



DRUMS OF THE DEAD: BOOK 3

A ritual to destroy Chult's undead has backfired and unleashed an undead plague! The components needed to concoct an antidote have been identified, but need to be scavenged from the jungle. Meanwhile, Valindra Shadowmantle and Szass Tam are rallying the infected to conduct a massive assault on Port Nyanzaru. If they succeed, the results will be catastrophic.

A Three-Hour D&D Epics™ Adventure for 1st-20th Level Characters



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DDEP7-02 *Drums of the Dead: Book 3 (Tier 3 and 4)*

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to *Drums of the Dead*, a D&D Adventurers League™ adventure, part of the official D&D Adventurers League™ organized play system and the *Tomb of Annihilation*™ storyline season.

This is a special D&D Epics™ three-hour interactive adventure, designed for **four or more groups playing together**. Each table must seat **three to seven players** from one of the following tiers:

- 1st-4th level characters (tier 1, optimized for average party level 3).
- 5th-10th level characters (tier 2, optimized for average party level 8).
- 11th-16th level characters (tier 3, optimized for average party level 13).
- 17th-20th level characters (tier 4, optimized for average party level 18).

There must be at least one group from tier 1 or 2, and one group from tier 3 or 4. Guidelines for coordinating this event appear later in this booklet.

Drums of the Dead is set in the jungle peninsula of Chult. To win the day, the players must find a cure for the undead plague and repel the zombie horde closing on Port Nyanzaru. The adventure

takes place after the events of the *Tomb of Annihilation* hardcover adventure.

ADVENTURE BOOKLETS

Drums of the Dead is the first D&D Epics™ event to challenge all four tiers of play! As such, it is a large and complex event. To simplify things, the adventure material is separated into three booklets.

- **Book 1: Event Overview.** The event overview explains the rules of the adventure and provides guidance on how to administrate the event. All DMs should read this guide!
- **Book 2: Find the Antidote (tier 1 & 2).** This book provides everything you need to run the adventure for tier 1 or 2 characters. If you're not running these tiers, you don't need to read this.
- **Book 3: Destroy the Crawling Palace (tier 3 & 4).** This book provides everything you need to run the adventure for tier 3 or 4 characters. If you're not running these tiers, you don't need to read this.

To reduce prep time, each book shares the same quests between its tiers, with rules for scaling encounters per tier. Encounter locations are also shared between both tiers. If possible, event organizers should use online registration to let the DMs know which tier they are running ahead of time.

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ADVENTURE PRIMER

Before beginning play, read Book 1: Event Overview and familiarize yourself with the event rules and Victory Events.

ADJUSTING THIS ADVENTURE

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

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

DETERMINING PARTY STRENGTH

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

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

BEFORE PLAY AT THE TABLE

Before you start play, consider the following:

- Read through the adventure, taking notes of anything you'd like to highlight or remind yourself while running the adventure, such as a way you'd like to portray an NPC or a tactic you'd like to use in a combat. Familiarize yourself with the adventure's appendices and handouts.
- Gather any resources you'd like to use to aid you in running this adventure--such as notecards, a DM screen, miniatures, and battlemaps.
- Ask the players to provide you with relevant character information, such as name, race, class,

and level; passive Wisdom (Perception), and anything specified as notable by the adventure (such as backgrounds, traits, flaws, etc.)

PLAYING THE DUNGEON MASTER

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

To facilitate this, keep in mind the following:

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

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

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

TIER 4 PLAY

Tier 4 (level 17-20) is the most challenging tier of D&D to adjudicate. At these levels, characters wield earth-shaking powers and magic items that make each group wildly different. Consider the following guidance before tackling this tier as a DM:

NOTE DOWN ITEMS, ALLIES AND ENCHANTMENTS

Before play begins, jot down all the goofy stuff that your players have available: shield guardians, wyvern steeds, simulacrum, rare and legendary items, permanent spell effects, etc. Consider whether these features increase the group's APL: but most important of all, ensure you know how they function.

APPLY THE 'RULE OF COOL'

Assume every combat challenge can be easily overcome. Up the difficulty as needed, but let the players enjoy their capstone powers before searching for ways to counter them. You're good so long as everyone has fun. During combat, find ways to introduce character interactions and thrilling choices instead of just resorting to raw power.

ADJUST ENCOUNTERS ON THE FLY

Every group plays differently at tier 4. More than ever, it's your responsibility to shake up encounters on-the-fly until you hit the right balance. Here are some simple tricks you can employ:

- Introduce waves of reinforcements. Players sometimes blow their big powers early, leaving them exposed to new threats. Just add more enemies of the types already listed in the encounter.
- Counter magic with magic. Consider adding an **evoker** for every spellcaster in the group.
- Maximize enemy damage instead of rolling (including spell damage!)
- If you overcompensate, introduce an **evoker** or a **champion** as an ally at the start of the next round. At these levels, the characters should have plenty of allies to fall back on.

KNOW YOUR SPELLS

High-level spells often have complex conditions and limitations. To avoid slowing play, refresh your memory of the most troublesome spells before the game begins (start with *antimagic field*, *gate*, *imprisonment*, *simulacrum* and *wish*). In addition, don't be afraid to ask players "what powerful spells do you have prepared?"

In the hands of enemy casters, some spell combinations are especially potent. For example:

- A 4th-level *glyph* cast into the hood of a cloak could *polymorph* a wizard into a Tyrannosaurus Rex when they drop below half hit points.
- A *globe of invulnerability* protects a high-level caster from *counterspell*, allowing them to unleash their most powerful spells in relative safety.
- Spellcasters can use the Ready action to cast a short-range spell outside of *counterspell* range, then move into range to release it without risk of being countered.

- A *contingency* spell can trigger a *dimension door* to whisk a spellcaster to safety or cast *greater invisibility* on them when they take damage.

SORCERY CROWS

Many locations within the tower exploit **sorcery crows** as guardians. These scarlet songbirds have glowing eyes that can peer into the Weave.

- Sorcery crows automatically detect magic within 50 feet of themselves and are trained to squawk if they discern unauthorized spell-effects within that range.
- For the purposes of detection, spell-effects include Wild Shape abilities, polymorphed or awakened creatures, and familiars.

If a character spots a sorcery crow, they can recognize its powers with a successful DC 12 Intelligence (Nature or Arcana) check. If they fail this check, it's just a weird bird.

BEGINNING PLAY

When everyone is ready, the administrators announce the start of the event.

1. INTRO SPEECH (ADMINISTRATOR)

An administrator reads the following aloud. If your group misses the announcement, you can read it to them yourself:

The Soulmonger is no more, and Acererak's death curse has been lifted from Toril! Tonight, adventurers from far and wide gather in Port Nyanzaru to celebrate their victories. Alas, no sooner has one threat perished, another bubbles up to threaten the poor folk of Chult.

Earlier today, a messenger stumbled into town from a secret laboratory in the jungle. He revealed that alchemists from the Lords' Alliance had colluded with Order of the Gauntlet clerics to weave a powerful spell over the jungle. Their intention was to destroy Chult's undead, but the spell backfired to create a zombie plague that infects both the living and the undead. As we speak, an undead horde rushes toward Port Nyanzaru! These zombies are fast! They cannot be turned! One bite or scratch infects their victims with the zombie plague!

Worse, our seers have revealed that the archlich Szass Tam has found a way to command the zombies, and has raised the Crawling Palace of Ras Nsi – a castle carried on the backs of twelve skeletal tortoises. Led by the lich Valindra Shadowmantle, Tam's drummers beat out a rhythm that controls the infected and drives them towards our city!

Volo and the Merchant Princes have worked together to brew an antidote for the zombie plague, but the components are hidden deep in the jungle. We need volunteers to search for these components, while the greatest among you strike against the Crawling Palace to silence the drums of the dead! You're the best that this land can offer: heroes forged in the crucible of adventure!

Are you with me?

- Ask the players to introduce their characters to the group.

THE RED WIZARDS OF THAY

Thay is a land of slaves and tyrants ruled by the infamous power-hungry Red Wizards. A council of 'zulkirs' once governed the realm, but the lich Szass Tam, zulkir of necromancy, orchestrated a coup to seize absolute power. In recent days, Szass Tam sought to harness the powers of the Soulmonger, and sent the lich Valindra Shadowmantle to Chult to hunt it down (see *Tomb of Annihilation*

hardcover). Unfortunately for Valindra, questing heroes found the Soulmonger and destroyed it. The zombie plague has given her new purpose, and a chance to redeem herself to her undying master. Using the drums of the dead, Valindra plans to decimate Port Nyanzaru with her zombie army and replace its merchant princes with vassals loyal to Thay.

2. INTRO SPEECH (DUNGEON MASTER)

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

Your group has been chosen to join the raid on the Crawling Palace. Soldiers escort you to Goldenthron, seat of power for the port's merchant princes. As the sun ebbs over the Shining Sea, you mount up on pterosaur steeds and take to the air.

For hours, you soar high above the jungle canopy. Stars wheel across the night sky, and tendrils of mist eddy through the treetops below. All is silent. Then you spot a darkness seething over the jungle ahead: a cloud of flies that spreads as far as the eye can see! The trees quiver as a vast undead army sweeps forward below, full of chattering teeth and wild stares.

A ruined palace lurches into view at the heart of the mob, borne on the backs of twelve monstrous undead tortoises. Moss and ivy clings to the palace's walls, yet hundreds of cook-fires burn on its ramparts and within its courtyards. From its broken domed roof, the relentless beat of drums echoes over the jungle.

PLAYING THE EVENT

- Give your players the **palace map** handout and explain the special restrictions in play for the event.
- Ask your players to pick a quest from the **first zone** on the palace map (either 1A, 1B, or 1C). Once they've decided, review their chosen quest and prepare the appropriate adventure location for their sector.
- Begin your first encounter!
- If the group succeeds, deliver the **victory boon** for their chosen quest to HQ (see Appendix 3) and ask the players to pick a quest from the **next zone** on the palace map (either 2A, 2B, or 2C). If they beat this second quest, they move into the final zone and take on quest 3.
- **If the first quest takes more than an hour and thirty minutes to complete, the group can skip their second quest and advance instead to quest 3.**

- If you finish quest 3 ahead of time, repeat the process from the start but only play quests that you haven't played already. Continue playing quests until time is called.

THE CRAWLING PALACE OF RAS NSI

The necromancer Ras Nsi built the crawling palace as a mobile base to harvest the jungle for timber, which he shipped to the great cities of the North. When the Spellplague robbed Nsi of his powers, his citadel fell into ruin and was swallowed by the jungle. The palace has the following general features:

Terrain. Walls and ceilings are fashioned from stone and timber clad in cracked plaster. Faded murals show the wonders of Mezro, lost city of Ubtao.

Weather. The night is bright and clear with a full moon and very little wind.

Light. The Thayans have hung lanterns throughout the palace interior, so the area is brightly lit throughout.

Smells and Sounds. The stench of the zombie horde suffuses the palace and their deafening howls echo through its halls. From the central dome, the relentless beat of drums shakes the whole site.

Zombie Horde. Thousands of plague **zombies** mill around beneath the palace. Any character that falls into their midst takes 27 (5d10) piercing damage at the start of each of their turns. Characters injured by the zombies must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or contract the zombie plague (see Book 1: Event Overview). A creature that falls into the horde can use its action to climb back onto the palace with a successful DC 16 Strength (Athletics) check.

3. FACTION ASSIGNMENTS

Players can please their patrons by completing the following assignments during the event. Present these goals as they choose their first quest:

EMERALD ENCLAVE

The Emerald Enclave needs to study the cursed undead. Characters who belong to Emerald Enclave earn one point of renown if they capture a creature infected by the zombie plague and keep it above 0 hit points until the end of the event.

HARPERS

This mission is an opportunity to acquire valuable lore about this land. Characters who belong to the Harpers earn one point of renown if they recover any historical tomes during the adventure.

LORDS' ALLIANCE

The Lords' Alliance can't be marred by the taint of undeath! Characters who belong to the Lords' Alliance earn one point of renown if they survive

the adventure without transforming into a plague zombie.

ORDER OF THE GAUNTLET

The undead must be vanquished! Characters who belong to the Order of the Gauntlet earn one point of renown if they land a killing blow on at least 3 undead monsters during the event.

ZHENTARIM

The Zhents need coin to carry out their operations worldwide. Characters who belong to the Zhentarim earn one point of renown if they find a cache of hidden gold during the adventure.

4. UBTAO SPEAKS! (TIER 4 ONLY)

If you're playing at tier 4, the god Ubtao offers a divine boon to the characters before they begin their first quest. Read the following aloud:

A stab of green lightning lashes the night sky. You blink, and find yourself gazing over the jungle from miles above. Before your eyes, the rivers and mountains of Chult swirl together to form a vast labyrinth. Another blink, and you are on a grassy plain among herds of dinosaurs. Rain pours from the heavens. A booming voice says:
 "Speak. Tell me of the maze of your life."

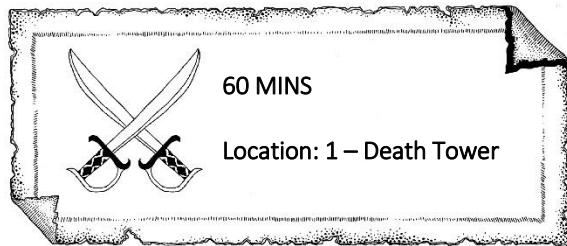
Go around the table and ask each player to answer the question in turn, with no conferring. There's no right answer: ideally, they should say something that reveals an understanding of their character's backstory or a resolution for their personal characteristics. Once everyone has spoken, Ubtao blesses those who pleased him.

Those who pleased Ubtao receive the following vision. Characters who were cagey or rude in their responses receive nothing.

"My land is dying. My back may be turned, yet I have not abandoned my people. Hero, I offer you my aid in this battle."
 You blink, and find yourself back outside the Crawling Palace. But now something feels different inside you...

Characters who please Ubtao earn the **Blessed of Ubtao** story award, which they can use at any time during the event.

QUEST 1A: DESTROY THE DEATH GOD



QUEST SUMMARY

The heroes must fight a Thayan 'death god': a giant golem made from hundreds of lashed-together zombies.

BEGINNING THE QUEST

If the players choose this quest, read the following aloud:

A dozen towers line the palace's outer wall, their bases resting on the shells of colossal undead tortoises. The Red Wizards have built scaffolds around each tower, and their slaves are using chains and pulleys to pluck zombies from the milling horde below. As each zombie is hoisted up, it's lashed to the writhing body of a 40-foot tall golem made entirely from zombies. These abominations will soon be unleashed on Port Nyanzaru - they must be destroyed!

FIGHTING THE DEATH GOD

This encounter uses the death tower map from Appendix 2 (reproduced below with notes).

DEPLOYMENT

The characters can land anywhere in the loading bay area before rolling initiative. Their pterosaur mounts are not bred for combat: if they come under fire they're liable to panic. Players who wish to land elsewhere must roll initiative as normal. On their turn, they must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom (Animal Handling) check to land safely at their destination. If they fail this check, they waste their turn trying to control their steed.

ENEMIES

The following enemies are present in this encounter:

- At tier 3, there is one **death god** and four **mages**.

- At tier 4, there is one **death god**, four **evokers** and one **archmage** (tier 4).

The Red Wizards supervise the construction of the death god, and fight valiantly to protect it.

ADJUSTING THIS ENCOUNTER

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter, according to your group. These are not cumulative.

- **Very Weak:** The soul caskets don't prevent regain of hit points. At Tier 3, remove the mages. At Tier 4, remove the archmage and two evokers.
- **Weak:** At Tier 3, remove two mages. At Tier 4, remove two evokers.
- **Strong:** At Tier 3, add a mage. At Tier 4, add an evoker.
- **Very Strong:** At Tier 3, add two mages. At Tier 4, add two evokers and one archmage.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

This area has the following important features:

Magic Circle: If a creature dies inside the magic circle, the death god regains 5 hit points per level of the creature. The circle channels energy into the headbands that control the palace's slaves. When the death god dies, the circle fades and the headbands deactivate (see Soul Caskets, below).

HAZARD: SOUL CASKETS

Each urn on the map contains a Chultan tribesperson bound in enchanted chains.

Detection. Any character who examines an urn sees a captive inside, bound in chains and wearing a magic headband. With a successful DC 10 Intelligence (Arcana) check, they realize the enchanted chains are draining the captive's life force and converting it into necrotic energy.

Trigger. Every round on initiative count 1, a wave of necrotic energy washes from each urn.

Effect. All creatures within 40 feet of an urn when it fires must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, taking 10 necrotic damage per tier on a failed save and losing the ability to regain hit points until the end of their next turn. On a successful save, the creature takes 5 necrotic damage per tier and can still regain hit points. Creatures wearing the Red Wizards' runic bracelets are immune to these effects (as each wave breaks, the bracelets glow brightly).

Disabling. The chains around each captive are magically hardened, but the padlocks can be picked with a successful DC 18 Dexterity (Thieves' Tools) check. Freeing a captive from the chains disables that urn's power. Alternatively, the captive can be killed (AC 7, HP 7). If the death god is slain, the captives try to struggle free from their chains. Roll a d20 for each captive at the start of each round: on a roll of 16 or more they escape the chains.

SIEGE DAMAGE

As soon as combat breaks out here, read the following aloud:

Bells toll across the Crawling Palace as the alliance strikes in force! In response, the wizards activate a bronze contraption on the roof of a nearby tower. Bolts of energy scream down from the device, exploding around you in bursts of unholy fire.

Ask the players to roll a d20 at the end of each of their turns. On a 1-5, their character receives **siege damage** (see Book 1: Event Overview).

VICTORY EVENT: DESTROYING THE ARTILLERY

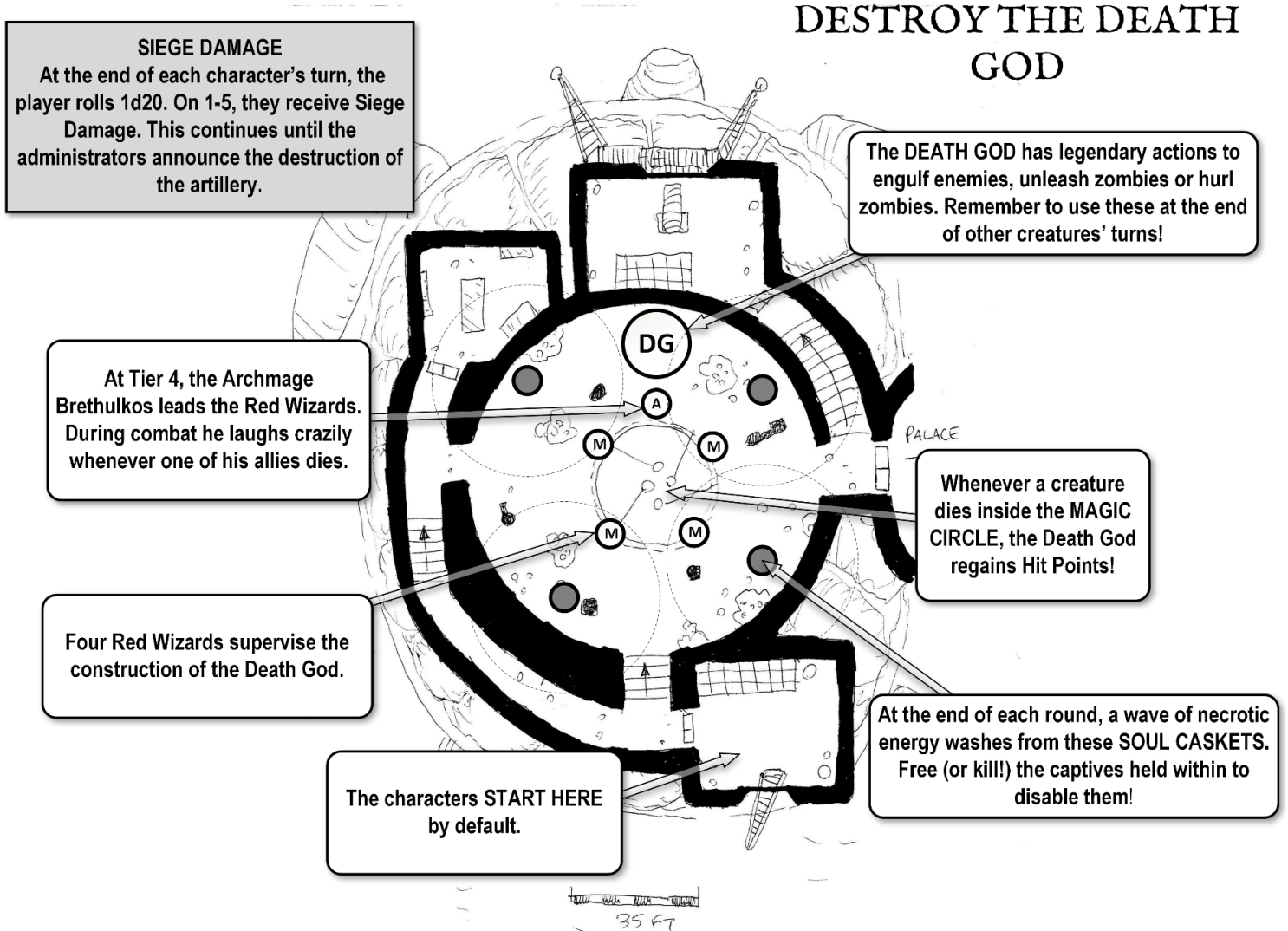
Listen out for the announcement that Quest 1B has been won: as soon as the soul cannon is destroyed, your players can stop rolling for siege damage!

CONCLUSION

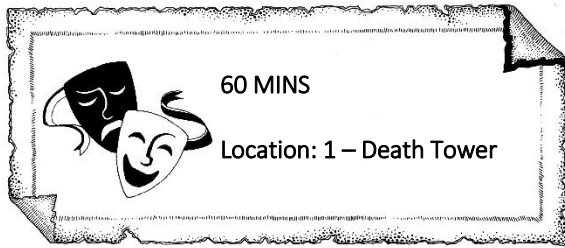
Ask a player to deliver the victory boon for this quest to the administrators (see Appendix 3.)

TREASURE

For completing this quest, characters receive a magic item and one treasure award from their faction. These treasures are awarded at the end of the adventure.



QUEST 1B: INFILTRATE THE RED WIZARDS



QUEST SUMMARY

The heroes pose as Thayan reinforcements to infiltrate the Crawling Palace and sabotage its artillery batteries.

BEGINNING THE QUEST

If the players choose this quest, read the following aloud:

A dozen towers line the palace's outer wall, their bases resting on the shells of colossal undead tortoises. The Red Wizards have engraved magic portals into the courtyards beneath the towers. As you watch, figures in flowing red robes teleport in from distant Thay to reinforce the enemy ranks.

A paladin from the Order of the Gauntlet swoops alongside and calls for you to follow her. She lands in the canopy of a giant cypress tree. As you dismount, you see a group of heroes kneeling over the corpse of a red-robed dwarf. The paladin turns to you.

"We ambushed a group of Red Wizards. They're all dead, but this one managed to help us..."

The paladin explains the following:

- The paladin cast a *Speak with Dead* spell to learn the sigil sequence to a teleportation circle inside the palace, and the password to enter ("Everdeep").
- She suggests that the characters dress up as Thayan reinforcements and teleport in through the portal. Once inside, they must sabotage the palace artillery using arcane bombs (see "Gearing Up", below).
- Reinforcements are regularly teleporting into the towers. There's no way the Red Wizards can know each group by sight, so they rely on the password.

Some players may want to cast *Speak with Dead* themselves to ask further questions of the corpse. If so, use the encounter below to guide the spirit's responses. As a rule, the broader the question, the more cryptic the response.

GEARING UP

The paladin provides red robes for each character. Not all characters need to pose as spellcasters: the organization also employs mercenaries and spies. The Red Wizards have no racial restrictions.

One character receives an **arcane bomb**. Setting the timer on this handheld bronze device takes an action, and the bomb explodes up to ten rounds later. When it explodes, all creatures within 20 feet must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw, taking 27 (5d10) force damage on a failed save, and half as much damage on a successful one. The bombs deal 55 (10d10) force damage to all objects in their blast area.

INFILTRATING THE PALACE

This encounter uses the death tower map from Appendix 2 (reproduced below with notes).

TELEPORTING INTO THE COURTYARD

When the players teleport into the palace, read:

You appear in a circle of carved sigils. Wizards scurry about the surrounding courtyard, running errands between three archways set into the perimeter walls. A stone tower looms overhead. The entire structure rocks back and forth as the giant tortoise lugs it forward.

As soon as you appear, a gold-skinned woman wearing red robes strides up to you and snaps her fingers. A lumbering iron giant clumps along behind her.

"What's the password?"

This is Rethya Norn, the red wizard in charge of this tower (see 'Palace Locations', below). Assuming they provide the password, read:

The wizard starts barking out orders.

"You're late. I need *you* to guard the palace gates, *you* to help out in the laboratory, and *you* to mind the prisoner cells."

Rethya splits the group into three work forces. She won't accept dissent: these are direct orders from their superior officer. Their tasks are:

- Characters at the gates must stop outsiders from breaking into the palace interior.
- Characters in the laboratory must help Kahlzar trap souls to feed the soul cannon.
- Characters minding the prisoners must ensure that none escape.

Separate the group however you please. See below for details on these areas.

ROLEPLAYING THE INFILTRATION

This quest is intentionally open-ended. The hooks are designed to create dilemmas and tense moments, but ultimately, it's up to the players to hatch a plan to infiltrate the artillery tower. Jump between the groups whenever it seems dramatically appropriate, roll with the player's ideas, and try to keep everyone engaged!

PALACE LOCATIONS

The following locations correspond to locations marked on the map below.

AREA 1: COURTYARD

Rethya waits in this courtyard to meet new arrivals. She suspiciously questions any characters who leave their work areas, and spies on any characters who linger here.

- At tier 3, Rethya is an **evoker** with a **shield guardian**.
- At tier 4, Rethya is an **archmage** with an **iron golem**.

Rethya challenges any character who behaves suspiciously or casts a spell without her permission. If defied, she raises the alarm.

COMBAT IN THE PALACE

If Rethya raises the alarm, all enemies in this location respond within two rounds. Worse, reinforcements arrive from the gates at the end of each round thereafter (1d3 **gladiators** at tier 3, or 1d3 **champions** at tier 4). The players must move fast to destroy the artillery or they'll soon be overwhelmed.

AREA 2: LABORATORY

A horrid sight greets you inside the laboratory. Two wizards struggle with a captive while a red-robed dragonborn presses a crystal shard to the captive's forehead. The shard crackles with power, and the captive withers and dies.

"Good work", the dragonborn wheezes. "Let's get this one loaded into the soul cannon. Ah, here's our help!"

This is Kahlzar the Alchemist and his two assistants, Gethos and Osmel.

- At tier 3, Kahlzar is an **abjurer** and his assistants are two **evokers**.
- At tier 4, Kahlzar is an **abjurer** and his assistants are two **illusionists**.

Kahlzar uses the shard to extract the souls of captives held in his cells. This magic item was stolen from the wreckage of the Soulmonger. When pressed against an incapacitated humanoid, the shard deals 11 (2d10) necrotic damage per round, trapping the victim's soul if it reduces them to 0 hit points. When pressed against the soul cannon, any one soul contained within the shard is fed inside. The shard only works within this tower.

- Kahlzar sets the characters to work creating healer's kits under his supervision, but he is absent-minded and easily distracted.
- Gethos is charged with fetching captives from the cells, but could always use some help. He despises Osmel and would do anything to see him taken down a peg.
- Osmel's job is to deliver the Soulmonger shard to the artillery tower, feed its captive soul into the soul cannon, and then return with it. He's a busy-body who acts superior to the characters

BOOKS OF LOST LORE

Kahlzar has two books of esoteric lore on his table. If a character belonging to the Harpers steals the books, they complete their faction assignment.

AREA 3: CELLS

- A **veteran** called Razvasu watches over the cells.

Four **commoners** are held in the cages (Udu, Yaa, Buku, and Mazuma). Razvasu is playing a mean game. Each slave has three tries to guess what she's thinking. Whoever gets closest is spared death when Gethos comes to fetch the next victim.

AREA 4: GATES

A pair of elite guards called Melnod and Ros man the gates.

- At tier 3, they are both **gladiators**.
- At tier 4, they are both **champions**.

The guards secretly share a flask of tej wine and tease each other with scare stories about the coming raiders. They have orders to allow no-one but Osmel into the artillery tower. Only Rethya or Kahlzar can countermand these instructions.

Sorcery Crow. A **sorcery crow** sits on a perch nearby, and squawks if it discerns spell effects in its area. If the guards can't tell what the crow is squawking about, they sound the alarm.

VICTORY EVENT: CREATING A DIVERSION

Listen out for the announcement that Quest 1C has been won: as soon as the slaves are freed, Rethya sends the guards to help recapture them, leaving the characters to man the gates alone.

AREA 5: ARTILLERY TOWER

The artillery tower houses the arcane soul cannon. The soul cannon is a magical weapon powered by souls (AC 15, HP 35).

- A hulking **veteran** called Venk mans the soul cannon.

The staircase from the gates is the only way to enter the artillery tower without climbing, moving

incorporeally or flying (all of which draw unwanted attention). If the alarm is raised, Venk pulls a lever to lower an adamantine portcullis at the base of the stairs (AC 20, HP 40).

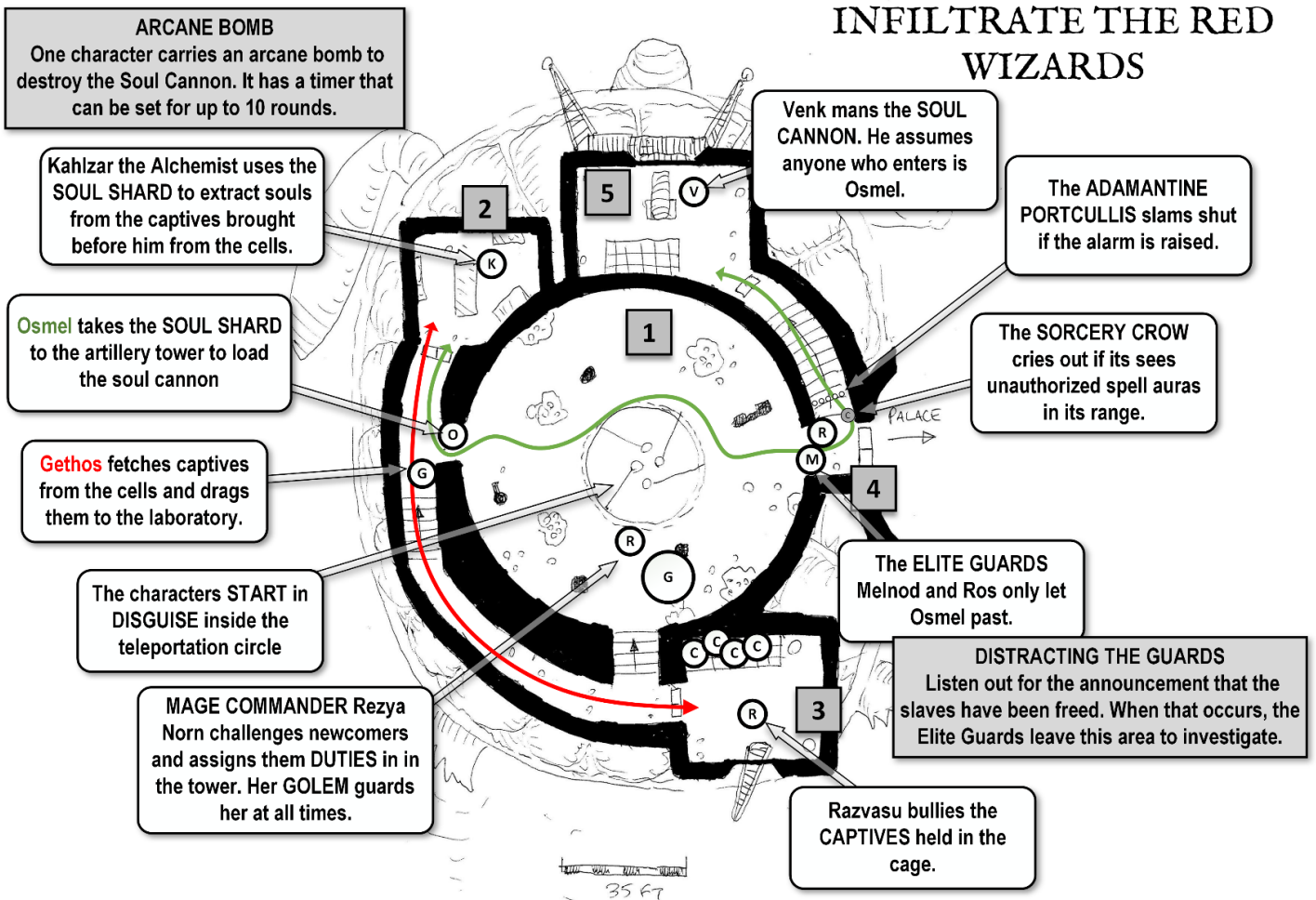
At all other times, Venk remains preoccupied by blasting heroes with his cannon. Unless the alarm is raised, he assumes any visitor is Osmel come to recharge the weapon. He doesn't even look around when they enter...

CONCLUSION

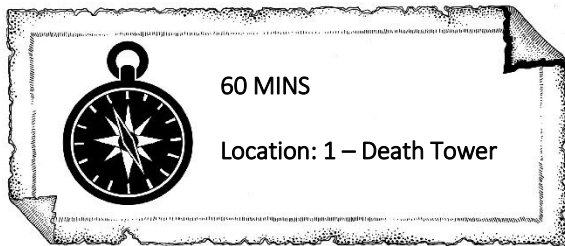
Ask a player to deliver the victory boon for this quest to the administrators (see Appendix 3.)

TREASURE

For completing this quest, characters receive a magic item and one treasure award from their faction. These treasures are awarded at the end of the adventure.



QUEST 1C: FREE THE CAPTIVES



QUEST SUMMARY

The characters infiltrate the palace via the corpse wagons to free the captives.

BEGINNING THE QUEST

If the players choose this quest, read the following aloud:

A dozen towers line the palace's outer wall, their bases resting on the shells of colossal undead tortoises. The Red Wizards have built scaffolds around each tower, and their slaves are using chains and pulleys to lower zombies into the milling horde below. From your vantage point, you spot wagons pulled by skeletal horses threading through the horde toward the palace, laden with Chultan corpses.

You meet the other heroes on the summit of a nearby crag. One of your clerics has formulated a plan.

"The Red Wizards are harvesting corpses to create more zombies. If we sneak onto those wagons, we can infiltrate the palace covertly and free the captives from within."

The cleric explains the following:

- The alliance has hijacked a corpse wagon, and plans on using it to get closer to the palace.
- The cleric can cast a *feign death* spell on the characters so they can hide among the dead.
- Once inside, they must covertly free the captives *and* get them to safety. Reinforcements are sure to arrive in force if they set off any alarms.

INFILTRATING THE PALACE

This encounter uses the death tower map from Appendix 2 (reproduced below with notes).

MOVING THROUGH THE HORDE

When the characters are on their way, read:

The cleric wraps himself in crimson robes and steers the wagon into the screaming undead horde. The zombies jostle past, shaking the wagon as it creaks toward the palace.

"Almost there", the cleric whispers.

The wagon pulls alongside one of the tortoises, and slaves throw down ropes to hoist the corpses. One-by-one, your death-cold bodies are lifted into the palace, where a red-robed necromancer inspects them. After feeling for a pulse, she orders the slaves to take you to the ritual room.

"I'll be there shortly", she rasps.

The slaves use wheelbarrows to take the characters to the ritual room, where they're dumped until the necromancer arrives.

MAGIC HEADBANDS

The slaves wear magic headbands that keep them in a state of zombie-like obedience. They relentlessly perform whatever task the red wizards assign them, and ignore all other stimuli.

Sabotaging the magic circle in Quest 1A frees the slaves from their torpor. If a headband is removed from a slave before then, the slave collapses in agony until the headband is replaced. A *remove curse* spell or similar magic releases them from their pain and restores their mind.

VICTORY EVENT: RELEASING THE SLAVES

Listen out for the announcement that Quest 1A has been won: with the slaves freed from their torpor, the characters can now issue orders to them, making it easier to aid their escape.

PALACE LOCATIONS

The following locations correspond to locations marked on the map below.

AREA 1: RITUAL ROOM

This chamber is filled with necromantic ritual components and jars of pickled specimens.

- 10 **zombies** stand around the room. They don't move, and only attack if attacked themselves (these are *not* plague zombies!).
- The **necromancer** Grethlanja returns after five minutes to cast *animate dead* on the corpses.

Five **commoner** slaves ferry corpses between the loading bay and here (a tortle called Moro, two albino dwarves called Chokk and Rubos, and two Chultans called Ana and Thu). Grethlanja returns here after five minutes. If the characters' bodies

aren't present, she dashes to raise the alarm in Area 2.

Bone Handbell. A small handbell sits on one of the tables, with a human tongue as a clapper. It makes no sound when rung, but summons Dagkamir from Area 5 to escort the zombies to the tower. He arrives after one minute.

AREA 2: LOADING BAY

Corpses are unloaded here and taken to the ritual room. The characters could signal their allies from here. If so, the cleric who dropped them off returns in 2d6 rounds.

There's also a gong here that raises the alarm when sounded.

THE ALARM

If the alarm is raised, all enemies present respond within two rounds. Worse, reinforcements arrive from the gates at the end of each round thereafter (1d3 **gladiators** at tier 3, or 1d3 **champions** at tier 4). The characters must move fast to free the slaves or they'll soon be overwhelmed.

HIDDEN TREASURE CACHE

A chest in the corner contains rare treasures stolen from the dead. This counts as a secret treasure cache (see "Rewards"). The chest is locked (DC 20 to pick) but Gethlania carries a key on a cord around her neck. Stealing the cache completes the faction assignment for any Zhentarim characters present.

AREA 3: COURTYARD

The west archway contains a gold force-field (see Magic Portals, below). Characters can look through it to perceive the courtyard beyond.

High walls border this ruined courtyard, with a single tower rising to the north. A magic circle is just visible beneath piles of rubble on the floor. A dwarf's skull hovers over the circle, grumbling to itself as it inspects the sigils.

Archways exit to the west, east and south. Magic barriers seal two of them, glowing gold to the west and purple to the east.

- The **demilich** Ringol Ghangalos lurks in this chamber.
- At tier 4, Ringol is accompanied by a **shield guardian**.

Ringol has been starved of souls for stealing from Szass Tam. The Red Wizards sent him to study the ancient circle and divine its meaning (it once allowed Ras Nsi to spy on the city of Mezro). Ringol drifts around the chamber on the route

shown, absorbed in deciphering the circle's sigils. If he spots intruders, he attacks at once.

Unfortunately for spellcasters, a **sorcery crow** sits on a perch by the eastern archway. If it detects spell-effects, it squawks a warning to Ringol.

HAZARD: MAGIC BARRIERS

Detection. The magic barriers are plainly visible. With a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check, a character realizes they prevent magic from passing through.

Trigger. If a character moves through a barrier, they trigger an effect based on the barrier's color (see below).

Effect. The barriers prevent spells of 5th level or lower from affecting creatures or objects on the other side of the barrier, even if the spell is cast with a higher-level slot. Such a spell can target creatures or objects on the other side of the barrier, but the spell has no effect on them. Similarly, the barrier blocks area effect spells from passing through it.

- Living creatures that move into the gold barrier must succeed on a DC 18 Constitution saving throw or be teleported inside the force cage in Area 5.
- Living creatures that move into the purple barrier are hurled 20 feet backwards and must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw: dropping to 0 hit points on failed save, or taking (11) 2d10 force damage per tier on a successful one.

Disabling. The lever in Area 4 disables the barriers when pulled. A creature wearing Dagkamir's ring (see Area 5) can pass through the barriers unhindered.

AREA 4: MAGIC MIRROR

A dusty, full-length mirror hangs on the wall here next to a lever. Pulling the lever disables and reactivates the magic barriers in Area 3.

HAZARD: MAGIC MIRROR

Detection. Characters who gaze into the mirror discern a delay on any reflected movement. The mirror emanates illusion and necromancy magic to those who can detect it.

Trigger. Inspecting the mirror trigger its illusory effect. Touching the mirror also has its own dangers (see below).

Effect. Any creature gazing into the mirror sees their reflection whispering at them to come closer. This is a purely illusory effect, having no purpose other than to lure a target closer. If a creature touches the mirror, they discover its surface is fluid and cold like water. Creatures who step inside the mirror must make a DC 20 Constitution saving throw, taking 82 (15d10) cold damage on a failed save, or half as much cold damage on a successful one. Characters reduces to 0 hit points by this damage turn to ice and die. Resolve the damage in private: if it kills them, don't tell their companions! If they survive, they can move back to safety. If they remain inside the mirror, they must repeat the saving throw at the start of each of their turns.

Disabling. There is no way to disable this hazard.

AREA 5: SLAVE TOWER

More slaves toil inside this tower.

- At tier 3, Dagkamir the **blackguard** watches over the slaves.
- At tier 4, Dagkamir is a **death knight**.

Twelve **commoner** slaves operate the ropes. As plague zombies are created in the ritual room, they're transferred here by Dagkamir and lowered into the horde. Dagkamir wears a magic ring inset with purple and gold stones that protects him from the barriers in Area 3.

A large cage of radiant energy sits by the southern wall, replicating the effects of a *forcecage* spell. Characters who fail their save against the gold barrier in area 3 are teleported inside the cage. Dagkamir is intrigued by the intruders and tries to strike a cruel bargain with them (see below). He carries a glowing key on his belt that can unlock the forcecage.

ROLEPLAYING DAGKAMIR

Szass Tam tricked Dagkamir into servitude through an unholy bargain that resulted in him forfeiting his own wife's

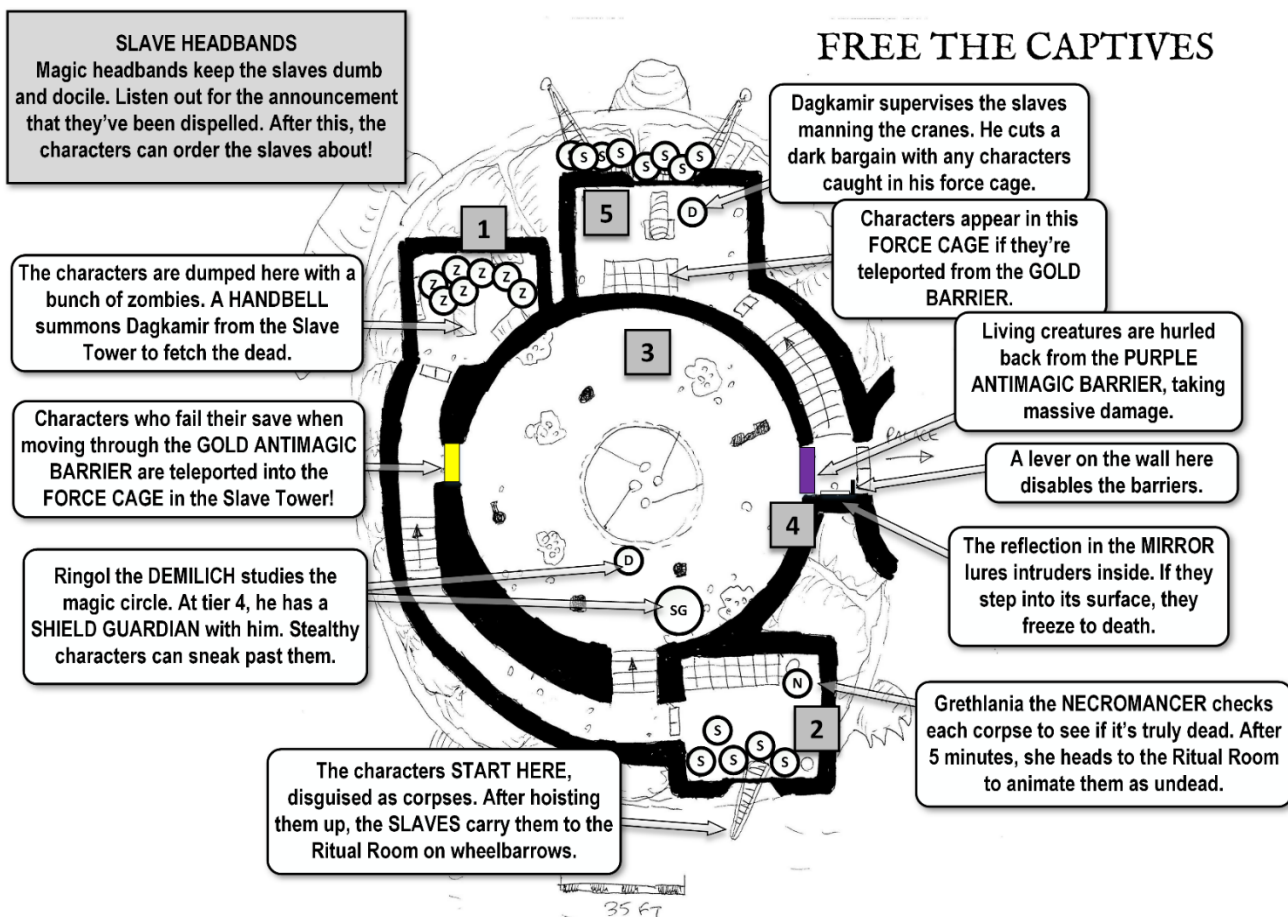
soul. Twisted by evil and eager for revenge, Dagkamir offers to free his captives from the *forcecage* if one of them strikes a similar bargain with him: promise him the soul of a loved one in return for freedom from the cage. If such a bargain is struck, Dagkamir unlocks the cage and teleports mysteriously away. This character gains the "Dark Promise" story award.

CONCLUSION

Ask a player to deliver the victory boon for this quest to the administrators (see Appendix 3.)

TREASURE

For completing this quest, characters receive a magic item and one treasure award from their faction. These treasures are awarded at the end of the adventure.



QUEST 2A: DESTROY THE ANTIMAGIC FIELD



QUEST SUMMARY

The characters must detonate an explosive device to punch a hole in the antimagic field surrounding Szass Tam's inner sanctum.

BEGINNING THE QUEST

If the players choose this quest, read the following aloud:

The central tower of the crawling palace looms ahead. A once-majestic garden stretches before it, now choked with palms and creepers. The undergrowth is both rotten and alive: oozing with pestilence, thick with mist, and haunted by darting forms. Stone columns jut from the murk, surmounted by Chultan statues. The whole structure rocks gently on its iron platform.

Your allies have gathered at the edge of the garden. As you arrive, an elf mage flies off on a magic carpet to scout the tower. As she draws near, she plummets from the air and crash-lands somewhere in the undergrowth below.

"As we feared", snarls a nearby paladin. "Szass Tam has cloaked this palace in an antimagic sphere. Sorcery that strong must be powered by something nearby: an artefact, or a magic circle! Advance into the garden! Find and destroy whatever's powering that field!"

The alliance divides into search parties and advances into the garden.

THROUGH THE GARDENS OF ROT

The characters search for the device powering the antimagic field. They are not alone: evil suffuses the garden, and monstrous forms flit between the shadows, always lurking just out of sight. If the characters scout from the air, **they surprise their enemies when they arrive at the magic circle.**

DEAD RED WIZARD

Shortly after entering the garden, the characters encounter a grisly scene:

Burned bodies litter the boggy ground ahead. The bloodied corpse of a Red Wizard sprawls between them, clutching a bronze device shaped like a pyramid.

Characters who examine the bodies discover that they are charred ghosts. The wizard was delivering a powerful weapon to Szass Tam, but perished at the claws of the undead. The wizard carries the following parchment note:

K.

Your orders are to move the annihilators to the vault in Szass Tam's quarters. Unwanted accidents could trigger Nsi's doomsday device, so Valindra has cast a spell to disable the timers on the annihilators until it we destroy the doomsday device. At least you won't blow yourself up, butterfingers.

M.

The device is a 'Thayan Annihilator'. With a successful DC 12 Intelligence (Arcana) check, a character identifies it as follows:

- Annihilators are Thayan artefacts designed to rip holes in the reality of the multiverse. When activated, an annihilator creates a large *sphere of annihilation* that consumes everything in its radius (including the annihilator) before swiftly disappearing.
- Only living humanoid creatures can arm the timer, as it requires a small amount of blood and life-force to engage.
- The device has a clockwork timer. Valindra's spell prevents the characters from arming the timer. A character can still detonate the annihilator, but it would have to be done by hand without a timer.

The annihilator sounds like the perfect weapon to destroy the field generator.

VICTORY EVENT: ARMING THE ANNIHILATOR

Listen out for the announcement that Quest 2C has been won: with the doomsday device destroyed, Valindra releases her spell and the annihilators can be armed normally.

THE MAGIC CIRCLE

This encounter uses the gardens of rot map from Appendix 2 (reproduced below with notes). When the players approach here, read:

A magic circle scores the earth ahead, sigils flickering with green flame. Ancient Chultan statues loom around it, and a squat, vine-covered tower rises from the undergrowth beyond. Inside the circle, a pair of red-robed wizards are locked in combat with a host of grisly undead figures. As they fight, wet holes open and close in the jungle floor nearby, disgorging more undead into the fray!

Drawn by the undead plague, the demon lord Orcus has sent his devourers to seize control of the horde. They've awoken the slumbering spirits in the statues, which have turned the garden against the Red Wizards. If the characters offer their help to the wizards, they fight alongside the group.

ENEMIES

- Two **mag**es, Clozar and Evrul, are fighting back-to-back inside the circle (with 3 and 12 hit points remaining and only 1st level spell slots).
- At tier 3, the wizards confront a **devourer** and four **wraiths**.
- At tier 4, they confront two **devourers** and eight **wraiths**.

The undead attack all living creatures. They carry the zombie plague, yet Orcus's hold on them makes them resistant to the drumming.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Deathly rifts. Any creature that steps through a deathly rift can teleport to another rift of their choosing within the encounter area and continue their movement. If the creature is not undead, it takes 10 necrotic damage at tier 3 or 25 necrotic damage at tier 4 as it passes through.

Statues. The statues depict Chultan spirits of vengeance. With a successful DC 10 Intelligence (Arcana or Religion) check, a character examining the statues discerns they are the source of the evil in this area (see 'the Living Jungle', below). Each of the eight statues has AC 12, a damage threshold of

ARMING THE ANNIHILATOR

Prior to arriving here, the characters find a weapon called a THAYAN ANNIHILATOR. The clockwork timer can't be set until the administrators announce it – until then, it can only be detonated by hand.

DESTROY THE ANTIMAGIC FIELD

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

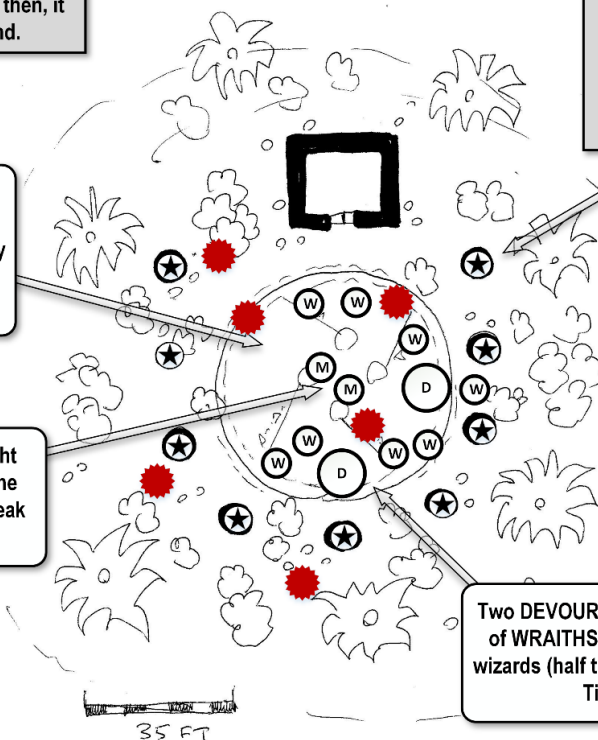
While the evil statues still function, the garden can use legendary actions to relocate the rifts, create grasping tendrils from a rift, or cause wights to emerge from the rifts.

Destroying the magic circle is the character's main objective. They could use the annihilator to destroy it, or disable the four sigils using *dispel magic*.

Two Thayan mages fight back-to-back against the undead, but are both weak and low on spells.

Creatures can step into one DEATHLY RIFT to emerge from any another. If they're not undead, they take necrotic damage.

Two DEVOURERS and a group of WRAITHS are fighting the wizards (half these numbers for Tier 3).



8, 22 hit points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage.

Magic circle. The magic circle empowers the antimagic field surrounding the palace. To disable it, the characters must either:

- Dispel each of the circle's four sigils with a *dispel magic* spell using a sixth-level or higher spell slot.
- Use the annihilator to remove the circle from existence (see 'Detonating the Annihilator' below). If the players can't yet set the timer, the operator must die in the blast.

THE LIVING JUNGLE

While any statues remain intact, the garden 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 garden regains spent legendary actions at initiative count 20 of each round (beating ties).

Shifting Rifts. The garden repositions a deathly rift to any unoccupied space within the encounter area.

Grasping Tendrils. One creature within 10 feet of a deathly rift must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or be pulled through the rift to emerge from another rift in the encounter area of the garden's choosing (taking necrotic damage as normal).

Spew Undead (Costs 2 Actions). At tier 3, three **wights** emerge from deathly rifts within the encounter area. At tier 4, six **wights** emerge.

DETONATING THE ANNIHILATOR

Any humanoid holding the annihilator detonate it by hand. When the annihilator fires, all objects within 10 feet of it are destroyed (including the annihilator itself). Creatures take 150 force damage upon entering the sphere and again at the start of each of their turns, winking out of existence if this damage reduces them to 0 hit points. When no creatures or objects remain inside the sphere, it collapses in on itself and disappears permanently.

Valindra's magic has disabled the clockwork timer. When her spell lifts, a character can use an action to set the timer for up to ten rounds.

ADJUSTING THIS ENCOUNTER

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter, according to your group. These are not cumulative.

- **Very Weak:** At tier 3, remove two wraiths. At tier 4, remove four wraiths.
- **Weak:** At tier 3, remove one wraith. At Tier 4, remove two wraiths.

- **Strong:** At tier 3, add two wraiths. At Tier 4, add four wraiths.

- **Very Strong:** At tier 3, add three wraiths. At Tier 4, add six wraiths.

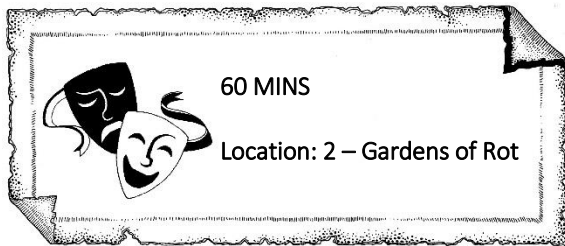
CONCLUSION

Ask a player to deliver the victory boon for this quest to the administrators (see Appendix 3.)

TREASURE

For completing this quest, characters receive a magic item and one treasure award from their faction. These treasures are awarded at the end of the adventure.

QUEST 2B: SILENCE THE GARGOYLES



QUEST SUMMARY

The characters pose as Red Wizards to silence the screaming gargoyles around Szass Tam's tower.

BEGINNING THE QUEST

If the players choose this quest, read the following aloud:

The central tower of the crawling palace looms ahead. A once-majestic garden stretches before it, now choked with palms and creepers. The undergrowth is both rotten and alive: oozing with pestilence, thick with mist, and haunted by darting forms. Stone columns jut from the murk, surmounted by Chultan statues. The whole structure rocks gently on its iron platform.

Your allies have gathered at the edge of the garden. As you approach, a rakish-looking halfling beckons you closer.

"Old and powerful gargoyles defend that tower, bent to the will of the Red Wizards. When the gargoyles scream, they hypnotize all who hear them. Thankfully, I know a man who can get us inside to disable them!"

The halfling explains the following:

- One of the Red Wizards, Draumglau Groth, has approached the alliance with terms to defect.
- He's offered to smuggle a group of infiltrators into the gargoyle's tower. On the way, he'll teach them the command words to dismiss the gargoyles from the wizard's servitude.
- Draumglau can brief the infiltrators on any security protocols around the tower. The characters are to meet him inside the garden.

Assuming the characters agree to his ploy, the halfling hands them a set of crimson robes so they can disguise themselves as Red Wizards. Not all characters need to pose as spellcasters: the organization also employs mercenaries and spies. The Red Wizards have no racial restrictions.

MEETING THE DEFECTOR

The characters meet Draumglau a short way inside the garden. Read the following aloud:

A bald human with gold skin awaits inside the garden. Seeing you, he breaks into wracking coughs.

"I'm Draumglau", he gasps. "Follow me, and listen carefully. I've arranged for you to pose as special agents. Once inside, you need to act like you know what you're doing."

Draumglau walks toward a vine-covered tower. Along the way, he whispers secrets to you about your mission. Between his coughing and the ever-present howling of the dead, you can't make out everything he tells you. Before you can clarify the details, three Red Wizards step from the undergrowth. Draumglau looks shocked to see them.

"Ah, there you are, Draumglau", says one. "These must be the agents you promised. We'll take them from here."

Draumglau bows respectfully, and the Red Wizards march you away.

SECRET INFORMATION

Each character missed one or more of Draumglau's facts! Deal out the **missed information** handouts until all seven are in play (see Appendix 4). **The players must not read their handouts!** Instead, each player must place their handout so everyone but them can see it! Either:

- Copy the handouts to Post-It notes and ask the players to stick them to their foreheads.
- Print the handouts as table-tents, and ask the players to angle theirs so only they can't read them.

Give the players a moment to read each other's handouts before continuing. For your benefit, the missed information is reproduced below:

"My orders are to interrogate the captive."

"The standing stone is key to deciphering the command phrase."

"Always bow to the smiling face."

"I must act like I'm our leader."

"My orders are to serve Lord Hekradon."

"We must disable the gargoyles before the interrogation ends."

"The command phrase to disable the gargoyles is etched on the magic circle."

Once the handouts are in place, tell the players that they shouldn't be asking questions about

their mission or reminding each other about their orders. Doing so arouses suspicion!

THE ANTIMAGIC FIELD

The tower lies within the enlarged *antimagic field* surrounding the central palace. Inside this field, spells can't be cast, summoned creatures disappear, and even magic items become mundane (see the spell description for details).

A group of Red Wizards have gathered here. Two warriors chat outside a military tent, while a third leans against a standing stone etched with ancient script. A fourth figure studies the magic circle. His head has been replaced by a grotesque cube of metal, with stretched human faces grafted to four of its sides. The wizards who escorted you here pause at the edge of the clearing.

“Well, then. How do you want to do this?”

VICTORY EVENT: LIFTING THE ANTIMAGIC FIELD

Listen out for the announcement that Quest 2A has been won: when the magic circle is ruptured, the antimagic field lifts over this area and the characters can cast spells again.

It's now up to the players to improvise the scene. Their goal is to figure out the command phase and speak it aloud to disable the guardians without alerting the wizards.

THE TOWER OF GARGOYLES

This encounter uses the gardens of rot map from Appendix 2 (reproduced below with notes). When the characters arrive here, read:

GATHERING SUSPICION

Each time a character acts suspiciously, note down one failure on a scrap piece of paper. If the group accrues three failures, the wizards demand they prove their loyalty or die. A successful group Charisma (Deception) check opposed by the lead Red Wizard's Wisdom (Insight) can remove one failed check.

The wizards escort you to the base of the tower, where they've erected a makeshift camp. Gargoyles leer from the ruined columns and a ritual circle peeks out from under the ivy.

ANTIMAGIC FIELD
This area occurs inside the *antimagic field*. Listen out for the administrators to announce that the field has been dispelled. After this point, the characters can use magic!

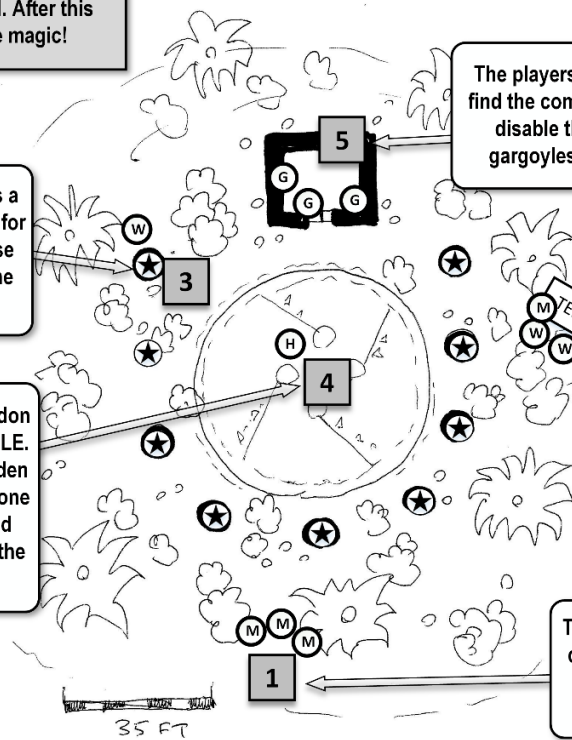
SILENCE THE GARGOYLES

This **STANDING STONE** contains a sequence of symbols that is vital for deciphering the command phrase from the ritual circle. Kiermov the sword master watches over it.

The players' objective is to find the command phrase to disable the screaming gargoyles in this tower.

The fearsome Lord Hekradon studies this **RITUAL CIRCLE**. Strange symbols and hidden phrases are etched here, one of which is the command phase needed to control the screaming gargoyles.

Two elite warriors, Karinax and Groth, watch over a tent containing a suspected traitor wizard called Faulko.



The characters **START HERE** in disguise, escorted here by the Red Wizards Mekos, Nurmax, and Vekross.

AREA 1: START

The characters enter from this area. Three red wizards are present (Mekos, Nurmax, and Vekross). As the characters explore, at least one red wizard escorts each group.

- At tier 3, there are three **mag**es.
- At tier 4, there are three **ev**okers.

Remember that the wizards can't cast spells while the *antimagic field* is in place!

AREA 2: MILITARY TENT

Two guards (Karinax and Groth) watch over Faulko, a **mage** suspected of spying.

- At tier 3, there are two **gladiators**.
- At tier 4, there are two **blackguards**.

Faulko was caught with a half-penned defection note on his person (Draumglau planted this to frame him). Faulko struggles to prove his innocence, and the guards expect the characters to extract a confession via torture. If things look serious, Faulko confesses to avoid facing a slow and painful death.

OBTAINING THE CONFESSION!

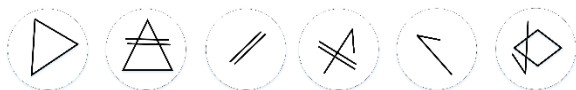
If Faulko confesses, the guards have orders to escort the characters from the garden (apart from the one assigned to serve Lord Hekradon). Any hesitance to leave could make the guards suspicious!

AREA 3: STANDING STONE

The sword-master Kiermov Hok leans against this stone. He's bored, and eagerly questions newcomers for news from his homeland.

- At tier 3, Kiermov is a **blackguard**.
- At tier 4, Kiermov is a **warlord**.

The standing stone has the following set of symbols etched around it:



Give the players the **standing stone symbols** handout if they examine the stone. The symbols are a sequence. A diamond symbol would be next in the sequence:



This knowledge is vital for deciphering the command phrase from the magic circle.

AREA 4: RITUAL CIRCLE

Strange symbols and hidden phrases are etched into the ritual circle. The Red Wizards know which phrase commands the gargoyles, but Lord Hekradon believes the circle has additional powers. He is busy examining it for clues. He challenges any character who interrupts his work (see 'Roleplaying Lord Hekradon', below).

If a character presents himself as his assistant, Lord Hekradon demands that they serve as his scribe as he studies the circle. Throughout the process, he uses his four faces to pester the character relentlessly. He won't divulge the command phrase unless tricked, and becomes suspicious if the players ask for it.

- At tier 3, Lord Hekradon is a **blackguard**.
- At tier 4, Lord Hekradon is a **death knight**.

Give the players the **ritual circle** handout if they study it in depth (reproduced below).

If the players read the words marked with the diamond in a clockwise direction, they decipher the following phrase: "WISE WORDS BIND STONE MINDS". This phrase commands the gargoyles at Area 4.

ROLEPLAYING LORD HEKRADON

Lord Hekradon is in charge here. The minds of four wizards share his body, their faces grafted to his dice-shaped head. Lord Hekradon can rotate his six-sided head laterally to present one of the following faces:

Angry: Hekradon shouts and blusters madly.

Smiling: Cold and calculating, this face belonged to a high-ranking wizard of yore. If the characters don't bow when this face appears, they gain suspicion.

Sad: This face is always defeatist and moaning.

Shocked: Hekradon switches to this face if the players say something that surprises him.

HIDDEN LORE

Lord Hekradon carries a book of arcane lore in his hands, and studies it as he examines the circle. Stealing this book completes the faction assignment for any Harper characters present.

AREA 5: TOWER OF GARGOYLES

Gargoyles roost on the roof of this tower and atop the nearby columns.

- At tier 3 and 4, there are three screaming **gargoyles** in this area.

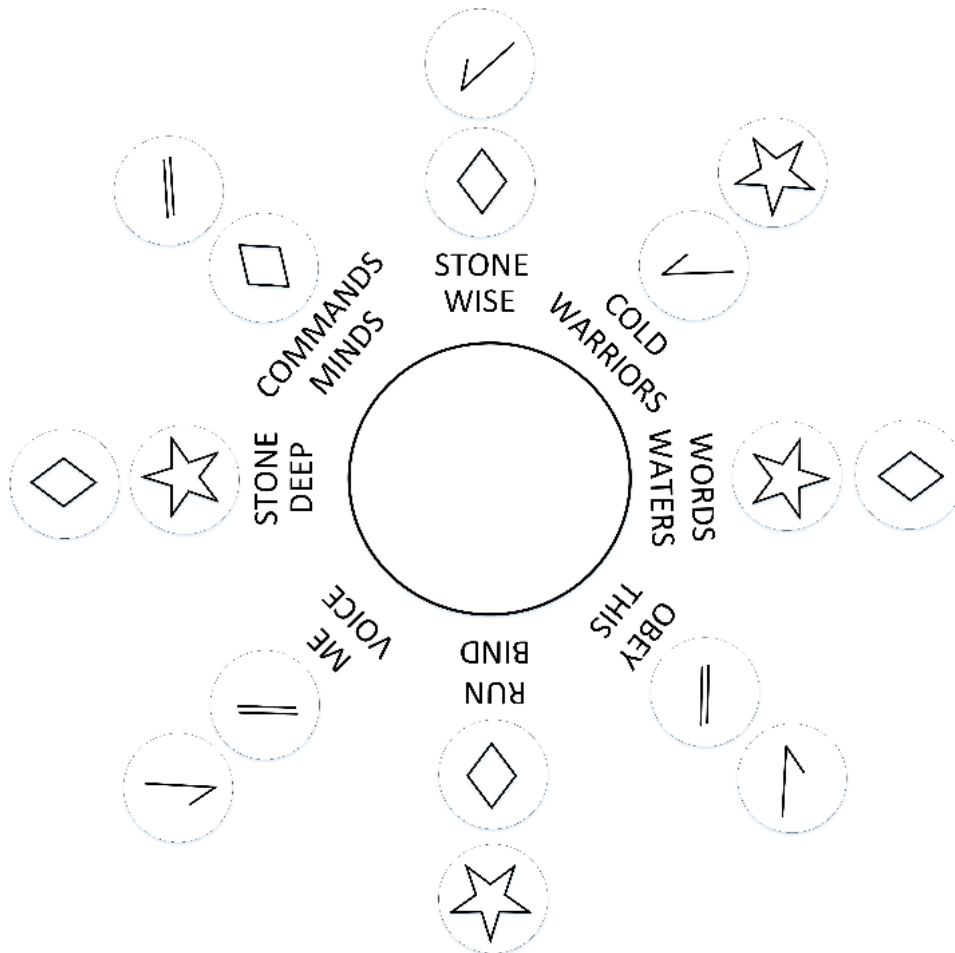
If a character speaks the command phrase aloud outside the tower, he or she can order the gargoyles to abandon the area and cease their screaming. Until dismissed, the gargoyles are sworn to protect the Red Wizards and fight alongside them.

CONCLUSION

Ask a player to deliver the victory boon for this quest to the administrators (see Appendix 3.)

TREASURE

For completing this quest, characters receive a magic item and one treasure award from their faction. These treasures are awarded at the end of the adventure.



QUEST 2C: DISARM THE DOOMSDAY DEVICE



QUEST SUMMARY

The characters break into the Vault of Dead Men to disarm Ras Nsi's doomsday device.

BEGINNING THE QUEST

If the players choose this quest, read the following aloud:

The central tower of the crawling palace looms ahead. A once-majestic garden stretches before it, now choked with palms and creepers. The undergrowth is both rotten and alive: oozing with pestilence, thick with mist, and haunted by darting forms. Stone columns jut from the murk, surmounted by Chultan statues. The whole structure rocks gently on its iron platform.

Your allies have gathered at the edge of the garden. A robed tabaxi gazes toward the central tower, her brow knitted in concern.

"Something is wrong", she purrs. "I sense something ancient under the earth... something waiting to destroy us."

The tabaxi mystic introduces herself as Shera the Cloaked. She provides the following information:

- Something underneath the garden is affecting the Weave across the whole palace.
- Shera senses that it is a weapon: perhaps something created long ago by Ras Nsi himself.
- She wants the characters to identify the source of this power and report back to her. She can point out its rough location from here.
- Shera loans the characters a *sending stone* so they can communicate with her. When they find the source of the anomaly, they should contact her.

INTO THE GARDEN

The evil that suffuses the garden grows stronger as the characters approach their destination.

- On route, the characters encounter a swarm of two hundred plague **zombies** charging through the garden.
- The swarm is so large that not all the zombies arrive at the same time. At the start of each round, 20 zombies from the swarm charge into the area. Characters can see that many more are moving up behind!

The characters hear the undead approaching from afar. They can fight the zombies in the thick undergrowth, or avoid them on a successful DC 10 group Dexterity (Stealth) check.

MAUSOLEUM ENTRANCE

This encounter uses the gardens of rot map from Appendix 2 (reproduced below with notes). When the characters approach here, read:

An edifice of worked stone looms at the far side of this clearing. Grinning skeletons decorate the tower's flanks, marking it as some form of mausoleum or burial shrine. Broken columns topped by leering gargoyles radiate in an arc in front of it. Between them, a bronze ring etched with pictorial plates peeks from the undergrowth.

AREA 1: GARGOYLE ROOSTS

Screaming **gargoyles** perch on the columns marked on the map. Each gargoyle unleashes its Shriek attack on any creature that it sees entering within range. To stay out of sight, a character must move stealthily and succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity (Stealth) check. The rest of the gargoyles only attack if they are targeted by an attack or spell.

Whenever a gargoyle uses its Shriek power, 20 plague **zombies** are drawn here from the swarm milling beyond the clearing. Characters can hide from these zombies with a successful DC 12 group Dexterity (Stealth) check. If they've already defeated the zombie horde, no more zombies can arrive.

VICTORY EVENT: BANISHING THE GARGOYLES

Listen out for the announcement that Quest 2B has been won: when the heroes dismiss the screaming gargoyles, they fly away from this location.

AREA 2: THE BRONZE RING

Each pictograph shows a different scene from the construction of the vault (see the map for the location of each pictograph). Examined up close, the pictographs reveal the following scenes:

Frieze A: A powerful Chultan noble dressed in silks marches toward the mausoleum. Behind him, a horde of zombies lugs a large, pyramid-shaped device on their shoulders.

Intelligence (History) DC 12: The noble is Ras Nsi disgraced Chosen of Ubtao, who was banished from the holy city of Mezro for committing genocide. He built the Crawling Palace.

Frieze B: Robed Chultans cast a spell to entomb a tattooed man in a block of stone. Those not aiding them cover their ears protectively.

Intelligence (Religion) DC 18: The tattoos are infernal, indicating that the man is some form of devil.

Frieze C: A Chultan priest strides across a pool of fire, wearing a blindfold. The flames roar around him, yet he remains unhurt.

Intelligence (Religion or History) DC 14: The priesthood of Ubtao believed that life was a maze. To reach paradise, one

must find the path within oneself. Becoming blind to pain was often key to enlightenment.

Frieze D: A Chultan woman kneels at the center of a maze, driving a dagger into her own heart. Blood gushes from the wound and fills the maze around her.

Intelligence (Religion or History) DC 14: Chultan priests who believed they had obtained transcendence would sometimes take their own lives to hasten their ascendance to the afterlife.

Frieze E: A man stands over the corpse of stork-like bird with a needlelike beak. He drinks a cup of its blood as he steps into a seething swarm of serpents.

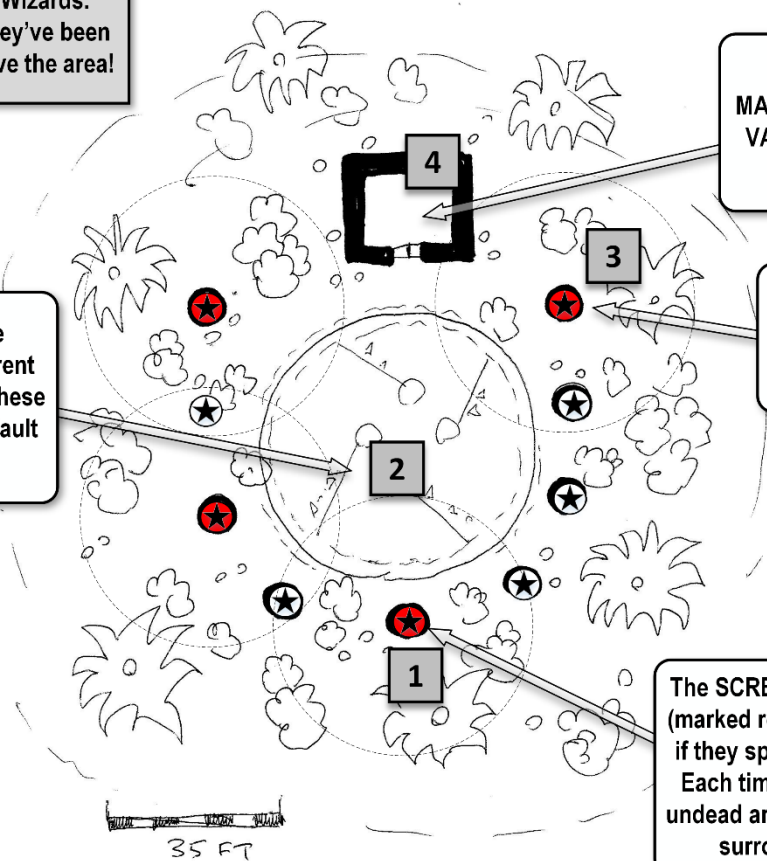
Intelligence (Nature) DC 13: The stork-like creature is an eblis: an evil, intelligent bird known for its lies.

Intelligence (Religion or History) DC 15: In Chultan culture, the trickster gods were represented by animals. They're often used as metaphors for people with similar traits.

DISARM THE DOOMSDAY DEVICE

SCREAMING GARGOYLES
The screaming gargoyles that perch on the pillars here are bound to the Red Wizards. Listen out for the announcement they've been dismissed – at which point they leave the area!

Ancient carvings on the **BRONZE RING** show different images from Chultan life. These can aid characters in the Vault of Dead Men...



Characters who enter the **MAUSOLEUM** are teleported to the **VAULT OF DEAD MEN** where the doomsday device resides.

An **ENTOMBED JEWELER** begs the characters to free him from his magic prison. He's actually a devil, and is lying to get away.

The **SCREAMING GARGOYLES** (marked red) unleash their howl if they spot intruders in range. Each time they scream, more undead are summoned from the surrounding gardens.

Frieze E: A strange, pyramid device explodes above a Chultan city, destroying it in a cataclysmic explosion.

Intelligence (History) DC 12: That city looks like the holy city of Mezro. Ras Nsi had sworn to conquer Mezro or die trying. Perhaps he planned to destroy it if he failed?

AREA 3: THE PETRIFIED JEWELER

This column depicts the relief of a man struggling to free himself from the stonework. The rendering is near-perfect: so much so, you wonder if he's a real person who was petrified within the column...

When a character approaches, the figure's eyes grind open and he begins to whisper for them to help him. If they talk to him, the stone figure reveals the following information:

- The figure claims to be a jeweler who Ras Nsi entombed after he accidentally scratched one of Nsi's gems.
- He begs the characters to free him using magic.

The figure is lying. In fact, he is an **erinyes**. The devil can be freed by casting a *dispel magic* or *remove curse* spell over the column, at which point it reveals its true form and tries to escape.

The magic that traps the erinyes doesn't make it invulnerable. If a weapon strikes the statue with sufficient force (Damage Threshold 5), the erinyes takes damage. As it does, blood gushes from the stony wound.

AREA 4: MAUSOLEUM

A pair of double doors are set onto the face of the mausoleum. These grind open to reveal a dusty spiral staircase leading down into the earth.

Any living creature that touches the steps is teleported into the Vault of Dead Men (see below). Creatures using flight or magic to scout the stairs discovers that they terminate in a dead end after just a couple of turns.

THE VAULT OF DEAD MEN

When a character appears inside the vault, read:

You find yourself in another world. You stand on a narrow step made from skulls, hovering high above a corpse-filled crater. A glowing gate wavers behind you, and black rain lashes from swirling ash clouds. Hundreds of bone steps spiral down to the bottom of the crater, where a gold pyramid device spins on its axis.

The character is now in the Shadowfell. If they step back through the gate, they return to their own world. Within the demiplane, the characters can still communicate with Shera via the *sending stone* but the message has a 5% chance of not getting through.

THE EIGHT HUNDRED STEPS

This demiplane of the Shadowfell was created by Ras Nsi for the sole purpose of storing his doomsday device. Navigating the steps is key to unlocking and arming the doomsday device. Each step hovers two feet above the step below: the entire staircase is 1,600 feet high.

HAZARD: NAVIGATING THE 800 STEPS.

The steps have many magical defenses:

Exhaustion: The negativity suffusing the plane bears down on visitors. For every two minutes that the character remains here, they must succeed on a DC 8 Constitution saving throw or take one level of exhaustion. Moving at normal speed, a character must make three saves to navigate the staircase.

No magical flight: Magical flight is impossible in the demiplane. This includes spells and items that provide the power of flight. Such magic ceases to function while inside the demiplane.

Trapped steps. Three of the steps are trapped (step 100, 300, and 500). Each of these steps looks markedly different from its neighbors. Characters who've studied the friezes received clues to surviving these steps.

- **Fire step.** This step flickers with blue flame. A character who closes their eyes when they step onto it is unharmed. Characters who keep their eyes open must succeed on a DC 15 Charisma saving throw, disintegrating into ash on a failed save, and taking 27 (5d10) fire damage per tier on a successful one.
- **Serpent step.** This step seethes with shadowy snakes. A character who's drunk the blood of a liar in the last hour can move through unharmed (the erinyes is a perfect candidate). Characters who haven't done so must succeed on a DC 15 Charisma saving throw, dying immediately of blood poisoning if they fail the save, and taking 27 (5d10) poison damage per tier on a successful one.
- **Maze step.** The final trapped step depicts a maze. Stepping onto it has no harmful effects; however, to unlock the doomsday device a humanoid creature must die on this step. Any living humanoid that **leaves** the step must succeed on a DC 15 Charisma saving throw or suffer the effects of *bestow curse* spell cast with a 9th level slot (disadvantage on Charisma ability checks and saving throws).

THE DOOMSDAY DEVICE

The doomsday device is three feet tall and spins on its axis.

- No magic other than a *wish* spell can move the doomsday device from this location. If armed, it teleports itself back to the material plane.
- The doomsday device has 801 bronze keys set into keyholes across its faces. All but one key turns automatically when a living creature steps onto one of the 801 steps.
- The final key is set into the top of the pyramid, and can only be turned once all the others have been turned.

When the final key is turned, the Doomsday Device activates and teleports back to the clearing. Moments later, air in the demiplane begins to tremble as the plane begins to tear itself apart.

HIDDEN TREASURE CACHE

A locked compartment is hidden in the floor underneath the doomsday device (passive Perception DC 15 to spot when the device disappears). There is a lock on the compartment, but it can be opened with a DC 16 Dexterity (Thieves' Tools) check. This compartment contains a secret treasure cache (see "Rewards").

ESCAPING THE PLANE

Two rounds after the Doomsday Device teleports away, the eight hundred steps begin to disintegrate from the bottom up. Characters still in the demiplane can run back up the steps, but must succeed on two more exhaustion saving throws to reach the top. Characters who are too exhausted to move at full speed can't keep up and the steps disintegrate beneath them. When the final step disintegrates, all creatures trapped inside the demiplane are destroyed and their charred bones vomited forth from the mausoleum entrance.

DISABLING THE DEVICE

Once activated, the Doomsday Device begin to emit a subsonic hum that grows louder with every passing minute. To disable the device, the characters must turn all the keys back to their starting positions.

DESTROYING THE DOOMSDAY DEVICE

The Doomsday Device could be the perfect weapon to destroy the Crawling Palace and put an end to Szass Tam's plans. However, Sheera warns against detonating it. There's no telling to what extent the devastation could spread: potentially, it could destroy the whole continent!

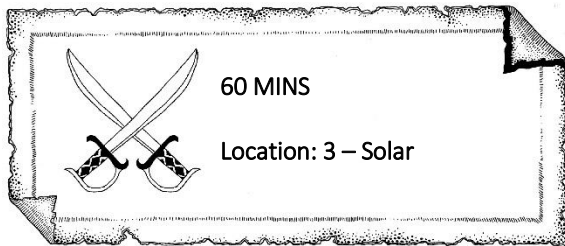
CONCLUSION

Ask a player to deliver the victory boon for this quest to the administrators (see Appendix 3.)

TREASURE

For completing this quest, characters receive a magic item and one treasure award from their faction. These treasures are awarded at the end of the adventure.

QUEST 3: SLAY THE LICH



QUEST SUMMARY

The characters confront Szass Tam (tier 4) or his lich commander, Valindra Shadowmantle (tier 3).

BEGINNING THE QUEST

If the players choose this quest, read the following aloud:

You enter the palace and find yourselves in a wide hall with a domed roof. Frescos depicting the lost city of Mezro decorate the walls, and the floor is engraved with a topographical map of Chult: replete with mountains, plateaus and swathes of jungle. The whole structure shudders to the inexorable march of the tortoises below.

A robed figure stalks the map, lighting candles one-by-one with a flickering taper. A red dragon lurks in the darkness beyond, eyes twinkling in the candlelight. Without turning, the figure rasps the following words.

“Come forward. I know you’re there.”

CONFRONTING THE LICH

Use Map: Solar for this encounter. The lich magically senses the characters’ arrival and tries to engage them in conversation, saying “there is no need for bloodshed when wise words hold council.”

THE PARLEY

The lich tries to ask as many questions as possible, lighting the *candles of stolen power* as it does so (see sidebar, below). Roleplay the scene, using the following questions as inspiration. The lich addresses each question to a different character in the group. Whenever a character answers truthfully, the lich lights a new candle.

- “The Merchant Princes of Port Nyanzaru are corrupt. Why do you support them?”
- “We aim to return this country to its former glory. Will you not join us?”

- “You were brave to come here. Tell me who you are, so I may know my enemy better.”
- “Myself and my colleagues have the power to wipe out the undead throughout this land. Is that not something you want?”
- “I believe that is fear I see in your eyes. Am I wrong?”
- “My people fear me: that fear gives me authority. Why are you the leader of this little band?”

Adlib other questions as necessary. Before the encounter begins, write down the characters’ names on a piece of paper. Each time a character replies truthfully to one of the lich’s question, secretly mark a check next to the character’s name.

The lich is stalling for time. When at least one candle has been lit for every character, the lich orders its dragon into combat and attacks.

CANDLES OF STOLEN POWER

These candles sap the souls of those who answer the lich’s questions. When the lich attacks, the candles explode and suppress one of the following powers from each character who answered truthfully:

- One spell slot of the highest level available to the character.
- One Extra Attack class feature.
- The rogue’s Cunning Action class feature.

Choose any feature that is appropriate. If a character answered more than one question truthfully, you can suppress multiple features (including the same feature more than once).

Each exploded candle transforms into a hovering sphere of soul energy. If a character moves close to a sphere, they can take an action to attempt a DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check. On a success, they dispel the sphere and restore the suppressed feature to whoever it belongs to. Alternatively, a *dispel magic* spell targeted on a sphere dispels the sphere and restores the suppressed feature.

ENEMIES

- At tier 3, the characters face **Valindra Shadowmantle** and one **red dragon (young)**.
- At tier 4, the characters face **Szass Tam**, one **red dragon (adult)** and a **shield guardian** that has a permanent *greater invisibility* spell cast over it.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

The architecture of the palace is ancient and crumbling. During the fight, it should collapse dramatically around the characters!

Balconies. Each marked section of balcony collapses if it or character standing on it takes more than 15 points of bludgeoning, piercing or slashing damage in a single attack. When it collapses, all creatures standing on it fall to the ground below, taking an additional 16 (3d10) bludgeoning damage from the tumbling debris. Whenever a section of balcony collapses, there is a 20% chance that an adjacent section is pulled down with it.

- **Very Strong:** At Tier 3, add four **evokers** and give Valindra access to 8th level spells. At Tier 4, add four **archmages**.

CONCLUSION

Ask a player to deliver the victory boon for this quest to the administrators (see Appendix 3.) With the lich destroyed, the drummers flee the dome above and the drums of the dead are silenced!

TREASURE

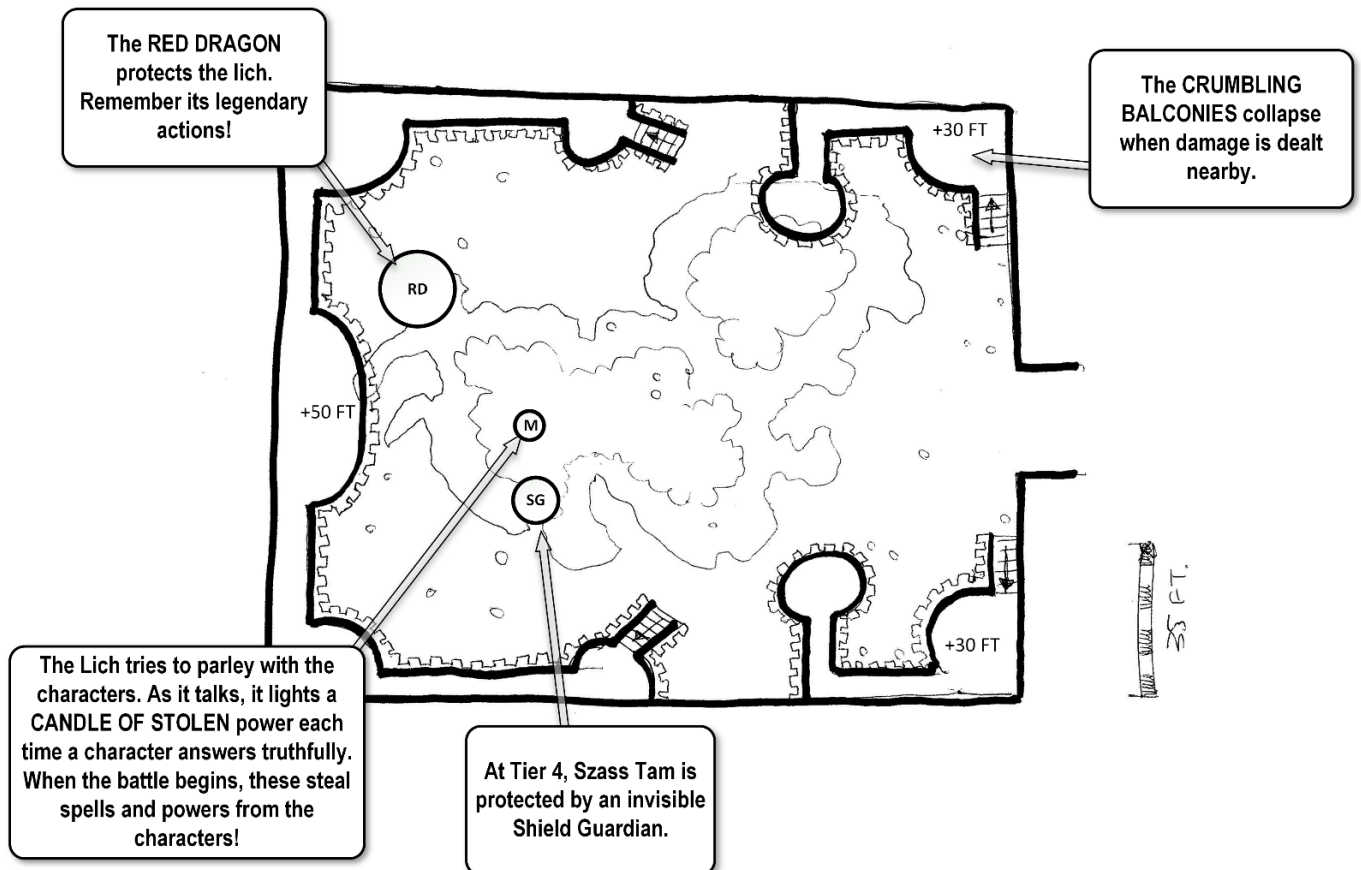
For completing this quest, characters receive a magic item and one treasure award from their faction. These treasures are awarded at the end of the adventure.

ADJUSTING THIS ENCOUNTER

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter, according to your group. These are not cumulative.

- **Very Weak:** At Tier 3, the dragon only has half hit points and Valindra has already cast all her spells above level 4. At Tier 4, the dragon only has half hit points and Szass Tam has already cast all his spells above level 6.
- **Weak:** At Tier 3, the dragon only has three-quarters of its hit points and Valindra has already cast all her spells above level 5. At Tier 4, the dragon only has three-quarters of its hit points and Szass Tam has already cast all his spells above level 8.
- **Strong:** At Tier 3, add two **evoker** and give Valindra access to 7th level spells. At Tier 4, add two **archmages**.

SLAY THE LICH



REWARDS

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

EXPERIENCE

TIER 1 MIN/MAX XP: 12,500/19,000 XP EA.

TIER 2 MIN/MAX XP: 20,000/33,000 XP EA.

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

COMBAT AWARDS

Name of Foe	XP Per Foe
Abjurer	5,000
Archmage	8,400
Blackguard	3,900
Champion	5,000
Commoner	10
Death God (modified Iron Golem)	15,000
Death Knight	18,000
Demilich	20,000
Devourer	10,000
Evoker	5,000
Gargoyle, Screaming	450
Gladiator	1,800
Illusionist	700
Iron Golem	15,000
Szass Tam (Lich)	33,000
Mage	2,300
Necromancer	5,000
Red Dragon, Adult	18,000
Red Dragon, Young	5,900
Shield Guardian	2,900
Sorcery Crow (modified Raven)	10
Valindra Shadowmantle (Lich)	33,000
Veteran	700
Warlord	8,400
Wight, Plague	700
Wraith, Plague	1,800
Zombie, Plague	50

NON-COMBAT AWARDS

Task or Accomplishment	XP Per Character (Tier 3 / Tier 4)
Complete 2B without combat	4,000/6,000
Disarm the Doomsday Device (2C)	4,000/6,000

TREASURE

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

TREASURE AWARDS

Item Name	GP Value (Tier 3 / Tier 4)
Quest Reward	3,000gp/5,000gp
Secret Treasure	1,500gp/2,500gp

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

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

TIER 3 MAGIC ITEM AWARDS

+3 WAND OF THE WAR MAGE (1ST SUCCESSFUL QUEST)

Wand, very rare (requires attunement by a spellcaster).

This thick wand is made of polished steel with a sword-like pommel. It can be used as a mace in melee combat. This item is described in **Players Handout 1**.

+2 HALF PLATE (2ND SUCCESSFUL QUEST)

Armor (half plate), very rare

This armor is made of thin plates of rune-engraved stone. While worn, the wearer becomes proficient in Dwarvish. This item is described in **Player Handout 2**.

WAND OF POLYMORPH (3RD SUCCESSFUL QUEST)

Wand, very rare (requires attunement by a spellcaster)

This wand is made of what appears to be the skeletal finger of some unusually-large humanoid. When wielded, it occasionally flexes and twitches. This item can be described in **Player Handout 3**.

TIER 4 MAGIC ITEM AWARDS

SPELLGUARD SHIELD (1ST SUCCESSFUL QUEST)

Armor (shield), very rare (requires attunement)

This shield is fashioned from a single piece of flawless crystal with straps of supple leather. This item is described in **Player Handout 4**.

TOME OF CLEAR THOUGHT (2ND SUCCESSFUL QUEST)

Wondrous item, very rare

More information on this award can be found in **Player Handout 5**.

TOME OF LEADERSHIP AND INFLUENCE (3RD SUCCESSFUL QUEST)

Wondrous item, very rare

More information on this award can be found in **Player Handout 7**.

STORY AWARDS

During the course of this adventure, the characters may earn the following story award:

BLESSED OF UBTAO

Awarded to tier 4 characters who answered Ubtao faithfully during his vision. This story award is described in **Appendix 5a**.

DARK PROMISE

Awarded to characters who made a pact with Dagkamir in Quest 1C: Free the Slaves. This story award is described in **Appendix 5b**.

LICH SLAYERS

Awarded to all characters if this section of the event was a success overall. This story award is described in **Appendix 5c**.

PLAYER REWARDS

For completing this mission, the characters earn downtime and renown as described in the D&D Adventurers League Dungeon Master's Guide (ALDMG). In addition, characters have the opportunity to earn additional renown as follows:

Members of the Emerald Enclave (rank 2 or higher) who keep one of the infected "alive" during the event earn **one additional renown**.

Members of the Harpers (rank 2 or higher) who recover the historical tomes during the event earn **one additional renown**.

Members of the Lords' Alliance (rank 2 or higher) who survive the event without transforming into a plague zombie earn **one additional renown**.

Members of the Order of the Gauntlet (rank 2 or higher) who land a killing blow on at least 3 undead monsters during the event earn **one additional renown**.

Members of the Zhentarim (rank 2 or higher) who find the cache of hidden gold during the event earn **one additional renown**.

DM REWARDS

In exchange for running this adventure, you earn DM Rewards as described for a **level 18** adventure in the *D&D Adventurers League Dungeon Master's Guide* (ALDMG).

APPENDIX 1. MONSTER / NPC STATISTICS

ABJURER

Medium humanoid (human), any alignment

Armor Class 12 (15 with *mage armor*)

Hit Points 84 (13d8 + 26)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws Int +8, Wis +5

Skills Arcana +8, History +8

Senses passive Perception 11

Languages any four languages

Challenge 9 (5,000 XP)

Spellcasting. The archmage is an 13th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 16, +8 to hit with spell attacks). The abjurer has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *blade ward, dancing lights, mending, message, ray of frost*

1st level (4 slots): *alarm**, *mage armor**, *magic missile, shield**

2nd level (3 slots): *arcane lock**, *invisibility*

3rd level (3 slots): *counterspell**, *dispel magic**, *fireball*

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

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

6th level (3 slots): *flesh to stone, globe of invulnerability**

7th level (3 slots): *symbol**, *teleport*

**Abjuration spell of 1st level or higher*

Arcane Ward. The abjurer has a magical ward that has 30 hit points. Whenever the abjurer takes damage, the ward takes the damage instead. If the ward is reduced to 0 hit points, the abjurer takes any remaining damage. When the abjurer casts an abjuration spell of 1st level or higher, the ward regains a number of hit points equal to twice the level of the spell.

ACTIONS

Quarterstaff. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 2 (1d6 - 1) bludgeoning damage,

or 3 (1d8 - 1) bludgeoning damage if used with two hands.

ARCHMAGE

Medium humanoid (human), any alignment

Armor Class 13 (16 with *mage armor*)

Hit Points 99 (18d8 + 18)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	20 (+5)	15 (+2)	17 (+3)

Saving Throws Int +9, Wis +6

Skills Arcana +13, History +13

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

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Undercommon, Elvish, Dwarvish, Thayan, Gnomish, Netherese

Challenge 12 (8,400 XP)

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

Spellcasting. The archmage is an 18th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 17, +9 to hit with spell attacks). The archmage can cast *disguise self* and *invisibility* at will and has the following wizard spells prepared:

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

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

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

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

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

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

6th level (3 slots): *globe of invulnerability*

7th level (3 slots): *teleport*

8th level (3 slots): *mind blank**

9th level (3 slots): *time stop*

**The archmage casts these spells on itself before combat*

ACTIONS

Dagger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage,

BLACKGUARD

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

Armor Class 18 (plate)

Hit Points 153 (18d8 + 72)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws Wis +5, Cha +5

Skills Athletics +7, Deception +5, Intimidation +5

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

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

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

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

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

ACTIONS

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

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

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

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

CHAMPION

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 18 (plate)

Hit Points 143 (22d8 + 44)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	15 (+2)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Str +9, Con +6

Skills Athletics +9, Intimidation +5, Perception +6

Senses passive Perception 16

Languages any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 9 (5,000 XP)

Indomitable (2/Day). The champion rerolls a failed saving throw.

Second Wind (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). As a bonus action, the champion can regain 20 hit points.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The champion makes three attacks with its greatsword or its shortbow.

Greatsword. Melee Weapon Attack: +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d6 + 5) slashing damage, plus 7 (2d6) slashing damage if the champion has more than half of its total hit points remaining.

Light Crossbow. Ranged Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage, plus 7 (2d6) piercing damage if the champion has more than half of its total hit points remaining.

COMMONER

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 10

Hit Points 4 (1d8)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 0 (10 XP)

ACTIONS

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

DEATH GOD (MODIFIED IRON GOLEM)

Huge 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 language of its creator but can't speak

Challenge 16 (15,000 XP)

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

Necrotic Absorption. Whenever the death god is subjected to necrotic damage, it takes no damage and instead regains a number of hit points equal to the necrotic damage dealt.

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

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

Magic Weapons. The death god's weapon attacks are magical.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The death god makes two melee attacks.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +13 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 23 (3d10 + 7) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or contract the zombie plague (see Book 1: Event Overview)

Necrotic Breath (Recharge 6). The death god exhales necrotic gas in a 15-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 19 Constitution saving throw, taking 45 (10d8) necrotic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

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

Bite. The death god makes a Bite attack.

Engulf. The death god moves up to its speed. While doing so, it can enter Large or smaller creature's spaces. Whenever the death god enters a creature's space, the creature must make a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw.

On a successful save, the creature can choose to be pushed 5 feet back or to the side of the death god. A creature that chooses not to be pushed suffers the consequences of a failed save.

On a failed save, the death god enters the creature's space, and the creature takes 19 (3d12) necrotic damage and is engulfed. The engulfed creature can't breathe, is restrained, and takes 38 (6d12) necrotic damage at the start of each of the death god's turns. When the death god moves, the engulfed creature moves with it.

The engulfed creature can try to escape by taking an action to make a DC 18 Strength check. On a success, the creature escapes and enters a space of its choice within 5 feet of the death god.

Release Zombies (2 Actions). The death god summons four **zombies** into empty spaces within 20 feet.

DEATH KNIGHT

Medium undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 20 (p late, shield)

Hit Points 180 (19d8 + 95)

Speed 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	11 (+0)	20 (+5)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws Dex +6, Wis +9, Cha +10

Damage Immunities necrotic, poison

Condition Immunities exhaustion, frightened, poisoned

Senses darkvision 120ft., passive Perception 13

Languages Abyssal, Common

Challenge 17 (18,000 XP)

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

Marshal Undead. Unless the death knight is incapacitated, it and undead creatures of its choice within 60 feet of it have advantage on saving throws against features that turn undead.

Spellcasting. The death knight is a 19th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 18, +10 to hit with spell attacks). It has the following paladin spells prepared:

1st level (4 slots): *command*, *compelled du el*, *searing smite*

2nd level (3 slots): *hold person*, *magic weapon*

3rd level (3 slots): *dispel magic*, *elemental weapon*

4th level (3 slots): *banishment*, *staggering smite*

5th level (2 slots): *destructive wave* (necrotic)

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The death knight makes three longsword attacks.

Longsword. Melee Weapon Attack: +11 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 9 (1d8 + 5) slashing damage, or 10 (1d10 + 5) slashing damage if used with two hands, plus 18 (4d8) necrotic damage.

Hellfire Orb (1/Day). The death knight hurls a magical ball of fire that explodes at a point it can see within 120 feet of it. Each creature in a 20-foot-radius sphere centered on that point must make a DC 18 Dexterity saving throw. The sphere spreads around corners. A creature takes 35 (10d6) fire damage and 35 (10d6) necrotic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

REACTIONS

Parry. The death knight adds 6 to its AC against one melee attack that would hit it. To do so, the death knight must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.

DEMILICH

Tiny undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 20 (natural armor)

Hit Points 80 (20d4)

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

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
1 (-5)	20 (+5)	10 (+0)	20 (+5)	17 (+3)	20 (+5)

Saving Throws Con +6, Int + 11, Wis +9, Cha + 11

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from magic weapons

Damage Immunities necrotic, poison, psychic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons

Condition Immunities charmed, deafened, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, stunned

Senses truesight 120 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages -

Challenge 18 (20,000 XP)

Avoidance. If the demilich is subjected to an effect that allows it to make a saving throw to take only half damage, it instead takes no damage if it succeeds on the saving throw, and only half damage if it fails.

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

Turn Immunity. The demilich is immune to effects that turn undead.

ACTIONS

Howl (Recharge 5-6). The demilich emits a bloodcurdling howl. Each creature within 30 feet of the demilich that can hear the howl must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or drop to 0 hit points. On a successful save, the creature is frightened until the end of its next turn.

Life Drain. The demilich targets up to three creatures that it can see within 10 feet of it. Each target must succeed on a DC 19 Constitution saving throw or take 21 (6d6) necrotic damage, and the demilich regains hit points equal to the total damage dealt to all targets.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

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

- **Flight.** The demilich flies up to half its flying speed.
- **Cloud of Dust.** The demilich magically swirls its dusty remains. Each creature within 10 feet of the demilich, including around a corner, must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or be blinded until the end of the demilich's next turn. A creature that succeeds on the saving throw is immune to this effect until the end of the demilich's next turn.
- **Energy Drain (Costs 2 Actions).** Each creature within 30 feet of the demilich must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the creature's hit point maximum is magically reduced by 10 (3d6). If a creature's hit point maximum is reduced to 0 by this effect, the creature dies. A creature's hit point maximum can be restored with the greater restoration spell or similar magic.
- **Vile Curse (Costs 3 Actions).** The demilich targets one creature it can see within 30 feet of it. The target must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or be magically cursed. Until the curse ends, the target has disadvantage on attack rolls and saving throws. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the curse on a success.

DEVOURER

Large fiend, chaotic evil

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 178 (17d10 + 85)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	12 (+1)	20 (+5)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)	16 (+3)

Damage Resistances cold, fire, lightning

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Abyssal, telepathy 120 ft.

Challenge 13 (10,000 XP)

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The devourer makes two claw attacks and can use either Imprison Soul or Soul Rend.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d6 + 5) slashing damage plus 21 (6d6) necrotic damage.

Imprison Soul. The devourer chooses a living humanoid with 0 hit points that it can see within 30 feet of it. That creature is teleported inside the devourer's ribcage and imprisoned there. A creature imprisoned in this manner has disadvantage on death saving throws. If it dies while imprisoned, the devourer regains 25 hit points, immediately recharges Soul Rend, and gains an additional action on its next turn. Additionally, at the start of its next turn, the devourer regurgitates the slain creature as a bonus action, and the creature becomes an undead. If the victim had 2 or fewer Hit Dice, it becomes a zombie. If it had 3 to 5 Hit Dice, it becomes a ghoul. Otherwise, it becomes a wight. A devourer can imprison only one creature at a time.

Soul Rend (Recharge 6). The devourer creates a vortex of life-draining energy in a 20-foot radius centered on itself. Each humanoid in that area must make a DC 18 Constitution saving throw, taking 44 (8d10) necrotic damage on a failed save, or half as much on a successful one. Increase the damage by 10 for each living humanoid with 0 hit points in that area.

EVOKER

Medium humanoid (human), any alignment

Armor Class 12 (15 with *mage armor*)

Hit Points 66 (12d8 + 12)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws Int +7, Wis +5

Skills Arcana +7, History +7

Senses passive Perception 11

Languages any four languages

Challenge 9 (5,000 XP)

Spellcasting. The archmage is an 12th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). The abjurer has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *fire bolt**, *light**, *prestidigitation*, *ray of frost**

1st level (4 slots): *burning hands**, *mage armor*, *magic missile**

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

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

4th level (3 slots): *ice storm**, *stoneskin*

5th level (3 slots): *Bigby's hand**, *cone of cold**

6th level (3 slots): *chain lightning**, *wall of fire**

**Evocation spell of 1st level or higher*

Sculpt Spells. When the evoker casts an evocation spell that forces other creatures it can see, it can choose a number of them equal to 1 + the spell's level. These creatures automatically succeed on their saving throws against the spell. If a successful save means a chosen creature would take half damage from the spell, it instead takes no damage from it.

ACTIONS

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

GARGOYLE, SCREAMING

Medium elemental, chaotic evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 52 (7d8 + 21)

Speed 30 ft., fly 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	11 (+0)	16 (+3)	6 (-2)	11 (+0)	7 (-2)

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

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities exhaustion, petrified, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Terran

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

False Appearance. While the gargoyle remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from an inanimate statue.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The gargoyle makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its claws.

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

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) slashing damage.

SCREAMING GARGOYLE

Scream (Recharge 5-6). The gargoyle releases a mournful wail. This wail has no effect on constructs and undead. All other creatures within 30 feet of her than can hear her must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw. On a failure, a creature is stunned for one minute and loses half its remaining hit points. The creature can repeat the save at the end of each of its turns, ending the stunned effect on a success.

GLADIATOR

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 16 (studded leather, shield)

Hit Points 112 (15d8 + 45)

Speed 30 ft.

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

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

Skills Athletics +10, Intimidation +5

Senses passive Perception 11

Languages any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

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

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

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The gladiator makes three melee attacks or two ranged attacks.

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

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

REACTIONS

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

GOLEM, IRON

Large construct, unaligned

Armor Class 20 (natural armor)

Hit Points 210 (20d10 + 100)

Speed 50 ft., climb 50 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, prone

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.

ILLUSIONIST

Medium humanoid (human), any alignment

Armor Class 12 (15 with *mage armor*)

Hit Points 38 (7d8 + 7)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws Int +5, Wis +2

Skills Arcana +5, History +5

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages any four languages

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

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

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

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

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

3rd level (3 slots): *major image**, *phantom steed**

4th level (3 slots): *phantasmal killer**

*Illusion spell of 1st level or higher

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

ACTIONS

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

SZASS TAM (LICH)

Medium undead, any evil alignment

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 198 (18d8 + 54)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	16 (+3)	16 (+3)	20 (+5)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Con +10, Int +12, Wis +9

Skills Arcana +18, History +12, Insight +9, Perception +9

Damage Resistances cold, lightning, necrotic

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

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, poisoned

Senses truesight 120 ft., passive Perception 19

Languages Common plus up to five other languages

Challenge 21 (33,000 XP)

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

Spell Mastery. If the lich casts a spell that requires concentration, the duration of the spell lasts for as long as the lich maintains concentration (unique power to Szass Tam).

Rejuvenation. If it has a phylactery, a destroyed lich gains a new body in 1d10 days, regaining all its hit points and becoming active again. The new body appears within 5 feet of the phylactery.

Spellcasting. The lich is an 18th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 20, +12 to hit with spell attacks). The lich has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *mage hand*, *prestidigitation*, *ray of frost*

1st level (4 slots): *detect magic*, *magic missile*, *shield*, *thunderwave*

2nd level (3 slots): *detect thoughts*, *invisibility*, *Melf's acid arrow*, *mirror image*

3rd level (3 slots): *animate dead*, *counterspell*, *dispel magic*, *fireball*

4th level (3 slots): *blight*, *dimension door*

5th level (3 slots): *cloudkill*, *scrying*

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

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

8th level (1 slot – already cast): *dominate monster*, *power word stun*

9th level (1 slot): *power word: kill*

Turn Resistance. The lich has advantage on saving throws against any effect that turns undead.

ACTIONS

Paralyzing Touch. Melee Spell Attack: +12 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 10 (3d6) cold damage. The target must succeed on a DC 18 Constitution saving throw or be paralyzed for 1 minute. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

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

- **Cantrip.** The lich casts a cantrip.
- **Paralyzing Touch (Costs 2 Actions).** The lich uses its Paralyzing Touch.
- **Frightening Gaze (Costs 2 Actions).** The lich fixes its gaze on one creature it can see within 10 feet of it. The target must succeed on a DC 18 Wisdom saving throw against this magic or become frightened for 1 minute. The frightened target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. If a target's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the target is immune to the lich's gaze for the next 24 hours.
- **Disrupt Life (Costs 3 Actions).** Each living creature within 20 feet of the lich must make a DC 18 Constitution saving throw against this magic, taking 21 (6d6) necrotic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

PRECAST SPELLS

Szass Tam has cast a *contingency* spell to trigger a *dimension door* spell if he drops below half hit points. He uses this to teleport onto the back of the dragon or onto one of the far balconies. Tam also has a *globe of invulnerability* precast using his 8th-level slot when the players enter the room.

MAGE

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 12 (15 with *mage armor*)

Hit Points 40 (9d8)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws Int +6, Wis +4

Skills Arcana +6, History +6

Senses passive Perception 11

Languages any four languages

Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

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

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

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

2nd level (3 slots): *misty step*, *suggestion*

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

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

5th level (1 slot): *cone of cold*

ACTIONS

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

NECROMANCER

Medium humanoid (human), any alignment

Armor Class 12 (15 with *mage armor*)

Hit Points 66 (12d8 + 12)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws Int +7, Wis +5

Skills Arcana +7, History +7

Senses passive Perception 11

Languages any four languages

Challenge 9 (5,000 XP)

Spellcasting. The necromancer is a 12th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). The necromancer has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *chill touch*, *dancing lights*, *mage hand*, *mending*

1st level (4 slots): *false life**, *mage armor*, *ray of sickness**

2nd level (3 slots): *blindness/deafness**, *ray of enfeeblement**, *web*

3rd level (3 slots): *animate dead**, *bestow curse**, *vampiric touch**

4th level (3 slots): *blight**, *dimension door*, *stoneskin*

5th level (2 slots): *Bigby's hand*, *cloudkill*

6th level (1 slot): *circle of death**

*Necromancy spell of 1st level or higher

Grim Harvest (1/Turn). When necromancer kills a creature that is neither a construct nor undead with a spell of 1st level or higher, the necromancer regains hit points equal to twice the spell's level, or three times if it is a necromancy spell.

ACTIONS

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

RED DRAGON, ADULT

Huge dragon, chaotic evil

Armor Class 19 (natural armor)

Hit Points 256 (19d12 + 133)

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

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
27 (+8)	10 (+0)	25 (+7)	16 (+3)	13 (+1)	21 (+5)

Saving Throws Dex +6, Con +13, Wis +7, Cha +11

Skills Deception +13, Stealth +12

Damage Immunities fire

Damage Resistances necrotic

Senses blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 23

Languages Common, Draconic

Challenge 17 (18,000 XP)

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

Living Shadow. While in dim light or darkness, the dragon has resistance to damage that isn't force, psychic, or radiant.

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

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

ACTIONS

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

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +14 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 19 (2d10 + 8) piercing damage plus 7 (2d6) fire damage.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +14 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (2d6 + 8) slashing damage.

Tail. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +14 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (2d8 + 8) bludgeoning damage.

Frightful Presence. Each creature of the dragon's choice that is within 120 feet of the dragon and aware of it must succeed on a DC 19 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.

Shadow Breath (Recharge 5–6). The dragon exhales necrotic energy in a 60-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 21 Dexterity saving throw, taking 63 (18d6) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. A humanoid reduced to 0 hit points by this damage dies, and an undead shadow rises from its corpse and acts immediately after the dragon in the initiative count. The shadow is under the dragon’s control.

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 Attack.** The dragon makes a tail attack.
- **Wing Attack (Costs 2 Actions).** The dragon beats its wings. Each creature within 10 feet of the dragon must succeed on a DC 22 Dexterity saving throw or take 15 (2d6 + 8) bludgeoning damage and be knocked prone. The dragon can then fly up to half its flying speed.

RED DRAGON, YOUNG

Large dragon, chaotic evil

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)

Hit Points 178 (17d10 + 85)

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

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
23 (+6)	10 (+0)	21 (+5)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	19 (+4)

Saving Throws Dex +4, Con +9, Wis +4, Cha +8

Skills Perception +8, Stealth +4

Damage Immunities fire

Senses blindsight 30ft., darkvision 120ft., passive Perception 18

Languages Common, Draconic

Challenge 10 (5,900 XP)

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The dragon makes three attacks: one with its bite and two with its claws.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 10ft., one target. *Hit:* 17 (2d10 + 6) piercing damage plus 3 (1d6) fire damage.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d6 + 6) slashing damage.

Fire Breath (Recharge 5-6). The dragon exhales fire in a 30-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 17 Dexterity saving throw, taking 56 (16d6) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

SHIELD GUARDIAN

Large construct, unaligned

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 142 (15d10 + 60)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	8 (-1)	18 (+4)	7 (-2)	10 (+0)	3 (-4)

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

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, poisoned

Languages understands commands given in any language but can't speak

Challenge 7 (2,900 XP)

Bound. The shield guardian is magically bound to an amulet. As long as the guardian and its amulet are on the same plane of existence, the amulet's wearer can telepathically call the guardian to travel to it, and the guardian knows the distance and direction to the amulet. If the guardian is within 60 feet of the amulet's wearer, half of any damage the wearer takes (rounded up) is transferred to the guardian.

Regeneration. The shield guardian regains 10 hit points at the start of its turn if it has at least 1 hit point.

Spell Storing. A spellcaster who wears the shield guardian's amulet can cause the guardian to store one spell of 4th level or lower. To do so, the wearer must cast the spell on the guardian. The spell has no effect but is stored within the guardian. When commanded to do so by the wearer or when a situation arises that was predefined by the spellcaster, the guardian casts the stored spell with any parameters set by the original caster, requiring no components. When the spell is cast or a new spell is stored, any previously stored spell is lost.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The guardian makes two fist attacks.

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

REACTIONS

Shield. When a creature makes an attack against the wearer of the guardian's amulet, the guardian grants a +2 bonus to the wearer's AC if the guardian is within 5 feet of the wearer.

SORCERY CROW (MODIFIED RAVEN)

Tiny beast, unaligned

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 1 (1d4 - 1)

Speed 10ft., fly 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
2 (-4)	14 (+2)	8 (-1)	2 (-4)	12 (+1)	6 (-2)

Skills Perception +3

Senses passive Perception 13

Languages -

Challenge 0 (1 0 XP)

Mimicry. The raven can mimic simple sounds it has heard, such as a person whispering, a baby crying, or an animal chittering. A creature that hears the sounds can tell they are imitations with a successful DC 10 Wisdom (In sight) check.

ACTIONS

Beak. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1 piercing damage.

VALINDRA SHADOWMANTLE (LICH)

Medium undead, any evil alignment

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 135 (18d8 + 54) – currently 97

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	16 (+3)	16 (+3)	20 (+5)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Con +10, Int +12, Wis +9

Skills Arcana +18, History +12, Insight +9, Perception +9

Damage Resistances cold, lightning, necrotic

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

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, poisoned

Senses truesight 120 ft., passive Perception 19

Languages Common plus up to five other languages

Challenge 21 (33,000 XP)

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

Rejuvenation. If it has a phylactery, a destroyed lich gains a new body in 1d10 days, regaining all its hit points and becoming active again. The new body appears within 5 feet of the phylactery.

Spellcasting. The lich is an 18th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 20, +12 to hit with spell attacks). The lich has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *mage hand*, *prestidigitation*, *ray of frost*

1st level (4 slots): *detect magic*, *magic missile*, *shield*, *thunderwave*

2nd level (3 slots): *detect thoughts*, *invisibility*, *Melf's acid arrow*, *mirror image*

3rd level (3 slots): *animate dead*, *counterspell*, *dispel magic*, *fireball*

4th level (3 slots): *blight*, *dimension door*

5th level (3 slots): *cloudkill*, *screaming*

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

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

8th level (1 slot*): *dominate monster*, *power word stun*

9th level (1 slot*): *power word: kill*

* already expended in battle before the characters arrive.

Turn Resistance. The lich has advantage on saving throws against any effect that turns undead.

ACTIONS

Paralyzing Touch. Melee Spell Attack: +12 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 10 (3d6) cold damage. The target must succeed on a DC 18 Constitution saving throw or be paralyzed for 1 minute. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

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

- **Cantrip.** The lich casts a cantrip.
- **Paralyzing Touch (Costs 2 Actions).** The lich uses its Paralyzing Touch.
- **Frightening Gaze (Costs 2 Actions).** The lich fixes its gaze on one creature it can see within 10 feet of it. The target must succeed on a DC 18 Wisdom saving throw against this magic or become frightened for 1 minute. The frightened target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. If a target's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the target is immune to the lich's gaze for the next 24 hours.
- **Disrupt Life (Costs 3 Actions).** Each living creature within 20 feet of the lich must make a DC 18 Constitution saving throw against this magic, taking 21 (6d6) necrotic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

VETERAN

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 17 (splint)

Hit Points 58 (9d8 + 18)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Skills Athletics +5, Perception +2

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

ACTIONS

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

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

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

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

WARLORD

Medium humanoid (human), lawful evil

Armor Class 20 (plate)

Hit Points 229 (27d8 + 108)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	18 (+4)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	19 (+4)

Saving Throws Str +9, Dex +8, Con +8

Skills Athletics +9, Intimidation +8, Perception +5, Persuasion +8

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 15

Languages Common, Giant

Challenge 12 (8,400 XP)

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

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

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The warlord makes two weapon attacks.

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

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

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

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

Weapon Attack. The warlord makes a weapon attack.

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

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

WIGHT, PLAGUE

Medium undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 14 (studded leather)

Hit Points 45 (6d8 + 18)

Speed 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	13 (+1)	15 (+2)

Skills Perception +3, Stealth +4

Damage Resistances necrotic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons that aren't silvered

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities exhaustion, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60ft., passive Perception 13

Languages the languages it knew in life

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

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

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The wight makes two longsword attacks or two longbow attacks. It can use its Life Drain in place of one longsword attack.

Life Drain. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) necrotic damage. The target must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or its hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the damage taken. This reduction lasts until the target finishes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0. A humanoid slain by this attack rises 24 hours later as a zombie under the wight's control, unless the humanoid is restored to life or its body is destroyed. The wight can have no more than twelve zombies under its control at one time.

Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) slashing damage, or 7 (1d10 + 2) slashing damage if used with two hands.

Longbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage.

ZOMBIE PLAGUE

Undead infected by the zombie plague have the following adjustments:

- If the undead creature's Speed is more than 0 and less than 30 ft., it increases to 30 ft.
- The undead creature can't be turned or harmed using Turn Undead or Destroy Undead.
- When the undead creature deals damage with a melee weapon attack, its target must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or catch the zombie plague.

WRAITH, PLAGUE

Medium undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 67 (9d8 + 27)

Speed 0 ft., fly 60 ft. (hover)

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

Damage Resistances acid, cold, fire, lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks that aren't silvered

Damage Immunities necrotic, poison

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

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages the languages it knew in life

Challenge 5 (1800 XP)

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

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

ACTIONS

Life Drain. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 21 (4d8 + 3) necrotic damage. The target must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or its hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the damage taken, and it contracts the zombie plague (see Book 1: Event Overview). This reduction lasts until the target finishes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0.

Create Specter. The wraith targets a humanoid within 10 feet of it that has been dead for no longer than 1 minute and died violently. The target's spirit rises as a specter in the space of its corpse or in the nearest unoccupied space. The specter is under the wraith's control. The wraith can have no more than seven specters under its control at one time.

ZOMBIE, PLAGUE

Medium undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 8

Hit Points 22 (3d8 + 9)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	6 (-2)	16 (+3)	3 (-4)	6 (-2)	5 (-3)

Saving Throws Wis +0

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 8

Languages understands the languages it knew in life but can't speak

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Undead Fortitude. If damage reduces the zombie to 0 hit points, it must make a Constitution saving throw with a DC of 5 + the damage taken, unless the damage is radiant or from a critical hit. On a success, the zombie drops to 1 hit point instead.

ACTIONS

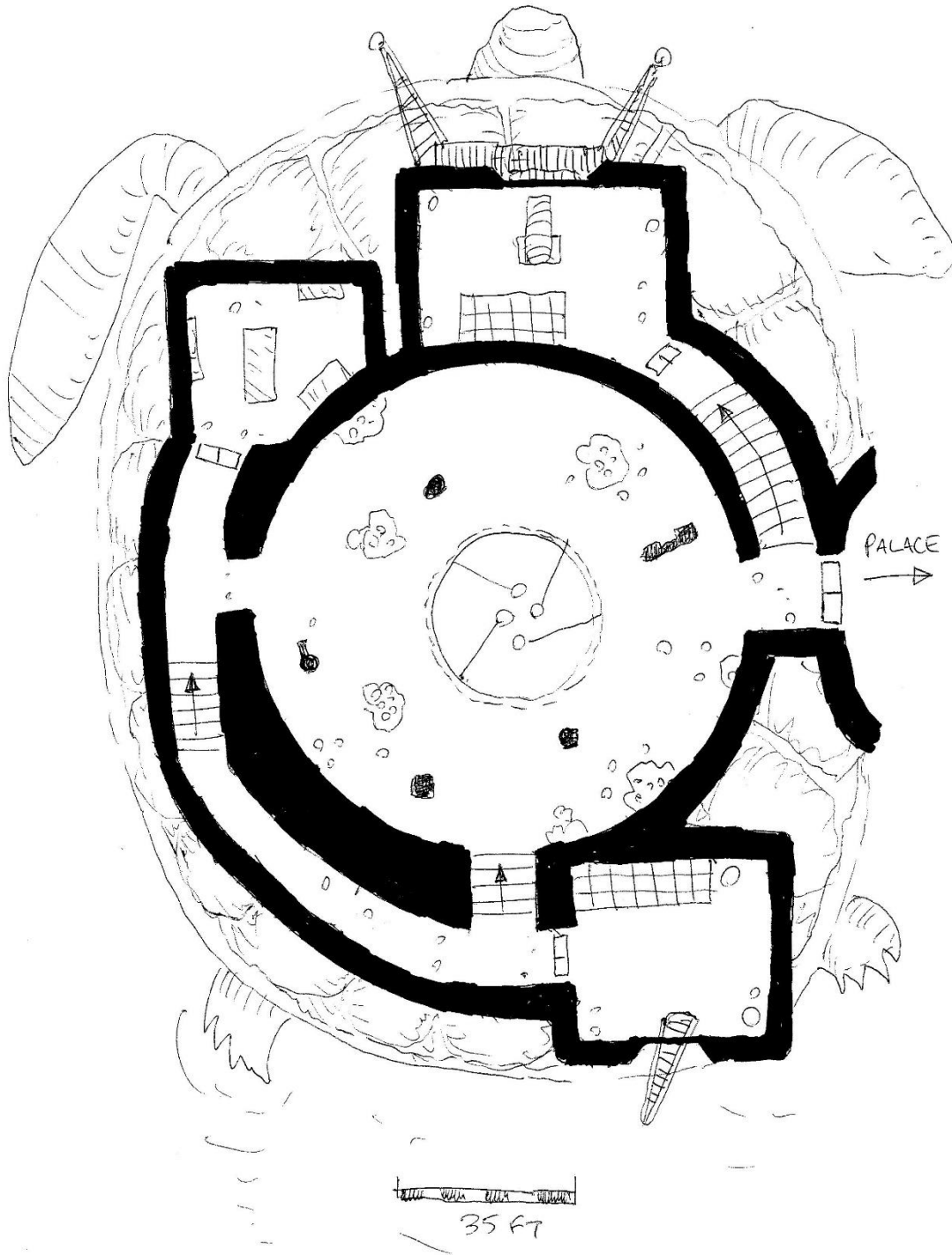
Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) bludgeoning damage. The target must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or contract the zombie plague (see Book 1: Event Overview).

ZOMBIE PLAGUE

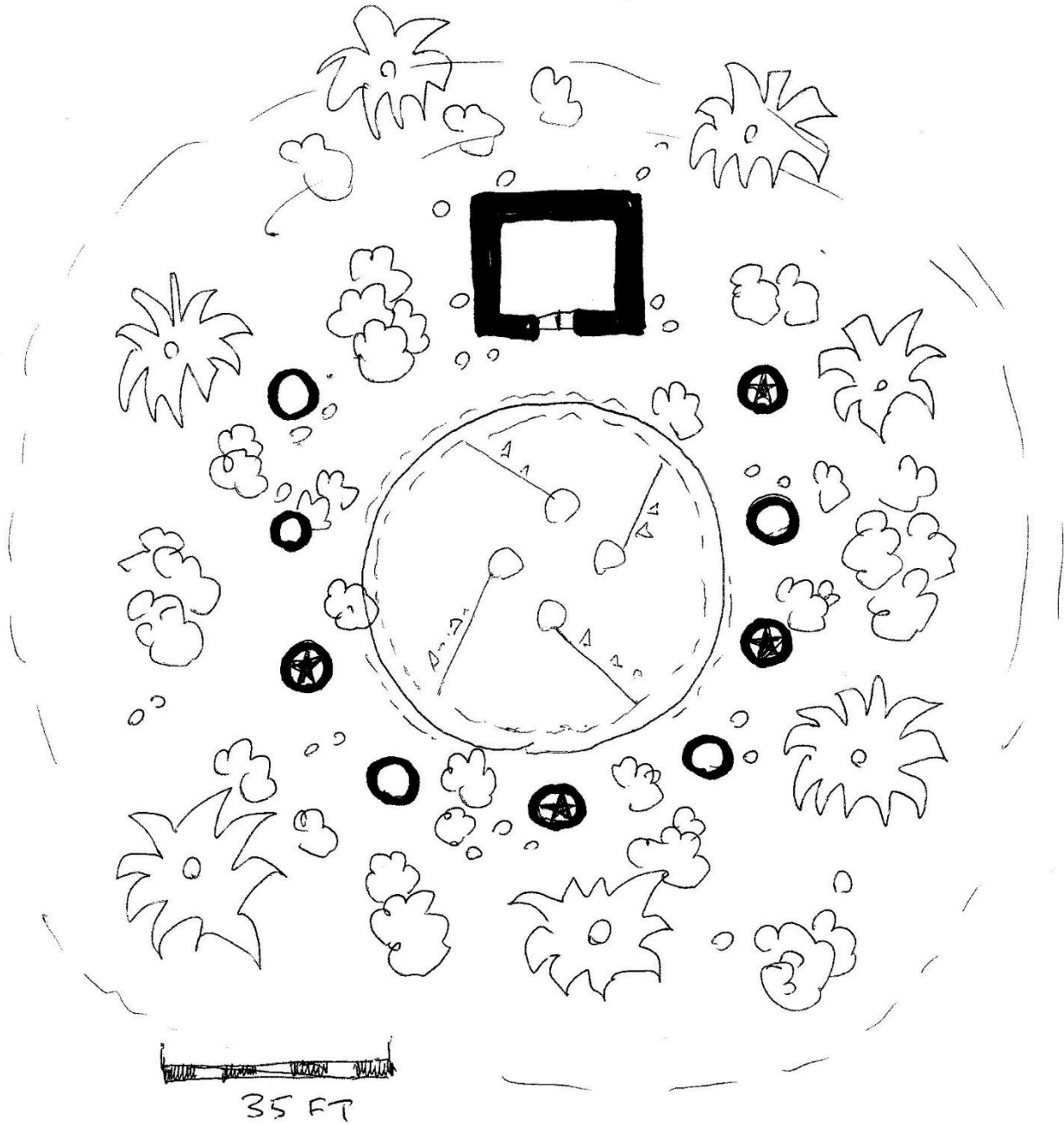
Undead infected by the zombie plague have the following adjustments:

- If the undead creature's Speed is more than 0 and less than 30 ft., it increases to 30 ft.
- The undead creature can't be turned or harmed using Turn Undead or Destroy Undead.
- When the undead creature deals damage with a melee weapon attack, its target must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or catch the zombie plague.

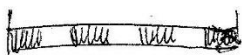
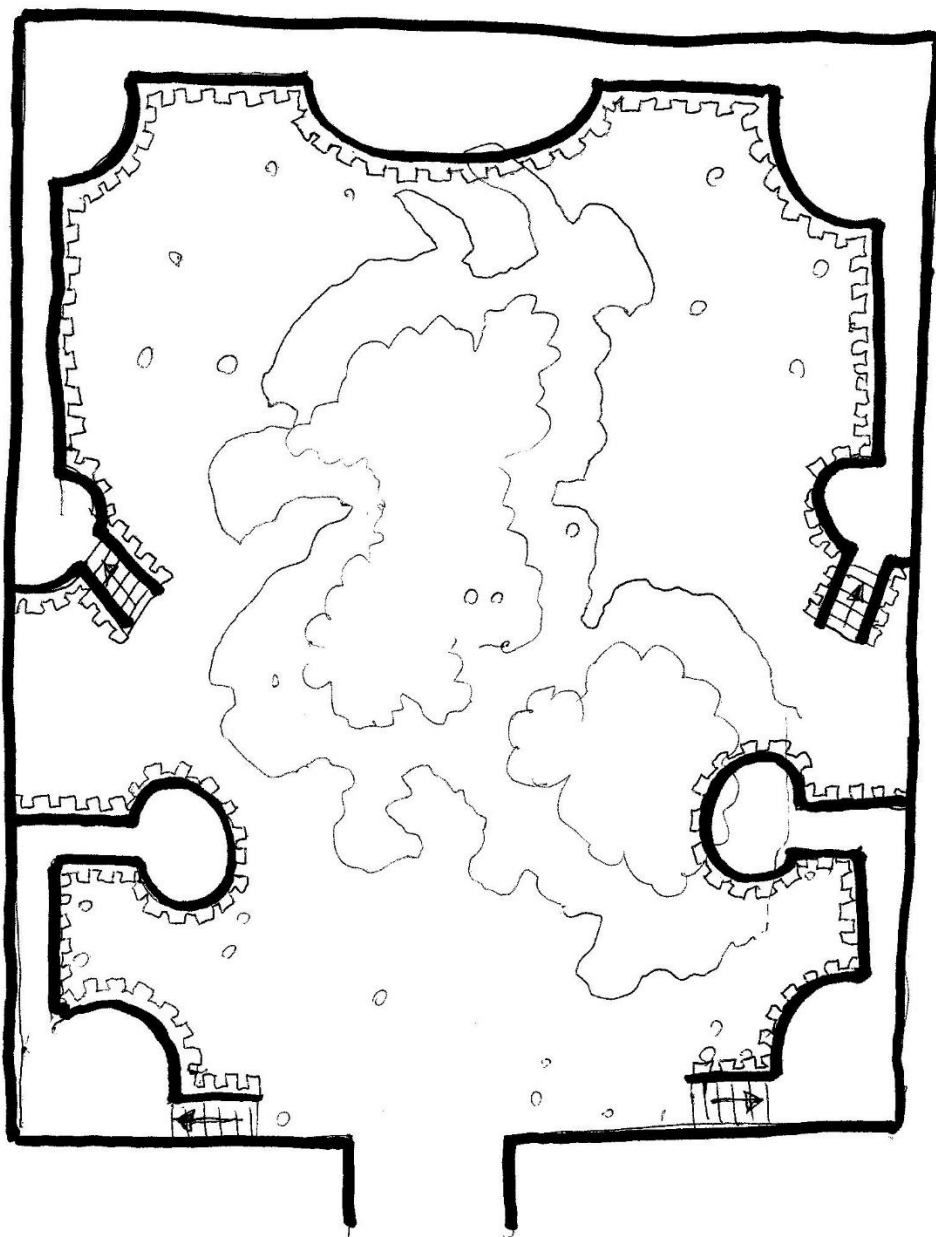
APPENDIX. DEATH TOWER MAP



APPENDIX. GARDENS OF ROT MAP



APPENDIX. SOLAR MAP



35 FT.

APPENDIX 3. VICTORY BOONS

VICTORY BOON 1A: DESTROY THE DEATH GOD

ACHIEVEMENT

We destroyed one of the arcane 'death gods' created to destroy Port Nyanzaru.

EFFECT

Glorious Inspiration: You can spend this boon when a character hits an enemy with a weapon or spell attack. The attack becomes a critical hit that knocks the enemy prone.

THIS BOON IS FROM TIER 3 & 4: QUEST 1A

NOTE: THIS BOON DOES NOT COUNT TOWARD THE VICTORY TOTAL.

VICTORY BOON 1B: INFILTRATE THE RED WIZARDS

ACHIEVEMENT

We infiltrated the palace by posing as Red Wizards and destroyed one of their arcane artillery units.

EFFECT

Last Blast: You can spend this boon during combat to make all enemies in your encounter roll on the Siege Damage table.

THIS BOON IS FROM TIER 3 & 4: QUEST 1B

NOTE: THIS BOON DOES NOT COUNT TOWARD THE VICTORY TOTAL.

VICTORY BOON 1C: FREE THE SLAVES

ACHIEVEMENT

We broke into the palace and freed a group of slaves who were toiling under the Red Wizards.

EFFECT

Prison Break: You can spend this boon after one of the characters in your group fails a Dexterity (Stealth) check. This check is now an automatic success.

THIS BOON IS FROM TIER 3 & 4: QUEST 1C

NOTE: THIS BOON DOES NOT COUNT TOWARD THE VICTORY TOTAL.

VICTORY BOON 2A: DESTROY THE ANTIMAGIC FIELD

ACHIEVEMENT

We destroyed one of the magic circles that powers the *antimagic field* around the inner sanctum.

EFFECT

Arcane Backlash: You can spend this boon to restore one spent spell slot of 5th-level or lower to every spellcaster in your group.

THIS BOON IS FROM TIER 3 & 4: QUEST 2A

NOTE: THIS BOON DOES NOT COUNT TOWARD THE VICTORY TOTAL.

VICTORY BOON 2B: SILENCE THE GARGOYLES

ACHIEVEMENT

We banished a swarm of screaming gargoyles from the inner sanctum.

EFFECT

Trap Awareness: You can spend this boon after one of the characters in your group fails a saving throw. This save is now an automatic success.

THIS BOON IS FROM TIER 3 & 4: QUEST 2B
NOTE: THIS BOON DOES NOT COUNT TOWARD THE VICTORY TOTAL.

VICTORY BOON 2C: DISARM THE DOOMSDAY DEVICE

ACHIEVEMENT

We disarmed one of Ras Nsi's Doomsday Devices, allowing us to continue the raid in safety.

EFFECT

Second Wind: You can spend this boon between encounters to gain the benefit of a short rest.

THIS BOON IS FROM TIER 3 & 4: QUEST 2C
NOTE: THIS BOON DOES NOT COUNT TOWARD THE VICTORY TOTAL.

VICTORY BOON 3: SLAY THE LICH

ACHIEVEMENT

We defeated a lich in mortal combat.

EFFECT

Glorious Inspiration: You can spend this boon to grant inspiration to every player in the group.

THIS BOON IS FROM TIER 3 & 4: QUEST 3

APPENDIX 4. HANDOUTS

PALACE MAP

STAGE 1: DEATH TOWER

Play one of the following quests and then proceed to Stage 2.



Quest 1A: Destroy the Death God

Fight a Thayan 'death god': a giant golem made from hundreds of lashed-together zombies.



Quest 1B: Infiltrate the Red Wizards

Pose as Thayan reinforcements to infiltrate the Crawling Palace and sabotage the arcane artillery.



Quest 1C: Free the Slaves

Infiltrate the palace via the corpse wagons and free the captives.

STAGE 2: GARDEN OF ROT

Play one of the following quests and then proceed to Stage 3. If Stage 1 took longer than one and a half hours, skip this stage and proceed to Stage 3.



Quest 2A: Destroy the Antimagic Field

Detonate an explosive device to punch a hole in the *antimagic field* protecting the inner sanctum.



Quest 2B: Silence the Gargoyles

Pose as Red Wizards to silence the screaming gargoyle that watch over Szass Tam's tower.



Quest 2C: Disarm the Doomsday Device

Break into the Vault of Dead Men to disarm Ras Nsi's doomsday device.

STAGE 3: SOLAR

Complete the final quest to increase your section's chances of winning!



Quest 3: Slay the Lich

Defeat Szass Tam or his undead commander, Valindra Shadowmantle.

EVENT RULES

- You can only take one short rest and no long rests.
- You can't cast spells with a casting time longer than 5 minutes before the event begins.
- Spells with a casting time of longer than 5 minutes require a short rest to cast.
- Spells with a casting time of longer than 1 hour can't be cast at all.
- You can call on Volo once between encounters to purchase spell services and potions.



= **Combat**



= **Social Interaction**



= **Exploration**

“MY ORDERS ARE TO INTERROGATE THE CAPTIVE.”

**“THE STANDING STONE IS KEY TO DECIPHERING
THE COMMAND PHRASE.”**

“ALWAYS BOW TO THE SMILING FACE.”

“I MUST ACT LIKE I’M OUR LEADER.”



“MY ORDERS ARE TO SERVE LORD HEKRADON.”

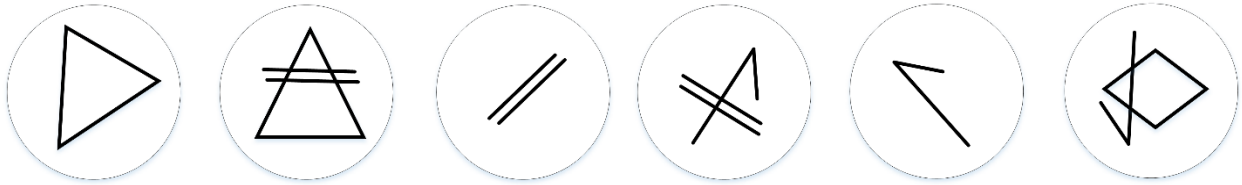


“WE MUST DISABLE THE GARGOYLES BEFORE THE INTERROGATION ENDS.”

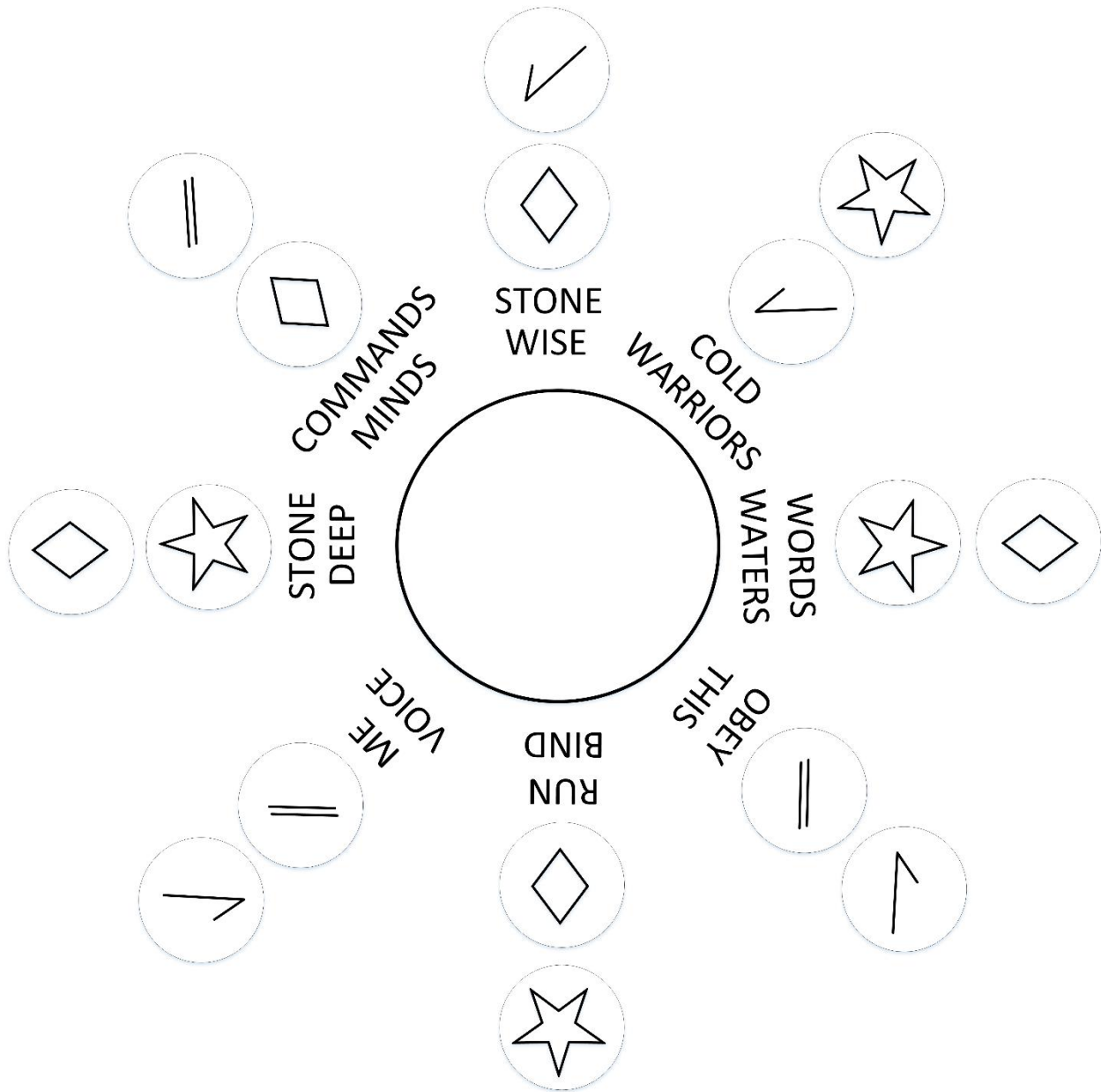


“THE COMMAND PHRASE TO DISABLE THE GARGOYLES IS ETCHED ON THE MAGIC CIRCLE.”

STANDING STONE SYMBOLS

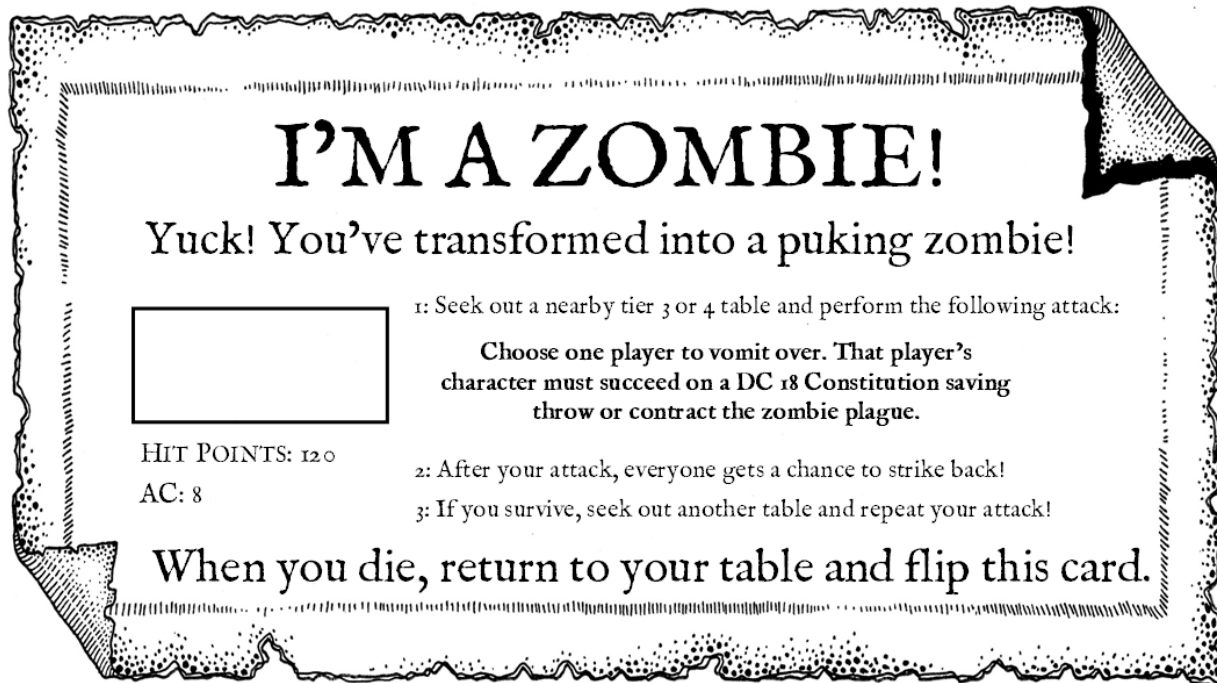
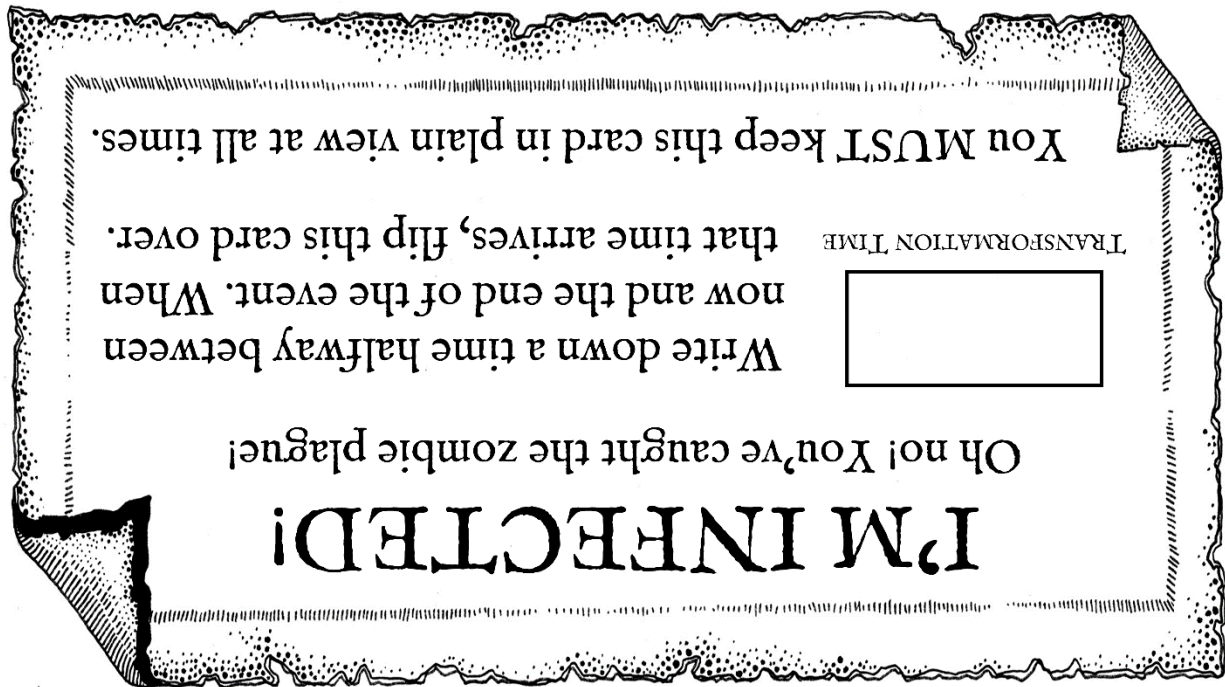


RITUAL CIRCLE



INFECTION CARDS

PUKING ZOMBIE




I'M INFECTED!

Oh no! You've caught the zombie plague!

Write down a time halfway between now and the end of the event. When that time arrives, flip this card over.

TRANSFORMATION TIME

You MUST keep this card in plain view at all times.



I'M A ZOMBIE!

Gross! You've transformed into an exploding zombie!

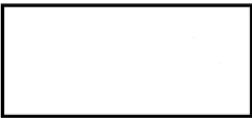
HIT POINTS: 140
AC: 8

1: Seek out a nearby tier 3 or 4 table and perform the following attack!
Choose one character to slam (+8 to hit, 20 bludgeoning damage).

2: After your attack, everyone gets a chance to strike back!
If you die, all characters on the table must succeed on a DC 18 Constitution saving throw or contract the zombie plague.

3: If you survive, seek out another table and repeat your attack!

When you die, return to your table and flip this card.



STINKING ZOMBIE


I'M INFECTED!

Oh no! You've caught the zombie plague!

Write down a time halfway between now and the end of the event. When that time arrives, flip this card over.

TRANSFORMATION TIME

You MUST keep this card in plain view at all times.



I'M A ZOMBIE!

Ugh! You've transformed into a stinking zombie!

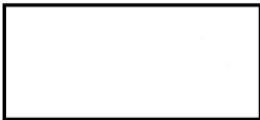
HIT POINTS: 110
AC: 12

1: Seek out a nearby tier 3 or 4 table and perform the following attack!
Choose one character to bite (+7 to hit, 15 piercing damage). If you hit, that character must succeed on a DC 18 Constitution saving throw or contract the zombie plague.

2: After your attack, everyone gets a chance to strike back!
Due to your foul stench, all characters have disadvantage on their attacks. If you are missed by an attack, you shamble away to safety.

3: If you survive, seek out another table and repeat your attack!

When you die, return to your table and flip this card.



APPENDIX 5A. STORY AWARDS

During this adventure, the characters may earn the following story award. If you're printing these out for your characters, print as many as you may need to ensure that any eligible character receives a copy:

BLESSED OF UBTAO

Your understanding of the maze of life has pleased the great god Ubtao. To save his people, the god has granted you the ability to foresee your own failures and react accordingly. **Once before the end of this event**, you can undo any action you take after it has been resolved. This could be an action taken during combat, or a character action you describe to the DM outside of combat. Time literally resets to the moment before the action was taken, yet you remain cognizant of its outcome.

APPENDIX 5B. STORY AWARDS

During this adventure, the characters may earn the following story award. If you're printing these out for your characters, print as many as you may need to ensure that any eligible character receives a copy:

DARK PROMISE

You promised the soul of a loved one to the dark champion Dagkamir, and he disappeared mysteriously to claim his due. You'll never know when he'll strike, or if you can ever undo your promise. It will haunt you forever. Whenever you use inspiration, you must use any "1" you roll on the dice as your result. If you're a halfling, you can't reroll these results using halfling luck.

APPENDIX 5C. STORY AWARDS

During this adventure, the characters may earn the following story award. If you're printing these out for your characters, print as many as you may need to ensure that any eligible character receives a copy:

LICH SLAYER

You helped an alliance of heroes stop Szass Tam and Valindra Shadowmantle from destroying Port Nyanzaru and conquering Chult. Your names spread throughout the necromantic orders, where they are feared forevermore. You have advantage on saving throws made to resist spells cast by necromancers and other undead creatures.

PLAYER HANDOUT 1

+3 WAND OF THE WAR MAGE

Wand, very rare (requires attunement by a spellcaster).

While holding this wand you gain a +3 bonus to spell attack rolls. In addition, you ignore half cover when making a spell attack. This item is found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

This thick wand is made of polished steel with a weapon-like pommel, and can be wielded in combat like a mace.

PLAYER HANDOUT 2. +2 HALF PLATE

+2 HALF PLATE

Armor (half plate), very rare

You have a +2 bonus to AC while wearing this armor. This item is found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

This armor is made of thin plates of rune-engraved stone. While worn, the wearer becomes proficient in the Dwarven language.

PLAYER HANDOUT 3. WAND OF POLYMORPH

WAND OF POLYMORPH

Wand, very rare (requires attunement by a spellcaster)

The wand regains 1d6 +1 expended charges daily at dawn. If you expend the wand's last charge, roll a d20. On a 1, the wand crumbles into ashes and is destroyed. This item is found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

This wand is made of what appears to be the skeletal finger of some unusually-large humanoid. When wielded, it occasionally flexes and twitches. This wand has seven charges. While holding it, you can use an action to expend 1 of its charges to cast the polymorph spell (save DC15) from it.

PLAYER HANDOUT 4. SPELLGUARD SHIELD

SPELLGUARD SHIELD

Armor (shield), very rare (requires attunement)

While holding this shield you have advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects, and spell attacks have disadvantage against you. This item is found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

This shield is fashioned from a single piece of flawless crystal with straps of supple leather.

PLAYER HANDOUT 5. TOME OF CLEAR THOUGHT

TOME OF CLEAR THOUGHT

Wondrous item, very rare

This book contains memory and logic exercises, and its words are charged with magic. If you spend 48 hours over a period of six days or fewer studying the book's contents and practicing its guidelines, your Intelligence score increases by 2 as does your maximum for that score. The manual then loses its magic. This item is found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

PLAYER HANDOUT 6. TOME OF LEADERSHIP AND INFLUENCE

TOME OF LEADERSHIP AND INFLUENCE

Wondrous item, very rare

This book contains guidelines for influencing and charming others, and its words are charged with magic. . If you spend 48 hours over a period of six days or fewer studying the book's contents and practicing its guidelines, your Charisma score increases by 2 as does your maximum for that score. The manual then loses its magic. This item is found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.