The outer door,

however, does not open without the control panel being used to do so.

2. DARK HALL

This hall creates a complete circuit around the inner Vault, and can be used to access various rooms.

GENERAL FEATURES

Sound. If they are paying attention, characters may hear the shuffling of feet, and the occasional whimper or croak.

Smell. Mostly, the hall is scent free. There is a slight lingering smell of rot, however, especially as they near the creatures roaming the hall.

Two creatures, overcome by the power of the primordial in the center of the Vault, but unable to make it deeper into the complex, wander this hall. A **darkling** and a **grung** can be found, with a 50% chance of finding them walking together. Both look as though their skin has been bleached, their eyes white and milky. Their stupor is misleading, however, as they are quite capable of defending themselves. While they do not seek out the characters, if another creature nears them, they enter a maniacal rage, their minds long since lost to the power of Achlyos.

Adjusting the Encounter

These adjustments are not cumulative.

Very Weak: No change, but the **darkling** and **grung** are encountered separately, with no chance of encountering them together.

Weak: No change.

Strong: Remove the **darkling** and the **grung**. Replace them with a **darkling elder** and a **grung elite warrior**.

Very Strong: Remove the **darkling** and the **grung**. Replace them with a **darkling elder** with 40 hit points, and a **grung elite warrior** with 54 hit points. They are encountered together, no chance of encountering them separately.

The darkling, named Radiq, is not beyond saving, however. If the characters can capture him and return him to Fasily, the darkling elder from *Those That Dwell Beneath*, grant each character **200 experience points**.

3. THE ALCHEMY ROOM

The party enters a room once used for the brewing of potions and tinctures.

GENERAL FEATURES

Smell. As the adventurers move through this room, different scents assault their nostrils. Vanilla, sulphur, salt, a strange odor like taffy that causes them to hiccup a few times, an acidic tang, etc.

Though many of the potions long ago evaporated, the glass vials and alchemy equipment used to make such brews still sit on three long stone tables in this room. The vials and gear on the tables are in disarray, and shards of glass are scattered across the floor. Many of the potion vials are stained with color, residue of whatever used to be stored inside.

There are two **potions of healing** and a **potion of growth** that are still liquid, though they have become somewhat syrupy. They are still as potent as the day they were brewed, however.

Under one of the tables is the mummified remains of an occupant of the city. A DC 15 Medicine check allows a character to find signs that this was an elf, though how his remains have stood the test of time is unknown. On the elf's bony finger is a silver ring, emblazoned with seven 7-pointed stars, worth **50 gold pieces**.

4. SCROLL CHAMBER

The characters find what appears to be a storage chamber for scrolls.

GENERAL FEATURES

Smell. The vanilla scent of old books and parchment.

Hundreds, if not thousands of scrolls line the shelves that cover the walls in this room. It is obvious to any viewer that the scrolls are ancient. In fact, the barest touch will cause them to crumble to dust. If a character attempts to remove a scroll from an upper shelf, it sets off a chain reaction that causes all of the scrolls in the room (but three) to disintegrate. A DC 13 Investigation (Wisdom) check lets a character realize that the scrolls are beyond salvaging, and are best left alone if they don't want to destroy them. Perhaps Vayu Ashvin will have a solution when they return to him in Thentia.

The Investigation check also reveals the three scrolls that seem to be on fresh parchment, the magic imbued in them sustaining the scrolls through the ages. These scrolls rest in different areas, but are all on lower shelves. Removing them destroys the scrolls around them, but does not harm the bulk of the collection. The characters find a **scroll of comprehend languages**, a **scroll of gentle repose**, and a **scroll of Tenser's floating disk**.

If the characters do not destroy the bulk of the scrolls, and inform Vayu Ashvin of their existence upon returning to Thentia, they gain the **Knowledge of the Vault** story award.

5. THE ONLY REMAINING TREASURE

The party enters a room with dozens of niches in the stone walls, which appear to

have once displayed objects. Unfortunately, very little remains in this area, though what does may be useful.

Hovering in one of the stone alcoves is a stringed instrument made of a purplish wood, with grain that whorls rather than lies in straight lines. A sun of worked silver seems to be rising from the base of the cittern. On the lower edge of the niche is a bronze plaque that reads, "MAC-FUIRMIDH CITTERN." This is an **instrument of the bards**.

The only other object in the room is a strange hexagonal cylinder, 7-inches long and 2-inches wide. It is made of stone, and is carved with grooves and runes. One end of the cylinder has a small protrusion, with a spiral carved around the outside. A DC 13 Intelligence check will reveal to a character that this is very similar to the keyhole on the golden gate into the Vault. Also, the protrusion seems to be carved like a screw, as though the cylinder attaches to another object.

6. SORROWFUL SILDA

As adventurers enter this room, they immediately realize they are not alone, as they hear soft weeping in the room. A teenage girl, who appears to be phasing between being solid and transparent, stands near a marble display column. Her shoulders shake with each quiet sob, and she does not notice the group right away until they make their presence known.

This is Silda Sharpe, a ghost from the section of the city explored in CCCTHENT01-02, *Those That Dwell Beneath*. Her brother, Matthew, and her grandfather, Dorren, were searching for her.

Silda has known for many years that the city was inhabited by ghosts and not living people, and she would often wander as far

from the city as possible to see if she would fade away. Only the illusion that disguised her true nature would fade, however, and she would always return to watch over her little brother. Recently, however, her essence has been drawn to the Vault, where she understands that something dark and unfathomable is stirring. She feels her essence draining, but she cannot seem to return to the city. She knows she will fade away soon, and is saddened that she may never see Matthew or her grandfather again.

Silda does not want to be absorbed by the primordial that calls her, but her will is weakening. If she could possess a character, she could maintain her ability to keep away from it, and they could return her to her people. If they do this, her brother, Matthew, is overjoyed to see her. If any character suffers from the **You Made Matthew Cry!** story award, this act causes the curse to be removed.

Silda can warn the characters that creatures which have not fallen to the ravages of time still reside within the Vault. She heard the shattering of at least one cage not long ago, though she has not seen what might have crawled out of it. She recalls, many years ago, when the unicorn broke free. She saw it running through the city, and then it disappeared. None of the other citizens of the city saw it, nor do they believe her tale.

If attacked, Silda will plead with the characters to help her, forsaking attacking them back for one round. If they do not desist, she will curse them, and unleash her fury upon them. Should she be able to possess a character, she will move the body into the doorway and stop, allowing the body to take 14 (4d6) points of damage every time the wall slides shut (every 4 rounds). The DM may choose to have her end up on the other side of the door from

the room when the door slides shut, cutting off the adventurers from their comrade for 4 rounds. Who knows where she might run off to with her temporary body?

If the characters do not attack Silda, but offer to help her, award them **220 experience points** each. If they do not attack her, but ignore her plight, award no experience for the encounter.

While the display column that Silda stands next to has nothing on it, as do many of the nineteen columns in the room, a few do have busts of humans and elves. None seem familiar to the characters, though a DC 13 Perception (Wisdom) check reveals that one of the busts, that of a beautiful human woman with long tresses of curly hair, moves its eyes to watch them. While the other busts can be lifted from their pedestals, the sculpture of the woman seems attached to hers. Only by twisting the bust and unscrewing it from the column can it be removed. If the characters have the hexagonal cylinder from Area 5, they should realize that it could be attached to the bottom of the sculpture of the woman.

7. THE DEVIL IS IN...

As the first group member enters this room, read or paraphrase the following.

You jump through the doorway just in time to avoid it closing on you. A hint of sulphur assails your nostrils, and you glance to your right, into the face of a huge red demon. Its mouth splits into a massive, fanged grin and it looks at the doorway, where the opening won't return for far too long.

The demon is a balor. Fortunately for these adventurers, it is sealed inside one of the arcane cages, which still holds the creature at bay, and will continue to do so for a few more eons. The balor knows this,

but likes to mess with creatures that may pass by, just to make the centuries more entertaining.

The balor is the only resident of this room, the other cages all empty.

8. WHO LET THE DEMONS OUT?

While almost all of the cages in the Vault are now empty, a few are not. Or weren't, until the occupants were released as the magic of their cages failed.

Two fiends, a **babau** and a **maw demon**, were in this room when the walls began moving. They now wait on opposite ends, each near a doorway, hoping for warm and bleeding prey to enter. If a character enters, the closest demon will attack them the round after. Two rounds later, the other demon will arrive to join the fray.

Due to the lag time between the doorways being open, this may prove to be a deadly encounter without some quick thinking.

Adjusting the Encounter

These adjustments are not cumulative.

Very Weak: Remove the **babau**, add a **maw demon**.

Weak: Remove the **babau**, add two **maw demons**.

Strong: The **maw demon** has 45 hit points.

Very Strong: The **babau** has 102 hit points, the **maw demon** has 45 hit points.

9. THE CONTROL ROOM

The final circle before the inner chambers of the Vault, the area is unmarred and empty but for a metal box that sits several feet from the closed doorway that leads to Part 4.

The metal box looks like a podium or stand, with several control buttons and a hexagonal hole. The buttons can be used to shut down the gear system that is causing the walls to spin, allowing the characters to

align the doorways so they can pass through. Another button opens the gold gate on the outer wall of the Vault, which causes a shuddering thud that the characters may recognize as the door opening.

The hexagonal hole requires a key to be used to open the doorway into the inner vault. The only remaining key was kept in two parts; one a hexagonal cylinder kept in Area 5, and the other the bust of the human woman with the shifty eyes in Area 6. By connecting the two pieces, inserting the key into the keyhole with the statue's face away from the door, and then turning the key so the statue faces the door, the doorway will slide open. The key may be removed, and the door will stay open.

As the characters open the doorway, a wave of cold pours out, and mist creeps out from the opening.

Treasure. The statue of the woman may be sold for **50 gold pieces**, or may be kept as a trinket.

PART 4. SQUAMOUS WRITHING

The adventures enter the central rings of the Vault to determine what lingers there. Two corridors encircle the final chamber, and fog hangs heavy over the floor.

GENERAL FEATURES

Terrain. The floors are clear of debris, though this may not be obvious as a thick fog covers the floor. The fog is 2 feet deep.

Ceiling. The ceiling is higher here than the rest of the Vault, reaching up 80 feet above the floor.

Light. The outer rings of this inner sanctum are unlit. The center chamber is dimly lit by the magic crawling over the titanic chains.

Sound. The central room is painfully quiet, causing the character's ears to ring in the absence of sound. Those wearing clanky armor are grateful for the noise they bring with them.

Smell. A faint, lingering scent of rotting flesh.

Fog flows low about you as you enter the central chamber of the complex. Before you, suspended by massive chains is what appears to be a bone of a titanic creature, or perhaps only a sliver of such a bone. The multitude of chains reach out to various points in the chamber, and seem to dance with brilliant magical energies. As you watch, some of those arcane lights seem to flare, then dim almost to nothing. The mist seems to be flowing from the bone in soft waves, almost as though the fragment were breathing it out.

As you watch, a formless mass rises up from the mist near you. The sickly white blob shudders, and waves of black scales writhe over its surface. Faces of grungs, chitines, and humans boil forward from the mass, screeching in a tongue that hurts your ears. Tendrils of corrupted flesh erupt from the thing's body and begin to lash out at you, gibbering mouths sprouting from the ends of the pseudopods.

The formless mass is a **squamous gibberer**, and it attacks intruders without provocation. It is made up of the flesh and bones of the creatures that have been drawn here by the call of the relic hanging from the magical chains, twisted and corrupted by the primordial's presence. As it moves about, faces of grungs, chitines, humans, and other creatures will form in its white flesh, screaming and gibbering.

The gibberer is not alone, however. The fog has a **vampiric mist** within it, which will move to attack the round after battle has begun.

TACTICS

The squamous gibberer simply attacks whoever is closest, kills them, absorbs their mass into itself, and then moves on to the next living creature. If a creature is killed by the gibberer, a ghostly essence can be seen rising from their body, ascending into the hanging shard of bone, which then rumbles slightly, as the creature's life force feeds the primordial's awakening.

The vampiric mist attacks less defended creatures, such as mages or ranged attackers that are not in melee with the gibberer. Because it blends in with the mist in the fog that covers the floors in this room and the hallways leading up to it, a character must make a DC 12 Perception (Wisdom) check when attacking it. On a successful check, the character may attack it

as normal. On a failed check, the player must roll their attack at Disadvantage, unable to tell what is the regular mist, and which is the vampiric creature. Area of effect spells do not have this penalty, and if the regular mist is somehow moved or cleared, the vampiric mist no longer gains this advantage.

Adjusting the Encounter

These adjustments are not cumulative.

Very Weak: The **vampiric mist** cannot attack, though it can use the Help action to grant the **squamous gibberer** Advantage on its attack, or engage a ranged character to give them Disadvantage on ranged attacks. The mist can be attacked, but will also simply dissipate when the gibberer dies. The squamous gibberer has 37 hit points.

Weak: The **vampiric mist** has no Damage Resistances, and has 33 hit points. The **squamous gibberer** has 37 hit points.

Strong: The **squamous gibberer's** Gibbering save DC is increased to 13.

Very Strong: The **squamous gibberer's** Gibbering save DC is increased to 13, and it has 80 hit points.

A DC 13 Arcana (Intelligence) check reveals that the magic of the chains holding the bone is weakening.

A silver key, similar to the hexagonal cylinder, can be found lying on the ground with a DC 13 Investigation (Wisdom) or Perception (Wisdom) check. It may be useful for future investigation within the Vault.

Investigating the walls of the chamber, or the chains themselves, reveal line upon line of magical incantations that seem to bind the power within the bone. The name Achlyos is repeated many times. A DC 18 History (Intelligence) check reveals that while very little is known about it, Achlyos was a primordial that walked the face of the world long before mortals.

With nothing else obvious, it is time for the adventurers to return to Thentia and inform Vayu Ashvin of their findings.

PART 5. CONCLUSION

Meeting Vayu Ashvin within his tower, the half elf mage seems oddly quiet upon receiving the news that the bone of a primordial is imprisoned within the Vault, not far from his beloved city.

He thanks the characters profusely, and pays them for their time. If they did not destroy the bulk of the scrolls in the Vault, and inform Vayu of their existence, they gain the **Knowledge of the Vault** story award.

As he turns to being poring through a stack of tomes he's been pulling down from the walls during the conversation, Vayu informs the group that he may have further use of them, once he has done some more research on Achlyos. If they are around, he will contact them in the future.

This ends the *Squamous Writhings Trilogy*. The characters may be called upon again by the silver mage in a future adventure!

REWARDS

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

EXPERIENCE

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

COMBAT AWARDS

Name of Foe	XP / Foe
Babau	1,100
Cave Fisher	700
Darkling	100
Darkling Elder	450
Foil of Smothering	450
Ghost	1,100
Grung	50
Grung Elite Warrior	450
Maw Demon	200
Squamous Gibberer	450
Vampiric Mist	700

NON-COMBAT AWARDS

Task/Accomplishment	XP / Character
Convince Silda to return to the ghost city OR to move on to the afterlife	200
Save Radiq, returning him to the darklings	200

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

The maximum total award for each character participating in this adventure is **1200 experience points**.

TREASURE

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

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

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

TREASURE AWARDS

Item Name	GP Value
Vayu's Payment	50 each
Gold Flakes	50
Extra Gold Flakes	50
Silver Ring	50
Human Maiden Bust	50

Permanent Magic Item Distribution

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

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

INSTRUMENT OF THE BARDS : MAC-FUIRMIDH CITTERN

Wondrous item, uncommon (requires attunement by a bard)

This stringed instrument is made of a purplish wood, with grain that whorls rather than lies in straight lines. A sun of worked silver seems to be rising from the base of the cittern. A description of this item can be found in **Player Handout 1**.

POTION OF GROWTH

Potion, common

A description of this item can be found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* (pg. 187).

POTION OF HEALING

Potion, common

A description of this item can be found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* (pg. 188).

SPELL SCROLL OF COMPREHEND LANGUAGES

Scroll, common

A description of this item can be found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* (pg. 200).

SPELL SCROLL OF GENTLE REPOSE

Scroll, uncommon

A description of this item can be found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* (pg. 200).

SPELL SCROLL OF TENSER'S FLOATING DISK

Scroll, common

A description of this item can be found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* (pg. 200).

RENOWN

All faction members gain one renown point for successfully completing the adventure.

DOWNTIME

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

DM REWARDS

You receive **400 XP, 200 gp, and ten downtime days** for each session you run of this adventure.

DM APPENDIX.

NPC SUMMARY

Below is a list of named NPCs that appear in this adventure.

Vayu Ashvin (VIE-yoo ASH-vin). A wizard who has set up shop in the city of Thentia, Vayu is a sight to behold. His massive form belies his half-elven heritage, which he attributes to goliath parentage. Often garbed in silver or other brilliant garments, with dark hair and pale blue eyes, viewers are often caught off-guard by his appearance.

Dorren Morninglark (DOHR-en MAWR-ning-LAHRK). Once a resident in the resplendent city of Quenester, Dorren now resides in its sunken ruins as a ghost. He and the other inhabitants go about their day, unaware of their true fate. Dorren appears as a wizened-old man, often fretting over his grandchildren, whose parents died many years ago (longer ago than Dorren even suspects).

Matthew Sharpe (MATH-hew SHAHRP). The grandson of Dorren Morninglark, Matthew is a rambunctious child, appearing to be 7 or 8 years old with sandy-brown hair and brown eyes. In reality, Matthew passed away thousands of years ago when the city of Quenester sunk into the ground. Now he resides in the ruins of the city as though that day had never happened, his existence as a ghost unknown to him.

Silda Sharpe (SILL-dah SHAHRP). Silda is Matthew Sharpe's 13-year old sister, and Dorren Morninglark's granddaughter. Her hair appears lighter than her brothers,

almost golden blonde, with hazel green eyes. As with the other ghosts of Quenester, she does not understand her true fate, though she sometimes questions why it seems like much time has passed, and yet she has not grown older. Her growing suspicion of something amiss in the city has caused her to wander about, trying to find answers.

Fasily (FAH-see-LEE). The elder of a tribe of darklings, Fasily still appears strong and confident. His tribe's safety is his main concern, and odd forces have been at work in the area lately. He is of a mind to be moving his tribe to other locales in the Underdark.

APPENDIX. MONSTER/NPC STATISTICS

Babau

Medium fiend (demon), chaotic evil

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 82 (11d8 + 33)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	16 (+3)	16 (+3)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)

Skills Perception +5, Stealth +5

Damage Resistances cold, fire, lightning; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from non-magical attacks

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 120 ft., Passive

Perception 15

Languages Abyssal

Challenge Rating 4 (1,100 XP)

Innate Spellcasting. The babau's innate spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 11). The babau can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *darkness, dispel magic, fear, heat metal, levitate*

Actions

Multiattack. The babau makes two melee attacks. I can also use Weakening Gaze before or after making these attacks.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) slashing damage.

Spear. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage, or 8 (1d8 + 4) piercing damage when used with two hands to make a melee attack.

Weakening Gaze. The babau targets one creature that it can see within 20 feet of it. The target must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the target deals only half damage with weapon attacks that use Strength for 1 minute. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

Cave Fisher

Medium monstrosity, unaligned

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 58 (9d8 + 8)

Speed 20 ft., climb 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	3 (-4)	10 (+0)	3 (-4)

Skills Perception +2, Stealth +5

Senses blindsight 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages -

Challenge Rating 3 (700 XP)

Adhesive Filament. The cave fisher can use its action to extend a sticky filament up to 60 feet, and the filament adheres to anything that touches it. A creature adhered to the filament is grappled by the cave fisher (escape DC 13), and ability checks made to escape this grapple have disadvantage. The filament can be attacked (AC 15; 5 hit points; immunity to poison and psychic damage), but a weapon that fails to sever it becomes stuck to it, requiring an action and a successful DC 13

Strength check to pull free. Destroying the filament deals no damage to the cave fisher, which can extrude a replacement filament on its next turn.

Flammable Blood. If the cave fisher drops to half its hit points or fewer, it gains vulnerability to fire damage.

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

Actions

Multiattack. The cave fisher makes two attacks with its claws.

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

Filament. One creature grappled by the cave fisher's adhesive filament must make a DC 13 Strength saving throw, provided that the target weighs 200 pounds or less. On a failure, the target is pulled into an unoccupied space within 5 feet of the cave fisher, and the cave fisher makes a claw attack against it as a bonus action. Reeling up the target releases anyone else who was attached to the filament. Until the grapple ends on the target, the cave fisher can't extrude another filament.

Darkling

Small fey, chaotic neutral

Armor Class 14 (leather armor)

Hit Points 13 (3d6 + 3)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)

Skills Acrobatics +5, Deception +2, Perception +5, Stealth +7

Senses blindsight 30 ft., darkvision 120 ft., Passive Perception 15

Languages Elvish, Sylvan

Challenge Rating 1/2 (100 XP)

Death Flash. When the darkling dies, non-magical light flashes out from it in a 10-foot radius as its body and possessions, other than metal or magic objects, burn to ash. Any creature in that area and able to see the bright light must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or be blinded until the end of the creature's turn.

Light Sensitivity. While in bright light, the darkling has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Perception (Wisdom) checks that rely on sight.

Actions

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. If the darkling has advantage on the attack roll, the attack deals an extra 7 (2d6) piercing damage.

Darkling Elder

Medium fey, chaotic neutral

Armor Class 15 (studded leather armor)

Hit Points 27 (5d8 + 5)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	17 (+3)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)

Skills Acrobatics +5, Deception +3, Perception +6, Stealth +7

Senses blindsight 30 ft., darkvision 120 ft., Passive Perception 16

Languages Elvish, Sylvan

Challenge Rating 2 (450 XP)

Death Burn. When the darkling elder dies, magical light flashes out from it in a 10-foot radius as its body and possessions, other than metal or magic objects, burn to ash. Any creature in that area must make a DC 11 Constitution saving throw. On a failure, the creature takes 7 (2d6) radiant damage and, if the creature can see the light, is blinded until the end of its next turn. If the saving throw is successful, the creature takes half the damage and isn't blinded.

Actions

Multiattack. The darkling elder makes two melee attacks.

Shortsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6+3) piercing damage. If the darkling elder has advantage on the attack roll, the attack deals an extra 10 (3d6) piercing damage.

Darkness (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). The darkling elder casts darkness without any components. Wisdom is its spellcasting ability.

Foil of Smothering*

Large construct, unaligned

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 33 (6d10)

Speed 10 ft., fly 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	1 (-5)	3 (-4)	1 (-5)

Damage Immunities poison, psychic

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

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

Languages -

Challenge Rating 2 (450 XP)

A foil of smothering appears as a sheet of metal so thin that it is semi-transparent. It is capable of bending and warping similar to cloth.

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

Damage Transfer. While it is grappling a creature, the foil takes only half the damage dealt to it, and the creature grappled by the foil takes the other half.

False Appearance. While the foil remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from its background as long as it lays against metal of its type.

Actions

Smother. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one Medium or smaller creature.

Hit: The creature is grappled (escape DC 13). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained, blinded, and at risk of suffocation, and the foil can't smother another target. In addition, at the start of each of the target's turns, the target takes 10 (2d6 + 3) bludgeoning damage.

*based on the rug of smothering

Ghost

Medium undead, any alignment

Armor Class 11

Hit Points 45 (10d8)

Speed 0 ft., fly 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
7 (-2)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	17 (+3)

Damage Resistances acid, fire, lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from non-magical weapons

Damage Immunities cold, necrotic, poison

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

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages any languages it knew in life

Challenge Rating 4 (1,100 XP)

Ethereal Sight. The ghost can see 60 feet into the Ethereal Plane when it is on the Material Plane, and vice versa.

Incorporeal Movement. The ghost can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. It takes 5 (1d10) force damage if it ends its turn inside an object.

Actions

Withering Touch. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 17 (4d6 + 3) necrotic damage.

Etherealness. The ghost enters the Ethereal Plane from the Material Plane, or vice versa. It is visible on the Material Plane while it is in the Border Ethereal, and vice versa, yet it can't affect or be affected by anything on the other plane.

Horrifying Visage. Each non-undead creature within 60 feet of the ghost that can see it must succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened for 1 minute. If the save fails by 5 or more, the target also ages 1d4 x 10 years. A frightened target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the frightened condition on itself on a success. If a target's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the target is immune to the ghost's Horrifying Visage for the next 24 hours. The aging effect can be reversed with a *greater restoration* spell, but only within 24 hours of it occurring.

Possession (Recharge 6). One humanoid that the ghost can see within 5 feet of it must succeed on a DC 13 Charisma saving throw or be possessed by the ghost; the ghost then disappears, and the target is incapacitated and loses control of its body. The ghost now controls the body but doesn't deprive the target of awareness. The ghost can't be targeted by any attack, spell, or other effect, except ones that turn undead, and it retains its alignment, Intelligence, Wisdom, Charisma, and immunity to being charmed and frightened. It otherwise uses the possessed target's statistics, but doesn't gain access to

the target's knowledge, class features, or proficiencies.

The possession lasts until the body drops to 0 hit points, the ghost ends it as a bonus action, or the ghost is turned or forced out by an effect like the *dispel evil and good* spell. When the possession ends, the ghost reappears in an unoccupied space within 5 feet of the body. The target is immune to this ghost's Possession for 24 hours after succeeding on the saving throw or after the possession ends.

Grung

Small humanoid (grung), lawful evil

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 11 (2d6 + 4)

Speed 25 ft., climb 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
7 (-2)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Dex +4

Skills Athletics +2, Perception +2,
Stealth +4, Survival +2

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages Grung

Challenge Rating 1/4 (50 XP)

Amphibious. The grung can breathe air and water.

Poisonous Skin. Any creature that grapples the grung or otherwise comes into direct contact with the grung's skin must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or become poisoned for 1 minute. A poisoned creature no longer in direct contact with the grung can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

Standing Leap. The grung's long jump is up to 25 feet and its high jump is up to 15 feet, with or without a running start.

Actions

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4+2) piercing damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or take 5 (2d4) poison damage.

Grung Elite Warrior

Small humanoid (grung), lawful evil

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 49 (9d6 + 18)

Speed 25 ft., climb 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
7 (-2)	16 (+3)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Dex +5

Skills Athletics +2, Perception +2,
Stealth +5, Survival +2

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages Grung

Challenge Rating 2 (450 XP)

Amphibious. The grung can breathe air and water.

Poisonous Skin. Any creature that grapples the grung or otherwise comes into direct contact with the grung's skin must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or become poisoned for 1 minute. A poisoned creature no longer in direct contact with the grung can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of

its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

Standing Leap. The grung's long jump is up to 25 feet and its high jump is up to 15 feet, with or without a running start.

Actions

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, and the target must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or take 5 (2d4) poison damage.

Shortbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6+3) piercing damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or take 5 (2d4) poison damage.

Mesmerizing Chirr (Recharge 6). The grung makes a chirring noise to which grungs are immune. Each humanoid or beast that is within 15 feet of the grung and able to hear it must succeed on a DC 12 Wisdom saving throw or be stunned until the end of the grung's next turn.

Maw Demon

Medium fiend (demon), chaotic evil

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)

Hit Points 33 (6d8 + 6)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	8 (-1)	13 (+3)	5 (-3)	8 (-1)	5 (-3)

Damage Resistances cold, fire, lightning

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., Passive Perception 9

Languages understands Abyssal but can't speak

Challenge Rating 1 (200 XP)

Rampage. When it reduces a creature to 0 hit points with a melee attack on its turn, the maw demon can take a bonus action to move up to half its speed and make a bite attack.

Actions

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d8 + 2) piercing damage.

Squamous Gibberer*

Large aberration, neutral

Armor Class 12 (natural armor)

Hit Points 67 (9d8 + 7)

Speed 10 ft., swim 10 ft.

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

Condition Immunities prone

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive

Perception 10

Languages -

Challenge Rating 2 (450 XP)

A squamous gibberer is an amorphous blob of flesh covered with writhing black scales. The flesh is made up of creatures it has previously absorbed, and hints of these creatures may roil to the surface of the flesh as the gibberer moves about.

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

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

Actions

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

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

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

*based on the gibbering moulder

Vampiric Mist

Medium undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 45 (6d8 + 8)

Speed 0 ft., fly 30 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6 (-2)	16 (+3)	16 (+3)	6 (-2)	12 (+1)	7 (-2)

Saving Throws Wis +3

Damage Resistances acid, cold, lightning, necrotic, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks.

Damage Immunities poison

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

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive

Perception 11

Languages -

Challenge Rating 3 (700 XP)

Blood Sense. The vampiric mist can sense living creatures that have blood or similar vital fluids in a radius of 60 feet.

Forbiddance. The vampiric mist can't enter a residence without an invitation from one of the occupants.

Misty Form. The vampiric mist can occupy another creature's space and vice versa. In addition, if air can pass through a space, the mist can pass through it without squeezing. Each foot of movement in water costs it 2 extra feet, rather than 1 extra foot. The mist can't manipulate objects in any way that requires hands; it can apply simple force only.

Sunlight Hypersensitivity. The vampiric mist takes 20 radiant damage when it starts its turn in sunlight. While in sunlight, the mist

has disadvantage on attack rolls and ability checks.

Undead Nature. A vampiric mist doesn't require air or sleep.

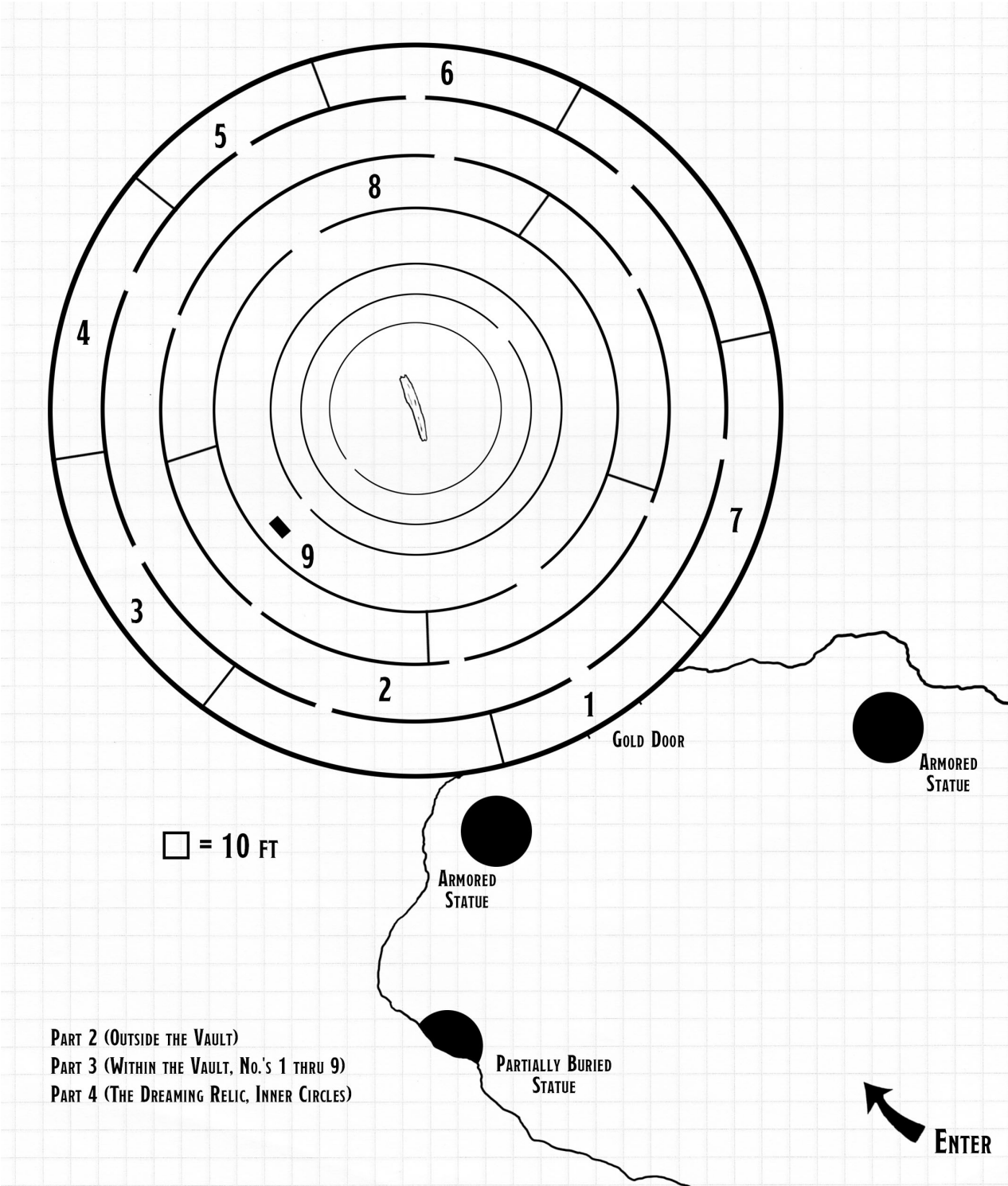
Actions

Blood Drain. One creature in the vampiric mists' space must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw (undead and constructs automatically succeed). On a failed save, the target takes 10 (2d6 + 3) necrotic damage, its hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the necrotic damage, and the mist regains hit points equal to that amount.

This reduction to the target's hit point maximum lasts until the target finishes a long rest. It dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0.

APPENDIX. MAP I

A map of the Vault, once both museum and prison in the city of Yrisgow.



PLAYER HANDOUT I. INSTRUMENT OF THE BARDS : MAC-FUIRMIDH CITTERN

INSTRUMENT OF THE BARDS : MAC-FUIRMIDH CITTERN

Wondrous item, uncommon (requires attunement)

This stringed instrument is made of a purplish wood, with grain that whorls rather than running in straight lines. A sun of worked silver seems to be rising from the base of the cittern.

A creature that attempts to play the instrument without being attuned to it must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or take 2d4 psychic damage.

You can use an action to play the instrument and cast one of its spells. Once the cittern has been used to cast a spell, it can't be used to cast that spell again until the next dawn. The spells use your spellcasting ability and spell save DC.

The cittern can cast the following spells: *barkskin, cure wounds, fly, fog cloud, invisibility, levitate, protection from good and evil.*

PLAYER HANDOUT 2. STORY AWARDS

Characters have the opportunity to earn the following story awards during this adventure.

KNOWLEDGE OF THE VAULT

You returned information of surviving scrolls within the Vault to Vayu Ashvin, silver mage of Thentia. Overcome with appreciation, Vayu offers you room and board at his tower any time you are in Thentia. In addition, this information may prove useful during a future adventure.

Results Code for CCCTHENT01-03, The Dreaming Realic

If you are DMing this adventure between the months of August 2017 and December 2017, please show your players this page. The QR code below can be scanned, and will allow them to give feedback and results on the adventure to influence the storyline in the future.

If a player does not have a mobile device, please ask them to head to <http://www.whpublications.com/surveys/> to enter their feedback. Thank you!

