

Halls of the Mountain-King

4th Edition
Adventure



Edited by
Scott Gable

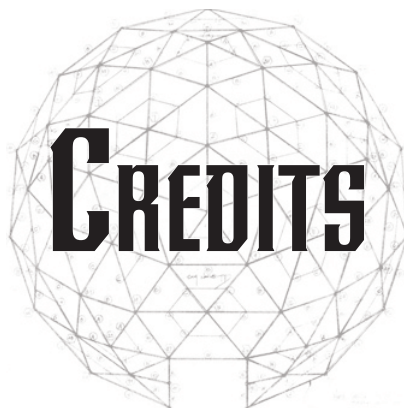
Levels 8-12

Halls of the Mountain-King



an adventure for character levels 8-12

BY WOLFGANG BAUR, TIM & EILEEN CONNORS, MICHAEL FURLANETTO,
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FOREWORD

You really have no sense of time underground.

As a kid, I went spelunking through part of Colorado's Cave of the Winds. I had a blast scrambling through the tunnels, squeezing through the small passages. One was called the Birth Canal, a tiny grime-caked fissure I wormed and twisted my way through, flashlight in hand. Always eager, I'd plunged in first and emerged from the other side to the sound of my chuckling friend—the guide had showed him a path involving none of the contortions I'd just suffered. Continuing, we marveled at the active formations, forgetting all about the untold tons of raw stone pressing in from every direction. In one instance, I squirreled down a narrow shaft headfirst to examine a crystal blossom forming in geologic slow motion. Giddy and thinking this was the best birthday party ever, I remember being coated in sticky mud before returning to the surface, squinting at the fading sun while wearing an enormous grin.

We spent the whole day in there, and I'd hardly realized it.

This project has a lot of parallels. We dove into the **HALLS OF THE MOUNTAIN KING** in the dark of winter, starting a new year with a new design. After being selected in the second round of adventure pitches, I eagerly started working on what would essentially consume the next year. I have to blink when I consider the investment—the deadline for the OGL manuscript was in April, and my wonderful wife, Mandy, was kind enough to let me finish my part while we vacationed in Myrtle Beach. With the first half kicked down the mineshaft to the editor, we started the conversion by the end of May. Each portion built upon the next, another cavern opening up as I clambered through the tunnels, making a change here, creating stat blocks there, and making sure things fit the new 4E paradigm. Before I knew it, GenCon arrived, and I had three playtest tables scheduled to run three different sections of the adventure, all of which I'd had some hand in writing or converting. By then, I could draw the maps by memory and jump straight to an encounter's page numbers.

HALLS OF THE MOUNTAIN KING also holds a particular personal triumph—we managed to get the **DWARVES OF THE IRONCRAGS** cover illustrated by David Wenzel, a feature that I lobbied for and the patrons made possible. Mr. Wenzel's **KINGDOM OF THE DWARVES** inspired me as a kid, becoming a fantastic, unforgettable influence burnt into my imagination. Sure, everyone knows of Moria, but I humbly suggest you consider taking a trip into that hidden warren of Aegol Barrow, lost in the English countryside since 1980. I'm glad I did, and hopefully, you get some sense of its impact as you enter the hearthforges and ventshafts, torch held high.

Overall, **HALLS OF THE MOUNTAIN KING** turned into another spelunking party of sorts. I had a blast crafting the dark spaces, the elegant galleries and the quirky characters alongside both the patrons and my fellow authors. I sincerely hope you enjoy this project for many entertaining hours, surrounded by friends; I know I already have. I'm thankful for the priceless education, and it's an opportunity I'd seize again without hesitation. We managed to squeeze our way past the deadlines and after what turned out to be months later, emerged with the triumph you now hold—coated in the ink of conversions and playtests, all while wearing enormous grins.

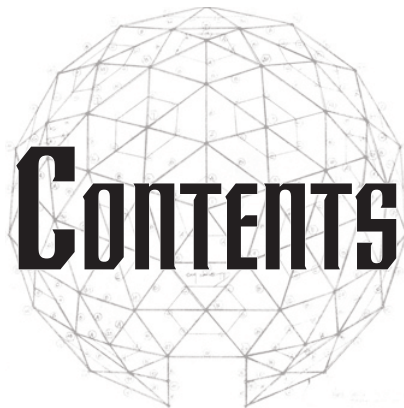
I spent the whole year in the **HALLS OF THE MOUNTAIN KING**, and I've hardly realized it.

Thanks for throwing the party,

Ben McFarland

November 28, 2009





Rise and Fall of the Golden Citadel

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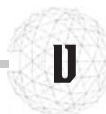
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Rise and Fall of the Golden Citadel

BY WOLFGANG BAUR & BRANDON HODGE

Long centuries ago, the dwarves of the **I**roncrags found a rich vein of gold on a mountain they called **R**yggar, or "the high pass." **T**hey mined the veins and grew rich, building a vast set of mines, lookout posts, fortifications, and halls great enough to house a kingdom.

The Golden Age

Of all the dwarven cantons, the Golden Citadel prospered and grew fastest. The dwarves carved the runes of the Law on the pillars at the gates, they buried their dead in the vast deeps, honed their skills in working metal and stone, and in thanks gave offerings to the Spirit of the Mountain. All was well. For a time.

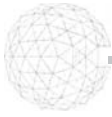
The Coming of Mammon

As these riches flowed down from the Golden Citadel and into the surrounding lands, the arch-devil Mammon took notice. In jealousy, he corrupted the orichalcum of the citadel to carry a disease of greed and avarice to those possessing the ore. In this way, Mammon hoped his corruptive taint could spread throughout the lands below the Ironcrags. In response, the slumbering Spirit of the Mountain awoke. To counter Mammon's plot, the spirit drew the curse into itself and called out to those who dwelled within. Its deep voice resonated through the stone in warning, even as dwarven priests received strange auguries from Grajava, the Shield Maiden of Volund and patroness of Rygar.

The Birth of the Brotherhood

Few dwarves could discern the voice of the mountain arising from the depths and the warning cries from on high, but a small group of wizards and priests of rare sensitivity heard the distant calls above the din of clanging hammers and bellowing forges in the halls of the Golden Citadel. Those mystics able to detect the resonance of the mountain and the prophecies of Grajava answered the voices and heeded their warnings. The king convened the seers as a special secret council, which commissioned the famed dwarven engineer Bartholomeus Lodoviceus to create an artifact, the Golden Bowl, that would enable them to more clearly hear the Spirit of the Mountain.

Once they established communication, the message from the Spirit of the Mountain's and Volund's emissaries was clear: the dwarves must cease mining the corrupted orichalcum that had brought so many fabulous riches to their people. Knowing their dwarven brothers would never willingly stop the extraction of the tainted ore, and with the corruption of greed beginning to swell in the hearts of their brethren, the seers used their influence over their people to lead miners away from the richest veins of orichalcum, while they bargained with the gold dragon Satarel to take custody of all the corrupt ore they could gather and protect it far away



in her secluded hoard. Within a few short years, the wealth and prestige of the Golden Citadel began to wither.

Even as the citadel's fortunes waned, these new leaders among the dwarven people became unparalleled masters of their crafts, and took on apprentices and students. Guided by the Angels of Volund, and convinced that the morals and parables learned by all dwarves at work in the forge were the purest tenets by which dwarves could live, the seers soon rose in prominence and prestige while their followers founded a brotherhood seeking enlightenment and illumination from the founding masters. The group met regularly in assemblies called lodges, adding quasi-religious rituals and rites to its proceedings and initiations. Later masters began to call the founding mystics "the Old Masters."

The Fall of the Golden Citadel

This new Illuminated Brotherhood successfully halted the spread of the corrupted gold, although the once-rich halls of the Golden Citadel now stood largely empty, with the exception of the aging Old Masters, their followers, and desperate dwarven prospectors. The call of the corrupted ore was great, however, and soon miners discovered previously disguised veins of ore and greedily dug them from the mountain.

As word of the renewed riches spread, great hordes of dwarves descended upon the quiet halls, refusing to heed the authority of the Old Masters. With the threat of more orichalcum too great, the masters made the fateful decision to bar the gates and close off the lower mines from all intrusion. The masters gave warning, even as Bartholomeus crafted the impenetrable gates that would seal the Great Stair and lower holds. Those already fallen prey to avarice did not heed the warnings, and so their doom was sealed. In a great ceremony, the Old Masters used a powerful ritual of flaming stone pillars, books of arcane formulas, and golden sacrifices to forever lock the clockwork gates.

When the dwarves' diseased, tainted cousins dug their way to the surface, the Illuminated Brotherhood slew them in great numbers, or sent Satarel to drive them back below the earth. In time, the fallen brethren of the dwarves no longer cared to seek the light, but lived only among the bones of the earth, nursing their hate and following the call of strange gods toward madness.

The Angel of Grajava

To prevent further bloodshed, Grajava herself offered a relic—a teardrop-shaped gem—that would purge the taint of Mammon from the mountain if sacrificed. The slaughter already finished and the guilt of the act weighing heavily on the Old Masters, they chose to preserve the gem against future need. They feared that history might repeat these unfortunate events. They placed the holy relic in a sacred shrine christened the Eye of Grajava and set guardians provided by the Spirit of the Mountain. To prevent Mammonites from stealing the Teardrop, the Old Masters devised chambers of tests, known as the Sanctum of Assaying, to protect the Eye.

By then, the Old Masters were infirm, and their followers sought to preserve them. Again the brotherhood called on the master craftsman Bartholomeus. He crafted a set of six clockwork bodies to house the departing souls of the Old Masters so they might escape the mantle of death. Volund guided their souls into these new bodies, and each clockwork creation held the physical incarnation of a secret of the Brotherhood, so a record of the society's most precious secrets might always exist.

As centuries passed, the Illuminated Brotherhood fashioned the mountain into a reflection of their moral code and values, while protecting the shameful secrets of their history with degrees of revelation in their society. Small groups were eventually established in other dwarven communities, spreading their crafts and values while at the same time gathering any corrupt ore that managed to previously make its way into the larger world.

The Old Masters succumbed to senility as the ages passed, and all but one were locked away by a new order of Silent Masters who took on their previous roles. The symbols of their great crime against their dwarven brethren eventually formed the foundation of the esoteric symbolism of the Illuminated Brotherhood, though only those of the highest degree of illumination became aware of their true meaning.

Eventually, the Golden Citadel was abandoned.

The Paladin of Khors

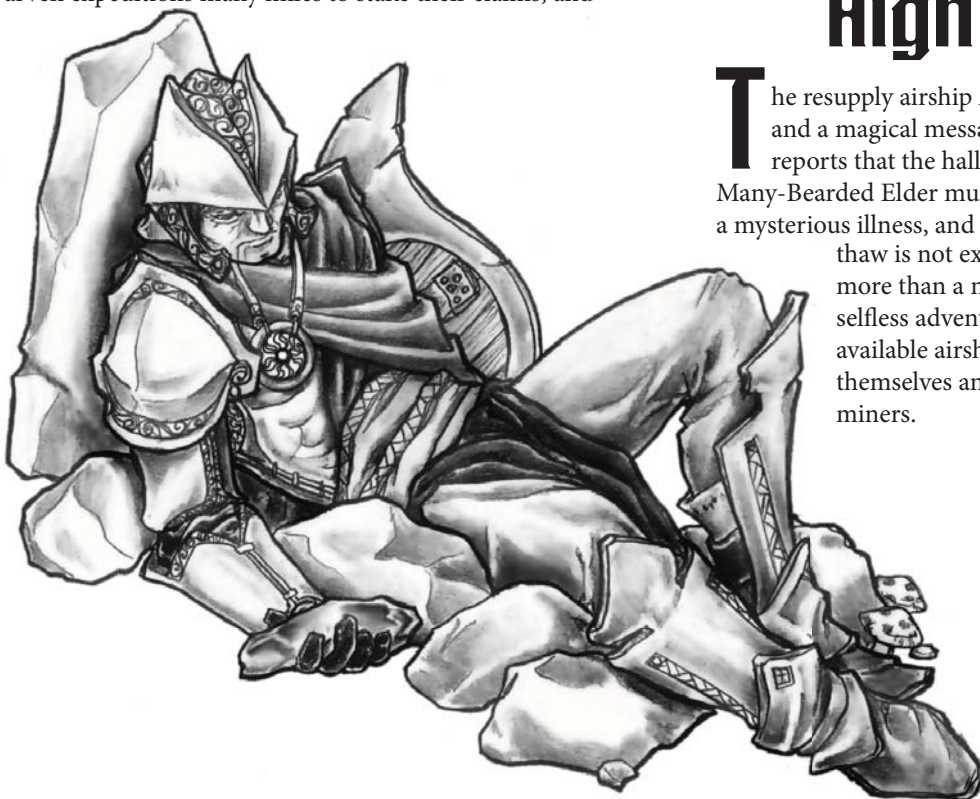
One day, about a year ago, a human paladin of Khors returned to Zobeck. His warhorse was dead, his fingers frostbitten, and his eyes haunted by the loss of all his companions. In one hand, he clutched the straps of a bridle. In the other, he held a nugget of gold as big as his fist.

The paladin, Sir Ronceval by name, gave the gold to the Order of Undying Light for the relief of the poor, so prayers might be said for his fallen companions. The story came out slowly: he and his allies went to investigate an abandoned dwarven citadel perched atop a smoldering caldera, and there he found the nugget.

Perhaps, thought people, gold returned to that once-rich mine or, better still, the paladin discovered a new mother lode. And was not Khors the son of Volund? Surely this was an omen from the divine.

The Gold Rush

The rush to the Ironcrag was on, led first and foremost by the Many-Bearded Elder Madka Podpora, the high priestess of Volund in Zobeck. Donkey trains led dwarven expeditions many miles to stake their claims, and



along with them came secret members and elders of the Illuminated Brotherhood. They did not go alone: hundreds of human miners and entire kobold mining gangs put their picks into oxcarts and set off for the western ranges.

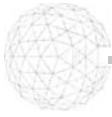
They were not disappointed. Word filtered back of great volumes of gold, and the first shipment arrived at midsummer. The Golden Citadel would be restored! The Many-Bearded Elder declared the dwarven claim to its gold was secure and warned others not to trespass on their ancient privileges.

And yet, the lust for gold drove hundreds, perhaps even thousands, into the mountains. Merchants sent food and supplies after them, until the harvest season, when the first great storm blew in and snowed in the passes. Later travelers reported bitter cold and snows deeper than a man on horseback could ride through.

Since then, communication became sporadic, as a few daredevil airship captains braved the winter weather and mountain winds to bring news down and supplies up. Some miners starved, they say. Others report dangers on the roads and along the ridges: Ogres, bandits, werebears, and even ghouls and wights are said to rob or murder travelers on the road. Some consider these a traveler's tall tales, but just the same, no sane man travels the Ironcrag passes until summer.

Winter in the High Passes

The resupply airship *Drake* is several weeks overdue and a magical message from the trapped inhabitants reports that the halls have turned dangerous: the Many-Bearded Elder murdered, dozens inflicted with a mysterious illness, and hundreds starving. The spring thaw is not expected for weeks, possibly more than a month, but a small group of selfless adventurers might take one of the last available airships to see the Golden Citadel for themselves and aid the trapped and desperate miners.



Major NPCs and Groups

The PCs can meet, interact with, and aid the various groups fighting in a dwarven mountain citadel to possess, amass, abandon, or cleanse devil-corrupted gold.

THE SPIRIT OF THE MOUNTAIN

Description: A faceless spirit that possesses and inhabits the mountain. Had an affinity for the dwarves who long ago gave it thanks for all the mountain provided them.

Goal: To contain the gold, even at the cost of lives. While it thinks of itself as a benevolent force saving the world from the taint, the Spirit of the Mountain is actually now a corrupted spirit who wants the gold for itself.

ILLUMINATED BROTHERS

Description: Dwarven Freemason types who know the corrupted gold exists, and whose forefathers purposely guided the dwarves away from the richest (corrupted) vein and sealed diehard dwarven miners (the “forsaken”) in the mountain.

Goal: To cause everyone to abandon the gold, even at the cost of lives, because they know the effect the gold’s corruption would have on the world and to stop the Mammonites from ushering into the world an aspect of Mammon.

THE FORSAKEN

Description: Originally dwarves who the Illuminated Brothers sealed in the mountain years ago. As a result, they are degenerate and insane. Also known as the derro.

Goal: To kill dwarves and generally follow insane paths.

MINERS

Description: Human, dwarf, and kobold gold rushers and their suppliers trapped in the mountain by a winter storm.

Goal: To escape the mountain and, preferably, take the gold with them.

MAMMONITES

Description: Agents of Mammon.

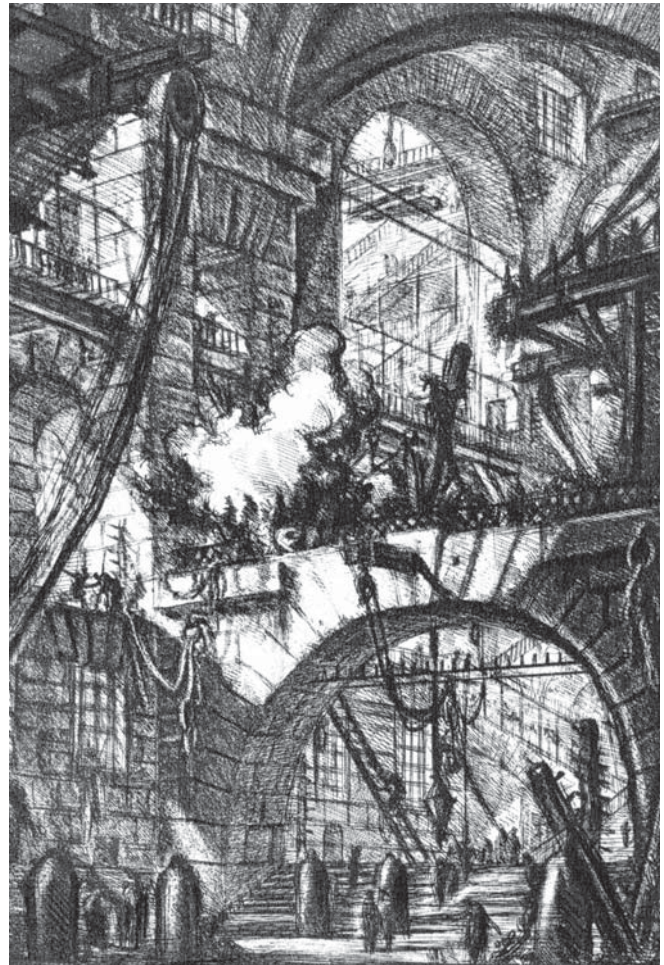
Goal: To amass the gold into a pile big enough to usher into the world an aspect of Mammon.

THE GOLD DRAGON

Description: Satarel the gold dragon long ago helped the Illuminated Brotherhood seal the derro in the mountain. She guarded an off-site pile of corrupted gold for ages, but she recently handed off the responsibility to her daughter, Bragollach. Bragollach is not corrupted but is very tempted and, by this point, very greedy.

Goal: Find out about more gold in the mountain. Initially, inner struggle to either destroy or cleanse the remaining gold or possess the gold to “guard it as well.”

After Mammonites pour molten corruption down Bragollach’s throat, her goal becomes the same as the Mammonites: to fetch her treasure and amass all the gold into a pile big enough to usher into the world an aspect of Mammon.



DARK WAS THE NIGHT, COLD WAS THE GROUND

A PERILOUS JOURNEY FOR FOUR 8TH-LEVEL CHARACTERS

BY BRANDON HODGE AND BEN MCFARLAND

WITH ANDRE ARAUJO, RICHARD GREEN, SCOTT HALL, AND BRETT MCLEAN

WEALTH, LIKE WITHERING FRUIT, BECAME WORTHLESS WHEN THERE WAS NOTHING LEFT ON WHICH TO SPEND IT. ONLY WITH THE ONSET OF WINTER DID WE REALIZE THAT GOLD—THOUGH WE MINED MORE THAN WE COULD CARRY—COULD NOT BE EATEN...

—from the journal of Jeraldi Hamhock, Ironcrag survivor

Background

Nearly 2 weeks ago, Albricius Everart returned to the Free City of Zobeck from the ruins of the Golden Citadel, high in the Ironcrag Peaks.

While harbored at the citadel during the onset of a cruel winter, Albricius uncovered two ancient pillars in the secret storeroom of a dwarf inventor, containing the ancient schematics for the creation of a remarkable being. The designs depicted a clockwork body, constructed ages ago to house the soul of a dying founder of a secret dwarven society known as the Illuminated Brotherhood. (Albricius knows the brotherhood all too well; he is a devoted servant in the cult of the archdevil Mammon that is slowly taking control of the dwarven fortress, and the brotherhood is his enemy.)

Incorporating ancient and cryptic knowledge into the gears and carapace of the clockwork, the schematics were too tempting for the greedy Mammonite. Most importantly, Albricius recognized the designs chiseled into the marble of the pillar as being the basis for a famous clockwork dwarf of Zobeck, known as Rabscuttle.

Desperate to return to the free city and possess the secrets of the clockwork body, Albricius booked passage aboard the supply airship *Drake* with two sympathetic Mammonites. During the journey, the cultists discovered the ship carried a heavy cargo of orichalcum, a corrupted gold ore precious to their unholy deity. The three conspired together to poison the crew, so the cargo could be returned to their peers in the Golden Citadel. After this foul deed was accomplished, Albricius reconsidered sharing either success or the secrets he carried, so he murdered his collaborators before returning to civilization.

Albricius has spent the last several days locating and trailing Rabscuttle, who works for the Splitrock Company. The doddering old gearforged is a fixture of the Gear District, running errands and delivering improper invoices for as long as anyone can remember. Albricius trapped the gearforged in the dark, frozen streets of Zobeck. With the assistance of several hired cultists, he will pry loose the secrets concealed within the gears and pulleys of Rabscuttle.

The PCs become involved just as the cultists begin their grisly work.

Summary

In Zobeck, the characters rescue the gilded gearforged Rabscuttle from a group of Mammonite cultists. The rescue leads his grateful company to hire the adventurers to take supplies to the struggling Golden Citadel via airship. On the journey to the citadel, several encounters raise suspicions that someone is sabotaging the resupply mission. The PCs investigate the wreck of a gold-laden airship with a murdered crew, and a dwarf crewmember tries to sabotage their ship before they can arrive at their destination. Clues begin to point to occult conspiracies between a group of Mammon worshipers and an opposed fraternity of dwarven craftsmen.

The crew shows signs of illness similar to those found on the bodies of the derelict vessel. Feverish, confused, and beset by giants, the crew crashes the wounded airship at the gates of the Golden Citadel. The PCs enter the fortress and find a large population of starving, sick, and freezing refugees splintered into many opposed camps and factions.

As the PCs and the survivors of the crash debate ways to abandon the peak, a crewmember goes missing and a set of sealed clockwork gates to the lower hold are destroyed. The PCs investigate and find a bizarre, ritualistic murder scene and evidence that the perpetrator was their sick shipmate, in the form of a golden wyrm. As the mystery deepens, a raiding party of stunted, mutated dwarves swarms out of the sundered gates, attacking the PCs in a mad fury. This threat from below is momentarily deterred, but the surviving refugees need healing, food, and warmth. Larger dangers loom in the dark halls beneath.

PART I:

Not a Servant So Faithful He Found

HALLS OF THE MOUNTAIN KING begins on the frozen streets of Zobeck during a harsh winter that has shut down commerce and forced the citizenry to eke out a miserably cold existence. The PCs roam the dark, iced-over streets of nighttime Zobeck seeking warm fires and shelter from the incessant, driving sleet. The PCs then stumble into an unpredictable chain of events.

Rumors and stories of the recent gold rush have spread quickly through the city's taverns and bars. Whether characters are just arriving in town or have been here for some time, allow them to catch up with recent events.



TABLE 1-1: STREETWISE

DC	Result
14	Ever since Sir Ronceval returned to Zobeck clutching a king's ransom in one fistful of gold, settlers have been pouring into the Ironcrag from the city, trying to strike it rich quick. Before the winter storms blew in, many miners returned with pockets laden with gold. Many more did not return, and dark rumors hint of the desperate measures those trapped in the Ironcrag take to survive: murder, deceit, and even cannibalism.
19	The only way to bring aid to the stranded refugees is by airship, and the news from the survivors was positive until the <i>Drake</i> failed to return several weeks ago. Another desperate expedition is being mounted, but hopes are not high. As difficult as it is to stay warm and find food in the city during this horrendous winter, many citizens of Zobeck have already assumed their relatives and loved ones trapped in the mountains are dead. Others cling to hope, knowing the Golden Citadel might provide refuge.
24	Many merchants of Zobeck have reported delirious, feverish customers are attacking peddlers and shopkeepers in the marketplaces in disputes over refunds for wildly outrageous claims, demanding their money back. Merchants say that some longtime loyal customers are the culprits, many of whom recently returned from the Ironcrag with more wealth than they could ever hope to spend. Some call it a plague of avarice.

ALARM IN THE DEAD OF NIGHT

As the PCs trudge through the dark streets, emphasize the miserable weather conditions and seeping, frozen rains. Read or paraphrase the following:

Through the penetrating cold and driving, frozen sleet, a deep hum resonates briefly along the dimly lit, empty street. The droning rises in a quick crescendo and climaxes in a low, muted implosion. From an alley ahead, a grating, metallic cacophony erupts, like some metallic voice screeching in terrible pain, while several rough voices shout out, punctuated by dull, repetitive thuds.

A DC 20 Perception check reveals several golden gears scattered at the entrance to an alley nearby. A few moments later, the air is pierced with more sounds of violent struggle and strange metallic cries pleading for help.

When the PCs investigate, they see three hooded men assaulting a battered, immobile clockwork construct of rich gilding and antique design. Wielding stiff iron bars and wearing leering, distorted copper masks, they are prying and tearing the dwarf-like creature apart, scattering golden gears and flywheels. One of the men illuminates the scene with a

dim lantern and sputters croaking commands to the others between bouts of coughing. The hooded figures continue tearing and ripping at the helpless gearforged, who screams in great, agonizing wails.

The abduction takes place near the far end of a dead-end alley 15 ft. wide and 60 ft. deep, abutted by shuttered, empty shops and homes. One cultist stands 25 ft. from the back, between the approaching characters and the struggle. Unless the PCs attempt to quiet their actions, the cultists turn to protect their prize. The intervening cultist shines his bullseye lantern at the approaching PCs. If the party is not carrying a light source, they suffer blinding disorientation. The area behind the cultist is plunged into darkness while he gives the interlopers a single warning as the others prepare to attack.

BLINDING DISORIENTATION

+5 vs. Fortitude

Hit Target is dazed (save ends)

ENVIRONMENT

The alley is choked with trash and slick with ice; it is considered difficult terrain. It is sleeting. The cultist's bullseye lantern has a 25% chance of being extinguished each round, plunging the alley into darkness if no other light source exists.

10TH LEVEL ENCOUNTER

- 4 PCs (2,050 XP) • 2 cultist thugs of mammon, 1 strongarm cultist, 1 cult warlock, 1 cult leader, 1 spined devil
- 5 PCs (2,500 XP) • 4 cultist thugs of mammon, 1 strongarm cultist, 1 cult warlock, 1 cult leader
- 6 PCs (3,000 XP) • 4 cultist thugs of mammon, 1 strongarm cultist, 1 cult warlock, 1 cult leader, 2 spined devils

COPPER MASKED CULT LEADER LEVEL 10 CONTROLLER (LEADER)

MEDIUM NATURAL HUMANOID (HUMAN) XP 500

Initiative +6 **Senses Perception** +8

hp 92 **Bloodied** 46

AC 25 **Fortitude** 23 **Reflex** 21 **Will** 24

Speed 5

[mba] **Flail** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

+14 vs. AC; 1d10 + 12 damage

[rba] **Brimstone Blast** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Divine, Fire, Implement**

Ranged 5; +11 vs. Ref; 1d6 + 6 fire damage

[c] **Healing Word** (minor; twice per encounter) ♦ **Divine, Healing**

Close burst 10 (cleric class feature; see PHB page 62)

[r] **Command** (standard; encounter) ♦ **Charm, Divine, Implement**

Ranged 10, +12 vs. Will (level 3 cleric power; see PHB page 65)

[r] **Goldtempt** (standard; encounter) ♦ **Conjuration, Divine, Illusion, Implement**

Ranged 10; the cult leader conjures an illusory pile of glittering treasure in an unoccupied square within range that lasts until the end of the cultist's next turn; if an enemy begins its turn within 3 squares of the "treasure," the cult leader makes the following attack

Attack +10 vs. Will

Effect The target is pulled 3 squares toward the treasure and is stunned until the end of the cultist's next turn.

Alignment evil **Languages** Common, Dwarven

Skills Insight +23, Religion +20

Str 19 (+9) **Dex** 13 (+6) **Wis** 19 (+8)

Con 12 (+6) **Int** 11 (+5) **Cha** 14 (+7)

Equipment +1 copper coin of the miser (see page 9), boots of equilibrium (see ADVENTURER'S VAULT page 126), chainmail, copper mask of Mammon, flail, holy symbol of Mammon, *potion of healing*



CULTIST THUG OF MAMMON
LEVEL 8 SKIRMISHER

MEDIUM NATURAL HUMANOID (HUMAN) XP 350

Initiative +10 Senses Perception +6

hp 84 Bloodied 42

AC 22 Fortitude 21 Reflex 20 Will 19

Speed 5

[mba] Rapier (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon

+13 vs. AC; 2d6 + 5 damage

[rba] Poisoned Dart (standard; at-will) ♦ Poison, Weapon

Ranged 6/12; +13 vs. AC; 1d4 + 14 damage, and the cultist makes a secondary attack

Secondary Attack +13 vs Fortitude; the target suffers the effects of drow poison (see DMG page 51)

[m] Blinding Thrust (standard; encounter) ♦ Weapon

+11 vs. Fort; 3d6 + 5 damage, and target is blinded until the end of cultist's next turn

[m] Deft Strike (standard; at-will) ♦ Martial, Weapon

+13 vs. AC; 2d6 + 5 damage (level 1 rogue power; see PHB page 118)

Deceitful

The cultist is able to strike for an extra +2d6 damage if it has combat advantage over an opponent

Alignment evil **Languages** Common, Dwarven**Skills** Acrobatics +18, Religion +16**Str** 20 (+9) **Dex** 18 (+8) **Wis** 14 (+6)**Con** 12 (+5) **Int** 13 (+5) **Cha** 8 (+3)**Equipment** +1 copper coin of the miser (see page 9), chainmail, copper mask of Mammon, drow poison (1 vial), iron crowbar, poisoned darts (12), *potion of healing*, rapier**TIEFLING CULT WARLOCK**
LEVEL 7 ARTILLERY

MEDIUM NATURAL HUMANOID (TIEFLING) XP 300

Initiative +4 Senses Perception +8

hp 97 Bloodied 48

AC 19 Fortitude 17 Reflex 18 Will 19

Speed 6

[mba] Dagger (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon

+10 vs. AC; 1d4 + 5 damage

[rba] Hellfire Blast (standard; at-will) ♦ Arcane, Fire, Implement

Ranged 10, +8 vs. Reflex; 2d6 + 5 fire damage

[r] Pacify the Gullible (standard; encounter) ♦ Arcane, Charm

Ranged 5, +8 vs. Will; target willingly surrenders held weapon or implement, tossing it into a square adjacent to the warlock.

Warlock's Curse (minor; at-will)

+1d6 damage (warlock class feature; see PHB page 131)

Wings of the Diabolist

When an enemy under your Warlock's Curse is reduced to 0 hp, the cultist can immediately fly 6 squares as a free action.

Alignment evil **Languages** Common, Supernal**Skills** Arcana +10, Religion +10**Str** 12 (+4) **Dex** 12 (+4) **Wis** 11 (+3)**Con** 13 (+4) **Int** 14 (+5) **Cha** 16 (+6)**Equipment** copper mask of Mammon, nasty-looking curved dagger, red leather armor, iron rod**STRONGARM CULTIST OF MAMMON**
LEVEL 7 BRUTE

MEDIUM NATURAL HUMANOID (HUMAN) XP 300

Initiative +6 Senses Perception +5

hp 92 Bloodied 46

AC 21 Fortitude 20 Reflex 19 Will 18

Speed 5

[mba] Flail (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon

+10 vs. AC; 2d8 + 5 damage

[r] Armor of Temptation (standard; encounter) ♦ Charm, Weapon

Ranged 3; +8 vs. Will; The cultist causes his scale armor to glow with a beautiful golden radiance, filling the target's heart with greed; the target is pulled to the nearest unoccupied space adjacent to the cultist and suffers 4d8 + 5 damage.

Deceitful

The cultist is able to strike for an extra +2d6 damage if it has combat advantage over an opponent.

Alignment evil **Languages** Common, Dwarven**Skills** Endurance +9, Religion +10**Str** 19 (+7) **Dex** 16 (+6) **Wis** 14 (+5)**Con** 12 (+4) **Int** 13 (+4) **Cha** 8 (+2)**Equipment** copper mask of Mammon, flail, iron crowbar, scale mail**SPINED DEVIL**

(See MM page 66)

TACTICS

During Combat As the PCs approach, the cultists abandon Rabscuttle and turn their efforts toward the characters, concentrating on disabling and hindering the party by using *goldtempt*, *pacify the gullible*, *poisoned dart*, and the charm power of the copper coins of the miser.

The copper masked leader stays back, using *command* and *brimstone blast* to attack and *healing word* to support the two thugs and the strongarm cultist. The tiefling warlock also keeps his distance, cursing a PC each round and letting rip with *hellfire blast*. The devils gleefully move to the opposite edges of the alley, flinging spines at the adventurers.

The two cultist thugs will enter melee, relying on their superior Acrobatics to remain on their feet in the slippery alleyway. They use *blinding thrust* and attempt to get into flanking positions to do more damage to the PCs using combat advantage. The strongarm cultist is more likely to fall over when he moves, so he attempts to lure a weak-looking PC within striking distance of his flail with *armor of temptation*.

Morale Cornered, the cultists fight as they must but flee if they can.

TREASURE

In addition to their gear, the two cultist thugs have bags containing 100 gp, protected by a glyph of warding (trap) (see DMG page 90). The leader has a *bag of holding* containing 500 gp.

DEVELOPMENT

If interrogated, the cultists reveal only that they were hired by a man named Albricius to abduct the gearforged for his golden plates, and they know nothing else of the matter. They were paid well for their trouble.

THE GRANDFATHER CLOCKWORK

The ruined mess of the gearforged lies still in the rear of the alley, his parts mixed with trash. Despite his battered condition, he is alert, and the clockwork dwarf coos at each delicate gear and engraved flywheel he sees in the alleyway, admiring each piece of himself in wide-eyed, childlike amazement as if hypnotized by some bright valuable gem. He seems oblivious to the fact that the parts even belong to him and doesn't seem in pain or even distraught now that the attack is over. He is immobile, and someone well versed in his construction is required to put the poor creature back together.

NEW ITEM

+1 Copper Coin of the Miser

This item, unique to the cult of Mammon, is crafted from a specially minted coin threaded on a leather or metal band. One side portrays a handsome merchant while the other shows a horn of plenty overflowing with jewels. The unholy symbol of Mammon is hidden on each side. Each coin has a reminder of Mammon's teachings inscribed around the horn of plenty. The coin lightly tints the wearer's flesh.

Level 3

680 gp

Item Slot neck

Enhancement Fortitude, Reflex, and Will

Power (standard; daily) ♦ **Charm**

Make a Charisma attack vs. Will against an enemy within 5 squares of you. If you hit, the enemy cannot attack you until the end of your next turn or until you attack the target (save ends).

The unusual clockwork dwarf is wounded and immobile. Healing spells are fruitless, as so many of his scattered parts are missing that he is treated as unwound: immobile until repaired, a process that takes 4 hours by someone trained in both Arcana and Thievery. Helpless without aid, the gearforged asks the characters to gather his strewn parts but seems to have trouble recalling just where he belongs.

A search of the area (DC 19 Perception) successfully gathers up all of his gears and uncovers a courier satchel containing the invoices and passage requests Rabscuttle was delivering for Splitrock Company. Rabscuttle remembers that the company is located in the Gear District near the Steamworker's Union and can offer a reward if the PCs simply carry him home.

Rabscuttle offers no explanation for the attack, merely stating that he was delivering documents to a customer and was lured into the alley. The PCs may learn the name of Albricius Everart from a denial-of-passage contract in the satchel, but if they investigate the nearby address listed, they discover an empty, uninhabited room adjacent to the alley where the attempted abduction took place. Albricius watched the failed abduction from nearby and, a true coward at heart, could not bring himself to intervene. He fled the scene in fear without confrontation, and he hopes to claim his prize another time.

TICK TOCK, THEY WAIT AT THE DOCK

When the PCs head for the docks to return Rabscuttle to his rightful owners, read or paraphrase the following:

Despite the damp fog and chill of winter, the warehouses of Splitrock Company come into focus. In the central courtyard of the buildings, an impressive wooden galleon hovers some 20 ft. from the ground, held aloft by a series of cables and ropes tethered to a massive conical balloon as large as the galleon itself.

The warehouses are a hive of frenzied activity. In every direction, dwarves hustle back and forth, sweating heavily despite the chill, loading large crates onto substantial wooden ramps and hoisting items via pulleys toward the cargo hold of the ship.

If the characters approach the docks with the body of Rabscuttle, several shirtless, tattooed dwarves stop in their tracks and stare in disbelief, their mouths agape. Without averting their gaze from the characters or moving to assist, one dockworker lets out a shrill whistle. Moments later, a burly dwarven supervisor steps from the fog and lowers a folder of manifests, his eyes widening as he tries to comprehend the scene before him.

CAPTAIN, MY CAPTAIN

Clovis Stonethrower (lawful good dwarf fighter) is both one of the owners of Splitrock Company and captain of the *Manticore*—the weathered airship currently being outfitted. He recently lost most of his company stake to a new senior partner, but he is content as dock supervisor and ship captain for the company. Clovis is a proud, stout dwarf but carries the burden of his past failures, especially the recent loss of the *Drake*, heavily on his shoulders. His slate blue eyes often display a resigned hesitation to take the chances he might have in his youth, and his brown beard and unkempt hair show a few more gray streaks than they should. Clovis is a talented pilot and navigator and cares deeply for his ship and crew.

As Clovis questions the PCs on exactly how they came to rescue Rabscuttle, a gruff company doctor called Sawbones arrives and manhandles the clockwork. After a brief inspection, Sawbones assures those present that “The old boy will be rewound and causing trouble again in no time.” Rabscuttle happily yaps away during the examination, just as naïve and oblivious as when the characters found him.

Clovis then turns to the PCs and says:

“Thank you for coming to the aid of my old boy Rabscuttle here. You know, he’s been here in the city

with my family for many years—way back when we dwarves locked up the citadel after the veins ran dry. He’s old even by dwarven standards.

Wasn’t anything like him ‘til those other gearforged came along during the Revolt. For the longest time we had wizards and clockwork mages poking and prodding him, trying to figure him out. Well, I ran them off, but before you knew it, that Orlando fellow announced he ‘invented’ the gearforged. Well, I beg to differ! Another fortune we Stonethrowers got cheated out of! And, speaking of fortunes—it’s high time we talk about some proper compensation for your troubles.”

Clovis’s dying clan has long cared for the venerable, senile old gearforged. Observing the rambling clockwork dwarf, the captain sheepishly observes, “His watch might be wound, but it ain’t keeping time.” The mechanical marvel is his valued advisor, servant, and friend, though, and he is quick to defend Rabscuttle’s dignity.

If the characters voice suspicions about Rabscuttle’s abduction, Clovis claims the greedy men were out for revenge after he denied them passage to the citadel or were simply after Rabscuttle’s valuable parts, noting that there is little intrinsic value to the clockwork. After all, Rabscuttle has been in his family for centuries. “No time to worry about that now anyhow. We’ve got to get this old bird up and away. Say, you wouldn’t be looking for a job, would ya’?”

Clovis invites the characters “into the warm belly of Splitrock” for a drink to stave off the cold and to discuss some proper reward for their deeds. Clovis becomes more and more impressed by the story of Rabscuttle’s rescue. Since he is short on daring adventurers to protect his precious cargo, he offers the party a rich payment in return for “an investment of your time and energy” as escort for the *Manticore* on its trip to the Golden Citadel and back. He offers 5% of the total profits of the venture, which he thinks should be a substantial amount—an estimated 4,000 gold for the group—in exchange for a little guard duty:

The dwarf leans in close and whispers, “You’ve heard the tales of those settlers. We all have. They struck it rich up there, but they didn’t prepare. Snowed in, you see? Worst in decades. Desperate. Dying. They’re rich, but they can’t eat gold! They’ll pay whatever we ask, but we’ll be fair and honest about it, and do a good deed to boot! We’ll take the risk, and the reward!”

“I’m sure you’re familiar with the line of work, by the looks of you. We’ll need you to protect the freight while the crew handles the flying. Usual stuff—rogue griffons, occasional giants, big birds—nothing a stout bunch like yourselves couldn’t handle. We’ll feed you and get you there and back safe, if you’ll do the same for us. Besides, I think Rabscuttle likes you folks.”

If the PCs agree to the terms, Clovis is thrilled and shakes their hands roughly, promising contracts in hand by morning if the party can be prepared to leave the following afternoon. He offers accommodations in the company boarding house, which are quite accommodating, if a little threadbare and rundown.

The following morning is a flurry of activity around the airship, and Clovis wakes the characters early with a fresh pot of some stout concoction. He encourages those who have any last-minute affairs to attend to them promptly, and the rest he puts to work, packing crates and loading cargo for the arduous journey. Early that afternoon, with a meager crowd of onlookers braving the cold to see the ship off, the *Manticore* drops ballasts and begins the long journey into the Ironcrag.

TREASURE

The sum Clovis offers and will pay amounts to 4 treasure parcels worth of gold and represents the bulk of the rewards available in this portion the adventure.

TECHNOLOGY LEVELS AND CAMPAIGN FLAVOR

Many campaigns do not use clockwork magic and airships as found in the Zobeck campaign setting, and many GMs might shy away from such content. To suit the needs of your playing style, you can make a few changes. The modified aerial galleons, as presented in this adventure, could be considered to be exceptional, prototype examples of desperate dwarven engineering to save their kin. As neither vessel survives the adventure, the status quo of your campaign's flavor is easily retained. If gearforged are not prevalent then, again, Rabscuttle is an easy exception—an ancient construct of retained intelligence; this is hardly a stretch in a fantasy world where golems are common.

PART II Manticore

Allow the characters to get acquainted with the curious and dynamic crew that operates the *Manticore* for the first couple days in order to set a rhythm (see “A Day in the Life” section for more details). Because of unfavorable winds and the horrible weather, the journey takes 1 week, so the characters should experience the lively, chaotic life aboard the ship without forgetting the miserable weather and desperation to rescue the settlers before they starve. Clovis, Guigo, or even Rabscuttle should give the party a complete

tour of the vessel and assign the PCs their rooms (see cargo deck, rooms 10 and 11). The ship is an old oceangoing vessel specially retrofitted for flight, lending a bit of familiarity to those accustomed to life at sea.

Fire of any type outside of the engine furnace is forbidden, and *everburning torches* are used throughout the ship. An ever-present rumbling resonance comes from the steam engine that powers the vessel from the lowest deck of the ship.

A DAY IN THE LIFE

A typical day aboard the *Manticore* begins 2 hours before sunrise. In the dull gray of morning, the crew rises and takes breakfast in the mess—usually a thick porridge heated over the engine boilers by Guigo and a bitterly strong invigorating brew of tar-like consistency. The furnace is then stoked and the gasbags filled, having been lowered in the evening to stabilize the ship's mooring. The lethargic crew chips accumulated ice from the ship's rails and spreads sand on the decks to provide sure footing. Ropes are secured, sails unfurled, and steering fins deployed as the *Manticore* and her crew comes back to life.

The PCs are assigned watch duty, two at a time throughout the day, primarily on the lookout for rocs and hungry griffons. A well-maintained ballista, affectionately nicknamed “Betty Spatcher,” is mounted on the front forecandle to combat such intrusions. Lunch is taken on the hoof when Boso prepares sausage, chicken, or other simple foods easily consumed while working aloft. The ship is anchored before sunset, as nighttime navigation is treacherous. Once the *Manticore* is properly moored, the crew takes a more complete meal of a spicy boar stew and coarse bread, afterward indulging in some robust camaraderie, gambling, and strong drink before heading into the lower deck to sleep for a few hours before beginning the journey anew.

Clovis requires at least one PC on guard duty during these evening hours. A single dwarf, usually Guigo or Otto, keeps the night watchman company. Clovis instructs the night guards to watch carefully from the deck for the distant fires of giant camps and listen for the particular cries of rocs and griffons, which have been known to attack at night when food is scarce.

CREW MEMBERS

Besides Clovis and Rabscuttle, 10 crewmembers currently serve on the *Manticore*, including two mates, a ship surgeon, and the owner of Splitrock Company—Vianna Geldenhoff. Interactions with the crew should be lively to establish a firm emotional connection to losses suffered later. Insert Rabscuttle into these interactions in an effort to downplay

his importance somewhat and take some of the emphasis off of the gearforged until he is needed again. The crew consists of the following.

Zangen Billens (unaligned male dwarf fighter 4). Proud, stoic, and rarely seen without his sooty mask, Zangen is the ship's engineer. He stokes the furnaces, primes the boiler, and sees to the overall safety and mechanics of the engines that fill the gas bladders and power the propeller.

Bjorn "Sawbones" Burkhardt (good male dwarf cleric 6). "Sawbones" is the gray-haired, hardnosed surgeon of the *Manticore*, responsible for the health of her crew and passengers. Dour, short-tempered, and aggressive, Sawbones often refuses to tend crewmembers who are injured as the result of careless accidents. He says the suffering of such unfortunates helps prevent further incidents. Sawbones possesses an impressive reservoir of healing magic and is a skilled brewer and scribe, although he uses simply his Healing skill (+13) to tend most patients. He remains a cleric undevoted to any single deity, as he has his entire life. Sawbones is a ritual caster with Animal Messenger, Gentle Repose, Make Whole, Silence, Endure Elements, Arcane Lock, Knock, Brew Potion, Cure Disease, and Sending in his book.

In addition, Sawbones provides the characters with alchemical pills that alleviate the effects of high altitude. A creature who consumes a single pill becomes acclimated to altitudes as if it lived at high altitude for a month.

Giroidus Felsenfaust (unaligned male dwarf). A shock of white-blond hair and beard distinguish the helmsman, whose main responsibility is the piloting and steering of the vessel.

Ansgar Flintknapper (unaligned male dwarf wizard 9). Taciturn, gruff, and entirely unfriendly, Ansgar does not speak at all. He seems to have little trouble communicating, through perpetual sneers and scowls, that he'd rather just be left alone to do his job as he mans the rigging and stokes the boilers. There is no indication of his true nature as a secret member of the Illuminated Brotherhood or as a Silent Master of that group. His plans and motivations are outlined later (see "Sabotage" section).

Vianna Geldenhoff (lawful good female juvenile gold dragon, disguised as dwarf fighter 6). Most recognizable by her monocle and dreadlocked blonde hair, Vianna is the kind-yet-professional new owner of Splitrock and has the ignoble job of company accountant, spending most of her days tracking inventory and cataloging revenue. The shortage of company crew has brought the normally reclusive dwarf here, and she is somewhat distant from the resentful crew. Vianna usually seems distracted and slightly perturbed.

Boso Hammerfall (lawful good male dwarf fighter 4). Lively and humorous, the rigsmen Boso usually has a bawdy joke to share when the captain is not within earshot. He acts as the midday and evening mate.

Guigo Ironglove (lawful good male dwarf bard 4). Guigo is entertaining and charismatic, beloved by all who meet him for his colorful language and inspiring collection of shanties. That he is missing an eye, a hand, and a leg from an unfortunate griffon attack doesn't seem to dampen his spirits as morning mate and night watchman.

Otto Motzger (lawful good male dwarf fighter 3). More ape than dwarf and ugly beyond measure, this lovable oaf spends his days climbing the rigging of the airship and hollering insults at the crew below. Immensely strong, he frequently shows off "Matta" and "Pompilina," his two named and tattooed biceps.

Rabscuttle. Rabscuttle is an ever-present personality aboard the *Manticore*, who often finds himself in the way of operations. The crew accepts the interferences as a fact of life and regards the old clockwork with the utmost respect. To add flavor to the characters' interactions with the gearforged, liberally use the Rabscuttle Interactions table.

Matheus Segelnetz (chaotic evil male dwarf cleric 4). Matheus is slender, tall, and wiry for a dwarf, recently hired on an earlier Golden Citadel journey to work a return trip. No one suspects that he is a Mammonite cultist sent to spy on Vianna. He is the only person in the company aware of the owner's true nature.

Brill Stamper (lawful good male human fighter 5). A salty and coarse former seaman, Brill spends most of his idle minutes reminiscing about his three lovely young daughters. The rest of his hours are spent cursing their mother for taking them from him.

Mykrin Understone (unaligned male dwarf barbarian 4). Horribly scarred, terribly tattooed, and entirely toothless, with a patchwork of wiry tufts for a beard, Mykrin is never without his two trusty handaxes, "Olga" and "Bromhilda." Mykrin is disdainful of sorcerers, wizards, and warlocks, whom he refers to as "bazzakers."

Brunerius Weitesland (unaligned male dwarf fighter 4). Exceptionally neat and tidy, Brunerius constantly bellows at the entire crew whenever anything is out of place or disorderly. His days are a flurry of cleaning and straightening.

RABSCUTTLE INTERACTIONS

Once per watch shift or whenever the PCs interact with Rabscuttle, roll 1d6 and consult the following table. Feel free to repeat results, as it only adds to the surreal nature of dealing with a centuries-old senile clockwork dwarf.

Anytime Rabscuttle is aided closely, such as in results 2 and 4, allow the characters a DC 25 Perception check to notice the tiny, intricate engravings embossed on his gears, parts, and plates, heavily worn by time. A DC 27 Thievery check hints that the symbols are instructions of some sort, but not even magic reveals their true meaning. A DC 30 Arcana check reveals what seem to be directions to a location, although they are rife with esoteric symbolism and are contradictory and indecipherable in their current configuration. Clovis dismisses the markings as “decorations of a bygone era.”

TABLE 1-2: RABSCUTTLE INTERACTIONS

Roll	Result
1	Rabscuttle suddenly recognizes the characters as his saviors in the alleyway, falling all over himself to thank them for their aid and offering his services in exchange for their heroics. Suddenly coherent, he follows the characters around in admiration for the next several hours, trying to assist them, resulting in a -4 penalty on skill checks attempted during this time.
2	Rabscuttle approaches the characters with the slurred remains of one of the leftover crew meals clogged in the gears and pulleys of his face and upper torso. He sheepishly explains that he was hungry and felt compelled to eat. A DC 12 Thievery check cleans the mess from his gears and cogs.
3	Rabscuttle suddenly mistakes the PC least like Clovis (such as a female or wizard) as the captain himself and addresses the character as such. He acts as if he has not seen his master in years. He tells embarrassing stories of incidents of Clovis's youth, such as wetting the bed or crying at the sight of his first elf.
4	A strange noise late one night in the galley reveals that Rabscuttle dismantled a large portion of his torso and is minutely examining his own scattered parts, cooing in wide-eyed amazement over each one. Oblivious to the great harm he has inflicted, he proudly shows off his constituent components, which take 4 hours to replace using Arcana and Thievery.
5	Rabscuttle suddenly scurries around the deck, grabbing and pawing at everyone's money pouches or bags, jingling the coins within. He cries out, “The ship's weighed down! We've got to gain speed! Everyone throw your gold overboard!”
6	One at a time, Rabscuttle bolts ahead of the characters and pantomimes opening a door for them to walk through, continuing this action for several minutes as the PCs work. Abruptly, he “slams” an imaginary door in the face of a PC before he can “enter.” The gearforged then sneers and says, “Not all doors are meant to be opened, master.”

VIANNA'S SECRET

When the gold rush started, a young gold dragon by the name of Bragollach had recently assumed her mother's role of protecting an ancient quarantined hoard of corrupted gold. Contacting Silent Master Bradobaraxas of the Illuminated Brotherhood, the two agreed that the dragon, with the help of an acquired shipping company, would supply the citadel with food and equipment, taking the corrupt ore back to the hidden hoard.

Bragollach, disguised as the merchant Vianna Geldenhoff, then bought out the Splitrock Company, using their two airships to transport the corrupted gold from the Citadel and into hiding. There is some animosity between Vianna and Clovis, as he has yet to see the payoff of these resupply missions. Bragollach is quick to dismiss the accusations of paying off creditors and conceals the whereabouts of the gold through complicated bookkeeping. She is unaware that the Mammonites, through the spying of Matheus, know both her true identity and of her presence aboard the *Manticore*.

ROCS AND A HARD PLACE

On the third day, just as the crew finishes lunch, the distracted sailors fail to notice a large shadow passing briefly over the bow of the ship. Allow any PCs on the top deck a DC 21 Perception check to see the shadow, cast by several young rocs swooping down to collect some lunch of their own. Any character who successfully spots the roc may act in the surprise round. The massive birds dive swiftly down from the cover of clouds above, spinning toward the ship before most of the crew realizes what is happening. The only clue, a piercing cry that chills the soul more than any winter wind, comes much too late.

8TH LEVEL ENCOUNTER

- 4 PCs (1,400 XP) • 2 fledgling rocs
- 5 PCs (1,750 XP) • 2 fledgling rocs, but the rocs fight to the death
- 6 PCs (2,100 XP) • 3 fledgling rocs

FLEDGLING ROC LEVEL 8 ELITE SKIRMISHER

LARGE NATURAL BEAST XP 700

Initiative +11 Senses Perception +11
 hp 180 each Bloodied 90
 AC 24 Fortitude 23 Reflex 23 Will 19
 Saving Throws +2
 Speed 4, fly 10 (clumsy), overland flight 15
 Action Points 1

[mba] **Talon Flurry** (standard; at-will)

+13 vs. AC; 2d6 + 5; target is pushed 1 square and knocked prone

[m] **Foot and Mantle** (standard; at-will)

Requires adjacent prone target; +11 vs. Reflex; target is grabbed (escape ends), and the roc has +2 to AC until the end of its next turn

Sustain Minor—the effect persists

[m] **Rip Flesh** (minor; at-will)

Requires grabbed target; +11 vs. reflex; 2d8 + 5 damage

[m] **Swooping Strike** (standard; at-will)

The roc moves up to its fly speed in one direction and makes a melee basic attack at any point during its move

Special —if the roc is bloodied, it can make 2 additional melee basic attacks at -2 to attack

Clutch and Carry (move; at-will)

Requires dying target (Medium or smaller); the target is grabbed, and the roc moves up to its fly speed, carrying the target along with it

From the Nest (free action, when knocked prone in mid-air; at-will)

The fledgling roc spreads its wings and slides 3 squares, remaining flying

Alignment unaligned **Languages** —

Str 19 (+8) Dex 19 (+8) Wis 14 (+6)

Con 18 (+8) Int 2 (+0) Cha 10 (+4)

TACTICS

During Combat While an adult roc would grab its prey and carry it off, a fledgling roc is too weak to carry a struggling person over great distances. The young roc will instead use its *swooping strike* to push victims off the airship and down to the rocks far below. If it manages to knock a victim prone instead, it will land on the ship, pinning the victim and protecting itself with its *foot and mantle* power, then use *rip flesh* to incapacitate it.

Morale If a fledgling roc succeeds in claiming several victims, or drops to 30 hp or less, it will leave the encounter, either to return later for its hard-won meal or to find easier prey.

DEVELOPMENT

The crew takes cover below decks or behind rigging, providing a +2 cover bonus against the attacks. The roc's formidable reach otherwise makes anyone remaining on the upper decks fair game, although you should choose expendable crew, such as Brill or Boso. Any characters or crewmembers you see fit can operate the ballista to ward off the bird's attack.

“SHARP TONGUE LASHING”**Ballista Attack** (standard and move action, at-will)

+12 vs AC; 2d8 + 6 damage

Afterwards, Sawbones recognizes the service of any lost to the bird's attack in a brief benediction. The survivors return to work in silence and have little to share for the rest of the morning, until the lookout spots the shipwreck.

THE WRECK OF THE DRAKE

Not long after the rocs attack, a harsh cry echoes from the top deck: “Captain! I think we've got our bird!” An almost identical airship flounders hopelessly in the distance, hovering at anchor and gently tugging against its moorings alongside a mountain peak, as the swift winds of winter batter the vessel. A long rope ladder dangles behind the ship, marking a trail through the snow below. As the *Manticore* approaches, a name can be made out painted in tall, golden letters along the bow. It is the *Drake*.

The *Drake* has been adrift for 2 weeks, ever since Albricius poisoned the crew and escaped with a portion of the corrupt gold on his way back to Zobeck. Clovis displays a grim concern at the sight of the bodies in the rigging and instructs the characters to investigate the fate of his company's ship. Grappling hooks are deployed and the ships are tethered, the crew waiting for the “all-clear” from the PCs.

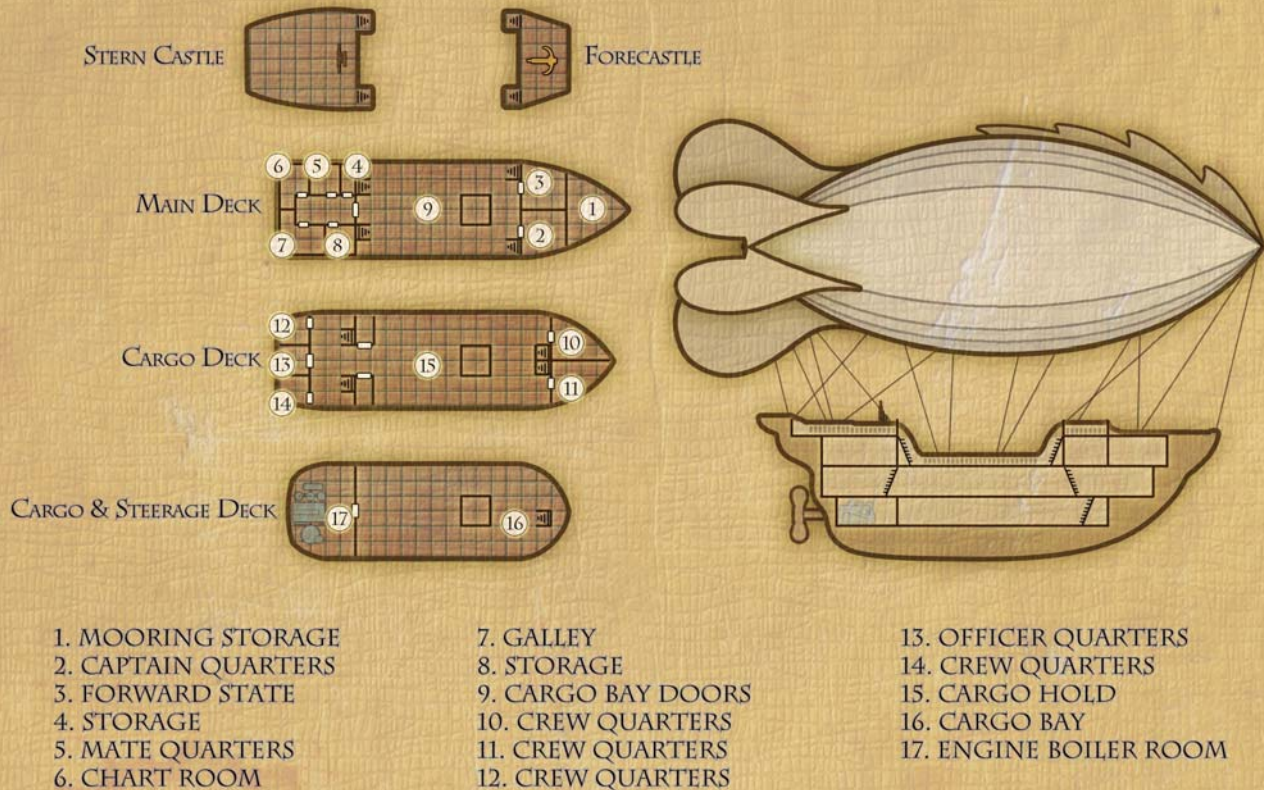
Boarding the *Drake* requires a DC 17 Acrobatics or a DC 15 Athletics check. Use of the Athletics skill, which requires getting down awkwardly on all fours and clamoring across the moorings, results in an eruption of catcalls and laughter from the nervous crew. Any character failing a check by 5 or more loses his grip and falls, plummeting to the mountainside 80 ft. below (suffering 8d10 damage).

The *Drake*, like the *Manticore*, is an outdated cargo ship. Due to the partially deflated air bladders of the *Drake*, the vessel shifts and sways. After the PCs spend several minutes onboard, they may become sickened for the rest of the time they are aboard.

MOTION SICKNESS

+5 vs. Fortitude; Hit -2 to attack and damage rolls, and to AC and Reflex until departing the *Drake*

THE MANTICORE & THE DRAKE



Allow the PCs to roam the ship freely to investigate the tragic circumstances of the airship. Clovis and crew wait impatiently for the all-clear signal from the characters, calling out often, even during combat, eager to resolve the grim scene before them. When the PCs finally call them over, Clovis, Sawbones, and two crewmembers board the *Drake* and search for any clues the characters' investigations might have missed. Feel free to provide the fate of the ship through these NPCs. Rooms and areas not described here contain nothing of interest.

MAIN DECK

Area 1, Main Deck. After days of the constant buzz of activity aboard the *Manticore*, the *Drake's* decks are eerily silent. Slumped along the deck and hanging from the rigging are the unfortunate dwarven crew, their bodies rigid and lifeless, each coated in hoarfrost. Besides the wind that whistles through the rigging, the only sound is the abrupt knocking of the stiff, frozen bodies, bumping the rails of the ship by the occasional northern gust.

Five corpses are present on the top deck, all of which are iced over and frozen solid. Another body lies in the stairwell of the sterncastle. A bloody smear spreads beneath the accumulated ice, running from the sterncastle, over the steps, and down through the smashed cargo doors of each deck. Climbing this slippery cargo opening requires a DC 21 Athletics check. A failure indicates the character loses footing and falls 20 ft. to the steerage deck below (suffering 2d10 damage).

If the PCs inspect the bodies carefully, they might determine the cause of death of the unfortunate crew. A DC 19 Heal check reveals the bodies died of poisoning, while a success of DC 23 or more reveals the symptoms of dark toxin (see DMG page 51). The deceased crewmembers were at morning mess, as bowls of thick porridge lay disposed or dropped nearby, barely eaten. Several dead crows litter the decks as well. An inspection of the porridge confirms the presence of a suspicious powder on a DC 21 Perception check.

Two of these crewmembers display strange pus-filled sores on their arms and faces. A DC 25 Heal check confirms this is a symptom of disease but not of any recognizable illness. When examined, the pustules ooze oily pus with an almost metallic sheen, like oil on water. The crewmembers' frozen eyes have a similar cast to them.

Area 2, Captain's Quarters. The door to the captain's quarters swings open and shuts meatily with each icy gust, tapping out an unnatural cadence and guarding the beckoning darkness beyond. The frozen body of a dwarf crewmember blocks the portal, preventing it from closing, although the constant slamming of the door has pulped his upper torso.

The crewmember in the doorway was murdered, his body showing many puncture wounds. The furniture within was either ransacked or violently tossed about due to the airship's motions. The captain's log lays open on the floor, but a quick search reveals that many pages from the last several weeks have been ripped out. Without them, there is no way to determine crew count or passenger numbers. The body of Captain Stimme Amboschlag is not present. His is the half-eaten corpse in the steerage deck (see Area 16).

Area 3, Forward State Quarters. A murdered family of five humans occupies this room, and a casual search reveals their throats were cut while sleeping. They do not display signs of illness.

Area 6, the Chart Room. Nothing seems out of place in the chart room besides the normal dishevelment found throughout the rest of the ship, with maps, charts, sextants, and compasses in disarray. A DC 21 Perception check, however, reveals several empty packets of a dark purple powder. A DC 19 Heal check identifies it as dark toxin powder.

Area 7, the Galley. The body of a single dwarf crewmember, identified as Broffo, is crumpled on the floor here, having died consuming his breakfast.

CARGO DECK

Unlike the *Manticore's* cramped and stuffed cargo hold, the upper bay of the *Drake* is largely barren, save for a few scattered tools and several damaged crates that might once have held supplies.

Dim gray light leaks into the cargo deck from the smashed bay doors above. Any characters succeeding on a DC 23 Perception check detect a shuffling on the deck below, followed by a thump, which sounds vaguely like falling ice. In the main hold is a single body dressed as an arcanist. This was Belvedere, the company's sole aeromancer. His body is partially burned, and he appears to have been severely bludgeoned. A DC 25 Arcana check reveals the shattered fragments of a wand in his hand.

A dwarf crewmember lies dead at the bottom of the fore stairs, his bowl still in his hand and a spoon hanging from his rigor-hardened jaw. Nearly a dozen dead rats litter the floor near the stairwell, and the metallic tinge of spilled blood is heavy in the stale air below decks. A dark ichor has spread out from under each door here, staining the deck in a thick, viscous sludge. This is the body of a crewmember by the name of Malbic, who died of poisoning along with his mates. The rats died eating him.

Area 10, Crew Quarters. This room contains eight humans, comprising two families. The corpses are poorly dressed and seem to have been extremely malnourished, indicating they were probably refugees rescued from the Golden Citadel. All here show signs of the unidentified illness. While two of the bodies succumbed to the illness, the others were murdered while they slept. A man and a woman both definitely died in a struggle, as both display extremely precise, scalpel-like cuts across their arms, face, and neck.

Area 11, Crew Quarters. This room holds the bodies of nine dwarven passengers, malnourished and diseased like those in area 10. Four died fighting after being cornered in this room and bear the seared residue of some intense heat (a DC 23 Religion check confirms the wounds are consistent with *lance of faith*) and multiple small puncture wounds. A DC 15 Heal check finds the wounds have a distinctive blue hue, the telltale mark of hellstinger scorpion venom (see DMG page 51).

Area 14, Crew Quarters. Most of the crew quarters and storage rooms of this area are empty and abandoned, the contents in disarray but nevertheless eerily familiar—mirror reflections of the lively halls and corridors of the *Manticore*.

The door leading to this chamber fails to yield if tested; a heavy dwarven body blocks it. A DC 19 Athletics check forces open the door, revealing the corpses of two dwarf crewmembers. A DC 19 Perception check confirms that the two dwarves died in a fight. There is no trace of poison, but a DC 19 Heal check reveals the same strange symptoms seen on some of the crew above. One died of strangulation, while the other bled to death from many puncture wounds caused, leaving little doubt that the two killed one another in a struggle.

A DC 15 Perception check reveals that one corpse has several rough gold nuggets lodged in his mouth. A floor plank has been pulled up, revealing a small, tipped coffer. The distinctive gold ore, worth about 500 gp, is spilled onto the floor. These two dwarves can be confirmed as crewmembers aboard the *Drake*. In addition, consider placing Belvedere's spellbook here, especially if the PCs are short on magic or treasure.

STEERAGE DECK

Area 16, Lower Cargo Hold. Many broken, empty crates lay scattered here in the dark recess of the lowest cargo hold. Two massive, ironbound chests sitting back-to-back are the only intact items present. Below the cargo bay hatch lies the frost-rimed upper torso of a once-stout dwarf, his head cleanly severed from his body. The corpse has been eaten from the chest down; even the leg bones are gone.

This is the final resting place of Captain Stimme, and is the nest of a very old and grizzled chimera by the name of Frostgrenze. Infected with the goldveined curse, the chimera waits in the shadows, charging the party when the opportunity presents itself. For a larger party, carrion crows hop about the hold, picking at the severed limbs and mangled corpses the chimera pulled in to gnaw on.

11TH LEVEL ENCOUNTER

- 4 PCs (2,500 XP) • Frostgrenze
- 5 PCs (3,000 XP) • Frostgrenze, 5 carrion crows
- 6 PCs (3,500 XP) • Frostgrenze, 10 carrion crows

FROSTGRENZE, GOLDVEINED CHIMERA LEVEL 10 SOLO BRUTE

LARGE MAGICAL BEAST XP 2500

Initiative +8 **Senses** Perception +12; all-around vision, darkvision

hp 369 **Bloodied** 185

AC 23 **Fortitude** 24 **Reflex** 18 **Will** 21

Resist 10 fire

Saving Throws +5

Speed 6; fly 10 (clumsy), overland flight 15

Action Points 2

[mba] **Snow Leopard's Bite** (standard; at-will)

+13 vs. AC; 2d8 + 5 damage

[m] **Amalgam's Fury** (standard; at-will)

Frostgrenze makes the following three melee attacks, no more than two against the same target

Snow Leopard's Bite +13 vs. AC; 2d8 + 5 damage

Wurm's Rending +13 vs. AC; 3d6 + 5 damage

Mountain Ram's Battering +13 vs. AC; 1d10 + 5 damage, and the target is knocked prone

[m] **Mountain Ram's Charge** (move; at-will)

Frostgrenze makes a charge attack; +14 vs. AC; 1d10 + 9 damage, and the target is knocked prone

[c] **Bloodied Breath** (free, when first bloodied; encounter)

Frostgrenze recharges and uses dragon breath

[c] **Dragon Breath** (move; encounter) ♦ **Fire**

Close blast 5; +11 vs. Reflex; 2d6 + 1 damage, and ongoing 10 fire damage (save ends)

[r] **All that Glitters** (standard, recharge on 5, 6)

Ranged 10; +14 vs. Will; the target is pulled 5 squares and dazed (save ends)

[r] **For Love of Money** (immediate interrupt, when targeted by a melee attack; at-will)

+14 vs. Will; instead of attacking Frostgrenze, the attacker makes a melee basic attack against an adjacent target of Frostgrenze's choice; if no such target exists, no attack is made

Fatal Bequest

When it dies, Frostgrenze vomits forth 10 greed-tainted gold pieces

Madness of the Mines ♦ **Psychic**

If Frostgrenze is hit by a charm affect, its insane minds cause painful psychic feedback to rebound upon the caster; this inflicts 8 psychic damage and counts as exposure to gold fever

Alignment unaligned **Languages** Common, Draconic, Dwarven

Skills Endurance +16, Nature +12, Perception +12, Stealth +13

Str 24 (+12) **Dex** 17 (+8) **Wis** 14 (+7)

Con 23 (+11) **Int** 8 (+4) **Cha** 17 (+8)

CARRION CROW

LEVEL 9 SKIRMISHER MINION

SMALL NATURAL BEAST XP 100

Initiative +11 **Senses** Perception +7; darkvision

hp 1; a missed attack never damages a minion

AC 23 **Fortitude** 21 **Reflex** 23 **Will** 19

(see also *shrieking dive*)

Speed 3, fly 6 (hover), overland flight 8

[mba] **Eyeplucker Bite** (standard; at-will)

+14 vs. AC; 9 damage

[m] **Shrieking Dive** (move; encounter)

The delver crow may move 6 squares and make an *eyeplucker bite* attack against any one adjacent foe during its movement; it gains +2 to all defenses against opportunity attacks during this movement

Alignment unaligned **Languages** —

Skills Athletics +11, Stealth +14

Str 15 (+6) **Dex** 20 (+9) **Wis** 6 (+2)

Con 17 (+7) **Int** 6 (+2) **Cha** 8 (+3)

TACTICS

During Combat Frostgrenze begins combat by charging with *mountain ram's charge* and then using *amalgam's fury*. Then it uses *all that glitters* to pull a foe close and better utilize its *dragon breath* against clustered opponents. If it bloodies a foe with *amalgam's fury*, it spends an action point to use the power again. Once bloodied, it uses *bloodied breath*—ensuring that the foe that struck the bloodying blow is in the blast.

Morale Frostgrenze fights to the death.

TREASURE

The chests are not trapped. One is locked with a good lock (DC 27 Thievery) and is so full it bulges nearly to bursting. A DC 19 Perception check reveals several scores in the wood, indicating that a small plank had previously been removed from the backside. Once the PCs open the chest, they can see that some gold was removed in this manner, with a cloth stuffed into the cavity and the plank replaced. Approximately 500 gp worth of the precious gold ore mined from the Golden Citadel has been removed (see area 5) and about 50,000 gp remain. This is likely the party's first view of orichalcum, the brilliant, pure alchemical gold mined by the dwarves of the Golden Citadel and the impetus of the gold rush.

The other chest has been battered open and stripped of any wealth it once contained. Clovis and Vianna are visibly stunned at the amount of gold in the chests. If the other chest contained as much gold, it would have far exceeded the profits they hoped to garner for the expedition.

A DC 19 Perception check reveals the key on a golden chain concealed under the body of Captain Stimme.

A Speak with Dead ritual cast on the captain or any crew members imparts similar information to that found in the captain's log (see *Captain's Log* section, page 20). The crew died eating morning mess. Some crew and passengers died in a struggle with the cultists, and they describe them as a human and two dwarves wearing leering golden masks. Two of the bodies matching their descriptions can be found below the ship.

THE CLUES LIE COLD ON THE PEAKS BELOW

If the characters investigate the dragging rope ladder, or if they succeed on a DC 23 Perception check from the main deck of either ship, they see a valuable clue to the fate of the vessel on the peak below. The long rope ladder dangles from the forecastle and drags in the fresh snow of the peak far below, tracing a circular trail in the snow. A flash of bright copper glints from the drifts, drawing attention to what looks like two frozen bodies.

Any movement near these bodies attracts the attention of the creatures buried in the snow, totally concealed, 10 ft. behind the corpses. They attack when anyone approaches within 10 ft. of the bodies. Treat the mountainside as difficult terrain.

9TH LEVEL ENCOUNTER

- 4 PCs (1,650 XP) • 1 glacial drake, 3 rime worm larva, 1 rime worm
- 5 PCs (2,000 XP) • 1 glacial drake, 2 rime worm larva, 2 rime worms
- 6 PCs (2,450 XP) • 1 glacial drake, 3 rime worm larva, 2 rime worms

GLACIAL DRAKE	LEVEL 10 LURKER
LARGE NATURAL BEAST (COLD, REPTILE)	XP 500
Initiative +13	Senses Perception +7; darkvision
hp 86	Bloodied 43
AC 24	Fortitude 23
	Reflex 23
	Will 21
Resist 10 cold	
Speed 6 (ice walk); burrow 6	
[mba] Terrible Bite (standard; at-will)	
+15 vs. AC; 3d6 + 5 damage	
[m] Icebreaker Gore (standard; encounter) ♦ Cold	
Reach 2; +13 vs. Reflex; 4d10 + 5 damage, and target is knocked prone and takes ongoing 5 cold damage (save ends)	
[c] Breath of Frostknives (standard; recharge on 5, 6) ♦ Cold, Zone	
Close blast 4; +11 vs. Reflex; 3d8 + 5 damage, and creates a zone of swirling ice and snow that blocks line of sight until end of next turn; enemies within the zone at the end of their turn take 1d8 cold damage (uncovered flames are doused and ongoing fire damage ends immediately within the zone)	
Combat Advantage	
The drake deals an extra 2d6 damage on melee and ranged attacks against any target it has combat advantage against	
Riftshard Dive (move; recharges when bloodied) ♦ Cold	
Requires snowy or icy terrain; close burst 3; +11 vs. Reflex; 4d8 + 5 damage; the drake may burrow its speed for free	
Through the Ice (minor; at-will) ♦ Illusion	
While the drake is burrowing in an area of snow or ice, it is invisible	
Alignment unaligned	Languages —
Skills Endurance +15, Nature +12, Stealth +14	
Str 16 (+10)	Dex 18 (+9)
	Wis 15 (+7)
Con 20 (+10)	Int 8 (+4)
	Cha 10 (+5)

RIME WORM GRUB	LEVEL 5 LURKER	
SMALL ELEMENTAL BEAST (COLD)	200 XP	
Initiative +11	Senses Perception +1; tremorsense 10	
hp 56	Bloodied 26	
AC 19	Fortitude 17	Reflex 19 Will 15
Resist 10 cold		
Speed 4 (also see <i>snow burrowing</i>)		
[mba] Frosty Bite (standard action; at-will) ♦ Cold		
+10 vs. AC; 2d8 + 4 cold damage		
[m] Lunging Strike (standard action; at-will)		
The grub shifts 4 squares and makes a melee basic attack		
Combat Advantage		
The grub deals an additional 2d6 damage against any creature it has combat advantage against		
Snow Burrowing		
The grub is considered to have a burrow speed of 6 squares for purposes of movement through snow and ice		
Alignment unaligned		Languages —
Skills Stealth +12		
Str 10 (+2)	Dex 20 (+7)	Wis 8 (+1)
Con 16 (+5)	Int 4 (-1)	Cha 10 (+2)

RIME WORM	LEVEL 9 ARTILLERY	
Medium elemental beast (cold)	400 XP	
Initiative +9	Senses Perception +4; tremorsense 10	
hp 76	Bloodied 38	
AC 21	Fortitude 20	Reflex 23 Will 18
Resist 10 cold		
Speed 4 (also see <i>snow burrowing</i>)		
[mba] Snowy Lunge (standard action; at-will) ♦ Cold		
+16 vs. AC; 1d8 + 5 cold damage		
[c] Snowy Breath (standard action; recharge on 6) ♦ Cold, Zone		
Close blast 5; +12 vs. Fortitude; 3d10 + 5 cold damage, and a zone is created; the zone provides concealment and persists until the end of the worm's next turn		
[r] Frozen Spittle (standard action; at-will) ♦ Cold		
+16 vs. AC; 2d8 + 5 cold damage		
Snow Burrowing		
The worm is considered to have a burrow speed of 6 squares for purposes of movement through snow and ice		
Alignment unaligned		Languages —
Skills Stealth +14		
Str 10 (+4)	Dex 21 (+9)	Wis 10 (+4)
Con 16 (+7)	Int 4 (+1)	Cha 10 (+4)

RIME WORM LARVA	LEVEL 6 SOLDIER	
Medium elemental beast (cold, swarm)	250 XP	
Initiative +9	Senses Perception +2; tremorsense 10	
Leach Warmth (cold) aura 1; the swarm makes a melee basic attack as a free action against each enemy that begins its turn in the aura; in addition, any enemy that enters or starts its turn in the aura gains vulnerability cold 5 (save ends)		
hp 72	Bloodied 36	
AC 22	Fortitude 18	Reflex 19 Will 15
Resist 10 cold; half damage from melee and ranged attacks; Vulnerable 5 against close and area attacks		
Speed 4 (also see <i>snow burrowing</i>)		
[mba] Feast on Flesh (standard action; at-will)		
+13 vs. AC; 1d10 + 4 damage		
[c] Writhing Snow (standard action; rechargeable on 5, 6) ♦ Cold		
Close burst 1; +9 vs. Reflex; 1d8 + 4 cold damage; if the target moves before the end of the swarm's next turn, it immediately falls prone		
[m] Crawl under Armor (standard action; encounter) ♦ Cold		
Must occupy the same square as the target; +11 vs. Reflex; 3d6 + 4 damage, and the target is slowed and suffers ongoing 5 cold damage (save ends both)		
<i>Miss</i> —ongoing 5 cold damage and the target is not slowed (save ends)		
Snow Burrowing		
The swarm is considered to have a burrow speed of 6 squares for purposes of movement through snow and ice		
Alignment unaligned		Languages —
Skills Stealth +12		
Str 10 (+3)	Dex 19 (+7)	Wis 8 (+2)
Con 16 (+6)	Int 2 (-1)	Cha 10 (+3)

TACTICS

During Combat The glacial drake burrows up to attack using *riftshard dive* and unleashes its *breath of frostknives* on the largest group. Then, it uses its *icebreaker gore* and proceeds to *bite* bloodied targets first, utilizing its *through the ice* power as it moves.

The larva swarm maneuvers to keep as many targets as possible within the effects of its aura and *writhing snow* ability.

The worm burrows several squares away from the rest of its brood before surfacing to pelt intruders with its *frozen spittle*. Enemies that draw too close risk facing its *snowy breath*.

Morale These creatures are starving and fight to the death.

THE EVIDENTIAL CORPSES

Albricius murdered his two collaborators immediately after dispatching the crew. Their corpses are visible but partially buried in the snow of the mountainside near the dangling rope ladder. Both are dwarven and wear familiar leering masks of beaten copper. They were not crewmembers and were not aware of Albricius' goal. In addition to white, furred robes, they each carry a sash containing concealed darts coated in ground thassil root poison and wear a brass, coin-like symbol with a devilish face cast in relief. A DC 15 Religion check reveals these as holy symbols of Mammon.

A DC 23 Heal check reveals the cause of death as skull fractures from a blunt object. If the corpses are successfully questioned using Speak with Dead, they reveal only that they knew they would be rewarded for returning such a sum of gold to their masters. The acolytes are unaware of the greater scheme at hand or why Albricius killed them; however, they do know he was on his way to Zobeck to seek out the whereabouts of some great treasure. If questioned about the nature of the cult in the citadel, the acolytes reveal that unchecked greed has attracted the cold eye of Mammon. One still wears a *belt of vigor* (heroic tier).

Albricius neglected to retrieve the crew manifest and log entries his conspirators had collected from the captain's log. They can be found on one of the bodies, its contents detailed below. In addition, one of the bodies has several parchment rubbings of an engraved mechanical device—an armor-like plate and a few complicated gears. A DC 15 Arcana or Thievery check identifies these rubbings as having come from Rabscuttle, although they are oddly backwards, as if rubbed in relief. Several notes, scrawled in Common, read: “Where is the Eye?” and “Tears wash away greed.” These had been stolen from Albricius.

A very difficult Perception check (DC 30) of the area reveals almost 70,000 gp in orichalcum ore buried in the snow near the corpses. This orichalcum was removed from the empty chest in the ship's hold and is as much as the lazy Albricius was willing to remove.

TREASURE

70,000 gp worth of orichalcum, *belt of vigor* (heroic tier) (see PHB page 253), captain's log missing pages, copper masks (2), etchings, holy symbols of Mammon (2), poisoned darts (10)

THE CAPTAIN'S LOG

The missing pages from Captain Stimme's logbook provide a valuable glimpse into the airship's fate. The journey is described in Dwarven with short, simple entries. The report from the Golden Citadel, which dates to almost 3 weeks ago, describes a sedate situation for those holed up.

According to the logbook, droves of miners were taken in by the dwarves as the winter storms increased and the passes snowed in. Apparently, the rescue efforts were coordinated by an exceptionally kind and generous man named Halston, and Captain Stimme (who had been unknowingly charmed) dealt with him exclusively, turning a profit well beyond the expectations of the company. Some 130,000 gp was received for a shipment estimated at half that value. Several dozen passengers are listed, including Albricius Everart. Most of the settlers intended to wait out the winter storms and return to their mines once the snows subsided. The ship also carried very ill passengers in quarantine (see areas 10 and 11). Laden with orichalcum, the *Drake* set flight again only a few hours after arrival, which Clovis notes as unusual.

From there, the entries grow shorter again, with little to report other than cabin fever and growing aggravation among the crew. The captain begins to worry when several of his crew contract the settler's illness, despite the care taken to quarantine the sick. The last entry reads: “A pall of discontent has fallen on the ship. Gorfred was confined to quarters. The crew is getting ill.”

That evening, PCs who succeed at DC 25 Perception checks hear snippets of a heated argument in the captain's quarters between Clovis and Vianna. Vianna believes they should return to Zobeck immediately with the shipment and recovered cargo, while Clovis wants to go to the aid of his endangered kin. The journey continues the following morning, and Vianna is not seen on decks after breakfast, as she sulks in her quarters.

PART III We Were Dead Before the Ship Even Sank

The Splitrock Company hired Ansgar Flintknapper during a recent supply run to the citadel. Unknown even to Vianna, he was sent to secretly monitor the safety of shipments for the Illuminated Brotherhood. Even he is not aware of the true nature of Vianna. A Silent Master of the Brotherhood, he understands the danger in allowing the orichalcum cargo from the *Drake* to be returned to the hands of the Mammonites in the Golden Citadel. To prevent the cult from acquiring this gold, he has made the fateful decision to sabotage and crash the *Manticore*.

In the hours before dawn, on the morning of the seventh day of the journey, the Silent Master rises and goes about his foul business. After preparing himself, he casts Arcane Lock on the doors of areas 12, 13, and 14 of the cargo deck, trapping the eight sleeping crew members there before making his way quietly down into the engine room to set the boilers to dangerously explosive levels.

SABOTAGE!

Guigo is on the final shift of guard duty before dawn. As the dark of night gives way to the first gray glow of dawn, he nods to the PCs on watch and points to the roiling black clouds along the horizon. “Sure hope the ol’ girl can make it to the citadel before that storm reaches us!” Rabscuttle laughs as the disabled pilot leers with a hesitant grin and a nervous wink.

Suddenly, a great shudder jolts the anchored airship; Guigo heaves forward and is knocked violently back from the rails. The airship lurches before veering sharply starboard, leaning precariously as it gains momentum. The boilers are firing! Any characters on the top deck must take a DC 15 Acrobatics or Athletics check to avoid falling prone when the ship unexpectedly fires to life. Guigo hobbles to the ship’s wheel and attempts to control the quickly spiraling craft while shouting, “Get down to the engines and see what’s going on!”

SKILL CHECK DC 15 (ACROBATICS, ATHLETICS)

Success—Remain standing as ship lurches

Fail—Fall prone as encounter begins

Anyone present on the top deck 3 rounds from the initial lurch sees Clovis, Vianna, and Sawbones exit their quarters on the main deck and begin trying to control the vessel as best they can in the absence of the rest of the crew.

No matter the character’s whereabouts, call for initiative to give some order to the chaos that is about to result and to keep better track of player character actions and movement. It also alerts PCs that they should be acting. The sequence of events is somewhat mutable but should take 9-12 rounds before the boilers ultimately explode.

Sleeping characters below deck are instantly awakened by this sudden movement and are thrown from their hammocks and mats. Loud, metallic clangs ring through the steerage deck below, followed by the hiss of escaping steam rising up from the stairwell leading into the lowest hold near their quarters’ doors. A DC 15 Arcana check reveals that the boilers are firing at dangerous levels. Any characters succeeding on a DC 23 Perception check can hear the shouting and banging of the trapped crew trying to break out of their locked doors.

INTO THE HOLD

When the characters open their door or peer below deck, a great rush of hot air blasts up from the stairwell. Something is going terribly wrong in the engine room. Any character on the cargo deck succeeding on a DC 21 Perception check catches a glimpse of the forceful splintering of the door to area 13, as Mykrin attempts to break out of the crew compartment.

PCs can assist the crew members trapped in their quarters, in the hope of bringing the careening vessel back under control. They can also investigate the problems in the engine room.

Unlike the wreck of the *Drake*, the large cargo bay loading grates on the *Manticore* are securely fastened on both levels. If a PC insists on taking this route rather than the stairs, it takes four consecutive DC 19 Dungeoneering or Thievery checks (one per round) to unfasten the bindings, and a DC 20 Strength check to open the heavy doors.

TRAPPED!

The PCs might also try to rescue the trapped dwarven crewmembers. To do so, they must cross the cluttered cargo bay (all movement considered squeezing) and break through the doors to the crew quarters, which include Boso and Otto in area 12; Mykrin, Zangen, and Matheus in area 13; and Brill, Brunerius, and Girolodus in area 14. Adjust for any losses to the rocs. The break DC for the good doors of the *Manticore* is currently 23 due to the arcane lock ritual, and they should be treated as large vault doors (see DMG page 64).

Any dwarves who become aware of the rescue attempt shout, “Get down to the engines and see what’s happening!” If the characters take this strongly worded hint, they should be penalized by 3 rounds on the Catastrophe Progression table.

Without player aid, Mykrin hacks his way out of area 13 in 6 rounds. Taking Strength and aid another actions into account, Otto can force open area 12 on a roll of 17-20, while the crew trapped in area 14 can break out with a roll of 19-20 each round. To avoid these rolls, just assume that the crewmembers of area 14 (Brill, Brunerius, and Girolodus) fail to escape and perish if the boilers explode.

Characters who opt to rescue the crew have probably saved their lives, but cannot prevent the explosion of the boilers in the engine room. On the 6th round, any crew members or characters in the immediate stern area (areas 12, 13, 14, and 17) are subject to the results of the explosion.

ANGER IN THE BOILER Room

PCs can stop Ansgar by rushing through the disheveled lower cargo hold (treat all movement as squeezing) to the engine room (see area 17) to investigate and, potentially, reverse the sabotage.

As the PCs descend the stairs, a loud wail erupts as Ansgar's glyph of warding (thunder) (trap) discharges and attacks. The spell is centered at the base of the stairs (see DMG page 90).

The door to the engine room hangs loosely from its hinges, knocked off by the intense pressure of the coal-powered furnace. Over an ominous, high-pitched squeal and through the hot miasma of steam that sprays the room in thick gout, an invisible Ansgar swings a large wrench onto a pressure release valve, severely denting the pipe and sending a shower of sparks dancing across the chamber. Red-hot iron rivets pop and ricochet from the large iron boiler as Ansgar swings again and again. After several strikes, he drops the tool to the floor with a loud metallic clang and turns a large release valve, sealing off a gout of pressurized steam. Ansgar begins the encounter invisible and needs to strike the boiler three times with his wrench (AC 25) before he can close the release valve. Ansgar needs 2 standard actions to close the release valve enough to ensure the boiler's explosion. If he spends an action point, the Catastrophe Countdown begins on the third round.

ENVIRONMENT

A character entering or beginning their turn inside the room wearing metal armor suffers 5 fire damage. In addition, anyone breathing in the smoke and scalding steam without adequate protection (such as Zangen's mask) may spend that round choking and coughing (+4 vs. Fortitude (+1/round in steam)); target is dazed until start of target's next turn). Anyone leaving the room for 1 round resets this save progression. The steam obscures vision, providing concealment to characters within it.

TERRAIN

Movement through the lower cargo bay is considered difficult terrain due to the disarray of boxes, crates, and supplies.

ANSGAR THE SILENT MASTER LEVEL 10 ELITE CONTROLLER

MEDIUM NATURAL HUMANOID (DWARF) XP 1,000

Initiative +8 **Senses** Perception +12; darkvision
Resolve of the Just Aura 3; all foes within the aura receive a -2 penalty to damage rolls

hp 204 **Bloodied** 102

AC 24 **Fortitude** 20 **Reflex** 24 **Will** 25

Immunity see *sprig of acacia* **Resist** 10 fire

Saving Throws +2

Speed 5

Action Points 1

[mba] **Saboteur's Wrench** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

+15 vs. AC; 2d6 + 5 damage

[m] **Flurry of Desperation** (standard; recharge on 5, 6) ♦ **Weapon**

+13 vs. AC; Ansgar may make two melee basic attacks on up to two valid adjacent targets

[a] **Foil the Uninitiated** (standard; encounter)

Area burst 2 within 5; +12 vs. Reflex; target is knocked prone and slowed (save ends)

Miss—target slides outside area of effect

[c] **Weakness of Ignorance** (minor; at-will)

Close blast 3; +12 vs. Will; target is pushed 3 squares and weakened (save ends)

Adverse Ballot (free action; daily)

Ansgar may "recast" his fate and force a reroll of one roll just made; the result of the reroll must be taken, even if it's worse than the original roll

Lux ex Tenebris (immediate reaction; daily)

Ansgar may reroll one failed saving throw

Sprig of Acacia

Ansgar prepares himself in life for the protection of secrets in the next, gaining immunity from *Speak with Dead* and other similar divinations cast after he dies; additionally, he cannot be forced to surrender through *Intimidation*

Stealth of Conspiracy (move, move sustains; at-will)

Ansgar becomes invisible until the end of his next turn and may move his speed

Alignment unaligned **Languages** Common, Dwarven
Skills Arcana +15, Athletics +9, Endurance +12, Perception +12

Str 8 (+4) **Dex** 17 (+8) **Wis** 14 (+7)

Con 14 (+7) **Int** 21 (+10) **Cha** 8 (+4)

Equipment Heavy wrench, leather armor, Zangen's gasmask

TACTICS

Ansgar batters the boiler with *saboteur's wrench* or *flurry of desperation* while using his *stealth of conspiracy* to remain hidden and *weakness of ignorance* to keep foes back. If he can hit with both attempts of his *flurry of desperation*, he'll use *foil the uninitiated* to knock as many foes prone as possible. If he hasn't needed to use his action point to push away foes, he'll use it to close the pressure release valves twice in a single round.

CATASTROPHE PROGRESSION

Make the escalation toward catastrophe very obvious to the players, as well as the opportunity to reverse the sabotage and prevent impending disaster. If the progression reaches Round 5, make it clear that an explosion is imminent and that anyone in the engine room is in extreme peril.

The countdown starts once Ansgar closes the release valve with 2 standard actions. Unless the PCs move unusually slowly to the engine room, assume the countdown begins 6 rounds after you ask them to roll for initiative. If they delay going to the engine room despite your hints, push back the beginning of countdown, but make sure they have at least a few rounds in which to act once they arrive.

When at the valves, a DC 21 Arcana or Thievery or a DC 24 Athletics or Endurance check made as a standard action allows the character to open the valves and release pressure, pausing the countdown at the current hazard level. (Even characters untrained in Arcana may make this check.) A second successful check halts the countdown completely. Ansgar has set the catastrophe in motion, and unless characters counteract it, the countdown proceeds automatically each round through the described hazards. If the characters do pause or reset the countdown, Ansgar may use a standard action to negate one of their checks by closing other valves and gauges scattered about the machine.

Powers with the Cold descriptor halt the progression for 2 rounds. They also cause the rivetstorm (hazard) attack to affect all in the room or adjacent to the door (see table below). Any power with the Fire descriptor cast within 4 squares of the engine advances the countdown by 1 round. (Halted rounds do not stack and cannot be increased until previous halted rounds expire; multiple cold descriptor powers used in the same round do not stack their duration.)

As long as Ansgar remains conscious, he uses his standard actions to undo any halting the PCs accomplish and push the catastrophe progression toward explosion. If he is defeated, the PCs can undo the sabotage without great effort.

NAVIGATING THE DYNAMICS OF THE ENCOUNTER

Several environmental factors contribute to the dynamic nature of this encounter. Assign a separate initiative count for the environmental effects of the engine room. The following is a concise list of the effects the characters might face each round:

- The effects of the Catastrophe Progression, adjusted each round for player interventions.
- The steam provides concealment to anyone in the engine room.
- Characters wearing metal armor suffer 5 fire damage each round they begin within the steam.
- Steam inhalation (+4 vs. Fortitude (+1/round in steam); target is dazed until start of target's next turn) forces full round spent choking.
- Difficult terrain constricts all movement in the steerage deck (see area 16).
- Ansgar may use a standard action to close pressure release valves once he has hit the boiler three times. Closing the valves does not break his invisibility or require him to make a skill check, but by doing so, he can counteract characters' efforts to halt the Catastrophe Progression.

TABLE 1-3: CATASTROPHE PROGRESSION

Round	Effect
1	Scalding Spray
2	Blastpipe Explosion
3	Firebox Embergout
4	Smokebox Plume
5	Rivetstorm
6	Boiler Explosion

HAZARDS

These countermeasures and considerations pertain to hazards at all levels of the countdown.

COUNTERMEASURES

Powers with the Cold descriptor prevent the current hazard from occurring this round and halt the catastrophe progression for 2 rounds; however, they also trigger a sudden rivetstorm (hazard) attack to occur, affecting all in the room or adjacent to the door this round instead (see below).

A DC 21 Arcana or Thievery check or a DC 24 Athletics or Endurance check made as a standard action allows a

character to shut off valves and release pressure, preventing the next hazard from occurring but not preventing the current hazard from recurring until a second check is made

CONSIDERATIONS

Any power with the Fire descriptor cast within 4 squares of the engine instantly advances the countdown by 1 round, skipping an entire hazard; characters with action points may expend them prior to the engine explosion (hazard) trigger.

Halted rounds do not stack.

SCALDING SPRAY

LEVEL 5 BLASTER MINION (HAZARD XP 50)

A spray of boiling water erupts from the furnace!

Hazard: Boiling water scalds those around the engine in the first round of sabotage.

Perception

DC 19—The character notices tiny goutts of steam getting larger and stronger and realizes being in proximity to the engine is dangerous.

Additional Skill (Arcana, Dungeoneering, Nature)

DC 21—Same as for Perception, above

Initiative +2

Trigger This hazard occurs on its initiative count when a character enters a square adjacent to it; it makes an attack as an immediate reaction.

Immediate Reaction Close burst 1

Target All creatures in adjacent squares

Attack +5 vs. Reflex

Hit 1d6 + 5 fire damage

Miss 6 damage

BLASTPIPE EXPLOSION

LEVEL 9 BLASTER MINION (HazardXP 100)

The blastpipe overloads and lets out a tremendous cacophony!

Hazard A pipe explodes, throwing shrapnel and spraying a huge cloud of superhot steam in the second round of sabotage.

Perception

DC 21—The character hears a high-pitched whine over the roar of the engine and sees the pipe beginning to buckle; realizing being near the engine is dangerous, the character gains a +2 bonus to their Fortitude defense as a minor action

Additional Skill (Arcana, Dungeoneering, Nature)

DC 24—Same as for Perception, above

Initiative +1

Trigger This hazard occurs on its initiative count

Immediate Reaction Burst 4

(centered randomly on a target in the room)

Target All creatures in adjacent squares

Attack +6 vs. Fortitude

Hit 2d8 + 5 thunder damage and knocked prone

Miss 9 damage

Upgrade to Elite

- Increase DCs of Arcana, Athletics, Dungeoneering, Endurance, Nature, Perception, and Thievery by 2
- Increase attack by +2 and increase damage to 3d8+5, and target is knocked prone

FIREBOX EMBERGOUT

LEVEL 10 BLASTER MINION (HAZARD XP 125)

The door to the firebox bursts open, filling the room with burning embers!

Hazard The firebox door explodes outward, blasting shrapnel and burning coals into the room during the third round of sabotage

Perception

DC 21—The character hears a high-pitched whine over the roar of the engine and sees the pipe beginning to buckle; realizing being near the engine is dangerous, the character gains a +2 bonus to their Fortitude defense as a minor action

Additional Skill (Arcana, Dungeoneering, Nature)

DC 24—Same as for Perception, above

Initiative +2

Trigger This hazard occurs on its initiative count

Immediate Reaction Burst special, see target

Target All creatures in the room

Attack +7 vs. Reflex

Hit 3d6 fire damage and ongoing 5 fire damage

Miss 5 damage and no ongoing damage

Upgrade to Elite

- Increase DCs of Arcana, Athletics, Dungeoneering, Endurance, Nature, Perception, and Thievery by 2
- Increase attack by +2 and increase damage to 3d8+5, and target is knocked prone

SMOKEBOX PLUME

LEVEL 11 BLASTER MINION (HAZARD XP 150)

The smokebox ruptures in an explosion of super-heated acrid smoke!

Hazard An exhaust pipe explodes, throwing shrapnel and spraying a huge cloud of acidic smoke in the fourth round of sabotage

Perception

DC 21—The character hears a high-pitched whine over the roar of the engine and sees the pipe beginning to buckle; realizing being near the engine is dangerous, the character gains a +2 bonus to their Fortitude defense as a minor action

Additional Skill (Arcana, Dungeoneering, Nature)

DC 24—Same as for Perception, above

Initiative +3

Trigger This hazard occurs on its initiative count

Immediate Reaction Burst special, see target

Target All creatures in the room

Attack +8 vs. Reflex

Hit 2d6 fire damage plus 2d6 acid damage and ongoing 5 acid damage

Miss 7 damage and no ongoing damage

RIVETSTORM

LEVEL 12 BLASTER MINION (HAZARD XP 175)

Popping rivets and bolts fly in all directions!

Hazard Plates, pipes, and grates buckle and burst while spraying shrapnel throughout the room

Perception

DC 21—The character hears a high-pitched whine and sees the pipe beginning to buckle; realizing being near the engine is dangerous, the character gains a +2 bonus to their Fortitude defense as a minor action

Additional Skill (Arcana, Dungeoneering, Nature)

DC 24—Same as for Perception, above

Initiative +4

Trigger This hazard occurs on its initiative count

Immediate Reaction Burst special, see target

Target All creatures in the room

Attack +9 vs. Reflex

Hit 5d6 damage

Miss 8 damage

Upgrade to Elite

- Increase DCs of Arcana, Athletics, Dungeoneering, Endurance, Nature, Perception, and Thievery by 2
- Increase attack by +2 and increase damage to 5d8+5, and target is knocked prone

BOILER EXPLOSION

LEVEL 13 BLASTER MINION (HAZARD XP 200)

Explosion! The boilers explode, resulting in a cave-in as the stern crumbles!

Hazard A massive blast of fire and metal sprays death throughout the room

Perception

DC 21—The character hears a high-pitched whine over the roar of the engine and sees the pipe beginning to buckle; realizing being near the engine is dangerous, the character gains a +2 bonus to their Fortitude defense as a minor action

Additional Skill (Arcana, Dungeoneering, Nature)

DC 24—Same as for Perception, above

Initiative +5

Trigger This hazard occurs on its initiative count

Immediate Reaction Burst special, see target

Target All creatures in the room

Attack +10 vs. Reflex

Hit 2d6 damage plus 4d6 fire damage and ongoing 5 fire damage

Miss Half damage and ongoing 5 fire damage

Upgrade to Elite

- Increase DCs of Arcana, Athletics, Dungeoneering, Endurance, Nature, Perception, and Thievery by 2
- Increase attack by +2, and increase damage to 2d8 damage plus 4d6 fire damage and ongoing 10 fire damage plus target is knocked prone
- Change damage for a miss to: Half damage and ongoing 10 fire damage

10TH LEVEL ENCOUNTER:

- 4 PCs (2,000 XP) • glyph of warding (thunder) (trap), Ansgar, Catastrophe Progression
- 5 PCs (2,500 XP) • elite glyph of warding (thunder) (trap), Ansgar, Catastrophe Progression (with elite blastpipe explosion)
- 6 PCs (3,000 XP) • elite glyph of warding(thunder) (trap), Ansgar, Catastrophe Progression (with elite blastpipe explosion, elite firebox embergout, elite rivetstorm [*hazard event only, not power response*], and elite engine explosion)

EXPLOSION!

If the PCs fail to stop Ansgar (either by failing to stop him in the engine room or by simply not going down to it for 12 rounds), a tremendous explosion rips the ship asunder, sending vast shards of red-hot boilerplate and showers of hardwood splinters in all directions. The rear hull of the airship is blown to pieces as it violently collapses in a jumbled array of engine parts, support beams, nearby cargo, and dwarven crewmembers unable to escape the compartments above.

The explosion destroys the stern sections of the two lowest decks—areas 12, 13, 14, and 17—and severely damages the mate quarters and galley on the main deck—area 15 is destroyed up to the stairs. Characters in or adjacent to the engine room, Ansgar, and any dwarves in the crew compartments above suffer an attack from the explosion (Attack +6 vs. Reflex; Hit 8d6 damage and 8d6 fire damage, target is knocked prone; Miss half damage). A character knocked prone or reduced to 0 hp must make a saving throw or be thrown from the exploding wreckage of the ship, landing on the mountain side 80 ft. below, taking falling damage as normal (8d10). Those who are knocked prone but make their save must save again or be immobilized beneath the debris (save ends).

AFTERMATH

If the explosion occurred, the characters can shamble through the wreckage and witness the destruction. Roughly 10 tons of cargo is lost (half of the original 20 tons). After careful evaluations of the damage by Clovis and his remaining crew, liftgas reserve tanks are recovered from the disarray of the cargo and the gasbags refilled. The *Manticore* carries a complicated backup mechanism consisting of a winding lever, a central gear housing, and a propeller. While it is an efficient machine, two crewmembers must work in tandem to drive the propeller, and as there is a shortage of able bodies due to the explosion, the dubious honor falls upon the characters. While operating the crank, PCs must succeed on a DC 21 Athletics check each 1/2 hour or lose a healing surge.

THE SECRETS OF ANSGAR

With the crew compartment possibly destroyed in the blast, and Ansgar himself blown out and slain with the force of the explosion, investigation alone cannot reveal the reasoning behind his sabotage. His body, if recovered, provides as many mysteries as it solves. Ansgar's body bears many unusual tattoos, including a set of fiery pillars and arcane symbols on his chest and a relatively fresh and intricate tattoo of a crypt on his back. A DC 15 Heal check reveals that the crypt was applied within the last 3 weeks. Rabscuttle coos in awe of the elaborate design.

ANSGAR'S BUNK

If the crew quarters survived, the characters can search Ansgar's footlocker, which is fastened with a good lock (DC 27 Thievery check). In addition to the normal accoutrements of a normal crewmember's footlocker, Ansgar's contains a pair of stark-white cloth gauntlets neatly folded atop a richly embroidered blacksmith apron, although it is obvious from the intricately fine quality that it was never intended for actual use.

Beneath these items is a voluminous maroon robe trimmed with a belt of gold chain worth 20 gp. The robe, apron, and gloves all display the flaming pillar and many other neatly worked and sometimes cleverly concealed esoteric symbols (some are duplicated on the tattoo on Ansgar's back). An *elixir of invisibility* is tucked away under the garments (with an identical empty vial found on Ansgar's bunk). At the bottom, rests a black leather-bound book, a flaming pillar embossed in gold on its cover. This is Ansgar's personal Brotherhood Codex (see sidebar), which resembles a normal spellbook.

Clovis has no idea what to make of these events, and Vianna—along with most of the crew—is furious and saddened at any losses suffered by the crew. No one in the crew can identify the symbols on Ansgar's possessions.

THE PLAGUE STRIKES!

If the *Drake* cargo was brought on board, all aboard the *Manticore* are subject to gold fever due to their proximity to the corrupted cargo, with a saving throw made each morning to resist the effects for another day. Be as discreet about the illness as possible, and try to keep the disease—and especially its source—a mystery. Remain aware of the characters' ability to potentially thwart the illness with magic, although magic does not prevent further chances of infection.

Choose three surviving crewmembers to become infected with gold fever. If they survived the catastrophe, Brill, Brunerius, and Gioldus are excellent candidates. If those members perished in the explosion, Boso, Otto, and Zangen are most likely to succumb to the disease. Disarm the characters' suspicions with offhand remarks, for only as they approach the citadel should the crew begin displaying the more advanced delirium that puts the ship in jeopardy.

Vianna contracts the disease immediately. It is crucial to the adventure that Vianna remain sick. If the characters cure her, she relapses the following day. Although the PCs only have a brief few hours to act in any case, Sawbones can certainly intervene if the characters become too cure-happy, as he prefers non-life-threatening illnesses to run their course—it toughens his crew. As the ship remains under his care, he sees to it that the characters defer to his decision until he decides his crew needs magical treatment.

NEW ITEM

Brotherhood Codex

These specially prepared ritual books serve members of the Illuminated Brotherhood as keys to the cabalistic secrets and occult rituals of their secret order.

Implement (Codex), Wondrous Item

Lvl 5	+1	1,000 gp
Lvl 10	+2	5,000 gp
Lvl 15	+3	25,000 gp
Lvl 20	+4	125,000 gp
Lvl 25	+5	625,000 gp
Lvl 30	+6	3,125,000 gp

Enhancement Attack rolls and damage rolls

Critical +1d6 damage per plus

Property This book doubles as an implement and a ritual book; a codex is a universal implement, emulating any other type of implement, but altering the type of implement requires 8 hours of study; it contains 5 rituals at no additional cost of the same level or lower as the codex (any additional rituals add to the item's cost)

Property A *mnemonic fob* is required to read rituals from the book (but not to use it as an implement); those not inducted into the Illuminated Brotherhood require Comprehend Languages to read the rituals already contained within and require twice the time to master them

Property The codex grants a +5 bonus to all skill checks made during the casting of any ritual transcribed within

Transducing Action (free; daily)

When performing a ritual from the codex, you can substitute another skill for required skill checks.

GOLD FEVER

LEVEL 12 DISEASE

Caused by cursed gold, or orichalcum, this disease drives victims mad and muderous with greed.

Attack: +16 vs Fortitude

Endurance: improve DC 22, maintain DC 17, worsen DC 16 or less.

The target is cured.

◀ Initial Effect ▶

The target begins each day with no action points and takes 5 necrotic damage, which cannot be healed until the disease is cured. Each time the target becomes bloodied, it is stunned (save ends).



The target cannot use action points. At the start of each day, the target takes 10 necrotic damage, which cannot be healed until the disease is cured. Any time the target is bloodied, it is dominated (save ends), with a goal of killing anyone nearby and taking their gold. If the target makes its save and is still bloodied, it cannot become dominated for a number of rounds equal to its Constitution modifier.

▶ Final State

Target gains the goldveined template and may now use action points. Previous disease-inflicted necrotic damage may now be healed. Goldveined templated creatures fall under the control of the GM, but the template may be removed and player control restored with Remove Affliction and Cure Disease rituals performed in succession.



GOLDVEINED CREATURE

If gold fever is allowed to run its course, Mammon's curse twists the victim's body and mind to better serve the devil lord's purposes. The result is a permanently fevered creature with golden eyes, blood speckled by flakes of cursed orichalcum, and a frenzied lust for wealth of all kinds. Mammon's followers consider it a holy blessing, but to everyone else, it's a terrible curse.

GOLDVEINED TEMPLATE	
Prerequisites beast, humanoid	
GOLDVEINED CREATURE BEAST OR HUMANOID (ELEMENTAL)	ELITE CONTROLLER XP ELITE
Senses darkvision	
Defenses +1 AC; +2 Will	
Saving throws +2	
Resist 5 fire	
Action Points 1	
hp +8 per level + Constitution score	
[m] For Love of Money (immediate interrupt, when goldveined creature is targeted by a melee attack; at-will)	
Level +4 vs. Will against the attacker; instead of attacking the goldveined creature, the attacker makes a melee basic attack against an adjacent target of the goldveined creature's choice (if no such target exists, no attack is made)	
[r] All that Glitters (standard, recharge on 6)	
Ranged 10; level +4 vs. Will; the target is pulled 5 squares and dazed (save ends)	
Fatal Bequest	
Upon death, a gold-veined creature vomits forth an amount of greed-tainted gold pieces equal to its level	
Madness of the Mines ♦ Psychic	
If the goldveined creature is hit by a charm affect, its insane mind causes painful psychic feedback to rebound upon the caster, inflicting psychic damage equal to the goldveined creature's charisma ability modifier (this counts as exposure to gold fever)	

...THE SUDDEN STOP

As the seventh day progresses, the mood is grim. The winds keep picking up and flurries of snow blow across the ship's bow and accumulate on the deck. The hours lost either repairing the boiler or relying on the manual propeller has cost the expedition valuable time, and the storm is catching up despite their best efforts:

The battle against the accumulation of ice has become fruitless—the weather is winning. An already powerful wind has become outright unbearable, penetrating

clothing, skin, pores, and bones, making it difficult to work and even more difficult to concentrate. Buffeted by the storm, the Manticore is straining under the pressure. The crew scrambles to keep the airship aloft, while snow flurries make spotting the treacherous peaks ahead difficult. Weary, sick, and tired, the heads of the crew raise with a renewed energy when the lookout finally rings out: "Captain Clovis! Citadel off starboard!"

The Golden Citadel straddles the thin rim of the caldera of an extinct volcano, massive towers struggling skyward, a golden pallor gleaming through the gray gloom. Another gust of icy wind interrupts the brief clarity, ripping at the rigging and showering the deck with shards of splintered ice.

THE SNOW ON THE PEAKS

As the PCs peer through the increasingly heavy flurry of snow, a DC 23 Perception check on the approach to the Citadel reveals a large bank of snow on the otherwise bare stone of the caldera. It seems to have taken some unusual form, like symbols or letters, and appears unaffected by the storm. Anyone able to read Primordial can identify the word "cursed" mysteriously spelled out by the fallen snow on the peak below.

A COLD RECEPTION

A gang of ravenous frost giants has been harassing the settlers at the upper gates of the Golden Citadel for the last 2 days. Unable to penetrate the defenses of the stronghold, they now consider the crippled and storm-tossed *Manticore* an easy meal:

Clovis yells that no mooring team is stationed on the docking tower, as his jaw clenches in grim realization of the ship's fate. The pilot grunts and moans, straining to control the vessel when a tremendous force jars the ship as if it has run aground. Another jolt shakes the vessel, and a glance over the rail reveals two huge holes have ripped through the hull. Someone, or something, is attacking the ship!

While they are on the ship, the PCs should be considering two options: attacking the frost giants or helping the crew try to land as safely as possible. While they can soften up the giants from the relative safety of the airship, this will most likely result in more damage during the crash. However, if the PCs assist the crew in putting the ship down, they face a gang of uninjured giants after taking a bruising in the crash. The characters are welcome to split their efforts. Because the airship is already rapidly falling out of the sky, anyone choosing to jump overboard takes 8d10 points of damage, regardless of at what point they choose to do so.

PUTTING HER DOWN

SKILL CHALLENGE (1,050 XP)

Setup You have the option of assisting with the handling of the airship as it crashes, and the level of success will determine the severity of the crash when it occurs; you have 4 rounds before the airship comes to a catastrophic stop

Level 8th-level challenge

Complexity 3 (requires 8 successes before 3 failures)

Primary Skills Athletics, History, Perception, and Thievery

Athletics and Thievery (DC 14)—You help the struggling helmsman turn the wheel, move shifting cargo out of the way, or otherwise perform strenuous feats to aid the crew.

History (DC 19)—You have spent some time studying airships or, more importantly, airship crashes, and while you may not be able to operate one, you know some of the errors made in the past and are able to help the crew avoid repeating those mistakes.

Perception (DC 14)—You provide another pair of eyes for the crew, making sure the ship doesn't drift into the mountainside or the docking tower; you call out when you detect the ship listing too far in one direction or the other and try to monitor the rapidly changing condition of the vessel.

Success/Failure When you have accumulated 3 failures, or 4 rounds have elapsed, the airship crashes; the extent of the damage from this catastrophe depends on the number of successes you achieved prior to the crash (see table).

TABLE 1-4: CRASH CONSEQUENCES

Success	Healing surges lost ¹	Survivors	Cargo Destroyed
7-8	2	One crewmember of the GM's choice ²	5 tons
5-6	3	Clovis	7 tons
3-4	4	Sawbones	10 tons
1-2	5	Matheus	12 tons
0	6	Rabscuttle, Vianna	15 tons

¹All passengers listed for fewer successes also survive (i.e. Rabscuttle and Vianna survive regardless of the number of successes obtained).

²Ideally, this should be someone to which the players have developed a particularly close attachment.

After 4 rounds or 3 failures in the skill challenge, the inevitable happens:

The giants' boulders and the heavy winds are too much for the Manticore. The dirigible rips and liftgas rapidly evacuates the gas bladders as the ship quickly

loses altitude. The damage and the storm have taken their toll, and the calls of the crew leave little doubt that the ship and the peak are about to become one... the walls of the docking tower loom ahead, and the ship is going down.

Once the crash occurs, the PCs have only a moment to get their bearings before the frost giants move in to finish off their kill.

TERRAIN

Snow—The raging storm has already left a substantial accumulation of snow outside the citadel. All squares are considered difficult terrain and lightly obscured.

Wreckage—What is left of the *Manticore* further inhibits the PCs' movement, costing a total of 4 squares of movement. However, the debris also provides total cover to those that seek it and partial cover otherwise.

10TH LEVEL ENCOUNTER

- 4 PCs (2,000 XP) • 4 frost giants
- 5 PCs (2,500 XP) • 5 frost giants
- 6 PCs (3,000 XP) • 6 frost giants

FROST GIANT	LEVEL 10 BRUTE
LARGE ELEMENTAL HUMANOID (GIANT)	
XP 500	
Initiative +4	Senses Perception +6
hp 129 each	Bloodied 64
AC 22	Fortitude 23
	Reflex 17
	Will 20
Resist 15 cold	
Speed 8	
[mba] Greataxe (standard; at-will) ♦ Cold, Weapon	
Reach 2; +13 vs. AC; 2d6 + 5 damage and 1d6 cold damage	
[c] Sweeping Greataxe (standard; encounter) ♦ Cold, Weapon	
Requires greataxe; close burst 2; +11 vs. AC; 2d10 + 5 damage plus 2d10 cold damage	
[r] Toss Boulder (standard; at-will)	
Ranged 8/16; +13 vs. AC; 3d6 + 5 damage	
Alignment evil	Language Giant
Skills Athletics +15, Intimidate +11	
Str 21 (+10)	Dex 8 (+4)
	Wis 12 (+6)
Con 19 (+9)	Int 7 (+3)
	Cha 9 (+4)
Equipment hide armor, greataxe	

CONCLUDING THE ENCOUNTER

Once the frost giants have been defeated, the PCs can turn their attention back to the wreckage of the *Manticore*:

Delirious dwarven crewmembers pick their way out of the wreckage and attempt to recover the buried survivors and the bodies of the deceased. Wails go out as crewmembers discover dead friends. Wounded dwarves, their faces bloody and their clothes in tatters, wander around in confusion. There is little time. The storm is raging, and shelter must be found if anyone is to survive.

From between the imposing towers of the citadel, a massive gate moans and slowly creaks open. Several dozen thin and ragged humans, some obviously afflicted and all armed, nervously shuffle through the massive portal, staring at the scene in disbelief. One moves to the fore of the rabble and extends a nervous, shaking hand. "Thank the gods you've come. Thank the gods. May they have mercy on you all."

Regardless of the final results of the skill challenge, the devastation to the *Manticore* itself is severe. Rabscuttle and a sick Vianna must survive for future adventures. If Matheus survived, he can provide information on Bragollach to the cult. If the PCs made an active effort to help the crew in the last moments of the *Manticore*'s decent, it's possible that Sawbones and even Clovis survive the crash as well. Sawbones can provide valuable assistance and healing for the player characters as the adventures progress, tempered as the GM sees fit by his administrations to the sick refugees. All other hands have been lost in the crash.

The storm does not subside and the PCs must get the supplies indoors before they are buried in thick snow. Some of the refugees will help move the cargo, although many stop to gorge themselves on the spilled contents of some cracked crate or collapse in the wreckage from exhaustion.

If the PCs look for the recovered chest from the *Drake* in the wreckage, an injured Clovis will lay a firm hand on a character's shoulder and whisper "We'd best leave that buried for now" while attempting to conceal the chest with wreckage. Night is falling, and the winds are only getting fiercer. It is time to move inside.

PART IV

The Great Hall of the Golden Citadel

In the chaos following the crash, the settlers bring in the supplies from the storm. As the final supplies make it inside, the PCs see that a dozen heavily armed guards have taken posts around the supplies, keeping the voracious rabble at bay. As the gates shut, the crowd parts and the charismatic Halston makes his introduction.

Halston is a man of incredible bulk and humongous proportions, wearing a pair of tiny spectacles at the end of his pudgy nose that he frequently adjusts. He steps to the front of the crowd, bowing as low as his great girth allows. In a booming voice he calls out:

"Welcome, my friends, to the Golden Citadel. My name is Halston. Captain Clovis! Captain Stimme said we should expect you! Please allow me to offer my services.

"As you can see, we do have a great many mouths to feed and the job can be somewhat... ahem... intimidating. My men and I have administrative services in place to see to the needs of all as best we are able. I am prepared to purchase your entire shipment at an extraordinarily generous sum, so we can help those who cannot help themselves."

The PCs certainly have a stake here, and may negotiate and weigh in on the transaction and the moral dilemma of selling food in front of hundreds of starving onlookers. As the owner of the cargo, Clovis is eager to sell it and leave the Golden Citadel. A DC 25 Insight check reveals Clovis looks a little too eager to sell the goods to Halston, who used his *eyes of charming*. A DC 21 Arcana check identifies the magic used on the dwarf.

The merchant lord's gold collection effort is in serious jeopardy, and he offers 10,000 gp in gems and platinum per ton of recovered cargo (50,000 gp for 5 tons or 150,000 gp for 15). This far exceeds Vianna's profit estimations and increases the size of the characters' cut. Halston warns the survivors not to simply release the food to the public, for doing so will likely lead to uncontrollable riots with the formation of a black market for food. If the characters prevent Halston's acquisition of the shipment or deny his offer, he views them as enemies.

Vianna strongly urges the sale of the entire shipment but requests payment in orichalcum, a suggestion that seems to make Halston very uncomfortable (DC 21 Insight check).

While Vianna's insistence might have been a deal breaker for Halston if the crew had the means to leave, he relents, trusting that he can earn the money back by charging inordinate sums from the new arrivals for services and goods. If it looks like the deal is about to go through, read or paraphrase the following:

A cry raises up from among the throng: "What are we waiting for? What about the starving poor?" A thin, clearly overtaxed man stumbles through the crowd, averting his eyes from the party with a downward cast. "Halston's prices are too high! How can anyone think of gold anymore? What of the poor? What of the sick? Please give us food!"

In response, Halston steps forward confidently, and his guards nudge the man back into the crowd. "You'll have to excuse Father Jappe. He is quite burdened by his ministrations to the sick, poor, and dying. Please tell us, Father Jappe—what of the dead? Where are their bodies? You have yet to offer satisfactory information. Do you truly think we believe they just got up and walked away, as you suggest? Hmmmm?" The gathered rabble responds with japes and jeers at the cleric, who leaves without response.

At that, Halston turns to the PCs and other survivors with a wide grin and the desire to close the deal. At this point, the characters are most likely unaware of the incredible inflation within the halls, but they might nevertheless have the foresight to convince Clovis into not selling all of the supplies to Halston. They can also take their cut in food rather than gold (at the credit of 10,000 gp per ton). For purposes of this adventure, a ton of food can feed 100 people for 1 week without rationing. With more than 400 people inhabiting the halls (both those in the upper halls and the dwarves and cult below), there are only enough supplies for 10-30 days, depending on the losses suffered in the crash and sabotage. With careful rationing, the food can last double this duration, although Halston cares nothing for conservation.

If Halston buys the entire shipment, the PCs soon learn of the inflation that runs rampant in the settlement and have to suffer the consequences of their greed. If they decline his offer and start opening crates and passing out food for free, or turn the duties over to another, a riot might form (see the adventure hook, "Riot!"). In that case, prices plummet to only 100 times the standard costs (see the PHB page 222), but the PCs make a lethal enemy in Halston. His camp, as well as his cult, opposes the characters at every turn.

If the crew sells the entire shipment to Halston, Clovis gives the group their 5% share of the profits as agreed. In the aftermath of the crash, the PCs are free to do as they please. They might feel some loyalty to Clovis, and he certainly feels loyal to them.

ECONOMY OF STARVATION

The laws of supply and demand determine almost every NPC action in the refugee camps of the citadel. While they are not initially aware of it, when the PCs arrive the cost of food is inflated to 1,000 times normal thanks to the greed of the merchants, who are loyal to the cult of Mammon. The prices stay at that level if Halston acquires the entire shipment. A common daily meal of stale bread and stew to feed a normal family of four costs in excess of 1,200 gp.

TABLE 1-5: INFLATED FOOD PRICES

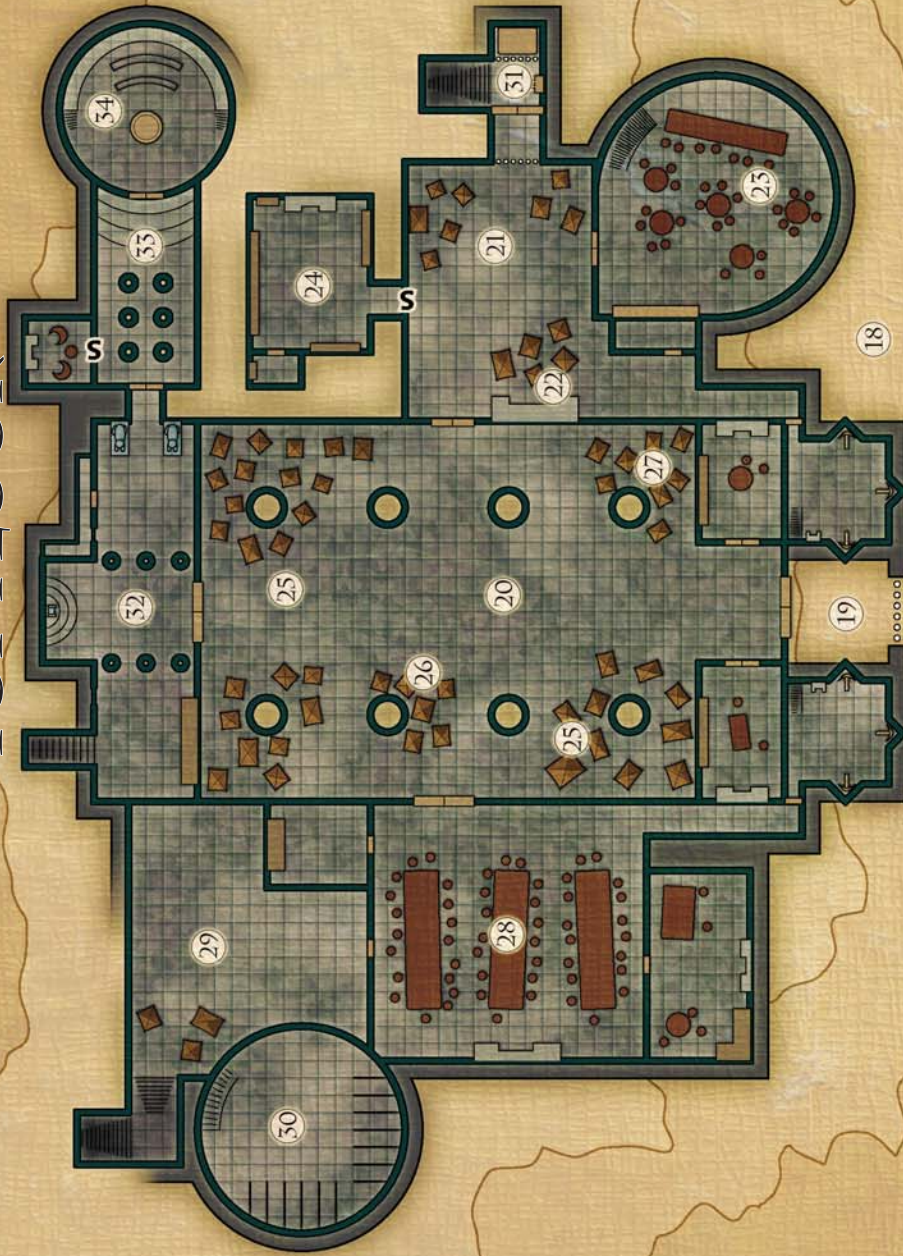
Item	Price
Ale, mug	50 gp
Cured hamhock	300 gp
Poor wine, bottle	200 gp
Small wheel of cheese	100 gp
Stale loaf of bread	20 gp
Daily Meals (per person):	
Poor	100 gp
Common	300 gp

THE GOLD FEVER

Gold fever consumes the upper halls. No faction goes untouched by the corruption the tainted gold spreads—at least a quarter of the settlers are afflicted. At this time, no one outside of the cult knows that the gold is the source of the disease, and most have simply accepted it as a physical manifestation of greed and a plague of the gods for their shallow materialism. In fact, the chosen term for the disease in the halls is "greed fever."



GOLDEN CITADEL
TOP FLOOR



- 18. MANTICORE CRASH SITE
- 19. FRONT GATE & DEFENSES
- 20. GREAT HALL
- 21. MERCHANT CAMPS & BAZAAR
- 22. FIREWOOD HOARDER CAMP
- 23. THE KNUCKLEBONE
- 24. THE MUSEUM OF BARTHOLOMEUS
- 25. STARVING MASSES CAMP
- 26. QUARANTINED SICK CAMP
- 27. STRUCK IT RICH CAMP
- 28. THE RUINED FEAST HALL
- 29. GRIFFON BARDING & TACK WAREHOUSE
- 30. GRIFFON TOWER & STABLES
- 31. ELEVATOR/LOWER HOLD ACCESS
- 32. UPPER BROTHERHOOD LODGE
- 33. GRAND LODGE OF OLD MASTERS
- 34. OLD MASTER COUNCIL CHAMBER

RUMORS OF THE HALLS

Streetwise checks made in the Golden Citadel and the Great Hall reveal the following information. (PCs learn the information of the DC they make plus that from all the lower DCs as well.)

TABLE 1-6: STREETWISE

DC	Result
16	Just after the departure of the <i>Drake</i> , dwarves arrested two human miners who were charged and publicly executed for the murder of the Many-Bearded Elder, Madka Podpora, leader of the dwarves. The dwarves then disappeared, although some scouts report seeing their settlement deep below, where they have girded for war against some threat. Many believe the dwarves conceal massive hordes of food in the lower depths, and some desperate refugees seek out these caches in hopes of feeding their families.
18	Three tomb raiders recently explored a poisonous, acidic passage in the lower hold, seeking food, supplies, and wealth, but only two returned. Other refugees whisper that they murdered their companion in the darkness below. The two disappeared into the depths when the community turned against them. Miners also report that placing an ear against the stone walls on the second level reveals a distant howling resonating through the stone there.
20	At times, small groups of white-robed priests, including some who once lived in the upper halls, appear among the camps, seeking out select individuals and proclaiming to all the glories of riches and wealth and freedom from care. They disappear soon afterward, leading converts to their cause below. These same priests confronted Halston after the <i>Drake</i> departed, and he afterward increased his prices, doubling them daily. His armed guard made it impossible to reason with him, and the riches gathered by so many desperate souls quickly changed hands.
22	Rumors among the miners claim that a brotherhood of strange, hooded Silent Masters infused with mystical power rule the dwarves. Their esoteric symbols are worked into the elaborate stonework of the Golden Citadel, and the more conspiracy-minded refugees happily point them out to PCs and extrapolate on the evil—thought-control, flaming pillars, and occult symbolism. Other miners tell of vast caverns full of strange howling and glimpses of stunted and mutated humanoids in the lower holds.

THE REFUGEE CAMPS

The vast, cavernous Great Hall of the Golden Citadel is home to hundreds of cold, hungry, and desperate miners and gold-rush fools. Since their arrival several weeks ago, the steady stream of hungry prospectors have faced more adversity from the inhospitable dwarves than from the outside storm

itself. Initially, the upper halls were kept warm by the Eight Great Pillars: great brass and iron columns intricately molded with bizarre symbolism and dwarven deities with glowing eyes and mouths, which are the warm chimneys of deeper forges (see area 39). Segregated camps composed of lean-tos, shacks, tents, and hovels began springing up around these warm vents, each a faction of like-minded or opportunistic settlers and each with different circumstances, means, and motivations.

The various factions and camps are presented below. The upper halls are intended as a home base for the characters, allowing them to rest and integrate into the complex society of the large group of desperate, stranded individuals. Many adventure hooks are provided as springboards to further excitement, as well as sample NPCs who provide excellent flavor for the settlement. Some are kind and generous, others selfish and violent. Customize it to fit your style of group play.

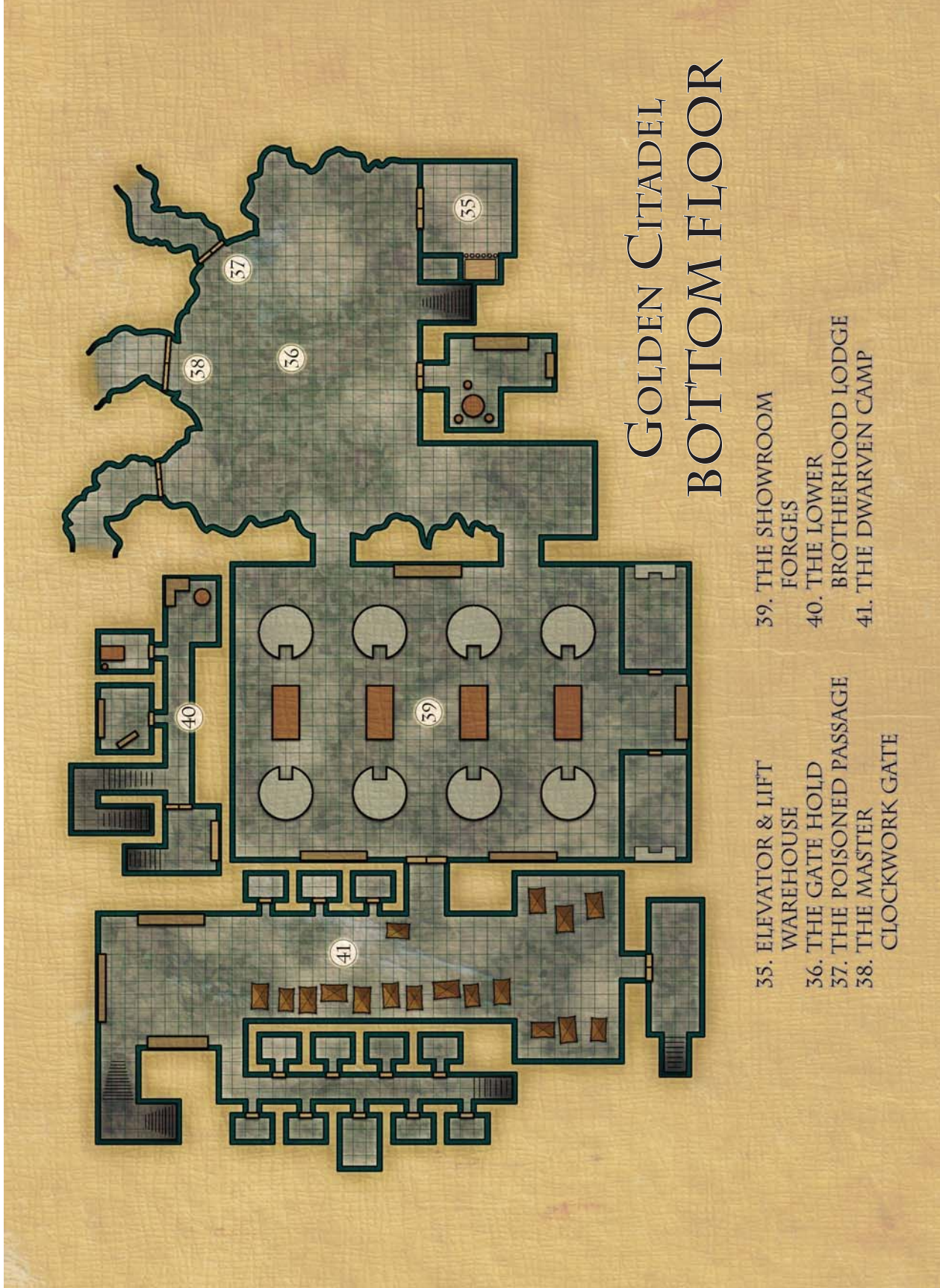
AREA 21: INFLATIONISTS (MERCHANT CAMPS AND BAZAAR)

Many of the settlers are secretly Mammonites with the foresight to hoard food and necessities in order to charge outrageous prices for these precious supplies. When the PCs arrive, the Mammonites charge more than 1,000 gp per day to feed a family. The merchant class here, including Halston, numbers only six individuals, although they hired a healthy retinue of bodyguards whose loyalty they buy with full bellies. Each merchant retains at least six such guards (chaotic evil male and female human fighter 4) at any one time, bringing the number of their camp to more than 40 individuals.

If confronted about their enterprise, members of this small and exclusive camp are quick to prattle on about “free markets” and “supply and demand” and cleverly sidestep the moral conundrums that result. This group also controls the portcullis access to the lower halls (see area 31).

Halston the Just (evil male human). Grossly obese, Halston’s gaudy jewelry glints as he plays with the loose waddle under his multiple chins. His smug, purring voice and mouthful of gold-capped teeth make Halston look like a fat feline ready to pounce on wounded prey. Halston is a recent convert of the Mammonites, who “coerced” him into joining them after he allowed so much orichalcum to slip out through the *Drake*’s supply purchase. He is loyal to the cult, funneling the vast sums of collected gold to the massive project in Heartsblood Forge (see chapter 6). His *eyes of charming* help immensely in his effort.

Balin Krotov (unaligned male dwarf rogue 1). The voice, eyes, and ears of Halston, Balin has a tongue that likes to gossip, but useful tidbits only slip when the price is right. In the halls, Balin owes hundreds of favors and likewise hundreds of favors are due to him as he barter among the



inhabitants for food, materials, and rumors. If the characters seek goods here in the halls, he can make the deal happen.

Adventure Hooks. If the PCs did not agree to Halston's initial terms or offers or catch his attempted enchantment, the merchant pays a cohort to poison a portion of the food supplies with dark toxin in an attempt to re-corner the market.

AREA 22: FIREWOOD HOARDER CAMP

In recent days, before the arrival of the frost giant at the gate, Jorgen and his group of 10 heartless, hardened loyalists braved the harsh winter on the slopes to collect what little firewood was available at this altitude. The lumber is priceless since the elementals left the forges and the chimneys that radiated their warmth went cold. A single day's worth costs 500 gp. Due to their forays into the lower halls to collect small flammable scraps for inventory, many refugees are openly hostile toward the firewood hoarders. They suspect their young sorcerer set the elementals of the lower hold free, shutting off the warm chimneys and increasing the demand for fuel.

Jorgen Stravbard (unaligned male dwarf fighter 4). A grizzled old miner, whose cries of "Well, ye curs be durned" from behind his hired guards and roaring fireplace echo through the halls with each freezing settler seeking warmth. Five human thugs (unaligned male and female warrior 3) rotate guard duty to protect the merchant's inventory, and another four scoundrels (unaligned male human rogue 1), led by a young sorcerer named Vanessi (unaligned female human sorcerer 4) round out the camp. These scoundrels are Jorgen's gatherers, who sneak away late at night to explore the deeper halls for more fuel. These trips serve a double purpose, as Vanessi and her four devotees are Mammonite cultists who disrupted the elemental wards at the suggestion of a mysterious lurker known as the Journeyman (see chapter 2).

Adventure Hooks. After the crash, the characters see Vanessi beguile one of the crewmembers of the *Manticore* with a spell to sell her boss the leftover supply crates. The potential source of free firewood from the crash signals the beginning of the end of Jorgen's profitable enterprise here in the halls.

Encountering Jorgen near his camp, the PCs may make DC 20 Perception checks to note that the dwarf tries to hide his secret passion—embroidering in needlepoint. Jorgen is quick to succumb to blackmail, lest his secret be revealed. In return for their discretion, he can confirm that Vanessi met with someone known only as the Journeyman, and the elemental wards broke shortly thereafter.

AREA 23: KOBOLDS (THE KNUCKLEBONE)

Just as the human miners came to the Golden Citadel seeking aid, so too did some five dozen kobolds. Initially turned out by the dwarves, the kobolds nevertheless worked their way inside the citadel. Once they established a foothold, the tide of tiny, ankle-biting refugees was unstoppable. Led by Old Ossa, the "Squinting King," the kobolds wasted no time setting up a camp for the harlots, drunkards, and parasites that followed at a bar known as the Knucklebone.

After weaseling their way into the dwarven halls, Old Ossa and his gang swiftly installed themselves in the crumbling remains of the airship-mooring tower. Using spare parts for silverware, propellers for benches, cut gasbags for tablecloths, and patch planks for tables and bars, they set up a makeshift tavern offering the very worst kind of cheap liquor, harlots of various races, and entertainments such as dire weasel fights, dogmole baiting, and bare-knuckle boxing.

Although loathed by the dwarves, Ossa's people held their own and the result has been quite popular, especially for those with gold to spend and a taste for gambling or violence. At all hours, a motley assemblage of tomb robbers, black marketers, drunkards, and fools congregate in the smoky haze of the Knucklebone, and roguish adventurers looking for contacts inevitably find themselves at Old Ossa's door. If the PCs need a guard to look the other way, a smuggled forsaken artifact, or just some decent food, Ossa can supply it or else knows someone who can.

Old Ossa, the Squinting King (evil male kobold rogue 6). King Ossa, also known as Old Ossa, is determined to keep the halls entertained. Hobbling and hoary, the Squinting King still maintains a gambler's love of life. His eyes glitter at any opportunity for profit or mischief and he can rarely resist a bet. Physically, he's an unimpressive, stooped, and venerable kobold with a severe squint, but what he lacks in appearance he makes up in bombastic bravado. Verbose and creatively abusive, Ossa's mocking tones are unmistakable.

Ossa's goals are to keep his business running and the halls stable and secure. He forged a formidable position in the underbelly of the halls and is not about to give it up to dwarves, forsaken, or Mammon himself. Despite the worsening situation, it's become a point of pride for Old Ossa to leave only of his own volition and with bulging sacks of loot. This defiant attitude and drive for order is slowly turning him into a figure of authority among the refugees. He is earning their genuine respect and, in return, developing a paternal (if abusive) relationship toward his fellow squatters.

Lazy Toe-Belcher (evil male kobold rogue 4). Kicked out of Zobeck for his incessant need to construct annoying traps throughout the kobold ghetto, this talented kobold tinkerer joined the gold rush to find some shiny coin. He brought along his 16 offspring, and along the way, he is training his fledgling swarm the fine art of trap-building, which they practice all over the halls—much to everyone’s annoyance.

Dalm Grendshood (unaligned male dwarf). Former Brewmaster in the halls, Dalm is now grudgingly partnered with the Knucklebone. He desperately seeks out any travelers who might spare some grain or hops, so he can continue his brewing duties. Dalm maintains a healthy colony of yeast but knows his future batches are doomed to fail without much-needed grain. Some customers claim Dalm hoards his ales and demand they be served, but Dalm retorts that they are not yet properly aged.

Adventure Hook. Captain Clovis calls on the characters to investigate the airship-mooring tower to gather supplies and spare parts in a vain attempt to repair the *Manticore* and rescue as many refugees as possible. Unfortunately, most of the spare propellers, boilers, and steering fins were dismantled and converted into bar furniture, fight cages, stills, and dancing poles for the kobold entertainment. Clovis’s anger needs tempering, and any negotiations for the return of these vital supplies must be handled gingerly.

AREAS 25: STARVING MASSES CAMPS

These unfortunates either depleted their fortunes buying the dwindling firewood and food at hugely inflated prices from the Mammonites or never struck it rich to begin with. Making up the majority of the settlement, these people all relate the same sad tale of moving their families to the mountains in hopes of finding a new, fruitful life in the shadow of Mount Rygar. With the onset of winter, they discovered the worst qualities of human and dwarf. The starving masses number just over 100, although there were twice that in recent weeks. While all of this camp is starving, few of them are sick due to their lack of orichalcum, although they are forced to camp next to the quarantine camp of the ill.

Adventure Hook. If the PCs investigate Albricius’s former lodging, they discover more of the rubbings that match engravings, parts, and gears of Rabscuttle’s body almost perfectly. Scrawled on these parchments, in Common, are the messages “They put it inside him, hidden in plain sight. The answer is the gears!” and “Tears of the Maiden will wash away the greed! The mountain cannot be cured of the curse it caught!”

AREA 26: QUARANTINED SICK CAMP

Gold fever took hold of these unfortunate souls, and no one yet realizes that the corrupt gold is the cause. Many of

those present in this foul-smelling camp were once part of the upper echelon of the settlers, but due to their illness, their peers abandoned them completely. More go missing from this camp every day as they succumb to the goldveined curse and, under the sway of Mammon, sneak into the lower halls at night. Some three dozen beds make up this camp, all of which hold sickly folk in various advanced stages of the illness. Both these unfortunates and the starving are tended with care by Father Jappe and his acolytes.

Father Jappe (lawful good male human cleric 7), Brother Yensal (lawful good male human cleric 5), and Brother Haywood (lawful good male human cleric 5). These priests of the Golden Goddess Lada bear a heavy burden because they are the only ones who minister to the sick and keep the gold fever at bay. They spend what coin they have to cast *Travelers’ Feast*, which is hardly enough to sustain every parishioner in their flock. When they can, they briefly open up a small soup kitchen for the less fortunate. Even then, they cannot possibly meet the demand of their hungry charges.

Lisbet (good female gnome). Lisbet is a lovely gnome with a gift for animal training. Father Jappe cares for her in exchange for the protection her guard animals provide. She leads a small pack of loyal dogmoles; a dire weasel; and her pet boar, Figgillin. The intimidating pack keeps thugs away, so only those in the greatest need are given the charity of Lada. Dishonest interlopers looking for a free meal long ago learned not to try to take advantage of the clerics’ generosity.

Adventure Hooks. Both of Father Jappe’s acolytes go missing and he suspects Halston’s guards are the guilty culprits. Halston has long wanted to shut down Jappe’s weekly charity meals, and the absence of the brothers’ *Travelers’ Feast* rituals puts a great strain on the poor, who must instead negotiate with the merchants for food.

Riot! Upset over the rumors of desecration of the dead or unfair food distribution, the weak, poor, and starving take up simple arms (36 unaligned male and female humans). They attempt to seize enough food for themselves from Halston and the Mammonites.

AREA 27: STRUCK-IT-RICH CAMP

This once well-to-do faction set up a prosperous camp within the halls, but with so much hoarded wealth, gold fever took hold of this group faster than any other did, drastically reducing their numbers. Their camp is now a fetid wasteland that is an obscene reflection of the opulence they once afforded themselves only days before.

The group consists of only 20 humans of all ages and backgrounds, all depleting fortunes that could buy them palatial estates in Zobeck on meager supplies and vital necessities. Due to their affliction, many believe that greed and selfishness are the real cause of the illness.

Fiver Hazelwood (good male human). An interesting character among this faction is a fresh-faced young orphan by the name of Fiver Hazelwood. This lovable scamp has endeared himself to these refugees with his cute hijinks and charming nature, and everyone makes sure he gets the best possible care and morsels of food. The “child,” however, has everyone fooled—his real name is Mardibiddle Schumeli (good male gnome bard 4), a rather clever gnome who is using his *hat of disguise* to pass himself off as a human orphan.

Teskallarin (unaligned male human Shaman 4). With his wild stare, unkempt attire, and grubby nails, Teskallarin. He spends more time ranting and raving from his primitive lectern against the rampant greed consuming the settlement than he does helping those in need. Spittle flies as he races through the camps, raising his bony hands to the sky and deploring the “plague of greed” gripping the settlement.

Adventure Hooks. The kobolds discover Mardibiddle’s ruse when a playful child of Lazy Toe-Belcher inadvertently removes his *hat of disguise*. The PCs may choose to protect the gnome from an enraged rabble determined to get its revenge on the “orphan” who took advantage of their generosity for the last several weeks.

AREA 29: DWARF MINERS (GRIFFON BARDING AND TACK WAREHOUSE)

For now, the dwarves remain largely out of sight, isolated in the lower halls with only the most tenuous control of their ancestral holdings. Many have succumbed to the greed of Mammon and gold fever, fracturing the original population. The murder of the Many-Bearded Elder brought further chaos to the miners, who have since had to deal with the increased exodus, the loss of control of Heartsblood Forge to a growing faction of cultists, and the bizarre appearance of the forsaken—an aggressive, mutated race that strikes an uncomfortable chord of familiarity. The remaining dwarves who have not succumbed to greed and temptation number less than 100 and many of those joined the mining camps.

The dwarves are currently led by the Silent Masters of the Illuminated Brotherhood, who are usually dismissed as rumors of the more conspiratorially minded. Since the death of the elder, the leaders cut off the dwarven habitations from contact with the refugees. They hope to consolidate power internally before moving on to developing a plan to deal with the refugees and gold fever. As a result, the rampant inflation in the upper chambers goes unchecked, while the political shifting in the dwarf-controlled lower halls forces many dwarven Mammonites into the open. When dwarven leadership forced their hand, the Mammonites took control of the Heartsblood Forge by force.

The dwarven camps are currently accessible only through a heavily guarded stairwell in area 29 of the upper halls, and

the guards, led by Varden Redfel (unaligned male dwarf fighter 5), allow no one to pass for any reason. The former dignitary suites on the second level house 50 dwarves, with another 50 stationed near the Heartsblood Forge, where they fight sporadic battles to reclaim the territory controlled by the traitorous Mammonites.

Adventure Hook. In an attempt to control their stronghold, an armed retinue of 12 dwarves (unaligned male and female fighter 4) led by Silent Master Bradobaraxas arrive in the Great Hall and attempt to put a stop to the food hoarding immediately. Outnumbered by the merchants and their guards, the dwarves retreat under fire unless the PCs intervene to see justice brought to the Inflationists.

RABSCUTTLE

Partially constructed from corrupt gold ore, the already eccentric Rabscuttle slides further into dementia and insanity, although many of his insane insights are based on memories and nuggets of truth. Attempt to work in all of the following events over the course of the first few days after the PCs arrive at the citadel. Try to make these events seem as innocuous as possible, giving them no greater or lesser attention than any other roleplaying encounter. Roll randomly for the order in which they occur or present them in any order you think best.



TABLE 1-7: RABSCUTTLE EVENTS

Roll	Event
1	Rabscuttle wanders the halls alone but speaks to the air around him, seemingly opening invisible doors and climbing nonexistent stairs, all the while addressing the deceased crewmembers of the <i>Manticore</i> by name. He appears to be giving a guided tour, pointing to various non-existent carvings and statues and giving apparently nonsensical explanations of their meanings, such as explaining that the statue of some long-forgotten dwarven king was his stepbrother, and that all those flaming pillars represent angels.
2	The PCs notice Rabscuttle has been standing inert before the massive, impenetrable mithral doors that loom over the far end of the hall for hours. He simply gazes upward, and will do so for as long as he is left to linger. If approached by the characters, he replies: "Lives in metal? No, that's me. Lives in meat? No that's you. Ah, yes! Lives in STONE!" He knocks several times in an unusual cadence, waits for a reply that does not arrive and then returns to his day, offering no explanation.
3	Rabscuttle ascends Teskallarin's lectern in the "Struck it Rich" Camp and puffs up as if he is about to give some grand lecture to the gathered crowd of curious onlookers. For the next 10 min. or so, he repeats lines like, "Hmmm... can't talk about that. No—can't talk about THAT, either. Can't talk about... that. Or that. Can't talk about that." He then spends about 5 min. silently mouthing animated sentences, presenting a mute soliloquy before losing interest in his dwindling crowd.
4	Exasperated, Rabscuttle awakens the characters before dawn. He excitedly tells them, "You must stop the followers of the serpent queen! They seek to poison the liftgas and turn all of the fleshed-ones into snakes! Go to the liftgas caverns and take their relic of impurification! Go quickly, they plan to release the sibilant fumes. Thousands of our kind will perish!"
5	Rabscuttle wakes the PCs late one night by running a sharp rock across a rusty iron skillet while cooing and murmuring softly to the stone floor with rapt attention. The screeches are rhythmic but teeth rattling. For those who can understand Primordial, his cooing sounds like a gentle lullaby wooing the stone to peaceful slumber.
6	During dinner, Rabscuttle suddenly dives for cover and screams in an unidentifiable tongue. He pantomimes being pinned, and pitifully accuses any who come to his aid of abandoning him. He cries out accusations such as, "Why won't you help me! I'm trapped! Please take this stone from my legs, sir! It hurts! It hurts!" If the characters pantomime removing a great weight from his body, he calms down and forgets the incident almost immediately. Otherwise, after roughly 15 min., he falls silent, stands up, and walks away as if nothing happened.

THE GREAT ADAMANTINE DOORS

The far end of the Great Hall features a set of delicately engraved, massive adamantine doors. They have no knobs, latches, locks, or handles and are flanked by two massive flaming pillars, similar to Ansgar's tattoos. These doors are impenetrable, blocked to scrying and teleporting by Forbiddance, and they can only be opened through very specific means (see chapter 5).

OTHER AREAS OF THE UPPER HALLS

Many areas in the immediate vicinity of the miner camps are unused by dwarves and refugees alike. The feast hall (see area 28) and adjoining kitchen are good examples, although the massive stone tables are sometimes used as emergency beds when the number of sick and dying grows too great. The elemental-powered forges of the second level were built in antiquity as an impressive display area where dwarven craftsmen could show off their substantial skills to visiting dignitaries. When the elementals left the Hearthforges far below (see chapter 2), so too did these forges grow cold. As a result, the chimneys in the halls above ceased providing their warmth to the camps.

In the heyday of the Golden Citadel, areas 29 and 30 in the upper hall housed a mighty flock of griffon mounts used by the dwarves in an age of travel before airships. The current occupants continue in this tradition, although the mounts are a far cry from their glorious ancestors. Only six mangy and mite-ridden griffons remain in area 30. They grow wilder each day, for they cannot hunt in the current blizzard and the dwarves leave them untended. Several griffons recently went missing from their stalls, and some dwarves are beginning to wonder where Brothers Haywood and Yensal acquire the meat for their weekly charity meals.

PART V

The Outing of Bragollach

While the PCs are distracted late on the second day of their arrival, the cult of Mammon makes its move on Vianna (Bragollach). If Matheus survived the crash, he is the spy who alerts them. Otherwise, a previous Sending ritual informed the cult of Vianna's actions. The dragon, increasingly delirious from gold fever, wanders off early on the second day and is easily subdued by the cultists. The cult escorts her down into the lower halls for an intricate binding ritual that also forces her to take her true form. The cultists command the dragon to sunder the Master Clockwork Gate and enter the forbidden areas of the citadel.

The lively activities of the halls are abruptly interrupted by a tremendous reverberation from the lower hold. The citadel quivers as if some great knife has been dragged across the side of the mountain. The miners stare about in stunned disbelief as the tremendous cacophony echoes in a teeth-rattling, bone-jarring chorus before a final metallic clang shakes the halls and quiet settles across the camps.

If the PCs investigate, they learn that the only way down available to them is through a locked and barred portcullis (see area 31) controlled by Halston's armed guards. These guards collect a toll from those seeking food in the depths but allow goldveined creatures to pass freely. When the PCs approach, Blithus the gatekeeper confronts them and demands payment.

Blithus tells the PCs the toll is 20 gp per person to pass through the gate (one way), and he only accepts orichalcum. If the PCs are still on good terms with Halston, he intervenes to give the PCs free passage through and back this one time as, he says, "a gesture of good faith." Otherwise, the PCs must pay. The PCs might consider forcing the gate, but make sure they realize that doing so would bring the entire Inflationist camp against them:

With a slight sneer as he accepts the payment, Blithus adds, "Going to fetch your friend, are you? She the one down there making all that racket? She didn't look too good when she passed by a half hour ago. Maybe you should bring her to see Father Jappe."

If asked what he means, Blithus mutters about the "blonde dwarf woman who crashed with the rest of you," but he has nothing further of importance to say.

THE HALLS BELOW

Descending into the lower hold, the characters enter the massive gateway chamber (see area 36). Unlike the exceptional stonework of the upper hall, this first chamber is roughhewn. At the far end, three incredible clockwork and rune-graven gates are deeply inset into the stone.

The closest door to the stairs (see area 37) leaks noxious green gas that hovers in the space near the door. On the stone wall above, scribbled graffiti in Dwarven reads: "Danger! Poisoned Passage" and "Volund save us! Crying eyes are our salvation!"

The Master Clockwork Gate (see area 38) is the largest of the gates and has been severely damaged. After describing the area, read or paraphrase the following:

The larger middle gate was recently torn asunder, the once magnificent gears bent and broken, engraved runes still smoldering. This is apparently the source of the recent pandemonium. A grisly scene is laid

out before the gates. Several emaciated refugees lay arranged in an approximate circle on the stone floor, their throats slit and their chests exposed, displaying some bizarre rune of arcane symbolism carved into their flesh. Several small candles have burned to nubs near the bodies, and more runes, smeared as if by some giant brush, are painted in what appears to be blood in the center of the group.

A DC 25 Arcana check reveals that some intricate binding ceremony took place here and that many of these symbols appear to match Ansgar's tattoos (a clever ruse by the cultists to shift blame to the Brotherhood). A DC 23 Perception or Nature check reveals that something very large moved through this chamber, although magic obscures the trail and prevents any further tracing of the creature's whereabouts.

THE LONE SURVIVOR

After the PCs take in the scene, they see a wounded and hobbled man dragging himself across the floor from the forge area toward the stair. This is Ogdred, a Mammonite injured in the abduction and abandoned after being subjected to magical memory modification in order to provide a false cover story to anyone investigating the disappearance. The man looks witless but reveals the following false account of events when confronted.

"We were down here shuffling around for food when a dwarf came through, acting real strange and messing with that big gate. The poor girl looked terrible—definitely had the greed fever. We started talking to her, but she spouted out some gibberish, and we couldn't move! She'd put some kind of spell on us! She tossed me aside like a rack of lamb but took Gen there, then Yethris and those other two there and started carving them up with those weird symbols. I couldn't even scream.

"She lit those candles and started muttering a bunch of funny words, and then, she just went wild and started changing! I mean, she started getting big. Real big. Before you knew it, she was growing a tail and wings and, well, I don't know how to explain this exactly, but she turned into a big 'ol dragon. You might not believe me, but she tore through that gate. Just peeled it like an orange. It made a terrible racket! When she was done, she changed back to the way she was and walked down those stairs, as pretty as you please. Not long after, all that howling started and, you know. I don't feel right."

THE FORSAKEN

A DC 15 Perception check reveals a distant but rapidly approaching, disconcerting howling that clouds the mind, emanating from the middle gate. Ogdred crawls toward the stairs in terror. The forsaken, long ago locked into the heart of the mountain, waited long years for release, and they know the time has come. Allow the PCs 3 rounds to prepare themselves before the forsaken arrive.

The raiding party consists of forsaken soldiers, leading howlers on leashes, which they release as they near the sundered gates and then charge into the room to confront anyone in sight.

11TH LEVEL ENCOUNTER

- 4 PCs (2,400 XP) • 4 howlers, 2 derro artillery, 2 ambushers, 1 soldier, 1 deathspittle bombardier
- 5 PCs (3,000 XP) • 4 howlers, 2 derro artillery, 2 ambushers, 4 soldiers, 1 deathspittle bombardier
- 6 PCs (3,600 XP) • 4 howlers, 2 derro artillery, 4 ambushers, 2 soldiers, 2 deathspittle bombardiers

HOWLER	LEVEL 4 SKIRMISHER
LARGE ABERRANT BEAST	XP 175
Initiative +6	Senses Perception +9; darkvision
hp 55	Bloodied 27
AC 18	Fortitude 17
	Reflex 16
	Will 16
Speed 7	
[mba] Grisly Bite (standard; at-will)	
+9 vs. AC; 1d10 + 4 damage	
[m] Quills (free action; when hit by a melee attack)	
+7 vs. Reflex; 1d6 + 4 damage	
[c] Disturbing Howl (standard; recharge on 6) ♦ Psychic	
Close blast 5; +5 vs. Will; 1d6 + 4 psychic damage, and target is stunned until end of howler's next turn	
Alignment chaotic evil	Languages —
Str 18 (+6)	Dex 15 (+4)
	Wis 15 (+4)
Con 15 (+4)	Int 6 (+0)
	Cha 8 (+1)

DERRO ARTILLERY	LEVEL 6 ARTILLERY
SMALL NATURAL HUMANOID	XP 250
Initiative +7	Senses Perception +7; darkvision, low-light vision
hp 60	Bloodied 30
AC 18	Fortitude 19
	Reflex 19
	Will 18
Resist 5 psychic	
Speed 5	
[mba] Short Sword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	

+11 vs. AC; 1d6 + 1 damage	
[rba] Crossbow (standard; at-will) ♦ Poison, Weapon	
+13 vs. AC; 1d8 + 4 and 1d6 poison damage	
[r] Repeating Crossbow (standard; requires at least 2 quarrels in clip; recharge on 6) ♦ Poison, Weapon	
The derro makes two <i>crossbow</i> attacks at same target with -2 on attack rolls	
Alignment chaotic evil	Language Deep Speech, Dwarven
Skills Athletics +9	
Str 12 (+4)	Dex 19 (+7)
	Wis 14 (+5)
Con 18 (+7)	Int 12 (+4)
	Cha 16 (+6)
Equipment hide armor, repeating crossbow (3 6-quarrel clips), short sword	

DERRO AMBUSER	LEVEL 6 LURKER
SMALL NATURAL HUMANOID	XP 250
Initiative +11	Senses Perception +11; darkvision, low-light vision
hp 58	Bloodied 29
AC 20	Fortitude 18
	Reflex 19
	Will 18
Resist 5 psychic	
Speed 5	
[mba] Short Sword (standard; at-will) ♦ Poison, Weapon	
+11 vs. AC; 1d6 + 4 and 1d6 poison	
[c] Enclosing Darkness (minor; recharge on 5, 6) ♦ Zone	
Close burst 1; creates a cloud of darkness that lasts until the end of the derro's next turn; the derro can see normally, but the cloud provides full cover and blinds other creatures in the cloud	
Cruel Blow	
The forsaken deals an extra +1d6 damage if it has combat advantage	
Alignment chaotic evil	Languages Deep Speech, Dwarven
Skills Athletics +9, Stealth +12	
Str 12 (+4)	Dex 19 (+7)
	Wis 16(+6)
Con 16 (+6)	Int 13(+4)
	Cha 14(+5)
Equipment hide armor, short sword	

FORSAKEN DEATHSPITTLE BOMBARDIER	
LEVEL 10 ARTILLERY	
SMALL NATURAL HUMANOID	XP 500
Initiative +10	Senses Perception +11; darkvision, low-light vision
hp 84	Bloodied 42
AC 22	Fortitude 22 Reflex 20 Will 24
Resist 5 psychic	
Speed 5	
[mba] Shortsword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+17 vs. AC; 1d8 + 5 damage	
[m] Desperate Cover (immediate interrupt, when hit by a ranged, melee, or close attack; encounter) ♦ Weapon	
The forsaken gains resist 10 against the attack	
[a] Murderous Bombard (standard; recharge on 6) ♦ Charm, Poison, Weapon	
Area wall 8 within 8; +13 vs. Will; 2d6 + 5 poison damage and ongoing 5 poison damage, and target is dominated (save ends).	
[a] Sloughide Bombard (standard; recharge on 5, 6) ♦ Acid, Poison, Weapon	
Area wall 8 within 8; +13 vs. Reflex; 3d6 + 5 acid damage, and target is immobilized until end of forsaken's next turn.	
[a] Weeping Bombard (standard; at-will) ♦ Poison, Weapon	
Area wall 8 within 8; +13 vs. Fortitude; 2d6 + 5 poison damage, and target is slowed (save ends); if target is already slowed, target becomes weakened (save ends).	
Clarity of Madness	
The forsaken cannot be dominated.	
Cruel Blow	
The forsaken deals an extra +1d6 damage if it has combat advantage	
Alignment chaotic evil	Languages Deep Speech, Dwarven
Skills Athletics +12, Dungeoneering +12, Perception +11	
Str 15 (+7)	Dex 21 (+10) Wis 13 (+6)
Con 18 (+9)	Int 15 (+7) Cha 18 (+9)
Equipment chainmail, forsaken tower bombard (with 3 each of <i>murderous</i> , <i>sloughide</i> , and <i>weeping</i> canisters), shortsword	

DERRO SOLDIER	LEVEL 5 SOLDIER
SMALL NATURAL HUMANOID	XP 200
Initiative +6	Senses Perception +5; darkvision, low-light vision
hp 66	Bloodied 33
AC 21	Fortitude 18 Reflex 17 Will 17
Resist 5 psychic	
Speed 5	
[mba] Guisarme Slash (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Reach 2; +12 vs. AC; 1d10 + 4 damage	
[mab] Guisarme Hook (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Reach 2; +10 vs. Fortitude; 1d4 + 4 damage, and target is marked and knocked prone	
Cruel Blow	
The forsaken deals an extra +1d6 damage if it has combat advantage	
Alignment chaotic evil	Languages Deep Speech, Dwarven
Skills Athletics +11, Endurance +11	
Str 18 (+6)	Dex 15 (+4) Wis 16 (+5)
Con 18 (+6)	Int 11 (+2) Cha 15 (+4)
Equipment guisarme, hide armor	

Concluding the Adventure

With the gates sundered, the lower halls are now filled with the distant echoes of nearby howlers' insanity-inducing caterwaul. Areas 35–41 remain inhospitable for the duration of the adventure due to the maddening effects the howls have on those in such close proximity. The mountain's interior now lies open to both the PCs and to other interests within the citadel.

Halston moves quickly to find a way to profit from this new development, increasing the fee to move through the portcullis at area 31 to 100 gp per person, per trip. He sees no increase in profit from this move, however, as the people in the upper halls for the most part see no reason to travel deeper into the mountain. Their distrust of the dwarves, fear of the noise that rent the clockwork doors, and outrage over Halston's fee increase kills the curiosity in most of the upper hall residents. Those few who do venture downward over the next few days do not return.

The PCs have other problems they must deal with, though, which are outlined in the next chapter, *Roots of Madness*.



ROOTS OF MADNESS

AN ADVENTURE FOR FOUR 9TH-LEVEL CHARACTERS

by Ben McFarland

with monster design assistance from JOHN STEVEN SCHUTT, TIM NICKEL, and SCOTT HALL

Background

Dark Was the Night, Cold Was the Ground ends at a clockwork gate at the entrance to the lower halls. Encamped in the upper halls of the citadel, the human and kobold miners establish a truce with their dwarven hosts. An uneasy peace exists, but the lack of food and warmth for all threatens to shatter it.

If the PCs are not yet 8th level at the end of chapter 1, they have downtime between the events of that adventure and the beginning of this one, and they should be provided enough additional adventure and side treks to reach 8th level. The dwarves, kobolds, and humans brought together in the frigid upper halls should provide plenty of opportunities for adventure, especially as their resources, supplies, and food dwindle.

Summary

This adventure takes the PCs into the mountain, where they find the ancient secret of Mount Rygar's past and the cult that wants to decide its future—all while trying to save the recently arrived miners seeking shelter.

The PCs travel to the Hearthforges, and along the way, they meet the Fire Shepherd and learn of the False Gearworker and his Journeyman, the strange sickness that follows in their wake, and the plan to sabotage the connection between the Hearthforges and the Shank. They will have a chance to interact with Imperial ghosts, who lurk with unknown intentions, and the forsaken constantly harass the PCs as they explore large sections of the Hearthforges complex overrun and despoiled by the crazed and foul creatures.

In the depths of the Hearthforges, the PCs witness the Journeyman's corruption of the gold dragon Bragollach and the dragon's flight into the air shafts leading to the Shank. After defeating the Journeyman and his co-conspirators and foiling the False Gearworker, the PCs can help the Fire

Shepherd restore the elementals to the Hearthforges. To do so, though, they must hold back a ravaging mob of forsaken until the furnaces are lit. Their task complete, the characters return to the citadel accompanied by the Fire Shepherd.

PART I

The Upper Halls

The leaders of the dwarven citadel and the mining camps realize that to stay alive, they need to restore the Hearthforges that recently went cold. Scouting indicates the elementals that provided the heat left the furnaces and are roaming one of the lower halls. Several priests of the healing goddess Lada ask the party to:

1. Go to Hearthforges.
2. Speak to the dwarves to determine why the elementals left their furnaces.
3. Convince the Fire Shepherd to restore the truant elementals, while making sure that none escapes to threaten the citadel.

At their quarters, Varden Redfel (good dwarf fighter 6) approaches the party with Father Jappe (lawful good human cleric of Lada 7), Brother Yensal (good human cleric of Lada 5), and Brother Haywood (good human cleric of Lada 5) in tow. Redfel and the clerics bring a small meal of unspoiled food for the PCs and ask for a moment of their time.

Varden Redfel is a genial dwarf, wearing a polished but tested breastplate:

Redfel waits a moment for the clerics to distribute the food before he clears his throat and says, "I am Varden Redfel, First of the Stair Guard. I apologize for the intrusion. We come to petition you for a favor. I'm sure you've noticed that the halls have grown no warmer since the blizzard resumed. Indeed, as most of the fuel is spent, the situation will grow worse when hungry people grow cold and tempers flare." The air has certainly grown chill in the past few hours.

“We need someone to go to the Hearthforges, in the roots of the mountain, and determine why the elemental furnaces no longer generate heat. Abelard, the Fire Shepherd, usually tends them with a cadre of devotees to Volund, but we’ve not heard back from either group we sent to investigate and fear the worst. Are you willing to go?”

Some probable questions, and their corresponding answers, follow:

WHAT’S IT WORTH TO YOU?

Varden and the clerics grimace. The dwarf looks as if he’s bitten into something foul. He answers, “Well, if you need pay we can work something out. We have plenty of gold to carry back to Zobeck, and we can trade with some of the craftsmen.”

Brother Yensal adds, “Lada smiles on those who aid the suffering. You can count on our gifts and meager resources when you return.”

Father Jappe says, “This duty would serve the whole population of the citadel. It is the right thing to do. Do you really require pay to help those who cannot help themselves?”

WHY US?

Father Jappe answers, “You’re as close to a neutral party as we have here. There’s been some... strong discussion that perhaps the groups sent down the Great Stair were ambushed to weaken the positions of those who stayed behind. Ludicrous, but we need this, and no one objects to your selection.”

Redfel adds, “Captain Stonethrower mentioned that you acquitted yourselves quite well during the journey here. Since the other two groups disappeared, we think something dangerous is lurking in the deeper halls of the citadel. We thought it best to send down veterans.”

WHAT OF THE OTHER GROUPS?

Redfel answers, “We sent two small expeditions down to the Hearthforges. One of the journeymen gearworkers led the first group. The second was a group of volunteers. Neither party has returned or sent word.”

HOW DO YOU EVEN KNOW ANYONE’S ALIVE DOWN THERE? DID YOU COMMUNICATE WITH THEM?

Brother Haywood answers, “Our divinations show that dwarves still live within the Hearthforges, and that the Fire Shepherd is trapped inside, as well. Is not that enough?”

ELEMENTALS? ARE THEY ENSLAVED?

Redfel answers, “The elementals entered into a bargain with the Lords of the Halls long ago. They are not enslaved but must serve in the Hearthforges for some time to come. We know they left the furnaces because the air from the vent shafts is cold.”

WHAT DO WE NEED TO DO WHEN WE GET THERE? HOW DO WE GET ELEMENTALS BACK TO WORK?

Redfel answers, “You must find Abelard. He has run the Hearthforges for generations and knows how to keep the elementals in line. Whatever happened, it’s keeping him from the furnaces.”

HOW WILL WE RECOGNIZE ABELARD?

Redfel answers, “He’s the senior cleric of Volund in the Hearthforges. You cannot mistake him.”

WHAT IF WE FIND TREASURE?

Redfel answers, “Unless you take it from the corpse of some creature who is not a dwarf or from the citadel, you can be certain it’s an heirloom of our people. While we would not object to your using them to perform your duty, this place is our home; try to respect it. Do not worry about your reward; we will make sure you are fairly compensated.”

DEVELOPMENT

The emissaries ask the PCs to depart as soon as possible. The storm outside is growing stronger, and the upper halls are becoming even less hospitable. Varden Redfel provides a map of the route and enough foodstuffs for 2 days, for the trip down to the Hearthforges can take some time. Other considerations, like weapons, magic, or other specialty gear, are subject to the inflationary economy that grips the population.

DOWN THE STAIR

As the PCs descend into the darkness of the Great Stair, read the following:

The passage spirals around a great open shaft, then becomes more of a tunnel—turning posts and corners, with the hum of the Shank carried on gusts of cold wind. That wind is sharp enough to leave a hint of frost on beards and collars.

The stairs are abandoned but not empty. Vast halls and galleries stretch into darkness and show signs of old battles. Fragments of weapons, bits of shattered bones, and blasted marks of soot litter the path. An eerie silence hangs behind the soft drone of the distant dwarven gearworks.

**AUTHOR'S NOTE:
BUILDING ATMOSPHERE**

This encounter showcases the initial descent into the ancient dwarven halls. The long-ago infighting is recorded in the graffiti of doomed holdouts and survivors; whatever happened here was desperate and vicious. As you progress, feed the players' doubts to build on later in the adventure. Who built the Halls? Who should answer for the ancient tragedy, or are all survivors long dead?

TRAVEL DOWN THE GREAT STAIR

Travel from the citadel to the Hearthforges requires the better part of a day, including short breaks for rest and food. If the party decides to venture off the Great Stair, active Perception checks reveal one or more of the following. Consider the DCs 5 higher for passive Perception.

TABLE 2-1: PERCEPTION

DC	Result
10	Graffiti, "Volund have mercy on us for this."
12	Graffiti, "Balik, we're headed for the place we agreed. We wait until the supplies demand we go."
14	Graffiti, "Only the forsaken have a claim here anymore."
15	A skeleton behind some fortification, armored but unarmed.
16	Graffiti, "Neherak's Hall: Trespas<bloodsmear>ill be gutted!"
17	Scorch marks from a large fire.
18	Graffiti, "Mine mine MiNe MINE mine MINE YOURS!"
19	A last stand—a broken-in door, skeletons with obvious wounds, and dark blood smears.
20	Graffiti, "This is Volund's punishment for us!"
21	Scorch marks, possibly from spells.
22	Graffiti, "Beware! They take prisoners, kill your wounded!"
23	Melted stone spots, possibly from spells.
25	Remnants of a previous trip—a cold fire circle and some trash. A DC 18 Nature check reveals that these remnants are recent.

Roughly 6 hours into the journey, read or paraphrase the following:

At long last, you arrive at the end of the gallery that your map shows leads up to the Hearthforges. The air is warmer here, and a sliver of dull, copper-colored light glimmers up ahead.

A DC 12 Perception check reveals shouting, a terrible grinding sound, and screams of pain. It sounds like a battle is taking place up ahead. Allow the PCs to create battle plans or scout around. Once at least one PC moves forward to investigate, read or paraphrase the following:

This hall looks like some kind of bailey. Several broken barricades yet stand, partially dismantled and stained with long red splatters and smears along the walls and floors. A few bodies lay scattered and unmoving about the shattered fortifications.

The light from the chamber ahead grows stronger, and the sounds of battle grow louder. Now, the DC to hear the battle is reduced to 0. Those who move quickly to the door can make Perception checks to assess the battle, while those who linger can make Perception checks assessing the condition of the corpses.

TABLE 2-2: PERCEPTION

DC	Result
15	None of these corpses are armed or armored, but they all show the signs of participating in battle.
22	There are leather straps and belts, all of which might be used on armor or weapons, but they appear slightly chewed.

Once the PCs move to the door, they reach area 1 and the encounter there. For each round that the party delays, add another corpse of a dwarf forgeworker at the elder xorn's feet. These freshly killed goldveined dwarves are not scavenged by the elder xorn, and do not modify the level of the encounter.

PART II

The Hearthforge

The Hearthforge is the working section of the Rygar Halls where ore was smelted into metal, where metal was worked into alloys, and where goods were forged with fire, sweat, and magic. Much of this area has been home for the forsaken and the fire elementals for decades, since the halls were abandoned. The presence of Abelard, the Fire Shepherd, kept the area from complete abandonment and decay.

Some encounters within the Hearthforges call for Perception checks. To simplify play, ask the players to roll 4 Perception checks, then record their results for later use in the Hearthforges.

CEILING TRAPS

The ceiling traps are marked on the map outside areas 1, 10, 12, 15, and between 5 and 9. When triggered, each creates a deadfall of rock and debris that seals the passage. A thunderstone or power with the thunder keyword used within 10 ft. of the marked square activates the trap there.

CEILING DEADFALL (5)	
LEVEL 8 LURKER (HAZARD XP 350)	
<i>Rocks fall from above.</i>	
Hazard Rocks tumble down to a target square and make a burst 3 attack before sealing the passage	
Perception	
DC 19—The character notices the odd construction	
DC 24—The character realizes that the trap is activated at the ceiling	
Additional Skill (Dungeoneering, Nature)	
DC 24—The character notices the ceiling is unstable	
Initiative +5	
Trigger A thunder effect sets off the deadfall (doing 5 or more points of thunder damage to the ceiling activates the trap)	
Standard Action	Close burst 3
Targets Creatures in burst	
Attack +11 vs. Reflex	
Hit 3d8 + 5 damage, and target is prone, stunned, and immobilized (save ends)	
Miss Half damage, and target is prone	
Sustain Standard The deadfall continues for 3 rounds; the area of the burst is difficult terrain during and impassable after the deadfall	
Countermeasures	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A character in the area can take advantage of natural flow and rhythm in the rockslide to avoid damage by making a DC 25 Nature or Dungeoneering check. With a successful check, a character takes half damage on a hit and no damage on a miss. 	

WELCOMING PARTY

Approaching the Hearthforges, the PCs hear combat and see the signs of siege—a series of broken barricades and finally, the smashed doors that lead into the Hearthforges. Advancing, they see a strange, golden xorn battling a group of wild golden-eyed dwarves over the corpses of forsaken.

As a PC crosses the threshold or attacks through the doorway, the dwarves notice, give a great shout, and turn their attention to the interruption. The dwarves operate a

jury-rigged molten metal sprayer. This requires a two-dwarf crew: one operating the sprayer and the other working the bellows pump.

Left unmolested, the xorn kills the dwarves while being reduced to a bloodied state. He remains in the hall, consuming the molten metal sprayer until defeated by the PCs. In this case, award 350 XP for the encounter and have the elder xorn vomit additional cursed gold as appropriate for the number of foes it killed before being slain.

An *everburning torch* provides bright light within 5 squares of the doors. The metal sprayer utilized by two goldspawn minion dwarves creates a burst of light that provides dim light in its area of effect when fired.

EAT HOT METAL!
Molten Metal Sprayer (standard and move action; at-will)
♦ Fire, Weapon
Close burst 3; +8 vs. Reflex; 2d6 + 5 fire damage, and target is immobilized (save ends); roll 1d20 when anyone fires the sprayer. On a natural 1, it explodes in a burst 3, dealing 4d6 hp damage and ongoing 10 fire damage (save ends) to any creature within range.

The sprayer is easy to figure out. Any character examining or attempting to use it must make a DC 10 Arcana check. It fires for only 1 round unless a second person operates the bellows. Operating the bellows or the sprayer uses a standard and a move action and does not provoke opportunity attacks. It functions for this combat, and then its reservoir is drained.

The sprayer requires three people to move. Abelard can refuel the sprayer using the maintenance forge in area 6.

TERRAIN

The area within 3 squares of the barricade is littered with rubble and corpses, and it acts as rough terrain. The xorn ignores the rough terrain with its earth walk ability, but the dwarves utilize it, hiding behind barricades and falling back to its corners. There are 15 forsaken corpses and 8 goldspawned dwarf corpses. The xorn consumed the gold from any killed before this battle, so the only cursed gold available from this room comes from the dwarves manning the barricades and molten metal sprayer and any corpses that result from earlier delays. The ceiling is 30 ft. high.

8TH LEVEL ENCOUNTER

- 4 PCs (1,400 XP) • 1 goldveined feldspar xorn, 1 goldveined dwarf hammerer, 4 goldspawn minions
- 5 PCs (1,750 XP) • 1 goldveined feldspar xorn, 1 goldveined dwarf bolter, 1 goldveined dwarf hammerer, 4 goldspawn minions
- 6 PCs (2,100 XP) • 1 goldveined feldspar xorn, 2 goldveined dwarf bolter, 1 goldveined dwarf hammerer, 4 goldspawn minions

GOLDVEINED FELDSPAR XORN**LEVEL 8 ELITE SKIRMISHER**

MEDIUM ELEMENTAL MAGICAL BEAST (EARTH) XP 700

Initiative +9 Senses Perception +7; all-around vision, darkvision

hp 196 Bloodied 98

AC 23 Fortitude 22 Reflex 20 Will 22

Resist 5 fire

Saving Throws +2

Speed 5 (earth walk); burrow 5 (see *stone phase*)

Action Points 1

[mba] **Claw** (standard; at-will)

+13 vs. AC; 1d8 + 5 damage

[m] **Bite** (standard; at-will)

+13 vs. AC 2d6+5 damage

[m] **Burrowing Bite** (standard; at-will)

The feldspar xorn burrows at least half its speed; +14 vs. AC; 2d8 + 5 damage, and the target is pushed one square and the feldspar xorn shifts into the vacated space

[m] **Claw Frenzy** (standard; at-will)

The feldspar xorn can make one claw attack against up to three targets

[m] **For Love of Money** (immediate interrupt, when targeted by a melee attack; at-will)

+12 vs. Will against the attacker; instead of attacking the xorn, the attacker makes a melee basic attack against an adjacent target of the xorn's choice (if no such target exists, no attack is made)

[r] **All that Glitters** (standard; recharge on 6)

Ranged 10; +12 vs. Will; the target is pulled 5 squares and dazed (save ends)

Fatal Bequest

When it dies, the xorn vomits up 8 greed-tainted gp.

Madness of the Mines ♦ **Psychic**

If the xorn is hit by a charm affect, its insane mind causes painful psychic feedback to the caster, inflicting 3 psychic damage (this counts as exposure to gold fever)

Stone Phase

The xorn ignores movement penalties for burrowing through stone

Alignment evil Languages Common, Primordial

Str 18 (+8) Dex 15 (+7) Wis 15 (+7)

Con 20(+9) Int 10 (+4) Cha 10 (+4)

GOLDVEINED DWARF HAMMERER**LEVEL 5 ELITE SOLDIER**

MEDIUM NATURAL HUMANOID XP 400

Initiative +4 Senses Perception +4; darkvision, low-light vision

hp 136 Bloodied 68

AC 24 Fortitude 18 Reflex 15 Will 19

Resist 5 fire

Saving Throws +2, +5 against poison effects

Speed 5

Action Points 1

[mba] **Warhammer** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

+11 vs. AC; 1d10 + 3 damage

[m] **For Love of Money** (immediate interrupt, when targeted by a melee attack; at-will)

+9 vs. Will against the attacker; instead of attacking the dwarf, the attacker makes a melee basic attack against an adjacent target of the dwarf's choice (if no such target exists, no attack is made)

[m] **Shield Bash** (minor; recharge on 5, 6)

+9 vs. Fortitude; 2d6 + 3 damage, and the target is knocked prone or pushed 1 square (attacker's choice)

[m] **Stubborn** (immediate interrupt, when an enemy tries to push it or knock it prone; at-will)

The dwarf makes a melee basic attack against the attacker.

[r] **All that Glitters** (standard; recharge on 6)

Ranged 10; +9 vs. Will; the target is pulled 5 squares and dazed (save ends)

[r] **Throwing Hammer** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

Ranged 5/10; +10 vs. AC; 1d6 + 3 damage

Fatal Bequest

When it dies, the dwarf vomits up 5 tainted gold pieces.

Madness of the Mines ♦ **Psychic**

If the dwarf is hit by a charm affect, its insane mind causes painful psychic feedback to the caster, inflicting 3 psychic damage (this counts as exposure to gold fever)

Stand Your Ground

When an effect forces the dwarf to move—through a pull, a push, or a slide—the dwarf moves 1 square less than the effect specifies, and when an attack would knock the dwarf prone, the dwarf can roll a saving throw to avoid falling prone

Alignment evil Languages Common, Dwarven

Skills Dungeoneering +11, Endurance +5

Str 17 (+5) Dex 10 (+2) Wis 14 (+4)

Con 16 (+5) Int 11 (+2) Cha 12 (+3)

Equipment heavy shield, plate armor, throwing hammers (3), warhammer

GOLDVEINED DWARF BOLTER
LEVEL 4 ELITE ARTILLERY

MEDIUM NATURAL HUMANOID XP 350

Initiative +5 **Senses** Perception +8; darkvision, low-light vision

hp 110 **Bloodied** 55

AC 18 **Fortitude** 16 **Reflex** 16 **Will** 16

Resist 5 fire

Saving Throws +2, +5 against poison effects

Speed 5

Action Points 1

[mba] **Warhammer** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

+8 vs. AC; 1d10 + 2 damage

[m] **For Love of Money** (immediate interrupt, when targeted by a melee attack; at-will)

+8 vs. Will against the attacker; instead of attacking the dwarf, the attacker makes a melee basic attack against an adjacent target of the dwarf's choice (if no such target exists, no attack is made)

[r] **All that Glitters** (standard, recharge on 6)

Ranged 10; +8 vs. Will; the target is pulled 5 squares and dazed (save ends)

[r] **Crossbow** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

Ranged 15/30; +10 vs. AC; 1d8 + 3 damage

Aimed Shot

The dwarf bolter gains a +2 bonus to attack rolls and deals an extra 1d6 damage with ranged attacks against creatures that don't have cover

Fatal Bequest

When it dies, the dwarf vomits up 4 greed-tainted gold pieces

Madness of the Mines ♦ **Psychic**

If the dwarf is hit by a charm affect, its insane mind causes painful psychic feedback to the caster, inflicting 3 psychic damage (this counts as exposure to gold fever)

Stand Your Ground

When an effect forces the dwarf to move—through a pull, a push, or a slide—the dwarf moves 1 square less than the effect specifies, and when an attack would knock the dwarf prone, the dwarf can roll a saving throw to avoid falling prone

Alignment Evil **Languages** Common, Dwarven

Skills Dungeoneering +10, Endurance +7

Str 14 (+4) **Dex** 16 (+5) **Wis** 12 (+3)

Con 16 (+5) **Int** 11 (+2) **Cha** 10 (+2)

Equipment chainmail, crossbow (20 bolts), warhammer

GOLDSPAWN DWARF

LEVEL 7 CONTROLLER MINION

MEDIUM NATURAL HUMANOID XP 75

Initiative +3 **Senses** Perception +5; darkvision, low-light vision

hp 1; a missed attack never damages a minion

AC 22 **Fortitude** 19 **Reflex** 17 **Will** 20

Speed 5

[mba] **Forgehammer** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

+12 vs. AC; 9 damage

[rba] **Crossbow** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

+12 vs. AC; 9 damage

[m] **For Love of Money** (immediate interrupt, when targeted by a melee attack; at-will)

+11 vs. Will against the attacker; instead of attacking the dwarf, the attacker makes a melee basic attack against an adjacent target of the dwarf's choice (if no such target exists, no attack is made)

Fatal Bequest

When it dies death, the dwarf vomits up 7 greed-tainted gold pieces

Stand Your Ground

When an effect forces the dwarf to move—through a pull, a push, or a slide—the dwarf moves 1 square less than the effect specifies, and when an attack would knock the dwarf prone, the dwarf can roll a saving throw to avoid falling prone

Alignment evil **Languages** Common, Dwarven

Skills Dungeoneering +11, Endurance +9

Str 17 (+6) **Dex** 10 (+3) **Wis** 14 (+5)

Con 16 (+6) **Int** 11 (+3) **Cha** 12 (+4)

Equipment chainmail, crossbow (20 bolts), warhammer

TACTICS

The xorn will typically initiate combat using *burrowing bite* and prefers to utilize its movement abilities to harry targets with hit-and-run tactics. If surrounded by multiple enemies, it will use *claw frenzy*; otherwise, the xorn will look to move or shift into a position where it can then make another *burrowing bite* attack.

TREASURE

+3 magic weapon

DEVELOPMENT

After they die, the xorn and the dwarves vomit small pools of quickly cooling gold. This gold stays in liquid form for 2 minutes after death and then becomes a chip of solid gold. If the party delayed outside to search the bodies, add 2 gp of tainted gold per round of delay.

SPEAK WITH DEAD

If the PCs question corpses using a Speak with Dead ritual while in the Hearthforges, the dead require a skill challenge before answering questions.

Speak with Dead Skill Challenge

Setup To converse with a corpse inside the Hearthforges, it must be cajoled into cooperation

Level 8th level challenge

Complexity 2 (requires 6 successes before 3 failures)

Primary Skills Diplomacy, Insight, Intimidation, and Religion

Diplomacy (DC 20)—You barter with the corpse, offering to return it for a proper burial, to cleanse the Hearthforges, or simply to avenge its death (each failure increases the DC of future Diplomacy checks by 2 and contributes toward total skill challenge failure)

Insight (DC 18)—You sense the unbalanced nature of the corpse, and play on these misconceptions and fears (success indicates the next Diplomacy or Intimidation check gains a +3 bonus; failure does not count towards total challenge failure)

Intimidation (DC 18)—You browbeat and threaten the corpse, suggesting you may leave it for scavengers, prevent a proper burial, or defame its character and honor back at the citadel (each failure increases both the DCs of future Diplomacy and Intimidation checks by 2 and contributes toward total skill challenge failure)

Religion (DC 20)—You invoke the rites of Volund and dwarven religion, demanding that the corpse answer the responsibilities it had as a custodian of the Hearthforges and as a member of the citadel community (each failure contributes toward total skill challenge failure)

Miscellaneous—Speaking to the corpse in Dwarven provides a +2 bonus on the check; dwarf participants in this challenge receive a +1 racial bonus to their checks

Success The corpse answers the PC's questions

Failure The corpse refuses to cooperate. Pay all costs of the ritual.

Any of the dead can explain that sickness overcame the workers, and even those who seemed to improve one day woke insane the next. Before long, everyone was infected. The dead do not all know of the forsaken attacking, and most do not realize what the forsaken are, other than crazed dwarves.

Not far away (area 12), the lich hounds' lifesense ability makes the Imperial ghosts aware of the party's presence once the PCs approach within 10 squares of their barricade (see area 12 for hounds and ghosts). As long as the party includes one living creature, they are prepared when the PCs open the doors to area 12 and cannot be surprised.

AREA 1: SEEKING THE FIRE SHEPHERD

The first PC to approach the doors into the Hearthforge hears a voice say in Common, "Hello? You there! Hello! Can you hear me? Come to the furnaces and free me! I hear you, you know. Come to the Chamber, set me free!"

The voice seems to originate out of thin air and belongs to the Fire Shepherd, speaking through one of the many tiny tunnels that honeycomb the Hearthforges. He gives his name and basic directions to the chamber, but does not consider the characters' lack of familiarity with the area. While he can hear the PCs, he cannot guide them after they leave room 1 unless they enter room 3, just in front of rooms 4, 8, 10, 12, or 13. If the PCs question him, see possible questions and answers in the "Speaking with the Fire Shepherd" section in room 4.

Unless otherwise noted, the ceiling is 10 ft. high in all rooms and the corpses bear the marks of gold fever infection.

AREA 2: WAREHOUSE CAVERN

Crates fill this arched cavern. Three rows of wooden boxes stretch back into darkness.

The PCs can hear the soft chitter and squeak of a rat, but as the GM, play up player paranoia if the PCs search through the crates. The PCs can find two recent corpses here, both dwarves caught in the western corners and stabbed multiple times. Their belt pouches are missing, and they wear blood-soaked artisan's outfits. The one in the southwestern corner has a gear from the "furnace gear chamber" (room 4) on a cord around his neck.

More than 75 crates are stacked up to the 15-ft. ceiling and contain enough food for 45 people for 14 days. Other crates contain a large amount of iron rod stock. The PCs can find mundane equipment here at your discretion.

AREA 3: MAIN FURNACE CHAMBER

Air ducts enter this room from the western wall and feeds into the three enormous furnaces there. It continues overhead to the lone furnace standing on the eastern wall and joins a junction that reenters the bedrock of the mountain. The furnaces are great rectangular, adamantite constructions, crafted to resemble great towers, and the ducts are shaped like billowing plumes of smoke. They sit, cool and unoccupied.

Smooth hexagonal paving stones cover the floor, inlaid with silvery dwarven runes. The runes spell names of previous Hearthforge workers. In the center of the room's floor is a symbol-engraved silver circle for a Linked Portal ritual. A DC 14 Arcana check indicates that a blank portion of the circle allows the ritual to transport between a number of different locations. Prying the precious metal up requires 4 hours and recovers silver worth 200 gp. A DC 22 Perception check reveals a gear for the "furnace gear chamber" (room 4) hanging on a hook beside the eastern forge.

From this room, the PCs can hear and attempt to speak to the Fire Shepherd.

AREA 4: FURNACE GEAR CHAMBER: THE BROKEN DOOR

When the PCs approach this area, read or paraphrase the following:

A short dogleg passage ends at a massive door, fashioned from an enormous cog mechanism. The door has more gears embedded within it, but they look vandalized. Dwarven runes and the iconography of Volund cover its entirety.

The goldveined dwarves sabotaged the door and tore apart its inner workings:

A configuration of three slightly smaller gears threads this massive cog, which has been set on edge to act as a door. A mechanism of hand-sized gears overlays part of it, apparently for unlocking and opening the door, but someone vandalized it, leaving large gaps evident among the cogs.

As the PCs consider the door and its inner workings, the Fire Shepherd hears them and speaks up again. His voice sounds tinny and seems to come from above the door. "Hello," he says, "I'm glad you made it! I hope you can open the door, so we can speak face to face."

The PCs must rummage through the piled dead to find the parts to open it and release the Fire Shepherd. They can attempt a Thievery or Arcana check to discern the amount of destruction caused to the door.

TABLE 2-3: THIEVERY OR ARCANA

DC	Result
15	Several gears are missing, and perhaps another component.
20	Several gears are missing, and the handle.
25	Six gears and the handle are missing.

OPENING THE DOOR

The party can most easily open the door by one of three methods, or a combination of all three; however, they might have other means of bypassing or opening it. The primary methods of opening this door are:

1. The Knock ritual.
2. Replacing the missing components.
3. Successfully completing a skill challenge.

Each success in the skill challenge or in an Arcana check for the Knock ritual effectively counts as replacing two of the missing gears or one gear and the key handle, so multiple techniques are certainly possible.

The PCs can use the Knock ritual. Once they manage 4 DC 20 Arcana successes using the ritual, a subsequent DC 22 Strength check opens the door.

Alternatively, they can repair the door by finding and replacing the six missing gears and the key handle. The gears are scattered about the Hearthforges in rooms 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, and 11. The key handle is located in room 9.

One last option, the PCs can attempt the following skill challenge:

OPENING THE DOOR

SKILL CHALLENGE (1,050 XP)

Setup To enter the command chamber, the great door must be opened

Level 8th level challenge

Complexity 3 (requires 7 successes before 3 failures)

Secondary Checks Any character who makes a primary check cannot assist in the secondary check for that rotation. Two successful checks—a primary check and a subsequent secondary check—are necessary in any given round to gain an overall success that contributes to total challenge success.

Primary Skills Dungeoneering, Perception, Religion, and Thievery

Dungeoneering (DC 20)—You consider the door mechanism in relation to the rest of the underground structure, evaluating how it must move and what you can do to move its components in their current state (success permits a secondary check; failure contributes towards total challenge failure)

Perception (DC 22)—You step back and get a view of the door's bigger picture, examining how everything interconnects—the gears, the structure, the runes (success provides a +3 bonus on the next Dungeoneering, Religion, or Thievery check; failure does not count towards total challenge failure)

THE HEARTHFORGE

1 square = 5 feet

To the Golden Citadel

F Feldspar Xorn
H Dwarf Hammerer
M Minion

G Ghoul Centurion
L Gutripper Lichhound



x Metal Sprayer

T Ceiling Trap

I Indrecalla
K Forsaken Marksman
G Ghoul Centurion
x Bloated Corpse trap

To Ventshafts

To Derro

Religion (DC 18)—You sense relation of the rune-marked gears with the teachings and scripture of Volund, divining the proper movement based on their religious significance (success permits a secondary check; failure contributes towards total challenge failure)

Thievery (DC 18)—Using your knowledge of mechanical principles and machine motion, you intuit the proper rotation of the gears despite the absence of some parts (success permits a secondary check; failure contributes towards total challenge failure)

Secondary Skills Athletics and Endurance

Athletics or Endurance (DC 23)—In a great test of strength, you rotate the massive gear as directed from the primary check (success contributes toward total skill challenge success; failure does not contribute toward total skill challenge failure but requires a new primary check)

Success The door opens

Failure The gears are misaligned too badly to open properly without the missing components or magical assistance

Special (note the number of successes for a failure)

For every success—One less gear must be found within the Hearthforges; for example, if 6 successes have been achieved, then only one gear or the key needs to be found

For every 2 successes—One less Arcana success is necessary from a Knock ritual; for example, if 6 successes have been achieved, then only one Arcana check success is required from a Knock ritual

If the PCs elect to cut through or bust down the door instead, they face a Large reinforced steel door (AC 3, Reflex 3, Fortitude 15; hp 500; Breakdown DC 34). The room's walls have a sheet of metal plating preventing a Passwall ritual, and a permanent Forbiddance ritual protects the room beyond, as well as the door itself. Other solutions might work at your option.

SPEAKING WITH THE FIRE SHEPHERD

The PCs might have some questions for the Fire Shepherd, Abelard Feuerhirte (good male azer cleric 10 of Volund; see page 69). Some likely questions and answers follow.

HOW DO WE OPEN THE DOOR?

“My divinations tell me that all the parts of the door mechanism are within the Hearthforges. Find them, repair the door, and it will open. Opening spells might work as well. If you tell me what it looks like now, perhaps I can tell you what's missing.”

Abelard confirms the missing parts, describes them, and explains how to repair them if they are returned.

WHO ARE YOU?

“I am Abelard, the Fire Shepherd, caretaker of the Hearthforges.”

WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

“It is my responsibility to watch after the fire elementals who keep these halls warm.”

WHY AREN'T THEY DOING THEIR JOBS, THEN?

“A powerful elemental, part stone, part fire, convinced them to abandon the Hearthforges after the dwarves gave in to madness. When I went to stop them, his gilded tongue deafened them to my logic.”

HOW DID YOU GET TRAPPED BACK THERE?

“I came to direct the defense of the Hearthforges. As madness took the last of my assistants, they stole the gears and trapped me here.”

WHY DID YOU NOT CURE THE MADNESS?

“At first, we took it for a normal sickness, and it spread faster than my spells could halt it. Then the forsaken attacked. That, combined with my entrapment, doomed the good dwarves here. I could only listen to what unfolded.”

CAN'T YOU JUST CAST A SPELL TO ESCAPE?

“Long ago, when we established this chamber, the elders hallowed and warded it to provide a secure place where the defense of the Hearthforges could be safely and effectively coordinated. I cannot leave except by the door. We did not expect our own cleverness to be turned against us. Had you not arrived when you did, I would have attempted to dispel the protective magics. I was loath to do so otherwise.”

WHY SHOULD WE BELIEVE YOU?

“You have nothing but my words to trust. True, this might be a clever ruse, and I might be an awful evil sealed away, desperate for escape, but no abjuration magic wards the door. If I were some demon, the dwarves would have used more than a door and a magical anchor to bind me!”

A DC 20 Insight check reveals that the Fire Shepherd seems sincere.

DEVELOPMENTS

Once released, the Fire Shepherd explains that forsaken attacked his forge after his assistants got sick. Just before that, a gearworker and his journeyman came asking about the Hearthforge and how it distributes heat through the vent shafts to the Shank. Abelard did not trust them, though, for they asked questions to which they should have known the answers. The azer gave the gearworkers inaccurate directions.

If the PCs leave the Hearthforge with the Fire Shepherd, he informs them that if they hurry, they can prevent the

sabotage of the vent shafts and the Shank. If asked who the forsaken are, Abelard calls them “degenerate, filthy undermountainers, invaders of our realms” and refuses to speak further on the matter.

AREA 5: CISTERN CAVERN

Two wells, 20 ft. wide, dominate this room. Their dark, glassy surfaces betray an occasional ripple from a falling drop of water. The two wells fill from a natural spring. Overflow provides running water in the kitchen and infirmary (area 8) and steam-powered trip hammers in the maintenance forge (area 6). The wells are 25 ft. deep.

A dwarven corpse fouls the southern well; the back of its head is crushed, and its pockets and boots weighed down with iron rod stock. His 4 gp of cursed gold sits on the well bottom between his feet.

AREA 6: MAINTENANCE FORGE

A large forge and anvil dominate this square room. The upper half of a scorched body lies in the cooling forge cinders. Another body lies over the anvil with a hammer buried in his ribcage. A third corpse hangs from the side of the workbench, her head pinched in a heavy vise.

The forge can be cleaned up and put to use, if needed. A set of masterwork smith's tools is available. A DC 15 Perception check reveals 8 gp of cursed gold on the floor. A control gear for the “furnace gear chamber” (room 4) is hidden in the pocket of the corpse draped over the anvil.

AREA 7: DORMITORIES

These rooms once housed 60 dwarves. When the PCs enter the first, read or paraphrase the following:

This small room has clearly been searched. Some doors are shut tight, others hang open, and a few are smashed open like a child's toy bank. The room holds a three-tiered bunk bed, three footlockers, and a writing desk.

This area has two floors, identical to one another and one directly over the other. All of the rooms are identically furnished, although those behind smashed doors contain signs of a struggle with furniture and clothing scattered and tossed about. These rooms have a total of 12 corpses and 6 gp of cursed gold scattered between the two floors.

There are 20 total rooms and 4 lavatories. A DC 15 Perception check reveals a gear for the “furnace gear chamber” (room 4) on the desk of one undisturbed room.

AREA 8: INFIRMARY

This long room once housed the sickened and injured. It contains 9 beds, all of which are now covered with

bloodstains. Two of the beds are overturned and eight corpses lie scattered in the wreckage. As the PCs glance around, read or paraphrase the following:

Two doors stand open. One is a supply closet, with ransacked pots, boxes, and pouches lying about the floor. The other is an office. The desk within is overturned as if to form a barrier to the door, although it looks as though it was split with an axe. Much of the office is splattered with blood.

The supply closet holds 300 gp worth of mystic salves. A DC 15 Perception reveals a metal pan underneath one bed containing a cooled disk of cursed gold worth 5 gp, under which lays a gear for the “furnace gear chamber” (room 4).

AREA 9: KITCHEN

The kitchen is large enough to accommodate preparations for dozens of dwarves. In addition to the two doors that lead to the dining hall, a third door leads through a small passage into the cistern chamber.

What was once a kitchen now serves as the final resting place for at least two dwarves. One is stuffed in a stone oven, booted feet hanging out the front. The other lies slumped against a countertop, a vicious cleaver wound splitting his skull, his apron stained with dark, port-colored blood. Pots, pans, and cooking utensils of all kinds lay scattered around the room.

The sinks provide running water and the still-edible food can feed 10 people for 3 days. A DC 22 Perception check reveals the key to room 4, which is stuffed in a sack of flour inside a cabinet. The dwarf on the floor has 2 gp worth of cursed gold in his pockets, and his hands are covered in flour.

AREA 10: DINING HALL

The massive dining hall was the scene of intense but short-lived fighting. In better times, the hall could seat half the dwarves of the citadel, but now, it merely hosts four corpses.

Six enormous tables occupy the bulk of this room. Two are overturned, and the broken remains of benches and chairs lie scattered around the room.

Walking through the room reveals the four dwarf corpses spread throughout it. They lay where they fell, with two still gripping the knives they stuck into each other. Small lumps of cursed gold worth 14 gp lie about the room. The ceiling is 20 ft. high.

AREA 11: WORKSHOPS

The doors to these two workshops bear the same label of “workshop” in Dwarven. Both are equipped with fine sets of tools for many trades, all of which have been rifled through and cast aside.

This room once obviously served as a workshop, likely well organized and tidy. Now, however, its content lay about in a terrible mess. Two dwarf corpses lay here, one with an awl stabbed through his eye and the other slouching against the far wall with a dark crimson smear behind his head.

The closed door is locked. Opening it requires a DC 14 Thievery check or a DC 20 Athletics check. As the PCs open the door, read or paraphrase the following:

This workshop looks very similar to the other, including the mess scattered about and the corpse of a dwarf. The dead dwarf is stretched out against one workbench, with a crossbow bolt in his belly.

If the PCs search the room, they find cursed gold on the floor next to the corpse worth 3 gp. In his hand is one of the gears for the Furnace Gear Chamber (area 4) and a light crossbow with a bolt loaded in it. The dwarf corpse has a bolt quiver on his belt with 7 bolts remaining.

AREA 12: VENT SHAFT BAILEY

The embossed metal door is closed and barred from this side, making it easy for the PCs to open. Any PC standing adjacent to the door before it is opened can smell the particularly foul stench of ghastrs emanating from the other side with a successful DC 10 Perception check. Those with scent can automatically detect the smell.

A DC 20 Religion check identifies the odor as ghastr stench. A DC 20 Nature check eliminates troglodytes as the source. A DC 20 Arcana check eliminates hezrou as the source.

A DC 19 Perception check reveals that someone is whispering on the other side of the door. A DC 24 Perception check further reveals the words. If the listener who makes such a check can understand Deep Speech, he understands the speaker to say, "Be ready, they're on the other side!"

Beyond the door stands an encampment manned by Imperial ghouls hunting the forsaken who captured several of their own kind. Since the ghastrs and lich hounds can see in darkness, they do not bother to light the room.

The ceiling is 30 ft. high in this room. The enclosed barricade requires a DC 15 Athletics check to ascend as part of a move action. Failure by more than 5 indicates a slip and fall on the spikes studding the edifice, dealing 5 points of damage. A wide step on the ghastrs' side gives them the ability to attack over the barricade, which provides cover to those standing behind it.

As the first PC steps into the room, with or without a light source, one of the ghastrs calls out in Common, "Hold! Stand fast in the name of the Empire!" The ghastrs hold their actions to see if the party attacks. Aside from the stench (which is not easily identified as originating with them), the ghastrs'

undead nature is not immediately obvious, as they wear armor and wield weapons.

The ghastrs are not opposed to speaking with the party, although their initial attitude is unfriendly. If the PCs decide to fight their way through, they face a hard-fought battle, as they must push against a fortified position held by an organized and prepared foe.

The following skill challenge allows the PCs to improve the ghastrs' attitude.

TALKING TO THE GHASTRS SKILL CHALLENGE (1,000 XP)

Setup To converse with the imperial ghastrs, they must be made friendly

Level 10th level challenge

Complexity 2 (requires 6 successes before 3 failures)

Primary Skills Diplomacy, Insight, Intimidation, and Religion

Diplomacy (DC 18)—You negotiate with the voices in the dark, discussing how an amicable resolution that benefits both parties can be reached and mentioning your greater mission (each failure increases the DC of future Diplomacy checks by 2 and contributes toward total skill challenge failure)

Insight (DC 18)—You sense the desire to reach an alternate solution with minimal losses and to return to Imperial territory (success indicates the next Diplomacy or Intimidation check gains a +3 bonus; failure does not count towards total challenge failure)

Intimidation (DC 22)—You hint at the military prowess of your group and your merciless victories, mentioning the casual ease with which you dispatched the other foes inside the Hearthforges (each failure increases both the DCs of future Diplomacy and Intimidation checks by 2 and contributes toward total skill challenge failure)

Religion (DC 18)—You play upon the probable hungers and vulnerabilities of ghouls and ghastrs, suggesting powers and abilities that would be very formidable against them and idly mention the possibility of enemy corpses in trade or some other option for mutual exchange (each failure contributes toward total skill challenge failure)

Miscellaneous—Speaking to the ghastrs in Deep Speech provides a +2 bonus on the check

Success The barricade's leader, who spoke to the PCs originally, offers a deal to the PCs:

"We do not often deal with those we might better enslave," he says, "but perhaps we can help one another. If you can recover our fellows from the hands of the forsaken in the shrine to the south, we are willing to

depart without battle, allowing you to continue on your way. Surely, you would slay those who defile your shrines, regardless? Bring back our brothers unharmed, and we can all go our separate ways. Betray us and you will learn the true might of the Empire.”

If the PCs agree, he provides a code word that an uncontrolled ghast recognizes as signaling an ally, and so does not attack. Choose a phrase or term incongruous with the nature of ghosts, such as “sunshine” or “rabbit.”

Failure The ghosts refuse to speak further, indicating that if the group approaches again, they will attack

10TH LEVEL ENCOUNTER

- 4 PCs (2,150 XP) • 4 ghast centurions, 3 gutripper lich hounds
- 5 PCs (2,500 XP) • 5 ghast centurions, 3 gutripper lich hounds
- 6 PCs (3,000 XP) • 5 ghast centurions, 5 gutripper lich hounds

GUTRIPPER LICH HOUND **LEVEL 6 LURKER**
MEDIUM NATURAL BEAST (UNDEAD) XP 250

Initiative +7 **Senses** Perception +8; darkvision
Scent of the Living (necrotic) aura 10; any living creature within the aura at the start of its turn becomes visible and known to the hound

hp 64 **Bloodied** 32
AC 21 **Fortitude** 19 **Reflex** 19 **Will** 19
Immune disease, poison; **Resist** 10 necrotic; **Vulnerable** 5 radiant

Speed 6 (see *ethereal jaunt*)

[mba] **Soulrender Fangs** (standard; at-will)

+12 vs. AC; 1d10 + 4 damage

[m] **Cull the Herd** (minor; recharge on 4, 5, or 6)

+10 vs. Reflex; the target falls prone, and the hound may shift 2 squares

[m] **Feast of Entrails** (standard; at-will)

Requires target to be immobilized, prone, stunned, or unconscious; +10 vs. Fortitude; 3d6 + 4 damage, and the target is stunned (save ends)

Ethereal Jaunt (move; recharges when bloodied)

The hound teleports 6 squares and gains the insubstantial and phasing qualities until the start of its next turn

Alignment evil **Languages** — (understands Deep Speech)

Skills Athletics +10, Endurance +11, Nature +6, Perception +8

Str 14 (+5) **Dex** 18 (+7) **Wis** 10 (+3)
Con 16 (+6) **Int** 6 (+1) **Cha** 18 (+7)

GHAST CENTURION **LEVEL 8 SOLDIER**
MEDIUM NATURAL HUMANOID (UNDEAD) XP 350

Initiative +8 **Senses** Perception +10; darkvision
Stench of Grave (necrotic) aura 2; living enemies that start their turns in the aura take a -2 penalty to attack rolls

hp 89 **Bloodied** 44
AC 24 **Fortitude** 21 **Reflex** 19 **Will** 20
Immune disease, poison; **Resist** 10 necrotic; **Vulnerable** 5 radiant

Speed 8, climb 4

[mba] **Greatsword** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

+15 vs. AC; 2d6 + 5 damage

[mba] **Claw** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Necrotic**

+15 vs. AC; 1d8 + 5 damage, and the target is immobilized (save ends)

[rba] **Crossbow** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

Range 15; +13 vs. AC; 1d10 + 2 damage

[m] **Imperial Conscription** (standard; daily) ♦ **Disease, Necrotic**

Requires target to be immobilized, stunned, or unconscious; +13 vs. Fortitude; 3d6 + 4 damage, and if the target dies, it animates as a new ghast centurion in 1d4 hours under its creator’s control; a Remove Affliction ritual prevents the target’s rising as a ghast

Envenom Weapon (minor; encounter)

Any living target hit with *greatsword* before the end of the ghast’s next turn is immobilized (save ends)

Glory to the Emperor (immediate reaction, when bloodied; daily) ♦ **Healing, Weapon**

The ghast makes a melee basic attack and regains 20 hp

Alignment evil **Languages** Common, Deep Speech
Skills Athletics +13, Endurance +12, Intimidate +12, Perception +10

Str 19 (+8) **Dex** 14 (+6) **Wis** 12 (+5)
Con 17 (+7) **Int** 13 (+5) **Cha** 16 (+7)

Equipment centurion’s pack, greatsword, scale mail

DEVELOPMENT

If party negotiates and agrees to return the ghosts’ comrades from captivity, the undead open the barricade and allow the PCs to pass. They are gone when the group returns from dealing with the gearworker and elementals (see *Part III: Lighting the Fires* page 59). If the party completes the rescue, award experience for a 10th level encounter.



AREA 13: SHRINE TO VOLUND

As they pushed their way through the complex, the forsaken found this holy site dedicated to Volund, and their contemptuous ways led them to blaspheme against Volund. They are in the long, slow process of converting it to a site honoring Addrikah, goddess of madness (see **KOBOLD ECOLOGIES** Vol. 1, page 26). The doors to the shrine are closed when the PCs arrive at them.

A pair of heavy metal doors, embossed with the holy horse and anvil of Volund, ends this short passage. Scorch marks and long red smears leave terrible arcs along the walls. More wide, crimson smears stain the floor and lead inside.

A DC 20 Perception check reveals the presence of a lone voice beyond the door, while a DC 26 Perception check allows the PC to make out what is said if the PC speaks Deep Speech (the language of the forsaken). In Deep Speech, the voice says, “Yes, like that. Prepare the corpses as it shows here. Perfect. For Addrikah!”

Unless the PCs all make at least a DC 14 Stealth check, the forsaken beyond the door hear the PCs outside and fall silent. The doors are not locked and push open with relative ease.

Opening the doors reveals a horrific sight. Bodies are strewn about in twisted poses, their hands and feet maimed and impaled with nails and spikes. A small

pyramid of drying skulls and wilting purple organs is stacked to one side. A thick, red slurry churns inside a large, glass alembic standing above the remnants of the cracked altar, around which flicker a half dozen candles.

The candles provide dim light for 5 ft. around the altar. The ceiling of this once-grand room rises 30 ft. The overturned pews act as rough terrain.

As the PCs enter, a gore-painted forsaken woman drops a dwarf body into the enormous alembic, where the liquid froths and boils. At her feet, a gagged, armored male dwarf grovels, his blackened hands slapping the floor. A DC 22 Perception check uncovers the vague shapes of many forsaken hiding in the shadows.

When facing larger groups, four bodies are positioned on the overturned pews, marked with an X on the map. If anyone approaches within 5 ft. of a body, it explodes in a shower of gore and poisonous residue. See trap description on page 57.

The large set of spheres make up an *alembic of essential distillation*, which was set up to convert bodies into useful slurry. The forsaken make use of the alembic if they completely disable the party. Forsaken turn captured characters into sludge within the alembic, starting with the largest creature first.

8TH LEVEL ENCOUNTER

- 4 PCs (1,400 XP) • 1 derro priestess, 1 ghastr centurion, 3 derro marksmen
- 5 PCs (1,750 XP) • 1 derro priestess, 1 ghastr centurion, 3 derro marksmen, 4 trapped corpses (see below)
- 6 PCs (2,100 XP) • 1 derro priestess, 1 ghastr centurion, 3 derro marksmen, 4 trapped corpses (see below), 4 derro reavers

DERRO MARKSMEN **LEVEL 6 ARTILLERY**
SMALL NATURAL HUMANOID XP 250

Initiative +7 Senses Perception +10; darkvision
hp 60 Bloodied 30
AC 18 Fortitude 19 Reflex 19 Will 18
Resist 5 psychic
Speed 5

[mba] Short Sword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon
+11 vs. AC; 1d6 + 1 damage

[rba] Crossbow (standard; at-will) ♦ Poison, Weapon
Ranged 10/20; +13 vs. AC; 1d8 + 4 and 1d6 poison damage

[r] Paralytic Bolt (standard; recharge on 5, 6) ♦ Poison, Weapon
Ranged 10/20; +11 vs. Fortitude; 1d8 + 5, and target is immobilized (save ends); if target is already immobilized, target is instead stunned (save ends)

[r] Repeating Crossbow (standard; requires at least 2 bolts in clip; recharge on 5, 6) ♦ Poison, Weapon
The derro marksman makes two *crossbow* attacks.

Cruel Blow
The derro deals an extra +1d6 damage if it has combat advantage

Alignment chaotic evil Languages Deep Speech, Dwarven
Skills Athletics +9, Dungeoneering +9, Perception +10, Stealth +12
Str 12 (+4) Dex 19 (+7) Wis 14 (+5)
Con 18 (+7) Int 12 (+4) Cha 16 (+6)

Equipment hide armor, repeating crossbow (2 ten-bolt clips), short sword

INDRECALLA BATEATER, DERRO PRIESTESS
LEVEL 7 CONTROLLER

SMALL NATURAL HUMANOID XP 300

Initiative +7 Senses Perception +7; darkvision
hp 80 Bloodied 40
AC 21 Fortitude 18 Reflex 19 Will 20
Resist 5 psychic
Speed 5

[mba] Mailed Fist (standard; at-will) ♦ Poison, Weapon
+12 vs. AC; 1d6 + 4 damage plus 5 poison damage

[rba] Visions of Addrikah (standard; at-will) ♦ Psychic
Ranged 10; +11 vs. Will; 2d6 + 5 damage, and target is dazed (save ends)

[r] Addrikah's Blessing (encounter; recharges when bloodied) ♦ Psychic
Close blast 4; +9 vs. Will; 2d8 + 4, and target is immobilized (save ends); if target is already immobilized, target is instead stunned (save ends)

[r] Hymn of Addrikah (standard; recharge on 5,6) ♦ Psychic
Area burst 3; +9 vs. Will; 3d8 + 4 damage and target is immobilized (save ends)

Cruel Blow
The derro deals an extra +1d6 damage when it has combat advantage

Alignment chaotic evil Languages Deep Speech, Dwarven
Skills Diplomacy +12, Insight +7, Religion +9, Perception +7
Str 10 (+3) Dex 19 (+7) Wis 8 (+2)
Con 16 (+6) Int 12 (+4) Cha 18 (+7)

Equipment hide armor, holy symbol of Addrikah, spiked gauntlet

DERRO REAVER **LEVEL 8 BRUTE MINION**
SMALL NATURAL HUMANOID XP 88

Initiative +4 Senses Perception +8; darkvision, low-light vision
hp 1; a missed attack never damages a minion
AC 20 Fortitude 20 Reflex 18 Will 22
Resist 5 psychic
Speed 5

[mba] Shortsword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon
+11 vs. AC; 10 damage

[rba] Crossbow (standard; at-will) ♦ Poison, Weapon
Ranged 10/20; +11 vs. AC; 5 damage plus 5 poison damage

Cruel Blow
The derro deals an extra +1d6 damage when it has combat advantage

Alignment chaotic evil Languages Deep Speech, Dwarven
Skills Athletics +12, Dungeoneering +9, Perception +8
Str 17 (+7) Dex 10 (+4) Wis 8 (+3)
Con 16 (+7) Int 11 (+4) Cha 12 (+5)

Equipment chainmail, light crossbow (20 bolts), shortsword

GHAST CENTURION		LEVEL 8 SOLDIER	
MEDIUM NATURAL HUMANOID (UNDEAD)		XP 350	
Initiative +8	Senses Perception +10; darkvision		
Stench of Grave (necrotic) aura 2; living enemies that start their turns in the aura take a -2 penalty to attack rolls			
hp 89	Bloodied 44		
AC 24	Fortitude 21	Reflex 19	Will 20
Immune disease, poison; Resist 10 necrotic; Vulnerable 5 radiant			
Speed 8, climb 4			
[mba] Claw (standard; at-will) ♦ Necrotic			
+15 vs. AC; 1d8 + 5 damage, and the target is immobilized (save ends)			
[rba] Crossbow (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon			
Range 15; +13 vs. AC; 1d10 + 2 damage			
[m] Greatsword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon			
+15 vs. AC; 2d6 + 5 damage			
[m] Imperial Conscription (standard; daily) ♦ Disease, Necrotic			
Requires target to be immobilized, stunned, or unconscious; +13 vs. Fortitude; 3d6 + 4 damage, and if the target dies, it animates as a new ghost centurion in 1d4 hours under its creator's control; a Remove Affliction ritual prevents the target's rising as a ghost			
Envenom Weapon (minor; encounter)			
Any living target hit with <i>greatsword</i> before the end of the ghost's next turn is immobilized (save ends)			
Glory to the Emperor (immediate reaction, when bloodied; daily) ♦ Healing, Weapon			
The ghost makes a melee basic attack and regains 20 hp			
Alignment evil Languages Common, Deep Speech			
Skills Athletics +13, Endurance +12, Intimidate +12, Perception +10			
Str 19 (+8)	Dex 14 (+6)	Wis 12 (+5)	
Con 17 (+7)	Int 13 (+5)	Cha 16 (+7)	
Equipment adventurer's pack, greatsword, scale mail			
TRAPPED CORPSE			
LEVEL 8 LURKER MINION (Trap XP 88)			
<i>A bloated corpse explodes in gore and poisonous ichor as you get too close.</i>			
Trap When a creature steps within 1 square of the infected, gas-filled corpse, it explodes			
Perception			
<i>DC 14</i> —The character notices the odd twitch or jerk of the obviously dead body, as if a random nerve fired			
<i>DC 22</i> —The character realizes that the body will explode if someone gets too close			

Additional Skills (Heal, Religion)

DC 24—The character notices the body is somehow rigged and gains a +2 bonus on Thievery checks to disable it

Trigger When a creature approaches within 1 square of the body, it explodes, spraying deathjump spider venom and bone bits and consuming the trap

Immediate Reaction Close burst 1

Targets Creatures in burst
Attack +11 vs. Reflex

Hit 2d6 + 4 damage, target is knocked prone, and the trap makes a secondary attack against the same target

Secondary Attack—+8 vs. Fortitude; target succumbs to carrion crawler brain juice poison (see DMG page 51)

Countermeasures

- If the trap is known, a character within sight of the body can make a DC 25 Heal or Religion check to determine the blast area (with a successful check, a character takes half damage)
- A character can make a DC 28 Thievery check to deactivate the trap (failure causes the body to explode as if triggered)

TREASURE

+2 *cloak of survival* (see PHB page 250)

DEVELOPMENT

With the shrine clear and the elementals recovered, the Hearthforges' restoration can continue. Once the PCs resolve this encounter, they can move on to "Part III: Lighting the Fires," which also occurs in this room.

AREA 14: SHRINE KEEPER'S QUARTERS

This is the room where the shrine keeper slept and to which he often retreated to rest, relax, and—in his final act—die.

This sparsely decorated room contains a small shrine to Volund, a small writing desk and chair overturned and battered, and a thick red-and-gold curtain dividing the room. Slices in the curtain reveal a large shape behind it.

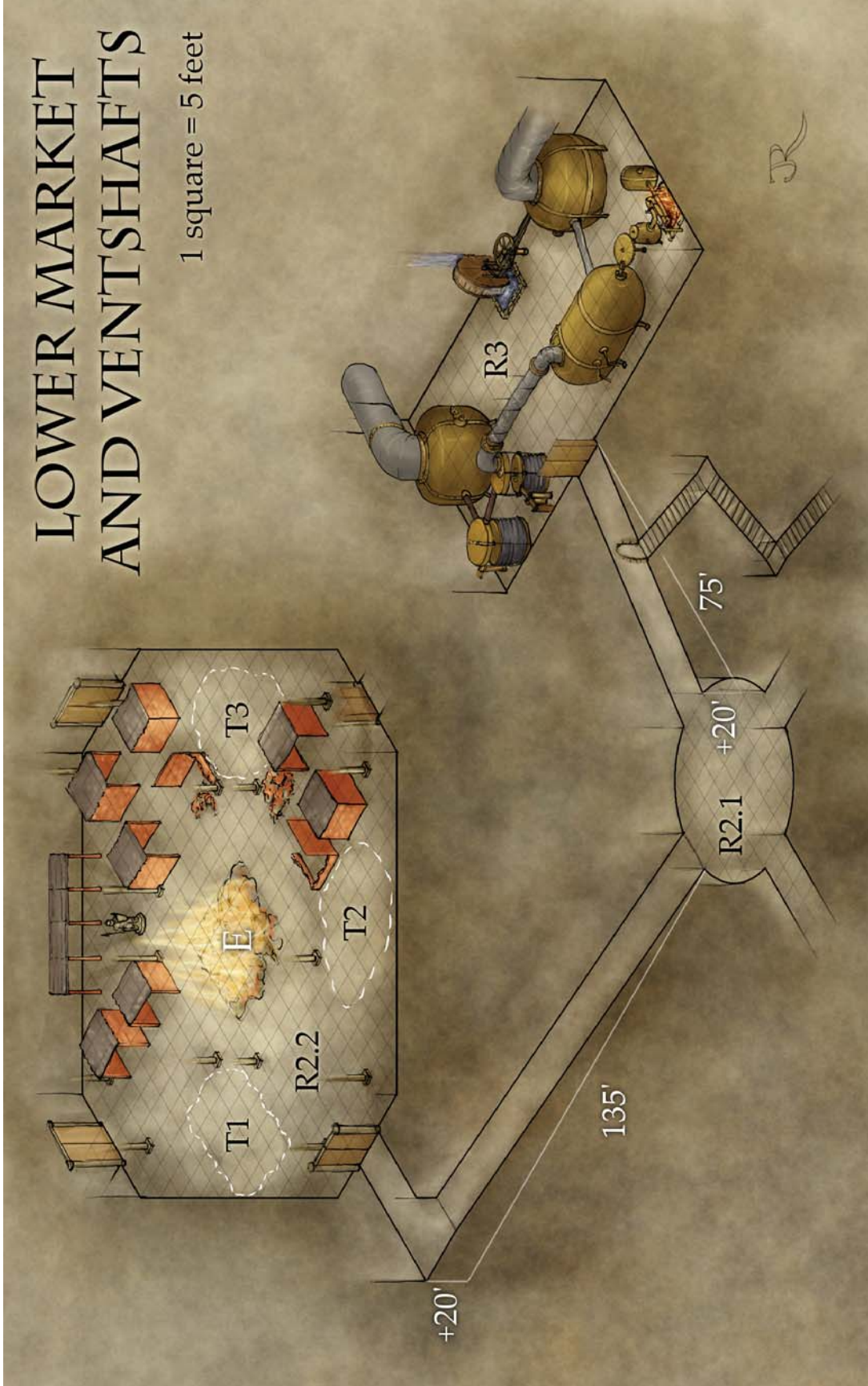
A bed stands behind the curtain and upon it sprawls the body of the shrine keeper, his neck slit from ear to ear. A DC 15 Perception check uncovers a holy symbol of Volund mixed in with the bed sheets.

AREA 15: FORSAKEN BAILEY

The doors to this hall hang open, the bar shattered on the floor before them. Dried bloodstains and a few broken crossbow bolts lie splattered and scattered about the floor near the doors. A few shattered wooden planks and mortarless square stones here and there are all that remain of a barricade.

LOWER MARKET AND VENT SHAFTS

1 square = 5 feet



This ceiling of the lonely hall beyond the doors is 30 ft. high.

A high ceiling rises above a room filled with more carnage. At the southern end of the hall, an arched tunnel sinks further into the depths of the mountain.

The southern passage leads to the warrens of the forsaken, more than a quarter mile underground. The scope of this adventure does not include exploring the warrens, as they are little more than dozens of additional galleries, caverns, and caves filled with forsaken. The passage eventually leads to the Howling City of Farragum (as detailed in **KOBOLD QUARTERLY #11**)

Discourage further exploration in this direction by indicating that the quality of workmanship noticeably drops once they leave area 15. If the PCs do insist on exploring, let them encounter increasing resistance from the forsaken, who come at them in larger waves (but never with any usable treasure) until the PCs get the point and turn back.

FORSAKEN (200)

8TH LEVEL ENCOUNTER

- 4 PCs (1,400 XP) • 1 derro priestess, 3 derro marksmen, 4 derro reavers
- 5 PCs (1,750 XP) • 1 derro priestess, 4 derro marksmen, 5 derro reavers
- 6 PCs (2,100 XP) • 2 derro priestesses, 4 derro marksmen, 5 derro reavers

PART III

Lighting the Fires

The party reaches a split in the tunnel. Abelard offers to go check on the state of the elementals in the ruined lower market, confident in his ability to rebuke them, and suggests the party go stop the saboteurs. Abelard insists on remaining behind, if only to ensure that no one escapes to sabotage the Hearthforges further. He further insists the party rest, if it looks battered or the PCs seem tired and depleted. Emphasize to them that Abelard thinks it too dangerous to proceed in anything other than full capacity.

IF THE PARTY DELAYS

If the party insists on stopping the elemental rebellion prior to resolving the vent shafts encounter, permit them, but use Abelard to impress upon them that such a decision is unwise. If the PCs choose that path anyway, they find the air shafts room quieted and heavily damaged. With minimal effort, they notice the sprayed blast of now-cooled gold and the extent of damage to the machinery.

Abelard can repair all of the damage in the room with Make Whole rituals, but in order to cast enough, he must go to a nearby cache of supplies and return, which delays him until the next morning. This displeases him greatly, and he makes no effort to hide his anger and disappointment.

Thanks to the delay, the PCs do not learn the fate of Bragollach (although they do find a few small golden scales under the vent shaft she used to escape; see R2) or more about the nature of the saboteurs. Worse, the delay adds to the burdens of the starving populace, with 1d6 more people dying from the cold and hunger.

R2: VENT SHAFT BOILERS

Clanking, roaring, churning machinery fills this room. The PCs can hear the echoing din long before they reach this point, but usually only as the faintest hum. As they approach the door outside of this room, read or paraphrase the following:

The thrum of the machinery that has grown steadily louder for the past several minutes apparently originates from the room just beyond this large, open metal door. Beyond the door, several huge boilers connect to strange machinery. Two large bellow-cramps alternately rise and fall. A small waterwheel and a stream of lava feed down portions of the wall, helping power the odd gearworkings. The noise is nearly deafening.

A DC 25 Perception check reveals the sound of voices from within, barely evident above the racket, while a DC 23 Perception check catches glimpses of non-mechanized movement within. Allow the PCs to take whatever precautions they choose, as the cultists cannot hear them. / Unless the PCs take more than 30 minutes preparing, the events described occur just as they enter. If the PCs delay for more than 30 minutes, the ritual is complete and Bragollach escapes, with the PCs only witnessing some parts of the events through the door.

The machinery in this room is quite loud, requiring a DC 15 Perception check to communicate by voice but providing a +2 circumstance bonus on any saving throw made against a thunder effect. Flickering, *everburning torches* set in small recesses in the ceiling provide dim light throughout the room.

The ceiling here is 25 ft. high, while the boiler and Hearthforge ductwork, 5 ft. in diameter, rises 20 ft., with a 5 ft. clearance above them. The main duct into the vent shafts is flush with the ceiling and 10 ft. in diameter.

PCs can grab the spinning waterwheel, the rising and falling bellows, the ladders, the turning gears, and the piston arms with DC 12 Athletics checks. Any PC that fails this check by 5 or more is crushed in the machinery (+10

vs. Reflex; 6d6 damage; Miss half damage). A successful Athletics check puts the PC halfway up the room and can be done as part of a move action. From that position, a second DC 15 Athletics check lets the PC reach the tops of the boilers, which can also be done as part of the same move action. Walking around on the ductwork requires a DC 10 Athletics or Acrobatics check to prevent slipping.

While the PCs are up in the machinery, a DC 18 Athletics or Acrobatics check made during a move action allows lateral movement through the maze of gears, pistons, bellows, and belts. A PC who fails falls to the ground, taking 1d6 points of falling damage and ending his move action. Failing by 5 or more means the PC fell into the machine is crushed in the machinery (+10 vs. Reflex; 6d6 damage; Miss Half damage).

As a standard and a move action, a PC can open a steam release valve, creating a close blast 3 of superheated steam. Those in the chosen area suffer the following attack:

[c] **Steam Valve** (standard and move; once per round) ♦

Fire

Close blast 3; +10 vs. Reflex; 2d8 + 5 damage, and target is blinded (save ends)

Miss—Half damage, and target is not blinded

THE RITUAL

When the PCs arrive, the Mammonite cultists are in the final stage of conducting a ritual of transformation. If the PCs act within 30 minutes of arriving, they witness the unplanned conclusion to the ritual and the escape of Bragollach. Otherwise, they merely witness parts of the events described herein, as the machinery in the room blocks their view.

Unless the PCs intervene at some point, the Mammonite ritual ends as follows.

Bragollach, in the guise of Vianna, the blonde female dwarf, sags in the arms of Hronagar the darakhul and Sebastian Ufastis. A spined devil stands behind them, and an older dwarf wearing the robes of a gearworker leers close to her. A kobold dances maliciously from foot to foot in his shadow while the Journeyman gearworker brings a steaming crucible held in tongs. A few goldspawn dwarves watch greedily from the periphery.

The older dwarf calls out, “Bring the blessing. The ceremony will be completed!” At that, the spined devil pulls back Bragollach’s head and pries open her mouth as the Journeyman gearworker dumps the contents down her throat.

Her captors callously drop her to the floor. Bragollach writhes, clutching at her chest, then arches her back and screams again, opening her eyes wide. They glow with golden fury. The older dwarf stands over her, telling her to accept her transformation, while the kobold capers and leers

next to him. Bragollach then bellows defiantly, blasting the older dwarf and kobold with molten gold from her mouth, catching them unawares and melting their skulls and coating their upper torsos in a glittering death shroud. Bragollach then completes her transformation and claws a narrow rent in the metal of an air shaft as she leaps inside and flies off.

The remaining cultists are dumbfounded for several seconds before the Journeyman gearworker says, “No matter, we can deal with her later. Let us finish our work here. Destroy it.” With that, the remaining conspirators turn with malicious eyes upon the machinery in the room.

Let the PCs arrive just as the doomed older dwarf says his piece and the Journeyman gearworker pours the molten gold down Bragollach’s throat. This allows them to see the most important part of the ceremony and prevents them from interrupting it early. If they charge into battle at that point, roll for initiative as usual but arbitrarily place Bragollach at the top of the initiative order so she may breathe the molten gold onto the older dwarf and kobold without fear of striking an intervening PC. Even if the PCs come to her rescue, Bragollach flies into the vent shaft to sulk and fight off the effects of the cursed gold, leaving the PCs to their fates.



11TH LEVEL ENCOUNTER

- 4 PCs (2,400 XP) • Journeyman, Hronagar, Sebastian, spined devil, 4 goldspawn dwarves
- 5 PCs (3,000 XP) • Journeyman, Hronagar, Sebastian, spined devil, goldveined dwarf hammerer, 6 goldspawn dwarves
- 6 PCs (3,600 XP) • Journeyman, Hronagar, Sebastian, spined devil, goldveined dwarf hammerer, goldveined dwarf bolter, 9 goldspawn dwarves

GEARWORKER JOURNEYMAN

LEVEL 7 ELITE CONTROLLER (LEADER)

MEDIUM NATURAL HUMANOID XP 600

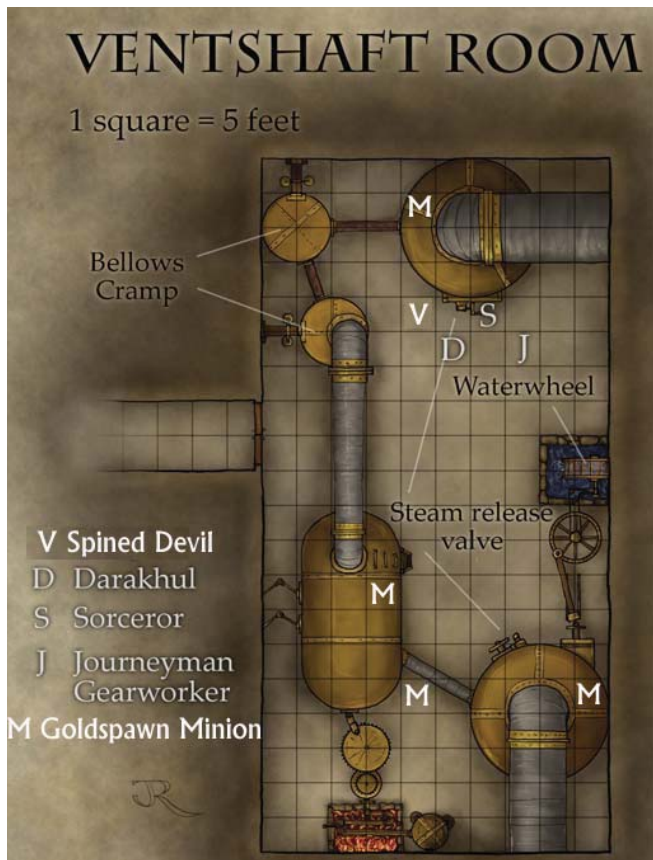
Initiative +8	Senses Perception +10		
hp 182	Bloodied 91		
AC 23	Fortitude 18	Reflex 22	Will 21
Saving Throws +2			
Speed 5			
Action Points 1			
[mba] Blinding Lash (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon			
Reach 3; +11 vs. Reflex; 1d6 + 5 damage, and target is blinded (save ends)			
[m] Deceiver's Gambit (minor; at-will) ♦ Psychic, Weapon			
Reach 3; +11 vs. Reflex; 1d10 + 4 damage, and target slides 4 squares			
[m] Hindering Snare (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon			
Reach 3; +11 vs. Reflex; 1d6 + 5 damage, and target is knocked prone			
[m] Sceptered Blow (immediate interrupt, when targeted by a melee attack; at-will) ♦ Weapon			
+11 vs. Fortitude; 1d6 + 5 damage and target is weakened (save ends)			
Devil's Due (move; recharge on 4, 5, 6)			
The Journeyman directs an ally within sight to make a free melee basic attack against a blind, dazed, weakened, or prone foe			
[a] Mammon's Feint (move; recharges when first bloodied) ♦ Charm			
Area burst 5 within 10; +9 vs. Will; 3d8 + 5 damage, and target is dazed (save ends)			
Alignment evil	Languages Common, Dwarven, Supernal		
Skills Diplomacy +12, Dungeoneering +9, Insight +10, Perception +10, Religion +9			
Str 11 (+3)	Dex 20(+8)	Wis 14 (+5)	
Con 16 (+6)	Int 12 (+4)	Cha 18 (+7)	
Equipment chainmail, holy symbol of Mammon, jeweled scepter, whip			

HRONAGAR

LEVEL 7 ELITE BRUTE

MEDIUM NATURAL HUMANOID (UNDEAD) XP 600

Initiative +6	Senses Perception +9		
hp 224	Bloodied 112		
AC 23	Fortitude 21	Reflex 21	Will 17
Immune disease, poison; Resist 10 necrotic; Vulnerable 5 radiant			
Saving Throws +2			
Speed 5			
Action Points 1			
[mba] Urgrosh Slash (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon			
+10 vs. AC; 2d8 + 5 damage			
[m] Crushing Wave of the Aegis (move; at-will) ♦ Weapon			
+8 vs. Reflex; 2d6 + 5 damage, and target is knocked prone			
[m] Devouring Bite (standard; recharges on 5, 6) ♦ Necrotic			
+8 vs. Fortitude; 3d8 + 5 damage, and Hronagar regains hp equal to 1/2 the damage			
[m] Hungering Bite (minor; at-will) ♦ Necrotic			
+8 vs. Fortitude; 1d8 + 5 damage, and target is immobilized (save ends)			
[m] Master of the Field (immediate interrupt, when an adjacent enemy attempts to shift or slide away; at-will) ♦ Weapon			
+8 vs. AC; 1d8 + 5 damage, and the target is prevented from moving			
[m] Urgrosh Whirlwind (standard; recharges when first bloodied) ♦ Weapon			
+8 vs. AC against up to three targets; 2d8 + 5 damage			
Alignment evil	Languages Common, Deep Speech, Dwarven		
Skills Athletics +14, Endurance +11, Intimidate +9, Perception +9			
Str 22 (+9)	Dex 16 (+6)	Wis 12 (+4)	
Con 16 (+6)	Int 10 (+3)	Cha 12 (+4)	
Equipment plate armor, tower shield, urgrosh			



SEBASTIAN UFASTIS
LEVEL 7 ELITE ARTILLERY

MEDIUM NATURAL HUMANOID XP 600

Initiative +3 Senses Perception +8
hp 200 Bloodied 100
AC 21 Fortitude 21 Reflex 19 Will 21
Resist (see *turn the fatal blade*)
Saving Throws +2
Speed 5
Action Points 1

[rba] **Gout of Magma** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Fire**
Ranged 10/15; +12 vs. Reflex; 1d8 + 5 damage plus ongoing 5 fire damage

[a] **Fumes of the Earth** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Poison**
Area burst 3 within 10; +10 vs. Fortitude; 2d8 + 5 damage, and targets are weakened (save ends)

[a] **Knives of the Mountain** (standard; recharges on 5, 6)
Area burst 3 within 10; +12 vs. AC; 3d8 + 5 damage

[r] **Betraying Implements** (minor; at-will) ♦ **Fire**
Ranged 10; +12 vs. Will; 1d8 + 5 damage

[r] **Gifts of Mammon** (standard; recharges when first bloodied) ♦ **Psychic**
Ranged 15; +12 vs. Will; 3d10 + 5 damage, and target is slowed (save ends)

Turn the Fatal Blade (immediate interrupt, when targeted by a melee attack; at-will)
+8 vs. Will against attacker; Sebastian gains Resist 10 against any power with the weapon keyword

Alignment evil **Languages** Common, Dwarven, Primordial, Supernal
Str 12 (+4) **Dex** 10 (+3) **Wis** 10 (+3)
Con 18 (+7) **Int** 12 (+4) **Cha** 20 (+8)

GOLDSPAWN DWARF
LEVEL 7 CONTROLLER MINION

MEDIUM NATURAL HUMANOID XP 75

Initiative +3 Senses Perception +5; darkvision, low-light vision
hp 1; a missed attack never damages a minion
AC 22 Fortitude 19 Reflex 17 Will 20
Speed 5

[mba] **Forgehammer** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
+12 vs. AC; 9 damage

[rba] **Crossbow** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
+12 vs. AC; 9 damage

[m] **For Love of Money** (immediate interrupt, when targeted by a melee attack; at-will)
+11 vs. Will against the attacker; instead of attacking the dwarf, the attacker makes a melee basic attack against an adjacent target of the dwarf's choice (if no such target exists, no attack is made)

Fatal Bequest
When it dies, the dwarf vomits up 7 greed-tainted gold pieces

Stand Your Ground
When an effect forces the dwarf to move—through a pull, a push, or a slide—the dwarf moves 1 square less than the effect specifies, and when an attack would knock the dwarf prone, the dwarf can roll a saving throw to avoid falling prone

Alignment evil **Languages** Common, Dwarven
Skills Dungeoneering +11, Endurance +9
Str 17 (+6) **Dex** 10 (+3) **Wis** 14 (+5)
Con 16 (+6) **Int** 11 (+3) **Cha** 12 (+4)

Equipment chainmail, crossbow (20 bolts), warhammer

TACTICS

The Journeyman attempts to blind or knock opponents prone, then use *deceiver's gambit* to slide them near another opponent, like Hronagar, whom he can then direct with *devil's due*. When *devil's due* hasn't recharged, he uses *Mammon's feint*, trying to catch as many foes as possible.

Hronagar wades into combat, utilizing his *devouring bite* to restore hp when needed. He and the Journeyman work well together, as the Journeyman brings foes to him and he knocks them down and then bites or hacks them.

Sebastian begins combat using *gifts of Mammon* and *betraying implements* against the same target, trying to focus fire. He then utilizes *knives of the mountain* to best effect and alternates to *fumes of the earth* when it does not recharge. He fires *gout of magma* at enemies who seem clumsy and easily hit.

TREASURE

Boots of striding (see PHB, page 246)

DEVELOPMENT

Only the False Gearworker truly knew why they were attempting to perform the ritual. With him killed in such a way, not even a Speak with Dead ritual can extract information. The PCs learn nothing useful from any prisoners they might take.

Abelard arrives shortly after the battle and casts a Make Whole ritual on the rent in the duct if the PCs don't do it themselves. He expresses his concerns about the dragon's presence in the vent shafts, but he sees no easy way of extracting her.

R2: ELEMENTAL REBELLION

Abelard returns as the party recovers from the battle with the Mammonites. He found the elementals, loose in a lower hall but led by some sort of corrupted elemental of both earth and fire. Abelard can round up the elementals, but he needs the PCs to deal with the ringleader while he is doing so. In order to ensure the PCs are protected as well as possible, Abelard casts all of his protective and enhancing spells on them before leading them into the next room.

Beyond the closed metal door, the PCs can only hear the roar of hundreds of fires. The door is warm to the touch but opens easily. When they do open it, read or paraphrase the following.

A domed ceiling roughly 40 ft. high and supported by nearly a score of thick pillars caps this massive chamber. At the far side of the gallery stand the scorched remains of what appear to be market stalls, some more damaged than others. The entire chamber is awash in an eerie, dull orange light.

The light originates from three crowds of fire elementals gathered around Gefangak, a large elemental of cinders and charcoal who stands atop a great pile of burning timbers and glowing rubble in the center of the room. Gefangak calls out to the elementals around him, his great anvil-like hands outstretched and pleading to the others in a gesture of entreaty. He speaks Primordial in a crackling, roaring voice.

If a PC can understand Primordial, he hears Gefangak say, "We need not remain here any longer! See the greed that grips the dwarves? Why stay? Let us abandon our contract with them as they abandoned us and return to our true home!"

Abelard replies in Primordial, "Do not believe Gefangak, my friends! He is confused! His mind is filled with rage, uncertainty, and conflict! Return with me, and let us continue our duty!"

Gefangak punctuates his retort with a breath of flame when he snorts, "Duty to whom? Service for what? Send your worst, azer. When I have crushed it, we will leave this place!"

Abelard turns to the PCs and, in Common, says, "I had hoped to reason with them, but it seems we have no choice. Only the death of Gefangak can settle this matter."

The fire elementals are uncertain of what to do and remain neutral, bunched into three groups. They neither participate in combat nor hinder the PCs except by creating the areas of great heat (see below). Abelard moves to one side of the groups and addresses the elementals while the PCs engage Gefangak. Elementals of all sizes watch and wait. If a PC attacks them for some reason, the party finds itself suddenly opposed by hundreds of elementals, including at least two-dozen elder fire elementals. Unless they find a way to end a fight with fire elementals quickly, the PCs do not survive such folly.

Although battling Gefangak might seem like a relatively straightforward decision to many, some PCs might justifiably agree with Gefangak, or at least want to more fully hear his side of the story. Rather than blindly rushing in to slay the enhanced elemental, they might wish to talk to him (see the "Moral Dilemmas" sidebar). Gefangak begins the encounter with an initial attitude of hostile. Bringing his attitude up to indifferent prevents combat, while making him friendly or helpful convinces him to lead the elementals back to the Hearthforges.

As long as the elementals return to their duties, Abelard is content with the decision, and he asks the PCs to help him work out another contract with Gefangak and the elementals to prevent another occurrence in the future. Should the party attempt to parlay in earnest, consider the following skill challenge. Note that it is higher level than fighting Gefangak, for convincing the elemental is harder than just crushing him to rubble.

WORKING THINGS OUT WITH GEFANGAK**SKILL CHALLENGE (1,800 XP)**

Setup You must convince the elementals to return to the Hearthforges by making Gefangak friendly

Level 11th level challenge

Complexity 3 (requires 8 successes before 3 failures)

Primary Skills Arcana, Diplomacy, Insight, and History

Arcana (DC 21)—You discuss the inherent magical laws of elementals and primordials, the binding magics of contracts, and the consequences if Gefangak is mistaken about the dwarves' breach. You talk about the sorts of punishments oathbreakers suffer and the comparison of an elemental's immortality to a dwarf's lifespan (each failure contributes toward total skill challenge failure)

Diplomacy (DC 20)—You negotiate with Gefangak, discussing possible inconsistencies in its logic, misinterpretations of the dwarves' behavior, and considerations of the probable consequences. You talk about the benefits of reconsidering his contract, of reestablishing terms and benefits (each failure increases the DC of future Diplomacy checks by 2 and contributes toward total skill challenge failure).

Insight (DC 18)—You understand Gefangak's desire for change, recognition, and appreciation while sensing its pride and warrior spirit (success indicates the next Diplomacy check gains a +3 bonus; failure does not count towards total challenge failure).

History (DC 18)—You suggest precedents and loopholes for leniency or consideration and provide examples of compromise and potential benefits (each failure contributes toward total skill challenge failure).

Special—Any attempt to Intimidate Gefangak increases the DC of Diplomacy checks by 2 and counts as a failure.

Miscellaneous—Speaking to the Gefangak in Primordial provides a +2 bonus on the check.

Success Gefangak realizes the benefits of renegotiation outweigh the short-term continuation of their service and agrees to return to the Hearthforges and lead the elementals there in good faith that a new contract will be established shortly.

Failure Gefangak refuses to speak further, and he demands that Abelaird's champions face him now in combat or permit the elementals to depart.

The three areas where the elementals congregate are intolerably hot. A character who enters or begins his turn in one of these areas suffers one of the following effects.

AREA 1

[m] **Blazing Sparks of Barely Concealed Wrath**
+10 vs. Fortitude; 2d6 + 5 fire damage

AREA 2**Constant Heat of the Unceasing Furnace**

Character is weakened until start of next turn; if already weakened, character becomes dazed (save ends)

AREA 3**[m] Thirst that Knows No Respite**

+10 vs. Fortitude; Ongoing 5 fire, and target is weakened (save ends)

An Endure Elements ritual protects its recipient from the effects of area 2.

The burning debris pile is rough terrain, and anyone who enters one of its squares or begins her turn in one of its squares takes ongoing 5 fire damage and cannot save to end the effect unless they resist fire damage or until they leave the area. While standing in the burning rubble, Gefangak heals 1 point per round and receives a +2 bonus on any saving throw made against ongoing cold-based effect. The high temperature areas do not heal Gefangak.

GEFANGAK THE UPSTART**LEVEL 9 SOLO SOLDIER**

LARGE ELEMENTAL MAGICAL BEAST (EARTH, FIRE) XP 2,000

Initiative +9 **Senses Perception** +9; darkvision
Furnace's Bite (fire) aura 1; any creature that enters or starts its turn in the aura takes 5 fire damage
hp 360 **Bloodied** 180
AC 27 **Fortitude** 25 **Reflex** 20 **Will** 22
Immune disease, petrification, poison; **Resist** 10 fire;
Vulnerable 5 cold
Saving Throws +5
Speed 8
Action Points 2

[mba] **Forgeblast Strike** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Fire**

Reach 2; +14 vs. Reflex; 2d8 + 5 fire damage

[m] **Crushing Hammerblow** (standard; at-will)

Reach 2; +16 vs. AC; 2d6 + 5 damage, and target slides 3 squares

[m] **Teeth of the Vengeful Earth** (standard; encounter) ♦ **Reliable**

Reach 2; +14 vs. Reflex; 4d8 + 5 damage, and target is knocked prone and dazed (save ends)

[c] Bellows' Wrath (standard; recharge on 5, 6) ♦ Fire		
Close blast 5; +12 vs. Reflex; 3d10 + 5 fire damage plus 5 ongoing fire damage (save ends)		
[c] Spray of Sparks (minor; at-will) ♦ Fire		
Close burst 2; +12 vs. Reflex; 1d8 + 5 fire damage, and target is pushed 2 squares		
[r] Cindershot (standard; at-will) ♦ Fire		
Ranged 10/15; +16 vs. AC; 1d10 + 4 damage plus 5 fire damage		
Alignment unaligned	Languages Common, Dwarven, Primordial	
Skills Athletics +15, Diplomacy +12, Endurance +12, Perception +9		
Str 22 (+10)	Dex 17 (+7)	Wis 11 (+4)
Con 17 (+7)	Int 12 (+6)	Cha 15 (+7)

TACTICS

Gefangak pummels enemies while burning those caught within its aura. It only hurls flaming rocks when its enemies are out of reach, pulling the cinders from its own body. It uses the *crushing hammerblow* to knock foes into heat effect areas and *bellows' wrath* on clustered groups. Gefangak reserves *teeth of the vengeful earth* for a difficult opponent, following it with a *spray of sparks*, moving closer as needed and then spending an action point to use a *crushing hammerblow* to send the victim into a heat effect zone.

When Gefangak becomes bloodied, a second option for ending the battle becomes available. In a complexity 3, level 11 Skill challenge, the PCs may convince the elemental to submit and surrender through this combat skill challenge.

MORAL DILEMMAS

Gefangak's cause is not an immoral one. He believes the dwarves, in their current greedy state, no longer honor the spirit of the agreement made so long ago. He thinks that leading the elementals to a planar portal and back to the Elemental Chaos is the right thing to do.

The question put to the PCs, then, is whether the contract was violated. If the players care to, let them work out the answer with Gefangak. This can provide an excellent roleplaying encounter rather than a combat one. If the players show no interest in contracts and moral quandaries, let them decide the answer through combat.

Ultimately, whether or not Gefangak is right does not impact the larger story of **HALLS OF THE MOUNTAIN KING**, as long as the PCs can restore the escaped elementals to the Hearthforges.

SURRENDER GEFANGAK!

SKILL CHALLENGE (1,800 XP)

Setup You must convince the elementals to return to the Hearthforges, forcing Gefangak to submit

Level 11th level challenge

Complexity 3 (requires 8 successes before 3 failures)

Primary Skills Arcana, Bluff, Diplomacy, History, Insight, and Intimidate

Arcana (DC 21)—You taunt Gefangak with the knowledge that his death will be permanent and that he sacrifices the rest of his immortal lifespan for foolish pride (each failure contributes toward total skill challenge failure. On a failure, Gefangak's *teeth of the vengeful earth* immediately recharges, and he attacks you with it or *cindershot* as a free action that does not provoke opportunity attacks).

Bluff or Intimidation (DC 18)—You taunt Gefangak with its crumbling state at the hands of mortals, belittling its prowess and attempts to stop your group (each failure contributes toward total skill challenge failure; on a failure, Gefangak's *bellows' wrath* immediately recharges, and he attacks you with it or *cindershot* as a free action that does not provoke opportunity attacks)

Diplomacy (DC 20)—You exhort Gefangak, shouting flaws in its logic, misinterpretations of the dwarves' behavior, and considerations of the probable consequences and explaining how there is still time to stop all this. Each failure contributes toward total skill challenge failure; on a failure, 3 sparkspawn minions (see below) are released adjacent to Gefangak, acting on the next initiative count.

History (DC 18)—You recall great defeats of Gefangak's people at the hands of mortals, telling of monuments built on the folly of elementals and the weight of past military failures against the character's race. Each failure contributes toward total skill challenge failure; on a failure, Gefangak's *teeth of the vengeful earth* immediately recharges, and he immediately attacks you with it as part of a charge in a free action that does not provoke opportunity attacks.

Insight (DC 18)—You sense Gefangak's desire for change, recognition, and appreciation while realizing its pride and warrior spirit, and you determine that Bluff or Intimidate would work better than Diplomacy in this situation. Success indicates that you may make an Intimidate check as a move action with a +2 bonus; failure does not count towards total challenge failure, but Gefangak may shift 2 squares or recharge either *teeth of the vengeful earth* or *bellows' wrath*.

Miscellaneous—Speaking to the Gefangak in Primordial provides a +2 bonus on the check

Individual Successes Unless otherwise stated, each success in this skill challenge during combat impedes Gefangak's ability to battle as you wear away at its confidence and determination

1st Success—Gefangak may only use at-will powers this round

2nd Success—Gefangak may not use a move action this round; it may still spend an action point to gain a move action

3rd Success—Weakened until the start of its next turn

4th Success—May not use a standard action this round; it may still spend an action point to gain a standard action

5th Success—Grants combat advantage until the start of its next turn

6th Success—Provokes an opportunity attack from the closest foe within 10 squares

7th Success—May no longer use *bellows' wrath* for this encounter

8th Success—Total success

Total Success Gefangak realizes the opportunities for survival and possible renegotiation outweigh the principles it might hold. It kneels and begs mercy, agreeing to return to the Hearthforges and lead the elementals there in good faith, swearing by its soulfires to serve out its contract.

Failure Gefangak spends a second wind as a free action, gaining 36 hit points, a +1 to all defenses, and a +2 bonus to attack with all powers until it is destroyed.

SPARKSPAWN **LEVEL 7 SOLDIER MINION**
TINY IMMORTAL BEAST XP 75

Initiative +8 **Senses** Perception +5; darkvision, low-light vision

hp 1; a missed attack never damages a minion

AC 23 **Fortitude** 18 **Reflex** 20 **Will** 19

Speed fly 5 hover

[mba] **Sparkbite** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Fire**

+14 vs. AC; 6 damage

[rba] **Sparkblast** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Fire**

+14 vs. AC; 6 damage

Hunger of Flame

When reduced to 0 hp, the fire resist of all creatures adjacent to the sparkspawn is reduced by 5 until the end of the target's next turn; targets with no fire resist, gain instead vulnerable 5 fire; the effect of multiple sparkspawns is cumulative.

Alignment evil **Languages** Primordial

Str 6 (+2) **Dex** 16 (+6) **Wis** 14 (+5)

Con 13 (+4) **Int** 6 (+2) **Cha** 12 (+4)

DEVELOPMENT

In the end, regardless of how the PCs convince Gefangak and the elementals to return to the Hearthforges, the PCs need to rehear the Hearthforges.

RESTORING THE HEARTHFORGE

This encounter occurs in area 3, but only after the PCs clear the cultists from area 13. If the party did not search the room already, Abelard pauses at the junction of passageways, just outside and turns his head as if listening. PCs can also make DC 10 Perception checks to hear the chanting occurring within the room. Abelard whispers, "Someone is in the Shrine to Volund! Please, go and secure the Shrine. I will guide the elementals to the furnaces and prepare the ritual."

Abelard leaves the PCs here while he goes to restore the elementals to the Hearthforges. He tells the party to set up any defenses they want, as long as he can get back into the chamber. It takes Abelard 10 minutes to lead the elementals to the Hearthforges, and restore them. About 5 minutes after he leaves, a great whoosh of air can be heard within the walls and after several more minutes a quiet hum of machinery begins in the distance, rising in volume. The noise imparts a -5 penalty on Perception checks.

When the group arrives in the Hearthforges, Abelard says, "I need to complete the ritual that bonds the elementals to the furnaces and allows them to burn hotter while drawing their sustenance from the mountain. I need you to guard the Hearthforges while I do so. If the forsaken are about, they might well attack."

Abelard gives the PCs 10 more minutes to finish setting up their defenses, giving them a total of 20 minutes of preparation time. Moving a barricade from areas 1, 10, or 12 takes four PCs 10 minutes each (using additional characters does not speed up the process). Setting up the tables from area 10 or the beds from area 8 takes four PCs only 5 minutes apiece. Let the PCs set up any other defenses they can think of.

While the PCs busy themselves with final preparations, Abelard himself also prepares for what lies ahead. He moves to stand in front of the center furnace on the western wall and meditates. After 10 minutes of quiet contemplation, he turns to the PCs and says, "It is time."

Abelard's ritual takes 10 minutes to complete, and the first wave of forsaken arrive 4 minutes into it. The forsaken come in three waves. A number of forsaken reavers and bombardiers attack in each wave as listed below. The next wave attacks 1d4 rounds after the previous wave is reduced to half strength.

11TH LEVEL ENCOUNTER

- 4 PCs (2,640 XP) • 3 waves (6 derro reavers, 4 derro bombardiers)
- 5 PCs (3,168 XP) • 3 waves (7 derro reavers, 5 derro bombardiers)
- 6 PCs (3,696 XP) • 3 waves (7 derro reavers, 7 derro bombardiers)

The PCs can end a wave quickly by destroying the keystone in the cistern passage—but doing so with the first or second wave means the next wave breaks through 5 rounds later. Otherwise, the PCs must hold the line. The forsaken are desperate to stop Abelard, but the only way to do so is to kill or incapacitate him. He cannot fight back or defend himself without interrupting the ritual and grants combat advantage for the entire encounter (see page 69 for Abelard's statistics). He cannot, however, be dominated during the ritual. Two reavers move to flank Abelard and attack him, while the rest of the reavers and the bombardiers target characters. Two reavers from each wave always move to attack Abelard, unless he is already under attack.

If the party sealed the passage outside of room 11, the forsaken swarm out of either the cistern door or the main entry passage. If all other routes are blocked to them, the forsaken swarm down the main passage.

DERRO REAVER		LEVEL 8 BRUTE MINION	
SMALL NATURAL HUMANOID		XP 88	
Initiative +4	Senses Perception +5; darkvision, low-light vision		
hp 1; a missed attack never damages a minion			
AC 20	Fortitude 20	Reflex 18	Will 22
Resist 5 psychic			
Speed 5			
[mba] Shortsword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon			
+11 vs. AC; 10 damage			
[r] Crossbow (standard; at-will) ♦ Poison, Weapon			
Ranged 10/20; +11 vs. AC; 5 damage and 5 poison damage			
Cruel Blow			
The derro deals an extra +1d6 damage when it has combat advantage.			
Alignment chaotic evil		Languages Deep Speech, Dwarven	
Skills Athletics +12, Dungeoneering +9, Perception +8			
Str 17 (+7)	Dex 10 (+4)	Wis 8 (+3)	
Con 16 (+7)	Int 11 (+4)	Cha 12 (+5)	
Equipment chainmail, light crossbow (20 bolts), shortsword			

DERRO BOMBARDIER	
LEVEL 8 ARTILLERY MINION	
SMALL NATURAL HUMANOID	XP 88
Initiative +9	Senses Perception +10; darkvision, low-light vision
hp 1; a missed attack never damages a minion	
AC 20	Fortitude 20 Reflex 18 Will 22
Resist 5 psychic	
Speed 5	
[mba] Shortsword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+15 vs. AC; 9 damage	
[r] Murderous Bombard (standard; encounter) ♦ Charm, Poison, Weapon	
Ranged 15; +13 vs. Will; ongoing 5 poison damage, and target is dominated (save ends)	
[r] Sloughide Bombard (standard; encounter) ♦ Acid, Poison, Weapon	
Ranged 15; +13 vs. Reflex; ongoing 5 acid damage, and target is immobilized (save ends)	
Cruel Blow	
The derro deals an extra +1d6 damage when it has combat advantage.	
Alignment chaotic evil	Languages Deep Speech, Dwarven
Skills Athletics +11, Dungeoneering +11, Perception +10	
Str 14 (+6)	Dex 20 (+9) Wis 12 (+5)
Con 17 (+7)	Int 14 (+6) Cha 17 (+8)
Equipment chainmail, forsaken bombard (with 1 each of murderous and sloughide canisters), shortsword	



DEVELOPMENT

Before departing, Abelard recommends sealing off the Hearthforges. He will teleport back in later with a group of dwarves to clear the cave-ins and collect any supplies.

With the Hearthforges lit and functioning, the party can ascend to the citadel with Abelard in tow and receive the cheers and accolades of dwarves, humans and kobolds alike. They are asked of their exploits, and Abelard recommends they share the news of the mobs of forsaken, the cultists' existence, and the corruption of Bragollach.

Something sinister is brewing deep within Mount Rygar, and things will get worse before they get better.

Concluding the Adventure

The PCs can enjoy some downtime before the events in *The Eye of Grajava*. Use this time for side adventures if the PCs aren't yet 10th level, especially to answer some questions about the Illuminated Brotherhood, the history of Mount Rygar, the forsaken, and the source of the corruption that taints the Halls of the Mountain King.

Keep track of how much cursed gold each PC carries. Between the Hearthforges and vent shaft saboteurs, more than 100 gp of cursed gold are in play, especially if the PCs delayed before the "Welcoming Party" encounter. Every day the PCs keep the cursed gold, those characters with 20 gp or more suffer an attack of the gold fever. See the *Gold Fever* description in *Dark was the Night, Cold was the Ground* (page 27).

Barring complete failure by the PCs, Abelard returns with them and speaks highly of their actions, assuming they don't release the elementals. Using Linked Portal, he returns to the Hearthforge periodically to check on its status.

If the PCs released the elementals from their contract, the Hearthforges do not produce enough heat to warm the structures of Mount Rygar. After only a day, the citadel becomes a place of cold weather (DMG 158). This leaves many of the NPCs either without healing surges or suffering damage. Abelard makes it known why the elementals no longer heat the Hearthforges, and the PCs can expect that every NPC in the citadel is at least indifferent, although most are unfriendly, and a growing number become hostile. Abelard reports the PCs' actions to the brotherhood and attempts to find a way to summon new elementals to the Hearthforges. Despite his disappointment in them, Abelard asks the PCs to help him bring in new elementals, telling them that doing so will greatly redeem them in his eyes and the eyes of others.

If the party acted without expectation of compensation, their success is considered a "selfless act" for reducing the potency of Mammon's idol in *Heartsblood Forge*. They are still provided real rations for 3 days and a token appreciation of 100 untainted gp each. Varden is willing to assist them in some requested endeavor, should they ask. If the Hearthforges are repaired when the party returns and the characters accepted Varden's assurances of compensation, they are paid 2,800 untainted gp (two treasure parcels) and provided real rations to feed each member for 3 days. If they negotiated some other payment, Varden and the clerics pay as agreed, although they maintain an indifferent attitude toward the characters.

A large amount of foodstuffs exists down in the Hearthforges. If the party transports even some of it back to the citadel, their actions might affect later events—depending on whether the characters donate or sell the surplus. If the PCs sell the food, they gain only the resulting gold. On the other hand, if the PCs donate the food, they gain considerable social capital—becoming popular and well liked by everyone except the food-hoarding Inflationists. The attitudes of all other NPCs increases by one step, to a maximum of friendly.

If the party successfully returned the captured ghouls unharmed to the Imperial ghouls in area 12, the ghast leader provides them with a useful gift. This could be a single gift for each member, such as a *potion of healing*, or a single *everlasting provisions* (see PHB page 254) for the whole party. He delivers it silently in a canvas envelope or a leather sack, sealed with the triple skull emblem of the Empire of the Ghouls. Inside, along with the gifts, is a note, written in excellent calligraphy, that says simply, "Our thanks."

APPENDIX A

The Fire Shepherd

Known throughout the Golden Citadel as the "Fire Shepherd," Abelard has roamed these halls for as long as any dwarf can remember. Loyal to the rulers of the halls and the dwarves who depend on forge-fires, Abelard commands the fire elementals that power the great forges of the Golden Citadel. He is their brother, their caretaker, and their shepherd. Bearing a kilt of polished bronze, great glaring eyes of melted copper, and a flaming beard of fire and flame, Abelard performs the duties his flock demands humorlessly and with a deeply abiding reverence.

Long-forgotten contracts between the Illuminated Brotherhood and powerful elemental lords brought Abelard to the halls, and it has never occurred to the cleric that he should have any other purpose. He maintained the forges

even during the centuries-long absence of his dwarven cousins. As he herds bound elementals from one forge to another, he always speaks to them in low, even tones, eyes averted in reverence. Abelard prefers to guide his charges with promises of rich tinder, although he must occasionally rebuke them. Even more rarely, a disobedient elemental demands greater use of force, and Abelard wield his +2 *frost scourge*. On the rare occasions he must, he does so with great regret.

When the Golden Citadel faces threats from outside its walls or deep below its halls, Abelard is a fierce and merciless defender. He commands a full dozen Large elementals, including one elder elemental by the name of Gefangak. Abelard can release them from their forge homes, free to destroy those who dare invade the sanctity of the halls.

ABELARD FEUERHIRTE, FIRE SHEPHERD	
LEVEL 10 ELITE CONTROLLER (LEADER)	
MEDIUM NATURAL HUMANOID (FIRE)	XP 500
Initiative +8	Senses Perception +12
Warding Flame (fire) aura 1; any enemy adjacent to two or more azers at the start of its turn takes 5 fire damage	
hp 256	Bloodied 128
AC 26	Fortitude 24
	Reflex 22
	Will 24
Resist 30 fire	
Saving Throws +2	
Speed 5	
Action Points 1	
[mba] the Fire's Scourge (standard; at-will) ♦ Cold, Weapon	
+15 vs. AC; 3d6 + 5 damage	
[m] Punishing Lash (standard; at-will) ♦ Cold, Weapon	
+14 vs. Fortitude; 4d8 + 5 damage, and ongoing 5 cold damage (save ends)	
[c] Commanding Decree (standard; sustain minor; encounter) ♦ Psychic, Zone	
Close burst 3; +11 vs. Will; targets with the fire keyword are dominated	
Gentle Warmth of the Welcoming Hearth (standard; daily) ♦ Healing	
An ally heals as if spending two healing surges +1d6	
Mock the Forge's Flame (standard; encounter) ♦ Fire	
Target gains resist 10 fire until the end of the encounter	
Alignment good	Languages Common, Dwarven, Primordial
Skills Arcana +13, Endurance +14, Insight +12, History +13, Perception +12	
Str 18 (+10)	Dex 14 (+9)
	Wis 15 (+7)
Con 20 (+9)	Int 17 (+8)
	Cha 13 (+3)
Equipment +2 <i>frost scourge</i> , holy symbol of Volund, scale armor	

APPENDIX B

New Items

A number of magic and mundane items appear in this adventure. They are collected here for ease of reference.

ALEMBIC OF ESSENTIAL DISTILLATION

Level 14

This massive contraption of connected pipes and glass globes features a central sphere spacious enough to seal a large creature inside.

Wondrous Item

21,000 gp

Power (Daily ♦ Necrotic)

Placing a living creature within the alembic, half-filling the spheres with water (about 200 gallons), and setting the center chamber to boil (this takes 10 min.) activates the magic of the device. A living creature inside the activated alembic is quickly rendered (+6 vs. Fortitude, +1/round in the alembic; 5d6 necrotic damage each round until dead). Bodies of creatures killed within the alembic are converted into sludge. Placing a dead body into the alembic and activating it destroys the body.

When utilized to render certain creatures, the resulting sludge can fill the canisters of derro bombards, negating the spell requirements and halving the cost for creation. The alembic can hold one Large, two Medium, or eight Small creatures at a time.

Creature of Elemental Chaos A single Medium creature provides enough sludge for 2 *mindshatter bombard* canisters, while a large creature fills 4.

Humanoids Each Small creature produces enough sludge for 2 *murderous bombard* canisters, a Medium creature fills 4, and a Large creature fills 8 canisters.

Oozes A Medium ooze provides enough sludge for 2 *sloughide bombard* canisters, while a Large ooze fills 4.

FORSAKEN BOMBARD

Level 9

This is a brass and crystal cylinder, tipped with a funnel on one end and a wooden plunger on the other. The bombard is filled with a strange, frothy solution.

Alchemical Item

640 gp

Power (Consumable, Encounter): As a standard action, you fire this device, creating a 8 square line attack based on the contents of the bombard:

Murderous Bombard ♦ Weapon, Charm, Poison

Area Wall 8; +12 vs. Will; 2d6+5 poison damage and ongoing 5 poison damage plus target is dominated (save ends).

Sloughide Bombard ♦ Weapon, Acid, Poison

Area Wall 8; +12 vs. Reflex; 3d6+5 acid damage and target is immobilized until end of next turn.

Weeping Bombard ♦ Weapon, Poison

Area Wall 8; +12 vs. Fortitude; 2d6+5 poison damage and target is slowed (save ends). If target is already slowed, target becomes weakened (save ends).

Reloading the bombard requires a prepared, full bombard cannister and both a standard and move action.

BOMBARD RITUAL

Level 9 **Component Cost:** See Alchemical Item

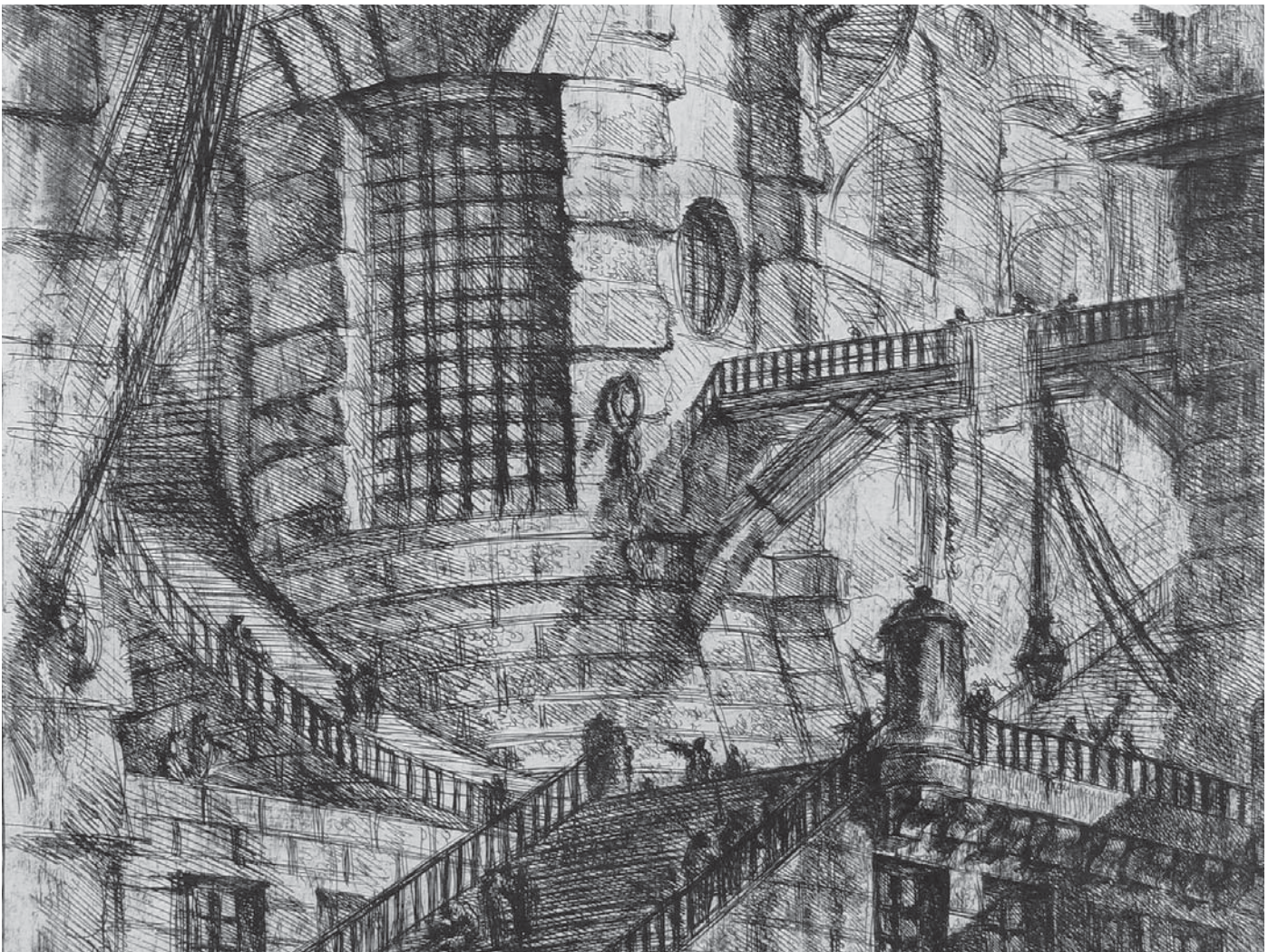
Category: Volatile

Market Price: 750 gp

Time: 1 hour

Key Skill: Arcana or Thievery (no check)

A specially prepared solution creates a debilitating, corrosive liquid when this sealed flask is sprayed over targets.



Eye of Grajava

AN ADVENTURE FOR FOUR 10TH-LEVEL CHARACTERS

by MICHAEL FURLANETTO, BRETT MCLEAN, and BEN MCFARLAND

Background

Not long after the orichalcum began to flow from the halls of the Golden Citadel, Mammon wove a powerful curse into the ore, such that a representative of the archdevil would appear if enough of it were collected in one place. The Spirit of the Mountain realized the danger and, together with Grajava, shield maiden of Volund and patron of Mount Rygar, warned the dwarf priests of the forge god. The priests formed a secret society, the Illuminated Brotherhood, and ruled the mountain from within as silent masters. They steered their brethren away from the veins of ore, while their gold dragon ally Satarel took custody of the cursed ore already dug from Mount Rygar's roots. Over time, the dwarves largely abandoned the Golden Citadel, and the threat seemed contained.

Grajava herself offered a relic—the *Teardrop of Grajava*—to purge the taint of Mammon, but the dwarves chose to preserve it rather than use it immediately. They placed it in a sacred shrine they called the Eye of Grajava and guarded it with a servant of the Spirit of the Mountain. To prevent Mammonites from stealing the *Teardrop of Grajava*, the original silent masters devised a series of tests, known as the Sanctum of Assaying, to protect the entrance to the Eye of Grajava. The builder of this sanctum—the priest who later became Rabscuttle—instructed crafters of his future body to engrave the details of the sanctum's trials upon it, as a safeguard against his capture or death.

Over time, the details of the Sanctum of Assaying, Eye of Grajava, and *Teardrop of Grajava* were lost. Now that the priests are desperate for help against the cultists, they see the fabled weapon left in the Eye as their best hope for victory and the PCs as their perfect pawns.

Summary

The PCs discover that Rabscuttle's inner workings contain long-lost instructions for reaching the Eye of Grajava, a shrine containing a relic of great power. Following these clues, the party finds the secret chapter house of the silent masters and learns the hidden history of the Illuminated Brotherhood and the curse afflicting Mount Rygar.

Passing into the Sanctum of Assaying, the PCs face guardians, traps, temptation, and betrayal by Mammonite infiltrators. Finally, they reach the Eye of Grajava, where they acquire the *Teardrop of Grajava* from a representative of the Spirit of the Mountain.

Returning to the Forge of the Fire Blessing, the party must overcome a diabolical ambush, sacrifice the *Teardrop of Grajava*, and cleanse Mount Rygar of Mammon's taint.

PART I Finding the Secret Chapter House

In the first two adventures, the PCs found some subtle clues that likely seem unconnected and random (see tables 3-1, 3-2, and 3-3).

CLUES

To begin this adventure the PCs need to have three pieces of information.

- Something is wrong with the orichalcum ore and the Spirit of the Mountain.
- The Eye of Grajava contains something important.
- Rabscuttle contains the key to finding the Eye of Grajava.

The PCs might also be curious about the Illuminated Brotherhood, the silent masters, the cult of Mammon, the dragon, or the forsaken. Because the exploration of the Eye of Grajava helps explain all of these things, guide the party's investigations to focus on the three pieces of information above.

The clues are collected in the following tables. Skill checks need not be made if the players have already figured out the significance of the clue. Likewise, if the PCs have already deduced one of the facts, omit later clues related to that fact.

Divination rituals can also help the party by providing missed clues. Commune with Nature, Consult Mystic Sages, and Speak with Dead are rituals the party may have at their disposal. Note that both the Eye of Grajava and the *Teardrop of Grajava* are not physically located near the halls and will always be out of range of a ritual such as Detect Object.

After the PCs discover that Rabscuttle contains vital information, they still must decode his internal writings. Although a Comprehend Languages ritual will translate the Dwarven it is written in, a DC 25 Arcana check is still required to interpret the ciphers. Rabscuttle's inner workings contain three pieces of information, each of which requires its own check:

1. The Eye of Grajava exists just beyond the Sanctum of Assaying.
2. The location of the secret door leading to the sanctum is nearby in the forge.
3. There are specific actions they must perform within the sanctum.

The latter comes complete with five clues providing bonuses to the future skill checks: the order of actions required to open the puzzle doors, the nature of the gear key, the "Volund" password, and the "fire," "smoke," and "ash" passwords.

The following tables outline where the various clues appear that the PCs might notice. In the tables, "DN" refers to *Dark Was the Night, Cold Was the Ground*, and "RM" refers to *Roots of Madness*.

TABLE 3-1: SOMETHING IS WRONG WITH THE ORICHALCUM ORE AND THE SPIRIT OF THE MOUNTAIN.

Clue	Scene	Primary Check	Secondary Check
A curse	"The Snow on the Peaks" page 28 (DN)	DC 25 Perception	Primordial language
Orichalcum ore causes gold fever	any with gold fever (DN, RM)	DC 25 Arcana	DC 20 History
Cursed ore in goldveined creatures	any with goldveined creatures (RM)	DC 20 Perception	DC 20 History
"The orichalcum—it destroyed us!"	"Down the Stair" page 43 (RM)	DC 20 Perception and Dwarven language	DC 20 History
"The mountain cannot be cured..."	"The Refugee Camps" page 31 (DN)	DC 15 Perception	DC 15 Religion

TABLE 3-2: THE EYE OF GRAJAVA CONTAINS SOMETHING IMPORTANT.

Clue	Scene	Primary Check	Secondary Check
"Volund save us until the <i>Teardrop of Grajava</i> can be used!"	"The Outing of Bragollach", page 38 (DN)	DC 25 Perception	Dwarven language
"We need the <i>Teardrop</i> . Find the eye. Save Mount Rygar!"	"Ventshaft Boilers", page 43 (RM)	DC 20 Perception	Primordial language
"Tears of the Maiden will wash away the greed!"	"The Refugee Camps", page 33 (DN)	DC 15 Perception	DC 15 Religion
"Investigate the Fire Blessing for the <i>Teardrop</i> ."	"Ventshaft Boilers", page 43 (RM)	DC 10 Arcana	—
The path to the eye runs through the Forge of the Fire Blessing	after decoding Rabscuttle (any)	—	—

TABLE 3-3: RABSCUTTLE CONTAINS THE KEY TO FINDING THE EYE OF GRAJAVA.

Clue	Scene	Primary Check	Secondary Check
Writing on Rabscuttle's gearworks	any when Rabscuttle is wounded or disassembled (DN)	DC 25 Perception	DC 30 Perception
A silent master is surprised by Rabscuttle	any with silent masters (any)	DC 25 Insight	—
Rubbings in Albricius' quarters match Rabscuttle's parts	"The Refugee Camps" page 33 (DN)	DC 20 Perception	DC 20 Craft (gearwork) or Craft (clockwork)
"They put it inside him, hidden in plain sight...!"	"The Refugee Camps" page 33 (DN)	DC 15 Perception	DC 15 Religion

WHAT IF RABSCUTTLE HAS BEEN DESTROYED?

Although some of the clues come from Rabscuttle's consciousness, all of the details of the Sanctum of Assaying are etched on the gears, plates, and components of his body. As a result, the party only needs the pieces of Rabscuttle, not his survival as a sentient being. If Rabscuttle has been completely destroyed, enough alternative clues exist to complete the adventure, although the sanctum presents a greater challenge.

OBTAINING ACCESS TO RABSCUTTLE

Clovis Stonethrower is Rabscuttle's official guardian. Parties on good terms with Clovis have no trouble "borrowing" the gearforged. Other groups should be able to bargain for access. If Clovis perished in an earlier adventure, the PCs could be named guardians of Rabscuttle if they remained on good terms with Clovis and other dwarves, thereby avoiding any problems.

FIRST VISIT TO THE FORGE

Eventually the PCs should learn from the clues that the path to the Eye of Grajava leads through the Forge of the Fire Blessing. If they are stuck, the silent masters could become desperate enough to take the PCs into their confidence or Abelard could share memories of silent masters entering the Forge of the Fire Blessing through a secret door.

The PCs might have visited the forge before. In any case, the adventure proceeds more smoothly if they have a knowledgeable local guide on one of their trips before entering the chapter house. Both Abelard Feuerhirte and Varden Redfel make appropriate companions. Abelard could ask for an escort to the forge to retrieve some belongings, while Redfel could ask for the party's help investigating reports of Mammonite spies or else accompany the party as far as the forge at the beginning of *Roots of Madness*. Read or paraphrase the following:

The Forge of the Fire Blessing is a vast room of worked stone. One wall connects to the Shank, and up it run stone wheels bringing quenching water and burning lava from the depths of Mount Rygar. On a ledge perched halfway up another of the walls stands the Altar-Forge of Volund, site of the most holy rituals to the forge god. After flowing around the altar-forge, the lava and water cascade down to the floor of the main hall, where they split into rivulets to supply each of the seven smaller forges.

Chains hang from block and tackle on the ceiling, allowing even the largest forgings to be moved about the room with relative ease. Air shafts pierce the walls, bringing refreshingly cool air to the temple. Three doors lead to rooms carved from under the ledge.

The Forge of the Fire Blessing was once the greatest temple to Volund in the Golden Citadel. A number of features of the room are important later (see *Part III: Sacrifice* page 89), so make every effort to ensure that the PCs learn about them now. Most can be discovered by simple observation. The primary exception—the controls to the ventilation system—can be explained by the PCs' guide to the forge or by information available in one of the rooms under the ledge. These rooms also contain vestments, tools, and other religious paraphernalia for ceremonies, as well as some personal effects of Abelard.

Finally, the walls of these side rooms are decorated with mosaics depicting the forge and the worship of Volund. Several mosaics provide clues describing the proper operation of the puzzle doors (see *Puzzle Doors*, page 76), showing clerics approaching an anvil and casting a spell. Another mosaic shows the location of the secret door to the chapter house (the beginning of the priestly procession in the other mosaics). A DC 25 Perception or Religion check suffices to deduce the location of the secret door from the mosaics.

To reveal the secret door and enter characters must each intone a brief prayer to Volund while sacrificing precious metal worth at least 10 gp to the lava of the forge. Details of this sacrifice are available from Rabscuttle's etchings, through divination, or with a DC 30 Religion or DC 35 History check. Note that the secret door is impossible to detect by mundane means until a sacrifice is made.

SECRET CHAPTER HOUSE

Once the PCs make their sacrifices and prayers, the wall of the forge shimmers and a hidden door reveals itself. The door opens with a touch, revealing the Great Hall beyond.

With a touch, the secret door opens to a vast, brightly lit great hall. The room is supported by pair after pair of pillars reaching upward to the ceiling high above. Covering every surface—even the checkerboard floor—are the same esoteric symbols from the upper halls. The walls contain a number of normal doors, while opposite the entrance stands a large door of reddish-gold metal.

One of the Silent Brothers greets the PCs at the door. He is dressed in maroon robes trimmed in embroidered gold. This adventure assumes Bradobaraxas survived to this point and is the dwarf who greets the PCs at the door. If Bradobaraxas did not survive, use one of the other dwarves listed below. Bradobaraxas asks the PCs to accompany him to meet his superior. He leads them to a featureless orichalcum door. As Bradobaraxas approaches, the door splits into four quadrants with a slight click. The sections slide silently into the walls, ceiling, and floor. Read or paraphrase the following:

Beyond the door is a hidden temple 50 ft. on a side and 20 ft. high. Pillars support the ceiling and symbols cover all surfaces, just as in the Great Hall. The floor is decorated in a mosaic showing dwarf priests of Volund carrying a sacred hammer across a forge and then using it to strike an anvil. The far 15 ft. of the room is a raised dais, on which stands a small altar. Behind the altar is a carved orichalcum door.

On the dais stand three dwarves, two of whom wear the maroon and gold robes of the Illuminated Brotherhood. These dwarves are several of the brotherhood's leaders, who have followed the party's progress through various divinations.

The main rooms of the chapter house are brightly lit with *everburning torches*. The walls, floor, and ceiling are made of dressed stone of high quality. Doors are all of excellent quality, although none save the puzzle doors can be locked.

Silent Brother Bradobaraxas (male dwarf), who sits on the Council of Masters, joins the other three dwarves on the dais and nods mutely to the party. With him are Most Silent Master Caradlather (male dwarf, Bluff +16), who leads the brotherhood. Illuminated Sister Jorunn Flintknapper (female dwarf) is the sister of Ansgar (saboteur of the *Manticore*) and the leader of the silent masters' guards. She is also a secret member of the Mammonite cult (see *Ambush at the Test of Lore* on page 82). The fourth dwarf is not a member of the brotherhood's leadership, but he seems to have a close working relationship with Jorunn. He is Paracelix Zhedan,

who appears to be a diviner-for-hire, recently retained by the brotherhood to spy on the Mammonite cult. Secretly, Paracelix is a gilded devil polymorphed into dwarf form.

If the PCs attack the dwarves, all but Jorunn and Paracelix flee. Caradlather invokes a Linked Portal ritual to return to the upper halls and report their treachery. Likewise, if the PCs see through Paracelix's deception and attack, the silent masters flee. In either case, the battle scheduled for the Test of Lore occurs here, leaving that room devoid of encounters.

DEVELOPMENT

The silent masters are desperate and see the Eye of Grajava as their last hope, but they do not want to risk the few surviving brothers in the Sanctum of Assaying. They see the arrival of a party of adventurers who both oppose the cult and seek the *Teardrop of Grajava* as divine providence. The silent masters want the PCs to retrieve the *Teardrop of Grajava* to use against the cult, which benefits them all. In exchange, they offer to answer some of the PCs' questions. Caradlather does almost all of the talking.

Caradlather is silent and laconic by nature, but the recent events in the Golden Citadel have made him somewhat desperate. Caradlather also knows all the information in the Adventure Background, although he does not reveal the origin of the forsaken or the fate of the old masters, and he truly does not know either the nature of the *Teardrop of Grajava* or the true history of Rabsuttle.

This is an opportunity for the PCs to gather information and garner a better understanding of the events unfolding around them. Caradlather's initial attitude towards them is indifferent but can be shifted in either direction depending on how the characters interact with him. If the PCs offer to help bring down the cult or express a desire to oppose Mammon, the dwarf will warm to the party. Conversely, asking for payment, attempts at intimidation, or sympathy for Cult of Mammon will quickly anger him. If further provoked, he leaves, and Bradobaraxas continues the conversation, although also greatly displeased.

Likely questions and Caradlather's answers follow. The friendlier he is toward the PCs, the more information he provides. The entries marked as opposed require opposed Insight checks; success reveals that Caradlather is hiding something but does not reveal precisely what it is.

WHO ARE YOU?

“Caradlather, leader of the silent masters, hidden rulers of the Illuminated Brotherhood.”

Friendly—“We protect the world from the cursed orichalcum.”

WHAT IS WRONG WITH THE ORICHALCUM?

“An archdevil cursed it.” He punctuates this with a spit.

Friendly—“It causes the plague you’ve witnessed.”

Helpful—“And the devil’s cult wants to use it to summon him to Mount Rygar.”

WHICH ARCHDEVIL?

“The greediest of all.” Opposed.

Friendly—“Mammon.”

WHY IS YOUR ORDER SO SECRET?

“So the cult does not know its opponents.” Opposed.

WHAT IS THE EYE OF GRAJAVA?

“A shrine through the puzzle doors and the Sanctum of Assaying.”

Friendly—“It holds the *Teardrop of Grajava*. The sanctum tests your worthiness to wield it.”

WHAT IS THE TEARDROP OF GRAJAVA?

“A great weapon.”

Friendly—“Particularly effective against Mammon, the archdevil who cursed the orichalcum.”

Helpful—“We no longer know its precise nature.” Opposed.

WHAT DO YOU WANT US TO DO?

“Get the *Teardrop*.”

“GET THE TEARDROP.”

Helpful—“And use it against Mammon.”

WHO IS THE DRAGON?

“I do not know.”

Helpful—“We once had a dragon ally, but we do not know where she is.” Opposed.

WHAT IS RABSCUTTLE?

“A gearforged, apparently. I do not know why he carries our secrets.”

Helpful—“He resembles some ancient legends of prototype gearforged.”

WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THE PUZZLE DOORS?

“Not much.”

Friendly—“We can open those in the chapter house, although we have never been successful in opening the doors to the sanctum.”

WHY ARE YOU NOT HELPING THE REFUGEES?

“Why should we?”

Friendly—“They are infiltrated with cultists.”

Helpful—“They are part of the problem—more miners mean more ore.”

WHERE DO YOU KEEP THE CURSED ORICHALCUM?

“A safe place.”

Friendly—“We do not speak of that for fear of infiltration.”

WHO ARE THE FORSAKEN?

“Who?”

Helpful—“Dwarves who were punished for apostasy.” Opposed.

WHAT HAPPENED ON THE MANTICORE?

“A misunderstanding.”

Friendly—“We had to keep the ore out of the hands of the cult.”

A DC 15 Insight check reveals that Jorunn is upset by this question. If confronted, she admits to being angry about her brother’s death at the hands of the PCs.

If the PCs wish to rest before attempting the puzzle doors, and they remain on good terms with Caradlather and the brotherhood, Caradlather offers them lodging in the chapter house. After the PCs leave, Jorunn and Paracelix monitor their progress, and enter the sanctum in pursuit of the PCs as soon as the PCs enter the Test of Faith.

PART II

The Sanctum of Assaying

The Sanctum of Assaying was designed by the old masters of the Illuminated Brotherhood to prevent the cult—and unauthorized members of the brotherhood—from reaching the Eye of Grajava. All walls, floors, and ceilings are made of dressed stone of excellent quality.

To prevent cultists of Mammon from reaching the Eye of Grajava, the entire sanctum is warded. A variant Forbiddance effect on each room wards against all dimensional travel. Only creatures who open the puzzle door to a given room may enter that room. Those who manage to enter without passing through the appropriate puzzle door take 6d6 points of psychic damage. The rooms are also sheathed in 6 in. of lead, blocking scrying spells from targeting the rooms themselves.

The Sanctum of Assaying consists of three tests: the Test of Valor, the Test of Faith, and the Test of Lore. Puzzle doors separate the rooms.

Puzzle Doors

Six puzzle doors divide the secret chapter house and the Sanctum of Assaying. One leads from the Great Hall to the hidden temple, and opens with a touch. Two more lead to the lower council chambers of the silent priests. Although these two doors are not described in this adventure, their codes are incredibly convoluted, reflecting the esoteric nature of the Illuminated Brotherhood. Finally, three doors lead to the various rooms of the Sanctum of Assaying. When the PCs approach the first of the sanctum puzzle doors, show them the illustration and read or paraphrase the following:

This door stands as a marvel of dwarven craftsmanship. The 10-ft. square door of refined orichalcum gleams in the magical light of the hidden temple. A series of scenes are carved in relief on the door's surface. At the top is a large hammer surrounded by flames dance in the forge fires as dwarves prepare tools and metal.

At the edges of the door are carved pillars topped by mithral flames. The pillars rest on a vast relief anvil etched with another set of dwarven runes. The stone surrounding the door has been carved as well, continuing the scene depicted on the door.

The doors are 6 in. thick (AC 4; Fortitude 12; 200 hp; break DC 25). They automatically close 2 rounds after being opened. The reverse sides of the doors are plain, with an engraved anvil in the center. Pressing that anvil opens the door. These doors were created from uncursed ore and do not cause gold fever.

VOLUND'S PUZZLE DOOR

To proceed beyond a puzzle door, the characters must manipulate puzzles built within the door itself. The proper sequence of these puzzles is revealed through three clues located throughout the Halls: the broken door in *Roots of Madness* page 49 (key before hammer), the mosaic floor of the hidden temple page 75 (hammer before anvil), and the mosaics in the side rooms of the Forge of the Fire Blessing page 74 (anvil before guidance). A DC 15 Perception or Religion check can allow a character to recall one of these scenes.

The gear key is part of Rabscuttle. Characters who dismantle and decode Rabscuttle's workings receive a +5



bonus to any skill check involved with opening a puzzle door. Additionally, dwarves and the faithful of Volund each receive a +1 bonus to these checks. (Dwarves faithful to Volund receive a +2 bonus.)

The first challenge is to locate the correct recess for the gear key. Because the location changes between frescos, a DC 23 Perception check is required to begin the puzzle at each door. Once the gear key has been correctly placed, the puzzle activates and permits the characters to manipulate the various runes on the door.

The next step involves solving a pair of puzzles built into the door. The runes are written in Dwarven. Once the language barrier is overcome, the PCs can solve either puzzle by recalling relevant religious clues or tinkering with the mechanics of the puzzle itself. Either way, each skill check made represents another manipulation of that puzzle and requires a standard action to perform. While characters can assist each other, only one check result can be valid per puzzle at a time. Subsequent skill checks negate all previous attempts, even if the result is lower. Do not tell the players whether or not their check was successful—they'll find out at the final step when they attempt to activate the door.

For the first puzzle, the tumblers built into the handle of the hammer must be rotated to spell the name "Volund." A successful DC 23 Religion or DC 28 Thievery check will accomplish this. Because the same word is used at each of the three doors, reduce the DC of the checks at the second door by 10. No skill check should be necessary at the third door.

A THINKING MAN'S GAME

If you and your players prefer, the challenge of opening the puzzle doors can be presented as more than just a series of die rolls. Present the following word puzzles to your players to solve. Correctly solving these puzzles translates to a success for their characters.

For the hammer puzzle, write out of the following series of letters:

V	B	C	D	E	F
G	H	I	J	N	L
M	O	O	U	Q	R
S	T	U	V	W	X
Y	Z	L	B	C	D

Inform your players that they must spell out a single word using one letter from each column. If they need additional assistance, permit each character to make a single DC 15 Wisdom check. A success reveals a single letter from one column at random. Once this puzzle is solved, there is no need to repeat it at the second and third doors.

For the anvil puzzle, write out the following letters:

A E F H I K M O R S

The players must then spell out the correct password based on the clues provided to their characters.

If the gear key was not properly placed prior to starting the hammer puzzle, any character moving the tumblers on the hammer takes 2d8+5 radiant damage. Characters attempting to assist these checks suffer half damage.

The next puzzle requires pressing a sequence of runes on the anvil to spell out the correct password. This can be accomplished with a DC 19 Religion or a DC 23 Thievery check. Clues as to the password can be gleaned from the etchings on the doors themselves. If the gear key was not properly placed and a skill check was not attempted for the hammer puzzle prior to starting the anvil puzzle, any character moving the runes on the anvil takes 2d8+5 radiant damage. Characters attempting to assist these checks suffer half damage.

Finally, a character must activate the magic bound to the door. A successful DC 23 Arcana check invokes the energies required to release the portal. If the party provided successful checks for the hammer and anvil puzzles, the door glides open soundlessly. If either check was unsuccessful, the door's trap is triggered—each creature within 5 squares of the door

takes 4d8+5 radiant damage and is dazed (save ends). Failing the Arcana check does not trigger the trap, but it does deal 1d8+5 radiant damage to any character attempting the check, including those attempting to assist.

THE TEST OF VALOR

The first challenge posed to the PCs tests their combat prowess. This room is a warren of smoke filled tunnels that house the fiery essence of Volund. A pair of magma mephits has also taken up residence in this heated paradise.

Once the PCs open the first puzzle door, read:

With a soft click, the orichalcum door splits into four quadrants. The gear key falls to the floor as the sections slide silently into the walls, ceiling, and floor. Beyond is a 15-ft. passageway filled with a dense smoke, concealing whatever waits ahead. Engraved in mithral on the floor are dwarven runes.

Anyone capable of reading Dwarven:

First, the faithful of Volund master flame for they fear not fire, just as they fear not their enemies.

ILLUMINATION

The tunnels are completely dark from smoke.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Magma pools—The molten rock costs 3 squares of movement to wade through; any creature that enters or begins its turn in a square containing magma suffers 4d10+5 fire damage and ongoing 10 fire damage (save ends)

Puzzle door—At the other side of the maze is a second locked puzzle door with carvings that of blacksmiths hard at work within a smoky forge; this door opens just as the first (see *Puzzle Doors*), although the code word for the anvil carving is “smoke”

Smoke—The smoke-filled warrens provide a -2 penalty to melee and ranged attacks

10TH LEVEL ENCOUNTER

- 4 PCs (2,102 XP) • 1 flame of Volund, 3 magma mephits, 4 sparks of Volund
- 5 PCs (2,528 XP) • 1 flame of Volund, 4 magma mephits, 6 sparks of Volund
- 6 PCs (3,028 XP) • 1 flame of Volund, 6 magma mephits, 4 sparks of Volund

FLAME OF VOLUND LEVEL 10 ELITE SOLDIER

LARGE IMMORTAL HUMANOID 1,000 XP

Initiative +12 Senses Perception +5, dark-vision

hp 208 Bloodied 104

AC 28 Fortitude 21 Reflex 25 Will 21

Resist 10 fire, 10 radiant

Saving Throw +2

Speed 6

Action Points 1

[mba] **Scorching Blow** (standard, at-will) ♦ Fire

Reach 2; +17 vs. AC; 2d6 + 5 fire damage, and the target is marked (save ends)

[m] **Raging Inferno** (standard; recharge on 4, 5, 6) ♦ Fire

The flame of Volund makes 2 scorching blow attacks

[c] **Backdraft** (free; when first bloodied) ♦ Fire

Close burst 3; +13 vs. Reflex; 3d8 + 5 fire damage and ongoing 5 fire damage (save ends)

Searing Mark

If an enemy marked by the flame of Volund makes an attack that does not include the flame of Volund, it grants combat advantage until the start of its next turn.

Spark of Life (immediate reaction; at will)

If the flame of Volund has less than 4 sparks of Volund present, when it is hit by an attack that deals damage; a spark of Volund appears in an adjacent square.

Alignment unaligned Languages —

Str 14 (+7) Dex 21 (+10) Wis 11 (+5)

Con 16 (+8) Int 6 (+3) Cha 11 (+5)

MAGMA MEPHIT LEVEL 6 SKIRMISHER

SMALL ELEMENTAL HUMANOID 250 XP

Initiative +6 Senses Perception +3

hp 69 Bloodied 34

AC 20 Fortitude 17 Reflex 17 Will 18

Immune fire (see *soothing heat*); Vulnerable cold (slowed until the end of the magma mephit's next turn)

Speed 4, fly 6

[mba] **Claw** (standard, at-will) ♦ Fire

+11 vs. AC; 1d10 + 4 fire damage

[m] **Hit and Run** (standard; at-will) ♦ Fire

+11 vs. AC; 1d10 + 4 fire damage, and the mephit may fly up to its speed; it does not provoke opportunity attacks when moving away from the target of the attack

[c] **Searing Breath** (standard; encounter) ♦ Fire

Close blast 3; +7 vs. Reflex; 3d6 + 4 fire damage, and the target is blinded (save ends); creatures that are resistant or immune to fire are not blinded

Combat Advantage

The mephit deals an extra 2d6 damage if it has combat advantage against its target.

Soothing Heat (free; encounter)

When the mephit is hit by an attack dealing fire damage, it regains 17 hp.

Alignment unaligned Languages Primordial

Str 10 (+3) Dex 13 (+4) Wis 11 (+3)

Con 13 (+4) Int 6 (+1) Cha 15 (+5)

SPARK OF VOLUND

LEVEL 8 MINION

TINY IMMORTAL MAGICAL BEAST 88 XP

Initiative +6 Senses Perception +3, darkvision

Radiant Spark aura 1; enemies in the aura suffer a cumulative -1 penalty to melee and ranged attacks

hp 1; a missed attack never damages a minion

AC 22 Fortitude 17 Reflex 17 Will 19

Speed fly 8 (hover)

[c] **Flash of Light** (when at 0 hp or less) ♦ Radiant

Close burst 1; +10 vs. Fortitude; 2d6 radiant damage, and the target is blinded (save ends)

Dying Ember

A spark of Volund is reduced to 0 hp if it does not end its turn within 3 squares of a flame of Volund.

Alignment unaligned Languages —

Str 10 (+4) Dex 10 (+4) Wis 10 (+4)

Con 10 (+4) Int 6 (+2) Cha 14 (+6)

TACTICS

During Combat The sparks of Volund swarm as many characters as possible in order to give the flame of Volund a better advantage in melee combat as well as to maximize their own effectiveness when they perish. They will willingly sacrifice themselves in order to blind enemies that are attacking from a distance. The flame of Volund attacks whichever characters it can reach before moving on to others. It fights until it is destroyed since a new flame of Volund will ignite after 24 hours to challenge anyone else that seeks the Eye of Grajava.

The magma mephits enjoy the chaos of battle and swoop in to harass characters with their hit and run attacks. They retreat to a magma pool for healing if necessary.

Morale These guardians fight to the death.

DEVELOPMENT

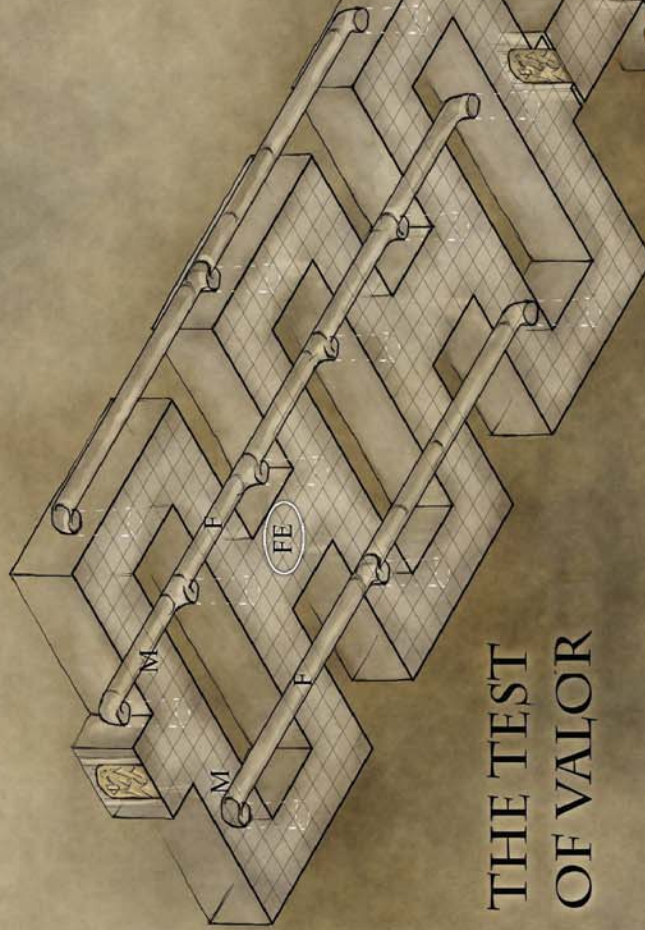
Every PC with an Intelligence score of 12 or greater can make a DC 24 Perception check to reveal Paracelix's scrying sensor.

THE THREE TESTS

1 square = 5 feet

- S Secret Door
- P Pit Trap
- M Mind Trap
- IC Incendiary Cloud

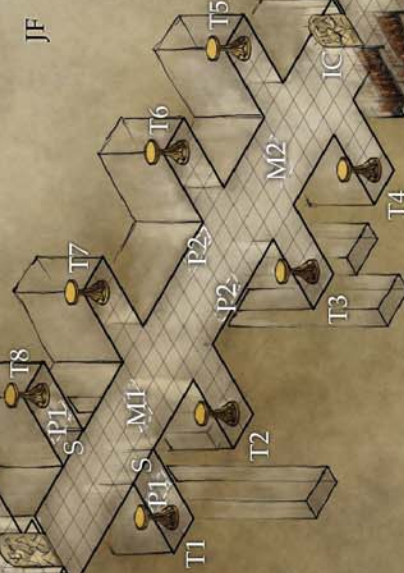
- GD Gilded Devil
- JF Jorun Flintknapper



THE TEST OF VALOR

- M Magma Mephit
- F Fire Mephit
- FE Fire Elemental

THE TEST OF FAITH



THE TEST OF LORE

BR

At the other side of the maze is a second locked puzzle door. The carvings on the door and the surrounding alcove depict a bevy of blacksmiths hard at work within a smoky forge. This door opens just as the first (see “Puzzle Doors”), although the code word for this anvil carving is “smoke.”

THE TEST OF FAITH

When the second door opens, the gear key falls:

Beyond is a long wide hallway extending into darkness. At your feet, just beyond the threshold are engraved mithral runes.

Any PC who can read Dwarven can decipher the runes:

Second, the faithful of Volund do not bow to the smoke of temptation, but rather seek their goal with the same focused determination a smith uses to forge his metal for the glory of Volund.

SETUP

This room is designed to punish the greedy. Characters proceeding directly to the exit will be unaffected by the traps in this room. Those that delay too long or succumb to their greed will pay the price.

ILLUMINATION

The room is completely dark.

FEATURES OF THE ROOM

Corridors—At the far end of each corridor is an elegant marble pedestal on which rests a single, seemingly valuable, treasure.

False disintegration trap—A conical pile of ash, a non-magical wand, and a decorated silk robe, suggests the presence of a disintegration trap (a DC 20 Arcana check reveals that the ash is not the result of disintegration). Attempts to locate or disarm the trap automatically fail since there is no trap to find.

False scythe trap—A corpse, head cleanly severed beside it, suggests the presence of a scythe trap waiting to be sprung, and a long narrow slit in the wall, 5 ft. off the ground, furthers the charade (DC 15 Perception check). A DC 20 Heal check reveals that the body was planted and Thievery checks to disarm the trap automatically fail because no trap actually exists.

False treasure—These worthless items have been masterfully designed to resemble treasures valuing several thousand gp (DC 30 Perception check to identify the actual worthlessness of a specific item). The items include an adamantite dwarven urgrosh, a mithril lyre, a golden horn, a gem-encrusted brooch, an ornate chalice, raw ore of an unidentifiable substance, a silver hammer, and a crystal orb (no magic radiates from any of the items).

Paracelix’s scrying sensor—Characters must succeed on a DC 24 Perception check to notice the scrying sensor.

Puzzle door—At the other side of the room is yet another locked puzzle door, and carvings on the door and the surrounding alcove depict the end of the day at a smithy with dwarves returning tools to their holders and shoveling ash from the furnaces; this door opens just as the first (see *Puzzle Doors*, page 76), although the code word for this anvil carving is “ash.”

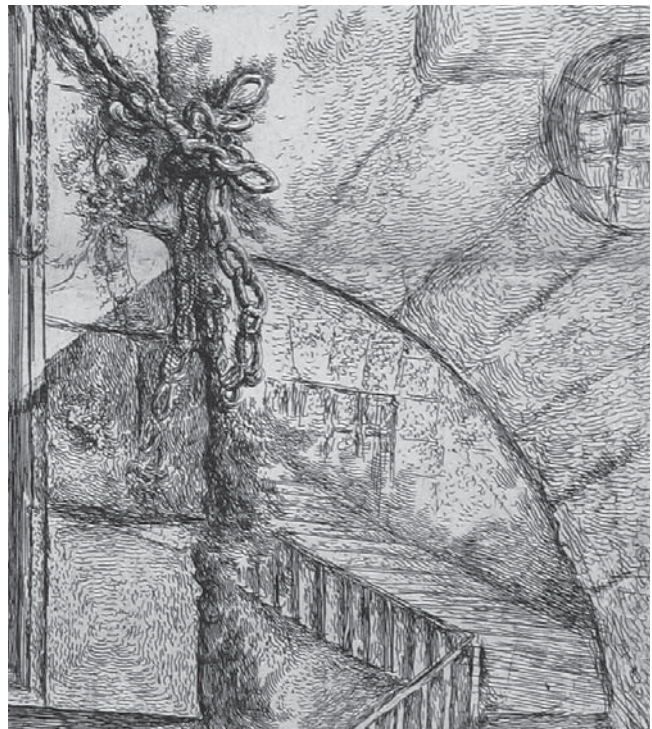
Secret door—The secret doors can be noticed with a DC 20 Perception check. They are not locked.

Note: The encounter is worth only 1,000 XP if the party interacts with the false treasures and other traps in the room as this represents a failure to prove oneself faithful to Volund.”

8TH LEVEL ENCOUNTER

- 4 PCs (1,650 XP) • 2 incendiary gas (trap) (G), 4 inverted razormaw pits (trap) (P), 8 runes of guardianship (trap) (R)
- 5 PCs (1,650 XP) • 2 incendiary gas (trap) (G), 4 inverted razormaw pits (trap) (P), 8 runes of guardianship (trap) (R)
- 6 PCs (2,250 XP) • 2 incendiary gas (trap) (G), 2 inverted razormaw pits (trap) (P) and 2 elite inverted razormaw pits (trap) (P), 8 runes of guardianship (trap) (R)

This is a 9th level encounter for parties of four characters.



INCENDIARY GAS

LEVEL 10 BLASTER (TRAP XP 500)

Hidden vents release an invisible, incendiary gas into the room. After several seconds, the gas is ignited, creating a massive ball of flame.

Trap A flammable gas fills the room before exploding

Perception

DC 21—The character notices the vents in the ceiling (no perception check is required to notice the smell of sulfur when within the zone of gas)

DC 25—The character identifies the incendiary gas (trap) and locates the ignition mechanism

Primary Trigger The trap begins creating a zone of incendiary gas in the room as soon as the door is opened; the zone begins as a close blast 1 centered in the square indicated, and each round, the zone increases in size by 2

Secondary Trigger 9 rounds after the primary trigger, the trap makes an attack

Standard Action Close blast

Targets Each creature in the zone

Attack +14 vs. Reflex

Hit 4d8 + 5 fire damage and 5 ongoing fire damage

Miss Half damage

Effect The zone disappears, and the trap resets

Special If the gaseous zone of another incendiary gas (trap) is adjacent to or overlaps this zone when the trap attacks, the other trap may make an attack

Countermeasures

- Open flame or causing fire damage within the zone causes the trap to attack prematurely
- A DC 25 Thievery check obstructs the vent
- A DC 29 Thievery check disables the ignition mechanism

RUNE OF GUARDIANSHIP

LEVEL 8 BLASTER (Trap XP 350)

An intricate rune is engraved in the stone surface, designed to protect whatever object is set atop the magical glyph.

Trap A blast of holy energy punishes those that attempt to remove the protected item.

Perception

DC 15—The character notices the rune on the pedestal

Additional Skills (Religion)

DC 23—The character identifies it as a rune of guardianship (trap)

Trigger Touching the item on the pedestal triggers the rune's attack

Immediate Reaction

Close burst 1

Targets Each creature in the burst

Attack +13 vs. Reflex

Hit 1d8 + 5 radiant damage, and the target is pushed 3 squares and blinded (save ends)

Countermeasures

- A DC 23 Thievery or Arcana check disables the rune for 1 round.
- A DC 28 Religion check disables the rune until the end of the encounter or for 5 min.

INVERTED RAZORMAW PIT

LEVEL 7 WARDER (Trap XP 300)

The walls of this pit are lined with iron spikes that point downward. Although they do not harm those falling in, anyone climbing out can't help but be pierced by them.

Trap The hole is 10 ft. in diameter, 10 ft. deep, and lined with sharp spikes designed to injure anyone ascending the pit

Perception

No perception check is required to notice the open pit

Trigger Athletic checks to ascend the pit draw an attack from the trap

Immediate Interrupt

Melee

Target Creature making an Athletics check

Attack +14 vs. AC

Hit 2d10 damage

Countermeasures

- Teleporting out of the pit avoids the attack
- A DC 19 Athletics check is required to successfully climb out of the pit
- A character can make a DC 11 Athletics check (or DC 21 without a running start) to jump across the pit

Upgrade to Elite

- The spikes are coated in poison, and the trap deals 2d10 damage and 5 ongoing poison damage on a successful hit (save ends)
- Increase the DC of the Athletics check to climb out of the pit by 2

TACTICS

Each incendiary gas (trap) triggers as soon as the doors to this room are opened and will continue to reset themselves if the characters do not close the door again. The party has only a few rounds to pass through this room before being caught in the trap. Those who delay too long to investigate the treasures in the alcoves also risk being subject to additional wards.

Each pedestal is trapped with a rune of guardianship (trap) that is triggered if a character attempts to handle the

false treasure. The runes' effect will likely push the character into a nearby inverted razormaw pit (trap).

The false traps are designed to slow the party down and pose no direct threat.

DEVELOPMENT

Once they have opened the next set of puzzle doors, the party can move on to the next area.

AMBUSH AT THE TEST OF LORE

The third and final test awaits the PCs in this chamber. The test does not go as planned, however, as the PCs are attacked while they navigate the room. As the PCs open this third puzzle door, the gear key falls once more to the floor. Beyond is a pitch-black room. If the PCs have darkvision or provide their own light source, read or paraphrase the following:

Beyond is a square room with carved pillars. Along the sidewalls, iron racks hold graven copper tablets, and in the center of the room sit an iron table and chair. Directly across from the door is a relief eye, fully 5 ft. in diameter, carved in carnelian. Beneath the thin layer of dust on the floor, you see inlaid mithral runes. More runes encircle the carved red eye.

The dwarven runes along the floor read:

Third, the faithful of Volund atone for the ashen sins staining their souls and the souls of their ancestors.

Originally, Rabscuttle or one of the other old masters inhabited this room, where they personally tested the knowledge of any who desired entrance to the Eye of Grajava. When the rest of the silent masters imprisoned the old masters, Rabscuttle escaped Mount Rygar, leaving this room unguarded.

DEVELOPMENT

Two rounds after the party enters the test of lore, Jorunn and Paracelix emerge from the test of valor. A DC 17 passive Perception is sufficient to notice the approaching dim light of a candle carried by Jorunn if the door has not been shut. Otherwise, 2 rounds after that, the doors to the test of lore open once again. When confronted, the newcomers attempt to bluff the party with an offer for assistance until they can get close enough to attack them.

SETUP

Jorunn Flintknapper (F); Paracelix Zhedan (J)

ILLUMINATION

Unless the PCs brought their own light source, this room is completely dark.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Eye gate—Dwarven runes around the carving of an eye read, "Gather and prepare to enter the shrine of the valorous shield maiden." Any creature touching the eye is instantly transported to the Eye of Grajava.

Iron racks – These racks are securely fastened to the stone walls of this room. The tablets they hold contain much of the secret history of the Illuminated Brotherhood, etched entirely in Dwarven. Enough time spent poring over the information available here will provide a character with all of the information Caradlather is capable of providing. Browsing the racks will reveal that the shelf labeled "Satarel" is empty. A DC 20 Perception check will determine that the section labeled as "Forsaken" contains tablets covering a random assortment of topics, none of which actually mention the forsaken.

Tablet of the Illuminated Brotherhood – Characters choosing to take any of the tablets will carry with them a source of ancient lore. Not specifically magical, they are considered a wondrous item. Although limited only by the carrying capacity of the character, carrying multiple tablets does not further enhance the benefit they bestow.



JORUNN FLINTKNAPPER
LEVEL 10 ELITE SOLDIER

MEDIUM NATURAL HUMANOID (DWARF) XP 1,000

Initiative +7 Senses Perception +4, low-light vision
hp 202 Bloodied 101
AC 26 Fortitude 22 Reflex 18 Will 22
Saving Throw +2
Speed 5
Action Point 1

[mba] **Dwarven Ugrush** (standard, at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
+17 vs. AC; 2d6 + 5 damage, and the target is marked

[rba] **Crossbow** (standard, at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
+17 vs. AC; 1d8 + 5 damage

[m] **Double Weapon Attack** (standard, at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
Flintknapper can make two *dwarven ugrush* attacks

[m] **Focused Strike** (standard, recharge on 5, 6) ♦ **Weapon**
Requires a marked enemy; +15 vs. Fortitude; 4d8 + 5 damage, and the target is pushed 1 square; Flintknapper may shift into the vacated space

[m] **Nimble Feint** (move; at-will)
+15 vs. Will; the target switches positions with Flintknapper

Lux ex Tenebris
Flintknapper receives a +2 bonus on saving throws against effects with the charm or fear keywords

Alignment evil **Languages** Common, Dwarven
Skills Bluff +15, Religion +10
Str 17 (+8) **Dex** 10 (+5) **Wis** 8 (+4)
Con 13 (+6) **Int** 10 (+5) **Cha** 14 (+7)

Equipment ugrush

NEW ITEM

Tablet of the Illuminated Brotherhood

This copper tablet represents only a fragment of the written knowledge from the secret dwarf organization known as the Illuminated Brotherhood.

Level 1

Wondrous Item 520 gp

Property +1 item bonus to History checks

Power (free, encounter)

You may reroll a History check as long as the topic for the check is dwarven in focus. You must keep the second result, even if it is worse.

PARACELIX ZHEDAN

LEVEL 10 ELITE CONTROLLER

MEDIUM IMMORTAL HUMANOID (DEVIL) XP 1,000

Initiative +6 Senses Perception +7; low-light vision
hp 216 Bloodied 108
AC 25 Fortitude 24 Reflex 23 Will 23
Resist 10 fire, 10 weapon
Saving Throw +2
Speed 6
Action Point 1

[mba] **Claw** (standard; at will)
+15 vs. AC; 1d8 + 3 damage

[m] **Heavy Flail** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
+15 vs. AC; 2d6 + 3 damage

[m] **Scourge of Avarice** (free, encounter) ♦ **Charm**
If Paracelix hits a target with *heavy flail*, that target must use its next turn to steal the most valuable item from its nearest ally

[r] **Amass All Things** (standard; daily) ♦ **Teleportation**
Range 10; +14 vs. Reflex; the target's most valuable item (determined by gp value) teleports from the target's possession and into the hands of Paracelix

[r] **Betrayal of Riches** (standard; recharge on 4, 5, 6)
Range 10; +14 vs. Fortitude; 2d8 damage, and an item of the target is affected; the target suffers a secondary effect based on the item's location

1. *Arm*—Receives -2 penalty to attack rolls (save ends)
2. *Feet*—Slowed (save ends)
3. *Hand/Ring*—Drops held items
4. *Head*—Blinded (save ends)
5. *Neck/Waist*—Dazed (until the end of the target's next turn)
6. *Other item*—Additional 1d8 damage

[a] **The Wealth beneath Your Feet** (standard; recharge when bloodied) ♦ **Conjuration**
Burst 3 within 10; +12 vs. Reflex; 3d8 + 5 fire damage, and the target is restrained until the end of the Paracelix's next turn
Miss—Target takes half damage and is not restrained

Greed's Many Forms (move; at-will) ♦ **Polymorph**
Paracelix takes the form of any humanoid his size or smaller; he may remain in this form until damaged or until it dispels the effect

Alignment evil **Languages** Common, Supernal
Skills Bluff +16, Diplomacy +16, Intimidate +16
Str 16 (+9) **Dex** 14 (+7) **Wis** 16 (+8)
Con 20 (+10) **Int** 18 (+9) **Cha** 22 (+11)

Equipment golden heavy flail, golden plate mail



TACTICS

During Combat As soon as Jorunn marks a target, she uses her action point to attack that character with a *focused strike*, hoping for it to be available again in the following round.

If the PCs initiate hostilities before Jorunn is in position, Paracelix opens with *the wealth beneath your feet* before they can close. For the rest of the combat the devil attempts to maintain a position where he can alternate between using his ranged powers to hinder the party and his heavy flail in melee while he waits for *betrayal of riches* to recharge.

The duo does not chase any characters who flee. However, they will pursue characters that teleport to the Eye of Grajava once no else remains in the room. Refer to the next encounter for continuing the fight at the Eye.

Morale Jorunn fights to the death in the name of Mammon. Paracelix will not flee so long as Jorunn continues to fight but will withdraw if the dwarf is slain and he himself is reduced to less than 54 hp.

THE EYE GATE

The runes around the carved eye read, “Gather and prepare yourselves to enter the great shrine to the valorous shield maiden. Touch the eye together and allow yourselves to be transported.” When all creatures in the room are touching the carving of the eye, they are teleported to the Eye of Grajava. If any creature in the room cannot be transported, no one is teleported.

THE EYE OF GRAJAVA

When the PCs touch the eye, it is quickly apparent that they are somewhere else. Read or paraphrase the following:

Gone is the ever-present stink of unwashed bodies, the oily tang of forges, and the fine dust wafting up from the mines. Instead, the air smells as clean as that outdoors, over the Ironcrags. The light here is cast in a red glow, and a sphere of red glass encloses the area. Three bridges, evenly spaced around the sphere, rise to a circular platform in the center.

The Eye of Grajava is a spherical cavity in a vast ruby, fully 340 ft. in diameter. At the center of the sphere stands a circular platform 50 ft. in diameter supporting a large altar. Guarding the platform is Rygar, the Voice of the Mountain, an immense aspect of the Mountain Spirit itself. Three 20-ft.-wide bridges descend from and support this platform, ending at a 20-ft.-wide catwalk that runs around the inside of the sphere at its equator. On one side of this catwalk is a carved red eye, in front of which the PCs appear. Farther along the catwalk, not quite opposite the eye, is a carving of an anvil. The room is brightly lit by red-cast light diffusing through the ruby from all directions.

The Eye of Grajava is hidden from divination rituals by the combined power of the Spirit of the Mountain and the shield maiden Grajava. All details of the *Teardrop of Grajava*—save its existence and its use as a weapon against Mammon—are likewise shielded from divinations. Rygar can pass freely through the wards on the Eye of Grajava.

The carved eye in front of which the PCs appear is only a carving and does not function as a portal from this direction. The runes around the carved anvil read, “Rest and recover under the Shield of Grajava. Then prepare yourself to enter the great shrine to Volund himself. Touch the anvil and allow yourselves to be transported.” When a creature touches the carving of the anvil, they are teleported to the Forge of the Fire Blessing (page 91), just as by the eye gate.

JORUNN AND PARACELIX

If the party arrives before Jorunn and/or Paracelix have been dealt with, the Mammonites follow them here. If they were in the midst of combat, they will continue to assault the PCs before doing anything else.

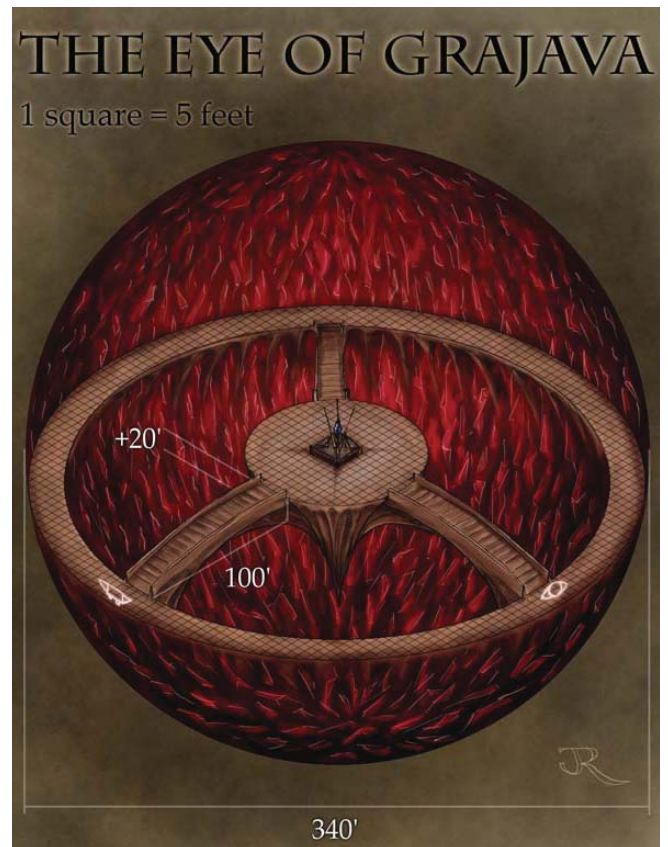
If the cultists had not yet been engaged, they attempt to bluff the PCs that they have arrived to help claim the *Teardrop of Grajava* for the brotherhood. Rygar sees through their charade if they approach her and attacks them if the PCs do not intercept the cultists first. So long as she is not directly engaged by the fight, Rygar remains where she is, content to await the outcome.

RYGAR, THE VOICE OF THE MOUNTAIN

Rygar waits on the central platform. In this physical form, she appears as a large earthen humanoid with the head of a scaly kobold and two pairs of arms ending in clenched stone fists. Her initial attitude towards the party is indifferent. Rygar claims to be an aspect of the Spirit of the Mountain. This ancient being is a garrulous and relatively unbiased source of information about the history of the Golden Citadel. Her loyalty is solely to the Spirit of the Mountain, viewing the cult of Mammon as the ultimate enemy and the Illuminated Brothers as allies of questionable loyalty. She wanted to use the *Teardrop of Grajava* centuries ago, but reluctantly agreed with the old masters to wait to see if the Spirit of the Mountain could overcome the curse itself.

Rygar has guarded the *Teardrop of Grajava* for centuries and is reluctant to hand it over, especially to those not belonging to the Illuminated Brotherhood. She must be convinced that the PCs will use the eye to defeat the cultists of Mammon. This encounter may be roleplayed or, if you wish, attempted as a skill challenge.

Rygar despises lies and intimidation. Any PC caught lying to her, as determined by a Bluff check versus Rygar’s Insight check, shifts her attitude closer towards hostile. Intimidation checks automatically fail. If Rygar is satisfied with the PC’s answers, she agrees to aid them. If she detected that the PCs lied or if they provided answers that displeased her, she declines to hand over the *Teardrop of Grajava*. Use the following questions to guide the conversation with the PCs.



WHO ARE YOU?

Any true answer satisfies Rygar, so long as the PCs are not working for the Mammonites.

WHY HAVE YOU COME TO THIS TWICE-HOLY PLACE, SACRED TO BOTH THE STONES AND THE SHIELD MAIDEN?

Rygar hopes that the PCs intend to save the Spirit of the Mountain from Mammon’s curse. Acquiring the *Teardrop of Grajava* is also an acceptable answer, as long as the PCs do not express a desire to keep it or profit from it. If they admit to the intent of keeping or profiting from it, she refuses to with the *Teardrop*, but does not automatically attack.

ARE YOU ILLUMINATED BROTHERS?

Rygar is merely curious and does not care what the PCs say, as long as they don’t lie.

HAVE THE MINIONS OF MAMMON PENETRATED THE CITADEL?

The presence of Mammonites constitutes the imminent threat Rygar needs to release the *Teardrop of Grajava*. If Jorunn or Paracelix appeared here, Rygar does not ask this question, since the answer is obvious.

**WHAT HAPPENED TO THAT SESQUIPEDALIAN
BORE, SATAREL?**

If the PCs look confused or say they don't know who that is, Rygar adds, "Her dwarven form is tall and blonde and her natural form has a missing horn." If the PCs still express uncertainty, she concludes with, "She's a gold wyrm. I guess you have not seen her around? Given how much she loves the sound of her own voice, I suspect that if you had ever met her, you would have spent decades on the pleasantries alone." The absence of Satarel—and the capture of Bragollach—is another grave threat to the Spirit of the Mountain.

**PROVING YOUR WORTH
SKILL CHALLENGE (800 XP)**

Setup You must convince Rygar that you are worthy of the *Teardrop of Grajava*

Level 10

Complexity 2 (6 successes before 3 failures)

Primary Skills Arcana, Bluff, Diplomacy, History, Insight, Religion

Arcana (DC 21)—An understanding of the arcane arts and the magical wards implemented by the brotherhood gives Rygar confidence in the party's ability to use the *Teardrop of Grajava*; this can also represent an attempt at discussing what the *Teardrop of Grajava* is and how it works.

Bluff (DC 25)—Subterfuge and deceit have long been tools of Mammon and there is little Rygar despises more than a liar (a failed check results in 2 failures for the skill challenge).

Diplomacy (DC 21)—You explain who you are, the deeds you have performed for the brotherhood, and why you've come to the Eye of Grajava. (The DC for all skill checks increases by 5 if a character admits to wanting the *Teardrop of Grajava* for wealth or personal gain.)

History (DC 25)—You convey your understanding of the situation by speaking of Mammon's plot against the Mountain Spirit, Satarel's quest to gather the corrupted ore, and other relevant events.

Insight (DC 17)—Rygar does little to mask her concern for the Eye of Grajava and her curiosity about the characters' motivations (the result of this check does not generate a success or failure for the challenge, but instead provides a +2 bonus or -2 penalty towards the next character's skill check; in addition, the first successful check reveals Rygar's disdain for intimidation and lies and increased suspicion of the party if the DCs of this challenge have increased).

Religion (DC 25)—You divulge your understanding of the Mammonite cult, their activities, and their goals (once 2 successes have been achieved in this way, increase the DC of all skill checks by 2 as Rygar becomes suspicious of a party that seems to know too much about the Mammonites).

Miscellaneous—Rygar is an aspect of the Mountain Spirit itself who has guarded the Eye of Grajava for centuries, and she refuses to be cowed by mere mortals and associates such bullying as the tactics of weaklings (all intimidate checks automatically generate a failure).

Special—Actions speak louder than words and if Paracelix was defeated at the Eye of Grajava this automatically generates 2 successes for the PCs; killing the gilded devil goes a long way towards proving that the PCs oppose Mammon while also showing that his cult has penetrated the brotherhood's hidden defenses.

Success If the party achieves 6 successes before accumulating 3 failures, Rygar is convinced of their intentions and is willing to give them the *Teardrop of Grajava*.

Failure If the party has achieved 3 or more successes when they fail the challenge, Rygar is unconvinced. So long as they do not provoke her, the aspect remains amiable, but asks that they move along. If the party has not achieved at least 3 successes, Rygar believes them to be cultists of Mammon, or at least sympathizers, and she immediately attacks.

If Rygar can be convinced to turn over the *Teardrop of Grajava*, she allows them to rest and recover before returning the Forge. As an aspect of the Mountain Spirit, she can answer many of the questions the PCs might have regarding the mountain, its history, and the curse. Reveal any information the PCs might have missed before this point, using the following is a list of sample questions:

WHAT IS THE TEARDROP OF GRAJAVA?

"This is the *Teardrop of Grajava*, the sorrow of Volund's shield maiden given physical form. She grieved for the corruption of the Spirit of the Mountain and offered this gift to the dwarves." (Note that greedy responses from the PCs could change Rygar's willingness to help them.)

HOW DOES IT WORK?

"It is a weapon, albeit only in the mystical sense. If an intelligent creature sacrifices it freely—knowingly giving up a lifetime of riches in order to fight Mammon—then the *Teardrop of Grajava* will purge the corruption from the Golden Citadel. The Spirit of the Mountain will be whole again, and it will purge the taint from its veins of ore. The grace of Grajava will also cure those avaricious souls who fell victim to the plague. After that, it should be a simple matter to drive off the cult and round up the remaining cursed ore.

Remember this, though—the sacrifice must occur on a holy altar of Volund within the Golden Citadel. Willingly break the sapphire on the altar and victory is at hand!”

WHO ARE YOU?

“I am Rygar, the Voice of the Mountain. I am a shard—an aspect, if you will—of the Spirit of the Mountain. I serve all the Ironcraggs, really. When the dwarves shortsightedly—hmm, or was it greedily?—refused to use the *Teardrop of Grajava*, I volunteered to stand guard, and so, I have for centuries. If the corruption of Mammon has spread as widely as it sounds, I might be the only uncorrupted part of the spirit left.”

WHAT IS THE SPIRIT OF THE MOUNTAIN?

“Think of it as part god, part elemental essence, and part location. It welcomed the dwarves to the Ironcraggs, not knowing they would bring this infernal curse upon its roots.”

WHAT IS MAMMON’S CURSE?

“Ugh, devils—always concocting some overly complicated and showy plan to prove themselves. Mammon cursed the orichalcum lying within Mount Rygar. Lesser beings who are exposed to it succumb to their native avarice. Initially, that appears to be a disease with gold-flaked pustules. Showy, right? Then the afflicted change into twisted, gold-veined mockeries.

Horrible as that is, ‘tis but a distraction. If enough cursed ore is gathered together, then an aspect of Mammon himself can be summoned to the Ironcraggs. I’m sure the summoning itself would require the usual tedious rituals and sacrifices—which worthies like yourselves could stop—but as long as the orichalcum remains cursed, the threat of Mammon’s arrival remains.”

WHO IS THE DRAGON?

“Well, the dwarves had a problem. They could prevent their brethren from mining any more ore, but the orichalcum they already mined from Mount Rygar was a real danger—at any moment cultists could steal it and summon their sulfurous master. So the dwarves found an ally—the gold wyrm, Satarel. To be fair, she had a sterling reputation for fighting evil, but only I appreciated the danger of having a dragon guard precious metals. Dragons are like magpies bred with xorn—sooner or later their greed for shiny things overcomes their supposedly good nature.

Anyway, Satarel took away the cursed ore and stood guard over it. If she’s out of the picture, then her egg must finally have hatched. The daughter—Bragollach, I think they named her—was going to take charge of the cursed orichalcum. I certainly hope she’s less long-winded than her mother.”

WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE SILENT MASTERS?

“The original lot was tolerable, I suppose. They did not appreciate my superior wisdom—witness their reluctance to use the *Teardrop of Grajava* and their insistence upon working with Satarel—and they hid something from me, I think. One day they suddenly stopped visiting. I know nothing of the modern group.”

WILL YOU ACCOMPANY US?

“No. My duty was to guard this place from the servants of Mammon. Now that you possess the *Teardrop of Grajava*, my presence here is no longer required. I will reunite with the Mountain and lend my energies to its recovery. The time has come for the Spirit of the Mountain to awaken.”

Before the PCs leave, Rygar gathers them together and says, “The Mammonites are sure to know that someone has reached the Eye of Grajava—the wards are powerful but so are the forces of the Greedy Prince. That gate will take you back to the Forge of the Fire Blessing. If I were you, I would gird myself for battle before I ventured forth, for the army of greed will stop at nothing to possess the *Teardrop of Grajava*.”

TREASURE

On the altar rests the *Teardrop of Grajava*. Also on the altar are the **Writings of the Voice**, a collection of observations and prophecies recorded, in Primordial, by Rygar in her centuries of isolation. Should the PCs kill Rygar, they can learn the same information from her writings as if they had spoken with her. The copper tablets from the “Satarel” section of the Test of Lore are stacked next to the altar.



RYGAR, VOICE OF THE MOUNTAIN

LEVEL 9 SOLO BRUTE

HUGE NATURAL MAGICAL BEAST 2,000 XP

Initiative +4 Senses Perception +11; tremorsense 20
Tremors aura 1; all squares adjacent to Rygar are considered difficult terrain

hp 396 Bloodied 198
AC 23 Fortitude 26 Reflex 23 Will 24
Immune fear, lightning; Resist 10 radiant
Saving Throw +5
Speed 8, climb 5
Action Points 2

[mba] **Claw** (standard; at will)

Reach 3; +12 vs. AC; 2d8 + 5 damage

[m] **Electrified Scales** (immediate reaction, when hit by a melee attack; at-will) ♦ **Electricity**

Targets attacker; +12 vs. AC; 3d8 lightning damage

[m] **Rain of Stone** (standard; recharge when bloodied)

Rygar may make up to four *claw* attacks; if Rygar hits the same target with two *claw* attacks, that target is stunned (save ends)

[m] **Rending claws** (standard; at-will)

Rygar may make two *claw* attacks; if Rygar hits the same target with both *claw* attacks, that target is dazed (save ends)

[c] **Mountain's Fury** (standard; encounter) ♦ **Electricity**

Close burst 3; +8 vs. Reflex; 4d10 + 5 electrical damage
Miss—Half damage

Earthbound

Rygar cannot be forced to move

Lightning Speed

Rygar acts on her initiative as well as on her initiative -5

Alignment unaligned **Languages** Common, Draconic, Primordial

Skills Diplomacy +10, History +12, Insight +16
Str 24 (+11) **Dex** 11 (+4) **Wis** 24 (+11)
Con 19 (+8) **Int** 17 (+7) **Cha** 12 (+5)

NEW ARTIFACT

The Teardrop of Grajava

Artifact (Heroic Level)

A lasting manifestation of the shield maiden Grajava's sorrow, this blue sapphire is the size of a dwarf's head.

Wondrous Item

Property You gain a +1 item bonus to Diplomacy and Insight checks

Property You receive twice the normal amount when selling an item

Power (minor; daily) You receive a +2 bonus to your Will defense until the end of the encounter

Goals of the Teardrop of Grajava

- Defeat the influences of greed and avarice
- Purge the Mountain Spirit of Mammon's curse

ROLE PLAYING THE TEARDROP OF GRAJAVA

The *Teardrop* is a selfless item that seeks to be sacrificed for the greater good of the Mountain Spirit. It communicates with you empathically, conveying a constant sense of longing. This feeling intensifies when in the presence of an altar at which it can be sacrificed. When devils are near, the gem grows angry, just as it does when you use its abilities for personal gain.

TABLE 3-4: CONCORDANCE

Action	Score
Starting score	5
You sacrifice the <i>Teardrop</i>	+10
You are a dwarf	+1
You are a worshipper of Volund	+2
You complete a quest for the Silent Brotherhood	+2
You kill an agent of Mammon (maximum 1/day)	+1
You retain possession of the <i>Teardrop</i> (1/day)	-1
You retain possession of the <i>Teardrop</i> (1/week)	-2
You sell a magic item	reduced by half the item's level



TABLE 3-5: THE TEARDROP'S REACTIONS

Pleased (16-20)
<i>"By my hand, the Tear will fulfill its destiny."</i>
It is only a matter of time before you find the appropriate location at which to sacrifice the <i>Teardrop</i> .
Property You receive a +5 bonus to Diplomacy and Insight checks
Power (free; daily) You deal an additional 1d8 damage to any devil that you hit until the end of your turn
Satisfied (12-15)
<i>"My motivations are pure and honest."</i>
You have proven that you are more interested in defeating the forces of Mammon than in the accumulation of wealth or power.
Property You receive a +2 bonus to Diplomacy and Insight checks
Power (immediate reaction, when you fail a saving throw; encounter) You may reroll a failed saving throw against an effect with the charm or fear keyword
Normal (5-11)
<i>"The Teardrop tests my resolution again the forces of the Greedy Prince."</i>
The <i>Teardrop</i> tests you until you prove your resolve.
No additional Properties or Powers.
Unsatisfied (1-4)
<i>"I am weak to temptation."</i>
You refuse to sacrifice the <i>Teardrop</i> or use it for your own personal gain. If you don't change your ways, the <i>Teardrop</i> soon leaves.
Property You take a -2 penalty to Diplomacy, Insight, and Bluff checks
Power (minor; daily) You receive a +1 bonus to your Will defense until the end of the encounter
Angered (0 or lower)
<i>"I am corrupt."</i>
The <i>Teardrop</i> is being used for personal wealth, and it will not remain in your possession for long.
Property You suffer a -5 penalty to Diplomacy, Insight, and Bluff checks
Special You automatically fail the first saving throw you make against an effect that has the charm or fear keyword
Moving On
<i>"The Tear's destiny must be fulfilled."</i>
The <i>Teardrop</i> wants to be sacrificed. If it is pleased when the sacrifice occurs, you find a sapphire in your pack the following morning worth a magic item of half your level. Otherwise, when you next gain a level, the <i>Teardrop</i> disappears, returning to the Eye of Grajava and summoning Rygar to once again guard over it. Rygar will not allow the same group of characters to possess the <i>Teardrop</i> again. In addition, you awaken the following day to find you have been branded with the mark of Mammon.

THE RETURN OF RYGAR?

Although Rygar refuses to accompany the PCs, you could use her to help a party that finds itself in a crisis through poor luck. Such aid should only be available once, if at all. Alternatively, if the campaign continues in the Ironcrag, Rygar can make an excellent recurring source of adventure hooks and information.

THE EYE OF GRAJAVA AFTER THE ADVENTURE

The precise location of the Eye of Grajava is unspecified. If you wish to remove it from possible PC use after the adventure, perhaps the earthquake destroys it, Grajava moves it elsewhere to aid other dwarves, or the Spirit of the Mountain reabsorbs the eye. You need not explain to the PCs why they cannot access the Eye of Grajava, merely that it is now inaccessible. They may investigate its disappearance if they like, leading to further adventures in the Ironcrag.

If, on the other hand, you prefer to leave the Eye of Grajava available for further adventures, you can place it somewhere convenient for the latter parts of your campaign. The Eye might be buried deep within Mount Rygar, and to reach it, the PCs must mine through the territory of the remaining forsaken and the Imperial ghouls; the eye is easy to find but remains sacred to followers of Volund, and PCs who exploit it face the ire of pious worshippers; the eye is easy to find, but any attempt to profit from it causes Mammon's curse to return; or the eye is not within Mount Rygar at all, and is instead in a location more convenient to your plans.

PART III Sacrifice

The cult learned that the *Teardrop of Grajava* needs to be taken to the altar-forge but does not know it is a gemstone. Instead, the cultists assume they seek a powerful magic weapon. The PCs must fight their way to the altar-forge through several cultists and their diabolic allies. After using the gate in the Eye of Grajava, the PCs are teleported directly to the Forge of the Fire Blessing.

FORGE OF THE FIRE BLESSING

The PCs appear in the Forge of the Fire Blessing just outside the secret door to the chapter house. Feel free to refresh the memories of your players by rereading the read-aloud text in the section *First Visit to the Forge* (page 73).

The forge is dimly lit by the lava. Unless another light source is present, all creatures have concealment from the PCs. Characters with darkvision or low-light vision can see as normal for those abilities.

All four doors in the forge—including the secret door to the chapter house—are under the effects of Arcane Lock rituals cast by Tarisaul (DC 30). One of the passageways leaving the room was blocked by an ancient earthquake, while the other leads to the Great Stair.

Seven forges stand on the lower level while the altar-forge sits on the ledge. One Medium or smaller creature can stand on each of the lower forges, and two Medium or one Large creature can stand on the altar-forge, gaining a +1 bonus to melee attacks for fighting from higher ground.

One side of the chamber connects to the Shank. Creatures can ride the wheels carrying water or lava to or from the ledge; the trip requires a DC 10 Acrobatics check per round. Failure leads to a fall of 1d6x10 ft. in the first and third rounds or 1d8x10 ft. in the second round. Falls in the third round leave the creature on the ledge if it started on the floor or on the floor if it started on the ledge. The heat of the lava wheel deals 10 fire damage per round to anyone on it. Creatures on one wheel can engage those on the same wheel in melee combat but not those on the other wheel.

The thin layers of lava in the troughs deal 5 fire damage per round of exposure. Total immersion is impossible, and merely passing near the lava deals no damage.

The water troughs are 1 ft. deep. If mixed with the lava—by destroying a trough (AC 5; Fortitude 10; 20 hp), for instance—the water generates a 4 squares of steam, which provides total concealment and deals 10 fire damage to anyone within the steam. The steam dissipates in 3 rounds, unless the lava and water continue to come into contact.

Chains hang from the ceiling down to one square above the floor of the room. Except for the 10 ft. nearest each wall, everywhere in the chamber can be reached by the chains. A DC 16 Athletics check is required to climb up or down the chains, and creatures can hold at one height with one DC 10 Athletics check per round as a free action. Creatures can swing on the chains with DC 10 Athletics checks and leap from chain to chain with Athletics or Acrobatics checks (DC 10 + 10 per square of horizontal distance + 5 per square of change in height). Characters can use Acrobatics checks to drop from the chains.

Ten ventilation shafts cover the ceiling and outer walls of the room, except for the Shank wall and the wall segments where the doors, secret door, and passageways enter the chamber. These shafts contain magically bound spirits of air and cold. Each round, each 10-ft. square of wall or ceiling can generate the following effects, directed outward:

BLAST OF THE ICY MOUNTAIN ZEPHYR

Wall 6; +14 vs. Reflex; 1d8 + 5 cold damage, and target is pushed 3 squares

These effects are triggered as minor actions through prayers to Volund. One command word combination controls each wall segment for each spell, but the pattern of prayers is simple enough that any creature with at least an 8 Intelligence can remember it. Each shaft can be commanded once from anywhere within the forge.

The PCs are blocked from the altar-forge by a handful of devils and Mammonite cultists. Tanya Hrovitz leads this particular group of Mammonites. She is a thin, middle-aged woman wearing brightly polished armor and wielding a richly filigreed flail. Off to her side is Tarisaul Eris, a brown-haired man with a pudgy face and a short-cropped beard. He wears expensive robes and a bored expression.

One hamatula and one kyton guard the entrance to the forge and another pair guards the secret door. Tanya stays near the altar-forge as a last line of defense, while Tarisaul and some devils wait at the top of the stairs; they've destroyed several of the steps in preparation. Any additional devils needed for larger parties arrive 1 round after fighting begins. The cultists discussed their tactics before the PCs arrive, so their initial actions proceed without any direction from Tanya, the leader of this group.

Note that none of the cultists is initially aware of the ventilation system, but they avoid the affected squares once they realize the threat. They do not use the ventilation system against the PCs.

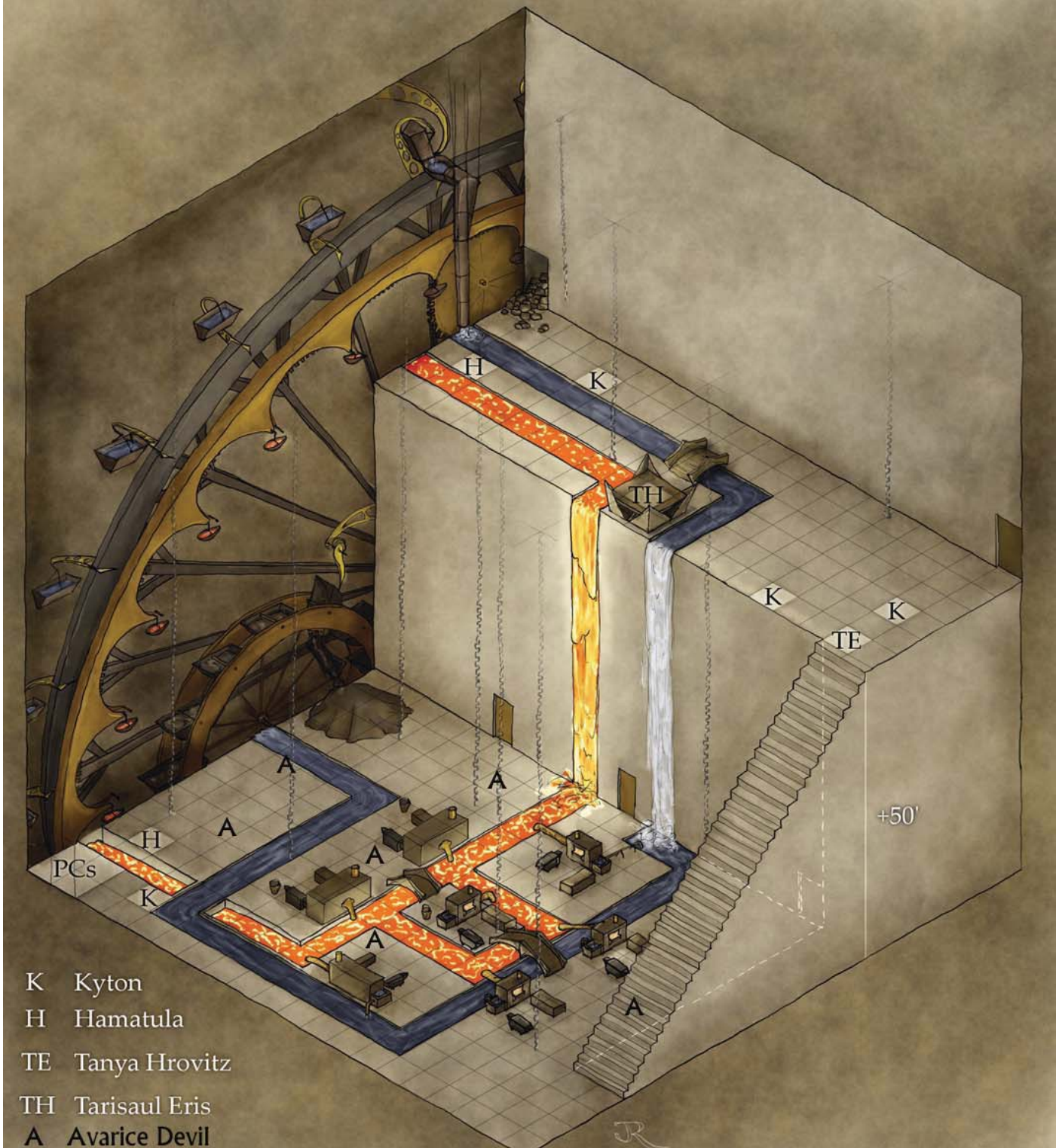
If the cultists learn the true nature of the *Teardrop of Grajava*—through overheard PC conversation, for instance—they look for and focus their attention on the actual holder of the gemstone.

13TH LEVEL ENCOUNTER

- 4 PCs (3,200 XP) • 2 greedfire kytons, 3 poisonbarb hamatula, Tanya Hrovitz, Tarisaul Eris
- 5 PCs (4,100 XP) • 2 greedfire kytons, 3 poisonbarb hamatula, Tanya Hrovitz, Tarisaul Eris, 6 avarice devil minions
- 6 PCs (4,850 XP) • 3 greedfire kytons, 3 poisonbarb hamatula, Tanya Hrovitz, Tarisaul Eris, 7 avarice devil minions

THE FORGE OF THE FIRE BLESSING

1 square = 5 feet



- K Kyton
- H Hamatula
- TE Tanya Hrovitz
- TH Tarisaul Eris
- A Avarice Devil

POISONBARB HAMATULA **LEVEL 9 BRUTE**
MEDIUM IMMORTAL HUMANOID (DEVIL) XP 400

Initiative +7 Senses Perception +11; darkvision
hp 118 Bloodied 59
AC 23 Fortitude 21 Reflex 21 Will 19
Resist 20 fire
Speed 7, teleport 3

[mba] **Venomous Slash** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Poison**
+12 vs. AC; 2d6 + 5 damage and ongoing 5 poison damage (save ends)

[m] **Poisonbarb Mauling** (move, target must be grabbed; at-will) ♦ **Poison**
+10 vs. Fortitude; 3d8 damage and ongoing 5 poison damage (save ends)

[m] **Poisonbarb Tackle** (standard; recharge on 5, 6) ♦ **Poison**
+12 vs. AC; 3d10 + 5 poison damage, and the target is grabbed (until escapes); this attack can be made as part of a charge

[m] **Vengeful Barbs** (immediate reaction, when hit with a melee attack; at-will) ♦ **Poison**
+10 vs. Fortitude; 1d8 damage plus 5 poison damage

[r] **Devilish Transposition** (move; at-will) ♦ **Teleportation**
Ranged 10; the hamatula and an allied devil within range exchange positions

Alignment evil Languages Supernal
Skills Insight +11, Intimidate +10, Perception +11
Str 20 (+9) Dex 16 (+7) Wis 14 (+6)
Con 18 (+8) Int 12 (+5) Cha 12 (+5)

GREEDFIRE KYTON **LEVEL 11 SKIRMISHER**
MEDIUM IMMORTAL HUMANOID (DEVIL) XP 600

Initiative +14 Senses Perception +7; darkvision
hp 116 Bloodied 58
AC 25 Fortitude 22 Reflex 24 Will 19
Resist 20 fire
Speed 7 (see *flailing feint*)

[mba] **Lashing Chain of Coins** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Fire**
Reach 2; +16 vs. AC; 2d4 + 2 damage plus 5 fire damage

[m] **Bound by Gold** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Fire**
+14 vs. Reflex; ongoing 10 fire damage, and the target is restrained (save ends both); only one creature at a time can be so restrained

[m] **Doubledown** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Fire**
The kyton makes two melee basic attacks

[m] **Payback** (free, when first bloodied; encounter) ♦ **Fire**
Reach 2; +16 vs. AC; 2d4 + 2 damage plus 5 fire damage, and target is blinded (save ends)

Flailing Feint (minor; at-will)
The kyton shifts 1 square

Unquenchable Bloodthirst
The kyton deals an extra 1d8 damage on melee attacks targeting any foe it has combat advantage against

Alignment evil Languages Supernal
Skills Intimidate +11, Perception +7
Str 19 (+9) Dex 24 (+12) Wis 15 (+7)
Con 20 (+10) Int 14 (+7) Cha 13 (+6)

TARISAUL ERIS **LEVEL 9 CONTROLLER**
MEDIUM NATURAL HUMANOID XP 400

Initiative +6 Senses Perception +11; darkvision
hp 95 Bloodied 47
AC 23 Fortitude 19 Reflex 22 Will 22
Resist 10 fire
Speed 8 (see *dimensional fold*)

[mba] **Morningstar** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
+14 vs. AC; 1d8 + 5 damage

[r] **Force Blast** (standard; at-will)
Ranged 10; +13 vs. Reflex; 2d8 + 5 damage

[a] **Bludgeoning Shadow Tentacles** (standard; recharge on 4, 5, 6) ♦ **Necrotic**
Area burst 2 within 15; +11 vs. Reflex; 3d10 + 5 necrotic damage, and target is immobilized (save ends)

[a] **Dimensional Binding** (standard; recharge when bloodied) ♦ **Psychic, Reliable**
Area burst 2 within 15; +11 vs. Will; 4d8 + 5 damage, and target is dazed (save ends)

Dimensional Fold (move; encounter) ♦ **Teleportation**
Tarisaul may teleport 10 squares

Alignment evil Languages Common, Dwarven, Supernal
Skills Arcana +14, History +10, Perception +11
Str 10 (+4) Dex 14 (+6) Wis 15 (+6)
Con 15 (+6) Int 21 (+9) Cha 10 (+4)

TANYA HROVITZ **LEVEL 9 ARTILLERY (LEADER)**
MEDIUM NATURAL HUMANOID XP 400

Initiative +8 **Senses** Perception +14; darkvision
hp 74 **Bloodied** 37
AC 21 **Fortitude** 20 **Reflex** 21 **Will** 22
Resist 10 fire
Speed 6

[mba] **Coin Flail** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
+16 vs. AC; 1d8 + 5 damage

[r] **Spiritual Weapon** (standard; at-will)
Ranged 10; +16 vs. Reflex; 2d6 + 5 damage

[a] **Dimensional Binding** (move; recharge on 5, 6) ♦
Teleportation

Area burst 2 within 15; +12 vs. Will; 2d6 + 5 damage, and target may not use powers with teleportation keyword until the start of Tanya's next turn

[a] **Infernal Greedfire** (standard; recharge on 5, 6) ♦ **Fire, Radiant**

Area burst 2 within 15; +12 vs. Reflex; 2d10 fire damage plus 1d10 + 5 radiant damage to each target, and Tanya makes a secondary attack
Secondary Attack—+14 vs. Will; target is blinded (save ends)

Simple Blind Cruelty (move; recharge on 4, 5, 6)

Hrovitz directs an ally within sight to make an attack against a blind or immobilized foe

Soul of Battle (minor; at-will) ♦ **Healing**

Hrovitz directs an ally within sight to expend a healing surge as a free action to regain 20% of its maximum hp

Alignment evil **Languages** Common, Dwarven, Supernal

Skills Arcana +10, Insight +14, Perception +14, Religion +10

Str 13 (+5) **Dex** 18 (+8) **Wis** 21 (+9)
Con 14 (+6) **Int** 13 (+5) **Cha** 16 (+7)

AVARICE DEVIL **LEVEL 11 BRUTE MINION**
MEDIUM IMMORTAL HUMANOID (DEVIL) XP 150

Initiative +6 **Senses** Perception +6; darkvision
hp 1; a missed attack never damages a minion
AC 21 **Fortitude** 21 **Reflex** 22 **Will** 20
Resist 10 fire
Speed 6, teleport 3

[mba] **Coin Flail** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
+14 vs. AC; 11 damage

[m] **Windmill Batterstrike** (standard; encounter) ♦
Weapon

The devil makes two *coin flail* attacks

Blinded by Greed (when killed)

Close burst 1; targets enemies; +10 vs. Will; each target suffers 13 damage and is blinded (save ends)

Alignment evil **Languages** Supernal

Skills Intimidate +11, Perception +6

Str 14 (+7) **Dex** 12 (+6) **Wis** 12 (+6)
Con 14 (+7) **Int** 10 (+5) **Cha** 14 (+7)

TACTICS

During Combat A poisonbarb hamatula often begins combat with a *poisonbarb tackle*, and proceeds to attack with *poisonbarb mauling* until its foe dies or escapes. Cruel and malicious, they attack a foe until dead or the poisonbarb hamatula is bloodied, at which point they use *devilish transposition* to exchange places with a less wounded devil.

A greedfire kyton batters its enemies with its chains of sharpened gold, silver, and platinum coins, using *bound by gold* to restrain potent foes that close with or mark it. *Flailing feint* permits it to shift before and after an attack, and when working in groups, one greedfire kyton will often restrain a foe while the others use *doubledown* and *unquenchable bloodthirst* to maximum advantage.

Morale Intent on utilizing the forge for nefarious purposes, this party refuses to retreat as long as the *Teardrop of Grajava* remains intact, attacking until destroyed.

DEVELOPMENT

The Mammonites try to prevent any PC from reaching the altar-forge. If one PC is incapacitated, they attempt to ransom that PC's life for the *Teardrop of Grajava*. If the PCs agree, the Mammonites leave the helpless PC unharmed but return to the Heartsblood Forge with their prize. Recovering the *Teardrop of Grajava* is outside the scope of this adventure; see *Heartsblood Forge* for more information on the Heartsblood Forge.

A PC can sacrifice the *Teardrop of Grajava* as a standard action by breaking it either with a held weapon while it rests on the altar-forge or by striking the *Teardrop of Grajava* against the altar-forge itself. The PC may also attempt to shatter the *Teardrop of Grajava* against the altar-forge by throwing the gem at it. In that case, the PC must make a ranged attack against the altar-forge (AC 2). The *Teardrop of Grajava* has a range increment of 10 ft. If this attack fails, randomly determine where the *Teardrop of Grajava* lands. As a divine relic, it is impervious to damage from falling, lava, or other environmental hazards, but as it was meant to be broken on the altar-forge, it does so if the PC's aim strikes true.

If the PCs sacrifice the *Teardrop of Grajava*, the human cultists retreat and return to their base in the Heartsblood Forge, leaving all the devils behind to punish the PCs for their selflessness. If the PCs leave the room with the *Teardrop of Grajava*, the Mammonites remain to guard the altar-forge.

Concluding the Adventure

If the PCs sacrifice the *Teardrop of Grajava*, it shatters in a rapidly expanding sphere of cerulean light. As this sphere passes through Mount Rygar, visible to all within the Golden Citadel, the magical light purges the unmined orichalcum of Mammon's curse. Mined ore is outside the influence of the Spirit of the Mountain and, so, is unaffected. All creatures afflicted with gold fever are cured completely, although they are subject to re-infection by cursed ore. Goldveined creatures are unaffected.

Finally, this sacrifice helps the PCs in their future dealings with the Spirit of the Mountain and in their final conflict with the Mammonites. The change in the unmined ore awakens the Spirit of the Mountain.

As a reward for their sacrifice, each PC gains Volund's Boon—a permanent inherent +1 increase in an ability score of his choice. PCs who died in the final battle in the Forge of the Fire Blessing are returned to life through the equivalent of a Raise Dead ritual, but they do not receive the ability boost. Interpret this reward in the way most favorable to the PCs—for instance, if a PC gains Volund's Boon but later dies in the combat, allow the player to choose between keeping the ability boost and gaining the instantaneous effects of a Raise Dead ritual.

If the PCs do not sacrifice the *Teardrop of Grajava*, they have other opportunities to do so, although they forever lose their chance at Volund's Boon. The sacrifice of the *Teardrop of Grajava* must occur on an altar holy to Volund within Mount Rygar; such altars are located in the Forge of the Fire Blessing, the Ash Chapel in *Deeper Darkness*, and the Prime Anvils in *Heartsblood Forge* (page 178). The wielder of the *Teardrop of Grajava* will know these altars for what they are. The greed of the PCs' choice (or the victory of the Mammonite cultists, if the PCs were prevented from sacrificing the *Teardrop of Grajava*) resonates in the corrupt ore, and the Spirit of the Mountain begins to awaken.

In either case, the actions of the PCs awaken the Spirit of the Mountain. Allow the party time to rest and heal (but not more than 12 hours). Afterward, the walls of the Golden Citadel begin to mutter in Primordial, "The curse, the curse!" Soon thereafter, the Spirit of the Mountain cries out and Mount Rygar shakes. *Deeper Darkness* has begun.

WHAT SURVIVES THE EARTHQUAKE?

If the *Teardrop of Grajava* still exists, the Forge of the Fire Blessing should survive the earthquake. The chapter house and Sanctum of Assaying only need to survive if the PCs missed some important information located therein. Rabscuttle has a role in *The Grand Lodge of the Old Masters*, so he should survive the devastation.

DEEPER DARKNESS

AN ADVENTURE FOR FOUR 10TH-LEVEL CHARACTERS

by TIM and EILEEN CONNORS and BEN MCFARLAND

with LUTZ HOFMANN, RICHARD GREEN, and SCOTT HALL

Monster design assistance from TIM NICKEL, BRETT MCLEAN, and DAN VOYCE

Background

The Spirit of the Mountain still thinks of itself as the benevolent spirit it once was. It tells itself that the world depends on it to quarantine Mammon's cursed gold, but this old motivation died long ago. The devil's curse has snaked through the mountain's veins and twisted the spirit's soul. Greed, not benevolence, drives the Spirit of the Mountain to contain the corrupted gold, and it suffers no one to escape the mountain with even an ounce of its precious metal. For what the Spirit of the Mountain calls the "greater good," everyone in the Halls of the Mountain King must perish.

Summary

Desperate to contain the corrupted gold, the enraged mountain spirit rumbles to life. The polished ceilings of the upper halls crash to the floor in great shattering chunks, burying gold-rushers, crushing supplies, and trapping everyone inside the ancient dwarven citadel. Explosive gases rise through newly opened rifts and fill the halls from bottom to top. A sustained screech echoes from the mountain's belly as the water-driven Shank that distributes power and circulates air grinds to a halt.

The entombed dare not dig out of the mountain for fear that a spark from a glancing pick could ignite the collected gas and incinerate everyone. To get the air flowing and the gases dispelled, the PCs must brave the deeper darkness and repair the Shank. The earthquake collapsed the main tunnel to the Shank, but the Illuminated Brothers describe a dangerous alternative route.

The PCs must take the Great Stair to the long-abandoned royal residences. In this massive complex, forsaken and their dogmole juggernauts patrol the darkness. At the Ash Chapel of Volund, slaves of the forsaken, a curtain of lava, and a test of Volund stand between the PCs and the entrance to the royal crypts.

In the catacombs of the dwarven kings, granitewyrms spring from holes like hot bullets and xorns glide under the PCs' feet. On the scrimshawed skeletons of Illuminated Brothers, the PCs discover an alternative way out of the mountain and a secret shame of the brotherhood.

As the PCs descend farther, hewn halls give way to natural caverns. Deep in the mountain, water rages past a waterwheel that the earthquake disconnected from the 100 ft. tall oak Shank. Before the PCs can turn the massive water gate to divert the flow long enough to repair the connection, the Spirit of the Mountain takes one final step to stop them. The Shank's support structure, wooden catwalks, and steel scaffolding rip from the walls and transform into a colossal, possessed bipedal construct that swings massive chains and log-sized pipes at the PCs.

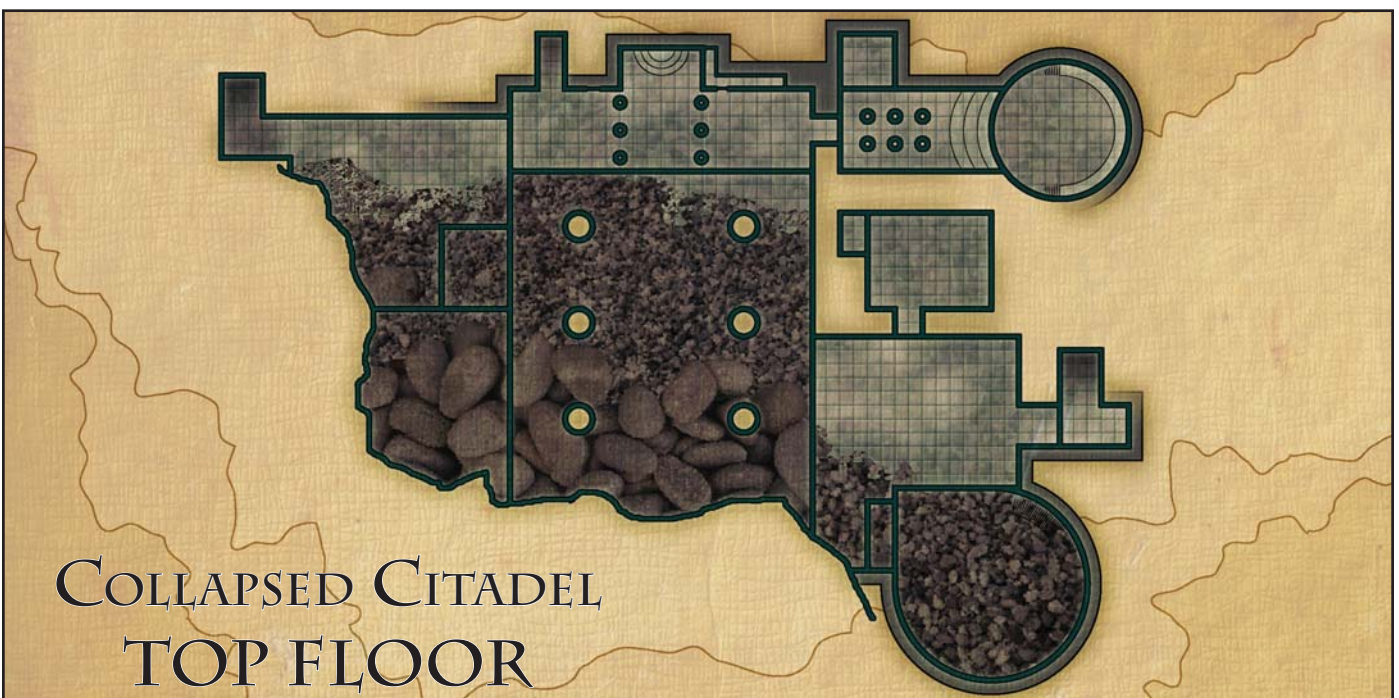
PART I

The Upper Halls

After the *Eye of Grajava* adventure, the PCs likely return to the upper halls. This adventure assumes the PCs are in the Great Hall in the topmost hold when the quake hits. Give them the opportunity to rest and recover their resources before bringing down the ceiling. The PCs have few opportunities to rest without consequence during the course of this demanding adventure.

The encounter begins with shudders and groans from the living stone of Mount Rygar. (See map for safe points.) At the beginning of each round, select a PC. The quake (hazard) attacks the square that PC begins the round in. The Spirit of the Mountain invested some of its power into the mephits, making them immune to the attacks of the hazards.

Roll for initiative as the mountain attacks.



11TH LEVEL ENCOUNTER

- 4 PCs (2,400 XP) • 2 dust mephits, 2 earth mephits, falling ceiling (hazard), quake (hazard)
- 5 PCs (3,200 XP) • 3 dust mephits, 3 earth mephits, falling ceiling (hazard), quake (hazard)
- 6 PCs (3,600 XP) • 3 dust mephits, 4 earth mephits, falling ceiling (hazard), quake (hazard)

THE QUAKE

LEVEL 10 LURKER (Hazard XP 500)

A deep rumble rises from the bowels of the mountain. The flagstones of the upper halls shake, grate, and skew upward. Dust and small rocks fall, structures collapse, and frightened people are thrown off their feet. Suddenly, the violence of the tremor crescendos and a massive earthquake shakes the mountain. Great cracks snake up the walls and columns, and sections of the citadel's polished ceilings crash to the floor in great shattering chunks. Throughout the upper halls, refugees scream, scurry, and fall as the columns crumble, shear, and collapse.

Hazard The quake (hazard) causes the ceiling to fall in on the occupants of the Great Hall

Perception

Characters can't use Perception to detect this hazard

Initiative +6

Trigger The trigger for the quake (hazard) is timed and starts at the GM's discretion. When triggered, the quake (hazard) rolls initiative, and between the trigger and its attack, characters in the area know that an earthquake is beginning. On its initiative, it attacks the randomly selected square where a PC within the Great Hall began their turn.

Standard Action Close burst 4

Targets All creatures in burst

Attack +13 vs. Reflex

Hit 4d10 + 5 damage, and the PC is restrained (save ends)

Miss Half damage

Effect The burst area becomes difficult terrain

Sustain Standard The quake continues attacking each round until the mephits are killed, targeting the starting square of a different player character in the Great Hall

Countermeasures

- A DC 29 Dungeoneering check as a minor action determines the square the trap attacks on its next turn.
- A DC 21 Perception check as a minor action identifies a safe area under a doorway or beside a raised area, a character in this spot before the quake (hazard) attacks again gains a +4 bonus to Reflex defense.

DROPPING CEILING

LEVEL 7 BLASTER (Hazard XP 300)

Hazard After the quake (hazard) and during each of the next 5 rounds, the ceiling screeches, drops a few feet before catching again, and threatens to fall to the flagstones; it attacks all PCs in the Great Hall

Perception

No check is required to detect this hazard

Trigger The dropping ceiling starts at the GM's discretion as the PCs stagger to their feet after the initial earthquake. When a creature enters the room or begins his turn in the Great Hall, the ceiling makes an attack.

Opportunity Action

Melee

Attack +12 vs. Reflex

Hit 1d8 + 5 damage (3d8 + 5 on round 5+)

Miss Half damage

Effect The burst area becomes difficult terrain

Sustain Standard The ceiling sags before it collapses entirely on the death of the mephits.

Countermeasures

- A DC 29 Dungeoneering check anticipates when the ceiling will slip again and the character takes half damage from its attack (no damage if it misses).

RAVENOUS EARTH MEPHIT LEVEL 9 CONTROLLER

SMALL NATURAL HUMANOID

XP 400

Initiative +3 **Senses** Perception +4; darkvision

hp 97 **Bloodied** 48

AC 23 **Fortitude** 23 **Reflex** 19 **Will** 21

Resist 5 acid

Speed 6, 8 fly (hover)

[mba] **Talus Fist** (standard; at-will)

+14 vs. AC; 1d8 + 5 damage

[a] **Earth's Embrace** (standard; recharge when bloodied)

Area burst 2 within 7; +11 vs. Reflex; 2d10 + 3 and target is immobilized (save ends)

[c] **Avalanche Scream** (standard; recharge on 5, 6)

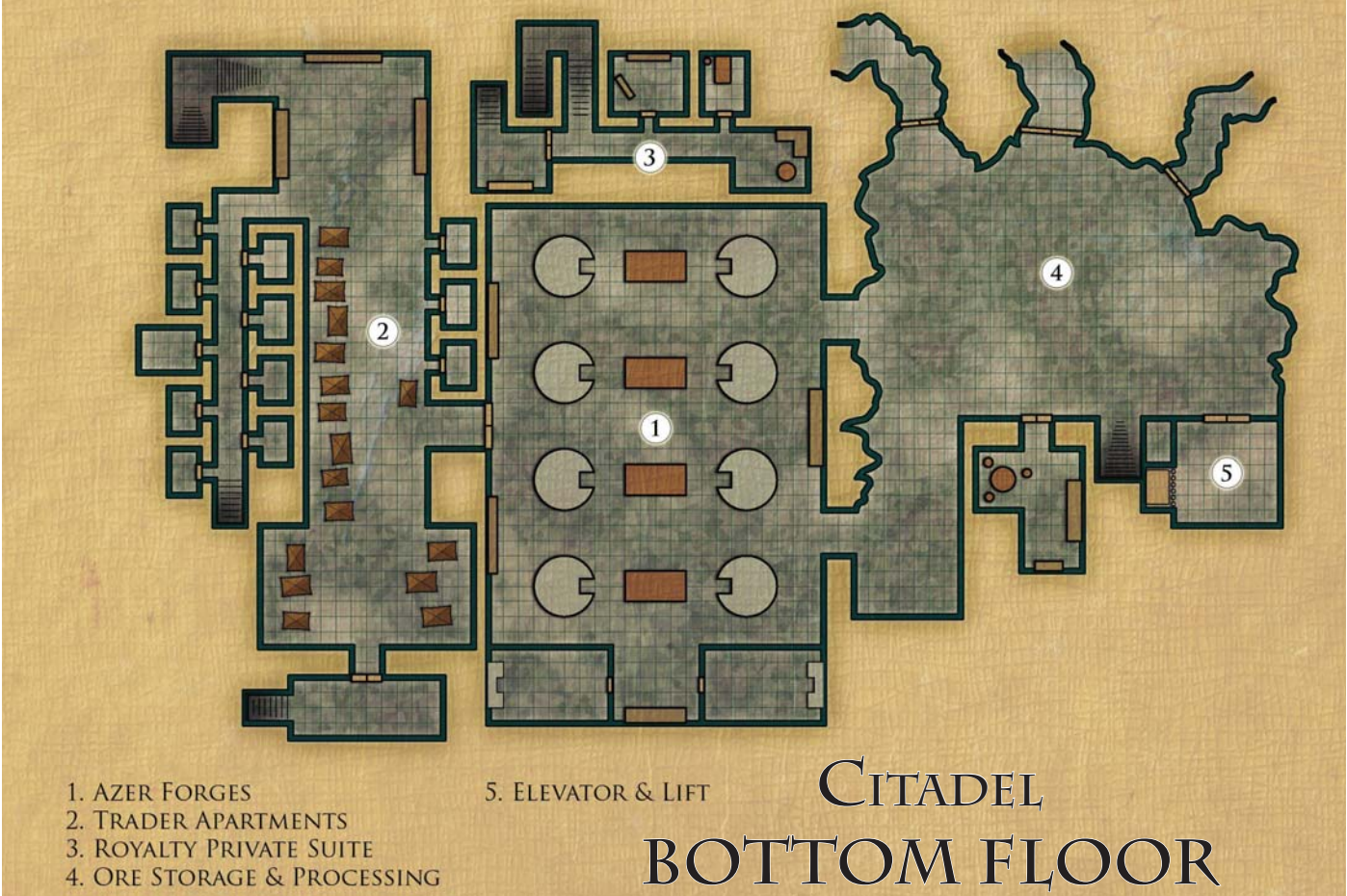
Close blast 3; +11 vs. Fortitude; 2d8 + 5 damage, and target is slowed (save ends)

Alignment evil **Languages** Dwarven, Primordial

Skills Athletics +12, Dungeoneering +8, Stealth +8

Str 17 (+7) **Dex** 8 (+3) **Wis** 11 (+4)

Con 13 (+5) **Int** 6 (+2) **Cha** 15 (+6)



SCOURING DUST MEPHIT LEVEL 9 ARTILLERY

SMALL ELEMENTAL HUMANOID (EARTH) XP 400

Initiative +7 **Senses** Perception +9; darkvision**hp** 70 **Bloodied** 35**AC** 21 **Fortitude** 19 **Reflex** 23 **Will** 20**Resist** 5 acid**Speed** 6 (earth walk), fly 8 (hover)**[mba]** **Obsidian Claws** (standard; at-will)

+16 vs. AC; 1d8 + 5 damage

[a] **Flaying Whirlwind** (standard; recharge when bloodied)♦ **Acid**

Area burst 2 within 7; +12 vs. Reflex; 3d8 + 5 acid damage

[c] **Howling Sandblast** (standard; recharge on 5, 6) ♦ **Thunder**

Close blast 3; +12 vs. Fortitude; 2d8 + 5 thunder damage, and target is pushed 2 squares

Alignment evil **Languages** Dwarven, Primordial**Skills** Dungeoneering +7, Perception +9, Stealth +12**Str** 10 (+4) **Dex** 17 (+7) **Wis** 11 (+4)**Con** 10 (+4) **Int** 6 (+2) **Cha** 15 (+6)**DEVELOPMENT**

The quake (hazard) and the mephits' attack lasts for mere seconds, but it is more than enough to cause destruction throughout the Great Hall. Fallen debris extinguishes all natural fires, leaving the Great Hall in dust-choked darkness. The muffled screams of the buried fill the air.

When the ceiling collapses entirely, the PCs and other survivors find themselves lying prone in a maze of crawlspaces and fallen pillars. Massive ceiling slabs lie just inches above their heads. If the PCs shed light or can see in the dark, read or paraphrase the following. Otherwise, describe just the sounds of the falling ceiling and the echoes of frightened screams:

What was once a soaring ceiling is now a mosaic of cracked stone slabs precariously balanced 30 ft. from the ground by pillars leaning against each other at haphazard angles. Every few seconds, the tremendous overhead weight kicks a pillar aside and the whole ceiling slips a few feet further down before catching again. Everywhere, screams of pain and calls for help issue from billowing clouds of dust.

All told, the earthquake kills half of the refugees and obliterates 3/4 of the already meager food and water supplies. Hundreds of tons of rubble block the exits from the citadel, making areas of the upper halls impassable. Everyone is now trapped inside the mountain. The race to rescue skill challenge begins.

THE RACE TO RESCUE

In addition to a dozen wounded refugees yelling for help, fallen stone blocks pin five major NPCs and an iron support rod has sheared off the leg of a sixth. Choose eight NPCs that the PCs know and can identify by sight or voice. Each PC spots 1d2 of these major NPCs and 1d3 minor NPCs and must choose whom to attend to first. It takes 1 round to reach an NPC and attempt to free the trapped individual. PCs who rescue any NPCs gain a +5 bonus on Diplomacy checks when interacting with that NPC in the future.

A major NPC may also loan the party a magic item or provide a +3 bonus to future Bluff, Diplomacy, and Intimidate checks with other NPCs in the citadel as a reward for rescue. PCs who ignore all NPCs never forget this moment, for the NPCs' beseeching faces and outstretched arms haunt the PCs' dreams (and possibly their waking lives).

RACE TO RESCUE**SKILL CHALLENGE (1,800 XP)**

Setup You must rescue as many people as possible. During each of the next 5 rounds, or until three failures occur, the ceiling screeches and drops a few feet before catching again, imminently threatening to fall to the flagstones.

Level 11th level challenge

Complexity 3 (requires 8 successes before 3 failures)

Primary Skills Acrobatics, Athletics, Dungeoneering, Endurance, Heal, Nature, Perception, Thievery

Acrobatics or Athletics (DC 21)—You squeeze through the spaces made by fallen beams and rock slabs to pull a victim free and to a healer (each failure contributes toward total skill challenge failure as an NPC dies from injuries sustained during the collapse.)

Dungeoneering (DC 20)—You shore and reinforce unstable cavern locations to help the NPC return to safety (each failure contributes toward total skill challenge failure as an NPC dies from injuries sustained during the collapse before you can help.)

Endurance (DC 18)—You call up your reserves of strength, holding open a gap to permit a trapped individual the room needed to escape (each failure counts towards total challenge failure as an NPC dies from injuries sustained during the collapse.)

Heal (DC 18)—You treat the injuries sustained by a trapped individual as other workers dig at the debris (every 2 failures contribute a failure toward total skill challenge failure and an NPC dies from his injuries.)

Nature (DC 18)—You shore up unstable cavern locations to permit the NPC return to safety (every 2 failures contribute a failure toward total skill challenge failure as an NPC dies from injuries sustained during the collapse.)

Perception (DC 18)—You spot an unconscious and previously unlocated victim, assisting the NPC back to safety (every 2 failures contribute a failure toward total skill challenge failure as an NPC dies.)

Thievery (DC 21)—Using your knowledge of traps, moving gears, and shifting devices, you reinforce unstable cavern locations to permit the NPC to escape to safety (every 2 failures contribute a failure toward total skill challenge failure as an NPC dies.)

Special—Up to two characters may assist a trained character's skill attempt

Success You pull all the entrapped from the destruction and lead the group back to the gathered survivors

Failure The ceiling collapses completely as another inhabitant of the citadel pulls the rescuers clear of the falling debris; all those remaining trapped beneath the wreckage die

DEVELOPMENT

All that remains of the once-proud Great Hall is a squat maze of crawlspaces alongside fallen pillars and under massive ceiling slabs. Vision extends a mere 5 ft. in these dust-choked warrens. Survivors more than 3 ft. tall crawl forward on bloody elbows, inching over dense rubble and the broken torsos of the crushed.

If the PCs were separated when the ceiling collapsed completely, they are in separate crawlspaces. They may call to each other, but among all the screaming, it takes a successful DC 19 Perception check to communicate a short sentence. Assume that each PC crawls 8 squares to the juncture at the open doors of area 4. In this damaged but intact area surviving refugees gather to nurse their wounds, weep for the dead, and pray for deliverance. The doors to area 9 are locked, and the stairs in the northeast corner of area 8 are behind rubble that can be removed by hand with an hour's work.

As the PCs and other survivors crawl through the fallen pillar maze to safety, they soon discover that the mountain still threatens their continued existence.

TREASURE

Regardless of success or failure, a searching PC discovers a level 9 *mnemonic fob* around the neck of a crushed dwarf, five dusty *potions of healing* miraculously preserved in a satchel, and a +3 *rod of corruption*. This counts as two treasure parcels.

NEW ITEM

Mnemonic Fob

This fob is fashioned like a stylized pillar wreathed in flame with an eye at its center.

Wondrous Item

Lvl 4 840 gp; **Lvl 9** 4,200 gp; **Lvl 14** 21,000 gp.

Power (Daily): As a minor action, you spend an action point and activate this fob to immediately use a previously used encounter or daily power of equal or lesser level than the fob.

EXPLOSIVE GAS

Wherever the PCs exit the pillar maze (areas 2, 6, and 8 of the topmost hold), they enter an area where the ceiling held firm, although its floor did not fare so well. Explosive gases rise through newly opened rifts and slowly fill the upper halls.

Sensing the humanoids still alive in the halls, the Spirit of the Mountain rages again, and a second tremor rocks the mountain's core. A sustained screech echoes from the mountain's belly where the water-driven Shank that distributes power and circulates air grinds to a halt. If the Spirit of the Mountain cannot crush the interlopers, it intends to suffocate them instead.

Given time, the entombed could dig out, but dwarf penitents (named for their constant crawling when burning dangerous gases from the heights of chambers) warn the huddled survivors that a spark from a glancing pick could ignite the collected gas and incinerate everyone. The dwarves legislate an immediate fire ban, and in the darkness, surviving humans begin to panic.

After a quick discussion, the remaining dwarves and humans with any degree of authority quickly discuss their options. They conclude that there is one way out of this dilemma: to get the air flowing and the gases dispelled, someone (and at this point, they unanimously indicate the PCs) must brave the deeper darkness and repair the Shank. And they must hurry. It is only a matter of time before the refugees are squeezed between gas filling the upper halls and twisted creatures rising from the lower ones.

Allow the PCs to discuss their options with the NPCs and to try to uncover what information they can. Diplomacy or Streetwise checks can reveal a bounty of information. PCs who attempted to help the refugees gain an automatic +5 bonus on their checks (making some information all but automatic), +2 for each NPC they rescued.

TABLE 4-1: DIPLOMACY OR STREETWISE

DC	Result
5	Deep in the mountain, a subterranean water wheel turns a massive, vertical, metal-banded, oak Shank that distributes power throughout the halls. Various levels of the citadel plug into its power to drive billows, pump water, power fountains, and even play carillon music. All levels require it to circulate air.
10	Dwarven penitents estimate that the upper halls have no more than 48 hours of breathable air. After that, short-term survival depends on marshalling the refugees deeper into the mountain.
13	Scouts report that the quake destroyed the path to the Shank (the leftmost stair of area 4 on the second hall level), but rumor has it that the Illuminated Brotherhood knows an alternative route.
18	Despite reproachful stares from his brethren, a frightened Illuminated Brother named Sigil divulges the alternative route to the Shank: down the Great Stair, into the abandoned Royal residences, under the Ash Chapel of Volund, through the royal crypts, and into the caverns below the citadel.
22	Long ago, a creature burrowed from the caverns into the burial chamber of six revered Illuminated Brothers. The creature's tunnel connected the royal crypts to the caverns below the citadel. Of the six bodies, five were subsequently moved to an undefiled resting place within the royal crypts. The sixth brother was lost to the creature.
26	The bones of the six brothers are said to "collect the hidden shame of the brotherhood."

Members of the Illuminated Brotherhood attempt to solicit promises from the PCs to never reveal any secrets discovered in the crypts. If the PCs request a guide to the Shank, the near-panicked, non-combatant Brother Sigil reluctantly volunteers.

If the PCs request a map, Sigil draws a crude map of the royal residences—a square with Xs marking the locations of the Great Stair and the Ash Chapel of Volund. Centuries have passed since any Illuminated Brother knew how to enter the royal crypts, what the layout of the royal crypts is, or how to enter the caverns. All that remains is Sigil's fragmented knowledge that these areas once connected.

KEEPING THE PRESSURE ON

If the PCs dally, perhaps to rest before heading for the Shank, antsy dwarves periodically urge them into action. Even if the PCs threaten them, they return with thinly veiled excuses. An old man approaches the PCs to pray over his saviors. A young woman comes to show the face of a child whose life depends on the PCs' success. All remind the PCs of the consequences of inaction and procrastination with as much politeness as they can muster.

Before the PCs leave, a man named Roen approaches with swollen eyes and a curious glass. Silver filigree surrounds the glass's mirrored surface, and when the PCs gaze upon it, it ripples into a dark scene featuring a crushed body. Roen tells them that the image is always that of the last possessor of the glass. Presently, it shows his dead wife in the Great Hall, and he can bear to look upon it no more. He offers to loan the glass to the PCs, so they can see him while they are away to monitor the refugees' situation.

If they take it, the image of the crushed wife ripples into an image of Roen bursting into tears. Treat the glass as a *crystal ball of spying* (level 10) whose subject is always the previous creature to possess the glass willingly. The current possessor cannot hear the subject and cannot see a subject on another plane. In 12 hours, the glass shows Roen and the refugees coughing through cloth handkerchiefs in the topmost hold. In 24 hours, it shows Roen and other refugees descending the lift to the second hall level. In 48 hours, it shows Roen helping lame and sickened refugees down the steps leading to the lower halls. In 50 hours, the glass shows images in flashes: silent, close-up screams; forsaken with cruel weapons, and, finally, Roen's dead face in the dirt.

With just 48 hours to repair the Shank, the PCs have a budget of two rests for this adventure. If your party consists of six or more PCs, consider halving the timeline and giving them just one rest before the second hall level fills with gas. During all rest periods, the grind of shifting stone, the rising smell of sulfur, and the sound of distant liftgas explosions remind the PCs that while they recover, the sands of the hourglass drain.

PART II The Royal Residences

To reach the royal crypts, the PCs must descend the Great Stair, enter the royal residences (area A), and make their way to the Ash Chapel of Volund (area E). They might have a dwarf guide or a hand-drawn map of the royal residences, and this is critical because the entire pitch-black complex is overrun by forsaken.

INTO THE DARKNESS

The royal residences are a long-abandoned, long-forgotten masterpiece of negative space. Everywhere that there is now air, there was once rock. A century of labor carted it all away, and what remains—the floor, the 60-ft. ceilings, the floor-to-ceiling stone buildings, the pillars, the fountain bases—is

HALLS OF THE MOUNTAIN KING
ROYAL RESIDENCES



- FETAL SAVANT SHRIEKER
- DOGWOLF PATROLS (TRAVEL CLOCKWISE)
- FORSAKEN GANGS

- A. THE GREAT STAIR
- B. UNDERMOUNTAIN SQUARE
- C. ROYAL BALCONIES
- D. THE FORSAKEN POOL
- E. THE ASH CHAPEL OF VOIUND

all one continuous stone. Even the extravagantly carved stone furniture inside the buildings is an extension of the walls and floor. All buildings stand three stories tall, feature complex facades, and offer arched entrances with fluted legs. Windows and second story balconies are common. If you wish to increase the difficulty of the adventure, the forsaken utilize secret tunnels above the ceiling or below the floor to pass between adjacent buildings.

Condensation and slime cling to the walls and lie in thin sheets on the floor, making running hazardous (DC 13 Acrobatics check every time a creature uses its full speed in a move action or it falls prone). Disturbing sounds—hordes of squeaking bats, screaming children, tortured cries—created by the forsaken settlement's population constantly echo through the darkness.

DUNGEON DENIZENS

Run this section of the adventure in a freeform style. Treat the royal residences as one giant room where distance, darkness, and blocked lines of sight separate the PCs from a fractured horde of adversaries. The royal residences map indicates the initial positions of all dogmole patrols, forsaken gangs, and savant shriekers. Each of these groups' stat blocks lists their tactics both before and during battle.

A strategy of stealth and sniping repays PCs who pass through the royal residences. PCs who do not know where the crypt is, who require light, or who do not move with stealth encounter resistance. Every time a dogmole patrol or forsaken gang detects and engages the PCs, a 9th level battle begins. Unless the PCs dispatch these foes quickly and make a clean break, another nearby 8th or 9th level patrol or gang arrives and joins the fray.

Such reinforcements arrive every 1d4+3 rounds, up to three times per battle, thereby escalating each fight to a maximum of 15th level. More groups do not join the battle because they consider the PCs doomed or because they entertain a petty rivalry with forsaken already engaging the intruders.

FORSAKEN RIVALS

Two rival forsaken groups vie for control of the royal residences. The Red Eyes have scooped phosphorescent pus from fire beetle glands and used it to paint overlarge red eyes upon their faces. This gives them a +1 circumstance bonus on Intimidate checks but frequently reveals their position in the darkness (granting a +2 bonus on Perception checks made to see them). They painted the same false eyes throughout the complex—on balconies, on walls behind open doorways, on pillars, and elsewhere—to frighten rivals and disguise their dwindling numbers. Each Red Eye member fights with an insane ferocity to prove to his

comrades that he deserves to replace their dead leader.

The Red Eyes' rivals have no name—only a common disease and a mad affinity. Covering the skin of their face, chest, and arms are hundreds of bloody potholes, each containing a wriggling botfly larva. Atop these, dozens of bats perch, jostle, and stretch their wings like some hellish black leather coat. In a dead quiet room, the sound of the bats' tongues eating worms and licking blood sometimes give away the host forsaken's position (granting a +2 bonus on Perception checks made to hear them). What twisted ecstasy these grinning forsaken gain from their pets is quite unknowable to the sane observer, but a symbiosis does evidence itself. As a full-round action, a bat-coated forsaken can throw his bats into the face of a foe up to 10 ft. away (Ranged 2; +4 vs. Reflex; target is blinded (save ends)). These forsaken use trained bats to give away a false position and encourage their quarry into an ambush.

The PCs are equally likely to encounter Red Eyes or their bat-coated rivals. Neither group ever reinforces the other. To liven up an encounter, have one group attack all combatants in a battle between its rivals and the PCs.

9TH LEVEL ENCOUNTER

- 4 PCs (1,614 XP) • 1 dogmole juggernaut, 1 forsaken deathspittle bombardier, 1 forsaken marksman, 3 forsaken reaver minions
- 5 PCs (2,040 XP) • 1 dogmole juggernaut, 1 forsaken ambusher, 1 forsaken deathspittle bombardier, 1 forsaken marksman, 5 forsaken reaver minions
- 6 PCs (2,364 XP) • 1 dogmole juggernaut, 2 forsaken ambusher, 1 forsaken deathspittle bombardier, 2 forsaken marksmen, 3 forsaken reaver minions

FORSAKEN GANG

8TH LEVEL ENCOUNTER

- 4 PCs (1,352 XP) • 1 forsaken ambusher, 1 forsaken deathspittle bombardier, 1 forsaken marksman, 4 forsaken reaver minions
- 5 PCs (1,764 XP) • 2 forsaken ambushers, 1 forsaken deathspittle bombardier, 2 forsaken marksmen, 3 forsaken reaver minions
- 6 PCs (2,352 XP) • 2 forsaken ambushers, 2 forsaken deathspittle bombardiers, 2 forsaken marksmen, 4 forsaken reaver minions

DOGMOLE JUGGERNAUT LEVEL 7 ELITE BRUTE

LARGE NATURAL BEAST (BLIND, MOUNT) XP 600

Initiative +5 Senses Perception +8; blindsight 20
Scent aura 2; dogmoles automatically detect invisible enemies and those with concealment (including total concealment) within their aura

hp 186 Bloodied 93

Regeneration 5

AC 21 Fortitude 27 Reflex 20 Will 18

Speed 6, burrow 4

Action Points 1

[mba] **Gouging Teeth** (standard; at-will)

+11 vs. AC; 2d8 + 6 damage

[m] **Ferocious Charge** (standard; usable only when charging; at will)

+9 vs. Ref; 4d8 + 4 damage; target pushed 2 squares and knocked prone; the dogmole may continue its move if it has any remaining this turn, but it must finish its move in an unoccupied square

[m] **Rabid Rebuke** (immediate reaction, when hit by melee attack; at will)

The dogmole makes a basic melee attack against whoever hit it

[c] **Forsaken Frenzy** (standard; recharge on 5, 6)

Close burst 1; targets enemies; +9 vs. Armor Class; 4d8 + 5 damage

Murderous Frenzy

The dogmole gains 1 action point the first time it reduces an enemy to 0 hp in an encounter

Alignment unaligned Languages —

Str 21 (+8) Dex 14 (+5) Wis 10 (+3)

Con 18 (+7) Int 2 (-1) Cha 10 (+3)

FORSAKEN AMBUSER

LEVEL 6 LURKER

SMALL NATURAL HUMANOID

XP 250

Initiative +11 Senses Perception +11; darkvision

hp 58 Bloodied 29

AC 20 Fortitude 18 Reflex 19 Will 18

Speed 6

[mba] **Short sword** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Poison, Weapon**

• +11 vs. AC; 1d6 + 4 plus 1d6 poison

[c] **Darkness Cloud** (minor; recharge on 5, 6) ♦ **Zone**

Close burst 1; creates a zone of darkness that lasts until the end of the forsaken's next turn; the zone provides full cover and blinds any creature in the cloud; the forsaken can see through the cloud normally

Cruel Blow

The forsaken deals an extra +1d6 damage if it has combat advantage

Alignment chaotic evil Languages Deep Speech, Dwarven

Skills Athletics +9, Stealth +12

Str 12 (+4) Dex 19 (+7) Wis 16(+6)

Con 16 (+6) Int 13(+4) Cha 14(+5)

Equipment hide armor, short sword



FORSAKEN DEATHSPITTLE BOMBARDIER
LEVEL 10 ARTILLERY

SMALL NATURAL HUMANOID XP 500

Initiative +10 **Senses** Perception +11; darkvision, low-light vision

hp 84 **Bloodied** 42

AC 22 **Fortitude** 22 **Reflex** 20 **Will** 24

Resist 5 psychic

Speed 5

[mba] **Short sword** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

+17 vs. AC; 1d8 + 5 damage

[m] **Desperate Cover** (immediate interrupt, when hit by a ranged, melee, or close attack; encounter) ♦ **Weapon**

The forsaken gains resist 10 against the attack

[a] **Murderous Bombard** (standard; recharge on 6) ♦ **Charm, Poison, Weapon**

Area wall 8 within 8; +13 vs. Will; 2d6 + 5 poison damage and ongoing 5 poison damage, and target is dominated (save ends)

[a] **Sloughide Bombard** (standard; recharge on 5, 6) ♦ **Acid, Poison, Weapon**

Area wall 8 within 8; +13 vs. Reflex; 3d6 + 5 acid damage, and target is immobilized until end of forsaken's next turn

[a] **Weeping Bombard** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Poison, Weapon**

Area wall 8 within 8; +13 vs. Fortitude; 2d6 + 5 poison damage, and target is slowed (save ends); if target is already slowed, target becomes weakened (save ends)

Clarity of Madness

The forsaken cannot be dominated

Cruel Blow

The forsaken deals an extra +1d6 damage if it has combat advantage

Alignment chaotic evil **Languages** Deep Speech, Dwarven

Skills Athletics +12, Dungeoneering +12, Perception +11

Str 15 (+7) **Dex** 21 (+10) **Wis** 13 (+6)

Con 18 (+9) **Int** 15 (+7) **Cha** 18 (+9)

Equipment chainmail, forsaken tower bombard (with 3 each of *murderous*, *sloughide*, and *weeping* canisters), shortsword

FORSAKEN MARKSMAN **LEVEL 6 ARTILLERY**
SMALL NATURAL HUMANOID XP 250

Initiative +7 **Senses** Perception +10; darkvision

hp 60 **Bloodied** 30

AC 18 **Fortitude** 19 **Reflex** 19 **Will** 18

Resist 5 psychic

Speed 5

[mba] **Shortsword** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

+11 vs. AC; 1d6 + 1 damage

[rba] **Crossbow** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Poison, Weapon**

Ranged 10/20; +13 vs. AC; 1d8 + 4 and 1d6 poison damage

[r] **Paralytic Bolt** (standard; recharge on 5, 6) ♦ **Poison, Weapon**

Ranged 10/20; +11 vs. Fortitude; 1d8 + 5, and target is immobilized (save ends); if target is already immobilized, target is instead stunned (save ends)

[r] **Repeating Crossbow** (standard; requires at least 2 bolts in clip; recharge on 5, 6) ♦ **Poison, Weapon**

The forsaken makes two *crossbow* attacks

Cruel Blow

The forsaken deals an extra +1d6 damage if it has combat advantage

Alignment chaotic evil **Languages** Deep Speech, Dwarven

Skills Athletics +9, Dungeoneering +9, Perception +10, Stealth +12

Str 12 (+4) **Dex** 19 (+7) **Wis** 14 (+5)

Con 18 (+7) **Int** 12 (+4) **Cha** 16 (+6)

Equipment hide armor, repeating crossbow (2 clips, 10 bolts each), short sword

FORSAKEN REAVER **LEVEL 8 BRUTE MINION**
SMALL NATURAL HUMANOID XP 88

Initiative +4 **Senses** Perception +8; darkvision, low-light vision
hp 1; a missed attack never damages a minion
AC 20 **Fortitude** 20 **Reflex** 18 **Will** 22
Resist 5 psychic
Speed 5

[mba] **Shortsword** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
+11 vs. AC; 10 damage

[rba] **Crossbow** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Poison, Weapon**
Ranged 10/20; +11 vs. AC; 5 damage plus 5 poison damage

Cruel Blow
The forsaken deals an extra +1d6 damage if it has combat advantage

Alignment chaotic evil **Languages** Deep Speech, Dwarven

Skills Athletics +12, Dungeoneering +9, Perception +8
Str 17 (+7) **Dex** 10 (+4) **Wis** 8 (+3)
Con 16 (+7) **Int** 11 (+4) **Cha** 12 (+5)

Equipment chainmail, light crossbow (20 bolts), shortsword

TACTICS

Before Combat Dogmole patrols move at 6 squares per round and take random turns at intersections. Blindsight allows the dogmole juggernauts to detect any PC within 20 squares.

During Combat Juggernauts attack with the ferocity of rabid animals, beginning with a *ferocious charge*, then a frenzy and bites. Forsaken troops attack as appropriate, trying to maximize their *cruel blow* power.



TACTICS

Before Combat Forsaken gangs (darkvision, Perception +11) initially remain stationary. When they detect a target, they close to melee range, leveraging their Stealth (+4) skill if they believe they remain unseen.

During Combat Forsaken gangs soften enemies with *paralytic bolts* and *bombard* shot if at range but within 6 squares. As they close, the forsaken work to flank foes and focus on bloodied foes—not killing but taking prisoners.

TREASURE

The forsaken carry a sack with 650 gp and three art objects (each one is worth 250 gp):

- a gold seal of a lost dwarf clan
- a silver tankard encrusted with amethysts and lapis lazuli, and
- a gold belt buckle set with emeralds.

SAVANT SHRIEKERS

These bizarre creatures act as living alarms. They do not move from their indicated positions.

FORSAKEN SAVANT SHRIEKER
LEVEL 10 CONTROLLER MINION

TINY NATURAL ANIMATE (PLANT) XP 125

Initiative +5 **Senses** Perception +14; darkvision, low-light vision
hp 1; a missed attack never damages a minion
AC 22 **Fortitude** 20 **Reflex** 23 **Will** 25
Resist 5 psychic
Speed 1, forsaken fetal savants cannot shift

[mba] **Brainbleeder Rebuke** (minor; at-will) ♦ **Psychic**
Reach 2; +14 vs. Will; 1d8 + 5 psychic damage

[c] **Wail from the Utter Black** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Psychic**
Close burst 6; +12 vs. Will; 2d8 + 5 psychic damage, and target is dazed (save ends)

Clarity of Madness
The savant cannot be dominated

Precious Cargo (move; at-will)
Another creature may carry the savant in a specially prepared cage; doing so requires the savant's move action but allows it to move when that creature moves; carrying the cage reduces the bearer's speed by three squares unless otherwise noted

Alignment chaotic evil **Languages** Common, Deep Speech, Dwarven
Skills Arcana +13, Insight +14, Perception +14, Stealth +10
Str 6 (+3) **Dex** 10 (+5) **Wis** 18 (+9)
Con 6 (+3) **Int** 16 (+8) **Cha** 16 (+8)

TACTICS

Before Combat While savant shriekers have outgrown the soul exchange ability they had as derro fetal savants, they still make excellent watchdogs. The forsaken set each caged savant shrieker (darkvision, Perception +14) in a wall nook, where they are considered hidden (Stealth +5). Whenever one detects a PC, it babbles and violently shakes its cage, alerting all dogmole patrols and forsaken gangs within 20 squares of the intruder.

A. THE GREAT STAIR

As the PCs descend the Great Stair, they hear the sounds of screaming children, squeaking bats, and maddened laughs echoing from the royal residences. When they get to the landing, read or paraphrase the following:

The Great Stair reaches a landing where twin statues of 10-ft-tall dwarves in dress armor flank a large open arch. Beyond the arch, a dark complex beckons.

B. UNDERMOUNTAIN SQUARE

Stone buildings surround a central square where two massive pillars, carved to look like well-muscled dwarven forearms, stretch to the ceiling. Their great stone hands hold aloft the bottom half of a stone world—20 squares in diameter—that merges into the ceiling at its equator.

C. ROYAL BALCONIES

Each of these two buildings features numerous windows that face the fountains and pillars of Undermountain Square. The best view, however, can be found from a second-story balcony that cantilevers an incredible 5 squares toward the open square. Viewed from the balcony's railings, a stone hand of the square's forearm pillars appears to offer the privileged spectator the great stone world it holds.

D. THE FORSAKEN POOL

Black water half fills an artificial pool—10 squares by 20 squares. Enormous shelf fungi grow from the sides and reach for the center, where bodies float face down in a field of oily black muck. Two piers extend into the “water” but a rope of intestines blocks passage.

The forsaken frequent this old pool to discard their dead and the unused body parts of torture victims. PCs who probe the pool discover dead forsaken, entrails, and otyugh feet.

The oily black muck that covers most of the pool is a group of oil puddings. They attack anyone who walks on a pier or looks over the pool's edge.

12TH LEVEL ENCOUNTER

- 4 PCs (2,800 XP) • 2 elder oil puddings
- 5 PCs (3,500 XP) • 2 elder oil puddings, 1 greater oil pudding
- 6 PCs (4,200 XP) • 3 elder oil puddings

ELDER OIL PUDDING		LEVEL 12 ELITE BRUTE	
LARGE NATURAL BEAST (OOZE)		XP 1400	
Initiative +9	Senses Perception +7; blindsight 10, tremorsense 10		
hp 302	Bloodied 151		
AC 26	Fortitude 26	Reflex 22	Will 22
Immune gaze; Resist 15 acid; Vulnerability 5 fire			
Saving Throws +2			
Speed 4, climb 4 (spider climb), swim 4			
Action Points 1			
[mba] Fleshmelter Slam (standard; at-will) ♦ Acid			
Reach 2; +15 vs. AC; 2d6 + 5 acid damage			
[m] Consuming Tendril (standard; recharge when first bloodied) ♦ Acid			
Target must be grabbed; +13 vs. Fortitude; 4d8 + 5 acid damage; the pudding regains 37 hp; target escapes after suffering damage			
Miss—Target must escape normally			
[m] Unceasing Hunger (standard; recharge on 5, 6) ♦ Acid			
The pudding may make two <i>fleshmelter slam</i> attacks; if both attacks are against the same target and both hit, the target is grabbed.			
[c] Manslayer Shroud (move; at-will) ♦ Acid			
Close wall 4; +13 vs. AC; 3d6 + 5 acid damage and target is grabbed.			
<i>Sustain minor</i> —The pudding continues its grab, and the target takes 10 acid damage and loses a healing surge; a target with no healing surges instead takes damage equal to its level.			
Miotic Restoration (standard; encounter)			
The elder oil pudding uses a healing surge and regains 75 hp.			
Undaunted Predator			
The pudding ignores difficult terrain and does not provoke opportunity attacks by moving.			
Alignment unaligned		Languages —	
Str 17 (+9)	Dex 16 (+9)	Wis 13 (+7)	
Con 21(+11)	Int 3 (+2)	Cha 3 (+2)	

GREATER OIL PUDDING		LEVEL 12 BRUTE	
LARGE NATURAL BEAST (OOZE)		XP 700	
Initiative +9	Senses Perception +7; blindsight 10, tremorsense 10		
hp 151	Bloodied 75		
AC 24	Fortitude 24	Reflex 22	Will 22
Immune gaze; Resist 15 acid; Vulnerability 5 fire			
Speed 4, climb 4 (spider climb), swim 4			
[mba] Fleshmelter Slam (standard; at-will) ♦ Acid			
Reach 2; +15 vs. AC; 2d6 + 5 acid damage			
[m] Consuming Tendril (standard; encounter) ♦ Acid			
Target must be grabbed; +13 vs. Fortitude; 4d8 + 5 acid damage; the pudding uses a healing surge to regain 37 hp; target escapes after suffering damage.			
Miss—Target must escape normally			
[m] Unceasing Hunger (standard; recharge on 6) ♦ Acid			
The pudding may make two <i>fleshmelter slam</i> attacks; if both attacks are against the same target and both hit, target is grabbed.			
[c] Manslayer Shroud (move; at-will) ♦ Acid			
Close wall 4; +13 vs. AC; 3d6 + 5 acid damage, and target is grabbed			
Sustain standard—The pudding continues its grab and the target takes 10 acid damage and loses a healing surge; a target with no healing surges instead takes damage equal to its level.			
Undaunted Predator			
The pudding ignores difficult terrain and does not provoke opportunity attacks by moving.			
Alignment unaligned		Languages —	
Str 17 (+9)	Dex 16 (+9)	Wis 13 (+7)	
Con 21(+11)	Int 3 (+2)	Cha 3 (+2)	

TACTICS

During Combat The elder pudding flows into the midst of combat with *fleshmelter slams* to a point where it can utilize its *manslayer shroud* to attack many foes. If wounded, it uses its *consuming tendril* on a grabbed foe to replenish itself. If it cannot grab a foe, it resorts to *miotic restoration*.

The greater pudding flows into the midst of combat with *fleshmelter slams* to a point where it can utilize its *manslayer shroud* to attack many foes. If wounded, it uses its *consuming tendril* on a grabbed foe to replenish itself.

E. THE ASH CHAPEL OF VOLUND

The Ash Chapel sits upon a raised platform with steps on all sides. There are no windows. On the north side, a set of great stone double doors stand closed. Inscribed on the doors, above inlaid iron anvils, are the phrases, “Fear not flame” and “Fear not ash.” Metal spikes driven into the floor ensure that the unlocked doors do not open outward as they should. Tortured screams and wailing sobs issue from inside.

Ceremonial ash covers the floor of this once royal chapel. At the far end, a massive altar-forge sits in front of a curtain of magma that drips in viscous chunks from the 60-ft. ceiling. From the center of the room, many wailing dwarf-things rise from the floor. Where once they had arms, only bloody-stumps twitch in shoulder sockets. Thick black thread snakes in and out of their skin, stitching the head, hide, and tentacles of a monstrous abomination over each of their heads and down their backs. The dwarves’ horrified faces look out of gnashing otyugh maws, and they laugh and cry from inside their stitched-skin helmets. As the spiked tentacles of their worn creatures flail, the maddened dwarves beg for mercy and close to attack.

The forsaken weave black thread and foul magic upon their slaves in this once-holy place. If a dwarven refugee with whom the PCs previously interacted went missing from the upper halls, reintroduce him here as a begging otyugh-stitched-slave to increase the horror of this encounter.

12TH LEVEL ENCOUNTER

- 4 PCs (2,800 XP) • 4 otyugh-stitched slave grunts, 4 otyugh-stitched slave stinkers
- 5 PCs (3,500 XP) • 5 otyugh-stitched slave grunts, 5 otyugh-stitched slave stinkers
- 6 PCs (4,200 XP) • 6 otyugh-stitched slave grunts, 6 otyugh-stitched slave stinkers



OTYUGH-STITCHED SLAVE GRUNT
LEVEL 7 SOLDIER

MEDIUM ABERRANT HUMANOID XP 350

Initiative +5 **Senses** Perception +9; darkvision
Oozing Pustules aura 1; terrain within aura is considered difficult

hp 80 **Bloodied** 40
AC 23 **Fortitude** 21 **Reflex** 18 **Will** 18

Immune disease

Speed 6

[mba] **Tentacle** (standard; at-will)

Reach 2; +14 vs. AC; 1d8 + 5 damage, and the target is pulled 1 square and grabbed (escape ends)

[m] **Crazed charge** (standard; usable only with charge; encounter)

The grunt charges and deals an extra 5 damage when it hits with a basic melee attack

[m] **Diseased Bite** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Disease**

+14 vs. AC, 2d6 + 5 damage, and the target contracts filth fever (see MM page 219)

[m] **Pleading Constriction** (move; at-will)

Targets grabbed foe; +12 vs. Fortitude, 1d8 + 5 damage

Alignment unaligned **Languages** Common, Dwarven

Skills Perception +9, Stealth +8

Str 17 (+6) **Dex** 10 (+3) **Wis** 12 (+4)

Con 16 (+6) **Int** 11 (+3) **Cha** 6 (+1)

OTYUGH-STITCHED SLAVE STINKER
LEVEL 7 SOLDIER

MEDIUM ABERRANT HUMANOID XP 350

Initiative +9 **Senses** Perception +11; darkvision
Otyugh Stench aura 1; living enemies in the aura take a -2 penalty to attack rolls (otyugh-stitched slaves are immune)

hp 77 **Bloodied** 38
AC 23 **Fortitude** 18 **Reflex** 20 **Will** 19

Immune disease

Speed 6

[mba] **Tentacle** (standard, at-will)

Reach 2; +14 vs. AC; 1d8 + 5 damage, and the target is pulled 1 square and grabbed (escape ends)

[m] **Diseased Bite** (standard, at-will) ♦ **Disease**

+14 vs. AC, 1d10 + 4 damage, and the target contracts filth fever (see MM page 219)

[m] **Spew Effluent** (standard, at-will) ♦ **Poison**

+12 vs. Reflex, 2d6 + 5 damage, and ongoing 5 poison damage (save ends)

[c] **Sewage Breath** (standard, recharge on 5, 6) ♦ **Poison**

Close blast 5; +10 vs. Fortitude, 1d12 + 4 poison damage, and target is weakened (save ends)

Alignment unaligned **Languages** Common, Dwarven

Skills Perception +11, Stealth +12

Str 10 (+3) **Dex** 19 (+7) **Wis** 16 (+6)

Con 13 (+4) **Int** 13 (+4) **Cha** 10 (+3)

TACTICS

No strategy guides the flailing tentacles of these slaves. Their dwarf mouths beg for mercy, but their otyugh maws and tentacles thrash at their would-be saviors. Madness drives these aberrations to fight to a welcome death.

TRAPS

Behind the altar and just inches from the wall, magma falls in a 10-ft.-wide sheet from the ceiling. The magma curtain deals 2d6 fire damage per round of exposure plus an additional 1d6 fire damage for 1d3 rounds after. Occasionally, it clumps and parts as it falls, allowing DC 23 Perception checks to notice a decorative metal plate on the wall behind it. This plate is 5 ft. tall and molded to look like a dragon's glaring face. A small door covers the dragon's mouth and conceals a white-hot furnace with a metal handle at arm's length inside it.

If a PC reaches an unprotected arm into the furnace, he experiences excruciating pain as the skin of his hand and forearm sears, blisters, and burns away. He takes 10 points of fire damage per round. In the face of such agony, he must succeed on a DC 25 Endurance check to keep his hand in long enough to grasp and pull the handle. A PC who fails the check withdraws his arm. The successful PC pulls the handle, causing stone slabs to retract in the chapel's floor and form a spiral staircase to the royal crypts below. Whether the PC retracts his unprotected arm voluntarily or otherwise, he finds it instantly magically healed of the furnace's fire damage.

If the PC puts anything else in the furnace or magically protects himself before sticking his hand in the furnace, he triggers two traps before he gets a chance to pull the handle. The first trap consists of sharp metal tines that shoot from the inner walls of the furnace. The tines attempt to pin the PC in place, subjected to prolonged exposure to the furnace's intense heat. A successful DC 20 Athletics check rips the pinned object free and deals the PC 1d8 points of damage.

The second trap causes metal tines to grow from all metal objects in the chapel. The effect lasts 6 rounds before reversing at the same pace. The anvil-altar becomes a porcupine of metal quills. Spikes grow from the PCs' metal weapons and shields. Metal armor becomes iron maidens. Use the elite daggerthorn briar (hazard) (DMG 90), but any character wearing metal within the Chapel is in the area affected. The hazard is not vulnerable to fire, and no skill can identify the effect before it is triggered.

PART III**The Royal Crypt**

Unlike the polished surfaces and wide expanses of the upper halls and royal residences, the royal crypts are rough-hewn and close. Stale air pools in the nostrils, and dust puffs around footfalls. Recesses in nearly every wall form shelves where the bones of ancient dwarves lie in disarticulated repose. These 6-ft. recesses stack four high, and anyone succeeding on a DC 15 Athletics check can scale them to within reach of the 35-ft. ceiling. There is no light. There are no sounds.

If Sigil is alive and still with the party, he refuses to enter the royal crypt and indicates that he shall wait for the PCs up above, guarding their rear from anyone who might try to sneak in behind them. No form of coercion short of domination forces Sigil to join the party down below, and later encounters all assume he is not present.

AREA 1: CRYPT ANTECHAMBER

The spiral stair curves down from the Ash Chapel and then splits into two parallel staircases that proceed another 15 ft. down. Between these twin stairs and directly in front of the landing, a statue of Volund stands on the lower level, its chin and arms raised to accept the newcomer.

Two more statues stand side by side deeper in the room. The left statue is a larger-than-life dwarf dressed in stone military regalia and posed in a battle stance. The statue on the right depicts a simply attired dwarf miner with a pick at his feet and a large nugget held aloft in both hands. Between the statues, an arched entry to another room beckons.

AREA 2: HOT BULLETS

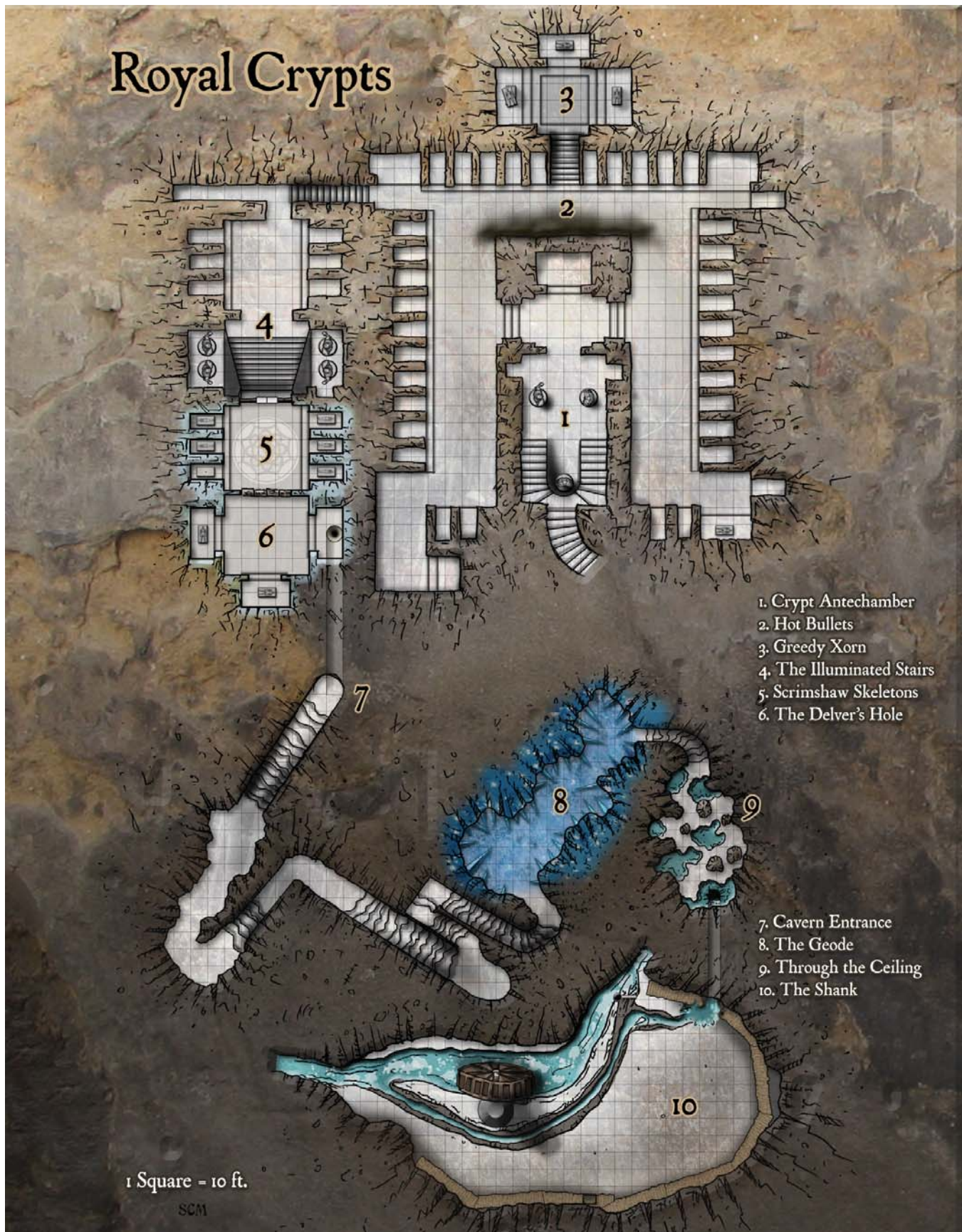
Recessed shelves line the north side of this hall. At the hall's midpoint, a passage proceeds north down a flight of steps. All along the south side of this hall, gray-black smoke and steam hiss from numerous holes, each the size of a dinner plate. As the PCs pass, read or paraphrase the following:

Worms—5 ft. long, segmented, and glowing red—spring from the holes like hot bullets. Steam rises from their bodies, and their front tips glow like orange-white arrowheads.

10TH LEVEL ENCOUNTER

- 4 PCs (2,000 XP) • 2 granitewyrms, 8 gravelgrinder minions, 1 magmaspike
- 5 PCs (2,500 XP) • 2 granitewyrms, 9 gravelgrinder minions, 2 magmaspike
- 6 PCs (3,000 XP) • 3 granitewyrms, 10 gravelgrinder minions, 2 magmaspike

Royal Crypts



- 1. Crypt Antechamber
- 2. Hot Bullets
- 3. Greedy Xorn
- 4. The Illuminated Stairs
- 5. Scrimshaw Skeletons
- 6. The Delver's Hole

- 7. Cavern Entrance
- 8. The Geode
- 9. Through the Ceiling
- 10. The Shank

1 Square = 10 ft.

SCM

GRANITEWYRM **LEVEL 9 BRUTE**
SMALL NATURAL ELEMENTAL BEAST (EARTH, FIRE) XP 400

Initiative +7 **Senses** Perception +11; darkvision, tremorsense 10

hp 115 **Bloodied** 57

AC 22 **Fortitude** 21 **Reflex** 21 **Will** 20

Resist 10 fire

Speed 5, burrow 5 (tunneling) (see *blazing path*)

[mba] **Piledriver Slam** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Fire**

+12 vs. AC; 2d6 + 5 damage and ongoing 5 fire damage (save ends)

[m] **Pyroclastic Charge** (standard, can be used with charge; recharge on 5, 6) ♦ **Fire**

Reach 2; +12 vs. AC; 3d6 + 5 fire damage, and the target is weakened (save ends); if target is already weakened, it instead loses a healing surge; if target has no healing surges remaining, it instead takes damage equal to the value of a healing surge

[m] **Soul of Fire** (free, when hit by melee attack; at-will) ♦ **Fire**

+10 vs. Fortitude; 5 fire damage

Blazing Path ♦ **Fire**

Until a short rest has passed, the Small tunnel wake of a burrowing granitewyrm deals 5 fire damage to any creature that enters or begins its turn inside the tunnel

Alignment unaligned **Languages** —

Skills Athletics +14, Dungeoneering +10, Perception +10

Str 20 (+9) **Dex** 17 (+7) **Wis** 12 (+5)

Con 15 (+6) **Int** 6 (+2) **Cha** 10 (+4)

GRAVELGRINDER **LEVEL 9 LURKER MINION**
SMALL NATURAL ELEMENTAL BEAST (EARTH, FIRE) XP 100

Initiative +13 **Senses** Perception +2; darkvision, tremorsense 10

hp 1; a missed attack never damages a minion

AC 23 **Fortitude** 21 **Reflex** 22 **Will** 20

(see *tremorstrike*)

Speed 5, burrow 5 (tunneling)

[mba] **Stonecrusher Smash** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Fire**

+14 vs. AC; 6 damage plus 5 fire damage

[m] **Tremorstrike** (standard; encounter) ♦ **Fire**

The gravelgrinder may move 7 squares in any combination of movement types as a charge and make a *stonecrusher smash* attack against any one adjacent foe during its movement; it gains a +2 bonus to all defenses against opportunity attacks during this movement

[c] **Explosive Demise** (when killed)

Close burst 1; targets enemies; +11 vs. Reflex; each target is knocked prone; if already prone, target is instead weakened (save ends)

Alignment unaligned **Languages** —

Skills Athletics +11, Stealth +14

Str 15 (+6) **Dex** 20 (+9) **Wis** 6 (+2)

Con 17 (+7) **Int** 6 (+1) **Cha** 8 (+3)

MAGMASPIKE **LEVEL 9 SKIRMISHER**
SMALL NATURAL ELEMENTAL BEAST (EARTH, FIRE) XP 400

Initiative +11 **Senses** Perception +10; darkvision, tremorsense 10

hp 97 **Bloodied** 48 (see *lavagout thrash*)

AC 23 **Fortitude** 22 **Reflex** 21 **Will** 20

(see *earthswim gambit*)

Resist 10 fire

Speed 5, burrow 5 (tunneling) (see *blazing path*)

[mba] **Blisterstrike Lunge** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Fire**

+14 vs. AC; 1d8 + 5 damage (2d6 + 5 damage if the target is prone), and the thoqqua makes a secondary attack against the same target

Secondary Attack—+12 vs. Reflex; 1d6 + 5 fire damage

[m] **Soul of Fire** (free, when hit by melee attack; at-will) ♦ **Fire**

+12 vs. Fortitude; 5 fire damage

[c] **Lavagout Thrash** (standard; recharge when bloodied) ♦ **Fire**

Close burst 2; +11 vs. Reflex; 3d6 + 5 fire damage, and each target is knocked prone

Blazing Path ♦ **Fire**

Until a short rest has passed, the Small tunnel wake of a burrowing magmaspike deals 5 fire damage to any creature that enters or begins its turn inside the tunnel

Earthswim Gambit (move; recharge on 5, 6)

The magmaspike may move up to 3 squares; it gains a +2 bonus to all defenses until the end of its next turn, and it gains combat advantage against any target that it ends its move adjacent to

Sinuous Agility (minor, usable after hitting with a melee attack; at-will)

The magmaspike may shift 1 square; it may not burrow with this shift

Thirst of Flame

The magmaspike deals an extra 1d6 damage on melee attacks against any target it has combat advantage against

Alignment unaligned **Languages** —

Skills Athletics +14, Dungeoneering +10, Perception +10

Str 15 (+6) **Dex** 20 (+9) **Wis** 12 (+5)

Con 17 (+7) **Int** 6 (+2) **Cha** 10 (+4)

TACTICS

A graniteworm often begins combat with a *pyroclastic charge*, and proceeds to attack with *piledriver slams* until the *pyroclastic charge* becomes available again. They tend to pick a target and continue ravaging it until either the prey or the graniteworm dies.

Magmaspikes prefer to approach foes using the *earthswim gambit* and then attack an unsuspecting foe with *blisterstrike lunge*. When faced with two or more enemies within range, it will use *lavagout thrash* to knock them prone and vulnerable to other magmaspikes. Canny predators, they use their *sinuous agility* to create situations that provide combat advantage.

AREA 3: GREEDY XORN

As the PCs enter this room, read or paraphrase the following:

A 10-ft.-wide staircase descends into a square room with a recessed floor. Wide, open arches on the other three walls each lead to a shallow nook where a stone sarcophagus rests. In the western nook, the sarcophagus lid is thrown aside.

A group of feldspar xorn squabble over the grave goods within the sarcophagus. Even if these xorn become aware of the PCs, they fight among themselves over their find. Their corundum xorn mother recognizes the threat posed by the PCs, though, and when the PCs arrive, she is earth gliding to a point under their feet. The PCs likely have no way of detecting her presence until she attacks.



10TH LEVEL ENCOUNTER

- 4 PCs (2,050 XP) • 1 corundum xorn, 3 feldspar xorns
- 5 PCs (2,400 XP) • 1 corundum xorn, 4 feldspar xorns
- 6 PCs (3,050 XP) • 2 corundum xorns, 3 feldspar xorns

CORUNDUM XORN		LEVEL 10 ELITE BRUTE	
LARGE ELEMENTAL MAGICAL BEAST (EARTH)		XP 1000	
Initiative +7	Senses Perception +7; all-around vision, darkvision, tremorsense 5		
hp 260	Bloodied 130		
AC 25	Fortitude 25	Reflex 21	Will 23
Resist 10 fire, 10 lightning			
Saving Throws +2			
Speed 5 (earth walk), burrow 5 (see <i>stone phase</i>)			
Action Points 1			
[mba] Shieldcrusher Claw (standard; at-will)			
Reach 2; +13 vs. AC; 2d6 + 5 damage			
[m] Irongnaw Bite (minor; at-will)			
+13 vs. AC 3d6 + 5 damage			
[m] Savage Rending (standard; at-will)			
The xorn can make one <i>shieldcrusher claw</i> attack on each of two adjacent targets; any target hit is pushed 2 squares			
[c] Tectonic Shudder (move; recharge on 5, 6)			
Close burst 1; +9 vs. Reflex; 4d8 + 5 damage, and the target dazed (save ends)			
Bosom of Earth (immediate reaction, when targeted by melee or ranged attack; at-will)			
The xorn sinks partially into ground, gaining a +2 bonus to AC until it moves or until the beginning of its next turn			
Stone Phase			
The xorn ignores the movement penalties for burrowing through stone			
Alignment unaligned		Languages Common, Primordial	
Str 18 (+8)	Dex 15 (+7)	Wis 15 (+7)	
Con 20(+10)	Int 10 (+5)	Cha 10 (+5)	

TACTICS

A corundum xorn initiates combat using *tectonic shudder* and then strikes dazed targets with *savage rending*. It tends to stay in the thick of battle, moving away only when it can reuse its *tectonic shudder*.

A feldspar xorn initiates combat using *burrowing bite* and harries targets with hit-and-run tactics. If surrounded by multiple enemies, it uses *claw frenzy*; otherwise, the feldspar xorn moves or shifts into a position where it can then make another *burrowing bite* attack.

FELDSPAR XORN		LEVEL 8 SKIRMISHER	
MEDIUM ELEMENTAL MAGICAL BEAST (EARTH)		XP 350	
Initiative +9	Senses Perception +7; all-around vision, darkvision		
hp 92	Bloodied 46		
AC 22	Fortitude 22	Reflex 20	Will 20
Speed 5 (earth walk); burrow 5 (see <i>stone phase</i>)			
[mba] Claw (standard; at-will)			
+13 vs. AC; 1d8 + 5 damage			
[m] Bite (standard; at-will)			
+13 vs. AC 2d6 + 5 damage			
[m] Burrowing Bite (standard; at-will)			
+14 vs. AC; 2d8 + 5 damage, and the target is pushed one square; the xorn shifts into the vacated space			
[m] Claw Frenzy (standard; at-will)			
The xorn can make one <i>claw</i> attack against each of three adjacent targets			
Stone Phase			
A xorn ignores the movement penalties for burrowing through stone			
Alignment unaligned		Languages Common, Primordial	
Str 18 (+8)	Dex 15 (+7)	Wis 15 (+7)	
Con 20(+9)	Int 10 (+4)	Cha 10 (+4)	

TREASURE

The xorns fight over two sets of dwarven plate armor, but the PCs can compose only one set from what remains. Minor gemstones, worth a total of 2,100 gp, are scattered upon the floor like crumbs. This represents one treasure parcel.

AREA 4: THE ILLUMINATED STAIRS

A grand set of steep stairs narrows as it descends to a set of double-doors. Four statues of dwarves, two on each side of the stairs, stare at each other from recesses in the walls.

A flaming pillar is carved into each of the stone double-doors (AC 4; Fortitude 12; 80 hp; Break DC 25 or DC 38 with Arcane Lock). The doors are locked by Arcane Lock and protected by a glyph of warding (trap) (see DMG, page 90). A DC 21 Perception check notices that the carvings of all four statues include a necklace with a *mnemonic fob* charm—a clue that these statues are Illuminated Brothers.

Anyone who attempts to pass through the doors triggers the glyph of warding (trap). However, a creature that crosses the threshold wielding a mnemonic fob—an item that only Illuminated Brothers typically possess—acts as a password to safely bypass the glyph.

AREA 5: SCRIMSHAW SKELETONS

When the PCs enter this room, read or paraphrase the following:

Unlike the rough-hewn halls of the crypt, this chamber features intricately carved walls and a polished floor. Every line is precise. Every shelf is perfectly balanced to stand the test of time. In the center of the floor, a ring of tile encircles a mosaic trowel.

On each side of the chamber, three tall arches lead into burial nooks. All six nooks hold a closed stone sarcophagus. Atop one sarcophagus is a dark polished stone. Atop the other five, a dwarf skeleton lay. Each skeleton's teeth are closed tight upon a gleaming sapphire, and every inch of their skull and bones is covered in scrimshawed writing.

The scrimshaw skeletons are those of revered Illuminated Brothers of highest station. Six bodies were originally interred in area 6 (just beyond this chamber's south wall), but a delver dug up into the chamber and collapsed the floor. One of the bodies was lost to the delver's corrosive slime. The dwarves moved the remaining five to this redecorated antechamber. The polished stone on the sixth Brother's sarcophagus is a *stone of penance*.

Any PC who succeeds at a DC 10 History or Religion check realizes the scrimshaw writing tells a story, possibly of great importance given the detail involved.

As soon as a PC attempts to read, attack, or otherwise disturb a skeleton, though, the skeletons rise up as one in choreographed motion. As they stand up, they crush their sapphires with their teeth and wrap their knuckles around flaming greataxes that appear in their hands.

A truly observant PC who succeeds at a DC 21 Perception check notices that the south wall of this chamber is composed of four pieces of stone, dropped into place and joined with expert skill to seal off area 6. The PCs must break through this wall to get to the original burial chamber on the other side.

The stone wall separating this chamber from the original burial chamber is 1 ft. thick (AC 13; other defenses 3; hp 90; Break DC 35).

TACTICS

The skeletons summoned their weapons from some distant cache. They attack immediately, preferably from atop their sarcophagi. The firelight from their battleaxes casts jittering, wiry shadows on the walls behind them. These dark shadows represent the shame from the Illuminated Brotherhood's past.



At the end of the first round, the shadows of all remaining skeletons rise from the ground, detach from their owners, and glide with crackling necrotic energy toward the nearest PC in flanking position. If the PCs destroy a skeleton, that skeleton's shadow dissipates.

**GAINING THE KNOWLEDGE
SKILL CHALLENGE (500 XP)**

Setup You must read as many bones as possible

Level 10th level challenge

Complexity 2 (requires 6 successes before 3 failures)

Primary Skills Arcana, Athletics, Diplomacy, Religion, Thievery

Arcana (DC 21)—You recognize the symbols on the moving bone.

Arcana or Religion (DC 10)—You recognize the symbols on the moving bone (only available when the character is the recipient of a Comprehend Languages ritual).

Athletics (DC 14)—You break off a bone; while not a success, the next Arcana check gains a +4 bonus to scrutinize the bone (on a failure you lose a healing surge).

Diplomacy (DC 14)—You cause a skeleton to hesitate before it attacks again (the skeleton may not perform standard actions on its next turn); while not a success, the next Arcana check gains a +2 bonus to scrutinize a bone (dwarves gain a +2 bonus on this skill check).

Religion (DC 21)—You sanctify a bone, and its information is protected against later erasure.

Thievery (DC 14)—You extricate an etched bone, and its information is protected against later erasure (on a failure you are grabbed).

Special—Intimidating a bloodied skeleton to surrender, counts as a success, but its associated shadow still attacks.

Success Each success secures an etched writing, revealing one fact (in the order presented in Table 4-2); fact number six is discovered regardless of when eventual failures occurred.

Failure Each failure or reduction of a skeleton to 0 hp erases the next unread fact from all skeletons, leaving each with an identical patch of bleached bone; total skill failure means that no more facts can be discovered at all

Note Combat continues regardless of skill challenge success or failure.

TABLE 4-2: SCRIMSHAW FACTS

#	Fact
1	The Illuminated Brotherhood learned that Mammon corrupted gold in the Ironcrags.
2	In league with the Spirit of the Mountain, the brotherhood steered its clansmen away from the richest veins.
3	The brotherhood sealed the great doors to the citadel when the dwarves abandoned the fruitless mines.
4	A band of dwarves refused to leave the citadel.
5	This band dug deep and embraced the corruption of Mammon.
6	When the corrupted dwarves attempted to dig out of the mountain with their tainted gains, the Illuminated Brothers drove them back inside and sealed them in, knowingly dooming them to darkness and madness. Thus were born the forsaken. <i>(If the PCs read this fact, the shame of the brotherhood is revealed, and all attacking shadows reattach to their owners as normal non-threatening ones.)</i>
7	Vague but true directions to the site where the forsaken attempted to exit the mountain centuries ago.

ILLUMINATION

The darkness is dimly lit by flaming weapons.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Sarcophagi—These create difficult terrain, and a DC 15 Acrobatics or Athletics check is required during a move to treat it as normal terrain.

11TH LEVEL ENCOUNTER

(3,250 XP) • gaining the knowledge (challenge), 5 scrimshaw skeletons, 5 tethered shadows

SCRIMSHAW SKELETONS (5) LEVEL 9 BRUTE
MEDIUM NATURAL ANIMATE (UNDEAD) XP 400 EACH

Initiative +9 Senses Perception +11; darkvision
hp 116 Bloodied 58
AC 22 Fortitude 21 Reflex 22 Will 19
Immune disease, poison; Resist 10 necrotic; Vulnerable 5 radiant
Speed 8

[mba] **Greataxe Haul** (standard; at will) ♦ **Fire, Weapon**

+12 vs. AC; 1d12 + 4 damage (crit 1d12 + 16 damage) plus 5 fire damage

[c] **Great Sweep** (standard; at will) ♦ **Fire, Weapon**

Close burst 1; targets enemies; +12 vs. AC; 1d12 + 4 damage (crit 1d12 + 16 damage) plus 5 fire damage

Alignment unaligned Languages —
Str 18 (+8) Dex 20 (+9) Wis 14 (+6)
Con 16 (+7) Int 3 (+0) Cha 3 (+0)

Equipment +1 flaming greataxe

TETHERED SHADOWS (5) LEVEL 3 SKIRMISHER
MEDIUM SHADOW HUMANOID (UNDEAD) XP 150

Initiative +7 Senses Perception +7; darkvision
hp 48 Bloodied 24
AC 17 Fortitude 15 Reflex 16 Will 13
Immune disease, poison; Resist 10 necrotic, insubstantial;
Vulnerable 5 radiant
Speed 8

[mba] **Greataxe Haul** (standard; at will) ♦ **Disease, Weapon**

+8 vs. AC; 1d12 + 4 damage (crit 1d12 + 16 damage), and the target contracts the wasting (see below)

[m] **Lead with Greataxe** (standard; at will) ♦ **Disease, Weapon**

The shadow shifts 2 squares and makes a *greataxe* haul attack against a target

Alignment unaligned Languages —
Str 10 (+1) Dex 18 (+5) Wis 12 (+2)
Con 16 (+4) Int 3 (-3) Cha 3 (-3)

THE WASTING

LEVEL 3 DISEASE

Those afflicted by the wasting become weaker and weaker. Their energy simply fades away. **Attack:** +6 vs Fortitude
Endurance: improve DC 16, maintain DC 11, worsen DC 10 or lower.

The target is cured.	◀ Initial Effect	▶▶	▶ Final State
	The target takes a -2 penalty to attacks.		Target takes a -4 penalty to attacks and are weakened and slowed.
		The target takes a -4 penalty to attacks.	

DEVELOPMENT

Once the PCs dispatch the skeletons and the chamber goes quiet, read or paraphrase the following:

The faint pummeling of fists on stone comes from deep inside the south wall. A moment later, the sound stops and a ghostly set of corroded arms reaches through the wall, stretching and straining forward as if the body they connect to is stuck behind in the stone.

When the skeletons rose, so did the ghost of the Illuminated Brother whose body was lost to the delver's corrosive slime. This ghost poses no threat to the PCs. It merely wishes to escape the chamber of its defilement and abandonment. The wall that separates it from its brothers presently holds back the ghost like a supernatural cage. If the PCs break through the wall, the corroded ghost races through the hole and dissipates mid-room, at last entering its final rest.

TREASURE

The PCs find the following items inside the sarcophagi: one arcane scroll with four rituals (Hallucinatory Creature, Drawmij's Instant Summons, Magic Circle, Arcane Lock); one *elemental gem (earth)* (see below); two *elixirs of shield of faith* (see below); *gauntlets of the ram*; *immovable shaft*; *lyre of building* (see below); four *potions of vitality*; a +2 *lightning greataxe*; and gems, jewelry, and coins worth 4,200 gp.

(The +2 *lightning greataxe* is one treasure parcel. The *lyre of building* is one treasure parcel. The ritual scroll and the *elemental gem (earth)* combined are one treasure parcel. The gems, jewelry, and coins are three treasure parcels. Anything further is excess treasure appropriate for level 9 wealth—calculated between *Eye of Grajava* and *Deeper Darkness*.)

NEW ITEMS

Elemental Gem (earth) Level 10

The light brown gem pulses with a warm light.

Wondrous Item 200 gp

Power (standard; consumable) You crush this gem to conjure an earth elemental (see below for statistics); as a free action, you can spend a healing surge when consuming this item to give the creature temporary hp equal to your healing surge value.

Special Consuming this gem counts as a use of a magic item daily power.

EARTH ELEMENTAL (FROM ELEMENTAL GEM)			
LARGE ELEMENTAL MAGICAL BEAST (EARTH)			
Initiative as conjurer	Senses Perception +8		
hp 15	Bloodied 7		
AC 20	Fortitude 20	Reflex 16	Will 18
Speed 8			
[mba] Slam (standard; at will)			
+11 vs. AC; 1d10 + 7 damage, and the target is pushed 1 square and knocked prone			
[m] Windmill Slam (standard; at will)			
The elemental makes one <i>slam</i> attack against each of two adjacent targets			

Elixir of Shield of Faith Level 13

Your body is enclosed in an aura erected by faith.

Elixir 650 gp

Power (minor; consumable) You drink the elixir; once before the end of this encounter, you can make an immediate interrupt when you would be hit by an attack to gain an AC of 30 against that attack, replacing your normal AC for that attack

Special Consuming this elixir counts as a use of a magic item daily power.

Lyre of Building Level 12

The lyre is built with a rectangular motif.

Wondrous Item 13,000 gp

Power (standard; at-will) You play the lyre, and all allies who can hear the music gain a +2 item bonus to Acrobatics, Athletics, Dungeoneering, and Endurance checks for 1 hour made in the construction of buildings of any kind.

Stone of Penance Level 6

This is a dark, polished stone.

Wondrous Item 1,800 gp

Cursed You are considered to be at a heavy load and can carry no additional weight, and once picked up, the stone cannot be disposed of by any nonmagical means until a Remove Affliction ritual has been performed on you.

AREA 6: THE DELVER'S HOLE

As the PCs enter this room, read or paraphrase the following:

Numerous 15-ft. arches lead to burial nooks on three walls of this empty chamber. A hole, 10 ft. in diameter, drops through the floor of the eastern nook. Through it, moist air flows up, carrying the unmistakable sweet smell of carrion into the chamber.

The centuries-old delver's hole falls 30 ft. down into the darkness of area 7. Its smooth sides make climbing extremely difficult, requiring a DC 25 Athletics check to navigate safely.

PART IV The Caverns Below

Unlike the squared, hewn walls of the royal crypts, the caverns below have never felt a dwarven chisel. Natural crevices twist, wind and double back. Mineral rich water slides down the walls, and the slow heartbeat of it dripping from stalactites to stalagmites echoes in the distance. The only light in the caverns comes from the occasional phosphorescent puddle where glowworms slither and albino crabs crawl. Although no extraneous tunnels appear on the map, feel free to expand the caverns by adding them wherever desired.

AREA 7: CAVERN ENTRANCE

After dropping 30 ft., the vertical hole pauses at a landing, tilts to a 45 degree angle, and slides further into darkness. After the tilt, the PCs can navigate the hole with relative ease. Here and there, it elbows into steps. Any PC who succeeds on a DC 15 Athletics check traverses the 50-ft. length and reaches a natural cavern with normal footing.

AREA 8: THE GEODE

When the PCs reach the base of the natural stairs that lead into this cavern, they come to a final blind turn where a pale blue glow thrown from the cavern dances on the walls. Nearby carrion reeks. When they turn the corner, read or paraphrase the following:

This cavern resembles the inside of a massive geode. 8-ft. crystals jut in all directions. There is no floor, just the angles at which the razor-sharp edges and slippery sides of the crystals come together. The cavern itself is squat, rising to barely double the height of a human. It stretches out of view. A powerful phosphorescent light rises through the crystals and bathes the entire cavern in an eerie glow.

Movement over the severely obstructed, slippery surfaces of the crystals requires a DC 15 Acrobatics or DC 19 Athletics check. PCs who succeed move at half speed. PCs who fail by 4 or less make no progress that round. PCs who fail by 5 or more fall, take 1d6 points of damage, 5 ongoing damage from blood loss (the ongoing damage can be stopped with a DC 15 Heal check, a successful saving throw, a healing potion or the expenditure of a healing surge). The phosphorescent light throws the PCs' bloody reflections on a thousand glass planes, but provides plenty of light.

The large crystals provide cover against ranged attacks. Inadequate footing severely hampers all creatures attempting melee attacks. Unless a creature is trained in Acrobatics, it grants combat advantage at all times while it is in the room. Whenever a creature takes damage, it must succeed on another DC 15 Acrobatics or DC 19 Athletics check to remain standing. Falling prone deals 1d6 points of damage (it does not deal ongoing damage).

Beneath the crystals, several large cavelight mosses flood the floor. The bases of the crystals rise through the creatures as if through lace. One cavelight moss fills the cavern's center; the other two flank it. A DC 20 Perception check is required to notice that a lacey moss lies under a layer of collected dirt and spores. The mosses sit perfectly still until they attack. As the first PC reaches the midpoint of the first moss (about 5 squares into the chamber, measured from the stairs), that moss attacks. The other mosses writhe in anticipation of a meal and the other creatures come out from hiding to attack. If a PC attacks the mosses with ranged attacks, all of the creatures attack.

10TH LEVEL ENCOUNTER

- 4 PCs (2100 XP) • 1 briar witch dryad, 2 cavelight mosses
- 5 PCs (2400 XP) • 1 briar witch dryad, 2 cavelight mosses, 1 vine horror spellfiend
- 6 PCs (2950 XP) • 1 briar witch dryad, 3 cavelight mosses, 2 vine horror spellfiends

(See MM for briar witch dryad on page 96 and vine horror spellfiend on page 260.)

CAVELIGHT MOSS		LEVEL 6 SOLDIER	
LARGE NATURAL ANIMATE (BLIND, OOZE, PLANT)		250 XP	
Initiative +3	Senses Perception +4; blindsight 10, tremorsense 10		
hp 70	Bloodied 35		
AC 20	Fortitude 22	Reflex 18	Will 19
Immune gaze			
Speed 1			
[mba] Tendrils (standard action; at-will)			
Reach 2; +13 vs. AC; 1d10 + 4 damage, and the target is weakened until the end of the moss's next turn			
[m] Grasping Tendrils (standard action; recharge on 6)			
Reach 2; +11 vs. Reflex; 3d8 + 4 damage, and target is restrained and weakened (escape ends both); only one creature can be restrained at a time			
[m] Writhing Tendrils (standard action; at-will)			
The moss makes two <i>tendrils</i> attacks			
Phosphorescent Light			
The moss constantly emits a dim light; as a minor action, it can increase the radius of its light by 1 square (to a maximum of 5 squares) or decrease it by 1 square (to a minimum of 1 square)			
Alignment unaligned		Languages —	
Str 19 (+7)	Dex 10 (+3)	Wis 13 (+4)	
Con 13 (+4)	Int 2 (-2)	Cha 5 (+0)	

TACTICS

Cavelight moss attempts to remain as unobtrusive as possible until prey approaches within reach. Once a creature has been seized, it uses its extra tendrils attack to fend off would-be rescuers.

AREA 9: THROUGH THE CEILING

When the PCs drop down or peer into this room, read or paraphrase the following.

Stalactites and stalagmites reach for each other in this cavern of pools. A single path leads from the north to sound end, snaking around pools and over natural bridges along the way. Here and there, tiny cave worms drip their mucous lines from the ceiling, hoping to catch a hapless insect.

In the south end of this chamber, water spills through a natural conduit to another cavern (area 10). Looking down the hole—1 square in diameter—the PCs see that the hole drops 10 ft. before popping through the ceiling of the 70-ft.-tall cavern below.

They also see a wooden catwalk bolted 30 ft. below their current position (50 ft. above the floor in area 10). Centuries of dripping water has disintegrated the wooden boards directly below the hole and left only its metal scaffold frame. It is impossible to climb down to the catwalk, but a PC descending a rope (Athletics DC 13 if knotted, 17 if unknotted) can swing himself to a section of catwalk that still has its boards.

AREA 10: THE SHANK

This massive kidney-shaped cavern is roughly a 100 ft. wide, more than twice as long, and nearly as tall. Two wooden catwalks supported by steel scaffolding are fastened to the walls and encircle the space. One catwalk stands a little higher than halfway above the ground, and the other stands half as high. On the south side of the cavern, at its midpoint, a ladder connects the two catwalks to each other and the ground. Numerous chains and ropes connect to winches and hang from one level to the other.

The room stretches 100 ft. wide, 250 ft. long, and 70 ft. high. The higher catwalk is 50 ft. above the floor and the lower is 25 ft.

At ground level, a torrent of water rages into this cavern's north end. A gate funnels the flow into the northernmost of two artificial canals. Both canals head west, but the northern canal races the water past a massive waterwheel. The wheel appears designed to spin the 100-ft.-tall, 20-ft.-diameter, metal-banded oak Shank set in the floor and rising up through the ceiling. Presently, the waterwheel is disconnected from the Shank and freewheels at an awkward angle.

Some of the catwalks' boards are missing, rotten, or loose. Any PC who moves faster than half speed must succeed at a DC 10 Acrobatics check. If he fails, his weight splinters boards, and he falls 25 ft. down to either the catwalk below or to the ground, and he takes 2d10 points of falling damage.

Both canals are 10 ft. deep. The water in the northern canal is considered rough water for the purposes of Athletics swim checks (DC 15).

As the PCs traverse the top-level catwalk, the Spirit of the Mountain rages. In a desperate effort to prevent the PCs from repairing the Shank and saving the refugees (who, the spirit thinks, want the corrupted gold for themselves), the Spirit of the Mountain invests all its hatred, all its greed, and all its taint into this final battle.

A quake rocks the cavern. Loose boards fall like missing teeth from the catwalk. The pins holding the scaffolding and catwalks to the walls screech as they rip out. Sections of the upper catwalk break from adjacent sections and hang limp. Other sections break away completely, crashing upon the lower catwalk and pulling it down too.

All PCs must succeed at DC 18 Athletics check to dive to a safe section of catwalk. PCs who fail by 4 or less find themselves dangling over the edge of the catwalk by a rope or chain. PCs who fail by 5 or more fall 25 ft. to the lower catwalk, take 2d10 points of falling damage, and must succeed on a DC 18 Athletics check to avoid falling from the lower catwalk. Those who fall a second time take 5d10 falling damage.

MOUNTAIN CORRUPTION MADE FLESH

Before the PCs can take further action, the corruption running through the Spirit of the Mountain pulses from the cavern's walls and into the catwalk superstructure. The quake subsides but the catwalks continue to shake. Large sections of catwalk and steel scaffolding rip from the walls with supernatural force.

Instead of falling to the ground, the entire connected mess gathers, folds, and transforms itself into a colossal bipedal creature. The monstrosity of steel pipes and wooden planks stands more than 60 ft. tall. It swings a thick braided chain in one hand and raises a log-sized steel pipe in the other. Winches on its head lower its metal jaw, and it screams with a voice of steel on steel.

PCs on a safe section of catwalk are stranded on one of a dozen random catwalk islands: 5-ft.-wide sections disconnected from each other but still anchored to the wall. The rest of the catwalk superstructure has integrated into the animated scaffolding's body.

PCs dangling from catwalk ropes take a wild ride when the scaffolding animates. Their ropes attach to sections of catwalk integrated into the creature's torso and arms, and these danglers swing in wide arcs around the creature's body. At the start of their turn, danglers must succeed on a DC 17 Athletics check or fall, taking 2d10 damage. As a move action, they may attempt to climb to a safe section of the colossus (DC 20 Athletics check). If characters fail by 5 or more, they fall; characters who succeed end on a solid part of the colossus (see *colossal* ability below).



ANIMATED SCAFFOLDING COLOSSUS

LEVEL 10 SOLO BRUTE

GARGANTUAN NATURAL ANIMATE (CONSTRUCT) 2500 XP

Initiative +6 **Senses** Perception +9; tremorsense 20

Crumbling Colossus (only when bloodied) aura 10; enemies starting their turn in the aura take 7 damage; the colossus takes 10 damage at the start of each turn it begins bloodied

hp 448 **Bloodied** 224 (see *crumbling colossus*)

AC 24 **Fortitude** 25 **Reflex** 22 **Will** 22

Immune disease, poison, sleep

Saving Throws +5

Speed 6

Action Points 2

[mba] **Braided Chain** (standard; at-will)

Reach 5; +17 vs. AC; 3d6 + 5 damage

[m] **Double Attack** (standard; at will)

The colossus makes a *braided chain* and a *steel pipe* attack

[m] **Mountain Fury** (minor; recharge on 5, 6)

+13 vs. Fortitude, targets creatures sharing its space; target is pushed 3 squares and falls, and the colossus may move its speed +2. The colossus can move into the squares of Large or smaller creatures (provoking opportunity attacks); if it enters another creature's space, it makes a secondary attack.

Secondary Attack +15 vs. AC; 3d8 + 5 damage

[m] **Steel Pipe** (standard; at will)

Reach 3; +17 vs. AC; 2d6 + 5 damage

[c] **Constriction** (minor 1/round; at will)

Close Burst 0; targets creatures sharing its space; +13 vs. Reflex; 1d8 + 5, and target is restrained (save ends)

[c] **Scaffolding Spawn** (immediate reaction, when hit by ranged or area attack; at will)

Close burst 10, targets creature who hit it; +15 vs. reflex; 2d6 + 5 damage

Miss—Three scaffolding spawn appear adjacent to target, sharing the colossus's initiative

Colossal

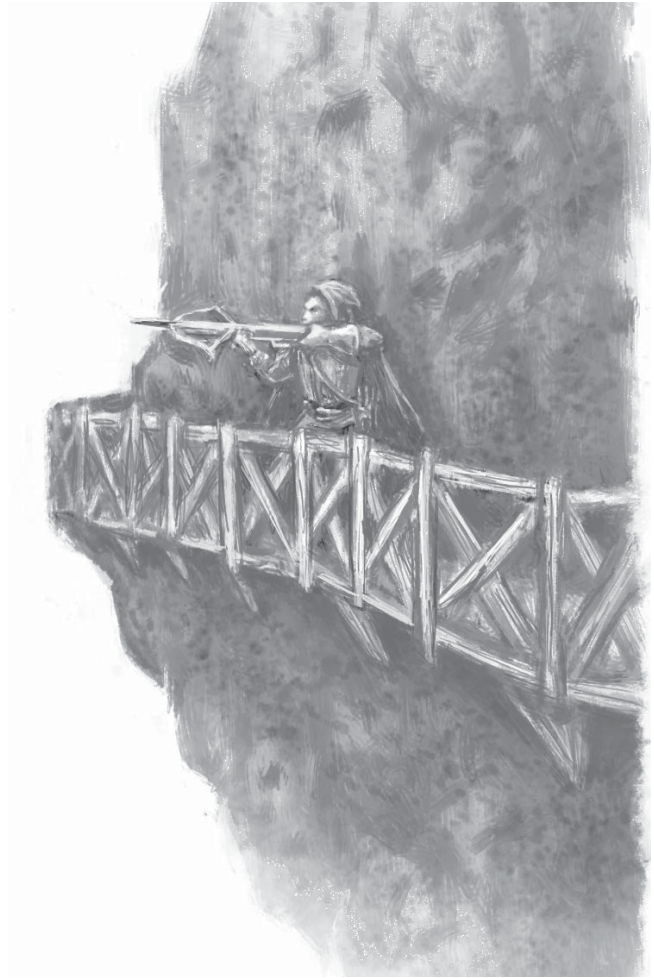
The colossus occupies a 5 x 5 square space, and Large or smaller creatures may enter the colossus's area (provoking opportunity attacks) and climb it with a DC 18 Athletics check. Characters who climb 20 ft. or higher can find a safe place to stand, gaining combat advantage and a +5 bonus to damage with melee attacks.

Alignment evil **Languages** Primordial

Skills Athletics (+15)

Str 21 (+10) **Dex** 12 (+6) **Wis** 18 (+9)

Con 24 (+12) **Int** 18 (+9) **Cha** 12 (+6)



SCAFFOLDING SPAWN

LEVEL 8 MINION

Medium natural animate (construct) XP 88
(or 0 if created by animated scaffolding colossus)

Initiative +6 **Senses** Perception +6; tremorsense 5

AC 23 **Fortitude** 24 **Reflex** 20 **Will** 19

Immune disease, poison, sleep

Speed 5

[mba] **Slam** (standard, at will)

+11 vs. AC; 9 damage

Alignment evil **Languages** Primordial

Skills Athletics (+13)

Str 18 (+8) **Dex** 14 (+6) **Wis** 14 (+6)

Con 20 (+9) **Int** (6) (+2) **Cha** 10 (+4)

DEVELOPMENT

When the PCs finally deal the final blow to the animated scaffolding, read or paraphrase the following:

The animated scaffolding's knees buckle and twist. Its winch lines reel out, and its jaw slacks open and snaps off. With a sideways lurch, the great construct collapses in a heap of splintered logs and bent steel.

In the dust of its destruction, a cloud of iridescent light rises. For a moment it hovers, pulsing out waves of palpable hatred. Then, it rushes at a cavern wall and disappears into the mountain.

THE SHANK

The Shank itself is the colossal trunk of a once-mighty oak tree, nearly 20 ft. thick (AC 2; Fortitude 20; 600 hp; Break DC 50).

REPAIRING THE SHANK

In the north end of the cavern, on a thin island between the two canals, a winch connects to a series of oblong gears and pulleys. By cranking the winch for 1 minute, a PC can lift the water gate into the air and drop it down again to redirect the water flow to one canal or the other. If the PCs direct the water to the southern canal, the northern canal drains, the water wheel stops spinning, and the PCs gain enough space to begin repairing the wheel-to-Shank connection.

The 30-ft.-diameter water wheel weighs 4 tons, and the PCs must carefully lever it back into place. The job requires pulleys, winches, and sweat. It takes a total of 12 hours to gather the equipment from the colossus's heap, repair the necessary parts, rig them together, and use them to reconnect the water wheel to the Shank. Every contributing PC trained in Arcana, Dungeoneering, Endurance, or Thievery reduces the time by 2 hours.

Once the PCs reconnect the water wheel and redirect the water to the northern canal, the rushing water smashes into the wheel and sprays everywhere. A few moments later, the Shank begins to turn slowly in its base.

Concluding the Adventure

If the PCs repair the Shank, the billows in the old forge, the fountains in the royal residences, and the air circulatory system throughout the complex start working again. In a few hours, the explosive gases collected in the upper halls dissipate to safe levels. The PCs successfully neutralize the imminent threat of suffocation, and the refugees can begin the long, slow process of digging their way out of the mountain without risk of explosion.

If the PCs die, selfless dwarf penitents crawl through the great hall to the griffon tower (area 7 in the topmost hold) and sacrifice themselves in an explosion that rips a new exit from the mountain. A fireball races through the topmost hold and second hall level, consuming the explosive gas and scorching everything in its wake. When it is over, the citadel's griffon tower welcomes silently falling snow and the next set of PCs to the scene.

THE GRAND LODGE OF THE OLD MASTERS

A DEEP CAVERN DELVE FOR FOUR 11TH-LEVEL CHARACTERS

by BRANDON HODGE and BEN MCFARLAND
with BRETT MCLEAN, RICHARD GREEN, and DAN VOYCE

EVENTS OF THE GRAND LODGE OF THE OLD MASTERS OCCUR AFTER DEEPER DARKNESS. OLD MYSTERIES AND OLDER SHAMES COME TO LIGHT IN THIS ADVENTURE AND PAVE THE WAY FOR THE CAMPAIGN ARC'S CONCLUSION IN HEARTSBLOOD FORGE. IF THE PCs ARE NOT YET 10TH LEVEL, DELAY THE BEGINNING OF THIS ADVENTURE AND ALLOW THEM TO PERFORM A FEW SIDE TASKS UNTIL THEY EARN ENOUGH EXPERIENCE TO GAIN A LEVEL.

Background

Long ago, the six Old Masters of the Illuminated Brotherhood, the founders of the organization, devised a means of attaining immortality. Bartholomeus, one of the greatest craftsmen of the time, constructed golden clockwork to house the souls of the Old Masters, so the brotherhood's founders achieved immortality.

Time passed and gave rise to complacency, and the Old Masters lost control of the brotherhood they founded to newly illuminated masters. As the years dragged on, the sextet lost their relevancy and were shut away in a room, neglected and mostly forgotten. Mammon's taint infected the Spirit of the Mountain and, ever so slowly, it befouled the souls of the five Old Masters who remained behind. The Stonethrower Clan smuggled Rabscuttle out before he met this terrible fate.

Summary

Following the events of *Deeper Darkness*, the PCs return to the ruined upper halls to find a small group of survivors investigating a previously unknown doorway now exposed by the earthquake. Exploring the chamber beyond, the party discovers a long-sealed repository of Illuminated Brotherhood artifacts and galleries of the secret society's history, as well as the caretaker of the museum: the stone-dead gearmaster Bartholomeus, creator of Rabscuttle and the clockwork doors. Through questioning the lich-like dwarf, the PCs learn of secrets concealed by the adamantine doors of the Grand Hall as well as the means to pass through the portal and obtain them.

Armed with this knowledge, the party ventures into the depths of a sealed-off, partially collapsed mineshaft to reach the control mechanism that unlocks the otherwise impenetrable doors, all the while fending off the forsaken who rule this "poisoned passage." Reaching the control mechanism, the players must use teamwork to navigate a poison gas chamber while dodging the many dangers that lurk within. Once they work the controls, the PCs return to the surface to enter the Grand Lodge of the Old Masters, where they must overcome riddles, guardians, and traps to finally encounter the corrupted founders of the Illuminated Brotherhood and the secrets they keep!

PART I

Our Wealth Was Written into Words

The PCs return to the ruined upper halls, which are still wracked by distressing tremors and aftershocks. While most survivors hail the PCs as returning heroes and saviors, one group is distracted by something else entirely. These survivors are gathered around a deep crack in a wall of the former merchant camp (area 21) that appeared after the earthquake.

Several surviving refugees investigated the crevice and report there seems to be the outline of a previously hidden door set into the wall, now crooked and disturbed from its frame. The miners are unable to open it. Choose a bold survivor to relate this discovery to the party.

If the PCs investigate, read or paraphrase the following:

A large crack has opened up the stone wall, and indeed, the outline of a hidden door is visible due to the terrible shifting of the mountain. There does not appear to be any obvious mechanism to open the portal.

A DC 26 Perception check uncovers a tiny golden gear inset into the stone. When turned, the gear unlocks the door, which nonetheless must still be forced open with a DC 16 Athletics check.

A CABINET OF CURIOSITIES

Beyond the door lies a long-sealed chamber, well lit by a cold magical fire in a damaged fireplace. The earthquake uncovered this forgotten repository of Illuminated Brotherhood artifacts and galleries of the secret society's history. Bartholomeus Lodoviceus spent decades scouring the citadel for any trace of brotherhood knowledge, collecting every decaying scrap, every crumbling book, every memento of the organization. Displays of ancient ceremonial uniforms, disintegrating tomes, and rotting tapestries were arranged with great care, evident even after the earthquake's destruction.

In some instances, entire blocks of stone engraved with symbols of the flaming pillar and barred doors were chiseled from their original settings and placed in this chamber. The esoteric symbolism of the secret society is etched into every stone surface of the room, predominantly scenes of morality for those seeking knowledge and enlightenment. Dusty scrolls, tapestries, and tomes display indecipherable arcane formulas and diagrams that seem to illustrate the construction of not only physical creations, but also the less tangible lessons that such artistic pursuits teach the creator.

Two stone pillars are also in this room. Unusually embossed, they display deeply inset engravings of gears, wheels, and armor-like plates. A DC 16 Dungeoneering or Thievery check identifies these indentations and the markings around them as metalworking molds. In fact, some of the plates and gears they contain are quite familiar and match parts and pieces of Rabscuttle. They are the partial molds with which his body was constructed, and several sections match any rubbings found on the bodies of cultists encountered in Zobeck, in the quarters of Albricius, or near the wreck of the *Drake*.

A tall golden suit of armor rests in a stone and glass case near the fireplace. The massive, beautifully engraved plate armor is sized for a troll. A DC 23 Perception check reveals that it is an automaton with clockwork gears visible in the seams. This is an inert shield guardian, identifiable by a monster knowledge Nature check (PHB, page 180). Originally constructed by the guardian Bartholomeus for the Old Masters, he now holds the chest piece amulet that controls the creation.

A massive ceremonial chair carved of solid stone and etched with the tools of the stonemason's craft near the fireplace faces the door. The seat is covered in a crumpled collection of brotherhood ritual dress—an embroidered apron, soiled cloth gauntlets, a dirty sash, a gilded robe, and a belt of chain—all moldering atop a mound of hard, stony earth. A great blacksmith's hammer lies discarded on the floor nearby.

A large ceremonial breastplate, golden and square and unlike anything the PCs have yet seen, tops the heap. It is segmented into 16 squares. Each square is adorned with a single rune or symbol, and large half-spherical gems of various colors top each one, magnifying the character beneath.

A DC 23 Arcana or Thievery check, or a Comprehend Language ritual, properly interprets the symbols as numbers in the following grid.

TABLE 5-1: NUMBERED GRID

1	14	14	4
11	7	6	9
8	10	10	5
13	2	3	15

This artifact is +3 *dwarven armor*, but more importantly, it is a ceremonial adornment of a 33rd-degree Silent Master that also serves as the shield guardian's controlling amulet. Each row, column, and diagonal carries the symbolic sum of 33, as does the sum of the four corners.

If PCs touch the armor or the hammer, interfere with the remains, or approach the chair or shield guardian, the dirt slowly shifts and takes humanoid form. Bartholomeus Lodoviceus, the ancient architect of the clockwork doors and the gearforged bodies of the Old Masters, is still here, now an ancient stone-dead dwarf. Read or paraphrase the following:

The fine dirt and grit heaped upon the great chair begins to shift and flow, quickly taking a humanoid form, filling out the tattered clothing and adornments found on the seat there. The gentle shifting of silt confers the still countenance of an earthen dwarf, bits of refuse and spider web interrupting the otherwise perfect dusty rendition. A shudder knocks loose dirt to the floor, and gemlike eyes pop open and scrutinize the surroundings with a furrowed earthen brow. Teeth of stone seem to chew the air, as the creature sits upright on the seat.

Bartholomeus is an ancient dwarven architect, engineer, and inventor who refused to leave the hall's first exodus, having since achieved the lich-like state of stone death. Although once the great mind behind the creation of the clockwork gates, the dwarven gearforged, and the



preservation of the Old Masters, Bartholomeus long ago succumbed to the corruption of the mountain and the temptations of Mammon. He spent countless hours roaming the abandoned halls, greedily acquiring the forgotten knowledge of the brotherhood and storing it in this secret chamber.

Creaking uncomfortably in his seat and leaning forward, his stone jaw opens for the first time in ages to speak to those before him as spiders scurry and crawl all over his earthen skin. Bartholomeus asks in a low, slow, and resonant tone, “Who seeks Bartholomeus, and what would you have me do?”

Bartholomeus addresses the PCs as a proud caretaker, shuffling slowly from his seat and pointing out the meanings of symbols the party might find interesting, such as the recurring display of symbolic doors matching the impenetrable adamantine portal seen in the Great Hall. He encourages the PCs to research the nearby codices and hints at the marvels the Grand Lodge contains that he longs to visit again, although his current state no longer allows him to roam as he once did.

Bartholomeus’s initial attitude is friendly, but after each question the PCs ask, he slides toward hostility. At some point, the senile creature realizes he isn’t even talking to

members of the Illuminated Brotherhood, at which point he becomes hostile and attacks. The base number of questions the PCs can ask is ten before Bartholomeus attacks. If a dwarven PC asks the questions, he can ask three additional questions before Bartholomeus turns hostile. In addition, the PCs may make one DC 26 Diplomacy check to ask two more questions of Bartholomeus before he loses his patience and attacks. If the PCs do not ask enough questions to anger him, Bartholomeus becomes indifferent to them and they may look through his collection at their leisure, with him offering random and unbidden insights into the chamber’s holdings.

REVELATIONS OF BARTHOLOMEUS

Focus on providing the hook for this adventure through Bartholomeus, to lure the PCs down to the poisoned passage to unlock the adamantine doors and beyond them to discover the council chamber of the Old Masters. Bartholomeus tends to meander through the chamber and discuss topics of interest to himself anyway, ignoring questions that do not interest him.

ON ALBRICIUS

Bartholomeus can confirm that several weeks ago, he caught two masked dwarves and a human in the chamber taking rubbings from a nearby pillar. They ran away before he could pursue. He admits, though, that in any case, his “old bones of earth and silt can’t move that fast, anyhow.”

ON THE GOLDEN ARMOR

The stone-dead dwarf seems to disdain the display case, calling the armor a failure. He explains that he sought to create a protector for the Old Masters of the brotherhood, but it was a mere automaton and had no soul. The lessons he learned in its creation led to great breakthroughs in other clockwork creations.

ON RABSCUTTLE AND THE CREATION PILLAR

Bartholomeus does not remember any names, so mention of “Rabscuttle” stirs no memories. He does reveal, however, that he perfected a technique for creating new bodies for dying dwarves and that the blessing of Volund allowed their souls to make the transition into clockwork bodies. Because he long ago forgot, he in no way reveals that the bodies he constructed were masters of the brotherhood or that more than one exists.

If shown Rabscuttle, Bartholomeus focuses on his memories of the techniques of the construction and forging of the body, and talks about the clever inclusion of symbols and maps on the creation with pride. He does not seem to remember what the maps led to or even that Rabscuttle is a living being, manhandling the gearforged as if Rabscuttle were a piece of hot metal on an anvil. He ignores Rabscuttle if the gearforged addresses him and instead gives the other PCs a peculiar look, like a veterinarian annoyed by a barking dog.

Rabscuttle, for his part, does not remember his creator either, although he shakes Bartholomeus’s hand heartily as he marvels in familiarity at the objects of the chamber—the names and lesson of each revelation just on the tip of his tongue, just out of reach of his senile mind.

ON DOORS

The crowning achievement of Bartholomeus was his clockwork and adamantine doors: “The ones that hide secrets worth keeping.” He discusses at length the incredibly tough construction of the adamantine doors. “Have you tried to get past them? You can’t! I dare you! Impossible! You’ve got to unlock them, first! And you can’t speak to the mountain unless you get by them! You want to speak to the mountain, do you not? The Old Masters can stop these tremors! You’ve got to get past the poisoned passage to open them!”

In his excitement, Bartholomeus strides throughout the chamber, pointing out the various door symbolisms rife in brotherhood allegory. He proudly exclaims how each

door featured in the numerous tapestries and codices are all his creations, although representations of the unique adamantine doors seem the most prevalent.

He also has dark thoughts about the ultimate use of those doors to seal away his cousins, who, like him, refused to leave the citadel. His memories are faint about these events, but he can reveal that he never intended for his doors to be used to lock away these forsaken brethren and could not blame them for not wanting to leave the halls. He carries some guilt for his contribution to this crime.

THE OLD MASTERS

If questioned about the Old Masters, Bartholomeus points out a tapestry depicting six dwarven statues, each aflame with the Fires of Knowledge and wielding various implements and symbolic tools of the order. Each a master craftsman in his own right, the founders of the brotherhood passed on their knowledge to their dwarven brethren and allowed the Golden Citadel to flourish.

Eventually, even the succession of dwarven kings bowed before their enlightenment, and the Old Masters ruled the citadel from beyond the adamantine doors, where they communed with the Spirit of the Mountain through the power of the golden bowl to seek guidance in their endeavors.

THE GOLDEN BOWL

Bartholomeus makes constant reference to a golden bowl, calling it, “the prettiest, most perfect thing you ever saw.” The bowl rests beyond the adamantine doors, which were built to protect the device, housed within a special well. The well was used for sacrifices to Rygar, to summon the Spirit of the Mountain. He concludes by saying, “You have more questions? You’ll have to speak to the mountain. Listen to the silt. All the answers to why are behind those doors.”

THE POISONED PASSAGE

The dwarf points to a tapestry that shows a dark cave, billowing with clouds of acid, and mentions “dark tunnels of forbidden knowledge.” He relates how his people asked him to stem the flow of a deadly gas that seeped from a mine, the explosion that rocked the citadel, and how he saved his people by creating a gate to cap the destroyed tunnels. In his ramblings, he also mentions an airlock to access the mines, “because the only way to unlock the doors was down there.”

He further explains that the controls to open the adamantine doors were originally in a lower chamber for defensive purposes, but now, the airlock must be navigated and the poisonous gas chamber crossed to reach the controls and unlock the door. The PCs have seen the door sealing off this area before, which is at area 37 on level 2 of the citadel.

FURTHER QUESTIONS

If the PCs start to inquire on topics other than the proud accomplishments of Bartholomeus, he becomes annoyed, and steers the conversation back toward doors and the secrets they guard. If pressed, he becomes hostile and attacks.

CONCLUSION

The PCs should learn that the adamantine doors in the upper halls conceal a secret lodge as well as an important artifact known as the golden bowl that once allowed the Old Masters to summon the Spirit of the Mountain and communicate with it. With the tremors of the earthquake as constant reminders of the wrath of the Spirit of the Mountain, the characters may realize that the chamber beyond might be their only chance to negotiate with the spirit to prevent further collapse. They should know that the only way to open the doors to the Grand Lodge is to descend into the poisoned passage. They must go past the airlock and operate the controls found there.

As the PCs tour the chamber with the dwarf, he becomes increasingly taciturn and suspicious. Eventually, he turns on them and begins demanding explanations: What are they doing here? Who are they? What do they seek? Why don't they stop these tremors? Madness and greed well up inside the suddenly hostile creature, and the once-forthcoming inventor attempts to destroy the party. As his mind snaps and he turns on the PCs, he seizes his great hammer in his stony fists, and the golden automaton steps forward in his defense. Against larger groups, many of the tools and weapons in the cage animate and attack. For a greater challenge, an eidolon rises up next to Bartholomeus.

11TH LEVEL ENCOUNTER

- 4 PCs (2,400 XP) • Bartholomeus, shield guardian
- 5 PCs (3,000 XP) • Bartholomeus, 6 craftshard sentinels, shield guardian
- 6 PCs (3,600 XP) • Bartholomeus, 4 craftshard sentinels, eidolon, shield guardian

BARTHOLOMEUS STONE-DEAD

LEVEL 10 ELITE BRUTE

MEDIUM MAGICAL CONSTRUCT (UNDEAD) XP 1,000

Initiative +5 **Senses** Perception +10; darkvision
Whispers from Peaks and Caverns aura 3; allies within aura gain +2 bonus to hit and damage

hp 252 **Bloodied** 126

AC 26 **Fortitude** 20 **Reflex** 26 **Will** 24

Immune disease, poison; **Resist** 10 acid, 10 necrotic;

Vulnerable 5 radiant

Saving Throws +2

Speed 6

Action Points 1

[mba] **Ancestor's Maul** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

+13 vs. AC; 3d6 + 5 damage

[m] **Avalanche's Treachery** (minor; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

+11 vs. Reflex; 1d8 + 5, and target is knocked prone

[m] **Flurry of Mountain Steel** (standard; recharge on 4, 5, 6) ♦ **Weapon**

Reach 2; +11 vs. Fortitude; 2d6 + 5 damage, and target is knocked prone

Miss—Half damage, and target is not knocked prone

[m] **Remorseless Stone Rain** (immediate reaction, when a foe is blinded, immobilized, knocked prone, or restrained; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

Reach 2; +13 vs. AC; 1d8 + 5 damage

[c] **The Living Rock Obeys Me** (move; recharge when bloodied)

Close burst 2; +9 vs. Reflex; 1d8 + 5 damage, and target is immobilized (save ends)

First failed save—Target is restrained (save ends)

Adverse Ballot (immediate reaction, when a roll is made; daily)

Bartholomeus may reroll one roll that he has just made, but the result of the reroll must be taken, even if it's worse than the original roll.

All Seeing Eye

Flanking Bartholomeus does not grant combat advantage

Bound by Choice

Bartholomeus deals an extra 1d6 damage against foes standing on the ground; he deals an extra 2d6 damage against foes knocked prone

Alignment unaligned **Languages** Common, Dwarven
Skills Arcana +13, Athletics +14, Nature +10, Perception +10

Str 18 (+9) **Dex** 10 (+5) **Wis** 10 (+5)

Con 16 (+8) **Int** 16 (+8) **Cha** 15 (+7)

CRAFTSHARD SENTINEL

LEVEL 9 SKIRMISHER MINION

SMALL MAGICAL CONSTRUCT

XP 100

Initiative +9 Senses +4

hp 1; a missed attack never damages a minion

AC 23 Fortitude 23 Reflex 21 Will 19

Speed 6

[mba] **Betraying Handiwork** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

+14 vs. AC; 9 damage

[c] **Smith's Regret** (when killed)

Close burst 1; +10 vs. Fortitude; 9 damage, and target is blinded (save ends)

Alignment evil Languages Common, Dwarven

Str 20 (+9) Dex 16 (+7) Wis 11 (+4)

Con 13 (+5) Int 7 (+2) Cha 13 (+5)

EIDOLON

(See MM, page 101)

SHIELD GUARDIAN

(See MM, page 149)

TACTICS

Bartholomeus batters enemies with *ancestor's maul* or *flurry of mountain steel* while using *avalanche's treachery* and the loss of any craftshard minions to provoke his *remorseless stone rain*. If in the thick of battle and surrounded by enemies, he uses *the living rock obeys me* power and considers using an action point to attempt killing any bloodied foes within reach.

TREASURE

Art objects (symbols of the brotherhood worth 1,500 gp), +3 *dwarven armor*, ritual text with Consult Mystic Sages (worth 1,000 gp)

(This represents two treasure parcels.)

Bartholomeus's belongings disincorporate along with his form, including his shield guardian amulet. Despite the apparent wealth contained in the room, a DC 23 Perception or a DC 16 Thievery check reveal the gaudy gold artifacts of the Illuminated Brotherhood—gold trimmed vestments, gem-encrusted chalices, silver medals of commendation, brass tablets and copper plates (all adorned with the esoteric symbols of the brotherhood)—are only worth 1,500 gp.

Only a single book remains intact among dozens of volumes pertaining to clockwork construction and maintenance. This reference is a ritual text of Consult Mystic Sages.

PART II

The Poisoned Passage

The PCs should easily locate the door to the poisoned passage, as they know its existence and location. They pass the clockwork door whenever they enter the lower halls of the citadel and they faced the forsaken there for the first time.

37. THE CLOCKWORK DOOR

Cogs and gears litter the floor surrounding the great clockwork door. Over the many years, most gears from the portal were stripped in an attempt to disable the door, although many other gears (obviously not a part of the original door) were placed within it in an altogether different configuration than the builders originally intended.

Since the sundering of the central clockwork door in this lower ward, the forsaken took steps to ensure they are never again trapped beneath the halls. After their initial assault, a small band disabled the door leading into the poisoned passage, an area they long ago claimed. The crafty creatures reconfigured the clockwork gears of the door in hopes that only they might open it, although a DC 26 Thievery check can make sense of the bizarre arrangement of gears and unlock the door. In addition, the forsaken trapped the door.

FUSILLADE OF GREENBLOOD OILED GEARS
(POISON)

Use stats for black lotus (poison), except attack is +15 vs. Fortitude and does not require ingestion (see DMG 51).

1. THE POISONED PASSAGE

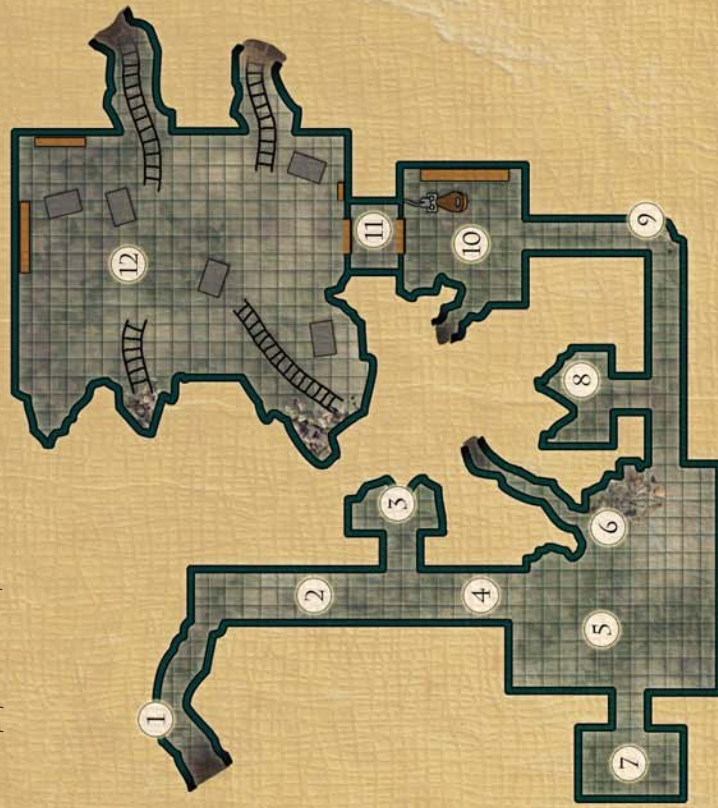
Once the PCs open the clockwork door, read or paraphrase the following:

The distant howling that prevents habitation of the lower halls is much louder here, a droning distraction that muddles the mind and dulls the senses. A moist, cloying green vapor hovers low over the floor and clings to every surface of the passage, stinging the eyes, irritating the skin, and piercing the lungs. A thick, green sludge accumulated over the floor, ceiling, and walls of the stone hallway, dripping down occasionally with a faint, sickening plop. The corridor displays a massive amount of damage, obviously from an explosion, and the tunnel is collapsed in many areas.

The poisoned passage is what remains of a large mine and lower substation where a particularly rich vein of orichalcum

THE POISONED PASSAGE

1 SQUARE = 5 FEET



- 1. STAIRWELL DOWN BEYOND CLOCKWORK DOOR
- 2. TRAP
- 3. COLLAPSED ROOM

- 4. TRAP
- 5. MINING OPERATION (PARTIAL COLLAPSE)
- 6. DERRO TUNNEL
- 7. EQUIPMENT ROOM

- 8. COLLAPSED ROOM
- 9. COLLAPSED TUNNEL SECTION
- 10. BELLOWS/AIRLOCK CONTROL ROOM

- 11. AIRLOCK
- 12. POISON GAS-FILLED MINE STATION

was extracted. One of the earliest discovered veins, this area was once used as a nexus of communications between the upper and lower citadel and included a master control panel to unlock the doors to the Grand Lodge above. Centuries before the fall of the Golden Citadel, a group of miners excavated a massive pocket of highly compressed, poisonous gas that exploded upon release. So great was the devastation that the entire citadel had to be abandoned until a solution could be found. To answer this crisis, Bartholomeus invented and constructed the airlocks, which kept the poisonous vapors at bay.

The passages leading to the airlock chamber are treacherous. The forsaken invaded these tunnels from their nearby Howling City, traversing the mist with alchemical items and setting traps in the hallways to drive out any interlopers. Residue of the gases lingers throughout these hallways. A thick green mist settles on the floor, although its acidic qualities are irritating but not damaging. The accumulated scum that layers the walls and objects of this area in poisonous filth is another matter (see the “Poison Gas Residue” sidebar).

The poison gas is not flammable.

Once the PCs pass through the clockwork door, they hear the distant wails of the forsaken howlers. While unnerving, they have no other effect.

POISON GAS RESIDUE

The slick, olive-colored film is a contact poison. This film covers every wall, door, and object in the area, including the control panel, so great care must be taken to prevent contact with the virulent substance (a DC 21 Thievery check cleans one square in 10 minutes).

Poison Gas Residue Level 10 Poison

Reduced from the thick, billowing vapors of the corrupted vents within Rygar, the forsaken use this toxic oil to trap areas and help capture slaves.

Poison 1,250 gp

Attack +13 vs. Fortitude; ongoing 5 poison damage, and the target takes a -2 penalty to saving throws and is immobilized (save ends both)

First Failed Save—Target is stunned (save ends)

Aftereffect—The target is weakened (save ends)

2. THE COLLAPSING CORRIDOR

The forsaken set a trap to warn them of approaching intruders. They rigged a very unstable wall to collapse if the area is not properly navigated.

COLLAPSING WALL

LEVEL 5 LURKER (Hazard XP 250)

An acrid, burning smell draws your attention to an unstable looking wall of piled stones and talus.

Hazard A portion of precariously stacked stone brick wall is coated with a poisonous gelatin.

Perception

DC 17—The character detects the slight odor of the poison when within 2 squares of the wall

DC 22—The character detects the slight odor of the poison when within 3 squares of the wall

DC 27—The character detects the slight odor of the poison when within 4 squares of the wall

Additional Skill (Nature, Dungeoneering)

DC 22—The character recognizes the danger of the unstable wall or poison residue before approaching within 3 squares of the wall

Trigger When a living creature enters or begins its turn within 1 square of the wall, the hazard is triggered and attacks, toppling to crush the targets.

Standard Reaction

Close blast 4

Target All creature within burst

Attack +7 vs. Reflex

Hit 2d8 + 5 damage

Countermeasure

- A character aware of the collapsing wall can enter the area without triggering the attack by making a DC 22 Acrobatics or Dungeoneering check

Upgrade to Elite (500 XP)

- Increase all skill check DCs by 2
- Increase the attack bonus by 2, and change the damage to 3d6 + 5 damage

Note Any PC hit by this trap is also affected by the poison gas residue (see sidebar)

3. COLLAPSED ROOM

Once the PCs enter or look into this room, read or paraphrase the following:

This rubble-filled room displays the massive devastation that long ago wrecked these chambers. Patches of slime drape the floors and ceiling, while a slime-encrusted dwarf skeleton is half-buried in the stones of the collapsed wall, iron helm crushed. The golden hilt of a finely wrought sword protrudes from the rubble, flames dancing lightly along the visible portion of the blade, casting odd shadows at weird angles throughout the room.

THE POISON GAS

The poisonous fumes that erode these chambers were long trapped in a highly compressed gas pocket far below, spreading catastrophe throughout these tunnels when the dwarves inadvertently mined too closely. The thick fumes provide concealment as heavily obscured squares (PHB 280) and act as difficult terrain. The gas is poisonous and acidic. Obviously, the fumes are unbreathable, and any unprotected creatures introduced to the gas immediately suffer the effects of suffocation (see **DMG** 159). The gas is not flammable or combustible.

POISONOUS GAS

LEVEL 9 BLASTER (HAZARD XP 400)

A faint sulfurous smell and a burning at the back of your throat lets you know you've ventured into an area filled with colorless, poisonous fumes.

Hazard Poisonous gas concentrates in an isolated cavern, filling up to 20 contiguous squares

Perception

DC 28—The character detects the slight odor of the gas before entering the area

Additional Skill (Dungeoneering, Nature)

DC 24—The character recognizes the danger of the gas before entering the area

Trigger When a living creature enters or begins its turn within the area, the hazard is triggered and attacks, releasing its poisonous fumes

Opportunity Action Melee

Target Living creature within the area

Attack +12 vs. Fortitude

Hit 2d8 + 5 poison damage, and target takes ongoing 5 poison damage and is slowed (save ends both)

Countermeasure

- A DC 20 Endurance check allows characters aware of the gas to hold their breath and avoid damage when entering area; characters can hold their breath for 3 minutes, but will need to make another Endurance check each round they take damage

Upgrade to Elite (800 XP)

- Increase the Perception and Dungeoneering check DCs by 2
 - Increase the ongoing damage to ongoing 10 poison
-

This area contains a cleverly constructed trap set by the forsaken. Five patches of green slime grow on the ceiling throughout the room and blend in so well with the surrounding sludge that it takes a DC 21 Dungeoneering or Perception check to pick them out. The enticing sword is the subject of magic rituals to appear as a +2 *flaming sword*. In fact, the “sword” is simply an intricately fabricated plug for a gas leak emanating from a fissure beyond the rubble. Even if the gas pocket it contains is discovered, it is incredibly difficult to remove the sword without also releasing the high-pressure poison gas from the fissure. Once removed, the false sword’s true nature is easily discerned.

4. GLYPHS AND WARDS

The forsaken placed another trap here to warn them of the approach of interlopers.

GLYPH OF WARDING (TRAP)

(see **DMG** 90)

CANARIES IN THE COALMINE

PCs can purchase canaries and white mice from the dwarves for 1 gp each. These useful creatures act as early detection devices for poisonous gases and provide characters with a +5 bonus on related checks.

5. THE ANTECHAMBER

The forsaken guards of the poisoned passage chose this room to stop the party’s intrusion. The forsaken use a combination of foul-tasting antitoxins and crude gasmasks to navigate the poisonous passages from their Howling City to these safer chambers, although these precautions do little to protect against the high pressure gas chamber the airlock cordons off from the rest of the mines. They confront the party and defend their territory to the death. As the PCs enter, read or paraphrase the following:

Heavy mist swirls lazily about the floor of this chamber, occasionally interrupted by small, brief jets of the sickly green vapor from concealed fissures in the walls and floor. Old mining equipment and ore carts—rusted, pitted, and deteriorating in the corrosive environment—lay scattered throughout the room. Many of the walls are collapsed into rubble, although a roughly hewn tunnel, thick with poison gas, leads downward into the darkness below.

Two forsaken reaver minions, a forsaken raider, and a deathspittle bombardier stand watch in area 7 with one savant attacking from the room beyond. The remaining forsaken reavers and deathspittle bombardiers protect the other savant positioned near the fissure opening at area 6.

14TH LEVEL ENCOUNTER

- 4 PCs (4,000 XP) • 1 dogmole juggernaut, 2 forsaken deathspittle bombardiers, 1 forsaken fetal savant, 1 forsaken raider, 5 forsaken reaver minions, 2 forsaken savants
- 5 PCs (5,000 XP) • 1 dogmole juggernaut, 2 forsaken deathspittle bombardiers, 1 forsaken fetal savant, 2 forsaken raiders, 10 forsaken reaver minions, 2 forsaken savants
- 6 PCs (6,000 XP) • 1 dogmole juggernaut, 2 forsaken deathspittle bombardiers, 1 forsaken fetal savant, 2 forsaken raiders, 10 forsaken reaver minions, 2 forsaken savants

DOGMOLE JUGGERNAUT LEVEL 7 ELITE BRUTE

LARGE NATURAL BEAST (BLIND, MOUNT) XP 600

Initiative +6 Senses Perception +9; blindsight 20
Scent aura 2; dogmoles automatically detect invisible enemies and those with concealment (including total concealment) within their aura

hp 192 Bloodied 96

Regeneration 5

AC 21 Fortitude 23 Reflex 21 Will 18

Resist 15 poison

Saving Throws +2

Speed 6, burrow 4

Action Points 1

[mba] **Gouging Teeth** (standard; at-will)

+11 vs. AC; 2d8 + 6 damage

[m] **Ferocious Charge** (standard; usable only when charging; at will)

+9 vs. Ref; 4d8 + 4 damage; target pushed 2 squares and knocked prone; the dogmole may continue its move if it has any remaining this turn, but it must finish its move in an unoccupied square

[m] **Rabid Rebuke** (immediate reaction, when hit by melee attack; at will)

The dogmole makes a basic melee attack against whoever hit it

[c] **Forsaken Frenzy** (standard; recharge on 5, 6)

Close burst 1; targets enemies; +9 vs. Armor Class; 4d8 + 5 damage

Murderous Frenzy

The dogmole gains 1 action point the first time it reduces an enemy to 0 hp in an encounter

Alignment unaligned Languages —

Str 21 (+8) Dex 16 (+6) Wis 14 (+5)

Con 16 (+4) Int 2 (-1) Cha 8 (+2)

FORSAKEN DEATHSPITTLE BOMBARDIER

LEVEL 10 ARTILLERY

SMALL NATURAL HUMANOID

XP 500

Initiative +10 Senses Perception +11; darkvision, low-light vision

hp 84 Bloodied 42

AC 22 Fortitude 22 Reflex 20 Will 24

Resist 15 poison (see sidebar), 5 psychic

Speed 5

[mba] **Shortsword** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

+17 vs. AC; 1d8 + 5 damage

[m] **Desperate Cover** (immediate interrupt, when hit by a ranged, melee, or close attack; encounter) ♦ **Weapon**

The forsaken gains resist 10 against the attack

[a] **Murderous Bombard** (standard; recharge on 6) ♦ **Charm, Poison, Weapon**

Area wall 8 within 8; +13 vs. Will; 2d6 + 5 poison damage and ongoing 5 poison damage, and target is dominated (save ends)

[a] **Sloughide Bombard** (standard; recharge on 5, 6) ♦ **Acid, Poison, Weapon**

Area wall 8 within 8; +13 vs. Reflex; 3d6 + 5 acid damage, and target is immobilized until end of forsaken's next turn

[a] **Weeping Bombard** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Poison, Weapon**

Area wall 8 within 8; +13 vs. Fortitude; 2d6 + 5 poison damage, and target is slowed (save ends); if target is already slowed, target becomes weakened (save ends)

Clarity of Madness

The forsaken cannot be dominated

Cruel Blow

The forsaken deals an extra +1d6 damage if it has combat advantage

Alignment chaotic evil Languages Deep Speech, Dwarven

Skills Athletics +12, Dungeoneering +12, Perception +11

Str 15 (+7) Dex 21 (+10) Wis 13 (+6)

Con 18 (+9) Int 15 (+7) Cha 18 (+9)

Equipment chainmail, forsaken tower bombard (with 3 each of murderous, sloughide, and weeping canisters), shortsword, forsaken gasmask

FORSAKEN FETAL SAVANT
LEVEL 10 CONTROLLER

TINY NATURAL HUMANOID XP 500

Initiative +5 **Senses** Perception +14; darkvision, low-light vision

hp 94 **Bloodied** 47

AC 22 **Fortitude** 20 **Reflex** 23 **Will** 25

Resist 15 poison (see sidebar), 5 psychic

Speed 1, forsaken fetal savant cannot shift

[mba] **Brainbleeder Rebuke** (minor; at-will) ♦ **Psychic**

Reach 2; +14 vs. Will; 1d8 + 5 psychic damage

[c] **Wail from the Utter Black** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Psychic**

Close burst 6; +12 vs. Will; 2d8 + 5 psychic damage, and target is dazed (save ends)

[r] **Despairing Prison of Flesh** (standard; recharge when first bloodied) ♦ **Psychic, Reliable**

Ranged 7; +14 vs. Will; 4d10 + 5 psychic damage, and target is dazed (save ends); targets already dazed are instead dominated (save ends); commanding a dominated target is a free action

First Failed Save—If not already dominated, target is dominated (save ends)

Clarity of Madness

A forsaken fetal savant cannot be dominated.

Precious Cargo (move; at-will)

Another creature may carry a fetal savant in a specially prepared cage. Doing so requires the fetal savant's move action, but allows it to move when that creature moves.

Carrying the cage reduces the bearer's speed by three squares unless otherwise noted.

Alignment chaotic evil **Languages** Common, Deep Speech, Dwarven

Skills Arcana +13, Insight +14, Perception +14, Stealth +10

Str 6 (+3) **Dex** 10 (+5) **Wis** 18 (+9)

Con 6 (+3) **Int** 16 (+8) **Cha** 16 (+8)

Equipment forsaken gasmask

FORSAKEN RAIDER

LEVEL 10 BRUTE

SMALL NATURAL HUMANOID

XP 500

Initiative +9 **Senses** Perception +6; darkvision, low-light vision

hp 131 **Bloodied** 65

AC 21 **Fortitude** 24 **Reflex** 23 **Will** 20

Resist 15 poison (see sidebar *k*), 5 psychic

Speed 5

[mba] **Guisarme** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

Reach 2; +13 vs. AC; 3d6 + 5 damage

[m] **Goading Slash** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

Reach 2; +11 vs. Fortitude; 2d6 + 5 damage, and the target is marked until the end of the forsaken's next turn

[m] **Guisarme Hook** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

Reach 2; +11 vs. Reflex; 2d6 + 5 damage, and target is knocked prone

[c] **Weeping Steel Blossom** (standard; encounter) ♦ **Weapon**

Close burst 1; +9 vs. Reflex; 2d6 + 5 damage

Clarity of Madness

A forsaken cannot be dominated

Cruel Blow

The forsaken deals an extra +1d6 damage if it has combat advantage

Alignment chaotic evil **Languages** Deep Speech, Dwarven

Skills Athletics +15, Endurance +15

Str 21 (+10) **Dex** 18 (+9) **Wis** 13 (+6)

Con 21 (+10) **Int** 11 (+5) **Cha** 12 (+6)

Equipment forsaken gasmask, guisarme, hide armor

FORSAKEN GASMASK

These ill-fitting, barely functional gasmasks provide their wearers with a +2 bonus on saving throws made against ongoing poison damage for an encounter. The gasmask also provides the wearer resist 15 poison against gaseous poisons, such as the poisonous gas (hazard). Afterward, the canister is expended and the mask provides only the +2 to saving throws.

FORSAKEN SAVANT **LEVEL 10 ARTILLERY**
SMALL NATURAL HUMANOID XP 500

Initiative +10 **Senses** Perception +13; darkvision, low-light vision
hp 84 **Bloodied** 42
AC 24 **Fortitude** 20 **Reflex** 21 **Will** 23
Resist 15 poison (see sidebar on *forsaken gasmask*), 15 psychic
Speed 5

[mba] **Longsword** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
+17 vs. AC; 1d8 + 5 damage

[m] **Brainbleeder Rebuke** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Psychic**
Reach 2; +15 vs. Will; 2d6 + 5 psychic damage

[r] **Vision of the Unspeakable Truth** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Psychic**
Ranged 7; +15 vs. Will; 2d8 + 5 psychic damage, and target is dazed until the end of forsaken's next turn

[r] **Wrath of Chaos** (standard; recharge when first bloodied) ♦ **Charm, Psychic**
Ranged 7; +15 vs. Will; 4d8 + 5 psychic damage, and target is stunned; a stunned target is instead dazed (save ends)

First Failed Save—Target is dazed if not already dazed (save ends)

Clarity of Madness
The forsaken cannot be dominated

Cruel Blow
The forsaken deals an extra +1d6 damage when it has combat advantage

Mule for the Twisted (move; at-will)
The forsaken may move 4 squares while carrying an occupied forsaken fetal savant's cage

Alignment chaotic evil **Languages** Deep Speech, Dwarven

Skills Arcana +14, Dungeoneering +13, Insight +13, Religion +14

Str 15 (+7) **Dex** 15 (+7) **Wis** 17 (+8)
Con 18 (+9) **Int** 19 (+9) **Cha** 21 (+10)

Equipment *forsaken gasmask*, hide armor, holy symbol, long sword

FORSAKEN REAVER **LEVEL 8 BRUTE MINION**
SMALL NATURAL HUMANOID XP 88

Initiative +4 **Senses** Perception +8; darkvision, low-light vision
hp 1; a missed attack never damages a minion
AC 20 **Fortitude** 20 **Reflex** 18 **Will** 22
Resist 15 poison (see sidebar on *forsaken gasmask*), 5 psychic
Speed 5

[mba] **Shortsword** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
+11 vs. AC; 10 damage

[rba] **Crossbow** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Poison, Weapon**
Ranged 10/20; +11 vs. AC; 5 damage plus 5 poison

Cruel Blow
The forsaken deals an extra +1d6 damage if it has combat advantage

Alignment chaotic evil **Languages** Deep Speech, Dwarven

Skills Athletics +12, Dungeoneering +9, Perception +8

Str 17 (+7) **Dex** 10 (+4) **Wis** 8 (+3)
Con 16 (+7) **Int** 11 (+4) **Cha** 12 (+5)

Equipment chainmail, light crossbow (20 bolts), shortsword



TACTICS

During Combat Forsaken reavers and raiders charge into melee, attempting to flank the party while deathspittle bombardiers fire bombards from a distance. Savants try to work in concert with fetal savants, dazing targets and using *despairing prison of flesh*. Fetal savants reserve *wail from the utter black* until a foe engages them, instead relying on *brainbleeder rebuke*.

Morale The maddened forsaken fight until killed.

6. DERRO TUNNELS

The pile of rubble near the fissure opening is trapped to collapse in case the forsaken need to cover their escape. In madness, a forsaken might choose to collapse the wall on himself and enemies if he thinks he can harm numerous enemies by doing so.

BUILT-TO-COLLAPSE WALL

(SEE ENCOUNTER 2)

If the PCs wish to investigate the passages leading to the Howling City, they find themselves deterred by the noxious fumes, which resemble the poisonous gas chamber fog (see the “Poison Gas” sidebar), with the exception of the slowing quality. The treacherous home city of the forsaken stands more than a quarter mile down these passages. Expand or define the Howling City in any way appropriate to your campaign, or simply dissuade the PCs from investigating it. Map and details on the city are available in **KOBOLD QUARTERLY #11**.

7. GUARD STATION

Once the PCs defeat the guards in area 5 and look into this room, read or paraphrase the following:

This room is a disheveled mess, serving as guard quarter, kitchen, hearth, and home for the acid-scarred forsaken stationed here. Pervasive litter lies scattered throughout the room, with piles of rusted junk as maddened attempts at artistic decoration. Rough mats of woven cave moss fibers make do as beds.

Beyond the normal accoutrements of habitation by the forsaken, there appears to be little of value here, although a DC 26 Perception check uncovers a worn effigy of Volund worth 100 gp. A stack of used scroll parchments used as a pillow contains one scrap still holding a Passwall ritual.

TREASURE

2 bombard canisters (weeping), 10 forsaken gasmasks, ritual scroll with Passwall, +3 safewing amulet, a silver effigy of Volund (worth 100 gp)

This is two treasure parcels.

8. RUINED WAYSTATION

Several enormous patches of tangled, feathery cavelight moss cover this room, giving off a faint illumination. As the PCs approach it, the glow intensifies as dusty motes fall from it and drift to the floor in a muted sparkle of luminescence. A DC 19 Dungeoneering or Nature check correctly identifies cavelight moss for what it is. The forsaken allowed it to prosper here and learned to bypass the creatures here by feeding them scraps and slaves.

8TH LEVEL ENCOUNTER

- 4 PCs (1,400 XP) • 4 cavelight moss, 1 dryad
- 5 PCs (1,750 XP) • 5 cavelight moss, 1 dryad
- 6 PCs (2,100 XP) • 4 cavelight moss, 1 dryad, 1 shambling mound

(See MM for dryad on page 96 and shambling mound on page 232.)

CAVELIGHT MOSS		LEVEL 6 SOLDIER	
LARGE NATURAL ANIMATE (BLIND, OOZE, PLANT)		250 XP	
Initiative +3	Senses Perception +4; blindsight 10, tremorsense 10		
hp 70	Bloodied 35		
AC 20	Fortitude 22	Reflex 18	Will 19
Immune gaze			
Speed 1			
[mba] Tendril (standard action; at-will)			
Reach 2; +13 vs. AC; 1d10 + 4 damage, and the target is weakened until the end of the moss's next turn			
[m] Grasping Tendrils (standard action; recharge on 6)			
Reach 2; +11 vs. Reflex; 3d8 + 4 damage, and target is restrained and weakened (escape ends both); only one creature can be restrained at a time			
[m] Writhing Tendrils (standard action; at-will)			
The moss makes two <i>tendril</i> attacks			
Phosphorescent Light			
The moss constantly emits a dim light; as a minor action, it can increase the radius of its light by 1 square (to a maximum of 5 squares) or decrease it by 1 square (to a minimum of 1 square)			
Alignment unaligned		Languages —	
Str 19 (+7)	Dex 10 (+3)	Wis 13 (+4)	
Con 13 (+4)	Int 2 (-2)	Cha 5 (+0)	

TACTICS

Cavelight moss remains as unobtrusive as possible until prey approaches within reach. Once a creature has been seized, it uses its extra *tendril attack* to fend off rescuers.

TREASURE

6 canisters for *forsaken gasmasks*; a carefully decorated dogmole skull encrusted with semi-precious gems and clockwork castoffs (worth 200 gp); a collection of golden gears and cogs (worth 800 gp); and raw orichalcum ore (worth 400 gp; bearers risk gold fever (disease) after each extended rest)

This is one treasure parcel.

9. COLLAPSED TUNNEL

This section of tunnel caved in enough to block Medium or larger creatures and requires even Small creatures to squeeze. Removing enough debris to allow Medium creatures to pass requires four successful DC 16 Athletics, Dungeoneering, or Endurance checks. Each check requires 10 minutes to clear. Failure by 5 or more causes part of the tunnel to further collapse, adding one additional check to the total needed to clear enough space.

10. THE CONTROL ROOM

A massive explosion scarred this chamber. Most of the stout stone walls shifted and settled in the centuries since, forming deep cracks that barely contain the poisonous fumes beyond. A circular brass door 10 ft. in diameter and 8 inches thick is set into the far wall; when opened, the door rolls into a recess in the surrounding rock. A small, iron-rimmed porthole of thick glass to the side of the circular door looks into the airlock beyond, revealing an identical door and porthole beyond.

A control panel composed of various pressure gauges and stiff iron levers, along with simple, pictographic instructions, fills one wall of this room. The twin seesaw handles of a large bellows pump spouts from the stone floor within, with a worn leather hose snaking to the wall and into the gas chamber beyond. Two airtight suits hang on hooks flanking the door. The suits are composed of thick-but-pliable leather, iron reinforcements, and heavy copper helmets with small glass portholes.

The pictograms contain numerous warnings about the toxic nature of the gas beyond. Lewd vandalism and graffiti, written by the forsaken in Dwarven, cover most of the signs, warning of the dangers and madness of being trapped behind closed doors. The control panel is covered in poison gas residue (see the “Poison Gas Residue” sidebar on page 130). A DC 21 Arcana check by someone who can read Dwarven correctly interprets the airlock opening instructions.

TABLE 5-3: AIRLOCK OPENING INSTRUCTIONS

Step	Instruction
1.	Worker to put on suit and secure helmet. Two crew prime air pump to clear airlock by working bellow handles in back-and-forth action.
2.	Open outer door with marked lever. DANGER! ONLY worker in secure suit should enter airlock.
3.	Outside crew close outer airlock door with marked lever. Inside worker opens inner airlock door from inside chamber using properly marked lever.
4.	Inside worker enter chamber and turn right. Close inner airlock door with properly marked lever. Attach hose there to proper socket on face of helmet to provide air. Proceed carefully while working in chamber.
5.	Prevent snagging hose in hazardous environment. DANGER! Low visibility!
6.	Outside crew work pump by operating bellow handles to provide fresh air to inside worker. Use marked lever to open door when airlock secure.

Working any lever to open an airlock door is a standard action. Failure to disconnect the hose from the helmet before re-entering the airlock results in it being kinked and trapped in the door, leaving the wearer with a 3-round supply of air. It takes 2 rounds of pumping to clear the airlock of poison gas with the pump mechanism before a worker exits the chamber, otherwise a 20-foot burst of pressurized poison gas affects all within range of the outer door when it opens.

POISON GAS POCKET

(see “The Poison Gas” sidebar page 130)

THE AIRTIGHT SUITS

The suits provide access to the important controls beyond the airlock. There are two suits present, resembling antique diving suits made of thick, magically enhanced leather augmented by a metal collar that securely fastens a large, heavy copper helmet. They radiate magic and fit any Medium creature. The bulkiness and thickness of the suits, as well as the metal fittings, require the plate armor proficiency to don without penalty and insulate their wearers from all gas damage while whole. In addition, the suits protect the wearer from acid and counteract the slow effect of the noxious fumes.

Unlike armor, however, the suits were not constructed to withstand the rigors of combat, and take untyped damage equal to that dealt to their wearers (the suits take no damage from ongoing damage other than fire). A punctured suit retains the ability to move without hindrance but leaves the wearer vulnerable to some effects of the gas—the effects increasing with every 5 points of damage the suit takes. The enhancements fail completely if the suit takes 30 hp.

If the connecting air hose is significantly punctured, the wearer only has a 3-round air supply before the effects of suffocation begin (see DMG 304). Due to the bulkiness of the suits, a character can wear light armor under them without additional penalty, but only the greater armor bonus of the two applies.

As soon as the first PC puts on a suit, two others must operate the pump to provide air. Roll for initiative and begin tracking the number of rounds it takes for the PCs to activate the door controls in area 13.

THE AIR PUMP

The pump requires a two-person team to properly operate, each crewmember working one end of the seesaw of the bellows handle to provide clean, fresh air to the workers wearing the suits. A stout hose (AC 7 + wearer's Dexterity modifier; 20 hp) runs from the pump and into a socketed recess on the wall, feeding the other end of the 150-ft. coiled hose on the far side of the airlock. Working the pump also clears the poison gas from the airlock in 2 rounds. Without pumping, suits only have 3-round air supplies.

NEW ITEM

Airtight Suit

Heavy armor	Cost	Armor Bonus	Armor Check Penalty	—Base Speed—		Wgt
				6 squares	4 squares	
Pressure Suit	250 gp	+2	-6	4 squares	3 squares	40 lb.

Damage	Effects
0–4	Immune to poison and acid damage, +2 AC, -6 armor check penalty
5–9	+3 save vs. ongoing poison, 2 ongoing acid damage, +2 AC, -5 armor check penalty failure
10–14	+2 save vs. poison, 3 ongoing acid damage, +1 AC, -4 armor check penalty
15–19	+1 save vs. poison, 4 ongoing acid damage, +1 AC, -3 armor check penalty
20–24	+0 save vs. poison, 5 ongoing acid damage, +0 AC, -2 armor check penalty
25–29	+0 save vs. poison, 8 ongoing acid damage, +0 AC, -1 armor check penalty
30+	Suit destroyed; full effects of fumes and acid, and suffer all penalties for movement through gas.

11. THE AIRLOCK CHAMBER

To protect the upper chambers from the deadly gas, the dwarves built a failsafe into this door. The outer door can only be unlocked and opened from the outside, while the inner door can only be unlocked and worked from inside the airlock and the greater chamber. Only one door can be open at any time, and from different locations, to prevent sabotage. Four consecutive successful DC 45 Thievery checks can change these failsafes.

12. THE POISONED CHAMBER

Once the PCs make their way through and beyond the airlock, read or paraphrase the following:

The chamber beyond the airlock is littered with the remnants of the previous mining operations torn apart when the gas pocket ruptured. Visibility is extremely limited due to the green, poisonous vapor, although many light stones provide ample, if muted, illumination. Several air hoses lay coiled near the door. Creaks, screeches and other unusual, unidentifiable noises resonate throughout the chamber. Mining carts, torn and jagged rails, rusted lanterns, picks, shovels, and hammers all lay in scattered disarray, pitted and useless.

Everburning torches provide illumination. The coiled air hoses stretch to 150 ft., but three of the hoses that lead off into the chamber have been severed. The oppressive, cloying dampness weighs heavily on those in the chamber, and all squares are heavily obscured.

The jumbled mess on the floor makes the entire chamber difficult terrain. In addition, obstacles spring up at random intervals, threatening the safety of the workers and their vulnerable suits. The following hazards act as traps although they are consequences of the environment and were not deliberately set. Most of these events can affect flying PCs as well. Any attacks that damage a PC deal an equal amount to the suit (see the "Airtight Suit Damage" sidebar). Add events to create drama and tension, but avoid killing a PC with a hazard. Consider rolling a d10 each round. On a 1, have a hazard effect occur to a random target in the room. See DMG pages 87-89 for details

- **Rusted Equipment Collapse.** Use attack block for whirling blades (trap).
- **Rolling Rocks.** Use attack block for rockslide (hazard).
- **Jagged Rail Shifts.** Use attack block for spear gauntlet (trap).
- **Rocks from Ceiling.** Use attack block for magic crossbow turret (trap).
- **Released Winch Chain.** Use attack block for pendulum scythes (trap).

THE CONTROL PANEL.

The control panel for the adamantine doors in the upper halls stands at the back of the chamber. Many complicated levers and switches adorn the pitted and rusted interface. Some of these levers and switches power the airship dock functions, release pressure in the upper halls' chimneys, and control several lifts and rails in an area too damaged for the controls to affect anything. A DC 16 Perception check locates a series of pictograms that identify the proper door mechanism. The rusted lever requires a DC 16 Acrobatics or Thievery check. Shifting the lever unlocks the doors in the halls above.

THE AIR PUMP

The characters operating the pump do not have an easy time of it, either. Operating the antique pump is incredibly strenuous work.

After pumping for a number of rounds equal to half their Constitution score, PCs must make a DC 16 Athletics or Endurance check at the beginning of their next turn to continue pumping. On a failure, PCs are weakened. In this case, spending a healing surge eliminates the weakened condition in addition to restoring hp. Thereafter, PCs must make checks every other round, and each additional check increases the DC by +1. Weakened PCs who continue pumping and fail a second check become dazed and can no longer pump.

PCs who rest for a number of rounds equal to half their Constitution score can resume pumping as though they had pumped for 0 rounds.

In addition, the machinery is altogether unreliable, and every 2d4 rounds a mishap occurs, creating a few moments of havoc (for three-character parties, roll once every 3d6 rounds; for parties larger than six, roll every 1d4 rounds). All of these events halt airflow until they are addressed and corrected.

TABLE 5-5: MACHINERY MISHAP!

d6	Event
1-2	Detached hose! Air supply is interrupted. A DC 13 Dexterity check replaces the hose in its socket.
3-4	Leak! One bellow rips, disrupting the mechanism until repaired. A Make Whole ritual immediately repairs the damage and prevents it from occurring again. Otherwise, patching a bellow requires 1d6 rounds of work, and this result can reoccur.
5-6	Jam! The device jams, requiring a DC 19 Athletics check to dislodge the bellow handles before operation can continue.

RUNNING THE AIRLOCK

Players do not like to split the party, and they might take extreme measures to magically circumvent the lack of breathable air, no communication, impenetrable double-locked doors, acidic fumes, deadly poisonous vapor, and the slow effect of the gas, just to keep the group from splitting up. However unlikely, groups who concoct such solutions should reap the rewards of such innovation and be fairly allowed to proceed.

For those without such resources, you must deal with a split party, as there are only two suits available to enter the dangerous chamber safely. This is by design, and can be run a number of ways if you want to maximize the surprise and impact of the hidden creatures that lurk in the mist, especially the deception of the returning venomtongue mohrg.

You can split the players into two groups and place them in separate rooms until the mohrg makes his appearance, at which point the table can be recombined and the attacks both inside and out run concurrently. Alternatively, careful word choice, clever timing, and deceptive descriptions can fool even the most suspicious party, allowing you to keep all party members at the same table without splitting them up.

Wait until the suited PCs are on the return trip after operating the door lock. As the belker prepares to make its appearance inside, let the pump operators reach their own conclusions as the inner door opens and the concealed mohrg knocks on the glass. Even the players of the returning characters might assume their trial is over and you are wrapping up the events! At this point, if the pump operating characters are fooled, stay in initiative and roll for the belker and mohrg.

THE FIENDS IN THE FOG

After the PCs traverse the poisonous gas chamber and operate the lever to unlock the door, they must navigate the treacherous terrain back to the control room. Emphasize the claustrophobic confines of the damp suit, the unusual noises that echo throughout the chamber, and the oppressive mist that conceals it all. Perception checks in this environment are fruitless, due to the concealment of the gas, but the characters quickly become aware of a belker that makes its home in the mist. It attacks when the lead character reaches the middle of the room on his return trip.

DEVELOPMENT

While the suited PCs deal with the smoky menace within the poisoned chamber (area 12), the PCs left in the control room

(area 10) hear the inner airlock door open. A suited creature shuffles through the inner door, closes it, and with a gloved hand taps on the porthole glass, motioning to open the outer door. Hide as best you can that this creature is not one of the PCs returning to the airlock.

This creature is all that remains of a human tomb robber who entered this chamber weeks ago in search of riches. When he was attacked, his friends at the pump abandoned him. Slain by the belker, the poisonous mist of the chamber infused him with a foul sentience, rising as a mohrg that now inhabits the suit. The cunning mohrg attempts to trick anyone outside into letting him out of the airlock, tapping patiently on the glass but allowing the remnants of the fog and a subtle turn of his helmeted head to conceal his true nature. His suit currently has taken 15 hp damage, calculated as appropriate on the table above. In addition, this particular mohrg is immune to the acid effects of the fog. Because the mohrg's undead existence is so inexorably tied to the suit, it suffers no ill effects from wearing it, but it does gain the suit's armor bonus to AC.

LUNG-RENDER BELKER	
LEVEL 10 ELITE CONTROLLER	
LARGE ELEMENTAL MAGICAL BEAST (AIR)	XP 1,000
Initiative +10	Senses Perception +13, darkvision
hp 212	Bloodied 106
AC 26	Fortitude 24
	Reflex 26
	Will 20
Immune disease, poison; Resist 15 acid	
(see <i>breath of the wind</i>)	
Saving Throws +2	
Speed 8 (hover)	
Action Points 1	
[mba] Howling Bite of the Zephyr (standard; at-will) ♦ Acid	
+14 vs. Reflex; 3d6 and ongoing 5 acid damage	
[m] Driving Whirlwind Claw (minor; at-will)	
Reach 2; +15 vs. AC; 1d8 + 5 damage, and target slides 1 square	
[m] Engulfing Smokeclaws (standard; at-will) ♦ Acid	
Targets one or two Medium or smaller targets; +12 vs. Reflex, automatically hits an immobilized creature; target is grabbed and pulled into the belker's space, and target is dazed and takes ongoing 10 acid damage (escape ends); a creature that escapes the grab shifts to a square of its choosing adjacent to the belker; the belker moves normally while creatures are engulfed within it	
[m] Wing of the Blustering Gale (standard; at-will) ♦ Acid	
Reach 2; +14 vs. Reflex; 2d6 + 5 acid damage, and target is blinded (save ends)	
<i>First missed save</i> —Target is immobilized (save ends)	

Breath of the Wind (minor; recharge when bloodied)

The belker becomes insubstantial until the end of its next turn; those grabbed by it are immediately freed, but remain dazed and continue to take ongoing 10 acid damage (save ends)

Alignment evil	Languages Common, Dwarven, Primordial	
Skills Perception +13, Stealth +15		
Str 16 (+17)	Dex 21 (+10)	Wis 16 (+8)
Con 18 (+13)	Int 8 (+4)	Cha 8 (+4)

VENOMTONGUE MOHRG

LEVEL 10 ELITE SKIRMISHER

MEDIUM NATURAL HUMANOID (UNDEAD) XP 1,000

Initiative +12 **Senses** Perception +11, darkvision
hp 208 **Bloodied** 104

AC 26 **Fortitude** 20 **Reflex** 26 **Will** 24

Immune disease, poison; **Resist** 15 necrotic;

Vulnerable 5 radiant

Saving Throws +2

Speed 6

Action Points 1

[mba] **slam** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Necrotic**

+15 vs. AC; 2d6 + 5 necrotic damage

[m] **Killer's Dance** (standard; recharge when bloodied) ♦ **Necrotic**

The mohrg may shift up to 6 squares and make one *slam* attack against each adjacent foe along the move

[m] **Murderous Feint** (move; at-will) ♦ **Necrotic**

+13 vs. Reflex; 1d8 + 5 damage, and target is knocked prone; mohrg shifts 3 squares

Miss—Half damage, and target is not knocked prone; mohrg may still shift 3 squares

[m] **Poison Tonguestrike** (standard; recharge on 4, 5, 6) ♦ **Poison**

Reach 2; +13 vs. Fortitude; 2d6 + 5 poison damage and 5 ongoing poison damage, and target is slowed (save ends)

First failed save—Target is immobilized (save ends)

Second failed save—Target is restrained (save ends)

Killer Instincts

The mohrg deals an extra +2d6 damage when it has combat advantage

Alignment evil	Languages Common, Dwarven	
Skills Athletics +14, Nature +13, Perception +11, Stealth +15		
Str 18 (+9)	Dex 21 (+10)	Wis 13 (+6)
Con 16 (+8)	Int 16 (+8)	Cha 16 (+8)



LUNG-RENDER BELKER TACTICS

The lung-render belker likes to use its *driving whirlwind claw* and *wing of the blustering gale* or *howling bite of the zephyr* attacks in combination until foes have been moderately wounded, using *breath of the wind* to shift positions and reduce damage from hard-hitting or missile-firing foes. Then it will try catching enemies with its *engulfing smokeclaws*.

The venomtongue mohrg pummels enemies with its skeletal fists while using its *murderous feint* to improve its position and create situations where it might use *killer instincts*. It utilizes its *poison tonguestrike* as often as the power recharges, trying to hinder as many foes as possible.

If the PCs defeated the forsaken guards, traversed the treacherous airlock, overcame the threats of the poisonous chamber, and manipulated the controls found there, the adamantine doors above are unlocked. The secrets they conceal await.

PART III

The Grand Lodge of the Old Masters

When the PCs return to the Great Hall, they find the adamantine doors to the Grand Lodge are now unlocked, although with the structural damage of the earthquake, it takes a DC 19 Athletics check to swing them open.

32. THE GREAT DOORS

These doors and the Grand Lodge chambers beyond are enhanced with a *Forbiddance* effect and are sealed against all planar travel into or within the chambers, including all

teleportation, plane shifting, astral travel, ethereal travel, and all summoning spells. Such effects simply fail. The Well is exempt from this effect. The alignment restriction effects long ago faded away, and all may now pass freely.

33. THE RECEPTORY

When the PCs open the adamantine doors, read or paraphrase the following:

Beyond the doors is a once magnificent chamber, now ruined by the earthquake and the ages. Brotherhood symbols adorn every surface, from the intricately carved pillars to the massive dais and throne that dominate the north wall. The floor is constructed of alternating black and white marble tiles in a disorienting checkerboard arrangement. Posted just above eye level along the periphery of the room are more than two dozen stations—each a colorful, framed mosaic depicting some lesson of this secret society. The six embossed pillars do not support the arched ceiling of the room, but rather stop just short of the ceiling, each topped with a flickering orange flame. Two large statues flank a passageway leading away from the chamber toward a smaller set of adamantine doors similar to those leading into the room.

This chamber was originally designed as the upper throne room for the dwarven kings, but over the years, the successive rulers' devotion to their secret society transformed the chamber, until the brotherhood completely took over the rooms and suites. Members of the Council of the Old Masters sat on the throne to address members of the brotherhood.

Most of the treasures here decayed long ago, although two golden curtain rods and various golden vessels, silver badges, engraved cups, golden chains, and other gaudy brotherhood paraphernalia lie scattered about. The rods are worth 100 gp each and the paraphernalia is worth a total of 200 gp.

THE MOSAIC STATIONS

A total of 33 delicately designed tile mosaics adorn the walls. Framed in gilded settings, each mosaic is approximately 3 ft. square and labeled with a golden plaque beneath. The tiled pictures depict allegorical scenes of dwarven life, mythology, and legend, with each selection filled with symbolism and obviously important posturing of the subjects' actions within. The entire dwarven lifespan is depicted, with each subject growing in knowledge, wealth, age, and adornments as the mosaics progress.

These mosaics metaphorically depict the 33 degrees on the path to illumination. Some of the more important degrees are described here, but feel free to add additional descriptions if your players seem curious.

1st Degree—A naked, blind, and crippled dwarf child wanders through a dark, smoldering cave clutching a blunt chisel and broken hammer. A light shines far in the distance.

5th Degree—A young dwarven smith holds a pair of metalworking tongs in denial away from his body, while his other hand clutches a golden medallion within the flames of a hot forge. Several blindfolded dwarves stand beside, threatening the smith with bared axes.

17th Degree—Clad in rich red robes lined in white fur, a dwarf stands before a set of silver doors. A scroll lies at his feet. His gloved left hand holds a key placed within one door, while his right hand thrusts a large book into the fires of a flaming pillar adjacent to the doors.

21st Degree—A dwarven stonemason stands atop a massive pillar, constructing a nearly-complete statue of a king out of stone blocks. An intense fire burns from within the statue, and the dwarf is preparing to trowel mortar into the final opening and place the last stone. The mason's apron and gloves are dirty with labor.

33rd Degree—A dwarf with eyes and hair ablaze with the fires of knowledge is seated on a throne before a set of fully open silver doors, a shattered pillar lies in ruins about his feet. He holds a silver chisel and a golden hammer and wears a golden plate across his chest composed of 16 squares, each carrying a numeric symbol. (The plate matches the shield guardian amulet worn by Bartholomeus.)

THE GUARDIANS AND THE RIDDLES THEY KEEP

Four large stone statues, two pairs standing side by side, flank a passageway leading to a set of tarnished doors. The statues are sculpted in white marble as great perching creatures with winged leonine bodies and rams' heads. They stare forward, mute and stoic. On the floor between them is a slightly raised 4-ft.-by-4-ft. grid composed of 16 tiles, each 1 ft. square and displaying a single esoteric symbol.

Some of the statues are actually criosphinxes in a special stasis that keeps them inert and ageless. They guard the doors leading into the council chambers. When anyone approaches within 10 ft. of the statues, the criosphinxes awaken. Their eyes and mouths open, ablaze with fire, and they speak the following riddle in tandem in a dated Dwarven dialect:

“One by one in fives and threes, brothers pass through strange degrees. When flesh and blood fail but the spirit remains, which degree must all someday obtain?”

When they finish the riddle, the criosphinxes' eyes and mouths close and the symbols on the grid glow with a faint light similar to that of the criosphinxes' mouths and eyes. In addition, the pillars flanking the door burst into flame.

TREASURE

Gold and silver art objects (worth 400 gp total). This is one treasure parcel.

THE MAGIC SQUARE RIDDLE

The floor grid contains a magic square of 16 digits, arranged so that, with careful intuition, all columns, rows, four-square diagonals, and corners add up to 34. To cross this threshold, the PCs must correctly answer the riddle. In a secret society where the highest degree a living member might obtain is the 33rd, the next rank—the one obtained by all when “flesh and blood fail but the spirit remains”—is death, the 34th degree.

To open the door without incident, the PCs must first correctly interpret the symbols on the grid, equating them with numbers, then step on the symbols corresponding first with “3” and then “4” as their answer. Doing so opens the door and maintains the stasis on the criosphinxes. Failure to do so properly animates the creatures (as needed, the excess statues shatter to become the Craftshard Sentinel minions, based on party size), which immediately attack.

A DC 21 Arcana check properly interprets the symbols as numbers, as does a Comprehend Languages ritual. The numbers are arranged as shown.

TABLE 5-6: RIDDLE GRID

16	3	2	13
5	10	11	8
9	6	7	12
4	15	14	1

The tiles are raised about 1 in. above the floor. When stepped upon, a tile lowers level with the floor and clicks, springing back up when released. If the correct answer is given in proper sequence (“3,” then “4”), all tiles lower flush with the floor and the doors swing open, resetting only when the doors close automatically 1 minute later.

If an incorrect tile is pressed, the puzzle's magic attacks the character making the erroneous step:

PUZZLE ATTACK

+15 vs. Fortitude; target is immobilized (save ends)

First failed save—Target is stunned (save ends)

If an incorrect answer is given, allow the party DC 21 Perception checks to detect a subtle change in the criosphinxes. Those who succeed can take part in a surprise round as normal, while those who fail are surprised when the criosphinxes attack.

If the PCs subsequently defeat the sphinx guardians, the squares reset but the doors do not open. The sequence of grid events repeats (including the immobilization effect), resetting after two incorrect tiles are depressed, until the correct answer is given.

Chunks of toppled pillars and fallen ceremonial sconces riddle the floor and lie scattered about, making the entire room difficult terrain.

8TH LEVEL ENCOUNTER

- 4 PCs (1,400 XP) • 2 grimvigil criosphinxes
- 5 PCs (1,750 XP) • 3 craftshard sentinels, 2 grimvigil criosphinxes
- 6 PCs (2,100 XP) • 3 grimvigil criosphinxes

flecked with gold dust that might once have formed discernable pictures. The banners hang like shrouds from golden rods and chains. Fallen stone blocks litter the floor and appear to have crushed several rows of stone pews.

Three large, raised steps lead to a set of stone doors engraved with silver and gold symbols of the tools of the craft of the brotherhood, such as the trowel, the hammer, the chisel, and the book. These doors are not flanked by the usual flaming pillars.

These stone doors (leading to area 34) are locked by an Arcane Lock ritual (Thievery DC 30). Carefully chiseled in the stone tiles before the door is a small, coin-shaped recess, engraved with a depiction of the flaming pillar. The circular recess is inset into the middle of a larger, 2-ft. square indentation in the floor. The key to opening this door lies in the mnemonic fobs carried by the Illuminated Brotherhood. If the disc is removed and placed in the circular recess, an actual pillar springs into existence and the doors open for as long as the pillar remains.

THE SECRET ROOM

The secret door to this room is a missing 5-ft. section of wall replaced with a deathshroud mimic in a stony form. The PCs make Perception checks against the mimic's Stealth skill (+14) to realize something unusual about the texture of the wall. The mimic attacks only if anyone approaches this specific section of wall to search or investigate. A second mimic is spread across the floor in front of the first. For larger groups, an iron cobra hides just behind the mimic, and a third mimic possibly grips the ceiling above the other two.

6TH LEVEL ENCOUNTER

- 4 PCs (1,000 XP) • 2 deathshroud mimics
 - 5 PCs (1,250 XP) • 2 deathshroud mimics, 1 iron cobra
 - 6 PCs (1,500 XP) • 3 deathshroud mimics
- (See MM page 157 for iron cobra.)

DEATHSHROUD MIMIC LEVEL 10 LURKER
LARGE ABERRANT BEAST XP 500

Initiative +13 **Senses** Perception +12; darkvision
hp 87 **Bloodied** 43
AC 25 **Fortitude** 24 **Reflex** 20 **Will** 21
Resist 5 acid
Speed 6, climb 3 (spider climb)

[mba] **Pseudopod Slam** (standard; at-will)

Reach 3; +15 vs. AC; 2d6 + 5 damage, and the target is grabbed (escape ends); a target takes a -4 penalty to the escape check; the mimic can grab up to three creatures at once

GRIMVIGIL CRIOSPHINX LEVEL 12 SOLDIER
MEDIUM IMMORTAL BEAST XP 700

Initiative +9 **Senses** Perception +9; darkvision
hp 120 **Bloodied** 60

AC 28 **Fortitude** 22 **Reflex** 20 **Will** 26
Speed 6, fly 6 (clumsy), overland flight 8

[mba] **Obsidian Claw** (standard; at-will)

+19 vs. AC; 2d6 + 5 damage

[m] **Furious Onslaught** (standard; encounter)

If *rush of the ram* has not recharged, it recharges; the criosphinx may make a rush of the ram attack and an *obsidian claw* attack against the same target

[m] **Rush of the Ram** (standard; recharge on 6)

The criosphinx can move 3 squares before making this attack; +13 vs. Reflex; 3d6 + 5 damage, and target is knocked prone

Strength of Dedication (minor; encounter) ♦ **Healing**

The criosphinx spends a healing surge and regains 30 hp; the sphinx gains a +2 bonus to all defenses until the start of its next turn

Alignment unaligned **Languages** Common, Dwarven, Supernal

Skills Insight +14, Intimidate +13, Religion+14, Stealth +12

Str 17 (+9) **Dex** 13 (+7) **Wis** 17 (+9)

Con 14 (+8) **Int** 12 (+7) **Cha** 14 (+8)

TACTICS

The grimvigil criosphinxes are simple combatants, wading in against foes and tending to focus on the opponent who hit it hardest most recently. They reserve their *furious onslaught* for a ranged attacking foe—possibly using *strength of dedication*, then moving, then using *rush of the ram* and *obsidian claw*.

33. THE ANTECHAMBER

Once the PCs pass by the criosphinxes and enter the room beyond their riddle, read or paraphrase the following:

Like the floor of the Grand Lodge, the antechamber is tiled in a checkerboard pattern. Six pillars once rose from the floor here, although only five still stand, all stopping short of the ceiling and flaming with a continuous fire.

The walls are heavily draped in red velvet curtains

[m] Devouring Gullet (move; encounter) ♦ Acid, Reliable
Targets one grabbed creature; +13 vs. Fortitude; 4d8 + 5 acid damage, and target is restrained (save ends)
[m] Hungry Maw (standard; recharge on 5, 6) ♦ Acid
Targets grabbed creatures; +11 vs. Fortitude; 3d6 + 5 damage and ongoing 5 acid damage; the mimic makes an attack against each grabbed target
Change Shape (minor; at-will) ♦ Polymorph
The mimic can alter its physical form to take on the appearance of any mundane object from Small to Large size, including a unique object (see change shape, MM page 280)
Fool's Gambit (immediate interrupt, when targeted against Reflex or AC; recharge on successful <i>pseudopod slam</i> attack)
The mimic forces its grabbed victim to become the target of the incoming effect instead of itself; the mimic cannot use this power to redirect attacks made by a creature it is currently grabbing
Malleable Cloak (minor; at-will)
The mimic gains concealment until the start of its next turn; it can't use this power while grabbing a creature or while being grabbed
Alignment evil Languages —
Skills Athletics +19, Perception +12, Stealth +14
Str 21 (+14) Dex 18 (+9) Wis 15 (+7)
Con 21 (+14) Int 6 (+3) Cha 10 (+5)

TACTICS

A deathshroud mimic pummels enemies with its *pseudopod slam*, trying to grab and feed them to its *hungry maw* while using them for its *fool's gambit* power. It reserves its *devouring gullet* for bloodied foes.

DEVELOPMENT

The protected room took a heavy pounding from the earthquake. Once a comfortable library and lounge for discussion of the path to illumination, it is now little more than a trash-strewn room destroyed by a partially collapsed ceiling and the passage of too many years. The crumbled remains of rotten furniture litter the floor and most of the books decayed long ago beyond worth.

A mosaic depicting barred doors flanked by flaming pillars crafted into the floor here, damaged only minimally in the earthquake. In addition, a bureau contains a Brotherhood Codex.

34. CHAMBER OF THE OLD MASTERS

This was once the chamber where the six founding council members of the Illuminated Brotherhood met with their brethren. As old age set in, the founders and their followers sought immortality for the masters, and the great craftsman Bartholomeus constructed the golden clockwork receptacles that would house the souls of the dwarves.

After several centuries, newly illuminated masters slowly took over the secret society, and the Old Masters, as they were called, became mere ornaments. Neglect and the corruption of the mountain weighed upon them, senility crept into their preserved minds, and their souls soured. Only Rabscuttle, smuggled away by the Stonethrower Clan, escaped this fate. The new Silent Masters barred this chamber, locking in the founders and repeating a cycle of history begun by the Old Masters themselves.

When the PCs open the doors, read or paraphrase the following:

Beyond the doors stretches a large, circular chamber. A massive stone well sits in the center of the room, filled with a dark glittering dust. An ill-formed arm, composed of the fine grit, rises from the center of the well, holding aloft a simple golden bowl. Past this unusual setting, a stepped platform leads up to an immense curved stone podium. Golden plaques engraved with esoteric script are evenly spaced on the face of the dais.

THE WELL AND THE GOLDEN BOWL

A DC 21 Religion check recognizes the golden bowl as an offering plate, and a DC 11 Perception check reveals some small crumbs of gold dust settled at the bottom of the receptacle. The well itself radiates strong conjuration magic.

Placing gems or uncorrupted valuable metals worth at least 10 gp in the bowl causes it to sink into the earth and summon a large earth elemental. What happens next depends on whether the PCs have already properly sacrificed the Teardrop.

ALREADY SACRIFICED

If the Teardrop was already properly sacrificed, the quartzbone earth archon speaks to the PCs with the authority of the Spirit of the Mountain. It stares forward without expression and suddenly bellows in Primordial, “The Old Masters call and the Old Mountain answers.”

The archon is more lethargic and cryptic than Rygar, the oracle encountered in *Eye of Grajava*. Its initial attitude is indifferent, and regardless of character efforts, its attitude does not improve (although failed checks can make its attitude worse). Answers to any questions the PCs ask seem

disconnected and disinterested. The elemental speaks with a similar tone and inflection as the oracle, although more monotone and with no emotion. Possible questions and their answers follow. The quartzbone earth archon speaks only in Primordial, although it understands Dwarven.

WHAT IS CAUSING THE TREMORS AND AFTERSHOCKS?

The mountain shudders as the messenger says, “The heartsblood of Rygar carries much corruption. A graven image with foulness in its belly stands there, where the sickness has taken form.”

CORRUPTION? BUT WE ALREADY SACRIFICED THE TEARDROP.

“You mistake the symptom for the disease. The sickness is rooted deep in my heartsblood. It tears flesh from me for its womb of infernal gold and it would be born into your world.”

WHERE IS YOUR HEARTSBLOOD?

“Betwixt blood of earth and liquid air.”

WHAT HAPPENED TO THE OLD MASTERS?

“The Old Masters were locked away behind hard doors and cold stone, their souls left to sour.”

The quartzbone archon gives similar cryptic references to the cult’s machinations and idolatry in the Heartsblood Forge, but it speaks of little else. Once the PCs run out of questions, the elemental settles back into the well without a farewell. The earthquake tremors subside for the next 48 hours.

NOT YET SACRIFICED

If the Teardrop remains intact, the Spirit of the Mountain, as well as this messenger, remains corrupt. The arm holding the bowl suddenly and violently lashes out, tossing the bowl at the nearest PC (or one at random if several are close to it).

The pervasive corruption of the Old Masters taints this once-sacred chamber. A potent dark aura applies to the area:

Dreams of Greed and Failure (aura): Living creatures suffer a -2 penalty to saving throws, and elemental, construct, and undead creatures may roll twice for any saving throw, taking the better of the two rolls.

The arm holding the bowl has the following statistics:

KEEPER OF THE SACRIFICIAL BOWL
(Init +5; AC 25; 100 hp)
+12 vs. AC; 2d8 + 7 damage

The following round, the earth archon arises as a move action and attacks anyone within reach for 5 rounds. On being summoned, the archon attacks the party ferociously, lamenting in Primordial the “greed and path of selfishness” taken by the PCs for refusing to calm the disquiet of the tremors. The elemental is obviously hostile at this point, but it can be made indifferent with successful Diplomacy checks (take into account the limited time the PCs have).

QUARTZBONE EARTH ARCHON	
LEVEL 10 SOLDIER	
MEDIUM ELEMENTAL HUMANOID (THUNDER)	XP 500
Initiative +8 Senses Perception +6; darkvision hp 109 Bloodied 54 AC 26 Fortitude 26 Reflex 20 Will 24 Immune disease, poison; Resist 15 acid, 15 thunder Speed 6	
[mba] Stonesplitter Pick (standard; at-will) ♦ Thunder, Weapon	
+17 vs. AC; 1d8 + 5 damage plus 1d8 + 5 thunder damage	
[c] Righteous Furrow of Earth (move; encounter) ♦ Reliable, Thunder, Weapon	
Close wall 2; +15 vs. Reflex; 3d6 + 5 damage plus 1d8 thunder damage, and target is knocked prone; already prone targets are instead dazed (save ends) Miss—Half damage, and target is knocked prone	
[c] Tectonic Smash (standard; recharge on 6) ♦ Thunder	
Close burst 3; +13 vs. Fortitude; 3d8 + 5 damage plus 1d8 thunder damage, and target is knocked prone; already prone targets are instead dazed (save ends) Miss—Half damage and target is knocked prone	
[r] Tooth of the Earth (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Ranged 10/15; +17 vs. AC 1d10 + 5 damage, and target is marked until the end of the archon’s next turn	
Combat Superiority	
The archon gains a +5 bonus to opportunity attacks and slows any creature that it hits with an opportunity attack	
Alignment unaligned	Languages Primordial (understands Dwarven)
Str 21 (+10)	Dex 12 (+6) Wis 13 (+6)
Con 21 (+10)	Int 12 (+6) Cha 15 (+7)
Equipment 6 crystal javelins, heavy shield, plate armor, war pick	

TACTICS

During Combat A quartzbone earth archon throws javelins as it closes, wading into the thick of combat before utilizing its *tectonic smash* followed by its *righteous furrow of earth*. It hammers at foes with its *stonesplitter pick*, focusing on lightly armored and bloodied enemies.



Morale If the PCs properly summon the archon and it remains indifferent, or if they summoned it with cursed metal but made it indifferent through Diplomacy, the elemental helps them fight off fellforged attacks (it cannot leave this area, though). After 5 rounds, or once the elemental is defeated, it settles back into the well, at which time the stone arm recovers the bowl and returns to its state of rest. The elemental can be resummoned with another donation, at which point it reappears with its full complement of hp.

DEVELOPMENT

If a PC picks up the bowl, the arm reforms as before, sans the bowl. At some point in the next 24 hours, though, when the PC isn't paying attention, the bowl suddenly fades from the PC's possession and reappears here.

Regardless of how often the PCs summon and defeat the elemental, grant them experience for the first time only.

THE COUNCIL PODIUM

The immense stone podium rises 8 ft. from the floor and is carved out of the solid rock of the mountain. Two stone steps lead up to the front of the podium, and a set of stairs provides entry behind from each end. If the PCs ascend these stairs onto the podium, they can make Perception checks (against the +11 Stealth bonus of the fellforged) to see several slumped forms in the shadows of the structure. The bodies of the fellforged lay here, inert, behind the cover of their old officiating dais, until the presence of the living awakens them from their unquiet rest.

As long as at least one PC thoroughly investigates the dark podium or succeeds on a Spot check, read or paraphrase the following:

Several slumped forms lie crumpled and battered on the dark floor behind this raised podium. Each form looks like Rabscuttle, dismantled again, with gears and cogs scattered in disarray around it. The gearforged bodies smoke slightly, as if recently burned.

Once one of the PCs stands adjacent to one of the fellforged, their gears and flywheels suddenly spin to life, and the creatures quickly rise. Any PC who can see the fellforged can make a DC 21 Perception check to act on the surprise round (the round the Old Masters stand up). The fellforged speak to one another in harsh metallic voices in a secret language (Comprehend Languages allows PCs to understand that the fellforged are coordinating their tactics). Although they share the construction and form of Rabscuttle, these creatures burn with a blackness and seep an oily black miasma—a sour malevolence felt throughout the chamber.

Unlike the fellforged found in the back alleys of the Gear District of Zobeck, where errant wraiths find discarded clockwork bodies to inhabit, the Old Masters are the result of centuries-old dwarven souls in stoutly forged clockwork bodies slowly souring and fragmenting with the progress of eons. Built to house the spirits of the dead, these fellforged frames hold trapped souls cursed with immortality and an imprisonment they cannot escape. The orichalcum in their gears, along with the mountain's corrupting radiation, twisted these once-proud beings into spiteful creatures willing to destroy even their own bodies to see life extinguished. The only means of separating the spirits from their receptacles is through powerful turning attempts, which expels the spirit from the clockwork but leaves the sour soul free to roam as a wraith. Even reducing their bodies to 0 hp does not free the souls from their mechanical prisons; they merely lay motionless, forever trapped in cursed gears.

13TH LEVEL ENCOUNTER

- 4 PCs (3,200 XP) • 5 fellforged old masters, 3 tattersoul wraiths
- 5 PCs (4,000 XP) • 5 fellforged old masters, 4 tattersoul wraiths
- 6 PCs (4,800 XP) • 3 craftshard sentinels, 5 fellforged old masters, 5 tattersoul wraiths

The aura, *dreams of greed and failure*, affects this area:

Dreams of Greed and Failure aura; living creatures suffer a -2 penalty to saving throws, and construct, elemental, and undead creatures may roll twice for any saving throw, taking the better of the two rolls

FELDFORGED OLD MASTERS LEVEL 9 SOLDIER

MEDIUM NATURAL ANIMATE (CONSTRUCT, UNDEAD) XP 400

Initiative +8 **Senses** Perception +6; darkvision
hp 98 **Bloodied** 49
AC 25 **Fortitude** 23 **Reflex** 20 **Will** 20
Immune disease, poison, sleep; **Resist** 10 necrotic, 10 radiant
Speed 6

[mba] **Melee Slam** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Necrotic**
+16 vs. AC; 2d6 + 5 damage plus 1d6 necrotic damage

[m] **Lifedrinker Strike** (standard; encounter) ♦ **Necrotic**
+14 vs. Fortitude; 3d10 + 5 damage and ongoing 5 necrotic (save ends), and target is knocked prone
Miss—Half damage, and target is not knocked prone

[c] **Scornful Gearblast** (free; when first bloodied) ♦ **Necrotic**
Close burst 1; +14 vs. Reflex; 3d8 + 5 damage and ongoing 5 necrotic damage (save ends), and target is pushed 2 squares

[c] **Unnatural Resonance** (standard; recharge on 4, 5, 6) ♦ **Psychic**
Close burst 3; +14 vs. Will; 1d8 + 5 damage plus 1d6 psychic, and the target is dazed (save ends); the Fellforged's speed is reduced by 2 for its next move action

Alignment evil **Languages** Common, Dwarven
Skills Insight +11, Stealth +11
Str 20 (+9) **Dex** 14 (+6) **Wis** 15 (+6)
Con 18 (+8) **Int** 13 (+5) **Cha** 12 (+5)

TATTERSOUL WRAITH LEVEL 10 SKIRMISHER

MEDIUM SHADOW HUMANOID (UNDEAD) XP 500

Initiative +13 **Senses** Perception +10; darkvision
hp 208 **Bloodied** 104
AC 26 **Fortitude** 20 **Reflex** 26 **Will** 24
Immune disease, poison; **Resist** 15 necrotic, insubstantial;
Vulnerable 5 radiant
Speed 6 fly, phasing

[mba] **Frozen Caress** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Necrotic**
+15 vs. AC; 2d8 + 5 necrotic damage

[m] **Crushing Grip of Frost** (standard; recharge on 5, 6) ♦ **Necrotic**
+13 vs. Fortitude; 3d6 + 5 necrotic damage, and target is slowed (save ends)
First failed save—Target is weakened (save ends)

[m] **Lingering Icy Feast** (standard; encounter) ♦ **Necrotic**
+13 vs. Reflex; 4d10 + 5 necrotic damage, and the wraith shifts 3 squares
Miss—Half damage, and target is knocked prone; the wraith may still shift 3 squares

Deathly Vigil

The wraith's attacks deal an extra 1d8 damage against targets it has combat advantage against

Skirt the Shadows (move; encounter)

The wraith shifts 4 squares

Alignment evil **Languages** Common, Dwarven
Skills Perception +10, Stealth +16
Str 8 (+4) **Dex** 22 (+11) **Wis** 10 (+5)
Con 14 (+7) **Int** 13 (+6) **Cha** 20 (+10)

TACTICS

During Combat The Old Masters attack furiously, supporting one another with flanking. One fellforged summons the Spirit of the Mountain's incarnation with a fistful of corrupted gold gears, causing the berserk elemental to attack randomly for 5 rounds.

The tattersoul wraiths tire seek only warm souls to consume. Each wraith maneuvers to take combat advantage and utilizes its *crushing grip of frost* as often as possible, alternating with its *frozen caress* when needed and often choosing to *skirt the shadows* rather than just move. It saves its *lingering icy feast* for a bloodied opponent providing combat advantage and, then, shifts to allow one of its fellows to do the same.

Morale The Old Masters, so disdainful of this existence, hate life and fight until destroyed.

DEVELOPMENT

Evenly spaced behind the podium stand six stone seats, corresponding to the six gold plaques on the face of the dais; however, only five of the sitters are here. The plaques are written in an archaic form of Dwarven, and even a dwarf needs to make a DC 11 Arcana or History check to understand them. Each plaque bears a name with a long and grandiose title. From left to right, the titles and names are as follows:

Grand Illuminated and Worthy Founder
Albertus Christopholus

Most Illustrious and Knowledgeable Master
Daigilius Adamandorax

Mastermind of the Sanctum and Sealer of Gates
Verubious Rabscuttle

Wise Gearfitter of the Hidden Works
Mersicus Ailessoxan

Master Keeper of the Most Worthy Esoterics
Lozemus Isumius

First Ascendant of the Righteous Enlightenment
Girtson Rokthemin

One name among those six should stand out to the PCs. If they later bring Rabscuttle to the council chamber, his sanity and memories return briefly, and he becomes suddenly stoic, well spoken, and wise. He can recount the history of the Old Masters and how the Silent Masters took over the brotherhood. The once-pure souls of the Old Masters were left to sour and rot in their immortal mechanical bodies. Only he was saved, smuggled from the citadel by the Stonethrower clan and forgotten over time.

Rabscuttle recounts the guilt and shame of his part in the final locking of the clockwork gates. It was he who used flaming pillars in the sealing ceremony, which at once became a powerful symbol to the dwarves who knew of the significance of these objects. Use Rabscuttle to fill in any holes in the party's knowledge of the history of the complex or the preceding events or hints to a particular problem or reward, before he reverts to his senile old self and forgets the entire episode.

40. THE LOWER BROTHERHOOD LODGE

The area from room 40 and beyond is left undefined to allow you to customize as you feel appropriate. These suites were once the royal lodgings for the upper citadel, but as the authority of the kings gradually shifted to loyalty to the secret society to which they belonged, the chambers were yielded to the group and modified into use by the Illuminated Brotherhood.

The rooms should reflect this opulence, but it can be inhabited by any creatures you see fit to include. If you lack the time or inclination to customize, leave the chambers as they are—decaying former residences, dusty, cold, and abandoned.

Concluding the Adventure

The golden bowl is the ultimate purpose for the PCs to undertake the perilous journey into the Grand Lodge, and once they arrive and receive answers to their questions, their work here is done. Fighting the Old Masters is not necessary, although it is likely. Once they finish their activities in the Grand Lodge, they find the journey back to the upper halls a relatively simple affair (aside from the poisoned passage, of course). Unless you feel the characters need more experience, they can return to the halls above without additional altercations along the way.

HEARTSBLOOD FORGE

BY DAN VOYCE

IN THE RUINS OF THE UPPER HALLS, CLEARING RUBBLE AND EXTRACTING THE DEAD SLOWLY CONTINUES. TWO UNFORTUNATE FACTS SOON BECOME APPARENT. FIRST, MANY PEOPLE SEEM TO HAVE VANISHED, THEIR BODIES AND MANY OF THEIR POSSESSIONS SIMPLY GONE. SECOND, MORE THAN ONE COLONIST WAS KILLED NOT BY FALLING STONES, BUT BY A SLIT THROAT. WHEN THE PCs EXIT THE GRAND LODGE, IF THEY ARE NOT CAREFUL, THEY TOO MIGHT FIND THEIR THROATS IN JEOPARDY.

Background

The soul of Rygar, its beating heart and pounding blood, can be found in the blazing depths of its oldest smithy. Here, Grajava forged the alliance between the dwarves and the mountain, sealing the covenant with creations of the Prime Forge, forgeworks imbued with Volund's power. Built around liftgas-impregnated water and magma that sparkled with traces of adamantine, the forge combined divine might and the raw energies of the Spirit of the Mountain to create potent artifacts. Among these craftsmen the organization later known as the Illuminated Brotherhood first took shape, and they feel the forge's loss as an unforgivable affront. Mammon, meanwhile, considers it the perfect venue for his rise to power—a symbolic and literal corruption of Rygar's soul, enslaving it for the glory of Hell.

By this point, the PCs should know that Mammon is the root of all their woes. They might have freed the Spirit of the Mountain and learned the truth behind the forsaken, but the dragon Bragollach has fallen to corruption and the cult of Mammon has quietly gathered enough cursed orichalcum to draw its master into the world. Of course, things might not have gone quite so smoothly. If the PCs were unable to sacrifice the Teardrop at the Forge of the Fire Blessing, the mountain remains corrupted and Mammon is poised on the brink of victory. The party might need an alternative location to sacrifice the Teardrop or an opportunity to steal it back from the cult. Either way, the cult's headquarters is the natural target.

Summary

The PCs are pressed into service once more. If the party carries so much as a single piece of orichalcum, it is beset by a group of devils and Mammonites intent on claiming every bit of the cursed metal to summon their archdevil master.

The PCs descend into the lower halls, where they pass through the Trochil Gate and come upon the site of a slaughter. Numerous forsaken lie dead in a room containing a water-rise. The survivors provide precious few clues, but as the PCs make to depart, they once again meet an old opponent. The ghost of the Journeyman gearworker they slew earlier appears and tempts them to quit their errand and leave. When the PCs refuse, they are beset by several hidden fellforged.

Descending through the water-rise, the PCs must overcome several guardians at the entrance gate to the Heartsblood Forge complex and work their way through the new home of the Mammonite cult. Along the way, they encounter a vampire noblewoman who they can make into an ally if they choose to parley. They can also recover the cult's account books, which reveal the names of its supporters.

Bragollach, once their ally in her dwarven disguise, stricken mad by Mammon's avarice plague, now opposes their progress through the complex in her true, draconic form. At last, the PCs reach the Prime Forge, where they must deal with an incarnation of Mammon himself.

PART I

The Upper Halls

The truth behind the missing residents and slit throats lies with the cult of Mammon. Many of the Mammonite cultists quietly retreated to Heartsblood Forge even before the earthquake, and the rest disappeared in the ensuing chaos. They took with them every ounce of cursed orichalcum in the upper halls, killing anyone who refused to part with it. If the PCs still carry any of the tainted mineral, they too receive a visit from the cult.

A GRIM TITHING

Charged with recovering all cursed metal from the upper halls is a gilded devil who calls himself Mr. Purse. If the PCs carry even a single coin of orichalcum, they receive a visit from him shortly after returning to the upper halls following their actions in “The Grand Lodge of the Old Masters.” Two cultists of Mammon and a pair of chain devil bodyguards that he calls Mr. Cuff and Mr. Bridle accompany Mr. Purse. All three devils are disguised in winter garb and voluminous cloaks, and the kytons carry backpacks filled with chains.

11TH LEVEL ENCOUNTER

(3,000 XP) • 2 chain devils (Mr. Bridle & Mr. Cuff), 4 dwarf converts, Mr. Purse



MR. PURSE, GILDED DEVIL	
LEVEL 9 CONTROLLER	
MEDIUM IMMORTAL HUMANOID (DEVIL)	XP 400
Initiative +6	Senses Perception +7; low-light vision
hp 100	Bloodied 50
AC 23	Fortitude 22 Reflex 21 Will 23
Resist 10 fire	
Speed 6	
[m] Heavy Flail (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+14 vs. AC; 2d6 + 3 damage	
[m] Scourge of Avarice (free, encounter) ♦ Charm	
If Mr. Purse hits a target with <i>heavy flail</i> , that target must use its next turn to steal the most valuable item from its nearest ally	
[r] Amass All Things (standard; daily) ♦ Teleportation	
Range 10; +13 vs. Reflex; the target's most valuable item (determined by gp value) teleports from the target's possession and into the hands of Mr. Purse	
[r] Betrayal of Riches (standard; recharge on 4, 5, 6)	
Range 10; +13 vs. Fortitude; 2d8 damage, and an item of the target is affected; the target suffers a secondary effect based on the item's location	
1. <i>Arm</i> —Receives -2 penalty to attack rolls (save ends)	
2. <i>Feet</i> —Slowed (save ends)	
3. <i>Hand/Ring</i> —Drops held items	
4. <i>Head</i> —Blinded (save ends)	
5. <i>Neck/Waist</i> —Dazed (until the end of the target's next turn)	
6. <i>Other item</i> —Additional 1d8 damage	
[a] The Wealth beneath Your Feet (standard; recharge when bloodied) ♦ Conjuration	
Burst 3 within 10; +13 vs. Reflex; 3d8 + 5 fire damage, and the target is restrained until the end of the Mr. Purse's next turn	
<i>Miss</i> —Target takes half damage and is not restrained	
Greed's Many Forms (move; at-will) ♦ Polymorph	
Mr. Purse takes the form of any humanoid of its size or smaller; it may remain in this form until damaged or until it dispels the effect	
Alignment evil	Languages Common, Supernal
Skills Bluff +16, Diplomacy +16, Intimidate +16	
Str 16 (+7)	Dex 14 (+6) Wis 16 (+7)
Con 20 (+9)	Int 18 (+8) Cha 22 (+10)
Equipment golden heavy flail, golden plate mail	

MR. BRIDLE & MR. CUFF (CHAIN DEVILS)
LEVEL 11 SKIRMISHER

(See MM page 62.)

DWARF CONVERT **LEVEL 8 SOLDIER**
MEDIUM NATURAL HUMANOID XP 350Initiative +9 Senses Perception +4; low-light vision
hp 89 Bloodied 44
AC 24 Fortitude 22 Reflex 20 Will 20
Speed 5[mba] War Pick (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

+17 vs. AC; 2d6 + 5 damage

[m] Spiking Strike (standard; recharge on 6) ♦ **Weapon**

+17 vs. AC; 3d8 + 5 damage, and target slowed (save ends)

[r] Throwing Hammer (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

Ranged 5/10; +17 vs. AC; 2d6 + 5

Stand Your Ground

When an effect forces the dwarf to move—through a pull, a push, or a slide—the dwarf moves 1 square less than the effect specifies. When an attack would knock the dwarf prone, the dwarf can roll a saving throw to avoid falling prone.

Alignment evil Languages Common, Dwarven

Skills Dungeoneering +11, Endurance +14

Str 20 (+9) Dex 17 (+7) Wis 10 (+4)

Con 17 (+7) Int 10 (+4) Cha 16 (+6)

Equipment chain shirt, throwing hammer, war pick

SETUP

The PCs spot Mr. Purse and his entourage at work while traveling to and from the Lodge of the Old Masters. This encounter can take place just about anywhere. Choose a suitable location in the upper halls for Purse's ambush, adding any required terrain or hazards as normal.

Bring back enemies that survived previous battles, replacing the generic dwarf converts with Hronagar Corpsegrinder or Sebastian Ufastis from *Roots of Madness*, Jorunn Flintknapper or Tanya Hrovitz from *Eye of Grajava*, or Vanessi and her thugs from *Dark Was the Night, Cold Was the Ground*.

TACTICS

Mr. Purse tries to keep enemies at a 10-square range. His first attack is *wealth beneath your feet* on the largest group of enemies followed by *amass all things* and *betrayal of riches*. If he recovers any orichalcum, he departs as soon as possible leaving the kyttons and cultists to cover his withdrawal. Otherwise, he fights to the death for Mammon.

Mr. Cuff and Mr. Bridle concentrate on guarding Mr. Purse, restraining anyone who tries to close with him. Unwavering in their dedication, the chain devils fight to the death. On the other hand, if Mr. Purse recovers orichalcum and departs, the kyttons make a fighting withdrawal.

Hardship and despair has driven the dwarf converts to swear loyalty to Mammon. Some embrace his faith with fanatical zeal, others with dead-eyed resignation. The PCs may well recognize them as former refugees. They fight to the death using *spiking strike* to cripple moving foes.

DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Purse is not interested in killing the PCs, only acquiring their orichalcum. If they cached it, he uses divinations and spying to find it. If one or two PCs carry the metal on their person, he attacks them as soon as he can catch them alone. If this fails, he tries kidnapping a PC or NPC to bargain for it.

If the PCs are defeated, Purse mocks them while looting the possessions of their fallen comrades (being sure to take any magic items and cursed orichalcum). PCs will get a chance to even the score (and retrieve their goods) later in Heartsblood Forge.

ONCE MORE INTO THE BREACH

The party might already be pursuing the cult on their own, but if they need a nudge in the right direction, either Clovis or one of the NPCs from *Roots of Madness* can act to spur them on. These patrons have nothing but gratitude to offer the PCs at this point, although they can impress on reluctant characters the need for a final resolution.

MAJOR QUEST:**DEFEATING THE CULT OF MAMMON**

Find the Mammonite lair and break their power over the citadel. Foil Mammon's plans and see that the cursed orichalcum is destroyed or neutralized.

Reward: 3,000 XP

PCs can find the Mammonite base in various ways. The most likely sources of information are summarized here.

Rituals. Consult Mystic Sages, Consult Oracle and similar rituals can be used to gather intelligence on the cult and its location. Commune with Nature easily locates the place where's Rygar's spirit burns with corruption, and if the adventurers recover a cultist's body, they can subject it to a Speak with Dead ritual to pry the information from it.

Rabscuttle. Since the earthquake, Rabscuttle intermittently mutters, "My heartsblood is tainted by

infernal ash. They see my brothers naked in bronze at the silent room...”

The Spirit of the Mountain. If the PCs summoned and conversed with the Spirit of the Mountain at the end of *The Grand Lodge of the Old Masters*, it gave them a significant clue to the cult’s location. If your players seem frustrated by the confusing and cryptic answers provided, their characters may make DC 15 Arcana checks for a clue.

Dwarves. Any surviving dwarf from the Golden Citadel can direct PCs to Heartsblood Forge: descend the Great Stair, go through the lower hall, and take an elevator down the water-rise. The hall is the site of the main forsaken encampment, but there have been no incursions into the upper halls for some days. The refugees hope this means the forsaken have suffered at least as much as the miners have in the quake.

Illuminated Brotherhood. The Brotherhood longs to see the cult removed from Heartsblood Forge. If neutral or friendly toward the party, the Brotherhood might simply tell the PCs where to find the cult. If actually friendly with the group, they inform the PCs that one of their agents disappeared there months ago, beginning a minor quest.

MINOR QUEST:

FIND THE ILLUMINATED AGENT

Uncover the fate of Brother Ulricus, the Brotherhood spy.

Reward: 600 XP.

PART II

The Lower Hall and the Trochil Gate

Located some way below the upper halls, the Trochil Gate was the citadel’s original entrance. Less prestigious than the upper halls, the gate nonetheless served as a busy hub for miners, trappers, merchants, and traders. The gate was sealed by the Brotherhood during the abandonment and remains closed and warded to this day. For the last few months, a forsaken army has used it as a staging ground.

The door from the Great Stair leads into a stepped cavern, with each step about 10 ft. higher than the last. The rotting remains of carts and cargo dot the floor, alongside debris created by forsaken and chunks of fallen rubble. The shaded areas are under the effects of a Guards and Wards ritual (see **ARCANE POWER**, page 155) used to seal the Trochil Gate long ago. These areas are filled with dense fog that makes the area heavily obscured. All doors, windows, and other sealable nonmagical portals are sealed by Arcane Locks and half a dozen illusionary walls, doors may confound explorers.

LH1. MULE PADDOCKS

The lowest level was used for unloading caravans and contains corrals that once held pack mules and ponies, as well as the mechanism to turn the Trochil Gate.

LH2. THE TROCHIL GATE

This area is under the effect of the Guards and Wards ritual.

A marvelous feat of ancient artifice, the Trochil Gate is one of the great engineering wonders of the world. A central shaft turns orichalcum walls that control access to the citadel, herding visitors to the lower hall, to a guard station for questioning, or into a dead-end laced with traps and murder holes. The door is strong enough to resist a dragon’s breath or the battering of a storm giant, and the tons of orichalcum used in its creation make the gate priceless. Despite centuries of forsaken attack, it shows only the slightest damage.

The door is currently immovable; the great cogs that drive it are damaged beyond repair (AC/Reflex 2, Fortitude 20; hp 1,000; Break DC 39).

LH3. THE PILLARS OF LAW

A carved dwarven face stares imperiously down at visitors as they approach the entrance, which is flanked by Rygar’s Pillars of Law. White runes on black stone make the citadel’s laws plain to all who approach, magically translating their words for visitors.

Soldiers once watched from behind the eyes of the dwarven face, and the mouth serves as a murder hole to dispatch boiling lead onto approaching enemies. The arch, pillars, and face are all covered by a thick layer of ice.

LH4. CABLECART STATION

This area is under the effect of the Guards and Wards ritual.

A huge iron wheel and the remains of thick steel cables dominate this chamber, which once opened to the air but has since partially collapsed and is blocked by ice. From here, cablecars once trundled up and down the mountain on toothed tracks, raised and lowered by engines connected to the Shank far below the mountain.

LH5. THE ORE EXCHANGE

Ore, finished goods, cattle, and foodstuffs were all traded here. The auctioneer’s podium leads into an office and storeroom, then out to the water-rise.

LH6. THE WATER-RISE

Liftgas-impregnated geysers thunder upwards like reverse waterfalls. The southernmost column of the water-rise is blocked by rubble from the earthquake, but the other remains clear. Water blasts upwards around the elevator,

THE LOWER HALL AND THE TROCHIL GATE

1 square = 5 feet



which is docked at this level. A series of wheels and levers on the platform control its ascent and descent, but activating them merely produces screams of tortured machinery: the fellforged have sabotaged the platform's mechanism and the platform isn't going anywhere without repairs.

**FIXING THE WATER-RISE
SKILL CHALLENGE (1,000 XP)**

Setup The PCs must fix get the elevator moving

Level 10th level challenge

Complexity 2 (requires 6 successes before 3 failures)

Primary Skills Dungeoneering, Perception, Thievery

(Each check requires one round of effort and may subject the character to an attack of opportunity if there are still enemies within reach.)

Athletics (DC 25)—You apply brute force to free some of the jammed machinery; to use this skill, you or someone else must first make a DC 17 Perception or Thievery check to identify a suitable part for removal.

Dungeoneering (DC 25)—You use your knowledge of dwarven machinery to bypass some of the damage.

Nature (DC 17)—You use your knowledge of the water-rise and how it powers the lift to advise your companions (+2 bonus to their next check).

Perception (DC 17)—You spot one of the removed pieces of machinery 3d6 squares away (if recovered this grants a +4 to someone's next check; there are only 2 such pieces to be found, however).

Religion (DC 17)—You pray to Volund or the Gear Goddess for aid, and their power flows through you (you may expend one healing surge or one use of the channel divinity class feature to add one success to the challenge; the gods will only aid you here once, however).

Thievery (DC 21)—You undo a significant piece of sabotage, repairing the machine.

Miscellaneous—Dwarf and kobold characters gain a +2 bonus; each fellforged body that is pillaged for parts grants a +2 bonus .

Success Once repaired and activated, the platform starts to descend; the controls on the platform can pause this journey but cannot reverse it.

Failure The mechanism becomes irrevocably damaged and the elevator permanently stuck, and the PCs will have to make their own way down to Heartsblood Forge. Clambering down requires a DC 20 Climb check each round (the shaft is 100 ft. deep, but characters only take half damage from any fall thanks to the cushioning effect of the geyser-churned waters below).

THE FATE OF THE FALLEN

As the PCs approach the lower hall, they notice the unpleasant smell of something rotting mixed with the acrid stench of smoke and burnt meat. Read or paraphrase the following:

The lower hall has become a charnel house. Every space is scattered with bodies, wreckage, or smoldering fires. Something has torn the forsaken army into bloody chunks. Only a handful of living forsaken huddle here, and they clutch numbly at the bodies of their former comrades, seemingly oblivious to your presence.

The PCs' initial examination of the room reveals more graffiti like that seen near the Hearthforges (see *Roots of Madness*) and, more importantly, the bodies of forsaken scattered throughout the hall, along with a few live ones huddled about. The dark souls of many derro still inhabit their corpses, and these pitiful creatures exist now as forsaken shades.

PCs can investigate unmolested, at least until they attempt to leave (see *A Deal with the Devil* section page 154). Allow the PCs to make a variety of skill checks to learn what happened.

TABLE 6-1: HEAL

DC	Result
15	They were slaughtered around the time of the earthquake.
20	They have been burned with magical fire and torn apart by a large beast. Some victims were finished off with weapons.

TABLE 6-2: PERCEPTION

DC	Result
16	You think you hear whispering but can't make out its source. What sounds like a waterfall can also be heard echoing off to the east.
20	There are several medium sized boot prints and signs of a clawed beast.
25	The beast that did this was a large quadruped, possibly a dragon. It moved somewhat clumsily, as if encumbered.

QUESTIONING THE FORSAKEN

Interrogating the survivors requires a Diplomacy or Intimidation check to pierce their shock and insanity.

A DC 21 check coerces a survivor to mutter in Dwarven, "The gold came alive and took them into the dark, where the mother croons and the gibber soothes. Father Gold is coming soon, she sang from our bones."

A DC 25 check forces a survivor to cry out in Dwarven, "Demons with golden faces! The shining juggernaut! They took everything and flew down to Hell on a fountain of

blood. Yellow blood for the golden god! I'm faithful and was spared!" The Speak with Dead ritual provides similar results, but each question has a cumulative 10% chance of conjuring forth a forsaken shade from the body.

A DEAL WITH THE DEVIL

As the PCs finish their investigations and turn to leave, an old adversary reveals himself. The ethereal face and familiar sly smile of the gearworker Journeyman the PCs slew in the halls above glides into view from the darkness. His spectral body still bears the wounds dealt to him. He holds up his ghostly hands and says, "*I come in peace. We should talk. How are my murderers today?*"

The Journeyman is here to tempt the PCs, promising great rewards if they abandon their quest. Ultimately, only you know what might truly tempt the PCs, but Mammon is offering each character a significant boon (with the usual "deal with the devil" side-effects of course). One of the following might be appropriate.

- Return a companion or loved one to life
- Reveal a long-hidden secret or piece of lost lore
- Feed the entire population of the upper halls and provide everything required for them to survive until spring
- Gain the services of a regiment of infernal legionnaires
- Gain the character's weight in gold
- Gain Skill Training or Skill Focus (thievery) as a bonus feat
- Gain 13 years of prosperity for the character's family, home city, or other group
- Gain a promise that Mammon will use his divine might to do one magical favor for a character at a later date

If any PC agrees to the deal, a sweltering heat passes through the room and anyone of good alignment knows as instinctively as breathing that something wicked has stepped into the world. When the heat-haze passes, the deal-making PC vanishes, appearing back at the alley in Zobeck where the party first encountered Rabscuttle.

As well as possible consequences to his alignment and mortal soul, the PC automatically gains a geas to stay away from Mount Rygar and a tattoo of Mammon's coin over his heart. The character suffers a -2 penalty to all defenses against creatures with the devil type and the component cost of using Raise Dead on the character doubles, as Mammon must be bribed into ignoring his claim on the target's soul.

The mark can be removed only by Mammon or an obscure variant of the Remove Affliction ritual that requires the discovering secret lore skill challenge (see DMG, page 80). Such brands are well known to scholars, inquisitors, and witch hunters as the mark of those who have sold their soul to Hell.

THE DEVIL SPURNED

PCs who refuse the journeyman's offer encounter the cult's second line of defense—a group of fellforged that, up to this point, remained concealed near the water-rise. These fellforged vaguely resemble Rabscuttle and the Old Masters, but their bronze features have a devilish cast and their bodies gleam as though newly forged. Tenebrous vapors lick around their gaping clockwork mouths and from every joint and gear comes a frightful shrieking, as if each movement caused the creatures utter agony. As if in answer to this noise, forsaken shades start to rise from the open mouths of corpses all around the PCs.

SETUP

In the first round of combat, five forsaken shades rise up from corpses around the party, gaining surprise unless the PCs are already aware that shades inhabit the derro corpses. They appear within 5 squares and immediately move to attack while the fellforged charge over from the water-rise. Five more shades appear each round.

10TH LEVEL ENCOUNTER

(2,680 XP) • 3 fellforged, 10 forsaken shades, Journeyman's ghost

FELLFORGED	LEVEL 9 SOLDIER
MEDIUM NATURAL ANIMATE (CONSTRUCT, UNDEAD) XP 400	
Initiative +8	Senses Perception +6; darkvision
hp 98	Bloodied 49
AC 25	Fortitude 23
	Reflex 20
	Will 20
Immune disease, poison, sleep; Resist 10 radiant, 10 necrotic	
Speed 6	
[mba] Slam (standard; at-will)	
+16 vs. AC; 2d6 + 5 damage plus 1d6 necrotic damage	
[m] Lifedrinker Strike (standard; encounter) ♦ Necrotic	
+14 vs. Fortitude; 3d10 + 5 damage and ongoing 5 necrotic damage (save ends), and target is knocked prone	
Miss—Half damage, and target is not knocked prone	
[c] Scornful Gearblast (free, when first bloodied; encounter) ♦ Necrotic	
Close burst 1; +14 vs. Reflex; 3d8 + 5 damage and ongoing 5 necrotic damage (save ends), and target is pushed 2 squares	
[c] Unnatural Resonance (standard; recharge on 4, 5, 6) ♦ Psychic	
Close burst 3; +14 vs. Will; 1d8 + 5 damage plus 1d6 psychic, and the target is dazed (save ends); the fellforged's speed is reduced by 2 for its next move action	
Alignment evil	Languages Common, Dwarven
Skills Insight +11, Stealth +11	
Str 20 (+9)	Dex 14 (+6)
	Wis 15 (+6)
Con 18 (+8)	Int 13 (+5)
	Cha 12 (+5)

FORSAKEN SHADE

LEVEL 8 SKIRMISHER MINION

SMALL SHADOW HUMANOID (UNDEAD) XP 88

Insane Whispers aura 1; enemies within aura suffer -2 penalty to attack rolls and skill checks

Initiative +11 **Senses** Perception +2; darkvision
hp 1; a missed attack never damages a minion

AC 22 **Fortitude** 20 **Reflex** 22 **Will** 20

Resist necrotic 10

Speed fly 5, phasing

[mba] **Necrotic Rake** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Necrotic**

+13 vs. AC; 4 necrotic damage

Possess Fellforged (move; at-will)

The shade enters the body of a fellforged with 0 hp, reanimating it; the reanimated fellforged suffers a -2 to attack rolls and defenses, has 1 hp, and follows the normal rules for damaging minions

Alignment chaotic evil **Languages** Deep Speech, Dwarven

Str 17 (+7) **Dex** 20 (+9) **Wis** 6 (+2)

Con 11 (+4) **Int** 7 (+2) **Cha** 17 (+7)

THE JOURNEYMAN'S GHOST

LEVEL 7 ELITE LURKER

MEDIUM SHADOW HUMANOID (UNDEAD) XP 600

Initiative +12 **Senses** Perception +9; darkvision
hp 128 **Bloodied** 64

AC 23 **Fortitude** 19 **Reflex** 23 **Will** 22

Saving Throws +2

Immune disease, poison; **Resist** necrotic 10, insubstantial;

Vulnerable radiant 10

Speed fly 5, phasing

Action Points 1

[mba] **Phantom Fists** (standard; at-will)

+12 vs. AC; 1d8 + 5 damage, and target is grabbed (escape ends)

[m] **Ghostly Possession** (standard; encounter) ♦ **Charm**

Target must be a living humanoid or fellforged; +10 vs. Will; the Journeyman enters the target's space and is removed from play, and the target is *dominated* (save ends). The Journeyman can use this power against only one creature at a time. When the target is no longer dominated, or when the Journeyman chooses to end its ghostly possession (a free action), he reappears in a square of his choice adjacent to the target.

[m] **Soul Choke** (minor; at-will) ♦ **Necrotic**

Grabbed target only; +10 vs. Fort; 1d8 + 5 necrotic damage

[m] **Wrath of Mammon** (immediate reaction, when hit by a melee attack; at-will) ♦ **Fear**

+10 vs. Will; 1d8 + 5 psychic damage, and target is pushed 1 square

[r] **Entangling Ectoplasm** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Cold**

Ranged 10; +10 vs. Ref; 1d8 + 5 cold damage, and target is slowed (save ends)

Wraith's Retreat (move; recharge when first bloodied)

The Journeyman shifts 5 squares

Alignment evil **Languages** Common, Dwarven, Supernal

Str 11 (+3) **Dex** 20 (+8) **Wis** 14 (+5)

Con 16 (+6) **Int** 12 (+4) **Cha** 18 (+7)

TACTICS

Fellforged use *unnatural resonance* and *lifedrinker strike* to hinder PC movement. If a fellforged's possessing spirit is exorcised, another forsaken shade takes its place next round (assuming any remain).

Forsaken shades rush forward and attack, striking frenziedly at the nearest living creature. Only the temptation of an empty fellforged shell distracts them from violence against the living.

The Journeyman uses *entangling ectoplasm* to hinder foes while the forsaken shades advance, then tries *ghostly possession* on a PC hoping to force the other adventurers to kill them.

PART III Heartsblood Forge

Heartsblood Forge stands at the mountain's spiritual heart, above a churning sea of magma known as the Well of Fire. Once home to master smiths and Illuminated Brothers, the cult of Mammon now defiles its sacred forges, crafting unholy symbols and infernal artifacts.

The walls and floors in Heartsblood Forge are made of superior masonry. Unless otherwise noted, all doors are unlocked iron doors. Most are decorated with brass, bronze, copper, and steel. The walls are periodically set with glass pots containing immature cavemoss, which provide shadowy illumination throughout the entire chamber. Many cavemosses have outgrown their jars and the ground below is littered with luminous spores. Infernal prayers echo through the corridors, mixing with the rhythmic clunk of machinery and an occasional tortured scream. All Perception checks are made with a -4 penalty.

Speaking Tubes. Each of these wall-mounted racks, labeled in Dwarven, connects to a specific room. The speaking tubes consist of two flared bronze funnels (one for speaking, one for listening) attached to segmented pipes running through the walls. A cork-mounted whistle can be inserted into the speaking tube to alert a room to incoming messages. PCs can use speaking tubes to make Perception checks into the location each tube connects.

Steam Pipes. The forge is dotted with thin metal pipes (AC/Reflex 10, Fortitude 5; hp 10; Break DC 18) carrying liftgas steam. Puncturing a steam pipe releases a 20-ft. radius cloud of scalding steam that creates obscured terrain and deals 1d8 fire damage per round. The cloud lasts until the end of the encounter.

Steam Whistles. These inverted cups mounted on stems scream shrill notes (and puffs of steam) when their chains are pulled. They can be heard from anywhere in the forge area (no Perception checks necessary).

Trapped Gratings. These grates (AC/Reflex 5, Fort 12; hp 60; Break DC 22) lead down to the slag pits. A crank near each one opens it, but an ancient dwarven steam trap guards the grates from creatures below.

SCALDING WATER TRAP

LEVEL 6 BLASTER (Trap XP 250)

Blasts of scalding water shoot in all directions, drenching the area beneath the grate.

Trap Once per round when someone attempts to open the grate by force, the trap makes an attack

Perception

DC 22—The character notices small holes in the ceiling and walls

DC 27—The character notices that moving the grate triggers the trap

Trigger Creature tries to force the grating open.

Immediate Reaction Close blast 2

Targets Creatures in blast

Attack +11 vs. Reflex

Hit 1d8 + 5 fire damage, and target dazed (save ends)

Miss Half damage

Countermeasures

- An adjacent character can disarm the trap with a DC 30 Thievery check

SOUNDING THE ALARM

Once the alarm is raised, most cultists secure their areas and await further instruction, while the Golden Guardsmen from area HF3 (or another group if these have been killed) take position at the entrance while the main gate is closed and its mechanism dismantled, trapping PCs within. Use the

water-rise skill challenge to handle repairing this, if the PCs try (page 153).

Ghrysigor and the Redcloak riders remain on watch outside—much to the devil’s chagrin—while Bragollach assembles some reinforcements and comes looking for the PCs (see below). If they can’t locate the party in their initial sweep, Bragollach summons the Redcloak riders into the forge, trying to sniff out their location using the olfactory senses of the murreymount dogmoles.

CONFRONTING BRAGOLLACH

As soon as she becomes aware of intruders, Bragollach guesses it’s the PCs and comes looking for them. She prefers to confront the PCs in the corridor running around the main forge so her shieldbearers can circle behind them.

The golden dragon has changed greatly since last you met. She’s clad in golden armor that bristles with spikes and blades and crawls with infernal runes, secured so tightly that her wings are pinned and its scales are cracked and bloody. Her limbs are slick with fever-sweat, her lips are foam-flecked, and there’s a look of bloodshot madness in her eyes.

Bragollach is a creature of passion—and that passion is avarice. Weighed down by cursed armor and driven mad by gold fever and Mammon’s whispering, she’s far from thinking clearly. Her natural draconic greed has been corrupted into a rabid belief that every precious thing in the world belongs to her. She’s not yet beyond redemption, however. If the adventurers try to reason with her, they can try the skill challenge below.

REDEEMING BRAGOLLACH

SKILL CHALLENGE (2,100 XP)

Level 12th level challenge

Complexity 3 (requires 8 successes before 3 failures)

Primary Skills Athletics, Diplomacy, Thievery

Despite her madness, Bragollach’s noble nature rails against Mammon’s taint and it’s possible to temporarily bring her back to her right mind. PCs need to either reason with Bragollach or cut the cursed armor from her body.

For every two successes the PCs get by Athletics or Thievery, lower the dragon’s AC and the attack power of her *armor of the geldwyrn* by 1. Once they accrue 5 successes in the challenge (by any method), Bragollach is visibly confused and counts as dazed for the rest of the encounter.

Arcana (trained only; DC 25)—You identify the magic flowing through the devilish runes on Bragollach’s armor, and know that it’s probably affecting her mind.

THE HEARTSBLOOD FORGE

1 square = 5 feet



Athletics (DC 21)—You tear a cursed piece of armor from Bragollach, lessening its insidious power (attempting this check subjects the character to an opportunity attack from the dragon).

Bluff (DC 17)—You distract the dragon while one of your companions moves in to remove some of her armor, negating Bragollach's attack of opportunity and granting a +2 bonus to their check (if the character grabs Bragollach's attention with a chunk of cursed orichalcum, they get a +5 bonus to the Bluff check).

Diplomacy (DC 25)—You reason with the corrupted dragon, calling for her to throw off Mammon's influence.

Heal/Insight (DC 15)—You spot that Bragollach is suffering from a severe case of gold fever (this check does not count towards the success or failure of the challenge).

History (DC 20)—You remind Bragollach of the ancient pacts between her clan and the people of Rygar.

Perception (DC 17)—You spot that Bragollach's armor is made from glittering orichalcum covered with infernal runes and that it seems to be weighing her down and digging painfully into her flesh (success opens the possibility of identifying the runes with Arcana and using Athletics or Thievery to cut it off the dragon; this check does not count towards the success or failure of the challenge).

Religion (DC 15)—You issue a rousing speech denouncing Mammon's ways.

Thievery (DC 23)—You skillfully unbuckle a piece of armor or slash a strategic strap (attempting this check subjects the character to an opportunity attack from the dragon).

Success Bragollach comes to her senses for a time and ceases to attack the PCs; she pounces on any remaining enemies and tears them apart, before breaking down in horror at what she's become (see "Development" section).

Failure Bragollach is consumed by gold fever and cannot be reasoned with.

10TH LEVEL ENCOUNTER

(2,600 XP) • Bragollach, 8 dwarf shieldbearers

BRAGOLLACH, CORRUPTED GOLD DRAGON

LEVEL 9 SOLO CONTROLLER

LARGE NATURAL MAGICAL BEAST (DRAGON) XP 2,000

Initiative +7 **Senses** Perception +12; darkvision

hp 380 **Bloodied** 190

AC 23 **Fortitude** 21 **Reflex** 23 **Will** 21

Resist 15 fire **Saving Throws** +5

Speed 8, fly 10 (hover), overland flight 15

Action Points 2

[mba] **Bite** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Fire**

Reach 2; +14 vs. AC; 2d8 + 6 damage plus 2d6 fire damage

[m] **Armor of the Geldwyrn** (immediate reaction, when hit by an adjacent creature; at-will) ♦ **Poison**

+13 vs. Ref; 1d8 + 5 damage, and target takes ongoing 5 poison damage (save ends)

[m] **Claw** (standard; at-will)

Reach 2; +14 vs. AC; 2d6 + 6 damage

[m] **Double Attack** (standard, at-will)

Bragollach makes two *claw* attacks

[m] **Hornblade Charge** (standard; usable only when charging; at-will)

Reach 2; +12 vs. AC; 2d8 + 6 damage, and target is impaled (treat as grabbed); an impaled character cannot be targeted by Bragollach's bite, but otherwise follows the normal rules for being grabbed

[c] **Breath of Molten Gold** (standard; recharge on 5, 6) ♦ **Disease, Fire**

Close blast 5; +11 vs. Fortitude; 2d6 + 5 fire damage and ongoing 5 fire damage, and target is slowed (save ends both); this attack counts as exposure to gold fever

Miss—Half damage

[c] **Golden Glory** (standard; encounter) ♦ **Charm**

Close burst 5; targets enemies; +11 vs. Will; target is stunned until the end of Bragollach's next turn

Aftereffect—Target takes a -2 penalty to attack rolls (save ends)

[r] **Seized by Greed** (standard; encounter) ♦ **Charm**

Ranged 5; +11 vs. Will; target is dominated until the end of target's next turn

Fatal Bequest

Upon death, Bragollach vomits up 9 gp of cursed gold

Alignment unaligned **Languages** Common, Draconic

Skills Arcana +8, Athletics +15, Diplomacy +13,

Insight +10, Intimidate +13

Str 23 (+10) **Dex** 16 (+7) **Wis** 12 (+5)

Con 15 (+6) **Int** 8 (+3) **Cha** 18 (+8)

Equipment golden draconic plate armor

DWARF SHIELDBEARER	
LEVEL 7 CONTROLLER MINION	
MEDIUM NATURAL HUMANOID (DWARF)	XP 75
Initiative +3 Senses Perception +5; low-light vision hp 1; a missed attack never damages a minion AC 22 Fortitude 19 Reflex 17 Will 20 Speed 5	
[mba] Shield Bash (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+12 vs. AC; 4 damage, and target is pushed 1 square	
[m] Reactive Smash (immediate interrupt, when targeted by a melee attack; at-will)	
Targets attacker; +11 vs. Fort; target takes 4 damage and is stunned until the start of target's next turn	
Fatal Bequest	
Upon death, a dwarf vomits up 7 gp of cursed gold	
Stand Your Ground	
When an effect forces the dwarf to move—through a pull, a push, or a slide—the dwarf moves 1 square less than the effect specifies, and when an attack would knock the dwarf prone, the dwarf can roll a saving throw to avoid falling prone.	
Alignment evil Languages Common, Dwarven	
Skills Endurance +9, Dungeoneering +11	
Str 17 (+6)	Dex 10 (+3) Wis 14 (+5)
Con 16 (+6)	Int 11 (+3) Cha 12 (+4)
Equipment chainmail, large shield	

TACTICS

Bragollach begins combat with her breath weapon, followed by her *hornblade charge*. She uses *seized by greed* to draw in ranged PCs and reserves *golden glory* for when she's pressed by foes in melee. Unless redeemed, she fights to the death, consumed by greed and Mammon's promises.

Shieldbearers form a wall to cut off the party's retreat. They *shield bash* anyone who tries to break their line but otherwise let Bragollach deal with the PCs.

DEVELOPMENT

If the PCs redeem her, Bragollach is distraught. Exhausted and barely clinging to sanity, she refuses to linger in the forge or go near Mammon's avatar but otherwise helps the PCs however she can. Gold fever soon begins to creep over her again, and to avoid falling into Mammon's clutches once more, she departs the forge.

HF1. BASE OF THE WATER-RISE

The base of the water-rise is a mass of thundering geysers. The platform the PCs ride comes to rest level with a corridor covered in mold and giant mushrooms, shuddering from the constant impact of water. The floor of the shaft is 15 ft.

further down, filled with churning water to a depth of 10 ft. The dim light and fine spray hides the PCs' arrival; the blue-shaded area around the water-rise counts as obscured terrain.

There are two exits from this chamber, but only the corridor is immediately apparent. A hidden egress exists half concealed by spray in the wall (SP1). A DC 22 Perception check is required to spot this grating, as well as numerous humanoid and animal tracks in the mold. A character examining the large mushrooms can make a DC 17 Nature check to determine that they are harmless but infested with cloudspores (terrain) (see DMG, page 67).

HF2. THE GATES OF HEARTSBLOOD FORGE

Once the PCs navigate the fungus patch, read or paraphrase the following:

Giant bronze lanterns flank the entrance to Heartsblood Forge, its rune-carved arch edged in silvery metal. The points of a raised portcullis are visible above the doorway.

Pacing this room is a double-headed, boar-faced giant in gleaming golden armor, pacing as if impatient. A pair of Redcloak kobolds sit astride Dogmoles and, in contrast to the giant, they sit neatly at attention, their eyes glitteringly alert.

SETUP

Ghrysigor and the Redcloaks are charged with guarding the entrance to Heartsblood Forge. Although not visible to the PCs, a unit of golden guard are also nearby (HF3) and come running if a fight breaks out. Flame jet (trap) nozzles are concealed in the giant lanterns, ready to fill the area in front of the gate with fumes, but they are not yet activated. The control panel is just inside the gate.

ILLUMINATION

The lanterns shed bright light in an 8-square radius.

ENVIRONMENT

Dwarven runes around the door read "*from faith and heartsblood comes the glory of our people. Work well, crafter.*" A steam whistle is mounted by the gate, near the southernmost rider.

The rumbling and thundering of the water-rise interferes with the senses of the dogmoles in this area, effectively halving their blindsight.

Squares occupied by giant mushrooms count as difficult terrain. They're also infested with cloudspores (terrain) that create concealment if disturbed. If lowered, the main gate counts as an adamantite portcullis. The latticework provides superior cover (-5 to hit rolls) to creatures on either side.

If they approach peaceably, there's a chance that the party can bluff its way into the forge. Like all devils, Ghrysigor is vulnerable to flattery and bribery, but he's a loyal servant of Mammon, and the PCs will also need a convincing ruse: most likely pretending to be cultists.

BLUFFING THE GATE GUARDS SKILL CHALLENGE (XP 700)

Setup The PCs must get past the gate guard

Level 12th level challenge

Complexity 1 (requires 4 successes before 3 failures)

Relegation to guard duty has left Ghrysigor in a foul mood. He's spoiling for a fight and looks for any excuse to bully and extort treasure from those who pass. If the PCs accrue 2 fails in the challenge, Ghrysigor becomes suspicious and readies his *horn of summons*.

Primary Skills Bluff, Diplomacy, Religion

Bluff (DC 21)—You claim to be a cultist of Mammon or some other ruse designed to gain entry without a fight.

Diplomacy (DC 16)—You flatter Ghrysigor's ego or offer him a bribe; attempts to appeal to the devil's better nature or turn him against the cult are automatic failures.

If you have successfully interrogated a living or dead cultist earlier in the adventure, you can use the information learned to banter with Ghrysigor about the movers and shakers in the cult, easing the devil's suspicions.

Insight (DC 16)—You accurately analyze Ghrysigor's mood, noting that he is unhappy to be on guard duty and looking for any excuse to pick on visitors (this check does not affect the outcome of the skill challenge).

Intimidate (DC 22)—You threaten retribution from one of the cult's senior members or look too tough for Ghrysigor to bully (if you fail this check, Ghrysigor deliberately picks on you for the rest of the encounter).

Religion (DC 20)—You know the correct rituals and forms of address for worshippers of Mammon, and the best way to converse with devils.

Streetwise (DC 14)—You recognize the Redcloaks as an infamous gang of Mammon-worshipping kobolds; a successful check adds nothing to the challenge but opens up the possibility of making a Diplomacy or Bluff check with the kobolds, persuading them to vouch for the PCs (only 1 success is possible by this method, as Ghrysigor puts little stock in their opinion).

Optional Modifiers—If you are dressed in cult regalia you gain a +2 bonus to Bluff, Diplomacy, and Religion checks; if you bribe Ghrysigor with 500 gp or more of treasure, a magic item, or a lump of cursed orichalcum, you gain a +4 on all checks.

Success Ghrysigor allows you to enter the forge but for every failure accrued, he demands 500 gp worth of treasure or a magical item as a tithe.

Failure Ghrysigor blows his *horn of summons* and the guards attack.

If the guards to raise the alarm, the PCs hear multiple steam whistles going off deeper in the forge as the alert spreads from room to room. No other reinforcements arrive during the course of the battle, but a few minutes later (just enough time for a short rest), Bragollach comes looking for the PCs.

12TH LEVEL ENCOUNTER

(3,676 XP) • 2 dogmole murreymounts, flame jet trap, Ghrysigor, 6 golden guard templars, 2 Redcloak riders

FLAME JET

LEVEL 8 BLASTER (Trap XP 350)

Trap The nozzle of a flame jet (trap) is mounted in each lantern; controls behind the portcullis control it (see DMG page 64)

Perception

DC 16—A spiraling ivory horn hangs from the belt of the giant

DC 24—There's a suspicious-looking nozzle built into each lantern

DC 28—The control panels are on the far side of the doorway

Religion

DC 20—The character recognizes Ghrysigor as some kind of devil

DOGMOLE MURREYMOUNT LEVEL 6 MINION

MEDIUM NATURAL BEAST (BLIND)

XP 63

Initiative +5 **Perception** +14; blindsight 20 (but see setup)

Scent aura 2; dogmoles automatically detect invisible enemies and those with concealment (including total concealment) within their aura

hp 1, a missed attack never damages a minion

AC 18 **Fortitude** 18 **Reflex** 17 **Will** 18

Speed 6

[mba] **Gouging Teeth** (standard; at-will)

+11 vs. AC; 4 damage

Shifty Mount (immediate reaction, when rider is missed by melee attack; while mounted by a friendly rider of 6th level or higher; at-will) ♦ **Mount**

The dogmole may shift 1 square

Alignment unaligned

Languages —

Str 19 (+7)

Dex 14 (+5)

Wis 16 (+6)

Con 14 (+5)

Int 4 (0)

Cha 8 (+2)

GHRYSIGOR, SLAVER OF THE GOLDEN HELL
LEVEL 11 ELITE SOLDIER

LARGE IMMORTAL HUMANOID (DEVIL) XP 1,200

Initiative +8 Senses Perception +9; darkvision

hp 238 Bloodied 119

AC 28 Fortitude 26 Reflex 18 Will 19

Resist fire 20

Saving Throws +2

Speed 6

Action Points 1

[mba] **Huge Spiked Chain** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

Reach 3; +18 vs. AC; 1d10 + 9 damage

[c] **Flailing Chains** (standard; recharge on 5, 6) ♦ **Weapon**

Close burst 3; +14 vs. Fort; 3d8 + 5 damage, and target pushed three squares and knocked prone

[r] **Chain Net** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

Range 10/20; +16 vs. Ref; 1d8 + 5, and target is restrained (save ends); Ghrysigor must recover his net before it can be thrown again.

[r] **Seized by Greed** (standard; encounter) ♦ **Charm**

Ranged 4; Level + 16 vs. Will; target is dominated until the end of target's next turn

Double Actions

Ghrysigor rolls initiative twice, gets two turns during a round, and has a full set of actions (standard, move, minor) on each turn; each set of actions corresponds to a different head

Dual Brain

At the end of his turn, Ghrysigor automatically saves against dazed and stunned conditions, and against charm effects that a save can end.

Alignment evil Languages Common, Giant, Supernal

Str 28 (+14) Dex 12 (+6) Wis 9 (+4)

Con 23 (+11) Int 8 (+4) Cha 15 (+7)

Equipment chain net, gold-plated breastplate, *horn of summons*, huge spiked chain, key to area HF4

GOLDEN GUARD TEMPLAR LEVEL 6 SOLDIER

MEDIUM NATURAL HUMANOID XP 250

Initiative +8 Senses Perception +9

hp 69 Bloodied 34

AC 23 Fortitude 19 Reflex 18 Will 18

Speed 5

[mba] **Trident** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

+13 vs. AC; 1d10 + 4 damage

[m] **Blazing Shield** (immediate interrupt, when hit by melee attack; encounter) ♦ **Radiant, Weapon**

Targets attacker; +11 vs. Fort; 3d6 + 4 damage, and target blinded until the end of target's next turn.

[r] **Hellish Litany** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Psychic**

Range 10; +11 vs. Will; 1d10 + 4 psychic damage

Esprit de Corps (free; at-will)

The templar grants a +2 bonus to one defense score, attack roll, or saving throw of one adjacent templar.

Alignment evil Languages Common

Skills Religion +11

Str 19 (+7) Dex 16 (+6) Wis 16 (+6)

Con 13 (+4) Int 13 (+4) Cha 13 (+4)

Equipment golden plate armor, holy symbol of Mammon, large shield

REDCLOAK RIDER KOBOLD

LEVEL 6 ARTILLERY

SMALL NATURAL HUMANOID XP 250

Initiative +4 Senses Perception +12; darkvision

hp 55 Bloodied 27

AC 18 Fortitude 18 Reflex 19 Will 18

Speed 6

[mba] **Crimson Cutlass** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

+12 vs. AC; 1d6 + 4 damage

[r] **Ruby Ray** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Fire**

Ranged 20; +13 vs. AC; 1d10 + 4 fire damage

[r] **Scarlet Salvo** (standard; recharge on 4, 5, 6) ♦ **Force**

Ranged 10; +11 vs. Reflex; 3d6 + 4 damage, and the kobold makes a secondary attack against each creature adjacent to the target

Secondary Attack +11 vs. Reflex; 1d10 + 4 damage

Shifty (minor; at-will)

When dismounted, the kobold shifts 1 square.

Alignment evil Languages Common, Draconic

Skills Ride+9

Str 16 (+6) Dex 13 (+4) Wis 16 (+6)

Con 13 (+4) Int 19 (+7) Cha 13 (+4)

Equipment exotic saddle (dogmole), red mask and cloak, small cavalry saber

TACTICS

The templars emerge from area HF3 on the 2nd round of combat, sounding the steam whistle alarm as they leave their chamber. On arrival, they take up position in the entranceway (safe from the traps), forming a shield wall and using *hellish litany* against the PCs. If the adventurers seem to have the upper hand, one of them activates the flame jets



(trap) and another closes the gate. If the PCs look vulnerable however, four guardsmen advance to engage them while two remain to guard the gate controls.

Ghrysigor is the offspring of a chain devil and shares his father's love of torture, violence, and chain fighting. He sounds his *horn of summons* at the first sign of trouble and then holds the center of the chamber to engage the adventurers with his superior reach. He throws his net at the most mobile-looking enemy and, if the traps are activated, tries to push PCs into their reach. He fights to the death to prevent adventurers interrupting Mammon's plans.

Redcloak riders try to stay out of melee, peppering the group with *ruby rays* and *scarlet salvos*. They retreat if bloodied, trying to lower the portcullis and activate the trap.

Murreymounts act as steeds for the Redcloak riders, and bite enemies who come within melee range.

HF3. GOLDEN GUARDROOM

Mammon's golden guard templars make their home here. Read or paraphrase the following:

Perched on a table is a statue of a frog-faced devil the size of a grown dwarf. It seems to be made of solid gold.

A steam whistle is mounted on a pipe opposite the door to this chamber. Within the room, banners marked with Mammon's seal bedeck the walls and relics like holy symbols and Mammonite bibles dot the shelves. The room is also a barracks and armor stands, kit bags, and the smell of polish are everywhere.

Once the alarm has been raised, the golden guardsmen move to reinforce the main gates (HF2). The tithe eater initially resembles treasure rather than a monster, although PCs may be rightly suspicious of a grinning golden statue in Mammon's lair.

TABLE 6-4: PERCEPTION

DC	Result
11	The statue seems to be hollow.
16	There's no sign of a trap or any other mechanisms built into this statue.
28	You could swear the statue just moved, ever so slightly.
Special	Anyone looking into the tithe eater's open mouth will just be able to make out that its hollow belly seems to be filled with coins, gems, and valuable-looking objects. Strangely, it looks bigger on the inside than it does from the outside.

TABLE 6-5: RELIGION

DC	Result
21	It's a statue of a tithe eater: a minor functionary of the Mammon court that deals with the collection of tribute. These statues are often used as repositories for treasure and unholy relics.
25	Tithe eaters are devilish constructs that resemble gold statues.

8TH LEVEL ENCOUNTER

(1,850 XP) • 6 golden guard templars (see page 161 for statistics), golden tithe eater

GOLDEN TITHE EATER MEDIUM IMMORTAL ANIMATE	LEVEL 8 BRUTE XP 350
Initiative -1	Senses Perception +12
hp 109	Bloodied 54
AC 20	Fortitude 21 Reflex 5 Will 20
Resist all damage 10	
Speed 0	
[mba] Clamping Jaws (standard; at-will) ♦ Teleport	
+9 vs. Ref; 2d6 + 5 damage, and target is restrained (escape ends); all escape checks must be made against the tithe eater's Fortitude	
<i>First Failed Escape</i> —Target ½ devoured	
<i>Second Failed Escape</i> —Target ¾ devoured	
<i>Third Failed Escape</i> —Target devoured and transported to Hell	
[m] Grinding Maw (immediate reaction, when hit by close or melee attack while a target is restrained; at-will)	
+11 vs. AC; restrained target takes 1d8 + 5 damage	
[r] Evil Eye (minor action; at-will) ♦ Fear, Gaze, Psychic	
Ranged 5; +9 vs. Will; 2d6 + 5 psychic damage, and target stunned (save ends); the tithe eater cannot target an opponent in its <i>clamping jaws</i>	
[r] Maleficent Misdirection (immediate interrupt, when hit by area or ranged attack while a target is restrained; at-will) ♦ Charm	
Ranged 10; +9 vs. Will; the redirected attack hits the restrained victim instead	
Devil's Lunge (standard; recharge on 6) ♦ Teleport	
The tithe eater teleports 6 squares and may make an attack with its <i>clamping jaws</i>	
Greed's Retreat (free; while bloodied) ♦ Teleport	
The tithe eater releases any restrained victim and seems to devour itself, vanishing back to Mammon's Golden Hell along with anything it has consumed.	

Stubborn Squat

The tithe eater is immune to forced movement via powers that pull, a push, or a slide it; when hit by an attack would knock it prone, the Tithe Eater can make an immediate saving throw with a +4 bonus to avoid falling prone.

Alignment evil	Languages Common, Supernal	
Str 16 (+7)	Dex 1 (-1)	Wis 16 (+7)
Con 19 (+8)	Int 16 (+7)	Cha 6 (+2)

TACTICS

The tithe eater sits motionless, unmoving and uncaring even if the PCs are slaughtering golden guardsmen around it. It hopes that one of the PCs will stick their hand in its mouth. If no one takes the bait, it uses *devil's lunge* on a PC. If the players do not specify that they are watching the tithe eater carefully, it surprises them.

TREASURE

Among the devotional items, here is a *ritual candle* (level 11).

HF4. DOORKEEPER'S CHAMBER

A steam whistle is mounted on a pipe opposite the door to this chamber. The door is locked (DC 30 Thievery), but Ghrysigor has the key. When the PCs open the door, read or paraphrase the following.

This room is buried under layers of tarnished armor, filthy clothes, discarded food, and other rubbish. Here and there, an item of gold or silver sparkles amid the detritus. An ancient-looking forge-hammer, locked between the lips of a hideous stone face of a decrepit female elf apparently growing out of one wall, dominates the treasures of this room.

A rack of speaking tubes connects to HF6, HF10, HF12, HF13, and HF14. The stone face's jaws are locked tight around the hammer. Attempts to remove it activate the trap below and the noise automatically alerts Ghrysigor (HF2), the Golden Guardsmen (HF3), and (thanks to her keen draconic senses) Bragollach.

WAILING GUARDIAN

LEVEL 10 BLASTER (Trap XP 500)

The stone face depicts a wrinkled female elf; her jaws are locked tight around the mighty hammer. As you try to pull the weapon loose, it snorts a blast of green smoke into your face.

Trap The face animates once triggered and attacks every round on its initiative

Perception

DC 16—You get the uncanny feeling that the stone face is watching you

Initiative +3

Trigger The wailing guardian (trap) rolls for initiative when someone moves adjacent to it

Opportunity Action Blast 1

Targets All within blast

Attack +13 vs. Reflex

Hit 3d8 + 4 acid damage and secondary attack

Secondary Attack +10 vs. Fortitude

Hit Ongoing 5 poison damage (save ends)

Attack (once hammer removed)

Standard Action Burst 6

Target All creatures in burst

Attack +13 vs. Fort

Hit 3d10 thunder damage

Miss Half damage

Countermeasures

- If attacked, the Wailing Guardian has AC/Reflex/Fortitude 8 and hp 30
- Freeing the hammer from the jaws of the stone face is a move action requiring a DC 25 Athletics check

TREASURE

Clasped in the stony jaws of the wailing guardian (trap) is *Masterstroke*, an ancient artifact of Volund.

NEW ARTIFACT**Masterstroke, Hammer of Grajava**

Artifact (Heroic Level)

This ancient forge hammer has been forged from a single piece of orichalcum. Its haft is engraved with Dwarven runes, its head with the symbol of Volund.

Masterstroke is a +3 warhammer.

Enhancement Attack rolls and damage rolls

Critical +3d6

Property This weapon has the heavy thrown property and scores critical hits on 19 and 20.

Property (minor) You may call *Masterstroke* to your hand from up to 10 squares away.

Power (free; encounter) *Masterstroke* gains the cold, fire, lightning, or thunder keyword and deals an extra 1d10 damage of the chosen type for the rest of the encounter.

Power (standard; daily) You gain the following attack:

Close burst 2; Constitution or Strength +3 vs. Fort; 3d8 + 9 damage, and targets are knocked prone.

Goals of Masterstroke

- Protect Heartsblood Forge and the ancient covenant between Grajava and Rygar's people.
- Serve the Illuminated Brotherhood.
- Help its master construct mighty artifacts for the glory of Volund.
- Slay servants of Mammon.

ROLEPLAYING MASTERSTROKE

Masterstroke has the solemn demeanor of an ancient pontiff and often quotes from Volund's scripture. It can provide PCs with details of the forge's layout (including HF16) and history. *Masterstroke* claims to have been wielded by Grajava herself and to have forged the Prime Anvils from the mountain's fiery heartsblood—no amount of honor and respect is too much to show it. The forge's desecration makes it burn for vengeance against Mammon's servants.

TABLE 6-6: CONCORDANCE

Action	Score
Starting score	6
You are a dwarf	+2
You are a stone pact warlock or is of a divine class that worships Volund	+2
You kill a goldveined creature (once per encounter)	+2
You kill a devil in Mammon's service (once per encounter)	+1
You kill a Minion in Mammon's service (once per encounter)	+1
You engage in excessive looting	-1
You leave the Forge (per day)	-1
You retreat before the forces of Mammon	-1
You were initially dressed as a cultist of Mammon	-2
You carry cursed orichalcum	-3

TABLE 6-7: MASTERSTROKE'S REACTIONS

Pleased (16-20)
<i>"United we are Grajava's unstoppable wrath!"</i>
<i>Masterstroke</i> throws its power fully behind your efforts.
Property You gain the dwarf racial feature Stand your Ground; if you already possess this power, you resist one more square of movement and gain a +1 bonus to saves against being knocked prone.
Property You gain +5 to saves against powers with the fear or charm keyword.
Power (immediate interrupt; daily) You gain resist 20 to all damage and may ignore any effects that pull, push, slide, or knock prone until the end of your next turn .
Satisfied (12-15)
<i>"You are worthy. Together we will smite the enemies of Volund"</i>
<i>Masterstroke</i> is happy that you are fighting the forces of hell and bolsters your determination with its own.
Property You gain a +2 bonus to Will defense against powers with the fear or charm keyword.
Normal (5-11)
<i>"Mammon is rising; we must beat him back down into hell"</i>
<i>Masterstroke</i> urges you to destroy the forces of Mammon.
Property <i>Masterstroke</i> grants you proficiency (+2 bonus) with itself if you do not already have it.
Unsatisfied (1-4)
<i>"Your cowardice offends the Shieldmaiden of Rygar"</i>
<i>Masterstroke</i> berates you for your lack of resolve.
Special <i>Masterstroke</i> ceases to return when thrown and no longer flies to your hand when called. You gain vulnerable 5 to fire and cold and to attacks from creatures with the elemental type.
Angered (0 or lower)
<i>"You are an enemy of Grajava and must die"</i>
<i>Masterstroke</i> perceives you as an enemy. None of <i>Masterstroke's</i> properties and powers function for you.
Special Whenever you take an action that provokes opportunity attacks, <i>Masterstroke</i> makes an attack against you: +19 vs. AC; 1d10 + 3 damage, and <i>Masterstroke</i> may also apply any of its powers to this strike.
Moving On
<i>Masterstroke</i> moves on after the Prime Forge is cleansed of Mammon's taint. If pleased, it allows you to forge one magical item of your level +4 with it on the Prime Anvils (assuming Mammon is defeated, of course). You also gain a permanent +1 to Diplomacy checks with dwarves.

TREASURE

Amid the rubbish are looted jewelry and scattered coins worth 600 gp and a golden statuette of a grinning frog-mouthed devil (looking identical to the tithe eater next door) worth 200 gp.

HF5. SMELTING CHAMBER

This extremely hot room contains the forge's smelting operation, which still runs perfectly to this day. As the PCs enter, read or paraphrase the following:

This workroom contains every tool, machine, and component required for smelting. The machinery moves with clockwork precision and the forges glow, heated not by coals but vents of magma. Glowing molten metal pours out of buckets suspended from rattling chains and into barrel-shaped vessels. Cooling molds throw steam into the air and waste materials are sluiced away into gratings in the floor.

A steam whistle is mounted on one of the pipes. This room counts as a very hot environment (see DMG, page 158). The machinery is non-magical and is being guided around by a kyton using chains and pulleys that criss-cross the 20-ft. high ceiling.

SETUP

The chain devil is hidden in the ceiling's web of chains (a DC 23 Perception check spots it). The other dangers are malfunctions it deliberately causes rather than actual traps, and cannot be detected in advance by the PCs.

Terrain. Machinery can be scrambled over as if it was difficult terrain, but is extremely hot: each square passed through inflicts 1d6 fire damage. The web of chains dangling from the ceiling allows the chain devil to ignore this terrain, and whenever it shifts, it may move an extra square.

Fiery Affinity. The air prickles with magical energy, producing a tingly, slightly itchy sensation that can be recognized with a DC 16 Arcana check. Attacks with the fire keyword made in this chamber gain a +2 bonus to attack rolls, and attacks with the cold keyword deal half damage (ongoing damage is unaffected). The room counts as stifling heat but this is unlikely to impact on the PCs unless they try to take an extended rest here.

9TH LEVEL ENCOUNTER

(2,150 XP) • burst of sparks (hazard), chain devil, scalding blast (hazard), torrent of molten gold (hazard).

CHAIN DEVIL

(See MM, page 62)

TACTICS

The chain devil remains hidden until PCs are partway through the room, then activates a scalding blast (hazard) in its surprise round. Its favored strategy is to restrain a character near one of the molten ore converters using its *hellish chains* and then release a torrent of molten gold (hazard) on them.

SCALDING BLAST

LEVEL 7 BLASTER (Hazard XP 300)

A blast of scalding steam erupts from a nearby steam pipe.

Hazard The scalding blast (hazard) becomes active when the chain devil forgoes one of its chain attacks to activate it, and it fills its blast area for the duration of the fight

Trigger Once activated, the trap attacks whenever a creature enters or begins its turn in the blast area

Standard Action Close blast 2

Targets Creatures in blast

Attack +11 vs. Ref

Hit 2d10 + 5 fire damage

Miss Half damage

Effect The blast area provides light concealment until the start of the steam blast's next turn

Countermeasures

- Shutting off the valve is relatively simple and requires a DC 11 Thievery check from an adjacent character; it can also be deactivated with brute strength, but this requires a DC 16 Athletics check

BURST OF SPARKS

LEVEL 6 BLASTER (HAZARD XP 250)

A nearby machine showers you with searing sparks, stinging your face like a thousand fiery wasps.

Hazard The hazard becomes active when triggered and makes a single attack

Trigger The blast attacks when the devil forgoes one of its chain attacks to activate it

Standard Action Close blast 1

Targets One creature adjacent to a square containing machinery

Attack +11 vs. AC

Hit 1d8 + 5 fire damage, and the target is blinded (save ends)



TORRENT OF MOLTEN GOLD

LEVEL 10 ELITE BLASTER (HAZARD XP 1,000)

A wave of searing, golden death rushes towards you!

Hazard The torrent becomes active when triggered, and it makes a single attack, creating a hazard in the area of effect until the end of its next turn (each molten ore converter in the room can launch a single attack)

Initiative +5

Trigger The torrent of molten gold (hazard) rolls for initiative when activated and attacks on it next turn

Standard Action Close burst 1

Targets Creatures adjacent to a converter

Attack +14 vs. Reflex

Hit 4d6 fire damage and 10 ongoing fire damage, and target is slowed (save ends both)

Special The area of effect remains covered by a pool of molten gold and slag until the end of the hazard's next turn; creatures entering or beginning their turn in the area of effect take 4d6 damage

Countermeasures

- If the area is subject to an attack with the cold keyword that does more than 10 damage, the torrent immediately cools and becomes harmless

TREASURE

Hung on a peg among many other tools (DC 18 Perception check to locate it) are a pair of bronze mail gauntlets, long disused and forgotten.

NEW ITEM

Gloves of the Forgemaster

These scaled gloves are made from enchanted bronze that stays perpetually warm.

Item Slot Hands

Level 6 1,800 gp

Property +1 to Endurance checks to resist environmental cold damage

Power (minor; daily) ♦ Fire

You grant a melee or thrown weapon you wield the fire keyword until the start of your next turn; the weapon does an extra 1d6 fire damage

DEVELOPMENT

If the PCs are disguised as cultists the creature initially ignores them but attacks if the characters do or say anything suspicious while within the room.

HF6. ASSEMBLY ROOM

This workshop produces constructs based on Rabscuttle's blueprints. The cult plans to unleash a horde of fellforged on the upper halls—a golden army to accompany Mammon's avatar into battle. The room is littered with elaborate machinery and workbenches filled with bronze and steel parts. Several dozen kobolds are crammed in here and hard at work, busy assembling some kind of construct.

SETUP

Small creatures can move beneath the workshop tables with no penalty. Medium-sized or larger PCs treat them as difficult terrain. A speaking tube connects to area HF4.

The kobolds are suspicious but engage in artful banter if approached peaceably. Although loyal to Mammon, they're more than happy to murder and rob even fellow cultists. Unless the PCs make a DC 21 Intimidate or a DC 25 diplomacy check, the kobolds try to ambush the PCs.

8TH LEVEL ENCOUNTER

(1,725 XP) • 23 Redcloak rascals

REDCLOAK RASCAL KOBOLD LEVEL 7 SKIRMISHER MINION	
SMALL NATURAL HUMANOID	XP 75
Initiative +9 Senses Perception +12; darkvision hp 1; a missed attack never damages a minion AC 21 Fortitude 19 Reflex 20 Will 19 Speed 6	
[mba] Improvised Weapon (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon +12 vs. AC; 4 damage	
[m] Loot the Stunned (standard; at will) Requires stunned target; +10 vs. Reflex; the kobold steals a magic item and attempts to escape with it; roll 1d8 to determine the slot pillaged: 1. Weapon 2. Arm 3. Foot 4. Hand 5. Head 6. Neck 7. Ring 8. Waist	
[a] Volley of Gears (standard; daily per kobold group) Requires volley of gears not used previously during this encounter; burst 1 within 10; targets enemies; +12 vs. AC; 1 damage per rascal within 10 squares of the target, and kobold makes a secondary attack <i>Secondary attack</i> +10 vs. Fortitude; target is stunned	
Shifty (minor; at-will) The kobold can shift 1 square as a minor action	

Trap Sense

The kobold gains a +2 bonus to all defenses against traps

Alignment evil Languages Common, Draconic
Skills Intimidate +11, Thievery +12

Str 13 (+4) Dex 19 (+7) Wis 12 (+4)

Con 16 (+6) Int 15 (+5) Cha 16 (+6)

Equipment artisan's tools, handful of cogs, improvised weapon

TACTICS

The kobolds open with a *volley of gears* and run forward to loot what they can from stunned enemies. If more than 15 kobolds are slain, the rest try to retreat.

TREASURE

Pinned to one wall are etchings taken from Rabscuttle's schematic pillar in Bartholemeus' lair (worth 600 gp to an interested sage), stolen personal effects, and a pair of *goggles of the gearworker*.

NEW ITEM

Goggles of the Gearworker

This delicate-looking circlet mounts a series of crystal prisms that slide one over another. Even the tiniest object appears larger and more detailed when viewed through the lens.

Item Slot Head

Level 7

4,200 gp

Property You gain a +2 item bonus to Perception checks when looking for traps

Power (minor; encounter)

You can identify the origin, type, and keywords of any creature with the construct type

HF7. THE ARMY OF BRONZE AND GOLD

This large room is devoid of furnishings or fixtures. It is far from empty, though:

Gleaming constructs stand in neat rows, each bronze face a mask of infernal wickedness. They stand at attention like perfect soldiers, not an inch out of alignment.

These 30 inanimate fellforged are newly created. Their shells are complete, but their clockwork hearts and damned souls are not yet in place. Mammon promised that any loyal cultist who falls in battle would be restored to eternal life as a clockwork warrior.

HF8. STOREROOM

Both doors to this chamber are locked (DC 30 Thievery check; Break DC 25). The stone giant Anak (HF11) and the gilded devil Palnitoke (HF12) have the keys.

This room is piled high with chests and boxes spaced between stacks of processed iron ore. PCs can load themselves down with largely worthless iron and help themselves to any kind of common equipment that costs less than 50 gp. Also present are 100 newly forged holy symbols of Mammon and 10 sets of cult regalia with gleaming copper masks.

Buried among the supply of bandages and medicines is a tub of *Keoghtom's ointment*, which requires a DC 19 Perception check to locate.

HF9. JANGLING CELLS

This converted smelter is unlit, but light is visible from area HF10. Five cages dangle from the ceiling, holding captive chokers. Another choker hunches beneath the bars of the slag grate in this room, crooning soulfully at its fellows. A steam whistle is mounted in the SE corner.

A DC 23 Perception check spots a chain devil lurking in the web of chains above the cages.

SETUP

A choker occupies each cage, while the chain devil lurks in the ceiling (a DC 23 Perception check spots it). A DC 15 Heal check identifies signs of both gold fever and prolonged torture on the chokers. The room also contains two trapped gratings, but since they're harmless from this side they are not included in the XP of the encounter.

Squares containing cages are obstructions for Medium-sized creatures. Small creatures can run unhindered beneath the cages, but are subject to opportunity attacks from the chokers.

6TH LEVEL ENCOUNTER

(1,225 XP) • 5 caged goldveined chokers, 1 chain devil

CHAIN DEVIL

(See MM page 62)

GOLDVEINED CHOKER**LEVEL 10 CONTROLLER MINION**

SMALL NATURAL HUMANOID

XP 125

Initiative +11 **Senses** Perception +14; darkvision
hp 1, a missed attack never damages a minion
AC 24 **Fortitude** 23 **Reflex** 22 **Will** 22
Resist psychic 5
Speed 6

[mba] **Flailing Tentacles** (standard; at-will)

Reach 2; +15 vs. AC; 5 damage, and target is grabbed (escape ends); a target trying to escape the grab takes a -4 penalty to their check

[m] **For Love of Money** (immediate interrupt, when targeted by a melee attack; at-will)

+14 vs. Will; instead of attacking the choker, the attacker makes a melee basic attack against an adjacent target of the choker's choice. If no such target exists, no attack is made.

Fatal Bequest

Upon death, each choker vomits up 10 gp of cursed orichalcum

Alignment evil **Languages** Common

Skills Athletics +15, Stealth +14

Str 21(+10) **Dex** 18(+9) **Wis** 6 (+3)

Con 15 (+7) **Int** 6 (+3) **Cha** 18 (+9)

TACTICS

The chain devil uses a move action to move up to 4 cages 10 squares around the room.

Chokers begin by howling and thrashing in their cages. They lunge at anyone passing within two squares of their cage, and if released by the chain devil, charge the nearest creature, trying to strangle them and loot the body. If a choker incapacitates a PC, it spends 1 round tearing any valuables from the body before running off. Two or more chokers looting the same body may well come to blows.

DEVELOPMENT

If the PCs are disguised as cultists the chain devil observes them briefly before greeting them in a hissing voice. It demands to know why they are troubling the countess and interfering with the Golden Lord's holy work. The devil is practically Urzana's jailer and a DC 17 Bluff check is needed before it will let the PCs pass without a fight.

If any battle continues for 3 rounds or more then Lady Urzana arrives from area HF10 to investigate the disturbance.



HF10. LABORATORY

Dissected corpses, bubbling solutions, and half-finished constructs all compete for space here. Urzana uses the lab to create undead and fellforged and refine the gold fever plague into ever more virulent strains. A speaking tube connects to area HF4. A rune resembling a twisted coil of barbed wire sits above the doorway to area HF10a.

SETUP

If the party passed through area HF9 without alerting Urzana, they surprise her assembling a clockwork fellforged heart in the lab. The guardian effigies are currently flanking her throne (in area HF10a) in their statue form.

TRAP

The glyph of warding (trap) (see DMG, page 90) activates if a living creature touches it or passes through the doorway to area HF10a without Urzana's invitation.

9TH LEVEL ENCOUNTER

(2,000 XP) • glyph of warding (necrotic) (trap), 2 guardian effigies, Lady Urzana Dolingen

LADY URZANA DOLINGEN LEVEL 11 ELITE CONTROLLER

MEDIUM NATURAL HUMANOID (UNDEAD) XP 1,200

Initiative +7 **Senses** Perception +17; darkvision
hp 214 **Bloodied** 106

Regeneration 10 (does not function while exposed to direct sunlight)

AC 27 **Fortitude** 25 **Reflex** 26 **Will** 25

Immune disease, poison

Resist necrotic 10 **Vulnerable** radiant 10

Saving Throws +2

Action Points 1

Speed 6

[mba] **Tonderil's Claw** (standard; at-will)

+16 vs. AC; 1d8 + 5 damage (see *Tonderil's claw*)

[m] **Blood Drain** (standard; recharge when an adjacent creature becomes bloodied) ♦ **Healing**

Requires combat advantage against bloodied target; +13 vs. Fortitude; 2d12 + 7 damage, and target is weakened (save ends); Urzana regains 53 hp

[a] **Red Queen's Wrath** (standard; encounter) ♦ **Necrotic**

Burst 1 within 10; +14 vs. Will; 3d8 + 5 damage, and target is stunned (save ends)

[r] **Bolt of Ague** (standard; at-will)

Ranged 10/20; +15 vs. Fortitude; 1d8 + 5 damage, and target is dazed until the end of Urzana's next turn

[r] **Dominating Gaze** (minor; recharge on 6) ♦ **Charm**

Ranged 5; +14 vs. Will; target is dominated (save ends, with a -2 penalty on the saving throw); Urzana can dominate only one creature at a time

Aftereffect—Target is dazed (save ends)

[r] **Heartclutch** (standard; encounter)

Ranged 10; +14 vs. Fort; 3d8 + 5 damage, and target is helpless (save ends)

Mist Form (standard; encounter) ♦ **Polymorph**

Urzana becomes insubstantial and gains a fly speed of 12, but cannot make attacks; she can remain in mist form for up to 1 hour or end the effect as a minor action

Alignment evil **Languages** Common, Deep Speech, Dwarven, Supernal

Str 18 (+9) **Dex** 15 (+7) **Wis** 15 (+7)

Con 15 (+7) **Int** 21 (+10) **Cha** 18 (+9)

Equipment *Tonderil's claw*

TACTICS

Urzana fights with her *dominating gaze* and ranged attacks, calling her guardian effigies from area HF10a only if pressed. She tries to parley if bloodied. If destruction looms, she assumes mist form and makes for the nearest speaking tube.

TREASURE

Among the reagents here are 2d6 vials of drow poison, and a ritual scroll of Consult Mystic Sages.

NEW ITEM

Tonderil's Claw

This ornate silver gauntlet mounts long blades on the fingers. Ghouls still recognize it as an icon of their first king.

Level 13+3 17,000 gp

Weapon Superior Light Blade (High Crit, Off-Hand)

Damage 2d4

Enhancement Attack and damage rolls

Critical 5 ongoing damage (save ends)

Property +2 to diplomacy checks with ghouls

Power (free; daily)

The gauntlet injects potent venom into its target; the target is immobilized (save ends, with a -2 penalty)

TACTICS

The guardian effigies begin the encounter in statue form but attack if directed by Urzana or if someone enters area HF10a without her invitation. They use their *hypnotic stare* and *gnawing grapple* to immobilize foes, assuming statue form to restrict their movement.

HF10A. URZANA'S RETREAT

Urzana (or rather, her servants) expended great effort to make this chamber not just livable, but luxuriously comfortable. Read or paraphrase the following:

Thick carpets and draperies obscure the stonework, trinkets and treasures dot the room, and the chamber is dominated by a throne-like chair flanked by two life-sized statues of jackals—one made of ebony, the other alabaster. Books sit on a table near the chair, beside which an ornate brazier sends scented smoke spiraling lazily into the air.

A tiny crack here leads into the slag tunnels beneath the complex. The crack is far too small for even Tiny creatures to traverse, but Urzana makes use of the crack if she chooses or is forced to assume gaseous form.

TREASURE

Among Urzana's less valuable knickknacks are a jeweled golden goblet worth 2,000 gp and gothic silver jewelry worth 500 gp. The most fascinating treasure, however, is Urzana's notebooks and diaries, which detail hundreds of encounters with monsters below the earth. These are worth 2,000 gp to a collector and grant a +2 item bonus to monster lore checks on subterranean creatures when referenced.

DEVELOPMENT

The Countess is a Morgau noblewoman, forced into exile after an attempted coup against her brother. She serves the cult as an expert in magic and a guide to the kingdoms beneath the earth, but her position is a precarious one. She guided the Mammonites into the citadel from below, negotiating passage through the subterranean empire of the ghouls, and has been researching the gold fever plague and crafting fellforged for the cult.

She's not a worshiper of Mammon, though, and knows she becomes expendable once the avatar emerges from the golden idol. If the PCs find a way to uncover this and play on it, Urzana is a potential ally.

GUARDIAN EFFIGY		LEVEL 7 LURKER	
MEDIUM NATURAL ANIMATE		XP 300	
Initiative +11	Senses Perception +10; darkvision		
hp 64	Bloodied 32		
AC 21	Fortitude 20	Reflex 19	Will 19
Immune petrification			
Regeneration 3 (statue form only)			
Speed 6			
[mba] Bite (standard; at-will)			
+12 vs. AC; 1d10 + 5 damage			
[m] Gnawing Grapple (standard; at-will)			
+12 vs. AC; 1d10 + 5 damage, and target is grabbed and takes ongoing 5 damage (escape ends both); the effigy can take statue form while grabbing a foe, imposing a -4 penalty to the target's escape check			
[r] Hypnotic Stare (minor; recharge on 6) ♦ Charm, Gaze			
Ranged 10; +8 vs. Will; target is dazed (save ends)			
[r] Word of Recall (move; encounter) ♦ Teleport			
Ranged sight; the effigy teleports back to beside to Urzana's throne			
Statue's Resilience (standard; at-will)			
The effigy returns to statue form, gaining resist all damage 20, regeneration 3, and tremorsense 10; it loses its other senses and can take no actions other than to return to normal form (a minor action)			
Alignment unaligned		Languages —	
Str 19 (+7)	Dex 16 (+6)	Wis 17 (+6)	
Con 16 (+6)	Int 6 (+1)	Cha 10 (+3)	

HF11. MESS HALL

This former smelter was converted into a kitchen. Pots cook over hot coals and dirty dishes are heaped in smelting pots, and a steam whistle is mounted to one of the pipes. An iron spit skewers the glazed carcass of a steaming roast in the center of a long table. A slate board written on with chalk mounted to one wall reads, in Common:

TODAY: GRIFFON

TOMORROW: HUMAN

The mess hall is run by Wynkyn, an imp with a genuine flair for catering. He's assisted by Anak the Blind, a captured stone giant. A steam whistle is mounted in the corridor heading east from this room. If the alarm hasn't been sounded then sounds of combat and excited shouts are issuing from the northernmost exit of this room.

SETUP

If the alarm hasn't been raised then the PCs catch these enemies by surprise. Anak is doing the washing up while Wynkyn (perched on Anak's head) and the berserkers banter about the valuable cultists killed by the adventurers and brag about what they'd do to the PCs if they ever came face to face with them.

9TH LEVEL ENCOUNTER

(1,850 XP) • Anak the Blind, 2 trollheim dwarf berserkers, Wynkyn

ANAK THE BLIND		LEVEL 10 ELITE BRUTE	
LARGE ELEMENTAL HUMANOID (GIANT, BLIND) XP 1,000			
Initiative +4	Senses Perception +4 (blind)		
hp 250	Bloodied 125		
AC 24	Fortitude 25	Reflex 18	Will 24
Saving Throws +2			
Speed 6			
Action Points 1			
[mba] Stonefist Slam (standard; at-will)			
Reach 2; +8 vs. AC; 3d6 + 5 damage			
[m] Double Attack (standard; at-will)			
Anak makes two <i>stonefist slam</i> attacks			
[m] Grapple and Hurl (standard; recharge on 6)			
Reach 2; +7 vs. Ref; 3d8 + 5 damage, and target is pushed 3 squares and knocked prone			
[c] Earth Shock (standard; recharge when bloodied)			
Close burst 2; +11 vs. Fortitude; 3d8 + 5 damage, and target is stunned until the end of Anak's next turn			
<i>Miss</i> —Half damage, and target not stunned			

Blind

Anak cannot flank an opponent and grants combat advantage to all enemies; he takes a -10 penalty to Perception checks, and all targets have total concealment from him (-5 to attacks, included above)

Alignment unaligned	Languages Common, Deep Speech, Giant, Primordial	
Skills Dungeoneering +10		
Str 21 (+10)	Dex 8 (+4)	Wis 18 (+9)
Con 15 (+7)	Int 11 (+5)	Cha 10 (+5)

Equipment key to area HF8

TROLLHEIM DWARF BERSERKERS

LEVEL 7 BRUTE

MEDIUM NATURAL HUMANOID XP 300

Initiative +7	Senses Perception +3, low-light vision		
hp 79	Bloodied 39		
AC 23	Fortitude 20	Reflex 19	Will 18
Speed 5			

[mba] **Greataxe** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

+14 vs. AC; 1d12 + 6 damage

[m] **Bearkiller Blow** (standard; recharge on 5, 6) ♦ **Weapon**

+14 vs. AC; 1d10 + 9 damage

[m] **Blooded Fury** (free, when first bloodied; encounter)

The dwarf makes a melee basic attack with a +4 bonus to the attack roll and deals an extra 1d6 damage on a hit

Thousand Yard Stare (immediate reaction, when hits with a melee attack or is hit by a melee attack; encounter)

The dwarf's opponent is marked (save ends)

Alignment evil	Languages Common, Dwarven	
Skills Intimidate +9, Nature +8		
Str 16 (+6)	Dex 14 (+5)	Wis 11 (+3)
Con 15 (+5)	Int 10 (+3)	Cha 12 (+4)

Equipment chain shirt, greataxe, ornate mead horn

WYNKYN		LEVEL 8 LURKER	
TINY IMMORTAL HUMANOID (DEVIL)		XP 350	
Initiative +13	Senses Perception +7; darkvision		
hp 69	Bloodied 34		
AC 22	Fortitude 19	Reflex 21	Will 20
Resist 15 fire			
Speed 4, fly 7 (hover)			
[mba] Barbed Whip (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon			
Reach 1; +11 vs. AC; 1d4 +1 damage			
[m] Master's Lash (standard, while riding or adjacent to Anak; at-will) ♦ Weapon			
Anak takes 5 damage and makes a melee basic attack or takes a move action of Wynkyn's choosing.			
[m] Rider's Retreat (immediate interrupt, when targeted by an attack while riding Anak; at-will))			
+12 vs. Ref; the attack hits Anak instead of Wynkyn.			
[r] Master's Wand of Hellish Rebuke (standard; encounter) ♦ Arcane, Fire, Implement			
Range 10; +12 vs. Ref; 1d10 + 8 damage (see ADVENTURER'S VAULT, page 110).			
Vanish (Standard, at-will) ♦ Illusion			
Wynkyn becomes invisible until the end of its next turn or until he attacks			
Alignment evil	Languages Common, Supernal		
Skills Arcana +10, Bluff +11, Stealth +12			
Str 12 (+4)	Dex 18 (+7)	Wis 12 (+4)	
Con 16 (+6)	Int 15 (+5)	Cha 16 (+6)	
Equipment barbed whip, <i>master's wand of hellish rebuke</i> (level 8)			

TACTICS

Enslaved by the cult and his spirit broken long ago, Anak obeys Wynkyn's instructions numbly. If the imp is killed, Anak curls into a ball and cowers for the rest of the fight.

Wynkyn rides Anak into battle, goading him with verbal abuse and his *master's lash* power. While Anak engages foes in melee, Wynkyn targets ranged combatants with his *master's wand of hellish rebuke*. If he is bloodied or Anak is reduced below 50 hp, Wynkyn tries to flee.

The dwarves Ulrik and Grimhuld charge enemies with glee, preferring to target armored warriors over other "inferior" combatants.

DEVELOPMENT

If the fight lasts longer than 3 rounds, the inhabitants of area HF13 hear it and come running. If Wynkyn is killed, Anak curls into a fetal ball. He expects nothing but abuse from all around him and suspects a trick if the PCs try to befriend him.

Anak's initial attitude is unfriendly, but if convinced they're genuinely friendly, he helps the PCs however he can. Anak knows that a spy of the Illuminated Brotherhood infiltrated the forge several months ago, hiding in a secret room, but not where the chamber is or what became of him.

TREASURE

Wynkyn is carrying a *master's wand of hellish rebuke* (8th level). Anak has the key to the storeroom (HF8) dangling from his belt.

HF12. THE LIBRARY

The library's double doors are made from petrified wood stained with iron oxides in angular patterns of red, brown, and orange. Runes carved above read, "The Book is the Anvil of Knowledge." If the alarm has been raised, Palnitoke locks the door (DC 20 Thievery check; Break DC 16) and begins an Arcane Lock ritual to seal it further (which adds +5 to its DC).

Half a dozen tiny spheres float in mid-air, spotting the otherwise dark chamber with pools of illumination. Beneath them, long tables are flanked by threadbare chairs. Shelves of petrified wood line the walls, their contents quite varied—books, sheets of metal, ceramic tablets, and the occasional mechanical object all share space here.

Speaking tubes here connect to areas HF14 and HF4. The shelves are filled with books, manuscripts, schematics, and other materials. Most are written in Dwarven but a few are in ancient Common, Elven, Giant, Primordial, and Supernal.

At the far end of the room, a small figure is hunched over a pile of books, making occasional tuts and exasperated mutterings.

SETUP

If the PCs gain entry to this room quietly, they may catch Palnitoke unawares, but it's far more difficult to evade the tiny scrivener imps that lurk among the bookshelves (a DC 26 Perception check is required to spot them—this includes a -4 penalty for the dim light).

10TH LEVEL ENCOUNTER

(2,500 XP) • Palnitoke (gilded devil), 6 scrivener imps

PALNITOKE, INFERNAL BOOKKEEPER	
(GILDED DEVIL)	LEVEL 9 CONTROLLER
MEDIUM IMMORTAL HUMANOID (DEVIL)	XP 400
Initiative +6 Senses Perception +7; low-light vision	
hp 100	Bloodied 50
AC 23	Fortitude 22 Reflex 21 Will 23
Resist 10 fire	
Speed 6	
[mba] Poisoned Quill (standard; at-will) ♦ Poison, Weapon	
+14 vs. AC; 1d4 +3 poison damage and target weakened (save ends).	
[m] Devil's Mark (standard; encounter) ♦ Arcane, Poison	
+17 vs. AC; 3d8 + 5 poison damage and all creatures with the devil type gain +2 to hit the character (no save). The Devil's Mark can be removed only by Palnitoke, the Dispel Magic power, or a similar ritual. Overzealous inquisitors and witchunters may believe the mark indicates that the character has sold his soul to Hell.	
[r] Amass All Things (standard; daily) ♦ Teleportation	
Range 10; +13 vs. Reflex; the target's most valuable item (determined by gp value) teleports from the target's possession and into the hands of Palnitoke	
[r] Betrayal of Riches (standard; recharge on 4, 5, 6)	
Range 10; +13 vs. Fortitude; 2d8 damage, and an item of the target is affected; the target suffers a secondary effect based on the item's location	
1. Arm—Receives -2 penalty to attack rolls (save ends)	
2. Feet—Slowed (save ends)	
3. Hand/Ring—Drops held items	
4. Head—Blinded (save ends)	
5. Neck/Waist—Dazed (until the end of the target's next turn)	
6. Other item—Additional 1d8 damage	
[r] Thrown Inkwell (standard; at-will)	
Ranged 5; +13 vs. Ref; the target is blinded until the beginning of Palnitoke's next turn.	
[a] The Wealth beneath Your Feet (standard; recharge when bloodied) ♦ Conjuration	
Burst 3 within 10; +11 vs. Reflex; 3d8 + 5 fire damage, and the target is restrained until the end of the Palnitoke's next turn	
Miss—Target takes half damage and is not restrained	
Greed's Many Forms (move; at-will) ♦ Polymorph	
Palnitoke takes the form of any humanoid of its size or smaller; it may remain in this form until damaged or until it dispels the effect	

Alignment evil	Languages Common, Supernal	
Skills Bluff +16, Diplomacy +16, Intimidate +16		
Str 16 (+7)	Dex 14 (+6)	Wis 16 (+7)
Con 20 (+9)	Int 18 (+8)	Cha 22 (+10)
Equipment <i>cape of the mountebank</i> (level 10), keys to areas HF8 and HF10, poisoned quill		

SCRIVENER IMP	LEVEL 8 LURKER	
TINY IMMORTAL HUMANOID (DEVIL)	XP 350	
Initiative +13 Senses Perception +7; darkvision		
hp 69	Bloodied 34	
AC 22	Fortitude 19 Reflex 21 Will 20	
Resist 15 fire		
Speed 4, fly 7 (hover)		
[m] Poisoned Quill (standard; at-will) ♦ Poison, Weapon		
+13 vs. AC; 1d3 + 2 damage and ongoing 5 poison damage, and target is marked (save ends both)		
[m] Hobbling Strike (standard; recharge on 5, 6) ♦ Poison, Weapon		
+13 vs. AC; 3d8 + 5 poison damage, and target is slowed (save ends)		
[r] Tailspray (standard; at-will) ♦ Poison		
Ranged 5; +11 vs. Ref; 1d8 + 5 poison damage, and target is blinded until the start of the imp's next turn		
Quick Escape (immediate reaction, when first bloodied; encounter)		
The imp uses <i>vanish</i> as an immediate reaction		
Vanish (standard; at-will) ♦ Illusion		
The imp becomes invisible until the end of its next turn or until it attacks		
Alignment Evil	Languages Common, Supernal (can read and write any language)	
Skills Stealth +14, Thievery +14		
Str 6 (+2)	Dex 20 (+9)	Wis 16 (+7)
Con 15 (+6)	Int 8 (+3)	Cha 12 (+5)
Equipment poisoned quill		

TACTICS

Palnitoke disdains combat but stabs with his *poisoned quill* if anyone comes within range. His first thought in any combat is to escape and raise the alarm. He uses his *cape of the mountebank* to head for the door.

The imps use their attacks to protect Palnitoke from the PCs by blinding, slowing, and marking them. Half of them use their *vanish* power each round, trying to keep the PCs guessing about their numbers.

TREASURE

Three tomes are of particular interest to the PCs:

The Cult Accounts. A massive tome written in coded Supernal, with vital portions hidden by the Secret Page ritual. A DC 30 Arcana check eventually deciphers layers of false accounting, double-dealing, deliberate miscalculations, and other embezzlement. PCs can learn the cult's income and outgoings, an approximate tally of their total treasure, and the locations of secret chapels in nearby realms.

Palnitoke's Notebook. These notes represent months of work by Palnitoke cracking various secrets of the Illuminated Brotherhood. A bookmarked page makes reference to a secret chamber he suspects is somewhere in the forge, containing "the bronze schematics" but its location is not mentioned (Palnitoke never found it).

Infernal Contracts. Scrolls of cured skin detail souls recently sold to Mammon. Among the names here are those of Halston the Just, Vanessi and her thugs, and Sebastian Ufastis, and possibly a PC, if one accepted the devil's bargain.

DEVELOPMENT

Mammon demands that every copper spent by his worshippers be accounted for, and it's Palnitoke's job to see that the cult's labyrinthine accounts are kept in order. Palnitoke loathes this assignment, believing it suited to a devil of lesser ability. He seeks a loophole out of his contract and might collude with the PCs if they approach him diplomatically. Unless obviously hostile, Palnitoke answers PC questions curtly in the hopes of being rid of them as quickly as possible. If he suspects they might aid him, the gilded devil makes subtle overtures of alliance.

HF13. THE HALL OF APPRENTICES

A door of filigreed adamantine (AC/Reflex 4 Fortitude 12; hp100; Break DC 25), its surface carved with anvils, hammers, and other symbols of the forge (see area HF14), leads to this chamber. The gate doesn't quite block line of sight but provides superior cover to anyone behind it. Runes on the arch above read, "The finest steel begins with raw iron." Speaking tubes connect to areas HF4 and HF14.

SETUP

If the alarm is not yet raised, the PCs can clearly hear the clash of arms from within even before they open the door. Members of the golden guard are sparring here, with several cultists making bets on the outcomes. If the alarm was raised, the cultists wait inside, ready to ambush.

8TH LEVEL ENCOUNTER

(1,700 XP) • 3 fellforged prototypes, 12 goldspawn dwarves, Longhand Lohengrin

**FELLFORGED PROTOTYPE
LEVEL 9 SOLDIER MINION**

MEDIUM NATURAL ANIMATE

XP 100

Initiative +8 **Senses Perception** +11
hp 1, a missed attack never damages a minion
AC 25 **Fortitude** 23 **Reflex** 20 **Will** 20
Speed 6

[mba] **Clumsy Slam** (standard; at-will)

+11 vs. AC; 2d6 + 5 damage

[m] **Clumsy Grab** (standard; at-will)

+9 vs. Ref; 1d8 + 5 damage, and target is grabbed (escape ends)

Alignment unaligned **Languages** —
Str 20 (+9) **Dex** 14 (+6) **Wis** 14 (+6)
Con 18 (+8) **Int** 3 (+0) **Cha** 1 (-1)

GOLDSPAWN DWARF**LEVEL 7 CONTROLLER MINION**

MEDIUM NATURAL HUMANOID

XP 75

Initiative +3 **Senses Perception** +5; darkvision,
low-light vision
hp 1; a missed attack never damages a minion
AC 22 **Fortitude** 19 **Reflex** 17 **Will** 20
Speed 5

[mba] **Forgehammer** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

+12 vs. AC; 9 damage

[rba] **Crossbow** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

+12 vs. AC; 9 damage

[m] **For Love of Money** (immediate interrupt, when targeted by a melee attack; at-will)

+11 vs. Will against the attacker; instead of attacking the dwarf, the attacker makes a melee basic attack against an adjacent target of the dwarf's choice (if no such target exists, no attack is made)

Fatal Bequest

Upon death, the dwarf vomits forth 7 greed-tainted gold pieces

Stand Your Ground

When an effect forces the dwarf to move—through a pull, a push, or a slide—the dwarf moves 1 square less than the effect specifies, and when an attack would knock the dwarf prone, the dwarf can roll a saving throw to avoid falling prone

Alignment evil **Languages** Common, Dwarven
Skills Dungeoneering +11, Endurance +9
Str 17 (+6) **Dex** 10 (+3) **Wis** 14 (+5)
Con 16 (+6) **Int** 11 (+3) **Cha** 12 (+4)

Equipment chainmail, crossbow (20 bolts), warhammer

**LONGHAND LOHENGRIN,
CAPTAIN OF THE GOLDEN GUARD
LEVEL 6 ELITE SOLDIER (LEADER)**

MEDIUM NATURAL HUMANOID XP 500

Initiative +5 **Senses** Perception +8
Captain's Aura aura 3; allies in the aura gain a +1 bonus to hit
hp 140 **Bloodied** 70
AC 23 **Fortitude** 20 **Reflex** 20 **Will** 17
Saving Throws +2
Speed 5
Action Points 1

[mba] **Longspear** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

Reach 2; +13 vs. AC; 1d10 + 7 damage, and target is marked until the start of the captain's next turn

[m] **Leading Strike** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

Requires longspear; the captain makes a *longspear attack*, and one ally within 3 squares of him makes a melee basic attack as a free action (+11 vs. AC; 1d10 + 4 damage)

[m] **Sweeping Strike** (standard; recharge on 6) ♦ **Weapon**

Requires longspear; reach 2; +11 vs. Ref; 2d10 + 4 damage, and target is knocked prone

[c] **Captain's Command** (minor; recharge when first bloodied)

Targets two allies; close burst 5; target makes a charge attack as a free action

Captain's Glory (immediate reaction, when an ally within 5 squares bloodies an enemy; at-will)

The captain gains 5 temporary hp and can shift 1 square as a free action.

Alignment evil **Languages** Common

Skills Diplomacy +9, Bluff +9, Insight +8, Intimidate +9

Str 19 (+7) **Dex** 10 (+3) **Wis** 11 (+3)

Con 14 (+5) **Int** 18 (+7) **Cha** 13 (+4)

Equipment *choker of eloquence* (level 12), golden plate armor, holy symbol of Mammon, longspear

TACTICS

Fellforged prototypes are nearly mindless. They stand motionless unless given an instruction. They obey the last command given by anyone present and take their orders literally.

Goldspawn dwarves throw themselves at Mammon's enemies with fanatical zeal, trusting their god (and *for love of money*) will protect them.

Longhand fends off enemies with his longspear, mocking them with sarcastic comments and being sure to keep a minion or two in his aura ready for a *leading strike*. He fights with intelligence and cunning but would rather cut a deal than die for his god. He likes to feint in combat.

DEVELOPMENT

If captured by the PCs, Lohengrin is more than happy to bargain for his life. He'll happily tell the party about the other cultists in the forge (how Bragollach devoured their former leader, that Palnitoke is unhappy with his job, etc) and how Mammon's ascension is unstoppable.

He makes every effort to appear amiable and as a man whose loyalty is wavering but, if given the opportunity (using his *choker of eloquence* to enhance any bluff or diplomacy checks), he will try to feed the party misdirection and misinformation until he sees the opportunity to escape.

TREASURE

The loot being gambled here amounts to 1,000 gp. About half of this is crude derro jewelry, the rest is trinkets stolen or traded for food in the upper halls. Lohengrin wears a *choker of eloquence* (level 13).

THE HALL OF MASTERS

A door of filigreed adamantine (AC/Reflex 4 Fortitude 12; hp 100; Break DC 25), its surface carved with anvils, hammers, and other symbols of the forge, leads to this chamber. It is protected by an Arcane Lock ritual that can be bypassed by touching specific symbols in the correct order. Only Bragollach and (unknown to her) Palnitoke know the combination.

Runes on the arch above read, "Mastery is not the end of the journey but the beginning." Speaking tubes connect this room to areas HF4, HF12, and HF13.

This room once housed the private forges of the master smiths. Bragollach claimed it as her lair recently.

The walls of this hall contain numerous niches, each containing a small forge, anvils, and racks of tools. Like a golden carpet lay coins, jewelry, candlesticks, statuettes, and countless other precious things spread throughout the room.

If the PCs have gotten here without the alarm being raised, there's a 50% chance that Bragollach is resting fitfully on her hoard, mumbling of madness, paranoia, and greed. Otherwise, she's prowling the forge or communing with Mammon's avatar and returns in 1d6 hours. (See *Confronting Bragollach* on page 157 for her statistics.)

Among the heaped treasure is the severed hand of a thief who tried to steal from Mammon and was caught in the avatar's *golden grasp*. The hand inflicts a curse on anyone daring to purloin the dragon's hoard.

HAND OF GOLD

LEVEL 11 ELITE (Trap XP 1,000)

Touching this horde triggers a devilish curse that turns intruders into statues of fool's gold.

Trap The trap consists of a single heap of treasure occupying up to 10 conterminous squares

Arcana

DC 26—You identify the hand of gold (trap) as the source of the magic, and recognize its origins and power

Initiative +5

Trigger The trap rolls for initiative when a character enters one of the affected squares, and it attacks everyone in the affected area each round.

Opportunity Action Melee

Targets Creature in trapped square

Attack +15 vs. Fortitude

Hit Target is slowed (save ends)

First Failed Save—Target is immobilized (save ends)

Second Failed Save—Target is petrified as a pyrite statue (no save)

Countermeasures

- Removing the hand from any nearby valuable items negates its magic.

Note If a PC picks up the hand while carrying any treasure or magical items, the hand's curse will continue to affect them. Once removed from the horde, the hand reactivates if any valuable object is brought into an adjacent square; the ring is currently on the hand.

TREASURE

Bragollach has claimed most of the cult's treasure as her personal hoard. It amounts to a considerable fortune in ingots, coins, and raw ore (total value 6,000 gp) and countless pieces of dwarven arms and armor, scattered among which are all the parts for a suit of *dwarven armor* (level 12 plate). There's also a golden ceremonial chalice studded with shards of emerald (1,000 gp), a silver and gold chess set whose pieces are dwarven tools and weapons (600 gp), and a large sphere of jade on a golden stand that is actually an *orb of mental dominion* (see **ADVENTURER'S VAULT** page 95).

HF15. A SHRINE DEFILED

The first time the PCs look into this room, read or paraphrase the following:

A massive statue of Grajava stands opposite doors of bronze and electrum. Someone vandalized the statue, painting her face with crude "make up" and hammering gold coins into cracks in her stone flesh. Her broken hands are outstretched but whatever they once held is gone. Streaks of mineral water drip from a

ring of stalagmites around the statue's head. Grajava's ruined face seems to be weeping.

Religious frescos cover the walls, but they have been thoroughly vandalized. Large golden icons of Mammon adorn the walls. PCs who pass this area more than once might notice (with DC 15 Perception checks) the slow spread of Mammon's features and iconography throughout the room.

A DC 24 Perception check reveals, on the wall behind the statue, the tiny words "Audi, Vide, Tace" ("Hear, See, Be Silent") written using Dwarven runes on one of the stones. This marks the mechanism for the secret door to area HF16.

The bronze and electrum doors (AC/Reflex 3 Fortitude 15; hp 100; Break DC 30) leading to area HF17 are locked. Their surface once depicted Volund's face, but as Mammon's power grows, the archdevil's grinning visage slowly replaces the smith god's features. Dwarven runes above the doors read, "Fire burns at the heart of our community. Here shall the master set down his artifice with good runes, and the wise shall know the path to travel."

Six formidable locks prevent access to the Prime Forge, although Mammon can open and close the doors as a swift action merely by concentrating. Each lock has a set of images carved around it: crafting tools, dwarves with linked hands, flames, celestial figures, runic patterns, and galloping horses. The writing above the doors is a clue to the correct sequence in which the locks should be opened.

There are three ways to pass the bronze and electrum doors: PCs can use the master keys found in area HF16, they can offer up the *Teardrop* or *Masterstroke* to Grajava's statue, or they can break in using the skill challenge below.

THE BRONZE & ELECTRUM DOOR**SKILL CHALLENGE (2,100 XP)**

Setup The PCs must successfully open the doors

Level 12th level challenge

Complexity 3 (requires 8 successes before 3 failures)

Primary Skills Arcana, Religion, Thievery

Arcana (DC 21)—There's something odd about the message carved above the door, as if it had been designed to communicate more than the obvious words.

Dungeoneering (DC 17)—You advise your companions with your knowledge of dwarven culture and machinery, adding +2 to their next check (this check does not count as success or failure for the challenge).

History (DC 25)—The prime anvils were originally guarded by six master craftsmen, each of which possessed a master key.

Perception (DC 24)—You spot the trap, opening the possibility of disarming it.

Religion (DC 17)—Volund’s traditional attributes are the Unmatched Crafter, the Lord of Community, the Master of Fire, the Champion of Good, the Sage of Runes, and the Captain of Travel.

Thievery (DC 30)—You pick a lock or disarm the trap.

Special—Turning the correct master key in the correct lock automatically adds 1 success to the challenge; an incorrect selection counts a 1 failure.

Miscellaneous—Devout worshippers of Volund gain a +4 bonus to the Religion check.

Success You open the door to the Prime Anvils.

Failure The door remains locked and you activate the trap unless it’s been spotted and dealt with; Mammon also becomes aware of PCs interfering with the doors.

GRAJAVA’S WRATH	
LEVEL 10 ELITE BLASTER (Trap XP 1,000)	
<i>A blast of scalding steam and poisonous volcanic vapor erupts all around you.</i>	
Trap	Sulfurous fumes and hot liftgas are channeled into the area
Perception	DC 24—You detect the concealed pipes that channel Grajava’s Wrath (trap)
Additional Skills (Dungeoneering)	DC 16—You recognize the distinctive smell of volcanic gas
Trigger	A creature tries to force the doors or fails the bronze and electrum doors (skill challenge) above.
Opportunity Action	Close blast 5
Targets	Creatures in Blast
Attack	+12 vs. Reflex
Hit	3d10 + 6 fire damage and 5 ongoing poison damage, and the target it weakened
Miss	Half damage, no ongoing damage or weakness
Special	When the trap goes off, it also triggers a steam whistle, raising the alarm

DEVELOPMENT

If a PC places *Masterstroke* or the *Teardrop of Grajava* into the statue’s hands, Volund’s power temporarily breaks through the desecration of its shrine. The ravaged statue of Grajava shudders suddenly to life, its fist closing around the offering as it staggers from its podium. With every step, pieces of its body slough off, but it makes unerringly for the bronze and electrum doors. With a mighty blow, it smashes them open and collapses there in a pile of rubble.

If PCs offered *Masterstroke* the hammer is visible in the rubble. Sacrificing the *Teardrop* here is the same as sacrificing it at the Forge of the Fire Blessing, cleansing the Spirit of the Mountain of its Mammonite taint.

HF16. THE SILENT ROOM

This room was a meditation chamber for the ancient masters of Heartsblood Forge, all of whom were members of the Illuminated Brotherhood. Rituals of Silence and Forbiddance blanket this room. The chamber is unlit.

A single carving adorns the center of each of this chamber’s seven walls: a compass, three cogs, an anvil of flame, an adze, a flint, a broken pillar, and a ribbon. In the center of the room stand four bronze pillars covered in intricate carvings. Between them is the base for another, but it stands empty. Hunched in one corner is a dwarven corpse in robes of maroon and gold, one finger pressed to its lips as if requesting silence.

The corpse is Brother Uldricus of the Illuminated Brotherhood. He is wedged in the corner between the symbols of the flint and the ribbon. Grasped in his desiccated hands are a sprig of acacia and five large keys.

His body is immune to the Speak with Dead ritual. If the symbol of the ribbon is touched with the sprig of acacia, it activates a variant Magic Mouth that produces text on the wall rather than spoken words saying: “The Master Keys remain untainted and will grant us access to the Prime Forge. The giant might help. Good luck my brothers, know that I was faithful to the last.”

The PCs recognize the various symbols in this room as minor icons of the Illuminated Brotherhood. A DC 20 Religion check reveals the meaning of the symbols: the compass represents order; the cogs, the Brotherhood’s three orders; the anvil of flame is passion; the adze is power; the flint, history; the pillar represents preparation; and the ribbon symbolizes their oath of silence. A DC 16 Arcana check reveals that the carved pillars contain the blueprints for the Old Masters (see *The Grand Lodge of the Old Masters*).

TREASURE

Brother Uldricus holds the Master Keys that unlock the door to the Forge of the Prime Anvils. Each bears the name of one of Volund’s aspects in Supernal:

- Key of the Unmatched Crafter
- Key of the Clan Lord
- Key of Fire’s Master
- Key of Good’s Champion
- Key of the Runic Sage
- Key of the Travel Captain

They are icons of office for the former master-smiths of Rygar and can also be used as implements by stone pact warlocks (see **IRON GAZETTEER**, page 26) and classes that utilize holy symbols.

HF17. THE PRIME FORGE

Once the PCs breach the door from room HF15, read or paraphrase the following:

A giant golden statue looks imperiously over the Prime Forge. The statue is not an icon of Volund, however, but a grinning infernal dwarf. Flanked by silver pillars spiraled by blue-white flame, the statue looks down on the Great Forge and the six mighty anvils surrounding it. Steam and a red glow rise from a narrow moat around the Great Forge dais. The walls are hung with Mammonite coins and masks, gleaming with unnatural brightness from every corner of the room.

Four gold-masked dwarves toil at the prime anvils, and before the statue stands a pair of gold-tiefling priests in cloth-of-gold robes. A sneering gilded devil stands on the bridge of arching stone between the anvils and doors. If they did not slay him in the halls above, this is Mister Purse, armed with any items he took from the group.

PCs are likely to attack immediately, so if the GM would like to engage in some villainous banter with the PCs, Mammon should address them straight away: his booming baritone issuing from the mouth of his statue but echoing from every coin, jewel, and precious item in the room:

“Ah, adventurers: looters, pillagers, killers for hire. My favorite kind of people. It seems some vacancies recently opened in our ranks. Can I interest your resourceful group in a very profitable position?”

If they allow him, Mammon embarks on a final attempt to corrupt the PCs. By this point in the campaign, you should have a fairly good idea of what motivates each character in the party. Use some of that information to your advantage, and let Mammon tempt some of the non-good PCs with whatever it is they seek, from power (both within and outside the cult) to wealth (his specialty) to comfortably settling down with family (of course, Mammon might require such a character to occasionally come out of retirement for him).

A PC taking up Mammon on his offer can radically change the dynamics of the party, to say nothing with how the adventure arc concludes. This possibility lies outside the scope of this adventure, but see the “Concluding the Adventure” section for directions regarding Mammon’s victory.

It is far more likely, however, that none of the PCs believe Mammon or are willing to sacrifice their souls for what he promises. If they do, they gain a mark as described in the *A Deal With The Devil* section on page 154.

Once he believes he has no chance of tempting the PCs, Mammon decides to take more direct measures. His voice suddenly falls silent without any farewell, and as the PCs (and their players) wonder what has happened to it, read or paraphrase the following:

The statue at the back of the chamber glitters suddenly as if hit by bright sunlight and its surface peels away like gold leaf. In moments, a whirlwind of sparkling gold flecks surrounds it. With a ponderous thud, the figure steps off its plinth, golden statue transformed into gold-skinned giant. Gems mottle its flesh in serpentine patterns, rubies fall from its smiling lips, and its eyes glow like infernal emeralds. Diamonds and platinum coins fall like sweat from its flesh.

“Before you raise your hands against me, know this: the first weapon that wounds me shall be utterly destroyed. The first power that harms me shall be lost to you forever. He who stands aside from this fight will gain all that the others lose. This is the word of Mammon, your glorious and immortal mountain king.”

As befits an archdevil’s appearance, there is more here than meets the eye. The PCs are actually facing two enemies: one physical and one not. The golden giant is a corrupted shard of the Spirit of the Mountain, its body twisted by gold fever. Filled with pain and madness, the shard simply wants to lash out at everything around it, but it does not control its own limbs. A sliver of Mammon’s will possesses the shard, whispering lies to it, prompting it ever forward in battle. If the PCs bloody the Mountain King, Mammon’s tenuous hold on his avatar’s body is lost.

13TH LEVEL ENCOUNTER

(4,200 XP) • 1 gilded devil, 4 goldspawn dwarves, the Mountain King, 2 tiefling preachers.

GILDED DEVIL		LEVEL 9 CONTROLLER	
MEDIUM IMMORTAL HUMANOID (DEVIL)		XP 400	
Initiative +6	Senses Perception +7; low-light vision		
hp 100	Bloodied 50		
AC 23	Fortitude 22	Reflex 21	Will 23
Resist 10 fire			
Speed 6			
[mba] Scourge of Avarice (standard; at-will) ♦ Heavy Flail			
+14 vs. AC; 2d6 + 3 damage			
[r] Amass All Things (standard; daily) ♦ Teleportation			
Range 10; +13 vs. Reflex; the target's most valuable item (determined by gp value) teleports from the target's possession and into the hands of Palnitoke			
[r] Betrayal of Riches (standard; recharge on 4, 5, 6)			
Range 10; +13 vs. Fortitude; 2d8 damage, and an item of the target is affected; the target suffers a secondary effect based on the item's location			
1. <i>Arm</i> —Receives -2 penalty to attack rolls (save ends)			
2. <i>Feet</i> —Slowed (save ends)			
3. <i>Hand/Ring</i> —Drops held items			
4. <i>Head</i> —Blinded (save ends)			
5. <i>Neck/Waist</i> —Dazed (until end of target's next turn)			
6. <i>Other item</i> —Additional 1d8 damage			
[a] The Wealth beneath Your Feet (standard; recharge when bloodied) ♦ Conjuration			
Burst 3 within 10; +11 vs. Reflex; 3d8 + 5 fire damage, and the target is restrained until the end of the devil's next turn			
<i>Miss</i> —Target takes half damage and is not restrained			
Greed's Many Forms (move; at-will) ♦ Polymorph			
The gilded devil takes the form of any humanoid of its size or smaller; it may remain in this form until damaged or until it dispels the effect.			
Alignment evil	Languages Common, Supernal		
Skills Bluff +16, Diplomacy +16, Intimidate +16			
Str 16 (+7)	Dex 14 (+6)	Wis 16 (+7)	
Con 20 (+9)	Int 18 (+8)	Cha 22 (+10)	
Equipment golden heavy flail, golden plate mail			

GOLDSPOWN DWARF		LEVEL 7 CONTROLLER MINION	
MEDIUM NATURAL HUMANOID		XP 75	
Initiative +3	Senses Perception +5; darkvision, low-light vision		
hp 1; a missed attack never damages a minion			
AC 22	Fortitude 19	Reflex 17	Will 20
Speed 5			
[mba] Forgehammer (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon			
+12 vs. AC; 9 damage			
[rba] Crossbow (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon			
+12 vs. AC; 9 damage			
[m] For Love of Money (immediate interrupt, when targeted by a melee attack; at-will)			
+11 vs. Will against the attacker; instead of attacking the dwarf, the attacker makes a melee basic attack against an adjacent target of the dwarf's choice (if no such target exists, no attack is made)			
Fatal Bequest			
Upon death, the dwarf vomits forth 7 tainted gold pieces			
Stand Your Ground			
When an effect forces the dwarf to move—through a pull, a push, or a slide—the dwarf moves 1 square less than the effect specifies, and when an attack would knock the dwarf prone, the dwarf can roll a saving throw to avoid falling prone.			
Alignment evil	Languages Common, Dwarven		
Skills Dungeoneering +11, Endurance +9			
Str 17 (+6)	Dex 10 (+3)	Wis 14 (+5)	
Con 16 (+6)	Int 11 (+3)	Cha 12 (+4)	
Equipment chainmail, crossbow (20 bolts), warhammer			



THE MOUNTAIN KING

LEVEL 11 SOLO CONTROLLER

HUGE IMMORTAL HUMANOID (DEVIL) XP 3,000

Initiative +6 Senses Perception +19; truesight
Aura of Glittering Gold aura 1; creatures infected by gold fever suffer a -2 penalty to all defenses

hp 448 Bloodied 224
 AC 25 Fortitude 23 Reflex 23 Will 24
 Saving Throws +5
 Resist fire 20
 Speed 8
 Action Points 2

[mba] **Bejeweled Blow** (standard; at-will)

Reach 2; +16 vs. AC; 2d6 + 4 damage, and Mammon sheds precious stones (worth 100 gp x damage inflicted), all of which are infected with gold fever.

[m] **Curse of the First Strike** (immediate reaction, when hit by a power with the weapon keyword; encounter)

+15 vs. Ref; the weapon is destroyed; if Mammon is struck by a ranged attack, both weapon and ammunition used are destroyed.

[m] **Curse of the Purloined Power** (immediate interrupt, when struck by a non-martial power; encounter)

+15 vs. Will; the Mountain King steals the power (no save) and can use it once; the target cannot invoke that power again until the Mountain King either uses it or becomes bloodied; use statistics for the power as if it had been used by the PC it was stolen from.

[m] **Golden Grasp** (standard; encounter)

Reach 2; +15 vs. Fort; the target is slowed (save ends)
First Failed Save—Target is immobilized (save ends)
Second Failed Save—Target is petrified as a pyrite statue (no save)

[m] **Stamp and Smash** (standard; at-will)

The Mountain King makes two *bejeweled blow* attacks.

[r] **Archdevil's Glare** (minor; at-will) ♦ Fear, Gaze

Ranged sight; +15 vs. Will; 1d8 + 5 psychic damage, and target is marked until the start of the Mountain King's next turn.

[r] **Plutokinesis** (standard; recharge on 4, 5, 6)

Ranged 20; +15 vs. Fort; 3d8 damage and extra point for every magical item carried by the target, and target slides 3 squares and is knocked prone.

[a] **Visions of Wealth** (standard; encounter) ♦ Charm, Illusion

Burst 5 within 20; +13 vs. Will; 3d8 psychic damage and 5 ongoing damage, and target is stunned (save ends both).

Bloodied Disjoin

When bloodied, Mammon's spirit is cast from the corrupted flesh of the mountain spirit and they become two separate entities: the Will of Mammon and the Corrupted Shard.

Stand Your Ground

When an effect forces the Mountain King to move—through a pull, a push, or a slide—the dwarf moves 1 square less than the effect specifies, and when an attack would knock the Mountain King prone, the dwarf can roll a saving throw to avoid falling prone.

Alignment evil **Languages** Common, Dwarven, Supernal

Str 18 (+9) **Dex** 13 (+6) **Wis** 18 (+9)
Con 16 (+8) **Int** 18 (+9) **Cha** 21 (+10)

TIEFLING PREACHER		LEVEL 6 ARTILLERY	
MEDIUM NATURAL HUMANOID		XP 250	
Initiative +8	Senses Perception +6; low-light vision		
hp 55	Bloodied 27		
AC 18	Fortitude 18	Reflex 19	Will 18
Resist 8 fire			
Speed 6			
[mba]	Golden Flail (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
+13 vs. AC; 1d6 + 4 damage			
[m]	Debase (standard; encounter)		
+11 vs. Will; a magic item touched by the tiefling loses enhancement bonus, properties, and powers (save ends)			
[r]	Hellfire (standard; at-will) ♦ Fire		
Ranged 20; +11 vs. Ref; 1d6 + 4 damage and ongoing 5 fire damage (save ends)			
Bloodhunt			
The tiefling gains a +1 racial bonus to attack rolls against bloodied foes			
Infernal Wrath (minor; encounter)			
The tiefling gains a +1 power bonus to its next attack roll against an enemy that hit it since the tiefling's last turn; if the attack hits, it deals an extra 5 damage			
Plea for Deliverance (immediate reaction, when hit by a melee attack while Mountain King is unbloodied; at-will) ♦ Teleportation			
The tiefling slides 10 squares; this power is not functional when the Mountain King becomes bloodied			
Alignment evil	Languages Common, Supernal		
Skills Insight +11, Religion+11			
Str 16 (+6)	Dex 19 (+7)	Wis 16 (+6)	
Con 13 (+4)	Int 15 (+5)	Cha 15 (+5)	
Equipment cultist mask and robes, gold-etched flail			

TACTICS

The gilded devil fights to the death to defend his god avatar. His first attack is *wealth beneath your feet* on the largest group of enemies followed by *amass all things* and *betrayal of riches*. If the devil is Mister Purse and he stole any items from the party in their previous encounter, he delights in using them against the PCs now.

Goldspawn dwarves throw themselves at Mammon's enemies with fanatical zeal, trusting their god (and *for the love of money*) will protect them.

The Mountain King flings PCs around using *plutokinesis* and especially enjoys hurling them into the pillars of flame or the gap around the Prime Anvils. He fixes his *archdevil's glare* on enemies targeting either Mr. Purse or the tiefling preachers, and uses *visions of wealth* to distract the party. Use the Mountain King's action points early in the combat since he loses them once bloodied.

Tiefling preachers prefer to blast the PCs with *hellfire*. If engaged in melee, they first use *debase* on the target's weapon, then cry for a *plea of deliverance* to escape.

SUNDERING THE MOUNTAIN KING

When the Mountain King is bloodied, Mammon's Will loses control of its host, and the two become separate entities. The Shard is stunned during this round of transformation.

The Mountain King's golden flesh sloughs away to reveal a twisted half-elemental creature: an ugly giant with hair of tangled roots, a beard of icicles, and eyes that flow like magma. Its skin is marred by sores and pustules and golden veins pulse in its flesh. It thrashes out at you ferociously, a mindless horror of pain and madness.

Mammon's Will also remains to threaten the PCs. It gathers up the scattered treasure to form a rough humanoid body of coins, gems, jewelry, and forge tools, appearing anywhere it wants in the chamber.



THE CORRUPTED SHARD **LEVEL 11 BRUTE**
LARGE FEY MAGICAL BEAST (EARTH) XP 600

Initiative +8 **Senses** Perception +8; tremorsense 20
hp 124 **Bloodied** 62
AC 23 **Fortitude** 24 **Reflex** 22 **Will** 23
Immune petrification, sleep
Speed 6

[mba] **Smash** (standard; at-will)
Reach 2; +14 vs. AC; 3d6 + 5 damage

[m] **Avalanche Rush** (standard; recharge on 4, 5, 6)
The shard moves up to its speed, entering enemies' spaces and provoking opportunity attacks; the shard must end its move in an unoccupied space; when it enters an enemy's space, the shard makes a trample attack: +12 vs. Reflex; 3d8 + 5 damage, and target is knocked prone.

[m] **Sunder Floor** (standard; at-will)
Reach 2; targets 2 squares; the shard smashes holes in the ground over the Well of Fire; characters occupying either square must make a DC 15 Acrobatics or Athletics check
Succeed Check—PC shifts 1 square.
Fail Check—PC ends up dangling by their fingertips over the Well of Fire; a DC 15 athletics check is required to climb back up.

[c] **Wrath of Mountain Spirit** (standard; recharge when bloodied) ♦ **Cold, Fire, Thunder**
Close blast 3; +10 vs. Fort; Target takes 3d10 cold, fire, and thunder damage.
Miss—Half damage

Rygar Restoration (move; encounter) ♦ **Healing, Teleport**
The shard collapses into a churning mass of elements, reforming 6 squares away and regaining 31 hp.

Alignment unaligned **Languages** —
Str 21 (+10) **Dex** 16 (+8) **Wis** 6 (+3)
Con 15 (+7) **Int** 4 (+2) **Cha** 18 (+9)

TACTICS

Driven mad by gold fever, Mammon's whispering, and exile from its parent spirit, the shard is little more than a rabid animal. It attacks like a berserker.

If anyone has a particularly powerful looking weapon, Mammon taunts them with archdevil's glare and tries to embezzle implement as quickly as possible. Unfortunately for Mammon, stealing and wielding Masterstroke angers the artifact (see page 164). Mammon uses fires of the golden hell if surrounded by PCs and prefers to use his second embezzle implement on an item with a ranged attack, allowing him to retreat from trouble.

MAMMON'S WILL **LEVEL 11 SKIRMISHER**
LARGE IMMORTAL ANIMATE (CONSTRUCT) XP 600

Aura of Glittering Gold aura 1; creatures infected by gold fever suffer a -2 penalty to all defenses
Initiative +10 **Senses** Perception +17; truesight
hp 124 **Bloodied** 62
AC 25 **Fortitude** 23 **Reflex** 24 **Will** 23
Immune disease, poison, sleep
Speed fly 7, phasing

[mba] **Rain of Riches** (standard; at-will)
Reach 2, +16 vs. AC; 2d6 + 5 damage

[m] **Embezzle Implement** (immediate reaction, when struck by a power with the weapon or implement keyword; recharge when bloodied)
Reach 2; +15 vs. Ref; 3d8 + 5 damage, and the weapon or implement flies from the wielder's grasp and becomes part of Mammon's Will's body. Mammon's Will adds any item bonus to attack and damage to all powers (subject to his magic threshold of +2) and can use any powers of the item as normal. PCs can grab back an embezzled item with a DC 25 Thievery check.

[r] **Archdevil's Glare** (minor; at-will) ♦ **Fear, Gaze**
Range sight; +15 vs. Will; 1d8 + 5 damage, and target is marked until the start of the Mountain King's next turn

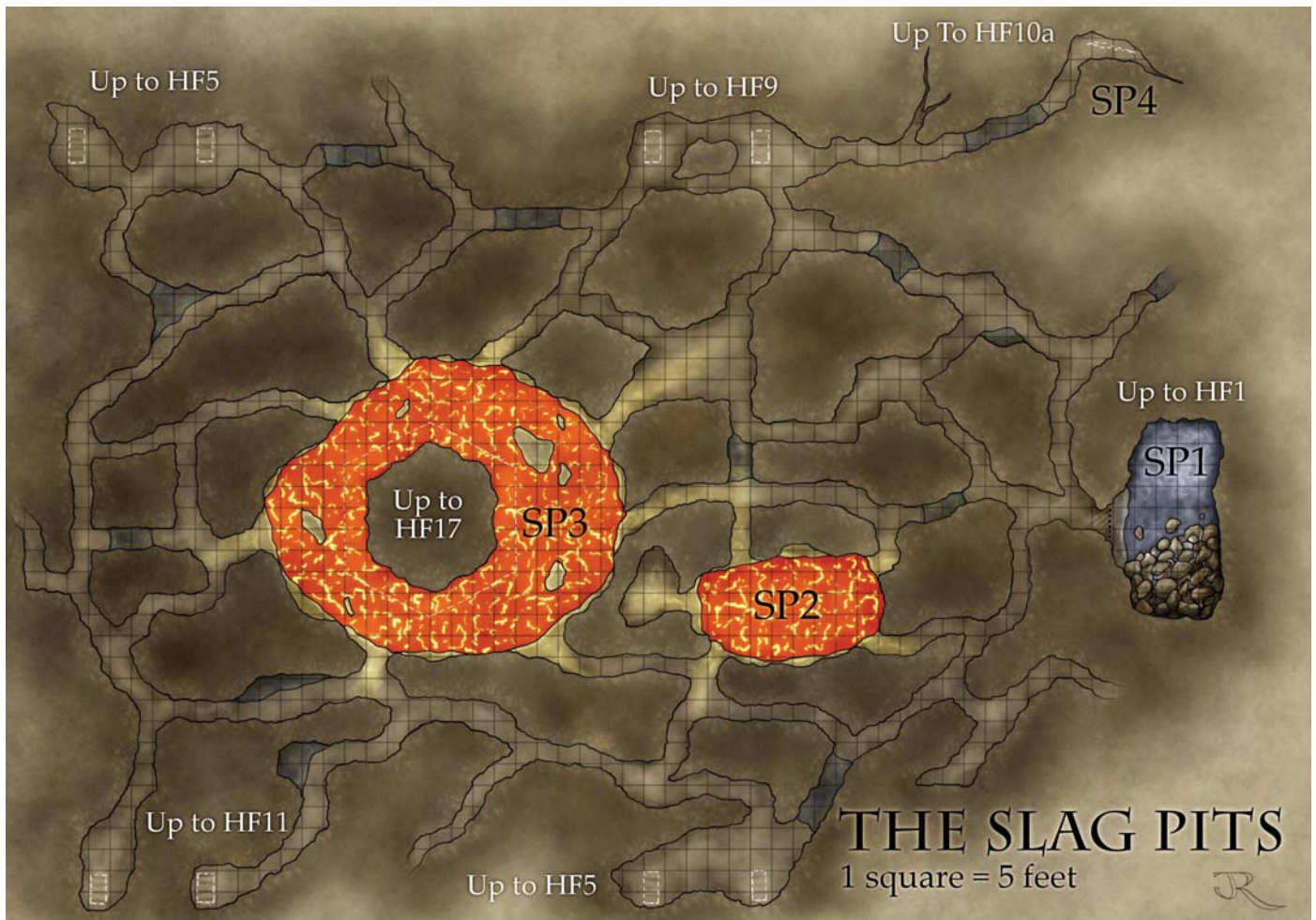
[r] **Seized by Greed** (standard; recharge on 6) ♦ **Charm**
Ranged 5; +15 vs. Will; the target is dominated until the end of their next turn

[c] **Fires of the Golden Hell** (standard; encounter) ♦ **Fire**
Close burst 5; +12 vs. Fortitude; 3d8 fire damage plus an extra point of ongoing fire damage for every magical item carried by the target (save ends)

Alignment evil **Languages** Common, Dwarven, Supernal
Str 15 (+7) **Dex** 21 (+10) **Wis** 15 (+7)
Con 18 (+9) **Int** 15 (+7) **Cha** 19 (+9)

GRAJAVA'S AID

If the PCs sacrificed the *Teardrop* during *Eye of Grajava* or in area HF16, or do so now by smashing it against an anvil or dropping it into the lava, Volund's shieldmaiden lends them her power for the final fight. While Grajava does not physically appear, the presence of her divine power is enough to weaken Mammon's grasp of the mountain and its shard. As long as at least one PC remains in the room, fighting, modify the encounter in the following ways. If all of the PCs flee or are defeated, the shieldmaiden departs and does not return.



Effects of the Shieldmaiden's Presence:

- Every PC regains 1 healing surge and gets a +2 untyped bonus to their defenses against Mammon and his servants
- PCs become immune to the Mountain King's *golden grasp* power
- Exiled from its parent spirit, the shard loses its *Rygar restoration* power while in or on Mount Rygar

THE SLAG PITS

Beneath the forge a series of tunnels carry waste runoff. The cramped, uneven tunnels are lined with mineral waste—streaks of bauxite, copper, and other minerals stain the walls and pollute the lukewarm water that gathers in toxic puddles. Sulfur encrusts cracks that periodically vent scalding steam, and the air is stiflingly hot, especially near the Well of Fire.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS

The tunnels pose the following environmental challenges.

Cramped Conditions—Even where the tunnels are wide enough to fight, the roof is so low a human must bend almost double. Creatures of medium size or greater lose their Dexterity adjustment to AC and Reflex defenses while in the slag pits and cannot run. Large slashing and bludgeoning weapons cannot be used at all, and characters using Medium sized slashing or bludgeoning weapons suffer a -4 penalty to hit and damage.

Heat Danger—The tunnels count as stifling conditions (see DMG page 158)

Lava—Falling into lava deals 4d6 fire damage and ongoing 20 fire damage per round (save ends, only if the character is out of the lava).

The Slag Pits are also home to a clan of chokers that haunt the citadel stealing what they can. They interbreed with the forsaken and are largely insane, thoroughly wicked, and totally consumed by gold sickness. The cult of Mammon uses them as laboratory animals. PCs who venture into the pits will swiftly attract their attention.

QUEEN OF THE SLAG PITS

The slag pits are the lair of an ancient and cunning choker matriarch, which the forsaken call Baba Ruzna (“widow of the caves”). They fear and revere her as a priestess of the Mother of Madness and most of her sons were fathered by crazed forsaken devotees. Baba Ruzna and her goldveined offspring make their home on the rock shelf in area SP2, but rove throughout the tunnels.

SETUP

Chokers spy on the PCs, lurking around corners and in shadowy cracks and crevices. A DC 20 Perception check spots them, although no roll is needed to hear the simian shrieks and chittering they use to communicate (DC 20 Dungeoneering identifies this). Once aware of the PCs, chokers move to surround them before charging the group in a frenzied rush.

11TH LEVEL ENCOUNTER

(3,000 XP) • Baba Ruzna, 16 goldveined chokers

BABA RUZNA, GOLDVEINED WIDOW OF THE CAVES LEVEL 10 ELITE LURKER	
SMALL NATURAL HUMANOID	XP 1,000
Initiative +14 Senses Perception +13; darkvision hp 180 Bloodied 90	
AC 24 Fortitude 21 Reflex 21 Will 21	
Resist psychic 5	
Saving Throws +2	
Speed 6, climb 6 (spider climb)	
Action Points 1	
[mba] Tentacle Claw (standard; at-will)	
Reach 2; +15 vs. AC; 1d8 + 4 damage, and target is grabbed (escape ends); a target trying to escape the grab takes a -4 penalty to the check	
[m] Choke (standard; at-will)	
Requires grabbed target; +13 vs. Fortitude; 1d8 + 4 damage	
[r] Seized by Greed (standard; encounter) ♦ Charm	
Ranged 5; +12 vs. Will; target is dominated until the end of their next turn	
Body Shield (immediate interrupt, when targeted against Reflex or AC; recharge when the choker makes a successful melee attack)	
Baba Ruzna makes her grabbed victim the target instead. Baba Ruzna cannot use this power to redirect attacks made by a creature she is currently grabbing.	

Chameleon Hide (minor, at-will)

Baba Ruzna gains concealment until the start of its next turn; it cannot use this power while grabbing a creature or while grabbed

Fatal Bequest

Upon death, Baba Ruzna vomits 10 gp of cursed gold

Madness of the Mines ♦ Psychic

If Baba Ruzna is hit by a charm affect, her insane mind causes painful psychic feedback to rebound on the caster, inflicting 6 psychic damage. This counts as exposure to gold fever.

Alignment chaotic evil Languages Deep Speech, Dwarven

Skills Athletics +15, Dungeoneering +13, Stealth +15

Str 20 (+10) Dex 20 (+10) Wis 16 (+8)

Con 17 (+8) Int 10 (+5) Cha 12 (+6)

GOLDVEINED CHOKER

LEVEL 10 CONTROLLER MINION

SMALL NATURAL HUMANOID

XP 125

Initiative +11 Senses Perception +14; darkvision

hp 1, a missed attack never damages a minion

AC 24 Fortitude 23 Reflex 22 Will 22

Resist psychic 5

Speed 6

[mba] Flailing Tentacles (standard; at-will)

Reach 2; +15 vs. AC; 5 damage, and target is grabbed (escape ends); a target trying to escape the grab takes a -4 penalty to their check

[m] For Love of Money (immediate interrupt, when targeted by a melee attack; at-will)

+14 vs. Will; instead of attacking the choker, the attacker makes a melee basic attack against an adjacent target of the choker's choice.

Fatal Bequest

Upon death, each choker vomits up 10 gp worth of cursed orichalcum

Alignment evil Languages Common, Deep Speech

Skills Athletics +15, Stealth +14

Str 21(+10) Dex 18(+9) Wis 6(+3)

Con 15(+7) Int 6(+3) Cha 18(+9)

TACTICS

Baba Ruzna lures a PC to her using *seized by greed*, then uses them as a *body shield* while dragging them off and strangling them. She retreats using *chameleon hide* if bloodied but follows the PCs determined to avenge her fallen “sons” and acquire the party's gold.

Goldspawn chokers attack the PCs in a rabid wave hoping to swamp them in a tangle of limbs. If they incapacitate a PC they start tearing away valuables (possibly coming to blows with each other over choice items) before running off into the tunnels.

DEVELOPMENT

It's possible to reason with Baba Ruzna, but only just—she's mad, savage, and has no concept of honor or keeping her word. Only a fellow stone pact warlock earns her genuine regard, and this soon turns to an obsession that the character must become her consort. All Baba Ruzna really wants is gold, mayhem, and to rule more chokers.

She hates the cult for what it's done to her sons and daughters, and she would dearly like to rescue them from area HF9. If the PCs open a grating for her, the Queen and her followers will happily rampage through the halls causing a chaotic but brief distraction.

SP1 RUSTED GRATING

The air is cooler here, where the slag pits meet the icy spray of the water-rise. A lattice of rusted iron bars seal the entrance. Small creatures can fit through them with a DC 15 Acrobatics check (Medium creatures with a DC 20 check), but unlike the gratings in the forge itself, this one is not trapped (AC 5, Fortitude 10; hp 60; Break DC 22).

SP2. BASKING POOL

This pool and the Well of Fire are fed via the same lava tube, which branches in two some 100 ft. below this level. Although they fear the xorns that make their home nearby, Baba Ruzna and her clan make their lair in the stone shelf of this chamber. Among the heaps of detritus and bones is Lady Urzana's secondary coffin, left here by special arrangement (a combination of intimidation and domination) with Ruzna Baba.

TREASURE

Baba Ruzna and her clan have assembled quite a collection of stolen goods here, which they squabble over constantly. As well as chunks of silver and adamantine ore (1,000 gp) and a pile of semi-precious stones (amber, jasper, malachite, and the like worth another 600 gp) there are various artifacts and offerings of forsaken manufacture, many of which defy identification.

SP3. THE WELL OF FIRE

Heat and an incredible radiance spill out into the tunnels from here. Miniscule flecks of adamantine sparkle in the walls and flows of lava, and far above, the ceiling is broken by the narrow opening into Prime Forge. Two powerful goldveined xorns swim in the lava, commanded by Mammon to keep watch for adventurers and Volund's elemental servants.

Chunks of volcanic rock ride the sea of magma. PCs can leap between these floating islands, but they are dangerously unstable. Characters moving or hit by an attack must make DC 17 Acrobatics checks or fall prone. If they fail this check by 10 or more points, they fall into the lava. If two or more Medium characters occupy the same island, it begins to sink into the lava, disappearing beneath it in 2 rounds.

SETUP

The xorns patrol the central pillar, occasionally taking time to frolic in the lava and sieve adamantine flakes from the lava with their teeth.

12TH LEVEL ENCOUNTER

(3,800 XP) • 2 goldveined pyroclastic xorns, 6 unstable floating rocks (hazard)

UNSTABLE FLOATING ROCKS

LEVEL 9 OBSTACLE (Hazard XP 100)

The ground shifts alarmingly and you realize you're stood on an uneven chunk of rock floating in lava.

Hazard Each of the islands shown on the map except the central column are unstable floating rocks (hazard).

Perception

DC 20—The islands bob up and down in the lava like they're floating on it.

Additional Skills (Dungeoneering)

DC 17—The Islands will probably support one character's weight, but not two or more.

Trigger A character moves while on one of the floating rocks.

Attack

The character must make a DC 17 Acrobatics check or fall prone.

GOLDVEINED PYROCLASTIC XORN

LEVEL 13 ELITE BRUTE

LARGE ELEMENTAL MAGICAL BEAST (EARTH) XP 1,600

Searing Heat (Fire) aura 1; creatures moving into or starting their turn within the aura take 5 fire damage

Initiative +10 Senses Perception +16;
all-around vision, darkvision

hp 284 Bloodied 142

AC 26 Fortitude 26 Reflex 25 Will 26

Resist fire 30, psychic 5, Vulnerable cold 10

Saving Throws +2

Speed 5, burrow 5

Action Points 1

[mba] Claw (standard; at-will)

+16 vs. AC; 3d6 + 3 damage

[m] Flurry of Claws (standard; at-will)

The xorn makes one *claw* attack against up to three targets.

[m] Undermine (standard; recharge on 5, 6)

The xorn burrows its speed and attacks one nonflying enemy whose space it passes under; +14 vs. Reflex; 4d8 + 3 damage, and target is restrained (save ends).

[r] Fling Lava (standard; recharge minor when adjacent to lava square) ♦ Fire

Ranged 5/10; +16 vs. AC; 2d6 + 4 fire damage and ongoing 5 damage.

[c] Volcanic Breath (standard; recharge when bloodied) ♦ Fire, Poison

Close blast 2; +12 vs. Fort; 3d10 + 6 damage and ongoing 5 fire and poison damage (save ends both).

Miss—Half damage, and no ongoing damage.

Earth Glide

The xorn can burrow through solid stone as if it were loose earth.

Fatal Bequest

Upon death, the xorn vomits up 13 tainted gold pieces.

Madness of the Mines ♦ Psychic

If the xorn is hit by a charm affect, its insane mind causes painful psychic feedback to rebound upon the caster, inflicting 8 psychic damage and this counts as exposure to gold fever.

Retreat (immediate reaction, when missed by a melee attack; at-will)

The xorn burrows its speed.

Submerge (minor; at-will)

The xorn sinks partially into the ground and gains a +2 bonus to AC until it moves.

Alignment unaligned Languages Common,
Primordial

Str 17 (+9) Dex 18 (+10) Wis 18 (+10)

Con 20 (+11) Int 10 (+6) Cha 14 (+8)

TACTICS

If engaged at range, the xorns throw globs of lava at the PCs for a few rounds (*fling lava*), then charge them using their *undermine* power. They devour any magical item they can lay their hands on and fight to the death to protect their new god. They do not leave the Well of Fire.

DEVELOPMENT

It's possible to climb directly into the Prime Forge from here, but it's a DC 23 Athletics to scale the crumbling walls. Falling into lava inflicts 4d6 fire damage and ongoing 10 fire damage (save ends, only when the character is out of the lava).

A noisy fight here draws the attention of Mammon's servants in area HF17 above. Although Mammon himself does not deign to appear, the PCs must deal with ranged attacks from the tiefling preachers and gilded devil.

Concluding the Adventure

The entire adventure arc rests on the PCs' success or failure in this final adventure. If the PCs defeat Mammon in the Prime Forge, they become heroes of the citadel and the surrounding lands. If they fall, their failure is not limited to their own deaths but, instead, encompasses an entire region for years to come.

FAILURE!

If the PCs are defeated, Mammon's cult soon conquers Mount Rygar, and all who refuse to bow before him are killed. Any surviving PCs end up dangling in area HF9, although Lady Urzana might free them if they agree to escort her to safety.

The cantons mobilize their armies as soon as word spreads of Rygar's fate, but by then, the cult is too firmly entrenched. Only a permanent siege of the mountain conducted by all the neighboring cantons and their allies holds Mammon's cult in check. Years, perhaps decades might pass before a band of heroes successfully brings down the Hellish hordes, but until then, Rygar becomes a blight on the world.

VICTORY!

The shard is the anchor that allows Mammon to remain in the mortal realm. Once the PCs destroy it, the archdevil's psyche is swiftly drawn back to Hell. As the shard's body crumbles, an infernal vortex greedily sucks up the tainted ore and the gold and gems shed by the avatar before vanishing in a burst of hellfire. Mammon's last act is to deliver a dire threat, his voice echoing through the forge:

"Do not think that you have seen the last of me, mortals. Steal but one copper, scorn one beggar's plea, plunder a single tomb for naught but greed, and we shall meet again. My eye is upon you and Mammon does not forget!"

Surviving cultists (including those who once were a part of the refugee camp) flee once Mammon is banished, and the refugees can reclaim the lower halls and Heartsblood Forge. Much work must be done if the miners hope to survive until spring, but no more significant dangers remain.

When the thaw comes, the dwarf cantons send reinforcements to the citadel and the PCs are hailed as saviors. When the shrine in Heartsblood Forge is repaired, their images are added to the frescos alongside that of Volund and Grajava. Rewards offered to the PCs include a magical weapon of the PC's level +4 forged on the Prime Forge to replace any destroyed by the avatar, and the chance for PC wizards and clerics to study with the cantons' most powerful mystics. Each PC is also given a specially crafted medallion of orichalcum in commemoration of their deeds.

Many of the stranded miners swear oaths of eternal friendship with the adventurers, and their families shower the characters with gifts, business opportunities, and offers of marriage. Impressed with the PCs' efforts, the Illuminated Brotherhood might even offer them membership. The only limits to the dwarves' generosity are *Masterstroke* and the forge keys, which they politely insist must be returned to Heartsblood Forge.

FURTHER ADVENTURES

Once the PCs are bored with victory feasts and pats on the back, there are plenty of loose ends they might follow.

Against the Howling City. All those forsaken must have come from somewhere, and it's up to the PCs to find out where. Deep in the lightless expanse beneath the citadel exists a city where the forsaken gather to gibber and wail and worship the primeval dark. The citadel cannot afford enemies massed on its doorstep, so it turns once more to its saviors to end the forsaken menace forever.

Castles and Clan Lords. With a citadel to be rebuilt, repopulated, and ruled, dwarf adventurers might well think about putting down some roots. They do not get to enjoy a quiet life, however, as they must politick with vying clan lords, put kobold kings in their place, and open trade relations. Some might even aspire to use their newfound fame to be named Many-Bearded Elder, or even king.

Curing the Cursed. Sadly, freeing the mountain from Mammon's grasp does not cure those who became goldveined creatures. If she lives, Bragollach is among those still inflicted with devil-induced madness. Only powerful magic can cure her, but when a gold dragon's distraught mother begs for aid, what's a hero to do?

The Agents of Greed. Armed with Palnitoke's account book, the names and locations of a dozen devil-worshipping cults are available to the PCs. Paladins and would-be inquisitors can spend months kicking down doors and making the world a better place, while slyer types might use what they learned to infiltrate the cults and relieve Mammonites of their treasures.

DANGER ABOVE SECRETS BELOW

HALLS OF THE MOUNTAIN-KING is an untraditional dungeon, an homage to all the great delves, from the Mines of Moria on —with a few new twists.



The dwarves of the canton of Rygar were a hard-working group, whose mining lured them ever-deeper and whose pursuit of ore led them into dangerous territory. This dungeon goes from a snowy mountaintop spire and an airship dock down through the great halls and works of a vanished clan, and into the depths of the earth.

The rumors of a huge mass of gold lured miners and speculators into the mountain, but when winter came, the old mines were suddenly a much more difficult place to survive. The passes are snowed in. The airships struggle to arrive with supplies.

Deadly new creatures, a sinister brotherhood, and secrets kept locked away for centuries all boil to the surface in a series of challenging and original encounters that take the party from 8th to 12th level.

Now the party is asked to go up into the Ironcrag peaks and see whether the easy money is, perhaps, not so easy after all.



HALLS OF THE MOUNTAIN-KING breaks new ground for OPEN DESIGN, reimagining the original OGL version to bring out the best of 4th Edition gameplay.

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