

# DUNGEONS & DRAGONS<sup>®</sup>

## CONFRONTATION AT CANDLEKEEP<sup>™</sup>

A D&D<sup>®</sup> NEXT ADVENTURE FOR 2<sup>ND</sup> LEVEL CHARACTERS

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# INTRODUCTION

*Confrontation at Candlekeep™* is a D&D® Next adventure designed for four to six 2nd-level characters. This event is intended to be playable in two hours and is designed to be run in stores and at conventions.

**Quick Start:** If you don't have time to read the entire adventure in advance, review pages 2 - 4, and then read the encounters as you go.

## Playtesting D&D Next

This adventure is intended for use with the online playtest packet available at [dndnext.com](http://dndnext.com). Prior to running this adventure for Gen Con 2013 (August 15-18), follow these preparation steps.

1. Visit [dndnext.com](http://dndnext.com) and sign up for the playtest.
2. Download the playtest packet and review the documents, paying close attention to the How to Play file and the DM Guidelines file.
3. Familiarize yourself with the adventure.

## Background

In ages past, Asmodeus crafted a spell of enchantment so powerful that it could force any creature to submit to the caster's will without traces of magical compulsion. The spell was too potent to be held within the mind. Asmodeus recorded its foul magic on a scroll instead.

Mystra learned of the spell's existence and yearned to unmake it. However, fearing that destroying the scroll would release its energy for Asmodeus to recapture, she sent one of her Chosen to steal it and hide it.

For untold years, the scroll has rested in secret among the tomes and parchments of Candlekeep—the vast library of Faerûnian lore and prophecy. Now, as the Realms faces an era of upheaval and restoration (see the “What is the Sundering” sidebar on page 24), Asmodeus has learned the location of his scroll and dispatched one of his Chosen named Valraun to do the unthinkable: penetrate the vast and potent defenses of Candlekeep, find the scroll, and reclaim it for the forces of the Nine Hells.

## Adventure Summary

While the adventurers are visiting Candlekeep, a Chosen of Asmodeus named Valraun launches an attack against the stronghold. Cultists of Asmodeus have secretly deactivated many of the fortress's wards, leaving it vulnerable to an assault.

The adventurers are presented with tasks that aid in the defense of Candlekeep—raising wards, killing enemies, or gathering information. In the final encounter, the adventurers help in the raising of the Great Shield—a powerful ward that expels the intruders and establishes an impenetrable barrier against further incursion.

# RUNNING THE EVENT

In this event, players are separated into four to nine play groups. Collectively, these groups are a pod. Each pod is managed by a coordinator, called a First Reader, and the groups participate in the event simultaneously.

The sections below outline the responsibilities of this event's various roles.

A map of Candlekeep, noting key areas in the adventure, appears on page 25.

## Coordinator (First Reader)

Each pod of four to nine play groups is overseen by a coordinator known as a First Reader. **The First Reader's responsibilities include:**

- ◆ Reading sections of the adventure's setup. Your readaloud text is in **blue**.
- ◆ Resolving questions for Dungeon Masters.
- ◆ Facilitating interaction between groups.
- ◆ Handing out rewards at the end of the event.

## Dungeon Master

A Dungeon Master (DM) runs the activity at each table. **The DM's responsibilities include:**

- ◆ Running the encounter associated with a task the party selects. Your readaloud text is in **maroon**.
- ◆ Using the initiative tables and monster statistics for combat. You can decide whether to use miniatures, theater-of-the-mind, or a variation of these options.
- ◆ Notifying the First Reader when the adventure prompts you to do so.
- ◆ Gathering feedback from players at the end of the event.

## Rules Expert (Loremaster)

In addition to the Dungeon Master at each table, a rules expert known as the Loremaster patrols the room. **The Loremaster's responsibilities include:**

- ◆ Resolving D&D Next rules questions.
- ◆ Observing play and offering helpful tips.

## Line Marshal (Gatewarden)

The Gatewarden is a guardian of Candlekeep who watches over the scholars and adventurers entering the library-fortress. **The Gatewarden's responsibilities include:**

- ◆ Providing players with pregenerated characters.
- ◆ Creating groups and pods for this event.
- ◆ Reading the following readaloud, and providing details about Candlekeep to those in line.

*At the end of a long road, a coastal promontory of rock thrusts up above the Sea of Swords. A forest of many-windowed stone towers rises from this broad bluff, whose edges are the foundation walls of a massive fortress.*

*Candlekeep is a place of wonder, said to contain more knowledge than any other site in Faerûn. Perhaps you've come with your companions seeking a respite from your adventures, or perhaps the key to a riddle or mystery. Whatever the case, Candlekeep is the answer to your needs. This is a place devoted to knowledge—not to good or evil. All kinds of wonders and dangers are to be found within.*

*The sun is setting upon the Way of the Lion when you finally approach Candlekeep's massive gates. To be granted access to the fortress, each seeker of knowledge must provide the guardian monks with a book. Those seeking to study in the private libraries of Candlekeep are made to offer a rare tome, spellbook, or map.*

*As you approach with your offering, Candlekeep's Gatewarden addresses you.*

*"What brings you to Candlekeep, my child? Tell me about yourself, and what tome of knowledge you bring as an offering for entry?"*

**Other Gatewarden responsibilities include:**

- ◆ Roleplaying with those waiting in line. Ask players waiting in line what brings them to Candlekeep, what they hope to research or discover in the great library-fortress, and what sort of knowledge or book is being offered as the price of admission.
- ◆ Rewarding those who show great imagination in describing their character, purpose, or book. The Gatewarden can bestow the blessing of Oghma, which grants a +1 bonus to all attacks, checks, and saving throws during the event.

## THE WORLD NEEDS HEROES

As the Sundering rises to a climax that shakes two worlds, desperation grows among civilized folk of all races. Everywhere, the farsighted turn to the wisdom of the past, in hopes of finding secrets that can guide the tumult of the worlds and harness the awesome energies now raging wild across them.

For once, what "every fool knows" is correct: the greatest surviving storehouse of lore is Candlekeep. Guarding it and finding its relevant secrets are crucial—and you are there, on the spot, the fate of the Realms depending on your deeds and aspirations.

Every world needs its heroes to save it, and in *Confrontation at Candlekeep*, you have a splendid chance to do just that. A wild ride, great fun, and high stakes—what more can one ask of an adventure?

—Ed Greenwood

# SETUP

10 Minutes

**When all groups are seated and ready to begin, the First Reader will read:**

*As you step through the gates, you're greeted by one of the wonders of Faerûn—a sight few in the world will ever see: The great library fortress of Candlekeep.*

*A balding, brown-robed monk hustles toward your groups, leading a convocation of young acolytes.*

*“Welcome, my friends, to Candlekeep. I am First Reader Quinlapp, one of the leaders of Candlekeep. These acolytes here will be assisting you during your stay. Please let us know if you have any questions during your stay. For now, they'll lead you to the House of Rest, where you can store your gear before exploring the library.”*

**Read the following, inserting your name:**

*One of the younger acolytes approaches your group. “Hello, travelers. My name is [Your Name]. I'll be assisting you during your stay. Are you already acquainted with one another? What pursuit brings you to Candlekeep?”*

Allow the characters the opportunity to roleplay their introductions and come up with explanations for why they are in Candlekeep. If you've had time to prepare this adventure, feel free to offer background and describe sections of Candlekeep.

**When the conversation concludes, read:**

*The acolyte escorts you across the courtyard to the House of Rest. The enormity of Candlekeep is overwhelming. Hundreds of stone towers stretch toward the cloudy sky. Dozens of monks bustle about, carrying large tomes between the towers.*

*At the House of Rest, the acolyte departs, and you get a friendly greeting from the master of the house, a portly fellow named Winthrop.*

*“Ye look weary from your travels,” he says. “Drop your things there and join me for a drink. I'm always eager to hear of news from beyond the walls.”*

Winthrop is the proprietor of the Candlekeep Inn—a subsection of the House of Rest. He is the latest Winthrop in a long line of Winthrops, and he takes pride in the inn, claiming “it's clean as an Elven arse.” He gladly chats with the characters.

**When the players conclude their roleplaying, move on to “Starting the Action” on the next page.**

## Character Death

If an adventurer dies, signal the First Reader. The party can communicate with the First Reader using the reader's runestone it receives in “Starting the Action.” The First Reader can send aid in the form of another adventurer (represented by a new pre-generated character). In the Final Confrontation, no such aid is available.

## Features of the Area

The following information applies unless an encounter description says otherwise.

**Light:** Bright light is found throughout Candlekeep, supplied by enchanted glowing *driftglobes* that hover in the air or are set into stone wall sconces.

**No Fire:** Magical wards active throughout Candlekeep are designed to protect the precious stores of books and papers there. No fires except lit candles can burn within the fortress. Spells and other effects that deal fire damage are immediately dispelled.

**Ceilings:** The ceilings in the fortress are 15 feet high.

**Doors:** Candlekeep's doors are thick wood, and are normally closed when encountered.

### SMALL TALK IN CANDLEKEEP

During the course of the adventure, it's likely that the characters will interact with one or more nonplayer characters who live in Candlekeep. The list below provides some useful information related to Candlekeep and its environs, if you're looking to improvise some casual conversation.

1. Candlekeep is old, so old that people disagree about who founded it, and when. Candlekeep has always stood at its current location, and the stone fortress has always been a center of learning dedicated to the god Oghma.
2. The monks of Candlekeep are scholar-priests who primarily venerate Oghma or Deneir, but many sages and other “seekers after knowledge” visit the monastery-fortress for extended periods.
3. To get into Candlekeep (unless you are a high-ranking priest of Oghma or for rare special other reasons), you must pay an entry fee in the form of a valuable book that's not yet part of the Candlekeep library.
4. Although Candlekeep is primarily a place of quiet study, its halls resonate with the Endless Chant of Alaundo. Novice monks led by the Chanter or other senior monks follow a long circuitous route through the monastery, chanting the prophecies of Alaundo that haven't yet “come true.” This procession never ends, but monks are replaced in shifts.
5. Candlekeep sometimes copies books or pages from its library and sells them as a source of income. Spells and important magical processes or divine secrets are very rarely copied and are very expensive. Other useful works are often purchased by nobles, the wealthy, and libraries from across Faerûn.

# STARTING THE ACTION

10 Minutes

## Read:

*As the day closes, Candlekeep becomes illuminated by the light of driftglobes scattered throughout the monastery.*

*Suddenly a terrible explosion booms above you. The floorboards tremble and the windows rattle. Outside, you can see an unnatural bolt of crimson lightning strike down at one of Candlekeep's many towers.*

*"Ye best grab your weapons and armor," Winthrop says. "This can't be good."*

## Signal the First Reader, who will address the group in the role of Quinlapp:

*"This storm is some kind of attack. We've spotted robed priests of Asmodeus outside the walls, and they have somehow disabled many of our wards and magical defenses.*

*The wizards and clerics of Candlekeep are busy preparing our defenses in case we must raise the Great Shield to repel the attackers. Unfortunately, the enemy is spread out. We desperately need your help."*

*"Take these two potions of healing, and this stone. It's a reader's runestone, and allows you to communicate with me at a distance. Keep it with you at all times, and inform me if you need aid or wish to communicate anything to the other adventuring parties. Now, let me explain what must be done."*

The First Reader tells you which area to prepare and then reads or summarizes one of the following scenarios, which is tied to a location on the map of Candlekeep. Each group in a pod plays through a different scenario. If nine or more groups are participating in the event, each additional group above eight can play the Area 8 scenario.

While the First Reader describes the scenario and answers the players' questions, go to the specified location and prepare to run it. Each area is keyed to the map. When the First Reader is done, you resume running the table, playing the role of an acolyte escorting the player characters. The First Reader's role resumes in the final encounter. The acolytes are non-combatants with the exception of acolyte Restov who is associated with Area 6. Each non-combatant acolyte has 9 hit points, speed 30 ft., and AC and ability scores of 10.

**Potion of Healing (Consumable):** You regain 2d4 + 2 hit points.

### Area 1. Ghost Dragon Hall:

*"I've had reports of devils emerging from Ghost Dragon Hall. It will be difficult to raise the Great Shield while these creatures run rampant. If they were to disable the wards against fire in Candlekeep, it could mean the destruction of vast quantities of knowledge. Assist the acolyte here in stopping these creatures."*

### Area 2. Library of Natural Wonders:

*"I've sent a couple acolytes to the Library of Natural Wonders. There, hidden in one of the books is a shield runestone. We may need it to raise the Great Shield if we cannot repel the attack. Unfortunately, the acolytes haven't come back, and I'm worried. Please accompany this acolyte here to investigate. The shield runestone is in a large green tome without a title."*

### Area 3. Bluffs of Candlekeep

*"One of the acolytes has spotted boats sheltered in a cove down on the sea, along the bluffs. We think that might be how the attackers approached unnoticed. Please, follow this scribe here. The acolyte claims to have read about a secret path leading down the cliff to the shore below. Let us hope it's true. We need to sabotage the boats so they can't escape with whatever it is they're searching for."*

### Area 4. Leaning Tower:

*"An enemy has blockaded itself inside a place we call Broken Tower. The enemy has somehow seized one of several ritual scrolls necessary to complete the Great Shield. I'm hoping you can gain entry through an adjacent tower that leans against the top of Broken Tower. The acolyte here will escort you to Leaning Tower, and show you the way."*

### Area 5. Dry Fountain:

*"We may need to raise the Great Shield to repel these attackers. To do that, we require shield runestones hidden throughout Candlekeep. I've sent several groups to retrieve them already—I need your group to head for Dry Fountain. There, hidden in a book, is another runestone. This acolyte here can take you."*

### Area 6. Shrine of Oghma:

*"We may need to raise the Great Shield if we cannot repel the attack. Shield runestones will be necessary. I've dispatched several groups to recover them from elsewhere in Candlekeep. I need you to take this scroll to the Shrine of Oghma and read it. That will let you retrieve a stone from the altar. The shrine is to the west."*

### Area 7. Library of Lost Titles:

*"Several of the acolytes have reported goblins and robbed figures skulking around in the chambers below Candlekeep. I fear they are trying to lower the wards to allow more invaders inside. Please, hurry to the Library of Lost Titles, and make sure the ward is safe. This acolyte here will show you the way."*

### Area 8. Walls of Candlekeep:

*"One of the acolytes reported seeing goblins and hobgoblins scaling the walls. We need to raise the Great Shield to keep them out, but we can't do so while we're under fire from these monsters. Head for the walls and stop them! The acolyte here will show you the way."*

# Area 1. Ghost Dragon Hall

45 Minutes

## Read:

An acolyte escorts you across Candlekeep's courtyard, taking you toward a large building at the base of one of the towers. Inside, the acolyte leads you down a steep stairway into the basement. The air is cool and the sound of distant thunder becomes muted.

The acolyte looks nervously toward you. "Candlekeep's ghost dragon guardian is said to haunt this place. A few weeks ago, a young scribe named Jarvis came down here to repair the furnishings stored in these chambers. When he didn't return, a search party found his body—with no signs of what had killed him. Everyone believed it was the dragon.

Jarvis was not the victim of the ghost dragon. He was killed by the imp's poison. The imp was trying to deter the monks from investigating under Candlekeep, where infiltrators were disabling wards. If the characters press the acolyte for answers, the acolyte is unable to explain why the ghost dragon—a guardian of Candlekeep—would have killed Jarvis.

**Ghost Dragon:** A character who succeeds on an Intelligence check can recall additional information about the ghost dragon.

- ◆ DC 15: Legends holds that the ghost dragon was once a silver dragon who was bound in the service of Candlekeep.
- ◆ DC 20: The dragon's name was once Miiryum. She was supposed to be bound for only twenty years of service, but the wizard who bound her died, and the spell could not be broken. She perished in an attack on Candlekeep.

## Room 1

As you come to the bottom of the stairs, a heavy fog fills the area making it difficult to see into the room beyond.

The fog is a permanent *fog cloud* spell that was placed here weeks ago to dissuade the acolytes from checking the wards. The entire room is heavily obscured, helping an invisible **imp** to deter intruders (see "Imp's Ploy" below). A wind with a speed greater than 11 miles per hour or more disperses the cloud for 1 minute.

**Imp's Ploy:** The imp in this room has been instructed by its master to fool trespassers into thinking it's the ghost dragon.

## When the characters come to the fog, read:

From the fog, you hear a voice pierce the silence, squeaking like rusty hinges. "I am the ghost dragon of Candlekeep. Turn back, unless you want to die."

The imp banters and bluffs with characters, attempting to dissuade them from entering the room—or at the very least, attempting to delay them. A character who succeeds on a DC 12 Wisdom check can discern that the voice seems to be acting under false pretense. Alternatively, characters might use information learned from an earlier Intelligence check about the dragon to punch holes in the imp's story (the imp has no relevant knowledge of the ghost dragon). If one or more characters seems to suspect the deception, the imp picks a character who looks particularly weak willed (likely a non-spellcaster), and uses its *suggestion* ability on him or her. It then issues a command to that character to convince his or her party to leave.

The imp avoids combat, remaining invisible or hiding in the fog until the characters are in battle with the spined devils in room 2. If the party somehow learns of its location, the imp flees into the room containing the spined devils.

## Room 2

### When characters proceed into the fog, read:

Through the fog, you hear the scuffle of movement and a frantic infernal incantation from a distant room. Beyond the mist is a cluttered room containing broken furnishings. From a corridor on the opposite end of the room, two spine-covered devils emerge. You can hear more chanting down the corridor, beyond the two creatures.

The two **spined devils** confront the party, attempting to prevent them from reaching the dark acolyte in the next room. The **imp** also attacks, if present.

## Room 3

### When any adventurer enters this room, read:

In this empty chamber, a human male in purple robes stands before an ominous-looking summoning circle. "You're too late," he cries, clutching a dagger, apparently ready to spill blood to perform the ritual.

Before he can do so, the chamber is filled with a chill breeze. A set of spectral jaws rises through the floor, enveloping the cultist, who squeals and falls to the ground dead, and the glow from the summoning circle subsides.

The jaws turn toward you and you hear a disembodied voice say, "Hello."

Miiryum is not about to help the characters with any undefeated spined devils, unless they need it (in which case her attack is +8 and deals 4d12 + 5 necrotic damage). She helped the party, because the cultist was preparing to summon a much more powerful devil (a barbed devil), and has been preparing to do so for several weeks while Miiryum was watching.

## Roleplaying the Ghost Dragon

Miiryam would rather talk than fight. Use the following information to roleplay the dragon.

- ◆ Miiryam's sanity isn't strong.
- ◆ She is very lonely and secretly dreams of regaining her body and flying again.
- ◆ In life, Miiryam loved green, growing things. She can still vividly picture the Sword Coast
- ◆ She is eager for tales and information about current events in Faerûn, though recalls little of the past.
- ◆ She likes to hear jokes but is saddened by news of changes that she can't see or be a part of.

Miiryam will talk to the characters at length until eventually—in an instance of lucidity—she warns them of the arrival of the Chosen of Asmodeus. She tells them they must return and protect Candlekeep, since she cannot leave the lower chambers.

## Moving On

When the heroes complete this encounter, signal the First Reader.

### IMP

**Tiny Fiend (Devil, Shapechanger)**

**Armor Class** 13

**Hit Points** 7 (2d4 + 2); see Traits below

**Speed** 15 ft., fly 30 ft.

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft.

**Str** 6 (-2)      **Dex** 17 (+3)      **Con** 13 (+1)

**Int** 11 (+0)      **Wis** 12 (+1)      **Cha** 14 (+2)

**Alignment** lawful evil

**Languages** Common, Infernal

#### TRAITS

**Immunities:** The imp is immune to fire and poison.

**Magic Resistance:** The imp has advantage on saving throws against magical effects.

**Damage Resistance:** The imp is resistant to nonmagical weapons except those made of silver.

#### ACTIONS

**Melee Attack—Sting:** +4 to hit (reach 5 ft.; one creature). *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw. *Failed Save:* 10 (2d8 + 1) poison damage.

**Invisibility:** The imp turns invisible until it attacks, casts a spell, or ends the effect. It can end the effect at any time without using an action.

**Suggestion (Recharge 6):** The imp chooses a creature within 50 feet of it that can hear and understand it. The creature must make a DC 10 Wisdom saving throw. *Failed Save:* The target is charmed until the end of its next turn. During that turn, the imp can verbally control how the target uses its action and movement, but cannot command the target to harm itself.

## SPINED DEVIL (2)

**Small Fiend (Devil)**

**Armor Class** 13

**Hit Points** 10 (3d6); see Traits below

**Speed** 20 ft., fly 30 ft.

**Senses** darkvision 100 ft.

**Str** 9 (-1)      **Dex** 15 (+2)      **Con** 10 (+0)

**Int** 11 (+0)      **Wis** 14 (+2)      **Cha** 8 (-1)

**Alignment** lawful evil

**Languages** Common, Infernal

#### TRAITS

**Immunity:** The spined devil is immune to fire.

**Damage Resistance:** The spined devil is resistant to cold and to nonmagical weapons except those made of silver.

**Swoop:** The spined devil doesn't provoke opportunity attacks when it flies out of a hostile creature's reach.

**Telepathy:** The spined devil can communicate telepathically with any creature within 100 feet of it that can understand a language.

#### ACTIONS

**Multiattack:** The spined devil makes one claws attack and one tined fork attack, or two spine attacks.

**Melee Attack—Claws:** +4 to hit (reach 5 ft.; one creature). *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) slashing damage.

**Melee Attack—Tined Fork:** +4 to hit (reach 5 ft.; one creature). *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage.

**Ranged Attack—Spine:** +4 to hit (range 20 ft./80 ft.; one creature). *Hit:* 2 (1d4) piercing damage and 2 (1d4) fire damage. *Special:* The spined devil has twelve spines and regrows spines at the rate of one per hour.

#### Initiative Tracker

29		14	
28		13	
27		12	
26		11	
25		10	
24		9	
23		8	
22		7	
21		6	
20		5	
19		4	
18		3	
17		2	
16		1	
15		0	

## Area 2. Library of Natural Wonders

### 45 Minutes

Prior to this encounter, note of the characters' Wisdom modifiers. You will need them for the party's interaction with the doppelgangers.

#### Then read:

*An acolyte leads you up a set of stone stairs to the battlements high on Candlekeep's walls. At the end of the wall is a solid wooden door barring entry into the Library of Natural Wonders. A window stands open 20 feet overhead.*

*The acolyte rattles the door knob. "That's strange. This door isn't normally locked. I'm afraid I don't have a key."*

The door is locked from the inside, but can be opened with a successful DC 20 Dexterity check. If the check fails by 5 or more, the character making the failed check must succeed on a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw or take 1d6 lightning damage from a *glyph of warding*. Detecting the lightning glyph requires a DC 15 Intelligence check or the use of a spell such as *detect magic*. The glyph can be disabled by scratching it out, but requires a DC 15 Dexterity check to do so without triggering it.

Alternatively, the door can be broken open with a DC 15 Strength check, but doing so triggers the glyph.

**Window:** The open window is 20 feet above the wall, which requires a successful DC 10 Strength check to climb. A character who reaches the window can lower a rope to allow others to climb without a check.

### The Library of Natural Wonders

If the party enters through the door, it arrives on the bottom level of the tower where the doppelgangers are searching. If the party enters through the window, it arrives on a landing, which is 20 feet above the floor and connected to the lower level by a sloping walkway.

#### When the characters enter the tower, read:

*Bookshelves of various sizes line the curved walls of the tower interior, and are accessed by a long, sloping walkway that circles down from the top of the tower. Above the shelves hang paintings of animals in natural scenes.*

*The center of the tower is wide open, revealing the upper landings, as well as the ground floor, which contains tables, statues, and animals that have been stuffed and mounted. At one of the tables are two acolytes, who are hurriedly skimming through a large stack of books.*

The acolytes are actually **doppelganger** servants of Asmodeus named Nan and Nils. They're searching the library for the *shield runestone* to hamper the monks trying to raise the Great Shield. The acolyte accompanying the characters faintly recalls the other acolytes' faces, though he or she doesn't know them closely. In reality, the doppelgangers killed the acolytes and then copied their forms. The bodies are stashed behind some of the statues (DC 15 Wisdom to spot them).

**Roleplaying:** The "acolytes" act surprised by the characters' arrival, and feign worry that they are allied with the attacking forces. They urge the heroes to come help them search the books. If the characters entered through the window, the doppelgangers try to draw them down to the lower level of the room. They attempt to use *read thoughts* (roll in secret) to learn that Quinlapp sent the party and that the characters are looking for a green book.

A DC 15 Wisdom check to sense motive reveals the doppelgangers' deception.

**Enemies Revealed:** The doppelgangers were expecting trouble, so they are prepared with a *wand of animate objects*. When the characters suspect the doppelgangers' ploy, Nan uses the wand to animate three statues of **giant frogs** along the south side of the room. The wand's charges are exhausted after this use of it.

When the frogs attack, Nan and Nils attempt to flee out onto the battlements. If the characters unwittingly help the doppelgangers find the *shield runestone*, Nan and Nils attack whoever recovered it (or flee if one of them found it; see "Green Books" below).

**Capturing an Enemy:** If killed, the doppelgangers revert to their true form. If a player indicates that he or she wishes to knock a doppelganger unconscious instead of killing it, the characters can capture and question the creature. The doppelganger will reveal the information contained in the Background section (page 2) if the adventurers spare its life. If a doppelganger is killed, the characters find a note to search for a scroll with the symbol of Asmodeus upon it. The acolyte accompanying the characters has no insights into what this object might be, but First Reader Quinlapp knows. He can relate the details from the Background to the characters.

**Green Books:** It requires 5 minutes and a DC 10 Wisdom check to spot around the library. A successful check reveals one of the following four green books lacking titles (determine randomly).

A character must succeed on a DC 10 Intelligence check to determine without opening a book whether it contains a hollow compartment. Opening a book triggers its effect, if any.

1. An illuminated tome detailing a monk's travels in the Moonshae Isles. The writing is not very good.
2. A cursed book that summons four Small **feral monkeys** when it is opened. The monkeys attack until destroyed. AC 10; 3 hit points; ability scores +0; speed 40 feet; +5 to hit; 1d6 slashing damage.



- A magic tome that unleashes a burst of green light, enchanting the armor of the person holding it with a layer of lizard scales and making the armor *magic armor* +1.
- The hollow book containing a *shield runestone*, a walnut-sized polished blue agate.

If the party fails to find the book, you can allow them to search again. However, if time permits, you might have two **dark acolytes** (page 13) arrive to interfere with their efforts.

## Moving On

When the heroes complete this encounter, signal the First Reader.

### DOPPELGANGER (2)

**Medium Monstrosity (Shapechanger)**

**Armor Class** 11

**Hit Points** 18 (4d8)

**Speed** 30 ft.

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft.

**Str** 12 (+1)      **Dex** 13 (+1)      **Con** 10 (+0)

**Int** 13 (+1)      **Wis** 14 (+2)      **Cha** 13 (+1)

**Alignment** neutral

**Languages** Common

#### TRAITS

**Ambusher:** The doppelganger deals 2d6 extra damage when it hits a surprised creature with an attack.

**Immunities:** The doppelganger cannot be charmed or put to sleep.

#### ACTIONS

**Melee Attack—Slam:** +3 to hit (reach 5 ft.; one creature). *Hit:* 3 (1d4 + 1) bludgeoning damage.

**Melee Attack—Short Sword:** +3 to hit (reach 5 ft.; one creature). *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) piercing damage.

**Change Shape:** The doppelganger polymorphs into a Small or Medium humanoid, including a specific individual it has seen. It can remain in this form indefinitely. The doppelganger's equipment and statistics do not change (except for its size). The doppelganger reverts to its natural form when killed.

**Read Thoughts:** The doppelganger chooses a creature it can see within 60 feet of it, and the chosen creature must make a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw. *Failed Save:* The doppelganger can read the target's surface thoughts as long as they remain within 60 feet of one another. During that time, the doppelganger has advantage on Wisdom checks made to sense the target's intentions, Charisma checks made to deceive the target, and Charisma checks made to impersonate the target.

The effect can penetrate barriers, but 1 foot of stone, 1 inch of common metal, a thin sheet of lead, or 3 feet of wood or dirt blocks it. The effect ends immediately if the doppelganger attempts to read a different creature's thoughts or if either the target or the doppelganger dies.

### GIANT FROG (3)

**Medium Beast**

**Armor Class** 12

**Hit Points** 11 (2d8 + 2)

**Speed** 15 ft.

**Str** 14 (+2)      **Dex** 12 (+1)      **Con** 12 (+1)

**Int** 1 (-5)      **Wis** 11 (+0)      **Cha** 6 (-2)

**Alignment** unaligned

**Languages** –

#### ACTIONS

**Melee Attack—Bite:** +4 to hit (reach 5 ft.; one creature). *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage, and the target is grappled. While the frog has a creature grappled, the frog can bite only that creature, but the frog has advantage when it does so.

**Melee Attack—Sticky Tongue:** +4 to hit (reach 15 ft.; one creature). The frog cannot use this attack if a creature is grappled by the frog. *Hit:* If the target is Medium or smaller, the giant frog pulls the target up to 15 feet and can make a bite attack as part of the same action.

**Swallow Whole:** While grappling a Small or smaller creature, the frog can make a bite attack against the creature, and if the frog hits, it also swallows the creature. A frog can swallow one creature at a time.

A swallowed creature takes 3 (1d4 + 1) acid damage at the start of each of the frog's turns until it escapes. A swallowed creature is blinded and restrained, but it can use its action to cut its way free by dealing enough piercing or slashing damage to kill the frog. A creature that frees itself falls prone in an unoccupied space within 5 feet of the frog.

Initiative Tracker		
29		14
28		13
27		12
26		11
25		10
24		9
23		8
22		7
21		6
20		5
19		4
18		3
17		2
16		1
15		0

## Area 3. Bluffs of Candlekeep

45 Minutes

### Read:

As Quinlapp hurries away, the acolyte addresses you. “We’re going to have to get outside Candlekeep. The walls are under attack, but we might be able to sneak by the enemies if we descend near one of the towers. Follow me.”

The acolyte leads you up a set of wooden stairs to the battlements high on Candlekeep’s walls. Sixty feet down below, you can see dozens of humanoids amassed, attempting to scale the walls and break their way through the gates. Among them are goblins, hobgoblins, and several ogres.

The acolyte leads you south along the wall and stops near one of the large towers. The acolyte then pulls a rope out of a pack, and hands it to you.

The rope is 100 feet long and can be tied off to the crenellation. The acolyte would prefer to let the characters go down first but can be convinced to go first with a DC 10 Charisma check. Climbing down the rope does not require a check.

### When all the characters are at the bottom, read:

The acolyte gestures to be quiet and beckons you away from the wall toward the bluffs. Dozens of enemies are amassed about a hundred feet away, including four ogres.

The characters must attempt to avoid the attention of the mass of enemies. Each character (not including the acolyte) must make a DC 10 Dexterity check. If at least half of the party succeeds (ties go in favor of the players), the enemies don’t notice them, and you can proceed to “Into the Garbage Chute.”

## Fight or Flight

On a failure, six **hobgoblins** (see page 13, if it becomes necessary) unleash a barrage of arrows. Each character who failed the check is attacked with disadvantage (+5 vs. AC; 3 (1d6) piercing damage). If the characters linger, each is attacked once per round at disadvantage for as long as he or she does not flee. If characters remain to fight, they will almost certainly die, because in addition, four **ogres** and twenty **goblins** charge forward. They arrive in two rounds.

### If the characters stay to fight, read:

The acolyte accompanying you stares at you. “You’re mad to fight those monsters.” The acolyte then turns and runs for what you can only presume is the secret way to the coast.

### If the characters run, read:

The acolyte leads you around the edge of the southeast tower, where you’re able to get some shelter from the barrage of hobgoblin arrows. You hear the heavy pounding of the ogres’ footsteps just behind you. Ahead is a narrow ledge, not more

than a couple feet wide. It wraps around the southernmost wall of the tower. Down below, the sharp, rocky bluff threatens any misstep. “This way!” says the acolyte.

The characters don’t have time to rope together, but they are able to safely follow after the acolyte. They can move along the ledge without a check and reach a precipice along the southern wall.

The first ogre that arrives attempts to navigate the ledge. It must succeed on three DC 10 Dexterity checks to reach the characters. On a failed check, it makes no progress. If it fails by 5 or more, it falls. Any attack against the ogre while it is on the ledge forces it to make another check. If an ogre falls, it plummets 100 feet (10d6 bludgeoning damage), and the goblins and remaining ogres do not pursue. If the ogre somehow survives, note its hit points for the upcoming encounter.

If the ogre manages to reach the heroes, it attacks them, and another makes the same attempt.

## Into the Garbage Chute

A hundred feet down below, you spot several boats bobbing in the rough waters, obscured among the rocks.

The acolyte reaches under a protruding stone in the wall, and you hear a pop. One of the larger stones in the wall slams to the ground, revealing a hole, about three feet wide. Emanating from the hole is the sound of water and the faint smell of excrement.

“This chute leads down to the ocean. A stream carries waste there. I apologize for the manner of your descent; these chutes are used to pass waste out of the keep. They should take you near where those boats are. The chutes are kept secret—so I doubt the attackers used them. More likely they somehow managed to climb the bluff, though I wouldn’t recommend it.”

The acolyte declines to go down, preferring to remain up above and hold the rope while the characters descend the slippery chute. The acolyte can be convinced to go down only with a successful DC 15 Charisma check.

**Climbing:** The characters can climb down the 100-foot cliffs, but the acolyte urges against it. The wind blows hard against the cliffs, and the rocks are wet. Climbing down using a rope requires DC 10 Strength checks (DC 15 without a rope). Failure by 5 or more results in a fall from the character’s current height on the cliff (1d6 bludgeoning damage per 10 feet fallen).

**Chute:** The chute spirals gradually downward, growing steep only at the very bottom, where each character must succeed on a DC 10 Dexterity check to avoid slipping and tumbling down the slope into the ocean waters. At the bottom, the characters can make their way to a nearby rocky shelf without a check.

## OGRE (5)

Large Giant

Armor Class 11 (hide)

Hit Points 32 (5d10 + 5)

Speed 40 ft.

Senses darkvision 60 ft.

Str 18 (+4)      Dex 8 (-1)      Con 13 (+1)

Int 5 (-3)      Wis 7 (-2)      Cha 7 (-2)

Alignment chaotic evil

Languages Common, Giant

### ACTIONS

**Melee Attack—Greatclub:** +5 to hit (reach 5 ft.; one creature).

Hit: 13 (2d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

## GOBLIN (22)

Small Humanoid (Goblinoid)

Armor Class 13 (leather, shield)

Hit Points 3 (1d6)

Speed 30 ft.

Senses darkvision 60 ft.

Str 8 (-1)      Dex 11 (+0)      Con 10 (+0)

Int 10 (+0)      Wis 9 (-1)      Cha 8 (-1)

Alignment neutral evil

Languages Common, Goblin

### TRAITS

**Bushwacker:** During the first round of combat, the goblin has advantage on attack rolls against any target that has a lower initiative.

**Sneaky:** The goblin can attempt to hide at the end of a move without using an action.

**Stealthy +5:** The goblin gains a +5 bonus to all ability checks to avoid detection.

### ACTIONS

**Melee Attack—Mace:** +1 to hit (reach 5 ft.; one creature). Hit: 2 (1d6 - 1) bludgeoning damage (minimum 1 damage).

## Sabotaging the Boats

*Nine large vessels are lashed closely together and teeter in the rough water. Each of the vessels looks as though it could carry about fifteen humans or hobgoblins. The boats have heavy wooden bumpers along the sides and hulls reinforced with metal to protect them from the rocks. They are tied off to several rocky outcroppings with a thick chain.*

The boats (15 feet long and 5 feet wide) are connected together by ropes, and the flotilla is chained to the rocks. The flotilla is three boats wide on each side, with one boat in the middle. Each boat is tied off to the boats adjacent to it.

There's no immediate sign of danger, but a character who succeeds on a DC 15 Wisdom check notices that over the sound of the ocean is a snoring monster (an intoxicated **ogre** named Bert, who is joined by two intoxicated **goblins**). They come coming from the middle boat. A character spots the creatures if he or she is on the flotilla.

Initiative Tracker		
29		14
28		13
27		12
26		11
25		10
24		9
23		8
22		7
21		6
20		5
19		4
18		3
17		2
16		1
15		0

**Freeing the Boats:** A character can cut a rope lashing a ship to the others. Doing so requires an action and a DC 5 Dexterity check. A failed check causes the ropes to snap loudly, awakening the monsters.

A ship cut from the edge of the flotilla begins to float away at a rate of 10 feet per round. Characters can attempt to cut the chain keeping flotilla ashore. The chain has AC 10 and 20 hit points. Attacking the chain awakens the monsters.

**Destroying the Boats:** The boats can also be destroyed. Each has AC 10, 20 hit points, and resistance to slashing damage. Attacking a ship awakens the monsters. The boats are too soaked with water to be ignited.

**Sleeping Monsters:** The ogre and goblins were put on guard duty because they became intoxicated (as the condition) during the voyage and useless for the assault. They subsequently fell asleep. Due to the rocking ships, sneaking up adjacent to them requires a DC 15 Dexterity check. Otherwise, characters can move about the flotilla without disturbing them. The creatures awaken if any one of them is hit by an attack or if anyone attacks the chain or a boat.

## Moving On

The acolyte, if still above, holds the rope to help the characters scale their way slowly back up the chute (or climb a rope back up the cliff, if they so desire). From there, the party receives the assistance of several monks on the walls, who can lower ropes over the battlements to get the characters back inside Candlekeep.

If the characters didn't have a combat encounter down below, you can have several goblins waiting to ambush them along the cliff side.

When the characters have completed this encounter, signal the First Reader.

## Area 4. Leaning Tower

45 Minutes

### Read:

The acolyte safely leads you to Leaning Tower, the top of which has crashed into the much larger Broken Tower. The lower floors of Leaning Tower are intact, but the interior becomes increasingly ruined as you ascend. At the top of the stairs, you come to a door. The acolyte tells you that the abandoned room beyond should adjoin Broken Tower.

Around the door broken pieces of a statue lie strewn about, and fresh scratches show where some creature has recently forced open the now-closed door.

The statue is the petrified body of a monk that has fallen over and shattered. A successful DC 10 Intelligence check made to examine the statue determines that it is overly lifelike. A character who succeeds on a DC 10 Wisdom check to listen can hear a large creature breathing in the next room.

### Let Sleeping Basilisks Lie

A **basilisk** has taken up residence in the abandoned chamber at the top of Leaning Tower. The monks are not aware of its presence. Unless the characters are very loud as they approach, it remains sleeping.

### When the characters open the door, read:

*This room was once an alchemical laboratory. Shattered flasks and vials, fragments of a mirror, and various metal tools are piled in a heap opposite the door. Beside the pile, a rift opens up in the wall, accessing the adjacent Broken Tower. The approach is blocked by a sleeping, multilegged reptilian creature. Above it hangs an eight-inch diameter glass orb suspended on a chain. The orb is filled with a cloudy liquid that churns wildly.*

**Sneaking:** To sneak past the basilisk, a character must succeed on a DC 10 Dexterity check. Moving close enough to deliver a coup de grace requires a successful DC 20 Dexterity check. On a first failed check to sneak, the creature makes noise as if waking, then resumes sleeping. On a second failure, the creature wakes up and attacks.

**Glass Orb:** The orb contains a portion of a live **gray ooze**. Characters can identify the creature with a DC 15 Intelligence check. If the orb is shattered (AC 5; 1 hit point), the ooze expands and drops onto the basilisk, and the two creatures fight. This distraction—or any similar commotion that draws the basilisk's attention—allows the party to bypass the creatures and reach Broken Tower.

**Basilisk Bait:** Players might devise a way to lure the basilisk into the chamber containing the acolyte and the hobgoblins. Allow characters to make Charisma checks, or any other checks you deem

appropriate, to try to arouse the beast's interest and lure it to the lower level of Broken Tower. The basilisk does not discern between attacking the followers of Asmodeus and the characters.

**Petrified:** The room contains sufficient ingredients to concoct an antidote to cure petrification. A character can do the following:

1. Make an Intelligence check.
2. Multiply the results by 5.
3. Roll percentile dice (d%).

If the percentile result is under the multiplied Intelligence check, the character is restored.

If the result is above the multiplied Intelligence check, the character is restored only above the waist. The character is restrained and weighs an additional 100 pounds. The character can be carried or dragged by a companion, however.

## Broken Tower

### When the group arrives in Broken Tower, read:

*Unlike Leaning Tower, Broken Tower stands upright, its top floors affording a dramatic view out over the Sea of Swords. Stairs lead down to the tower's ground floor, from which you can hear muttered voices. A mixed group of humans and hobgoblins is hunkered down in defensive positions, facing away from you.*

One **dark acolyte** and four **hobgoblins** occupy the lower chamber of the tower, prepared for an attack through the main entrance. The characters can surprise the group; any character approaching the enemies must succeed on a DC 12 Dexterity check.

If the characters defeat the enemies here, they can reclaim the *Great Shield scroll* from the acolyte and leave

Initiative Tracker			
29		14	
28		13	
27		12	
26		11	
25		10	
24		9	
23		8	
22		7	
21		6	
20		5	
19		4	
18		3	
17		2	
16		1	
15		0	

through the tower's main door, which is barred from the inside.

**Capturing an Enemy:** If a player indicates that he or she wishes to knock an enemy unconscious instead of killing it, the characters can capture and question the creature. With a successful DC 15 Charisma check, the monster will reveal the information contained in the Background section (page 2), if the adventurers agree to spare its life.

## Moving On

When the heroes complete this encounter, signal the First Reader.

### DARK ACOLYTE

**Medium Humanoid (Human)**

**Armor Class** 16 (ring mail, shield)

**Hit Points** 16 (3d8 + 3)

**Speed** 25 ft.

**Str** 12 (+1)      **Dex** 11 (+0)      **Con** 13 (+1)

**Int** 10 (+0)      **Wis** 15 (+2)      **Cha** 10 (+0)

**Alignment** lawful evil

**Languages** Common

#### ACTIONS

**Melee Attack—Mace:** +2 to hit (reach 5 ft.; one creature). *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) bludgeoning damage.

**Ranged Attack—Sling:** +1 to hit (range 30 ft./120 ft.; one creature). *Hit:* 2 (1d4) bludgeoning damage.

**Spellcasting:** The acolyte can cast the following spell once per day.

**Inflict Wounds:** The dark acolyte chooses a living or an undead creature that it can see within 25 feet of it. If the creature is living, it must make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw. *Failed Save:* 13 (3d8) necrotic damage. *Successful Save:* Half damage.

### HOBGOBLIN (4)

**Medium Humanoid (Goblinoid)**

**Armor Class** 14 (ring mail)

**Hit Points** 11 (2d8 + 2)

**Speed** 25 ft.

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft.

**Str** 11 (+0)      **Dex** 10 (+0)      **Con** 12 (+1)

**Int** 10 (+0)      **Wis** 10 (+0)      **Cha** 13 (+1)

**Alignment** lawful evil

**Languages** Common, Goblin

#### TRAITS

**Steadfast:** The hobgoblin cannot be frightened while it can see a friendly creature within 30 feet of it that also has this trait.

#### ACTIONS

**Melee Attack—Longspear:** +2 to hit (reach 10 ft.; one creature). *Hit:* 4 (1d8) piercing damage.

**Ranged Attack—Shortbow:** +2 to hit (range 80 ft./320 ft.; one creature). *Hit:* 3 (1d6) piercing damage.

**Disciplined:** The hobgoblin chooses a creature within its reach. The next attack roll made against that target by a friendly creature that also has this trait has advantage.

### BASILISK

**Medium Beast**

**Armor Class** 10

**Hit Points** 28 (5d8 + 5)

**Speed** 20 ft.

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft.

**Str** 13 (+1)      **Dex** 8 (-1)      **Con** 12 (+1)

**Int** 2 (-4)      **Wis** 14 (+2)      **Cha** 12 (+1)

**Alignment** unaligned

**Languages** –

#### TRAITS

**Petrifying Gaze:** A creature that starts its turn within 30 feet of the basilisk and can see the basilisk must either avert its eyes or make a DC 11 Constitution saving throw against petrification (if the target is surprised, it cannot avert its eyes). A target that averts its eyes has disadvantage on attack rolls until the start of its next turn. *Failed Save:* The target is restrained. The target can use its action to make a DC 11 Constitution check. If the check fails or is not made, the target turns to stone permanently.

A basilisk can be affected by its own gaze if it sees its own eyes reflected on a polished surface that's within 30 feet of it and in an area of bright light.

#### ACTIONS

**Melee Attack—Bite:** +4 to hit (reach 5 ft.; one creature). *Hit:* 8 (2d6 + 1) piercing damage.

### GRAY OOZE

**Medium Ooze**

**Armor Class** 8

**Hit Points** 30 (4d8 + 12); see Traits below

**Speed** 10 ft.

**Senses** blindsight 60 ft.

**Str** 12 (+1)      **Dex** 6 (-2)      **Con** 16 (+3)

**Int** 1 (-5)      **Wis** 10 (+0)      **Cha** 3 (-4)

**Alignment** unaligned

**Languages** –

#### TRAITS

**Dissolve:** Any nonmagical weapon that hits the ooze becomes damaged and takes a -1 penalty to subsequent damage rolls. This penalty is cumulative with multiple hits. If a damaged weapon's penalty drops to -5, the weapon is destroyed. A damaged weapon costs half the weapon's cost to repair; a destroyed weapon cannot be repaired. Nonmagical ammunition that hits the ooze is destroyed instantly.

**Formless:** The ooze can squeeze through gaps that are at least 1 inch wide.

**Immunities:** The ooze cannot be charmed, frightened, affected by gaze attacks, or knocked prone.

**Damage Resistance:** The ooze is resistant to acid, cold, and fire.

#### ACTIONS

**Melee Attack—Slam:** +5 to hit (reach 5 ft.; one creature). *Hit:* 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage plus 7 (2d6) acid damage.

## Area 5. Dry Fountain

### 45 Minutes

#### Read:

Following the acolyte, you cross the broad courtyard of Candlekeep and enter one of the fortress's many halls. Twisting corridors eventually lead you to a lofty chamber. Arrayed around the room are four large vases, while in the center is a dry fountain. Rising from the basin is a twenty-foot tall pillar, carved to resemble a pair of arms and open hands. Some ten feet above the hands is a levitating stone book.

A character can retrieve the book from the top of the pillar, which can be climbed with DC 10 Strength checks. From the top of the pillar, a Medium character can reach up to snatch the book, or any character on the ground can attempt to lasso the book with a DC 15 Dexterity check. If a Strength check to climb fails by 5 or more when the character descends, the character falls (1d6 damage per 10 feet fallen).

When the stone book is retrieved, any inspection or search reveals that it cannot be physically opened. In addition, for every 5 feet it is removed from the column, the book exerts 5 pounds of force as it attempts to fly magically back to its original position above the pillar.

**Fountain's Riddle:** A simple search of the fountain (no check required) reveals a poem inscribed along its base, much of which is faded and illegible. Characters can make out the following section.

*"... and the four did travel to Lushpool long, whose ensorcelled water nurtured fountain's song."*

The poem hints that the characters must transfer four vessels of water from the singing pool in Lushpool back to Dry Fountain.

The acolyte accompanying the characters can tell them about Lushpool Court, which is said to contain a pool of magic water. If the characters consult Quinlapp using the *reader's* runestone, he can advise the characters about the "harmless" giant snakes in the pool (the acolyte accompanying the characters is unaware of the snakes). If pressed about other threats, Quinlapp or the acolyte remember the magic statue, which they warn the characters about.

### Lushpool Court

The gardens of Lushpool Court are only a short distance from Dry Fountain. The characters' acolyte companion can lead them there.

#### When the characters leave to Lushpool Court, read:

*You travel along a twisting passageway before coming to an alcove containing a statue of a frowning monk covered in wet moss. The monk holds an index finger to her lips. In the statue's ears small holes have been drilled into the stone.*

The acolyte accompanying the characters knows that the statue punishes those who aren't quiet, though the acolyte doesn't know the exact effect.

Whenever any creature attacks the magic statue or makes a noise (including speaking) while passing by it, the statue inflicts a magical effect on the triggering creature. That creature must succeed on a DC 12 Wisdom saving throw. On a failure, the creature is silenced for 5 minutes. While silenced, the creature does not produce sound from its movements or from speaking, and it cannot perform any actions that require speaking, such as spellcasting. The creature can still hear normally.

The statue has AC 10 and 20 hit points, and has resistance to nonmagical weapons. It can also be destroyed with a successful DC 20 Strength check to push it over.

**Sneaking:** To sneak past the statue, a character must succeed on a DC 10 Dexterity check. Alternatively, a character who succeeds at sneaking past can then attempt to plug the statue's ears using moss or some other appropriate material. While the statue's ears are plugged, the DC to sneak drops to 5.

#### When the characters arrive in Lushpool Court, read:

*Continuing down the corridor, you begin to hear a sweet melodic tune, similar to a bird song. Ahead, lush plants fill a humid chamber obscured in part by thick mist rising to the distant ceiling. Around the perimeter of the room are higher tiers containing potted plants and other vegetation. These tiers rise to the uppermost levels of the room.*

*At the center of the room just ahead of you, ripples disturb the surface of a large pool, which also seems to be the source of the song.*

**Spotting the Reptiles:** A DC 15 Wisdom check reveals three **giant snakes** in the pool. A DC 20 Wisdom check also lets a character notice the **giant lizard** clinging to the wall above the doorway.

Although they are normally harmless, these creatures have been agitated by the infernal magic shutting down Candlekeep's wards. As soon as anyone approaches the pool, the snakes emerge and attack, continuing to do so as long as any character remains in the area. The giant lizard doesn't act until the second round of combat, crawling down and attempting to snatch a character with its jaws. The creature attempts to drag off its victim to the upper tiers of the room.

**Singing Pool:** The characters can fill the vases, their waterskins, or any similarly sized container with water from the pool.

The pool has a magical enchantment that gives it the song. Water removed from the pool continues to sing (though more quietly) for one hour after its removal. A character drinking from the pool's singing waters gains a +2 bonus to Charisma checks for 1 hour. In addition, if any character drinks the water, it

removes the silencing effect of the magical statue from the previous area.

When the characters pass by the monk statue while carrying the waters back to Dry Fountain, it does not trigger the statue's effect.

## Activating Dry Fountain

To activate the fountain, the characters must pour the water from Lushpool Court into its basin.

### When the fountain is activated, read:

*The water expands to fill the fountain, which begins to flow once more, splashing upon the pillar. Lushpool's waters begin to sing as the hands on the pillar grow, reaching out and grasping the stone book. They then spread like a blooming flower to open the large stone tome.*

The characters can climb the pillar to retrieve the *shield runestone* contained in a cache in the open book. The runestone is a walnut-sized, polished blue agate.

## Moving On

When the heroes complete this encounter, signal the First Reader.

Initiative Tracker		
29		14
28		13
27		12
26		11
25		10
24		9
23		8
22		7
21		6
20		5
19		4
18		3
17		2
16		1
15		0

## GIANT SNAKE (3)

Large Beast

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 22 (3d10 + 6)

Speed 30 ft., climb 15 ft., swim 30 ft.

Str 15 (+2)      Dex 16 (+3)      Con 14 (+2)

Int 2 (-4)      Wis 12 (+1)      Cha 6 (-2)

Alignment unaligned

Languages –

### TRAITS

**Hold Breath:** The snake can hold its breath ten times longer than normal, and being underwater imposes no penalty on its attack rolls or ability checks.

### ACTIONS

**Melee Attack—Poisonous Bite:** +3 to hit (reach 5 ft.; one creature). *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw. *Failed Save:* 7 (2d6) poison damage.

## GIANT LIZARD

Medium Beast

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 13 (2d8 + 4)

Speed 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

Str 16 (+3)      Dex 12 (+1)      Con 14 (+2)

Int 2 (-4)      Wis 12 (+1)      Cha 6 (-2)

Alignment unaligned

Languages –

### TRAITS

**Spider Climb:** The giant lizard can climb on smooth walls and upside down on horizontal surfaces.

**Stealthy +5:** The giant lizard gains a +5 bonus to all ability checks to avoid detection.

### ACTIONS

**Melee Attack—Clamping Jaws:** +3 to hit (reach 5 ft.; one creature). *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage, and the target is grappled. While the lizard has a creature grappled, the lizard can bite only that creature but has advantage when it does so.

## Area 6. Shrine of Oghma

45 Minutes

### Read:

As you make your way toward the shrine, an acolyte hurries up to you, wiping away blood from a head wound with the sleeve of his robes.

“My name is Restov. I was told by First Reader Quinlapp to find you,” he says. “Invaders are in the area of the shrine. I will lead you there.”

Once a follower of Oghma, Restov was seduced by the power promised by Asmodeus’s followers. He hopes to trick the adventurers into bypassing the protective ward around the stone so that he can seize it and prevent the Great Shield from being raised.

**Restov’s Deception Revealed:** If a player specifically asks about Restov’s behavior, he or she can attempt a DC 15 Wisdom check to assess the acolyte. With a successful check, a character notes that Restov is sweating heavily. If asked about this, Restov explains that he has been running around the keep (roll a contest between his Charisma and any characters trying to perceive the lie).

If the characters think to corroborate the story with First Reader Quinlapp using the *reader’s runestone*, Quinlapp knows of Restov, but not ordering him to meet them. If pressed, Restov claims that the head trauma has addled his senses, and he confused Quinlapp with another of the monks (roll a contest between his Charisma and any characters trying to perceive the lie). If the lie is detected, he flees for the shrine.

**Restov’s Head Wound:** The wound is real but self-inflicted. Restov cut his forehead with a knife to add legitimacy to his lies. A DC 20 Wisdom check reveals that the wound looks as though it was inflicted with a knife or dagger.

**Killing Restov Early:** If the adventurers dispatch Restov prematurely, flag down the First Reader, who will come over and communicate with the characters as Quinlapp. The First Reader is disturbed by the report of Restov’s betrayal, and reports that he’s heard from several monks of activity suggesting that Candlekeep was infiltrated prior to the attack. He tells them to proceed to the shrine with caution, in case Restov’s allies are attempting to seize the runestone. In the shrine, the **human warriors**—not hearing Restov’s voice—spring the ambush prematurely, failing to surprise the characters.

## Shrine of Oghma

### When the characters reach the shrine, read:

Restov leads you across the courtyard to a tower containing a wide hall lined with closed doors. Each set of doors has a small window, where you could look through to view the monk’s sleeping cell beyond. On the north wall of the main chamber stands the shrine where a stone book rests. In front of the altar is the corpse of an acolyte.

“Oh, dear,” says Restov. “The invaders must have already been here. Let us hope they didn’t get the stone. Quickly, this way.”

Restov hurries up the altar beside the body of the acolyte. “It’s necessary to recite the words on the scroll to make the book open,” Restov says. “You’ll need to be in front of the altar when you recite the words.”

At this point, if anyone expresses suspicion toward Restov, that character can attempt a DC 10 Wisdom check to discern the false acolyte’s ploy.

**Acolyte’s Body:** Blood has begun to pool around the acolyte’s body. Restov killed the acolyte, from whom he learned about the scroll to open the stone book. Characters who inspect the body can make DC 10 Wisdom or Intelligence checks to learn any of the following details:

- ◆ The acolyte was recently killed, probably in the last fifteen minutes.
- ◆ The acolyte was likely stabbed with a dagger.
- ◆ The acolyte’s body looks as though it was searched.
- ◆ Several faint bloody footprints lead back toward the door into the shrine.

With a DC 15 Wisdom check, a character can either identify the footprint size as matching Restov’s, or can spot a dagger concealed on Restov.

**Scroll:** The scroll’s words are invisible to anyone intending to harm Candlekeep. As a result, Restov cannot read it. He waits, hoping that one of the characters will read it.

**Doors:** Five of the shrine’s sleeping cells (your choice which) hold mercenary **human warriors** that Restov has smuggled into Candlekeep. If the characters attempt to investigate these rooms before retrieving

### WRAPPING UP COMBAT

Depending on how the combat goes and whether you’re running out of time, you might have one or more of the mercenaries surrender or defect and join the heroes—particularly if Restov is dead or if the characters are willing to spare their lives or make a convincing offer of money (DC 15 Charisma check). If this happens, you can either play the role of the mercenary NPCs, or give the basic statistics (HP, AC, ability scores, and spear attacks) to an experienced player. The warriors can then accompany the characters into the final encounter.



the book, they find the doors locked (DC 10 Dexterity check to unlock; DC 15 Strength check to break open). If a door is opened, the mercenary within pretends to be a guard for the shrine. If the characters don't automatically suspect the guard, a successful DC 10 Wisdom check discerns the falsehood.

**Whenever a character recites the scroll, read:**

*A crease forms in the stone pages of the book, and with a shudder, it opens wide. Within the book is a small compartment containing the shield runestone, a walnut-sized, polished blue agate.*

*Restov snatches at the stone, attempting to scoop it up.*

Restov, if alive, immediately attempts to seize the shield runestone. If the character in front of the altar doesn't do anything, Restov automatically succeeds. Otherwise, he enters a Dexterity contest with that character. The winner takes the stone.

## Restov's Ambush

**If Restov has fooled the characters, read:**

*Restov dashes toward the door, nearly making in there. As he reaches the end of the hall, he shouts out. "Now! Kill them!"*

**If Restov's deception is revealed, read:**

*A sly grin plays across Restov's face. "I'm glad you came along. The writing on that scroll reveals itself only to a friend of Candlekeep."*

*"Now!" he calls, as the doors around you slam open, revealing leather-clad warriors each wielding two spears. "Asmodeus take you."*

Each of the mercenaries throws open a door (you choose which chambers they occupy). They do not gain surprise on the characters. On their turns, the five warriors throw spears and then move to protect Restov.

## Moving On

When the heroes complete this encounter, signal the First Reader.

## DARK ADEPT

Medium Humanoid (Human)

Armor Class 13 (leather)

Hit Points 22 (4d8 + 4)

Speed 25 ft.

Str 14 (+2)      Dex 14 (+2)      Con 13 (+1)

Int 10 (+0)      Wis 15 (+2)      Cha 10 (+0)

Alignment lawful evil

Languages Common

### ACTIONS

**Melee Attack—Dagger:** +4 to hit (reach 5 ft.; one creature). *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage.

**Ranged Attack—Sling:** +3 to hit (range 30 ft./120 ft.; one creature). *Hit:* 2 (1d4) bludgeoning damage.

**Spellcasting:** The dark adept casts one of the following spells. He can cast each spell once per day.

*Healing Word:* One living creature within 50 feet of Restov regains 6 (1d8 + 2) hit points. The dark adept can make a melee or a ranged attack as part of the same action.

*Inflict Wounds:* The dark adept chooses a living or an undead creature that it can see within 25 feet of it. If the creature is living, it must make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw. *Failed Save:* 13 (3d8) necrotic damage. *Successful Save:* Half damage.

## HUMAN WARRIOR (5)

Medium Humanoid (Human)

Armor Class 12 (leather)

Hit Points 11 (2d8 + 2)

Speed 30 ft.

Str 12 (+1)      Dex 12 (+1)      Con 12 (+1)

Int 10 (+0)      Wis 11 (+0)      Cha 10 (+0)

Alignment any

Languages Common

### ACTIONS

**Melee or Ranged Attack—Spear:** +2 to hit (reach 5 ft. or ranged 20 ft./60 ft.; one creature). *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) piercing damage.

**Disciplined:** The warrior chooses a creature within its reach. The next attack roll made against that target by a friendly creature that also has the disciplined action has advantage.

## Area 7. Library of Lost Titles

45 Minutes

### Read:

Following your acolyte companion, you make your way to the steep stairs granting entry to the Library of Lost Titles. As you pass into the first chamber, you see that the ward protecting the area has been deactivated. Scrolls and tomes that once lined the bookcases and shelves here have been strewn throughout the room as if hastily searched. A passageway leads deeper into the library, but a wall of darkness stands before you.

### Room 1

The adventurers enter room 1 from the east passageway. A dark acolyte of Asmodeus named Reena has placed a **wall of darkness** to the south to give pause to anyone searching the area. The wall blocks sight. A character can discern that the wall is harmless by touching it or with a DC 15 Intelligence check.

A search (DC 10 Intelligence) reveals the source of the wall to be a pebble enchanted by a shaped *darkness* spell. The stone can be picked up and moved. Once the dark acolyte is attacked, the effect ends.

### SEARCHING THE LIBRARY

The Library of Lost Titles is one of many locations around Candlekeep where monks store incomplete texts and scrolls. Characters who want to search the library find all manner of texts. A DC 10 Intelligence check reveals a tome of interest. Roll a d6 to determine which.

1. A fragment of a codex made of thin sheets of silver, stamped with Dwarven runes. It describes the techniques of master smith Gamdor Stronghammer.
2. A scroll containing a love poem from master moon elf poet Soldonus.
3. Fragments from a set of scrolls penned by a hobgoblin general named Krungoth Hapshor. These papers contain advice for winning military campaigns.
4. A moldering, leather-bound volume in which most of the writing has faded. It looks to have once been beautifully illustrated by a priest of Oghma, who documented descriptions of various angels and devils.
5. Half of a leather-bound volume that is the work of a gnome bard who traveled throughout Myth Drannor collecting songs.
6. An incomplete symphony composed by a musician named Heward who wrote it using a mystical organ. Supposedly the organ had at least a dozen keyboards and was large enough to fill a cathedral.

## Room 2 and 3

### If any character passes through the wall, read:

Another flight of stairs descends to a small landing, then splits to the north and west. Like the entry chamber, the rooms beyond are filled with shelves and bookcases holding a variety of tomes, scrolls, and other writings. Many of the shelves have been emptied, their contents discarded across the floor.

Each of the rooms at the bottom of the stairs contains five **goblins**. Spotting the goblins hiding in either room requires a DC 15 Wisdom check. Otherwise, the goblins attack with surprise when the characters enter a room.

**Bookshelves:** A creature can attempt to knock over a bookshelf with a DC 10 Strength check. Any creatures caught in a bookshelf's path must succeed on a DC 10 Dexterity check to avoid it. A bookshelf deals 1d6 bludgeoning damage and restrains the creature until it succeeds on a DC 10 Dexterity or Strength check to escape. Depending on which bookshelf is pushed, and the direction in which it's pushed, this action could cause a cascade of shelves falling across the room.

### Room 4

After defeating the goblins in room 2 or room 3, the characters can proceed to room 4.

### When the adventurers can see into this area, read:

This open room is featureless other than another corridor leading away, and a passageway blocked by a translucent magical field.

A human female in purple robes stares at a blue shield runestone in her blood-soaked hand. She stands before the magical field, beyond which are the faint figures of goblins.

She curses and glares at your interruption. "Kill them." Suddenly, from the other corridor, a group of six goblins rushes out to attack.

The remaining group of goblins attacks the party, protecting Reena (a **dark acolyte**) while she attempts to lower the ward. Each round on her turn, she can use an action to make a DC 10 Intelligence check. On her first two successful checks, two **goblins** rush in from the other side of the ward while it is briefly lowered. Ten goblins in total are hiding on the other side. If Reena makes three successful checks, the ward is destroyed and the remaining goblins join the fray.

**Capturing an Enemy:** If a player indicates that he or she wishes to knock out one of the foes in this encounter instead of killing it, that creature can be captured and questioned. If threatened, one of the goblins can reveal that the "purple robes" are searching for "a purple tube" (a scroll case). The goblins were offered shiny treasure in exchange for their aid, and are disgruntled at having only found "trash" so far. With a

## IF THE WARD IS LOWERED?

Reena is attempting to disable the wards to allow the forces of Valraun to breach Candlekeep from underground. One minute after completely lowering the ward, a squad of twenty hobgoblins reaches the area and will enter Candlekeep unless the ward is raised again. The characters can hear the hobgoblins' approach. If necessary, use the hobgoblin statistics block from Area 4.

If the ward falls, the monk accompanying the characters informs them that the *shield runestone* must be cleansed of its corruption. Washing the stone of the blood with water or using a spell such as *prestidigitation* purifies the stone enough that the ward is automatically reestablished. The runestone is a walnut-sized polished blue agate.

DC 15 Charisma check, a character might persuade a goblin to betray its allies. With a DC 20 Charisma check and sufficient incentive, a character could persuade multiple goblins to switch sides.

Reena reveals nothing unless a character succeeds on a DC 15 Charisma check to intimidate or persuade her into talking. She then reveals the information contained in the Background section (page 2) in exchange for her life. If all the enemies here are killed, the characters find a note to search for a scroll case that has the symbol of Asmodeus on it. The acolyte accompanying the characters has no insights into what this object might be, but First Reader Quinlapp knows. He can relate the details from the Background to the characters.

Initiative Tracker		
29		14
28		13
27		12
26		11
25		10
24		9
23		8
22		7
21		6
20		5
19		4
18		3
17		2
16		1
15		0

## Moving On

When the heroes complete this encounter, signal the First Reader.

### DARK ACOLYTE

**Medium Humanoid (Human)**

**Armor Class** 16 (ring mail, shield)

**Hit Points** 16 (3d8 + 3)

**Speed** 25 ft.

**Str** 12 (+1)      **Dex** 11 (+0)      **Con** 13 (+1)

**Int** 10 (+0)      **Wis** 15 (+2)      **Cha** 10 (+0)

**Alignment** lawful evil

**Languages** Common

#### ACTIONS

**Melee Attack—Mace:** +2 to hit (reach 5 ft.; one creature). **Hit:** 4 (1d6 + 1) bludgeoning damage.

**Ranged Attack—Sling:** +1 to hit (range 30 ft./120 ft.; one creature). **Hit:** 2 (1d4) bludgeoning damage.

**Spellcasting:** The dark acolyte can cast the following spell once per day.

**Inflct Wounds:** The dark acolyte chooses a living or an undead creature that she can see within 25 feet of her. If the creature is living, it must make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw. **Failed Save:** 13 (3d8) necrotic damage. **Successful Save:** Half damage.

### GOBLIN (10)

**Small Humanoid (Goblinoid)**

**Armor Class** 13 (leather, shield)

**Hit Points** 3 (1d6)

**Speed** 30 ft.

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft.

**Str** 8 (-1)      **Dex** 11 (+0)      **Con** 10 (+0)

**Int** 10 (+0)      **Wis** 9 (-1)      **Cha** 8 (-1)

**Alignment** neutral evil

**Languages** Common, Goblin

#### TRAITS

**Bushwhacker:** During the first round of combat, the goblin has advantage on attack rolls against any target that has a lower initiative.

**Sneaky:** The goblin can attempt to hide at the end of a move without using an action.

**Stealthy +5:** The goblin gains a +5 bonus to all ability checks to avoid detection.

#### ACTIONS

**Melee Attack—Mace:** +1 to hit (reach 5 ft.; one creature). **Hit:** 2 (1d6 - 1) bludgeoning damage (minimum 1 damage).

**Ranged Attack—Shortbow:** +2 to hit (range 80 ft./320 ft.; one creature). **Hit:** 3 (1d6) piercing damage.

## Area 8. Walls of Candlekeep

45 Minutes

### Read:

Your acolyte companion leads you across the courtyard and up a stairway to the walls of Candlekeep. At the top, the acolyte points down the ramparts, where you can see several grappling hooks clamped to the crenelation. Nearby are the hunched forms of several goblins and hobgoblins. They are focused on the dozens of humanoids amassed 60 feet down below, outside the wall.

On the wall are four **goblins** and two **hobgoblins**, which are distracted stabilizing four ropes to help their counterparts ascend the walls.

**Sneaking:** If the party attempts to sneak up on the monsters, each character must make a DC 10 Dexterity check. If at least half of the party succeeds (ties favor the players), the monsters are surprised.

**Reinforcements:** Unless characters make a point of looking down at the ropes attached to the grappling hooks, they won't see the approach of more forces until the start of the second round (count any surprise round as the first round).

## Battle on the Walls

### At the start of the second round, read:

*You hear a gruff voice calling out in Goblin from just over the wall, where one hobgoblin is climbing each of the ropes.*

If any character understands Goblin, he or she knows that the hobgoblin was calling out to its companions to hold the line steady. Until the characters remove all the hooks, monsters continue to scale the walls.

**Cutting the Lines:** As an action, a character with a slashing or piercing melee weapon can cut a line adjacent to him or her. Keep track of the destroyed line.

**Removing the Hook:** A character who succeeds on a DC 10 Strength check can remove one of the hooks and release it over the wall, causing anyone on the line to fall. Keep track of the removed hook.

### On the third round, if any lines remain, read:

*Hobgoblins emerge from the side of the wall, clawing their way onto the ramparts. They give you a nasty grimace and then attack.*

Add one **hobgoblin** for each line that wasn't removed.

## More Reinforcements

The characters may face another round of reinforcements, depending on whether they cut the lines or removed the grappling hooks, and how many lines they cut. **At the start of the fourth round, read the following depending on the circumstances.**

## INCOMING ARROWS!

At the start of the third round, the enemies might start attacking the characters with ranged attacks. Depending on how easy the players are finding the encounter, you can have the goblins down below begin to fire their shortbows at the characters. Rather than rolling a separate attack at disadvantage against each character, roll 1d20 against each character. On a 19 or 20, the character takes 1d6 + 1 piercing damage. Otherwise, an attack misses.

### If any lines remain, read:

*Goblins hop onto the lines down below and begin to nimbly climb up the remaining ropes, moving to reinforce their allies on the wall.*

### If the party removed (didn't cut) the lines, read

*You hear the scrape of metal on stone as several grappling hooks you previously removed clatter onto the wall behind you. Immediately, goblins begin scampering up the ropes.*

The characters have until the start of the sixth round to cut the remaining lines, or else one **goblin** arrives for each line that remains intact.

## Moving On

### When all the enemies are defeated, read:

*The battle done, the acolyte who brought you to the wall stares wide-eyed at the carnage, and then looks at you. "We're fortunate you were here to help repel the attackers. Now we must hurry back to First Reader Quinlapp on the Tower of the Crown. I've just heard that we're to raise the Great Shield. Follow me!"*

When the characters have completed this encounter, signal to the First Reader.

**GOBLIN (4+)**

**Small Humanoid (Goblinoid)**  
**Armor Class** 13 (leather, shield)  
**Hit Points** 3 (1d6)  
**Speed** 30 ft.  
**Senses** darkvision 60 ft.  
**Str** 8 (-1)      **Dex** 11 (+0)      **Con** 10 (+0)  
**Int** 10 (+0)      **Wis** 9 (-1)      **Cha** 8 (-1)  
**Alignment** neutral evil  
**Languages** Common, Goblin

**TRAITS**

**Bushwacker:** During the first round of combat, the goblin has advantage on attack rolls against any target that has a lower initiative.

**Sneaky:** The goblin can attempt to hide at the end of a move without using an action.

**Stealthy +5:** The goblin gains a +5 bonus to all ability checks to avoid detection.

**ACTIONS**

**Melee Attack—Mace:** +1 to hit (reach 5 ft.; one creature). **Hit:** 2 (1d6 - 1) bludgeoning damage (minimum 1 damage).

**Ranged Attack—Shortbow:** +2 to hit (range 80 ft./320 ft.; one creature). **Hit:** 3 (1d6) piercing damage.

**HOBGOBLIN (2+)**

**Medium Humanoid (Goblinoid)**  
**Armor Class** 14 (ring mail)  
**Hit Points** 11 (2d8 + 2)  
**Speed** 25 ft.  
**Senses** darkvision 60 ft.  
**Str** 11 (+0)      **Dex** 10 (+0)      **Con** 12 (+1)  
**Int** 10 (+0)      **Wis** 10 (+0)      **Cha** 13 (+1)  
**Alignment** lawful evil  
**Languages** Common, Goblin

**TRAITS**

**Steadfast:** The hobgoblin cannot be frightened while it can see a friendly creature within 30 feet of it that also has this trait.

**ACTIONS**

**Melee Attack—Longspear:** +2 to hit (reach 10 ft.; one creature). **Hit:** 4 (1d8) piercing damage.

**Ranged Attack—Shortbow:** +2 to hit (range 80 ft./320 ft.; one creature). **Hit:** 3 (1d6) piercing damage.

**Disciplined:** The hobgoblin chooses a creature within its reach. The next attack roll made against that target by a friendly creature that also has this trait has advantage.

Initiative Tracker			
29		14	
28		13	
27		12	
26		11	
25		10	
24		9	
23		8	
22		7	
21		6	
20		5	
19		4	
18		3	
17		2	
16		1	
15		0	

# FINAL CONFRONTATION

45 Minutes

For this encounter, refer to Area 9 on the map.

**When the first group in the pod finishes its task, the First Reader reads:**

*“Adventurers, hear me! This attack is more dangerous than we realized. Reports have confirmed that a Chosen of Asmodeus is here seeking to recover an item of great power—a spell scroll capable of bringing even the mightiest of individuals under Asmodeus’s will. We have only one choice: to raise the Great Shield and repel the attackers.*

*“Please, finish your tasks swiftly. I’m asking that groups of adventurers assemble on the nearby Tower of the Crown to protect the monks of Candlekeep, who will be configured across these towers to perform the ritual to raise the shield. They will be vulnerable and need protection.”*

**When your group starts this encounter, signal the First Reader, who reads:**

*“Thank you for meeting me in the Tower of the Crown. The news is troubling. Before I get to that, though, tell me how went your mission.”*

While the First Reader interacts with the party, you can read ahead.

**When the group finishes, the First Reader reads:**

*The First Reader gestures at a stone bridge magically suspended in midair. “This bridge will take you to one of the nearby towers, where you can help defend a monk performing the Great Shield ritual. The bridge can carry adventurers between towers. If you are in need of assistance, simply call out, and a hero from another tower can come to assist you—or perhaps you can assist one of them, if space permits.”*

*“Good luck, and thank you again for your help. Here are two healing potions to aid with your efforts.”*

Resume running the table. The characters can easily make their way to one of the towers in Area 9.

**Potion of Healing (Consumable):** You regain 2d4 + 2 hit points.

## Protecting the Towers

**When the adventurers arrive at the tower, read:**

*You file one at a time across the floating bridge to the top of the tower, where a monk greets you with a weary smile. “Your bravery today won’t go unrewarded. But now we must hurry.”*

*As you ready yourself, the monk on your tower grips one of the shield runestones required to raise the Great Shield. As the monk begins to chant, you see a shimmer of light overhead.*

*At that same time, dark clouds roll over Candlekeep, accompanied by thunder and a hot wind smelling of brimstone. The*

## THE MAGIC BRIDGE

The bridge allows transportation between the eight smaller towers, which are 20 feet from one another. The rules for using the floating stone bridge are below.

- ◆ Summoning the bridge and moving to another tower requires a character to use his or her action.
- ◆ The bridge moves only one adventurer per round.
- ◆ The bridge carries only one character at a time.
- ◆ A tower must have enough space. Each tower supports only as many heroes as there are chairs.
- ◆ A player rolls a new initiative when first joining a new group.

*sky fills with dark figures, two of which descend on you, scattering bones that assemble into skeletal humanoids.*

*The spined devils cackle gleefully and attack.*

Two **spined devils** land briefly on the tower and scatter bones that assemble into four **skeletons**. The spined devils then fly around and focus on the adventurers, while the skeletons attack the monk.

Each monk has AC 10, HP 30, speed 30 ft., Str 10 (+0), Dex 12 (+1), Con 12 (+1), Int 16 (+3), Wis 16 (+3), Cha 12 (+1). Healing magic or a *potion of healing* allows a wounded monk to regain hit points.

## Round 3

Signal the First Reader when your group enters round 3 of combat. That let’s the First Reader know that you’re ready to encounter the final threat.

**When the first group in the pod reaches round 3 of the Final Confrontation, the First Reader reads:**

*A cruel, booming laughter echoes across Candlekeep. “I am Valraun, Chosen of Asmodeus. You shall not deny my lord what is rightfully his.”*

*A moment later, those of you who can see the sky witness a huge blue dragon soar out of the clouds, lightning crackling from its mouth.*

*“I shall crush you one at a time,” it roars, bearing down on one of the towers.*

The First Reader places the blue dragon miniature to indicate the group confronting Valraun. The Reader supplies the dragon’s statistics and current hit points.

## Running Valraun

1. When Valraun first arrives, he clings to the top of the tower. Roll initiative for him.
2. Valraun’s lightning breath is not charged. At the start of his turn, roll to determine if it recharges. Valraun uses his lightning breath whenever it is available, and attempts to hit the monk performing the ritual, as well as multiple characters.

- If unable to use his breath, Valraun divides his multiattack across targets. He attempts to knock characters off the tower using his tail. A conscious creature knocked off is entitled to a DC 10 Strength saving throw to catch itself. A creature that falls takes 10d6 bludgeoning damage.
- At the end of Valraun's second turn, signal the First Reader, who will take him to another group. Valraun may leave earlier at the First Reader's discretion.

## Continuing the Battle

Until Valraun is defeated, enemies continue to arrive, and the devils and skeletons fight on. Walk through the following steps if the party defeats the monsters.

- The party enjoys a brief victory. Characters can freely use the magic bridge to visit other tables, and they can drink potions and cast spells. The monk continues performing the ritual.
- The party faces another wave of enemies (2 spined devil and 4 skeletons). These enemies attack in the same manner as the previous ones.
- If the characters defeat this wave, repeat these steps. In addition, Valraun might revisit a group at the DM and First Reader's discretion.

## Finishing the Battle

If your party defeats Valraun, inform the First Reader or announce it to the pod. At this, the devils flee and the skeletons collapse.

Report to the First Reader whether the monk on the tower survived or not. This helps determine how the battle concludes.

### SKELETON (4+)

Medium Undead

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 9 (2d8); see Traits below

Speed 30 ft.

Senses darkvision 60 ft.

Str 11 (+0)

Dex 14 (+2)

Con 10 (+0)

Int 6 (-2)

Wis 8 (-1)

Cha 3 (-4)

Alignment lawful evil

Languages understands Common

#### TRAITS

**Immunities:** The skeleton is immune to disease and poison. It cannot be charmed, frightened, or put to sleep. It does not need to sleep, eat, or breathe.

**Damage Resistance:** The skeleton is resistant to piercing damage.

**Vulnerability:** The skeleton is vulnerable to bludgeoning damage.

#### ACTIONS

**Melee Attack—Claws:** +2 to hit (reach 5 ft.; one creature). Hit: 4 (1d4 + 2) slashing damage.

### SPINED DEVIL (2+)

Small Fiend (Devil)

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 10 (3d6); see Traits below

Speed 20 ft., fly 30 ft.

Senses darkvision 100 ft.

Str 9 (-1)

Dex 15 (+2)

Con 10 (+0)

Int 11 (+0)

Wis 14 (+2)

Cha 8 (-1)

Alignment lawful evil

Languages Common, Infernal

#### TRAITS

**Immunity:** The spined devil is immune to fire.

**Damage Resistance:** The spined devil is resistant to cold and to nonmagical weapons except those made of silver.

**Swoop:** The spined devil doesn't provoke opportunity attacks when it flies out of a hostile creature's reach.

**Telepathy:** The spined devil can communicate telepathically with any creature within 100 feet of it that can understand a language.

#### ACTIONS

**Multiattack:** The spined devil makes one claws attack and one tined fork attack, or two spine attacks.

**Melee Attack—Claws:** +4 to hit (reach 5 ft.; one creature). Hit: 4 (1d4 + 2) slashing damage.

**Melee Attack—Tined Fork:** +4 to hit (reach 5 ft.; one creature). Hit: 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage.

**Ranged Attack—Spine:** +4 to hit (range 20 ft./80 ft.; one creature). Hit: 2 (1d4) piercing damage and 2 (1d4) fire damage. **Special:** The spined devil has twelve spines and regrows spines at the rate of one per hour.

Initiative Tracker			
29		14	
28		13	
27		12	
26		11	
25		10	
24		9	
23		8	
22		7	
21		6	
20		5	
19		4	
18		3	
17		2	
16		1	
15		0	

# CONCLUSION

For the Great Shield to be raised, at least half the monks atop the towers must survive across the pod when the two-hour play slot concludes.

## If the pod succeeds, the First Reader will read or summarize the following:

*From towers across Candlekeep, white beams of light rise into the sky, slowly converging to form a huge sphere that lowers toward you. As the energy hits, a force like a coursing wave from the Sea of Swords knocks you to the ground. The creatures who intended harm to Candlekeep recoil from the light. Those that don't flee are incinerated. Silence falls over the fortress. After a few seconds, a haggard but joyful cheer breaks out. Candlekeep is safe—for now.*

## WHAT IS THE SUNDERING?

The end of the Era of Upheaval is nigh!

The world of the Forgotten Realms has endured one catastrophe after another for the past century or so, from the Time of Troubles through the Spellplague. Time after time, upheaval has reshaped the pantheon, overthrown nations and rulers, and even altered the geography of the world. Now, the world is being shaken and reshaped once again—for the last time.

The gods are thrown into chaos at the promise of a new reckoning of the pantheon, and they scramble and grasp at power in hopes of cementing their positions of authority. Their mortal agents in the world, the Chosen, are charged with carrying out their will.

The Spellplague, the magical catastrophe that reshaped the world so dramatically, has come to an end. The Weave of magic is rewoven, and many lingering effects of twisted magic fade. The intermingling of worlds brought about by the Spellplague also comes to an end, as what belongs to Abeir returns to Abeir, leaving the Forgotten Realms looking much as it did before.

Partly driven by the activity of the gods' Chosen and partly arising from the turbulent political situation at the end of the Era of Upheaval, the nations and factions of Faerûn engage in their own maneuvers, manipulations, and acts of aggression. In particular, the empire of Netheril attempts to conquer the Dalelands, Cormyr, and Myth Drannor, setting off a war that engulfs the eastern Heartlands. The Harpers and the Zhentarim respond to the growing threats in the world by regrouping and refocusing their energies, slowly returning to their former prominence. Nations, geography, magic, and even the gods are changing forever, in the birth-pangs that herald a new creation. The world needs heroes to ensure that the new age dawns bright and full of hope, in a world where good still shines as a beacon against the darkness.

## If the pod fails, the First Reader will read or summarize the following:

*Although beams of white light rise from a few of Candlekeep's towers, the energy of the ritual dissipates too quickly. Your attempt to raise the Great Shield has failed. Voices shout, "Retreat!" You see monks streaming away from the walls and gates, chased by bloodthirsty devils and cackling cultists. You begin a fighting retreat, hoping that elsewhere in Candlekeep, other adventurers will succeed in raising the Great Shield and expelling the attackers.*

## Wrapping Up

Before the players leave, let them know about the following opportunities and outcomes.

**Replaying the Event:** This event has up to eight different scenarios. Players can participate in the event all weekend if they want to see what other scenarios are available.

**Running the Event:** If any players are interested in running this event, they can talk to the staff at the D&D headquarters booth. It's easy to DM and earns you some great D&D swag! Staff members are on hand to help if you're new to D&D Next.

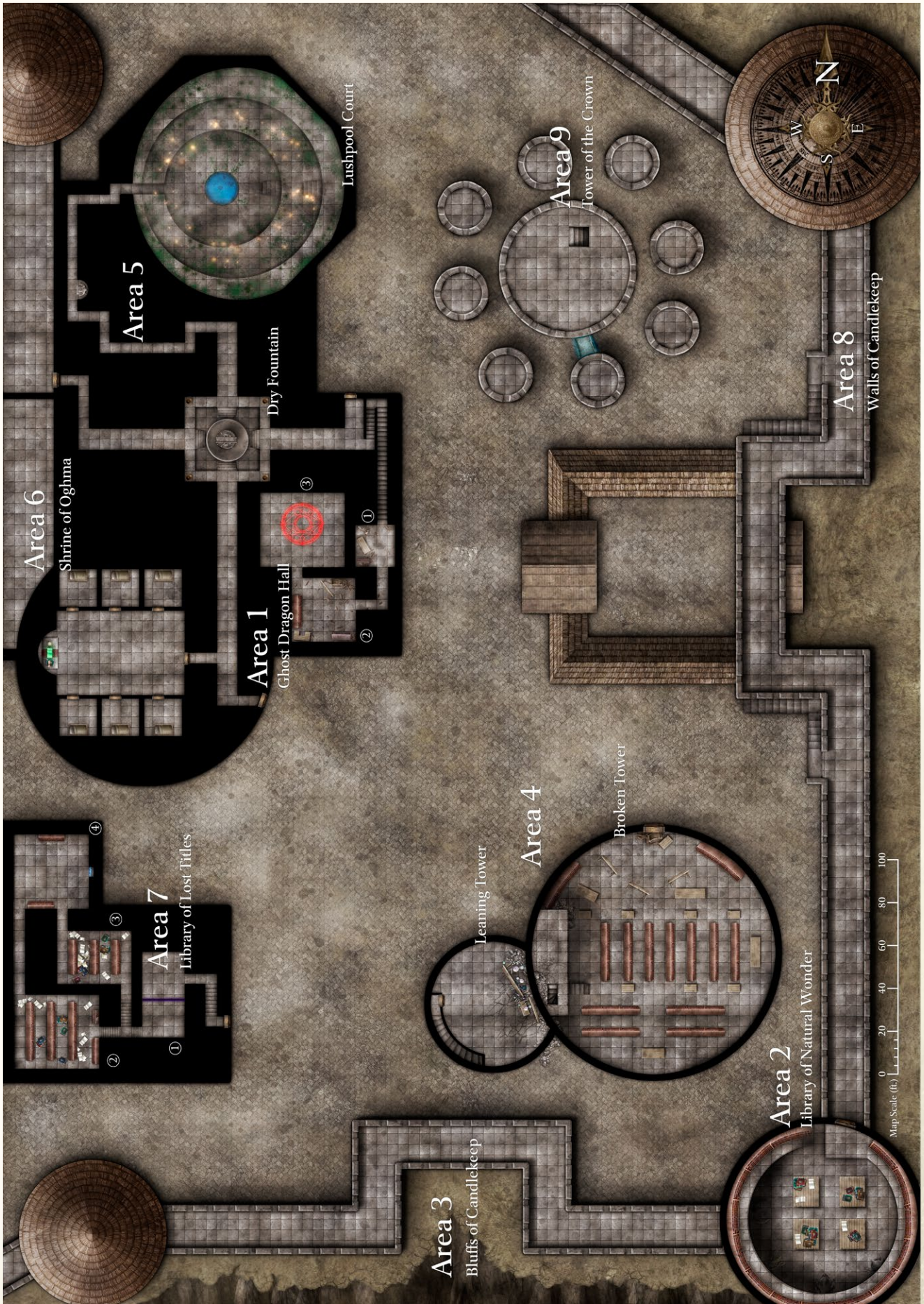
**Connection to *The Herald*:** The events of *Confrontation at Candlekeep* are connected to the Sundering (see the adjacent sidebar) and related to Ed Greenwood's 2014 novel, *The Herald*. The results of this adventure at Gen Con 2013 set the stage for Elminster's experiences in Candlekeep at the start of the novel.

**Feedback:** Players can send feedback about D&D Next or *Confrontation at Candlekeep* to [playtesting@wizards.com](mailto:playtesting@wizards.com).

## Playtesters!

Wizards of the Coast and the D&D R&D team appreciate the feedback of all the playtesters who helped make this adventure great, including Brent Allan, Paul Baalham, André Bégin, Greg Bilsland, Brad Bittner, Joe Boerjes, Alan Carlile, Bart Carroll, Jordan Comar, Bruce Cordell, Mélanie Côté, Barbara Cowman, Manon Crevier, James Duncan, Curt Duval, Laura Ely, Michael Fox, Jason Fuller, Jeffrey Fuller, Rich Green, Joe Gressis, Robert Gressis, Pete Griffiths, Sterling Hershey, Eric Hughey, Amanda Johnson, Jake Kiefer, James Kirtley, Yan Lacharité, Sean Lambert, Éric Leroux, Joseph Maranda, Matt Maranda, Vanessa Markland, Maitland McConnell, Kevin Mills, Logan Neufeld, Sam Orlando, Adam Page, Linda Pajaujis, Dan Pete, Mark Rousculp, Simon Sangster, Matt Sernett, Sam Simpson, Chris Sims, Scott Spatola, Robin Stacey, Stuart Tindall, Chris Tulach, Will Vaughan, Chris Wilkes, Steve Winter, Michael Yates, Robert Quillen II, and Jennifer Clarke Wilkes.







# ORGANIZER

## TROUBLESHOOTING

This event requires some choreography between the Gate Warden, the First Reader, and the Dungeon Master.

### Time

This event runs for two hours. Ideally, the first 15 minutes are spent getting acquainted with the characters and roleplaying the introduction. Then, a party can spend 45 minutes fulfilling its task. The remaining 45 minutes then goes into the Final Confrontation. However, not every group is going to proceed at the same pace.

Once the first group finishes its task and enters the Final Confrontation, the other groups will hear the announcement from the First Reader that urges them to hurry. Ideally, each group is participating in the Final Confrontation before any groups make it to round 3, when Valraun shows up. That way, each group has been briefed on the bridge and can aid other groups as necessary.

Throughout the event, keep an eye on groups' pacing. Don't let the fast groups jump right into the Final Confrontation if another group is particularly slow; give the players a short break to give the slower groups a chance to catch up. Once you're confident the slower groups are getting close to the final encounter, the faster groups can begin the Final Confrontation.

### Table Signals

You may find it very helpful to have some easy-to-handle, distinctive items that can serve as table signals to let the Dungeon Masters get the coordinator's attention. You can use flags, long sticks, or anything else that can serve. You could even use a prop such as a wand or a toy sword.

### Creating an Environment

Since each group of tables works together as a team, you might consider adding some elements to transport them away from their convention and into the adventure. Small, exotic-looking rocks could represent the *reader's runestones* or *shield runestones*. You could use small vials to represent the *potions of healing*. If you have a more sequestered space, you could even bring a soundtrack!

## Final Confrontation

Use the table below to track which groups succeeded or failed in protecting their monks in the Final Confrontation.

Pod Success		
Group Number	Success	Failure
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
10		

Use the table below to keep track of which groups Valraun has visited, and how many times he has visited those groups.

Groups Valraun Visits	
Group Number	Times Visited?
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	



Library of Lost Titles

A rectangular room with several long wooden tables and bookshelves. A purple bookshelf is visible in the center.

Shrine of Oghma

Ghost Dragon Hall

Dry Fountain

A complex structure with a large circular area at the top containing a shrine. Below it is a rectangular hall with a red circular symbol on the floor. To the right is a square area with a circular well.

Lushpool Court

A circular courtyard with a blue globe in the center, surrounded by a low wall and some greenery.

Bluffs of Candlekeep

A large, irregularly shaped area representing the cliffside of Candlekeep, with a stone wall bordering it.

Leaning Tower

Broken Tower

Two circular structures. The top one is a smaller tower with a leaning wall. The bottom one is a larger circular room with several long wooden tables.

A rectangular structure with a wooden door and a stone wall, possibly a gate or entrance.

Tower of the Crown

A large circular structure with a central tower and several smaller circular structures around it.

Library of Natural Wonder

A circular room with several wooden tables and bookshelves.

Library of Natural Wonder



Walls of Candlekeep

