

TYRANT OF ZHENNIL KEEP



A 5E SOLO GAMEBOOK
BY PAUL BIMLER

TYRANT OF ZHENTIL KEEP

*A SOLO GAMEBOOK
FOR DUNGEONS & DRAGONS (FIFTH EDITION)*

-ADVENTURE BOOKLET-

BY PAUL BIMLER

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TYRANT OF ZHENTIL KEEP: A DM-LESS ADVENTURE!



INTRODUCTION



Welcome to the second in our series of solo adventures, *Tyrant of Zhentil Keep*, the first instalment in a two-part gamebook quest for D&D Fifth Edition. Briefly, this is a D&D 5e adventure designed for one level 3 player, without a DM. It can also be played by two players without a DM, as a DM+1 adventure or even as a full campaign with multiple players, but it is primarily designed for a solo player. The written narrative entries in this book serve in place of the dungeon master, and guide you through the adventure. These solo DM-less quests are not trying to be anything other than what they are – a stand-in for your regular game with your Dungeon Master. If you have not yet played with a dungeon master, I highly recommend you do so as soon as possible, or become a DM yourself (the most fun) and run a game for some local players. Actual tabletop D&D, in a social setting, is how the game was always meant to be played.

But I'd like to think that this type of solo adventure would be a welcome diversion for

those who, despite all efforts, cannot find a game, who need more D&D than their dungeon master can provide, or who are DMs themselves that don't often get a chance to play.

Like the first 5e Solo Gamebook, (*The Death Knight's Squire*), this adventure is set in the Forgotten Realms. It continues on from *Death Knight's Squire* sequentially and narratively, presupposing that the character who successfully completed the first quest (and advanced to level 3) is now embarking on a new quest. This quest is bigger, badder, and more dangerous, and I hope even more fun for you as players.

Tyrant of Zhentil Keep is a mini-sandbox in gamebook form, with multiple sidequests and locations to explore. Such exploration enables the collection of artefacts and information, all leading towards a central story arc that becomes clear as the book progresses. Where *Death Knight's Squire* had a clear-cut mission at its core, this adventure is pure exploration at first, similar to how a game with a Dungeon Master might run. The

nature of your quest becomes clearer as you advance, collecting snippets of information and encountering various NPCs, locations, and sidequests.

So what will you need for this quest? For now a *Player's Handbook* is a handy thing to have, so you can learn what new abilities your character has gained. If you did not begin with a level 2 PC and play through the *Death Knight's Squire* adventure, you could go and do so now! Or you could just create a new 3rd level PC and play using that character (see 'Character Creation' below). Even if you have read the introduction to *Death Knight's Squire*, read this new introduction as well, as the mechanics and system of play are slightly different to the first book. For example, in this book you will see new map styles, you will see combat sheets, and different ways of navigating through the narrative text, including codewords.

This adventure is not easy. The whole idea of 'balance'... meh. Real life isn't balanced, and sometimes you will encounter things beyond, or below, your abilities. Roleplay your way out of stuff, sometimes avoiding potential combat if you can. It's a marathon, not a sprint. Be clever. Take your time with each entry and really consider what you should do. I like opportunities for roleplay and I've tried my best to give you options in this regard. Be aware, however, that as this is a gamebook, the amount of options will always necessarily be limited.

If you do not have access to the Dungeons & Dragons books like the Players Handbook, there is a handy PDF that Wizards of the Coast have kindly put out. It covers all the basic rules and can be found at this web address:

<http://dnd.wizards.com/articles/features/basicrules>

MULTI-PART ADVENTURE

Before you begin the adventure, I need to inform you that this is part one of a two-part quest. There are multiple sidequests which you can undertake and complete within this game, but the main quest takes place over two books, so please don't be disappointed when the adventure pauses at the end of this book. I was initially going to make the adventure in one book, but several authors advised me to split it into two parts.

The next book, *Citadel of the Raven*, will complete the quest. Rest assured, I am working to get this out as quickly as possible. You can expect it in early 2018.

MAPS

Important note: Don't look at the maps until you are specifically directed to! You will only be spoiling the surprise and gameplay for yourself.

This adventure is played using two booklets:

- ◆ The **Adventure Booklet**, which contains numbered entries that form the narrative basis of the adventure, and also map entries and combat sheets.
- ◆ The **Maps Booklet**, which contains maps that the PC may journey through during the game, as directed by the text. You may use these with tokens or simply as a visual reference, the choice is yours.

If you have access to a printer, you can print the Maps Booklet, preferably in colour, for the physical tabletop experience. Or, if you want to pursue the quest from your laptop or tablet, there are .png files of all the maps provided in a compressed .zip file. Just load up the map you need into Roll20 or whatever when the text directs you to that map, and

place and move your tokens using your device.

The PDF contains active links that you click on to move you between entries.

In the maps booklet, you will sometimes see numbers placed on little pieces of parchment. These represent numbered entries and you can turn to those entries in the Adventure Booklet to explore those locations, or to move to adjacent maps. It will all become clear once you start playing.

SPAWN POINTS

On the battle maps, you will see little circles with letters inside them. These are spawn points for monsters, NPCs and PCs (you). This is where they start for the encounter, but they are not stuck there. Once spawned, they may move anywhere they want, up to their allowance.

TOKENS

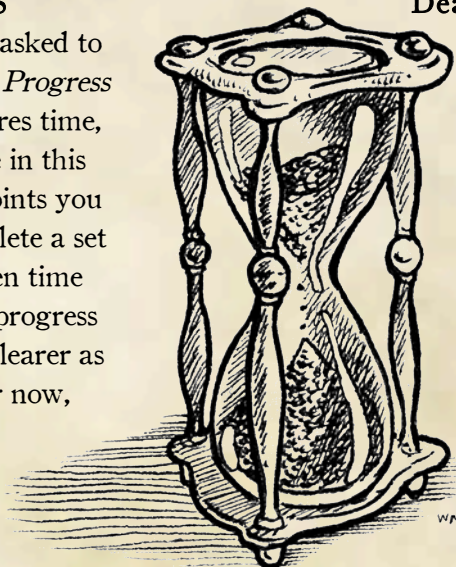
If you are playing a tabletop style of adventure with a printed maps booklet, find something to function as PC and monster tokens: game tokens, coins, dice, anything with a bit of weight.

GRID

With maps featuring a square grid, each square measures 5 ft. unless otherwise stated.

PROGRESS POINTS

Occasionally you will be asked to keep track of a new stat: *Progress Points*. This score measures time, and time is of the essence in this adventure. At various points you will only be able to complete a set number of tasks in a given time period, each costing one progress point. This will become clearer as the game progresses. For now, create a box on your character sheet marked *Progress Points* and leave it empty.



COMBAT SHEETS

All encounters in this adventure are managed via the use of custom combat sheets, which are found at the back of the Adventure Booklet (but don't look now!) They progress you through a series of events that make up each encounter, and which can take many different paths.

You will need to roll dice, saving throws and all other appropriate rolls for yourself AND any enemies. Keep in mind that not every encounter is what you would call 'balanced'. You will enter some dangerous places in the course of this adventure, and if you blunder into somewhere you shouldn't be, you may end up paying for it with your life! There are several encounters which, if you find yourself in them through foolishness or poor judgment, will result in your almost certain death. However, I have tried where appropriate to provide opportunities for escape and other solutions to combat encounters other than just hacking away and hoping for the best.

FLANKING

Unless otherwise stated, flanking rules are used in every combat encounter. See the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, p251, for rules on flanking.

HOUSE RULES

Death saves:

There are no death saves in this adventure, unless there are two or more PCs (see below), or an NPC present. If you die, you will simply have to roll up another PC and try again!

Max HP:

To balance out the above rule of no death saves, and to account for the fact that there is only one of you, we've added the additional rule that when you level up, you take max HP instead of rolling. This rule has

been introduced in this book, and was not there in *Death Knight's Squire*. It keeps the combat a bit more interesting and means you're not so squishy! So, take max HP for every level of your PC (and your con mod too). If you played *Death Knight's Squire*, you may retroactively award max HP to the character you went through that quest with.

MULTIPLAYER AND DM VERSIONS OF THE QUEST

If you are playing with a friend as a two-player party, **death saves are allowed**. To make the game more balanced, you should also double monster numbers, unless fighting a significant villain or final boss (they will be marked as such in the text). In that case, you should increase the villain's / Boss's AC by 2, and its HP by half as much again. Also, ignore the max HP rule for your multiple PCs, unless you want a really easy adventure.

When the narrative text calls for skill checks, both PCs will get to try, but the DC is raised by 2.

Also, keep tabs on *who* is interacting with whatever is going on in terms of what's happening in the story - it could be both of you, or, if appropriate, it could be just one of you while the other stands a little way off observing.

You can also run this adventure as a DM+1 campaign. The DM keeps the Adventure Booklet to themselves, runs the combat, and both DM and player have the Maps Booklet visible. The DM controls the Maps Booklet and reads the entries to the player.

You could also combine both the above methods to run this as a DM'd adventure with two players. Beyond that, I'll leave the maths up to you!

DM IDEAS: DMs, if you are running this adventure for any number of players then obviously you have free license to read whatever entries you want and examine the elements of the book in depth. Whole encounters of your own could easily be

inserted into the adventure, as long as you know the start and end entry numbers. On larger maps where progress points are being accumulated (such as Map 1) you could add additional map destinations or replace existing encounters with ones of your own. For smaller focus maps that contain 1-3 encounters (such as Map 5), you could replace the entire map, subbing in a dungeon entrance and subsequent adventure, or a wilderness encounter, a village... whatever. Theoretically, this adventure could serve as the framework for a multi-week campaign.



SPELLCASTING

I have given options throughout the adventure for casting spells (eg: "*Do you know the spell **Detect Magic**? You could use this to see whether this weapon is enchanted or not.*"). So if you're playing a

mage, think about what spells could be useful in a solo adventure. (Hint: combat spells is what you should probably focus on, although you will get occasional opportunities to use other spells as well). When in combat, you do not need to be prompted by the text entry to cast spells.

So, feel free to cast spells even if the text does not call for it. Use common sense. For example, if you want to cast *Feather Fall* to prevent fall damage, but the option is not given, still go ahead and cast it, avoiding the damage. Even if the options are not given, if you think the spell is appropriate for the situation and all the conditions are met, then go with it. Ask the question "What would a DM do?" Also, keep track of your spell slots.

RESTING AND HEALING

Opportunities will be given to rest at certain points. Follow normal rules for resting and recovering hp.

If you have healing abilities (Lay hands, Goodberry, Cure wounds etc etc), or healing potions, use those when you like and as appropriate, following normal 5e rules.

SKILLS

Skill checks will be asked for when appropriate.

NON-DARKVISION PCs

If you are playing a character *without* darkvision, then you will need torches. When you are in combat situations in dark places, you will not be able to wield a two-handed weapon or a shield and a weapon simultaneously, and you will not be able to use two-weapon fighting, unless that space is illuminated in some way. Outside there will always be a small amount of light. So, when you are entering dark spaces, it is presumed

you are always kindling a torch (otherwise entering such spaces and encountering scenarios is basically impossible). This rule is circumvented if you happen to find some aid to vision within the adventure.

ADVANTAGE

Be honest with yourself when awarding advantage to yourself or your opponents. Example: If you are a ranger with a favoured terrain of forest and you roll for stealth while in a forest, you can award yourself advantage. Or, if you are making an attack roll for an orc who has trapped you in a net, then roll for the orc with advantage. Ask yourself, "What would a DM do?"

HONESTY AND FAIRNESS

In order to give yourself a great, challenging game, the author assumes that you will play honestly and fairly. This means letting the dice fall where they may, keeping track of spell slots, etc etc, running monsters true to form. You're really only cheating yourself if you don't!

OTHER ISSUES

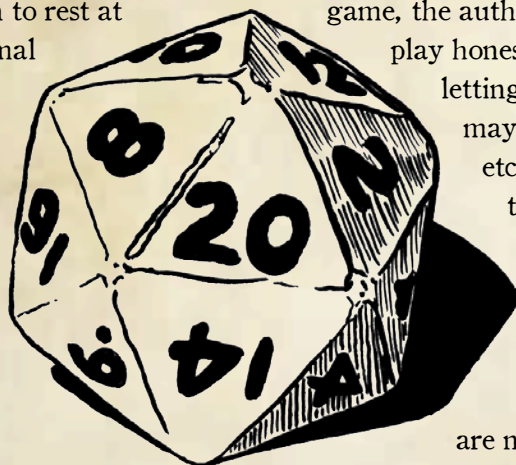
Any other issues where you are not sure of the judgement or how you should play it, just exercise common sense and ask yourself...

WHAT WOULD A DM DO?

This should be your guide when in doubt.

JOURNAL

A good idea is noting down clues and information that you think might come in handy later on. And they are there – clues and important bits of information are peppered throughout the adventure, so the more you are paying attention, the higher the chance you will succeed in this mission!



CLASS FEATS AND ABILITIES

Obviously in D&D, classes have special abilities: a cleric's Turn Undead ability, a paladin's Divine Sense and so on. Where possible, I have tried to work these into the story, and you should feel free to bring these into combat and other situations, when called for. If there's undead nearby, the text might read "Are you a paladin? If so, go to entry..." and then the text may inform you there that your Divine Sense is activated. There are also feats which are mainly used during combat. With these, and other feats that can be used independently, you do not need to wait to be prompted by the adventure text. Use them when and where you see fit.

GO WITH IT

Hey, feel free to improvise. The last thing I want this adventure to be is too prescriptive. Even if there's no DM, you might decide that the monster you are fighting does something different, even if it's not so great for your PC. If it's in the spirit of the game, go with it.

SOUNDS

Clicking this icon will play audio fx:

DEMO SOUND



Audio will only play in Adobe Acrobat Reader (free to install). Also, make sure the correct version of Flash is installed. Refer this link for more info:

<https://helpx.adobe.com/acrobat/using/flash-player-needed-acrobat-reader.html>

REFERENCE INFORMATION

Occasionally the text instructs you to refer to the *Player's Handbook* or *Dungeon Master's Guide*. If you are serious about getting into D&D as a hobby, these are essential for you to own. If you don't have them handy, however, you can usually find most things through an internet search of the relevant term or item.

SIDEQUESTS

Another way in which this adventure differs from *Death Knight's Squire* is the inclusion of multiple sidequests. Throughout this gamebook, there are quite a few little side adventures that you can participate in that are supplementary to the main adventure, ensuring extensive replayability of the module. You generally keep track of them via the use of codewords. Keep an eye out for these! Rest assured, you will know the main mission when it presents itself.

REPLAYABILITY

Confession time – I may have gotten a bit carried away with the number of entries! At a little under 500 entries, I think this is definitely in the running for the longest D&D solo adventure ever written (I've no idea if it is or not) but I think the level of detail ensures replayability. And even if you choose the same paths on a subsequent playthrough, there are still multiple courses of action you can take on those paths, rendering the number of possible routes through the quest practically endless. Even more so if you are playing as a different PC every time.

CHARACTER CREATION

If this is your first time playing one of our solo adventures, please create a level 3 character, equipping them with gear according to class. In addition to that, let's say they've already completed one quest and received 300 gp to spend on whatever they want, which they did straight after that quest (consult *Player's Handbook* p.145-150, standard D&D armour, weapons and equipment lists). For ability scores, use point-buy.

If you played *Death Knight's Squire*, you will have already levelled your character in preparation for this quest, and gained loot which you can use to buy items *during* this quest. If you have not yet done so, take them up to level 3 now. Another small change – in *Death Knight's Squire*, XP was awarded

after combat, but starting with this adventure we will be awarding XP by milestone. Expect to level up at the successful completion of this quest.

I'm envisioning this series being sequential, and going for a while, so your story will be formed within these adventures, but please also come up with a compelling personal backstory and background for your character as well, just because its fun, and helps you to enjoy the adventure. Your backstory will give the events within your quest a unique flavour and context, so this is highly encouraged.

I'm not going to put restrictions on race or class – go with whatever you're feeling, but keep in mind that this adventure is designed to be balanced with PHB+1 characters. In other words, use the Player's Handbook and, if you like, **one other source** to create your PC. That one other source can be either

Volo's Guide to Monsters, Elemental Evil, Sword Coast Adventurer's Guide, or Xanathar's Guide to Everything, but **not** Unearthed Arcana. If you're new to D&D just stick with creating a character using the Player's Handbook, as that already contains numerous options for character creation. Note also that, for the sake of my own sanity, I do not include feat options for non-core classes in the adventure text. I can't possibly account for every known class and their feats by level and still keep the adventure entries at a manageable size! So if you are playing a non-core class, and in general really, accept that you won't be able to do everything you can think of – that's just the nature of this style of play – and enjoy *Tyrant of Zhentil Keep* for what it is.

With all that out of the way, let's get into the adventure!



BACKSTORY

Flight From Shadows



You wander far.

At some point as you cross the Anauroch Desert, the year changes to 1350 DR.

Halfway through the century, and certainly the end of a momentous decade for Faerun. So much has happened: the departure of the elves from Cormanthor; the Rise of the Witch-King Zhengyi in Damara and Vaasa; the end of the Age of Humanity itself!

But these things are far from your mind as you toil across the dry, wasted landscape of the Netheril; heading east, sometimes north-east, as the wind takes you, but then again not heading anywhere really, just walking. You have seen much already, and for a while you have the feeling that shadows are on your tail, so you keep walking, trudging on until the weight of those shadows begins to lift.

As you cross the Anauroch, several days at a time pass when you see not a soul. You embrace the solitude and spend that time talking aloud to yourself about everything you have encountered, and everything you

have learnt so far in your life. Many realizations crystallize during your crossing of the Anauroch... but soon enough, you begin to crave the company of another being. Any friendly humanoid really.

As your supplies start to run out, your solitude becomes a threat to your survival. On the third day after your waterskin runs dry, you see a dot - no, several small dots on the horizon travelling towards you, oscillating like specters across the dry, hot distance. Your spirit lifts. You are saved from dying of thirst by a travelling caravan consisting of several friendly half-orc families, who are running from shadows of their own, it seems. They tell a tale of persecution in the lands you are about to enter. They speak of tyrants, powerful despots and secret networks (the word *Zhentarim* is mentioned several times, usually in conjunction with the name *Manshoon*) which makes you weigh for a moment the option of turning south and avoiding what lies ahead. That thought

enters your mind for but a breath, following which you chide yourself for your cowardice. No, ever since you set out on this journey, you were resolved to simply keep walking in the direction you had chosen, and now your resolve is firmer than ever. Whatever crosses your path, you will deal with it as you always have; with keen instinct and prodigious skill in combat.

You say goodbye to the caravan and continue. Slowly, civilization - or at least the remnants of it - begin to emerge from the shifting sands. Ruins of Netherese spires, and the Plain of the Standing Stones bear witness to the great civilizations that once prospered here, when great cities hovered above the desert floor. The great floating city of Thultanthar, now lost somewhere in the Shadow Plane, was the greatest of these. You walk on, and wonder to yourself if this desert has an ending, when slowly the landscape begins to change, endless sands giving way to grassy hills the color of wheat. Then suddenly, as if springing from the

landscape itself, a great, emerald forest rises before you, stretching far north. You enter the Border Forest, continuing east, and after two day's peaceful travel through its green depths you emerge, seeing before you a river winding its way through a pristine landscape towards a huge inland body of water. A locked sea - the Moonsea, to be precise. You'd always known it was here, but nothing had prepared you for its grandeur.

You walk following the River Tesh, and traffic on the road picks up. You see numerous farms dotting the landscape, and on the faces of these simple folk you read the lines of worry, of hardship and oppression, in stark contrast to the beauty of the land you travel through.

After three days you reach a town called Teshwave where you spend a night and replenish your supplies, and can't help noticing that these people, despite the beauty and grandeur of this inland realm, look harassed, exhausted. Ill-treated. Over ale, you listen in on whispered conversations. You



hear names spoken in bitter tones –
Manshoon, Fzoul, Semmemon.

An old merchant enjoys your company so much that he buys you several drinks and gives you a thorough run-down on the geography of the area. Later on, in your room, you go over his description in your head several times and cement the local geography in place. (See West Moonsea map, above).

The next day dawns grey and gloomy and you depart Teshwave, making your way towards the next city, the name of which you learnt the night before: Zhentil Keep.

It takes you three more days to reach Zhentil Keep, and as you approach you see ruins dotting the landscape, dimly lit in the evening light. It appears this was once the scene of a major conflict; you even notice what appears to be the scorching of dragonfire: long, dark grey streaks running the length of ruined buildings and roadways.

Then, suddenly, the granite walls of Zhentil Keep rise before you, banners flying and guards manning her battlements. Right from your first sight of Zhentil Keep, you see that it is not really a beautiful city, but rather built to withstand battle. It has a grim, imposing look to it.

Dusk slowly turns to evening as you descend from the north down the long slope towards the fortified town. Just before dipping below the horizon, the sun emerges from between a gap in the clouds, spreading a warm golden light over the landscape. The broad river Tesh, like a vein of gold running through stone, winds its way towards the Moonsea some fifteen miles to the east.

You sense, strongly, that something awaits you within those tall, weathered walls, some quest or task. For better or worse, you stride up to the guards who man the gates, eyeing you warily.

Turn to entry 1.



THE ADVENTURE BEGINS...



1 play audio

Four staunch-looking warriors guard the entrance to the city of Zhentil Keep. "Welcome to Zhentil Keep," the lead one says gruffly. "State your business." "Just travelling through," you reply. "Hngh," he grunts, surveying you from head to toe. "Well, mind your step, traveller. Obey Manshoon's edicts, stay out of trouble and you'll be just fine." You nod to the guards and walk past them, through the city gates. The street you are on leads directly into the heart of the city, and not far off you can see a market square, where merchants are packing up their tents as trade ends for the day. A quick look around reveals a city that's not exactly dirty, but definitely in need of a spruce-up. Buildings are thick wood structures or older stone edifices, damaged in places by what looks like the scars of battle. Cobble is poorly maintained and there are potholes here and there. The overall impression is of a once proud city that's taken a few knocks. The citizens look like they've taken a beating too; slumping around, not exactly full of the joy of life, like many others you have seen in this

expansive valley they look browbeaten, harassed, and at the end of their tether. On both sides of the street you see businesses shutting up shop and owners heading home. The only establishment still open is a tavern to your right, a sign hung above the door stating its name as *The Scoundrel's Tankard*. Just your sort of place. Further down the street, you see a man standing on a crate, with a large crowd gathered around him. He appears to be delivering some kind of sermon, although it is hard to make out what he is saying over the noise of carts clattering past you. You feel a tiny drop of rain on the back of your hand, and look up to see low, grey clouds threatening a downpour.

- ◆ *Do you want to go and listen to the man's sermon? Go to 158.*
- ◆ *Or, you could visit *The Scoundrel's Tankard*. Go to 109.*
- ◆ *Otherwise, if you are mindful of the late hour, you could look for an inn. Go to 6.*

(Tip: Hover over page numbers for link)

2

Huon's face lights up with a broad smile, as do the faces of all the other old men at the table. "Excellent!" he says, standing and embracing you warmly. "I can't tell you what this means to us, friend! You *will* be rewarded, but beyond that, you will always have friends in the Knights of Myth Drannor! And you will have saved the Moonsea from tyranny."

If you were imprisoned, the knight who rescued you returns your belongings to you.

"Go now," Huon says, placing a hand on your shoulder. "Spend the day here if you wish, and purchase whatever you need for your journey. But leave on the morrow, and do not delay any longer. At dawn tomorrow, leave the city. A mile from the gates, Teodric," he indicates the Knight who led you here, "will meet you with a horse, and guide you to the foot of the Dragonspines, about thirty miles' ride. After that, you are on your own."

One of the Knights, a very old character who looks more like a mage than a fighter, also approaches, with a blue bottle. "To heal your wounds," he says in a quiet voice. "I fear you will need it, young adventurer!" (*Add 1 healing potion to your inventory*).

After exchanging final words and receiving their blessings, you leave through the low door and emerge in the alleyway. You walk quickly, finding your way back out onto the street, reeling from what you have been thrust into the middle of - but you cannot help feeling this quest is vitally important. Zhentil Keep is waking up, and businesses are opening for trading. You unroll the map of Zhentil Keep that the Knights gave to you and survey the various places that you could visit.

- ◆ *Go to Map Entry 1.*

3 PLAY AUDIO

Quickly you dive out of the way, just in time! A bolt of magical energy rips across the passageway from a point on the left wall, slamming into the opposite wall with a deafening crack!

You avoided this magical trap, but any benefits you may have had from stealth are now gone. Take note of this and proceed to entry 194.

4

You move left to one of the alcoves and see a plaque, bolted to the wall at the back of the small recess. It reads:

Here lies Dalrock Blackwood, champion of the Moonsea and defender of Zhentil, loyal captain of the Zhentilar and personal guard of Zhentar himself. Rest in Bane's Might, valiant warrior.

These are small crypts, holding coffins perhaps? Whatever the case, the remains of warriors lie here. You briefly glance at the other alcoves - they appear similar.

- ◆ *To continue onwards to the room ahead, go to 172.*
- ◆ *To return to the junction, go to 194 and choose a different option.*

5

Looks like you'll have to do a bit more running to get yourself out of this situation. You turn and run quickly out of the alleyway, hearing another bolt skitter behind you just as you exit.

You run for a good long while, until you are certain that you are out of danger.

Return to Map 1 / Map Entry 1 and continue to your next chosen destination.

6

Night is now falling and you start walking towards Market Square, checking the main thoroughfare and side streets for suitable inns.

As you walk down one street that leads off the main street, you see a small figure slumped on a stoop, taking regular swigs from a whisky bottle. As you pass you catch sight of a halfling's face, and he looks absolutely miserable. You bid him a good night, if only to try and cheer him up a bit. "Is it?" he replies miserably. "Been a while since I had a good night. Anyway, fare thee well, stranger."

- ◆ *Do you stop and ask this sorrowful character what troubles him? Turn to 408*
- ◆ *Or do you continue on in your search for accomodation? Go to 221.*

7

There is nothing in this woman's behaviour that suggests she has any ill intentions toward you.

- ◆ *To accept her offer of a goblet of wine, go to 466.*
- ◆ *To make your apologies and leave, go to 240.*

8



Making your way through the narrow streets of Zhentil Keep, you glimpse all sorts of sights through open doorways and down narrow alleyways.

As you pass through a quieter area, you clearly hear the ringing of a hammer on metal. It increases in volume as you walk, seemingly coming from a barn door that is just ahead.

You glimpse inside as you pass, and see a tall, thin blacksmith tending his forge. Seated next to him is an odd-looking little humanoid mixing something in a bowl.

"Afternoon," the blacksmith greets you. "Can I interest you in a new weapon? Much cheaper than any weapons shop."

(cont. over)

- ◆ *To take the blacksmith up on his offer, go to 131.*
- ◆ *To decline but engage him in conversation, go to 369.*
- ◆ *To politely decline and move on, go to 483.*

9

A quick search turns up 55 gold pieces and three bottles of wine. You also find a small vial of poison, marked 'Midnight Tears'. There is enough here for one dose. *(Take what you wish and add it to your inventory. For details on the poison Midnight Tears Poison, consult the Dungeon Master's Guide, page 258).*

You hear a sound from outside. It sounds like Zhentilar approaching! Quickly you leave the apartment and make your way out of the building by a back entrance.

Return to Map 1 / Map Entry 1 and continue to your chosen destination.



10

Quietly you make your way up to a nearby female priest, resplendent in her robes of gold.

"Welcome to our temple, traveller," she says warmly. From her accent you pick her as a Zhent, but a non-Bane worshipping Zhent? That's rare.

What do you ask her about? She is quite busy with various tasks of worship but probably has time to answer one question.

- ◆ "What can you tell me about the Banite faith? How are they so prominent here?" Go to 26.
- ◆ "Do you have any holy oil that I could take in exchange for a donation to your beautiful temple?" Go to 168.
- ◆ "What other religions are present in the Moonsea?" Go to 235.

11

You turn down this second north passage and follow it as it bends around to the left. Then, at its end, you see iron bars, beyond which appear to be beds. You see female humanoids, goblins, sitting on the beds and tending to their young.

- ◆ To approach the bars, turn to 97.
- ◆ To return to the junction and continue east, go to 430.

12

Add 1 progress point if this is your first time reading this entry. You cannot have more than 4 progress points. If this puts your score to 5, go immediately to entry 132.

You make your way over to Arcana Lane, in the eastern part of the city, just north of the river Tesh.

A short tunnel leads to a narrow lane, and you make your way through.

On the other side, the narrow street continues for a short way and then opens up into a wide bazaar, covered with a canvas roof that provides a pleasant shade. Numerous doorways are tucked in amongst the stonework, signs hanging above them. Some

of the doors stand open, and strange aromas drift from each shop. All types of characters make their way down Arcana Lane, peering in windows or just loitering here and there, reading, practicing spells or inspecting their recent purchases.

Three particular shops catch your eye. You may visit any two of these. If you choose to visit all three, take another progress point.

- ◆ To visit Pyzar's Potion Emporium, go to 294.
- ◆ To visit Melhuish's Magical Curiosities go to 232.
- ◆ To visit Fodus the Clairvoyant, go to 126. If you are done with Arcana Street and wish to visit another destination, return to Map 1 / Map Entry 1 and choose a new location to visit.

13

You slide the window open for the elven knight of Myth Drannor.

"Just wanted to see that you'd made it to your lodgings safely. I will meet you one mile west of the city, on the road back towards Teshwave. All right?"

You confirm the plan to meet Teodric, then thank him and bid him good night, sliding the window shut. That's quite enough excitement for one day!

Go to 207.

14

The gnome leads you over to his display area where full suits of armour are set up on mannequins.

"I'm afraid we're not as well stocked as we usually are," the gnome says apologetically. "But have a look through this lot. It's all good quality, and you won't find better prices anywhere in the Moonsea Region."

Browse the list below. You may purchase any of the following items. If you do, obviously deduct the gold from, and add the armour to, your inventory.

(cont. over)

Studded leather armour (50 gp) AC: 12 + Dex Modifier
Breastplate (420 gp) AC: 14 + Dex Modifier (max +2)
Half plate (800 gp) AC: 15 + Dex Modifier (max +2)
Chain mail (100 gp) AC: 16
Shield (20gp) AC: +2

- ◆ *When you are done shopping in Mail, Plate & Hide, you may return to entry 86 and choose to visit another merchant (but ignore the direction to take another progress point).*

15

You take a little of the dust out of the jar and sniff it. It has no odour, and you detect nothing from the smell, but when you look at your fingers again, they are invisible where they touched the powder!

You toss the contents of the jar into the air and let it float down over you, making you completely invisible. Then, calmly, you walk through to the next room and pick up the ring. The guardians are none the wiser as you pick up the ring and make your way out of that room.

Suddenly, you feel the same bizarre sucking sensation that brought you here. Your body dematerializes, and everything goes black for a moment. After a few moments you find yourself back in Melhuish's Magical Curiosities!

The little girl is smiling from ear to ear. As you watch, she begins to grow before your eyes, increasing in size until she is nearing your height, and slowly morphing from a little girl into an old man - a total transformation!

"Well done!" the old man, dressed like a wizard, congratulates you. "You are the first person this year to pass my challenge. What you have in your hand there is a Ring of Resistance."

Roll a d10 to find out what gem the ring holds, and hence what damage it will grant you resistance against:

- 1: Pearl (Acid)
- 2: Tourmaline (Cold)
- 3: Garnet (Fire)
- 4: Sapphire (Force)
- 5: Citrine (Lightning)
- 6: Jet (Necrotic)
- 7: Amethyst (Poison)
- 8: Jade (Psychic)
- 9: Topaz (Radiant)
- 10: Spinel (Thunder)

Then, you may purchase any other items from the entry 232. After that, you leave the shop. Return to entry 12 (without taking another progress point) and choose another merchant to visit.

16

Did you choose the left or right sniper?

- ◆ *If you chose the left sniper, go to 332.*
- ◆ *If you chose the right sniper, go to 456.*

17

(Take an inspiration point for your bravery!)

You sprint through the door underneath the balcony where you saw the woman in distress. You take the stairs two at a time, noting in passing that the building is ornate and richly furnished. Following the sound of the woman's screams, you emerge in a hallway, and then see a door which stands slightly ajar. You run to it.

Yanking it open and rushing inside, you see the woman beset by a large, burly orc, who turns to face you when you enter, growling and sneering. But then, as you draw your weapon, the coward turns and sprints out towards the balcony! You follow, just in time to see the orc stand up on the railing, then jump down onto the awning below. Leaning over, you see him land on the street and turn left, hugging the wall and staying beneath the awnings so that a ranged attack of any

kind is impossible. He disappears around the side of the building.

Returning inside, you see the woman slumped against the wall, sobbing. Doing a quick visual check of the room, you see that it appears danger-free and you move over to her.

"Are you all right?" you ask, leaning down and offering a hand.

She looks up through bleary eyes. "Oh... thank you," she says, taking your hand unsteadily and slowly getting to her feet. "I don't know where it came from... it just barged the door down and attacked me!" You ponder this a moment. "But why you?" you ask. "Why not any of the other rooms in this building, or why didn't he just mug someone on the street?"

She shakes her head confusedly. "I have no idea. Sorry, I need to sit down. My name is Annaya, by the way."

The woman makes her way over to a table and begins pouring a goblet of wine for herself. She turns to you. "Oh, I'm sorry... please stay and have a wine with me. I need a drink to calm myself down." Annaya pours you a wine and brings both goblets over, inviting you to sit down.

- ◆ *Will you stay and have a wine with Annaya? If so, go to 466.*
- ◆ *If you would rather be on your way, you make your apologies and go to leave. Go to 240.*
- ◆ *If you would like to insight check Annaya, roll insight. If you score 1-13, go to 7.*
- ◆ *If you score 14 or above, go to 304.*

18



You move over to the dice table, where three men are deeply engrossed in a game that involves three dice. A female elf is running the game, but not playing herself. She sips on a cider and watches proceedings, and gives you a friendly smile as you approach. "We're playing *Dragon Slayer*," one of the men informs you. "Care to join in? 100 gold

pieces per round, so... not for the faint of heart!"

The two players glance up at you. You notice they are betting with gold coins. They finish their game and then invite you to sit down. Each of them rolls a dice. The first player gets a 3, the second a 4.

"Now you roll," the elf says. "To see who goes first."

Roll a d6 to determine first turn. If you tie with one of the players, then roll again for that player and yourself until an order is established. Write the order down and play as per the rules below!

Dragon Slayer is played with three d6 and coins, and is played for stakes.

*The first-turn player rolls 2d6. This roll sets how many **rounds** it will take to slay the dragon.*

The same player then rolls 3d6, then the next player, then the next, going in a circle, all players continuing to throw 3d6 until they get a double (a hit on the dragon), at which point that player stops rolling. The remaining players keep throwing until they get a double also. When everyone has rolled a double, that is the end of the round.

Every time someone throws the dice, they put down one gold piece, including for the throw containing the double.

After the round is played, the player with the lowest total coins in front of them has slain the dragon the fastest and wins 100 gp.

- ◆ *If you win 400gp (or the most gold by the end of the determined rounds), go to entry 163.*
- ◆ *If you lose 400gp, or any amount you're not happy with, go to entry 445.*
- ◆ *If you simply wish to leave the game at the end of a round, go to 381.*

19

Carefully you creep down the passageway towards the east, Zlug and Slug close behind. "He's down here somewhere," Slug growls. "He keeps all the food stores down here too, all the good stuff. We've never been allowed

down here. All we get is a few dry biscuits and a bit of bread every day.”

This draws a hateful sneer from Zlug. After some time, you reach a T-junction where the passageway runs north and south. From the south a chill wind blows. Zlug raises his nose to the air.

“I’d know that smell anywhere,” he says.

“It’s the smell of our goblin caves, many miles away.”

“Our home,” Slug says quietly. Then they both look north and frown. The passage in that direction looks freshly hewn, in comparison to the south passage which looks centuries old.

“It’s all coming back to me,” Slug says. “We came from the south, to here. Grax lured us here, just a few of us, with promises of gold and riches. Once we were here, his true plan was revealed. He lures fresh goblins here all the time, enslaving them, with the help of his bugbear henchmen.”

You ask if there are any more bugbears apart from the enforcer you encountered.

“Haven’t seen any for a while,” Zlug says.

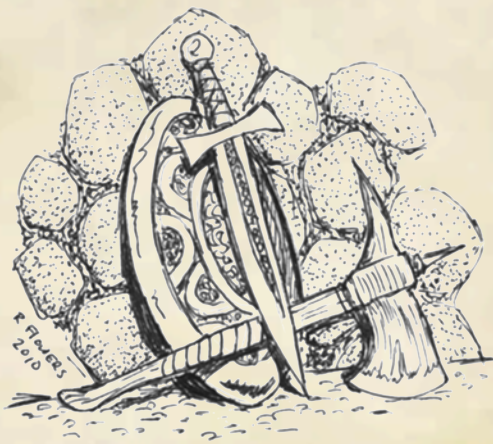
“They must be away south, recruiting new slaves.”

“So it’s just Grax then?” you ask.

“And Chopper,” Slug adds.

As stealthily as you can, all three of you start moving up the passageway to the north.

Turn to entry 379.



20

You assure the rogue that nothing could be further from the truth.

He nods. “I believe you,” he says plainly.

“So, outlander, I suppose you want to meet our boss then? I can take you to her, if you like.”

- ◆ *To accept the rogue’s invitation, go to 129.*
- ◆ *To say you have other business to attend to and leave, go to 266.*
- ◆ *You can make an insight check on the rogue, DC 15. If successful, go to 183. If unsuccessful, go to 156.*

21

You take careful aim at the specter’s back, then release your ranged attack.

Make your ranged attack with advantage, aiming for an AC of 16. If you hit, roll damage and take note of that amount to be deducted from the specter’s HP. Then go to Abyssal Specter Combat Sheet.

22

“Why are you being kept here?” you ask, knowing that most goblins and orcs have at least a scant knowledge of Common.

(Or perhaps you address them in Goblin, if you know it, in which case make the following check with advantage).

Will they speak to you?

Make a persuasion check, DC 12.

- ◆ *If successful, go to 276.*
- ◆ *If unsuccessful, go to 133.*

23

You berate the merchant for his unethical practices.

“Hey, I have to make money like everyone else. If you don’t agree with it, leave!”

The thought crosses your mind that you could destroy his shop, freeing all his wyrmlings... but where would the poor creatures go? You look around the shop, thinking about possible courses of action.

"Don't get any ideas, friend," the merchant says quietly. "The people who I work for... let's just say, they wouldn't let you off lightly if anything happened to their... merchandise."

Seeing little else you can do, you leave the dragon merchant and return to the main street.

Return to Map 1 / Map Entry 1 and choose a new destination.

24

You continue walking down the street, keeping a close watch on the large pillars where you saw the creature disappear. But something else catches your eye: a glint of gold.

Looking down, you see a gold ring, partially wedged between two cobblestones.

- ◆ *To pick this random find up, go to 142.*
- ◆ *To leave it and carry on, 440.*

25

You walk over to a table where the candles are for sale and drop 5 gp into a metal box (deduct this gold). Then you take up a candle, and a black-robed priest comes forward and lights it for you with a long taper. Around you, dozens of worshippers are doing the same. The smell from the candle is quite pleasant as the wick crackles alight. Slowly you join the queue of those approaching the altar, and notice several pairs of eyes watching you - the Banite clerics closely regard all who pass. Some worshippers are no doubt regulars, but others like yourself will be less familiar to them. You wonder if any of Manshoon's spies are amongst these clerics. Finally you reach the altar, and crane your neck up at the towering idol of Bane in his disguised demon form. You lean forward and place a candle on the altar, then try to form an appropriate prayer to the Dark Lord Bane.

(cont. over)

Make a religion check, DC 14.

- ◆ *If you are successful, go to 395*
- ◆ *If unsuccessful, go to 71*

26

"Why are the Banites so prominent?" the priest says, repeating your question. "Because the men at its head are corrupt, ruthless murderers, that is why. And their god rewards such behaviour. Never trust a devout Banite, outlander, or you could pay for it with your life."

She goes on to tell you that the Church of Bane is undergoing a bit of internal strife - Orthodox Banites are at odds with Fzoul Chembryl's faction of worshippers, as the latter has done a deal with Manshoon and the Black Network. They feel Fzoul has sold out to Manshoon and corrupted the faith. Interesting, you think. Where there is division, there is a chance to exploit that division.

You thank the priest for her time, and she wanders off to attend to other duties.

Return to entry 53 and choose another option if you wish.

27

The cleric looks you up and down. "Well, first, you must of course be a worshipper of Bane, willing to devote your life to him. After you have proved this by humbly serving the monks, you may be awarded the rank of propitiate, where you live as an uninitiated monk, doing the bidding of your elders. This lasts three years, after which you are initiated into the order, and receive your Robes of Darkness. After twenty or so years as an initiated monk, you may begin the process of becoming a Cleric of Bane." "I see," you remark. "And what does a Cleric of Bane do?"

The cleric straightens up, and his expression becomes a staunch grimace. "A Cleric of Bane carries out Bane's mission. Destroying the unfaithful. Promoting dissent among the

enemies of Bane. And carrying out the work of Lord Manshoon."

You think for a moment how you can exploit his statement to your advantage, and gain some more information.

"So Lord Manshoon is equal to Bane?" you goad.

The priest regards you for a moment with a look of utter contempt, and opens his mouth to berate you, but stops himself, glancing around cautiously. He lowers his voice. "No," he replies. "But Lord Manshoon made a deal with Bane, and with the Bane priesthood... so to an extent, we must follow his mission. We are obligated to."

Obligated.

Interesting.

"Hmm," you say, thinking to yourself that there are far too many experiences to be had in this world that you would shut yourself away in a cloistered monastery for three years. No thank you! It's the School of Hard Knocks for you.

"Thank you for your time," you say, and glide back in amongst the worshipping masses.

- ◆ *Return to entry 134 and choose another option.*

28

Find Map 6 in the Maps Booklet, and go to the *Bar Brawl Combat Sheet*.

29

Your danger sense tells you that trouble is nearby... something is off about this situation, but you can't discern the exact nature of that danger.

If you choose to descend into this chasm, you will have advantage on all dexterity saving throws.

- ◆ *Go to 87.*

30

"Is that so?" the rogue replies. "I'd be careful about making such proclamations around here, friend. People have wound up face down in the Tesh for a lot less!"

He gives you a curt nod and then disappears into the crowd, like mist on the breeze.

Go to entry 44.

31

Find Map 3 in the Maps Booklet, go to the Zhentilar Guards (#1) Combat Sheet and do battle with the two guards!

32

You survey the three dead bodies before you, amazed that you were able to defeat the clerics. Glancing around nervously, you decide you should leave before more Banites show up. Taking your time, you carefully scale the vine that leads up to the mezzanine floor.

You reach the mezzanine and quickly run to the other side, where a railing looks out over the street. Descending as quickly as you can down the outside of the building, you ignore the many eyes on you and quickly rejoin the crowd heading towards Market Square.

Return to Map 1 / Map Entry 1 and choose a new destination within Zhentil Keep. If you already have 4 progress points, immediately go to entry 132.

33



Add 1 progress point.

You cannot have more than 4 progress points. If this entry puts you to 5, go immediately to entry 132.

The noise of Market Square is the first thing you notice as you approach; you hear dozens of conversations in a variety of languages and accents, and the density of the crowd increases as you approach.

In this sizable square surrounded by grimy grey buildings, long rows of stalls have been set up displaying a huge variety of wares. Merchants load goods from carts onto their

stalls, and cityfolk browse the goods on display. A stray dog, lapping at a puddle of rainwater, glances up as you pass. Elsewhere, you get the occasional hesitant smile, a "good day," or a nod. This is the warmest reception you've had since entering Zhentil Keep!

- ◆ *Are you a rogue? If so go to 316.*
- ◆ *If not, go to 360.*

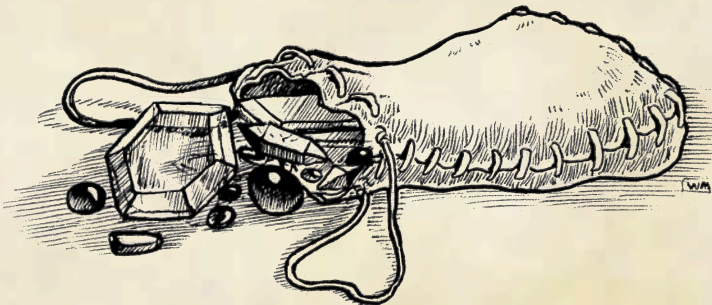
34

You are below deck, in a stifling hot, cramped space, and the smell is not pleasant. Making your way quickly along, you see cells on both sides of the tight passage that runs down the middle of the ship. The barred cells hold prisoners; slumped, dejected figures, their clothes and hair messy and disheveled. Each cell holds at least half a dozen prisoners, who have been provided with two buckets - one containing water, the other containing... well, you'd hate to think. The sight of these poor degraded souls makes your blood boil, and you quickly inspect the locks.

From above, you hear noise, and the sound of feet running on the deck. You must act quickly!

(If you used the disguise plan, your only weapon is Ganadhir's shortsword, unless you are a magic user of course, or you possess some other weapon with the light property which could have been easily concealed).

- ◆ *If you came down the ladder after being recognized, go to Zhentarim Slaver Combat Sheet.*
- ◆ *Otherwise, go to 41.*



35

Once past the chasm, you continue walking for some time - at least half an hour, by your reckoning.

Finally you reach a junction where a passage branches off to your north.

- ◆ *To take this passage, turn to 342.*
- ◆ *To continue east, go to 104.*

36

You ask the merchant about the dragon's blood.

"It's from a black dragon," he replies. "One of the most potent poisons known in Faerun. Completely toxic to anything except reptiles." He passes you the bottle to inspect. Lifting it up, you see that the thick black liquid moves slowly around the base of the tear-shaped bottle. There looks to be enough for two doses.

"150 gold pieces, my friend," the merchant informs you.

You may buy this if you wish. If you have a weapon that dispenses poison via a secret chamber, this is good for two uses (encounters). If however you are just coating it onto an ordinary weapon, the action of coating it onto your weapon must take place as a full action during combat, and the poison will only be good for one use (one encounter). A creature subjected to this poison must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw, taking 10 (4d6) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. Once they have rolled for the save (whether successful or not) the damage is done and is not repeated again during that encounter. Note this and then return to 433 and make another choice.

37

You sprint ahead to where you saw the creature, and round the corner just in time to see it disappear over a rooftop edge. You catch a glimpse of it - humanoid, completely devoid of hair, and in robes of some sort.

But at about one hundred feet away, it is too far to see any more detail than that.

You have one chance to hit it with a ranged attack, if you have the weaponry to do so.

Make a ranged attack with disadvantage.

- ◆ *If the roll is 15 or higher, go to 227.*
- ◆ *If lower than 15, go to 155.*

38

You quickly go to the brave crucian's body. Now that the specter is dead, its thralls are starting to come around, and one young man shouts "No!" when he sees Jamaunga lying prone on the floor. He rushes over and kneels beside the fallen crucian.

"Can you save him?" he asks you, desperate hope in his eyes.

Do you have a healer's kit, or do you know any healing spells like Spare the Dying, Goodberry or Cure Wounds? Or can you make a successful DC 10 medicine check? Or do you have a Potion of Healing?

- ◆ *If you have or can manage any of these things, go to 312.*
- ◆ *If you cannot, go to 208.*

39

You enter a medium-sized circular room that looks like it might once have been used as a space for rituals or worship. There are small nooks all around the circular wall containing the remains of wax... it looks eerie, dripping out over the edge of each nook, the spilling wax grey and frozen in time, like some substance spewed out by an eldritch beast of some kind.

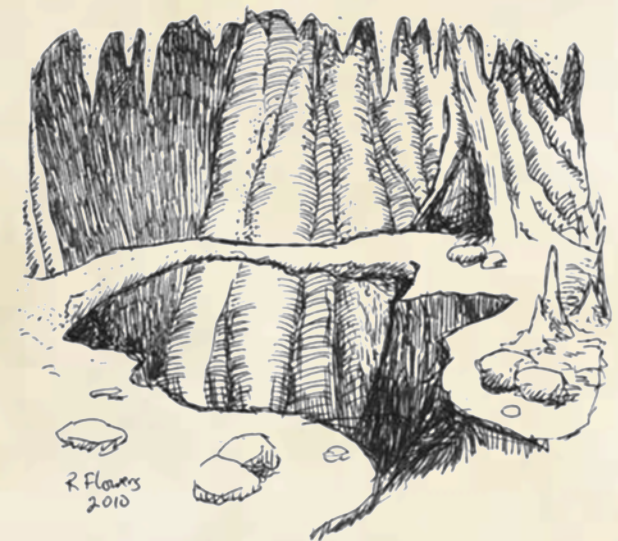
Then you look at the pile of rubble at the centre, and notice that the ground surrounding it is unnaturally clean, as if swept into a pile in the middle of the room. You are struggling to make sense of this when you see the pile shift once more, and another stone roll down its side, coming to rest near the base of the pile.

You draw your weapon, preparing yourself for any sort of attack... what's going on here?

- ◆ *To prod or jab into the pile with your weapon, go to 291.*
- ◆ *To start moving rocks aside, (you could use Mage Hand for this) go to 239.*
- ◆ *To investigate the pile further, go to 192.*

40

You continue forward, following the passage as it bends around to the right. After walking for a few minutes, you see that a wide abyss bisects the passage like some huge, ghastly maw. Only a narrow earthen bridge spans the chasm.



Gingerly you walk across, careful to keep your balance. You reach the far side of the bridge in one piece, and continue down the passage beyond.

- ◆ *Turn to 35.*

41

The cells are all kept locked by two master latches at the end of the rows. They are fairly sturdy, but a few well-placed blows would smash them. However, you must act quickly if you are to free these prisoners before the slavers arrive!

The master latches are quite sturdy and have an AC of 12 and HP of 15. You and Danadhir take a latch each and go to work on them. You have three rounds to destroy the latches (and you may use bonus actions if

they are available to you) using any weapon you have to hand, including magical attacks. However, if you have the item "skeleton key" in your inventory, you easily get both latches undone. That was a stroke of luck getting hold of that! Take note of this for when you continue to the following encounter sheet. Make three attacks on the latches, and then (successful or not) go to Zhentarim Slaver Combat Sheet.

42

"Thank you, stranger," the man says, and, stroking his new pet, moves off down the alleyway.
Return to Map 1 / Map Entry 1 and choose a new destination within Zhentil Keep.

43

You draw your weapon and stride forward towards the guard, intent on surprising him while he has his back to you. The other officers are looking around the shop and you are careful not to attract their attention either.

- ◆ Make a stealth roll, DC13. If you are successful, go to 366
- ◆ If not, go to entry 61

44

You make your way around the various stalls, examining the wares. You have time to briefly look at all of them, but you may only buy items from six stalls, otherwise you are eating into your next progress point. The stalls are described in the table below.

STALL	Description / Price
<i>Tertius's Unbreakable Ropes</i>	The main product here is Giant Spider Silk Rope. 100 ft coils, and incredibly light at 2 lbs. Tertius claims his rope is unbreakable. Price: 5 gp.
<i>Endless Candles</i>	Huge candles designed to burn for weeks, very useful. Price: 1 sp per candle.
<i>Tommelion's Digging Tools</i>	Spades: 1 gp. Shovels: 1 gp. Picks: 1 gp.
<i>Bigger Wigs</i>	All sorts of ridiculous and colourful wigs to make your noggin look bigger! Manticore mane wigs: 1 gp. Frazzled hag wigs: 1 sp. Golden maiden locks: 2 gp.
<i>Shadowdale Mulled Wine and Cider</i>	Bottles of exceptionally high quality mulled wine and cider. 1 gp per bottle.
<i>Dire Rat Traps</i>	There's been a few of these critters sighted around the Common Quarter lately. Traps are 1 sp each.
<i>Endless Mirrors</i>	Handmirrors at 1 gp each. Small pocket mirrors at 1 sp.
<i>Diverse Liquids</i>	Vials of acid 5 gp each, maximum quantity 2.
<i>Handcrafted Door Wedges</i>	Ornately carved wedges at 1 gp each.
<i>Natton's Noxious Weedkiller</i>	This weedkiller will get rid of any noxious plants for a low 1 sp per bottle.
<i>Edible Animal Treats</i>	For your home pet. Doggie treats 1 sp per bag, cat treats 1 cp per bag, horse treats 1 gp per bag.
<i>Navigation Kits – Never get lost again!</i>	This kit contains a sextant, compass, map paper, pencils and other writing implements, a plumb line and a looking glass. Never get lost again!
<i>Sarahna's Sweets and</i>	Candied hazelnuts 1 sp per bag. Glazed cherries in syrup, 1 sp per jar.

<i>Confections</i>	Toffee sugar lumps, 1 sp per bag. Sweet almond liquer, 2 gp per bottle (max allowance two bottles). Wonderful as a gift.
<i>Dragon Repellant! Better safe than sorry!</i>	1 sp per bottle. Does it actually work? Doubtful. But the maker swears by it. "It's saved my life dozens of times while travelling through the 'Spines! Works every time," he promises. "or your money back!"
<i>Pedrula's Perfumes</i>	Essence of Jasmine, 1 gp per bottle. Odious Odor Killer, 1 sp per bottle. Aroma of Alluring Night: 1 gp per bottle.
<i>Hammocks! Get your bum off the ground!</i>	1 sp each.
<i>Bells Galore</i>	Handbells 1 gp, ankle bells 1 sp for a set.
<i>Potions, Tinctures and Ointments</i>	Burn cream 1 sp a jar. Smelling salts, 1 sp. Potion of vigour, 1 gp (use uncertain).
<i>Harkula's Hand Drums</i>	Ornately crafted little hand-drums for 1 gp each. Keep gloom at bay with the gift of music.
<i>Adderton's Books and Scrolls</i>	Notable tomes: History of the Dragonspines: 55 gp. Lore of the Banite Religion: 14 gp. (under the counter): Notable Factions of the Moonsea Region: 70 gp.
<i>Pedrus Sweet-Tone's Musical Wonders</i>	Exceptionally crafted lutes, 5 gp. Beautiful silver flutes, 4 gp. Come with a book of tunes.
<i>Pipes and Potent Pipeweed</i>	Bag of extremely strong pipeweed (smoke with caution) 20 gp. Pipes, 5 gp each. Tapers, 1 sp each.

Once you have finished shopping, your time in Market Square is up! Return to Map 1 / Map Entry 1, and choose a new destination within Zhentil Keep!

45

You make your way to the pile, looking to climb over it and get inside. But then, to your horror, the whole thing starts to move... Forming itself into a vaguely humanoid shape, the stone monster stands fully erect and starts advancing on you! Evidently it does not want you to enter this temple! Go to *Stormstone Combat Sheet*.

46

You fail to get the lock open, but then you spy a window about twelve feet above. This area is stacked with crates, so getting up there shouldn't be too difficult, but getting down once inside the warehouse might be a different story. You climb up various crates and reach the window in a matter of moments. Once through the window, however, you see there is a twelve foot drop to the floor. If you land

and roll, you might be able to minimise any potential harm you do to yourself. Bracing yourself, you drop from the window, aiming to roll out of the landing. (If you have rope and grappling hook, or other means of descent, you don't need to jump). *Make an acrobatics check, DC 8. If you fail, take 1d4-1 fall damage. If successful, you take no damage and proceed to entry 415.*

47 play audio

Making your way through the tightly-packed streets of this part of Zhentil Keep, you see a crowd assembled ahead. From amidst the throng you hear music, punctuated by boisterous whoops and shouts. As you near the crowd you make out three street performers - two elves and a human - a percussionist, a lutist and a singer. You come within earshot of the song: *(cont. over)*

*Who is the tyrant all good folk fear
Who's never seen, neither here nor there
Whose evil deeds are beyond compare
The Lord of Zhentil Keep!*

*Whose life, by Zhentarim defended,
Is said to have been often ended
But by drow magic, always extended
The Lord of Zhentil Keep!*

Their song is attracting a crowd, and you make your way within it. Not far off, however, you see the helmets and livery of Zhentilar troops approaching.

"Break this up!" you hear their captain shouting as they barge into the crowd. "This is sedition, break this mob up immediately or you'll all be arrested! You, stop that singing!"

- ◆ *Are you a bard? If so, you could take out your instrument and join in this rebellious performance, perhaps inspiring the crowd to keep those soldiers at bay. Go to 336.*
- ◆ *Or, you could try to throw some Cutting Words at the Zhentilar soldiers. Go to 69.*
- ◆ *Otherwise, you could enjoy the rest of the song and then move on. Return to Map 1 / Map Entry 1 and continue to your next chosen destination.*

48

You break the chains keeping the goblin slaves bound together. They all come up and thank you, grateful for their freedom. One comes up and grabs your arm, talking rapidly in fluent Common.

"You have freed us, stranger!" he breathes.

"Thank you. But we must defeat Grax, or all your effort will be in vain!"

"Who is Grax?" you ask.

"Our slave master," the goblin repeats. "The one who is making us build these tunnels. He wants to tunnel all the way to the Dragonspines, and he has the blessing of the powerful human Manshoon to do so! He is league with wicked, evil men!"

"Is he the one who has been stealing from merchants?" you ask, motioning back in the direction you came from. "The cellars of merchants in Zhentil Keep? Or have you been stealing it for him?"

The goblin nods vigorously. "Yes! He made us do it!"

The goblin, whose name is Zlug, tells you all that has been going on here. He and the other goblins have been down here, tunneling passages, for close to four years now. They made their way from their underground home in the south, chipping through the rock, and now they are underneath the city of Zhentil Keep.

By the time Zlug has finished talking to you, nearly all of the goblins have slunk off in fear of reprisals from the one they call Grax, whose lair is somewhere down the passage to the east.

Zlug, and his brother Slug, however, are not so cowardly, and are waiting around to see what you will do. You tell them of your mission to reclaim the goods of Wendal Wheatfields, and they brighten at this. They tell you that Grax directed them to steal from the cellars of many merchants, and that they will help you reclaim the goods. They also tell you there is no way you will be able to face Grax alone; he has a vicious worg named Chopper who has killed many of their goblin comrades.

"Facing Grax and Chopper alone, that would be suicide for you, stranger!"

Zlug and Slug offer to help you in this quest. On the body of the bugbear enforcer you find a battleaxe and a shortsword. After a brief argument over who gets the battleaxe, Zlug and Slug take these weapons, testing them out with a few swings. The two goblin brothers look malnourished, not particularly strong, but they assure you that their father trained them with weapons from a young age, and they are keen to get their revenge on the bugbear tyrant who has made their lives a misery for so long. Also, such a

victory would ensure high status and reputation when they return to their village. Once you are ready, all three of you move back to the junction, minds set on the task of defeating Grax the bugbear tyrant.
Go to entry 19.

49

Producing the materials, you quickly make the incantations and gestures for the invisibility spell, and gradually fade from view, to the gasps of a pair of passing Zhents. You walk past the pillar where you saw the strange creature, keeping a keen eye out for it... but it is nowhere to be seen. You breathe a little easier, safe for now at least.
Go to Map 1 / Map Entry 1 and continue to your chosen destination.

50

There is a tumultuous round of applause as you survey your fallen opponents, who writhe in agony on the ground. You stopped short of killing them - that wouldn't have been a good look, especially so soon after your arrival - and everyone seems to have forgotten the reason the fight started. You move over to the orc who is struggling to get to his feet. "Thank you," he mutters, clambering up into a chair with your assistance. "I don't know how I can pay you, friend. I have no money..."
You shake your head. "Don't worry about it." It sickens you that any race would be discriminated against so blatantly, and you were glad to come to his assistance.
◆ *Return to Map 5 / Map Entry 5 and choose another part of the tavern to investigate.*

51



You fall asleep quickly.
Some time later, how long you do not know, you awake to a sound: *tap, tap, tap*. Half asleep, you think it part of your dream at first and ignore it. But then you hear it again. *Tap, tap, tap*.

Your eyes fly open, and you sit bolt upright, rolling off the bed and grabbing your weapon.

Tap, tap, tap.

It's coming from the window.

Peering over the edge of your bed, you look towards the window, but you shut the curtains earlier and so you can't see anything.

The tapping again. Then, a voice.

"Outlander! Come to the window!"

Some instinct tells you the tone is friendly, and you move cautiously over. Besides, if this *is* an enemy outside your window, would they be announcing their presence?

You yank the curtains open, and see an elf standing on the roof outside, clad in Zhentilar livery. However, something about his bearing, his expression, tells you this warrior is not some Zhentilar drone; there is too much dignity and intelligence in his face for that to be the case.

Do you know Teodric, the elven knight? If so, go to 13. If not, go to 62.

52

Make a DC 19 athletics check. This creature is fast.

- ◆ *If you are successful, go to 37.*
- ◆ *If unsuccessful, go to 345.*

53

Add 1 progress point if you have only just arrived at the Amaunator temple.

You cannot have more than 4 progress points. If this puts you to 5 progress points, do not read below and go immediately to entry 132.

The Amaunator temple is tucked away in the Northwestern area of Zhentil Keep behind artisan's workshops, in a semi-industrial area, unlike the Black Altar which sits among the main clerical region of the city. As you walk towards it you see many different races and peoples from all over Faerun, but not many Zhents; it seems Bane is the deity of choice in this city, and given that Amaunator is Bane's



mortal enemy, you can't help but think this temple a token gesture.. Amaunator's face, a radiant sun, is positioned right over the main entrance. You enter the cool interior and the heady smell of incense envelopes you.

There is a fountain set in the middle of the main temple room which provides a soft, watery background noise for the worshippers who sit peacefully around the temple room floor, contemplating the large Amaunator idol which graces the altar. A priest rings a bell as he chants an ethereal prayer and presents foodstuffs to the idol. In alcoves around the wall are other smaller idols, representing other deities of Faerun: Ilmater, God of Endurance; Torm, God of Courage; Tyr, God of Justice; Chauntea, Goddess of Agriculture... the list goes on and on. This appears to be a catch-all for worshippers of any deity that isn't Banel

Glancing around the worshippers, you see that this could be a chance to gain some valuable information. There are all sorts of individuals here. Or, perhaps you could use your time to pray for some boon from Amaunator.

- ◆ *To approach the altar and pray to Amaunator, go to 490.*
- ◆ *To approach and talk to a priest, go to 10.*
- ◆ *To go and talk to some elves who are sitting over by the south wall, go to 380.*
- ◆ *If you feel you have spent enough time in this peaceful oasis, you leave and depart for the street outside. Return to Map 1 / Map Entry 1 and continue to your next chosen destination.*

54

A halfling tends the bar, darting back and forth as he provides cider, ale and hot pies to his customers. A halfling woman, his wife perhaps, takes payment for the food and drink.

You watch them for a while, marvelling at this intricate dance that they perform effortlessly.

A male-half orc, over six feet tall, approaches. "Barkeep!" he cries in a merry tone. "A pint of your finest black ale, please."

The halfling turns and looks at him contemptuously. "Ye'll pipe down and wait your turn, laddie, if ye know what's good for ye"

The half-orc is taken aback by this, but doesn't protest. You hear him mumble under his breath, "Downright bloody rude, that is!" Your reverie is interrupted by a loud announcement.

"Ten minutes, friends, till the pit bouts! Get your drinks and move downstairs, and we shall have us a show! Still taking challengers for the third bout as well, against the mad dwarf Kromm Daggerfist! He takes all comers! A 150 gp purse, for that bout!" After hearing this, a few punters drift towards the stairs, but everyone else goes back to their drinks. It appears there are no challengers right now!

- ◆ *Do you order a drink and stand by the bar? Go to 457.*
- ◆ *Or do you try your luck against Kromm Daggerfist in the pit bout? Go to 204.*
- ◆ *Or, return to Map Entry 5 and choose a different location.*

55

You nod to Wendal.

"See you soon then," he says. "I'll have a dram of my finest whisky to share with you, once you get back."

Carefully you descend the stairs, primed for any sudden movement. But it is utterly quiet down here. Only the musty smell of damp earth greets you as you descend the crudely hewn stairs.



When you reach the bottom, you see a passage leading off into the darkness. As you proceed it bends left, widening around the corner. It is eerily quiet... only the occasional drop of water, echoing through these depths, punctuates the stillness.

Ahead you see an entranceway to the west that leads into a cavern. Past this entrance, the wide north passage slowly turns north-east, and you see the near end of a narrow bridge that runs over a chasm.

- ◆ *To check out the cavern to the left, go to 309.*
- ◆ *To continue towards the bridge, go to 40.*

56

You pound the streets of Zhentil Keep for half an hour or so, searching for an inn. The drizzle turns into proper rain as you walk, and night falls completely. The streets are wet and empty, everyone having retreated to the golden glow of their homes for the evening.



Finally you find a modest-looking establishment named *The Stout Miner*. You enter, dripping wet, and greet the inkeep with a nod.

“Rooms are two gold pieces a night,” she announces matter-of-factly. “And I’ll not have any hi-jinks. No guests in the room

after dusk, and breakfast is served an hour after sun-up.”

You shell out the two gold to the portly woman and see a stack of maps on the front desk, pocket-sized maps of Zhentil Keep. (If you cannot afford a room, the inkeep will take small items in lieu of gold. Consult PHB for prices).

“Take one,” the woman says, indicating the maps. “They’re free. Courtesy of Lord Manshoon.”

You retire to your room with the map, and study it carefully, thinking about what parts of the city you will visit tomorrow. (*Refer Map 1 in the Maps Booklet / Map 1 Entry at the end of the Adventure Booklet*).

Finally, sleep catches up with you, and you drift off into a deep slumber on the surprisingly comfortable bed.

Regain all your hit points from this long rest.

- ◆ *Go to entry 74*

57

Under the black cover of night you run low to the front door, stopping and checking your periphery. You reach the door and gingerly test the handle. It turns freely.

“It’s open,” you tell Salihn and Kragor.

“Fzoul would not let anyone just waltz into his tower,” Salihn whispers. “Someone - or something - is guarding this place.”

The three of you pause there for a moment. Finally, realizing there is nothing else for it, Salihn places her hand on the doorknob and quietly turns.

You may ready an action if you wish.

You enter a dark, spacious interior. Low light comes from some kind of phosphorescence which grows on the walls. There is a strange, pointed rock in the midst of this room, extending up from below. Glancing around, you move forward and see that there is a sizable hole in the floor, descending into pure blackness. Only the Gods know what is down there!

You look to the side of the room and see a staircase spiralling upwards around the wall,

which narrows inward as it ascends. The next floor up looks to be a lot smaller, and you remember that from outside the tower appeared to taper off at higher levels.

Roll perception, DC 19, for you, Salihn (d20-1) and Kragor (d20+1).

- ◆ *If one of you is successful, go to 467.*
- ◆ *If all of you are unsuccessful, go to 412.*

58

You move amongst the destroyed remnants of these houses, seeing the scars of battle everywhere. There is little to be seen – war has all but levelled the place.

Make an investigation check.

- ◆ *If you score 1-7, go to 346.*
- ◆ *If you score 8-13, go to 230.*
- ◆ *If you score 14 or above, go to 206.*

59

You check for traps as you move..

Make an investigation check, DC 12.

- ◆ *If you are successful, go to 372.*
- ◆ *If you are unsuccessful, go to 238.*

60

You are sufficiently conversant with the mysteries of life to know that any entity called a 'specter' is most likely undead.

You could attempt to use your turn undead ability here.

- ◆ *If you wish to do this, go to entry 469.*
- ◆ *Otherwise return to 367 and make another choice.*

61

As you approach, you accidentally bump into a suit of armor. Alerted by the noise, the Zhentilar turns to face you.

"What's this, eh?" he exclaims. "Going to attack me from behind, were you, coward?"

The Zhentilar draws his own sword and faces you. "Let's see how you fare against Zhentil Keep's finest, you craven filth!"

Find Map 4 in the Maps Booklet and go to Zhentilar Guards Combat Sheet (#2).

62

"What do you want?" you whisper urgently. The knight checks behind and to the sides, perhaps to check if he was followed. "Open the window, outlander. We need to talk."

You are hesitant at first, but then he says the following:

"We know of your deeds in Weathercote Wood. Your defeat of the Death Knight, your rescue of Darek Brewmont. Do not ask how we know, we just do. And now, a new quest awaits you. Glory and riches, my friend."

These words seal the deal for you, and you slide the window up. The elven warrior steps through.

"Thank you," he says. "My name is Teodric. I belong to an ancient order: the Knights of Myth Drannor. We have been watching you, outlander, ever since you arrived in Zhentil Keep. We have eyes throughout the city... not as many as the Black Network, but enough for us to achieve our aims."

You consider this for a moment. "What aims?" you ask.

There is a pause, then Teodric responds, "Arm yourself. We need to take a walk."

You pick up your weapon and equip yourself as you wish, then follow Teodric to the door and out into the streets of Zhentil Keep.

Go to entry 100.

63

"Grovel!" you command, and as if he is no more than a puppet that you control, the guard drops to the ground, arms outstretched, and begins writhing miserably at the base of the counter.

You stay well out of sight of the guards who haven't really noticed your presence, and they run forward to see if their captain is having a seizure of some kind.

Eventually, having had your fun, you allow him to compose himself and he stands.

Thoroughly embarrassed, he mutters "We'll be back," at the gnome and hurriedly leaves the shop, followed by his two lackeys.

You come out from behind the shelves, feigning confusion. "What was all that about?" you ask, shaking your head. "Anyway, would you mind showing me your wares, good sir?"

- ◆ *Go to entry 14.*

64

Your ranged attack hits the side of the building, not even close to harming either of the snipers, who immediately fire again with crossbows. This was a costly blunder.

Roll two crossbow bolt attacks (d20+5). Any result higher than your AC results in 1d8+3 damage being deducted from your hp. If both rolls hit, then it will be 2 damage rolls.

- ◆ *Wasting no more time, you get the hell out of this perilous deathtrap by going to 5.*

65

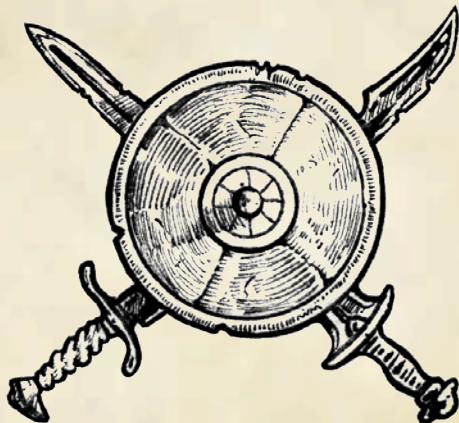
Despite making a thorough visual search of the area, you cannot see anyone who might be a rogue in the area.

- ◆ *To try your hand at pickpocketing, go to 277.*
- ◆ *To browse the stalls, go to 44*

66

Make an investigation check, DC 12.

- ◆ *If successful, go to 92.*
- ◆ *If unsuccessful, go to 364.*



67

*(If you are under the spell **Pass Without Trace**, all stealth checks have automatic success until you leave the tower).*

You reach a door. But rather than solid wood, or even metal, this particular portal is translucent, and within it you see swirling flames, a mass of flickering golden tongues. An iron handle sits down and to the left on this strange, fiery entrance.

Salihn pauses and begins moving her hands, making incantations. A few moments later, she opens her eyes. "I don't know the nature of it, but magic is it work here. Fell magic."

- ◆ *To try the handle, go to 396.*
- ◆ *To put your hand through the door, go to 293.*
- ◆ *To run through it, go to 319.*

68

You see little point in remaining here and decide to leave for another part of Zhentil Keep.

Return to Map 1 / Map Entry 1 and choose a new destination.

69

Roll a bardic inspiration die, then roll a d20 and subtract the first roll from it.

- ◆ *If the resulting score is 1-11, go to 370.*
- ◆ *If the result is 12 or above, go to 82.*

70

(If you had not freed the prisoners yet, you do so now).

You run to Danadhir's side, quickly tending to the fallen warrior. As you do so, one of the prisoners approaches, a middle-aged woman clad in little more than dirty rags.

"I'm a healer," she says in a croaky voice. "Move aside, please."

From somewhere you can't see, she produces a small handful of herbs and makes incantations over Danadhir's body. Within moments he has regained consciousness. The healer takes some water from you and makes a poultice from the herbs between her hands

with practiced skill, placing it over the wounds and binding them tight with strips of clothing.

"Get this fellow somewhere he can rest, quickly!" she says. "And thank you for freeing us. Thank you both."

Suddenly a little girl is before you, staring at you with wide eyes.

"Are you Anika's daughter?" you ask.

She nods silently.

Danadhir smiles weakly. With some effort, you carry Danadhir up to the top deck, the little girl following close behind.

Now freed, the prisoners have overpowered the remaining guards and have all fled into the streets of Zhentil.

Ganadhir meets you within the warehouse, overjoyed to see the little girl. He crouches down and they exchange whispers, after which she embraces him and takes hold of the old veteran's hand. "Let's get away from here, quickly," he says. "We cannot be found here by Zhentilar, and they will be here soon!" Then he pauses, and turns to you.

"Thank you, outlander. You have saved a great many people today, from a life of misery. You should take that to heart, take that with you. Regardless of what you've done before, I think the Gods have redeemed you today."

From the folds of his cloak, Ganadhir produces a large gem. Even in the darkness of the warehouse, the perfectly-formed prism catches the light beautifully. "From my homeland," he says. "A naturally formed amethyst prism. Gemstone dragons eat them sometimes, but you can sell it for about... 250 gp."

You thank Ganadhir for his generous gift.

Also, take an inspiration point for the completion of this sidequest. Well done! Then go to 479.

71

You place your candle at Bane's feet, among the others, and look up at the face of the idol. You see nothing there. To your eyes this is a religious icon, nothing more.

Leaving the altar, you return to the mass of visitors, to the spot where you were before.

◆ *Return to entry 134 and choose another option.*

72

You cannot escape the feeling of despair that has draped itself over you like a black cloak. You look over at Jamaunga. He seems to be faring better.

"Don't succumb to it!" he says. "It's the power of the specter, his aura of gloom... It will pass, trust me!"

You take several deep breaths, trying to steady yourself, but cannot shake this feeling of despondency, so you distract yourself by focusing on your surroundings.

You are under the influence of some kind of gloom aura. Until otherwise instructed, you have disadvantage on all attack rolls and saving throws.

Looking left and right, you see that the exits open out into empty rooms. These rooms seem completely bare, apart from a little moss and some rubble littering the floor.

Ahead, there are two more exits to the north and south, and beyond that the corridor ends.

◆ *If you would like to check out the nearest rooms that branch off this east-west passage to the north and south, go to 251.*

◆ *If you would like to continue down to the next set of exits, go to 244.*

73



You roll out of the way in the nick of time: three darts shoot out from the arc of the lock and embed themselves in the opposite wall. "Well done," Salihn congratulates you as she moves forward to inspect the chest. You move to the chest also, and cautiously peer inside.

Go to entry 427

74

You wake in the morning and take breakfast downstairs, gruel hotcakes with a sweet syrup. Thanking the inkeeper, you walk out to the street and survey the scene before you. Carts trundle towards Market Square where merchants are already setting up. The day is fine and clear, and all about you locals and travellers go about their business.

Unfurling your map, you study the different areas of Zhentil Keep and consider what parts you should explore.

- ◆ *Go to Map 1 / Map Entry 1.*

75

Despite your attempts to engage the little goblin in conversation, he is absorbed in his work and will not speak to you.

- ◆ *To wait for the blacksmith to return, go to 411.*
- ◆ *Or you could leave and continue to your next destination, in which case return to Map 1 / Map Entry 1 and turn to your chosen entry.*

76

You take a moment to catch your breath, gazing at the corpse of the dead sorceress. Slowly you regain your wits and begin a search of the apartment.

Make an investigation check.

- ◆ *If you score 1-11, go to 9.*
- ◆ *If you score 12 or above, go to 326.*

77

You brush yourself off, cursing your inability to get out of the pit, and then check the chest that lured you across the room. But all it contains is sand! Cursing your foolishness, you leave the room and head north towards the bridge.

- ◆ *Go to 40.*

78



Add 1 Progress Point. You cannot have more than 4 progress points. If this puts you to 5 progress points, do not read below and go immediately to entry 132.

You make your way past the Common Quarter and into the ravaged, rubble-strewn landscape of the South City ruins. From what you have gathered during your time here, there was a great invasion of Zhentil Keep some fifty years ago by a large force of orcs, ogres and even a dragon or two. The city was more or less levelled, and rebuilding has been going on since.

It appears most of the debris has been cleared away from this area, and you can see that the road has been remade. Fresh cobble runs southwards out of an open gate and onward to the next city to the south, named Yulash. Behind you, to the north, a swath of newly constructed houses forms the Common Quarter, where many of the poorer citizens live, and the Zhentilar Barracks on the eastern side of the South City.

You walk into the midst of the ruins and have a look around. Mostly all you can see are the blasted, empty shells of wrecked houses and the odd scurrying rat, but to the south you can also see the remains of what appears to be a temple.

- ◆ *To investigate some of the houses, go to 58.*
- ◆ *Or, would you rather investigate the temple ruins? Go to 471.*



79

Is Jamaunga with you, and alive?

- ◆ *If so, go to 101.*
- ◆ *If he died, go to 38.*
- ◆ *If you didn't meet Jamaunga, go to 350.*

80

If Kromm reduced you to 0 hp, record your hp as 5 as Kromm knew to stop short. This was not a fight to the death.

“Haha! Next time Pedrich, try harder to find me a worthy opponent!” you hear Kromm bellow as he leaves the ring. He tosses you a few coins, which land about your head as you lay beaten and spent on the canvas. “Buy yourself a drink, mate!” he laughs as he disappears into the crowd.

- ◆ *Slowly you pick yourself up and, licking your wounds, make your way back up to the tavern. Go to 381.*

81

You tell Wendal Wheatfields that you would be more than happy to check out what's at the bottom of those stairs for him. You've seen enough oppression already in the Moonsea to last you a lifetime - it's time someone showed a little humanity around here.

Wendal buries his face in your chest and throws his arms around you, sobbing profusely.

“Oh, thank you friend!” he bawls. “You have no idea... I can't even face my wife any more, this has nearly done me in. I'll give you whatever I can!”

- ◆ *To insist that Wendal lets you perform this service for free, go to entry 416.*
- ◆ *To accept Wendal's offer of payment, go to 403.*

82

You try to weave the Cutting Words into your performance, but somehow your subtle influence doesn't seem to affect the guards. As your song finishes, the Zhentilar manage to break through and disperse the rebellious

throng, who protest loudly as they are moved on. The Zhentilar then turn their gaze towards the performers.

But you are well ahead of them, and, having already packed your instrument away, you merge into the flow of passing Zhents and move quickly away.

Return to Map 1 / Map Entry 1 and continue to your next chosen destination.

83

You turn to face the man fully.

“Why did you single me out? I'm not the only outlander here, there are others. Why did you approach me?” You hold his gaze for a long moment, and he returns it, unflinching. Then he moves his hand forward and grasps yours in a firm handshake. He leans forward and whispers in your ear.

“We never met.”

The stranger releases your hand, and is gone. Literally vanished, as if he simply vaporised into the air itself. It happens so fast that you don't know whether he moved into the crowd or performed some magic trick.

You look down. In your hand, which the stranger just shook, is a small piece of parchment. Glancing around, you quickly read it. The writing is miniscule.

Be prepared to be contacted, stranger. You're being watched. Right now even. Not all who appear wolves are actually wolves.

You frown confusedly. What in all the Realms could this mean?

- ◆ *Go to entry 382.*

84

The two of you move as stealthily as you can down the passageway. You glance at Jamaunga - he gives you a look of brave encouragement.

Roll a d20+3 with advantage.

- ◆ *If the result is higher than your AC, go to 348.*
- ◆ *If lower, go to 151.*

85

You wait a few moments, and then calmly, casually put your head down and disappear down a nearby alleyway.

- ◆ *Roll stealth, DC 14. Make the roll with advantage if you are a rogue, or an urban ranger. If you are successful, go to 455.*
- ◆ *If you are unsuccessful, go to 424.*

86

Add 1 progress point (unless you are returning here after visiting a merchant on Scimitar St).

You cannot have more than 4 progress points. If this entry puts you to 5, go immediately to entry 132.

This street is populated by adventurers of all races, and all manner of characters. Street vendors hawk food to passers-by, and beggars beg for money, jangling metal cups as you pass.

Ahead you see a patrol of Zhentilar soldiers and you stop, turning your back to them, pretending to examine the jewelry laid out by a street hawker. From what you have learnt of the city, you decide it is probably best to not have your face seen about too much. Eventually they pass, and you continue, past smiths, armourers and weapons shops of all descriptions. Several look promising to your experienced eye.

You may visit any two of these. If you choose to visit three, take another progress point.

- ◆ *To visit **Mail, Plate & Hide**, an armourer's, go to entry 225.*
- ◆ *To visit **Sword In The Forge**, a weapons store, go to 376.*
- ◆ *To visit **Gunther's General Supplies**, go to 150.*
- ◆ *If you are done shopping on Scimitar Street, return to Map 1 and choose another location.*

87

Fixing your rope around the large rock nearby, you carefully let yourself down into the chasm, reaching the bottom after a descent of about twenty feet.

You unharness yourself from the rope and look around. The area you are in is a kind of wrecked room, and parts of the ceiling have caved in, but this was definitely once an underground structure of some sort.

To the north, you can see a passage leading off into the darkness. Checking your surroundings, you see this room contains nothing but rubble, and you head off down the dark passage.

If you do not have darkvision, you must kindle a torch. See the introduction on "Non-darkvision PCs".

Slowly the ruined architecture gives way to intact stonework, and you peer ahead into the gloom.

Further ahead, to the north, you see that the passage ends in an open chamber, but it is too far ahead to see what it contains.

Between you and the chamber, the north-south passage seems to be intersected by an east-west corridor.

There is about 20 feet between you and the junction.

- ◆ *If you are moving with stealth, then make a stealth roll, DC 14, taking note of success or failure.*
- ◆ *To move forward to the junction, go to 238.*
- ◆ *To check for traps, go to 59.*

88

You are aware that the noise you are making might attract some creature. Not surprisingly, you soon hear noises from down the hall passage beyond the door.

Do you stand and face whoever approaches?

- ◆ *If so, go to 441.*
- ◆ *Or, do you try and hide against the wall of the pit nearest the door? If you want to try this, turn to 265.*

89

The thief eyes you warily. "Designs on the Citadel? What have you heard?"

You give the thief a summary of the rumours you have heard circulating.

"That's what people are saying?" he marvels, shaking his head. "We need to report this to Night Fingers immediately! You should come with me!"

Do you follow the rogue?

- ◆ *If so, go to entry 129.*
- ◆ *Or, you could respond, "No, I have other business to attend to." Go to 266.*

90

You do your best to conjure an illusion, but it falls flat, and only serves to alert the specter to your presence.

The undead entity spins around, sees you, and lets out a chilling scream at your unannounced arrival! Then pointing its long, black horns towards you, it flies at you with blinding speed!

Go to Abyssal Specter Combat Sheet.

91

You deftly dismantle the device, cutting the wire to disable the trap. Then, it is a fairly simple matter to pick the lock, which is not complicated. Salihn comes forward and you peer inside the chest.

Go to entry 427.

92

You explore the room thoroughly, and it doesn't take long before you see it: a rectangular outline on the floor, and just visible, the tops of hinges. That chest was put there to lure you into a pit trap!

Carefully you skirt around the outside of the trap to get to the chest, and open the lid. All it contains is sand.

Shaking your head in disgust, you leave the room and continue towards the bridge.

Go to 40.

93

Erase the word Dockrescue from your character sheet.

Ganadhir Dorfolin's words come back to you:

"..Meet us in the large warehouse to the northeast of East Dock, an hour before midnight..."

You stay in your room for a few hours, resting, thinking about the events of the day, and eventually doze off into a light slumber. (*Recover hp from this short rest as per normal rules.*)

You wake much later, and go quickly to the window. The darkened sky is smothered with clouds, but you can see the moon shining through, like a grey smudge on the surface of night. From its position, you reckon the time to be just over an hour to midnight. Realizing you have little time, you equip yourself and make your way quietly out of the inn and back onto the much quieter night-time streets of Zhentil Keep.
Go to 243.

94

Add 1 progress point.

You cannot have more than 4 progress points. If this entry puts you to 5, go immediately to entry 132.

The Grand Temple of Bane towers above all other structures in Zhentil Keep. Even several blocks away you can see its central spire soaring above the rooftops, stabbing like a black spike into the sky. The very top of the spire sports a huge black hand, clenched into a fist, thrusting heavenward.

As you near it, you notice that many walking on the street are also headed in the same direction.

You enter a kind of open square area, and there in the centre is the Bane Temple in its full splendour, a harsh-looking structure made of black stone. Going along with the crowd you cautiously direct yourself to the main entrance where much traffic flows in and out.

(cont. over)

“Out-of-towner, eh?” comes a voice to your left. “What do you think of the Black Altar? Something to behold, no?”

You turn and see a shortish man with skin the colour of red desert sands, smiling at you. “Here,” he says, and hands you a sort of black shawl. “Put that over your head, you won’t stand out as much. And stick with me.”

- ◆ *Do you want to tag along with this friendly stranger? If so, go to entry 134.*
- ◆ *If you would rather explore the Bane Temple on your own, go to 140.*
- ◆ *If you like, you could do an insight check on the stranger. DC 13. If successful, go to entry 185. If not, go to 383.*

95

The cleric eyes you suspiciously. “The Zhentarim?” he says coolly, his expression not changing. “What is that? I have never heard such a word.”

How do you respond?

- ◆ *“Oh, my mistake, I must have misspoken. Thank you for your time, good day.” Go to 179.*
- ◆ *“Manshoon’s network of spies, of course. The Black Network.” Go to 446.*
- ◆ *“Sorry, I meant the Zhentilar. The soldiers.” Go to 465.*

96

Dragon’s bane is a rare flower that grows in the upper reaches of the Galena Mountains and is said to protect one from dragon’s fire, and possibly grant protection to other kinds of fire as well. The merchant informs you that in ancient times, dragon’s bane used to grow near the walls of Zhentil Keep. The merchant is selling small pouches of it for 100 gp each. The efficacy is unknown.

You may purchase one of these if you wish, and then return to 433.

97

You walk up to the bars and look through into the room full of female and infant

goblins. They females regard you with utter shock, although you note that they do not appear afraid, or malicious towards your presence, which you find a bit odd. But then you wonder why the bars are there. Are they being kept prisoner?

- ◆ *To address them, go to 22.*
- ◆ *To return to the junction and continue east, go to 430.*

98

You leave the ruined temple and make your way over to the houses you saw earlier. *Go to 58.*

99

You walk up to the bugbear and tap him on the back.. He turns, utterly bewildered to see you standing there behind him.

“Excuse me, good fellow,” you begin. “I am down here investigating—”

But he is no mood for polite chit-chat.

Roaring with rage at your impertinence, he raises his battleaxe and brings it arcing down towards you.

Go to Bugbear Enforcer Combat Sheet.

100

Teodric leads you deep into a labyrinth of tangled streets and endlessly twisting alleyways. Suddenly he stops dead in his tracks, putting a fist in the air. You freeze. He waits, holding his dagger at his side. “Quiet now,” he whispers, and waits for a long moment, listening, watching... making absolutely sure you haven’t been followed. *(cont. over)*





Finally, after what seems like an age, the elven knight moves forward towards a door at the end of the alley, motioning for you to follow. You arrive at the door, an unassuming wooden entrance on the side of a building. Teodric pushes it open, ushers you inside, then steps through himself, quickly shutting it behind.

You are in total darkness, and just as you begin to fear for your life, and suspect that you are the victim of some hideous, deadly trap, a flame bursts into life and candles are lit: one, two, three, shedding light around the room, and illuminating faces.

Seated around a table are six old men, in hooded robes. But by their bearing, and the scars they wear, you know these are warriors. Veterans.

"Welcome traveller," one of them says.

"Come, be seated!"

◆ *Go to entry 160.*

101

If you suffered any wounds in that encounter, Jamaunga gives you one of his healing potions.

Jamaunga slaps you heartily on the back. "Well met, brave adventurer! We showed that old specter, eh!" Quickly Jamaunga moves to the captives to make sure they are all right.

You may wish to take something from the specter. If you know what that thing is and where it needs to be delivered, mark it on your character sheet now.

You do not dally in this cursed room. With Jamaunga's help, you guide the captives out of the dungeon and back into the free air of Zhentil Keep. Well, some might call it free air. You're starting to learn otherwise...

Turn to 226.

102

One guard keeps his blade trained on you while the other binds your hands behind your back.

"We don't want to kill you traveller. But you will face justice!"

Along with the female orc, you are yanked to your feet and pushed forward. Through the darkening streets you are jostled at spearpoint past numerous onlookers. The guards march you down a nearby alley at the end of which are some stairs. You smell sewage, rotting food, and other putrid aromas as you descend the stairs into a dark, damp corridor. Finally you arrive before a door, which is pushed open. Your hands are unbound, and then with a boot in the middle of your back you are unceremoniously thrust into the room, falling onto your hands and knees. The cell door shuts and is locked behind you.

◆ *Go to 317.*

103

You take a pinch of the dust and cautiously sniff it, then toss it in the air. Nothing. But then you *do* start to feel something – thirst. Suddenly you crave water, desperately. You feel a thirst more intense than anything you have ever experienced. Just as you are thinking this, you feel the same sucking sensation that brought you into this room, and sense your body dematerialising! Once again, everything goes black, and all of a sudden you are back in Melhuish's Magical Curiosities.

The girl is standing there smiling. She hands you a goblet of water which you quickly drain. "Not successful, I'm afraid," she says officiously. "Such a shame, I thought you looked quite clever. Hmm."

Turning her back on you the girl returns to what she was doing before, reading her book on the stairs. *Quite rude for such a little one, her parents should have taught her better!* you think to yourself.

You may return to entry 232 and choose any item you wish to purchase. After that, you leave the shop. Return to entry 12 (without taking a progress point) and choose another merchant to visit.

104

You move further down the corridor, heading east, and for the first time hear noise other than the sound of your own footfalls. Echoing down the long passageway comes the sound of hammering, metal on rock, multiplied many times over. It sounds like a mining crew, or someone busy extending a tunnel.

Then, another passage branching off to the north. The noise doesn't seem to be coming from down here though. It seems to be coming from ahead, to the east.

- ◆ *To take the passage branching off to the north, go to 11.*
- ◆ *To continue east, go to 331.*

105

You search your memory for any knowledge of the strange idol before you, but it is not forthcoming.

Looking around the room, you see nothing else of note and return to the junction.

Go to 104.

106

Make a thieves' tools check, DC 8.

- ◆ *If successful, go to 489.*
- ◆ *If unsuccessful, go to 46.*

107

You make your way through a tight doorway and into a room where a man stands amidst a dozen or so cages. Inside each one of these is a small dragon, and they are all of different colours: bronze, gold, silver, green, red... there are even a few gemstone dragons! The room is bare, and looks as if it has only just been moved into... this is certainly not an established shop with a counter and fitting decor. This looks to be a bit of a ramshackle, impromptu set-up. The man standing amongst the cages is loudly arguing with another man who has his back to you.

"200 is just robbing me blind," the dragon seller is saying. "The cost in obtaining the beast alone is more than that!"

"You had no right buying these wyrmlings in the first place!" the customer shouts. "So what right do you have to sell them? I'm giving you an opportunity to do the right thing here! Report the poachers you bought these wyrmlings from, and then hand the beasts over to me."

Suddenly the merchant notices you. "Yes? Can I help you?"

"No thanks, just looking," you reply, and continue perusing the cages, eager to listen in on more of this heated exchange.

"As I said, Pavos, I cannot let you have the wyrmling for less than 350."

A long silence follows, and then something muttered, in a low tone, only the occasional

word audible. "... like to know... Black... sneaking... shouldn't ... poaching... on their bloody doorstep!"

Then silence follows, punctuated by the chink of a coin pouch being dropped on a table. A cage door creaks open, and you turn to see the customer leaving with a green dragon wyrmling perched on his shoulder! He is feeding it some small tidbits as he goes.

- ◆ *To follow this strange man, go to 452.*
- ◆ *To approach the shop owner, go to 433.*

108

Quickly you follow the rogue and duck into the secret passage, anxious not to be seen by any approaching Zhentilar. You move past him and hear the panel slide down behind you.

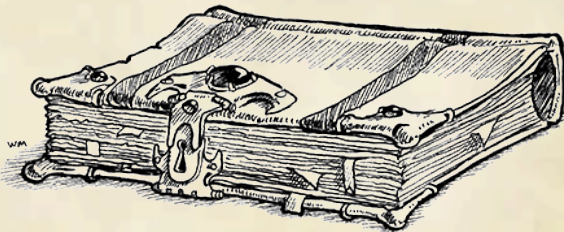
- ◆ *Roll a d20+4 with advantage. If the result is equal to or higher than your AC, go to 434.*
- ◆ *If it is lower, go to 170.*

109



You make your way across the street to *The Scoundrel's Tankard*. Pushing your way through the door, you are immediately met with a wall of noise. The place is packed. There is a reek of ale and sweat, and you shoulder your way in and towards the bar, raising a few grunts of protest.

- ◆ *Go to Map 5 in the Maps Booklet, and turn to the entry for Map 5 at the back of this booklet.*



110

You can choose to cast one of the following spells:

SPELL	EFFECT
Tasha's Hideous Laughter	Make a wisdom save for the bugbear (straight d20 roll against your Spell Save DC). If he fails, the bugbear falls prone, giving you time to smash the locks binding the goblins together. They will then be free to easily overpower the bugbear. Take an immediate victory on the following combat sheet.
Invisibility	The bugbear will not be able to see you, and you will be able to make one surprise attack on the bugbear, after which you will be visible.
Levitate	You can levitate the Bugbear 20ft in the air then drop him, giving him 2d6 fall damage. He will then be prone and will have disadvantage on initiative.

If there is another spell you feel would be appropriate here, go ahead and cast it, resolving the effects as you see fit, and in the spirit of the game. Once you have resolved the effects of any spell, go to Bugbear Enforcer Combat Sheet.

111

Did you succeed on a stealth check when you entered?

- ◆ *If so, and no effect (such as triggering a trap) has disrupted it, then go to entry 272.*
- ◆ *If you do not have stealth, go to 223.*

112

You spot something - a mechanism, connected to the lock. It is so small as to be barely visible, but it is there. You must disarm it.

Make a thieves' tools check, DC 14.

- ◆ *If successful, go to 91.*
- ◆ *If unsuccessful, go to 394.*

113

You search all around the walls, floor and ceiling of the room you are in. The only exit is through to the next room with the second table. There is nothing in this room except the table with the three jars of coloured dust. Aside from that, you find nothing - no other exits, no windows. It's as if you are shut in a tiny box. Then you realize - you are!

- ◆ *To investigate the next room, go to 191.*
- ◆ *To have a closer look at the jars of dust, go to 222.*

114

The Specter howls, as if in agony, and flees, but not towards the exit... It flies into the back wall and disappears, as if merging with it. It seems this undead can travel through stone, and it has used this ability to get as far away from you as possible.

Quickly you revive all the humans, shaking and slapping them to break them out of their trance. They are all shocked to find themselves there, having no memory of how they came to be there. All of them are from the Common Quarter.

Finally you get them moving, and out the door.

- ◆ *Will you accompany them out of the dungeon? If so, go to 167.*
- ◆ *If you prefer to stay here and wait to see if the specter returns, go to 154.*

115

You study the cleric's face, bearing, and body language. But his motives, whatever they are, are imperceptible.

- ◆ *To follow him through the door, go to 127.*
- ◆ *To politely decline and move back into the crowd, go to 285.*

116

You burst through the flames, emerging beyond the fiery door.

Take 1d4 fire damage.

You are on a landing which is empty apart from a ladder in its centre, going up to a hole through to the next floor up. The three of you scale this, emerging in a room shaped exactly like the bottom floor. Just smaller, and without giant reptiles.

Turn to entry 119.

117

Staying absolutely still and quiet, you hold your breath, pressed against the wall of the pit that lies nearest the door. Soon you hear something - puffing and grunting, as of a large animal, and snuffling about. You stay where you are, frozen, not even daring to breathe.

Eventually, however, the noises go away, and the room seems to be empty once more. Standing, you look around and then make a few more attempts to get out of the pit, which you eventually do. You check the chest, which unfortunately contains nothing but sand, and then finally leave the room, turning left down the passage.

Go to entry 40.

118

Turn to Map 8, go to the Shield Guardian Combat Sheet and do battle with these statues!

119

This room is bare apart from some armchairs and a table. You note that the ladder continues upward to the next floor.

- ◆ *To have a look around this room, go to entry 186.*
- ◆ *To continue up the ladder to the next floor, go to 125.*

120

The six old men and Teodric all sit down around the table, faces lit by the shimmering light of the candles.

“Welcome, traveller,” one of them says. “No doubt you are wondering why you are here. First, let me introduce myself. My name is Huon Falconhand, and I am the leader of



this little band. We are the Knights of Myth Drannor.”

Another of the old men pipes up. “Well, not *the* Knights of Myth-“

Huon cuts the old man off. “Shut up Addy!” He shakes his head, turning back to you.

“No, of course we are not the *entirety* of the Knights of Myth Drannor. What we are is a

small cell, placed here in Zhentil Keep, so that we might be useful in our old age. We sheathed our swords long ago, but still, we watch, and we keep an eye on Manshoon and his evildoings. And those are many.”

“The guts of it, my friend,” another chimes in, “is that we have been watching you. We need one such as yourself. As you can see, we are well past our prime. Not only that, but no Knight of Myth Drannor, even a young one, could complete the task we require of you, as there is a danger that a native of the Moonsea would be recognized by the Zhentarim.”

Huon cuts back in. “Illis is right,” he says. “Perhaps you have seen the discrimination that is currently being shown towards orcs. And heard the stories, perchance, of an orc horde marching on the Citadel of the Raven?”

“It’s all nonsense!” another old timer exclaims.

“A complete falsehood,” Illis agrees.

“Utter codswallop,” another one adds.

“The rumour goes,” Huon continues patiently, “That Galauntar Hawkhelm, the Captain of the Guard at the Citadel, was assassinated by orc spies who somehow infiltrated the Citadel. Well, we know that’s a falsehood because the Citadel is practically impenetrable by a force of any size. Besides that, what motive would the Thar orcs have to invade the Citadel? It poses no strategic advantage for them. Their own lands are well defended, and they have no designs over the Moonsea. No, it is a ruse, all of it. The Black Network are experts at this sort of scaremongering.”

“The *real* truth,” Huon continues, “is that Manshoon had Galauntar Hawkhelm assassinated by his Zhentarim spies.

Galauntar Hawkhelm was elected by all the Moonsea cities to serve as commander of the Citadel, protecting the Moonsea from invaders. But it is known that he is defiant towards Manshoon. For this reason, Manshoon wanted him dead. Now he *is* dead,

and soon the Zhentarim will have full control of the Citadel. Once they do, Manshoon will dominate these lands.”

“It is rumoured that there is a network of tunnels that originates in the Dragonspine Mountains and leads right under the Citadel. Zhentar, the founder of this city, had the tunnels constructed to serve as an escape from the Citadel in times of siege. We have only ever suspected these tunnels existed, but now we know they must exist, and now the Zhentarim have found them... or perhaps they knew the tunnels were there all along. This is the only way into the Citadel other than through its gates... the only way the Zhentarim could have gotten in there to assassinate Hawkhelm.”

“Unless they teleported in,” one old knight suggests, raising a finger.

Huon cuts him off. “No. There is a teleport cage around the Citadel. The Citadel is ancient, full of mysteries. No one can teleport in. Once inside, yes, magic can be used, but no one can teleport past those walls.”

“Ah. Right.”

Huon looks to you expectantly, with a glimmer of hope in his clear blue eyes. “We need you to find the entrance to these tunnels, wherever it lies within the Dragonspines. We need you to follow these tunnels inside the Citadel, and once there, to kill the Zhentarim spies that have infiltrated the Citadel. They may be holding the men there hostage... or they may be hiding in plain sight.”

“You will be rewarded,” Illis chimes in.

“King Azoun will see to that. We have already discussed the matter with him. He, like all of us, desires to thwart Manshoon’s plans. Here is a token of his goodwill.”

Teodric places a pouch into your hand; a heavy pouch. “800 gold,” he says. “And another 800 once the job is done.”

Huon continues, “If you cannot find the entrance to the tunnels, continue to the Citadel... there is a small chance you can get in over, or under the walls, concealed in a

cart perhaps... I don’t know how, but you look like a cunning sort. Once you are inside, you must find a knight called Sir Steval Skurynd, a Purple Dragon Knight, and tell him exactly what we have told you. But if you can, try your utmost to find the tunnel entrance. We must destroy it so that no more Zhentarim can infiltrate the Citadel!”

Huon sighs, as if exhausted by the telling of this story.

“So... what do you say, traveller? Are you willing to take up our quest?”

◆ *If you accept this quest, go to entry 174.*

◆ *If not, go to entry 438.*

121

As quickly as you can, you make your way across the bridge, but it is extremely narrow and not easily traversed - it certainly can’t be run across. By the time you get to the other side, the bugbear has disappeared out of sight down the passage.

◆ *There is little else to do but continue forward. Go to 35.*

122

You drop down into the street below, thanking the Gods that you were able to escape that alive. These Banite clerics are not to be trifled with, it seems! Indeed, all of Zhentil Keep now seems a dangerous place to you. You glance around and see many pairs of eyes watching you, and quickly you disappear into the flow of traffic heading back towards Market Square.

◆ *Return to Map 1 and choose a new destination. If you have 4 progress points, go to entry 132 now.*

123

You run past the guards and into the blacksmith’s workshop that lies behind the armourers. Several smiths, human and elven, look up as you pass.

Make a perception roll, DC 14.

◆ *If you are successful, go to 453.*

◆ *If you are unsuccessful, go to 281.*

124

The sound of her eldritch invocations chills you to the bone, and you turn and bolt out the door, hearing her curse loudly behind you.

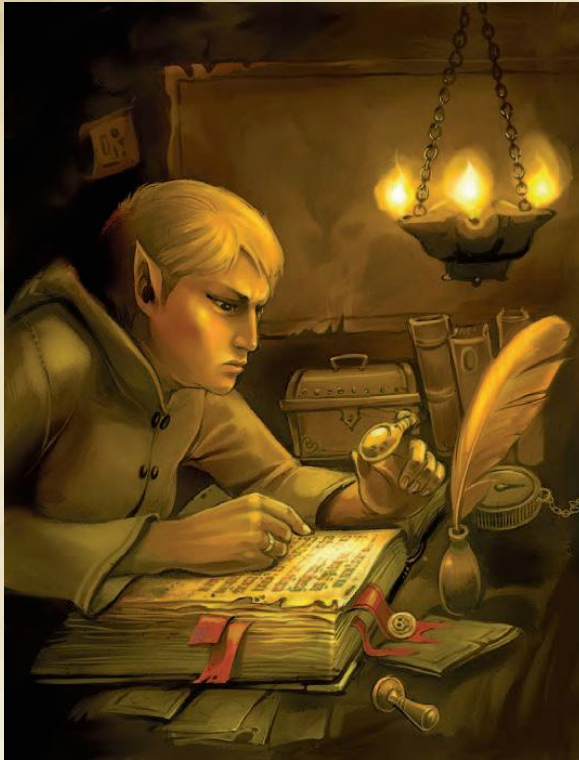
Make an athletics check, DC 14.

- ◆ *If you succeed, go to 268.*
- ◆ *If you fail, go to 253.*

125

You ascend another section of the ladder and emerge in a room which holds six simple beds, all of a similar make. The ladder continues to ascend upwards, finishing at a trapdoor.

- ◆ *To inspect this room, go to 327.*
- ◆ *To continue upwards to the trapdoor, go to 393.*



126

You make your way into an unlit shopfront. The only visible illumination comes from an open doorway at the far side of the room. You make your way over and knock on the door, stooping inside.

Inside is an elf bent over a table full of scrolls, books and other artefacts. He is so lost in his study he initially doesn't notice your presence.

Finally he looks up with a start. "Ah!" he says, jumping out of his chair. "Come in, come in! I'm Fodus, the clairvoyant, I presume you're here to have your fortune scried? Take a seat, please!"

You plonk yourself down in a seat on the other side of his desk. Fodus takes out a large book and a curious little circular device. "Now, what will it be? 20 gold pieces for the detailed scrying, or just 5 for a basic scrying?"

- ◆ *Do you pay 5 gold for the basic fortune? Go to 454.*
- ◆ *Or, do you pay the full 20 for the detailed fortune? Go to 398.*

127

"This way," the cleric says. You follow him through the open doorway.

The cleric holds the door for you as you step through, emerging in a small open courtyard, surrounded by pillars. Then he quickly pushes the door shut and locks it.

"Adoranz, Fromir!" he yells. "We have a visitor!"

"What kind of visitor?" comes a reply from somewhere beyond the pillars.

"The... curious kind," your host replies.

As you puzzle over what he means by this, two other clerics appear.

"Yes brothers, this one likes to ask a few too many questions."

"What sort of questions?" one cleric growls.

"Questions he has no business knowing the answers to," the first cleric says.

"We don't like those kind of questions," the second cleric says. All three of them now stand before you, glaring at you from hollow, fanatic eyes. Slowly, in unison, the clerics of Bane all draw vicious-looking maces from the folds of their robes.

(cont. over)



The clerics rush forward and attack!

- ◆ *Go to Map 7 and turn to Clerics of Bane Combat Sheet.*

128

You quickly duck between the two buildings where you saw the hooded figure disappear, but they are gone.

Wondering who it could have been, and whether they were actually watching you, you return to the street.

- ◆ *To visit The Scoundrel's Tankard, go to 109*
- ◆ *To go and look for an inn where you can rest, go to 6.*

129

The rogue leads you away from Market Square and down a succession of tight alleyways. "Our lair is hidden from the eyes of the public." He smiles. "As you can imagine, we have to be careful not to be seen. It's just down here. Wait."

The rogue walks up to the alleyway entrance and checks down it quickly.

"It's clear," he whispers. "Come on."

He quickly pads down the alleyway, then stops by the wall, turns to the right and touches something amongst the stonework – you don't quite see what. A slab of stone slides upwards.

The rogue beckons to you, indicating that you go first. There is a look of slight alarm on his face, seemingly in response to a clattery noise that you can hear from the next street over. He beckons urgently to you. "Come, quickly! I hear Zhentilar coming!"

- ◆ *To enter the secret passage, go to 108.*
- ◆ *To tell the rogue to stay and face the Zhentilar with you, go to 247.*



130



You are too slow. A bolt of magic energy hits you, slamming you into the opposite wall. *Take 1d6 bludgeoning damage from this force bolt.*

Taking several moments to recover, you pick yourself up and proceed forward to the junction.

Go to entry 194.

131

The blacksmith can forge one metal weapon for you (sword, axe, greatsword, warhammer, etc) for 20 gp, which is much cheaper than you might get it at a weapon merchant's shop. The weapon will be basic but functional, serving as any normal weapon would damage-wise.

The smith chats away as he works on your weapon, hammering out the metal with great skill. It doesn't take long before your weapon is ready, and you hand over the gold to the blacksmith, thanking him for his excellent work.

Return to Map 1 / Map Entry 1 and continue to your chosen destination.

132

Walking the streets of Zhentil Keep, you notice the hour is getting late and it is approaching the time when you should return to your inn. Evening is closing in and business owners are shutting up shop. Also, your stomach is beginning to utter growls of protest.

◆ *Go to 479.*

133

Despite your efforts to engage the female goblin in conversation, she seems suspicious of you and won't talk. Turning away, she retreats to her bed and her waiting infant. The others take her lead and don't approach you, despite your efforts to communicate.

After a while you give up and return to the junction. Go to 430.

134

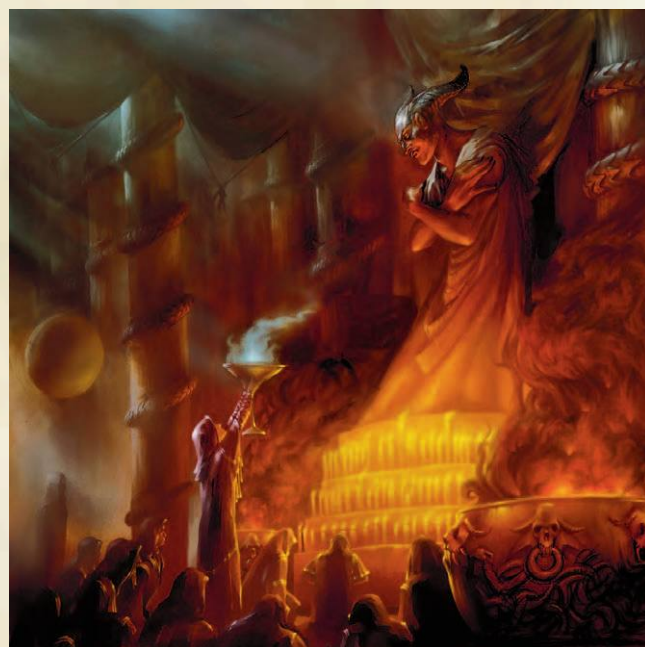
Following the stranger's advice, you place the shawl over your head. "That's it," he says. "The name's Rynmor."

You tell Rynmor your name in return.

Rynmor informs you he is originally from a nomadic race of people that roamed the Anauroch Desert, "Until our people were scattered to the four winds by the Netheril Wars." He says that an urgent mission

brought him to Zhentil Keep. Then he starts pointing some things of interest out to you. "Look at these worshippers. Slippery folk, these Zhents. Why else would they worship Bane, the God of Deception? An entire city devoted to a god like that? Boggles the mind."

You and Rynmor make your way slowly inside the main temple, the press of people tight. Inside the temple it is dark; no windows show through to the interior and only the door you just passed through admits any light. Low chanting comes from somewhere and there are a hundred different conversations going on around you.



At the main altar, which is lined with dozens of candles, you see a female priest offering a large smoking chalice to an image of what appears to be... a demon? You point out the horns to Rynmor, asking him what that idol represents.

"That's Bane, the Trickster!" Rynmor exclaims. "He's not a demon... look closer. That's a kind of mask he's wearing, with horns on the top. Bane once used a mask just like that to trick a female tanar'ri demon into bearing his seed and giving him a child! That child was Iyachtu Xvim. They say that Bane created Xvim in case he ever died, that he

would have another body that he could transfer to. That is why they call him the Trickster - he fooled even the denizens of the Abyss! And his plane, Acheron, touches the Nine Hells also. So there is a demonic connection. This is Bane's demonic manifestation."

There is a low, ominous chanting that reverberates throughout the temple, strangely soothing, but with an underlying sinister note. It unnerves you.

Rynmor points out some more aspects of the temple. There is a place where you can light candles and place them on the altar before Bane to make an offering. Each candle costs 5 gp and Rynmor tells you the money goes to the Banite monks. "Worship at your peril, friend! You never know what sort of boon the Lord of Darkness will bestow on you!"

Rynmor also points out to you a door at the far side of the temple that he says leads to the cloister of the Banite monks. You could have a bit of a careful pry around over there, but Rynmor quietly warns you not to go anywhere near that place.

You also see clerics milling about, wearing black gauntlets. If you can pretend to be naïve enough, you could perhaps approach one of them and try to get some information out of them.

Or you could just stay where you are and observe.

- ◆ *If you wish to make an offering to Bane, go to 25.*
- ◆ *To investigate the door that leads to the Banite cloister, go to 190.*
- ◆ *To approach a cleric and try to engage them in conversation, go to 289.*
- ◆ *To simply observe, go to 195.*
- ◆ *If you wish to leave the temple, go to 209.*

135

"Don't be foolish!" the cleric spits back. "The High Priest would not share quarters with mere monks! He is part of Lord Manshoon's inner circle."

"Oh right," you say. "So he lives with Manshoon then?"

The cleric gazes at you as if you are utterly dense. "High Priest Fzoul lives in the Tower of the High Priest of Bane, you fool! Now please, move on!"

You glance around and notice at least another dozen of these clerics milling about. Seeing little other option, you smile politely and move back into the crowd.

- ◆ *Return to 134 and choose another option.*

136

The gargoyle defeated, you look up to see who the stranger was who aided you from the rooftop - but they are gone. Moments later, however, you see a female halfling appear from an alley next to the building. She approaches you in the street.

"I'm Mechioli," she says. "A ranger, from Darnshall. Come, follow me. Quickly now!"

You follow the little warrior and she leads you back into the alley she just emerged from. There she stops and turns to face you. "That gargoyle was animated by a Zhentarim mage. I saw her, just moments before you appeared. I've been tracking you through the city."

"Tracking me? Why?"

"Someone tasked me with your protection," Mechioli replies. "The Knights of Myth Drannor. They will contact you soon, if they haven't already. You have two things that they require: firstly, an unfamiliar face. Secondly, prowess in battle. Your services are needed, outlander!"

*If you have suffered any wounds, Mechioli spends spell slots to cast **Cure Wounds** on you twice. Regain 2d8+4 hp.*

You try to get more information out of Mechioli, but it is not forthcoming. She says once more, "You are valuable to us... try not to die!"

And then, as quickly as she appeared, she is gone.

Return to Map 1 / Map Entry 1 and continue to your next destination.

137

You quicken your stride, anxious to get gone... whatever that thing was, it was after you and you need to be gone from here. You pick up your pace.

Roll perception, DC 18.

- ◆ *If successful, go to 428.*
- ◆ *If unsuccessful, go to 197.*

138

You join in heartily, adding your voice and instrument to the song, but soon the Zhentilar break through the gathering and begin to disperse everyone.

As the crowd dissipates, the guards look towards you, the performers, but you are one step ahead: your instrument is already packed away and you are out of there before you attract too much attention.

Return to Map 1 / Map Entry 1 and continue to your next chosen destination.

139

If you do not wish to accept the quest from the Knights of Myth Drannor, then your time here is done! This is a two-part adventure, so the next progression for you will be Book 4 in this series if you do not wish to accept the quest to find the secret tunnels within the Dragonspines. Thank you for playing *Tyrant of Zhentil Keep*, until next time!

140

You shake your head. "No thanks," you say curtly. "I prefer to be on my own."

The stranger gives a shrug. "Suit yourself," he says, and disappears into the crowd.

- ◆ *Go to entry 382*

141

Not wasting another moment, you run over, grab the large laughing halfling (as you do this you randomly think what an excellent tongue-twister that would make), throw him over your shoulder and stride out of the shop, grunting with the effort.

Once out on the street you drop him, and he falls onto his back in the street, now at least six feet tall and still growing! A small crowd gathers around.

"Thank you!" Pyzar shouts from the door behind you.

You turn and re-enter the shop, wiping your brow, and find him back behind his beakers and tubes, humming away happily.

"Get that a lot, do you?" you ask, a little put out that he's not more grateful. You nearly broke your back carrying that inflated midget out of his shop.

"Hm? Oh yes," Pyzar replies, then peers out from behind his equipment, lowering his spectacles. "Oh, I do really appreciate it... ahhh..." he looks around his shop. "I'll give you a ten percent discount on your purchase, how's that?"

You smile. "Very nice, thank you."

- ◆ *Go to 476.*

142

You reach down and grab the ring, inspecting it. As any sane adventurer would do, you slip it onto your figure, and immediately feel... warm.

A pleasant, comforting sensation of warmth comes over you, almost as if you had just pulled on a luxurious animal hide or woollen garment.

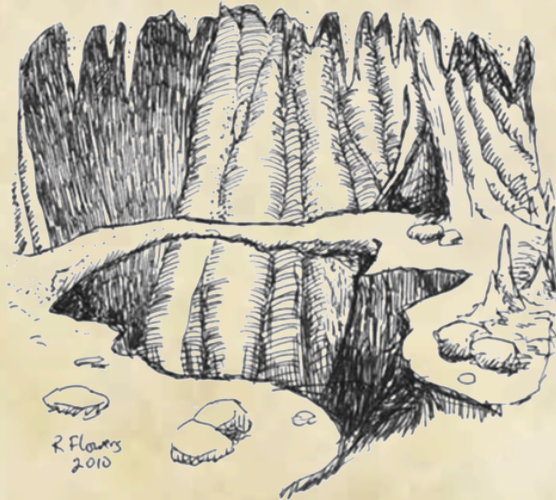
Add Ring of Warmth to your inventory if you wish. While wearing this ring, you have resistance to all cold damage. In addition, you and everything you carry cannot be affected by extremely low temperatures. What a great find!

To continue onto your next destination within Zhentil Keep, go to Map 1 / Map Entry 1 and find the relevant destination entry.

143

Your ranged attack finds its mark. The bugbear grunts with pain, and then, your attack having put him off balance, slips and falls into the deep crevasse. Quickly you

move forward and watch as his bulky form is swallowed into the black depths.



Beyond the bridge the passageway continues into darkness, bending around to the right. You take a deep breath and continue forward, thinking it amazing that Wendal Wheatfields had no idea this dungeon was beneath his humble place of business. Making your way across the narrow stone bridge, you peer down into the blackness into which the bugbear fell... but you cannot see a bottom down there. Cautiously you make your way across, soon reaching the other side,
Go to 35.

144

Quickly you move to the pillar where you saw motion, just in time to see the swift creature disappearing over a rooftop edge. You catch a glimpse of it - humanoid, completely devoid of hair, and wearing robes of some sort. But at about one hundred feet away, it is too far to see any more detail than that.

You have one chance to hit it with a ranged attack, if you have the weaponry to do so. Make a ranged attack with disadvantage.

- ◆ *If the roll is 15 or higher, go to 227.*
- ◆ *If lower than 15, go to 155.*

145

You gradually draw out the half-orc, who name is Mukdash, as to what he is doing in Zhentil Keep (he doesn't look like a local)

and about the discrimination against orcs that seems prevalent here.

"False rumours, planted by the Zhentarim," he breathes quietly, although the halfling seems to hear and shoots him a dirty look. "They're claiming that an orc horde is marching on the Citadel of the Raven." "And they're not?" you ask. "How can you be sure?"

Mukdash shakes his head. "Most of the orcs in the Moonsea live in Thar," he replies, "Alongside the ogres, another persecuted race. Not north of The Ride. They've been the brunt of Manshoon's false rumours before, now its our turn."

"But why?" you ask. "Why spread such rumours?"

Mukdash shrugs. "I don't know, but I can tell you this: whatever it is, it's all part of Manshoon's master plan. His goal is to rule all trade in this area. My guess is he's trying to get the other rulers of the Moonsea to agree to him taking control of the Citadel. If that happens, he will have a major strategic advantage over the area. Then we can kiss goodbye to all our freedoms!" Mukdash says this a little louder, for the halfling's benefit. "Orcs, halflings, elves, humans... everyone. Manshoon will rule us all!"

The halfling wags a finger at Mukdash angrily. "Now that's enough!" he barks. "Keep that sort of talk down or I'll call the guard."

"All right, settle down," Mukdash says, rolling his eyes at you.

A shout comes from the other side of the bar. "Last call for the pit bout! Starting in 2 minutes!"

- ◆ *Will you try your hand against Kromm Daggerfist in the pit? Go to 204.*
- ◆ *Or you could read the posters around the walls? Go to 189.*
- ◆ *Otherwise, there is an interesting-looking dice game going on at a nearby table. Go to entry 18.*

146

Deduct a spell slot, and roll 5d8 (you can also cast this at 2nd level and roll 7d8 instead).

- ◆ *If the result is 1-10, go to 246.*
- ◆ *If you rolled 11-21, go to 262.*
- ◆ *If the result is 22 or higher, go to 486.*

147

You quietly produce the materials and make the incantation.

Make a wisdom saving throw for the guard (straight d20). The DC is your spellcasting ability modifier.

- ◆ *If he succeeds, go to 252.*
- ◆ *If he fails, go to 373.*

148

Try as hard as you might, you cannot remember the significance of these religious icons.

Frustrated at your inability to recall, you return to the midst of the ruins.

Go to entry 78 without taking a progress point.

149

The rogue, a human, pouts as he considers your question. "A quest, you say? Well.. that all depends where your loyalties lie, my friend. No doubt you've heard of Manshoon. Now that you've seen Zhentil Keep, what do you think of him?"

How do you respond?

- ◆ *"He's obviously neglectful of his people – a tyrant and a villain!" Go to 399.*
- ◆ *You could attempt to praise Manshoon to this rogue. Go to 340.*
- ◆ *Or you could pretend to be ignorant. Go to 282.*

150

Gunter's General Supplies is a busy establishment. Humans – Zhentilar and civilians - rub shoulders with adventurers and townsfolk of all races. The harried staff dash to and fro between the many aisles and dark wooden shelves, seeing to people's orders and

generally looking quite harassed. You take your time, gathering the things you need. *Select and purchase any items you want from page 150 of the Players Handbook.*

The following items are also available.

- Monster hunter pack: includes a chest, a crowbar, a hammer, three wooden stakes, a holy symbol, a flask of holy water, a set of manacles, a steel mirror, a flask of oil, a tinderbox, and 3 torches. (45 gp. 46 lb.)
- Set of pitons and hammer (2 gp 8lb.)
- Set of 3 empty vials (2 gp. 1/2 lb.)
- 1 pound bag of flour (1 sp. 1 lb.)
- Gambling set (3 gp. 1/4 lb.)
- Large magnet (3 gp. 1/2 lb.)

- ◆ *Purchase whatever your heart desires and then return to entry 86. Do not take a progress point when returning to 86.*

151

You hear a sound from behind you, and turn just in time to see a hideous floating specter, its top half covered in armour, its head encased in a plated helmet bearing long, curving horns, which you manage to parry away as the specter charges you like a bull! *Go to Abyssal Specter Combat sheet and go with the "Location 2" settings.*

152

You feel something on the back of your neck, no more than a breath of air.

Quickly whipping around, you draw your weapon and reflexively lash out at whatever presence is behind you, but too late... whatever you felt is gone.

You reach up to feel the back of your neck, sensing something is definitely amiss.

Moving your hand around, you realize there is a little less hair than there was before. A lock of your hair is missing!

Appalled, you quicken your pace. This cannot be good.

(cont. over)

Note the codeword Memento on your character sheet.

- ◆ *To continue onto your next destination within Zhentil Keep, go to Map 1 / Map Entry 1 and find the relevant destination entry.*
- ◆ *Or, perhaps this encounter has spooked you to the point where you simply want to return to your inn. Go to 311.*

153

The flames in the door frame turn out to be actual fire, and burn your hand superficially. Take 2 hp fire damage. Seeing no other option, you realize Salihn's plan is the only way forward. Go to 319.

154

The captives quickly depart, and you remember that you left a rope dangling from above, tied to a rock. But simply rescuing these poor souls is not enough for you; you want to end the specter's reign of terror. You move to the back wall where the specter entered and hold your weapon at the ready, waiting, staying in the shadows. Soon, you see it emerge and move straight into the centre of the chamber. It only takes a second for it to realize it has been deprived of its quarry, and it searches the room for any sign... then it sees you. Howling in rage, it lowers the horns on its helmeted head and charges! You must do battle with this infernal spirit! Go to *Abyssal Specter Combat Sheet*. (If you have met Jamaunga, he stays and assists you in battle).

155

Your ranged attack does not find its mark, and now the creature is gone - disappeared amongst the rooftops of Zhentil Keep. Pursuit would be futile from here. The creature was quick and seemed to possess uncanny powers of stealth and camouflage.

Wondering at what could have motivated it to be spying on you, you return to the street. Go to Map 1 / Map Entry 1 and continue to your chosen destination.

156

You try to read the rogue's intentions, but he is either hiding his true motives, or his invitation is well-meant.

- ◆ *To follow him, go to 129.*
- ◆ *To turn and leave quickly without saying another word, go to 324.*
- ◆ *To make your apologies and say you have other business to attend to, go to 266.*

157

As you tend to the mistreated orc she slowly comes around.

"Thank you," she says in a slurred voice, looking around. "Where am I?"

You tell her what happened, and slowly she regathers her wits a little more. "I need to be gone," she says suddenly, getting to her feet. "It's not safe for orcs in Zhentil Keep any more. Not since these lies have been circulated. I need to leave for Thar, warn my people!"

Do you have anything you want to ask this orc?

- ◆ *"You mentioned the Zhentarim before. What are they?" Go to entry 423.*
- ◆ *"How do you know these are lies, and if they are, who is spreading them and why?" Go to 359.*
- ◆ *Or you could let her go on her way, and start searching for an inn where you can spend the night. Go to entry 6.*

158

You walk over to the crowd gathered around the man, who appears to be a priest of some sort. His words gradually become audible. The priest sees you arrive and gives you a slight smile.

"For the benefit of those who have just arrived, I shall repeat the fell news, delivered

to Lord Manshoon this morning, and relayed by His Grace to the Priests of the Temple of Bane. The tidings are thus: Galauntar Hawkhelm is murdered! By an orc assassin! And an orc horde descends on the Citadel of the Raven, marching unchecked across The Ride! Tens of thousands!"

"Lies!" a voice cries out. You turn to see a female orc glaring at the priest. "These are lies, propagated by the Black Network! Zhentarim spies killed Hawkhelm, not our people."

"Silence, wench!" the priest bellows. "Of course you would say such things! Killed by the Zhentarim indeed!"

From seemingly out of nowhere, two guards, dressed in the same livery as the gate sentries, appear and grab the orc female under her arms, and begin dragging her away kicking and screaming. The rest of the crowd grows restless.

"That's enough of that!" one guard says gruffly, dealing her a vicious blow with his gauntleted hand. The female orc's head slumps forward; the blow has rendered her unconscious.

The priest addresses the crowd again. "See! It is bred into them, this violence, this hatred. A night in the dungeons will be her reward for treasonous talk like that!"

- ◆ *Will you go to the female orc's aid? Go to 187.*
- ◆ *To do nothing and simply observe, go to 259.*
- ◆ *If you want to leave this crowd and visit The Scoundrel's Tankard, go to 109.*
- ◆ *Or, if you want to go and find an inn for the night, go to 6.*

159

Salihn is taken aback by your offer of assistance. "Well I won't say no... we could be killed, you know. And I don't have anything to pay you with. But you will be keeping power out of the hands of Manshoon, so that's something.

"Think about it tomorrow," Salihn says. "If you still want to help, meet us at the East Bridge, north end, four hours after dusk."

- ◆ *If you still want to help Salihn achieve her goals, take note of the codeword Wandquest. At the appropriate time, it will be activated. For now, go to 381.*

160

The six old men, and the elven warrior who brought you here, all sit down around the table, faces lit by the shimmering light of the candles.

"Welcome, traveller," one of them says. "No doubt you are wondering why you are here. First, let me introduce myself. My name is Huon Falconhand, and I am the leader of this little band. We are Knights of Myth Drannor."



Another of the old men pipes up. "Well, not *the* Knights of Myth—"

Huon cuts the old man off. "Shut up Addy!" He shakes his head, turning back to you.

"No, of course we are not the *entirety* of the Knights of Myth Drannor. What we are is a

small cell, placed here in Zhentil Keep, so that we might be useful in our old age. We sheathed our swords long ago, but still, we watch, and we keep an eye on Manshoon and his evildoings. And those are many.”

“The guts of it, my friend,” another chimes in, “is that we have been watching you. We need one such as yourself. As you can see, we are well past our prime. Not only that, but no Knight of Myth Drannor, even a young one, could complete the task we require of you, as there is a danger that a native of the Moonsea would be recognized by the Zhentarim.”

Huon cuts back in. “Illis is right,” he says. “Perhaps you have seen the discrimination that is currently being shown towards orcs. And heard the stories, perchance, of an orc horde marching on the Citadel of the Raven?”

“It’s all nonsense!” another old timer exclaims.

“A complete falsehood,” Illis agrees.

“Utter codswallop,” another one adds.

“The rumour goes,” Huon continues patiently, “That Galauntar Hawkhelm, the Captain of the Guard at the Citadel, was assassinated by orc spies who somehow infiltrated the Citadel. Well, we know that’s a falsehood because the Citadel is practically impenetrable by a force of any size. Besides that, what motive would the Thar orcs have to invade the Citadel? It poses no strategic advantage for them. Their own lands are well defended, and they have no designs over the Moonsea. No, it is a ruse, all of it. The Black Network are experts at this sort of scaremongering.”

“The real truth,” Huon continues, “is that Manshoon had Galauntar Hawkhelm assassinated by his Zhentarim spies. Galauntar Hawkhelm was elected by all the Moonsea cities to serve as commander of the Citadel, protecting the Moonsea from invaders. But it is known that he is defiant towards Manshoon. For this reason, Manshoon wanted him dead. Now he *is* dead,

and soon the Zhentarim will have full control of the Citadel. Once they do, Manshoon will dominate these lands.

“It is rumoured that there is a network of tunnels that originates in the Dragonspine Mountains and leads right under the Citadel. Zhentar, the founder of this city, had the tunnels constructed to serve as an escape from the Citadel in times of siege. We have only ever suspected these tunnels existed, but now we know they must exist, and now the Zhentarim have found them... or perhaps they knew the tunnels were there all along. This is the only way into the Citadel other than through its gates... the only way the Zhentarim could have gotten in there to assassinate Hawkhelm.”

“Unless they teleported in,” one old knight suggests, raising a finger.

Huon cuts him off. “No. There is a teleport cage around the Citadel. The Citadel is ancient, full of mysteries. No one can teleport in. Once inside, yes, magic can be used, but no one can teleport past those walls.”

“Ah. Right.”

Huon looks to you expectantly, with a glimmer of hope in his clear blue eyes. “We need you to find the entrance to these tunnels, wherever it lies within the Dragonspines. We need you to follow these tunnels inside the Citadel, and once there, to kill the Zhentarim spies that have infiltrated the Citadel. They may be holding the men there hostage... or they may be hiding in plain sight.”

“You will be rewarded,” Illis chimes in.

“King Azoun will see to that. We have already discussed the matter with him. He, like all of us, desires to thwart Manshoon’s plans. Here is a token of his goodwill.”

Teodric places a pouch into your hand; a heavy pouch. “800 gold,” he says. “And another 800 once the job is done.”

Huon continues, “If you cannot find the entrance to the tunnels, continue to the Citadel... there is a small chance you can get in over, or under the walls, concealed in a

cart perhaps... I don't know how, but you look like a cunning sort. Once you are inside, you must find a knight called Sir Steval Skurynd, a Purple Dragon Knight, and tell him exactly what we have told you. But if you can, try your utmost to find the tunnel entrance. We must destroy that entrance so that no more Zhentarim can infiltrate the Citadel!"

Huon sighs, as if exhausted by the telling of this story.

"So... what do you say, traveller? Are you willing to take up our quest?"

- ◆ *You cannot refuse a good quest. Go to entry 295.*

161

The elven stranger leads you deep into a labyrinth of tangled streets and endlessly twisting alleyways. Suddenly he stops dead in his tracks, putting a fist in the air. You freeze. He waits, holding his dagger at his side. "Quiet now," he says, and waits for a long moment, listening, watching... Making absolutely sure you haven't been followed.



Finally, after what seems like an age, he moves forward towards a door at the end of the alley, motioning for you to follow. You arrive at an unassuming wooden door on the side of a building. The stranger pushes it open, ushers you inside, then steps through himself, shutting it behind.

You are in total darkness, and just as you begin to fear for your life, and suspect that you are the victim of some hideous, deadly trap, a flame bursts from the darkness. Candles are lit - one, two, three - shedding light around the room, and illuminating faces.

Seated around a table are six old men, in hooded robes. By their bearing, and the scars they wear, you know these are warriors. Veterans.

"Welcome traveller," one of them says.

"Come, be seated!"

- ◆ *Go to entry 198.*

162

Something tingles on the back of your neck, and suddenly you get a feeling – no, a strong instinct – that you are being watched. You whip around quickly to see a hooded figure disappear between two buildings.

- ◆ *To try and follow, go to entry 128*
- ◆ *Or perhaps you merely imagining things. You shrug and try to find an inn. Go to 6.*
- ◆ *The other option, of course, is visiting The Scoundrel's Tankard. To visit the tavern, go to entry 109.*

163

One of the players congratulates you on your luck as you pocket the winnings. The other skulks angrily off to the bar.

"Well done," the elf says, giving you another one of her smiles. "Enjoy the rest of your stay in Zhentil Keep!"

- ◆ *To try and talk to this elf, go to 474.*
- ◆ *To stand and leave the table, go to 381.*

164

Whatever or whoever was keeping that robe erect will forever remain a mystery. But there are a few possible explanations. You have heard of assassins so accomplished that they can use the plane known as the Shadowfell to actually teleport short distances. Not only that, but in your travels you have heard tell of a race of people known as skulks who can accomplish similar feats, and whose camouflage abilities and stealth can render them virtually invisible. You don't know whether you've just encountered one of these beings, or simply a powerful magic user. Their motives and reasons for being where they were are, for now at least, unclear.

Return to Map 1 / Map Entry 1 and choose a new destination, or continue to the destination you were originally headed towards.

165 PLAY AUDIO

You have triggered a dart trap! Three small darts hit you in quick succession.

Take 3d4 piercing damage.

You quickly tend to your wounds and then make short work of the lock, which is a fairly simple device. The chest lid releases.

Go to entry 427.

166

In that moment, your instincts pick up on a few things about this situation that seem... a bit *off*. For one thing, there is the look on the rogue's face. It seems frustrated, exasperated, the expression of someone whose carefully laid plan has just failed.

The second thing you notice is the noise of the so-called approaching Zhentilar.

Listening closer, you realize that it's not the sound of armored feet at all, but rather the clatter of a horse-drawn cart, echoing off the walls and buildings!

This rogue was lying to you, and probably leading you into some sort of trap!

You turn to the rogue calmly, stilling your anger with great effort. "You're right," you say. "Let's go."

But the rogue is too perceptive for that – he knows he's been made. Turning and bolting, he hits the mechanism as he goes and the slab of stone begins sliding back into place.

◆ *Do you attempt to pursue him? Go to 292.*

◆ *Or you could just let him go by going to entry 215.*

167

You start herding the specter's captives out of the dungeon. However, just as you are exiting the glyph room, you hear a howl of protest behind you. You turn to see the specter flying towards you! Screaming in terror, the specter's former captives flee down the corridor, leaving you to face the thing alone.

Go to Abyssal Specter Combat Sheet starting from Location 2.

(If you have met Jamaunga, he stays and assists you in battle).

168

The priest responds that they do not have oil, but if you have some plain oil, she can bless it for you, which she will do for a donation of 20 gp.

Alternately, flasks of Amaunator-blessed holy water are being sold outside the temple for 25 gp each, limit 2.

The priest wishes you a good day and wanders off to attend to her duties.

Return to 53 and choose another option, if you wish.

169

Take 2d6 poison damage. If you are still alive, continue reading below.

You awake, what feels like many hours later, in a tight, enclosed space. You are being jostled about, which is probably what woke you. It's almost as if you're adrift on a rough

sea, inside a trunk of some sort. But then you hear voices.

"Not much further," one voice says.

"Good," a second answers. "Let's get this done and report back to Semmemon for our gold."

You bump along inside the dark trunk for another few minutes, until you can hear the sound of water lapping against a pier.

"Here we are," the first voice says. "To the end, then?"

"Aye."

You start banging on the lid of the chest, moving around so you can get your legs bent up above you, and kicking out as hard as you can.

"Still alive!" the second voice exclaims.

"Don't worry, the Tesh will take care of that!" the first voice says. "Ready?" The chest begins to swing back and forth. "On three... one, two..."

The gruff man's voice is cut short by the shear and *thunk* of an arrow, from a longbow if you're not mistaken, followed soon after by a dull thud. The trunk hits the ground hard, jarring your head severely.

"What the- Thebus, are-"

Another two arrows, *thunk-thunk*, in quick succession, followed by an agonized groan and a splash.

Then, soon after, you hear someone fumbling with the straps of the trunk. The lid flies open, and there looking down at you is a tall male elf, dressed in chain mail and Zhentilar livery. He offers a hand, just as you offered a hand to Annaya what only seems like moments ago. Unlike that encounter though, you get the distinct impression that no malice is involved here, despite the Zhentilar uniform.

The elf helps you up and out of the trunk, and you see that you are at the end of a pier which extends out over the river Tesh. It is dark, nighttime, and your head is pounding. You stand and notice your legs are shaky, barely strong enough to work. Annaya's poison is obviously still affecting you.

The elf hands you a flask.

(Do you know Teodric? If so, you thank him for saving you – and skip the following introductions...)

"I'm Teodric," he says, introducing himself.

"Drink that, it will help. Ignore the uniform, that's just a disguise."

You chug the sweet liquid, and indeed it does help, clearing your head and reinvigorating your spirit. You draw in several deep breaths and are beginning to feel yourself again.

(Regain 1d6 hp).

"You're lucky I got here in time," Teodric says as he retrieves his arrows. "Another few moments and you'd have been done for. Come on, we need to move."

Teodric leads you back down the pier and soon you are once again amongst the tangled streets and alleyways of Zhentil Keep, walking quickly. Teodric talks as you struggle to keep up with his swift stride.

"You were saved because we have been watching you, friend, since you entered the city. That was the Black Network you just encountered, the Zhentarim. They have been watching you also, but for different reasons. You must have done something to irritate them."

You rack your brains, wondering what it could have been.

"Don't bother trying to solve such questions. No-one understands the motives of Manshoon and his Zhentarim. The important thing is, you're safe now."

Teodric leads you this way and that, and you wonder if the twisting journey will ever end. Then, suddenly, you are before a low door at the end of an alleyway. Teodric quickly checks all around, the buildings above, the end of the alleyway to make sure you weren't followed. Then, with a quick nod to you, he opens the door and steps through. You follow Teodric into the totally dark room, and the elf quickly shuts the door behind you.

You are in total darkness.

Suddenly, a flame bursts from the darkness and candles are lit, one, two, three...

shedding light around the room, and illuminating faces, seven of them. Seated around a table are six old men, in hooded robes.

"Welcome traveller," one of them says.

"Come, be seated!"

Go to entry 229.

170

You hear something behind you, and turn just in time to see the rogue lurching forward at you with his rapier. Quickly you draw your own weapon and parry him to the side. "You bloody coward!" you growl through gritted teeth. "You'll pay dearly for that, worm!"

The cowardly rogue sneers evilly. "That's *Devil Worm* to you, cretin!"

Go to Devil Worm Combat Sheet.

171

"Oh I'm sorry, I didn't know," you lie.

The cleric eyes you warily. "Hm. Well, off with you then!"

You glance around and see at least another dozen of these clerics milling about. Seeing little other option, you smile politely and move back into the crowd.

◆ *Return to 134 and choose another option.*

172

You make your way forward into the large room to the north.

Entering the chamber, you see a large idol towering above you, but with one thing missing - its head! The decapitated statue holds a sceptre of some sort and stands on a large plinth, on the side of which is an inscription:

Zhentar, founding lord of Zhentil Keep.

So, Zhentil Keep did not begin with Manshoon after all! There was someone before him... at least one ruler who proceeded the man referred to as the Tyrant of Moonsea.

You take a brief look around the room, and, convinced there is nothing else here worthy of investigation, return to the junction.

Return to entry 194 and choose another option.

173

Ignoring the poor woman's cries for help, you continue on down the street, intent on your next destination.

◆ *You heartless wretch! Go to Map 1 / Map Entry 1 and continue to your next destination.*

174

"I'll do it," you hear yourself saying.

"Excellent!" Huon Falconhand exclaims. "I can't tell you what this means to us, friend! You will be rewarded, but beyond that, you will always have friends in the Knights of Myth Drannor! And, you will have saved the Moonsea from tyranny."

"Go now," Huon says, placing a hand on your shoulder. "Leave at dawn tomorrow. A mile from the city gates, Teodric will meet you with a horse, and guide you to the foot of the Dragonspines, about fifty miles' ride. After that, you are on foot, and on your own."

One of the Knights, a ancient character who looks more like a mage than a fighter, also approaches, holding a blue bottle out towards you. "To heal your wounds," he says in a quiet voice. "I fear you will need it, young adept!" You accept it with a slight inclination of your head.

(Add 1 Potion of Healing to your inventory).

After exchanging final words and receiving blessings from all the elderly knights, you leave their hideout and emerge in the alleyway, quickly finding your way back out onto the main street. Your head is spinning at what you have been thrust into the middle of, but you cannot help feeling this quest is vitally important.

(cont. over)

You return to your inn by the most direct route, careful to make sure you are not followed. You make your way inside. *If you are staying at The Stout Miner, pay 2 gp for your room for the night. If you are staying at The Zhentil Arms, pay 5 gp and then turn to 182.*

175

You use your cunning paired with your magic ability to create a distracting illusion on the far side of the room. The specter rushes to it, thinking it a foe of some kind. *You can use the specter's distraction to quickly make a ranged, melee or spell attack with advantage. Take note of any damage and then proceed to Abyssal Specter Combat Sheet.*

176

You are careful to keep yourself well hidden amongst the maze of shelves – the guards haven't really noticed your presence yet. Quietly you produce the materials and make the gestures, focusing on the outside street as you begin to create a sonic illusion. "Help!" comes a shout from outside the shop. "That orc just killed a Zhentilar guard! Catch him, catch him!" The speed at which the captain and his two lackeys run for the door is astonishing. One knocks over a set of shelves as he departs. "He's running towards Market Square! Catch him, quickly!" From between the shelves you have a good view out towards the front of the shop. The guards look around confusedly, and finally turn and run towards Market Square, as the illusory voice directed them. Smiling slightly you approach the gnome. "Wonder what all that was about?" you remark casually. "Now, would you mind showing me some of your fine wares, good sir?"

- ◆ *Go to 14.*

177 PLAY AUDIO

Closing your eyes, you attempt to conjure an image to distract the spectre. *Roll a d20, adding one of the modifiers listed below, based on the spell you choose to cast:*

SPELL	MODIFIER
Thaumaturgy	+3
Minor Illusion	+2
Silent Image	+1
Prestidigitation	0
Druidcraft	-1

- ◆ *If you roll 1-11 go to 245.*
- ◆ *If you roll 12 or above, go to 175.*

178

Your divine sense tells you that the floating creature is a type of powerful undead. *You could use your channel divinity ability to Turn the Unholy here.*

- ◆ *If you want to attempt this, go to 469.*
- ◆ *Otherwise, return to 367 and choose another option.*

179

"Hm. Very well then, off you go," the cleric says shortly. Glad to extricate yourself from this conversation, you smile politely, nod your head and merge back into the crowd.

- ◆ *Is Rynmor with you? If so return to 134 and choose another option.*
- ◆ *If you are alone, return to 382 and choose another option.*

180

You help Jamaunga herd the specter's captives out of the dungeon and up the rope you descended to get down here. Soon they are all on the ground above, and they become quite emotional, thanking you profusely. Jamaunga's friend comes close and embraces you warmly. "Thankyou, traveller. You saved us. We will never be able to repay you!"

(cont. over)

Take one inspiration point for your bravery. Then return to Map 1 / Map Entry 1 and choose your next destination. Or, if you already have four progress points, go to 132.

181

You bolt for the entrance, determined to make the rogue pay for his trickery. Just as it is shutting, you dive and barely make it through the gap, landing in a roll and deftly drawing your weapon as you come into a crouching position on the other side of the wall.

The rogue has turned to face you. "Foolish outlander!" he hisses, striding towards you and drawing his rapier. "Very foolish indeed."

Go to Devil Worm Rogue Combat Sheet.

182

You are happy to see your room, and quickly bed down to get some rest.

You will only have time to activate one codeword from the list below.

- ◆ *Do you have the codeword Wandquest? If so go to entry 413.*
- ◆ *Do you have the codeword Specterquest? If so go to entry 493.*
- ◆ *Do you have the codeword Dockrescue? If so go to entry 93.*
- ◆ *Do you have the codeword Helpwendal? If so go to entry 250.*
- ◆ *If you have none of these, go to entry 51.*

183

Something is off about this character. You get the distinct impression he is leading you into some sort of trap.

- ◆ *To follow him anyway, go to 129.*
- ◆ *To turn and walk away, go to 324.*
- ◆ *Or you could say you have other business to attend to, leaving courteously. Go to 266.*

184

You clearly read malicious intent in this cleric's expression and body language. And his tone... it is the tone of a liar.

It is obvious to you that if you follow him through this door, the result could be catastrophic.

- ◆ *To follow him through the door anyway, go to 127.*
- ◆ *To politely decline and rejoin the crowd, go to 285.*

185

Your new acquaintance appears to be sincere. There is nothing in his body language or his tone to indicate otherwise. But something tells you this is not some chance encounter.

- ◆ *Are you willing to have him accompany you? If so go to entry 134*
- ◆ *If not, go to 140.*
- ◆ *If you demand he tell you why he approached you, go to 83.*

186

You look around the room, but there is nothing remarkable here. It appears to be a kind of entry / waiting area, perhaps for guests of Fzoul's.

You move back to the ladder to continue to the next floor. Go to 125.

187

You stride towards the guards who are carrying the female orc away.

"Let her go!" you say. "She's done nothing wrong except speak her mind."

The guards stop and assess you. One puts a hand on the hilt of his sword.

(cont. over)

“How important is this to you, friend? You want to join her in the dungeons?”

- ◆ *Are you willing to pursue this to combat? If so go to 31*
- ◆ *Alternatively you could attempt to cast **Sleep** to send the guards into a magical slumber. Go to 146*
- ◆ *Otherwise, you realize you are hopelessly outnumbered and leave the situation. Go to 259*

188

The chasm is more a network of deep cracks, a depression in the earth which dips sharply near the centre. This whole area is sunken, almost as if whatever is underneath it, some underground structure, has partially collapsed.

Right at the centre of the depression is a wide crack, and you look down to see a drop of about 20 feet. There is a cracked cobble floor below. A sewer, or underground crypt perhaps? Or maybe the basement of an old ruined house that once stood here? Impossible to tell from this vantage point.

There is a large rock nearby to which you could easily fix a rope if you wanted to descend.

- ◆ *Are you a barbarian? If so go to 29.*
- ◆ *To descend and check out what is down below, go to 87 (you will need rope).*

189

There are numerous posters on the wall, advertising all sorts of things, but two in particular catch your eye. The first reads: **ORC AMNESTY**

All orcs will report to have compulsory identification papers issued, the third day of the first tenday of Kythorn, at the Grand Temple of Bane. This is to distinguish those who are legitimate citizens of Zhentil Keep from those who may be spies acting for Ghauust, the four-armed Orcish Warlord currently marching on the Citadel of the Raven.

And the second reads:

SPECTRAL TERROR IN THE SOUTH CITY!

All residents within the South City are advised to be indoors after dusk. A terrible specter has been sighted amongst the ruins at night and has already killed three people, and kidnapped four more. It is described as having an upper half covered in armor, and an ethereal, green vapor trail as its lower half. Those who have seen the Armored Specter have uniformly reported that it wears a large helmet sporting long black horns. The Zhentilar Captain of the Guard is offering a reward of 300 gp to the brave soul who can find the armoured specter amongst the ruins of the South City, kill it, and deliver its black-horned helmet to the Zhentilar Barracks. Several Zhentilar have already tried and failed. No questions asked.

*(If you are interested in investigating this Specter threat and claiming the reward, you think to yourself that tomorrow night, after you have rested and explored the city, will be an ideal time. Note the codeword **Specterquest** on your character sheet. At the appropriate time it will be activated).*

Suddenly, as you are reading, you feel a strong shove in your back!

“Oi! Get out of the way!” someone shouts as they push past you. There is a massive crash, and you turn to see a chair splintering into pieces over the head of an orc. “Get out, savage!” the attacker, a human, shouts.

Another thug, the one who pushed past you, joins the fray, and the orc, who appeared to have just been sitting there minding his own business, is on the ground, having the living daylight beaten out of him.

- ◆ *Do you want to involve yourself in this fight, going to the aid of the orc? If so, go to entry 28.*
- ◆ *To try your hand in pit combat against Kromm Daggerfist, go to 204.*
- ◆ *Or, to leave and go look for an inn, go to 6.*
- ◆ *Or, return to Map 5 / Map Entry 5 and choose a different location.*

190

Cautiously you move to the door that lies on the far side of the altar, and, looking around, move to open it.

Seemingly out of nowhere, a black cleric appears. He addresses you firmly.

"Only those in the garb of the Dark Lord's servants may enter the Cloister. This is not some local attraction, my friend. These are the quarters of the Banite Monks."

How do you respond?

- ◆ "Oh, sorry, I didn't know." *Go to entry 171.*
- ◆ "Does High Priest Fzoul live here?" *Go to 135.*
- ◆ "Do the Zhentarim live here also?" *Go to 95.*
- ◆ "How do I become a Banite Monk?" *Go to 27.*

191

You make your way towards the open stone doors, beyond which lies a second table. As you get closer, you see that there is a small gold ring on the table. On either side of the table, strangely, are two huge stone statues, giant warriors standing sentinel.

- ◆ *To move forward and pick up the ring, go to 279.*
- ◆ *To retreat to the first table with the jars of dust, go to 310.*

192

Moving around the pile, you see that it is comprised of a mixture of large and small stones. It appears to have been tidied into the middle of the room. You have no idea whether it is stones and rocks all the way through, or whether something else lies underneath it.

- ◆ *To start moving rocks aside, go to 239.*
- ◆ *To leave the room and return to the junction, go to 194.*

193

Kelelan quietly leads you behind the counter and into a small room behind the main shop, which is cool and quiet. In here are crates, some unpacked, and a selection of weapons and other things laid out on a table.

You peruse the items for about two heartbeats when she suddenly grabs you by the front of your tunic and plants a long, passionate kiss on your mouth. You are so shocked, you don't even really think to resist her advances.

"Sorry," she says unconvincingly, turning and walking towards the items, running a hand through her hair. You wonder where that came from! Some people just go with their instincts, you decide. Perhaps you're irresistible.

Kelelan first shows you a simple, unassuming arrow. "An arrow of undead slaying," she says, all business now. "Any undead creature, ghoul, vampire, zombie... this will down them... if not completely, then almost." She gently sets it down and then proceeds to the next item, an ornate longsword.

"This sword belonged to Zhentar's nephew, it is said. He was gifted it by a mage from Melvaunt, but he never knew how to use it. It's been in our possession for many years. Perhaps the price is what scares people off!" Kelelan then carefully picks up a long, vicious-looking dagger. She flips it around to show you a chamber on the underside. "A little flick of this catch, here, causes poison to run down the blade. It's equipped with two doses of Angel's Tears. After that, you'll need to refill it yourself."

"And this," Kelelan says, indicating a small sword, "belonged to a halfling famous in the area, Rune Blackwood."

Finally Kelelan shows you a small bottle. "Oil of Sharpness, distilled by my father himself before he died. Will make your blade keener than any sword in the land, for one hour." Then she lays out the prices for you.

ITEM	DESCRIPTION	PRICE
<i>Arrow of Undead Slaying</i>	If arrow hits undead target, it must make a DC 17 con save. 6d10 piercing damage on a failed save, 3d10 on a successful save. Good for one use.	400 gp
<i>Sword belonging to Zhentar's Nephew</i>	Longsword +1	1750 gp
<i>Poison Dagger</i>	Has a secret chamber. On a successful hit, target must make a DC 15 con save or take 2d10 poison damage, half as much on a successful save. 2 lots of poison supplied, good for two attacks.	700 gp
<i>Rune Blackwood's Sword</i>	Halfling Shortsword +1	1500 gp
<i>Oil of Sharpness</i>	+2 for one hour (one encounter) on any blade. Takes an action to coat.	400 gp

Make your purchases from this entry and also entry 376. Then, you thank Kelelan for her help and depart her fine establishment.

- ◆ *Return to entry 86 and visit any other merchants you want (ignore the instruction to take a progress point on 86).*

194

Find Map 12 in your Maps Booklet.

You stand at a four-way junction. Ahead, you can see some sort of chamber which contains a large statue. There appear to be small recesses, alcoves, in the walls approaching it.

To your right, you see a circular chamber, in the middle of which is a pile of rubble. As you watch, you see a stone near the top of the pile topple and roll down onto the floor. Is there something under that pile?

To your left is a long corridor with multiple exits on either side.

- ◆ *Choose your entry number from Map 12 and move in that direction.*
- ◆ *Or, if you have had enough, you may leave this place by going to 212.*

195

You stay where you are, observing the scene within the great temple known as the Black Altar. You pay close attention to the comings and goings of these cityfolk known as Zhents. What would cause an entire city to worship such a god as Bane?

Reading the facial expressions, and watching the body language, the answer becomes clear. Tyranny. You have travelled far, and know that generally, folk are good of heart. The evil ones are the exception. So it strikes you as strange that the entire population of Zhentil Keep would choose to worship an evil god of their own free will. More probable is that some sort of coercion is at work here; if they do not worship Bane, they will be ostracized, or worse. There is tyranny, and there is dogma as well, enforced by tyranny. Suddenly you hear a disturbance at the main door, and see a huddle of bodies moving in the direction of the main altar.

"Fzoul Chembryl!" one voice whispers. "It's the High Priest," another murmurs.

You crane your neck to try and catch a glimpse of the infamous High Priest of Bane, but he is hidden by his followers; a bevy of hooded clerics, all sporting the same sinister-looking black gauntlet on their right hand. You catch only a brief glimpse of a hooded figure, his face completely hidden: High Priest Fzoul.

The temple quietyens as the entourage approaches the altar, a path clearing before them. Fzoul places something small on the lower altar then stands there, his face still hidden, a low murmuring coming from inside his hood. The temple is hushed.

He stays there for a while before the altar, and then turns and lifts his head slightly, so that just his chin and his mouth are visible, and addresses the crowd in a deep, authoritative boom.



"Hear one, hear all! The rumours you have heard are confirmed. I have scried towards the north and have seen the orc horde passing Whitehorn, led by the four-armed abomination named Ghauust. Believe me when I say that this horde will march on every city in the Moonsea. No-one will be spared. Therefore, Lord Manshoon has proclaimed a new edict, a copy of which will

be sent to all kings and governors within the Moonsea region. It proclaims that the Zhentilar are the only force that can be trusted with the task of defending the Citadel of the Raven from the orc horde, now that Galauntar Hawkhelm has been killed, and that three large garrisons will leave Zhentil Keep for the Citadel within the week!" The crowd mumbles amongst itself, no doubt discussing these tidings. Around you, many have started to slowly file out, having made their visit and their offering for the day.

- ◆ *Is the stranger still with you? If so return to 134 and choose another option.*
- ◆ *If you are alone, return to 382 and choose another option.*

196

You hear a shout of surprise, and turn to see a huge reptile on top of Kragor.

"Quickly, kill it!" Salihn yells at you, notching an arrow herself.

Go to Stone Drake Combat Sheet. The drake gets one free attack, with advantage, on Kragor, who also takes 1d6 bludgeoning damage from the lizard landing on him. Then roll initiative.

197

You see no other signs of the creature, or of anything watching you.

Note the codeword Memento on your character sheet.

- ◆ *To continue onto your next destination within Zhentil Keep, go to Map 1 / Map Entry 1 and find the relevant destination entry.*
- ◆ *Or, perhaps this encounter has spooked you to the point where you simply want to return to your inn. Go to 311.*

The six old men, and the young warrior who brought you here, all sit down around the table, faces lit by the shimmering light of the candles.

“Welcome, traveller,” one of them says. “No doubt you are wondering why you are here. First, let me introduce myself. My name is Huon Falconhand, and I am the leader of this little band. We are Knights of Myth Drannor.”

Another of the old men pipes up. “Well, not *the* Knights of Myth-“

Huon cuts the old man off. “Shut up Addy!” He shakes his head, turning back to you.

“No, of course we are not the *entirety* of the Knights of Myth Drannor. What we are is a small cell, placed here in Zhentil Keep, so that we might be useful in our old age. We sheathed our swords long ago, but still, we watch, and we keep an eye on Manshoon and his evildoings. And those are many.”

“The guts of it, my friend,” another chimes in, “is that we have been watching you. We need one such as yourself. As you can see, we are well past our prime. Not only that, but no Knight of Myth Drannor, even a young one, could complete the task we require of you, as there is a danger that a native of the Moonsea would be recognized by the Zhentarim.”

Huon cuts back in. “Illis is right,” he says. “Perhaps you have seen the discrimination that is currently being shown towards orcs? And heard the stories, perchance, of an orc horde marching on the Citadel of the Raven?”

“It’s all nonsense!” another old timer exclaims.

“A complete falsehood,” Illis agrees.

“Utter codswallop,” another one adds.

“The rumour goes,” Huon continues patiently, “that Galauntar Hawkhelm, the Captain of the Guard at the Citadel, was assassinated by orc spies who somehow infiltrated the Citadel. Well, we know that’s a falsehood because the Citadel is practically

impenetrable by a force of any size. Besides that, what motive would the Thar orcs have to invade the Citadel? It poses no strategic advantage for them. Their own lands are well defended, and they have no designs over the Moonsea. No, it is a ruse, all of it. The Black Network are experts at this sort of scaremongering.”

“The real truth,” Huon continues, “is that Manshoon had Galauntar Hawkhelm assassinated by his Zhentarim spies. Hawkhelm was elected by all the Moonsea cities to serve as commander of the Citadel, protecting the Moonsea from invaders. But it is known that he is defiant towards Manshoon. For this reason, Manshoon wanted him dead. Now he *is* dead, and soon the Zhentarim will have full control of the Citadel. Once they do, Manshoon will dominate these lands.

“It is rumoured that there is a network of tunnels that originates in the Dragonspine Mountains and leads right under the Citadel. Zhentar, the founder of this city, had the tunnels constructed to serve as an escape from the Citadel in times of siege. We have only ever suspected these tunnels existed, but now we know they must exist, and now the Zhentarim have found them... or perhaps they knew the tunnels were there all along. This is the only way into the Citadel other than through its gates... the only way the Zhentarim could have gotten in there to assassinate Hawkhelm.”

“Unless they teleported in,” one old knight suggests, raising a finger.

Huon cuts him off. “No. There is a teleport cage around the Citadel. The Citadel is ancient, full of mysteries. No one can teleport in. Once inside, yes, magic can be used, but no one can teleport past those walls.”

“Ah. Right.”

Huon looks to you expectantly, with a glimmer of hope in his clear blue eyes. “We need you to find the entrance to these tunnels, wherever it lies within the Dragonspines. We need you to follow these

tunnels inside the Citadel, and once there, to kill the Zhentarim spies that have infiltrated the Citadel. They may be holding the men there hostage... or they may be hiding in plain sight."

"You will be rewarded," Illis chimes in. "King Azoun will see to that. We have already discussed the matter with him. He, like all of us, desires to thwart Manshoon's plans. Here is a token of his goodwill." Teodric places a pouch into your hand; a heavy pouch. "800 gold," he says. "And another 800 once the job is done."

Huon continues, "If you cannot find the entrance to the tunnels, continue to the Citadel... there is a small chance you can get in over, or under the walls, concealed in a cart perhaps... I don't know how, but you look like a cunning sort. Once you are inside, you must find a knight called Sir Steval Skurynd, a Purple Dragon Knight, and tell him exactly what we have told you. But if you can, try your utmost to find the tunnel entrance. We must destroy that entrance so that no more Zhentarim can infiltrate the Citadel!"

Huon sighs, as if exhausted by the telling of this story.

"So... what do you say, traveller? Are you willing to take up our quest?"

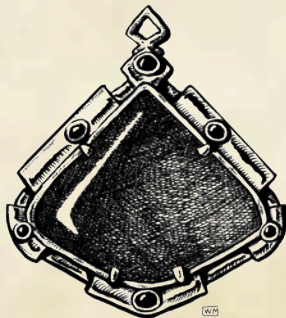
- ◆ *If you accept this quest, go to entry 2.*
- ◆ *If not, go to entry 269.*

199



You feel consciousness slipping away, and the goblet drops from your hand. The last thing you hear is Annaya's evil laughter...

Go to 169.



200

You knock on the surface with your fist, and it makes a hollow sound, as if you were knocking on a door, or on the side of a barrel.

"Hey!" you hear a voice hiss in common, with a strange accent. "Who's that out there?" "Who's that *in there*?" you reply.

Slowly, you see the rocks begin to move, tumbling away, as something extracts itself from the rockpile. A bizarre creature, covered in a hard shell, stands up before you. It holds a warhammer up before itself, glancing nervously around. "What are you doing here?" it whispers. "You cannot be



down here! This is a cursed place!"

You respond with your own questions, asking the creature what it is doing down here.

"Keep your voice down!" it hisses. "I came down here to find my friend... the specter enthralled him and took him down here. I was hiding under the rockpile, waiting for it to come past. I was going to surprise it, until you ruined everything!"

The creature, a crucialian who eventually introduces himself as Jamaunga Runeshell, tells you that this dungeon is the lair of a hellish specter, the spirit of a demon killed by Zhentar, the founder of this city. This specter has been collecting souls for the completion of a ritual.

"How do you know all this?" you ask.

"I study a lot," it says. "I know my local lore. Anyway, enough of that. Now that you're here, we can take the damned thing together!"

- ◆ *Do you accept Jamaunga's proposal? If so go to 361.*
- ◆ *If you have had enough of this place, you can leave the dungeon by going to 212.*

201

You take up the thieves' tools and pretend to work, while making your incantations as quietly as you can. Finally the spell is complete and the lock releases!

"Oh! You did it!" the halfling exclaims in a surprised tone. "But how..."

Excited, you peer inside, but see nothing, at least at first. Then you look closer.

Lying in the bottom of the little chest is a strange-looking key. You take it out and inspect it.

"It's a skeleton key," the halfling whispers.

"Made by the mysterious elves of Cormanthor, enchanted to open any door! Worth its weight in gold!"

You doubt its mysterious origins, and get the feeling you may have been scammed! But who knows, it may come in handy somewhere down the line.

Add 'skeleton key' to your inventory. Then go to Map 1 / Map Entry 1 and continue to your chosen destination.

202

You know enough about the mysteries of life to know that any entity called a 'specter' is most likely undead.

You could attempt to use your turn undead ability here.

- ◆ *If you wish to do this, go to entry 400.*
- ◆ *Otherwise return to 272 and make another choice.*

203

The half-elf rogue moves forward and produces a compact set of tools which he quickly unrolls. Working quickly, he soon finds something.

"There's a mechanism here," he says quietly, as if to himself. "I can't tell if it's connected to a booby-trap, or if it's simply a decoy... wait, I'll disarm it."

Kragor continues working, and a few minutes later you hear an audible 'click' as the chest lid releases! He turns and looks at you and Salihn.

"Shall I do the honours?" he asks. Salihn nods. Standing, Kragor takes a step back and draws his rapier, which he places under the lip of the chest's lid. Then, with a deft movement he flips the chest's lid open, simultaneously moving out of the way. But there is no trap triggered. Kragor laughs, half relief, half embarrassment at his own fear.

Salihn moves forward, and you with her. *Go to entry 427.*

204

You walk to the back of the tavern and descend a set of stairs. From below comes the stench of body odour, ale and pipe smoke. You emerge in a dingy little room, at the centre of which is an hexagonal ring, surrounded by ropes. You watch as a troll does battle with an ogre, neither of them giving an inch. The sounds of fist slapping against flesh fill the room to the raucous cheers of the crowd who are loving every moment of this bloodfest. Finally the ogre gets the better of the troll, beating him to the floor with a succession of vicious punches. Someone rings a gong and the referee enters the ring waving his arms.

"Our victor, Screwtoe of Thar!" the referee yells, lifting the arm of the ogre about a foot in the air, with great difficulty. "Now, our last competitor, who still has no opponent, Kromm Daggerfist! Any potential challengers should know, this is *not* a fight to

the death. You're not risking your life here. Kromm will reduce you to a bloody pulp, certainly, but he won't kill you! No, we'll leave that honour to the Black Network!" There is a roar of laughter at this comment, and a bottle goes flying through the ear, missing the announcer's head by a hair's breadth. "Hey! Settle down, you lot!" he shouts half-heartedly, then takes a swig of ale from a large tankard that someone has just passed to him.

A dwarf slides in under the ropes, stands, and begins immediately pacing back and forth, leering at the crowd menacingly, a mixture of cheering and booing greeting his arrival. He has a shock of bright red hair, and wears a belt lined with throwing daggers, as well as one long, menacing-looking blade a couple of fingers smaller than a shortsword.

The dwarf starts berating the punters, most of whom are quite drunk. "So, none of you cowards are willing to face me? I suppose I'll take the 150 gold myself then, drink it away upstairs!"

As Kromm turns his back to you in order to abuse the other half of the room, you step forward, and make a signal to the referee, who nods at you and motions you to enter the ring. It's on!

Find Map 2 in the Maps Booklet and go to the Kromm Daggerfist Combat Sheet.

205

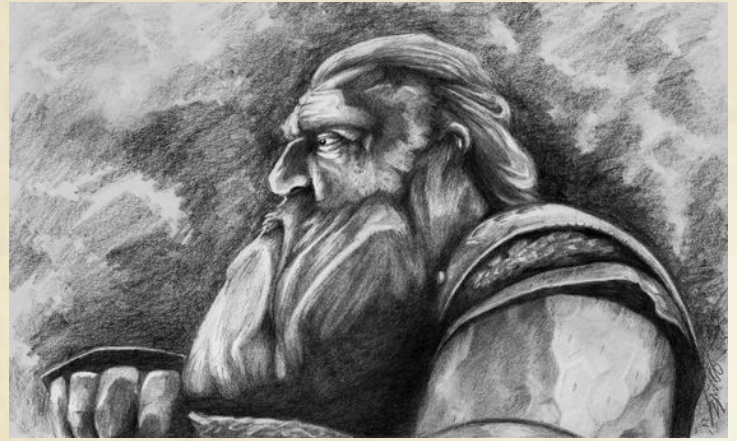
You plonk yourself down in a seat over in the corner and try to bend your ear to some conversations that are going on. At a nearby table, an old dwarf is talking with a human woman. He appears grumpy, and she distraught. You listen in on their conversation

"What if I never get her back? I don't think I'll be able to go on if-

He cuts her off. "Listen, lass. We'll find your wee girl, all right? I've got a pretty good idea where they might have taken her, and we'll go and look tonight."

"But what if they're keeping her locked up? Guarded? How are you going to fight them off, you've only got one leg!"

You glance down, and see that she is telling the truth: the dwarf indeed has only one leg.



The warrior shakes his head defiantly. "You have little faith, lass. My arms are fine, and have seen me through many a battle. I will get your daughter back, or I will die trying." "But that's no good to me, is it?" the woman wails. "If you die, she is lost forever!"

- ◆ *Do you help these people by offering your services? If so go to 260.*
- ◆ *You could go back to Map Entry 5 and choose another location.*
- ◆ *Or, if you want to put your name forward in the pit bout, there is still time... go to 204*

206

You move through various houses and turn up a few interesting items: 15 gp, 32 sp, a set of five daggers in a belt and a strange artifact that gives you pause... a piece of wood, likely part of a chest or table at some point in the past, with markings on it. Someone has carved a bird's head, a raven's head actually, totally black, into the wood... and something has been written next to it in a language you don't see every day...

(cont. over)

- ◆ *Do you know the language Undercommon? Or, do you know the spell **Comprehend Languages** or possess a *Helm of Comprehending Languages*? If so, go to 401.*
- ◆ *If not, you can check out the temple ruin to the south by going to 471.*
- ◆ *Otherwise, return to Map 1 / Map Entry 1 and choose a new destination.*

207

You sleep well that night at the inn, after a long and adventure-filled day in Zhentil Keep.

(Restore all your hp from this long rest, and reset your progress points to zero).

The next morning you wake with the rising of the sun and go downstairs where the inkeep serves you a steaming hot bowl of porridge with dark brown sugar, and a large mug of coffee to bolster your spirits.

You make your way through the quiet early morning streets of Zhentil Keep, slightly on-edge as you watch the rooftops and alleyways for Zhentarim spies. But you reach the city gates without incident, and give a nod to the Zhentilar guards as you leave the grey walls of Zhentil Keep and start west, back towards Teshwave.

You walk for about half an hour, keeping an eye out for the knight Teodric as you ascend a long, gradual slope leading up towards the foothills of the rocky Dragonspine Mountains. Then, as you near the upper ridge of the slope, the elf himself suddenly appears from amongst a small copse of trees, riding one horse and leading another. He is dressed in chainmail, but wears no livery. Teodric comes alongside you and dismounts, unhitching the second horse's reins from his own mount and handing them to you.

"Morning," he says. "Shall we ride?"

You mount the chestnut mare with ease, and set off alongside Teodric as the morning sun climbs into the sky at your backs, warming the air and the grassy landscape that surrounds you. Teodric says little as you ride,

and together you cover many miles. By mid-morning the Dragonspine Mountains fill your view, towering before you like rocky sentinels.

You ride all day, stopping only at midday for a bite to eat and to water the horses from a small stream, and by early evening you have reached a junction marked by a large obelisk, where a trail leads northwest into the heart of the Dragonspines. A road branches off southwest towards Teshwave.

Teodric dismounts and indicates that you do also.

"Go on foot from here," the knight says, nodding down the northwest trail. "That will lead you into the Dragonspines. The journey to the Citadel of the Raven will take several days, and much of it will be hard going. But you look well-travelled, so you'll do fine." *Teodric equips you with extra provisions (three days worth) and a ring bearing the crest of the Knights of Myth Drannor (add to inventory).*

"I have no idea how to find these secret tunnels that Huon spoke of, nor how to enter the Citadel should you fail to find the tunnels... but should you manage to reach Sir Steval Skurynd, show him this ring. He will know then that your mission is true."

You thank Teodric, and part ways.

Watching him ride into the distance, you start setting up camp, wondering what adventures the Dragonspine Mountains hold for you...



*Congratulations, worthy adventurer! You made it to the end of Part 1 of this adventure in one piece! Your quest to foil the evil plots of Manshoon and his Black Network will continue in Part 2 of this adventure, entitled *Citadel of the Raven*, to be released early next year. Keep your character sheet aside in preparation for this quest. In the meantime, there is no reason why you couldn't create a new character and explore this adventure some more....*

208

You say a few words over Jamaunga's prone body. When you are finished, his friend gently goes over the body and finds a healing potion, which he gives to you.

"He would have wanted you to have this," he says. "Use it well."

You may also take Jamaunga's warhammer if you wish. It is carved with crucial runes and images of tortoises, and has defeated many an enemy. Put it to good use!

Then, solemnly, you leave Jamaunga's friend to organize getting the body out of the dungeon, and you are on your way.

Go to 212.

209

You and Rynmor both make your way out into the street, leaving the Black Altar behind. It is nice to breathe fresh air after the stifling, incense-heavy interior of the temple. You thank Rynmor for showing you around the Black Altar. Smiling from ear to ear, he grasps your hand warmly and gives it a good shake. "My pleasure, friend."

And then he is gone, as if he simply melted back into the crowd.

You look down at your hand. There, in the centre of your palm, is a small scrap of parchment. Carefully peeling it from your palm you turn it over and read the miniscule writing printed on its surface:

Be prepared to be contacted, stranger. You're being watched. Right now even. Not all who appear wolves are actually wolves.

You glance around, suddenly paranoid.

What can this mean? Pocketing the parchment you quickly rejoin the crowd headed towards Market Square.

◆ *Return to Map 1 / Map Entry 1 and choose another destination within Zhentil Keep. If you have 4 progress points, go immediately to entry 132.*

210

You motion to the old woman. "Hello? This girl, she needs help!"

The crone nods, then slowly stands and hobbles forward. She crouches by the prone figure of the female orc, examines her for a moment, then looks up at you and nods. Suddenly a young woman is by her side, as if appearing from nowhere, and together the two of them carry the orc female inside. And then you are left alone on the street. The hour grows late, and you realize you must look for somewhere to sleep for the night.

◆ *Go to entry 6.*

211

You walk out into the street and consider where to travel next in Zhentil Keep.

Return to Map 1 / Map Entry 1 and choose a new destination.

212

You walk south back down the passageway to where your rope is still hanging down from above. Quickly you ascend and are soon back on the surface. You retrieve your rope, untying it from the rock and stowing it back inside your pack.

Turn to 485.

213

You make your way out of the temple and back out into the street, joining the crowd heading towards Market Square.

◆ *Return to Map 1 / Map entry 1 and choose a new destination within Zhentil Keep. If you have 4 progress points, immediately go to entry 132.*

214

You advance up the passageway that extends north beyond the junction. Looking left and right you see small alcoves, the purpose of which is unclear.

(cont. over)

Ahead, you see a chamber containing a large idol of some sort.

- ◆ *To investigate the alcoves, go to 4.*
- ◆ *To continue onwards to the room ahead, go to 172.*

215

You let the rogue flee, deciding you have better things to do than pursuing some amateur footpad.

You may return to the market, but since you were diverted you may only purchase wares from three stalls instead of six. Go to 44.

216

The three of you wait in the alleyway until night has completely fallen, then begin to make your way towards the tower of Fzoul Chembryl.

The tower is in the centre of a walled garden near the Black Altar, the Grand Temple of Bane. Built wide at its base, the tower tapers inwards as it ascends, shaped like an alchemist's beaker. It stands about three storeys high.

The three of you find your way within the walled compound easily, but getting inside the large, circular tower is going to be a different matter altogether. There is light coming from the second and third floor windows of the tower. You wait, watching for any signs of movement.

After a while, Salihn turns to you. "I don't think the High Priest is home right now," she whispers. "We've chosen our time well. He usually attends the evening service at the Black Altar."

You and Kragor nod, then look back at the tower. There is a front door, but Salihn points out that it might be guarded by a glyph of some sort. The three of you start looking around for other ways in.

- ◆ *If not, you could try moving to the door to check if it is open. Go to 57.*
- ◆ *What about casting **Pass Without Trace**, if you know it? Go to 271*

217

Quietly you make your way past the drake. To your amazement, it does not wake up or even notice your presence! You pad up the stairs carefully, ascending towards the first floor.

Go to entry 67.

218

You join the queue and await your turn to try and crack 'the lock to end all locks'.

Soon it is your turn.

"20 gold please," the halfling says.

"What's in the chest?" you ask.

The halfling winks at you. "Now that would be telling, wouldn't it?"

The halfling provides you with a set of thieves' tools (if you don't already have your own) and lets you go to work.

To attempt to pick the lock, make a thieves' tools check, DC 18.

- ◆ *If successful, go to 458.*

- ◆ *If unsuccessful, go to 328.*

- ◆ *To use the **Knock** spell, go to 201.*

219

You move to the rubble pile and start moving rocks aside. There is a lot of fallen masonry and other debris here, and after some time you are on the verge of giving up, when all of a sudden some rubble falls away to reveal something bizarre.

A black, obsidian finger extends upwards, sticking out above the loose grey stone. You work faster now and soon discover a black hand, which stirs a memory somewhere...

As you remove more of the rubble, you see that this black hand is an idol of some kind, on a marble base. and it is split, cracked right down the middle. Protruding from the middle of the palm and splitting the hard stone in two is an 8-pointed star made from shining blue metal. A circle binds the rays of the star together. This evokes some memory also, but you can't put your finger on it just yet.

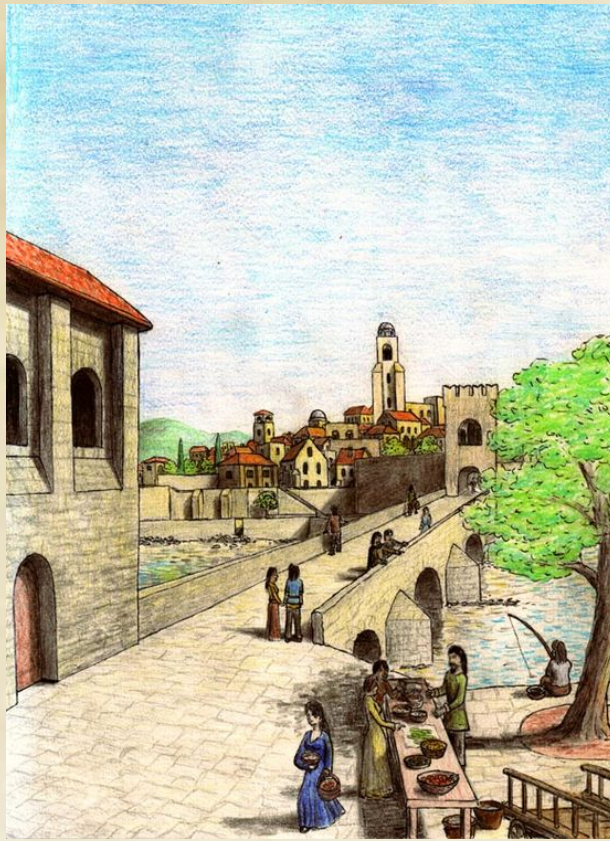
(cont. over)

Make a religion check, DC 12.
(If you have visited the Grand Temple of Bane, make the check with advantage).

- ◆ If successful, go to 362.
- ◆ If unsuccessful, go to 148.

220  play audio

You are in South Zhentil. Stopping where you are, you look back toward North Zhentil across the bridge that spans the River Tesh. The day has become fine, and from here Zhentil looks picturesque, friendly even. Towers adorn the skyline, and beyond that you can see the foothills of the Dragonspine Mountains in the distance.



Then your attention is drawn to a figure on the bridge. They are too far away to see properly, but something about them feels off.
(cont. over)

- ◆ You can move along quickly if you wish? Go to entry 85.
- ◆ Or you can stand and wait to see if the person does anything. Make an insight check. If you score 1-11, go to 417. If you score 12 or above, go to 273.

221

You walk the streets of Zhentil Keep, looking for somewhere to spend the night.

Make an investigation roll.

- ◆ If you score 1-10, go to 56.
- ◆ If you score 11-20, go to 313.

222

You peer down and have a closer look at the jars. There are three of them, and each contains a powder of some sort. They are also labelled. The one on the far left, containing a red powder, is labelled *SEZENE*. The middle one, containing a brown powder, is labelled *DYR*. And the one on the far right, containing a blue powder, is labelled *ASHVIN*.

Remember, the little girl said that you only had one chance to get this challenge right. Whatever you do next could be your last action in this room.

- ◆ To inspect the powder labelled *sezene*, go to 330.
- ◆ To inspect the powder labelled *dyr*, go to 103.
- ◆ To inspect the powder labelled *ashvin*, go to 15.

223

You progress along the hallway, towards the next set of exits.

Make a perception check, DC 15.

- ◆ If you are successful go to entry 274.
- ◆ If you are unsuccessful, go to 384.

224

The crowd disperses, leaving you alone in the street. The rain is increasing in intensity, and you are starting to get soaked.

- ◆ *To take shelter inside The Scoundrel's Tankard, go to entry 109.*
- ◆ *To go and find somewhere to sleep for the night, turn to 6.*

225



You step inside the spacious store, which appears unattended. Soon, however, a gnome appears from the workshop out back, from where hammering and the hiss of rapidly cooled metal can be heard.

"Sorry, I was talking to my smith!" the gnome chirps merrily. He looks middle-aged at most, but then it's hard to tell with gnomes; he could be two hundred years old. "Can I help you?" he asks.

You make a few enquiries and the gnome shows you around his shop, which specializes in full suits of armour. He is an interesting little chap and you are soon deep in conversation with him, thinking, *I might get a good deal out of this!*

Your conversation is rudely interrupted by the entrance of three Zhentilar guards.

"You there, gnome! Service!"

The gnome coughs in a dignified manner, and replies, "Ah yes, sorry sir, but if you could just wait till I finish serving this—" "No, I can't wait! The Zhentilar wait for no-one! Get over here!"

The gnome mumbles you an apology and walks quickly over to the counter, where he steps up onto a box. "Very well, sir," the gnome says to the Zhentilar guard, visibly flustered. "How may I—"

The guard cuts him off again. "I need to order twenty-four suits of full plate. At cost."

"At cost, sir? No, sir, that's simply not—"

"You will deliver this armour at cost, little gnome, or Manshoon will come down on you like a ton of bricks, do you hear?! There is a war on, midget!"

How will you deal with this rude soldier?

- ◆ *To wait patiently until these Zhentilar depart, go to 280.*
- ◆ *There is no one else in the shop – you could draw your weapon and attack. To do so, go to 43.*
- ◆ *You could cast **Command** and tell him to "Grovel" at the gnome's feet. Go to 63.*
- ◆ *You could cast **Suggestion**, planting the idea in his head that he has been very rude and should immediately give all his money to the gnome. Go to 147.*
- ◆ *You could definitely baffle him with a bit of **Minor Illusion**. Go to 176.*
- ◆ *Or you could wreak havoc with **Mage Hand**. Go to 480.*

226

Take 1 inspiration point for your completion of this sidequest!

You depart for the Zhentilar Barracks, eager to claim your reward. It is still nighttime but as you approach the barracks you can see that there is activity there. Stating your business at the gate, you move inside the compound and approach the main administrative building.

You present the specter's helmet to the guard on duty. His jaw drops, and he looks from the helmet, to you, back to the helmet.

"How did..." he starts, but then gives up trying to formulate a question, and says instead, "I'll get the captain of the watch."

The captain of the watch soon appears, dressed in fine livery, and surveys the helmet. Initially he tries to say that you must have acquired this helmet by some skullduggery, as no-one from among the Zhentilar ranks has even been able to find the dreaded specter of the ruins, let alone defeat it. But, patiently, you relate the story of how you defeated the specter, and the captain is finally convinced.

The captain of the guard begrudgingly hands over a large pouch containing 300 gold pieces. Nothing has ever felt as sweet as

taking money directly from Manshoon's coffers!

You leave the barracks building feeling very pleased with yourself.

Turn to 485.

227

Your attack catches the creature, wounding it... but not slowing its progress. It continues out of sight, across the rooftops of Zhentil Keep. Pursuit would be futile from here. The creature was incredibly quick and seemed to possess prodigious powers of stealth and camouflage.

Wondering at what could have motivated it to be spying on you, you return to the street. *Go to Map 1 / Map Entry 1 and continue to your chosen destination.*

228

You use your cunning paired with your magic ability to create a distracting illusion on the far side of the room. The specter rushes to it, thinking it a foe of some kind. *You can use the specter's distraction to make a free attack with advantage. Go to Abyssal Specter Combat Sheet, move the Specter to the square next to the red 5, then either move your token to make a melee attack, or stay where you are and make a ranged or spell attack of some kind. Then progress with combat as directed.*

229

Have you met the Knights of Myth Drannor before?

- ◆ *If so, go to 308.*
- ◆ *If not, go to 120.*

230

You kick some piles of rubble and find a few interesting things. A velvet pouch of bone gaming dice, 14 silver pieces, and a set of throwing daggers (5 of them, all in good condition and sheathed in a belt with multiple scabbards). Take any or all of these items and add them to your inventory.

- ◆ *Do you want to check out the temple ruin? If so, turn to 471.*
- ◆ *Otherwise, return to Map 1 / Map Entry 1 and choose a new destination.*

231

As you make your way through the strangely deserted streets of the Common Quarter in south Zhentil, you look up at the architecture of one building that looks a little out of place. More ancient than the others, this large stone house is adorned with ornate architecture. In particular, the gargoyles catch your eye...



Then, to your horror, one of them moves, its head turning to face you with the grinding sound of stone on stone! It fixes its eyes on you

with an expression of pure malice.

Roll perception.

If you score 1-13, go to 248.

If you score 14 or above, go to 472

232



You pull open the door of Melhuish's Magical Curiosities and enter. Inside it is dimly lit, warm golden light spilling over tables and shelves on which a large assortment of strange and fascinating artefacts are displayed. In the middle of the shop, you see an actual tree growing. The thick trunk of an ancient oak grows out of the floor and ascends upwards and through the ceiling.

At the far end of the shop is a set of stairs that turns and ascends to the upper floor. On

a corner of a polished wooden banister is perched a small girl reading a book, who looks up when you enter.

"Welcome, valued customer!" she exclaims in the high voice of a five year-old. "How many I help you?"

The girl, who never gives her name, begins showing you around the shop. Apparently there is no sort of order here. The items are scattered about haphazardly and finding anything is more or less luck of the draw. The girl shows you one particularly large shelf filled with a random assortment of items. "This is our special items shelf!" she says. Have a look, see anything you like?" You are unsure where Melhuish is, if he even exists, but this little girl is doing an excellent job of showing you around, and seems very friendly.

The shop has a full range of spell components for every spell you could possibly need. If you need them, you can purchase components

from the store at a cost of 10 gp per component.

In addition to that, the "special items shelf" contains the following items, listed on the table below.



ITEM	BRIEF DESCRIPTION (Main effect)	PRICE
Arrow-catching shield	+2 AC against ranged attacks	1800 gp
Boots of Striding and Springing	Can jump 6 times normal distance	500 gp
Decanter of Endless Water	Can produce endless water, also can shoot it out like a geyser for bludgeoning damage	400 gp
Elemental Gem	Can be used to summon an elemental	500 gp
Helm of Comprehending Languages	Self-explanatory	450 gp
Ioun Stone	(Dark Blue Rhomboid) Awareness - can't be surprised	1250 gp
Mace of Disruption	Useful against fiends or undead	2200 gp
Spellguard Shield	Advantage on saving throws against spells	5000 gp.
Wand of Magic Missiles	Holds 7 charges – casts magic missile	500 gp

Consult the DMG, pp.150-212 for more detailed information on these items (the girl provides this to you).

As you are perusing, the girl reaches up, standing on tip toes, and takes a little wooden box down from the shelf of special items. "Would you like to see something really special?" she whispers. "It's a challenge. If you pass, you can get an enchanted ring. But you only get one chance to pass."

She watches your face, waiting for your reaction. "It's quite dangerous," she says matter-of-factly. "You could die."

Do you accept the little girl's invitation?

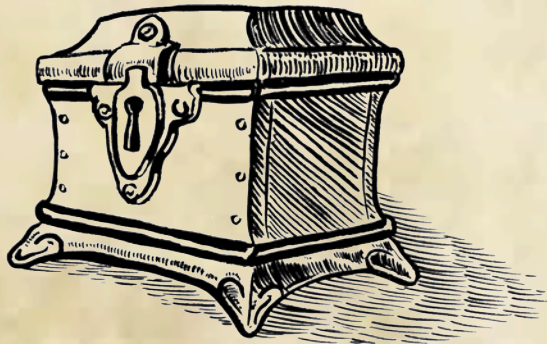
- ◆ *If so, go to entry 432.*
- ◆ *If not, you may purchase whatever you like from the above list, then leave the shop by returning to 12 (without taking a progress point) and choosing another option.*

233

You move to the chest, producing your thieves' tools, and start looking over the outside of the chest, searching for traps of any kind.

Choose from perception or investigation and make a skill check, DC 14.

- ◆ If you are successful, go to 112.
- ◆ If unsuccessful, go to 435.



234



You are passing through an area populated with many large stone monuments. It appears to be some sort of memorial to past battles. Rows of pillars are adorned with plaques celebrating the deeds of various heroes. Here and there are little alcoves where cityfolk can pay respects to the fallen

with gifts of flowers and incense. A kind of open-air temple to battles past, there is an air of reverence to this eerily quiet stretch of street.

Suddenly, it goes utterly quiet, and you find yourself wondering where everyone has gone.

Roll perception, DC 19.

- ◆ If successful, go to 418.
- ◆ If unsuccessful, go to 460.

235

"There are many religions in the Moonsea, friend. In Melvaunt they worship Gond the Wonderbringer, Loviatar and others, and the wealthy sometimes worship Shares out of their love of decadence. In Hillsfar they revere Tempus, as they do in Mulmaster, but in that city, and in Zhentil, the evil Bane reigns supreme." The priest lowers her eyes. "It is a shame to see so many innocent folk led astray. But the gods grant us free will... it is up to us what we do with it."

You thank the priest for her time and she wanders off to attend to her duties.

Return to entry 53 and choose another option.



236

You walk away from the alley, trying to block out the hideous screams of the old man. "Who's the coward now?!" you hear the Zhentilar shout behind you.

You shake your head, quickening your pace. Ahead is a stack of crates with a large rat perched on top, feeding on a pile of rotting vegetables. It slinks away as you approach, glancing back with slitted eyes.

You shudder and turn back towards the main street.

Return to Map 1 / Map Entry 1 and continue to your chosen destination. Please keep careful track of progress points.

237

Something tells you to move to the side, and you do so. Your warrior instinct saves you: Annaya goes lurching past, holding a long, curved dagger which she just tried to stab you with from behind!

In surprise and shock, you draw your weapon. "Coward!" you exclaim as you square up for combat. "Let's see how you do in face-to-face combat!"

Annaya begins summoning some sort of green energy. It rotates around her hands as she prepares to send it hurtling towards you. "You'll wish you hadn't said that, outlander."

Go to Annaya Combat Sheet.

238

Carefully you move forward, weapon at the ready.

Suddenly, you hear a sharp noise, a crack, as if something has just sprung into life.

Make a dexterity save, DC 13.

- ◆ *If you are successful, go to 3.*
- ◆ *If unsuccessful, go to 130.*

239

The rocks are all quite small in size, and it doesn't take long before you have cleared a good amount of them away. You work for a few minutes, as quietly as possible, and then

remove one rock that is a bit larger, revealing something rather strange.

Underneath the rocks you find a hard, curved surface, with runes scribed upon it. You extend your hand to touch the surface and it feels almost like bone, smooth and polished.

- ◆ *To knock on the surface with your fist, go to 200.*
- ◆ *To try and read the runes, go to 306.*
- ◆ *To strike the surface with your weapon, go to 368.*

240

"I'm sorry, there are things I must attend to," you say, looking her over. "You don't appear to be hurt. I can fetch a guard, if you like." Annaya regards you for a moment, then looks away. "No, it's all right. I'll be fine." "Very well then." You turn and make your way towards the door.

Roll insight, DC 12.

- ◆ *If successful, go to 263.*
- ◆ *If unsuccessful, go to 296.*

241

You cannot escape the feeling of despair that has draped itself over you like a black cloak. Taking several deep breaths, you try to steady yourself but cannot shake the feeling of despondency, so you distract yourself by focusing on your surroundings.

You are under the influence of some kind of gloom aura. Until otherwise instructed, you have disadvantage on all attack rolls and saving throws.

Looking left and right, you see that the exits open out into empty rooms. These rooms seem completely bare, apart from a little moss and some rubble littering the floor. Ahead, there are two more exits to the north and south, and beyond that the corridor ends.

- ◆ *If you would like to check out the nearest rooms, to the north and south, go to 354.*
- ◆ *If you would like to continue down to the next set of exits, go to 111.*

242

As you survey the market patrons, one cloaked individual in particular catches your eye. Just something about him: his stance, the way he moves.

You cautiously approach, and greet him in Thieves' Cant.

He looks around at you, in mild shock that you would address him so openly.

"New in town, are we?" he replies in Thieves' Cant, going back to browsing through a stall's wares.

You reply that you are, and are looking to make contact with the local guild.

"For what purpose?" he replies, without looking around.

How do you respond?

- ◆ *Perhaps the local guild has a quest I could take on? Go to 149.*
- ◆ *Who does the local Thieves' Guild answer to? Go to 429.*
- ◆ *Can you tell me more about Manshoon's designs on the Citadel of the Raven? Go to 89.*
- ◆ *What do you know about the Zhentarim? Go to 426.*

243

It has been raining while you've been resting at the inn, and the streets are slick with rainwater. It runs down gutters, cleansing the filth of the day away, but not the filth of corruption, if Ganadhir's story is anything to go by. Slaves, sold up and down the river Tesh, and around the Moonsea? Stories of slavery were becoming rarer in Faerun, thank the Gods, at least within your knowledge. You knew the drow kept slaves of all races, and in certain far-flung realms it was still legal. But children being sold as slaves, shipped like cargo down the river Tesh? The thought was horrific. You are determined to do whatever you can to stop this barbaric practice.

You see the docks ahead, and soon reach the end of the street, where you turn left. Despite the late hour, the riverside docks are still

fairly busy. To your right as you walk, gangs of workers load and unload crates from ships, ferried to and from the docks by a steady flow of carts and wagons. Zhentil Keep is obviously a major trading centre for the Moonsea region.

You remember Ganadhir told you to meet him "in the large warehouse to the northeast of East Dock," and so it is east you head, keeping to the shadows to avoid attention.

After some time you see East Dock ahead, and the large warehouse Ganadhir spoke of. Just before you reach the block it is on, you duck down an alleyway to your left and make your way around the back of the building, where you find a sturdy wooden door.

You try the handle - it's locked.

What now?

- ◆ *If you have thieves' tools, you could try picking the lock. Go to entry 106.*
- ◆ *Or, if you do not have thieves' tools, you could try knocking softly. Go to 442.*

244

Did you succeed on a stealth check when you entered?

- ◆ *If so, and no effect (such as triggering a trap) has disrupted it, then go to entry 367.*
- ◆ *If you do not have stealth, go to 249.*

245

You do your best to conjure an illusion, but it falls flat, only serving to alert the specter to your presence.

The undead entity spins around, sees you, and lets out a chilling scream at your unannounced arrival! Then it lowers its head, pointing its long, black horns towards you, and flies at you with blinding speed!
Go to Abyssal Specter Combat Sheet.

246

You make the necessary motions, say the words and produce the materials, but nothing happens. The guards eye you strangely.

“You’re a bit wrong in the head, I think!” one of them laughs, and they turn and leave with the orc female.

- ◆ *Do you pursue them and challenge them to combat? Go to entry 31.*
- ◆ *Or, to leave them and return to the crowd, go to 259.*

247

“No,” you say resolutely. “Stay here, face them with me.”

The rogue regards you uncertainly.

Roll insight, DC 13.

- ◆ *If you are successful, go to 166.*
- ◆ *If you are unsuccessful, go to 261.*

248

You have no idea why this gargoyle has suddenly sprung to life, or even time to ponder the reason! The hideous thing drops from its perch and comes swooping towards you. You must do battle with this stony beast immediately!

Go to Gargoyle Combat Sheet.

249

You progress along the hallway, towards the next set of exits.

Make a perception check, DC 15. Make one for Jamaunga also, d20+1.

- ◆ *If one of you is successful go to entry 352.*
- ◆ *If you are both unsuccessful, go to 84.*

250

Erase the word Helpwendal from your character sheet.

Remembering your promise to the halfling merchant Wendal Wheatfields, you take a short rest (recover hp as per normal) and then equip yourself and make your way out into the darkened streets of Zhentil Keep.

Following Wendal’s directions, you navigate your way to his place of business. Despite the late hour there are still a few Zhents out and about; drunks staggering home from the tavern, a trio of bards playing merry-songs for the night-time wanderers, a man selling

hot stew and fresh bread rolls at the side of the street - it’s all going on!

You finally reach *Wendal’s Essential*

Victuals and see a light coming from inside.

Knocking at the door you only have to wait a few moments before Wendal Wheatfields presents himself before you, looking a lot more composed this time.

“Ah, you came!” he says cheerfully. “I was starting to wonder if I’d imagined the whole thing!”

Wendal shows you inside and provides you with a bite to eat and a glass of wine before addressing the issue of his cellar.

“Shall we go take a look?” he asks. You nod. Wendal leads you down a narrow flight of stairs to his basement where the cellar is situated.

It is cool and dark in the merchant’s basement area, and he kindles a lantern which sheds golden rays down the narrow stone passage. Soon you emerge in the cellar. Wendal leads you to a bare patch of wall, and reaches behind a piece of stonework, activating some hidden mechanism. A low door, more a slab of white stone, slides to the left, revealing a passageway beyond.

“My friend found it purely by accident,” he tells you. “He was helping me move some crates and he knocked this part of the wall with the edge of a crate, and it just slid open. Took us a while to figure out what he’d done, but... there you go.”

You put your head through the hole and peer down into the darkness (if you are non-darkvision you borrow Wendal’s lantern). A roughly hewn stairway, carved out of the earth itself, leads down into the darkness. Looking closer, you see a multitude of footprints.

- ◆ *To inspect the footprints, make a survival check, DC 12.*
- ◆ *If you are successful, go to 298.*
- ◆ *If unsuccessful, you cannot tell what the tracks are. To proceed down the stairs go to 55.*

251

You inspect the rooms to the north and south, but they are nearly completely empty, save for rubble and some rusted pieces of iron; the remnants of cell bars possibly?

You make your way back to the main east-west corridor.

- ◆ *To continue west to the next set of exits, go to 244.*
- ◆ *Or perhaps you suddenly decide that this doesn't feel right, and want to leave? Jamaunga won't be pleased! Go to 390.*

252

This guard appears to not be so susceptible to enchantment. You consider another course of action.

- ◆ *To wait patiently until these Zhentilar depart, go to 280.*
- ◆ *To draw your weapon and attempt to sneak up on the guard and attack, make a stealth roll, DC 13. If you are successful, go to 366. If not, go to entry 61.*

253

Fleeing out the door you turn quickly down the corridor and sprint for the end. But just as you are about to turn the corner you hear a crack of energy and a searing sound...

Roll a d20+5. If the result is higher than your AC, you take 2d8 damage from the Ray of Sickness and must make a constitution saving throw, DC 13. If you fail, you are poisoned for the next minute. If still alive, continue reading below.

Gritting your teeth in anger you descend the stairs two at a time and rush out onto the street. You keep running until you have put several blocks between yourself and the sorceress Annaya.

Return to Map 1 / Map Entry 1 and continue to your next destination.

254

If they are still alive, Zlug and Slug take their leave now - they have a long journey back to their home. They take some food from the stolen food - you won't mention this to Wendal - and they keep the weapons they looted from the bugbear earlier. The rest they leave to you, and after thanking you again for



freeing them from bondage, they leave you alone in the room.

You take stock of the carnage in the room, the dead bugbears and the worg, and do a quick search which reveals 189 gp, the battleaxe and warhammer belonging to the bugbears, Wendal Wheatfields' stolen goods, and something else curious, a note...

Most worthy friend Grax, I was most pleased to hear of your success in tunnelling north towards the Dragonspine Mountains. It sounds like your recruitment drive is going well! It is my hope that we can link your network of tunnels with my own, which are beneath the Dragonspines themselves. You and your allies will prove most valuable to me if you are able to do so. A great war is coming, my friend, and one should think carefully about which side one positions oneself on...

Think on that, dear Grax.

Sincerely,

M.

Most interesting.

You memorise the contents of the note and then destroy it, aware that if you are caught with something like this on your person the results could be disastrous.

It takes you about an hour to journey back to the staircase that leads up to Wendal

Wheatfields' cellar, and he is not there initially. But, on hearing your arrival, he hurries downstairs with a whisky bottle and two glasses!
You inform him of your success, and he is overjoyed. Toasting your bravery and cunning, Wendal is full of praise for your efforts and equips you with provisions lasting 10 days.

If you previously agreed to be paid, Wendal pays you 75 gp, and after spending time in his pleasant company, you return to your inn, feeling satisfied you were able to help such a worthy soul.

The streets are dark and the hour is late as you make your way back to your accommodation. The innkeeper greets you warmly, and you head upstairs to your room. Undressing and laying down on your bed, you are asleep moments after your head hits the pillow.

Turn to 51.

255

You find vestments, the robes of monks, religious icons and amulets. The amulets look interesting but a quick inspection tells you they are probably just symbols of devotion to Bane. You have little use for such icons. You may take one of the Bane amulets if you wish, and a Banite monk's robe if you have room in your pack.

Then go to entry 393.

256

You continue walking towards the end of the open-air temple.

Weird question: Does your character have hair?

- ◆ *If so, go to 152.*
- ◆ *If not, go to 24.*

257

Putting your head down, you continue on towards your destination.

Go to Map 1 / Map Entry 1 and continue to your chosen destination.

258

You ascend carefully, one rung at a time. You are almost at the top when it happens. There is a flash, and a blinding bolt of lightning hits you in the chest.

Make a dexterity save, DC 16. On a failed save, you take 3d6 lightning damage, or half as much on a successful save.

If you are still alive, you climb the last few rungs shakily and push the trapdoor open. Pulling yourself through the hole, you lower a rope and hold it steady while Salihn and Kragor ascend.

Then you all stand, and look around the room that you have entered.

Go to entry 387.

259

You watch the poor female being carted off, realizing that there is little you can do for her without getting yourself thrown in some dungeon for the night as well.

The show over, some of the crowd start wandering off, and the rain begins to pick up.

What is your passive perception?

- ◆ *Is it 1-11? Go to 224*
- ◆ *Is it 12 or above? Go to 162*

260

You casually approach the table and help yourself to a seat.

"Excuse me," you say. "I couldn't help overhearing... is there something I can do to help?"

The woman seems overjoyed at your arrival. "Yes!" she exclaims. "Ganadhir, we need help! Please!"

The dwarf is a little more sceptical, looking you up and down doubtfully.

"Just what makes you think you'd be of any help, young 'un? Some sort of hero, are you?"

"I can handle myself," you reply. "What's the situation?"

"Slavery," the dwarf replies bluntly.

"Pirates, you'd call them, not much better

than animals, buying and selling humans, dwarves, elves, like so much cattle. You have the stomach for this?"

After a few more enquiries, you learn that the poor woman hired the dwarf, a sort of investigator, to look into the whereabouts of her missing daughter. He found her for sale, being kept on a ship at the East Dock on the Tesh River.

"She's due to be shipped out tomorrow, if they can't find a buyer in Zhentil. Their ship does the rounds of the Moonsea, selling slaves to anyone with the money. Bloody shameful business. Disgusting. And Anika's little girl here will fetch a high price."

At these words, the woman breaks down sobbing.

- ◆ *Are you still willing to help these two? If so go to 392*
- ◆ *If not, you make your apologies and excuse yourself. Go to 381*

261

"Wait here! I'll get help!" the rogue cries, and disappears down the tunnel. You grip your sword, staring straight ahead. That rogue was a coward for deserting you like that, but perhaps a few more of his kind would even out the odds against the approaching soldiers, whose armoured footfalls are getting closer with every moment.

As the sound reverberates through the narrow alleyway, you hear it anew, and realize: that's not armoured feet at all! It is the sound of a horse-drawn cart, echoing through the alleyways.

Now it becomes clear – that rogue was trying to lure you into that passageway for some nefarious purpose, probably to finish you off! You briefly consider trying to follow him, but the entrance to the secret passage is sealed shut now.

Shaking your head, you return to Market Square.

Go to entry 44, but you may now only buy products from three stalls instead of six.

262

The first guard goes down, collapsing to the floor in a deep slumber.

"What is this witchcraft?!" the second exclaims, brandishing his spear, and drops the unconscious orc female, who slumps prone on the ground. The guard advances on you.

Go to entry 31, but only do battle with one guard. However, every two rounds, roll a d6. If the guard is within 30 ft of the sleeping guard, is alive, and the d6 roll is 5 or 6, then the guard uses an action to move to his partner and slap him awake. The sleeping guard will then join the battle. If this never happens, then just do battle with one guard.

263

You hear a noise from behind you, and spin around to see the woman rushing at you with a long, curved dagger! Quickly drawing your weapon you parry the attack and push her away, hissing through your teeth.

"You will not leave here, alive, outlander!" she says in a venomous tone, her face now twisted in a hateful sneer. "I'll see to that!" Sheathing her dagger, the woman who called herself Annaya raises her hands and begins making fell incantations...

- ◆ *If you would like to flee, go to 124.*
- ◆ *If you would rather stand and fight, go to Annaya Combat Sheet.*

264

"Orcs have always been discriminated against here," Salihn answers. "And ogres, goblins... anyone of that persuasion. Greenskins they call them around here. But lately... I don't know, it's different. I think Manshoon wants to use them as a scapegoat, a symbol of fear... then he can take control of the Moonsea area with his armies, and his spies, and have it all look legitimate."

Salihn turns and spits on the floor. "He is a tyrant, and if someone doesn't stop him, he'll cast his evil shadow over all these lands. And

he won't stop there. He won't stop until *all Faerun* is under his control!"

Taking in this information, you thank Salihn and turn to survey the rest of the tavern.

◆ *Go to entry 381.*

265

Quickly you move to the pit wall nearest the door, ducking low to stay out of view of anyone coming through the door.

Make a stealth check, DC 18. If you are a halfling, a dwarf, gnome, or similar sized creature, you grab the large pauldron to hide beneath - make the stealth check with advantage.

◆ *If you are successful in the stealth check, go to 117.*

◆ *If unsuccessful, go to 397.*

266

"Other business, eh?" the rogue says, looking vaguely amused. "Oh well, I shall pass your best regards onto my employer. We shall keep an eye out for you." He gives you a wink, then turns and departs.

Within moments, he is gone from view.

◆ *Go to entry 44.*

267

The rogue smiles at these words. Your deception has fooled him!

"Yes, friend, that is very perceptive of you to say! Not many outlanders are aware of how much Manshoon does to elevate the status of this fair city." He glances around. "Can I let you in on something? Even our guild of thieves, the Devil Worms, is patronized by the lord of Zhentil Keep. Manshoon himself uses us as his eyes and ears. There are deeds that not even his beloved Zhentarim, his Black Network, will stoop to. That is where the Devil Worms come in."

The rogue winks at you craftily. You nod, looking around to see if anyone is listening. When you turn back, the rogue is gone, disappeared like mist on the breeze! Perhaps you will get a chance to contact him again...

but for now, something else appears to have called him away.

Go to entry 44.

268

You move quickly out the door and reach the end of the hallway fast, turning the corner just as a green bolt of magic energy hits the wall behind you. Annaya curses loudly, but you are too fast. You run quickly down the stairs and exit the building via the back way, sprinting down the block until you are certain you are not being followed.

Return to Map 1 / Map Entry 1 and continue to your chosen destination.

269

Your reaction is met with visible disappointment.

"Ah. Well," says Huon, his expression downcast. "So be it."

The knight who brought you here comes forward, takes the pouch containing your advance payment from your hand, and shows you to the door. "Tell no-one of our location," he whispers to you as you exit. "We are watching."

Go to Map Entry 1. If you do not accept the Knights' quest, you may spend the day in Zhentil Keep visiting various locations and completing sidequests, after which this adventure will come to a close. Note down the entry 139. When you have accumulated 4 progress points, complete any sidequests and then go to that entry. Otherwise, you may reconsider, returning to 198 and choosing to accept the quest.

270

Your divine sense tells you that the floating creature is a type of powerful undead.

You could use your channel divinity ability to Turn the Unholy here.

◆ *If you want to attempt this, go to 400.*

◆ *Otherwise, return to 272 and choose another option.*

271

You produce the materials and begin casting the spell over you and your companions. An odd feeling comes over you. Looking around at your companions, you see that they now appear blurry, ethereal almost.

You creep towards the tower, footsteps silent, and check the door. It is open.

Opening the door, you duck inside and see a staircase spiralling upwards around the wall, which slopes inward. The next floor up looks to be a lot smaller, and you remember that from outside the tower appeared to taper off at higher levels.

Go to 402.

272

Find Map 13 in the Maps Booklet.

You move further along the darkened corridor, and as you progress towards the next set of exits you begin to hear something... breathing. Ragged panting, as of an animal, or several animals. It's difficult to tell; the stone walls could be multiplying the sound many times over. You move closer to the end exits, stopping just short of the north one. The sound seems to be coming from in there.

You creep up to the exit, and, carefully easing your head around the corner, you see a bizarre scene before you. In a small room, four people, three men and a woman, stand on four points of a large red glyph painted on the floor. And there, in the centre of the glyph, its back to you, is a large, armoured... thing. It could be called a humanoid if it possessed a bottom half, but where legs should be, instead only a green vapour trail is visible. It wears a suit of armour on its upper half, and on its head a great helmet bearing long, curling black horns. It is about thirty feet away from you and appears to be floating, about three feet off the floor. The humans, stationed around the outside of the glyph, have small candles at their feet, and seem transfixed by them. They are not

looking up, and it appears as if they are under some sort of charm spell.

What do you do now? The creature is at the centre of the glyph.

- ◆ *If you are a paladin, go to 270.*
- ◆ *If you are a cleric, go to 202.*
- ◆ *You could make a ranged attack against it, while its back is turned. Go to 21.*
- ◆ *You could attempt to sneak up on it from behind and make an attack. Go to 365.*
- ◆ *You could use some sort of illusion spell to create a diversion. Choose from **Thaumaturgy, Minor Illusion, Silent Image, Prestidigitation or Druidcraft.** Go to 357.*

273

You move a little closer to the bridge, and notice that the figure is not moving. It is really impossible to tell *what* they are as their robe covers all facial and bodily detail. But whatever is under there is completely still. A slight breeze moves the fabric of the robe, but it is as if it is draped over a statue. The figure is unnaturally motionless.

- ◆ *To leave quickly, go to 85.*
- ◆ *To approach the figure on the bridge, go to 444.*

274

You move carefully and quietly along the passageway, primed for action. Something makes you look to your right, some movement: the stonework morphs, changes shape, and a form begins to emerge... the form of a man, no, half a man, clad in armour! As he floats out from the wall you see he is an ethereal being of some sort, but with armour over the top.

You turn to face the entity, weapon at the ready.

Go to Abyssal Specter Combat Sheet, using the "Location 2" settings.

275

Searching the beds, you soon discern that these are the cots of monks, perhaps Fzoul's personal servants. You find vestments, religious icons, and something else of interest. (*You may take the robe of a Banite Monk and a Bane amulet if you wish*).

Under one cot is a small chest containing very strange items. There are journals written in a language unlike anything you have ever seen, a book of gibberish written in Common, and a map.

With the little time you have available, you study the map carefully. If your knowledge of the area is anything to go by, this is a map of the Dragonspine Mountains, north of the Moonsea. The map bears strange markings in the same script as the journals.

You glance around. Salihn and Kragor are busy searching other areas of the room.

- ◆ *Do you show the map to Salihn and Kragor? Go to 335.*
- ◆ *Or, do you simply pocket it yourself. Go to 284.*

276

One female goblin comes to the bars and addresses you.

"Keep your voice down!" she hisses, looking furtively around. "We are slaves," she continues. "Kept here by our bugbear masters, to mine these tunnels. At least, our men are..." She glances sadly down at the little goblin boy in her arms. "And one day, my son will be, too."

You find out from this goblin, whose name is Moragh, that a large bugbear tyrant named Grax is in charge of this operation, and has enslaved the goblins to expand tunnels towards the Dragonspine Mountains. "We think he is in league with some powerful humans," Moragh tells you. "But supplies have been running low. He has been raiding the cellars of merchants across the city above to keep his workers, our husbands, fed. They tunnel, night and day. Grax works them to the bone."

You learn that the newest tunnel is situated to the east of the junction you just came from. It branches off to the north. The male goblins are to be found there, tunneling north towards the Dragonspines, a job that will take them months, years perhaps.

Somewhere further along the eastern passage is Grax's abode.

Having solved the mystery of who has been stealing Wendal's supplies, your thoughts now turn towards helping these miserable creatures.

Armed with this knowledge, you return to the junction and continue east.

Turn to 430.

277

You scan the marketgoers, looking for a suitable victim.

Make a sleight of hand roll to determine how successful your pickpocketing efforts are.

1-10: You are unsuccessful.

11-14: You manage to pickpocket 3d20+20 gold from one mark.

15-18: You lift 5d20+40 from several affluent nobles.

19-20: You pickpocket 7d20+60 gold from a range of different victims.

When you have concluded your nefarious activities, you may browse the market stalls by going to 44.

278

You quickly grab the female orc, who has now become conscious.

"Come on," you say, pulling her to her feet. "Let's get out of here!"

The mob behind you stands a little way off, unwilling to approach you after you bested those guards. Dragging the orc female behind you, you move quickly and put some distance between you and the unruly mob. You see a secluded side street, and duck down it. An old crone is sitting on a balcony smoking her pipe, sheltering beneath an

awning to escape the rain. She watches you casually.

The sounds of the mob have faded completely behind you. You stop and examine the female orc. She has a nasty gash across her temple.

- ◆ *Do you have any healing abilities? If so, you could heal this poor orc by going to 157.*
- ◆ *Otherwise, you could try and leave this orc in the care of the crone. Go to 210.*

279

You stride forward and reach out to take the ring, but as you do so two large stone hands palms chop down in front of you, barring your way. There is no getting past them. You look left, and right, and the two stone statues have come to life. Where they were rigid and forward-facing before, now they face you and don't look like they will let you past. Their eyes are fixed on you in a stoney, unflinching gaze.

What now?

- ◆ *To attempt to reach for the ring again, go to 303.*
- ◆ *To retreat to the other room and look for some other solution, go to 310.*

280

You hold your tongue, waiting for the Zhentilar to depart, which they do eventually, but only after they have secured their demands from the poor old gnome. "Bloody thugs," the little merchant mumbles as he makes his way back over to you. "Put me out of business, they will!!"

You make a few sympathetic comments to the poor gnome and then get back to the business of shopping for armour.

- ◆ *Go to 14.*

281

You make for the open door on the far side of the smithy. Behind you, you hear the clank of the guards running in full armour.

Running quickly out the door you exit into a wide alleyway. You turn left and run hard, but just before you are out of sight you hear a shout behind you. The guards are still following.

It takes a good while to properly lose them. Finally you stop in some unknown alleyway and look back, watching for them... but it appears they have given up the chase.

- ◆ *What now? You may return to Scimitar Street, but it will cost you another progress point if you do so. Go to 86.*
- ◆ *Otherwise, go to Map 1 / Map Entry 1 and choose another destination.*

282

"Manshoon? Is he the lord of Zhentil Keep?" you reply naively. "I've been here less than a day, truth be told."

"Manshoon is more than the lord of Zhentil, friend," the rogue answers. "He is the lord of all these lands, or at least he soon will be!" Seeing this as an opportunity to coax further information, you continue playing the ignorant card.

"Soon will be?" you repeat, trying to appear only mildly interested. You move to a nearby stand and begin casually inspecting the wares on display. "What's stopping him from taking power?" The rogue goes to answer, but then the stallkeeper comes near and you break off to ask him the price of the trinket you are holding, haggling for a few moments. Then your resume your conversation.

"Sorry, you were saying?"

"Several troublesome kings and governors stand in Manshoon's way," the rogue informs you tersely. "Fools who think they can *share* power with the High Lord. But they will learn. Oh yes, they will learn of his power, and his reach, soon enough."

It seems from all indications that this rogue, and possibly the entire thieves' guild of Zhentil Keep, are in league with Manshoon, and perhaps acting on his behalf!

(cont. over)

How do you respond?

- ◆ *"Well it sounds like the future of the city is in good hands! I wish you a good day, sir!" you say, then depart to look around the stalls. Go to 44.*
- ◆ *Ditching the façade, you say, "I've seen enough injustice to know that eventually, all tyrants get what's coming to them." Go to 30.*
- ◆ *"That sounds like something I could get behind. Can you introduce me to your guild leader?" Go to 488.*

283

As you wander the tight, narrow streets of Zhentil Keep, watching your footing on the poorly-maintained cobble, you see a sign which catches your eye:

DRAGON WYRMLINGS FOR SALE – ENQUIRE WITHIN.

As you near the door, you can hear a heated argument coming from inside.

- ◆ *Do you wish to go inside to investigate? If so, go to 107.*
- ◆ *If not, go to 257.*

284

Without telling the others, you may pocket these items if you wish. Add them to your inventory: "Map of Dragonspines with strange markings" and "Journal with strange markings."

Then go to entry 393.

285

"No thank you, but thank you for your time," you say with a slight bow and a feigned smile. Quickly you rejoin the crowd, not wanting to wait around to see what happens next.

- ◆ *If you are with Rynmor, go to 134 and choose another action.*
- ◆ *If you are on your own, go to 382 and choose another action.*

286

"This is used for magic users, to help them learn spells," the merchant tells you. "300 gp per pouch. Limit one."

Powdered dragon's tooth can be used to temporarily learn one cantrip from your class's spell list, above your normal allowance. It enables you to choose an extra cantrip from your class list (if your class does not have cantrips, then use the wizard's spell list and choose a cantrip from there) which you will know for the entirety of that day. Once that day is over, the spell will no longer be available for use.

You may purchase a pouch of the powder if you wish, and then return to 433 and choose another option.

287

You recognize the imposing figure as that of Hruggek, the bugbear god of violence and war, and ex-arch of Bane, the patron god of Zhentil Keep!

If there is an idol of Hruggek down here, it stands to reason that bugbears are nearby. Knowing this gives you a slight advantage - while you are down in this dungeon, you have advantage on all stealth checks that determine surprise.

There is nothing else of any note in this room. You return to the junction and continue east.

Go to 104.

288

You look around various parts of the ruined building, and find alcoves, much like any other temple, where candles or figurines might have been placed before. This place appears to have been heavily looted. Nothing of any value remains.

- ◆ *To search the rubble pile at the altar, go to 219.*
- ◆ *To leave and go to investigate some houses, go to 98.*
- ◆ *Or perhaps you have had enough of this ruined part of Zhentil Keep? Go to 68.*

289

You walk up to one of the black-clad priests. Clearing your throat, you raise your voice a few notes to give the illusion of naivete.

“Excuse me, your holiness. I am new to this city, I wonder... could you tell me something about your order, and your God? I have never had a faith before, and... I’m alone in this world. I wonder if your God is someone I could offer myself to?”

The priest looks you up and down, an odd smirk on his face. “Lord Bane does not accept fools and vagabonds into his circle. The followers of Bane exist only to do his will: kill his enemies and bring more followers to the Dark Lord’s feet. That is why Lord Manshoon is so powerful, because he does the work of Bane, ridding this world of heathen scum. Just as he is now doing with the orcs of Thar.”

You nod, trying to appear attentive. “I see. Well... how could I get the blessing of Lord Bane?”

The priest tuts mockingly. “What does a piteous mortal such as you have to offer The Black Lord?”

You search around for an answer. “I... I don’t know.” The priest shakes his head in disgust and turns to go. “Tell me,” you say quickly, trying to stop his departure, “they say Lord Manshoon is as powerful as Bane, if not more powerful! They say he is hundreds of years old!”

“Where did you hear such nonsense?” the priest spits.

“In a tavern,” you reply.

It’s not entirely untrue. You heard several such things in Teshwave, and have overheard other conversations since you have been here. This priest looks you over derisively, now in complete contempt of your apparent stupidity. “Utter nonsense! Some fools have said that Manshoon gets his power from fonts of magic beneath the Citadel of the Raven. That is speculation, and besides, no-one is as powerful as Lord Bane, not even Manshoon.”

You bow low. “Why thank you, your holiness, for taking the time to answer my questions.”

You turn and walk back into the throng of people.

- ◆ *Is the stranger still with you? If so return to 134 and choose another option.*
- ◆ *If you are alone, return to 382 and choose another option.*

290

Make a wisdom saving throw for the cleric. Roll a d20+2.

- ◆ *If the result is higher than your Spell Save DC, the spell ends. You thank the cleric and return to the crowd. Go to 134 if you are with Rynmor, or go to 382 if you are alone, then choose another action.*
- ◆ *If it is lower, go to 371*

291

You take out your weapon and jab it into the pile. Nothing happens. If there is something under there, it is buried deep.

- ◆ *To start moving rocks aside, go to 239.*
- ◆ *To investigate the pile further, go to 192.*
- ◆ *To leave the room and return to the junction, go to 194.*

292

Make an athletics check, DC 11.

- ◆ *If you succeed, go to 181.*
- ◆ *If you fail, go to 338.*

293

You dart your hand quickly in and out of the door frame.

Make a dexterity check, DC 12.

- ◆ *If successful, go to 404.*
- ◆ *If unsuccessful, go to 153.*

294



You enter Pyzar's Potion Emporium through a low doorway. Inside the antique gloom of the shop there are several other customers moving about, casually browsing through

different categories of items. The walls of this grand establishment are lined with tightly-crammed shelves. At the far end of the shop, behind a wooden counter, is a stout dwarf in rich burgundy robes. His face is partially obscured by a complicated-looking array of beakers and tubes, and his wild, gray hair sticks up like a bush of nettles. No doubt this is Pyzar, and he ignores your arrival, absorbed in his work of combining strange-coloured liquids. You peruse the shelves.

There is an entire shelf reserved for healing potions. At 150 gp a bottle, there appear to be 5 standard healing potions available at the moment.



You also see a Potion of Hill Giant Strength which looks interesting, as well as a Potion of Flying which you can see being handy in a number of situations.

Suddenly, as you are perusing the shelves, there is a small shattering noise, and you look across the shop to see a halfling laughing uproariously. He is holding an empty bottle. "Hey!" Pyzar shouts in the halfling's direction. "Pay first, then drink, you thief!" The halfling ignores the dwarf and, as you watch, you see that he can not really be called a halfling any more. He is growing, and quickly!

"Bloody Nora, get him out!" Pyzar yells.

"Someone grab him, get him out into the street! He'll destroy my ceiling!"

- ◆ *If you wish to try and help Pyzar the Potion Master, make an athletics check to grab the expanding halfling and get him*

out of the shop. The DC is 14. If you are successful go to 141. If you are unsuccessful go to 492.

- ◆ *Otherwise you can simply stand there and wait to see what happens. Go to 329.*

295

Huon's face lights up with a broad smile, as do the faces of all the other old men at the table. "Excellent!" he says, standing and embracing you warmly. "I can't tell you what this means to us, friend! You *will* be rewarded, but beyond that, you will have saved the Moonsea from tyranny! And of course, you will always have friends in the Knights of Myth Drannor."

"Go now," Huon says, placing a hand on your shoulder. "Get some rest, you will need it for the quest ahead. At dawn tomorrow, leave the city. A mile from the gates, Teodric," he indicates the Knight who led you here, "will meet you with a horse, and guide you to the foot of the Dragonspines, about thirty miles' ride. After that, you are on your own."

One of the knights, an ancient character who looks more like a mage than a fighter, approaches, you with a blue bottle. "To heal your wounds," he says in a quiet voice. "I fear you will need it, young warrior!" (*Add 1 healing potion to your inventory*).

After exchanging final words and receiving their blessings, you quietly emerge back out in the alleyway and walk quickly, finding your way back out onto the street. Your head is spinning at what you have been thrust into the middle of, but you cannot help feeling this quest is vitally important.

You return to your lodgings, your mind abuzz with anticipation at the prospect of this quest as you navigate your way back to the inn.

Go to entry 207.

296

Roll a *d20+1* with advantage. If the result is higher than your AC, read below, otherwise go to 237.

Without warning, you feel a blade biting into your shoulder, the pain searing through you like a bolt. The devious woman stabbed you in the back!

You turn, and see an entirely different person before you. The woman who called herself Annaya raises her hands in the air, invoking some eldritch language as green energy begins to swirl around her.

Do battle with this evil witch by going to Annaya Combat Sheet.

297

As the other guards are running towards their captain to see what all the fuss is about, it is no great task for you to quietly slip out the front door.

- ◆ *Return to 86 (without taking a progress point) and choose another option. Unfortunately you will not be able to purchase armour from Mail, Plate and Hide today, but there may be another shop on this street who can take care of your needs.*

298

You have definitely seen such tracks before, near the lairs of goblin tribes. These are goblin prints!

To descend the stairs, go to 55.

299

You take careful aim at the specter's back, then release your ranged attack.

Make your ranged attack with advantage, aiming for an AC of 16. If you hit, roll damage and take note of that amount to be deducted from the specter's HP. Then go to Abyssal Specter Combat Sheet.

300

Make a survival check to attempt to track the creature. Favoured enemies do not come into play here - you have no idea what the creature was. The DC is 18.

- ◆ *If you are successful, go to 144.*
- ◆ *If you are unsuccessful, go to 343*

301

Making your way through Northern Zhentil, you are in a particularly busy street, being carried along by the press of people. Suddenly, you hear a sound from above, and look up to see a woman, standing on an apartment balcony, calling out in distress. "Help, please, someone! I'm being attacked!" She then disappears out of sight, and you hear a scream coming from inside the room beyond.

You look around at your fellow pedestrians, but none of them seem particularly bothered. You hear a few comments such as, "Oh well, that's life," and "happens to the best of us," but none of them is rushing to the poor woman's aid!

- ◆ *Do you go to her aid? Go to 17.*
- ◆ *Do you ignore her pleas and continue down the street? Go to 173.*

302

You move forward to fight the rat-creature and save the old man.

- ◆ *Go to Dire Rat Overlord Combat Sheet.*

303

Again you extend your arm to grab the ring, and you see the statues grind into action once more. They raise their fists to pummel you! This does *not* look like a fight you can win. Each statue is about twelve feet tall and made of stone with large, powerful-looking fists. Your instincts tell you that entering combat with these opponents would almost certainly spell death for you.

- ◆ *To do battle with these statues go to 118.*
- ◆ *To retreat to the first room go to 310.*

304

Without trying to draw attention to yourself, you regard the woman closely. After only a few moments of watching her eyes, and reading her body language, it becomes clear to you that she is not all she seems. You keep this to yourself, nodding as she talks.

"Please, drink your wine. It's all the way from Velen. Excellent vintage."

"No thanks," you say, setting it down. "I must be going." You stand, and the woman stands too, seemingly uncertain of what to do. You make your way towards the door, primed for action, and then you hear it... the faintest whisper of a blade being drawn from a scabbard.

Quickly you spin around and parry the blade that arcs down towards your neck, pushing Annaya away with your boot.

"Back, witch!" you yell. She snarls at you through gritted teeth and raises her hands, pulling green, crackling energy out of the air. This woman is a sorceress, apparently intent on your demise!

Go to Annaya Combat Sheet.

305

You instantly recognize that the note is written in the druidic language. It reads: "Take this knowledge and memorize it instantly, fellow druid. Members of our Mountain Circle Guild are determined to assist the Knights of Myth Drannor in their coup against Manshoon and his evil Black Network, the Zhentarim. To this end, we have hidden a package in the Dragonspine Mountains, within a natural temple known as Temple of the Obscured Moon, which lies behind a waterfall. It is for you, our fellow druid, if you should be contacted by those knights and asked to take up that quest. It contains useful items and will assist you greatly in your quest. Now destroy this note immediately and prepare to be contacted by the Knights of Myth Drannor."
(cont. over)

You memorize the note and then tear it into pieces, scattering them as you walk.

Take note of the codeword Druidicnote on your character sheet. Then return to Map 1 / Map Entry 1 and choose a new destination.

306

The runes are in a language utterly unfamiliar to you. They look vaguely similar to Draconic visually, but even if you can read that language, they are still indecipherable.

- ◆ *To knock on the surface with your fist, go to 200.*
- ◆ *To strike the surface with your weapon, go to 368.*
- ◆ *To return to the junction, go to 194.*

307

You move forward down the corridor, with bated breath, Jamaunga by your side.

Suddenly you feel an unpleasant feeling come over you. It grows, and soon a deep, dark despair begins to overwhelm your soul...

- ◆ *Make a wisdom save, DC 14. If you are successful, go to 431.*
- ◆ *If you are unsuccessful go to 72.*

308

"Welcome back, traveller!" Huon Falconhand greets you. "I trust you found everything you need in Zhentil Keep? Regardless, time is pressing... and as you have just seen, the Black Network is well aware of your presence here in Zhentil Keep. Which means it is time for you to leave, to depart and begin your quest, through the Dragonspines, in search of the secret underground route to Zhentil Keep."

You nod, and repeat that you are intent on the quest.

"You were rescued for a purpose, traveller. Manshoon's foul schemes must be uncovered, and you are the one to complete this quest. Find the hidden tunnels that lead to the Citadel of the Raven, then when you reach the Citadel itself, find Sir Steval Skurynd,

and with his help rout out any Zhentarim spies that still lurk there. Hawkhelm's assassin may be hiding within the Citadel's soldiers, so be careful!"

You stay for a little while longer, and the old Knights provide you with a nourishing meal of soup and bread (*Restore 3 hp*). You tell them of your encounter with the witch Annaya.

"Yes," Addy says. "The Black Network has many agents, possessing many dubious talents. You are lucky to be alive!"

You stay for a while longer, discussing various things. They remind you that you are to meet Teodric on the morrow, one mile northwest of the city gates, on the road that leads back towards Teshwave.

Finally, you bid the Knights farewell, and leave their hideout, returning to your inn by the most direct route. You are very careful to make sure you are not followed. You make your way inside the inn.

If you are staying at The Stout Miner, pay 2 gp for your room for the night. If you are staying at The Zhentil Arms, pay 5 gp and then turn to 182.

309

This cavern is quite large, about 40 ft or so lengthways. On the far side, you can make something out. Is it... a chest? Yes, there on the other side is a large chest, sturdy wood with brass bands reinforcing it.

- ◆ *To go over and inspect the chest, go to 320.*
- ◆ *To check the room for anything unseen, go to 66.*
- ◆ *To leave the room and continue down the passage, go to 40.*

310

You make your way back into the first room. Obviously the challenge is getting that ring, but you don't really like the idea of fighting your way through those guardian statues.

- ◆ *To explore this room, go to 113.*
- ◆ *To inspect the jars, go to 222.*

311

You make your way through the streets of the river city, heading quickly back to the inn where you stayed last night.

You greet the inkeep with a curt nod, pay for another night's accommodation, and make your way to your room, drawing the curtains.

- ◆ *Go to 182.*

312

You work on Jamaunga's body, and soon you see signs of life returning... his chest rises and falls and he begins to groan, but he is in no condition to talk.

You send another one of the specter's captives to go and get help, and a stretcher, to carry Jamaunga out of this accursed place. Then, thinking it's probably best that you leave and avoid any unwanted attention, you quickly leave the dungeon. A quick scan of the room before you go reveals nothing of value.

You help the former thralls get Jamaunga's body up and out of the hole, and see them on your way, whispering your farewell to the brave Crucian before you part ways.

Then, once more, you are alone.

Go to Map 1 / Map entry 1 and continue to your next chosen destination.

313

A light drizzle settles in as you walk, directing yourself towards the middle of town. Just near the market square, where a few merchants are packing down the last of the tents, you find a nice-looking inn named *The Zhentil Arms*.

Pushing your way through an ornate wooden door, you enter a busy foyer where travellers wait to be shown to their rooms.

Eventually an elderly elf approaches you, key in hand. "Rooms are five gold pieces a night," he informs you with a smile. "Show you to your room?"

(cont. over)

What do you choose to do?

- ◆ Respond "That would be lovely, thank you." Go to 337.
- ◆ "No thanks, I might look for somewhere a bit cheaper." Go to 389.

314

With one final attack you slay the rat-like creature. It drops to the ground, and immediately, as if from nowhere, hundreds of rats appear and begin devouring the carcass. Shuddering with disgust, you turn and see the old man, cowering against the wall of the alley. Quickly you go to him.

"Thank you, thank you," he breathes, beside himself with gratitude for you.

"Why was it attacking you?" you ask.

"I'm a maker of dire rat traps," he says. "My son sells them at the market. They're intelligent creatures, those rats. He must have been lying here in waiting for me. I don't know how to thank you, I have very little money... here..."

The old man passes you a small whistle, hung on a cord around his neck. "Take it. If you're ever in a situation where you're surrounded by rats, blow on this thing. They can't stand the sound of it... Not that big one though... didn't seem to affect that thing."

Nodding, you accept the gift (although you're not sure how effective it would be) and help the old man to his feet.

Add rat whistle to your inventory.

Once you are sure he is alright, you turn and exit the alley.

Return to Map 1 / Map Entry 1 and continue to your chosen destination.



315

You do a quick search of the rogue's body, finding 72 gold. He also carries a rapier, which you may take if you wish.

- ◆ Then you return to Market Square. Go to 44, but due to the time spent here, you may only purchase from three stalls instead of six.

316

To your trained eye, this looks like an ideal place to make contact with the local thieves' guild. There are also a lot of semi-affluent looking cityfolk milling about, so a bit of casual pickpocketing could also be on the cards!

- ◆ To attempt to find a member of the local thieves' guild, go to 468.
- ◆ To try your hand at pickpocketing, go to 277.

317

You pass the night very uncomfortably on the stone floor of the cell. Down the corridor, horrific, tortured screams echo, and the sound of iron doors slamming and boots marching keeps you awake most of the night. Your belongings are gone, including your weapons – they have all been stripped from you. And the female orc, only the Gods know what became of her.

Still, you manage to grab sleep in small snatches (*recover 1 hit die*).

And then, just before dawn, you hear it; a key turning in the lock. You sit up in time to see the cell door swing quietly inward, and standing there is a lone elven guard, dressed in the livery of the Zhentilar. But something about his face... he wears no expression of malice or suspicion. Rather, a look of urgent desperation.

"Come traveller, quickly!" he whispers, beckoning to you. "It's all right, I'm a friend. Come, quickly!"

Having nothing to lose, you stand and go with him.

(cont. over)

The elven warrior leads you out into the corridor, down to its end and then up some stairs and into an alleyway. "Let's go," he hisses, hand on his sword as his eyes scan every nook and cranny.

The mysterious stranger leads you through a maze of twisting and turning alleyways, always glancing behind to check if you are being followed. As you dash through this urban labyrinth, your saviour draws a dagger, keeping a close watch on his surroundings. Dawn is just breaking in the sky overhead.

"They will have discovered your escape by now," he says, and chuckles to himself. "They'll have no clue. Fools! Still, they don't know your value to us."

◆ *Go to entry 161*

318

As you make your way through the streets of Zhentil Keep, you hear a cheerful voice coming from up ahead.

"Come one, come all! Try your hand at the lock that has confounded the most skilled thieves in the Moonsea! Devil Worms have tried it, even the famous rogue Night Fingers has tried it and couldn't crack it! Do you think you can? 20 gold pieces a try, and you get to keep whatever's in the chest! Don't miss out!"

As you near, you see a jolly-looking halfling at the road's edge, tossing a key and loudly inviting all to try his lock challenge. A small woman, finely dressed, is hunched over a small chest with lockpicking tools, and as you watch she gives up, shakes her head and walks off. A man, waiting in the queue, moves forward and begins his attempt. The halfling catches your eye. "How about you, friend? Fancy a real challenge?"

- ◆ *Will you try your hand at the halfling's challenge? If so, go to 218.*
- ◆ *If you would rather not, then return to Map 1 / Map Entry 1 and proceed to your next chosen destination.*



319

The three of you back up, down the stairs a little, and bolt towards the door at full speed. *Make an athletics check, DC 13.*

- ◆ *If successful, go to 116.*
- ◆ *If unsuccessful, go to 344.*

320

You walk across to the chest, eager to see what riches it might hold! Suddenly, to your horror, you feel the ground start to give way beneath you! *Make a dex save, DC 13.*

- ◆ *If successful, go to 375.*
- ◆ *If unsuccessful, go to 356.*

321

You shake your head, telling yourself there is some sort of charm or dark magic inherent in this place, and you force yourself to think happier thoughts. It seems to work: slowly

the despair subsides and you are back to your normal, determined self.

Looking left and right, you see that the exits open out into empty rooms. These rooms seem completely bare, apart from a little moss and some rubble littering the floor.

Ahead, there are two more exits to the north and south, and beyond that the corridor ends.

- ◆ *If you would like to check out the nearest rooms, to the north and south, go to 354.*
- ◆ *If you would like to continue down to the next set of exits, go to 111.*

322

The Specter howls, as if in pain, and flees, but not towards the exit... It flies into the back wall and disappears, as if merging with it. It seems this undead can travel through stone, and it has used this ability to get as far away from you as possible.

"Your power is astounding, holy one!"

Jamaunga marvels as you both watch the specter flee. Then, seemingly remembering why he was there, he rushes to the furthest human, a middle-aged man, and shakes him awake. "Thebius!" he cries. "It's Jamaunga! Remember me?"

You help Jamaunga revive all the humans, breaking them out of their trance. They are all shocked to find themselves there, having no memory of how they came to be there.

They are all from the Common Quarter.

Finally you get them moving, and out the door. As Jamaunga is leading them out, he looks back at you.

"You coming?" he asks.

- ◆ *Well, are you? If you accompany Jamaunga and the rescued captors out the dungeon, go to 180.*
- ◆ *If you prefer to stay here and wait to see if the specter returns, go to 410.*

323

The specter, seemingly immune to your efforts to turn it, stops what it is doing and rushes towards you, floating above the

ground! It lowers its head, as if to gore you! You must do battle with this hellish entity.

Go to Abyssal Specter Combat Sheet.

324

You turn and walk quickly away from the rogue, perhaps feeling something is a bit off about this situation.

Go to entry 44.

325

As you wander towards your next destination, something catches your eye: A note, pinned to the wall of a house.



You move closer and notice that it is written in a strange, eldritch-looking language.

- ◆ *Do you know the Druidic language? If so go to 305.*
- ◆ *If not, you shake your head at the indecipherable runes and continue on your way. Go to Map 1 / Map Entry 1 and choose a new destination.*

326

You search Annaya's apartment thoroughly and turn up some interesting finds... 55 gold pieces, three bottles of wine, and a vial of poison marked "Midnight Tears." There is enough here for one dose. *(Take what you wish and add it to your inventory. For details*

on the poison Midnight Tears Poison, consult the Dungeon Master's Guide, page 258).

There is also a note, written in tiny script on a small piece of parchment, and bearing today's date. It is concealed amongst the pile of books on the wood table.

It reads:

Dearest Annaya

I long for your company day and night, my dark seductress... please, come to me tonight. The front door will be open. Use the usual charm to get past my guardian.

*I will not be there until late as I have duties to attend to at the Black Altar, but you can amuse yourself I'm sure. There is wine and many tomes for you to peruse while you await my arrival, sweet love. And also, if you look in the spine of the tome named "Memoirs of Tertius Realmwanderer" you will find a little present I have left for you. Until this evening,
Fzoul.*

Below this note you see, written in common script, the words of a magical charm. As you finish reading, you hear a sound from the street outside - it sounds like Zhentilar approaching! Quickly you pocket the note (add 'Annaya Note' to your inventory) and leave the apartment, exiting the building by a back entrance.

Return to Map 1 / Map Entry 1 and continue to your chosen destination.

327

Make an investigation check.

- ◆ *If you score 1-13, go to 255.*
- ◆ *If you score 14 or above, go to 275.*

328

Try as you might, the lock will not yield to your efforts.

"Oh well, not everyone can manage the lock to end all locks!" the halfling says. "If they could, I'd be out of business!"

(cont. over)

Annoyed, you leave the halfling and walk off, shaking your head with disappointment. *Go to Map 1 / Map Entry 1 and continue to your chosen destination.*

329

Pyzar stands with an exasperated groan.

"Must I do everything? Gods, I'm trying to run a business here!"

Pyzar produces a bottle from behind his desk and casually tips a few drops into his left hand, then walks out from behind his desk, flinging the liquid over the halfling with a flourish. Immediately the halfling stops laughing, stops growing, and begins shrinking back to normal size.

"There," Pyzar says, walking back to his desk and slumping back into his chair behind his equipment. He sighs heavily, and then resumes his work.

Calmly, he remarks, "And that will be 250 gold, please, for the Potion of Growth."

The halfling's eyes go wide at this. He looks about shiftily. "Oh. Alright," he says, pretending to browse the shelves once more, as if everyone had forgotten about his recent transformation. Then, with a cautious glance towards Pyzar, he begins to tiptoe towards the front door.

"Stay!" Pyzar commands, raising a hand.

The halfling freezes on the spot. Pyzar huffs grumpily as he comes out from behind his equipment once more. The halfling still does not move, does not even turn to face Pyzar. It seems as if he is frozen mid-step, one foot lifted in the air.

Pyzar approaches and begins rifling through the halfling's pockets. "Hm. No, empty. The other one? No, empty there too... what do you have then? Ah!" Pyzar finds a necklace around the halfling's hairy neck, and promptly whips it off. On the end is a large piece of jade. "That should do." He waves his hand again and the halfling topples to the ground. "Now, get out thief!"

Ashamed, the halfling runs from the shop, crying.

Shaking your head in amazement at these proceedings, you go back to surveying the shelves.

◆ *Go to entry 476.*

330

You reach into the jar and take out a small amount of the dust. Raising it to your nose, you take a careful sniff, and immediately begin sneezing and coughing uncontrollably! You feel your airways begin to close over, and breathing becomes near impossible. This sensation combines with the same sucking feeling you felt earlier, and your body dematerializes. Everything goes black, and then suddenly you are back in Melhuish's Magical Curiosities. Slowly you regain the ability to breathe.

The little girl shakes her head, regarding you with a disappointed expression. "Tsk tsk, dear oh dear. I thought you would pass the challenge, but it appears not." She sighs. "Oh well." She returns to her banister and goes back to reading her book, leaving you to ponder what happened.

You may return to entry 232 and choose any item you wish to purchase. After that, you leave the shop. Return to entry 12 (without taking a progress point) and choose another merchant to visit.

331 PLAY AUDIO

You stalk quietly along the narrow corridor heading east. The sounds of metal on stone, hammering and picking, get louder as you progress.

Eventually you come to yet another north-branching passage. The noise appears to be coming from down here, if your ears do not deceive you. You take a deep breath and head down this passage, towards the noises.
Go to entry 353.

332

There is a muffled scream, and the left-hand sniper drops out of view. A few seconds later the right-hand sniper also disappears, either

scared away by your skill, or for some other reason.

Wasting no more time, you turn and bolt out of this perilous death-trap.

Go to entry 5.

333

You beckon to the gnome, "Quick, help me with these bodies!" You grab the captain under the arms and start dragging him out of sight.

The gnome, in a panic at the carnage you have created in his store, shakes his head. "No, this way, this way!" He leads you out to the smithy, then calls several burly smiths to come and help with the other two corpses. "What have you done, traveller?! I know you were trying to help, but... if this ever gets found out, I'm done for!"

The smiths make quick work of the bodies, feeding them into the largest furnace. One of them eyes you with a look of contempt. "A word of advice, friend. The best way to proceed with the Zhentilar is just smile and agree, go along with whatever. They always leave, eventually."

You express in the simplest of terms that that is not your way, never has been and never will be. This doesn't seem to placate him, however.

After all this, you quietly approach the gnome. "I know it might seem... a tad on the nose, but, could you show me your armour?"

The gnome, regarding you with shock, shakes his head, and sighing, walks back towards the storefront. "Follow me," he says resignedly.

◆ *Go to 14*

334

The stone creature collapses to the ground, rocks piling and collapsing as a cloud of dust rises. Quickly you make your way into the temple, eager to see what the creature was guarding. You have a feeling someone placed the creature here, or enchanted it to remain here for this exact purpose.

You eventually make your way inside the blasted interior of the former temple. Looking around, it is difficult to see why anyone would have wanted to guard such a place. All you can see is rubble. At the far end, where the altar should be, the rubble is piled highest.

- ◆ *To search some other parts of the temple, go to 288.*
- ◆ *To investigate the rubble pile at the altar, go to 219.*

335

You motion your two companions over. "Look at this," you whisper. "It's the Dragonspines, isn't it?" Salihn glances at it briefly. "Hm. Yes," she replies curtly. "No idea what that language is though."

With that, she goes back towards the ladder, inspecting the trapdoor. Kragor is similarly disinterested.

You may keep the map and the journal if you wish. Add them to your inventory "Map of Dragonspines with strange markings" and "Journal with strange markings." Then go to entry 393.

336

You whip out your instrument to the delight of the crowd and move up to join the band. "Let's hear you play!" someone shouts. One of the musicians, playing a little hand drum, beckons you over with a wide smile. You are swept up in the moment and add your part to the lively show.

Roll performance.

- ◆ *If you roll 1-11, go to 138.*
- ◆ *If you roll 12 or above, go to 470.*

337

Deduct 5 gold for the night's stay.

The elf shows you upstairs to your room, which is well appointed. A four-poster bed is covered with plush blankets and silk sheets, and a bath at the side of the room already has

several steaming pails of water sitting beside it, waiting for your arrival. It's the little things that count! You are certainly getting your money's worth.

The elf bids you goodnight and leaves the room. Quickly you strip off and fill the bath, and have a long hot soak, washing away the dust and cares of travel.

You dry off and get half dressed, ready for sleep. On a bedside table is a platter of fruit and sweetmeats, and a rolled parchment. You untie the parchment - it is a map of Zhentil Keep.

You lie down on the bed and study this, thinking about the areas of the city that you will visit tomorrow. (See Map 1 in the Maps Booklet / Map Entry 1 in the Adventure Book). Slowly, your eyes droop and you fall into a deep slumber.

Regain all your hitpoints from this long rest.

- ◆ *Go to entry 74.*

338

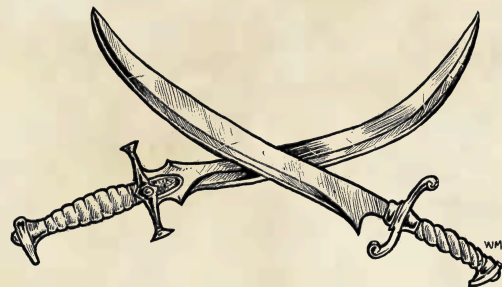
You rush for the entrance, aiming to dive through it and pursue the rogue, but you are too slow. The stone panel slides shut, and you are forced to give up the chase.

Cursing yourself for having missed the opportunity to punish the villain, you return to the market and busy yourself perusing the stalls.

Go to 44, but you may now only purchase goods from three stalls rather than six.

339

You say your prayer, and walk away from the altar, feeling spiritually invigorated. *Return to 53 and choose another option.*



340

“Manshoon?” you say. “He’s renowned throughout Faerun as being a firm, but just leader, isn’t he? At least that’s what they say in Waterdeep. I don’t have much of a head for politics myself.”

Make a persuasion roll.

- ◆ *If you score 1-10 go to 385.*
- ◆ *If you score 11-20 go to 267.*

341

To your alarm, a crossbow bolt hits the cobblestones next to you and skitters into some crates. You quickly turn and make out the shapes of two rooftop snipers, each on opposite buildings looking down on the alleyway.

- ◆ *To make a ranged attack on one of these snipers, go to 349.*
- ◆ *To turn and bolt out of the alley, go to 5.*

342

You make your way down a narrow passage which looks freshly hewn from the earth. From ahead comes the smell of incense, and you recognize it as a commonly available incense used in the worship of many different deities.

You creep forward, wary of any beings that might inhabit the way ahead, and see light emanating from an open doorway which lies at the end of the passage. Slowing your progress, you approach stealthily... as you reach the doorway you get a view into the room, and it appears vacant.

Beyond the doorway is a well-lit chamber, and you enter, keeping a watch on all sides. No, it is definitely empty in here, but it does show signs of recent habitation. There are torches ablaze on the walls, and at the far end is a low alcove containing an altar. Atop this altar is an idol of a hulking black beast, some sort of goblinoid creature. You aren’t sure whether you have seen this before, but have a feeling you might have.

(cont. over)

Make a religion check, DC 13.

- ◆ *If successful, go to 287.*
- ◆ *If unsuccessful, go to 105.*

343

You try your best to see any sign of the creature, but all trace of it has disappeared. But then something else catches your eye. Glancing down, you see a ring, partially wedged between two cobblestones.

- ◆ *To pick this random find up, go to 142.*
- ◆ *To leave it and carry on, 440.*

344

You are not fast enough through the door, and are superficially burnt by the door flames.

Take 2d4 fire damage. If you are still alive, continue reading below.

You emerge on a landing which is empty apart from a ladder in its centre, going up to a hole through to the next floor up. The three of you quickly scale this, and emerge in a room shaped exactly like the ground floor room, only smaller, and without giant reptiles.

Turn to entry 119.

345

You run as fast as you can, forward to where you saw the creature on the pillar... but you are too slow. Rounding the corner, you look down a short alleyway and up at the surrounding rooftops. There is no sign of the creature you saw.

Shaking your head, you return to the street and carry on walking, extra cautious now.

- ◆ *If this encounter has spooked you, and you wish to return to your inn, go to 311.*
- ◆ *Otherwise, go to Map 1 / Map Entry 1 and continue to your next chosen destination.*

346

Fossicking about in the rubble of a few ruined houses, you find a small amount of money: 5 gp, 22 sp and 14 ep.

Add this to your inventory.

- ◆ *To check out the temple ruin, go to 471.*
- ◆ *Otherwise, return to Map 1 / Map Entry 1 and choose a new destination.*

347

Moving slowly and quietly, you enter the room and begin making your way, staying low, towards the specter.

Make a stealth roll, DC 12. If you are successful, you may make a single melee attack with advantage. Take note of damage and then progress to Abyssal Specter Combat Sheet.

348

Suddenly from behind you feel something sharp gore into you; the pain is almost unbearable! Dark necrotic energy pulses through you, and turn to see a hideous, floating entity. Its top half is covered in armour, its head encased in a plated helmet bearing long, curving horns, now dripping with your blood! Its bottom half is ethereal, green vapour, trailing into nothing.

Take 2d6 necrotic damage and then (if you're still alive) go to Abyssal Specter Combat sheet. Go with the "Location 2" settings.

349

The snipers are about 120 feet away.

- ◆ *To make a ranged attack, choose the left or right sniper, and make your attack roll, aiming for an AC of 17. If successful, go to 16. If unsuccessful, go to 64.*
- ◆ *If this is too far, you'll have to make a run for it. Go to 5.*

350

A brief scan of the room reveals nothing of value. You set about helping the specter's former captives out of this accursed place,

guiding them up the rope and back out into the free air.

And then, you are on your way.

Return to Map 1 / Map Entry 1 and continue to your next destination.

351

You reach up to feel the back of your neck, feeling something is definitely amiss. Moving your hand around, you realize that a lock of your hair is gone!

Appalled, you quicken your pace. This cannot be good.

Note the codeword Memento on your character sheet.

- ◆ *To continue onto your next destination within Zhentil Keep, go to Map 1 / Map Entry 1 and find the relevant destination entry.*
- ◆ *Or, perhaps this encounter has spooked you to the point where you simply want to return to your inn. Go to 311.*

352

You move carefully and quietly along the passageway with Jamaunga at your side, senses primed for action. Suddenly, something makes you look to your right (perhaps Jamaunga alerts you), and you see something strange. The stonework is morphing, transforming, and a shape begins to emerge... the shape of a man, no, half a man, in armour, with long, curving horns emerging from a plated helmet!

Jamaunga turns towards where you are looking, shouts out in alarm and readies his warhammer.

Go to Abyssal Specter Combat Sheet, using the "Location 2" settings.

353

You make your way down a long passageway, hewn from raw stone, and the sounds of hammering and picking grow ever louder. You approach quietly, and soon see light coming from the end of the tunnel.

You see humanoid creatures - goblins, you realize, busy chipping away at a sheer rock face. They are all chained together at the feet, and watched over by a large bugbear with a battleaxe over his shoulder. He moves along the ranks, barking orders in Goblin.

What will you do?

- ◆ *Attempt to make a surprise attack on the bugbear? Go to 419.*
- ◆ *Walk up and introduce yourself to the bugbear and enquire what's going on? Go to 99.*
- ◆ *Cast a spell and attempt to free the goblins? Go to 110.*

354

You enter these rooms and have a look around, but they are nearly completely empty, save for rubble and some rusted pieces of iron; the remnants of cell bars possibly? You make your way back to the main corridor.

- ◆ *To continue west to the next set of exits, go to 111.*
- ◆ *Or perhaps you suddenly decide that this doesn't feel right, and want to leave? Go to 212.*

355

The Specter, seemingly immune to your efforts to turn it, stops what it is doing and rushes towards you. It lowers its head like a bull, as if to gore you!

Go to Abyssal Specter Combat Sheet.

356

You try to throw yourself sideways, but you are not fast enough and your feet tread air. With a heavy thud, you land at the bottom of a pitfall trap.

(Take 1d6 fall damage. If you're still alive, continue reading below).

Slowly you pick yourself up and look around. The top of the trap consists of hinged metal plates, designed to fall inwards, bolted into stone. They are smooth and provide no purchase.

The only other items there in the pit with you are a couple of discarded pieces of half-rusted armour, and the pieces of a broken crate. Considering your situation, it becomes clear why the pieces of armour are in here, the largest being a pauldron that looks like it belonged to a troll or some other large creature. Some poor individual fell victim to the same fate, and the only way they could think of to get out was to run and jump, using a piece of their armour as a vaulting point.

It looks like this is your only option also, unless you have something you could use to gain height in a jump. A quarterstaff would be handy, or some sort of a flying feat (for example if you are a variant tiefling). If you have a flying feat, take an immediate success on the following check.

Make an athletics check, DC 16. If you are a smaller being like a halfling, dwarf or gnome, then the DC is 17. You may make this check as many times as it takes to be successful, but take count of the number of attempts, each failed attempt probably taking about thirty seconds real time.

- ◆ *If you succeed in 1-3 attempts, go to 386.*
- ◆ *If it took you 4 or more attempts, go to 88.*

357 play audio

Closing your eyes, you attempt to conjure an image to distract the spectre.

Roll a d20, adding one of the modifiers listed below, based on the spell cast:

SPELL	MODIFIER
Thaumaturgy	+3
Minor Illusion	+2
Silent Image	+1
Prestidigitation	0
Druidcraft	-1

- ◆ *If you roll 1-11 go to 90.*
- ◆ *If you roll 12 or above, go to 228.*

358

Quickly you get yourself out of the pit and run after the bugbear, aware that he might be on his way to alert someone.

You catch up with him as he crosses the bridge that spans what looks like a deep chasm.

Do you have any ranged attacks? If so, you may make one on the bugbear, aiming for his back as he crosses the bridge as quickly as his bulky form will allow.

- ◆ *If you score 13 or above, you hit. Go to 143.*
- ◆ *If you score lower than 13, you miss, go to 121.*
- ◆ *If you have no ranged attacks, go to 121.*

359

The orc shakes her head. "Orcs have no interest in the affairs of the Moonsea. We live peacefully in the Thar, alongside the ogres, our days of conquest far, far gone. We just want a quiet life with our families, our husbands and wives and little orclings. But for Manshoon, we orcs are a convenient scapegoat.

"You ask *how* I know these latest rumours are lies? Hear this: the story doing the rounds right now is that orcs march *south* towards the Citadel, and that they have just passed Whitehorn. The truth is, there *are* no orc tribes north of Whitehorn, so how would orcs be marching south past Whitehorn?"

The orc's voice has risen in anger, and a few faces have appeared at rain-spattered windows. She lowers her voice.

"Orcs have no interest in the Citadel of the Raven," she continues. "Even if we were to conquer it by siege – which is an impossible feat – how would we keep it? The armies of Zhentil Keep, of Cormyr, Sembia, Phlan and Melvaunt would descend on us and we would be slaughtered to the last orc! So, does that answer your question? The only answer is that Manshoon has assassinated this Hawkhelm through his Zhentarim spies! And now, I must go! Thank you for rescuing me,

but time presses. Goodbye, and fare thee well, traveller!"

The orc stands, looks around quickly, and departs, her footfalls echoing off the walls of the narrow street.

- ◆ *You realize the hour is growing late, and it is time to look for an inn. Go to entry 6.*

360

You browse the various aisles, getting a feel for the square. There is a lot on offer here! Some of it is useless junk, but some items are potentially quite useful.

Make a perception roll.

- ◆ *If you roll 1-10, turn to 491.*
- ◆ *If you roll 11-20, turn to 44.*

361

Jamaunga leads you out of the room, then past the junction and west, quietly along the corridor. Ahead you can see exits leading off the north and south walls, and you grip your weapon tightly, hearing the sound of your own heart beating loudly.

- ◆ *Go to entry 307.*

362

It comes back to you now - the black hand is the symbol of Bane, obviously, that doesn't take much to recall. It takes a little longer to remember the blue star symbol, however...

this is the symbol of Mystra, Goddess of Magic and arch-enemy of Bane, and it has split the Black Hand in two!

You find yourself uttering the name *Mystra* as you remember this, and as the words leave your lips you see a glow flickering on the ring binding the rays of the star together. You peer closer and can make out words, written in Common, shimmering with incandescent light.

Mystra Moonsong Merradussi...

You have no idea what the words mean, but you commit them to memory nonetheless,

and a strange, peaceful feeling overcomes you, like a kind of inspiration, or as if hope has been instilled into the deepest part of your soul.

Savouring this pleasant feeling, you return to the midst of the ruins.

Write the codeword Moonson on your character sheet, then return to entry 78 without taking a progress point.

363

Roll 2d6 and take half the roll as poison damage. If you're still alive, continue reading below

You fling the goblet to the floor, and stand, drawing your weapon. Cursing, the woman who called herself Annaya also stands, and begins waving her hands, making fell incantations. This woman is a sorceress!

Go to Annaya Combat Sheet and do battle with this devious character!

364

You explore the room, checking out various areas. But as you walk into the centre of the floor, you feel it giving way beneath you!

Make a dexterity save, DC 13.

- ◆ *If you are successful, go to 375.*
- ◆ *If unsuccessful, go to 356.*

365

Moving slowly and quietly, you enter the room and begin making your way, staying low, towards the specter.

Make a stealth roll, DC 12. If you are successful, you may make a single melee attack with advantage. Take note of damage and then progress to Abyssal Specter Combat Sheet.

366

Carefully you sneak up on the ill-mannered Zhentilar Guard; you have caught him completely unawares, and the other two guards haven't noticed either!

Make your first attack roll with advantage, aiming to beat an AC of 16! Take note of any

damage. Then find Map 4 in the Maps Booklet and go to Zhentilar Guard Combat Sheet 2.

367

Find Map 13 in the Maps Booklet.

You and Jamaunga move further along the darkened corridor, and as you progress towards the next set of exits you begin to hear something... breathing. Ragged panting, as of an animal, or several animals. It's difficult to tell; the stone walls could be multiplying the sound many times over. You move closer to the end exits, stopping just short of the north one. The sound seems to be coming from in there.

You motion to Jamaunga to stay back, and, carefully easing your head around the corner, you see a bizarre scene before you. In the small room, four people, three men and a woman, stand on four points of a large glyph painted on the floor. And there, in the centre of the glyph, its back to you, a large, armoured... thing. It could be called a humanoid of sorts, if it possessed a bottom half, but where legs should be, instead only a green vapour trail is visible. It wears a suit of armour on its upper half, and on its head a great helmet bearing long, curling black



horns. It is about thirty feet away from you and appears to be floating, about three feet off the floor.

The humans, stationed around the outside of the glyph, have small candles at their feet, and seem transfixed by them. They are not looking up, and it appears as if they are under some sort of charm spell.

"That's it!" Jamaunga whispers. "That's the specter!"

What do you do now? The specter is at the centre of the glyph, represented by a dark blue dot.

- ◆ *If you are a paladin, go to 178.*
- ◆ *If you are a cleric, go to 60.*
- ◆ *You could make a ranged attack against it, while its back is turned. Go to 299.*
- ◆ *You could attempt to sneak up on it from behind and make an attack. Go to 347.*
- ◆ *You could use some sort of illusion spell to create a diversion. Choose from **Thaumaturgy, Minor Illusion, Silent Image, Prestidigitation or Druidcraft.** Go to 177.*

368

You bring your weapon down hard on the rune-scribed surface.

A voice from underneath, yells "HEY! Stop that!"

Startled, you step back a few paces. The rocks begin to move, tumbling away, as



something extracts itself from the rockpile. A bizarre creature, covered in a hard shell, stands up before you.

It holds a warhammer up before itself, glancing nervously around. "What are you doing here?" it whispers. "You cannot be down here! This is a cursed place!"

You respond with your own questions, asking the creature what *it* is doing down here.

"Keep your voice down!" it hisses. "I came down here to find my friend... the specter enthralled him and took him down here. I was hiding under the rockpile, waiting for it to come past. I was going to surprise it, until you ruined everything!"

The creature, a crucian who eventually introduces himself as Jamaunga Runeshell, tells you that this dungeon is the lair of a hellish specter, the spirit of a demon killed by Zhentar, the founder of this city. This specter has been collecting souls for the completion of a ritual.

"How do you know all this?" you ask.

"I study a lot," it says. "I know my local lore. Anyway, enough of that. Now that you're here, we can take the damned thing together!"

- ◆ *Do you accept Jamaunga's proposal? If so go to 361.*
- ◆ *If you have had enough of this place, you can leave the dungeon by going to 212.*

369

You decline the offer of a new weapon, but enter the smithy anyway, eager for a bit of conversation.

"Is that all you do, weapons?"

"Oh no," the smith replies. "Horseshoes, cart wheels, you name it."

You turn towards the little goblin, who is absorbed in his work and has not even looked up at you.

"And what about him?"

The blacksmith smiles. "Krug there helps me keep the forges going. He's a bit of an alchemist... good with all sorts of things."

"Indeed," you nod, eyeing the goblin curiously.

"Excuse me a moment," the blacksmith says. "Nature calls."

The blacksmith sets his tools down and leaves via a door that leads into an adjacent room. When he is gone, your attention turns to the little goblin.

- ◆ *To attempt to strike up a conversation with Krug, make a Charisma check, DC 12. If successful, go to 422.*
- ◆ *If unsuccessful, go to 75.*
- ◆ *To wait for the blacksmith to return, go to 411.*
- ◆ *Or you could leave and continue to your next destination, in which case return to Map 1 / Map Entry 1 and turn to your chosen entry.*

370

You subtly weave your bardic abilities into the song you are performing, and are pleased to see the guards become confused and disoriented, pushed back by the crowd. They move back and keep at a distance, talking amongst themselves as they wait for the provocative performance to come to an end. Enjoying your time with the band, you play two more songs to the uproarious delight of the crowd, then quickly pack away your instrument and move on before you attract any more attention.

Take an inspiration point for your outstanding performance!

Return to Map 1 / Map Entry 1 and continue to your next chosen destination.



371

You gain some more insight. This cleric meant to trap you in the courtyard beyond this door and then summon two cronies, who would kill you and do away with your body! Looks like you're asking too many questions. But beyond that, there is a general state of worry and discontent in this cleric's mind... something to do with discord between factions of the temple. This cleric is apparently loyal to Fzoul and Manshoon, but not all are so, it would appear. Any more than that, you cannot tell. Feigning a polite smile, you return to the crowd.

- ◆ *If you are with Rynmor, go to 134 and choose another action.*
- ◆ *If you are alone, go to 382 and choose another action.*

372

You look around, searching for any sign of danger... and then you spot it. On the left wall, near the bottom, a glyph is painted in dried blood, some sort of eldritch rune. It is scrawled roughly, as if by someone of demented mind, but you have seen such things before. Watching the location of the rune carefully, you run and dive across the section of passage it is level with. As you land and roll, you hear a loud crack as a bolt of force fires across the passage, blasting a section of the wall opposite.

You avoided the trap! But any stealth advantage you may have had is now gone. Proceed to 194.

373

Suddenly the guard's whole demeanour changes, and he drops to his knees. "Oh sir," he pleads. "You must forgive my rudeness! How could I have talked to you so? Here..." the knight goes to his belt and unties a large pouch. "Please, take this, as compensation for my inexcusable behaviour. Please sir!"

The gnome, utterly bewildered at this turn of events, silently accepts the coin pouch, his mouth moving as if he wants to say something but cannot form the words. The knight then goes on to negotiate a new deal, paying full price for the plate armour and ordering extra suits. Then he gathers his comrades and they depart.

The gnome is speechless as you present yourself smiling. "You're welcome," you say coolly, and then enquire about looking at some armour.

After the gnome has gathered his wits and had a hearty laugh at your sense of humour, he wipes his eyes and proceeds to show you his wares.

◆ *Go to 14*

374

You feel a sharp, stabbing pain in your lower leg, and look down to see a crossbow bolt lodged in your calf! (*Roll 1d8+3 and deduct the result from your hp as piercing damage. If you're still alive, continue reading below*). With a grimace of pain, you pull the bolt out, and looking up you see two rooftop snipers, on opposite buildings looking down on the alley. They appear to be loading new bolts.

- ◆ *To make a ranged attack on one of these snipers, go to 349.*
- ◆ *To turn and bolt out of the alleyway, go to 5.*

375

In the nick of time, you manage to throw yourself sideways, grabbing hold of the right edge of the pit that has opened up underneath you. You scramble out of the pitfall trap, heart pounding, and look down - it is at least a 10 ft drop, and there are items like discarded pieces of armour and a barrel, blasted to pieces, lying at the bottom. Quickly you skirt around the edge of the pit and make your way over to the chest. It is unlocked, and inside is nothing but sand.

Clearly this chest is bait to lure the unwitting into the pit trap.

There doesn't appear to be anything else in this room. You leave the room and continue north towards the bridge.

Go to 40.

376

You enter the large and spacious shop named *Sword In The Forge*, and are immediately struck by the peaceful atmosphere - something you've never encountered before in a weapons store. A dark-skinned young man holding a cat walks between customers, checking that their needs are taken care of, and a young woman, who could easily be his twin, paces lightly around, bringing customers their orders and engaging them in polite conversation.

You start perusing the wares and are struck by their high quality. The selection is vast, and the workmanship is outstanding.

"See anything that takes your fancy?" the young woman asks, coming near. "I'm Kelelan, I part-own this place... it's run as a co-operative of weaponsmiths, bowyers and finesmiths. There's dwarven work here, elvish, human, all sorts!"

You notice Kelelan talks with a thick accent that sounds nothing like the locals.

"I'm from Vaasa," she says with a smile, as if reading your thoughts. "My father moved us here some years ago... there's not much going on up those ways, not these days anyway. Just strife."

You nod appreciatively. "Could you show me through your stock?" you ask politely.

Sword in the Forge is an exceptionally well-stocked weapons shop. Browse the list below and purchase what you like.

(cont. over)

(See PHB p.149 for full stats on these weapons).

Handaxe (5gp)	1d6 slashing
Mace (5gp)	1d6 bludgeoning
Quarterstaff (2 sp)	1d6 bludgeoning
Spear (1 gp)	1d6 piercing
Shortbow (25 gp)	1d6 piercing
Battleaxe (10 gp)	1d8 slashing
Flail (10 gp)	1d8 bludgeoning
Glaive (20 gp)	1d10 slashing
Greataxe (30 gp)	1d12 slashing
Greataxe (50 gp)	2d6 slashing
Longsword (15 gp)	1d8 slashing
Maul (10 gp)	2d6 bludgeoning
Morningstar (15 gp)	1d8 piercing
Rapier (25 gp)	1d8 piercing
Scimitar (25 gp)	1d6 slashing
Shortsword (10 gp)	1d6 piercing
Warhammer (15 gp)	1d8 bludgeoning
Hand Crossbow (75 gp)	1d6 piercing
Longbow (50 gp)	1d8 piercing

The store also has a single suit of ring mail for 40 gp, a little more expensive, but it is an exceptional suit (AC 14).

As you are searching through and choosing your purchases, Kelelan leans in and says quietly. "You look like someone who knows their weapons. Would you like to have a look at what we have out back? There's a few special items." She gives you a coy little wink.

◆ *Go to entry 193*

377

You move down the corridor with bated breath.

Suddenly an unpleasant feeling overcomes you. A deep, dark despair threatens to overwhelm your soul...

◆ *Make a wisdom save, DC 14. If you are successful, go to 321.*

◆ *If you are unsuccessful go to 241.*

378

You make your way through the narrow streets of Zhentil Keep, on your way to your next destination.

Suddenly you hear a cry of alarm coming from ahead. You run towards the sound, which seems to be coming from the next street over. Ducking down an alleyway you emerge in a smaller lane that runs through the centre of the city block. The cries are coming from up ahead, and you are now close enough that you can make out words: "Help, I'm being attacked! Help, someone, please!"

You come to a stop at an alleyway entrance. Halfway down, a large, rat-like humanoid stabs at a cowering old man with a dagger, and gnashes at him with long, menacing teeth that drip with saliva.



And at the other end of the alley, a Zhentilar soldier, sword drawn, watches the whole thing!

(cont. over)

What do you do?

- ◆ *Yell at the soldier to help the poor old man? Go to 448.*
- ◆ *Help the old man by attacking the rat creature? Go to Dire Rat Overlord Combat Sheet.*
- ◆ *Ignore this unfortunate scene and continue to your next destination? Go to 236.*

379

You creep up the passageway to the north. After only a few minutes, you see a wooden door at the end of the passageway. Cautiously you move towards it. Moving up, you listen at the door... the only sound you hear, however, is a wet chomping noise.

“Chopper,” Zlug whispers to you. “His worg. Must be eating. Perhaps Grax is sleeping.”

You nod, and the three of you quickly formulate a plan to try and give you advantage in this combat.

You could cast the spell Pass Without Trace here, deducting a spell slot. If you choose to do so, take an automatic success on the following stealth check.

If you were seen by a bugbear in the pit room earlier, then make the following stealth check with disadvantage.

To see if you can creep through the door unnoticed, make a stealth check, DC 15. Take note of success or failure and then go to Grax Combat Sheet.

380

You approach the elves and attempt to engage them in conversation, but they look slightly suspicious of you.

Make a performance check, DC 11.

- ◆ *If you are successful, go to 421.*
- ◆ *If unsuccessful, go to 420.*

381

The crowd in The Scoundrel’s Tankard is quickly thinning, heading home. Soon there are only a few people left in the bar, talking quietly over pints of ale. Those who witnessed the pit bouts are filtering up from downstairs, loudly discussing the merits of various champions as they leave.

You realize that it grows late, and you’ll need to find somewhere to stay for the night.

- ◆ *Go to entry 6.*

382



Wondering at the stranger’s motives, you make your way slowly inside the main temple, the press of people tight.

Inside the temple it is dark; no windows show through to the interior and only the door you just passed through admits any light. Low chanting comes from somewhere and there are a hundred different conversations going on around you.



At the main altar, lined with row upon row of candles, you see a female priest offering a large smoking chalice to an image of what appears to be... a demon? Is that Bane up there? From what you’ve heard, Bane is a mortal man who ascended to the status of a god. Is this a town of demon worshippers?

- ◆ *To try to talk to a cleric, go to 289.*
- ◆ *To simply observe, go to 195.*
- ◆ *If you have done both of these, progress to 213.*

383

You try to discern this stranger's sincerity to the best of your ability, but his motives seem impenetrable to you.

- ◆ *Do you wish him to accompany you? If so, go to 134.*
- ◆ *If not, go to 140.*

384

You move as stealthily as you can down the passageway.

Roll a d20+3 with advantage.

- ◆ *If the result is higher than your AC, go to 481.*
- ◆ *If lower, go to 437.*

385

The rogue pouts, looking you up and down. "Yes, exemplary leader, indeed. Oh well, a good day to you, friend!"

And as quickly as he appeared, the rogue is gone.

- ◆ *Go to 44.*

386

You manage to get yourself out of the pit and look around. Quickly you check the chest that led you across the floor and find it full of nothing but sand. Wasting no more time, you turn and leave the room, continuing on to the bridge.

Go to 40.

387

You look around the floor you have emerged on. To the south is a writing desk with a chair. There is a bookshelf and cupboard to the east of the room, and to the west is a bed and a bedside table. The last thing you notice is a medium-sized chest.

(cont. over)

Salihn quickly approaches the chest, and gives it a thorough inspection without touching it.

"Probably booby-trapped," she says.

- ◆ *Kragor moves forward to check the chest for traps. If you simply allow him to do this, go to 203.*
- ◆ *To volunteer yourself for the job, go to 233.*

388

The drunken louts stop just short of killing you, leaving you grovelling on the ground, and spit on you as they walk to the bar.

"Welcome to Zhentil Keep!" one of them shouts at you.

The orc crawls over. "Thankyou for coming to my aid," he says, and struggles to help you to your feet, but he is in no shape to be helping anyone. Gradually you recover and help *him* into a chair, then you glance around the tavern and consider your next course of action.

- ◆ *Return to Map 5 / Map Entry 5 and choose another part of the tavern to investigate. Or you could leave and look for an inn, in which case go to entry 6.*

389

You exit the Zhentil Arms and slog through the city streets in the rain, your miserly self considering it worth saving a few gold!

- ◆ *Turn to entry 56*

390

You turn to Jamaunga, and express that you need to leave. He glares at you.

"Bloody coward!" he hisses, narrowing his eyes. "And here I thought you were some brave adventurer! Never mind, I'll manage on my own. Off you go then, craven."

Jamaunga turns his back to you and continues down the passage on his own.

Go to 212.

391

The crew seem totally convinced by your disguise - it was all in your head! You and Danadhir move casually up the deck towards the bow, sacks of grain over your shoulders. You plonk the sacks down near a stack of crates, and immediately see a nearby trapdoor, likely leading down to the lower decks. You move quickly to it, open it and lower yourselves down.

Go to entry 34.

392

"I will help," you say.
"There's no payment," says the dwarf. "I expect that'll seal the deal for ye."
You reply in the negative, and now the dwarf really is surprised.
"Well, friend, I hope you're serious, I really do... 'cos if you get Anika's hopes up, and then do a no-show on us... well, you'll have the Gods to answer to, I promise you that!"
The dwarf, whose name is Ganadhir Dorfolin, tells you where the slaves are being kept; in a large boat berthed at East Dock.
"There's only one jetty, so it's not hard to find. The local authorities, the Zhentilar and what have you, turn a blind eye. 'Spect they're paying them off somehow. Other people say it's the Zhentarim themselves doing the trafficking. I hear, through me contacts, that they're bringing more slaves from Teshwave by river tomorrow. They'll transfer 'em to the big boat and then set sail with the whole lot in a few days' time."
Dorfolin tells you to meet him in the large warehouse to the northeast of East Dock, tomorrow night, an hour before midnight.
"I'll have my nephew Danadhir along to help," Ganadhir whispers, which definitely sounds like a good idea from what you can see. "We'll plan our assault there," he adds, with a glint in his eye.

(cont. over)

You look over at Anika, and she gazes at you with cautious admiration.

- ◆ *To take part in this sidequest, note down the codeword Dockrescue. At the appropriate time, it will be activated. For now, continue to entry 381.*

393

You go back to the trapdoor. Seeing nothing else for it, you decide that one of you must ascend.

"There's no point in you doing it," Kragor says to Salihn. "It could be trapped. The whole reason we're here it to get back Elanil's wand, your mother's wand... if you die, the reason dies with you."
Salihn says nothing in response, but her eyes shine with gratitude at Kragor's assessment. Kragor sets his jaw. "This is my chance for redemption, sister, for all the horrible crimes I have committed." He turns and places his hands on the ladder, and begins ascending, one rung at a time.

- ◆ *Will you let him do it? If so, go to 447.*
- ◆ *If you volunteer yourself instead, go to 475.*

394

As you are attempting to disarm the mechanism, there is a quick, almost imperceptible movement from just below the lock, and then a short, whipping sound.

Make a dexterity save, DC 13.

- ◆ *If successful, go to 73.*
- ◆ *If unsuccessful, go to 165.*

395

You place your candle carefully on the altar, the marble covered in layer upon layer of wax from the candles of countless worshippers.

As you set your lit candle there, you feel a strange, dark energy come over you. You look up, and the face of Trickster Bane seems animated to you... as if he is regarding you, and you alone, with his dark eyes. You hear a voice in your head...

"Ah, you are a crafty one... you worship me merely to gain an advantage for yourself, nothing more... I like it... I am pleased..." You feel a strange sensation wash over you. The Dark Lord has awarded you a blessing. You may either: take 1 inspiration point / reserve an automatic success on a deception, sleight of hand, or persuasion roll / gain one unknown benefit (to be activated at a later time) represented by the codeword Redfield. If you choose the last option, note the codeword Redfield on your character sheet.

- ◆ After this, you return to the mass of worshippers. If you are still with the stranger, return to entry 134 and make another choice.
- ◆ Or if you are on your own, go to entry 382.

396

You go to take the handle, but Kragor stops you.

"Let me," he says, and grasps the handle himself, quickly, crying out in pain. "Aah! It burns!" He takes out his waterskin and pours some cold water over the injured hand. Salihn shakes her head. "I think we run through it. All together."

- ◆ Do you agree with this, and are you willing to try Salihn's plan? If so go to 319.
- ◆ If you would like to test the theory by putting your hand through the door, go to 293.

397

You hide yourself as best you can, pressing yourself hard against the wall nearest the door. Soon you hear something enter the room; something snuffles and grunts about, then abruptly stops, hoing silent - it has scented you.

The thing comes around the side of the pit, and then you see it plainly - a large, male bugbear. It gives a bark of alarm when it sees you, then turns and runs for the door. You

don't even have time to make a ranged attack! The thing is fast.

Do you want to give chase? Make another athletics check (DC 16, 17 if you are a halfling, dwarf or gnome) to escape the pit.

- ◆ If you are successful in 1-2 attempts you may give chase by going to 358.
- ◆ If it takes you more than 2 attempts to get clear of the pit, then the bugbear is too far away to pursue, but you do eventually get out of the pit. Go to 77.

398

Fodus moves the little circular gold object he holds in his hand, tilting it at different angles, shaking it and referring back to the large book that lies open before him. All the while he makes strange noises, muttering to himself. "Hmmm, yess..." "Intriguing..." "No... it can't be!"

"What is it?" you ask concernedly.

Fodus looks up at you, as if suddenly remembering your presence. "It is strange that you decided to come in here today, traveller... I have a feeling I am going to be telling my grandchildren about your visit in years to come."

Still nonplussed, you ask Fodus to elaborate. "The fortune says that you are a saviour of these lands... that soon, a stranger will approach you and ask you to take up a quest to rescue these lands from destruction. It says the stranger will be in the garb of a Zhentarim soldier." Then he lowers his voice. "The strangest thing..."

"What? What's strange?" you demand.

Fodus smiles slightly. "The fortune also says that... I don't understand this myself... it says 'Your destiny lies in the mouth of a skull.' I have no idea what this means." You thank Fodus for his time, and his reading, and leave his place of business.

Return to entry 12 without taking a progress point, and choose another merchant to visit.

399

The rogue looks you up and down. "Yes, there are many who say that," he says. "I would like to introduce you to my boss, Night Fingers. She may have a quest for you. What do you say? I can take you to her now."

- ◆ *To follow the rogue, go to 129.*
- ◆ *To refuse and quickly leave, go to 324.*
- ◆ *You can make an insight check if you wish, DC 15. If successful, go to 183.*
- ◆ *If not successful, go to 156.*

400

You take up your holy symbol and begin muttering a prayer censuring the undead. As you do so, the specter whips around and faces you, now alerted to your presence, and a hideous, howling sound issues from inside its shimmering helmet, which is adorned with large, black horns.

Roll a d20.

- ◆ *If the result is higher than your spell save DC, go to 323.*
- ◆ *If lower, go to 114.*

401

The words inscribed on the piece of wood read:

"The tyrant has stolen our magic... but it will be his undoing."

You puzzle over these words for some time. The tyrant... Manshoon? And 'our magic'... what in all the Realms does that mean? It is written in Undercommon too, was that significant? Who wrote it, and why, and how did it come to be in this ruined house?

You may add "piece of wood with writing" to your inventory if you wish. Then, you can either:

- ◆ *Investigate the temple ruin by going to 471.*
- ◆ *Or, you can return to Map 1 / Map Entry 1 and choose a new destination.*

402

Something makes you look up, and there, inverted on the ceiling, is a huge, dragon-like lizard! It appears to be dozing and hasn't noticed you. Salihn puts her finger on her lips to signal quiet.

Carefully, you move through the room and towards the staircase without a sound.
Go to entry 67.

403

Wendal says that he can probably manage about 75 gold for you, but the rest he simply must keep as capital to purchase his next lot of stock. He actually has a smile on his face now at the prospect of you helping him with his problems, and he embraces you warmly. *If you change your mind and decide to offer your services to him free of charge, go to 416.* "So nice to meet someone from outside of Zhentil Keep," he says. "You've convinced me now... at the end of this year, I'm selling up and moving to Loudwater, or Melvaunt perhaps. I've had enough of this place!" Wendal gives you directions to his place of business and asks you to meet him there three hours after close of business tomorrow night. Right now he is incapable of anything other than staggering home and falling into bed! *Note the codeword Helpwendal on your character sheet. At the appropriate time it will be activated. In the meantime, proceed to entry 221.*

404

You massage your hand. It is slightly burnt, the fine hairs singed off. That is actual fire there, no doubt, but if you are quick enough getting through it, you could probably avoid too much damage.

Seeing no other option, you realize Salihn's plan is the only way forward.
Go to 319.

405

Is Jamaunga still alive, and did he win the fight? (If the fight between Jamaunga and the specter is not yet resolved, resolve it).

- ◆ *If Jamaunga beat the specter but you are down, go to 478.*
- ◆ *If you did not meet Jamaunga, or if you were both defeated, then go to 406.*

406

The specter drains the last of your life from your body, and you feel blackness closing in. You have fought well, brave adventurer, and died trying to free these poor souls from a fate worse than death. Count yourself lucky that you were not spared, doomed to an eternity of bondage to an undead spirit! Now roll up a new PC and give this adventure another try! No doubt there is much that you have not yet explored. Thank you for playing *Tyrant of Zhentil Keep*.

407

If you reduced Kromm to 0 hp, you knew to stop short as this fight was not to the death. Kromm Daggerfist is lying on the ground, panting heavily. "Well met, sir!" he croaks, absolutely spent.

The referee comes forward with a pouch of gold for you, 150 pieces of it. He grabs your hand and thrusts it into the air, and your victory is met with a rousing roar of approval. With a nod to Kromm, and to the crowd, you leave the ring to the cheers of your newfound adoring fans!

Not eager to attract too much attention, you quickly climb the stairs and head back up to the bar area.

- ◆ *Go to entry 381*

408

You ask the dejected halfling why he is so miserable. Through a thick drunken haze he peers up at you, as if struggling to understand.

"Why am I so sad?" he replies. "I'm ruined, my friend. Absolutely ruined, my business in tatters!"

You sit yourself down and question him further. Slowly you manage to coax the full story out of him.

The halfling, whose name is Wendal Wheatfields, runs *Wendal's Essential Victuals*, selling meats, vegetables, dry grains and other items to various hospitality establishments across Zhentil Keep. "I keep the whole city fed!" he boasts at one point. But Wendal tells you that thieves have been pilfering his goods for some weeks now.



"At first it was just a sack of grain here, a crate of potatoes there... but lately they've been taking more and more... and just last night, they cleaned me out completely! Everything gone! I have the capital to restock my inventory, but I can't go on like this!"

You discover from Wendal that he keeps all his goods in a cellar, selling from his shopfront upstairs. Customers walk in off the street, and the doors are triple-locked every night. There were never any signs of forced entry, which led Wendal to think that someone was could be using magic to teleport in. But he soon dismissed that idea.

"Teleporting in to steal potatoes and flour?" Wendal scoffs. "Why would anyone bother, when there's a bank two doors down?"

Wendal takes a long swig of whisky. "Then I found it," he says, turning to meet your gaze as he wipes his mouth with the back of his hand, now very drunk. "Or rather, my friend Ortner found it."

"Found what?" you ask.

"A secret tunnel, leading down. Stairs beyond." He pauses, shaking his head. "Who knows what's down there?! Thugs most likely, stealing from my storeroom and reselling it on the black market."

You ask him if he had informed the city guard.

Wendal laughs. "The Zhentilar?" he laughs derisively. "They're no help, especially not to a small-timer like me. Didn't you know that Bane is the god in this city? No, friend, kindness is in short supply around here, I'm afraid. And I can't afford mercenaries, so that's me done I'm afraid." He takes another long swig of whisky, nearly draining the bottle this time!

You can't help but pity this poor little fellow. And you also can't help thinking that, depending on what is down those stairs, this is possibly something you could help him out with.

- ◆ *To offer your help with Wendal's problem, go to 81.*
- ◆ *To give Wendal a consoling pat on the back and then leave to continue searching for an inn, go to 221.*

409

You hear a scream, and spin around to see a huge lizard which has fallen on Salihn. She is on the ground and it is attacking her!

"Help!" she shouts, "It's a stone drake, don't let it take me!"

Go to Stone Drake Combat Sheet. The drake gets one free attack, with advantage, on Salihn, who also takes 1d6 damage from the lizard landing on her. Then roll initiative.

410

Jamaunga departs with the specter's captives, but simply rescuing these poor souls is not enough for you; you want to end the specter's reign of terror. You move to the back wall where the specter entered and hold your weapon at the ready, waiting.

Soon you see it emerge and move straight into the centre of the chamber. It only takes a second for it to realize it has been deprived of its quarry, and it searches the room for any sign...

Make a stealth check, DC 12. If successful, you may make one ranged or melee attack on the specter. Then go to Abyssal Specter Combat Sheet and proceed with combat as per instructions.

411

Eventually the blacksmith returns, resuming his conversation with you as he takes up his tools.

"So, what can I interest you in? New weapon? Any other item?"

The blacksmith will forge one new weapon from the PHB (p.149) as long as its not too detailed, for 20 gp.

As the blacksmith works, he chats away, glad for your company. He also directs you to help yourself from a table where bread, cheese and a small keg of black stout are on offer.

You may restore 2 hp from this small meal, and then you continue on your way. Return to Map 1 / Map Entry 1 and continue to your chosen destination.

412

"Shall we try the stairs?" Salihn asks. You and Kragor look at each other, considering this question. It is eerily quiet in here.

Roll a d6.

- ◆ *If you score 1-2 go to 463.*
- ◆ *If you score 3-4 go to 196.*
- ◆ *If you score 5-6 go to 409.*

413

Erase the word Wandquest from your character sheet.

Salihn's words come back to you: meet us at the east bridge, four hours after dusk. You stay in your room for a few hours, resting. *(Recover hp from this short rest as per normal rules).*

Noting the time, you make your way quickly towards the east bridge, keeping your head low. You reach the east bridge, near the docks, and see townsfolk headed north or south over it, on their way home, but no sign of either Salihn or her assassin friend.

You are just about to give up when you hear a whisper behind you. "Outlander! Over here"

You turn and see Salihn's friend, the assassin, beckoning to you from a nearby alleyway, and you quickly go to him. Salihn is waiting there in the alleyway. Salihn produces a large bottle half-filled with a swirling purple liquid, which you recognize instantly as healing potion.

"Need any of this stuff?" she asks. "There's still enough for two doses."

When you ask how she came by such a large bottle, Salihn laughs. "I'm from Elventree. Lots of people make potions there. This stuff is as common as mead where I come from!" *Restore hp from the two draughts of healing potion (4d4+4 hp).*

Salihn informs you, "Fzoul's tower is near the Black Altar, a bit of a walk from here but not too far. We wait 'till night has completely fallen, then we will enter. There are three floors, we know that much, and I suspect the Wand is being kept on the top floor. I need to let you know now - there is a high chance we could die. Fzoul is very powerful, and even if he is not home, there are rumours that Fzoul has some beast guarding his tower which we will have to get past. Are you still with us, outlander?" *(cont. over)*

Well, are you?

◆ *If so, go to 216.*

◆ *If you think this might be a bit beyond you, then you return to the inn, leaving Salihn and her friend to do the job themselves. Go to 485.*

414

Salihn is taken aback by your offer of assistance. "Well I won't say no... we could be killed, you know. And I don't have anything to pay you with. But you will be keeping power out of the hands of Manshoon, so that's something."

"Think on it," Salihn says. "If you still want to help, meet us at the East Bridge, north end. Four hours after dusk."

If you still want to help Salihn achieve her goals, take note of the codeword Wandquest. At the appropriate time, it will be activated. For now, return to 53 and choose another option.

415

Inside you find a huge warehouse space, half-filled with wooden crates of all sizes.

From the far side of the cavernous building you hear lowered voices, and you proceed cautiously, keeping a watch on all sides, following the voices. Gradually they get louder, until you can tell that the speakers must be close.

You round a corner, and there is Ganadhir leaning on a crutch, accompanied by a much younger-looking dwarf.

"... told me that we would meet - ah!"

Ganadhir catches sight of you and gets a bit of a fright, nearly falling over. You glance down and see that although his leg is missing, he still carries a shortsword and handaxe, and don't doubt that the old veteran could give most comers a pretty good run for their money.

"Outlander, meet my nephew, Danadhir, son of Baladhir."

The younger, red-bearded dwarf steps forward, proffering a thick, meaty hand.

"Pleasure," he says gruffly. Danadhir is thick-shouldered and carries an ornate battle axe across his back. As he comes near you see the grip and pommel are inscribed with dwarvish runes. With arms like thick tree boughs, you have no doubt he wields it well. The three of you go to a grimy window that looks out over the East Dock. Keeping his voice low, Ganadhir tells you the following: "See that ship there? Called the *Mulmaster Pride*. Looks like a logging ship, doesn't it?" You look closer and see that the deck is stacked with logs and crates. From the outside at least, it looks like any ordinary freight vessel, and you express as much to the old dwarf. He shakes his head.

"It's a slaver's ship," he says flatly.

"Zhentarim. Marsh Belwintle, the Zhentarim Slave Lord, he does a steady trade in slaves of all races, all round this area. Been operating for years, with Manshoon's blessing. Anyway, the wee lass we've come here to save, she's below decks. And there's others too. Children, men, women... whatever the customers want."

You scowl at this, and restate your desire to help free these slaves, thinking to yourself that whoever is responsible for this must be made to pay, and dearly. You ask Ganadhir what his plan is.

"Well," he says, "We could go the Dwarvish route and simply hack our way in and out, but I feel a little strategy might not go amiss here."

Danadhir looks a bit deflated at this. "But uncle-

"Hush, boy!" Ganadhir snaps, and Danadhir does just that.

"The way I see it," the veteran continues, "there are two ways we could proceed here. See those workers?" he indicates. "The two of you could both join them, in disguise, but you'd have to leave weapons and armour here." Ganadhir gestures to his shortsword. "Use this if you like. Easily concealable, on your pants leg. Then, you find some way to

get aboard, get beneath decks and free those prisoners."

"What's the other option?" Danadhir asks, not looking too thrilled about the prospect of giving up his precious battleaxe.

"The other option is this. See the crates there, getting loaded aboard?"

You and Danadhir both nod. Outside, there are stacks of crates getting loaded on-board the cargo ship.

"One of you could fit inside one of these smaller crates," Ganadhir continues, gesturing to a stack of boxes nearby, in the warehouse. "No prizes for guessing who," he adds, raising an eyebrow at his nephew.

"Then you, outlander, will take the on one of those loading trolleys, and get it aboard somehow. Say it's for the captain or something. Take it to the back, then crack it open and get below decks quickly. You'll be found out eventually of course, but the more time you go undiscovered the better. Hence the need for subterfuge."

You nod appreciatively at the old dwarf's plans. He's done this sort of thing before, it would seem.

"What if we are discovered before we free the girl?" Danadhir asks.

"Then hack your way out," Ganadhir says bluntly, and Danadhir beams at this prospect.

"But do not leave that ship without Anika's girl. I am not going to her with that news."

"Never fear, Uncle, we'll get her back!"

Danadhir says, then turns to you. "I like the second plan better," he says directly. "The one where I get to keep my battleaxe."

You nod, and the magnitude of your task becomes apparent; returning a young girl to her mother. And if you can free others in the process, all the better.

Now comes the choice: which plan of Ganadhir's are you going with?

◆ *Keep Danadhir happy by going with the plan involving the crate? Go to 449.*

◆ *Or do you think disguising yourselves as workers might be a better idea? Go to 477.*

416

(Take one inspiration point for your kindness).

Wendal's jaw drops at your offer to investigate his problem for free.

"Sent by the Gods, you are," he marvels in a hushed voice. "I knew one day my luck would turn, I just knew it!" He offers you the last of his whisky, and together you toast the mission ahead.

Wendal tells you he is far too drunk now to do anything but stagger home and fall into bed, but he gives you directions to his place of business and tells you to come there tomorrow night, three hours after the close of business.

*Note the codeword **Helpwendal** on your character sheet, and then you really must find an inn, which you can do by going to 221. At the appropriate time, this codeword will be activated and you will be able to undertake this sidequest.*

417

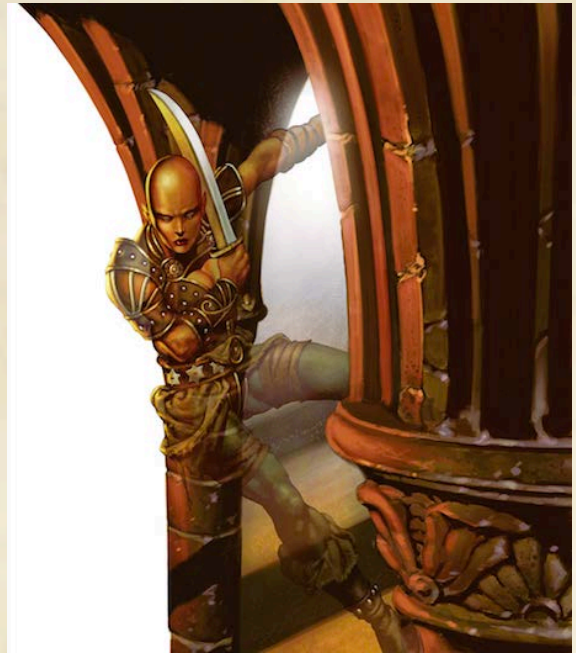
You can't tell anything about the strange figure on the bridge, even whether they are male or female. You move from your position and walk around a bit, browsing the wares of a nearby vendor. But every time you glance up, the figure on the bridge is still there, not moving. Are they watching you? You can't tell. They are staring east, down the River Tesh, but their face is covered by a deep hood. As people pass on the bridge, they completely ignore the presence of the figure, as if they are not even there.

- ◆ *To leave the area quickly, go to 85.*
- ◆ *To approach the figure on the bridge, go to 444.*

418

You become aware of a presence nearby... a creature, shadowing you. At first you are not even sure how you are aware of this, but then you see movement... on the upper part of a pillar, just ahead, you see a creature, climbing, a dagger in its grip... It blinks at

you, a look of anger on its face at having been spotted. And then, as quickly as it appeared, it is gone again.



You will not be able to make a ranged attack as the creature has slipped out of sight.

- ◆ *To quicken your pace, go to 137.*
- ◆ *To continue walking as normal, go to 256.*
- ◆ *To cast **Invisibility** on yourself, go to 49.*
- ◆ *To try and pursue the creature, go to 52.*
- ◆ *If you are a ranger and wish to use your tracking abilities, go to 300.*

419

You tiptoe up behind the bugbear as he moves along the chain gang.

Roll stealth, DC 11.

If successful, go to Bugbear Enforcer Combat Sheet and make one surprise attack with advantage, then begin combat as normal.

If unsuccessful, then the bugbear notices your approach and spins around to face you, raising his battleaxe and roaring with rage.

Go to Bugbear Enforcer Combat Sheet.

420

Despite your best efforts, these elves do not seem interested in talking to you. You try for

a while but eventually give up, leaving them to their worship.

Return to 53 and choose another option.

421

The elves, one female and one male, engage you in conversation. They don't appear to know much that is useful to you, but are certainly friendly enough. The female elf introduces herself as Salihn. She tells you that the main elven settlement in the Moonsea area is Elventree, which is near the forest of Cormanthor. Both these elves are from there. Myth Drannor is also nearby, and there are many elves within the ranks of the Knights of Myth Drannor, who are, according to these two, "The Moonsea's best hope of freedom."

You notice the Salihn says this last statement with quite some amount of passion.

- ◆ *You could ask her what she is specifically doing here in Zhentil Keep. Go to 462.*
- ◆ *Or, you thank them for the conversation and then leave them be. Return to 53 and choose another option.*

422

The little goblin looks up, a glint in his eyes. He seems pleased to have been directly spoken to.

"Come closer!" he whispers in a scratchy, high-pitched rasp. You crouch down next to him. The little bowl he is working with contains a fine yellow powder.

"Seen this before?" he asks in a mysterious tone. "Fire powder! That's why the human named Dillon Doren keeps Krug here... the fire powder makes his forge burn hotter than any other in Zhentil Keep! But he does not know the mysteries of creating it... Only Krug knows. Only my race, the fire goblins, only they know. Watch."

Krug the goblin takes a small pinch of the fire powder and stands, moving over to the forge. With a flourish, he casts it into the fire. There is a small explosion, and you feel a wave of heat surge forth from the glowing

forge, so much so that you have to step back a couple of feet!

The goblin turns, smiling. "See! Good stuff, eh?"

You nod. "It is good stuff. You're very talented!"

Krug nods, holding your gaze for a moment. "Krug likes you," he says. "Krug will sell you some fire powder, if you wish. 30 gold pieces for a small pouch. Quickly now, before the human named Dillon Doren returns!"

If you decide to purchase some fire powder from Krug, do so now! He pours the contents of the bowl into a small pouch and gives it to you, giggling as he takes your gold, which he stashes out of sight. Add fire powder to your inventory.

Then go to entry 411.

423

"What are the Zhentarim?" the orc say, repeating your question. "Spies. Cutthroats. Footpads. Manshoon's personal elite of mages and warriors, that do his bidding, no matter how dark the deed. About a hundred years ago, he founded them, the Zhentarim, the Black Network. Their existence remained secret for a long time, but the idea was that they would support Manshoon in his rule over Zhentil Keep, and his designs over the Moonsea, after Zhentar was assassinated. The only ones more powerful are the Harpers."

The orc takes a breath, and lowers her voice, as if imparting a great secret. "They have one goal, the Zhentarim, Manshoon's goal... and that is to control trade. All trade. They are slavers too, drug dealers, poison sellers, killers for hire. Anything illicit that goes on in the Moonsea, Manshoon has a hand in, through his Black Network. He is a slippery one, that Manshoon. He'll court the favour of all the lords, kings, rulers, and then at the last moment will slit their throat from behind." The orc smiles deviously, lowering her voice to a whisper. "He is powerful, make no mistake, but he hides his power

carefully. Some have reckoned he is hundreds of years old, that he regenerates himself every few decades. Some have said that this Manshoon is merely a clone of the first Manshoon, that he has done this many times. But only the Inner Circle knows the real truth in this matter."

The orc stands and begins straightening her clothes, checking her weapon, preparing to depart. "So, who are the Zhentarim? To answer that you must know who Manshoon is, and no one really knows the answer to that question. And now, traveller, I must depart. I thank you for rescuing me... who knows what those guards would have done to me!"

The orc stands, and looking around quickly, sets off at a run, leaving you alone in the alleyway.

- ◆ *It is night, and you realize that you must find a place to sleep for the evening. Go to entry 6.*

424

Quickly as you can, you leave the riverfront area and make your way in amongst the newly-constructed buildings of South Zhentil Keep. Walking at first, then breaking into a run, you weave your way through empty streets and throughfares. Eventually you find yourself in an alleyway, bordered left and right by two-storey buildings.

- ◆ *Roll a d20+5. If the result is higher than your AC, go to 374.*
- ◆ *If lower, go to 341.*

425

You freeze. On the left rail of the ladder, slightly above your head, a small, intricate rune has been carved within a circle.

A glyph.

"There's a glyph here!" you announce.

Salihn immediately comes forward and takes a moment to focus on the glyph, muttering some incantation as she moves her hands slightly. "Magic," she says finally. "Could be deadly."

You nod, and descend the ladder carefully. Salihn backs away, then raises her hands and closes her eyes. Arcing fire shoots from her hands, burning a section of the ladder away, the part that held the glyph. Then she ceases the flame, and the fire quickly puts itself out. All three of you ascend the partially burnt ladder now, pushing open the trapdoor at the top.

Go to 387.

426

The rogue regards you calmly.

"Zhentarim?" he shoots back. "I have a piece of advice for you, friend – never go out of your way to meet them. What's your interest?"

"Oh none really," you reply. "It's just a name I'd heard a few times since being here." "Hm," the rogue says quietly, looking suspicious. "How do I know *you're* not an agent of the Black Network, then?" he asks. "Trying to catch me out, eh?"

- ◆ *To assure him you are not, go to 20.*
- ◆ *To turn and depart, go to 324.*

427

Inside the chest, lying on top of a pile of folded cloth, is a gnarled, arcane-looking piece of wood.

Tears streaming down her face, Salihn picks the wand up and cradles it to her breast.

"I have it," she says quietly, more to herself than you or Kragor. "I have it, mother." Kragor puts a hand on her shoulder. "This is no time for sentiment. We should leave. Now."

As Salihn savours this moment, you quickly search the rest of the chest. You find a pouch containing 80 gp, and a jewel-encrusted dagger which looks enchanted. (*Dagger +2*). The others don't seem interested in this loot (tainted by association perhaps?) so you stash it in your bag.

(Did you read a letter in Annaya's apartment? If so, take a brief detour to entry 443 and then return here)

Wasting no more time, you descend the tower quickly, and all three of you are quickly back outside and running for the gate. The mission has gone well, and within moments you are back out on the streets of Zhentil Keep. The three of you duck into an alleyway.

"Thank you, outlander," Salihn says, embracing you. "You cannot know the value of your assistance. We have thrown one more barrier in the path of the Black Network. Go well, friend."

You nod, and watch Salihn and Kragor disappear down the end of the alleyway. Waiting a little while longer, you emerge from the alley yourself and return to your inn.

The innkeeper greets you warmly, and you return to your room, eager for some rest.
Go to entry 51.

428

You feel something on the back of your neck, no more than a breath of air.

Quickly whipping around, you draw your weapon and reflexively lash out at whatever presence is behind you, but too late... whatever you felt is gone.

Weird question: Does your character have hair?

- ◆ *If yes, go to 351.*
- ◆ *If your character is hairless, go to 24.*

429

The rogue looks at you with a startled expression, then looks away, considering your question for a long moment. "Where are you from, stranger?" he asks coolly.

Realizing that it's unlikely you'd be able to fool him into thinking you're a local, you go with the truth instead, telling him where you're from. Not *exactly* where you're from, but the general area. Can't be too careful.

Finally he turns, setting down the trinket he had been making a show of examining. "Who do we answer to, indeed." He shakes

his head. "A word of advice, friend. Asking questions like that around here is liable to get you killed." He holds your gaze a moment longer than is comfortable, then adds, "That was free. You won't get a second warning." Then, without any ceremony, he turns and walks off, leaving you to ponder his answer.
You are in Market Square. Go to 44.

430

You leave the passage and return to the junction, taking the passage heading east.
Go to 331.

431

You shake your head, telling yourself there is some sort of charm or dark magic inherent in this place, and force yourself to think of happier times. It seems to work: slowly the despair subsides and you are back to your normal, determined self.

Looking left and right, you see that the exits open into empty rooms. These rooms seem completely bare, apart from a little moss and some rubble littering the floor. Ahead, there are two more exits to the north and south, and beyond that the corridor ends.

- ◆ *If you would like to check out the nearest rooms, to the north and south, go to 251.*
- ◆ *If you would like to continue down to the next set of exits, go to 244.*

432

The little girl giggles. "I was hoping you would say that!" she says, and waves a hand, uttering an incantation.

All of a sudden you feel your form changing, as if your body is being sucked out of reality itself, and space starts whooshing past your eyes. Your vision concentrates on the lock of the little box the girl is holding, and you feel yourself travelling towards it with pin-point accuracy, the entirety of your being squeezing itself through that small opening. Everything goes black, for just a moment.

Go to Map 8.
(cont. over)

You awake in a a spacious room with stone doors at the far end. Through the doors you can see a table, which has something small on it, right at its centre. There is another table before you also, and on this table are three jars, each bearing a label bearing a word. Looking closer, you see that the jars contain dust or powder of some sort. Each jar contains a different coloured dust. You remember the little girl's words: *It's a challenge. If you pass, you can get an enchanted ring. But you only get one chance to pass. One chance.*

But what exactly is this challenge?

What is your next course of action?

- ◆ *Explore the room more thoroughly? Go to 113.*
- ◆ *Go and look at the other table, on the other side of the stone doors? 191.*

433

You approach the shifty-looking man who moves around the wyrmling's cages. "Afternoon, friend," he greets you in a simpering tone. "We have all sorts of dragon-related products here... dragon's bane, in liquid and powdered form, as well as powdered dragon tooth, dragon scale clothing, dragon's blood... what can I interest you in?"
(*cont. over*)



Obviously as a wandering adventurer it's not practical for you to purchase and care for a wyrmling dragon, but other products are available from this devious dealer in everything draconic.

- ◆ *To ask about the dragon's bane, go to 96.*
- ◆ *If you are interested in dragon's blood (a known poison), go to 36.*
- ◆ *If you want to know more about powdered dragon tooth, go to 286.*
- ◆ *To condemn the shopkeeper for his poor ethics, go do 23.*
- ◆ *If you are done here and wish to move on, go to 211.*

434

You feel a blade slice into your back, and a voice of malice hiss in your ear. "That will teach you to be too trusting, outlander. No one crosses the Devil Worms and escapes alive! We are Manshoon's ears, eyes, hands... he can never be defeated, never!"

Take 1d8+4 piercing damage, and then make a DC 12 constitution save, taking 2d6 poison damage from this cowardly attack or half as much on a successful save. If you are still alive, go to Devil Worm Combat Sheet.

435

You find no traps that you can see, and move to the lock mechanism, preparing to disarm it.

But as soon as you touch the lock, there is a tiny movement from underneath the lock mechanism, accompanied by a short, whipping sound.

Make a dexterity save, DC 13.

- ◆ *If successful, go to 73.*
- ◆ *If unsuccessful, go to 165.*

436

You and Danadhir walk as casually as you can towards the bow of the *Mulmaster Pride*, sacks slung over your shoulders.

Suddenly you hear a shout from behind.

"Hey! You two! Come over here!" a rough voice bellows.

"Run!" Danadhir exclaims. Without seeing who it belongs to, you both drop your sacks and dash to a nearby ladder, quickly descending to the between-decks.

Go to Zhentarim Slaver Combat Sheet.

437

You hear a sound from behind you, and turn just in time to see a hideous floating specter, its top half covered in armour, its head encased in a plated helmet bearing long, curving horns, which you manage to parry away as the specter charges you like a bull!

Go to Abyssal Specter Combat Sheet, using the "Location 2" settings.

438

If you do not wish to accept this quest from the Knights of Myth Drannor, then your time here is done! This is a two-part adventure, so the next progression for you will be Book 4 in this series if you do not wish to accept the quest to find the secret tunnels within the Dragonspines. Thank you for playing *Tyrant of Zhentil Keep*, until next time!

Otherwise you could reconsider your decision by returning to entry 120.

439

"What brings me here?" she asks. "That, you are perhaps better off not knowing. Besides, I've only just met you. How do I know I can trust you?"

She makes to go but you take hold of her arm. "Tell me," you say, holding her gaze. "You can trust me."

She looks down at your hand, then up at your face. Something about your expression

must resonate with her. She nods, and shakes your grip off.

"Very well," she says. "My name is Salihn Ellassidil, and I come on a mission from Elventree, on the south shore of the Moonsea." She pauses here, sighing. "My mother is the Warden of Elventree, and her name is Elanil Ellassidil. Even though we are peaceful folk, still we are not hidden enough to escape the prying eyes of the powers that be.

"Fzoul Chembryl, High Priest of Bane, came to Elventree some weeks ago, looking to court my mother's favour, to see if the elves there would back Manshoon if ever a war was to come... She denied him, saying that the elves there wanted no part of Manshoon's plans. So he left, seemingly accepting her decision.

"But later on that night he had one of his minions, a Zhentarim spy, creep in and steal a precious artifact... The Wand of the Elven Mage. This is a treasured wand that has been in the Ellassidil family for generations, and is very powerful. He means to use it in some war that is coming, and by doing so will stain our family's legacy for ever. And so, I am here to retrieve it. And one of the men you played dice with... he is here to help me as well. He is a master assassin. We are going to break into the Fzoul's tower and retrieve the Wand."

◆ *To offer your help in Salihn's quest, go to 159*

◆ *Otherwise you wish her all luck and go on your way. Go to 381*

440

You ignore the ring and carry on.

To continue on to your next destination within Zhentil Keep, go to Map 1 / Map Entry 1 and find the relevant destination entry.

441

Brazenly you stand in the centre of the pit, awaiting whatever creature might present itself at the door.

You don't have to wait long.

Through the door runs a large bugbear, and you brace yourself to attack.. but the thing takes one look at you, mutters something to itself, then turns and runs from the room, turning left as it enters the passageway.

Do you want to give chase? Make another athletics check athletics check (DC 16, or 17 if you are a halfling, dwarf or gnome).

- ◆ *If you are successful you may give chase by going to 358.*
- ◆ *If it takes you more than 2 attempts to get clear of the pit, then the bugbear is too far away to pursue, but you do eventually get out of the pit. Go to 77.*

442

Very quietly so as not to attract any attention from the docks, you knock on the wooden door.

You wait a few minutes, but no one answers. *Go to entry 473.*

443

As per the clue given in the love letter from Fzoul to Annaya, you move to the bookshelf and look for the tome entitled *Memoirs of Tertius Realmwanderer*. You quickly find it, and tip it upside down. From inside the hollow spine, a small corked vial slides out containing a pink liquid. Around it is wrapped a label bearing tiny, intricate writing: "Philter of Love: whomsoever consumes this liquid shall fall in love with the next creature they see, for a short while."

Chuckling to yourself at the possibilities, you slip this into your pocket.

Return to entry 387 and continue from where you left off reading.

444

Casually, you move onto the bridge and begin walking at a moderate pace towards the middle of the bridge, as if you simply mean to return to the North City. Out of your peripheral vision, you keep one eye on the figure on the bridge. Now that you are closer you can see that whoever stands there is draped in a voluminous robe that conceals not only their face, but also the shape of their body. You continue to walk, but then when you are right beside them, you suddenly turn and move to tap them on the shoulder... But the robe crumples under your hand! Whatever or whoever was holding it up is now gone!

You look around, but all you can see are cityfolk strolling across the bridge, merchants pushing carts. It's as if the whole incident was only visible to you and you alone!

Who or what was this figure?

- ◆ *Make a history roll, DC 15. If you are successful, go to 164.*
- ◆ *If unsuccessful, you are unable to make sense of what you have just seen. Return to Map 1 / Map Entry 1 and choose your destination*

445

The female elf gives you a smile. "Oh well. Can't win them all, as they say!"

Cursing your bad luck, you pick up your belongings and stand, walking away from the table.

- ◆ *Go to 381.*
- ◆ *Or, if you wish to try and talk to the elf, go to 474.*

446

"Manshoon's spies?" he repeats quietly, almost incredulously. "Yes, of course..." the cleric glances around, his eyes moving this way and that, then finally settling on you. "I thought that's what you meant." He leans in and lowers his voice to a whisper, looking around with cautious eyes. "Actually... it's better if we talk about this somewhere..."

more quiet." He puts his hand on the door that leads through to the Cloister. "Follow me?" He opens the door slightly and motions for you to follow him.

- ◆ *To follow him through the door, go to 127.*
- ◆ *To refuse and move back into the crowd, go to 285.*
- ◆ *You can do an insight check on him. DC 18. If you succeed, go to 184. If your check is unsuccessful, go to 115.*
- ◆ *To cast **Detect Thoughts** on this Cleric, go to 451.*

447

Kragor moves up the ladder, placing hand over hand. He is almost at the top when his arm is thrown back, and a bolt of pure white lightning flashes out from the ladder itself, shuddering his body as white hot energy slams into his chest.

"No!" Salihn yells, running forward. Kragor lets go of the ladder and falls backwards, slumping to the floor.

Wasting no time, Salihn makes invocations over the fallen rogue's body. You watch as Kragor's wound closes over and his eyes flicker open. A few minutes later he is up again.

"Kragor triggered a glyph," Salihn says. "It should be safe now. Let's get this done." You all move to the ladder, preparing to ascend to the trapdoor. You take the lead. You step onto the ladder and place one hand over the other, scaling till you reach the trapdoor. With one almighty push, the trapdoor swings upwards and open, and you climb up and emerge on the floor above. *Go to 387.*

448

"Hey!" you shout at the Zhentilar soldier. "You're the city guard! Help this citizen!" "And get in the way of those teeth?" the Zhentilar scoffs. "No chance!"

The old man continues to plead with both of you to help him.

What next?

- ◆ *To draw your weapon and attack, go to 302.*
- ◆ *To give up on this hopeless situation and move on, go to 236.*

449

The three of you move to a nearby stack of small crates. Danadhir enthusiastically grabs a nearby crowbar and pries the top off one of them. It is empty apart from packing straw, and the stocky dwarf climbs in, giving his battleaxe a quick pat to check that it's there before motioning for you to shut the lid. You throw your weapons and armour in there first, then put the lid on and secure it with just two nails, banging them in with the pommel of Ganadhir's basic shortsword. Loading it onto a trolley, you wheel it to a door that opens onto the dock.

"Go with the gods, outlander," Ganadhir says, and then pulls the door open for you. It is a simple matter to blend in with the general traffic on the docks, and no-one gives you a second look as you wind your way towards the gangplank, pulling the loaded trolley behind you.

A large man, possibly the quartermaster, stops you as you go to ascend the ramp up towards the ship's top deck.

"What's in there?" he asks, giving the crate a look over.

"Provisions," you say in your best Zhentil accent. "Captain's supplies."

The man backs away, putting his hands up.

"All right, don't want to keep the captain from his rum. On ya get, matey."

You drag the trolley up the gangplank. On deck it is a lot quieter - only three or four

crew are present, most of them busy with their duties.

You walk the crate to the front of the boat where other crates are stacked, and quickly get the lid off. Danadhir stands, stretching his back, then vaults over the side of the crate, surprisingly agile for a dwarf. You retrieve your weapons and armour from the bottom of the crate and quickly don them. "Hurry, hurry!" Danadhir urges as you pull your armour on.

Nearby is a square trapdoor, likely leading down to the lower decks. You move quickly to it, open it and lower yourselves down. *Go to entry 34.*

450

Somehow, by the grace of the Gods, you have defeated the Shield Guardians!

You stride forward and claim the ring. As you do so, you feel yourself dematerializing, being sucked into a void. You blink your eyes and there you are inside Melhuish's Magical Curiosities once more. The little girl is gone, replaced by a full-grown human wizard.

"I have no idea how you did that, but you deserve that prize. Gods, do you know how long it took to make those Shield Guardians?" He sighs. "Anyway, what you have there in your hand is a Ring of Resistance."

Roll a d10 to find out what gem the ring holds, and hence what type of damage it will grant you resistance against:
(cont. over)



- 1: Pearl (Acid)
- 2: Tourmaline (Cold)
- 3: Garnet (Fire)
- 4: Sapphire (Force)
- 5: Citrine (Lightning)
- 6: Jet (Necrotic)
- 7: Amethyst (Poison)
- 8: Jade (Psychic)
- 9: Topaz (Radiant)
- 10: Spinel (Thunder)

Then, you may purchase any other items from the entry 232. After that, you leave the shop. Return to entry 12 (without taking another progress point) and choose another option.

451

Hidden from view, you produce the copper piece and begin the incantation under your breath. But there's no fooling this one. "A mage, eh?" the cleric sneers. "You're a crafty one aren't you!"

It doesn't take long to gain entry to the cleric's thoughts, and it's obvious that he definitely means you harm if you follow him through this door. The exact nature of what kind of harm is unclear though.

- ◆ *Do you wish to probe deeper? If so go to 290*
- ◆ *If not, you return to the crowd. If you are with Rynmor, go to 134 and choose another option.*
- ◆ *If you are alone, go to 382 and choose another option.*

452

You run out after the man with the green dragon on his shoulder, eager to find out more.

"Wait," you call out to him. You catch up with him just as he turns into a dark, covered alleyway. He turns and regards you. "Yes?" "What was that all about?" you ask. "How did that man get hold of those dragons, and who is he selling them to?"

The man looks you up and down, petting his newly acquired green wyrmling as he does so.



"Poachers is who he gets them from," he says. "There is a lucrative market in it, here in Zhentil Keep at least. Do you know the Dragonspines?"

From the old man in the Teshwave Tavern, who told you of the Dragonspine Mountains, you do have scant knowledge of the mountain range that lies north of this part of the Moonsea.

"They're not called the Dragonspines for nothing," the man continues. "In the higher parts, red, white and green dragons lurk. And there are a few dry valleys as well where they sometimes rest and make lairs. That man in there, he buys dragon eggs from Zhentarim who journey into those mountains, at a very reduced price, and then resells them to travellers, merchants, nobles... people who don't know any better... who know nothing about dragons. It is said that the Zhentarim have a network of secret tunnels that connect to some of these dragons' lairs."

You probe a bit further, and find out that the man, who is from far, far to the east, learnt the art of dragoncare from his father, and is descended from a line of masters who

captured and trained dragons. The dragons were worshipped reverently.

"Now they are simply being treated as a novelty item. And when they start getting too big, and the owners don't know what to do with them... well..."

He reaches up and pets the nose of the green wyrmling who gurgles appreciatively.

"The whole practice is barbaric," he says bitterly.

How do you respond to this outlandish story?

- ◆ *"Well, I hope you succeed in bringing this network down, it sounds terrible." Go to 42.*
- ◆ *"Is there any way I can help you with this? What can be done?" Go to 482.*

453

As you run, you notice one of the smiths, an elf, subtly motion with his eyes towards a low door in the back wall. You make for it and exit into a narrow alley. The guards, if they followed you into this alley, would only be able to move in single file. Seeing where it exits onto the street, you run forward and soon find yourself in the middle of a busy thoroughfare.

You are one street over from Scimitar Street. Quickly you move to an awning on the opposite side of the street and watch for the guards, but they don't come. They must have given up the chase.

You wait for some time until you think it is safe and then consider where to go next.

Mail, Plate & Hide is not an option, as there will likely be other Zhentilar there soon.

- ◆ *You can return to Scimitar Street and visit one of the other shops. Turn to 86 but do not take a progress point.*
- ◆ *If you would rather go somewhere else, go to Map 1 / Map Entry 1 and choose a new destination. Keep track of progress points.*

454

Fodus politely accepts the money and then settles down to read your fortune. He takes the little circular device and gives it a good shake. It starts to glow slightly, and he makes interested noises such as “hmmm...” and “aaahhhh” and “fascinating...”

“What?” you ask.

Fodus looks up at you. “You have a fascinating path laid out before you, my friend. A stranger shall approach you, today, and ask you to undertake a deadly quest... a quest to save these lands from destruction!” You nod, intrigued.

“The fortune I have here tells me that you will meet a stranger in the guise of an enemy who will gift you with a quest... or perhaps this has already happened? The prophecy warns that some who look untrustworthy are actually allies, and it reminds us not to judge... fascinating...”

“What’s fascinating?”

Fodus shakes his head, perplexed. “The image that I am getting here resembles the coat of arms of the Zhentilar... I have no idea what that means.”

You thank Fodus for his time, stand and leave his place of business.

Return to entry 12 (without taking a progress point) and choose another merchant to visit.

455

You move quickly, putting as much distance between you and the bridge as possible. For several minutes you walk, occasionally glancing behind to make sure you haven't been followed.

After a while, it seems you are safe.

Go to Map 1 / Map Entry 1 and continue to your next chosen destination.

456

There is a cry of pain as your attack finds its mark, and the right hand sniper disappears out of view. However, the left hand sniper

does not, and another bolt comes hurtling at you!

Roll d20+5 again. If the result is higher than your AC, take another 1d8+3 damage and then get the hell out of there by going to 5.

457

You signal to the halfling barkeep, and he presents himself before you, standing up on a crate. “What can I get you?” he says shortly, obviously not in the mood for small talk. You order a tankard of ale (deduct 1 sp), and it is promptly delivered. Lifting the draught to your lips, you take a deep sip, and by the Gods, does it taste good after a long days' travel!



The male half-orc who was addressed rudely by the barkeep finally has his drink and is enjoying it quietly.

- ◆ *If you would like to try and strike up a conversation with him, go to 145.*
- ◆ *If you want to finish your ale and try your hand at the pit bout, go to 204.*
- ◆ *If you would rather try out the dice game, go to entry 18.*
- ◆ *Or you could read the posters plastered around the walls by going to entry 189.*

458

Deftly manipulating the thieves' tools, you move the tumblers into place and hear a satisfying click.

The chest's lid releases. Excited, you peer inside, but see nothing, at least at first. Then you look closer.

Lying in the bottom of the little chest is a strange-looking key. You take it out and inspect it.

"It's a skeleton key," the halfling whispers.

"Made by the mysterious elves of Cormanthor, enchanted to open any door! Worth its weight in gold!"

You doubt its mysterious origins, and get the feeling you may have been scammed! But who knows, it may come in handy somewhere down the line.

Add 'skeleton key' to your inventory. Then go to Map 1 / Map Entry 1 and continue to your chosen destination.

459

You look up at Amaunator as you say your prayer, and the face of the solar god seems alive to you, animated. You feel a benevolent spiritual energy overwhelm you, and feel as though nothing could stand in the way of you reaching your destiny.

You have received a spiritual boon from Amaunator. You may either take an inspiration point, or an automatic success on a Medicine, Survival, Perception, or Insight check. Then return to 53 and choose another option.

460

You continue walking towards the end of the open-air temple.

Weird question: Does your character have hair?

◆ *If so, go to 152.*

◆ *If not, go to 24.*

461

The lizard suddenly wakes from its dozing state. It raises its head and hisses malevolently at you!

Salihn yells as she notches an arrow and prepares to fire. Kragor also notches an arrow with his shortbow. The drake begins scurrying to the far wall, as quickly and easily as if it were the level floor, and then

descends the wall, advancing on your little party!

Go to Stone Drake Combat Sheet.

462

Have you met the elf Salihn before? If so, you greet each other fondly. If you already have the codeword Wandquest, you give Salihn a knowing look and continue on.

Return to 53 and choose another option.

If you do not have that codeword, continue below.

"What brings me here?" she asks. "That, you are perhaps better off not knowing. Besides, I've only just met you. How do I know I can trust you?"

You sit down next to them. "Tell me," you repeat. "You can trust me."

She looks down at you a long time, holding your gaze, as if peering into your soul.

"Very well," she says. "My name is Salihn Ellassidil, and I come on a mission from Elventree, on the south shore of the Moonsea." She pauses here, sighing. "My mother is the Warden of Elventree, and her name is Elanil Ellassidil. Even though we are peaceful folk, still we are not hidden enough to escape the prying eyes of the powers that be.

"Fzoul Chembryl, High Priest of Bane, came to Elventree some weeks ago, looking to court my mother's favour, to see if the elves there would back Manshoon if ever a war was to come... She denied him, saying that the elves there wanted no part of Manshoon's plans. So he left, seemingly accepting her decision."

"But later on that night he had one of his minions, a Zhentarim spy, creep in and steal a precious artifact... The Wand of the Elven Mage. This is a treasured wand that has been in the Ellassidil family for generations, and is very powerful. He means to use it in some war that is coming, and by doing so will stain our family's legacy for ever. And so, I am here to retrieve it, and I have a friend with

me. We are going to break into Fzoul's tower and retrieve the Wand."

- ◆ *To offer your help in Salihn's quest, go to 414.*
- ◆ *Otherwise you wish her all luck and go on your way. Go to 53 and choose another option.*

463

Your world goes black. Something heavy has fallen on you from above, and now has you in its jaws, dragging you along the floor.
Subtract 1d6 bludgeoning damage. If you're still alive, continue reading below
As you struggle to regain your wits, you see Salihn and Kragor rushing to your aid. "Stone drake!" Salihn yells. "Quick, get up!"
Go to Stone Drake Combat Sheet. The drake gets one free attack, with advantage, on you. Then roll initiative.

464

You and Danadhir survey the carnage - dead Zhentarim are everywhere.
(If you haven't yet had the chance, break the locks now and free the prisoners).
Suddenly a little girl is before you, staring at you with wide eyes.
"Are you Anika's daughter?" you ask.
She nods silently.
"Uncle will be pleased," Danadhir says.
"Well done, outlander." He gives you a solid clap on the back.
Now freed, the prisoners have overpowered the remaining guards and have all fled into the streets of Zhentil.
Ganadhir meets you within the warehouse, overjoyed to see the little girl. He crouches down and they exchange whispers, after which she embraces him and takes hold of the old veteran's hand.
(If you had left your armour and clothes here, you now reclaim them).
"Let's move away from here, quickly," he says. "We cannot be found here by Zhentilar, and they will be here soon!" He pauses, and

turns to you. "Thank you, outlander. You have saved a great many people from a life of misery. You should take that to heart, take that with you. Regardless of what you've done before, I think the Gods have seen you redeem yourself today."

From the folds of his cloak, Ganadhir produces a small gem. Even in the darkness of the warehouse, the perfectly-formed prism catches the light beautifully. "From my homeland," he says. "A naturally formed amethyst prism. Gemstone dragons eat them sometimes, but you can sell it for about... 250 gp."

*You thank Ganadhir for his generous gift. Well done on your completion of this sidequest!
Go to 479.*

465

The cleric regards you cautiously for a moment. "The Zhentilar? Their barracks is across the river Tesh. A short walk from here."

"Thank you for your time," you say, and merge back into the crowd.

- ◆ *Are you still with the friendly stranger? If so, return to 134 and choose another action.*
- ◆ *If not, return to 382 and choose another action there.*

466

You gratefully accept the goblet of wine and sit down on one of the plush leather armchairs. As you sip your wine you begin probing Annaya with questions, trying to discern why the orc might have picked her to attack. She seems to have no knowledge of the reason.

As you are talking, you feel a strange, creeping sensation, starting from your gut and working its way upwards. Initially you think it is just the alcohol, but no, this is something else. A horrid feeling of dread begins to overcome you.

Annaya smiles. "Yes, the poison should be starting to work now," she says calmly. "Soon you will be unconscious, and then... well, who knows what will happen to you? This is what comes of those who attract the attention of the Black Network, outlander." *Make a constitution save, DC 15.*

- ◆ *If you are successful, go to 363.*
- ◆ *If unsuccessful, go to 199.*

467

Something makes you look up, and there, inverted on the ceiling, is a large, dragon-like lizard! It appears to be dozing and hasn't noticed you.

Salihn puts her finger on her lips to signal quiet.

Carefully, you try to move through the room towards the staircase without a sound.

Roll stealth with advantage, since you have the rogue Kragor with you, who is leading the party towards the stairs. DC 15.

- ◆ *If you are successful, go to 217.*
- ◆ *If unsuccessful, go to 461.*

468

Make an investigation roll, DC 15.

- ◆ *If you are successful, go to 242.*
- ◆ *If you are unsuccessful, go to 65.*

469

You take up your holy symbol and begin muttering a prayer censuring the undead. As you do so, the specter whips around and faces you, now alerted to your presence, and a hideous, howling noise comes from inside its shimmering helmet, which is adorned with large, black horns.

Roll a d20.

- ◆ *If the result is higher than your spell save DC, go to 355.*
- ◆ *If lower, go to 322.*

470

Your performance, along with your fellow musicians, is a rousing success, and the crowd

is jumping up and down with enthusiasm as you finish the song!

"Another one!" you hear. "Encore, encore!" The crowd is so enlivened that they easily overwhelm the efforts of the Zhentilar guards to disperse them. You go on to play two more songs with the band of street performers! *Take an inspiration point for your outstanding performance! You then quickly pack away your instrument and move on before you attract too much attention. Return to Map 1 / Map Entry 1 and continue to your next chosen destination.*

471

You walk south, discerning the outline of a temple, made in an older style than the other buildings you've seen so far in Zhentil Keep. It resembles some of the Bane temples you have seen since being here, and nearing the ruin you can see inside the remains of an altar. The entrance, however, is utterly wrecked. A high pile of rubble will make getting inside a bit of work.

- ◆ *Will you climb over the rubble pile to get inside the ruined temple? If so, go to 45.*
- ◆ *If you would rather go and investigate some of the ruined houses instead, go to 58.*
- ◆ *Or perhaps you have had enough of this area, in which case return to Map 1 / Map Entry 1 and choose a new destination.*

472

It is clear that some dark magic is at work here... perhaps there is a Zhentimar sorcerer nearby who has set this foul creature on you! Regardless, you have little time to ponder they whys and wherefores... you must do battle with this stony beast immediately! *Go to Gargoyle Combat Sheet.*

473

Wondering what you should do next, you look all around, and then spy a window about twelve feet above the door. This area is stacked with crates, so getting up there

shouldn't be too difficult, but getting down once inside the warehouse might be a different story.

You climb up various crates and reach the window in a matter of moments. Once through the window, however, you see there is a twelve foot drop to the floor. If you land and roll, you might be able to minimise any potential harm you do to yourself.

Bracing yourself, you drop from the window, preparing yourself to roll out of the landing. *Make an acrobatics check, DC 8. If you fail, take 1d4-1 fall damage. If successful, you take no damage. Then proceed to entry 415.*

474

"Just a minute," you say, lightly touching her on the arm...

Something about this elf tells you she might know some useful information.

"What do you want?" she asks. "I need to be somewhere, spit it out!"

What do you wish to ask her? She seems to be in a hurry but probably has time to answer one question.

- ◆ *What brings you to Zhentil Keep? Go to 439.*
- ◆ *Why are orcs being discriminated against here? Go to 264.*

475

You place a hand on the ladder rung and begin climbing, making sure your handholds are firm.

Roll perception, DC 15.

- ◆ *If you are successful, go to 425.*
- ◆ *If unsuccessful, go to 258.*

476

You browse the wares. There is a wide range of bizarre potions available here, many of them designed for domestic uses, such as potions to encourage cows to provide milk, potions to get unmovable stains out of clothes, potions to make your children more obedient... the list is endless. As far as you're concerned, the list of useful potions, and their prices, is as follows. (If Pyzar has granted

you a discount then adjust prices accordingly).

Potion of Flying 150 gp

Potion of Hill Giant Strength 130 gp

Potion of Healing 150 gp

(5 Potions of Healing available)

Potion of Gaseous Form 75 gp

Potion of Growth 100 gp

Potion of Mind-reading 100 gp

Potion of Necrotic Resistance 200 gp

Make your purchases, and then depart Pyzar's Potion Emporium. Return to entry 12 without taking a progress point and choose a different option.

477

With Ganadhir's help, you rough yourselves up a bit to look like workers, smearing dirt on your face and removing armour and weapons. Danadhir is not happy. Both of you carry a shortsword - Ganadhir has two in his possession. *(If you have another light blade, you could use two-weapon fighting; strap each blade to a leg, ready for drawing. If you have two light blades already, Danadhir could equip himself with Ganadhir's two shortswords, which would probably make him a bit less grumpy as well.)*

"I look like a pig farmer," Danadhir says, staring down at his clothes. "No sort of job for a-

"Shut it, you!" Ganadhir says, giving his nephew a sharp clip on the back of the head.

"A little girl needs saving, so you'll forget your lordly pride for once!"

Ganadhir looks at you, shaking his head.

"Dwarven nobility," he sighs irritably.

"Never happy."

You and Danadhir both look the part, but can you act it?

Do you know the spell Disguise Self, or own a disguise kit? If so, now might be a good time to use these. Should you do so, take note of that fact and continue reading below. (cont. over)

You and Danadhir make your way to a nearby door and quietly slip out, grabbing a sack of grain each as you walk towards East Dock. The two of you join a crew of workers hefting crates and sacks up and down the wide gangplank that leads onto the deck of the *Mulmaster Pride*.

You get a few glances, and start feeling nervous. You feel as if you are being eyed up by the other crew members.

*Make a deception check, DC 12. Make it with advantage if you used the disguise kit. If you cast the spell **Disguise Self**, make it with advantage and add +2 to the roll.*

- ◆ *If you are successful, go to 391.*
- ◆ *If unsuccessful, go to 436.*

478

You come to consciousness, gasping air. Looking up, you see Jamaunga leaning over your body, holding herbs under your nose. He has revived you.

"Thank the Gods!" Jamaunga exclaims. "I thought we'd lost you there!"

He gives you two draughts of healing potion to bring your strength up.

Roll the appropriate dice and regain hp.

You lie there, recovering yourself, and watch Jamaunga organizing the specter's former captives, getting them ready to leave this accursed place. Finally he comes to you, helps you up, and together you all leave the dungeon.

Go to 212.

479

You make your way back to your inn, the streets now quiet. It seems everyone is at home with the families, and gold light beckons from windows as you navigate through the narrow streets of the fortress city.

The innkeeper greets you, and you pay for another night of accomodation, if you haven't already (2 gp if you are staying at The Stout Miner, 5 gp if you are staying at The Zhentil Arms). The innkeeper also serves

you a delicious bowl of stew in your room with thick slices of dark rye bread. You wolf this down quickly, already feeling reinvigorated from this hearty meal (*restore 3 hp*).

Go to entry 182.

480

You are careful to keep yourself well hidden amongst the maze of shelves – the guards haven't really noticed your presence yet. Quietly you speak the words and make the gestures, and create the spectral hand behind the guard at the counter who is still berating the poor gnome. You direct the hand to pick up a shoulder plate, which it does quietly, and then move it directly over the guard's unhelmeted head. The gnome watches in horror as the magical appendage drops the shoulder plate directly onto the guard's head. He yells out in pain, clutching his cranium as blood begins to run down his face.

Roll a d4 and add it to damage to be subtracted from the guard, should combat commence.

"Who did that? Show yourself! Thelnor, was that you?!"

What now?

- ◆ *To quietly slip out of the shop, go to 297*
- ◆ *To draw your weapon and attempt to sneak up on the guard, make a stealth roll, DC 13. If you are successful, go to 366. If not, go to entry 61.*

481

From behind you feel something sharp gore into you, but this is no ordinary weapon... you turn to see a floating entity, its top half covered in armour, its head encased in a plated helmet bearing long, curving horns, now dripping with your blood! You feel twisted, dark energy rippling through you. *Take 2d6 necrotic damage and then go to Abyssal Specter Combat sheet, using the "Location 2" settings.*

482

The man shakes his head. "There is little that can be done," he responds. "The illegal trade in dragons and dragon's products will continue as long as there is a market. But it's the Zhentarim who are behind it, ultimately. If you can find some way to throw obstacles in their path... the more we can do to confound the plots and schemes of the Zhentarim and Manshoon, the more we are easing the plight of the dragons." You have no idea what might take you into the Dragonspine Mountains, but you take note of what you have learnt from this man nonetheless.

Return to Map 1 / Map Entry 1 and choose a new destination.

483

You thank the blacksmith for his offer and continue down the street, leaving him to his work.

Return to Map 1 / Map Entry 1 and continue to your chosen destination, or choose a new destination.

484

Your knowledge of magical items tells you that these powders all have magical effects, but the effects are hidden to you.

With this new knowledge, return to entry 222 and choose an option.

485

You return to the inn by the shortest route and go quickly to your room. Lying down, you are soon fast asleep.

Turn to 51.

486

Both guards collapse to the ground in a deep magical slumber, releasing their hold on the unconscious female orc, who also falls to the ground.

◆ *Go to entry 278.*

487

You move quietly, west along the corridor. Ahead you can see exits leading off the north and south walls, and you grip your weapon tightly as you advance, your heartbeat loud in your ears.

◆ *Go to entry 377.*

488

The rogue looks you up and down, then nods.

"Follow me," he says.

Go to 129.

489

The lock quickly comes undone and you ease the door open.

Go to 415.

490

You kneel before the altar and quietly say a prayer to Amaunator, asking him to bless your travels.

Roll a d20. If you have Amaunator as your deity you may add 5 to the roll.

◆ *If you roll 1-9 go to 339.*

◆ *If you roll 10 or above go to 459.*

491

You begin perusing the wares on one stall when suddenly something feels amiss.

You check your gold pouch, only to find it considerably lighter! Some light-fingered rascal has made off with a good chunk of your gold! You're surprised you didn't hear or feel this happening, but then the marketplace is quite busy.

Roll a d100 and subtract that much gold from your inventory. Then proceed to 44.

492

You run to the halfling and attempt to pick him up, but he is growing rapidly and is already taller than you! He is simply too heavy.

◆ *Go to entry 329.*

Erase the word Specterquest from your character sheet.

You remember the poster you saw at *The Scoundrel's Tankard*, promising 300 gp for the defeat of the specter seen lurking in the South City Ruins at night. You also remember that you will need to take the specter's helmet to the Zhentilar Barracks. You mull over these facts as you drift off to sleep, the sounds of early evening coming from the street beyond your window.

(Recover hp from this short rest as per normal rules).

You awake some time later, feeling rested, and equip yourself for your expedition to the South City Ruins. Making your way out onto the nighttime streets of Zhentil Keep, you see that the city is still fairly lively, with

street performers and food vendors plying their trade here and there.

You make your way across the bridge that spans the River Tesh, and the noise of North Zhentil Keep fades behind you. It is a lot quieter in the southern districts, and even quieter still as you leave the Common Quarter behind and venture into the rubble of the South Zhentil ruins.

You loiter there for some time, waiting for a glimpse of anything. You see nothing but scurrying rats.

As you wander around, however, you happen to see an interesting-looking chasm which appears to have opened up across an old road between destroyed houses.

You move over to investigate it.

Turn to 188.



MAPS BOOKLET ENTRIES

MAP 1: Zhentil Keep

On the back of your map is scrawled a brief description of each area. As you move between locations, you may cross a green dot, in which case roll for a random encounter (table next page).

Arcana Lane

A treasure trove of supplies and diverse artifacts for magic users of all kinds.

Scimitar Street

Serving the Zhentilar army and the Keep's warriors for many generations, Scimitar Street is where all martial supplies, weapons and armour, are to be found.

Grand Temple of Bane

The glorious temple of our beloved God Bane, this grand place of worship is presided over by High Priest Fzoul Chembryl.

South City – Ruins

From the ashes, we will rise again. After the disastrous invasion of the orc and ogre horde and the scorching of dragonfire that destroyed Zhentil Keep nearly fifty years ago, we rebuilt this fair city out of the rubble and ruins of old. Some of the destruction is still visible in the South City, to remind us of those horrible times.

Market Square

All manner of goods are available here, vegetables, fruits, fish and meats, foods from all over the Moonsea, as well as interesting books, perfumes, trinkets... whatever your need, there is a merchant here to satisfy it.

Zhentilar Barracks / Common Quarter *(You can't visit, but it is marked)*

Living area for the glorious army of fighters tasked with defending our fair city. They live side by side with the poor of Zhentil Keep, as the barracks are situated alongside the Common Quarter, and are conveniently situated near the ruins so work on rebuilding the city can continue unharried.

Amaunator Temple

Not everyone is as enlightened as the Zhents. This temple to the minor Sun God (and other gods in the Faerun pantheon) is mainly placed here for outlanders. Presided over by Eldar the Pious, novice priest, formerly of Waterdeep.

On the map you will see entry numbers pertaining to each of these areas. You may visit these areas by going to the numbered entries, but each location takes time (1 progress point per location). You will have time to visit four locations before nightfall.

At any time, you may choose to conclude the day's business in Zhentil Keep and return to the inn where you stayed last night. Go to 311.

D6 RANDOM ENCOUNTER ROLL (If you get a roll you've already had, re-roll, unless you roll "No encounter")	
In North Zhentil	In South Zhentil
1. No encounter	1. No encounter
2. Go to 378	2. Go to 47
3. Go to 318	3. Go to 325
4. Go to 283	4. Go to 220
5. Go to 301	5. Go to 231
6. Go to 234	6. Go to 8

MAP 5: The Scoundrel's Tankard

Place your token at the bottom of the map, then have a look at the numbered entries on the map and choose where to move your token to.

18: There appears to be a dice game going on here.

54: The bar, where a halfling pours drinks.

189: Over on the east wall are various posters that look interesting.

205: You could sit here and try to listen in on some conversations.

COMBAT SHEETS

COMBAT SHEET: KROMM DAGGERFIST

KROMM DAGGERFIST

Dwarf Berserker, NE

Armour Class 15

Hit Points 25

Speed 25 ft.

STR 16 (+3)	DEX 14 (+2)
CON 17 (+3)	INT 9 (-1)
WIS 11 (+0)	CHA 9 (-1)

Senses Passive Perception 10

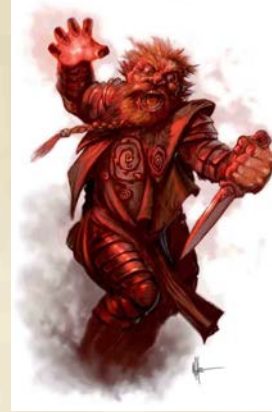
Languages Common, Dwarf

Sharpshooter Kromm has spent his life throwing blades and is a master. He does not suffer disadvantage when throwing at distances exceeding 20ft.

ATTACKS

Dagger Melee or Ranged weapon attack: +5 to hit, 1d4+3 damage.

Black Poison Dagger Melee or Ranged magic weapon attack: +6 to hit, 1d4+4 piercing damage. Target must make a constitution saving throw (DC 15) or take 2d6 poison damage and become poisoned for one minute. The target takes half as much damage on a successful save.



The dwarven warrior looks you up and down and laughs. “Is this the best you could find, Pedrich? I’ll make short work of this poor fool!” Kromm wears a belt stocked with throwing daggers. There is also a vicious-looking black-handled dagger.

Why isn’t this dwarf better armed? you think. But you won’t be bringing it up! 150 gp purse, after all!

You look back up at his face, which is extensively scarred, and grimace as Kromm cracks his mouth in a malicious smile, revealing rows of rotten teeth.

“Ready, then?” he asks, mockingly.

COMBAT NOTES (USE MAP 2)



1. If you are a two-player party, choose one of you to do battle with Kromm.
2. Place tokens. PC: You, K: Kromm.
3. Roll initiative for yourself and for Kromm (d20+2).
4. Cast **Charm Person**? If successful, Kromm gives up and buys you a drink, but you get no winner’s purse! Go to 381.
5. If you are within 25 ft, Kromm makes a melee attack using his Black Poison Dagger. If not, he makes a ranged attack using a normal dagger. The Black Poison dagger is good for two poison attacks, whether the attacks are successful or not. After that it becomes merely a +1 dagger, used in melee.
6. Once per turn, if you or Kromm moves onto or away from a square at the ring’s edge, roll once on the random effect table below.
7. Whoever is reduced to 5 hp or less first is the loser! See below.

RANDOM TABLE – 1D6 (RESULTS MAY RECUR INDEFINITELY)

1. Nothing happens.
2. Nothing happens.
3. A spectator splashes beer on the floor in the space within the green rectangle. Passing through this requires a dexterity save, DC 11. A failed save means anyone passing through slips and falls over, becoming prone.
4. A bottle is hurled. Roll a d4. 1-2 it is aimed at you, 3-4 it is aimed at Kromm. Roll a d20 with advantage (surprise). If equal to or higher than target's AC, target takes 1d4-1 damage.
5. Some rowdy drunks enter the ring and try to involve themselves in the fight, not really attacking but definitely obstructing the fight. The ref chases them round for a bit, and then they drunkenly fall over in your path, reducing movement by half (difficult terrain).
6. The crowd makes a deafening cheer in support of one of the combatants, granting one of you advantage. Roll a d4: 1-2 you, 3-4 Kromm.

- ◆ *If you are victorious, go to entry 407.*
- ◆ *If Kromm defeats you, go to entry 80.*

COMBAT SHEET: ZHENTILAR GUARDS (#1)

ZHENTILAR CITY GUARD (x2)

Human Fighter, Neutral

Armour Class 16

Hit Points 18

Speed 30 ft.

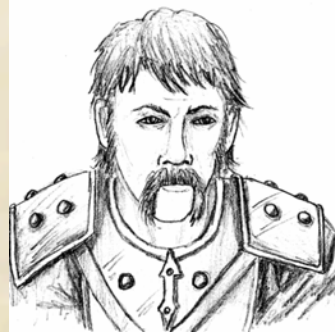
STR 14 (+2)	DEX 12 (+1)
CON 12 (+1)	INT 10 (+0)
WIS 11 (+0)	CHA 10 (+0)

Senses Passive
Perception 12

Languages Common

ATTACKS

Spear +4 to hit, 1d6+1
slashing damage



“You are foolish to take us on,” the lead guard says. “You’ll either die or be tortured for this! Manshoon does not take kindly to those who defy his Zhentilar!”

The two warriors brandish their spears and attack.

COMBAT NOTES (USE MAP 3)



1. Place tokens. Z: Guards. PC: You. Roll initiative for yourself and once for both the guards.
2. The guards make melee (not ranged) attacks with spears, and constantly try to flank you. On their turn, they move as close as possible to you by the shortest route, using dash if needed. If you are flanked, they attack with advantage.
3. Once per turn, if you or the guards move, roll on the random table (d6).
4. Combat continues until all the guards are defeated, or until you are 7hp or below. When one of those happens, see below for the entry number.

RANDOM TABLE (PC) – 1d6

(If you get a result you’ve had, re-roll, unless you roll 1 or 6)

1. Nothing happens.
2. Nothing happens.
3. Someone throws a rock at one of the guards. Disadvantage on one of their attacks.
4. One of your enemies trips on a stone, advantage on your next attack on them.
5. A dog runs through the fight, tripping one of you up. Roll a d4 to determine who: 1-3 one of the guards, 4 is you. That person becomes prone.
6. A cart overturns nearby, spilling watermelons all over the road. Everyone roll dex check, DC9. A failed check means you fall over and are prone.

- ◆ *If you are victorious, go to entry 278*
- ◆ *If you are reduced to 7hp or less, go to 102*

COMBAT SHEET: ZHENTILAR GUARDS (#2)

ZHENTILAR CITY GUARD (x3)

Human Fighter, Neutral

Armour Class 16

Hit Points 11

Speed 30 ft.

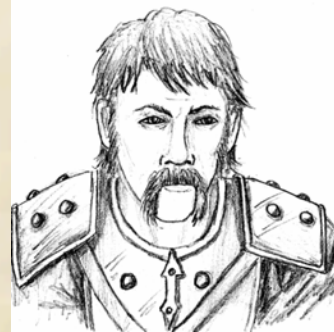
STR 14 (+2)	DEX 12 (+1)
CON 12 (+1)	INT 10 (+0)
WIS 11 (+0)	CHA 10 (+0)

Senses Passive
Perception 12

Languages Common

ATTACKS

Longsword +4 to hit,
1d8+1 slashing damage



“What’s this, villian? Disrupting a Zhentilar in the course of his daily business? You shall pay with your life, scum!”

COMBAT NOTES (USE MAP 4) **play AUDIO**

- Place tokens. Z: Guards. PC: You. Roll initiative (just once for all guards).
- Guards come to you by the quickest route and attack, However, this shop is full of well-stocked wooden shelves. On their first turn, the two guards at the east of the shop run past shelves in a hurry. Make a dex check for each guard, (d20+1 against DC 12). If they fail, they knock over shelves costing them another round to get to you. The next round they move normally, no check required. The guard at the counter does not need to make this check.
- The guards may quickly flank you, giving them advantage on attacks.
- You may flee into the smithy (the exit to which is on the top left). When you do so, the guards will get one attack of opportunity each, unless you disengage, or you are out of their melee range. After any AOOs, go to entry 123.
- On each of your turns (except the surprise round), roll once on the random table below before making your attack.

RANDOM TABLE - 1d6

(If you get a roll you’ve already had, re-roll, unless you get 1 or 6. When all options are exhausted, stop rolling.)

- Nothing happens.
- The shopkeeper flings a spiked gauntlet into the fray. Roll a d4. 1: It hits you, 2-4: it hits the guard nearest the wooden counter. 1d4 bludgeoning damage.
- One of the guards (choose one near the armor) accidentally knocks over a suit of armour. It topples down on top of him. Make a dex roll for that guard, DC 12. If he fails he is knocked prone. Remove this condition next round.
- There is a helmet rolling around the floor. Someone accidentally steps in it and must make a dex check to see if their foot gets stuck in it. DC 11. If they fail, all their attacks are at disadvantage until they use an action get it off . 1-3: Choose a guard, 4: You.
- A dog belonging to the gnome enters the fray and will make one attack on a random combatant. 1-3 the target is a guard, 4 the target is you. Bite attack, +3 to hit, 1d4+1 piercing damage. Its AC is 11 and it has 10 hit points. After this, the gnome calls it off immediately.
- Nothing happens.

◆ *If you are victorious, go to entry 333.*

COMBAT SHEET: BAR BRAWL

DRUNKEN

THUGS (x2)

Medium Humanoid,
Neutral

Armour Class 11

Hit Points 22

Speed 30 ft.

STR 15 (+2)	DEX 11 (+0)
CON 14 (+2)	INT 10 (+0)
WIS 10 (+0)	CHA 11 (+0)

Senses Passive
Perception 10

Skills Intimidation +2

Languages Common

ATTACKS

Improvised Club +4 to hit, 1d4+2 bludgeoning damage



You quickly move to the aid of the defenceless orc, who seems incapable of defending himself. Not everyone in this world is a warrior, after all! And two on one – that's just not fair, unless you're talking about dragons.

COMBAT NOTES (USE MAP 6) [PLAY AUDIO](#)

1. Place tokens. T: Thugs. PC: You. Roll initiative.
2. The drunken thugs are facing the orc, backs to you. If you can reach them in one round of movement, you may make a surprise attack. However, the tables are occupied and moving through the two squares in the middle of the two nearest tables counts as difficult terrain.
3. There are three other options. 1) Make a ranged attack, for which you will need to at least get on top of one of the tables. 2) Jumping onto or walking over the table immediately south of you (the table also counts as difficult terrain). 3) Getting to the thugs another way, eg flying.
4. To go over or get onto the table, apologise to the patrons with a charisma check, DC 11. If successful, then you may have your surprise attack. If the charisma check fails, the patrons loudly protest which alerts the thugs, and you lose your surprise. Attacks on the drunken thugs from atop any table have advantage.
5. After surprise attacks, roll initiative. The thugs immediately come within melee range and start attacking you.
6. Stay atop the table if you wish, although if an attack hits you while you are up there you are knocked prone if you fail a DC 13 dex save. If one thug knocks you prone and then the other attacks, the second does so with advantage. You can jump up onto other tables during the fight, although the dex check / prone rule still applies. You cannot get onto a table, attack and then jump off in one action.
7. This is a rowdy bar and there are many things happening around you. Every time you take a turn, roll on the random table below.

RANDOM TABLE - 1D6

(If you get a roll you've already had, re-roll, unless you get 1 or 6. When all options are exhausted, stop rolling.)

1. Nothing happens.
 2. A large burly bouncer comes and tries to drag you away from the fight. "Leave them to it!" he says as he grabs you under the arms. Strength check to escape his grasp, DC 14. If you fail you are dragged to the middle of one edge of the map. Roll a d4 to find out which 1: North, 2-3: East, 4: South. You will need to spend movement to get back into the fight.
 3. A chair goes flying into the middle of the brawl. Who does it hit? 1: Thug nearest you. 2: Thug furthest from you. 3: You. 4: The orc. 1d4-2 damage.
 4. A female dwarf, blind drunk, stumbles into the middle of the fight and vomits profusely right in someone's path. 1: Thug nearest you. 2: Thug furthest from you. 3: You. 4: No-one. Whoever is nearest makes a dex save, DC 12. If they fail, they slip over in the chunder and are prone.
 5. Another drunken dwarf, possibly the husband of the extremely drunk female dwarf, stands in between you, holding four huge tankards of ale in his two hands. He demands that you drink a tankard of dwarven ale with him immediately or he will set "his boys" on you (he indicates a table full of about 12 very intimidating dwarves all armed with warhammers). You have little choice but to stop and chug the tankards, all three of you. You may regain 2 hp from the excellent ale, but you also roll constitution for the two thugs and yourself. Whoever rolls highest chugs their ale the fastest and picks up their weapon first, giving them advantage on their next attack!
 6. Nothing happens.
- ◆ *If both thugs are reduced to 5 hp or less, go to 50.*
 - ◆ *If you are reduced to 5 hp or less, go to 388.*

COMBAT SHEET: CLERICS OF BANE

CLERICS OF BANE (x3)

Medium Humanoid, Lawful Evil, War Domain Clerics

Armour Class 16

Hit Points 17

Speed 30 ft.

STR 14 (+2)	DEX 9 (-1)
CON 15 (+2)	INT 11 (+0)
WIS 15 (+2)	CHA 13 (+0)

Senses Passive Perception 10

Skills Intimidation +2

Languages Common

War Priest After his attack action, the cleric can make one weapon attack as a bonus action. He can do this 2 times per long rest. He regains all uses after a long rest.

Guided Strike: The cleric can use his Channel Divinity to gain a +10 bonus to the attack roll. You make this choice after you see the roll. This can be used once per day.

ATTACKS

Mace +4 to hit, 1d6+2 bludgeoning damage

SPELLS (3 slots each)

Cure Wounds 1d8+3 healing on themselves or an ally.

Inflict Wounds +5 Spell attack, 3d10 Necrotic damage



The clerics seem move slowly towards you with dead, lifeless eyes. It is as if they are in a trance of devotion to their malevolent god Bane. Things are not looking good for you! It appears you are trapped in here and it will be a miracle if you get out alive. You should never have followed that cleric in here.

COMBAT NOTES (USE MAP 7)

1. If you are a two-player party, do not double enemy numbers for this encounter.
2. Place tokens. C: Clerics. PC: You.. Roll initiative, once for yourself, once for all three clerics. The clerics all move in quickly and attack, and will attempt to flank you.
3. The clerics attack in the following order, as if in some sort of synchronised trance: **Round 1:** Mace with War Priest feat. **Round 2:** Inflict Wounds. **Round 3:** Mace with Guided Strike feat. **Round 3 & 4:** Mace with War Priest feat. **Rounds 5+:** Mace.
4. If a cleric drops below 5 hp, he will use his next action to cast **Cure Wounds** on himself. Each cleric can do this twice (they will only cast **Inflict Wounds** once).
5. Good luck! You got yourself into this. If you can get yourself out of it, you will have deserved the XP!
6. There is a small chance you can flee this encounter. There are vines encircling the pillars that border this courtyard. On your turn, you can scale these vines with an athletics check, DC 11. This will provoke attacks of opportunity if you are leaving any cleric's melee range. If successful, you reach a mezzanine floor that looks onto the courtyard on one side and onto the street on another. From here you can drop down onto the street outside. If you do so, go to entry 122.
7. If you are victorious, go to 32.

COMBAT SHEET: DIRE RAT OVERLORD

DIRE RAT OVERLORD

Medium Humanoid,
Neutral

Armour Class 13

Hit Points 24

Speed 30 ft.

STR 10 (+0)	DEX 15 (+2)
CON 12 (+1)	INT 11 (+0)
WIS 10 (+0)	CHA 8 (-1)

Senses Passive
Perception 12

Languages Common
(can't speak in rat form)

Summon Rat Swarm
(see combat sequence)

ATTACKS

Multiattack The overlord makes 2 attacks, a bite attack & a dagger attack.
Dagger Melee attack, +4 to hit, 1d4+2 piercing dmg
Bite Melee attack, +4 to hit, 1d6+2 piercing damage and target must make a con save (DC 14) or contract the fast-acting disease. All attacks are made at disadvantage until the target makes the Con save at the start of their turn. They cannot then be affected by the disease again.



The wererat gnashes at you with its vicious incisors as you come near.

COMBAT NOTES (Use MAP 9)



- Place tokens. D: Dire Rat Overlord. PC: You. Roll initiative.
- Roll stealth (DC 12) to see if you can creep up on the overlord, who is busy attacking the old man. If you can, make one attack with advantage before starting the initiative order. Once you have engaged it in battle, the overlord will always move to you to make melee attacks. Until you engage it (melee or ranged), it will not fight you in melee (it has no ranged attacks). It will continue to harass the old man.
- On its first turn, as a bonus action, the overlord makes a high-pitched, piercing noise, raising its snout into the air... it has a 60% chance of summoning a Rat Swarm to assist him in combat. Roll a d100, if the result is 60 or under then a Swarm of Rats appears in 1d4-1 rounds and comes into melee range with you. Their stats are on the next page. Roll initiative for them and have them enter combat.
- Halfway through the fight, the Zhentilar guard disappears, perhaps worried that if you beat the overlord then he will look bad for shirking his city guard responsibilities.
- Do you have a Dire Rat Trap? If so, you could show it to the beast to taunt it. Taking it out is a free action, and the overlord must succeed on a wisdom save, DC 13, or be enraged for 1 turn. Its attacks will be at disadvantage as a result.
- Every time you move, roll on the random table below.

DIRE RAT OVERLORD: RANDOM TABLE (1d4)

RANDOM TABLE - 1d4

(If you get a roll you've already had, re-roll, unless you get 1 or 4. When all options are exhausted, stop rolling.)

1. Nothing happens.
2. A feral dog comes into the fray and starts savaging someone. Roll a d4: 1-2 it's the overlord, 3-4 its you. The bitten party takes 1d4-1 damage per round until it deals with the dog, which has an AC of 10 and hp of 5.
3. In the course of the battle, one of the combatants trips on a stone and stumbles. Roll a d4: 1-2 it's the overlord, 3-4 its you. If this person is about to attack, they have disadvantage. If they are about to *be* attacked, then attacks on them have advantage.
4. Nothing happens.

◆ *If you are victorious, go to 314.*

SWARM OF RATS (SMALL)

Small Beasts, Neutral

Armour Class 10

Hit Points 24

Speed 30 ft.

STR 9 (-1)	DEX 11 (+0)	CON 9 (-1)
INT 2 (-4)	WIS 10 (+0)	CHA 3 (-4)

Damage Resistances Bludgeoning, Piercing, Slashing,

Condition Immunities Charmed, Frightened, Grappled, Paralyzed, Petrified, Prone, Restrained, Stunned

Senses Passive Perception 10

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 rat. The swarm can't regain hit points or gain temporary hit points.

ATTACKS

Bites *melee attack* +2, 0 ft, one target in the swarm's space. Hit: 2d6 piercing damage or 1d6 if hp drops to 12 or below.

COMBAT SHEET: DEVIL WORM ROGUE

DEVIL WORM ROGUE

Medium Humanoid,
Lawful Evil

Armour Class 13

Hit Points 24

Speed 30 ft.

STR 14 (+2)	DEX 15 (+2)
CON 10 (+0)	INT 11 (+0)
WIS 13 (+1)	CHA 9 (-1)

Senses Passive
Perception 10

Skills Intimidation +2,
Stealth +6

Languages Common
CR 3

Two-weapon Fighting
Two shortswords

Cunning action The
rogue can use a bonus
action to Disengage or
Dash.

Sneak Attack Each
successful attack made
with advantage garners
an extra 1d6 damage.

ATTACKS

Shortsword 1 +4 to hit,
1d6+2 slashing damage

Shortsword 2 (offhand)
+4 to hit, 1d6 slashing
damage.

Hand Crossbow +4 to
hit, 1d6+2 piercing
damage.



The rogue whips out his hand crossbow and levels it at your head. “Foolish outlander!” he hisses. “You should not have followed me here!” Behind him, the light of torches casts long shadows towards you.

COMBAT NOTES (Use MAP 10) play audio

1. Place tokens. D: Devil Worm Rogue. PC: You. Roll initiative.
2. This area, being the entrance to a lair of rogues, is peppered with traps. Every time your PC moves, roll on the table below. The rogue, knowing the location of the traps, avoids the traps and does not roll.
3. The rogue stays 30 ft (6 squares) away from the PC, and uses his hand crossbow + sneak attack (if he has advantage), trying to force you to move towards him. However, if the PC makes 2 ranged attacks, then on the rogue's next turn after the second ranged attack, he moves to melee range (adjacent square, 5 ft).
4. While in melee, he attacks with his two shortswords and uses sneak attack if he can. If you continue using ranged attacks even while the rogue is 5 ft away, those ranged attacks will be made with disadvantage (you can move to get rid of the disadvantage, but that will require you to roll on the table below). If you inflict 10 hp or more melee damage on the rogue in one round, then on his next turn he will use a bonus action (after a single shortsword attack) to dash instead of making his offhand attack, moving 40 ft down the passageway, and will start using ranged attacks once more.

See over for random table.

RANDOM TABLE - 1d6

(If you get a roll you've already had, re-roll, unless you get 1 or 6. When all options are exhausted, stop rolling.)

1. Nothing happens.
2. You step on a pressure plate of some sort. Darts fly towards you. Roll a d20+8 four times. Deduct 2 hp for every roll of your AC and above. The rogue has advantage on his next attack against you.
3. You trip on a rock. Make a dex save, DC 12. If you fail, you drop your weapon, giving the rogue advantage on his next attack.
4. You notice that the rogue seems to be avoiding one particular spot. Make an athletics check, DC 12. If successful, you can use your action to push him onto that spot, which is a pair of scything blades. He must make a DC 14 dex save or take 2d6 slashing damage, half as much on a successful save. You do not trigger any traps as you are doing this.
5. Your trip on a wire which triggers flame jets that shoot across the passageway. Dex save DC 14 or take 2d6 fire damage.
6. Nothing happens.

◆ *If you defeat the rogue, go to 315.*

COMBAT SHEET: ANNAYA

ANNAYA

Human Sorceress, Lawful Evil

Armour Class 13 / 16

Hit Points 28

Speed 30 ft.

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

Senses Passive Perception 10

Skills Athl+1, Ins +3, Intim +5, Pers +5, Rel +2

Languages Common

Wild Magic Surge (See Combat Sequence)

ATTACKS

Dagger *melee attack*, +1 to hit, 1d4-1 piercing dmg
Dagger 2 (offhand) *melee attack*, +1 to hit, 1d4 piercing damage.

Ray of Frost (cantrip) *Ranged Spell Attack (60 ft)* +5 to hit, 1d8 cold dmg. Target movement reduced to 10 ft.

Ray of Sickness (4 uses) *Ranged Spell Attack (60 ft)* +5 to hit, 2d8 poison dmg. Target must make DC13 con save or be poisoned until the end of Annaya's next turn.



An evil, determined expression on her face, Annaya sends a sickly green ray searing towards you, screaming “Soon, my friend... your soul will be mine!”

COMBAT NOTES (USE MAP 11)



1. Place tokens. A: Annaya. PC: You. Roll initiative.
2. Every time you move, roll a d6. If you get a 5 or 6, roll on the random table below.
3. As Annaya's first action, she casts **Mage Armour** on herself, after which her AC is 16, then moves 30 ft towards the balcony. You will get one attack on her at AC 13 if you win initiative. If she is moving out of your melee range, you will get an attack of opportunity
4. Annaya attacks using **Ray of Sickness** (4 uses). If you are in melee range, she will move 30 ft away from you and then attack. Note the constitution saving throw you must make if her attack hits. If you fail, you will be poisoned and will have disadvantage on your next attack.
5. Every time you inflict more than 10 damage, Annaya will cast **Invisibility** as her next action. You can attempt an attack at disadvantage on your turn, and then she will make her next attack with advantage. The Invisibility spell will then end.
6. If Annaya uses up all four 1st level spell slots, she will make a **Ray of Sickness** attack at 2nd level (3d8 poison damage), then subsequent attacks will be **Ray of Frost**. Again, she will move 30 ft away from you, usually in the direction of the balcony, or if that is not possible, then any clear path of 30 ft available.
7. Wild Magic Surge: every time Annaya uses a spell attack, roll a d20. If the roll comes up 20, roll a d100 on the table found on p104 of the Player's Handbook and follow the effects.
8. You may escape via the balcony if need be, but this will provoke a **Ray of Sickness** opportunity attack (if she has slots left) or a **Ray of Frost** attack if not. After you have escaped, return to Map 1 and choose a new destination.

RANDOM TABLE - 1d4

(If you get a roll you've already had, re-roll, unless you get 1 or 4. When all options are exhausted, stop rolling.)

1. Nothing happens.
2. If you are travelling across one of the rugs, then the rug bunches under your feet and you stumble. This halves your move speed. If you are dashing, the second part of the movement will be as normal.
3. You trigger a spell glyph set up by Annaya prior to your arrival and drawn using some sort of invisible ink. It triggers a Magic Missile spell. Roll 3d20. For every d20 that rolls above your AC, deduct 1d4 piercing damage from the darts.
4. Nothing happens.

◆ *If you are victorious, go to 76.*

COMBAT SHEET: ABYSSAL SPECTER

ABYSSAL SPECTER

Medium Undead, CE

Armour Class 16

Hit Points 24

Speed 30 ft. / Fly 50ft

STR 13 (+1)	DEX 15 (+2)
CON 11 (+0)	INT 10 (+0)
WIS 10 (+0)	CHA 11 (+0)

Damage Resistances Damage from non-magical weapons that aren't silvered

Damage Immunities Poison, Fire

Condition Immunities Charmed, Exhausted, Grappled, Paralyzed, Petrified, Poisoned, Prone, Restrained, Unconscious

Senses Darkvision 60 ft Passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Abyssal

Incorporeal Movement The specter can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. It takes no force damage as a result.

ATTACKS

Shoot Gauntlet *ranged attack (60 ft)*, +4 to hit, 1d6 bludgeoning + 1d4 necrotic damage. The gauntlet returns to the specter's hand automatically.

Horns of Baphomet *Melee attack*, +3 to hit, 2d6 necrotic damage. Target must make a DC 10 con save or its hp max is reduced by the damage taken. This lasts until the creature finishes a long rest.



The spectre lowers its head and charges you, thrashing its head side to side as it attempts to gore you with its hellish horns.

COMBAT NOTES (USE MAP 13) play audio

- Place tokens. S= Specter. T= Thrall. J= Jamaunga. PC= You
Location 2: Spawn the spectre on the PC symbol, your PC one square to the right. Choose an adjacent square to place Jamaunga if he is with you. Roll init (only once for all thralls).
- Note the specter's resistance to non-magical weapons.
- At the start of your turn, make a wisdom save (DC 14) to dispel the gloom aura if you are still under its effect.
- The Specter has its thralls to attack you. (Jamaunga tells you to knock them out, not kill them). The thralls try to surround you and stop you entering the ritual room. Roll a d4 to determine who each thrall attacks. 1-2=you, 3-4=Jamaunga. They flank whenever possible.
- If you are surrounded, the specter will stay clear and shoot its gauntlet into the fray, moving to find line of sight (use the same roll to determine target).
- Fallen thralls are difficult terrain. Active thralls will move over the other thrall's body to attack targets.
- Every time the specter is wounded, it uses a reaction to disengage and morph into a wall. No AOO is provoked. On its next turn, it emerges from the wall. Roll a d4 if you are in the corridor, and spawn it by a white number. If you are in the room, roll d12 and spawn it by a red number. Re-roll if you get the same result twice in a row. The specter attacks the nearest target.
- When the specter emerges, its target rolls perception, DC 11. On a fail, the specter charges and attacks using its horns. If equidistant, roll a d4: 1-2: Jamaunga, 3-4: You.
- Once the specter is dead, the thralls' trance is broken.

- ◆ *If you are killed, continue the combat with Jamaunga. If he wins, go to 405.*
- ◆ *You may also wish to take a token from the specter – if you know what is being referred to here, then it will not need to be spelt out. Add it to your inventory.*
- ◆ *If you are victorious, go to 79.*
- ◆ *If you are defeated, go to 405.*

JAMAUNGA RUNESHELL (NPC)

Medium Humanoid, LN



Armour Class 17

Hit Points 22

Speed 20 ft.

STR 15 (+2)	DEX 8 (-1)	CON 17 (+3)
INT 11 (+0)	WIS 12 (+1)	CHA 12 (+1)

Senses Darkvision 60 ft, PP 12

Skills Persuasion +3, Insight +3, Perception +3

Languages Common, Crucian, Draconic

Retract The crucian has the ability to retract into its shell, shielding it from most attacks. It does this when its hp drops to 5 or below. When it is retracted, its AC becomes 21 and if its shell is adorned in protective runes (as most are) it is also shielded against magical attacks of a spell level three and below.

ACTIONS

Warhammer *melee attack*, +4 to hit, range 5 ft, one target. Hit: 1d10+2 bludgeoning damage

THRALL

Human



Armour Class 10

Hit Points 4

Speed 30 ft.

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

Skills Acrobatics +5, Athletics +3, History +4, Intimidation +2, Perception +1

Languages Common

Enthralled The thralls are under the command of the specter, who commands them all to surround you and strike.

ACTIONS

Unarmed Strike *melee attack* +0 to hit, 1d4 bludgeoning damage.

melee attack, +4 to hit, range 5 ft, one target. Hit: 1d8+2 bludgeoning damage

COMBAT SHEET: GARGOYLE SWOOPER

GARGOYLE SWOOPER

Medium Elemental, CE

Armour Class 15

Hit Points 52

Speed 30 ft. / Fly 60ft

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

Damage Resistances Damage from non-magical weapons that aren't silvered

Damage Immunities Poison

Condition Immunities Exhausted, Petrified, Poisoned

Senses Darkvision 60 ft Passive Perception 10

Languages Terran

ATTACKS

Multiattack The swooper makes one bite attack and one claw attack.
Bite *melee weapon attack*, +4 to hit, reach 5ft, one target. Hit: 1d6+2 piercing damage.

Claws *melee weapon attack*, +4 to hit, reach 5ft, one target. Hit: 1d6+2 slashing damage.

Grab The Swooper uses an action to grab and lift a target in the air in order to drop them. Target makes a DC 12 Strength save or is grappled and lifted at a height of 10 ft per round. When dropped, the target takes fall damage. (See Combat Notes for more details).



The gargoyle swoops down towards you, a bizarre grimace on its stony face.

COMBAT NOTES (Use MAP 14)



- Place tokens. G: Gargoyle Swooper. PC: You. MS: Mysterious stranger. Roll initiative.
- After one round, roll init for a mysterious stranger who begins shooting arrows at the Gargoyle from a nearby rooftop. If she hits the gargoyle while it carries the PC, it will drop the PC. If the stranger crit fails an attack while the PC is grabbed, the PC takes half attack damage. The gargoyle never attacks the stranger. The stranger's stats are on the next page.
- The gargoyle flies at you, making passing bite / claw attacks but always trying to stay out of reach. It flies at 60 ft per round so you get time for one attack, which you take on your turn (and no AOO) every time it passes. You either make a ranged attack when it is out of reach, or a melee attack when it is in reach. After attacking it keeps moving in a straight line until it reaches a building and then turns to face you again.
- Every gargoyle attack, roll a d6. On a 5 or 6, it tries to **grab** the PC and lift them into the air and drop them. It flies upwards at a rate of 10 ft per round, starting in the round of its grab action. PC can make a DC 12 strength check at the start of each turn to escape the grapple, but they will take fall damage. The gargoyle does not attack while it is grappling you.
- When the Gargoyle has the PC in its clutches, its movement slows to 10 ft vertical movement per round.
- Attacks while grabbed are at disadvantage.

MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

Female Halfling

Armour Class 15

Hit Points 25

Speed 25 ft.

STR 12 (+1)	DEX 17 (+3)	CON 13 (+1)
INT 8 (-1)	WIS 14 (+2)	CHA 11 (+0)

Senses PP 12

Skills Athletics +3, Insight +4, Stealth +5, Survival +4

Languages Common, Halfling

ACTIONS

Longbow +1 +6 to hit, 1d8+4 piercing damage.

melee attack, +4 to hit, range 5 ft, one target. Hit: 1d8+2 bludgeoning damage

- ◆ *If you are victorious, go to 136.*

COMBAT SHEET: STONE DRAKE

STONE DRAKE

Medium Dragon, NE

Armour Class 19

Hit Points 69

Speed 40 ft. / Climb 40 ft

STR 17 (+3)	DEX 15 (+2)
CON 19 (+4)	INT 14 (+2)
OWIS 12 (+1)	CHA 14 (+2)

Senses Darkvision 120 ft Passive Perception 10

Skills Intimidation +5, Stealth +6, Athletics +6, Perception +4

ATTACKS

Charge Once per turn, when enraged (usually after being made to drop a potential meal) the drake can charge a target, attempting to rush it suddenly. Strength save DC 17 or target is knocked prone. It moves up to 80 ft and gains a +2 bonus to a single follow-up attack (bite or claw) but suffers -2 to AC until the start of its next turn.

Multiattack The stone drake makes two attacks, one with bite and one with claw.

Bite *melee weapon attack*, +5 to hit, reach 5ft, one target. Hit: 1d8+3 piercing damage + 1d6 acid damage.

Claws *melee weapon attack*, +5 to hit, reach 5ft, one target. Hit: 1d6+3 slashing damage.



The stone drake slinks across walls and ceilings quickly and stealthily, as nimbly as on level ground. The sleek reptile eyes you all hungrily...

COMBAT NOTES (Use MAP 15)

1. Place tokens. SD: Stone drake. S: Salihn. K: Kragor. PC: You. Roll initiative (Kragor and Salihn's NPC stats on next page).
2. The dark patch in the centre of the map is a hole in the floor, descending downwards out of sight, with a rock sticking up from it, a kind of obelisk. This cannot be traversed on foot.
3. Salihn carries 2 healing potions which she will quickly throw to anyone in need, but will only give one at a time.
4. To the stone drake you are all tasty-looking delicacies, but it will fixate on grabbing one of you. To determine who looks the tastiest, roll a d6. 1-2 You, 3-4 Kragor, 5-6 Salihn. It will run to that character and focus all its attacks on them until it has reduced its HP to 0. It will try to avoid being flanked, so move it to the best spot for that. Once a character is at 0 hp, it will grab them in its powerful jaws and make quickly for its lair, as marked (L), the entrance to which is at the base of the north wall of the tower.
5. The drake will only inflict enough damage to take you to 0 hp. It doesn't want to ruin its meal!
6. When running to its lair, it may provoke AOOs.
7. As always, flanking rules apply. The drake is focused on its meal.
8. While it is fleeing, the stone drake will not stop regardless of how much damage it takes. It will use double movement, moving up to 80ft towards its lair.
9. Due to the presence of NPCs, death saves are available in this encounter.
(NPC Sheets over the page).

- ◆ *If you defeat the stone drake, you continue up the stairs immediately. Go to 67.*
- ◆ *If one of you is captured and the drake gets to its lair, continue to the next combat sheet: Stone Drake (Lair).*
- ◆ *If a character goes down, the stone drake will grab it and make off with it, towards its lair. The others will have to follow if there is any chance of saving their ally. Go to the next combat sheet: Stone Drake (Lair).*

SALIHN (NPC)

Female Elven Fighter (Eldritch Knight), Level 3



Armour Class 16

Hit Points 28

Speed 30 ft.

STR 12 (+1)	DEX 17 (+3)	CON 14 (+2)
INT 14 (+2)	WIS 8 (-1)	CHA 10 (+0)

Senses Darkvision 60 ft

Skills Acrobatics +5, Athletics +3, History +4, Intimidation +2, Perception +1

Languages Common, Elvish, Drow

Fighting style: Archery +2 to hit with any ranged attack.

Action Surge Extra action in turn, once between short rests

Weapon Bond Cannot be disarmed

Two-weapon Fighting 2 scimitars

ACTIONS

Scimitar 1 *melee attack* +3 to hit, 1d6+3 slashing damage

Scimitar 2 (offhand) *melee attack* +3 to hit, 1d6 slashing damage

Longbow *ranged attack* +5 to hit, 1d8+3 damage

Chill touch *cantrip spell attack* +2 to hit, 1d8 necrotic damage

Burning hands *Ranged L1 spell attack*, 15 foot cone. 3d6 fire damage. Dex save (DC 12) halves the damage. Two uses per day.

melee attack, +4 to hit, range 5 ft, one target. Hit: 1d8+2 bludgeoning damage

KRAGOR (NPC)

Male Half-elf Rogue (Assassin), Level 3



Armour Class 14

Hit Points 21

Speed 30 ft.

STR 14 (+2)	DEX 15 (+2)	CON 11 (+0)
INT 13 (+1)	WIS 11 (+0)	CHA 10 (+0)

Senses Darkvision 60 ft

Skills Acrobatics +5, Athletics +2, Deception +2, Insight +3, Perception +3, Sleight of hand +7, Stealth +7

Double Proficiency Sleight of Hand, Stealth

Languages Common, Elvish, Drow

Assassinate Advantage against enemies who haven't taken a turn in combat. Any hit against a surprised creature is an automatic crit.

Cunning Action Bonus action after combat turn to dash, disengage or hide.

Sneak Attack Extra 2d6 damage for all attacks made with advantage.

ACTIONS

Rapier *melee attack* +4 to hit, 1d8+3 piercing damage

Dagger *melee or ranged attack* +4 to hit, 1d6 slashing damage

Shortbow *ranged attack* +4 to hit, 1d6+3 damage

melee attack, +4 to hit, range 5 ft, one target. Hit: 1d8+2 bludgeoning damage

COMBAT SHEET: STONE DRAKE (LAIR)

STONE DRAKE

Medium Dragon, NE

Armour Class 19

Hit Points 69 (adjust for damage)

Speed 40 ft. / Climb 40 ft

STR 17 (+3)	DEX 15 (+2)
CON 19 (+4)	INT 14 (+2)
WIS 12 (+1)	CHA 14 (+2)

Senses Darkvision 120 ft Passive Perception 10

Skills Intimidation +5, Stealth +6, Athletics +6, Perception +4

ATTACKS

Charge Once per turn, when enraged (usually after being made to drop a potential meal) the drake can charge a target, attempting to rush it suddenly. Strength save DC 17 or target is knocked prone. It moves up to 80 ft and gains a +2 bonus to a single follow-up attack (bite or claw) but suffers -2 to AC until the start of its next turn.

Multiattack The stone drake makes two attacks, one with bite and one with claw.

Bite *melee weapon attack*, +5 to hit, reach 5ft, one target. Hit: 1d8+3 piercing damage + 1d6 acid damage.

Claws *melee weapon attack*, +5 to hit, reach 5ft, one target. Hit: 1d6+3 slashing damage.



The stone drake deposits its quarry on the far side of the room, then turns to face you, its pursuers.

COMBAT NOTES (Use MAP 16)

1. Continue on where you left off on the last combat sheet, with the same stats. Reroll initiative without the downed player.
2. The drake deposits its quarry on the far side of the room then turns to face its foes and finish them off.
3. You are in the drake's lair. Hence there is a 50% chance that it will become enraged at your presence. Every turn, roll a d100. If the number is 50 or under, use the **Charge** attack.
4. Once the PC who was downed and brought in here is revived and stabilized, the mission to retrieve the wand will be aborted. If they manage to stabilize them, the remaining PC or PCs will take the downed PC out of here and go to a safe place. After this, the three of you part ways. Go to 485.

COMBAT SHEET: ZHENTARIM SLAVER

ZHENTARIM SLAVER

Medium Human, Enforcer, LE

Armour Class 13 (leather armour)

Hit Points 14

Speed 30 ft.

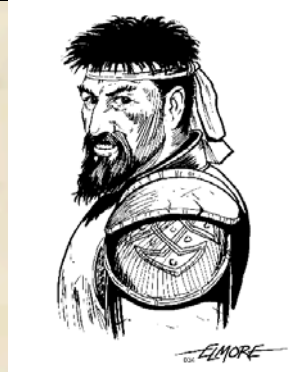
STR 15 (+2)	DEX 14 (+2)
CON 10 (+0)	INT 13 (+1)
WIS 9 (-1)	CHA 8 (-1)

Skills Intimidation +1

ATTACKS

Barbed nine-tail whip *melee attack*, +4 to hit, reach 5ft, one target. Hit: 1d4+2 slashing damage.

Scimitar *melee attack*, +4 to hit, one target, 1d6+2 slashing damage.



The slavers descend the ladder, alerted to your presence. “Out, scum!” one barks at you and Danadhir. “Leave the merchandise be, or you’ll be tossed to the Kraken!”

COMBAT NOTES (USE MAP 17) play AUDIO

1. Place tokens. ZS=Zhentarim slaver. ZP=Zhentarim paladin. D=Danadhir. PC=you. Roll initiative
2. Did you and Danadhir destroy both latches within three rounds? If not, then the prisoners are still within their cells.
3. If they are free, you can rally the prisoners to charge the Zhentarim. Make a persuasion check, DC 10. It shouldn't take too much to rouse this rabble. As soon as this happens, all the Zhentarim Slavers' attacks are at disadvantage. The prisoners are terrified of the paladin, however, and will not go near him.
4. Take note of Danadhir's **Protection** fighting style. If he is 5 ft away (which he will try to do) he imposes disadvantage on all attacks on you. If your attacker would have advantage (eg due to flanking) then it is cancelled and becomes a normal roll.
5. Standing in the rear, an evil paladin casts **Bless** on his first turn, adding 1d4 to the slavers' attack rolls. He continues the spell until one of the slavers dies, after which he will break concentration and make melee attacks. with his battleaxe, first casting Divine Favour as a bonus action before making his first attack. He will attack whoever has the most hitpoints.
6. If the Zhentarim can flank, they will. The exception is if a slaver has someone grappled, they will continue the grapple.
7. The slavers attack with barbed nine-tail whips, always moving to be in melee range. If a slaver rolls a 19 or 20 (without mods), the tails of the whip wrap around their target. DC 14 strength save target is grappled, after which the slaver makes a scimitar attack with advantage on their next turn. In addition, the barbed whip grappling the target causes an extra 1d4 damage. Target makes a strength save at the start of their turn to escape the grapple (except the turn after the grapple is initiated).
8. You can choose to move to where the latches are (the “L” markers), and finish these off as per the entry 41. When that happens, the prisoners flood the combat space.
9. Death saves are allowed in this encounter. If you go down, Danadhir will keep fighting until he either wins or is killed. If he wins, he will revive you, then go entry 464.

◆ *If you are victorious, go to 464.*

◆ *If you are victorious, but Danadhir goes down, go to 70.*

ZHENTARIM BLACK PALADIN

Male Human Paladin, LE



Armour Class 16 (studded leather armour)

Hit Points 28

Speed 30 ft.

STR 15 (+2)	DEX 14 (+2)	CON 12 (+1)
INT 11 (+0)	WIS 11 (+0)	CHA 9 (-1)

Fighting Style: Defense While wearing armour, gain +1 to AC

Skills Athletics +5, Insight +3, Persuasion +4

Languages Common, Giant, Sylvan

Bless (concentration) +1d4 to the slavers' attack rolls.

Lay on Hands When the paladin drops to below 10 hp, he will use an action to heal himself, from a pool of 15 hp.

Two Slots the paladin will cast Bless on the slavers at the start, and will use his second spell slot to cast Divine Favour as a bonus action before attacking with his Battleaxe. (+1d4 extra radiant damage to every successful attack).

ACTIONS

Battleaxe *melee attack* +4 to hit, 1d10+2 slashing (used two-handed: versatile).

DANADHIR DORFOLIN (NPC)

Male Dwarven Fighter, Level 2



Armour Class 16 (Chain mail)

Hit Points 26

Speed 25 ft.

STR 15 (+2)	DEX 13 (+1)	CON 16 (+3)
INT 10 (+0)	WIS 13 (+1)	CHA 8 (-1)

Senses Darkvision 60 ft

Skills Athletics +4, Intimidation +1, Survival +3

Languages Common, Dwarvish

Fighting style: Protection When a creature you can see attacks a target other than you that is within 5 ft of you, you can use your reaction to impose disadvantage on the attack roll. You must be wielding a shield.

Action Surge Extra action in turn, once between short rests

Second Wind Regain 1d10+2 h.p.

Two-weapon Fighting 2 shortswords (if available).

ACTIONS

Battleaxe *melee attack* +4 to hit, 1d10+2 slashing (used two-handed: versatile).

Shortsword 1 *melee attack* +4 to hit, 1d6+2 slashing damage

Shortsword (offhand – if available) *melee attack* +4 to hit, 1d6 slashing damage
melee attack, +4 to hit, range 5 ft, one target. Hit: 1d8+2 bludgeoning damage

COMBAT SHEET: SHIELD GUARDIANS

SHIELD GUARDIANS (x2)

Large Construct, Unaligned

Armour Class 17

Hit Points 142

Speed 30 ft.

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

Senses blindsight 10 ft, darkvision 60 ft, passive perception 10

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhausted, frightened, paralyzed, poisoned.

Languages Understands commands in any language but can't speak

Regeneration The Shield Guardian regains 10 hp at the start of its turn if it has at least 1 hp.

Guided Strike: The cleric can use his Channel Divinity to gain a +10 bonus to the attack roll. You make this choice after you see the roll. This can be used once per day.

ATTACKS

Multiattack The Shield Guardian makes two fist attacks.

Fist Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 5 ft, 2d6+4 bludgeoning damage.



The giant stone guardians move forward and begin pummeling you with their granite fists. It will be a miracle if you escape this alive.

COMBAT NOTES (Use MAP 8)

1. Place your PC token on the marker. The statues do not move (they are fixed in place) and are found on to top part of the map, flanking the table. Do not double monster numbers for this encounter if you are a party of 2. It is all but unwinnable as is.
2. The Shield Guardians stay within this small room during the battle. At any time you may retreat to the first room, but they will not follow you. They are tasked with defending the ring and that is their sole purpose. So, you may retreat without provoking attacks of opportunity. As long as you are within this room, however, and attacking, they will attack back.
3. If you retreat to the first room, you do not have a clear line of sight on either of the Shield Guardians to make ranged attacks. If you find some way of damaging them, without being in the room, the following occurs: One of the Shield Guardians moves forward and shuts the stone doors. You feel yourself dematerializing, and all of a sudden are back in Melhuish's Magical Curiosities. You may purchase anything you like from the entry 232 but you have failed the challenge. Return to 12 (without taking a progress point) and choose another merchant to visit.

◆ *If you are successful, go to entry 450.*

COMBAT SHEET: BUGBEAR ENFORCER

BUGBEAR

Medium Humanoid, CE

Armour Class 16 (chain mail)

Hit Points 27

Speed 30 ft.

STR 15 (+2)	DEX 14 (+2)
CON 13 (+1)	INT 8 (-1)
WIS 11 (+0)	CHA 9 (-1)

Senses darkvision 60 ft

Skills Stealth +6, Survival +2

Languages Common, Goblin

Brute A melee weapon deals one extra die of its damage on a successful attack.

ATTACKS

Battleaxe *Melee Weapon Attack* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft, one target, 1d8+2 piercing damage



The bugbear runs at you, enraged at your presence!

COMBAT NOTES (Use MAP 18)

1. Place tokens. B=Bugbear Enforcer. PC=You. Roll initiative.
2. This is uncomplicated, duke-it-out combat with no terrain effects. The goblins are all cheering in your favour, or at least you think so!

◆ *If you are victorious, go to 48.*

COMBAT SHEET: GRAX

GRAX

Bugbear Fighter, Battle Master, CE

Armour Class 17 (splint mail)

Hit Points 35

Speed 30 ft.

STR 17 (+3)	DEX 14 (+2)
CON 14 (+2)	INT 8 (-1)
WIS 12 (+1)	CHA 10 (+0)

Senses darkvision 60 ft

Skills Stealth +6, Survival +2, Perception +3

Languages Common, Goblin

Brute Force (Bugbear) 1 extra weapon damage die on a successful attack, once per short or long rest.

Superiority Dice 4 x 1d8 per day

Maneuvers (PHB p74 – each costs one superiority die):

Feinting action: bonus action to gain advantage on attack.

Precision attack: add one superiority die (d8) to attack roll (before or after making the roll)

Riposte: reaction attack when opponent misses with their attack.

Action Surge Extra action in turn once between rests.

ATTACKS

Warhammer (two-handed) Melee Weapon Attack +5 to hit, reach 5 ft, one target, 1d10+3 bludgeoning damage



Grax wastes no time advancing on you, raising his warhammer as he strides forward. “Taste my wrath, swine!” he roars.

COMBAT NOTES (Use MAP 19) **PLAY AUDIO**

- Place tokens. G=Grax, C=Chopper, Z=Zlug, S=Slug, PC=you. Roll initiative.
- If you win the stealth check, you can make a ranged surprise attack on Grax from the door. If you come into the room, Chopper will immediately see you and alert Grax.
- Grax is highly trained in certain martial techniques, among which is the ability to not be flanked. You and the goblins, however, can be flanked.
- The worg makes passing bite attacks on a target (roll d4: 1-2=you, 3=Zlug, 4=Slug), then uses any remaining movement (50 ft total movement) to get as far away as possible. Make a dex check (DC 12) every time to see if target is fast enough to make an opportunity attack on the creature.
- Do you have any dog treats? If so, you can scatter these about as a free action, which will keep the Worg busy for two rounds!
- The goblins focus all attacks on Grax until he is dead.
- Grax attacks with his warhammer (two-handed = 1d10+3), using *Precision attack* on his first attack (but only if he needs to). He attacks you first, as you pose the greater threat. If he ever misses, Grax uses *Feinting Action* maneuver. Grax will use *Feinting Action* a maximum of twice during this encounter. Remember he has four superiority dice, so can make four maneuvers.
- On his first successful attack, Grax uses his Brute Force racial feat to add 1 extra damage die (1d10).
- To determine who Grax attacks after his first turn, roll a d6. 1-4=you, 5=Zlug, 6=Slug.
- The first time anyone misses Grax, he uses *Riposte* (only once) to make a reaction attack on that character.
- Grax fought a troll earlier today while exploring some caverns, and luckily for you has already expended his *Second Wind* and *Action Surge*.
- If you are killed, Zlug and Slug will continue fighting and will then stabilise you if victorious. Death saves are allowed for all characters.

◆ *If you are victorious, go to 254.*

CHOPPER (WORG)

Large Monstrosity, NE



Armour Class 13

Hit Points 26

Speed 50 ft.

STR 16 (+3)	DEX 13 (+1)	CON 13 (+1)
INT 7 (-2)	WIS 11 (+0)	CHA 8 (-1)

Senses Darkvision 60 ft, PP 14

Skills Perception +4

Languages Goblin, Worg

Keen Hearing & Smell The worg has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

ACTIONS

Bite *melee attack* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft, one target, 2d6+3 piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 13 strength throw or be knocked prone.

ZLUG (NPC)

Goblin Fighter, Level 1, NE



Armour Class 14 (Leather armour)

Hit Points 12

Speed 30 ft.

STR 14 (+2)	DEX 17 (+3)	CON 13 (+1)
INT 10 (+0)	WIS 12 (+1)	CHA 15 (+2)

Senses Darkvision 60 ft

Skills Athletics +4, Deception +4, Stealth +5

Languages Common, Goblin

Combat Advantage Zlug deals 1d4 extra damage when he hits a target he has combat advantage against.

Goblin Quickness Immediate reaction when missed by a melee attack.

ACTIONS

Battleaxe *melee attack*, +4 to hit, 1d8+2 bludgeoning damage.

Battleaxe *melee attack* +4 to hit, 1d8+2 piercing damage. 8+2 bludgeoning damage

SLUG (NPC)

Goblin Fighter, Level 1, NE



Armour Class 14 (Leather armour)

Hit Points 12

Speed 30 ft.

STR 14 (+2)	DEX 17 (+3)	CON 13 (+1)
INT 10 (+0)	WIS 12 (+1)	CHA 15 (+2)

Senses Darkvision 60 ft

Skills Athletics +4, Deception +4, Stealth +5

Languages Common, Goblin

Combat Advantage Slug deals 1d4 extra damage when he hits a target he has combat advantage against.

Goblin Quickness Immediate reaction when missed by a melee attack.

ACTIONS

Shortsword *melee attack* +4 to hit, 1d6+2 piercing damage.

COMBAT SHEET: STORMSTONE

STORMSTONE

Medium Elemental, Unaligned

Armour Class 16 (natural)

Hit Points 35

Speed 30 ft.

STR 16 (+3)	DEX 17 (+3)
CON 20 (+5)	INT 6 (-2)
WIS 15 (+2)	CHA 10 (+0)

Skills Athletics +5, Intimidation +2

Damage Immunities Poison

Condition Immunities Frightened, Grappled, Petrified, Poisoned

Languages Terran

Command Stone The Stormstone can command any stone within sight to rise and hurtle at a target within 60 ft (see “Hurtle Stone” attack, below). The target makes an insight check, DC 10, to see where the Stormstone is directing this power. On a fail, the Stormstone makes the attack with advantage. The first time the Stormstone uses this attack, it is with advantage.

Shrapnel Burst Twice per day, the Stormstone sends out a blast of shrapnel from its body. Dex save, DC 14, 2d6+3 piercing damage on a failed save, half as much on a successful save.

ATTACKS

Hurtle Stone *Ranged Attack*, +5 to hit, range 60 ft, 1d8+3 bludgeoning damage.

Swipe *Melee attack*, +5 to hit, 1d8 +3 bludgeoning damage.



The bizarre creature stands before you, rubble falling from its lumbering form as it raises its arms, causing the very stone of the ruins to rise into the air.

COMBAT NOTES (Use MAP 20)

1. Place tokens. S=Stormstone. PC=You. Roll initiative.
2. The stormstone attacks primarily using its Command Stone feat, staying where it is at the entrance to the temple.
3. When you are within melee range, it will use its Shrapnel Burst attack on you (it has three of these attacks). If you leave its melee range, it uses Swipe as an opportunity attack (unless you disengage).
4. When it is out of Shrapnel Attacks, it will use Command Stone as its default attack.
5. If you feel this option is beyond you, you can flee the area. The Stormstone will get one Hurtle Stone attack with advantage as you leave, then return to entry 78 (without taking a progress point). The Stormstone goes back to guarding the ruined temple entrance, as if nothing had happened!

◆ *If you are victorious, go to 334.*

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