



Bedlam at the Benefit

Some heroes raid dungeons. Some heroes slay dragons. And some heroes raise money for children's hospitals. Everything is going splendidly for the fundraising gala at the Moonsea Children's Hospital – until an uninvited guest and his aberrant entourage crash the party!

A Two-Hour Adventure for 1st-4th Level Characters

Chris "Waffles" Wathen
Author

Adventure Code: CCC-GEL-01
Optimized For: APL 3
Version: 1.1

Special Thanks: Robert Andersen, Phil Baranski, Michael Brown, Sean Carpentier, Curtis Glenn, David Hopkins, Savannah Miller & Zach Person

Playtesters: Sean Carpentier, Leah Dennis, Sean Michael Galgano, Xavier Holland & Katie Mulryan,

Organized Play: Chris Lindsay

D&D Adventurers League Wizards Team: Adam Lee, Chris Lindsay, Mike Mearls, Matt Sernett

D&D Adventurers League Administrators: Robert Adducci, Bill Benham, Travis Woodall, Claire Hoffman, Greg Marks, Alan Patrick

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS, D&D, Wizards of the Coast, Forgotten Realms, the dragon ampersand, *Player's Handbook*, *Monster Manual*, *Dungeon Master's Guide*, D&D Adventurers League, all other Wizards of the Coast product names, and their respective logos are trademarks of Wizards of the Coast in the USA and other countries. All characters and their distinctive likenesses are property of Wizards of the Coast. This material is protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America. Any reproduction or unauthorized use of the material or artwork contained herein is prohibited without the express written permission of Wizards of the Coast.

©2018 Wizards of the Coast LLC, PO Box 707, Renton, WA 98057-0707, USA. Manufactured by Hasbro SA, Rue Emile-Boéchat 31, 2800 Delémont, CH. Represented by Hasbro Europe, 4 The Square, Stockley Park, Uxbridge, Middlesex, UB11 1ET, UK.

Introduction

Welcome to *Adventure Name*, a D&D Adventurers League™ adventure, part of the official D&D Adventurers League™ organized play system and the *Give Extra Life* story arc.

This adventure takes place at the opening of the newly completed Moonsea Children's Hospital. The hospital is situated on the southern coast of the Moonsea, approximately 20 miles due north of Elventree and only a couple of miles from Elua's Lighthouse.

This adventure is designed for **three to seven 1st-4th level characters** and is optimized for **five characters with an average party level (APL) of 3**. Characters outside this level range cannot participate in this adventure.

Adjusting This Adventure

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

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

Determining Party Strength

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

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

Before Play at the Table

Before you start play, consider the following:

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

Playing the Dungeon Master

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

To facilitate this, keep in mind the following:

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

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

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

Adventure Primer

Adventure Background

Displaced by the Great Law of Humanity in Hillsfar, a small group of non-human refugees took refuge at Elua's Lighthouse, and a small village sprung to life (DDEX 3-3, *Occupation of Szith Morcane*). While many refugees returned to Hillsfar following the overthrow of the First Lord, many decided this new village life suited them better.

While exploring the surroundings of their new home, some of the villagers discovered the forgotten ruins of a decently sized hospital. Some of the older members of the community remembered the existence of the sanatorium that existed here some 60 years ago, but the patients of that time were long gone, and the villagers decided it was time to put it to good use!

Reaching out for assistance from the major communities of the area, the villagers of Lighthouse were able to repair and rebuild the old asylum. Bars were removed from doors, cells were turned into bedrooms and the entire building was given a cheery facelift. The ultimate plan being to open its doors to the whole of the Moonsea Region, providing shelter and medical aid to the ones who need it most ... the children.

Little do the villagers know that prior to the close of the sanatorium one of its patients, a warlock named Kelkos, had received a call from The Chained God, Tharizdun. This warlock built a secret lair under the building ... and now he has returned to claim it.

Acting as not only hospital, but orphanage and safe haven for the region's children, the Moonsea Children's Hospital has been welcomed warmly by the surrounding communities and is ready to open its doors!

Location and NPC Summary

The following NPCs and locations feature prominently in this adventure. Each NPC and location should have an entry with a phonetic pronunciation and one-three sentences describing them.

Director Erika Salinop (AIR-i-ka SAL-i-nahp).
Lighthouse.

Adventure Overview

This adventure takes place at the opening gala for the new hospital. Characters have been asked by faction agents or hospital representatives to attend the gala and use their status as adventurers to solicit additional donations from the gathered nobility. But things will quickly go downhill.

The adventure is broken down into 4 parts:

Part 1. The characters will mingle with the nobility at the gala and attempt to raise money for the hospital through role-playing and skill checks. Each potential donor has a different motive for donating, and the players will need to discover and utilize them.

Part 2. The gala is attacked by the warlock Kelkos' minions! Not only will the players need to defend the nobility to protect their donations, but also help keep the children safe. Unfortunately, some of the minions manage to kidnap innocent nobles & staffers.

Part 3. The characters will take point on the search for the missing people, leading them into the new hospital. Through some clever research and investigation they will uncover the dark past of the building. If things go well, they could also discover Kelkos' story ... and weakness!

Part 4. The characters find Kelkos' lair and face off with the insane warlock for the good of all the children in the Moonsea!

Adventure Hooks

Each character receives a specific invitation to attend the gala. However, there are several additional reasons that a given character may have a vested interest in helping the hospital be successful.

Director's Request. The character's exploits as a fledgling adventurer have earned them some modicum of fame. Since nobles tend to enjoy being in the presence of such fame, the Director of the Hospital, Erika Salinop, has asked the adventurers to solicit additional donations from the attendees.

Part 1. Rubbing Elbows

Estimated Duration: 45 minutes

The characters find themselves attending a party for the opening of the hospital. They are reminded of why they were asked to attend and are then set loose to garner donations from the gathered nobility.

General Features

The field outside the hospital has the following features.

Terrain. Low-cut grasses in a flat field.

Weather. Director Salinop could not have chosen a better spring day on which to have the event. Fluffy clouds roll lazily by and a light breeze off the Moonsea keeps the temperature comfortable.

Light. The Gala begins in early afternoon as the sun is high overhead. The entire area is bright light.

Sounds. Caterers and bartenders create a bed of sound as they prepare, and the partygoers and musicians take over when the party starts.

A. Director's Directives

When you are ready to start the adventure, read or paraphrase the following:

Director Salinop, a captivating half-elven woman wearing an extravagant navy blue dress, approaches you, slightly out of breath. She has spent the past few hours bustling around, ensuring everything was just right for the impending party.

"Everything seems to be ready and the guests have begun to arrive. I can't thank you enough for agreeing to this; the children will appreciate any money you're able to raise!

"I know I've said it to you three times already, but I need everything to be perfect, so let's go over it one more time:

"The party you're attending is the Opening Gala for the Moonsea Children's Hospital. Your job is to mingle with the collected nobility and convince them to donate additional funds to the hospital. What questions might you have?"

Director Salinop is anxious to get to the party, but can afford a few moments to make sure the adventurers are fully informed as to the event. Feel free to be liberal with these answers as none of this information is sensitive or secretive.

- **What is the Moonsea Children's Hospital?** "The hospital is an opportunity for better lives for all of the children of the Moonsea region. Not only will it offer free medical care for young people, but also

act as an orphanage, providing shelter and safety until permanent residences can be found."

- **Why us?** "Let me tell you a little secret: the nobility LOVE getting to say they know adventurers. I'm hoping that the chance to spend a little time with up-and-coming adventurers will encourage them to open their hearts ... and their money pouches!"
- **Can we wear our gear?** "You are here because you are adventurers; you should absolutely dress the part!"
- **Who will be in attendance?** "Nobility from the entirety of the Region will be here. Zhentil Keep, Hulburg, Hillsfar, Phlan, Melvaunt and, well, the list goes on. There's even going to be a representative from the Red Wizards who are helping rebuild Mulmaster! Anyone who contributed money or personnel to the construction efforts was invited to this Gala."
- **They've already donated? And you want us to ask for more!?** "It's true; these people have already generously contributed to the construction effort. But the point of this Gala is to raise money for the first year of operation. The hope is that by getting them here in person they'll be able to SEE the good their donations will do."
- **Will we be handling cash?** "Absolutely not! I would never wish to put that much responsibility on you all. Each of you will carry a kit with you containing ink and quill, cards for donors to fill out, candle and sealing wax. If someone agrees to donate, have them fill out a card, add some wax and stamp their sigil! The donors should already know this process as well."
- **How much money should we be asking for?** "Our official strapline is 'No donation is too small.' But anything smaller than 100gp would be unlikely given the wealth of those in attendance. Additionally, in the rare event that someone is pledging 1,000gp or more, make sure you find me immediately! We will make a special announcement."
- **Are we getting paid?** Director Salinop smiles and rolls her eyes. You will receive the 25gp stipend you were promised following the party. Also, feel free to partake in the food. Although, I must ask you to avoid the booze and other intoxicants. People tend not to donate money to drunkards.

Don't let the players spend too long on the questions. Director Salinop is in a bit of a rush to check the finishing touches ... and the real fun, after all, is to be

had at the party. Move on to Part B when the players have the information they need.

B. Party Time? Excellent!

As the players move on to the party, read or paraphrase the following:

The scene before you is elegant, but not extravagant. Held in a field of low-cut grass (soon to be the children's outdoor play area), the affair offers natural beauty as opposed to humanoid-crafted opulence. Hills to the south begin to show signs of the same trees that permeate the Cormanthor Forest beyond. Only a few miles away to the east, the top of Elua's Lighthouse can be seen, although it remains unlit.

The decorations are simple, and were clearly designed to catch the sea breeze that blows in off the Moonsea to the north. Streamers of white, sage green and pale blue toss and twist themselves into elegant knots which fall away when the wind calms.

A few clusters of decorations, made by the first group of children to take up residency in the hospital, display the color and cheerful personalities which will be welcomed in this one-of-a-kind building.

Tables of food (featuring Falwan's half cakes) and two bars (serving wine and ale selections from across the region) have been set up around the edges and a group of performers are tuning their instruments on the steps of the Hospital.

And then the guests arrive...

Before the Fun Begins

Before you begin introducing the various partygoers with whom the players will need to interact, explain to them how this part of the adventure is going to operate:

A Social Skill Challenge. While this section is driven by the social interactions the players devise, their ultimate success or failure will be determined by a short series of skill checks.

Each in Their Time. Each character should have a chance to interact with 2 NPCs (there will essentially be two 'rounds'). You can have the players roll initiative, or just work your way around the table - whatever works best for you. If you have a large party, you may recommend that they pair up or take turns helping each other. This helps cut time in this section.

Everyone has Reservations. Each NPC listed here can be convinced to cough up that extra donation (except for Lord Eorl Hulmaster; see his entry). However, it is going to take more than asking nicely. Each time a player chooses an NPC to interact with, they will need to determine the proper way to approach the topic and solicit that donation.

The Hard Sell. Once a player endeavors to learn what makes their NPC tick, they must attempt a skill check to get that person to fill out a donation card. The options are unique for each NPC, but there are always at least two to choose from.

Always a Catch. Consult the list of modifiers below to know how to reward or penalize your players appropriately for their Social Interaction.

For any skill checks in this chapter, use the table below as a guideline for modifiers:

Rubbing Elbows Skill DCs

Base DC to learn how to approach	15
Base DC to convince to donate	20
Excellent Role Playing	Player adds d4
Using appropriate approach	-5 to DC
Player makes a donation to Extra Life in real life during the check	-2 to DC
Character skips 'turn' to Help Another	Advantage
Character consumes alcohol during party	Disadvantage
Character attempts and fails to use any kind of Enchantment on an NPC	+2 to DC & Disadvantage
Utilizing previously earned Story Awards	As appropriate

*Please Note: Character abilities/spells that help with skill checks should absolutely be allowed ... within reason. For example, a character should only be able to affect one character per round with Guidance.

Results!

The results of the Approach Check are cut-and-dry: either the character learned the proper approach or not. If they did, *and* they choose to use it, they earn the -5 to the DC of the Donation Check.

The Donation Check results are slightly more complicated. After calculating all of the modifiers, the characters earn a 100gp base donation for a success. You then add an additional 100gp to the donation for each point the check exceeded the DC. There is no maximum donation.

Make sure you track how much the party has earned as you go; it will affect how much gold they get at the end of the module.

Donations over 1,000gp

When a character rolls well enough to earn over one thousand gold pieces from a donor (meaning they exceed the Donation Check by at least nine) characters should, as previously instructed, alert Director Salinop. With the aid of a *Thaumaturgy* spell, she immediately calls the entire gathering's attention to recognize and thank the "Celestial Donor". You should feel free to role-play the NPC's reaction to this announcement as you see fit, given what their situation is.

Solicitations Welcome.

Once both you and the players have a grasp on how this Social Interaction Encounter will run, move on to the next section by giving them **Player Handout #1** and reading or paraphrasing the following along with them (DMs and players can use the matching numbers as a common reference point):

The arrival of the guests has been a whirlwind of activity. Before you realized what was happening, the yard was filled with nobles of every race. Hailing from across the Moonsea region, it's hard to keep track of everyone individually. The time has come to begin making your solicitations. Glancing around the gathered assembly, some people catch your eye as potential targets:

- 1) A human woman attempting to wrangle five ... or is it six ... children.
- 2) A gnome in pale green robes, her hair decorated with twigs and leaves.
- 3) A hill dwarf at a table with a small alchemy kit, continuously sipping at his beer and grimacing.
- 4) A half-drow whom you only catch glimpses of occasionally.
- 5) A female dwarf with a tavern owner's warm smile; she has freckles and red hair.
- 6) A larger than life human man wearing the robes of the Red Wizards of Thay.
- 7) A mature elven woman who is speaking mostly with employees and clerics of the hospital.
- 8) An attractive middle-aged human woman who clearly knows what a hard day's labor on the docks looks like.
- 9) A portly human gentlemen sporting a golden wig and fancy doublet.
- 10) A halfling dressed in the latest fashion enjoying another glass of hard liquor.
- 11) A brass dragonborn wearing a naval dress uniform.
- 12) A human couple wearing Mulmastrian-styled clothing; the woman is covered entirely in scarves, even her face is veiled.
- 13) A gnome who keeps looking over his shoulder and jumping at any loud noises.
- 14) A tiefling woman who has just pulled her 6th or 7th partner on to the dance floor.
- 15) An elderly human gentleman who only speaks with those who approach him directly.
- 16) A goliath barbarian queen, covered head to toe in animal totems.

With such a colorful group of potential donors and a limited window who will you choose to approach!?

The Partygoers

Below you will find a list of 16 NPCs who are in attendance at the party. This list is by no means complete: there are a couple hundred nobles in attendance. Feel free to change names or adjust slight details while using the attributes, descriptions and personalities as guidelines for the actual skill checks.

- **1) Shelia Goodfellow** is a half-elf **noble** from Phlan. While her husband was not able to attend the event, all six of her children are present. Unfortunately, she is having trouble keeping all of them under control; they range in age from 4 months to 8 years old.
 - **Complication:** Shelia is far too distracted by her children running amok to be able to have a serious conversation about donations.
 - **Approach:** *Animal Handling*, *Intimidation* or *Performance* will allow a character to either corral the kids into one place or otherwise find a way to keep them occupied so she can listen to a pitch.
 - **Donation Check:** A simple *Persuasion* check is all that Shelia needs ... once you gain her attention.

- **2) Seranolla the Whisperer**, a gnome **druid**, wears pale green robes and her hair is an intricate weave of sticks, leaves and flowers. She is also the Emerald Enclave representative of the Moonsea region, a fact which any Enclave member can identify immediately.
 - **Complication:** Several high ranking members of the Enclave have recently declared war on the Red Wizards of Thay and Seranolla is conflicted as to how best use her faction funds.
 - **Approach:** She did not earn the title 'Whisperer' without cause. Unfortunately, with the din of the party at the volume it is, one must succeed on a *Perception* check to make out what she is saying! (Otherwise, a character risks offending her by asking 'What?' too many times!)
 - **Donation Check:** On one hand, she feels her Enclave funds should be held in reserve to support the war effort. On the other, if war is to come, a hospital for the children affected and displaced by it would be a huge boon to the region. She has heard all of the arguments, so only a *Medicine*, *Nature* or *History* check can be made to provide historical examples of wars supporting the character's opinion.

- **3) Thalik Ironheart**, a hill dwarf **noble**, brewer and alchemist, has been sent from Ylraphon on behalf of his clan. The Ironhearts provide brewing, distilling and alchemical supplies in Ylraphon.
 - **Complication:** Thalik utterly dislikes the beer which is being served this evening. He is trying to make it better, but hasn't succeeded yet. He's also one to appreciate a friendly challenge.
 - **Approach:** If a character speaks with Thalik, he is in the middle of adding drops of liquid from various vials to his mug of ale. He's having trouble modifying the beer to his specifications. But before letting a character mess with it, he needs to know what to expect from them: an *Intelligence (Brewer's Supplies)*, *Medicine* or *Survival* will answer his questions.
 - **Donation Check:** Once he has a sense of the character's skill he offers them a friendly wager: he will let them use his portable Alchemy Kit to work on a single beer. He agrees to donate an amount of money proportional to how good the beer is! A character will need to make an *Intelligence (Alchemist's Supplies)*, *Arcana* or *Survival* to modify the beer effectively.
- **4) Dark Linsa** is a standoffish half-drow **master thief**. She is a known member of The Welcomers (a thieves guild in Phlan) and is in attendance on their behalf. She also has a propensity for disliking adventurers and their "foolhardy bravado".
 - **Complication:** Linsa knows she can keep any of the The Welcomers money she doesn't donate, so intends to avoid the process entirely. She considers this event, the adventurers working it, and even the idea of a children's hospital to be 'over-dramatic' and sentimental.
 - **Approach:** Dark Linsa does not wish to be approached. To even get face to face with her requires an *Acrobatics* or *Stealth* check to maneuver through the crowds of people and cut her off at the right moment.
 - **Donation Check:** When finally pinned down, she listens to the character's pitch with bored resignation. She then quickly (and sloppily) fills out a donation card and stamps it. However, she purposefully fills it out poorly and illegible ... even the stamp is unintelligible. A *Perception* check will let a character notice this quickly enough to have her correct the

'mistake' before she walks away. Otherwise, they notice after she walks away: the document can then be 'modified' by a *Sleight of Hand* or *Forgery Kit*.

- **5) Thyra Stoneshoulders** is a female dwarf **guard** with red hair, brown eyes and rosy skin. Her warm smile welcomes anyone into a conversation. She is the leader of the Phlan Refugees in Elmwood.
 - **Complication:** Thyra would love to donate to the hospital as she, more than most, knows the importance of helping those hurt by the regions continuing troubles. However, she is simply out of money!
 - **Approach:** Thyra is proud and would never just admit that she has nothing to spare to help those in need. A successful *Insight* or *Persuasion* check, however, will reveal that she is just flat out broke.
 - **Donation Check:** Thyra truly has no coin to donate. But if the characters are creative they could put together a donation in her name, allowing her to fill out the donation card.
- **6) The Zulkir Dar'lon Ma** is a Red Wizard of Thay and their top-ranking representative in Mulmaster. His blindingly white smile and boisterous laugh makes him hard to miss.
 - **Complication:** Speaking with a high ranking Red Wizard can be a daunting task... especially this Zulkir, as he always seems to know exactly what to say. Knowing tensions between adventurers and Thay are high right now, requesting money from the Zulkir is actually about knowing what *NOT* to say.
 - **Approach:** An *Investigation* (by speaking to others) or a *History* check will allow a character to avoid faux pas topics while interacting with the Zulkir.
 - **Donation Check:** *Arcana* and *History* checks are the easiest ways to prove a character knows what they're talking about. However, a *Persuasion* check could also be effective. The Zulkir is immune to *Deception* and *Intimidation* checks, as well as mind influencing magic. He is simply too powerful of an Enchanter.
- **7) Edea Valkrana** is a female elf **Spy** who operates a tile factory in Thentia. However, she also has a secret enterprise: assisting runaway slaves in escaping and establishing new lives.

- **Complication:** Edea has ulterior motives for wanting to see the hospital be a success. She hopes to use it as a stop where she can hide slaves whom she is helping escape.
 - **Approach:** An *Insight* or *Perception* check while speaking with Edea will convince her that a character is trustworthy enough to confide in them that she wishes to periodically hide people 'on the run' in the hospital.
 - **Donation Check:** *Deception*. Despite the fact that both Edea and Director Salinop are good-hearted people, Director Salinop would never risk the hospital or the children. Edea won't donate without a guarantee of aid, so unfortunately lying to her (*Deception*) would be the only way to get her donation.
- **8) Mara Betry** is an attractive middle-aged human woman **Bandit Captain** who is the level-headed overseer of the Hulburg Harbor District.
 - **Complication:** Mara is concerned with the bottom line and worries about the Hospital constantly requesting the aid of her already busy Shipping Guild.
 - **Approach:** *Insight* or *Investigation* (either by speaking with her or asking around about her) will reveal Mara's concerns, suggesting that if they can be adequately addressed she would be happy to donate from the Guild's coffers.
 - **Donation Check:** *Intelligence (Persuasion)* (to address her concerns in a logical manner) or *Water Vehicles* if the character has proficiency in them (by 'talking shop').
 - **9) Baron Debent** is a **Yuan-Ti Anathema** currently polymorphed into a human male wearing an ornate doublet and gaudy, golden wig.
 - **Complication:** The Baron, as he prefers to be called, has come to ensure this Hospital is what it proclaims to be. He is paranoid that a supernatural creature may be using the Hospital as a front for nefarious deeds, just as he himself is with his Complex in Mulmaster. He hates competition.
 - **Approach:** *Insight* or *Investigation* (either by speaking with him or asking around about him) will reveal that The Baron simply wants to ensure that the Hospital isn't "too good to be true."
 - **Donation Check:** The only way The Baron will believe the Hospital has no nefarious purpose is if he can get close enough to Director Salinop to cast *Detect Thoughts* on her. This requires a *Persuasion* check on the part of the characters to tear her away from the other elite donors with whom she is already speaking.
 - **10) Finnan Jampot** is a lightfoot Halfling **commoner** from Melvaunt. The Jampot family has quite the fortune from their textiles business ... but it is also known that Finnan has a tendency to over indulge while at these parties and charity events.
 - **Complication:** Finnan has had a bit too much to drink and is looking for a party!
 - **Approach:** Finnan is simply looking for a drinking buddy! He begs any character that approaches him to do a shot of Elvenclear with him. He won't listen to anything they say until his request is met, instead choosing to sing loudly over top of their pitch.
 - **Donation Check:** *Intimidation, Deception, or Persuasion*. Frankly, he's so deep in the bottle, he could believe whatever a character tells them.
 - **Special!:** Remind a character that Director Salinop asked them not to drink. If they proceed anyway, she happens to be looking in their direction as they take the shot and shakes her head in disapproval. Make sure you apply the 'Consumes Alcohol' penalty from the skill chart above to future checks.
 - **11) Rijjak Kerrhylon** is a brass dragonborn **war priest** of Helm who participated in the Reclamation of Phlan. During the attack, as well as in the days following, Rijjak proved himself a capable commander. He now commands a small paramilitary fleet which is available to all cities on the Moonsea.
 - **Complication:** While driven to give back to the community, Rijjak has been duped by the rich and their 'causes' before. He now feels the need to investigate charitable causes with scrutiny before committing.
 - **Approach:** Rijjak is uncomfortable amongst the nobility, so spends most of the party as a wallflower. He avoids even the most polite conversation, excusing himself after only the briefest exchange of pleasantries. Only by starting an informed conversation about a topic in which he is greatly interested (*Nature* or *Religion*) can a character keep his attention.
 - **Donation Check:** Once nailed down, Rijjak realizes the character is an adventurer (not a

stuffy noble which he finds insufferable) and he begins to open up. However, he still needs to confirm that the hospital is a cause worthy of his hard earned gold. But given his past as a Life Cleric, a character will need to put it in terms he understands: *Medicine, Religion* or *Survival*.

- **Special!:** Rijjak misses the adventuring life; if the character tells him a story of their heroics, they can add an additional d6 to the check of their choice.
- **12) Zor Faltyn and Zora Tiega Gos** are nobles from Mulmaster who suffered more than one tragic attack a few years ago during the time of the Elemental Cults. Tiega wears a series of scarves and shawls which cover her entire body and face, covering burns she suffered during these attacks.
 - **Complication:** The Goses wish for the hospital's mental health wing to be dedicated to (and named after) their dear nephew, Andrik. Andrik lost his mind to the influence of the Cult of the Eternal Flame.
 - **Approach:** A successful *History* or *Investigation* check (by asking around about the couple) can reveal the events of DDEX 2-5 when Tiega was burned and Andrik went crazy due to the actions of the Eternal Flame. Additionally, they learn that adventurers were instrumental in the resolution of this conflict; Zor Faltyn has had an incredible fondness for adventurers ever since.
 - **Donation Check:** A character who introduces themselves as an adventurer and/or can share stories of their past adventures (especially those dealing with the Cult of Elemental Evil) earns the Gos family confidence, and Faltyn reveals their desire for the dedication of the mental health wing. A *Persuasion* or *Deception* roll is then required to promise them their request will reach the ears of Director Salinop.
 - **Special!:** Characters (or Players with another character) who have played DDEX 2-5, Flames of Kythorn may have experienced Tiega dying in the adventure. In this case, please feel free to have Faltyn in attendance by himself. Or you could justify that he had her raised from the dead. Ultimately, whatever feels like a logical explanation should be used.
- **13) Schmon Schmith** is actually Roondar Murndiggles, a skittish gnome **evoker** and retired adventurer. He recently caused a small fiasco by

burning down a tavern with an ill-considered fireball. (He SWEARS there were trolls attacking the place!) Unfortunately, the fire spread to nearby buildings and the end result was a full quarter of the village reduced to ash.

- **Complication:** Roondar is now on the run. The villagers wish to humiliate him for a time, then send him to prison in Phlan. Additionally, they plan to take the small fortune he possesses from his adventuring days to cover the repair costs of the village.
- **Approach:** Roondar is so anxious that he very quickly blurts out the full story in one hurried pleading breath if he is sufficiently startled by a *Stealth, Slight of Hand* or *Intimidation*. (See below sidebar),
- **Donation Check:** Continuing to *Intimidate* "Schmon" is the easiest way to get him to donate. However, he is also willing to make a contribution if the character knows of someone who could help him escape and make a new life! (His adventuring gold ultimately means less to him than his freedom.)

Roondar's Rambling Confession

I'm sorry okay! I admit the fireball came from these hands but you have to understand... TROLLS there were TROLLS coming in the doors and windows I really did a good thing by trying to defend the tavern how was it to know the fire would spread to next door at least nobody died nobody died right? so please just let me go and forget about the whole thing! I just never come back OK? I PROMISE! Oh goodness you scared the living daylight out of me I thought you were one of them.

- **14) Felicia del Eathalena** prefers to be called **Temerity**. She is a noble who is proud of her tiefling blood. Having recently come of age, her elven parents have begun sending her to events in their stead.
 - **Complication:** Temerity is an insatiable flirt, having no preference as to race or gender. She flatly refuses to discuss donations until *someone* dances with her!
 - **Approach:** Temerity has positioned herself by the dance floor, clearly waiting to be asked to dance. If not approached in the first round, Temerity approaches the character she finds most attractive (literally anyone, DMs decision) and asks them to dance. A character dancing with Temerity must make a *Performance* check using *either* Dexterity or

Charisma to determine how well they keep up with her.

- **Donation Check:** Little do the characters know that Temerity was sent with donation funds from her parents and is going to use them no matter how they reacted to her flirting. Use the result of the *Performance* check to determine the amount of her donation.
- **15) Lord Eorl Hulmaster** is the Lord of Hulburg and a human **noble**. He is blunt, but not condescending, especially in the presence of the gathered nobility, but he does have a tendency to keep to himself.
 - **Complication:** Lord Hulmaster does not believe in charity. He believes that anything earned must be deserved. He was only invited to the Gala because he is the most influential man in Hulburg.
 - **Approach:** Any *Insight* or *Investigation* check reveals that the “Hedge Lord” (as the other nobles call him behind his back) does not have an inclination towards charity and will be a hard sell ... if they succeed on the check by 5 or more, they can identify the truth of the matter: he is here for appearance’s sake only and no argument will convince him to donate.
 - **Donation Check:** Unfortunately, there is nothing the characters can do to earn a donation from this NPC. You should allow them to roll any check they wish to try, but the result will not matter. He dismisses their requests adamantly, not-so-subtly implying they should take their leave of his presence.
- **16) Vulai Skyherald** is a goliath **champion** and Queen of the Falling Storm Clan: barbarians of the Galena Mountains. She is also (surprisingly) one of the most cunning politicians of this age (Intelligence and Wisdom both 17).
 - **Complication:** Queen Vulai plays the part of the unintelligent barbarian spectacularly, offering trinkets and baubles (feathers, beads, river stones and the like) as “the wealth of her people” ... but it is all a ruse. Quite recently, veins of diamonds have been discovered in the mountains over which the Falling Storm claims dominion. This has made her one of the wealthiest attendees at the gala, despite not being the most refined.
 - **Approach:** She initially tells any approaching character that she is more than happy to

donate all she has to this wonderful cause. She then proceeds to produce a pouch of beads made from bone, stone and horn. Once it is explained that coinage or precious gemstones are a more conventional form of wealth in these parts, the character will need to make a successful *Insight* check (to tell she actually does understand) or *Perception* check (to notice true diamonds hidden amongst her jewelry).

- **Donation Check:** Whether the ruse is uncovered or not, Queen Vulai continues to deny her possession of ‘conventional wealth’. A character must outwit her to catch her in a lie or poke holes in her arguments until she relents. These can be achieved with an *Insight* or *Investigation* check respectively.
- **Special!:** Assume the DC of Queen Vulai’s checks are determined by her own *Deception* rolls. This means creative characters may find ways to affect the DC not included on the chart.

Developments

Once each player has had two opportunities to solicit donations (whether they succeed or fail), move on to the Box Text at the beginning of Part 2!

DM Reminder: Make sure you have documented the total amount the players have accumulated on their donation cards!

XP Award

If the characters interact with NPCs, award each of them 50 XP.

If a player role-played particularly well throughout the encounter, award that player an additional 50 XP.

If a character managed to solicit a single donation of 1,000 gp or more, award that player an additional 25 XP. (Only once per character.)

Part 2. Get Out of My House

Estimated Duration: 15 minutes

Kelkos, Warlock of the Great Old One, has returned to his lair from his time in the Far Realm ... with plenty of minions in tow. Unhappy to find it not only rebuilt, but also occupied by hundreds of Nobles, he launches an attack on the gala via an Arcane Gate.

A. The Gate Opens

Without warning, a crack of Arcane Energy rips through the air! Turning to the source of the sound, the partygoers fall silent and witness an *Arcane Gate* open in front of the hospital. A writhing mass of flesh tumbles out of the portal. It is an amalgam of eyes and mouths and a constant stream of whispers and chatterings begins to issue forth from it.

Director Salinop looks around the gathered nobles. "A moulder? Here? Who ..."

Before she can finish her question, a small brain follows through the portal, leaping past the moulder and landing deftly on four bestial legs. Immediately following that creature a swarm of creatures erupt from all edges of the gate: the heads and necks of eels connected to the bodies of spiders.

There is a unified intake of breath from the partygoers. Then chaos breaks out. Nobles and servants alike begin scattering in a hundred directions at once, fear taking the place of reason. The Red Wizard promptly removes himself from the commotion with a *teleport* spell while several of those attendees more experienced in the ways of combat (such as Rijjak, Queen Vulai and Seranolla) launch themselves into the fray.

Unfortunately, the waves of aberrations pouring from the portal seem to have no end ... you need to get in there!

At this point, as DM, you should pick one of the least powerful NPCs from whom the characters successfully obtained a donation card. Unfortunately, it is the lot of this poor NPC to be in need of saving! Describe how the aberrations listed in the sidebar are cornering and threatening the NPC, as well as how ineffectually they are defending themselves. If the players need a little nudge, remind them the donation card is only a pledge; that NPC must be alive in order to actually donate at the end of the night.

Adjusting this Encounter

Use the following monsters for this combat based on the strength of your group. These are not cumulative.

- **Very Weak:** 4 Neogi Hatchlings & 1 Neogi
- **Weak:** 6 Neogi Hatchlings & 2 Gibbering Moulders
- **Average:** 6 Neogi Hatchlings, 1 Neogi & 1 Gibbering Moulder
- **Strong:** 8 Neogi Hatchlings & 2 Neogi
- **Very Strong:** 8 Neogi Hatchlings, 2 Neogi & 2 Gibbering Moulders

Tricks of the Trade

This combat is not designed to kill the players, but rather to drain their resources a bit and prepare them for the kinds of things they may see in the final fight. Don't hesitate to call this fight early if they have learned the enemies weaknesses and aren't in danger of falling to them!

Neogi Hatchlings: These monsters attack in pairs; never have more than 2 of them attack a single character. Also remember they are not highly intelligent so will do things like provoke attacks of opportunity.

Gibbering Moulders: Start this enemy at least 40 ft away from any player or NPC. Players should be tentative to approach it and be surprised when it attempts to blind them from range. Hopefully they learn that it is slow and not a real threat unless it gets too close.

Neogi: Clearly the ringleader of the group, it will try to *Enslave* the most dexterous-looking character, and then will target the biggest warrior with its bite and claws.

The Targeted NPC(s)

The aberrations have been directed to take as many prisoners as possible, but they understand the difference between a noncombatant and a threat. Only in the case that all players have been knocked unconscious will the monsters go for the NPCs.

B. Development

Once this combat is complete: move immediately into Part 3. Unfortunately, the players couldn't be everywhere and some nobles have been abducted!

Part 3. Down Memory Lane

Estimated Duration: 40 minutes

After the rush of combat, the minions have retreated, taking many hostages with them. The players are the most appropriately equipped group to find them. Some help from the more arcane-inclined partygoers will point the players in the right direction: the basement of the hospital. As they explore the hidden lower levels of the hospital, they will learn more about Kelkos and his past. Hopefully the exploration will go well enough to discover his weakness!

A. Aftermath

Immediately kick off Part 3 by reading or paraphrasing the following:

The constant babble and chatter comes to a sudden end as the last gibbering moulder dies. The hum of magical energy fades as the Arcane Gate closes, leaving only the sobs and cries of the wounded in its place.

As the survivors take stock of what just happened it becomes clear not many people were killed during the attack, but more than a few are currently unaccounted for including Director Salinop! Seranolla the Whisperer turns to you as you approach a gathering of the minds.

"You did very well, young ones, holding your own and defending the innocents. But unfortunately, your work is not over."

"Yesss," the Baron Debent interjects- "my divination spells have located that *Arcane Gate's* origin point."

"And we're very thankful for that-" Seranolla continues "While the strongest of us guard and relocate those less capable east to Lighthouse, a small group should investigate the origin location and report back."

"I have traced the origin to underneath the hospital. Do with that information what you will." the Baron adds nonchalantly. Then, with a short tug on his blonde wig, he begins walking east.

Seranolla rolls her eyes. "Ever the melodramatic, that one. Director Salinop and I had many conversations during the construction efforts. There is an archway in the southwest corner of the main floor. It was walled up when the Director determined that the basements to which it led were too dangerous for children. I trust the Baron's magic, even if he is a pompous fool. Start your search there, and good luck!"

With that, the forest gnome hurries over to Rijjak, who has organized the survivors into small groups as they start the hike towards Lighthouse.

Before running this section, you should be familiar with the following sidebar as it will put into context the pieces of the story which the players will receive as they explore.

The Full and True Story

Kelkos lived in a self-built cabin, near the site of what was then a sanitarium. He herded sheep and enjoyed the solitude the life allowed him, requiring only infrequent journeys to Hillsfar and Elventree to sell his wool and milk.

Then the whispers started – voices in his head suggesting that he do things he never would have considered before. They were easy to ignore at the onset. But the longer he ignored them, the more persistent they became. Before he did something rash or dangerous, he sold his herd and checked himself in to the sanitarium.

Little did he know that the caregivers of the sanitarium were clerics of the deity of madness, The Chained God (Tharizdun). One of the clerics had seen Kelkos in the fields with his herd and became madly obsessed with him. So she used her powers to slowly drive him both insane and in to her arms.

The tortures he endured while in the "care" of The Chained God's clerics were not of the body, but the mind. But inflicting madness upon him was not enough; they broke him even further by periodically and temporarily curing his insanity. In these times of lucidity, Kelkos could remember the visions of the Far Realm forced in to his mind. He would beg any higher power he could to save him from his torture.

Tharizdun answered.

Seeing untapped power in the young shepherd, the Chained God decided to challenge his followers. Granting Kelkos a wealth of arcane power, the Chained God posed a simple question to all the residents of the sanitarium: Who would win in a fight to the death? A handful of novice clerics -- or a single, powerful warlock? And with that, he commanded every resident of the sanitarium to be set free within its walls.

The mayhem that ensued was inconceivable to the sane mind. Released from his cell, Kelkos moved through the building seemingly at random, slaughtering any clerics he came upon. The other residents perhaps had the worse fate, as they were transformed into the aberrations that now make up Kelkos' servants.

The Chained God, pleased with his new warlock's achievement, granted him reign over the sanitarium. Kelkos carved a series of caves beneath the basement in which he and the other aberrations could lair. And once again, he was content to be alone with a flock.

But Tharizdun had need of his new pet and pulled Kelkos into the Far Realm for some unknown, alien mission.

Kelkos finally returned (on the night of the Gala) to find his quiet, remote lair to be not only crowded with people, but converted to a hospital! Imbued with even more of The Chained God's power, he opened the *Arcane Gate* and sent his herd forth to bring back these invaders. His herd would swell with their transformation!

B. Exploratory Skill Challenge

This section runs as one big Skill Challenge as the characters explore the previously sealed basements of the sanitarium. After explaining how the Skill Challenge will work, have the players roll for initiative and proceed in order.

Completing the Challenge. The players need to achieve a number of successful ability checks before they acquire a number of failed checks. The numbers needed for both successes and failures are determined by the number of players and are shown on the table below.

# Players	Successes	Failures
3	6	3
4	8	4
5	10	5
6	12	6
7	14	7

Players Initiate. The players have complete autonomy when choosing the skill they wish to use on their turn. However, it is important that they tell you *how* they wish to use the skill. Knowing the given circumstances of their situation, they should tell you how they wish to use a specific skill to manipulate and explore the world. You should empower them to create obstacles for themselves in order to justify using a skill. [Example: "I want to use *Athletics* to kick in the stuck door that blocks our path."]

Still Telling a Story. The goal of this chapter is for the players to learn Kelkos' background by exploring the world from which he came. It is still your job as the DM to turn their ability checks and dice rolls into a believable, connected story. Once a player has told you how they wish to use a skill, it is your job to say "yes" to their idea, and turn what they've created into the story you need to tell.

Four Groups of Skills. For convenience, the story pieces to be discovered have been broken down into four groups. Each group has a bulleted list of information and rewards which can be earned during the chapter.

Success! Each time a player succeeds at an ability check, you should include the next sequential bullet of information as you narrate what their success looks like.

Failure! When a character fails a check, they do not earn new information and you should narrate accordingly. Additionally, they must succeed at a DC 12 Wisdom saving throw or suffer a short-term madness as described on page 259 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*. However, the next character may either attempt to deal with the same situation laid before them or "move on" to a new and different task.

Repetition Complicates Matters. Players should know that choosing the same skill repeatedly for their checks will result in the difficulty increasing for each subsequent check.

Rewards. The rewards the players earn for this section are related to how many failures they have accrued by the time they reach the required number of successes to move forward.

DCs for Checks in this Section

ALL ability checks in this section have a Base DC of 16. Each time a character uses a skill that they have used previously in this chapter, the DC increases by 2. Since the goal is to encourage players to choose different skills each time their turn comes around, players should be aware of both the DC and the penalty for reusing skills.

Spells and abilities should absolutely be allowed to modify these checks within reason. For instance, even though more than a minute will pass on a given round, it is recommended that a character with the *Guidance* cantrip only be allowed to cast it on one character per round.

Additionally, characters should be allowed to forgo their turn to use the Help action, granting another character of their choosing Advantage on their check. However, this comes with a penalty (as the characters are covering less total area): the DC is raised by 3 for the receiving character's check.

Into the Depths

Once both you and the players have a grasp on how this Exploratory Skill Challenge will run, move on to the next section by reading or paraphrasing the following:

The walled-up archway is easy to spot as you've made your way to the southwest corner of the hospital. Smashing through the mortar and stone was easier than you expected and you've found yourselves in a long abandoned hallway with numerous doors lining both walls.

Rats and insects flee from your presence and the introduction of new sound and light to their world. The air smells and feels stale and undisturbed. Corridors look to branch off this main hallway frequently and in both directions.

Scars from errant spells mar the walls. The occasional door is missing or shattered to splinters, while others remain unopened, reinforced with metal. Suddenly, the spectral visage of a humanoid momentarily passes through the walls just within your range of sight, disappearing as quickly as it appeared. Runes and symbols are both carved and painted in seemingly random locations- or could there be a pattern?

Ultimately, the scene is utter madness: it seems chaos itself has left its mark as it inhabited this portion of the world.

Skill Groups and Results

The following groupings outline the knowledge characters can learn throughout this section. Use your judgment as a DM in special circumstances and pull from whichever series of information feels appropriate for how the player describes their use of a given skill. However, do your best to reveal each section's information in the order the bullet points provide. If you have a smaller party (who therefore require fewer successes) you should combine a few bullets to help them get the full story.

Physical Skills

The following skills fall into this category: *Athletics, Acrobatics, Sleight of Hand, & Stealth*.

- There are few locks and bars; whomever lived here apparently did so (mostly) voluntarily.
- Before being converted into the current children's hospital, this place was a sanitarium, and the events that destroyed it happened approximately 60 years ago.
- It's not that the people who lived in these ... rooms? cells? ... wanted to stay, they simply did not have the mental faculties to leave.
- There is an additional sub-basement below the first and furthermore there look to be caves below that.
- You have found access to a final layer of this cave system. Strange purple and teal crystals are beginning to appear in the walls and floors. They are not of this place, you must be nearing the lair of some powerful creature.

Examples of Use: Shoving aside fallen rubble (Athletics); Squeezing through a narrow passageway (Acrobatics); Picking a locked chest (Sleight of Hand); Observing spirits reliving events without disturbing them (Stealth).

Knowledge Skills

The following skills fall in to this category: *Arcana, History, Medicine, Nature, & Religion*.

- The most common symbols are spirals and two-tiered inverted ziggurats ... these are holy symbols of a great old god of madness: Tharizdun.
- Tharizdun is also called The Chained God because the other deities were frightened of him and locked him away in a planar prison.
- Typically, clerics of Tharizdun seek to free The Chained God from his prison by drawing power from the madness of others.
- An arcane caster now wields the power granted by Tharizdun; there are no remnants of the divine power of any Clerics of Madness.
- Tharizdun, The Patient One, is secretive and does not like sane people knowing of his plans, sometimes abandoning followers if he is revealed to be backing them.

Examples of Use: Identifying the spell that caused a scar (Arcana); Recalling stories told of madness and its effects (History); Determining the cause of a corpse's death (Medicine); Knowing the implications of specific plant growth (Nature); Identifying runes as holy symbols (Religion).

Social Skills

The following skills fall into this category: *Animal Handling, Deception, Intimidation, Performance, & Persuasion*.

- A patient of this place, before the time of the hospital, was a resident of the area: a shepherd named Kelkos.
- The caretakers, who promised to watch over those who sought sanctuary here, were actually fueling the madness of their charges.
- One of the caretakers was smitten with Kelkos and lured him here by causing him to go insane.
- Kelkos was tortured and driven mad by the caretakers and regularly called out for anything to give him the power to take his revenge.
- In the wake of the destruction, Kelkos took the souls of the other residents into his care, creating a new, aberrant, flock to shepherd.

Examples of Use: Corraling rats back to their nest or food source (Animal Handling); Convincing a spirit it is still alive (Deception); Threatening a spirit (Intimidation); Recreating the scene in a room and what happened (Performance); Offering to put a spirit to rest (Persuasion).

Observation Skills

The following skills fall into this category:

Investigation, Insight, Perception & Survival.

- The destruction of this place was more of a slaughter than a drawn out battle.
- There are far fewer corpses than the swath of destruction suggests there should be.
- There were two sides to this fight: a small cluster of people who operated the facility against a single adversary.
- The adversary broke out of a cell and decimated the others, not caring about the collateral damage and was the clear victor.
- It appears as though errant magics manipulated and twisted those caught in the cross fire, turning them in to creatures of the Far Realm: aberrations.

Examples of Use: Looking for clues in the rubble (Investigation); Drawing conclusions from previously gathered information (Insight); Spotting a hidden entryway to another room (Perception); Finding and reading movement patterns in the area (Survival).

Failed Checks

If a character fails an ability check during this skill challenge, they must immediately succeed on a DC 12 Wisdom saving throw or suffer a random short-term madness as described on page 259 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*. If the effect rolled is debilitating for longer than 3 minutes, skip their next turn in the initiative order.

Developments

The characters find the stairs leading down to Kelkos' audience chamber regardless of whether their overall skill challenge succeeded or failed: proceed to Part 4 for the final encounter with the warlock.

Treasure

The success or the degree of the failure of the party determines their rewards as follows:

If the players succeeded without any failures:

The characters should have learned the full story of Kelkos and what happened in the sanitarium. They find 2 *potions of healing*, a *potion of resistance (psychic)*, an Onyx Ziggurat Statue worth 150 gp and a Holy Symbol of Tharizdun worth 100 gp. Additionally, Kelkos' stat block is modified as listed at the beginning of Part 4.

If the players succeeded but had some failures:

The characters should have learned a great deal of

the story, although they may be missing a piece or two. They find 2 *potions of healing*, an Onyx Ziggurat Statue worth 150 gp and a Holy Symbol of Tharizdun worth 100 gp. Additionally, Kelkos' stat block is modified as listed at the beginning of Part 4.

If the players failed but acquired half or more of the required successes: The characters will only know part of the story and should be surprised by some of Kelkos' abilities. They find an Onyx Ziggurat Statue worth 150 gp and a Holy Symbol of Tharizdun worth 100 gp. Additionally, Kelkos' stat block is modified as listed at the beginning of Part 4.

If the players failed and did not acquire half of the required successes: The characters barely know any of the story and will walk into the fight with Kelkos fairly ignorant. They find a Holy Symbol of Tharizdun worth 100 gp. Unfortunately, Kelkos' stat block is unmodified.

XP Award

If the party succeeded overall on the skill challenge, award each player 100 XP.

Part 4. Showdown

Estimated Duration: 20 minutes

The characters find their way into the heart of the warlock's lair. Armed with the knowledge they learned in the basement, they fight not only to defeat him, but to rescue the donors from the Gala who are set to become his next victims.

A. Kelkos' Lair

When the players enter the lair, Kelkos is aware of them already, having been informed by Tharizdun of their approach.

Lair Actions

In addition to any changes listed below to Kelkos' stat block, he gains the following lair actions, which he uses on initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties):

Create Abomination. Kelkos gestures at an incapacitated creature within his lair and one or more abominations erupt from that creature's body, killing the host creature. Kelkos chooses one of the following two options, but can't choose the same option two rounds in a row.

- 2d4 Neogi Hatchlings
- 1 Gibbering Moulder

Move among the Flock. Kelkos magically teleports to any unoccupied square within his lair.

Read or paraphrase the following, being sure to include the additional boxes below based on how the party performed during the skill challenge section.

The experience of walking into this cave is something you won't forget for a long time. A dark spiral groove in the stone floor dominates the middle of the room and is lined with glowing purple and teal crystals. Also covered in these crystals is a large, flat rock at the center of the spiral.

Standing before the rock is a dark, robed man, a scowl on his face. His features have been twisted by unknown forces, and his eyes radiate only madness. Flanking him are more abominations.

Unspeakable amalgamations of flesh are set on the floor against the walls, almost as a young girl would arrange a set of dolls. Some of them rise and shift forward at the gesture of the man in the center of the room.

Finally, in one corner, living humanoids dangle from chained wrists. While most hang unconscious, some still have a little struggle left in them. You recognize a few, but perhaps most importantly, you see Director Salinop. Their faces light up at the sight of an adventuring party coming to their rescue.

"I suppose it was too much to hope to chase you ALL off with a single attack." The robed man sneers at you. "At least most of the rabble had the good sense to leave my domain! Once I've finished you off, I can return to my flock in peace." But before he launches any kind of attack he cocks his head to one side as though listening to something ...

If the players succeeded without any failures, additionally read or paraphrase the following

"NOOOOO!" Kelkos screams! "Master, do not abandon me. They will not learn of your true plans. I will destroy them like I did your failed clerics. Do not leave me helpless as you left them!!!" He falls to his knees, clawing at his scalp as the crystals lose their glow. Then, the fleshy monstrosities around the room dissolve into lifeless puddles of goo.

"You." He regains his faculties and spits the word at you. "Your meddling caused this; they were my secrets, not for you to learn! You and your friends will become my new flock!"

And with that he releases an *eldritch blast*.

If the players succeeded but had some failures, additionally read or paraphrase the following

"NOOOOO!" Kelkos screams! "Master, do not take them; my flock is everything to me! Do not leave me helpless as you did your failed clerics!!!" He falls to his knees, clawing at his scalp as the glowing crystals dim significantly. Then, the fleshy monstrosities around the room dissolve into lifeless puddles of goo.

"You." He regains his faculties and spits the word at you. "Your meddling caused this; they were my flock. My responsibility. You and your friends will replace them!"

And with that he releases an *eldritch blast*.

If the players failed but acquired half or more of the required successes, additionally read or paraphrase the following

"Yes, Master, I understand." Then, he cringes as though he is bracing himself for something. The glowing crystals dim significantly.

"He has deemed it significant that I prove myself once again. Like his clerics before, you will fall before me and join my flock!"

And with that he coats himself in an *armor of Agathys* and the abominations to his side lunge into combat.

If the players failed and did not acquire half of the required successes, additionally read or paraphrase the following

“Yes, Master, I understand.” Then, turning back to you he addresses you politely “My master would prefer my sacrifices alive and insane when he devours their minds. If you wouldn’t mind just coming along quietly, you can be added to my flock soon enough.”

And with that he coats himself in an *armor of Agathys* and the abominations to his side lunge into combat.

Kelkos’s Stat Block

Kelkos is flanked by a **Nothic** and a **Neogi**. He himself is a **Warlock of the Great Old One** with the following modifications based on the results of the previous skill challenge section. Because of these modifications, he has a challenge of 5 (1,800 XP).

If the players succeeded without any failures,

- Remove the **Nothic** and the **Neogi**
- Remove his Whispering Aura
- Remove his Innate Spellcasting (although he still has the effects of Mage Armor pre-cast)
- All of his spell slots are 2nd level and he can’t cast any spell higher than 2nd level.

If the players succeeded but had some failures,

- Remove the **Nothic** and the **Neogi**
- Remove his Innate Spellcasting (although he still has the effects of Mage Armor pre-cast)
- All of his spell slots are 3rd level and he can’t cast any spell higher than 3rd level.

If the players failed but acquired half or more of the required successes,

- Kelkos will not use his Create Abomination Lair Action.
- Remove his Whispering Aura
- All of his spell slots are 3rd level and he can’t cast any spell higher than 3rd level.

If the players failed and did not acquire half of the required successes,

- Kelkos will not use his Create Abomination Lair Action.
- No modifications are made to his stat block.
- All combatants in the fight will always choose to knock a character unconscious instead of killing them.

Adjusting this Encounter

Use the following for Kelkos’ spellcasting ability for this combat based on the strength of your group.

- **Very Weak:** Kelkos only has **1 spell slot** and his damage-dealing cantrips **deal only 1 die** of damage.
- **Weak:** Kelkos only has **2 spell slots** and his damage-dealing cantrips **deal only 1 die** of damage.
- **Average:** Kelkos only has **2 spell slots** and his damage-dealing cantrips **deal only 2 dice** of damage.
- **Strong:** Kelkos has all **3 spell slots** but his damage-dealing cantrips **deal only 2 dice** of damage.
- **Very Strong:** Kelkos has all **3 spell slots** and his damage-dealing cantrips **deal 3 dice** of damage.

Tricks of the Trade

Don’t be afraid to challenge the players with this combat! **Save the Prisoners.** They should feel the threat not only to themselves, but also to the prisoners so their attention will be split.

Don’t forget the Minions. The minions are designed to keep the characters from focusing solely on Kelkos for the first round or two. If Kelkos gets locked down, the minions are intelligent enough to target his attackers (attempting to break any concentration or knock out a grappler).

Sustainability is Key. Kelkos’ has a decent pool of hp , which will help him remain a threat in the combat. Additionally, use his mobility from his lair action to help him line up spells or escape dangerous situations.

Prisoners

Kelkos has a total of 11 prisoners hanging from manacles: 6 are already unconscious and the other 5 are not far behind. Kelkos will use the unconscious ones to fuel his Create Abomination Lair Action. Feel free to include any of the non-combat NPCs from the party as prisoners here. Those who pledged donations are an especially good idea!

Director Salinop should fall unconscious at the end of the 2nd round of combat, leaving her vulnerable, and hopefully spurring the players to save her. She should be targeted with the Lair Action on the 4th round if they have not saved her.

Failure

All is not lost if this combat overwhelms the players. If the whole party is killed (or knocked unconscious), the powerful NPCs from the party will show up to retrieve their bodies and chase Kelkos off.

However, all characters are afflicted by an indefinite madness. Roll randomly for each character on the Indefinite Madness table on page 260 of the *Dungeon Master’s Guide*.

Unfortunately, there is no hope for any of the captives, including Director Salinop, as their bodies were used to create more of Kelkos’ flock.

Finally, the story of what happened at the Gala spreads fairly quickly across the Moonsea and funding for the hospital falters slightly. Divide the total in half when determining the amount of money successfully raised in Part A.

Treasure. The characters are paid the 25gp each they were promised by an Interim Director, recently appointed. He is grateful for their attempted rescue and pays the **group** additional gold equal to 10% of the money they successfully raised for the hospital.

Success

If the players successfully kill Kelkos and his new flock they are able to free any prisoners which have not had abominations created from their bodies.

If any of the partygoers from whom the players obtained donation cards died during the encounter in either Parts 2 or 4, that donation is lost.

The adventurers are met with cheers and greeted as heroes as they arrive in Lighthouse with the survivors. Surely nobility and commoners alike will be talking about your deeds in the weeks to come! Who knows? Maybe more nobility will want you at their upcoming parties!

Treasure. The only item of worth on Kelkos' person is his amulet. Made from the same purple and teal crystals found around the room, it was his spellcasting focus, and functions as a *Dark Shard Amulet*.

Additionally, the characters are paid the 25gp each that they were promised by Director Salinop (or an Interim Director, if she still perished). She is grateful for their rescue and pays the **group** additional gold equal to 20% of the money they successfully raised for the hospital.

Story Award. Each character earns the story award **Children's Benefactor**. (See Rewards)

Rewards

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

Experience

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

Combat Awards

Name of Foe	XP Per Foe
Kelkos	1,800
Neogi	700
Gibbering Moulder	450
Nothic	450
Neogi Hatchling	25

Non-Combat Awards

Task or Accomplishment	XP Per Character
Interact with Partygoers	50
Good Role-Playing	50
1,000gp Donation	25
Skill Challenge Success	100

The **minimum** total award for each character participating in this adventure is **450 experience points**.

The **maximum** total award for each character participating in this adventure is **600 experience points**.

Treasure

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

Treasure Awards

Item Name	GP Value
Black Onyx Ziggurat Statue	150
Holy Symbol of Tharizdun	100
Hospital's Stipend	25
Bonus from Hospital	10% or 20% of the money raised in donations.

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

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

Dark Shard Amulet

Wondrous item, common (requires attunement by a warlock)

This amulet is fashioned from a single shard of twisted purple and teal extraplanar crystal originating from The Far Realm. While you are wearing it, you gain the following benefits:

- You can use the amulet as a spellcasting focus for your warlock spells.
- You can try to cast a cantrip that you don't know. The cantrip must be on the warlock spell list, and you must make a DC 10 Intelligence (Arcana) check. If the check succeeds, you cast the spell. If the check fails, so does the spell and the action used to cast the spell is wasted. In either case, you can't use this property again until you finish a long rest.

This item can be found in **Player Handout #3**.

Potion of Healing

Potion, common

This item can be found in the *Player's Handbook*.

Potion of Resistance (Psychic)

Potion, uncommon

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

Story Award

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

Children's Benefactor. You rubbed elbows with the nobility to benefit a worthy, charitable cause. Additionally, word has spread that you saved some of them from a horrible death at the hands of a madman. While in the Moonsea region, you are welcome in high society and other people of high birth treat you as a member of the same social sphere. A copy of this information can be found in **Player Handout #2**.

Renown

Each character receives **one renown** at the conclusion of this adventure.

DM Reward

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

Appendix. Monster/ NPC Statistics

Kelkos, Warlock of the Great Old One

Medium humanoid (human), neutral evil

Armor Class 12 (15 with *mage armor*)

Hit Points 91 (14d8+28)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws Wis +4, Cha +7

Skills Arcana +4, History +4

Damage Resistances psychic

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages Common, Undercommon, telepathy 30 ft.

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP) [due to modifications]

Innate Spellcasting. Kelkos' innate spellcasting ability is Charisma. It can innately cast the following spells (spell save DC 15), requiring no material components:

At will: *detect magic*, *jump*, *levitate*, *mage armor* (self only), *speak with dead*

1/day each: *arcane gate*, *true seeing*

Spellcasting. Kelkos is a 14th-level spellcaster. His spell-casting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). He regains his expended spell slots when it finishes a short or long rest. He knows the following warlock spells:

Cantrips (at will): *chill touch*, *eldritch blast*, *guidance*, *mage hand*, *minor illusion*, *prestidigitation*, *shocking grasp*

1st-5th level (3 5th-level slots): *armor of Agathys*, *arms of Hadar*, *crown of madness*, *clairvoyance*, *contact other plane*, *detect thoughts*, *dimension door*, *dissonant whispers*, *dominate beast*, *telekinesis*, *vampiric touch*

Whispering Aura. At the start of each of the warlock's turns, each creature of its choice within 5 feet of it must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or take 10 (3d6) psychic damage, provided Kelkos isn't incapacitated.

Actions

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

Gibbering Moulder

Medium aberration, neutral

Armor Class 9

Hit Points 67 (9d8 + 27)

Speed 10 ft., swim 10 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	8 (-1)	16 (+3)	3 (-4)	10 (+0)	6 (-2)

Condition Immunities prone

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages —

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Aberrant Ground. The ground in a 10-foot radius around the moulder is doughlike difficult terrain. Each creature that starts its turn in that area must succeed on a DC 10 Strength saving throw or have its speed reduced to 0 until the start of its next turn.

Gibbering. The moulder babbles incoherently while it can see any creature and isn't incapacitated. Each creature that starts its turn within 20 feet of the moulder and can hear the gibbering must succeed on a DC 10 Wisdom saving throw. On a failure, the creature can't take reactions until the start of its next turn and rolls a d8 to determine what it does during its turn. On a 1 to 4, the creature does nothing. On a 5 or 6, the creature takes no action or bonus action and uses all its movement to move in a randomly determined direction. On a 7 or 8, the creature makes a melee attack against a randomly determined creature within its reach or does nothing if it can't make such an attack.

Actions

Multiattack. The gibbering moulder makes one bite attack and, if it can, uses its Blinding Spittle.

Bites. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft, one creature. *Hit:* 17 (5d6) piercing damage. If the target is Medium or smaller it must succeed on a DC 10 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone. If the target is killed by this damage, it is absorbed into the moulder.

Blinding Spittle (Recharge 5-6). The moulder spits a chemical glob at a point it can see within 15 feet of it. The glob explodes in a blinding flash of light on impact. Each creature within 5 feet of the flash must succeed on a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw or be blinded until the end of the moulder's next turn.

Neogi

Small aberration, lawful evil

Armor Class 15 (Natural Armor)

Hit Points 33 (6d6 + 12)

Speed 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6 (-2)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)	15 (+2)

Skills Intimidation +4, Perception +3

Senses Darkvision 60 ft., Passive Perception 13

Languages Common, Deep Speech, Undercommon

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Mental Fortitude. The neogi has advantage on saving throws against being charmed or frightened, and magic can't put the neogi to sleep.

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

Actions

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

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage plus 14 (4d6) poison damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or become poisoned for 1 minute. A target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (2d4 + 3) slashing damage.

Enslave (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). The neogi targets one creature it can see within 30 feet of it. The target must succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw or be magically charmed by the neogi for 1 day, or until the neogi dies or is more than 1 mile from the target. The charmed target obeys the neogi's commands and can't take reactions, and the neogi and the target can communicate telepathically with each other at a distance of up to 1 mile. Whenever the charmed target takes damage, it can repeat the saving throw, ending the effect on itself on a success.

Neogi Hatchling

Tiny aberration, lawful evil

Armor Class 11

Hit Points 7 (3d4)

Speed 20 ft., climb 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
3 (-4)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)	6 (-2)	10 (+0)	9 (-1)

Senses Darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages --

Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

Mental Fortitude. The hatchling has advantage on saving throws against being charmed or frightened, and magic can't put the hatchling to sleep.

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

Actions

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d4 + 1) piercing damage plus 7 (2d6) poison damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or become poisoned for 1 minute. A target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

Nothic

Medium aberration, neutral evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 45 (6d8+18)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	16 (+3)	16 (+3)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)	8 (-1)

Skills Arcana +3, Insight +4, Perception +2, Stealth +5

Senses truesight 120 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Undercommon

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Keen Sight. The nothic has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) check that rely on sight.

Actions

Multiattack. The nothic makes two claw attacks.

Claw. Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6+3) slashing damage.

Rotting Gaze. The nothic targets one creature it can see within 30 feet of it. The target must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw against this magic or take 10 (3d6) necrotic damage.

Weird Insight. The nothic targets one creature it can see within 30 feet of it. The target must contest its Charisma (Deception) check against the nothic's Wisdom (Insight) check. If the nothic wins, it magically learns one fact or secret about the target. The target automatically wins if it is immune to being charmed.

Player Handout #1. Partygoers

- 1) A human woman attempting to wrangle five ... or is it six ... children.
- 2) A gnome in pale green robes, her hair decorated with twigs and leaves.
- 3) A hill dwarf at a table with a small alchemy kit, continuously sipping at his beer and grimacing.
- 4) A half-drow whom you only catch glimpses of occasionally.
- 5) A female dwarf with a tavern owner's warm smile; she has freckles and red hair.
- 6) A larger than life human man wearing the robes of the Red Wizards of Thay.
- 7) A mature elven woman who is speaking mostly with employees and clerics of the hospital.
- 8) An attractive middle-aged human woman who clearly knows what a hard day's labor on the docks looks like.
- 9) A portly human gentlemen sporting a golden wig and fancy doublet.
- 10) A halfling dressed in the latest fashion enjoying another glass of hard liquor.
- 11) A brass dragonborn wearing a naval dress uniform.
- 12) A human couple wearing Mulmastrian-styled clothing; the woman is covered entirely in scarves, even her face is veiled.
- 13) A gnome who keeps looking over his shoulder and jumping at any loud noises.
- 14) A tiefling woman who has just pulled her 6th or 7th partner on to the dance floor.
- 15) An elderly human gentleman who only speaks with those who approach him directly.
- 16) A goliath barbarian queen, covered head to toe in animal totems.

Player Handout #2. Story Award

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

Story Award

Children's Benefactor. You rubbed elbows with the nobility to benefit a worthy, charitable cause. Additionally, word has spread that you saved some of them from a horrible death at the hands of a madman. While in the Moonsea region, you are welcome in high society and other people of high birth treat you as a member of the same social sphere.

Player Handout #3.

Magic Item

During the course of this adventure, the characters may find the following permanent magic item:

Dark Shard Amulet

Wondrous item, common (requires attunement by a warlock)

This amulet of is fashioned from a single shard of twisted purple and teal extraplanar crystal originating from The Far Realm. While you are wearing it, you gain the following benefits:

- You can use the amulet as a spellcasting focus for your warlock spells.
- You can try to cast a cantrip that you don't know. The cantrip must be on the warlock spell list, and you must make a DC 10 Intelligence (Arcana) check. If the check succeeds, you cast the spell. If the check fails, so does the spell and the action used to cast the spell is wasted. In either case, you can't use this property again until you finish a long rest.

This item can be found in *Xanathar's Guide to Everything*.