



FATHOMLESS PITS OF ILL INTENT

The time is now! The yuan-ti lay on the cusp of freeing an ancient being of insurmountable evil from its imprisonment. Should this happen, Faerûn may very well be plunged into an age of darkness. You have traveled the width and breadth of the peninsula and learned what you could about your foe. Now it's time to put that knowledge to use. Steel yourself, adventurer, there are important deeds to be done!

A Four-Hour Adventure for 11th-16th Level Characters



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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to *Fathomless Depths of Ill Intent*, a D&D Adventurers League™ adventure, part of the official D&D Adventurers League™ organized play system and the *Tomb of Annihilation*™ storyline season.

This adventure is mostly set in a lesser tomb recently carved out beneath the ruins of Orolunga in the Jungles of Chult. Gameplay begins and ends in Port Nyanzaru.

This adventure is designed for **three to seven 11th-16th level characters** and is optimized for **five characters with an average party level (APL) of 13**. 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

"You were but a means to an end. Please know that I hold no ill intent toward you."

--Rhaugilath the Ageless

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Once a Sorcerer-King of Netheril, the lich Rhaugilath survived the fall of that ancient kingdom, but he was defeated by his rival Larloch who bound him as a servitor. Rhaugilath has chafed under the magically compelled servitude for centuries.

Recently, Rhaugilath studied Acererak's methods used in the construction of the Tomb of Nine Gods and determined that he can build a similar tomb to channel souls into a ritual to free him from his eternal servitude to Larloch.

To do this, he has influenced the dreams of Kress'voon, a yuan-ti anathema. Kress'voon believed that he was hearing the whispers of Dendar the Night Serpent who was telling the anathema how to stir the sleeping goddess. Following the lich's instructions given through dreams, Kress'voon has built a tomb to channel souls into a ritual, much the same way that Acererak was channeling souls into the atropal in *Tomb of Annihilation*. Kress'voon believes the ritual will awaken Dendar, but Rhaugilath is using the souls and the ritual to break his magically compelled servitude to Larloch.

LOCATION AND NPC SUMMARY

The following NPCs and locations feature prominently in this adventure.

Kress'voon (kres-VOON). Kress'voon is the leader of the yuan-ti sect that inhabits the Lesser Tomb under Orolunga.

Rhaugilath (RAW-gil-LATH). Rhaugilath is an archlich and a servitor lich of Larloch. He is influencing Kress'voon through its dreams.

Orolunga (OR-oh-LUN-gah). Orolunga is a lesser tomb in Chult and a trap where Kress'voon is harvesting souls.

ADVENTURE OVERVIEW

The adventure is broken down into three parts:

Part 1. The characters arrive at Orolunga and must find their way inside the tomb.

Part 2. Once inside the tomb, the characters must overcome the many traps, puzzles, and dangers created for them by Kress'voon. These challenges are designed to kill the party and harvest their souls for use in Kress'voon's ritual.

Part 3. In the deepest pit, the characters face off with Kress'voon and his many servants, as they

attempt to complete the ritual to awaken Dendar. Rhaugilath looks on through a magical relic and tries to tip the battle in favor of the yuan-ti.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

This adventure begins in Port Nyanzaru.

Previous Adventures. If the characters have played in DDAL07-13 *Old Bones and Older Tomes*, then they are aware of Kress'voon's plot to awaken Dendar the Night Serpent and where it is happening. If the characters have been to Orolunga before in their exploration of Chult then they know where to find their destination. They must arrange some form of transportation to reach Orolunga, whether it is walking through the jungle, flying over it on a flying carpet, or even teleporting to the site.

If the characters have not been to Orolunga before, they must use other resources to find its location, such as a guide, old maps, or even divination magic.

Any inquiry reveals that a lot of adventurers are heading to Orolunga so it's easy to arrange travel.

Savras' Divinations. Grandfather Zitembe (*Tomb of Annihilation* p. 21) receives a vision from Savras, deity of diviners and fortune tellers, that reveals the danger of Kress'voon's plan.

Zitembe summons some of the most powerful adventurers in Nyanzaru (the party) to the Temple of Savras. He informs them that the yuan-ti are currently attempting to awake Dendar the Night Serpent, and urges them to seek the "The Death of the Sun." It must be destroyed before the yuan-ti succeed!

As above, the party needs to arrange some form of transportation to reach Orolunga. A guide is recommended if the characters have not been there before.

Take the Bait. The party learns that many other adventurers are heading to the ruins of Orolunga. The purpose of the trip varies with each group. Some are going to stop a great evil while others seek treasure that is supposedly buried there, but something is definitely going on in Orolunga.

The spike of interest by adventurers is due to whispered rumors being spread by yuan-ti agents in the city. Kress'voon needs many souls to awaken Dendar and is using his agents to spread tales to lure adventurers to Orolunga. These agents work through third parties and can't be uncovered in this adventure.

PART 1. OROLUNGA

Estimated Duration: 15 minutes

Orolunga is described in *Tomb of Annihilation*, p. 80-82. If the party has visited before, they're familiar with its layout. However, Kress'voon has slain the guardian naga Saja N'baza and intends to enslave her as a bone naga within the pits below while preventing her reincarnation.

GENERAL FEATURES

Orolunga has the following general features.

Terrain. Jungle grows up to the base of the ziggurat—covering long-buried foundations and tumbled stones.

Weather. A storm brews in the sky overhead. No lightning comes until the party triggers it. The heavily overcast sky bathes Orolunga in dim light.

Smells and Sounds. The air tingles with energy as the storm waits to strike. The rest of the jungle waits in hushed anticipation.

A. AT THE BASE OF THE ZIGGURAT

When the party arrives at Orolunga, read the following:

The massive brick and stone ziggurat of Orolunga towers above you. Two staircases angle up and across the front face, crossing each other at three different landings before reaching the summit. An enclosed shrine sits at its peak.

A swirling thundercloud fills the sky overhead, centered directly overtop the ziggurat. Your hair rises slightly with electrical energy but no lightning strikes.

As Saja N'baza has been slain by Kress'voon, the test described in *Tomb of Annihilation* doesn't occur in this adventure. Anyone can freely climb the walls, fly, or even use *teleport* or *misty step* to reach the top of the ziggurat. The stairs offer the easiest means of ascent.

B. THE SUMMIT OF THE ZIGGURAT

When the characters reach the top of the ziggurat, they find the following:

The shrine atop the ziggurat is a simple rectangular structure of brick. Its outside walls are decorated with the labyrinthine symbols of Ubtao. An open doorway leads into the inside of the shrine, but you also see crumbled stone where someone has recently scaled to its top.

The portal that leads to the pits below the ziggurat can only be opened by a lightning strike. The party needs to erect a lightning rod atop the shrine to drive the electricity down to the portal inside the shrine.

1. ATOP THE SHRINE

The shrine is 10-feet tall and is only a DC 10 Strength (Athletics) check to scale. When a character reaches the top, read the following.

Atop the shrine you see three corpses strewn about. Much of their clothing has been blasted to pieces and their hair is completely burned off. A long lance lies on the stone. It has been wrapped in copper wire from its metal tip to its base.

The characters can investigate the summit of the ziggurat in a number of ways. Here are the most likely actions they'll take.

- Four dead bodies—adventurers by the look of them—lie atop the roof of the shrine. They appear to have been completely stripped of values.
- A DC 12 Wisdom (Medicine) check reveals that the adventurers were all slain by a tremendous amount of lightning damage.
- A DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check uncovers a metal socket set into the roof of the shrine.

2. INSIDE THE SHRINE

If the party hasn't triggered the lightning strike, they see the following inside the shrine.

Inside the open doorway to the shrine is a barren room with a 10-foot-wide freshly carved symbol of a coiled snake set into the floor. The tail of the snake is at the edge of the carving while the mouth is at the center. From the middle of the carved symbol is a thick iron pole that extends up and into the ceiling. The base of the iron pole rests in the snake's open mouth.

Saja N'baza is no longer present and bringing tokens as described in *Tomb of Annihilation* has no effect in this room. Instead, Rhaugilath has created a magical portal that seals the pits below.

The carved symbol in the floor is the portal. When it is charged by a powerful electrical charge, the stone turns ethereal for 10 minutes, allowing the access to the pit below. After 10 minutes pass, the stone reappears and anything metal in the socket on the roof top is pushed out.

The stone can also be broken by brute force. It has AC 17, 100 hit points; immune to poison and psychic damage. If broken, the block reforms in 10 minutes.

3. CALLING DOWN THE LIGHTNING!

The characters can erect the lightning rod on the roof of the shrine that connects to the socket in the roof which is linked to the iron rod below. The lightning rod weighs 20 pounds.

Once something metal has been attached to the socket, the party has one round to get off the roof before lightning strikes the rod. Characters can feel the ionization in the air, and metal armor begins to crackle with energy.

Alternatively, a *lightning bolt* spell (or any other spell of 3rd level or higher that deals lightning damage) targeted at the iron pole inside the shrine opens the portal.

LIGHTNING STRIKE TRAP

Simple Trap (level 11-16, deadly threat)

A lightning strike blasts anyone on the roof of the shrine.

Trigger. One round after a metal object has been set into a socket, a lightning bolt streaks down from the clouds above and strikes the lightning rod.

Effect. Any creature on the roof when lightning strikes the lightning rod must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw, taking 45 (10d8) electrical damage on a failed save or half as much damage on a successful one. Creatures in metal armor make the saving throw with disadvantage.

Countermeasures. Get off the roof or remove the lightning rod from the socket before the lightning strikes.

The lightning rod remains in place after the strike until the reappearing stone pushes it out 10 minutes later. The characters can pull the lightning rod out beforehand. A DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check reveals that removing the lightning rod won't close the entrance to the ziggurat.

TRICKS OF THE TRADE

If your group seems stuck with this puzzle, consider giving them some hints.

Clouds but no lightning. Casually mention the storm overhead. It swirls and roils, yet it produces neither rain nor lightning.

Electrified Bodies. The characters realize the adventurers on the roof of the shrine died from lightning damage.

C. THE ENEMIES' GATE IS DOWN

If a character is inside the shrine when the lightning strikes, read the following:

The carving of the coiled snake fades into mist and then disappears entirely. Below it is a shaft that plunges down into the darkness. Its smooth, featureless walls offer no handholds. The iron rod that extends from the ceiling of the shrine disappears into the depths of the shaft.

If the party waits elsewhere, the carving is gone when they enter, and they don't see it fading away.

The shaft falls 200 feet down to the first chamber of the pits. The walls are extremely smooth; climbing them requires a successful DC 25 Strength (Athletics) each round to climb down. A creature that fails this check by 5 or more falls.

Magic is an option to descend the shaft, but characters can also grab onto the pole and slide down. It takes four rounds of sliding to reach the bottom safely. Characters can go faster, but they take damage as if falling.

Unless the characters remembered to pull out their lightning rod from the socket on the shrine roof, another strike of lightning courses down the pole when the party is about halfway down.

LIGHTNING STRIKES TWICE TRAP

Simple Trap (level 11-16, deadly threat)

Lightning courses down the iron pole.

Trigger. A lightning bolt strikes the lightning rod.

Effect. Any creature in the shaft when lightning strikes the lightning rod (regardless of whether they are touching the iron pole) must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw. They take 45 (10d8) electrical damage on a failed save or half as much damage on a successful one. Creatures in metal armor or holding onto the iron pole are at disadvantage on the saving throw.

Failure also means the character lets go of the pole or wall (if applicable) and plummets the remaining 100 feet down to the floor below, taking 35 (10d6) bludgeoning damage.

Countermeasures. Remove the lightning rod from the socket before descending.

XP AWARDS

If the characters figure out how to enter the shrine, award each character 500 XP.

DEVELOPMENT

Once the characters have reached the bottom of the shaft, go to Part 2.

PART 2. EXPLORING THE PITS

Estimated Duration: 120 minutes

This part covers the first two levels of the tomb. The party's goal is to open the pit that leads to the third and final level, which is covered in Part 3.

Rhaugilath and Kress'voon have relied on a beholder named Manxanic to create the pits using its disintegration ray. The resulting construction was very vertical with sharp corners with very precise lines, as that pleased the beholder. The yuan-ti demanded no stairs to make it easier for them to slither through the complex.

THE FATHOMLESS PITS

Refer to **Appendix. First Level Map** for the first level of the Fathomless Pits and **Appendix. Playing with Portals** for the second level.

GENERAL FEATURES

The Fathomless Pits have the following general features.

Ceilings. Unless specified otherwise, the ceilings are 10 feet high in both the corridors and the rooms.

Walls. Being carved out by disintegration, the walls are smooth and seamless without discernable stone blocks or mortar—climbing them requires a successful DC 25 Strength (Athletics) each round to climb down. A creature that fails this check by 5 or more falls.

Floors. Like the walls, the floors are perfectly smooth, but can be traversed normally.

Lighting. All areas of the Fathomless Pits are brightly lit at the beginning of the adventure by the illusion of the sun. As the adventure progresses and the illusion is eclipsed, the light fades to dim then finally to darkness. The illusory light does not impact those with sunlight sensitivity.

Statues. There are many statues in the likeness of Kress'voon scattered through the pits. Kress'voon uses the sculptures as a means of scrying on intruders in the pits—observing their strengths and weaknesses in case he must face them later. Kress'voon can use the statues to talk to the adventurers lured to the dungeon.

The sculptures can be destroyed (AC 17, 18 hit points; immune to poison and psychic damage). If a sculpture is destroyed, Kress'voon can no longer see or communicate with creatures in that room.

SOUL HARVESTING

To harvest souls for his ritual, Rhaugilath has recreated Acererak's Death Curse, but on a much smaller scale. While the Death of the Sun (the focal point of Rhaugilath's ritual) is still intact, the following effects apply to the Fathomless Pits.

- If a humanoid dies within the Fathomless Pits, its soul is trapped inside the Death of the Sun on

Level 3. Only the destruction of the Death of the Sun can free the trapped soul.

- Any spell that breathes life into the dead (*revivify*, *raise dead*, and other similar spells) automatically fails if cast on a humanoid whose soul is trapped in the Death of the Sun.

SPEAK WITH DEAD

There are a lot of corpses littered around the Pits, and the party may cast *Speak with Dead* on them. If this happens, you can either extrapolate what knowledge the dead adventurer would have or have the spell fail. Reasons for failing include the mouth of the corpse was ruined when the person died or another adventuring party has already cast *Speak with Dead* on this corpse within the past ten days.

THE FINAL COUNTDOWN

After the party's first encounter with Kress'voon in **Area A2**, the party is on a two-hour timer. Use the timer to put pressure on the characters and keep them moving. If more than two hours pass in game time, then Rhaugilath's ritual should succeed.

To show the passage of time, every room in the pits has an illusion of the sun on the ceiling. As Rhaugilath acquires more souls for the ritual, the sun becomes more eclipsed. When Rhaugilath has all the souls he needs, the sun is completely eclipsed.

The illusory sun bathes the pits with bright light. Once the sun is half eclipsed, it provides only dim light. When the sun is completely eclipsed, it provides no light at all.

A. CHALLENGED ON ENTRY

This area consists of three encounters: Bottom of the Shaft, Cold Reception, and the Ssssircuit board.

A1. BOTTOM OF THE SHAFT

Descending the 200-foot deep shaft from the ziggurat above leads the characters to a small alcove adjoining a larger room.

The shaft finally comes to an end in a small chamber that opens into a larger room to the south. The floor is splattered with blood and a dead body rests in the far corner.

The larger room to the south is **A2**. If the party inspects the body, they find the following.

- Judging by its remaining possessions, a successful DC 10 Intelligence (Arcana) check reveals that the dead dragonborn was likely a sorcerer.

- A successful DC 12 Wisdom (Medicine) check reveals that he was injured by lightning damage but died from the fall.

Treasure. Most of the sorcerer’s equipment was taken or is broken, but a character who makes a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check finds a *spell scroll of comprehend languages* hidden inside the headband of the sorcerer’s hat and 10 platinum pieces sewn into his belt.

A2. COLD RECEPTION

When the party moves to inspect the large room to the south, read the following.

The walls of this rectangular chamber are perfectly smooth with precise corners and sharp angles. On the ceiling is a glowing illusion of the sun that lights the entire room. A curved piece is missing out of the sun, as if it is being eclipsed.

The far wall is graced by the sculpture of either one creature with multiple snake heads or multiple snakes coiled around each other. Their mouths are open in gaping malice.

A large set of tiles that form some sort of design in the floor at the center of the room. There are two exits from this room. One heading east; the other to the west.

If the party asks about the odd construction or the light:

- A DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check reveals that the sun will be entirely eclipsed in two hours’ time.
- A DC 15 Intelligence (History) check confirms suspicions that the perfectly smooth walls and precise corners were built by magic.
- A DC 18 Intelligence (Arcana) check verifies that a precise application of multiple disintegrate spells carved these walls.
- A DC 25 Wisdom (Survival) check reveals that this architecture is somewhat similar to tunnels carved by beholders.

Once the party enters the main chamber, Kress’voon animates the snake heads on the sculpture and addresses the party:

A statue with six snake-like heads animates and writhes in a corner—its heads speaking in unison:

“Savras sends us more heroes. You cannot stop us.”

“We shall use your souls to awaken the Night Serpent.”

“Flee while you can. Death is forever here!”

“Find the snakes if you dare. They are the keys to facing us!”

“But your time is slipping away. Look to the ceiling! When the sun is gone, Dendar shall awaken!”

“You will be like the others here: dead, dead, dead!”

As the last head speaks, the sculpture returns to its original pose and moves no more.

Feel free to have Kress’voon make his presence known in this and other chambers as the party explores the pits using the statues. One of his heads loves to taunt the characters, while another wants to see them squirm, and another just wants them to die. Have fun!

ROLEPLAYING KRESS’VOON.

Kress’voon worships Dendar the Night Serpent fanatically and wants nothing more than to plunge the world into darkness that only the yuan-ti will survive. Each of Kress’voon’s six different heads has a different personality, but all are thoroughly evil. See the **Appendix. Dramatis Personae** for the personalities of each head.

Quote: “We have looked into the darkness and embraced its strength.”

A3. SSSIRCUIT BOARD.

The tiles at the center of the room are a puzzle that opens the pit that leads to the lowest level of the dungeon.

The center of the floor is divided into square tiles. Most of the tiles are featureless, but five of the tiles have metal posts that stick up about 3 inches. Each of the posts are a different color: red, yellow, orange, blue, and green.

Another five tiles have an inch-wide hole in the center. Each of the holes are ringed in a metal of a different color. The colors of the rings match those of the posts.

An orange snake is laid out on the tiles. It grips the matching color post with its mouth and has its tail wedged into the matching hole like it was a socket. Magical energy courses through the snake but does not seem to harm it.

Give the players **Player Handout 1**.

To solve this puzzle, the party must find the chromatic snakes hidden in the pits. Kress’voon scattered the chromatic snakes to entice adventures to confront his traps and guardians and so die. The orange snake is already present on the board but is in the wrong position.

Once in possession of a chromatic snake, the party can connect its mouth to the same color post and

insert its tail into the same color socket. The colored snakes won't bite posts of a different color and their tails won't stay in different colored sockets. Non-chromatic snakes have no effect on this puzzle.

The rules for solving the puzzle are:

- Each tile can only have one snake passing through it.
- Snakes can only cross to another tile by going up, down, or sideways. They can't go diagonally.
- Snakes can't cross each other.
- Snakes can't go outside the border of the puzzle.
- Snakes can lengthen and shrink to go through as many tiles as needed to connect a post and a socket.

When connected to the correct post and socket, the chromatic snake crackles with magical energy, letting the characters know that the connection is made. A solution is presented in **DM Handout 1**.

If your group isn't one for puzzles, a character can spend 10 minutes studying the puzzle and make a DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check. On a success, the character knows the correct position of one of the snakes. Spending a full hour and six checks solves the puzzle, but that should use up most of the time the party has before the ritual is complete in Level 3. They see the illusory sun eclipsing on the ceiling which should indicate to them that they are low on time.

INTERACTING WITH THE CHROMATIC SNAKES

The chromatic snakes have the stats of a **poisonous snake**. They weigh 12 pounds. Chromatic snakes radiate magic.

- A character must spend an action to pick up a chromatic snake. The snake coils around the character's arm and stays there until pulled off by the character.
- If slain, a new chromatic snake of the same color slithers out of a small hole in the wall of the chamber in which it originally appeared.
- Chromatic snakes are immune to poison.

Tricks of the Trade. When solving this puzzle, the players are going to want to draw lines all over your handout. This can result in a giant mess as they probably don't have pens in six different colors. Here are a couple solutions for you to consider.

Paper Clips. Bring paper clips of the appropriate colors. Link them together to make snakes as long as you want.

String. Bring string of the appropriate colors. String is light and easy to move around. You'll need to keep them all the same length so as to not give away the answer.

XP Award. If the characters open the passage to the pits below, award each character 1,000 XP.

Developments. When the characters solve the puzzle, and connect all the red, orange, yellow, blue, and green posts to sockets with the matching chromatic snake, read the following.

The tiles fall away, one-by-one, revealing a yawning pit. There are no stairs or other easy means of descent except a swift plummet into the dark depths.

The tiles fall away slowly so characters can easily move off the tiles before dropping into the shaft. When the party descends the shaft, go to **Part 3**.

B. KEYWORD STONES

At four different locations in the Fathomless Pits, a large stone blocks passage down a corridor. Their description is uniform. The runes appear on both sides of the stone.

A large stone fills the corridor. A knife-thin gap separates the block from the surrounding walls, ceiling, and floor, but passage around the block is impossible for anything larger than an insect. The stone is carved with runes.

There are four such blocking stones in the Fathomless Pits. They are the first part of a two-stage puzzle. They provide the clues to the combination in **Area C**.

Each of the stones is tied to a specific word that is the answer to a riddle carved into the side of the stone. Each of the riddles are written in a different language. If the answer to the riddle is spoken in **ANY** language within 10 feet of the stone block, it fades away into the Ethereal plane (much like the stone seal at the top of the shaft in the shrine). The stone remains in the ethereal for 1 minute before re-appearing and blocking the corridor again.

Note that some of the riddles are written in a language other than Common. At Tier 3, this should be a relatively easy obstacle to overcome. However, if the characters simply have **no way** to translate the riddles (no one in the group can use the *spell scroll of comprehend languages* found earlier, etc.), consider allowing them to do so by succeeding on a DC 15 Intelligence check. Make them work for it; they're grown-ups now!

Player's Handout 2 has the riddles. Feel free to cut them up to hand out one at a time.

B1. THE COMMON STONE

The runes on this stone are written in Common.

Trees bow before my might.
You can feel me, but I'm not in sight.
Speak my name, and you will pass freely.

The answer to this riddle is wind. If that word is spoken aloud, the stone fades.

B2. THE DRACONIC STONE

The runes on this stone are written in Draconic.

My eyes are windows. My spine is a stair.
You can walk on my crown and breath the fresh air.
Sometimes I'm a refuge, sometimes a prison.
Sometimes I'm ivory, but I'm usually stone.
Speak my name, and you will pass freely.

The answer to this riddle is tower. If that word is spoken, the stone fades.

B3. THE ABYSSAL STONE

The runes on this stone are written in Abyssal.

When I'm thick, I am slow. When I'm thin, I am fast.
I'm tall when I'm young, but short when I'm old.
Speak my name and you will pass freely.

The answer to this riddle is candle. If that word is spoken aloud, the stone fades.

B4. THE NETHERESE STONE

The runes on this stone are written in Netherese.

Words set in place.
Lines ordered into rows.
Sheets counted in sequence.
All of this I bind together.
Speak my name, and you will pass freely.

The answer to this riddle is book. If that word is spoken aloud, the stone fades.

TRICKS OF THE TRADE

This encounter involves riddles and not every player is good at them. Here are some ideas on how to help give hints.

Answer Bank. The answers to the riddles are also the answers to the puzzle in Area C. The options on the rings limit the possible answers to the riddles.

Expand the Riddles. Feel free to expand the riddles to give more clues, making the riddle easier.

Intelligence Checks. Use Intelligence checks to give hints or direct them away from wrong answers.

Other Adventurers. The adventurer in Area E took notes while exploring. You can seed clues for the party there.

Speaking the Language. If the party can't speak one or more of the languages, the dead adventurer in A1 has a *spell scroll of comprehend languages* or consider letting characters make a DC 15 Intelligence check to have enough passive knowledge of the language to translate the riddles.

C. RINGS WITHIN RINGS

In this chamber, the party encounters a puzzle that guards the red chromatic snake.

This long rectangular room is divided into two by a deep, spiked pit. On the far wall across the pit is a large carving with four concentric rings. The rings are divided into sections; each one depicting a different carving.

On the right-hand wall on your side of the pit is an elaborately carved door frame that depicts a six-headed serpent is set into the wall, but the frame is filled with the same smooth stone of the walls.

The pit trap in the center of the room is 40-feet deep and 25-feet across and lined with poison-coated spikes. Three bodies lie at the bottom of the pit. They've all been looted and have no treasure.

When the characters examine the rings carved on the wall, give them **Player Handout 3**.

Anyone examining the carving notices that each of the rings is held in place by stone brackets and mounted on small stone rollers inside the carving, allowing the rings to spin inside its track. The center carving is a separate piece of stone and can be depressed.

The solution to the puzzle are the four words that the characters spoke to render the Keyword Stones ethereal: wind, tower, candle, book.

If those four carvings are set to the top or their respective ring and the center carving is depressed, then a portal opens in the door frame on the right wall that leads to a featureless 10-foot square extra-dimensional chamber. Inside, is the red chromatic snake as well as some treasure.

If the center carving is depressed while the rings are set to any other combination, then a trap is set off.

THUNDERWAVE AND PIT TRAP

Simple Trap (level 11-16, dangerous threat)

A thunderwave spell damages all those who trigger the trap and push them into a spiked pit trap.

Trigger. Pushing the center carving while the rings are set to any combination other than the solution.

Effect. A *thunderwave* spell cast at 5th level emanates forth from the puzzle, affecting the 15-foot cube in front of it. Any creatures in the area must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or take 27 (6d8) thunder damage and be pushed 10 feet away from the puzzle. On a successful save, the creature takes half as much damage and isn't pushed.

Creatures pushed by the spell fall into the pit. Any creature that falls into the pit takes 14 (4d6) bludgeoning damage. In addition, creatures falling into the pit take 11 (2d10) piercing damage from the spikes. Anyone taking piercing damage from the spikes must also make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, taking 22 (4d10) poison damage on a failed save or half as much on a successful one.

All pieces of the puzzle then pop back out as the trap rearms itself.

Countermeasures. The elements of the trap can be thwarted.

- **Break the Spikes.** With an action, a creature can break all the spikes in a 5-foot square with a DC 10 Strength check.
- **Counter the spell.** A successful *dispel magic* (DC 15) dispels the *thunderwave* for one activation of the puzzle. The spell reappears when the trap rearms itself.
- **Notice the Glyph.** Creatures examining the puzzle notice the glyph that activates the spell on the surface with a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check.
- **Remove the Poison.** With an action, a creature can wipe the poison off the spikes in a 5-foot square.

TRICKS OF THE TRADE

This puzzle requires the characters to acquire information from the keystones, so they may need to press on and come back to it.

Divinations. Guidance from a variety of spells should urge the party to explore deeper into the Fathomless Pits.

Intelligence Checks. If the party seems determined to stay at the puzzle no matter what, use an Intelligence (Investigation) check to encourage them to explore.

Out of Reach. The puzzle is more than 30 feet away from the safe side of the pit. *Mage hand* won't reach it.

Taunting Sculptures. Have Kress'voon animate the sculptures and taunt the party. In his taunts, he'll let slip that the clues they need aren't here.

THE EXTRA HIDDEN CHAMBER

If the characters have played DDAL07-12 *In Search of Secrets* and DDAL07-13 *Old Bones and Older Tomes*, then have received clues to an alternative solution to this puzzle. This solution is Mountain, Wave, Tree, Key. When the puzzle is set to this combination, the door frame on the south wall opens to a different extra-dimensional chamber. This one contains a book.

The book is the latest chapter from *Of the Fall of Netheril* by Rhaugilath, which is a story award. See **Player Handout 4**.

XP AWARD

Each character receives 1,000 XP for solving the puzzle.

TREASURE

Inside the treasure room opened by the puzzle, the party finds a *spell scroll of greater restoration* and a golden necklace, ornamented with pieces of jade. It was a relic of Ubtao and worth 1,000 gp.

DEVELOPMENTS

The party finds the red chromatic snake for the puzzle in **Area A3**.

D. UP AND DOWN

A complex trap guards the green chromatic snake.

D1. THE SLIDING DOOR

When the characters move past the stone at B1, they find a long passage way. At the very end of the hall before it opens into the shaft of D2, there is a large sliding door made of iron that is flush with the stone floor. Characters notice the top of the door as a band of metal that extends across the width of the hall with a successful DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) check.

When the dynamic element of the trap in D2 is triggered, gravity reverses and the door slides down and blocks the hall. The party can take countermeasures to prevent this as discussed below.

D2. THE HARPOON PIT

At the end of the passage is the Harpoon Pit and the green chromatic snake.

The passage ends in the side of 100-foot-tall shaft. The opening is surrounded by a carving of six different snake heads. Above you, the ceiling rises 50 feet up. Four large spikes as large as ballista bolts hang downward. They drip with fresh blood.

50-feet below you on the floor is a 10-foot-wide dome created by force magic. The dome is secured to the floor at four points. Inside the dome is a virulent green snake. A half-dozen crumpled bodies lie here and there on the floor. In the corners are four sculptures of snakes with their mouths open in a silent hiss.

This entire chamber is a complex trap, described below. Kress'voon watches the excitement through the six-headed snake sculpture that surrounds the entrance to **Area D2**.

UP AND DOWN TRAP

Complex Trap (level 11-16, deadly threat)

This death trap features chained harpoons that do damage and reel the targets to the ceiling while a *cloudkill* covers the floor. Gaining possession of the chromatic snake triggers the dynamic element of the trap.

Trigger. The trap activates as soon as a humanoid enters the harpoon pit. It remains active as long as any humanoid is in D2.

Initiative. The trap acts on initiative count 20 (losing ties) and initiative count 10 (losing ties)

Active Elements. The trap includes a set of four harpoons and a *cloudkill*.

- **Harpoons Go Down (Initiative 20).** Each round two of the four harpoons in the ceiling attack targets in the shaft with a +7 bonus to the attack roll and dealing 16 (3d10) piercing damage. The harpoons ignore the heavy obscurement granted by the *cloudkill*. Targets are grappled (escape DC 15) by the harpoon. Until the grapple ends, the target is restrained and has disadvantage on Strength checks and Strength saving throws.
- **Harpoons Go Up (Initiative 20).** On the round after attacking, a harpoon uses its action to retract to the ceiling. If a target is still grappled, the target takes another 16 (3d10) piercing damage and is pulled up to the ceiling. Grappled creatures are restrained there, taking damage each round. A grappling harpoon doesn't attack additional targets.
- **Cloudkill (Initiative 10).** The snake sculptures on the floor begin spewing poisonous gas to form a *cloudkill* spell. The gas fills bottom 10 feet of the shaft on the first round and climbs an additional 10 feet each round, eventually spilling into D1. The *cloudkill* heavily obscures the area. Any creature that enters the *cloudkill* for the first time or starts its turn there must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, taking 23 (5d8) poison damage on a failed save or half as much damage on a successful one.

Constant Elements. The *cloudkill* and the dome of force remain in effect until countered.

- **Dome of Force.** The dome is made of a *wall of force* made into a hemisphere. There are four locks that hold the dome to the floor. They can be each be opened with either a

successful DC 20 Dexterity (Thieves' Tools) check or a successful DC 20 Intelligence (Arcana) checks to disrupt the runes on the locks. Each lock requires a separate action.

Dynamic Elements. When any character takes possession of the green chromatic snake, the snake heads around the hall's opening animate. "Well done," one of the heads hisses. "Now let's try this again. Only upside down." This triggers the *reverse gravity* effect.

- **Reverse Gravity.** Area D1 and D2 is subjected to a *reverse gravity* spell for 1 minute. A creature that succeeds on a DC 20 Dexterity saving throw, can grab onto a fixed object and avoid the fall. Otherwise, they plummet 100 feet to the harpoon-covered ceiling that is now the floor.
- **Sliding Door.** The door that separates D1 from D2 slides down and blocks escape from D2. This also blocks the *cloudkill* from entering D1, forcing it further down D2.
- **Harpoons Are Now Spikes.** The harpoons act as giant spikes to anyone who falls on them, adding 16 (3d10) piercing damage to any falling damage. The harpoons still attack and grapple, dragging targets to what is now the floor.
- **Tumbling Fog.** The *cloudkill* gas now seeps toward the harpoon end of the pit at a rate of 10 feet each round.

Countermeasures. The elements of the trap can be thwarted.

- **Antimagic Shell.** An *antimagic shell* prevents the harpoons from functioning, freezing them in place while inside the shell.
- **Breaking Down the Sliding Door.** The sliding door can be destroyed. It has AC 19, 200 hit points, and is immune to poison and psychic damage.
- **Break the Harpoons.** A creature that is in the shaft can ready an attack to strike one of the harpoons as it goes by. The harpoon gains advantage against the creature. Creatures grappled by a harpoon or able to reach the harpoons in their retracted state can attack them without having to ready an action. Each harpoon has AC 19 and 18 hit points. They can also be broken with a DC 20 Strength check. Destroying a harpoon reduces the total number of harpoon attacks by one each round.
- **Dispel the Cloudkill.** A successful *dispel magic* (DC 15) cast on the *cloudkill* effect ends the spell.
- **Dispel a Harpoon.** A successful *dispel magic* (DC 15) cast on a harpoon causes it to become dormant for 1 minute.
- **Dispel the Reverse Gravity.** A successful *dispel magic* (DC 17) cast on the *reverse gravity* effect ends the spell.
- **Gust of Wind.** A *gust of wind* or similar effect disperses the *cloudkill* vapors in its area of effect for 1 minute.
- **Lifting the Sliding Door.** A character can lift the sliding door with a successful DC 20 Strength check. Characters in D2 are at disadvantage because there is nowhere to stand. Magic such as *fly* or *spider climb* negates that.
- **Stuffing the Vents.** Stuffing the vent in the snake sculpture's mouths with cloth or wax prevents the flow of the *cloudkill*. Each sculpture requires its own DC 15

Dexterity check to seal. Success with all four sculptures causes the *cloudkill* to cease expanding.

- **Wedge the Sliding Door.** Before gravity reverses, the falling door can be jammed with an iron spike with a DC 20 Strength check or with thieves' tools and a successful DC 20 Dexterity check.

There's a total of four other dead adventurers at the base of the shaft. They died from harpoon attacks or falls. They have some of their treasure still on them.

ADJUSTING THIS ENCOUNTER

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter, according to your group. These are not cumulative.

- **Very Weak:** Remove two of the harpoons.
- **Weak:** Remove one of the harpoons.
- **Strong:** Add one harpoon.
- **Very Strong:** Add two harpoons.

XP AWARD

Each character receives 2,220 XP for surviving the trap and obtaining the green snake.

TREASURE

The party can collect 100 gp worth of coins from each of the dead adventurers for a total of 400 gp.

DEVELOPMENTS

The party finds the green chromatic snake for the puzzle in **Area A3**.

E. ROOM OF REPOSE

This room is untrapped and could provide clues to help the party.

This room is small room is devoid of features and decoration. From the debris strewn about the room, it would appear that someone rested here not too long ago. A dead human woman slumps against the far wall.

The characters can find evidence of a group of adventurers resting here in the recent past—such as crumbs, empty potion bottles, and discarded healer kits. The party can learn the following about the corpse.

- The dead woman is a Calishite.
- A successful DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals that she was likely a fighter.
- A successful DC 12 Wisdom (Medicine) check reveals that she was poisoned.
- She has a gold ring on her left hand, but her finger has bloated so that it won't come off without

cutting the ring or the finger. Inside is a single word, "*Jareen*."

The adventurer was keeping notes of her exploration of the pits. Her notebook is in her pouch. Highlights include:

- "*We found the orange snake!*"
- "*The statues keep taunting us. Claiming that our souls will feed their dark god.*"
- "*Zitembe insisted we come, but I think this may be beyond our abilities. Doubt has begun to take hold.*"
- "*There's a level below this one. Maybe two?*"
- "*The room with the spiked ceiling screams 'trap.'*"
- "*We put the orange snake into the puzzle. I think we have it in the right place.*"
- "*My companions are all dead or worse...statues.*"
- "*I won't leave this place alive.*"

TREASURE

The gold ring the adventurer wears is worth 100 gp.

DEVELOPMENTS

These rooms provide an excellent location for taking a short rest. Time continues to pass, and the souls rack up.

F. DEEP DIVE

An illusion guards the blue chromatic snake and tries to trick the characters into falling a great depth.

The corridor opens into a 15-by-20 foot room with a narrow ledge overlooking a gorgeous pool of water. The surface of the water is about 15 feet below the edge of the pool. Magical lights shine on the sides of the well, illuminating the depths, which appear to be maybe 40 feet below. At the very bottom of the water is a bright blue snake and the glitter of precious metals.

The water in this shaft is an illusion crafted using *mirage arcane* and has audible, visual, tactile, and olfactory elements. Any creature that dives into the water instead finds a long fall all the way to the bottom.

The dusty dry bottom of the shaft is 180 feet down from the ledge. The walls are smooth and require a DC 22 Strength (Athletics) check to climb. The passage to Area G is 20 feet above the bottom of the shaft. It can't be seen from the ledge until the illusion is countered.

DEEP DIVE TRAP

Simple Trap (level 11-16, deadly threat)

A deep pit is disguised by an illusion to appear full of water.

Trigger. A creature who falls or dives into the shaft, probably expecting water.

Effect. Any creature that dives into the water instead plummets 180 feet to the bottom of the shaft, taking 63 (18d6) bludgeoning damage from the fall.

Countermeasures. Creatures with *truesight* see through the illusion. Otherwise, a creature can determine that it is an illusion with a successful DC 21 Intelligence (Investigation) check by using its round to interact with it. The water is 15 feet down the shaft so interacting with the water requires moving down the well. A successful *dispel magic* (DC 17) cast on the illusion destroys the trap.

TREASURE

While the coins in the illusion are fake, 800 gp has been strewn temptingly on the actual floor at the bottom of the pit.

DEVELOPMENTS

The party finds the blue chromatic snake for the puzzle in **Area A3**.

G. PLAYING WITH PORTALS

Manxanic and its minions guard the yellow chromatic snake in a chamber with teleportation gates. See **Appendix. Playing With Portals Map** for this encounter.

The corridor opens into an enormous chamber composed of a series of four descending ledges. With each 10-foot drop, the central pit narrows, until only a 10-foot-wide square in the middle remains some 40 feet down. In that space are a score of yellow chromatic snakes slithering overtop each other.

Floating just above the snakes is an orb-shaped creature, covered in purplish-blue, pitted skin and a large mouth with thick and pointed teeth. Its enormous singular pink eye with a triangular iris darts around the room, constantly scanning. Ten thick and short segmented eyestalks crown its head. They quiver in anticipation.

Set into the walls of the room are magical gates—four on each level. They're edged in glowing magic fire in an assortment of colors. Looking through a gate, you can see through the other gate that glows with the same color. Above you, the ceiling soars upward at a steep angle to a height of 50 feet.

A few broken pieces of statues of former adventurers are scattered about. Two corpses in full plate armor float in the air above the ledges. Foul magical energy radiates from the inside.

Manxanic the **beholder** awaits just above the central pit in the center of the chamber while two **helmed horrors** fly about the edge of the chamber. They attack as soon as they can see the party. They don't chase characters who leave this chamber, even if the party has the yellow snake.

This is not Manxanic's lair, and the beholder doesn't get lair actions.

ROLEPLAYING MANXANIC

Manxanic knows the Common tongue and talks to itself all the time, considering what its perfect-to-be-conquered world will be like. It uses stupendously unnecessary verbiage and obscure insults when dealing with prospective lackeys like the party.

Quote: "You would use that attack, you dilatory sloth? In my boundless capacity, I anticipated this weeks ago. My countermeasures await!"

PLAYING WITH PORTALS

There are sixteen portals in this pit. Each of the gates is set 5 feet into the wall (protecting them some from the beholder's *antimagic* cone) and is ringed with energy of a particular color around its edge. The gates are paired to one of eight colors: blue, gray, green, orange, pink, purple, red, and yellow. The placement of the colored portals is shown on **Appendix. Playing With Portals Map**.

Creatures, line-of-sight, objects, and effects can pass through either of the paired portals and out the other portal of the matching color.

ADVANCED PORTALING

If you are up for a bit more of a dynamic challenge for this encounter, consider these additions.

- There are seventeen portals instead of sixteen. The seventeenth portal is on the ceiling at the center of the room, over top the deepest part of the floor below. This portal is orange.
- The orange portal on the bottom level is an inactive portal and has no color at all. An inactive portal doesn't glow and just shows the gray stone behind it.
- After a creature passes through a pair of linked portals, the originating portal becomes inactive and the old inactive portal glows with the originating portal's color. So there is only one inactive portal at a time.
- Manxanic stays near the portals. He uses them to move quickly about the room to compensate for his low speed.
- If a creature is put asleep, paralyzed, or petrified, Manxanic can use telekinesis to move the creature through the portal that empties out of the ceiling, resulting in a 90-foot drop.

FINDING THE RIGHT SNAKE

In the bottom of the central pit are twenty yellow chromatic snakes. Only one is real; the others are cleverly carved articulated wooden replicas that closely resemble the real snake. The movement of the real snake makes the toys move as well.

- **Grab a Snake.** Characters can just randomly pick up a snake, but there is only a 1-in-20 chance of grabbing the right one. Otherwise they grab one of the toys. Toy snakes can be tossed aside to improve chances.
- **Damage a Snake.** The toy snakes can be destroyed (AC 15, 2 hit points; immune to poison and psychic damage).
- **Inspect the Snakes.** Characters can spend an action to inspect the snakes, and with a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check, identify the real snake.

MOVING THE ENCOUNTER ALONG

This combat has the potential of running long if the party doesn't have the right set of skills to counter a beholder. If you're running short on time, consider the following ways to wrap up the encounter.

- The party doesn't need to kill Manxanic. They just need to get the yellow snake and get out. Manxanic doesn't chase.
- The helmed horrors are only active for so long. When you decide that the combat needs to end, the magic animating them fails.
- Manxanic decides it's had enough and leaves. Near the apex of the room is a conjured stone block that seals an escape tunnel. The beholder uses its *antimagic* cone to cause it to disappear, moves through, and then seals the tunnel behind it.

TRICKS OF THE TRADE

Consider the following:

Crazy Lines of Sight. The eye rays extend 120 feet and can shoot through the gates. This gives the beholder incredible options for angling its rays.

Hiding in the Hallway. If some of the party remain in the passage outside this room, have Manxanic aim his *antimagic cone* at the ethereal stone in the hall. This causes it to spring back into place in the Material plane, pushing characters aside and possibly trapping some of the party on the far side. The stone won't turn ethereal while in the *antimagic cone*.

I'm a Rock! If one of the characters is petrified by Manxanic, a *spell scroll of greater restoration* can be found in Area C.

Number the Portals. If you're using a battle mat and don't have all the colors for the portals. Just number them. 1 leads to 1, 2 leads to 2, and so on.

String Me Along. Use the string from the Ssssircuit puzzle to measure out the eye rays. If you're using battle mats with 1-inch squares to represent 5 feet, then make the strings 24-inches long.

Watch the Antimagic Cones. The *antimagic cone* of a beholder shuts down a portal and eye rays. Be careful where you angle it.

ADJUSTING THIS ENCOUNTER

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter, according to your group. These are not cumulative.

- **Very Weak:** Remove both of the **helmed horrors**.
- **Weak:** Remove one of the **helmed horrors**.
- **Strong:** Add another **helmed horror**.
- **Very Strong:** Add two **helmed horrors**.

TREASURE

In addition to the yellow chromatic snake for the puzzle in Area A3, each portal has a gemstone of the corresponding hue set into the top of the lintel. They can be pried out. Each one is worth 100 gp for a total of 1,600 gp.

PART 3. THE COILED SNAKE

Estimated Duration: 60 minutes

The third level of the pits is one large chamber used by Kress'voon to conduct the ritual which Kress'voon thinks will awaken Dendar.

See **Appendix. The Coiled Snake** for a layout of this chamber.

GENERAL FEATURES

The Fathomless Pits have the following general features.

Ceilings. The ceiling is 30-feet high at the entrance from the shaft.

Walls. Being carved out by disintegration, the walls are smooth and seamless without discernable stone blocks or mortar. Climbing them requires a DC 25 Strength (Athletics) check.

Floors. Like the walls, the floors are perfectly smooth, but can be traversed normally.

Lighting. Only the Death of the Sun provides any light and it provides dim light in a 5-foot radius. Everything else is draped in darkness.

Modified Spells. Kress'voon has caused the following spells to be modified on this level:

- **Etherealness.** The caster enters the Border Ethereal but can't move through surfaces.
- **Passwall.** This spell has no effect on surfaces, walls, or statues.
- **Stone Shape.** This spell has no effect on surfaces, walls, or statues.

THE RITUAL CHAMBER

The shaft descends from **Area A3** for 200 feet before opening reaching the final level.

The shaft opens at the edge of a truly enormous chamber. The floor is carved to look like the coils of an enormous snake with every loop lower and tighter until it reaches the rearing head of the snake that soars into the air over a sunken dais in the center. The sculpture has a roughly rounded piece of citrine in its mouth that is nearly 5 feet in diameter and gleams with magical energy. A pile of gold and gems is heaped up in offering beneath the rearing snake head.

At the center of the dais is a large, bloodstained block of stone that functions as an altar. Surrounding the altar are a clutch of yuan-ti. Three of them are snake-human hybrids but rising above them is a huge yuan-ti monstrosity with six heads. Cruel, cold ophidian evil radiates from it in such power you can feel it even at this distance.

A. ENTRANCE SHAFT

This is where the shaft from Area A3 in Part 2 enters the room. The shaft is set into the ceiling.

B. COILS OF DENDAR

The floor is carved to resemble the coils of a snake. The coils descend at an angle of 10 feet for every circuit around the room, so the angle gets steeper as the coils get tighter. The coils descend a total of 30 feet before reaching the Sunken Dias.

C. HEAD OF DENDAR

The carved head of Dendar looms 20 feet over the Sunken Dias. In its mouth is the Death of the Sun.

With a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Religion) check characters can identify the sculpture as a representation of Dendar the Night Serpent.

The yuan-ti have piled a great deal of treasure before the statue, including the *mask of Wompona Yarp*.

Death of the Sun. In the mouth of the sculpture of Dendar is the Death of the Sun. This magical artifact of yuan-ti origin is crucial to the ritual. If it is destroyed, his ritual ends. It has the following abilities.

- **Scrying.** It acts as an improved scrying sensor for Rhaugilath. He can see, hear, and talk through it.
- **Spell Origin.** Rhaugilath can use his legendary actions through it. Spells cast through the Death of the Sun use the sphere as their origin point.
- **Soul Absorption.** The Death of the Sun can absorb souls to power Rhaugilath's ritual.

If the Death of the Sun is destroyed (AC 18; 200 hit points; vulnerable to radiant damage and immune to bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from nonmagical attacks, poison and psychic damage), Rhaugilath's ritual is ruined.

D. ALTAR TO DENDAR

Yuan-ti make a lot of sacrifices and the blood on the altar is fresh. They have prepared four pots of broodguard brew for making of broodguards. The brew is kept in golden goblets atop the altar and can be drunk as an action. Also, atop the altar is a golden knife and a golden holy symbol to Dendar.

Around the base of the altar are the bones of Saja N'baza, the guardian naga of Orolunga. Kress'voon intends on making her remains into a bone naga once the ritual is complete.

BROODGUARD BREW

A creature that consumes broodguard brew must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw. On a failure, the creature is incapacitated and transforms into a broodguard over the next 1d6+6 days. On a success, the creature takes 14 (4d6) poison damage and isn't otherwise affected.

A spell such as *lesser restoration* or *remove curse* can end the transformation process at any time before it runs its course. After the process is complete, only a *wish* spell can reverse the effect. Characters transformed in such a way are removed from Adventurers League play.

E. BOUND PRISONERS

Four helpless adventurers are held by manacles and chains to pillars at the corners of the altar. Even though they're adventurers, treat the prisoners as **commoners** to reflect their weakened state. The prisoners can be freed in the following manner:

- **Breaking the Manacles.** The manacles can be broken with a successful DC 20 Strength check.
- **Picking the Manacles.** The manacles can be opened with thieves' tools and a successful DC 15 Dexterity check.
- **Attacking the Manacles.** The manacles can be destroyed (AC 19, 15 hit points, immune to poison and psychic damage).

F. THE SUNKEN DIAS

The Sunken Dias is the central area of the room that is bound by the Coils of Dendar. On the Sunken Dias await Kress'voon and his minions. Kress'voon is a **yuan-ti anathema**. He is supported by two **nightmare speakers**, and one **yuan-ti abomination**. The nightmare speakers have a different spell list than normal and use spells from the celestial patron list, but their application is dark and full of shadows.

While he's not physically present, the **lich** Rhaugilath can influence events in this chamber with his legendary actions, through the Death of the Sun, the large piece of citrine held in the mouth of the sculpture of Dendar. He is currently performing the ritual which uses his actions and his concentration.

ROLEPLAYING RHAUGILATH

Rhaugilath is an archmage from ancient Netheril who has been magically enslaved for centuries to his former rival Larloch. Rhaugilath would like nothing more than to be free of his bondage to Larloch.

Rhaugilath speaks in a deep, quiet voice that is commanding and confident. He only speaks in this encounter when he's giving orders, offering tactical advice to Kress'voon and the others, or in the Conclusion below.

Quote: "Come. We have much to do, and your lifespan is very short."

LAIR ACTIONS

On initiative count 20 (losing ties), Kress'voon can take a lair action to cause one of the following magical effects; Kress'voon can't use the same effect two rounds in a row. He summons rolling souls as often as possible to complete the ritual.

- **Cloud of Snakes.** A cloud of flying snakes fills a 20-foot-radius sphere centered on a point Kress'voon chooses within 120 feet of him. It remains until Kress'voon dismisses it as an action, uses this lair action again, or dies. Any creature in the cloud when it appears must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, taking 10 (3d6) piercing damage on a failed save or half as much damage on a successful one. A creature that ends its turn in the cloud takes 10 (3d6) piercing damage.
- **Darkness of the Night Serpent.** Magical darkness spreads from a point Kress'voon chooses within 60 feet of the anathema, filling a 15-foot-radius sphere until Kress'voon dismisses it as an action, uses this lair action again, or dies. A creature with darkvision can't see through this darkness, and nonmagical light can't illuminate it. If any of the effect's area overlaps with an area of light created by a spell of 2nd level or lower, the spell that created the light is dispelled.
- **Rolling Souls.** A soul from a slain adventurer drops from the shaft at Area A, where it crystalizes into a ball of potent necromantic energy. The soul ball lands at the tip of the tail. It then rolls down the track formed by the snake's coils. On the round it lands, the soul ball rolls 30 feet. Its speed increases by 30 feet each round until it reaches the reared neck of the sculpture. There it is absorbed into the Death of the Sun. Non-yuan-ti living creatures in its path are affected by a *harm* spell. Target must make a DC 20 Constitution saving throw, taking 49 (14d6) necrotic damage on a failed save or half as much damage on a successful one. The damage can't reduce the target's hit points below 1. If the target fails the saving throw, its hit point maximum is reduced for 1 hour by an amount equal to the necrotic damage it took. Any effect that removes a disease allows a creature's hit point maximum to return to normal before that time passes.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

Kress'voon doesn't have legendary actions, but Rhaugilath does. The legendary actions all use the Death of the Sun as their focal point.

Rhaugilath can take three 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. Rhaugilath regains spent legendary actions on Initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties).

- **Cantrip.** Rhaugilath casts a cantrip (+12 to hit with spell attacks) from the following list: *chill touch* (20 (4d8) necrotic damage), *prestidigitation*, *ray of frost*.
- **Unweave Their Magic (Costs 2 Actions).** Rhaugilath automatically dispels one spell effect within the chamber.
- **Frightening Gaze (Costs 2 Actions).** Rhaugilath fixes his gaze on one creature he can see within 10 feet of the Death of the Sun. The target must succeed on a DC 18 Wisdom saving throw against this magic or become frightened for 1 minute. The frightened target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. If a target's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the target is immune to the lich's gaze for the next 24 hours.
- **Disrupt Life (Costs 3 Actions).** Each non-undead creature within 20 feet of the Death of the Sun must make a DC 18 Constitution saving throw against magic, taking 21 (6d6) necrotic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

ADJUSTING THIS ENCOUNTER

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter, according to your group. These are not cumulative.

- **Very Weak:** Remove the **yuan-ti abomination** and one of the **yuan-ti nightmare speakers**.
- **Weak:** Remove one of the **yuan-ti nightmare speakers**.
- **Strong:** Add one **yuan-ti abomination**.
- **Very Strong:** Add two **yuan-ti abominations**.

TRICKS OF THE TRADE

When running this encounter, consider the following:

Freezing Hit Points. *Chill touch* not only does damage; it also prevents the target from regaining hit points for a round. Target those engaged by Kress'voon who deals massive damage.

Haste Beforehand. The tiles falling down the shaft when the party solves the Ssssircuits puzzle alerts Kress'voon that heroes are on the way. He casts *haste* on himself just before the adventurers enter the final chamber.

Having the Last Word. Save Kress'voon's *divine word* until the party is damaged to make the most of this spell.

Keep Them in the Dark. While normal darkvision can't see through magical darkness, the darkvision of the nightmare speaker can. Also, Kress'voon has blindsight and Rhaugilath has truesight.

Readying the Revivify. The nightmare speakers have the power to cast *revivify*. Ready an action to cast this right before the turn of the dead creature to make sure it gets a round of actions.

Suggested Suggestions. Have the yuan-ti suggest that the heroes drink the broodguard brew from the altar or that the characters free the prisoners. Those who fail drink the brew or use up actions freeing the helpless prisoners.

Turning Turtle. Kress'voon can use his polymorph to turn a target into a turtle then direct one of his minions to put it upside down in the way of a Rolling Soul.

XP AWARD

Each character receives 500 XP for destroying the naga skeleton and allowing Saja N'baza to reincarnate. Finally, they receive 2,500 XP for stopping the ritual.

TREASURE

The yuan-ti have assembled 1,000 gp in offerings before the statue of Dendar. The *Mask of Wompona Yarp* is among this hoard.

The golden knife and the holy symbol of Dendar are each worth 200 gp. The goblets holding the broodguard brew are worth 100 gp each for 600 gp total.

CONCLUSION

How the adventure concludes depends upon whether the Death of the Sun was destroyed.

RHAUGILATH COMPLETES THE RITUAL

If two hours elapse in game (or the slot ends in timed convention play), the party is unable to destroy the Death of the Sun before Rhaugilath completes his ritual.

If the party is in the Coiled Snake chamber when this occurs, read the following. If Kress'voon is dead at this point, replace their role with another yuan-ti.

As the last rolling soul is absorbed into the glowing citrine, a dry chuckle emanates from it. The yuan-ti anathema raises their many mouths upward as they hiss in triumph. "Dendar stirs!" they say as one.

The glow inside the citrine increases in intensity, forcing the yuan-ti to shield their eyes. That same dry voice comes from the citrine. This time the voice is confused. "It's not enough? Impossible!"

Then the citrine explodes, releasing all of its energy. The souls trapped inside radiate out in every direction before fading away.

The power of ritual was not sufficient to break Larloch's bonds of Rhaugilath and the attempt shatters the Death of the Sun, leaving Kress'voon and the yuan-ti in the lurch.

Kress'voon does not understand what has happened as the ritual comes to an end and Dendar doesn't awaken. They quickly come to believe that Dendar has pulled her favor from the anathema and their sect. They flee the tomb with their life and treasure, if they can.

If the entire party was slain in the course of the adventure, the Death of the Sun still explodes and the ritual fails. Another adventuring party finds the party's bodies and raises the characters for twice the price of the spells needed.

DEATH OF THE SUN IS DESTROYED

If the party destroys the Death of the Sun before time elapses, read the following.

Your mighty blow against the artifact of the yuan-ti crushes into the heart of the glowing citrine. Cracks radiate out from the point, spreading across the surface of the gem.

A dry voice emanates from the Death of the Sun. "Unbelievable! So close but still freedom eludes me."

The citrine explodes, releasing all of its energy, hurtling you back. The souls trapped inside spill out of the mouth of the statue of Dendar and speed away to the Fugue Plane.

Rhaugilath can no longer use legendary actions in the chamber and the ritual is ruined. All collected souls are released.

Rhaugilath sighs in disappointment and moves onto a new scheme to break his servitude. Perhaps these adventurers might be of use to him in the future? He'll keep an eye on them.

Any surviving yuan-ti immediately transform into snakes and slither away through small slither holes in the walls of the Coiled Snake.

Whether or not he sent the party to Orolunga, Zitembe is overjoyed at the success of the party for destroying the Death of the Sun and preventing Dendar from awakening. Upon their return to Port Nyanzaru, he fêtes the party at the Temple of Savras and regales them with many stories, both plausible and implausible.

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 session.

EXPERIENCE (MIN/MAX XP: 10,125/13,500 EA.)

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
Beholder	10,000
Helmed Horror	1,100
Kress'voon	8,400
Yuan-ti Abomination	2,900
Yuan-ti Nightmare Speaker	1,100

NON-COMBAT AWARDS

Task or Accomplishment	XP Per Character
Gaining Entrance to the Pits	500
Rings with Rings	1,000
Up and Down Complex Trap	2,220
Solving the Ssssircuit Board	1,000
Rescuing Saja N'baza	500
Stopping the Ritual	2,500

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
Platinum Coins in a Belt (Area 1)	100
Ubtao Necklace (Area 3)	1,000
Adventurer's Gear (Area 4)	400
Gold Ring "Jaleen" (Area 5)	100
Coins as Bait (Area 6)	800
Portal Stones (Area 7)	1,600
Broodguard Cups (Part 3)	600
Golden Knife (Part 3)	200
Offerings to Dendar (Part 3)	1,000
Symbol to Dendar (Part 3)	200

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 determine who gets it randomly 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*.

THE MASK OF WOMPONA YARP (HELM OF BRILLIANCE)

Wondrous item, very rare (requires attunement)

This monstrous batiri goblin mask is made of lacquered wood and its gems carved to resemble numerous unblinking eyes. When a gem is used, the surrounding wood closes around it like an eyelid. When found, the helm has 6 diamonds, 5 rubies, 17 fire opals, and 34 opals. This item can be found in **Player Handout 5**.

SPELL SCROLL OF COMPREHEND LANGUAGES

Scroll, uncommon

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

SPELL SCROLL OF GREATER RESTORATION

Potion, rare

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

STORY AWARDS

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

Dead Men Tell Tales. You have found a never-before-published chapter of *Of the Fall of Netheril*, penned by the lich Rhaugilath the Ageless. The chapter addresses the architectural design of the Netherese enclave of Orbedal, which was ruled by Rhaugilath. This book would be of great interest to a sage of ancient history and could be used to gain access to the great library at Candlekeep. More information can be found in **Player Handout 4**.

PLAYER REWARDS

For completing this mission, the characters earn downtime and renown as described in the *D&D Adventurers League Dungeon Master's Guide* (ALDMG).

DM REWARDS

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

APPENDIX. DRAMATIS PERSONAE

The following NPCs are featured prominently in this adventure:

Kress'voon (kres-VOON). Kress'voon is the leader of the yuan-ti sect that inhabits the Lesser Tomb under Orolunga. They (the six heads of Kress'voon use the they pronoun) worship Dendar the Night Serpent fanatically and has titled themselves the Herald of the Night and wants nothing more than to plunge the world into darkness that only the yuan-ti will survive. Kress'voon has six different personalities that correspond to their six different heads.

- **Head 1.** The dominating head. This head wants to make everything bend knee before it.
- **Head 2.** The calculating head. This head keeps Kress'voon focused on their plans.
- **Head 3.** The impatient head. This head has the drive to keep Kress'voon ever pushing forward.
- **Head 4.** The bragging head. This head loves talk and dreams up cruel taunts against their enemies.
- **Head 5.** The nihilistic head. This head wants to see everything die.
- **Head 6.** The terrified head. This head whimpers in fear and wails in dismay at the slightest provocation.

Manxanic (MAN-zan-ICK). Rhaugilath allied with the beholder and used its magical eye rays to create the pits, especially its disintegration and telekinesis rays.

As a beholder, Manxanic believes it deserves not just a part of a world to subjugate but all of it. Abeir-Toril is just too crowded with other beholders for easy domination, and Manxanic is eager to get to the ruling part. Rhaugilath has promised to take it to another world where there are no other beholders where it can conquer without rivals.

Manxanic talks to itself all the time, discussing what its perfect to-be-conquered world will be like.

Rhaugilath (RAW-gil-LATH). Once a Sorcerer-King of Netheril, the lich Rhaugilath survived the fall of that ancient kingdom, but he was defeated by his rival Larloch who bound him as a servitor. Rhaugilath has chafed under the magically compelled servitude for centuries.

Recently, Rhaugilath studied Acererak's methods used in the construction of the Tomb of Nine Gods, and he has determined that he can build a similar tomb to channel souls into a ritual to free him from his eternal servitude to Larloch.

The lich began influencing the dreams of Kress'voon, a yuan-ti anathema. Kress'voon believes

the dreams come from Dendar and eagerly followed Rhaugilath's instruction to create a tomb and a ritual that would awaken Dendar from her eternal slumber. This may even be true, but Rhaugilath intends to use the souls to free himself from Larloch first. He will then abandon the yuan-ti to operate the tomb on their own. Rhaugilath does not want the world to end with the awakening of Dendar and is confident that adventurers will stop Kress'voon.

APPENDIX. MONSTER/NPC STATISTICS

BEHOLDER

Large aberration, lawful evil

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)

Hit Points 180 (19d10 + 76)

Speed 0 ft., fly 20 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	14 (+2)	18 (+4)	17 (+3)	15 (+2)	17 (+3)

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

Skills Perception +12

Condition Immunities prone

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 22

Languages Deep Speech, Undercommon

Challenge 13 (10,000 XP)

Antimagic Cone. The beholder's central eye creates an area of antimagic, as in the antimagic field spell, in a 150-foot cone. At the start of each of its turns, the beholder decides which way the cone faces and whether the cone is active. The area works against the beholder's own eye rays.

ACTIONS

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (4d6) piercing damage.

Eye Rays. The beholder shoots three of the following magical eye rays at random (reroll duplicates), choosing one to three targets it can see within 120 feet of it:

1. **Charm Ray.** The targeted creature must succeed on a DC 16 Wisdom saving throw or be charmed by the beholder for 1 hour, or until the beholder harms the creature.

2. **Paralyzing Ray.** The targeted creature must succeed on a DC 16 Constitution saving throw or be paralyzed for 1 minute. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

3. **Fear Ray.** The targeted creature must succeed on a DC 16 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened for 1 minute. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

4. **Slowing Ray.** The targeted creature must succeed on a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save, the target's speed is halved for 1 minute. In addition, the creature can't take reactions, and it can take either an

action or a bonus action on its turn, not both. The creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

5. **Enervation Ray.** The targeted creature must make a DC 16 Constitution saving throw, taking 36 (8d8) necrotic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

6. **Telekinetic Ray.** If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 16 Strength saving throw or the beholder moves it up to 30 feet in any direction. It is restrained by the ray's telekinetic grip until the start of the beholder's next turn or until the beholder is incapacitated.

If the target is an object weighing 300 pounds or less that isn't being worn or carried, it is moved up to 30 feet in any direction. The beholder can also exert fine control on objects with this ray, such as manipulating a simple tool or opening a door or a container.

7. **Sleep Ray.** The targeted creature must succeed on a DC 16 Wisdom saving throw or fall asleep and remain unconscious for 1 minute. The target awakens if it takes damage or another creature takes an action to wake it. This ray doesn't affect constructs and undead.

8. **Petrification Ray.** The targeted creature must make a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save, the creature begins to turn to stone and is restrained. It must repeat the saving throw at the end of its next turn. On a success, the effect ends. On a failure, the creature is petrified until freed by the greater restoration spell or other magic.

9. **Disintegration Ray.** If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw or take 45 (10d8) force damage. If this damage reduces the creature to 0 hit points, its body becomes a pile of fine gray dust.

If the target is a Large or smaller nonmagical object or creation of magical force, it is disintegrated without a saving throw. If the target is a Huge or larger object or creation of magical force, this ray disintegrates a 10-foot cube of it.

10. **Death Ray.** The targeted creature must succeed on a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw or take 55 (10d10) necrotic damage. The target dies if the ray reduces it to 0 hit points.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The beholder can take 3 legendary actions, using the Eye Ray option below. It can take only one legendary action at a time and only at the end of another

creature's turn. The beholder regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

- **Eye Ray.** The beholder uses one random eye ray.

COMMONER

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 10

Hit Points 4 (1d8)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 0 (10 XP)

ACTIONS

Club. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 2 (1d4) bludgeoning damage.

HELMED HORROR

Medium construct, neutral

Armor Class 20 (plate, shield)

Hit Points 60 (8d8 + 24)

Speed 30 ft., fly 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	13 (+1)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

Skills Perception +4

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks that aren't adamantine

Damage Immunities force, necrotic, poison

Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, deafened, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, stunned

Senses blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 14

Languages understands the languages of its creator but can't speak

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Magic Resistance. The helmed horror has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Spell Immunity. The helmed horror is immune to three spells chosen by its creator. Typical immunities include fireball, heat metal, and lightning bolt.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The helmed horror makes two longsword attacks.

Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) slashing damage, or 9 (1d10 + 4) slashing damage if used with two hands.

POISONOUS SNAKE

Tiny beast, unaligned

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)

Hit Points 2 (1d4)

Speed 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
2 (-4)	16 (+3)	11 (+0)	1 (-5)	10 (+0)	2 (-4)

Senses blindsight 10 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages --

Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1 piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw, taking 5 (2d4) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

YUAN-TI ABOMINATION

Large monstrosity (shapechanger, yuan-ti) neutral evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 127 (15d10+45)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	16 (+3)	17 (+3)	17 (+3)	15 (+2)	18 (+4)

Skills Perception +5, Stealth +6

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15

Languages Abyssal, Common, Draconic

Challenge 7 (2,900 XP)

Shapechanger. The yuan-ti can use its action to polymorph into a Large snake, or back into its true form. Its statistics are the same in each form. Any equipment it is wearing or carrying isn't transformed. It doesn't change form if it dies.

Innate Spellcasting (Abomination Form Only). The yuan-ti's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 15). The yuan-ti can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At Will: *animal friendship* (snakes only)

3/day: *suggestion*

1/day: *fear*

Magic Resistance. The yuan-ti has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

ACTIONS

Multiattack (Abomination Form Only). The yuan-ti makes two ranged attacks or three melee attacks, but can use its bite and constrict attacks only once each.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6+4) piercing damage plus 10 (3d6) poison damage.

Constrict. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6+4) bludgeoning damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 14). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained, and the yuan-ti can't constrict another target.

Scimitar (Abomination Form Only). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6+4) slashing damage.

Longbow (Abomination Form Only). *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d8+3) piercing damage plus 10 (3d6) poison damage.

YUAN-TI ANATHEMA

Huge monstrosity (shapechanger, yuan-ti), neutral evil

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 189 (18d12+72)

Speed 40 ft., climb 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
23 (+6)	13 (+1)	19 (+4)	19 (+3)	15 (+2)	20 (+5)

Skills Perception +7, Stealth +5

Damage Resistances acid, fire, lightning

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses blindsight 30 ft., darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 17

Languages Abyssal, Common, Draconic

Challenge 12 (8,400 XP)

Innate Spellcasting (Anathema Form Only). The anathema's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 17). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At Will: *animal friendship* (snakes only)

3/day each: *darkness*, *entangle*, *fear*, *haste*, *polymorph*, *suggestion*

1/day: *divine word*

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

Ophidiophobia Aura. Any creature of the anathema's choice, other than a snake or a yuan-ti, that starts its turn within 30 feet of the anathema and can see or hear it must succeed on a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw or become frightened of snakes and yuan-ti. A frightened target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. If a target's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the target is immune to this aura for the next 24 hours.

Shapechanger. The yuan-ti can use its action to polymorph into a Huge **giant constrictor snake**, or back into its true form. Its statistics are the same in each form. Any equipment it is wearing or carrying isn't transformed.

Six Heads. The anathema has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks and on saving throws against being blinded, charmed, deafened, frightened, stunned, or knocked unconscious.

ACTIONS

Multiattack (Anathema Form Only). The anathema makes two claw attacks, one constrict attack, and one Flurry of Bites attack.

Claw (Anathema Form Only). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d6+6) slashing damage.

Constrict. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 15 ft., one Large or smaller creature. *Hit:* 16 (3d6+6) bludgeoning damage plus 7 (2d6) acid damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 16). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained and takes 16 (3d6+6) bludgeoning damage plus 7 (2d6) acid damage at the start of each of its turns, and the anathema can't constrict another target.

Flurry of Bites. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 10 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 27 (6d6+6) piercing damage plus 14 (4d6) poison damage.

YUAN-TI NIGHTMARE SPEAKER

Medium monstrosity (shapechanger, yuan-ti), neutral evil

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 71 (13d8+13)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws Wis +3, Cha +5

Skills Deception +5, Stealth +6

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 120 ft. (penetrates magical darkness), passive Perception 11

Languages Abyssal, Common, Draconic

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Shapechanger. The yuan-ti can use its action to polymorph into a Medium snake, or back into its true form. Its statistics are the same in each form. Any equipment it is wearing or carrying isn't transformed. It doesn't change form if it dies.

Death Fangs (2/day). The first time the yuan-ti hits with a melee attack on its turn, it can deal an extra 16 (3d10) necrotic damage to the target.

Innate Spellcasting (Yuan-ti Form Only). The yuan-ti's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 13). The yuan-ti can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At Will: *animal friendship* (snakes only)

3/day: *suggestion*

Magic Resistance. The yuan-ti has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Spellcasting (Yuan-ti Form Only). The yuan-ti is a 6th-level spell caster. Its spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). It regains its expended spell slots when it finishes a short or long rest. It knows the following warlock spells.

Cantrip (at will): *chill touch*, *eldritch blast* (range 300 ft., +3 bonus to each damage roll), *mage hand*, *message*, *poison spray*, *prestidigitation*
1st–3rd level (2 3rd level slots): *cure wounds*, *darkness*, *fear*, *guiding bolt*, *hex*, *hold person*, *revivify*

ACTIONS

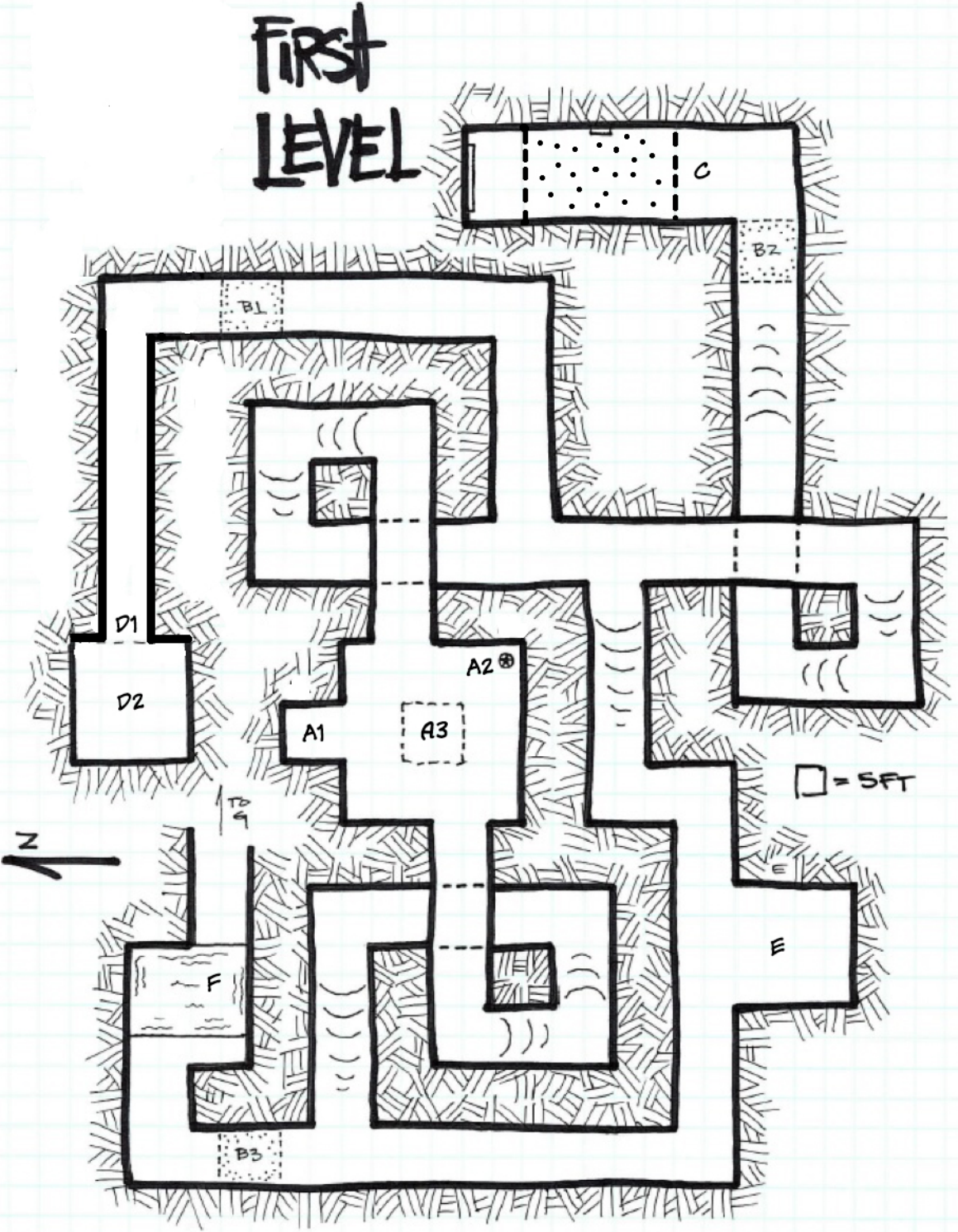
Multiattack (Yuan-ti Form Only). The yuan-ti makes one constrict attack and one scimitar attack.

Constrict. Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) bludgeoning damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 14). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained, and the yuan-ti can't constrict another target.

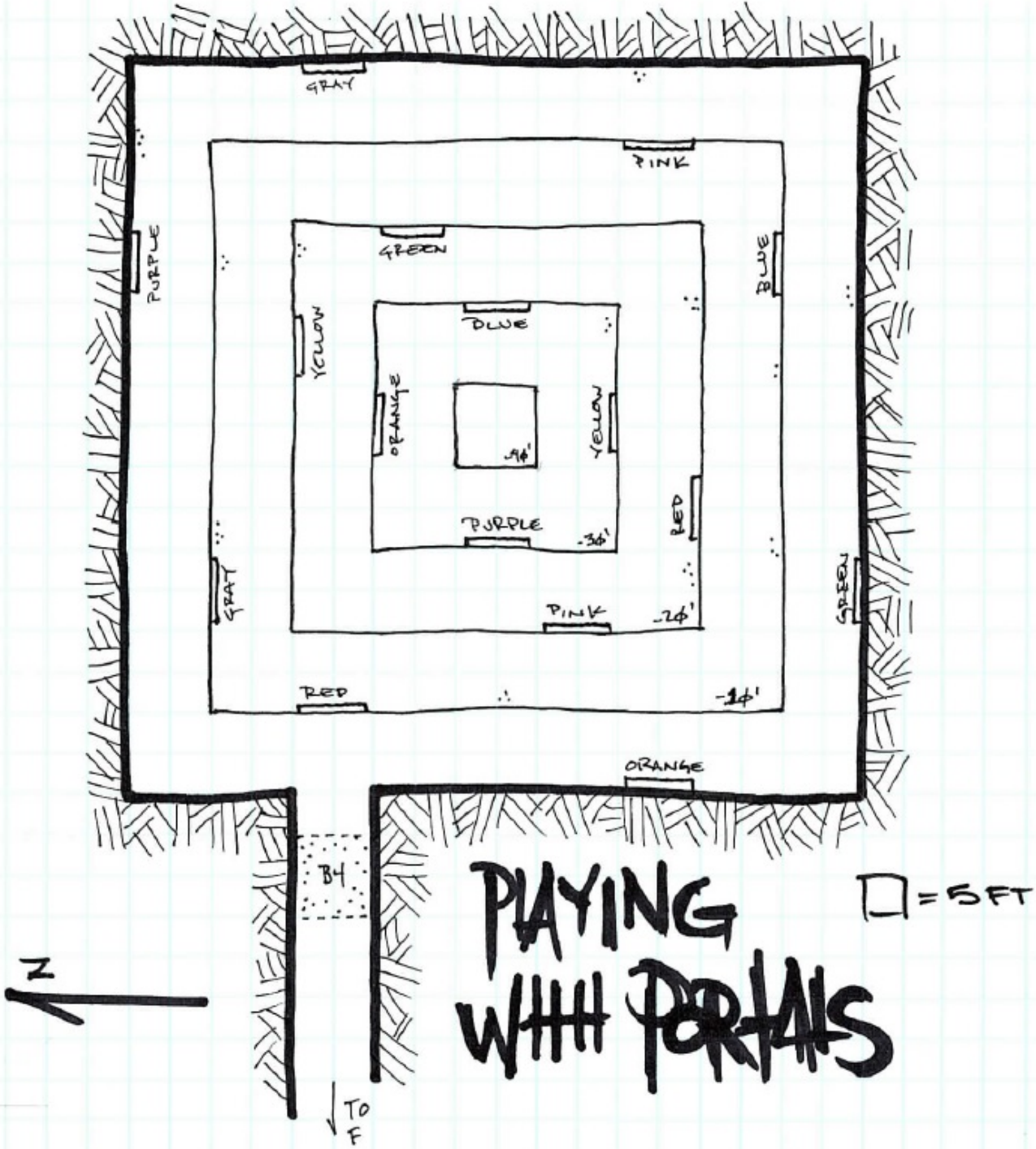
Scimitar (Yuan-ti Form Only). Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6+3) slashing damage.

Invoke Nightmare (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). The yuan-ti taps into the nightmares of a creature it can see within 60 feet of it and creates an illusory, immobile manifestation of that creature's deepest fears, visible only to that creature. The target must make a DC 13 Intelligence saving throw. On a failed save, the target takes 11 (2d10) psychic damage and is frightened of the manifestation, believing it to be real. The yuan-ti must concentrate to maintain the illusion (as if concentrating on a spell), which lasts for up to 1 minute and can't be harmed. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the illusion on a success, or taking 11 (2d10) psychic damage on a failure.

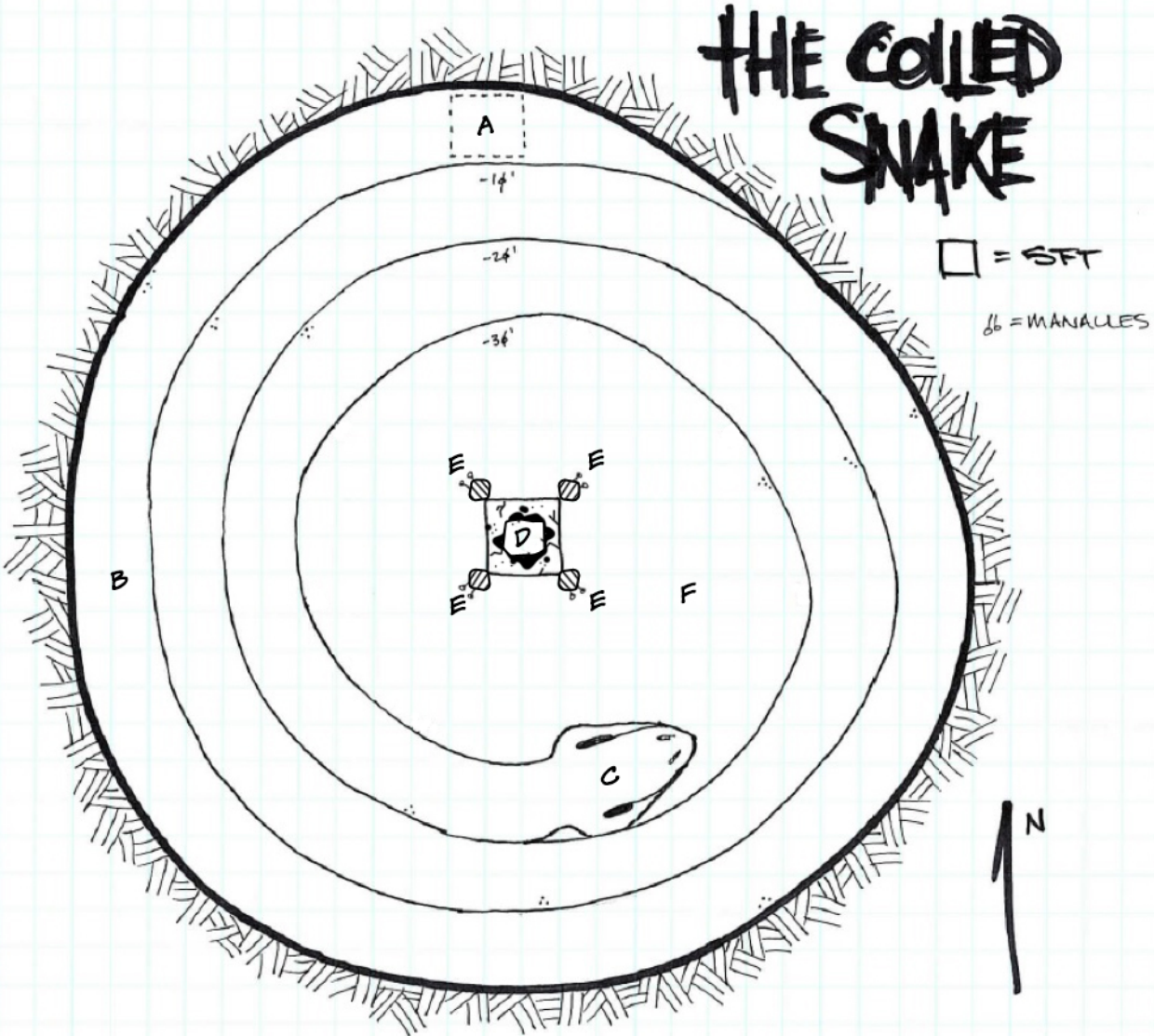
APPENDIX. MAP 1



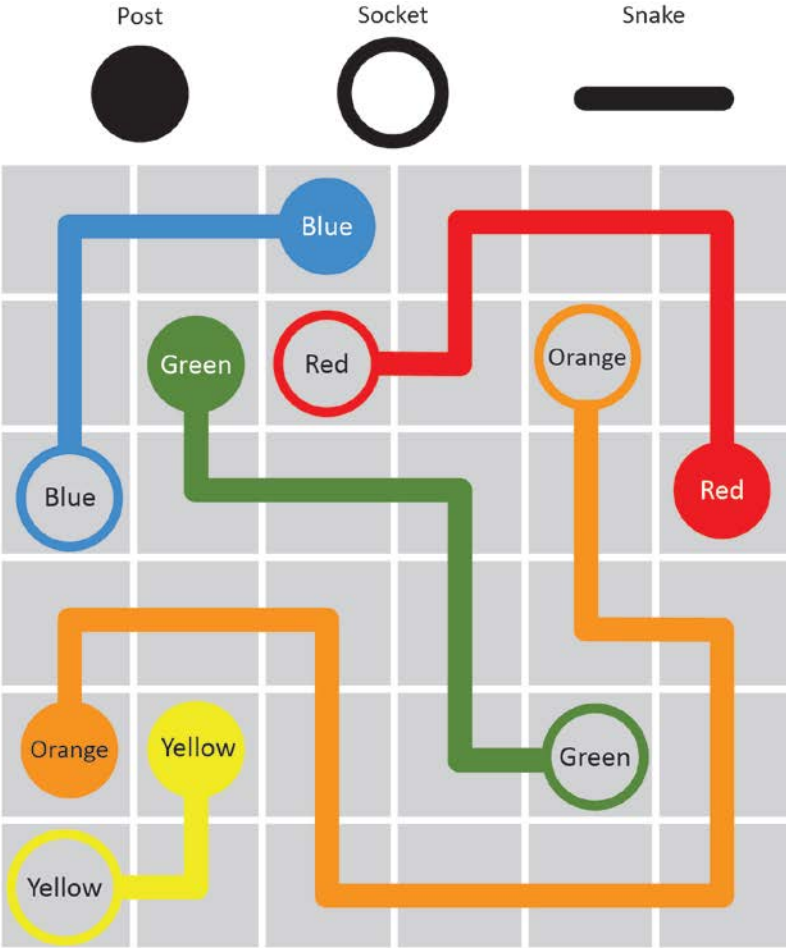
APPENDIX. MAP 2



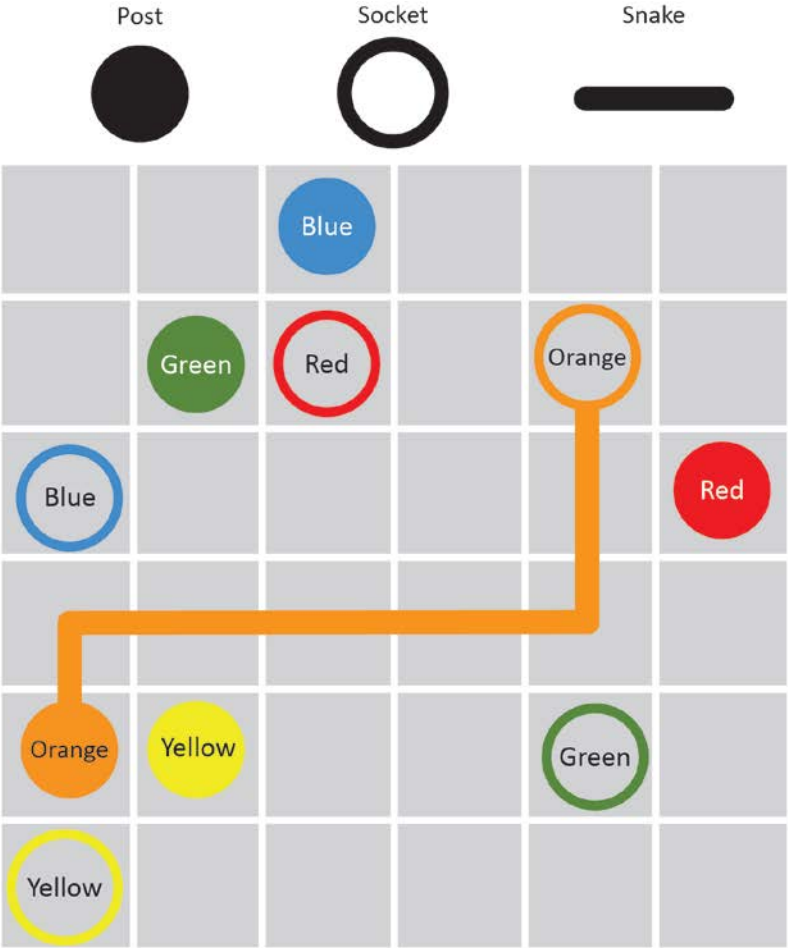
APPENDIX. MAP 3



APPENDIX. DM HANDOUT 1



PLAYER HANDOUT 1



PLAYER HANDOUT 2

**Trees bow before my might.
You can feel me, but I'm not in sight.
Speak my name, and you will pass freely.**

**My eyes are windows. My spine is a stair.
You can walk on my crown and breath the fresh air.
Sometimes I'm a refuge, sometimes a prison.
Sometimes I'm ivory, but I'm usually stone.
Speak my name, and you will pass freely.**

**When I'm thick, I am slow. When I'm thin, I am fast.
I'm tall when I'm young, but I'm short when I'm old.
Speak my name and you will pass freely.**

**Words set in place.
Lines ordered into rows.
Sheets counted in sequence.
All of this I bind together.
Speak my name, and you will pass freely.**

PLAYER HANDOUT 3



PLAYER HANDOUT 4. 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:

DEAD MEN TELL TALES

You have found a never-before-published chapter of *Of the Fall of Netheril*, penned by the lich Rhaugilath the Ageless. The chapter addresses the architectural design of the Netherese enclave of Orbedal, which was ruled by Rhaugilath. This book would be of great interest to a sage of ancient history and could be used to gain access to the great library at Candlekeep.

PLAYER HANDOUT 5. MAGIC ITEM

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

THE MASK OF WOMPONA YARP (HELM OF BRILLIANCE)

Wondrous item, very rare (requires attunement)

This dazzling helm is set with 1d10 diamonds, 2d10 rubies, 3d10 fire opals, and 4d10 opals. Any gem pried from the helm crumbles to dust. When all the gems are removed or destroyed, the helm loses its magic.

You gain the following benefits while wearing it:

- You can use an action to cast one of the following spells (save DC 18), using one of the helm's gems of the specified type as a component: *daylight* (opal), *fireball* (fire opal), *prismatic spray* (diamond), or *wall of fire* (ruby). The gem is destroyed when the spell is cast and disappears from the helm.
- As long as it has at least one diamond, the helm emits dim light in a 30-foot radius when at least one undead is within that area. Any undead that starts its turn in that area takes 1d6 radiant damage.
- As long as the helm has at least one ruby, you have resistance to fire damage.
- As long as the helm has at least one fire opal, you can use an action and speak a command word to cause one weapon you are holding to burst into flames. The flames emit bright light in a 10-foot radius and dim light for an additional 10 feet. The flames are harmless to you and the weapon. When you hit with an attack using the blazing weapon, the target takes an extra 1d6 fire damage. The flames last until you use a bonus action to speak the command word again or until you drop or stow the weapon.

Roll a d20 if you are wearing the helm and take fire damage as a result of failing a saving throw against a spell. On a roll of 1, the helm emits beams of light from its remaining gems. Each creature within 60 feet of the helm other than you must succeed on a DC 17 Dexterity saving throw or be struck by a beam, taking radiant damage equal to the number of gems in the helm. The helm and its gems are then destroyed. This item is found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

This monstrous batiri goblin mask is made of lacquered wood and its gems carved to resemble

numerous unblinking eyes. When a gem is used, the surrounding wood closes around it like an eyelid. When found, the helm has 6 diamonds, 5 rubies, 17 fire opals, and 34 opals.