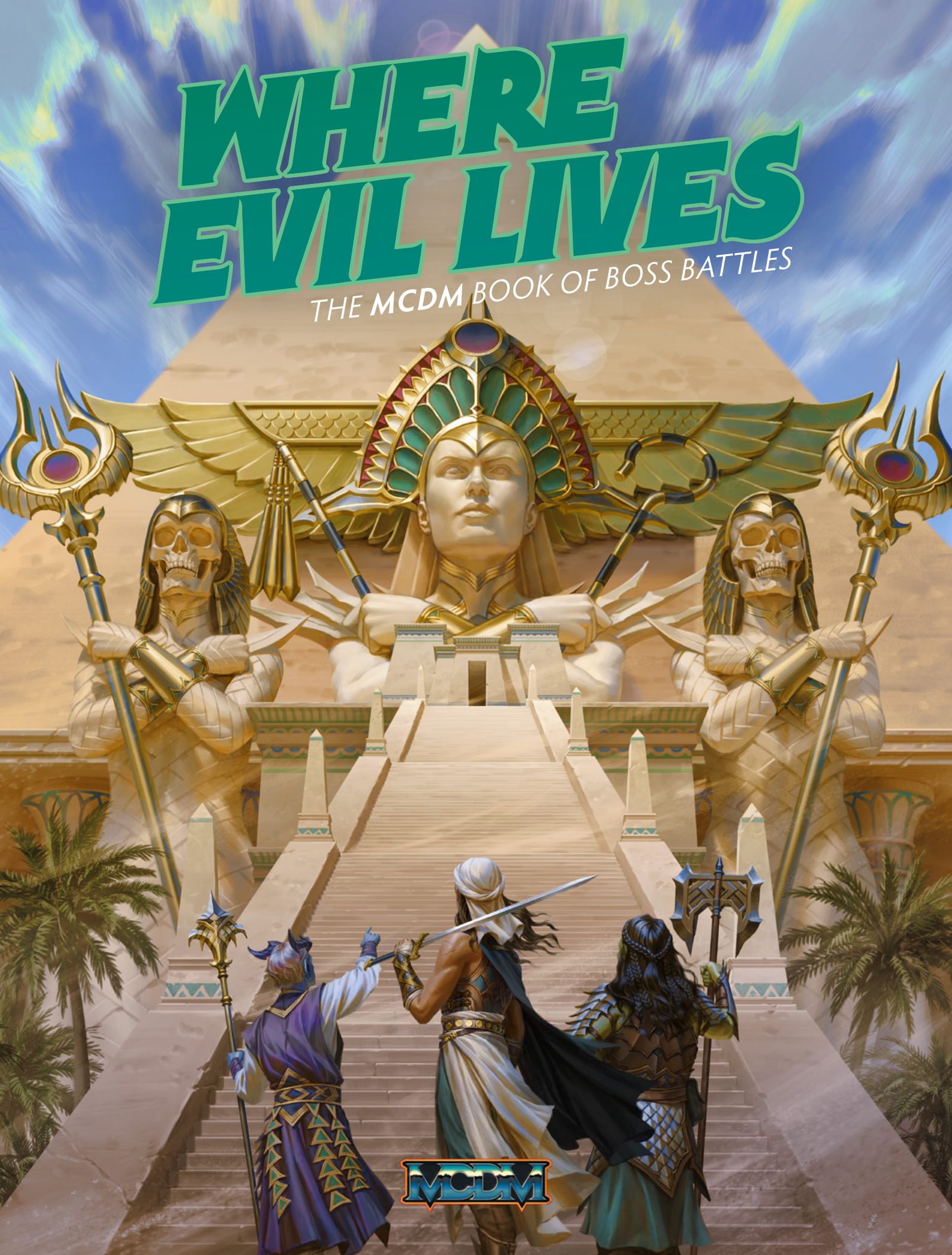
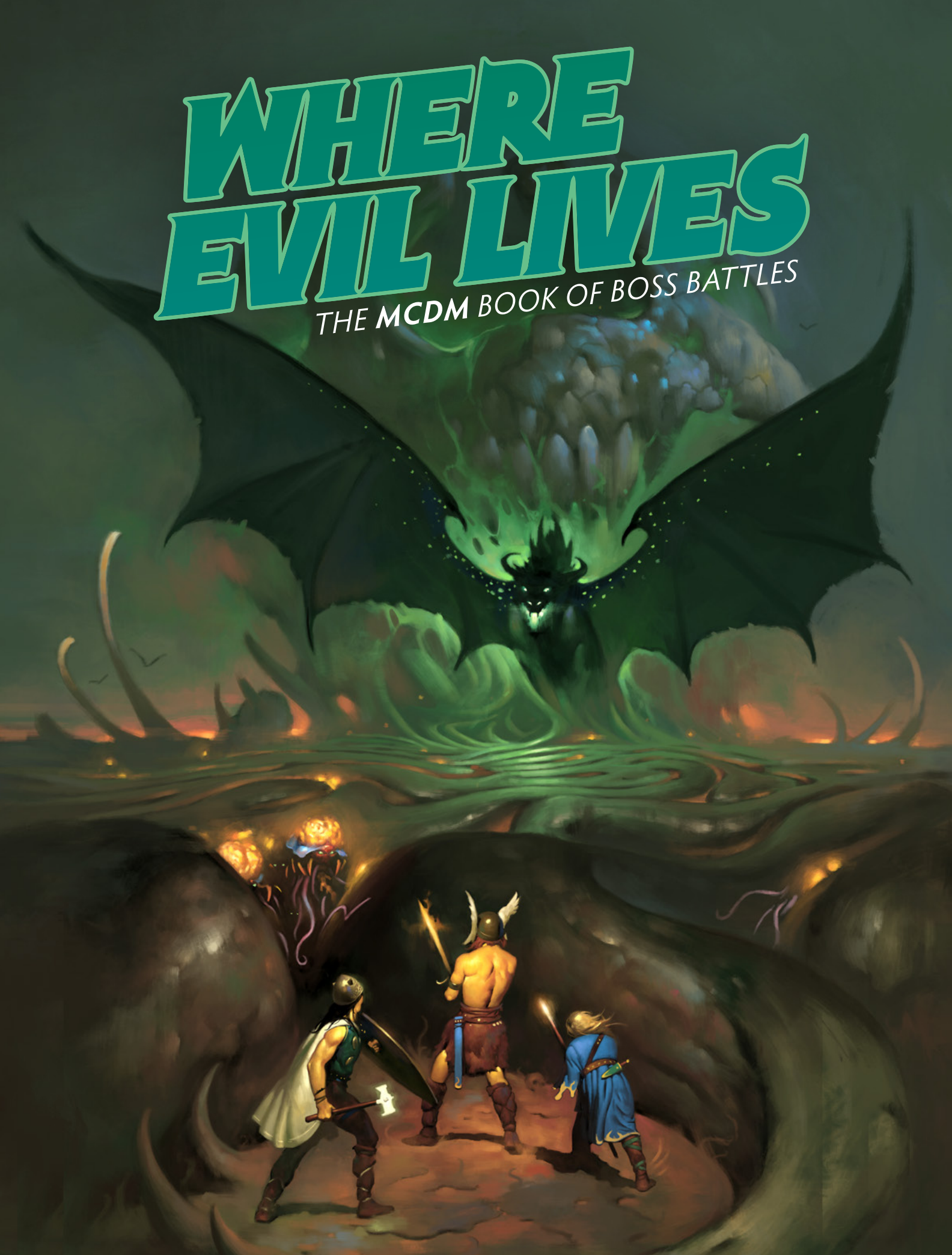
WHERE EVIL LIVES

THE **MCDM** BOOK OF BOSS BATTLES




WHERE EVIL LIVES
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ISBN: 978-1-7375124-6-2

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Join us on the MCDM Discord server, where you can get involved in playtests and chat with others about MCDM products like *Where Evil Lives.*

MCDM.gg/discord

Foreword

We should call this book Oops! All Lairs.

Matthew Colville

We ended up making two books. Before *Flee, Mortals! The MCDM Monster Book* even launched on Kickstarter, we knew that hitting our lairs stretch goal might mean another book's worth of content. When *Flee, Mortals!* reached the layout stage, we realized that our fateful prediction was correct. We could either cut fifty pages of content from the lairs and other parts of *Flee, Mortals!*, or we could break out the lairs into their own book, add more content, and bring our dream book of dungeons and boss battles to life. Since you're reading this, you know which route we took.

The truth is that these lairs deserve to be in their own book. Each little slice of hell contains story hooks, background information, detailed hazards and NPCs, a villain, unique rewards, and all the stat blocks you need to run them. You can use this book without ever referencing *Flee, Mortals!*

The real stars of this book are the villains. Each is abominable in their own way; every lair boss is a unique monster, from their personality to their stat block. When a group of heroes invades a villain's home, that evildoer fights like hell to end the threat. We've given each villain the beefy, playtested stat block they need to stand up to even the most optimized parties.

Each lair was specially crafted for the villain and their allies. A lair is an extension and example of its villain's power and personality. Lord Syuul performs his wicked experiments in a laboratory made of flesh. Kiona the Dread Lord obsessively researches the *Codex Mortis* in her extradimensional library. The once-proud Ithu'rath plots their grand return to the top in a crumbling castle.

The boss battles and lairs in this book have saved my game nights. If I don't have anything prepared or if the players zig when I expect them to zag, I can easily grab a story hook or tempt them with some unique treasure and get them into one of these places where evil (and fun!) lives. When I'm scheming for the perfect capstone encounter to end a killer adventure, I reach for this book.

The authors packed so much delicious evil into these bosses and their homes. I am incredibly grateful to them as well as all the artists, consultants, editors, playtesters, and the rest of the MCDM team who worked super hard to make more pages of content in one year than we ever have before. We, uh, learned a lot—a whole friggin' lot.

We hope you enjoy reading and running these lairs as much as we enjoyed making them. Go, brave adventurers. Only you have the heart to face evil where it lives.

Ex animo,
James Introcaso
MCDM Lead Game Designer

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Introduction

Twenty-two lairs that you can drop right into your campaign have arrived. Each is a home to a unique villain and is filled with lackeys, hazards, traps, and a treasure hoard with unique rewards. Every lair has been optimized to present a fun challenge for five player characters of a specific level, indicated in the lair's description and on the Lairs by Level table.

The lairs are presented in ascending order of their challenge.

Maps

Each lair has a map that indicates all hidden information, like traps and secret doors. Digital versions of these maps (along with player versions that don't include the secrets) are included with your purchase of this book.

Cardinal Directions

Most lair maps include a compass rose, even if the location is on a plane other than the Mundane World. Most planes of the timescape (see "The Timescape") are circular planets as well as planes, so they have a north, south, east, and west. But for the rare planes without cardinal directions, the compass rose is still included to make interpreting the map easier.

Area Descriptions

Each lair area begins with bullet points that overview the room's most important features, giving you all the information you need to run that area upfront. Some of these are meant to be shared with players, while others are for the GM's eyes only, as follows:

- "If you see a description in quotation marks like this, read or paraphrase it to the players when their characters first enter the area—provided they can sense their surroundings properly. This text describes what the characters immediately notice."
- (*If the characters did X in area Y...*) "If a quotation starts with a parenthetical condition like this, only read or paraphrase it to players if those conditions apply."
- (**Secret**) If a bullet starts with this parenthetical subheading, don't read it aloud! This description contains information for the GM, and it shouldn't be revealed to players until their characters investigate the area further. Hidden creatures, traps, and more could be presented this way.

Lairs by Level

Optimized Level	Lair Name	Lair Boss	Boss Ancestry	Page
2nd	Jagged Edge Hideaway	Queen Bargnot	Goblin	16
3rd	Hanging Tree	Dohma Raskovar	Orc	29
4th	Shtriga Nonna's Hut	Shtriga Nonna	Hag	45
5th	Burnock Mill	Baron Uthrak	Human	55
6th	Camp Firefield	Bloodlord Varrox	Hobgoblin	68
7th	Shifting Library	Kiona the Dread Lord	Incorporeal Undead	82
8th	Cloud Fang Keep	Lady Emer	Medusa	94
9th	Molten Enclave	Zenith Aastrika	Fire Giant	110
10th	Ruins of Wrathrock	Ithu'rath	Olothec	121
10th	The White Tower	Xorannox	Overmind	137
11th	Canyon of the Tower Crown	Aurumvas of Meaningless Greed	Demon	152
11th	Tomb of the Keeper	Ashyra	Mummy	166
12th	Terminal Excrescence	Lord Syuul	Voiceless Talker	176
13th	Eighth City Advocacy Services	Chancellor Lazivos	Devil	193
13th	Shadowkeep	Count Rhodar von Glauer	Vampire	208
14th	Durixaviinox's Rest	Durixaviinox	Dragon	224
15th	Coronal Hollow	Qazyldrath	Dragon	236
16th	Eyes of the Mountain	Yserthrax	Dragon	251
17th	Glass Cavern	Xaantikorijek	Dragon	263
18th	Mount Brazen	Forzaantilirys	Dragon	274
19th	Ash Queen's Reliquary	Atæshia	Elemental	287
20th	Boughs of Eternity	High Mage Vairae	Lich	302

Treasure Hoards

The bulk of a lair's treasure is in a hoard listed at the end of the lair. Each treasure hoard includes a unique magic or psionic item and another unique reward, such as a recipe for a new poison.

Treasures not included in the hoard are sprinkled throughout the lair. These appear in the "Treasure" subheading of the area where they are found.

Stat Blocks

Unless otherwise noted, when a creature appears in a lair's area description, their stat block is found at the end of the lair's entry. For instance, the stat block of Queen Bargnot, the ruler of Jagged Edge Hideaway, appears at the end of the Jagged Edge Hideaway entry along with the stat blocks of all the other creatures in the lair. The stat blocks appear in alphabetical order.

The Timescape

The places, people, and other proper names in the lore of this book come from the timescape, the MCDM multiverse. Most of the creatures detailed in this book are found in Orden, a world of high fantasy and just one of the timescape's many planes (also called manifolds). Orden is also called the Mundane World. If you like what you're reading, you can find more lore about the timescape on the MCDM Patreon at *mcdm.gg/patreon*.

You can ignore any creature's lore if you wish to use their stat block in another way in your campaign.

New Rules and Styles

The creatures in this book generally follow the core rules, but we've made a few tweaks. These new rules and presentation styles are designed to make combat encounters easier to run, more fun, and more memorable.

Allies and Enemies

The effects in this book sometimes target just allies or enemies. A creature is your **ally** if they're inclined to help you or fight alongside you—or if you believe they're inclined to do so. However, you are not your own ally, so if you target your allies with an effect, it doesn't affect you. A creature is your **enemy** if they're inclined to oppose you or fight against you—or if you either believe they're inclined to do so, or you plan to pick a fight with them regardless. If in doubt, it's up to the GM to decide whether a creature counts as an ally, an enemy, or neither.

Challenge Rating

Each creature's stat block lists their challenge rating in the top right corner. The more obvious placement of the challenge rating makes it easier to find stat blocks and build encounters to challenge your players.

Conditions

Some of the creatures in this book inflict—or are immune to—the following new conditions.

Dazed

A **dazed** creature can only do one of the following things on their turn: move, use an action, or use a bonus action. If a creature becomes dazed during their turn, their turn ends. The *cure ailment* power, *lesser restoration* spell, and *greater restoration* spell remove the dazed condition. At the GM's discretion, other powers, spells, or effects might also remove the dazed condition.

When a dazed creature is affected by a spell or effect that gives them an extra action on their turn (like the *haste* spell or the fighter's Action Surge feature), they can still take this extra action, in addition to the movement, action, or bonus action allowed by the dazed condition.

Some creatures in this book have immunity to the dazed condition. At the GM's discretion, a creature published in the core rules or another supplement who has immunity to the paralyzed or stunned condition also has immunity to the dazed condition.

Flanked

If your game uses the optional flanking rules in the core rules, a creature who is immune to the **flanked** condition can't be flanked regardless of the position of their enemies.

Creature Roles

Each creature has a role listed next to their challenge rating. Roles are descriptive and most don't follow special rules—they simply help you build encounters and use the creature effectively in combat.

Ambusher

Ambushers are creatures who hide well—not just before an encounter, but during it. They utilize surprise and stealth to gain the upper hand.

Artillery

Artillery creatures fight best from afar. Whether they wield arrows or magical rays, these creatures always try to keep a distance from their foes.

Brute

Brutes are hardy creatures who have lots of hit points and deal lots of damage. They might not be the most disciplined warriors, but they make up for it with sheer toughness and aggression.

Companion

Companion creatures are meant to accompany player characters on adventures. For more information, see the "Companion Creatures" section.

Controller

Controllers debuff, move, and obstruct their enemies. They often have crowd-control actions that apply a debilitating effect or target multiple creatures at once.

Leader

A leader is an action-oriented creature who fights alongside underlings. For more information, see the "Action-Oriented Creatures" section.

Minion

Minions are weak creatures who find strength in numbers. For more information, see the "Minions" section.

Retainer

Retainers are sapient beings meant to accompany player characters on adventures. For more information, see the "Retainers" section.

Skirmisher

Skirmishers are mobile warriors who use hit-and-run tactics in combat. Their traits allow them to make the most of their position.

Soldier

Soldiers are well-armored creatures who draw the attacks of their foes, freeing allies to move around the battlefield. These trained warriors typically have higher attack bonuses and AC.

Solo

A solo creature is an action-oriented creature who can take on the player characters on their own. For more information, see the "Action-Oriented Creatures" section.

Support

Support creatures aid their allies, providing buffs, healing, movement, or action options.

Mundane and Supernatural

This book uses the term **mundane** to refer to attacks, items, and other effects that aren't magical or psionic.

On the other hand, the term **supernatural** describes an effect or item that is either magical or psionic. For instance, a creature's stat block might say they're resistant to "bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from mundane attacks." This means that when you deal them bludgeoning, piercing, or slashing damage using a spell, power, magic weapon, or psionic weapon, the damage is supernatural and thus the creature isn't resistant to it.

Pronouns

The core rules often use the singular pronoun "it" to refer to a single creature. This book instead uses the singular "they" to clearly delineate between creatures and objects. Objects still use "it" as a singular pronoun.

Psionic Powers

Some creatures have psionic **powers**, creating effects with sheer force of will instead of with magic. When a creature manifests a power, they create an effect that has similar rules to casting spells, with the following exceptions.

Not Magic

Powers don't create magical effects, so they're unaffected by features and spells like *antimagic field*, *counterspell*, and *dispel magic*. The damage from a power attack isn't magical. If a rule affects only spells or magical effects, it doesn't affect powers. However, psionic powers are supernatural, so if a rule affects supernatural effects, it does affect powers (see "Mundane and Supernatural").

Power Orders

Every power has an **order** that is an expression of its level of strength. Powers of the 1st order are the weakest (equivalent to cantrips in strength), and 6th-order powers are the strongest.

If a stat block feature should be considered a power, its order is noted in parentheses.

No Components

Powers don't have material, somatic, or verbal components.

Concentration

Like spells, many powers require you to concentrate to maintain their effects. However, unlike spells, a creature can simultaneously concentrate on more than one power, up to a number equal to their proficiency bonus. If a creature fails a Constitution saving throw to maintain concentration, all the powers they are concentrating on end.

A creature can't have multiple manifestations of the same power active at once. Additionally, a creature can't concentrate on a power if they're concentrating on a spell or other effect.

If a stat block power requires concentration, this is noted in parentheses.

Manifesting Multiple Powers

Unlike player characters, if a creature's stat block allows them to manifest a power as a bonus action, they can still manifest another power of 2nd order or higher as an action on that turn. For example, a creature who manifests the *jaunt* power as a bonus action can also make a 2nd-order power attack as an action. Similarly, many Multiattack actions let a creature make multiple power attacks on a turn, even though each attack is a power of its own.

Power Attacks as Opportunity Attacks

When an enemy's movement provokes an opportunity attack from a creature whose stat block includes a melee power attack, the creature can use their reaction to make a melee power attack against the creature, rather than making an opportunity attack.

New Powers

A character playing a talent—the class found in the MCDM supplement *The Talent and Psionics*—can use the rules in that book to learn new powers from the creatures in *Where Evil Lives*. Powers that aren't in *The Talent and Psionics* are indicated in a creature's stat block with an asterisk (*) and provided in the "New Psionic Powers" chapter of this book.

Save Ends Effects

Some creatures have a trait or action that, on a failed saving throw, imposes a debilitating effect for an extended duration. But sometimes a lucky foe can retry their saving throw and potentially end the effect early. In such situations, the stat block specifies "save ends at start of turn" or "save ends at end of turn."

When you see this phrase, it means any creature affected by a **save ends effect** like this can repeat the saving throw on each of their turns, ending the effect on themself early on a success. They can only make that saving throw either at the start or end of their turn, as specified in the stat block.

Here is an example of an attack with a save ends effect from the **goblin cursespitter** stat block:

Toxic Touch (Cantrip). *Melee or Ranged Spell Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 30 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (2d6) poison damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 1 minute (save ends at end of turn).

Behind the Design: Save Ends Effects

Save ends effects are one way of saving space in stat blocks and making them less complex for GMs to run at the table. Much like how stat blocks just reference the poisoned condition instead of spelling its rules out each time, we didn't want to fill up the pages by repeating long sentences similar to this one: "A target poisoned in this way can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of their turns, ending the effect on themself on a success."

Spells

Some creatures have magical actions, bonus actions, and reactions. When these features should be considered spells (for the purpose of *counterspell*, *dispel magic*, and similar effects), the spell level is noted in parentheses. If the spell requires concentration, this is also noted in parentheses. Unless otherwise noted, these spells have somatic and verbal components.

Casting Multiple Spells

Unlike player characters, if a creature's stat block allows them to cast a spell as a bonus action, they can still cast another spell of 1st level or higher as an action on that turn. For example, a creature who casts the *misty step* spell as a bonus action can also make a 2nd-level spell attack as an action. Similarly, many Multiattack actions let a creature make multiple spell attacks on a turn, even though each attack is a spell of its own.

Spell Attacks as Opportunity Attacks

When an enemy's movement provokes an opportunity attack from a creature whose stat block includes a melee spell attack, the creature can use their reaction to make a melee spell attack against the creature, rather than making an opportunity attack.

Utility Spells

In addition to combat-focused spells, some creatures can cast spells that are primarily used outside of combat. To streamline the stat blocks, these spells aren't written out in the creature's combat-oriented "Actions" section. Instead, their names are listed in a separate "Utility Spells" section at the end of the stat block. After each spell name, the casting time is indicated in superscript, as shown in the Casting Times table.

Casting Times

Superscript	Casting Time
A	1 action
B	1 bonus action
R	1 reaction
+	Longer than 1 action (see spell description)

For example, a spellcaster's utility spells might appear as follows:

1/day each: *expeditious retreat*[B], *mage armor*[A], *phantom steed*[+]

Action-Oriented Creatures

The solo and leader creatures presented in this book are designed to be bosses: enemies who can take on an entire party by themselves or with a handful of underlings. Rather than simply increasing the challenge rating (an approach that often leads to underwhelming encounters), this book introduces **action-oriented creatures**.

A powerful villain needs plenty of opportunities to act and move when it's not their turn. Thus, each action-oriented creature has at least one special bonus action and reaction, as well as a special section with villain actions that let them dominate the battlefield.

These actions make the boss creatures dynamic and formidable. Whether fought as an exciting solo challenge or alongside a few easy-to-run underlings, action-oriented creatures challenge the characters with dramatic and powerful actions in combat.

Villain Actions

Every action-oriented creature has three **villain actions** they can use after an enemy's turn. Villain actions are similar to legendary actions with the following exceptions:

- A creature can use only one villain action per round (as such, villain actions tend to be more powerful than legendary actions).
- Each villain action can only be used once during a combat encounter.

Like legendary actions, a creature can't use villain actions if incapacitated or otherwise unable to take actions.

Choosing Villain Actions

Each trio of villain actions has a recommended round order. These abilities give the battle a logical flow and a cinematic arc:

- The first villain action is an opener, which shows the characters they're not battling a typical creature. Openers generally deal some damage, summon a lackey or three, buff the boss, debuff the characters, or move the creature into an advantageous position. They're just a taste of what's to come.
- The second villain action provides crowd control. It typically fires after the heroes have had a chance to respond once or twice, get into position, and surround the villain. This second action helps the villain regain the upper hand. Like an opener, this action comes in many flavors, but it's even more powerful than an opener.
- The third and final villain action is an ultimate move or "ult"—a showstopper the villain can use to deal a devastating blow to the characters before the end of the battle.

While every creature has a recommended order of actions, you can take villain actions in any order if it makes your fight more dramatic. You could push back a villain action if a creature is stunned or might stay alive for more than three rounds, or you could perform the recommended third action in round two after several surprise critical hits!

Unique Creatures

All of the action-oriented creatures in this book are unique. They have a specific name and backstory, though you can ignore these if you wish to use the creature's stat block in another way in your campaign. For instance, Queen Bargnot's stat block could be used for any action-oriented goblin in your game.

Companion Creatures

A **companion** is a wild ally who adventures with characters. Each companion has unique traits and actions that make them a great ally. But beware! These creatures can be difficult to control in the heat of battle and just might bite the hand that feeds. Don't fret too much, though! A companion gelatinous cube or owlbear is worth the risk of an occasional wild rampage.

Caregiver

Every companion has a player character **caregiver** who commands the creature. The caregiver's player controls the companion most of the time during the game, though the GM can step in to take control if the companion and caregiver are separated, or if the caregiver mistreats the companion in some way.

In combat, a companion shares a turn with their caregiver and acts during the caregiver's turn. A companion can move and use their own reaction and bonus action independently. But they can take only the Dash, Disengage, or Dodge actions unless their caregiver uses a bonus action to command the companion to take a different action, including any of the actions noted in the companion's stat block. A companion must be able to see or hear their caregiver to receive a command. A companion can also take other actions if their caregiver is incapacitated or if the companion enters a rampage (as discussed below).

One Companion per Group

Companions are a lot of fun, but having more than one companion to manage can slow things down at the table. A companion is another member of the party, with statistics and actions to track, and additional companions can easily make combat slow to a crawl. If every player wants to get in on the companion action, it's simpler for the characters to take turns as a creature's caregiver, rather than running around adventuring with a menagerie.

For characters wishing to share a companion, the companion accepts a new caregiver at the end of a short or long rest. Because a companion's proficiency bonus and hit points depend on their caregiver's level, those statistics might fluctuate if the characters in a party are different levels, reflecting that a more experienced caregiver is more adept at directing a companion.

Charmed Caregiver

A caregiver who is charmed can still command their companion, but they can't command the companion to attack a creature who charmed them.

Incapacitated or Absent Caregiver

If a companion's caregiver is incapacitated or dies, the GM determines who controls the companion—typically, the caregiver's player can maintain control of their companion as they take a heroic stand against the enemy.

However, in cases where a caregiver and their companion are physically separated, such as when a companion is captured, the GM might wish to take control of the companion to keep the player in suspense about the creature's fate.

New Caregiver

At the GM's discretion, a companion can abandon a caregiver character and choose a different willing creature as a caregiver.

Ferocity

Companions are dangerous creatures. Though often more docile than their wild counterparts, they aren't fully domesticated. Each companion's **ferocity** is a measure of their tenacity and fury, and of how those things build in battle. As a companion's ferocity increases, they gain access to powerful new actions, but they also become more difficult for a caregiver to control.

If a companion isn't incapacitated at the start of their and their caregiver's turn, their ferocity increases by 1d4 + the number of enemies the companion can see or hear within 5 feet of them. For the purpose of increasing ferocity, a group of creatures who share a single stat block (such as a swarm of rats) counts as one creature. Ferocity increases round after round during combat, and there is no maximum to the level of ferocity a companion can gain.

Bag of Rats

We can already tell that some crafty players are scheming to stuff a bag full of slightly groggy rats, then open that bag up in front of their companion to build up their ferocity during a fight. However, a too-easy target doesn't rile up a companion the way being threatened by an enemy combatant in a battle for survival does. As such, the GM makes the final decision as to what constitutes an enemy for the purpose of increasing a companion's ferocity. Likewise, in the same way a swarm of creatures is counted as a single creature for the purpose of increasing ferocity, the GM is free to determine that two or three weak creatures might count as only one creature for that purpose.

Rampage

After rolling to increase ferocity at the start of their turn, if a companion has 10 ferocity or more and isn't incapacitated, they run the risk of entering a **rampage**. The companion's caregiver can make a Wisdom (Animal Handling) check (no action required) to try to stop the companion from entering a rampage. To make the check, the caregiver must not be incapacitated, and the companion must be able to see or hear the caregiver. The DC for the check equals 5 + the companion's ferocity. On a success, the companion acts normally on their turn. On a failure, or if the caregiver doesn't make the check, the companion enters a rampage.

When a companion enters a rampage, they immediately move up to their speed toward the nearest creature they can sense and attack that creature with their signature attack (see below), dealing extra damage equal to half their ferocity if the attack hits. If at least one ally and one enemy are nearest and equidistant to the companion, the caregiver's player rolls any die. On an odd number, the companion attacks an ally. On an even number, the companion attacks an enemy. The caregiver's player determines which specific equidistant ally or enemy the companion engages (and can choose their own character if they wish).

A companion who can't reach a creature to attack while in a rampage uses the Dash action to move as far as they can toward the nearest creature they can sense. If a companion can't sense any potential targets, they move as far as they can in a random direction determined by the GM, avoiding danger.

When a companion who has entered a rampage resolves their action or ends their turn, their ferocity drops to 0 and they're no longer in a rampage.

Reducing Ferocity

To prevent a companion from entering a dangerous rampage, a caregiver has several options at their disposal for reducing the creature's ferocity.

Ferocity Actions. Each companion has three actions in their stat block that cost ferocity to use. To use one of these ferocity actions, the caregiver's character level must be equal to or greater than the ferocity action's level, and the companion must spend the necessary amount of ferocity before they use the action. If the companion doesn't have enough ferocity to spend, they can't use the action.

Ferocity actions always use the companion's action, meaning they can't be used as part of an opportunity attack. Ferocity actions can't be used while a companion is in a rampage.

End of Combat. When a combat encounter involving a companion ends and the companion isn't dying, the companion regains hit points equal to their ferocity, and their ferocity drops to 0. The GM determines when a combat encounter ends, typically at the point when creatures stop acting in initiative order.

Dying Companions

When a companion is reduced to 0 hit points, they are dying and make death saving throws just as characters do. Thus, characters always have a chance to save their furry (or scaly, or slimy, or exoskeletony) friends' lives! If combat ends while a companion is dying, their ferocity drops to 0 but they don't regain hit points (see "End of Combat" above).

Statistics

In addition to their ferocity actions, a companion's statistics vary from the statistics of their wild counterparts. This makes a companion easier to run, keeps their power in line with other companions, and helps ensure companions never outshine the characters. As somewhat more social versions of wild creatures, companions are often cleverer and more versatile than their untamed counterparts.

Hit Dice

Most creatures without character classes have their Hit Die type determined by their size (d4 for Tiny creatures, d6 for Small creatures, and so forth). However, companions are special and use a d8 for Hit Dice regardless of size.

Language

A companion shares a unique bond with their caregiver and can understand basic commands in one language chosen by the caregiver. However, the companion can't read, speak, or write any language, even if similar creatures normally can.

Proficiency Bonus

Because a companion's effectiveness and survivability depend on the training and expertise of their caregiver, a companion's proficiency bonus is equal to their caregiver's proficiency bonus. Additionally, some of a companion's statistics refer to their proficiency bonus, abbreviated as PB. Other statistics use a number of dice equal to a companion's proficiency bonus; these are expressed with PB in place of the number of dice. For example, if a companion has a +2 proficiency bonus, PBd6 means 2d6.

Signature Attack

Each companion has an action designated as their **signature attack**. A signature attack is always a melee attack, and it's typically the creature's best natural attack. A companion uses their signature attack when they enter a rampage.

Each companion also has special actions that they can use only by spending ferocity during their turn, with some of those actions making use of the companion's signature attack. See "Reducing Ferocity" above for more information on ferocity actions.

Companion Mounts

Many companions are large enough to ride, especially by caregivers who are Small, when outfitted with an exotic saddle similar to those worn by aquatic or flying mounts. When a caregiver rides a companion into combat, not much actually changes. The caregiver and companion still each act on the same turn, and the caregiver must use their bonus action to direct the companion to take any action other than the Dash, Disengage, or Dodge actions. Under some circumstances, a companion might allow themself to be ridden by a creature other than their caregiver, though that other creature can't give the companion commands.

If a companion rampages while bearing a rider, that rider counts as being within 5 feet of the companion when determining which creature the companion attacks. If a companion attacks their rider, they have disadvantage on the attack roll.

Companion Barding

At the GM's discretion, characters can purchase barding for a companion, as discussed in the core rules, with the following adjustments:

- Barding for Small companions weighs half as much as the equivalent armor for Humanoids. Barding for Medium companions weighs the same as Humanoid armor, while barding for Large companions weighs four times as much.
- Companions are proficient in any barding they wear.
- When a companion wears barding, they don't add their caregiver's proficiency bonus to their AC.
- Companions who are shapechangers (such as the mimic companion) can't use that ability while wearing barding.
- Companions who have corrosive bodies or are amorphous (such as the gelatinous cube companion) can't wear nonmagical barding.

Companion Encounter Balance

Unless a caregiver has the beastheart class (found in *Beastheart and Monstrous Companions*), the GM should consider a companion as akin to a powerful combat-focused magic item when building encounters. A companion gives a party a significant power boost, not just by dishing out more damage and providing more hit points for enemies to target, but also by creating complications that can make a fight more challenging for the party's foes. GMs can adjust encounter difficulty by one step (from easy to medium, hard to deadly, and so forth) to properly challenge a group of characters with a companion, particularly if the characters' average level is 7th or lower.

NPCs with Companions

Companion creatures are designed to accompany player characters on adventures. If an NPC has a pet or creature servant, it's recommended you use the creature's normal stat block. For instance, if an NPC ranger has an owlbear they work with, that creature would use the normal **owlbear** stat block and be played by the GM as normal. But if the characters are charged with rescuing a fallen druid NPC's owlbear pet from the clutches of a villain, the GM can choose to instead make the pet an **owlbear companion**, allowing the creature to join their rescuers on their adventures.

Demons

Demons consume mortal souls to fuel their fiendish powers. Use the following rules whenever you run one of the demons in this book.

Demons and Souls

Demons feast not on food or water, but on souls. These fuel their bloodthirsty powers, and while starved for souls, a demon can scarcely think.

Soul Count

A demon's stat block states the number of souls a given demon has already consumed at the beginning of combat. This number is presented right under their hit points in a similar fashion: both as a die expression and as an average number.

Soul Devourer

Demons can gain more souls by slaying other creatures, as described in their Soul Devourer trait. Unlike hit points, there is no maximum limit to a demon's soul count.

Soul-Fueled Power

Most demons have one or more features that require souls to use.

Passive Traits. Passive traits automatically take effect after a demon's soul count crosses the threshold described in that trait. The trait remains active until the demon's soul count drops below the threshold, and the trait reactivates when the demon's soul count equals or exceeds it.

Pitling

Active Features. During an encounter, a demon can burn souls to use or enhance certain abilities. When they do, their soul count decreases by the number indicated. This cost is sometimes noted in parentheses at the beginning of an ability, such as "(Costs 1 Soul)." Other times, the text of the ability itself describes it, such as saying "the demon can burn 1 soul" for an additional effect.

Lethe

When a demon's soul count drops to 0, they fall into a state known as lethe—a violent hunger wherein they can only lash out in a desperate search for sustenance. Demons who have fallen into lethe become single-minded and violent, seeking only to consume. See a demon's Lethe trait for more information.

Soulsight

Demons have a special sense called soulsight, allowing them to perceive each creature, other than Constructs and Undead, within a certain radius. Soulsight doesn't rely on sight but counts as "seeing" for features that require sight. Neither physical objects (including total cover) nor supernatural effects can impede soulsight unless otherwise stated. A demon's stat block lists the radius of their soulsight under "Senses."

Adjusting Lethality

Soul devouring makes demons deadly opponents. To give characters a better chance of living through their encounter with a demon, you can reduce the DC of the saving throw—or you can remove the saving throw entirely, and only allow a demon to devour a soul when a creature dies within 60 feet of them through other means. On the other hand, you might like to scale up the deadliness with more powerful demons! If so, instead of always using a DC 11 saving throw, you can set the DC equal to 8 + the demon's proficiency bonus.

I sometimes sit all day among my treasures. I have piles of coins, one-of-a-kind statuettes, and magic items of great power. Do you know what I think when I look upon my vast hoard? I think, "This is nothing compared to the taste of a mortal soul."

Aurumvas of Meaningless Greed

Retainers

Retainers are sapient beings who adventure alongside the player characters. Each retainer is a less experienced adventurer who a player character can take under their wing. Retainers are never meant to achieve the same power level as the player characters.

Rules for retainers first appeared in *Strongholds & Followers*. This book contains updated rules for these followers.

Mentor

Every retainer has a player character **mentor**. A retainer's mentor gives them orders, and the mentor's player also controls the retainer. A retainer acts on the same initiattive count as their mentor in combat, acting immediately before or after the mentor (player's choice). As a mentor gains experience and levels up, so does their retainer (see "Statistics" below).

Statistics

Retainers are designed to be easy to run so their player (who is already managing a complex character) doesn't get overwhelmed with even more details. Each retainer has a simple stat block—though these are similar to other creature stat blocks, retainers follow a few different rules.

Level

A retainer's level equals their mentor's level. As a retainer levels up, their hit points increase (see "Hit Points and Hit Dice") and they gain combat features (see "Features"). Additionally, a few of their statistics increase when their mentor's proficiency bonus does, including attack bonuses, skills, and save DC (see "Proficiency Bonus"). Their other statistics typically remain the same regardless of their level.

Armor Class

Unlike player characters, a retainer's armor class isn't determined by a particular set of armor they don (like studded leather). Instead, each retainer's armor class is simplified to one of three armor types:

- Retainers with light armor have AC 13.
- Retainers with medium armor have AC 15.
- Retainers with heavy armor have AC 18.

Hit Points and Hit Dice

Retainers gain one Hit Die per level. Their hit point maximum is based on the size of their Hit Die, as shown on the Retainer Hit Points table.

Retainers have exceptionally high hit points—sometimes even higher than their mentor. This allows the party to enjoy the presence of a beloved retainer without worrying about losing them to an unlucky roll of the dice or decision by a single player. The GM often awards characters with retainers in lieu of other treasure. Such rewards shouldn't be lost easily.

Retainer Hit Points

Hit Die Size	Hit Point Maximum
d6	6 times their level
d8	7 times their level
d10	8 times their level
d12	9 times their level

Proficiency Bonus

Because a retainer's effectiveness and survivability depend on the training and expertise of their mentor, a retainer's proficiency bonus is equal to their mentor's proficiency bonus.

Some of a retainer's statistics refer to their proficiency bonus, abbreviated as PB. Other statistics use a number of dice equal to a retainer's proficiency bonus; these are expressed with PB in place of the number of dice. For example, if a retainer has a +3 proficiency bonus, PBd10 means 3d10.

A retainer adds their proficiency bonus to any saving throw they make.

Features

Each retainer has a **signature attack** they can make using the Attack action each round. Retainers can use their signature attack to make opportunity attacks, even if their signature attack isn't a melee weapon attack.

A retainer gains new features at 3rd, 5th, and 7th level. Some features can only be used a certain number of times per day (as noted in the retainer's stat block).

Additionally, if a retainer's signature attack is a weapon attack, they typically gain an extra attack at 7th level (as noted in their stat block), allowing them to make two signature attacks per round instead of one.

Gear

When a retainer joins the party, they typically carry clothes appropriate to their position, a suit of armor, a weapon, and an explorer's pack. If the retainer casts spells, they also carry a spellcasting implement. Any additional equipment must be provided to them by their mentor.

Magic Items. Retainers can use magic items like anyone else. For example, a *+1 weapon* increases their attack and damage rolls by 1, and *+1 armor* of the appropriate type (light, medium, or heavy) increases their AC by 1.

One happy side effect of having retainers is that as a player character levels up and acquires better equipment, they can pass their obsolete items on to the retainer.

Dying Retainers

When a retainer is reduced to 0 hit points, they follow the same rules as player characters. If not killed instantly by massive damage, they fall unconscious, make death saving throws, and can be stabilized or healed.

Optional Rule: Shared Attacks

If a player wants to speed up their retainer's turn, they can make **shared attacks** at the GM's discretion.

When the mentor hits a creature with an attack, if their retainer can see or hear them, the retainer is inspired by their mentor's success. On the inspired retainer's next turn, for each successful attack their mentor just made, the retainer can automatically hit a creature of their choice within range with their signature attack, up to the number of attacks the retainer can make.

If the mentor hit with fewer attacks than the number of attacks the retainer can make, the retainer can make additional attack rolls for those attacks to see if they hit.

Retainer Encounter Balance

When building encounters, the GM should consider a retainer as akin to a powerful combat-focused magic item. A retainer gives a party a significant power boost; they not only dish out more damage and provide more hit points for enemies to target, but they also create complications to challenge the party's foes. GMs can increase encounter difficulty by one step (from easy to medium, hard to deadly, and so forth) to properly challenge a group of characters with a retainer.

Minions

A **minion** is a weak foe, designed to allow GMs to create dramatic combat encounters with hordes of enemies without overwhelming the characters. In fact, an encounter with minions makes characters feel heroic, since they can take on a myriad of foes and live to tell the tale.

However, minions still make threatening foes. Killing a minion still requires penetrating their defenses, and characters can't just shrug off damage from minion attacks.

So how do minions make running a horde of enemies quick and easy for the GM?

- Minions are simple to run. Their stat blocks are small and uncomplicated.
- Minions act quickly. They don't multiattack, roll for damage, or take unique bonus actions or reactions, so their turns aren't long.
- Minions die fast. A character can kill several minions with a single weapon attack!
- Minions have strength in numbers. Their attacks can be grouped together to make them deadlier and faster to use at the table.

No Hit Dice

Minions have hit points but no Hit Dice, simplifying their design. Minions can't spend Hit Dice to heal during a short rest because they have none.

No Damage Rolls

Minions don't roll for damage because their attacks deal a static amount of damage. They also can't score critical hits.

Shared Turns

Typically, all minions of the same stat block act on the same turn. Since they share a turn, the minions can each move into position then each use an action if they wish, instead of each moving and taking an action individually.

Minion Trait

Every minion has the Minion trait, which affects the creature in the following ways:

- If the minion takes any damage from an attack or as the result of a failed saving throw, their hit points are reduced to 0.
- If the minion takes damage from another effect, they die if the damage equals or exceeds their hit point maximum; otherwise they take no damage.

Overkill Attacks

Powerful weapon attacks can kill more than one minion in a single maneuver called an **overkill attack**.

As already discussed, a weapon attack requires only 1 point of damage to reduce a minion to 0 hit points, regardless of their hit point maximum. However, when a weapon attack's damage does exceed the target minion's hit point maximum, the attack becomes an overkill attack and the damage dealt beyond the minion's hit point maximum becomes **overkill damage**.

Overkill damage can be applied to a second minion who has the same stat block as the target and is in overkill range (see below). Damage against the second minion is counted as if you made a weapon attack against them; since it only takes 1 point of weapon damage to reduce a minion to 0 hit points, *any* amount of overkill damage immediately knocks them out. But wait, it gets better—if the initial attack's overkill damage exceeds the second minion's hit point maximum, the leftover overkill damage can roll over to a third minion, and so on! In other words, for each time the overkill damage exceeds the new target's hit point maximum, the attacker can choose an additional minion to reduce to 0 hit points.

For example, when a weapon attack deals 18 damage to a minion with a hit point maximum of 5, the overkill damage is 13. If there are three additional minions of the same stat block in overkill range, they can all three be immediately reduced to 0 hit points, since the overkill damage exceeded the target's hit point maximum more than twice over.

Overkill attacks can't be made as part of an opportunity attack.

Overkill Range

Minions must be within a certain range to qualify for an overkill attack, determined by whether the attack is a melee or ranged attack. In addition to the examples below, the "Overkill Damage Illustrated" sidebar demonstrates how to calculate overkill damage.

Melee Overkill Attacks. When a creature hits a minion with a melee weapon attack, other minions within reach of the attack are in **overkill range** and can be chosen as additional targets for an overkill attack. The overkill attack can't target minions outside the weapon attack's reach.

Lady Ulnock the paladin battles a horde of goblin minions (each with 6 hit points). She hits a goblin minion with her longsword and uses Divine Smite, dealing 8 slashing damage and 11 radiant damage to the target for a total of 19 damage. Since Lady Ulnock dealt 13 points of overkill damage–more than the hit point maximum of two additional minions–she can choose up to three additional goblin minions within 5 feet of her (the reach of her longsword attack) and reduce them to 0 hit points. If there are no other goblin minions within 5 feet of Lady Ulnock, she can't damage additional minions with this attack.

Ranged Overkill Attacks. When a creature hits a minion with a ranged weapon attack, other minions in a line originating from the creature in the direction of the target, to a distance equal to the weapon's short range, are in **overkill range** and can be chosen as additional targets for an overkill attack. The overkill attack can't target minions outside the line or beyond the weapon's short range.

Perigold Quickfingers the rogue is hidden and takes aim at a group of zombie minions (each with 6 hit points) with his light crossbow (which has a short range of 80 feet). He hits a zombie minion with his crossbow, dealing extra damage thanks to his Sneak Attack, for a total of 14 damage. Since Perigold dealt 8 points of overkill damage–more than the hit point maximum of one additional minion–he can choose up to two additional zombie minions in an 80-foot-long line extending from Perigold in the direction of the target, reducing them to 0 hit points. If there are no other zombie minions in the line, then Perigold can't damage other minions with this attack.

Behind the Design: Minion Trait

You might ask, why not just give minions 1 hit point and take no damage when they save for half, like in fourth edition? First, spells that use a creature's hit points to determine effectiveness—like *color spray* and *sleep*—would devastate all minions, even those meant to challenge high-level characters. These spells are still effective against minions, just not devastating!

Second, spells and effects that deal damage without any attack roll or save—like *magic missile* and *spike growth*—would lay waste to minions with 1 hit point. This fits the fiction for minions with low challenge ratings, like goblins and zombies. But the balance of combat and fiction breaks down to near-silliness at higher levels when the same spells easily take down powerful devil minions.

Finally, high-level spells with a save for half damage—like *fireball* or *meteor swarm*—would feel wasted against minions with 1 hit point. Why use a higher-level spell when a lower-level one will do? Similarly, the fourth edition design could lead to a kobold minion illogically surviving a *fireball* spell while a "stronger" standard kobold next to them dies, despite both creatures succeeding on their saving throw. By contrast, under this book's minion rules, spellcasters still have a good reason to use high-level spells against minions.

Outnumbered? Switch to area-of-effect powers. Otherwise you're gonna have a bad day, which will probably last the rest of your life.

The Sun,
Senior Pyrokinetic,
The Society

Group Attacks

Each minion has at least one **group attack** action that speeds up play. In a group attack, two to five minions of the same stat block who share a turn can all use their action to join the attack, provided the target is within the original attack's reach or range for each minion.

- Make a single attack roll for the group attack. It counts as one attack.
- A group attack roll gains a +1 bonus to the attack roll for each minion who joins the attack. (For example, if four goblin minions make a group attack together, the attack roll has a +4 bonus.)
- If the group attack hits, multiply the damage by the number of minions who joined that group attack. (For example, if four goblin minions hit with a group attack that deals 1 damage, their group attack deals 4 damage.)

The GM decides how many minions join a group attack. For instance, if five minions surround a target, the GM may decide to have all five attack at once to speed up combat, or may break up the attacks among smaller groups to increase the odds that some minions hit while others miss. A single minion can even use their group attack action on their own—they make the attack as a normal creature would, and simply don't benefit from the group bonuses described above.

Advantage and Disadvantage

A group attack is only made with advantage or disadvantage if all the minions joining the group attack have advantage or disadvantage on the attack roll. Otherwise, the attack is made without advantage or disadvantage.

Cover and Concealment

If a target has cover or concealment from some but not all minions, the GM should divide the minions into multiple groups based on the type of cover or concealment they have, then make a separate attack for each group.

Target Response Effects

If a group attack triggers a reaction or similar effect that would normally affect a single attacker, such as the *fire shield* or *hellish rebuke* spell, the target of the group attack picks one minion who joined the attack to be affected by the effect.

Group Opportunity Attacks

If a creature provokes an opportunity attack from more than one minion of the same stat block at a time and those minions have a melee group attack action, the minions can each use their reaction to join a group attack as an opportunity attack.

Optional Rule: Group Saving Throws

Though minions often make saving throws individually, there are times when rolling individual saving throws for each minion could slow down the fight, like when a cleric surrounded by eighteen shade minions uses Turn Undead.

When many minions with the same stat block need to make a saving throw against the same effect at the same time, you can make one saving throw for a group of up to five minions at a time. All minions in a group use the result of the saving throw.

For instance, if thirty-four goblin minions need to make a saving throw against a *hypnotic pattern* spell, the minions would make a total of seven saving throws against the spell: six for thirty minions divided into six groups of five, and one more save for the remaining group of four minions.

Optional Rule: Tough Minions

Minions of a higher challenge rating, such as fire giants, make for powerful foes. Consequently, it could break the game's verisimilitude for an NPC commoner to kill such a minion with a single attack. To keep minions believable, you can use the following rule.

Overkill Damage Illustrated

Imagine a fighter is making a melee attack with a shortsword against a lackey, and two more lackeys are within overkill range of that attack. Each lackey is a minion with 6 hit points. In example A, the attack hits and deals 4 piercing damage. This kills only the targeted lackey. A successful attack against a minion always kills the target.

Example A

In example B, the attack is a critical hit and deals 13 piercing damage. This kills the targeted lackey with 7 overkill damage remaining, which spreads to the other minions within the fighter's overkill range. So a second lackey within 5 feet of the fighter takes 6 piercing damage and dies, leaving 1 overkill damage remaining. The third lackey takes that last point of overkill damage and dies.

Example B

When a minion's challenge rating is at least 6 higher than an NPC's challenge rating, that NPC's actions and traits affect a minion as if they didn't have the Minion trait, reducing the minion's hit points like a normal creature instead of automatically dropping them to 0.

This rule shouldn't be applied to player characters—they're heroes who can always kill a minion in one hit.

Special Traits

Many minions have traits that give them strength in numbers but become less powerful as their allies are defeated. For example, an enemy who starts their turn within 5 feet of three or more goblin lackeys must succeed on a saving throw or take damage from the lackeys' Tiny Stabs trait.

Challenge Ratings

Minions have a challenge rating just like any other creature. However, their experience point value depends on their challenge rating. Aside from their damage output, the Minion trait, and their experience point value, a minion's statistics are on par with a standard creature of the same challenge rating.

When the rules reference a challenge rating, such as the *polymorph* spell or the cleric's Destroy Undead feature, use the minion's listed challenge rating as normal. For instance, a 5th-level cleric can affect Undead creatures with a challenge rating of 1/2 or lower with their Destroy Undead feature—so this feature can affect rotting zombie minions (CR 1/4) but not shade minions (CR 1).

Minion Bands

A combat encounter with more than five minions per character can become deadly if all minions act on the same turn—the characters cut down minion hordes on their turns but then suffer massive damage as a sea of minions pour down on them. While many groups like this challenge, you have the option to divide the minions into different bands that act on different initiative counts. If you do this, minions can only join group attacks with minions in the same band. At the start of a new round, two or more bands of minions can reorganize into one band, acting on the lowest initiative count of the bands that combined.

If you divide minions into bands, be sure to distinguish which minions belong together. For gridded combat, you could use a colored marker for each miniature. In a theater of the mind encounter, try group descriptors like "zombie dwarves" and "zombie elves."

WHERE EVIL LIVES

THE MCDM BOOK OF BOSS BATTLES

MCDM

Jagged Edge Hideaway

Optimized for Five 2nd-Level Characters

Content Warning: Spiders

Marrowgnaw is a really big spider! If you or any players in your group don't enjoy descriptions of skittering spiders, you don't need to go into detail while narrating scenes with the creature. You could also turn the war spider into another creature, like a war lizard with sticky saliva. A bucket of spiders also serves as a trap in area G9. You can similarly reflavor this trap.

Queen Bargnot, Scourge of the High Road, leads the Jagged Edge Bandits in pillaging caravans. Before her rise, the goblins struggled, attacking only the weakest travelers in unorganized strikes. When she killed her boss and became the band's self-proclaimed queen, everything changed.

The Jagged Edges dug a sprawling network of tunnels in the soft earth beneath the High Road. Secret entrances allow the goblins to make coordinated strikes and disappear before their victims can organize against them. Jagged Edge Hideaway contains the bandits' living quarters, pets, prisoners, and ill-gotten gains.

Goblins

Like all humanoid ancestries, there are many different goblins and goblin cultures, each with their own ideals. Known to themselves as *rogabrin*, meaning "more of us" in their language, goblins are one of the most numerous humanoids in the world. They can be found in every environment humans occupy and places many others avoid, like deep cave systems.

Their proportionally long arms and prehensile toes make them equally well adapted to arboreal environments. Goblins live comfortably in treetop cities and subterranean environments with stalactites, ledges, and chasms. Others prefer to dwell in tight-knit neighborhoods of diverse cities.

Those goblins who cross swords with adventuring heroes are the worst of the bunch, thieves and murderers shunned by their own people and driven to live on society's outskirts.

Hideaway Story Hooks

You can use one of the following story hooks to integrate this lair into an adventure:

Bandit Attack. While the characters traverse the High Road, a group of Jagged Edge Bandits, consisting of ten **goblin lackeys**, a **goblin sniper**, and a **goblin warrior**, attacks. If the characters defeat the bandits, the party can track the goblins back to the hideaway without an ability check.

Friends of Toblobb. One of the characters is friends with Toblobb (see area G7). Toblobb's mother, Morba, reaches out to the character. Morba knows Toblobb went to confront the Jagged Edge Bandits and the young goblin never returned. The mother begs the characters to find her child, offering them a *potion of gaseous form* as a reward for bringing Toblobb back to her.

Merchant's Request. Fenrir Whipp, a human cooper and the leader of the High Road Guild of Merchants, puts out a bounty on Queen Bargnot. The merchant offers 500 gp to any band of adventurers who can capture or kill the bandit queen.

Hideaway Features

Unless otherwise noted, each area of Jagged Edge Hideaway has the following features:

Ceilings. The dirt ceilings are 15 feet high, and creatures with a climbing speed can climb upside down on them without needing to make an ability check.

Dirt Walls. A creature without a climbing speed or climbing equipment can climb the packed-dirt walls of the hideaway with a successful DC 12 Strength (Athletics) check. If a creature fails this check by 5 or more, they fall while attempting to climb, taking 1d6 bludgeoning damage per 10 feet fallen. A creature can use a shovel or other digging equipment to dig out a 5-foot-cube section of a wall with 5 minutes of work. Multiple creatures working together decrease the time proportionally.

Doors. Heavy oak doors stand in doorways 8 feet high. The doors have no locks.

Illumination. Lanterns hang from the ceilings of all areas. The bandits keep the lanterns burning low, shedding only dim light.

Noise. The hideaway's solid doors and dirt walls muffle sound. Creatures in an enclosed area can't hear creatures outside that area.

Secret Doors. Each bandit knows the location of the secret doors in the hideaway. Any creature who has a passive Wisdom (Perception) score of 14 or higher spots the outline of these doors, as does a creature who searches the area and succeeds on a DC 14 Intelligence (Investigation) check.

Jagged Edge Hideaway Map

Bandits

Bandits in the Jagged Edge hideout attack intruders as soon as the bandits notice them. The goblins make use of their Crafty trait to engage in hit-and-run tactics and escape melee confrontations with dangerous foes. Goblins who are clearly losing flee for their lives and escape the lair by the most direct route.

Captured Bandits. A character who succeeds on a DC 13 Charisma (Deception, Intimidation, or Persuasion) check convinces a captured or cornered bandit to give up one of the following pieces of information:

- The location of one of the secret passages connecting area G4 to G7 or area G7 to G9.
- The location of a trap in area G2.
- The existence of the war spider in area G4.
- The location of the treasure in area G7.
- The location of Queen Bargnot in area G9.

Defeated Characters. If the bandits defeat the characters, the Jagged Edges don't kill them. Instead, the bandits lock them in cages and store their equipment in area G7.

Resting in the Hideaway

Provided the characters first deal with any enemies in that area, they can safely take short rests in areas G1, G3, G4, G6, and G7, and long rests in areas G1, G3, and G4. Otherwise, if the characters attempt to rest, there is a 50 percent chance four **goblin warriors** interrupt them halfway through their rest.

Entering the Hideaway

If the characters search the High Road for entrances to the lair, a successful DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals one of the seven hidden, moss-covered trapdoors leading to area G2 or G3. Alternatively, a character who succeeds on a DC 12 Wisdom (Survival) check finds goblin footprints that lead to and reveal one of these trapdoors.

False Entrance. The goblins have placed a decoy trapdoor leading to a dead-end trap in area G1. This trapdoor is purposefully easy to find. A character who searches the High Road and succeeds on a DC 8 Intelligence (Investigation) check notices this poorly hidden trapdoor. If the party also noticed the other trapdoors, they observe that this one isn't hidden nearly as well as the others, and it has very few goblin tracks around it.

Scouting Party. If the party fails to find a real entrance to the lair and they don't learn about one from any goblins who investigate the collapsed tunnel in area G1, the character with the highest passive Perception spots three **goblin warriors** and one **goblin sniper** leaving the hideaway via a trapdoor from area G2. These goblins are heading out to scout for merchants to rob.

Jagged Edge Hideaway Areas

The following areas are keyed to the Jagged Edge Hideaway Map.

G1. Dead-End Tunnel

The dead-end tunnel has the following features:

- "The entrance opens into a tunnel that slopes gently down. Its earthen walls are supported with vertical wooden beams. At the end of the tunnel stands a dirt-stained wooden door."
- (**Secret**) Opening the false door at the end of the tunnel activates a trap that collapses the tunnel.

Collapsing Tunnel. A character who succeeds on a DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check notices that an unusual series of planks connect the doorframe to each of the tunnel's support beams. If a character investigates the door and succeeds on a DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) check, they determine a solid dirt wall lies beyond it.

If a creature pulls on the door to open it, the door tumbles out of its frame and all the wood beams attached to it fall, causing the tunnel's ceiling to collapse. Each Medium or smaller creature in the tunnel when it collapses must make a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save, a creature takes 7 (2d6) bludgeoning damage and becomes restrained in 3 feet of dirt. On a successful save, a creature takes half as much damage and isn't restrained. A creature can use their action to make a DC 10 Strength check, and on a success, they free themself or another creature in reach who is restrained in this way.

When the tunnel collapses, the entire ceiling falls in and exposes the tunnel to the surface. Two rounds later, three **goblin warriors** and one **goblin sniper** arrive from an entrance tunnel (area G2) to investigate. If captured, they freely reveal one of the entrances to area G2 or G3, in addition to any other information the party coaxes out of them.

G2. Entrance Tunnels

The hideaway's six main entrance tunnels sit on either side of the High Road. Each tunnel has the following features:

- "This circular shaft sinks 30 feet into the earth, leading down to a tunnel with hazy light. Its dirt wall is marred with little holes."
- (**Secret**) A dirt-covered canvas conceals a pit at the end of the tunnel, opposite the entrance shaft.

Entrance Shaft. The entrance shaft has no ladder or other means of climbing. A character who succeeds on a DC 10 Wisdom (Survival) check recognizes that the holes in the shaft are created by goblin fingers and toes.

Pit Trap. The goblins avoid the pit trap by climbing the tunnel ceiling and walls. A character who succeeds on a DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) or Intelligence (Investigation) check notices there are no footprints in the dirt over the trap. If this check result is 14 or higher, the character also notices the canvas covering the pit's entrance.

The pit has a 5-foot-square opening and is 10 feet deep. The bottom of the pit is lined with rusty iron pots.

When a Small or larger creature steps on the canvas, it collapses and the creature falls into the pit below it with a clatter, taking 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage and landing prone. If any creatures are in the adjacent area (G4 or G5), they hear this noise and arrive to investigate.

G3. War Spider Entrance

This wide entrance tunnel sits on one side of the High Road. It has no light sources and the following features:

- "This wide entrance shaft sinks 30 feet into the earth. At the bottom, its floor is illuminated only by what light seeps in from outdoors."
- "Webs as thick as rope line the shaft, and a foul scent of decay wafts up from the tunnel."

Entrance Shaft. Characters can use the webs to climb down the shaft without needing to make a check (see "Climbing Webs"). If they attempt to avoid touching the webs while climbing down the shaft, they must succeed on a DC 12 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check to do so. On a failed check, the creature must choose between grabbing onto a web or falling to the bottom of the shaft. A creature who chooses to fall takes 10 (3d6) bludgeoning damage and lands prone.

Climbing Webs. These webs are far less sticky than the prey-snaring webs they connect to in area G4, and creatures can safely climb them without impediment. Marrowgnaw, the **war spider** in that area, uses the webs in this shaft to climb to the surface when she's needed in battle. They allow her to move at full speed as she squeezes through this area.

If a creature touches or damages these webs, it alerts Marrowgnaw. She climbs up to the ceiling of area G4 and hides in the darkness to ambush them when they enter that area.

G4. Marrowgnaw's Cavern

This cave has a 25-foot ceiling and no light sources. The characters only notice the following features if they have a light or another way to see in the dark:

- "Sticky, thick webs crisscross over the ground."
- "Stinking humanoid bones and bloodstained rags litter the floor."
- *(If the characters didn't touch the webs in area G3)* "An elephant-sized, gray-haired spider chitters her mandibles, then she skitters up the wall on legs strapped with bloodstained blades."
- (**Secret**) If the characters touched the webs in area G3, the spider is already hidden and the characters don't see her skittering up the wall.
- (**Secret**) A secret door opens to reveal a passage to area G7 (see "Hideaway Features").

War Spider. This cave is the den of Marrowgnaw, a **war spider** who the bandits keep well-fed with prisoners. If she didn't detect the characters before they entered the area, they can make a DC 10 group Dexterity (Stealth) check, sneaking through the cavern unnoticed on a success (as long as they avoid touching the webs as described in "Sticky Webs").

If a creature touches or damages the webs in area G3 or G4, this alerts Marrowgnaw to their presence, and if they haven't already seen her, she hides on the cave's ceiling in the shadows. A character who has a way to see in the dark and a passive Wisdom (Perception) score of 12 or higher notices Marrowgnaw in hiding. Otherwise, the characters are surprised when she attacks.

She begins combat by using Web Spray, then wades into the fray making Bite attacks. When Marrowgnaw only has 20 hit points remaining, she uses Trample to try to escape through area G3.

Sticky Webs. The webs are difficult terrain. A creature who enters a webbed area for the first time on a turn or starts their turn there must make a DC 10 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check. On a failed check, their speed is reduced to 0 until the end of their next turn and Marrowgnaw is alerted to their location. On a successful check, they avoid touching the webs in that area.

Dealing fire or slashing damage to a web destroys a 5-foot-square section.

Treasure. A character who takes 10 minutes to search the rags on the chamber's floor finds a *potion of healing*, three gold teeth (worth 2 gp each), and a belt pouch containing 210 cp, 55 sp, and 16 gp.

G5. Living Quarters

This room has the following features:

- *(If a character fell into a pit trap in area G2 that is connected to this area, these goblins may have already engaged the party in combat.)* "A small, robed figure and a muscle-bound goblin carrying an axe twice her size lead ten bandits in sparring exercises."
- "Bedrolls and backpacks lie neatly on the floor around the cave's perimeter."

Goblins. Forcan (a **goblin cursespitter**) and Ulgna (a **goblin spinecleaver**) train a group of ten **goblin lackeys**. When they notice the party, Ulgna attempts to shove any character who is next to a pit into that trap (see area G2), then she switches to Greataxe attacks. Forcan hurls hexes while moving toward the skitterling den (area G8) to stir up those creatures; if he can, he then moves to the throne room (area G9) to warn Queen Bargnot of intruders. If Forcan reaches the queen, she prepares an ambush in area G9 with Forcan and her guards.

Treasure. The backpacks around the room hold a total of thirty-six rations, five silvered arrows, 90 cp, 23 sp, and 8 gp.

G6. Guard Post

This room has the following features:

- "Raucous laughter and the smell of strong liquor fills this small chamber. Three bantering goblins sit on the dirt floor, rolling bright green dice and gambling copper pieces."
- "A barrel at the north end of the room is labeled, 'Brimshire's Best.'"

Goblin Party. Morky (a **goblin assassin**) is beating Norrica (a **goblin underboss**) and Skelver (a **goblin warrior**) in a dice game. All three are drunk and considered poisoned. They're supposed to watch the door to the prison (area G7), but are absorbed in their game, jokes, and liquor. A character can sneak by them with a successful DC 11 Dexterity (Stealth) check.

Explosive Alcohol. A character who is proficient with brewer's supplies or who succeeds on a DC 15 Intelligence (History) check knows Brimshire's Best is a whiskey with explosive potential. If the barrel or its contents take fire damage, the barrel explodes and each creature within 10 feet of it must make a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw, taking 9 (2d8) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Treasure. There are 27 cp on the ground, along with a dice set carved from bright green teeth that glow in the dark (worth 3 gp).

G7. Prison and Storage

This room has the following features:

- "Three 6-foot-tall iron cages stand at the north end of the room. Two are empty, but the centermost contains a thin goblin wearing filthy clothing."
- "On the east and west walls of the room, crates stand piled up to the ceiling, emblazoned with the marks of various merchants."
- (**Secret**) Two secret doors open to reveal passages to areas G4 and G9 (see "Hideaway Features").

Cages. The cages are locked, and Queen Bargnot (in area G9) holds their key. A character can force a cage open with a successful DC 18 Strength check, or they can pick a cage's lock with a successful DC 15 Dexterity check using thieves' tools. A cage door has AC 19, 18 hit points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage.

Prisoner Toblobb. The prisoner is Toblobb, a goblin adventurer. They dislike the Jagged Edges for giving goblins a bad name. Toblobb scouted the High Road for the bandits' hideaway, but the Jagged Edges found Toblobb first. The bandits plan to feed Toblobb to Marrowgnaw.

Toblobb begs for freedom when they notice the characters, offering to aid in the fight against Queen Bargnot. If freed, Toblobb is a **goblin sneak** who stays with the group for the duration of their time in the lair. At the GM's discretion, Toblobb can choose to join the party for a longer period.

Toblobb knows about both of the room's secret passages, but they don't know where the passages lead.

Treasure. Toblobb's equipment is in the crate nearest them. The other crates contain Queen Bargnot's treasure hoard. See "Queen Bargnot's Hoard" for more information.

G8. Skitterling Den

This room has the following features:

- *(If the skitterlings have already been stirred up to attack the characters, they aren't in this room.)* "Scores of winged rodents with six legs cling to the dirt ceiling, chittering to each other."
- "Foul-smelling guano covers the floor."

Skitterlings. A **swarm of skitterlings** clings to the ceiling here, eager for violence. A Jagged Edge bandit who enters this room can use their action to stir up the skitterlings, who then fly through the complex in search of intruders.

Each character who enters the area while the skitterlings are at rest must succeed on a DC 11 Dexterity (Stealth) check to avoid disturbing them. Alternatively, a character can befriend the swarm by succeeding on a DC 11 Wisdom (Animal Handling) check, made with advantage if the character offers food. A befriended swarm does not attack any of the characters.

Guano. When a creature who isn't a Jagged Edge bandit or skitterling starts their turn in this area, they must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned until the start of their next turn.

G9. Throne Room

This room has the following features:

- "On the east side of the room, a 5-foot-tall wooden platform stands on wooden legs. Atop it, a goblin with long white hair and a jeweled crown sits on her throne. On each side of her stands a goblin warrior."
- "At the west end of the room, a table holds a map of the High Road, scribbled with notes in Goblin."
- (**Secret**) A goblin sniper hides in the shadows under the platform.
- (**Secret**) If Forcan from area G5 warned Queen Bargnot of intruders, a rusty iron bucket of spiders sits on the doorway into this area (see "Spider Bucket"), Forcan hides under the platform with the sniper, and all goblins have actions readied to attack intruders on sight.
- (**Secret**) A secret door opens to reveal a passage to area G7 (see "Hideaway Features").

Goblins. **Queen Bargnot** is flanked by two **goblin warriors** and protected by a hidden **goblin sniper** under the platform (possibly accompanied by Forcan the **goblin cursespitter** from area G5). Any character who has a passive Wisdom (Perception) score of 15 or higher notices all hidden goblins.

Queen Bargnot allows her warriors to wade into the fray while she makes Shortbow attacks. If cornered, she

makes Shortsword attacks. When she uses her Get in Here bonus action, goblin lackeys can appear from area G7 or G8 or from hiding spaces, shadows on the ceiling, or beneath the platform or table.

If her defeat is imminent, Queen Bargnot asks for parley and offers the characters all the goods in area G7 in exchange for her freedom (see "Queen Bargnot's Hoard"). If the characters refuse, she resumes the attack, fighting bitterly to the death.

Platform. Medium creatures must squeeze to move under the platform. Small and Tiny creatures can move under it freely. The platform has AC 15, 27 hit points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage. If the platform is destroyed, each creature on and under it takes 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage.

Spider Bucket. If Forcan reached the queen with a warning, a bucket containing spiders has been rigged to sit above the door leading from area G8. The first creature to enter this room through that door knocks down the bucket and must make a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save, the spiders swarm the target, and the target takes 2 (1d4) bludgeoning damage plus 2 (1d4) piercing damage before the spiders scurry away.

Map. The map on the table contains notes about previous and upcoming robberies. The characters can use this map to return the goods from area G7 to their owners. At the GM's discretion, the map might be marked with other creature lairs.

Treasure. Queen Bargnot wears a silver crown set with small moonstones (worth 125 gp) and carries a goblet made from a halfling skull (worth 70 gp).

Queen Bargnot's Hoard

Queen Bargnot's treasure hoard is contained in crates in area G7 of her lair. Her hoard was stolen from merchants she robbed, and she isn't fully aware of its contents.

The hoard contains the following items:

- *Bag of holding* that contains a *potion of climbing*, a *spell scroll* of *cure wounds*, a *spell scroll* of *lesser restoration*, and a glowing poison recipe (see below)
- *Monocle of secrets* (see below)
- 5 silvered arrows
- 250 pounds of flour (worth 5 gp)
- 10 pounds of ginger (worth 10 gp)
- 200 pounds of salt (worth 10 gp)
- 5 pounds of cloves (worth 15 gp)
- 200 pounds of iron bars (worth 20 gp)
- 3 pounds of saffron (worth 45 gp)
- 10 square yards of linen (worth 50 gp)
- 193 cp, 110 sp, and 83 gp

Glowing Poison Recipe

Injury Poison

This one-page recipe is written in fine calligraphy on a sheet of clean white parchment. If you are proficient with alchemist's supplies or a poisoner's kit, you can make a dose of this poison with raw materials worth 250 gp and 1 hour of uninterrupted work.

A creature subjected to this poison must succeed on a Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 8 hours. The DC for this saving throw equals 8 + your Intelligence modifier + your proficiency bonus. While poisoned in this way, a creature sheds bright green light in a 10-foot radius and dim light for an additional 10 feet. Any attack roll against the poisoned creature has advantage if the attacker can see them, and the affected creature can't benefit from being invisible or hide from creatures who can see.

Additionally, the creature leaves a glowing green trail whenever they move. The trail lasts until the creature is no longer poisoned.

Monocle of Secrets

Wondrous Item, Uncommon

While you wear this gold-rimmed monocle, you have advantage on ability checks made to find secret doors and traps.

Additionally, you can use an action while holding a mundane object to learn that object's exact value, the materials used to create it, and whether it is genuine or counterfeit.

Monocle of Secrets

Returning the Hoard

If the characters wish to return the items the Jagged Edge Bandits stole to their rightful owners, the merchants who own the flour, salt, ginger, cloves, iron, saffron, and linen give the characters a reward equal to half the value of the items, or the full value of the items if the characters defeated Queen Bargnot. The owners of the magic items, poison recipe, silvered arrows, and coins were killed by the Jagged Edges, so the characters can keep those items for themselves.

Jagged Edge Hideaway Stat Blocks

The following stat blocks appear in the lair.

Goblin Tactics

Goblins benefit from fighting in environments with features to climb on and hide behind, like trees and pillars. The Crafty trait means melee-focused goblins can run into combat, attack, then regroup with their allies. It also allows goblin minions to run past enemy warriors and surround their spellcasting foes to make use of their Tiny Stabs trait. Goblins who fight at range climb for better sightlines and defense.

If clearly losing a battle, goblins typically don't stick around and fight to the last warrior. Instead, they flee to untamed wilderness and tight tunnels, utilizing their natural agility to run and hide from threats. Goblins who escape with their lives take time to lick their wounds then gather more allies and rush back to face the threat with fresh, overwhelming numbers.

Goblin Assassin

Goblin Assassin

CR 1/2 Ambusher

Small Humanoid (Goblin), Any Alignment — 100 XP

Armor Class 15 (studded leather)
Hit Points 16 (3d6 + 6)
Speed 30 ft., climb 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (–1)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	8 (–1)

Skills Stealth +7
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10
Languages Common, Goblin
Proficiency Bonus +2

Backstab. When the assassin has advantage on their attack roll against a creature who isn't a Construct or an Undead, their attacks deal an extra 3 (1d6) damage and inflict a bleeding wound on the target that lasts until the bleeding creature regains at least 1 hit point. A bleeding creature loses 2 hit points for each bleeding wound they have at the start of their turn. Any creature who can reach the target can use an action to stanch all the target's wounds, ending the effect.

Crafty. The assassin doesn't provoke opportunity attacks when they move out of an enemy's reach.

Actions

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

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

Summon Shadows (1/Day). A 10-foot-radius sphere of magical darkness emanates from a point the assassin can see for 1 minute. The darkness spreads around corners. Except for the assassin, a creature with darkvision can't see through this darkness, and mundane light can't illuminate it. At the start of their turn, the assassin can move the darkness up to 30 feet to a point they can see (no action required). If the assassin takes damage, the effect ends.

Bonus Actions

Sneak. The assassin takes the Hide action.

Strike first, strike hard, grab what you can, and then disappear into the shadows. If you can't find a shadow, don't worry. Morky will make one for you.

Queen Bargnot

Goblin Cursespitter

CR 1 Controller

Small Humanoid (Goblin), Any Alignment — 200 XP

Armor Class 15 (leather armor, shield)
Hit Points 27 (5d6 + 10)
Speed 30 ft., climb 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (–1)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	15 (+2)

Saving Throws Wis +2
Skills Stealth +4
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10
Languages Common, Goblin
Proficiency Bonus +2

Crafty. The cursespitter doesn't provoke opportunity attacks when they move out of an enemy's reach.

Actions

Toxic Touch (Cantrip). *Melee or Ranged Spell Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 30 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (2d6) poison damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 1 minute (save ends at end of turn).

Brittle Bone Hex (Cantrip). The cursespitter chooses one creature they can see within 60 feet of them. The target's bones are wracked with pain until the end of their next turn. The first time the target willingly moves or uses an action, a bonus action, or a reaction before then, they must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or take 9 (2d8) necrotic damage.

To Me! The cursespitter chooses up to two willing creatures they can see within 30 feet of them. Each creature is teleported to an unoccupied space within 5 feet of the cursespitter.

Dizzying Hex (2/Day; 1st-Level Spell). The cursespitter chooses one creature they can see within 60 feet of them. The target must make a DC 12 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, the target falls prone and can't stand back up for 1 minute (save ends at end of turn).

Reactions

Cowardly Commander. When a creature the cursespitter can see hits them with an attack, the cursespitter chooses a willing ally within 5 feet of them. The attack hits the ally instead.

Goblin Lackey

CR 1/4 Minion

Small Humanoid (Goblin), Any Alignment — 10 XP

Armor Class 14 (leather armor, shield)
Hit Points 6
Speed 30 ft., climb 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (–1)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	8 (–1)	8 (–1)

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 9
Languages Common, Goblin
Proficiency Bonus +2

Crafty. The lackey doesn't provoke opportunity attacks when they move out of an enemy's reach.

Minion. If the lackey takes damage from an attack or as the result of a failed saving throw, their hit points are reduced to 0. If the lackey takes damage from another effect, they die if the damage equals or exceeds their hit point maximum; otherwise they take no damage.

Tiny Stabs. If an enemy starts their turn within 5 feet of three or more lackeys who can see them, the enemy must succeed on a Dexterity saving throw or take 1 piercing damage for each lackey within 5 feet. The DC for this saving throw equals 10 + the number of lackeys within 5 feet of the enemy.

Actions

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

Goblin Cursespitter

Goblin Sneak

Retainer

Small Humanoid (Goblin), Any Alignment

Armor Class 15 (medium armor)
Hit Points Seven times their level (number of d8 Hit Dice equal to their level)
Speed 30 ft., climb 20 ft.

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

Saving Throws +PB to all
Skills Acrobatics +3 plus PB, Stealth +3 plus PB
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10
Languages Common, Goblin
Proficiency Bonus (PB) equals the mentor's bonus

Signature Attack (Daggers). *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 plus PB to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 2d4 plus PB piercing damage. Beginning at 7th level, the sneak can make this attack twice, instead of once, when they take the Attack action on their turn.

Features

3rd Level: Weaving Knives (3/Day). As an action, the sneak moves up to their speed without provoking opportunity attacks. Before, during, or after the move, they can make two signature attacks.

5th Level: Sneak and Stab (3/Day). As a bonus action, the sneak takes the Hide action. If the sneak hits a creature they are hidden from with an attack on the same turn, the creature takes an extra PBd10 piercing damage, and the sneak can immediately take the Hide action (no action required).

7th Level: Poisoned Blade (1/Day). As a bonus action, the sneak covers a dagger in a special poison, which lasts for 1 hour or until the sneak hits a creature with a signature attack. A creature hit with the poisoned dagger must make a DC 10 plus PB Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the target takes PBd12 poison damage and is poisoned for 1 minute (save ends at the end of turn). On a successful save, the target takes only half as much damage and isn't poisoned.

Goblin Sniper

CR 1/2 Artillery

Small Humanoid (Goblin), Any Alignment 100 XP

Armor Class 14 (leather armor)
Hit Points 13 (3d6 + 3)
Speed 30 ft., climb 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (–1)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	8 (–1)

Skills Perception +3, Stealth +5
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13
Languages Common, Goblin
Proficiency Bonus +2

Crafty. The sniper doesn't provoke opportunity attacks when they move out of an enemy's reach.

Sniper. If the sniper misses with a ranged weapon attack while they are hidden, they remain hidden. Additionally, if the sniper hits a target with a ranged weapon attack while they have advantage on the attack roll, the attack deals an extra 3 (1d6) damage.

Actions

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

Shortbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage.

Bonus Actions

Sneak. The sniper takes the Hide action.

Goblin Sniper

Look, you saved me–that's enough to get my knives for a day. But if you help me stop Bargnot, we're friends for life.

Toblobb

Goblin Spinecleaver

CR 1 Brute

Small Humanoid (Goblin), Any Alignment — 200 XP

Armor Class 14 (hide armor)
Hit Points 33 (6d6 + 12)
Speed 30 ft., climb 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	8 (−1)

Saving Throws Con +4
Skills Athletics +5
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10
Languages Common, Goblin
Proficiency Bonus +2

Crafty. The spinecleaver doesn't provoke opportunity attacks when they move out of an enemy's reach.

Strong Grip. Wielding a heavy weapon doesn't impose disadvantage on the spinecleaver's attack rolls.

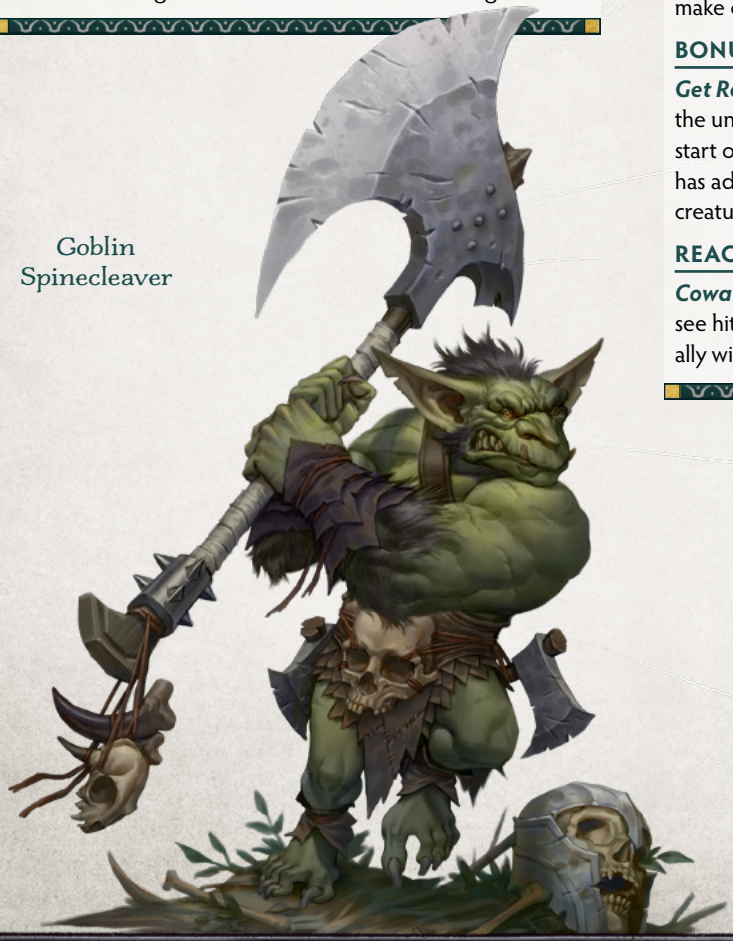
Actions

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

Handaxe. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) slashing damage.

Reactions

Tricksy Warrior. When a creature within 5 feet of the spinecleaver misses them with an attack, the spinecleaver can make a melee attack against the creature with disadvantage.



Goblin Spinecleaver

Goblin Underboss

CR 2 Support

Small Humanoid (Goblin), Any Alignment — 450 XP

Armor Class 17 (studded leather, shield)
Hit Points 36 (8d6 + 8)
Speed 30 ft., climb 20 ft.

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

Saving Throws Dex +5, Wis +3
Skills Insight +3, Intimidation +2, Stealth +5
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11
Languages Common, Goblin
Proficiency Bonus +2

Crafty. The underboss doesn't provoke opportunity attacks when they move out of an enemy's reach.

Actions

Multiattack. The underboss makes two Shortsword attacks or two Shortbow attacks. They can replace one attack with a use of Command.

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

Shortbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage.

Command. The underboss chooses one ally they can see within 30 feet of them. If the target can hear the underboss, the target can use their reaction to move up to their speed or make one weapon attack.

Bonus Actions

Get Reckless (Recharge 6). Each willing ally within 30 feet of the underboss who can hear them becomes reckless until the start of the underboss's next turn. While reckless, a creature has advantage on attack rolls, and attack rolls against the creature have advantage.

Reactions

Cowardly Commander. When a creature the underboss can see hits them with an attack, the underboss chooses a willing ally within 5 feet of them. The attack hits the ally instead.

Goblin Warrior

CR 1/4 Skirmisher

Small Humanoid (Goblin), Any Alignment — 50 XP

Armor Class 15 (leather armor, shield)
Hit Points 9 (2d6 + 2)
Speed 30 ft., climb 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (–1)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	8 (–1)

Skills Acrobatics +4, Stealth +4
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10
Languages Common, Goblin
Proficiency Bonus +2

Crafty. The warrior doesn't provoke opportunity attacks when they move out of an enemy's reach.

Actions

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

Shortbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

Reactions

Fleet Foot. When a creature within 5 feet of the warrior misses them with a melee attack, the warrior can move up to half their speed.

Skitterling

Swarm of Skitterlings

CR 2 Soldier

Medium Swarm of Tiny Beasts, Unaligned — 450 XP

Armor Class 13
Hit Points 36 (8d8)
Speed 30 ft., fly 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	3 (–4)	12 (+1)	5 (–3)

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, slashing
Condition Immunities charmed, dazed, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, prone, restrained, stunned
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11
Languages —
Proficiency Bonus +2

In Your Face. While the swarm occupies an enemy's space, that creature has disadvantage on attack rolls made against any target other than the swarm and takes 3 (1d6) slashing damage if they attack a creature other than the swarm.

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

Actions

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 0 ft., one target in the swarm's space. *Hit:* 14 (4d6) slashing damage, or 7 (2d6) slashing damage if the swarm has half of their hit points or fewer. The target must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or be blinded until the start of their next turn. Creatures who are immune to poison damage or the poisoned condition succeed on this saving throw automatically.

Skitterling

A six-legged, winged rodent the size of a housecat, a skitterling moves their clawed feet as they fly, appearing to scurry through the air. Goblins train these pets to claw at the faces of enemies, as their feet secrete a toxin that causes temporary blindness.

Skitterlings make excellent little guardians, but they leave quite the mess. Make sure they're fed. If not, you'll become the next mess they make.

Queen Bargnot

Queen Bargnot

CR 3 Leader
Small Humanoid (Goblin), Neutral Evil 700 XP

Armor Class 17 (studded leather, shield)
Hit Points 54 (12d6 + 12)
Speed 30 ft., climb 20 ft.

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

Saving Throws Dex +5, Wis +3
Skills Insight +3, Intimidation +3, Perception +3, Stealth +5
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13
Languages Common, Goblin
Proficiency Bonus +2

Crafty. Queen Bargnot doesn't provoke opportunity attacks when she moves out of an enemy's reach.

Take My Pain (3/Day). When Queen Bargnot fails a saving throw against a spell or other supernatural effect, she can choose a willing creature within 30 feet of her. Queen Bargnot succeeds on the saving throw, the creature is targeted with the same spell or effect as if they were in her space, and they fail their saving throw automatically.

Actions

Multiattack. Queen Bargnot makes three Shortsword attacks or two Shortbow attacks.

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

Shortbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage.

Bonus Actions

Get In Here. Queen Bargnot shouts for aid and 1d4 **goblin lackeys** appear in unoccupied spaces within 60 feet of her.

Reactions

No Dying! When an ally Queen Bargnot can see within 30 feet of her is reduced to 0 hit points, they are reduced to 1 hit point instead.

Villain Actions

Queen Bargnot has three villain actions. She can take each action once during an encounter after an enemy's turn. She can take these actions in any order but can use only one per round.

Action 1: What Are You Waiting For?! Each ally within 60 feet of Queen Bargnot who can hear her can move up to their speed or make a melee weapon attack (no action required).

Action 2: Focus Fire. Queen Bargnot chooses an enemy she can see with 60 feet of her. Queen Bargnot and each ally within 60 feet of her who can hear her can move up to their speed toward the target.

Action 3: Kill! Each ally within 60 feet of Queen Bargnot who can hear her can make a weapon attack with advantage (no action required). If the attack hits, it deals an extra 3 (1d6) damage.

Swarm of Spiders

CR 1/2 Controller

Medium Swarm of Tiny Beasts, Unaligned — 100 XP

Armor Class 12
Hit Points 18 (4d8)
Speed 20 ft., climb 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
3 (–4)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	2 (–4)	9 (–1)	2 (–4)

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, slashing
Condition Immunities charmed, dazed, flanked, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, prone, restrained, stunned
Senses blindsight 10 ft., darkvision 30 ft., passive Perception 9
Languages —
Proficiency Bonus +2

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

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

Web Walker. The swarm ignores movement restrictions caused by webbing.

Actions

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 0 ft., one target in the swarm's space. *Hit:* 5 (2d4) piercing damage plus 4 (1d8) poison damage, or 2 (1d4) piercing damage plus 3 (1d6) poison damage if the swarm has half their hit points or fewer.

Too Many Legs. The swarm mobs a creature in their space and attaches to them. When the swarm takes damage other than psychic damage, the attached creature also takes half as much damage. The attached creature has disadvantage on attacks against creatures other than the swarm, and attacks against the attached creature have advantage.

While attached, the swarm can't attack another target. The attached creature or another creature who can reach them can shake off the swarm and detach them as an action. The swarm can detach by spending 5 feet of their movement.

War Spider

CR 3 Brute

Huge Beast, Unaligned — 700 XP

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)
Hit Points 73 (7d12 + 28)
Speed 40 ft., climb 40 ft.

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

Senses blindsight 10 ft., darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10
Languages —
Proficiency Bonus +2

Baby Burst. When the spider dies, a **swarm of spiders** bursts forth from their remains and acts on the same initiative count as the spider did.

Rider Launcher. An allied rider who jumps off the spider has a long jump of 30 feet and a high jump of 15 feet, with or without a running start. If an allied rider jumps off the spider, the first melee weapon attack the ally makes on the same turn has advantage.

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

Web Walker. The spider ignores movement restrictions caused by webbing.

Wide Back. Two Small or Tiny creatures can share a space while riding the spider, allowing up to eighteen Small or seventy-two Tiny creatures to ride the spider at once.

Actions

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) piercing damage plus 7 (2d6) poison damage.

Bladed Leg. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) slashing damage.

Web Spray. The spider sprays webbing from their abdomen in a 15-foot cube. Each creature in that area must succeed on a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw or be restrained by the webbing. A creature can use their action to make a DC 14 Strength or Dexterity check, freeing themself or another creature they can reach on a success.

Trample (Recharge 6). The spider can move up to their speed and move through the spaces of other creatures as if they were difficult terrain. The spider can make one Bladed Leg attack against each creature whose space they move into during the move. A creature hit by this attack can't take reactions until the start of their next turn.

Hanging Tree

Optimized for Five 3rd-Level Characters

Dohma Raskovar is the latest in a long line of orc leaders—known as dohmas—of the Ivory Throne, a band of mercenaries. Under Raskovar's leadership, the throne has grown to over a hundred strong, and now they handle multiple contracts simultaneously, occasionally banding together to fight as a single unit in battle.

Raskovar runs the throne from the Hanging Tree, his tavern where he plays the role of barkeep. Here, clients in the know can discreetly indicate their desire to hire bounty hunters, cutthroats, or thieves by ordering a boiling oil, a mundane blend of whiskey and rum that appears on no menu. Once the drink is ordered, Raskovar himself appears at the table, ready to do business. He prides himself on remaining politically neutral and treating all potential customers as equals, something that chafes a few of his clients.

Hidden beneath the Hanging Tree tavern is the true headquarters of the Ivory Throne, a base with deadly defensive measures and lavish ornamentation. Here, Dohma Raskovar plots new jobs with his mercenary band and stores his treasures.

Orcs

In a long-lost language, the word *oruk*—"blood fire"—described the glowing appearance of the orc people when they push themselves to their limits. While orcs know one another as *kanin* in their own tongue, they also use "orc" with great pride, especially when dealing with other folk.

Orc history spans the world and all its ages. They've settled into villages and cities, hot and cold climates, high in the mountains and deep underground. Most orcs live in diverse humanoid societies, though a few live secluded in the tropics.

Though orcs are no more likely to stand in the adventurers' way than any other folk, those who do fill the same roles as other humanoids: mercenaries, bounty hunters, garroters, guards, cultists, and corrupt kings.

Hanging Tree Story Hooks

You can use one of the following story hooks to integrate this lair into an adventure:

Disgraced Soldier. Seeking to restore their family's honor, an old orc soldier named Erzal offers the characters 1,000 gp to recover their family crest, which was taken by the Ivory Throne when Erzal joined the Throne many decades ago. The crest lies within the Hanging Tree in Raskovar's treasure vault (area O9).

Shadowy Patron. A mysterious patron contacts the characters through the mail, offering to give them a *+1 longsword* if they kill or force Raskovar to relinquish the title of Dohma of the Ivory Throne. The patron is Orvakar, a former orc dohma of the throne who wishes to reclaim her station.

Unearned Debt. A dead human mercenary's son, Torvend, was forced to join the Ivory Throne to pay for his father's debts. Yearning for freedom, he begs the characters to find and destroy his father's contract, which is locked away in the Hanging Tree's vault (area O9).

Hanging Tree Features

Unless otherwise noted, each area of the headquarters beneath the Hanging Tree has the following features:

Ceilings. The stone ceilings are 15 feet high. Old and broken blades are wedged between the ceiling stones. If a creature attacks the ceiling, the blades fall directly down in a 10-foot-diameter cylinder centered on the point that was attacked. If this debris passes through a creature's space, they must succeed on a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw or take 5 (2d4) slashing damage. Each area's ceiling can only drop blades once.

Illumination. Waist-high ivory lanterns stand in the corners of every area and fill the place with bright white light. All lights can simultaneously be turned off, turned red, or turned back to white by using an action to speak aloud a command word known to all members of the Ivory Throne: *nict* (dark), *orr* (red), and *ior* (white). Turning the lights red alerts the entire complex to intruders (see "Ivory Throne Mercenaries") and prompts Dohma Raskovar to use the magic shaker in the tavern (area O1) to teleport to the Dohmain (area O8).

Nothing Bolted Down. A creature can flip a table or lantern within reach or shove it up to 10 feet in a horizontal line as a bonus action. A flipped table provides half cover to Medium and smaller creatures. A Medium or smaller creature in the path of a shoved object must succeed on a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw or be knocked prone.

Ivory Throne Mercenaries

While Raskovar conducts most Ivory Throne business in the tavern, his mercenaries attend to more covert matters at the headquarters below. Unless otherwise noted, mercenaries act in the following ways:

- If the lights in the headquarters are white, the mercenaries question intruders who aren't engaged in suspicious activity. Characters who succeed on a DC 14 Charisma (Deception) check convince an area's

mercenaries they have a legitimate reason to be in the lair. Otherwise, the mercenaries attack intruders and raise the alarm by turning the lights red.
- If the lights in the headquarters are dark or red, or if the mercenaries catch intruders performing a suspicious act (such as picking a lock or stealing), the mercenaries attack the intruders as soon as they notice them.

During combat, the mercenaries use the environment to their advantage (see "Hanging Tree Features"), creating cover, knocking weapons from the ceiling, and bowling over any intruders before engaging them head-on.

Sharing Information. A character who succeeds on a DC 16 Charisma (Intimidation or Persuasion) check convinces a captured mercenary or a mercenary who believes the characters are welcome in the lair to divulge one of the following pieces of information:

- The location of the keys to the Dohmain by the holding cell (area O4).
- The fact that the green-banded key by the holding cell (area O4) is a mimic.
- The location of the hidden orcs in the wall of the narrow hallway (area O3) and the fountain at the dohma's door (area O7).
- The trigger for the trap in the feed room (area O6).
- The command words for the lanterns.

Defeated Characters. If the mercenaries defeat the characters, they try to keep them alive for interrogation and ransom. All but one character wakes up in the holding cell in area O4. The remaining character wakes up at the bar in area O1, face-to-face with Raskovar, ready to discuss his terms for their safety. All the characters' equipment is held in the storage unit in area O5.

Resting in the Hanging Tree

If the Hanging Tree isn't on alert, the characters can take a short rest in any area without incident provided they deal with any enemies in the area. They can also take a short or long rest in the storeroom without incident. Otherwise, if the characters attempt to rest, there's an 80 percent chance two **orc bloodrunners** and two **orc furies** working for Raskovar find them 5 minutes into the rest.

Boiling Oil

If the characters know the Hanging Tree is the Ivory Throne's headquarters, they can question members of the mercenary band or their clients and learn that ordering a boiling oil (a type of drink) at the bar gets you a meeting with Dohma Raskovar.

Entering the Hanging Tree

The Hanging Tree is open at all hours. The characters can enter through the front door into the tavern (area O1).

Hanging Tree Areas

The following areas are keyed to the Hanging Tree Map.

O1. Tavern

Unless Raskovar has cleared the place out for a private meeting, the tavern is busy. It has the following features:

- "The tavern buzzes with raucous conversation and clanking steins. A human and an orc bouncer scan the room for trouble while a tired orc bartender pours a drink."
- "Large scrolls illustrated with landscapes and portraits line nearly every inch of the walls, swaying gently whenever the front doors open and close."
- (**Secret**) One of the wall scrolls in the back hides a portal that leads into the stairwell in the meeting area (area O2).
- (**Secret**) An ivory shaker hidden behind the bar teleports whoever shakes it to the bar in the Dohmain (area O8).

Raskovar. **Dohma Raskovar** tends the bar and makes friendly conversation with patrons, who know him as Roscoe. He makes polite conversation with any character who orders a drink, asking where they're from and what brings them to the Hanging Tree. If asked about the Ivory Throne, Raskovar claims to know nothing special about the mercenary band. He deflects personal questions, saying he's just a tavern owner. A character who succeeds on a DC 16 Wisdom (Insight) check knows Raskovar is lying.

If a character orders a boiling oil, Raskovar's demeanor changes. He invites them to sit at a table and joins them, introducing himself as Dohma Raskovar and asking what services the Ivory Throne can provide. For adventurers, he's willing to order an assassination or a skirmish—if they'll provide one for him in return. If he suspects the characters mean him harm, he calls for help from the bouncers and uses the shaker behind the bar to teleport to the Dohmain (area O8).

Bouncers. An **orc rampart** and a **human brawler** act as bouncers at opposite ends of the room. If a fight breaks out, a second **orc rampart** disguised as a patron rises from their seat at the bar and helps escort the riffraff out. A character can recognize this patron is ready for combat with a successful DC 13 Wisdom (Insight) check.

If a character searches the room or otherwise acts suspicious, they must succeed on a DC 13 Dexterity (Stealth) or Charisma (Deception) check or be asked to leave by the bouncers. If a character refuses to leave, the bouncers attack.

Patrons. There are twelve patrons in the bar who are noncombatants. If a fight breaks out, they flee the tavern.

Portal. A character who searches the tavern and succeeds on a DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) check

The Hanging Tree Map

notices the portal in the south wall behind a scroll depicting a red-striped orc facing off against an army of faceless knights. A *detect magic* spell reveals the portal's aura of conjuration magic. If the characters remain in the tavern for 10 minutes and don't notice the portal, the character who has the highest passive Wisdom (Perception) score spots two **orc blitzers** quietly slipping out of the portal behind the scroll to join the bouncers. The portal leads to the meeting area (area O2). The characters can sneak into it unnoticed by succeeding on a DC 13 group Dexterity (Stealth) or Charisma (Deception) check.

Shaker. A character notices the ivory shaker behind the bar with a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check. A *detect magic* spell reveals the shaker's aura of conjuration magic. When a creature uses a bonus action to shake the item, they are teleported behind the bar in the Dohmain (area O8).

O2. Meeting Area

This area has the following features:

- "A stone stairwell leads down from a swirling green portal into a wide, stately meeting room and then continues down into another level of the complex."
- "Two oak tables meet at the center of a red rug. Six orcs and five humans gather around the tables playing cards."

Orc Godcaller

Mercenaries. Brunsa (an **orc godcaller**), five **orc blitzers**, and five **human guards** are absorbed in their game. If they notice the characters, Brunsa questions them.

O3. Narrow Hallway

This dimly lit hallway has the following features:

- "This narrow hall has wood-paneled walls."
- (**Secret**) A secret door on the east wall hides an orc in a narrow room behind the wall.

Secret Room. A character who has a passive Wisdom (Perception) score of 16 or higher or who succeeds on a DC 16 Intelligence (Investigation) check notices the outline of a square door, 2 feet on all sides, at the bottom of the wall. A Medium creature must squeeze to get through the entrance.

Garroter. Yarl, an **orc garroter**, hides in the secret room. She only attacks the characters if they enter the secret room and the base is on alert. Otherwise, Yarl waits until the characters leave the area, then shadows the group. If her observations make her believe they are intruders, Yarl attacks the next time a fight breaks out or when the characters enter an area where they are outnumbered by mercenaries. A character who has a passive Wisdom (Perception) score of 16 or higher notices Yarl shadowing them.

O4. Holding Cell

This area doesn't have blades wedged in the ceiling (see "Hanging Tree Features"). It has the following features:

- "The west side of this room is a long cell with iron bars. The cell's door swings lazily on its hinges."
- "Along the room's east wall hang two hefty bronze keys, each over two feet long. Each key has a colored pattern on its ring: one banded green and one spotted blue."
- (**Secret**) The green-banded key is a mimic.

Cell Door. If the characters are imprisoned in the cell (see "Ivory Throne Mercenaries"), the door is closed and locked. The lock can be picked with a successful DC 18 Dexterity check using thieves' tools. A character who doesn't have thieves' tools can still attempt the check with a small pin or similar object but makes the check with disadvantage. The cell's bars can be bent open with a successful DC 18 Strength check. The cell door has AC 19, 27 hit points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage. Attacking the door or bending the bars causes the mimic to attack.

Keys. The key with blue spots opens the door to the Dohmain (area O8). The other key is a trained **mimic** who attacks if touched. The mimic fights until reduced to 15 hit points or fewer, then flees.

O5. Storeroom

The storeroom has no light sources of its own and the double doors from the hallway are locked. A character can pick the locks with a successful DC 16 Dexterity check using thieves' tools or force the doors open with a successful DC 16 Strength check. An orc rampart at the dohma's door (area O7) holds the key to these doors. Each door has AC 17, 27 hit points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage.

This area has the following features:

- "This room is a mess. The remnants of destroyed crates, produce, and spices are smeared all over the floor, which has several shallow holes in it."
- "An excited, whimpering mole-like critter covered in carrot pulp hops up from one of the holes, sniffing the air."

Mohler. A **mohler** from the feed room (area O6) accidentally got locked in the storeroom. They don't attack the characters. At the GM's discretion, if a character shares food and kindness with the mohler, the beast might follow them as a **mohler companion**.

Treasure. Only one crate in the storeroom remains undamaged. It contains eight clay bottles of tonic water (worth 1 cp each), four clay bottles of ginger ale (worth 2 cp each), and two *potions of healing*.

O6. Feed Room

This area doesn't have blades wedged in the ceiling (see "Hanging Tree Features"). It has the following features:

- "Several mole-like creatures leap in and out of this room's dirt floor, chasing each other around stone feeding troughs in the center of the room."
- "Three orcs watch the beasts from the inner portion of the feeding trough."
- (**Secret**) The troughs are magically trapped.

Mohlers. Three **mohlers** play in the dirt. If the orcs attack, the mohlers join the fray. The mohlers fight until the orcs are defeated, then retreat into the dirt.

Orcs. Nalan (an **orc terranova**) and two **orc furies** watch the mohlers play, trying to determine whether one is missing. If combat breaks out here, the orcs try to bait the characters into stepping inside the trough ring to trigger the trap.

Scyza Trap. If a creature other than a mohler or an Ivory Throne mercenary moves into the circle inside the troughs, a 10-foot-diameter portal connected to the vault (area O9) opens at the center of the troughs. This allows the scyza who guards the vault to stick just his head through and attack intruders. The portal remains open until the triggering creature is dead or no longer in the feed room. As the portal closes, the scyza retracts his head unharmed.

A *detect magic* spell reveals the troughs' auras of conjuration magic. Each trough has a 1-inch-square symbol carved onto it that holds the trap's magic. A character who succeeds on a DC 14 Intelligence (Investigation) check finds the symbol, and a character who succeeds on a DC 16 Intelligence (Arcana) check knows the symbol controls a trap in the room. Scratching out one of the symbols with a tool or weapon as an action permanently deactivates the trap and its magic.

O7. Dohma's Door

This area has the following features:

- "A stone fountain endlessly sprays water in a tall, cylindrical curtain, obscuring its center."
- "Two ornate ivory doors at the back wall stretch to the ceiling, flanked by lanterns twice as tall as the others in the complex."
- "Two alert orcs stand in front of the door like statues, intent on keeping out uninvited visitors."
- (**Secret**) An orc conduit hides in the fountain.

Orcs. Kevlic and Liway, two **orc ramparts**, let no creature near the door without the dohma's permission. They can't be convinced otherwise through mundane means. They first warn then attack creatures who insist on seeing the dohma without an appointment. The hidden **orc conduit** waits for trouble to break out before striking. A character who has a passive Wisdom (Perception) score of 16 or higher notices the hidden conduit through the sheet of falling water.

Ivory Doors. The doors to the Dohmain (area O8) are locked. A character can pick the locks with a successful DC 22 Dexterity check using thieves' tools or force the doors open with a successful DC 20 Strength check. Each door has AC 17, 54 hit points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage. The key to these doors hangs on the wall by the holding cell (area O4).

Keys. One rampart holds the lock and key for the holding cell in area O4. The other holds the key to the storeroom (area O5).

Treasure. The fountain's water flows from a *decanter of endless water* affixed to its center. A creature can remove the decanter from the fountain as an action. All the mercenaries know the decanter is a prized possession of the dohma and attack any creature they notice carrying it.

O8. The Dohmain

This room, dubbed the Dohmain by members of the Ivory Throne, has the following features:

- "A dozen orcs sitting at tables and a long bar clink glasses and make merry."
- "A massive iron door dominates the east wall. Before it stands a throne carved of ivory."

Mercenaries. Ten **orc blitzers** and two **orc bloodrunners** immediately attack intruders who enter the room. They also activate the red lights (see "Hanging Tree Features") to summon **Dohma Raskovar**; one round later, he teleports using the ivory shaker in the

tavern (area O1) and joins combat. When the dohma uses his Reinforcements action, the summoned blitzers arrive via the staircase down from the dohma's door (area O7).

If Raskovar is reduced to 20 hit points or fewer and has no uses of Dohma Rally left, he offers to treat with the characters, telling them to sit at the private bar while he prepares drinks and negotiates with them. The dohma is willing to grant the characters anything in his power if it means escaping with his life.

Treasure. Raskovar wears a chipped ivory signet ring (worth 200 gp) with the word "Dohma" carved in it.

O9. Vault

If the characters approach the vault door from the Dohmain (area O8), they hear heavy breathing from the other side. The vault door is kept shut by a heavy latch on the outside but no lock. A creature who can reach the latch can use an action to make a DC 16 Strength (Athletics) check, flipping the latch on a success. A Large or larger creature or two Small or Medium creatures working together automatically succeed on this check.

The vault's ceiling is 25 feet high and has no blades wedged in it (see "Hanging Tree Features"). It has the following features:

- "A massive straw nest containing a 20-foot-tall reptilian bird takes up most of this area."
- "Two rows of stone shelves jut from the walls, lined with treasure and coins."

Scyza. The vault is guarded by Horanus, a **scyza**. If the characters didn't encounter him via the trap in the feed room (area O6), he sleeps soundly. Characters who enter the vault must succeed on a DC 8 Dexterity (Stealth) check or wake Horanus. He also awakes if he hears noises louder than hushed conversation, if he is jostled, or if he smells food.

If Horanus is awake and the characters haven't harmed him or any Ivory Throne mercenaries in his presence, the characters have 1 round after he notices them to calm him, otherwise he attacks, fighting to the death. A character who succeeds on a DC 14 Wisdom (Animal Handling) check keeps the scyza calm. This check is made with advantage if the characters feed him meat.

Treasure. The shelves contain the dohma's assets. See "The Dohma's Hoard" for more information.

The Dohma's Hoard

The Ivory Throne's most precious assets stay in their vault (area O9). Everything from money, sentimental gifts, collateral objects, and seized assets are all carefully organized for easy access.

The hoard contains the following items:

- *Psi lenses* (see below)
- 2 *potions of water breathing* contained in a coral-encrusted pouch with a note that reads, "It's yours, if you can reach it."
- House deed (see below)
- Old plush toy resembling a purple kobold (worth 5 cp)
- Crude wax drawing of Raskovar waving on fine parchment (worth 5 cp)
- Barrel of wine with Orc names carved into it (worth 25 gp)
- 5 minuscule diamonds (worth 25 gp each)
- Bronze dwarf skull that screams when looked at (worth 40 gp)
- Framed painting of the Hanging Tree with two orcs standing in front of it (worth 100 gp)
- 107 cp, 512 sp, and 456 gp

House Deed

This deed entitles you to a house in a location of the GM's choice. The house contains the following rooms:

- Five bedrooms, each with a fireplace, a bed, a nightstand, and a chest.
- A kitchen with an oven, a stove, and two tables.
- A dining area with a fireplace, a table, and eight chairs.

Psi Lenses

Wondrous Item, Uncommon

Psi lenses come in pairs, with each shard of iridescent glass made to fit flush with the other's irregularly chiseled edge. When you touch one lens while the other is on the same plane of existence as you, you can use an action to teleport to the space containing the other lens, or the closest unoccupied space if the lens's space is occupied.

After a lens is used to teleport, the pair can't be used again until the next dawn.

Bronze Dwarf Skull

Hanging Tree Stat Blocks

The following stat blocks appear in the lair.

Dohma Raskovar

CR 5 Leader
Medium Humanoid (Orc), Lawful Evil 1,800 XP

Armor Class 14 (chain shirt)
Hit Points 93 (11d8 + 44)
Speed 35 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)	16 (+3)	15 (+2)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Str +6, Con +7, Wis +5
Skills Athletics +6, Deception +6, Insight +5, Intimidation +6, Perception +5
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15
Languages Common, Orc
Proficiency Bonus +3

Adrenaline Rush. If Raskovar fails a saving throw, he can expend a use of his Dohma Rally without gaining its benefits (no action required) and succeed instead.

Relentless (1/Turn). When Raskovar isn't incapacitated and he is reduced to 0 hit points but not killed outright, he can make an attack against an enemy (no action required) before the hit point reduction is resolved. If the attack hits and its damage reduces the target to 0 hit points, Raskovar drops to 1 hit point instead of 0 hit points.

Actions

Multiattack. Raskovar makes three Repeating Crossbow attacks or two War Mace attacks.

War Mace. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (2d4 + 3) bludgeoning damage, and the target is dazed until the end of their next turn.

Repeating Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d12 + 1) piercing damage, and the target's speed is reduced by 10 feet until the end of their next turn.

Reinforcements (1/Day). Raskovar takes the Dodge action, and ten **orc blitzers** appear in unoccupied spaces within 30 feet of him.

Bonus Actions

Dohma Rally (3/Day). Raskovar regains 20 hit points, and he gains resistance to bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage until the end of his next turn.

Reactions

On the House. When a creature Raskovar can see within 30 feet of him fails an ability check or misses with an attack roll, that creature can reroll the check or attack, choosing either result.

Villain Actions

Raskovar has three villain actions. He can take each action once during an encounter after an enemy's turn. He can take these actions in any order but can use only one per round.

Action 1: Close In. Each ally within 60 feet of Raskovar who can hear him can move up to their speed. After this movement, each enemy within 5 feet of at least one creature who moved must make a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened of Raskovar for 1 minute (save ends at end of turn).

Action 2: Lockdown. Each ally within 60 feet of Raskovar who can hear him can make a Strength (Athletics) check with advantage to grapple an enemy within their reach (no action required). Then Raskovar can move up to his speed.

Action 3: Do It Myself. Raskovar moves up to his speed without provoking opportunity attacks. At the end of the movement, he can make up to five War Mace attacks with advantage.

Human Brawler

CR 2 Brute

Medium Humanoid (Human), Any Alignment — 450 XP

Armor Class 14 (studded leather)
Hit Points 52 (7d8 + 21)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)

Skills Athletics +5, Intimidation +3
Senses passive Perception 10
Languages Common
Proficiency Bonus +2

Exploit Opening (3/Day). When the brawler makes an attack, they have advantage on the attack roll.

Actions

Multiattack. The brawler makes two attacks using Grab, Haymaker, or both.

Grab. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one Medium or smaller creature. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) bludgeoning damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 13). Until this grapple ends, the brawler can't grab another creature.

Haymaker. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) bludgeoning damage, or 10 (3d4 + 3) bludgeoning damage against a grappled target.

Throw. The brawler throws one Medium or smaller creature they are grappling or object they are holding up to 30 feet horizontally. If the thrown target is a creature, they fall prone after this throw. If the thrown target would enter the space of a creature or solid object that is no more than one size smaller than it, the thrown target collides with it and stops in the nearest unoccupied space, taking 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage for every 10 feet it was thrown. A Large or smaller creature hit by this thrown target must succeed on a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw or take the same amount of damage and fall prone.

Reactions

Meat Shield. When the brawler is grappling a target and is hit by a ranged attack made by another creature the brawler can see, the brawler gains a +2 bonus to AC against the triggering attack. If this bonus causes the attack to miss the brawler, it hits the grappled target instead.

Human Guard

CR 1/8 Minion

Medium Humanoid (Human), Any Alignment — 5 XP

Armor Class 16 (chain shirt, shield)
Hit Points 5
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

Skills Perception +2
Senses passive Perception 12
Languages Common
Proficiency Bonus +2

Exploit Weakness. When the guard makes or joins an attack that's made with advantage, the attack deals an extra 1 damage per guard who made or joined the attack.

Minion. If the guard takes damage from an attack or as the result of a failed saving throw, their hit points are reduced to 0. If the guard takes damage from another effect, they die if the damage equals or exceeds their hit point maximum; otherwise they take no damage.

Overwhelm. If a Medium or smaller enemy starts their turn within 5 feet of three or more guards who can see them, until the start of the enemy's next turn, the enemy's speed is reduced by 5 feet for each guard within 5 feet of them. If this reduces the enemy's walking speed to 0, they are restrained until the start of their next turn.

Actions

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

Human Brawler

Mimic

CR 2 Ambusher
450 XP

Medium Monstrosity (Shapechanger), Typically Neutral

Armor Class 11
Hit Points 65 (10d8 + 20)
Speed 15 ft., climb 15 ft.

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

Skills Deception +2, Stealth +5
Damage Immunities acid; bludgeoning damage from falling
Condition Immunities prone
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11
Languages —
Proficiency Bonus +2

False Appearance (Object Form Only). While the mimic remains motionless, they are indistinguishable from an ordinary object.

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

Actions

Pseudopod. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a Large or smaller creature, they are grappled (escape DC 13).

Gnashing Maw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage plus 3 (1d6) acid damage. If the target is grappled by the mimic, they take an extra 3 (1d6) acid damage.

Shapechanger. The mimic polymorphs into a Small, Medium, or Large object or back into their true amorphous form. Other than size, the mimic's statistics are the same in each form. Anything they are wearing or carrying isn't transformed. They revert to their true form if they die.

Envelop. While grappling a creature, the mimic uses their Shapechanger action to polymorph into an object that is the same size or bigger than the grappled creature (if the mimic isn't already in such a form). The creature is then enveloped by the mimic. An enveloped creature is no longer grappled, but they can't breathe, are blinded and restrained, have total cover against attacks and other effects outside the mimic, and take 10 (3d6) acid damage at the start of each of the mimic's turns. When the mimic moves, the enveloped creature moves with them. The mimic can envelop one creature at a time.

An enveloped creature can use their action to try to escape by making a DC 13 Strength check. On a successful check, the creature is no longer enveloped and is shunted to an unoccupied space of their choice within 5 feet of the mimic. The creature automatically escapes if the mimic uses Shapechanger or Panic Shift, becomes incapacitated, or dies.

Reaction

Panic Shift (1/Day). When the mimic takes damage, they release any grappled or enveloped creatures and then polymorph into a Small dense object with spikes, such as an iron ball or helm. While in this form, the mimic's walking and climbing speeds are doubled, they have resistance to bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from mundane attacks, they can only take the Dash, Disengage, or Shapechanger action, and a creature who touches the mimic or hits them with a melee attack while within 5 feet of them takes 10 (3d6) piercing damage. This effect ends when the mimic dies or uses their Shapechanger action to polymorph into another form.

Just the doorknob, right?
Not the door, just that one doorknob.
Little shit almost chewed my hand off
before I even knew what was happening.
But what are you gonna do?
You can't just ... stop opening doors.
Just need to expect the unexpected.
Not the most useful lesson, I realize.

The Sun,
Senior Pyrokinetic,
The Society

Mohler

CR 1/4 Controller

Small Beast, Unaligned

50 XP

Armor Class 12
Hit Points 9 (2d6 + 2)
Speed 20 ft., burrow 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
7 (–2)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	2 (–4)	12 (+1)	5 (–3)

Senses blindsight 20 ft., tremorsense 40 ft., passive Perception 11
Languages —
Proficiency Bonus +2

Actions

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

Earth Bump. As the mohler burrows under a Large or smaller creature on the ground within 5 feet of them, the mohler shifts the ground. The creature above them must succeed on a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw or be knocked prone.

Ground Grinder. The mohler burrows up to their burrowing speed. Ground within 5 feet of where the mohler burrows becomes difficult terrain.

Reactions

Zip. If the mohler fails a Dexterity saving throw while burrowing, they succeed instead.

Mystic Connection: Mohler

If you're playing a beastheart and have a mohler companion, you gain the following benefit at 9th level when you gain the beastheart's Mystic Connection feature:

Earthen Strength. As a bonus action, your limbs grow dense and swing with incredible force for 1 minute. For the duration, when you hit a creature no more than one size category larger or smaller than you with a melee weapon attack, the creature is also knocked prone. Once you use this bonus action, you can't do so again until you finish a long rest.

Mohler Companion

Companion

Small Beast, Unaligned

Armor Class 13 plus PB (natural armor)
Hit Points 7 + seven times caregiver's level (number of d8 Hit Dice equal to their caregiver's level)
Speed 20 ft., burrow 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
7 (–2)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	2 (–4)	12 (+1)	5 (–3)

Saving Throws Dex +3 plus PB, Con +2 plus PB
Skills Acrobatics +3 plus PB, Stealth +3 plus PB
Senses blindsight 20 ft., tremorsense 40 ft., passive Perception 11
Proficiency Bonus (PB) equals the caregiver's bonus

Actions

Signature Attack (Claw). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 plus PB to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1d6 plus PB slashing damage.

1st Level: Earth Bump (2 Ferocity). The mohler burrows up to their speed and chooses one Large or smaller creature they come within 5 feet of during the move. The target must succeed on a DC 10 plus PB Dexterity saving throw or be knocked prone.

3rd Level: Sinkhole (5 Ferocity). The mohler burrows up to their speed and targets a creature they can sense on the surface within 10 feet of them. The target must succeed on a DC 10 plus PB Strength saving throw or be restrained by the ground until the start of the mohler's next turn.

5th Level: Terranova (8 Ferocity). Each creature on the ground within 10 feet of the mohler must succeed on a DC 10 plus PB Strength saving throw or take 1d6 plus PB bludgeoning damage and be knocked prone. A creature who fails this saving throw by 5 or more is restrained by the ground (save ends at end of turn). A creature can use their action to free themself or another creature within their reach, ending the effect.

Reactions

Quick Pit (Recharges after a Long Rest). If the mohler's caregiver fails a Dexterity saving throw while they are within 10 feet of the mohler and the mohler isn't incapacitated or restrained, the mohler pulls the caregiver out of danger. The caregiver succeeds on the saving throw instead.

Mohler

Orc Blitzer

CR 1/2 Minion

Medium Humanoid (Orc), Any Alignment

20 XP

Armor Class 13 (studded leather)
Hit Points 7
Speed 35 ft.

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

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10
Languages Common, Orc
Proficiency Bonus +2

Gnashing Horde. If an enemy the blitzer can see starts their turn within 5 feet of three or more blitzers, the enemy takes 1 piercing damage for each blitzer within 5 feet of them.

Minion. If the blitzer takes damage from an attack or as the result of a failed saving throw, their hit points are reduced to 0. If the blitzer takes damage from another effect, they die if the damage equals or exceeds their hit point maximum; otherwise they take no damage.

Relentless Minion. When the blitzer is reduced to 0 hit points while they aren't incapacitated, they can deal 1 piercing damage to an enemy within 5 feet of them.

Actions

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

Orc Bloodrunner

CR 1/2 Skirmisher

Medium Humanoid (Orc), Any Alignment — 100 XP

Armor Class 15 (spiked shield)
Hit Points 15 (2d8 + 6)
Speed 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	16 (+3)	16 (+3)	11 (+0)	9 (–1)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Dex +5
Skills Acrobatics +5, Athletics +4
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 9
Languages Common, Orc
Proficiency Bonus +2

Relentless (1/Turn). When the bloodrunner isn't incapacitated and they are reduced to 0 hit points but not killed outright, they can make an attack against an enemy (no action required) before the hit point reduction is resolved. If the attack hits and its damage reduces the target to 0 hit points, the bloodrunner drops to 1 hit point instead of 0 hit points.

Unimpeded. The bloodrunner can occupy a prone creature's space. The first time the bloodrunner enters a prone creature's space on the bloodrunner's turn, the prone creature takes 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage. When a prone creature in the bloodrunner's space stands up, the creature enters the nearest unoccupied space of their choice.

Actions

Spiked Shield. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage. If the bloodrunner moves at least 10 feet before hitting a Large or smaller creature with this attack, the bloodrunner can choose to knock the target prone or push them up to 10 feet away.

Javelin. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

Reactions

Juke. When the bloodrunner makes a Dexterity saving throw, they can gain advantage on the save. To do so, the bloodrunner can't be prone, grappled, or restrained.

Orc Conduit

CR 1 Artillery

Medium Humanoid (Orc), Any Alignment — 200 XP

Armor Class 13 (studded leather)
Hit Points 30 (4d8 + 12)
Speed 35 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)

Skills Perception +3
Damage Resistances determined by the conduit's Affinity trait
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13
Languages Common, Orc
Proficiency Bonus +2

Affinity. The conduit has a lifelong affinity for one of the following damage types: cold, fire, or lightning. The chosen type determines the conduit's damage resistance and the damage of their Elemental Discharge and Power Burst actions.

Relentless (1/Turn). When the conduit isn't incapacitated and they are reduced to 0 hit points but not killed outright, they can make an attack against an enemy (no action required) before the hit point reduction is resolved. If the attack hits and its damage reduces the target to 0 hit points, the conduit drops to 1 hit point instead of 0 hit points.

Actions

Elemental Discharge (Cantrip). *Melee or Ranged Spell Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d12 + 3) damage of the type determined by the conduit's Affinity trait.

Power Burst (2/Day; 1st-Level Spell). The conduit unleashes explosive energy in a 15-foot cone. The ground in that area becomes difficult terrain, and each creature in that area must make a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save, a creature takes 10 (3d6) damage of the type determined by the conduit's Affinity trait, and they are pushed 10 feet away from the conduit. On a successful save, a creature takes half as much damage and isn't pushed.

Bonus Actions

Rush. The conduit takes the Dash action.

Orc Fury

CR 1/2 Brute

Medium Humanoid (Orc), Any Alignment — 100 XP

Armor Class 13 (studded leather)
Hit Points 22 (3d8 + 9)
Speed 35 ft.

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

Saving Throws Str +5
Skills Athletics +5
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10
Languages Common, Orc
Proficiency Bonus +2

Relentless (1/Turn). When the fury isn't incapacitated and they are reduced to 0 hit points but not killed outright, they can make an attack against an enemy (no action required) before the hit point reduction is resolved. If the attack hits and its damage reduces the target to 0 hit points, the fury drops to 1 hit point instead of 0 hit points.

Actions

Haymaker Greataxe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d12 + 3) slashing damage, or 12 (1d12 + 6) slashing damage if the target is prone. If the target is a Medium or smaller creature, they must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

Javelin. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage.

Bonus Actions

Healing Rally (1/Day). The fury regains 5 hit points.

The orcs are out there, and we're in here.
I checked the Chronicle for advice on sieges.
"Be on the outside," it said.
Wonderful, thanks.

Dancer, Chronicler of the Chain of Acheron, Heroes 216–231

Orc Garroter

CR 1 Ambusher

Medium Humanoid (Orc), Any Alignment — 200 XP

Armor Class 14 (studded leather)
Hit Points 30 (4d8 + 12)
Speed 35 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	9 (–1)

Saving Throws Dex +4
Skills Athletics +4, Stealth +6
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11
Languages Common, Orc
Proficiency Bonus +2

Relentless (1/Turn). When the garroter isn't incapacitated and they are reduced to 0 hit points but not killed outright, they can make an attack against an enemy (no action required) before the hit point reduction is resolved. If the attack hits and its damage reduces the target to 0 hit points, the garroter drops to 1 hit point instead of 0 hit points.

Actions

Strangle. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) bludgeoning damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 12). Until the grapple ends, the target can't speak intelligibly or cast spells with verbal components. If the attack was made with advantage, the target must make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the target falls unconscious for 1 minute (save ends at start of turn) or until they take damage. A creature can use an action to shake another creature awake who falls unconscious in this way.

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage. If the attack was made with advantage, the target takes an extra 7 (2d6) piercing damage.

Bonus Actions

Cloak (1/Day). The garroter magically turns invisible for 1 minute. Any equipment the garroter wears or carries is invisible with them. While invisible, the garroter's movements make no sound. If the garroter hits a creature with an attack, casts a spell, or takes damage, the effect ends.

Orc Godcaller

CR 4 Support

Medium Humanoid (Orc), Any Alignment — 1,100 XP

Armor Class 14 (studded leather)
Hit Points 82 (11d8 + 33)
Speed 35 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)	19 (+4)

Saving Throws Wis +3
Skills Arcana +3, Insight +3, Performance +8
Condition Immunities charmed
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11
Languages Common, Orc
Proficiency Bonus +2

Relentless (1/Turn). When the godcaller isn't incapacitated and they are reduced to 0 hit points but not killed outright, they can make an attack against an enemy (no action required) before the hit point reduction is resolved. If the attack hits and its damage reduces the target to 0 hit points, the godcaller drops to 1 hit point instead of 0 hit points.

Actions

Power Chord (1st-Level Spell). *Melee or Ranged Spell Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 30 ft., one creature who can hear the godcaller. *Hit:* 18 (4d6 + 4) thunder damage.

Cadenza. The godcaller chooses another creature within 30 feet of them. If the target can hear the godcaller, the target can use their reaction to move up to their speed and make an attack.

Song of the Gods (2nd-Level Spell). The godcaller and each ally within 30 feet of them who can hear them has advantage on attack rolls until the start of the godcaller's next turn. This effect ends early if the godcaller takes any damage.

Bonus Actions

Rallying Ostinato (1/Day). The godcaller and up to three allies within 60 feet of them who can hear them regain 20 hit points, and these creatures ignore difficult terrain for 1 minute.

Orc Rampart

CR 2 Soldier

Medium Humanoid (Orc), Any Alignment — 450 XP

Armor Class 18 (chain mail, shield)
Hit Points 42 (5d8 + 20)
Speed 35 ft.

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

Skills Athletics +6, Perception +2
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12
Languages Common, Orc
Proficiency Bonus +2

Relentless (1/Turn). When the rampart isn't incapacitated and they are reduced to 0 hit points but not killed outright, they can make an attack against an enemy (no action required) before the hit point reduction is resolved. If the attack hits and its damage reduces the target to 0 hit points, the rampart drops to 1 hit point instead of 0 hit points.

Actions

Multiattack. The rampart makes two Spear attacks. If the rampart targets the same creature with both attacks, the target has disadvantage on attack rolls against creatures other than the rampart until the start of the rampart's next turn.

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

Reactions

No! When an enemy within 5 feet of the rampart targets another creature with an attack, the attacker must target the rampart instead.

Everyone is welcome at the Hanging Tree. It's only when I find someone poking around where they don't belong that things turn violent. Care to explain why you're down here before we draw steel? I'm happy to listen after instead, but it'll be so much harder to understand you when your lips are bleeding.

Dohma Raskovar

Orc Terranova

CR 2 Controller

Medium Humanoid (Orc), Any Alignment — 450 XP

Armor Class 15 (breastplate)
Hit Points 37 (5d8 + 15)
Speed 35 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	9 (–1)	16 (+3)

Skills Athletics +4
Condition Immunities prone
Senses darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 30 ft., passive Perception 9
Languages Common, Orc
Proficiency Bonus +2

Relentless (1/Turn). When the terranova isn't incapacitated and they are reduced to 0 hit points but not killed outright, they can make an attack against an enemy (no action required) before the hit point reduction is resolved. If the attack hits and its damage reduces the target to 0 hit points, the terranova drops to 1 hit point instead of 0 hit points.

Tremorspeak. The terranova can sense anything a willing creature within 30 feet of them can sense with tremorsense or Tremorspeak.

Unhindered. The terranova ignores difficult terrain.

Actions

Earth Pillar (1st-Level Spell). *Melee or Ranged Spell Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 30 ft., one target touching the ground. *Hit:* 12 (2d8 + 3) bludgeoning damage, and the target is knocked prone.

Quake. The terranova chooses up to five creatures on the ground within 15 feet of them and stomps the ground. Each target must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

Sinkhole. The terranova chooses up to two creatures on the ground within 30 feet of them. Each target must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or be restrained. A creature can use their action to free themself or another creature within their reach, ending the effect on that creature.

Bonus Actions

Rush. The terranova takes the Dash action.

Unearth Mohlers (1/Day). The terranova stomps, and 1d3 + 1 **mohlers** pop out of the ground in unoccupied spaces within 30 feet of them. The mohlers are friendly to the terranova and act immediately after the terranova's turn on the same initiative count.

Scyza

CR 4 Brute

Gargantuan Monstrosity, Unaligned

1,100 XP

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)
Hit Points 108 (8d20 + 24)
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
21 (+5)	9 (–1)	17 (+3)	5 (–3)	11 (+0)	7 (–2)

Saving Throws Str +7, Con +5
Condition Immunities frightened
Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 10
Languages —
Proficiency Bonus +2

Siege Monster. The scyza deals double damage to objects and structures.

War Harness. While wearing a war harness, the scyza can carry up to thirty-six Medium or smaller creatures.

Actions

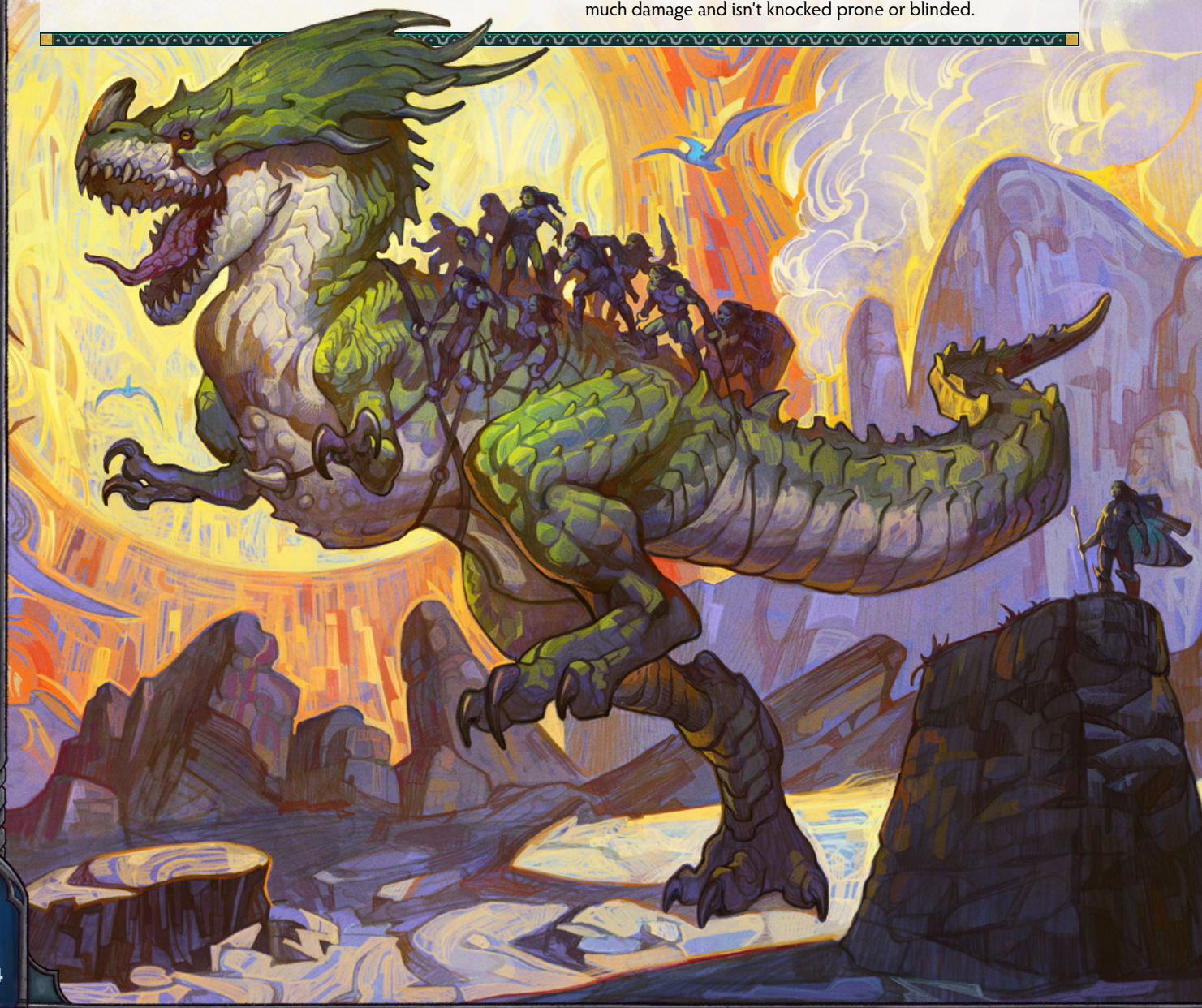
Multiattack. The scyza makes two Claw attacks.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d6 + 5) slashing damage, and the target is knocked prone.

Tail Whip. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 20 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (2d8 + 5) bludgeoning damage. If the target is on top of the scyza, the target falls off and lands prone.

Head Crest. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 23 (4d8 + 5) bludgeoning damage, and if the target is a creature who can hear, they are dazed until the end of their next turn by the crest's deep ringing.

Claw Twister (Recharge 6). The scyza claws at the ground in a flurry. Each creature of the scyza's choice within 5 feet of them must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save, a creature takes 13 (3d8) slashing damage, is knocked prone, and is blinded by a cloud of dust until the start of the scyza's next turn. On a successful save, a creature takes half as much damage and isn't knocked prone or blinded.



Shtriga Nonna's Hut

Optimized for Five 4th-Level Characters

Content Warning: Pet Violence and Cannibalism

If your group won't have fun attacking Shtriga Nonna while she's in feline form, you can change the descriptions of Feline Resilience and Feline Felicity to make her a four-legged demon instead of a cat. If you don't want cannibalism in your games, Shtriga Nonna could capture humanoids and force them to make bad deals for their freedom instead of killing and eating her victims.

Shtriga Nonna loves cats, cooking, and not much else. This ancient hag has lived high atop her snowy mountain for time beyond even the memory of most other hags. Shtriga Nonna is unique among her kind—she isn't of the forest, the night, or the sea, and the hag insists she has no need of sisters … at least, not anymore.

Rumors abound that she ate her former coven, and there's every reason to believe these stories are true. Shtriga Nonna enjoys dining on the flesh of any creature, especially if it's marinated with the fear and sadness born from making several bad deals with a hag.

Shtriga Nonna can look like anyone, so her victims fear everyone. Many swear she's a massive woman with claws of rusted iron. Others say she's a cat who steals the souls of the sleeping, and some describe her as a beautiful woman cooking tender meat pies.

The hag lives inside a mobile hut that walks through the snowy mountains on giant cat paws. This cozy shack appears inviting on the outside, especially its porch where she has tea with desperate souls who climb the mountain to make a deal. The interior of her home, which is much larger than the outside suggests, betrays her true nature. It's a cluttered, filthy place of wicked cats and cruel instruments for carving flesh.

Hut Story Hooks

You can use one of the following story hooks to integrate this lair into an adventure:

Cat Maiden. The characters encounter Radlena, a tabby cat who transforms into a halfling woman every full moon. Radlena is a victim of one of Shtriga Nonna's powerful hexes, and only the hag's death can reverse the curse.

Promise of Vengeance. A **human mercenary** named Diedre confides in the party that as children, she and her friend Valyr were kidnapped by Shtriga Nonna, but only Diedre managed to escape. Racked with guilt over abandoning her friend, Diedre asks the characters to join her in taking revenge on the hag, offering that the characters can keep any treasure in the lair.

Sweet Scent. A delicious, sweet scent has been wafting across the mountains, driving the local fauna into a frenzy and making them attack travelers. A tiefling ranger named Zerphe has tracked the scent to Shtriga Nonna's wandering hut, but he is too scared to enter. He offers the characters 1,250 gp to investigate it.

Hut Features

Unless otherwise noted, each area of Shtriga Nonna's hut has the following features:

Cursed Food. A *detect magic* spell reveals that the food and cooking ingredients in the lair radiate auras of necromancy. If a creature who doesn't live in the hut eats any of the food found within, they must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or be cursed. While cursed in this way, a creature has disadvantage on saving throws. A *cure ailment* power or a *remove curse* or *greater restoration* spell can remove the curse.

Doors. The doors in Shtriga Nonna's hut are made of rough-hewn wood. Each door has AC 15, 27 hit points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage. If a door is locked, it can be unlocked with a successful DC 15 Dexterity check using thieves' tools, or forced open with a successful DC 16 Strength check. Shtriga Nonna (see area H8) has the key to all the doors in the hut.

Fireplaces. A creature who touches a lit fireplace for the first time on a turn or starts their turn touching it takes 5 (2d4) fire damage.

High Ceilings. Rough-hewn wooden beams cross overhead at a height of 20 feet, but the ceiling's peak is 30 feet high.

Illumination. Fireplaces and low-burning lamps fill each room with dim light to the rafters. The areas above the rafters are dark.

Chimera, Trolls, and Cats

Shtriga Nonna's hut is also home to her servants and pets. A young chimera, a troll, and the troll's whelps serve as her guardians in return for the hag's special meals. These creatures attack intruders and fight to the death.

Spectral Cats. Shtriga Nonna's spectral cats are Tiny noncombatant Constructs with climbing and walking speeds of 30 feet. Each wears a collar with a name tag. Though the cats and their collars look solid, they are incorporeal—they can walk through walls and furniture, they can't be harmed, and they can communicate telepathically with Shtriga Nonna if they can see her. Unless attacked, they observe the characters. Once the characters attack the cats or move to a different area, a cat heads to Shtriga Nonna to report the intruders' actions.

Defeated Characters. If the characters are defeated in combat while in the hut, Shtriga Nonna retrieves and stabilizes any survivors, puts them in cages in the kitchen (area H8), and tosses their gear in the kitchen's debris pile.

Resting in the Hut

The characters can take a short rest in any area without incident, provided they deal with any enemies in the area. If the characters try to take a long rest, there is a 50 percent chance ten **troll whelps** find them halfway through their rest.

Entering the Hut

While stationary, entering Shtriga Nonna's hut is as simple as climbing the front steps. If the characters chase the hut while it is moving, the hut has a walking speed of 30 feet, and climbing onto the porch requires a successful DC 12 Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) check.

Shtriga Nonna's Hut Areas

The following areas are keyed to the Shtriga Nonna's Hut Map.

H1. Front Porch

The porch has a 10-foot-high ceiling and the following features:

- "This wide porch wraps around the front and sides of the hut."
- "A table with six chairs sits at one corner of the porch, and three wooden rocking chairs sit along the hut wall."
- "Four square windows dot the hut walls. A wooden door with charming scrollwork stands directly across from the front steps."
- "A sign on the door carved with flowery script and images of kittens reads, 'Be kind to the cats, or they'll fetch Mommy!'"

Bigger on the Inside. Before the characters enter the hut, it magically appears as a small one-room cottage with a large porch. On the map, areas H1 and H2—the only areas visible from outside the hut—are surrounded by a red box. Once a character enters the front room (area H2) and finds the hidden doors, they realize the hut is far bigger inside.

Windows. The 3-foot-square windows (AC 11, 4 hit points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage) are made of thick, wavy glass that distorts images seen through it, imposing disadvantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks made to see into the front room (area H2). The windows don't open.

H2. Front Room

The door from the front porch (area H1) is locked (see "Hut Features"). The front room has the following features:

- "The cozy, warm room smells of hearty stew, fresh-baked bread, and woodsmoke."
- "Above a crackling fireplace, a pot of stew bubbles and a long ladle rests in it."
- "The room is furnished with a table, some chairs, a tidy bed with a straw mattress, and a shelf holding a cookbook and a few jars."
- (**Secret**) A spectral cat hides beneath the bed.
- (**Secret**) Two doors flank the fireplace on the north wall, hidden by illusions.

Stew Pot. The pot over the fire is filled with a meat stew (see "Cursed Food" in the "Hut Features" section). A character who examines the stew and succeeds on a DC 15 Wisdom (Medicine) check identifies pieces of Humanoids in the stew.

Bookshelf. The bookshelf holds several jars of spices (see "Cursed Food" in the "Hut Features" section) and a cookbook filled with common local recipes titled *Cozy Meals*.

Spectral Cat. A character who looks under the bed or succeeds on a DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) check notices the spectral cat Briar Tom, a long-haired tabby with piercing green eyes. Briar Tom doesn't respond to any attempt to coax him from under the bed, but if a character calls him sweet names or tries to pet him, the cat doesn't report the intruders to Shtriga Nonna.

Hidden Doors. A character who succeeds on a DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) check finds the doors despite the illusion. If either door is opened, the illusion hiding both doors ends.

If the characters fail to see through the illusion, eight **troll whelps** enter from the dining room (area H3) 5 minutes after the characters enter this room. The trolls are hungry for stew but won't turn down an adventurer appetizer.

Treasure. The pot over the fire is *Shtriga Nonna's pot of plenty* (see "Shtriga Nonna's Hoard").

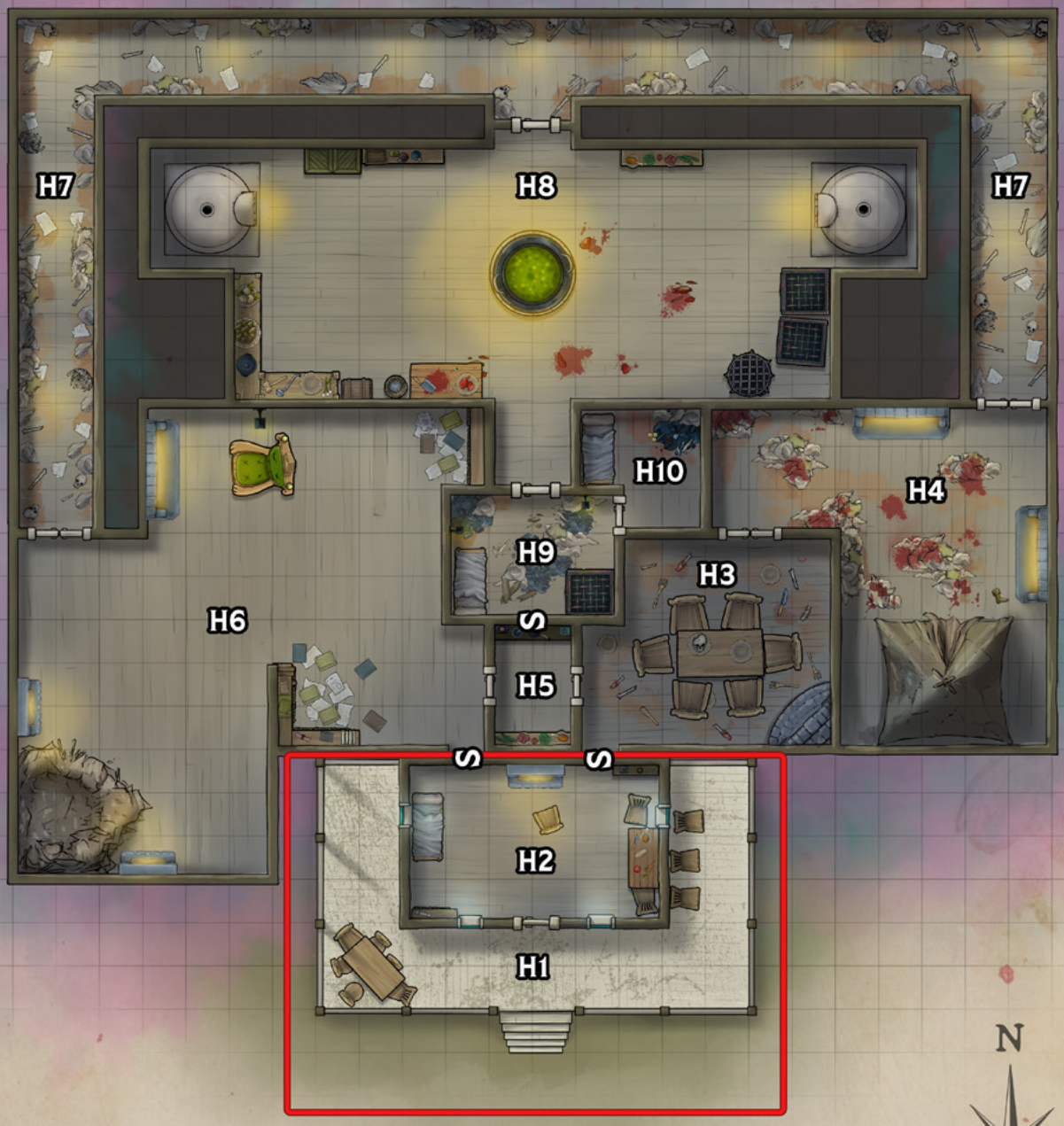
H3. Dining Room

The dining room is in darkness. It has the following features:

- "Bones, dirty dishes, and filthy utensils cover the floor and table of this filthy dining room."
- "A cold, ash-filled fireplace stands in the room's southeast corner."

Bones. A character who succeeds on a DC 12 Intelligence (Nature) or Wisdom (Medicine) check recognizes the bones are from Humanoids.

Shtriga Nonna's Hut Map



H4. Troll Room

This room is in darkness. It has the following features:

- "Logs sit unlit in two large, cold fireplaces."
- "Piles of smelly, bloodstained clothing dot the room."
- "At the south end of the room, snoring echoes from a 15-foot-tall tent made of tattered fabric that stretches nearly wall to wall."
- (**Secret**) A troll and his troll whelps sleep in the tent.

Trolls. Gorfus (a **troll**) and four **troll whelps** are asleep in the tent when the characters enter the room. Characters trying to search or sneak across the room must succeed on a DC 13 group Dexterity (Stealth) check or wake the trolls. If a character opens the tent to look inside, they must succeed on a DC 17 Dexterity (Stealth) check or wake the trolls.

Fireplaces. Shtriga Nonna keeps the fireplaces stocked with wood to intimidate the trolls in this room, but she only lights them if they disobey her. A creature with flint and steel, a lit candle, a spell that deals fire damage, or another way to create fire can use an action to light a fireplace. While the fire is burning, a creature can reach into the fireplace and grab a log to use as a torch (no action required).

Treasure. A character who spends 1 minute searching through the clothing piles finds 30 cp, 17 sp, 8 gp, and a shield, breastplate, and gladius each sized for a Small Humanoid and bearing the image of a green-scaled dragon. The equipment belongs to Kira, the kobold prisoner in the kitchen (area H8).

H5. Pantry

The pantry has the following features:

- "This cramped pantry smells of mildew and spices."
- "Tall shelves hold jars, bottles, and boxes that spill spices and ingredients onto the floor."
- "A fluffy gray cat sleeps atop the shelf on the south wall."
- (**Secret**) A door to Shtriga Nonna's bedroom (area H9) is hidden behind a shelf.

Shelves. The shelves hold spices, herbs, wines, and salts for cooking (see "Cursed Food" in the "Hut Features" section).

Spectral Cat. Rotten Peaches, the cat atop the shelf, is asleep. Characters who move through the area or search the shelves must succeed on a DC 14 group Dexterity (Stealth) check or wake her.

Hidden Door. A character who succeeds on a DC 20 Intelligence (Investigation) check notices scratch marks on the floor where the bookshelf hiding the secret door has been moved before. Moving the shelf reveals the door, but also wakes Rotten Peaches.

Treasure. A character who takes 10 minutes to search the shelves finds a *potion of healing*.

H6. Sitting Room

The sitting room has the following features:

- "The smell of woodsmoke and animal musk fills this room, and books on cluttered shelves spill out onto the floor."
- "Three fireplaces burn low. In front of the largest, an enormous overstuffed chair holds a black cat looking at the fire and mewling."
- "Debris in one corner of the room forms a wide, flat pile."
- (**Secret**) Tearmonger, a young chimera, lurks in the rafters.

Books. A creature who looks through the books discovers several journals, each by different people. In addition to personal details about each author's life, most feature entries toward the end about Nonna, a kind woman who promised to make their problems go away over a homecooked meal.

Spectral Cat. The spectral cat, Putrid Paul, mewls at the fireplace because he has batted the tibia bone he was playing with into the flames. A character who looks at the fireplace and succeeds on a DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check notices the bone, and a character who succeeds on a DC 12 Intelligence (Nature) or Wisdom (Medicine) check can tell it belonged to a human. If Putrid Paul is given this bone or any other, he stops mewling and doesn't report the characters to Shtriga Nonna.

Debris Pile. The debris pile is Tearmonger's nest, made from the discarded belongings of Shtriga Nonna's

Tearmonger

victims. A character who looks through the nest finds gold-and-white fur and a few red scales. A character who succeeds on a DC 14 Intelligence (Nature) check knows the fur and scales belong to a chimera.

Tearmonger. Tearmonger, a **chimera**, hides in the rafters above the characters. A character who succeeds on a DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check notices Tearmonger, prompting her to attack. Otherwise, the chimera watches until a character looks through the books, investigates her nest, or opens the door to another area before attacking, and the characters are surprised during the first round of combat. Tearmonger starts combat by using Roar or Dragon's Eruption to attack from range before moving in for the kill.

Treasure. A creature who spends 10 minutes searching the room discovers a *spell scroll* of *remove curse* among the books and a tiny paper packet filled with *dust of disappearance* wedged between the chair's cushions.

H7. Hallway

The hallway has a 10-foot-high ceiling and the following features:

- "A long hall extends before you, its floor made of rotting boards. Skulls, loose sheets of paper, filthy rags, and other garbage are strewed over the floor."
- "Despite the trash, the savory scent of meat hangs in the air. Something is cooking nearby."
- (**Secret**) The ceiling in this room can rain seasonings onto intruders.

Creaky Floorboards. The hallway has creaky wooden floorboards, which the characters notice immediately after stepping onto them. Characters who want to avoid notice while approaching the kitchen (area H8) must succeed on a DC 13 group Dexterity (Stealth) check or alert Shtriga Nonna to their presence.

Seasoned Snow. A character who succeeds on a DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check notices the numerous grains of salt and pepper among the trash. A *detect magic* spell reveals that the ceiling radiates an aura of conjuration magic.

When a creature who doesn't live in the hut reaches a bend in the hall, the ceiling begins to snow salt and pepper, seasoning intruders for Shtriga Nonna. The hall snows seasonings for 1 minute, then can't snow seasoning for another 24 hours. For the duration, a creature who starts their turn in the hall or enters it for the first time on a turn must make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, a creature is blinded for 1 minute, and if the creature doesn't have all their hit points, they take 2 (1d4) acid damage. A creature can use an action to wash a blinded creature's eyes with water, ending the effect.

H8. Kitchen

Shtriga Nonna's kitchen has the following features:

- "Two 15-foot-tall stone ovens dominate the northeast and northwest corners of the room, radiating heat in shimmering waves."
- "Three iron cages are clustered in the southeast corner of the room. A kobold huddles on the floor of the middle cage."
- "Tall shelves stand against the walls, filled with jars and bottles."
- "An oversized cauldron sits above a fire in the center of the room, bubbling and steaming."
- "An old woman stirs the large pot, her face wrinkled like a prune and her thin hair pulled into a wispy bun atop her head."

Shtriga Nonna. If **Shtriga Nonna** heard the characters coming along the hallway (area H7) or one of her spectral cats warned her about them, she turns to greet the characters as they enter. Otherwise, she is absorbed in preparing her stew and doesn't notice the characters right away, giving them a chance to surprise her.

If the characters don't attack the hag right away, she smiles when she notices them and offers them a deal:

Lair Actions

When fighting inside her lair, Shtriga Nonna can take lair actions. On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), she can take one lair action to cause one of the following effects; Shtriga Nonna can't use the same lair action two rounds in a row:

Fatten You Up. Shtriga Nonna chooses a point on the ground she can see within 60 feet of her. A 20-foot-square feast of pasta, gingerbread, and roast goose centered on that point appears on the ground until the end of initiative count 20 on the next round. Each creature in that area when the feast appears must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or be dazed by the bounty for the duration. The feast is difficult terrain for all creatures except Shtriga Nonna.

Kitties of Despair. Illusory cats hiss at three enemies Shtriga Nonna can see within 60 feet of her. Each target must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or their speed is halved and they can't regain hit points until the end of initiative count 20 on the next round.

Sugar and Spice. Magical herbs and spices rain down in a 20-foot-radius sphere at a point Shtriga Nonna can see within 120 feet of her. Each creature in that area must succeed on a DC 15 Charisma saving throw or have disadvantage on Constitution and Wisdom saving throws until the end of initiative count 20 on the next round.

each time they bring her a live Humanoid to eat, she'll give them a gift from her hoard (see "Shtriga Nonna's Hoard"). At your discretion, Shtriga Nonna could offer another deal, tempting the characters to bring her food in exchange for something very important to them. If the characters refuse, she attacks, intent on making them her next meal.

Shtriga Nonna fights to the death without seeking reinforcements, confident her power far surpasses the characters' might.

Cages. Each iron cage is 10 feet tall and has AC 19, 27 hit points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage. The cages are locked and can be unlocked with a successful DC 16 Dexterity check using thieves' tools, or forced open with a successful DC 20 Strength check. Shtriga Nonna holds the key to each cage.

Kira. One cage holds Kira, a **kobold decanus**. Her equipment is in the troll room (area H4). If the characters free Kira and either return her equipment to her or succeed on a DC 15 Charisma (Intimidation or Persuasion) check, she battles Shtriga Nonna with them. Otherwise, if the characters release the kobold, she flees the hut.

Cauldron. The Medium cauldron bubbles with onions, herbs, and spices as Shtriga Nonna prepares to cook Kira in a stew. A creature who touches the cauldron or fire for the first time on a turn, or who starts their turn touching it, takes 2 (1d4) fire damage.

Ovens. Each oven has a 5-foot-square opening. A creature who touches or enters an oven for the first time on a turn or starts their turn there takes 7 (2d6) fire damage.

Shtriga Nonna

Shelves. These shelves are filled with spices and ingredients for Shtriga Nonna's meals (see "Cursed Food" in the "Hut Features" section).

Treasure. Shtriga Nonna carries a ring of keys. The keys unlock the cages and doors in the hut.

H9. Bedroom

The door from the kitchen (area H8) is locked (see "Hut Features"). Shtriga Nonna's bedroom is in darkness. It has the following features:

- "A mixture of mildew, grease, and rot permeates the air of this filthy, cluttered room with garbage all over the floor."
- "Rolling on her back, a fluffy white cat lounges on an unmade bed in the corner of the room."
- "An empty iron cage stands across from the bed."

Bed. The bed holds a plush, comfortable mattress, a feather pillow, and thick, luxurious blankets, though all the bedding is stained with grease and bits of food, as if Shtriga Nonna eats meals here with little care for the mess.

Spectral Cat. Thumbscrews the cat rests on the bed and hisses at any creature who comes into the room. A character who succeeds on a DC 12 Wisdom (Animal Handling or Insight) check can tell Thumbscrews just wants to be left alone. If a character tries to touch Thumbscrews or the bed, she yowls and later reports them to Shtriga Nonna. If they leave Thumbscrews alone, she doesn't report their movements to Shtriga Nonna.

Cage. This empty iron cage stands 10 feet tall and is unlocked. Shtriga Nonna (see area H8) holds the key to it.

H10. Treasure Room

The treasure room—formerly a guest room—has the following features:

- "Piles of stinking garbage and an old straw mattress litter the floor of this room."
- "Amid the trash, something glints. Many somethings! There is treasure here."

Treasure. The objects on the floor are Shtriga Nonna's hoard. See "Shtriga Nonna's Hoard" for more information.

Shtriga Nonna's Hoard

Shtriga Nonna's hoard is piled in the corner of an old guest room (area H10). The hoard contains items taken from her victims that she thought looked particularly interesting, along with a few of her personal belongings. Additionally, the front room (area H2) contains *Shtriga Nonna's pot of plenty* (see below).

The hoard contains the following items:

- *Broom of flying*
- Vial of *oil of slipperiness*
- *Potion of greater healing*
- Treasure rat in a wire cage (see below)
- Backpack containing a set of traveler's clothes, a crowbar, a hammer, 7 pitons, a bedroll, 3 days' rations, and a set of jeweler's tools
- Longbow
- Quiver with 40 arrows
- Sparkling purple and green stone that bards, sorcerers, warlocks, and wizards can use as a spellcasting focus (worth 10 gp)
- 3 minuscule sapphires (worth 25 gp each)
- 3 minuscule emeralds (worth 30 gp each)
- 3 minuscule diamonds (worth 50 gp each)
- 3 gold bars (worth 75 gp each)
- Delicate platinum bracelet set with three diamonds (worth 400 gp)
- 132 cp, 57 sp, and 21 gp

Shtriga Nonna's Pot of Plenty

Wondrous Item, Uncommon

This black iron pot weighs only 2 pounds. As an action, you can speak one of the following command phrases to activate its effect:

Boil, Boil, Until You Spoil. The cauldron fills with a hearty stew. It creates enough stew to feed fifteen Humanoids. The food is tasty and seasoned well, and spoils if uneaten after 24 hours.

Bubble, Bubble, Toil and Trouble. The cauldron fills with stew, as if you said "Boil, boil, until you spoil," but the stew is poisoned. A creature who consumes the stew must succeed on a DC 16 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 24 hours.

Once the pot has been used in either of these ways, the pot can't be used again until the next dusk.

Treasure Rat

When you open the door to this white-furred, red-eyed rat's cage, they point their nose in the direction of the nearest magic item, if any, within 30 feet of them that isn't being worn or carried by another creature. They continue pointing their nose at that item for 1 minute or until you shut the cage door. After pointing at a magic item, the rat refuses to do so again until they consume a piece of cheese worth at least 10 gp.

Treasure Rat

Hut Stat Blocks

The following stat blocks appear in the lair.

Chimera

CR 6 Skirmisher

Large Monstrosity, Typically Neutral — 2,300 XP

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)
Hit Points 119 (14d10 + 42)
Speed 30 ft., fly 60 ft.

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

Skills Athletics +7, Perception +5
Condition Immunities frightened
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15
Languages understands any one language but can't speak
Proficiency Bonus +3

Volant. When the chimera reduces a creature to 0 hit points, the chimera can move up to their speed toward an enemy they can see.

Actions

Multiattack. The chimera makes three Bite attacks. They can replace one attack with a Lion's Toss attack or a use of Dragon's Eruption, if available.

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

Lion's Toss. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (2d4 + 4) piercing damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 15 Strength saving throw or be moved up to 20 feet in any direction.

Dragon's Eruption (Recharge 6). The chimera spits a volcanic explosion at a point they can see within 120 feet of them. Each creature in a 10-foot-radius sphere centered on that point must make a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw, taking 27 (6d8) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Bonus Actions

Roar. Each enemy who can hear the chimera and is within 60 feet of them must succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened of the chimera for 1 minute (save ends at end of turn). If a creature succeeds on a saving throw against this effect or if the effect ends for them, the creature is immune to the chimera's Roar for the next 24 hours.

Reactions

Ram's Defiance. When a creature within 30 feet of the chimera misses them with an attack, the chimera can move up to half their speed in a straight line toward the creature. If the chimera ends this movement within 5 feet of the creature, the creature must succeed on a DC 15 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

Human Mercenary

Retainer

Medium Humanoid (Human), Any Alignment

Armor Class 15 (medium armor)
Hit Points Nine times their level (number of d12 Hit Dice equal to their level)
Speed 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws +PB to all
Skills Athletics +3 plus PB, Medicine +0 plus PB, Perception +0 plus PB
Senses passive Perception 10 plus PB
Languages Common
Proficiency Bonus (PB) equals the mentor's bonus

Signature Attack (Halberd). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 plus PB to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1d10 plus PB slashing damage. Beginning at 7th level, the mercenary can make this attack twice, instead of once, when they take the Attack action on their turn.

Features

3rd Level: Battlefield Medicine (3/Day). As an action, the mercenary restores PBd8 hit points to a creature they can see within 5 feet of them.

5th Level: Exploit Opening (3/Day). The mercenary takes the Attack action, making each attack with advantage and dealing an extra PBd4 slashing damage on a hit.

7th Level: Halberd Master (3/Day). When a creature enters a space within the mercenary's reach, the mercenary uses a reaction to make a signature attack with advantage against that creature. If this attack hits, it deals an extra PBd6 slashing damage.

Honestly, it is a lot of work. Their hide is tough, they have so little marbling, and there's not a lot of meat at all once you get all those scales off. But if you prepare enough of them then make a stew and let it simmer for hours, you'll kick yourself for having not tried kobold sooner, my loves.

Shtriga Nonna

Kobold Decanus

Retainer

Small Humanoid (Kobold), Any Alignment

Armor Class 15 (medium armor; includes shield)
Hit Points Eight times their level (number of d10 Hit Dice equal to their level)
Speed 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws +PB to all
Skills Athletics +3 plus PB, History +1 plus PB, Perception +0 plus PB
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10 plus PB
Languages Common, Draconic
Proficiency Bonus (PB) equals the mentor's bonus

Signature Attack (Gladius). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 plus PB to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1d8 plus PB piercing damage. Beginning at 7th level, the decanus can make this attack twice, instead of once, when they take the Attack action on their turn.

Features

3rd Level: Reinforce (3/Day). When the decanus sees an ally within 30 feet of them being targeted by an attack, the decanus can use a reaction to move up to their speed toward the target. If the decanus ends their movement within 5 feet of the target, the target gains a +PB bonus to their AC until the beginning of the decanus's next turn, including against the triggering attack.

5th Level: Shield Bash (3/Day). The decanus attempts to topple a Medium or smaller creature within 5 feet of them. The target must succeed on a DC 10 plus PB Strength saving throw or be knocked prone. Succeed or fail, the decanus then makes two signature attacks against any creature within reach.

7th Level: One-Kobold Army (1/Day). The decanus moves up to their speed, then makes a number of signature attacks equal to the number of enemies within 5 feet of them (minimum of three attacks). Each enemy within range must be attacked at least once. On a hit, the target must succeed on a DC 10 plus PB Charisma saving throw or be frightened of the decanus for 1 minute (save ends at end of turn).

Shtriga Nonna

CR 6 Solo
Medium Fey, Neutral Evil
2,300 XP

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)
Hit Points 119 (14d8 + 56)
Speed 30 ft., fly 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws Wis +5
Skills Deception +7, Perception +5, Stealth +6, Survival +5
Damage Resistances thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from mundane attacks
Damage Immunities cold, fire
Condition Immunities charmed, frightened
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15
Languages Common, Giant, Infernal, Sylvan
Proficiency Bonus +3

Feline Resilience (3/Day). When Shtriga Nonna fails a saving throw, she can immediately turn into a cat of her size (Medium in her normal form, Large while under the effect of Grow) and succeed instead. While in cat form, Shtriga Nonna retains her game statistics and ability to speak, except she can't cast spells or use Soul Steal. She reverts to her previous form at the end of her next turn.

Supernatural Resistance. Shtriga Nonna has advantage on saving throws against powers, spells, and other supernatural effects.

Actions

Multiattack. Shtriga Nonna makes two Corrosive Claw attacks. She can replace one attack with a use of Soul Steal, if available.

Corrosive Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft. (10 ft. with Grow), one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) slashing damage, or 14 (3d6 + 4) slashing damage while under the effect of Grow. If the target is wearing mundane metal armor, they must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity throw or their armor takes a permanent and cumulative –1 penalty to the AC it offers. If the armor is reduced to an AC of 10, it is destroyed.

Soul Steal (Recharge 5–6). Shtriga Nonna inhales deeply in a 30-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, taking 16 (3d10) necrotic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. Shtriga Nonna regains 10 hit points for each creature who fails this saving throw.

Bonus Actions

Grow (2/Day; 3rd-Level Spell). For 1 minute, Shtriga Nonna magically increases in size, along with anything she is wearing or carrying. While enlarged, she is Large, her reach becomes 10 feet, she deals an extra 3 (1d6) damage on Strength-based weapon attacks (included in the attacks), and she makes Strength checks and Strength saving throws with advantage. If Shtriga Nonna lacks the room to become Large, she attains the maximum size possible in the space available.

Gobble You Up. Shtriga Nonna feeds on the body of an unconscious creature within 5 feet of her. The target takes 10 (3d6) piercing damage, and Shtriga Nonna recharges her Soul Steal action.

Reactions

Turned Upside Down. When a creature hits Shtriga Nonna with a melee attack, she magically reverses gravity around her. Each creature within 5 feet of her must succeed on a DC 15 Strength saving throw or rise vertically 10 feet into the air. A creature levitating in this way remains suspended until the end of their next turn, then falls unless they have an ability that keeps them aloft.

Villain Actions

Shtriga Nonna has three villain actions. She can take each action once during an encounter after an enemy's turn. She can take these actions in any order but can use only one per round.

Action 1: Snackies for Sweeties. The air within 30 feet of Shtriga Nonna magically fills with the scent of rotten food. Each other creature in that area must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or be poisoned for 1 minute (save ends at end of turn). Creatures are affected even if they hold their breath or don't need to breathe.

Action 2: Feline Felicity. Shtriga Nonna grows four cat legs in a burst of magical energy. Each creature within 5 feet of her must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save, a creature takes 10 (4d4) force damage and is pushed 10 feet away from her. On a successful save, a creature takes half as much damage and isn't pushed. Shtriga Nonna can then move up to twice her speed, after which the extra cat legs disappear.

Action 3: Open the Oven. Shtriga Nonna opens a portal to her massive oven in the palms of her hands, creating a blast of heat and noise in a 30-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw, taking 13 (3d8) fire damage plus 13 (3d8) thunder damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Utility Spells

In addition to any other spells in this stat block, Shtriga Nonna can cast the following spells, using Charisma as the spellcasting ability (spell save DC 15):

At will: *alter self*[^], *detect thoughts*[^], *thaumaturgy*[^]
3/day each: *fabricate*[+], *legend lore*[+]
1/day: *scrying*[+]

Troll

CR 5 Brute

Large Giant, Typically Chaotic Evil — 1,800 XP

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)
Hit Points 94 (9d10 + 45)
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	13 (+1)	20 (+5)	7 (–2)	9 (–1)	7 (–2)

Saving Throws Con +8
Skills Athletics +7, Perception +5
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15
Languages Giant
Proficiency Bonus +3

Relentless Hunger. When the troll is reduced to 0 hit points by any damage other than acid or fire damage, they don't die or fall unconscious, and can continue moving and taking actions as usual. The troll only dies if they end their turn with 0 hit points, if acid or fire damage reduces them to 0 hit points, or if they take acid or fire damage while they have 0 hit points.

Sluggish. For 1 hour after sleep or another period of unconsciousness, the troll's speed is halved and they can't use Multiattack.

Actions

Multiattack. The troll makes one Bite attack and two Claw attacks.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 14 (3d6 + 4) piercing damage. If the target is not a Construct, an Elemental, or a Plant, the troll regains hit points equal to the damage dealt. If this attack reduces the target to 0 hit points, the troll regains twice as many hit points as they otherwise would with this attack.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) slashing damage.

Crash Through. The troll moves up to their speed in a straight line, smashing through mundane obstacles in their path. The troll can enter the spaces of Large or smaller creatures during this movement, forcing those creatures to make a DC 15 Strength saving throw. On a failed save, a creature takes 14 (4d6) bludgeoning damage and falls prone. On a successful save, a creature takes half as much damage and doesn't fall prone.

During this move, mundane objects that aren't worn or carried by a creature take 14 (4d6) damage when the troll enters their space. If the troll moves into the space of a Large or larger object and this damage doesn't destroy it, the troll's movement stops and they are stunned until the end of their next turn.

Reactions

Spiteful Retort. When the troll is reduced to 0 hit points and doesn't die, they can make a Bite attack against a creature within 5 feet of them.

Troll Whelp

CR 5 Minion

Medium Giant, Typically Chaotic Evil — 225 XP

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)
Hit Points 12
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	13 (+1)	20 (+5)	7 (–2)	9 (–1)	7 (–2)

Saving Throws Con +8
Skills Athletics +7, Perception +2
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12
Languages Giant
Proficiency Bonus +3

Minion. If the whelp takes damage from an attack or as the result of a failed saving throw, their hit points are reduced to 0. If the whelp takes damage from another effect, they die if the damage equals or exceeds their hit point maximum; otherwise they take no damage.

Relentless Hunger. When the whelp is reduced to 0 hit points by any damage other than acid or fire damage, they don't die or fall unconscious, and can continue moving and taking actions as usual. The whelp only dies if they end their turn with 0 hit points, if acid or fire damage reduces them to 0 hit points, or if they take acid or fire damage while they have 0 hit points.

Ripping Claws. Spaces within reach of one or more whelps are difficult terrain for Medium or smaller enemies. When an enemy leaves the reach of one or more whelps who can see them, the enemy takes 2 slashing damage.

Actions

Bite (Group Attack). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 piercing damage, and if the target is not a Construct, an Elemental, or a Plant, each whelp who joined this attack regains all lost hit points.

Trolls do make the most delightful lackeys. My beauties require so little maintenance. Their wounds get better without any care from me, and the trollies work for food! Oh, they're not fussy when it comes to payment–as long as it's meat, dearies. If you're really clever, you can carve off a piece of one troll to feed another and save the rarer meats for yourself.

Shtriga Nonna

Burnock Mill

Optimized for Five 5th-Level Characters

Even as a young adventurer, Wigar Uthrak was known for his derring-do, formidable swordplay, and cutthroat leadership. He soon gathered a team of like-minded scoundrels, rising from bandit chief to mercenary captain. After winning the favor of a monarch, he was titled baron.

However, Baron Uthrak gambled poorly when he backed the monarch's younger brother in a failed rebellion. Stripped of his lands, the exiled baron now abides in the wild with his crew of miscreants, knavish ex-knights, and wielders of forbidden magic.

Uthrak and his crew lurk along a caravan road, robbing travelers under the pretense of a "bridge toll." His current base of operations is an abandoned water mill, but he doesn't intend to abide in this backwater forever. Once he gathers enough treasure and mercenaries, he'll reclaim his lands.

Mill Story Hooks

You can use one of the following story hooks to integrate this lair into an adventure:

Duelist's Honor. The characters meet Lady Vigue, a human noble who was defeated and humiliated by Baron Uthrak in a rigged duel before the baron's exile. Vigue offers the characters a *+1 shield* as a reward for infiltrating Burnock Mill and recovering her stolen sword from Uthrak's hoard (area U7).

Rising Rebellion. Duke Rodrik, the human ruler of lands where Baron Uthrak once led a rebellion, offers the characters 2,000 gp to infiltrate Burnock Mill and capture or kill Uthrak before the baron can incite another uprising.

Toll Concerns. Merchants and caravans have complained to local authorities about the exorbitant bridge toll demanded by Baron Uthrak and his crew. Countess Irna, a human, offers a 2,000 gp reward to the characters if they can stop these unauthorized "tolls."

Mill Features

Areas U5, U6, and U7 comprise the interior of Burnock Mill. These areas have the following features:

Ceilings. The mill's ceilings are 10 feet high.

Illumination. During the day, bright sunlight fills the mill's second floor (area U6) and third floor (area U7). The mill's first floor (area U5) has no windows and is dimly lit by lanterns.

Machinery. Toothed shafts and large wooden gears cluster at the center of the mill's first floor (area U5) and second floor (area U6). If the water wheel is turning, the shafts and gears spin. A creature pushed into the spinning machinery must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or be restrained by the machinery. A creature restrained in this way takes 10 (3d6) bludgeoning damage at the start of each of their turns as long as the machinery is spinning. As an action, a creature can make a DC 13 Strength check, freeing themself or another creature within their reach on a success. The machinery on each floor has AC 15, 40 hit points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage. Destroying the machinery on one floor stops it on all floors.

Trapdoors. Heavy trapdoors connect each floor of the mill. Opening a trapdoor requires an action. The trapdoors muffle sound, and creatures on an enclosed floor can't hear noise made on others.

Uthrak's Henchmen

Unless otherwise noted, named NPCs are Baron Uthrak's officers. They are loyal to him and fight to the death. Interrogating them yields no information. If no officers are nearby to command the baron's other forces, they surrender or flee when they are clearly losing. Fleeing henchmen try to reach the mill or open the sluice gate (see area U2) to alert Baron Uthrak (see "Alerting the Mill").

Captured Henchmen. A captured or cornered henchman who isn't an officer offers any knowledge or items they can to save their own life. When questioned, they can provide any of the following pieces of information:

- A wicked creature lives in the mill pond (area U2) and tried to drown a bandit who got too close.
- Baron Uthrak bullies a bandit named Dogface (see area U6) for being soft and showing mercy to the travelers they rob.
- Gray Walter (see area U1) says the millstone at the top of the mill (area U7) is magic, but he hasn't told Baron Uthrak yet.
- Brother John (see area U5) keeps winning money in sparring matches against other bandits. Some say he cheats!

Defeated Characters. If Baron Uthrak's forces defeat the characters, the henchmen disarm them and take them to meet the baron in area U7. The baron searches the captive characters, politely confiscates their weapons and half their coin, then frees them.

New Recruits. A character who approaches one of Uthrak's officers while the mill isn't on alert (see "Alerting the Mill") and asks to join the bandits can convince the officer with a successful DC 17 Charisma (Deception or Persuasion) check. If convinced, the officer escorts the party to Baron Uthrak on the mill's third floor (area U7). Before allowing the characters to join his forces, the baron tests their loyalty with two requests: that they give him a tribute worth at least 500 gp, and that they seize and bring back the carts of a merchant caravan.

Resting in the Mill

Provided the characters first deal with any enemies in that area, they can safely take short rests in areas U1 and U2. Otherwise, if the characters attempt to rest, there is an 80 percent chance two **human knaves** and one **human trickshot** interrupt them halfway through their rest.

Entering the Mill

Truss Bridge (area U1) can be approached from either the north or south on the main road. If the characters search for another crossing, they find the mill pond (area U2). Burnock Mill is visible from both areas, but the building's limited windows prevent the inhabitants from seeing either area.

The characters can enter the mill through the door or window near the water wheel (area U3). A character who can climb or fly can enter through the crane bay or the roof near the mill's top floor (area U7). A creature without a climbing speed or climbing equipment can climb the mill's outside wall with a successful DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check.

Alerting the Mill

Under normal circumstances, the inhabitants of the mill aren't particularly attentive. However, if an enemy escapes to warn Baron Uthrak of intruders or if someone activates the machinery inside the mill, the inhabitants go on high alert.

While the mill is on alert, Barrelhouse Jill (a **human scoundrel**) and six **human guards** exit the mill's first floor (area U5) and patrol clockwise around the outside of the mill. Baron Uthrak sends the two **human trickshots** on the third floor (area U7) to the roof to fire crossbows at strangers within 100 feet of the mill. While on the steeply slanted roof, the trickshots have half cover from attacks on the ground. A **human raider** readies the loading crane to attack creatures in the crane loading zone (area U4).

Burnock Mill Areas

The following areas are keyed to the Burnock Mill Map.

U1. Truss Bridge

This bridge over the Burnock River has the following features:

- "A sturdy plank bridge is roofed by a framework of wooden beams."
- "Five humans share a meal on the roof, legs dangling."

Toll Bandits. Flash Maggie (a **human brawler** with 77 hit points) guards this bridge alongside Gray Walter (a **human storm wizard**) and Walter's sons (three **human apprentice mages**). When the characters approach, Flash Maggie drops down to the bridge and demands a toll of half their coin. She sarcastically refers to herself as "your humble servant" and asks "your eminences" to "make a donation." If the characters refuse to pay or decide to turn back, the bandits attack.

In combat, Maggie grabs lightly armored enemies, uses them to block incoming attacks, then throws them off the bridge. Gray Walter and his sons remain on the scaffolding 10 feet above the bridge, raining down magical attacks while Walter uses the *gust of wind* spell to push enemies off the bridge.

If defeat seems inevitable, one of the bandits gestures toward the mill and declares, "You may have beaten us, but Baron Uthrak will have his revenge! No one crosses the baron and lives."

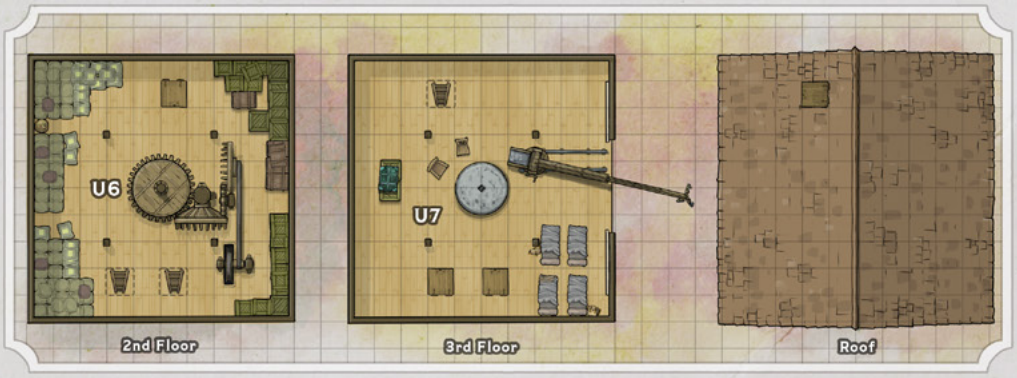
Bridge Beams. Sturdy hooks stick out of the beams on the bridge, allowing a creature to climb the beams without making an ability check.

River. A fast-flowing, 10-foot-deep river runs under the bridge. A creature without a swimming speed who starts their turn in the river must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or be moved 5 feet west.

Treasure. Flash Maggie carries 120 gp and receipts, signed by Baron Uthrak, detailing 600 gp of "tolls" paid over the past month.

Human Knave

Burnock Mill Map



U2. Mill Pond

This pond has the following features:

- "The still, circular pond is blocked on its south side by a wooden sluice gate. On the other side of the gate lies a dry channel."
- (**Secret**) Salty Anne, a **sea hag apprentice**, lurks at the bottom of the pond.

Pond and Sluice Gate. The pond is 20 feet deep, and the currently dry channel is 5 feet deep. The sluice gate is a square slab of wood that blocks water from flowing down the channel toward the mill and powering its water wheel. The sluice gate can be operated by pulling on a rope that lifts the wooden slab, sending water racing down the channel. The rope can be tied off to keep the sluice open. Two rounds after the gate is opened, the water wheel begins to turn and the mill's machinery springs to life (see "Alerting the Mill").

Salty Anne. Salty Anne, a **sea hag apprentice**, has lived in the river for decades. Apprenticed to a sea hag in her youth after her parents made a deal for wealth, Salty Anne was never truly evil, so her disgusted mistress exiled her.

The sea hag apprentice hates Baron Uthrak and his crew for their crimes against travelers, but Salty Anne fears facing the bandits alone. When the characters approach, she hides behind a boulder at the bottom of the pond, thinking them members of Baron Uthrak's crew.

A character observing the pond notices Salty Anne with a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check. A character who succeeds on a DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion) check can coax Salty Anne to the surface and convince her to share her feelings about Baron Uthrak. If the characters tell her they want to fight the baron, Salty Anne agrees to aid them and tells them the mill's grindstone is a powerful magic item (see "Baron Uthrak's Hoard"). She also mentions that opening the gate puts the mill on alert and draws some of the bandits out of the complex to search for intruders. At the GM's discretion, Salty Anne can join the party for further adventures.

U3. Mill Wheel

The wooden wheel attached to the water mill has the following features:

- "The mill's water wheel is attached to the south wall, and a window lies 6 feet above it. Nearby, a bridge crosses over a wide channel, leading to the mill's entrance."
- *(If the sluice gate in area U2 hasn't been opened)* "The channel, which looks as though it's meant to contain flowing water, is empty. The wheel sits stationary."
- *(If the sluice gate in area U2 has been opened)* "Water flows easily beneath the bridge, catching the water wheel. It slowly turns, causing something inside the mill to clank and grind."

Water Wheel. The wheel, which is 10 feet in diameter and 3 feet wide, is attached to an axle protruding horizontally from the mill's outer wall.

Window. The window above the wheel leads to the mill's second floor (area U6). A character can climb the wheel to reach the window by succeeding on a DC 15 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check, made with disadvantage if the water wheel is in motion. On a failed check, a creature tumbles 10 feet down into the channel, taking 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage from the fall if the channel is dry.

U4. Crane Loading Zone

This cobbled area to the east of the mill has the following features:

- "A cobbled yard lies east of the mill."
- "Nearly 30 feet above the cobbles, a wooden crane juts from a wide window on the third story of the mill. A metal claw dangles from the end of the crane's arm."
- "An armored human is visible in the crane window."

Crane. The crane can be operated from the crane bay on the mill's third floor (area U7) to attack anyone in the loading zone. As an action, the operator can use the crane in one of the following ways:

- The crane picks up a Large or smaller object in the loading zone not worn or carried by a creature.
- The crane makes a melee weapon attack with a +6 bonus to its attack roll against a creature in the loading zone. On a hit, the target is grappled (escape DC 13).
- The crane's claw rises up to 30 feet (to a maximum of 30 feet above the ground).
- The crane releases a creature or object it is holding. If the crane has been raised 30 feet, the crane operator can release the target safely into the crane bay on the mill's third floor (area U7) or drop the target into the loading zone.

Sentry. A **human raider** sentry sits in the third-floor crane bay (area U7). If the alarm hasn't been raised (see "Alerting the Mill"), the sentry reads a book of children's poems entitled *Rhymes for Little Ones* and pays no attention to anything happening in the crane loading zone. If the alarm has been raised, the sentry watches the crane loading zone for intruders.

U5. First Floor

The water mill's first floor has the following features:

- "Gears surround wooden beams and pillars throughout the room."
- "A ladder leads up to a closed trapdoor on the north side of the ceiling."
- *(If the mill isn't on alert)* "Atop a pair of crates, a leather-clad duelist battles a robed human wielding a scythe. Along the walls, a dozen humans shout encouragement to the combatants."

Training Exercise. If the mill hasn't been alerted (see "Alerting the Mill"), Barrelhouse Jill (a **human scoundrel**) spars with Brother John (a **death cultist**) in the middle of the room. The combatants stand atop a 5-by-10-foot arena formed by two crates pushed together. Around the crates, six **human guards** cheer for Jill and six **death acolytes** pray for John. The characters can sneak into the room and observe the bandits or catch them by surprise with a successful DC 13 group Dexterity (Stealth) check.

Although the duel is friendly, both combatants wagered heavily on the outcome. If the characters observe the duel, they notice both fighters suffer minor injuries, but John's wounds magically heal thanks to his Scythe attack. When Jill is reduced to 30 hit points, she admits defeat and pays 100 gp to John.

If combat breaks out with the characters, a single human guard opens the trapdoor to the second floor (area U6) and carries a message to Baron Uthrak. If a character points out to Jill that John was healing during the fight, and if that character succeeds on a DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion) check made as an action, she turns on John and attacks him for his unfair tactics. When John is defeated, she resumes battling the characters.

If the mill is on alert, Brother John and the death cultists attack the characters when they enter.

Treasure. Jill and John each carry a pouch with 100 gp. The death cultists and guards have 120 gp between them. The crates contain clothing, food, and three *potions of healing*.

U6. Second Floor

This floor has the following features:

- "Crates and sacks line the walls. A sleeping guard with a black eye lies on a stack of musty sacks, clutching a mop."
- "Gears surround a wooden pillar in the middle of the room."
- "There are three visible trapdoors: one on the floor on the north side of the room, and two on the ceiling on the south side of the room. Ladders lead up to the two on the ceiling."
- "A small window in the south wall overlooks the mill's water wheel."

Sleeping Guardian. The sleeping guard is named Dogface. He was supposed to be cleaning the room, but Baron Uthrak has bullied him so mercilessly that Dogface has no loyalty to him. The baron's most recent assault was punching Dogface for oversleeping. If the players attack Dogface, he uses the **human raider** stat block. However, if they wake him without attacking him, he asks if they've come to defeat Baron Uthrak. A character who claims they'll defeat Uthrak and succeeds on a DC 14 Charisma (Intimidation or Performance) check earns Dogface's loyalty. He describes the mill's defenses and offers to join the party. As an ally, Dogface uses the **human mercenary** stat block.

Treasure. Most of the sacks contain rotten grain, but Dogface has stashed his treasure in a clean sack: 50 gp, 10 rations, and a packet of *dust of disappearance*. He happily gives his treasure to the party if they let him aid in Baron Uthrak's defeat.

U7. Third Floor

This floor has the following features:

- "Two humans stand at a round millstone, talking in hushed voices. One is armored and carries a whip and a jeweled longsword, and the other wields a morningstar."
- "A small contingent of soldiers equipped with axes and other weapons sits by bedrolls in the southeast corner of the room."
- "On the east side of the room, a sliding door stands open. A long wooden crane juts through the door."
- "On the west side of the room, an iron chest sits atop a crate."

Uthrak and Company. If the mill hasn't been alerted to the characters (see "Alerting the Mill"), **Baron Uthrak** and his lieutenant, Beatrice the Cruel (a **human knave**), eat meat and drink wine at the stone table. Three **human raiders** are nearby, two polishing their blades while a third stands on sentry duty near the crane bay and reads a book of poetry. Another two **human raiders** and two **human trickshots** are asleep in their bedrolls. If combat breaks out, sleeping combatants spend their first turn waking up and collecting their weapons.

If the mill is on alert, Baron Uthrak, Beatrice, and four human raiders (along with survivors from previous battles) are ready for combat while the fifth raider stands at the crane controls. The two human trickshots have been sent to the roof.

In combat, Baron Uthrak and Beatrice kick enemies prone and attack them while they're down. If the mill's machinery has been activated, Baron Uthrak pulls opponents into the millstone with his whip, and, when reduced to 25 hit points or fewer, uses his whip to swing from the crane into the flowing channel 30 feet below. Human raiders try to push intruders out the crane bay door or into the spinning millstone.

Stone Table. Baron Uthrak's table is a 10-foot-diameter *millstone of grinding* (see "Baron Uthrak's Hoard") once used to grind grain. It has a 1-foot-wide square hole.

If the mill is put into operation by opening the sluice gate (see "Pond and Sluice Gate" in area U2), the millstone begins spinning, sending Uthrak and Beatrice's feast flying. A creature pushed or pulled into the spinning millstone takes 10 (3d6) bludgeoning damage, is pushed 10 feet away from the millstone in a random direction, and is knocked prone.

Crane Bay. The door on the room's east side is open, revealing a 20-foot wide, 10-foot-high opening. Anyone pushed out the door falls 30 feet down into the crane loading zone (area U4). Next to this opening is a 30-foot-long wooden crane, which can be swiveled and retracted using

levers at its base. A heavy claw dangles on a rope from the end of the crane.

Roof. A trapdoor leads up to the mill's peaked roof. The roof's slant makes it difficult terrain for creatures without a climbing speed.

Treasure. The iron chest contains Baron Uthrak's treasure hoard, while the crate contains items pulverized by the *millstone of grinding*. See "Baron Uthrak's Hoard" for more information.

Extra Lives

If you wish, you can tailor *Nine Lives*' Bloodstones property to your own campaign by changing the creature type that restores its charges from Dragon to Aberration, Celestial, Fey, Fiend, or another type.

Baron Uthrak's Hoard

Baron Uthrak carries his magic sword, *Nine Lives*. The rest of his treasure hoard is contained in an iron chest atop a crate in area U7 of his lair.

The hoard contains the following items:

- *Figurine of wondrous power* (silver raven)
- 2 *potions of greater healing*
- Shield bearing the Uthrak coat of arms, a toad rampant (worth 50 gp)
- Silver circlet set with a pearl (worth 150 gp)
- 750 sp and 900 gp

Unbeknownst to the baron, the mill's grindstone bears an enchantment that allows it to grind ordinary items into flour (see *millstone of grinding* below). The crate under Baron Uthrak's chest contains ten tiny, labeled packets of flour, each of which turns into an item when added to water. The crate contains the following flour packets:

- 3 50-foot coils of hempen rope
- 3 sets of carpenter's tools
- Rope ladder
- 3 10-pound sacks of wheat (worth 1 sp each)
- Keg of wine (worth 50 gp)
- Gold bracelet (worth 250 gp)

Millstone of Grinding

Wondrous Item, Uncommon

This 5-ton, 10-foot-diameter flat stone bears the inscription "All is Grist."

While the mill is operational, the millstone can pulverize any Small or Tiny mundane object placed in the hole at its center. The object becomes a pinch of magic flour. As an action, a creature can add this flour to water, causing the object to return to its original form.

Nine Lives

Weapon (Longsword), Rare (Requires Attunement)

The black pommel of Baron Uthrak's longsword is set with nine bloodstone gems: three gray and six red.

You have a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this magic weapon. When you hit with an attack roll using it, the target takes an extra 1d6 necrotic damage.

Bloodstones. The sword has 3 charges left, one for each gray bloodstone.

When you fail a saving throw while holding this sword, you can expend 1 charge to succeed instead (no action required). When you do so, you take 2d6 necrotic damage, which can't be reduced in any way, and the sword drains some of your blood into one of the remaining gray bloodstones, turning the stone red.

The sword loses this property while it has no charges remaining.

When you deal damage to a Dragon with *Nine Lives* while the sword has fewer than 9 charges, the sword regains 1 charge and one of the sword's red bloodstones turns gray. Once the sword has regained a charge in this way, it can't do so again until the next dawn.

Uthrak Coat of Arms

Mill Stat Blocks

The following stat blocks appear in the lair.

Baron Uthrak

CR 7 Leader

Medium Humanoid (Human), Lawful Evil — 2,900 XP

Armor Class 16 (half plate)
Hit Points 144 (17d8 + 68)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	12 (+1)	19 (+4)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Str +7, Con +7
Skills Athletics +10, Deception +6, Insight +5, Intimidation +9, Perception +5
Senses passive Perception 15
Languages Common
Proficiency Bonus +3

Bloodstones (3 Uses). When Baron Uthrak fails a saving throw while holding his magic longsword *Nine Lives*, he can choose to succeed instead. If he does so, he takes 7 (2d6) necrotic damage as one of the bloodstones set in the sword's pommel fills with his blood.

Exploit Opening (3/Day). When Baron Uthrak makes an attack, he has advantage on the attack roll.

Actions

Multiattack. Baron Uthrak makes two attacks using Nine Lives, Whip, or both.

Nine Lives. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d8 + 5) slashing damage plus 3 (1d6) necrotic damage.

Whip. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d4 + 4) slashing damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 15 Strength saving throw or be pulled up to 15 feet toward Baron Uthrak.

Bonus Actions

Kneel, Peasant! Baron Uthrak kicks a Large or smaller creature within 5 feet of him. The target must succeed on a DC 15 Strength saving throw or take 6 (1d4 + 4) bludgeoning damage and be knocked prone.

Reactions

Riposte. When a creature Baron Uthrak can see misses him with a melee attack, Baron Uthrak makes a melee attack against that creature.

Villain Actions

Baron Uthrak has three villain actions. He can take each action once during an encounter after an enemy's turn. He can take these actions in any order but can use only one per round.

Action 1: Shoot! Each ally within 60 feet of Baron Uthrak who can hear him can make a ranged weapon attack (no action required).

Action 2: Form Up! Baron Uthrak and each ally within 60 feet of him who can hear him can move up to their speed without provoking opportunity attacks. Baron Uthrak and each ally enters a defensive stance that lasts until that creature moves or is restrained or incapacitated. When two or more allies in a defensive stance are within 5 feet of each other, attack rolls against them are made with disadvantage.

Action 3: Lead from the Front. Baron Uthrak moves up to twice his speed without provoking opportunity attacks. During or after this movement, he can make up to four Nine Lives or Whip attacks with advantage, each against a different target. After he attacks a target in this way, each ally within 5 feet of that target can make a melee attack with advantage against the same target (no action required).

Human Apprentice Mage

CR 6 Minion

Medium Humanoid (Human), Any Alignment — 285 XP

Armor Class 14 (studded leather)
Hit Points 13
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (–1)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

Skills Arcana +5
Senses passive Perception 10
Languages Common plus any two languages
Proficiency Bonus +3

Empower Patron. A non-minion creature serves as the mage's patron in exchange for the mage's protective magic. At the start of the patron's turn, the patron gains temporary hit points equal to twice the number of apprentice mages within 60 feet of them who chose them as a patron and can see them.

Exploit Weakness. When the mage makes or joins an attack that's made with advantage, the attack deals an extra 1 damage per mage who made or joined the attack.

Minion. If the mage takes damage from an attack or as the result of a failed saving throw, their hit points are reduced to 0. If the mage takes damage from another effect, they die if the damage equals or exceeds their hit point maximum; otherwise they take no damage.

Actions

Lightning Strike (Group Attack). *Ranged Spell Attack:* +5 to hit, range 120 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 2 lightning damage, and if this attack was made by more than one mage, each mage who joined the attack picks one creature within 30 feet of the original target. Each creature picked takes 2 lightning damage for each mage who targeted them; the mage's Exploit Weakness trait does not increase this damage.

Thunder Crack (Group Attack). *Melee Spell Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 thunder damage, and the target can't make opportunity attacks until the start of their next turn.

Changing the Apprentice Mage

Human wizards often follow arcane traditions to master a particular element of magic. In this stat block, the apprentice mage makes Lightning Strike and Thunder Crack attacks, but the GM can reflect a different elemental mastery by changing both damage types to acid, cold, or fire damage. A mage can only join other mages in this group attack if their group attack deals the same damage type.

Human Brawler

CR 2 Brute

Medium Humanoid (Human), Any Alignment — 450 XP

Armor Class 14 (studded leather)
Hit Points 52 (7d8 + 21)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)

Skills Athletics +5, Intimidation +3
Senses passive Perception 10
Languages Common
Proficiency Bonus +2

Exploit Opening (3/Day). When the brawler makes an attack, they have advantage on the attack roll.

Actions

Multiattack. The brawler makes two attacks using Grab, Haymaker, or both.

Grab. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one Medium or smaller creature. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) bludgeoning damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 13). Until this grapple ends, the brawler can't grab another creature.

Haymaker. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) bludgeoning damage, or 10 (3d4 + 3) bludgeoning damage against a grappled target.

Throw. The brawler throws one Medium or smaller creature they are grappling or object they are holding up to 30 feet horizontally. If the thrown target is a creature, they fall prone after this throw. If the thrown target would enter the space of a creature or solid object that is no more than one size smaller than it, the thrown target collides with it and stops in the nearest unoccupied space, taking 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage for every 10 feet it was thrown. A Large or smaller creature hit by this thrown target must succeed on a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw or take the same amount of damage and fall prone.

Reactions

Meat Shield. When the brawler is grappling a target and is hit by a ranged attack made by another creature the brawler can see, the brawler gains a +2 bonus to AC against the triggering attack. If this bonus causes the attack to miss the brawler, it hits the grappled target instead.

Human Death Acolyte

CR 2 Minion

Medium Humanoid (Human), Any Alignment — 90 XP

Armor Class 13 (leather armor)
Hit Points 9
Speed 30 ft.

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

Senses passive Perception 12
Languages Common
Proficiency Bonus +2

Death Chant. When an enemy succeeds on a death saving throw while within 30 feet of three or more acolytes who aren't incapacitated, the success instead counts as a failure, and if the roll was a 20, the enemy doesn't regain hit points.

Exploit Weakness. When the acolyte makes or joins an attack that's made with advantage, the attack deals an extra 1 damage per acolyte who made or joined the attack.

Minion. If the acolyte takes damage from an attack or as the result of a failed saving throw, their hit points are reduced to 0. If the acolyte takes damage from another effect, they die if the damage equals or exceeds their hit point maximum; otherwise they take no damage.

Actions

Transfer Life (Group Attack). *Melee Spell Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 2 necrotic damage, and if this attack was made by more than one acolyte, a creature of the acolytes' choice within 30 feet of them regains 1 hit point per acolyte who joined this group attack.

Necrotic Bolt (Group Attack). *Ranged Spell Attack:* +4 to hit, range 30 ft., one target. *Hit:* 2 necrotic damage.

Laws? You only need to follow the laws if you're weaker than the people enforcing them. Oh, I've made mistakes in my time, but I've never followed any law some rich brat who inherited a crown made up to control people. Nobles don't even follow the rules they write for others. It's a joke.

What you don't understand is that out here, I am the nobles. I am the law, and if the bodies at the bottom of the river could talk, they'd tell you I can enforce it.

Baron Wigar Uthrak

Human Death Cultist

CR 4 Support

Medium Humanoid (Human), Any Alignment — 1,100 XP

Armor Class 16 (chain mail)
Hit Points 60 (8d8 + 24)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	10 (+0)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Wis +6, Cha +3
Skills Intimidation +3, Religion +4
Senses passive Perception 14
Languages Common plus any one language
Proficiency Bonus +2

Exploit Opening (3/Day). When the cultist makes an attack, they have advantage on the attack roll.

Actions

Scythe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d10 + 3) slashing damage plus 7 (2d6) necrotic damage, and the cultist regains hit points equal to half the necrotic damage dealt.

Death Bolt. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +6 to hit, range 60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (4d6) necrotic damage, and the target's weapon attacks deal half damage until the start of the cultist's next turn.

Blackfire Blessing (1/Day). The cultist empowers up to 10 non-minion allies within 30 feet of them. For 1 minute or until the cultist dies, each creature's weapons burn with black fire and deal an extra 2 (1d4) necrotic damage on a hit.

Bonus Actions

Rise, My Minions! (1/Day). The cultist chooses up to three creatures within 30 feet of them who died within the last minute. These creatures return to life with 1 hit point, but they can't regain hit points, and they die after 1 minute.

Reactions

Life from Death. When a creature the cultist can see within 30 feet of them fails a death saving throw or dies, the cultist siphons their faltering life energy. The cultist chooses a creature within 30 feet of the cultist who isn't unconscious, and that creature regains 14 (4d6) hit points.

Human Guard

CR 1/8 Minion

Medium Humanoid (Human), Any Alignment — 5 XP

Armor Class 16 (chain shirt, shield)
Hit Points 5
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

Skills Perception +2
Senses passive Perception 12
Languages Common
Proficiency Bonus +2

Exploit Weakness. When the guard makes or joins an attack that's made with advantage, the attack deals an extra 1 damage per guard who made or joined the attack.

Minion. If the guard takes damage from an attack or as the result of a failed saving throw, their hit points are reduced to 0. If the guard takes damage from another effect, they die if the damage equals or exceeds their hit point maximum; otherwise they take no damage.

Overwhelm. If a Medium or smaller enemy starts their turn within 5 feet of three or more guards who can see them, until the start of the enemy's next turn, the enemy's speed is reduced by 5 feet for each guard within 5 feet of them. If this reduces the enemy's walking speed to 0, they are restrained until the start of their next turn.

Actions

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

Human Knave

CR 3 Soldier

Medium Humanoid (Human), Any Alignment — 700 XP

Armor Class 16 (breastplate, shield)
Hit Points 60 (8d8 + 24)
Speed 30 ft.

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

Skills Intimidation +4, Perception +3
Senses passive Perception 13
Languages Common
Proficiency Bonus +2

Exploit Opening (3/Day). When the knave makes an attack, they have advantage on the attack roll.

Actions

Multiattack. The knave makes two Morningstar or two Javelin attacks. They can replace one attack with a Shield Bash attack.

Morningstar. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) piercing damage, or 13 (2d8 + 4) piercing damage if the target is prone.

Shield Bash. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d4 + 4) bludgeoning damage, and if the target is a Medium or smaller creature, they must succeed on a DC 14 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

Javelin. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage.

Bonus Actions

Stay Down. The knave kicks one prone creature within 5 feet of them. The target must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or their speed is reduced to 0 until the end of their next turn.

Human Mercenary

Retainer

Medium Humanoid (Human), Any Alignment

Armor Class 15 (medium armor)
Hit Points Nine times their level (number of d12 Hit Dice equal to their level)
Speed 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws +PB to all
Skills Athletics +3 plus PB, Medicine +0 plus PB, Perception +0 plus PB
Senses passive Perception 10 plus PB
Languages Common
Proficiency Bonus (PB) equals the mentor's bonus

Signature Attack (Halberd). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 plus PB to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1d10 plus PB slashing damage. Beginning at 7th level, the mercenary can make this attack twice, instead of once, when they take the Attack action on their turn.

Features

3rd Level: Battlefield Medicine (3/Day). As an action, the mercenary restores PBd8 hit points to a creature they can see within 5 feet of them.

5th Level: Exploit Opening (3/Day). The mercenary takes the Attack action, making each attack with advantage and dealing an extra PBd4 slashing damage on a hit.

7th Level: Halberd Master (3/Day). When a creature enters a space within the mercenary's reach, the mercenary uses a reaction to make a signature attack with advantage against that creature. If this attack hits, it deals an extra PBd6 slashing damage.

Human Raider

CR 1/2 Skirmisher

Medium Humanoid (Human), Any Alignment — 100 XP

Armor Class 14 (padded, shield; AC 12 without shield)
Hit Points 22 (4d8 + 4)
Speed 30 ft.

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

Skills Stealth +3
Senses passive Perception 11
Languages Common
Proficiency Bonus +2

Charge. If the raider moves at least 15 feet straight toward a target and then hits the target with a melee attack on the same turn, the target takes an extra 3 (1d6) damage.

Exploit Opening (3/Day). When the raider makes an attack, they have advantage on the attack roll.

Actions

Handaxe. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) slashing damage.

Shield Shove. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) bludgeoning damage, and if the target is a Medium or smaller creature, they must succeed on a DC 12 Strength saving throw or be pushed 5 feet away from the raider.

Reactions

Splinter Shield. When the raider is wielding a shield and is hit by an attack made by a creature they can see, the raider gains a +4 bonus to AC against the triggering attack. If this causes the attack to miss, the raider's shield breaks, and until they get a new shield, their AC is reduced by 2 and they can't use this reaction or make a Shield Shove attack.

Human Raider

Human Scoundrel

CR 3 Ambusher

Medium Humanoid (Human), Any Alignment — 700 XP

Armor Class 15 (studded leather)
Hit Points 55 (10d8 + 10)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)

Skills Deception +4, Sleight of Hand +5, Stealth +5
Senses passive Perception 10
Languages Common
Proficiency Bonus +2

Ambusher. In the first round of combat, the scoundrel has advantage on attack rolls against any surprised creature.

Exploit Opening (3/Day). When the scoundrel makes an attack, they have advantage on the attack roll.

Hit 'Em Where It Hurts. When the scoundrel has advantage on a weapon attack roll, the attack deals an extra 7 (2d6) damage on a hit.

Actions

Rapier. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage, and the scoundrel can make a dagger attack against the target with advantage.

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

Human Storm Wizard

CR 6 Controller

Medium Humanoid (Human), Any Alignment 2,300 XP

Armor Class 12 (15 with *mage armor*)
Hit Points 75 (10d8 + 30)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Int +7, Wis +5
Skills Arcana +7, History +7
Senses passive Perception 12
Languages Common plus any two languages
Proficiency Bonus +3

Exploit Opening (3/Day). When the wizard makes an attack, they have advantage on the attack roll.

Actions

Arcane Staff. *Melee or Ranged Spell Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 30 ft., one target. *Hit:* 21 (6d6) lightning damage.

Gust of Wind (1/Day; 2nd-Level Spell; Concentration). A 10-foot-wide, 60-foot-long line of strong wind gusts from the wizard for 1 minute. Each creature who starts their turn in that area must succeed on a DC 15 Strength saving throw or be pushed 15 feet away from the wizard. Each creature in that area must spend 2 feet of movement for every 1 foot they move toward the wizard.

The gust disperses gas or vapor, and it extinguishes candles, torches, and similar unprotected flames. It has a 50 percent chance to extinguish protected flames like lanterns. The wizard can use a bonus action to change the direction in which the wind blasts from them.

Lightning Bolt (3/Day; 3rd-Level Spell). The wizard fires magical lightning in a 5-foot-wide, 100-foot-long line. Each creature in the line must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw, taking 28 (8d6) lightning damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. The lightning ignites flammable objects in the area that aren't being worn or carried.

Reactions

Arcane Shield (3/Day). When the wizard is hit by an attack, they magically gain a +5 bonus to AC against that attack, potentially causing it to miss. If the attacker is within 10 feet of the wizard, the attacker must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or take 18 (4d8) thunder damage and be pushed 10 feet away from the wizard.

Utility Spells

In addition to any other spells in this stat block, the wizard can cast the following spells, using Intelligence as the spellcasting ability (spell save DC 15):

At will: *mage hand*[A], *prestidigitation*[A]
1/day each: *clairvoyance*[+], *mage armor*[A], *see invisibility*[A], *sending*[A]

Human Elementalist Wizards

Human wizards often follow arcane traditions to master a particular element of magic. As GM, you can introduce new elementalist wizards by adjusting the **human storm wizard** stat block, as in the following examples.

Human Cryomancer. The wizard's Arcane Staff action and Arcane Shield reaction deal cold damage instead of lightning and thunder damage. Additionally, instead of casting the *lightning bolt* spell, the wizard casts *ice storm*.

Human Pyromancer. The wizard's Arcane Staff action and Arcane Shield reaction deal fire damage instead of lightning and thunder damage. Additionally, instead of casting the *gust of wind* spell, the wizard casts *flaming sphere*, and instead of *lightning bolt*, the wizard casts *fireball*.

Human Trickshot

CR 2 Artillery
Medium Humanoid (Human), Any Alignment 450 XP

Armor Class 14
Hit Points 39 (6d8 + 12)
Speed 30 ft.

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

Skills Perception +4, Stealth +6
Senses passive Perception 14
Languages Common
Proficiency Bonus +2

Exploit Opening (3/Day). When the trickshot makes an attack, they have advantage on the attack roll.

Point Blank Shooting. When the trickshot hits a creature within 30 feet of them with a ranged weapon attack, they deal an extra 7 (2d6) piercing damage. Additionally, being within 5 feet of an enemy doesn't impose disadvantage on the trickshot's ranged attack rolls.

Actions

Heavy Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, range 100/400 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d10 + 4) piercing damage.

Bayonet. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage.

Ricochet Bolt (Recharge 5–6). The trickshot uses a special ricocheting bolt to make one Heavy Crossbow attack against a target within 100 feet of them, then a second Heavy Crossbow attack against a different target within 30 feet of the first target.

Content Warning: Drowning

Before using a sea hag, check in with your group to see if anyone is upset by descriptions of drowning or suffocation. If so, you can keep the game fun by describing the hag's Dry Drown action as a dizzying hex that affects creatures who live on land, instead of describing it as drowning.

Formally known as Terrans because of their unique relationship to the Mundane World, humans have no direct connection to their creator-god.

Remainer

Sea Hag Apprentice

Retainer
Medium Fey, Any Alignment

Armor Class 13 (light armor)
Hit Points Six times their level (number of d6 Hit Dice equal to their level)
Speed 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws +PB to all
Skills Deception +3 plus PB, Intimidation +3 plus PB
Damage Resistances cold, lightning
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11
Languages Aquan, Common, Sylvan
Proficiency Bonus (PB) equals the mentor's bonus

Amphibious. The apprentice can breathe air and water.

Signature Attack (Zap). *Melee or Ranged Spell Attack:* +3 plus PB to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d8) lightning damage. This spell's damage increases by 1d8 when the apprentice reaches 5th level (2d8), 11th level (3d8), and 17th level (4d8).

Features

3rd Level: Wash Away (3/Day). As a bonus action, the apprentice rides a crashing wave. They make a signature attack against an enemy within 5 feet of them and move up to their walking speed without provoking opportunity attacks. If the attack hits, it deals an extra PB bludgeoning damage.

5th Level: Ride the Lightning (3/Day). As an action, the apprentice supercharges their foe's nervous system. The apprentice makes a signature attack, and if it deals damage to a creature, the target must make a DC 10 plus PB Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the target is incapacitated and their speed is halved until the end of their next turn.

7th Level: Drown (1/Day). As an action, the apprentice chooses three creatures the apprentice can see within 60 feet of them. Each target feels as though their lungs are filling with water and must make a DC 10 plus PB Constitution saving throw. A creature who can breathe water or who doesn't need air automatically succeeds on this saving throw. On a failed save, a target takes PBd8 force damage, and for 1 minute, they can't speak, their speed is halved, and they are dazed (save ends at end of turn). On a successful save, the target takes half as much damage and suffers no other effect. Another creature within 5 feet of a target can use their action to make a DC 10 plus PB Strength (Athletics) or Intelligence (Medicine) check, ending the effect on a success.

Camp Firefield

Optimized for Five 6th-Level Characters

The brilliant tactician Varrox traces his lineage to the first goblin who made an infernal bargain to become a hobgoblin. Varrox's mother, the great bloodlord Fanoxa, raised him right alongside her army. The only home Varrox has ever known was a war camp, and his upbringing was conquest and bloodshed. When he witnessed her defeat and capture at the Battle of Redfields, he vowed to die an even greater conqueror.

The warlord enthusiastically embraces his legacy, seeking more power by forging deals with devils. These fiends demand Varrox capture more territory, which the devils then offer to greedy nobles in exchange for their souls and service.

Bloodlord Varrox's lair exists in a pocket dimension. Varrox and his vanguard travel with a magical tent that was gifted to the hobgoblin by an archdevil. The tent contains the rest of his forces—when its stakes are set into the ground, the tent flaps open into Camp Firefield, a multilevel demiplane where Varrox's forces prepare for conquest.

Hobgoblins

Also known as demogoblins, hobgoblins descend from ancient goblins who made a pact with an infernal power in exchange for increased size and strength. Each hobgoblin has fang-like tusks, and one or more horns protrude from their head.

Like other humanoids, hobgoblins have no special inclination toward conquest, battle, or cruelty, and they can be found in all walks of life. But when the wicked among them fall on desperate times, some use their talents for the violence and subjugation of others.

Camp Firefield Story Hooks

You can use one of the following story hooks to integrate this lair into an adventure:

Archdevil's Pupil. A dwarf warlock, Velthor, made a pact with an archdevil, only to later discover his patron is also nurturing another protégé—Bloodlord Varrox. Feeling jealous and betrayed, Velthor approaches the characters. Pretending to be a scholar concerned by the destruction wrought by the hobgoblin's warband, he asks them to disrupt Varrox's operations. Velthor attempts to appeal to the party's sense of justice, but if they ask for a reward, the warlock offers four diamonds (worth 500 gp each).

Hobgoblin Defector. A **hobgoblin tactician** named Kerg defects from Bloodlord Varrox's tyrannical rule, but his family is captured by Bloodlord Varrox and held in the great hall (area C6). Kerg asks for the characters' help rescuing his family.

Scourge of War. Bloodlord Varrox's war campaign causes an unprecedented surge of refugees into nearby towns and cities. A local hobgoblin noble, Lady Yanil, offers the characters 2,500 gp to infiltrate Camp Firefield and put a stop to the army's advance.

Camp Firefield Features

Unless otherwise noted, each area of Camp Firefield has the following features:

Gates. Each level of Camp Firefield beyond the first can be reached through a magic gate. The first time a creature moves through a gate, it requires a password, key, or special action to open; a *detect magic* spell reveals an aura of conjuration around objects that create or open gates. Varrox has left clues for new recruits on how to open these gates. An open gate acts as a two-way portal and remains open for 1 minute upon activation. Any creature peering into an open gate can see the other side as though looking through an open doorway. Once a creature passes through any given gate, they can open that gate in the future by standing within 10 feet of it and activating it with a thought (no action required).

Illumination. Perpetual twilight hangs in the sky, filling outdoor areas with dim light. Campfires provide bright light in a 20-foot radius. The interior of tents and other structures are filled with bright light from hanging lanterns.

Outdoor Areas. Most areas of the camp are outdoors. Grass and dirt cover the ground of these areas.

Spherical Levels. The camp has eight spherical levels, which Varrox and his troops refer to as circles. However, from the perspective of a creature walking on the ground or flying above it, the circle magically appears flat. Every circle is self-contained and wraps around because of its spherical nature.

Soldiers-at-Arms

Camp Firefield is protected by hardened hobgoblin troops. Unless otherwise noted, they attack intruders and fight to the death.

Captured Troops. If the characters capture one of Varrox's troops, a successful DC 17 Charisma (Intimidation or Persuasion) check convinces the hobgoblin to reveal one of the following pieces of information:

- How to open the gate in the area where the characters are.
- The existence of the summoning altar in area C7.
- The location of Varrox in area C8.

Defeated Characters. Varrox is willing to deal with defeated characters who beg for their lives and have magic items, particularly weapons and armor, to offer in

exchange. His soldiers attempt to keep defeated intruders alive, bind the prisoners in manacles, and drag them to Varrox for judgment in the camp's war room (area C8).

Resting in Camp Firefield

Once the characters clear the enemies from an area of the camp, they can take a short rest there without interruption. If they take a long rest, there is a 20 percent chance that eight **hobgoblin troopers** find them halfway through their rest.

Entering Camp Firefield

By all outward appearances, Varrox's lair is a general's military tent. Made of goatskin leather, it measures 10 feet wide on each side. The walls are 9 feet tall, rising to a peak of 12 feet in the middle. Varrox typically pitches the tent on an elevation facing a settlement, and a squad of eight **hobgoblin troopers** led by a **hobgoblin death captain** stand guard outside the tent. The characters can sneak by them unnoticed with a successful DC 14 group Dexterity (Stealth) check.

Enchanted Entrance. The tent-flap entrance to Camp Firefield is enchanted. When a creature opens the flap, they are instantly teleported to the nowhere gate (area C1).

Camp Firefield Areas

The following areas are keyed to the Camp Firefield Map.

C1. Nowhere Gate (First Circle)

This area has the following features:

- "Under a twilight sky, a vast, desolate plain stretches as far as the eye can see."
- (**Secret**) This circle of the camp is connected to the Seven Cities of Hell and occasionally watched by cruel devils who enjoy making others suffer.
- (**Secret**) The ways to leave this area are hidden, but a clue is written in the dirt.

Infernal Connection. A creature who succeeds on a DC 18 Intelligence (Arcana) check knows this desolate wasteland is exactly like those in the Seven Cities of Hell, and this circle of the camp is connected to that plane's infernal power.

Hidden Gates. The character with the highest passive Wisdom (Perception) score notices Infernal words written in the dirt. A character who can read Infernal can read the words, which say "Who acts in stillness finds the way." If all nearby creatures choose to remain as still as possible, two gates appear on the plane within 30 feet of the first creature to stop moving. One gate leads out of Camp Firefield, the other leads to the second circle (area C2).

Devil Notary. If the characters can't find the gates after being on this plane for 10 minutes, Mixlax (a **devil notary**) appears and offers them a deal. In exchange for sending a character to the second circle, the devil gets to curse the target for the duration of their stay at the camp. Mixlax tells characters interested in the deal that "you must choose to brave the camp without either Strength, Dexterity, Constitution, Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma." Any character who accepts the deal must choose an ability, then they're immediately teleported—without other party members—to the entrance gate in the green route (area C2). This character is cursed, giving them disadvantage on ability checks and saving throws made with the chosen ability for the duration of their stay in Camp Firefield. The curse ends 3 days after the character leaves the camp, and can't be removed through any other means short of a *wish* spell.

Treasure. Any character who has a passive Wisdom (Perception) score of 15 of higher notices a skeletal finger poking out of the dirt near where they entered this area. The finger is connected to a buried skeleton wearing rusted armor and a *helm of comprehending languages*. A character can unearth the skeleton with 5 minutes of work. Multiple characters working together reduce the time proportionally.

C2. Green Route (Second Circle)

This area has the following features:

- "The entrance gate opens into a dirt footpath that cuts through a field of 10-foot-tall grass and leads under a 20-foot-high arch of braided plants."
- (**Secret**) Twelve grilps lurk in the tall grass.
- (**Secret**) The braided plants mark the location of the gate to the barracks (area C3).

Grass. The grass is difficult terrain.

Grilps. A creature who succeeds on a DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) check notices the twelve **grilps** in the grass. A creature who succeeds on this check by 5 or more notices one of the grilps has a collar with a polished malachite on her neck.

A character who speaks Goblin or Infernal who succeeds on a DC 16 Charisma (Intimidation) check convinces the grilps to come forward without a fight. The collared grilp, Oki, speaks for the group. She explains that the characters need her stone to open the portal. A follow-up successful DC 12 Charisma (Deception or Intimidation) check convinces Oki to hand the collar over. If the characters can't convince her to give them the collar, the grilps attack.

If the characters don't notice the grilps, Oki activates the portal and goes to warn the hobgoblins in the barracks (area C3) of intruders. When she passes through the portal, the stone falls off her neck onto the path.

Hidden Gate. When the malachite on Oki's neck comes within 5 feet of the arch, the gate to the barracks (area C3) opens. If a creature is carrying the malachite as they pass through the portal, the stone disappears from their possession and falls on the ground in front of the portal.

Camp Firefield Map

C3. Barracks (Third Circle)

This area has the following features:

- "Dozens of 5-foot-tall leather tents stand in neat rings around a raging bonfire."
- (**Secret**) The bonfire marks the location of the gate to the fourth circle (area C4).
- (**Secret**) Not all the tents are occupied, as some of Varrox's forces are always scouting, securing, and invading new lands.

Soldiers. The camp contains two **hobgoblin troopers**, two **hobgoblin incendiarists**, a **hobgoblin firerunner**, a **hobgoblin war mage**, and twenty **hobgoblin recruits**. If Oki (see area C2) didn't alert them to the characters' presence, the troopers and incendiarists patrol the camp while the rest of the hobgoblins sleep. The characters can sneak through the camp unnoticed with a successful DC 15 group Dexterity (Stealth) check. If the patrol notices intruders, they shout, waking the other hobgoblins and attacking.

If Oki the **grilp** alerted the hobgoblins to trouble, the camp is awake. The incendiarists and war mage stand by the bonfire, while Oki, the recruits, the troopers, and the firerunner stand near the entrance gate, ready to attack.

Bonfire Gate. A creature who touches the bonfire for the first time on a turn or starts their turn touching it takes 7 (2d6) fire damage. The bonfire can't be extinguished by mundane means. An engraved stone circle surrounds the bonfire with a slot shaped like a five-sided star, and an Infernal inscription on it reads, "Light the way ahead."

A character who studies the fire as an action and succeeds on a DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check, or who studies the fire for 1 minute (no check required), notices a red-hot brass pentagram in the bonfire. Placing this pentagram in the slot on the stone ring turns the flames of the bonfire into a magic gate that leads to the armory (area C4). While the bonfire is an active gate, it doesn't deal fire damage.

Treasure. Each tent contains three bedrolls and three spare uniforms. If the characters take 10 minutes to search the tents, they also find a *potion of healing*, 132 cp, 76 sp, and 17 gp.

C4. Armory (Fourth Circle)

This area has the following features:

- "Fire crackles in a stone forge. Next to it stands a stack of crates and a wide tent."
- "The 12-foot-tall tent's entrance flaps are pulled back, revealing wooden shelves filled with weapons."
- "A hobgoblin smith stands at the forge, a sword pendant hanging from her belt. Several other hobgoblins move about the tent, taking inventory."
- (**Secret**) The secret to opening the gate to the fifth circle (area C5) hangs on the blacksmith's belt.

Hobgoblins. Narine, a **hobgoblin incendiarist**, is the blacksmith for Camp Firefield. The sword pendant on her belt is inscribed with a Goblin phrase that reads, "Forge ahead." These words are a key to opening the gate to the field hospital (area C5). A hidden creature can grab the pendant from her belt unnoticed with a successful DC 16 Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check.

A **hobgoblin death captain** oversees two **hobgoblin troopers** taking inventory in the tent.

The characters can sneak around this area unnoticed with a successful DC 14 group Dexterity (Stealth) check.

Hidden Gate. If a creature holds Narine's pendant and says "Forge ahead" aloud in Common, Goblin, or Infernal, the backside of the forge becomes a magic gate that leads to the field hospital (area C5). If a creature is carrying the pendant as they pass through the portal, it disappears from their possession and falls on the ground in front of the portal.

Treasure. The crates contain broken weapons in need of repair and ten sets of manacles with keys. The armory holds fifty of every suit of light and medium armor and martial weapon in the core rules, as well as fifty shields, a thousand arrows, and a thousand crossbow bolts. Narine carries a set of smith's tools.

C5. Field Hospital (Fifth Circle)

This area has the following features:

- "A long, 12-foot-high tent stands next to a small, well-tended garden."
- "Injured hobgoblins lie on cots in the tent as others dress their wounds."
- (**Secret**) The garden contains the gate to the great hall (area C6).

Hobgoblins. Six wounded **hobgoblin troopers**, each with 9 hit points remaining, lie on cots in the tent. These wounded soldiers avoid combat and surrender if threatened. A **hobgoblin war mage** and eight **hobgoblin brandbearers** tend to the wounded. The characters can sneak around outside the tent without the hobgoblins noticing them with a successful DC 12 group Dexterity (Stealth) check.

Garden Gate. The garden contains neat rows of medical plants and herbs growing around a ring of mushrooms. At the center lies a mortar and pestle set containing red and purple pulp. The mortar bears an Infernal inscription that reads, "The fiend's fruit opens the path." A creature who examines the mortar and pestle and succeeds on a DC 15 Intelligence check using alchemist's supplies or an herbalism kit recognizes that devil's blossom, a rare medicinal herb, was recently ground up into the pulp with these tools.

A creature can identify devil's blossom in the garden with a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Nature) check. If the creature already identified the flower pulp, they automatically succeed on this check. If a character fails this check, they still find the flower, but it takes them so long that the war mage in the tent comes out to the garden, notices the characters, and orders an attack.

When a creature grinds up a fresh flower using the mortar and pestle, a magic gate to the sixth circle (area C6)

opens in the mushroom ring. If a creature is carrying the mortar and pestle as they pass through the portal, these disappear from their possession and fall on the ground in front of the portal.

Treasure. Any character who has an herbalism kit and is proficient with it can gather enough herbs in the garden to make one *potion of greater healing*. They can craft this potion during a short or long rest.

C6. Great Hall (Sixth Circle)

The great hall is where Varrox's troops rest and relax. It has a 20-foot-high ceiling. Climbing the walls of the great hall without climbing equipment requires a successful DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check. This area has the following features:

- "A long mead hall with open doors and a roaring fire within erupts with sounds of hobgoblins making merry."
- "Inside, hobgoblins sit at long tables devouring food and drinking mead. At the room's center, a group of hobgoblin cooks turn a boar on a spit over a fire."
- "Shelves on the walls hold food, herbs, spices, and kegs of mead."
- "Opposite the doors, an enormous painting of Bloodlord Varrox hangs on the wall. Above his visage, a balcony extends across the room, empty except for a statue of a hobgoblin with an open mouth."
- (**Secret**) A secret door behind the painting hides a staircase that leads up to the balcony.
- (**Secret**) The statue on the balcony can activate the magic gate to the seventh circle (area C7).

Hobgoblins. Thirty **hobgoblin recruits**, three **hobgoblin incendiarists**, and one **hobgoblin death captain** are feasting in the hall. The recruits drank too much and are poisoned as a result. The characters have advantage on Charisma checks made to influence poisoned recruits.

Cookfire. The cookfire's flames are 5 feet high. If a creature touches the fire for the first time on a turn or starts their turn touching it, they take 7 (2d6) fire damage.

Secret Door. A character notices the outline of the secret door behind Varrox's painting with a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check. A character can use this door to access the balcony.

Statue Gate. An inscription in Goblin on the balcony statue reads, "Keep your fellow soldiers fed!" When a piece of food is placed in the statue's mouth, the statue becomes a magic gate to the seventh circle (area C7).

Treasure. The shelves hold ten barrels of mead, worth 50 gp each, and six sets of cook's utensils.

C7. Summoning Altar (Seventh Circle)

This area has the following features:

- "Three hooded hobgoblins chant at a massive stone altar before an obsidian arch."
- "Six armed hobgoblins stand back and watch the proceedings."
- "The altar area is encircled by pillars carved with scenes of hobgoblin and devil soldiers conquering other armies."
- (**Secret**) The obsidian archway is the magic gate leading to the eighth circle (area C7).
- (**Secret**) A hobgoblin smokebinder hides behind the archway.

Hobgoblins. Six **hobgoblin troopers** and a hidden **hobgoblin smokebinder** guard three **hobgoblin war mages** as they perform a summoning ritual. If all the mages die, become incapacitated, or move outside the circle of pillars, the summoning fails. Otherwise, at the start of the fourth round after the characters arrive, a **slaughter demon** appears on the altar. A character who observes the ritual and succeeds on a DC 18 Intelligence (Arcana) check knows the hobgoblins are performing a ritual to summon a slaughter demon.

Any character who has a passive Wisdom (Perception) score of 17 or higher spots the hidden smokebinder.

Pillars. A creature who examines the pillars and succeeds on a DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) check finds an image that looks like the arch in this area with hobgoblins kneeling before it (see "Hidden Gate").

Hidden Gate. If a creature uses an action to kneel before the arch, a magic gate opens that connects to the eighth circle (area C8).

C8. War Room (Eighth Circle)

This area is an enclosed chamber with a 10-foot-high ceiling. It has following features:

- "Resplendent in plate armor, Bloodlord Varrox stands over a military sand table."
- "Another six hobgoblins stand at Varrox's side, hanging on his every word."
- "Three wood chests lie beneath the table."

Hobgoblins. **Bloodlord Varrox** stands with four **hobgoblin troopers**, a **hobgoblin firerunner**, and a **hobgoblin war mage**. Furious the characters have made it into his inner sanctum on their own, Varrox attacks. He fights until reduced to 20 hit points, then attempts to flee through all the levels of the camp.

Treasure. The chests contain Varrox's treasure. See "Varrox's Hoard" for more information.

Varrox's Death

The magic tent that creates Camp Firefield is tied to Varrox's life force. If he dies, no creatures can enter the camp. When no creatures remain in the camp, the demiplane and all objects still within it are destroyed.

Varrox's Hoard

Varrox's hoard is full of the spoils of war from conquered lands. He keeps it in chests in his war room (area C8).

The hoard contains the following items:

- *Sands of war* (see below)
- *Chime of opening*
- Jar of *restorative ointment*
- 2 *potions of healing*
- *Potion of poison*
- *Battle Master's Compendium* (see below)
- Plate armor
- 5 casks of wine (worth 50 gp each)
- Ceremonial dagger with a bloodstone in the hilt (worth 500 gp)
- War mask painted with gold (worth 750 gp)
- 210 sp and 170 gp

Battle Master's Compendium

Written by Bloodlord Varrox, *Battle Master's Compendium* is a military treatise. Each of its thirteen chapters covers a different skill related to military strategy and tactics. The book's detailed analysis covers military units, weapons, strategy, rank, discipline, and much more.

When you study a chapter in the book for 1 hour during a short or long rest, you learn interesting military strategies. The first time you make an Intelligence or Charisma check to influence a general, monarch, or other military leader within the next 48 hours, you have advantage on the check.

Battle Master's Compendium

Sands of War

Wondrous Item, Rare (Requires Attunement)

This sand table is filled with black volcanic sand. It is 15 feet long, 5 feet wide, and 3 feet tall. While you touch the table, you have advantage on Intelligence (History) checks to recall military lore and on Charisma (Intimidation) checks.

When you use an action to speak the table's command phrase—"Prepare for war" in Infernal—the table turns into a 10-inch-tall, 3-inch-wide hourglass that weighs half a pound and is filled with black volcanic sand. You can speak the phrase again as an action to turn the hourglass back into a table, provided the hourglass has enough space to expand.

While you carry the hourglass, you are resistant to fire damage.

Additionally, while you hold the hourglass, you can use a bonus action to flip it and give yourself supernatural tactical insight. For 10 minutes, when you make an attack roll or saving throw, you can roll a d4 and add the number rolled to the attack roll or saving throw. Once this bonus action is used, it can't be used again until the following dawn.

A creature in possession of the hourglass can use an action to smash it on a solid surface. The hourglass is destroyed, and it explodes in a 30-foot-radius sphere centered on it. Each creature in that area must make a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw, taking 44 (8d10) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Slaughter Demon

When evil hobgoblins who embrace their fiendish heritage need to wipe an enemy off the map, their war mages ritualistically beseech an archdevil for the service of a grack'tanar, known as a slaughter demon in the Common tongue. Once summoned, this towering, serpent-bodied, six-clawed demon slithers to war alongside the hobgoblins who summoned them.

Devils captured the grack'tanars eons ago. Broken, these demons wait for a call to war, hungry and frothing in the Seven Cities of Hell. Their archdevil captors reward loyal hobgoblins by allowing the mortals to hold a grack'tanar's reins for a time. These slaughter demons are eager to kill and please their captors so they might be sent out again, and they rarely turn on hobgoblins unless they fall into lethe.

Camp Firefield Stat Blocks

The following stat blocks appear in the lair.

Bloodlord Varrox

CR 8 Leader
Medium Humanoid (Hobgoblin), Lawful Evil 3,900 XP

Armor Class 18 (plate)
Hit Points 119 (14d8 + 56)
Speed 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws Wis +5, Cha +5
Skills Arcana +3, Athletics +7, History +3, Intimidation +5
Damage Resistances fire, necrotic
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12
Languages Common, Goblin, Infernal
Proficiency Bonus +3

Infernal Ichor. When Varrox dies, his corpse unleashes a spray of burning orange ichor. Each creature within 5 feet of him takes 5 fire damage.

Infernal Sacrifice (3/Day). When Varrox fails a saving throw, he can call on Hell to succeed instead. When he does, each ally within 60 feet of him takes 5 necrotic damage.

Actions

Multiattack. Varrox makes three attacks using Soulsword, Death Skulls, or both.

Soulsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) slashing damage plus 10 (3d6) necrotic damage. If the target is a creature, they can't regain hit points until the start of Varrox's next turn.

Death Skulls. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) piercing damage plus 9 (2d8) fire damage, and Varrox can teleport to an unoccupied space he can see within 5 feet of the target.

Bonus Actions

Advance and Attack. Varrox barks orders at one ally within 60 feet of him who can hear him. That ally can use their reaction to move up to their speed and make a weapon attack.

Reactions

An Army from Blood. When a non-minion hobgoblin who Varrox can see within 60 feet of him takes damage, Varrox magically summons three **hobgoblin recruits** who appear in unoccupied spaces nearest to the damaged hobgoblin.

Villain Actions

Varrox has three villain actions. He can take each action once during an encounter after an enemy's turn. He can take these actions in any order but can use only one per round.

Action 1: Uncanny Leadership. Varrox chooses up to six non-minion allies within 60 feet of him who can see or hear him. Varrox and each chosen creature gain 10 temporary hit points and can move up to their speed.

Action 2: Hellish Transport. Varrox and each ally within 60 feet of him can teleport up to 60 feet to an unoccupied space they can see.

Action 3: I Am Fire and Death. Each enemy within 20 feet of Varrox must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, taking 11 (2d10) fire damage plus 11 (2d10) necrotic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. After the explosion, a shroud of black flame covers Varrox for 1 minute. For the duration, each time another creature hits Varrox with an attack while within 5 feet of him or touches him, that creature takes 5 (1d10) fire damage plus 5 (1d10) necrotic damage.

Bloodlord Varrox Rides Again!

If the characters managed to dispatch Bloodlord Varrox, the hobgoblin could easily return with the help of his infernal patrons to take revenge on the heroes who killed him. When Bloodlord Varrox returns from death, he can be more powerful than his previous incarnation, choosing from or inspired by one of the following options:

- Varrox returns with 168 hit points and a Strength of 24 (+7). Because of his new Strength score, he makes Strength (Athletics) checks with a +10 bonus and makes Soulsword and Death Skulls attacks with a +10 bonus to attack rolls and a +7 bonus to damage rolls.
- Varrox returns as a **devil adjudicator** (see "ECAS Stat Blocks").
- Varrox returns as a **vampire** (see "Shadowkeep Stat Blocks").

Bloodlord Varrox stands victorious over his vanquished enemies.

Devil Notary

CR 6 Minion
Medium Fiend (Devil), Typically Lawful Evil 285 XP

Armor Class 15 (chain shirt)
Hit Points 13
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	15 (+2)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)

Damage Immunities fire
Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 12
Languages Common, Infernal
Proficiency Bonus +3

Importunity. At the start of the notary's turn, they can grant an infernal blessing to a non-minion ally they can see within 60 feet of them (no action required). The next time that ally makes an attack roll or saving throw before the start of the notary's next turn, the ally can add a +1 bonus to the roll. This bonus increases by 1 (maximum bonus of +5) for each notary who grants an infernal blessing to the creature.

Minion. If the notary takes damage from an attack or as the result of a failed saving throw, their hit points are reduced to 0. If the notary takes damage from another effect, they die if the damage equals or exceeds their hit point maximum; otherwise they take no damage.

True Name. If a creature the notary can hear within 60 feet of them speaks the notary's true name aloud, the notary loses their damage immunities and Importunity trait for 24 hours.

Actions

Brimstone (Group Attack). *Melee or Ranged Spell Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 30 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 fire damage.

Grilp

CR 1/4 Ambusher
Tiny Fiend (Devil), Typically Lawful Evil 50 XP

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)
Hit Points 10 (3d4 + 3)
Speed 30 ft., fly 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6 (–2)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)

Skills Stealth +6, Perception +3
Damage Immunities fire, necrotic
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13
Languages Goblin, Infernal
Proficiency Bonus +2

Shifting Camouflage. The grilp has advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks and can hide from creatures who are observing them.

Actions

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage, and if the target is a creature, they must succeed on a DC 11 Constitution saving throw or gain vulnerability to fire and necrotic damage until the start of the grilp's next turn.

Necrotic Mote. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +3 to hit, range 30 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d6) necrotic damage.

Hobgoblin Brandbearer

CR 5 Minion
Medium Humanoid (Hobgoblin), Any Alignment 225 XP

Armor Class 13 (hide armor)
Hit Points 12
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	15 (+2)

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10
Damage Immunities fire
Languages Common, Goblin, Infernal
Proficiency Bonus +2

Infernal Ichor. When a creature within 5 feet of the brandbearer reduces the brandbearer to 0 hit points, the brandbearer's corpse unleashes a spray of burning orange ichor. The creature who reduced the brandbearer to 0 hit points takes 1 fire damage.

Minion. If the brandbearer takes damage from an attack or as the result of a failed saving throw, their hit points are reduced to 0. If the brandbearer takes damage from another effect, they die if the damage equals or exceeds their hit point maximum; otherwise they take no damage.

Too Hot to Handle. Whenever an enemy takes fire damage from a non-minion creature, the enemy takes an extra 1 fire damage for each brandbearer within 5 feet of them.

Actions

Searing Grasp (Group Attack). *Melee Spell Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 fire damage. If three or more brandbearers joined the attack, the target has disadvantage on saving throws against powers, spells, and other supernatural effects that deal fire damage until the start of the brandbearer's next turn.

Hobgoblin Death Captain CR 6 Support

Medium Humanoid (Hobgoblin), Any Alignment 2,300 XP

Armor Class 20 (plate, shield)
Hit Points 90 (12d8 + 36)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	12 (+1)	17 (+3)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws Con +6, Wis +4
Skills Athletics +7, History +5, Intimidation +5, Perception +4
Damage Resistances fire
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14
Languages Common, Goblin, Infernal
Proficiency Bonus +3

Battle Ready. The captain and each ally within 60 feet of them who can hear them have advantage on initiative rolls and can't be surprised, provided the captain isn't incapacitated.

Infernal Ichor. When the captain dies, their corpse unleashes a spray of burning orange ichor. Each creature within 5 feet of the captain takes 5 fire damage.

Actions

Multiattack. The captain makes two Blightblade or two Eye Fire attacks. They can replace one attack with a use of On My Mark.

Blightblade. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) slashing damage plus 7 (2d6) necrotic damage.

Eye Fire. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +6 to hit, range 60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (4d6) fire damage.

On My Mark. The captain commands an ally within 60 feet of them who can hear them to attack. That ally can make a weapon attack (no action required), dealing an extra 3 (1d6) necrotic damage on a hit.

Bonus Actions

Lead the Charge (1/Day). The captain and each ally within 30 feet of them who can see them can move up to their speed without provoking opportunity attacks.

Reactions

Hidden Gift (3/Day). When an ally the captain can see within 30 feet of them takes damage, the captain magically turns that ally invisible. The ally remains invisible until the end of their next turn or until they attack, deal damage, or force another creature to make a saving throw.

Hobgoblin Firerunner CR 4 Skirmisher

Medium Humanoid (Hobgoblin), Any Alignment 1,100 XP

Armor Class 16 (studded leather)
Hit Points 78 (12d8 + 24)
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Dex +6
Skills Acrobatics +6
Damage Immunities fire
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11
Languages Common, Goblin, Infernal
Proficiency Bonus +2

Fiery Leap. The firerunner's long jump is up to 30 feet and their high jump is up to 15 feet, with or without a running start. The first time a firerunner lands after a jump on their turn, each creature within 5 feet of them takes 3 (1d6) fire damage.

Infernal Ichor. When the firerunner dies, their corpse unleashes a spray of burning orange ichor. Each creature within 5 feet of the firerunner takes 5 fire damage.

Actions

Multiattack. The firerunner makes two Fire Scimitar attacks.

Fire Scimitar. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) slashing damage plus 7 (2d6) fire damage.

Blaze Sprint (Recharge 5–6). The firerunner moves up to their speed without provoking opportunity attacks. Each creature they come within 5 feet of during this movement must make a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw, taking 10 (3d6) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Hobgoblin Incendiarist

CR 1 Artillery

Medium Humanoid (Hobgoblin), Any Alignment — 200 XP

Armor Class 15 (studded leather)
Hit Points 33 (6d8 + 6)
Speed 30 ft.

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

Skills Perception +5
Damage Resistances fire
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15
Languages Common, Goblin, Infernal
Proficiency Bonus +2

Infernal Ichor. When the incendiarist dies, their corpse unleashes a spray of burning orange ichor. Each creature within 5 feet of the incendiarist takes 3 fire damage.

Actions

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

Blazing Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 100/400 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d10 + 3) piercing damage, and if the target is a creature, they are set on fire. While on fire, the target takes 3 (1d6) fire damage at the end of each of their turns, and the target or another creature who can reach them can use an action to put out the flames. A creature who is already on fire suffers no additional effect from being set on fire in this way again.

Fire Mote (Recharge 6). The incendiarist shoots an explosive mote of fire at a creature they can see within 100 feet of them. The target must succeed on a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw or take 7 (2d6) fire damage and, if they are Large or smaller, fall prone. All other creatures within 15 feet of the target must succeed on a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw or take 3 (1d6) fire damage.

Hobgoblin Recruit

CR 1/2 Minion

Medium Humanoid (Hobgoblin), Any Alignment — 20 XP

Armor Class 14 (leather armor, shield)
Hit Points 7
Speed 30 ft.

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

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11
Damage Immunities fire
Languages Common, Goblin, Infernal
Proficiency Bonus +2

Infernal Ichor. When a creature within 5 feet of the recruit reduces the recruit to 0 hit points, the recruit's corpse unleashes a spray of burning orange ichor. The creature who reduced the recruit to 0 hit points takes 1 fire damage.

Minion. If the recruit takes damage from an attack or as the result of a failed saving throw, their hit points are reduced to 0. If the recruit takes damage from another effect, they die if the damage equals or exceeds their hit point maximum; otherwise they take no damage.

Tactical Positioning. When a non-minion ally attacks a creature, that ally gains a +1 bonus to the attack roll for each recruit within 5 feet of the target (maximum bonus of +5).

Actions

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

Right, hobgoblins. These guys are bad. Like, really really bad. The Society takes on dragons, demons, things from other worlds, but these guys are dangerous the way we're *dangerous. We're lucky they spend most of their time fighting each other. If they ever get organized, this world is in trouble.*

The Sun, Senior Pyrokinetic, The Society

Hobgoblin Smokebinder CR 2 Ambusher

Medium Humanoid (Hobgoblin), Any Alignment 450 XP

Armor Class 17 (studded leather, shield)
Hit Points 44 (8d8 + 8)
Speed 30 ft. (fly 30 ft. in smoke form)

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

Skills Stealth +5
Damage Resistances fire (bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from mundane attacks in smoke form)
Condition Immunities (grappled, restrained in smoke form)
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11
Languages Common, Goblin, Infernal
Proficiency Bonus +2

Amorphous (Smoke Form Only). The smokebinder can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing.

Infernal Ichor. When the smokebinder dies, their corpse unleashes a spray of burning orange ichor. Each creature within 5 feet of the smokebinder takes 3 fire damage.

Actions

Toxic Flame. *Melee Spell Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (3d6) fire damage. If the smokebinder has advantage on the attack roll, the target is poisoned and can't speak until the end of the target's next turn.

Choking Bolt. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +5 to hit, range 60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (2d8) fire damage. If the smokebinder has advantage on the attack roll, the target can't speak until the end of the target's next turn.

Bonus Actions

Smoke Form (1/Day). The smokebinder transforms from flesh into a magical gray smoke for 1 minute. Any equipment they are wearing or carrying is also transformed for the duration.

While in smoke form, the smokebinder gains a flying speed equal to their walking speed, resistance to bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from mundane attacks, and immunity to the grappled and restrained conditions.

The smokebinder can revert to their true form as a bonus action. If the smokebinder becomes incapacitated or dies, they revert to their true form.

Sneak (Smoke Form Only). The smokebinder takes the Hide action.

Hobgoblin Tactician Retainer

Medium Humanoid (Hobgoblin), Any Alignment

Armor Class 15 (medium armor)
Hit Points Seven times their level (number of d8 Hit Dice equal to their level)
Speed 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws +PB to all
Skills Arcana +3 plus PB, History +3 plus PB
Damage Resistances fire
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11
Languages Common, Goblin, Infernal
Proficiency Bonus (PB) equals the mentor's bonus

Signature Attack (Flame Touch). *Melee or Ranged Spell Attack:* +3 plus PB to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d10) fire damage. A flammable object hit by this spell ignites if it isn't being worn or carried. This spell's damage increases by 1d10 when the tactician reaches 5th level (2d10), 11th level (3d10), and 17th level (4d10).

Features

3rd Level: Heat Seeker (3/Day). As an action, the tactician makes a signature attack but doesn't make an attack roll for it. Instead, the attack automatically hits, and each ally within 30 feet of the target can use their reaction to move up to their speed toward the target.

5th Level: Beacon (3/Day). When the tactician hits with a signature attack, each creature within 5 feet of the target can use a reaction to make a melee weapon attack against the target.

7th Level: Explosion (1/Day). As an action, the tactician hurls a ball of fire at a point they can see within 120 feet of them. The ball explodes in a 20-foot-radius sphere, forcing each enemy in that area to make a DC 10 plus PB Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save, a creature takes PBd12 fire damage and is pushed 20 feet away from the center of the area. On a successful save, a creature takes half as much damage and isn't pushed. The fire spreads around corners and ignites flammable objects in the area that aren't being worn or carried.

Hobgoblin Trooper

CR 1/2 Soldier

Medium Humanoid (Hobgoblin), Any Alignment — 100 XP

Armor Class 16 (ring mail, shield)
Hit Points 18 (4d8)
Speed 30 ft.

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

Skills Athletics +4, Perception +2
Damage Resistances fire
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12
Languages Common, Goblin, Infernal
Proficiency Bonus +2

Infernal Ichor. When the trooper dies, their corpse unleashes a spray of burning orange ichor. Each creature within 5 feet of the trooper takes 2 fire damage.

Actions

Fire Flail. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) bludgeoning damage, and another target within 5 feet of the first takes 2 (1d4) fire damage.

Brimstone Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 30/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage plus 2 (1d4) fire damage.

Bonus Action

Fight Me, Coward. The trooper hexes a creature within 5 feet of them who isn't already hexed by another trooper. The first time on a turn a hexed creature damages a creature other than the trooper, the hexed creature takes 5 fire damage. The hex lasts until the start of the trooper's next turn.

Hobgoblin War Mage

CR 3 Controller

Medium Humanoid (Hobgoblin), Any Alignment — 700 XP

Armor Class 15 (chain shirt)
Hit Points 65 (10d8 + 20)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	15 (+2)	15 (+2)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Int +6, Cha +5
Skills Arcana +6, History +6
Damage Resistances fire
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12
Languages Common, Goblin, Infernal
Proficiency Bonus +2

Infernal Ichor. When the mage dies, their corpse unleashes a spray of burning orange ichor. Each creature within 5 feet of the mage takes 5 fire damage.

Actions

Infernal Teleport. *Melee Spell Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d10) necrotic damage, and if the target is a creature, they must succeed on a DC 14 Charisma saving throw or be teleported up to 15 feet to an unoccupied space the mage can see.

Rain Hellfire (2nd-Level Spell). The mage rains fire down on a point they can see within 60 feet of them. Each creature in a 10-foot-radius sphere centered on that point must make a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw, taking 10 (3d6) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. The fire spreads around corners, and it ignites flammable objects in that area that aren't being worn or carried.

Unhallowed Ground (3rd-Level Spell; Concentration). The mage chooses a point on the ground that they can see within 60 feet of them. A 20-foot square of glowing, unholy energy appears on the ground centered on that point and lasts for up to 1 minute. Each enemy in that area is vulnerable to fire damage.

Reactions

Spell Siphon. When a creature the mage can see within 60 feet of them casts a spell, the mage reflects some of the spell's magical energy back at the caster. The caster must succeed on a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw or take 3 (1d6) force damage per level of the triggering spell (minimum 1d6 force damage).

Slaughter Demon

CR 8 Brute

Huge Fiend (Demon, Category 3), Typically Chaotic Evil — 3,900 XP

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)
Hit Points 138 (12d12 + 60)
Souls 2 (1d4)
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
22 (+6)	10 (+0)	20 (+5)	8 (–1)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Str +9, Dex +3, Con +8
Skills Athletics +9, Perception +7
Damage Resistances fire
Condition Immunities flanked
Senses darkvision 60 ft., soulsight 30 ft., passive Perception 17
Languages Abyssal, Goblin, Infernal
Proficiency Bonus +3

Lethe. When the demon's soul count is 0, they have advantage on attack rolls, disadvantage on saving throws, and their Intelligence score becomes 3 (–4). Additionally, the demon must use their movement on each of their turns to move as close as possible to the nearest creature they can sense with their soulsight, and then if they are able, they must use their action to attack and attempt to kill that creature. The demon can't act with any other purpose until they add 1 to their soul count.

Soul Devourer. When the demon reduces a creature who isn't a Construct or an Undead to 0 hit points or deals damage to a dying creature, the creature must make a DC 11 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, the demon consumes the creature's soul and adds 1 to the demon's soul count. A creature whose soul is consumed in this way immediately dies, and they can't be restored to life by any means short of a *wish* spell.

Actions

Multiattack. The demon makes four attacks using Pincer, Sword, Javelin, or a combination of them. They can replace one of these attacks with a Tail Spike attack. The demon can burn 1 soul to make a fifth attack using Pincer, Sword, or Javelin.

Pincer. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d6 + 6) bludgeoning damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 17). While grappled, the target is restrained. The demon has six pincers, each of which can grapple a target or wield a weapon.

Sword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (2d8 + 6) slashing damage.

Javelin. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 10 ft. or range 60/240 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d6 + 6) piercing damage.

Tail Spike. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (1d10 + 6) piercing damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 16 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 1 minute (save ends at end of turn).

Bonus Actions

Dive Deep (Costs 1 Soul). The demon takes the Disengage action and gains a burrowing speed equal to their walking speed until the end of their next turn.

Shifting Library

Optimized for Five 7th-Level Characters

Once a humble historian and archaeologist, Kiona Duemois stumbled across the *Codex Mortis*, a powerful tome of necromancy, in her travels. It changed her life forever—and ended it.

She spent months poring over her discovery, attempting to decipher the book's archaic passages. At first, she only meant to study the tome and record notes on her findings … but the codex called to her. Enthralled, Kiona convinced herself that she should just perform one of the book's smaller incantations for posterity. That one spell destroyed her earthly form and turned her ragged soul into a twisted, shadowy abomination of dark power.

The *Codex Mortis* mysteriously disappeared shortly after Kiona's death. In her new form, she set out to amass more power. The once genial archaeologist thirsts for the life of the living and yearns to hold the *Codex Mortis* once more. To those ends, she has built an army of spectral undead who carry out her every desire. (You can find out more about the *Codex Mortis* in *Strongholds & Followers*.)

Kiona makes her home in the Shifting Library, a collection of rare tomes stashed in a shadowy demiplane that overlaps with the Mundane World. Kiona's spectral undead servants gather lore and rumors from across the timescape and bring them back to the library to aid Kiona in her search for the *Codex Mortis*.

Library Story Hooks

You can use one of the following story hooks to integrate this lair into an adventure:

Ancestral Curse. A prominent half-elf noble, Banara Starweaver, is the latest inheritor of an ancestral curse. Her trusted sages have tracked down a rare incantation to finally free Banara and her descendants from the curse, but the incantation is inscribed on a scroll in the Shifting Library's scroll room (area K6). Banara offers the characters 3,000 gp to recover the scroll.

Missing Mages. Just before their disappearance, human arcanists Brada and Micus wrote a controversial thesis on the nature of death, based on recorded fragments from the *Codex Mortis*. They left behind a note hinting that they seek to verify their thesis at the tome's last known location—the Shifting Library. In exchange for bringing back the arcanists or proof of their demise, the mages of Brada and Micus's order offer ten *spell scrolls* of the characters' choice. Each scroll must contain a wizard spell of 4th level or lower that requires no costly material components.

Spectral Librarian. A **wraith** has been spotted stealing tomes from a university library, and the characters are offered 3,000 gp to stop the thefts. When confronted, the undead vanishes, leaving behind an unstable portal to the Shifting Library.

Library Features

Unless otherwise noted, each area of the Shifting Library has the following features:

Academic Luxury. The library's floors and walls are made of glittering, white-veined black marble inlaid with brass.

Ceilings. The library's ceilings are 10 feet high.

Chill of the Grave. The chill of the grave permeates the library. When a creature who isn't Undead takes a short or long rest within the library, they must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw to gain the benefits of that rest. A creature automatically succeeds on this saving throw if they are wearing cold weather gear or are resistant or immune to cold damage.

Illumination. Gas lamps on wrought iron stands are placed at regular intervals, filling each area of the library with dim light.

Private Collection. The library is a demiplane under Kiona's control. If a character carries a book out of the library, the book crumbles to dust then reappears on the shelf it was taken from. At the GM's discretion, supernatural tomes kept in the library aren't subject to this effect.

Librarians

When the *Codex Mortis* shattered Kiona's soul, pieces of her essence became separate phantoms whom Kiona dubbed librarians. Each librarian resembles Kiona, a half-orc sage, at a different point in her life between the ages of twenty and forty. Their attire varies between adventuring gear, academic dress, high society formalwear, and casual slacks and tunics. The Dread Lord surrounds herself with these spectral undead, who gather and catalog fragments of lore about the *Codex Mortis*.

The librarians ignore intruders who leave them be. If a creature speaks to or otherwise disturbs the librarians, or if the librarians notice a creature attempting to damage or take take anything from the library or touch any of the books, the librarians attack. If a creature attacks a librarian, any nearby librarians rush to their ally's defense. The librarians take advantage of their incorporeal nature to move through the bookshelves to attack then disappear.

Once they start fighting, the librarians battle until destroyed. Interrogating them yields no information. When a librarian is destroyed in the library, they leave behind a glowing blue ectoplasm.

Resting in the Library

Provided the characters first deal with any enemies in an area, they can take a short or long rest in any area without incident.

Shifting Library Map

Entering the Library

There are two ways to enter the Shifting Library.

In the Shadows. The librarians frequently move in and out of the Mundane World, searching for new lore to add to Kiona's collection. A librarian can use an action to leave the Shifting Library and arrive at a destination they know of in the Mundane World, or vice versa. When they travel in this way from the Mundane World, a librarian leaves a shadowy rift in the space they left, which lasts for 30 seconds. A creature who enters this rift arrives in the library's entryway (area K1).

Kiona's Trap. If the characters have knowledge about the *Codex Mortis* that Kiona desires, the Dread Lord lays a magical trap in the form of a cursed tome or scroll. When a creature reads the text, they must make a DC 20 Charisma saving throw. On a failed save, the creature teleports directly to Kiona's study (area K8), leaving the cursed text behind. On a successful save, the creature knows that the text was attempting to transport them somewhere and they can choose to fail the saving throw instead.

Shifting Library Areas

The following areas are keyed to the Shifting Library Map.

K1. Entryway

This room is brightly lit by candles. It has the following features:

- "Hundreds of blue-flamed candles in wall niches flood the room with light."
- "Against the north wall, two overstuffed leather chairs sit alongside a sideboard holding a decanter of bloodred wine and several bottles of liquor."
- (**Secret**) Five blood-borne oozes lurk at the bottom of the wine decanter.

Oozes. Kiona captured five **blood-borne oozes**, who she now keeps as guardians in the decanter. The oozes attack any creature who opens the decanter and fight to the death. A character who examines the glassware without removing the lid can tell there are creatures inside with a successful DC 14 Intelligence (Arcana or Investigation) check.

Lighting. The candles' blue flames are illusions that produce no heat. A candle can be carried throughout the library, but it disappears if a creature removes it from the demiplane. Each candle sheds bright light in a 10-foot radius and dim light for an additional 10 feet.

Door Out. The door that leads outside can't be opened. When a creature touches the door, they hear Kiona's voice in their mind say, "Only the void lies beyond."

Treasure. The sideboard contains eight bottles of spirits (worth 6 gp each).

K2. Foyer

This area has the following features:

- "A large, rectangular table made of dark wood occupies an empty balcony. On one corner of the table sits a silver service bell and a conical lamp."
- "Behind the desk, a wrought iron rail overlooks the library's ground floor."

For Whom the Bell Tolls. If the characters ring the service bell or linger for more than 5 minutes around the table, the four **lightthieves** from the ground floor bookstacks (area K3) arrive and attack. If the characters ring the bell more than once, the librarians from the upper floor bookstacks (area K3) also attack.

K3. Bookstacks

Both levels of the library contain bookstacks arranged on three walls. These areas have the following features:

- "Gas lamps attached to the balcony's support pillars dimly illuminate rows of bookshelves."
- *(If the characters haven't already provoked the librarians and engaged them in combat)* "Spectral figures move between the stacks, replacing and removing books."
- (**Secret**) If the characters didn't attract their attention in area K2, four lightthieves hide in the lamps on the bookstacks' ground floor.

Lightthieves. Four **lightthieves** escaped the Hell gate (area K5) and now infest the bookstacks. They make their homes in the lamps mounted on the ground floor. These fiends ignore Kiona and the librarians, instead ambushing and feeding on any creature carrying light sources who isn't Undead. If combat against a lightthief lasts more than 3 rounds, or if the characters damage the library during combat, the librarians on the same level as the battle join the fray, attacking the characters.

Librarians. Each floor of the bookstacks is haunted by a group of librarians made up of a **wraith**, a **specter**, and five **shades**. The librarians pore endlessly through books while roaming the stacks, hoping to glean new information about the *Codex Mortis* to share with Kiona. A character who succeeds on a DC 14 Wisdom (Insight) check can tell that disturbing the librarians' work or touching the books will be met with violence.

If combat against the librarians on one level of the library lasts more than 2 rounds, the librarians from the other level arrive at the start of the third round to aid their allies.

Gas Lamps. On both levels, each support pillar holds a gas lamp 5 feet above the floor. A lamp fixture has AC 11, 4 hit points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage. When a fixture is broken, it releases flammable gas in a 15-foot radius around it that lasts for 1 minute. A creature who takes fire damage while in the area of the gas takes an extra 5 (1d10) fire damage.

Books. Most of the books in the library are about necromancy. A character who succeeds on a DC 16 Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check can remove a book from a shelf without the librarians noticing. The characters can find books with any of the following information:

- A ritual that opens a portal to the Seven Cities of Hell; annotations indicate a special place in the library has been magically prepared for the ritual (this is the Hell gate in area K5)
- Detailed instructions for ritually creating a lich, mummy, vampire, or other Undead creature
- A spellbook containing necromancy spells such as *animate dead*, *bestow curse*, *blight*, *false life*, or *ray of enfeeblement*
- A visual guide to cursed magic items

K4. Ground Floor Desks

This area has the following features:

- "A large table and several writing desks are littered with open books."
- **"**Scattered notes are strewn about, written primarily in Common, but with smatterings of Infernal and Orc."

Notes. The books and papers contain notes on the *Codex Mortis* and other necromantic lore. When a librarian finds important information in a tome, they bring it here for Kiona to collect. A character who spends 1 minute looking at the notes and makes an Intelligence (Investigation) check, made with advantage if they can read Infernal or Orc, learns the following cumulative information based on the result:

9 or Lower. A half-orc sage named Kiona Duemois has been studying necromancy related to the *Codex Mortis* here. The codex is a powerful book that can reanimate the dead.

10–14. Kiona was killed in an accident attempting to decipher the *Codex Mortis*. The ritual shattered her soul, turned her into an undead creature, and created the librarians and the library. Kiona lost the *Codex Mortis* after the accident. The codex allows its wielder to command certain Undead.

15–19. Kiona searches for the *Codex Mortis* so she can raise an army of spectral undead and enhance the power of her current form. She sends the librarians out to the Mundane World to steal rare texts related to the *Codex Mortis* and store them in the library, where the librarians then pore over the pages for any clue about the infamous codex. The character also finds a hidden *spell scroll* (see "Treasure").

20 or Higher. Kiona has begun sending her librarians into other worlds for books. The first place she has dared to send them is the Seven Cities of Hell. In the hands of a powerful mage, the codex can be used to restore the forms of destroyed vampires and liches imprisoned in the Seven Cities.

The first time a character makes a check to search these notes, they notice any librarians in the ground floor bookstacks (area K3) watching them closely. Additional characters can make another check to search the notes, but as soon as they do, these librarians attack.

Treasure. In addition to the notes, the first character who succeeds on a DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check to look through the lore finds a *spell scroll* of *speak with dead* tucked within the stacks of paper.

K5. Hell Gate

A red velvet rope bars the door to this room. Hanging from the rope is a small placard with "DO NOT ENTER" printed in polite-but-firm slab serif type.

The door to this room is locked. A character can pick the lock with a successful DC 20 Dexterity check using thieves' tools or break the door open with a successful DC 12 Strength check. The key to this door is in Kiona's office (area K8). The door has AC 15, 18 hit points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage. Damaging the door draws the attention of the librarians from both levels of the library's bookstacks (area K3). Picking the lock and opening the door also attracts their attention unless the character succeeds on a DC 12 Dexterity (Stealth) check.

This room has the following features:

- "The room reeks of decaying flesh with a hint of acrid woodsmoke."
- "The wall opposite the entrance is burned black and engraved with softly glowing red runes."
- "In the center of the floor lie the shriveled corpses of two bearded humans in mage robes. Their faces are frozen in expressions of horror."

Corpses. To activate the Hell gate in this room, Kiona sacrificed Brada and Micus, two mages who dared to enter the library and touch the Dread Lord's books while searching for the location of the *Codex Mortis*. The bodies have no wounds, and a character who examines the bodies and succeeds on a DC 13 Intelligence (Arcana) or Wisdom (Medicine) check knows the mages were killed by necrotic damage.

Infernal Runes. A creature who can read Infernal or who examines the runes and succeeds on a DC 17 Intelligence (Arcana) check knows that the runes are part of a ritual used to open a gate to the Seven Cities of Hell. As an action, a creature who can reach the runes can mar them with a weapon or tool, making it impossible to perform the ritual in this room until the runes are restored. If the runes are marred, each creature in this room must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw, taking 22 (4d10) force damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Hellgate. Kiona has used this gate twice. The ritual to reopen the gate is located in the bookstacks (see "Books" in area K3). To open the gate, a character must perform the ritual for one uninterrupted hour in this room. The ritual's

final step requires killing an incapacitated creature who isn't a Construct or Undead.

If the ritual is successful, the wall opposite the door becomes a swirling orange portal leading to the Seven Cities that lasts for 1 hour. The exact location the portal leads to is up to the GM's discretion. When the portal opens, there is a 50 percent chance that four **hellhounds** come through it, attacking any creatures they come across and fighting to the death.

K6. Scroll Room

This room has the following features:

- "Dozens of hive-like shelves cover the walls of this chamber, each stuffed with ancient, loose scroll cases. Some of the cases are sealed with wax or clay."
- "Two bearded, shadowy figures wearing mage robes silently arrange the scroll cases on the shelves, dripping spectral dust behind them."
- (**Secret**) A magic ward keeps this room silent.

Wraiths. The two **wraiths** in this room are Brada and Micus, adventurers sacrificed to open the Hell gate (see "Corpses" in area K5). Unlike the librarians, they don't resemble Kiona. They attack when they notice intruders, fighting to the death.

Silence Ward. To prevent the librarians from accidentally casting spells by reading scrolls aloud, Kiona warded this room with a permanent *silence* spell. If a character who has a passive Wisdom (Perception) score of 18 or higher listens at the door or opens it, they notice no sound comes from the room. A creature inside this room is immune to thunder damage, deafened, and can't cast spells that include a verbal component. A *dispel magic* spell cast on the room ends the effect.

Treasure. Most of the scrolls contain personal accounts of necromancers doing grim research. A character who spends 2 minutes searching the scrolls finds a diamond (worth 300 gp) and three *spell scrolls*: *bestow curse*, *dimension door*, and *speak with dead*.

K7. Storage

The door to this area is held shut by stacks of books. A character who succeeds on a DC 11 Strength check forces the door open. If a character fails this check, the librarians in the ground floor bookstacks (area K3) attack.

This room has no light sources and the characters only notice the following features if they have a light or another way to see in the dark:

- "Every area of this room is piled with books, filling it with a musty old-book smell."
- (**Secret**) Kiona's old spellbook is hidden among the tomes.

Treasure. Most of these books—biographies of mages, arcane history, and similar academic fare—have been deemed worthless to Kiona's hunt. However, a character who searches the piles of books for 10 minutes and succeeds on a DC 14 Intelligence (Investigation) check finds the spellbook Kiona used when she was alive. It contains the following spells: *alarm*, *detect magic*, *floating disk*, *identify*, *illusory script*, *locate object*, *longstrider*, *magic mouth*, *rope trick*, *suggestion*, and *web*. A small vial of rare ink (worth 150 gp) is tucked into a space carved into the leather-bound book's back cover.

K8. Kiona's Office

The iron door to this room is locked and has no visible keyhole. A plaque on the door reads, "The blood of a being half in this world and half in another can open the door to knowledge." A character who is proficient in Arcana or Religion knows that spectral Undead are often said to have one foot in the world of the living and another in the world of the dead.

If a spectral Undead touches the door, or if a creature coats part of their body in a librarian's ectoplasm (see "Librarians") then touches the door, the door unlocks. The iron door has AC 19, 27 hit points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage.

This room has the following features:

- "A spectral half-orc hovers over an iron desk, upon which a magic lantern swirls with unnatural blue light. Her face is furrowed with desperation as she examines the tomes and notes strewn across the desk."
- "Glass cases on the walls display jeweled rods, staffs, and wands, interspersed with small metal shelves filled with books."
- (**Secret**) The desk is warded against magic hostile to Kiona.

Kiona. If the characters reached the library of their own volition, **Kiona the Dread Lord** asks why they disturb her research. A character who succeeds on a DC 15 Charisma (Deception or Persuasion) check convinces Kiona they have information to share about the *Codex Mortis*. If Kiona's teleportation trap (see "Entering the Library") brought the characters there, she asks what they know about the *Codex Mortis*.

If a character offers information about the codex's whereabouts and can either prove the information's veracity or succeed on a DC 17 Charisma (Deception or Persuasion) check, Kiona gives the characters one item from her hoard as thanks before using an action to open a portal to a destination in the Mundane World of the characters' choosing. If the characters fail to prove their usefulness to Kiona, she attacks. Any remaining spectral Undead in the library hasten to the Dread Lord's side. Undead on the ground floor join combat immediately, while Undead on the upper floor appear in the office at the start of the third round of combat.

Kiona fights until reduced to 30 hit points or fewer, then she begs the characters for mercy. She opens a portal to the Mundane World and tells the characters they can take anything from her hoard, except her books. If the characters take her books, Kiona fights to the death.

Warded Desk. When a creature Kiona can see who isn't Undead casts a spell within 60 feet of her desk, the spellcaster must succeed on an Intelligence (Arcana) check with a DC equal to 10 + the spell's level or take 2 (1d4) psychic damage per level of the spell. A *dispel magic* spell cast on the desk ends the effect.

Treasure. The display cases, desk, and bookshelves contain Kiona's treasure hoard (see "Kiona's Hoard"). The books in this room can be removed from the library without them disappearing. In addition, the characters find a key to the Hell gate (area K5).

Mutual Destruction

If Kiona is destroyed, the following occurs:

- Each book in the library immediately fades—except for those from Kiona's office (area K8), which contain her personal notes—returning to the place the librarians stole it from.
- A 10-foot-diameter portal immediately opens on both levels of the bookstacks. The one-way portals lead to the location the characters were when they entered the library; creatures can only use the portals to leave the library, not return to it.
- After 1 hour, the library breaks apart as its walls and floors fade into the void. Any creature still in the library 1 minute after it begins to break apart takes 16 (3d10) psychic damage and is teleported to a random location in the Mundane World (chosen by the GM).

Kiona's Hoard

Kiona's hoard is contained in her office (area K8). The hoard contains the following items:

- *Soul lamp* (see below)
- *Staff of the python*
- *Wand of magic detection*
- *Potion of resistance* (necrotic)
- *Spell scroll* of *raise dead*
- Kiona's notes (see below)
- Flask of holy water
- Jasper wand (worth 25 gp)
- 2 smooth black onyx stones (worth 100 gp each)
- 2 longswords with sapphire-studded hilts (worth 150 gp each)
- Ornate golden reliquary (worth 200 gp)
- Pouch of ruby dust (worth 350 gp)
- Emerald wand (worth 500 gp)
- Gold rod set with rubies (worth 500 gp)
- Onyx staff set with black sapphires (worth 750 gp)
- Diamond rod (worth 1,000 gp)
- Velvet pouch containing 9 cp, 41 sp, and 135 gp

Kiona's Notes

Kiona has filled nearly thirty books with notes and secrets about the *Codex Mortis*. If you spend 80 hours studying Kiona's notes, you gain the following benefits:

- You have advantage on Intelligence checks to recall or understand lore about necromancy and the *Codex Mortis*.
- You have advantage on death saving throws.
- When you cast a necromancy spell, the gold piece cost of the spell's material components is halved.

Soul Lamp

Wondrous Item, Rare (Requires Attunement)

Swirling soul energy fills the glass globe of this lantern.

The lantern has 6 charges. As an action, you can speak the lantern's command word and expend 1 charge to summon a **specter** residing within the lantern. The specter appears in an unoccupied space within 5 feet of you. They know and can speak any language you know, obey your verbal commands, and act immediately after you in the initiative order. The specter is destroyed after 1 hour or when it drops to 0 hit points. The lamp can only have one specter summoned at a time.

The lantern regains 1 charge when a creature who isn't a Construct or Undead dies within 20 feet of the lantern, allowing the lamp to draw their soul into it.

Soul Lamp

Library Stat Blocks

The following stat blocks appear in the lair.

Blood-Borne Ooze

CR 1/4 Ambusher

Tiny Ooze, Typically Neutral Evil — 50 XP

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)
Hit Points 14 (4d4 + 4)
Speed 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (–1)	15 (+2)	13 (+1)	1 (–5)	10 (+0)	2 (–4)

Skills Stealth +4
Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, deafened, exhaustion, flanked, prone
Senses blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 10
Languages —
Proficiency Bonus +2

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

False Appearance. While the ooze remains motionless, they are indistinguishable from a pool of blood.

Actions

Pseudopod. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) bludgeoning damage plus 2 (1d4) necrotic damage. If the target is a creature who isn't a Construct or an Undead, they must succeed on a DC 11 Constitution saving throw or the ooze melds into the target's body. While inside a creature, the ooze has total cover against attacks and other effects originating outside that host.

If the host creature takes 5 damage or more on a single turn from a source other than the ooze, the ooze must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw at the end of that turn or exit the host, entering the nearest unoccupied space of the ooze's choice. A *cure ailment* power, *protection from poison* spell, or *lesser restoration* spell cast on the host also forces the ooze out. By spending 5 feet of their movement, the ooze can voluntarily leave the host's body.

Crimson Feast (Inside Host Only). The ooze consumes their host creature's bodily fluids. The host must make a DC 11 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the host takes 5 (2d4) necrotic damage and is poisoned until the end of their next turn. On a successful save, the host takes half as much damage and isn't poisoned.

Hellhound

CR 3 Soldier

Medium Fiend, Typically Neutral Evil — 700 XP

Armor Class 15 (natural armor; 18 with Hardened by Flame)
Hit Points 76 (9d8 + 36)
Speed 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	17 (+3)	19 (+4)	11 (+0)	8 (–1)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Dex +5, Con +6
Skills Perception +3, Stealth +7, Survival +3
Damage Immunities fire
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13
Languages understands Common and Infernal but can't speak
Proficiency Bonus +2

Hardened by Flame. When the hound is subjected to fire damage, they take no damage. Instead, their skin darkens and hardens, and their AC increases to 18 until the end of their next turn.

Stealthy Hunter. The hound has advantage on Wisdom (Survival) checks to track other creatures and on Dexterity (Stealth) checks to hide from creatures who are unaware of their presence.

Actions

Hellish Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage plus 4 (1d8) fire damage.

Hellfire Breath (Recharge 5–6). The hound exhales flame in a 15-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw, taking 14 (3d6 + 4) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. A creature who isn't a hellhound who fails the saving throw is lit on fire for 1 minute (save ends at end of turn), or until the target or another creature who can reach them uses an action to extinguish the flames. A creature who is on fire at the start of their turn takes 7 (2d6) fire damage. If a creature who is already on fire is set on fire again on a subsequent turn, the damage isn't cumulative, but the duration of the fire resets to 1 minute.

Reactions

Tug of War. When an enemy within 5 feet of the hound hits the hound with a melee attack, the hound can make a Hellish Bite attack against that enemy. If the hound's attack hits, the enemy is also grappled (escape DC 12), and if the triggering attack was a weapon attack, the weapon used in the triggering attack can't be used to make any more attacks while the target is grappled. The grapple ends if the hound attacks a different target with Hellish Bite.

Kiona the Dread Lord

CR 9 Leader

Medium Undead (Incorporeal), Chaotic Evil — 5,000 XP

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)
Hit Points 136 (16d8 + 64)
Speed 0 ft., fly 60 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (–1)	18 (+4)	18 (+4)	20 (+5)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)

Saving Throws Int +9, Wis +6
Skills Arcana +9, History +9, Perception +6
Damage Resistance acid, cold, fire, lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from mundane attacks
Damage Immunities necrotic, poison
Condition Immunities charmed, dazed, exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained, unconscious
Senses blindsight 60 ft., passive Perception 16
Languages Common, Draconic, Orc
Proficiency Bonus +4

Corrupting Phasing. Kiona can move through other creatures and objects. Kiona takes 5 (1d10) force damage if she ends her turn inside an object. A creature takes 9 (2d8) necrotic damage the first time Kiona passes through them on a turn.

Incorporeal Empowerment. Each incorporeal Undead within 120 feet of Kiona ignores difficult terrain.

Spiritual Sacrifice (3/Day). When Kiona fails a saving throw, she can lose 15 hit points and choose to succeed instead.

Actions

Multiattack. Kiona makes two Energy Siphon attacks.

Energy Siphon. *Melee or Ranged Spell Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 120 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 15 (3d6 + 5) necrotic damage, and the target can't regain hit points until the start of Kiona's next turn. Kiona gains temporary hit points equal to half the damage dealt by this attack.

Rise from Death (1/Day). Kiona conjures three **shadows**, two **specters**, or one **wraith** under her control. Each summoned creature appears in an unoccupied space within 30 feet of Kiona and acts immediately after her turn on the same initiative count.

Bonus Actions

Path of Pain. Kiona chooses one other incorporeal Undead within 120 feet of her who can see her. That Undead can move up to their speed.

Reactions

Death's Breath. When a creature within 5 feet of Kiona hits her with an attack, she breathes a toxin at the creature. The creature must succeed on a DC 17 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned until the end of their next turn.

Villain Actions

Kiona has three villain actions. She can take each action once during an encounter after an enemy's turn. She can take these actions in any order but can use only one per round.

Action 1: Restrain Them! A 20-foot-radius sphere of spectral arms emerges from a point Kiona can see within 120 feet of her. Each enemy in that area must succeed on a DC 17 Dexterity saving throw or be restrained until the end of Kiona's next turn.

Action 2: Ruinous March. Kiona and each ally within 60 feet of her can move up to their speed without provoking opportunity attacks.

Action 3: Vitality Drain. Kiona and each ally within 60 feet of her can make a melee attack (no action required). A creature hit by one of these attacks gains a level of exhaustion.

Lightthief

A lightthief is a fiend who comes to the Mundane World to feast on soul energy. They stalk graveyards and tombs, where they know vulnerable mourners come in the dark to pay their respects. These bat-winged creatures resemble flayed humanoid hands with a bloodshot eye leering from the palm—though their victims have little chance to notice them before darkness falls.

Lightthief

CR 2 Ambusher

Tiny Fiend, Typically Chaotic Evil

450 XP

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)
Hit Points 38 (11d4 + 11)
Speed 20 ft., fly 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6 (–2)	17 (+3)	12 (+1)	6 (–2)	16 (+3)	5 (–3)

Skills Perception +5, Stealth +5
Senses blindsight 60 ft., passive Perception 15
Languages understands Abyssal, Common, and Infernal but can't speak
Proficiency Bonus +2

Actions

Necrotic Drain. *Melee Spell Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) necrotic damage, or 13 (3d6 + 3) necrotic damage if the target can't see the lightthief.

Into the Light (Recharge 6). The lightthief teleports inside a light source they can see within 15 feet of them that is emitting bright or dim light. While inside the light source, the lightthief has total cover against attacks and other effects outside the light source. If the light source is extinguished by any means other than the lightthief's Steal Light action, the lightthief is forced out, appears in an unoccupied space of their choice within 5 feet of the light source, and is paralyzed until the end of their next turn.

Steal Light (Inside Light Source Only). The lightthief can cause the light they are inside to erupt in a burst of brilliant radiance. Each creature within 15 feet of the light source must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, a creature takes 14 (4d6) radiant damage and loses any darkvision they have for 1 minute. On a successful save, a creature takes half as much damage and doesn't lose their darkvision. After this, the light source extinguishes and the lightthief appears in an unoccupied space of their choice within 5 feet of the light source.

Shade

CR 1 Minion

Medium Undead (Incorporeal), Typically Chaotic Evil — 40 XP

Armor Class 11
Hit Points 8
Speed 0 ft., fly 50 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
1 (–5)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)

Damage Immunities necrotic, poison
Condition Immunities charmed, dazed, exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained, unconscious
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10
Languages the languages they knew in life
Proficiency Bonus +2

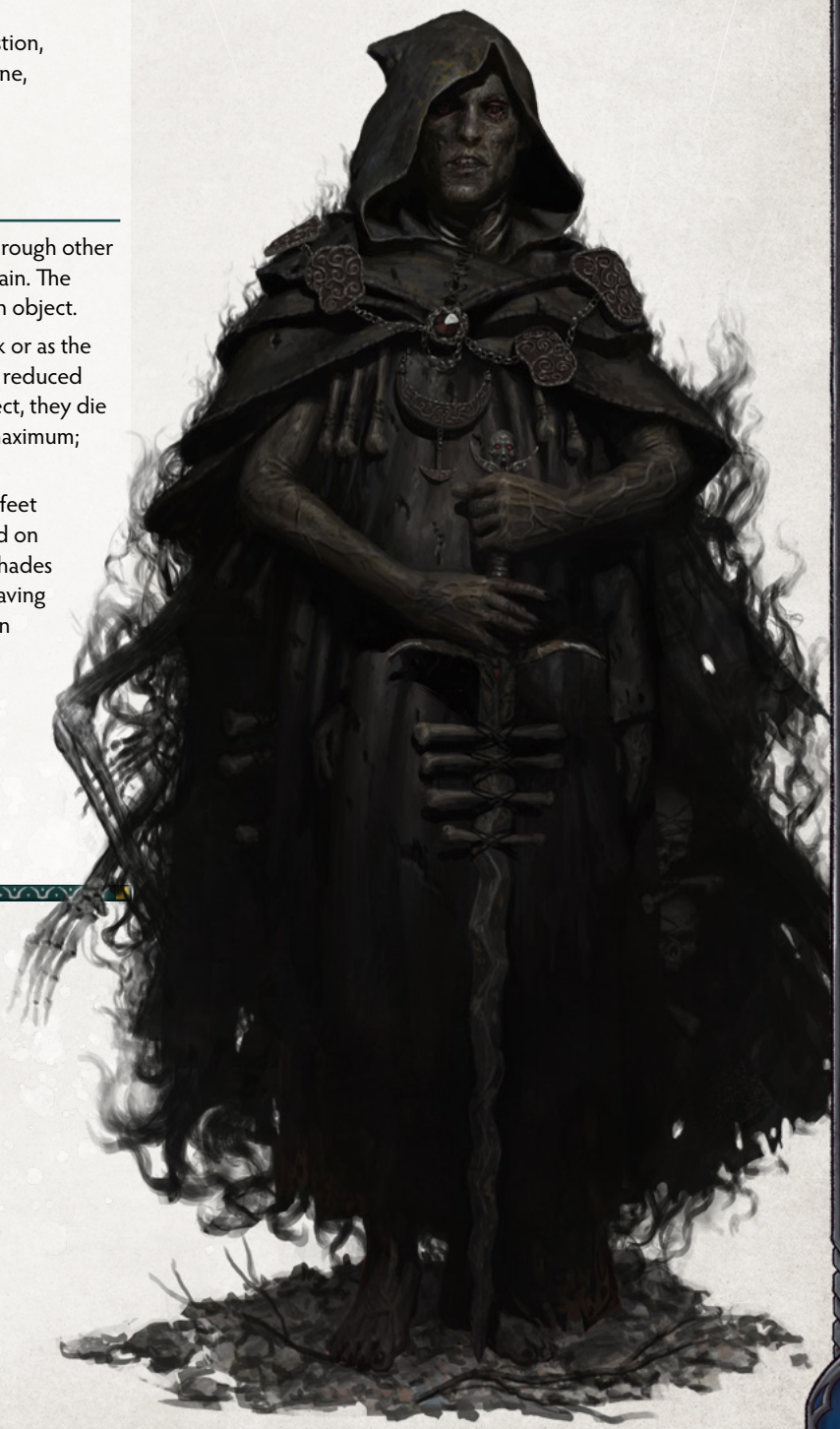
Incorporeal Movement. The shade can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. The shade is destroyed if they end their turn inside an object.

Minion. If the shade takes damage from an attack or as the result of a failed saving throw, their hit points are reduced to 0. If the shade takes damage from another effect, they die if the damage equals or exceeds their hit point maximum; otherwise they take no damage.

Terrifying. If an enemy starts their turn within 5 feet of three or more shades, the enemy must succeed on a Wisdom saving throw or be frightened of the shades until the start of their next turn. The DC for this saving throw equals 10 plus the number of shades within 5 feet of the enemy. On a successful save, the enemy is immune to the Terrifying trait of all shades for the next 24 hours.

Actions

Life Drain (Group Attack). *Melee Spell Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 1 necrotic damage.



Making Incorporeal Undead

Though most incorporeal undead were once Humanoid, you can easily make spectral undead from any other creature type. First, choose the stat block you want to use for the undead: shade, shadow, specter, or wraith. Then adjust the stat block's size and Intelligence score to match the original creature's statistics. That's all you need to do to make an incorporeal undead version of a creature.

Shadow

CR 1/2 Ambusher

Medium Undead (Incorporeal), Typically Chaotic Evil 100 XP

Armor Class 12
Hit Points 13 (3d8)
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6 (–2)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)

Skills Stealth +4
Damage Resistance acid, lightning, necrotic, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from mundane attacks
Damage Immunities cold, poison
Condition Immunities dazed, exhaustion, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10
Languages the languages they knew in life
Proficiency Bonus +2

Chilling Phasing. The shadow can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. The shadow takes 5 (1d10) force damage if they end their turn inside an object. A creature takes 1 cold damage the first time a shadow passes through them on a turn.

Dark Stalker. While in dim light or darkness, the shadow has advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks.

Actions

Chilling Grasp. *Melee Spell Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) cold damage, and the target's Dexterity score is reduced by 2. The target dies if this reduces their Dexterity to 0. Otherwise, the reduction lasts until the target finishes a short or long rest.

Freezing Dark (1/Day). The shadow pours magical darkness out of their hand in a 15-foot cone. A creature with dark-vision who isn't an incorporeal Undead can't see through this darkness, and light can't illuminate it. Each creature in this darkness when it first appears must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or take 7 (2d6) cold damage. The darkness remains in that area for 1 minute or until the shadow is destroyed.

Bonus Actions

Shadow Bind. The shadow targets one creature they can see within 15 feet of them who is in bright or dim light. The target must succeed on a DC 12 Strength saving throw or be grappled by their own shadow (escape DC 12). The grapple ends if the target is no longer in bright or dim light, or if the shadow who used this bonus action is destroyed.

Specter

CR 1 Skirmisher

Medium Undead (Incorporeal), Typically Chaotic Evil 200 XP

Armor Class 11
Hit Points 19 (3d8 + 6)
Speed 0 ft., fly 50 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
1 (–5)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	15 (+2)

Damage Resistance acid, cold, fire, lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from mundane attacks
Damage Immunities necrotic, poison
Condition Immunities charmed, dazed, exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained, unconscious
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10
Languages the languages they knew in life
Proficiency Bonus +2

Corrupting Phasing. The specter can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. The specter takes 5 (1d10) force damage if they end their turn inside an object. A creature takes 2 (1d4) necrotic damage the first time a specter passes through them on a turn.

Actions

Decaying Touch. *Melee Spell Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 7 (2d6) necrotic damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or spend 1 Hit Die without any benefit. If the target has no Hit Dice to spend, they drop to 0 hit points instead.

If a Humanoid dies within 1 minute of being hit by this attack, their spirit rises as a **specter** under the GM's control in an unoccupied space nearest to where that Humanoid died.

Bonus Actions

Hidden Movement (Recharge 5–6). The specter turns invisible and then moves up to their speed. At the end of this movement, the invisibility ends.

I dunno why it's always wraiths. Dealt with a lot of deathless, but wraiths are the worst. They're always pissed about something.

Dancer, Chronicler of the Chain of Acheron, Heroes 216–231

Wraith

CR 5 Controller
1,800 XP

Medium Undead (Incorporeal), Typically Chaotic Evil

Armor Class 12
Hit Points 58 (9d8 + 18)
Speed 0 ft., fly 60 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6 (–2)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	17 (+3)

Damage Resistance acid, cold, fire, lightning, necrotic, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from mundane attacks
Damage Immunities poison, psychic
Condition Immunities charmed, dazed, exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained, unconscious
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12
Languages the languages they knew in life
Proficiency Bonus +3

Agonizing Phasing. The wraith can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. The wraith takes 5 (1d10) force damage if they end their turn inside an object. A creature takes 5 (1d10) psychic damage the first time a wraith passes through them on a turn.

Throes of Oblivion. When the wraith dies, they collapse inward, creating a burst of painful psychic energy. Each creature within 20 feet of the wraith must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw, taking 18 (4d8) psychic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Actions

Agonizing Touch. *Melee Spell Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 14 (4d6) psychic damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw or be dazed (save ends at end of turn). Each time a target dazed in this way fails a saving throw to end the condition, their hit point maximum is halved. This effect is cumulative, and the reduction lasts until the target finishes a short or long rest.

If a Humanoid dies within 1 minute of being hit by this attack, their spirit rises as a **specter** under the wraith's control in an unoccupied space nearest to where that Humanoid died.

Psychic Enervation. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +6 to hit, range 60 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 10 (3d6) psychic damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw or fall prone and be frightened of the wraith for 1 minute (save ends at end of turn). While frightened in this way, the target can't stand up.

Reactions

Denied Vitality. When a creature who the wraith can see within 30 feet of them regains hit points, the wraith can attempt to sap the life energy restoring the creature. The creature must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or only regain half the number of hit points they otherwise would regain.

Cloud Fang Keep

Optimized for Five 8th-Level Characters

When Lady Emer was human, she excelled as a scout in the mercenary Order of the Ouroboros. As her fame grew, she openly proclaimed that one day she would ascend to godhood. Emer hired bards to sing of her inevitable rise to the heavens, and their words reached the ears of the gods. Those lyrics damned Emer—but she saw her transformation into a medusa not as a curse, but as an advantage, and her ambitions grew.

The leaders of the Order of the Ouroboros accepted Emer's new form as a unique opportunity. She secretly serves the order as an assassin, though most members don't realize it. The order pays her and she gets the job done, no questions asked. In exchange for her service, the order also allows Emer access to their library. The medusa takes promising tomes back to her lair, where she searches for secrets to help her achieve godhood.

Emer lives in Cloud Fang Keep atop Frigid Summit. She maintains the crumbling fortress, which once belonged to an illusionist, with an eye for modern fashion and elegant comfort. The garden courtyard of her keep boasts a unique collection of statues—targets who needed to disappear but might still be useful someday.

The extroverted Lady Emer craves company, but members of her order rarely visit and never stay for long. The medusa is confident that if she were to amass enough power to claim leadership, then she could come out of the shadows and use the order's resources to achieve her divine goals.

Keep Story Hooks

You can use one of the following story hooks to integrate this lair into an adventure:

Art Collector. Alira Zoransk, an eccentric gnome art collector, wishes to possess a full set of crystal instruments crafted by a renowned gnomish artisan. She lacks only one, an ornate crystal flute stored in a display case in Lady Emer's grand salon (area E4). Alira offers the characters 5,000 gp to collect the flute.

Blight Cure. Tahir Zuljali, a human druid, seeks to halt a blight killing a nearby forest. They ask the characters to retrieve a rare plant called the petrified tear, which can save the forest—but this plant only grows in a medusa's stone garden. The druid hopes the characters can find a specimen in Cloud Fang Keep's garden (area E5).

Dreamwalker's Plea. A hobgoblin adventurer, Varnes Dwell, appears to the characters in their dreams. He begs the characters for rescue, as his physical body lies petrified within Cloud Fang Keep's garden (area E5).

Keep Features

Unless otherwise noted, each area of Cloud Fang Keep has the following features:

Ceilings. The stone ceilings are 60 feet high. The ceilings in each chamber have been patched up, but the halls still have holes that allow snow into the keep.

Doors. Lady Emer has removed all the keep's interior doors and replaced them with heavy velvet curtains that muffle sound. Stone doors lead into the entrance hall (area E1) from outside, and every area adjoining the stone garden (area E5) has stone doors leading to it. Doors and doorways are 10 feet high.

Illumination. Low-burning lanterns fill the halls with dim light. Chandeliers enchanted with permanent *dancing lights* spells provide colorful dim light in each chamber.

Walls. Climbing the walls of the keep without equipment requires a successful DC 14 Strength (Athletics) check. If the check fails by 5 or more, the wall crumbles when the creature is halfway to their destination and they fall.

Guardians

Lady Emer cares for several creatures who serve as her guards and pets. They are trained to attack intruders and to alert her to invited guests.

Defeated Guardians. Unless otherwise noted, if the keep's guardians are clearly losing a battle to intruders, they flee to warn Lady Emer in the library (area E6). If she has been warned of intruders, Lady Emer moves to the stone garden (area E5) and sends the guardians who warned her to patrol the perimeter of the keep.

Defeated Characters. Lady Emer's guardians try to keep defeated characters alive and bring them to Lady Emer, who petrifies her prisoners and displays them in the stone garden (area E5).

Resting in Cloud Fang Keep

Once an area is clear of enemies, the characters can take a short rest there uninterrupted. If the characters take a long rest in the lair while **Lady Emer** is alive, there is a 50 percent chance she finds them 1 hour into the long rest.

Entering Cloud Fang Keep

Perched atop Frigid Summit, Cloud Fang Keep is 23,421 feet above sea level. The area outside the lair is a high altitude and extreme cold environment. You can find rules for these adventure environments in the game's core rules.

The crumbling castle's stone double doors are flanked by two trained **owlbears** disguised as statues thanks to an illusion created by the castle. If the characters observe the castle from a distance for at least 5 minutes before

entering, they notice that another four owlbears patrol the castle's perimeter, while four **griffons** patrol the skies and occasionally visit a nest atop the ruined tower.

As the party approaches the castle, characters who succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check notice the owlbear statues twitching and breathing; otherwise, they are surprised when the owlbears attack. When the characters come within 30 feet of the owlbears, the owlbears attack and the statue illusion ends. At the start of the second round of combat, the four owlbears on patrol join the fray. A **blood-borne ooze** emerges from the first two owlbears to die.

At the start of the fourth round of combat, a griffon from the roost (area E2) swoops down and joins the fray. The griffon tries to capture a character and bring them back to the roost.

Blood-Borne Oozes

For convenience, the blood-borne oozes simply emerge from the owlbears when they die. However, for more unpredictability, you can have each ooze make a Constitution saving throw whenever an owlbear takes 5 or more damage, per their Pseudopod attack.

Cloud Fang Keep Areas

The following areas are keyed to the Cloud Fang Keep Map.

E1. Entrance Hall

The chandelier in this hall glows brighter than the others, filling the chamber with bright light. The entrance hall has the following features:

- "Moldy, faded tapestries decorate this welcome hall that smells of animal musk."
- "A pile of animal bones and refuse sits in the northeast corner of the room. It is clearly the source of the odor."
- (**Secret**) Blood-borne oozes hide in the refuse pile.
- (**Secret**) The tapestries hide crumbling walls and are covered in toxic mold.

Moldy Tapestries. A character who examines a tapestry and succeeds on a DC 17 Intelligence (Nature) check discovers it is covered in flemgot, a mind-altering mold that weakens Humanoids who inhale it. Each Humanoid who spends longer than 1 minute in this room must succeed on a DC 16 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 1 hour. While poisoned in this way, they have vulnerability to poison damage and have disadvantage on saving throws made to avoid or end the frightened condition on themself. A creature who succeeds on this saving throw is immune to the effects of flemgot for 24 hours.

Owlbear Nest. The refuse pile is a nest for the owlbears who patrol. Made of bones, feathers, and pieces of destroyed leather armor, it is filled with bloody bones, rusty blades, and hidden treasure (see below).

A creature who succeeds on a DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) check before touching the nest notices the three **blood-borne oozes** hiding inside it. The oozes ambush any creature who investigates the nest, but otherwise remain there. They owe no loyalty to Lady Emer and don't warn her of intruders.

Treasure. A creature who searches the owlbear nest and succeeds on a DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check find a silver necklace (worth 15 gp) and ten crossbow bolts.

E2. Griffon Roost

Spiral stairs lead 120 feet to the top of this tower where the griffons roost. On the top floor, the tower's walls and ceiling have been removed, exposing it to the outside. As the characters make their way upstairs, they can hear the griffons move and squawk around overhead.

The roost has the following features:

- "The stairs emerge into the middle of a gigantic nest made of wet branches and filled with bones and feathers. The walls and ceiling are gone, exposing the nest to the sky."
- "Two enormous griffons sit in the nest, tearing apart a stag carcass as they devour chunks of its flesh."
- "A gray-speckled egg as wide as a wagon wheel sits on the west edge of the nest."
- (**Secret**) More griffons are in the sky, returning from a hunt.
- (**Secret**) The wyvern lounging in the central courtyard can be spotted by a creature on the northeast edge of the nest.

Nest. The nest is difficult terrain for non-griffon creatures.

Griffons. A family of four **griffons** patrol the castle and serve as Lady Emer's mounts and guardians. Two griffons are in the nest when the characters arrive. Another two in the sky return to the nest at the start of the second round of combat. Only one griffon arrives as reinforcements if the characters have already defeated a griffon (see "Entering Cloud Fang Keep").

If the characters outnumber the griffons, the griffons try to pick up and drop foes to the ground or use Buffet to push them off the tower. While foes remain in the nest, the griffons ignore foes outside the nest. If the griffons outnumber the characters, they engage in melee, hoping to kill the intruders quickly and devour their bodies.

The griffons fight to the death to defend their nest and don't pursue enemies who retreat inside the castle.

Wyvern Below. A creature who looks over the side of the nest and into the stone garden (area E5) can see the **wyvern** lounging on the pillar.

Treasure. The 200-pound egg is a griffon egg (see "Lady Emer's Hoard"). A creature who spends at least 5 minutes picking through the bones in the nest finds a bag of ball bearings, a bag of caltrops, and a flask of alchemist's fire wrapped in leather.

Cloud Fang Keep Map

E3. Storage Room

This area has the following features:

- "Porcelain dust fills the air, and the room smells faintly of garlic and dust."
- "Crates stand in neat stacks along the east wall while broken statuary lies in piles across the floor."
- (**Secret**) Lady Emer's basilisks sleep amid the rubble on the west wall.
- (**Secret**) Rubble hides a trapped glyph on the ground in the south doorway.

Rubble-Strewn Floor. The rubble is difficult terrain for creatures who walk on four or fewer legs. (The basilisks have eight legs.)

Basilisks. Blinkers and Blunders are Lady Emer's prized pet **basilisks**. Each wears a dragon-scale collar with a gold name tag. A creature who has a passive Wisdom (Perception) score of 17 or higher notices the basilisks sleeping among the rubble and spots their shiny collars. If the characters succeed on a DC 12 group Dexterity (Stealth) check, they can sneak through the room without waking the basilisks. A character who succeeds on a DC 17 Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check can remove a basilisk's collar without waking the creature.

Trapped Glyph. The rubble-covered glyph is a trap created by the illusionist who lived in the keep. Lady Emer and her guardians know about the trap and only use the north entrance to the room. A creature who succeeds on a DC 17 Intelligence (Investigation) check notices the glyph on the ground. A *detect magic* spell reveals the glyph's aura of illusion magic.

When a creature passes over the glyph, it erupts with magical energy. Each creature within 10 feet of the room's south entrance sees an illusion of what they fear most and must succeed on a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened for 1 minute or until that creature takes damage. While frightened by this magic, a creature must scream loudly (which wakes the basilisks) and run in a clockwise circuit around the lair (from area E3 to E4 to E6, and so on), moving their full speed and taking the Dash action each turn. Once the glyph triggers, it can't trigger again for 24 hours.

If the glyph loses its magic, it can no longer trigger and the frightened condition ends for all creatures affected by the trap. Treat the glyph as a 4th-level spell for the purpose of *dispel magic* or similar effects. A creature can make a DC 17 Dexterity check using thieves' tools to scratch out the glyph. On a successful check, the glyph loses its magic; otherwise, the trap triggers.

Treasure. The crates contain a pouch containing 200 gp and enough food and water to sustain a Medium creature for 90 days. The basilisk collars are worth 150 gp each.

E4. Grand Salon

This area has a 30-foot-high ceiling and the following features:

- "Shimmering lights from three chandeliers illuminate a stained-glass ceiling that depicts suns, moons, and planets. The reflections of the chandelier and stained glass gleam on a polished marble floor with a wide space for dancing."
- "The chamber's northwest corner holds comfortable couches and a side table with decorative ashtrays."
- "The northeast corner is set with four wooden chairs next to a harpsichord. Musical instruments sit on each chair."
- "Two glass-and-marble display cases filled with glittering treasures stand against the south wall."
- (**Secret**) The ceiling can create a mesmerizing illusion when a creature tampers with the display cases.

Display Case Trap. Lady Emer uses the keep's trapped display cases to keep her treasures safe. A *detect magic* spell reveals auras of illusion magic on the display cases, the chandeliers, and the ceiling.

The cases are locked, and Lady Emer carries a key. A display case's glass top has AC 13, 9 hit points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage. A creature can pick the lock with a successful DC 18 Dexterity check using thieves' tools. If this check fails or if a display's glass is broken, the trap triggers.

When the trap triggers, the chandeliers put on a brilliant light display as the stained-glass images dance enthrallingly for 1 minute. For the duration, when a creature who can see the floor or ceiling starts their turn, they must succeed on a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw or take 7 (2d6) psychic damage and be incapacitated until the start of their next turn.

Treat the trap as a 4th-level spell for the purpose of *dispel magic* or similar effects. Destroying all three chandeliers ends the effect early. Each 10-foot-diameter chandelier has AC 13, 25 hit points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage. When a chandelier is destroyed, it falls to the ground. Each creature beneath a chandelier when it falls must make a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw, taking 35 (10d6) bludgeoning damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Treasure. The items in the room and its display cases are Lady Emer's hoard. See "Lady Emer's Hoard" for more information.

E5. Stone Garden

The stone garden is an outdoor courtyard at the center of the keep. It has the following features:

- "Fragrant flowers and herbs decorate the six statues standing in this courtyard. These verdant splashes of life fail to conceal the terror depicted on each stone face."
- "At the center of the garden, towering above the statues, an enormous marble pedestal encased in flowering vines rises 40 feet into the air."
- (**Secret**) Atop the pedestal sits a wyvern.
- (**Secret**) If Lady Emer has been warned about intruders (see "Guardians"), she hides atop the pedestal.

Wyvern. A **wyvern** surveys the garden. Hot-tempered and bored, her only entertainment is poisoning trespassers moments before Lady Emer or her basilisks petrify them. The wyvern waits for intruders to near the center of the courtyard then attacks, making ample use of her Bite and Stinger attacks. She enjoys flying up to the pedestal with grappled creatures and flinging them off using Tail Sweep, then picking them up after they hit the ground with another Bite attack.

Lady Emer. If **Lady Emer** is here, she views the characters as a threat. She attacks from atop the pedestal, using the height to her advantage. Until her death, her arrogance makes her believe she can beat any opponent.

Poisonous Plants. Characters who succeed on a DC 15 Intelligence (Nature) check know the plants in this garden thrive at high altitudes and many are poisonous. A character who is proficient with alchemist's supplies, herbalism kits, or poisoner's kits knows which plants are most useful for alchemical purposes and can spend 10 minutes gathering blossoms to make one dose of each of the following poisons: assassin's blood, malice, and oil of taggit. That character can then spend 1 hour during a short or long rest to create a dose of one of those poisons.

Statues. The statues in the garden are petrified adventurers who came to the castle seeking treasure or the death of Lady Emer. Each is a retainer who can serve the characters if freed:

- Alia Sylf: A **human mercenary**
- Gorith Tork: An **orc blacksmith**
- Kaxor: A **lizardfolk hunter**
- Septima Vinculum: A **kobold decanus**
- Varnes Dwell: A **hobgoblin tactician**
- Worjo: A **minotaur devastator**

Climbable Vines. The sturdy vines growing on the pedestal can be climbed without an ability check.

Treasure. Lady Emer carries a key to the display cases in the grand salon (area E4).

E6. Library

The library has the following features:

- "Warm light illuminates walls lined with shelf after shelf of books. On the west side of the room, a desk sits piled high with assorted papers, an inkpot, a penknife, and dozens of quills. A bed stands in the southeast corner."
- *(If Lady Emer is here)* "Coiled over the desk in a pose of frustration, a medusa exasperatedly crosses out something with a quill and breaks its nib. Without missing a beat, one of the snakes that comprises her hair places another freshly inked quill in her hand."

Lady Emer. How **Lady Emer** handles the characters depends on how they enter the library. If they arrive with weapons drawn, screaming in fear due to the storage room's trap (area E3), or covered in her guardians' blood, she attacks, moving into the stone garden (area E5) where she can maneuver freely and fuel her Stone Sacrifice trait with the garden statues.

If the characters arrive in a friendly manner, Lady Emer takes the opportunity to chat. A notoriously deadly and vain assassin, Lady Emer prefers conversations that are short, exciting, and flattering. She is quick to turn her Stone Gaze on anyone who bores or insults her.

If a character praises Lady Emer's skill as an assassin, extols a love of literature, or claims to know secrets that could help the medusa ascend to godhood, they can make a DC 19 Charisma (Deception or Persuasion) check. On a success, Lady Emer invites the characters to stay for a party. If they agree, she leads them to the grand salon (area E4), where she plays the harpsichord for them and encourages them to dance. If the characters don't play along, Lady Emer attacks. If the characters do as she asks, Lady Emer thanks them for their time and conversation, then asks them to leave so she can rest. At your discretion, characters who are particularly engaged receive an item

Lair Actions

When fighting inside her lair, Lady Emer can take lair actions. On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), she can take one lair action to cause one of the following effects; she can't use the same lair action two rounds in a row:

Shadowstep. Emer teleports up to 30 feet to an unoccupied space she can see.

Stony Wail. The statues in Emer's lair scream in pain. Each enemy within 60 feet of Emer who can hear the statues must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened of Emer until the end of initiative count 20 on the next round.

Venom Shower. Black venom rains down in a 10-foot-radius, 40-foot-high cylinder centered on a point Emer can see within 90 feet of her. Each creature in that area must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned until the end of initiative count 20 on the next round.

from her hoard (see "Lady Emer's Hoard") as a gift and are invited for a return visit.

Books. Lady Emer's books consist mainly of tomes about religious and magical lore.

Treasure. Lady Emer's desk holds hundreds of poorly written poems, twelve owlbear-feather quills, twelve griffon-feather quills, and inkpots with black, gold, green, and purple ink. The set of quills and inks is worth 50 gp. The desk drawers contain a disguise kit, a forgery kit, a set of mason's tools, a poisoner's kit, a set of thieves' tools, and a pouch containing 3,130 gp. Lady Emer carries a key to the display cases in the grand salon (area E4).

E7. Parlor

This area has the following features:

- "Overstuffed armchairs sit among side tables set with vases holding roses."
- "An empty crystal decanter, matching goblets, and bottles of wine sit on a buffet table against the south wall."
- "Beneath a hole in the keep's ceiling, a pile of snow lies against the east wall."
- (**Secret**) The snow pile is enchanted to animate and attack intruders.

Living Snow. Illusion magic in the keep's walls has seeped into the pile of snow. A creature who has a passive Wisdom (Perception) score of 18 or higher notices the snow shifting unnaturally. When a Humanoid touches the snow, it reforms into a duplicate of that Humanoid. The duplicate uses the same statistics as the Humanoid, except it is a Construct. The duplicate has mundane copies of the Humanoid's equipment and is hostile to the Humanoid and their allies. The duplicate attacks, fighting until destroyed. When the duplicate is destroyed, its body and equipment melt into a puddle of water. There is only enough snow to form one duplicate.

If combat breaks out in the parlor while **Lady Emer** is in the library (area E6), she arrives at the start of the third round of combat.

Treasure. The parlor holds four porcelain vases (worth 20 gp each), a crystal decanter and six crystal goblets (worth 50 gp as a set), and six bottles of aged fine wine (worth 20 gp each).

Too Much Work!

If living snow creating a duplicate would involve too much work, you can have the snow form another creature instead, such as a **crux of frost** or a **gem jelly**.

Lady Emer's Hoard

Lady Emer's grand salon (area E4) contains the bulk of her assassination trophies, and the griffon roost (area E2) holds a griffon egg. The hoard includes the following items:

- *Bag of beans*
- Pair of *winged boots*
- *Ring of mind shielding*
- *Wand of restoration* (see below)
- *Dust of disappearance*
- *Potion of gaseous form*
- *Potion of heroism*
- 2 *potions of poison*
- 5 bottles of serpent venom
- Lyre (worth 30 gp)
- 2 viols (worth 30 gp each)
- Ornate crystal flute (worth 350 gp)
- Heavy ebony crossbow with gold filigree (worth 1,500 gp)

Griffon Egg

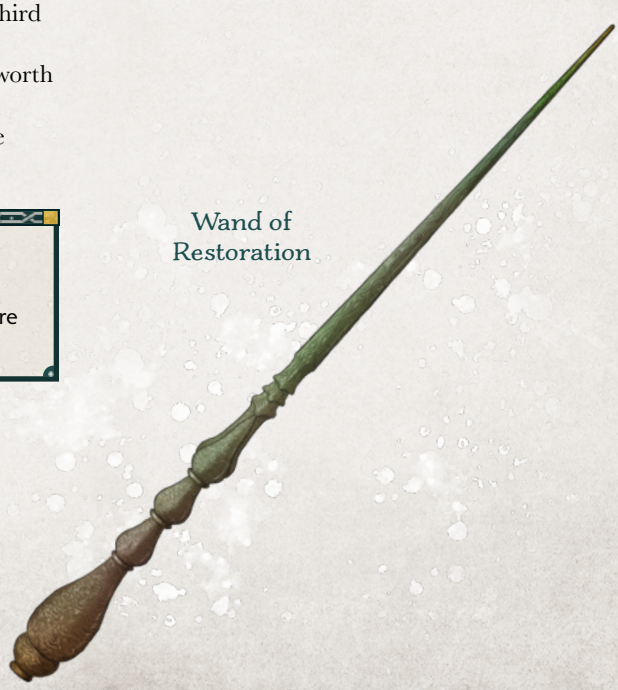
This 3-foot-diameter, 4-foot-high egg weighs 200 pounds. After 1d6 weeks, a Medium baby griffon noncombatant hatches from the egg. After 1 year, the creature becomes a **griffon companion**. The GM can advance or slow this timeline to suit the campaign's pacing.

Wand of Restoration

Wand, Rare (Requires Attunement)

This wand has 6 charges. While holding it, you can use an action to expend 2 of its charges to cast the *lesser restoration* spell from it, or 4 charges to cast the *greater restoration* spell from it.

The wand regains 1d4 + 2 expended charges daily at dawn. If you expend the wand's last charge, roll a d20. On a roll of 1, the wand crumbles into dust and is destroyed.



Wand of Restoration

Keep Stat Blocks

The following stat blocks appear in the lair.

Basilisk

CR 3 Brute
700 XP

Medium Monstrosity, Unaligned

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)
Hit Points 65 (10d8 + 20)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	10 (+0)	15 (+2)	2 (–4)	8 (–1)	7 (–2)

Damage Immunities poison
Condition Immunities petrified, poisoned
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 9
Languages —
Proficiency Bonus +2

Alchemical Ingredients. After the basilisk dies, a creature can make a DC 12 Wisdom (Medicine) check using an herbalism kit and the basilisk's gullet, destroying the gullet in the process. On a success, the creature creates three doses of a salve. One dose of this salve can be applied to a petrified creature as an action, and 1 minute after the salve is applied, the petrified condition ends for that creature.

Toxic Ichor. A creature who deals piercing or slashing damage to the basilisk while within 5 feet of them takes 2 (1d4) poison damage.

Actions

Multiattack. The basilisk uses Petrifying Eye Beams and makes one Bite attack or uses Poison Fumes, if available.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage plus 5 (2d4) poison damage.

Petrifying Eye Beams. The basilisk targets one or two creatures they can see within 30 feet of them. Each target must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or be restrained as they magically begin to turn to stone. Until the end of the restrained creature's next turn, they or an ally within 5 feet of them can use an action to cut the encroaching stone from the restrained creature's body using a weapon that deals slashing damage. When they do, the restrained creature takes 13 (2d12) slashing damage, which can't be reduced in any way, and they are no longer restrained.

A creature restrained in this way must repeat the saving throw at the end of their turn. On a successful save, the effect ends. On a failed save, this creature is petrified until freed by a *cure ailment* power of 4th order or higher, a *greater restoration* spell, or a similar supernatural effect.

Poison Fumes (Recharge 4–6). The basilisk exhales poisonous fumes in a 15-foot cone. Each creature in this area must make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw, taking 10 (4d4) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Reactions

Poison Splash. When the basilisk takes piercing or slashing damage, their wound spews poison. Each creature within 10 feet of the basilisk must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 1 minute (save ends at end of turn).

Blood-Borne Ooze

CR 1/4 Ambusher

Tiny Ooze, Typically Neutral Evil — 50 XP

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)
Hit Points 14 (4d4 + 4)
Speed 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (–1)	15 (+2)	13 (+1)	1 (–5)	10 (+0)	2 (–4)

Skills Stealth +4
Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, deafened, exhaustion, flanked, prone
Senses blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 10
Languages —
Proficiency Bonus +2

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

False Appearance. While the ooze remains motionless, they are indistinguishable from a pool of blood.

Actions

Pseudopod. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) bludgeoning damage plus 2 (1d4) necrotic damage. If the target is a creature who isn't a Construct or an Undead, they must succeed on a DC 11 Constitution saving throw or the ooze melds into the target's body. While inside a creature, the ooze has total cover against attacks and other effects originating outside that host.

If the host creature takes 5 damage or more on a single turn from a source other than the ooze, the ooze must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw at the end of that turn or exit the host, entering the nearest unoccupied space of the ooze's choice. A *cure ailment* power, *protection from poison* spell, or *lesser restoration* spell cast on the host also forces the ooze out. By spending 5 feet of their movement, the ooze can voluntarily leave the host's body.

Crimson Feast (Inside Host Only). The ooze consumes their host creature's bodily fluids. The host must make a DC 11 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the host takes 5 (2d4) necrotic damage and is poisoned until the end of their next turn. On a successful save, the host takes half as much damage and isn't poisoned.

Crux of Frost

CR 8 Controller

Medium Elemental (Water), Any Alignment — 3,900 XP

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)
Hit Points 135 (30d8)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	18 (+4)

Skills Deception +10, Insight +9, Perception +6
Damage Immunities cold, poison
Condition Immunities invisible, poisoned
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 16
Languages Aquan, Common, plus the languages known by a creature reflected by Frosted Reflection
Proficiency Bonus +3

Scintillating. The crux can't benefit from being invisible.

Actions

Multiattack. The crux makes two Rimeglass Touch attacks, and they can use Frosted Reflection or It Stares Back, if available.

Rimeglass Touch. *Melee or Ranged Spell Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 17 (3d8 + 4) cold damage, and the target can't see or hear creatures other than themself and the crux until the start of the crux's next turn.

Frosted Reflection. The crux reflects the appearance of a specific Medium or Small creature they've seen within the last week. This appearance is illusory and imperfect, showing a frostbitten version of the creature. The illusion lasts until the crux takes thunder damage, uses this action again, or is incapacitated. For the duration, the crux additionally knows any languages that creature knows.

It Stares Back (Recharge 5–6). The crux imposes fragility on a creature within 60 feet of them who is reflected by the crux's Frosted Reflection. If the target can see the crux, the target must make a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, the target is frightened of the crux for 1 minute (save ends at end of turn), or until the crux stops reflecting them. While frightened in this way, whenever the target takes damage, they take an extra 11 (2d10) psychic damage. On a successful save, the target isn't frightened, and they are immune to the It Stares Back of all cruxes for 24 hours.

Gem Jelly

CR 9 Brute
Large Ooze, Unaligned
5,000 XP

Armor Class 10 (20 in crystalline form)
Hit Points 152 (16d10 + 64)
Speed 25 ft., climb 25 ft. (0 in crystalline form)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	10 (+0)	18 (+4)	6 (−2)	14 (+2)	4 (−3)

Skills Stealth +4
Damage Resistances acid; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from mundane attacks
Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, deafened, exhaustion, frightened, prone
Senses blindsight 120 ft., passive Perception 12
Languages —
Proficiency Bonus +4

Amorphous. The gem jelly can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing.

False Appearance. While the jelly remains motionless, they are indistinguishable from a natural crystal formation.

Actions

Multiattack. The gem jelly makes two Pseudopod attacks.

Pseudopod (True Form Only). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 18 (4d6 + 4) piercing damage.

Crystalline Shatter (Crystalline Form Only). The jelly shatters their hardened outer layer, returning to their true form and sending crystal shrapnel in all directions. Each creature within 10 feet of the gem jelly must make a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw, taking 36 (8d8) piercing damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. Gem jellies are immune to this damage.

Bonus Actions

Harden. The gem jelly transforms into a psionically hardened crystalline form or back into their true form. While in crystalline form, the jelly's AC increases to 20, their speed becomes 0, they can't make Pseudopod attacks, they have disadvantage on Dexterity saving throws, and they gain vulnerability to thunder damage.

Reactions

Reactive Shatter (Crystalline Form Only). When the jelly takes thunder damage, they use Crystalline Shatter.

Griffon

CR 2 Controller
Large Beast, Unaligned
450 XP

Armor Class 12
Hit Points 57 (6d10 + 24)
Speed 30 ft., fly 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	14 (+2)	18 (+4)	6 (−2)	14 (+2)	8 (−1)

Saving Throws Con +6
Skills Perception +4
Senses passive Perception 14
Languages —
Proficiency Bonus +2

Steady. The griffon has advantage on ability checks and saving throws against being knocked prone.

Swoop. If the griffon flies more than 20 feet in a straight line toward their target and then hits them with a Claw attack on the same turn, the target is grappled (escape DC 14). While the target is grappled in this way, the griffon has advantage on Beak attacks against the target but can't make Claw attacks. Grappling a Medium or smaller creature imposes no penalty on the griffon's speed.

Actions

Multiattack. The griffon makes one Beak attack, and they can make one Claw attack, use Buffet, or use Piercing Cry.

Beak. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (2d4 + 4) slashing damage.

Buffet. The griffon beats their wings in mighty gusts of wind. Each creature not grappled by the griffon within a 30-foot cone originating from the griffon must make a DC 14 Strength saving throw. On a failed save, a creature takes 5 (2d4) bludgeoning damage, is pushed 5 feet away from the griffon, and is knocked prone.

Piercing Cry. The griffon lets out an earsplitting screech. Each enemy within 60 feet of the griffon who can hear them must succeed on a DC 12 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened of the griffon for 1 minute (save ends at end of turn). If a creature's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for them, they are immune to the Piercing Cry of all griffons for the next 24 hours.

Mystic Connection: Griffon

If you're playing a beastheart and have a griffon companion, you gain the following benefit at 9th level when you gain the beastheart's Mystic Connection feature:

Griffon-Hearted. As an action, you can fly up to twice your walking speed without provoking opportunity attacks. During this movement, you can enter the spaces of other creatures and these spaces don't count as difficult terrain for you. The first time you enter each creature's space during this move, they must succeed on a Strength saving throw against your exploit save DC or take bludgeoning damage equal to your beastheart level and be knocked prone. Once you use this action, you can't do so again until you finish a long rest.

Griffon Companion

Companion

Large Beast, Unaligned

Armor Class 13 plus PB (natural armor)
Hit Points 7 + seven times caregiver's level (number of d8 Hit Dice equal to their caregiver's level)
Speed 30 ft. (see Learning to Fly)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	12 (+1)	15 (+2)	6 (−2)	12 (+1)	8 (−1)

Saving Throws Con +2 plus PB
Skills Perception +1 plus PB
Senses passive Perception 11 plus PB
Proficiency Bonus (PB) equals the caregiver's bonus

Learning to Fly. The griffon has a flying speed of 10 × PB feet.

Actions

Signature Attack (Beak). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 plus PB to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1d6 plus PB piercing damage.

1st Level: Violent Attack (2 Ferocity). The griffon makes a signature attack. On a hit, the attack deals an extra PB slashing damage, and the griffon can move the target 5 feet in any direction.

3rd Level: Grabbed from Above (5 Ferocity). The griffon makes a signature attack against a Medium or smaller creature. On a hit, the target is also grappled (escape DC 10 plus PB) if they weren't already. While grappled in this way, the target is restrained and the griffon can't make a signature attack against another target.

3rd Level: Bombs Away (5 Ferocity). The griffon flies up to their speed without provoking opportunity attacks. If the griffon has a creature grappled, the grapple doesn't halve the griffon's speed and the griffon can end the grapple at any point during this movement. If the griffon ends the grapple before the end of their turn and the target takes bludgeoning damage from that fall, the target takes an extra PB bludgeoning damage.

5th Level: Backdraft (8 Ferocity). The griffon flies up to their speed without provoking opportunity attacks. When the griffon ends this movement, each creature within 15 feet of them must make a DC 10 plus PB Strength saving throw. On a failed save, a creature takes PBd6 bludgeoning damage and is knocked prone. On a successful save, a creature takes half as much damage and isn't knocked prone.

Hobgoblin Tactician

Retainer

Medium Humanoid (Hobgoblin), Any Alignment

Armor Class 15 (medium armor)
Hit Points Seven times their level (number of d8 Hit Dice equal to their level)
Speed 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws +PB to all
Skills Arcana +3 plus PB, History +3 plus PB
Damage Resistances fire
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11
Languages Common, Goblin, Infernal
Proficiency Bonus (PB) equals the mentor's bonus

Signature Attack (Flame Touch). *Melee or Ranged Spell Attack:* +3 plus PB to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d10) fire damage. A flammable object hit by this spell ignites if it isn't being worn or carried. This spell's damage increases by 1d10 when the tactician reaches 5th level (2d10), 11th level (3d10), and 17th level (4d10).

Features

3rd Level: Heat Seeker (3/Day). As an action, the tactician makes a signature attack but doesn't make an attack roll for it. Instead, the attack automatically hits, and each ally within 30 feet of the target can use their reaction to move up to their speed toward the target.

5th Level: Beacon (3/Day). When the tactician hits with a signature attack, each creature within 5 feet of the target can use a reaction to make a melee weapon attack against the target.

7th Level: Explosion (1/Day). As an action, the tactician hurls a ball of fire at a point they can see within 120 feet of them. The ball explodes in a 20-foot-radius sphere, forcing each enemy in that area to make a DC 10 plus PB Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save, a creature takes PBd12 fire damage and is pushed 20 feet away from the center of the area. On a successful save, a creature takes half as much damage and isn't pushed. The fire spreads around corners and ignites flammable objects in the area that aren't being worn or carried.

Human Mercenary

Retainer

Medium Humanoid (Human), Any Alignment

Armor Class 15 (medium armor)
Hit Points Nine times their level (number of d12 Hit Dice equal to their level)
Speed 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws +PB to all
Skills Athletics +3 plus PB, Medicine +0 plus PB, Perception +0 plus PB
Senses passive Perception 10 plus PB
Languages Common
Proficiency Bonus (PB) equals the mentor's bonus

Signature Attack (Halberd). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 plus PB to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1d10 plus PB slashing damage. Beginning at 7th level, the mercenary can make this attack twice, instead of once, when they take the Attack action on their turn.

Features

3rd Level: Battlefield Medicine (3/Day). As an action, the mercenary restores PBd8 hit points to a creature they can see within 5 feet of them.

5th Level: Exploit Opening (3/Day). The mercenary takes the Attack action, making each attack with advantage and dealing an extra PBd4 slashing damage on a hit.

7th Level: Halberd Master (3/Day). When a creature enters a space within the mercenary's reach, the mercenary uses a reaction to make a signature attack with advantage against that creature. If this attack hits, it deals an extra PBd6 slashing damage.

Wow. Was I really petrified? How long? Honestly, it wasn't that bad. I didn't even know time was passing. It's like I blinked. I was fighting Emer–I thought I was winning by the way–and now you're here rescuing me. Wild. Just wild. Oh, my captain is going to be so pissed.

Alia Sylf

Kobold Decanus

Retainer

Small Humanoid (Kobold), Any Alignment

Armor Class 15 (medium armor; includes shield)
Hit Points Eight times their level (number of d10 Hit Dice equal to their level)
Speed 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws +PB to all
Skills Athletics +3 plus PB, History +1 plus PB, Perception +0 plus PB
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10 plus PB
Languages Common, Draconic
Proficiency Bonus (PB) equals the mentor's bonus

Signature Attack (Gladius). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 plus PB to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1d8 plus PB piercing damage. Beginning at 7th level, the decanus can make this attack twice, instead of once, when they take the Attack action on their turn.

Features

3rd Level: Reinforce (3/Day). When the decanus sees an ally within 30 feet of them being targeted by an attack, the decanus can use a reaction to move up to their speed toward the target. If the decanus ends their movement within 5 feet of the target, the target gains a +PB bonus to their AC until the beginning of the decanus's next turn, including against the triggering attack.

5th Level: Shield Bash (3/Day). The decanus attempts to topple a Medium or smaller creature within 5 feet of them. The target must succeed on a DC 10 plus PB Strength saving throw or be knocked prone. Succeed or fail, the decanus then makes two signature attacks against any creature within reach.

7th Level: One-Kobold Army (1/Day). The decanus moves up to their speed, then makes a number of signature attacks equal to the number of enemies within 5 feet of them (minimum of three attacks). Each enemy within range must be attacked at least once. On a hit, the target must succeed on a DC 10 plus PB Charisma saving throw or be frightened of the decanus for 1 minute (save ends at end of turn).

Lady Emer

Guests are always welcome to stay.
Intruders stay forever.

Lady Emer

Lady Emer

CR 11 Solo
Medium Monstrosity, Lawful Evil
7,200 XP

Armor Class 17
Hit Points 190 (20d8 + 100)
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	24 (+7)	20 (+5)	16 (+3)	17 (+3)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws Str +8, Dex +11, Con +9, Wis +7
Skills Athletics +8, Deception +8, Perception +7, Persuasion +8, Stealth +11, Survival +7
Damage Immunities poison
Condition Immunities poisoned
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 17
Languages Common, Elvish
Proficiency Bonus +4

Stone Sacrifice (3/Day). When Emer fails a saving throw, she can choose to succeed instead by ending the effects of her Stone Gaze on a creature of her choice within 300 feet of her.

Actions

Multiattack. Emer uses Pinning Shot or makes three attacks using Snake Bite, Longbow, or both. She also uses Stone Gaze or Envenomed Stone, if available.

Snake Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 10 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 17 (5d6) poison damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 17 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned until the end of Emer's next turn. While poisoned in this way, the target can't take reactions.

Longbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (1d8 + 7) piercing damage plus 14 (4d6) poison damage.

Pinning Shot. Emer makes three Longbow attacks against a creature touching the ground within 150 feet of her. If at least two of those attacks hit, the target is restrained by arrows pinning their limbs to the ground. A creature restrained in this way or another creature who can reach them can use an action to pull out the arrows and end the condition.

Stone Gaze. Emer fires beams of energy from her eyes at up to three creatures she can see within 60 feet of her. Each target must succeed on a DC 17 Constitution saving throw or begin turning to stone (save ends at end of turn). While turning to stone, a creature's speed is reduced by 10 feet and they have disadvantage on Dexterity checks and saving throws. If a creature who is turning to stone is targeted by this action again and fails their save, their speed is reduced by another 10 feet and they are dazed until the effect ends.

If a creature who is turning to stone and dazed in this way is targeted by this action again and fails their save, they are petrified and can no longer make saving throws to end the effects of Stone Gaze. The petrification lasts until the creature is restored by Emer's Stone Sacrifice trait, a *cure ailment* power of 4th order or higher, a *greater restoration* spell, or a similar supernatural effect.

Envenomed Stone (Recharge 5–6). Emer utters an ancient hex. Each creature within 60 feet of her who is being turned to stone by her Stone Gaze must make a DC 17 Constitution saving throw, taking 44 (8d10) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Bonus Actions

Mesmerizing Eyes. The glowing eyes of Emer's snakes gaze at one creature Emer can see within 60 feet of her. If the target can see Emer, they must succeed on a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw or be charmed until the start of the target's next turn. A target charmed in this way must immediately use their reaction, if available, to move up to their speed in a direction of Emer's choice.

Reactions

Blinding Mucus. When a creature Emer can see within 5 feet of her hits her with a melee attack, Emer spits venom at their eyes. The target must succeed on a DC 17 Dexterity saving throw or take 7 (2d6) acid damage and be blinded until the start of their next turn.

Villain Actions

Emer has three villain actions. She can take each action once during an encounter after an enemy's turn. She can take these actions in any order but can use only one per round.

Action 1: I See You! Emer uses Stone Gaze against each enemy she can see within 60 feet of her.

Action 2: Medusa's Evolution. Emer grows wings from her back, gaining a flying speed of 40 feet, then she moves up to her speed without provoking opportunity attacks. After 1 minute, the wings crumble to dust and her flying speed is lost.

Action 3: Stone Puppets. Emer mentally manipulates the stone in each creature who is being turned to stone by her Stone Gaze. Emer and each of those creatures move up to their speed then make a weapon attack against a creature of Emer's choice (no action required).

Lizardfolk Hunter

Retainer

Medium Humanoid (Lizardfolk), Any Alignment

Armor Class 15 (medium armor)
Hit Points Eight times their level (number of d10 Hit Dice equal to their level)
Speed 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws +PB to all
Skills Athletics +3 plus PB, Nature +0 plus PB, Perception +2 plus PB
Senses passive Perception 12 plus PB
Languages Common, Draconic
Proficiency Bonus (PB) equals the mentor's bonus

Signature Attack (Greatsword). *Melee Attack:* +3 plus PB to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 2d6 plus PB slashing damage. Beginning at 7th level, the hunter can make this attack twice, instead of once, when they take the Attack action on their turn.

Features

3rd Level: Wrenching Bite (3/Day). As an action, the hunter makes a signature attack against a Large or smaller creature. On a hit, the target is grappled (escape DC 10 plus PB). Until the grapple ends, the target takes PB piercing damage at the end of each of their turns, and the hunter can't use their Wrenching Bite against another target.

5th Level: Thrashing Tail (3/Day). As an action, the hunter makes a signature attack against a Large or smaller creature. On a hit, the target must succeed on a DC 10 plus PB Dexterity saving throw or fall prone. While the hunter is within 5 feet of this prone target, the target can't stand up unless they use an action to make a DC 10 plus PB Strength (Athletics) check. On a success, the target can stand up.

7th Level: Hypnotic Sleep (1/Day). As a bonus action, the hunter drones lullingly. Each creature within 5 feet of the hunter who can hear them must succeed on a DC 10 plus PB Constitution saving throw or fall unconscious for 1 minute. An unconscious target wakes up if they take damage, the hunter becomes incapacitated, the hunter moves more than 5 feet away from the target, or another creature uses an action to rouse the target.

Minotaur Devastator

Retainer

Medium Monstrosity, Any Alignment

Armor Class 13 (light armor)
Hit Points Eight times their level (number of d10 Hit Dice equal to their level)
Speed 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws +PB to all
Skills Athletics +3 plus PB, Survival +0 plus PB
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10
Languages Common
Proficiency Bonus (PB) equals the mentor's bonus

Signature Attack (Goring Horns). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 plus PB to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1d10 plus PB piercing damage. Beginning at 7th level, the devastator can make this attack twice, instead of once, when they take the Attack action on their turn.

Features

3rd Level: Furious Charge (3/Day). As an action, the devastator moves up to their speed. At the end of this movement, they can make a signature attack. If that attack hits a Large or smaller creature, the target is pushed up to 10 feet away from the devastator, and the devastator and their allies have advantage on attack rolls against the target until the end of the devastator's next turn.

5th Level: Fearsome Gore (3/Day). As an action, the devastator makes a signature attack against a creature within 5 feet of them. On a hit, the attack deals an extra PBd10 piercing damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 10 plus PB Wisdom saving throw or be frightened of the devastator until the end of the devastator's next turn.

7th Level: Retaliatory Charge (1/Day). When a creature the devastator can see within 40 feet of them deals damage to the devastator, the devastator can use a reaction to move up to their speed toward the creature. If the devastator ends this movement within 5 feet of the creature, they can make two signature attacks against the creature with a +PB bonus to those attack and damage rolls.

Medium Minotaur

The minotaur devestator originally appeared in *Flee, Mortals! The MCDM Monster Book*. In that book, the retainer is Large. However, Worjo, the minotaur devestator in Lady Emer's lair, is Medium. The stat block here reflects Worjo's size.

Orc Blacksmith

Retainer

Medium Humanoid (Orc), Any Alignment

Armor Class 15 (medium armor)
Hit Points Eight times their level (number of d10 Hit Dice equal to their level)
Speed 35 ft.

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

Saving Throws +PB to all
Skills Athletics +3 plus PB, Perception +1 plus PB
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11 plus PB
Languages Common, Orc
Proficiency Bonus (PB) equals the mentor's bonus

Signature Attack (Warhammer). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 plus PB to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1d10 plus PB bludgeoning damage. Beginning at 7th level, the blacksmith can make this attack twice, instead of once, when they take the Attack action on their turn.

Features

3rd Level: Relentless Rush (3/Day). When the blacksmith isn't incapacitated and they take damage but aren't killed outright, they can make an attack against an enemy (no action required) before the hit point reduction is resolved. If the attack hits, the blacksmith regains twice their PB hit points.

5th Level: Reinforce Armor (3/Day). As a bonus action, the blacksmith touches a piece of armor and fortifies it. For the next 10 minutes, a creature wearing the armor gains a bonus to their AC equal to half the blacksmith's PB.

7th Level: Fortify Weapon (3/Day). As a bonus action, the blacksmith touches a weapon and polishes it. For 1 minute, the weapon is magical and deals an extra PB damage.

Owlbear

CR 3 Brute

Large Monstrosity, Unaligned

700 XP

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)
Hit Points 82 (11d10 + 22)
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
21 (+5)	12 (+1)	15 (+2)	5 (−3)	12 (+1)	6 (−2)

Skills Perception +3
Condition Immunities frightened
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13
Languages —
Proficiency Bonus +2

Deadly Leap. The owlbear's long jump is up to 30 feet and their high jump is 15 feet, with or without a running start. If the owlbear leaps at least 20 feet toward a target and then hits them with a Bite or Claw attack, the target must succeed on a DC 15 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

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

Actions

Multiattack. The owlbear makes one Bite and one Claw attack.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (1d12 + 5) piercing damage, and the owlbear can move the target 5 feet in any direction.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d6 + 5) slashing damage.

Bear Hug (Recharge 4–6). The owlbear attempts to grab and crush a creature they can see within 5 feet of them. The target must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save, the target takes 22 (4d10) bludgeoning damage and is grappled (escape DC 15). On a successful save, the target takes half as much damage and is not grappled. Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained and takes 5 (1d10) bludgeoning damage at the start of each of their turns. The grapple ends if the owlbear uses Bear Hug on another target or makes a Claw attack against another target.

Reactions

Hulking Rush. When the owlbear takes damage, they can move up to half their speed without provoking opportunity attacks.

Owlbears make spectacular guardians, and they're always a good topic of conversation for guests. Everyone wants to know how I trained them, what their names are, and if they do tricks. Well, they don't, and they smell atrocious. You probably would too if your diet consisted mainly of monster hunters and thieves.

Lady Emer

Wyvern

CR 6 Controller

Large Dragon, Unaligned

2,300 XP

Armor Class 12 (natural armor)
Hit Points 119 (14d10 + 42)
Speed 20 ft., fly 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	4 (–3)	14 (+2)	6 (–2)

Skills Athletics +6, Perception +5
Damage Immunities acid
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15
Languages —
Proficiency Bonus +3

Stubborn Rage. The wyvern is immune to the frightened and stunned conditions while they have fewer than half their hit points or are within 60 feet of another wyvern they can hear or see.

Actions

Multiattack. The wyvern makes one Stinger attack and one Bite attack. They can replace one attack with a use of Tail Sweep.

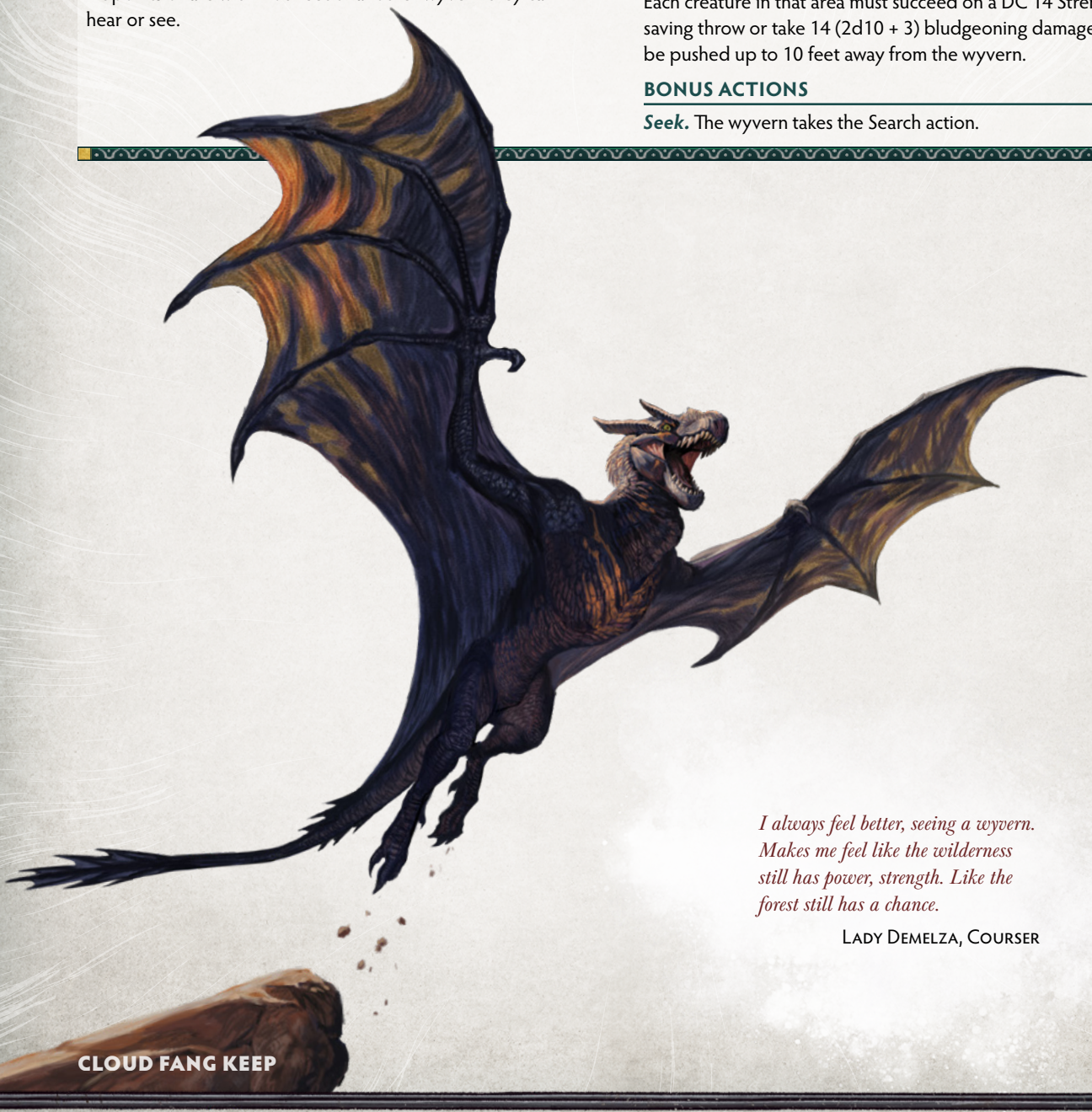
Stinger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (3d6 + 3) piercing damage. The target must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or take 7 (2d6) acid damage at the start of each of their turns for 1 minute (save ends at end of turn). A *cure ailment* power or a *lesser restoration* spell ends this effect on a target.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 16 (2d12 + 3) piercing damage. If the target is Large or smaller, they are grappled (escape DC 13). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained and the wyvern can't bite another target.

Tail Sweep. The wyvern swipes their tail in a 15-foot cone. Each creature in that area must succeed on a DC 14 Strength saving throw or take 14 (2d10 + 3) bludgeoning damage and be pushed up to 10 feet away from the wyvern.

Bonus Actions

Seek. The wyvern takes the Search action.



I always feel better, seeing a wyvern. Makes me feel like the wilderness still has power, strength. Like the forest still has a chance.

Lady Demelza, Courser

Molten Enclave

Optimized for Five 9th-Level Characters

Once a lieutenant of the Sunlight Legion, the fire giant Aastrika fought and clawed through the ranks, proving herself in battle after battle. However, she suspected many above her felt threatened by her meteoric rise, and her suspicions were confirmed when her unit was dispatched deep into the desert.

There, Aastrika discovered signs of blue dragon territory and realized her superiors had ordered her into a trap. On sharing her discovery with her unit, they decided together to desert the legion. Rather than face the dragon, Aastrika and her troops pursued spiritual enlightenment. They roamed the highest sunlit mountain peaks and deepest volcanic caverns in search of understanding. In one of these magma tunnels, Aastrika crawled deep into a volcanic crater and remained for hours. When she returned, she spoke of her body discorporating into fire and of newly unearthed wisdom, and in this moment, her unit became her first spiritual followers.

Returning to the Sunlight Legion, Aastrika used her newfound prowess and understanding to depose the leadership that sent her to her death. She then claimed her rightful place as warlord and spiritual leader in equal parts, preaching the importance of balance in both.

Deep beneath the Roaring Peak—a sandstone mountain in the middle of the Karae Desert—the Sunlight Legion carved a home from the ancient magma tunnels where Zenith Aastrika found enlightenment. In this sacred mountain's monastery fortress, Aastrika and her comrades live, train, meditate, and grow their spiritual connection to their elemental origins.

Giants

Supremely well adapted to harsh environments, giants thrive in extreme conditions. Fire giants build floating cities in the hearts of volcanic calderas, while stone giant villages dot the tallest mountains.

Though giants sometimes live near humanoid settlements, the latter often pass their entire lives blissfully unaware of the local tribe of giants living atop the nearby mountain range. This is for the best, as few "smallfolk" structures can survive even a handful of sufficiently motivated giants.

Giants physically resemble the territory they inhabit. A band of frost giants doesn't simply live on a mountain—they're part of the mountain, and it's part of them. Fire giants exude heat like a roaring volcano. Sages have long debated the question, "Does the environment shape a giant, or does the giant shape their environment?"

Enclave Story Hooks

You can use one of the following story hooks to integrate this lair into an adventure:

Fire Oracle. Milosh Lunaris, a dwarf oracle who sees the future in flames, asks the characters to recover a piece of coal from the Molten Enclave's forge (area Z5). The oracle claims the coal will help them witness a possible future calamity. They offer the characters a *belt of dwarvenkind* in exchange for the coal.

Giant Rivalry. Unable to raise arms against the Sunlight Legion without risking a political disaster, the fire giant Princess Karith asks for the characters to drive Zenith Aastrika and her followers away from the Molten Enclave. Karith plans to gain the same enlightenment Aastrika found there. The princess rewards the party with a *ring of resistance* (fire) if they succeed in the task.

Rumbling Mountain. Ever since the Sunlight Legion moved into Roaring Peak, the volcano has become increasingly active, threatening to erupt and devastate the surrounding area. Local leaders offer the characters 5,000 gp to travel into the Molten Enclave and find a way to calm the mountain. Zenith Aastrika's constant communing with the Crater of the Core (area Z9) has caused the disruption.

Enclave Features

Unless otherwise noted, each area of the Molten Enclave has the following features:

Ceilings. Corridors and rooms have arched ceilings at least 25 feet high.

High Heat. Creatures who don't have access to drinkable water must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw at the end of each hour they spend in the enclave or gain 1 level of exhaustion. Creatures in medium or heavy armor or heavy clothing have disadvantage on this saving throw, and creatures who have resistance or immunity to fire damage succeed automatically.

Illumination. Veins of molten rock in the walls fill each area with dim light.

Iron Portcullises. Many passages in the lair are closed off by iron portcullises operated with heavy winches. Medium or smaller creatures can squeeze through these gates with a successful DC 13 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check. Small creatures have advantage on this check, and Tiny creatures succeed automatically.

Lava Pool. Bubbling pools of lava dot the lair. Each sheds bright light in a 30-foot radius and dim light for an additional 30 feet. The Sunlight Legion can also use the pools to teleport around the lair (see "Sunlight Legion Giants"). Creatures who touch the lava for the first time

on a turn or who end their turn in it take 33 (6d10) fire damage.

Noisy. The noises of bubbling lava, smithing, and fire giants training and talking fill the enclave. Creatures in one area don't hear combat or cries for help in another area.

Size. Everything in the lair is sized for Huge creatures, except for magic items, which adjust to the size of their bearer.

Winches. Gates and traps in the lair are operated by gigantic winches. A creature can turn a winch as an action by making a DC 24 Strength check. On a success, the winch turns. On a failure, the winch doesn't turn, but the creature can choose to gain 1 level of exhaustion and succeed instead. Large creatures have advantage on this check, and Huge and Gargantuan creatures automatically succeed on this check.

Zenith Aastrika

Sunlight Legion Giants

The Sunlight Legion fire giants in this lair fight with military discipline, immediately attacking any intruders they notice. A fire giant who is losing a battle retreats further into the lair and seeks reinforcements. If cornered, they fight to the death.

Magma Transport. Giants blessed by Zenith Aastrika can teleport through the lava pools in the lair. A fire giant touching one of these pools can use an action to teleport to an unoccupied space within 10 feet of any other lava pool in the lair. A character who eavesdrops on the giants and succeeds on a DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) check overhears one of them mention the Zenith's secret sanctum (area Z10), which can only be accessed via lava pool.

Defeat. If the characters are defeated but put up a respectable fight, the Sunlight Legion captures them, takes their equipment, and brings them before Aastrika in the Crater of the Core (area Z9). She offers the characters a choice: If one of them willingly sacrifices themself to the Core, the remaining characters are free to leave with their equipment, provided they never return.

Resting in the Enclave

The characters can safely take a short rest in any area, provided they deal with any enemies in the area. If the characters try to take a long rest, there is a 50 percent chance a **fire giant red fist** interrupts them halfway through their rest.

Entering the Enclave

The Molten Enclave sits in the deepest labyrinthine tunnels beneath Roaring Peak. The fire giants find their way by following wall carvings of a rising sun over a mountain peak. A character who succeeds on a DC 17 Intelligence (History) check identifies the symbol as the emblem of the Sunlight Legion and can plot a course to the lair using the symbols. Alternatively, a character who succeeds on a DC 15 Wisdom (Survival) check can follow the gigantic sooty footprints back to the lair.

If all the characters fail their ability check to find the lair's entrance, they still make it to the lair but spend extra time searching in the sweltering tunnels. Each character must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or gain 1 level of exhaustion. Characters who have resistance or immunity to fire damage succeed automatically.

When the characters find the lair, they arrive at the entrance stairs (area Z1).

Molten Enclave Areas

The following areas are keyed to the Molten Enclave Map.

Z1. Entrance Stairs

The entrance has the following features:

- "The natural magma tubes give way to worked stone stairs, each no less than 3 feet high. The steps narrow as they lead down toward a towering portcullis of wrought iron."
- "A gigantic winch is set into the ground next to the portcullis."

See "Molten Enclave Features" for details on operating this area's portcullis and winch.

Z2. Trapped Atrium

This room's domed ceiling rises to a height of 40 feet at its peak. The atrium has the following features:

- "Two 25-foot-tall statues with rubies for eyes flank the lava pool. The west statue depicts a fire giant in a battle stance with their fists up. The east one depicts a fire giant with their hands clasped in prayer."
- (**Secret**) The ceiling contains two 20-foot-cube stone blocks suspended by chains, ready to crush unwary thieves.

Statues. Characters who examine the statues and succeed on a DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check notice the statues' arms are hinged at the shoulder. The statues can be climbed with a successful DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check, but if a character doesn't take care to avoid the statue's arms while climbing, they place additional weight on an arm, which tips the arm and triggers the stone block trap. The climbing character must succeed on a DC 16 Strength saving throw or fall 20 feet off the arm and land prone on the ground in the path of the stone block trap, taking 7 (2d6) bludgeoning damage from the fall (along with damage from the trap as detailed below).

Fire Giants

Hailing from sweltering deserts and deep caverns of roiling magma alike, fire giants embody the passion and ruthlessness of their namesake. Though their reputation is one of violent growth and expansion, their lesser-known side is a deeply spiritual one, guided by introspection and understanding.

Fire giants rarely wear armor, as their bodies heat up to extreme temperatures while they fight, causing straps to melt and metal to deform. They instead hone their own bodies into the perfect weapons of war.

Stone Block Trap. When a statue arm triggers this trap, the stone blocks in the ceiling fall. Each creature in the blocks' path, including any creature who just fell off a statue, must make a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw, taking 55 (10d10) bludgeoning damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. Winches down the east and west corridors can be turned to raise the blocks again. Each block can be climbed with a successful DC 17 Strength (Athletics) check. If the stone blocks fall, the **fire giant red fist** from the dining hall (area Z6) arrives 1 minute later to investigate. When the fire giant arrives, they operate the winch to lift the stone block.

Treasure. Characters who are proficient with jeweler's tools or thieves' tools can pry the statues' ruby eyes out. There are four rubies total (worth 300 gp each).

Z3. The Crucible

This multitiered room has a pyramidal ceiling that rises to a height of 50 feet at its peak. The Crucible has the following features:

- "In the center of this room, an iron railing surrounds a 20-foot-deep fighting pit. Stairs lead into the pit."
- "Seven enormous spectators around the pit's perimeter cheer a duel between two bruised, grunting fire giants below."

Stairs. The stairs in this chamber are difficult terrain for Medium or smaller creatures.

Fire Giants. Two **fire giant red fists** (each with 80 hit points remaining) are dueling in the pit, while six **fire giant troopers** watch from the raised section, and a **fire giant lightbearer** stands by the north stairs, ready to spring into action if a combatant is seriously injured. Unless these giants have been warned about intruders, they don't notice when the characters arrive. If the characters succeed on a DC 19 group Dexterity (Stealth) check and don't operate the winches in the area, they can sneak through this area unnoticed.

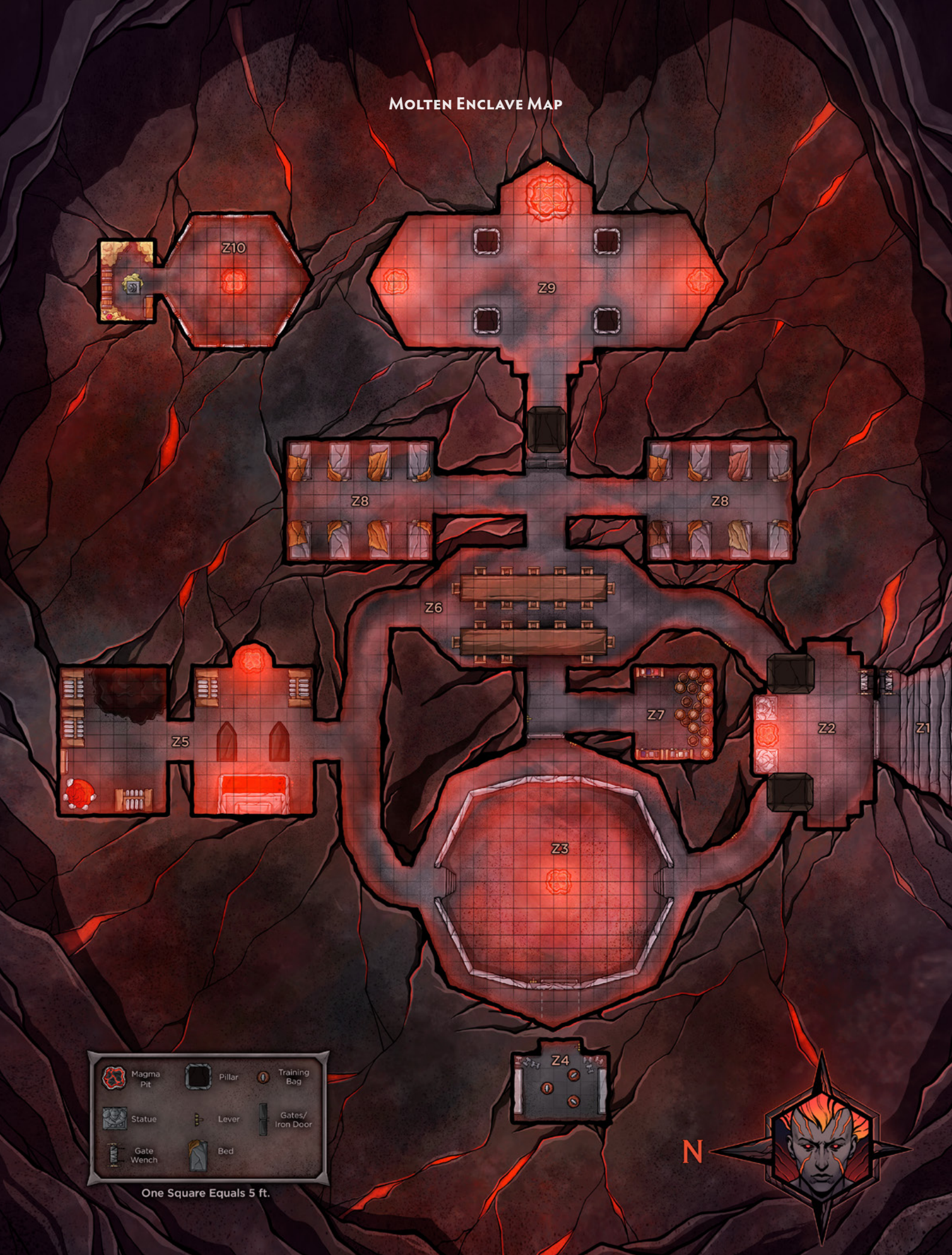
Z4. Gym

The gym has the following features:

- "Huge stone benches line the walls in between racks of enormous barbell weights."
- "A burn-marked leather sandbag hangs from the ceiling, a slow trickle of sand escaping a burst seam."

Treasure. Climbing the 10-foot-high stone benches requires a successful DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check. A jar containing six doses of *restorative ointment* sits on one of the benches.

Molten Enclave Map



Z5. Forge

The forge has the following features:

- "Thanks to the magma forge that dominates the west wall, the air in this room is thick with sulfur and painful to breathe."
- "At one of the anvils in the middle of the room, a fire giant pounds on an enormous iron door, while a stone giant with obsidian skin supervises the work."
- "A storage area to the north contains stacks of metal ingots, a mound of charcoal with a Giant-sized shovel, and a statue of an iron hand clutching an orb of volcanic glass."

Toxic Forge. The forge fills this area with toxic fumes. When a creature who isn't a fire giant or stone giant starts their turn in this area, they must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned until the start of their next turn. A creature who succeeds on this saving throw is immune to the forge's toxic fumes for 24 hours.

If the forge takes 30 cold damage, or is doused with 50 gallons of water in 1 minute or less, the toxic air clears 1 minute later.

Smiths. Hurga, a **fire giant red fist** and blacksmith's apprentice, pounds the metal door into shape. Ostios, a **basalt stone giant** and master smith who Aastrika hired to teach her smiths, oversees Hurga's work. Unless these giants have been warned about intruders, they don't notice when the characters arrive. If the characters succeed on a DC 16 group Dexterity (Stealth) check, they can sneak through this area unnoticed.

Treasure. The storage area contains twenty-five steel ingots (worth 50 gp each) and fifty iron ingots (worth 25 gp each), each of which weighs 50 pounds. The hand sculpture is a monument of molten blades (see "Zenith Aastrika's Hoard" for more information).

Z6. Dining Hall

This room's arched ceiling rises to a height of 40 feet at its peak. The dining hall has the following features:

- "A mural of fire giants traveling a vast desert adorns the carved walls of this chamber."
- "Two gigantic stone banquet tables run the length of the chamber, accompanied by chairs."
- "Two fire giants sit at a table sharing a meal and chatting quietly. A dog made of flame and ash patiently begs for scraps at their heels."

Gigantic Tables. The tables are 10 feet high and can be climbed with a successful DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check.

Inhabitants. A **fire giant lightbearer**, a **fire giant red fist**, and a **hellhound** are eating a meal, but quietly enough that they immediately notice characters who aren't trying to stay hidden.

Z7. Storage Area

The storage area has the following features:

- "Crates and barrels line the walls of this storeroom, and leather sacks contain a variety of provisions."
- "Two skinned giant lizard carcasses hang in the northeast corner of the room, their meat drying over a stone brazier of smoldering rocks."

Provisions. This room contains 2,000 pounds of grains, dried meat, water, wine, beer, and other provisions. The combined food can sustain a Medium or Small creature for 500 days.

Z8. Barracks

The fire giants take shifts sleeping in the barracks. Its two rooms each have the following features:

- "Two rows of gigantic stone slabs line the walls of this room, four on each side, each covered with a leather blanket."
- "A fire giant lays in each bed, chest rising and falling."
- "Three beds have leather pouches the size of halflings hanging at the end."

Beds. A character can climb up onto a bed and reach its pouch with a successful DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check.

Sleeping Giants. If the giants haven't been made aware of intruders, each room has eight beds with sleeping occupants, for a total of fifteen **fire giant troopers** and one **fire giant red fist**. Characters sneaking through a room must succeed on a DC 10 group Dexterity (Stealth) check or wake the sleeping giants in that room.

Hellhound

Treasure. Each sack (three in each barracks for a total of six) contains 50 pounds of dried meat and one of the following items:

- *Feather token* (whip)
- Cloth-wrapped giant eagle talon (a Tiny object) enchanted with a *continual flame* spell
- Bottle of wine (worth 25 gp)
- Set of prayer beads (worth 70 gp)
- Golden brooch with a platinum star on it—the symbol of a long-lost knightly order (worth 100 gp)
- Fist-sized spinel (worth 200 gp)

Z9. Crater of the Core

The double iron doors into this area can be easily opened or closed by a Huge or Gargantuan creature. Smaller creatures can open the doors if they work together and have a combined Strength score of 50 or higher. If four or more Large, Medium, or Small creatures work together but their combined Strength score is lower than 50, they open the door after 1 minute of work, but each creature gains one level of exhaustion.

The angled ceiling of this room rises to a height of 60 feet, and the whole room is brightly lit. The Crater of the Core has the following features:

- "Intense heat radiates from an enormous magma crater at the east end of the room."
- "Four massive support pillars rise to the ceiling. The hollow base of each pillar holds a brazier that billows with black smoke."
- "Seven fire giants, one wearing an obsidian crown and standing taller than the rest, meditate in the room."
- (**Secret**) The entry corridor's ceiling contains a 20-foot-cube stone block suspended by chains.

The Core. The great pool of lava at the east of the chamber—the Core—is where Zenith Aastrika first found enlightenment, and, as such, is a sacred site to the Sunlight Legion. A fire giant touching the Core at the start of their turn regains 20 hit points; other creatures who touch the Core for the first time on a turn or end their turn in it take 44 (8d10) fire damage.

Braziers. A *detect magic* spell reveals the braziers' auras of conjuration magic. When combat begins, smoke magically fills the area within 10 feet of each pillar. Each round on initiative count 20, the smoke's radius increases by 5 feet. The affected area is lightly obscured, and creatures are blinded while in that area unless they have resistance or immunity to fire damage. As an action, a creature can douse a brazier within reach with 1 gallon of water, ending the effect on that brazier. If a brazier is affected by a *dispel magic* spell or any effect that deals cold damage, this also ends that brazier's effect.

Inhabitants. **Zenith Aastrika** is accompanied by a **fire giant lightbearer** and five **fire giant troopers**. When the giants notice intruders in this sacred place, they attack. Zenith Aastrika fights to the death, and when she falls, the other giants flee.

Stone Block Trap. A winch near the Core lowers or raises the stone block when turned. When the trap triggers, the stone block in the ceiling falls. Each creature in the block's path when it falls must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw, taking 55 (10d10) bludgeoning damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. The block can be climbed with a successful DC 17 Strength (Athletics) check.

Treasure. Aastrika wears *Aastrika's crown* (see "Zenith Aastrika's Hoard").

Z10. Secret Sanctum

This chamber's ceiling rises to a height of 80 feet. The characters can access the sanctum by using *Aastrika's crown* (see area Z9) to teleport via lava pool. The sanctum has the following features:

- "Six 20-foot-high shelves carved into the walls of this chamber hold massive stone tablets."
- "To the north, a small chamber holds a pile of precious metals, plundered goods, and coin."

Shelves. Creatures can climb the shelves with a successful DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check. The eighty-seven tablets on the shelves contain a record of the Sunlight Legion's history, carved in Giant. It is incredibly thorough, containing not only their story, but also records of all their dead, their missions, their laws, and their treatises. Each tablet weighs 25 pounds.

Treasure. The north chamber in this area contains Zenith Aastrika's hoard. See "Zenith Aastrika's Hoard" for more information.

Zenith Aastrika's Hoard

The plunder of dozens of conquests lies hidden in a secret chamber of the Molten Enclave. Additionally, the monument of molten blades (see below) can be found in the forge (area Z5).

The hoard contains the following items:

- *Aastrika's crown* (see below)
- *Efreeti bottle*
- *Flame tongue* (greatsword)
- 6 *beads of force*
- *Elemental gem* (red corundum)
- *Potion of giant strength* (fire)
- Palm-sized rose quartz carved to look like a blazing bonfire (worth 150 gp)
- 4 bars of silver weighing 40 pounds each (worth 200 gp each)
- Ruby carved to look like an eye (worth 250 gp)
- Silver flute engraved with scales, the bell of which resembles a dragon's head, with yellow diamonds for eyes (worth 600 gp)
- Finely crafted ornamental longsword, the pommel of which contains a topaz set in gold (worth 800 gp)
- 1 bar of gold weighing 20 pounds (worth 1,000 gp)
- 25,872 cp, 1,589 sp, and 876 gp

Aastrika's Crown

Aastrika's Crown

Wondrous Item, Rare (Requires Attunement)

Aastrika's crown is a relic Aastrika took from her previous commander after killing him. It has been infused with a shred of her power, and it magically resizes to fit its attuned wearer.

Blend with the Blaze. As an action, you can touch a Small or larger mundane flame. When you do, you take no damage from the fire, and you know the location of every Small or larger flame within 10 miles of you. As part of the action, you can teleport to an unoccupied space within 5 feet of another flame you detect. This property can be used twice, and the crown regains all expended uses daily at dawn.

Fire Resistance. You have resistance to fire damage while wearing this crown.

Magma Transport. You know the location of all lava pools in the Molten Enclave. While you are within 10 feet of one of these lava pools, you can use an action to teleport yourself and up to one willing creature within 10 feet of you to an unoccupied space within 10 feet of any other lava pool in the lair.

Monument of Molten Blades

This 8-foot-tall sculpture of a giant's hand holding a volcanic glass orb is constructed from weapons, armor, holy symbols, jewelry, and an assortment of other metal objects taken from now-dead adventurers who dared challenge the Sunlight Legion. A miniature castle made of slagged weapons is suspended in the glass orb. The Sunlight Legion forged this sculpture, which weighs 1,200 pounds, as a monument to their triumph over all foes.

You can give this monument to a Giant, who in exchange will perform one favor for you. This favor can be life-threatening to the Giant, but the GM decides just how much the Giant is willing to do in exchange for the monument.

Giant Followers

If you are using *Strongholds & Followers*, the monument of molten blades can be integrated into a stronghold. While you have the monument, you gain a Giant of the GM's choice as a special ally at the end of each season. This monument can grant a maximum number of Giant allies equal to your stronghold level. If the monument is lost or destroyed, these allies depart at the end of the season unless it has been recovered before then.

Enclave Stat Blocks

The following stat blocks appear in the lair.

Basalt Stone Giant

CR 8 Controller
Huge Giant, Any Alignment 3,900 XP

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)
Hit Points 150 (12d12 + 72)
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
24 (+7)	15 (+2)	22 (+6)	13 (+1)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Con +9, Wis +5
Skills Athletics +10, Perception +5
Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from mundane attacks that aren't adamantine
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15
Languages Giant
Proficiency Bonus +3

False Appearance. While motionless, the giant is indistinguishable from a statue.

Stone Flesh. When a creature attacks the giant with a melee weapon that isn't adamantine and rolls a 1 on the d20 for that attack, that weapon is destroyed if it is mundane. If that weapon is supernatural, it loses all supernatural properties for 1 hour.

Actions

Multiattack. The giant makes two Rune-Signed Blade attacks. They can replace one attack with a Forked Knives attack.

Rune-Signed Blade. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 25 (4d8 + 7) slashing damage. If the target is a creature, each time they are hit by this attack, their movement speed is reduced by a cumulative 10 feet (to a minimum speed of 5 feet) until they regain at least 1 hit point.

Forked Knives. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 10 ft. or range 60/240 ft., one target. *Hit:* 17 (3d6 + 7) piercing damage, and if the target is a Medium or smaller creature on the ground, they are knocked prone and restrained as they are pinned by the knife. The target or a creature who can reach the knife can use an action to make a DC 18 Strength (Athletics) check to try to dislodge the knife, freeing the pinned target and ending the restrained condition on a success.

Reactions

Resonate Rune. When the giant is hit by a melee attack, each creature within 10 feet of them must succeed on a DC 17 Strength saving throw or be pushed up to 10 feet away from the giant.

Fire Giant Lightbearer

CR 10 Support
Huge Giant, Any Alignment 5,900 XP

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)
Hit Points 137 (11d12 + 66)
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
22 (+6)	16 (+3)	23 (+6)	10 (+0)	21 (+5)	13 (+1)

Saving Throws Str +10, Dex +7, Con +10
Skills Athletics +10, Perception +9
Damage Immunities fire
Senses passive Perception 19
Languages Giant
Proficiency Bonus +4

Healing Heat. When the lightbearer targets a fire giant with an attack, spell, or other supernatural effect that deals fire damage, that target instead regains a number of hit points equal to the damage that would be dealt. The target can choose to be hit by this attack or fail their saving throw against this effect.

Molten Flesh. The first time a creature other than a fire giant touches the lightbearer or hits them with a melee attack on a turn, that creature takes 7 (2d6) fire damage.

Actions

Multiattack. The lightbearer makes two attacks using Slam, Living Blaze, or both. They can replace one attack with a use of Flamelash.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 16 (3d6 + 6) bludgeoning damage plus 7 (2d6) fire damage, and if the target is a Huge or smaller creature, the target must choose between being knocked prone or pushed 10 feet away from the lightbearer.

Living Blaze. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +10 to hit, range 180 ft., one target. *Hit:* 16 (3d6 + 6) fire damage, and the lightbearer can ricochet the flame toward another target within 5 feet of the first. The lightbearer makes another spell attack roll against the second target with disadvantage, dealing the same damage on a hit.

Flamelash. The lightbearer extends a whiplike flame to strike a creature they can see within 30 feet of them. The target must make a DC 18 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save, the target takes 20 (4d6 + 6) fire damage, and if the target is Large or smaller, the lightbearer moves the target up to 10 feet horizontally.

Bonus Actions

Travel by Fire (3/Day). The lightbearer chooses two willing creatures they can see within 30 feet of them. Each target takes 14 (4d6) fire damage and teleports, swapping places with the other target.

Fire Giant Red Fist

CR 9 Soldier

Huge Giant, Any Alignment

5,000 XP

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)
Hit Points 162 (13d12 + 78)
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
25 (+7)	14 (+2)	23 (+6)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)

Saving Throws Str + 11, Dex +6, Con +10
Skills Athletics +11, Perception +6
Damage Immunities fire
Senses passive Perception 16
Languages Giant
Proficiency Bonus +4

Heat and Pressure. When an enemy moves out of the red fist's reach, the enemy must succeed on a DC 18 Constitution saving throw or gain a level of exhaustion. Creatures with resistance or immunity to fire damage are immune to this effect.

Molten Flesh. The first time a creature other than a fire giant touches the red fist or hits them with a melee attack on a turn, that creature takes 7 (2d6) fire damage.

Actions

Multiattack. The red fist makes two Unarmed Strike attacks.

Unarmed Strike. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 21 (4d6 + 7) bludgeoning damage plus 7 (2d6) fire damage. If the same creature is hit twice with this attack on a turn, they are blinded until the end of their next turn.

Hurl Flame. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +10 to hit, range 180 ft., one target. *Hit:* 34 (8d6 + 6) fire damage.

Reactions

Guardian Block (3/Day). When an enemy within 10 feet of the red fist hits a creature other than the red fist with an attack, the red fist halves the damage dealt by that attack. The red fist then makes an Unarmed Strike against the attacker.

Fire Giant Trooper

CR 12 Minion
Huge Giant, Any Alignment 840 XP

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)
Hit Points 19
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
22 (+6)	14 (+2)	19 (+4)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)

Damage Immunities fire
Senses passive Perception 12
Languages Giant
Proficiency Bonus +4

Minion. If the trooper takes damage from an attack or as the result of a failed saving throw, their hit points are reduced to 0. If the trooper takes damage from another effect, they die if the damage equals or exceeds their hit point maximum; otherwise they take no damage.

Molten Flesh. The first time a creature other than a fire giant touches the trooper or hits them with a melee attack on a turn, that creature takes 7 fire damage.

Actions

Unarmed Strike (Group Attack). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 bludgeoning damage plus 3 fire damage, and the target must succeed on a Strength saving throw or fall prone. The DC for this saving throw equals 12 + the number of troopers who joined the group attack.

Rock (Group Attack). *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, range 60/240 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 bludgeoning damage.

Hellhound

CR 3 Soldier
Medium Fiend, Typically Neutral Evil 700 XP

Armor Class 15 (natural armor; 18 with Hardened by Flame)
Hit Points 76 (9d8 + 36)
Speed 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	17 (+3)	19 (+4)	11 (+0)	8 (–1)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Dex +5, Con +6
Skills Perception +3, Stealth +7, Survival +3
Damage Immunities fire
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13
Languages understands Common and Infernal but can't speak
Proficiency Bonus +2

Hardened by Flame. When the hound is subjected to fire damage, they take no damage. Instead, their skin darkens and hardens, and their AC increases to 18 until the end of their next turn.

Stealthy Hunter. The hound has advantage on Wisdom (Survival) checks to track other creatures and on Dexterity (Stealth) checks to hide from creatures who are unaware of their presence.

Actions

Hellish Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage plus 4 (1d8) fire damage.

Hellfire Breath (Recharge 5–6). The hound exhales flame in a 15-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw, taking 14 (3d6 + 4) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. A creature who isn't a hellhound who fails the saving throw is lit on fire for 1 minute (save ends at end of turn), or until the target or another creature who can reach them uses an action to extinguish the flames. A creature who is on fire at the start of their turn takes 7 (2d6) fire damage. If a creature who is already on fire is set on fire again on a subsequent turn, the damage isn't cumulative, but the duration of the fire resets to 1 minute.

Reactions

Tug of War. When an enemy within 5 feet of the hound hits the hound with a melee attack, the hound can make a Hellish Bite attack against that enemy. If the hound's attack hits, the enemy is also grappled (escape DC 12), and if the triggering attack was a weapon attack, the weapon used in the triggering attack can't be used to make any more attacks while the target is grappled. The grapple ends if the hound attacks a different target with Hellish Bite.

Zenith Aastrika

CR 12 Leader

Huge Giant, Lawful Neutral

8,400 XP

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)
Hit Points 225 (18d12 + 108)
Speed 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
25 (+7)	16 (+3)	23 (+6)	10 (+0)	23 (+6)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws Str +11, Dex +7, Con +10, Wis +10
Skills Athletics +11, Perception +10, Persuasion +6
Damage Immunities fire
Condition Immunities charmed, frightened
Senses passive Perception 20
Languages Giant, Primordial
Proficiency Bonus +4

Battle Tranquility (3/Day). When Aastrika fails a saving throw, she can choose to succeed instead. When she does so, she can't use Sweltering Heat until the end of her next turn.

Molten Flesh. The first time a creature other than a fire giant touches Aastrika or hits her with a melee attack on a turn, that creature takes 7 (2d6) fire damage.

Actions

Multiattack. Aastrika takes the Disengage action and makes up to three attacks using Unarmed Strike, Hurl Flame, or both.

Unarmed Strike. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 21 (4d6 + 7) bludgeoning damage plus 7 (2d6) fire damage. If the target is a creature, they are outlined in red light until the start of Aastrika's next turn, and for the duration, attack rolls against them have advantage.

Hurl Flame. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +10 to hit, range 180 ft., one target. *Hit:* 20 (4d6 + 6) fire damage.

Lava Pillar (Recharge 5–6). Aastrika causes a 20-foot-radius, 60-foot-high cylinder of lava to erupt from the ground at a point she can see within 120 feet of her. Each creature in that area must make a DC 18 Dexterity saving throw, taking 38 (11d6) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Bonus Actions

Sweltering Heat. Aastrika's inner flame pulses harshly. Each creature within 20 feet of her who doesn't have resistance or immunity to fire damage must succeed on a DC 18 Constitution saving throw or gain a level of exhaustion.

Reactions

Power of Flame. When another fire giant Aastrika can see within 60 feet of her misses with a weapon attack, Aastrika causes flame to trail from the attacker. The attacker rolls damage for the attack as if they had hit, and the target takes half that amount as fire damage instead of taking the full amount of normal damage.

Villain Actions

Aastrika has three villain actions. She can take each action once during an encounter after an enemy's turn. She can take these actions in any order but can use only one per round.

Action 1: Forward! Aastrika and up to three creatures she can see can move up to their speed without provoking opportunity attacks and make one melee attack each.

Action 2: The Manifold Self. Aastrika disappears in a flash of light and teleports, reappearing in an unoccupied space she can see within 30 feet of her. At the same time, five **fire giant troopers** appear in unoccupied spaces within 30 feet of the space she teleported from. The troopers act immediately after this villain action is taken and on the same initiative count in subsequent rounds.

Action 3: This. Ends. Now. Aastrika and each willing fire giant within 60 feet of her unleashes a burst of heat. Each creature within 10 feet of Aastrika or one of these fire giants must make a DC 18 Dexterity saving throw, taking 55 (10d10) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

I didn't find enlightenment atop some peaceful mountain high in the clouds or while sitting with my eyes closed in a serene field of high grass. I earned it in the hottest fires the earth produces. Would you like to feel that enlightenment for yourself?

Zenith Aastrika

Ruins of Wrathrock

Optimized for Five 10th-Level Characters

Content Warning: Body Horror

Ithu'rath is a creature of incomprehensible evil who uses their psionic might to reshape the flesh of their enemies. Their stat block contains strong elements of body horror. You should feel free to modify any of these effects for the safety of you and your players.

Called the All-Seeing by the slime servants who worship them as a living god, Ithu'rath (*ith-YOU-rath*) stole forth from ocean depths centuries ago to conquer humanoid lands. The olothec followed the courses of lakes and rivers across a half-dozen realms, leaving death and mayhem in their wake. But upon arriving at the remains of Castle Wrathrock, a war-shattered lakeside ruin, the olothec recognized a home suitable for enacting their long-term plan for dominion.

Over the decades since, Ithu'rath has been breeding an army of slime servants in the flooded caverns beneath Wrathrock, preparing for a day when their army will spill forth to seize the rich lands nearby. A humanoid gang known as the Havoc Host serves the olothec; in exchange for the promise of power in the new order, the gang smuggles slime servant agents into caverns and waterways beneath nearby settlements.

Explorers who slip past Wrathrock's slime servant patrols must navigate the collapsing tunnels and passageways that fill the castle. These treacherous halls are all coated with thick slime, allowing Ithu'rath to use their swimming speed to hunt intruders in their lair.

Castle Wrathrock was a forbidding lakeside fortress in centuries past, when local nobles made constant war against each other's lands and holdings. The last of those wars razed the castle to the ground, leaving only ruins and tales of vengeful spirits that have long kept locals away from the site.

Wrathrock Story Hooks

You can use one of the following story hooks to integrate this lair into an adventure:

Ghost Hunt. Taldrys Paleflame, a renowned dragonborn sage who studies ghosts, asks the characters to investigate the vengeful spirits rumored to haunt the ruins of Castle Wrathrock. She offers the characters a *cape of the mountebank* to thoroughly investigate the ruins—but she is unaware of the real danger lurking within.

Lost Legacy. Bronwen Wrathrock, a human noble, wishes to reclaim and rebuild his family's castle. He offers the characters 10,000 gp to clear out any occupants.

Olothec

Protean in form, beings of nearly pure intellect, the old ones think in alien geometric logic. Their name for themselves is unrecorded, but sages believe they are the oldest beings in the timescape and simply call them "old ones." Voiceless talkers refer to them as olothec (*OH-luh-thek*)—"ancient enemies." But some humanoid scholars have noted this term bears an uncanny similarity to another archaic synlirii word meaning "ancient ancestor."

Across countless cultures and ancestries, olothec feature in nightmares and temple friezes alike. While their origins are obscure and may never be known, their hatred of the Mundane World and every living thing in it is well recorded. Olothec channel psionic energy beyond any mortal power, surpassing even the voiceless talkers. To them, a living creature who can't reshape their own flesh is repugnant, an unnatural abomination requiring eradication—or transformation.

At first sight, an olothec seems like little more than a rippling mass of tentacles, twisting around each other like a shifting shroud. Creatures who get too close discover each of those tentacles ends in a ravenous mouth set with razor-sharp teeth. Each mouth is tipped by a cluster of three eyes that focus the olothec's relentless attacks. In water or on land, fetid slime coats the aberration, protecting them against attackers and acting as a conduit for their fearsome psionic power.

Slime Plague. The people of Eroce, a town outside of Castle Wrathrock, begin suffering a new psionic disease that torments the mind and ultimately turns victims into puddles of slime. Emeryx Caradar, a local halfling healer, traces the malady's origins to waters that run through the ruins of Wrathrock. He begs the characters to investigate. If the characters kill or drive Ithu'rath away from the castle, the disease stops spreading, and those still infected recover completely 1d10 days later.

Wrathrock Features

Unless otherwise noted, each area of the ruins of Wrathrock has the following features:

Old and New. The lair is a mix of rough-walled tunnels and caverns along with a few chambers and passages that have avoided collapse since the days of the castle.

Ceilings. Tunnels and passageways in the ruins vary from 10 to 12 feet high, worked-stone chambers range from 15 to 25 feet high, and natural caverns run from 30 to 50 feet high.

Illumination. The lair is dark, except in areas J2 and J6. Slime servants who don't have darkvision wear phosphorescent algae from the flooded caverns for light, shedding dim light in a 15-foot radius. Humans of the Havoc Host carry lanterns that shed bright light in a 30-foot radius and dim light for an additional 30 feet.

Slime Tunnels. Tunnels and passageways in the lair that aren't underwater are coated with a 3-inch-thick layer of slick slime, as indicated on the lair's map. The slime imposes disadvantage on Strength (Athletics) checks to climb, and any creature who uses the Dash action in a tunnel must succeed on a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw or fall prone at the end of their movement. Ithu'rath can use their swimming speed to move through these tunnels, squeezing if necessary.

Empty Areas. Chambers and caverns not labeled on the map are empty. Some are used as latrines by the Havoc Host or as grim offal piles for creatures eaten by slime servants.

Servants of Ithu'rath

Only creatures serving Ithu'rath and a few vengeful spirits are allowed to roam Wrathrock. Slime servants and Havoc Host mercenaries attack any intruders they notice. A slime servant's Servant Senses trait automatically notifies Ithu'rath when the slime servant spots intruders, and the olothec telepathically puts the lair on alert (see "Patrols").

Havoc Host mercenaries who engage intruders don't alert any slime servants or Ithu'rath, hoping to loot defeated characters and ply them for useful information.

Captured Servants. Ithu'rath's loyal slime servants can't be reasoned with and fight until slain. However, Havoc Host mercenaries bargain for their lives if reduced to 10 hit points or fewer. With appropriate roleplaying, a bribe of 100 gp, or a successful DC 16 Charisma (Intimidation) check, a mercenary reveals one of the following pieces of information:

- Some of the lair's old worked-stone chambers are haunted by invisible spirits.
- The lair's crumbling passageways are generally safe, but must be walked carefully.
- Hundreds of Ithu'rath's slime servants dwell in the flooded caverns, whose water can transform creatures into slime servants over time (see "Grim Transformation" in area J2).
- Ithu'rath rests in the temple at the heart of the lair, lurking beneath the surface of the pool.

Patrols

Ithu'rath's slime servants and the Havoc Host constantly patrol Wrathrock. Each time the characters move through two to three areas or take a short or long rest, roll a d10. On a roll of 1, a Havoc Host patrol crosses the party's path; on a roll of 2 or 3, the party encounters slime servants. (The Havoc Host patrols only the upper tunnels; in a flooded passageway or cavern, use a slime servant patrol on a roll of 1.)

Human
Death Cultist

Each time a patrol encounter begins, have each character make a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check, made with advantage if encountering the Havoc Host (due to the lanterns the mercenaries carry). On a success, the characters notice the patrol. If the party is aware of the patrol and succeeds on a DC 15 group Dexterity (Stealth) check, the characters can either hide for 1 minute and avoid the patrol completely, or the characters can set an ambush and catch the patrol by surprise. Otherwise, the patrol spots the characters and attacks.

If Ithu'rath is defeated, the patrols cease.

Havoc Host Patrol. Three Havoc Host mercenaries (a **human death cultist** and two **human knaves**) attack intruders on sight, thrilled to have a distraction from the tedium of patrol duty. Defeated mercenaries each carry 4d10 × 10 sp and 2d10 + 20 gp.

Only two Havoc Host patrols can be encountered in the lair. If both patrols are defeated, ignore further rolls of 1.

Slime Servant Patrol. Three **orc rampart slime servants**, a **goblin underboss slime servant**, and a **lizardfolk bloodeye slime servant** encounter the characters while heading to or returning from the temple (area J7). They zealously attack intruders. The characters can encounter an indefinite number of these patrols.

Alert. If Ithu'rath puts Wrathrock on alert (see "Servants of Ithu'rath"), roll for random patrols in each area the characters move through. Characters have disadvantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks to hide from or ambush patrols.

Entering the Ruins of Wrathrock

The isolation of Castle Wrathrock appealed to Ithu'rath when the olothec first came to the site decades ago. The well-known ruins are easy to find. This aboveground area, which isn't shown on the lair map, has the following features:

- "A field of rubble punctuated by crumbling piles of ancient stone rises along the lakeshore, marking out the ruins of Castle Wrathrock."
- (**Secret**) A squad of slime servants patrols the ruins, watching constantly for intruders.
- (**Secret**) Three entrances leading down to the lair lie among the ruins. A fourth entrance is hidden behind some vines.

Slime Servant Patrol. As the characters explore, have them each make a Wisdom (Perception) check. The character who got the highest check result notices a patrol of two **human brawler slime servants** and two **human trickshot slime servants**. The characters can make a DC 17 group Dexterity (Stealth) check. If the group check is successful, the characters can hide for 1 minute and allow the group to pass or set an ambush; otherwise, the slime servants spot the characters and attack.

Lair Entrances. At three locations across the ruins, a rough 6-foot-high tunnel leads steeply down. The tunnels connect to specific locations of areas J1, J2, and J3, as shown on the map. A character who succeeds on a DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) or Wisdom (Perception) check while exploring the ruins finds tracks leading to a fourth entrance covered by a screen of vines that leads to area J6.

Ruins of Wrathrock Areas

The following areas are keyed to the Ruins of Wrathrock Map.

J1. Unstable Tunnels

The ancient tunnels beneath Castle Wrathrock are dangerous to traverse. These areas have the following features:

- "Water drips from countless fissures in this rough tunnel's ceiling, draining away through cracks in the floor."
- "The sound of cracking stone rings out on all sides, as if the tunnel were settling."
- "The tunnel floor is strewn with rubble where a section of ceiling has fallen."

Rough Passage. These tunnels can be hazardous if the characters inadvertently disturb the old stone. While moving through a unstable tunnel, each character must succeed on a DC 13 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check to step lightly. On a failed check, a character cracks an unstable section of floor, causing the tunnel to shift and a section of ceiling to fall. The character and each creature within 5 feet of them must make a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw, taking 14 (4d6) bludgeoning damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Any area effect that deals bludgeoning, force, or thunder damage in a passageway automatically triggers a ceiling collapse in the affected area. Each creature in that area must make a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw, taking 14 (4d6) bludgeoning damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

J2. Flooded Caverns

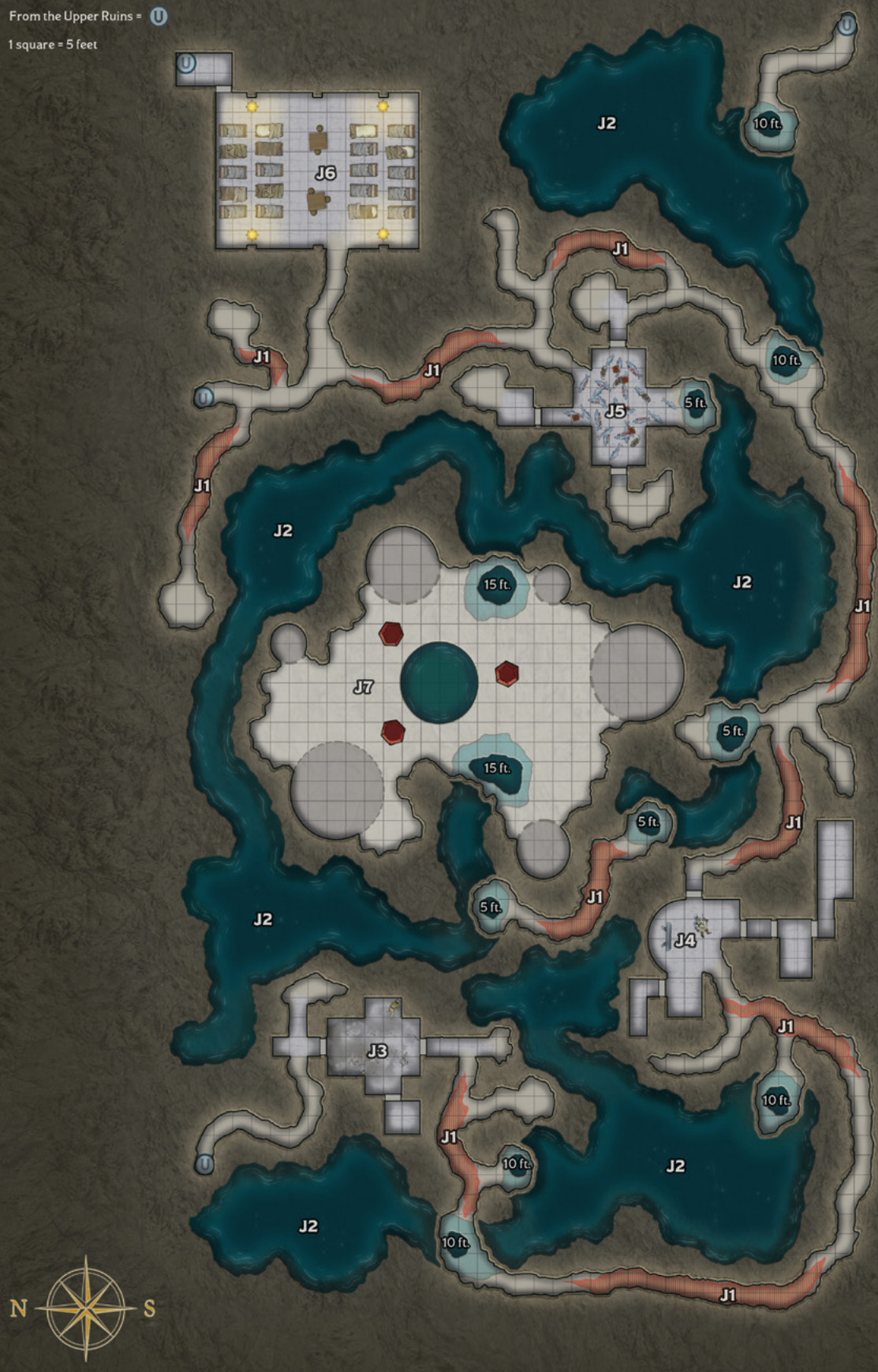
The lowest levels beneath the castle are accessible by sinkholes. Algae fills these tunnels and caverns with dim light. These areas have the following features:

- "Faint light marks the walls of this flooded cavern where phosphorescent algae clings to the stones."
- (**Secret**) Hundreds of slime servants lurk in the darkness of these flooded caverns.
- (**Secret**) The dark water carries Ithu'rath's eldritch power of transformation.

Into the Murk. The map notes the height of the drop from the lair's upper levels into the water below. It takes a successful DC 13 Strength (Athletics) check to climb up the rough wall of a sinkhole. Flooded tunnels are filled entirely with water, and characters who can't breathe water must hold their breath to traverse them. Each cavern has a 10-foot-high air space above the water.

Portable Light. A creature can use an action to pull a clump of phosphorescent algae from any cavern wall.

The Ruins of Wrathrock Map



The detached algae sheds dim light in a 15-foot radius for 24 hours.

Slime Servants. The flooded caverns of Ithu'rath's lair serve as the main living spaces for the olothec's slime servant army. Fifty slime servants of various ancestries dwell in each main cavern, either resting or skirmishing in combat training.

While passing through a cavern, the character who has the highest passive Wisdom (Perception) score is the first to notice slime servants at the edge of their visual range. If the characters try to keep their distance from the slime servants, they can make a DC 16 group Dexterity (Stealth) or Charisma (Deception) check (each character can choose which ability they use). Any character using a light source that creates bright light makes their check with disadvantage. On a success, the slime servants mistake the party for other slime servants at a distance and ignore them. On a failure, fifteen **minotaur lackey slime servants** swim toward the characters and attack; every third round after, an additional ten slime servants joins the fray until the characters are victorious or flee. The core rules present guidelines for underwater combat.

Grim Transformation. Whenever a character enters the water while Ithu'rath lives, the character must succeed on a DC 15 Charisma saving throw or take on an aspect of Ithu'rath's dread form, such as the following:

- Their skin develops patches of fish scales.
- Their eyes constantly weep black liquid.
- Their fingers twist into a claw shape.
- Their skin or hair exudes slime.

Long-term exposure to the water turns a creature into a slime servant, but the characters are in no danger of that while raiding the lair. (Don't tell the players, though). These transformations do not affect a character's statistics and fade within a week of them leaving the lair. Any supernatural effect that restores hit points or ends a condition, such as a *cure wounds* or *lesser restoration* spell, ends this effect early.

J3. Restless Undead

Though Castle Wrathrock fell centuries ago, its last defenders still linger in the spaces below as vengeful spirits. This area has the following features:

- "Other than the slow crumbling of this ancient stone hall's walls and ceiling, it appears to have stood untouched for centuries."
- "The faint sound of stone on stone rises from the darkness as pebbles and scree begin to move across the chamber floor."
- (**Secret**) Invisible spirits lurk in these ancient chambers.
- (**Secret**) The defenders who died here left their valuables behind.

Undead Remembrance. A character who succeeds on a DC 18 Intelligence (History) check knows that after Castle Wrathrock fell to siege, its last defenders grabbed any valuables they could and fled down to these chambers, ready to make a last stand. When the castle was razed, they were trapped here and slowly starved to death.

Unseen Assault. The first time a character moves more than halfway into one of these chambers, each character must succeed on a DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check or be surprised by the attack of two **haunts** who spawned from the defenders who died here. The haunts use Wave of Despair first, then attack with Spectral Wrath while using Possess Object to hurl rocks at less-armored characters.

During the fight, the haunts telepathically project thoughts to random characters ("Embrace our fury," "We will stand to the end," "Wrathrock will never fall," and so forth), as if making the defiant last stand the castle's defenders never got to make.

Treasure. The bones of those who fell here are scattered along the walls, hidden under rubble and dust. Most of their gear has long since rotted away, but a pair of *boots of levitation* and ten silvered arrows remain.

J4. Ruined Study

The ghost of a dead adventurer haunts this ruined study. This area has the following features:

- "A twisted skeleton in rusted chainmail lies on the floor, a longbow in their grasp and a quiver of arrows on their belt."
- "Behind an overturned stone desk, the sound of sobbing rings out."
- (**Secret**) Milo Kentbrush, a handsome ghost sycophant, cries behind the desk.

Milo Kentbrush. When Milo, an overly confident **ghost sycophant**, notices the characters, he composes himself and shares his tale. The former adventurer died in the study at the hands of slime servants; his body is the skeleton on the floor. With dreams of being a legendary hero, he came to Wrathrock alone, determined to kill Ithu'rath single-handedly. Milo is confident he could have done it—his father even gave him a magic arrow. If only those slime servants hadn't taken him by surprise! Now, something prevents Milo from physically leaving the study, but he has no idea what. If the characters can help him leave, Milo offers to show them a treasure that can aid in the fight against the olothec and to lead them to the olothec's temple (area J7).

A character who finds the *arrow of aberration slaying* in the skeleton's quiver and either examines it with a *detect magic* or *identify* spell or succeeds on a DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check can tell the magic arrow is connected to the ghost. They determine that when Milo died, a piece of his soul attached to the arrow, and until the arrow loses its magic, Milo can't move more than 60 feet away from it. If the characters help Milo leave the study, he makes good on his promise and leads them to the temple.

Treasure. One of the arrows in the skeleton's quiver is an *arrow of aberration slaying*.

J5. Hall of Dead Fish

This area has the following features:

- "A horrid stench of rotting flesh fills this chamber."
- "Dozens of dead fish the size of adult humans cover the floor. Each is in a different state of decay, from bare skeletons to almost entirely intact."
- "The slippery guts of these fish sprawl across the floor, making it difficult to walk across this room without touching the gruesome remains."
- (**Secret**) The fish corpses are psionically trapped.

Fish Guts Trap. Each fish corpse is the victim of Ithu'rath's Piscine Transformation, sent to this chamber to suffocate and then be imbued with a psionic trap. A character who succeeds on a DC 17 Wisdom (Perception) check notices that the rotting flesh vibrates slightly.

A creature who attempts to move across the slippery floor of this chamber without touching the fish must succeed on a DC 13 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check. A creature crossing at the same time as another can offer help, but has disadvantage on their own Dexterity (Acrobatics) check.

If a creature fails this check or otherwise touches one of the fish corpses, all the corpses explode with psionic energy. Each creature within this chamber must make a DC 17 Dexterity saving throw, taking 16 (3d10) piercing damage plus 16 (3d10) force damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

J6. Havoc Host Barracks

When the Havoc Host mercenaries came into Ithu'rath's service, they took over this large chamber, cleaned it up, and refitted it. Large braziers fill the area with bright light. The barracks have the following features:

- "This large open space is a barracks, kept warm and dry with blazing braziers, and outfitted with beds, tables, and stools."
- "Sixteen human mercenaries occupy this chamber."

State of Occupation. If the lair is on alert, the mercenaries watch the west corridor through a peephole in the west door. They are confident their hidden entrance from the east won't be discovered, so they don't post a guard at that door.

Cry Havoc. The Havoc Host mercenaries have no interest in detente unless first overcome in combat (see "Servants of Ithu'rath"). This area is occupied by ten **human death acolytes**, a **human death cultist**, two **human knaves**, two **human trickshots**, and a **human storm wizard**.

Treasure. Each fallen mercenary carries 4d10 × 10 sp, 2d10 + 20 gp, and a *potion of healing*. Four of them also carry one of the following: two flasks of alchemist's fire, a flask of antitoxin, a vial of basic poison, and a spyglass.

A thorough search of the barracks turns up a coffer that holds the Havoc Host's collective wealth: thirty-five bloodstones (worth 10 gp each), 2,130 sp, and 710 gp.

J7. Temple

At the center of the web of tunnels and chambers below Castle Wrathrock, Ithu'rath the All-Seeing holds court in a temple their slime servants have excavated over decades. This area has the following features:

- "A rough-walled cavern has been expanded with excavated domes."
- "Twisted glyphs and otherworldly sigils are scribed into the ceiling of each dome."
- "A great pool of dark water opens up at the heart of the cavern, surrounded by three pillars of bloodred stone."
- "Piles of coins, clusters of gems, and art objects are strewn around the foot of each pillar."
- (**Secret**) Ithu'rath lies unseen beneath the surface of the pool, meditating if the characters have reached here unobserved, or waiting to attack if the lair is on alert.

Ithu'rath's Pool. The pool of dark water at the center of the chamber is 50 feet deep. When a creature who isn't an Aberration or slime servant starts their turn in the water, they must make a DC 19 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, a creature can't see Ithu'rath until the start of their next turn as their eyes transform into insectile eyes. A *cure ailment* power or *remove curse* spell reverses this transformation.

Horrid Transformation. The sigils in the domes channel dread eldritch power. A *detect magic* spell reveals the sigils' auras of transmutation magic. On initiative count 20 each round, each character beneath a dome (including within the dotted lines on the map showing the extent of each dome's ceiling) must succeed on a DC 15 Charisma saving throw or take 13 (3d8) necrotic damage and undergo an excruciating transformation. You can use the following options or come up with transformations of your own:

- One or more of the character's limbs becomes longer or shorter.
- The character grows extra limbs or eyes.
- The character becomes hunched and must move on all fours.
- The character's fingers become gnarled claws.
- The character's skin becomes fish scales or fur.
- If two or more characters are beneath the same dome, they swap limbs or physical features.

These transformations do not affect a character's statistics. A *cure ailment* power or *remove curse* spell reverses all transformations on a creature.

Olothec Showdown. If the lair isn't on alert, the characters have a chance to catch Ithu'rath by surprise or draw them into an ambush. A character within 20 feet of the pool's edge can spot the olothec with a successful DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) check—but must also succeed on a DC 18 Dexterity (Stealth) check to escape Ithu'rath's notice.

If the lair is on alert, **Ithu'rath** bursts up from the pool as soon as two or more characters enter this area,

Lair Actions

When fighting inside their lair, Ithu'rath can take lair actions. On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), Ithu'rath can take one lair action to cause one of the following effects; Ithu'rath can't use the same lair action two rounds in a row:

Baleful Teleport. A surge of psionic power scours up to two creatures Ithu'rath can see within 60 feet of Ithu'rath. Each creature must succeed on a DC 15 Charisma saving throw or be teleported up to 60 feet to an unoccupied space the olothec can see.

Psychic Shock. Ithu'rath targets up to two creatures within 30 feet of them who are under the slime effect of Ithu'rath's Devolving Tentacle. Each target takes 9 (2d8) psychic damage and Ithu'rath regains a number of hit points equal to the total damage taken.

Slime Eruption. A surge of toxic slime erupts from tunnels or caverns, targeting up to three creatures within 120 feet of Ithu'rath. Each target must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned until the end of their next turn.

taking to the air with their flying speed. The olothec makes Devolving Tentacle attacks against as many creatures as they can reach, then strategically uses Piscine Transformation to hinder characters (giving spellcasters a fish head to prevent them using verbal components, or giving melee combatants a fish torso to force them out of the fight and into the pool, and so forth).

Convinced of their divine supremacy, Ithu'rath summons no slime servants to aid them in battle, and fights to the death. If the characters flee the temple, the olothec pursues.

Treasure. Ithu'rath's hoard is piled up around the pillars. See "Ithu'rath's Hoard" for more information.

Ithu'rath's Hoard

Ithu'rath's treasure hoard has been amassed in the temple (area J7) by slime servants making offerings to their living god. These offerings are mostly riches looted from nearby settlements.

The hoard contains the following items:

- *Adamantine armor* (plate)
- *Foresight weapon* (see below)
- *Necklace of fireballs* with six beads
- *Feather token* (bird)
- *Potion of invisibility*
- *Potion of mind reading*
- *Spell scroll* of *dream*
- Vial of *oil of sharpness*
- 3 vials of balm of shifting form (see below)
- 75 valuable books (worth 10 gp each)
- 6 gold fountain pens (worth 100 gp each)
- 10 white-gold napkin rings set with topazes (worth 100 gp each)
- Electrum cup scribed with arcane sigils (worth 150 gp)
- Decorative golden dagger (worth 150 gp)
- Fine porcelain dinner service (worth 200 gp)
- Ebony pepper grinder scribed with images of rare plants (worth 250 gp)
- Ivory chalice engraved with the sigil of a long-lost noble house (worth 250 gp)
- Ivory statuette of an octopus with gold filigree (worth 250 gp)
- 1 peridot (worth 250 gp)
- Portrait of a well-known noble in a gilt frame (worth 250 gp)
- Silk dressing gown with cloth-of-gold trim (worth 250 gp)
- 12 platinum cufflinks encrusted with diamonds and emeralds (worth 250 gp each)
- 2 blue spinels (worth 300 gp each)
- 1 alexandrite (worth 350 gp)
- 2 aquamarines (worth 550 gp each)
- 1 black pearl (worth 600 gp)
- Gem-encrusted porcelain bowl (worth 650 gp)
- 5,500 cp, 8,300 sp, 2,500 gp, and 1,120 pp

Balm of Shifting Form

This alchemical concoction was derived from research into the transmutation effects of olothec slime. When a creature uses an action to rub this balm onto their body, they can alter their superficial features, such as changing the color of their skin, hair, and eyes and reshaping their ears and facial features. The balm doesn't allow a creature to take on another specific creature's form, but it can be used to alter appearance and apparent ancestry with ease. A creature using the balm adds double their proficiency bonus to any ability checks they make to create a visual disguise, and they have advantage on those checks. The effects of the balm last until the creature finishes a long rest.

A character who studies a sample of balm for 1 week and succeeds on a DC 18 Intelligence (Arcana) or Wisdom (Medicine) check can create a recipe for it. Using the recipe, a character can create one dose of balm with 8 hours of work at a cost of 125 gp. Using slime collected from an olothec lair or a dead olothec as a reagent reduces the cost by half.

Foresight Weapon

Weapon (Any), Very Rare (Requires Attunement)

This weapon's haft is engraved with sigils of divination. You have a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this magic weapon. In combat, the weapon imparts subtle hints of the future to you, letting you predict a foe's defensive movements when you initially engage them. The first time you attack each creature during an encounter with this weapon, you have advantage on the attack roll. If that attack hits, maximize your weapon damage dice against the target.

Additionally, when you miss with an attack using this weapon, you can use your reaction to shift the flow of causality and turn the miss into a hit. Once you use this reaction, you can't do so again until the next dawn.

Foresight Weapon

Wrathrock Stat Blocks

The following stat blocks appear in the lair.

Ghost Sycophant

Retainer

Medium Undead, Any Alignment

Armor Class 13 (light armor)
Hit Points Six times their level (number of d6 Hit Dice equal to their level)
Speed 30 ft., fly 30 ft. (hover)

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

Saving Throws +PB to all
Skills Intimidation +3 plus PB, Stealth +1 plus PB
Damage Resistances acid, cold, fire, lightning, thunder
Damage Immunities necrotic
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11
Languages Common, any two languages they knew in life
Proficiency Bonus (PB) equals the mentor's bonus

Signature Attack (Dark Essence). *Melee or Ranged Spell Attack:* +3 plus PB to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d10) necrotic damage. This spell's damage increases by 1d10 when the sycophant reaches 5th level (2d10), 11th level (3d10), and 17th level (4d10).

Features

3rd Level: Call of the Dead (3/Day). When the sycophant hits a creature with a signature attack, the target must also succeed on a DC 10 plus PB Wisdom saving throw or be frightened of the sycophant for 1 minute (save ends at end of turn).

5th Level: Astral Presence (3/Day). As an action, the sycophant becomes invisible for 1 minute or until they use a bonus action to end this effect. While invisible, the sycophant can move through creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain, and the sycophant's signature attacks deal an extra PB damage to creatures who can't see them. The sycophant takes 5 (1d10) force damage if they end their turn inside an object.

7th Level: Whispers of the Dead (3/Day). As an action, the sycophant chooses up to PB creatures they can see within 30 feet of them. Each target must succeed on a DC 10 plus PB Charisma saving throw or make an attack against their nearest ally (no action required). A frightened creature has disadvantage on the saving throw.

Haunt

CR 9 Skirmisher

Huge Undead, Typically Chaotic Evil — 5,000 XP

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)
Hit Points 153 (18d12 + 36)
Speed 0 ft., fly 40 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	8 (–1)	16 (+3)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws Wis +7, Cha +8
Skills Intimidation +8, Perception +7
Damage Resistances acid, fire, lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from mundane attacks
Damage Immunities cold, necrotic, poison
Condition Immunities charmed, dazed, exhaustion, flanked, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained
Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 17
Languages telepathy 60 ft.
Proficiency Bonus +4

Incorporeal Cloud. The haunt can occupy another creature's space and vice versa. In addition, the haunt can move through creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. The haunt takes 5 (1d10) force damage if they end their turn inside an object.

Invisibility. The haunt is invisible.

Actions

Multiattack. The haunt makes two Spectral Wrath attacks.

Spectral Wrath. *Melee Spell Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 0 ft., one target in the haunt's space. *Hit:* 17 (2d12 + 4) force damage.

Wave of Despair (Recharge 5–6). The haunt unleashes a wave of psychic pain. Each enemy within 20 feet of the haunt must make a DC 16 Wisdom saving throw, taking 33 (6d10) psychic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Bonus Actions

Possess Object. The haunt can magically manipulate a Large or smaller object within 30 feet of them that isn't being worn or carried by another creature. The haunt can exert fine control on objects under their control, such as playing piano keys, slamming doors, opening windows, or writing with a quill.

As part of this bonus action, the haunt can hurl the object up to 30 feet in any direction or use it as a ranged weapon to attack one creature within 30 feet of the object. The object has a +8 bonus to hit and deals 15 (2d10 + 4) bludgeoning damage on a hit. The GM might rule that a specific object deals piercing or slashing damage based on its form.

Human Death Acolyte

CR 2 Minion

Medium Humanoid (Human), Any Alignment — 90 XP

Armor Class 13 (leather armor)
Hit Points 9
Speed 30 ft.

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

Senses passive Perception 12
Languages Common
Proficiency Bonus +2

Death Chant. When an enemy succeeds on a death saving throw while within 30 feet of three or more acolytes who aren't incapacitated, the success instead counts as a failure, and if the roll was a 20, the enemy doesn't regain hit points.

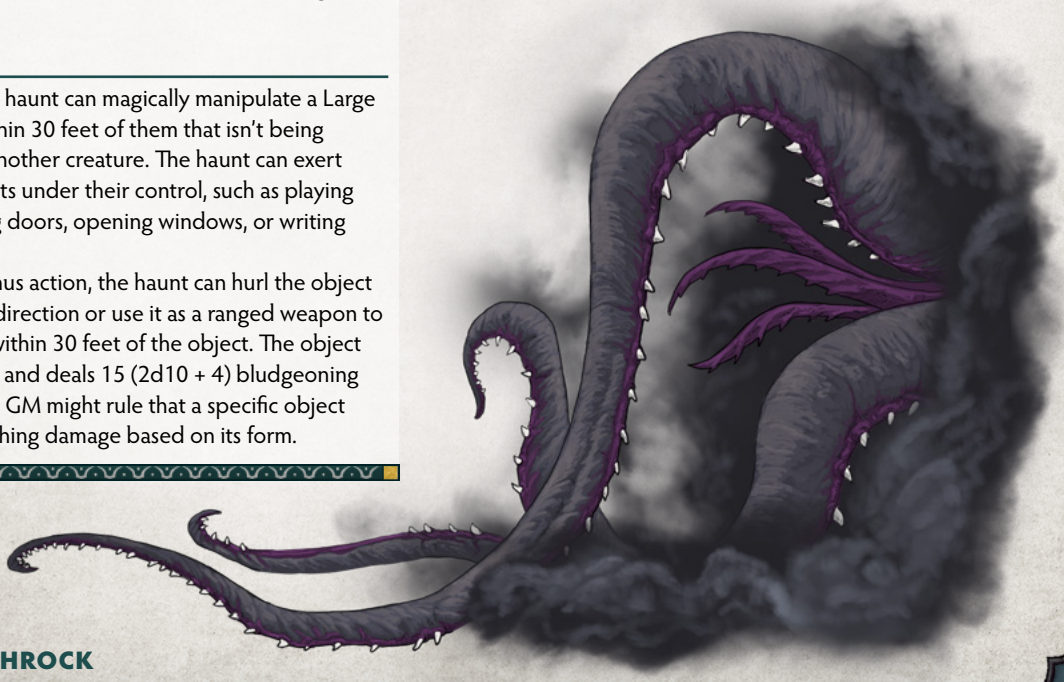
Exploit Weakness. When the acolyte makes or joins an attack that's made with advantage, the attack deals an extra 1 damage per acolyte who made or joined the attack.

Minion. If the acolyte takes damage from an attack or as the result of a failed saving throw, their hit points are reduced to 0. If the acolyte takes damage from another effect, they die if the damage equals or exceeds their hit point maximum; otherwise they take no damage.

Actions

Transfer Life (Group Attack). *Melee Spell Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 2 necrotic damage, and if this attack was made by more than one acolyte, a creature of the acolytes' choice within 30 feet of them regains 1 hit point per acolyte who joined this group attack.

Necrotic Bolt (Group Attack). *Ranged Spell Attack:* +4 to hit, range 30 ft., one target. *Hit:* 2 necrotic damage.



Human Death Cultist

CR 4 Support

Medium Humanoid (Human), Any Alignment 1,100 XP

Armor Class 16 (chain mail)
Hit Points 60 (8d8 + 24)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	10 (+0)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Wis +6, Cha +3
Skills Intimidation +3, Religion +4
Senses passive Perception 14
Languages Common plus any one language
Proficiency Bonus +2

Exploit Opening (3/Day). When the cultist makes an attack, they have advantage on the attack roll.

Actions

Scythe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d10 + 3) slashing damage plus 7 (2d6) necrotic damage, and the cultist regains hit points equal to half the necrotic damage dealt.

Death Bolt. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +6 to hit, range 60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (4d6) necrotic damage, and the target's weapon attacks deal half damage until the start of the cultist's next turn.

Blackfire Blessing (1/Day). The cultist empowers up to 10 non-minion allies within 30 feet of them. For 1 minute or until the cultist dies, each creature's weapons burn with black fire and deal an extra 2 (1d4) necrotic damage on a hit.

Bonus Actions

Rise, My Minions! (1/Day). The cultist chooses up to three creatures within 30 feet of them who died within the last minute. These creatures return to life with 1 hit point, but they can't regain hit points, and they die after 1 minute.

Reactions

Life from Death. When a creature the cultist can see within 30 feet of them fails a death saving throw or dies, the cultist siphons their faltering life energy. The cultist chooses a creature within 30 feet of the cultist who isn't unconscious, and that creature regains 14 (4d6) hit points.

Human Knave

CR 3 Soldier

Medium Humanoid (Human), Any Alignment 700 XP

Armor Class 16 (breastplate, shield)
Hit Points 60 (8d8 + 24)
Speed 30 ft.

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

Skills Intimidation +4, Perception +3
Senses passive Perception 13
Languages Common
Proficiency Bonus +2

Exploit Opening (3/Day). When the knave makes an attack, they have advantage on the attack roll.

Actions

Multiattack. The knave makes two Morningstar or two Javelin attacks. They can replace one attack with a Shield Bash attack.

Morningstar. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) piercing damage, or 13 (2d8 + 4) piercing damage if the target is prone.

Shield Bash. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d4 + 4) bludgeoning damage, and if the target is a Medium or smaller creature, they must succeed on a DC 14 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

Javelin. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage.

Bonus Actions

Stay Down. The knave kicks one prone creature within 5 feet of them. The target must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or their speed is reduced to 0 until the end of their next turn.

Human Storm Wizard

CR 6 Controller

Medium Humanoid (Human), Any Alignment 2,300 XP

Armor Class 12 (15 with *mage armor*)
Hit Points 75 (10d8 + 30)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Int +7, Wis +5
Skills Arcana +7, History +7
Senses passive Perception 12
Languages Common plus any two languages
Proficiency Bonus +3

Exploit Opening (3/Day). When the wizard makes an attack, they have advantage on the attack roll.

Actions

Arcane Staff. *Melee or Ranged Spell Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 30 ft., one target. *Hit:* 21 (6d6) lightning damage.

Gust of Wind (1/Day; 2nd-Level Spell; Concentration). A 10-foot-wide, 60-foot-long line of strong wind gusts from the wizard for 1 minute. Each creature who starts their turn in that area must succeed on a DC 15 Strength saving throw or be pushed 15 feet away from the wizard. Each creature in that area must spend 2 feet of movement for every 1 foot they move toward the wizard.

The gust disperses gas or vapor, and it extinguishes candles, torches, and similar unprotected flames. It has a 50 percent chance to extinguish protected flames like lanterns. The wizard can use a bonus action to change the direction in which the wind blasts from them.

Lightning Bolt (3/Day; 3rd-Level Spell). The wizard fires magical lightning in a 5-foot-wide, 100-foot-long line. Each creature in the line must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw, taking 28 (8d6) lightning damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. The lightning ignites flammable objects in the area that aren't being worn or carried.

Reactions

Arcane Shield (3/Day). When the wizard is hit by an attack, they magically gain a +5 bonus to AC against that attack, potentially causing it to miss. If the attacker is within 10 feet of the wizard, the attacker must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or take 18 (4d8) thunder damage and be pushed 10 feet away from the wizard.

Utility Spells

In addition to any other spells in this stat block, the wizard can cast the following spells, using Intelligence as the spellcasting ability (spell save DC 15):

At will: *mage hand*[A], *prestidigitation*[A]
1/day each: *clairvoyance*[+], *mage armor*[A], *see invisibility*[A], *sending*[A]

Human Trickshot

CR 2 Artillery

Medium Humanoid (Human), Any Alignment 450 XP

Armor Class 14
Hit Points 39 (6d8 + 12)
Speed 30 ft.

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

Skills Perception +4, Stealth +6
Senses passive Perception 14
Languages Common
Proficiency Bonus +2

Exploit Opening (3/Day). When the trickshot makes an attack, they have advantage on the attack roll.

Point Blank Shooting. When the trickshot hits a creature within 30 feet of them with a ranged weapon attack, they deal an extra 7 (2d6) piercing damage. Additionally, being within 5 feet of an enemy doesn't impose disadvantage on the trickshot's ranged attack rolls.

Actions

Heavy Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, range 100/400 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d10 + 4) piercing damage.

Bayonet. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage.

Ricochet Bolt (Recharge 5–6). The trickshot uses a special ricocheting bolt to make one Heavy Crossbow attack against a target within 100 feet of them, then a second Heavy Crossbow attack against a different target within 30 feet of the first target.

Ithu'rath

CR 16 Solo

Large Aberration, Chaotic Evil — 15,000 XP

Armor Class 19 (natural armor)
Hit Points 255 (30d10 + 90)
Speed 30 ft., fly 60 ft. (hover), swim 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
23 (+6)	9 (–1)	16 (+3)	23 (+6)	14 (+2)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws Con +8, Int +11, Wis +7, Cha +9
Skills History +11, Insight +12, Intimidation +9, Perception +12
Condition Immunities charmed, flanked, frightened, prone
Senses blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 22
Languages Common, Deep Speech, Undercommon, telepathy 120 ft.
Proficiency Bonus +5

Amphibious. Ithu'rath can breathe air and water.

Immutable Form. Ithu'rath is immune to any power, spell, or effect that would alter their form.

Slimy Resistance (3/Day). When Ithu'rath fails a saving throw, they can succeed on the save by channeling the power of their protective slime. Until the end of Ithu'rath's next turn, creatures have advantage on the saving throw for Ithu'rath's Devolving Tentacle attack.

Supernatural Resistance. Ithu'rath has advantage on saving throws against powers, spells, and other supernatural effects.

Actions

Multiattack. Ithu'rath makes six Devolving Tentacle attacks and uses Piscine Transformation.

Devolving Tentacle. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 20 ft., one target. *Hit:* 16 (3d6 + 6) piercing damage. The first time a creature is hit with this attack on a turn, they must succeed on a DC 19 Constitution saving throw or be injected with a degenerative psionic slime (save ends at end of turn). While slimed, each time the creature makes an attack roll or an ability check, they must roll a d4 and subtract the number rolled from the d20 roll. At the end of a slimed creature's turn, the size of the subtracted die increases by one: the d4 becomes a d6, the d6 becomes a d8, and so on, to a maximum of d12. The *cure ailment* power or *lesser restoration* spell also ends this effect.

****Piscine Transformation (3rd-Order Power).*** Ithu'rath targets a creature with a head, legs, or torso they can see within 60 feet of them, blasting them with a pulse of transformational energy. The target must succeed on a DC 19 Wisdom saving throw or undergo one of the following transformations of the Ithu'rath's choice:

Head. The target's head transforms into the head of a fish, proportionately sized for their body. They can't speak.
Legs. The target's legs become fins. Their walking speed is reduced to 10 feet (unless their walking speed is slower), and they gain a swimming speed of 30 feet.
Torso. The target's torso becomes the body of a fish with gills. They can only breathe water and can hold their breath for 1 hour. If the target isn't underwater when this transformation takes effect, they begin suffocating.

The transformation lasts until a *cure ailment* power of 4th order or higher or the *greater restoration* spell affects the target. A target who suffers all three transformations at once is permanently transformed into a hybrid fishlike creature and can only be returned to their original form by a *wish* spell or similar supernatural effects.

Bonus Actions

Jaunt (3rd-Order Power). Ithu'rath teleports 30 feet to an unoccupied space they can see.

Reactions

****Liquefy (3rd-Order Power).*** When a creature within 30 feet of Ithu'rath hits them with an attack, Ithu'rath can psionically barrage that creature. That creature must succeed on a DC 19 Constitution saving throw or be pushed 5 feet away from Ithu'rath and be restrained until the end of the creature's next turn, as their lower body temporarily melts into an immovable goo.

Villain Actions

Ithu'rath has three villain actions. They can take each action once during an encounter after an enemy's turn. They can take these actions in any order but can use only one per round.

Action 1: Skeletal Collapse. Ithu'rath targets one or more creatures with a skeleton within 60 feet of them, attempting to temporarily melt their ligaments. Each target must succeed on a DC 19 Constitution saving throw or take 18 (4d8) necrotic damage and have disadvantage on Strength- and Dexterity-based ability checks, attack rolls, and saving throws for 1 minute (save ends at end of turn).
Action 2: Psychic Pulse. Ithu'rath channels a pulse of telekinetic energy to scour and harry their foes. Each enemy within 60 feet of Ithu'rath must succeed on a DC 19 Strength saving throw or take 18 (4d8) force damage and be moved up to 30 feet in any direction.
Action 3: Slime Storm. Ithu'rath unleashes a cloud of transformative slime. Each creature within 60 feet of Ithu'rath who isn't an olothec or a slime servant must make a DC 19 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, a target takes 45 (10d8) piercing damage and is blinded until the end of their next turn as their eyes temporarily turn into insectoid feelers. On a successful save, a target takes half as much damage and isn't blinded.

Ithu'rath the All-Seeing plots the domination of the Mundane World.

Slime Servants

If a creature spends 1 continuous minute under the effect of the slime from an olothec's Devolving Tentacle attack, that effect ends and their flesh devolves into a translucent primordial state. The creature loses their memories and sense of self, becoming a slime servant NPC who is loyal to the olothec. The following stat blocks are Ithu'rath's slime servants.

Goblin Underboss Slime Servant

CR 2 Support
450 XP

Small Humanoid (Goblin), Any Alignment

Armor Class 17 (studded leather, shield)
Hit Points 36 (8d6 + 8)
Speed 30 ft., climb 20 ft., swim 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws Dex +5, Wis +3
Skills Insight +3, Intimidation +2, Stealth +5
Condition Immunities charmed, frightened
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11
Languages Common, Goblin
Proficiency Bonus +2

Amphibious. The underboss can breathe air and water.

Crafty. The underboss doesn't provoke opportunity attacks when they move out of an enemy's reach.

Servant Senses. Ithu'rath can sense anything the underboss senses, and Ithu'rath can speak through their body.

Actions

Multiattack. The underboss makes two Shortsword attacks or two Shortbow attacks. They can replace one attack with a use of Command.

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

Shortbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage.

Command. The underboss chooses one ally they can see within 30 feet of them. If the target can hear the underboss, the target can use their reaction to move up to their speed or make one weapon attack.

Bonus Actions

Get Reckless (Recharge 6). Each willing ally within 30 feet of the underboss who can hear them becomes reckless until the start of the underboss's next turn. While reckless, a creature has advantage on attack rolls, and attack rolls against the creature have advantage.

Reactions

Cowardly Commander. When a creature the underboss can see hits them with an attack, the underboss chooses a willing ally within 5 feet of them. The attack hits the ally instead.

Human Brawler Slime Servant

CR 2 Brute
450 XP

Medium Humanoid (Human), Any Alignment

Armor Class 14 (studded leather)
Hit Points 52 (7d8 + 21)
Speed 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)

Skills Athletics +5, Intimidation +3
Condition Immunities charmed, frightened
Senses passive Perception 10
Languages Common
Proficiency Bonus +2

Amphibious. The brawler can breathe air and water.

Exploit Opening (3/Day). When the brawler makes an attack, they have advantage on the attack roll.

Servant Senses. Ithu'rath can sense anything the brawler senses, and Ithu'rath can speak through their body.

Actions

Multiattack. The brawler makes two attacks using Grab, Haymaker, or both.

Grab. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one Medium or smaller creature. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) bludgeoning damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 13). Until this grapple ends, the brawler can't grab another creature.

Haymaker. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) bludgeoning damage, or 10 (3d4 + 3) bludgeoning damage against a grappled target.

Throw. The brawler throws one Medium or smaller creature they are grappling or object they are holding up to 30 feet horizontally. If the thrown target is a creature, they fall prone after this throw. If the thrown target would enter the space of a creature or solid object that is no more than one size smaller than it, the thrown target collides with it and stops in the nearest unoccupied space, taking 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage for every 10 feet it was thrown. A Large or smaller creature hit by this thrown target must succeed on a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw or take the same amount of damage and fall prone.

Reactions

Meat Shield. When the brawler is grappling a target and is hit by a ranged attack made by another creature the brawler can see, the brawler gains a +2 bonus to AC against the triggering attack. If this bonus causes the attack to miss the brawler, it hits the grappled target instead.

Human Trickshot Slime Servant

CR 2 Artillery
450 XP

Medium Humanoid (Human), Any Alignment

Armor Class 14
Hit Points 39 (6d8 + 12)
Speed 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

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

Skills Perception +4, Stealth +6
Condition Immunities charmed, frightened
Senses passive Perception 14
Languages Common
Proficiency Bonus +2

Amphibious. The trickshot can breathe air and water.

Exploit Opening (3/Day). When the trickshot makes an attack, they have advantage on the attack roll.

Point Blank Shooting. When the trickshot hits a creature within 30 feet of them with a ranged weapon attack, they deal an extra 7 (2d6) piercing damage. Additionally, being within 5 feet of an enemy doesn't impose disadvantage on the trickshot's ranged attack rolls.

Servant Senses. Ithu'rath can sense anything the trickshot senses, and Ithu'rath can speak through their body.

Actions

Heavy Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, range 100/400 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d10 + 4) piercing damage.

Bayonet. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage.

Ricochet Bolt (Recharge 5–6). The trickshot uses a special ricocheting bolt to make one Heavy Crossbow attack against a target within 100 feet of them, then a second Heavy Crossbow attack against a different target within 30 feet of the first target.

Lizardfolk Bloodeye Slime Servant

CR 2 Controller
450 XP

Medium Humanoid (Lizardfolk), Any Alignment

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)
Hit Points 44 (8d8 + 8)
Speed 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws Str +5
Skills Athletics +5, Perception +5
Condition Immunities charmed, frightened
Senses passive Perception 15
Languages Common, Draconic
Proficiency Bonus +2

Amphibious. The bloodeye can breathe air and water.

Servant Senses. Ithu'rath can sense anything the bloodeye senses, and Ithu'rath can speak through their body.

Actions

Multiattack. The bloodeye makes one Bite or one Bola attack and uses Bloodeye Bolt or Mesmeric Lure, if available.

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

Bola. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) bludgeoning damage, and the target is restrained by the bola. A creature can use their action to make a DC 10 Strength check, freeing themself or another creature within their reach from the bola on a success. Dealing 5 slashing damage to the bola (AC 10) destroys it and frees a creature restrained by it without harming them.

Bloodeye Bolt (3/Day). The bloodeye shoots blood from their eyes at one creature they can see within 30 feet of them. The target must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or be blinded for 1 minute (save ends at end of turn).

Mesmeric Lure (3/Day). The bloodeye hypnotically stares at one creature they can see within 30 feet of them. The target must succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or all creatures other than the bloodeye are invisible to them until the end of the bloodeye's next turn.

Reactions

Reptilian Escape (1/Day). If the bloodeye fails a Strength or Dexterity saving throw, they lose their tail and succeed instead. They regrow their tail when they finish a long rest.

Minotaur Lackey Slime Servant

CR 3 Minion
140 XP

Medium Monstrosity, Typically Chaotic Neutral

Armor Class 12
Hit Points 10
Speed 40 ft., swim 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)	13 (+1)	8 (−1)

Condition Immunities charmed, frightened
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11
Languages Common
Proficiency Bonus +2

Amphibious. The lackey can breathe air and water.

Goring Run. If the lackey moves at least 20 feet straight toward an enemy and then ends their movement within 5 feet of the enemy, the enemy takes 1 piercing damage.

Minion. If the lackey takes damage from an attack or as the result of a failed saving throw, their hit points are reduced to 0. If the lackey takes damage from another effect, they die if the damage equals or exceeds their hit point maximum; otherwise they take no damage.

Servant Senses. Ithu'rath can sense anything the lackey senses, and Ithu'rath can speak through their body.

Actions

Goring Horns (Group Attack). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 piercing damage. If this attack was made by more than one lackey, the target must succeed on a Strength saving throw or be moved 5 feet horizontally for each minion who joined the attack. The DC for this saving throw equals 10 plus the number of lackeys who joined the attack.

Orc Rampart Slime Servant

CR 2 Soldier
450 XP

Medium Humanoid (Orc), Any Alignment

Armor Class 18 (chain mail, shield)
Hit Points 42 (5d8 + 20)
Speed 35 ft., swim 35 ft.

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

Skills Athletics +6, Perception +2
Condition Immunities charmed, frightened
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12
Languages Common, Orc
Proficiency Bonus +2

Amphibious. The rampart can breathe air and water.

Relentless (1/Turn). When the rampart isn't incapacitated and they are reduced to 0 hit points but not killed outright, they can make an attack against an enemy (no action required) before the hit point reduction is resolved. If the attack hits and its damage reduces the target to 0 hit points, the rampart drops to 1 hit point instead of 0 hit points.

Servant Senses. Ithu'rath can sense anything the rampart senses, and Ithu'rath can speak through their body.

Actions

Multiattack. The rampart makes two Spear attacks. If the rampart targets the same creature with both attacks, the target has disadvantage on attack rolls against creatures other than the rampart until the start of the rampart's next turn.

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

Reactions

No! When an enemy within 5 feet of the rampart targets another creature with an attack, the attacker must target the rampart instead.

The White Tower

Optimized for Five 10th-Level Characters

The White Tower, an alabaster tower that resembles a finger, contains the hoard and forces of Xorannox (*ZOR-ah-nocks*) the overmind. Commonly known as the Tyract—an ancient Deep Speech word that literally translates as "a king who rules with his teeth"—the overmind indeed consumes those who displease him.

Xorannox is chief of the Grasp, a secret organization made up of various humanoids. They seek to overthrow the voiceless talkers' great empire and place Xorannox above all, first as king, then as god.

The Tyract is a master strategist, always one step ahead of his enemies. Adventurers from the Mundane World may be surprised to discover their deep allies are members of the Grasp. When they meet Xorannox, he's delighted! He loves treating with humanoids! They have the same enemies, after all.

Unfortunately, no matter how useful or dependable a party of heroes might be, Xorannox is nearly incapable of resisting the urge to betray his allies. He assumes, as do most overminds, that the natural end of all alliances is betrayal. It's just a matter of who stabs who first.

The White Tower has no windows and only two entrances: the main doors and Xorannox's very own secret underground tunnel in the World Below. From this lair, Xorannox and members of the Grasp indoctrinate new followers and plan their takeover of the voiceless talkers' empire.

Tower Story Hooks

You can use one of the following story hooks to integrate this lair into an adventure:

Egg Hunt. Rixoros, a secretive dragonborn sorcerer, needs an overmind egg to complete a ritual to protect his city in the World Below from an overmind's psionic influence. He offers the characters 10,000 gp for infiltrating the White Tower and stealing one of Xorannox's eggs (in area X9).

Orb Marks the Spot. Viranis Rusk, a gnome antique dealer, purchased a strange orb from an adventurer who claimed the artifact came from a voiceless talker. Viranis has interpreted the orb's strange markings as a map. He offers the characters 10,000 gp to follow it and find out where it leads. The map guides the characters to the White Tower.

Rogue Apprentice. Marka the Mirthful, an elf mage, has long competed with rival human wizard Basil—who recently stole Marka's spellbook. Marka believes the Grasp has recruited Basil (see area X2b). Marka offers the characters a *+2 wand of the war mage* for recovering her spellbook and ensuring Basil won't trouble her again.

Tower Features

Unless otherwise noted, each area of the White Tower has the following features:

Ceilings. The ceilings are 20 feet high, tall enough for Xorannox to hover imperiously above his followers without bumping his head.

Doors. The doors are iron. If a door is locked, a character can pick the lock with a successful DC 16 Dexterity check using thieves' tools or force the door open with a successful DC 16 Strength check. Each door has AC 19, 27 hit points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage. Xorannox and Ornaz (see area X7) hold keys to the doors.

Illumination. Hanging chandeliers and torches in wall sconces fill the tower with bright light.

Overmind Slime. The alabaster walls of the tower are clean in areas X1 through X4, but they ooze a sticky, smelly green slime in the suspended library (area X5) and below. When a non-overmind creature touches the slime for the first time on a turn or starts their turn touching it, they must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or take 11 (2d10) poison damage.

Spiral Staircase. The spiral staircase in the center of the tower runs from the top of the talon (areas X2a–X2b) to the top of the suspended library (area X5). Where the staircase ends, there is an 80-foot drop to the egg pit below (area X9).

The Grasp

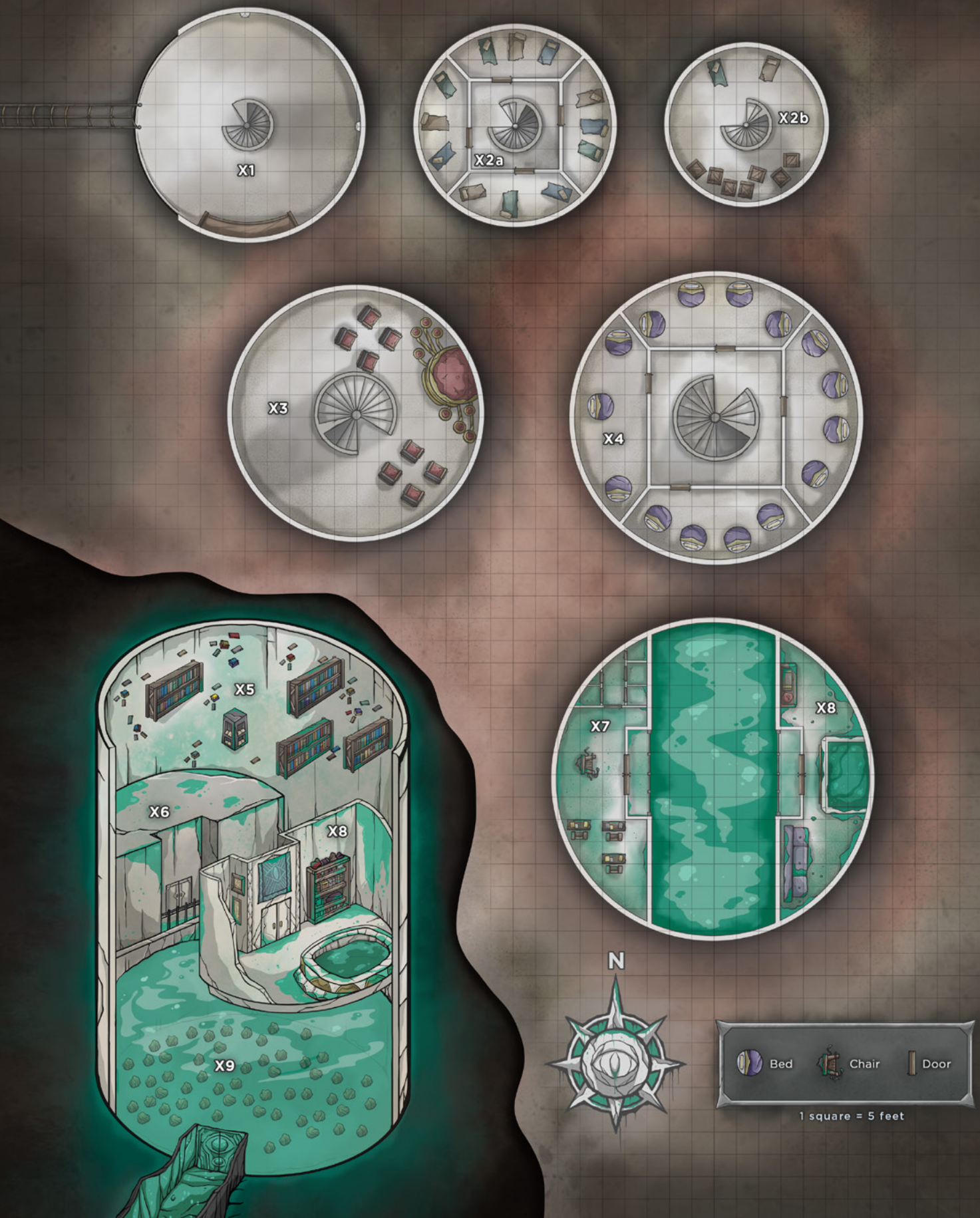
Xorannox's lackeys in the Grasp are separated into two groups. The guards occupying the upper tower (areas X4 and above) are the rank-and-file grunts. They defend the tower's only surface entrance and maintain the upper levels' grandiose presentation. The guards occupying the lower tower (areas X5 and below) are Xorannox's more capable followers who have earned a modicum of his trust or respect.

Guards in the White Tower attack when they notice intruders and fight until it becomes clear they are going to lose, whereupon they flee or surrender.

Flying Guards. Basil and Cransta in the talon's attic (area X2b), Vor'pat in the war room (area X3), and the lower-tower guards each wear a psionic flying amulet that gives them a flying speed equal to their walking speed while within the tower. A creature who wears one of these amulets gains the same benefit.

Captured Guards. Upper-tower guards know little about the tower or its secrets, so interrogating them yields no information. However, a character who interrogates a lower-tower guard and succeeds on a DC 15 Charisma

The White Tower Map



(Deception or Intimidation) check convinces them to give up one of the following pieces of information:

- The guest quarters (area X4) contain a deadly trap.
- The library is equipped with psionic anti-noise measures (see "Silence Insurance" in area X5).
- Xorannox's chief interrogator, Ornaz, is currently questioning a noble in the wisdom extraction room (area X7).
- Breaking one of Xorannox's eggs (in area X9) sets off a psionic alarm in his mind.
- Xorannox has a secret hatch beneath his egg pit (area X9) that leads to an underground tunnel.

A character can convince a guard to hand over their psionic flying amulet with a successful DC 18 Charisma (Deception or Intimidation) check.

Defeated Characters. If the Grasp defeats the characters, the guards stabilize any dying characters and drag the party to the wisdom extraction room (area X7), where Ornaz takes their equipment and attempts to get information from them.

Resting in the Tower

Provided the characters first deal with any enemies in an area, they can take a short rest in any area without incident. If the characters attempt to take a long rest, there is a 70 percent chance four **human knaves** and a **human scoundrel** interrupt them halfway through their rest.

Talk Your Way Inside

The "Entering the Tower" section and certain areas of the lair give the characters the option to bluff or persuade their way through the tower. If the characters are known enemies of Xorannox or the Grasp, you can remove these options, and members of the Grasp attack as soon as they notice the characters.

Entering the Tower

The tower's primary entrance is the "cuticle" of the finger, a wide opening 140 feet above the tower's base. A 5-foot-wide rope bridge connects this opening to a tall cliff 30 feet away.

Four **human knaves** stand guard: two on the cliffside in front of the bridge and two in front of the cuticle. They ask the business of characters they notice approaching the tower.

Asking Permission. The Grasp typically schedules and vets all Xorannox's visitors before they arrive at the tower, but a character can convince the guards they have an appointment with a successful DC 23 Charisma (Deception or Persuasion) check. If the check fails by 4 or less, the guards attack. If the check fails by 5 or more, the guards pretend to be fooled and escort the characters to the war room (area X3) to let Vor'pat deal with the intruders.

If the check succeeds, the guards unsuspectingly escort the characters to the war room, where Xorannox receives them (see "Xorannox's Bargain" in area X3).

Fighting for Entry. If combat breaks out, a knave on the cuticle side of the bridge runs for backup while the rest engage the intruders. The knave returns at the start of the third round of combat with two **human trickshots** and one **human storm wizard** from the talon's bedchambers (area X2a).

Enter from Below

The characters may learn that Xorannox has a secret entrance to his lair from the World Below. If the characters navigate miles of tunnels (potentially laden with other hazards at your discretion), they reach a 50-foot-tall shaft that rises to the trapdoor in the egg pit (area X9). A character without a climbing speed or climbing equipment can climb the shaft's walls with a successful DC 18 Strength (Athletics) check. The trapdoor is visible from the underside. Opening it causes overmind slime to coat each creature in the shaft as if they were submerged in the egg pit (see "Slime Pool" in area X9).

White Tower Areas

The following areas are keyed to the White Tower Map.

X1. Cuticle

The cuticle interior acts as a base for members of the Grasp on security duty. It contains the following features:

- "A shortsword, a mace, javelins, and a hand crossbow rest in a weapon rack on the south wall."
- "The spiral staircase in the center of the room provides access to the floors above and below."

Staircase. The staircase leads up to the talon (areas X2a–X2b) and down to the war room (area X3).

Treasure. The weapon rack holds a hand crossbow, a mace, a shortsword, a quiver of ten javelins, and a quiver of twenty crossbow bolts.

X2a–X2b. Talon

Stairs upward from the receiving area lead into the talon, a portion of the tower that resembles a long fingernail from the outside. This two-level area serves as the barracks for the Grasp. Its first level (area X2a) has the following features:

- "The spiral staircase opens into a square chamber with a human-sized door on each wall."
- "The stairs continue to curve up toward the ceiling."

If the barracks were warned about intruders (see "Entering the Tower"), the forces here are awake and watching the stairs. They attack when they notice the characters.

Bedchambers (Area X2a). The first level of the barracks has four bedchambers, each with worn-out bunk beds. Within these rooms are a total of ten **human**

guards and two **human trickshots**. If the barracks weren't warned about intruders (see "Entering the Tower"), its occupants are unconscious in their beds. A character who wishes to sneak through one of the rooms must succeed on a DC 14 Dexterity (Stealth) check or wake anyone in that bedchamber. Members of the Grasp who wake up to find intruders afoot start shouting, rousing both levels of the barracks to battle.

Attic (Area X2b). On the second level of the barracks, Basil and Cransta (two **human storm wizards**) argue about which one of them will clean the blood in the guest quarters. A character in the barracks room below can overhear the argument with a successful DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) check.

Treasure. The rooms contain a total of 1,132 cp, 431 sp, and 128 gp.

X3. War Room

Xorannox holds diplomatic meetings and entertains his co-conspirators in this room. It has the following features:

- "Eight ornate chairs face a massive golden throne with eight extended arms. Plush red cushions rest atop its central seat and arms."
- "A four-armed humanoid with a single ocular sensor stands deep in thought next to the throne. The humanoid holds a hand against the wall as drawings appear and disappear on the surface."
- *(If the characters succeeded in securing an audience with Xorannox)* "An imperious overmind sits on the throne, his maw of teeth crunched up into his best attempt at a grin."

Time Raider. Vor'pat (pronouns xe/xem/xir) is Xorannox's strategist in the war against the voiceless talkers, but xe knows the overmind will inevitably betray xem. When Vor'pat notices the characters, the time raider asks what brings them to the tower. A character who succeeds on a DC 14 Wisdom (Insight) check senses that Vor'pat is sizing them up and doesn't trust Xorannox. A character who succeeds on a DC 18 Charisma (Deception or Persuasion) check convinces Vor'pat that the characters are more trustworthy allies than the overmind.

If Vor'pat is convinced xe can trust the characters or if xe sees the characters attack Xorranox, Vor'pat joins the party's side as a **time raider freebooter** until Xorranox is defeated (or longer, at the GM's discretion). Vor'pat knows all of the lair's traps and secrets and shares that information with the characters.

If the characters fail to convince Vor'pat they are trustworthy and failed to convince the guards they are allies of Xorannox (see "Entering the Tower"), Vor'pat uses the **time raider nemesis** stat block and attacks.

Xorannox's Bargain. If the characters obtained an audience with **Xorannox**, he suspiciously sizes them up as potential allies. A character who succeeds on a DC 25 Charisma (Deception or Persuasion) check convinces Xorannox the party would be worthy allies. Whether the check succeeds or fails, Xorannox insists the characters stay for the evening as his guests and asks Vor'pat to bring them to the guest quarters (area X4). The overmind encourages the characters to rest before dinner—though the meal consists only of trail rations, since Xorannox doesn't care about the comfort of his guests or underlings. While the characters stay in the tower, Xorannox allows them to roam freely through areas X1 to X4 but forbids them from going lower in the tower. If the characters outlive their usefulness to him, Xorannox sets the trap in the guest quarters.

If the characters attack Xorannox, he fights until reduced to 60 hit points then attempts to flee through his secret exit in the egg pit (area X9).

War Wall. A creature who can manifest a psionic power can touch the wall and manipulate drawings as if the wall were a chalkboard. Such a creature can make a DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check to try and recall previous drawings. On a success, the following message appears: "Clean the guest quarters and reset the spike trap."

Vor'pat's Pronouns

In the real world, xe, xem, and xir (pronounced "zee," "zem," and "zir") are examples of neopronouns. Neopronouns are pronouns that transcend (or don't engage with) the concepts of "masculine," "feminine," or "gender neutral," on which ordinary pronouns are based. While neopronouns are not as common as gender pronouns like "he," "she," and "they," these pronouns are sometimes used by trans, non-binary, and gender-expansive people because they don't come with pre-existing gender connotations and meanings. Player characters and NPCs of any background or species can use xe/xir as well, along with any other pronouns (neo or otherwise) that fit their character. Vor'pat uses xe/xem for the same reason anyone else might—they just fit.

X4. Guest Quarters

This floor has four identical rooms where Xorannox allows guests to stay the night. Each guest room has the following features:

- "Several circular beds are fitted with simple linens and pillows."
- "The ceiling is decorated with an etched pattern of repeating circles."
- (**Secret**) The beds rest on pressure plates that activate a spike trap. The trap is set unless the characters convinced Xorannox they'd make good allies in the war room (see "Xorannox's Bargain" in area X3).

Bedroom Trap. Each bed stands on a pressure plate in the floor, and the trap triggers when more than 20 pounds of weight is placed on the bed. When triggered, the doors to all the guest rooms lock (see "Tower Features") and serrated spikes gradually lower through the 20-foot-high ceilings. On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties) of

Time Raiders

The kuran'zoi (*coor-AN-zoy*), also called time raiders, are humanoids who make the Astral Sea their home. Many kuran'zoi make their living as guides for travelers from other planes, while others survive on the Sea of Stars through piracy of interplanar vessels.

Thousands of years ago, the synlirii—a powerful species of evil psionic aberrations—created kuran'zoi as soldiers. But as the synlirii experimented and enhanced these warriors' psionic abilities, the kuran'zoi saw the true nature of their progenitors. They rebelled against the synlirii and fled to the Astral Sea, becoming nomads of the timescape.

Kuran'zoi possess resilient ocular sensors that allow them to see in the dark. Knowing these sensors would also defend them against the hardlight storms of the Astral Sea, the escaping kuran'zoi chose the Sea of Stars as their home. They thrive where the winds of limbo roar.

Time raiders also have two sets of arms, allowing them to wield melee weapons at the same time as ranged weapons. A single well-trained kuran'zoi is like a squad unto themself.

each round, the spikes descend 5 feet. Once they touch the ground, the spikes remain for 1 minute then rise back into the ceiling at the same rate. After the spikes have fully retracted, the doors unlock. A creature who starts their turn occupying the same space as the spikes takes 16 (3d10) piercing damage and must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or be restrained until the start of their next turn. Spaces occupied by the spikes are difficult terrain.

A character can discover the spike trap in the following ways:

- A character who has a passive Wisdom (Perception) score of 20 or higher notices a small bloodstain on some of the bedframes.
- A character who succeeds on a DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check notices the circular pattern on the ceiling isn't purely decorative. Each circle is a hole hiding a spike.
- A character who succeeds on a DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check to search the room finds the pressure plates under the beds.

X5. Suspended Library

Xorannox devoted three floors of the tower to a 70-foot-diameter floating library with a 60-foot-high ceiling. The staircase leading down from the guest quarters (area X4) terminates in open air near the library's ceiling. The library has the following features:

- "Shelves of books hover above a bubbling pit of green slime, and more ooze trickles down the walls of this wide space."
- "Several humanoids silently float around the library, placing stray books back on shelves and pulling other books off."
- "An ornate book stand drifts around the library. The stand has enough space for six books, and a sign hanging on it reads, 'Be quiet or else.'"
- (**Secret**) Anyone who produces a noise louder than a whisper in this room is punished by the psionic power that keeps this place running.

Readers. A **bugbear channeler**, a **bugbear commander**, and two **hobgoblin firerunners** guard this room. A character who climbs the walls (see "Slime Walls") or flies can make a DC 17 Dexterity (Stealth) check to use the shelves as cover, sneaking past the guards on a success.

Slime Walls. A creature without a climbing speed or climbing equipment can climb the walls with a successful DC 20 Strength (Athletics) check. The walls are coated in overmind slime (see "Tower Features").

Levitating Library. A psionic effect controlled by Xorannox causes the shelves, books, and book stand to levitate. If a book is dropped, it floats in place. The *extinguish* power ends the effect on a single book or piece of furniture, causing the object to fall into the egg pit and break one of the eggs (see "Overmind Eggs" in area X9).

Silence Insurance. A psionic effect on the book stand's sign punishes creatures who disturb Xorannox's reading. When a creature other than Xorannox speaks louder than a whisper in the library, the sign loudly shushes them. The target must succeed on a DC 16 Wisdom saving throw or take 3 (1d6) psychic damage and be dazed until the end of their next turn. The *extinguish* power manifested on the sign ends the effect.

Treasure. The stand contains Xorannox's most recent reading material, including the latest issue of *Bizarrecadia*, a magazine featuring the strangest finds on the Astral Sea (worth 2 gp); *Aberrant Dreams*, an anthology of overmind poems rudely annotated by Xorannox (worth 10 gp); and *The Silent Roar*, a time raider's first-person account of their war against the voiceless talkers (worth 50 gp).

X6. Balconies

Two opposing balconies lie 60 feet below the ceiling of the suspended library (area X5) and the bottom of the staircase that terminates there. They overlook the egg pit (area X9) and have the following features:

- "Two balconies with wrought iron fencing overlook a large pool of slime 10 feet below."
- "A placard on the east balcony's door reads 'Do Not Disturb. Ever.'"

Balcony Doors. The west balcony's door is locked (see "Tower Features"), and it leads to the wisdom extraction room (area X7). The east balcony's door is unlocked, and it leads to Xorannox's quarters (area X8).

X7. Wisdom Extraction Room

The door to this room is locked (see "Tower Features"). It has the following features:

- "The walls of this chamber exude a putrid slime."
- "A human sits chained to an uncomfortable wooden chair, speaking in urgent tones. A nearby orc hunches over a desk, scribbling on parchment."
- "Two sneering gnolls flank the human. They shake their heads in boredom and disappointment."
- "Three cages line the north wall."

Guards. If Ornaz (an **orc godcaller**) or the two **gnoll bonesplitters** notice the characters, the gnolls attack; Ornaz rushes to warn Xorannox, then flees the tower. If Xorannox is in the lair, he arrives 1 minute later.

Wisdom Extraction. The human in the chair, Andros LeScob (a noncombatant), is undergoing the "wisdom extraction" process. His captors force-fed him truth serum and he's currently recounting an exchange he witnessed between two powerful human nobles Xorannox wishes to blackmail.

If the characters save Andros, he thanks them warmly. Andros promises and delivers a reward of 500 gp if the characters escort him out of the White Tower alive.

Treasure. Each of the three desks contain two vials of truth serum poison and ten sheets of parchment. Ornaz carries a key to all the doors in the tower.

X8. Xorannox's Quarters

This room has the following features:

- "Above a huge ceramic tub filled with green ooze, large, viscous strands of slime stretch down from the ceiling like a canopy."
- "A dusty shelf sits in the corner of the room, stuffed with books and trinkets."
- (*If Xorannox is alive and isn't in area X3*) "A large, scowling overmind bathes in the tub, flanked by eight floating eyes."

Xorannox. If he notices intruders while bathing, **Xorannox** immediately attacks, flying out of the room to the center of the tower over the egg pit and daring enemies to come after him.

When Xorannox is reduced to 60 hit points, he ends the levitating furniture effect in the library (area X5) and attempts to flee through the trapdoor in the egg pit (area X9). When the furniture falls, each creature other than Xorannox in areas X5 and X6 must make a DC 17 Dexterity saving throw, taking 35 (10d6) bludgeoning damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Tub. The 5-foot-deep tub is filled with slime (see "Tower Features").

Treasure. The shelf mostly contains volumes upon volumes of Xorannox's personal musings, each more bloviating than the last. The top shelf holds the overmind's treasure hoard. See "Xorannox's Hoard" for more information.

X9. Egg Pit

At the bottom of the tower is a pit with slime and eggs Xorannox laid. The pit has the following features:

- "Twenty round ochre objects rest at the bottom of a 20-foot-deep pool of lime-green translucent slime."
- "The smell of citrus mixed with rotting flesh hangs heavy in the air around the bubbling, popping pool."
- (**Secret**) Beneath the egg pit is a trapdoor.

Overmind Eggs. The slime pit contains twenty overmind eggs, which a character can identify with a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana or Nature) check. Each egg has AC 8, 1 hit point, and immunity to poison damage. If an egg is destroyed, roll a d6. On a 6, an overmind hatchling (a noncombatant) emerges. If an egg breaks, it psionically alerts Xorannox, who rushes to investigate. A creature holding an egg has advantage on Charisma (Intimidation) checks made to influence Xorannox.

Slime Pool. The slime is hazardous to non-overmind creatures (see "Tower Features"). Only overminds can breathe in the slime, and the pool is difficult terrain for

Lair Actions

When fighting inside his lair, Xorannox can take lair actions. On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), Xorannox can take one lair action to cause one of the following effects; he can't use the same lair action two rounds in a row:

Gas Belch. A hole opens in the ceiling, floor, or wall at a point Xorannox chooses within 60 feet of him and belches a 20-foot-sphere of smelly gas that lasts until the end of initiative count 20 on the next round. When a creature enters that area for the first time or starts their turn there, they must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned until the start of their next turn.

Slime Shower. Viscous slime falls from the ceiling toward one enemy within 120 feet of Xorannox. The creature must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or be vulnerable to fire and lightning damage. The effect ends when they take fire or lightning damage, or at the end of initiative count 20 on the next round.

Telekinetic Hold. An invisible force attempts to grab three enemies within 60 feet of Xorannox. Each creature must make a DC 15 Strength saving throw. On a failed save, a creature's speed becomes 0 and they rise vertically 20 feet in the air, suspended there until the end of initiative count 20 on the next round, at which point they fall.

non-overmind creatures. If a creature is submerged in the pool, the slime sticks to them. A creature can use an action to remove the slime.

Trapdoor. A character who succeeds on a DC 22 Intelligence (Investigation) or Wisdom (Perception) check notices the outline of the trapdoor at the bottom of the slime pool. The trapdoor opens down into a 50-foot-tall shaft that ends in a dark, underground tunnel leading into the World Below.

Xorannox's Hoard

Xorannox's treasure hoard sits on the top shelf in his quarters (area X8). It includes offerings from his supporters and items of interest taken from the bodies of people he betrayed.

The hoard contains the following items:

- Book on seafaring with a *folding boat* tucked inside, marking Xorannox's place
- *Overmatter totem* (see below)
- *Wand of wonder*
- 2 *potions of gaseous form*
- 2 *potions of invisibility*
- *Potion of water breathing*
- *Spell scroll* of *teleportation circle*
- Book of secrets (see below)
- 2 vials of torpor poison
- 7-piece set of emerald dice (worth 840 gp total)
- Ornate silver hand mirror (worth 1,000 gp)
- 1 ruby (worth 2,500 gp)
- 519 sp and 1,952 gp

Book of Secrets

This book contains Xorannox's collection of dirty secrets about other people: intrigues between nobles, unfaithful leaders, infernal contracts between devils and clergy of good-aligned temples, and similar misdeeds.

If you study the book for 1 uninterrupted hour, you find a piece of secret information about an important public figure of your choice. You only find information if the GM determines that person has a hidden secret. If you reveal you know the secret to the figure, you gain a +5 bonus on Charisma checks to influence them for 24 hours. After the book reveals ten secrets in this way, it holds no more secrets of use.

A good spy has eyes and ears everywhere. A great spy puts their actual eyes and ears everywhere. After all, I'm the only one I can trust.

Xorannox

Overmatter Totem

Wondrous Item, Rare (Requires Attunement)

This totem is made out of a petrified overmind tongue encased in hard, translucent resin. While holding it, you can use an action to detach one ear, eye, or hand from your body. The body part has AC 10, hit points equal to half your hit point maximum, a flying speed equal to half your greatest movement speed, and it can hover.

Your detached body part acts on your turn and follows your telepathic commands. Each body part can only take the following actions:

Ear. Your ear can hear. Anything your detached ear hears, you hear. On your turn, your ear can use an action to make a Wisdom (Perception) check to hear.

Eye. Your eye can see and has any special senses you have, except for tremorsense. Anything your detached eye sees, you see. On your turn, your eye can use an action to make a Wisdom (Perception) check to see.

Hand. Your hand can carry and manipulate Tiny objects. On your turn, your hand can use an action to interact with an object you can see or to make one attack using a light weapon against a target you can see. This attack uses your attack bonus and ability score modifier.

If your detached body part is within 5 feet of you, it can use an action to reattach to you. If your body part is reduced to 0 hit points or is ever more than 60 feet away from you, it falls to the ground, lifeless, and must be reattached manually. Reattaching a body part manually takes 1 hour.

Book of Secrets

Tower Stat Blocks

The following stat blocks appear in the lair.

Bugbear Channeler

CR 7 Controller

Medium Humanoid (Bugbear), Any Alignment — 2,900 XP

Armor Class 14 (studded leather)
Hit Points 102 (12d8 + 48)
Speed 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws Wis +6, Cha +7
Skills Arcana +5, Perception +6, Stealth +5, Survival +6
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 16
Languages Common, Goblin
Proficiency Bonus +3

Bugbear's Inspiration. Allied Humanoids within 15 feet of the channeler who can see or hear them have advantage on Wisdom and Charisma saving throws.

Actions

Multiattack. The channeler makes two Channeling Staff attacks.

Channeling Staff. *Melee Spell Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage plus 9 (2d8) lightning damage. If the target is a Large or smaller creature, the channeler can move them up to 10 feet horizontally.

Vine Eruption (3/Day; 4th-Level Spell). The channeler attempts to use primal magic to overload a creature they can see within 60 feet of them. The target must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw as thorny vines erupt from their body and attempt to envelop them. On a failed save, the target takes 27 (5d10) piercing damage and is restrained until the vines are destroyed. On a successful save, a target takes half as much damage and isn't restrained. A creature restrained in this way takes 5 (1d10) piercing damage at the start of each of their turns. The vines have AC 15, 10 hit points, and immunity to psychic damage.

Ball Lightning (1/Day; 7th-Level Spell; Concentration). The channeler creates a 20-foot-radius sphere of electricity centered on a point they can see within 120 feet of them. The sphere lasts for 1 minute. When an enemy starts their turn in that area, they must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or take 27 (6d8) lightning damage. As a bonus action, the channeler can move the sphere up to 20 feet.

Reactions

Shared Shield (2/Day; 2nd-Level Spell). When a creature the channeler can see within 30 feet of them is hit with an attack, the channeler can create a barrier of magical force around that target. Until the start of the channeler's next turn, the target gains a +5 bonus to AC, including against the triggering attack.

Utility Spells

In addition to any other spells in this stat block, the channeler can cast the following spells, using Charisma as the spellcasting ability (spell save DC 15):

At will: *light*[A], *message*[A]
1/day each: *detect magic*[A], *disguise self*[A], *identify*[+]

Bugbear Commander

CR 5 Support

Medium Humanoid (Bugbear), Any Alignment — **1,800 XP**

Armor Class 18 (plate)
Hit Points 97 (15d8 + 30)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	15 (+2)	15 (+2)	17 (+3)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)

Saving Throws Wis +5, Cha +5
Skills Intimidation +5, Persuasion +5, Stealth +5, Survival +5
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12
Languages Common, Goblin
Proficiency Bonus +3

Commander's Inspiration. Allied Humanoids within 30 feet of the commander who can see or hear them have advantage on Wisdom and Charisma saving throws and gain a +1 bonus to weapon attack and damage rolls.

Actions

Multiattack. The commander makes two Greatsword or two Longbow attacks.

Greatsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) slashing damage, and one ally within 30 feet of the target who can see the commander has advantage on their next melee attack roll made against the target before the start of the commander's next turn.

Longbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage.

Bark Orders (Recharge 6). Each ally within 60 feet of the commander who can hear and understand them can use a reaction to move up to their speed and make a weapon attack.

Reactions

Bolstering Pride. When another creature within 60 feet of the commander who can hear and understand them makes a saving throw, the commander can give that creature advantage on the saving throw.

Gnoll Bonesplitter

CR 4 Brute

Medium Fiend (Gnoll), Typically Chaotic Evil — 1,100 XP

Armor Class 13 (hide armor)
Hit Points 90 (12d8 + 36)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	12 (+1)	17 (+3)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Con +5
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11
Languages Abyssal, Gnoll
Proficiency Bonus +2

Actions

Multiattack. The bonesplitter makes two attacks using Bite, Spiked Flail, or both. They can replace one attack with a use of Bloody Roar, if available.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage, or 11 (2d6 + 4) piercing damage if the target is restrained.

Spiked Flail. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) piercing damage. If the target is a Medium or smaller creature, they are grappled (escape DC 14). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained and the bonesplitter can't make Spiked Flail attacks.

Bloody Roar (Recharge 6). The bonesplitter roars, spitting a spray of blood. Each ally within 10 feet of them who can see them can make a weapon attack (no action required), provided that ally isn't incapacitated.

Bonus Actions

Over Here! The bonesplitter yanks a creature they are grappling. The target must succeed on a DC 14 Strength saving throw or swap spaces with the bonesplitter.

Reactions

Death Frenzy. When an ally the bonesplitter can see within 30 feet of them is reduced to 0 hit points, the bonesplitter moves up to half their speed and makes a Bite attack.

Hobgoblin Firerunner

CR 4 Skirmisher

Medium Humanoid (Hobgoblin), Any Alignment — 1,100 XP

Armor Class 16 (studded leather)
Hit Points 78 (12d8 + 24)
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Dex +6
Skills Acrobatics +6
Damage Immunities fire
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11
Languages Common, Goblin, Infernal
Proficiency Bonus +2

Fiery Leap. The firerunner's long jump is up to 30 feet and their high jump is up to 15 feet, with or without a running start. The first time a firerunner lands after a jump on their turn, each creature within 5 feet of them takes 3 (1d6) fire damage.

Infernal Ichor. When the firerunner dies, their corpse unleashes a spray of burning orange ichor. Each creature within 5 feet of the firerunner takes 5 fire damage.

Actions

Multiattack. The firerunner makes two Fire Scimitar attacks.

Fire Scimitar. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) slashing damage plus 7 (2d6) fire damage.

Blaze Sprint (Recharge 5–6). The firerunner moves up to their speed without provoking opportunity attacks. Each creature they come within 5 feet of during this movement must make a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw, taking 10 (3d6) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Human Guard

CR 1/8 Minion

Medium Humanoid (Human), Any Alignment — 5 XP

Armor Class 16 (chain shirt, shield)
Hit Points 5
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

Skills Perception +2
Senses passive Perception 12
Languages Common
Proficiency Bonus +2

Exploit Weakness. When the guard makes or joins an attack that's made with advantage, the attack deals an extra 1 damage per guard who made or joined the attack.

Minion. If the guard takes damage from an attack or as the result of a failed saving throw, their hit points are reduced to 0. If the guard takes damage from another effect, they die if the damage equals or exceeds their hit point maximum; otherwise they take no damage.

Overwhelm. If a Medium or smaller enemy starts their turn within 5 feet of three or more guards who can see them, until the start of the enemy's next turn, the enemy's speed is reduced by 5 feet for each guard within 5 feet of them. If this reduces the enemy's walking speed to 0, they are restrained until the start of their next turn.

Actions

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

Human Knave

CR 3 Soldier

Medium Humanoid (Human), Any Alignment — 700 XP

Armor Class 16 (breastplate, shield)
Hit Points 60 (8d8 + 24)
Speed 30 ft.

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

Skills Intimidation +4, Perception +3
Senses passive Perception 13
Languages Common
Proficiency Bonus +2

Exploit Opening (3/Day). When the knave makes an attack, they have advantage on the attack roll.

Actions

Multiattack. The knave makes two Morningstar or two Javelin attacks. They can replace one attack with a Shield Bash attack.

Morningstar. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) piercing damage, or 13 (2d8 + 4) piercing damage if the target is prone.

Shield Bash. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d4 + 4) bludgeoning damage, and if the target is a Medium or smaller creature, they must succeed on a DC 14 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

Javelin. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage.

Bonus Actions

Stay Down. The knave kicks one prone creature within 5 feet of them. The target must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or their speed is reduced to 0 until the end of their next turn.

Human Scoundrel

CR 3 Ambusher

Medium Humanoid (Human), Any Alignment — 700 XP

Armor Class 15 (studded leather)
Hit Points 55 (10d8 + 10)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)

Skills Deception +4, Sleight of Hand +5, Stealth +5
Senses passive Perception 10
Languages Common
Proficiency Bonus +2

Ambusher. In the first round of combat, the scoundrel has advantage on attack rolls against any surprised creature.

Exploit Opening (3/Day). When the scoundrel makes an attack, they have advantage on the attack roll.

Hit 'Em Where It Hurts. When the scoundrel has advantage on a weapon attack roll, the attack deals an extra 7 (2d6) damage on a hit.

Actions

Rapier. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage, and the scoundrel can make a dagger attack against the target with advantage.

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

Human Storm Wizard

CR 6 Controller

Medium Humanoid (Human), Any Alignment — 2,300 XP

Armor Class 12 (15 with *mage armor*)
Hit Points 75 (10d8 + 30)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Int +7, Wis +5
Skills Arcana +7, History +7
Senses passive Perception 12
Languages Common plus any two languages
Proficiency Bonus +3

Exploit Opening (3/Day). When the wizard makes an attack, they have advantage on the attack roll.

Actions

Arcane Staff. *Melee or Ranged Spell Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 30 ft., one target. *Hit:* 21 (6d6) lightning damage.

Gust of Wind (1/Day; 2nd-Level Spell; Concentration). A 10-foot-wide, 60-foot-long line of strong wind gusts from the wizard for 1 minute. Each creature who starts their turn in that area must succeed on a DC 15 Strength saving throw or be pushed 15 feet away from the wizard. Each creature in that area must spend 2 feet of movement for every 1 foot they move toward the wizard.

The gust disperses gas or vapor, and it extinguishes candles, torches, and similar unprotected flames. It has a 50 percent chance to extinguish protected flames like lanterns. The wizard can use a bonus action to change the direction in which the wind blasts from them.

Lightning Bolt (3/Day; 3rd-Level Spell). The wizard fires magical lightning in a 5-foot-wide, 100-foot-long line. Each creature in the line must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw, taking 28 (8d6) lightning damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. The lightning ignites flammable objects in the area that aren't being worn or carried.

Reactions

Arcane Shield (3/Day). When the wizard is hit by an attack, they magically gain a +5 bonus to AC against that attack, potentially causing it to miss. If the attacker is within 10 feet of the wizard, the attacker must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or take 18 (4d8) thunder damage and be pushed 10 feet away from the wizard.

Utility Spells

In addition to any other spells in this stat block, the wizard can cast the following spells, using Intelligence as the spellcasting ability (spell save DC 15):

At will: *mage hand*[A], *prestidigitation*[A]
1/day each: *clairvoyance*[+], *mage armor*[A], *see invisibility*[A], *sending*[A]

Human Trickshot

CR 2 Artillery

Medium Humanoid (Human), Any Alignment — 450 XP

Armor Class 14
Hit Points 39 (6d8 + 12)
Speed 30 ft.

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

Skills Perception +4, Stealth +6
Senses passive Perception 14
Languages Common
Proficiency Bonus +2

Exploit Opening (3/Day). When the trickshot makes an attack, they have advantage on the attack roll.

Point Blank Shooting. When the trickshot hits a creature within 30 feet of them with a ranged weapon attack, they deal an extra 7 (2d6) piercing damage. Additionally, being within 5 feet of an enemy doesn't impose disadvantage on the trickshot's ranged attack rolls.

Actions

Heavy Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, range 100/400 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d10 + 4) piercing damage.

Bayonet. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage.

Ricochet Bolt (Recharge 5–6). The trickshot uses a special ricocheting bolt to make one Heavy Crossbow attack against a target within 100 feet of them, then a second Heavy Crossbow attack against a different target within 30 feet of the first target.

Orc Godcaller

CR 4 Support

Medium Humanoid (Orc), Any Alignment 1,100 XP

Armor Class 14 (studded leather)
Hit Points 82 (11d8 + 33)
Speed 35 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)	19 (+4)

Saving Throws Wis +3
Skills Arcana +3, Insight +3, Performance +8
Condition Immunities charmed
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11
Languages Common, Orc
Proficiency Bonus +2

Relentless (1/Turn). When the godcaller isn't incapacitated and they are reduced to 0 hit points but not killed outright, they can make an attack against an enemy (no action required) before the hit point reduction is resolved. If the attack hits and its damage reduces the target to 0 hit points, the godcaller drops to 1 hit point instead of 0 hit points.

Actions

Power Chord (1st-Level Spell). *Melee or Ranged Spell Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 30 ft., one creature who can hear the godcaller. *Hit:* 18 (4d6 + 4) thunder damage.

Cadenza. The godcaller chooses another creature within 30 feet of them. If the target can hear the godcaller, the target can use their reaction to move up to their speed and make an attack.

Song of the Gods (2nd-Level Spell). The godcaller and each ally within 30 feet of them who can hear them has advantage on attack rolls until the start of the godcaller's next turn. This effect ends early if the godcaller takes any damage.

Bonus Actions

Rallying Ostinato (1/Day). The godcaller and up to three allies within 60 feet of them who can hear them regain 20 hit points, and these creatures ignore difficult terrain for 1 minute.

Betrayal is inevitable. I'm no fool. Everyone wants what I have–even people working for me. They want to wield the Grasp and aren't content to simply share the spoils of my brilliance. I make it look easy, but those peons don't realize that my hard work gives them the good life. They could never be me. That's why they fail.

Xorannox

Time Raider Freebooter

Retainer

Medium Humanoid (Time Raider), Any Alignment

Armor Class 15 (medium armor)
Hit Points Seven times their level (number of d8 Hit Dice equal to their level)
Speed 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws +PB to all
Skills Athletics +3 plus PB, Perception +1 plus PB
Damage Resistances psychic
Condition Immunities blinded, charmed
Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 11 plus PB
Languages Common, Kuran'zoi
Proficiency Bonus equals the mentor's bonus

Signature Attack (Cutlass). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 plus PB to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1d10 plus PB slashing damage. Beginning at 7th level, the freebooter can make this attack twice, instead of once, when they take the Attack action on their turn.

Features

3rd Level: Blip Strike (3/Day). As a bonus action, the freebooter teleports up to 30 feet to an unoccupied space they can see. If this space is within 5 feet of an enemy the freebooter can see, the freebooter can make a signature attack against them with advantage as part of this bonus action.

5th Level: Kinetic Clamp (3/Day). As a bonus action, the freebooter tries to telekinetically grip one creature they can see within 60 feet of them. The target must make a DC 10 plus PB Strength saving throw. On a failed save, the target takes PBd6 force damage and is restrained until the start of the freebooter's next turn. On a successful save, the target takes half as much damage and is not restrained.

7th Level: Wraithstep (1/Day). As an action, the freebooter becomes invisible for 1 minute. While invisible, the freebooter has resistance to bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from mundane attacks, and the freebooter can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. The freebooter takes 5 (1d10) force damage if they end their turn inside an object.

Time Raider Nemesis

CR 8 Skirmisher

Medium Humanoid (Time Raider), Any Alignment 3,900 XP

Armor Class 17 (Precog Reflexes)
Hit Points 130 (20d8 + 40)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Str +7, Con +5, Int +7
Skills Arcana +7, Athletics +7, Intimidation +6, Perception +4, Stealth +6
Damage Resistances psychic
Condition Immunities blinded, charmed
Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 14
Languages Common, Kuran'zoi, telepathy 60 ft.
Proficiency Bonus +3

Precog Reflexes. The nemesis adds their Intelligence modifier (+4) to initiative rolls and to their AC (included in Armor Class).

Psychic Scar. The nemesis is immune to any effect that would sense their emotions, read their thoughts, reveal they are lying, or reveal their alignment or location.

Actions

Multiattack. The nemesis makes two Golden Scythe attacks. They can replace one attack with a use of Kinetic Crush or Phase, if available.

Golden Scythe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) slashing damage plus 13 (3d8) necrotic damage. If this attack reduces a creature who is in an astral body (as with the *astral projection* spell) to 0 hit points, that creature's soul returns to their material body, and then their material body is also reduced to 0 hit points.

Kinetic Crush (4th-Order Power). The nemesis attempts to telekinetically grip one creature they can see within 60 feet of them. The target must make a DC 15 Strength saving throw. On a failed save, the target takes 27 (6d8) force damage, and their speed becomes 0 until the start of the nemesis's next turn. On a successful save, a target takes half as much damage and their speed isn't reduced.

****Phase (1/Day; 4th-Order Power; Concentration).*** For 1 minute, the nemesis can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. The nemesis takes 5 (1d10) force damage if they end their turn inside an object. If this power ends while the nemesis is inside an object, they are shunted out of the object into the nearest unoccupied space of their choice.

Bonus Actions

Jaunt (3/Day; 3rd-Order Power). The nemesis teleports up to 30 feet to an unoccupied space they can see.

Xorannox

CR 14 Solo
Large Aberration, Lawful Evil
11,500 XP

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)
Hit Points 228 (24d10 + 96)
Speed 0 ft., fly 20 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	16 (+3)	18 (+4)	19 (+4)	14 (+2)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws Int +9, Wis +7, Cha +9
Skills Arcana +9, Deception +9, Insight +7, Intimidation +9, Perception +7
Condition Immunities charmed, flanked, frightened, prone
Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 17
Languages Common, Deep Speech, Undercommon
Proficiency Bonus +5

Painful Resistance (3/Day). Eight eyes float around Xorannox and create his Eye Psionics. If Xorannox fails a saving throw, he can destroy a random floating eye (chosen by rolling a d8) and succeed instead. If an eye is destroyed, a new eye pops of out of Xorannox's face to replace it 24 hours later.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (4d6) piercing damage.

Eye Psionics. Xorannox creates three of the following psionic eye effects. Unless otherwise stated, each eye targets a creature who he can see within 120 feet of him. He can't use the same effect twice on a turn.

1. **Charm Beam.** The targeted creature must succeed on a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw or be charmed by Xorannox for 1 hour, or until he harms the creature or one of their allies.
2. **Compulsion Beam**. The targeted creature must succeed on a DC 17 Intelligence saving throw or use their reaction, if available, to move up to their speed toward the closest ally they can see and make one weapon attack against them. Creatures who can't be charmed are unaffected.
3. **Memory Beam**. The targeted creature must make a DC 17 Intelligence saving throw. On a failed save, if the creature has unexpended spell slots, they expend a spell slot of their highest remaining level, with no effect. If they don't have unexpended spell slots, they instead lose proficiency with a weapon they're holding or carrying for 1 minute (save ends at end of turn).
4. **Toxic Vapors.** Xorannox chooses a point he can see within 120 feet of him. Each creature within 10 feet of the point must succeed on a DC 17 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 1 minute (save ends at end of turn).
5. **Telekinetic Field**. Xorannox chooses a point he can see within 120 feet of him. Each enemy within 10 feet of the point must succeed on a DC 17 Strength saving throw or be moved up to 30 feet in any direction and take 7 (2d6) force damage at the end of the move. Additionally, Xorannox can target any object within 10 feet of the point that weighs 300 pounds or less and isn't being worn or carried, moving it up to 30 feet in any direction. Xorannox can also exert fine control on objects with this effect, such as manipulating a simple tool or opening a door or a container.
6. **Lightning Bolt.** Xorannox shoots a 5-foot-wide, 60-foot-long line of lightning. Each creature in the line must succeed on a DC 17 Dexterity saving throw, taking 36 (8d8) lightning damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.
7. **Explosion.** Xorannox chooses a point he can see within 120 feet of him. Each creature within 10 feet of the point must make a DC 17 Dexterity saving throw, taking 36 (8d8) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.
8. **Necrosis Beam.** The targeted creature must succeed on a DC 17 Constitution saving throw or immediately take 55 (10d10) necrotic damage and lose 7 (2d6) hit points at the start of each of their turns. If this effect reduces a target's hit points to 0, they die. The effect ends if Xorannox dies or can't see the target. This psionic effect can't be used again while this effect persists.

BONUS ACTIONS

The Great Eye (Recharge 6). Xorannox's central eye turns solid black and projects a 150-foot cone of energy. If Xorannox or any creature in that area is affected by a spell, the spell's effects immediately end for that creature.

REACTIONS

Cower! When a creature hits Xorannox with an attack, he shoots a psionic fear beam at them. The creature must succeed on a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw or take 21 (6d6) psychic damage and be frightened of Xorannox for 1 minute (save ends at end of turn).

VILLAIN ACTIONS

Xorannox has three villain actions. He can take each action once during an encounter after an enemy's turn. He can take these actions in any order but can use only one per round.

Action 1: Disruption Beams. Xorannox shoots a psionic disruption beam at three creatures he can see within 120 feet of him. Each target must make a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, whenever the target makes more than one weapon attack on a turn or casts a spell that isn't a cantrip, they take 14 (4d6) psychic damage. This effect lasts for 1 minute (save ends at end of turn).

Action 2: Disappearing Act. Xorannox turns invisible until the end of his next turn and teleports up to 120 feet to an unoccupied space he can see.

Action 3: Megabeam. Xorannox unleashes the effects of all of his remaining psionic eyes at once in a 20-foot-wide, 120-foot-long line. Each creature in that area must make a save against two random eye effects from Xorannox's Eye Psionics (reroll duplicates for each target). If the effect usually affects an area, it instead only affects individual creatures.

Xorannox the Tyract sets his sights on underworld domination.

Canyon of the Tower Crown

Optimized for Five 11th-Level Characters

Covetous is too soft a word to describe the avarice of Aurumvas (*or-UM-vahs*). This towering Category 6 demon wears a stack of crowns atop his reptilian head. His gaudy robe of gold and jewels hangs open, exposing his bare chest.

Aurumvas hungers for riches just as much as souls. His private vaults in the Abyssal Wastes hold treasures his band of demons has slaughtered hundreds of creatures to acquire. All he does is gaze on them and want for more.

Understanding that one needs to spend wealth to make it, Aurumvas is willing to part with smaller treasures to hire lesser fiends and wicked mortals. Someday his hoards and hordes may cover the timescape while he rules from atop a pile of platinum.

From a distance, the entrance to the Canyon of the Tower Crown looks like nothing more than a slender pit in the Abyssal Wasteland's broken earth. At its bottom, the pit opens into a covered canyon, brimming with treasure, lain with traps, and home to Aurumvas. He lounges in this lair, scheming new ways to steal treasure and souls while his underlings manage his many treasures. Aurumvas keeps a small force of fiends in the canyon while most of his army searches the timescape for treasure.

Demons

Demons spawn in the Abyssal Wasteland, where evil and chaos meet. These creatures of incarnate evil need violence and suffering the way most other creatures need food. A demon cares only for themself, and they torture or tear apart lesser demons for fun.

The bestial appearance of each demon is unique, with a chaotic arrangement of teeth, claws, and limbs meant for killing. Even demons of the same kind have unique features—one might have an extra set of eyes or teeth, while another could have a human arm growing from their forehead.

Mortal scholars classify demons in nine categories—the higher a demon's category, the more powerful the fiend. Though demons don't use these classifications themselves, scholars are correct that demons have a hierarchy, as stronger demons bully the weak into service.

Canyon Story Hooks

You can use one of the following story hooks to integrate this lair into an adventure:

Devil's Due. Xalios, a high-ranking devil, promises to cast the *wish* spell once for the characters in exchange for retrieving one of the statues displayed in Aurumvas's throne room (area D8). The devil offers no explanation for why they require the statue.

Forbidden Codex. Yarius Squird, a human scholar on the council of a prominent arcane university, believes that the *Book of Deudar the Dreadful*—a source of lost arcane knowledge—was meticulously inscribed in an ivory puzzle box. He has learned Aurumvas possesses the puzzle box in his hoard (area D9). Yarius asks the characters to retrieve the puzzle box, offering 20,000 gp for its recovery.

Tortured Painting. Ace detective Cormin Flint, a tiefling, has been hot on the trail of a demonic cult whose members and victims vanished overnight. The only lead is a painting of the terrifying Canyon of the Tower Crown, depicting demons torturing a group of mortals—the missing victims. Cormin begs the characters to find the location and rescue the victims (in area D4).

Canyon Features

Unless otherwise noted, each area of the canyon has the following features:

Bones. The ground throughout the canyon is littered with bones, making it difficult to move on the ground without making noise. A creature has disadvantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks made while moving over the ground.

Ceilings. The canyon used to be open to the elements, but Aurumvas had his lackeys build a ceiling over it. The ceiling is 40 feet high.

Doors. The doors in the complex are heavy slabs of stone. A creature can use their action to move one aside. The slabs stop sound from carrying between areas when they're closed.

Illumination. Lanterns lit by the *continual flame* spell fill each area with bright, bloodred light so Aurumvas's minions can evaluate and sort his loot.

Secret Doors. Aurumvas and Gorgonash (see area D7) know the locations of the secret doors in the canyon. A creature notices the doors if they have a passive Wisdom (Perception) score of 20 or higher, or if they succeed on a DC 18 Intelligence (Investigation) check when searching the area. While inside the dungeon (area D4) and secret stash (area D9), a creature notices the doors without a check.

Walls. A character without climbing equipment can climb the rough walls of the canyon with a successful DC 14 Strength (Athletics) check.

Underlings

The lesser fiends who serve Aurumvas spend their time sorting, guarding, and gathering the demon lord's treasure in exchange for mortals to slaughter and souls to devour. Unless otherwise noted, they attack intruders, planning to take whatever loot they might find to Aurumvas, and they flee when it becomes obvious the battle is lost. These fiends hate the drudgery of their labor and relish the chance for violence.

Let's Do Business. If the characters openly approach the lair's guards with treasure in hand, they have 1 round to make a DC 20 Charisma (Deception or Persuasion) check to convince Aurumvas's underlings that they've come to trade before the demon's forces attack. On a success, the guards don't attack, but escort the characters directly to Bray in the melting center (area D6). A character who succeeds on a DC 15 Wisdom (Insight) check can tell the demons are leading them into a trap. Once Bray has the characters cornered and sees what treasure they have to offer, she attacks.

Captured Fiends. A character who succeeds on a DC 17 Charisma (Deception or Intimidation) check convinces a captured or cornered fiend to give up one of the following pieces of information:

- Aurumvas wears a magic crown that allows him to teleport outside the canyon to any place in the timescape.
- Aurumvas put a magic curse on his favorite treasures that makes them hard to steal.
- Aurumvas has a secret treasure vault connected to his throne room with a trapped entrance.
- Gorgonash (see area D7), Aurumvas's curator and second-in-command, despises his job.

Resting in the Canyon

Provided the characters first deal with any enemies, they can safely take a short rest in any area of the canyon. If Gorgonash has been defeated, they can safely take a long rest in the dungeon (area D4). Otherwise, if the characters attempt to take a long rest, there is a 50 percent chance that two **ruinants** and ten **pitlings** interrupt them an hour into their rest.

Entering the Canyon

At the westernmost tip of the canyon, two identical rope ladders hang across from one another at its north and south ends and reach 100 feet down to the floor of area D1.

North Ladder. The north ladder is worn with use and bolted into the canyon ridge. It can safely support one Medium or Large creature at a time. If a Medium or Large creature gets on the ladder while another creature is on it, there's a 50 percent chance the rope breaks and each creature on the ladder falls to the floor. If a Huge or Gargantuan creature uses the ladder, it breaks immediately.

South Ladder Illusion. A creature who succeeds on a DC 18 Intelligence (Investigation) check knows the south ladder is a magical illusion. The *dispel magic* spell causes the illusionary ladder to disappear. If a creature attempts to grab or use the ladder, they must succeed on a DC 18 Dexterity saving throw or fall to the canyon floor, taking 35 (10d6) bludgeoning damage.

Canyon of the Tower Crown Areas

The following areas are keyed to the Canyon of the Tower Crown Map.

D1. Fool's Pit

This area has the following features:

- "A red glow from hanging lanterns in the stone ceiling reveals the bones littering the ground at the perimeter of this chamber."
- "A pile of glittering treasure—crowns, scepters, jewelry, gems, chalices, coins, and other valuables—sits at the center of the chamber, an island among a sea of bones."
- (**Secret**) There is a pit of living quicksand in the center of the room that is concealed by fake treasure atop it.

Living Quicksand. From a distance, a character who is proficient with jeweler's tools and succeeds on a DC 18 Intelligence (Investigation) check can tell the treasures in the pile are all worthless fakes. A character who succeeds on a DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check sees the treasures are floating in the sand. The treasure conceals a 30-foot-deep pit with a 20-foot square opening that is filled with living quicksand, a hazard of the Abyssal Wastes that grabs creatures who get too close and suffocates them in a sandy embrace.

When a non-Fiend creature enters the area within 5 feet of the pit for the first time on a turn or starts their turn there, they must succeed on a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw or be restrained by the quicksand. A creature can use an action to make a DC 16 Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) check, freeing themself or another creature within their reach on a success. If a creature who isn't restrained by the quicksand fails a check to free another creature from it, the creature who failed the check also becomes restrained by the quicksand.

If a creature starts their turn restrained by the quicksand, they are pulled 5 feet down into it. If a creature becomes fully submerged, they begin suffocating and ability checks made to free them are made with disadvantage. If a creature dies in the living quicksand, the hazard vomits its corpse and equipment onto the ground 1d6 hours later.

Canyon of the Tower Crown Map

D2. Narrow Passageway

This hallway has no hanging lanterns in the ceiling but is dimly lit by the light from the areas on either side. It has the following features:

- "This high but narrow hall is a tight squeeze for any creature larger than a halfling."
- "Any sound reverberates through the confined chamber and out both sides."

Tight Fit. Medium and larger creatures must squeeze to move through this hall.

Echo Chamber. The characters must succeed on a DC 15 group Dexterity (Stealth) check or attract the attention of the creatures in area D3. The twenty **pitlings** wait until the first character is about halfway through the hall then attack, while the two **gnoll bonesplitters** wait at the end of the hall to attack any character who emerges.

D3. Sorting Room

Aurumvas's underlings sort newly acquired treasure in this chamber. It has the following features:

- "Several bloodred boulders between two and three feet high lie scattered throughout this room."
- "A modest, disorganized pile of treasure stands at the center of the room. It is surrounded by smaller hoards, each separated into types of coins, gems, and art objects."
- *(If the characters haven't alerted the creatures here to their presence)* "Two hulking gnolls with maws covered in dried blood growl at over a dozen tiny, furry demons who sort the center pile into smaller ones."
- (**Secret**) On the west side of this room stands a secret trapdoor (see "Canyon Features") that opens into a 20-foot-deep shaft leading to area D4.
- (**Secret**) A boulder on the east wall hides an alcove.

Demons and Gnolls. If they haven't already been alerted to the character's presence, twenty **pitlings** and two **gnoll bonesplitters** sort treasure in this area.

Red Boulders. A *detect magic* spell reveals the boulders all radiate an aura of enchantment magic. A creature who stands on a boulder is fueled with a primal desire for violence; while on the boulder, they have advantage on attack rolls, and attack rolls against them have advantage. Additionally, the boulders provide half cover to Medium creatures and three-quarters cover to Small creatures.

Hidden Alcove. A character notices the alcove behind the boulder with a successful DC 17 Intelligence (Investigation) check. It is empty other than a small pouch (see "Treasure").

Treasure. The piles in the center of the room hold a gold egg studded with tiny rubies (worth 725 gp), a marble statuette of a kitten (worth 150 gp), four pearls (worth 50 gp each), two rose zircons (worth 100 gp each), and 2,346 cp, 1,009 sp, and 743 gp. The hidden alcove holds a pouch with *dust of disappearance*.

D4. Dungeon

Aurumvas pays the demons with the souls of his captives. He doesn't trust his underlings to not rip their food apart, so the dungeon's entrances are a secret that only Aurumvas and Gorgonash (see area D7) know. The ceiling is 20 feet high. This area has no light sources, so the characters only notice the following features if they have a way to see in the dark:

- "Coughing and low moans come from a 20-foot-deep pit with a 20-foot-diameter opening covered by bone bars embedded into the earth."
- "Malnourished humanoids of various ancestries lie huddled in the bottom of the pit, each dirt-covered and bruised as they pant with shallow, uneven breaths."
- "A bony hyena lies among them, equally starved and sporting a bloody gash on their hindquarters."
- (**Secret**) The bone bars are magically rigged to explode if destroyed.

Imprisoned Mortals. Twenty-three adult humanoids are imprisoned in this pit. They are noncombatants who wish to return to the Mundane World but are too weak to fight against the demons. They only know that Gorgonash comes down every few hours to choose a humanoid to feed their soul to another demon, and that no other demons ever come down to this place. If given a rope or other assistance, the humanoids climb out of the pit and follow any instructions as best they can.

Abyssal Hyena. The **abyssal hyena** at the bottom of the pit is wounded and incapacitated. If a character restores hit points to the hyena or succeeds on a DC 13 Wisdom (Medicine) check to treat the wound, the hyena becomes an **abyssal hyena companion** who loyally serves them.

Bone Bars. The *detect magic* spell reveals that the bone bars radiate an aura of evocation magic. A non-Fiend creature who touches the bars feels the bones vibrate with power. When a Fiend touches the bars, they magically retract into the ground, or if they are already retracted, they extend across the pit's opening to cover it.

The bars have AC 15, 50 hit points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage. If the bars are destroyed, they explode in a burst of magic force. Each creature within 10 feet of the bars must make a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw, taking 16 (3d10) piercing damage plus 16 (3d10) force damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. Casting a *dispel magic* spell on the bars causes them to lose their magic. The characters can spend an hour digging the bones out of the ground to uncover the pit.

Waiting for Gorgonash. For each hour the characters spend in this area, there is a 30 percent chance that Gorgonash (a **chimeron**) enters looking for a prisoner to feed to other demons (see area D7).

D5. Showroom

Aurumvas displays some of his treasures in this area, which has the following features:

- "Six ornately carved marble pedestals, three on the south wall and three on the north wall, each hold a gold statuette."
- "A scarred demon stands hunched over one of four empty glass display cases, tendrils twitching in her mouth."

Working Demons. Venash (a **ruinant**) prepares the display cases for *Mortal Magic*, the latest exhibition Aurumvas has dreamed up. If Venash notices the characters, she attempts to engage them in conversation because she knows Rancyth, one of Aurumvas's demon curators, should be along shortly. Venash asks the characters if they've come to defeat Aurumvas and free her from this terrible drudgery. A character who succeeds on a DC 16 Wisdom (Insight) check discerns that Venash is lying and stalling them.

Rancyth (a **wobalas**) and an escort of five **pitlings** arrive in this area 1 minute after the characters enter. They attack the intruders immediately.

Pedestals. Each pedestal has a label with a name on it: Ahtuir, Enora, Galiza, Hanoth, Koranvarg, Melisthine, Vergabon, and Xantal. A character who succeeds on a DC 20 Intelligence (Arcana or History) check recognizes each of these as a former kingdom in the timescape that Aurumvas's demons have destroyed.

Treasure. The gold statuette on each pedestal is worth 500 gp and depicts a monarch slain by Aurumvas. Rancyth and the pitlings carry a *spell scroll* of *animate objects*, a *spell scroll* of *arcane eye*, a *spell scroll* of *dispel magic*, and two silver-plated wizard spell books (worth 50 gp each). One spellbook is blank, but the other contains the *blink*, *bestow curse*, *continual flame*, *darkness*, *fabricate*, *fire shield*, *illusory script*, *jump*, *mage armor*, *magic circle*, *magic missile*, *sleep*, and *slow* spells.

D6. Melting Chamber

In this chamber, Aurumvas's demons melt gold coins to remint them with his visage on both sides. The room has the following features:

- "A sweltering heat radiates from a 10-foot-long iron trough bubbling with molten gold on the north wall. A white-hot fire burns beneath the container."
- "Covered in countless mouths, a hulking demon shaped like a gorilla stirs the liquid gold with a long iron rod."
- "Steaming molds line the shelves of a 15-foot-tall iron rack beside the trough."
- "Two demons stand at a wood table strewn with metallurgy instruments and stacks of clean, shiny coins."

Aurumvas of Meaningless Greed sits upon his lavish throne, contemplating all that is missing from his vast hoard.

Demons. Bray (a **tormenauk**) stirs the gold and barks orders in Abyssal to her assistants, two **ruinants** named Sangor and Malon. Aurumvas has told Bray that if the gold isn't constantly stirred, its luster once molded will be lacking. Fearing punishment from Aurumvas, she only stops stirring if she needs to fight.

Hot Stuff. If a creature touches the molten gold, the trough, the fire, or the molds, they take 16 (3d10) fire damage.

Treasure. The workbench holds 932 gp and the molds hold another 400 gp. The liquid gold in the pool is worth 5,000 gp, and a character who is proficient with jeweler's tools or smith's tools can spend 8 hours turning the liquid gold into coins of that value.

D7. Appraisal Room

This area has the following features:

- "Two long stone tables hold a variety of jeweler's tools—magnifying glasses, microscopes, scales, and gauges—as well as ledgers."
- "At one table stands an enormous being who appears to be four or five different demons fused into one giant conglomeration of flesh. He holds a gem in one of his many claws and makes a note in a ledger with another."
- **(Secret)** On the west side of this room is a secret door (see "Canyon Features") that leads to area D4.

Gorgonash. Gorgonash (a **chimeron**) works here appraising Aurumvas's latest acquisitions. The chimeron hates the work, but he believes he'll soon consume enough souls to become a Category 6 demon, and then he can finally leave Aurumvas's protection or maybe even try to take the demon lord's hoard for himself. If the characters enter this room and succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity (Stealth) check, the chimeron doesn't notice them. The characters hear him muttering to himself in Abyssal that treasure is a waste of time, for true demons care only to devour souls.

If a character approaches Gorgonash and agrees with his sentiments about treasure, a successful DC 18 Charisma (Deception or Persuasion) check convinces him to not attack immediately. The characters can't convince Gorgonash to face Aurumvas in combat, but if they succeed on a second DC 20 Charisma (Persuasion) check, he lets them pass without harm if they agree to bring him Aurumvas's living but unconscious body so he might consume Aurumvas's souls. A character who succeeds on a DC 15 Wisdom (Insight) check learns Gorgonash plans to eventually kill the characters no matter what they do. If the characters make good on their deal, Gorgonash kills Aurumvas then turns on them. If they don't, Gorgonash hunts them across the timescape.

Treasure. The benches hold three sets of jeweler's tools, a brocade cushion (worth 150 gp), and a gold scepter engraved with runes (worth 200 gp). Gorgonash examines a large sapphire (worth 800 gp). If the characters make a deal with him and ask for the gem, he gives it to them, believing he'll get it back from their corpses.

D8. Aurumvas's Throne Room

This area has the following features:

- "A huge amphibian-like demon with several crowns stacked on his head sits on an enormous throne made from various coins melted together."
- "Four marble pedestals stand along the east and west walls. Atop each one is a platinum bust of the same demon—each with a different expression."
- "Ten small demons flit about the crowned demon, fanning him with their wings, while another two demons with long claws and mouths full of tendrils massage his feet."
- (**Secret**) On the east side of this room is a secret door (see "Canyon Features") that leads to Aurumvas's secret stash (area D9). This door is trapped.

Demons. **Aurumvas** sits on a throne while two **ruinants** named Xaxos and Zeron and ten **pitlings** tend to him. When he notices the characters, Aurumvas sees them as both a threat to his treasure and a chance to gain more from their corpses. He uses his Time Is Money villain action to allow the demons to act before the characters. He fights until reduced to 50 hit points then attempts to teleport out of the lair using his crown, which functions as a *helm of teleportation*. Aurumvas assumes the intruders have already freed the prisoners in area D4 and doesn't waste time going back.

Trapped Door. A creature who examines the secret door and succeeds on a DC 20 Intelligence (Investigation) check notices an almost imperceptible seam running down the middle of the trapdoor and understands the trap. A creature can disarm it with a successful DC 20 Dexterity check using thieves' tools. On a failed check, the creature triggers the trap. If a creature attempts to open the door before the trap is disarmed, they trigger the trap.

When a creature triggers the trap, the door flies off its hinges and attempts to clamp down around them like a hunting trap. The creature must succeed on a DC 18 Dexterity saving throw or take 22 (4d10) bludgeoning damage and become restrained. While restrained, the creature takes 22 (4d10) bludgeoning damage at the start of each of their turns. A creature can make a DC 18 Strength check, freeing themselves or another creature they can reach on a success. Once the door no longer restrains a creature, its trap can be reset as an action.

Aurumvas always has an underling open this door for him, triggering the trap. He then murders the underling and devours their soul.

Treasure. Aurumvas's throne (worth 5,000 gp) weighs 2,000 pounds. The four platinum busts are worth 750 gp each. Aurumvas wears a gem-studded, platinum-thread robe (worth 2,000 gp), a stack of twelve mundane crowns on his head (each worth 500 gp), and one crown that functions as a *helm of teleportation*.

D9. Secret Stash

The ceiling in this area is 20 feet high. It has the following features:

- "Coins, art, gems, potions and more are neatly arranged in stacks and on display in this chamber."
- (**Secret**) The objects in this chamber are cursed while Aurumvas is alive.

Treasure. The chamber holds Aurumvas's treasure hoard. See "Aurumvas's Hoard" for more information.

Curse. While Aurumvas is alive, a *detect magic* spell reveals that all the treasures that aren't coins or potions in this chamber radiate an aura of transmutation magic. If a creature other than Aurumvas removes such an item from this chamber while Aurumvas is alive, the item's weight increases by 500 pounds until it is returned to this chamber or touched by Aurumvas. Casting the *dispel magic* or *remove curse* spell on a treasure removes the curse from that object.

Aurumvas's Hoard

Aurumvas's secret stash (area D9) contains the following items:

- *Shortsword of vengeance*
- *Watch of prospecting* (see below)
- *Potion of diminution*
- *Potion of invisibility*
- Vial of *oil of sharpness*
- Demon signet ring (see below)
- Bundle of rare linens and silks (worth 925 gp)
- 3 emeralds (worth 800 gp each)
- Gold chalice inlaid with rubies (worth 50 gp)
- Ivory puzzle box (worth 100 gp)
- Porcelain tea service (worth 50 gp)
- Purple silk cloak with matching gloves (worth 25 gp)
- Set of dragonbone salt and pepper shakers (worth 100 gp)
- 3,000 gp (each coin is stamped with Aurumvas's face)

Demon Signet Ring

Demon Signet Ring

This ring shows that you have encountered a Category 6 demon and lived to tell the tale. While you wear it, you have advantage on Charisma (Intimidation) checks made to influence demons and gnolls.

Watch of Prospecting

Wondrous Item, Rare

This silver pocket watch can detect the presence of items made of gold. Its second hand ticks loudly when you are within 30 feet of an item that is worth at least 100 gp, partially or entirely made of gold, and not worn or carried by another creature.

Additionally, you have advantage on ability checks made to find hidden treasure.

Canyon Stat Blocks

The following stat blocks appear in the lair.

Abyssal Hyena

CR 1 Minion
Medium Fiend, Typically Chaotic Evil
40 XP

Armor Class 11
Hit Points 8
Speed 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)	5 (−3)	12 (+1)	7 (−2)

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11
Languages understands Abyssal but can't speak
Proficiency Bonus +2

Death Snap. When the hyena is reduced to 0 hit points, they can deal 1 piercing damage to a creature within 5 feet of them (no action required), provided they weren't incapacitated before dropping to 0 hit points.

Minion. If the hyena takes damage from an attack or as the result of a failed saving throw, their hit points are reduced to 0. If the hyena takes damage from another effect, they die if the damage equals or exceeds their hit point maximum; otherwise they take no damage.

Actions

Bite (Group Attack). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1 piercing damage. If the target is a creature and two or more hyenas joined the attack, the target must succeed on a Strength saving throw or be knocked prone. The DC for this saving throw equals 10 plus the number of hyenas who joined the attack.

Abyssal Hyena Companion

Companion
Medium Fiend, Unaligned

Armor Class 13 plus PB (natural armor)
Hit Points 7 + seven times caregiver's level (number of d8 Hit Dice equal to their caregiver's level)
Speed 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	5 (−3)	12 (+1)	8 (−1)

Saving Throws Str +3 plus PB, Dex +2 plus PB
Skills Perception +1 plus PB
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11 plus PB
Proficiency Bonus (PB) equals the caregiver's bonus

Actions

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

1st Level: Unbalancing Attack (2 Ferocity). The hyena makes a signature attack. On a hit, the target also has disadvantage on the next Strength or Dexterity saving throw they make before the start of their next turn.

3rd Level: Gobbling Bite (5 Ferocity). The hyena makes a signature attack with advantage. On a hit, the attack deals an extra PB necrotic damage, and the hyena regains hit points equal to the necrotic damage dealt.

5th Level: Cackle (8 Ferocity). Each enemy within 30 feet of the hyena who can hear them must succeed on a DC 10 plus PB Wisdom saving throw or take PBd4 psychic damage and be frightened of the hyena until the start of the hyena's next turn.

Reactions

Blood Frenzy (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). When the hyena's caregiver is hit with an attack and the hyena is within 5 feet of the attacker, the hyena can make a signature attack against the attacker.

Mystic Connection: Abyssal Hyena

If you're playing a beastheart and have an abyssal hyena companion, you gain the following benefit at 9th level when you gain the beastheart's Mystic Connection feature:

Rending Teeth. As a bonus action, you can grow your teeth into natural weapons, which you can use to make unarmed strikes for 1 minute. You can use Strength or Dexterity for the attack and damage rolls of your teeth, which deal 1d6 + your Strength or Dexterity modifier piercing damage instead of the bludgeoning damage normal for an unarmed strike. The first time on a turn that you hit an enemy with this attack, you and your companion regain hit points equal to the damage dealt. Once you use this bonus action, you can't do so again until you finish a long rest.

Aurumvas

CR 14 Leader

Huge Fiend (Demon, Category 6), Chaotic Evil — 11,500 XP

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)
Hit Points 273 (26d12 + 104)
Souls 5 (2d4)
Speed 40 ft., fly 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
25 (+7)	15 (+2)	18 (+4)	22 (+6)	20 (+5)	21 (+5)

Saving Throws Dex +7, Wis +10, Cha +10
Skills Arcana +11, Athletics +12, Deception +10, History +11, Insight +10, Perception +10, Persuasion +10
Damage Resistances necrotic, psychic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from mundane attacks
Condition Immunities charmed, dazed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, stunned
Senses darkvision 120 ft., soulsight 30 ft., passive Perception 20
Languages all, telepathy 120 ft.
Proficiency Bonus +5

Abyssal Resistance (Costs 2 Souls). When Aurumvas fails a saving throw, he succeeds instead.

Lethe. When Aurumvas's soul count is 0, he has advantage on attack rolls, disadvantage on saving throws, and his Intelligence score becomes 3 (–4). Additionally, Aurumvas must use his movement on each of his turns to move as close as possible to the nearest creature he can sense with his soulsight, and then if he is able, he must use his action to attack and attempt to kill that creature. Aurumvas can't act with any other purpose until he adds 1 to his soul count.

Soul Devourer. When Aurumvas reduces a creature who isn't a Construct or an Undead to 0 hit points or deals damage to a dying creature, the creature must make a DC 11 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, Aurumvas consumes the creature's soul and adds 1 to his soul count. A creature whose soul is consumed in this way immediately dies, and they can't be restored to life by any means short of a *wish* spell.

Soul Weapons. While Aurumvas's soul count is 2 or higher, his weapon attacks are magical, and allies within 60 feet of him deal an extra 5 (1d10) psychic damage with weapon attacks.

Actions

Multiattack. Aurumvas makes three attacks using Greedy Hands, Covetous Bolt, or both.

Greedy Hands. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 10 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 14 (2d6 + 7) bludgeoning damage plus 10 (3d6) psychic damage. Aurumvas can burn 1 soul to gain temporary hit points equal to the psychic damage dealt.

Covetous Bolt. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +11 to hit, range 120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 22 (5d8) force damage. If the target has spell slots, Aurumvas can burn 2 souls to force the target to expend their highest-level spell slot available with no effect.

Bonus Actions

Greed Is Good. Aurumvas chooses an object he can see within 30 feet of him that is worth at least 100 gp. He teleports to an unoccupied space within 5 feet of that object.

Reactions

Absorb Soul. If a demon with a soul count of 1 or higher who Aurumvas can see dies within 60 feet of him, Aurumvas gains 1 soul.

Villain Actions

Aurumvas has three villain actions. He can take each action once during an encounter after an enemy's turn. He can take these actions in any order but can use only one per round.

Action 1: Time Is Money. Aurumvas warps time with his supernatural greed. Each ally he can see within 120 feet of him moves up to their speed. At the end of this round of combat, Aurumvas rearranges the initiative order in any way he chooses.

Action 2: That's Ours. Aurumvas chooses up to three magic items he can see within 30 feet of him that aren't artifacts or of legendary rarity and that don't require attunement. He teleports each item to an ally who he can see within 30 feet of him, placing it either into their hands or at their feet. If a targeted object is being worn or carried by an enemy, the enemy can make a DC 19 Charisma saving throw, preventing that object from being teleported on a success.

Action 3: At Any Cost. Aurumvas teleports Tiny explosive treasures from his vault to four different points he can see within 120 feet of him. Each creature within 10 feet of one or more of these points must make a DC 19 Dexterity saving throw, taking 33 (6d10) force damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Teleporting Aurumvas

Aurumvas's Greed Is Good bonus action allows him to teleport all over the battlefield. By the time the characters are ready to face him in a mortal showdown, each likely has at least a few expensive magic items or pieces of equipment worth at least 100 gp. That allows Aurumvas to teleport to the most vulnerable and unprotected foe each round and unleash his Greedy Hands attacks upon them.

Chimeron

CR 12 Brute
8,400 XP

Huge Fiend (Demon, Category 5), Typically Chaotic Evil

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)
Hit Points 230 (20d12 + 100)
Souls 5 (2d4)
Speed 30 ft., fly 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
24 (+7)	12 (+1)	20 (+5)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Str +11, Dex +5, Cha +5
Skills Intimidation +9, Perception +6
Damage Resistances cold, fire, thunder
Senses darkvision 120 ft., soulsight 30 ft., passive Perception 16
Languages Abyssal, Common, telepathy 120 ft.
Proficiency Bonus +4

Lethe. While the chimeron's soul count is 0, they have advantage on attack rolls, disadvantage on saving throws, and their Intelligence score becomes 3 (–4). Additionally, the chimeron must use their movement on each of their turns to move as close as possible to the nearest creature they can sense with their soulsight, and then if they are able, they must use their action to attack and attempt to kill that creature. The chimeron can't act with any other purpose until they add 1 to their soul count.

Soul Devourer. When the chimeron reduces a creature who isn't a Construct or an Undead to 0 hit points or deals damage to a dying creature, the creature must make a DC 11 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, the chimeron consumes the creature's soul and adds 1 to the chimeron's soul count. A creature whose soul is consumed in this way immediately dies, and they can't be restored to life by any means short of a *wish* spell.

Soul Resistance. While the chimeron's soul count is 2 or higher, they have advantage on saving throws against powers, spells, and other supernatural effects.

Actions

Multiattack. The chimeron makes up to three attacks using Powerful Bite, Scorching Bite, Booming Bite, or Chilling Bite. They can't use any attack more than once.

Powerful Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 25 (4d8 + 7) piercing damage.

Scorching Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (1d8 + 7) piercing damage plus 9 (2d8) fire damage, and the target is set on fire until the target or a creature who can reach them uses an action to extinguish the flames. A creature who is on fire at the start of their turn takes 7 (2d6) fire damage. If a creature who is already on fire is set on fire again on a subsequent turn, the damage isn't cumulative.

Booming Bite (Costs 1 Soul). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (1d8 + 7) piercing damage plus 9 (2d8) thunder damage, and the target is knocked prone.

Chilling Bite (Costs 1 Soul). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (1d8 + 7) piercing damage plus 9 (2d8) cold damage, the target's speed is halved until the end of their next turn, and they can only make one attack during their next turn.

Reactions

Pain Absorption (Costs 1 Soul). When the chimeron takes damage, they reduce the damage taken by 16 (3d10).

Gnoll Bonesplitter

CR 4 Brute

Medium Fiend (Gnoll), Typically Chaotic Evil — 1,100 XP

Armor Class 13 (hide armor)
Hit Points 90 (12d8 + 36)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	12 (+1)	17 (+3)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Con +5
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11
Languages Abyssal, Gnoll
Proficiency Bonus +2

Actions

Multiattack. The bonesplitter makes two attacks using Bite, Spiked Flail, or both. They can replace one attack with a use of Bloody Roar, if available.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage, or 11 (2d6 + 4) piercing damage if the target is restrained.

Spiked Flail. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) piercing damage. If the target is a Medium or smaller creature, they are grappled (escape DC 14). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained and the bonesplitter can't make Spiked Flail attacks.

Bloody Roar (Recharge 6). The bonesplitter roars, spitting a spray of blood. Each ally within 10 feet of them who can see them can make a weapon attack (no action required), provided that ally isn't incapacitated.

Bonus Actions

Over Here! The bonesplitter yanks a creature they are grappling. The target must succeed on a DC 14 Strength saving throw or swap spaces with the bonesplitter.

Reactions

Death Frenzy. When an ally the bonesplitter can see within 30 feet of them is reduced to 0 hit points, the bonesplitter moves up to half their speed and makes a Bite attack.

Gnolls

Gnolls aren't humanoids, but hyena-faced fiends—created by a dead demon lord, they carry his evil legacy wherever they roam. Most gnolls live for the thrill of the hunt and the taste of flesh, and they aren't choosy with their targets.

Pitling

CR 4 Minion

Tiny Fiend (Demon, Category 1), Typically Chaotic Evil — 220 XP

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)
Hit Points 11
Speed 30 ft., fly 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	3 (−4)	6 (−2)	6 (−2)

Damage Immunities poison
Condition Immunities poisoned
Senses darkvision 60 ft., soulsight 10 ft., passive Perception 8
Languages Abyssal
Proficiency Bonus +2

Horrid Stench. If an enemy starts their turn within 10 feet of three or more pitlings, the enemy is poisoned until the start of their next turn.

Minion. If the pitling takes damage from an attack or as the result of a failed saving throw, their hit points are reduced to 0. If the pitling takes damage from another effect, they die if the damage equals or exceeds their hit point maximum; otherwise they take no damage.

Soul Feast. When the pitling reduces a creature who isn't a Construct or an Undead to 0 hit points or deals damage to a dying creature, the creature must make a DC 11 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, the pitling consumes the creature's soul, and the pitling becomes a Category 2 demon of the GM's choice with 1 soul. A creature whose soul is consumed in this way immediately dies, and they can't be restored to life by any means short of a *wish* spell. If the creature was reduced to 0 hit points by a group attack, the GM picks one pitling who joined the attack to consume the soul.

Actions

Spit (Group Attack). *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 15/30 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 poison damage.

"Gnoll" is a shortened form of their endonym Gnol'sylrak, meaning "Children of As'sylrak." As'sylrak held the title of Archion of the Cult of the Black Star when he died, and he passed his immortal hate of all things with souls on to his children.

Remainer

Ruinant

CR 6 Skirmisher
2,300 XP

Medium Fiend (Demon, Category 2), Typically Chaotic Evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)
Hit Points 105 (14d8 + 42)
Souls 2 (1d4)
Speed 60 ft.

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

Saving Throws Wis +7, Cha +6
Skills Deception +6, Perception +7
Damage Resistances necrotic
Senses darkvision 120 ft., soulsight 30 ft., passive Perception 17
Languages Abyssal, Common, telepathy 120 ft.
Proficiency Bonus +3

Lethe. When the ruinant's soul count is 0, they have advantage on attack rolls, disadvantage on saving throws, and their Intelligence score becomes 3 (–4). Additionally, the ruinant must use their movement on each of their turns to move as close as possible to the nearest creature they can sense with their soulsight, and then if they are able, they must use their action to attack and attempt to kill that creature. The ruinant can't act with any other purpose until they add 1 to their soul count.

Soul Devourer. When the ruinant reduces a creature who isn't a Construct or an Undead to 0 hit points or deals damage to a dying creature, the creature must make a DC 11 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, the ruinant consumes the creature's soul and adds 1 to the ruinant's soul count. A creature whose soul is consumed in this way immediately dies, and they can't be restored to life by any means short of a *wish* spell.

Actions

Multiattack. The ruinant makes three Bloodletting Claws attacks.

Bloodletting Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage plus 7 (2d6) necrotic damage, and the target can't take reactions this turn.

Salt Wounds (Costs 1 Soul). The ruinant chooses up to three creatures they can see within 60 feet of them who don't have all their hit points. Each target must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, taking 16 (3d10) necrotic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Reactions

Corrupt Healing (Costs 1 Soul). When a creature within 60 feet of the ruinant regains hit points from a power, a spell, or a similar supernatural effect, the ruinant corrupts the effect. The target regains no hit points, and the target and each of the ruinant's enemies within 5 feet of the ruinant must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or take necrotic damage equal to half the number of hit points the effect would have restored.

Tormenauk

CR 8 Brute
3,900 XP

Large Fiend (Demon, Category 3), Typically Chaotic Evil

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)
Hit Points 136 (13d10 + 65)
Souls 2 (1d4)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	10 (+0)	20 (+5)	15 (+2)	15 (+2)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws Con +8, Wis +5, Cha +7
Skills Intimidation +7, Perception +5
Senses darkvision 120 ft., soulsight 30 ft., passive Perception 15
Languages Abyssal, Common, telepathy 120 ft.
Proficiency Bonus +3

Lethe. When the tormenauk's soul count is 0, they have advantage on attack rolls, disadvantage on saving throws, and their Intelligence score becomes 3 (−4). Additionally, the tormenauk must use their movement on each of their turns to move as close as possible to the nearest creature they can sense with their soulsight, and then if they are able, they must use their action to attack and attempt to kill that creature. The tormenauk can't act with any other purpose until they add 1 to their soul count.

Soul Devourer. When the tormenauk reduces a creature who isn't a Construct or an Undead to 0 hit points or deals damage to a dying creature, the creature must make a DC 11 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, the tormenauk consumes the creature's soul and adds 1 to the tormenauk's soul count. A creature whose soul is consumed in this way immediately dies, and they can't be restored to life by any means short of a *wish* spell.

Actions

Multiattack. The tormenauk makes two Slam attacks and one Many Maws attack.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (2d8 + 5) bludgeoning damage. If the target is Large or smaller, they are grappled (escape DC 15), and they are restrained until the grapple ends. The tormenauk can grapple up to two targets at a time.

Many Maws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target grappled by the tormenauk. *Hit:* 21 (3d10 + 5) piercing damage.

Agony Wail (Costs 1 Soul). The tormenauk screeches, broadcasting a consumed soul's lifelong pain. Each creature within 30 feet of the tormenauk who can hear them must make a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw, taking 35 (10d6) psychic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. Creatures who knew the owner of the burned soul have disadvantage on the saving throw.

Reactions

Share Agony (Costs 1 Soul). When the tormenauk takes damage, they choose a creature they can see within 30 feet of them to share the pain. The target must make a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw, taking psychic damage equal to the triggering damage taken by the tormenauk on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Wobalas

CR 10 Artillery
5,900 XP

Medium Fiend (Demon, Category 4), Typically Chaotic Evil

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)
Hit Points 156 (24d8 + 48)
Souls 2 (1d4)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	22 (+6)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	18 (+4)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws Dex +10, Wis +8, Cha +8
Skills Deception +8, Intimidation +8, Perception +8
Senses darkvision 120 ft., soulsight 30 ft., passive Perception 18
Languages Abyssal, Common, telepathy 120 ft.
Proficiency Bonus +4

Lethe. When the wobalas's soul count is 0, they have advantage on attack rolls, disadvantage on saving throws, and their Intelligence score becomes 3 (–4). Additionally, the wobalas must use their movement on each of their turns to move as close as possible to the nearest creature they can sense with their soulsight, and then if they are able, they must use their action to attack and attempt to kill that creature. The wobalas can't act with any other purpose until they add 1 to their soul count.

Soul Devourer. When the wobalas reduces a creature who isn't a Construct or an Undead to 0 hit points or deals damage to a dying creature, the creature must make a DC 11 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, the wobalas consumes the creature's soul and adds 1 to the wobalas's soul count. A creature whose soul is consumed in this way immediately dies, and they can't be restored to life by any means short of a *wish* spell.

Actions

Multiattack. The wobalas makes three Despair Bolt attacks.

Despair Bolt. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 16 (3d6 + 6) piercing damage plus 10 (3d6) psychic damage. The wobalas can burn 1 soul to make the target frightened of them for 1 minute. If the target is immune to being frightened, the wobalas regains the burned soul.

Banishing Touch. *Melee Spell Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 22 (4d10) psychic damage, and the target is teleported up to 30 feet to an unoccupied space the wobalas can see.

Bonus Actions

Flee, Mortal (Costs 1 Soul). The wobalas chooses a creature they can see within 60 feet of them. The target must succeed on a DC 16 Charisma saving throw or use their reaction, if available, to move their speed away from the wobalas by the most direct route possible, with no regard for their own safety. Creatures who can't be frightened succeed on this saving throw automatically.

Tomb of the Keeper

Optimized for Five 11th-Level Characters

Most of the ancient people of Kortar have long passed from the world, but the mummy Ashyra (*ah-SHEE-rah*) waits to return her rulers to greatness. Now all that remains of Kortar on the surface is a weathered tomb entrance that leads nearly a mile below the earth. Ashyra's tomb guards the only entrance to New Kortar, a dead city where one hundred undead sorcerer-sovereigns rest until Ashyra resurrects them for conquest.

In her human life, Ashyra led a mystery cult dedicated to unlocking the secrets of immortality. She uncovered the ritual of mummification and performed it on herself just as her people were overthrown. In undeath, Ashyra works slowly and patiently, gathering the knowledge and supplies needed to return the sorcerer-sovereigns from the dead so her people may take back the world that was once theirs.

For now, Ashyra is cut off from the world above by powerful seals placed on the expansive necropolis she is bound to guard. She knows it is only a matter of time before she exhausts the knowledge within the magical tomes buried with her, so she eagerly waits for an opportunity to escape. Though Ashyra will do everything possible to protect her charges, she knows her people's glorious vision cannot come to pass unless she gains access to the world above.

Tomb Story Hooks

You can use one of the following story hooks to integrate this lair into an adventure:

Last Guardian. Since ancient times, a secret arcane order has maintained vigil over the Tomb of the Keeper, keeping the tomb's evil sealed within. Now, the order's ranks have dwindled to a single member, Ramisen. As Ramisen lies on his deathbed, the human sends for the characters, begging them to enter the tomb and deal with the evil inside so that none need guard it ever again.

Lost Expedition. At an abandoned campsite, the characters discover a journal detailing a failed expedition to find the remnants of Kortar and the Tomb of the Keeper. That night, whoever reads the journal is visited by the spirit of Andarta, the journal's writer. The elf encourages the characters to pick up where the expedition left off, promising riches within the tomb.

Scholar's Challenge. Adila Bahram, an elderly human scholar, has dedicated her life to studying an ancient mask of a jeweled raven's head. She recently discovered the artifact came from Kortar, and she believes more masks lie within the Tomb of the Keeper. Unaware of Ashyra's presence, Adila offers the characters 25,000 gp to venture into the crypt and recover any artifacts they can.

Tomb Features

Unless otherwise noted, each area of the Tomb of the Keeper has the following features:

Ceilings. The stone ceilings are 20 feet high and etched in runic symbols that keep the wards of the tomb active.

Empowered Undead. All Undead creatures in the tomb have advantage on saving throws against any effect that turns Undead.

Floral Scent. To mask the smell of death, the tomb magically smells like fresh-cut flowers.

Illumination. 6-inch-diameter magic spheres embedded in the ceiling fill each area with dim light.

Theft Wards. Ashyra placed powerful wards in the tomb to protect the treasures of the sorcerer-sovereigns. When an object from the tomb is brought outside it, the object teleports back to its original place inside the tomb. If Ashyra is destroyed or leaves the tomb, this effect ends.

Travel Wards. A creature can't teleport inside the tomb from the outside or vice versa. While inside the tomb, the creature can't enter another plane.

Wandering Souls. Whenever the characters enter an area they've visited before or take a short or long rest, there is a 30 percent chance they encounter a spirit who appears as a human made of blue, ethereal light. These spirits clean and maintain the rooms in the tomb. They have no statistics and don't acknowledge the party. If a character tries to harm a spirit, the spirit wails hauntingly before disappearing, and each creature within 15 feet of that spirit must succeed on a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw or take 11 (2d10) psychic damage.

Undead

Mummies and other undead guard the tomb. The undead are members of Ashyra's cult who swore to protect the sorcerer-sovereigns in this life and the next. They know Ashyra wishes to interrogate intruders, so they attack, hoping to beat foes unconscious and bring them to her for questioning. The undead fight until destroyed.

Defeated Characters. If the undead defeat the characters, they strip the party of their equipment and store it in the treasury (area M6), while survivors are brought to the throne room (area M5) to stand before Ashyra.

Resting in the Tomb

Once an area is clear of enemies, the characters can take a short or long rest there without interruption, though they may glimpse the spirits who maintain the tomb (see "Wandering Souls" in "Tomb Features").

Entering the Tomb

If the characters scour the wasteland around the tomb and succeed on a DC 16 group Wisdom (Survival) check, they find the weathered entrance to the tomb partially buried in the dirt. On a failure, the characters still find the entrance, but it takes them so much searching that they each must succeed on a DC 16 Constitution saving throw or gain a level of exhaustion.

The stone door to the tomb is magically sealed. A *detect magic* spell reveals that the door radiates an aura of abjuration magic. It is immune to all damage and can only be opened by providing a proper sacrifice or by a *wish* spell.

Loyal Sacrifice. The tomb's door bears a carving of a skeletal hand encased in black fire. A creature who is proficient in Arcana, History, or Religion recognizes it as a sign, commonly used in spellbooks and scrolls, to indicate when a spell deals necrotic damage to a creature.

When a creature enters a space within 5 feet of the door, an ancient voice carried on the wind whispers to them, "The tomb requires a willing sacrifice of decay to prove your loyalty to the guardian—or if you have no magic to offer, give us your blood and we will empower the decay."

The door opens if a character willingly takes necrotic damage within 10 feet of the door or smears their blood on the door. A creature can choose to fail their saving throw against or to be hit by a spell that deals necrotic damage. If they smear their blood, they take an extra 22 (4d10) necrotic damage as the door draws more blood from their body.

The door opens into stairs that go on for 1 mile and end at the antechamber (area M1).

Where's the Rest of It?

We get it. You want an awesome dead city adventure. Frankly, so do we, but that should be a book all on its own. If you'd rather not have the dead city in your adventure, simply remove the stairs down in the treasury (area M6) and have Ashyra enacting her own plans to raise the spirits of the one hundred sorcerer-sovereigns from her tomb. They might even be interred in the burial chamber (area M3).

Tomb of the Keeper Areas

The following areas are keyed to the Tomb of the Keeper Map.

M1. Antechamber

The antechamber has the following features:

- "Rusted and decayed weapons are fused into the walls of this antechamber."
- "Clay jars crowded on glass pedestals stand in the northwest corner of the room, while barrels and crates occupy the other corners."

Jars. On the northwest pedestals, fifty-six jars contain pulsing human organs—such as hearts, lungs, and livers—removed from the mummies who guard the tomb. A *detect magic* spell reveals that the organs and their jars radiate auras of necromancy magic. If a creature destroys an organ or jar, that creature takes 10 (3d6) necrotic damage and is cursed until they finish a long rest outside the tomb. While cursed in this way, Undead have advantage on attack rolls against that creature, and the creature has disadvantage on saving throws against effects created by Undead. A *cure ailment* power, *remove curse* spell, or similar effect ends the curse early.

A character who examines the jars and succeeds on a DC 18 Intelligence (Investigation) check notices six of the jars are marked with a minuscule gold raven on the bottom, and each of those jars contains a different organ. A creature who succeeds on a DC 18 Intelligence (History) check knows the raven is the symbol of Ashyra and these jars must contain her organs. A creature who succeeds on this check by 5 or more also knows that carrying these jars and their organs into combat against her will weaken her. Each creature who carries one or more of these jars while facing Ashyra in combat can gain advantage (no action required) on an attack roll against her or a saving throw against an effect caused by her. A creature can gain this benefit once for each jar they carry.

If the jars or organs are removed from the tomb, they lose their magic and no longer grant advantage.

Wine Barrels. The ancient barrels are stored here for a celebration when the sorcerer-sovereigns awake. The wine they contain has been enchanted so Undead may drink and enjoy it. A *detect magic* spell reveals that the wine radiates an aura of necromancy. If a creature who isn't Undead drinks the wine, they must succeed on a DC 18 Constitution saving throw or be dazed for 1 hour.

Treasure. The crates contain one hundred shirts made with gold thread (worth 50 gp each).

Tomb of the Keeper Map

Content Warning: Suffocation

The koptourok in area M2 steals the breath of their victims. If you or any of your players find descriptions of suffocation upsetting, you may want to avoid using this creature or reflavor their abilities.

M2. Workshop

This workshop was constructed to honor sorcerer-sovereigns who were artisans and to provide them with a place to create when their rest ends. It has the following features:

- "This chamber is part workshop and part library. A loom stands in the southwest corner. Along the walls, benches and shelves hold tools and books."
- "Eight cloth-wrapped human corpses lie on the floor."
- (**Secret**) The corpses are guardian mummies.

Undead. Eight **mummies** lie on the floor in this room. The first time the characters enter this chamber, the mummies don't move or attack unless the characters touch or harm them. The second time the characters enter this chamber, the mummies rise and attack.

If combat breaks out here, the four **koptouroks** in the burial chamber (area M3) arrive at the start of the second round.

Treasure. The workshop contains alchemist's supplies, brewer's supplies, calligrapher's supplies, carpenter's tools, weaver's tools, and woodcarver's tools. It also has aged but high-end raw materials for the creation of each of these arts, worth a total of 500 gp.

M3. Burial Chamber

There are no light sources in the burial chamber, so the characters only notice the following features if they have a way to see in the dark:

- "Marble pillars ascend toward the ceiling of this massive chamber."
- "Dozens of interment niches line the walls, some containing bodies and others empty."
- (**Secret**) Guardian koptouroks hide atop four of the 15-foot-high pillars.
- (**Secret**) The interment niches contain mummies and treasures.

Koptouroks. Four **koptouroks** hide atop the pillars if combat didn't draw them to the workshop (area M2). A character who can see in the dark notices them lurking with a successful DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) check. The koptouroks wait for the characters to notice them or for at least half the party to enter the chamber before leaping down to attack.

Mummies. If the characters explore the interment niches or if combat breaks out in this room, six **mummies** rise from their niches and attack.

Cursed Treasure. If the characters take 10 minutes to search all the interment niches, they find six gold rings (worth 25 gp each), four gold necklaces (worth 50 gp each), and a gold tiara (worth 250 gp).

If a creature takes treasure from the interment niche, they are cursed. They become vulnerable to necrotic damage until the treasure is returned to the interment niche or until the curse is removed by a *cure ailment* power, *remove curse* spell, or similar effect.

M4. Archive

The archive has the following features:

- "Organized rows of bookshelves on the north and south walls are labeled with the subject matter of their tomes, ranging from artistic chronicles to records of the weather."
- "Between the shelves, a staggered row of tables runs from one side of the room to the other. One table is piled high with worn books."
- "At the south end of the room, a display case contains several glittering objects."
- (**Secret**) A pair of haunts guard this room.
- (**Secret**) The display case is trapped.

Haunts. Two **haunts** wait for the characters to enter the room and start looking around before attacking. They have no qualms about hurling books off the shelves, but they leave the pile on the table alone. If combat with the haunts lasts more than three rounds, any **mummies** in the workshop (area M2) arrive at the start of the fourth round of combat.

Books. If a character looks through the books piled on the table, they find each book is about necromancy magic. A character who is familiar with matters of the arcane knows these books discuss rituals forbidden in most mage circles and often require living creatures to be sacrificed.

Trapped Display Case. The display case is locked and trapped. The display case's glass top has AC 13, 9 hit points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage. A creature can pick the lock with a successful DC 20 Dexterity check made with thieves' tools. A key to the case is in the throne room (area M5).

A creature who inspects the case and succeeds on a DC 18 Intelligence (Investigation) check notices it has 1-inch-diameter holes at the bottom covered with paper-thin pieces of wood made to blend in with the rest of the cabinet. A creature can block these holes and disable the trap with a successful DC 20 Dexterity check using carpenter's tools or thieves' tools. If a creature who isn't Undead touches the trapped case without succeeding on this check, the trap triggers.

A *detect magic* spell reveals an aura of transmutation magic radiating from dozens of unseen Tiny objects

beneath the case's bottom. Treat the trap (or the beetles it releases) as a 5th-level spell for the purpose of *dispel magic* or similar effects.

When the trap is triggered, a swarm of magically powered mechanical beetles emerges through the holes and attach to the creature who triggered the trap. At the start of each of the creature's turns, the beetles deal 16 (3d10) piercing damage. The swarm has AC 19, 50 hit points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage. Whenever the beetles take damage, the creature they are attached to takes the same amount of damage.

Treasure. The display case contains a *cloak of protection*, a *spell scroll* of *geas*, two *spell scrolls* of *legend lore*, and three diamonds (worth 2,000 gp each).

M5. Throne Room

This grand chamber has the following features:

- "Four stone pillars surround a stone throne built atop a massive sarcophagus."
- "Sitting on the throne, a mummy wearing a gold crown reads a massive, ancient tome."
- "Images carved into the walls depict hundreds of mages casting spells to change weather, block out the sun, create forests, and move water in tidal waves."
- **(Secret)** A secret trapdoor leads to the treasury (area M6).

Ashyra. When **Ashyra** notices the characters, her glee can't be contained. The presence of intruders means her tomb is finally unsealed—now she can scour the outside world for more knowledge to aid the sorcerer-sovereigns. But first she must deal with these interlopers. They could be thieves, here to steal from her, or they might be assets who can better navigate a world she hasn't seen for millennia.

Ashyra asks the characters why they've come to her tomb. A character who succeeds on a DC 20 Charisma (Deception or Persuasion) check convinces Ashyra the party would make useful allies. Ashyra proposes that the characters secure the heart of an empyrean stag, a component she needs for a ritual to make the sorcerer-sovereigns more powerful when they arise. A character who succeeds on a DC 15 Wisdom (Insight) check can tell that Ashyra means the party no harm, but she wants the heart for a nefarious purpose. If the characters agree to the deal, she gives the party all the treasure from the display cabinet in the archives (area M4) except for the *spell scroll* of *geas*. If the party returns with the heart, Ashyra gives them the items from her hoard (see "Ashyra's Hoard").

If Ashyra doesn't believe the characters will be good allies, she attacks. She fights until destroyed to defend the sorcerer-sovereigns.

Pillars. The *detect magic* spell reveals that the pillars radiate auras of necromancy magic. When Ashyra forces a creature in the chamber to make a Constitution or Wisdom saving throw, she can make the pillar thrum with magic (no action required). When she does, the creature makes the saving throw with disadvantage. Ashyra can activate each pillar once and then can't activate them again for 24 hours.

Secret Trapdoor. If a character searches the throne room for 10 minutes or succeeds on a DC 18 Intelligence (Investigation) check made as an action, they find the outline of the secret trapdoor to the treasury (area M6).

Treasure. Ashyra wears a golden crown studded with rubies (worth 1,500 gp) and carries a key to the display case in the archives (area M4). Her sarcophagus beneath her throne contains a pearl (worth 100 gp), a gold hourglass filled with black sand (worth 500 gp), an emerald (worth 1,250 gp), and a ruby (worth 3,000 gp).

M6. Treasury

The treasury has the following features:

- "Two chests and several stacks of crates stand in this chamber."
- "The stairs continue down beyond this room into dark depths."

Stairs Down. The stairs continue down into the necropolis of New Kortar, where one hundred sorcerer-sovereigns rest. The details of the dead city are beyond the scope of this lair. It may be that the place is crawling with restless undead, eager to reclaim the surface world, or that all within is still, and Ashyra's defeat guarantees it will remain so.

Treasure. The chests and crates contain Ashyra's Hoard. See "Ashyra's Hoard" for more information.

What's in New Kortar?

What dangers await characters who dare to venture into New Kortar? You could reskin the following lairs in this book to make them locations in the necropolis:

Terminal Excrescence. Lord Syuul has taken up residence in New Kortar and is attempting to unearth the ex-sovereigns so he can perform vile experiments with their organs.

Shadowkeep. Count Rhodar von Glauer is one of the sorcerer-sovereigns. He awoke and claimed a keep within the necropolis as his own. He wants to prevent the other sorcerer-sovereigns from waking up so he can be the only ruler of New Kortar.

Coronal Hollow. The negative energy produced by the necropolis makes it the perfect location for the great dragon Qazyldrath's lair. The Sun Eater believes their home is hidden beneath the earth and doesn't want any intruders who uncover the secret to live.

Ashyra's Hoard

Ashyra's hoard is contained in chests and crates in her tomb's treasury (area M6). This is wealth she gained in life for her service to the sorcerer-sovereigns. The hoard contains the following items:

- *Nine lives stealer* longsword with a curved blade (also called a khopesh)
- *Rod of the sovereigns' servant* (see below)
- *Potion of flying*
- *Potion of cloud giant strength*
- *Potion of speed*
- Ashyra's research notes (see below)
- 100 pounds of salt (worth 10 gp)
- 10 marble bowls (worth 15 gp each)
- 20 square yards of linen (worth 100 gp)
- 20 square yards of silk (worth 250 gp)
- Gold-plated abacus (worth 250 gp)
- Gold mask of Ashrya's face in life (worth 1,000 gp)
- Portrait depicting Ashyra in life (worth 1,250 gp)
- 41,330 cp, 1,210 sp, and 980 gp

Ashyra's Research Notes

Ashyra's research notes about magic and necromancy are organized and indexed. When you fail an Intelligence (Arcana) check to recall lore, you can spend 1 hour during a short or long rest reviewing the notes and repeat the check. If the check is related to necromancy magic, you have advantage when you reroll it.

Rod of the Sovereigns' Servant

Rod, Very Rare (Requires Attunement by a Spellcaster)

While holding this rod of blackened bone, you can cast the *speak with dead* spell without expending a spell slot.

Additionally, while you hold the rod, you can cast the following spells using your spell save DC: *animate dead* as a 5th-level spell, *bestow curse*, *geas*, and *raise dead*. Once the rod has been used to cast one of these four spells, it can't be used to cast that spell again until the next dusk.

The sorcerer-sovereigns will rise again.
Your souls will fuel their rise to glory.
Those who stand in their way will be
lost to the sands of time.

Ashyra

Nine Lives Stealer Longsword

Rod of the Sovereigns' Servant

Tomb Stat Blocks

The following stat blocks appear in the lair.

Ashyra

CR 15 Solo
Medium Undead, Lawful Evil 13,000 XP

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)
Hit Points 225 (30d8 + 90)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	10 (+0)	17 (+3)	15 (+2)	19 (+4)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Con +8, Int +7, Wis +9
Skills Arcana +7, History +7, Perception +9, Religion +7
Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from mundane attacks
Damage Immunities necrotic, poison
Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, deafened, exhaustion, frightened, poisoned
Senses blindsight 120 ft., passive Perception 19
Languages Common, telepathy 60 ft.
Proficiency Bonus +5

Atonement (3/Day). If Ashyra fails a saving throw, she can choose to succeed instead. When she does, she must either end the effect of her Ancient Curse on one enemy within 120 feet of her or be dazed until the end of her next turn.

Mummy Dust. Whenever Ashyra takes piercing or slashing damage, each creature within 5 feet of her takes 9 (2d8) poison damage.

Actions

Multiattack. Ashyra makes two attacks using Desiccating Slam, Soul Fire, or both, and she uses Ancient Curse.

Desiccating Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (3d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage plus 10 (3d6) necrotic damage. The target's speed is reduced to 0, and they can't regain hit points until the start of Ashyra's next turn.

Soul Fire (3rd-Level Spell). *Ranged Spell Attack:* +9 to hit, range 60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 20 (3d10 + 4) radiant damage, and if the target is a creature, their hit point maximum decreases by a number equal to the damage taken. This reduction lasts until the target finishes a long rest or is targeted by a *cure ailment* power of 4th order or higher, a *greater restoration* spell, or a similar supernatural effect. The target dies if this effect reduces their hit point maximum to 0.

Ancient Curse. Ashyra inflicts weakness on one creature she can see within 120 feet of her. The target must succeed on a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw or be cursed. While the target is cursed in this way, their attacks deal half damage. The curse lasts until Ashyra chooses to end it or until removed by a *cure ailment* power, a *remove curse* spell, or a similar supernatural effect.

Bonus Actions

Misty Step (2nd-Level Spell). Ashyra teleports up to 30 feet to an unoccupied space she can see.

Reactions

Weight of Ages. When a creature Ashyra can see within 60 feet of her deals damage to her, Ashyra brings down the weight of ages on them. The creature must succeed on a DC 17 Strength saving throw or be restrained until the end of their next turn.

Villain Actions

Ashyra has three villain actions. She can take each action once during an encounter after an enemy's turn. She can take these actions in any order but can use only one per round.

Action 1: Sands of the Ancients. A storm of stinging dirt whirls around Ashyra in a 15-foot-radius until the end of her next turn. For the duration, that area is heavily obscured, and when a creature starts their turn in or enters that area for the first time on a turn, they must succeed on a DC 17 Constitution saving throw or take 22 (4d10) necrotic damage.

Action 2: Dust to Dust. Ashyra bursts into a cloud of dust and makes one Desiccating Slam attack against each enemy within 60 feet of her, then she reforms in an unoccupied space within 60 feet of her original location.

Action 3: Last Rites. Ashyra commands the land to entomb her foes. Each enemy within 30 feet of her must make a DC 17 Strength saving throw. On a failed save, a target takes 21 (6d6) bludgeoning damage and is entombed in stone. On a successful save, a target takes half as much damage and is not entombed. An entombed creature is restrained, has total cover against attacks and other effects outside the stone, and takes 7 (2d6) necrotic damage at the end of each of their turns. The creature can be freed if the stone is destroyed (AC 17; 30 hit points; immunity to poison and psychic damage).

Ashyra swirls the Sands of the Ancients around her enemies, stealing their life force.

Haunt

CR 9 Skirmisher

Huge Undead, Typically Chaotic Evil — 5,000 XP

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)
Hit Points 153 (18d12 + 36)
Speed 0 ft., fly 40 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	8 (–1)	16 (+3)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws Wis +7, Cha +8
Skills Intimidation +8, Perception +7
Damage Resistances acid, fire, lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from mundane attacks
Damage Immunities cold, necrotic, poison
Condition Immunities charmed, dazed, exhaustion, flanked, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained
Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 17
Languages telepathy 60 ft.
Proficiency Bonus +4

Incorporeal Cloud. The haunt can occupy another creature's space and vice versa. In addition, the haunt can move through creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. The haunt takes 5 (1d10) force damage if they end their turn inside an object.

Invisibility. The haunt is invisible.

Actions

Multiattack. The haunt makes two Spectral Wrath attacks.

Spectral Wrath. *Melee Spell Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 0 ft., one target in the haunt's space. *Hit:* 17 (2d12 + 4) force damage.

Wave of Despair (Recharge 5–6). The haunt unleashes a wave of psychic pain. Each enemy within 20 feet of the haunt must make a DC 16 Wisdom saving throw, taking 33 (6d10) psychic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Bonus Actions

Possess Object. The haunt can magically manipulate a Large or smaller object within 30 feet of them that isn't being worn or carried by another creature. The haunt can exert fine control on objects under their control, such as playing piano keys, slamming doors, opening windows, or writing with a quill.

As part of this bonus action, the haunt can hurl the object up to 30 feet in any direction or use it as a ranged weapon to attack one creature within 30 feet of the object. The object has a +8 bonus to hit and deals 15 (2d10 + 4) bludgeoning damage on a hit. The GM might rule that a specific object deals piercing or slashing damage based on its form.

Koptourok

CR 5 Controller

Medium Undead, Typically Chaotic Evil — 1,800 XP

Armor Class 13
Hit Points 90 (12d8 + 36)
Speed 30 ft. (see Wings of Breath)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (–1)	16 (+3)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	8 (–1)

Saving Throws Dex +6, Con +6
Skills Perception +4
Damage Resistances necrotic, poison; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from mundane attacks
Condition Immunities charmed, dazed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned
Senses blindsight 120 ft., passive Perception 14
Languages understands the languages they knew in life but can't speak
Proficiency Bonus +3

Breathless Aura. Enemies within 30 feet of the koptourok can't speak, and if they are a creature who needs to breathe, they also have disadvantage on Constitution saving throws.

Wings of Breath. The koptourok gains a flying speed equal to their walking speed if they have at least one enemy within 30 feet of them. If the koptourok starts their turn in the air and doesn't have a flying speed, they fall.

Actions

Multiattack. The koptourok makes two Choking Grasp attacks.

Choking Grasp. *Melee Spell Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 30 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 14 (4d6) bludgeoning damage, and the target is pulled to an unoccupied space within 5 feet of the koptourok and grappled (escape DC 14). While grappled in this way, the target is restrained and the koptourok's speed isn't halved by the grapple.

Last Gasp. The koptourok attempts to steal the breath from each creature they are grappling. Each target must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw, taking 14 (4d6) bludgeoning damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. The koptourok gains temporary hit points equal to 5 times the number of creatures who failed their save.

Reactions

Thunderous Deflation. When the koptourok drops to 30 hit points or fewer, they unleash a shrieking wail. Each creature within 30 feet of the koptourok must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, a creature takes 16 (3d10) thunder damage and is deafened until the end of their next turn. On a successful save, a creature takes half as much damage and isn't deafened. The koptourok then releases all creatures they are grappling and flies up to their speed.

Koptourok

Derived from an archaic duergar dialect, koptourok (*cop-TOUR-ock*) roughly translates to "dead tourist." These lost dead were raised in a world with a sky then spent their last moments in a dark, breathless place. They rise as rasping paper-skinned husks, like a cross between an unwrapped mummy and accordion bellows that forever expand and contract. They hunger only for what they've lost—breath.

Koptourok

Mummy

CR 3 Brute
700 XP

Medium Undead, Typically Lawful Evil

Armor Class 12 (natural armor)
Hit Points 60 (8d8 + 24)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	8 (–1)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)

Skills Arcana +2, History +2, Religion +2
Damage Immunities necrotic, poison
Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, deafened, exhaustion, frightened, poisoned
Senses blindsight 60 ft., passive Perception 12
Languages the languages they knew in life
Proficiency Bonus +2

Flammable. Whenever the mummy takes fire damage, they take an extra 5 (1d10) fire damage.

Mummy Dust. Whenever the mummy takes piercing or slashing damage, each creature within 5 feet of them takes 4 (1d8) poison damage.

Actions

Multiattack. The mummy makes two Desiccating Slam attacks and uses Guardian Curse.

Desiccating Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) bludgeoning damage. Until the start of the mummy's next turn, the target's speed is reduced by 10 feet and the target can't regain hit points.

Guardian Curse. The mummy calls down a scourge on one creature they can see within 60 feet of them. The target must succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or be cursed. While cursed in this way, whenever the target takes damage, they take an extra 3 (1d6) necrotic damage that can't be reduced in any way. The curse lasts until removed by a *cure ailment* power, a *remove curse* spell, or a similar supernatural effect. A target who succeeds on their saving throw is immune to the Guardian Curse of all mummies for the next 24 hours.

Terminal Excrescence

Optimized for Five 12th-Level Characters

Content Warning: Body Horror and Eugenics

The Terminal Excrescence contains many visceral scenes of body horror. Be sure to check in with your players and establish the use of safety tools before running this lair.

Voiceless talkers are evil sapient beings who engage in reprehensible and irredeemable acts of eugenics. While you can create exceptional synlirii who fight against such philosophies and practices, the voiceless talkers who participate in genetic experiments are unquestionably evil.

Chief Design Architect of his nation's body banks, the synliroi Lord Syuul (*see-YOU-ull*) seeks more material for his experiments. His spies, informants, and allies are always on the lookout for subjects with unique hereditary traits the Interlace might extract.

Lord Syuul, who belongs to an ancient and respected noble house, never leaves his estate without a retinue of guards and minions. They obey his orders fanatically—as Syuul has ensured they're biologically incapable of refusing to do so.

Syuul's recent experiments have focused on isolating the trait that expresses sorcerous ability in humanoids. Thus far, these attempts have been unsuccessful. Not to be deterred, Lord Syuul has placed his assistant in charge of the day-to-day operations of the body banks, while Syuul himself ventures forth to observe the surface world and plunder its diversity.

In his vile laboratory known as the Terminal Excrescence, Lord Syuul performs terrible procedures on all manner of creatures. This lab-fortress was originally made from the vessel Syuul used to travel to the Mundane World, but over the years, leftover flesh from discarded experiments has grown over the lab and much of the massive cavern it inhabits. The Terminal Excrescence is suspended 100 feet below the cavern's ceiling and 200 feet above the floor via web-like cords of neoplasmic flesh. From the outside, the lab looks like a distended orb of pulsing meat hanging over a bilious lake of its own drippings.

Terminal Excrescence Story Hooks

You can use one of the following story hooks to integrate this lair into an adventure:

Missing Orcs. Berak Mahul, an elderly orc wizard, contacts the characters to find and rescue two of his vassals who recently went missing: Gosha and Gorar (see areas S2 and S3). The pair were last seen venturing to the depths of the World Below. The characters can trace the orcs back to the Terminal Excrescence. If they bring back Gosha and Gorar, Berak gives the characters a *carpet of flying*.

New Flesh. A humanoid cult believes that Lord Syuul's grotesque experiments will lead to the perfect form. Its members travel to the World Below and willingly undergo his fatal procedures. Following the trail of these misguided fanatics leads the characters to the Terminal Excrescence.

Twin Vessel. An otherworldly vessel of the same make as the one that creates Syuul's laboratory crashed in a valley near the characters. The vessel has autonomously started to replicate some of Lord Syuul's experiments, producing mutated aberrations that threaten to overrun the region. Investigating the vessel reveals a map that can be followed to the location of the Terminal Excrescence. The local leaders offer the characters 30,000 gp to find this second ship and destroy it.

Voiceless Talkers

Among the most powerful psions in the timescape, synlirii (singular: synliroi) are known as the "voiceless talkers" to the denizens of the World Below—and to surface dwellers unfortunate enough to encounter them. Descended from boneless aquatic cephalopods, they are alien in thought and motivation to the humanoid species they loathe. Synlirii consider the "barking ones" (their label for creatures who squeeze air through meat flaps to communicate) to be an abomination that must be corrected.

Synlirii breed mollusks that secrete plastic-like substances, using them to fashion weapons and similar technology powered by psionic crystals. The voiceless talkers' handheld psi-pistols and portable psi-rifles can be used only by their alien minds.

Synlirii are obsessed with manipulating the natural development of other organisms. They create hulking brains, mindkillers, and other servants using a psionic technique they call the Interlace. Many synlirii experiments don't live long and aren't intended to. But the World Below is littered with unnatural creatures who escaped the voiceless talkers' body banks—most of them singular life forms that can't reproduce and may never die.

Terminal Excrescence Features

Unless otherwise noted, each area of the Terminal Excrescence has the following features:

Ceilings. The ceilings in the fortress are 15 feet high.

Extension of Will. Countless eyes—humanoid and not—line this structure's fleshy walls. Syuul is psionically connected to the eyes via the cerebral processor in the experimentation chamber (area S3). While connected, he can see through these eyes and his own at the same time.

Flesh Fortress. The fortress's walls, floors, ceilings, and other surfaces are covered with a mass of muscle, skin, teeth, and bones. This pulsing organic matter flinches if touched.

Illumination. Inside the fortress (in areas S2 and S3), chitinous growths on the walls and ceilings contain bioluminescent globules suspended in a clear liquid. These fill the interior of the fortress with dim light.

Worth More Alive

Powerful heroes are much more useful to Syuul alive than dead. His forces prioritize submission over destruction. Defeated adventurers are placed within the stasis pods in cold storage (area S2) to await their inevitable vivisection.

Syuul's servants are unerringly loyal and fight to the death. Interrogating them yields no information.

Resting in the Terminal Excrescence

Provided the characters first deal with any enemies in an area, they can take a short or long rest in any area without incident. At the GM's discretion, Lord Syuul can confront characters who rest in the cold storage (area S2) before they find him in the experimentation chamber (area S3).

Entering the Terminal Excrescence

A vast, winding tunnel network in the World Below leads to dozens of outcroppings in the upper levels of a massive cavern with a 150-foot diameter and a 300-foot-high ceiling.

Flight of the Navigators. Two flying patrols, each consisting of a **voiceless talker artillerist** and ten **mindkiller whelps**, make circles through the cavern. The characters must succeed on a DC 17 group Dexterity (Stealth) check to get to the fortress without one of the patrols noticing. On a failed check, one patrol spots the characters and attacks; if the party doesn't defeat that patrol within two rounds, the second patrol arrives at the start of the third round and joins the fray.

Neoplasmic Webbing. A precarious webbing of sinewy bridges and fleshy knotted cords extends from the cavern's tunnels to the Terminal Excrescence's exterior (area S1). The 10-foot-wide bridges have very little cover, and creatures on them have disadvantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks. If a creature instead tries to reach the lab by climbing the web of narrow cords, they have advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks but must also succeed on a DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check to cross. A creature who fails this Strength (Athletics) check by 5 or more falls into the lake of rot, taking damage from the fall as normal. A creature who fails by less than 5 is unable to cross but safely slides back to the cavern's tunnels.

Lake of Rot. A 15-foot-deep lake of blood, bile, and worse drips from the Terminal Excrescence, covering the floor of the cavern 200 feet below the fortress. Non-Aberration creatures who start their turn touching the lake must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 1 hour. While poisoned in this way, a creature's speed is halved as their limbs become rubbery and difficult to move.

A living **amalgam** of flesh (a giant gibbering mouther) floats in the lake and attacks non-Aberration creatures who enter.

Mindkiller

S1. Body Ball Map

1. Psionic Egress
2. Lab Entrance
3. Horrid Climb
4. Neoplasmic Webbing Cord
5. Neoplasmic Webbing Bridge

Terminal Excrescence Areas

The following areas correspond to the Body Ball Map, the Cold Storage Map, and the Experimentation Chamber Map.

S1. Body Ball

The exterior of the suspended laboratory is a gruesome flat-topped orb. This area has the following features:

- "Flesh bridges and cords meld seamlessly into the massive structure they're suspending—an orb of wet muscle and bulbous flesh. Across its surface, incomplete faces scream soundlessly and impossibly twisted limbs extend outward, offering grim handholds as a way up the pulsating mass."
- "Atop the orb, several figures stand guard, backlit by a dim purple light. A hulking mass of muscle patrols in a circle around the source of the light. Around them, two tentacled horrors and two bone-clawed brains watch the cavern for intruders."

Flesh Bridges and Cords. For information about the bridges and cords, see "Neoplasmic Webbing" in the "Entering the Terminal Excrescence" section. The bridges and cords intersect the body ball halfway up its side, just below the Horrid Climb.

Horrid Climb. A 25-foot-wide ring of steep difficult terrain circles the body ball. Creatures who access the ball via the bridges or cords must climb this incline to reach the lab entrance.

Lab Entrance. The top of the body ball is flattened and easy to traverse. At the center of its 35-foot radius lies the psionic egress—the sole entrance to the lab.

Guards. The psionic egress is guarded by two **voiceless talkers**, two **mindkillers**, and a **hulking brain**. If one of the voiceless talkers is killed, the other retreats to the cold storage (area S2) to continue the fight.

Psionic Egress. The cold storage (area S2) can be entered via the psionic egress atop the body ball. This 20-foot diameter, 25-foot-deep cylinder contains a semisolid membrane of transparent psionic gel, which sheds bright purple light in a 20-foot radius and dim light for an additional 20 feet.

Creatures who can manifest a psionic power can move through the egress, including up or down, at normal speed. The egress is difficult terrain for other creatures. A creature who looks down through the egress can see Humanoid shapes dangling from the ceiling of a large chamber below.

Hulking Brain

The voiceless talkers have engineered pearlescent-skinned, humanoid-shaped aberrations with four massive arms and—in place of a head—a large pulsing brain. Called thylinça by voiceless talkers and hulking brains by everyone else, these creatures serve as bodyguards and psionic batteries for their synlirii creators.

S2. Cold Storage

What once was a hibernation chamber for long-distance travel now resembles a butcher's meat locker. Lord Syuul stores his future experiments here while they await their grisly fate in the experimentation chamber (area S3). This area has the following features:

- "In this frigid chamber, breath curls up in white wisps and a sheen of frost clings to everything."
- "Gnarled hooks made of extruded bones and teeth dangle from the ceiling. Each hook suspends a mutilated humanoid or monstrous corpse."
- "Along the north wall, half of a troll hangs over a footlocker made of flesh."
- "Meaty growths have overtaken every surface, partially burying ten coffin-like metal pods that circle this chamber."
- "At the south end of the chamber, a huge metal plate protrudes from the fleshy floor. In the middle of this square platform, an embedded 10-foot purple crystal hums with energy."
- (**Secret**) Mindkillers hide behind the stasis pods and among the hanging bodies.
- (**Secret**) An unconscious orc is trapped in a stasis pod.

Cold Storage. Each creature must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw at the end of each hour they spend in this area or gain a level of exhaustion. Aberrations, creatures who are resistant or immune to cold damage, and creatures wearing cold weather gear automatically succeed on this saving throw.

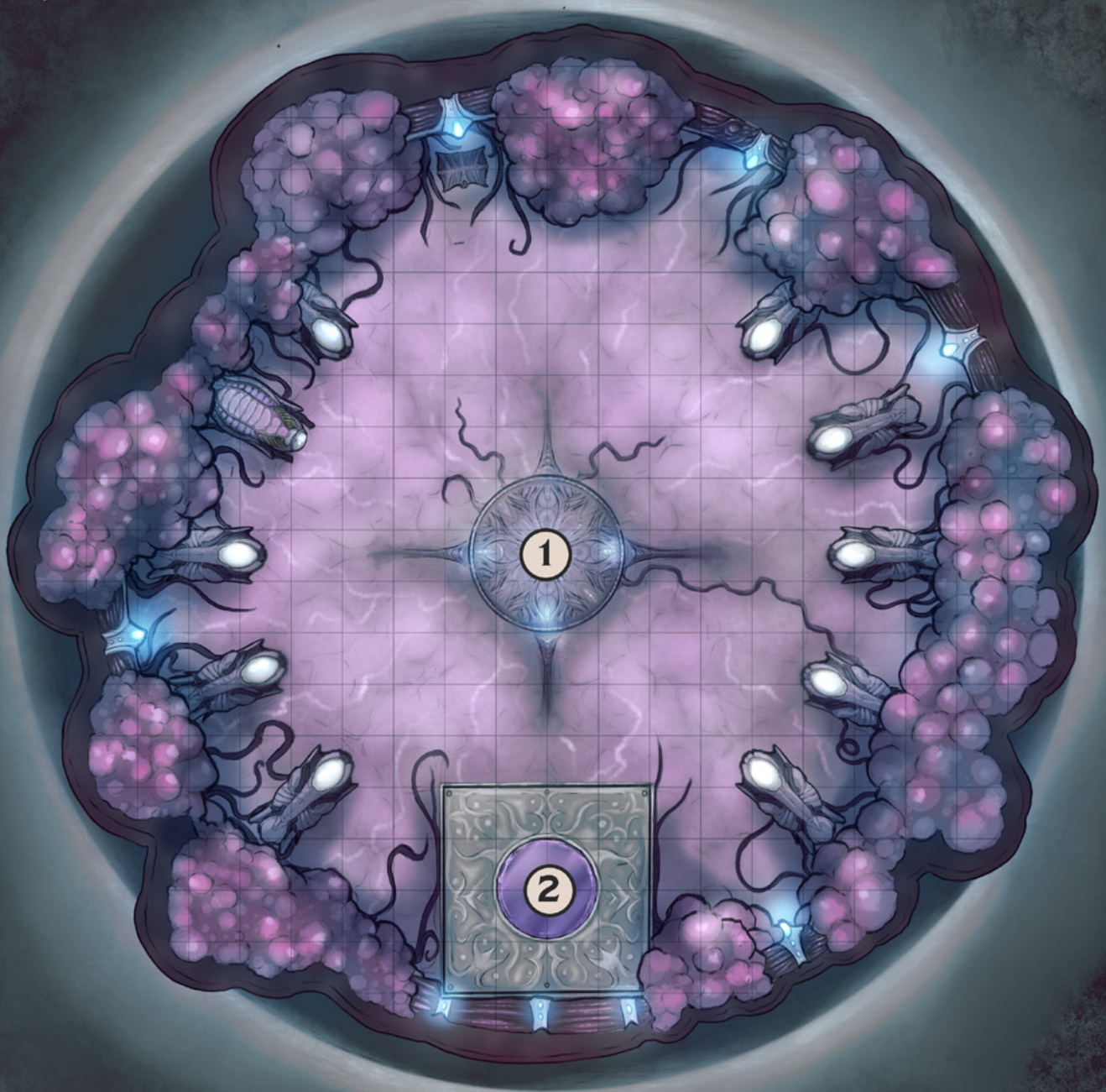
Mindkillers. Three **mindkillers** and ten **mindkiller whelps** hide until all the characters emerge from the psionic

Hulking Brain

S2. Cold Storage Map

N

1 square = 5 feet



1. Psionic Egress
2. Transporter Pad

egress before attacking. A character notices the hidden mindkillers with a successful DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check. If noticed, the mindkillers immediately attack.

Half a Troll. The **troll** hanging above the footlocker has 0 hit points remaining but is still alive, thanks both to their Relentless Hunger trait and Syuul's experimentation. The troll is immune to cold damage and loyal to the voiceless talkers. They remain motionless until a character gets within 5 feet of the footlocker, then the troll attacks. If the troll regains any hit points, they regrow the bottom half of the body, break free of their bonds, and fight to the death.

Footlocker. Beneath the troll's body, this membranous, fleshy chest contains two dungeoneering packs and equipment belonging to Gosha (see "Stasis Pods") and Gorar (see area S3).

Stasis Pods. Ten stasis pods encircle the chamber: nine pods are empty with clear windows, and one humming pod has a foggy window but is clearly occupied. On the occupied pod, a small console displays in Undercommon, "Use this console to open without killing subject." A creature can open the pod by using an action to make a DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check. On a successful check, the pod opens without killing the creature inside. On a failed check, the pod opens but the creature inside is dead. A creature who can read Undercommon automatically succeeds on this check by following the console's prompts.

If the occupied pod is safely opened, it hisses and white mist shoots out of its sides, revealing an unconscious, mucus-covered **orc blacksmith** named Gosha. A character can use an action to wake her. Gosha was captured with her brother, Gorar, when they were in the World Below looking for rare ores for smithing. If her brother is not with the party, she tells them with panic that Lord Syuul is probably experimenting on him in area S3 (see "Gorar"), and she eagerly joins the characters if offered a chance to fight Syuul.

Transporter Pad. A character who is proficient in Arcana or who spends 1 minute studying the metal plate knows what the transporter pad is and how it works. At the start of each round, any object or willing creature on the pad is teleported to the transporter pad in the experimentation chamber (area S3), and vice versa.

Content Warning: Extreme Body Horror

The enucleator in the experimentation chamber (area S3) restructures a creature's body while the subject is still alive. If you or anyone in your group doesn't like such descriptions, the enucleator can instead magically scan and enchant creatures to give them magical features rather than rearranging or adding to their body parts. You should double-check with a player before their character enters the enucleator to get a body modification. Make sure the character is undergoing a change their player enthusiastically embraces.

S3. Experimentation Chamber

In this inner laboratory, Syuul vivisects living bodies to create new and horrifying amalgamations. This area has the following features:

- "Dim blue, pink, and purple light illuminates this vast chamber that smells of blood. Two enormous square mouths filled with mismatched teeth protrude from the east and west walls."
- "Statues of fused humanoid bodies form two rows in the middle of the room."
- "On the north side of the room, an enormous device made of flesh contains a translucent vat of viscous liquid."
- "A voiceless talker gazes into the vat in front of him. He wears a massive crown, and gold jewelry adorns his face. He touches two metallic orbs that protrude from the floor on rods, manipulating the contents of the vat."
- "Inside the vat, the body parts of a dissected—but still living—orc float within a clear liquid. The orc's nervous system, musculature, and skeleton are all visible as his isolated eyes dart in terror."
- "Lodged in the center of the chamber's ceiling, a 15-foot-diameter mass of brain matter pulsates slowly."
- "Three chests made of flesh stand on the east wall."

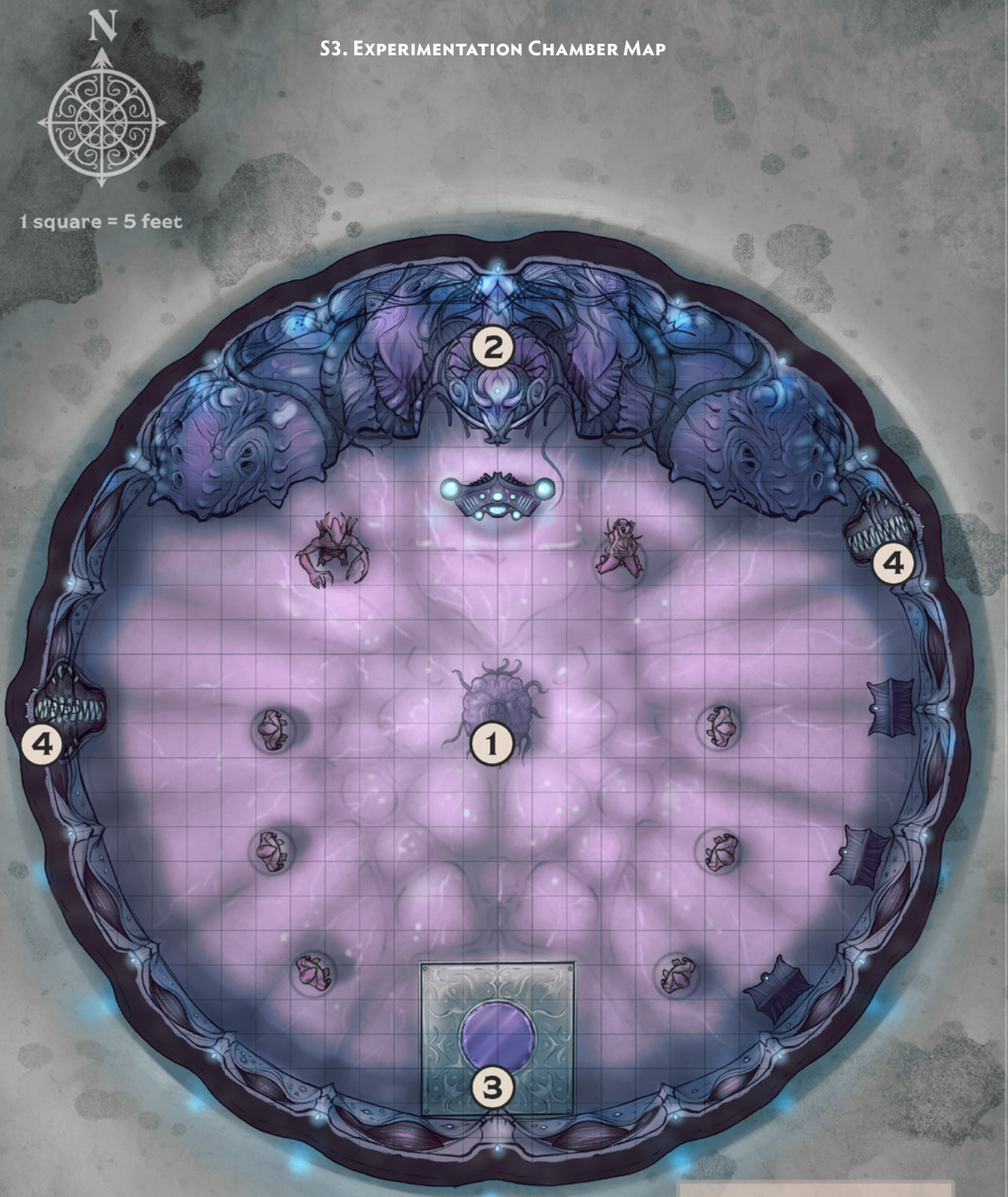
Lord Syuul. Using a psionic device called the enucleator, **Lord Syuul** works to isolate the biological origins of sorcery within an orc subject (see "Gorar"). He likely saw the characters approach through the eyes on the walls and ceilings of the fortress (see "Terminal Excrescence Features"), and it's nearly impossible to surprise him.

Syuul isn't particularly angry with the characters for overcoming his guards. In fact, he thinks any spellcasters or psionic talents among them would be excellent subjects for his experiments. Assuming they decline his offer to volunteer as subjects, Syuul attacks. He begins by using his Wall of Flesh lair action (see the "Lair Actions" sidebar) to divide the party, and he uses his Grappling Jaunt bonus action to place his foes within 5 feet of the excremus. If defeat is imminent, Syuul attempts to flee.

Enucleator. This horrifying device can reconfigure a living creature's entire bodily structure, pulling their organs apart so they can be picked through or recombined with something else. The lid of the enucleator's 10-foot-deep tank is open, revealing an orc's disassembled body floating inside a psionic liquid (see "Gorar"). A creature who can manifest a psionic power or who is proficient in Arcana can touch the metal orbs of the enucleator and spend 1 minute splicing or putting back together a creature inside the enucleator tank. A creature spliced by the enucleator is stunned, but the psionic liquid in the tank keeps them alive. If a spliced creature is removed from the tank before being reassembled, they die.

On both sides of the enucleator, a mass of clear psionic gel rises in a column from floor to ceiling. The gel suspends

S3. Experimentation Chamber Map



1. Cerebral Processor
2. Enucleator
3. Transporter Pad
4. Excremus Mouth Starting Locations

and preserves organs, limbs, monstrous appendages, and unrecognizable viscera.

The enucleator can also be used to make body modifications (see "Lord Syuul's Hoard").

Excremus. Two 15-foot-wide square mouths with rows of mismatched teeth protrude from the walls on the east and west sides of the room. Their starting locations are shown on the map, but Lord Syuul can use his Excremus March lair action to move both mouths.

When a creature starts their turn within 5 feet of a mouth, the creature must succeed on a DC 19 Dexterity saving throw or take 13 (2d12) piercing damage and be swallowed by the excremus. While swallowed, a creature disappears into the excremus stomach cavity where they are blinded and restrained, have total cover against attacks and effects outside the cavity, and take 22 (4d10) acid damage at the start of each of their turns.

Each mouth has AC 10 and 50 hit points. If destroyed, that mouth can no longer swallow creatures, though any creatures already swallowed remain in the stomach.

A creature inside the stomach can attack it. The stomach has AC 10, and if it takes 20 or more damage on a turn, it relaxes until the end of that turn. A swallowed creature can exit the relaxed stomach on their turn (no action required), landing prone in an unoccupied space of their choice within 5 feet of either excremus mouth. If Syuul dies or leaves the fortress, the excremus stops functioning and the stomach relaxes.

Cerebral Processor. The cerebral processor is a mass of brain matter on the ceiling that connects Syuul's mind to the fortress. The processor has 15 AC and 60 hit points. If it is destroyed, Lord Syuul can no longer see through the fortress's eyes (see "Terminal Excrescence Features") or use lair actions.

Chests. These chests contain Syuul's hoard. See "Lord Syuul's Hoard" for more information.

Gorar. The orc in the enucleator is Gorar, an **orc conduit**. If he's reassembled and rescued, he thanks the characters. If his sister Gosha is not with the party, he expresses hope they can save her from area S2 (see "Stasis Pods"). If Gosha and Gorar are both saved, Gosha offers to join the party as a retainer while Gorar goes back home.

Transporter Pad. A character who is proficient in the Arcana skill or who spends 1 minute studying the metal plate knows what the transporter pad is and how it works. At the start of each round, any object or willing creature on the pad is teleported to the transporter pad in the cold storage (area S2), and vice versa.

Lair Actions

When fighting inside the Terminal Excrescence, Lord Syuul can command the living fortress around him. On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), the cerebral processor whirs and Syuul takes one of the following lair actions; he can't take the same lair action two rounds in a row:

Excremus March. Both excremus mouths can each move up to 30 feet along the wall in directions of Syuul's choice.

Screaming Protection. Psionic projections of fleshy mouths cover Lord Syuul and scream at his aggressors. When a creature within 5 feet of Lord Syuul hits him with a melee attack, the attacker must succeed on a DC 19 Constitution saving throw or take 13 (3d8) thunder damage. The mouths disappear at the end of initiative count 20 on the next round.

Wall of Flesh. Syuul creates a wall of flesh that extends in a straight line between two points he can see on the chamber walls. The wall stretches from floor to ceiling and is 5 feet thick. Each 5-foot cube of wall has AC 10 and 20 hit points.

Lord Syuul's Hoard

Lord Syuul's hoard is stored in three fleshy, chitinous pods—one holding currency, one for collectibles, and one for magic items. All the items float in the quivering gel inside the pods.

The hoard contains the following items:

- *Kinesthetic projection* (see below)
- *Robe of eyes* made of an unidentified creature's flesh
- *Rope of climbing* with fleshy fibers
- *Potion of flying*
- *Potion of superior healing*
- *Power crystal* of *fold space*
- *Power crystal* of *gravitational collapse*
- *Power crystal* of *psychic projection*
- Vial of *oil of etherealness*
- 10 pieces of gold jewelry, each fashioned to wear on a voiceless talker's tentacles (worth 60 gp each)
- 90 ingots of metal from an alien plane of existence (worth 100 gp each)
- 10 fleshwork statuettes (worth 300 gp each)
- Ornate fleshwork box with a collection of copper coins from across the planes (worth 500 gp)
- 1 diamond (worth 1,000 gp)
- Pouch of ruby dust (worth 3,500 gp)
- 9,000 sp, 6,000 gp, and 450 pp

Enucleator Modifications

Lord Syuul's psionic enucleator can be used to modify the body of any creature inside its tank. The device must be operated by another creature who can manifest a psionic power or who has proficiency in Arcana. To complete a body modification, the subject must remain inside the tank while the operator touches the metal orbs outside the enucleator for 1 hour. If this work is interrupted, the creature in the tank takes 55 (10d10) necrotic damage; they remain unmodified unless the process is started over.

In Lord Syuul's absence, the enucleator has enough energy stored to make three modifications. Each creature can only have their body modified by the enucleator once. The creature operating the enucleator chooses one of the following permanent modifications to apply to the creature in the tank:

Bone Spikes. Bony protrusions sprout from the creature's skin. The creature gains a +1 bonus to the attack and damage rolls of unarmed strikes and natural weapon attacks.

Chromatophores. The creature's skin gains the camouflaging qualities of a squid. As an action, the creature can make themself invisible for 10 minutes or until they attack, cast a spell, or manifest a power. Once they become invisible in this way, they can't do so again until they finish a long rest.

Redundant Organs. The creature gains an extra heart, liver, spleen, or other essential organ, granting them advantage on death saving throws.

Relentless Toughness. The creature is infused with troll essence. If they are reduced to 0 hit points by damage other than acid or fire damage, they are reduced to 1 hit point instead. Once this effect is triggered, the creature can't benefit from this modification again until they finish a long rest.

Tentacle Arms. One or more of the creature's arms are replaced with tentacles. The creature's reach is extended by 5 feet.

Power Crystals?

The power crystals are psionic items found in *The Talent and Psionics*. If you're not using the rules in that MCDM supplement, replace the power crystals with *spell scrolls* containing the following spells: *globe of invulnerability*, *phantasmal killer*, and *wall of force*.

Kinesthetic Projection

Weapon (Shortsword), Very Rare (Requires Attunement)

Many warriors claim the sword they wield is an extension of themself—an allegory at best. But this shortsword, forged from viscera, bone, and shattered psyches, makes the statement literal. The sword's bony blade narrows into a handle, wrapped in fleshy tendrils.

Curse. When you attune to this shortsword, it fuses to your hand, stitching your bones to the handle and binding your flesh to the sinewy wraps. You can't let go of the sword or use your fused hand to hold another object. This effect ends and the sword detaches if you are targeted by a *cure ailment* power or *remove curse* spell.

While attached to your hand, whether you remain attuned to the sword or not, you have violent nightmares whenever you close your eyes, and you take 1d6 psychic damage whenever you finish a short or long rest.

Kinesthetic Projection. You gain a +2 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this shortsword, and it deals an extra 1d6 psychic damage on a hit.

Visceral Reach. As a bonus action, you can spend 2 Hit Dice to extend this weapon's reach by 10 feet for 1 minute. Additionally, for the duration, you can use an action to make a melee weapon attack against a creature within 30 feet of you. On a hit, the target must succeed on a DC 17 Strength saving throw or be pulled up to 25 feet directly toward you.

Kinesthetic Projection

Terminal Excrescence Stat Blocks

The following stat blocks appear in the lair.

Amalgam

CR 5 Controller

Gargantuan Aberration, Typically Chaotic Neutral 1,800 XP

Armor Class 11 (natural armor)
Hit Points 189 (14d20 + 42)
Speed 10 ft., fly 10 ft. (hover), swim 10 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	7 (–2)	10 (+0)	5 (–3)

Saving Throws Con +6
Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, prone
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10
Languages speaks all languages but doesn't understand any
Proficiency Bonus +3

Immutable Form. The amalgam is immune to any power, spell, or effect that would alter their form.

Lake Rebirth. If destroyed, the amalgam reforms in the Lake of Rot 24 hours later with all their hit points.

Primordial Influence. A dazed enemy who starts their turn within 20 feet of the amalgam must make a DC 16 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, that creature's body is altered in an otherworldly way of the GM's choice—they might flicker in and out of reality, sprout miniature fingers from their fingers, or have their physical form altered in a similarly alien way. This alteration doesn't affect the creature's game statistics. A *cure ailment* power of 4th order or higher, a *greater restoration* spell, or a similar supernatural effect reverses this alteration.

While altered in this way, a creature must repeat the saving throw whenever they finish a long rest. On a failed save, their previous alteration worsens or they experience another chaotic alteration of the GM's choice. If a creature fails this saving throw three times after their initial alteration, they transform into an amalgam controlled by the GM, and only a *wish* spell can restore the creature to their original form.

Viscous Vicinity. The amalgam envelops their surroundings in their shifting reality. The area within 20 feet of them is difficult terrain for other creatures.

Actions

Multiattack. The amalgam makes two Reality Rend attacks. They can replace one attack with a use of Pull.

Reality Rend. *Melee Power Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (2d10 + 4) psychic damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 16 Wisdom saving throw or be dazed until the start of the amalgam's next turn.

Pull. The amalgam warps reality around up to three creatures they can see within 60 feet of them. Each target must succeed on a DC 16 Strength saving throw or be pulled up to 30 feet directly toward the amalgam.

Hulking Brain

CR 7 Brute

Large Aberration, Typically Lawful Evil 2,900 XP

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)
Hit Points 126 (12d10 + 60)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
21 (+5)	10 (+0)	20 (+5)	8 (–1)	6 (–2)	12 (+1)

Senses blindsight 120 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 8
Languages Deep Speech, Undercommon, telepathy 120 ft.
Proficiency Bonus +3

Psionic Immunity. The hulking brain is unaffected by psionic powers manifested by voiceless talkers unless the brain wishes to be.

Psychic Scream. When the brain drops to 0 hit points, each creature within 30 feet of them must make a DC 16 Wisdom saving throw, taking 21 (6d6) psychic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Actions

Multiattack. The brain makes three Bash attacks.

Bash. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (2d8 + 5) bludgeoning damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 15). Until the grapple ends, the target is restrained and has disadvantage on saving throws against psionic powers. The brain can grapple up to four creatures at once.

Squeeze. Each creature grappled by the brain must make a DC 16 Strength saving throw, taking 22 (4d10) bludgeoning damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Bonus Actions

Psionic Invigoration (1/Day). Each willing voiceless talker within 60 feet of the brain regains the use of one psionic power of the voiceless talker's choice, and the voiceless talker has advantage on attack rolls until the end of the brain's next turn.

Lord Syuul

CR 15 Solo
Medium Aberration, Lawful Evil
13,000 XP

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)
Hit Points 221 (26d8 + 104)
Speed 30 ft., fly 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	16 (+3)	18 (+4)	22 (+6)	20 (+5)	21 (+5)

Saving Throws Con +9, Int +11, Wis +10
Skills Arcana +16, Deception +10, Insight +10, Perception +10, Persuasion +10, Stealth +8
Damage Resistances bludgeoning
Condition Immunities charmed, frightened
Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 20
Languages Deep Speech, Undercommon, telepathy 120 ft.
Proficiency Bonus +5

Draw In. If Lord Syuul fails a saving throw while grappling at least one enemy, he can choose to release all grappled creatures and succeed on the saving throw instead.

Actions

Multiattack. Lord Syuul makes two Tentacle or two Psionic Repeater attacks then manifests a power or uses Memory Transfer.

Tentacle. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 28 (4d10 + 6) psychic damage, and if the target is Large or smaller, they are grappled (escape DC 19).

Psionic Repeater. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. *Hit:* 22 (3d10 + 6) force damage.

Brain Overload (1/Day; 6th-Order Power). Lord Syuul creates a sudden surge of energy in the mind of a creature he can see within 120 feet of him. The target must make a DC 19 Constitution saving throw, taking 77 (14d10) psychic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. If the target has a brain and is reduced to 0 hit points, their brain explodes, and if they can't survive without their brain, they die.

Flay (6th-Order Power). Lord Syuul shoots a 15-foot cone of psionic energy from his eyes. Each creature in that area must make a DC 19 Intelligence saving throw, taking 35 (10d6) psychic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Memory Transfer. Lord Syuul psionically plunders the mind of each creature he is grappling. Each target must succeed on a DC 19 Intelligence saving throw or take 44 (8d10) psychic damage. If a target fails their saving throw and doesn't escape the grapple by the end of their next turn, they must choose one of these effects:

- The target's proficiency bonus drops to 0, they can't form new thoughts or speak, and they have disadvantage on all ability checks, attack rolls, and saving throws. Only the *cure ailment* power, a *lesser restoration* spell, or a similar supernatural effect can end this effect. Additionally, until Lord Syuul finishes a long rest, he gains a cumulative +5 bonus to damage rolls.
- The target is charmed by Lord Syuul for 1 hour. While the target is charmed, Lord Syuul can issue the target telepathic commands (no action required), which the target does their best to obey. Each time the target takes damage, they can make a DC 19 Wisdom saving throw, ending the effect on a success.

Guise (3rd-Order Power). Lord Syuul projects a psionic image over his body, transforming his appearance for 1 hour into that of a Medium creature he has seen. When he manifests this power, he can also change the appearance of any equipment he carries.

The changes wrought by this power fail to hold up to physical inspection. A creature can use an action to inspect Lord Syuul's appearance and make a DC 19 Intelligence (Investigation) check, noticing the image is a projection on a success.

Bonus Actions

Grappling Jaunt. Lord Syuul and each creature grappled by him teleport up to 30 feet to an unoccupied space he can see.

Reactions

Brain Drain. When a creature grappled by Lord Syuul makes a saving throw against Memory Transfer, Lord Syuul momentarily weakens the creature and the creature has disadvantage on the saving throw.

Villain Actions

Lord Syuul has three villain actions. He can take each action once during an encounter after an enemy's turn. He can take these actions in any order but can use only one per round.

Action 1: Mindblind. Each enemy Lord Syuul can see within 60 feet of him must make a DC 19 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, a creature can't see creatures other than Lord Syuul for 1 minute (save ends at end of turn).

Action 2: Was I Ever Here? Lord Syuul becomes invisible, teleports 60 feet to an unoccupied space he can see, and can take the Hide action. At the same time, an illusory psionic image of Lord Syuul appears in the space he left, gesturing, speaking, and behaving as he chooses (no action required). A creature who touches the image for the first time on a turn or makes a melee attack against it must succeed on a DC 19 Constitution saving throw or take 21 (6d6) psychic damage. Lord Syuul's invisibility ends and his image disappears at the end of his next turn.

Action 3: Mindshatter. Each enemy Lord Syuul can see within 60 feet of him must make a DC 19 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, a target takes 55 (10d10) psychic damage and is dazed for 1 minute (save ends at end of turn). On a successful save, a target takes half as much damage and isn't dazed.

Mindkiller

CR 2 Ambusher

Small Aberration, Typically Lawful Evil — 450 XP

Armor Class 12
Hit Points 45 (10d6 + 10)
Speed 10 ft., fly 30 ft.

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

Skills Deception +4, Stealth +4
Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 12
Languages Deep Speech, Undercommon, telepathy 120 ft.
Proficiency Bonus +2

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

Psionic Immunity. The mindkiller is unaffected by psionic powers manifested by voiceless talkers unless the mindkiller wishes to be.

Actions

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (2d4 + 2) slashing damage plus 7 (2d6) psychic damage, and if the target is a Medium or smaller creature, they are grappled (escape DC 12).

Concealing Strike. *Ranged Power Attack:* +5 to hit, range 30 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 13 (3d6 + 3) psychic damage, and the mindkiller is invisible to the target until the end of the mindkiller's next turn.

Mindwipe. A Humanoid grappled by the mindkiller must succeed on a DC 12 Strength saving throw or the mindkiller enters the Humanoid's body. While inside a Humanoid, the mindkiller has total cover against attacks and other effects originating outside the Humanoid, and the only action the mindkiller can take is to leave the body, exiting in an unoccupied space within 5 feet of the body.

When a Humanoid ends their turn with the mindkiller inside of them, they must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or take 10 necrotic damage. If the Humanoid is reduced to 0 hit points, they die and the mindkiller takes over the body, which regains hit points equal to the Humanoid's hit point maximum. The mindkiller retains their Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma scores, their understanding of Deep Speech and Undercommon, and their telepathy. They otherwise adopt the target's statistics and can take the actions the creature could take. They know everything the creature knew, including spells, class features, traits, and languages. If the body is reduced to 0 hit points after the mindkiller takes control, the mindkiller must leave it.

A creature wielding a sharp tool or weapon within reach of a Humanoid host or body with a mindkiller inside can use an action to attempt to remove the mindkiller, making an attack roll against the Humanoid's AC if the host is unwilling. On a hit, the creature deals 11 (2d10) slashing damage to the host and must make a DC 15 Wisdom (Medicine) check. On a successful check, the creature cuts the mindkiller out of the host. On a failed check, if this slashing damage reduced the host to 0 hit points, the mindkiller kills the host; otherwise, there is no effect.

Mindkiller Whelp

CR 2 Minion

Small Aberration, Typically Lawful Evil — 90 XP

Armor Class 12
Hit Points 9
Speed 10 ft., fly 30 ft.

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

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 11
Languages Deep Speech, Undercommon, telepathy 120 ft.
Proficiency Bonus +2

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

Minion. If the whelp takes damage from an attack or as the result of a failed saving throw, their hit points are reduced to 0. If the whelp takes damage from another effect, they die if the damage equals or exceeds their hit point maximum; otherwise they take no damage.

Psionic Immunity. The whelp is unaffected by psionic powers manifested by voiceless talkers unless the whelp wishes to be.

Resistance Drain. When an enemy within 5 feet of three or more whelps makes a saving throw against a power or psionic effect, the enemy takes a penalty to the save equal to the number of whelps within 5 feet of them.

Actions

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

Orc Blacksmith

Retainer

Medium Humanoid (Orc), Any Alignment

Armor Class 15 (medium armor)
Hit Points Eight times their level (number of d10 Hit Dice equal to their level)
Speed 35 ft.

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

Saving Throws +PB to all
Skills Athletics +3 plus PB, Perception +1 plus PB
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11 plus PB
Languages Common, Orc
Proficiency Bonus (PB) equals the mentor's bonus

Signature Attack (Warhammer). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 plus PB to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1d10 plus PB bludgeoning damage. Beginning at 7th level, the blacksmith can make this attack twice, instead of once, when they take the Attack action on their turn.

Features

3rd Level: Relentless Rush (3/Day). When the blacksmith isn't incapacitated and they take damage but aren't killed outright, they can make an attack against an enemy (no action required) before the hit point reduction is resolved. If the attack hits, the blacksmith regains twice their PB hit points.

5th Level: Reinforce Armor (3/Day). As a bonus action, the blacksmith touches a piece of armor and fortifies it. For the next 10 minutes, a creature wearing the armor gains a bonus to their AC equal to half the blacksmith's PB.

7th Level: Fortify Weapon (3/Day). As a bonus action, the blacksmith touches a weapon and polishes it. For 1 minute, the weapon is magical and deals an extra PB damage.

Orc Conduit

CR 1 Artillery

Medium Humanoid (Orc), Any Alignment — 200 XP

Armor Class 13 (studded leather)
Hit Points 30 (4d8 + 12)
Speed 35 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)

Skills Perception +3
Damage Resistances determined by the conduit's Affinity trait
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13
Languages Common, Orc
Proficiency Bonus +2

Affinity. The conduit has a lifelong affinity for one of the following damage types: cold, fire, or lightning. The chosen type determines the conduit's damage resistance and the damage of their Elemental Discharge and Power Burst actions.

Relentless (1/Turn). When the conduit isn't incapacitated and they are reduced to 0 hit points but not killed outright, they can make an attack against an enemy (no action required) before the hit point reduction is resolved. If the attack hits and its damage reduces the target to 0 hit points, the conduit drops to 1 hit point instead of 0 hit points.

Actions

Elemental Discharge (Cantrip). *Melee or Ranged Spell Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d12 + 3) damage of the type determined by the conduit's Affinity trait.

Power Burst (2/Day; 1st-Level Spell). The conduit unleashes explosive energy in a 15-foot cone. The ground in that area becomes difficult terrain, and each creature in that area must make a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save, a creature takes 10 (3d6) damage of the type determined by the conduit's Affinity trait, and they are pushed 10 feet away from the conduit. On a successful save, a creature takes half as much damage and isn't pushed.

Bonus Actions

Rush. The conduit takes the Dash action.

That thing–he called it the enucleator–it was awful. I was ripped apart and examined, but I was still alive. I could feel every piece of me separate. I have no idea how you put me back together.

Gorar

Troll

CR 5 Brute

Large Giant, Typically Chaotic Evil — 1,800 XP

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)
Hit Points 94 (9d10 + 45)
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	13 (+1)	20 (+5)	7 (–2)	9 (–1)	7 (–2)

Saving Throws Con +8
Skills Athletics +7, Perception +5
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15
Languages Giant
Proficiency Bonus +3

Relentless Hunger. When the troll is reduced to 0 hit points by any damage other than acid or fire damage, they don't die or fall unconscious, and can continue moving and taking actions as usual. The troll only dies if they end their turn with 0 hit points, if acid or fire damage reduces them to 0 hit points, or if they take acid or fire damage while they have 0 hit points.

Sluggish. For 1 hour after sleep or another period of unconsciousness, the troll's speed is halved and they can't use Multiattack.

Actions

Multiattack. The troll makes one Bite attack and two Claw attacks.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 14 (3d6 + 4) piercing damage. If the target is not a Construct, an Elemental, or a Plant, the troll regains hit points equal to the damage dealt. If this attack reduces the target to 0 hit points, the troll regains twice as many hit points as they otherwise would with this attack.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) slashing damage.

Crash Through. The troll moves up to their speed in a straight line, smashing through mundane obstacles in their path. The troll can enter the spaces of Large or smaller creatures during this movement, forcing those creatures to make a DC 15 Strength saving throw. On a failed save, a creature takes 14 (4d6) bludgeoning damage and falls prone. On a successful save, a creature takes half as much damage and doesn't fall prone.

During this move, mundane objects that aren't worn or carried by a creature take 14 (4d6) damage when the troll enters their space. If the troll moves into the space of a Large or larger object and this damage doesn't destroy it, the troll's movement stops and they are stunned until the end of their next turn.

Reactions

Spiteful Retort. When the troll is reduced to 0 hit points and doesn't die, they can make a Bite attack against a creature within 5 feet of them.

Voiceless Talker

CR 7 Controller

Medium Aberration, Typically Lawful Evil — 2,900 XP

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)
Hit Points 91 (14d8 + 28)
Speed 30 ft., fly 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	19 (+4)	15 (+2)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws Con +5, Int +7, Wis +5
Skills Arcana +7, Deception +5, Insight +5, Perception +5, Persuasion +5, Stealth +6
Damage Resistances bludgeoning
Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 15
Languages Deep Speech, Undercommon, telepathy 120 ft.
Proficiency Bonus +3

Actions

Multiattack. The voiceless talker manifests a power and makes one Tentacle or Psionic Pistol attack.

Tentacle. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (2d10 + 4) psychic damage, and if the target is Large or smaller, they are grappled (escape DC 15).

Psionic Pistol. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (2d10 + 4) force damage.

****Memory Thief (4th-Order Power).*** The voiceless talker psionically plunders the mind of a creature they can see within 30 feet of them. The target must make a DC 15 Intelligence saving throw. On a failed save, the target takes 22 (4d10) psychic damage, and until they finish a long rest or die, their proficiency bonus is cumulatively lowered by 1 and the voiceless talker gains a cumulative +2 bonus to damage rolls. On a successful save, a target takes half as much damage and doesn't have their proficiency bonus reduced.

A creature whose proficiency bonus drops to 0 can't form new thoughts or speak, and they have disadvantage on ability checks, attack rolls, and saving throws.

Flay (3/Day; 5th-Order Power). The voiceless talker shoots forth a 15-foot cone of pure psionic energy. Each creature in the area must make a DC 15 Intelligence saving throw, taking 28 (8d6) psychic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Guise (3rd-Order Power). The voiceless talker projects a psionic image over their body, transforming their appearance for 1 hour into that of a Medium creature they have seen. When they manifest this power, they can also change the appearance of any equipment they carry for the duration.

The changes wrought by this power fail to hold up to physical inspection. A creature can use an action to inspect the voiceless talker's appearance and make a DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check, noticing the image is a projection on a success.

Reactions

Brain Drain. When a creature grappled by the voiceless talker makes a saving throw against one of the voiceless talker's powers, the voiceless talker momentarily weakens the creature and the creature has disadvantage on the saving throw.

Voiceless Talker Artillerist

CR 10 Artillery
5,900 XP

Medium Aberration, Typically Lawful Evil

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)
Hit Points 150 (20d8 + 60)
Speed 30 ft., fly 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	16 (+3)	16 (+3)	21 (+5)	17 (+3)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Con +7, Int +9, Wis +7
Skills Arcana +9, Deception +7, Insight +7, Perception +7, Persuasion +7, Stealth +7
Damage Resistances bludgeoning
Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 17
Languages Deep Speech, Undercommon, telepathy 120 ft.
Proficiency Bonus +4

Phasing Rifle (1/Turn). When the artillerist hits a target with their Psionic Rifle attack, the artillerist can attempt to teleport the target (no action required). The target must succeed on a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw or be teleported to an unoccupied space the artillerist can see within 60 feet of the artillerist.

Actions

Multiattack. The artillerist makes two Psionic Rifle attacks, or they manifest a power and make one Phasing Tentacles attack.

Psionic Rifle. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. *Hit:* 21 (3d10 + 5) force damage.

Phasing Tentacles. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 21 (3d10 + 5) psychic damage, and if the target is Large or smaller, the artillerist can choose one of the following effects: the target is grappled (escape DC 17) or teleported up to 15 feet to an unoccupied space the artillerist can see.

****Memory Thief (5th-Order Power).*** The artillerist psionically plunders the mind of a creature they can see within 30 feet of them. The target must make a DC 17 Intelligence saving throw. On a failed save, the target takes 33 (6d10) psychic damage, and until they finish a long rest or die, their proficiency bonus is lowered by 1 and the artillerist gains a cumulative +2 bonus to damage rolls. On a successful save, a target takes half as much damage and doesn't have their proficiency bonus reduced.

A creature whose proficiency bonus drops to 0 can't form new thoughts or speak, and they have disadvantage on ability checks, attack rolls, and saving throws.

Guise (3rd-Order Power). The artillerist projects a psionic image over their body, transforming their appearance for 1 hour into that of a Medium creature they have seen. When they manifest this power, they can also change the appearance of any equipment they carry for the duration.

The changes wrought by this power fail to hold up to physical inspection. A creature can use an action to inspect the artillerist's appearance and make a DC 17 Intelligence (Investigation) check, noticing the image is a projection on a success.

Bonus Actions

****Vanish for One (3/Day; 3rd-Order Power; Concentration).*** The artillerist cloaks themself from the sight of a creature the artillerist can see within 60 feet of them. The creature must succeed on a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw or the artillerist becomes invisible to the creature for 1 minute (save ends at end of turn). This effect ends early if the artillerist attacks the creature, deals damage to them, or creates an effect that forces them to make a saving throw.

But where does your magic come from? The humors–your very lifeblood? Perhaps it is deep within your marrow. Bones are such curious things. We must dissect again and again–every piece smaller than the last–until we arrive at the truth. Your contributions to this experiment could change everything.

Lord Syuul

Psi-Tech

While most psi-tech weapons can be used only by voiceless talkers, a character using the talent class (from the MCDM supplement *The Talent and Psionics*) can use these weapons by gaining 1 strain each time they make an attack with one. A creature using a psi-tech ranged weapon uses Intelligence instead of Dexterity for attack and damage rolls.

Eighth City Advocacy Services

Optimized for Five 13th-Level Characters

To reach the rank of chancellor in the Seven Cities of Hell, Lazivos (*LAH-zih-vohs*) has executed dozens of intricate schemes, uttered hundreds of deceptions into opportune ears, and positioned countless rivals into unfortunate—yet completely compromising—circumstances.

And still, he remains unsatisfied.

Lazivos now pursues election to the Court of Seven Cities. In the meantime, he gladly commands and exploits his assembly of devils to curry favor and acquire loftier connections. His agents manipulate mortals and collect powerful relics on his behalf, ever expanding his reach and strengthening his grip.

A consummate narcissist, Lazivos dislikes dirtying his own hands unless absolutely necessary. Even when forced into a fight, the infernal chancellor coerces his enemies into aiding him, weakening them even further.

Infernal Chancellor Lazivos dwells in a demiplane within the Seven Cities of Hell, which he calls Eighth City Advocacy Services (ECAS). It is a place of business for Lazivos and his lesser devils, who offer contractual, legal, and advocacy services to desperate creatures in need of a deal. This part of the demiplane, the Office, is open to any creature who comes in. A secret part of the demiplane, the Agency, conceals the headquarters of Lazivos's extensive intelligence gathering and "reputation management" operations.

The demiplane's security measures deter unwanted visitors while testing and cataloging them. If Lazivos faces them, the interlopers fight an entity who exploits their goals, weaknesses, and secrets.

Devils

In the lower plane of Hell, devils of the Seven Cities vie unceasingly against each other for power and control—a conflict fought foremostly through cunning and schemes. Compared to other fiends, devils appear remarkably humanoid, but infernal attributes such as horns, hooves, tails, and wings still set them apart.

The Seven Cities are built on a strict hierarchy and bureaucracy. Draconian chains of command place each devil in service to a higher authority—typically a more powerful devil. While devils are lawful, they're always looking for another way up the ladder. They twist every rule to their benefit to gain power and usurp those they answer to, eager to uncover loopholes in the eternal struggle for significance and supremacy.

These winsome fiends can acquire great influence through corrupting mortal souls—who then become subordinate devils when they die. Devils are virtuosos with words, skilled at tempting and coercing people into performing atrocities. They exploit the weaknesses of mortals—greed, revenge, vanity—or just simple desperation.

In the heat of battle, a devil's supernatural charisma can influence a mortal to do their bidding, often without realizing until it's too late.

All devils have two names: one they're commonly known by, and another secret true name. Every devil zealously safeguards the latter, as their true name can be spoken aloud to aid in summoning the fiend or to strip them of their power.

ECAS Story Hooks

You can use one of the following story hooks to integrate this lair into an adventure:

Broken Triad. The characters are approached by two night hags, Anya and Galina Darkdream. The sisters offer to make each character up to 20 years younger if the party discovers what happened to their third sister, Sasha (see area I8), who went to ECAS to negotiate a contract and never returned.

Legalese Woes. Berik, an orc sage, recently discovered an ancient infernal pact in the library of a major city, and he believes it may imply every resident will soon be cursed with bad luck. However, the language is so complex and obtuse that Berik wants to confirm this interpretation with the devils at ECAS. The city pulls together the sum of 40,000 gp and asks the characters to go there to untangle the contract.

Soul-Mined. Many years ago, plane-shifting goblin mage Gaisa Reiks visited ECAS and had her soul mined during her stay. Though her infernal contract was resolved, her secrets gathered by the devils have recently resurfaced in an anonymous blackmail attempt. Not wanting to risk having more information taken from her, Gaisa offers the characters a *staff of frost* if they can find out who is responsible. In truth, Lazivos is spreading Gaisa's secrets in hopes she will send more powerful people into the offices to be mined.

ECAS Features

The Office consists of areas I1 to I4. The Agency consists of areas I5 to I12. Unless otherwise noted, each area has the following features:

Ceilings. The ceilings are 15 feet high.

Doors (Agency). The doors to Agency areas are made of stygian steel and stand 10 feet tall. A *detect magic* spell reveals these doors have auras of transmutation magic. Each door is locked and can be picked with a successful DC 20 Dexterity check using thieves' tools. Failing this check deals 16 (3d10) fire damage to the creature

trying to pick the lock, and if the thieves' tools used are mundane, they instantly melt. Each door has AC 22, 50 hit points, immunity to poison and psychic damage, and immunity to bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from mundane attacks.

Doors (Office). The wooden doors between Office areas are 10 feet tall and bear Lazivos's seal in gold inlay.

Furniture. The desks, couches, and other furniture in the lair appear to be beautiful pieces of art; however, a character who inspects a piece of furniture more closely notices its frame is carved from Humanoid bones and the leather is Humanoid skin.

Illumination. The lair is magically illuminated by bright ambient lighting that shines down from the ceilings.

Partner's Key. A partner's key, found in several areas throughout ECAS, can unlock or lock any door in the lair.

ECAS Staff

Creatures who work for Lazivos react differently to the characters depending on their location.

The Office. The devils in the Office behave politely to all visitors who remain civil. They are happy to talk but offer no truly exploitable information about Lazivos or other employees, and they refuse to discuss any deal without the express permission of the clients involved.

If a fight breaks out, or if the devils catch the characters sneaking into the Agency or stealing, the devils attack, fighting until it becomes clear they may lose, then fleeing.

The Agency. Lazivos believes that any creature willing to breach his lair could be usefully employed—or would at least be interesting to interrogate. Unless otherwise noted, devils in areas I5 to I9 try to capture and imprison intruders. In areas I10, I11, and I12, the devils attack with lethal intent.

Captured Characters. Captured creatures are locked in the holding cells (area I8) to await the Clinician. Their equipment is stored in the guard station (area I5).

Captured Devils. Any devils the party captures are bound by infernal contract to Lazivos and can't answer questions in a way that endangers their employer. They can, however, offer up misinformation: fake details of guard posts, misleading details of patrols, a claim that Lazivos is cursed to fear fire, and so on.

Resting in ECAS

If the characters haven't fought any battles in the lair, they can take a short rest in areas I2 and I3. The party can also take a short or long rest in the interrogation clinic (area I9) after dealing with any enemies there. Otherwise, if the characters try to rest, there is a 50 percent chance a **devil jurist** and two **devil legates** interrupt them halfway through the rest.

Soul Mining

Lazivos has woven magic into several pieces of his lair that covertly leech information from the minds of visitors and intruders in a process called soul mining. Soul mining doesn't work on creatures who are immune to effects that read their thoughts, such as a creature affected by a *mind blank* spell.

Each time a creature is soul-mined, a piece of information is telepathically gleaned from their mind and transmitted to the archivists in the Vault of Leverage (area I11). Soul mining can also affect combat with Lazivos in his office (area I12).

The information stolen from the subject is one distinct, directly exploitable fact about them, such as a phobia, a flaw, a past mistake, or a vice. It should be something that would be damaging to the creature were it widely known, or otherwise useful leverage for Lazivos to have.

When a creature who is proficient in Arcana is soul-mined, they can make a DC 22 Intelligence (Arcana) check. On a success, they know their mind was just plundered for secrets, but not what those secrets were.

Entering ECAS

Lazivos has made deals with solicitors, banks, and other businesses across the timescape to grow his power. They gain success, he gains access to their clients. The buildings where these firms do business each hold a private consulting room, empty aside from a silver-framed painting of a handsome human—Lazivos depicted as if he were a human.

Should a desperate client need the very best service, the staff leads them through a simple bloodletting ritual to turn the painting into a portal to the foyer of ECAS (area I1). Any creature who passes through is covertly soul-mined (see "Soul Mining").

A creature in the Seven Cities of Hell can also find a public entrance to the foyer on the main street of each major metropolis. Simply opening the door leads to the foyer.

Eighth City Advocacy Services Areas

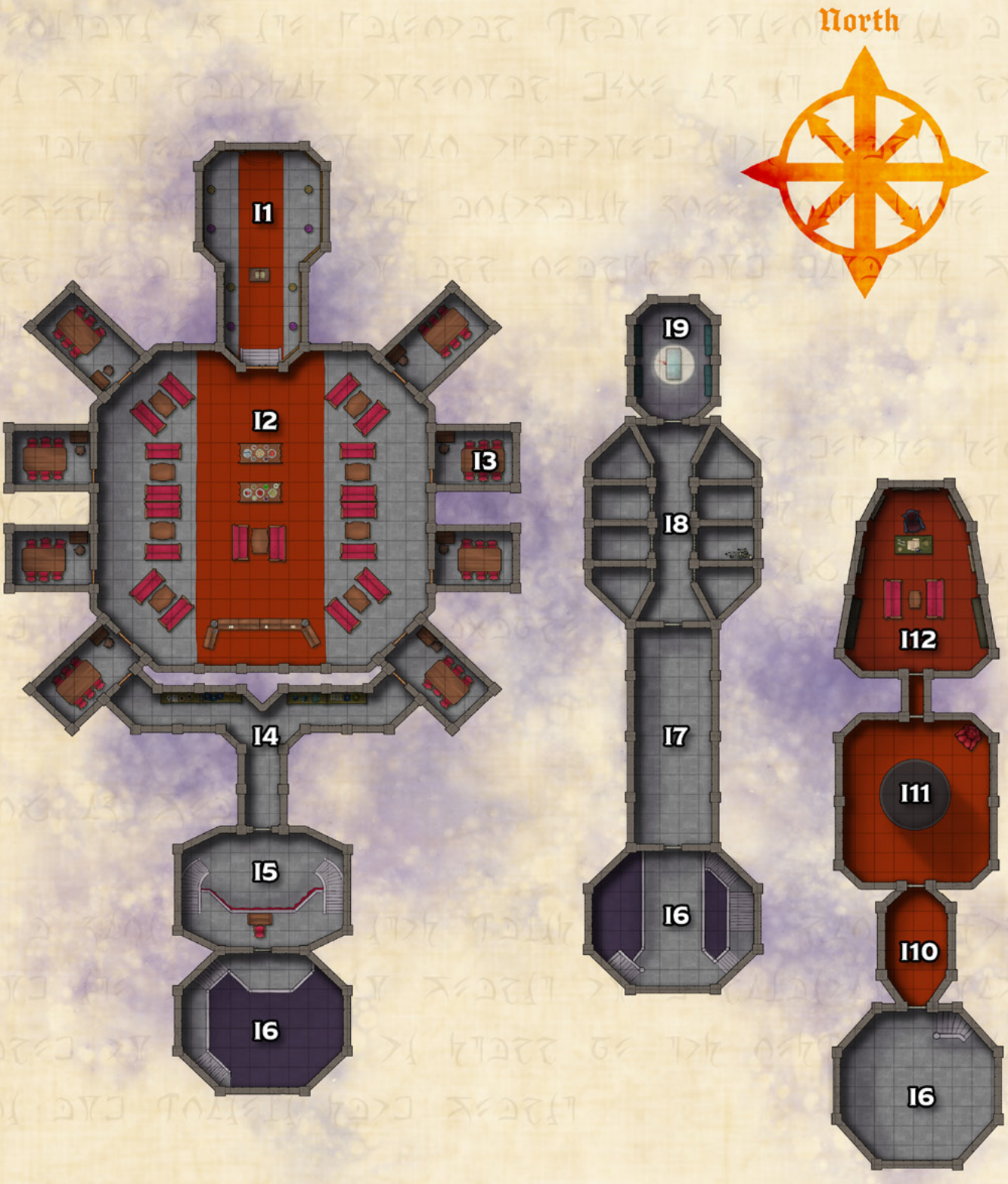
The following areas are keyed to the Eighth City Advocacy Services Map.

I1. Entrance Foyer

When a creature enters ECAS, they step out through a portal in a silver picture frame on the north wall. This space has a 30-foot-high ceiling and the following features:

- "Wood-paneled walls lined with tall vases of orange lilies and pink aconites end at a pair of large double doors with a motto carved above them in Infernal."
- *(If a character can read Infernal)* "The motto reads, 'Better the devil you know.'"
- "A plush carpet leads to a smartly dressed devil standing beside a desk in front of the doors."

Eighth City Advocacy Services Map



1 square = 5 feet

Portal. The portal in the foyer links back to whichever portal the creature last used to reach ECAS. If the creature didn't arrive at ECAS via the usual method, this portal brings them to a connected portal of their choice that they have seen before, or to a random portal of the GM's choice if the creature hasn't seen another portal connected to ECAS.

Flowers. A character who succeeds on a DC 17 Intelligence (History) check knows the floral selection is a warning, symbolizing a need for caution amid a background of contempt and hatred.

Signing In. Orecic (a **devil legate**) greets guests, answers questions, and makes sure visitors sign the ancient visitors' book—which soul-mines any creature who writes in it (see "Soul Mining"). A *detect magic* spell reveals the book's aura of divination magic.

Orecic insists the characters sign in, but a character can convince the devil the group doesn't need to sign in with a successful DC 17 Charisma (Intimidation) check. Characters who pretend to sign the book must succeed on a DC 17 Charisma (Deception) check to fool Orecic. If combat breaks out in this room, the four **devil legates** from reception (area I2) investigate.

The visitors' book is enchanted so that non-Devil creatures can't read its contents, but a creature who can read Infernal and succeeds on a DC 22 Intelligence (Arcana) check can read the names of past visitors who signed in. If the book is removed from ECAS, it bursts into flame and is destroyed.

I2. Reception

This room has a 30-foot-high ceiling and the following features:

- "The delicious scent of fresh tea and pastries wafts from a full buffet spread across two tables."
- "Two devils stand behind a large desk at the south end of the room."
- "Another four armored devils armed with long pikes stand at attention, overlooking the orderly chamber."

Buffet. The buffet's food and drinks are of the finest quality. A creature who consumes anything from the buffet gains 10 temporary hit points and is soul-mined (see "Soul Mining").

Reception Devils. Anyahx (a **devil jurist**) has a particular talent for administration and a brutal adherence to regulations. If the characters enter the room peacefully, she demands they wait in this area until a devil is free to speak with them. After 5 minutes, she introduces them to Thrubwell. If the characters are rude to Anyahx, she vindictively makes them wait longer.

Thrubwell (a **devil notary**) stands behind the desk, following Anyahx's directives. Once assigned to the characters, he leads them to one of the consulting chambers (area I3) for a consultation. If either Anyahx or Thrubwell think the characters are going to cause trouble, Thrubwell instead escorts them straight to the guard station (area I5) and into an ambush with the other devils there. Characters who succeed on a DC 18 Wisdom (Insight) check sense the devil is leading them into a trap.

Guards. Four **devil legates** stand at attention near the reception desk. The characters can sneak past the guards into the backroom corridor with a successful DC 17 group Dexterity (Stealth) check.

I3. Consulting Chambers

Each consulting chamber is a private, soundproof space the ECAS devils use to make deals with clients. This area has the following features:

- "This cozy stone room holds a conference table next to a smaller desk."
- *(If Thrubwell is with the characters)* "Thrubwell sits at the far side of the table and motions for you to sit as well."
- **(Secret)** A magic ward in the room compels non-Devil creatures to tell the truth.
- **(Secret)** An archivist in the Vault of Leverage (area I11) uses a permanent *clairvoyance* spell to observe the chamber.

Let's Make a Deal. If Thrubwell is with the characters, he explains that wards in the room ensure clients tell the truth so conversations can be frank. He then informs them that by attending a meeting with the devils of ECAS, the characters must promise to keep what they learn in this room private. If the characters don't agree to the terms or if they don't fail their saving throw against the chamber's zone of truth (see "Zone of Truth Effect"), he politely asks them to leave. If they do agree to the terms, Thrubwell goes on to offer a list of what ECAS can offer, including but not limited to the following goods or services (which you should modify as you see fit):

- The true name of a devil the party can use during a summoning
- A specific magic item of very rare or lesser rarity
- The assassination of a mortal who isn't a client or employee of ECAS
- An endowment of art, coins, gems, or other treasure worth up to 50,000 gp
- A piece of lost, hidden, or forbidden information or lore

Thrubwell explains that ECAS would want a similar service or goods from the characters in exchange. For instance, if the characters ask for a magic item, the devil might ask them to assassinate a mortal, to recover a shipping manifesto at the bottom of the sea, to find proof of a monarch's rumored extramarital affair, or to pay up to 50,000 gp for the item.

If requested, Thrubwell leaves the room to give the party space for private discussion. If the characters don't ultimately make a deal, he asks them to leave ECAS.

Zone of Truth Effect. Each consulting chamber is under a magical effect. Whenever a non-Devil creature enters one of these chambers, they must succeed on a DC 17 Charisma saving throw (which they can choose to fail) or be unable to speak a deliberate lie while they

remain in the room. The creature is aware of the effect on them and can be evasive or avoid answering questions. Any Devils in the room know if a creature succeeds on their saving throw against the effect.

Being Watched. The archivist watching the characters through a permanent *clairvoyance* spell listens in on their conversations and records salient information about the characters.

Soul Mining. If the characters spend at least 5 minutes in one of these chambers, they are soul-mined (see "Soul Mining").

Treasure. Thrubwell's desk contains pens, inks, a *potion of clairvoyance*, a partner's key (see "ECAS Features"), and a sack of salted human eyeballs he snacks on in private.

Devil
Jurist

14. Backroom Corridor

This corridor contains shelves stacked with tins of coffee, fruits, ink made from humanoid blood, pens, and other miscellany. If the characters consume any of the food, they are soul-mined (see "Soul Mining").

15. Guard Station

This area has the following features:

- "At the south end of the room, a studious devil works at a desk that sits atop a 15-foot-tall platform framed by thick red curtains."
- "Two armored guards stand at the bottom of the stairs that lead up to the desk."

Devils. Aemilios (a **devil jurist**) writes an hourly report for Lazivos in a ciphered script, while two **devil legates** stand guard. Aemilios politely asks the party to wait a moment while they write up a description of the party. The devil then offers a sincere apology for the delay before ordering the guards to attack. If combat breaks out before Aemilios orders the guards to attack, the devil takes no part in the first two rounds of combat, preferring to finish their report.

Treasure. The desk drawer contains a *feather token* (whip). Aemilios carries a partner's key (see "ECAS Features") and wears a necklace of gilded finger bones (worth 250 gp).

16. Staircase

This chamber is 100 feet tall and houses a staircase that connects each level of the lair. The three levels are 50 feet apart.

Security. A patrol of two **devil jurists** moves between the levels. The characters can avoid them with a successful DC 17 group Dexterity (Stealth) check. If alerted by the sounds of conflict at the guard station (area I5), the devils lie in wait above the door on the third level.

17. Information Retrieval Corridor

The corridor has the following features:

- "Three devils stand guard before a heavy metal door at the end of this long corridor."
- "Faint racking sobs emanate from behind the door."
- "Bloodstained spikes protrude from the ceiling."
- "A large lever protrudes from the north wall."
- (**Secret**) The lever activates a trap.

Guards. A **devil jurist** and two **devil legates** guard the door to the holding cells (area I8). When they notice intruders, the legates attack. The jurist hangs back near the lever and flips it once all the characters enter the room.

Reversed Gravity Trap. Creatures can use an action to pull down the lever on the north wall. When the lever is flipped, gravity reverses for each non-Devil creature in the room. Each non-Devil creature on the ground must succeed on a DC 17 Strength saving throw or take 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage plus 11 (2d10) piercing damage, and be restrained as they fall up into the ceiling spikes. A creature

restrained in this way takes 11 (2d10) piercing damage at the start of each of their turns. A creature who isn't restrained can pull a restrained creature within their reach free with a successful DC 17 Strength (Athletics) check made as an action. A creature can turn off the trap by pulling the lever back up as an action, freeing any creatures restrained by the reversed gravity, who then fall 15 feet to the floor, taking 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage and landing prone.

I8. Holding Cells

This area has the following features:

- "Eight cells with portcullis doors line the walls of this dungeon."
- "The only prisoner, an old hag with a gaping chest wound, sobs uncontrollably in her cage."
- (**Secret**) A minuscule black gem set into the ceiling creates an aura of hopelessness.

Aura of Hopelessness. This chamber is bathed in a magic aura of hopelessness so strong that inmates look forward to their interrogations. While the aura is active, non-Devil creatures must make a DC 15 Charisma saving throw at the end of each minute they spend in this area. On a failed save, the creature's overall level of sadness increases and they gain 1 melancholy (to a maximum of 4). Whenever a character makes an ability check, attack roll, or saving throw, they subtract their melancholy from the result.

If a creature who has melancholy leaves this area or if the gem creating the aura is destroyed, they lose 1 melancholy at the end of each hour. A *cure ailment* power of 4th order or higher or a *greater restoration* spell removes all a creature's melancholy.

Gem of Hopelessness. A creature who succeeds on a DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check notices the gem in the ceiling. A *detect magic* spell reveals the gem's aura of enchantment magic. A character who examines the gem and succeeds on a DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check identifies it as the source of the aura of hopelessness.

The gem (AC 21, 50 hit points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage) becomes mundane if targeted by a *dispel magic* spell, ending the aura of hopelessness. If a creature who can reach the gem uses an action to try to remove it from the ceiling, the gem is destroyed.

If the gem is destroyed before being rendered mundane, it releases a burst of psychic energy. Each creature within 30 feet of it must make a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw, taking 33 (6d10) psychic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Cells. The cell bars are made from stygian steel and each requires a successful DC 25 Strength check to bend. A Small or smaller creature can escape after a single bar is bent. A Medium creature requires two bent bars to squeeze through, and a Large creature requires three bent bars. Otherwise, the cells can be opened like Agency doors (see "ECAS Features").

Sasha Darkdream. Sasha Darkdream, a **night hag** with 4 melancholy, has been imprisoned for longer than she can recall and still doesn't know why. Her heart has been cut out, leaving a ragged hole in her chest, but the devils have performed a ritual to keep her alive without it. Sasha bargains with the characters, promising to assist and reward them (see "Treasure") if they return her heart, which she knows is kept in the interrogation clinic (area I9). If the characters return her heart and free her, she accompanies them through the rest of the lair, hoping to reach the Vault of Leverage (area I11) and discover why she has been imprisoned.

Treasure. If the characters free Sasha, she vomits up an *Ioun stone* (protection) that she swallowed when imprisoned and gives it to them as thanks for freeing her.

I9. Interrogation Clinic

The door to this chamber is unlocked. It is filled with dim light, except for a 10-foot-diameter, 15-foot-high cylinder of bright light around the operating table. This area has the following features:

- "A bright beam of light surrounds a well-maintained operating table and an expansive set of torture tools."
- "Two tall cabinets stand behind the table."
- "A white-robed devil wipes a single drop of blood from the table. Two glowing eyes burn in the void of her face as four more devils in bloody aprons step into the light."

Devils. The Clinician (a **devil magistrate**) is Lazivos's dedicated information retrieval specialist. Obsessed with order, she takes pride in the efficiency of her interrogations and the cleanliness of her workplace, and enjoys violence. Her assistants, four **devil notaries**, join her in combat.

Treasure. The cabinets contain collections of Humanoid teeth and organs, Sasha Darkdream's heart (see area I8), a *vicious weapon* (dagger), and silver torture tools (worth 500 gp). The Clinician carries a partner's key (see "ECAS Features").

I10. Management Corridor

The corridor has the following features:

- "A single iron door stands at the north end of this corridor, bearing a golden plaque that reads 'Restricted Area.'"
- (**Secret**) The north door is magically warded.

Warded Door. The door to the Vault of Leverage (area I11) magically and silently alerts Lazivos if a non-Devil creature moves through it. A creature who succeeds on a DC 20 Intelligence (Investigation) check notices the faint outline of a magic sigil on the door. The *detect magic* spell reveals the sigil's aura of abjuration magic. A creature who examines the sigil and succeeds on a DC 20 Intelligence (Arcana) check understands the ward's nature. A *dispel magic* spell removes the ward and sigil from the door without alerting Lazivos.

I11. Vault of Leverage

This area has a 40-foot-high ceiling and the following features:

- "Sitting in a chair made of plastinated muscle, a devil in noble attire whispers with a floating, shadowy specter."
- "An ominous black cylinder runs through the center of this chamber."

Deal with a Devil. Akistos (a **devil adjudicator**) is in charge of keeping the information in the vault secure. Lazivos ordered the devil to look into the intruders, and if any character has been subjected to soul mining, Akistos is looking through the information the vault contains about them when the party arrives.

If Akistos notices the characters, he approaches them with a deal. He hates Lazivos, but Akistos's contract prevents him from taking direct action against his superior. But if the characters have come to kill Lazivos, Akistos wants to help them. If the characters agree, Akistos explains how to retrieve information from the vault. If the characters don't take his deal, Akistos attacks, as the characters are now a liability who could tell Lazivos about his betrayal.

Archivists. Five **wraiths** are what remains of wizards who died while owing Lazivos a debt. Only one archivist leaves the vault at a time to attend Lazivos, but if a creature damages the vault, they all emerge and defend it to the death.

Vault. The black iron cylinder in the center of the room is only part of the true vault. Within is an incomprehensible mass of filing cabinets, scrying tools, and the wraiths that operate both. The interior is inaccessible to corporeal beings and actively hostile to life.

Any creature who sits in the plastinated muscle chair can request information from the attending wraith. If the requested information is available and known to Lazivos, the wraith enters the vault to locate the file then returns to relay the contents in terrible whispers.

- A character can request Lazivos's true name, but must make a DC 20 Charisma (Persuasion) check to convince the wraith to look up any information about the devil. On a success, the wraith returns with a fake true name of Lazivos, "Velott Llicame." A character who succeeds on a DC 20 Wisdom (Insight) check knows this must be a fake name implanted by Lazivos.
- A character can make a subtler request to obtain Lazivos's genuine true name. If they ask the wraith for Lazivos's biggest secret or the thing the devil most wants to keep hidden and succeed on a DC 20 Charisma (Persuasion) check, the wraith returns with Lazivos's true name, "Minto Abi."
- If a character asks for information about Sasha Darkdream (see area I8), the wraith tells them her internment was paid for by Pulmonia Spittlesand, a rival night hag. If Sasha learns this, she betrays the party to Lazivos at the first opportunity, hoping to buy revenge on her rival.
- The characters can find other information related to your campaign at your discretion.

I12. Chancellor's Office

This area has a 60-foot-high ceiling and the following features:

- "Two couches and a set of closed cabinets stand before an intimidating desk where a regal devil sits."
- "The scent of spiced incense permeates this room, whose walls are lined with huge paintings."
- *(If any character was subjected to soul mining)* "The paintings depict scenes from your worst moments in life."
- (**Secret**) The carpet is soaked with flammable oil.

Lazivos. When the characters enter, **Infernal Chancellor Lazivos** is reviewing any information he has soul-mined from them. The room appears ready for a meeting, but the devil has prepared himself and the space for combat. Lazivos is impressed the characters have made it this far, and earnestly offers them the opportunity to work for him, gathering information by any means necessary and assassinating his enemies. If the characters take him up on this offer, the terms of the deal are yours to negotiate, but Lazivos expects the characters to commit evil acts in exchange for his seemingly endless supply of influential contacts, coin, and magic items. At your discretion, Lazivos can also offer to kill rivals, resurrect loved ones, or do anything else within his power, exploiting what he has learned about the characters to convince them to make a deal.

If the characters speak his true name or are unwilling to deal with the devil, Lazivos attacks. When combat breaks out, Lazivos summons a **devil magistrate** and eight **devil notaries** to his side (no action required).

When Lazivos is reduced to 75 hit points or fewer, he flees.

Painting. Each character who was soul-mined (see "Soul Mining") has a painting hanging on the wall depicting one of their worst or most shameful moments. Ask the player of each soul-mined character to choose and describe what their painting represents. A *detect magic* spell reveals each painting's auras of enchantment and evocation magic.

During combat, on initiative count 20 each round, each painting of a soul-mined character in the room fires a beam of negative energy at that character. The character must make a DC 20 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save, whenever the character makes an attack roll or a saving throw before initiative count 20 on the next round, they must roll a d4 and subtract the number rolled from the attack roll or saving throw.

Targeting a painting with a *dispel magic* spell renders it mundane, if no less mortifying. Each painting has AC 13, 18 hit points, and immunity to fire, poison, and psychic

damage. When a painting is destroyed, it explodes in a burst of fire and each creature within 5 feet of it takes 10 (3d6) fire damage.

Carpet. A character who succeeds on a DC 22 Wisdom (Perception) check or who touches the floor with exposed flesh (for example, walking into the room barefoot) realizes the carpet is soaked with oil. If the carpet takes any fire damage, it burns for 1 minute. A creature who starts their turn touching the burning floor must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw, taking 10 (3d6) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Treasure. Lazivos carries a partner's key (see "ECAS Features"). Lazivos's desk and cabinets contain his hoard (see "Lazivos's Hoard").

Lazivos's Hoard

The chancellor's office (area I12) contains Lazivos's hoard, which consists of the following items:

- *Hat of disguise*
- *The Closing Argument* (see below)
- 5 arrows of *+2 ammunition*
- *Potion of superior healing*
- *Potion of supreme healing*
- *Spell scroll* of *animate objects*
- *Spell scroll* of *modify memory*
- Deed to Addlecove Castle (see below)
- Animated electrum letter opener (worth 900 gp)
- 13 bottles of vintage celestial wine (worth 1,000 gp each)
- The carved skull of St. Naram-Sur (worth 800 gp)
- Dragon bone bracelet set with rubies (worth 650 gp)
- Pouch of diamond powder (worth 1,000 gp)
- Signet ring of a lost noble family (worth 150 gp)
- Suit of infernal ceremonial plate armor inlaid with gold and rubies (worth 2,000 gp)
- Tarnished broken angel's harp (worth 20 gp)
- 1 cp, 33,333 sp, 6,666 gp, and 1,248 pp

Deed to Addlecove Castle

Submerged amid a sea of legal terms on this scroll of human skin, this deed declares that the bearer of this document is the rightful Lord of Addlecove Castle. An ancient fortress, Addlecove Castle has sat abandoned and haunted since Emperor Gaius VIII murdered the last Lord Addlecove.

The Closing Argument

Wondrous Item, Very Rare

This golden archangel's feather exudes gravitas. The feather can be used as a quill that never runs out of bloodred ink.

While you hold the quill, you have advantage on ability checks made to create and interpret contracts, deeds, and other official documentation, and you have advantage on ability checks made to conduct a legal dispute or negotiation.

Additionally, when a creature (including you) uses *The Closing Argument* to sign a contract or other legal document, they can't willingly break the terms of the contract while the document exists. This effect can't control the actions of any creature who didn't sign the contract, nor can it empower a signatory to perform impossible actions. When this quill is used to sign a legal document, it supplies ink for 5 minutes (allowing more than one creature to sign), then the ink ceases to flow and no creature can use it to sign a document until a month has passed.

The Closing Argument

You say it's "just a signature." My good sir, what you believe is a mere scribble is actually your very soul on these pages. This ink is your blood. It is your bond. Try as you might, it will not break. Your choice has already been made. Not even dishonor can reverse it.

Infernal Chancellor Lazivos

ECAS Stat Blocks

The following stat blocks appear in the lair.

Devil Adjudicator

CR 14 Controller

Medium Fiend (Devil), Typically Lawful Evil — 11,500 XP

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)
Hit Points 204 (24d8 + 96)
Speed 30 ft., fly 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	16 (+3)	18 (+4)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	20 (+5)

Saving Throws Con +9, Wis +7, Cha +10
Skills Deception +10, Insight +7, Perception +7, Persuasion +10, Religion +8
Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from mundane attacks
Damage Immunities fire
Condition Immunities charmed, frightened
Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 17
Languages Common, Infernal
Proficiency Bonus +5

True Name. If a creature the adjudicator can hear within 60 feet of them speaks the adjudicator's true name aloud, the adjudicator loses their damage resistances, damage immunities, and Devilish Charm reaction for 24 hours.

Actions

Multiattack. The adjudicator makes two Infernal Injunction attacks and uses Adjudicator's Interdiction, if available.

Infernal Injunction. *Melee or Ranged Spell Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 27 (5d8 + 5) fire damage, and the target must make a DC 18 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, the adjudicator chooses for the target to become either charmed by or frightened of them until the end of the target's next turn.

Adjudicator's Interdiction (Recharge 5–6). The adjudicator places an infernal seal on one creature they can see within 120 feet of them. The target must succeed on a DC 18 Charisma saving throw or be interdicted until the adjudicator dies. While interdicted, a creature's speed is halved, they can't take reactions, and they can't regain hit points. A *cure ailment* power, a *lesser restoration* or *remove curse* spell, or a similar supernatural effect ends the effect early.

Bad Deal (1/Day). Three creatures the adjudicator can see within 60 feet of them must make a DC 18 Charisma saving throw. On a failed save, a target must choose to either take a –5 penalty to AC or a –5 penalty to ability checks and attack rolls. This penalty lasts for 10 minutes (save ends at end of turn).

Reactions

Devilish Charm (2/Day). When the adjudicator is targeted by an attack, power, spell, or other supernatural effect by a creature they can see within 60 feet of them, the creature must make a DC 18 Charisma saving throw. On a failed save, the creature is charmed by the adjudicator until the start of the creature's next turn, and the adjudicator chooses a new target the adjudicator can see for the triggering effect. The new target must be within the triggering effect's range.

Devil Jurist

CR 10 Artillery

Medium Fiend (Devil), Typically Lawful Evil — 5,900 XP

Armor Class 16 (studded leather)
Hit Points 156 (24d8 + 48)
Speed 30 ft., fly 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	18 (+4)	15 (+2)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	19 (+4)

Saving Throws Int +7, Wis +6, Cha +8
Skills Arcana +7, Deception +8, Perception +6, Persuasion +8
Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from mundane attacks
Damage Immunities fire
Condition Immunities charmed
Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 16
Languages Common, Infernal
Proficiency Bonus +4

Hellfire. Fire damage dealt by the jurist ignores damage resistance.

True Name. If a creature the jurist can hear within 60 feet of them speaks the jurist's true name aloud, the jurist loses their damage resistances, damage immunities, and Devilish Charm reaction for 24 hours.

Actions

Multiattack. The jurist makes two Fire and Brimstone attacks.

Fire and Brimstone. *Melee or Ranged Spell Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 17 (3d8 + 4) fire damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 16 Constitution saving throw or gain one festering wound. A creature takes 4 (1d8) fire damage at the start of each of their turns for each festering wound they have. A creature who receives supernatural healing loses all festering wounds.

Inferno (Recharge 5–6). The jurist makes one Fire and Brimstone attack against each enemy they can see within 60 feet of them.

Bonus Actions

Ashes to Ashes. The jurist chooses a creature they can see within 120 feet of them who has one or more festering wounds. One of the target's wounds ignites and they take 9 (2d8) fire damage.

Reactions

Devilish Charm (1/Day). When the jurist is targeted by an attack, power, spell, or other supernatural effect by a creature they can see within 60 feet of them, the creature must make a DC 16 Charisma saving throw. On a failed save, the creature is charmed by the jurist until the start of the creature's next turn, and the jurist chooses a new target the jurist can see for the triggering effect. The new target must be within the triggering effect's range.

Devil Legate

CR 8 Soldier

Medium Fiend (Devil), Typically Lawful Evil — 3,900 XP

Armor Class 17 (half plate)
Hit Points 127 (15d8 + 60)
Speed 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws Str +7, Wis +5, Cha +7
Skills Athletics +7, Deception +7, Persuasion +7
Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from mundane attacks
Damage Immunities fire
Condition Immunities charmed
Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 12
Languages Common, Infernal
Proficiency Bonus +3

Hellish Resistance. While in Hell or within 60 feet of a devil with a challenge rating of 9 or higher, the legate has advantage on saving throws against powers, spells, and other supernatural effects.

True Name. If a creature the legate can hear within 60 feet of them speaks the legate's true name aloud, the legate loses their damage resistances, damage immunities, and Devilish Charm reaction for 24 hours.

Actions

Multiattack. The legate makes two Infernal Pike attacks.

Infernal Pike. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d10 + 4) piercing damage plus 11 (2d10) fire damage, and the legate chooses one of the following effects:

Focused Hate. The target has disadvantage on attack rolls made against creatures other than the legate until the end of the legate's next turn.
Hellbite. The target takes an extra 5 (2d4) fire damage.
Skewer. The legate deals 5 (1d10) piercing damage plus 5 (1d10) fire damage to another creature within 5 feet of the target.

Reactions

Devilish Charm (1/Day). When the legate is targeted by an attack, power, spell, or other supernatural effect by a creature they can see within 60 feet of them, the creature must make a DC 15 Charisma saving throw. On a failed save, the creature is charmed by the legate until the start of the creature's next turn, and the legate chooses a new target the legate can see for the triggering effect. The new target must be within the triggering effect's range.

Devil Magistrate

CR 12 Skirmisher

Medium Fiend (Devil), Typically Lawful Evil — 8,400 XP

Armor Class 18 (studded leather)
Hit Points 182 (28d8 + 56)
Speed 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	22 (+6)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	16 (+3)	19 (+4)

Saving Throws Dex +10, Wis +7, Cha +8
Skills Acrobatics +10, Deception +8, Insight +7, Persuasion +8, Stealth +10
Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from mundane attacks
Damage Immunities fire
Condition Immunities charmed
Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 13
Languages Common, Infernal
Proficiency Bonus +4

True Name. If a creature the magistrate can hear within 60 feet of them speaks the magistrate's true name aloud, the magistrate loses their damage resistances, damage immunities, and Devilish Charm reaction for 24 hours.

Actions

Multiattack. The magistrate makes two Infernal Knife attacks and one Obsidian Kris attack.

Infernal Knife. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (2d8 + 6) piercing damage plus 9 (2d8) fire damage, and the target is frightened of their allies until the end of their next turn.

Obsidian Kris. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (2d8 + 6) piercing damage, and if the target is frightened, they can't take reactions until the frightened condition ends for them.

Reactions

Devilish Charm (2/Day). When the magistrate is targeted by an attack, power, spell, or other supernatural effect by a creature they can see within 60 feet of them, the creature must make a DC 16 Charisma saving throw. On a failed save, the creature is charmed by the magistrate until the start of the creature's next turn, and the magistrate chooses a new target the magistrate can see for the triggering effect. The new target must be within the triggering effect's range.

Devil Notary

CR 6 Minion

Medium Fiend (Devil), Typically Lawful Evil — 285 XP

Armor Class 15 (chain shirt)
Hit Points 13
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	15 (+2)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)

Damage Immunities fire
Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 12
Languages Common, Infernal
Proficiency Bonus +3

Importunity. At the start of the notary's turn, they can grant an infernal blessing to a non-minion ally they can see within 60 feet of them (no action required). The next time that ally makes an attack roll or saving throw before the start of the notary's next turn, the ally can add a +1 bonus to the roll. This bonus increases by 1 (maximum bonus of +5) for each notary who grants an infernal blessing to the creature.

Minion. If the notary takes damage from an attack or as the result of a failed saving throw, their hit points are reduced to 0. If the notary takes damage from another effect, they die if the damage equals or exceeds their hit point maximum; otherwise they take no damage.

True Name. If a creature the notary can hear within 60 feet of them speaks the notary's true name aloud, the notary loses their damage immunities and Importunity trait for 24 hours.

Actions

Brimstone (Group Attack). *Melee or Ranged Spell Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 30 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 fire damage.

Devil Notary

Infernal Chancellor Lazivos

CR 16 Leader
15,000 XP

Medium Fiend (Devil), Lawful Evil

Armor Class 19 (natural armor)
Hit Points 238 (28d8 + 112)
Speed 40 ft., fly 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	20 (+5)	18 (+4)	19 (+4)	18 (+4)	24 (+7)

Saving Throws Dex +10, Int +9, Wis +9, Cha +12
Skills Arcana +9, Deception +12, Insight +9, Perception +9, Persuasion +12, Religion +9
Damage Resistances psychic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from mundane attacks
Damage Immunities fire
Condition Immunities charmed, dazed, exhaustion, flanked, frightened, paralyzed, stunned
Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 19
Languages Common, Infernal
Proficiency Bonus +5

Security for Speed (3/Day). When Lazivos fails a saving throw, he can succeed instead. When he does, his speed is halved and he can't take bonus actions or reactions until the end of his next turn.

Supernatural Resistance. Lazivos has advantage on saving throws against powers, spells, and other supernatural effects.

True Name. If a creature Lazivos can hear within 60 feet of him speaks his true name aloud, Lazivos loses his damage resistances, damage immunities, and Devilish Charm reaction for 24 hours. Lazivos's true name is Minto Abi.

Actions

Multiattack. Lazivos makes three attacks using Infernal Rapier, Chancellor's Decree, or both.

Infernal Rapier. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d8 + 5) piercing damage plus 9 (2d8) fire damage, and the target is marked with an infernal sigil until the end of their next turn. While marked, a creature can't hide or benefit from being invisible, and attack rolls against them have advantage.

Chancellor's Decree. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +12 to hit, range 120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 18 (2d10 + 7) psychic damage, and the target must make a DC 20 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, the target is charmed by Lazivos until the end of his next turn or until Lazivos or one of his allies harms the target.

Diabolic Deposition (Recharge 5–6). Lazivos commands the attention of each enemy within 30 feet of him who can hear him. Each target must make a DC 20 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, a creature must choose to either take 27 (6d8) fire damage plus 27 (6d8) psychic damage or be dazed for 1 minute (save ends at end of turn). On a successful save, a creature must either choose to take half as much damage or be dazed until the end of their next turn. Succeed or fail, if a creature is already dazed, they must choose the damage

Bonus Actions

As I Say. Lazivos commands a creature charmed by him to use their reaction, if available, to make a weapon attack against a target of his choice.

Reactions

Devilish Charm. When Lazivos is targeted by an attack, power, spell, or other supernatural effect by a creature he can see within 60 feet of him, the creature must make a DC 20 Charisma saving throw. On a failed save, the creature is charmed by Lazivos until the start of the creature's next turn, and Lazivos chooses a new target he can see for the triggering effect. The new target must be within the triggering effect's range.

Villain Actions

Lazivos has three villain actions. He can take each action once during an encounter after an enemy's turn. He can take these actions in any order but can use only one per round.

Action 1: Welcome, Friends. Lazivos invokes an infernal word of power. Up to three enemies within 60 feet of him who can hear him must make a DC 20 Charisma saving throw. On a failed save, a target is charmed by Lazivos for 1 hour (save ends at end of turn) or until Lazivos or one of his allies harms the target. On a successful save, a target takes 16 (3d10) psychic damage.

Action 2: Heed My Commands! Lazivos and each ally within 60 feet of him moves up to their speed without provoking opportunity attacks. Each creature charmed by Lazivos moves up to half their speed in a direction he chooses (no action required).

Action 3: Deceptive Stratagem. Lazivos switches places with a willing creature of his choice within 120 feet of him. Immediately afterward, up to five creatures of Lazivos's choice within 120 feet of him can make a melee attack (no action required).

"It's all there in black and white." Infernal Chancellor Lazivos holds out a contract, offering the deal of a lifetime.

Night Hag

CR 5 Controller

Medium Fey, Typically Neutral Evil — 1,800 XP

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)
Hit Points 97 (13d8 + 39)
Speed 30 ft., fly 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	18 (+4)	16 (+3)	16 (+3)	17 (+3)	19 (+4)

Skills Deception +10, Insight +6, Perception +6, Stealth +7 (+17 with *pass without trace*)
Damage Resistances fire, necrotic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from mundane attacks
Condition Immunities charmed
Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 16
Languages Common, Infernal, Sylvan
Proficiency Bonus +3

Supernatural Resistance. The hag has advantage on saving throws against powers, spells, and other supernatural effects.

Actions

Multiattack. The hag makes two Dream Claw attacks.

Dream Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d10 + 4) slashing damage plus 3 (1d6) psychic damage. If a target is hit by this attack more than once on a turn, they must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the target falls unconscious for 1 minute (save ends at end of turn), until the target takes damage, or until another creature who can reach the target uses their action to wake them. Creatures who can't be supernaturally put to sleep automatically succeed on this saving throw.

Vicious Visions (1/Day; 6th-Level Spell). The hag releases magic dream dust in a 60-foot cone. Each creature must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or be charmed for 1 minute or until they deal damage to another creature. While charmed, the creature sees all allies as enemies and all enemies as allies.

Tiny Time. The hag magically shrinks down to a height of 1 inch, becoming Tiny along with any items they wear or carry. While Tiny, the hag has advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks made to hide, and they can use a bonus action to enter the head of an unconscious Humanoid they can reach or to grow back to the hag's normal size. The hag's game statistics otherwise remain the same.

While the hag is inside a Humanoid's head, that Humanoid is considered haunted by the hag, and the hag has total cover against attacks and other effects outside the head. The hag can speak telepathically to the haunted Humanoid, but the Humanoid is unaware of the source of this telepathic speech. The haunted Humanoid can't gain any benefit from rest unless the hag allows it, and when the Humanoid attempts to sleep, the hag can fill the Humanoid's mind with nightmarish visions.

The hag is expelled from the head and grows back to their normal size if the haunted Humanoid is affected by a *dispel evil and good* spell or similar supernatural effects, or if the hag chooses to exit the head as a bonus action.

Bonus Actions

Sleepwalk. The hag moves one unconscious creature they can see within 60 feet of them up to 30 feet horizontally.

Reactions

Aren't You Tired? When a creature within 5 feet of the hag hits them with an attack, the hag spits sleep dust at the attacker. The attacker must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, until the end of the hag's next turn, the attacker feels tremendously sleepy, they can't take reactions, and they have disadvantage on attack rolls and saving throws. Creatures who can't be supernaturally put to sleep are immune to this effect.

Utility Spells

In addition to any other spells in this stat block, the hag can cast the following spells, using Charisma as the spellcasting ability (spell save DC 15):

At will: *alter self*[A], *detect magic*[A], *pass without trace*[A]
3/day each: *dream*[+], *legend lore*[+], *mirage arcane*[+]
1/day: *scrying*[+]

I don't know why I'm in this damned place ... Yes, yes. I know that was a pun. Who cares? Get me my heart, and I'll reward you. I'll be extra impressed if you bring me the eyes of the devil guarding it. I need a snack.

Sasha Darkdream

Night Hag in a Coven

A night hag in a coven gains the following action option.

Phantoms Abound (Recharge 5–6). The hag fills the area around them with illusions of their enemies' worst fears. Each enemy within 30 feet of the hag must make a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, a target takes 22 (5d8) psychic damage, falls prone, and if the hag is within 5 feet of the target, the hag can make a Dream Claw attack against them. On a successful save, a target takes half as much damage, doesn't fall prone, and the hag doesn't attack them.

Specter

CR 1 Skirmisher

Medium Undead (Incorporeal), Typically Chaotic Evil 200 XP

Armor Class 11
Hit Points 19 (3d8 + 6)
Speed 0 ft., fly 50 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
1 (–5)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	15 (+2)

Damage Resistance acid, cold, fire, lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from mundane attacks
Damage Immunities necrotic, poison
Condition Immunities charmed, dazed, exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained, unconscious
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10
Languages the languages they knew in life
Proficiency Bonus +2

Corrupting Phasing. The specter can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. The specter takes 5 (1d10) force damage if they end their turn inside an object. A creature takes 2 (1d4) necrotic damage the first time a specter passes through them on a turn.

Actions

Decaying Touch. *Melee Spell Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 7 (2d6) necrotic damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or spend 1 Hit Die without any benefit. If the target has no Hit Dice to spend, they drop to 0 hit points instead.

If a Humanoid dies within 1 minute of being hit by this attack, their spirit rises as a **specter** under the GM's control in an unoccupied space nearest to where that Humanoid died.

Bonus Actions

Hidden Movement (Recharge 5–6). The specter turns invisible and then moves up to their speed. At the end of this movement, the invisibility ends.

Wraith

CR 5 Controller

Medium Undead (Incorporeal), Typically Chaotic Evil 1,800 XP

Armor Class 12
Hit Points 58 (9d8 + 18)
Speed 0 ft., fly 60 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6 (–2)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	17 (+3)

Damage Resistance acid, cold, fire, lightning, necrotic, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from mundane attacks
Damage Immunities poison, psychic
Condition Immunities charmed, dazed, exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained, unconscious
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12
Languages the languages they knew in life
Proficiency Bonus +3

Agonizing Phasing. The wraith can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. The wraith takes 5 (1d10) force damage if they end their turn inside an object. A creature takes 5 (1d10) psychic damage the first time a wraith passes through them on a turn.

Throes of Oblivion. When the wraith dies, they collapse inward, creating a burst of painful psychic energy. Each creature within 20 feet of the wraith must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw, taking 18 (4d8) psychic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Actions

Agonizing Touch. *Melee Spell Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 14 (4d6) psychic damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw or be dazed (save ends at end of turn). Each time a target dazed in this way fails a saving throw to end the condition, their hit point maximum is halved. This effect is cumulative, and the reduction lasts until the target finishes a short or long rest.

If a Humanoid dies within 1 minute of being hit by this attack, their spirit rises as a **specter** under the wraith's control in an unoccupied space nearest to where that Humanoid died.

Psychic Enervation. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +6 to hit, range 60 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 10 (3d6) psychic damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw or fall prone and be frightened of the wraith for 1 minute (save ends at end of turn). While frightened in this way, the target can't stand up.

Reactions

Denied Vitality. When a creature who the wraith can see within 30 feet of them regains hit points, the wraith can attempt to sap the life energy restoring the creature. The creature must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or only regain half the number of hit points they otherwise would regain.

Shadowkeep

Optimized for Five 13th-Level Characters

Content Warning: Suffocation

The koptourok steals the breath of their victims. If you or any of your players find descriptions of suffocation upsetting, you may want to avoid using this creature or reflavor their abilities.

After falling to a vampiric curse in his early twenties, Count Rhodar—the last Lord of Glauer—ruled his tiny, heavily forested mountainous county in eastern Rhöl for three hundred years. There were worse overlords, the people said. After all, Rhodar took his pact with the people and the land seriously. He aggressively defended the villages in his demesne against constant incursions from rival counts and barons. He believed his power waxed and waned with the prosperity of the people and the vitality of the land.

Each new moon, when the Red Tax came due, the count would visit a young candidate, then emerge with renewed vitality. Across the land, folk feared their Dragon Count, but the witches of the wood wove a prophecy: "The land's darkest hour shall be the redemption of House von Glauer."

Eventually, the conquering force of Emperor Gaius VIII came for Rhodar—not because he was a vampire, but because the empire wanted his land and people. Count von Glauer was staked, and his body burned to ash. The emperor kept the Rod of Count Rhodar von Glauer as a trophy, and with this symbol of authority, he sealed his claim to the land.

Under new rule, Rhodar's people lament the absence of their lord, recalling the time before the coming of the empire as a golden age. But the witches' whispers can still be heard. For as long as the people of Glauer persist, they continue believing their Dragon Count will return in their darkest hour to deliver them from tyranny. They're right. The vampire lord is biding his time, plotting his inevitable return to power.

Atop the mountain of Drachen's Peak, Count Rhodar von Glauer lairs in Shadowkeep, a fortress infused with infernal magic. The vampire lord received the keep in a bargain struck when he sacrificed an ancient dragon to an archdevil. Undead lurk within Shadowkeep's desecrated halls, while a contingent of vampires plan a war to free Rhöl from imperial tyranny.

Shadowkeep Origins

Rhodar was gifted Shadowkeep after sacrificing the fiery heart of the dragon Wyraxain to an archdevil. We've left the archdevil unnamed so you can use one that fits your campaign setting. If you need an archdevil, we suggest using Infernal Chancellor Lazivos from this book or a member of the Court of Seven Cities from *Kingdoms & Warfare*.

Shadowkeep Story Hooks

You can use one of the following story hooks to integrate this lair into an adventure:

Cursed Carriage. An alarming number of villagers have been disappearing at night, and multiple witnesses claim the victims were lured into a carriage driven by a headless coachman. After the characters hear these tales, the same coach approaches them on the road at night. Boarding or following it leads them to Shadowkeep.

Dragon's Grudge. Vizfrilkat, a descendant of Wyraxain, seeks revenge for their ancestor, but the magic of Shadowkeep prevents the dragon from entering the region. Vizfrilkat promises the characters a *+3 weapon* of their choice in exchange for putting down Rhodar once and for all.

Missing Mercenaries. Renowned local adventurers Zendra and Ravlen (see areas V1 and V3) went into Shadowkeep and never returned. Mundila Wulf, the human mayor of a nearby town, is concerned about their disappearance, as the duo has been protecting the region from monsters for a long time. Mundila offers the characters a *+3 shield* if they can find out what happened to the adventurers.

Shadowkeep Features

Unless otherwise noted, each area of Shadowkeep has the following features:

Built for Vampires. Shadowkeep was created around the vampiric traits of climbing and flying; certain locations and traps are purpose-built as obstacles for creatures without those speeds.

Ceilings. The ceilings are 30 feet high, aside from those in the underground tunnels and the mausoleum (area V8), which are 10 feet high.

Devil's Influence. Rhodar named the infernal power infusing Shadowkeep "the Devil's Influence." This power causes unexplainable magical events inside the fortress. Only a *wish* spell or permanently destroying Rhodar can remove the Devil's Influence from Shadowkeep.

Illumination. The Devil's Influence manifests accursed black clouds, shrouding the summit of Drachen's Peak from the sun. In addition, Shadowkeep's interior and exterior walls exude eerie bloodred light, filling all areas with dim light.

Pipe Organ. The pipe organ in the occult sanctum (area V6) plays ominous gothic music throughout the fortress due to the Devil's Influence. A creature who isn't Undead inside Shadowkeep has disadvantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing.

Secret Doors and Trapdoors. Each Undead knows the location of the secret doors and trapdoors in Shadowkeep. A creature who has a passive Wisdom (Perception) score of 20 or higher spots the outline of these secret entrances, as does a creature who searches the area and succeeds on a DC 20 Intelligence (Investigation) check.

Walls. A creature without a climbing speed or climbing equipment can climb Shadowkeep's walls with a successful DC 17 Strength (Athletics) check.

Shadowkeep's Undead

Shadowkeep's vampires and other corporeal undead are seasoned warriors. If they are losing a fight, they retreat to find reinforcements before leading a counterattack against their enemies. When cornered, these undead fight until destroyed.

Spectral undead haunt the mausoleum, using their Incorporeal Movement trait to ambush creatures who foolishly disturb their resting place. These undead fight until destroyed.

Captured Undead. A character who succeeds on a DC 16 Charisma (Deception or Intimidation) check convinces a captured or cornered undead to give up one of the following pieces of information:

- The location of traps in the ichor path (area V4).
- The nature of the organ trap in the occult sanctum (area V6).
- The location of one of the secret passages connecting area V5 to V8, area V3 to V8, or area V6 to V7.
- The knowledge that Rhodar already knows the characters are in Shadowkeep.

Unconscious Creatures. If a creature who isn't Undead is reduced to 0 hit points, nearby spectral undead and vampires prioritize killing that creature and raising them to undeath.

Rhodar. The Devil's Influence bound Rhodar's essence to the surrounding region. The vampire lord is aware of the presence of creatures within 1 mile of Shadowkeep and knows the distance and direction to each creature. He can communicate telepathically with any creature he can sense in this way. Rhodar baits, taunts, or tempts the characters—possibly without revealing he knows they're in Shadowkeep—but allows them to explore without coordinating his servants to attack them. If the heroes can overcome his forces, Rhodar deems them worthy of replacing his servants as his new vampire lieutenants.

Rhodar confronts the characters at the time and place of his choosing (see "Confrontation with Rhodar" below).

Confrontation with Rhodar

The final confrontation with Rhodar is designed to be epic and cinematic. Consider using Rhodar's communications with the characters as they explore Shadowkeep to increase their disdain for him before the encounter. Once the characters defeat all the vampires and vampire spawn in Shadowkeep—or if they try to leave the mountain before doing so—the GM can begin the confrontation with **Count Rhodar von Glauer**. The following events precede the battle:

- The Devil's Influence extinguishes the red light shed by the walls, plunging Shadowkeep into darkness.
- The angelic face on the pipe organ in the occult sanctum (area V6) weeps bloody tears as the instrument plays frantic, dreadful music.
- Rhodar appears at a location of the GM's choice and initiates combat with the characters. The war room (area V3), the vault (area V5), and the occult sanctum (area V6) are excellent locations for this showdown.

Resting in Shadowkeep

Provided the characters first deal with any enemies in that area, they can take a short or long rest in areas V5 and V8. Otherwise, if the characters attempt to rest, there is a 50 percent chance three **vampire spawn** interrupt them halfway through their rest.

Lair Actions

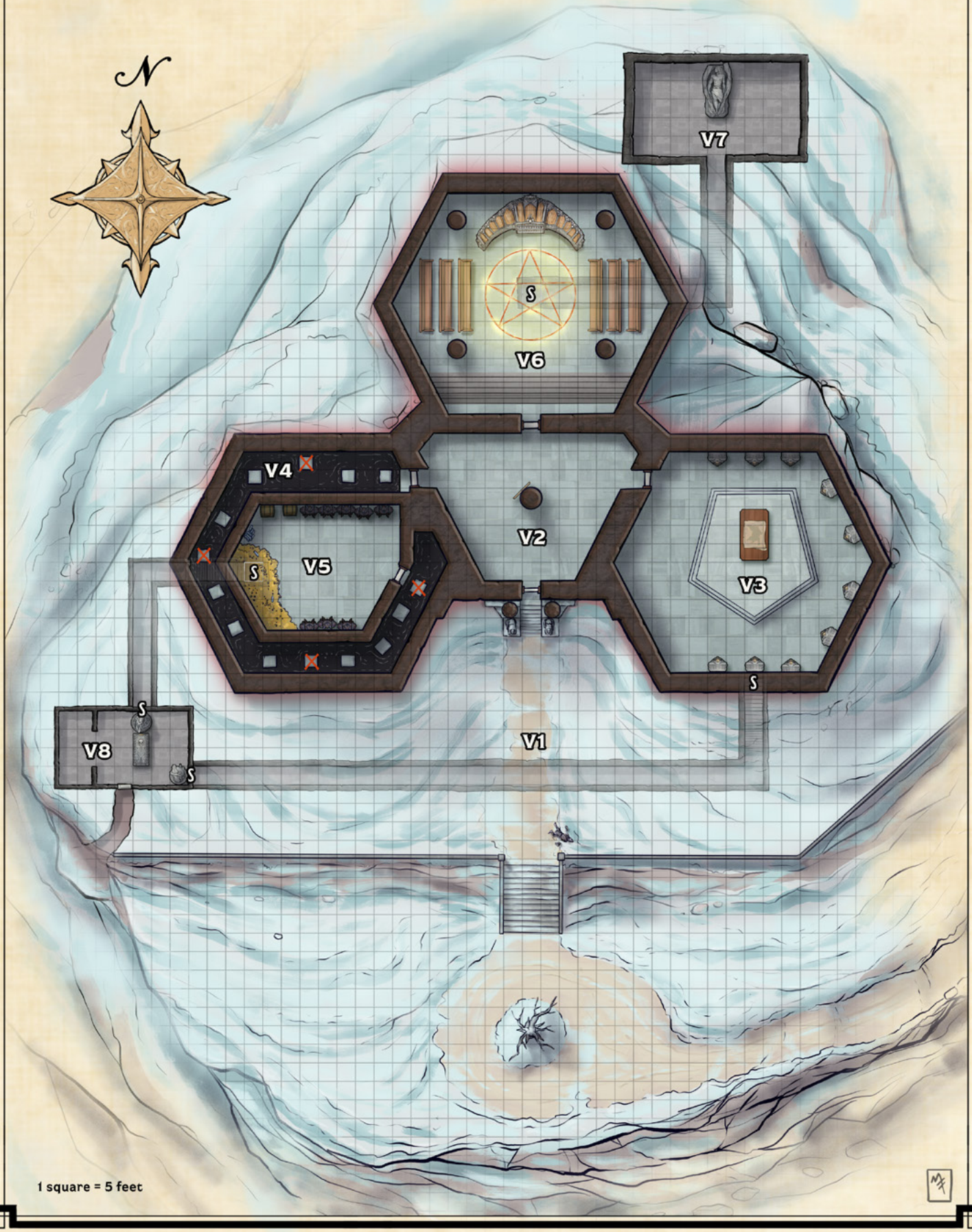
When fighting inside his lair, Rhodar can take lair actions. On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), Rhodar can take one lair action to cause one of the following effects; he can't use the same lair action two rounds in a row:

Children of the Night. A swarm of bats and insects flies around Rhodar, moving with him. The area within 30 feet of him is heavily obscured for other creatures until the end of initiative count 20 on the next round.

Blood Rain. Rhodar chooses a point he can see within 60 feet of him. Blood rains down in a 40-foot-high, 10-foot-radius cylinder centered on this point until the end of initiative count 20 on the next round. When a creature who isn't Undead in the cylinder takes necrotic damage, they take an extra 5 (1d10) necrotic damage.

Obey My Desire. Rhodar exerts his will on those who surround him. Each creature within 60 feet of Rhodar who can hear him must succeed on a DC 18 Wisdom saving throw or be charmed by him until the end of this turn. Each charmed creature must immediately use their reaction, if available, to make a melee attack against another creature, to make a melee attack against themself, or to drop prone (Rhodar's choice).

Shadowkeep Map



Entering Shadowkeep

Shadowkeep rests 27,666 feet above sea level atop the snow-tipped summit of Drachen's Peak, hidden by black clouds. When a creature pierces the thick shroud, they reach the top of the mountain (area V1).

Shadowkeep Areas

The following areas are keyed to the Shadowkeep Map.

V1. Drachen's Peak Summit

This area has the following features:

- "Snow falls like ash from pitch-black clouds, adorning a large three-spire keep that emanates an ominous red glow."
- "The frozen corpse of an elf warrior lies on the ground. From the body drifts an elderly voice singing a children's lullaby: 'Hush little beet, now don't you cry, granny's gonna make you into a pie…'"
- "On Shadowkeep's south wall is a closed crimson door with a pentagram emblazed on its center."
- "West of Shadowkeep stands an obsidian structure inscribed with infernal markings. The edifice's entrance is marked by a pair of glossy black oak doors engraved with the phrase, 'Those who pay the Red Tax may enter.'"
- (**Secret**) When entered, the crimson door alerts the vampires in Shadowkeep of intruders.

Putrid Agnes. The **night hag** Putrid Agnes sings from inside the head of Ravlen, a deceased elf warrior, using her Tiny Time action. Ravlen came to Shadowkeep because of the hag's whispers, but he froze to death outside the fortress. Agnes's song is part of a ritual that extracts the elf's essence from his body.

If the characters approach the corpse, Agnes crawls out of the elf's head. As she joyfully greets them, the hag magically grows from Tiny to Medium size, taking the form of a grandmotherly human. Her curly white hair is shaded by a brown bonnet, and she wears a yellow dress embroidered with patches depicting smiling beets. She doesn't hide that she's evil but also doesn't directly harm the characters.

Agnes is excited to see the adventurers venture into Shadowkeep, as the vampires allow her to extract the essences of their victims. She tells the characters a human warrior entered the fortress alone just hours ago and they're probably in need of rescue. The hag is referring to Zendra in the war room (area V3). To tempt the characters into Shadowkeep, Agnes is willing to either tell them which items are in the treasure hoard (see "Count Rhodar's Hoard"), or to put them under the effect of the *scrying* spell, showing them any creature in the fortress except Rhodar.

If the characters attack, Agnes flees, claiming she'll return to extract their souls.

Crimson Door. A *detect magic* spell reveals that the door leading to Glauer Hall (area V2) radiates an aura of divination magic. If a character moves within 10 feet of the crimson door, the Devil's Influence throws the door wide open. When a character moves over the door's threshold, the Devil's Influence alerts each vampire in Shadowkeep of intruders, and those vampires can't be surprised for 24 hours. A character who teleports across the threshold doesn't trigger this effect. A character who examines the door and succeeds on a DC 16 Intelligence (Arcana) check knows that crossing the crimson door's threshold alerts the vampires. A character who succeeds on this check by 5 or more knows that teleportation bypasses this alert. A character who casts the *identify* spell on the door has advantage on this check.

Black Oak Doors. These doors lead into the mausoleum (area V8) but are locked by the Devil's Influence. If a creature who isn't Undead moves within 10 feet of the doors, the Devil's Influence emits a melodic voice that asks, "Who is willing to pay the Red Tax?" If a character indicates they are willing, or if they attempt to damage or force open the doors, the Devil's Influence marks that creature with a blood splatter and the doors open. The blood splatter leaves an indelible stain that can't be washed or removed except by a *cure ailment* power of 4th order or higher, a *greater restoration* spell, or a similar effect. In combat, vampires prioritize attacking and killing a creature marked by the blood splatter.

A creature who succeeds on a DC 20 Dexterity check using thieves' tools to pick the lock, or who has the bone key from Rhodar's sanctum (area V7), can open the door without triggering the blood splatter effect.

V2. Glauer Hall

Glauer Hall connects to the mountain's summit via a door that is warded by the Devil's Influence (see "Crimson Door" in area V1). This area has the following features:

- "Hanging from a pillar in the center of the hall, an oil painting depicts a handsome knight atop Drachen's Peak. He carves the heart from a red-scaled dragon, while a devilish silhouette overlooks the scene."
- (**Secret**) Four vampire spawn hide in the ceiling's shadows.

Vampire Spawn. A character who succeeds on a DC 17 Wisdom (Perception) check notices the four **vampire spawn** on the ceiling. The spawn are on guard duty and alert. They attack once all characters enter Glauer Hall, trying to drag one character up to the ceiling to feed on, before dropping them in favor of a new victim.

Treasure. There is a hidden compartment behind the oil painting. A character who succeeds on a DC 16 Intelligence (Investigation) check notices a gap in the pillar behind the painting. Inside the compartment is a vial of *marvelous pigments* with paint sufficient to cover 10 square feet of a surface.

V3. War Room

This area has the following features:

- "Atop a 15-foot-tall dais in the middle of the room, two nobles stand around a table having a hushed conversation."
- "Ten lavish coffins rest against the perimeter of the room. On the south wall, one coffin is adorned with raven sculptures and fixtures."
- (**Secret**) The raven coffin is backless and serves as a secret door (see "Shadowkeep Features"), revealing an earthen tunnel to area V8.
- (**Secret**) The southwest coffin contains a koptourok.
- (**Secret**) A terrified human hides in the southeast coffin.

Undead Enemies. Famsa (a **vampire**) and her advisor Merric (a **vampire spawn**) stand at the table analyzing a regional map while debating military strategies to reclaim eastern Rhöl. A **koptourok** that Rhodar found in the caves of Drachen's Peak hides in the southwest coffin. If the characters disturb this coffin, open the secret door, or fight the vampires, the koptourok attacks.

Zendra. The southeast coffin contains Zendra, a terrified **human mercenary** who came to Shadowkeep seeking her adventuring partner, Ravlen (see area V1). She managed to sneak into this area and has been hiding ever since. If the characters find her, she throws herself at their mercy, offering to aid them in the fight against Rhodar if they help her escape.

Coffins. The two coffins closest to the door to Glauer Hall (area V2) are the resting places of Famsa and Azon (see area V6).

V4. Ichor Path

This area was constructed to guard Rhodar's treasure hoard and has the following features:

- "A pool of stinking black liquid covers the room's floor. White marble stepping stones protrude from the bubbling ichor."
- (**Secret**) Four stepping stones are affected by the *glyph of warding* spell (see "Glyphs of Warding").

Black Liquid. The pool is 10 feet deep. A character who is proficient with alchemist's supplies or who succeeds on a DC 17 Intelligence (Arcana) check recognizes the liquid as devil ichor—a corrosive substance extracted from a devil's organs. A creature who enters the black liquid for the first time on a turn or starts their turn there takes 22 (4d10) acid damage.

If a creature who isn't Undead attempts to fly over the liquid, they must succeed on a DC 17 Dexterity saving throw or be dragged to the bottom of the pool by a hand of ichor.

Glyphs of Warding. The map indicates which stepping stones are inscribed with a *glyph of warding* spell. Each glyph triggers a different spell when a creature who isn't Undead touches the stone. Starting with the stone closest to the door to Glauer Hall (area V2) and continuing counterclockwise, the triggered spells are *harm* (6th level), *fireball* (3rd level), *confusion* (4th level), and *disintegrate* (6th level). Each spell has a save DC of 17.

V5. Vault

The iron door to this area is locked from the ichor path (area V4) side. A creature who succeeds on a DC 20 Dexterity check using thieves' tools picks the lock, or a creature who succeeds on a DC 20 Strength check forces the door open. The bone key in Rhodar's sanctum (area V7) unlocks this door. The door has AC 19, 50 hit points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage.

The vault has the following features:

- "Statues and antique relics surround a mound of coins."
- **"**Above the coins, wisps of shadow twist and stretch around each other."
- (**Secret**) A loose floor tile hides a trapdoor (see "Shadowkeep Features") to a tunnel to the mausoleum (area V8).

Essence of Shadowkeep. The wisps of shadow are the *Essence of Shadowkeep* (see "Count Rhodar's Hoard"). When the characters approach the hoard, the essence speaks in a harsh whisper, asking to be inhaled by an ambitious warrior who wishes to use their might to further their goals.

Treasure. The vault contains Count Rhodar's treasure hoard. See "Count Rhodar's Hoard" for more information.

V6. Occult Sanctum

Vampires use this unholy temple to perform occult rituals. This area has the following features:

- "Four black-robed figures chant in unison around a burning pentagram with a candle at its center. An audience of spectral figures watches from nearby pews."
- "A pipe organ, made of bones and bearing the symbol of an angel's face, plays gothic music of its own accord."
- (**Secret**) The center of the pentagram hides a trapdoor (see "Shadowkeep Features") to a tunnel to Rhodar's sanctum (area V7).

Ritual. Azon (a **vampire**) and three **wights** perform an occult ritual in the center of the room as ten **shades** watch from the pews. The ritualists pray in Infernal, beseeching aid from the Seven Cities of Hell to deliver them fresh victims. If Azon knows the characters are in Shadowkeep, the prayer mentions them by name. A character who succeeds on a DC 17 Intelligence (Arcana) check recognizes the sacrificial ritual, which summons a devil, and how to disrupt it. The ritual can be ended by casting a successful *dispel magic* spell on the pentagram, or by defeating Azon

Count Rhodar von Glauer exsanguinates his enemies.

and the wights before the last shade is destroyed. If the ritual is not ended before the shades are destroyed, a **devil magistrate** appears in an unoccupied space in the pentagram and fights intruders to the death while defending Rhodar's remaining Undead.

Pipe Organ. If a creature who isn't Undead starts their turn within 10 feet of the pipe organ, the angel's face weeps bloody tears while uttering "Save yourself while you can" in Celestial. The creature must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened of the organ for 1 minute (save ends at end of turn). If a creature's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for them, the creature is immune to the organ's effects for 24 hours.

V7. Rhodar's Sanctum

This room has no light sources. The characters only notice the following features if they have a way to see in magical darkness:

- "The petrified corpse of a faceless angel rests in the middle of the room."
- (**Secret**) If Rhodar was defeated in combat (see the "Confrontation with Rhodar" section), he retreats here.

Darkness. The Devil's Influence shrouds this area with magical darkness. A creature with darkvision can't see through this darkness, and mundane light can't illuminate it. If any of the darkness's area overlaps with an area of light created by a spell of 2nd level or lower, the spell that created the light is dispelled.

Petrified Corpse. The petrified angel corpse is Rhodar's resting place. The corpse is hinged and can be opened like a coffin. Dousing the corpse with a flask of holy water destroys it. It has AC 17, 100 hit points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage.

If Rhodar has been reduced to 0 hit points within the last hour, he's in his resting place.

Bone Key. Rhodar keeps a bone key inside the petrified corpse. The key unlocks the doors to the mausoleum (area V8) and the vault (area V5).

V8. Mausoleum

Rhodar built this mausoleum to hold the remains of those forced to pay the Red Tax. It connects to the mountain's summit (area V1) via a pair of black oak doors warded by the Devil's Influence (see "Black Oak Doors" in area V1). The mausoleum has no light sources. The characters only notice the following features if they have a light or another way to see in darkness:

- "A stone sarcophagus, etched with a scene of horrified humans, sits at the center of the mausoleum."
- "A black marble statue portrays Rhodar von Glauer drinking blood from the neck of a human man. Across the room, a white marble sculpture depicts Rhodar biting the wrist of a human woman."
- "Three shadowy figures drift back and forth through the walls."
- (**Secret**) A secret door (see "Shadowkeep Features") behind the black statue reveals a tunnel to the vault (area V5), and a secret door behind the white statue reveals a tunnel to the war room (area V3).

Shadowy Figures. The three shadowy figures are **wraiths** who paid Rhodar's Red Tax.

Sarcophagus. As an action, a creature can open the sarcophagus to reveal a 10-foot-deep hole. The bottom of the hole is filled with the bones of the victims of the Red Tax.

Treasure. A *mace of disruption* lies among the bones in the sarcophagus.

Count Rhodar's Hoard

Count Rhodar von Glauer's treasure hoard is in his vault (area V5). Rhodar accumulated this hoard over centuries of ruling and taxing the people of his land. Each coin in the hoard is stamped with the profile of the vampire lord.

The hoard contains the following items:

- *Essence of Shadowkeep* (see below)
- *Shield of shadow form* (see below)
- *Potion of clairvoyance*
- *Potion of heroism*
- 2 *potions of speed*
- *Potion of supreme healing*
- Vial of *oil of etherealness*
- An unsigned Infernal contract (see below)
- Gold-gilded black shield engraved with the image of two dragon wings (worth 200 gp)
- 3 gold-gilded black breastplates engraved with the silhouette of a dragon (worth 1,000 gp each)
- 50 pounds of gold (worth 2,500 gp)
- 4 suits of gold-gilded black plate armor engraved with the silhouette of a dragon (worth 3,125 gp each)
- Diamond dragon statuette (worth 5,000 gp)
- 10 pounds of platinum (worth 5,000 gp)
- 100,000 cp, 10,000 sp, 5,000 gp, and 500 pp

Sanguinus

Sanguinus, the sword of Count Rhodar von Glauer, is made from the blood of his enemies. Only he can wield the weapon, and if he is destroyed, the weapon is also destroyed.

Shield of Shadow Form

I liked Von Glauer, he was old-school nobility. Invited us officers to dinner during the siege. Civilized. Not like these warlords we got today.

Dancer, Chronicler of the Chain of Acheron, Heroes 216–231

Essence of Shadowkeep

Wondrous Item, Very Rare (Requires Attunement by an Illrigger, Paladin, or Warlock of Evil Alignment)

The *Essence of Shadowkeep* is a sentient fragment of the hellish influence permeating Shadowkeep, which takes the form of black mist. As an action, you can inhale the essence and attune to it instantly. You can exhale the essence as an action, ending your attunement to it.

While attuned to the essence, your eyes turn red and you gain the following benefits:

- You are resistant to necrotic damage.
- Your weapon attacks deal an extra 1d6 necrotic damage.
- When you hit a creature with a weapon attack, you can regain hit points equal to the damage dealt. Once you regain hit points in this way, you can't do so again until the next dusk.
- You know about effects created by the Devil's Influence in Shadowkeep.

Sentience. The *Essence of Shadowkeep* is a sentient, lawful evil item with an Intelligence of 14, a Wisdom of 15, and a Charisma of 18. When a creature isn't attuned to it, the essence has hearing and darkvision out to a range of 120 feet and can speak and understand Common. When a creature is attuned to it, the essence can sense everything its wielder senses and can only communicate telepathically with its wielder.

Personality. Egotistical and domineering, the *Essence of Shadowkeep* is an ambitious force that craves action. The essence encourages its wielder to be decisive, choose action over words, and awe enemies with displays of might. If the wielder ignores the essence's advice three times in a row, a conflict between it and the wielder arises at the next sunset.

Shield of Shadow Form

Armor (Shield), Rare (Requires Attunement)

While holding this shield, you have a +1 bonus to AC.

Additionally, you can use an action to transform yourself and everything you wear and carry into a shadowy cloud for 10 minutes. The effect ends if you drop to 0 hit points or use an action to end it.

While in this form, your only method of movement is a flying speed of 10 feet. You can enter and occupy the space of another creature. When you end your turn in another creature's space, that creature takes 6d8 necrotic damage. You have resistance to mundane damage, and you have advantage on Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution saving throws. You can pass through small holes, narrow openings, and even mere cracks, though you treat liquids as if they were solid surfaces. You can't fall and remain hovering in the air even when stunned or otherwise incapacitated.

While in the form of a shadowy cloud, you can't talk or manipulate objects, and any objects you were carrying or holding can't be dropped, used, or otherwise interacted with. You can't attack, cast spells, or manifest powers.

Once you use the shield to transform into a shadowy cloud, that property can't be used again until the following dusk.

Unsigned Infernal Contract

The archdevil who created Shadowkeep for Count Rhodar von Glauer wrote up another contract on human skin that Rhodar hasn't signed. The contract is written in Infernal.

When you sign this contract using your blood as ink, you lose all levels in your current classes and have the option of gaining levels equal to your character level in any combination of the illrigger, paladin, and warlock classes. Additionally, you can reassign your six ability scores. You are bound by the contract until the archdevil dies or the contract is broken by a *wish* spell. The contract can only be signed by one creature.

Shadowkeep Stat Blocks

The following stat blocks appear in the lair.

Count Rhodar von Glauer

CR 19 Solo

Medium Undead, Neutral Evil — 22,000 XP

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)
Hit Points 289 (34d8 + 136)
Speed 30 ft., fly 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
23 (+6)	20 (+5)	18 (+4)	20 (+5)	17 (+3)	22 (+6)

Saving Throws Dex +11, Wis +9, Cha +12
Skills Deception +12, History +11, Intimidation +12, Perception +9, Persuasion +12, Stealth +11
Condition Immunities charmed, flanked, frightened, prone, stunned
Damage Resistances necrotic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from mundane attacks
Senses blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 19
Languages Common
Proficiency Bonus +6

Resting Place. When Rhodar drops to 0 hit points and isn't in his resting place, he teleports to his resting place. While in his resting place, Rhodar is stable. After spending 1 hour in his resting place with 0 hit points, he regains 1 hit point.

Spear Sacrifice (3/Day). Rhodar is surrounded by three floating spears of shimmering darkness, which he can summon to a free hand on his turn (no action required). When Rhodar fails an ability check or saving throw, he can choose to destroy one of these spears and succeed on the ability check or saving throw instead. Once Rhodar destroys all three spears, he can't use his Spear of the Damned attack or Spear Sacrifice until the next dusk, when he manifests any destroyed spears.

Actions

Multiattack. Rhodar makes two Sanguinus attacks, and he can make one Spear of the Damned attack for each Spear Sacrifice use he has remaining.

Sanguinus. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d6 + 6) slashing damage plus 14 (4d6) necrotic damage. If the target is a creature, their hit point maximum is reduced by a number equal to the necrotic damage taken, and Rhodar regains hit points equal to that number. This reduction lasts until reversed by a *cure ailment* power of 4th order or higher, a *greater restoration* spell, or a similar supernatural effect. The target dies if this effect reduces their hit point maximum to 0. A humanoid slain in this way rises the following midnight as a **vampire spawn** under Rhodar's control.

Spear of the Damned. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +12 to hit, range 60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (3d6) force damage, and if the target is a creature, they are knocked prone and restrained as a spear of darkness impales them. A creature can attempt to free themself or another creature within their reach by using an action or a bonus action to make a DC 20 Strength (Athletics) check. On a success, the creature is freed and the restrained condition ends for them. The creature is also freed if Rhodar summons that spear to attack another target or destroys it using Spear Sacrifice.

Bonus Actions

Beguile. Rhodar targets one creature he can see within 30 feet of him and who can see him. The target must make a DC 20 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, the creature uses their reaction, if available, to move up to their speed to a location chosen by Rhodar, then either makes a melee attack against a target of Rhodar's choice or falls prone (Rhodar's choice).

Inhuman Agility. Rhodar moves up to his speed without provoking opportunity attacks.

Reactions

Withering Stare. When Rhodar is hit by an attack by a creature he can see within 60 feet of him, his eyes bore into the creature. The target must succeed on a DC 20 Wisdom saving throw or take 10 (3d6) necrotic damage.

Villain Actions

Rhodar has three villain actions. He can take each action once during an encounter after an enemy's turn. He can take these actions in any order but can use only one per round.

Action 1: Bloodstained. Rhodar causes blood to explode in a 20-foot-radius sphere centered on a point he can see within 120 feet of him. Creatures who aren't Undead in that area must succeed on a DC 20 Dexterity saving throw or be bloodstained until the end of Rhodar's next turn. Rhodar has advantage on attack rolls against bloodstained creatures, and bloodstained creatures have disadvantage on saving throws against Rhodar's Beguile bonus action.

Action 2: Fire Drake. Rhodar, along with anything he is wearing or carrying, turns into a Large dragon made of fire. When he does, he releases any creature he was grappling, and if Rhodar was grappled or restrained, that effect ends for him. He then flies up to twice his speed to an unoccupied space. During this move, Rhodar ignores difficult terrain, doesn't provoke opportunity attacks, and can move through creatures and objects. Each creature Rhodar passes through must make a DC 20 Dexterity saving throw, taking 36 (8d8) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. At the end of this movement, Rhodar transforms back into his previous form.

Action 3: Mist of Blades. Rhodar fills the area within 60 feet of him with thick swirling mists, heavily obscuring that area for other creatures. He can teleport up to four times into any unoccupied space in the mist and make one Sanguinus attack after each teleport. The mist dissipates at the end of this action.

Utility Spells

In addition to any other spells in this stat block, Rhodar can cast the following spells, using Charisma as the spellcasting ability (spell save DC 20):

At will: *charm person*[A], *detect thoughts*[A], *disguise self*[A], *sending*[A]
3/day each: *clairvoyance*[+], *geas* (at 9th level)[+], *legend lore*[+]

Devil Magistrate

CR 12 Skirmisher

Medium Fiend (Devil), Typically Lawful Evil — 8,400 XP

Armor Class 18 (studded leather)
Hit Points 182 (28d8 + 56)
Speed 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	22 (+6)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	16 (+3)	19 (+4)

Saving Throws Dex +10, Wis +7, Cha +8
Skills Acrobatics +10, Deception +8, Insight +7, Persuasion +8, Stealth +10
Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from mundane attacks
Damage Immunities fire
Condition Immunities charmed
Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 13
Languages Common, Infernal
Proficiency Bonus +4

True Name. If a creature the magistrate can hear within 60 feet of them speaks the magistrate's true name aloud, the magistrate loses their damage resistances, damage immunities, and Devilish Charm reaction for 24 hours.

Actions

Multiattack. The magistrate makes two Infernal Knife attacks and one Obsidian Kris attack.

Infernal Knife. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (2d8 + 6) piercing damage plus 9 (2d8) fire damage, and the target is frightened of their allies until the end of their next turn.

Obsidian Kris. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (2d8 + 6) piercing damage, and if the target is frightened, they can't take reactions until the frightened condition ends for them.

Reactions

Devilish Charm (2/Day). When the magistrate is targeted by an attack, power, spell, or other supernatural effect by a creature they can see within 60 feet of them, the creature must make a DC 16 Charisma saving throw. On a failed save, the creature is charmed by the magistrate until the start of the creature's next turn, and the magistrate chooses a new target the magistrate can see for the triggering effect. The new target must be within the triggering effect's range.

Excerpt from the Chronicle of the Chain of Acheron

"In those days, the Chain was in service to the Emperor Gaius VIII, third of the Five Crusading Emperors, and 27th Emperor of Caelia. Gaius continued the crusades started by his illustrious granduncle. Those were profitable days for the Chain, the Wheel, and the Gate. While the other Helltroopers waded into the deserts of Khoursir and Khemhara, we battled in the forests of Vaslor. We had it easy. I hate deserts.

"Thinking his vampiric power would save him, Count Rhodar von Glauer waited until he was fulsome in his strength before trying to extend his dark realm into Caelian territory. But we know how to deal with vampires. The black and gold standard of the von Glauer family reads, "I do the devil's work." We can attest to that. We lost many souls to that long siege, but in the end, we staked him. An old woman howled at us saying, "He is the land!" but we hear that stuff all the time. We sacked his castle, burned his forest and orchards, and delivered his staff to the emperor. That was harder than it sounds. Finger had to drop it in one of his bottomless sacks to stop the mists from coming. What the emperor will do with it, I don't know. I fear that staff may hold more than the power to make the mist."

Dancer, Chronicler of the Chain of Acheron, Heroes 228

Human Mercenary

Retainer

Medium Humanoid (Human), Any Alignment

Armor Class 15 (medium armor)
Hit Points Nine times their level (number of d12 Hit Dice equal to their level)
Speed 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws +PB to all
Skills Athletics +3 plus PB, Medicine +0 plus PB, Perception +0 plus PB
Senses passive Perception 10 plus PB
Languages Common
Proficiency Bonus (PB) equals the mentor's bonus

Signature Attack (Halberd). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 plus PB to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1d10 plus PB slashing damage. Beginning at 7th level, the mercenary can make this attack twice, instead of once, when they take the Attack action on their turn.

Features

3rd Level: Battlefield Medicine (3/Day). As an action, the mercenary restores PBd8 hit points to a creature they can see within 5 feet of them.

5th Level: Exploit Opening (3/Day). The mercenary takes the Attack action, making each attack with advantage and dealing an extra PBd4 slashing damage on a hit.

7th Level: Halberd Master (3/Day). When a creature enters a space within the mercenary's reach, the mercenary uses a reaction to make a signature attack with advantage against that creature. If this attack hits, it deals an extra PBd6 slashing damage.

Koptourok

CR 5 Controller

Medium Undead, Typically Chaotic Evil

1,800 XP

Armor Class 13
Hit Points 90 (12d8 + 36)
Speed 30 ft. (see Wings of Breath)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (–1)	16 (+3)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	8 (–1)

Saving Throws Dex +6, Con +6
Skills Perception +4
Damage Resistances necrotic, poison; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from mundane attacks
Condition Immunities charmed, dazed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned
Senses blindsight 120 ft., passive Perception 14
Languages understands the languages they knew in life but can't speak
Proficiency Bonus +3

Breathless Aura. Enemies within 30 feet of the koptourok can't speak, and if they are a creature who needs to breathe, they also have disadvantage on Constitution saving throws.

Wings of Breath. The koptourok gains a flying speed equal to their walking speed if they have at least one enemy within 30 feet of them. If the koptourok starts their turn in the air and doesn't have a flying speed, they fall.

Actions

Multiattack. The koptourok makes two Choking Grasp attacks.

Choking Grasp. *Melee Spell Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 30 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 14 (4d6) bludgeoning damage, and the target is pulled to an unoccupied space within 5 feet of the koptourok and grappled (escape DC 14). While grappled in this way, the target is restrained and the koptourok's speed isn't halved by the grapple.

Last Gasp. The koptourok attempts to steal the breath from each creature they are grappling. Each target must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw, taking 14 (4d6) bludgeoning damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. The koptourok gains temporary hit points equal to 5 times the number of creatures who failed their save.

Reactions

Thunderous Deflation. When the koptourok drops to 30 hit points or fewer, they unleash a shrieking wail. Each creature within 30 feet of the koptourok must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, a creature takes 16 (3d10) thunder damage and is deafened until the end of their next turn. On a successful save, a creature takes half as much damage and isn't deafened. The koptourok then releases all creatures they are grappling and flies up to their speed.

Night Hag

CR 5 Controller

Medium Fey, Typically Neutral Evil — 1,800 XP

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)
Hit Points 97 (13d8 + 39)
Speed 30 ft., fly 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	18 (+4)	16 (+3)	16 (+3)	17 (+3)	19 (+4)

Skills Deception +10, Insight +6, Perception +6, Stealth +7 (+17 with *pass without trace*)
Damage Resistances fire, necrotic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from mundane attacks
Condition Immunities charmed
Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 16
Languages Common, Infernal, Sylvan
Proficiency Bonus +3

Supernatural Resistance. The hag has advantage on saving throws against powers, spells, and other supernatural effects.

Actions

Multiattack. The hag makes two Dream Claw attacks.

Dream Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d10 + 4) slashing damage plus 3 (1d6) psychic damage. If a target is hit by this attack more than once on a turn, they must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the target falls unconscious for 1 minute (save ends at end of turn), until the target takes damage, or until another creature who can reach the target uses their action to wake them. Creatures who can't be supernaturally put to sleep automatically succeed on this saving throw.

Vicious Visions (1/Day; 6th-Level Spell). The hag releases magic dream dust in a 60-foot cone. Each creature must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or be charmed for 1 minute or until they deal damage to another creature. While charmed, the creature sees all allies as enemies and all enemies as allies.

Tiny Time. The hag magically shrinks down to a height of 1 inch, becoming Tiny along with any items they wear or carry. While Tiny, the hag has advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks made to hide, and they can use a bonus action to enter the head of an unconscious Humanoid they can reach or to grow back to the hag's normal size. The hag's game statistics otherwise remain the same.

While the hag is inside a Humanoid's head, that Humanoid is considered haunted by the hag, and the hag has total cover against attacks and other effects outside the head. The hag can speak telepathically to the haunted Humanoid, but the Humanoid is unaware of the source of this telepathic speech. The haunted Humanoid can't gain any benefit from rest unless the hag allows it, and when the Humanoid attempts to sleep, the hag can fill the Humanoid's mind with nightmarish visions.

The hag is expelled from the head and grows back to their normal size if the haunted Humanoid is affected by a *dispel evil and good* spell or similar supernatural effects, or if the hag chooses to exit the head as a bonus action.

Bonus Actions

Sleepwalk. The hag moves one unconscious creature they can see within 60 feet of them up to 30 feet horizontally.

Reactions

Aren't You Tired? When a creature within 5 feet of the hag hits them with an attack, the hag spits sleep dust at the attacker. The attacker must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, until the end of the hag's next turn, the attacker feels tremendously sleepy, they can't take reactions, and they have disadvantage on attack rolls and saving throws. Creatures who can't be supernaturally put to sleep are immune to this effect.

Utility Spells

In addition to any other spells in this stat block, the hag can cast the following spells, using Charisma as the spellcasting ability (spell save DC 15):

At will: *alter self*[A], *detect magic*[A], *pass without trace*[A]
3/day each: *dream*[+], *legend lore*[+], *mirage arcane*[+]
1/day: *scrying*[+]

Night Hag in a Coven

A night hag in a coven gains the following action option.

Phantoms Abound (Recharge 5–6). The hag fills the area around them with illusions of their enemies' worst fears. Each enemy within 30 feet of the hag must make a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, a target takes 22 (5d8) psychic damage, falls prone, and if the hag is within 5 feet of the target, the hag can make a Dream Claw attack against them. On a successful save, a target takes half as much damage, doesn't fall prone, and the hag doesn't attack them.

Hush little beet, now don't you cry,
Granny's gonna make you into a pie.
If that pie is tasting sour,
Granny's gonna add some boney powder.
If that powder is too dry,
Granny's gonna make somebody die.

Putrid Agnes

Shade

CR 1 Minion

Medium Undead (Incorporeal), Typically Chaotic Evil 40 XP

Armor Class 11
Hit Points 8
Speed 0 ft., fly 50 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
1 (–5)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)

Damage Immunities necrotic, poison
Condition Immunities charmed, dazed, exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained, unconscious
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10
Languages the languages they knew in life
Proficiency Bonus +2

Incorporeal Movement. The shade can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. The shade is destroyed if they end their turn inside an object.

Minion. If the shade takes damage from an attack or as the result of a failed saving throw, their hit points are reduced to 0. If the shade takes damage from another effect, they die if the damage equals or exceeds their hit point maximum; otherwise they take no damage.

Terrifying. If an enemy starts their turn within 5 feet of three or more shades, the enemy must succeed on a Wisdom saving throw or be frightened of the shades until the start of their next turn. The DC for this saving throw equals 10 plus the number of shades within 5 feet of the enemy. On a successful save, the enemy is immune to the Terrifying trait of all shades for the next 24 hours.

Actions

Life Drain (Group Attack). *Melee Spell Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 1 necrotic damage.

Specter

CR 1 Skirmisher

Medium Undead (Incorporeal), Typically Chaotic Evil 200 XP

Armor Class 11
Hit Points 19 (3d8 + 6)
Speed 0 ft., fly 50 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
1 (–5)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	15 (+2)

Damage Resistance acid, cold, fire, lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from mundane attacks
Damage Immunities necrotic, poison
Condition Immunities charmed, dazed, exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained, unconscious
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10
Languages the languages they knew in life
Proficiency Bonus +2

Corrupting Phasing. The specter can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. The specter takes 5 (1d10) force damage if they end their turn inside an object. A creature takes 2 (1d4) necrotic damage the first time a specter passes through them on a turn.

Actions

Decaying Touch. *Melee Spell Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 7 (2d6) necrotic damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or spend 1 Hit Die without any benefit. If the target has no Hit Dice to spend, they drop to 0 hit points instead.

If a Humanoid dies within 1 minute of being hit by this attack, their spirit rises as a **specter** under the GM's control in an unoccupied space nearest to where that Humanoid died.

Bonus Actions

Hidden Movement (Recharge 5–6). The specter turns invisible and then moves up to their speed. At the end of this movement, the invisibility ends.

While we drink blood, specters, wraiths, and other dead creatures without form feed on a different lifeforce. Some say it is energy drawn from the souls of the living these ghosts pass through. Other sages take a more tangible approach, claiming the spirits siphon the warmth needed to survive from the bodies of mortals. Whatever the case, these undead have no interest in feeding on vampires, and therefore make perfect companions.

Count Rhodar von Glauer

Vampire

CR 13 Skirmisher

Medium Undead, Typically Neutral Evil — 10,000 XP

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)
Hit Points 204 (24d8 + 96)
Speed 30 ft., fly 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws Dex +10, Wis +8, Cha +10
Skills Deception +10, History +9, Insight +8, Intimidation +10, Perception +8, Persuasion +10, Stealth +10
Damage Resistances necrotic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from mundane attacks
Condition Immunities charmed, frightened
Senses blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 18
Languages the languages they knew in life
Proficiency Bonus +5

Radiant Aversion. Each time the vampire takes radiant damage, they take an extra 10 radiant damage.

Resting Place. When the vampire drops to 0 hit points and is not in sunlight, running water, or their resting place, the vampire teleports to their resting place. While in their resting place, the vampire is stable. After spending 1 hour in their resting place with 0 hit points, they regain 1 hit point.

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

Actions

Multiattack. The vampire makes two Claw attacks and, if possible, a Bite attack.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d6 + 5) slashing damage plus 10 (3d6) necrotic damage. If the target is Large or smaller, they are grappled (escape DC 18). While grappled in this way, the target is restrained. Moving while grappling a Medium or smaller creature doesn't halve the vampire's speed. A vampire can have only one target grappled in this way at a time.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature who is grappled by the vampire, incapacitated, or restrained. *Hit:* 8 (1d6 + 5) piercing damage plus 10 (3d6) necrotic damage. The target's hit point maximum is reduced by a number equal to the necrotic damage taken, and the vampire regains hit points equal to that number. The reduction lasts until reversed by a *cure ailment* power of 4th order or higher, a *greater restoration* spell, or a similar supernatural effect. The target dies if this attack reduces their hit point maximum to 0. A Humanoid slain in this way rises the following midnight as a **vampire spawn** under the vampire's control.

Exsanguinating Mist (Recharge 6). The vampire, along with anything they are wearing or carrying, turns into a cloud of blood-sucking mist. When they do, they release any creature they were grappling, and if the vampire was grappled or restrained, that effect ends for them. Then the vampire flies up to twice their speed to an unoccupied space. During this move, the vampire ignores difficult terrain, doesn't provoke opportunity attacks, and can move through creatures and objects. Each creature the vampire passes through must make a DC 18 Constitution saving throw, taking 35 (10d6) necrotic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. At the end of this movement, the vampire transforms back into their previous form.

Bonus Actions

Beguile. The vampire targets one creature they can see within 30 feet of them and who can see them. The target must make a DC 18 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, the target uses their reaction, if available, to move up to their speed to a location chosen by the vampire, then either makes a melee attack against a target of the vampire's choice or falls prone (vampire's choice).

Creatures who can't be charmed automatically succeed on this saving throw, and creatures who have advantage on saving throws against being charmed make this saving throw with advantage.

Inhuman Agility. The vampire moves up to their speed without provoking opportunity attacks.

Reactions

Run, My Child. When an ally the vampire can see takes damage, the vampire can command the ally to move up to their speed without provoking opportunity attacks.

Utility Spells

In addition to any other spells in this stat block, the vampire can cast the following spells, using Charisma as the spellcasting ability (spell save DC 18):

At will: *charm person*[A], *detect thoughts*[A], *disguise self*[A], *sending*[A]
1/day each: *clairvoyance*[+], *geas*[+]

Vampire Spawn

CR 5 Skirmisher

Medium Undead, Typically Neutral Evil — 1,800 XP

Armor Class 14
Hit Points 112 (15d8 + 45)
Speed 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws Wis +3, Cha +6
Skills Acrobatics +7, Intimidation +6, Perception +3, Persuasion +6, Stealth +7
Damage Resistances necrotic
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13
Languages the languages they knew in life
Proficiency Bonus +3

Radiant Aversion. Each time the spawn takes radiant damage, they take an extra 10 radiant damage.

Actions

Multiattack. The spawn makes two Claw attacks. They can replace one attack with a Bite attack.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) slashing damage, and if the target is Large or smaller, they are grappled (escape DC 15). Moving while grappling a Medium or smaller creature doesn't halve the spawn's speed. The spawn can have only one target grappled in this way at a time.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature who is grappled by the spawn, incapacitated, or restrained. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage plus 7 (2d6) necrotic damage. The target's hit point maximum is reduced by a number equal to the necrotic damage taken, and the spawn regains hit points equal to that number. The reduction lasts until the target finishes a long rest or is targeted by a *cure ailment* power of 4th order or higher, a *greater restoration* spell, or a similar supernatural effect. The target dies if this attack reduces their hit point maximum to 0.

Bonus Actions

Inhuman Speed. The spawn moves up to their speed.

Wight

CR 3 Soldier
Medium Undead, Typically Neutral Evil 700 XP

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)
Hit Points 65 (10d8 + 20)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	13 (+1)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)	16 (+3)

Skills Intimidation +5, Perception +3
Damage Resistance necrotic
Damage Immunities poison
Condition Immunities exhaustion, poisoned
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13
Languages the languages they knew in life
Proficiency Bonus +2

Actions

Multiattack. The wight makes one Longsword attack and one Vitality Theft attack, or they make two Heavy Crossbow attacks.

Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) slashing damage.

Heavy Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, range 100/400 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d10 + 1) piercing damage.

Vitality Theft. *Melee Spell Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 9 (2d8) necrotic damage, and the wight regains a number of hit points equal to half the damage dealt. Until the start of the wight's next turn, the target has disadvantage on attack rolls made against creatures other than the wight.

Reactions

Decaying Guard. When an ally the wight can see within 5 feet of them is hit by an attack, the wight forces the attacker to reroll the attack and to instead target the wight or a willing ally within 5 feet of the original target.

Wraith

CR 5 Controller
Medium Undead (Incorporeal), Typically Chaotic Evil 1,800 XP

Armor Class 12
Hit Points 58 (9d8 + 18)
Speed 0 ft., fly 60 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6 (–2)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	17 (+3)

Damage Resistance acid, cold, fire, lightning, necrotic, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from mundane attacks
Damage Immunities poison, psychic
Condition Immunities charmed, dazed, exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained, unconscious
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12
Languages the languages they knew in life
Proficiency Bonus +3

Agonizing Phasing. The wraith can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. The wraith takes 5 (1d10) force damage if they end their turn inside an object. A creature takes 5 (1d10) psychic damage the first time a wraith passes through them on a turn.

Throes of Oblivion. When the wraith dies, they collapse inward, creating a burst of painful psychic energy. Each creature within 20 feet of the wraith must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw, taking 18 (4d8) psychic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Actions

Agonizing Touch. *Melee Spell Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 14 (4d6) psychic damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw or be dazed (save ends at end of turn). Each time a target dazed in this way fails a saving throw to end the condition, their hit point maximum is halved. This effect is cumulative, and the reduction lasts until the target finishes a short or long rest.

If a Humanoid dies within 1 minute of being hit by this attack, their spirit rises as a **specter** under the wraith's control in an unoccupied space nearest to where that Humanoid died.

Psychic Enervation. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +6 to hit, range 60 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 10 (3d6) psychic damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw or fall prone and be frightened of the wraith for 1 minute (save ends at end of turn). While frightened in this way, the target can't stand up.

Reactions

Denied Vitality. When a creature who the wraith can see within 30 feet of them regains hit points, the wraith can attempt to sap the life energy restoring the creature. The creature must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or only regain half the number of hit points they otherwise would regain.

Durixaviinox's Rest

Optimized for Five 14th-Level Characters

In a cold expanse at the edge of the world, Durixaviinox (*dur-ih-ZAH-vin-nox*) lairs beneath the ruins of the draconic city of Vexinoth. Though many now call him the Ruined Providence, this frost-breathing ruin dragon once ruled as a benevolent and all-powerful emperor who amassed enough reverence to rival the gods. But Durixaviinox was betrayed by his sister Yserthrax, who conspired with Qazyldrath to destroy the city. The conflict killed countless dragons on both sides and Durixaviinox was left for dead, his body buried beneath the rubble of a once-mighty civilization.

But the Providence refused to die, bringing himself back from the brink through force of will. As Durixaviinox slowly regained his physical might over a millennium of wound licking, he swore oaths of revenge against his sister and Qazyldrath. He plans to bring an eternal winter to the Mundane World, making it a place fit only for those with frigid hearts.

High in the mountains overlooking the sea and the frozen remains of Vexinoth, an icy tunnel leads deep down into Durixaviinox's Rest, a lair built by the Ruined Providence himself. In his underground complex constructed from ice and pieces of the ruined city above, Durixaviinox plots the demises of Yserthrax and Qazyldrath while attended by undead and elementals who believe the Ruined Providence should rule once again.

Durixaviinox's Rest Story Hooks

You can use one of the following story hooks to integrate this lair into an adventure:

Creeping Death. Durixaviinox's increasing activity has made the region around the dragon's lair all but uninhabitable, blanketing it with biting frost, constant blizzards, and deadly avalanches. Brynmor Stonedancer, matriarch of a nearby dwarf settlement, asks the characters to stop the dragon before the cold reaches their homes within the mountain. If the characters put down the dragon, Brynmor rewards them with a *hammer of thunderbolts*.

Draconic Wraiths. Spectral dragons are terrorizing the region surrounding Durixaviinox's Rest, causing chaos and panic. Those who know Draconic say the spirits lament the demise of their lost city and herald the return of the Ruined Providence. Local leaders offer the characters twenty magnificent diamonds (worth 5,000 gp each) for delving into Durixaviinox's Rest and obtaining the dragon's head.

Rival Cult. A cult dedicated to one of Durixaviinox's draconic rivals (either Qazyldrath or Yserthrax) seeks the characters' assistance to make sure the Ruined Providence never rises again. The cultists claim that a war among the dragons would devastate the Mundane World.

Durixaviinox's Rest Features

Unless otherwise noted, each area of Durixaviinox's Rest has the following features:

Ceilings. Ceilings are 70 feet high.

Extreme Cold. At the end of each hour a creature spends in the lair, they must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or gain 1 level of exhaustion. Creatures who are wearing cold weather clothing or who have resistance or immunity to cold damage automatically succeed on this save.

Frigid Lakes. The lakes are 50 feet deep. When a creature starts their turn in a lake, they take 14 (4d6) cold damage. Cold weather clothing that is wet grants its wearer no benefit against extreme cold until the clothing is removed and dried by a fire or other heat source for 1 hour.

Icy Surfaces. Every surface is covered in ice. A creature who moves more than half their speed while climbing or walking on the ice must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check or fall prone at the end of their movement. A creature who can ignore the effects of difficult terrain composed of ice succeeds automatically. A creature without climbing equipment must succeed on a DC 22 Strength (Athletics) check to climb the walls. Creatures who live in the lair are used to the icy surfaces, and can move normally over them without needing to make an ability check.

Illumination. There are no light sources.

Magic Traps and Portal. The lair contains three magic traps (one in area W1 and two in area W2) and a portal (in area W4). Treat the traps and the portal as 6th-level spells for the purpose of *dispel magic* and similar effects. A dispelled trap becomes mundane and is disarmed, and a dispelled portal closes.

Durixaviinox's Guardians

Durixaviinox's few guardians are undead and elementals who attack intruders and fight to the death.

Resting in Durixaviinox's Rest

After dealing with any enemies in an area, the characters can take a short rest there without interruption. If the characters take a long rest while **Durixaviinox** is alive and in the lair, there is a 30 percent chance he finds them 1d6 hours into the rest.

Entering Durixaviinox's Rest

A creature must succeed on a DC 20 Wisdom (Survival) check to find the mountain cave that leads to Durixaviinox's Rest. On a failed check, the creature can't find the cave and can't try again for 24 hours. Each day the characters spend searching the mountains for the lair entrance, there is a 30 percent chance that 1d4 + 2 **trolls** who have immunity to cold damage find the party and attack.

Once the characters find the cave, they must move through a 20-foot-wide, 40-foot-tall tunnel for 6 miles as it twists and turns, descending into the earth. This tunnel ends at the top of the chasm (area W1).

Durixaviinox's Rest Areas

The following areas are keyed to the Durixaviinox's Rest Map.

W1. Chasm

This area has the following features:

- "The tunnel ends at a shaft that descends into darkness."
- "Jagged rocks and ice create treacherous handholds and footholds."
- (**Secret**) A magic glyph inscribed on the shaft's walls triggers a trap.

Trapped Shaft. This 200-foot-tall shaft descends to the guard room (area W2). The glyph is placed halfway down the shaft. Characters who succeed on a DC 18 Intelligence (Investigation) check notice the faint outline of the glyph. A *detect magic* spell reveals the glyph's aura of evocation magic.

A creature can attempt to chip away the ice encasing the rune and scratch it out by making a DC 20 Dexterity check using thieves' tools or any sharp weapon or tool. On a success, the trap deactivates; otherwise, it triggers.

When a creature who isn't Durixaviinox passes the shaft's halfway point, all the ice explodes from its walls and the glyph disappears. Each creature inside the shaft or within 5 feet of its top must make a DC 18 Dexterity saving throw. A creature climbing the chasm wall has disadvantage on the saving throw. On a failed save, a creature takes 44 (8d10) piercing damage and falls to the floor of the guard room (area W2), taking 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage per 10 feet fallen and landing prone (see "Ice and Bone Spikes" in area W2). On a successful save, a creature takes half as much damage and doesn't fall.

If all the ice is removed from the shaft's walls, creatures without climbing equipment can climb the shaft with a successful DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check, instead of the check normally required (see "Durixaviinox's Rest Features").

W2. Guard Room

The guard room's ceiling is only 25 feet high. This area has the following features:

- "Long ice spikes and frozen bones protrude from the floor, walls, and ceiling of this chamber."
- "The corpses of six giants lie on the floor of this chamber, their flesh preserved in frost."
- (**Secret**) The corpses are giant zombies.
- (**Secret**) Two wraiths wait in the ice, ready to attack.

Undead. When a character passes through the center of the chamber or disturbs a corpse, the six **giant zombies** and the two **wraiths** attack. Four zombies shove intruders into spikes, knock them prone, or grapple characters and pull them away from their allies, while the other two zombies and the wraiths target characters who are prone or who have the lowest AC. The giants have advantage on Strength checks made to grapple and shove Medium or smaller characters. They also use their Shove Away reaction to push creatures into the spikes.

Ice and Bone Spikes. A creature who falls prone in this chamber or who is pushed against the wall or ceiling takes 11 (2d10) piercing damage plus 11 (2d10) cold damage.

The spikes protruding from the walls make them easier to climb. A creature only needs to succeed on a DC 12 Strength (Athletics) check to climb the wall without climbing equipment.

W3. Memory Hall

This area has the following features:

- "Snow covers the floor of this chamber."
- "Frozen corpses and rusted, worthless objects are stuck to the walls behind a thick layer of ice. Their orderly arrangement suggests someone has neatly curated the grotesque display."
- "Two massive ice-covered pillars flank the room's east exit and extend from floor to ceiling. The pillars are carved with images of dragons creating art, music, poetry, and spells."
- (**Secret**) The room contains three traps designed to kill intruders.
- (**Secret**) Galithor, a wight, is imprisoned in the ice on the chamber's west wall.

Snow-Covered Floor. A 1-foot-deep layer of snow covers the chamber's icy floor, making it difficult terrain for Medium or smaller creatures. Dealing 5 or more fire damage to a 5-foot square of snow melts it.

Freezing Runes Trap. A 5-foot-wide band of Draconic runes is carved into the floor beneath the snow. The band starts 10 feet away from the north wall and extends to 10 feet away from the south wall. A *detect magic* spell reveals the runes' aura of evocation magic.

Durixaviinox's Rest Map

A creature who removes the snow from the runes can see how far the runes extend but must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check or activate the trap.

When a creature who isn't Durixaviinox walks, flies, or otherwise crosses over the runes, the trap triggers. The triggering creature must make a DC 18 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, a creature takes 27 (6d8) cold damage and is restrained by ice. On a successful save, a creature takes half as much damage and isn't restrained. While restrained by ice, a creature takes 13 (3d8) cold damage at the start of each of their turns. The ice has AC 17, 27 hit points, vulnerability to fire damage, and immunity to cold, poison, and psychic damage. When the ice is reduced to 0 hit points, any excess damage carries over to the restrained creature, and they are no longer restrained.

Spear Trap. Characters who examine the ceiling and succeed on a DC 18 Intelligence (Investigation) check notice that 2-inch-diameter holes dot the stone on the other side of the ice.

A thin tripwire made from the strong web of a fey spider runs north to south across the room at a height of 6 inches, buried in the snow. A creature who moves the snow around the tripwire must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check or activate the trap.

If the snow is cleared, a creature must succeed on a DC 20 Intelligence (Investigation) check to notice the wire. Once the wire is noticed, it is easily avoided. A creature who cuts the wire must succeed on a DC 20 Dexterity check using thieves' tools or trigger the trap.

When the trap triggers, spears break through the ice and rain down from the ceiling, attacking each creature in the room on initiative count 20 for 1 minute. Each time the trap attacks, make a ranged attack roll with a +10 bonus to hit against each creature in the room. On a hit, a spear deals 13 (2d12) piercing damage.

Freezing Wind Trap. A *detect magic* spell reveals the pillars' auras of evocation magic. Creatures who examine the pillars and succeed on a DC 22 Intelligence (Arcana) check realize the dragon images are cleverly shaped arcane runes that trigger a trap when a creature who isn't Durixaviinox passes between the pillars. A creature can knock over one of the pillars and disarm the trap with a successful DC 20 Strength (Athletics) check. On a failed check, the trap triggers.

When the trap triggers, a blast of freezing wind rushes out from the pillars toward the west side of the room. The creature who triggered the trap and each creature in the chamber must make a DC 18 Strength saving throw. On a failed save, a creature takes 27 (6d8) cold damage, is knocked prone, and is blown directly backward until they reach the chamber's west wall (which may trigger other traps in the room). On a successful save, a creature takes half as much damage, isn't knocked prone, and isn't moved.

Monument to Death. Characters who succeed on a DC 15 Intelligence (History) check know the chamber's icy walls contain artifacts and people of Vexinoth. Durixaviinox created this grim display as a monument to a happier time in his life.

Galithor, a **wight deathguard**, is incapacitated and restrained by the ice on the walls. Creatures who examine the walls and succeed on a DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) check notice Galithor's eyes darting around the room and following creatures. A creature who can see Galithor and succeeds on a DC 22 Wisdom (Insight) check senses he means the characters no harm and is pleading with his eyes to be freed.

A creature wielding a bludgeoning weapon, piercing weapon, or artisan's tools that include an awl, a hammer, a pick, or similar item, can free Galithor from the ice as an action. In thanks for his freedom, Galithor tells the characters about the freezing runes trap and offers to help them battle Durixaviinox. He doesn't know about the other traps because no intruder has ever made it beyond the first.

Galithor has been trapped so long, he doesn't remember much about his life before Durixaviinox sealed him in the wall. He knows that he was a mighty warrior who protected the dragons of Vexinoth and that Durixaviinox is no longer the noble dragon he was.

W4. Frigid Lake

The portal in this chamber fills the area above the surface of the lake with dim light. This area has the following features:

- "A 10-foot-diameter circle of blue energy hums on the north wall. It emits a thin but steady stream of water that sends ripples across the lake dominating the east of the room."
- (**Secret**) The energy circle is a portal connected to the elemental plane of Quintessence.
- (**Secret**) Two cruxes of frost hide at the edge of the water near the west entrance.

Portal. A creature who succeeds on a DC 16 Intelligence (Arcana) check knows this portal is connected to Quintessence and is one-way—it only allows travel from the elemental plane, not to it. A *detect magic* spell reveals the portal's aura of conjuration magic.

If combat occurs in this area while the portal is open, ten **air sparks** with immunity to cold damage emerge through the portal on initiative count 0 for 3 rounds. The sparks use their Wind Sweep attack to hurl intruders into the frigid lake (see "Durixaviinox's Rest Features").

If the characters close the portal (see "Durixaviinox's Rest Features"), Durixaviinox notices when the water stops moving in the throne room (area W5) and hides.

Cruxes of Frost. A creature who succeeds on a DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) check notices two **cruxes of frost** in the water. The cruxes leap onto shore and attack as soon as they notice the characters.

Underwater Opening. A 20-foot-diameter opening at the base of the west wall leads to Durixaviinox's throne (area W5).

Lair Actions

When fighting inside his lair, Durixaviinox can take lair actions. On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), he can take one lair action to cause one of the following effects; he can't use the same lair action two rounds in a row:

Fallen Army. Durixaviinox calls the spirits of his fallen warriors to attack up to five creatures he can see within 90 feet of him. Each target must succeed on a DC 18 Dexterity saving throw or take 10 (3d6) force damage from spectral arrows.

Hailstorm. Durixaviinox creates a magical hailstorm in a 30-foot cube centered on a point he can see within 120 feet of him. The storm lasts until the end of initiative count 20 on the next round. Its area is difficult terrain, and creatures who enter the storm for the first time on a turn or start their turn there must succeed on a DC 18 Dexterity saving throw or take 10 (3d6) cold damage.

Sovereignty. Each enemy who starts their turn within 120 feet of Durixaviinox and is aware of him must succeed on a DC 18 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened of him until the end of initiative count 20 on the next round.

W5. Throne Room

The throne room has the following features:

- "The entire floor of this chamber is an ice-covered lake. A 20-foot-diameter hole in the ice reveals the frigid, dark water below."
- "Glittering treasure sparks against the walls of this chamber, covered in a layer of pale-blue ice."
- "A cracked marble throne fit for a being larger than a Giant stands against the south wall."
- *(If Durixaviinox is here and the characters didn't close the portal in area W4)* "An immense white-scaled dragon sits on the throne."
- (**Secret**) If the characters turned off the portal in area W4 and Durixaviinox is here, he clings to the ceiling.
- (**Secret**) Some of the lake ice is too thin to support the weight of Medium or larger creatures.

The Ruined Providence. The great dragon **Durixaviinox** attacks the intruders when he notices them. If he is clinging to the ceiling, the characters don't notice him when they enter the chamber unless they succeed on a DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check. During battle, Durixaviinox uses his Claw attack to move creatures onto areas of thin ice.

Thin Ice. The map of this lair shows the areas of thin ice. Durixaviinox knows where these patches are. Other creatures can try to spot the thin ice by using an action to make a DC 20 Intelligence (Nature) check. On a success, the creature identifies all the patches of thin ice in the room.

When a Medium or larger creature moves onto a patch of thin ice, the patch is destroyed, and any creatures on the patch fall into the frigid water below (see "Durixaviinox's Rest Features").

Treasure. The treasure frozen to the walls is Durixaviinox's hoard. It takes one creature 30 hours to chip free all the treasure from the hoard. Multiple creatures working together reduce the time proportionally. Dealing 500 fire damage to the ice melts it and reveals the treasure. See "Durixaviinox's Hoard" for more information.

Durixaviinox's Hoard

Durixaviinox salvaged much of his wealth from Vexinoth after it was destroyed. He keeps his hoard frozen to the wall in his throne room (area W5).

The hoard contains the following items:

- *Bowl of commanding water elementals*
- *Draconic visage* (see below)
- *Dragon slayer* (longsword)
- *Bead of force*
- *Potion of clairvoyance*
- *Potion of giant strength* (cloud)
- *Potion of flying*
- 3 pots of *marvelous pigments*
- Vial of *oil of etherealness*
- Vial of *oil of sharpness*
- Copy of *Crog's Guide to Disarming Magic Traps* (see below)
- 50 blue zircons (worth 10 gp each)
- 10 pearls (worth 100 gp each)
- 2 gold chalices (worth 500 gp each)
- 1 diamond (worth 1,000 gp)
- Dragon statue carved from ice that never melts, dusted with diamond dust (worth 1,000 gp)
- 1 ruby (worth 1,000 gp)
- 1 sapphire (worth 1,000 gp)
- 45,021 sp, 15,243 gp, and 1,386 pp

Durixaviinox stands in the frozen ruin of Vexinoth, head curled back in a roar of anguish for the kingdom he lost.

Crog's Guide to Disarming Magic Traps

This book describes various mundane techniques and theories related to foiling magic traps. If you spend 48 hours studying this book, you learn how to overcome certain types of magic traps with your thieves' tools.

If a trap's magic can be dispelled or suppressed by a *dispel magic* spell, you can make a Dexterity check using thieves' tools to achieve the same result. The DC of the Dexterity check is equal to 5 + the DC required to dispel or suppress the trap with *dispel magic* (minimum DC 18). On a failed check, the trap triggers.

Draconic Visage

Wondrous Item, Very Rare (Requires Attunement)

This mask bears the visage of a fearsome white-scaled dragon. When you finish a long rest, you can change the color of the mask's scales to another color on the Draconic Visage Color table.

When you wear the mask, your body becomes covered in dragon scales, granting you a +1 bonus to AC and resistance to the damage type associated with the mask's color. You can speak and understand Draconic, and you have advantage on Charisma checks made to influence dragons.

Additionally, when you wear the mask and deal damage to a creature, you can deal an extra 3d10 damage of the type associated with the mask's color. The mask can deal extra damage in this way three times and regains all expended uses daily at dawn.

Draconic Visage Color

Color	Damage Type
Black	Acid
Blue	Lightning
Green	Poison
Red	Fire
White	Cold

Draconic Visage

Durixaviinox's Rest Stat Blocks

The following stat blocks appear in the lair.

Air Spark

CR 15 Minion

Small Elemental (Air), Any Alignment — 1,300 XP

Armor Class 13
Hit Points 22
Speed 20 ft., fly 50 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (–1)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	9 (–1)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)

Skills Perception +5
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15
Languages Auran, Common
Proficiency Bonus +5

Minion. If the spark takes damage from an attack or as the result of a failed saving throw, their hit points are reduced to 0. If the spark takes damage from another effect, they die if the damage equals or exceeds their hit point maximum; otherwise they take no damage.

Actions

Wind Sweep (Group Attack). *Melee Spell Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 slashing damage, and if this attack was made by more than one air spark against a Large or smaller creature, the sparks can move that creature up to 5 feet horizontally for each spark that joined the attack.

Crux of Frost

An entity of mirrored ice, the crux of frost is almost always covered by a frosted facade. They are commonly called frigid glintmasks due to their ability to imperfectly mimic creatures, inflicting supernatural terror on those they reflect. This fear makes the reflected creature more vulnerable to harm, their form and spirit withering to a brittle consistency under the crux's scrutiny.

Most thieves hear the words "magic trap" then turn around and head back to their guilds empty-handed. With my simple sixteen-step technique, you'll be filling up every sack you have with every treasure a wizard's tower has to offer.

Crog's Guide to Disarming Magic Traps

Crux of Frost

CR 8 Controller

Medium Elemental (Water), Any Alignment — 3,900 XP

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)
Hit Points 135 (30d8)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	18 (+4)

Skills Deception +10, Insight +9, Perception +6
Damage Immunities cold, poison
Condition Immunities invisible, poisoned
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 16
Languages Aquan, Common, plus the languages known by a creature reflected by Frosted Reflection
Proficiency Bonus +3

Scintillating. The crux can't benefit from being invisible.

Actions

Multiattack. The crux makes two Rimeglass Touch attacks, and they can use Frosted Reflection or It Stares Back, if available.

Rimeglass Touch. *Melee or Ranged Spell Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 17 (3d8 + 4) cold damage, and the target can't see or hear creatures other than themself and the crux until the start of the crux's next turn.

Frosted Reflection. The crux reflects the appearance of a specific Medium or Small creature they've seen within the last week. This appearance is illusory and imperfect, showing a frostbitten version of the creature. The illusion lasts until the crux takes thunder damage, uses this action again, or is incapacitated. For the duration, the crux additionally knows any languages that creature knows.

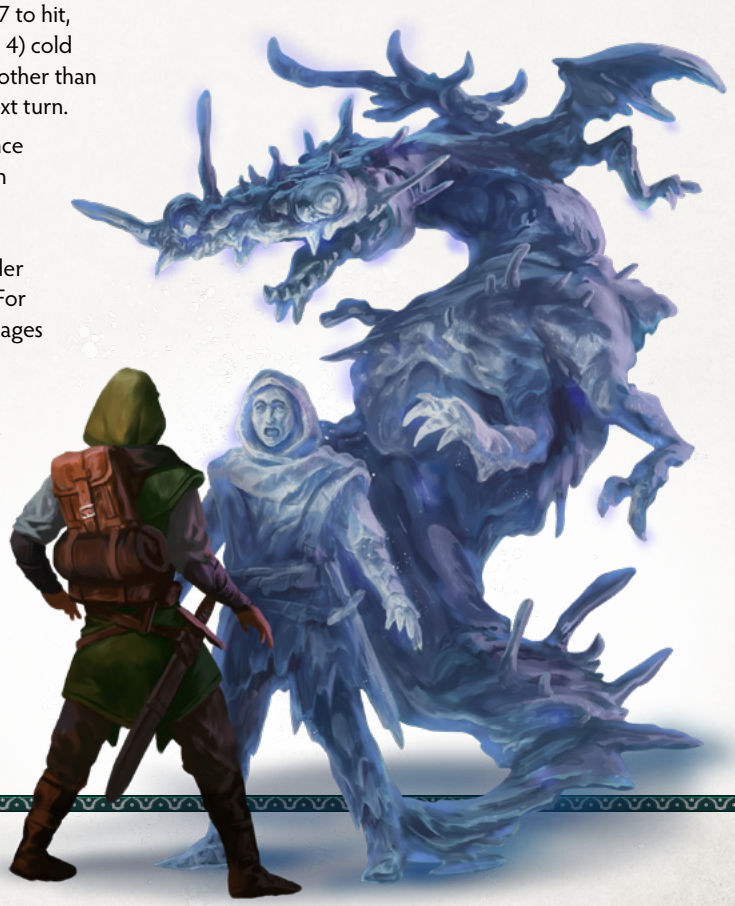
It Stares Back (Recharge 5–6). The crux imposes fragility on a creature within 60 feet of them who is reflected by the crux's Frosted Reflection. If the target can see the crux, the target must make a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, the target is frightened of the crux for 1 minute (save ends at end of turn), or until the crux stops reflecting them. While frightened in this way, whenever the target takes damage, they take an extra 11 (2d10) psychic damage. On a successful save, the target isn't frightened, and they are immune to the It Stares Back of all cruxes for 24 hours.

Bonus Actions

Convocation of Ice (1/Day). The crux imbues the power of ice in themself or another Elemental they can see within 30 feet of them, granting one of the following effects of that Elemental's choice:

Frigid Sheen. The Elemental gains a mirror sheen that reflects damage for 1 minute. When the Elemental is hit with an attack by a creature they can see within 30 feet of them, the Elemental can use a reaction to reflect the attack. The Elemental is unaffected by the attack, and the attacker must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save, the attack's damage and effects are reflected back at the attacker as if the attack originated from the Elemental, turning the attacker into the target. On a successful save, the attacker takes half as much damage, but suffers no other effect.

Frost Squall. Frost swirls around the Elemental for 1 minute. For the duration, each non-Elemental creature who starts their turn within 15 feet of the Elemental has their speed reduced to 15 feet unless it is already lower until the end of their turn, and the first time they willingly move before the start of their next turn, they take 10 (3d6) cold damage.



Durixaviinox

CR 20 Solo

Gargantuan Dragon, Lawful Evil

25,000 XP

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)
Hit Points 370 (20d20 + 160)
Speed 40 ft., burrow 40 ft., fly 80 ft., swim 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
26 (+8)	10 (+0)	26 (+8)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws Con +14, Wis +8, Cha +10
Skills Intimidation +10, Perception +8, Persuasion +10
Damage Immunities cold, force
Condition Immunities charmed, dazed, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, stunned
Senses blindsight 120 ft., truesight 60 ft., passive Perception 18
Languages Common, Draconic
Proficiency Bonus +6

Frosted Resistance (3/Day). When Durixaviinox fails a saving throw, he can succeed instead. When he does, his speed is halved and he can't take the Disengage action until the end of his next turn.

Hoarfrost. Cold damage dealt by Durixaviinox ignores damage resistance.

Ice Walk. Durixaviinox can move across and climb icy surfaces without needing to make an ability check. Additionally, difficult terrain composed of ice or snow doesn't cost him extra movement.

Actions

Multiattack. Durixaviinox makes one Bite attack and two Claw attacks.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +14 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 19 (2d10 + 8) piercing damage plus 9 (2d8) cold damage, and the target can't take reactions until the end of their next turn.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +14 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (2d6 + 8) slashing damage, and Durixaviinox can move the target up to 15 feet horizontally.

Numbing Breath (Recharge 5–6). Durixaviinox exhales a freezing blast in a 90-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 22 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, a creature takes 42 (12d6) cold damage and is restrained until the end of their next turn. On a successful save, a creature takes half as much damage and isn't restrained.

Bonus Actions

Icy Grip. Durixaviinox encases a creature he can see within 60 feet of him in ice. The target must make a DC 18 Strength saving throw. On a failed save, a creature takes 22 (4d10) cold damage and is restrained. On a successful save, a target takes half as much damage and isn't restrained. A creature can use an action to break themself or another creature they can reach out of the ice, ending the restrained condition.

Reactions

Withering Frost. When a creature within 5 feet of Durixaviinox hits him with an attack, Durixaviinox releases a burst of cold energy. Each creature within 5 feet of him must succeed on a DC 18 Constitution saving throw or take 10 (3d6) cold damage.

Villain Actions

Durixaviinox has three villain actions. He can take each action once during an encounter after an enemy's turn. He can take these actions in any order but can use only one per round.

Action 1: Raging Blizzard. Durixaviinox beats his wings, and frigid winds and hail swirl around him. Each creature within 120 feet of him must make a DC 18 Strength saving throw. On a failed save, a creature takes 21 (6d6) bludgeoning damage, is pushed 60 feet directly away from Durixaviinox, and is knocked prone. On a successful save, a creature takes half as much damage and isn't pushed or knocked prone.

Action 2: Royal Defense. Durixaviinox calls the faithful soul of a spectral guard to fight at his side. The guard uses the **frost giant wind sprinter** stat block, but they are an Undead instead of a Giant. The guard acts immediately after Durixaviinox and follows his verbal commands. While the guard is within 60 feet of Durixaviinox, Durixaviinox gains resistance to all damage. If Durixaviinox dies, the guard is destroyed.

Action 3: Frost Cataclysm. Durixaviinox releases a pulse of frigid energy followed by a shock wave of force in a 120-foot-radius sphere centered on him. Each enemy in that area must make a DC 18 Constitution saving throw, taking 45 (10d8) cold damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. Immediately after, each enemy in that area must make a DC 18 Strength saving throw, taking 45 (10d8) force damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Frost Giant Wind Sprinter

CR 8 Skirmisher
3,900 XP

Huge Giant, Any Alignment

Armor Class 15 (issenblau plating)
Hit Points 115 (11d12 + 44)
Speed 60 ft., climb 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
23 (+6)	9 (–1)	18 (+4)	9 (–1)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Str +9, Con +7
Skills Athletics +9, Intimidation +3, Perception +3
Damage Immunities cold
Senses passive Perception 13
Languages Giant
Proficiency Bonus +3

Crush Underfoot. When the wind sprinter enters a Medium or smaller enemy's space, the enemy must choose to either fall prone or take 10 (3d6) bludgeoning damage. Each enemy can be affected by this trait only once per turn.

Oncoming Storm. Wisps of stinging snow and icy winds surround the wind sprinter. When an enemy concentrating on a power, a spell, or a similar effect starts their turn within 15 feet of the wind sprinter, the enemy must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or lose concentration.

Actions

Multiattack. The wind sprinter makes two Ice Axe attacks.

Ice Axe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 22 (3d10 + 6) slashing damage.

Rock. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, range 60/240 ft., one target. *Hit:* 28 (4d10 + 6) bludgeoning damage.

Blizzard Surge (Recharge 5–6). The wind sprinter moves up to their speed in a straight line. At any point during this move, they can make up to three Ice Axe attacks against different creatures.

Reactions

Begone, Smallfolk! After a Medium or smaller creature makes an opportunity attack against the wind sprinter, the wind sprinter can make an Ice Axe attack against that creature.

Giant Zombie

CR 4 Brute
1,100 XP

Huge Undead, Typically Neutral Evil

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)
Hit Points 84 (8d12 + 32)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	8 (–1)	18 (+4)	3 (–4)	5 (–3)	4 (–3)

Damage Vulnerabilities radiant
Damage Immunities poison
Condition Immunities exhaustion, poisoned
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 7
Languages understands the languages they knew in life but can't speak
Proficiency Bonus +2

Negative Nerves. Whenever a creature deals 7 damage or less to the zombie, the zombie takes no damage instead.

Actions

Multiattack. The zombie makes two Fist attacks.

Fist. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage, and if the target is Large or smaller, they are grappled (escape DC 14). The zombie has two fists, each of which can grapple one target.

Toxic Exhalation (Recharge 5–6). The zombie spews toxic vomit in a 15-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw, taking 14 (4d6) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Reactions

Shove Away. When a Huge or smaller creature within 10 feet of the zombie hits them with a melee attack, the zombie pushes the creature up to 10 feet away.

My rule was glorious, and the dragons, giants, and others who I protected lived prosperous lives. Those that remain–the dead that walk–don't remember the time that was. They are mindless drones. The lucky ones died ages ago and stayed dead.

Durixaviinox

Specter

CR 1 Skirmisher

Medium Undead (Incorporeal), Typically Chaotic Evil — 200 XP

Armor Class 11
Hit Points 19 (3d8 + 6)
Speed 0 ft., fly 50 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
1 (–5)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	15 (+2)

Damage Resistance acid, cold, fire, lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from mundane attacks
Damage Immunities necrotic, poison
Condition Immunities charmed, dazed, exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained, unconscious
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10
Languages the languages they knew in life
Proficiency Bonus +2

Corrupting Phasing. The specter can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. The specter takes 5 (1d10) force damage if they end their turn inside an object. A creature takes 2 (1d4) necrotic damage the first time a specter passes through them on a turn.

Actions

Decaying Touch. *Melee Spell Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 7 (2d6) necrotic damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or spend 1 Hit Die without any benefit. If the target has no Hit Dice to spend, they drop to 0 hit points instead.

If a Humanoid dies within 1 minute of being hit by this attack, their spirit rises as a **specter** under the GM's control in an unoccupied space nearest to where that Humanoid died.

Bonus Actions

Hidden Movement (Recharge 5–6). The specter turns invisible and then moves up to their speed. At the end of this movement, the invisibility ends.

My breath carries the sorrow of thousands of dead dragons. Their despair will freeze the heart of my sister and make brittle anything else that stands in the way of my revenge for those lost.

Durixaviinox

Troll

CR 5 Brute

Large Giant, Typically Chaotic Evil — 1,800 XP

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)
Hit Points 94 (9d10 + 45)
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	13 (+1)	20 (+5)	7 (–2)	9 (–1)	7 (–2)

Saving Throws Con +8
Skills Athletics +7, Perception +5
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15
Languages Giant
Proficiency Bonus +3

Relentless Hunger. When the troll is reduced to 0 hit points by any damage other than acid or fire damage, they don't die or fall unconscious, and can continue moving and taking actions as usual. The troll only dies if they end their turn with 0 hit points, if acid or fire damage reduces them to 0 hit points, or if they take acid or fire damage while they have 0 hit points.

Sluggish. For 1 hour after sleep or another period of unconsciousness, the troll's speed is halved and they can't use Multiattack.

Actions

Multiattack. The troll makes one Bite attack and two Claw attacks.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 14 (3d6 + 4) piercing damage. If the target is not a Construct, an Elemental, or a Plant, the troll regains hit points equal to the damage dealt. If this attack reduces the target to 0 hit points, the troll regains twice as many hit points as they otherwise would with this attack.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) slashing damage.

Crash Through. The troll moves up to their speed in a straight line, smashing through mundane obstacles in their path. The troll can enter the spaces of Large or smaller creatures during this movement, forcing those creatures to make a DC 15 Strength saving throw. On a failed save, a creature takes 14 (4d6) bludgeoning damage and falls prone. On a successful save, a creature takes half as much damage and doesn't fall prone.

During this move, mundane objects that aren't worn or carried by a creature take 14 (4d6) damage when the troll enters their space. If the troll moves into the space of a Large or larger object and this damage doesn't destroy it, the troll's movement stops and they are stunned until the end of their next turn.

Reactions

Spiteful Retort. When the troll is reduced to 0 hit points and doesn't die, they can make a Bite attack against a creature within 5 feet of them.

Wight Deathguard

Retainer

Medium Undead, Any Alignment

Armor Class 15 (medium armor)
Hit Points Eight times their level (number of d10 Hit Dice equal to their level)
Speed 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws +PB to all
Skills Intimidation +3 plus PB, Perception +0 plus PB
Damage Resistances necrotic
Damage Immunities poison
Condition Immunities exhaustion, poisoned
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10 plus PB
Languages the languages they knew in life
Proficiency Bonus (PB) equals the mentor's bonus

Signature Attack (Longsword). *Melee Attack:* +3 plus PB to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1d8 plus PB slashing damage. Beginning at 7th level, the deathguard can make this attack twice, instead of once, when they take the Attack action on their turn.

Features

3rd Level: Blood for Blood (3/Day). As a reaction to an ally the deathguard can see within 5 feet of them being hit with an attack, the deathguard redirects the attack to themself, potentially causing the attack to miss. If the attacker is within 5 feet of the deathguard, the deathguard can make a signature attack against the attacker.

5th Level: Soul Thief (3/Day). As an action, the deathguard shrouds themself in dark energy. The deathguard regains PBd6 hit points, and each enemy within 5 feet of the deathguard must make a DC 10 plus PB Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, a target takes PBd6 necrotic damage. On a successful save, a target takes half as much damage.

7th Level: This Way! (3/Day). As an action, the deathguard moves up to their speed without provoking opportunity attacks. Each ally the deathguard passes within 5 feet of during the move can use a reaction to move up to their speed in the same direction as the deathguard without provoking opportunity attacks. Until the start of the deathguard's next turn, attacks against these allies have disadvantage.

Wraith

CR 5 Controller

Medium Undead (Incorporeal), Typically Chaotic Evil

1,800 XP

Armor Class 12
Hit Points 58 (9d8 + 18)
Speed 0 ft., fly 60 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6 (–2)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	17 (+3)

Damage Resistance acid, cold, fire, lightning, necrotic, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from mundane attacks
Damage Immunities poison, psychic
Condition Immunities charmed, dazed, exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained, unconscious
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12
Languages the languages they knew in life
Proficiency Bonus +3

Agonizing Phasing. The wraith can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. The wraith takes 5 (1d10) force damage if they end their turn inside an object. A creature takes 5 (1d10) psychic damage the first time a wraith passes through them on a turn.

Throes of Oblivion. When the wraith dies, they collapse inward, creating a burst of painful psychic energy. Each creature within 20 feet of the wraith must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw, taking 18 (4d8) psychic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Actions

Agonizing Touch. *Melee Spell Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 14 (4d6) psychic damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw or be dazed (save ends at end of turn). Each time a target dazed in this way fails a saving throw to end the condition, their hit point maximum is halved. This effect is cumulative, and the reduction lasts until the target finishes a short or long rest.

If a Humanoid dies within 1 minute of being hit by this attack, their spirit rises as a **specter** under the wraith's control in an unoccupied space nearest to where that Humanoid died.

Psychic Enervation. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +6 to hit, range 60 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 10 (3d6) psychic damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw or fall prone and be frightened of the wraith for 1 minute (save ends at end of turn). While frightened in this way, the target can't stand up.

Reactions

Denied Vitality. When a creature who the wraith can see within 30 feet of them regains hit points, the wraith can attempt to sap the life energy restoring the creature. The creature must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or only regain half the number of hit points they otherwise would regain.

Coronal Hollow

Optimized for Five 15th-Level Characters

An ancient creature of nightmares and a manipulator of acid and shadows, Qazyldrath (*KAZZ-ill-drath*) is a monster who has haunted mortal minds ever since the dragon's wings first engulfed the light of the sun. This gloom dragon's venerable age is surpassed only by the fear they command. Also known as the Sun Eater and the Silent Decay, Qazyldrath features heavily in the oral tradition of draconic ancestries; they're said to be one of the progenitors of lesser dragons and the one responsible for the viciousness of dragonkind.

Though Qazyldrath hasn't been seen in millennia, their influence is ever-present across the timescape. Many elven dialects still use variations of the dragon's name for the word "eclipse." Some people believe darkness amplifies Qazyldrath's power, and the Sun Eater will one day return to plunge the world into eternal shadow.

Qazyldrath lairs in the Coronal Hollow, a demiplane situated in the cold coronal hole of a sun. The ancient gloom dragon has eclipsed this sun since the dawn of time. In the lightless abyss, Qazyldrath's power grows ever stronger, and they whisper viciousness and malice into the minds of mortals. Darkness and silence pervade the damp vastness of the hollow, and the servitors inside hungrily consume any remaining traces of light and life.

Coronal Hollow Story Hooks

You can use one of the following story hooks to integrate this lair into an adventure:

Dying Sun. Sages have discovered that the sun's light is growing dimmer over time, and the process is accelerating. The scholars made a breakthrough discovery linking an acid lake—the entrance to the Coronal Hollow—with this phenomenon. They ask the characters to venture into the lake and investigate.

Frozen Flame. A sacred torch that burned for centuries in the temple of a sun deity has extinguished mysteriously. Ancient scriptures point to the Coronal Hollow as the only place where the flame will reignite. The sun priests ask the characters to carry the relic there to reignite it. If the characters return with a lit torch, the priests give them a *talisman of pure good*.

Luminous Exodus. The characters encounter Emanael, a dying angel who escaped the Coronal Hollow and is being consumed by shadow. Moments before dying, Emanael tells the characters that celestials and other creatures of light are being captured across the timescape and brought to the Coronal Hollow for wicked experiments.

Coronal Hollow Features

Unless otherwise noted, each area of the Coronal Hollow has the following features:

Ceilings. Ceilings in the Coronal Hollow are 120 feet high.

Illumination. Damp darkness saturates the Coronal Hollow, which has no light sources.

Noxious Vents. Slits in the obsidian walls spew acid at intruders. A character who starts their turn within 5 feet of a wall has a 50 percent chance of taking 9 (2d8) acid damage. These vents hiss loudly when they erupt, drowning out other noises, so creatures in an area can't hear creatures outside that area.

Wyrm Servitors

The creatures who serve Qazyldrath are all violent and malicious, no matter the extent of their sentience or intelligence. Most of them are fanatically devoted to the ancient dragon, believing the wyrm is an apocalyptic, immortal force. The cultists (see area B5) and the sunlight nexus (see area B4) retreat and seek reinforcements from other areas if they're losing a fight. Otherwise, they all fight intruders to the death.

Captured Servitors. A character who succeeds on a DC 18 Charisma (Deception, Intimidation, or Persuasion) check can convince a captured cultist (see area B5) or sunlight nexus (see area B4) to reveal one of the following cryptic pieces of information:

- "What a glorious day it is for Qazyldrath indeed, that two creatures of light have been caught." (see areas B5 and B6)
- "Qazyldrath's treasure is past the writhing darkness." (see area B6)
- "Beware the statue in the place where treasure gleams." (see area B7)

Obscured. A servitor has advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks to remain hidden.

Light-Hungry. A servitor has advantage on the first attack roll they make on their turn against a creature carrying a light source.

Resting in the Coronal Hollow

The characters can take a short rest without incident in the test bed (area B5) and the light-harvesting depths (area B6) once those areas are cleared of enemies. If the characters attempt to take a long rest in those areas, or rest elsewhere in the Coronal Hollow, there is a 50 percent

chance one **vampire** cultist finds them halfway through their rest. If the vampire isn't defeated in three rounds of combat, 1d4 **vampire spawn** arrive during the vampire's turn on the fourth round.

Entering the Coronal Hollow

The entrance to the Coronal Hollow demiplane lies beneath a lake of acid in a deep cave in the Mundane World. The lake is 150 feet deep. A creature who enters the lake for the first time on a turn or starts their turn there must make a DC 16 Constitution saving throw, taking 14 (4d6) acid damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

At the bottom of the lake lies a 10-foot-diameter portal that shimmers glittery black. When a creature other than Qazyldrath swims through the portal, they enter area B1 and the portal remains open. When Qazyldrath swims through this portal, they are transported directly to their chamber (area B8) and the portal closes. Qazyldrath can reopen the portal from their chamber (area B8) by concentrating on the portal for 1 minute, as if concentrating on a spell.

Coronal Hollow Areas

The following areas are keyed to the Coronal Hollow Map.

B1. Pressure Tunnel

The portal opens to a 10-foot-high tunnel that deters unwanted visits with small corrosive gas geysers. It has the following features:

- "The humid, dark tunnel winds down into the distance, with frothing, ovular slits exposed in the cold stone."
- "Tremors vibrate up and down the tunnel's length, like a shiver down a spine, and a small shriek in the distance is either a hissing release or a scream."

Corrosive Vents. The vents spew acid in short, irregular bursts. Each creature who traverses the tunnel must make a DC 19 Dexterity saving throw, taking 18 (4d8) acid damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. If a creature can't see in the tunnel due to darkness or another reason, they make this saving throw with disadvantage.

B2. Abyssal Swamp

The tunnel opens into a sprawling, unnatural swamp—a pool of extraplanar, acidic liquid—in which Qazyldrath submerges themself to communicate with the mortal agents who serve them. It has the following features:

- "An expanse of black liquid forms an unnatural swamp that seeps up this cavern's walls—thicker than water, but thinner than muck. Ripples occasionally disrupt the viscous surface."
- "Obsidian, plant-shaped formations stick out of the liquid."
- "Drifting silently over the swamp are four 6-foot-tall mushrooms with long, prehensile eyestalks that dangle from their cap. Like jellyfish, they waft aimlessly, their black-and-brown caps like dancing swirls of ichor."
- "Two paths on the opposite side of the room rise from the swamp—one leading northwest, one leading northeast."
- (**Secret**) Six bog bodies lurk in the pool.
- (**Secret**) The swamp can act as a scrying pool.

Swamp Water. The swamp water is 30 feet deep. A creature takes 3 (1d6) acid damage when they enter the water for the first time on a turn or start their turn there. The acid damage increases by 3 (1d6) each consecutive turn spent in the water, to a maximum of 70 (20d6) acid damage.

The swamp doesn't count as obviously dangerous ground for the purposes of the rot angel's Hypnotic Beam.

Servants of Death. Four **rot angels** hover over the swamp. They serve Qazyldrath, who they believe is an apocalyptic god of death, and they attack any creature who disturbs them or the swamp. If the rot angels engage in combat, six **empowered bog bodies** emerge from the swamp at the start of the second round of combat.

Branching Paths. The northwest path leads to the cove of nightmares (area B3), while the northeast path leads to the abnegation chamber (area B4). A creature

Rot Angel

Standing five to six feet tall, floating black-and-brown mushrooms move about the swamp like jellyfish, their thirteen prehensile eyestalks dangling beneath their cap. These rot angels are in fact celestials, typically serving gods of death in their search for the recently deceased. The touch of their stalk-like proboscises causes rapid decay in organic matter.

Rot Angel

Coronal Hollow Map

who succeeds on a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception or Survival) check to inspect both paths determines that the left path is eerily silent and dark, while the right path has a faint light, as well as signs of glass scraping against stone.

Scrying Swamp. A creature who can cast spells and who is submerged at least 10 feet deep in the swamp water senses that the swamp is connecting to their mind. While submerged, a creature who can cast spells can cast the *scrying* spell, even if they can't normally, on a creature in the Mundane World without expending a spell slot or requiring material components. This spell uses the creature's spellcasting ability, but due to the swamp's strength, the target has a −10 penalty to their saving throw instead of the spell's normal modifiers. While scrying on a target, the creature can also cast a *sending* spell on that target, even if they can't normally, without expending a spell slot or requiring material components. Once a creature uses the pool to cast a *scrying* or *sending* spell, that creature can't cast that spell in this way again for 24 hours.

B3. Cove of Nightmares

This small cavern's walls are made of smooth obsidian, making it difficult to locate an exit in the dark. The cove has the following features:

- "The natural cavern wall gives way to smooth, deep obsidian that is too much like a mirror, refracting your silhouettes onto other walls endlessly into the dark."
- (**Secret**) Two deep dreamers hover 30 feet off the ground.
- (**Secret**) There is a path to the light-harvesting depths (area B6) and Qazyldrath's lair (area B8) to the north, as well as a secret door to the test bed (area B5) to the southwest.

Deep Dreamers and Dark Dreams. The cultists in the test bed (area B5) use two **deep dreamers** as guards. Since the cultists are vampires and don't sleep—and thus don't dream—the deep dreamers have no interest in them. The deep dreamers use their spores to share their apocalyptic dreams, pulling any creatures in the cove into visions of a beautiful end. Each creature who enters the cavern witnesses the glorious death of the sun, the birth of a new dark world, and themself as a creature of shadow, happy and sated in the dark world.

A creature affected by the spores must succeed on a DC 17 Intelligence saving throw or be pulled deeper into the reverie and be dazed while they remain in the cove. The deep dreamers don't initiate combat, happy to sup on dreams unless attacked. If the deep dreamers are killed, the spores immediately lose their effectiveness and all their effects end.

Secret Test Bed. The door to the test bed (area B5) is spotted by a creature who has a passive Wisdom (Perception) score of 22 or higher. A creature who searches for a secret door finds it with a successful DC 20 Intelligence (Investigation) check.

Content Warning: Suffocation

The essence of mist manipulates the breath of their enemies. If you or any of your players find descriptions of suffocation upsetting, you may want to avoid using the elemental or reflavor their abilities.

B4. Abnegation Chamber

This cavern chamber, where Qazyldrath's cultists operate, is a natural pseudo-laboratory. It has the following features:

- "Light emanates from one of the chamber's occupants, an angelic creature of stained glass and sunlight who is in hushed conversation with the silhouette of a cloaked humanoid formed of mist and chill."
- "Tables, desks, and other furniture litter what is otherwise a natural cavern. The furniture is covered in notes, diagrams, and drawings."
- "The brilliant angelic being holds a thick black tome bound with three leather straps."

God-Loathing Elementals. The cavern's two occupants are Spicule (a **sunlight nexus**) and Brume (an **essence of mist**). These elementals serve Qazyldrath as powerful cult leaders. Spicule loathes deities of light, and though she believes Qazyldrath is no god, she's confident the ancient dragon will slaughter light deities while bringing about the apocalypse. Meanwhile, Brume—a creation of malice and violence—serves as a vicious extension of the dragon's will, enacting cruelty gleefully in their name if it means he can kill the very gods who bound him to this form.

Spicule and Brume are willing to explain their beliefs if given the chance to talk, and they're glad to stop or delay the adventurers from getting to the light-harvesting depths (area B6). The cult leaders are cold, condescending, derisive toward divinity, and scornful of clerics or paladins. They are quick to attack if the characters attempt to wrap up the conversation.

Laboratory. A creature who succeeds on a DC 18 Intelligence (Investigation) or Wisdom (Perception) check notices diagrams of angels bound by black ropes, with arcane runes that hint at "draining power and light." They also observe that makeshift shelves hold jars of hearts, eyes, and other body parts of various creatures, while severed wings are tucked under a table. The drawings hint at the empyrean stag being drained in the next room (area B6), while the organs were harvested in the test bed (area B5).

Tome. Spicule's tome, named the *Heavenkiller Chronicles*, contains the culmination of many years of researching celestials (see "Qazyldrath's Hoard").

Content Warning: Body Horror

In area B5 of this lair, cultists cut apart a captured lightbender as part of a profane ritual. If you wish to limit body horror in your game, instead of the cultists cutting up the lightbender, they chant and perform a magic ritual that causes the captive's life to fade.

B5. Test Bed

This cavern's giant obsidian slab serves as a harvesting table for Qazyldrath's cultists to dissect and defile creatures of light for profane rituals. It has the following features:

- "Three cloaked figures surround an obsidian slab where a massive lion-like creature lies restrained, heavily injured and struggling to breathe."
- "A cloaked figure cuts a deep gouge in the prisoner's chest."

Cultists. Eritha (a **vampire**) and two **vampire spawn** cultists are harvesting the heart of a **lightbender companion** for use in profane rituals to create darkness. The vampire spawn attack the characters immediately. Eritha doesn't engage in combat and continues cutting open the lightbender until the characters damage her. If the vampire isn't interrupted, she kills the lightbender at the end of her second turn after the characters notice her.

Restraints. The lightbender is held by five restraints that prevent them from teleporting. Each restraint has AC 17, 25 hit points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage.

Lightbender. If freed, the lightbender aids the characters in the fight against Qazyldrath. The lightbender can stay with the party or leave to find a new caregiver at your discretion.

B6. Light-Harvesting Depths

Divine creatures imprisoned in the light-harvesting depths are drained of their divinity, which is then used to empower Qazyldrath. This area has the following features:

- "The floor, walls, and ceiling writhe as tendrils of black ichor shift unnaturally toward slivers of light."
- "A single mournful bay pierces the quiet sounds of movement. A gleaming stag, their horns radiating dimming light, fights against the tendril restraining them, their light steadily dimming."
- (**Secret**) Two tendrils hide the way to the treasure hoard (area B7).

Tendrils. Twelve tendrils in this room block creatures outside this chamber from seeing into it and vice versa. Each tendril has AC 20, 40 hit points, and immunity to acid, necrotic, poison, and psychic damage. In addition, if a creature deals acid damage to a tendril, the tendril takes no damage and instead regains hit points equal to the damage dealt.

When a creature enters this room, they must succeed on a DC 17 Dexterity saving throw or be restrained by a tendril (save ends at end of turn). A restrained creature takes 16 (3d10) necrotic damage at the start of each of their turns. Each tendril can restrain one creature.

A creature who succeeds on a DC 18 Intelligence (Arcana or Religion) check can tell the tendrils drain the life and light out of celestials to empower Qazyldrath.

Stag. The **empyrean stag** was stolen from a forest by Qazyldrath's servants. If the stag isn't freed within 1 minute of the characters noticing them, the stag dies and Qazyldrath is empowered (see area B8). If Spicule and Brume successfully delayed the characters, you can decide that it takes less time for the stag to die.

Even if the stag is freed, they are in no condition to aid the characters in combat against the dragon. Once freed, the stag uses their Starcall action to damage any remaining tendrils and restore 15 hit points to the characters. The stag also explains that the tendrils are a way for Qazyldrath to empower themself.

Treasure Hoard. Two tendrils on the east wall hide the way to the treasure hoard (area B7). The opening is revealed if the tendrils are destroyed. A creature who has a passive Wisdom (Perception) score of 22 or higher, or who searches for a secret door and succeeds on a DC 20 Intelligence (Investigation) check, notices the path to the hoard.

B7. Treasure Hoard

This cavern is where Qazyldrath amasses their treasures, whether mundane, arcane, or otherworldly. It has the following features:

- "Three crumbling statues with expressions of despair stand on display, along with other fine art pieces and relics. A mountain of coins dominates the far end of the cavern."

Lair Actions

When fighting inside their lair, Qazyldrath can take lair actions. On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), Qazyldrath can take one lair action to cause one of the following effects; Qazyldrath can't use the same lair action two rounds in a row:

Acidic Gas. Corrosive gas erupts in a 10-foot-radius sphere centered on a point Qazyldrath can see within 120 feet of them. Each creature in that area must succeed on a DC 19 Constitution saving throw or take 18 (4d8) acid damage.

Consume Light. Qazyldrath extinguishes one or more light sources they can see within 120 feet of them. Qazyldrath regains 5 (1d10) hit points for each light source they extinguished.

Hungry Gloom. Grasping shadows sap the vitality of each enemy in dim light or darkness within 120 feet of Qazyldrath. Each target must succeed on a DC 19 Strength saving throw or take 13 (3d8) necrotic damage and be restrained until the end of initiative count 20 on the next round.

- "A black wooden staff with veins of obsidian and black opal lies on a pedestal."
- (**Secret**) Two of the statues are disguised lacunas.

Lacunas. Two **lacunas** stand near the door, disguised as crumbling statues. The lacunas feed off the latent loneliness of Qazyldrath's remote demiplane, as well as the violence the ancient dragon commits against the Mundane World. As creatures who loathe joy, the lacunas attack immediately if the characters find joy in the mountainous treasure hoard.

Treasure. This cavern contains Qazyldrath's treasure hoard. See "Qazyldrath's Hoard" for more information.

B8. Qazyldrath's Chamber

Qazyldrath resides in the darkest depths of the demiplane, biding their time, drinking in light and divinity, and growing in power. The lair has the following features:

- "Dark acid pools and hissing geysers churn in the deepest pits of the expansive cavern, filling the gaping opening with eerie whistles."
- "A single glowing eye opens in the dark, fixating on you from across the shadowy expanse. The darkness swells around the massive draconic silhouette as Qazyldrath rises."
- *(If the empyrean stag in area B6 was drained of divinity)* "A shimmering gold glow radiates from the ancient dragon, divinity wrenched from a celestial—then as you watch, the radiance rots to black holiness."

Qazyldrath. If **Qazyldrath** notices the intruders, they immediately attack, flying 60 feet into the air to begin combat. If the empyrean stag in the light-harvesting depths (area B6) was drained of divinity, Qazyldrath begins combat with 100 temporary hit points. Qazyldrath uses their Claw attack to push creatures into the pools or against the walls.

Acid Pools. Each acid pool is 50 feet deep. When a creature enters an acid pool for the first time on a turn or starts their turn in one, they take 19 (3d12) acid damage.

Treasure. If Qazyldrath is killed and a creature succeeds on a DC 18 Wisdom (Medicine or Survival) check to inspect the dragon's corpse, the creature finds a *sun blade* embedded in Qazyldrath's chest.

Qazyldrath's Hoard

Qazyldrath's treasure hoard is in a cavern (area B7), accumulated by their cultists and servants over millennia.

The hoard contains the following items:

- *Cloak of the bat*
- *Dagger of venom*
- *Sun eater staff* (see below)
- 2 *potions of clairvoyance*
- 2 *potions of flying*
- 2 *potions of gaseous form*
- 2 vials of *oil of sharpness*
- The *Heavenkiller Chronicles* (see below)
- Black onyx bowl (worth 500 gp)
- Porcelain vase adorned with stylized draconic art (worth 2,000 gp)
- Dragon-horn comb engraved with gothic imagery and veined with black tourmaline (3,000 gp)
- Marble statue of a weeping human with black opal eyes (worth 4,500 gp)
- Gold cup with serpentine handles, embedded with emeralds (worth 5,000 gp)
- Ring inlaid with smooth obsidian surrounded by black diamonds (worth 5,000 gp)
- 100,000 cp, 40,000 sp, 10,000 gp, and 1,500 pp

Heavenkiller Chronicles

Spicule's vast tome contains secrets concerning celestials and how to use them to fuel dark magic. You must spend 50 hours studying this tome to gain the following benefits:

- You have advantage on Intelligence checks to determine the vulnerabilities and weaknesses of Celestials.
- You deal an extra 9 (2d8) damage to Celestials when you hit them with an attack.
- You know how to harvest parts of Celestials and use them to fuel dark magic. You can harvest a heart, eye, or other useful organ from a Celestial's corpse with a successful DC 16 Wisdom (Survival) check. You can use a harvested Celestial organ in place of one material component that would normally be consumed by the spell, up to a cost of 2,500 gp.

Sun Eater Staff

Staff, Rare (Requires Attunement by a Spellcaster)

This lengthy staff of black wood has veins of black opal and obsidian running through it, and it feels cool to the touch. This staff can be wielded as a magic quarterstaff that grants a +2 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with it.

The staff has 10 charges and regains 1d6 + 4 charges daily at midnight.

Spells. While holding the staff, you can use an action to expend 1 or more of its charges to cast one of the following spells from it, using your spell save DC: *acid arrow* (2 charges), *blight* (4 charges), *darkness* (1 charge), *fog cloud* (1 charge), or *wall of force* (5 charges).

Consume Light. You can expend 1 charge as an action to extinguish any light sources of your choice that you can see within 120 feet of you.

Fire Immunity. When you take fire damage while holding the staff, you can expend 1 charge as a reaction. You gain immunity to fire damage until the start of your next turn, including against the triggering effect.

Sun Eater Staff

Coronal Hollow Stat Blocks

The following stat blocks appear in the lair.

Deep Dreamer

CR 13 Controller

Large Plant (Fungus), Typically Neutral — 10,000 XP

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)
Hit Points 178 (21d10 + 63)
Speed 0 ft., fly 20 ft. (hover)

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

Saving Throws Int +10
Skills Deception +8, Insight +6, Persuasion +8
Damage Immunities psychic
Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, prone
Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 11
Languages Deep Speech, Undercommon, telepathy 120 ft.
Proficiency Bonus +5

Psionic Shroud. The dreamer is immune to divination spells and to any effect that would sense their emotions or read their thoughts.

Actions

Multiattack. The dreamer makes two Tendrils attacks and uses Dream Spores, if available.

Tendrils. *Melee Power Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d6 + 5) slashing damage plus 22 (4d10) psychic damage. If the target is charmed by the dreamer, the dreamer regains hit points equal to half the psychic damage dealt.

****Dream Spores (5th-Order Power; Recharge 5–6).*** The dreamer releases a cloud of psionic spores. Each creature within 60 feet of them must succeed on a DC 18 Intelligence saving throw or be charmed by the dreamer for 1 minute. While charmed in this way, a creature must use their movement during their turn to move within 10 feet of the dreamer by the safest available route.

A creature charmed in this way can repeat the saving throw whenever they take damage, ending the effect on themself on a success.

Reactions

Rouse Dreamer. When a creature makes an attack against the dreamer, the dreamer chooses a creature charmed by the dreamer within the attack's range, and the charmed creature becomes the target of the attack instead.

Empowered Bog Body

CR 3 Ambusher

Medium Undead, Typically Neutral Evil — 700 XP

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)
Hit Points 75 (10d8 + 30)
Speed 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
26 (+8)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	5 (–3)	10 (+0)	6 (–2)

Skills Perception +2, Stealth +5
Damage Immunities acid, poison
Condition Immunities poisoned
Senses blindsight 60 ft., passive Perception 12
Languages understands the languages they knew in life but can't speak
Proficiency Bonus +2

Acidic Blood. A creature who deals piercing or slashing damage to the bog body while within 5 feet of them takes 3 (1d6) acid damage.

Actions

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (1d6 + 8) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a Medium or smaller creature, they are grappled (escape DC 18). Until this grapple ends, the bog body can't make a Slam attack against another target.

Sling Mud. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, range 30 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (1d4 + 8) bludgeoning damage plus 3 (1d6) acid damage.

Submerge. If the bog body is in swampy terrain, they can submerge themself beneath the water and mud. While submerged, the bog body is heavily obscured.

If the bog body is grappling a target when they submerge, the target submerges with them. While submerged, the target is heavily obscured, restrained, and unable to breathe, and takes 4 (1d8) acid damage at the start of each of their turns.

A bog body can resurface as a bonus action. When they do so, a target they have grappled also resurfaces.

Deep Dreamer

A fine network of barbed black filaments supports the deep dreamer's fungal body, making them resemble a massive sinister dandelion. These plants drift through the air on gentle psionic currents, propelled by the spores they constantly release. As other creatures dream, the deep dreamer uses their filaments to feed on those creatures' psychic energy. A deep dreamer's influence can compel creatures to become lost in their dreams, never to wake up.

Empyrean Stag

CR 13 Support
Large Celestial, Typically Neutral Good 10,000 XP

Armor Class 20 (natural armor)
Hit Points 187 (22d10 + 66)
Speed 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
24 (+7)	16 (+3)	16 (+3)	18 (+4)	20 (+5)	20 (+5)

Saving Throws Dex +8, Wis +10, Cha +10
Skills Athletics +12, Insight +10, Perception +10
Damage Resistances necrotic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from mundane attacks
Damage Immunities radiant
Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened
Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 20
Languages all, telepathy 120 ft.
Proficiency Bonus +5

Supernatural Resistance. The stag has advantage on saving throws against powers, spells, and other supernatural effects.

Actions

Multiattack. The stag makes three Ram or Lightburst attacks.

Ram. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 25 (4d8 + 7) piercing damage.

Lightburst. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +10 to hit, range 120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 18 (3d8 + 5) radiant damage, and the target is outlined in a golden light, giving attack rolls against them advantage until the start of the stag's next turn.

Starcall (1/Day). The stag calls down a magical shower of stars on an area that is 60 feet long and 5 feet wide within 120 feet of the stag. Each enemy in that area must make a DC 18 Dexterity saving throw, taking 28 (8d6) radiant damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. Each other willing creature in that area regains 15 hit points.

The stars then create a 10-foot-high wall of opaque radiant light in that area. Each creature in the wall's space is pushed out of it by the shortest route. The creature chooses which side of the wall to end up on. The wall lasts for 1 minute or until the stag is incapacitated or dies. Any enemy who enters the wall of light for the first time on a turn must make a DC 18 Constitution saving throw, taking 14 (4d6) radiant damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Bonus Actions

Starlight Infusion. The stag infuses radiant energy into a willing creature they can see within 60 feet of them. That creature deals an extra 5 radiant damage with weapon attacks until the start of the stag's next turn.

Reactions

Nature's Ward. When the stag or a creature they can see within 30 feet of them takes damage, the stag magically creates a protective barrier around that creature. The barrier reduces that damage to the protected creature by 20, then vanishes.

Empyrean Stag

As Celestial wardens of the forest, empyrean stags appear only to defend forest denizens from great threats or to warn mortals about forthcoming calamities. Their white fur is dappled with blue, and their eyes shine with the darkness of night.

Essence of Mist

CR 13 Ambusher

Medium Elemental (Air, Water), Any Alignment 10,000 XP

Armor Class 15
Hit Points 165 (22d8 + 66)
Speed 40 ft., fly 20 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	20 (+5)	17 (+3)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Dex +10, Cha +8
Skills Deception +8, Sleight of Hand +10, Stealth +10
Damage Resistances psychic
Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, frightened, grappled, prone, restrained
Senses blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 11
Languages Aquan, Auran, Common
Proficiency Bonus +5

Flowing Form. The essence can enter an enemy's space and stop there, and they can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing.

Gasping Aura. While within 10 feet of the essence, creatures who need to breathe can't take reactions or speak.

Actions

Multiattack. The essence makes two Breathless Rend attacks.

Breathless Rend. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (2d8 + 5) slashing damage plus 22 (4d10) psychic damage.

Bonus Actions

Convocation of Breath (2/Day). The essence imbues the power of breath in themself or another Elemental they can see within 30 feet of them, granting one of the following effects of that Elemental's choice:

Hide in Breath. The Elemental tries to hide inside the body of a creature within 10 feet of them who isn't a Construct, an Elemental, an Ooze, or an Undead. The target must succeed on a DC 18 Constitution saving throw or the Elemental retreats inside the target until the start of the Elemental's next turn. While inside the target, the Elemental can't take actions and has total cover against attacks and other effects outside the target.

Toxic Breath. The Elemental exudes a noxious aura 10 feet in every direction for 1 minute or until dispersed by a moderate or stronger wind. That area is lightly obscured, and each creature who needs to breathe who starts their turn in that area must succeed on a DC 16 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned until the end of their next turn.

Breathstealer's Shimmer (1/Day). The essence becomes invisible then takes the Hide action. This invisibility ends if the essence makes an attack or uses Convocation of Breath.

Lacuna

CR 15 Skirmisher

Medium Fiend, Typically Chaotic Evil 13,000 XP

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)
Hit Points 195 (26d8 + 78)
Speed 0 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
5 (–3)	10 (+0)	17 (+3)	18 (+4)	16 (+3)	24 (+7)

Saving Throws Dex +5, Wis +8, Cha +12
Skills Arcana +9, Deception +12, Insight +8, Persuasion +12
Condition Immunities charmed, dazed, exhaustion, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained, stunned
Senses truesight 60 ft., passive Perception 13
Languages Abyssal, Common, Infernal
Proficiency Bonus +5

Avoidance. If the lacuna is subjected to an effect that allows them to make a saving throw to take only half damage, they instead take no damage if they succeed on the saving throw, and only half damage if they fail.

False Appearance. While the lacuna remains motionless, they are indistinguishable from a normal statue.

Fiend Between. The lacuna doesn't have a walking speed and can't benefit from any bonus to their speed.

Supernatural Resistance. The lacuna has advantage on saving throws against powers, spells, and other supernatural effects.

Actions

Multiattack. The lacuna makes three Grief-Eater attacks and uses Infuse Sadness, if available.

Grief-Eater. *Melee or Ranged Spell Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 29 (4d10 + 7) psychic damage, and the target's speed is reduced by 10 feet until the end of their next turn.

Infuse Sadness (1/Day). Each enemy the lacuna can see within 30 feet of them must succeed on a DC 20 Wisdom saving throw or be overwhelmed with grief for 1 minute (save ends at end of turn). While a creature is overwhelmed, attacks against them are made with advantage.

Bonus Actions

Slip Between. The lacuna teleports up to 60 feet to an unoccupied space they can see.

Reactions

Slip Away. When a creature within 60 feet of the lacuna targets them with an attack, the lacuna teleports up to 60 feet to an unoccupied space they can see. If the lacuna is no longer a valid target for the triggering attack, the attacker must choose a new target or the attack misses.

Mystic Connection: Lightbender

If you're playing a beastheart and have a lightbender companion, you gain the following benefit at 9th level when you gain the beastheart's Mystic Connection feature:

Unleash Sunlight. As a bonus action, you cause your skin to flare with brilliant light. Each creature of your choice within 10 feet of you who can see you must succeed on a Constitution saving throw against your exploit save DC or be blinded for 1 minute (save ends at end of turn). Once you use this bonus action, you can't do so again until you finish a long rest.

Lacuna

Lightbender Companion — Companion

Large Monstrosity, Unaligned

Armor Class 13 plus PB (natural armor)
Hit Points 7 + seven times caregiver's level (number of d8 Hit Dice equal to their caregiver's level)
Speed 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	6 (–2)	12 (+1)	8 (–1)

Saving Throws Str +3 plus PB, Dex +2 plus PB
Skills Perception +1 plus PB, Stealth +2 plus PB
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11 plus PB
Proficiency Bonus (PB) equals the caregiver's bonus

Actions

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

1st Level: Tail Whip (2 Ferocity). The lightbender makes a signature attack. On a hit, the attack deals an extra PB radiant damage to the target, and a different creature the lightbender chooses within 15 feet of them takes PB radiant damage.

3rd Level: Silent Pounce (5 Ferocity). The lightbender teleports 30 feet to an unoccupied space they can see. Before or after teleporting, the lightbender can make a signature attack. If the attack hits, the target is knocked prone.

5th Level: Hypnotic Mane (8 Ferocity). Each creature within 10 feet of the lightbender must succeed on a DC 10 plus PB Wisdom saving throw or be charmed by the lightbender until the end of the lightbender's next turn. While charmed in this way, a creature is incapacitated and has a speed of 0. If a creature charmed in this way takes damage or if someone else uses an action to shake the creature out of their stupor, the condition ends on that creature.

Reactions

Shared Afterimage (Recharges after a Long Rest). When the lightbender and their caregiver are within 30 feet of each other and one of them is hit by an attack, the lightbender reveals that both they and their caregiver are past visual imprints. The lightbender and the caregiver each appear in an unoccupied space they can see within 30 feet of their imprints, the attack misses, then the imprints disappear. The lightbender can't use this reaction if the attacker relies on senses other than sight, such as blindsight, or if they can perceive illusions as false, as with truesight.

Qazyldrath

CR 21 Solo

Gargantuan Dragon, Chaotic Evil

33,000 XP

Armor Class 20 (natural armor)
Hit Points 402 (23d20 + 161)
Speed 40 ft., fly 80 ft., swim 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
27 (+8)	12 (+1)	24 (+7)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws Con +14, Wis +10, Cha +11
Skills Arcana +9, History +9, Perception +10, Stealth +8
Damage Immunities acid, necrotic
Condition Immunities charmed, dazed, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, stunned
Senses blindsight 120 ft., truesight 60 ft., passive Perception 20
Languages Common, Draconic
Proficiency Bonus +7

Amphibious. Qazyldrath can breathe air and water.

Consume Shadow (3/Day). When Qazyldrath fails a saving throw, they can succeed instead. When they do, any areas of magical darkness in the lair are dispelled, and they can't use Enshroud or Thwart Healing until the end of their next turn.

Shadow Strength. Acid and necrotic damage dealt by Qazyldrath ignore damage resistance.

Actions

Multiattack. Qazyldrath makes one Bite attack and two Claw attacks.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +15 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 19 (2d10 + 8) piercing damage plus 9 (2d8) necrotic damage. If the target is a light source or is wearing or holding a light source, that light is extinguished.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +15 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (2d6 + 8) slashing damage, and Qazyldrath can move the target up to 15 feet horizontally.

Vacuous Breath (Recharge 5–6). Qazyldrath exhales dark energy in a line that is 90 feet long and 20 feet wide. Each creature in that area must make a DC 22 Dexterity saving throw, taking 24 (7d6) acid damage plus 24 (7d6) necrotic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Additionally, that area is filled with magical darkness for 1 minute. A creature with darkvision can't see through this darkness, and no light except a *daylight* spell or a light-creating spell of 5th level or higher can illuminate it.

Bonus Actions

Enshroud. Shadows cling to one creature Qazyldrath can see within 120 feet of them. The target must succeed on a DC 19 Dexterity saving throw or be blinded and vulnerable to necrotic damage until the start of Qazyldrath's next turn.

Reactions

Thwart Healing. When a creature within 60 feet of Qazyldrath regains hit points, Qazyldrath forces them to make a DC 19 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the creature regains half the number of hit points instead.

Villain Actions

Qazyldrath has three villain actions. They can take each action once during an encounter after an enemy's turn. They can take these actions in any order but can use only one per round.

Action 1: Burning Globs. Qazyldrath spits acid globules at each enemy they can see within 90 feet of them. Each target must succeed on a DC 19 Dexterity saving throw or have a globule attached to their body. A creature attached to a globule takes 14 (4d6) acid damage at the start of their turns. A creature can use an action to remove a globule from themself or a creature they can reach.

Action 2: Shadow Form. Qazyldrath becomes semi-incorporeal, gaining resistance to bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage until the end of their next turn. Qazyldrath then teleports up to 120 feet to an unoccupied space that they can see.

Action 3: Sinking Gloom. Qazyldrath summons sticky black acid centered on a point they can see on the ground within 120 feet of them, creating a 5-foot-deep, 20-foot-radius pool. The pool is difficult terrain and lasts for 1 minute. An enemy who starts their turn in the pool takes 24 (7d6) acid damage and must succeed on a DC 19 Strength saving throw or be restrained until the start of their next turn. An enemy who starts their turn flying within 30 feet of the pool must succeed on a DC 19 Dexterity saving throw or be pulled down by living acid, landing in the nearest unoccupied space of their choice within the pool, take 24 (7d6) acid damage, and be restrained until the start of their next turn.

Qazyldrath the Silent Decay plans to blot out the sun and plunge the Mundane World into darkness.

Rot Angel

CR 4 Skirmisher

Medium Celestial, Typically Lawful Neutral — 1,100 XP

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)
Hit Points 90 (12d8 + 36)
Speed 0 ft., fly 50 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6 (–2)	16 (+3)	17 (+3)	8 (–1)	14 (+2)	19 (+4)

Saving Throws Con +5, Cha +6
Skills Perception +6
Condition Immunities charmed, flanked, frightened
Damage Resistances necrotic, radiant
Senses blindsight 10 ft., darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 16
Languages understands Celestial but can't speak it, telepathy 120 ft.
Proficiency Bonus +2

Flyby. The angel doesn't provoke opportunity attacks when they fly out of an enemy's reach.

Actions

Decaying Touch. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 18 (4d8) necrotic damage, or if the target is a corpse or Undead, the damage increases to 36 (8d8). Additionally, for the next 24 hours, the target is marked for death. A creature who drops to 0 hit points while marked for death immediately fails one death saving throw. This effect isn't cumulative.

Bonus Actions

Hypnotic Beam. One of the angel's eyes shoots a magic ray at a creature the angel can see within 60 feet of them. The target must succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw or use their reaction, if available, to move as far as their speed allows toward the angel, avoiding obviously dangerous ground.

Reactions

Radiant Puff. When the angel is hit with an attack, they release a cloud of spores. Each creature within 10 feet of the angel must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or be blinded until the end of the rot angel's next turn.

Sunlight Nexus

CR 12 Support

Large Elemental (Air, Fire), Any Alignment — 8,400 XP

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)
Hit Points 152 (16d10 + 64)
Speed 40 ft., fly 90 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	15 (+2)	19 (+4)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	20 (+5)

Saving Throws Wis +7, Cha +9
Skills Insight +7, Intimidation +9, Perception +7, Religion +6
Damage Resistances fire, radiant
Damage Immunities poison
Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, poisoned
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 17
Languages Common, Primordial
Proficiency Bonus +4

Corona. The nexus sheds bright sunlight in a 120-foot radius and dim light for another 120 feet.

Actions

Multiattack. The nexus makes three Solar Arc attacks. They can replace one attack with a use of Heavenly Collapse or Rejuvenating Flare, if available.

Solar Arc. *Melee or Ranged Spell Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 30 ft., one target. *Hit:* 18 (2d12 + 5) radiant damage.

Heavenly Collapse (2/Day). The nexus shines harsh light on an enemy they can see within 60 feet of them. Each ally of the nexus within 5 feet of the target regains 20 hit points, and the target must succeed on a DC 17 Constitution saving throw or lose any damage resistances they have and be blinded for 1 minute (save ends at end of turn).

Rejuvenating Flare (1/Day). One ally the nexus can see within 30 feet of them is bathed in rejuvenating light. The ally regains 27 (5d10) hit points, and if they are charmed, dazed, frightened, or poisoned, those conditions end for them.

Bonus Actions

Convocation of Sunlight (2/Day). The nexus imbues the power of sunlight in themself or another Elemental they can see within 30 feet of them, granting one of the following effects of that Elemental's choice:

Healing Radiance. The Elemental regains 30 hit points. Until the end of the nexus's next turn, the Elemental refracts shimmering light, and creatures within 10 feet of them who aren't Elementals are blinded.

Protective Light. Four brilliant motes orbit the Elemental for 1 minute. When the Elemental deals damage to a creature with an attack, the Elemental can extinguish one mote (no action required) to deal an extra 14 (4d6) radiant damage to that creature.

Vampire

CR 13 Skirmisher

Medium Undead, Typically Neutral Evil — 10,000 XP

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)
Hit Points 204 (24d8 + 96)
Speed 30 ft., fly 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws Dex +10, Wis +8, Cha +10
Skills Deception +10, History +9, Insight +8, Intimidation +10, Perception +8, Persuasion +10, Stealth +10
Damage Resistances necrotic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from mundane attacks
Condition Immunities charmed, frightened
Senses blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 18
Languages the languages they knew in life
Proficiency Bonus +5

Radiant Aversion. Each time the vampire takes radiant damage, they take an extra 10 radiant damage.

Resting Place. When the vampire drops to 0 hit points and is not in sunlight, running water, or their resting place, the vampire teleports to their resting place. While in their resting place, the vampire is stable. After spending 1 hour in their resting place with 0 hit points, they regain 1 hit point.

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

Actions

Multiattack. The vampire makes two Claw attacks and, if possible, a Bite attack.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d6 + 5) slashing damage plus 10 (3d6) necrotic damage. If the target is Large or smaller, they are grappled (escape DC 18). While grappled in this way, the target is restrained. Moving while grappling a Medium or smaller creature doesn't halve the vampire's speed. A vampire can have only one target grappled in this way at a time.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature who is grappled by the vampire, incapacitated, or restrained. *Hit:* 8 (1d6 + 5) piercing damage plus 10 (3d6) necrotic damage. The target's hit point maximum is reduced by a number equal to the necrotic damage taken, and the vampire regains hit points equal to that number. The reduction lasts until reversed by a *cure ailment* power of 4th order or higher, a *greater restoration* spell, or a similar supernatural effect. The target dies if this attack reduces their hit point maximum to 0. A Humanoid slain in this way rises the following midnight as a **vampire spawn** under the vampire's control.

Exsanguinating Mist (Recharge 6). The vampire, along with anything they are wearing or carrying, turns into a cloud of blood-sucking mist. When they do, they release any creature they were grappling, and if the vampire was grappled or restrained, that effect ends for them. Then the vampire flies up to twice their speed to an unoccupied space. During this move, the vampire ignores difficult terrain, doesn't provoke opportunity attacks, and can move through creatures and objects. Each creature the vampire passes through must make a DC 18 Constitution saving throw, taking 35 (10d6) necrotic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. At the end of this movement, the vampire transforms back into their previous form.

Bonus Actions

Beguile. The vampire targets one creature they can see within 30 feet of them and who can see them. The target must make a DC 18 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, the target uses their reaction, if available, to move up to their speed to a location chosen by the vampire, then either makes a melee attack against a target of the vampire's choice or falls prone (vampire's choice).

Creatures who can't be charmed automatically succeed on this saving throw, and creatures who have advantage on saving throws against being charmed make this saving throw with advantage.

Inhuman Agility. The vampire moves up to their speed without provoking opportunity attacks.

Reactions

Run, My Child. When an ally the vampire can see takes damage, the vampire can command the ally to move up to their speed without provoking opportunity attacks.

Utility Spells

In addition to any other spells in this stat block, the vampire can cast the following spells, using Charisma as the spellcasting ability (spell save DC 18):

At will: *charm person*[A], *detect thoughts*[A], *disguise self*[A], *sending*[A]
1/day each: *clairvoyance*[+], *geas*[+]

Vampire Spawn

CR 5 Skirmisher
Medium Undead, Typically Neutral Evil 1,800 XP

Armor Class 14
Hit Points 112 (15d8 + 45)
Speed 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws Wis +3, Cha +6
Skills Acrobatics +7, Intimidation +6, Perception +3, Persuasion +6, Stealth +7
Damage Resistances necrotic
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13
Languages the languages they knew in life
Proficiency Bonus +3

Radiant Aversion. Each time the spawn takes radiant damage, they take an extra 10 radiant damage.

Actions

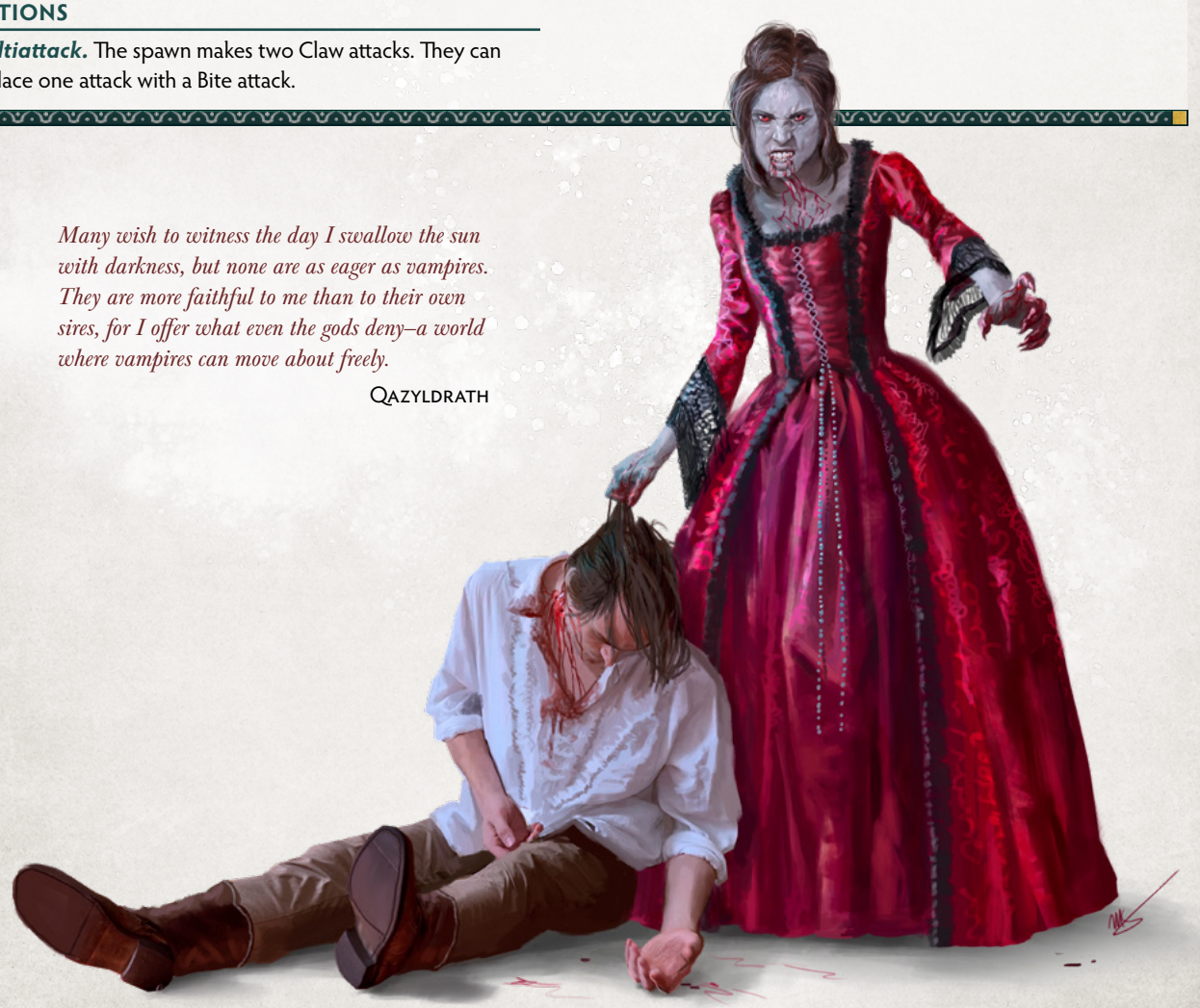
Multiattack. The spawn makes two Claw attacks. They can replace one attack with a Bite attack.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) slashing damage, and if the target is Large or smaller, they are grappled (escape DC 15). Moving while grappling a Medium or smaller creature doesn't halve the spawn's speed. The spawn can have only one target grappled in this way at a time.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature who is grappled by the spawn, incapacitated, or restrained. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage plus 7 (2d6) necrotic damage. The target's hit point maximum is reduced by a number equal to the necrotic damage taken, and the spawn regains hit points equal to that number. The reduction lasts until the target finishes a long rest or is targeted by a *cure ailment* power of 4th order or higher, a *greater restoration* spell, or a similar supernatural effect. The target dies if this attack reduces their hit point maximum to 0.

Bonus Actions

Inhuman Speed. The spawn moves up to their speed.



Many wish to witness the day I swallow the sun with darkness, but none are as eager as vampires. They are more faithful to me than to their own sires, for I offer what even the gods deny–a world where vampires can move about freely.

Qazyldrath

Eyes of the Mountain

Optimized for Five 16th-Level Characters

In the deepest and darkest parts of the timescape, there are beings that should not be, touched by corruption beyond worlds. One such creature is Yserthrax (*EE-sur-thracks*), a draconic abomination whose wings are lined with hundreds of emerald eyes.

Yserthrax was born a venom dragon, revered for her mastery of spellcraft and occult lore. Now, she has been transformed by the machinations of elder evils, her body becoming distended and covered with strange growths.

The Many-Eyed earned her name not only for her eye-laden form. She is widely praised as one of the most cunning and devious among her kin, sought after for her arcane talents, spycraft, and intrigue. Little happens among dragonkind that Yserthrax doesn't see; she knows every great wyrm's desires and could manipulate them into carrying out the will of the elder evils that bind her.

Yserthrax makes her home inside the petrified corpse of an enormous overmind, which is embedded in a cliff face far from civilization. Yserthrax uses her psionic powers (enhanced by the latent psychic energy lingering in the overmind's body) to spy on everyone and everything that interests her from the seclusion of her lair. A group of synlirii also live in the lair, ostensibly to assist The Many Eyed in her psionic spying, though the true motivations of the voiceless talkers are likely much more complex.

Eyes of the Mountain Story Hooks

You can use one of the following story hooks to integrate this lair into an adventure:

Tyrant's Power. The human despot Lady Aranac and her army have recently gained unique psionic powers. Eoghan Kadel, an elf and the head of a rebel cell fighting against Aranac, discovers that the source of the power is tied to Yserthrax. The rebel leader asks the characters to venture into the Eyes of the Mountain to kill the dragon and break this connection.

Voiceless Informant. The characters are approached by Faynex, a voiceless talker who believes the synlirii working for Yserthrax will be killed by the dragon once they outlive their usefulness. Faynex offers to lead the characters to the Eyes of the Mountain if they promise to stop the dragon. If the characters deliver on the promise, Faynex gives them a *rod of lordly might* as thanks.

Watcher in the Dark. Spellcasters across the Mundane World believe they are being watched whenever they cast divination spells. Uzma Nazari, a renowned orc seer, traces the arcane anomaly to the Eyes of the Mountain. She sends a letter summoning the characters to her home to ask for their help—but before they arrive, Uzma mysteriously disappears, and the only leads she leaves behind are her notes and a cryptic map to the lair. Yserthrax has already consumed the seer and is enacting a ritual to tap into every divination spell cast in the timescape to glean knowledge for the elder evils.

Eyes of the Mountain Features

Unless otherwise noted, each area of the Eyes of the Mountain has the following features:

Ceilings. The ceilings on the first and third levels are 45 feet high. The ceilings on the second level are 90 feet high. See "Organic Structures" for more information about the ceilings.

Doors. The doors are made of stone and unlocked.

Illumination. There are no light sources in the lair.

Organic Structures. The walls and ceilings contain petrified organic structures (such as arteries, veins, and synapses) which allow them to be climbed. However, the lingering corruption that Yserthrax spreads wherever she goes gives the walls a false life, causing these structures to occasionally pulse and quiver. A creature can climb the interior walls and ceilings with a successful DC 17 Strength (Athletics) check.

Synlirii

Most of the synlirii in the Eyes of the Mountain obey Yserthrax's commands but feel no true loyalty to the dragon and won't risk their own lives to save hers.

Unless instructed otherwise, the synlirii avoid contact with intruders, preferring instead to remain hidden and observe. If they are discovered, voiceless talkers with the *guise* power take on the appearance of one of the intruders in hopes of confusing them long enough to escape. If a fight becomes inevitable, the voiceless talkers instruct any hulking brains and mindkillers within range of their telepathy to engage the intruders and fight to the death while the voiceless talkers flee. All synlirii fight to the death if forced into combat.

Entering the Eyes of the Mountain

Discovering the location of Yserthrax's lair requires research or an extensive search of the mountain range where it lies. Once the characters know how to find the lair, however, the gigantic face protruding from a cliff isn't difficult to notice.

The petrified overmind's maw is open and level with the bottom of the cliff face, making it possible for characters to walk into the tentacle pits (area N1). A character who succeeds on a DC 15 Wisdom (Survival) check notices a

lack of recent footprints or other signs of passage through this main entrance.

Illusory Eye. The overmind's 30-foot-diameter central eye is visible 75 feet above the main entrance. In reality, Yserthrax had the petrified eye removed long ago and projected a psionic illusion in its place. Characters who can fly or who succeed on a DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check to climb can reach the illusory eye. A character who reaches the eye and succeeds on a DC 21 Intelligence (Investigation) check recognizes the illusion for what it is. Passing through the illusory eye leads characters into Yserthrax's bedchamber (area N5).

Eyes of the Mountain Areas

The following areas are keyed to the Eyes of the Mountain Levels 1 and 2 Map and the Eyes of the Mountain Level 3 Map.

N1. Tentacle Pits

This area has the following features:

- "Seven circular pits dot the floor, the largest situated in the center of the chamber."
- "A distant echoing mumble sounds throughout the chamber, as if a far-off chorus all speak different words at the same time."
- *(If the characters approach quietly and have not engaged in combat in area N4)* "Floating silently on either side of the large central pit are two boneless cephalopod-like creatures."
- (**Secret**) The large central pit contains four gibbering mouthers.

Pits. The seven pits are the overmind's hollowed out tentacles. The six smaller pits are 90 feet deep, and the central pit is 120 feet deep.

Voiceless Talkers. When the characters approach, two **voiceless talkers** are attempting to make sense of the babbling of the four **gibbering mouthers** in the central pit. If the voiceless talkers hear combat elsewhere in the lair, or if the characters are particularly loud when they approach this area, the voiceless talkers hide at the bottom of two different smaller pits and take random humanoid forms using the *guise* power. If the characters notice them in the pits, the voiceless talkers pretend they are captives of Yserthrax and ask for help escaping. A character who succeeds on a DC 18 Wisdom (Insight) check can tell the voiceless talkers are lying. If the characters oblige, the voiceless talkers exit the lair and reenter through the illusory eye into Yserthrax's bedchamber (area N5) to warn Yserthrax of intruders, then they retreat to the scrying room (area N6).

Gibbering Mouthers. The gibbering mouthers in the central pit are victims of Yserthrax's corruption and fully under her control. They attack any creature who descends at least 60 feet into the pit who isn't Yserthrax or a voiceless talker. They don't leave the pit unless instructed to do so by Yserthrax.

N2. Hall of Records

Yserthrax records every bit of intelligence she and the synlirii obtain through their spying and stores it in this room, which has the following features:

- "Floor-to-ceiling shelves line the walls, all filled to bursting with sheaves, rolls, and scraps of parchment."
- "Two cephalopod-like creatures stand at opposite ends of the room searching the shelves and occasionally pulling down pieces of parchment."
- "A 30-foot-diameter hole in the ceiling leads to another chamber in the level above."

Intelligence Reports. Every piece of parchment in this chamber contains information Yserthrax or the synlirii have gathered through their spying. Everything is written in Undercommon. At your discretion, a character who can read Undercommon and who spends 1 hour sifting through them can make a DC 18 Intelligence (Investigation) check. On a success, they find a previously unknown and helpful piece of information about your campaign world.

Voiceless Talkers. Two **voiceless talker artillerists** are poring over reports when the characters enter. They attack intruders. If one of the artillerists is defeated, the other flees to the barracks (area N3).

Hole in the Ceiling. This opening leads to the scrying room (area N6).

N3. Barracks

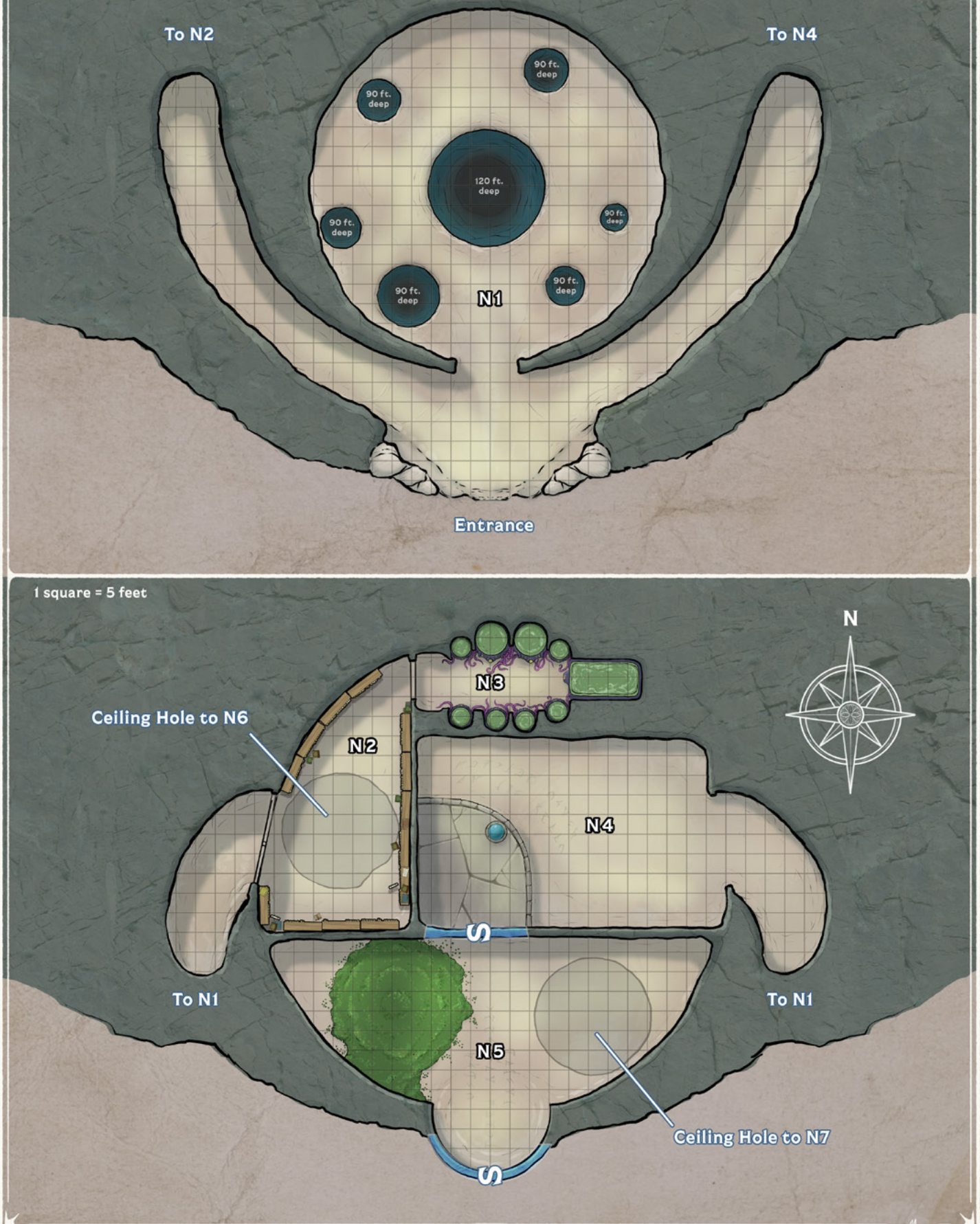
The synlirii use this chamber as their quarters. It has the following features:

- "A 20-foot-long, 10-foot-tall, 10-foot-wide glass tank stands against the east wall. The tank is two-thirds full of hazy goo. Six shapes float idly in the viscous liquid."
- "Next to the glass tank sits a wooden chest with iron bands."
- "Four alcoves line the north wall of this chamber, and another four line the south wall. A tall cylindrical glass pod stands in each alcove."
- *(If one of the voiceless talker artillerists in area N2 fled here)* "All eight pods are empty. In the center of the room stands the creature from the records room, flanked by two horrifying humanoid-shaped creatures with gray skin, four thick arms, and large pulsing brains in place of heads."
- *(If both voiceless talker artillerists were defeated in area N2)* "Six of the pods are empty. The remaining two pods contain horrifying humanoid-shaped creatures with gray skin, four thick arms, and large pulsing brains in place of heads."
- (**Secret**) One of the hulking brains has the key to the room's chest around their neck.

Pods. The lair's voiceless talkers, voiceless talker artillerists, and hulking brains use these pods to rest.

Hulking Brains. If the two **hulking brains** have been alerted to intruders by a **voiceless talker artillerist** from the hall of records (area N2), they immediately attack the characters. Otherwise, the hulking brains are unconscious

Eyes of the Mountain Levels 1 and 2 Map



in their pods. The party can move about the chamber without alerting the hulking brains with a successful DC 12 group Dexterity (Stealth) check. On a failure, the hulking brains wake up and attack, fighting to the death.

Mindkillers. Inside the tank on the east wall are six **mindkillers**. They only attack if the tank is disturbed or they sense combat in the room. Otherwise, they remain dormant in their tank.

Treasure. The chest is locked and can be opened using the key hanging from one of the hulking brain's necks. Alternatively, a character can unlock it with a successful DC 16 Dexterity check using thieves' tools. Six of Yserthrax's discarded scales (worth 500 gp each) are inside the chest.

N4. Audience Chamber

A curved ramp leads from the first level of the lair directly into this area. This area has a 60-foot-high ceiling and the following features:

- "Eldritch symbols are carved all over the floor, ceiling, and walls of this chamber."
- "The southwest corner of the chamber is dominated by a dais that rises 15 feet above the floor. A hulking dragon atop the platform stares into a large crystal sphere. The dragon's body is bloated with strange growths, and her wings are covered in hundreds of emerald eyes that blink in waves."
- (**Secret**) A psionic illusion conceals a 30-foot-wide archway in the south wall leading to Yserthrax's bedchamber.

Yserthrax the Many-Eyed. The dragon on the dais is **Yserthrax**. Her paranoia combined with her All-Seeing lair action make it nearly impossible to surprise her. She is unlikely to have any interest in negotiating with the characters, preferring instead to either kill them, or, if she believes they possess valuable information, subdue them and instruct the mindkillers in the barracks (area N3) to use their Mindwipe action to extract the information.

In combat, Yserthrax takes flight immediately and attempts to wear the characters down from as far away as possible. Any characters who die while affected by her corruption turn into gibbering mouthers and are sent to the tentacle pits (area N1), where voiceless talkers are assigned to gather whatever information they can glean from the new mouthers' gibbering.

If defeat seems inevitable or if she needs more space, Yserthrax moves through the hidden archway in the south wall into her bedchamber (area N5). From there she can exit the lair through the illusory central eye.

Crystal Sphere. If Yserthrax is aware of the characters when they enter this area, she has been using the sphere to observe their progress. Characters who have a passive Wisdom (Perception) score of 15 or higher notice themselves in the sphere when they first arrive in this chamber. If Yserthrax is unaware of the characters, she is using the sphere to spy on someone else—their identity is up to the GM, but options include a powerful NPC ally of the characters or the ruler of a nearby kingdom.

Lair Actions

When fighting inside her lair, Yserthrax can take lair actions. On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), she can take one lair action to cause one of the following effects; she can't use the same lair action two rounds in a row:

All-Seeing. Yserthrax projects her senses through her lair, opening emerald eyes on every surface. Until the end of initiative count 20 on the next round, Yserthrax can see every creature in the lair.

Eldritch Suppuration. Yserthrax releases a flood of eldritch energy from a point she can see within 120 feet of her. Each creature in a 20-foot-radius sphere centered on that point must make a DC 19 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, a creature takes 11 (2d10) necrotic damage, and until they finish a long rest, their hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the damage taken. On a successful save, a creature takes half as much damage and their hit point maximum is not reduced.

Elder Whispers. Yserthrax whispers a warping word of power to up to three creatures she can see within 120 feet of her who are corrupted by her Corruption trait. Each target must succeed on a DC 19 Wisdom saving throw or use their reaction, if available, to move up to their speed in a direction chosen by Yserthrax.

Concealed Archway. A character within 5 feet of the archway can use an action to make a DC 21 Intelligence (Investigation) check. On a success, they identify the illusion. If the characters witness Yserthrax exit through the illusion, they identify it without needing to make a check.

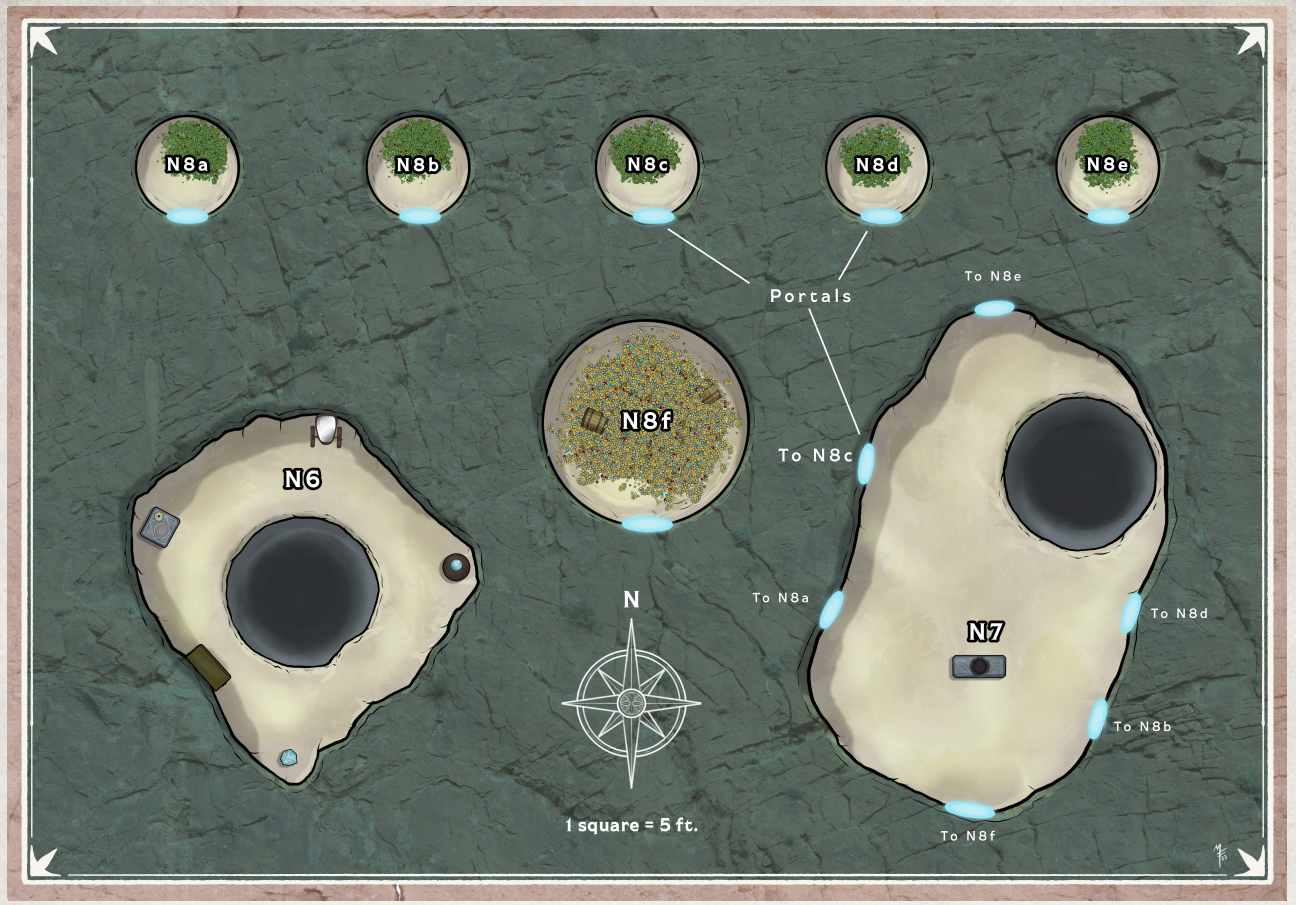
Treasure. The crystal sphere Yserthrax uses to observe her lair is a *crystal ball*.

N5. Yserthrax's Bedchamber

This area has the following features:

- "Eldritch symbols are carved all over the floor, ceiling, and walls of this chamber."
- "To the west, green stone eyes form an enormous pile."
- "A semicircular alcove bulges outward in the center of the south wall."
- "A 30-foot-diameter hole in the ceiling leads to another chamber in the level above."
- (**Secret**) A 30-foot-wide archway in the north wall leads to the audience chamber (area N4). The archway is concealed with a psionic illusion that makes the wall appear whole.
- (**Secret**) The alcove is where the overmind's central eye used to be before Yserthrax had it removed. The back of the alcove is open to the outside, but is covered by a psionic illusion that makes it look like solid stone.
- (**Secret**) Passing through the hole in the ceiling triggers explosive runes.

Eyes of the Mountain Level 3 Map



Alcove. Any creature who stands within the alcove is able to see through the illusion without needing to make an ability check.

Hole in the Ceiling. This opening leads to the shrine to the elder evils (area N7). Any creature other than Yserthrax who passes through the opening triggers explosive runes (as with a 9th-level *glyph of warding* spell). The triggering glyph can be detected by a successful DC 21 Intelligence (Investigation) check. Each creature within 20 feet of the opening when the glyph is activated must make a DC 21 Dexterity saving throw, taking 49 (11d8) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

If the glyph is triggered by the characters while **Yserthrax** is in the audience chamber (area N4), she rushes into this chamber and attacks.

Concealed Archway. A character within 5 feet of the archway can use an action to make a DC 21 Intelligence (Investigation) check. On a success, they identify the illusion. If the characters entered this chamber through the audience chamber (area N4), they are already aware of the archway.

Treasure. Many of the green stone eyes are worthless, but the pile includes two hundred fifty green tiger's eye gems (worth 10 gp each). A character who spends 1 hour searching through the pile and succeeds on a DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check gathers all the gems. A character who succeeds on this check by 3 or more also finds six of Yserthrax's discarded scales (worth 500 gp each).

N6. Scrying Room

Yserthrax and the synlirii use this chamber for their spying efforts. The chamber has the following features:

- "A large mirror, a gem-encrusted ewer and basin, a 3-foot-tall rough quartz, and a glass orb filled with swirling green smoke are displayed around the perimeter of this chamber."
- "A large wooden wardrobe stands against the west wall."
- *(If the characters weren't tricked by the voiceless talkers in area N1)* "Two cephalopod-like creatures stand in front of the mirror, both staring at it intently."
- (**Secret**) If the characters were tricked by the voiceless talkers in humanoid form in area N1, four voiceless talkers are here instead of two, and they immediately attack.

Voiceless Talkers. Unless the voiceless talkers from the tentacle pits (area N1) tricked the characters and alerted the others in this room, a **voiceless talker** and a **voiceless talker artillerist** are currently scrying using one of the mirrors in the room. They are engrossed in their

spell, and characters who succeed on a DC 12 Dexterity (Stealth) check can approach them unnoticed. They don't notice combat in other areas of the lair.

If the two **voiceless talkers** from the tentacle pits (area N1) made it to this room, they join the other two here, and all four attack on sight.

Scrying Foci. The objects strewn around the room are all foci for *scrying* spells. While these items are within the lair, Yserthrax or any creature who can manifest a psionic power can use one to cast the *scrying* spell (save DC 21) without expending a spell slot.

Wardrobe. The wardrobe contains an eclectic collection of trinkets that belonged to various targets of Yserthrax's spying. She and the synlirii use them as physical connections to enhance their *scrying* spells. The wardrobe also contains two *spell scrolls* (see "Treasure").

Treasure. The scrying foci around the room are finely wrought and worth 1,000 gp each. The trinkets in the wardrobe are worthless to anyone but Yserthrax and their original owners, but there are two *spell scrolls* of *scrying* at the bottom of the wardrobe.

N7. Shrine to the Elder Evils

Accessible only through Yserthrax's private chambers, this area serves as a place of worship to the elder evils that bind her. It has the following features:

- "Horrible murals cover the walls of this chamber, depicting creatures out of the darkest nightmares, all with far too many eyes that seem to shift and squirm at the edges of your vision."
- "In the center of the room, an emerald basin filled with a black liquid sits atop an obsidian altar. Every few seconds, a drop of this substance falls from the ceiling above the altar into the basin—but no matter how long you observe this process, the basin never seems to get any fuller."
- (**Secret**) Six of the eyes depicted in the murals are buttons.

Mural and Eyes. The creatures depicted on the walls represent the elder evils who empower and bind Yserthrax. A character who succeeds on a DC 18 Intelligence (Investigation) or Wisdom (Perception) check finds the six buttons hidden among the eyes on the mural.

When pressed, each button opens an opaque portal in the wall next to each eye. The portals each lead to a different chamber carved out of the overmind's petrified floating eyes, which are strewn throughout the mountain surrounding the overmind's main body (areas N8a–f). The portals remain open until the button is pressed a second time.

Emerald Basin. This basin is consecrated to the elder evils, and the substance that fills it is their essence. The basin can't be removed from the altar. If a creature touches the substance, they must succeed on a DC 25 Wisdom saving throw or be cursed. While cursed, a creature can't willingly sleep or benefit from a long rest, and whenever they close their eyes, they see nightmarish creatures. The *cure ailment* power, *remove curse* spell, or similar supernatural effect removes the curse.

N8a–N8e. Empty Eye Chambers

These five chambers are decoy hoard chambers. They are all identical and have the following features:

- "An enormous pile of oxidized green copper pieces fills this spherical room."
- (**Secret**) The copper pieces have been enchanted by Yserthrax.

Bait Coins. Each of these five chambers holds 50,000 cp. The copper pieces are all enchanted by Yserthrax, and a *detect magic* spell reveals that each coin radiates an aura of divination. A creature carrying at least one of these coins automatically fails Wisdom saving throws against a *scrying* spell cast by Yserthrax. A *dispel magic* spell ends the enchantment on one chamber's worth of coins.

N8f. Hoard Chamber

A vast sea of coins and other treasures fills this room.

Treasure. Yserthrax's hoard is located in this room. See "Yserthrax's Hoard" for more information.

Yserthrax's Hoard

The bulk of Yserthrax's hoard is secured in one of the petrified overmind eyes (area N8f) that surrounds the primary lair, accessible through the hidden portals in the shrine to the elder evils (area N7).

The hoard contains the following items:

- *Bag of eyes* (see below)
- *Robe of eyes*
- Wooden box containing a *potion of clairvoyance*, a *potion of flying*, a *potion of gaseous form*, a *potion of invisibility*, a *potion of superior healing*, and a *potion of supreme healing*
- Vial of *oil of sharpness*
- 10 vials of antitoxin (worth 50 gp each)
- Yserthrax's corruption poison recipe (see below)
- 250 zircons (worth 10 gp each)
- 10 blank spellbooks (worth 50 gp each)
- Collection of damaged scrying foci (worth 1,000 gp)
- 3 spyglasses (worth 1,000 gp each)
- Map case containing illuminated maps of ancient kingdoms with Yserthrax's marginalia concerning the kingdoms' rulers (worth 10,000 gp)
- 26,480 sp, 14,852 gp, and 1,001 pp

Bag of Eyes

Wondrous Item, Very Rare (Requires Attunement)

This lumpy green leather sack contains five eyeballs of varying colors. You can use your action to place an eyeball on a surface and utter the command word, causing the eyeball to meld into the surface and become invisible for

Yserthrax breathes a corrupting poison onto a navy of would-be heroes who dared threaten her might.

the next 24 hours. The eyeball has normal vision and darkvision out to 60 feet and can look in every direction. You can have up to five eyeballs active at once.

As an action, you can see through an active eyeball that is on the same plane of existence as you. During this time, you see as if you were in its space, gaining the benefits of the eyeball's darkvision, but you are blind with regard to your own senses. Switching your vision between eyeballs requires an action. Returning to your own senses doesn't require an action.

After an eyeball has been active for 24 hours, it vanishes from the surface where it was placed. If the eyeball and the *bag of eyes* are on the same plane of existence, the eyeball returns to the bag. Otherwise, the eyeball is lost.

Yserthrax's Corruption Poison Recipe

Injury Poison

This one-page recipe is written in Undercommon on a piece of bloodstained vellum. If you are proficient with alchemist's supplies or a poisoner's kit, you can make a dose of this poison with raw materials worth 750 gp and 1 hour of uninterrupted work.

A creature subjected to this poison must succeed on a DC 19 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 1 minute. They can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of their turns to end the poisoned condition. While poisoned in this way, the creature takes 10 (3d6) force damage at the start of each of their turns.

Bag of Eyes

Eyes of the Mountain Stat Blocks

The following stat blocks appear in the lair.

Gibbering Mouther

CR 2 Controller

Medium Aberration, Typically Chaotic Neutral 450 XP

Armor Class 11 (natural armor)
Hit Points 60 (8d8 + 24)
Speed 10 ft., fly 10 ft. (hover), swim 10 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	7 (–2)	10 (+0)	5 (–3)

Saving Throws Con +5
Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, prone
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10
Languages speaks all languages but doesn't understand any
Proficiency Bonus +2

Immutable Form. The gibbering mouther is immune to any power, spell, or effect that would alter their form.

Primordial Influence. A dazed enemy who starts their turn within 20 feet of the gibbering mouther must make a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, that creature's body is altered in an otherworldly way of the GM's choice—they might flicker in and out of reality, sprout miniature fingers from their fingers, or have their physical form altered in a similarly alien way. This alteration doesn't affect the creature's game statistics. A *cure ailment* power of 4th order or higher, a *greater restoration* spell, or a similar supernatural effect reverses this alteration.

While altered in this way, a creature must repeat the saving throw whenever they finish a long rest. On a failed save, their previous alteration worsens or they experience another chaotic alteration of the GM's choice. If a creature fails this saving throw three times after their initial alteration, they transform into a gibbering mouther controlled by the GM, and only a *wish* spell can restore the creature to their original form.

Viscous Vicinity. The gibbering mouther envelops their surroundings in their shifting reality. The area within 20 feet of them is difficult terrain for other creatures.

Actions

Multiattack. The gibbering mouther makes two Reality Rend attacks. They can replace one attack with a use of Pull.

Reality Rend. *Melee Power Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) psychic damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or be dazed until the start of the gibbering mouther's next turn.

Pull. The gibbering mouther warps reality around up to three creatures they can see within 60 feet of them. Each target must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or be pulled up to 30 feet directly toward the gibbering mouther.

Hulking Brain

CR 7 Brute
Large Aberration, Typically Lawful Evil 2,900 XP

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)
Hit Points 126 (12d10 + 60)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
21 (+5)	10 (+0)	20 (+5)	8 (–1)	6 (–2)	12 (+1)

Senses blindsight 120 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 8
Languages Deep Speech, Undercommon, telepathy 120 ft.
Proficiency Bonus +3

Psionic Immunity. The hulking brain is unaffected by psionic powers manifested by voiceless talkers unless the brain wishes to be.

Psychic Scream. When the brain drops to 0 hit points, each creature within 30 feet of them must make a DC 16 Wisdom saving throw, taking 21 (6d6) psychic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Actions

Multiattack. The brain makes three Bash attacks.

Bash. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (2d8 + 5) bludgeoning damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 15). Until the grapple ends, the target is restrained and has disadvantage on saving throws against psionic powers. The brain can grapple up to four creatures at once.

Squeeze. Each creature grappled by the brain must make a DC 16 Strength saving throw, taking 22 (4d10) bludgeoning damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Bonus Actions

Psionic Invigoration (1/Day). Each willing voiceless talker within 60 feet of the brain regains the use of one psionic power of the voiceless talker's choice, and the voiceless talker has advantage on attack rolls until the end of the brain's next turn.

Mindkiller

CR 2 Ambusher
Small Aberration, Typically Lawful Evil 450 XP

Armor Class 12
Hit Points 45 (10d6 + 10)
Speed 10 ft., fly 30 ft.

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

Skills Deception +4, Stealth +4
Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 12
Languages Deep Speech, Undercommon, telepathy 120 ft.
Proficiency Bonus +2

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

Psionic Immunity. The mindkiller is unaffected by psionic powers manifested by voiceless talkers unless the mindkiller wishes to be.

Actions

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (2d4 + 2) slashing damage plus 7 (2d6) psychic damage, and if the target is a Medium or smaller creature, they are grappled (escape DC 12).

Concealing Strike. *Ranged Power Attack:* +5 to hit, range 30 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 13 (3d6 + 3) psychic damage, and the mindkiller is invisible to the target until the end of the mindkiller's next turn.

Mindwipe. A Humanoid grappled by the mindkiller must succeed on a DC 12 Strength saving throw or the mindkiller enters the Humanoid's body. While inside a Humanoid, the mindkiller has total cover against attacks and other effects originating outside the Humanoid, and the only action the mindkiller can take is to leave the body, exiting in an unoccupied space within 5 feet of the body.

When a Humanoid ends their turn with the mindkiller inside of them, they must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or take 10 necrotic damage. If the Humanoid is reduced to 0 hit points, they die and the mindkiller takes over the body, which regains hit points equal to the Humanoid's hit point maximum. The mindkiller retains their Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma scores, their understanding of Deep Speech and Undercommon, and their telepathy. They otherwise adopt the target's statistics and can take the actions the creature could take. They know everything the creature knew, including spells, class features, traits, and languages. If the body is reduced to 0 hit points after the mindkiller takes control, the mindkiller must leave it.

A creature wielding a sharp tool or weapon within reach of a Humanoid host or body with a mindkiller inside can use an action to attempt to remove the mindkiller, making an attack roll against the Humanoid's AC if the host is unwilling. On a hit, the creature deals 11 (2d10) slashing damage to the host and must make a DC 15 Wisdom (Medicine) check. On a successful check, the creature cuts the mindkiller out of the host. On a failed check, if this slashing damage reduced the host to 0 hit points, the mindkiller kills the host; otherwise, there is no effect.

Voiceless Talker

CR 7 Controller

Medium Aberration, Typically Lawful Evil — 2,900 XP

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)
Hit Points 91 (14d8 + 28)
Speed 30 ft., fly 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	19 (+4)	15 (+2)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws Con +5, Int +7, Wis +5
Skills Arcana +7, Deception +5, Insight +5, Perception +5, Persuasion +5, Stealth +6
Damage Resistances bludgeoning
Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 15
Languages Deep Speech, Undercommon, telepathy 120 ft.
Proficiency Bonus +3

Actions

Multiattack. The voiceless talker manifests a power and makes one Tentacle or Psionic Pistol attack.

Tentacle. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (2d10 + 4) psychic damage, and if the target is Large or smaller, they are grappled (escape DC 15).

Psionic Pistol. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (2d10 + 4) force damage.

****Memory Thief (4th-Order Power).*** The voiceless talker psionically plunders the mind of a creature they can see within 30 feet of them. The target must make a DC 15 Intelligence saving throw. On a failed save, the target takes 22 (4d10) psychic damage, and until they finish a long rest or die, their proficiency bonus is cumulatively lowered by 1 and the voiceless talker gains a cumulative +2 bonus to damage rolls. On a successful save, a target takes half as much damage and doesn't have their proficiency bonus reduced.

A creature whose proficiency bonus drops to 0 can't form new thoughts or speak, and they have disadvantage on ability checks, attack rolls, and saving throws.

Flay (3/Day; 5th-Order Power). The voiceless talker shoots forth a 15-foot cone of pure psionic energy. Each creature in the area must make a DC 15 Intelligence saving throw, taking 28 (8d6) psychic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Guise (3rd-Order Power). The voiceless talker projects a psionic image over their body, transforming their appearance for 1 hour into that of a Medium creature they have seen. When they manifest this power, they can also change the appearance of any equipment they carry for the duration.

The changes wrought by this power fail to hold up to physical inspection. A creature can use an action to inspect the voiceless talker's appearance and make a DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check, noticing the image is a projection on a success.

Reactions

Brain Drain. When a creature grappled by the voiceless talker makes a saving throw against one of the voiceless talker's powers, the voiceless talker momentarily weakens the creature and the creature has disadvantage on the saving throw.

Draconic Aberrations

Just like Yserthrax is a dragon with eldritch power, you can give the voiceless talkers and other aberrations in this dungeon draconic features. You can implement the following changes to any Aberration stat block in the lair to surprise characters who have faced voiceless talkers and their creations before and show that spending time around a powerful dragon like Yserthrax can magically warp nearby creatures:

Scales. The Aberration is covered in dragon scales. Their AC increases by 2.

Wings. The Aberration has leathery dragon wings. If the Aberration already has a flying speed, their flight is powered by the wings instead of psionic might. If the Aberration doesn't have a flying speed, they gain a flying speed equal to their walking speed.

Poison Immunity. The Aberration has immunity to poison damage and the poisoned condition.

Draconic Senses. The Aberration is proficient in the Perception skill, and their proficiency bonus is doubled for any ability check they make that uses Perception. If the Aberration doesn't have blindsight, they gain blindsight out to a range of 30 feet.

Breath Weapon. As an action, the Aberration breathes poison in a 30-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 13 plus PB Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, a creature takes PBd12 poison damage and is poisoned for 1 minute (save ends at end of turn). On a successful save, a creature takes half as much damage and isn't poisoned. The Aberration can't use this action again until they finish a long rest.

Poison-Infused Weapons. When the Aberration hits a creature with a melee weapon attack, the attack deals an extra 5 (1d10) poison damage.

Voiceless Talker Artillerist

CR 10 Artillery
5,900 XP

Medium Aberration, Typically Lawful Evil

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)
Hit Points 150 (20d8 + 60)
Speed 30 ft., fly 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	16 (+3)	16 (+3)	21 (+5)	17 (+3)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Con +7, Int +9, Wis +7
Skills Arcana +9, Deception +7, Insight +7, Perception +7, Persuasion +7, Stealth +7
Damage Resistances bludgeoning
Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 17
Languages Deep Speech, Undercommon, telepathy 120 ft.
Proficiency Bonus +4

Phasing Rifle (1/Turn). When the artillerist hits a target with their Psionic Rifle attack, the artillerist can attempt to teleport the target (no action required). The target must succeed on a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw or be teleported to an unoccupied space the artillerist can see within 60 feet of the artillerist.

Actions

Multiattack. The artillerist makes two Psionic Rifle attacks, or they manifest a power and make one Phasing Tentacles attack.

Psionic Rifle. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. *Hit:* 21 (3d10 + 5) force damage.

Phasing Tentacles. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 21 (3d10 + 5) psychic damage, and if the target is Large or smaller, the artillerist can choose one of the following effects: the target is grappled (escape DC 17) or teleported up to 15 feet to an unoccupied space the artillerist can see.

****Memory Thief (5th-Order Power).*** The artillerist psionically plunders the mind of a creature they can see within 30 feet of them. The target must make a DC 17 Intelligence saving throw. On a failed save, the target takes 33 (6d10) psychic damage, and until they finish a long rest or die, their proficiency bonus is lowered by 1 and the artillerist gains a cumulative +2 bonus to damage rolls. On a successful save, a target takes half as much damage and doesn't have their proficiency bonus reduced.

A creature whose proficiency bonus drops to 0 can't form new thoughts or speak, and they have disadvantage on ability checks, attack rolls, and saving throws.

Guise (3rd-Order Power). The artillerist projects a psionic image over their body, transforming their appearance for 1 hour into that of a Medium creature they have seen. When they manifest this power, they can also change the appearance of any equipment they carry for the duration.

The changes wrought by this power fail to hold up to physical inspection. A creature can use an action to inspect the artillerist's appearance and make a DC 17 Intelligence (Investigation) check, noticing the image is a projection on a success.

Bonus Actions

****Vanish for One (3/Day; 3rd-Order Power; Concentration).*** The artillerist cloaks themself from the sight of a creature the artillerist can see within 60 feet of them. The creature must succeed on a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw or the artillerist becomes invisible to the creature for 1 minute (save ends at end of turn). This effect ends early if the artillerist attacks the creature, deals damage to them, or creates an effect that forces them to make a saving throw.

Yserthrax

CR 22 Solo

Gargantuan Dragon, Neutral Evil — 41,000 XP

Armor Class 19 (natural armor)
Hit Points 420 (24d20 + 168)
Speed 40 ft., fly 80 ft., swim 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
28 (+9)	10 (+0)	25 (+7)	22 (+6)	17 (+3)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws Con +14, Wis +10, Cha +11
Skills Arcana +13, Deception +11, Insight +17, Perception +17, Persuasion +11, Stealth +7
Damage Immunities poison, psychic
Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, dazed, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, stunned
Senses blindsight 120 ft., truesight 60 ft., passive Perception 27
Languages Common, Deep Speech, Draconic
Proficiency Bonus +7

Amphibious. Yserthrax can breathe air and water.

Corruption. Poison damage dealt by Yserthrax ignores damage resistance and treats damage immunity as damage resistance. Whenever Yserthrax deals poison damage to a creature who isn't a Construct or an Undead, that creature must succeed on a DC 19 Constitution saving throw or be corrupted (save ends at end of turn). The corruption lasts until cured by a *cure ailment* power, *lesser restoration* spell, or similar supernatural effect.

While corrupted, a creature takes 14 (4d6) psychic damage at the start of each of their turns as their mind and body are ravaged by reality-warping anomalies. If a creature dies while corrupted, their body melts into a gruesome puddle, becoming a **gibbering mouther** under Yserthrax's control.

Withering Resistance (3/Day). When Yserthrax fails a saving throw, she can take 16 (3d10) necrotic damage and succeed instead.

Actions

Multiattack. Yserthrax makes one Bite attack and two Claw attacks.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +16 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 20 (2d10 + 9) piercing damage plus 11 (2d10) poison damage.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +16 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 16 (2d6 + 9) slashing damage, and Yserthrax can move the target up to 15 feet horizontally.

Corrupting Breath (Recharge 5–6). Yserthrax exhales poison in a 90-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 22 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, a target takes 56 (16d6) poison damage and is poisoned until the end of their next turn. On a successful save, a target takes half as much damage and isn't poisoned.

Bonus Actions

Ulcerate. Yserthrax magically aggravates a creature she can see within 60 feet of her who is corrupted by her Corruption trait. The target must succeed on a DC 19 Constitution saving throw or be dazed until the end of their next turn.

Reactions

Eldritch Disruption. When a creature Yserthrax can see within 60 feet of her hits her with an attack or succeeds on a saving throw, Yserthrax conjures a reality-warping anomaly around them. The creature must choose to either take 10 (3d6) psychic damage or to reroll the attack or saving throw and use the new result.

Villain Actions

Yserthrax has three villain actions. She can take each action once during an encounter after an enemy's turn. She can take these actions in any order but can use only one per round.

Action 1: Summon Monoliths. Yserthrax conjures three monoliths of otherworldly green crystal, which grow out of the ground centered on three points she can see within 500 feet of her. Each monolith is a 10-foot-radius, 60-foot-high cylinder with AC 19, 100 hit points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage. The monoliths don't block Yserthrax's vision. Each creature within 10 feet of a monolith other than Yserthrax is vulnerable to psychic damage. When a monolith is destroyed, each creature within 30 feet of it must make a DC 19 Wisdom saving throw, taking 21 (6d6) psychic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Action 2: Spatial Alteration. Yserthrax bats her wings erratically, releasing foul energy that warps space around her. Each creature within 60 feet of her must succeed on a DC 19 Charisma saving throw or be teleported up to 120 feet to an unoccupied space Yserthrax can see.

Action 3: Elder Scream. Yserthrax unleashes an eldritch scream, piercing the mind of each enemy she can see within 120 feet of her. Each target must make a DC 19 Wisdom saving throw, taking 77 (14d10) psychic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Glass Cavern

Optimized for Five 17th-Level Characters

Deep beneath the barren wastes of the world rests one of its oldest creatures—so old, in fact, that he has forgotten his own name. This storm dragon has come to be known simply as the Voice of the Ages—or Xaantikorijek (*zan-tih-KOR-eh-jehk*) in Draconic.

Xaantikorijek is a master of thunder and lightning, and as part of the first brood to hatch on the Mundane World, he predates most of his surviving kin. Legend holds that the Voice of the Ages once knew a secret that could remake the Mundane World in whatever form they choose—but the aging wyrm remembers very little of his own past.

Whether this was the cost of surviving the doom that befell the dragons of old, a self-imposed condition, or some other magical malady, is unknown even to Xaantikorijek.

Once every few centuries, however, Xaantikorijek remembers a detail about his lost history. It is said that when this happens, his voice resounds worldwide as he relays the fact to all dragonkin. The dragons eagerly hope he may someday remember how to reforge the world with dragons as rulers.

Miles beneath the deserts at the edge of the world, Xaantikorijek dwells in a massive cave system constructed of glass. Forged by lightning as Xaantikorijek burrowed millennia ago, these caverns serve as a monument to his extensive and forgotten past. Colorful striations in the glass walls chronicle deep, seismic changes in the desert's composition as the Mundane World took shape, and various notes, drawings, and runes scrawled by Xaantikorijek over the eons document his pursuit of his lost memories. For most of Xaantikorijek's existence, these caverns have been his domain alone. However, in the past century, he has been attended by a group of fire giants who believe that unlocking the dragon's memories will help them find enlightenment.

Cavern Story Hooks

You can use one of the following story hooks to integrate this lair into an adventure:

Impending Doom. Hildifons Savil, a renowned dragonborn historian, has spent the last year researching ancient and devastating cataclysms, and he is confident another will happen soon. Hildifons believes Xaantikorijek experienced a similar disaster and might hold the key to preventing its recurrence. The historian begs the characters to seek the dragon and see if they can recover the wyrm's memories.

Shattered Memories. Xaantikorijek's voice reverberates through dragonkind across the timescape, signaling the elder dragon's recovery of a new memory. This results in more frequent and vicious dragon attacks everywhere. A group of nations pools their resources, offering the characters 200,000 gp to find the Voice of the Ages in his lair and learn what prompted the attacks.

Whispers in Glass. Mysterious glass structures start appearing throughout the Mundane World, bearing patterns that mirror the etchings in Xaantikorijek's mural (see area R2). The structures are the product of the Ozvarthrax, a wicked dragonborn cult that seeks to gain the storm dragon's favor and use the wyrm as weapon to subjugate others. If the characters can get to Xaantikorijek's lair before the cult, they might be able to convince the wyrm to stand against the cult—or kill him before he can join.

Cavern Features

Unless otherwise noted, each area of the Glass Cavern has the following features:

Ceilings and Walls. The ceilings of tunnels and the hallways are 40 feet high. All ceilings and walls are made of smooth glass and can't be climbed without supernatural aid. The glass is reinforced with magic, and unless otherwise specified, it is immune to all damage.

Illumination. Torches lit by the *continual flame* spell line the halls of the cavern, but the colorful glass walls absorb some of their illumination. Each area is filled with dim light, and only a light-creating spell of 3rd level or higher can cast bright light in the lair. All other effects that create bright light cast dim light instead.

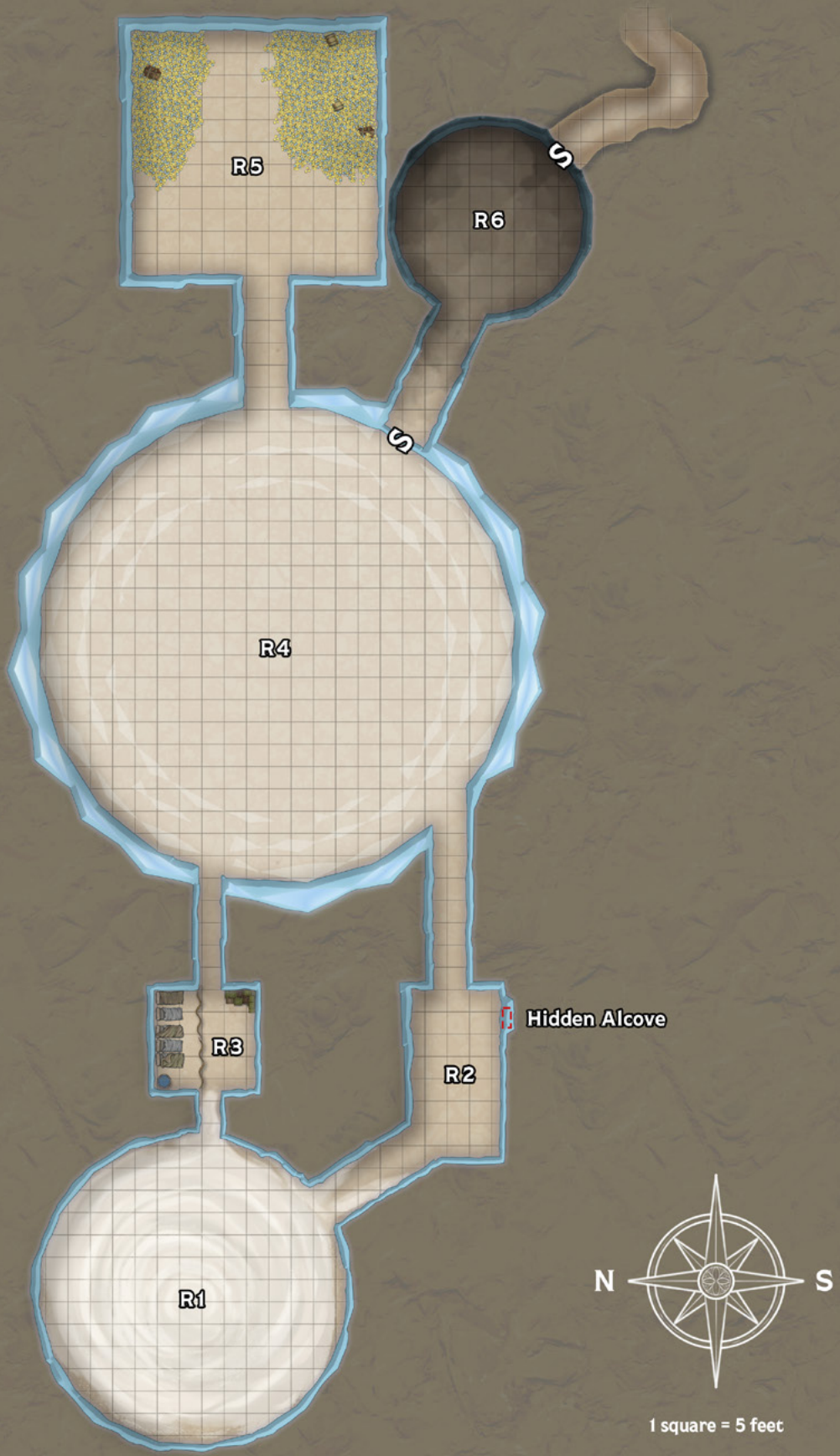
Sandstone Floor. The floors of the cavern are sandstone.

Fire Giants

The fire giants are disciples of Zenith Aastrika led by a lightbearer named Genesis Karmark. Aastrika told the giants to seek out Xaantikorijek and help him regain his memories. The giants believe that secrets of enlightenment are locked inside the wyrm, and they protect him with their lives.

Visitors to the Glass Cavern are exceedingly rare. Xaantikorijek and the fire giants are suspicious but not immediately hostile to uninvited visitors. They attack those who are caught stealing or harming others in the lair. Otherwise, the fire giants bring intruders to Xaantikorijek to discern their intent through Xaantikorijek's Wyrm's Memories lair action. If he senses a creature has no ill intent, they are escorted from the cavern. If the creature has nefarious intentions, such as harming Xaantikorijek or stealing from him, they are attacked immediately. On rare occasions, Xaantikorijek detects knowledge within a creature who intrigues him and offers them shelter within the caverns, an exchange of knowledge, or even a small favor or piece of treasure in exchange for more information.

Glass Cavern Map



Resting in the Glass Cavern

If Xaantikorijek is dead or isn't in the lair, the characters can take a short or long rest in any unoccupied area of the cavern without interruption. If the dragon is alive, whenever they rest, there is a 20 percent chance **Xaantikorijek** finds them halfway into the rest.

Entering the Glass Cavern

The hourglass chamber (area R1) provides the only entrance to the Glass Cavern. In the deepest part of a vast desert in the Mundane World, a lone patch of quicksand serves as a portal to this chamber; creatures submerged in the quicksand are instantly transported miles directly below the surface into the chamber.

Finding the patch of quicksand is easiest at night, for when Xaantikorijek slumbers, the sound of his snoring is transmitted through the patch and sounds like thunder throughout the desert. A character who succeeds on a DC 16 Intelligence (Nature) check identifies the thunder as a dragon's snores. A character can track the sound through the desert to the quicksand with a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Survival) check.

Xaantikorijek's presence and nightly snoring deters much of the desert's wildlife from approaching the quicksand patch, even during the day. A character knows this fact with a successful DC 20 Intelligence (History) check, and a character can find this particularly barren section of desert with a successful DC 20 Wisdom (Survival) check.

A creature transported by the quicksand portal falls from the ceiling of the hourglass chamber (area R1) and lands harmlessly on a pile of soft, talc-like sand in the center of the room.

Glass Cavern Areas

The following areas are keyed to the Glass Cavern Map.

R1. Hourglass Chamber

This area has a 120-foot-high ceiling and the following features:

- "This massive, hemispherical chamber is empty save for a heap of soft white sand in the middle of the room. The walls of the room are made of glass in vibrant, colorful layers; they shift from scarlet red to verdant green to deep blue as they ascend to the ceiling high above the sandstone floor."
- "From the zenith of the curved glass ceiling, a slow, methodical stream of sand feeds the pile."
- (**Secret**) A kingfissure worm, magically bound to Xaantikorijek, guards the entrance.

Kingfissure Worm. Under the sand hides a **kingfissure worm**, covered in Draconic sigils, who is magically bound to guard the lair. A character who examines the ground and succeeds on a DC 20 Intelligence (Investigation) or Wisdom (Survival) check notices that something enormous has been tunneling in the sand. If a creature enters the lair without permission from Xaantikorijek and remains on the ground in this area for 1 minute, the worm erupts from the earth and attacks.

A character who can read Draconic and succeeds on a DC 19 Intelligence (Arcana) check knows the worm's sigils were used in a ritual to bind the worm to Xaantikorijek's will. Treat the sigils as a 9th-level spell for the purpose of the *dispel magic* spell or similar effects. If dispelled, the sigils disappear and the worm is no longer bound to the dragon.

While bound to Xaantikorijek, the worm fights the intruders to the death. If unbound, the worm attacks the nearest creature they can sense, fights until reduced to 100 hit points, then flees.

If the characters battle the worm for more than three rounds, a **fire giant red fist** from the giant chambers (area R3) enters and attacks any intruders.

Trickling Sand. The trickle of sand comes from the quicksand portal used to enter the lair (see "Entering the Glass Cavern"). In its typical state, the portal is infinitesimally small, allowing only a single grain of sand (along with any creatures submerged in the quicksand) to enter the chamber and allowing no exit. However, when Xaantikorijek needs himself or another creature to leave his lair, he expands the portal to allow travel to the surface.

When Xaantikorijek recalls details of his past every few centuries, the quicksand above shifts to form a magical amplifier, allowing Xaantikorijek's voice to be heard by all dragons in the Mundane World.

Sand Pile. While the center pile of sand is perpetually filled, it never grows, but remains the perfect size to cushion the landing of whatever creatures fall from the ceiling. If a creature attempts to remove sand from the pile to decrease its size, the trickle of sand immediately adjusts to maintain the pile. If a creature adds sand to the pile, a mysterious breeze blows, dispersing precisely enough sand to maintain the pile's size.

R2. Chamber of Vital Prophecy

The giants don't enter this chamber because of the southern mural's effects. This area has a 100-foot-high ceiling and the following features:

- "The south wall of this chamber contains vivid splashes of colored glass that hint at a massive, vibrant picture covering the entirety of the surface. The picture has been largely scratched out with various sketches and memoranda."
- (**Secret**) There is an alcove 50 feet above the floor on the south wall. This contains a ball of yarn that Strika has taken from the hoard and tucked away (see "Treasure" below for more information).

Walls. The deep scratches on the walls of this room allow them to be climbed with a successful DC 18 (Strength) Athletics check. A creature with a climbing speed automatically succeeds on the check.

Southern Mural. When a non-Dragon creature looks at the mural, they must make a DC 20 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, the creature's head is filled with

visions of the timescape coming to a catastrophic end, and they take 55 (10d10) psychic damage. After a creature makes a saving throw against the mural's effects, succeed or fail, they are immune to its effects for 24 hours.

The glass on the south wall once displayed a mural of vital importance to Xaantikorijek. A character who succeeds on a DC 23 Intelligence (History) check knows that the mural displayed a prophecy that led to Xaantikorijek killing the dragon Frezzelvarax nearly a thousand years ago. In the ensuing millennium, Xaantikorijek has used the walls of this chamber as a notepad, completely obfuscating the picture and its larger meaning. A *detect magic* spell reveals that the mural radiates an aura of divination magic.

A character who succeeds on a DC 16 Intelligence (History or Nature) check recognizes rough sketches of extinct creatures from eras long past. A creature who understands Draconic can read various random notes Xaantikorijek has left for himself, such as "Bring back food for Genesis (what does he eat?)" or "The Ashen Song lies waiting." At your discretion, you can include messages that offer story hooks for future adventures.

Treasure. A character who succeeds on a DC 20 Intelligence (Investigation) or Wisdom (Perception) check notices a little alcove in the wall 50 feet above the ground. It contains a ball of ancient silk yarn worth 25 gp. Strika the lightbender (see area R5) stole this treasure from Xaantikorijek's hoard and tucked it away here to play with when she's bored. Xaantikorijek is aware but allows Strika to believe it is her secret.

R3. Giant Chambers

This area has the following features:

- "Boxes are stacked high in the southeast corner."
- "A massive curtain hangs from the ceiling just to the north of the entrance, completely obscuring that side of the room."
- *(If the characters didn't attract the attention of the giants in area R1)* "Loud, repetitive rumbles come from the other side of the curtain. Some big creatures are snoring."
- (**Secret**) Three fire giants, huddled on a heap of human-sized bedrolls, and a spring-fed well are on the north side of the curtain.

Fire Giants. If the three **fire giant red fists** are asleep, the characters can move through this chamber with a successful DC 16 group Dexterity (Stealth) check. If the party fails this check and the giants awake, or if the characters already awoke the giants before entering the chamber, the giants listen in on the characters' conversation from the other side of the curtain. If the characters seem hostile, the giants attack. If the characters don't seem hostile, the giants appear and tell them to halt; one leaves to get Xaantikorijek in the chamber of stars (area R6) to question the characters while the remaining giants keep them here. If the characters try to leave before the dragon can question them, the giants attack. This room and the hall to get to it are cramped for the giants, who must squeeze while in these areas. They sleep in this room as to not take up too much space, which they view as a sign of respect to the dragon.

Supply Crates. The crates in the southeast corner are where the giants store food. They contain a year's worth of food for the giants—or enough to feed forty Medium or Small creatures for a year. A character who succeeds on a DC 16 Intelligence (Investigation) check discovers two *potions of superior healing* tucked between the furthest crate and the wall.

R4. Chamber of Reflection

Xaantikorijek uses this chamber to stare at his reflection in an attempt to regain his memories. Due to the silver present in the sand that formed this chamber, its walls are reflective and the area is filled with bright light. This area has a 200-foot-high ceiling and the following features:

- "The walls of this circular room form a mirror dome."
- "Six big cats with brilliant, light-reflecting fur sit in a pride near the center of the room."
- (**Secret**) In the southeast wall of this chamber, there is a 1-inch-diameter hole through which Xaantikorijek passes from the chamber of stars (area R6).

Lightbenders. The six big cats are **lightbenders**, the pets of the fire giants. The lightbenders don't attack the characters unless the party attacks first or unless the characters use a light source in the chamber that sheds bright light in a radius of 120 feet or greater (see "Reflective Walls"). If the characters battle the lightbenders, **Xaantikorijek** arrives from the chamber of stars (area R6) at the start of the third round of combat and attacks the party.

Reflective Walls. Instead of dampening light, the mirrored walls of this chamber double the effects of all illumination. For example, a torch sheds 40 feet of bright light and 40 feet of dim light, instead of its usual 20 feet of each. If a light source that creates bright light in a radius of 120 feet or greater is activated or carried into this area, each creature in the chamber must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or be blinded for 1 minute (save ends at end of turn).

Secret Hole. A character who succeeds on a DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check notices the hole in the southeast wall, and a successful DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals the area behind this portion of the wall to be hollow. A creature can use an action to break an opening in the wall that is large enough for them to pass through.

If the wall is broken, it reveals the tunnel to the chamber of stars (area R6). Xaantikorijek can use his Fulguration villain action to pass through the hole or break the wall down.

R5. Hoard Chamber

This area has the following features:

- "This massive chamber is filled with treasure stacked in neat piles."
- "Two fire giants move treasure fastidiously from one pile to another."
- "An abnormally large lion with glistening fur and a brilliant mane regards the giants with lazy boredom."

Giants and Lightbender. Genesis Karmark, a **fire giant red lightbearer**, spends most of his waking hours attempting to organize this hoard. He is assisted by a **fire giant red fist** and accompanied (but in no way assisted) by Strika, Genesis's **lightbender** and best friend. Genesis believes that if the hoard is organized correctly, it will unlock a key memory from Xaantikorijek's past. When one system doesn't work, he moves onto another. When the characters arrive, he is organizing items by color.

If the giants notice the characters, they regard them with suspicion. Genesis asks them to stay in the chamber and not touch anything while the other giant goes to get Xaantikorijek from the chamber of stars (area R6). If the characters refuse to comply, Genesis and Strika attack.

Treasure. Most of Xaantikorijek's hoard is in this room (see "Xaantikorijek's Hoard" for more information).

R6. Chamber of Stars

This dark, blackened chamber is where Xaantikorijek sleeps. It has a 120-foot-high ceiling and the following features:

- "Many lighting strikes have scorched this domed chamber's glass walls, making them the deep black color of obsidian."
- "Gems embedded in the ceiling glisten like stars in a night sky."
- *(If the characters enter without drawing Xaantikorijek to another area)* "Curled in the center of this room lies a sleeping blue-scaled dragon."
- *(If Xaantikorijek is dead)* "A massive open doorway glows faintly red on the southeast wall of this chamber."
- (**Secret**) A secret magic door exists on the southeast corner of this chamber.
- (**Secret**) If Xaantikorijek is here and the characters broke down the wall in the chamber of reflection to enter (area R4), he is only pretending to be asleep.

Xaantikorijek. If the great dragon **Xaantikorijek** is asleep when the characters enter this chamber, they can move in this chamber without waking him up by succeeding on a DC 15 group Dexterity (Stealth) check. If the dragon fakes sleep, a character can tell that Xaantikojroek is actually awake with a successful DC 17 Wisdom (Insight) check.

While faking sleep, Xaantikorijek listens to the characters and observes them with his blindsight. If they attempt to harm or steal from him, he attacks. If their intentions aren't hostile, he eventually rouses and asks why they disturb his rest.

Lair Actions

When fighting inside his lair, Xaantikorijek can take lair actions. On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), he can take one lair action to cause one of the following effects; he can't use the same lair action two rounds in a row:

Echoing Roar. Xaantikorijek lets out a roar that reverberates within his lair. Each enemy in the lair must make a DC 20 Constitution saving throw, taking 36 (8d8) thunder damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Quicksand. Xaantikorijek magically transmutes a 20-foot-square section of ground centered on a point he can see within 120 feet of him, turning it into shifting quicksand. Until the end of initiative count 20 on the next round, that area is difficult terrain, and creatures who start their turn in that area or enter it for the first time on a turn become restrained. A creature can use their action to make a DC 15 Strength check, freeing themself or a creature they can reach on a success. If a creature is still restrained in this way when the ground returns to normal, they remain restrained and the DC to escape increases to 20.

Wyrm's Memories. Xaantikorijek taps into his recollections of lost magic and chooses one creature he can see within the lair. Xaantikorijek divines the significant secrets and details of that creature's life. In addition, Xaantikorijek has advantage on attack rolls against the target until the end of initiative count 20 on the following round.

Magical Door. Xaantikorijek created a 20-foot-wide, 50-foot-tall magical door in the southeast corner of this room. It leads to magma chambers that wind their way to the surface. He can open this door with a thought while in the chamber (no action required). If he dies, the door opens permanently. A *detect magic* spell reveals that the door radiates an aura of transmutation magic, and a *dispel magic* spell opens the door permanently.

Treasure. Xaantikorijek keeps the Star Map of Creation (see "Xaantikorijek's Hoard") in this room. He leaves it on the floor when he isn't here and holds it close when he is.

Additionally, the ceiling of this chamber is embedded with fifty moonstones (worth 50 gp each), twenty pearls (worth 100 gp each), nine topazes (worth 500 gp each), and one opal (worth 1,000 gp). A character who can reach the gems can remove them with a successful DC 20 Strength (Athletics) check or DC 15 Dexterity check using jeweler's or thieves' tools.

Xaantikorijek's Hoard

The bulk of Xaantikorijek's hoard is in area R5. The hoard contains the following items:

- *Chime of opening*
- *Efreeti bottle*
- *Ring of lightning resistance*
- *Staff of thunder and lightning*
- *Xaantikorijek's looking glass* (see below)
- Silver box (worth 10 gp) containing 2 *potions of giant strength* (fire), a *potion of flying,* 2 vials of *oil of etherealness*, and 2 vials of *oil of sharpness*
- Star Map of Creation (see below)
- 19 obsidian stones (worth 10 gp each)
- Stylized amber figurine of a humanoid creature (worth 250 gp)
- 2 breastplates bearing the royal crest of a lost kingdom (worth 400 gp each)
- 4 matching silver chalices set with star rose quartz (worth 750 gp each)
- Box of jade animals, all of which have been extinct for centuries (worth 2,500 gp)
- Gold music box that plays a long-forgotten melody (worth 2,500 gp)
- Masterpiece painting of a lost citadel in the desert nearby, artist unknown (worth 2,500 gp)
- 4 diamonds (worth 5,000 gp each)
- Jeweled gold crown from a long-forgotten desert kingdom (worth 7,500 gp)
- Pearl-encrusted game board with solid gold playing pieces, the rules of which have been lost to history (worth 7,500 gp)
- 5,200 sp, 8,480 gp, and 450 pp

Star Map of Creation

This scroll displays what the night sky looked like at the creation of the Mundane World. If you have proficiency with the Arcana or Nature skill, you can spend 1 minute holding and studying the map and search it for an omen about the results of a specific course of action that you plan to take within the next 30 minutes. The GM chooses from the following possible outcomes:

- Good omen
- Bad omen
- Mixed omen that has both good and bad results
- No omen for a result that isn't especially good or bad

The omen doesn't take into account any possible circumstances that might change the outcome, such as the loss or gain of equipment or a companion.

If the map is used two or more times in 24 hours, there is a cumulative 25 percent chance for each reading after the first that you get a random reading. The GM makes this roll in secret.

Xaantikorijek the Voice of the Ages unleashes a furious storm.

Xaantikorijek's Looking Glass

Wondrous Item, Very Rare (Requires Attunement)

This handheld silver mirror is made from a portion of Xaantikorijek's Glass Cavern, and the back shows his thoughtful visage. While you carry the mirror, you are resistant to lightning and thunder damage.

In addition, while you hold the mirror and can see a creature or object in its reflection, you can ask the mirror a question about the reflected creature or object's past. The mirror answers the question by magically changing the reflection, showing an event from the subject's past. The mirror can only show events that have occurred on the Mundane World. Once the mirror has shown an answer to a question, it can't be used in this way again until the next dawn.

Staff of Thunder and Lightning

Cavern Stat Blocks

The following stat blocks appear in the lair.

Fire Giant Lightbearer

CR 10 Support
Huge Giant, Any Alignment
5,900 XP

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)
Hit Points 137 (11d12 + 66)
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
22 (+6)	16 (+3)	23 (+6)	10 (+0)	21 (+5)	13 (+1)

Saving Throws Str +10, Dex +7, Con +10
Skills Athletics +10, Perception +9
Damage Immunities fire
Senses passive Perception 19
Languages Giant
Proficiency Bonus +4

Healing Heat. When the lightbearer targets a fire giant with an attack, spell, or other supernatural effect that deals fire damage, that target instead regains a number of hit points equal to the damage that would be dealt. The target can choose to be hit by this attack or fail their saving throw against this effect.

Molten Flesh. The first time a creature other than a fire giant touches the lightbearer or hits them with a melee attack on a turn, that creature takes 7 (2d6) fire damage.

Actions

Multiattack. The lightbearer makes two attacks using Slam, Living Blaze, or both. They can replace one attack with a use of Flamelash.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 16 (3d6 + 6) bludgeoning damage plus 7 (2d6) fire damage, and if the target is a Huge or smaller creature, the target must choose between being knocked prone or pushed 10 feet away from the lightbearer.

Living Blaze. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +10 to hit, range 180 ft., one target. *Hit:* 16 (3d6 + 6) fire damage, and the lightbearer can ricochet the flame toward another target within 5 feet of the first. The lightbearer makes another spell attack roll against the second target with disadvantage, dealing the same damage on a hit.

Flamelash. The lightbearer extends a whiplike flame to strike a creature they can see within 30 feet of them. The target must make a DC 18 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save, the target takes 20 (4d6 + 6) fire damage, and if the target is Large or smaller, the lightbearer moves the target up to 10 feet horizontally.

Bonus Actions

Travel by Fire (3/Day). The lightbearer chooses two willing creatures they can see within 30 feet of them. Each target takes 14 (4d6) fire damage and teleports, swapping places with the other target.

Fire Giant Red Fist

CR 9 Soldier
Huge Giant, Any Alignment
5,000 XP

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)
Hit Points 162 (13d12 + 78)
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
25 (+7)	14 (+2)	23 (+6)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)

Saving Throws Str + 11, Dex +6, Con +10
Skills Athletics +11, Perception +6
Damage Immunities fire
Senses passive Perception 16
Languages Giant
Proficiency Bonus +4

Heat and Pressure. When an enemy moves out of the red fist's reach, the enemy must succeed on a DC 18 Constitution saving throw or gain a level of exhaustion. Creatures with resistance or immunity to fire damage are immune to this effect.

Molten Flesh. The first time a creature other than a fire giant touches the red fist or hits them with a melee attack on a turn, that creature takes 7 (2d6) fire damage.

Actions

Multiattack. The red fist makes two Unarmed Strike attacks.

Unarmed Strike. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 21 (4d6 + 7) bludgeoning damage plus 7 (2d6) fire damage. If the same creature is hit twice with this attack on a turn, they are blinded until the end of their next turn.

Hurl Flame. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +10 to hit, range 180 ft., one target. *Hit:* 34 (8d6 + 6) fire damage.

Reactions

Guardian Block (3/Day). When an enemy within 10 feet of the red fist hits a creature other than the red fist with an attack, the red fist halves the damage dealt by that attack. The red fist then makes an Unarmed Strike against the attacker.

Kingfissure Worm

CR 15 Solo
Gargantuan Monstrosity, Unaligned
13,000 XP

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)
Hit Points 297 (18d20 + 108)
Speed 60 ft., burrow 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
29 (+9)	10 (+0)	23 (+6)	1 (–5)	10 (+0)	5 (–3)

Saving Throws Con +11
Condition Immunities charmed, flanked, frightened, prone
Senses blindsight 30 ft., tremorsense 120 ft., passive Perception 10
Languages —
Proficiency Bonus +5

Multiple Tongues. The worm has three tongues, each of which can be targeted with attacks (AC 20, immunity to psychic damage) while that tongue is grappling a creature. When a tongue takes 35 damage or more in a single turn, that tongue is destroyed, releasing any target it was grappling. The worm can't use a destroyed tongue with their Multiattack or Tongue Grab action until they finish a long rest. Damaging or destroying a tongue deals no damage to the worm.

Slowed, Not Stopped (3/Day). When the worm fails a saving throw, they can choose to succeed instead. When they do, their speed and the reach of their Tongue Grab attack are each reduced by a cumulative 10 feet until they finish a long rest. The worm's speed and reach can't be reduced below 5 feet in this way.

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

Actions

Multiattack. The worm can make a number of Tongue Grab attacks equal to the number of tongues they currently have (see Multiple Tongues). The worm can replace any number of those attacks with a use of Swallow.

Tongue Grab. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +14 to hit, reach 30 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (4d6) acid damage, and the creature is grappled (escape DC 19). Until this grapple ends, the worm can't use this tongue against another target.

Maw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +14 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 22 (3d8 + 9) piercing damage. If the target is Huge or smaller, they must succeed on a DC 19 Dexterity saving throw or be swallowed (as if by the worm's Swallow action).

Swallow. The worm pulls a Huge or smaller grappled creature into their maw and swallows them. A swallowed creature is no longer grappled, but they are blinded and restrained, have total cover against attacks and other effects outside the worm, and take 28 (8d6) acid damage at the start of each of the worm's turns.

If the worm takes 30 damage or more on a single turn from a creature inside them, the worm must succeed on a DC 21 Constitution check at the end of that turn or regurgitate all swallowed creatures, each of whom fall prone in an unoccupied space within 10 feet of the worm. If the worm dies, a swallowed creature can escape from the corpse by using 20 feet of movement, exiting prone.

Bonus Actions

Tongue Sweep. The worm violently swings a creature they have grappled. The grappled creature takes 10 (3d6) bludgeoning damage, and each enemy within 10 feet of the grappled creature must succeed on a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw or take 10 (3d6) bludgeoning damage.

Reactions

Tongue Recall. When one of the worm's tongues takes damage that doesn't immediately destroy it, the worm can release any target that tongue is grappling and recall the tongue back inside the worm's body. That tongue can't be targeted until the worm uses it to grapple a creature again.

Villain Actions

The worm has three villain actions. They can take each action once during an encounter after an enemy's turn. They can take these actions in any order but can use only one per round.

Action 1: Open the Earth. The worm writhes, sending tremors through the ground and opening a 20-foot-wide, 100-foot-long, 40-foot-deep fissure in the ground, originating from the worm. Each creature in that area must make a DC 19 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save, a creature falls into the fissure, taking 14 (4d6) bludgeoning damage from the fall and landing prone. On a successful save, a creature flees to the closest unoccupied space outside the fissure's area.

Action 2: Earth Breach. The worm burrows up to half their speed and then bursts through the surface, breaching the ground in a 10-foot-radius circle. Huge and smaller creatures within that area must succeed on a DC 19 Dexterity saving throw or be swallowed (as if by the worm's Swallow action).

Action 3: Better Out Than In. The worm projectile vomits the contents of their stomach in a 60-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 19 Dexterity saving throw, taking 21 (6d6) bludgeoning damage plus 21 (6d6) acid damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. Additionally, creatures who were swallowed by the worm are regurgitated, taking 21 (6d6) bludgeoning damage and landing prone in an unoccupied space of the worm's choice within that area.

Lightbender

CR 5 Ambusher

Large Monstrosity, Unaligned — 1,800 XP

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)
Hit Points 102 (12d10 + 36)
Speed 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	6 (−2)	12 (+1)	8 (−1)

Skills Perception +4, Stealth +8
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14
Languages —
Proficiency Bonus +3

Avoidance. If the lightbender is subjected to an effect that allows them to make a saving throw to take only half damage, they instead take no damage if they succeed on the saving throw, and only half damage if they fail.

Pounce. If the lightbender moves at least 20 feet straight toward a creature and then hits them with a Claw attack on the same turn, that target must succeed on a DC 15 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone. If the target is prone, the lightbender can make one Bite attack against them as a bonus action.

Actions

Multiattack. The lightbender makes one Bite attack and two Claw attacks, or uses their Tail Whip twice.

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

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) slashing damage.

Tail Whip. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage plus 7 (2d6) radiant damage.

Hypnotic Mane (1/Day). The lightbender discharges the light absorbed in their mane into a brilliant, mesmerizing display. Each creature within 15 feet of the lightbender must succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw or be charmed by the lightbender for 1 minute. While charmed in this way, a creature is incapacitated and has a speed of 0. If a creature charmed in this way takes damage or if someone else uses an action to shake the creature out of their stupor, the condition ends for that creature.

Reactions

Afterimage. When the lightbender is hit by an attack, they can reveal that the attacker is attacking a past visual imprint of the lightbender. The lightbender appears in an unoccupied space they can see within 30 feet of their imprint, the attack misses, then the imprint disappears. The lightbender can't use this reaction if the attacker relies on senses other than sight, such as blindsight, or if they can perceive illusions as false, as with truesight.

Lightbender

Lightbenders prowl deserts, plains, forests—any sun-bathed wilderness. Their adaptations make them skilled daylight predators. This monstrous creature's fur bends and refracts light from the surrounding environment, producing mirages that distract and confuse their prey—hence their name.

At a distance, a lightbender looks akin to a regular lion, but closer inspection reveals their glowing eyes, iridescent mane, and pair of lashing tails spiked with refractive crystals. The lightbender's pelt magically warps light around them to disguise their movement, allowing them to teleport while leaving behind a past visual imprint. Unsuspecting prey rarely realize they're staring at an afterimage of the lightbender until the fearsome creature pounces.

Xaantikorijek

CR 23 Solo

Gargantuan Dragon, Neutral — 50,000 XP

Armor Class 20 (natural armor)
Hit Points 518 (28d20 + 224)
Speed 40 ft., burrow 40 ft., fly 80 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
28 (+9)	10 (+0)	27 (+8)	24 (+7)	16 (+3)	20 (+5)

Saving Throws Con +15, Wis +10, Cha +12
Skills Arcana +21, History +21, Nature +21, Perception +10, Religion +21
Damage Immunities lightning, thunder
Condition Immunities charmed, dazed, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, stunned
Senses blindsight 120 ft., truesight 60 ft., passive Perception 20
Languages all
Proficiency Bonus +7

Static Shield (3/Day). When Xaantikorijek fails a saving throw, he can succeed instead. When he does, his sight, blindsight, and truesight are reduced to a range of 30 feet until the start of his next turn.

Storm of the Gods. Lightning and thunder damage dealt by Xaantikorijek ignore damage resistance.

Actions

Multiattack. Xaantikorijek makes one Bite attack and two Claw attacks.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +16 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 20 (2d10 + 9) piercing damage plus 5 (1d10) lightning damage, and Xaantikorijek can move the target up to 20 feet in any direction.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +16 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 16 (2d6 + 9) slashing damage plus 7 (2d6) thunder damage, and the target is knocked prone.

Fulminating Breath (Recharge 5–6). Xaantikorijek exhales lightning in a line that is 120 feet long and 30 feet wide. Each creature in that area must make a DC 23 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save, a creature takes 66 (12d10) lightning damage and has disadvantage on saving throws until the end of Xaantikorijek's next turn. On a successful save, a creature takes half as much damage and suffers no other effect.

Bonus Actions

Lightning Discharge. Xaantikorijek makes one Bite attack. On a hit, Xaantikorijek's teeth spark with energy, dealing an extra 11 (2d10) lightning damage to the target and to one other enemy within 60 feet of the target.

Reactions

Voice of Negation. When a creature Xaantikorijek can see within 60 feet of him uses an action or bonus action to cast a spell, Xaantikorijek speaks an arcane word, forcing the creature to make a DC 23 saving throw using their spellcasting ability. On a failed save, the target takes 16 (3d10) thunder damage and is unable to cast spells until the end of their turn, but the spell slot is not expended and the creature's action is not lost.

Villain Actions

Xaantikorijek has three villain actions. He can take each action once during an encounter after an enemy's turn. He can take these actions in any order but can use only one per round.

Action 1: Voice of Reverence. Xaantikorijek speaks an ancient word of authority into the mind of each creature of his choice within 60 feet of him. Each target must succeed on a DC 20 Wisdom saving throw or fall prone. A creature who falls prone in this way takes 22 (4d10) thunder damage if they stand up before the end of Xaantikorijek's next turn.

Action 2: Fulguration. Xaantikorijek sheds his physical form to become a being of lightning until the end of his next turn. While in this form, Xaantikorijek gains the following benefits:

- He is resistant to all damage.
- He can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing.
- His movement doesn't provoke opportunity attacks.
- He can move through any creature's space, and when he moves into a creature's space for the first time on a turn, that creature takes 16 (3d10) lightning damage.

Action 3: Voice of the Ages. Xaantikorijek recites an ancient lament that reverberates in nearby souls. Each enemy within 60 feet of Xaantikorijek who can hear him must make a DC 20 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, a creature takes 44 (8d10) psychic damage, falls prone, and is unable to stand up for 1 minute as they weep uncontrollably (save ends at end of turn). On a successful save, a creature takes half as much damage and suffers no other effect.

Mount Brazen

Optimized for Five 18th-Level Characters

The blood dragon known as the Ashen Song is a creature of ash and cinder, her body wreathed in flames that burn with an unearthly heat. Forzaantilirys (*for-zan-TILL-ih-riss*) lairs in the heart of the world's largest volcano, and if the rumors are true, she can see and hear through magma and lava flows everywhere.

Forzaantilirys is an inferno of anger, and this burning rage makes her immune to all fires, including the harsh light of the sun. She hates humanoids for their belief they are entitled to the Mundane World, and she abhors the gods who created them. The Ashen Song also despises the wyrm Xaantikorijek, who killed her mate, Frezzelvarax (*frezz-el-VAR-ax*), nearly a thousand years ago. She wants nothing more than to see the world consumed and remade by her fire, though she knows wanton destruction would lead to her demise.

Mount Brazen Story Hooks

You can use one of the following story hooks to integrate this lair into an adventure:

Burning Convoy. The villages around Mount Brazen ask the characters to deliver tribute to Mount Brazen to appease the grieving Forzaantilirys during the death anniversary of her beloved Frezzelvarax. As payment, the villagers offer the party a *vorpal longsword*. When the characters arrive, Forzaantilirys assumes they're part of the tribute and attempts to consume them.

Cinder Secrets. Xochitlin, a human cleric, recently translated ancient tablets that reveal a magical seal lies beneath Mount Brazen. This seal is tied to Goxomoc, a slumbering titan with the power to end the world. Fearing that Forzaantilirys's presence might weaken the seal before the titan's timely awakening, Xochitlin asks the characters to deal with the dragon.

Draconic Rest. Bright Akhros, one of the giants serving the dragon Xaantikorijek, learns that Forzaantilirys is keeping corpses of the storm dragon's progeny as trophies in her lair. Akhros tells the characters they will gain Xaantikorijek's favor if they can infiltrate Mount Brazen and destroy the corpses, putting the blue dragons' spirits to rest.

Mount Brazen Features

Unless otherwise noted, each area of Mount Brazen has the following features:

Ceilings. Forzaantilirys has expanded the tunnels and chambers in her lair, increasing their height to 60 feet.

Hotter than Hell. At the end of each hour a creature spends in the lair, they must succeed on a Constitution saving throw or gain 1 level of exhaustion. The DC is 10 for the first hour and increases by 1 for each consecutive hour spent in the lair. Creatures in medium or heavy armor or heavy clothing have disadvantage on this save. Creatures who have resistance or immunity to fire damage automatically succeed on this save.

Illumination. Lava sheds bright light for 15 feet and dim light for an additional 15 feet. Otherwise, the lair is dark.

Lava. The lava pools and rivers in the volcano are 15 feet deep. The first time a creature enters the lava on a turn or starts their turn there, they take 33 (6d10) fire damage. When a creature starts their turn submerged in the lava, they must succeed on a DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check or have their speed reduced to 0 until the start of their next turn. A creature who is resistant to fire damage has advantage on this saving throw, and a creature who is immune to fire damage automatically succeeds on it.

Volcanic Rock. The ceilings, floors, and walls are made of ash-streaked igneous rock and obsidian. These surfaces radiate heat. A wall can be climbed without equipment with a successful DC 13 Strength (Athletics) check.

Elemental and Giant Servants

Wicked elementals and fire giants serve Forzaantilirys in her quest to burn the world. These guards and soldiers attack intruders and fight to the death.

Captured Guards. If the characters question a captured guard and succeed on a DC 20 Charisma (Intimidation or Persuasion) check, the guard reveals one of the following pieces of information:

- The black rock chamber (area F2) is made of life-sapping stone, and invisible undead haunt that chamber.
- The Draconic phrase to pass through the trophy room (area F3) without triggering the trap is "Frezzelvarax my beloved, I'll not rest until Xaantikorijek the murderer is slain."
- There is a shortcut to help the characters navigate the volcano (see "Navigating Mount Brazen"). This information allows the character guiding the party through the tunnels to automatically succeed by 5 on their next Wisdom (Survival) check to navigate Mount Brazen's tunnels.

Resting in Mount Brazen

If **Forzaantilirys** is alive and in the lair while the characters rest in the volcano, there is a 30 percent chance she finds them halfway through their rest. If Forzaantilirys is dead or not present, the characters can rest without interruption in any area of Mount Brazen once they deal with the area's enemies.

While resting, they must contend with the extreme heat of the lair (see "Hotter than Hell" in "Mount Brazen Features").

Entering Mount Brazen

There are two ways to get to the heart of the volcano.

Secret Entrance. A tunnel to the ground entrance (area F1) is hidden behind a lava fall at the base of the volcano. A creature approaching the volcano notices the tunnel with a successful DC 22 Wisdom (Perception) check. A creature searching the volcano's perimeter who succeeds on a DC 20 Intelligence (Investigation) or Wisdom (Survival) check notices faint footprints in the ash just in front of the entrance, which indicate that an enormous dragon has landed there and then walked into the lava fall.

Into the Crater. The most obvious way into Mount Brazen is to scale or fly to the 10,000-foot-high peak of the volcano and enter through the volcanic crater (area F5). A creature can climb up the side of the mountain and avoid the flowing lava with a successful DC 18 Strength (Athletics) check. A creature who fails the check still reaches the top of the volcano but takes 33 (6d10) fire damage from the lava.

A creature who flies into the crater must fly through a cloud of burning, toxic ash. If the creature needs to breathe, they must make a DC 18 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, a creature takes 22 (4d10) fire damage and is poisoned for 1 hour. On a successful save, they take half as much damage and aren't poisoned.

Come Prepared

Before the characters enter the tunnels of Mount Brazen, make sure they understand just how hot it is inside the volcano and what effect the heat could have on them. The characters have a better chance at winning the day if they come prepared to beat the heat or easily remove levels of exhaustion.

Navigating Mount Brazen

A sprawling network of 20-foot-wide tunnels connects the areas of Mount Brazen. The characters might travel the lair in reverse order if they enter the volcano through the crater (area F5). When the party leaves an area of Mount Brazen and attempts to go deeper into (or out of) the volcano, one character can make a DC 20 Wisdom (Survival) check to guide the others through the tunnels:

- If the check fails, the characters take an hour to reach the next area. For instance, if the characters are traveling from area F1, it takes them an hour to reach area F2.
- If the check succeeds by 4 or less, it takes the characters 30 minutes to reach the next area.
- If the check succeeds by 5 or more, the characters find a shortcut and can either make it to the next location in 15 minutes, or they can avoid the next area and make it to the area after the skipped one in 30 minutes. For instance, if the characters are traveling from area F1, they can choose to make it to area F2 in 15 minutes or area F3 in 30 minutes.

The characters can navigate their way back to any area they've visited (or skipped) without making an ability check. Travel between familiar areas takes only 15 minutes.

Mount Brazen Areas

The following areas are keyed to the Mount Brazen Map and the Volcanic Crater Map.

Content Warning: Blood

The force of blood manipulates the blood of their enemies. If you or any of your players find descriptions of blood upsetting, you may want to avoid using the elementals or reflavor their abilities.

F1. Ground Entrance

This area has the following features:

- "Narrow lava rivers flow on the north and south edges of this tunnel, fed by a curtain of lava that covers the tunnel's exit to the outside."
- "A knight made of blood and two fire giants stand guard on the east side of the room."

Guards. A **force of blood**, a **fire giant lightbearer,** and a **fire giant red fist** guard this entrance. A creature just outside the lava fall can draw the guardians out of this area and the lair with a successful DC 15 Charisma (Deception) check. The red fist attempts to grapple creatures and hold them in the lava.

F2. Black Rock Chamber

This area has the following features:

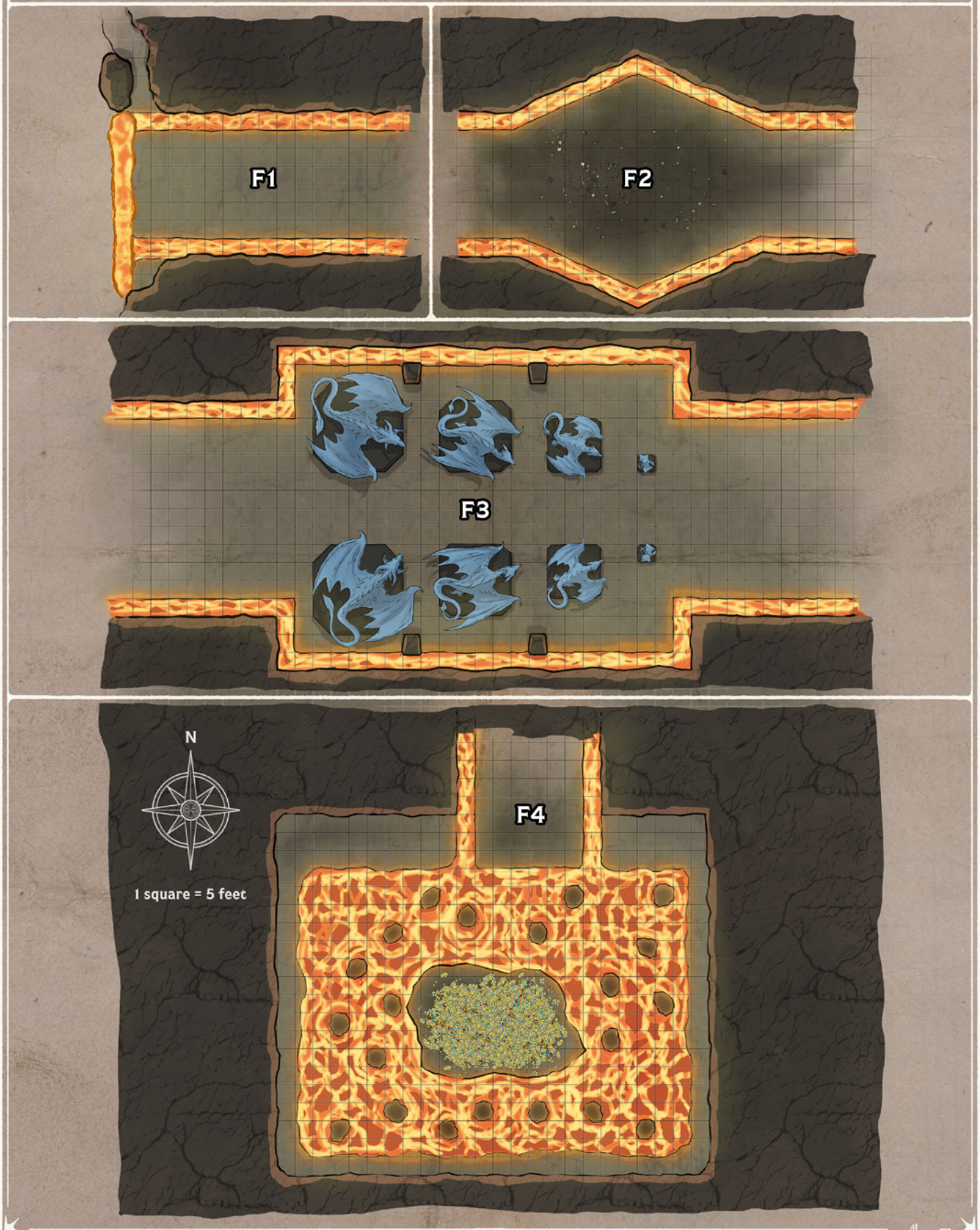
- "Many blackened bones litter this vast, diamond-shaped cavern of worked stone."
- "The dark marble absorbs most of the light created by two flowing channels of lava on the north and south walls of the chamber."
- (**Secret**) Four haunts stalk this chamber.
- (**Secret**) The rock used to build this chamber saps the energy of living creatures.

Haunts. Four **haunts** in the center of the room attack any creature who enters this area—except Forzaantilirys, for they know better than to harm the dragon. The haunts begin their assault by hurling bones at intruders. They don't leave this area.

Bones. The bones on the cavern floor make it difficult terrain for Medium and smaller creatures.

Necromancer's Marble. A character who succeeds on a DC 20 Intelligence (Arcana) check recognizes the black rock on the floor, walls, and ceiling of this chamber as necromancer's marble, a magic rock that absorbs light and

Mount Brazen Map



life. The *detect magic* spell reveals the rock radiates an aura of necromancy.

Thanks to the necromancer's marble, what is normally bright light becomes dim light and what is normally dim light doesn't produce any light in this chamber.

When a creature who isn't a Dragon or Undead starts their turn in the chamber, they must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, taking 32 (5d12) necrotic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Treat the marble as a 9th-level spell for the purpose of the *dispel magic* spell or similar effects. If dispelled, the marble loses its magic and the effects end.

F3. Trophy Room

This area has the following features:

- "This chamber's floors and walls are scorched, and lava rivers flow on its north and south edges."
- "Eight blue-scaled dragons of various ages and sizes stand on display, each stuffed and mounted."
- "On the west end of the room, an enormous empty plaque meant for displaying a creature's head is mounted over an exit tunnel. It reads, 'Xaantikorijek.'"
- "Two arches scorched with Draconic runes hold up the ceiling in this chamber."
- *(If a character can read Draconic)* "The runes read, 'My rage burns at the loss of my beloved Frezzelvarax. This chamber is a tribute to my beloved.'"

Dragon Gallery. Each of these storm dragon corpses are kin of Xaantikorijek murdered by Forzaantilirys and are now set as a trap for intruders. There are two ancient dragons, two adult dragons, two young dragons, and two dragon wyrmlings.

A creature who examines the room before entering and succeeds on a DC 20 Intelligence (Nature) or Wisdom (Perception) check notices the scorch marks on the wall were made by lightning. A *detect magic* spell reveals each statue radiates an aura of necromancy magic. Casting a *dispel magic* spell on a corpse suppresses its effect for 1 hour.

When a creature enters this chamber, they trigger a trap if they don't speak the following phrase aloud in Draconic: "Frezzelvarax my beloved, I'll not rest until Xaantikorijek the murderer is slain." If the trap is triggered, roll initiative.

When a creature enters the area without speaking the phrase, and again at the start of the initiative order for each round they remain in the chamber, roll on the Storm Dragon Gallery table to determine which statue targets a random creature in the gallery. The table lists each corpse's AC and hit points; every corpse is immune to lightning, poison, psychic, and thunder damage. If a corpse's number is rolled but that corpse is destroyed or its magic is suppressed, then nothing happens. Additionally, each time a statue takes damage, it immediately activates, targeting a random creature in the gallery.

Each statue has an effect it targets a creature in the gallery with, as listed on the Storm Dragon Gallery table:

Dispelling Crack. The corpse spits a ball of concentrated thunder at the target. The target must make a DC 18 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the target takes 33 (6d10) thunder damage and each spell of 5th level or lower affecting them ends. On a successful save, a target takes half as much damage and suffers no other effect.

Lightning Breath. The corpse unleashes ball lighting from its mouth. The target and each creature within 60 feet of them must make a DC 20 Dexterity saving throw, taking 33 (6d10) lightning damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Spit Lightning. The corpse spits a ball of lightning at the target. The target must make a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw, taking 16 (3d10) lightning damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Thunder Roar. The corpse roars, unleashing a ripple of thunder at the target. The target must make a DC 16 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the target takes 22 (4d10) thunder damage and is knocked prone. On a successful save, the target takes half as much damage and isn't knocked prone.

Storm Dragon Gallery

d8	Age	Position	Effect	AC	HP
1	Ancient	North	Lightning Breath	20	160
2	Ancient	South	Lightning Breath	20	160
3	Adult	North	Dispelling Crack	18	80
4	Adult	South	Dispelling Crack	18	80
5	Young	North	Thunder Roar	16	40
6	Young	South	Thunder Roar	16	40
7	Wyrmling	North	Spit Lightning	14	20
8	Wyrmling	South	Spit Lightning	14	20

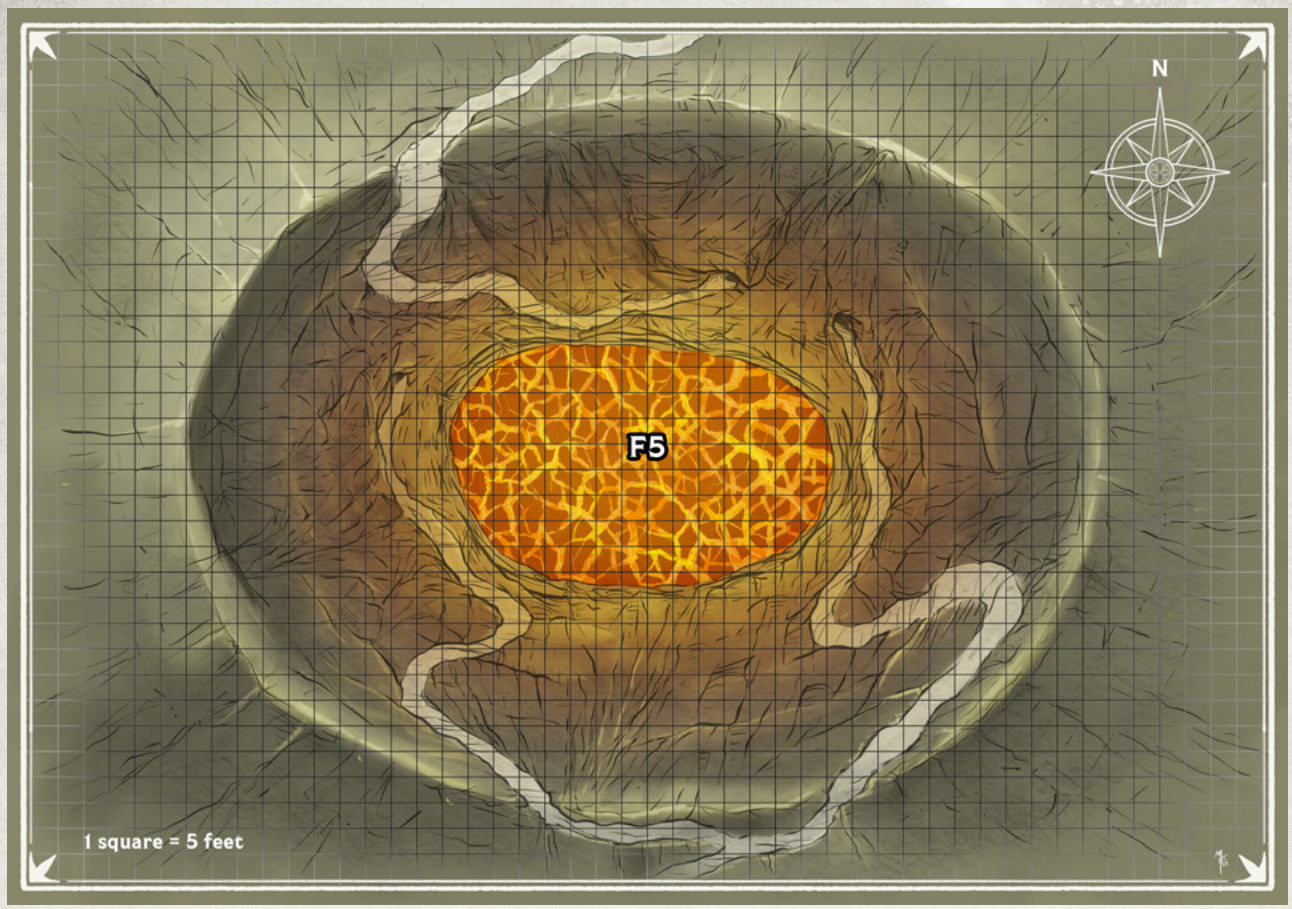
Treasure. If the characters destroy a corpse, they can collect its hide with 10 minutes of work. Each ancient hide is worth 10,000 gp, each adult hide is worth 5,000 gp, each young hide is worth 2,500 gp, and each wyrmling hide is worth 1,000 gp.

F4. Lava Lake

This area has the following features:

- "The tunnel gives way to a beach covered in ash, black sand, and volcanic rock against a lake of bubbling lava. A rocky ledge extends from the beach around the lake."
- "In the lava, boulders float like lily pads."
- "A stone island at the center of the lake holds gold, gemstones, and other treasures that refract the lava's light."
- *(If Forzaantilirys is still alive and in the lair)* "Atop the treasure, a great blood dragon gazes into a black bowl with glowing red runes etched around it."
- (**Secret**) The lava lake's depths are infinite. It serves as a portal to Quintessence.

Volcanic Crater Map



Forzaantilirys. When the characters enter, **Forzaantilirys** immediately attacks, cursing them for intruding. She alternates between taking to the air and submerging herself in the lava. She also pushes the characters into the lava with her Claw attacks. The dragon fights until reduced to 100 hit points, then attempts to flee, diving into the lava lake and fleeing to Quintessence.

Floating Boulders. Each floating boulder can support 500 pounds of weight before sinking. If a creature standing on a floating boulder takes damage, they must succeed on a DC 14 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check or fall into the lava.

Lava Portal. When a creature dives 100 feet below the surface of the lava, they enter a similar lava lake in Quintessence, and the direction that was previously down for the creature becomes up.

Treasure. The treasure on the island is Forzaantilirys's hoard. See "Forzaantilirys's Hoard" for more information.

F5. Volcanic Crater

This area has the following features:

- "Looking down into the volcano is like looking into the mouth of Hell. Amid the smoke and magma, a rocky path leads to tunnels that sprawl into the bowels of Mount Brazen."

Lair Actions

When fighting inside her lair, Forzaantilirys can take lair actions. On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), she can take one lair action to cause one of the following effects; she can't use the same lair action two rounds in a row:

Flaming Step. Forzaantilirys momentarily vanishes in a burst of flame and teleports to an unoccupied space she can see within 30 feet of her. Each creature within 5 feet of the space Forzaantilirys left must succeed on a DC 21 Dexterity saving throw or take 10 (3d6) fire damage.

Hard Light. Forzaantilirys causes pummeling light to erupt in a 30-foot-radius sphere centered on a point she can see within 120 feet of her. Each creature in that area must make a DC 21 Strength saving throw or take 10 (3d6) radiant damage and be moved up to 20 feet in any horizontal direction.

Inflame. Forzaantilirys infuses fiery rage into one creature she can see within 120 feet of her. The creature must make a DC 21 Charisma saving throw. On a failed save, the target takes 18 (4d8) fire damage, and until the end of their next turn, they have advantage on attack rolls and attacks against them have advantage.

- "Two centaurs made of iron patrol the ridge, and dozens of giants stand with boulders at the ready."

Guardians. Two **forces of iron** and thirty **fire giant troopers** patrol the top of Mount Brazen. The giants hurl rocks at intruders they spot climbing up the volcano. Once enemies get to the summit, the elementals and giants attempt to push them into the lava pool at the bottom of the crater. The characters can avoid the notice of the guards with a successful DC 18 group Dexterity (Stealth) check.

Lava Pool. A 300-foot-deep lava pool sits at the bottom of the crater. There is a 500-foot drop from the top of the volcano to the surface of the lava. If a creature slides over the crater's edge, they can make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw. On a successful save, they don't fall into the crater, but instead fall prone in a space at the edge of the ridge. At your discretion, a character can spend inspiration to automatically succeed on this saving throw.

Tunnels. No ability check is required to reach the tunnels that lead deeper into the cavern.

Forzaantilirys's Hoard

Forzaantilirys has amassed great wealth over the centuries by raiding and plundering mortals. Since the death of her mate, she's taken to killing storm dragons and claiming their hoards as her own. She keeps her hoard on an island in the middle of Mount Brazen's lava lake (area F4).

The hoard contains the following items:

- *Animated shield*
- *Lava crucible* (see below)
- *Necklace of fireballs*
- *Staff of fire*
- *Arrow of slaying* (undead)
- *Feather token* (bird)
- *Potion of giant strength* (cloud)
- *Potion of flying*
- *Potion of heroism*
- *Potion of invisibility*
- *Potion of speed*
- *Spell scroll* of *meteor swarm*
- *Spell scroll* of *raise dead*
- Vial of *oil of etherealness*
- Dragon compass (see below)
- 50 pearls (worth 100 gp each)
- 20 bloodstones (worth 500 gp each)
- 5 topazes (worth 500 gp each)
- 10 fire opals (worth 1,000 gp each)
- 10 full-length silver mirrors with gold and platinum filigree (worth 1,000 gp each)
- Portrait of Frezzelvarax in a 30-foot-wide, 20-foot-long ornate gold frame (worth 1,250 gp)
- 2 ornate sets of ceremonial plate (worth 3,000 gp each)
- 3 rubies (worth 5,000 gp each)
- Platinum tiara set with rubies (worth 15,000 gp)
- Gem-encrusted obsidian throne (worth 20,000 gp)
- Replica of a ruby rod of a ruler of Hell, cut from a single ruby (worth 25,000 gp)
- 255,122 cp, 99,763 sp, 51,032 ep, 31,599 gp, and 2,501 pp

Dragon Compass

This brass compass has been calibrated not to point north, but to point toward the magical energy produced by true dragons. When you hold the compass, its needle points in the direction of the nearest Dragon who is at least a century old and on the same plane as you. If you are a Dragon who is at least a century old, the compass doesn't point toward you while you hold it.

Lava Crucible

Wondrous Item, Legendary (Requires Attunement)

This 1-foot-diameter bowl is made of scorched and polished red dragon scales and engraved with fiery red runes on its exterior. While you carry the crucible, you are immune to fire damage and can speak and understand Draconic and Ignan.

Additionally, while you hold this crucible, you can use a bonus action to speak a command word and cause it to fill with lava. The lava is harmless to you, but other creatures who touch it take 33 (6d10) fire damage. While the crucible is filled with lava, you can use it in the following ways:

- As an action, you make a melee attack with the lava against a creature or mundane object within 5 feet of you. Make an attack with a +11 bonus to the attack roll. The attack empties the lava from the bowl and deals 33 (6d10) fire damage on a hit.
- You cast *scrying* (spell save DC 20). Your target's image appears in the lava.
- You cast *conjure elemental*, but only to call forth fire elementals.

You can use another bonus action to speak the command word again and harmlessly empty the lava from the crucible.

Dragon Compass

Mount Brazen Stat Blocks

The following stat blocks appear in the lair.

Earth Spark

CR 10 Minion

Large Elemental (Earth), Any Alignment — 590 XP

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)
Hit Points 17
Speed 30 ft., burrow 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	8 (–1)	16 (+3)	9 (–1)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)

Damage Immunities poison
Condition Immunities poisoned
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10
Languages Common, Terran
Proficiency Bonus +4

Minion. If the spark takes damage from an attack or as the result of a failed saving throw, their hit points are reduced to 0. If the spark takes damage from another effect, they die if the damage equals or exceeds their hit point maximum; otherwise they take no damage.

Trampling Rampage. If an enemy who is touching the ground starts their turn within 5 feet of two or more earth sparks, the enemy must make a Strength saving throw with a DC equal to 12 plus the number of earth sparks within 5 feet of the enemy. On a failed save, the enemy falls prone, and they can't stand up until there are fewer than two earth sparks within 5 feet of them.

Actions

Shatter Smash (Group Attack). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 bludgeoning damage.

Snort Rocks (Group Attack). *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, range 30/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 bludgeoning damage. If the target is a flying creature, they must succeed on a Strength saving throw or fall prone. The DC for this saving throw equals 12 plus the number of sparks who joined the attack.

I do not care what you have come for. You are but an annoyance and have simply earned the right to burn before the rest of the world.

Forzaantilirys

Fire Giant Lightbearer

CR 10 Support

Huge Giant, Any Alignment — 5,900 XP

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)
Hit Points 137 (11d12 + 66)
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
22 (+6)	16 (+3)	23 (+6)	10 (+0)	21 (+5)	13 (+1)

Saving Throws Str +10, Dex +7, Con +10
Skills Athletics +10, Perception +9
Damage Immunities fire
Senses passive Perception 19
Languages Giant
Proficiency Bonus +4

Healing Heat. When the lightbearer targets a fire giant with an attack, spell, or other supernatural effect that deals fire damage, that target instead regains a number of hit points equal to the damage that would be dealt. The target can choose to be hit by this attack or fail their saving throw against this effect.

Molten Flesh. The first time a creature other than a fire giant touches the lightbearer or hits them with a melee attack on a turn, that creature takes 7 (2d6) fire damage.

Actions

Multiattack. The lightbearer makes two attacks using Slam, Living Blaze, or both. They can replace one attack with a use of Flamelash.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 16 (3d6 + 6) bludgeoning damage plus 7 (2d6) fire damage, and if the target is a Huge or smaller creature, the target must choose between being knocked prone or pushed 10 feet away from the lightbearer.

Living Blaze. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +10 to hit, range 180 ft., one target. *Hit:* 16 (3d6 + 6) fire damage, and the lightbearer can ricochet the flame toward another target within 5 feet of the first. The lightbearer makes another spell attack roll against the second target with disadvantage, dealing the same damage on a hit.

Flamelash. The lightbearer extends a whiplike flame to strike a creature they can see within 30 feet of them. The target must make a DC 18 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save, the target takes 20 (4d6 + 6) fire damage, and if the target is Large or smaller, the lightbearer moves the target up to 10 feet horizontally.

Bonus Actions

Travel by Fire (3/Day). The lightbearer chooses two willing creatures they can see within 30 feet of them. Each target takes 14 (4d6) fire damage and teleports, swapping places with the other target.

Fire Giant Red Fist

CR 9 Soldier

Huge Giant, Any Alignment — 5,000 XP

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)
Hit Points 162 (13d12 + 78)
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
25 (+7)	14 (+2)	23 (+6)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)

Saving Throws Str + 11, Dex +6, Con +10
Skills Athletics +11, Perception +6
Damage Immunities fire
Senses passive Perception 16
Languages Giant
Proficiency Bonus +4

Heat and Pressure. When an enemy moves out of the red fist's reach, the enemy must succeed on a DC 18 Constitution saving throw or gain a level of exhaustion. Creatures with resistance or immunity to fire damage are immune to this effect.

Molten Flesh. The first time a creature other than a fire giant touches the red fist or hits them with a melee attack on a turn, that creature takes 7 (2d6) fire damage.

Actions

Multiattack. The red fist makes two Unarmed Strike attacks.

Unarmed Strike. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 21 (4d6 + 7) bludgeoning damage plus 7 (2d6) fire damage. If the same creature is hit twice with this attack on a turn, they are blinded until the end of their next turn.

Hurl Flame. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +10 to hit, range 180 ft., one target. *Hit:* 34 (8d6 + 6) fire damage.

Reactions

Guardian Block (3/Day). When an enemy within 10 feet of the red fist hits a creature other than the red fist with an attack, the red fist halves the damage dealt by that attack. The red fist then makes an Unarmed Strike against the attacker.

Fire Giant Trooper

CR 12 Minion

Huge Giant, Any Alignment — 840 XP

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)
Hit Points 19
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
22 (+6)	14 (+2)	19 (+4)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)

Damage Immunities fire
Senses passive Perception 12
Languages Giant
Proficiency Bonus +4

Minion. If the trooper takes damage from an attack or as the result of a failed saving throw, their hit points are reduced to 0. If the trooper takes damage from another effect, they die if the damage equals or exceeds their hit point maximum; otherwise they take no damage.

Molten Flesh. The first time a creature other than a fire giant touches the trooper or hits them with a melee attack on a turn, that creature takes 7 fire damage.

Actions

Unarmed Strike (Group Attack). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 bludgeoning damage plus 3 fire damage, and the target must succeed on a Strength saving throw or fall prone. The DC for this saving throw equals 12 + the number of troopers who joined the group attack.

Rock (Group Attack). *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, range 60/240 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 bludgeoning damage.

Dragon Tactics

Dragons seek lairs with lofty ceilings (or none at all) so they can use one of their greatest defenses: flight. A dramatic encounter with a dragon can quickly become a slog if the wyrm lands and never moves around the battlefield. Dragons are smart! They know to use their long reach and breath weapon to make life difficult for their enemies.

Dragons choose extremely defensible places for their lairs, which are part home and part treasure vault. The wyrms rely on loyal guardians and an environment that is inhospitable to mortal treasure hunters and would-be heroes. For instance, Forzaantilirys makes her home in Mount Brazen, an enormous volcano that is hotter than the Seven Cities of Hell. Her treasure sits on an obsidian island floating in a lake of lava in the heart of the mountain. Just walking through the tunnels to reach Forzaantilirys's hoard would bake most people to death.

Force of Blood

CR 19 Brute
22,000 XP

Large Elemental (Earth, Fire, Water), Any Alignment

Armor Class 21 (natural armor)
Hit Points 230 (20d10 + 120)
Speed 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
24 (+7)	20 (+5)	22 (+6)	19 (+4)	18 (+4)	20 (+5)

Saving Throws Con +12, Wis +10, Cha +11
Skills Intimidation +11, Medicine +10, Persuasion +11
Damage Resistances fire, necrotic
Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened
Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 14
Languages Common, Dwarvish, Elvish, Giant, Primordial
Proficiency Bonus +6

Visceral Sight. The force of blood can see any creature within 120 feet of them who isn't a Construct or an Undead. This sight ignores effects that obscure sight.

Actions

Multiattack. The force of blood makes three Scarlet Longspear attacks. They can replace one attack with a Rend from Within attack.

Scarlet Longspear. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +13 to hit, reach 15 ft. or range 30/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 18 (2d10 + 7) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, the force of blood regains 5 hit points.

Rend from Within. *Melee Spell Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 13 (2d6 + 6) slashing damage plus 26 (4d12) necrotic damage, and the target spends 1 Hit Die with no effect and can't take reactions until the start of their next turn. *Miss:* 13 (2d12) necrotic damage.

Bonus Actions

Convocation of Blood. The force of blood imbues the power of blood in themself or another Elemental they can see within 30 feet of them, granting one of the following effects of that Elemental's choice:

Boiling Blood. The Elemental boils the blood of a creature within 5 feet of them who isn't a Construct or an Undead. The target must make a DC 19 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the target must choose to either take 27 (5d10) fire damage or make an attack with a weapon that has a damage die of 1d4 or greater against a creature of the Elemental's choice. If the attack hits, it deals an extra 11 (2d10) fire damage.

Essence Thief. The Elemental steals the essence of two creatures the Elemental can see within 30 feet of them. Each target must make a DC 19 Constitution saving throw, taking 19 (3d12) necrotic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. The Elemental can then teleport to an unoccupied space they can see within 5 feet of one of the targets.

Force of Blood

Forces of blood, also called blood sovereigns, are warlords and diplomats who equally represent the birth of mortal life and the moment of its ending. They could be mistaken for a massive humanoid clad entirely in black-and-red toothed armor, but in truth, their "armor" is blackened, gnarled flesh punctuated with veins of boiling red.

Force of Iron

CR 10 Brute

Large Elemental (Earth, Fire), Any Alignment — 5,900 XP

Armor Class 19 (natural armor; 22 in Shield Form)
Hit Points 150 (12d10 + 84)
Speed 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
21 (+5)	10 (+0)	25 (+7)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Str +9
Skills Athletics +9, Perception +5
Damage Resistances fire
Damage Immunities poison
Condition Immunities exhaustion, frightened, petrified, poisoned
Senses darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 30 ft., passive Perception 15
Languages Common, Ignan, Terran
Proficiency Bonus +4

Actions

Multiattack. The force of iron uses Form Stance then makes three Ferrous Greatblade attacks or three Iron Spike attacks.

Ferrous Greatblade. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft. (20 ft. in Polearm Form), one target. *Hit:* 19 (4d6 + 5) slashing damage.

Iron Spike. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, range 30/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (2d8 + 5) piercing damage.

Form Stance. The force of iron shapes their body to gain one of the following benefits until the start of their next turn:

Polearm Form. The force of iron's melee attacks have a reach of 20 feet instead of 5 feet.

Reckless Form. The force of iron has advantage on all melee attack rolls, but attack rolls against the force of iron have advantage.

Shield Form. The force of iron gains a +3 bonus to AC.

Fire Form (1/Day). The force of iron's attacks deal an extra 13 (2d12) fire damage on a hit.

Bonus Actions

Convocation of Iron (1/Day). The force of iron imbues the power of iron in themself or another Elemental they can see within 30 feet of them, granting one of the following effects of that Elemental's choice:

Earth Reinforcements. Five **earth sparks** appear in unoccupied spaces within 20 feet of the Elemental. The sparks understand the Elemental, follow their verbal commands, and act immediately after the Elemental in the initiative order.

Iron Skin. Metal covers the Elemental, granting them resistance to bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage for 1 minute or until their concentration is broken (as if concentrating on a spell).

Her breath melts stone,
And her scales ignite,
But it's the dragon's ire
That burns so bright.

When our bones are black,
And the world is ash,
She will save the Voice
For the very last.

When his eyes flash blue,
While the earth just burns,
It will become clear.
His memories return.

Then her claws will slash,
And her fire will rage,
As the Voice gasps last,
"Thus will end my age."

Then the Ashen Song
Takes his heart away,
As she whispers sweet,
"Vengeance came today."

Ballad of
the Ashen Song

Force of Iron

A force of iron, also called an iron stalwart, appears as a four-armed centaur made of malleable metal with a head shaped like an empty knight's helm. Most are staunch, loyal, and uncompromising. Some forces of iron even achieve fame by facing down wickedness where they find it—but others become wickedness, using their strength to vanquish anything that even mildly displeases them.

Forzaantilirys the Ashen Song lives up to her name.

FORZAANTILIRYS

CR 24 Solo

Gargantuan Dragon, Lawful Evil — 62,000 XP

Armor Class 20 (natural armor)
Hit Points 585 (30d20 + 270)
Speed 40 ft., climb 40 ft., fly 80 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
30 (+10)	10 (+0)	28 (+9)	19 (+4)	16 (+3)	22 (+6)

Saving Throws Con +16, Wis +10, Cha +13
Skills Athletics +17, Perception +10
Damage Immunities fire, radiant
Condition Immunities charmed, dazed, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, stunned
Senses blindsight 120 ft., truesight 60 ft., passive Perception 20
Languages Common, Draconic
Proficiency Bonus +7

Hellfire. Fire damage dealt by Forzaantilirys ignores damage resistance.

Ireful Defense (3/Day). When Forzaantilirys fails a saving throw, she can succeed instead. When she does, attack rolls made against her have advantage until the end of her next turn.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Forzaantilirys makes one Bite attack and two Claw attacks.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +17 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 21 (2d10 + 10) piercing damage plus 14 (4d6) fire damage, and the target is set on fire for 1 minute or until the target or a creature who can reach them uses an action to extinguish the flames. A creature who is on fire at the start of their turn takes 10 (3d6) fire damage. If a creature who is already on fire is set on fire again on a subsequent turn, the damage isn't cumulative, but the duration of the fire resets to 1 minute.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +17 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 17 (2d6 + 10) slashing damage, and Forzaantilirys can move the target up to 15 feet horizontally.

Scorching Breath (Recharge 5–6). Forzaantilirys exhales fire in a 90-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 24 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save, a creature takes 70 (20d6) fire damage, and any mundane metal objects they are wearing or carrying are melted into slag and destroyed. On a successful save, a creature takes half as much damage and their equipment isn't destroyed.

Additionally, the fire remains in that area until the end of Forzaantilirys's next turn. For the duration, that area is difficult terrain, and a creature who enters that area for the first time on a turn or ends their turn there takes 14 (4d6) fire damage.

BONUS ACTIONS

Blazing Rush. Forzaantilirys moves up to half her speed. If she enters a creature's space during this move, the creature takes 10 (3d6) fire damage.

REACTIONS

Ignite the Insolent. When a creature within 120 feet of Forzaantilirys attacks her, the attacker must make a DC 21 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save, the attacker is set on fire for 1 minute or until the attacker or a creature who can reach them uses an action to extinguish the flames. A creature who is on fire at the start of their turn takes 10 (3d6) fire damage. If a creature who is already on fire is set on fire again on a subsequent turn, the damage isn't cumulative, but the duration of the fire resets to 1 minute.

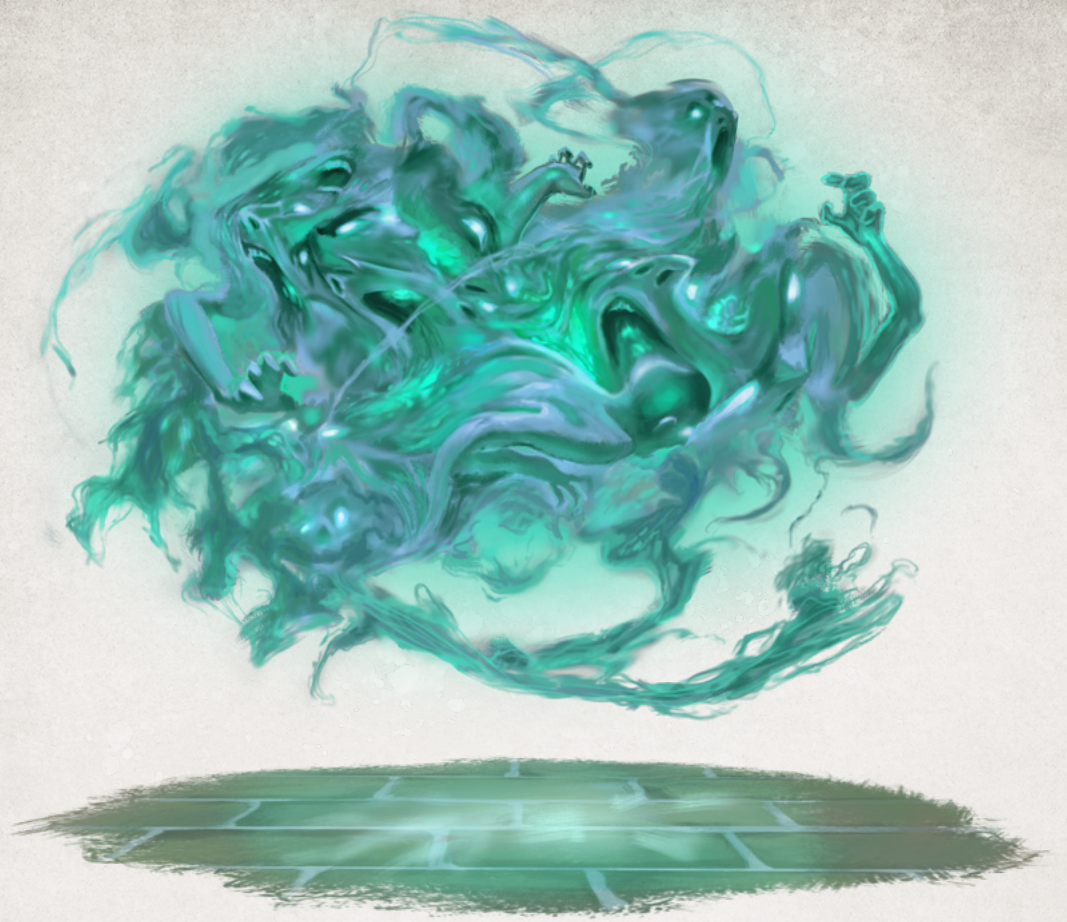
VILLAIN ACTIONS

Forzaantilirys has three villain actions. She can take each action once during an encounter after an enemy's turn. She can take these actions in any order but can use only one per round.

Action 1: Cinderfall. A 30-foot-radius cloud of smoke and cinders surrounds Forzaantilirys until the end of her next turn. That area is heavily obscured for creatures other than Forzaantilirys. An enemy who needs to breathe and starts their turn within the cloud must succeed on a DC 21 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 1 minute (save ends at end of turn).

Action 2: Ashen Armor. Forzaantilirys's skin hardens into a protective armor of ashen scales, granting her 100 temporary hit points. Until all these temporary hit points are gone, a creature within 5 feet of Forzaantilirys who touches her or hits her with an attack takes 14 (4d6) fire damage.

Action 3: Supernova. Forzaantilirys unleashes a massive burst of light and heat. Each creature within 120 feet of her must make a DC 21 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, a creature takes 35 (10d6) fire damage plus 35 (10d6) radiant damage and is blinded. On a successful save, a creature takes half as much damage and isn't blinded. The blindness lasts until cured by a power, a spell, or a similar supernatural effect that removes the blinded condition.



Haunt

CR 9 Skirmisher

Huge Undead, Typically Chaotic Evil — 5,000 XP

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)
Hit Points 153 (18d12 + 36)
Speed 0 ft., fly 40 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	8 (–1)	16 (+3)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws Wis +7, Cha +8
Skills Intimidation +8, Perception +7
Damage Resistances acid, fire, lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from mundane attacks
Damage Immunities cold, necrotic, poison
Condition Immunities charmed, dazed, exhaustion, flanked, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained
Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 17
Languages telepathy 60 ft.
Proficiency Bonus +4

Incorporeal Cloud. The haunt can occupy another creature's space and vice versa. In addition, the haunt can move through creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. The haunt takes 5 (1d10) force damage if they end their turn inside an object.

Invisibility. The haunt is invisible.

Actions

Multiattack. The haunt makes two Spectral Wrath attacks.

Spectral Wrath. *Melee Spell Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 0 ft., one target in the haunt's space. *Hit:* 17 (2d12 + 4) force damage.

Wave of Despair (Recharge 5–6). The haunt unleashes a wave of psychic pain. Each enemy within 20 feet of the haunt must make a DC 16 Wisdom saving throw, taking 33 (6d10) psychic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Bonus Actions

Possess Object. The haunt can magically manipulate a Large or smaller object within 30 feet of them that isn't being worn or carried by another creature. The haunt can exert fine control on objects under their control, such as playing piano keys, slamming doors, opening windows, or writing with a quill.

As part of this bonus action, the haunt can hurl the object up to 30 feet in any direction or use it as a ranged weapon to attack one creature within 30 feet of the object. The object has a +8 bonus to hit and deals 15 (2d10 + 4) bludgeoning damage on a hit. The GM might rule that a specific object deals piercing or slashing damage based on its form.

Ash Queen's Reliquary

Optimized for Five 19th-Level Characters

Content Warning: Blood and Suffocation

The force of blood and essence of mist manipulate the blood and breath of their enemies. If you or any of your players find descriptions of blood or suffocation upsetting, you may want to avoid using these elementals or reflavor their abilities.

Among the first elementals to inhabit the Mundane World, the Ash Queen Atæshia (*ah-TAY-shee-ah*) struck back against the mortals who attempted to tame the wild world. Her army clashed with humanoids for decades, but her enemies' numbers were too great and her allies too few. As the tides of war turned against the elementals, Atæshia knew it would be better for the elementals to live, rebuild their forces, and wait for another day to take back what was once theirs.

Atæshia hasn't forgotten their great war, and she views mortals and the gods who created them as the greatest threat to the timescape.

Once every year, Atæshia travels to her reliquary, a tower built in the ruins of her failed war. Here, she takes time to remember and honor the departed, holding a month-long vigil surrounded by elemental guardians.

Reliquary Story Hooks

You can use one of the following story hooks to integrate this lair into an adventure:

Echoes of the First War. An earthquake unearths an ancient mural depicting the first war between elementals and mortals. The mural warns of the potential return of Atæshia and her army. Terrified countryfolk beg the characters to find the Ash Queen and deal with her.

Guardian's Legacy. Zerphis, a goblin scholar who specializes in elemental phenomena, wishes to learn more about the first elemental war and its heroes. Hearing legends of the Ash Queen's Reliquary, Zerphis entreats the characters to go there and collect information—and relics. He offers the characters a *ring of air elemental command* if they return with the information he seeks.

Portent of Ashes. The skies over the Mundane World darken, and soon after, ash begins to fall. Elementals across the timescape whisper that this is a portent of the Ash Queen's imminent march on the gods. A council of world leaders urge the characters to find Atæshia and stop her from rising again, offering the party 500,000 gp to do the job.

Reliquary Features

Unless otherwise noted, each area of the Ash Queen's Reliquary has the following features:

Adamant Walls. The reliquary's structure is cast from primordial adamantine. As a magical metal, it can't be changed or transmuted by supernatural means, such as the *fabricate* or *passwall* spells. The walls also prevent teleportation or planar travel into the lair from the outside, except via the teleportation circle in the queen's chamber (area A5). Climbing the tower's walls without climbing equipment requires a successful DC 18 Strength (Athletics) check.

Ceilings. The tiled ceilings are 40 feet high and 5 feet thick. They block sound traveling between floors to avoid disturbing the queen's vigil.

Illumination Orbs. Magical orbs float 3 feet below the ceiling, filling each area with bright light. A creature who speaks Primordial can use an action or bonus action to command the orbs in an area to shed dim light, bright light, or no light.

Elementals

When the gods formed the Mundane World, they took sparks of creation from the roiling plane of Quintessence and gave sentience to some of the universe's most basic elements—air, fire, earth, and water. Some elementals contain just one of these components, but the greatest embody multiple as creatures of ash, blood, ice, and similar reagents.

Elementals are mercurial creatures of transformation, creation, and destruction. Though the deities first created the Mundane World, elementals cultivated and shaped it. When a tree, stone, or other aspect of the world doesn't suit an elemental, they break it down with fire, wind, or another element, then build it anew.

Elementals themselves also change like the winds and the tides, and from age to age, they remake themselves to reflect what the world has become. They are knights wrought of iron, lizards ablaze with fire, and angels of pure sunlight.

Each elemental can bolster themselves or another elemental with the primordial power they embody. To maximize this power and to protect each other, elementals live and work in groups called *ishkrars*. This Primordial word translates literally to "family," but more accurately refers to a family that is not one's first.

When the divine host created humanoids, many of these mortals tore down what the elementals had built to make way for roads, buildings, mines, and war. When the elementals sought a peaceful resolution to this conflict, their diplomats were assassinated by evil mortals, igniting a war which the unprepared and disorganized elementals lost.

Lift. An arcane lift connects the third, fourth, and fifth floors of the tower (via areas A5, A6, and A7). If Atæshia is in the tower, the lift works only for her. If she isn't in the tower, any creature on the lift can verbally command it to move up or down in Common or Primordial. When the lift isn't in use, a stone trapdoor that can retract into the floor covers the lift shaft. Opening one of these doors while the lift isn't in use requires a successful DC 20 Strength check made as an action.

Transportation Orbs. These violet sunburst orbs have a 1-foot diameter, hover 4 feet off the ground, and provide magical transportation between the first three floors of the reliquary (via areas A2, A3, and A4). The transportation orbs are immune to all damage. A creature can touch an orb (no action required) to teleport one floor in a direction determined by the orb's appearance: a rising sun for up, or a three-quarters eclipse for down. When a creature moves up a floor, they arrive within 5 feet of the new floor's down orb, and vice versa. Transporting from the second to the third floor (from area A3 to A4) also requires a command word—*Kitseth*, the name of an ancient fire elemental (see area A5). The command word can be learned by casting an *identify* spell on an orb or by spending 1 hour touching an orb during a short or long rest.

Guardians

Unless otherwise noted, the elemental guardians demand intruders leave the premises and treat mortals with open suspicion. This isn't Atæshia's court. She expects no envoys, and there is no reason for a mortal's casual presence. If a warning is ignored, the guardians fight to the death to defend their queen, secure in the knowledge that Atæshia can resurrect them. They also prioritize alerting Meskrit (see area A4) or Atæshia (see the "Atæshia's Vigil" sidebar) to intruders.

Individual descriptions note how the elementals act toward characters they don't know. If the characters are known enemies of Atæshia, the elementals attack as soon as they notice them.

Defeated Characters. If the guardians defeat the characters, the elementals don't kill them. Instead, Meskrit alerts Atæshia, who locks them in the empty preserver fields in the preservation vaults (area A7).

Resting in the Reliquary

The first time the characters try to rest within the reliquary while Meskrit, a **force of blood**, is alive (see area A4), he detects them using his Visceral Sight trait. Meskrit alerts all the reliquary's guardians to watch out for the intruders, then he goes to face the characters accompanied by Nayrin, a **sunlight nexus** (see area A4).

If Meskrit doesn't know the characters or their motivations, he respectfully asks why the characters are in the reliquary. Meskrit is earnest, but if the characters seek a relic or if they have killed any elementals in the tower, he ultimately has no option but to oppose their further ascent. He asks them to leave but offers for them to rest where they are for 1 hour first. If the characters then try to take a second rest while Meskrit is alive, he alerts Atæshia to their presence. She relocates the lair's hoard elsewhere via the teleportation circle in the queen's chamber (area A5), then she prepares to meet the characters in battle.

If the characters seek an audience with Atæshia, they must provide Meskrit with an urgent reason and make a DC 25 Charisma (Intimidation or Persuasion) check. On a success, he contacts **Atæshia**, who arrives 1d10 minutes later.

If the characters try to rest in the lair and Meskrit isn't there, any elementals alerted to their presence come and find them. If no living elementals in the tower have been alerted to the characters' presence, they can rest without interruption in any area clear of enemies.

Atæshia's Vigil

Atæshia performs a month-long vigil in areas A5 through A7 of the reliquary each year, accompanied by a band of guards. This lair assumes the characters arrive during a vigil.

To avoid disturbing their queen, guardians instead alert the vanguard, Meskrit (see area A4), who performs a 1-minute ritual to communicate telepathically with Atæshia. The queen has deemed this method the most respectful way to contact her during her vigil, though it's only to be used in dire circumstances.

If the characters arrive while Atæshia is away, the guardians try to alert her to the attack via the communion orb in the study (area A4). She arrives via the teleportation circle in the queen's chamber (area A5) 1d10 minutes later with her retinue and goes to confront the characters.

Entering the Reliquary

The main way inside is the guarded door on the Ashen Approach (area A1). The characters could also discover the sigil sequence to the teleportation circle in the queen's chamber (area A5).

Ash Queen's Reliquary Areas

The following areas are keyed to the Ash Queen's Reliquary Map.

A1. Ashen Approach

As the characters descend into the valley, they notice the following features:

- "The land is ash for miles in every direction. There are no plants, no signs of life—save for a windowless metal tower rising over 100 feet into the air."
- "The only clear point of entry is a 20-foot-tall set of green enamel double doors at the tower's base."

Ash Queen's Reliquary Map

- "The door is flanked by a pair of 9-foot-tall iron elementals with the silhouettes of armored centaurs. Flowing red crests adorn their bodies."
- (**Secret**) A force of earth hides beneath the ash in front of the door.

Guardians. Irk and Vairna, two **forces of iron**, guard the reliquary's main entrance. Their crests denote loyalty to Atæshia. Irk is both the grumpier and chattier of the pair, though Vairna can be coaxed into eclectic conversations, particularly regarding history. The pair are content to idly chat with travelers, but they eventually ask what the characters want.

Dorik, a **force of earth**, uses their Earth Glide trait to hide in the ground. They can't stand the grumpy Irk and only emerge if combat occurs.

Given Vairna's interest in history, a character can persuade her to let the characters enter the tower if they seem genuinely curious about the Elementals' lore and succeed on a DC 20 Charisma (Deception or Persuasion) check. If the characters talk their way in, the duo unlocks the doors (see "Doors" below) and escorts the characters into the tiled rotunda (area A2), but they won't permit the party further into the tower.

If a character requests an audience with Atæshia and succeeds on a DC 20 Charisma (Intimidation or Persuasion) check, Vairna fetches Meskrit and Nayrin from the study (area A4), while Irk stays with the characters and requests they stay where they are. When Meskrit arrives, he speaks with the characters in the same way as if they'd attempted to rest there (see "Resting in the Reliquary").

Doors. The doors are protected by an *arcane lock* spell and require a successful DC 24 Strength check to force open. Every guardian knows the password—*Kitseth*, the name of an ancient fire elemental (see area A5). If a guardian unlocks the doors, they take care to whisper so they're not overheard, but a character who succeeds on a DC 27 Wisdom (Perception) check overhears the password.

The doors have AC 20, 100 hit points, and immunity to acid, cold, fire, lightning, poison, psychic, radiant, and thunder damage. If the characters attack the door, the water sparks in area A2 alert Miklan in area A3 about the intruders.

You see it as destruction, but I see it–all of us see it–as a necessary part of change. You must destroy the old to clear the way for the new. Creation and evolution demand destruction.

Atæshia

A2. Tiled Rotunda

The reliquary's first floor has the following features:

- "Every surface of this chamber is covered in an intricate mosaic that ripples with magic. The walls and ceiling show scenes of elementals shaping the world, battling mortals, and mourning their lost."
- "The floor depicts a swirling ocean, and the room's four pillars depict islands, each themed to one of the prime elements."
- "A violet orb hovers 4 feet off the ground on the north side of the rotunda, shimmering like a tiny rising sun."
- (**Secret**) Water sparks blend into the floor's oceanic tilework.

Mosaic. The mosaic across the walls and ceiling displays the mythical history of elementals. The pillars show a tornado rising from the land, earth elementals scaling rocky mountains, a grand volcano dripping lava into the sea, and a lush island with misty clouds above. On the ceiling between the pillars, the mosaic depicts the roiling plane of Quintessence. A *detect magic* spell reveals that the mosaic is enhanced with illusion magic.

Transportation Orb (Up). The transportation orb is connected to the down transportation orb in the memorial chamber (area A3) on the second floor.

Water Sparks. Twenty **water sparks** blend into the floor's rippling tilework. A creature who succeeds on a DC 20 Intelligence (Investigation) or Wisdom (Perception) check notices the sparks moving among the tiles. If combat breaks out, the sparks join other guardians fighting in this room and defend themselves. Otherwise, they wait for an opportunity to sneak to the transportation orb and alert Miklan in the memorial chamber (area A3) to the presence of intruders.

A3. Memorial Chamber

The reliquary's second floor honors elemental heroes who died in ancient wars. It has the following features:

- "A dozen statues of ancient elemental warriors stand on pedestals in this chamber, each surrounded by a semicircle of candles—partially melted, currently unlit."
- "Four pedestals are much larger than the rest. Three of these hold great statues, depicting warriors of air, earth, and water. The fourth great pedestal stands empty, adorned only by a plaque."
- "Two violet orbs hover 4 feet off the ground, one near the north wall and one near the south."
- "A 17-foot-tall elemental in the form of a giant hunches over a smaller statue to the south. He is wrapped in a roiling cloak, and under his cowl, his eyes spark lightning blue."
- *(If Miklan was warned of intruders in the tower)* "Three elementals—one of air, another of earth, and a third of water—stand ready near the orb on the north wall."
- *(If water sparks from area A2 are here)* "Floating motes of water that look like octopuses hover in the air."
- (**Secret**) The three largest statues can summon elemental guardians.

Stormy Guardian. Miklan, an **oracle of storms**, is trying to learn the deeper secrets of the tales of fallen elemental heroes honored in this hall. If Miklan was warned about intruders, he called forth the guardians in the hero statues (see below) before the party arrived, and he attacks as soon as he notices the characters.

If Miklan isn't expecting trouble, he is halfway through casting the *legend lore* spell when the characters arrive, trying to learn about an earthen champion, Grevsk, and their role in creating the first badger. If the characters succeed on a DC 19 group Dexterity (Stealth) check while Miklan is casting the spell, they can sneak through this area without him noticing; otherwise, Miklan notices the characters and asks them to leave the area via the orb on the north wall. If they refuse, he uses the hero statues to summon aid and attacks. Any **water sparks** that came to this chamber from the tiled rotunda (area A2) also join the fray.

Hero Statues. These statues honor elementals who died fighting wicked mortals. The missing statue's plaque reads "Kitseth the Oldest Flame." Centuries ago, Atæshia relocated his statue to the queen's chamber (area A5) to feel closer to his memory.

The other prominent statues are the air champion Thorvion of Lightning's Stride, the earth champion Yateril the Mountain that Walks, and the water champion Merranon the Tidal Triumphant. A *detect magic* spell reveals each statue's aura of conjuration magic. An Elemental in this chamber can use an action or bonus action to activate all three statues. When activated, the candles around each statue burst alight and an **essence of tides**, an **essence of storms**, and a **force of earth** appear. They attack intruders, fighting to the death. Once the statues have been used to summon these elementals, they can't be used again for 24 hours. The statues each have AC 17, 27 hit points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage. If a statue is destroyed, the elemental it summoned disappears.

Transportation Orb (Down). The transportation orb near the north wall is connected to the up transportation orb in the tilted rotunda (area A2) on the first floor.

Transportation Orb (Up). The transportation orb on the south wall is connected to the down transportation orb in the study (area A4) on the third floor. Using this orb requires the command word (see "Reliquary Features").

A4. Study

On the third floor, this area has the following features:

- "Two stone desks and a third wooden desk face the north wall."
- "An apple-sized green orb encircled by a tilted ring of energy hovers 4 feet off the ground at the center of the chamber."
- "A violet orb hovers 4 feet off the ground near the east wall."
- *(If Meskrit and Nayrin are here)* "An armored elemental formed of blood talks with a winged being formed of glowing stained glass."

Communication Orb. The green communication orb enables any creature touching it to cast the *sending* spell without expending a spell slot or requiring material components. A creature who examines the orb and succeeds on a DC 23 Intelligence (Arcana) check knows messages sent through the stone are monitored by someone. That someone is Atæshia. If the characters use the stone to send a message, she gathers her forces and hunts them down in the tower.

Elementals. The elementals are the reliquary's vanguard, Meskrit (a **force of blood**) and Nayrin (a **sunlight nexus**). If the characters stopped to rest in the lair, they may have interacted with both elementals as detailed in "Resting in the Reliquary." Use that section to guide their actions in this chamber.

Transportation Orb (Down). The transportation orb near the east wall is connected to the up transportation orb in the memorial chamber (area A3) on the second floor.

Treasure. The stone desks belong to Nayrin and Meskrit, and the wooden one to Miklan (see area A3). Miklan has three handwritten tomes on his desk that contain the rare histories of long-dead elementals (worth 500 gp each). Nayrin's desk is empty except for a single drawer containing six ruby-inlaid handaxes (worth 250 gp each). Meskrit's desk holds a spare key to the door in this room that leads to the queen's chamber (area A5).

A5. Queen's Chamber

The double doors from the study (area A4) are locked. Picking the lock requires a successful DC 19 Dexterity check using thieves' tools, and forcing the door open requires a successful DC 14 Strength check. The doors have AC 20, 100 hit points, and immunity to acid, cold, fire, lightning, poison, psychic, radiant, and thunder damage.

This area has the following features:

- "A 15-foot-diameter teleportation circle glows with violet sigils at the east end of the room."
- "At the room's south apex stand two statues, one of a blazing fire elemental and one of the Queen of Ash. They clearly aren't designed to be displayed together, but have been placed as close as their bases allow. The fire elemental carries a wide-bladed scimitar, while the queen, smiling broadly, wears a simple crown."
- "The north wall bends around a circle carved into the floor. The ceiling directly above shows a round trapdoor roughly the same size as the circle."
- "A wardrobe and simple rug also adorn this room."

Furnishings. Nothing of value is kept in the wardrobe, since it is only used during vigils, a time for austerity.

Lift. The lift can access the panoramic vigil (area A6) on the fourth floor and the preservation vaults (area A7) on the fifth floor. See "Reliquary Features" for more information about the lift.

Nostalgic Statues. Atæshia's statue depicts her eons younger and much happier. A character who succeeds on a DC 20 Intelligence (History) check recognizes that the

fire elemental statue depicts Kitseth the Oldest Flame. The statue's plaque is in the memorial chamber (area A3). Kitseth was Atæshia's first and only love. He died fighting for his queen, but she still carries a torch for him—his name is the password for the reliquary's arcane defenses, a security vulnerability Atæshia can't bring herself to amend.

Teleportation Circle. Atæshia uses this circle to teleport to and from the reliquary.

A6. Panoramic Vigil

On the fourth floor, this site of Atæshia's vigil has the following features:

- "Magic makes the walls on this level seem as if they provide a panoramic view outside. Instead of an ashen wasteland, the view shows the surroundings as they were before the gods created mortals. Rolling fields of wildflowers in oranges, purples, reds, and pinks stretch as far as the eye can see."
- *(If Atæshia and her attendants are here)* "Atæshia, Queen of Ash, gazes away toward the horizon. More than twenty elemental attendants accompany her."
- "The center of this chamber's floor and ceiling sport circular trapdoors that allow a magic lift to pass through."
- (**Secret**) An invisible essence of mist is among the elementals.

Elementals. **Atæshia** is visibly accompanied by a **force of blood**, a **force of iron**, and twenty **air sparks**. An **essence of mist** watches invisibly over the vigil, thanks to her Breathstealer's Shimmer.

Atæshia addresses the characters without looking at them. Unless an elemental guardian vouches for the characters, Atæshia won't let them go unpunished. They have interrupted her sacred rite, and she assumes they have killed numerous guardians on the way—but her anger is patient, tempered. She questions their motives and morals then asserts they put their needs above her people's pain. Following that, she attacks with her band.

Pain justifies pain to Atæshia, but she notes any characters who show remorse before battle. She tries to avoid killing those characters, attacking other targets first and potentially offering surrender. Regardless, she fights to the death, confident of being reborn from war once more.

Lift. The lift can access the queen's chamber (area A5) on the third floor and the preservation vaults (area A7) on the fifth floor. See "Reliquary Features" for more information about the lift.

A7. Preservation Vaults

On the fifth floor, this area has the following features:

- "The room branches into four alcoves, each containing a yellow-runed ritual circle that hums with protective energy. Two are empty, the other two are filled with treasures."
- "The center of this chamber's floor sports a circular trapdoor that allows a magic lift to pass through."

Lift. The lift can access the queen's chamber (area A5) on the third floor and the panoramic vigil (area A6) on the fourth floor. See "Reliquary Features" for more information about the lift.

Preserver Fields. Objects in the four magical ritual circles don't age and can't be targeted by divination magic. Nothing can physically pass through the fields and creatures on the outside can't teleport into the fields. The fields have immunity to all damage, but each can be destroyed by a *disintegrate* spell or a successful *dispel magic* spell (treat each field as an 8th-level spell).

Saying the password, *Kitseth*, within 10 feet of a preserver field suppresses it for 1 minute. If the characters are imprisoned here and already know the password, Meskrit changes it to *Merranon* (the name of an elemental champion whose statue stands in area A3).

Treasure. The two filled preserver fields contain Atæshia's treasure hoard. See "Atæshia's Hoard" for more information.

Force of Earth

Atæshia's Hoard

Atæshia's hoard is held in the preserver fields in area A7 of her lair. She has gathered these relics over the millennia to assist her god-killing plots.

The hoard contains the following items:

- *Blade of forlorn hope* (see below)
- *Horn of Valhalla* (bronze), etched with whirlwind motifs
- *Oathbow* that speaks Primordial instead of Elvish
- Well-worn leather hip satchel containing 2 *beads of force*, a *chime of opening*, 2 *feather tokens* (bird and tree), a *potion of giant strength* (storm), and a *spell scroll* of *wish*
- Spell form of erasure (see below)
- 10-pound cube of ice that never melts (worth 2,000 gp)
- Coffer containing 20 primordial sapphires (worth 5,000 gp each)
- The oldest mortal-made axe in the timescape (worth 40,000 gp)
- 6 ancient gold holy symbols (worth 72,000 gp total)
- 29,465 gp and 5,123 pp

Blade of Forlorn Hope

Weapon (Scimitar), Legendary (Requires Attunement)

Gifted to vanguard Kitseth by the elder primordial of fire, this wide-bladed scimitar helps its wielder protect others, but with a disregard for self-preservation.

You gain a +2 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this magic weapon.

When you hit a creature with the sword, it flares with a burning corona. You can either deal an extra 2d6 radiant damage to the target, or you can choose one ally you can see within 30 feet of the target to gain 2d6 temporary hit points.

Immolating Surge. Immediately after attacking a creature on your turn with the sword, you can take one additional action. At the end of this turn, you take 6d8 radiant damage. If this damage reduces you to 0 hit points, you die and your remains burn to nothing. Once this property is used, it can't be used again until the next dawn.

Spell Form of Erasure

This fractal sphere is an informationally hyperdense arcane formula from the void. You can decipher it with 1 hour of study.

Once deciphered, the sphere can be used to perform a 1-hour ritual, which up to three other spellcasters within 10 feet of the sphere can participate in. At the ritual's culmination, the sphere is destroyed, and each participant can expend one spell slot. You must make a DC 40 Intelligence (Arcana) check, with a bonus equal to the combined level of the expended spell slots.

On a success, choose a specific entity. Every sentient being in the timescape who didn't participate in the ritual loses all memory of the chosen entity, and the entity's name is erased from all records. On a failure, the GM chooses an entity to be erased. If the check fails by 10 or more, you and all participants are also erased and die.

Blade of Forlorn Hope

Reliquary Stat Blocks

The following stat blocks appear in the lair.

Air Spark

CR 15 Minion

Small Elemental (Air), Any Alignment — 1,300 XP

Armor Class 13
Hit Points 22
Speed 20 ft., fly 50 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (–1)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	9 (–1)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)

Skills Perception +5
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15
Languages Auran, Common
Proficiency Bonus +5

Minion. If the spark takes damage from an attack or as the result of a failed saving throw, their hit points are reduced to 0. If the spark takes damage from another effect, they die if the damage equals or exceeds their hit point maximum; otherwise they take no damage.

Actions

Wind Sweep (Group Attack). *Melee Spell Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 slashing damage, and if this attack was made by more than one air spark against a Large or smaller creature, the sparks can move that creature up to 5 feet horizontally for each spark that joined the attack.

Atæshia

CR 23 Leader

Medium Elemental (Air, Earth, Fire), Neutral — 50,000 XP

Armor Class 20 (natural armor)
Hit Points 332 (35d8 + 175)
Speed 50 ft., fly 30 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	21 (+5)	21 (+5)	22 (+6)	23 (+6)	23 (+6)

Saving Throws Con +12, Wis +13
Skills Arcana +13, Deception +13, History +13, Nature +13, Perception +13, Persuasion +13, Religion +13
Damage Resistances cold, necrotic, poison, psychic, radiant
Damage Immunities fire
Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, poisoned
Senses blindsight 120 ft., passive Perception 23
Languages all
Proficiency Bonus +7

Offer to Remembrance (3/Day). When Atæshia fails a saving throw, a willing creature within 60 feet of her who can see her can give their life to protect her. This creature dies instantly, and Atæshia succeeds on the saving throw.

Reborn From War. When Atæshia is reduced to 0 hit points, she disintegrates into ash on a solemn wind. For the next 100 years, if a Celestial, a Elemental, or a Humanoid whose challenge rating or level is 5 or higher dies within 60 feet of where Atæshia died, Atæshia returns to life where she died with 25 hit points.

Actions

Multiattack. Atæshia makes three Pale Flame attacks. She can replace one attack with a use of Moment of Loss, if available.

Pale Flame. *Melee or Ranged Spell Attack:* +13 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 20 (4d6 + 6) radiant damage plus 14 (4d6) fire damage. If this attack reduces a creature to 0 hit points, they die and all their remains burn to nothing.

Moment of Loss (Recharge 6). Atæshia transforms one creature she can see within 60 feet of her into the form of a living ash cloud. While transformed to ash, the target is immune to all damage, can't provide cover to other creatures, and can't take reactions. At the start of the target's next turn, they reform and must make a DC 21 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the target is reduced to 1 hit point. On a successful save, the target takes 44 (8d10) necrotic damage. This damage can't reduce the target's hit points below 1.

From Death, Life (1/Day). Atæshia uses her Kindled Sacrifice villain action, even if it is unavailable, to sacrifice herself.

Bonus Actions

Flickering Flame. Atæshia forms into a cloud of ash, teleports to an unoccupied space she can see within 60 feet of her, and reforms into her true form. Each creature within 5 feet of the space she left must succeed on a DC 21 Dexterity saving throw or take 5 (1d10) fire damage.

Reactions

Convocation of Ash. When another Elemental Atæshia can see within 60 feet of her is hit with an attack, the damage from the attack is halved and the target can move up to half their speed without provoking opportunity attacks.

Villain Actions

Atæshia has three villain actions. She can take each action once during an encounter after an enemy's turn. She can take these actions in any order but can use only one per round.

Action 1: Wave of Sorrow. Atæshia unleashes a pulse of overwhelming sadness. Each enemy Atæshia can see within 120 feet of her must make a DC 21 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, a creature is dazed for 1 minute (save ends at end of turn). On a successful save, a creature can't take reactions until the end of their next turn.

Action 2: Kindled Sacrifice. Atæshia chooses a willing creature within 60 feet of her to die so their allies may live. The target dies, and up to two other dead creatures within 60 feet of the target return to life. These revived creatures regain the same number of hit points the sacrificed creature had, up to the revived creature's hit point maximum.

Action 3: Life's Finale. Atæshia releases a torrent of primordial anguish to unmake the marrow of creation around her. Each enemy within 60 feet of her must make a DC 21 Charisma saving throw. On a failed save, they take 55 (10d10) necrotic damage and can't regain hit points until the end of Atæshia's next turn. On a successful save, they take half as much damage, but suffer no other effect. Succeed or fail, if this damage reduces a creature to 0 hit points, they immediately fail one death saving throw.

Atæshia, Queen of Ash, marches forward without fear as pieces of her form swirl in the wind.

Earth Spark

CR 10 Minion

Large Elemental (Earth), Any Alignment — 590 XP

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)
Hit Points 17
Speed 30 ft., burrow 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	8 (–1)	16 (+3)	9 (–1)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)

Damage Immunities poison
Condition Immunities poisoned
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10
Languages Common, Terran
Proficiency Bonus +4

Minion. If the spark takes damage from an attack or as the result of a failed saving throw, their hit points are reduced to 0. If the spark takes damage from another effect, they die if the damage equals or exceeds their hit point maximum; otherwise they take no damage.

Trampling Rampage. If an enemy who is touching the ground starts their turn within 5 feet of two or more earth sparks, the enemy must make a Strength saving throw with a DC equal to 12 plus the number of earth sparks within 5 feet of the enemy. On a failed save, the enemy falls prone, and they can't stand up until there are fewer than two earth sparks within 5 feet of them.

Actions

Shatter Smash (Group Attack). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 bludgeoning damage.

Snort Rocks (Group Attack). *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, range 30/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 bludgeoning damage. If the target is a flying creature, they must succeed on a Strength saving throw or fall prone. The DC for this saving throw equals 12 plus the number of sparks who joined the attack.

Sapient Elementals

The elementals in the Ash Queen's Reliquary are sapient beings who live and fight together as a band. They have a rich history, hold grudges, and experience emotions just like humans do. Other elementals, called motes, exist in the timescape as well. Motes think and behave the way most experienced gamers expect when they hear the word "elemental."

Essence of Mist

CR 13 Ambusher

Medium Elemental (Air, Water), Any Alignment — 10,000 XP

Armor Class 15
Hit Points 165 (22d8 + 66)
Speed 40 ft., fly 20 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	20 (+5)	17 (+3)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Dex +10, Cha +8
Skills Deception +8, Sleight of Hand +10, Stealth +10
Damage Resistances psychic
Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, frightened, grappled, prone, restrained
Senses blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 11
Languages Aquan, Auran, Common
Proficiency Bonus +5

Flowing Form. The essence can enter an enemy's space and stop there, and they can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing.

Gasping Aura. While within 10 feet of the essence, creatures who need to breathe can't take reactions or speak.

Actions

Multiattack. The essence makes two Breathless Rend attacks.

Breathless Rend. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (2d8 + 5) slashing damage plus 22 (4d10) psychic damage.

Bonus Actions

Convocation of Breath (2/Day). The essence imbues the power of breath in themself or another Elemental they can see within 30 feet of them, granting one of the following effects of that Elemental's choice:

Hide in Breath. The Elemental tries to hide inside the body of a creature within 10 feet of them who isn't a Construct, an Elemental, an Ooze, or an Undead. The target must succeed on a DC 18 Constitution saving throw or the Elemental retreats inside the target until the start of the Elemental's next turn. While inside the target, the Elemental can't take actions and has total cover against attacks and other effects outside the target.

Toxic Breath. The Elemental exudes a noxious aura 10 feet in every direction for 1 minute or until dispersed by a moderate or stronger wind. That area is lightly obscured, and each creature who needs to breathe who starts their turn in that area must succeed on a DC 16 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned until the end of their next turn.

Breathstealer's Shimmer (1/Day). The essence becomes invisible then takes the Hide action. This invisibility ends if the essence makes an attack or uses Convocation of Breath.

Essence of Storms

CR 5 Controller

Medium Elemental (Air), Any Alignment — 1,800 XP

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)
Hit Points 78 (12d8 + 24)
Speed 20 ft., fly 60 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	17 (+3)	14 (+2)	9 (–1)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)

Skills Acrobatics +6, Perception +6
Damage Resistances lightning, poison, thunder
Condition Immunities dazed, grappled, paralyzed, poisoned, restrained
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 16
Languages Auran, Common
Proficiency Bonus +3

Actions

Multiattack. The essence makes two Wind Talons attacks. They can replace one attack with a use of Bluster or Lightning Squall, if available.

Wind Talons. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) piercing damage.

Bluster. The essence unleashes a 30-foot cone of wind. Each creature in that area must succeed on a DC 14 Strength saving throw or be moved up to 10 feet in any direction.

Lightning Squall (3/Day). The essence hurls a small lightning storm at a creature they can see within 30 feet of them. The target must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the target takes 28 (8d6) lightning damage and is dazed for 1 minute (save ends at end of turn). On a successful save, they take half as much damage and aren't dazed.

Bonus Actions

Convocation of Air (1/Day). The essence imbues the power of air in themself or another Elemental they can see within 30 feet of them, granting one of the following effects of that Elemental's choice:

Rising Whirlwind. Each creature of the Elemental's choice within 30 feet of them must make a DC 14 Strength saving throw against a violent whirlwind. On a failed save, the target rises 10 feet upward and is restrained for 1 minute (save ends at end of turn). A target restrained in this way rises an additional 10 feet at the start of each of their turns. Another creature who can reach the target can use an action to pull them free of the effect, ending the restrained condition for that creature. The whirlwind ends if the Elemental dies or chooses to end it (no action required).

Vortex Terrain. A vortex swirls around the Elemental. For 1 minute, the area within 20 feet of the Elemental is difficult terrain for enemies.

Essence of Tides

CR 5 Skirmisher

Medium Elemental (Water), Any Alignment — 1,800 XP

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)
Hit Points 84 (13d8 + 26)
Speed 15 ft., swim 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)	9 (–1)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)

Skills Acrobatics +7, Medicine +6
Damage Resistances acid, fire, poison
Condition Immunities grappled, poisoned, restrained
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13
Languages Aquan, Common
Proficiency Bonus +3

Water Glide. While within 5 feet of a liquid or solid surface, the essence gains a flying speed equal to their swimming speed. While flying, the essence doesn't provoke opportunity attacks.

Actions

Multiattack. The essence makes two Water Wing attacks and one Lightning Tail Whip attack.

Water Wing. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage. If the same creature is hit twice with this attack on a turn, they are vulnerable to lightning damage until the end of the essence's turn.

Lightning Tail Whip. *Melee Spell Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (2d6) lightning damage, and the target is pushed up to 10 feet away from the essence.

Bonus Actions

Convocation of Water (1/Day). The essence imbues the power of water in themself or another Elemental they can see within 30 feet, granting one of the following effects of that Elemental's choice:

Scalding Steam. The Elemental spouts blistering steam. Each non-Elemental creature within 15 feet of them must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, a target takes 18 (4d8) fire damage and is blinded until the end of their next turn. On a successful save, a target takes half as much damage and isn't blinded.

Waters of Vitality. The Elemental regains 25 hit points and can end one of the following conditions affecting them: blinded, charmed, dazed, deafened, paralyzed, poisoned, or stunned.

Force of Blood

CR 19 Brute
22,000 XP

Large Elemental (Earth, Fire, Water), Any Alignment

Armor Class 21 (natural armor)
Hit Points 230 (20d10 + 120)
Speed 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
24 (+7)	20 (+5)	22 (+6)	19 (+4)	18 (+4)	20 (+5)

Saving Throws Con +12, Wis +10, Cha +11
Skills Intimidation +11, Medicine +10, Persuasion +11
Damage Resistances fire, necrotic
Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened
Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 14
Languages Common, Dwarvish, Elvish, Giant, Primordial
Proficiency Bonus +6

Visceral Sight. The force of blood can see any creature within 120 feet of them who isn't a Construct or an Undead. This sight ignores effects that obscure sight.

Actions

Multiattack. The force of blood makes three Scarlet Longspear attacks. They can replace one attack with a Rend from Within attack.

Scarlet Longspear. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +13 to hit, reach 15 ft. or range 30/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 18 (2d10 + 7) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, the force of blood regains 5 hit points.

Rend from Within. *Melee Spell Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 13 (2d6 + 6) slashing damage plus 26 (4d12) necrotic damage, and the target spends 1 Hit Die with no effect and can't take reactions until the start of their next turn. *Miss:* 13 (2d12) necrotic damage.

Bonus Actions

Convocation of Blood. The force of blood imbues the power of blood in themself or another Elemental they can see within 30 feet of them, granting one of the following effects of that Elemental's choice:

Boiling Blood. The Elemental boils the blood of a creature within 5 feet of them who isn't a Construct or an Undead. The target must make a DC 19 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the target must choose to either take 27 (5d10) fire damage or make an attack with a weapon that has a damage die of 1d4 or greater against a creature of the Elemental's choice. If the attack hits, it deals an extra 11 (2d10) fire damage.

Essence Thief. The Elemental steals the essence of two creatures the Elemental can see within 30 feet of them. Each target must make a DC 19 Constitution saving throw, taking 19 (3d12) necrotic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. The Elemental can then teleport to an unoccupied space they can see within 5 feet of one of the targets.

Force of Earth

CR 5 Soldier
1,800 XP

Large Elemental (Earth), Any Alignment

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)
Hit Points 95 (10d10 + 40)
Speed 30 ft., burrow 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	9 (–1)	18 (+4)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	9 (–1)

Skills Athletics +7, History +6
Damage Immunities poison
Condition Immunities petrified, poisoned
Senses darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 30 ft., passive Perception 12
Languages Common, Terran
Proficiency Bonus +3

Earth Glide. The force of earth can burrow through mundane, unworked earth and stone. While doing so, the force of earth doesn't disturb the material they move through.

Actions

Multiattack. The force of earth makes two Earthbind Strike attacks.

Earthbind Strike. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage, and the target's speed becomes 0 until the start of the force of earth's next turn.

Shatter Rock. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, range 60/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 23 (3d12 + 4) bludgeoning damage, or 47 (6d12 + 8) bludgeoning damage if the target is an object or structure.

Bonus Actions

Convocation of Earth (1/Day). The force of earth imbues the power of earth in themself or another Elemental they can see within 30 feet of them, granting one of the following effects of that Elemental's choice:

Earthen Aura. Stones rapidly whir around the Elemental in a 10-foot-radius sphere for 1 minute or until they're killed or incapacitated. A creature who isn't an Elemental takes 5 slashing damage for every 5 feet they move into or within that area.

Stone Armor. Stone grows over the Elemental in a protective carapace, and they gain 20 temporary hit points. While the Elemental has these temporary hit points, they are immune to the dazed, paralyzed, petrified, and stunned conditions.

Force of Iron

CR 10 Brute

Large Elemental (Earth, Fire), Any Alignment — 5,900 XP

Armor Class 19 (natural armor; 22 in Shield Form)
Hit Points 150 (12d10 + 84)
Speed 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
21 (+5)	10 (+0)	25 (+7)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Str +9
Skills Athletics +9, Perception +5
Damage Resistances fire
Damage Immunities poison
Condition Immunities exhaustion, frightened, petrified, poisoned
Senses darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 30 ft., passive Perception 15
Languages Common, Ignan, Terran
Proficiency Bonus +4

Actions

Multiattack. The force of iron uses Form Stance then makes three Ferrous Greatblade attacks or three Iron Spike attacks.

Ferrous Greatblade. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft. (20 ft. in Polearm Form), one target. *Hit:* 19 (4d6 + 5) slashing damage.

Iron Spike. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, range 30/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (2d8 + 5) piercing damage.

Form Stance. The force of iron shapes their body to gain one of the following benefits until the start of their next turn:

Polearm Form. The force of iron's melee attacks have a reach of 20 feet instead of 5 feet.

Reckless Form. The force of iron has advantage on all melee attack rolls, but attack rolls against the force of iron have advantage.

Shield Form. The force of iron gains a +3 bonus to AC.

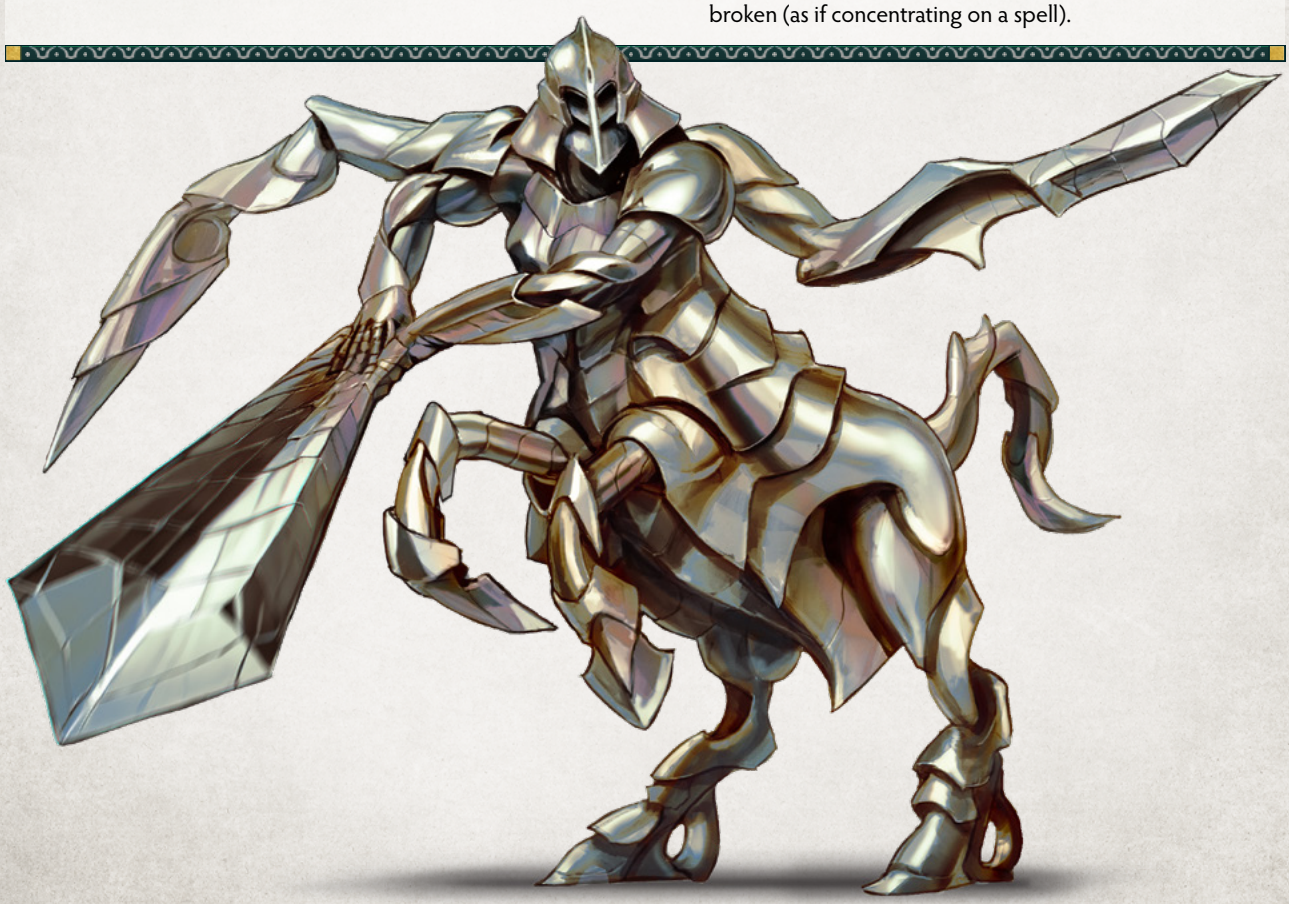
Fire Form (1/Day). The force of iron's attacks deal an extra 13 (2d12) fire damage on a hit.

Bonus Actions

Convocation of Iron (1/Day). The force of iron imbues the power of iron in themself or another Elemental they can see within 30 feet of them, granting one of the following effects of that Elemental's choice:

Earth Reinforcements. Five **earth sparks** appear in unoccupied spaces within 20 feet of the Elemental. The sparks understand the Elemental, follow their verbal commands, and act immediately after the Elemental in the initiative order.

Iron Skin. Metal covers the Elemental, granting them resistance to bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage for 1 minute or until their concentration is broken (as if concentrating on a spell).



Oracle of Storms

CR 16 Artillery

Huge Elemental (Air, Water), Any Alignment — 15,000 XP

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)
Hit Points 189 (18d12 + 72)
Speed 40 ft., fly 40 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	21 (+5)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)	17 (+3)

Saving Throws Dex +10, Cha +8
Skills History +11, Nature +11, Perception +9, Performance +8
Damage Immunities lightning, poison, thunder
Condition Immunities dazed, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained
Senses blindsight 60 ft., passive Perception 19
Languages Aquan, Auran, Common
Proficiency Bonus +5

Turbulent Escalation. When the oracle starts their turn outdoors while not incapacitated, they can stoke a thunderstorm (no action required). For 1 minute or until the oracle uses Turbulent Escalation again, the weather in a 1-mile radius centered on the oracle changes as follows:

- If the sky is cloudless, it becomes cloudy.
- If the sky is cloudy, it begins to rain or snow (oracle's choice).
- If it's raining or snowing, the weather becomes stormy.

Actions

Multiattack. The oracle uses Tempest Bolt twice. They can replace one use with a Cyclone Staff attack.

Cyclone Staff. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 23 (4d8 + 5) bludgeoning damage plus 22 (4d10) thunder damage, and the oracle moves the target up to 10 feet in any direction.

Tempest Bolt. A bolt of lightning streaks from the oracle to strike one creature they can see within 90 feet of them, or within 300 feet of them if the target is outdoors and the weather is stormy. The target must make a DC 18 Dexterity saving throw, taking 31 (7d8) lightning damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. If the target is outdoors and the weather is stormy, they have disadvantage on the saving throw.

Bonus Actions

Convocation of Storms (2/Day). The oracle imbues the power of storm in themself or another Elemental they can see within 30 feet of them, granting one of the following effects of that Elemental's choice:

Lightning Within. The Elemental becomes charged with lightning. The next time the Elemental hits a target with an attack within the next minute, the attack deals an extra 33 (6d10) lightning damage.

Thunder Burst. A concussive shock wave erupts from the Elemental toward four creatures they can see within 60 feet of them. Each target must succeed on a DC 17 Constitution saving throw or take 22 (4d10) thunder damage, be pushed up to 10 feet away from the Elemental, and be deafened until the end of the target's next turn.

Utility Spells

In addition to any other spells in this stat block, the oracle can cast the following spells, using Wisdom as the spellcasting ability (spell save DC 17):

3/day each: *commune*+, *commune with nature*+, *legend lore*+, *scrying*+

Elemental Appearances

Elementals in the Mundane World take the shape of other creatures formed of elements.

Air Spark. An air spark is a wisp of cloud that takes the shape of a winged serpent.

Earth Spark. An earth spark is a rhinoceros formed from hunks of dirt and stone.

Essence of Mist. An essence of mist has the misty silhouette of a cloaked humanoid. A brutal weapon forms in their grasp as they strike, rendering their victims breathless.

Essence of Storms. An essence of storms is formed from streaks of colored cloud-stuff woven into the silhouette of a large eagle or falcon.

Essence of Tides. An essence of tides looks like a shimmering blue manta ray that glides over land as easily as through water.

Force of Blood. A force of blood could be mistaken for a massive humanoid clad entirely in black-and-red toothed armor, but in truth, their "armor" is blackened, gnarled flesh punctuated with veins of boiling red.

Force of Earth. A force of earth resembles a nine-foot-tall great ape formed of rough stone.

Force of Iron. A force of iron appears as a four-armed centaur made of malleable metal with a head shaped like an empty knight's helm.

Oracle of Storms. An oracle of storms takes the shape of a storm giant made of thunderclouds.

Sunlight Nexus. A being of pure radiance, a sunlight nexus is easily mistaken for a winged celestial made of stained glass.

Water Spark. A water spark is an octopus formed out of water.

Sunlight Nexus

CR 12 Support

Large Elemental (Air, Fire), Any Alignment — 8,400 XP

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)
Hit Points 152 (16d10 + 64)
Speed 40 ft., fly 90 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	15 (+2)	19 (+4)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	20 (+5)

Saving Throws Wis +7, Cha +9
Skills Insight +7, Intimidation +9, Perception +7, Religion +6
Damage Resistances fire, radiant
Damage Immunities poison
Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, poisoned
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 17
Languages Common, Primordial
Proficiency Bonus +4

Corona. The nexus sheds bright sunlight in a 120-foot radius and dim light for another 120 feet.

Actions

Multiattack. The nexus makes three Solar Arc attacks. They can replace one attack with a use of Heavenly Collapse or Rejuvenating Flare, if available.

Solar Arc. *Melee or Ranged Spell Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 30 ft., one target. *Hit:* 18 (2d12 + 5) radiant damage.

Heavenly Collapse (2/Day). The nexus shines harsh light on an enemy they can see within 60 feet of them. Each ally of the nexus within 5 feet of the target regains 20 hit points, and the target must succeed on a DC 17 Constitution saving throw or lose any damage resistances they have and be blinded for 1 minute (save ends at end of turn).

Rejuvenating Flare (1/Day). One ally the nexus can see within 30 feet of them is bathed in rejuvenating light. The ally regains 27 (5d10) hit points, and if they are charmed, dazed, frightened, or poisoned, those conditions end for them.

Bonus Actions

Convocation of Sunlight (2/Day). The nexus imbues the power of sunlight in themself or another Elemental they can see within 30 feet of them, granting one of the following effects of that Elemental's choice:

Healing Radiance. The Elemental regains 30 hit points. Until the end of the nexus's next turn, the Elemental refracts shimmering light, and creatures within 10 feet of them who aren't Elementals are blinded.

Protective Light. Four brilliant motes orbit the Elemental for 1 minute. When the Elemental deals damage to a creature with an attack, the Elemental can extinguish one mote (no action required) to deal an extra 14 (4d6) radiant damage to that creature.

Water Spark

CR 20 Minion

Medium Elemental (Water), Any Alignment — 2,500 XP

Armor Class 19 (natural armor)
Hit Points 27
Speed 30 ft., swim 50 ft., fly 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	18 (+4)	16 (+3)	9 (–1)	16 (+3)	11 (+0)

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13
Languages Aquan, Common
Proficiency Bonus +6

Minion. If the spark takes damage from an attack or as the result of a failed saving throw, their hit points are reduced to 0. If the spark takes damage from another effect, they die if the damage equals or exceeds their hit point maximum; otherwise they take no damage.

Whirlpool Suction. If an enemy starts their turn within 5 feet of three or more water sparks, the enemy must succeed on a Strength saving throw or have their speed reduced to 0. The DC for this saving throw equals 14 plus the number of water sparks within 5 feet of the enemy.

Actions

Whelming Wave (Group Attack). *Melee or Ranged Spell Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 30 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 bludgeoning damage, and if the attack was made by more than one spark, the target must succeed on a Dexterity saving throw or be knocked prone and be unable to stand up until the end of the sparks' next turn. The DC for this saving throw equals 14 plus the number of sparks who joined the attack.

Boughs of Eternity

Optimized for Five 20th-Level Characters

Content Warning: Body Horror

High Mage Vairae's Machinations of Bone action is gruesome and visceral. Not everyone enjoys that kind of body horror. If anyone at your table is uncomfortable with bone extraction, feel free to describe this action as spectral blades pressing in around Vairae's foes.

The Gael Wode has been home to elves for thousands of years, including High Mage Vairae (*veh-RYE*). They excelled at school and easily made friends—which meant no one challenged them when they bullied the weaker children.

As an adult, Vairae joined the Gael garrison as a battle mage to round out their skills. Again they performed admirably and were showered with admirers and promotions.

But after discovering a cryptic tome on the corpse of an enemy wizard, Vairae set their sights even higher—for the tome contained a ritual to keep their vigor and power forever. After many late nights spent deciphering the text, Vairae succumbed to the irresistible pull to complete this ritual … and sacrificed their best friend in the process.

Their heart now sealed in a sphere of everlasting ice, Vairae returned to Gael Wode in disguise and ambitiously rose to the rank of High Mage. Today, the centuries-old Vairae is as spry and handsome as ever, with loyal followers at their command. But the world outside the wode is large and doesn't belong to Vairae—yet.

High Mage Vairae, self-proclaimed exemplar of the ancient arcane traditions of the Gael Wode, conducts their machinations from a giant tree made into a tower called the Boughs of Eternity. Ever the egotist, Vairae constructed their tower to celebrate their prowess, chronicling their life through the springtime of their youth, the summer of their martial victories, the autumn of their great discoveries, and the winter of their eternity.

Tower Story Hooks

You can use one of the following story hooks to integrate this lair into an adventure:

Broken Alliance. The treants of Gael Wode turn feral and attack any creature they encounter. A circle of druids believes the treants are being corrupted by an unnatural magic emanating from the Boughs of Eternity. The druids ask the characters to investigate. If the characters destroy Vairae's soulstone—the cause of this magic—the druids give them a *ring of invisibility*.

Forbidden Knowledge. Rysaen, an elf and Vairae's former apprentice, asks the characters to steal a dangerous spellbook from the library of the Boughs of Eternity (area L5). Unaware of the High Mage's true nature, Rysaen believes the adventure to be a simple heist. She just wants the book, and she tells the characters of other objects of power within the tower that they can keep for themselves.

Unraveling History. Eruvel Sennat, an elf scribe from Gael Wode, recently stumbled across ancient records that hint at Vairae's lichdom. Eruvel asks the party to investigate his findings—and if true, to put down the lich. If the characters do the deed, Eruvel gives them a *luck blade* for their trouble.

Tower Features

Unless otherwise noted, each area of the Boughs of Eternity has the following features:

Ceilings. The vaulted halls of Vairae's tower have 30-foot-high ceilings.

Doors. All doors are made from exquisitely decorated adamantine. They are 10 feet high and 1 foot thick.

Illumination. On the bottom three levels of the tower (areas L1–L6), glowing flowers grow from the walls, filling each area with bright light. On the top level of the tower (areas L7–L9), icy crystals take the place of the flowers, filling each area with dim light.

Living Tower. The tower's ceilings, walls, and floors are shaped from living wood and foliage. Any damaged walls and floors immediately regrow and repair themselves at the start of the next turn of the creature who damaged them.

Noise. Vairae has designed their tower to prevent travel of sound, both to ensure a productive study environment and prevent eavesdropping. Creatures in one area can't hear creatures outside that area.

Protective Ward. Except for Vairae, creatures can't teleport into the tower from outside it or pass through the tower doors or walls using supernatural means (such as a *passwall* spell).

High Mage's Retinue

Vairae keeps a retinue of fiendish soldiers who are vigilant against intruders. The guards attack with military precision, cooperating to the best of their ability. Characters who present themselves at the antechamber with appropriate pageantry are treated as honored guests—though they aren't permitted to explore beyond the Spring Gallery (area L2) without the High Mage's permission.

Illusions of Grandeur. Vairae takes great care to maintain their reputation as High Mage of Gael Wode. To hide their nature from guests, Vairae's guards are magically disguised to look like the finest elven soldiers by a permanent *seeming* spell (save DC 22).

Bound Devils. The devil soldiers in Vairae's retinue are magically bound to serve the lich to the utter end. If the magic circle in the mortuary (area L6) is dispelled or destroyed, a character can attempt to convince a member of Vairae's retinue to betray the lich with a DC 25 Charisma (Deception, Intimidation, or Persuasion) check. On a successful check, the devil stops battling the characters, but won't directly act against Vairae. If the check succeeds by 5 or more, the devil informs the character about the secret door in the autumn library (area L5) or provides one of the passwords to open the soulstone sanctum (area L8).

Defeated Characters. Vairae instructs their soldiers to take defeated intruders alive if convenient. Defeated intruders are taken to the mortuary (area L6) for interrogation by the High Mage. A character who ceases to be useful is killed by Vairae and raised as a **wraith** permanently under the lich's command.

Resting in the Tower

If the characters rest in an area of the tower, there is a 30 percent chance that **High Mage Vairae** finds them halfway through their rest. If the lich has been destroyed, the characters can rest without interruption in any area once it is clear of enemies.

Entering the Tower

The Boughs of Eternity are well known to the upper classes of Gael Wode. Though there are no roads to Vairae's tower, characters who have learned its approximate location notice the tower rising above the forest canopy.

Grand Entrance. Keeping up appearances is of utmost importance to High Mage Vairae; they are always prepared to receive important guests. The grand arches at the base of the tree trunk present an open doorway into the arboreal tower, leading directly to the willow's welcome (area L1), the only entrance.

Boughs of Eternity Areas

The following areas are keyed to the Boughs of Eternity Map.

L1. Willow's Welcome

This blossom-filled antechamber welcomes the High Mage's esteemed guests. It has the following features:

- "The walls of this circular chamber are decorated in delicate wooden filigree, and glowing flowers bathe the room in gentle light."
- "An adamantine door shimmers on the east wall, flanked by a pair of enormous willow trees in full blossom. Elvish hymns emanate from within their boughs."
- (**Secret**) The willows are home to a pair of dryads.
- (**Secret**) Despite appearances, the willow trees are rotten at their cores.
- (**Secret**) A dirt mournling is buried in the ground in front of the tower entrance.

Dryads. Sealh and Salix, twin **swamp dryads**, act as Vairae's gatekeepers. They treat all arrivals in the antechamber as honored guests but are secretly skeptical of unexpected parties. A character can convince the dryads to grant them entry without an appointment by succeeding on a DC 25 Charisma (Deception, Intimidation, or Persuasion) check. If the character fails the check or is caught trying to sneak further into the tower, the dryads attack, fighting until destroyed. When the dryads use Entangling Roots, they can avoid affecting their allies.

Dirt Mournling. If combat breaks out here, the **dirt mournling** bursts through the ground to engage enemies, fighting until destroyed or ordered to stop by the dryads. This dirt mournling is Large instead of Huge.

Rotten Cores. Having been corrupted by Vairae's magic, the dryads' willow trees are showing signs of sickness. A character who succeeds on a DC 20 Intelligence (Nature) or Wisdom (Perception) check notices blackened sap and rotten bark at the willows' bases and knows the lich's magic is the cause.

A creature can remove the trees' corruption by casting *dispel magic* as a 9th-level spell, or by casting that spell at any level and succeeding on a DC 19 ability check using their spellcasting ability.

If a character reveals this corruption to the dryads or remove it, they gain advantage on Charisma checks made to influence the dryads. The thankful dryads also urge the characters to remember the name "Aethilen" as "a key to Vairae's true nature" (see area L8).

L2. Spring Gallery

The door to this area from the willow's welcome (area L1) is locked by the *arcane lock* spell and trapped. The door has no mechanical locks, but it can be forced open with a successful DC 25 Strength check. Vairae and the dryads in the willow's welcome can unlock the door. The door has AC 23, 36 hit points, a damage threshold of 10, and immunity to poison and psychic damage.

The *symbol* spell with the death effect (save DC 22) has been cast on the side of the door facing the willow's welcome. When a creature who isn't one of the dryads or Vairae touches this side of the door, the symbol is triggered.

This area has the following features:

- "This chamber contains a lush garden rich in fragrant pink and white springtime blossoms. Vines stretch out from the walls, curling into loose, decorative tunnels that frame paved walkways."
- "The tunnels open into three intimate reception areas with benches, tables, and light refreshments. A prim elf servant stands with a tray of glasses at the ready."
- "The sound of childish laughter fills the halls, as spectral images of young elves chase each other through the tunnels."

Tunnels. The vines that form the walls of the tunnels aren't closely woven and characters can see through them. The tunnel walls offer creatures half cover (+2 to AC

The Boughs of Eternity Map

and Dexterity saving throws) against attacks and effects originating on the other side of a wall. The spaces between the tunnels are difficult terrain.

Hanaphaen. Three reception areas are served by a disguised **devil retainer** named Hanaphaen, who Vairae has tasked with eavesdropping on guests. He serves drinks to any creature who enters the area. Hanaphaen doesn't attack, and if harmed, he flees. The devil resents Vairae for the role the lich gave him but can't betray them while bound to the magic circle in the mortuary (area L6). A creature who succeeds on a DC 20 Wisdom (Insight) check senses Hanaphaen is miserable. If a creature succeeds on a DC 20 Charisma (Persuasion) check, Hanaphaen shares what little he can, saying, "Vairae's circle in the mortuary is of the utmost importance to the wizard's safety." If the characters destroy the magic circle and return to this area, Hanaphaen happily joins their cause.

Spectral Children. The illusions depict Vairae's fondest memories of childhood, acting out a scene every 5 minutes. In the first reception area, the illusion depicts Vairae at school with other elf children; Vairae raises a hand to answer their teacher's question before anyone else. In the second, Vairae leads a recital of an ancient elven play. In the final area, a teenage Vairae whispers a promise while holding their best friend's hand. A character who succeeds on a DC 22 Wisdom (Perception) check overhears the illusionary Vairae whisper, "We'll seize eternity together, Aethilen." The name Aethilen is one of the passwords used to open the soulstone sanctum (area L8).

L3. Summer War Room

The war room celebrates Vairae's martial accomplishments. It has the following features:

- "A company of elf soldiers stand guard along the walls."
- "The walls of this chamber are alive with flowers and verdant leaves."
- "A 15-foot-diameter table with an intricately detailed map of the continent stands at the center of the room. Miniature figures mark the locations of the militaries of Gael Wode and neighboring nations."
- "Statues of elves ready for battle stand around the room. Most depict the same elf in various heroic poses, but one statue shows a different elf, bowing to the other statues."

Guards. Two **devil magistrates** and two **devil legates**, all disguised as elves, guard this chamber. If the characters have permission to be in the tower, the devils tell the characters to wait below in the spring gallery (area L2) for High Mage Vairae to see them. If the characters refuse to leave the area, the devils attack. Before attacking, the magistrate opens the door to the armory (area L4) and calls for reinforcements, allowing the **devil adjudicator** and **devil legate** there to join the fray.

Map Table. The miniatures depict Vairae's plan for conquest. A character who inspects the table can make a DC 16 Intelligence (History) check. On a success, they realize whoever set up this map is planning an invasion with far more forces than Gael Wode has at its disposal.

Statues. Most of the statues depict Vairae. A character who succeeds on a DC 18 Intelligence (History) check recognizes the bowing statue as General Phadanar, a renowned Gael Wode noble who died in battle defending her queen from an invasion of devils. The name Phadanar is one of the passwords used to open the door to the soulstone sanctum (area L8).

L4. Armory

The tower armory has the following features:

- "A statue of an armored elf mage wearing a gold medal and wielding a spear and shield stands at the north end of the chamber."
- *(If the devils from this area weren't pulled into combat in area L3)* "Two armored elves inspect racks of swords, polearms, and longbows."

Quartermasters. Unless the magistrate in the summer war room (area L3) called for reinforcements, a **devil adjudicator** and a **devil legate** inspect the weapons in this chamber.

Statue. A *detect magic* spell reveals that the statue radiates an aura of necromancy magic. When a creature who isn't a Fiend or Undead looks at the statue, they must make a DC 20 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the target becomes powerfully hexed. Whenever a creature hexed in this way takes damage, they take an extra 11 (2d10) fire damage. Only a *heal* spell or similar magic can remove the hex. On a successful save, the target is immune to the statue's effects for 24 hours.

Treasure. The weapon racks contain twenty longswords, twenty longbows, twenty quivers that each hold twenty arrows, ten halberds, and ten pikes. The statue holds a *spellguard shield* bearing the crest of Gael Wode. The statue's gold medal is worth 500 gp and embossed in Elvish text that reads, "Given by General Phadanar in recognition of the valor of Vairae, now named High Mage." The name Phadanar is one of the passwords used to open the soulstone sanctum (area L8).

L5. Autumn Library

This area has the following features:

- "Foliage grows deep red and orange over shelves filled with hundreds of books and scrolls."
- "Fallen leaves form a rustling blanket across the floor."
- "A desk covered in candles and a century's worth of melted wax dominates the west side of the room."
- (**Secret**) The melted wax conceals a trapped drawer in Vairae's desk.
- (**Secret**) A secret door in the north wall hides a staircase that leads to area L7.

Desk. A character who inspects the desk notices that the melted wax covers a desk drawer. The wax can be cleared away with 10 minutes of work. The drawer is trapped with a canister of flesh-melting gas connected to

the bottom and front of the drawer by a chain. When the drawer is pulled open, the canister is pulled apart. A creature who succeeds on a DC 19 Intelligence (Investigation) check notices the chain. A character who succeeds on a DC 19 Dexterity check using thieves' tools disarms the trap, but on a failed check, the trap triggers.

If the trap is triggered, the canister releases its gas, and each creature in the library must make a DC 20 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, a creature takes 55 (10d10) necrotic damage and spends ten Hit Dice, if available, without any benefit. On a successful save, a creature takes half as much damage and suffers no other effect.

The drawer contains Vairae's diary from before their obsessions set them on the path to undeath. The final few pages discuss Vairae's defeat of Shadow Witch Geherel and her discovery of the *Soulstone Grimoire*. The name Geherel is one of the passwords necessary to open the soulstone sanctum (area L8).

Secret Door. A character who succeeds on a DC 23 Intelligence (Investigation) check notices the outline of the secret door.

Treasure. Most of the books discuss arcane theory and the history of Gael Wode. A character who searches the collection for 10 minutes finds a *spell scroll* of *forbiddance,* a *spell scroll* of *mirage arcane*, and a *spell scroll* of *scrying.*

L6. Mortuary

Vairae conducts their necromantic experiments in this chamber. It has the following features:

- "The north of this chamber is filled with alchemical and arcane tools and supplies scattered over several tables."
- "A blanket of red and orange leaves covers much of the floor, but where the floor is bare, glimpses of a circle of magical runes peek through."
- "To the south, four beds hold corpses in varying states of decay, and beside them stand tables of dissection tools and embalming jars. Plants growing along the walls have enveloped one of the corpses."
- (**Secret**) One of the corpses is a vampire and another has been implanted with a cursed seed.

Necromancy Tables. When a living creature gets within 5 feet of the corpses, the **vampire** awakens and attacks. This new vampire has no resting place and is destroyed when reduced to 0 hit points. At the same time, the corpse engulfed by plants erupts into a **thornblood** and attacks.

Alchemical Experiments. A creature who examines the supplies on the tables in the north end of the chamber and succeeds on a DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check notices the supplies are unstable and explosive. The first time any of the tables take force, fire, lightning, or thunder damage, the supplies on all of them explode. Each creature within 20 feet of an exploding table must make a DC 20 Dexterity saving throw, taking 44 (8d10) force damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Magic Circle. Vairae uses this circle to summon and bind their devil soldiers. A character who succeeds on a DC 20 Intelligence (Arcana) check knows that the circle keeps the devils in the tower loyal to the lich.

If a creature casts *dispel magic* on the circle as a 9th-level spell, or if they cast that spell at any level and succeed on a DC 19 ability check using their spellcasting ability, the circle loses its magic (see "High Mage's Retinue").

The circle has AC 19, 50 hit points, and immunity to fire, poison, and psychic damage. If destroyed, the circle unleashes a wave of magic. Each creature within 10 feet of the circle must make a DC 20 Dexterity saving throw, taking 55 (10d10) force damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Treasure. The north tables hold a *potion of flying*, a *potion of invisibility*, and a *potion of mind reading.*

L7. Vairae's Treasures

This area has the following features:

- "Four exquisite wooden chests, each decorated in golden filigree, sit in this hall."
- "At the south end of the hall, a thick adamantine door is carved with intricate Elvish script."
- *(If any characters can read Elvish)* "The inscription reads, 'Speak three names that made me.'"
- (**Secret**) The chests are trapped and teleport creatures to Vairae's winter throne (area L9).

Chests. A *detect magic* spell reveals that each chest radiates an aura of conjuration magic. A creature who succeeds on a DC 23 Intelligence (Investigation) check finds that each chest has a minuscule arcane symbol carved into its side. If a creature casts *dispel magic* on a chest as a 9th-level spell, or if they cast that spell at any level and succeed on a DC 19 ability check using their spellcasting ability, the chest loses its magic and its trap is disarmed. Alternatively, a creature who succeeds on a DC 23 Dexterity check using carpenter's or thieves' tools carefully scratches the symbol out and disables the chest's trap. On a failed check, or if a creature other than Vairae opens a chest, the chest's trap is triggered.

When a creature triggers a chest's trap while Vairae is alive, the creature is teleported to the winter throne (area L9). When a creature triggers a chest's trap once Vairae is destroyed, they are teleported 300 feet directly up into the air outside the tower.

Vault Door. The door to the soulstone sanctum is magically sealed and immune to all damage. It can be opened only by speaking the three names Vairae has chosen as the password: Aethilen, Phadanar, and Geherel. The characters can learn the name of Aethilen, Vairae's best friend, in areas L1 and L2. They can learn the name of Phadanar,

Vairae's commander, in areas L3 and L4. Finally, they can learn the name of Geherel, from whom Vairae learned about lichdom, in area L5.

Vairae's Treasures. The wooden chests contain the bulk of Vairae's collected wealth. See "Vairae's Hoard" for more information.

L8. Soulstone Sanctum

This area has the following features:

- "This octagonal chamber has sheer icy walls."
- "A stone pedestal in the room's center bears a sphere of ice."
- (**Secret**) The icy sphere and pedestal are protected by a glyph of warding.

One Last Horror. Vairae cast a 9th-level *glyph of warding* spell on the soulstone. It triggers when a creature touches the soulstone and succeeds on the Constitution saving throw to avoid dropping to 0 hit points, casting the *true polymorph* spell (save DC 22) on the creature and turning them into a **camel**. The glyph also triggers if a creature other than Vairae touches the stone when the lich's soul isn't within it.

Soulstone. The pedestal in the center holds Vairae's soulstone. Inside the soulstone's ice sphere are the frozen hearts of Vairae and their best friend Aethilen.

If Vairae is destroyed but their soulstone is intact, their soul retreats into the stone. While Vairae's soul is in the stone, a creature who can see the stone at the start of their turn must succeed on a DC 20 Charisma saving throw or be charmed by the stone until the end of their next turn. While charmed in this way, the creature must do everything in their power to move toward and touch the stone, avoiding obvious hazards.

If a creature touches the stone while Vairae's soul is inside, the creature must make a DC 20 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the creature drops to 0 hit points and Vairae reforms with all their hit points in an unoccupied space within 5 feet of the soulstone. On a successful save, the creature loses half their hit points and Vairae reforms with half their hit points in an unoccupied space within 5 feet of the soulstone.

The soulstone has AC 19, 50 hit points, and immunity to all damage except force and thunder.

Lair Actions

When fighting inside their lair, Vairae can take lair actions. On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), Vairae can take one lair action to cause one of the following effects; Vairae can't use the same lair action two rounds in a row:

Soul Sip. Vairae chooses two enemies they can see within 90 feet of them. Each target must succeed on a DC 20 Constitution saving throw or take 19 (3d12) necrotic damage as the lair absorbs a sliver of their soul.

Spirit Shell. Vairae summons spirits to surround them until the end of initiative count 20 of the next round. For the duration, a creature who hits Vairae with a melee attack must succeed on a DC 20 Wisdom saving throw or be dazed until the start of the creature's next turn.

Unnatural Born Leader. Vairae magnifies the power of their soulstone through the lair onto a creature they can see within 90 feet of them. The target must succeed on a DC 20 Charisma saving throw or use their reaction, if available, to move up to their speed and make a weapon attack against a creature of Vairae's choice.

L9. Winter Throne

This area has the following features:

- "Dead boughs twist up from the floor at the north end of the chamber, forming a wooden throne."
- "A handsome and youthful elf sits atop the throne."
- "A reflective, frozen pool shimmers in the center of the chamber."
- (**Secret**) The *hallow* spell affects this room.

Vairae. Confident in their own immortal power, **High Mage Vairae** attacks intruders who come here. If their soulstone is intact, Vairae fights to their body's destruction. If their soulstone has been destroyed, they attempt to flee the tower when reduced to 100 hit points.

Frozen Pool. This 20-foot-diameter pool of magic ice is used by Vairae to cast the *scrying* spell, thereby gathering the intelligence necessary to plan their conquests. The pool is difficult terrain, and a *detect magic* spell reveals that it radiates necromancy magic. When a creature who isn't Vairae touches the pool for the first time on a turn or starts their turn touching it, they must succeed on a DC 22 Constitution saving throw or take 19 (3d12) necrotic damage and fall prone.

The ice has AC 21, 100 hit points, and immunity to necrotic, poison, and psychic damage. If a creature casts the *dispel magic* spell as a 9th-level spell, or if they cast that spell at any level and succeed on a DC 19 ability check using their spellcasting ability, the ice loses its magic and melts into a puddle of water.

Hallow Spell. Vairae has cast the *hallow* spell on this chamber, except it allows Fiends and Undead to enter. In addition, any creature who isn't a Fiend or Undead who enters the chamber is subject to the spell's Energy Vulnerability effect (save DC 22), giving them vulnerability to necrotic damage.

Vairae's Hoard

The most valuable spoils of the lich's conquests are kept in the chests in area L7. The hoard contains the following items:

- *Spear of Gael Wode* (see below)
- *Well of many worlds*
- 2 *feather tokens* (tree)
- Tube of *sovereign glue*
- Tube of *universal solvent*
- *Spell scroll* of *astral projection*
- *Spell scroll* of *geas*
- *Spell scroll* of *symbol*
- *Soulstone Grimoire* (see below)
- Magical inks for scrolls and spell books (worth 5,000 gp)
- Obsidian hourglass that only flows in moonlight (worth 10,000 gp)
- Painting of Vairae in their prime, which repaints itself if damaged (worth 10,000 gp)
- Archdevil's quill that can only write lies (worth 20,000 gp)
- Assorted rubies, sapphires, and emeralds (worth 20,000 gp in total)
- Glowing platinum diadem (worth 20,000 gp) set with four astral sapphires (each worth 10,000 gp) and a large diamond (worth 25,000 gp)
- Golden scepter and orb (worth 35,000 gp)
- 214,475 gp and 10,103 pp

Soulstone Grimoire

Scrawled in devil's ichor, this tome describes the rites necessary to achieve immortality in undeath. The book includes instructions for crafting a soulstone and imbuing it with power, transforming the ritual caster into a lich. In a final, terrible act, the completion of the ritual requires tearing out one's own heart and the heart of a loved one.

To decipher the grimoire, you must be a spellcaster who can cast spells of 7th level or higher. If you spend 80 hours over a period of 30 days or fewer studying the book, you learn the ritual to create a soulstone and turn yourself into a lich. The ritual takes 1 hour to perform and requires you kill a loved one during the procedure. In addition, the ritual requires components and gems worth 100,000 gp, which the ritual consumes.

Spear of Gael Wode

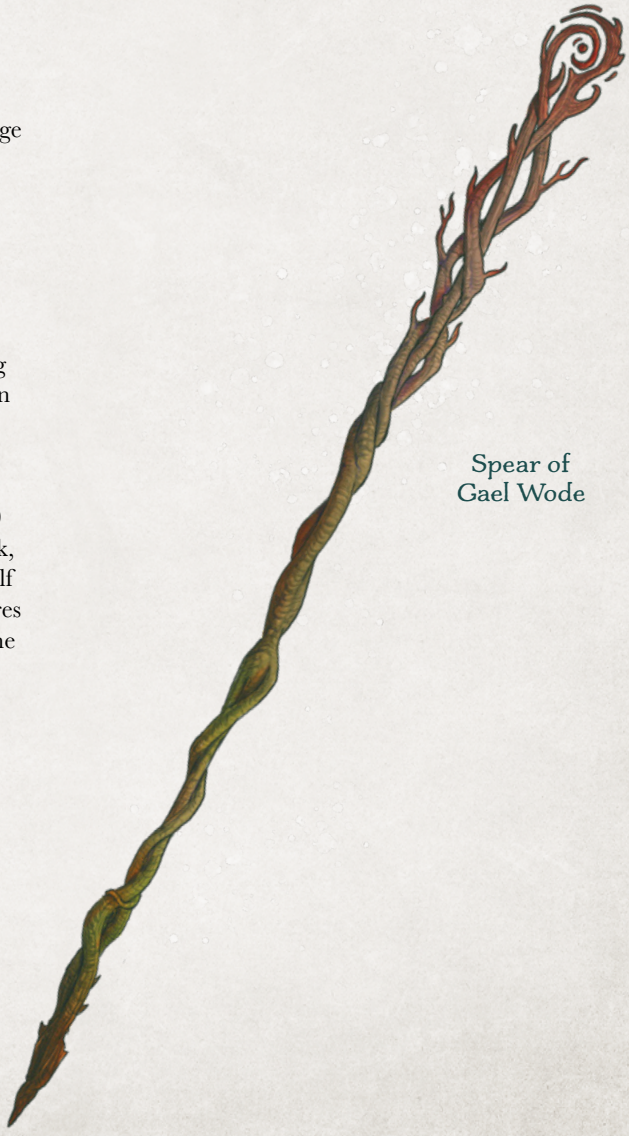
Weapon (Spear), Legendary (Requires Attunement)

This spear was awarded to Vairae in recognition of their accomplishments on the battlefield, but it now lies discarded in the High Mage's vaults.

You gain a +3 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this magic weapon. While holding it, you ignore difficult terrain and you are resistant to piercing damage.

The spear also has 5 charges. You can expend 1 charge to cast the *tree stride* spell from it. In addition, when you make a weapon attack with the spear, you can expend 1 charge to cause grasping vines to erupt from the spear's tip. The attack's target and each enemy within 5 feet of them must succeed on a DC 20 Strength saving throw or be restrained by the entangling plants. A creature can use their action to make a DC 20 Strength check, freeing themself or a restrained creature within their reach on a success.

The spear regains 1d4 + 1 expended charges daily at dawn.



Spear of Gael Wode

High Mage Vairae reveals their true form as they perform a forbidden necromancy ritual.

Tower Stat Blocks

The following stat blocks appear in the lair.

Camel

CR 1/2 Controller
Large Beast, Unaligned 100 XP

Armor Class 11
Hit Points 28 (3d10 + 12)
Speed 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	13 (+1)	19 (+4)	4 (−3)	12 (+1)	5 (−3)

Saving Throws Str +5, Con +6
Senses passive Perception 11
Languages —
Proficiency Bonus +2

Beast of Burden. The camel is considered to be one size larger for the purpose of determining their carrying capacity.

Desert Dweller. The camel ignores difficult terrain created by dirt or sand. They can tolerate temperatures as high as 120° Fahrenheit.

Metabolic Reserves. The camel can go without water for up to 7 days, and without food for up to 90 days.

Stubborn. The camel has advantage on saving throws made to avoid or end the charmed, frightened, or prone condition on themself.

Actions

Kick. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d10 + 3) bludgeoning damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

Bonus Actions

Bilious Spit (Recharge 5–6). The camel vomits bile onto a creature they can see within 10 feet of them. The target must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 1 minute (save ends at end of turn). If the target fails the save by 5 or more, they are also blinded while poisoned in this way.

Devil Adjudicator

CR 14 Controller
Medium Fiend (Devil), Typically Lawful Evil 11,500 XP

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)
Hit Points 204 (24d8 + 96)
Speed 30 ft., fly 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	16 (+3)	18 (+4)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	20 (+5)

Saving Throws Con +9, Wis +7, Cha +10
Skills Deception +10, Insight +7, Perception +7, Persuasion +10, Religion +8
Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from mundane attacks
Damage Immunities fire
Condition Immunities charmed, frightened
Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 17
Languages Common, Infernal
Proficiency Bonus +5

True Name. If a creature the adjudicator can hear within 60 feet of them speaks the adjudicator's true name aloud, the adjudicator loses their damage resistances, damage immunities, and Devilish Charm reaction for 24 hours.

Actions

Multiattack. The adjudicator makes two Infernal Injunction attacks and uses Adjudicator's Interdiction, if available.

Infernal Injunction. *Melee or Ranged Spell Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 27 (5d8 + 5) fire damage, and the target must make a DC 18 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, the adjudicator chooses for the target to become either charmed by or frightened of them until the end of the target's next turn.

Adjudicator's Interdiction (Recharge 5–6). The adjudicator places an infernal seal on one creature they can see within 120 feet of them. The target must succeed on a DC 18 Charisma saving throw or be interdicted until the adjudicator dies. While interdicted, a creature's speed is halved, they can't take reactions, and they can't regain hit points. A *cure ailment* power, a *lesser restoration* or *remove curse* spell, or a similar supernatural effect ends the effect early.

Bad Deal (1/Day). Three creatures the adjudicator can see within 60 feet of them must make a DC 18 Charisma saving throw. On a failed save, a target must choose to either take a −5 penalty to AC or a −5 penalty to ability checks and attack rolls. This penalty lasts for 10 minutes (save ends at end of turn).

Reactions

Devilish Charm (2/Day). When the adjudicator is targeted by an attack, power, spell, or other supernatural effect by a creature they can see within 60 feet of them, the creature must make a DC 18 Charisma saving throw. On a failed save, the creature is charmed by the adjudicator until the start of the creature's next turn, and the adjudicator chooses a new target the adjudicator can see for the triggering effect. The new target must be within the triggering effect's range.

Devil Legate

CR 8 Soldier
Medium Fiend (Devil), Typically Lawful Evil 3,900 XP

Armor Class 17 (half plate)
Hit Points 127 (15d8 + 60)
Speed 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws Str +7, Wis +5, Cha +7
Skills Athletics +7, Deception +7, Persuasion +7
Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from mundane attacks
Damage Immunities fire
Condition Immunities charmed
Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 12
Languages Common, Infernal
Proficiency Bonus +3

Hellish Resistance. While in Hell or within 60 feet of a devil with a challenge rating of 9 or higher, the legate has advantage on saving throws against powers, spells, and other supernatural effects.

True Name. If a creature the legate can hear within 60 feet of them speaks the legate's true name aloud, the legate loses their damage resistances, damage immunities, and Devilish Charm reaction for 24 hours.

Actions

Multiattack. The legate makes two Infernal Pike attacks.

Infernal Pike. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d10 + 4) piercing damage plus 11 (2d10) fire damage, and the legate chooses one of the following effects:

Focused Hate. The target has disadvantage on attack rolls made against creatures other than the legate until the end of the legate's next turn.

Hellbite. The target takes an extra 5 (2d4) fire damage.

Skewer. The legate deals 5 (1d10) piercing damage plus 5 (1d10) fire damage to another creature within 5 feet of the target.

Reactions

Devilish Charm (1/Day). When the legate is targeted by an attack, power, spell, or other supernatural effect by a creature they can see within 60 feet of them, the creature must make a DC 15 Charisma saving throw. On a failed save, the creature is charmed by the legate until the start of the creature's next turn, and the legate chooses a new target the legate can see for the triggering effect. The new target must be within the triggering effect's range.

Devil Magistrate

CR 12 Skirmisher
Medium Fiend (Devil), Typically Lawful Evil 8,400 XP

Armor Class 18 (studded leather)
Hit Points 182 (28d8 + 56)
Speed 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	22 (+6)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	16 (+3)	19 (+4)

Saving Throws Dex +10, Wis +7, Cha +8
Skills Acrobatics +10, Deception +8, Insight +7, Persuasion +8, Stealth +10
Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from mundane attacks
Damage Immunities fire
Condition Immunities charmed
Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 13
Languages Common, Infernal
Proficiency Bonus +4

True Name. If a creature the magistrate can hear within 60 feet of them speaks the magistrate's true name aloud, the magistrate loses their damage resistances, damage immunities, and Devilish Charm reaction for 24 hours.

Actions

Multiattack. The magistrate makes two Infernal Knife attacks and one Obsidian Kris attack.

Infernal Knife. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (2d8 + 6) piercing damage plus 9 (2d8) fire damage, and the target is frightened of their allies until the end of their next turn.

Obsidian Kris. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (2d8 + 6) piercing damage, and if the target is frightened, they can't take reactions until the frightened condition ends for them.

Reactions

Devilish Charm (2/Day). When the magistrate is targeted by an attack, power, spell, or other supernatural effect by a creature they can see within 60 feet of them, the creature must make a DC 16 Charisma saving throw. On a failed save, the creature is charmed by the magistrate until the start of the creature's next turn, and the magistrate chooses a new target the magistrate can see for the triggering effect. The new target must be within the triggering effect's range.

Devil Retainer

Retainer

Medium Fiend (Devil), Any Alignment

Armor Class 15 (medium armor)
Hit Points Eight times their level (number of d10 Hit Dice equal to their level)
Speed 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws +PB to all
Skills Deception +2 plus PB, Persuasion +2 plus PB
Damage Resistances fire
Condition Immunities charmed
Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 10
Languages Common, Infernal
Proficiency Bonus (PB) equals the mentor's bonus

Signature Attack (Daggers). *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 plus PB to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft. *Hit:* 2d4 + PB piercing damage. Beginning at 7th level, the retainer can make this attack twice, instead of once, when they take the Attack action on their turn.

Features

3rd Level: Misleading Strike (3/Day). As an action, the retainer makes a signature attack. On a hit, the target must use their reaction, if available, to make a weapon attack against a creature of the retainer's choice.

5th Level: Adjuration (3/Day). As a bonus action, the retainer grants an infernal blessing to an ally they can see within 60 feet of them. The next time that ally makes an attack roll before the start of the retainer's next turn, the ally adds a +PB bonus to the roll. If the attack hits, it deals an extra PB damage.

7th Level: Hellbitten Knives (1/Day). As a bonus action, the retainer imbues their daggers with hellfire. For 1 minute, their signature attack deals an extra PB fire damage and ignores damage resistances.

Dirt Mournling

CR 18 Controller

Huge Undead, Unaligned

20,000 XP

Armor Class 19 (natural armor)
Hit Points 253 (22d12 + 110)
Speed 40 ft., burrow 40 ft., climb 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
22 (+6)	17 (+3)	20 (+5)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Str +12, Con +11, Cha +6
Skills Athletics +12, Perception +7
Damage Immunities cold, fire, poison
Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, poisoned
Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 17
Languages understands the languages of their creator but can't speak
Proficiency Bonus +6

Anguish Unleashed. When the mournling dies, the sadness they contain is released into the world. Each creature within 30 feet of the mournling who can hear them must make a DC 19 Wisdom saving throw, taking 22 (4d10) psychic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Immutable Form. The mournling is immune to any power, spell, or effect that would alter their form.

Puddle of Mud. When the mournling leaves a space, the ground in that space becomes difficult terrain for their enemies for 10 minutes.

Actions

Multiattack. The mournling makes three attacks using Slam, Mudslide, or both, and they can use Dust Storm, if available.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 28 (4d10 + 6) bludgeoning damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 20). While grappled in this way, the target is restrained.

Mudslide. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, range 30/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 22 (3d10 + 6) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a Huge or smaller creature, the target and each Huge or smaller creature of the mournling's choice within 5 feet of the target are pulled up to 30 feet toward the mournling.

Dust Storm (1/Day). The mournling hurls dirt, gravel, and sand. Each creature within 60 feet of them must succeed on a DC 19 Constitution saving throw or be blinded for 1 minute (save ends at end of turn).

Bonus Actions

Break and Reform. The mournling teleports to an unoccupied space they can see within 30 feet of them.

Reactions

Stuck Fast. When the mournling is hit by a melee weapon attack, they capture the weapon that struck them in quick-hardening mud, disarming the attacker. A creature who can reach the weapon can use an action or bonus action to make a DC 19 Strength (Athletics) check, freeing the weapon on a success. The mournling can't use this reaction on attacks made with natural weapons.

High Mage Vairae

CR 25 Solo
75,000 XP

Medium Undead, Neutral Evil

Armor Class 21 (natural armor)
Hit Points 315 (42d8 + 126)
Speed 30 ft., fly 50 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	19 (+4)	16 (+3)	23 (+6)	20 (+5)	20 (+5)

Saving Throws Con +11, Int +14, Wis +13, Cha +13
Skills Arcana +14, Athletics +10, Deception +13, History +14, Perception +13, Persuasion +13
Damage Resistances fire, cold; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from mundane attacks
Damage Immunities necrotic, poison
Condition Immunities charmed, dazed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, poisoned, stunned
Senses truesight 120 ft., passive Perception 23
Languages Abyssal, Common, Draconic, Elvish, Infernal, Sylvan, telepathy 120 ft.
Proficiency Bonus +8

Draining Resistance (3/Day). If Vairae fails a saving throw, they can choose to succeed instead. When they do, Vairae has disadvantage on spell attacks until the end of their next turn.

Rejuvenation. Vairae's soul is connected to the soulstone in area L8.

Supernatural Resistance. Vairae has advantage on saving throws against powers, spells, and other supernatural effects.

Turn Immunity. Vairae is immune to effects that turn Undead.

Actions

Multiattack. Vairae uses Glare of Undeath and makes four attacks using Conflagration, Immortal Pain, Magic Drain, or a combination of them.

Conflagration (4th-Level Spell). *Ranged Spell Attack*: +14 to hit, range 150 ft., one target. *Hit:* 35 (10d6) fire damage, and if the target takes both an action and a bonus action on their next turn, they take an extra 17 (5d6) fire damage at the end of that turn.

Immortal Pain (4th-Level Spell). *Melee or Ranged Spell Attack*: +14 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 90 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 28 (8d6) psychic damage, and the target is afflicted with pain. While afflicted in this way, the creature's attacks deal half damage. After each attack the afflicted creature makes against an enemy, the afflicted creature can make a DC 22 Constitution saving throw, ending the effect on a success. A *cure ailment* power, a *lesser restoration* spell, or a similar supernatural effect also ends the effect.

Magic Drain (4th-Level Spell). *Melee or Ranged Spell Attack*: +14 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 60 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 26 (4d12) necrotic damage. If the target is currently affected by any spells not cast by Vairae, the target must succeed on a DC 22 Wisdom saving throw or those effects end for the target.

Glare of Undeath. Vairae glares at one creature they can see within 60 feet of them. The target must succeed on a DC 22 Wisdom saving throw or be compelled to hug themself tightly as protection against an unbearably cruel world. A creature hugging themself in this way is restrained for 1 minute (save ends at end of turn). A creature the target can hear and understand can use an action to make a DC 22 Charisma (Persuasion) check, ending the effect on a success.

Machinations of Bone (2/Day). Each enemy within 30 feet of a point Vairae can see within 150 feet of them must make a DC 22 Strength saving throw. On a failed save, a target's innards fly from their body and they take 54 (12d8) piercing damage, fall prone, and can't stand up until they receive supernatural healing.

Bonus Actions

Necrotic Form (3rd-Level Spell). Vairae enters a shadow form and can move up to their speed. While in this form, Vairae is immune to bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage and the grappled and restrained conditions, and they can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch without squeezing. Vairae reverts to their true form at the end of their turn.

Reactions

Baleful Teleport (6th-Level Spell). When a creature Vairae can see within 120 feet of them targets Vairae with an attack, Vairae utters a word of arcane power. The creature must succeed on a DC 22 Charisma saving throw or be teleported up to 60 feet to an unoccupied space Vairae can see, and if Vairae is no longer a valid target for the triggering attack, the attacker must choose a new target or the attack misses.

Villain Actions

Vairae has three villain actions. They can take each action once during an encounter after an enemy's turn. They can take these actions in any order but can use only one per round.

Action 1: Cages of Wasting. A cage of black energy springs forth around each enemy within 60 feet of Vairae. Each target must make a DC 22 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save, a target takes 27 (5d10) necrotic damage and is restrained in the cage for 1 minute or until Vairae is destroyed (save ends at end of turn). On a successful save, a target takes half as much damage and isn't restrained. If a restrained creature teleports out of their cage, the effect ends for them.

Action 2: My Magic Alone. Vairae unleashes a wave of canceling magic. Each creature within 60 feet of Vairae must make a DC 22 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, a target can't benefit from magic items or cast spells of 4th level or higher until the end of Vairae's next turn.

Action 3: Necrostorm. Vairae fires black bolts of magic from their body. Each creature within 60 feet of them must make a DC 22 Dexterity saving throw, taking 78 (12d12) necrotic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. The spirit of a Humanoid killed by this damage rises at the start of Vairae's next turn as a **wraith** who permanently follows Vairae's verbal commands.

Specter

CR 1 Skirmisher

Medium Undead (Incorporeal), Typically Chaotic Evil 200 XP

Armor Class 11
Hit Points 19 (3d8 + 6)
Speed 0 ft., fly 50 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
1 (–5)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	15 (+2)

Damage Resistance acid, cold, fire, lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from mundane attacks
Damage Immunities necrotic, poison
Condition Immunities charmed, dazed, exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained, unconscious
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10
Languages the languages they knew in life
Proficiency Bonus +2

Corrupting Phasing. The specter can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. The specter takes 5 (1d10) force damage if they end their turn inside an object. A creature takes 2 (1d4) necrotic damage the first time a specter passes through them on a turn.

Actions

Decaying Touch. *Melee Spell Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 7 (2d6) necrotic damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or spend 1 Hit Die without any benefit. If the target has no Hit Dice to spend, they drop to 0 hit points instead.

If a Humanoid dies within 1 minute of being hit by this attack, their spirit rises as a **specter** under the GM's control in an unoccupied space nearest to where that Humanoid died.

Bonus Actions

Hidden Movement (Recharge 5–6). The specter turns invisible and then moves up to their speed. At the end of this movement, the invisibility ends.

Swamp Dryad

CR 13 Controller

Large Fey, Typically Chaotic Neutral 10,000 XP

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)
Hit Points 171 (18d10 + 72)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)	21 (+5)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Str +9, Con +9, Wis +10
Skills Acrobatics +6, Animal Handling +10, Arcana +6, Medicine +10, Survival +10
Damage Resistances acid, poison; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from mundane attacks
Condition Immunities poisoned
Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 15
Languages Sylvan, any languages the dryad spoke before their binding
Proficiency Bonus +5

Supernatural Resistance. The dryad has advantage on saving throws against supernatural effects.

Speak with Beasts and Plants. The dryad can communicate with Beasts and Plants as if they shared a language.

Tree Stride (1/Turn). The dryad can use 10 feet of movement to step into one living tree within their reach and emerge from a second living tree within 60 feet of the first tree, appearing in an unoccupied space within 5 feet of the second tree. Both trees must be Large or larger.

Actions

Multiattack. The dryad makes two Slam attacks and uses Entangling Roots, if available.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 18 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the target takes 14 (4d6) poison damage and is poisoned for 1 minute. On a successful save, the target takes half as much damage and isn't poisoned.

Entangling Roots (Recharge 5–6). The dryad chooses a point they can see within 60 feet of them, causing tree roots to pull free of the ground and attack in a 15-foot radius centered on that point. If the dryad is within 5 feet of their tree, the radius of this effect doubles to 30 feet. Each creature in that area must succeed on a DC 18 Strength saving throw or take 22 (4d10) bludgeoning damage and be grappled (escape DC 14). While grappled in this way, a creature is restrained and their flesh begins to harden and turn to wood.

At the end of a creature's third consecutive turn being grappled in this way, they become petrified and turn into a hardwood statue. The petrified condition ends for that creature if the dryad uses an action to end it, or if the dryad dies.

Fey Intimidation. The dryad targets up to five creatures they can see within 30 feet of them. Each target who can see the dryad must succeed on a DC 18 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened of the dryad (save ends at end of turn). If a target succeeds on their saving throw or the effect ends for them, the target is immune to the swamp dryad's Fey Intimidation for the next 24 hours.

Bonus Actions

Swamp Medicine (3/Day). The dryad touches a creature, who regains 18 (3d8 + 5) hit points. Alternatively, the creature removes one disease or neutralizes one poison afflicting them.

Thornblood

CR 20 Controller

Gargantuan Plant, Typically Neutral — 25,000 XP

Armor Class 16
Hit Points 324 (24d20 + 72)
Speed 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
22 (+6)	23 (+6)	17 (+3)	11 (+0)	16 (+3)	8 (–1)

Saving Throws Con +9, Wis +9
Damage Resistances cold, lightning; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from mundane attacks
Damage Immunities poison, psychic
Condition Immunities charmed, dazed, flanked, frightened, grappled, poisoned, prone, stunned
Senses blindsight 120 ft., passive Perception 13
Languages Sylvan
Proficiency Bonus +6

Corpse Retreat (1/Day). The thornblood is a mass of thick, thorny vines that grow from a Medium humanoid corpse. When the thornblood is reduced to 0 hit points, they are reduced to 1 hit point instead and retreat into the corpse that grew them. The thornblood becomes immune to all damage until the end of their next turn. Additionally, until the thornblood finishes a long rest, their size becomes Medium, their walking and climbing speeds become 60 feet, and they can't make Throttle attacks or benefit from the Overgrowth trait.

Overgrowth. The thornblood can move their vines through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing. The thornblood can occupy another creature's space and vice versa.

Supernatural Resistance. The thornblood has advantage on saving throws against powers, spells, and other supernatural effects.

Actions

Multiattack. The thornblood makes four attacks using Vinerip, Throttle, or both.

Vinerip. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 30 ft., one target. *Hit:* 20 (4d6 + 6) bludgeoning damage plus 11 (2d10) piercing damage, and the target is pulled up to 30 feet toward the thornblood.

Throttle. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 0 ft., one target in the thornblood's space. *Hit:* 20 (4d6 + 6) piercing damage, and the target is entangled in thorny vines. While entangled, the target is restrained and moves with the thornblood, can't see outside their space, and takes 20 (4d6 + 6) piercing damage at the start of each of their turns. The target or another creature within 5 feet of them can use their action to take 20 (4d6 + 6) slashing damage and make a DC 20 Strength check, freeing the target on a success.

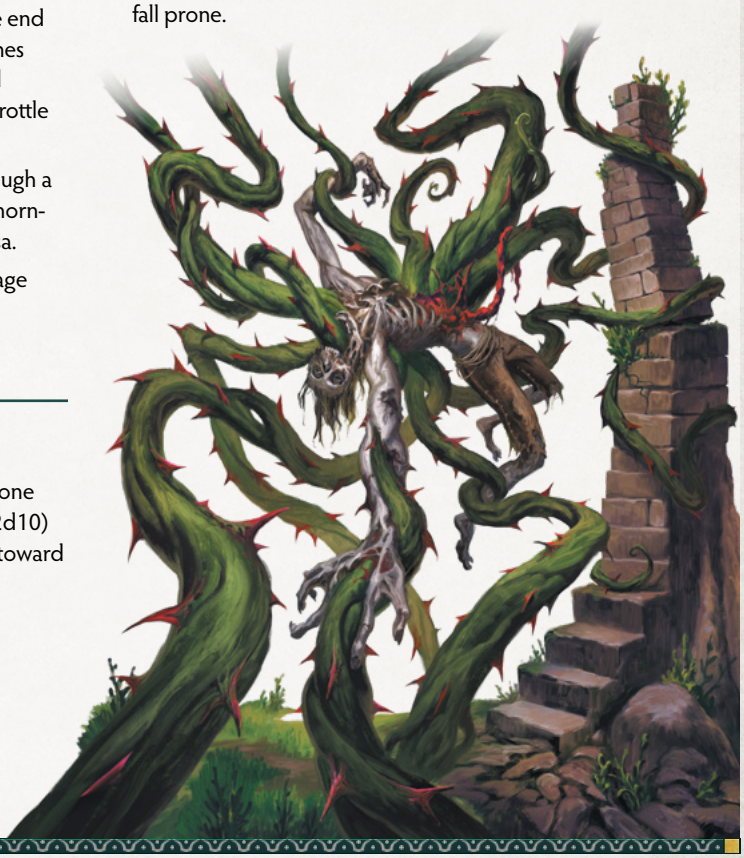
From Life, Lightning (2/Day). The thornblood must have at least one creature entangled to use this action. Each creature entangled by the thornblood must make a DC 20 Constitution saving throw, taking 55 (10d10) necrotic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. Then the thornblood shoots a bolt of lightning at each enemy within 60 feet of them who isn't entangled by them. Each target must make a DC 20 Dexterity saving throw, taking 55 (10d10) lightning damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Bonus Actions

You're Mine. The thornblood moves an entangled creature to a space occupied by the thornblood that isn't also occupied by another creature or object.

Reactions

Hostile Roots. When an enemy ends their turn in the thornblood's space, the thornblood attempts to pull them down. The target must make a DC 17 Dexterity saving throw or fall prone.



Vampire

CR 13 Skirmisher

Medium Undead, Typically Neutral Evil — 10,000 XP

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)
Hit Points 204 (24d8 + 96)
Speed 30 ft., fly 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws Dex +10, Wis +8, Cha +10
Skills Deception +10, History +9, Insight +8, Intimidation +10, Perception +8, Persuasion +10, Stealth +10
Damage Resistances necrotic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from mundane attacks
Condition Immunities charmed, frightened
Senses blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 18
Languages the languages they knew in life
Proficiency Bonus +5

Radiant Aversion. Each time the vampire takes radiant damage, they take an extra 10 radiant damage.

Resting Place. When the vampire drops to 0 hit points and is not in sunlight, running water, or their resting place, the vampire teleports to their resting place. While in their resting place, the vampire is stable. After spending 1 hour in their resting place with 0 hit points, they regain 1 hit point.

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

Actions

Multiattack. The vampire makes two Claw attacks and, if possible, a Bite attack.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d6 + 5) slashing damage plus 10 (3d6) necrotic damage. If the target is Large or smaller, they are grappled (escape DC 18). While grappled in this way, the target is restrained. Moving while grappling a Medium or smaller creature doesn't halve the vampire's speed. A vampire can have only one target grappled in this way at a time.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature who is grappled by the vampire, incapacitated, or restrained. *Hit:* 8 (1d6 + 5) piercing damage plus 10 (3d6) necrotic damage. The target's hit point maximum is reduced by a number equal to the necrotic damage taken, and the vampire regains hit points equal to that number. The reduction lasts until reversed by a *cure ailment* power of 4th order or higher, a *greater restoration* spell, or a similar supernatural effect. The target dies if this attack reduces their hit point maximum to 0. A Humanoid slain in this way rises the following midnight as a **vampire spawn** under the vampire's control.

Exsanguinating Mist (Recharge 6). The vampire, along with anything they are wearing or carrying, turns into a cloud of blood-sucking mist. When they do, they release any creature they were grappling, and if the vampire was grappled or restrained, that effect ends for them. Then the vampire flies up to twice their speed to an unoccupied space. During this move, the vampire ignores difficult terrain, doesn't provoke opportunity attacks, and can move through creatures and objects. Each creature the vampire passes through must make a DC 18 Constitution saving throw, taking 35 (10d6) necrotic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. At the end of this movement, the vampire transforms back into their previous form.

Bonus Actions

Beguile. The vampire targets one creature they can see within 30 feet of them and who can see them. The target must make a DC 18 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, the target uses their reaction, if available, to move up to their speed to a location chosen by the vampire, then either makes a melee attack against a target of the vampire's choice or falls prone (vampire's choice).

Creatures who can't be charmed automatically succeed on this saving throw, and creatures who have advantage on saving throws against being charmed make this saving throw with advantage.

Inhuman Agility. The vampire moves up to their speed without provoking opportunity attacks.

Reactions

Run, My Child. When an ally the vampire can see takes damage, the vampire can command the ally to move up to their speed without provoking opportunity attacks.

Utility Spells

In addition to any other spells in this stat block, the vampire can cast the following spells, using Charisma as the spellcasting ability (spell save DC 18):

At will: *charm person*[A], *detect thoughts*[A], *disguise self*[A], *sending*[A]
1/day each: *clairvoyance*[+], *geas*[+]

Wraith

CR 5 Controller
1,800 XP

Medium Undead (Incorporeal), Typically Chaotic Evil

Armor Class 12
Hit Points 58 (9d8 + 18)
Speed 0 ft., fly 60 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6 (–2)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	17 (+3)

Damage Resistance acid, cold, fire, lightning, necrotic, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from mundane attacks
Damage Immunities poison, psychic
Condition Immunities charmed, dazed, exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained, unconscious
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12
Languages the languages they knew in life
Proficiency Bonus +3

Agonizing Phasing. The wraith can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. The wraith takes 5 (1d10) force damage if they end their turn inside an object. A creature takes 5 (1d10) psychic damage the first time a wraith passes through them on a turn.

Throes of Oblivion. When the wraith dies, they collapse inward, creating a burst of painful psychic energy. Each creature within 20 feet of the wraith must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw, taking 18 (4d8) psychic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Actions

Agonizing Touch. *Melee Spell Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 14 (4d6) psychic damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw or be dazed (save ends at end of turn). Each time a target dazed in this way fails a saving throw to end the condition, their hit point maximum is halved. This effect is cumulative, and the reduction lasts until the target finishes a short or long rest.

If a Humanoid dies within 1 minute of being hit by this attack, their spirit rises as a **specter** under the wraith's control in an unoccupied space nearest to where that Humanoid died.

Psychic Enervation. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +6 to hit, range 60 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 10 (3d6) psychic damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw or fall prone and be frightened of the wraith for 1 minute (save ends at end of turn). While frightened in this way, the target can't stand up.

Reactions

Denied Vitality. When a creature who the wraith can see within 30 feet of them regains hit points, the wraith can attempt to sap the life energy restoring the creature. The creature must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or only regain half the number of hit points they otherwise would regain.

New Psionic Powers

A character playing a talent—the class found in the MCDM supplement *The Talent and Psionics*—can use the rules in that book to learn the following new powers from the creatures in this book. Powers that aren't found in *The Talent and Psionics* are listed in this section and indicated in a creature's stat block with an asterisk (*).

Note that some stat block powers work differently than the version for player characters presented below, usually because a creature's innate psionic ability enhances their power.

Dream Spores

5th-Order Telepathy Power

Manifestation Time: 1 action
Range: 30 feet
Duration: Concentration, up to 1 minute
Creatures: Deep dreamer

You release a burst of psionic spores. Each creature you can see within 30 feet of you must succeed on an Intelligence saving throw or be charmed by you for the duration. While charmed in this way, a creature must use their movement during their turn to move within 10 feet of you by the safest available route.

A creature charmed in this way can repeat the saving throw whenever they take damage, ending the effect on themself on a success.

Liquefy

3rd-Order Metamorphosis Power

Manifestation Time: 1 reaction, which you take when hit with an attack by a creature within 5 feet of you
Range: 5 feet
Duration: 1 round
Creatures: Ithu'rath

You psionically barrage your attacker with transformative energy. The attacker must succeed on a Constitution saving throw or be pushed 5 feet away from you and restrained until the end of their next turn, as their lower body temporarily melts into an immovable goo.

Our power lies in the brain's soft tissue. Most barking ones lack the capacity, but those who can manifest require study. With a few modifications, I could turn their parlor tricks into power.

Lord Syuul

Memory Thief

4th-Order Metamorphosis Power

Manifestation Time: 1 action
Range: 30 feet
Duration: Concentration, up to 1 minute
Creatures: Voiceless talker, voiceless talker artillerist

You plunder the mind of a creature you can see within 30 feet of you. The target must make an Intelligence saving throw. On a failed save, the target takes 4d10 psychic damage, their proficiency bonus is lowered by 1, and you gain a +1 bonus to attack rolls and your power save DC for the duration.

Increased Order. When you manifest this power, you can increase its order by 1 or more. For each increase of 1, the damage increases by 2d10.

Phase

4th-Order Metamorphosis Power

Manifestation Time: 1 action
Range: Self
Duration: Concentration, up to 1 minute
Creatures: Time raider nemesis

You imbue your body and everything you wear and carry with psychic energy, allowing it to pass through solid objects. For the duration, you can move through creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. You take 1d10 force damage if you end your turn inside an object. If this power ends while you are inside a creature or object, you are shunted out of it into the closest unoccupied space of your choice.

Increased Order. When you manifest this power, you can increase its order by 1 or more. For each increase of 1, you target one additional creature within 5 feet of you.

What Is a Power?

A power is a specific psionic effect created by energy drawn out of the manifester's body. A power is an incredible tool that can solve problems, harm enemies, or protect and aid you and your allies, but it can also drain your life energy. Heroes who wield these gifts use only their thoughts and bodily energy to hurl objects through the air, send telepathic messages, manipulate time, and reshape the world around them.

The stronger the power, the more energy it can take from you. Every power has an order from 1 to 6. The higher a power's order, the more difficult it is to learn and use.

Piscine Transformation

3rd-Order Metamorphosis Power

Manifestation Time: 1 action
Range: 30 feet
Duration: Concentration, up to 10 minutes
Creatures: Ithu'rath

You target a Humanoid you can see within range with a pulse of transformational energy. The target must succeed on a Wisdom saving throw or undergo one of the following transformations of your choice for the duration. The target can choose to fail this saving throw.

Head. The target's head transforms into the head of a fish, proportionately sized for their body. They can't speak.

Legs. The target's legs become fins. Their walking speed is reduced to 10 feet (unless their walking speed is slower), and they gain a swimming speed of 30 feet.

Torso. The target's torso becomes the body of a fish with gills. They can only breathe water and can hold their breath for 1 hour. If the target isn't underwater when this transformation takes effect, they begin suffocating.

Increased Order. When you manifest this power, you can increase its order by 2 to target any creature, instead of just a Humanoid, if they have the necessary body part you wish to transform.

Additionally, you can increase this power's order by 2 to increase its duration to 1 hour.

Vanish for One

2nd-Order Resopathy Power

Manifestation Time: 1 action
Range: 60 feet
Duration: Concentration, up to 1 minute
Creatures: Voiceless talker artillerist

You obscure yourself in the sight of a creature you can see within range. The target must succeed on a Wisdom saving throw or you become invisible to them for the duration (save ends at end of turn). This effect ends early if you attack the creature, deal damage to them, or create an effect that forces them to make a saving throw.

Increased Order. When you manifest this power, you can increase its order by 1 to make its manifestation time 1 bonus action.

Piscine transformation really gets into a guard's head... with their legs soon to follow!

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PLAYER NAME

ALIGNMENT

EXPERIENCE POINTS

CLASS & LEVEL

BACKGROUND

ANCESTRY

CHARACTER NAME

STRENGTH

DEXTERITY

CONSTITUTION

INTELLIGENCE

WISDOM

CHARISMA

INSPIRATION

PROFICIENCY BONUS

PASSIVE PERCEPTION

- Strength
- Dexterity
- Constitution
- Intelligence
- Wisdom
- Charisma

SAVING THROWS

- Acrobatics (Dex)
- Animal Handling (Wis)
- Arcana (Int)
- Athletics (Str)
- Deception (Cha)
- History (Int)
- Insight (Wis)
- Intimidation (Cha)
- Investigation (Int)
- Medicine (Wis)
- Nature (Int)
- Perception (Wis)
- Performance (Cha)
- Persuasion (Cha)
- Religion (Int)
- Sleight of Hand (Dex)
- Stealth (Dex)
- Survival (Wis)

SKILLS

ARMOR CLASS

INITIATIVE

SPEED

HP Max

CURRENT HP

TEMPORARY HP

Total

HIT DICE

Sucesses

Failures

DEATH SAVES

NAME	ATK BONUS	DAMAGE/TYPE

ATTACKS AND SPELLCASTING

CP SP EP GP PP

PERSONALITY TRAITS

IDEALS

BONDS

FLAWS

Total

RESOURCE

Total

RESOURCE

PROFICIENCIES AND LANGUAGES

EQUIPMENT

FEATURES AND TRAITS

MCDM

SPELLCASTING CLASS

SPELLCASTING ABILITY

SPELL SAVE DC

SPELL ATTACK BONUS

0 CANTRIPS

1

SLOTS TOTAL

SLOTS EXPENDED

2

SLOTS TOTAL

SLOTS EXPENDED

3

SLOTS TOTAL

SLOTS EXPENDED

4

SLOTS TOTAL

SLOTS EXPENDED

5

SLOTS TOTAL

SLOTS EXPENDED

6

SLOTS TOTAL

SLOTS EXPENDED

7

SLOTS TOTAL

SLOTS EXPENDED

8

SLOTS TOTAL

SLOTS EXPENDED

9

SLOTS TOTAL

SLOTS EXPENDED