



MARK OF HEROES

THE GRAYWALL INCIDENT

Contents

Introduction	2
Background	3
Prologue: Secretly into the Savage City	3
Part One: Turendurz Villa	5
Part Two: From the Streets to the Arena	12
Part Three: The Secret Path	19
Conclusion	22
Adventure Questions	23

Design: Tim Sech and Stephen Radney-MacFarland

Development: Stephen Radney-MacFarland

Illustrations: Jacob Burgess

Cartography: Rob Lazzaretti and Stephen Radney-MacFarland

Playersters: The players at Winter Fantasy 2006

Sources: *Five Nations* [Bill Slavicsek, David Noonan, Christopher Perkins], *Magic of Eberron* [Bruce R. Cordell, Stephen Schubert, Chris Thomasson], *Player's Guide to Eberron* [James Wyatt, Keith Baker, Juke Johnson, Stan!], *Expanded Psionics Handbook* [Bruce R. Cordell], *Complete Divine* [David Noonan], *Monster Manual III* [Rich Burlew, Eric Cagle, Jesse Decker, Andrew J. Finch, Gwendolyn F.M. Kestrel, Rich Redman, Matthew Sernett, Chris Thomasson, P. Nathan Toomey], *EMH-2 Pirate's Bounty and the Island of Fire* [Greg Marks], *EMH-5 Gambit at Dreadhold* [David Christ].

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS CAMPAIGNS

U.S., Canada
ASIA, PACIFIC, & LATIN AMERICA
Wizards of the Coast, Inc.
P.O. Box 707
Renton, WA 9805-0707
Questions? 1-800-324-6496



European Headquarters
Wizards of the Coast, Belgium
T. Hosveld 6d
1702 Groot-Bijgaarden
Belgium

+322 467 3360

Based on the original DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® rules created by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson and the new DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game designed by Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, Rich Baker, and Peter Adkison.

This WIZARD OF THE COAST® game product contains no Open Game Content. This work may be reproduced for personal use or in its entirety for use at RPGA-sanctioned events. To learn more about the Open Gaming License and the d20 SYSTEM® License, please visit www.wizards.com/d20. This product uses material from the v.3.5 revision.

This is an official RPGA® play document. To find out more about the RPGA and to learn more on how you can sanction and run DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game events of all sizes, visit our website at www.wizards.com/rpga.

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS, D&D, D&D REWARDS, DUNGEON MASTER, EBERRON, ABERRATIONS, DEATHKNELL, WINTER FANTASY, RPGA, d20, d20 SYSTEM, WIZARDS OF THE COAST, *Player's Handbook*, *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and *Monster Manual* and their respective logos are trademarks owned by Wizards of the Coast, Inc., in the US and other countries. This material is protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America. Any reproduction or unauthorized use of the material or artwork contained herein is prohibited without the express written permission of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. This product is a work of fiction. Any similarity to actual people, organizations, places, or events is purely coincidental. © 2006 Wizards of the Coast, Inc. Visit the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS CAMPAIGNS website at www.rpga.com

For rules questions specific to this document and DUNGEONS & DRAGONS CAMPAIGNS e-mail
dispelconfusion@wizards.com

INTRODUCTION

Incident at Graywall is optimized for 7th-level characters. This means that it's designed and balanced for a group of four to five 7th-level characters (PCs). If your group deviates from this size and strength, each encounter features a section titled "Scaling the Encounter" so that you, the Dungeon Master (DM), can create a more enjoyable and better balanced adventure. If there are only four of five PCs of the same level in your group, it's easy to use this section: just use the level entry that corresponds with the PCs' level (the optimized entry is given in the main adventure text). For groups of mixed levels and groups with six PCs, determine the average level of the PCs, and increase that average by one for groups of six PCs. Treat that level as the groups level. That said, as DM you have discretion when it comes to fitting the challenges of the adventure to your group. If your group finds the challenges too easy or too difficult, feel free to increase or decrease the level of challenge appropriately. The goal is to challenge the PCs and entertain the players, not to overwhelm or even underwhelm them. The most enjoyable D&D games are ones where failure and character death are possible, but success and reward are attainable through daring and smart play.

Incident at Graywall has been designed to be part of the RPGA DUNGEONS & DRAGONS CAMPAIGNS: MARK OF HEROES program. Like all DUNGEONS & DRAGONS CAMPAIGNS adventures, it's recommended that PCs undertaking its challenges have at least one arcane spellcaster, a divine spellcaster (preferably a cleric), a strong warrior, and a rogue. Parties missing these valuable adventuring components may find *Incident* very challenging, and the chances of character death higher. Please warn the players of this before play starts. DUNGEONS & DRAGONS CAMPAIGNS allow players to "take one for the team"; that is to play a fastplay wizard, fighter, rogue, or cleric in place of one of their characters, and gain experience point for their character. If the group lacks one of these vital four classes, suggest to your players to take advantage of this option.

RPGA-SANCTIONED PLAY

Most likely you ordered this adventure as part of an RPGA even from the RPGA website, or as part of the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS CAMPAIGNS retail program. To play *Incident at Graywall* as part of the MARK OF HEROES campaign—a worldwide, ongoing D&D campaign set in Eberron—you must sanction it as part of an RPGA event. This event could be as elaborate as a big convention, or as simple as a group of friends meeting at the DM's house.

To sanction an RPGA event, you must be at least a HERALD-LEVEL gamemaster. The person who sanctions the event is called the senior gamemaster, and is in charge of making sure the event is sanctioned before play, runs smoothly on the date sanctioned, and then reported back to the RPGA in a timely manner. The person who runs the game is called the table DM (or usually just DM). Sometimes (and almost all the time in the cases of home events) the senior gamemaster is also the table DM. You don't have to be a HERALD-LEVEL GM to run this adventure if you are not the senior GM.

By sanctioning and reporting this adventure you accomplish a few things. First, it allows the PCs participating in play to accumulate experience points (XP) and gold pieces (gp) to advance their MARK OF HEROES characters. Second, it allows the RPGA to track and record what character did during the adventure, and future adventures a written with what the majority of player did in mind—in this way characters' action shape the future of the campaign. Lastly, player and DMs gain rewards for sanctioned RPGA play if they are members of the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS REWARDS program. Playing this adventure is worth four (4) points.

This adventure retires from RPGA sanctioned play on June 6, 2006.

To learn more about the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS CAMPAIGNS:

MARK OF HEROES character creation and development, RPGA event sanctioning, and DUNGEONS & DRAGONS REWARDS, visit the RPGA website at www.rpga.com.

PLAYERS READ NO FARTHER

If you are planning on playing this adventure, stop reading now. The rest of the information in this adventure is for the DM only. If you read farther than this section, you'll know too much about its challenges, which kills the fun. Also, if you're playing this adventure as part of an RPGA-sanctioned event, reading beyond this point makes you ineligible to do so.

PREPARING FOR PLAY

To get the most out of this adventure, you need copies of the following D&D books: *Player's Handbook*, *Dungeon Master's Guide*, *Monster Manual*, and the *Eberron Campaign Setting*. It is also a good idea to have a copy of the *Expanded Psionics Handbook*, as it is possible that some character playing in this adventure will be kalashtar utilizing the psionics rules.

Throughout this adventure, blocks of *italicized* text provide player information for you to paraphrase or read aloud when appropriate. Sidebars contain important information for you, including special instruction on running or expanding the adventure. Information on nonplayer characters (NPCs) and monsters appear in abbreviated form in the adventure text. Full information on NPCs and monsters are given in a section directly after each encounter in a section titled "Combat Statistics" or can be found in the *Monster Manual*.

This adventure may use material from various other D&D sourcebooks and other official sources. While many times the adventure text notes where this information came from, the adventure is designed so that you don't need to have those sources during play.

Either attached to the adventure, you'll find a special *RPGA Session Tracking Sheet* tailored for this adventure. If you're playing this adventure as part of an RPGA-sanctioned event, complete and turn in this sheet to your senior GM directly after play.

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS MINIATURES

To run this adventure it's recommend you have the following miniatures:

From the HARBINGER™ set:
3 Hyena (67/80)

From the DRAGONEYE™ set:
Ialdabode, Human Psion (19/60) to represent Asulmaz.
10 Gargoyles (52/60)
6 Harpies (53/60) to represent normal harpies and Graywall savant harpies

From the ABERRATIONS™ set:
3 Gnolls (51/60) to represent the Ghûl Gnoll Mercenaries and normal gnolls

From the DEATHKNELL™ set:
2 Skullcrusher Ogre (41/60) to represent the ogre guards.
Spectre (42/60)

From the ANGELFIRE™ set:
2 Abyssal Skulkers (51/60) to represent runeounds
Feral Minotaur (53/60) to represent Goliath.

From the War Drums™ set:
Goblin Blackblade (30/60) to represent Meztak Gemeye

SUMMARY

While on a short respite within Grea Tower, Matron Martra contacts the PCs. She tasks them with stealing into the monster quarters of the Droam city of Graywall, sneak into the villa of an ogre mage merchant of things exotic and magical, and secure an artifact—the *Rod of Orbs*—which she believes is connected with the mysterious *Sardonian puzzle orbs*.

Unlike many adventures, *Incident at Graywall* starts *in medias res*—in the middle of things. The trek to Graywall and even the infiltration of the villa of the ogre mage Turendurz is pretty much completed at the start of play. The PCs begin outside the door of the chamber housing the *Rod of Eye*.

Once they open the door, the PCs find they are not the only one with designs on the rod. Asulmaz, the insane Inspired from *EMH-5 Gambit at Dreadhold*, has beaten the PCs to the villa and is standing over Turendurz's corpse. During the encounter, Asulmaz taunts the PCs and uses the *Rod of Orbs* in attempt to retrieve any *Sardonian puzzle orbs* the PCs may have, while his Ghûl gnoll assassins leap forth from the shadows, harrying the PCs. The rod secured, and orbs gathered, Asulmaz teleports out of the trophy room, setting off the villa's alarms.

While the villa's master's dead, its defenses are still potent. The PCs must race out of the villa using the knowledge gained during their entrance by way of the Villa Map (Handout 1).

The alarm does more than alert the villa's defenses. Turendurz was an important citizen and his alarms alert Xor'chylic, the illithid governor of Greywall. Once the PCs escape the villa, they must dodge the mind flayer's minions through the streets Graywall's monster quarters.

Using his psionic stranglehold on the city, Xor'chylic uses his powers and minions to corral the PCs into a fighting pit. There they battle a minotaur gladiator as entertainment for the illithid and his savage citizens. If the PCs defeat the minotaur, they may be able to gain the help of a goblin pit master, Meztak Gemeye. For a price the goblin is willing to show the PCs a secret way out of the monster quarters, and even allow them to rest before proceeding. Unfortunately the goblin has double-crossed the PCs, and alerted Xor'chylic of their presence. The illithid orders Gemeye to lead the PCs into a trap.

Within the twisted tunnels of Graywall's undercity, the PCs run across a strange, toothy chasm. Upon crossing the treacherous fissure, the PCs are set upon by Xor'chylic's elite harpy warriors.

If the PCs defeat the harpies, they can pass on into the Human Quarter, and then out of the city. Their skill and daring has peaked Xor'chylic's interest. The old mind flayer, persuaded by a dusk hag in his employ, decides that keeping these particular Diggers alive may further some further machinations...after all, anyone can hire the Diggers' Union.

TROUBLESHOOTING

Check for Sardonian Puzzle Orbs

This adventure has consequences for those with the item, and those who have failed 12 saving throws since they gained the item. Make sure to find out which PCs at the table have these story objects and what its current status is.

Know Your Psionics

This is a rather psionics-heavy adventure, especially in the early encounter with Asulmaz, who is a high-level psion. We recommend you have a copy of the *Expanded Psionics Handbook* at the table when running this adventure, and be knowledgeable of the Inspired powers before running the session.

If you don't have access to the *Expanded Psionics Handbook*, most of its rules can be found in the psionics section of the Standard Reference Document (SRD) of the Open Gaming License (OGL). You can find that document online at the following URL: www.wizards.com/d20.

Preserving the NPC...for Now

It's very important that Asulmaz both survives this adventure, and takes the Rod of Orbs with him. And while he should be of significant power to aid you in making sure this happens, smart or lucky players may frustrate this end. Make sure this happens even if you have to bend the rules a bit.

The PCs will get opportunity to defeat the insane Inspired in later adventures.

Raising the Dead

At this point the PCs may have gained enough renown, and hopefully enough gold and experience, to come back from the dead. Like many things that involve XP and gp cost, raise dead and other spells work differently in DUNGEONS & DRAGONS CAMPAIGNS. If a PC dies, and his or her companions are able to bring the body back to a temple with clerics powerful enough to cast *raise dead* within 11 days after the time of death, a character can be raised (assuming the soul is willing). This incurs a 1,100-gp debt, which may be divided up between the characters played during the session. This debt is forever subtracted from the equipment value of the characters, and reported in the "GP Debt" field of the Session Tracking sheet. Additionally, the character that came back from the dead has its experience points reduced. The amount of experience points reduced is dependent on the current character level (see the table below) of the PC raised. Record the proper amount on the "XP Drain" field of the Session Tracking sheet. These two costs are the only costs for the raise dead (even for 1st-level characters), and overrides the rules for the spell found in the *Player's Handbook*.

Please Note: When a character is brought back from the dead it is not recorded as a character death (so don't mark "Y" on the Session Tracking). Just record the gold debt and experience drain.

Experience Point Drain for Raised Characters

Character Level	XP Drain
7th	3,500 XP
8th	4,000 XP
9th	4,500 XP
10th	5,000 XP

PROLOGUE: SECRETLY INTO THE SAVAGE CITY

The adventure starts with the PCs' westward travel to Graywall complete. With the help of Slurge, the PCs' Graywall contact, they've infiltrated the monster quarters. The play starts the doorway of Turendurz's the trophy chamber on the upper story of his villa.

Silence. It's enshrouded the entire mission since the House Deneith guards escorted you into the Human Quarter of Graywall.

Now you're deep within the forbidden monster quarter of the gateway city of Droam, standing inside the villa of a respected—and by all stories, cunning and vicious—ogre mage arcane trader named Turendurz.

Matron Martra told you that securing the Rod of Orbs might be the greatest challenge you've ever faced. Your contact in the human quarter, the hobgoblin Slurge, said any pink skin or tin can of the Five Nations entering the monster quarters would need the luck of Olladra, and the guile of the Traveler to succeed, and by the sneering look of disdain

she gave you, you're sure she didn't think you had either.

Strangely, so far the mission's been trouble-free. You've gotten this far with eerie ease. The path Slurge gave you was true, and you were able to avoid the harpy and gargoyle patrols in the streets of the so-called monster quarters, and few guards stirred in the Turendurz villa, and those that did were too distracted by games or grog to notice your passage. And while you've noticed some traps and alarms, you were able not to set off a single one. Onata's wife must indeed be smiling upon you tonight.

Now all that's left to do is foil the locks and wards on a single door, enter the ogre mage's trophy room, collect your prize...and of course escape; there's always the escape.

At this point the PCs are in the hallway outside area 14 (Trophy Room) and area 13 (Storage Chamber).

Starting *in medias res* likely prompts questions from the players. Before the PCs decide to fiddle with the door, answer any of their questions to best of their ability to ascertain the answers. Use the following sections as guidelines. If you want, feel free to roleplay sections as "flashback" scenes.

Also give the players a copy of "Handout 1: Turendurz Villa", which gives them the information they've gathered about the villa up to this point.

How did we get here?

Some of the introduction text hints at the PCs' path to this point. They've been sent on this mission by Matron Martra to retrieve an artifact related to the strange *Sarlonian puzzle orbs* (see sidebar), called the *Rod of Orbs*. While the true purpose of the rod is as unknown as the orbs' purposes, but the Union desires to possess anything that will that could answer their mystery.

According to Union sources in Graywall, the rod has been in the possession of an ogre mage fence and smuggler named Turendurz since the close of the Last War, but despite numerous Union attempts, and the attempts by proxies covertly representing the Union, the Droaam merchant has been unwilling to discuss or part with the artifact. Martra suspect that either the ogre mage has some hint of the rod's true purpose, or the strange item psionically compels Turendurz's obstinance, at least in some minor way. Because of this, the Union has decided to extract the artifact by way subterfuge. The PCs are here to burgle the *Rod of Orbs* from Turendurz.

The PCs hitched a ride from Breland to Graywall via a heavily-armed House Denieth caravan, traveling to Graywall to replenishing house interests in the city. With Denieth's help, the PCs masqueraded as house mercenaries coming into the city, and then promptly blended into the throngs of the city's Human Quarter before meeting with their ally, the hobgoblin sorceress, and Union agent and journeyer, Slurge.

Though skeptical of the PCs' chances, Slurge was able to secure them a path into the monster quarters of the city. Aided with the robes of the Blistered Ones—a diseased brotherhood of Mockery monks with monasteries throughout Droaam—some useful magics, and key intelligence, the PCs have secreted themselves through the city and into the ogre mage's villa successfully. Without Slurge, the PCs would have never made it this far.

What's Graywall like?

The gateway to Droaam, Graywall sits roughly on the border of that land and Breland. The city was built using the strength of ogres and the architectural skill of medusas, all under the direction of Xor'chlic the illithid governor of the city.

It is a city of alien and disquieting—some would say deeply disturbing—architecture, overrun by creatures that most of those who hail from the Five Nations would call monsters. The eastern quarter of the city houses humans and other members of the "civilized"

racess. This Human Quarter is not only physically separated from the rest of the city, Xor'chlic has granted House Tharashk the right to administer justice within it.

The monster quarters are dangerous to outsiders, and feature numerous fighting pits that entertain the savage masses. Member of the civilized races caught within the monster quarters, who aren't killed outright, end up finding their death serving as entertainment in the wildly popular blood sports.

What do we know about Turendurz?

He's a powerful citizen of Graywall who has close ties with the mind flayer governor, Xor'chlic. Fat, vain, and wealthy, a number of ogres and orcs serve him. He's depraved, ruthless, and wickedly cunning. He prefers torture to negotiation, bloody murder over compromise, and skullduggery instead of direct confrontation.

Are we supposed to kill Turendurz?

No. Just steal the *Rod of Orbs*. Matron Martra knows the nature of this mission may make some Diggers uncomfortable (see below), and while the ogre mage is a monster (in more than one sense of the word), speeding him to the Keeper's clutches is beyond the mandate of this mission. She also does not want to anger Xor'chlic. The mind flayer is a commanding creature with powerful sense of pride and wrath.



Slurge

SARLONIAN PUZZLE ORB

Sarlonian puzzle orbs are mysterious psionic and/or magic items that started showing up early in the MARK OF HEROES campaign. Some Diggers who have been tasked to hold and guard these strange items for the Union have grown somewhat fascinated (others would say obsessed) with them. The orbs defy any meaningful evaluation and magical or psionic divination.

PCs with a *Sarlonian puzzle orb* must succeed a DC save at the beginning of each adventure they play or be transfixed by the strange item throughout the adventure's play. While this usually has little to no game effect, those who fail this save for this adventure suffer a -2 penalty to the Will save when Asulmaz activates the *Rod of Eyes* (see Part One).

Those PCs who have all the boxes checked on their *Sarlonian puzzle orb* story object (signifying that they have failed the saving throw 12 times since retrieving the orb) throw their orb toward the *Rod of Orbs* when it is activated—they get no save. They are also treated as sickened for the rest of the adventure, as withdraw from their orb cause physical and psychological pain. A remove disease removes this effect.

Why's it been so easy?

Much of the ease has been due to the aid of Slurge and her associates. While Graywall is a city of monsters, even Turendurz is too monstrous for some of its citizens. They've had no problem aiding outsiders if it embarrasses Turendurz.

Disguises further aided the PCs.

Slurge has equipped the PCs with the heavy protective robes worn by initiates of the Flayed Hand. Big and bulky, and made to protect the open wounds of those monks who lack magics to protect their newly flailed skin from dirt and infection. So feared are the members of the Flayed Hand that many citizens of Graywall will not risk making eye contact with the monks.

For those PCs hesitant to wear the garments of a member of the Dark Six, Slurge suggested that PC hide as a corpse of some spy or interloper that his or her companions can take in tow, and even aids in the disguise (Slurge's Disguise is +16, with the aid of a disguise kit).

I'm a paladin, why am I acting like a burglar?

There are, of course, many versions of this question. Some players may question their PCs' participation in such a seemingly nefarious mission. It's basically up to you to think fast and help them justify their character's involvement. Some ideas are:

Matron Martra has sent the PC to make sure less trustworthy members of the group don't compromise the mission by turning it into a murder-and-loot exercise.

Turendurz is responsible for the murder or ruination of a member of the PCs family or a close personal friend. The PCs may be motivated by serving justice and could even get Matron Martra to agree to sanction enacting of such "justice."

A faithful servant of a faith, organization, or other institution, the PC has broken his or her word to Martra and told the other organization about the *Sarlonian puzzle orbs*. That organization wants the PC involved with any mission concerning the strange objects. When the PCs are ready to proceed, go to "Part One: The Turendurz Villa".

PART ONE: THE TURENDURZ VILLA

During this section of the adventure, the PCs break into the Trophy Room, find out an unexpected foe has beaten them to the prize, and then must deal with the fallout of the encounter, which likely involves a hasty escape from the villa.

Review the "Villa Locations" sidebar, as it contains overviews of the villa's defenses and its areas. Knowledge of such will be important to run the encounter, and even more so if the PCs take any unexpected actions.

Entering the Trophy Room (EL 7)

Before the PCs can enter the trophy room, they must defeat its door. Locked (good lock, DC 30) and trapped with a *glyph of warding*, the magically reinforced strong wooden door (3-inch thick, lead lined, and ethereal solid; harness 10; hp 40; Break DC 35) leading directly to the trophy room is a formidable barrier.

Glyph of Warding (Blast): CR 6; spell; spell trigger; no reset; spell effect (glyph of warding [blast], 16th-level cleric, 8d8 sonic, DC 14 Reflex save half damage); multiple targets (all targets within 5 ft.); Search DC 28; Disable Device DC 28. The sound from the glyph also brings the two elite ogre guards (see "Leaving the Villa", below). They arrive 10 rounds after the glyph blasts.

The door leading to the storage chamber (area 13) is also locked (average lock, DC 25), and is identical in construction to the trophy room door. A search of that door's area (DC 15) may find some strange symbols etched into the floor stones. A successful evaluation of the symbols (Spellcraft DC 20, or investigate DC 25) identifies them as part of a ward keeping out (and in) incorporeal undead. (Which are part of the healthy number of wards that trap the spectre Turendurz uses as a guardian inside area 13, see that room's description.)

Beyond the Door: The trophy room is a large asymmetric chamber crammed with various items of sentimental value to the ogre mage. Trophies from vanquished foes, strange alchemical and magical trinkets, and rare artifacts from Xen'drik, Sarlona and Argonnessen are displayed liberally around the chamber.

Knickknacks aside, the real meat of this encounter is in the western area of the room, near the large window looking over the slightly sloped roof over the landing platform. Once that area comes into view, it takes no Spot check to see the large, limp, and lifeless form of Turendurz draped over a large table, and the man standing over him.

A beautiful man with a chiseled physique floats in the air, mere inches above the ogre mage's body. His ornately decorated robes flow about him, held aloft by a phantom wind, observed only by sight. He clutches what can only be the Rod of Orbs in his right hand.

Have the PCs attempt a Spot check (DC 12 – automatic success for kalashtar characters). Success recognizes the man as an Inspired, a member of the beautiful and exotic ruling class of Riedra on the Sarlonian continent. Those characters who have played *EMH-5 Gambit at Dreadhold*, and who succeeded their check by 10 or more recognize the Inspired as Asulmaz, the very prisoner that they were supposed to escort back to Grea Tower during that ill-fated mission to Dreadhold Prison. Failure of this check means that the PCs assume the man is a kalashtar.

Asulmaz immediately recognizes the PCs as rivals, and taunts them, confident that he has the upper hand in this situation. Furthermore, he recognizes those who attempted to secure his release from Dreadhold Prison, as his allies have warned him that the PCs and the Diggers' Union may actively search for him. In this case he



starts his taunts with the following whether or not the PCs recognize him:

"Oh, delightful. Delicious even. Are you looking for me, the rod, or both? You do know you'll get neither."

During his taunts he chuckles in a melodically but maniacally, and compulsively cracks all the knuckles in his left hand with a single, strained grasping motion. These are two of Asulmaz's many nervous habits.

If the PCs don't recognize him or pretend not to recognize him, he becomes even more agitated, screaming at them in a grating, high-pitched voice:

"No wonder you failed to capture me. You are as stupid as you are ugly and insignificant. For I am Asulmaz, keeper of Sor-Quosyent, reaper of mages, scourge of Arcanix!"

He then continues with the following:

Whatever you are here for, savor the bitter taste of failure, fools. You are nothing but insects caught in the maelstrom of machinations beyond your ability to comprehend.

Alternatively, if the PCs have not played *EMH-5 Gambit at Dreadhold*, Asulmaz starts his taunts with the above read-aloud text, peppering it with insults as the encounter progresses.

Don't let the read-aloud text stop the PCs from acting. Asulmaz can sprinkle his jeers among his combat actions.

Creatures: As the keen senses of the PCs may ascertain early in the encounter (use the initial Spot check against Hide), Asulmaz is not alone in Turendurz's treasure room. A trio of skilled and dangerous Ghûl gnoll mercenaries aids the Inspired in his theft of the *Rod of Orbs*. They lurk among the room's shadows and behind various treasures until the PCs attack.

Asulmaz: male Inspired psion 10 (nomad); hp 44; Combat Statistics.

Ghûl Gnoll Mercenaries (3): mix male and female gnoll scout 3; hp 32, 29, 29; Combat Statistics

Tactics: The gnolls use their skirmish ability to best effect. They're continuously tumbling into position and moving more than 10 feet to give them their bonuses. They make sure to move into a flanking position wherever possible.

Asulmaz stays away from combat the best he can, preferring to toy with his rivals. He supports the gnolls with psionic powers and psi-like abilities, while keeping himself safe—behind a *wall of ectoplasm* if need be—but makes his escape as soon as the gnolls (and thus his entertainment) are defeated.

This isn't the case if the PCs carry at least one *Sarlonian puzzle orb*. Asulmaz can sense the presence of the orbs, thanks to the rod, and he attempts to steal the orbs before he makes his escape.

On the first round he starts with the following taunt:

"You pathetic mortals, how could you possibly understand the Sarlonian puzzle orbs? Your intellect is hardly capable of figuring out what was in your last meal much less solve the puzzle orb"

Asulmaz then activates a power of the rod. Activating the power takes a standard action and provokes attacks of opportunity. Any PC carrying a *Sarlonian puzzle orb* an orb must succeed at a DC 20 Will save or retrieve an orb from wherever it is stowed and then throw it toward Asulmaz.

The gnolls have been instructed not to take attacks of opportunity against creatures reaching for orbs.

When a *Sarlonian puzzle orb* is thrown toward the *Rod of Orbs*, the artifact catches the orb by some invisible telekinetic force, and orb starts to orbit around the rod much like an *ioun stone* circles around its wearer's head.

A PC who succeeded its saving throw can't be affected by this particular power of the *Rod of Orbs* for another 24 hours. When Asulmaz takes possession of a *Sarlonian puzzle orb*, void a PCs' corresponding story object by writing void across the document.

Once the insane Inspired psion gathers as many *Sarlonian puzzle orbs* as he can, he spends no more than two rounds aiding the Ghûl gnolls' assault with his psionic powers before manifesting a *psionic teleport*, but not before taking one last opportunity to taunt the PCs.

"A pity that this will be the last time I set my eyes upon you all. I hope you are practice runners." Asulmaz pops out of existence and a blare of what can only be the villa's alarms scream into the Droaam night.

Development: If at any time Asulmaz drops to 15 or fewer hit points his pre-manifested *teleport trigger* activates, whisking him away from further danger. Also if the gnolls have been defeated in less than three rounds he will use his *psionic teleport* to get out of the villa. As indicated in the troubleshooting section of the adventure, Asulmaz must survive this adventure with the *Rod of Orbs* in tow.

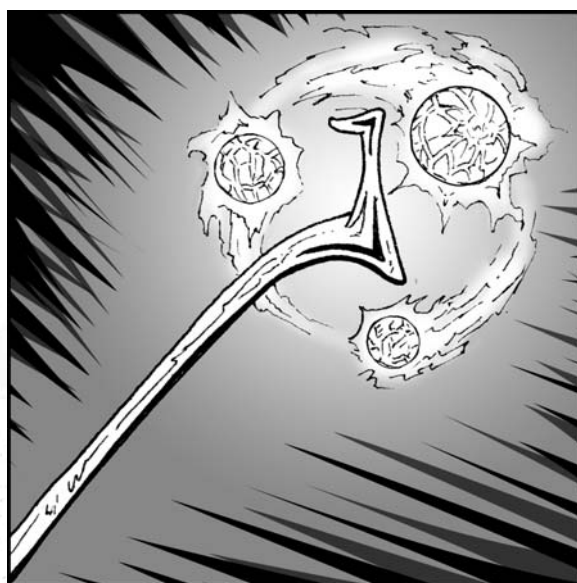
Teleporting out triggers the villa's main alarms, waking the sleeping guards in the Guardhouse (area 1), and jarring the ogre mage's elite guards (the ogre fighter / barbarians in area 4) into action.

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

8th-Level Characters: Asulmaz is a psion 11 (hp 44; Combat Statistics)

9th-Level Characters: Asulmaz is a psion 12 (hp 48; Combat Statistics). At this level, when the alarm sounds, teleportation magic is suppressed by a powerful localized *dimensional lock* keyed to each of the PCs. This makes teleportation impossible for 20 days.

10th-Level Characters: Asulmaz is a psion 12 (hp 48; Combat Statistics); increase the number of gnoll mercenaries to six (hp 35, 32, 30 29, 29, 24; Combat Statistics). At this level, when the alarm sounds, teleportation magic is suppressed by a powerful localized *dimensional lock* keyed to each of the PCs. This makes teleportation impossible for 20 days.



COMBAT STATISTICS

ASULMAZ

CR 11

CE male tsucora spirit / Inspired psion (nomad) 10 vessel
Medium humanoid (human, psionic)**Init** +5; **Senses** Listen +5, Spot +21**Languages** Common, Quori, Draconic, Elven, Riedran**AC** 20, touch 18, flat-footed 20; *inertial armor***hp** 42 (10 HD)**Immune** magic missiles (*brooch of shielding* – 20 pts)**Fort** +4, **Ref** +5, **Will** +12**Speed** 30 ft. (6 squares)**Melee** mwk crystal dagger +6 (1d4/19-20)**Base Atk** +5; **Grp** +4**Special Actions** Psi-like, abilities, psionic powers**Power Points/Day:** 118 pp (current 108); ■■■■■ ■■■■■

□□□□	□□□□	□□□□	□□□□	□□□□
□□□□	□□□□	□□□□	□□□□	□□□□
□□□□	□□□□	□□□□	□□□□	□□□□
□□□□	□□□□	□□□□	□□□□	□□□□
□□□□	□□	(ML 10th):		

5th—*baleful teleport* (DC 19), *psionic teleport*, *psychic crush* (DC 19), *teleport trigger*[†]4th—*correspond*, *energy adaptation*, *psionic fly*, *wall of ectoplasm*3rd—*energy burst* (DC 17), *energy retort* (DC 17), *forced share pain* (DC 17), *psionic blast* (DC 17)2nd—*biofeedback*, *energy stun*, *sustenance*, *thought shield*1st—*conceal thoughts*[†], *defensive precognition*, *force screen*, *mindthrust* (DC 15), *vigor*[†]Psionic power premanifested and in effect during encounter.**Psi-Like Abilities** (ML 6th):1/day—*body adjustment*, *id insinuation* (DC 17), *mindlink*, *psionic charm* (DC 15), *recall agony* (DC 17)3/day—*body equilibrium*, *far hand*, *inertial armor*, *psionic scent*.**Abilities** Str 8, Dex 12, Con 10, Int 19, Wis 18, Cha 17**SQ** Dual spirit, naturally psionic**Feats** Psionic Body, Psionic Endowment, Extend Power, Improved Initiative, Combat Empower Power, Overchannel, Talented.**Skills** Autohypnosis +24, Bluff +15, Concentration +26, Diplomacy +20, Intimidate +18, Knowledge (psionics) +28, Knowledge (planes) +28, Listen +5, Move Silently +13, Ride +5, Psicraft +27, Sense Motive +17, Spot +21.**Possessions** *amulet of natural armor* +2, masterwork Riedran crystal dagger, *brooch of shielding* (20 points), *cloak of resistance* +1, *headband of intellect* +2**Duel Spirit (Ex):** Among a host of other benefits, an Inspired gains the following benefits from its duel spirit.**Duel Mind:** An Inspired may reroll any failed save against a mind-affecting spell or ability. If the rerolled save also fails, the Inspired suffers the effects normally.**Resist Exorcism:** The quori spirit inhabiting an inspired is subject to a *dismissal* spell, exorcism, or a similar effect. Use the total of the human vessel's character level and the quori's hit dice for the purpose of determining whether the spirit resists dismissal or exorcism. If the effect is successful, the quori spirit is temporarily driven back to Dal Quor. The effect lasts for 10 minutes per caster level of the character who cast the spell or performed the exorcism after which point the quori spirit can return and possess the human vessel again.

If a quori spirit returns to Dal Quor for any reason, its human vessel loses the benefits of the dual spirit until the quori spirit returns.

Naturally Psionic (Ex): An Inspired gains 1 extra power point per character level, regardless of whether she chooses a psionic class.**Hook** Asulmaz believes he is all knowing and boasts about that every chance he gets.

ASULMAZ

CR 12

CE male tsucora spirit / Inspired psion (nomad) 11 vessel
Medium humanoid (human, psionic)**Init** +5; **Senses** Listen +5, Spot +22**Languages** Common, Quori, Draconic, Elven, Riedran**AC** 20, touch 18, flat-footed 20; *inertial armor***hp** 44 (11 HD)**Resist** magic missile (*brooch of shielding* – 40 pt.)**Fort** +5, **Ref** +6, **Will** +13**Speed** 30 ft. (6 squares)**Melee** mwk crystal dagger +6 (1d4/19-20)**Base Atk** +5; **Grp** +4**Special Actions** Psi-like, abilities, psionic powers**Power Points/Day:** 139 pp (currently 129); ■■■■■

■■■■■	□□□□	□□□□	□□□□	□□□□
□□□□	□□□□	□□□□	□□□□	□□□□
□□□□	□□□□	□□□□	□□□□	□□□□
□□□□	□□□□	□□□□	□□□□	□□□□
□□□□	□□□□	□□□□	□□□□	□□□□

(ML 11th):

6th—*mass cloud mind* (DC 20)5th—*baleful teleport* (DC 19), *psionic teleport*, *psychic crush* (DC 19), *teleport trigger*[†]4th—*correspond*, *energy adaptation*, *psionic fly*, *wall of ectoplasm*3rd—*energy burst* (DC 17), *energy retort* (DC 17), *forced shared pain* (DC 17), *psionic blast* (DC 17)2nd—*biofeedback*, *energy stun*, *sustenance*, *thought shield*1st—*conceal thoughts*[†], *defensive precognition*, *force screen*, *mindthrust* (DC 15), *vigor*[†]Psionic power premanifested and in effect during encounter.**Psi-Like Abilities** (ML 6th):1/day—*body adjustment*, *id insinuation* (DC 17), *mindlink*, *psionic charm* (DC 15), *recall agony* (DC 17);3/day—*body equilibrium*, *far hand*, *inertial armor*, *psionic scent*.**Abilities** Str 8, Dex 12, Con 10, Int 19, Wis 18, Cha 17**SQ** Dual Spirit, Naturally Psionic**Feats** Psionic Body, Psionic Endowment, Extend Power, Improved Initiative, Combat Empower Power, Overchannel, Talented.**Skills** Autohypnosis +25, Bluff +15, Concentration +27, Diplomacy +21, Intimidate +18, Knowledge (psionics) +28, Knowledge (planes) +28, Listen +5, Move Silently +13, Ride +5, Psicraft +28, Sense Motive +17, Spot +22.**Possessions** *amulet of natural armor* +2, masterwork Riedran crystal dagger, *brooch of shielding* (40 points) *cloak of resistance* +2, *headband of intellect* +2

ASULMAZ

CR 13

CE male tsucora spirit / Inspired psion (nomad) 12 vessel
Medium humanoid (human, psionic)**Init** +5; **Senses** Listen +5, Spot +23**Languages** Common, Quori, Draconic, Elven, Riedran**AC** 20, touch 18, flat-footed 20; *inertial armor***hp** 48 (12 HD)**Fort** +4, **Ref** +5, **Will** +12**Speed** 30 ft. (6 squares)**Melee** mwk crystal dagger +7/+2 (1d4/19-20)**Base Atk** +6; **Grp** +5**Special Actions** Psi-like, abilities, psionic powers**Power Points/Day:** 174 pp (currently 164 pts.); ■■■■■

■■■■■	□□□□	□□□□	□□□□	□□□□
□□□□	□□□□	□□□□	□□□□	□□□□
□□□□	□□□□	□□□□	□□□□	□□□□
□□□□	□□□□	□□□□	□□□□	□□□□
□□□□	□□□□	□□□□	□□□□	□□□□

□□□□□ □□□□□ □□□□□ □□□□□; (ML 12th):

6th—*cloud mind, mass* (DC 22), *psionic disintegrate* (DC 22)
5th—*baleful teleport* (DC 21), *psionic teleport, psychic crush* (DC 21), *teleport trigger*[†]

4th—*correspond, energy adaptation, psionic fly, psionic freedom of movement, wall of ectoplasm*

3rd—*energy burst* (DC 19), *energy retort* (DC 19), *forced share pain* (DC 19) *psionic blast* (DC 19).

2nd—*biofeedback, energy stun, sustenance, thought shield*

1st—*conceal thoughts*[†], *defensive precognition, force screen, mind thrust* (DC 17), *vigor*

[†]Psionic power premanifested and in effect during encounter.

Psi-Like Abilities (ML 6th):

1/day—*body adjustment, id insinuation* (DC 17), *mindlink, psionic charm* (DC 15), *recall agony* (DC 17)

3/day—*body equilibrium, far hand, inertial armor, psionic scent*.

Abilities Str 8, Dex 12, Con 10, Int 22, Wis 18, Cha 17

SQ Dual Spirit, Naturally Psionic

Feats Psionic Body, Psionic Endowment, Extend Power, Improved Initiative, Empower Power, Overchannel, Talented, Greater Psionic Endowment

Skills Autohypnosis +26, Bluff +15, Concentration +28, Diplomacy +22, Intimidate +18, Knowledge (psionics) +29, Knowledge (planes) +29, Listen +5, Move Silently +13, Ride +5, Psicraft +30, Sense Motive +17, Spot +23.

Possessions *amulet of natural armor* +2, masterwork Riedran crsteel dagger, *brooch of shielding* (40 points) *cloak of resistance* +2, *headband of intellect* +2

GHÛL GNOLL MERCENARIES CR 4

CE mix male and female gnoll scout 3

Medium humanoid (gnoll)

Init +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +5, Spot +5

Languages Gnoll, Common

AC 19, touch 13, flat-footed 19; Dodge, Mobility, skirmish, uncanny dodge

hp variable, see encounter text (5 HD)

Fort +7, **Ref** +6, **Will** +2

Speed 40 ft. (8 squares)

Melee +1 *short sword* +8 (1d6+4/19-20) or

Ranged mwk shortbow +6 (1d6/x3)

Base Atk +3; **Grp** +7

Attack Options skirmish +2d6

Abilities Str 18, Dex 16, Con 15, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 6

SQ battle fortitude +1, trackless step, darkvision 60 ft., fast movement, uncanny dodge

Feats Dodge, Mobility

Skills Spot +5, Listen +5, Tumble +10, Hide +7, Move Silently +7

Possessions +1 *short sword*, +1 *chain shirt*, mwk short bow, 20 arrows.

Skirmish (Ex): These scouts deal an extra 2d6 point of damage on all attacks they make during any round in which they move at least 10 feet. The extra damage applies only to attack taken during the scout's turn.

The extra damage only applies against living creatures that have a discernible anatomy. Undead, constructs, oozes, plants, incorporeal creatures, and creatures immune to extra damage from critical hits are not vulnerable to this additional damage. Scouts can apply this extra damage to ranged attacks made while skirmishing, but only if the target is within 30 ft.

The scout also gains a +1 competence bonus to AC during a round in which it moves at least 10 feet.

THE TURENDURZ VILLA FEATURES

The Prologue and Part One of this adventure take place in the villa. The PCs have some fairly detailed knowledge about much of the villa (Handout 1), but the following is your overview of the various locations within.

The villa stands 25 feet off the ground, held aloft by numerous iron beams. There's a single walkway that leads from the guardhouse (area 1, which doesn't appear on your map) up to the villa's front door (area 2). The ogre mage's servants, guards, and land-bound visitors use this walkway, but Turendurz prefers entering from one of the two aerial landings (areas 6).

Walls: The walls of this place are ethereal solid, lead-lined, magically treated reinforced masonry. The thinner walls are 1-foot thick (hardness 16; hp 180 per 5-foot section; Break DC 65), while the thicker walls are 3 feet thick (hardness 16; hp 540 per 5-foot section; Break DC 105).

Doors: The doors of this place are ethereal solid, lead-lined, magically reinforced, ironbound doors (3-inch thick; harness 10; hp 40; Break DC 35). Most are locked with average locks (DC 25), but the Trophy Room (area 14), Turendurz's Bedchamber (area 8) and the front door (area 2) are guarded with good locks (DC 30). Turendurz and his ogre guards each carry skeleton keys of all the locks (including the windows) within the villa.

Windows: The windows of this place are adorned with leaded glass (1/8 inch tick, hardness 1, hp 1), and sometimes shuttered (1-1/2 inch tick, harness 5, 15 hp), each is locked (good lock DC 30) and breaking or unsuccessfully tampering with the windows sounds the general alarm (see below).

Chimneys: The two chimneys of the villa (access through areas

5, 10, and 12) are only narrow enough for Tiny or smaller creatures. Even then, the elemental fires of both are always lit, and any creature traveling down the flue, must travel some 30 feet before reaching the second story, and 60 feet before reaching the first story. Due to the smoke and flames, such travel is difficult terrain for flying creatures, requires a DC 25 Climb check for those using that method of travel, and fraught with smoke inhalation dangers (see *Dungeon Master's Guide* 304). Choking and coughing creatures fall, taking falling damage and 5d6 fire for each fire pit the creature hits.

Alarms: Breaking any window, or the front door, or teleporting (including using other teleportation spells, powers, or spell- or psi-like abilities, including *dimensional leap* and *dimension door*) into, out of, or within the villa rises a loud gong alarm that alerts the guards to intruders' presence. It also drops a number of iron portcullises at locations marked on your map and barring all the windows (see "Leaving the Villa", below).

The alarms not only alert the guards within the villa, they also alert Xor'chlyic's and his Tentacles (see Part Two). Among his servants, Graywall's governor has recently acquired the services of a mysterious dusk hag void disciple named Beltrudalgald Twiceborn. He immediately has her reach out with her sense void ability to find out what is amiss within Turendurz's villa. From there on, he has Beltrudalgald follow the PCs with her mind, which allows him to track and harry their escape (and at higher levels help in positioning Xor'chlyic's powerful *dimensional locks*) in Parts Two and Three.

Wards: The lead-lined walls and doors, and even the special leaded glass of Turendurz's villa, blocks divination into the place, and even divining from one room to another within the place. The entire place is ethereally solid, blocking progress via that transitory

plane. Lastly, if a creature other than Turendurz uses a teleportation spell, power, or effect within the villa, the alarm is raised, and the half-ogre is mentally warned of the final destination of such magic (with 85% accuracy) though such passage is not usually blocked (see "Scaling the Encounter").

LOCATIONS

1. Guardhouse: This 40-foot by 60-foot guardhouse stands adjacent to the walkway leading to the villa's front door. It's just large enough to be a little too comfortable for its guards, a pair of ogres armed with masterwork greatswords (Ogres [2]: hp 25, 25; Melee Large masterwork greatswords +8 [3d6+7/19-20]; *Monster Manual* 199). Drugged with a minor sleeping agent slipped to them by Asulmaz's Ghûl gnoll mercenaries, they snore away the night, but awaken if touched or they hear the sounds of combat near their post or along the walkway (they suffer a -20 to listen checks due to the poison). They are automatically awakened when the villa's alarm sounds.

2. Front Door: The large and ornate double doors are locked with a good lock (DC 30). Fumbling with the lock, or breaking down the door sets off the alarm. The door is carved with a stylized rendering of Turendurz, depicting him as much more grand and muscular than the ogre mage's actual bearing and frame.

3. Foyer: Beyond the front doors is this large chamber that stretches up to the villa's vaulted roof, which features a *continual flame* chandelier. The walls of the chamber are cluttered with paintings depicting Droaam's rulers, Turendurz's ancestors, and scenes from the various blood sports the ogre mage enjoys.

The doors leading to the servant's quarters (areas 4) are not locked, but the door leading to the kitchen (area 5) is (average lock; DC 25).

4. Servant's Quarters (Dinning Rooms): More of a hovel of mats in the villa's two dining rooms than actual quarters, the various orcs servants sleep here under the watchful (but not always awake) eyes of an elite ogre guard (see "Leaving the Villa" below). There are 8 orcs sleeping in each room, they are armed only with makeshift weapons (Orcs [16]: hp 5 each; Melee club +4 [1d6+3]; *Monster Manual* 203). Unless attacked, the orcs stay out of any combat.

The doors to the aerial landings (areas 6) and the kitchen (area 5) are locked; good locks (DC 30) in the former cases, and average locks (DC 25) in the latter.

5. Kitchen: Turendurz has a healthy appetite, and his kitchen is stocked and well appointed. PCs may be disgusted by his idea of cuisine, though, as he has a fondness for gnome, elf, and kalashtar.

6. Aerial Landings: Some 25 feet above the ground, these landing are ideal landing spots for the landing of flyers. The walls have hitching points for the occasional wyvern or griffon. The doors leading to the dinning rooms (areas 4) and the kitchen (area 5) are barred with good locks (DC 30).

7. Balcony: This balcony oversees the walkway and the guardhouse (area 1). It is barred with a good lock (DC 30), that when opened sounds the alarm.

8. Turendurz's Bedroom: This is a modest but rather large room is adorned with an oversized bed with fine satin sheets. A few desks and cabinets are against the wall. Paintings old giant legendary leaders hang on each wall. This room is guarded with good locks (DC 30)

9. Privy: The doors to this chamber are unlocked for easy access by the villa's patriarch.

10. Sitting Room: A comfortable spot with a large cushioned chair and a table for Turendurz to study magic and read up on the current magic item market. A stack of copies of all the current chronicles from across Khorvaire lie in a stack next to the chair.

NEW ALCHEMICAL ITEMS

Acidic fire from the *Eberron Campaign Setting* (page 120) is probably familiar to most MARK OF HEROES players and DMs, but it's reprinted here for easy reference. The bloodspikes are from *Magic of Eberron* (pages 139 to 140)

Acidic Fire: this alchemical concoction combines alchemist's fire with a strong acid. A direct hit with acidic fire deals 1d4 points of acid damage and 1d4 points of fire damage. Every creature within 5 feet of the point where the acidic fire hits takes 1 point of acid damage and 1 point of fire damage from the splash. On a round following a direct hit, the target takes an additional 1d4 points of fire damage; this damage can be avoided in the same way as for alchemist's fire (see page 128 of the *Player's Handbook*).

Bloodspike: A bloodspike somewhat resembles a thin potion vial, narrowing to a needlelike point at one end. The interior of the slender tube is filled with one of sever varieties of alchemical substances (see below). To use a bloodspike, a user jabs it directly into her flesh (the fleshy part of her arm is an ideal location). Doing this deals 1 point of piercing damage (damage reduction does not apply when using a bloodspike) and causes the fluid in the narrow vial to be absorbed directly into the user's body.

Alternatively, a bloodspike can be thrown as a range weapon with a range increment of 5 feet. The bloodspike deals 1 point of piercing damage if it used in this way, with the target subject to the effects of bloodspike's contents on a successful hit. (Since most bloodspikes provide a beneficial effect, and adventurer will typically throw a bloodspike at an ally to grant him its benefits in a combat situation.) No proficiency is required to use a blood spike this way.

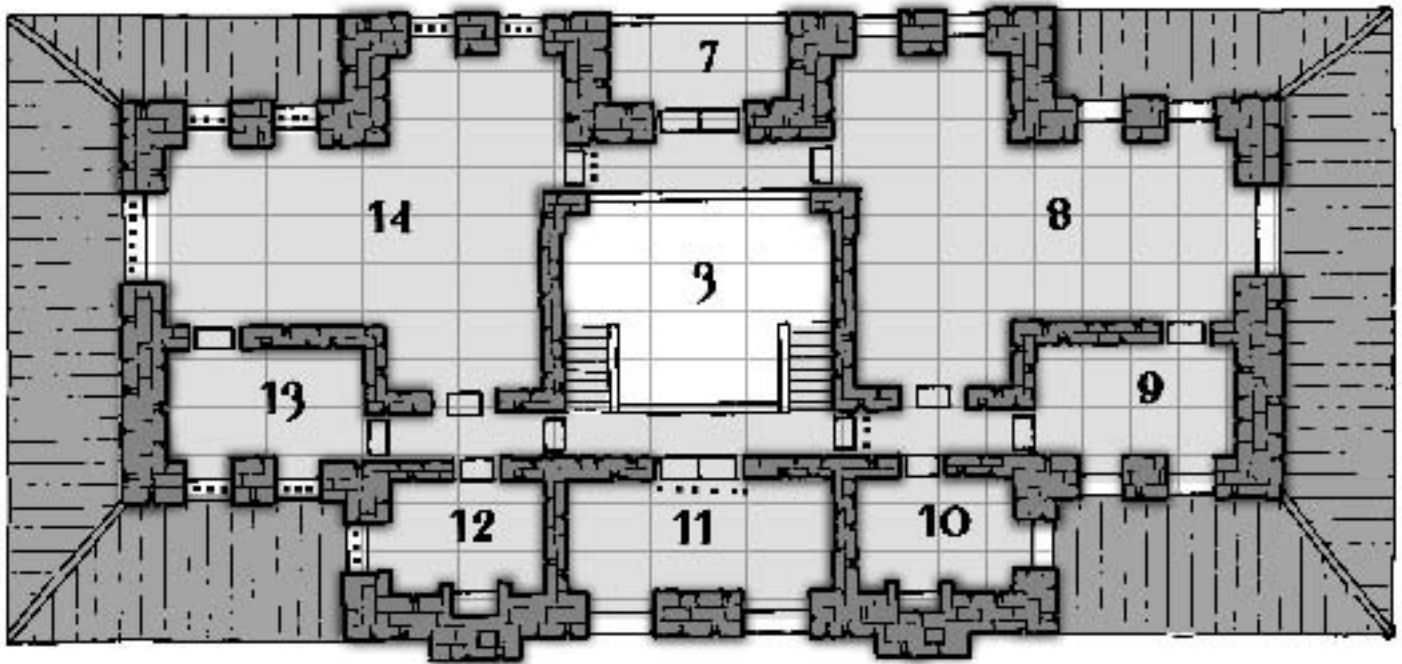
Regardless of the method of delivery, using a bloodspike is a standard action that provokes attacks of opportunity. The effects of the bloodspike's alchemical contents do not stack. Constructs, elementals, oozes, plants, and undead are unaffected by bloodspikes.

Glowbug: A glowbug bloodspike interlaces your blood with an alchemical substance that reacts by emitting a luminous radiance. For 1 hour after a bloodspike is used, this radiance leaks from every inch of your skin. So long as some art of your body is exposed (hand, arms, head, and so on), the effects of the bloodspike provide bright light to a radius of 10 feet and shadowy illumination out to 20 feet.

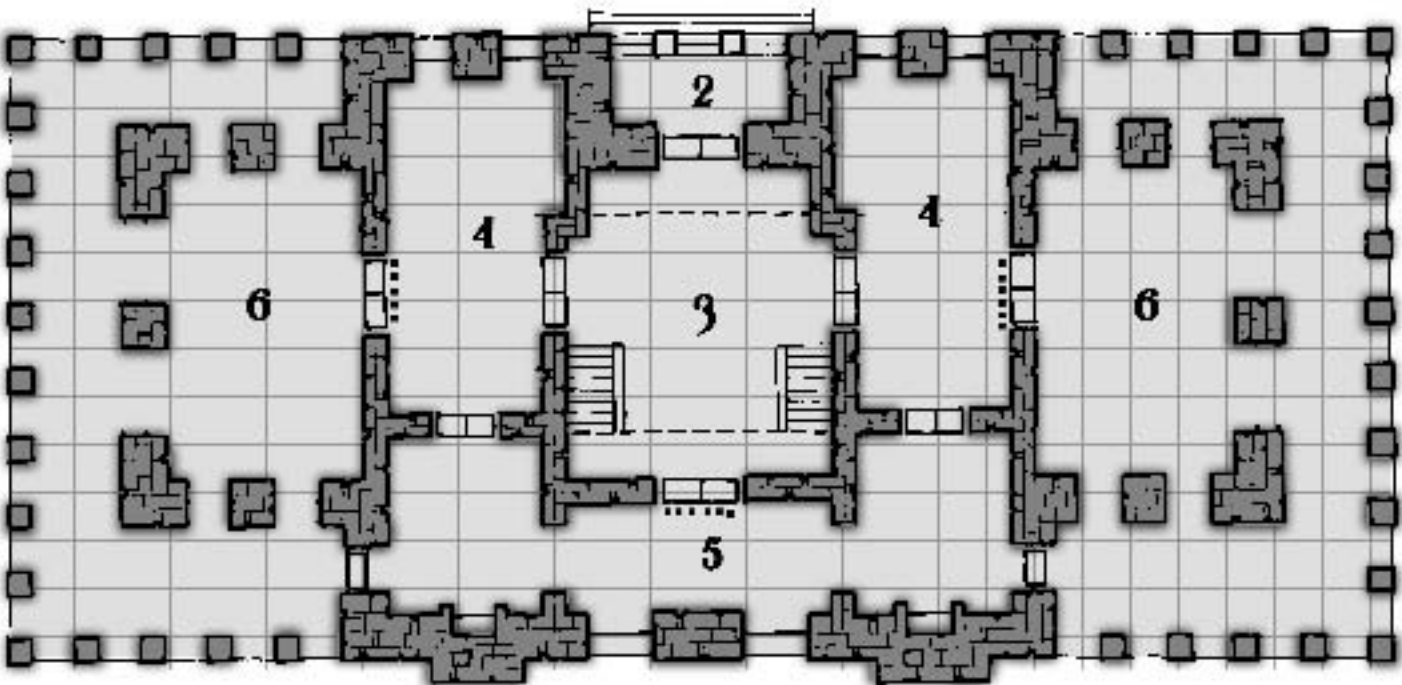
Tempo: The tempo bloodspike interlaces your blood with an alchemical substance that grants you a secret reservoir of energy. At any time in the hour after the bloodspike is used, you can draw upon this energy to take one additional move action on your turn (either before or after your other actions). If not used within 1 hour, the alchemical substance fades from your blood and is lost.

VILLA MAP

floor 2



floor 1



11. Lab: This room is full of tomes, history books, and vials of unlabeled alchemical substances. There is little of value in this room, but a detect magic identifies 3 potions as such (two are *inflict moderate wounds* potions [CL 3] and one is a *protection from good* potion [CL 1]). There are also five vials of acidic fire, and a tempo and glowbug blood spike (see new alchemical items sidebar).

12. Guest Room: This is a simply appointed bedroom. The door has an average lock (DC 25).

13. Supply Room: Turendurz keep various odds and ends in this

cluttered and warded rooms. The room is warded at each door and each window to keep in and out incorporeal undead. This is partially due to the fact that the ogre mage has trapped a spectre (hp 45; *Monster Manual* 232) in this room. All that remains of an elf thief who tried to plunder Turendurz's trophy room last winter, the wards that keep him in this chamber also prevent him from creating spawn.

14. Trophy Room: This room is detailed in the beginning of Part One.



LEAVING THE VILLA (EL 9♦)

Once Asulmaz escapes with the *Rod of Eyes*, the PCs immediate concern becomes escaping the villa. Handout 1 outlines their path into the villa, and will aid them in their escape.

The electrified portcullises slamming down in strategic parts of the villa further limit their escape route. The statistics for these barriers are as follows:

Iron Electrified Portcullises: 2 inches thick; hardness 10, hp 60; Lift DC 35 (25 if electricity is disrupted). Contact with a portcullis cause 3d6 points of electricity to course through the PC each round (a DC 13 Reflex save is allowed for half damage if the portcullis is only momentarily or accidentally touched).

If any PC is unfortunate enough to be standing under a portcullis's space when it falls, it acts like a trap with the following statistics: Atk +10 melee (3d6).

Small creatures can squeeze through the gaps in the portcullis with a DC 15 escape artist check. Such an attempt cause the creature to take the electricity damage (no save) if the portcullis is still charged. Tiny or smaller creatures can pass through the gaps of a portcullis, but will likely take electricity damage when they pass through (allow a saving throw).

PCs can attempt to disrupt the flow of electricity in individual portcullis (Disable Device DC 20; take 2d4 rounds).

Creatures: Unless the PCs can foil portcullises, the only clear path is outside the front door, and between the trophy room and that point, are the villa's guards: the elite guards from the dinning rooms and the normal guards from the guardhouse.

Only the elite guards leave their post to search out the PCs, probably confronting the PCs in the foyer (area 3), but they search them out if the PCs pursue other ways out of the villa.

Elite Ogre Guards (2): ogre fighter 2 / barbarian 2; hp 72, 67; Combat Statistics.

Tactics: Angered that their pampered life has been disrupted, and scared that failing their master may mean returning to the Graywall fighting pits, the ogre guards punish the PCs with fierce, raging blows. Steeled by blood sport training this pair works well in concert, taking ruthless advantages of PC mistakes whenever possible, while

cruelly mocking them for tactical mistakes, both real and perceived.

Development: There are many ways the PCs can escape. Different groups of PCs will find different solutions to the dilemma. Don't dissuade them—the escape should be difficult, fun, and features a real chance for failure.

If the PCs are beaten, those who survive are captured. Basically the adventure is over. Each PC gets the "Captured!" digital story object. Proceed to the conclusion.

Once the PCs leave the villa, they may have to deal with the ogre guards outside, but those two are just as likely to flee if they think the PCs beat the two tougher ogres inside the villa. From there, the PCs must find a way to escape the monster quarters and eventually leave Graywall. Go to Part Two.

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

8th-Level Characters: No change.

9th-Level Characters: There are three elite ogre guards (hp 72, 67, 66; Combat Statistics).

10th-Level Characters: There are four elite ogre guards (hp 72, 70, 67, 66; Combat Statistics).

PART TWO: FROM THE STREETS TO THE ARENA

After leaving the villa, the PCs next task is escaping the monster quarters of Graywall. At this point, give the PCs "Handout 2: Route to the Villa." This gives the PCs their basic route to Turendurz's villa, along with a scattering of information about the surrounding areas. The handout is not really there to help the PCs, but to give them a focus for their planned escape, and an idea of how hard the going is going to be.

Still, use it to add some life to the city, and even as a guide to the physical make up of areas in the city. Also use the sidebar "20 Graywall Random Encounters" to breath some life in the city.

Getting out of the city is a tricky task. The alarms of the villa have also warned the ogre mage's friend and ally, Xor'chlyic, of the PCs

COMBAT STATISTICS

OGRE GUARDS (RAGING) CR7

CE ogre fighter 2 / barbarian 2

Large giant

Init +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; low-light vision, Listen +4, Spot +4

Languages Giant, Common; illiterate

AC 20, touch 8, flat-footed 20

hp variable, see encounter text (8 HD)

Fort +16, **Ref** +1, **Will** +3

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares; base 50 ft.)

Melee +1 *Large greatsword* +15/+10 (3d6+22/19-20)

Base Atk +7; **Grp** +21

Attack Options Cleave, Power Attack* (+3 Power Attack already calculated in stat block) rage 1/day (9 rounds then fatigued; already calculated in stat block)

Abilities Str 30, Dex 11, Con 22, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 4

SQ fast movement, illiteracy, trap sense +1, uncanny dodge

Feats Cleave, Power Attack, Power Critical*, Toughness, Weapon Focus (greatsword)

Skills Climb +6, Hide -4, Listen +4, Spot +4, Swim -2

Possessions +1 *Large greatsword*, masterwork Large half-plate armor, *ring of protection* +1

*From *Complete Warrior* (page 103), grants a +4 bonus to confirm critical hits.

Hook "None leave alive!"

When not raging, the ogre guards have the following changed statistics:

AC 22, touch 11, flat-footed 22

hp -16 hit points from the variable in adventure text (8 HD)

Fort +14, **Will** +1

Melee +1 *Large greatsword* +13/+8 (3d6+17/19-20)

Grp +19

Attack Options Cleave, Power Attack* (+3 Power Attack already calculated in stat block) rage 1/day (9 rounds then fatigued—can't run or charge, -2 to Str and Dex)

Abilities Str 26, Con 18

presence. A powerful psion (15th-level telepath equivalent), the mind flayer's grip on the city is great, and he served by a group of powerful clerics, wizards, and psions called Xor'chlyic's Tentacles, and due to a powerful dusk hag void disciple's recent addition to that group, the crafty illithid is able to stay one step ahead of the PCs. He uses his formidable resources to attempt to thwart the PCs' egress from Graywall.

Xor'chlyic's main goal is to funnel the PCs to the Skullcrusher Fighting Pits, and due to his powerful resources, it's a goal that he'll ultimately succeed at. The actual location of the fighting pits has not been noted on Handout 2. This gives you flexibility on where to place it as the PCs proceed out of the monster quarters.

The first three of the following four encounters are encounters you can run along the PCs path to the pits.

The first encounter, "Strange Fruit", give the PCs an idea of the power and reach of their illithid pursuer, along with a moderately challenging combat encounter.

"Hyena's Den" is more of a random encounter with a powerful gnoll street gang who challenge those who enter their territory, and like less the idea of "pink skins" roaming the monster quarter.

The third encounter, "Sky Full of Danger", describes what happens if Xor'chlyic's band of aerial soldiers catches up with the PCs, in the mind flayer's push to move the interlopers to their blood sport debut.

The final encounter is the PCs show down with fighting pit sweetheart, the powerful minotaur barbarian goliath.

Typical convention play allows two to three of these encounters to play out. The best option is run "Strange Fruit", and either "Hyena's Den" or "Sky Full of Danger" before having the PCs stumble into the "Skullcrusher Fighting Pit".

TWENTY GRAYWALL ENCOUNTERS

Graywall is a city unlike most others, and the following are bits of random flavor to help liven up your descriptions of the city, and give the PCs the idea of the danger they are in.

If there is a scene here that tickles your fancy as a potential combat encounter, feel free to swap out either "Hyena Den" or "Sky Full of Danger" for an encounter of a similar CR based on it. This works like a mini DM's Mark within this adventure.

D20 Encounter

- 1 A gaggle of kobolds flee from an angry displacer beast. The lead kobold cackles in glee, pleased with the treasure in his hand—a fancy spiked collar.
- 2 A group of ogres play some sort of game with a ball that looks like it was made with the corpse of a gauth.
- 3 A pair of skullcrusher ogres (*Monster Manual III* 116) uses a live goblin as an unfortunate wishbone in some form of sad back-alley divination.
- 4 A goblin dressed as King Boranel ir'Wynarn of Breland plays jester to a group of gnolls, ogres, and minotaurs. He is actually very funny, but crass and bawdy.
- 5 A group of gnolls drags a gagged, but angry, destrachan up the street. Throng of Graywall citizens makes a path for the dangerous progression
- 6 A mongrelfolk rides atop a saddled otyugh. The pair serves as trash collectors, as the otyugh eats the foul filth and dung dumped on the streets by city inhabitants.
- 7 Ogre servants carry a platform holding aloft a fire giant of some importance.
- 8 A loud commotion issues forth from a structure. Moments later a scared ogre mage stumbles out, and looking back toward the door is turned to stone. Seconds later a trio of medusa exit the building to inspect their handiwork. The medusas wear the insignia of Xor'chlyic, and are obviously members of his elite forces.
- 9 What appears to be a pile of trash, starts to move down the street.
- 10 A medusa shops at a slave pit for just the right gnome to petrify and then display in her front yard.
- 11 A group of changelings perform a savage "morality" play involving the folly of Brelish soldiers who think they can outfight and outthink Droaam gnolls.
- 12 A bestial voice recites mystic syllables from a courtyard barely visible from the street. A gnoll spellcaster is animating dead in an old graveyard.
- 13 A group of gnolls watches a pair of hyena fight, different group wager on the combat's outcome.
- 14 On a stage a group of clerics of Fury anoint a war troll with blood-soaked large whip-like brushes. A banner over the ceremony declares "Korg-Ort the blessed ravager of Znir, and blessed of Fury." A throng of creatures surrounds the macabre ceremony, its frenzied member hoping to be splashed with the anointing fluid.
- 15 A figure mounted atop a wyvern circles overhead.
- 16 In an open-air market, a fight breaks out between gnoll toughs and a band of hobgoblin mercenaries. It ends as quickly as it began when a trio of harpies land in the market.
- 17 A carriage passes on the street. Six skeletal horses pull it, but has no driver. A strange, eerie moaning can be heard coming from within.



- 18 A parade of gladiators marches past on their way to the blood sport. The parade attracts the attention of nearby citizens who call out to favorite fighters, and throw scraps of raw meat to them, which if caught, are quickly gobbled up—no matter the gladiator's race.
- 19 A small band of nervous looking orcs wander up the streets, obviously amazed and alarmed about what they see.
- 20 A large elephant creature barrels up the street, forcefully pushing through the savage throngs. The creature is a Thaskor (*Miniatures Handbook* page 70)

STRANGE FRUIT (EL 5)

Not long after the PCs leave the villa, and move toward out of the city, the PCs come across one of the strange treelike structures that dot the city of Graywall. These *greater eyes of Xor'chlyic* are devices that allow the mind flayer to see the various parts of his city, and even move minions by teleportation magic to do his bidding. When the PCs approach, the mind flayer recognizes them as the intruders into Turendurz's villa, and sends to creatures to deal with the threat.

As you turn the corner you see a somewhat familiar sight—one of the strange twisted treelike growths ending in an orb of glowing mist. Slurge called them the governor's eyes and said that Xor'chlyic uses them to control the city, but never explained how.

Activity around this one gives hints to just how the mind flayer uses these strange objects, as a strange houndlike creature covered with strange rune tattoos leaps from the glowing mist of the governor's eye. A second one's mawed head juts out of the mist, also ready to leap out. Though these creatures seem to have no eyes, they seem eerily aware of your presence.

Any disguise the PCs might be wearing does not fool the rune-hounds. Their psionic impression of the PCs came straight from Xor'chlyic.

PCs who played *EMH-6 Blind Man's Hunt* recognize these creatures as rune-hounds, the very same kind of Khyber-spawned creature that haunted Stern Keep in the Harrowcrowns.

Creatures: These particular rune-hounds are Xor'chlyic's thralls, and are tasked with killing or capturing the pesky PCs.

Rune-hounds (2): hp 40, 33; Combat Statistics.

Tactics: While Xor'chlyic would rather the PCs be captured, rune-hounds are not gentle hunters. While they do use their spittle to web PCs first, they take no guff and have no problem ripping pesky PCs' guts out.

Development: If the hounds are able to trap the creatures for over a minute, they've stalled the PCs long enough for the gargoyles and harpies to swoop down and capture the PCs (see "Sky Full of Danger" below). The PCs are then captured and gain the "Captured!" story object. Proceed to the conclusion.

If the PCs defeated these creatures, Xor'chlyic reaches out telepathically to taunt them.

All of a sudden a voice echoes in your head. The alien voice echoes uncomfortably in your thoughts. "Nowhere to run, nowhere to hide murderers. It is futile to flee. I will hunt you down. This is my city and it lives and breathes to my rhythm."

At that point the PCs spot the large murder of harpies and gargoyles in the distance (see "Sky Full of Danger", below). The group harries them until PCs enter the Skullcrusher Fighting Pit, but allow the PCs to use whatever skills at their disposal to attempt to flee from the PCs.

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

8th-Level Characters: There are three rune-hounds (hp 40, 35, 33; Combat Statistics).

9th-Level Characters: There are four runeounds (hp 40, 40, 35, 33; Combat Statistics).

10th-Level Characters: There are five runeounds (hp 40, 40, 37, 37, 33; Combat Statistics).

COMBAT STATISTICS

The following statistics take into account the *Monster Manual III* errata for the runeound.

RUNEOUND

CR 3

NE Medium aberration

Init +4; **Senses** psychic scent, uncanny blindsight; **Listen** +5, **Spot** +5

AC 18, touch 12, flat-footed 14

hp 37 (5 HD); **DR** 5/silver; fast healing 3

Immune gaze attacks

Fort +5, **Ref** +5, **Will** +5

Spd 50 ft. (10 squares)

Melee bite +8 melee (2d6+7), or vile spew +5 ranged touch (5d6 acid damage; DC 15 Reflex for half damage)

Space/Reach 5 ft. /10 ft.

Base Atk +3, **Grp** +8

Atk Option extended reach (10 ft. reach, can attack adjacent creatures), **Combat Reflexes** (may make attacks of opportunity while flat-footed and up to 5 attacks of opportunity a round)

Special Atk vile spew (attack for damage [see above] or spit a single-target *web* spell [DC 15 negates the effect] both have ranges of 100 ft. and can be used once every 1d4 rounds).

Abilities Str 20, Dex 18, Con 19, Int 5, Wis 12, Cha 8

Feats Combat Reflexes, Lightning Reflexes, Track

Skills Hide +5, Move Silently +3, Spot +5

Psychic Scent (Su): A runeound tracks by following psychic trails and aura traces. It gains a +20 bonus on all Survival checks made to track. It does not receive this bonus against mindless creatures or creatures shielded against mental effects.

Uncanny Blindsight (Su): runeounds are blind but perceive their surrounds with their psychic senses. This ability provides a runeound with blindsight out to 500 feet. In addition, a runeound cannot be flanked.

HYENA DEN (EL 7)

More so than the other two encounters, this one is of a more random nature, but involves a typical group of Graywall citizens, rather than the minions of the mind flayer ruler.

This encounter also takes advantage of the fact that the PCs have to reapply their disguise without the help of Slurge and her disguise kit after their assault on the villa.

Behind a shady and rank stall, a group of gnolls and hyenas emerge. The lead, and armored female seems to be the leader. She looks out on the streets and snarls.

This smelly stall is the favorite haunt of a domineering gnoll cleric and her brood. Nicknamed the Hyena Den by the local denizens, the cleric, Gezlul, calls it simply her territory, and has marked it at such.

A natural busybody, Gezlul questions and harasses interesting passerbys. If the PCs are skulking around in their Flayed Hand disguise, this is enough to peak the gnoll's interest.

Monk, come here and show my men the glorious wounds of the Mockery.

Gezlul wants to amaze her brood with the fresh wounds of Flayed

Hand initiate, and pushes to get the PCs to drop their heavy robes. As she approaches, give the gnoll a chance to penetrate the disguise (*Player's Handbook* 72).

Even if the fearless gnoll does not penetrate the disguise, she pushes the matter, much to the horror of her brood. Here actions should eventually reveal the PCs fraud.

Creatures: Once Gezlul discovers the PCs are no monks of the Mockery, she and her cronies attack.

Gnolls (3): hp 12, 11, 11; *Monster Manual* 130.

Hyenas (3): hp 19, 16, 12; *Monster Manual* 174.

Gezlul: female gnoll cleric 5; hp 45; Combat Statistics.

Tactics: A paranoid creature (or maybe just one used to the ways of Graywall), Gezlul's first action is to cast *invisibility purge* to suss out any hidden adversaries. Gezlul follows up by supporting her brood members with spells, only entering melee when her fodder is depleted.

Development: The fight creates such a commotion it may the harpy and gargoyle servants of Xor'chlyic (see "Sky Full of Danger", below) or a press of the Graywall mob, both of which could press the PCs toward the entrance of the Skullcrusher Fighting Pits.

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

8th-Level Characters: increase the number of gnolls and hyenas to five (*Gnolls* (5): hp 12, 11, 11, 10, 9 and *Hyenas* (5): 19, 16, 15, 13, 12)

9th-Level and 10th-level Characters: increase the number of gnolls and hyenas to five (*Gnolls* (5): hp 12, 11, 11, 10, 9 and *Hyenas* (5): 19, 16, 15, 13, 12) and Gezlul is a 6th-level cleric (hp 51).

COMBAT STATISTICS

GEZLUL

CR 6

CE female gnoll cleric (Mockery) 5

Medium humanoid (gnoll)

Init +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; **Listen** +2, **Spot** +3

AC 21, touch 10, flat-footed 21

hp 45 (7 HD)

Fort +8, **Ref** +1, **Will** +7

Spd 20 ft. (4 squares)

Melee +1 flail +10 (1d8+5).

Base Atk +4, **Grp** +8

Atk Options spontaneously cast *inflict* spells

Special Atk rebuke undead, smite 1/day (+4 to hit, +5 damage)

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 5th; touch +8)

3rd—*magic vestment**, *invisibility purge*

2nd—*aid*, *calm emotions* (DC 15), *death knell* (DC 15), *spiritual weapon**

1st—*bless*, *command* (DC 14), *entropic shield*, *inflict light wounds** (DC 14), *remove fear*

0—*cure minor wounds*, *detect magic*, *detect poison*, *purify food and drink*, *resistance*.

*Domain spell: Domains Destruction (smite) and War.

Abilities Str 18, Dex 10 Con 15, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 6

Feats Combat Casting, Profane Boost, Weapon Focus (flail), Weapon Focus (kama), Exotic Weapon Proficiency (kama).

Skills Concentration +7 (+11 cast def.), Knowledge (religion) +5, **Listen** +2, **Spot** +3

Possessions full plate, +1 heavy steel shield, +1 flail, silver holy symbol of Mockery

Hook "You dare make a mockery of the Mockery?!"

Cont. page 16

COMBAT STATISTICS CONT.

GEZLUI

CR 7

CE female gnom cleric (Mockery) 6

Medium humanoid (gnoll)

Init +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +2, Spot +3**AC** 21, touch 10, flat-footed 21; Dodge**hp** 51 (9 HD)**Fort** +9, **Ref** +1, **Will** +8**Spd** 20 ft. (4 squares)**Melee** +1 *flail* +11 (1d8+5).**Base Atk** +5, **Grp** +9**Atk Options** spontaneously cast *inflict* spells**Special Atk** rebuke undead, smite 1/day (+4 to hit, +6 damage)**Cleric Spells Prepared** (CL 5th; touch +8)3rd—*blindness/deafness* (DC 16), *magic vestment**,
*invisibility purge*2nd—*aid, calm emotions* (DC 15), *death knell* (DC 15),
hold person (DC 15), *spiritual weapon**1st—*bleed, command, entropic shield, inflict light*
*wounds** (DC 15), *remove fear*0—*cure minor wounds, detect magic, detect poison,*
purify food and drink, resistance.

*Domain spell: Domains Destruction (smite) and War.

Abilities Str 18, Dex 10 Con 15, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 6

Feats Combat Casting, Dodge, Profane Boost, Weapon

Focus (flail), Weapon Focus (kama), Exotic Weapon

Proficiency (kama).

Skills Concentration +9 (+13 cast def.), Knowledge (religion)

+5, Listen +2, Spot +3

Possessions full plate, +1 *heavy steel shield*, +1 *flail*, silver
holy symbol of Mockery

PROFANE BOOST [DIVINE]

Complete Divine 84You can channel negative energy to increase the power of
inflict wounds spells cast near you.**Prerequisite:** Ability to rebuke undead.**Benefit:** You can spend a rebuke attempt as a standard
action to plan an aura of negative energy upon each
creature with a 60-foot burst. Any *inflict* spell cast on one
of these creatures before the end of your next turn is
automatically maximized, with no adjustment to the spell's
level or casting time.

SKY FULL OF DANGER (EL 12)

In this encounter, a power flight of the governor's aerial troops attempts to corner the PCs. But while these harpies and gargoyles have the higher ground, and the advantage of the mind flayer's intelligence, let the PCs spot their foes first.

For a moment a flock of winged beasts block the full winter moon out. Their silhouettes betray the group as a mix of gargoyles and harpies. The master of Graywall uses both as shock troops and city guards.

Creatures: This large flight of sixteen creatures harries the PCs for as long as they run. If the PCs wish to stand and fight, the creatures oblige to their desire.

Gargoyles (10): hp 37 each; *Monster Manual* 113.**Harpies (6):** hp 31 each; Ranged masterwork short bows +10/+6 (1d6/x3); *Monster Manual* 150.

Tactics: The harpies stay within range of the PCs, using they captivating song to sow confusion among their ranks, and then peppering those not captivated with arrows. They try to lure captivated creatures away from the rest of the group, and then after the PC is isolated, they tear the poor PC apart with gleeful rage.

The gargoyles attack PCs resist to the captivating song by way of special breeding, and run interference for the harpy's tactics.

Development: The smartest thing for the PCs to do is flee, and if they flee they eventually find themselves cornered in a blind alley, with only a corridor reaching into the dark underground as egress. This is the entrance into the Skullcrusher fighting pits.

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

8th-Level Characters: increase the number of harpies to eight, and the group is supported by five gnolls (hp 11 each; *Monster Manual* 130) on the ground.

9th-Level and 10th-Level Characters: the harpies are led by a Graywall savant harpy (hp 48; see page x) and the group is supported by five gnolls (hp 11 each; *Monster Manual* 130) and two ogres (hp 29 each; *Monster Manual* 189) on the ground.

SKULLCRUSHER FIGHTING PIT (EL 9)

The large passage slopes farther and farther down into darkness. As they progress down the corridor, large pair of double doors swings open at its far end, and lights and sound flood into the subterranean hallway.

The shifting colors of dramatic magical illumination dance down the corridor from the large chamber above, and a crowd beyond the doorways shouts one word over and over again: "Goliath! Goliath! Goliath!"

The PCs may have second thoughts about pursuing this path, but turning around forces them to confront the massive force on the other end of the double doors on the opposite side of the passage to the Skullcrusher Fighting Pit. Their best chance for survival is facing Goliath in the pits.

Entering the brightly lit chamber elicits a great roar of excitement from the crowd. All around you are hundreds of citizens of Graywall cheering at your entrance. This is an underground fighting pit, one of scores that pock the city.

More worrisome is the creature already fighting in the pit.

In the center of the blood-soaked pit stands a menacing creature. An impossibly large minotaur moves with savage grace as it swings its greataxe at its current foe. With one strike, the creature is cleaved in twain, its gore spraying disgustingly from the blow.

This titan among minotaurs must be Goliath.

As the unfortunate victim's remains fall with a sickening thud onto the crimson sands of the pit's floor. Goliath cleans his blade with his large blackened tongue, a magically enhanced voice calls out in echoing Goblin:

"The fun is not yet over! More foes have stumbled in to face Goliath. Will they live?"

"NO!!!" the crowd shouts.

"The place your bets now," the magically enhanced voice responds.

Goliath takes that as his cue to move forward.

Creature: Goliath begins his attack with a devastating raging charge aimed at the largest and toughest looking PC.

Goliath: male minotaur barbarian 5; hp 114; Combat Statistics.

Tactics: Goliath is the reigning champion the Skullcrusher Fighting Pit. A ruthless and frequent killer, Goliath fights to the death to keep his standing in the pits. While not smart, his natural cunning grants him enough sense to adjust his power attack when needed.

Development: If the PCs don't defeat Goliath, they are dead. The prime cuts of their remains are fed to Goliath, while the scraps are thrown to goblinoid and gnoll street urchins. If they defeat minotaur champion, the reaction is just as dramatic.

The crowd goes silent as they stare in shock at Goliath's fallen form. Seconds past like hours as hundreds of fanged and monstrous gaze sternly from the seats. The tension is palpable. Then, a well-dressed hobgoblin stands and begins to clap in a steady rhythm. Following the hobgoblin's lead, the entire arena erupts with raucous cheering. They chant: "Pink skins! Pink skins! Pink skins!"

After a few moments, the gate on the other end of the arena opens, as if beckoning you to enter.

When the PCs enter the gate, proceed to Part Three: The Secret Path. If they take any other path out of the pit, they'll have to face Xor'chyllic's horde of harpies and gargoyles (see "Sky Full of Danger", above).

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

8th-Level Characters: Goliath is a barbarian 6 (hp 148; Combat Statistics).

9th and 10th-Level Characters: Goliath is a barbarian 7 (hp 162; Combat Statistics).

COMBAT STATISTICS

GOLIATH (RAGING)

CR 9

LE minotaur 5th-level barbarian

Large monstrous humanoid

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., scent; Listen +11, Spot +12

Languages Giant (illiterate)

AC 20, touch 9, flat-footed 20; improved uncanny dodge, uncanny dodge

hp 136 (11 HD)

Immune maze

Fort +14, **Ref** +8, **Will** +8

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee +1 *Large greataxe* +16/+11/+6 (3d6+24) and gore +15 (3d6+24)

Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.

Base Atk +11; **Grp** +24

Attack Options Power Attack (+5 power attack already calculated in statistic block), rage 2/day, powerful charge 4d6+6

Abilities Str 28, Dex 14, Con 22, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 6

SQ darkvision 60 ft., fast movement, illiteracy, improved uncanny dodge, natural cunning, scent, uncanny dodge

Feats Great Fortitude, Improved Natural Attack (gore), Improved Natural Attack (gore) Power Attack, Track.

Skills Intimidate +13, Listen +11, Search +4, Spot +12

Possessions mwk Large breastplate, +1 *Large greataxe*

Powerful Charge (Ex): A minotaur typically beings battle by charging at an opponent. When charging it gets an additional gore attack that does 4d6 damage.

Natural Cunning (Ex): Although minotaurs are not especially intelligent, they possess innate cunning and logical ability. This gives them immunity to maze spells, prevents them from ever becoming lost, and enables them to track enemies. Further they are never caught flat-footed.

Cont. page 18



Cont. from 17

When not raging, Goliath has the following changed statistics:

AC 22, touch 11, flat-footed 22

hp 114 (11 HD)

Fort +12, **Will** +6

Melee +1 *Large greataxe* +19/+14/+9 (3d6+11) and gore +18 (3d6+11)

Grp +22

Abilities Str 24, Con 18

GOLIATH (RAGING)

CR 10

LE minotaur 6th-level barbarian

Large monstrous humanoid

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., scent; Listen +12, Spot +13

Languages Giant (illiterate)

AC 20, touch 9, flat-footed 20; improved uncanny dodge, uncanny dodge

hp 149 (12 HD)

Immune *maze*

Fort +15, **Ref** +9, **Will** +9

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee +1 *Large greataxe* +17/+12/+7 (3d6+26) and gore +17 (3d6+26)

Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.

Base Atk +12; **Grp** +25

Attack Options Power Attack (+6 power attack already calculated in statistic block), rage 2/day, powerful charge 4d6+12

Abilities Str 29, Dex 14, Con 22, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 6

SQ darkvision 60 ft., fast movement, illiteracy, improved uncanny dodge, natural cunning, scent, uncanny dodge

Feats Great Fortitude, Improved Natural Attack (gore), Improved Natural Attack (gore), Power Attack, Track, Weapon Focus (*greataxe*)

Skills, Intimidate +14, Listen +12, Search +4, Spot +13

Possessions mwk Large breastplate, +1 *Large greataxe*

Powerful Charge (Ex): A minotaur typically beings battle by charging at an opponent. When charging it gets an additional gore attack that does 4d6 damage.

Natural Cunning (Ex): Although minotaurs are not especially intelligent, they possess innate cunning and logical ability. This gives them immunity to maze spells, prevents them from ever becoming lost, and enables them to track enemies. Further they are never caught flat-footed.

When not raging, Goliath has the following changed statistics:

AC 22, touch 11, flat-footed 12

hp 125 (12 HD)

Fort +13, **Will** +7

Melee +1 *Large greataxe* +21/+16/+11 (3d6+11) and gore +20 (3d6+11)

Grp +23

Abilities Str 24, Con 18

GOLIATH (RAGING)

CR 11

LE minotaur 7th-level barbarian

Large monstrous humanoid

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., scent; Listen +13, Spot +14

Languages Giant (illiterate)

AC 20, touch 9, flat-footed 20; improved uncanny dodge, uncanny dodge

hp 162 (13 HD); **DR** 1/-

Immune *maze*

Fort +15, **Ref** +9, **Will** +9

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee +18/+12/+7 +1 *Large greataxe* (3d6+28) and gore +18 (3d6+28)

Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.

Base Atk +13; **Grp** +26

Attack Options Power Attack (+7 power attack already calculated in statistic block), rage 2/day, powerful charge 4d6+6

Abilities Str 29, Dex 14, Con 22, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 6

SQ darkvision 60 ft., fast movement, illiteracy, improved uncanny dodge, natural cunning, scent, uncanny dodge

Feats Great Fortitude, Improved Natural Attack (gore), Improved Natural Attack (gore), Power Attack, Track, Weapon Focus (*greataxe*)

Skills Intimidate +15, Listen +13, Search +4, Spot +14

Possessions Large mwk breastplate, +1 *Large greataxe*

Powerful Charge (Ex): A minotaur typically beings battle by charging at an opponent. When charging it gets an additional gore attack that does 4d6+6 damage.

Natural Cunning (Ex): Although minotaurs are not especially intelligent, they possess innate cunning and logical ability. This gives them immunity to maze spells, prevents them from ever becoming lost, and enables them to track enemies. Further they are never caught flat-footed.

When not raging, Goliath has the following changed statistics:

AC 21, touch 11, flat-footed 19

hp 136 (13 HD); **DR** 1/-

Fort +13, **Will** +7

Melee +1 *Large greataxe* +22/+17/+12 (3d6+11) and gore +21 (3d6+11)

Grp +24

Abilities Str 24, Con 18

PART THREE: THE SECRET PATH

Beyond the arena's far gate is a sister hallway to the one the PCs entered the Skullcrusher Fighting Pits from. Just as wide, this corridor slopes downward toward a large and dark open chamber some 50 feet beyond.

Unlike the first passage, many smaller hallways intersect this one, and from them gladiators of many races, some not even humanoid, gawk at the PCs in amazement as they proceed down the hallway. None of those monstrous fighters speak with the PCs or make any threatening gestures. They all just want to see the group that defeated Goliath.

Not everyone in the warrens keeps their distance from the PCs. The gladiator master Meztak Gemeye—a scarred and mangled goblin, with a gemstone shoved in the socket of one missing eye—steps out from one particularly dark corridor and beckons the PCs to follow.

You've really put my head in the vise. Goliath was one of my biggest draws, and replacing him won't be easy. Thing is, I imagine your in an even worse way. Pink skins in this section of the city don't live long. Then you are a skilled bunch.

I can help you. I know a way to get to the Human Quarter, but it's going to cost you.

Creature: Meztak is a cunning shyster, who has relied on his wits and guile, along with the magic of his *eye of seeing*, to survive the gladiator culture of Graywall. Meztak is always working an angle, though it might be hard for the PCs to discover (Bluff +13)

Meztak wants at least 2,000 gp worth of treasure from each PC for the path out of the monster quarters of the city. He prefers flying magic. If asked why, he responds "flying gladiators bring in more crowds than walking ones do. And everyone likes to watch a fall." While there is some truth in that, he has ulterior motives. When the PCs leave, he is going to sell intelligence of their path to Xor'chylic's minions, and he knows that denying them of flying magic limits their ability to proceed.

If the PCs want a place to rest before proceeding, Meztak can provide a safe place, but it costs them extra—1,000 gp extra per PC.

Killing or getting information from Meztak doesn't stop the following assault, but the PCs may be able to gain intelligence of it. If the goblin is unable to rat out the PCs one of his minions does.

MEZTAK GEMEYE

CR 4

NE goblin rogue 4

Small humanoid (goblinoid)

Init +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen -1, Spot +9

Languages Common, Goblin, Undercommon

AC 20, touch 15, flat-footed 16

hp 21 (4 HD)

Fort +2, **Ref** +4, **Will** +0; evasion

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee mwk Small morningstar +3 (1d6-1)

Ranged Small lt crossbow +7 (1d6/19-20)

Base Atk +3; **Grp** -2

Attack Options sneak attack +2d6

Abilities Str 8, Dex 18, Con 12, Int 13, Wis 8, Cha 12

SQ trap sense +1, uncanny dodge

Feats Persuasive, Skill Focus (Bluff)

Skills Bluff +13, Appraise +8, Diplomacy +8, Hide +14, Intimidate +10, Move Silently +14, Ride +8, Sense Motive +6, Slight of Hand +11, Tumble +10.

Possessions +1 Small chain shirt, mwk Small morningstar, Small lt crossbow, 20 bolts, *eye of seeing*, *potion of fly* (CL 5th).

Hook "I like you. For a small price, I can lead you where you need to go."



THE MAW GAP (EL 9)

Descending deeper into the warrens below the Skullcrusher Fighting Pit, the PCs finally reach their destination—the Maw Gap. Some 80 feet below Graywall's street level, this place offers a path—albeit a treacherous one—across the Tooth Pit that separates the monster quarters of the city with the House Tharashk controlled Human Quarter. The PCs have to negotiate over the 60-foot deep treacherous river chasm by navigating the toothy, razor-sharp spikes jutting out from each wall, and at times they may have to jump from one spike to the other.

Navigating the Maw: PCs without the benefit of *fly* or similar magics have to navigate the spikes on foot. On the map there are three levels of spikes. The level 1 spikes (those marked with a "1" in the middle of their difficult terrain triangle) are level with the cave floors on either side. The level 2 spikes (those marked with the "2") are 10 feet below the level 1 spikes, and 50 feet above the rushing water below. Finally the level 3 spikes are 10 feet below the level 2 spikes, and 40 feet above the water.

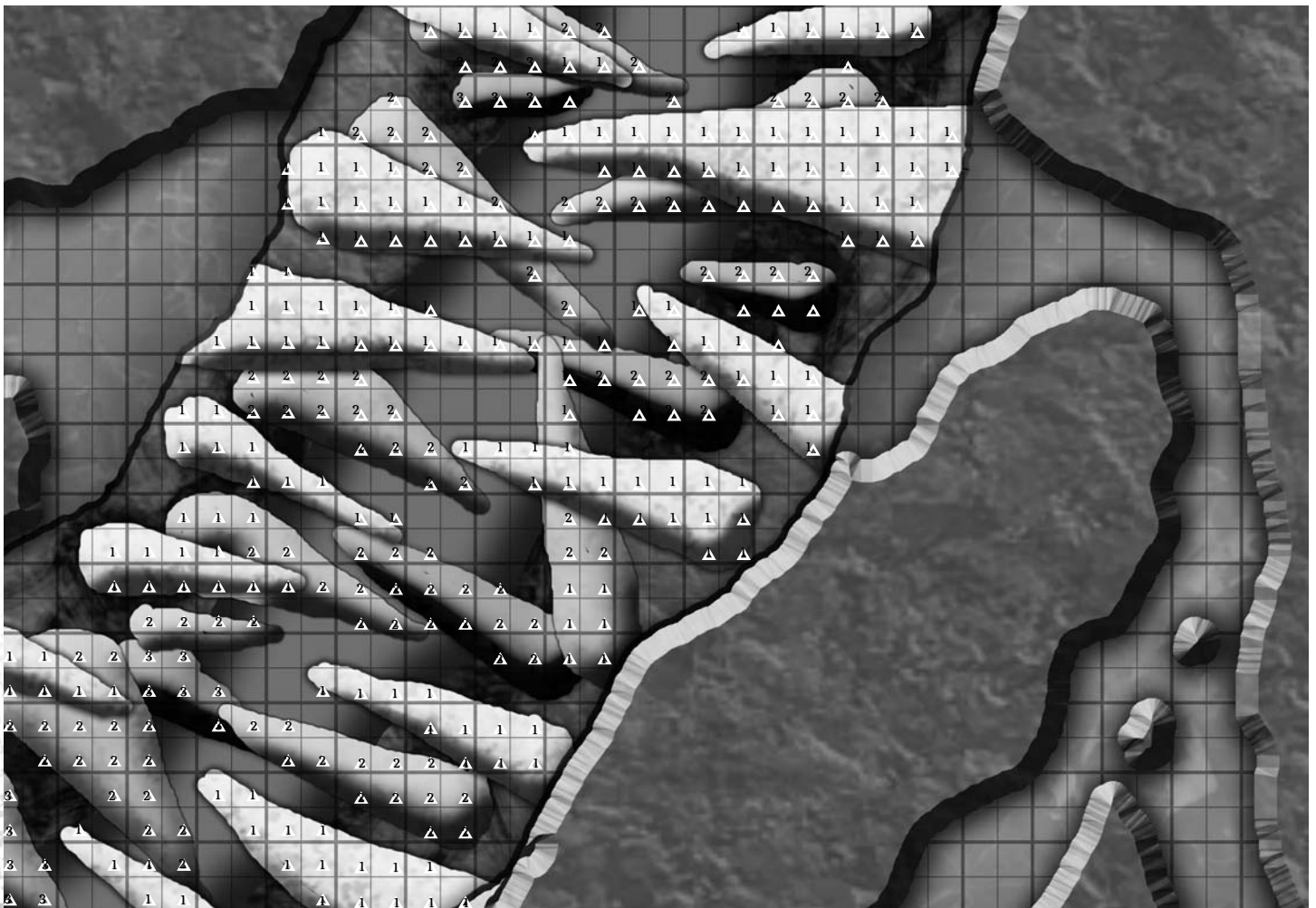
When on the spikes PCs can walk upon a spike squares that feature a difficult terrain triangle with a number on it, but they can only walk into squares featuring the same number as the square they are leaving. Moving into a square in the chasm with a higher number or without a number involves a fall. Moving into a square with a lower number requires a way to ascend onto it. In cases where you can't see whether a square has a 2 or 3 because it is

obscured by a lower number square, just use your best judgment and be consistent.

If the PCs fall and there is a higher number squared below them, just assume they land safely on that square (after taking the appropriate falling damage). If there is no spike square under them, but there is at least one adjacent to that square anywhere on the falling path, allows one DC 20 Reflex save per vertical level with an adjacent spike. Success allows the PC to grab onto the spike. A move action pulls the PCs up onto the spike. Until then he or she is considered climbing (no Dexterity bonus).

Falling into the water can be deadly. The water moves so fast, and the rapids are so rough, that falling into it does not break the fall at all. Worse still, any PC who falls into it and cannot find a means to get out must succeed swim checks every round (DC 15) to navigate its course. If the PCs are able to succeed three Swim checks in a row they are able to find some rocks to hold on to and remain safe until captured (give them the digital story object of the same name).

Creatures: More than falling dangers await the PCs at the Maw Gap. As the PCs may have found from intimidating Meztak, Xor'chylic's elite forces have anticipated the PC's arrival, thanks to good old-fashion goblin treachery. The pair of harpy savants waits hidden (Hide DC 16; can only be spotted by characters with low-light, darkvision or if the area is properly illuminated) some 40 feet up and amid the upper chasm teeth.





Graywall Savant Harpies: female harpy artificer 2 / fighter 1: hp 56, 42; Combat Statistics.

Tactics: The harpies begin their assault by spending a standard action to belt out their captivating song (Will DC 16). If there are flying PCs, the harpies deal with them first. They then fly down to maneuver those captivated toward the edges of spikes (which allows the victim another saving throw), while engaging those not affected in melee. These trained killers prefer Flyby Attack to standing toe-to-toe with well-armed and armored adventures, but are not afraid to use their Hover feat to deliver a salvo of devastating attacks against almost-vanquished foes.

Development: If the PCs defeat the harpies, there is little to nothing stopping them from traversing the chasm and finding their escape via the caverns on the other side. While thanks to the *lesser eyes of Xor'chylic* the harpies wore, the mind flayer has gathered enough information to renew the chase; he decides to let the PCs go. They've impressed the governor of Graywall, and impressive adventurers left alive may be able to serve him later.

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

8th-Level Characters: There are three savant harpies (hp 56, 50, 42; Combat Statistics). This increase the number of *lesser eyes of Xor'chylic* the PCs can recover to three.

9th-Level Characters: There are three savant harpies (hp 56, 50, 42; Combat Statistics) and two regular harpies (hp 40, 32; *Monster Manual* 150). This increase the number of *lesser eyes of Xor'chylic* the PCs can recover to three.

10th-Level Characters: There are three savant harpies (hp 56, 50, 42; Combat Statistics) and two regular harpies (hp 40, 32; *Monster Manual* 150). This increase the number of *lesser eyes of Xor'chylic* the PCs can recover to four.

COMBAT STATISTICS

GRAYWALL SAVANT HARPIES CR 6

CE harpy artificer 2/ fighter 1

Medium monstrous humanoid

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +9, Spot +4

Languages Common, Giant, Undercommon

AC 20, touch 13, flat-footed 18; Dodge

hp variable, see encounter text (10 HD); light fortification

Fort +5, **Ref** +8, **Will** +10

Speed 20 ft. (4 squares), fly 80 ft. (average)

Melee +1 battleaxe* +10/+5 (1d8+1/x3) and two claws +5 (1d3)

Base Atk +9; **Grp** +9

Attack Options captivating song, *before the battle the harpies make their battleaxes bane weapons with the personal weapon augmentation infusion, picking the most dominate racial type among the PCs. For those targets use the following: +1 *bane battleaxe* +12/+7 (1d8+3/x3 +2d6 bane).

Artificer Infusions (CL 2nd)

1st ■■■—energy alteration, enhancement alteration†, identify, inflict light damage, light, lesser armor enhancement†, magic stone, magic vestment, magic weapon, personal weapon augmentation, repair light damage, resistance item†, shield of faith, skill enhancement, spell storing item.

† Infusions already imbued, reflect in stat block.

Abilities Str 10, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 15, Wis 10, Cha 16

SQ Artificer knowledge (+4), artisan bonus, disable trap, item creation

Feats Brew Potion, Dodge, Flyby Attack, Hover, Improved Initiative, Persuasive, Scribe Scroll

Skills Bluff +11, Intimidate +8, Listen +9, Perform (sing) +5, Spot +4, Search +7, Use Magic Device +7

Possessions +1 battleaxe, +1 light wooden shield, ring of protection +1, potion of barkskin (CL 5; already drank, reflected in statistic block), minor eye of Xor'chylic

Cont. page 22

Cont. from 21

Captivating Song (Su): When a harpy sings, all creatures (other than harpies) within a 300-foot spread must succeed on a DC 16 Will save or become captivated. This is a sonic mind-affecting charm effect, and a creature that successfully saves cannot be affected by the same harpy's song for another 24 hours.

A captivated victim walks toward the harpy, taking the most direct route available. If the path leads into a dangerous area (through flame, off a cliff, or the like), the creature gets a second saving throw. Captivated creatures can take no other action except defend themselves. (Thus, a fighter cannot run away or attack, but takes no other defensive penalties.) A victim within 5 feet of the harpy stands in place and offers no resistance to the monster's attacks (effectively the target is considered stunned to the harpy's attacks). The effect continues for as long as the harpy sings and for 1 round thereafter. A bard's countersong ability allows the captivated creature to attempt a new Will save. Starting a captivating song is a standard action. While a harpy sings, she cannot imbue infusions, activate magic items by spell completion (such as scrolls), or activate magic items by magic words (such as a wand), but singing a captivating song does not require concentration, and the harpy can perform other actions (like moving and attacking) while singing her captivating song.

Hook These harpies captivating song glorifies the monstrous revolution of the Daughters of Sora Kell that separated Droaam from Breland.

CONCLUSION: ESCAPE OR CAPTURE

This adventure concludes either when the PCs are captured, or when they escape into the Human Quarter of Graywall.

Captured!

The PCs were captured in their race to leave the monster quarters of this city. The PCs spend time surviving the fighting pits of Graywall before the Digger's Union secure their release from Xor'chlyic. Each PC gets the "Captured!" digital story object.

Escape

If the PCs are able to defeat the savant harpies and make their way into the Human Quarter, their escape from Graywall is secured.

Matron Martra is distressed at the news of the PCs not retrieving the *Rod of Orbs* (and to any lost orbs that the PCs may have 'thrown' to Asulmaz) but promises that research into the items and Asulmaz is not over.

She thanks the PCs for their help in this matter, granting these PCs who are not Journeymen that honor. All of the PCs who escaped get the "Escaped Graywall" story object.

DIGITAL STORY OBJECTS

Story objects are now digital. You'll notice on both your Session Tracking Sheet, and in the online reporting on the RPGA database, there's a section titled certification or cert. These sections allow you to enter up to two groups of five alphanumeric characters. At the end of each adventure, usually in a sidebar or in the Conclusion section, there is a list of story objects unique to the adventure. This list also features a description of the object, and the five alphanumeric character code you place on the Session Tracking Sheet and the online reporting to grant a character a particular story object. The story object then is reported with the adventure questions, and appears on the character's online character record after the session is reported.

Here are the story objects for this adventure:

Object ID: MH1005

Object Name: Journeyer of the Union

Object Description: For outstanding service to the Diggers' Union, you have been made a journeyer. As a journeyer you have the right to a free bunk at any Diggers' Union chapter house, you can gain raise dead and resurrection for half the gold piece cost (though you are still drained the appropriate amount of XP), and requisition equipment worth no more than 200 gp prior to any mission you take on for the union, for the purpose of completing that mission. Your new rank is proven by display of the union's coat of arms, in the form of a non-magical patch that you can sew on almost any article of clothing. Warforged are given the option having the device engraved on their bodies, though some 'forged find this practice insulting.

Special Note: If any PC on the table has the Journeyer of the Union paper story object, give them this one. This story object overrides that one.

Object ID: MH1006

Object Name: Escaped Graywall

Object Description: Matron Martra warned you that the mission to Graywall might be the most difficult you've ever attempted, and she was right. While you did not succeed in securing the Rod of Orbs, you escaped the city with your life, liberty, and the Union has a better understanding of what they are up against. As a thank you and to aid in your future endeavors, the Union has granted you access to its alchemical stores. This unlocks the following rules items (all ME): alchemy blade (155 gp), defiling bloodspike (375 gp), glowbug bloodspike (125 gp), spatter bloodspike (125 gp), tempo bloodspike (375 gp), and thickener bloodspike (250 gp). Furthermore, it allows you to purchase these items of a special cost of half their campaign cost (the price listed in parentheses after each item).

Object ID: MH1007

Object Name: Captured!

Object Description: You were captured by Xor'chlyic's forces and were held in Graywall's fighting pits for a time. The Diggers' Union eventually brokered a deal for your release but it has cost you dearly, as the Union was not able to secure all of your possessions (1,000 gp has been deducted from your EV).

ADVENTURE QUESTIONS

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS CAMPAIGNS (of which MARK OF HEROES is part of) tracks character progress digitally. At the adventure's end, you report what the characters did, by answering a number of questions. The answers to those questions are tallied, and determine not only what happens in the campaign, but also the experience points (XP) and gold piece (gp) value increase each character gains. At the end of this adventure, you'll find the RPGA Session Tracking form, tailored for this adventure. On the section titled "Adventure Questions" fill in the bubble that corresponds to the best answer for the questions below.

Many times the questions ask whether or not the PCs defeated an encounter. Defeating doesn't necessarily mean killing all enemies, but many times such an event suffices as defeating an encounter. Sometimes PCs merely bypass an encounter. Through luck or circumstance a group of PCs can avoid encounters unscathed. Does bypassing an encounter earn the XP that defeating it would? No. The reward for getting past an encounter without actually interacting with it is having extra resources to bear in the next encounter. Where is the line? You are going to have to make that decision, because you are the DM.

For traps, PCs get experience points just for encountering them, whether or not they have been disabled.

Sometimes the PCs' actions don't really fit the actions of a particular adventure question perfectly. This especially happens when you play the adventure using the "Scaling the Encounter" options. In these cases find the answer that best fits the spirit of their results.

1. Were the PCs able to defeat the Ghûl gnoll mercenaries?

- a. No. They were defeated by the gnolls.
- b. Yes they defeated the gnolls.

2. Did Asulmaz retrieve any orbs from the PCs when he used the *Rod of Orbs*?

- a. Yes. One.
- b. Yes. More than one.
- b. No

3. Did the PCs defeat the elite ogre guards in the villa?

- a. No. The ogre guards pummeled the PCs or they didn't make it this far.
- b. Yes. The PCs snuck around and used other means to escape the ogres.
- c. Yes. The PCs killed them.

4. Did the PCs defeat the runehounds?

- a. Yes.
- b. No.

5. Did the PCs defeat Goliath the minotaur?

- a. No.
- b. Yes.

6. How did the PCs deal with Mezteck Gemeye?

- a. The bargained for the directions only.
- b. They bargained for the directions and time to rest.
- c. They killed that goblin liar after the coward spilled the directions to the PCs.
- d. They left the wretch alive after wringing the direction out of the city out of him.

7. Did the PCs defeat the harpy savants?

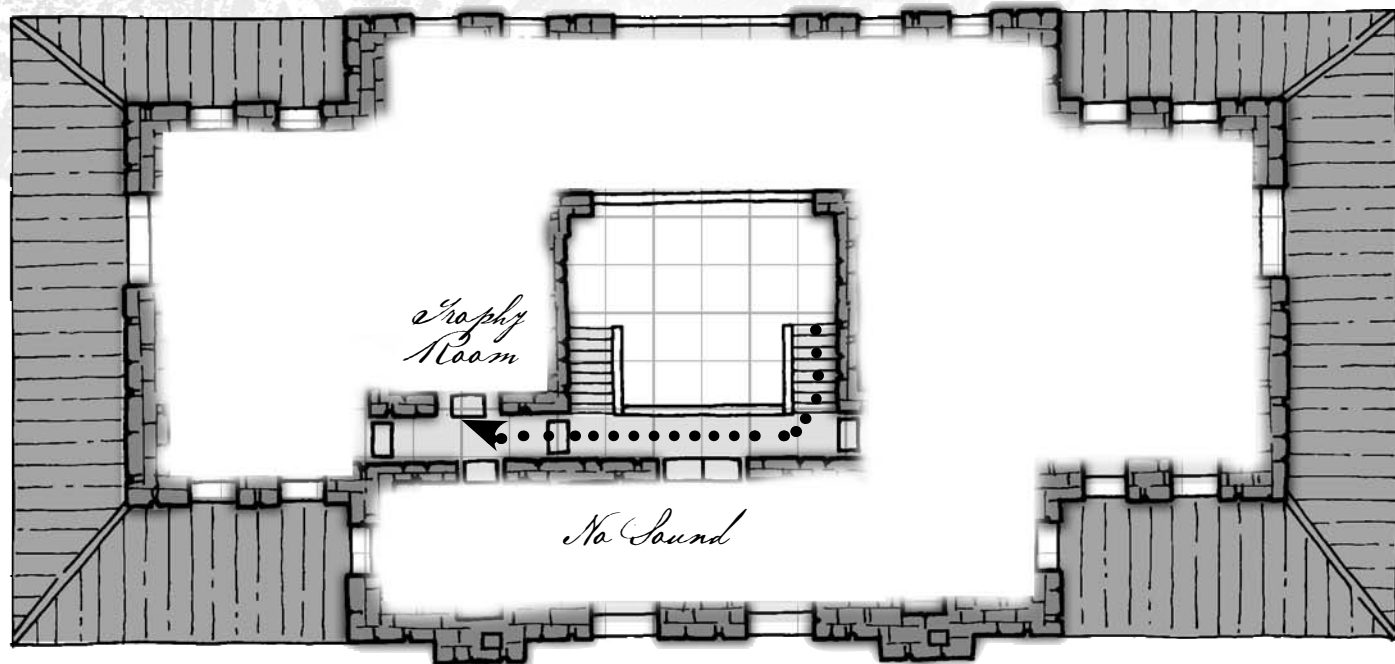
- a. Yes.
- b. No.

8. Rate the group's roleplaying.

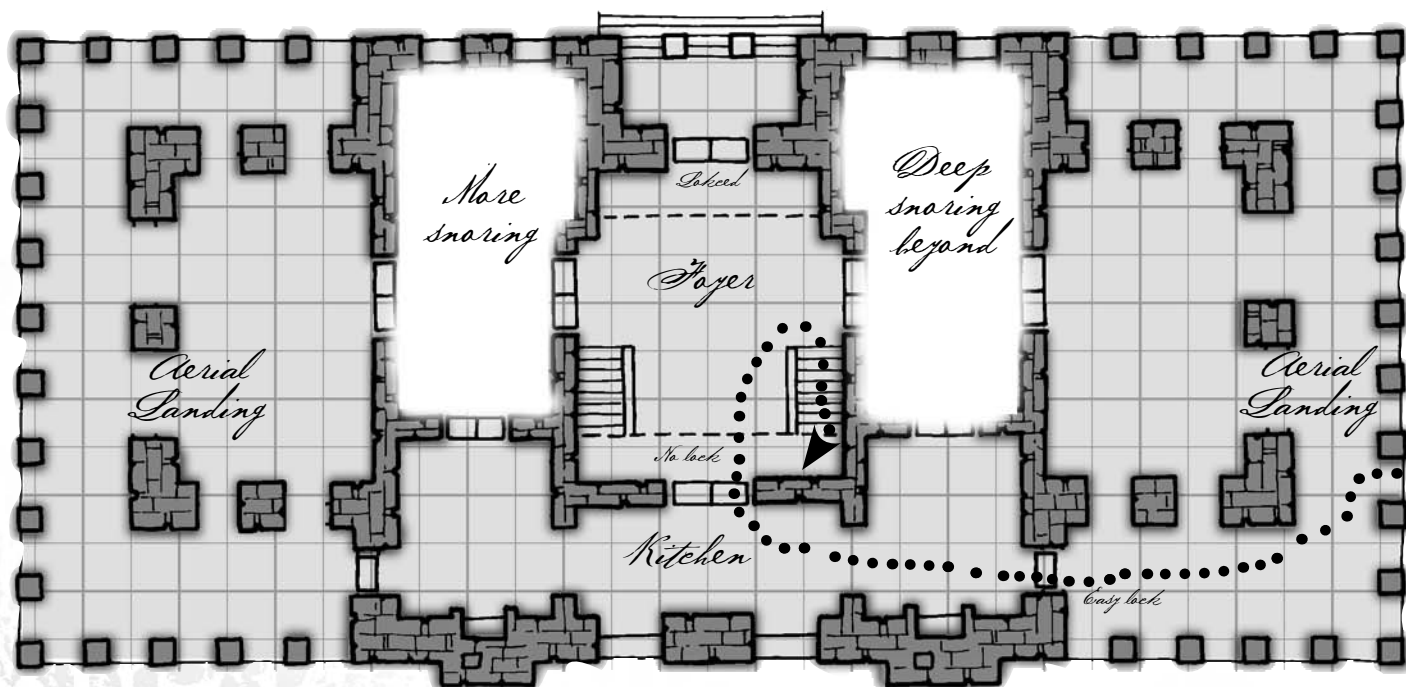
- a. Fantastic. Everyone had interesting and engaging characters that interacted with the adventure in very fun ways.
- b. Good. Most everyone had interesting and engaging characters that interacted with the adventure in very fun ways.
- c. Okay. There was some roleplaying.
- d. None. They treated the adventure only as a set of objectives. There was no roleplaying.

HANDOUT 1

floor 2



floor 1



HANDOUT 2: ROUTE TO THE VILLA

