



**ADVENTURERS
LEAGUE**

POOL OF ANNIHILATION

THE FINAL ADVENTURE IN THE TENETS OF BANE SERIES



CCC-WWC-08

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Optimized For: APL 8

Version: 2.3



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A Two-Hour to Four-Hour Adventure for 5th-10th Level Characters

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Adventure Designer



The platinum discs known as the Tenets of Bane have been reclaimed, and their owners, the Servants of Strife, no longer threaten the Moonsea. As the last days of summer rapidly approach, your faction asks you to meet Priestess Malana Homwell in the city of Thentia, where the lore wizard Rylan Elentaur believes he may have found a way to destroy the discs once and for all.

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ABOUT WINTER WAR

The Tenets of Bane adventures were written exclusively for the Winter War gaming convention. For over four decades, Winter War has been providing a place for tabletop gaming enthusiasts to come together to express their passion in a no-frills and no distractions atmosphere. Independently managed for over thirty five years, it has strived to preserve and promote the very essence of the gaming community: the games.

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FORGOTTEN REALMS DEITIES

The Tenets of Bane adventures mainly feature two deities: Bane and Torm. These gods have a long and storied history in the Forgotten Realms, and you can learn more about them in supplements such as the *Sword Coast Adventurer's Guide*, *Faiths and Pantheons*, and *The Avatar Trilogy* of novels.

The following sidebars provide basic information about each god and detail how loyalty to each might impact the adventure.

LOYALTY TO BANE

Bane is the evil and malevolent deity of fear, hatred, and tyranny. He prefers to plot and scheme and rarely acts in a direct manner. Bane furthers his nefarious agenda by utilizing a network of priests, worshippers, and other agents. He seeks to control all of Faerûn, and he works toward this goal ceaselessly. Bane's symbol is an upright black hand with thumb and fingers together. You can learn more about him in the *Sword Coast Adventurer's Guide*.

While Bane is wholly evil, not all who follow him hold the same darkness within their hearts. He represents power, ambition, and control. Many of his worshippers pray to him for strength, and he is said to favor the bold. Because of this, one or more characters playing the adventure might worship or serve Bane, and their devotion to him has the potential to put them at direct odds with the story's plot.

If you find a Bane loyalist amongst the characters, pull the player aside before the adventure begins and make them aware that the required actions of the adventure run in opposition to the will of Bane. If they wish, the character may still play the adventure, and doing so imposes no mechanical or story disadvantages. Alternatively, they can select another character for the adventure that does not worship Bane, providing they have one that meets the level requirements.

If a player opts to play a character loyal to Bane, make sure they know that this is still a cooperative adventure, and working against the other characters is not allowed. Any player who chooses this option must decide for themselves why their character is choosing to act against the will of their deity.

LOYALTY TO TORM

Torm is the god of duty and loyalty. Those who face danger for the greater good often worship him and seek to emulate his values. Because of his beliefs, many goodly paladins and clerics are found among his faithful. Those who worship Torm believe that spiritual deliverance is achievable by service. They struggle to accomplish his edicts by going out into the world as an active force for good. They seek to correct injustices and help those in need. Torm's symbol is a right-hand gauntlet held upright with its palm forward. You can learn more about him in the *Sword Coast Adventurer's Guide*.

FROM MOUNTAIN HALLS TO FORESTS DEEP,
I WILL NOT LET YOU BE.
I AM DEATH, AND YOU ARE MINE;
YOU WILL RETURN TO ME.

-DEATH



ADVENTURE PRIMER

As Bane's worship grows, the world suffers.

—Malana Homwell

BACKGROUND

In 1357 DR, three of Bane's devout followers attempted to establish a slave trade in the city of Thentia. These individuals were known as the **SERVANTS OF STRIFE**. Each one possessed a platinum disc depicting a painted black hand outlined in red on one side, and a single word signifying an edict of Bane on its opposite. The words: fear, hatred, and tyranny, each embodied a facet of Bane's teachings. Together, the discs were called the **TENETS OF BANE**.

In 1358 DR, a trio of Thentia's powerful archmages defeated the Servants of Strife and divided the Tenets of Bane between themselves for study. They quickly discovered the discs were divine in nature and beyond their complete understanding. Moreover, each disc seemed to radiate an aura that intensified emotions related to the word it bore. Simply having the items near proved to be unsettling, and when they could find no way to destroy them, the archmages chose to hide them away.

Each archmage hid one of the Tenets of Bane in a remote location of the Moonsea, safeguarding it with magic. They documented their studies of the discs in a shared text and presented it to Sureene Aumratha, the high priestess of the House of the Moon (a temple dedicated to Selûne in Thentia), for care.

Several months ago, **MALANA HOMWELL**, a cleric of Torm, acquired the text. Malana oversees the **HELPING HAND**, a temple dedicated to the Hand of Righteousness (Torm) that lies midway between Melvaunt and Thentia on the Sword Trail. After obtaining the text, Malana hired adventurers to retrieve the Tenets of Bane.

Once she had all three discs in her possession, she made plans to transport them to Elturgard, where they could be destroyed by the high clerics of Torm that reside in the city of Elturel. However, before she could depart Melvaunt, she was abducted by Banite worshipers who sought the discs for themselves. With the help of brave adventures, she was rescued, and the Tenets of Bane were safely recovered and taken back to the Helping Hand temple.

Instead of trying again to transport the discs to Elturel, Malana used her family connections in Elturgard to bolster the defenses of her temple. She

then asked for aid from **ONTHARR FRUME**, a paladin of the Order of the Gauntlet, in bringing three high clerics of Torm to the Helping Hand.

The high clerics attempted a divine ritual to destroy the discs, but it ended in disaster, and the souls of their original owners, the Servants of Strife, which had been trapped within each disc when they perished over a century earlier, were released.

The malignant souls easily overcame the shocked clerics and possessed their bodies. A battle ensued, but the newly returned Servants of Strife managed to escape into the surrounding countryside.

With assistance from the Moonsea's factions, the Servants of Strife were located and defeated, and the Tenets of Bane were recovered. Since then, Malana has been working closely with Rylan Elentaur, a Thentian wizard of lore, and after many days of study, he believes he may have found a way to finally destroy the discs once and for all.

THE TENETS OF BANE

Three of Bane's devout followers originally carried the Tenets of Bane. Collectively, these individuals were known as the Servants of Strife. The wizard, Sax Magnus, magically created each of the three discs. Upon their completion, they were bathed in the blood of the assassin, Cyran Steel, and blessed by the blackguard, Mace Dred. This process somehow bound the discs to the souls of each Servant of Strife, but since the exact nature of the joining is both arcane and divine, it is unknown to all but their original owners.

Each disc is specifically linked to its respective owner. If the individual perishes while the disc is on or near their person, their soul is instantaneously drawn into the item, where it remains until released. If another Servant of Strife speaks the phrase, *The Black Lord releases thee*, the soul departs the disc and enters prime material plane in spectral form. In this form, it is immune to all damage and spell effects, regardless of the origin (magical, divine, or other). The soul remains in spectral form until it finds a living creature of its choosing to possess, which it can do so without a chance of failure.

When the spectral entity enters a living creature, it completely suppresses the soul of its host and dominates its physical body. While the host's soul remains, it is isolated and retains no memories of the actions of its physical form.

Once a Servant of Strife possess a creature, it is impossible to remove its malignant soul without killing the host body. If the host perishes while the Tenet of Bane is near, the soul is drawn back into the disc, otherwise it dissipates and is gone forever. Because of this, the Servants of Strife always keep their discs safe and close.

Note. The details above are provided for informational and story purposes. They are not essential to the mechanics of the adventure.

EPISODES

This adventure is spread over five parts that takes approximately two hours to play. These episodes are initially introduced by a Call to Action Episode.

If you're planning to play the entire adventure at once, you only need to introduce the Call to Action once. However, if you plan to play them over several sessions, you'll want to revisit the Call to Action each time you play.

- **Episode 1: Rylan's Tower.** At the request of their factions, the characters arrive in Thentia to meet with Priestess Malana Homwell at the tower of Rylan Elentaur. Malana informs them that Rylan believes he has found a way to destroy the Tenets of Bane once and for all. This is the **Call to Action**.
- **Episode 2: A Mountain March.** The characters must travel high into the West Galena Mountains to reach a ruined monastery that holds the remnants of an earth node. Along the way, they face the harsh and bitter environment, as well as denizens that call the mountain peaks home.
- **Episode 3: Monastery of the Frozen Fist.** Inside the monastery, the party encounters a pervasive gloom and the spirits of those who perished during its fall.
- **Episode 4: The Earth Node.** A defunct earth node lies deep beneath the monastery in a cavern where the veil between the Material Plane and the Shadowfell is thin. To destroy the discs, the characters must defeat The Hungry (a sorrowsworn) and keep the despair of the Shadowfell from forcing them to take their own lives.
- **Episode 5: Conclusion.** With the Tenets of Bane finally destroyed, the characters are free to return to Thentia and claim their reward from Priestess Malana Homwell.

CITIES AND TOWNS

Parts of *Pool of Annihilation* take place in Thentia and Glistar. Maps and descriptions of these locations are not needed to play the adventure, but if you desire more information about them, you can find it in the *Mysteries of the Moonsea (3.5)* and *The Moonsea (2e)* campaign accessories available on dmsguild.com.

BONUS OBJECTIVES

This adventure also includes two, 1-hour bonus objectives that the characters can pursue if they have additional time to do so. These bonus objectives are found in this adventure's appendices, as follows:

- **Bonus Objective A: Restless Spirits.** While exploring the Frozen Fist monastery, the characters are attacked by the spirits of Shadar-Ki waaiors that perished at the hands of the Caadrin. This bonus objective is found in **Appendix 1**.
- **Bonus Objective B: Epilogue.** As they rest, the characters are drawn into a demi-plane inhabited by an aspect of the deity **BANE**. The creature wishes to know their reasoning for destroying the discs. This bonus objective is found in **Appendix 2**.

EPISODE SEQUENCE

Depending on your time constraints, and play style and environment, this adventure will take approximately two to four hours to play.

HOW WILL YOU PLAY?

The duration of your session depends on how much of this adventure you utilize. At the very least, your session will last approximately 2 hours. However, if you wish, you can provide a longer experience for your players by pursuing the bonus objectives.

Main Objective Only. To complete the adventure's main objective, the characters participate in Episodes 1 through 5 in order. Including the bonus objectives is optional.

Bonus Objectives. You can extend this adventure by one or two hours by including opportunities for the characters to pursue the bonus objectives.

Bonus Objective A can be included as the characters explore the Monastery of the Frozen Fist. **Bonus Objective B** can be introduced after the characters have destroyed the Tenets of Bane and are making their way back to Thentia.

EPISODE 1: RYLAN'S TOWER

Expected Duration: 15 minutes

Either of their own volition or by the direction of their factions, the characters arrive in **THENTIA**. It is early morning when they pass through the Dusk Gate and enter the city. It does not take them long to locate the stout brownstone tower of Rylan Elentaur near the city's northwestern wall. Upon entering and stating their affiliations, they are led to an opulent library on the third floor by an aged halfling butler. After only minutes, the butler reappears with a pitcher of rose-colored wine, stemware, and two individuals: **MALANA HOMWELL**, an attractive woman missing her right arm; and **RYLAN ELENDAUR**, a dark-haired elf dressed in blue robes.

DM tip. The accompanying sidebars contain additional information about Malana Homwell and Rylan Elentaur. If you are running the adventure in a 2-hour timeslot, it is best to limit the amount of roleplaying in this part of the adventure.

ROLEPLAYING MALANA HOMWELL

A native of Elturgard, Malana comes from a long line of paladins and clerics dedicated to the worship of Torm.

She typically dresses in clean white robes and a pale-blue shawl bearing the upraised hand of Torm. She keeps the right sleeve of her garment rolled and pinned at her elbow, making her missing appendage easily apparent. Light streaks of grey grace her lustrous blond hair, and her bright blue eyes convey both intelligence and authority.

When she was 18 years old, Malana left her homeland to preach Torm's word throughout the Sword Coast. She was young and full of pride in her deity, and she traveled with a party of adventurers for nearly a year before her piousness caused rifts among the group.

Malana fell in battle while dealing with an ankheg infestation north of Baldur's Gate, losing her arm to one of the creature's powerful pincers. Only the quick actions of her allies saved her life. She returned home to Elturel intent upon reclaiming her missing appendage, but ultimately, no healing could replace her missing limb.

Knowing she had failed her god, she returned to the farmland where she had lost her arm and worked as a simple farmhand for nearly three years. During that time, she came to understand the aspects of Torm that she had cast aside.

With respect, kindness, and humility in her heart, she traveled to the Moonsea, a land rife with Bane's worship, to serve as a counterpoint to his teachings of ambition and strife.

ROLEPLAYING RYLAN ELENDAUR

A high elf of noble birth, Rylan's family acquired the collective works of the archmage Rilitar Shadow-water after his death. The wizard has spent the better part of his life studying Rilitar's journals, and in doing so, he found entries pertaining to the Tenets of Bane.

While not a Harper, Rylan claims a loose affiliation with the organization, and when Malana's call for assistance went out, he learned of it through his Harper affiliates. The opportunity to lend his knowledge to help destroy the Tenets of Bane resonated strongly with Rylan, and he has offered his services to the priestess to help in any way possible.

A CALL TO ACTION

After formal introductions and wine, Malana tells the characters of the Tenets of Bane and the recent events surrounding the discs (see the **Adventure Primer** for more information). If a character has the **Inspired by Torm** or **Touched by Torm** story awards from the previous adventures, she speaks primarily to them, confident that her words will be heeded with earnestness.

Malana informs the characters that the only way to save the high clerics was to kill each of them, which forced the soul of the Servants of Strife to return to its respective Tenet of Bane. She adds that the clerics were revived immediately thereafter, and all are in good health with no memory of the misdeeds they caused during the time they were possessed. The experience has only strengthened their faith in Torm and their desire to see Bane's worship nullified. Fortunately, the soul of each Servant of Strife is now trapped once again within its respective Tenet of Bane.

After prayer and reflection, Malana acknowledges that her previous attempt to transport the discs to Elturgard alone was a mistake. She apologizes directly to any characters that may have played **CCC-WWC-04 The Black Hand** and earnestly thanks them for their continued assistance. She admits her pride and her desire to please Torm clouded her judgment. She has vowed to do penance and not to make the same mistake again.

Malana informs the characters that Rylan has considered many possible ways to rid the world of the Tenets of Bane, but most of the options he investigated involved placing the discs in a pocket dimension or sending them to another plane of existence. Unfortunately, none of these solutions actually destroyed the discs. They merely hid them away again. However, after studying the collective works of Rilitar Shadow-water, he believes he has found a way to destroy the Tenets of Bane for good.

Rylan tells the characters that centuries ago, a group of monks called the **CAADRIN** sought solitude from the constant war and chaos of the Moonsea. They traveled high into the Galena Mountains, where they found an **EARTH NODE**, which is a spot where streams of invisible power collect beneath the earth, like a river flowing into a lake. The monks built a sanctuary called the **MONASTERY OF THE FROZEN FIST** at the site and became its sacred protectors.

When the Spellplague ravaged Toril in 1385 DR, the node's power twisted, allowing it to act as a gate to the Shadowfell. Undead and shadow creatures flooded through the gate and slaughtered nearly all of the Caadrin, who could not hold against their might. When the invaders had wreaked all of the havoc they could, they returned to the Shadowfell, and the monastery fell to ruin.

Rylan notes that several of Rilitar's colleagues visited the site decades later and found it haunted by ghosts. They discovered the node had "burnt out", leaving a 10-foot-round pool of black nothingness in the center of the cavern. The pool exhibited the same properties as an immobile *sphere of annihilation*. When they could find no way to manipulate the pool, they departed, leaving the site to sit in ruin.

He explains that if the remnants of the node still function as a *sphere of annihilation*, simply dropping the discs into the pool would destroy them for good but adds that reaching the monastery is no easy feat. The journey into the mountains takes nearly a tenday, and the way is often treacherous. The extreme cold, high altitude, and unforgiving terrain are dangerous on their own. In addition, many hostile creatures such as giants and yetis make their homes amid the snow-covered peaks.

Malana asks for the characters help in destroying the discs. If they accept, she provides the party with the Tenets of Bane, which she has placed inside a magic item known as *hewards' handy haversack*. (The extradimensional space inside the pack successfully negates the amplified emotions the discs generate.) In addition, she offers to pay for mounts for the characters to reach Glister, which should only take three or four days. Once there, they can purchase supplies suitable for their trip.

Finally, Rylan gives the party a map with detailed directions and landmarks they can use to navigate the mountains and locate the monastery.

Special. Before departing, Malana gives each character with the **Touched by Torm** story award a *potion of greater healing* as a precaution.



EPISODE 2: A MOUNTAIN MARCH

Expected Duration: 45 minutes

Traveling to the Monastery of the Frozen Fist in the West Galena Mountains is an ordeal that takes the characters the better part of ten days. Use the encounters below to mark their daily progress.

GETTING THERE QUICKER

The party may have a way to reach Glister quicker (flying mounts, magic items, etc.), and that's fine. While Thar is dangerous to travel through, nothing of significance occurs if the characters stick to the Glister Road, the only real path through the rocky moor.

DAYS 1 TO 3

Reaching the town of Glister on the northern edge of Thar takes the characters three days of easy travel via horseback. Once in Glister, the party can purchase cold weather clothing and other supplies for their journey (see below).

Since the party's stop in Glister is just for supplies, no details are provided for the town or its inhabitants. If you wish to know more about Glister, see the **Cities and Towns** sidebar earlier in the adventure. Once the characters have all of the supplies they need, proceed to **Day 4 and 5** below.

Important. The map provided by Rylan Elentaur uses landmarks and other designators only visible at ground level to provide directions to the monastery. From this point forward, flying mounts and other magical transport provides no benefit. The party must make its way into the mountains on foot.

COLD WEATHER CLOTHING

Before heading into the West Galena Mountains, the characters can buy supplies in Glister. In addition to the normal items for sale in the *Player's Handbook*, the characters can purchase cold weather clothing (thick coats, gloves, and the like) for 4 gp.

DAY 4 AND 5

Two days after stopping for supplies in the town of Glister on the northern edge of Thar, the characters find themselves hiking through tall pines and firs under clear late-summer skies. As the altitude of their journey increases, the temperature begins to fall. When they make camp for the evening, they can easily see the snowline farther up the mountain. If they continue, tomorrow they should enter the bitter climate of the upper peaks.

To mimic the banter that often occurs between traveling companions, go around the table and let each player describe what their character is doing to help make camp or to prepare for a night's rest. Alternatively, a character may share something personal about themselves or tell an amusing tale about a previous adventure. Use this time just for roleplaying, and if the players are particularly creative with their stories or descriptions, feel free to award their characters inspiration.

Note. You can omit the roleplaying above if you are running short on time.

DAY 6

A day of trekking through snow-covered, rocky terrain and frigid winds starts to take its toll on the characters. When evening approaches, they locate an outcropping of rock to serve as a windbreak for their campsite. As they prepare for rest, a blowing snow begins to fall, streaking the sun's dying embers.

TRAVEL IN THE MOUNTAIN PEAKS

At the end of a day of travel above the snowline, each character must make a successful DC 12 Constitution saving throw or gain one level of exhaustion (see the **Above the Snowline** sidebar for additional details).

ABOVE THE SNOWLINE

The following rules apply as the characters travel through the harsh environment of the snowy mountain peaks.

Extreme Cold. Whenever the temperature is at or below 0 degrees Fahrenheit, characters exposed to the cold must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw at the end of each hour or gain one level of exhaustion. Characters with resistance or immunity to cold damage automatically succeed on the saving throw, as do those wearing cold weather clothing, those naturally adapted to cold climates (such as goliaths), and rangers that have chosen arctic terrain for their natural explorer class feature.

Travel. Tasks like trudging through deep snow and scaling cliff faces make travel above the snowline substantially more difficult. As a consequence, a character must make a successful DC 12 Constitution saving throw at the end of each day or gain one level of exhaustion. Characters that have persistent or long-term immunity or resistance to cold gain advantage on the saving throw, as do those naturally adapted to cold climates (such as goliaths). Rangers that have chosen arctic terrain for their natural explorer class feature also make this saving throw with advantage.

Resting. Characters that rest above the snowline recover spells, hit points, and other abilities as normal. However, unless a character has persistent or long-term immunity or resistance to cold, is naturally adapted to cold climates (such as goliaths), or is a ranger that has chosen arctic terrain for their natural explorer class feature, they do not recover from exhaustion, as the weather is simply too cold to allow it.

EXHAUSTION

Some special abilities and environmental hazards, such as starvation and the long-term effects of freezing or scorching temperatures, can lead to a special condition called exhaustion.

Exhaustion is measured in six levels. An effect can cause a creature to suffer one or more levels of exhaustion, as specified in the effects description.

Level	Effect
1	Disadvantage on ability checks
2	Speed halved
3	Disadvantage on attack rolls and saving throws
4	Hit point maximum halved
5	Speed reduced to 0
6	Death

As a creature's level of exhaustion increases, the effects worsen. The creature suffers the effect not only of the current level of exhaustion, but also of all the previous levels, so a creature suffering level 2 exhaustion has its speed halved and also has disadvantage on ability checks.

An effect that removes exhaustion reduces its level, with all exhaustion effects disappearing if a creature's exhaustion level is reduced below 1.

Finishing a long rest reduces a creature's exhaustion level by 1, provided that the creature has also ingested some food and drink.

DAY 7

The wind and snow abate early in the morning, giving way to clear skies and sunshine. As welcome as the warmth may be, the brightness and the pervasive white create a nearly blinding landscape.

Allow each character to make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw to avoid snow blindness. Rangers that have chosen arctic terrain for their natural explorer class feature make this saving throw with advantage, as do those naturally adapted to cold climates (such as goliaths). Characters that fail the check suffer disadvantage to Wisdom (Perception) checks involving sight and a -5 penalty to their passive Perception score for the next 8 hours.

FIELDS OF SNOW

Later in the afternoon of the same day, the characters encounter a snow-covered crevasse. Its crust has been weakened by the warmth of the day, creating a hazard. Characters with a passive Perception of 20 or higher automatically spot the danger and can direct their fellow party members around it.

If no character spots the weakened crust, it fails as the party crosses the crevasse. All characters must make a successful DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or tumble into 40-foot-deep fissure, suffering 14 (4d6) bludgeoning damage and 7 (2d6) slashing damage. In addition, characters that take damage from the fall must make a successful DC 15 Constitution

saving throw or contract creeping frost disease (see the **Creeping Frost** sidebar below) from arctic lichen covering sharp rocks at the bottom of the gorge.

CREEPING FROST

Creeping frost is often encountered in caves and other rocky areas of extreme cold. It is contracted when a creature with an open wound comes into contact with arctic lichen containing the disease. When contact occurs, a creature must make a successful DC 15 Constitution saving throw or have their Dexterity score reduced by 4 points, as their skin turns frosty, causing shivering and rigidity.

Identifying the disease requires a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Medicine) check by a creature proficient in the Medicine skill. The disease lasts for 1d4+2 days or until cured by a spell (such as *lesser restoration*) or class feature that rids a creature of disease.

Creatures immune to disease are immune to creeping frost.

TRAVEL IN THE MOUNTAIN PEAKS

At the end of a day of travel above the snowline, each character must make a successful DC 12 Constitution saving throw or gain one level of exhaustion (see the **Above the Snowline** sidebar for additional details).

DAY 8

Dawn comes with gray skies and even colder temperatures. Throughout the morning, the wind increases, and storm clouds gather in the distance. Snow begins to fall after noon, growing as time passes. Let the characters know that a blizzard is rapidly approaching from the west, and that finding shelter is imperative.

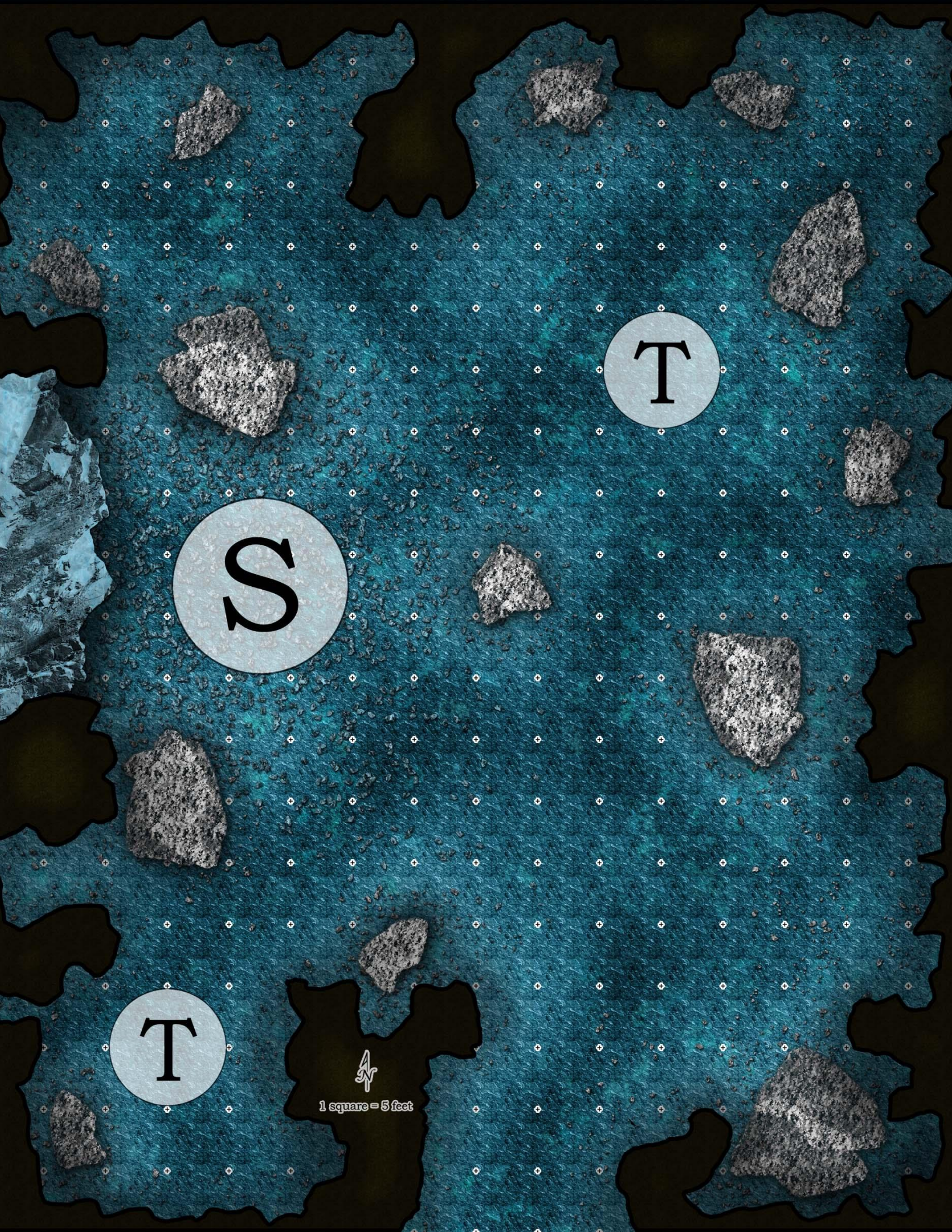
To find shelter from the storm, the characters must make a DC 15 group Wisdom (Survival) check. Rangers that have chosen arctic terrain for their natural explorer class feature, as well as goliaths, make this saving throw with advantage.

If half or more of the characters succeed when making the check, the party manages to locate a cave at the bottom of a nearby ravine. Proceed to the **Shelter from the Storm** encounter below.

If half or more of the characters fail the check, the party must dig in for the night and wait out the storm. The severe temperatures, howling winds, and relentless snow make rest impossible, and each character gains one level of exhaustion.

SHELTER FROM THE STORM

The characters manage to find a cave in which to wait out the storm. Unfortunately, it is not empty. Dim light from outside illuminates the cave, which is filled with rocks and frost. In the middle of the western wall is an outcropping of ice. Claw marks are readily apparent at its base, and pieces of it lie



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1 square = 5 feet

scattered on the floor. A huge, six-legged creature rolls around on top of the shards. When it sees the characters, it springs to its feet and roars. Elsewhere in the cave, several large rocks move, revealing themselves as giant white toads.

A **frost salamander (S)** and **two giant ice toads (T)** currently occupy the cavern. They attack any creature that enters.

ADJUSTING THE ENCOUNTER

Here are recommendations for adjusting this combat encounter. These are not cumulative.

- **Very weak party:** Remove **one giant ice toad**, the **frost salamander** has 128 hit points
- **Weak party:** Remove **one giant ice toad**
- **Strong party:** Add **two giant ice toads**
- **Very strong party:** Add **four giant ice toads**

GENERAL FEATURES

The area has the following features.

Ceilings. The cavern ceiling rises thirty feet above the floor.

Light. Dim light from the waning daylight outside.

Rocks and ice. Squares on the map containing rocks or ice are considered difficult terrain.

Walls. The cavern walls and floors are unworked natural stone.

TACTICS

The frost salamander uses its freezing breath whenever possible to target as many enemies as it can. It does not worry about catching the ice toads in its cone, as they are immune to cold. When its breath weapon is not available, it attacks any enemy that appears to be heavily damaged with its bite and claws, hoping for a quick kill.

The giant ice toads leap into melee and attempt to bite and swallow the nearest enemies.

All creatures fight to the death.

DEVELOPMENTS

Once the characters rid the cave of all hostiles, they are free to use it as a shelter. While they still need to make a Constitution saving throw from their day of travel (see **Travel in the Mountain Peaks** below), the comfort and safety of the cave allows them to

reduce their exhaustion level when they rest for the night, and if desired, they may rest even longer to remove additional exhaustion levels.

TRAVEL IN THE MOUNTAIN PEAKS

At the end of a day of travel above the snowline, each character must make a successful DC 12 Constitution saving throw or gain one level of exhaustion (see the **Above the Snowline** sidebar for additional details).

DAY 9

The previous day's blizzard leaves behind copious amounts of fresh, powdery snow, which makes walking even more difficult than normal for the characters. Fortunately, cloudy skies and little to no winds balanced out the required effort.

As the party makes camp for the night, let the characters know that according to Rylan's map, they should arrive at the monastery sometime tomorrow.

TRAVEL IN THE MOUNTAIN PEAKS

At the end of a day of travel above the snowline, each character must make a successful DC 12 Constitution saving throw or gain one level of exhaustion (see the **Above the Snowline** sidebar for additional details).

DAY 10

It is late afternoon when the characters clamber over a rocky rise. In the distance they spot a stone structure built into the side of an adjacent peak.

It takes the party the remainder of the day to reach the monastery. As a result, each character needs to make one more Constitution saving throw for traveling in the snowy mountain peaks (see **Travel in the Mountain Peaks** below).

TRAVEL IN THE MOUNTAIN PEAKS

At the end of a day of travel above the snowline, each character must make a successful DC 12 Constitution saving throw or gain one level of exhaustion (see the **Above the Snowline** sidebar for additional details).

CONTINUING THE ADVENTURE

Proceed to **Episode 3: Monastery of the Frozen Fist** to continue the adventure.

EPISODE 3: MONASTERY OF THE FROZEN FIST

Expected Duration: 45 minutes

In 1182 DR, a group of monks calling themselves the **CAADRIN** grew weary of the constant turmoil in the Moonsea. Seeking a place where they could pursue a path to physical, mental, and spiritual enlightenment, a small band of the order traveled deep into the mountains, where they discovered a cavern that held an **EARTH NODE**. Over the next century, the Caadrin worked with dwarven craftsmen to construct the Monastery of the Frozen Fist upon the site, and following its completion, the remaining members of the order joined their brethren in the mountains.

EARTH NODES

Streams of invisible power run beneath the earth, occasionally crossing and collecting in a single spot like rivers flowing into a lake. Such rare collection points are called earth nodes.

An earth node's power isn't visible to the naked eye, but such points are often eerily beautiful or bizarre. A giant geode or a teardrop-shaped, smooth-sided cavern might hold an earth node, as might any other wondrous subterranean shape. Such a sight isn't always present, though, and the node's power doesn't always respect physical boundaries.

Most nodes are fairly small and weak. The exact size of a node and its field of power varies from as wide as half a mile to about 30 feet across. Powerful nodes are rare and can radiate their influence over greater distances, but their strength doesn't always correlate to a wider field.

An earth node focuses magic, and arcane spellcasters can often sense the presence of a node upon entering its field of power. In addition, many nodes act as permanent teleportation circles or planar gates, and some are even linked to other nodes. These linked nodes often allow those within to teleport between them, but the exact process for doing so varies from node to node.

The Caadrin spent the subsequent century engaged in martial arts, meditation, and prayer, but when the **SPELLPLAGUE** ravaged Toril in 1385 DR, the power of the earth node warped and twisted, creating a gate to the Shadowfell. Beset by undead and "shadow cursed" humanoids, the Caadrin perished, and the monastery fell to ruin. Sometime during the following century, the node's power "burnt out", leaving the cavern with an anomaly in the form of a pool of absolute darkness, similar to a *sphere of annihilation*.

When the **SUNDERING** once again split the worlds of Abeir and Toril apart, the veil between the node and the Shadowfell tore slightly, allowing shadow creatures and the morose atmosphere of the plane into the node and the monastery.

INSIDE THE MONASTERY

It is nearing nightfall when the characters finally reach the Monastery of the Frozen Fist. Huge stone doors lie broken upon its floor, granting them entrance to a long chamber of worked stone that is supported by pillars. In the fading daylight, they can only make out part of the room, but the wind and cold is less intense within. However, upon entering the monastery's interior, they start to feel a sense of despair and dread creeping into their thoughts, and their surroundings begin to appear drab and gloomy.

The gloominess the characters feel is the presence of the Shadowfell leeching its way into the surroundings from the earth node below the monastery. The effect pervades the entire area, making resting difficult. Short rests are possible, but if they party attempts to take a long rest, each character must make a successful DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or suffer fevered dreams of hopelessness and fear. Characters failing the save recover spells, hit points, and other abilities as normal, but they do not recover from exhaustion, as the dreams keep them from deep and restful sleep.

EXPLORING THE MONASTERY

At its height, the Monastery of the Frozen Fist was home to nearly two hundred monks from the Moonsea and beyond. The structure consists of three levels (a main floor and an upper and lower floor) laid out in a network of personal quarters, common rooms, training areas, and prayer spaces.

A detailed map and full exploration of the monastery is beyond the scope of a 2-hour adventure. Instead, use some or all of the three encounters below to give the characters a feel for its size. An optional fourth combat encounter is also presented, but you should only use it if you have more than two hours to complete the adventure.

GENERAL FEATURES

Unless otherwise noted, the monastery has the following features.

Ceilings. The ceilings in all hallways are 10 feet high. The rooms have 20-foot-high ceilings.

Doors. All doors are 6 feet tall, 4 feet wide, and made of six-inch-thick blocks of worked stone fitted with iron handles and hinges.

Floors. The floors are smooth, worked stone.

Light. None. The boxed text assumes the characters have light sources or darkvision.

Walls. All walls are smooth, worked stone.

CONTINUING THE ADVENTURE

Use as many of the encounter sbelow as time allows, when you are ready to continue the adventure, proceed to **Part 4: The Earth Node**.

SCROLL ROOM

After nearly an hour of exploring hallways and rooms littered with ancient bones and ages of dirt and grime, the characters force open a stone door that leads to a small 10-foot-square room filled with rolled parchments and scrolls. The monks used this room to chronicle the history of their order and its members, and its contents are still in good repair.

TREASURE

If the characters spend an hour searching through the documents, they learn the monk who led the monastery when it fell was named Grandmaster Oolan. In addition, they manage to locate a *spell scroll of raise dead* inside an ornate scroll tube.

TEMPLE OF DENEIR

While exploring, the characters enter a sizeable room at the end of a long hallway. Rows of toppled pews and a stone altar mark the space as a temple. Scorch marks still mar the floor, and it is easy to see a battle occurred here long ago.

Caadrin monks made a stand here against the forces of the Shadowfell, but ultimately, they could not hold against the invaders' superior numbers. If the characters examine the stone altar, they find the image of a lit candle above an open eye carved into its top. A successful DC 10 Intelligence (Religion) check reveals the mark as a symbol of Deneir, the god of literature and scholars.

TREASURE

A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check while examining the altar allows a character to locate a hidden compartment near its base containing a *potion of greater healing* and a solid gold holy symbol of Deneir.

Many corpses occupy the temple. If the party takes an hour to search through the remains of those who fought in the room, they find a dingy iron key with a question mark worked into its head on a chain around the neck of one of the skeletons. The item is a *mystery key*.

Special. The *mystery key* is a common magic item. It is treated like a potion or scroll and can only be claimed by one character in the party.

CRUMBLING CHAMBER

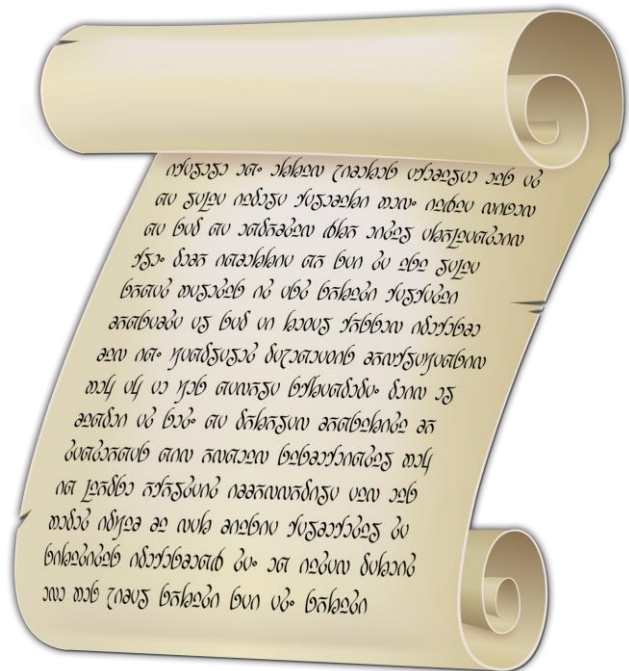
After following a flight of stairs downward, the characters arrive in a long, wide hallway covered in rubble. The end of the passage has collapsed, and many of its remaining support pillars show signs of heavy damage. They can make out more hallways branching off of the main corridor near the cave-in.

When the monastery was invaded, Shadar-Kai sorcerers caused an earthquake in level's eastern wing, killing many of the Caadrin monks. The quake also collapsed the middle of this long hallway.

Over the past decades, the corridor has become increasingly unstable. Moving through the rubble requires each character to make a DC 10 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check. Characters that fail the check slip and fall, dislodging rocks that trigger further tremors and cause large chunks of stone to fall from the ceiling. If this happens, each character must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or suffer 22 (4d10) points of bludgeoning damage from the falling rubble.

RESTLESS SPIRITS (BONUS OBJECTIVE A)

As the characters explore the monastery, they may encounter wraiths, which were created when a band of exceptionally vile Shadar-Kai perished at the hands of the Caadrin. See **Appendix 1: Restless Spirits** to run the encounter.



EPISODE 4: THE EARTH NODE

Expected Duration: 45 minutes

After several hours of exploring the monastery, the characters enter the Chamber of Enlightenment, an ornate room with a closed stone doorway on the opposing side. Many large rocks are piled in front of it, and dozens of skeletal corpses cover the floor, which is roughly fifty feet square. Several spectral forms float among the dead.

Before the characters can react, one of the spirits breaks away and moves toward them with supernatural speed. It stops several feet from the party, and they see a weathered face in its ghostly form. In a calm and even voice, it speaks, *"It has been long since we had visitors from the realm of the living. Why have you come to the Monastery of the Frozen Fist?"*

The ghost is that of **GRANDMASTER OOLAN**, former leader of the Caadrin monks. Oolan and many of his most disciplined students perished during the original attack, but the violence of their deaths and the destruction of their home caused them to rise again as ghosts. However, even from beyond the grave, they remain protectors of the monastery.

As long as the characters do not attack the ghosts, Oolan, shares information about the monastery and the earth node with them. If the characters do attack the ghosts, they simply flee the chamber, floating up through the ceiling to the level above.

Grandmaster Oolan tells the party that when the Spellplague came, the earth node's power changed, creating a permanent gate to the Shadowfell.

He recounts how he and his fellow monks fought bravely, but in the end, they could not stand against the endless stream of undead and other shadow creatures, and the monastery was overrun.

With nothing more to destroy and no more pain to inflict, the invaders retreated back to their plane. Eventually, the node's magic failed, closing the gate and leaving a pool of nothingness in the chamber's center.

Oolan states that nearly a decade ago, something caused the veil between the Material Plane and the Shadowfell to weaken, and since then, creatures of shadow have once again found their way into the cavern. The veil's thinning has also let the despair of the Shadowfell seep into the Material Plane, and he believes whatever latent magic still exists in the cavern is amplifying the effect.

The Grandmaster and his ghostly monks can no longer enter the earth node from the Material Plane, lest they be drawn into the nothingness of the pool. They can only safely enter the node by first traveling to the Ethereal Plane. However, from that plane, they cannot interact with the node or its inhabitant.

Recently, a horrid shadow monstrosity of eternal hunger has made the node its home, devouring any other creatures that manage to slip through the veil. By possessing a yeti that drew too near the monastery, Oolan managed to block the door leading to the node, trapping the horror below.

A NOBLE QUEST

If the characters tell Oolan of their quest and their need to destroy the Tenets of Bane, he warns against entering the node, stating that the pull of despair is too great. If the characters insist, the ghost's weathered face takes on a pensive look, and he says, *"Your path is dangerous, but noble, and we will not stop you. In fact, if you are resolute in your task, perhaps my brethren and I can be of assistance. If you allow us to possess you, our years of rigid mental training may be able to aid you against the despair of the node. Your actions would still be your own, but we could help quiet your thoughts and strengthen your will. The choice is yours."*

There are over a dozen spirits present. Any character who allows one of the Caadrin ghosts to enter their body immediately feels an odd peace and an emboldened sense of purpose. For the duration of the possession, they gain advantage on all Wisdom saving throws.

DM Tip. Do not inform the players of the mechanical advantage of allowing the Caadrin ghosts to possess their characters. The players should make their decision based on their character's in-game thoughts and beliefs, not by using metagame knowledge.

CONTINUING THE ADVENTURE

When the characters are ready, they can easily remove the rocks that block the door leading to the earth node. To continue the adventure, proceed to the **Cavern of Despair** encounter below.

CAVERN OF DESPAIR

The teardrop-shaped cavern that contains the earth node lies nearly a mile below the surface. It takes the characters an hour of navigating a tight, twisting passage to reach their destination, and as they draw nearer, the feeling of despair grows stronger. Eventually, they round a bend and see dim green light in the passageway ahead.

Allow the characters time to discuss a strategy. The encounter officially begins once they reach the tunnel leading to the node (see the map). When this happens, the presence of the Shadowfell is so strong that the characters must fight to keep from being overcome. See the **Fighting Despair** sidebar for details on how the Shadowfell impacts the fight.

FIGHTING DESPAIR

While characters are in the earth node's area (for simplicity sake, assume the node's area covers the entire map), they are subject to hopelessness and suicidal thoughts, leeching into the Material Plane from the Shadowfell.

At the start of each of their turns, a character must make a successful DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or suffer 14 (4d6) physical damage and be unable to take actions, bonus actions, or reactions until the start of their next turn. In addition the character must move 15 feet (or their maximum movement, if it is less than 15 feet) closer toward the pool in the center of the cavern. Characters who make their saving throw suffer half of the physical damage and can act as normal.

When one or more characters enter the node, they see a teardrop-shaped cavern covered in thousands of tiny luminescent crystals that bath the area in dim green light. Four larger clusters of glowing crystals grow near its perimeter, and an inky pool of absolute darkness lies at its center.

The northeast portion of the cavern has started to collapse, spilling rocky debris onto the concave floor. An unnatural, shadowy darkness lingers in the opening left by the small cave-in.

The party's goal is to destroy the Tenets of Bane. They can do so by simply dropping the discs into the pool in the center of the node. However, in addition to the relentless pull of despair pervading the area, a shadow creature with large, grasping claws called **The Hungry (H)** also occupies the cavern. When it notices a living creature, it moans loudly and says, "Sooooo hungry," before opening its mouth unnaturally wide to reveal sharp, pointed teeth.

THE HUNGRY

The Hungry is a horrid beast with grasping claws and a yawning mouth. It greedily devours all life and energy it encounters, stuffing its maws with flesh and drinking its victims' screams. When it finishes, it lurches away resuming the search for something else to consume.

As a creature native to the Shadowfell, The Hungry is immune to the despair present in the cavern. In addition to the features listed in its stat block at the back of the adventure, The Hungry also has the following trait:

- **Legendary Resistance (3/Day).** If The Hungry fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

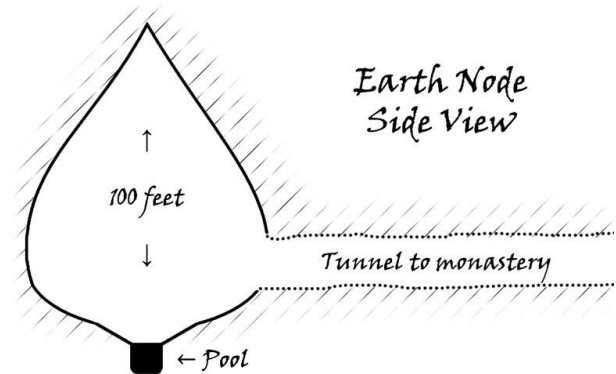
ADJUSTING THE ENCOUNTER

Here are recommendations for adjusting this combat encounter. These are not cumulative.

- **Very weak party:** The Hungry has 105 hit points.
- **Weak party:** The Hungry has 175 hit points.
- **Strong party:** The Hungry has 275 hit points.
- **Very strong party:** The Hungry has 330 hit points.

TACTICS

The Hungry is driven by an insatiable need to consume, and it fights to its death. It attacks the nearest enemy, hoping to kill as many living creatures as possible so that it can gorge itself on the flesh of its fallen foes.



GENERAL FEATURES

The area has the following features.

Light. Dim green light from glowing crystals.

Cave-in. Shadowy darkness occupies the cave-in in the northeast part of the cavern. The darkness is a tear in the veil between the Material Plane and the Shadowfell. For the purpose of this adventure, the tear is considered a one-way gate. Creatures may not use it to enter the Shadowfell.

Crystal clusters. Four clusters of glowing green crystals reside near the perimeter of the cavern. They shed bright light in a 5-foot radius. Each cluster is infused with powerful latent magic from when the earth node was originally active. The magic is responsible for amplifying the despair from the Shadowfell, as well as sustaining the tear between the Material Plane and the Plane of Shadow.

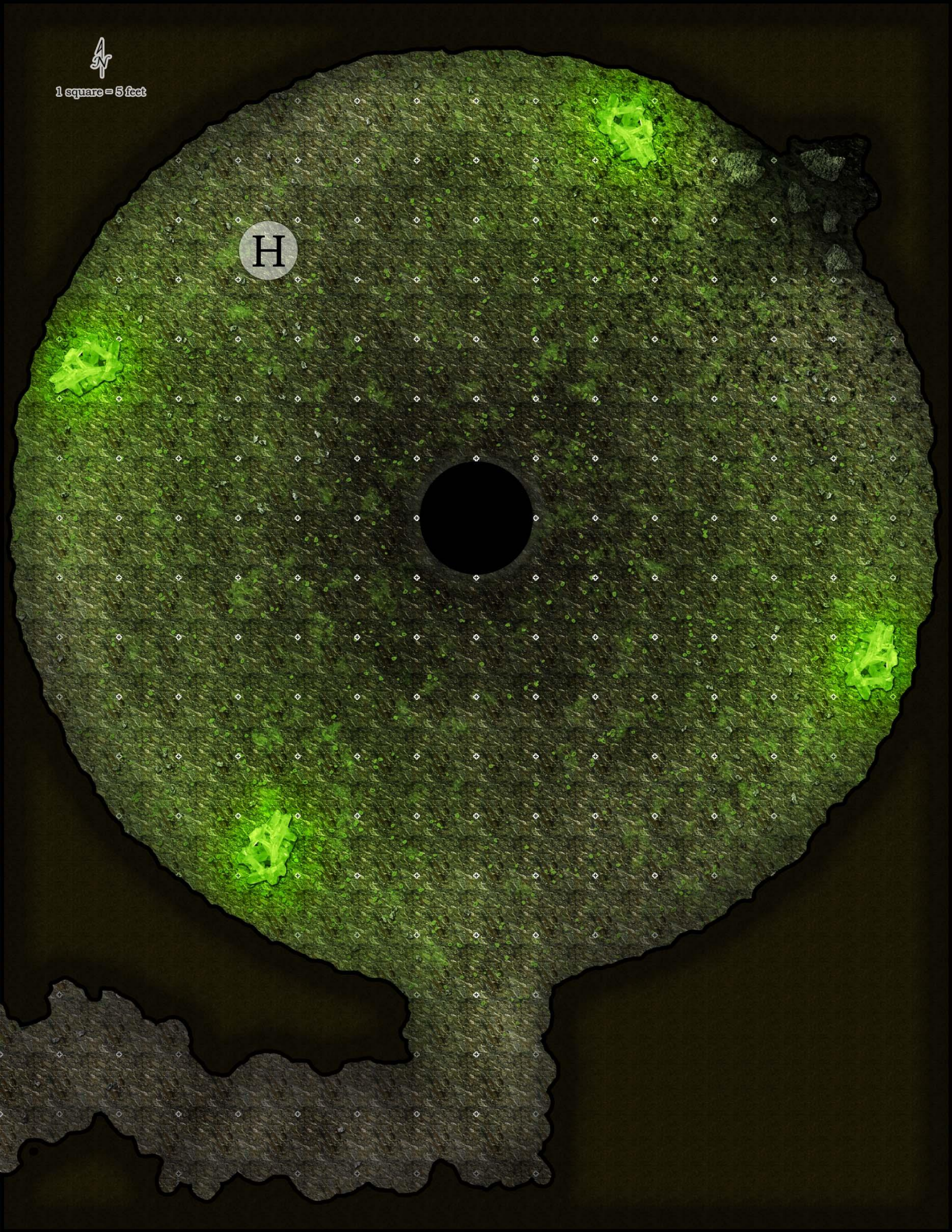
Characters with a passive Arcana score of 15 or higher automatically sense the power of each cluster when they enter the node and know that destroying them would help stem the effects of the Shadowfell. Any character that uses an action to examine a cluster can make a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check to learn the same information.

Each cluster has an AC of 5, 20 hit points, immunity to acid, cold, fire, lightning, necrotic, poison, psychic, and radiant damage; and vulnerability to bludgeoning, force, and thunder damage. If a cluster is destroyed, the DC of the Wisdom saving throw described in the **Fighting Despair** sidebar decreases by 1. If the characters destroy all of the clusters, the despair effect ends, and the shadowy darkness inside the cave-in disappears, as the tear between the Material Plane and the Shadowfell is sealed.



1 square = 5 feet

H



Pool. The pool in the center of the earth node is similar to an immobile *sphere of annihilation*. See the **Pool of Annihilation** sidebar for more information.

Over the centuries, the pool has been gradually consuming the surrounding earth, creating a slight slope in a 10-foot radius around it. While the slope is not enough to hinder movement, it can (at your discretion) cause objects that fall within the radius to slide into the pool.

POOL OF ANNIHILATION

This 10-foot-diameter black pool is a hole in the multiverse, fixed in space and stabilized by a magical field surrounding it.

The pool obliterates all matter that enters it. Artifacts are the exception. Unless an artifact is susceptible to damage from a *sphere of annihilation*, the pool has no effect on it. Anything else that touches or enters the pool but isn't wholly engulfed and obliterated by it takes 22 (4d10) force damage.

Creatures and items that fall into the pool simply cease to exist. Nothing less than a *wish* spell or divine intervention can bring them back.

TOUCHED BY TORM

If at any time during the final encounter a character with the **Touched by Torm** story award dies, read the following to the player:

The blackness of death is complete and eternal, and although you can see nothing, you feel yourself floating. Gradually, the black lightens to gray, and you wake to find yourself lying on nothingness in an endless void of white. You stand and see an old man in white robes leaning heavily on a simple wooden staff. His long white hair and beard hide most of his face, but he hobbles your way while speaking in a soft tone, "You. I see what you could be, even if you do not. You still have much to do." He raises his right hand, opens his palm, touches it to your forehead, and once again, all is black.

If the character fell fighting in the earth node (or the tunnel leading to it), they regain consciousness with half of their hit points at the start of their next turn. If they perished by falling or walking into the pool, they regain consciousness with 1 hit point at the start of their next turn in the Chamber of Enlightenment, which is detailed at the beginning of part 4. This act of divine intervention can only occur once for a character during the final encounter.

CONTINUING THE ADVENTURE

To destroy the Tenets of Bane, the characters need not defeat The Hungry or destroy the crystal clusters, but doing so certainly makes their task easier.

The Caadrin ghosts remain within any characters who allowed themselves to be possessed until they return to the Chamber of Enlightenment. After the ghosts depart the bodies of the possessed, Grandmaster Oolan asks the party to replace the stones in front of the door leading to the earth node—as a precaution.

If the characters destroyed the crystal clusters and sealed the tear in the veil, the aura of despair no longer exists within the monastery. The party is free to rest as long they wish with no ill effects. Thankful for their service, Grandmaster Oolan and his ghostly monks offer to watch over them as they rest.

If the characters would like an additional challenge, or if they have played through other Tenets of Bane adventures and would like some closure to the series, proceed to **Appendix 2: Epilogue**. Otherwise, continue to **Episode 5: Conclusion**.

TREASURE

If the characters defeat The Hungry, Grandmaster Oolan rewards them by directing them to a hidden cache of treasure. It contains various coins and gems, a *potion of greater healing*, and *gloves of missile snaring*.

EPISODE 5: CONCLUSION

Expected Duration: 15 minutes

With the Tenets of Bane finally destroyed, the characters are free to return to Rylan Elentaur's tower in Thentia. When they arrive, Malana is relieved to hear of their success and pleased to see they survived their journey into the mountains.

While she has no way of knowing with complete certainty if the characters truly completed their task, she trusts their word, and happily rewards them.

If any characters died during the adventure, and the party returned with their remains, Malana directs them to the House of the Moon, a temple to Selûne near the center of Thentia, where she pays for them to be brought back to life.

To end the adventure, continue to **Adventure Rewards**.

ADVENTURE REWARDS

Upon completing the adventure, the characters each receive rewards based upon their accomplishments. These rewards include advancement and treasure, and may include special rewards, such as story awards or new downtime activities, as follows:

ADVANCEMENT AND TREASURE CHECKPOINTS

The characters receive 2 advancement checkpoints and 2 treasure checkpoints for completing the **story** objective below:

- **Story Objective:** Destroy the Tenets of Bane by dropping them into the pool of annihilation.

The characters receive 1 advancement checkpoint and 1 treasure checkpoint for completing each of the **bonus** objectives below:

- **Bonus Objective A:** Thoroughly explore the Monastery of the Frozen Fist and fight the wraiths in the **Appendix 1: Restless Spirits** optional encounter.
- **Bonus Objective B:** Fight the aspect of Bane in the **Appendix 2: Epilogue** encounter.

PLAYER REWARDS

The characters earn downtime and renown as outlined in the *D&D Adventurers League Dungeon Master's Guide* for completing the adventure and any bonus objectives. They also earn the following player rewards:

MAGIC ITEM UNLOCK

Characters completing the adventure's **story** objective the magic item below.

Gloves of Missile Snaring. These gloves seem to almost meld into your hands when you don them. A full description of this item can be found under **Appendix 4: Player Handouts**.

CONSUMABLES

During this adventure, the characters may find the following consumable items:

Potion of Greater Healing. This item can be found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

Spell Scroll of Raise Dead. This item can be found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

STORY AWARDS

During this adventure, the characters may earn the following story awards:

Mark of Bane. You fell in battle while fighting a manifestation of Bane's power in a demi-plane created by the deity. While your spirit was returned to your physical form unharmed, you now bear the mark of Bane somewhere on your body. The mark is a small black handprint roughly three inches by two inches in size. Whenever you are presented with an opportunity to act in a manner that aligns with Bane's tenets of fear, hatred, or tyranny, the mark itches and burns. Whether you view this as a sign to fight against Bane's beliefs or treat it as a call to honor his teachings is up to you.

Divine Spark. You slew a manifestation of Bane's power in a demi-plane created by the deity. When your spirit returned to your physical form, a miniscule portion of deific power went with it. In times of great anger or duress, your eyes now glow with divine radiance. The color of the luminance is up to you.

DM REWARDS

In exchange for running this adventure, you earn advancement and treasure checkpoints and downtime as though you played the adventure, but none of the other rewards listed above.

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



DRAMATIS PERSONAE

The following NPCs and locations feature prominently in this adventure.

- **Malana Homwell.** A native of Elturgard, Malana comes from a long line of paladins and clerics dedicated to the worship of Torm. She typically dresses in clean white robes and a pale-blue shawl bearing the upraised hand of Torm. She keeps the right sleeve of her garment rolled and pinned at her elbow, making her missing appendage easily apparent. Light streaks of grey grace her lustrous blond hair, and her bright blue eyes convey both intelligence and authority.

Personality: I believe everyone deserves kindness, compassion, and dignity, and I do my best to set this example through my actions.

Ideal: I believe that my purpose is to spread the teachings of Torm.

Bond: I am dedicated to Torm with all of my being.

Flaw: My desire to please Torm sometimes blinds my judgement.

- **Rylan Elentaur.** A high elf of noble birth, Rylan's family acquired the collective works of the archmage Rililar Shadow-water after his death. The wizard has spent the better part of his life studying Rililar's journals. While not a Harper, Rylan claims a loose affiliation with the organization, and when Malana's latest call for assistance went out, he learned of it through his Harper affiliates.

Personality: I'm used to helping out those who aren't as smart as I am, and I patiently explain anything and everything to others.

Ideal: History is only important if we learn from it and do not make the same mistakes twice.

Bond: I want to use my knowledge to make the world a better place for everyone.

Flaw: I sometimes risk too much in my quest for forgotten lore.

- **Servants of Strife.** Three of Bane's devout followers who originally carried the Tenets of Bane. Collectively, they were known as the Servants of Strife.
- **Tenets of Bane.** Three palm-sized discs make up the Tenets of Bane. These discs once belonged to the Servants of Strife, three of Bane's most devout worshipers. Each disc bears a word (HATE, FEAR, or TYRANNY) in black letters on one side and a symbol of Bane, a painted black hand outlined in red, on the opposite. Creatures that touch the disc feel a sudden and intense rush of emotion related to the word it bears.

The wizard, Sax Magnus, magically created each of the three discs. Upon their completion, they were bathed in the blood of the assassin, Cyran Steel, and blessed by the blackguard, Mace Dred. This process somehow bound the discs to the souls of each Servant of Strife, but since the exact nature of the joining is both arcane and divine, it is unknown to all but their original owners.



APPENDIX 1: RESTLESS SPIRITS (BONUS OBJECTIVE B)

As the characters explore the monastery, they encounter an area where two hallways meet and form a 20-foot-by-20-foot room littered with the skeletons of fallen combatants. As they pass through the intersection, the air grows slightly cooler, and **four wraiths (W)** rise silently from the floor.

The wraiths came into being when a band of exceptionally vile Shadar-Kai perished at the hands of the Caadrin, and their malevolent forms still wander the halls of the monastery, seeking life to extinguish.

TACTICS

The wraiths employ very little in the way of tactics. Their only desire is to kill by draining the life from the nearest enemy. They will, however, move through walls to reach opponents.

ADJUSTING THE ENCOUNTER

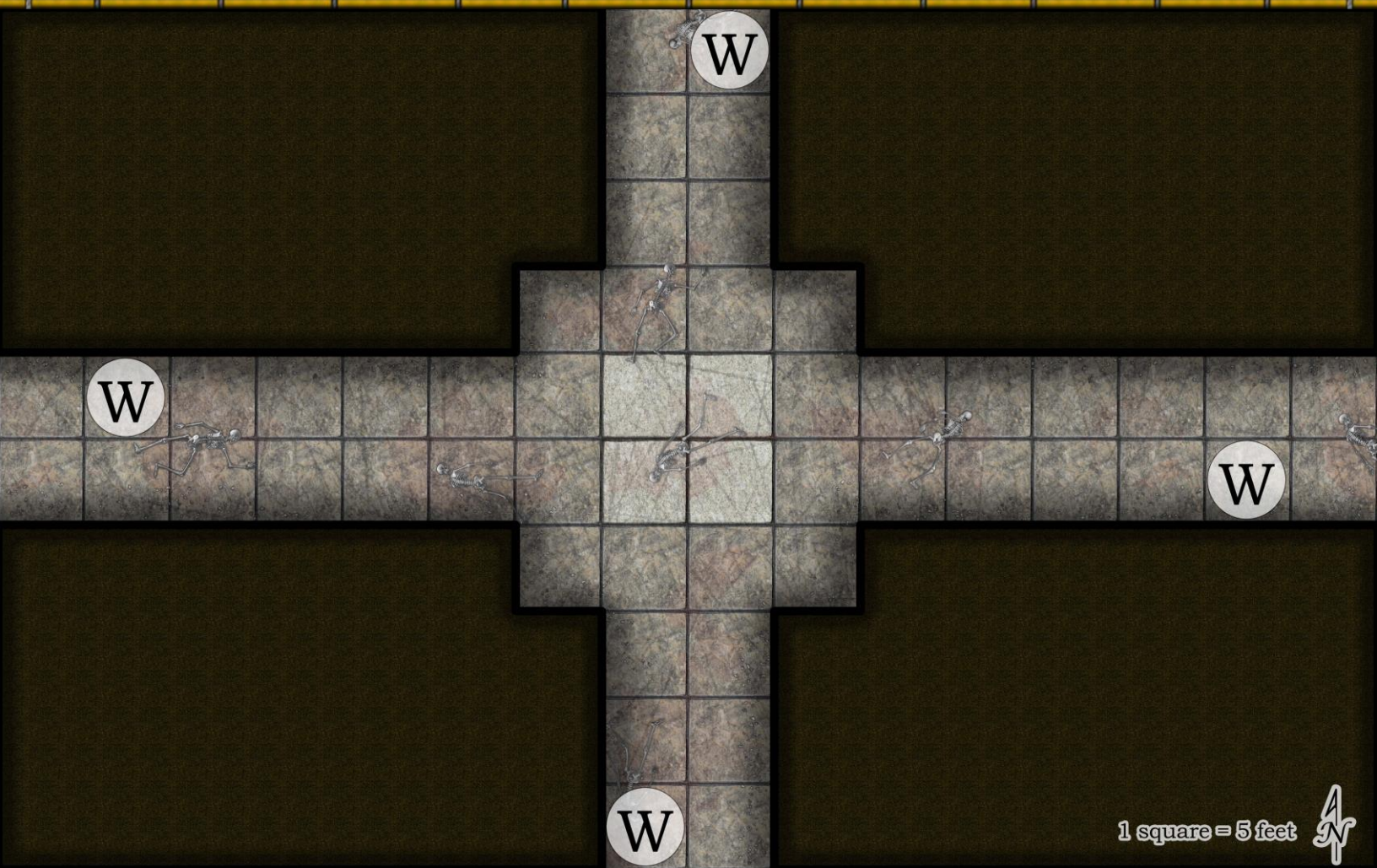
Here are recommendations for adjusting this combat encounter. These are not cumulative.

- **Very weak party:** Remove two **wraiths**
- **Weak party:** Remove one **wraith**
- **Strong party:** Add one **wraith**
- **Very strong party:** Add three **wraiths**

SHADOW STRENGTH

The strong presence of the Shadowfell radiating from the earth node grants the wraiths the following trait:

- **Turn Resistance.** The wraith has advantage on saving throws against effects that turn undead.



APPENDIX 2: EPILOGUE (BONUS OBJECTIVE B)

Expected Duration: 45 minutes

The Tenets of Bane story encompasses eight adventures, but it is possible the players at your table may not have played any (or very few) of the other adventures in the series. At its core, the story revolves around a quest to locate and destroy three platinum discs, and this adventure finally sees that goal realized. If there are characters in your party that have been involved in this quest from the start, they may appreciate a little more closure to the series. If that's the case, and if you have time, run the encounter below, which occurs after the discs have been destroyed, but before the characters return to Rylan Elentaur's tower in Thentia.

DREAMS OF THE DARK LORD

With the Tenets of Bane finally destroyed, the characters settle down for some much needed rest, and with little struggle, the darkness of sleep overtakes them. Adrift in a sea of nothingness, they feel their consciousness pulled from the dark and find themselves standing under a dome of black steel atop a floor of rough stone. Light occupies the space, but it seems to have no discernible source.

Moments later, a loud boom resonates within the dome, and the characters hear the sound of heavy, booted footsteps behind them. They turn to find a large humanoid with greenish-grey skin. He has slightly-pointed ears, glowing green eyes, and is dressed in plate armor. A two-handed morningstar rests easily at his side. Stepping forward, he speaks, *"So, you are those responsible for besting the Servants of Strife and destroying the discs. You seem unimpressive, but then, most mortals do."*

The creature is an **aspect of Bane (A)** (use the **Githyanki Supreme Commander** stat block and see the "Aspect of Bane" sidebar for more information), and the characters are instantly aware of its identity. Bane has sent this small splinter of himself into their dreams, because he is curious about those who would work so fervently to destroy items of such little power. He also wishes to learn if the characters are a serious threat to his worship in the Moonsea.

The aspect asks each character in turn why they felt it necessary to pursue the destruction of the discs. It speaks without malice, as it does not fear any mortal, nor does it attempt to rebuff their answers. It is simply curious.

If questioned, the aspect responds honestly. Use the guidance below to answer any questions the characters might have:

- The dome is a demi-plane, but only a character's consciousness has been drawn to it. Their physical body remains asleep on the Prime Material plane.
- A character's physical form in the demi-plane is a manifestation of their form on the Prime Material plane. They appear fully rested and equipped with all of their gear.
- The characters have been brought to the demi-plane so that Bane might learn their motivations and test their strength; for knowledge is power in its own right.
- Bane provides his worshipers with a path to personal power. He seeks to strengthen those who praise him, thereby bettering society as a whole.
- The weak and easily exploited often need to be culled from the herd so that it might become more resilient and produce sturdier stock.
- Bane's goal is the betterment of all. The way becomes clear through his worship.
- While Bane's beliefs may seem violent and cruel to some, they are necessary to bring about a stable society. However, it can be difficult for mortals to comprehend the will and rationality of a god.

Allow the characters as much time as they desire to speak with the aspect, and feel free to improvise in your roleplaying of the creature. As a splinter of the deity himself, the aspect does not feel a need to defend Bane's beliefs. It takes any criticism or verbal hostility with aloof amusement.

When the characters have finished speaking with the aspect, the large humanoid hefts its morningstar and speaks, *"Very well. Let us test your skills and prowess in battle, for Bane prizes physical strength as well as willpower and mental acuity. Do not fear, defeat here will not be the end of you. If Bane desired your deaths, he could take your souls at any time. Now, come, let us see what you are made of!"*

ADJUSTING THE ENCOUNTER

Here are recommendations for adjusting this combat encounter. These are not cumulative.

- **Very weak party:** The **aspect of Bane** has 150 hit points, and it cannot use its legendary actions.
- **Weak party:** The **aspect of Bane** has 200 hit points.
- **Average party:** The **aspect of Bane** has 250 hit points.
- **Strong party:** The **aspect of Bane** has 310 hit points.
- **Very strong party:** The **aspect of Bane** has 358 hit points.

1 square = 5 feet



characters start
in shaded area

ASPECT OF BANE

As a manifestation of Bane, the aspect appears as a large, green-skinned humanoid, which is a form often used by the deity throughout Faerûn's history. For convenience and ease of play, all changes to the **Githyanki Supreme Commander** stats have been summarized below.

- The aspect is size large and it is a lawful evil celestial.
- The aspect's silver greatsword is flavored as a large, two-handed morningstar.
- The aspect cannot be banished from its demi-plane.

GENERAL FEATURES

The area has the following features.

Light. Bright light permeates the area.

Dome. The dome is 40 feet in diameter and 40 feet tall at its peak. Nothing occupies its space, and its floor and walls are indestructible.

TACTICS

The aspect fights fearlessly, starting with melee attacks against the foe that appears the strongest. It prefers to use its Attack and Command Ally (which can also force an enemy to attack an adjacent target) legendary actions over Teleport, and it uses its Parry reaction whenever possible.

When reduced to half of its hit points, it casts *mass suggestion* and commands the characters to lay down arms and prostrate themselves before Bane's might (until told to do otherwise). It then casts *Bigby's hand* and targets those not under its *suggestion* spell with a "grasping hand". On subsequent rounds, it attacks threatening enemies with its morningstar.

THE HAND OF TORM

Characters who have taken the time to expand their knowledge of Torm or pledge themselves to him know that Bane is his greatest rival and most hated enemy. This aids them greatly while fighting Bane's aspect in the demi-plane.

Character with the **Inspired by Torm** story award have advantage on saving throws and ability checks while in the demi-plane. Those with the **Touched by Torm** story award have advantage on attack rolls, saving throws, and ability checks while there. In addition, if they "die" in the demi-plane, they do not receive the **Mark of Bane** story award.

DEVELOPMENTS

Any character reduced to 0 or less hit points while in the in the demi-plane "dies" and immediately awakens back in their body on the Prime Material plane, having suffered no damage or ill effects.

Characters killed in their battle with Bane earn the **Mark of Bane** story award (see **Appendix 4: Player Handouts** for a full description of the story award). Once returned to their bodies, they find any companions remaining in the demi-plane alive, but unconscious. Nothing they do can awaken them. Success or failure in the demi-plane is only thing that can return them to their bodies.

If the characters manage to defeat the aspect of Bane, they immediately awaken back in their bodies on the Prime Material plane, and each character earns the **Divine Spark** story award (see **Appendix 4: Player Handouts** for a full description of the story award).

ENDING THE ADVENTURE

Proceed to **Part 5: Conclusion** to end the adventure.



APPENDIX 3. MONSTERS/NPCs

FROST SALAMANDER

Huge elemental, unaligned

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 168 (16d12 + 64)

Speed 60 ft., burrow 40 ft., climb 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)	7 (-2)	11 (+0)	7 (-2)

Saving Throws Con +8, Wis +4

Skills Perception +4

Damage Vulnerabilities fire

Damage Immunities cold

Senses darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 60 ft., passive Perception 14

Languages Primordial

Challenge 9 (5,000 XP)

Burning Fury. When the salamander takes fire damage, its Freezing Breath automatically recharges.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The salamander makes five attacks: four with its claws and one with its bite.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d6+5) piercing damage.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d8 + 5) piercing damage and 5 (1d10) cold damage.

Freezing Breath (Recharge 6). The salamander exhales chill wind in a 60-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 17 Constitution saving throw, taking 44 (8d10) cold damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

GIANT ICE TOAD

Large monstrosity, neutral

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 52 (7d10 + 14)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	8 (-1)	10 (+0)	6 (-2)

Damage Immunities cold

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Ice Toad

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Amphibious. The toad can breathe air and water.

Cold Aura. Any creature that starts its turn within 10 feet of the toad takes 5 (1d10) cold damage.

Standing Leap. The toad's long jump is up to 20 feet and its high jump is up to 10 feet, with or without a running start.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) piercing damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 13). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained, and the toad can't bite another target.

Swallow. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one Medium or smaller creature the toad is grappling. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) piercing damage, the target is swallowed, and the grapple ends. The swallowed target is blinded and restrained, it has total cover against attacks and other effects outside the toad, and it takes 10 (3d6) acid damage and 11 (2d10) cold damage at the start of each of the toad's turns. The toad can have only one target swallowed at a time.

If the toad dies, a swallowed creature is no longer restrained by it and can escape from the corpse using 5 feet of movement, exiting prone.



GITHYANKI SUPREME COMMANDER

Medium humanoid (gith), lawful evil

Armor Class 18 (plate)

Hit Points 187 (22d8 + 88)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	17 (+3)	18 (+4)	16 (+3)	16 (+3)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws Con +9, Int +8, Wis +8

Skills Insight +8, Intimidation +9, Perception +8

Senses passive Perception 18

Languages Gith

Challenge 14 (11,500 XP)

Innate Spellcasting (Psionics). The githyanki's innate spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 16, +8 to hit with spell attacks). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no components:

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

3/day each: *jump*, *levitate (self only)*, *misty step*, *non detection (self only)*

1/day each: *Bigby's hand*, *mass suggestion*, *plane shift*, *telekinesis*

Legendary Resistance (3/Day). If the githyanki fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The githyanki makes two greatsword attacks.

Silver Greatsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (2d6 + 7) slashing damage plus 17 (5d6) psychic damage. On a critical hit against a target in an astral body (as with the astral projection spell), the githyanki can cut the silvery cord that tethers the target to its material body, instead of dealing damage.

REACTIONS

Parry. The githyanki adds 5 to its AC against one melee attack that would hit it. To do so, the githyanki must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

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

Attack (2 Actions). The githyanki makes a greatsword attack.

Command Ally. The githyanki targets one ally it can see within 30 feet of it. If the target can see or hear the githyanki, the target can make one melee weapon attack using its reaction and has advantage on the attack roll.

Teleport. The githyanki magically teleports, along with any equipment it is wearing and carrying, to an unoccupied space it can see within 30 feet of it. It also becomes insubstantial until the start of its next turn. While insubstantial, it can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. If it ends its turn inside an object, it takes 16 (3d10) force damage and is moved to the nearest unoccupied space.

THE HUNGRY

Medium monstrosity, neutral evil

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 225 (30d8 + 90)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	10 (+0)	17 (+3)	6 (-2)	11 (+0)	6 (-2)

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing while in dim light or darkness

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Common

Challenge 11 (7,200 XP)

Life Hunger. If a creature the Hungry can see regains hit points, the Hungry gains two benefits until the end of its next turn: it has advantage on attack rolls, and its bite deals an extra 22 (4d10) necrotic damage on a hit.

ACTIONS

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

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) piercing damage plus 13 (3d8) necrotic damage.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target *Hit:* 18 (4d6 + 4) slashing damage. If the target is Medium or smaller, it is grappled (escape DC 16) and restrained until the grapple ends. While grappling a creature, the Hungry can't attack with its claws.

SPECTER

Medium undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 22 (5d8)

Speed 0 ft., fly 50 ft. (hover)

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

Damage Resistances acid, cold, fire, lightning, thunder, bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons

Damage Immunities necrotic, poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained, unconscious

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages understands all languages it knew in life but can't speak

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Incorporeal Movement. The specter can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. It takes 5 (1d10) force damage if it ends its turn inside an object.

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

ACTIONS

Life Drain. *Melee Spell Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 10 (3d6) necrotic damage. The target must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or its hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the damage taken. This reduction lasts until the creature finishes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0.

WRAITH

Medium undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 67 (9d8 + 27)

Speed 0 ft., fly 60 ft. (hover)

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

Damage Resistances acid, cold, fire, lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons that aren't silvered

Damage Immunities necrotic, poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Common, Elvish

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Incorporeal Movement. The wraith can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. It takes 5 (1d10) force damage if it ends its turn inside an object.

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

ACTIONS

Life Drain. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 21 (4d8 + 3) necrotic damage. The target must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or its hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the damage taken. This reduction lasts until the target finishes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0.

Create Specter. The wraith targets a humanoid within 10 feet of it that has been dead for no longer than 1 minute and died violently. The target's spirit rises as a specter in the space of its corpse or in the nearest unoccupied space. The specter is under the wraith's control. The wraith can have no more than seven specters under its control at one time.



APPENDIX 4:

PLAYER HANDOUTS

During the course of the adventure, the characters may unlock or acquire the rewards below. If you are distributing these to your players, print and cut out as many of each as you need to ensure all eligible characters receive a copy. Alternatively, allow each player to take a picture of the information with their mobile device.

STORY AWARDS

MARK OF BANE

You fell in battle while fighting a manifestation of Bane's power in a demi-plane created by the deity. While your spirit was returned to your physical form unharmed, you now bear the mark of Bane somewhere on your body. The mark is a small black handprint roughly three inches by two inches in size. Whenever you are presented with an opportunity to act in a manner that aligns with Bane's tenets of fear, hatred, or tyranny, the mark itches and burns. Whether you view this as a sign to fight against Bane's beliefs or treat it as a call to honor his teachings is up to you.

DIVINE SPARK

You slew a manifestation of Bane's power in a demi-plane created by the deity. When your spirit returned to your physical form, a miniscule portion of deific power went with it. In times of great anger or duress, your eyes now glow with divine radiance. The color of the luminance is up to you.

COMMON MAGIC ITEMS

MYSTERY KEY

Wondrous item, common

A question mark is worked into the head of this key. The key has a 5 percent chance of unlocking any lock into which it's inserted. Once it unlocks something, the key disappears.

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

MAGIC ITEMS

GLOVES OF MISSILE SNARING

Wondrous item, uncommon (requires attunement), table F

These gloves seem to almost meld into your hands when you don them. When a ranged weapon attack hits you while you're wearing them, you can use your reaction to reduce the damage by 1d10 + your Dexterity modifier, provided that you have a free hand. If you reduce the damage to 0, you can catch the missile if it is small enough for you to hold in that hand.

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

APPENDIX 5: DUNGEON MASTER TIPS

This adventure is designed for **three to seven 5th-10th level characters** and is optimized for **five characters with an average party level (APL) of 8**. Characters outside this level range cannot participate in this adventure.

NEW TO D&D ADVENTURERS LEAGUE?

Welcome to the D&D Adventurers League! [You can learn more about this global organized play campaign on our website.](#)

NEW TO BEING THE DUNGEON MASTER?

A plethora of great Dungeon Master advice can be found all across the internet. New DMs are urged to purchase a copy of the Dungeon Master's Guide and join our Facebook ([player group](#) and [DM group](#)) and [Twitter discussions](#).

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

PREPARING THE ADVENTURE

Before you start play, consider the following:

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

Players can play an adventure they previously played as a Player or Dungeon Master, but may only play it once with a given character. Ensure each player has their character's adventure logsheet (if not, get one from the organizer). The players fill out the adventure name, session number, date, and your name and DCI number. In addition, the player also

fills in the starting values for advancement and treasure checkpoints, downtime days, and renown. These values are updated at the conclusion of the session.

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

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

ADJUSTING THIS ADVENTURE

When combat is a possibility, the adventure provides a sidebar to help you to determine the best mix/number of opponents to provide characters with to create an appropriate challenge. You are not bound to these adjustments. They are presented for your convenience and consideration.

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

Determining Party Strength

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