



SOMETHING VILE  
THIS WAY COMES

CCC-HATMS02-02



# SOMETHING VILE THIS WAY COMES

A hunt for a mad illithid has brought startling and dire news to the Emerald Enclave and the Harpers. The call has gone out for heroes to follow on the trail of Klondros Imdree as he seeks a book of terrible power, and to stop him once and for all.

*A 4-Hour Adventure for Tier 3 Characters.  
Optimized for APL 14.*

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# ADVENTURE PRIMER

This section provides the adventure's background, a list of prominent NPCs, an overview of the adventure in play, and hooks that you can use to introduce your players's characters to the action.

## ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Recently, adventurers were sent to investigate rumors of an illithid, long thought dead, who had supposedly been sighted in the forest south of Hillsfar. They found evidence of a dark plot to seek out one of the most horrible tomes ever created, the *Book of Vile Darkness*. Though Klondras Imdree, the mindflayer in question, escaped with his life, his search left clues as to where he might have gone.

Now, heroes of great power have been summoned by representatives of the Harpers and the Emerald Enclave, who are working together to put a halt to whatever machinations Klondras is wrapped up in. It is up to them to find the illithid, and the shadowy master that pulls the mindflayer's strings, putting a stop to their plot to obtain the *Book of Vile Darkness*.

Waiting for them, far from the surface world, in the cold and deadly Underdark, a necromancer named Simon Tiber has received another piece of his own puzzle, and is one step closer to holding his prize in his hands. And though he expects his minions to be completely obedient, a certain mindflayer has thoughts of his own.

## ADVENTURE OVERVIEW

The adventure is broken down into four parts:

**Part 1. Unsettling News.** Meeting in Elventree, the heroes learn of a mad necromancer's plot to locate the *Book of Vile Darkness*, a terrible tome that must never surface.

**Part 2. Sent Into the Dark.** Arriving in an underground sanctuary, the adventurers must find their way through to the wizard's lair, and deal with the catacomb's inhabitants along the way.

**Part 3. The Wizard's Lair.** Having found the lair of Simon Tiber, they now must find the necromancer and stop his evil plot.

**Part 4. Conclusion.** The adventurers return to Elventree with news of their findings.

## ADVENTURE HOOKS

**Illithid Activities.** Characters may have heard of the exploits of other adventurers who recently uncovered information about a dastardly

necromancer (in CCC-HATMS02-01, *Illithid Activities*), and have journeyed to Elventree to lend their skills and swords to stopping him. If characters have leveled up to Tier 3, and took part in the previous module, they have direct ties to the storyline.

**Harpers and Emerald Enclave.** Faction agents belonging to the Harpers or the Emerald Enclave have been sent to meet with representatives in Elventree. There, they find they have been summoned to seek out Simon Tiber and put an end to his plot.

**Recently Arrived or Lounging About in Elventree.** Characters may have simply been in the area, and have been noticed by Sarenolla the Whisperer or Elanil Elassidil. The dragonborn bard and Harper, Krenez, is a former adventurer, and has a good eye in spotting those who would be willing to venture forth for honor, glory and gold...or to do the right thing, there's always that. Whichever NPC has noticed them, the adventurers are asked to join in a meeting under the Listening Tree to discuss matters.

# PART 1. UNSETTLING NEWS

**Estimated Duration:** 15 minutes

A meeting is called in the town of Elventree, with representatives of the Harpers and the Emerald Enclave desperate to find heroes that are willing to take a potentially one-way trip to stop a conniving villain.

The adventurers meet under the Listening Tree, a gigantic oak tree that stands in the center of Elventree. Branches, their golden leaves marking the autumn season, reach out over a natural bowl of earth that surrounds it. The area is often used as an amphitheater, and indeed, dozens of people mill about, remnants of a recent festival. Highharvesttide passed only days ago, with pilgrims to the town and local partygoers still lingering.

In attendance are Sarenolla the Whisperer, Elanil Elassidil, and Krenez.

- Krenez has been summoned by the Harpers, due to his knowledge on lore of Simon Tiber.
- Sarenolla the Whisperer represents the Emerald Enclave.
- Elanil Elassidil speaks for the Harpers.

During their meeting, the adventurers learn the following.

- Evidence has come to light that a necromancer named Simon Tiber is seeking the infamous *Book of Vile Darkness*.
- An illithid named Klondras Imdree is apparently helping Simon to locate the artifact. Long thought to be dead, the mindflayer has reappeared out of nowhere, after last being seen suffering what should have been a fatal head wound at the Battle at the Bar, which leveled the Whistling Wizard Inn in Voonlar. That was well over 100 years ago.
- Elanil wishes the adventurers to seek out the mindflayer that was seen, and confirm if it is Klondras Imdree. If at all possible, put an end to the illithid's association with Simon Tiber, by whatever means necessary.
- Sarenolla stresses the urgency with which Simon Tiber must be stopped. The *Book of Vile Darkness* has been lost for many years, and should remain so. She asks the heroes to put an end to his machinations.
- Krenez owns other manuscripts penned by the necromancer, and can confirm that the page found

in *CCC-HATMS02-01 Illithid Activities* is indeed written by the same man.

- Krenez knows that Simon Tiber once managed to claim the *Book of Vile Darkness* for a time, and he has many pages of mad rambling penned by the necromancer, pieces of the same journal the page found in *Illithid Activities* came from. The words written by Simon Tiber are knowledge enough that the Harpers know he must never regain the book, or many innocents will suffer.
- Anyone investigating the parchment retrieved in *CCC-HATMS02-01, Illithid Activities* may make a DC 18 Intelligence (Investigation) check. Those that succeed notice a faint message indented onto the paper, as though it had been written on another piece of paper that lay over it. It reads, "The Darkness shall bind us all." Krenez and the others in attendance are unsure what it means, though they point out the capitalization of the word Darkness.
- When the adventurers are ready, they will travel to a teleportation circle, one discovered by heroes in *CCC-HATMS02-01, Illithid Activities*. It is from here they will be sent to wherever the illithid escaped to.

## CALL TO ACTION

This section summarizes both story objectives and presents them as an overall objective of the adventure.

- The heroes should seek out the illithid that is helping Simon Tiber and determine if it is indeed Klondra Imdree.
- The necromancer, Simon Tiber, must not be allowed to retrieve the *Book of Vile Darkness*. The adventurers should find him and put a stop to his plotting.

# PART 2. INTO THE DARK

*Estimated Duration:* 1 hour

## 1. ARRIVAL

The adventurers have been teleported to find Simon Tiber...but where exactly are they? As they explore, they will find out they are far from safe, with potentially no way home.

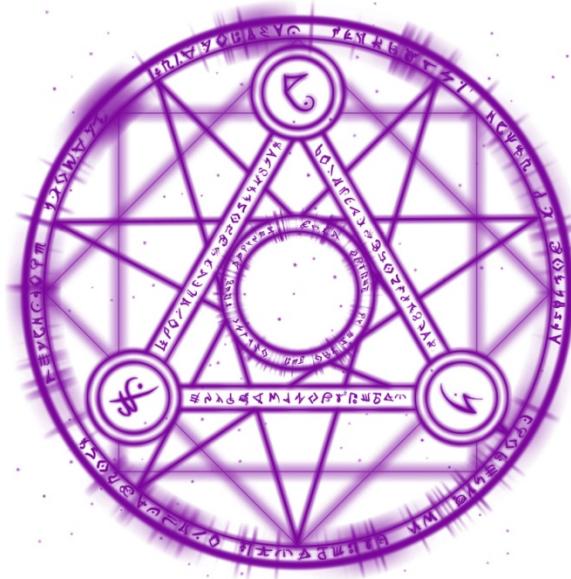
### AREA INFORMATION

This area features:

**Dimensions & Terrain.** The chamber is circular, roughly 30 ft. in diameter, its walls rough-hewn stone. The floor is clear of debris, and has a 20 ft. by 20 ft. teleportation circle carved into it. Only one narrow tunnel leads off into the dark, though four alcoves are carved into the walls.

**Lighting.** The teleportation circle flares with light as the adventurers arrive, then dims and the light goes out. There is no other light in this area.

- A DC 13 Intelligence (Arcana) check reveals that the teleportation circle is now inert, and some command word or object must be needed to power it.
- A skeleton rests in each of the alcoves surrounding the teleportation circle. A DC 13 Wisdom (Medicine) check reveals three of the skeletons seem to be those of kuo-toa, while the last is that of a githyanki. If anyone arrives via the teleportation circle, and does not speak the passphrase, "The Darkness shall bind us all," the skeletons begin emitting a terrible, high pitched sound. Any creature that can hear must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, or be deafened for 1 hour. This sound also alerts any creatures in area 4, as well as alarming Simon Tiber and his minions in the Wizard's Lair. *Detect magic* reveals abjuration auras on the skeletons. Use of *dispel magic* on a skeleton removes the alarm effect for 1 hour.



## 2. UNDERGROUND, AND UNDER... WHAT?

The narrow tunnel leads away from the teleportation chamber. Before intersecting with a larger series of tunnels, a surprise is revealed.

### AREA INFORMATION

This area features:

**Dimensions & Terrain.** The tunnel is barely 10 ft. wide, with a ceiling only a few feet higher. The stonework is well done, showing care taken to carve out this length of tunnel.

**Lighting.** Magical, ethereal lights appear every 15 ft. whenever a creature comes within 20 ft. of where a light would appear. This bathes the hallway in bright light.

As the characters proceed down the hallway, they notice:

- A 30-foot section of wall and ceiling seems to be missing, though the floor continues on as usual.
- The area where the floor and wall should be seems to be filled with darkness, though light shone into

this area reveals it is more of a murky brown. A DC 13 Intelligence or Wisdom check reveals to a character that it appears to be water, held by some unseen force. In fact, 5-foot thick crystal, bolstered by magic, holds the water at bay. The window does not seem to be affected by magic or physical damage.

- Characters that watch the water for several rounds, and are shining light into the darkness or have darkvision, notice fish swim by from time to time.
- A DC 13 Wisdom (Nature) check reveals that it is either nighttime where they are, or they are very deep beneath the surface for no light to penetrate the water. Succeeding the check by 5 or more, the character may realize they may be at the bottom of an underground lake.
- If characters using light remain to watch for 5 minutes or more, something massive swims by the window, an enormous eye reflecting their light as it passes.

### 3. MEET THE MAKER

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Through winding tunnels that crisscross and lead past empty chambers, the adventurers look for signs of life, until...

#### AREA INFORMATION

This area features:

**Dimensions & Terrain.** This tunnel has stretched on for some time, and is roughly 20 ft. wide.

The walls are oddly smooth.

**Lighting.** There is no light here except that which the adventurers bring with them.

- As the adventurers proceed, they notice what appears to be a large maw, gaping open the width and height of the tunnel. The mouth belongs to some form of burrowing worm, and the tunnel continues down its gullet.
- The worm does not seem to move, its mouth remaining open and quite still. Characters using light to see can tell it is the same color as the stone around it.
- There is a faint acrid smell that lingers near and inside the worm.
- A DC 15 Wisdom (Nature) check reveals to a character that this previously unheard of worm must secrete a potent acid to tunnel through solid stone, as it possesses no other digging faculties. It must be why the stonework of the tunnels is so smooth.

In fact, the worm has been turned to stone by magic. Simon Tiber controlled the creature to dig out these tunnels, and then turned it to stone. The far end of the worm, over 50 ft. away, has been removed, chiseled away with a good deal of care for craftsmanship, and the tunnel continues on.

Returning the worm's form to flesh does nothing but make a mess. The creature is dead, unable to survive being hollowed out. Its body is likewise unable to secrete the acid that it once used to create these halls.



## 4. A PLAYED MIND

Searching for signs of Simon Tiber and Klondras Imdree, the adventurers find a chamber where one of their potential foes lurks.

### AREA INFORMATION

This area features:

**Dimensions & Terrain.** This chamber is irregularly shaped, probably naturally formed and only added to the layout of the labyrinth by chance. Stalactites and stalagmites dot the ceiling and floor, providing cover for those hiding behind them.

**Lighting.** Several torch stands hold lit torches, providing bright illumination in the area.

### CREATURES/NPCs

Klondras Imdree, who is an **alhoon**, is speaking with a **githyanki knight** named Daqe. Nearby, three **githyanki warriors** watch for intruders. Each of them has partial cover from the cave entrance, but can easily move to gain full cover behind rock formations.

**Objectives/Goals.** Klondras Imdree is plotting with Daqe. Though the mindlayer is controlled to an extent by Simon Tiber, he retains a dangerous level of free will, though the necromancer does not yet know it.

**What Do They Know?** Klondras Imdree knows what Simon Tiber is planning, and can direct the adventurers to stop him. Though the mindlayer and githyanki cannot accompany them personally (they are still under Simon Tiber's control, and would end up being used against them), the information they can give them is quite useful.

If the adventurers choose to speak with Klondras and the githyanki rather than do battle, they can learn the following information.

- The illithid is indeed the Klondras Imdree of the Battle of the Bar, though rumors of his death were

not exaggerated. After he ran from the collapsing Whistling Wizard Inn, he perished from his wounds. Sometime later, he was reanimated as an intelligent undead by the necromancer, Simon Tiber.

- Simon has direct control over Klondras as long as the illithid is in the vicinity of the necromancer, and he must follow his orders to the letter. Once a task is completed, Klondras has some semblance of free will.
- Klondras had made connections with a sect of githyanki, and have been working together to seek out the *Book of Vile Darkness* for Simon Tiber. He is doing so because he must, he has no desire to see the terrible tome fall into the necromancer's hands.
- Despite their alliance, Simon Tiber has been "recruiting" githyanki into his undead service, as lesser undead. Bound by a magical pact, the living githyanki cannot raise a hand to stop him, but are attempting to find a way to end the necromancer's schemes.
- It is known to Klondras and Daqe that Simon Tiber is preparing to summon the *Book of Vile Darkness* from wherever it currently lays hidden. Through the deaths of many of githyanki, as well as other inhabitants of the Underdark, the necromancer has built a ritual that will rend space and time, pulling the *Book* to him.
- Klondras and Daqe have both seen a key, a device trusted only to Jorsem Boneview, a foul creature that lives only to serve Simon Tiber. That key may be the only way to gain access to the ritual chamber, which the wizard has warded heavily against incursion.
- Speak the words "The Darkness shall bind us all," when you enter the room with the obelisk, or it may have ill effects on the characters while they are in compound.

### Playing the Pillars

#### Combat

If combat ensues, Klondras and the githyanki will fight back with deadly force. The githyanki fight to the death, having only death at the hands of Simon Tiber to look forward to. Klondras will continue to fight as long as the githyanki live. If they perish, he will attempt to surrender. If he falls to 40 hp or less, a *contingency* spell teleports him away.

#### Exploration

Investigating the area reveals a good deal of bluish lichen growing in the cave. With a successful DC 17 Wisdom (Nature) or Intelligence (Arcana) check, a character knows it is often called blue bumble, and can mask attempts to scry on areas that have enough growth of the lichen. This effect ends quickly if the lichen is removed from where it grows.

#### Social

If characters attempt to converse with Klondras and the githyanki, the illithid is nervous at first, but can quickly tell if the heroes are truthful about their willingness to speak in peace. If they listen to what Klondras and Daqe have to say, they can learn the information listed above. In addition, it opens **Bonus Objective A**.

## BONUS OBJECTIVE A

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If the group speaks with the illithid, they may unlock **Bonus Objective A**. Klondras Imdree tells them of protection they may acquire prior to their encounter with Simon Tiber. He knows terrible forces will be unleashed as the necromancer performs his ritual, and they may need all the help they can get.

The store room in Simon Tiber's lair has a tincture that, when swallowed, allows one's consciousness to become bolstered against the evil they will face. Klondras knows little more, as the necromancer never took the potion in his presence, though he would lock himself away whenever he needed to re-administer his dosage.

The group finds this concoction in **Part 3. The Wizards Lair, area 7. Storage Room**.

# PART 3. THE WIZARD'S LAIR

**Estimated Duration:** 1 hour, 45 minutes

Having found Simon Tiber's lair in the submerged hideaway, they must now seek the necromancer out and put an end to his vile schemes.

## 1. ENTRANCE HALL

### AREA INFORMATION

This area features:

**Dimensions & Terrain.** The room is 35 ft. by 30 ft. and is largely devoid of features. Only an obsidian obelisk adorns the room, standing 15 ft. tall and 5 ft. wide at its base, in the center of the room. The obelisk is covered in scrawling words written in Abyssal. Those who can read it still cannot make much sense of it, as it seems to ramble on about various atrocities one can commit to others and to one's self.

**Lighting.** There is no light here except that which the adventurers bring with them.

The door to area 9 cannot be opened, a magical barrier blocking it from being accessed. This barrier is immune to magic, and cannot be harmed by physical damage. In addition, it extends around the entirety of area 9, including floor and ceiling, blocking travel through the stone, teleportation, and ethereal or astral shortcuts. To the side of the door, a strange emblem is carved into the wall. Those who can read Abyssal and succeed on a DC 15 Intelligence (Religion) check realize the symbol is made up of the



letters of the word VECNA as written in Abyssal. This carving may be a keyhole of sorts, needing some device to gain entry into the room beyond.

### LAIR EFFECTS

The obelisk emanates a constant field of energy that fills Simon Tiber's compound. For those who speak the phrase, "The Darkness shall bind us all," the field has no ill effects. To those who do not speak it, the constant presence of the terrible energies manifests as body aches, seeing things that aren't there out of the corner of one's eye, hearing whispers that others cannot. If a creature leaves and re-enters the

wizard's lair, they must pay homage and speak the words again in order to gain the benefits of immunity from its effects.

Characters cannot gain the benefits of a Short or Long rest while in the compound. Furthermore, upon arrival, and every 30 minutes they spend within the lair, characters must succeed on DC 15 Constitution saving throws or gain one level of exhaustion.

Characters who are deafened roll their save at disadvantage, unable to distinguish the phantom sounds from reality. Characters that succeed on a saving throw are immune to the effect for 1 hour.

## 2. BED CHAMBERS

### AREA INFORMATION

This area features:

**Dimensions & Terrain.** This bed chamber is approximately 35 feet by 40 feet, with a 10 foot high ceiling.

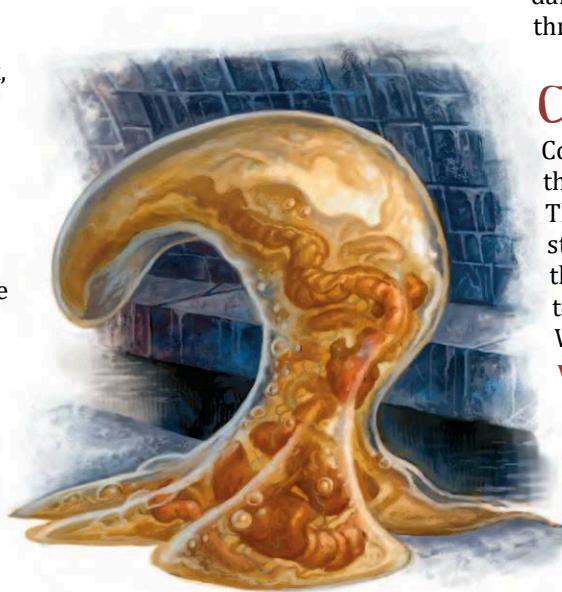
**Lighting.** When any creature steps across the threshold into this room, magical light springs into being. Several glowing orbs of intangible light are spaced along the walls throughout the room. These lights remain on for 5 minutes after all creatures have left the room, or until the phrase, "In Darkness we dream," is spoken. The phrase, "The Light is no terror to the Darkness," also causes the lights to illuminate.

The room is sparsely furnished, with only a bed, a small writing desk, a large, worn rug, and a wardrobe. Simon Tiber has little use for spending time here, when his efforts are better spent in his laboratory.

**Bonus Objective B.** If you are allowing time for the bonus objective from Iefyr Elfiel in area 5, a well-concealed trapdoor lies under the rug. If the rug is not moved, after 30 minutes of searching the room, a character notices an almost imperceptible rise in the rug where the door hides underneath. An illusion lies over the trapdoor, causing it to look like the rest of the floor. Creatures with truesight can see through the ruse, though others can find the door with a successful DC 17 Intelligence (Investigation) check. Those who succeed can feel seams in the floor that they cannot see, covered by the illusion. The trapdoor has no handle, though a small hole along one edge can be used to lever the door open with a DC 13 Strength (Athletics) check.

Below the door, a ladder descends in a narrow pit for 60 ft. No light illuminates the way down, or the small room at the bottom.

**Dimensions & Terrain.** The room at the bottom is barely 15 ft. by 15 ft., with a 10 ft. high ceiling, the walls made of pockmarked stone that glistens in any light brought into the room. Stuck to the wall appear to be a variety of preserved organs; lungs, intestines, hearts, eyes, etc. In the center of the room, a black metal cube rests on the floor.



**Lighting.** There is no light here except that which the adventurers bring with them.

The black cube is a strongbox with an intricate locking system, and a magical trap. To unlock the box, a successful DC 17 Thieves' Tools check is required. The box is impervious to physical damage, and cannot be lifted from the floor. A DC 17 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals signs of runes on the inner lip of the locking mechanism. Only Simon Tiber, Yjolgr, or Jorsem Boneview can open the box without setting off the trap. *Dispel magic* will nullify the runes for 1 hour, at which point the trap resets. Creatures in the room when the box is open must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, taking 55 (10d10) acid damage, or half damage on a successful saving throw.

### CREATURES/NPCs

Covering the walls and ceiling of the room are five **organ oozes**. They remain flattened out and stationary until someone opens the black box, or causes harm to one or more of the oozes. Within the black box are seven **vile pages**, which fly out and attack if the box is opened. The acid trap does not affect the vile pages.

**Objectives/Goals.** The creatures here have no objectives of their own, only to follow the will of Simon Tiber, who has created and commanded them to guard this room and attack unwelcome creatures (anyone but himself and his lackeys) who open the black box.

### TREASURE & REWARDS

Inside the black cube are several scrolls, including the one that controls Iefyr Elfiel. Destroying it frees the elven wight from Simon Tiber's servitude. Scrolls which control Klondras Imdree, or other undead, cannot be found.

In addition, a scroll of *animate dead*, a scroll of *magic mouth*, and a scroll of *Nystul's magic aura* are in the collection. The remaining four scrolls are blank.

## 3. LIBRARY

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### AREA INFORMATION

This area features:

**Dimensions & Terrain.** The library is circular in shape and is 45 feet in diameter. Bookshelves make up the entirety of the walls, and books are crammed into every available space. An overstuffed, red leather reading chair sits near the wall, a small side table next to it. A plate with a few crumbs of bread and the stems of grapes rests on the table. In the center of the room is a pristine wooden podium, a purple cloth covering the top as though waiting to be wrapped over a book that is not there yet.

**Lighting.** There is no light here except that which the adventurers bring with them.

Coming within 15 feet of the podium causes a creature to feel uneasy, and they can smell something rotting. The appearance of the lectern is an illusion. In truth, it is made of hundreds of humanoid bones, now stained black, and was built to hold the *Book of Vile Darkness* long ago, when Simon Tiber once had possession of the artifact. The horrid essence of the *Book* has marred and corrupted the podium. Anyone who touches it must make a DC 17 Charisma save, taking 55 (10d10) necrotic damage on a failed save, or half as much on a success. In addition, those who fail their saves suffer the following effects:

- The creature is aged 2d10 years.
- Gains one level of exhaustion.
- Must repeat the saving throw every 30 minutes, or gain one level of madness.

Evil-aligned creatures have advantage on their saving throws, and suffer none of the effects listed above, including the necrotic damage, on a successful saving throw.

The ongoing harm can be halted by *remove curse* or similar magic, though the damage that has been done is not removed by the spell. *Greater restoration* or similar magic is required to undo the aging of the curse's effect.

Simon Tiber and his minions are immune to this effect.

The podium is bolstered by the power of the *Book of Vile Darkness*, but it is not indestructible. It has an AC of 17, 110 hit points, and is vulnerable to radiant damage. It is immune to necrotic, poison, and psychic damage. Destroying the podium breaks its power, and renders it unable to harm others.

### TREASURE & REWARDS

The library is full of books of varying rarity. Their topics range from necromancy and other magic to politics to religion and world histories.



## 4. CELLS

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### AREA INFORMATION

This area features:

**Dimensions & Terrain.** This room is 30 feet by 40 feet, and has small cells that hold prisoners. The cells are made of bars that reach from floor to ceiling. Inside the cells are piles of rags, which may be used as beds by the prisoners who are living, and a wooden bucket.

**Lighting.** There is no light here except that which the adventurers bring with them.

### CREATURES/NPCs

Of the five cells in the room, only one holds a live captive. Purath, a **githyanki warrior**, is near death; his tortured and starved body barely hanging on. He has 5 hit points, has no weapons, and is wearing no armor (AC 12). Four of the other cells each hold a moldering corpse, while the last is empty.

**Objectives/Goals.** Purath has resigned himself to death. If the characters can communicate with him

somehow, and agree to free him and give him food, he may be able to help them in return.

**What Does He Know?** Purath has been imprisoned for quite some time, and during that time, he has heard things.

- The githyanki knows that other slaves have come from area 5 screaming in pain, their eyes bleeding. After being locked up, Yjolgr brought them some kind of salve from the direction of the storage room or laboratory. This goop seemed to stave off the worse of the problem. After all, blind slaves are useless slaves.
- If you are running Bonus Objective B, the githyanki can tell the characters about the time he heard Jorsem Boneview tell another slave to throw some corpses “down the pit in the master’s chamber,” to feed what is down there.

Purath will leave via area 1 if the characters let him go. If they left the other githyanki alive, and tell him of their location, he thanks them and goes to find his kin.

## 5. HALLWAY

### AREA INFORMATION

This area features:

**Dimensions & Terrain.** This 105 ft. long hallway is 10 ft. wide. One end turns to head into area 4, while at the other end, a gate leads into area 6. The hallway is littered with trash, an occasional body part, and long streaks of body fluids are smeared on the floor.

**Lighting.** There is no light here except that which the adventurers bring with them.

### CREATURES/NPCs

Iefyr Elafiel, an elven **wight**, wanders this hall, waiting to be summoned by Simon Tiber, or one of the other undead in the compound. The elf, who once lived in Elventree, now serves the necromancer by taking out the trash and other vile things, disposing of them in area 6.

**Objectives/Goals.** To spite him, Simon Tiber allowed Iefyr to retain just enough memory of life as to break his now undead spirit. Unable to do anything except what the necromancer, or a few of his other minions, says, the elf must languish in the dark of this place. Iefyr wishes nothing more than to perish, his body returned to his people for his last rites.



**What Does He Know?** Iefyr knows much about the necromancer's lair.

- Jorsem Boneview, a vile creature that once called itself dwarf, and Yjolgr, another wight, are the necromancer's most trusted allies.
- The dais built for the *Book of Vile Darkness* in the library is shrouded in dark magic, necromancy and sickness seeping into every fiber of its wood. Iefyr has heard Simon Tiber talking of it with Jorsem Boneview and Yjolgr on several occasions. For the living and unwary to touch it can mean pain and madness.
- Much time and care (and countless sacrifices) went into the construction of the ritual chamber, where Simon Tiber somehow means to gain the *Book of Vile Darkness*. Iefyr does not know more about how this will be accomplished.

Iefyr will not fight back if attacked. He prays to Sehanine Moonbow for a quick death and salvation.

If the adventurers offer to help the elf, he tells them he cannot leave the necromancer's compound, a compulsion lies upon him.

### BONUS OBJECTIVE B

Iefyr knows that the compulsion over him is controlled by a scroll hidden within Simon Tiber's bed chambers (area 2). If the scroll were destroyed, he could leave this place and return home, if only to die beneath the sky and leaves of Elventree once more.

## 6. REFUSE PIT

### AREA INFORMATION

This area features:

**Dimensions & Terrain.** This room is 20 feet by 20 feet wide, with a 10-foot diameter pit. The pit descends for over 600 feet, though the stench from what has been thrown into it is still atrocious. Gore made of blood, flesh, and other body fluids streak the floor up to the edge of the pit.

**Lighting.** There is no light here except that which the adventurers bring with them.

While nothing lurks here to attack the adventurers, being in the room for too long is unhealthy in itself. Living creatures that spend one minute or more in this room must succeed on a DC 11 Constitution saving throw, or become infected with *sight rot* (see **Appendix. Sight Rot**). If a character touches the gore that is present in the room with their bare flesh, the saving throw DC is increased to 15. A character so foolish as to ingest any of the gore has the DC increased to 18, and rolls their saving throw at disadvantage.



## 7. STORAGE ROOM

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### AREA INFORMATION

This area features:

**Dimensions & Terrain.** The storage room is 25 feet by 25 feet, with shelves crammed into every nook and cranny available. Moving through the room is difficult terrain, as characters thread their way through the maze. The shelves are covered in an assortment of brick-a-brack, random trinkets, empty vials and jars, and many bones and containers holding fluids in which are suspended dead things.

**Lighting.** There is no light here except that which the adventurers bring with them.

### TREASURE & REWARDS

Spending at least 30 minutes searching through the storage room, characters can find 1d4 potions of healing, one potion of clairvoyance, and one potion of resistance (radiant). In addition, they find a jar of Eyebright petals, a flower that grows in some swamps. It contains enough petals to make five ointments that can be used to stave off *sight rot*.

In addition, if playing with **Bonus Objective A**, the characters have been told of a tincture that should help them in their battle against Simon Tiber. They manage to locate enough samples of a strange, black and viscous fluid for each of them. If the characters drink the vials, use the encounter in **Appendix. The Guardian's Lair**.

## 8. LABORATORY

### AREA INFORMATION

This area features:

**Dimensions & Terrain.** Simon Tiber's laboratory is 25 feet by 35 feet, with entrances on either end. Several shelves line the walls, stocked with tinctures, powders, and a wide variety of other spell components. A large work table dominates the center of the room, and a long, thin table rests against one long wall, upon which sit large glass containers holding a variety of body parts. In a dark corner of the room, a hideously disfigured body stands, much of its musculature exposed as though being used for study.

On the wall next to the door into area 9, a strange sigil is carved. It matches the emblem carved next to the door in area 1.

**Lighting.** This room is dimly lit by insubstantial balls of magical light that hover near the ceiling. Their brightness can be increased by Simon Tiber, though he only does so when working in here. Now, the lights only throw large shadows in the dim light, places where anything could be hiding.



### CREATURES/NPCs

Of the fourteen glass containers holding body parts, five of them are filled with only hands. Each of those containers holds a **swarm of crawling claws**, which will attack anyone who moves within 5 feet of their jars, or who begin messing around with the items in the laboratory.

The body in the corner is Jorsem Boneview, a **boneclaw**. Characters attempting to investigate Jorsem from more than 15 feet away must succeed on a DC 22 Wisdom (Perception) check to notice anything off about the body, beyond its grotesqueness. Those who succeed get the feeling they saw it move ever so slightly. Jorsem will attack once the crawling claws have done so as well, or if a character moves to investigate him up close.

**Objectives/Goals.** The crawling claws have no objective other than destroying creatures that invade or harm their master's laboratory. Jorsem Boneview is tied to Simon Tiber, and gleefully helps him to gather new materials for his necromantic experiments by harvesting parts from the living.

### TREASURE & REWARDS

Jorsem Boneview carries a small, strange metal idol, what appears to be a clawed hand with an eye in its palm. The base of the idol is embossed with a odd marking, one that matches the etched symbol on the wall in areas 1, 4, and 8.

This is the key to area 9, and when inserted into the carving next to one of those doors and turned, it lowers the magical barrier and unlocks the doors. When the characters return to the teleportation circle they used to arrive with, the key causes the sigil to illuminate, and they can activate the circle to return to Elventree.

## 9. RITUAL CHAMBER

### AREA INFORMATION

This area features:

**Dimensions & Terrain.** This chamber is 60 feet by 35 feet. The walls are etched with various runes of summoning, binding, and control. Two massive sigils are etched into the floor, each made up of countless other runes.

**Lighting.** The sigils glow, one an eerie purple, the other a sickly green, providing light that throbs between dim and bright. In the center of the purple sigil, a jagged splinter so dark that it appears to absorb light hangs like a crack in reality. Light for 5 feet on any side of the splinter is considered dim at all times.

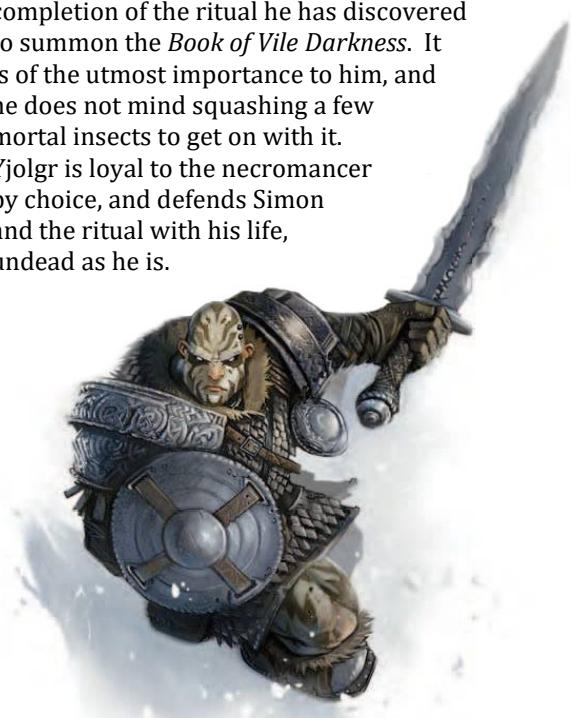
### CREATURES/NPCs

Three **wights** (a human, a githyanki, and a kuo-toa), stand equidistant from one another in the purple sigil. Their presence is powering the magic of the ritual, and they cannot move or it will disrupt Simon Tiber's summoning of the *Book of Vile Darkness*. They can, however, attack from their locations.

Nearby, **Yjolgr** moves to protect the ritual and his master by smiting their foes.

Standing in the center of the green sigil is **Simon Tiber**.

**Objectives/Goals.** Simon Tiber is nearing completion of the ritual he has discovered to summon the *Book of Vile Darkness*. It is of the utmost importance to him, and he does not mind squashing a few mortal insects to get on with it. Yjolgr is loyal to the necromancer by choice, and defends Simon and the ritual with his life, undead as he is.



### SIMON TIBER

The necromancer has the following ability, in addition to his stat block.

**Absorb Spell:** Simon can use his reaction to absorb a spell that is targeting only him and not an area of effect. The absorbed spell's effect is canceled and the spell's energy – not the spell itself – is stored within him. The energy has the same level as the spell when it was cast. Simon can convert energy he has stored into spell slots to cast spells he has prepared, up to a maximum of 5th level. He uses the stored spell levels in place of his spell slot, but otherwise casts the spell as normal. He can absorb up to 50 levels of spells.

The ritual hinges on the wights remaining in their spots for the duration of the spell. If a wight is moved from its spot in the sigil, it has until the end of its next turn to move back, or the careful balance of the ritual will fail. If a wight is destroyed, Yjolgr will move to take its place.

Simon Tiber has completed the bulk of the ritual, and after several painstaking hours, waits for his plans to come to fruition. The sigil he stands in acts as a *wall of force*, activating a dome of protection the first time something physically attempts to cross its threshold, whether it is matter or spell, blocking it an all other attempts to pass over the edge of the sigil for 1 minute (its duration is shorter than that of the spell). If needed, Simon can cast a spell (minimum 1st level) into the sigil to reactivate the *wall of force* after it expires.

**Tactics.** Simon is able to cast spells that cause effects outside of the *wall of force*, such as *Bigby's hand*, and he will do so to help defeat the intruders. If enemies should manage to enter his dome of protection (by way of *misty step*, or other similar magic), he will do battle with them the best he can. If all seems lost, he will cast *cloudkill* within the dome, potentially dooming himself in the process. (Remember, many teleport spells require you to see where you are going, and *cloudkill* will block line of sight.)

### WHAT HAPPENS WHEN...

**The wights fail to hold their position?** It is expected that the characters will find a way to defeat the wights, or at least push them out of their positions long enough to end the ritual. When this happens, Klondras Imdree suddenly appears next to the vortex. He appears to throw some kind of red powder over the rift and utters an incantation in Deep Speech, then steps into the vortex and disappears, the crack in space closing behind him.

His incantation is not a spell, and cannot be counterspelled. Those trained in Arcana may attempt a DC 18 Intelligence (Arcana) check to realize his wording altered the vortex so he could step through, rather than pulling something through from the other side.

**Simon Tiber perishes?** When the necromancer dies, he lets loose with a nerve-wracking cackle, which quickly becomes a dry wheeze. Within seconds, he collapses as his body dries and shrivels in size. A suth-wood rod erupts from his cracking chest and clatters to the ground, and as his head hits the floor, it bursts open in a cloud of corpse dust, a red gem skittering out of his broken skull. Within moments, red mist pours out of the gem and takes the form of a **deabru**. The battle is not yet over, and the deabru fights to the death.



## THE SUMMONING VORTEX

Countless whispers seem to emanate from the dark crack in reality. These whispers eat at the minds of the characters, potentially causing them harm and driving them mad.

At the beginning of a character's turn, they must make a DC 13 Charisma saving throw. If they fail, they are considered charmed until the start of their next turn. Charmed characters must move and/or attack the character in their group that is most pious or good, or the closest ally if such is not the case. If a character succeeds, they are unaffected, and are

granted advantage on subsequent saving throws against the effect.

A character's alignment determines how they roll their saving throw.

**Lawful Good, Neutral Good, Lawful Neutral** have advantage.

**Chaotic Good, Neutral, and Lawful Evil** have normal rolls.

**Chaotic Neutral, Neutral Evil, and Chaotic Evil** have disadvantage.

If a character fails a saving throw, once they are able to break the charm, they must succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or gain one level of madness.

On Initiative count 20, a random character must make a DC 13 Charisma saving throw, or be overcome with visions of their greatest fears, images of their loved ones being tortured or dying, etc.

These images cause 33 (6d10) psychic damage, and the character has disadvantage on attacks, saving throws, and skill checks until the end of their next round.

## TREASURE & REWARDS

Investigation the body of Simon Tiber, characters find what appears to be a corpse of a long-dead child. Next to the body is a **rod of absorption**, which had granted the necromancer the ability to absorb spells targeted at him.

Characters trying to understand what happened to the necromancer's body can attempt a DC 20 Intelligence (Arcana) check. On a success, they realize that the body may have been some kind of strange construct.

## 10. HIDEY HOLE

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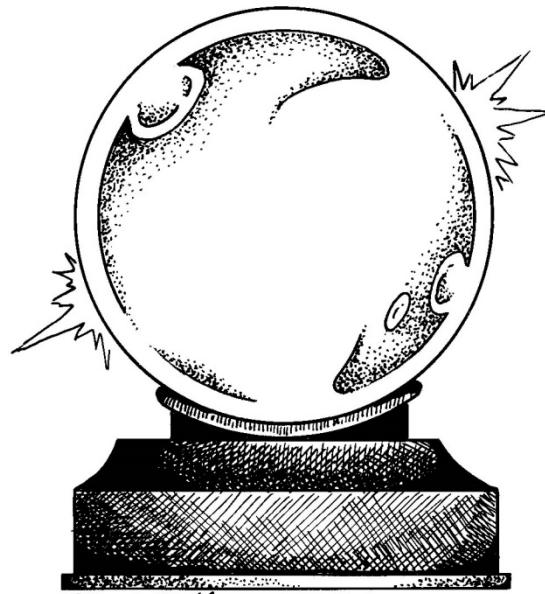
### AREA INFORMATION

This area features:

**Dimensions & Terrain.** A 10 ft. by 15 ft. chamber, a narrow passage leads into it from a blank wall.

**Lighting.** There is no light here except that which the adventurers bring with them.

- This small area was shaped by magic, formed and used by Klondras Imdree. There is no door into the room, as the mindflayer relied on magic to pass through the stone between this area's hallway and the short hallway between areas 4 and 9.
- There are few ways that a character might find this room. One way is to be in the ethereal plane, and stumble upon it while passing through the walls (perhaps in an attempt to gain access to the ritual chamber in area 9). Another way is to be to be under the effects of *detect magic* while in the hallways between areas 4 and 9, at which point they will note a faint transmutation aura on the wall where Klondras Imdree uses magic to pass through into this chamber.
- In the center of the room is a simple wooden table, upon which rests a crystal globe. While it is not magical itself, the illithid uses it as a focus for scrying.
- If characters manage to discover this room before the encounter in area 9, they find nothing else of note. If they find it after the encounter, the remnants of a magical scroll lie in scorched tatters around the globe, as though someone had recently used it to cast a spell.
- If Klondras Imdree's contingency spell was activated, this is where it will have brought him. If the characters worked out a deal with him, he teleports to this room shortly thereafter. He shall wait and watch for the perfect time, when his master's spell begins to fail, to teleport next to the black vortex in the ritual chamber and step through.

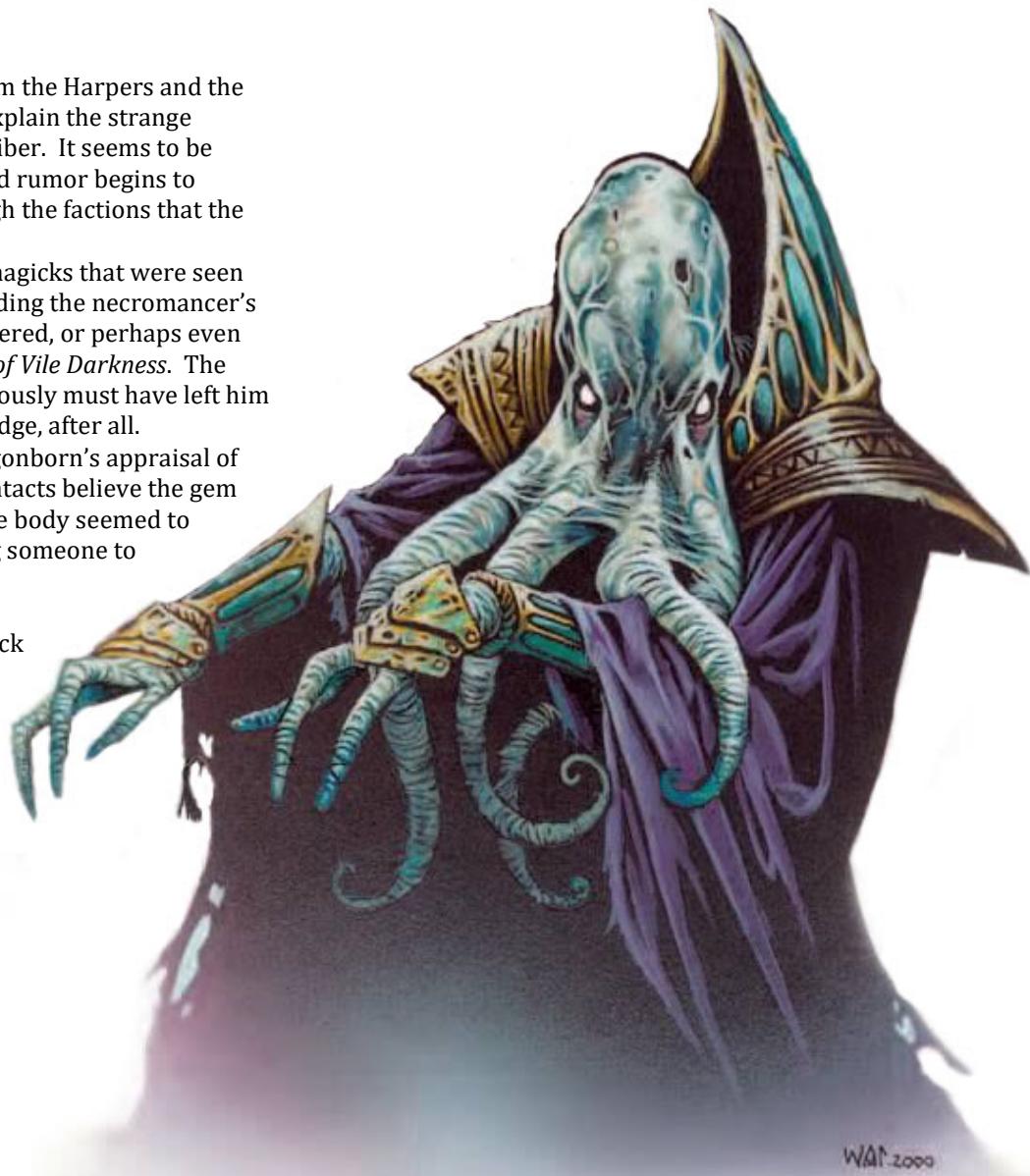


# PART 4. CONCLUSION, OR THE LOOMING VILE DARKNESS

**Estimated Duration:** 15 minutes

The adventurers have defeated Simon Tiber...or have they? While the fate of their foe remains uncertain, it is known that the Book of Vile Darkness is still out there, and an undead Klondras Imdree is seeking it for his own nefarious purposes. The group regathers in Elventree to report in and plan their next steps.

- Arcanists and Diviners from the Harpers and the Emerald Enclave cannot explain the strange creature that was Simon Tiber. It seems to be some kind of construct, and rumor begins to spread like wildfire through the factions that the necromancer still lives.
- Krenez suggests that the magicks that were seen in Simon Tiber's lair, including the necromancer's body, may have been bolstered, or perhaps even originated from, the *Book of Vile Darkness*. The wizard's time with it previously must have left him with some strange knowledge, after all.
- Elanil agrees with the dragonborn's appraisal of the situation. Her own contacts believe the gem that was within the strange body seemed to power it, perhaps allowing someone to control it from afar.
- Klondras Imdree's sudden disappearance into the black vortex bodes ill for the future. Where has he gone, and for what purpose?



# ADVENTURE REWARDS

At the end of the session, the characters each receive rewards based upon their accomplishments. These rewards include advancement and treasure, and may include player rewards—magic item unlocks, story awards, or new downtime activities, as follows:

## ADVANCEMENT AND TREASURE CHECKPOINTS

The characters receive **1** advancement checkpoint and 2 treasure checkpoints for each **story** objective that they complete, as follows:

- **Story Objective A:** Find Klondras Imdree and determine how he is still alive. Put an end to his alignment with Simon Tiber.
- **Story Objective B:** Stop Simon Tiber's plot.

The characters receive 1 advancement checkpoint and 2 treasure checkpoints for each **bonus objective** that they complete, as follows:

- **Bonus Objective A:** Destroy Simon Tiber's laboratory and free his githyanki slaves.
- **Bonus Objective B:** Drink the strange liquid in the storage room and be bolstered by it.

## PLAYER REWARDS

The characters earn the following player rewards for **completing the adventure**:

## MAGIC ITEM UNLOCK

Characters completing the adventure unlock:

**Rod of Absorption.** The rod is a two-foot long rod of suth-wood, carved with various alchemical symbols. This item can be found in **Player Handout 1**. Do not use the number of spell slots absorbed during the battle with Simon Tiber to determine how many have been stored within the rod already. Instead, use the guidance in the Player Handout or the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

## DUNGEON MASTER REWARDS

In exchange for running this adventure, you earn **advancement and treasure checkpoints** and downtime as though you played the adventure, but none of the adventure's **player rewards**.

However, this adventure may qualify for rewards earned by completing DM Quests. See the ALDMG (*Adventurers League Dungeon Master's Guide*) for more information about DM Quests.

# APPENDIX 1. LOCATIONS & NPCs

The following NPCs and locations feature **prominently** in this adventure.

- **Sarenolla the Whisperer (sehr-ah-nohl-ah).** A gnome druid who has dedicated her life in service to the forest, Sarenolla follows Mielikki and is devoted to protecting the natural world and employs adventurers on related missions. She is quiet and generally prefers to observe from hiding. The druid has an interest in charting the stars and weather patterns, and might be befriended by offering rare information concerning these areas of interest.
- **Elanil Elassidil (El-uh-kneel uh-LASS-ih-deel).** Female elf, bard extraordinaire, and member of the Harpers. She resides in Elventree, where she has the title of Moonsilver Herald, and is a bard of some renown in the area around Hillsfar. Elanil is confident in her ability and strong in purpose. She is not afraid to give her opinion on a subject, even when not asked. She is quick to give historical detail to back her opinions and hard on those that do not back their opinions with similar evidence. If things get too heated, Elanil is prepared with a song to lighten the mood and make all forget there was a disagreement. She is an accomplished diplomat and uses this skill regularly as a member of the Harpers.
- **Krenez (KREH-nezz).** Krenez is a dragonborn bard, once an adventurer, and now the founder of the Waypoint Bindery on the northern coast of the Moonsea, east of the city of Phlan. The Waypoint publishes books of all kinds, but is also a secret meeting point for all factions in the area. An author in his own right, the dragonborn collects books and knowledge, and has amassed quite the hoard. Characters may have met Krenez previously in the CCC-ROZK01 series.

# APPENDIX.

## MONSTER/NPC

## STATISTICS

### Alhoon

*Medium undead, lawful evil*

**Armor Class** 15 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 120 (16d8 + 48)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	19 (+4)	17 (+3)	17 (+3)

**Skills** Arcana +8, Deception +7, History +8, Insight +7, Perception +7, Stealth +5

**Saving Throws** Con +7, Int +8, Wis +7, Cha +7

**Damage Resistances** cold, lightning, necrotic

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

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

**Senses** truesight 120 ft., passive Perception 17

**Languages** Deep Speech, Undercommon, telepathy 120 ft.

**Challenge** 10 (5,900 XP)

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

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

At will: *detect thoughts, levitate*

1/day each: *dominate monster, plane shift* (self only)

**Spellcasting.** The alhoon is a 12th-level spellcaster. Its spellcaster ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 16, +8 to hit with spell attacks). The alhoon has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *chill touch, dancing lights, mage hand, prestidigitation, shocking grasp*

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

2nd level (3 slots): *invisibility, mirror image, scorching ray*

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

4th level (3 slots): *confusion, Evard's black tentacles, phantasmal killer*

5th level (2 slots): *modify memory, wall of force*

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

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

### Actions

**Chilling Grasp.** *Melee Spell Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (3d6) cold damage.

**Mind Blast (Recharge 5-6).** The alhoon magically emits psychic energy in a 60-foot cone. Each creature in that area must succeed on a DC 16 Intelligence saving throw or take 22 (4d8 + 4) psychic damage and be stunned for 1 minute. A target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

### Androsphinx

*Large monstrosity, lawful neutral*

**Armor Class** 17 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 199 (19d10 + 95)

**Speed** 40 ft., fly 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
22 (+6)	10 (+0)	20 (+5)	16 (+3)	18 (+4)	23 (+6)

**Skills** Arcana + 9, Perception +10, Religion +15

**Saving Throws** Dex +6, Con +11, Int +9, Wis +10

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

**Condition Immunities** charmed, frightened

**Senses** truesight 120 ft., passive Perception 20

**Languages** Common, Sphinx

**Challenge** 17 (18,000 XP)

**Inscrutable.** The sphinx is immune to any effect that would sense its emotions or read its thoughts, as well as any divination spell that it refuses. Wisdom (Insight) checks made to ascertain the sphinx's intentions or sincerity have disadvantage.

**Magic Weapons.** The sphinx's weapon attacks are magical.

**Spellcasting.** The sphinx is a 12th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 18, +10 to hit with spell attacks). It requires no material

components to cast its spells. The sphinx has the following cleric spells prepared:

**Cantrips (at will):** *sacred flame, spare the dying, thaumaturgy*

**1st level (4 slots):** *command, detect evil and good, detect magic*

**2nd level (3 slots):** *lesser restoration, zone of truth*

**3rd level (3 slots):** *dispel magic, tongues*

**4th level (3 slots):** *banishment, freedom of movement*

**5th level (2 slots):** *flame strike, greater restoration*

**6th level (1 slot):** *heroes' feast*

#### Actions

**Multiaction.** The sphinx makes two claw attacks.

**Claw.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 17 (2d10 + 6) slashing damage.

**Roar (3/day).** The sphinx emits a magical roar. Each time it roars before finishing a long rest, the roar is louder and the effect is different, as detailed below. Each creature within 500 feet of the sphinx and able to hear the roar must make a saving throw.

**First Roar.** Each creature that fails a DC 18 Wisdom saving throw is frightened for 1 minute. A frightened creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

**Second Roar.** Each creature that fails a DC 18 Wisdom saving throw is deafened and frightened for 1 minute. A frightened creature is paralyzed and can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

**Third Roar.** Each creature makes a DC 18 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, a creature takes 44 (8d10) thunder damage and is knocked prone. On a successful save, the creature takes half as much damage and isn't knocked prone.

#### Legendary Actions

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

**Claw Attack.** The sphinx makes one claw attack.

**Teleport (Costs 2 Actions).** The sphinx magically teleports along with any equipment it is wearing or carrying, up to 120 feet to an unoccupied space it can see.

**Cast a Spell (Costs 3 Actions).** The sphinx casts a spell from its list of prepared spells, using a spell slot as normal.

#### Boneclaw

*Large undead, chaotic evil*

**Armor Class** 16 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 127 (17d10 + 34)

**Speed** 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	16 (+3)	15 (+2)	13 (+1)	15 (+2)	9 (-1)

**Skills** Perception +6, Stealth +7

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

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

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

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

**Languages** Common, Dwarvish, Elvish, Undercommon

**Challenge** 12 (8,400 XP)

**Rejuvenation.** While its master lives, a destroyed boneclaw gains a new body in 1d10 hours, with all its hit points. The new body appears within 1 mile of the boneclaw's master.

**Shadow Stealth.** While in dim light or darkness, the boneclaw can take the Hide action as a bonus action.

#### Actions

**Multiaction.** The boneclaw makes two claw attacks.

**Piercing Claw.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 20 (3d10 + 4) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, the boneclaw can pull the target up to 10 feet toward itself, and the target is grappled (escaped DC 14). The boneclaw has two claws. While a claw grapples a target, the claw can attack only that target.

**Shadow Jump.** If the boneclaw is in dim light or darkness, each creature of the boneclaw's choice within 5 feet of it must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or take 34 (5d12 + 2) necrotic damage.

The boneclaw then magically teleports up to 60 feet to an unoccupied space it can see. It can bring one creature it's grappling, teleporting that creature to an unoccupied space it can see within 5 feet of its

destination. The destination spaces of this teleportation must be in dim light or darkness.

### Reactions

**Deadly Reach.** In response to a visible enemy moving into its reach, the boneclaw makes one claw attack against that enemy. If the attack hits, the boneclaw can make a second claw attack against the target.

### Deabru\*

*Large fiend, chaotic evil*

**Armor Class** 18 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 189 (18d10 + 90)

**Speed** 40 ft.

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

**Saving Throws** Str +9, Con +10, Wis +8, Cha +10

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

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** poisoned

**Senses** truesight 120 ft., passive Perception 13

**Languages** Abyssal, Telepathy 120 ft.

**Challenge** 16 (15,000 XP)

The deabru is a horror to behold, a conglomeration of uncountable arms ending in clawed hands, and a whip-like tendril that snakes in and out of its mass.

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

**Magic Weapons.** The deabru's weapon attacks are magical.

**Reactive.** The deabru can take one reaction on every turn in a combat.

### Actions

**Multiaction.** The deabru makes seven attacks: six with its claws and one with its tail.

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

**Tendril.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 10 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 15 (2d10 + 4) bludgeoning damage. If the target is Medium or smaller, it is grappled (escaped DC 19). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained, the deabru can automatically hit the target with its

tendril, and the deabru can't make tendril attacks against other targets.

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

### Reactions

**Parry.** The deabru adds 5 to its AC against one melee attack that would hit it. To do so, the deabru must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon. For this ability, its claws count as a melee weapon.

\*based on the Marilith, *Monster Manual*, pg. 61.

### Githyanki Knight

*Medium humanoid (gith), lawful evil*

**Armor Class** 18 (plate)

**Hit Points** 91 (14d8 + 28)

**Speed** 30 ft.

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

**Saving Throws** Con +5, Int +5, Wis +5

**Senses** passive Perception 12

**Languages** Gith

**Challenge** 8 (3,900 XP)

**Innate Spellcasting (Psionics).** The githyanki's innate spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no components:

At will: *mage hand* (the hand is invisible)

3/day each: *jump*, *misty step*, *nonetection* (self only), *tongues*

1/day each: *plane shift*, *telekinesis*

### Actions

**Multiaction.** The githyanki makes two silver greatsword attacks.

**Silver Greatsword.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d6 + 6) slashing damage plus 10 (3d6) psychic damage. This is a magic weapon attack. On a critical hit against a target in an astral body (as with the *astral projection* spell), the githyanki can cut the silvery cord that tethers the target to its material body, instead of dealing damage.

## Githyanki Warrior

Medium humanoid (gith), lawful evil

**Armor Class** 17 (half plate)

**Hit Points** 49 (9d8 + 9)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)

**Saving Throws** Con +3, Int +3, Wis +3

**Senses** passive Perception 11

**Languages** Gith

**Challenge** 3 (700 XP)

**Innate Spellcasting (Psionics).** The githyanki's innate spellcasting ability is Intelligence. It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no components:

At will: *mage hand* (the hand is invisible)

3/day each: *jump*, *misty step*, *nondetection* (self only)

### Actions

**Multiattack.** The githyanki makes two greatsword attacks.

**Greatsword.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (2d6 + 2) slashing damage plus 7 (2d6) psychic damage.

## Gynosphinx

Large monstrosity, lawful neutral

**Armor Class** 17 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 136 (16d10 + 48)

**Speed** 40 ft., fly 60 ft.

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

**Skills** Arcana +14, History +14, Perception +9, Religion +9

**Damage Resistances** bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons

**Damage Immunities** psychic

**Condition Immunities** charmed, frightened

**Senses** truesight 120 ft., passive Perception 19

**Languages** Common, Sphinx

**Challenge** 11 (7,200 XP)

**Inscrutable.** The sphinx is immune to any effect that would sense its emotions or read its thoughts, as well

as any divination spell that it refuses. Wisdom (Insight) checks made to ascertain the sphinx's intentions or sincerity have disadvantage.

**Magic Weapons.** The sphinx's weapon attacks are magical.

**Spellcasting.** The sphinx is a 9th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 17, +9 to hit with spell attacks). It requires no material components to cast its spells. The sphinx has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *mage hand*, *minor illusion*, *presidigitation*

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

2nd level (3 slots): *darkness*, *locate object*, *suggestion*

3rd level (3 slots): *dispel magic*, *remove curse*, *tongues*

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

5th level (1 slots): *legend lore*

### Actions

**Multiattack.** The sphinx makes two claw attacks.

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

### Legendary Actions

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

**Claw Attack.** The sphinx makes one claw attack.

**Teleport (Costs 2 Actions).** The sphinx magically teleports along with any equipment it is wearing or carrying, up to 120 feet to an unoccupied space it can see.

**Cast a Spell (Costs 3 Actions).** The sphinx casts a spell from its list of prepared spells, using a spell slot as normal.

## Organ Ooze\*

*Large ooze, unaligned*

**Armor Class** 7

**Hit Points** 85 (10d10 + 30)

**Speed** 20 ft., climb 20 ft.

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

**Damage Immunities** acid, cold, lightning, slashing

**Condition Immunities** blinded, charmed, deafened, exhaustion, frightened, prone

**Senses** blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 8

**Languages** -

**Challenge** 4 (1,100 XP)

The body of an organ ooze is made up of various internal organs of humanoids, suspended in a slightly yellow gelatinous gunk.

**Amorphous.** The ooze can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing.

**Corrosive Form.** A creature that touches the pudding or hits it with a melee attack while within 5 feet of it takes 4 (1d8) acid damage. Any nonmagical weapon made of metal or wood that hits the ooze corrodes. After dealing damage, the weapon takes a permanent and cumulative -1 penalty to damage rolls. If the penalty drops to -5, the weapon is destroyed. Nonmagical ammunition made of metal or wood that hits the ooze is destroyed after dealing damage.

The ooze can eat through 2-inch-thick, nonmagical wood or metal in 1 round.

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

### Actions

**Pseudopod.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) bludgeoning damage plus 18 (4d8) acid damage. In addition, nonmagical armor worn by the target is partly dissolved and takes a permanent and cumulative -1 penalty to the AC it offers. The armor is destroyed if the penalty reduces its AC to 10.

### Reactions

**Split.** When an organ ooze that is Medium or larger is subjected to lightning or slashing damage, it splits into

two new oozes if it has at least 10 hit points. Each new ooze has hit points equal to half the original ooze's, rounded down. New oozes are one size smaller than the original ooze.

\*based on black pudding, *Monster Manual*, pg. 241.

## Simon Tiber (Necromancer)

*Medium humanoid (human), chaotic evil*

**Armor Class** 12 (15 with *mage armor*)

**Hit Points** 66 (12d8 + 12)

**Speed** 30 ft.

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

**Skills** Arcana +7, History +7

**Saving Throws** Int +7, Wis +5

**Damage Resistances** necrotic

**Senses** passive Perception 11

**Languages** Abyssal, Common,

**Challenge** 9 (5,000 XP)

**Spellcasting.** Simon Tiber is a 12<sup>th</sup>-level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). Simon has the following wizard spells prepared:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

\*Necromancy spell of 1st or higher.

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

### Actions

**Withering Touch.** *Melee Spell Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 5 (2d4) necrotic damage.

## Swarm of Crawling Claws

*Large swarm of tiny undead, neutral evil*

**Armor Class** 12

**Hit Points** 77 (12d8)

**Speed** 20 ft., climb 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	5 (-3)	10 (+0)	4 (-3)

**Damage Resistances** bludgeoning, piercing, slashing

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained, stunned

**Senses** blindsight 30 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 10

**Languages** understands Common but can't speak

**Challenge** 3 (700 XP)

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

**Turn Immunity.** The swarm is immune to effects that turn undead.

### Actions

**Claw.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 0 ft., one target. *Hit:* 21 (6d6) bludgeoning or slashing damage (swarm's choice), or 10 (3d6) bludgeoning or slashing damage (swarm's choice) if the swarm has half of its hit points or fewer.

## Vile Page\*

*Tiny undead, unaligned*

**Armor Class** 14 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 2 (1d4)

**Speed** 10 ft., fly 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
4 (-3)	16 (+3)	11 (+0)	2 (-4)	8 (-1)	6 (-2)

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 9

**Languages** -

**Challenge** 1/8 (25 XP)

A vile page is created from parchment made from skin. It has profane words and phrases written in Abyssal on

its surface, which leave bloody word-shaped wounds on creatures the page feeds upon.

### Actions

**Blood Drain.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) piercing damage, and the vile page attaches to the target. While attached, the vile page doesn't attack. Instead, at the start of each of the vile page's turns, the target loses 5 (1d4 + 3) hit points due to blood loss.

The vile page can detach itself by spending 5 feet of its movement. It does so after it drains 10 hit points of blood from the target or the target dies. A creature, including the target, can use its action to detach the vile page.

\*based on the stirge, *Monster Manual*, pg. 284.

## Wight

*Medium undead, neutral evil*

**Armor Class** 14 (studded leather)

**Hit Points** 45 (6d8 + 18)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+5)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	13 (+1)	15 (+2)

**Skills** Perception +3, Stealth +4

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

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** exhaustion, poison

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

**Languages** the languages it knew in life

**Challenge** 3 (700 XP)

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

### Actions

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

**Life Drain.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) necrotic damage. The target must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving

throw or its hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the damage taken. This reduction lasts until the target finishes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0.

A humanoid slain by this attack rises 24 hours later as a zombie under the wight's control, unless the humanoid is restored to life or its body is destroyed. The wight can have no more than twelve zombies under its control at one time.

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

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

## Yjolgr\*

*Medium undead, neutral evil*

**Armor Class** 18 (plate)

**Hit Points** 135 (18d8 + 54)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)

**Skills** Perception +6, Stealth +5

**Saving Throws** Dex +5, Wis +6

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

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** exhaustion, poisoned

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

**Languages** Common, Giant

**Challenge** 11 (7,200 XP)

Yjolgr (yeh-OHL-gehr) is a powerful goliath wight.

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

## Actions

**Multiattack.** Yjolgr makes three attacks, either with his longsword or longbow. He can use Life Drain in place of one longsword attack.

**Life Drain.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 20 (5d6 + 3) necrotic damage. The target must succeed on a DC15 Constitution saving throw or its hit point maximum is reduced by an

amount equal to the damage taken. This reduction lasts until the target finishes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0.

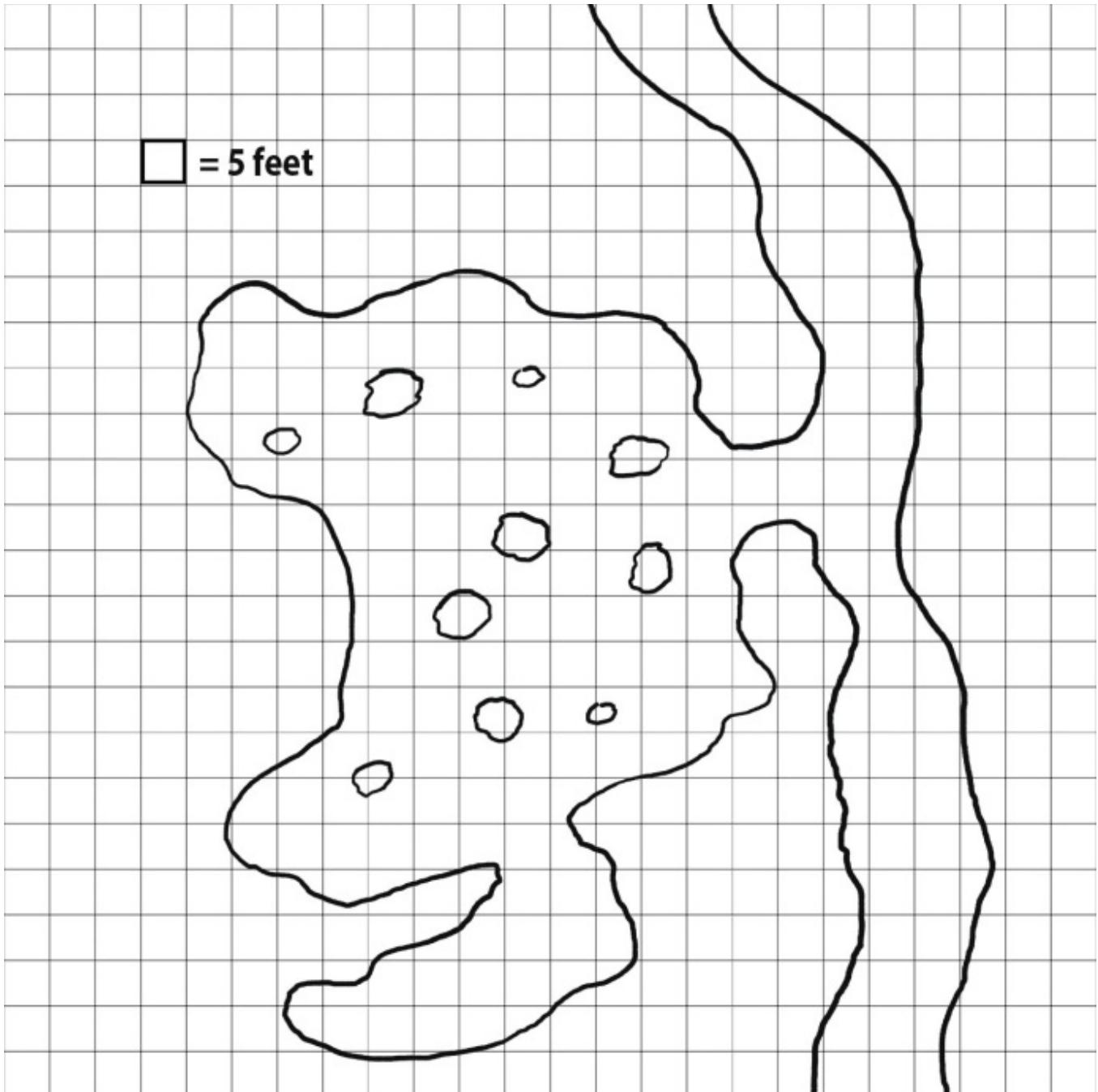
A humanoid slain by this attack rises 24 hours later as a zombie under Yjolgr's control, unless the humanoid is restored to life or its body is destroyed. Yjolgr can have no more than twelve zombies under his control at one time.

**Longsword.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d8 + 5) slashing damage, or 10 (1d10 + 5) slashing damage if used with two hands, plus 10 (3d6) necrotic damage.

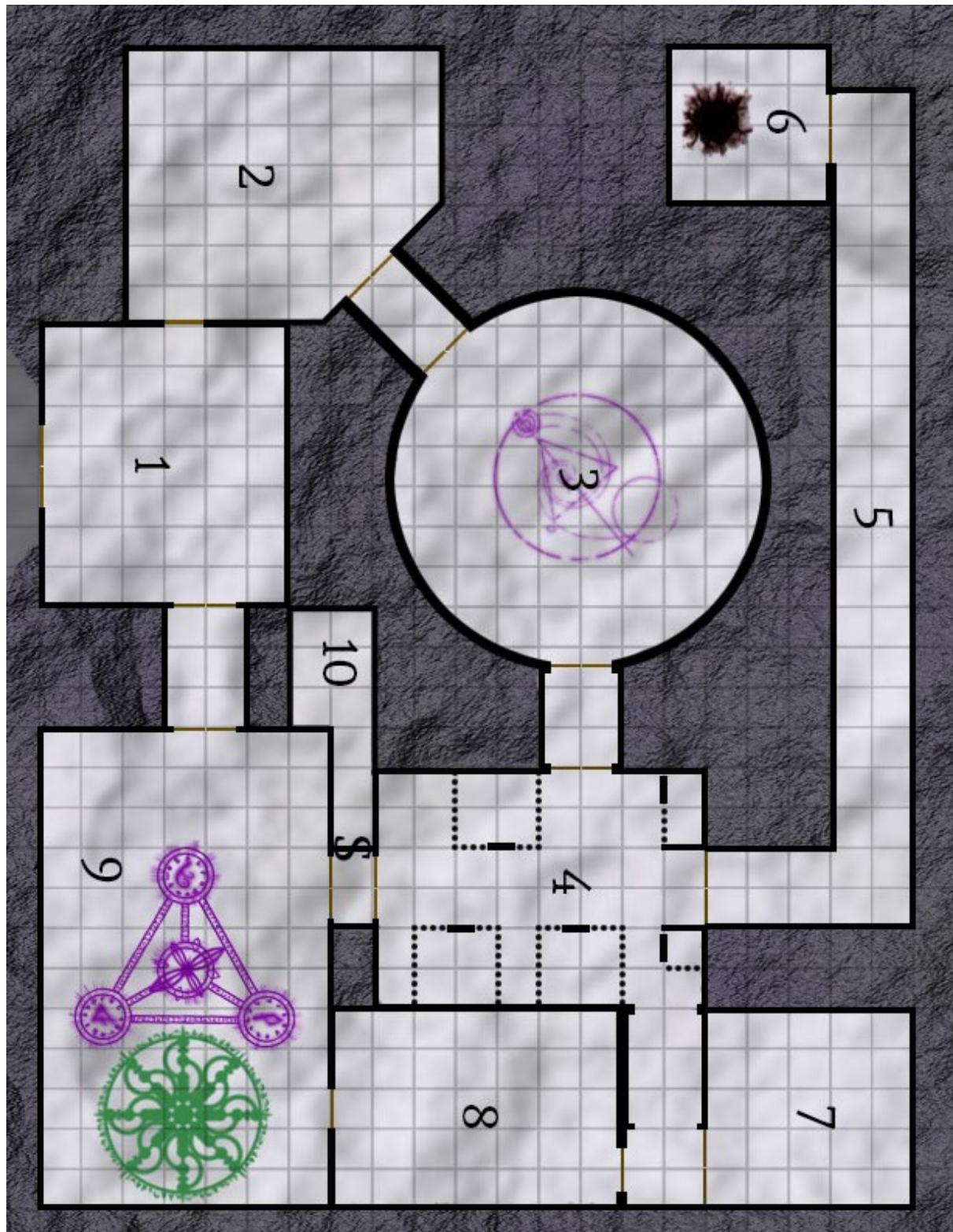
**Longbow.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d8 + 1) piercing damage plus 10 (3d6) necrotic damage.

\*based on Naergoth Bladelord, *Rise of Tiamat*, pg. 90.

# APPENDIX. MAP A FRAYED MIND



# APPENDIX. MAP THE WIZARD'S LAIR



# APPENDIX. THE GUARDIAN'S LAIR

Use this encounter if running **Bonus Objective A**.

When the characters imbibe the unknown black fluid from area 8, their bodies crumple to the floor, and their minds are whisked away elsewhere. Due to their free will in drinking the potion, they receive no saving throw for this effect. If a character does not wish to swallow the potion, they are able to attempt a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw in order to negate the effect of the potion.

## AREA INFORMATION

This area features:

**Dimensions & Terrain.** The chamber the characters find themselves in is 40 feet by 40 feet. The walls, floor and ceiling are made of limestone, as are the dozen sarcophagi that fill the room. No doors exist to let a soul in or out, and no windows reveal what might be outside the crypt.

**Lighting.** Several low-burning braziers illuminate the crypt dimly.

Each character arrives in the Guardian's lair alone, and are unable to find one another. They seem to be there physically, and have all of the gear they were carrying or wearing. Several tense moments after their arrival, a woman's powerful voice fills the crypt. "Why do you seek the *Book*?"

## CREATURES/NPCs

The spirit of a **gynosphinx** named Rathamila is bound forever to this place.

**Objectives/Goals.** Rathamila serves the *Book of Vile Darkness* by weeding out those unworthy of seeking it. Those who seek out her presence can be given boons to survive their search for the tome, and those who fail her tests are destroyed before they can waste the *Book*'s time. The sphinx once claimed ownership over the *Book*, though in time she fell prey to its power and now is bound to its service.

**What Does She Know?** The sphinx is not here to answer the questions of others, only to have her own questions answered. If one should pass her tests, however, she can grant them limited protection against the power of the *Book of Vile Darkness*.

### RATHAMILA

The body of the sphinx has desiccated over the long years in this place. Her mangy fur and feathers are now shades of gray and black, her skin dry and cracking when she moves. The flesh of her face and eyes has long since rotted away, leaving only a ragged skull with embers of red that glow within its sockets.

Rathamila's monster type is Undead, rather than Monstrosity. In addition, she gains the following descriptor:

**Turn Resistance:** The sphinx has advantage on Saving Throws against any effect that turns Undead.

Though they are each alone, Rathamila's existence is the same for each of the characters. Combat damage affects her as a single creature; characters simply cannot rely on each other's aid during combat.

However, how the sphinx interacts with each character, and also *appears* to interact with them is different for each character, depending on their actions. If one character chooses to only speak with her and does not enter combat, they do not see Rathamila engaged in combat.

### CONVERSING WITH THE GUARDIAN

Those within the crypt, no matter their location, are subject to a *zone of truth* effect. As they begin to speak with Rathamila, they can feel this magic settle on them, and can resist by succeeding on a DC 20 Charisma saving throw, or can choose to fail. Rathamila is immune to this effect, though she often has no reason to lie.

The first question the sphinx asks is quite important to how she will act. Characters who seek the book for selfish, evil purposes are ones that the *Book* wants to find it. Secretly, however, Rathamila does not wish the book to be found again. Characters who seek the *Book* to keep it hidden or attempt to destroy it gain favor in her eyes, as do those who seek to thwart other evil-doers who seek to make the tome their own.

### ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

- **Very Weak and Weak:** No change.
- **Strong:** The **gynosphinx** begins with 208 hit points.
- **Very Strong:** Replace the **gynosphinx** with the stats of an **androsphinx**.

## JUDGMENT OF THE GUARDIAN

As characters attempt to convince Rathamila to help them, or to defeat her in combat, keep track of their collective actions against her total hit points. Deal with combat damage as usual and non-combat interactions as follows. Non-combat reduction of hit points does not appear to "harm" Rathamila, it simply reflects her acquiescing to the character's requests in a simple fashion.

- First Answer: If a character answers that they wish to find the book for evil or selfish reasons, remove 5 hit points from Rathamila. If the character wishes to find it to hide or destroy it, remove 10 hit points. If they wish to foil another being from gaining possession of the *Book* in order to keep it from being used for evil, remove 10 hit points.
- Subsequent Answers: Rathamila will offer either riddles or questions of morality to gauge a person's worth. For each correct answer, given her own goals, reduce her hit points by  $10 + \text{the character's Charisma bonus}$  (minimum bonus of 0). Being bound to the will of the *Book*, answers of questionable morality or even blatant evil still lower her hit points, but only by 5.
- Flippant Answers or Threats: Threatening Rathamila or responding with silly or useless answers bolster her will to deny a character their wish to find the *Book*. These cases cause her to regain 10 hit points.

Once Rathamila is "defeated", she grants (either gladly or begrudgingly, depending on the situation) the characters their boon. She then bids the characters farewell, and returns them to their bodies.

Resources used during their out-of-body experiences are found to be unspent. Spell slots, abilities, hit points, and items are as they were prior to drinking the strange concoction.

## BOON OF THE GUARDIAN

For the next 24 hours, a character who has been granted the boon may re-roll a failed save against effects caused by the vortex in the ritual chamber (area 9). They may do this a total of three times before the power of the boon fades away. If a character has advantage on their rolls, they may make their re-roll at advantage. Characters who do not have advantage, or suffer from disadvantage, may make their boon re-roll at advantage.

## SAMPLE RIDDLES AND QUESTIONS

Here is a list of riddles and questions which Rathamalia may use during her talk with a character.

### RIDDLES

My tines are long, my tines are short, my tines end 'ere, my first report.

**Lightning.**

Never ahead, ever behind, yet flying swiftly past; For a child I last forever, for adults I am gone too fast.

**Childhood.**

It has a golden head, it has a golden tail, but still it has no body.

**A coin.**

A leathery snake, with a stinging bite, I'll stay coiled up, unless I must fight.

**A whip.**

At night they arrive without being fetched, yet by day they are lost without being stolen.

**Stars.**

### QUESTIONS

*When judging the answer of a question, base the "correctness" of an answer on the character's own alignment, not that of the sphinx or your own. The sphinx is judging the characters on their own beliefs rather than its own moral code.*

You find a tortoise crawling through the sands of a scorching desert, but choose not to save it. Why?

You and your mother are imprisoned by slavers. Your mother attempts to escape, but is captured and sentenced to death. To make an example of her, you are ordered to be the one who hangs her. If you decline, the slavers will kill her and another prisoner. What do you do?

A lord who has a terrible reputation for maiming their servants is attacked by someone else. You see the attack, but cannot help either side. Afterward, you find a pouch filled with gold, enough for a decent living for several people for a year. What do you do with it?



# APPENDIX. SIGHT ROT

This painful infection causes bleeding from the eyes and eventually blinds the victim.

If a beast or humanoid fails its saving throw and becomes infected, the creature's vision starts to become blurry. The creature takes a -1 penalty to attack rolls and ability checks that rely on sight. At the end of each long rest after the symptoms appear, the penalty worsens by 1. When it reaches -5, the victim is blinded until its sight is restored by magic such as *lesser restoration* or *heal*.

Sight rot can be cured using a rare flower called Eyebright, which grows in some swamps. Given an hour, a character who has proficiency with a herbalism kit can turn the flower into one dose of ointment. Applied to the eyes before a long rest, one dose of it prevents the disease from worsening after that rest. After three doses, the ointment cures the disease entirely.

# PLAYER HANDOUT 1.

## ROD OF ABSORPTION

Characters completing this adventure's objective unlock this magic item.

### ROD OF ABSORPTION

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*Rod, very rare (requires attunement)*

While holding this rod, you can use your reaction to absorb a spell that is targeting only you and not with an area of affect. The absorbed spell's effect is canceled, and the spell's energy – not the spell itself – is stored in the rod. The energy has the same level as the spell when it was cast. The rod can absorb and store up to 50 levels of energy over the course of its existence. Once the rod absorbs 50 levels of energy, it can't absorb more. If you are targeted by a spell that the rod can't store, the rod has no effect on that spell.

When you become attuned to the rod, you know how many levels of energy the rod has absorbed over the course of its existence, and how many levels of spell energy it currently has stored.

If you are a spell-caster holding the rod, you can convert energy stored in it into spell slots to cast spells you have prepared or know. You can create spell slots only of a level equal to or lower than your own spell slots, up to a maximum of 5th-level. You use the stored levels in place of your slots, but otherwise cast the spell as normal. For example, you can use 3 levels stored in the rod as a 3rd-level spell slot.

A newly found rod has 1d10 levels of spell energy stored in it already. A rod that can no longer absorb spell energy and has no energy remaining becomes nonmagical.

The rod is a two-foot long rod of suth-wood, carved with various alchemical symbols.

This item can be found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

# APPENDIX. DUNGEON MASTER TIPS

This adventure is designed for **three to seven 11th-16th level characters** and is optimized for **five characters with an average party level (APL) of 14**. Characters outside this level range cannot participate in this adventure.

## NEW TO D&D ADVENTURERS LEAGUE?

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

To DM an adventure, you **must** have 3 to 7 players—each with their own character whose level is within the adventure's level range. Characters playing in a **hardcover** adventure may continue to play to but if they play a different hardcover adventure, they **can't return** to the first one if they're outside its level range.

## PREPARING THE ADVENTURE

Before you start play, consider the following:

- Read through the adventure, taking notes of anything you'd like to highlight or remind yourself of while running the adventure, such as a way you'd like to portray an NPC or a tactic you'd like to use in a combat. Familiar yourself with the adventure's appendices and handouts.
- Gather any resources you'd like to use to aid you in running this adventure--such as notecards, a DM screen, miniatures, and battlemaps.
- Ask the players to provide you with relevant character information, such as name, race, class, and level; passive Wisdom (Perception), and anything specified as notable by the adventure (such as backgrounds, traits, flaws, etc.)

Players can play an adventure they previously played as a Player or Dungeon Master, but may only play it once with a given character. Ensure each player has their character's adventure logsheet (if not, get one from the organizer). The players fill out the adventure name, session number, date, and your name and DCI number. In addition, the player also fills in the starting values for advancement and treasure checkpoints, downtime days, and renown. These values are updated at the conclusion of the session.

Each player is responsible for maintaining an accurate logsheet. If you have time, you can do a

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

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

## ADJUSTING THIS ADVENTURE

When combat is a possibility, the adventure will provide a sidebar that helps you to determine the best mix/number of opponents to provide them with to create an appropriate challenge. While you're not bound to these adjustments; they're here for your convenience and consideration.

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

### Determining Party Strength

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