

MOMENT OF PEACE

A Dreams of the Red Wizards Adventure

Armed with a ritual that will let them track the *Wyrmskull Throne*, the characters travel to distant mountain, magical desert, and the Outer Planes—but all their success might yet be undone by a vengeful enemy.

Part Four of the *Storm King's Descent* series of adventures.

A Six-Hour Adventure for Tier 3 Characters.

Optimized For: APL 13



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ADVENTURE PRIMER

No man chooses evil because it is evil; he only mistakes it for happiness, the good he seeks.

—Mary Wollstonecraft

This adventure is designed for **three to seven 11th- to 16th-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 takes place in the storm giant city of Maelstrom, the mountain known as Wyvernfang in the Thunder Peaks, on the Plains of Purple Dust to the east of the Sea of Fallen Stars, and on the desolate prison plane of Carceri.

BACKGROUND

In previous D&D Adventurers League adventures (DRW01 through DRW03), the noble-turned-privateer **ZEHIRA DERIAN** acquired a magic rod dedicated to **CLANGEDDIN SILVERBEARD**, the dwarven god of war and valor. This rod is the **ILTKAZAR SCEPTER**, one of ten **RULING SCEPTERS OF SHANATAR** that can be used to control the **WYRMASKULL THRONE**, an artifact that is the centerpiece of **KING HEKATON'S** throne room in the undersea storm giant citadel of **MAELSTROM**. Zehira is intent on keeping the scepter, and so has received an invitation from Hekaton to travel to Maelstrom so that the scepter can be used to activate the throne.

Recently, agents of the **CULT OF THE DRAGON** secretly stole into Maelstrom, assassinated King Hekaton, and stole the *Wyrmskull Throne* away with the use of powerful magic. The Cult of the Dragon had previously turned the corpse of the ancient blue dragon sorcerer **IYMRITH** into a dracolich, and has since bound the *Wyrmskull Throne* as her phylactery. Still nurturing the rage inspired by her being murdered by adventurers in *Storm King's Thunder*, Iymrith seeks vengeance if those foes ever cross her path again.

The **RED WIZARDS OF THAY** have long sought the *Wyrmskull Throne* for themselves, and have been secretly watching the activities of the Cult of the Dragon. The Red Wizards had hoped to follow the cult assault force to Maelstrom and overcome them after they had dealt with the giants, but their agents arrived in the stronghold just after the cult had spirited the throne away. Never one to let an opportunity pass them by, the Thayans stole the body of King Hekaton instead. Then, using powerful necromantic rituals, they raised him as a death knight slave of **SZASS TAM**, the ancient lich who rules Thay.

With her father once again absent, **PRINCESS SERISSA** is thrust into power, a familiar position after the events that occurred in *Storm King's Thunder*. Serissa still possesses the **KOROLNOR SCEPTER**, with the Cult of the Dragon having failed to claim it when the *Wyrmskull Throne* was stolen. Her possession of the scepter has helped Serissa keep control over the giant court in the immediate aftermath of King Hekaton's disappearance, but her hold on power is tenuous at best. With her mother dead, her sisters defeated for their previous betrayal of her father, and her father missing amid signs of violence, she is desperate for aid.

Recently, Zehira and a group of adventurers working with her have learned that the Cult of the Dragon has used shadow magic to create multiple copies of the *Wyrmskull Throne* and spread them across Faerûn, making tracking the throne nearly impossible. However, with help from a mage of Candlekeep, the characters have acquired a ritual that can be used to track the original throne from any of its copies.

OVERVIEW

The adventure's story is spread over **three parts** and takes approximately **six hours** to play. The adventure begins with a Call to Action scene.

MODULAR ADVENTURE

While this adventure has distinct parts, each section is designed to be played on its own over approximately two hours, if you are at a store, convention, or public event with a shorter than six-hour play time available.

Call to Action: Cult to Action. The characters and Zehira begin in Maelstrom, having returned to meet with Princess Serissa. The characters learn that the ritual acquired from Candlekeep tracks all the copies of the *Wyrmskull Throne* and can be used to find the original from any copy. Using the ritual, it is determined that the closest false throne is on Wyvernfang, a mountain in the Thunder Peaks. Serissa urges Zehira and the characters to journey to Wyvernfang, infiltrate whatever Cult of the Dragon base has been set up there, find the false throne, and use it to locate and recover the real throne.

Part 1: Clever Wyverns. On Wyvernfang, the characters infiltrate an ancient dungeon site taken over by the Cult of the Dragon. Getting past the cultists and the wyverns that the cult is training and experimenting with reveals the hiding place of the duplicate *Wyrmskull Throne*. Finding the duplicate and using it to determine the location of the real throne is **Story Objective A**.

Part 2: Revenge is a Dish Best Served Dead. Traveling to the Plains of Purple Dust far to the east of the Sea of Fallen Stars, the characters must locate, then infiltrate an ancient arcane tower that holds the *Wyrmskull Throne*. Defeating the dracolich Iymrith and claiming the throne is **Story Objective B**.

Part 3: Vhaeraun and You. Though they have reclaimed the *Wyrmskull Throne*, the characters discover that they have a problem. Because the throne is Iymrith's phylactery, the dracolich's soul goes into it when she is destroyed. Destroying the throne is impossible, but if the characters can't somehow remove Iymrith's soul from it, the dracolich will constantly reform next to the throne. With aid from doomguides of Kelemvor in the Tower of Skulls in Ormath, the characters journey to the prison plane of Carceri in search of a forgotten spell capable of holding Iymrith's soul, so as to prevent that soul from inhabiting the *Wyrmskull Throne*. Gaining the spell that can imprison the dracolich's soul is **Story Objective C**.

Wrap-Up. The characters' mission is complete—but once more, cruel fate has undone their hard work. While they journeyed to Carceri, the death knight that was once King Hekaton led a force to the Tower of Skulls, and has stolen the *Wyrmskull Throne* for Szass Tam.



ADVENTURE HOOKS

Moment of Peace follows directly from *DDAL-DRW04 Foreign Affairs*, *DDAL-DRW05 Uncertain Scrutiny*, and *DDAL-DRW06 Thimbleriðging*. It assumes that the characters have been assisting Zehira Deryan in the search for information regarding the fate of King Hekaton and the *Wyrmskull Throne*. If the characters didn't play the previous adventures, the following hooks provide possible ways to involve them in the scenario.

Hey, I Know You. If the characters have played any of the earlier adventures in this series (DRW01 through DRW06), they are already acquainted with Zehira Deryan, who uses a *sending* spell to contact them. Zehira asks for aid in recovering the *Wyrmskull Throne*, and requests that the adventurers join her in Maelstrom to meet with Serissa.

Royal Favor. If the characters helped King Hekaton during the events of *Storm King's Thunder*, Serissa contacts them by messenger or magical means. She explains that she and her father have need of aid once more, and asks that the characters take up service to Hekaton as they did before.

LEGACY EVENTS

Before beginning play, ask the players to check their logsheets for any legacy events that might effect this adventure. *Moment of Peace* incorporates the following legacy event from previous adventures in the Dreams of the Red Wizards series.

LIBERATOR

This optional legacy event from *Uncertain Scrutiny* creates a connection between the characters and the Red Wizards they meet in this adventure. In the wrap-up section, Trildor Zihial is part of the Thayan force that steals the throne. Previously rescued from the dungeons under Thaymount, Zihial was actually an agent placed by Szass Tam in the Citadel, charged with learning what the characters and the storm giant court knew of the *Wyrmskull Throne*. If one character has this legacy event, this path is open to the party and all characters gain this legacy event.

THE ILTKAZAR SCEPTER

Zehira Deryan is present with the characters throughout this adventure, unless there's a strong reason for her not to be. As the primary quest giver and sidekick, she has a vested interest in all that happens in the storyline. Zehira is also the wielder of the *Iltkazar Scepter*—one of the ten Ruling Scepters of Shanatar, forged by the dwarven gods and given to the ruling houses of that ancient dwarven empire.

The *Iltkazar Scepter* is an intelligent artifact-level magic item that is bonded to Zehira. It takes the form of a tapered mithral rod as thick and long as a dwarf's forearm, with a small platinum knob at the bottom and a rounded disk adorned with a ring of seven tiny red gems at the top. A wielder attuned to the scepter has access to these properties:

- They gain a +3 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this scepter, which can be wielded as a magic club.
- They can make the scepter appear nonmagical at will, as if it were under the effect of the *Nystul's magic aura* spell.
- They can use the properties of the *Wyrmskull Throne*.

Additionally, the scepter has 10 charges, and it regains 1d6 + 4 expended charges at dawn. The wielder of the scepter can use these charges to access the following properties:

- If the wielder is underground or underwater, they can use an action to expend 1 charge to determine the distance to the surface.
- As an action, they can expend 2 charges to cast the *sending* spell from the scepter.
- As an action, they can expend 3 charges to cast the *teleport* spell from the scepter. If the destination is within 60 feet of the *Wyrmskull Throne*, there is no chance of a teleport error or mishap occurring. (Because the *teleport* spell takes the caster to a location, not an object, the wielder must know the location of the *Wyrmskull Throne* in order to teleport to it.)

The *Iltkazar Scepter* has additional properties that manifest throughout this series of adventures.

Though Zehira is a close ally of the characters, she does not allow anyone else to use the scepter, and the scepter cannot be attuned to another creature. If Zehira is incapacitated or killed and the characters attempt to claim the artifact, it teleports away from them, taking Zehira with it.

CALL TO ACTION: CULT TO ACTION

Estimated Duration: 10 minutes

The characters and Zehira Deryan begin the adventure in the storm giant citadel of Maelstrom with Princess Serissa. There, the characters learn that the ritual created by Master Reader Alsbith in Candlekeep magically connects the *Wyrmskull Throne* to the copies of the throne created by the Cult of the Dragon. The ritual determines that the closest copy is on Wyvernfang, a mountain in the Thunder Peaks, east of Cormyr. The characters can be imbued with the power of the ritual, so that if they make physical contact with any duplicate throne, they will learn the general location of all other copies—and of the real throne.

SPEEDING UP THIS ENCOUNTER

If you are running this encounter in less than the recommended time, or if you find that time is running short during your session, consider speeding up this section by summarizing the Call to Action rather than roleplaying the meeting with Princess Serissa.

RETURN TO MAELSTROM

The adventure starts in Maelstrom, which lies on the floor of the Trackless Sea and is the seat of power for the storm giants who live there. Whether the characters are returning to Maelstrom after having taken part in *Foreign Affairs* or are journeying there for the first time, they meet with Zehira and Princess Serissa in the throne room.

Maelstrom's throne room resembles a great amphitheater, with stone bleachers overlooking an oblong chamber with a 50-foot-deep pool of seawater near its center. In the middle of the bleachers is an archway with two doors in it. Facing the pool and the doors are two enormous thrones made of coral and giant seashells, flanking an empty spot in the middle where the *Wyrmskull Throne* should be.

AREA INFORMATION

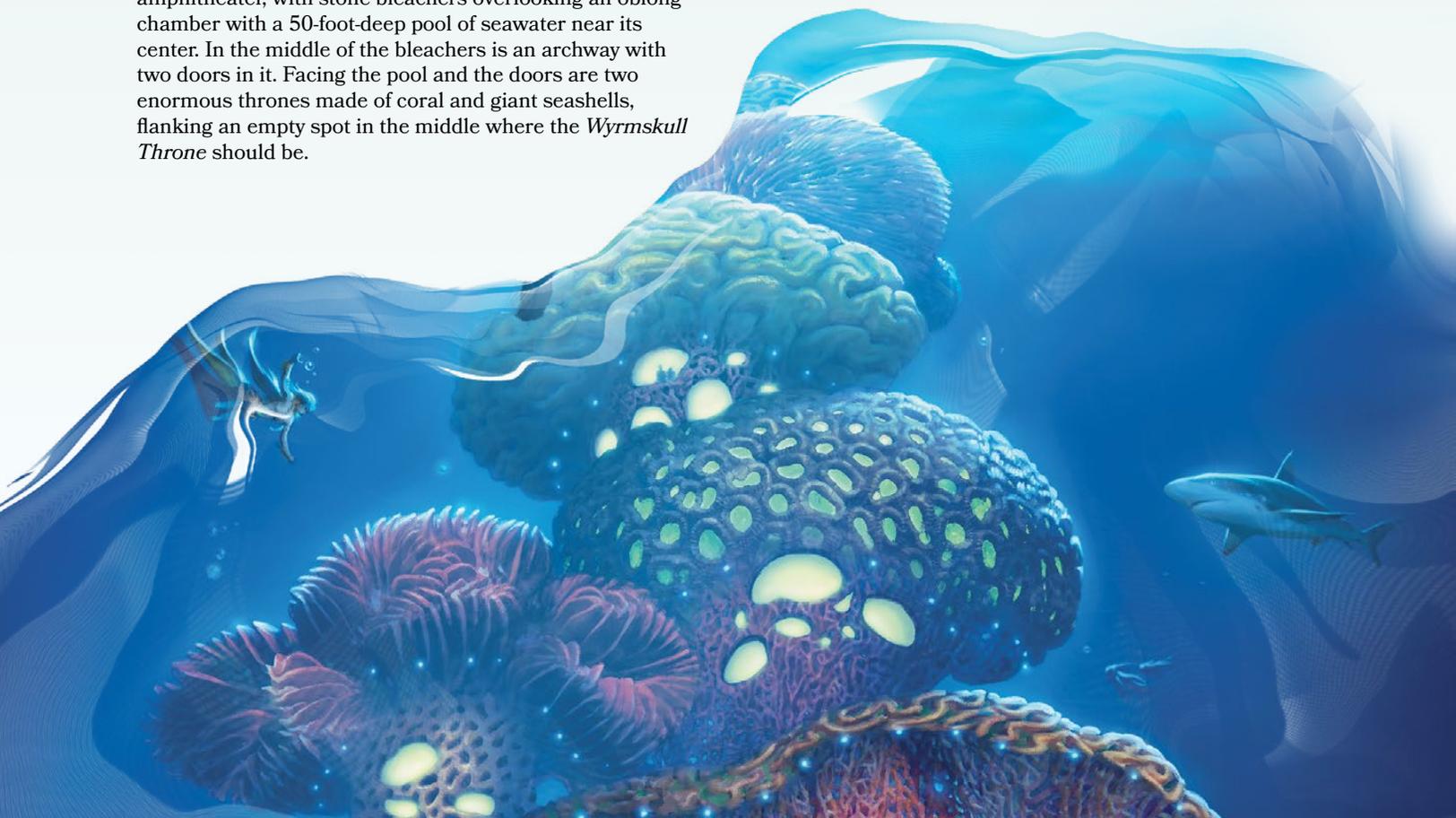
Maelstrom lies on the floor of the Trackless Sea west of Faerûn, some three thousand feet beneath the surface. The undersea fortress of King Hekaton is carved into a reef. Its four rocky towers covered in barnacles and coral rise upward, and a large sinkhole between them descends into the heart of the fortress.

Dimensions and Terrain. The stronghold has slick, rough-hewn walls. Most of its rooms have 50-foot-high ceilings. The giant-sized doors are 30 feet tall and made of barnacle-covered stone with rusty iron hinges. Their handles are 13 feet above the floor.

Light. All interior spaces are filled with dim light. Air-filled chambers feature shrouded wall sconces with *continual flame* spells cast on them, or oval windows of transparent crystal that allow light from the bioluminescent coral reef to enter. Bioluminescent fish illuminate submerged areas.

SERISSA'S MISSION

Even if the characters are meeting Serissa for the first time, she stands to welcome them, forgoing the use of one of the remaining thrones. If the characters have not played the previous adventures in this series, Serissa and Zehira provide the information given in the "Background" section. The two then focus on what has been learned by the storm giant wizards who have performed Master Reader Alsbith's ritual:



- The ritual taps into the shadow magic that created the duplicate thrones, connecting all those copies with the true *Wyrmskull Throne*.
- The power of the ritual can be infused into one or more characters. If a character channeling the power of the ritual touches one of the duplicate thrones, they should be able to determine where the real throne is located.
- Serissa's hope is that once the location of the real throne is determined, the characters and Zehira will be able to recover it.
- By focusing the power of the ritual, the storm giant wizards have determined that the closest copy of the *Wyrmskull Throne* is on Wyvernfang, a mountain in the Thunder Peaks east of Cormyr.
- The trip will not be without peril. Wyvernfang is known to be home to unusually strong and intelligent wyverns, and has been used as a base by the Cult of the Dragon for years.

To make it possible to travel with the *Wyrmskull Throne*, the arcanists of Maelstrom augment the *Iltkazar Scepter* carried by Zehira, so that she can use it to reduce the throne to its original size (suitable to seat a dwarf). This allows it to be brought with the characters when they use the *teleport* spell to travel, or to be moved relatively easily by nonmagical means.

PRINCESS SERISSA

Chaotic good storm giant

The youngest daughter and chosen successor of King Hekaton, Serissa is cool and calm, even as she understands that others in the giant court covet her position.

What They Want. To maintain peace among the giants, Serissa must find her father and the *Wyrmskull Throne*, and have those who attacked Maelstrom face justice.

Optimistic Leader. Serissa wants to believe that all folk are innately good at heart. Reluctantly accepting the mantle of ruler once more in her father's stead, she is determined to do everything she can to find King Hekaton and return the *Wyrmskull Throne* to Maelstrom. She fears that her father's death will bring about a new rise in tensions between the giant races and she knows that she must defuse those tensions if she can. Serissa hopes that her father's body can be recovered and raised from the dead, despite the king having been turned into a death knight in the service of Thay.

CALL TO ACTION

The characters agree to aid Serissa by working with Zehira, and by allowing the storm giant mages to infuse the power of the ritual into them. They will then journey to Wyvernfang, seeking out the Cult of the Dragon's base there, and determine the location of the *Wyrmskull Throne* from the duplicate throne. Once that location is known, they will seek out and recover the throne if they can.



PART 1: CLEVER WYVERNS

Estimated Duration: 1 hour 50 minutes

Making their way to Wyvernfang, the characters enter a series of chambers and caverns carved out beneath the top of the mountain, occupied by the Cult of the Dragon and guarded by monstrous wyverns. Only by overcoming the cultists and their wyvern servants can the characters gain access to the duplicate *Wyrmskull Throne* hidden here, which might grant them the location of the true throne.

This encounter is a mix of a dungeon crawl and a wide-open combat with aerial options. Though the cult members present here are not all that noteworthy, the wyverns are dangerous, and are led by an especially powerful creature known as Deathsting.

STORY OBJECTIVE

Finding the duplicate throne and using it to determine the location of the true *Wyrmskull Throne* is **Story Objective A**.

INTO THE THUNDER PEAKS

The Thunder Peaks are a range of mountains running in a north-south line to mark the eastern edge of Cormyr. These desolate peaks are subject to severe and sudden storms all year round, but the characters thankfully have access to the magic of the storm giant court to aid them. A storm giant sorcerer who knows the Thunder Peaks is made available to Zehira and the party, and can use the *teleport* spell to take the characters to Wyvernfang. Serissa and the sorcerer stay in touch with Zehira using *sending*, for when the characters are ready to go to their next destination.

SETTING: WYVERN Fang

Wyvernfang is just one of the mountains of the Thunder Peaks, and is named for the wyverns that lair there. Natural caverns dot the summit of the mountain, many of which are home to these creatures, who make their nests within. The wyverns of Wyvernfang are known for being stronger and more intelligent than most of their kind.

CAVES OF THE DRAGON CULT

Using the information gleaned by the storm giants from the ritual, the characters are able to easily find the caves occupied by the Cult of the Dragon. From the base of the mountain where the characters first arrive, the ascent to the caves is uneventful. The dragon cultists who reside here are not particularly adept at stealth, and even the most casual inspection reveals frequent foot traffic in and out of the cavern entrance.

The entry cavern is some 30 feet by 40 feet, and features three worked-stone passageways leading off in different directions. Two small benches stand against the far wall, flanking one tunnel.

AREA INFORMATION

The caves occupied by the cultists have the following features.

Stonework. The passages and chambers of the cult lair have been carved out of the natural limestone of the mountain. The entrance cavern and area 8 are rough stone, but all other areas are clean worked stone.

Lighting. Torch sconces line the walls of all areas, but are unlit when the characters enter unless otherwise noted.

CREATURE INFORMATION

In addition to the wyverns that lair above it, the base is currently home to some dozen Cult of the Dragon cultists. The cultists aren't particularly watchful except as noted, since few people brave the dangerous slopes of Wyvernfang.

FLYING CHARACTERS

If the characters decide to fly to the top of the mountain and try to enter through one of the many wyvern nests that pepper the summit, you can add an encounter with six **wyverns** in the cave they choose to enter. A tunnel beyond the entrance leads farther into the caves, ending at a weathered iron door. The door opens to reveal area 6 beyond.

EXPLORING THE CULT LAIR

The locations in this section are keyed to the map in appendix 1.

1. WEST TUNNEL

This tunnel is wet and dark, and extends 60 feet to end in a weathered iron door. Engraved into the door and painted with bright colors is an image of Tiamat in her five-headed dragon aspect.

Sonic Door Trap. The iron door is protected by a magical trap that can be noted with a *detect magic* spell or a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check made to carefully inspect the door. If the door is opened without the trap being dismissed or a creature speaking a passcode (changed daily by the cultists), the hallway fills with the rumble of thunder and each creature in the corridor must make a DC 17 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, a creature takes 55 (10d10) sonic damage and is knocked prone. On a success, the creature takes half as much damage and is not knocked prone.

The magic trap can be dismissed with a *dispel magic* spell (treat the trap as a 7th-level spell).

If the trap is triggered, all creatures in the complex become aware of intruders. If not already encountered, the cultists in area 4 emerge after 6 rounds to investigate and search the complex.

2. EAST TUNNEL

This tunnel is wet and dark, and extends 60 feet to end in a weathered iron door. Engraved into the door and painted with bright colors is an image of Tiamat in her comely humanoid form, with dark hair and dark eyes.

Poison Cloud Door Trap. The iron door is protected by a mechanical trap. A successful DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals the trap's mechanism embedded into the frame of the door. A successful DC 22 Wisdom (Perception) check finds a hidden stud in the right eye of the image of Tiamat. If the door is opened without the trap being disarmed or a creature first pressing the stud, holes concealed in cracks in the tunnel's stonework fill the hallway with clouds of red, black, blue, green, and white poisonous gas that extend 30 feet from the door.

A creature that starts its turn in the cloud or enters the area for the first time on a turn must make a DC 17 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the creature takes 45 (10d8) poison damage, and if its body is made of flesh, it is restrained as its flesh begins to harden. On a successful save, the creature takes half as much damage and isn't restrained. A creature restrained by the trap must make another Constitution saving throw at the end of each of its turns. If it successfully saves against this trap three times, the spell ends. If it fails its saves three times, it turns into an obsidian statue and is petrified. The successes and failures don't need to be consecutive; keep track of both until the target collects three of a kind.

A creature is affected by the poison even if it holds its breath or doesn't need to breathe. The cloud lasts for 10 minutes or until a strong wind disperses it. The area of the cloud is heavily obscured.

In addition to pressing the stud, the trap can also be disarmed with a successful DC 16 Dexterity check using thieves' tools. A failed attempt to disarm the trap triggers it.

If the trap is triggered, all creatures in the complex become aware of intruders. If not already encountered, the cultists in area 4 emerge after 6 rounds to investigate and search the complex.

I'M AN OBSIDIAN STATUE?

A *greater restoration* spell reverses the petrified condition for a character transformed into an obsidian statue, and the effect can also be undone by a *remove curse* or *wish* spell. If the characters don't have access to these spells, a petrified character can be cured in any major city for 450 gp.

If the entire party is turned into statues, the cult sells them to an art dealer for a tidy profit. Serissa eventually recovers the statues and has the characters returned to their normal state, but the adventure is over for them.

3. SOUTH TUNNEL

This tunnel is wet and dark, and extends 80 feet to end in an iron door. Engraved into the door and painted with bright colors is an image of Tiamat in the Undying Queen aspect revered by the Cult of the Dragon—the figure of a horrifying five-headed dracolich.

Necrotic Door Trap. The iron door is protected by a magical trap that can be noted with a *detect magic* spell or a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check made to carefully inspect the door. If the door is opened without the trap being dismissed or a creature speaking a passcode (changed daily by the cultists), the hallway fills with the

sounds of a rasping, rattling dragon's roar. Each creature in the corridor is wracked with terrible pain and must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, a creature takes 33 (6d10) necrotic damage and gains one level of exhaustion. On a success, a creature takes half as much damage and does not gain exhaustion.

The magic trap can be dismissed with a *dispel magic* spell (treat the trap as a 7th-level spell).

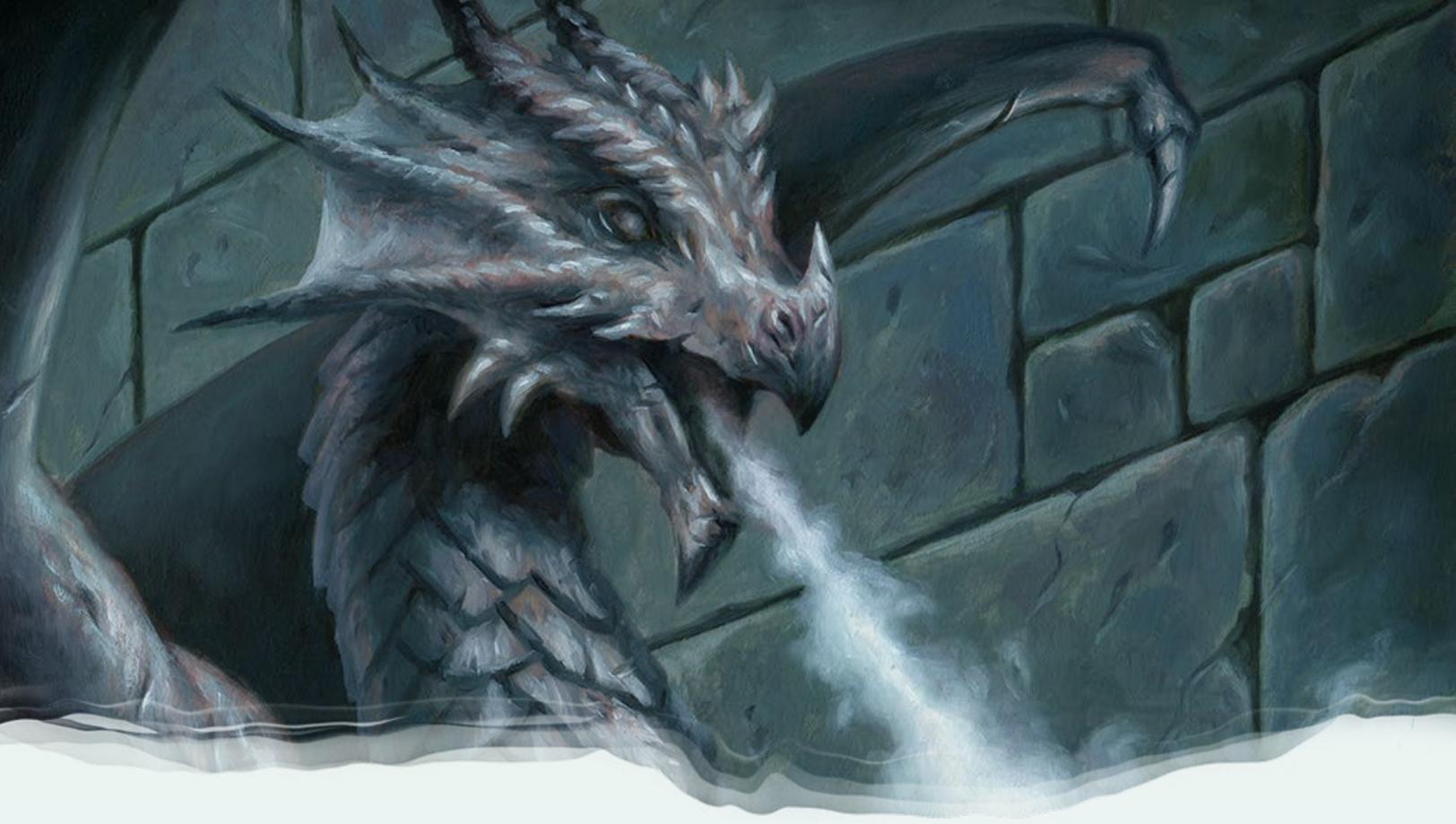
If the trap is triggered, all creatures in the complex become aware of intruders. If not already encountered, the cultists in area 4 emerge after 6 rounds to investigate and search the complex.

4. SLEEPING ROOM

Members of the Cult of the Dragon use this area as a common sleeping room. The chamber is brightly lit by torches in sconces along the walls, and the floor is covered with bedrolls. If the characters have avoided setting off any of the traps in areas 1 to 3 or triggering the altar in area 6, the cultists resting in this area are still here.

Cult Forces. Ten **cult fanatics** and three **blue dragonsouls** occupy this room, and are here playing cards if they have not been encountered elsewhere. The cultists who dwell in the complex know each other well, and any characters not recognized are immediately attacked.





ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Consider the following suggestions for adjusting this scene depending on the relative combat strength of the party:

- **Very Weak.** Remove two **blue dragonsouls** and three **cult fanatics**.
- **Weak.** Remove one **blue dragonsoul** and two **cult fanatics**.
- **Strong.** Add one **blue dragonsoul**.
- **Very Strong.** Each **blue dragonsoul** has 170 hit points.

SPEEDING UP THIS ENCOUNTER

If you are running this encounter in less than the recommended time, or if you find that time is running short during your session, consider speeding up this section by having the cultists be noncombatants who try to avoid interacting with the characters.

5. MAGICAL LABORATORY

Magical orbs are set around this room, glowing white and filling the area with bright light. The area appears old and forgotten. A thick layer of dust covers everything, and much of the equipment (aside from the orbs) is broken or destroyed from age.

A table stands at the center of the area, set with the skeletal remains of a wyvern's stinger. The skeleton of a dragon wyrmling can be easily noted where it's discarded in a corner. Both are yellowed and brittle with age.

Legends and Lore. If the characters take the time to search the room, a successful DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check spots the signs of a secret compartment in the wall near the skeletal remains. Opening the compartment reveals three small books, all beginning to decay.

One book is wrapped in bronze dragonskin, detailing experiments and magic dedicated to trying to make wyverns more like their dragon kin. The second book is made out

of what looks like burned tree bark, and details injecting creatures with infernal and draconic blood in an effort to please Tiamat. (It doesn't explain why this should please the Dragon Queen.) The third book's cover has mostly rotted away, but it looks to at one point have been made from some sort of dried plant. This book details the ramblings of someone who was obsessed with faerie dragons.

The books bear other details that connect them to the Cult of the Dragon, suggesting that the cult's long-ago activities here were behind the unusual size and intelligence of some of the wyverns lairing atop Wyvernfang.

6. PRAYER ROOM

The limestone walls of this room have been meticulously carved to show giant dragon reliefs, rising to a height of 50 feet. The floor is covered with a plush tapestry depicting the glories of Tiamat in all her might, leading up to an ornately carved altar of the Dragon Queen against the back wall, its five heads rearing in a magnificent display.

Tiamat's Fury. Coins, gems, and other treasures are spread atop the altar. These offerings are made to Tiamat, and she does not part with her treasures lightly. If a creature removes any treasure from the altar, the altar animates to deal with the offender.

Treat the altar as a Huge creature, but each of its five heads takes its own turn and uses the following statistics: an **iron golem** (the red dragon head), three **flesh golems** (the white, blue, and black heads), and a **clay golem** (the green head). The altar breaks away from the floor and wall to attack, and gets one turn per active head (initially five turns per round). When a head is destroyed, the altar loses that head's turn. On each of the altar's turns, it has a full compliment of actions and movement, using the speed of the active head.

The body of the altar construct is divided into the same colors as the heads, so attacks against the altar can target a head of the attacker's choice.

ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Consider the following suggestions for adjusting this scene depending on the relative combat strength of the party:

- **Very Weak.** Replace the **iron golem** with a **crystal golem** and remove a **flesh golem**. This makes the black dragon head inert.
- **Weak.** Replace the **iron golem** with a **crystal golem**.
- **Strong.** Replace one **flesh golem** with a **fiendish flesh golem**.
- **Very Strong.** Replace two **flesh golems** with a **fiendish flesh golem** and a **crystal golem**.

If the characters flee the room in response to the altar animating, it is too large to pass through the door. Its mighty roars of rage are heard throughout the complex, however, alerting all creatures within to the characters' presence. If not already encountered, the cultists in area 4 emerge after 6 rounds to investigate and search the complex.

Treasure. The altar of Tiamat holds a pile of gold coins, a brilliantly cut ruby, a fist-sized sapphire, a gem-encrusted empty scroll case, and a bolt of green silk.

7. STORAGE ROOM

This storage room sees a lot of use by the cultists, but its organization is haphazard at best. Boxes stand open, random bits of cloth hang out of barrels, and a wooden crate has been stacked under a pile of moldy canvas that looks like it might have been poorly laid out to dry. Water drips from the ceiling onto a single point on the floor, from which a small limestone stalagmite is beginning to rise.

A note written in Draconic is tacked to the back wall, passive-aggressively trying to shame someone into cleaning up the area.

8. DEATHSTING'S LAIR

Torches in sconces on the walls in this area are presently lit, providing bright light throughout the cave. Stalactites hang from the ceiling of this rough cavern, and the sound of dripping water is constant. Of more immediate note for the characters, however, the *Wyrmskull Throne* stands upon a large rock at the rear of the cavern.

Illusory Ceiling. This area is home to a number of wyverns, including the cunning creature known as Deathsting. The ceiling of the cavern is open to the sky but covered by an illusion that makes the cavern appear whole. To prevent their enemies from spotting this entrance from the air, spellcasters from the Cult of the Dragon placed this permanent illusion, which mimics the stone of the mountain but allows Deathsting and her entourage free access in and out of this lair.

The illusory ceiling extends from wall to wall 50 feet above the floor. It fools both sight and touch, and a creature carefully examining the illusion must succeed on a DC 18 Intelligence (Investigation) check to see through it. A creature that discerns the illusion for what it is sees it as a vague image superimposed across rising rock walls and the sky above. Dragons of any type automatically see through it. The illusion is subject to *dispel magic*, and is treated as a 5th-level spell.

Death from Above. The wyverns lairing here have set up rocks and boulders to drop onto intruders below. The boulders have been prepared ahead of time to fall at set intervals, once Deathsting has triggered this defense. In addition to the real boulders, however, the same magic that fuels the main illusion can call up a number of potent secondary conjuration, evocation, and illusion effects.

Have the characters roll initiative as soon as the first character moves more than 10 feet into this area. On initiative count 20 each round, roll on the Deathsting's Traps table to determine what happens.

DEATHSTING'S TRAPS

d6 Trap

- 1 Choose a character at random. That character must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or be affected by a dominate person spell as if cast by Deathsting. This effect can be utilized only three times. If you roll this result thereafter, roll again.
- 2 Rocks and boulders rain down across the cavern. Each creature in the area must make a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw, taking 27 (6d8) bludgeoning damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. Additionally, a random 10-foot-square section of the cavern is left filled with large rubble and becomes difficult terrain.
- 3 The illusion of a monstrous wyvern with two heads flies into the cavern. Each creature that can see the illusion must succeed on a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw or become frightened for 1 minute. A creature can repeat this 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, that creature is immune to this effect for the next 24 hours.
- 4 A small earthquake causes a rift 20 feet across and 50 feet deep to open up in the cavern floor under one or more characters. Each character in the area must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or fall into the rift and take 27 (5d10) falling damage. Climbing out of the rift requires a successful DC 13 Strength (Athletics) check.
- 5 An illusory dragon cultist steps out from a wall and points a finger at a random character, who must succeed on a DC 16 Wisdom saving throw or be affected by a hold person spell. The image of the cultist then disappears.
- 6 Clouds of what look like bug-sized wyverns appear, covering each character. Each cloud is treated as swarm of insects (wasps) and lasts for 1 round.

Wyvern Assault. As soon as the magical barrage is launched, **Deathsting** and four **wyverns** from her clutch drop down from above to attack the characters. Until a significant number of ranged attackers are able to see through the illusory ceiling, the wyverns swoop down to attack, then fly back up to take total cover behind the illusion.



Deathsting is the result of generations of experiments done on the wyverns of this area by the Cult of the Dragon centuries ago. Cult mages hoped to evolve wyverns to a level of power and cunning closer to their true dragon kin. Though the experiments were abandoned, the lingering effects of this manipulation still remain in many of the wyverns of Wyvernfang.

ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Consider the following suggestions for adjusting this scene depending on the relative combat strength of the party:

- **Very Weak.** Remove one **wyvern**, and give **Deathsting** 95 hit points.
- **Weak.** Give **Deathsting** 95 hit points.
- **Strong.** Add one **wyvern**.
- **Very Strong.** Add two **wyverns**.

Playing the Pillars. You can make use of the following suggestions when running this encounter.

Combat. Deathsting is more territorial than most wyverns, especially when facing creatures not of her clutch. She is cunning, and can stalk prey for miles. Deathsting's goal is to catch the characters unawares, using the terrain and her flyby attack to her advantage. In addition to the boulders dropped as part of the trap, the wyverns have piled caches of rocks that they can pick up and drop on targets from above the illusory ceiling.

Dropped Rock. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, range 60/240 ft., one target. *Hit:* 17 (3d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

Exploration. A character who uses an action to study the cave notes strange discrepancies where the illusory ceiling meets the walls. Any character made aware of these discrepancies has advantage on the Intelligence check made to see through the illusion.

Social. Deathsting is highly intelligent and understands Common, though she isn't capable of speech. If the characters attempt to interact with her, it becomes quickly clear that she is fighting to protect her lair, and that she will flee if the fight appears unwinnable.

Treasure. A small alcove on the wall behind the duplicate throne is easily found by any character inspecting the throne. It contains a silver-painted scroll tube containing a *spell scroll* of *true seeing* and a few small diamonds.

CHASING THE THRONE

Once the cultists and the wyverns occupying the Cult of the Dragon's base are defeated, any of the characters can touch the duplicate throne. The power of the ritual they channel draws their senses across Faerûn. As the throne melts into a puddle of gray shadow stuff, the characters come to know the location of the true *Wyrmskull Throne*, seeing a tower of purple stone set in a stony plain seemingly covered with purple sand. Any character with proficiency in the History or Nature skills (or Zehira if no characters do) recognizes the only place in Faerûn that fits this description—the Plains of Purple Dust, far east of the Sword Coast.

PART 2: REVENGE IS A DISH BEST SERVED DEAD

Estimated Duration: 2 hours

The journey to the Plains of Purple Dust takes the characters far across Faerûn, east of Mulhorand and the Dragonsword Mountains. The characters' ritual vision has made it clear that the throne is in the tower they have seen, though the specific location of the tower in the desert remains unknown. Locating the site of the throne's hiding place will be a daunting task. But even after the characters fight their way to the throne, the treachery of Iymrith the blue dragon dracolich will prove an even greater challenge.

STORY OBJECTIVE

Defeating Iymrith and recovering the *Wyrmskull Throne* is Story Objective B.

SETTING: THE PLAINS OF PURPLE DUST

Extending north of the Raurin Desert, the Plains of Purple Dust are a wasteland rumored to have been created by the struggles of the gods. A vast, wind-scoured desert of badlands and rocky crags, the plains are covered with a purple-colored dust that still radiates faint magic long after the ancient cataclysm that created it. The plains are home to nomadic tribes of mongrelfolk, descended from humanoids but transformed over generations by exposure to the magic of the purple dust. The most notable other creatures in the plains are the purple worms that are a constant threat to the nomads.

Making use of the magical assistance of Serissa's sorcerers, the characters can teleport to the edge of the plains. As they acclimatize themselves to the strange environment, they note that the sky is consistently clear and bright. The sun is overly warm by day, and the open plains offer little respite from its heat.

SPEEDING UP THIS ENCOUNTER

If you are running this encounter in less than the recommended time, or if you find that time is running short during your session, consider speeding up this section by having the characters know the route to the tower that holds the *Wyrmskull Throne*, allowing them to skip directly to the "Iymrith's Tower" section.

THE LERYYA

As they travel into the Plains of Purple Dust, the characters quickly come across one of the local mongrelfolk tribes, and can seek information regarding the tower seen in the ritual vision. Known as the Leryya, the folk of the tribe are welcoming to strangers, and the characters are invited to dwell in the tribe's small settlement by its leader, Meoran. A fierce and hardened desert explorer, she sees the characters' quest as an opportunity for a fair

trade of services. Use the following information to guide discussions between Meoran and the characters:

- The plains are a broad wasteland, but many purple towers resembling the one described by the characters can be found there.
- The purple towers were left behind by the Imaskari people, whose empire was once centered here.
- Determining which specific tower is the one the characters seek will likely require speaking to the tribe's scouts, all of whom are presently away.
- Like all the mongrelfolk tribes, the Leryya must keep moving across the Plains of Purple Dust because of the difficulties in finding water in a desert. Though wells are easily dug, they run dry quickly.
- Purple worms are a constant danger to the nomadic tribes on the plains. Although the Leryya mongrelfolk can handle smaller worm incursions well enough, a full pack of purple worms has recently established itself in the area around the settlement's safe ground. When the tribe moves on, they'll be running a deadly gauntlet of purple worm attacks.

The Leryya tribe has many scouts, and Meoran is confident that she can obtain the information the characters seek. She simply asks that they help the tribe deal with their purple worm problems first. She listens to any plans or suggestions the characters might have for removing the purple worms, and offers advice as she can. The tribe doesn't necessarily need the worms killed, but they must leave the area and not return so that the Leryya can relocate in relative safety.

DEVELOPMENT

If the characters agree to deal with the purple worm threat, go to the "Worm Hunt" section.

If the characters refuse to help, none of the tribesfolk recognize the specific description of the tower and its environs. Needing to deal with the purple worm threat on her own, Meoran can't afford to send her scouts back out to seek information from other tribes, and the characters must fend for themselves.

A solo search for the tower takes time, and word of the characters traveling across the plains reaches the cultists to put them on the alert for the party's eventual incursion. Go to the "Iymrith's Tower" section below when you are ready for the characters to take on the cultists, but make the following changes:

- The dragonsoul cultists in area 3 are alerted to the characters' presence in the tower as soon as they arrive. Each consumes a *potion of fire resistance* just before any fight begins.
- When the flameskulls in area 2 are engaged, the dragonsouls from area 3 descend the stairs and join the fight.
- Iymrith has time to enchant two additional lightning glass sculptures as guardian portraits in area 6.

MEORAN

Neutral good mongrelfolk

Meoran is the leader of the Leryya tribe of the Plains of Purple Dust. Her short-cut hair is sandy blond, and fluffs up because of its thickness. She wears brightly colored but lightweight clothing that protects her from the sun's rays. Her eyes are overly large, lacking any white, and glow an indigo color. She exudes an easy confidence and a friendly demeanor.

What They Want. Meoran needs someone to remove a clutch of purple worms that threaten her tribe's imminent migration to new territory.

Fierce Leader. Though Meoran comes across as kind and accommodating, she can be firm and aggressive when necessary. She is fiercely loyal to her tribe, and her dedication to her people's wellbeing inspires those who follow her.

WORM HUNT

As they prepare for the hunt, the characters are given clear directions to the expansive area that the purple worms have made the center of their lair territory.

AREA INFORMATION

The area of the hunt has the following features.

Terrain. Violet sand dunes cover this broad area, the center of which features an outcropping of rock 20 feet across and 15 feet high.

Lighting. The area is brightly lit by day, and dimly lit by clear-skied starlight at night.

CREATURE INFORMATION

The purple worms that have taken up residence here are two adults and a clutch of young that are staying close to their parents for safety. Characters who spend some time inspecting the area see the sand move from time to time, and spot two **purple wormlings** cresting the dunes, diving down, and resurfacing again. Unknown to the characters, the dangerous pack of predators beneath the dunes also comprises two **purple worms**, a **young purple worm**, and an additional three **purple wormlings**.

ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Consider the following suggestions for adjusting this scene depending on the relative combat strength of the party:

- **Very Weak.** Remove one **purple worm** and three **purple wormlings**.
- **Weak.** Remove one **young purple worm** and two **purple wormlings**.
- **Strong.** Add one **young purple worm**.
- **Very Strong.** Remove all the **purple wormlings** and add two **young purple worms**.

PLAYING THE PILLARS

You can make use of the following suggestions when running this encounter.

Combat. Purple worms are ravenous creatures, and treat all other creatures as prey. If all the characters are flying, the worms burrow down below the sand, waiting until their tremorsense detects a creature in contact with the ground before they breach and attack.

Exploration. The sandy tunnels created by the worms' burrowing usually collapse quickly. However, characters who explore the area during or after the fight discover one surviving tunnel where the sand is visibly wet. Digging farther down in this tunnel reveals a new well that the worms have uncovered, which will allow the Leryya tribesfolk to remain in this area longer if the worms do not return.

Social. Purple worms are nonintelligent, and can't be communicated with. However, loud noises attract their attention, and clever characters might be able to devise a plan to lure all the worms from their nesting ground. The worms have no specific attachment to this area, and will relocate if they are drawn more than one mile away from the site.

DEVELOPMENT

When the characters have defeated or driven off the purple worms, Meoran and her people give them a heroes' welcome back at the settlement. Meoran is able to safely send out scouts, who connect with other tribes and return in a few days with the following information:

- A tower set within a stony plain that matches the description of the site seen in the characters' vision is just a few days' journey away.
- Those who have passed through the area report that the tower has been taken over by an unknown group. Reports say that many of the group's members wear purple robes—marking them as the Cult of the Dragon.
- A local mongrelfolk tribe known as the Garniel have somehow been swayed to work for the cult, but whether by bribery or intimidation, Meoran doesn't know.

When the characters are ready to travel to the tower, continue with "Iymrith's Tower."

IYMRITH'S TOWER

Using directions given to them by Meoran's scouts, the characters can make their way safely to the site of the tower. The structure becomes visible at a distance, and its surroundings are a clear match for those seen in the ritual vision.

Three mongrelfolk can be seen guarding the only apparent entrance into the tower. The rocky ground provides plenty of cover for characters to get close before revealing themselves.

AREA INFORMATION

The tower has the following features.

Dimensions. The tower is 60 feet across and stands 80 feet high, and is shaped of smooth purple stone. Its weathered condition speaks to its great age.

Interior. In contrast to its weathered exterior, the interior of the tower has been cleaned and refurbished. Livery celebrating Tiamat the Dragon Queen decorates the walls in most areas.

Lighting. Unless otherwise noted, all areas of the tower are brightly lit by magical spheres in the shape of dragon skulls, which shift through all the colors of the chromatic dragons.

Staircases. Stairs on each level of the tower connect to the levels above and below.

UNWITTING DEFENDERS

The three mongrelfolk **cult fanatics** guarding the entrance are a real threat, but are also part of a plan by the dracolich Iymrith to keep the *Wyrmskull Throne* safe (see the “Fake It Till You Make It” sidebar). They attack as soon as they see intruders, and fight to the finish.

IYMRITH'S PLOTS

To limit the information the characters might learn from full cultists through coercion or magic, Iymrith has bought the allegiance of these local mongrelfolk of the Garniel tribe. These new cultists are not allowed above the ground floor of the tower, and they know little about the cult.

If left alive and questioned, the only information these cultists can share is that several of the cult's leaders went away recently with a few dozen other members of their tribe, hoping to sway more neighboring tribes to follow the cult. They are expected to return to the tower in half a day.

Treasure. Each mongrelfolk wears fine silk robes and a gold necklace engraved with the holy symbol of Tiamat.

FAKE IT TILL YOU MAKE IT

The Cult of the Dragon knows of the characters' successful infiltration of the Shadowed Tower in *Thimblerrigging*. With the knowledge the characters gained there, the cult's leaders fully expect that Princess Serissa and her agents will eventually locate the *Wyrmskull Throne*. They are thus not attempting to protect the throne where it is held within Iymrith's tower, but are rather assisting Iymrith in setting a trap for Serissa's agents when they eventually come. The cultists' goal is to allow the characters to gain entrance to the throne room, putting up a fight only well enough that it won't look suspicious when Iymrith springs her trap.

EXPLORING THE TOWER

The locations in this section are keyed to the maps in appendix 2.

1. FOYER

This open space features a small altar to Tiamat against the rear wall.

A *detect magic* spell notes abjuration magic just within the entrance to this area, with a feel similar to the *alarm* spell. Characters who note this magic can guess that someone in the tower (in this case, Iymrith) was alerted to their presence when they entered.

2. KITCHEN

The second floor of the tower is a well-kept kitchen. Pots and pans hang from various racks, and ingredients and spices are organized neatly on shelves.

Light 'Em Up. The magical light spheres in this area are actually ten **flameskulls** concealed with illusion magic. These undead attack anyone not wearing the vestments of the clergy of Tiamat who moves more than 10 feet into the room.

The flameskulls recognize the robes and necklaces of the mongrelfolk door guards, but they know that those guards are not welcome on the second floor. If any of the characters have disguised themselves in the guards' livery, the flameskulls screech out threats but refrain from attacking for 1 round. If the characters attack immediately, the flameskulls are surprised.



3. BARRACKS

The third floor of the tower has been turned into a barracks for the cultists serving Iymrith. Unless the characters encountered them in the fight in area 2 (see “Development” in “The Leryya” section above), four **blue dragonsoul** cultists are here. Cultists in this area are either resting on the beds (if the characters somehow made no noise coming through area 2) or are pressed back along the walls and waiting if the characters made noise fighting the flameskulls.

4. LABORATORY

The fourth floor of the tower is the cultists' laboratory. Unlike the ordered state of the lower levels, this area is quite cluttered.

Various tables are laden with equipment, flasks, and beakers, many filled with spell components and unusual-looking liquids. Characters who make a search of the tables note several dried samples of purple worm hide, as well as broken shell fragments of a purple worm egg.

Portal Entrances. Two glowing purple portals are set into the floor near the far wall, each 5 feet in diameter and pulsing with shadowy light. Labels in Draconic mark the portals as ‘The Hatchery’ and ‘The Throne Room.’ The portals lead to areas 5 and 6—two demiplanes permanently attached to the tower by the mages who built it, and which have now been repurposed by the Cult of the Dragon.

5. PURPLE WORM HATCHERY

This extradimensional space extends 80 feet by 60 feet, its walls shedding a gray glow that fills the area with dim light, so as not to disturb the incubating worms. In that light, characters emerging from the portal can see twenty unhatched purple worm eggs set around the room, with broken shells covering the dirt floor. Of more immediate note are the bloodied bodies of two cultists sprawled on the floor.

Iymrith's Experiments. The time she's spent in the Plains of Purple Dust has inspired Iymrith to turn her love of magical experimentation to raising purple worms. Most of the magical enhancements she has imbued into developing purple worm eggs were unsuccessful, but a few have produced deadly results. Any character who takes a closer look at the eggs notes that some have been bleached an unhealthy white color, while others flare with a pulsing black glow.

Dying Cultists. Any inspection of the two cultists reveals that they are not dead, but have been badly wounded and left unconscious by the attacks of the two sadistic augmented worms currently lurking beneath the floor. A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Medicine) check restores either **cult fanatic** to consciousness with 10 hit points. The panicked fanatics warn the characters that they're in grave danger—whereupon the two worms beneath the floor burrow up and attack. Unless convinced to fight with the characters (see "Playing the Pillars" below), the cultists stay away from the worms at any cost.

Worm Attack. Two of the modified eggs have recently hatched into two purple worm variants of different colors. One **white worm** has been infused with the blood of a young white dragon. It has translucent skin revealing internal organs that are a diseased white in color. One **black worm** has been infused with the blood of an adult black dragon, and pulses with a black glow. The ravenous appetites of these creatures are matched only by their sadistic evil natures, and they take great pleasure in tormenting victims before they kill them.

If the cultists are not revived to warn the characters, the worms attack 3 rounds after the first characters enter this area.

ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Consider the following suggestions for adjusting this scene depending on the relative combat strength of the party:

- **Very Weak.** Remove the **black worm**.
- **Weak.** Replace the **black worm** with a second **white worm**.
- **Strong.** Add three **blue dragonfang** cultists, whose job it is to keep the two worms away from the other eggs, and who attack the characters at once.
- **Very Strong.** Add five **blue dragonfang** cultists to the encounter.

Playing the Pillars. You can make use of the following suggestions when running this encounter.

Combat. These augmented purple worms are as voracious as their kin but are thoroughly evil. They attack until destroyed, using their breath weapons to torment prey before it is consumed.

Exploration. The shell fragments of the transformed purple worm eggs retain some of their magical augmentations. If claimed, they could be sold or might be useful for the characters' own magical experiments.

Social. Any cultists in this area recognize that they are obligated to deal with intruders, but they also recognize that the worms have become a deadly threat. If the characters offer a truce to the cultists, they join with the characters to attack the worms, then allow the characters to leave this area as long as they promise not to report their actions to Iymrith.

Treasure. The characters can collect a number of valuable magical fragments from the purple worm eggshells scattered across the floor.

6. IYMRITH'S LAIR

This massive extradimensional chamber extends 100 feet by 150 feet, and has a vaulted ceiling 75 feet high. Its floor is smooth, melted purple glass. A massive and elegant throne room opens up beyond the portal, the violet stone of its walls and floors glowing with a faint light. Magical sigils flare along the walls between lush tapestries and faded pieces of art, while strange sculptures dot the room, seemingly shaped of glass forged by lightning-blasted sand.

Across from the portal, a skeletal dracolich uncoils as she rises from the floor. Humanoids in the regalia of the Cult of the Dragon stand at her side, ready to fight—and to protect the *Wyrmskull Throne* where it rises behind them.

Iymrith's Revenge. The blue dracolich **Iymrith** has been awaiting the characters, and has prepared for their arrival. She has the following spells already cast on her, using the power of the *Wyrmskull Throne*: *death ward*, *protection from energy* (fire and cold), *protection from evil and good*, and *shield of faith*. Her servants are a **warlock of the fiend** serving Tiamat, a **war priest**, and five **cult fanatics**.

The ritual allowing Iymrith to use the throne as her phylactery has already been completed, and her soul has been moved into the artifact to grant her immortality. She and her followers attack at once, and she taunts the characters relentlessly, relishing in their pain and suffering as she rants about how her complicated plan for vengeance has finally come to fruition. She cares not for the plans of the Cult of the Dragon, but hates all adventurers and Serissa. If any of the characters took a part in slaying Iymrith in the *Storm King's Thunder* adventure, she goes out of her way to describe the dreams she has had about torturing them.

Iymrith has not yet had time to make this demiplane her lair, and cannot use her lair actions in combat.

Sculptures of Denial. Iymrith knows just how much adventurers enjoy their magic, and she has lined this room with equally magical defenses. Of the lightning glass sculptures scattered across the room, eight function as **guardian portraits**. Whenever a character attempts to cast a spell, one of the sculptures casts *counterspell*.

Dispel Magic Trap. The magical sigils along the walls have been created by the Cult of the Dragon at the behest of Iymrith. Each round on initiative count 20, losing initiative ties, these sigils cast a *dispel magic* spell against each creature in the area that is not a dragon and is not wearing the regalia of the Dragon Queen. The sigils can be dispelled all at once as if they were a 6th-level spell, or they can be disabled with a successful DC 25 Dexterity check using Thieves' Tools.

LYMRITH

Lawful evil blue dracolich

Iymrith is an ancient blue dragon turned dracolich, sometimes called the “Doom of the Desert” or “Dragon of Statues.” Blue dragon scales hang from her skeletal body, and her eyes glow yellow with hate.

What They Want. Since she was killed at the hands of heroes, Iymrith has bent her considerable intellect toward taking vengeance on every group of adventurers she can.

Never Let a Good Grudge Die. An excessively cruel dragon in life, the undead Iymrith nurtures a dark hatred of all adventurers after having been killed by adventurers in *Storm King’s Thunder*. If fortune has it that any of the characters in the party are the same characters who killed her, Iymrith’s rage is rewarded by Tiamat and she gains the benefits noted in the “Vengeance!” sidebar.

ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Consider the following suggestions for adjusting this scene depending on the relative combat strength of the party:

- **Very Weak.** Only three of the desert sculptures function, and the *dispel magic* sigils target only two characters per round.
- **Weak.** Only six of the desert sculptures function, and the *dispel magic* sigils target only three characters per round.
- **Strong.** Add three **cult fanatics** to the dracolich’s followers. Iymrith has 275 hit points and has had time to make this demiplane her lair, giving her access to her lair actions.
- **Very Strong.** Add a **warlock of the fiend** to the dracolich’s followers. Iymrith has 325 hit points and has had time to make this demiplane her lair, giving her access to her lair actions.

Playing the Pillars. You can make use of the following suggestions when running this encounter.

Combat. To nurture her plans for revenge, Iymrith plots constantly to ambush adventurers, and works with the Cult of the Dragon to aid her in that goal. The *Wyrmskull Throne* allows her to maintain concentration on multiple spells, but if she must make a Constitution saving throw to maintain concentration, she must do so for each spell she is concentrating on. Iymrith fights to the death, as she knows that she will reform next to her phylactery in just a few days.

Exploration. Exploration of the room reveals Iymrith’s modest hoard hidden beneath the *Wyrmskull Throne*.

Social. Iymrith cannot be reasoned with, and she mocks the weakness and stupidity of any adventurers who try to treat with or challenge her. If the characters engage with her, she gleefully informs them that she has completed the necessary ritual to make the *Wyrmskull Throne* her phylactery.

Treasure. Iymrith’s small hoard consists of a pile of coins, an *elixir of health*, and a *stonespeaker crystal*—a meager assortment of treasure compared to what she possessed before her death.



VENGEANCE!

If the party includes characters who were present in *Storm King’s Thunder* when Iymrith was slain, the dracolich gains the following blessings from Tiamat:

- She automatically goes first in the initiative order.
- As a legendary action that costs 3 actions, Iymrith recharges her breath weapon and uses it.
- All of Iymrith’s followers in this encounter are protected by the *death ward* spell.

PART 3: VHAERAUN AND YOU

Estimated Duration: 1 hour 50 minutes

With Iymrith defeated, the characters have destroyed a great evil—but only temporarily. A dracolich can be permanently destroyed only if its phylactery is destroyed, but Iymrith's phylactery is the *Wyrmskull Throne*. As an artifact, the throne is far beyond the power of the characters to destroy, and the storm giants will not willingly part with such an important relic. As such, it is up to the characters and Serissa to end the threat of Iymrith's return.

STORY OBJECTIVE

Gaining the knowledge of the *soultheft* spell, which can be used to imprison Iymrith's soul, is **Story Objective C**.

THE TOWER OF SKULLS

Having defeated Iymrith and acquired the *Wyrmskull Throne*, the characters are able to report their success to Serissa by way of *sending* spells. Serissa is overjoyed to hear that the throne has been reclaimed, but understands the implication of the throne having become the phylactery of Iymrith. The throne cannot be returned to Maelstrom while the threat remains that the dracolich will reform alongside it. As such, the storm giant monarch charges the characters with helping to ensure that the throne can be cleansed of Iymrith's soul.

As a first step, Serissa suggests that the characters take the *Wyrmskull Throne* to the city of Ormath in the Shining Plains, where the doomguides of Kelemvor might be able to help. The Tower of Skulls in Ormath is a major temple to Kelemvor, and Serissa hopes that the servants of the Lord of the Dead might have insight into how to deal with a soul as evil as Iymrith's.

A storm giant sorcerer teleports to the characters' location when they are ready to depart the Thunder Peaks. With the *Wyrmskull Throne* reduced in size by Zehira using the power of the *Illkazar Scepter*, the sorcerer can then teleport the party and the throne to Ormath.

SEEKING GUIDANCE

The Tower of Skulls stands in the center of Ormath and is easily identifiable. The site is not as gruesome as its name suggests, being made not of skulls but sturdy black stones. The symbol of Kelemvor hangs over the entrance. Characters who enter the tower note that the shadowy light within washes everything in a dreary shade of gray. An acolyte welcomes them and hears their unusual request. After some thought, the acolyte takes them to a doomguide capable of aiding them.

Doomguide Kroupant Shadaum reclines in a plush, purple chair in a small prayer room, reading. The light in the reading room is brighter, making for a more pleasant meeting. Kroupant welcomes the characters as guests of the Tower of Skulls. As Zehira and the characters tell

their story, Kroupant is rapt with attention, constantly making notes and pulling reference works from the room's bookshelves. As they converse with Kroupant, each of the characters notices that the doomguide occasionally stops and speaks as though talking to someone who isn't there, or moves around unseen obstacles.

When he has all the information at hand, Kroupant excitedly shares the following thoughts and information:

- He believes that it should be possible to remove the dracolich's soul from the *Wyrmskull Throne*.
- Old legends speak of the clerics of the drow god Vhaeraun the Masked Lord using a spell called *soultheft*, which could pull a soul out of a person or object.
- The clerics of Vhaeraun, the drow god of thieves and shadow magic, used this blasphemous spell to recharge spent magic items. But Kroupant believes that if the secret of the *soultheft* spell could be obtained, it could be used to draw a soul out of an object and send it to its final rest.
- The ancient spell passed from the memory of living clerics long ago. To learn its secrets, the characters must travel to Carceri, the desolate prison plane, whose level of Colothys holds Vhaeraun's realm of Ellaniath. There, they must seek knowledge of the spell from followers of the Masked Lord.

Kroupant is able to facilitate the characters' travel to Ellaniath if they need assistance. Because Carceri is a prison plane, entering it is relatively easy. However, the characters will need to find their own way home again.

DOOMGUIDE KROUPANT SHADAUM

Neutral good elf priest of Kelemvor

An elf cleric of Kelemvor, Kroupant has long, straight black hair and dark blue eyes, and wears the somber gray vestments of his order. A powerful spellcaster capable of the lost art of elven high magic, he carries himself in a gentle, fatherly way.

What They Want. Kroupant sees himself as a kind shepherd to the living and the dead. All must face the judgment of the Lord of the Dead, and Kroupant's goal is to help souls meet their end with dignity and grace.

One Too Many Seances. Due to an unfortunate surge of wild magic during the casting of a *speak with dead* spell in his earlier years, Kroupant has been blessed—or perhaps cursed—with the ability to see and speak with the spirits of the recently departed, allowing him to assist in ushering their souls to judgment in the afterlife. Unfortunately, this also causes the elf to constantly speak to spirits most others can't see. Those who know him understand the nature of these seemingly crazed conversations, and those who can see into the Ethereal Plane can confirm that Kroupant is frequently surrounded by the dead.



TRAVELING LIGHT

Knowing that traveling with the *Wyrmskull Throne* will be risky in Carceri, Kroupant suggests that the characters leave the throne safe within the Tower of Skulls until they return. This will allow him to begin preparations for the ritual, knowing that it will be only a matter of days before the dracolich reestablishes her material form again. Zehira is comfortable with this idea. Serissa can also direct the characters to leave the throne under the protection of the doomguides if the characters are worried about her reaction to them doing so.

If the characters insist on taking the *Wyrmskull Throne* with them to Carceri, it will not end well. See “Excess Baggage?” below for more information.

SETTING: COLOTHYS

Carceri is one of the Outer Planes—a great prison whose six layers nest within each other like wooden dolls. Ellaniath, Vhaeraun’s realm, is found on Colothys, the fourth layer of Carceri. Its status as a prison plane means that Carceri is warded against magic that would allow creatures to leave the plane. Casting a spell such as *banishment*, *gate*, and *plane shift* expends a spell slot but the spell automatically fails.

LOST MEMORIES

Vhaeraun has special protections on Ellaniath, so that those who enter and leave that realm lose all memory of it. As such, it is impossible for the characters to gain any information about Ellaniath’s layout or features. No one in Faerûn has access to any information about Ellaniath, and the characters will lose their own memories of Vhaeraun’s realm when they leave—though thankfully not the information they will take with them.

AREA INFORMATION

Colothys has the following features.

Terrain. Colothys is a jagged and unforgiving realm of rocks and mountains. Characters traveling overland must contend with miles of twisting chasms and canyons, and with razor-sharp outcroppings of rock. Paths and trading routes makes use of cliff-face trails barely wide enough for a single person, and creaking, rotten wood-and-rope bridges.

Lighting. The lighting on Colothys follows that of the Material Plane, with delineated days and nights. Lighting conditions are contingent upon the time of day.

Horrid Guides. Imprisoned souls chained to rocks abound across Colothys, and the characters will pass many such prisoners on their journey. These souls all whisper of the dread city of the Masked Lord, making it easy for the characters to determine the route to Ellaniath.

EXCESS BAGGAGE?

If the characters were foolish enough to bring the *Wyrmskull Throne* with them into Carceri, Vhaeraun senses the power of the artifact the moment they arrive. An **avatar of Vhaeraun** comes to personally greet the characters—and to take the throne from them.

Vhaeraun makes the characters a very generous offer, allowing them to trade the throne for their lives. If they appear reluctant, he offers to force Iymrith’s imprisoned soul out of the throne. If the offer is refused or the characters are rude or insulting, Vhaeraun sends his most powerful minions to retrieve the throne for him. During each encounter in Carceri, two **mariliths** appear in the first round, focused on retrieving the *Wyrmskull Throne*. Each subsequent round after the first, an additional creature appears—either an **arcanaloth**, a **marilith**, or a **yagnoloth**.



WILY WATCHERS

To reach Ellaniath, the characters must make their way along the jagged cliffs and dangerous trails of Colothys. But as they do, they discover that the creatures watching over this layer of Carceri are more dangerous by far.

The trail you've been following suddenly ends at a broad chasm filled with a swirling, unnatural red fog. A five-foot-wide rickety bridge lashed together from wood and rope extends across the chasm, its bottom just barely clearly the fog, which obscures the chasm's depth.

The chasm is 50 feet wide and 120 feet deep. For characters unable to fly, the bridge is the only option to get across—but it is guarded by a trio of swaggering fiends.

Two **yagnoloths** and an **arcanaloth** lingering near the bridge have decided they do not like the looks of the characters. These yugoloths conduct themselves with the confidence of those who are used to others doing their bidding. They make a show of insulting and belittling the characters as an entry point into combat.

SPEEDING UP THIS ENCOUNTER

If you are running this encounter in less than the recommended time, or if you find that time is running short during your session, consider speeding up this section by allowing the characters to avoid the yugoloths. If the party is particularly strong, the yugoloths might then follow the characters to the Garden of Malice, attacking as the characters try to defeat the Shadow Tree.

DANGEROUS CROSSING

Any creature moving more than half speed on the bridge must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check or slip over the side. A creature that slips must succeed on a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw to grab onto the bridge or fall, plummeting 120 feet and taking 12d6 bludgeoning damage.

Any creature that slips over the side, even if they catch the bridge, comes into contact with the red fog, which saps away the intelligence of mortal creatures. Any creature that is not a fiend, a construct, or an undead that enters the fog for the first time on a turn or starts its turn there is treated as if targeted by the *feblemind* spell (DC 18).

ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Consider the following suggestions for adjusting this scene depending on the relative combat strength of the party:

- **Very Weak.** Remove the **arcanaloth** and one **yagnoloth**.
- **Weak.** Remove one **yagnoloth**.
- **Strong.** The **arcanaloth** has 160 hit points and each **yagnoloth** has 210 hit points.
- **Very Strong.** Add an additional **arcanaloth** with 160 hit points.

If all the enemies in an encounter are destroyed, no additional enemies appear—until the next encounter. If Vhaeraun's minions succeed in recovering the throne, they flee with it at once.

If the characters are foolish enough to attack the avatar of a god, Vhaeraun's avatar uses his action to immediately teleport away. No ability the characters have can challenge the deity on his home plane, and killing his avatar only enrages him further.

AVATAR OF VHAERAUN

Chaotic evil celestial

Appearing as a handsome drow, Vhaeraun stands sixteen feet tall and is slender, graceful, and fit. His eyes shift in color depending on his mood, while shadows seem to form and vanish around him, his body disappearing and reappearing as they do so.

What They Want. Vhaeraun covets power—especially power gained at the expense of Lolth, his mother and rival. If the *Wyrmskull Throne* enters into his domain, the Masked Lord senses its power and potential.

Bow Before the Drow. Arrogant, vain, and vindictive, Vhaeraun believes the drow to be above all other folk, who deserve no more than subjugation. In particular, he brooks no disrespect from non-drow elves, and executes any elf who shows impertinence.

PLAYING THE PILLARS

You can make use of the following suggestions when running this encounter.

Combat. The aggressive yugoloths are ready to fight. When they first saw the characters, each yugoloth drank a *potion of fly* for maximum mobility. All these creatures seek out the weakest-looking characters first, targeting spellcasters if they can. However, if the characters put up too much of a fight and only one yugoloth remains, it flees (using its *teleport* ability if it can). Any arcanaloths in the encounter have prepared the *polymorph* spell instead of *banishment*.

Exploration. Any character who falls into the chasm and survives, or anyone who can safely explore down into the fog, finds its rough, rocky floor covered by the bones of thousands of humanoids.

Social. These fiends are happy to talk to the characters, but only so that they can mock and belittle them. They are as arrogant as they are evil. However, they are not above being bribed, and are willing to take a permanent magic item of at least uncommon rarity as payment for leaving the party alone.

DROW IN THE DARK OF NIGHT

The rest of the characters' journey to Ellaniath is arduous but uneventful. When they finally reach the city, they find its open gates unguarded—a sign of Vhaeraun's confidence that creatures can come and go as they please, for Carceri cannot be escaped.

Read the following to set the scene:

The stark beauty of the city of Ellaniath is built on the distinctive stonework of the drow. Tall spires rise above palisades of ebony. Deep shadows hang over the city, ever shifting where they cover the stone and the countless folk who dwell here, prisoners and jailers alike.

Most of the city is cloaked in darkness, punctuated by the light of magical flaming purple spheres or green-burning torches. The shadows that cover Ellaniath shroud all illumination to dim light.

GATHERING INFORMATION

Numerous drow souls and yugoloth jailers can be found in Ellaniath, and are surprisingly open to conversation. (Those who dwell here assume that anyone moving freely in the city is there at Vhaeraun's invitation—or that they deserve what's coming to them when the Masked Lord notices their presence.) The characters can thus openly seek out information on the city itself, on Vhaeraun, and on the *soultheft* spell by making DC 16 Intelligence (Investigation) checks. Characters who stand out, such as good-aligned paladins or surface elves, make these checks with disadvantage. On a successful check, a character learns one of the following pieces of information of your choice:

- Though the entirety of Ellaniath is dedicated to Vhaeraun, a concentrated center of worship stands at the city's center.
- Information is bought and sold within Ellaniath, just as in any other city. Brokering knowledge is one of the primary trades here.
- Vhaeraun is known by many names, including the Masked Lord, the Masked God of the Night, the Shadow Lord, and the Lord of Shadows. He is the drow god of thievery, trickery, and shadow magic.
- Skill and cunning are the only laws in Ellaniath. If you can best someone without being caught, there are no punishments. If you are caught, the punishment is usually final.

At the end of the characters' search for information, they learn that a drow named V'zree knows of much old and ancient forgotten elven magic for sale. He has a laboratory in Ellaniath that is easily found. The Knowledge of the Dead V'zree is a petitioner within the city, and one of its oldest citizens. The drow was killed many years before by a particularly spiteful arcane spellcaster of his own house, named X'althoa. X'althoa spent many years working to create the *soultheft* spell while V'zree toiled bitterly under him. When X'althoa could no longer tolerate V'zree's insolence, the arcanist made up some offence he claimed V'zree had committed against Lolth. After being tortured for many days, V'zree was executed.

V'ZREE

Chaotic evil drow shadowblade

V'zree is a small, lanky drow with the nervous habit of constantly biting his bottom lip. A large scar runs down the center of his face from a long-forgotten fight, his white hair stands straight up, and his clothing is well kept but nondescript.

What They Want. V'zree wants revenge on X'althoa, who was responsible for his death many years before. And what better way to do so than to give X'althoa's life's work to some do-gooder surface dwellers?

Distracted Ally. V'zree has grown bored after endless years of skulking around Ellaniath. Dealing with adventurers kindles his interest, but he ranges from being overly excited to uninterested very quickly, sometimes within the same sentence.

V'zree can be easily convinced to assist the characters, and he remembers the *soultheft* spell in great detail from the number of years he worked on it. He only asks that when all is said and done, the characters find some way to reach out to the soul of X'althoa and gloat. X'althoa is no doubt somewhere in the Demonweb Pits in the Abyss, but V'zree cannot be more specific than that.

In exchange for their promise, V'zree gives the characters a scroll detailing the workings of the ancient elven spell. He then tells them of a secret exit out of Carceri, found within a site in Colothys known as the Garden of Malice. In the garden is a magical plant creature known as the Shadow Tree. If the characters can subdue it, they can force it to open a portal out of Carceri through a massive knot on its side.

THE GARDEN OF MALICE

The journey to the Garden of Malice is long but uneventful. This sprawling area of sheer slopes and cliff faces extends some 300 feet across, and is covered with thick vines and bright flowers.

ETERNAL VINES

The Garden of Malice is actually a single massive organism that has been growing for eons. Every so often, its vines release tiny tufted seeds into the air, which are carried away on the wind. As the characters enter the garden, they are witness to this site—and might well succumb to it.

Each creature in the Garden of Malice when the tiny seeds are released must succeed on a DC 17 Constitution saving throw or inhale the seeds. A creature that inhales the seeds begins coughing and is wracked with pain as the seeds attempt to take root inside them. The creature takes 33 (6d10) piercing damage and must roll on the following table for an additional effect. Any non-damage effects remain until an affected creature leaves the Gardens of Malice or is treated with a *heal* spell or similar effect.

d4 Seed Effect

- 1 The creature takes 33 (6d10) piercing damage each round at the start of their turn as the vines grow thicker and burrow deeper under the skin. The creature can make a DC 17 Constitution saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.
- 2 The creature's skin begins to harden to a bark-like consistency, making it difficult to move. The creature is treated as if affected by a *slow* spell.
- 3 Pus begins to seep out the creature's eyes, nose, and ears, and its body becomes rampant with infection. The creature has disadvantage on Strength checks, Strength saving throws, and attack rolls that use Strength.
- 4 The creature's thoughts become unclear, and they can no longer tell friend from foe. While in combat, the creature makes a melee attack against a random target other than itself, or moves toward the nearest target if it can't attack.

GATHER ROUND THE SHADOW TREE

This enormous black tree stands out from the other foliage in the Garden of Malice, marking it clearly as the characters' objective. Standing seventy feet tall and with a trunk twenty feet wide, the tree has a full canopy of rich, shining black leaves, with beautiful flowers of all colors sprinkled among its mighty branches. A curtain of soft, black moss hangs down from the tree, waving in the faint breeze.



Like all the vegetation in the Garden of Malice, the shadow tree is hungry. It has fed on many unfortunate souls seeking to escape from the prison plane, and hopes to now make a meal of the characters. The secret portal that can take the characters back to the Material Plane is found within a knot in the massive tree, about 40 feet off the ground. Anyone approaching within 10 feet of the tree causes it to lash out. The shadow tree's lashing branches function as two **shadow tree limbs**.

ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Consider the following suggestions for adjusting this scene depending on the relative combat strength of the party:

- **Very Weak or Weak.** Remove one **shadow tree limb**.
- **Strong.** All **shadow tree limbs** have 260 hit points.
- **Very Strong.** Add one **shadow tree limb**, and all shadow tree limbs have 260 hit points.

PLAYING THE PILLARS

You can make use of the following suggestions when running this encounter.

Combat. The Shadow Tree is voracious and hungers endlessly. It screams in rage when injured and fights until destroyed.

Exploration. Characters who examine the tree find a body hidden beneath black moss at its base (see “Treasure” below), and note that the black moss hanging from the tree is woven through ancient bones.

Social. Although it has cunning, the shadow tree is not truly intelligent, and thinks only about its unending hunger. As such, the adventurers can distract the tree while they gain access to the portal by feeding it other living creatures. The tree ignores dead creatures, undead, and constructs, but stops fighting for 1d4 rounds to feast on a Medium or larger creature of any other type. With a little ingenuity, the characters might also think of ways to dupe the tree into thinking it is being fed.

Once the shadow tree is defeated, the characters can climb it with successful DC 15 Strength (Athletics) checks and reach the portal. The portal allows them to return to the material world as if subject to a *plane shift* spell, leaving the prison plane Carceri behind.

Treasure. The bones of a drow adventurer are covered in moss at the base of the Shadow Tree. In addition to a pouch full of coins, the drow carried a *spell scroll* of *passwall* and a *dancing longsword*.

WRAP-UP

Estimated Duration: 10 minutes

The characters have completed their mission to Carceri. With the knowledge of the *soulthrift* spell, the mission to reclaim the *Wyrmskull Throne* appears to be at an end. But when the characters return to the Tower of Skulls, they find that the forces of Thay have caught up to them—with dire results.

The tower has been attacked and now lies in ruin. Doomguide Kroupant and the other leaders of the temple have been slain. A force of Red Wizards and lichs led

by a storm giant death knight attacked shortly after the characters departed for Carceri—and have taken the *Wyrmskull Throne*. One Red Wizard was left for dead, then revived and taken prisoner.

If the characters have the **Liberator** legacy event, the prisoner is Trildor Zihial from *DDAL-DRW05 Uncertain Scrutiny*. Trildor reveals that when the characters met him under Thaymount, his exile to the dungeons was just one of Szass Tam's plans. With his memories corrupted, the Red Wizard was able to get close to the characters to learn what they and the storm giant court knew about the location of the *Wyrmskull Throne*. With his memories and his allegiance to Szass Tam now restored, Trildor mocks the characters mercilessly, pointing out that it is their fault that the Red Wizards were able to take the *Wyrmskull Throne* and kill the doomguides. If the characters do not have the legacy event, change the name and description of the captive, but the information revealed is the same. Trildor will return in a future adventure.

The captive confirms that the leader of the raid is the death knight raised from the slain King Hekaton. The death knight's plan is to deliver the *Wyrmskull Throne* to Szass Tam—but if the characters hurry, they might still catch him.

PLAYING CATCH-UP

If the characters took the *Wyrmskull Throne* to Carceri and had it taken from them, you'll need to adjust this scene so that the Thayans came to the Tower of Skulls looking for the throne, then killed all those here in a fury when it could not be found. The characters hear how the Red Wizards learned that the throne was taken to Carceri, and talked about plans for a raid to retrieve it. Before the next adventure, the death knight King Hekaton and the Thayans will have retrieved the throne, which the characters must steal back.

PAYING BACK THE DEAD

To make good on their promise to V'zree, the characters must find a way to mock X'althoa. Three options present themselves.

Doomguide Kroupant. All the slain doomguides have had their hearts removed, to prevent *raise dead* from working on them. If the characters are capable of casting or acquiring the *resurrection* spell, they can restore Doomguide Kroupant to life. He is capable of calling up X'althoa's spirit and communicating V'zree's message, fulfilling the characters' promise.

Soul Hunt. If the characters are unable or unwilling to return Doomguide Kroupant to life, they can travel to the Demonweb Pits in search of X'althoa's spirit. The harrowing journey takes each character 100 downtime days, but fulfills their promise in the end.

Ignoring the Debt. The characters might simply refuse to follow through on their promise, thinking that V'zree's options for retribution are somewhat limited while the drow remains trapped as a soul in Carceri. However, following this path gives each character the **Oathbreaker** legacy event.

REWARDS

At the **end of the session**, the characters receive rewards based upon their accomplishments.

CHARACTER REWARDS

The characters earn the following rewards.

ADVANCEMENT

A character participating in this adventure gains one level. Players must tick the box to show this reward has been claimed.

OPTIONAL: DECLINING ADVANCEMENT

Each player can decline advancement if they so choose, gaining potential benefits. It's possible that a player might want their character to not advance outside of an adventure's level range, meaning that they'd be unable to play the adventure as planned. Similarly, advancing too quickly means that a character won't earn as much gold as their peers.

Conversely, remind the players that the amount of gold their characters can earn per level is limited. Characters declining advancement might reach a point where they no longer earn gold.

GOLD

Award each character gold for each hour of the session. Adventures typically feature cues for where this treasure appears, but you can add it wherever you see fit. The maximum gold that you can award a character per hour is determined by their tier, as follows:

Tier	Hourly GP Award	GP Limit per Level
1	20 gp	80 gp
2	30 gp	240 gp
3	200 gp	1,600 gp
4	750 gp	6,000 gp

MAGIC ITEMS

The characters can keep the following magic items (described in "Appendix 3: Character Rewards") if they are found during the adventure:

- *Dancing longsword*
- *Elixir of health*
- *Spell scroll of passwall*
- *Spell scroll of true seeing*
- *Stonespeaker crystal*

LEGACY EVENTS

The characters can gain the following legacy event in this adventure.

Oathbreaker. Whether by choice or by circumstance, you have failed to fulfill your promise to V'zree of reaching out to the soul of the drow arcanist X'althoa, then gloating about how V'zree shared the secret of the *soultheft* spell. But with V'zree trapped in Carceri, surely there will be no consequences.

DUNGEON MASTER REWARDS

For running this adventure, you earn a DM Reward. See the *Adventurers League Dungeon Master's Guide* for more information.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

The following NPCs feature prominently in this adventure.

AVATAR OF VHAERAUN

(*vay-RAWN*)

Appearing as a handsome drow, Vhaeraun stands sixteen feet tall and is slender, graceful, and fit. His eyes shift in color depending on his mood, while shadows seem to form and vanish around him, his body disappearing and reappearing as they do so.

What They Want. Vhaeraun covets power—especially power gained at the expense of Lolth, his mother and rival. If the *Wyrmskull Throne* enters into his domain, the Masked Lord senses its power and potential.

Bow Before the Drow. Arrogant, vain, and vindictive, Vhaeraun believes the drow to be above all other folk, who deserve no more than subjugation. In particular, he brooks no disrespect from non-drow elves, and executes any elf who shows impertinence.

DOOMGUIDE KROUPANT SHADAUM

(*KROU-pant SHAD-um*)

An elf cleric of Kelemvor, Kroupant has long, straight black hair and dark blue eyes, and wears the somber gray vestments of his order. A powerful spellcaster capable of the lost art of elven high magic, he carries himself in a gentle, fatherly way.

What They Want. Kroupant sees himself as a kind shepherd to the living and the dead. All must face the judgment of the Lord of the Dead, and Kroupant's goal is help souls meet their end with dignity and grace.

One Too Many Seances. Due to an unfortunately surge of wild magic during the casting of a *speak with dead* spell in his earlier years, Kroupant has been blessed—or perhaps cursed—with the ability to see and speak with the spirits of the recently departed, allowing him to assist in ushering their souls to judgment in the afterlife. Unfortunately, this also causes the elf to constantly speak to spirits most others can't see. Those who know him understand the nature of these seemingly crazed conversations, and those who can see into the Ethereal Plane can confirm that Kroupant is frequently surrounded by the dead.

IYMRITH

(*eyem-rith*)

Iymrith is an ancient blue dragon turned dracolich, sometimes called the "Doom of the Desert" or "Dragon of Statues." Blue dragon scales hang from her skeletal body, and her eyes glow yellow with hate.

What They Want. Since she was killed at the hands of heroes, Iymrith has bent her considerable intellect toward taking vengeance on every group of adventurers she can.

Never Let a Good Grudge Die. An excessively cruel dragon in life, the undead Iymrith nurtures a dark hatred of all adventurers after having been killed by adventurers in *Storm King's Thunder*. If fortune has it that any of the characters in the party are the same characters who killed her, Iymrith's rage is rewarded by Tiamat and she gains extra benefits as she takes her revenge.

MEORAN

(ME-or-an)

Meoran is the leader of the Leryya tribe of the Plains of Purple Dust. Her short-cut hair is sandy blond, and fluffs up because of its thickness. She wears brightly colored but lightweight clothing that protects her from the sun's rays. Her eyes are overly large, lacking any white, and glow an indigo color. She exudes an easy confidence and a friendly demeanor.

What They Want. Meoran needs someone to remove a clutch of purple worms that threaten her tribe's imminent migration to new territory.

Fierce Leader. Though Meoran comes across as kind and accommodating, she can be firm and aggressive when necessary. She is fiercely loyal to her tribe, and her dedication to her people's wellbeing inspires those who follow her.

PRINCESS SERISSA

(SAH-riss-ah)

The youngest daughter and chosen successor of King Hekaton, Serissa is cool and calm, even as she understands that others in the giant court covet her position.

What They Want. To maintain peace among the giants, Serissa must find her father and the *Wyrmskull Throne*, and have those who attacked Maelstrom face justice.

Optimistic Leader. Serissa wants to believe that all folk are innately good at heart. Reluctantly accepting the mantle of ruler once more in her father's stead, she is determined to do everything she can to find King Hekaton and return the *Wyrmskull Throne* to Maelstrom. She fears that her father's death will bring about a new rise in tensions between the giant races and she knows that she must defuse those tensions if she can. Serissa hopes that her father's body can be recovered and raised from the dead, despite the king having reportedly been turned into a death knight in the service of Thay.

V'ZREE

(va-za-REE)

V'zree is a small, lanky drow with the nervous habit of constantly biting his bottom lip. A large scar runs down the center of his face from a long-forgotten fight, his white hair stands straight up, and his clothing is well kept but nondescript.

What They Want. V'zree wants revenge on X'althoa, who was responsible for his death many years before. And what better way to do so than to give X'althoa's life's work to some do-gooder surface dwellers?

Distracted Ally. V'zree has grown bored after endless years of skulking around Ellaniath. Dealing with adventurers kindles his interest, but he ranges from being overly excited to uninterested very quickly, sometimes within the same sentence.

ZEHIRA DERYAN

(zeh-HEER-uh DAIR-yuhn)

Zehira is an experienced privateer, once the daughter of Turmishan merchants. She has keen dark eyes, olive skin, and black hair that she keeps in a tight braid.

What They Want. Zehira possesses the *Iltkazar Scepter* and wants to make sure that this powerful relic does not fall into the wrong hands. She aspires to protect the greater good.

Reckless at Heart. Zehira is intelligent and kind but can be a little reckless in her pursuit of adventure.



CREATURE STATISTICS

The following creatures appear in this adventure.

AVATAR OF VHAERUAN (GRAZ'ZT)

Large fiend (demon, shapechanger), chaotic evil

Armor Class 20 (natural armor)

Hit Points 346 (33d10 + 165)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
22 (+6)	15 (+2)	21 (+5)	23 (+6)	21 (+5)	26 (+8)

Saving Throws Dex +9, Con +12, Wis +12

Skills Deception +15, Insight +12, Perception +12, Persuasion +15

Damage Resistances cold, fire, lightning

Damage Immunities poison, bludgeoning, piercing and slashing from nonmagical attacks.

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, poisoned

Senses truesight 120 ft., passive Perception 22

Languages all, telepathy 120 ft.

Challenge 24 (62,000 XP)

Shape Changer. Vhaeruan can use his action to polymorph into a form that resembles a medium humanoid, or back into his true form. Aside from his size, his statistics are the same in each form. Any equipment he is wearing or carrying isn't transformed.

Innate Spellcasting. Vhaeruan's spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 23). He can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components.

At will: *charm person, crown of madness, detect magic, dispel magic, dissonant whispers*

3/day each: *counterspell, darkness, dominate person, sanctuary, telekinesis, teleport*

1/day each: *dominate monster, greater invisibility*

Legendary Resistance (3/Day). If Vhaeruan fails a saving throw, he can choose to succeed instead.

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

Magic Weapons. Vhaeruan's weapon attacks are magical.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Vhaeruan attacks twice with the Wave of Sorrow.

Wave of Sorrow (Greatsword). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +13 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 20 (4d6 + 6) slashing damage plus 10 (3d6) acid damage.

Teleport. Vhaeruan magically teleports, along with any equipment it is wearing or carrying, up to 120 feet to an unoccupied space he can see.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

Vhaeruan 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.

Attack. Vhaeruan attacks once with the Wave of Sorrow.

Dance, My Puppet! One creature charmed by Vhaeruan that Vhaeruan can see must use its reaction to move up to its speed as Vhaeruan directs.

Sow Discord. Vhaeruan uses *crown of madness* or *dissonant whispers*.

Teleport. Vhaeruan uses his Teleport action.

ARCANALOTH

Medium fiend (yugoloth), neutral evil

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 104 (16d8 + 32)

Speed 30 ft., fly 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	11 (+0)	19 (+4)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	15 (+2)

Saving Throws Dex +5, Int +9, Wis +7, Cha +7

Skills Arcana +13, Deception +9, Insight +9, Perception +7

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

Damage Immunities acid, poison

Condition Immunities charmed, poisoned

Senses truesight 120 ft., passive Perception 17

Languages all, telepathy 60 ft.

Challenge 12 (8,400 XP)

Innate Spellcasting. The arcanaloth's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 15). The arcanaloth can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components.

At will: *alter self, darkness, heat metal, invisibility* (self only), *magic missile*

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

Magic Weapons. The arcanaloth's weapon attacks are magical.

Spellcasting. The arcanaloth is a 16th-level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 17, +9 to hit with spell attacks). The arcanaloth has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *fire bolt, mage hand, minor illusion, prestidigitation*

1st level (4 slots): *detect magic, identify, shield, Tenser's floating disk*

2nd level (3 slots): *detect thoughts, mirror image, phantasmal force, suggestion*

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

4th level (3 slots): *banishment, greater invisibility*

5th level (3 slots): *contact other plane, hold monster*

6th level (1 slot): *chain lightning*

7th level (1 slot): *finger of death*

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

ACTIONS

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (2d4 + 3) slashing damage. The target must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw, taking 10 (3d6) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Teleport. The arcanaloth magically teleports, along with any equipment it is wearing or carrying, up to 60 feet to an unoccupied space it can see.

ARCANALOTHS OF CARCERI

Since banishment automatically fails in Carceri, arcanaloths in Carceri instead prepare *polymorph*.

BLACK WORM

Large monstrosity, chaotic evil

Armor Class 19 (natural armor)
Hit Points 195 (17d12 + 85)
Speed 40 ft., burrow 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
23 (+6)	14 (+2)	21 (+5)	1 (-5)	13 (+1)	17 (+3)

Saving Throws Dex +7, Con +10, Wis +6, Cha +8
Skills Perception +11, Stealth +7
Damage Immunities acid
Senses blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 21
Languages —
Challenge 14 (11,500 XP)

Legendary Resistance (3/day). If the black worm fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

Tunneler. worm can burrow through solid rock at half its burrow speed and leaves a 10-foot-diameter tunnel in its wake.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The black worm can make three attacks: one with its bite and two with tail stinger.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 17 (2d10 + 6) piercing damage plus 4 (1d8) acid. If the target is a Large or smaller creature, it must succeed on a DC 19 Dexterity saving throw or be swallowed by the black worm. A swallowed creature is blinded and restrained, has total cover against attacks and other effects outside the worm, and takes 21 (6d6) acid damage at the start of each of the black worm's turns.

If the black purple worm takes 30 damage or more on a single turn from a creature inside it, the black purple worm must succeed on a DC 21 Constitution saving throw at the end of that turn or regurgitate all swallowed creatures, which fall prone in a space within 10 feet of the worm. If the black worm dies, a swallowed creature is no longer restrained by it and can escape from the corpse using 20 feet of movement, exiting prone.

Tail Stinger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (2d8 + 6) piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 19 Constitution saving throw, taking 42 (12d6) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Acid Breath (Recharge 5–6). The black worm exhales acid in a 60-foot line that is 5 feet wide. Each creature in that line must make a DC 18 Dexterity saving throw, taking 54 (12d8) acid damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

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 Stinger Attack. The dragon makes a tail attack.

Acid Breath (Costs 3 Actions). The black worm breath weapon recharges and it immediately uses it.

CULT FANATIC

Medium humanoid (any race), any non-good alignment

Armor Class 13 (leather armor)
Hit Points 33 (6d8 + 6)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)

Skills Deception +4, Persuasion +4, Religion +2
Senses passive Perception 10
Languages any one language (usually Common)
Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Dark Devotion. The fanatic has advantage on saving throws against being charmed or frightened.

Spellcasting. The fanatic is a 4th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 11, +3 to hit with spell attacks). The fanatic has the following cleric spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *light, sacred flame, thaumaturgy*
1st level (4 slots): *command, inflict wounds, shield of faith*
2nd level (3 slots): *hold person, spiritual weapon*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The fanatic makes two melee attacks.

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

DEATHSTING (IMPROVED WYVERN)

Large dragon, neutral evil

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 110 (13d10 + 39)

Speed 20 ft., fly 80 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	10 (+0)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	6 (-2)

Skills Perception +4

Damage Immunities lightning, poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses blindsight 10 ft., darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14

Languages understands Common, but can't speak

Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

Flyby. Deathsting doesn't provoke opportunity attacks when she flies out of an enemy's reach.

Legendary Resistance (3/day). If Deathsting fails a saving throw, he can choose to succeed instead.

Pounce. If Deathsting moves at least 20 feet toward a creature and then hits with an attack on the same turn, the target must succeed on a DC 15 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone. If the target is prone, Deathsting can make a stinger attack against it as a bonus action.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The wyvern makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its stinger. While flying, it can use its claws or repulsion breath in place of one other attack.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) piercing damage.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) slashing damage.

Stinger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) piercing damage. The target must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, taking 24 (7d6) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Repulsion Breath (Recharge 5–6). Deathsting exhales repulsion energy in a 30-foot cone. Each creature in that area must succeed on a DC 15 Strength saving throw. On a failed save, the creature is pushed 40 feet away from the wyvern.

DRAGONFANG, BLUE

Medium humanoid (human), neutral evil

Armor Class 15 (studded leather armor)

Hit Points 78 (12d8 + 24)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws Wis +4

Skills Deception +4, Stealth +5

Damage Resistance lightning

Senses passive Perception 11

Languages Common, Draconic, Infernal

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Dragon Fanatic. The dragonfang has advantage on saving throws against being charmed or frightened. While the dragonfang can see a dragon or higher-ranking Cult of the Dragon cultist friendly to it, the dragonfang ignores the effects of being charmed or frightened.

Fanatic Advantage. Once per turn, if the dragonfang makes a weapon attack with advantage on the attack roll and hits, the target takes an extra 10 (3d6) damage.

Limited Flight. The dragonfang can use a bonus action to gain a flying speed of 30 feet until the end of its turn.

Pack Tactics. The dragonfang has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the dragonfang's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The dragonfang attacks twice with its shortsword.

Shortsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage plus 7 (2d6) damage of the type to which the dragonfang has damage resistance.

Orb of Dragon's Breath (2/Day). *Ranged Spell Attack:* +5 to hit, range 90 ft., one target. *Hit:* 22 (5d8) damage of the type to which the dragonsoul has damage resistance.

DRAGONSOU, BLUE

Medium humanoid (human), neutral evil

Armor Class 16 (studded leather armor)

Hit Points 110 (17d8 + 34)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Wis +4

Skills Deception +6, Stealth +7

Damage Resistance lightning

Senses passive Perception 11

Languages Common, Draconic, Infernal

Challenge 7 (2,900 XP)

Dragon Fanatic. The dragonsoul has advantage on saving throws against being charmed or frightened. While the dragonsoul can see a dragon or higher-ranking Cult of the Dragon cultist friendly to it, the dragonsoul ignores the effects of being charmed or frightened.

Fanatic Advantage. Once per turn, if the dragonsoul makes a weapon attack with advantage on the attack roll and hits, the target takes an extra 10 (3d6) damage.

Limited Flight. The dragonsoul can use a bonus action to gain a flying speed of 30 feet until the end of its turn.

Pack Tactics. The dragonsoul has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the dragonsoul's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The dragonsoul attacks twice with its shortsword.

Scimitar. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage plus 10 (3d6) damage of the type to which the dragonsoul has damage resistance.

Orb of Dragon's Breath (3/Day). *Ranged Spell Attack:* +7 to hit, range 90 ft., one target. *Hit:* 27 (6d8) damage of the type to which the dragonsoul has damage resistance.

DROW SHADOWBLADE

Medium humanoid (elf), neutral evil

Armor Class 17 (studded leather)

Hit Points 150 (20d8 + 60)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	21 (+5)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)

Saving Throws Dex +9, Con +7, Wis +6

Skills Perception +6, Stealth +9

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 16

Languages Elvish, Undercommon

Challenge 11 (7,200 XP)

Fey Ancestry. The drow has advantage on saving throws against being charmed, and magic can't put the drow to sleep.

Innate Spellcasting. The drow's spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell DC 12). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components.

At will: *dancing lights*

1/day each: *darkness*, *faerie fire*, *levitate* (self only)

Shadow Step. While in dim light or darkness, the drow can teleport as a bonus action up to 60 feet to an unoccupied space it can see that is also in dim light or darkness. It then has advantage on the first melee attack it makes before the end of the turn.

Sunlight Sensitivity. While in sunlight, the drow has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The drow makes two attacks with its shadow sword. If either attack hits and the target is within 10 feet of a 5-foot cube of darkness created by the shadow sword on a previous turn, the drow can dismiss that darkness and cause the target to take 21 (6d6) necrotic damage. The drow can dismiss darkness in this way no more than once per turn.

Shadowword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d6 + 5) piercing damage plus 10 (3d6) necrotic damage and 10 (3d6) poison damage. The drow can then fill an unoccupied 5-foot cube within 5 feet of the target with magical darkness, which remains for 1 minute.

Hand Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 8 (1d6 + 5) piercing damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 1 hour. If the saving throw fails by 5 or more, the target is also unconscious while poisoned in this way. The target wakes up if it takes damage or if another creature takes an action to shake it awake.

FLAMESKULL

Tiny undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 40 (9d4 + 18)

Speed 0 ft., fly 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
1 (-5)	17 (+3)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)

Skills Arcana +5, Perception +2

Damage Resistances lightning, necrotic, piercing

Damage Immunities cold, fire, poison

Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, paralyzed, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Common

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Illumination. The flameskull sheds either dim light in a 15-foot radius, or bright light in a 15-foot radius and dim light for an additional 15 feet. It can switch between the options as an action.

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

Rejuvenation. If the flameskull is destroyed, it regains all its hit points in 1 hour unless holy water is sprinkled on its remains or a *dispel magic* or *remove curse* spell is cast on them.

Spellcasting. The flameskull is a 5th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). It requires no somatic or material components to cast its spells. The flameskull has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrip (at will): *mage hand*

1st level (3 slots): *magic missile*, *shield*

2nd level (2 slots): *blur*, *flaming sphere*

3rd level (1 slot): *fireball*

GOLEM, CLAY

Large construct, unaligned

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)
Hit Points 133 (14d10 + 56)
Speed 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	9 (-1)	18 (+4)	3 (-4)	8 (-1)	1 (-5)

Damage Immunities acid, poison, psychic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons that aren't adamantite

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

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 9

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

Challenge 9 (5,000 XP)

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

Berserk. Whenever the golem starts its turn with 60 hit points or fewer, roll a d6. On a 6, the golem goes berserk. On each of its turns while berserk, the golem attacks the nearest creature it can see. If no creature is near enough to move to and attack, the golem attacks an object with preference for an object smaller than itself. Once the golem goes berserk, it continues to do so until it is destroyed or regains all its hit points.

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 slam attacks.

Slam. Melee Weapon Attack: +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. **Hit:** 16 (2d10 + 5) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or have its hit point maximum reduced by an amount equal to the damage taken. The target dies if this attack reduces its hit point maximum to 0. The reduction lasts until removed by the *greater restoration* spell or other magic.

Haste (Recharge 5–6). Until the end of its next turn, the golem magically gains a +2 bonus to its AC, has advantage on Dexterity saving throws, and can use its slam attack as a bonus action.

GOLEM, CRYSTAL

Large construct, unaligned

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)
Hit Points 178 (17d10 + 85)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
22 (+6)	9 (-1)	20 (+5)	3 (-4)	11 (+0)	1 (-5)

Damage Immunities poison, psychic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons that aren't adamantite

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 10 (5,900 XP)

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.

Illumination. The golem magically sheds bright light in a 30-foot radius and dim light for an additional 30 feet. This light goes out when the golem is destroyed.

Light Intensity. Any creature that starts its turn within 10 feet of the illuminated golem and can see the golem must succeed on a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw or be blinded until the start of the creature's next turn.

A creature can avert its eyes to avoid the saving throw at the start of its turn. If the creature does so, it can't see the golem until the start of its next turn, when it can avert its eyes again. If the creature looks at the golem in the meantime, it must immediately make the save.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The golem makes two slam attacks.

Slam. Melee Weapon Attack: +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. **Hit:** 19 (3d8 + 6) bludgeoning damage.

Slow (Recharge 5–6). The golem targets one or more creatures it can see within 10 feet of it. Each target must make a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw against this magic. On a failed save, a target can't use reactions, its speed is halved, and it can't make more than one attack on its turn. In addition, the target can either take an action or a bonus action on its turn, not both. These effects last for 1 minute. A target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

GOLEM, FIENDISH FLESH

Large construct, neutral

Armor Class 12 (natural armor)

Hit Points 210 (20d10 + 100)

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

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	9 (-1)	20 (+5)	7 (-2)	10 (+0)	5 (-3)

Damage Resistances cold, fire

Damage Immunities lightning, poison; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons that aren't adamantite or silvered

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

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

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

Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Berserk. Whenever the golem starts its turn with 40 hit points or fewer, roll a d6. On a 6, the golem goes berserk. On each of its turns while berserk, the golem attacks the nearest creature it can see. If no creature is near enough to move to and attack, the golem attacks an object with preference for an object smaller than itself. Once the golem goes berserk, it continues to do so until it is destroyed or regains all its hit points.

The golem's creator, if within 60 feet of the berserk golem, can try to calm it by speaking firmly and persuasively. The golem must be able to hear its creator, who must take an action to make a DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion) check. If the check succeeds, the golem ceases being berserk. If it takes damage while still at 40 hit points or fewer, the golem might go berserk again.

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

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

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 slam attacks.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 16 (2d10 + 5) bludgeoning damage.

GOLEM, FLESH

Medium construct, neutral

Armor Class 9

Hit Points 93 (11d8 + 44)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	9 (-1)	18 (+4)	6 (-2)	10 (+0)	5 (-3)

Damage Immunities lightning, poison; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons that aren't adamantite

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

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

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

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Berserk. Whenever the golem starts its turn with 40 hit points or fewer, roll a d6. On a 6, the golem goes berserk. On each of its turns while berserk, the golem attacks the nearest creature it can see. If no creature is near enough to move to and attack, the golem attacks an object with preference for an object smaller than itself. Once the golem goes berserk, it continues to do so until it is destroyed or regains all its hit points.

The golem's creator, if within 60 feet of the berserk golem, can try to calm it by speaking firmly and persuasively. The golem must be able to hear its creator, who must take an action to make a DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion) check. If the check succeeds, the golem ceases being berserk. If it takes damage while still at 40 hit points or fewer, the golem might go berserk again.

Aversion of Fire. If the golem takes fire damage, it has disadvantage on attack rolls and ability checks until the end of its next turn.

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

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

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 slam attacks.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

GOLEM, IRON

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 weapons that aren't adamantite

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 5 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.

GUARDIAN PORTRAIT

Medium construct, unaligned

Armor Class 5 (natural armor)
Hit Points 22 (5d8)
Speed 0 ft.

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

Damage Immunities poison

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

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Common plus up to two other languages

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

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

Innate Spellcasting. The portrait's innate spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 12). The portrait can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *counterspell*, *crown of madness*, *hypnotic pattern*, *telekinesis*
3/day each: *counterspell*, *darkness*, *dominate person*, *sanctuary*,
telekinesis, *teleport*
1/day each: *dominate monster*, *greater invisibility*

False Appearance. While the figure in the portrait remains motionless, the portrait is indistinguishable from a normal painting.

IYMRITH

Huge undead, lawful evil

Armor Class 19 (natural armor)

Hit Points 225 (18d12 + 108)

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

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
25 (+7)	10 (+0)	23 (+6)	16 (+3)	15 (+2)	19 (+4)

Saving Throws Dex +6, Con +12, Wis +8, Cha +10

Skills Deception +14, Stealth +6

Damage Resistances necrotic

Damage Immunities lightning, poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, poisoned

Senses blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 24

Languages Common, Draconic

Challenge 17 (18,000 XP)

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

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

Innate Spellcasting. Iymrith's spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 19). She can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

1/day each: *counterspell*, *detect magic*, *ice storm*, *stone shape*, *teleport*

When she casts her stone shape spell, Iymrith can shape the targeted stone into a living gargoyle instead of altering the stone as described in the spell's description. This transformation is permanent and can't be reversed or dispelled.

ACTIONS

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

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +13 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 18 (2d10 + 7) piercing damage plus 5 (1d10) lightning damage.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +13 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (2d6 + 7) slashing damage.

Tail. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +13 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 16 (2d8 + 7) bludgeoning damage.

Frightful Presence. Each creature of the dracolich's choice that is within 120 feet of the dracolich and aware of it must succeed on a DC 18 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.

Lightning Breath (Recharge 5–6). The dracolich exhales lightning in a 90-foot line that is 5 feet wide. Each creature in that area must make a DC 20 Dexterity saving throw, taking 66 (12d10) lightning damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The dracolich 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 dracolich regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Detect. The dracolich makes a Wisdom (Perception) check.

Tail Attack. The dracolich makes a tail attack.

Wing Attack (Costs 2 Actions). The dracolich beats its tattered wings. Each creature within 10 feet of the dracolich must succeed on a DC 21 Dexterity saving throw or take 14 (2d6 + 7) bludgeoning damage and be knocked prone. After beating its wings this way, the dracolich can fly up to half its flying speed.

LAIR ACTIONS

On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), the dragon takes a lair action to cause one of the following effects: the dragon can't use the same effect two rounds in a row:

DM Note: Iymrith only has access to her Lair Actions for parties that are Strong or Very Strong.

- Part of the ceiling collapses above one creature that the dragon can see within 120 feet of it. The creature must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or take 10 (3d6) bludgeoning damage and be knocked prone and buried. The buried target is restrained and unable to breathe or stand up. A creature can take an action to make a DC 10 Strength check, ending the buried state on a success.
- A cloud of sand swirls about in a 20-foot-radius sphere centered on a point the dragon can see within 120 feet of it. The cloud spreads around corners. Each creature in the cloud must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or be blinded 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.
- Lightning arcs, forming a 5-foot-wide line between two of the lair's solid surfaces that the dragon can see. They must be within 120 feet of the dragon and 120 feet of each other. Each creature in that line must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or take 10 (3d6) lightning damage.

MARILITH

Large fiend (demon), chaotic evil

Armor Class 18 (natural)
Hit Points 189 (18d10 + 90)
Speed 40 ft.

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

Saving Throws Str +9, Con +10, Wis +8, Cha +10
Damage Resistances cold, fire, lightning, poison; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks
Damage Immunities poison
Condition Immunities poisoned
Senses truesight 120 ft., passive Perception 13
Languages Abyssal, Telepathy 120 ft.
Challenge 16 (15,000 XP)

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

Magic Weapons. The marilith's weapon attacks are magical.

Reactive. The marilith can take one reaction on every turn in combat.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The marilith makes seven melee attacks: six with its longsword and one with its tail.

Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) slashing damage.

Tail. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 10 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 15 (2d10 + 4) bludgeoning damage. If the target is Medium or smaller, it is grappled (escape DC 19). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained, the marilith can automatically hit the target with its tail, and the marilith can't make tail attacks against other targets.

Teleport. The marilith magically teleports, along with any equipment it is wearing or carrying, up to 120 feet to an unoccupied space it can see.

MONGRELFOLK

Medium humanoid, any alignment

Armor Class 11 (natural armor)
Hit Points 26 (4d8 + 8)
Speed 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	9 (-1)	15 (+2)	9 (-1)	10 (+0)	6 (-2)

Skills Deception +2, Perception +2. Stealth +3
Senses passive Perception 12
Languages Common
Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Keen Sight and Smell. The owlbear has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight or smell.

ACTIONS

Extraordinary Feature. The mongrelfolk has one of the following extraordinary features, determined randomly by rolling a d20 or chosen by the DM:

1–3: Amphibious. The mongrelfolk can breathe air and water.

4–9: Darkvision. The mongrelfolk has darkvision out to a range of 60 feet.

10: Flight. The mongrelfolk has leathery wings and a flying speed of 40 feet.

11–15: Keen Hearing and Smell. The mongrelfolk has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

16–17: Spider Climb. The mongrelfolk can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings without needing to make an ability check.

18–19: Standing Leap. The mongrelfolk's long jump is up to 20 feet and its high jump is up to 10 feet, with or without a running start.

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

Mimicry. The mongrelfolk can mimic any sounds it has heard, including voices. A creature that hears the sounds can tell they are imitations with a successful DC 12 Wisdom (Insight) check.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The mongrelfolk makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its claw or dagger.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d4 + 1) piercing damage.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d4 + 1) piercing damage.

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d4 + 1) piercing damage.

PURPLE WORM

Gargantuan monstrosity, unaligned

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)

Hit Points 247 (15d20 + 90)

Speed 50 ft., burrow 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
28 (+9)	7 (-2)	22 (+6)	1 (-5)	8 (-1)	4 (-3)

Saving Throws Con +11, Wis +4

Senses blindsight 30 ft., tremorsense 60 ft., passive Perception 9

Languages —

Challenge 15 (13,000 XP)

Tunneler. The worm can burrow through solid rock at half its burrow speed and leaves a 10-foot-diameter tunnel in its wake.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The purple worm makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its stinger.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +14 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 22 (3d8 + 9) piercing damage. If the target is a Large or smaller creature, it must succeed on a DC 19 Dexterity saving throw or be swallowed by the worm. A swallowed creature is blinded and restrained, has total cover against attacks and other effects outside the worm, and takes 21 (6d6) acid damage at the start of each of the worm's turns.

If the worm takes 30 damage or more on a single turn from a creature inside it, the worm must succeed on a DC 21 Constitution saving throw at the end of that turn or regurgitate all swallowed creatures, which fall prone in a space within 10 feet of the worm. If the worm dies, a swallowed creature is no longer restrained by it and can escape from the corpse using 20 feet of movement, exiting prone.

Tail Stinger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +14 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 19 (3d6 + 9) piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 19 Constitution saving throw, taking 42 (12d6) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

PURPLE WORMLING

Large monstrosity, unaligned

Armor Class 12 (natural armor)

Hit Points 42 (5d10 + 15)

Speed 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	7 (-2)	16 (+3)	1 (-5)	6 (-2)	2 (-4)

Senses blindsight 30 ft., tremorsense 30 ft., passive Perception 8

Languages —

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The purple wormling makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its stinger.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage. If the target is a Small or smaller creature, it must succeed on a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw or be swallowed by the wormling. A swallowed creature is blinded and restrained, has total cover against attacks and other effects outside the worm, and takes 3 (1d6) acid damage at the start of each of the worm's turns.

If the worm takes 10 damage or more on a single turn from a creature inside it, the wormling must succeed on a DC 21 Constitution saving throw at the end of that turn or regurgitate all swallowed creatures, which fall prone in a space within 10 feet of the wormling. If the wormling dies, a swallowed creature is no longer restrained by it and can escape from the corpse using 5 feet of movement, exiting prone.

Tail Stinger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw, taking 10 (3d6) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

SHADOW TREE LIMB

Medium fiend (demon), chaotic evil

Armor Class 18 (natural)
Hit Points 190 (20d8 + 100)
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
22 (+6)	14 (+2)	21 (+5)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	17 (+3)

Saving Throws Str +11, Dex +7

Skills Perception +7

Damage Resistances cold, fire, necrotic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 17

Languages Abyssal, Telepathy 120 ft.

Challenge 15 (13,000 XP)

Demonic Shadows. The shadow tree limb darkens the area around its body in a 10-foot-radius. Nonmagical light can't illuminate this area of dim light.

Devour Soul. The shadow tree limb can eat the soul of a creature it has killed within the last hour, provided that creature is either a construct nor undead. The devouring requires the shadow tree limb to be within 5 feet of the corpse for at least 10 minutes, after which it gains a number of Hit Dice (d8's) equal to half the creature's original number of Hit Dice. Roll those dice, and increase the shadow tree limb's hit points by the numbers rolled. For every 4 Hit Dice the shadow tree limb gains in this way, its attacks deal an extra 3 (1d6) damage on a hit. The shadow tree limb retains these benefits for 6 days. A creature devoured by a shadow tree limb can be restored to life only by a *wish* spell.

Magic Resistance. The shadow tree limb has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Magic Weapons. The shadow tree limb weapon attacks are magical.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The shadow tree limb uses its Soul-Stealing Gaze and makes two attacks: one with its claws and one with its bite.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.
Hit: 17 (2d10 + 6) slashing damage.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature.
Hit: 32 (4d12 + 6) piercing damage.

Soul-Stealing Gaze. The shadow tree limb targets one creature it can see within 30 feet of it. If the target can see the shadow tree limb and isn't a construct or undead, it must succeed on a DC 16 Charisma saving throw or reduce its hit point maximum by 13 (2d12) and give the shadow tree limb an equal number of temporary hit points. This reduction lasts until the target finishes a short or long rest. The target dies if its hit point maximum is reduced to 0, and if the target is a humanoid, it immediately rises as a ghoul under the shadow tree limb's control.

SWARM OF INSECTS

Medium swarm of Tiny beasts, unaligned

Armor Class 12 (natural armor)
Hit Points 22 (5d8)
Speed 20 ft., climb 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
3 (-4)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)	1 (-5)	7 (-2)	1 (-5)

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, slashing

Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, prone, restrained, stunned

Senses blindsight 10 ft., passive Perception 8

Languages —

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Swarm. The swarm can occupy another creature's space and vice versa, and the swarm can move through any opening large enough for a Tiny insect. The swarm can't regain hit points or gain temporary hit points.

ACTIONS

Bites. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 0 ft., one target in the swarm's space. *Hit:* 10 (4d4) piercing damage, or 5 (2d4) piercing damage if the swarm has half of its hit points or fewer.

WAR PRIEST

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

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 Throws Con +6, Wis +7
Skills Intimidation +5, Religion +4
Senses passive Perception 13
Languages any two languages
Challenge 9 (5,000 XP)

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

Cantrips (at will): *light, mending, sacred 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, prayer of healing, silence, spiritual weapon*
4th level (3 slots): *banishment, freedom of movement, guardian of faith, stoneskin*
5th level (1 slot): *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.

WARLOCK OF THE FIEND

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 12 (15 with *mage armor*)
Hit Points 78 (12d8 + 24)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws Wis +4, Cha +7
Skills Arcana +4, Deception +7, Persuasion +7, Religion +4
Damage Resistances slashing damage from nonmagical attacks not made with silvered weapons
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11
Languages any two languages (usually Abyssal or Infernal)
Challenge 7 (2,900 XP)

Innate Spellcasting. The warlock's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma. It can innately cast the following spells (spell save DC 15), requiring no material components:

At will: *alter self, false life, levitate (self only), mage armor (self only), silent image*

Spellcasting. The warlock is a 17th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). It regains expended spell slots when it finishes a short or long rest. It knows the following warlock spells:

Cantrips (at will): *eldritch blast, fire bolt, friends, mage hand, minor illusion, prestidigitation, shocking grasp*
1st-5th level (4 5th-level slots): *banishment, burning hands, flame strike, hellish rebuke, magic circle, scorching ray, scrying, stinking cloud, suggestion, wall of fire*

Dark One's Own Luck (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest).

When the warlock makes an ability check or saving throw, it can add a d10 to the roll. It can do this after the roll is made but before any of the roll's effects occur.

ACTIONS

Mace. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d6 + 3) bludgeoning damage plus 10 (3d6) fire damage.

WHITE WORM

Large monstrosity, chaotic evil

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)
Hit Points 133 (14d10 + 56)
Speed 40 ft., burrow 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	10 (+0)	18 (+4)	1 (-5)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Dex +3, Con +7, Wis +3, Cha +4
Skills Perception +6, Stealth +3
Damage Immunities cold
Senses blindsight 30 ft., darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 16
Languages —
Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The white worm can make three attacks: one with its bite and two with tail stinger.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (2d10 + 4) piercing damage plus 4 (1d8) cold damage. If the target is a Large or smaller creature, it must succeed on a DC 19 Dexterity saving throw or be swallowed by the white worm. A swallowed creature is blinded and restrained, has total cover against attacks and other effects outside the white worm, and takes 21 (6d6) acid damage at the start of each of the white worm's turns.

If the white worm takes 30 damage or more on a single turn from a creature inside it, the white worm must succeed on a DC 21 Constitution saving throw at the end of that turn or regurgitate all swallowed creatures, which fall prone in a space within 10 feet of the worm. If the white worm dies, a swallowed creature is no longer restrained by it and can escape from the corpse using 20 feet of movement, exiting prone.

Tail Stinger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 19 Constitution saving throw, taking 42 (12d6) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Cold Breath (Recharge 5–6). The white worm exhales an icy blast in a 30-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, taking 45 (10d8) cold damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

WYVERN

Large dragon, unaligned

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)

Hit Points 110 (13d10 + 39)

Speed 20 ft., fly 80 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	10 (+0)	16 (+3)	7 (-2)	12 (+1)	6 (-2)

Skills Perception +4

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14

Languages —

Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The wyvern makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its stinger. While flying, it can use its claws in place of one other attack.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) piercing damage.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) slashing damage.

Stinger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) piercing damage. The target must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, taking 24 (7d6) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

YAGNOLOTH

Large fiend (yugoloth), neutral evil

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 147 (14d10 + 70)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	14 (+2)	21 (+5)	16 (+3)	15 (+2)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws Dex +6, Int +7, Wis +6, Cha +8

Skills Deception +8, Insight +6, Perception +6, Persuasion +8

Damage Resistances cold, fire, lightning; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks.

Damage Immunities acid, poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 16

Languages Abyssal, Infernal, Telepathy 60 ft.

Challenge 11 (7,200 XP)

Innate Spellcasting. The yagnoloth's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 16). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *darkness*, *detect magic*, *dispel magic*, *invisibility (self only)*, *suggestion*

3/day each: *lightning bolt*

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

Magic Weapons. The yagnoloth's weapon attacks are magical.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The yagnoloth makes one massive arm attack and one electrified touch attack, or it makes one massive arm attack and teleports before or after the attack.

Electrified Touch. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 27 (6d8) lightning damage.

Massive Arm. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 23 (3d12 + 4) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 16 Constitution saving throw or become stunned until the end of the yagnoloth's next turn.

Life Leech. The yagnoloth touches one incapacitated creature within 15 feet of it. The target takes 36 (7d8 + 4) necrotic damage, and the yagnoloth gains temporary hit points equal to half the damage dealt. The target must succeed on a DC 16 Constitution saving throw, or its hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the damage taken. The reduction lasts until the target finishes a long rest, and the target dies if its hit point maximum is reduced to 0.

Battlefield Cunning (Recharge 4–6). Up to two allied yugoloths within 60 feet of the yagnoloth that can hear it can use their reactions to make one melee attack each.

Teleport. The yagnoloth magically teleports, along with any equipment it is wearing or carrying, up to 60 feet to an unoccupied space it can see.

YAGNOLOTHS OF COLOTHYS

Each yagnoloth has consumed a *potion of flying*, gaining a fly speed of 40 feet.

YOUNG PURPLE WORM

Gargantuan monstrosity, unaligned

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)

Hit Points 184 (15d20 + 9)

Speed 50 ft., burrow 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
28 (+9)	7 (-2)	22 (+6)	1 (-5)	8 (-1)	4 (-3)

Saving Throws Con +11, Wis +4

Senses blindsight 30 ft., tremorsense 60 ft., passive Perception 9

Languages —

Challenge 13 (10,000 XP)

Tunneler. The worm can burrow through solid rock at half its burrow speed and leaves a 10-foot-diameter tunnel in its wake.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The young purple worm makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its stinger.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +14 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 22 (3d8 + 9) piercing damage. If the target is a Large or smaller creature, it must succeed on a DC 19 Dexterity saving throw or be swallowed by the worm. A swallowed creature is blinded and restrained, has total cover against attacks and other effects outside the worm, and takes 21 (6d6) acid damage at the start of each of the worm's turns.

If the worm takes 30 damage or more on a single turn from a creature inside it, the worm must succeed on a DC 21 Constitution saving throw at the end of that turn or regurgitate all swallowed creatures, which fall prone in a space within 10 feet of the worm. If the worm dies, a swallowed creature is no longer restrained by it and can escape from the corpse using 20 feet of movement, exiting prone.

Tail Stinger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +14 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 19 (3d6 + 9) piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 19 Constitution saving throw, taking 42 (12d6) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

ZEHIRA DERYAN

Medium humanoid (human), neutral good

Armor Class 19 (*mariner's studded leather, shield +1*)

Hit Points 90 (12d10 + 24)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+2)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws Dex +9, Int +5

Skills Acrobatics +9, Athletics +12, Insight +8, Perception +8, Persuasion +12, Stealth +9, Survival +8

Senses passive Perception 18

Languages Common, Elvish, Infernal, Primordial, Sahuagin, thieves' cant

Challenge 13 (10,000 XP)

Cunning Action. Zehira can take a bonus action on each of her turns to take the Dash, Disengage, or Hide action.

Fancy Footwork. During her turn, if Zehira makes a melee attack against a creature, that creature can't make opportunity attacks against her for the rest of her turn.

Rakish Audacity. Zehira adds her Charisma modifier (+2) to her initiative rolls. She doesn't need advantage on the attack roll to use Sneak Attack against a creature if she is within 5 ft. of it, no other creatures are within 5 ft. of her, and she doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

Sneak Attack (1/Turn). Zehira deals an extra 7 (2d6) damage when she hits a target with a weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 feet of an ally that isn't incapacitated and Zehira doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll. Also see **Rakish Audacity**.

Spellcasting. Zehira is a 12th-level spellcaster. Her spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 16, +8 to hit with spell attacks). Zehira has the following ranger spells prepared:

1st level (4 slots): *cure wounds, goodberry, zephyr strike*

2nd level (3 slots): *darkvision, lesser restoration*

3rd level (2 slots): *water breathing*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Zehira makes two attacks with either her club, dagger, or rapier.

Club +3. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d4 + 7) bludgeoning damage.

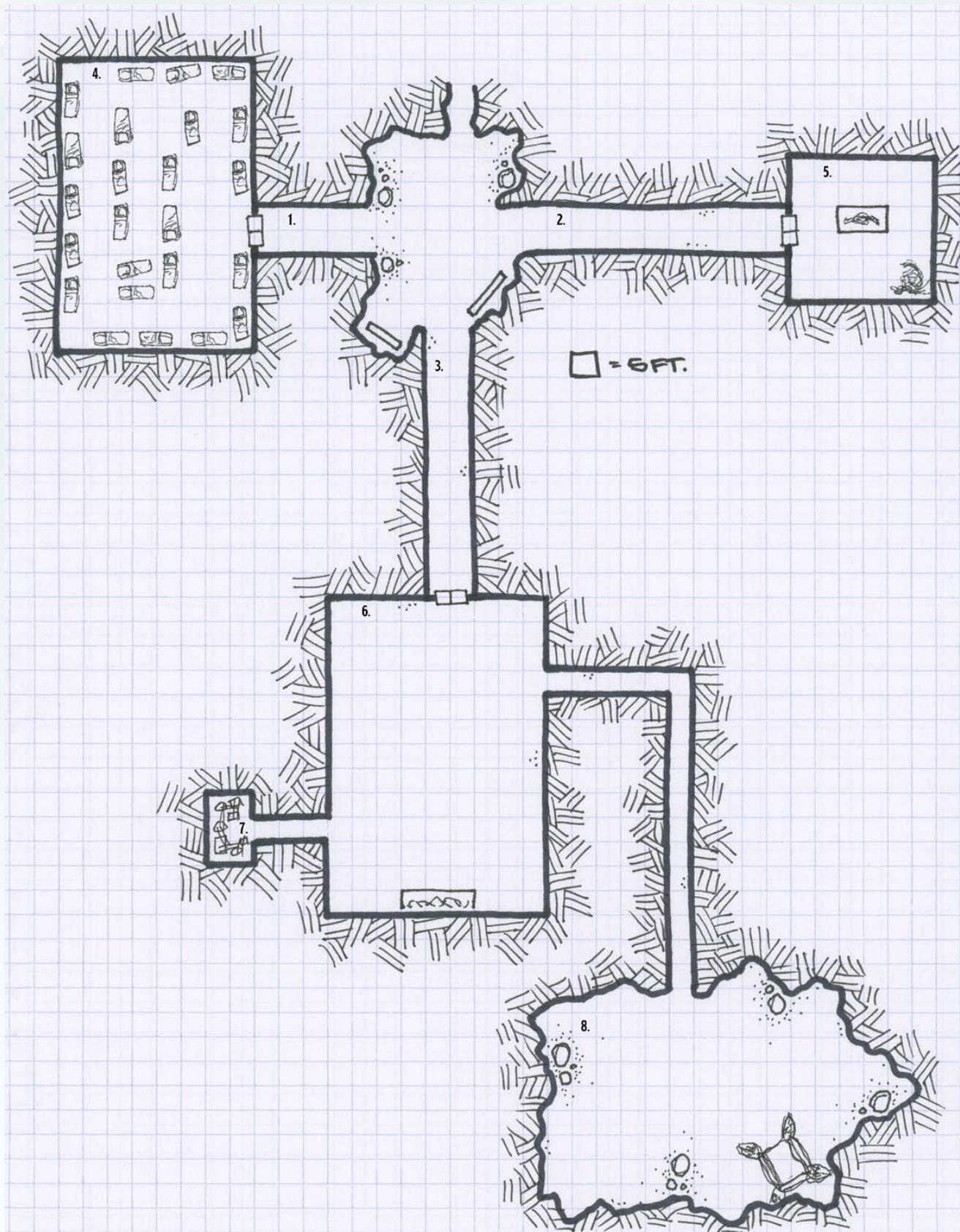
Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d4 + 6) piercing damage.

Rapier. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (1d8 + 6) piercing damage.

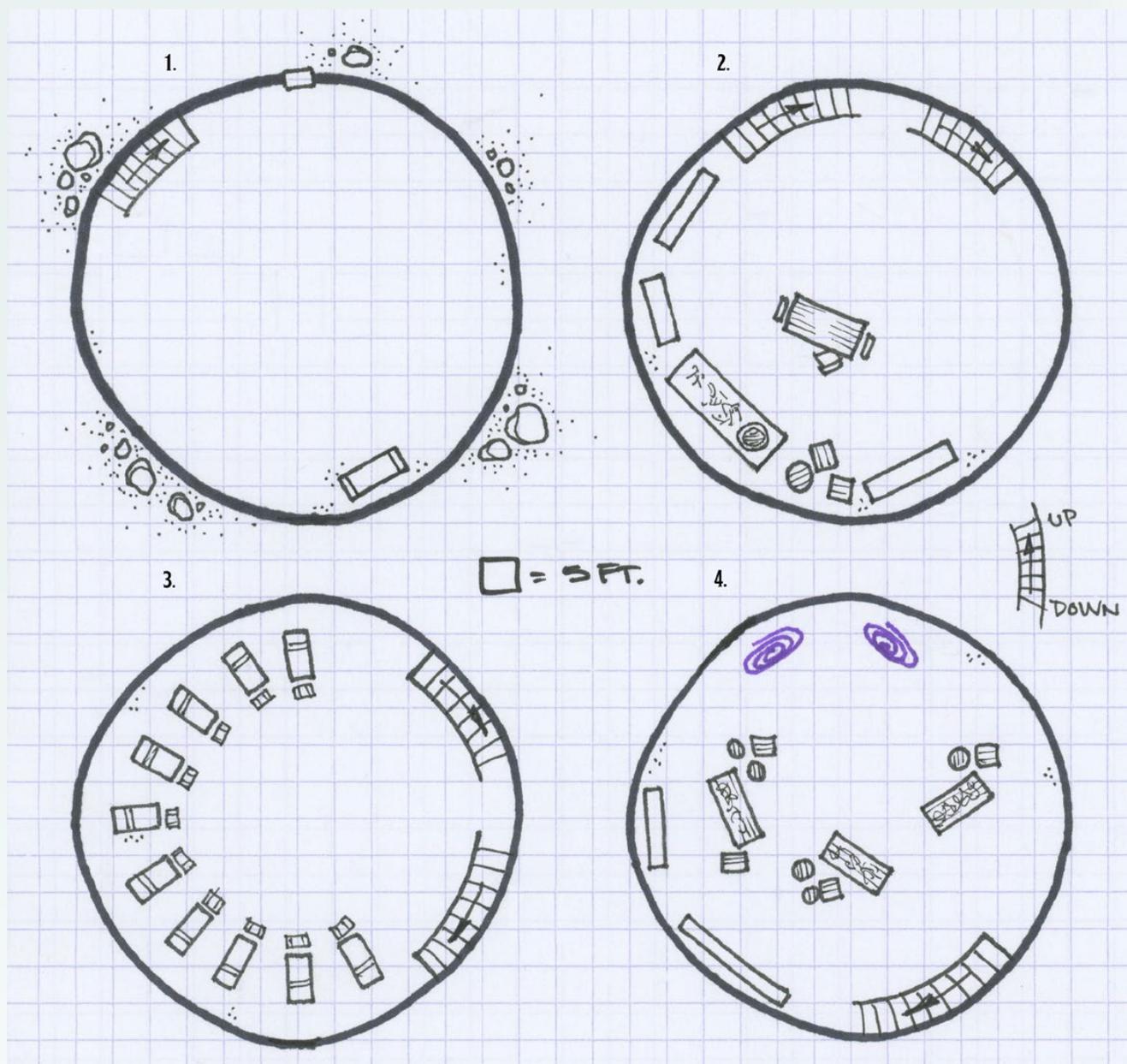
MARINER'S STUDED LEATHER

While wearing this armor, Zehira has a swimming speed equal to her walking speed. In addition, whenever she starts her turn underwater with 0 hit points, the armor causes her to rise 60 feet toward the surface. The armor is decorated with fish and shell motifs.

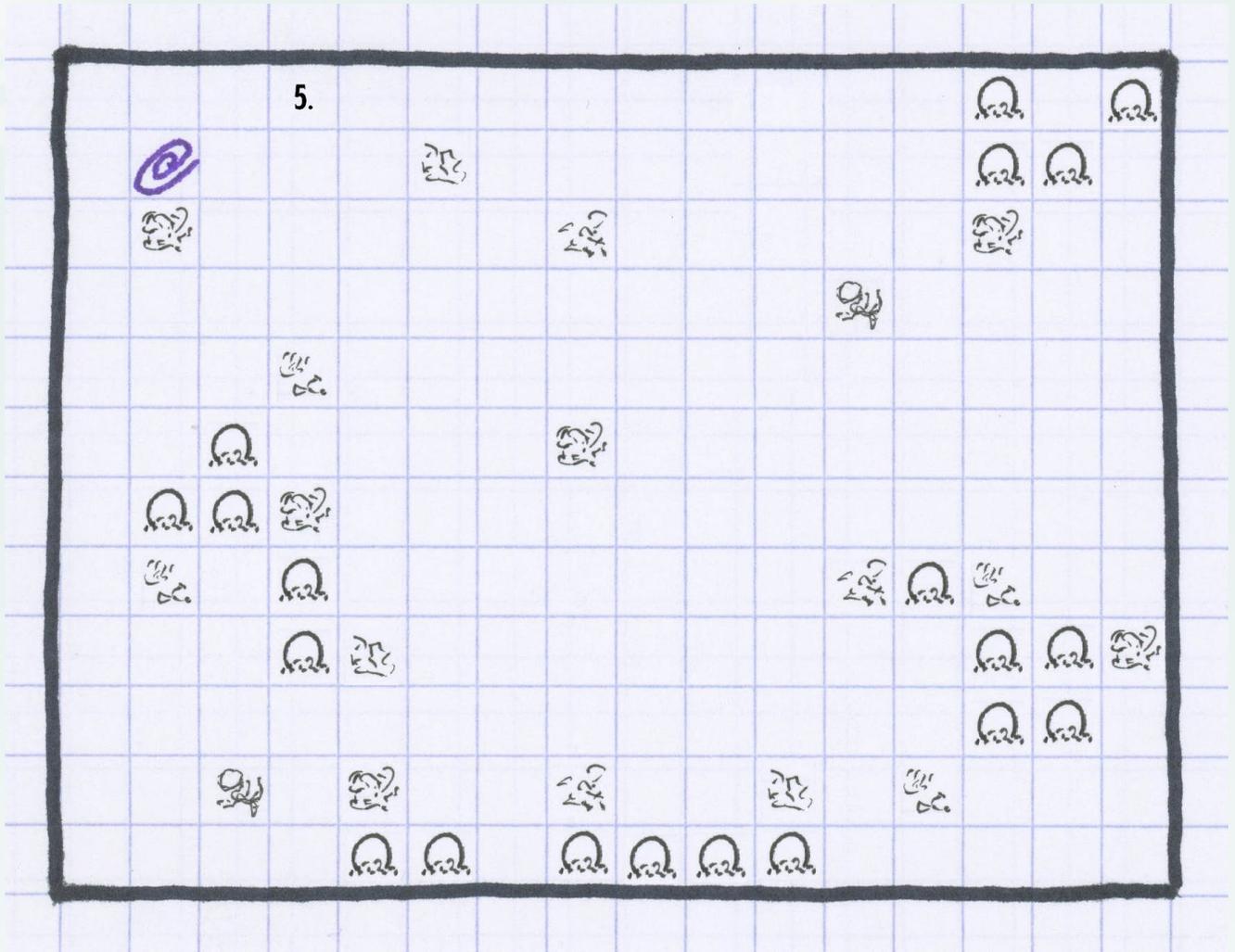
APPENDIX 1: DRAGON CULT BASE MAP



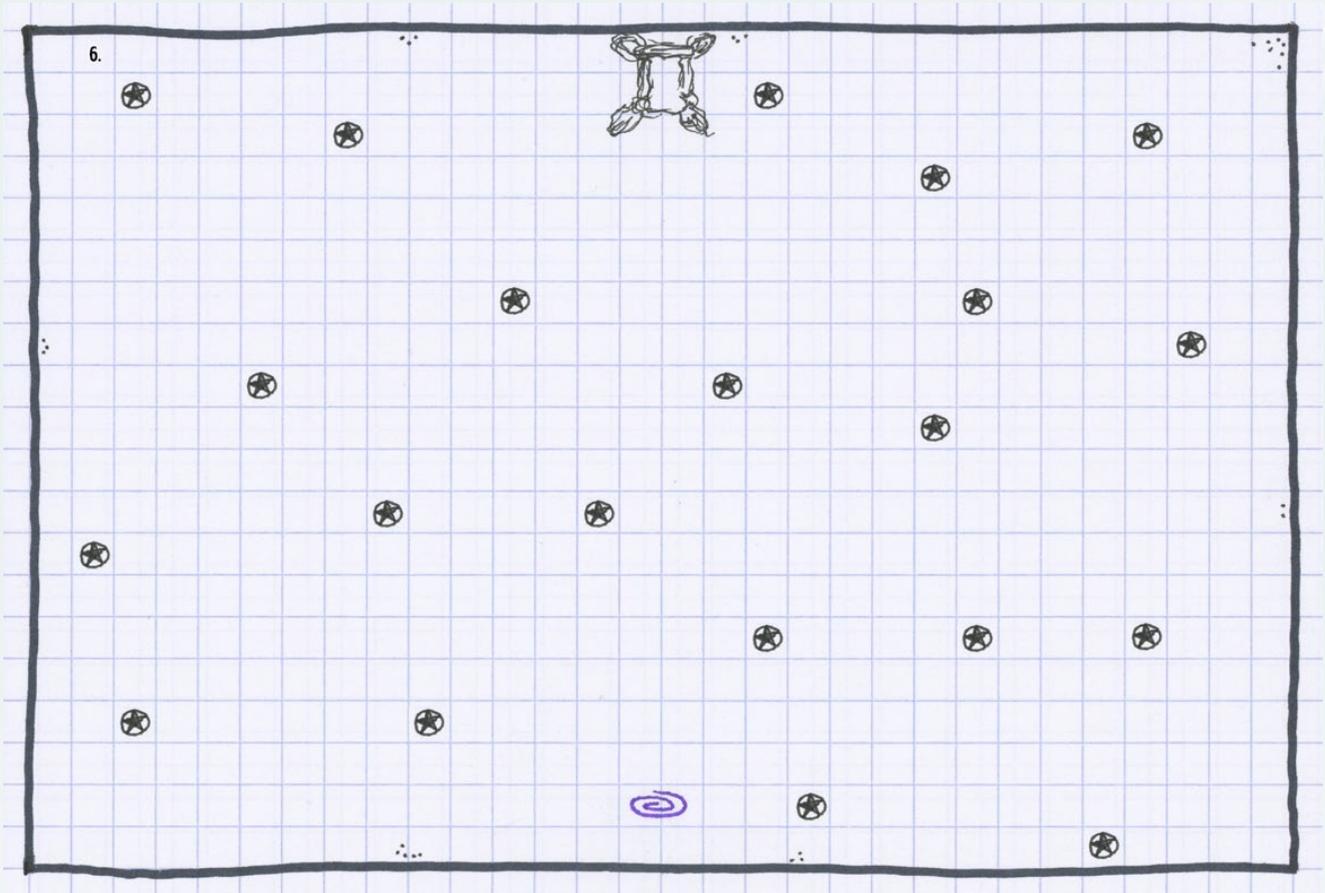
APPENDIX 2: IYMRITH'S TOWER MAPS



IYMRITH'S TOWER



PURPLE WORM HATCHERY



IMRITH'S LAIR

APPENDIX 3: CHARACTER REWARDS

The characters can keep the following magic items if they are found during the adventure. It is suggested that you print off enough copies of this page to be able to give one to each of your players, crossing out rewards they didn't receive during the session.

DANCING LONGSWORD

Weapon (longsword), very rare (requires attunement)

You can use a bonus action to toss this magic sword into the air and speak the command word. When you do so, the sword begins to hover, flies up to 30 feet, and attacks one creature of your choice within 5 feet of it. The sword uses your attack roll and ability score modifier to damage rolls.

While the sword hovers, you can use a bonus action to cause it to fly up to 30 feet to another spot within 30 feet of you. As part of the same bonus action, you can cause the sword to attack one creature within 5 feet of it.

After the hovering sword attacks for the fourth time, it flies up to 30 feet and tries to return to your hand. If you have no hand free, it falls to the ground at your feet. If the sword has no unobstructed path to you, it moves as close to you as it can and then falls to the ground. It also ceases to hover if you grasp it or move more than 30 feet away from it.

ELIXIR OF HEALTH

Potion, rare

When you drink this potion, it cures any disease afflicting you, and it removes the blinded, deafened, paralyzed, and poisoned conditions. The clear red liquid has tiny bubbles of light in it.

SPELL SCROLL OF PASSWALL

Scroll, rare

A passage appears at a point of your choice that you can see on a wooden, plaster, or stone surface (such as a wall, a ceiling, or a floor) within 30 feet and lasts for 1 hour. You choose the opening's dimensions: up to 5 feet wide, 8 feet tall, and 20 feet deep. The passage creates no instability in a structure surrounding it.

When the opening disappears, any creatures or objects still in the passage created by the spell are safely ejected to an unoccupied space nearest to the surface on which you cast the spell.

SPELL SCROLL OF TRUE SEEING

Consumable, very rare

This spell gives one willing creature you touch the ability to see things as they actually are. For the duration, the creature has truesight, notices secret doors hidden by magic, and can see into the Ethereal Plane, all out to a range of 120 feet.

STONESPEAKER CRYSTAL

Wondrous item, rare (requires attunement)

This nineteen-inch-long shard of quartz grants you advantage on Intelligence (Investigation) checks while it is on your person.

The crystal has 10 charges. While holding it, you can use an action to expend some of its charges to cast one of the following spells from it: *speak with animals* (2 charges), *speak with dead* (4 charges), or *speak with plants* (3 charges).

When you cast a divination spell, you can use the crystal in place of one material component that would normally be consumed by the spell, at a cost of 1 charge per level of the spell. The crystal is not consumed when used in this way.

The crystal regains 1d6 + 4 expended charges daily at dawn. If you expend the crystal's last charge, roll a d20. On a 1, the crystal vanishes, lost forever.

STORY AWARDS

The characters might earn the following story award in this adventure.

LEGACY EVENT: OATHBREAKER

Whether by choice or by circumstance, you have failed to fulfill your promise to V'zree of reaching out to the soul of the drow arcanist X'althoa, then gloating about how V'zree shared the secret of the *soulthief* spell. But with V'zree trapped in Carceri, surely there will be no consequences.

APPENDIX 4. DUNGEON MASTER TIPS

To run an adventure as a DM, you must have three to seven players, each with their own character within the adventure's level range (see the "Adventure Primer" section at the start of the adventure).

NEW TO D&D ADVENTURERS LEAGUE?

<http://dnd.wizards.com/playevents/organized-play>

NEW TO THE ANNUAL STORYLINE?

You can find out more about the Dreams of the Red Wizards storyline here:

<http://dndadventurersleague.org/storyline-seasons/dreamsof-the-red-wizards/>

PREPARING THE ADVENTURE

Before you start play, consider the following:

- Read through the adventure, taking notes of anything you'd like to highlight or remind yourself of while running it, such as a way you'd like to portray an NPC or a tactic you'd like to use in a combat. Familiarize yourself with the adventure's appendices and handouts.
- Gather any resources you'd like to use to aid you in running the 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) score; and anything the adventure specifies as notable (such as backgrounds, traits, and flaws).

Players can play an adventure they previously played as a player or Dungeon Master, but can do so only once with a specific character. Ensure that each player has their character's adventure logsheet (if not, get one from the organizer) with their starting values for level, magic items, gold, and downtime days. These are updated at the conclusion of the session. The adventure information and your information are added at the end of the adventure session—whether the character completed the adventure or not.

Each player is responsible for maintaining an accurate logsheet. If you have time, you can do a quick scan of a player's character sheet to ensure nothing looks out of order. If you see magic items of very high rarities or strange arrays of ability scores, you can ask players to provide documentation for the irregularities. If they cannot, feel free to restrict item use or ask them to use a standard ability score array.

Point players to the *D&D Adventurers League Player's Guide* for reference. If players wish to spend downtime days and it's the beginning of an adventure or episode, they can declare their activity and spend the days immediately, or they can do so at the end of the adventure or episode. Players should select their characters' spells and other daily options prior to the start of the adventure, unless the adventure specifies otherwise. Feel free to reread the adventure description to help give players hints about what they might face.

ADJUSTING THIS ADVENTURE

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

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