



SONGS OF LAW & CHAOS

Omens speak of an old and forgotten power located within a played-out diamond mine in the foothills of Thar, and some believe that might be a solution to the current problems facing Melvaunt—or possibly the cause of them. With danger closing in, someone has to investigate.

A 4-hour adventure for 1st-4th level characters

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Introduction

Welcome to *Songs of Law & Chaos*, a D&D Adventurers League adventure.

This adventure is designed for **three to seven 1st - 4th level characters**, and is optimized for **five 3rd level characters**.

The adventure is set in the Moonsea region of the Forgotten Realms, in and around the city of Melvaunt.

The D&D Adventurers League

This adventure is official for D&D Adventurers League play. The D&D Adventurers League is the official organized play system for DUNGEONS & DRAGONS®. Players can create characters and participate in any adventure allowed as a part of the D&D Adventurers League. As they adventure, players track their characters' experience, treasure, and other rewards, and can take those characters through other adventures that continues their story.

If you're running this adventure as a part of a store event or at certain conventions, you'll need a DCI number. This number is your official Wizards of the Coast organized play identifier. If you don't have a number, you can obtain one at a store event. Check with your organizer for details.

D&D Adventurers League play is broken up into storyline seasons. When players create characters, they attach those characters to a storyline season, which determines what rules they're allowed to use to create and advance their characters. Players can continue to play their characters after the storyline season has finished, possibly participating in a second or third storyline with those same characters. A character's level is the only limitation for adventure play. A player cannot use a character of a level higher or lower than the level range of a D&D Adventurers League adventure.

For more information on playing, running games as a Dungeon Master, and organizing games for the D&D Adventurers League, please visit the D&D Adventurers League home at:

www.dndadventurersleague.org

Preparing the Adventure

Before you show up to Dungeon Master this adventure for a group of players, you should do the following to prepare.

- Make sure to have a copy of the most current version of the *D&D Basic Rules* or the *Player's Handbook*.
- Read through the adventure, taking notes of anything you'd like to highlight or remind yourself while running the adventure, such as a way you'd like to portray an NPC or a tactic you'd like to use in a combat.
- Get familiar with the monster statistics in the Appendix.
- Gather together any resources you'd like to use to aid you in running this adventure--such as notecards, a DM screen, miniatures, and battlemaps.
- If you know the composition of the group beforehand, you can make adjustments as noted throughout the adventure.

Before Play at the Table

Ask the players to provide you with relevant character information:

- Character name and level
- Character race and class
- Passive Wisdom (Perception)—the most common passive ability check
- Anything notable as specified by the adventure (such as backgrounds, traits, flaws, etc.)

Players that have characters outside the adventure's level range **cannot participate in the adventure with those characters**. Players with ineligible characters can make a new 1st-level character or use a pregenerated character. Players can play an adventure they previously played or ran as a Dungeon Master, but not with the same character.

Ensure that each player has an official adventure logsheet for his or her character (if not, get one from the organizer). The player fills out the adventure name, session number, date, and your name and DCI number. In addition, the player also fills in the starting values for experience, gold, downtime, renown, and number of permanent magic items. He or she fill in the other values and write notes at the conclusion of the session. Each player is responsible for maintaining an accurate logsheet.

If you have time, you can do a quick scan of a player's character sheet to ensure that nothing looks out of order. If you see magic items of very high rarities or strange arrays of ability scores, you can ask players to provide documentation for the irregularities. If they cannot, feel free to restrict item use or ask them to use a standard ability score array. Point players to the *D&D Adventurers League Player's Guide* for reference.

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

Adjusting the Adventure

Throughout this adventure, you may see sidebars to help make adjustments for smaller/larger groups, and characters of higher/lower levels than the optimized group. Most of the time, this is used for combat encounters.

You may adjust the adventure beyond the guidelines given. For example, if you're playing with a group of inexperienced players, you might want to make the adventure a little easier; for very experienced players, you may want to make it a little harder. Therefore, five categories of party strength have been created for you to use as a guide. Feel free to use a different adjustment during the adventure if the recommended party strength feels off for the group.

This adventure is **optimized for a party of five 3rd-level characters**. To figure out whether you need to adjust the adventure, do the following:

- Add up the total levels of all the characters
- Divide the total by the number of characters
- Round fractions of .5 or greater up; round fractions of less than .5 down

You've now determined the **average party level (APL)** for the adventure. To figure out the **party strength** for the adventure, consult the following table:

Determining Party Strength

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

Running the Adventure

As the Dungeon Master of the session, you have the most important role in facilitating the enjoyment of the game for the players. You help guide the narrative and bring the words on these pages to life. The outcome of a fun game session often creates stories that live well beyond the play at the table. Always follow this golden rule when you DM for a group:

Make decisions and adjudications that enhance the fun of the adventure when possible.

To reinforce this golden rule, keep in mind the following:

- You are empowered to make adjustments to the adventure and make decisions about how the group interacts with the world of this adventure. Doing so is especially important and applicable outside of combat, but feel free to adjust the adventure for groups that are having too easy or too hard of a time.
- Don't make the adventure too easy or too difficult for a group. Never being challenged makes for a boring game and being overwhelmed makes for a frustrating one. Gauge the experience of the players (not the characters) with the game, try to feel out (or ask) what they like in a game, and attempt to give each of them the experience they're after when they play D&D. Give everyone a chance to shine.
- Be mindful of pacing, and keep the game session moving along appropriately. Watch for stalling, since play loses momentum when this happens. At the same time, make sure that the players don't finish too early; provide them with a full play experience. Try to be aware of running long or short. Adjust the pacing accordingly

- Read-aloud text is just a suggestion; feel free to modify the text as you see fit, especially when dialogue is present.
- Give the players appropriate hints so they can make informed choices about how to proceed. Players should be given clues and hints when appropriate so they can tackle puzzles, combat, and interactions without getting frustrated over lack of information. Doing so helps to encourage immersion in the adventure and gives players “little victories” for figuring out good choices from clues.

In short, being the DM isn't about following the adventure's text word-for-word; it's about facilitating a fun, challenging game environment for the players. The *Dungeon Master's Guide*[™] has more information on the art of running a D&D game.

Downtime and Lifestyle

At the beginning of each play session, players must declare whether or not they are spending any days of downtime. The player records the downtime spent on the adventure logsheet. The following options are available to players during downtime (see the D&D basic rules or the *D&D Adventurers League Player's Guide* for more information):

- Catching up
- Crafting (exception: multiple characters cannot commit to crafting a single item)
- Practicing a profession
- Recuperating
- Spellcasting services
- Training

Other downtime options might be available during adventures or unlocked through play, including faction-specific activities.

In addition, whenever a character spends downtime days, that character also spends the requisite expense for his or her lifestyle. Costs are per day, so a character that spends ten days of downtime also spends ten days of expenses maintaining his or her lifestyle. Some downtime activities help with lifestyle expenses or add lifestyle expenses.

Spellcasting Services

Any settlement the size of a town or larger can provide some spellcasting services. Characters need to be able to travel to the settlement to obtain these services.

Spell services generally available include healing and recovery spells, as well as information-gathering spells. Other spell services might be available as specified in the adventure. The number of spells available to be cast as a service is limited to a **maximum of three per day total**, unless otherwise noted.

Spellcasting Services

Spell	Cost
<i>Cure wounds (1st level)</i>	10 gp
<i>Identify</i>	20 gp
<i>Lesser restoration</i>	40 gp
<i>Prayer of healing (2nd level)</i>	40 gp
<i>Remove curse</i>	90 gp
<i>Speak with dead</i>	90 gp
<i>Divination</i>	210 gp
<i>Greater restoration</i>	450 gp
<i>Raise dead</i>	1,250 gp

Acolyte Background

A character possessing the acolyte background requesting spellcasting services at a temple of his or her faith may request **one spell per day** from the Spellcasting Services table for free. The only cost paid for the spell is the base price for the consumed material component, if any.

Disease, Death, and Recovery

Sometimes bad things happen, and characters get poisoned, diseased, or are killed. Since you might not have the same characters return from session to session, here are the rules when bad things happen to characters.

Disease, Poison, and Other Debilitating Effects

A character still affected by diseases, poisons, and other similar effects at the conclusion of an adventure can spend downtime days recuperating until such time as he or she resolves the effect to its conclusion (see the recuperating activity in the *D&D Basic Rules*).

If a character doesn't resolve the effect between sessions, that character begins the next session still affected by the debilitating effect.

Death

A character who is killed during the course of the adventure has a few options at the end of the session (or whenever arriving back in civilization) if no one in the adventuring party has immediate access to a *raise dead* or *revivify* spell, or similar magic. A

character subject to a raise dead spell is affected negatively until all long rests have been completed during an adventure. Alternatively, each downtime day spent after raise dead reduces the penalty to attack rolls, saving throws, and ability checks by 1, in addition to any other benefits the downtime activity might provide.

Create a New 1st-Level Character. If the dead character is unwilling or unable to exercise any of the other options, the player creates a new character. The new character does not have any items or rewards possessed by the dead character.

Dead Character Pays for Raise Dead. If the character's body is recoverable (it's not missing any vital organs and is mostly whole) and the player would like the character to be returned to life, the party can take the body back to civilization and use the dead character's funds to pay for a *raise dead* spell. A *raise dead* spell cast in this manner costs the character 1,250 gp.

Character's Party Pays for Raise Dead. As above, except that some or all of the 1,250 gp for the *raise dead* spell is paid for by the party at the end of the session. Other characters are under no obligation to spend their funds to bring back a dead party member.

Faction Charity. If the character is of level 1 to 4 and a member of a faction, the dead character's body can be returned to civilization and a patron from the faction ensures that he or she receives a *raise dead* spell. However, any character invoking this charity forfeits all experience and rewards from that session (both those earned prior to and after death during that session) and cannot replay that episode or adventure with that character again. Once a character reaches 5th level, this option is no longer available.

The Situation in Melvaunt

The walls of Melvaunt resemble Swiss cheese, but the city still stands. While the Orc Baron of Thar and his forces assaulted the city, a portal that was part of a modron plot to take over Melvaunt was miraculously moved outside the walls by a brave group of adventurers with the assistance of Truushee the Sage. That portal unleashed the modron legion into the orc forces just after the marauders breached the city walls in several locations. The ensuing battle between the orcs and modrons allowed the forces of Melvaunt to successfully defend the city.

In the aftermath of the battle, Melvaunt is in turmoil politically. The City Watch has been depleted, with many of their best and brightest killed in the recent events. The people of Melvaunt have hastily patched up the walls and are doing their best to repair them to their former strength. Beyond the walls, bands of orcs and modrons still roam the area, occasionally attacking the weak spots. While the orcs and modrons are no longer a threat to the city itself, citizens and travelers in the area have been killed. Occasionally groups of modrons, trapped away from their home, still attempt to follow their last orders of taking over Melvaunt. A pentadron called "Sleepie" (SL33P13-773P) has broken away from the modron collective and is assisting the City Watch in dealing with the modrons in the area.

Then there are the Lords. Political power has a way of moving hands in the wake of disastrous events. The Lord of Keys and The Lord of Waves have declared themselves the temporary rulers of Melvaunt, but murmurs are already starting to cascade around the Merchant's Council. Is this just a temporary situation or a power play by the two Lords to wrest all the power and wealth of Melvaunt for themselves? To make matters worse, a Red Wizard of Thay was killed during the recent events, and the Red Wizards don't approve of their own being killed. An emissary of the Red Wizards has been sent to determine what happened and who might be to blame.

While Melvaunt has dodged the executioner's axe this time, the city's head still looks like it might be on the chopping block.

Adventure Background

There are growing concerns among the people of Melvaunt that the strife of the Moonsea may soon be upon them – or that it already is. The Maimed Virulence laid siege to Phlan, and though it was rebuffed, the damage will be evidenced for years. Demons assaulted Hillsfar and the surrounding region. Mulmaster has been brought low by elemental cults and is now firmly under the thumb of the nation of Thay.

A gnomish family called the Cloisternooks recently re-purchased one of their old mines, Darkglitter Depths, from the city of Melvaunt under the guise of introducing new methods of extracting diamonds from the tapped-out veins. However, the old patriarch – Fizzlebottom Cloisternook – knows more than he let on, and he took right away to establishing an arcane teleportation engine deep inside Darkglitter Depths. Further exploration revealed an open vent that leads deep into the Underdark, letting the gnomes tunnel through solid stone in some places and muddy rooms in others. Unlike most mining operations, there was no consistent environment – and this typically represents both danger and the potential of great, unnatural riches! Fizzlebottom is no fool, though, and has backup plans for his backup plans.

Meanwhile, a cult of Cyric seeks to bring an avatar of that mad god into the world. They have learned of Fizzlebottom's new creation and wish to pervert it for their own uses; they believe that if they can twist the runic engine to their own ends, they may be able to open a portal that will allow the God of Deceit to walk the world once more. Their methods are desperate and made all the more dangerous for it.

Should the faithful of Cyric gain unrestricted access to the engine, Melvaunt may be in for a world of trouble.

Overview

This adventure is divided into multiple parts.

Part 1. By chance or divine fortune, the characters come upon Fizzlebottom Cloisternook, a cranky old gnome that recently purchased the defunct diamond mine Darkglitter Depths. He is drunk out of his mind and babbling about “the cur” and “wormy little splat.” Once sober he begs for help from the characters, saying that cultists of Cyric have taken his children and nephews hostage and that nobody in Melvaunt will listen.

Part 2. The land surrounding the mine is shrouded in permanent illusions and enchantments that hide the true location and condition of the mine from prying eyes and passers-by. Once the maze can be navigated, though, the true nature of the area becomes apparent: the mine is active and slowly but surely excavating diamonds and other valuable ores. However, the automatons that provide the labor send the materials deeper into the earth, and no wagons or trade caravans are present.

As they descend into the depths, the characters quickly find that others have been here recently. A petrified cultist of Cyric and the appearance of an old friend provides strength for Fizzlebottom's earlier comments (or a hook for those that may have otherwise missed his conversation). Dodging cave-ins and horrific beasts, the adventurers must find their way to the end of the complex!

Part 3. Now deep within Darkglitter Depths, the characters find that Fizzlebottom's teleportation apparatus has been tampered with and that something is attempting to enter this world. Seemingly powered by the life energy of the gnomes and the enthralled cultists of Cyric, this arcane engine represents a glimpse of a fate much worse than death.

Adventure Hooks

Played CORE 2-1. Characters that have already played CORE 2-1 are contacted by Parabald the Maimed. He has spotted Fizzlebottom Cloisternook, the eldest of the Cloisternook gnomes, sprawled upon the steps to the Purple Portals, the primary temple to Gond in this region. The gnome is drunk (more so than normal, which is no small feat) and babbling about the abduction of his family.

Worshippers of Gond. While paying their respects to the Wonderbringer in Melvaunt, the characters are asked to remove a drunken and disorderly gnome from the front steps of the temple.

Wealthy or Aristocratic Lifestyle. Characters that have wealthy or aristocratic lifestyles have heard that the Cloisternook gnomes are seeking to reopen their recently-acquired diamond mine, Darkglitter Depths. More information can be had at the temple of Gond the Wonderbringer, where it is said that the gnomes often congregate.

Keepin' it Weird. Some characters may not be in the city at all or meet the above hook notes. In that case skip Part 1 "My God Says..." and proceed directly to Part 2. Please note that this may cause some players to have a less-than-satisfactory experience, so you are strongly encouraged to move the roleplay notes and background information into the rest of the adventure as needed. NOTE: this hook may work well for time-sensitive environments like convention play, or for tables that have expressed a lessened interest in roleplaying.

Designer's Notes

This adventure plays best when your players have already experienced CORE 2-1 *Tales of Good & Evil*. If they have not, or if they are intending to play that adventure after this one, some story elements may be lost on the players. It is strongly recommended that you pay close attention to the sidebars in the roleplay encounters here, and that you favor character-centered events and comments over the prescribed text in these encounters.

Using this adventure as a framework from which you build a customized experience for your group of players is not only expected, but it is highly encouraged!

Lastly, this adventure deals with a very niche deity of the Forgotten Realms: Kezef the Chaos Hound. The final encounter features an agent of this nefarious being, but the focus should be on the matter-at-hand, not the history of the deity itself. In short: Kezef seeks to devour the souls of those that revere one deity above all others; characters that are more accepting or freely worship at multiple temples are simply less appealing.

Part 1. My God Says...

The Purple Portals: Science for Fun and Prophet

Expected Duration: 30 minutes

Fizzlebottom Cloisternook, a very drunken gnome, sits upon the stairs to the Purple Portals, the temple of Gond. This building serves many purposes, including lecture hall, library, research laboratory, magical academy (of sorts), but most importantly as a place where citizens and visitors can worship Gond the Wonderbringer, god of artifice, craft, and construction.

General Features

The general features of Melvaunt are as follows:

Light and Visibility. There is a permanent low-hanging smog cloud around this city thanks to the plethora of blacksmith shops and smelters. Though this is considered normal light, everything is covered in soot and grime.

Smells and Sounds. The city smells of sweat, burning metal, industry, and grime. The cursing calls of warehouse workers can be heard all over the city, and the streets ring with the clack of wagon wheels and trade.

A dirty, drunken gnome sprawls across the steps that lead to the doors of the Purple Portals. Though this place is a temple to Gond the Wonderbringer, the language that the gnome is spouting is not divine in any sense; he utters curses and threats while choking back tears. For someone who is lying down, his volume is actually quite impressive. A large brownish splash can be seen on the steps, with a broken mug in the middle.

Characters that choose to listen to the gnome's rant can hear the following:

- (In Gnomish) "Those stinking sons of... have my chil'ren!"
- (In Common) "Help! Neee' heeeeeeeeeelllp...!"
- He sings snippets from a gnomish funeral dirge.
- (In Common) "Cyrlic be damned. DAMNED! Needs to be put down, I tell ya, PUT DOWN!"
- Create appropriate babble as befitting a belligerent, drunken gnome

Any character that played through CORE 2-1 *Tales of Good & Evil* will likely have interacted with Fizzlebottom Cloisternook and recognize him immediately. He looks pretty bad off, even for him. The cranky old gnome has been crying for quite some time; his eyes are puffy and red.

Give the characters time to consider their options. If the characters fail to interact with the gnome, or simply spend too much time debating on what to do, read the following:

Three humans clad in scale mail and sporting razor-sharp longswords approach the gnome. While he plays at being a deadweight, two of the men lift him by his arms, causing his feet to dangle helplessly. The third man proceeds to read him a list of violations:

"Gnome, you are hereby placed under arrest for the following transgressions: disturbing the peace, disturbing the faithful, street-calling without a permit, being drunk in public, defacing a holy temple, truancy, verbal assault, harassment, and being a nuisance. Perhaps a trip to the Livestock Pens will clear your head."

They walk away, the gnome's legs spinning as if he is trying to run but unable to touch the flagstones. He catches your eyes and mouths "help me" while giving his most pitiful face.

Those that witness this interaction should make a DC 10 Wisdom (Insight) or Intelligence (History) check. If they succeed, they can tell that this is a trumped-up list of charges, and the "guards" are not official representatives of any power group in Melvaunt. All characters also know that the "Livestock Pens" in Melvaunt are not actually for livestock, but rather for open-air slave sales and auctions.

In the rare circumstance that the characters allow Fizzlebottom to be taken to the Livestock Pens, they earn the **Enmity of the Cloisternooks** story award; do not hand this out until the end of the game session. The adventure does not end here, though – simply proceed to Part 2 and advance as though the characters had taken the **Keepin' it Weird** story hook. It is a safe assumption that the characters would leave Melvaunt eventually, and finding a holy symbol of Cyrlic on the road should garner some attention from intrepid adventurers!

Should the characters choose to intervene, the "guards" are willing to release Fizzlebottom for the cost of 25 gp; the gnome nods his head no matter the cost and blurts out that he will "make it worth their while!"

This is not intended as a combat encounter, but these fake guards are followers of Cyrlic, and they want to take the gnome for their own purposes. They unceremoniously drop the gnome and attack the characters if it looks like any opposition is going to be put forward. They use the stats of **bandit captains** and use longswords instead of scimitars. Characters should be informed that combat with these men is likely to be dangerous and life-

threatening; **very strong** tables can offer double the stated ransom to avoid combat, but only during the first turn of combat.

Tactics

Should the characters attack the guards, they bellow out “For the glory of the Black Sun!” and attack. No Religion check is needed for the characters to know this is a reference to Cyric, the God of Trickery and Lies.

If the Cyric worshippers defeat the adventurers, they simply leave the unconscious characters on the street. Fizzlebottom is escorted away.

Adjusting the Encounter

Here are recommendations for adjusting this combat encounter. These are not cumulative. Fizzlebottom Cloisternook is too drunk to fight.

- **Very strong party:** the guards seek to kill the characters, informing citizens in the area that “these foul cultists must be put down”
- **All other parties:** the guards deal nonlethal damage and attempt to run away when possible

But *I* Worship Cyric, Too!

If one or more of the characters worships Cyric, they can take possession of Fizzlebottom by simply flashing their holy symbol and crafting an appropriate lie about why he is important to their plans. Allow the worshiper of Cyric to make a DC 10 Intelligence (Religion) or Charisma (Persuasion/Deception) check; they have advantage on this roll. On a failure, the guards attack, saying “Your deception is simpler than a child’s!” Even on a success, Fizzlebottom does not trust this character and may be slow to trust the other characters in this encounter.

Development

Once Fizzlebottom’s freedom has been secured and he sobers up a bit, he can give the following information to the characters:

- A dozen well-dressed nobles showed up at the mine yesterday, promising great riches if he would sell them the mine. When he refused, the men simply told him “A Dark Sun rises over this place.” and took him and his family hostage.
- He managed to escape by wriggling out of their grip and running to the ore transporter deep inside the mine, but he is ashamed that he could not protect his family. The men spoke of “breaking the egg” and held a scroll inscribed with arcane formulae that seemed to have a dual focus of teleportation and conjuration (he slurs out that he was a wizard until he learned better).

- “Get to the ore transporter – the machine, you’ll know it when you see it - and follow the sigils. No magic needed! I made it so that any thick-skulled dwarf could use it.” He goes on to explain that ‘the machine’ teleports ore and gems from the mine directly to the workshops within the Purple Portals, and that a set of instructions for the sigils can be found in the foreman’s office at the mine.
- DC 16 Charisma (Persuasion): “The machine sits upon a nexus of energies, deep within the world. I plan to use it as a node to interface with other teleportation circles around the world. Just imagine the ores in the Underdark that we could harvest with the just the click of a button! The good that we can do!”

Fizzlebottom promises riches to the characters if they can recover his family and secure his mine. He blurts out “diamonds!” if the characters ask him for specifics about these riches. He can describe the location of the mine and tells the characters how to quickly navigate the illusions surrounding the place.

Should any of the characters admonish him for endeavoring to establish a teleportation network so close to Melvaunt – and well-hidden – he responds simply with “Gond’s plan protects us all.”

Roleplaying Fizzlebottom Cloisternook

Fizzlebottom Cloisternook is old, kind, smart, and often intoxicated. When it comes to his family’s secrets he’s rather tight-lipped, but when he’s drunk, he can’t resist dropping a few hints. While roleplaying Fizzlebottom, you might:

- Speak in a gravelly, slightly slurred voice.
- Tell a lot of corny jokes.
- Laugh very loud and slap your knee when something funny happens.
- Whisper conspiratorially when sharing hints about the Cloisternook family’s secrets.

Fizzlebottom rummages into his pockets and produces three beautiful obsidian stones, saying “these are yours, and more where they came from— just get my family back”.

XP Awards

If the characters successfully negotiate for the peaceful release of Fizzlebottom Cloisternook, award each character 100 XP.

Treasure

Fizzlebottom’s three pieces of obsidian are worth 100 gp each. The guards carry no valuable treasure, though each of their longswords has a holy crest of Cyric set into the pommel.

Part 2. Darkglitter Depths Mine or Hole in the Ground, it's Home!

Expected Duration: 3 hours total

The adventurers arrive at Darkglitter Depths, a diamond mine owned by the Cloisternook Gnomes.

General Features

The land surrounding Darkglitter Depths has the following characteristics:

Light and Visibility. The sun shines brightly in the late morning sky. Visibility is normal on this very comfortable, casual day.

Sounds. Generic wildlife calls can be easily heard. Characters that pass a DC 15 Wisdom (Insight) check realize that the sounds of the wildlife are actually on a repeated loop.

The road continues in a generally eastern direction away from Melvaunt, with nothing seemingly out of the ordinary – until you notice the etched sigil of Cyric, god of lies and betrayal, in the center of the road. Roughly hewn, it is unmistakable in design and is oriented in such a way to indicate passage off the road.

If the characters have encountered the Cloisternook gnomes in CORE 2-1 *Tales of Good & Evil* or received instruction from Fizzlebottom Cloisternook earlier in this adventure, read the following:

The home of the Cloisternook gnomes is nearby, and the presence of the holy symbol of Cyric is particularly troublesome. You quickly navigate the mundane and repeated trees and paths as you trek away from the road towards Darkglitter Depths. After nearly an hour, you arrive in the camp.

If the characters have not spoken with Fizzlebottom, have not played CORE 2-1, or otherwise find themselves out here with no other explanation, read the following:

Once you leave the road, the terrain becomes unfamiliar very quickly. Oddly, though, for every several dozen steps you take you find that you are looking at similar environments to those you just walked through; you see the same trees and hear the same animal calls over and over. It is as if someone has gone to great trouble to place a significant number of illusion spells over this place.

Allow the players some creative license here; if they have inventive skill checks or wish to use spells, you should not only confirm that they are indeed walking through illusory terrain, but that they are walking in circles. If they simply proceed in a straight line to the north, they will find the operations area of Darkglitter Depths – and further evidence of the cultists of Cyric – after one hour. Otherwise, it takes them four hours of travel (and causes them to very likely be incredibly bored).

Operations and the Surface

Expected Duration: 20 minutes

Colorful tents dot the area here, and only one building has been erected. Beyond those, a huge circular pit has been painstakingly dug into the ground. It is easily a quarter-mile across, and you can see the screw-like path that winds down into the depths, clinging to the side of the pit. This must be Darkglitter Depths.

A DC 15 Intelligence (Nature) check can be made here; on a success, that character recognizes the size of the mine to indicate that it is quite old, and this sort of appearance often indicates that it has been tapped out. Any character that has experience as a miner or is a dwarf automatically succeeds on this check. Additionally, anyone that played CORE 2-1 spots the tip of a large drill poking from one of the tents; this is Big Billy, the drilling rig that the gnomes engineered to be fueled by a special moonshine concoction. It appears to have been mostly repaired, but is still non-functional for the purposes of this adventure.

An investigation of the tents and surrounding area reveals little of value. The symbol of Cyric has been marked on the door of the foreman's building, and another one has been constructed by assembling rocks near the edge of the pit. Inside the foreman's office, the characters automatically find **Handout 1**. This is an arcane schematic that details a modified teleportation circle; a spellcaster can record this information by taking the schematic (or coming back later) and spending 1 downtime day studying the runes and sigils. If they do, and they have already found the physical location of the circle deep underground, they can mark this in their adventure log as a teleportation circle for future use. If they do not spend a downtime day, this schematic serves no purpose.

There are four bottles marked Recipe 44 and one wax-sealed bottle marked Recipe 45 in the

foreman's office. While being close in quality to moonshine, these potent alcohols are also extremely flammable and can be used as alchemist's fire if so desired. Five sets of climbing gear can be recovered from the office, as well as a healer's kit (only three uses remain) and an ornate holy symbol of Gond worth 15 gp if the characters choose to take it.

In each of the tents and in several other places around the camp, signs of a struggle can be plainly seen. The tracks – human and gnomish – lead to the pit. Characters that succeed on a DC 10 Wisdom (Survival) check can tell that four humans and five gnomes made these tracks about two days ago, and that they were accompanied by a large number of scampering kobolds.

Optional/ Variable Encounter

If the characters arrived here without first speaking with Fizzlebottom Cloisternook in Melvaunt, they may need some convincing that this mine is worthy of their investigative efforts. If the characters are a **strong** or **very strong** party, run one of the following encounters, even if they spoke with the gnome already:

- **Melee-strong party:** one bandit captain and two cult fanatics of Cyric
- **Magic-strong party:** two bandit captains, two cultists of Cyric, and three kobolds.
- **Evenly-balanced party:** one bandit captain, one cult fanatic of Cyric, four cultists of Cyric

All of the humans wear the sign of Cyric of upon their robes and armor, and the bandit captains function the same way as the guards in Part 1. None of these enemies carry any appreciable wealth, and they have standard holy symbols of Cyric.

Descending Beneath the Earth

When the characters decide to descend into the depths, read the following:

Peering over the edge into Darkglitter Depths, the wind lets out a mournful howl. The scent of something foul wafts up to greet you, and the yawning hole in the earth seemingly beckons you to come down.

Following the winding path around the mine's edge and into the depths isn't particularly taxing, though the dirt is quite loose – particularly near the edges. If the characters wish to walk around the path, there is no challenge presented but it does take two hours. If the characters decide to expedite the trip and move from the top of the mine directly toward the mine entrance nearly 100 ft. below, they can – but they will each need to succeed on a DC 14 Dexterity

(Acrobatics) check or else lose their footing in the loose stones, sending them tumbling 2d6 x 10 ft. and taking necessary falling damage. Any character using climbing gear or taking necessary precautions (typically involving the expenditure of resources) has advantage on this check.

Development

Once the characters reach the bottom of the pit, they can enter the mineshaft directly with no further issues.

Sublevel One

Expected Duration: 30 minutes

Darkglitter Depths, now that you've entered it, is a much prettier name than the location. An unmistakable smell of stale dust mixes with the foul, oily smell of poorly-extinguished torches. The mine is dark, and the path extends into the distance. From somewhere far off, the echoing rumble and groan of a cave-in rise to greet you.

The timber-lined wide passageway is dotted every twenty feet by low-quality torches that appear to have been hastily extinguished; the carbon and creosote buildup from the pine tar upon them causes the stench.

Several rooms dot this level, including a **staging chamber**, **excavation chamber one**, **excavation chamber two**, and the **sorting room**.

General Features

The general features of the Darkglitter Depths are as follows:

Light. There is no natural light in the mine, but if a character uses anything brighter than a torch (such as a *light* spell), the diamond dust embedded in the walls sparkles wildly, casting beautiful rainbows of reflected and refracted bright light throughout the entire area. This effect is more pronounced the deeper they go in the mine.

Visibility. Due to the recent cave-ins, the mine has a cloud of stale dust everywhere. Vision is limited to 20 feet, and anything between 20 ft. and 30 ft. away is considered to be so concealed by the dust that ranged attacks against them are made at disadvantage. Nothing is visible beyond this range.

Smells and Sounds. The stink of stale dust and the sharp tang of burning carbon and creosote residue from old, poorly-made torches permeates the mine. The characters occasionally hear the scraping of rocks and small clicks of tiny stones contacting each other.

Darkglitter Staging Chamber

A number of warning posters cover one wall, and several wooden crates are piled atop the three tables in the middle of this large room. Many shovels and picks can be seen.

If the adventurers inspect the posters, they can plainly see the following (all written in gnome):

- “Safety first! Listen for stones, and heed their warnings!” Above the text appears to be a cartoonish pile of large stones falling on a silly gnome’s head.
- “Excavation Chamber Two is dangerous. Stay quiet, stay alive!” Above this text is a large skull and crossbones symbol.
- “Respect the automatons!” Above this text are six empty suits of armor, swinging picks and shovels.
- One of the posters is a clearly-marked map of the mine.

The crates hold basic climbing kits, crowbars, 200 feet of iron chain, 500 feet of hemp rope, three dozen candles, three sets of flint & tinder, two hooded lanterns, and five flasks of oil. Another crate holds three pouches of gnomish rations, which smell like an oddly delicious mix of chocolate and mushrooms. Each pouch contains 10 days of rations.

Excavation Chamber One

This round chamber has smooth walls, and upon first glance it appears that six miners have stopped moving in mid-swing. You soon realize that these aren’t miners – they’re constructs capable of swinging picks. Six very large piles of rubble and debris dot the chamber, likely the material that these machines have pulled from the walls and floor.

The six **animated armors** were excavating ore and gemstones from the walls but have fallen into disuse. These armors are not magically animated, though; they are clockwork creations. They have not been wound in several days and will not be able to work again until this happens. Unfortunately, the key is missing. Characters that attempt to make Intelligence (Arcana or Investigation), or other similar checks, learn that these are clockwork creatures and that their repair is outside the ability of the characters at this time.

Treasure

Each pile of rubble contains roughly 300 cubic feet of material and takes thirty minutes per person to search. If the characters choose to dedicate time to searching the piles, the following can be found by rolling a d6 (re-roll if duplicate results are found):

- 1: 20 gp worth of diamond dust
- 2: silver flakes worth 10 gp
- 3: six roughly spherical orbs of tiger eye (worth 10 gp if polished and retained as a set)
- 4: a fist-sized but poor quality chunk of hematite worth 10 gp
- 5: coal, worth 0 gp
- 6: a tiny piece of quartz that looks like a cat’s paw, worth 10 gp

Excavation Chamber Two

The ceiling in this chamber has begun caving in, likely in the last two ten-days or so. The edges of the rocks are still sharp, and the quiet of the room is pierced by the menacing sound of settling and scraping stones from above.

This room provides nothing of value for the characters early in the adventure. If they choose to dig into the pile of rubble or dally in this place for more than a few minutes, warn them a second time about the groaning stones. A DC 8 Intelligence (Nature) or Wisdom (Survival) check confirms that another cave-in is imminent, and it would likely dwarf the one that already happened. Continued activity triggers the collapse of the chamber, which quickly cascades into the hallway beyond – sealing the rest of the mine and further sublevels. Short of magic or many hundreds of gold worth of explosives, the characters cannot proceed. While the cave-in gives plenty of warning (thus requiring no saving throws), this results in the players being trapped outside of the lower levels... or in the unfortunate position where they may be trapped in the lower levels with no other escape route. If the characters are trapped inside the mine, you are strongly encouraged to allow the characters creative license in their escape methods; asking them to use ten days’ worth of rations each (or risking starvation) is not out of the question. This should not be a character-killing event though.

Later in the adventure, the characters may desire to trigger the cave-in in order to seal the lower areas of the mine from prying eyes. This is a perfectly viable tactic at that time but likely requires some careful negotiation with Fizzlebottom later on.

Sorting Room

Many long sorting tables line the walls here, with a belt-driven mechanized apparatus that appears to shake and presort much of the rubble that is placed upon its tray in the middle of the room. Though it is not currently active, two men are inspecting it and seem at once impressed and disdainful.

Unless the characters are taking great care to move stealthily, the **cult fanatic of Cyric** and **cultist of Cyric** here are not surprised. They have a loyal **phase spider** as well, which is currently in the ethereal plane. The cultists fight to the death, but the spider flees into the ethereal plane to escape if reduced to 10 hp or less.

If the characters subdue either of the faithful of Cyric and attempt to question them, they soon find that the cultists are utterly devoted to their god. They blurt out curses and quips, often saying that “The Dark Prince would have his hound devour us all!” or “The Dark Sun has risen o’er you!”. They provide no useful information.

Adjusting the Encounter

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

- **Very weak party:** remove the **phase spider**
- **Strong party:** Replace the **cultist of Cyric** with one more **cult fanatic of Cyric**
- **Very strong party:** as **Strong party**, and add one more **phase spider**

Treasure

The cultists each carry a *potion of healing*, as well as an obsidian and silver holy pendant of Cyric worth 10 gp.

Moving On

There is a platform equipped with a rope & pulley system along one side of the room. It can be operated by those riding on it, and descends to Sublevel Two.

Sublevel Two

The stone of this lower section of Darkglitter Depths seems much more structurally stable, with tiny web-like veins of precious metals running as far as you can see.

This portion of the mine does not have timber or additional supports. The tunnels are carved from a single massive stone – impossibly huge, but a single stone nonetheless. A DC 10 Intelligence (Nature) check confirms that the tunnels are indeed structurally sound (though any dwarf character knows this automatically). A DC 15 Intelligence (History) check brings to mind some ancient legends about how some of the mythical titans would become a single piece of stone when they died; further checks in this mode of thinking do not reveal any additional information.

Several rooms dot this level, including a **malachite cavern**, **mud pits**, and the **massive cavern**. Lastly, the characters will need to open the passage to **Kezef’s sanctuary**.

General Features

The general features of the Darkglitter Depths are as follows:

Light. As Sublevel One.

Visibility. As Sublevel One, but visibility is slightly increased. Anything between 40 ft. and 60 ft. away is considered to be so concealed by the dust that ranged attacks against them are made at disadvantage. Nothing is visible beyond this range.

Smells and Sounds. The stink of stale dust has largely been replaced but the smell of wet earth and corroded copper, but the sounds of falling stones – both large and small – can still be occasionally heard.

Darkglitter Malachite Cavern

Massive stalactites hang from the ceiling of this place, their faces a swirl of deep green and light-sucking black. Several have been broken and reveal that these formations are indeed huge pieces of malachite.

An elevator – really just a simple wooden platform with a rope and pulley system – can ferry the characters back up to Sublevel One.

Hidden behind one of the stalactites is the body of Parabald the Maimed, a one-armed dragonborn mage that the characters may have encountered in another adventure. If the characters spent one hour or less at the mine, Parabald is hiding in fear; if the characters have spent two to four hours at the mine, he is injured but still has 5 hp remaining. Otherwise,

he has turned to stone due to bites from the cockatrices that infest this space; this effect will naturally heal in 24 hours unless the characters have alternate means that they can employ to remove his condition. If Parabald is alive, the characters can hear his whimpers and ragged breaths on a Passive Perception score of 10 or above.

If the characters move to interact with Parabald or spend more than three rounds in this space, four **cockatrices** emerge from the holes in the walls and streak out to attack!

Adjusting the Encounter

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

- **Very weak party:** remove one **cockatrice**
- **Strong party:** add one more **cockatrice**
- **Very strong party:** as **Strong party**, and the entire chamber is sloped down towards the pit (instead of only the indicated portion on the map)

After the combat, should the characters revive him or interact with him, Parabald tells them that he had bluffed his way into the entourage of the cultists of Cyric when he learned of their desire to “bring out the hound”, and while he believes this to be a reference to some sort of extraplanar summoning ritual he is not exactly certain what it means. He adds that they became aware of his status as a Harper, and had laced his rations with a mild psychotropic drug which caused him to start hearing voices while the walls trembled. The cultists merely laughed at his reaction and left him here, presumably to die.

Roleplaying Parabald the Maimed

Parabald the Maimed is intelligent, crafty, and serious. His family had been killed by cultists of Cyric, and he sought to become a Harper so that he could protect others from similar events. He is unwilling to speak about his missing limb, other than stating “Sometimes there is a price that must be paid for the good we do.” While roleplaying Parabald the Maimed in this adventure, you might:

- Speak in a low voice with a gravelly tone.
- Be very cautious in your dealings with others.
- Remember your family with anger and sorrow.
- Rarely smile.

Of course, he is affected by a mild mind-affecting drug during his time in Darkglitter Depths and may not be entirely coherent.

Once he has been comforted appropriately, Parabald may be willing to share the following with the characters – especially if any of them are Harpers:

- The cult of Cyric believes that they have found a way to summon and bind an agent of a lesser deity named Kezef the Chaos Hound.
- Worship of Kezef is not common in the Realms, as he primarily busies himself with prowling the planes and devouring the souls of “The Faithful” – those that revere one deity above all others.
- The cultists believe that if they can harness one of Kezef’s emissaries in this world, they could set it loose in the temples of the gods that oppose Cyric.
- In order to summon the emissary, they needed a powerful teleportation engine; essentially, a vastly more powerful teleportation circle. By perverting the purpose of this device, they could reach into the far planes and capture an agent of the Chaos Hound. He does not know where this may be located, though.

Parabald is in no condition to walk out of the mine, but is also unable to accompany the characters. He begs them to stop the cultists. In the unfortunate circumstance where he may already be dead when the characters find him, all of the above information is conveniently scribed inside his journal (along with some elegant and complex chess gambits).

Treasure

There are four cockatrice eggs among the statues. They won’t hatch, but are worth 10 gp each in a major city like Melvaunt, Hillsfar, or Mulmaster as an exotic spell component.

Mud Pits

Several very smelly pits of bubbling, muddy liquid churn and sputter on the floor of this cavern. The walls appear to be sweating, and this cavern is easily twenty degrees warmer than the corridor outside and the previous chambers.

A dozen **kobolds** frolic in the filthy liquid and do not immediately take notice of the characters. If the characters attack immediately, they gain a surprise round. If they delay one round or more (or attempt to open the very squeaky unlocked gate), the kobolds become aware and combat proceeds as normal. They gleefully fling handfuls of the thick and slightly acidic mud at each other, the walls, and the characters (dealing 1d3 points of damage to characters but none to kobolds), and chirp away in Draconic about how much they hate gnomes.

Adjusting the Encounter

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

- **Very weak party and weak party:** the characters are granted surprise regardless of the number of rounds they use to prepare
- **Strong party:** add two more **winged kobolds**
- **Very strong party:** as **Strong party**, and the kobolds are aware of the characters immediately (no chance of surprise round)

Treasure

The mud can be bottled up and serves as a slightly-weaker vial of acid for the rest of the adventure, dealing 1d3 points of damage on a hit. Once the mud has spent more than one hour out of the pits, though, it loses its potency and becomes inert, normal (though smelly!) mud.

Massive Cavern

This huge open chamber sports a nearly forty-foot tall ceiling and measures nearly a hundred feet wide, while measuring almost twice that in distance. The flat floor is dotted with crates, hand tools, and sorting tables; this must have been the most recent worksite for the Cloisternook gnomes.

Scaffolding covers the walls and it can be plainly seen where the miners had been digging.

The center of the chamber is open and free of clutter.

There is a small depression here, but the contents – if any – cannot be spied from the entryway.

When the characters enter this chamber, a couple of different things may take place:

- **If the characters have been in the mine four hours or less:** two **cultists of Cyric** stand near the center of the room, and are accompanied by two **kobolds** and one **winged kobold**.
- **If the characters have been in the mine for more than four hours:** there is a dead cultist in the depression, surrounded by the corpses of two dead kobolds and one winged kobold. The remaining cultist is hiding in one of the mining crates, and has used *minor illusion* to create the image of a pile of raw ore on top of herself (attempts made to find her are made at disadvantage unless she reveals herself by talking or casting spells with a verbal component).

The depression in the center of the room has a large locked grate (DC 15) at the bottom. The lock used is non-standard, though, and requires a holy symbol of Cyric in order to unlock the grate (this can be found earlier in the mines, or upon the hiding cultist; there

is a chance that a character may have one as well from another source). Using a holy symbol in this way destroys it. Once the grate is unlocked and moved aside, a steel ladder can be easily seen descending further into the depths and towards the next section. A clattering, whining sound can be heard far below.

The cultist is named Li Tansu and, once hidden, is not eager to fight the characters, much preferring to stay hidden and safe until such time as she can leave the area. If discovered, she verbally stumbles into every apology she can think of: she was tricked into joining the clergy of Cyric; she regrets everything; she never meant to hurt anyone; she is quitting “RIGHT. NOW.” If the characters let her live, she follows through with this – she leaves the Moonsea and travels to Neverwinter where she hopes that she can disappear quietly and enjoy the rest of her life. In the rare situation that she may be placed in combat with the emissary of Kezef (see Part 3: Feast of the Hound), she uses the stats for a **cult fanatic of Cyric** but the emissary ignores her – in truth, her twin allegiances to Deneir and Cyric keep her safe and hidden from the beast. Before she leaves the characters, she tells them that the cultists took “the egg” below, and that it is apparently some kind of holy relic – “but it’s so squirmy and gross; it scares me.”

Adjusting the Encounter

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

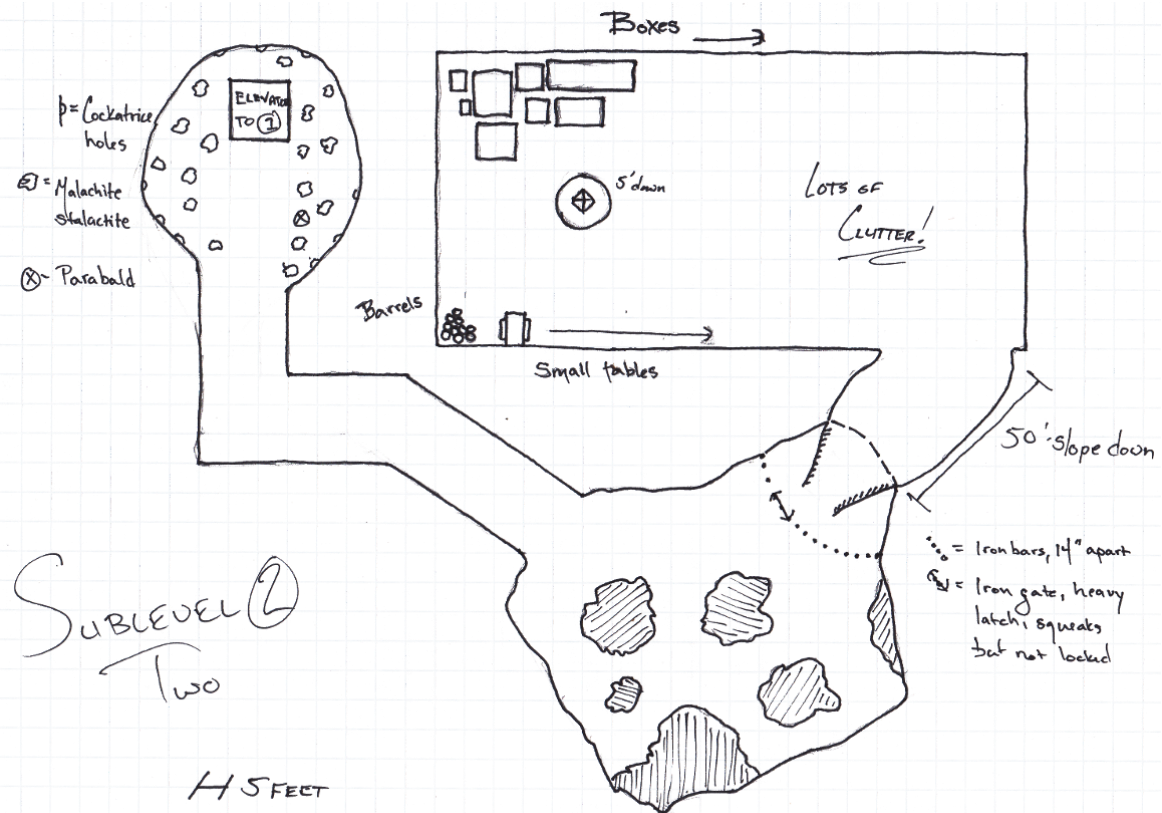
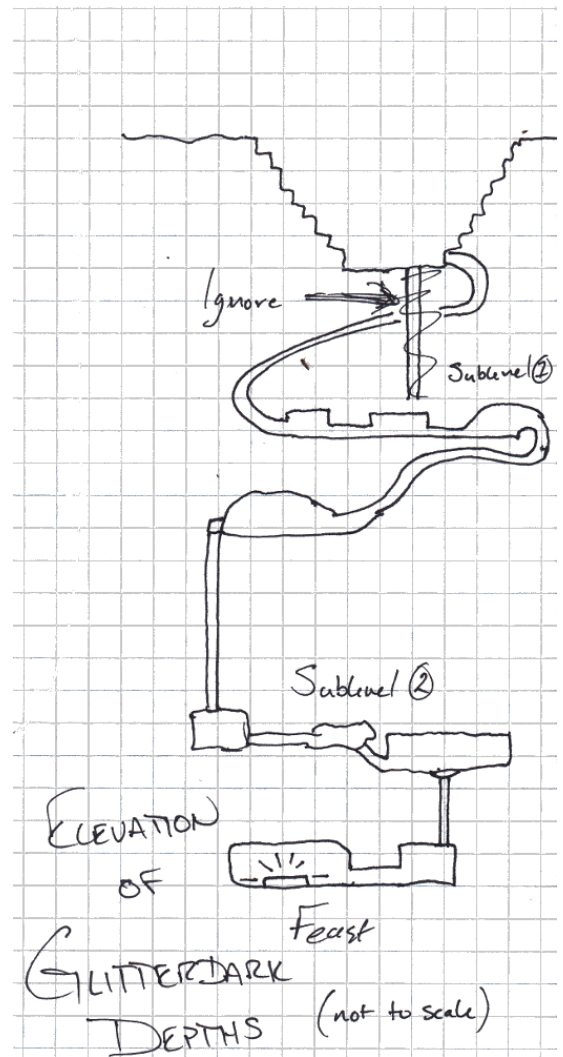
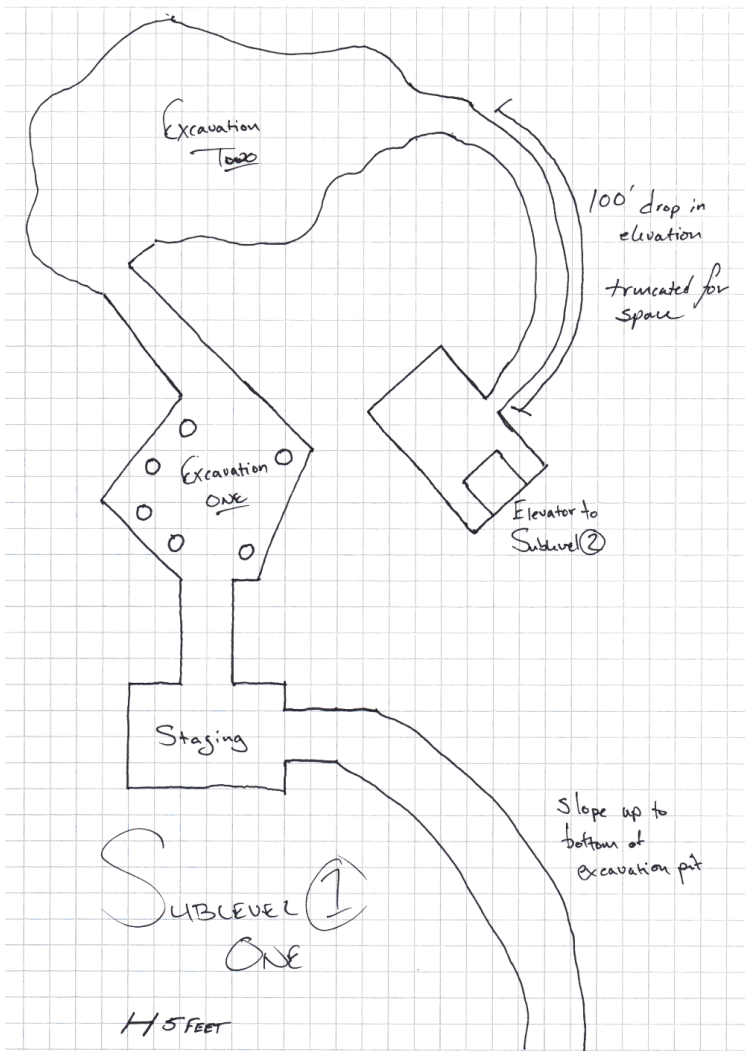
- **Strong party:** add one more **winged kobold**
- **Very strong party:** as **Strong party**, and change the **cultists of Cyric** to **cult fanatics of Cyric**

Roleplaying Li Tansu

Li is a woman of few summers but many stories. While she is slow to trust, she instinctively knows that there is more to the world than she has seen – and she wants to understand it all! Formerly from Neverwinter (by way of the Hordelands), she is not eager to fight. She has spent much of her life in study and pious reflection, but recently forsake her oaths to Deneir, the god of literature. She still feels his call and is torn between her twin allegiances.

Treasure

The cultists each carry a black and silver holy symbol of Cyric worth 10 gp, though if the cultist in the depression is already dead when the characters arrive, his holy symbol is gone – claimed by the remaining cultist that is hiding elsewhere in the chamber.



Part 3. Feast of the Hound

Kezef's Sanctuary

Expected Duration: 30 minutes.

General Features

The general features of Kezef's sanctuary are as follows:

Light and Visibility. As with other portions of Darkglitter Depths, this space is dark. Light sources cause the diamond veins to sparkle brightly.

Sights. The walls, floor, and ceiling here are rough, natural stone that are marbled with glittering veins of low-grade diamonds. An arcane machine stands in the center of the chamber.

Smells and Sounds. The stark aroma of wet earth and the scent of corroded copper coins permeates this space.

The rough-hewn walls of the mine open into a large natural cavern. The diamond veins are pushing through the walls here and glitter madly when light hits them. Half a dozen humanoid figures can be seen, their shoulders slumped as they stare listlessly at an alien, whirring apparatus that spins crazily in the center of the room.

The center of the room is dominated by the presence of the clacking and whirring relic of Kezef the Chaos Hound. This ancient deity is currently trapped elsewhere, but the cultists of Cyric have perverted the invention of the Cloisternooks that was originally intended to allow for moving ore from the depths of the mine directly back to Melvaunt. This machine is highly technical but is aided by complex teleportation rituals.

The breaking of the teleportation rituals allowed for the emissary to enter this world, but its power quickly overcame the cultists and it is now setting about to harvest them in order to more permanently open the portal so that Kezef himself may come through.

The noise of the arcane machine is a severe detractor from Perception checks. Wisdom (Perception) checks made in the area are made at disadvantage, and Passive Perception scores are lowered by 5. As the machine whirs and spins in its maddening rhythm, strange symbols can be faintly seen. If the characters state that they are checking the symbols, they must succeed on a DC 10 Intelligence (Religion) check. If they do, they can identify the symbols as those of Kezef the Chaos Hound, a rarely discussed deity that feasts upon the

souls of the "faithful" (i.e. those that revere one deity above all others) in the upper plane known as the Beastlands.

There are 3 gnomes and 3 cultists here (they all use the stats of a **commoner** for simplicity), entranced by the machine. They have been prepared by the **emissary of Kezef**, and their hit points have been reduced to 1 point each. The characters should be aware that these six survivors all appear to be in terrible shape, and although they are standing they are otherwise unresponsive.

If the adventurers make it a point to stare at the apparatus while the symbols take shape (whether or not they attempt the Religion check), they are surprised when the **emissary of Kezef** attacks.

Adjusting the Encounter

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

- **Very weak party:** As Weak party, and the **emissary of Kezef** only has half of its maximum hp
- **Weak party:** The **emissary of Kezef** cannot use its legendary actions
- **Strong party:** Add a 2nd **emissary of Kezef**
- **Very strong party:** As **Strong party**, and increase arcane bolt damage to 2d4 + 2

Tactics

The **emissary** spends the first two rounds of combat harrying the characters, in an attempt to drive them closer to the arcane machine.

Any character that begins their turn adjacent to the arcane machine must make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or their maximum hit points are reduced by 5 (10 for **strong** or **very strong** parties) as the machine attempts to drain their life energy. Clerics and paladins make this saving throw at disadvantage, as the magic of the machine has been perverted by the combined magic of Cyric and Kezef.

Interacting with the Machine

The characters can use their actions to delay the machine's transformation throughout the combat. These options should be made clear to the characters:

- **Eliminate a sigil of Kezef:** there are a number of sigils equal to twice the number of party members. If all sigils are destroyed, it shuts down
- **Damage the machine:** AC 8, hp 70; resistant to damage from weapons; immune to poison, disease, sleep, and psychic damage and conditions.

Interacting with the machine using the above methods prevents it from using its *arcane bolt* ability on the next turn in which it would normally do so.

Round 3 and Beyond

The machine shudders and screeches as it picks up speed. The symbols flare into clearer view, and tendrils of wispy white and black energy leap out from the center of the machine to every living creature in the room!

Tactics

The **emissary** fights to the death. Its sole purpose here on Faerûn is to harvest souls for Kezef, and it does not stray from its mission.

Due to the tendrils of energy in the room, invisibility and similar effects do not function as expected: while a creature affected by invisibility cannot be seen, there is a visual cue marking their position. Mechanically speaking, such characters should be granted a modified three-quarters cover (+5 AC) for the duration of that effect. Note that if a creature is not considered to be living, the tendril does not connect; characters with the ***Touched by the Mists*** story award are also unaffected by the tendrils.

Escalation/Round-by-Round

At the beginning of the fourth round of combat, every living creature adjacent to the machine must make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw. On a failure, their maximum hit points drop by 10 as the machine drains their life force (note that this means that dying characters may still be affected, as they are not yet dead). Additionally, one of the entranced gnomes or cultists dies as their maximum hit points are reduced to 0.

When the arcane machine successfully drains for the 20th time, it goes into overload mode. The **emissary of Kezef** howls with glee as it gains the ***reckless attack*** feature as if it were a barbarian and

must use it every turn, and, on initiative count 20 (losing ties), the machine sends out two randomly-targeted *arcane bolts* (no attack roll, living targets only; 1d4 + 1 force and necrotic damage) against targets within 10 feet of it. As above, characters with the ***Touched by the Mists*** story award cannot be targeted by this attack.

XP Award

If the adventurers complete this encounter without allowing any of the survivors to die to the emissary or the corrupted machine, grant them an award of 500 XP. If they instead save the lives of either all of the gnomes or all of the cultists, grant them an award of 100 XP (this does not stack with the previous reward of 500 XP). Any of the gnomes or cultists that die in this encounter cannot be raised, as Kezef has consumed their souls.

If any of the characters die due to their maximum hit points being reduced to 0, they earn the ***Feast of the Hound*** story award if they are ever returned to life.

Destroying all of the sigils of Kezef that are inscribed upon the apparatus earns the characters a reward of 100 XP each.

Treasure

Unfortunately, the diamond veins embedded in the walls are outside the ability of the characters to extract – these are very rough and, although pretty, of exceedingly low quality. An investigation of the area shows a number of dead bugs and what appears to be a crudely-made, leathery sack that has been split open.

Conclusion

Once the characters have erased all of the sigils of Kezef, they can use the symbols from Handout 1 to activate it appropriately and teleport whatever is on the pad directly to the Purple Portals in Melvaunt. Fizzlebottom Cloisternook waits there patiently, hoping that his daughters will be returned to him!

If the characters destroyed the machine, they will need to return to Melvaunt on foot and explain to the drunken gnome what happened down in the mines, including the status of his beloved machine. He may shed a gnome-ly tear if the characters are not delicate in their delivery of this news.

Returning Parabald the Maimed to Melvaunt is likely to earn the characters some good will, especially among the Harpers. If Parabald is returned to the city, the characters each have

advantage on the next Charisma-based skill check they attempt with him.

If Li Tansu was discovered and yet lives, she may play a role in later adventures. If the characters ask about her upon their return to Melvaunt, they learn that she was last seen leaving the city and heading west toward Phlan with a group of Denieran scholars. She had mentioned eventually heading to Neverwinter.

Lastly, the local priests and clerics know nothing about the religious significance of "the egg". If any of the characters worship Cyric, they have a sensation that bad things are in the works (though they may revel in this fact). If, during the course of the character's inquiry, they mention that "the egg" is something that the cultists of Cyric have been using, other clerics and sages may be able to respond that oftentimes an egg represents the promise of new life – but as with anything pertaining to the God of Lies, this is likely nothing more than the first of many tricks.

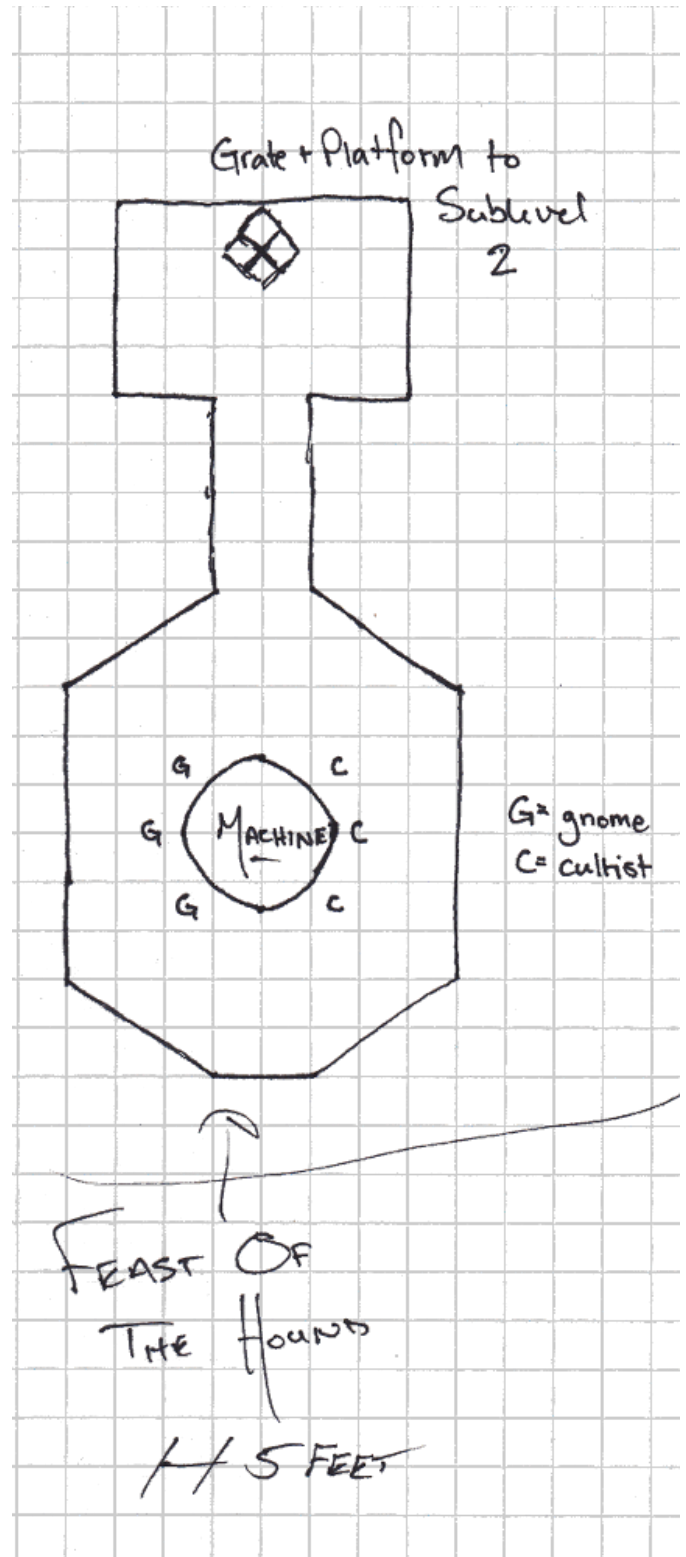
That night, as you lay down to rest, an image comes unbidden to your mind: a large, leathery egg splits open and spills forth a gout of insects and worms. A silver skull lies inside, radiating waves of solid black flame. It is quickly encompassed in a swirl of ghosts, spirits, and other incorporeal menaces.

Treasure

Fizzlebottom follows through with his offer from earlier in the adventure. He presents the characters with a sack filled with 250 gp worth of raw diamonds. If the characters have never met Fizzlebottom before, he insists that they take the gems anyways, or else he will "donate it to those dirty, dirty Harpers".

He also asks about the holy symbol of Gond in the foreman's office at Darkglitter Depths, saying that it is a family heirloom and very special to him. If the characters took it and do not take this opportunity to return it, they earn the **Enmity of the Cloisternooks** story award.

If he had previously been taken to the Livestock Pens, he has gotten free but he really does not want to talk about how this happened. If the characters had previously earned **Enmity of the Cloisternooks** due to his capture, but have successfully returned his daughters, the characters lose that story award.



Rewards

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

Experience

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

Combat Awards

Name of Foe	XP per Foe
Animated Armor	0
Cultist of Cyric	25
Cult Fanatic of Cyric	450
Phase Spider	700
Cockatrice	100
Kobold	25
Winged Kobold	50
Emissary of Kezef	1,100

Non-Combat Awards

Task or Accomplishment	XP per Character
Saved Parabald the Maimed	100
Saved all 6 survivors	500
Saved all 3 gnomes	100
Saved all 3 Cultists	100
Destroyed sigils of Kezef	100

The **minimum** total award for each character participating in this adventure is 900 experience points.

The **maximum** total award for each character participating in this adventure is 1,200 experience points.

Treasure

The characters receive the following treasure, divided up amongst the party. Characters should attempt to divide treasure evenly whenever possible. Gold piece values listed for sellable gear are calculated at their selling price, not their purchase price.

Consumable magic items should be divided up however the group sees fit. If more than one character is interested in a specific consumable

magic item, the DM can determine who gets it randomly should the group be unable to decide.

Permanent magic items are divided according to a system. See the sidebar if the adventure awards permanent magic items.

Treasure Awards

Item Name/Location	GP Value
Fizzlebottom's offer	300
Holy Symbol of Gond	15
Diamond Dust	20
Silver Flakes	10
Set of Tiger's Eye Orbs	10
Hematite	10
Coal	10
Quartz Catspaw	10
Cyric Holy Pendant	10
Cockatrice Eggs	10
Cyric Holy Symbol	10
Raw Diamonds	250

Emerald Kidgloves (Gloves of Thievery)

Wondrous item, uncommon

These delicate, goatskin gloves are colored with a bright green pigment and slip onto the wearer's hands effortlessly. While wearing these gloves, the wearer experiences irresistible generosity, expressing compliments to those around them and spending coin for the benefit of others without hesitation. Unlike conventional *gloves of thievery*, these gloves do not turn invisible when worn, but shrink or grow to accommodate a small or medium wearer's size.

Potion of Healing

Potion, uncommon

A description of this item can be found in the *Player's Handbook*.

Renown

Each character receives **one point of renown**.

Downtime

Each character receives **10 downtime days** at the conclusion of this adventure.

Story Awards

Characters have the opportunity to earn the following story awards during this adventure.

Enmity of the Cloisternooks. You have done something to grievously wound the gnomish Cloisternook family. Perhaps you insulted their honor, or perhaps you caused irreparable damage to Darkglitter Depths. Maybe you even sold one of them into slavery. Word travels fast in the gnomish communities, though, and as a result you have disadvantage on all social skill checks when dealing with Cloisternook gnomes and clerics of Gond.

Feast of the Hound. The corrupted machine deep in the Darkglitter Depths drew in your essence, and in those terrifying final moments you saw something: an emaciated hound, gargantuan in size, feasting upon the souls of those that arrived before you. It gleefully tore them asunder, and then turned to you. As its teeth sank into your metaphysical flesh and you felt the hot stink of its breath wash over you, you were pulled back to the world – but not without a reminder: you have the scars of a dog’s bite somewhere on your body, and sometimes those scars stink and fester when in the presence of clerics and paladins.

DM Rewards

For running this adventure, you receive 300 XP, 143 gp, and ten downtime days.

DM Appendix: NPC Summary

The following NPCs appear or are mentioned in this adventure.

Fizzlebottom Cloisternook (FIZ-el-BOT-um CLOY-stir-nook). Gnome male. The old, kind, smart, and often intoxicated patriarch of the Cloisternook family. The Gond-worshipping clan has more than a few secrets and Fizzlebottom knows them all.

Parabald the Maimed (par-uh-BALD). Dragonborn male. A one-armed mage who feigns madness while hunting cults of Cyric.

Li Tansu (LEE tahn-SOO). Human (Shou) female. A woman of roughly 30 years, but wise beyond her years. While slow to trust, she has set out in the world to develop a deeper understanding of “everything”. She recently broke her oaths to Deneir and took up with the cult of Cyric for reasons known only to her, but still feels the call of her former patron.

Appendix. NPC/Monster Statistics

Bandit Captain

Medium humanoid (human), neutral evil

Armor Class 15 (studded leather)

Hit Points 65 (10d8 + 8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws Str +4, Dex +5, Wis +2

Skills Athletics +4, Deception +4

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Gnome

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Actions

Multiattack. The captain makes three melee attacks: two with its longsword and one with its dagger. Or the captain makes two ranged attacks with its daggers.

Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) slashing damage.

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) piercing damage.

Reactions

Parry. The captain adds 2 to its AC against one melee attack that would hit it. To do so, the captain must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.

Cockatrice

Small monstrosity, unaligned

Armor Class 11

Hit Points 27 (6d6 + 6)

Speed 20 ft., fly 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6 (-2)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	2 (-4)	13 (+1)	5 (-3)

Senses darkvision 60ft., passive Perception 11

Languages –

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Actions

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 3 (1d4 + 1) piercing damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 11 Constitution saving throw against being magically petrified. On a failed save, the creature begins to turn to stone and is restrained. It must repeat the saving throw at the end of its next turn. On a success, the effect ends. On a failure, the creature is petrified for 24 hours.

Cult Fanatic of Cyric

Medium humanoid (human), neutral evil

Armor Class 13 (leather leather)

Hit Points 33 (6d8 + 6)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)

Skills Deception +4, Persuasion +4, Religion +2

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Common

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Dark Devotion. The cult fanatic of Cyric has advantage on saving throws against being charmed or frightened.

Spellcasting. The cult fanatic of Cyric is a 4th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 11, +3 to hit with spell attacks). The cult fanatic of Cyric has the following cleric spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *light, sacred flame, thaumaturgy*

1st level (4 slots): *command, inflict wounds, shield of faith*

2nd level (3 slots): *hold person, spiritual weapon*

Actions

Multiattack. The cult fanatic of Cyric makes two melee attacks.

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

Cultist of Cyric

Medium humanoid (human), neutral evil

Armor Class 12 (leather leather)

Hit Points 9 (2d8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

Skills Deception +4, Religion +2

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Common

Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

Dark Devotion. The cultist has advantage on saving throws against being charmed or frightened.

Actions

Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d8) slashing damage.

Commoner

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 10

Hit Points 4 (1d8)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 0 (10 XP)

Actions

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

Kobold

Small humanoid (kobold), lawful evil

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 5 (2d6 - 2)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
7 (-2)	15 (+2)	9 (-1)	8 (-1)	7 (-2)	8 (-1)

Senses Darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 8

Languages Common, Draconic

Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

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

Pack Tactics. The kobold has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the kobold's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

Actions

Dagger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage.

Sling. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) bludgeoning damage.

Kobold, Winged

Small humanoid (kobold), lawful evil

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 7 (3d6 -32)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
7 (-2)	16 (+3)	9 (-1)	8 (-1)	7 (-2)	8 (-1)

Senses Darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 8

Languages Common, Draconic

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

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

Pack Tactics. The kobold has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the kobold's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

Actions

Dagger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) piercing damage.

Dropped Rock. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, one target directly below the kobold. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) bludgeoning damage.

Phase Spider

Large monstrosity, unaligned

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)

Hit Points 32 (5d10 + 5)

Speed 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	6 (-2)	10 (+0)	6 (-2)

Skills Stealth +6

Senses Darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages -

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Ethereal Jaunt. As a bonus action, the spider can magically shift from the Material Plane to the Ethereal Plane, or vice versa.

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

Web Walker. The spider ignores movement restrictions caused by webbing.

Actions

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 7 (1d10 + 2) piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 11 Constitution saving throw, taking 18 (4d8) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. If the poison damage reduces the target to 0 hit points, the target is stable but poisoned for 1 hour, even after regaining hit points, and is paralyzed while poisoned in this way.

Emissary of Kezef

Large monstrosity, neutral evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 75 (10d10 + 20)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Abyssal, telepathy 60 ft.

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Legendary Resistance (1/Day). If the emissary fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

Actions

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (3d4 + 1) piercing damage plus 7 (3d4) poison damage.

Caustic Spittle (1/Day). The emissary spews forth a gruesome shower of spit and vomit in a 30-foot cone. Each creature in that area must succeed on a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw or take 1d6 acid damage at the start of each of the emissary's turns. A creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

Infestation Spores (1/Day). The emissary releases spores that burst out in a cloud that fills a 20-foot-radius sphere centered on it, and the cloud lingers for 1 minute. Any flesh-and-blood creature in the cloud when it appears, or that enters it later, must make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw. On a successful save, the creature can't be infected by these spores for 24 hours. On a failed save, the creature comatose but frozen in place. While infected in this way, the creature can't be re-infected, and it must repeat the saving throw at the end of every 24 hours, ending the infection on a success. On a failure, the infected creature's body is slowly taken drained of all vital energy, and after three such failed saves, the creature dies and rises 1d4 hours later as a shadow.

Legendary Actions

The emissary can take 2 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The emissary regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Bite. The emissary makes a bite attack.

Devour Faith. The emissary absorbs faith and spell energy from a creature within 10 feet of it, regaining 1d8 + 2 hit points unless that creature sacrifices an unused spell slot of 1st level or higher. This ability has no function against creatures with no spell slots (creatures that have used all of their spell slots are not immune).

Handout 1: Instructions for the Machine

Our plans proceed apace.

*Stay at your post and watch over the goods.
We make our move when the protestors' cries
echo throughout the city. I will be at the
Outcast's Sanctuary, preparing something
special for the occasion.*

*Lord Yestral is incredibly pleased with the
progress we've made. When the smoke clears,
your rewards will exceed anything you can
imagine.*

*By the full moon's glow,
E.M.*

Player Handout 2: Emerald Kidgloves

Emerald Kidgloves (Gloves of Thievery)

Wondrous item, uncommon

These delicate, goatskin gloves are colored with a bright green pigment and slip onto your hands effortlessly. Although these act as *gloves of thievery*, these gloves do not turn invisible when worn, but shrink or grow to accommodate a small or medium wearer's size.

While wearing these gloves, you gain a +2 bonus to Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) checks and Dexterity checks made to pick locks. Additionally, you feel a sense of irresistible generosity, expressing compliments to those around them and spending coin for the benefit of others without hesitation.