



ADVENTURERS LEAGUE™

THE OCCUPATION OF SZITH MORCANE

Agents of the fire giants of Maerimydra, a city in the Underdark, have overtaken the drow outpost of Szith Morcane. The factions seek out adventurers to free the outpost's leaders for questioning on the giants' activities. Can you extricate them before it's too late? A four-hour adventure for 5th-10th level characters.

Adventure Code: DDEX3-3

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EXPEDITIONS™

Debut: July 30, 2015

Release: September 1, 2015

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to *The Occupation of Szith Morcane*, a D&D Expeditions™ adventure, part of the official D&D Adventurers League™ organized play system and the Rage of Demons™ storyline season.

This adventure consists of five mini-adventures, and is designed for **three to seven 5th-10th level characters**, and is optimized for **five 8th-level characters**. Characters outside this level range cannot participate in this adventure.

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

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 will continue their story.

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.

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.

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](#).

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 Dungeon Mastering, such as notecards, a DM screen, miniatures, battlemaps, etc.
- 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. This includes:

- 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, and so on)

Players that have characters outside the adventure's level range **cannot participate in the adventure with those characters**. Players can play an adventure they previously played or ran as a Dungeon Master, but not with the same character (if applicable).

Ensure that each player has an [official adventure logsheet](#) for his or her character (if not, get one from the organizer). The player will fill out the adventure name, session number, date, and your name and DCI number. In addition, the player also fills in the starting values for XP, gold, downtime, renown, and number of permanent magic items. He or she will 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, or they can do so at the end of the adventure or episode.

Players should select their characters' spells and other daily options prior to the start of the adventure, unless the adventure specifies otherwise. Feel free to reread the adventure description to help give players hints about what they might face.

ADJUSTING THE ADVENTURE

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

You may adjust the adventure beyond the guidelines given in the adventure, or for other reasons. 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 might want to make it a little harder. Therefore, five categories of party strength have been created for you to use as a guide. Use these as a guide, and 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 8th-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

Average party strength indicates no recommended adjustments to the adventure. Each sidebar may or may not offer suggestions for certain party strengths. If a particular recommendation is not offered for your group, you don't have to make adjustments.

DUNGEON MASTERING THE ADVENTURE

As the DM 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. This 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 game. 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. This 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 (end of the adventure only)
- 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. Alternatively, if the party finishes an adventure, they can be assumed to return to the settlement closest to the adventure location.

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</i> (1st level)	10 gp
<i>Identify</i>	20 gp
<i>Lesser restoration</i>	40 gp
<i>Prayer of healing</i> (2nd level)	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.

Faiths that can call upon spellcasting services in and around Hillsfar include the following: Chauntea, Lliira, Mielikki, and Tempus.

CHARACTER DISEASE, DEATH, AND RECOVERY

Sometimes bad things happen, and characters get poisoned, diseased, or die. 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 dies 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 XP and rewards from that session (even those earned prior to death during that session), and cannot replay that episode or adventure with that character again. Once a character reaches 5th level, this option is not available.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

The Deep Wastes are the section of the Underdark that lies beneath the surface lands of the Dalelands and the Moonsea. It is home of the drow; dark elves who mostly worship the Spider Queen, Lolth.

The city of Maerimydra lies in the Deep Wastes, under the southern portion of Mistedale. During the Silence of Lolth in 1372, a drow archmage named Duneth Wharrell enlisted the help of a half-fiend named Kurgoth Hellspawn to execute a coup of the city from the priestesses of Lolth. Although successful in the coup, Duneth fell prey to a contingent of worshippers of the drow goddess of death, Kiaransalee. This group has since fallen to the fire giants who are now led by the daughter of Kurgoth, Hledh, whose demonic lineage is apparent in the six fingers she has on each hand.

The blood of the Dark Prince Graz'zt flows through her veins. Graz'zt has recently been expelled from the Abyss and is now residing in the Underdark, below the city of Hillsfar. Lust, self-indulgence, and narcissism are Graz'zt's gifts to the world. His presence has resulted in even surface dwellers embracing those gifts and allowing his spreading madness to infect their souls. One reason for his success in spreading his influence is the existence of *faerzress*, a magical radiation that exists in the Underdark.

Szith Morcane used to be an outpost for the city of Maerimydra when it was under the control the followers of Lolth. It served as entry point for raids into Daggardale by the drow. When the drow were beaten back to the outpost, it was sealed away from the surface. During the Silence of Lolth, the outpost was taken over by the cult of Kiaransalee. Raids on the surface resumed and were subsequently stopped by leaders in Shadowdale. Solom Ned'razak, a drow archmage who witnessed the rise and fall of the cult, took control of Szith Morcane and has again magically sealed it from the surface.

Since then, the population of Szith Morcane has swollen by the drow fleeing Maerimydra and Hledh. With Graz'zt's madness running rampant throughout the Deep Wastes, the fire giants under Hledh's leadership have attacked the drow sequestered at the outpost to abduct slaves to be fighters in their arena. The drow of Szith Morcane knew the only place to flee was the surface. Recent seismic activity opened a sinkhole in the area near Hillsfar, granting access to the surface.

THE OCCUPATION OF SZITH MORCANE

The factions in and around Hillsfar, having questioned escapees, have grown concerned about the fire giants' aggressiveness and are keen to learn more about their movements. They seek adventurers to travel to Szith Morcane, find its leaders, and, if they are still alive, bring them back for questioning.

THE SPREADING MADNESS

The extent of the spread and effects of Graz'zt's madness is not yet clear, but it is building. Those that feel the grasp of this insanity begin to crave the same things as the Dark Prince. They enjoy contrasts, oppositions, and mismatches that others find unsettling or disgusting. They are given over to the basest of hedonisms that would shock even the most corrupt and cosmopolitan. The lands surrounding Hillsfar, above and below, are gripped by a frenzied hedonism that continues to grow with demonic fecundity.

OVERVIEW

This adventure is divided into three parts.

Part 1. The adventure begins with the characters meeting Seranolla of Elventree—Priestess of Mielikki and member of the Emerald Enclave. She and leaders from other faction have a mission of some importance to discuss with group.

On their trip to Elventree, they happen across an elven bard, Elanil Ellassidil, who has run into some trouble with drow in the area. Elanil asks for help securing one of the drow to take to Elventree for questioning.

Once at Elventree, Elanil introduces Seranolla the Whisperer of the Emerald Enclave, and Zern Xerkstil Zern of the Order of the Gauntlet. Zern challenges the adventurers' best and burliest member to a wrestling match.

Part 2. The group then travels to the Underdark and Szith Morcane in order to rescue any leaders that may have been taken prisoner when it was attacked by the fire giants of Maerimydra. They head to a sinkhole that has recent developed, to find that the Red Plumes of Hillsfar are closing it off. The characters arrange for the Guard Commandant Vuhm Yestral to aid them in getting down the hole.

Once in the Underdark they travel down an underground river to Sporedome to ask the inhabitants for directions to Szith Morcane. The myconids are happy to help after the adventurers save them from a derro attack. They introduce a friend of theirs that has a portal to Szith Morcane. Their friend is the mind flayer, Huum.

Part 3. After traveling through the portal the adventurers make their way through the ransacked Szith Morcane. The fight through the new inhabitants to finally find Solom Ned'razak, the drow archmage leader. He is being held prisoner by a fire giant.

The characters defeat Solom's captor and take him to the surface and the leaders of the factions, in order to share information, in hopes of putting a stop to the fire giants.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

Emerald Enclave. Characters that are members of the Emerald Enclave receive an urgent message from Seranolla the Whisperer who is currently in Elventree. She wishes to speak with them about a great concern she has about drow disrupting the balance of the Cormanthor Forest.

Heroes of Phlan. Characters who have worked to protect the refugees of Phlan in previous seasons are en route to Elventree from Mulmaster, looking to make allies in the region to feed starving. They have been told by Zor Garwyl Gos that the famous bard Elanil Ellassidil of Elventree is looking to hire adventurers. In the breadbasket of the Moonsea, she would be a powerful ally indeed.

Order of the Gauntlet. The character who are members hear from an Order of the Gauntlet courier that Zern Xerkstil is looking for an able body group of adventurers to take a trip into the Underdark and keep the drow from coming to the surface again. He urges them to join him in Elventree

In Need of Work. The famous bard Elanil Ellassidil, Moonsilver Herald, has been seen around the area, telling stories of drow coming to the surface again. She has offered work to those who are willing to find out why they facing the sun again. Elventree is where Elanil was headed.

PART 1: UNWELCOME VISITORS

The road to Elventree is unusually busy. The traffic consists mostly of non-humans who are unwelcome in Hillsfar. These travelers have found the entrance to Hillsfar closed and the guards unwelcoming. Many are certain that they have the exact thing that Hillsfar needs and will be let in because of it. Disappointment awaits them. Others are traveling to Elventree in order to plead for help and to sell their wares to those who have also been refused.

The characters nearly make it to Elventree when they come across the end of a confrontation between a lone traveler and a group of drow.

With about two hours travel until you arrive at your destination, you come across a horse laying, unmoving on its side in the middle of the road. Closer inspection reveals multiple stab wounds have killed the animal. Evidence of a struggle is apparent all around, as your eyes fall on an immobile body on the edge of the woods. The humanoid creature has long white hair and black skin.

Before you are able to completely take in the situation, an elf brandishing a rapier runs out of the woods. She is out of breath and has blood soaking her white shirt. Many of the buttons on the shirt have been ripped off. A lyre is slung over her back.

She sees you and beckons in common, "Oh, thank the Gods! Quick, come and help me tie this one up before he wakes up." She grabs a pack from the ground that has a rope attached, and moves quickly toward the body on the side of the road.

The stranger is **Elanil Elassidil**, a famous half-elven bard who is known to reside in Elventree, returning from a trip to the outskirts of Hillsfar. A successful DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) allows a character to notice a pin in the shape of a harp on her shirt. The dark-skinned elf lying on the ground is a female drow that was part of a small group of three that attacked Elanil. Should the party follow to help bind the drow, she relays the story of what happened:

- Any character who succeeds on a DC 10 Intelligence (History) recognizes the famous bard. Bards and characters with the Entertainer background make this check with advantage.
- Elanil is traveling to Elventree to meet with some adventurers about the problem of drow coming to the

surface.

- When she got to this point in the road, three drow came barreling out of the woods and attacked her horse first.
- Her horse quickly fell from its injuries and then the drow started grabbing at her. They pinned her down and came at her with short swords.
- The fighting was relentless, but Elanil managed to wrestle away a poisoned crossbow bolt from the drow and stab her with it, putting the now-captured drow to sleep. The others panicked and ran into the woods.
- She chased after them, but they had too much of a head start. All the recent activity in the area has made tracking almost impossible.

When brought around, the drow is incoherent and wild. A bit of food and water calms her for only a moment before she begins to struggle frantically to free herself. It soon becomes apparent that keeping her unconscious is the only way to transport her successfully.

ROLEPLAYING ELANIL ELASSIDIL

Elanil Elassidil resides in Elventree, where she has the title of Moonsilver Herald, and is a bard of some renown in the area around Hillsfar.

Elanil is confident in her ability and strong in purpose. She is not afraid to give her opinion on a subject, even when not asked. She is quick to give historical detail to back her opinions and hard on those that do not back their opinions with similar evidence.

If things get too heated, Elanil is prepared with a song to lighten the mood and make all forget there was a disagreement. She is an accomplished diplomat and uses this skill regularly as a member of the Harpers.

Should the characters decide to not help Elanil, she mumbles to herself as she struggles with her wounds while securing the drow. She proceeds to slap the face of the drow—rousing her from her slumber. Once she is awake, Elanil brings her to her feet and uses her own dagger to further goad her down the road.

ELUA'S LIGHTHOUSE

Just outside of the forest in which Elventree is located is a lighthouse that could have once been on the shores of the Moonsea. Its light still shines despite there being no harbor for it to lead the way to. This, however, is not the most interesting sight in this area. A small community has grown around the lighthouse.

Several permanent structures, obviously recently built, can be seen. Smoke rises from a couple of them, indicating that they are occupied. Small gardens can be seen as well as livestock penned near a half constructed barn.

A small halfling child spots you and runs into the closest building. A few moments later a male halfling comes out and observes your approach.

The male halfling is Falwan Underbough. The village under the lighthouse grew as a result of the xenophobic actions of Hillsfar. The community consists mostly of elves, half-elves, halflings, and gnomes. The only humans living here are relatives of the half-elves. The residents are very leery of humans and are not overly friendly toward them. They have not named the community yet but some have simply been calling it Lighthouse.

If Elanil Elassidil is a prisoner, Falwan runs over and demands her release. He tells the characters who she is and after hearing what happened, offers that if Elanil had to put down a drow it needed to happen. He does not allow the characters to come any closer to the settlement no matter what they say. He leads Elanil to the house he came out of and has a few of the stronger residents bar the characters from entering.

If Elanil is with the characters and not a prisoner, she waves to Falwan and he starts walking toward the party. Elanil introduces the characters to Falwan and then asks him to give them food and drink while she takes a horse in order to get the prisoner to the leaders of Elventree right away. He eyes her pointedly, and she shakes her head and continues down the road to Elventree with the prisoner. If any characters attempt to follow her, she asks them to remain with Falwan; they will only slow her down. If they continue, skip to Elventree, below.

Falwan is reluctant to bring them closer to the settlement, especially if there is a human in the party. He walks them a little closer to the buildings talking about the town a bit, but not close enough to be able to talk to any other residents.

- Falwan tells the characters that he used to be a citizen of Hillsfar, but fled the city when all non-humans were banished by the First Lord, Torin Nomerthal. He was a very successful baker there, where "half cakes" were his specialty.
- He brought his family to Elventree along with many other refugees. Most have continued on their journey to other parts of the Moonsea or beyond. The leaders of Elventree suggested that those remaining could use the lighthouse as a basis for starting a new permanent settlement.

A successful DC 15 Charisma (Diplomacy) check can convince Falwan to take them into the village proper in order to talk a bit. The character is at disadvantage if there are humans in the party. If Falwan feels more comfortable with the party he divulges the following:

- They have started to slowly build up a village, but a new threat has arisen. There have been attacks by drow, which is strange in this area. It has been many years since the drow have come to the surface.
- His son, Jory, came across a group of drow recently. He was gathering wood for kindling and ran across three drow. They gave chase, but Jory was able to hide.
- The strange thing about that encounter was that it was during the day. The drow, also, seemed frenzied and not careful and nimble as the stories say they should be.
- He knows the leaders of Elventree have been investigating the area to try and see where they are coming from.

A character that succeeds at a DC 15 Intelligence (History) check knows that drow usually only come to the surface when it is dark and do not typically conduct raids during daylight. With a successful DC 20 Intelligence (History) check, a character recognizes the name Solom Ned'razak as the drow that rules the outpost of Szith Morcane and sealed it away from the surface many years ago.

ROLEPLAYING FALWAN UNDERBOUGH

Falwan Underbough is a male halfling of middle age, who acts as community leader for this new settlement. His family suffered greatly from their banishment from Hillsfar. There, he was the proud owner of a bakery. His "half cakes" had a popular following among the nobles. He lost that when the First Lord re-enacted the Two Great Laws. One of which forbade non-humans from being in the city other than as fodder for the arena.

Falwan is friendly to most, even humans if they prove themselves. Caution is evident when he encounters humans with weapons, however.

ELVENTREE

Elventree lies just inside the northern edge of the Cormanthor forest, twenty miles due south of Elua's Lighthouse.

The main road leading to Elventree turns into a footpath just before the forest begins. The forest is dense and the path leads over both hilly and flat land. After about a half a mile of travel, the trees open up into a small clearing, with large hills surrounding it on three sides. The hills have several caves and large cairns standing between the trees. There is activity in and around those openings. However, there are no free standing buildings that you can see.

As your gaze moves up the hills you see that there are buildings in the forest canopy. Walkways connect the structures in the trees and rope ladders lead to the ground in several places.

On the ground several fire pits with logs around them look to be gathering areas. There are a few people sitting around one of the pits sharing a few laughs. As they see you, a familiar face is among them. An elven woman stands and heads toward your group.

The elven woman is **Elanil Elassidil**, the woman that asked for aid from the characters on the road to Elventree.

"YOU AGAIN!"

If the characters didn't help Elanil on the road, she recognizes them when they arrive. She is gracious, but only refers them to the Hall of the Unicorn and waits until they have gotten started before she joins in the meeting representing the Harpers.

If the party attacked her, however, she is still very angry about it. She is sharp tongued and generally unhelpful. When told that they are here to answer the call from the Harpers, she snorts and with a smirk tells them to follow her.

Elanil greets the characters as they enter the village. She asks them how their visit at Lighthouse went and asks if they were able to try any of Falwan's Half Cakes. If the party has not yet told her why they have come to Elventree she asks what has brought them to "this hidden gem".

Elanil takes the party to the Hall of the Unicorn. She leads them up the top of the northern hill.

At the top of the hill you see perhaps the biggest tree you have ever seen. It is twenty feet in diameter and fifty feet high. Its branches are twisted as to resemble a great pair of antlers. There is a hole at the base through which Elanil enters.

As you follow, you find that the tree is completely hollow. There is a winding staircase that winds around the perimeter of the tree. Ten feet above you is a ceiling that the stairs lead up to. In the middle of this ground floor, taking up almost the entire room is a statue of a Unicorn. It is flawless and the wood it is carved from what seems to be petrified.

Elanil ascends the stairs and motions for you to follow. As you climb the stairs you start to hear voices on the second floor. You emerge from the stairs to the second floor. There you see two individuals debating around an unconscious drow. They notice your entrance and stop and turn your way.

A gnomish woman steps forward, she wears bland green robes. Her hair is wound around many small twigs, forming a rather beautiful style. With a quiet voice she says, "I am Seranolla the Whisperer, welcome to The House of the Unicorn! Please, have some half cake and tea. Oh! And have a seat, you must be weary from your journey."

Seranolla runs nervously around the room finding straw pillows for you to sit on. Elanil gently touches her shoulder to have her stop and smiles at her. Seranolla calms herself and settles down onto one of the pillows.

FACTION REPRESENTATIVES IN ELVENTREE

The following faction representatives can be found in Elventree:

Seranolla the Whisperer. Seranolla (female gnome) represents the Emerald Enclave. She always seems very nervous, and rarely speaks above a whisper. When anything disrupts the natural process of the world, she is decisive and relentless in its defense.

Elanil Elassidil. Elanil is the representative for the Harpers in the Hillsfar area. She finds herself relegated to subordinate now that Olisara Lightsong has also arrived in Hillsfar. She has the title of Moonsilver Herald, the leader of Elventree.

Zern Xerkstil. Zern is a half-orc male. Dressed in the vestments of a paladin of Helm. He represents the Order of the Gauntlet, and has been given charge by his superiors to make sure that only the strongest are chosen to go into the Underdark to complete this mission. He speaks constantly about the infiltration of Devils and the need for physical prowess to slay them. He asks the characters for stories demonstrating their own heroism and skill.

- Seranolla introduces the others in the room as representatives of the factions that have asked the characters to travel here. Her demeanor becomes serious and she loses her nervous behavior. With a whisper, she relays the following information to the party:
- They have come to learn of some disturbing news from the Underdark.
- Szith Morcane, a drow outpost, has recently been taken over by the fire giants of Maerimydra led by Hledh Hellspawn.
- This small group is speaking on behalf of all the factions. The factions are concerned about this new threat and need to have it further investigated. This is why Seranolla and the other two have asked the characters to come here.
- The prisoner that Elanil brought back with her has confirmed all of this information, but has also informed the trio that Solom Ned'razak, a drow archmage, is alive and being held captive in the outpost.
- That has been just about the only useful information that the drow prisoner has been able to give them. She seems to be suffering from some kind of madness. She keeps repeating the same thing over and over in between her small periods of lucidity: "he embraces the madness!"
- Seranolla believes that the drow are coming up to the surface through a sinkhole that opened due to recent rainfall and seismic activity stemming from the events in Mulmaster. Locals have starting calling it "The Waydown".

- This entrance is about two days travel from here or about a half day's journey from Hillsfar.
- From what the drow prisoner has said there is an underground river that flows to a lake in the middle of a colony of Myconids. They should be able to give the characters further directions to Szith Morcane if they can befriend them.

Seranolla offers the characters a purse containing 1,000 gp if they bring back Solom Ned'razak alive and unharmed. She refuses to provide anything more than 100 gp in advance. The Factions wish to learn more about what's going on and believe that Solom may be the key to the entire situation.

If the characters have not had favorable dealings with Elanil, she contests Seranolla's decision to employ the characters. The characters can change her mind with a successful DC 20 Charisma (Persuasion) check.

Not convinced of the characters ability to achieve the mission in such a dangerous place as the Underdark, Zern speaks up. He challenges the strongest looking character to a wrestling match. Rolling her eyes, Seranolla insists that this take place outside of the temple.

WANNA WRASSLE?

Use the following to facilitate the match. Zern has a Strength (Athletics) modifier of +10.

Initiative. Roll to see who gets the first opening.

Grapple. Strength (Athletics) check opposed by the opponent's Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) check (opponent's choice).

Take Down. Strength (Athletics) check opposed by the opponent's Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) check (opponent's choice). If an opponent is already grappled, the check is made with advantage. If successful, the opponent is also prone.

Pin. Strength (Athletics) check opposed by the opponent's Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) check (opponent's choice). This maneuver can only be attempted if opponent has been knocked prone. Success pins the opponent and wins the bout.

If the any characters not participating in the match attempt to interfere, Seranolla and Elanil step in and stop the match. That character then has to explain themselves and convince the trio of the commitment that they have to the mission.

If Zern loses or wins after a good fight, he is still satisfied that the characters will be able to handle the Underdark. If he wins easily, Zern grumbles about incompetence and having no other choice. He is unconvinced the party will succeed.

XP AWARD

If the characters successfully convince Elanil that they can be trusted, award each character 100 XP.

TREASURE

When the characters are ready to leave, Seranolla gives them two *vials of antitoxin*. She says that this should help resist the poison that drow are known to use.

PART 2: INTO THE DARKNESS

The characters make their way to The Waydown, a sinkhole that formed about a two days from Elventree and a half day's travel Hillsfar. The group's journey has been easy, when they make it to an enormous hole that leads into darkness.

As before, travel along the main road has been filled with traders hoping to trade in Hillsfar, only to be turned away. As you reach the area in which you were told the sinkhole formed, the amount of activity is surprising.

Around The Waydown you see a contingent of human soldiers--members of the Red Plumes by the look of it. The soldiers wear splint mail, carry shields and longswords, and have shortbows slung over their shoulders. They are overseeing a group of human laborers building a wall around the hole. Nearby there is a wagon filled with barrels and crates. Many of the laborers are in line drinking water from the barrels and grabbing tack from the crates. Guards talk with them pleasantly and help them carry the heavy stones they are using. There is also a winch whose rope leads down the hole.

An older man in armor is arguing with another over a table strewn with plans. As you approach, a few of the soldiers step in front of you and block your way to the pair. "What can we do for you travelers?" one of them says pleasantly.

If the characters try and hide the reason they wish to go into the Underdark, they must succeed at a DC 20 Charisma (Deception) check to convince the guard. This check is made at disadvantage if there are nonhumans in the group. The guard does not let them through if he does not believe them.

If the characters tell them the truth about their mission, the soldier asks them to wait there and goes to speak with the older man at the table. After listening to the soldier, the older man beckons the characters over to a nearby tent.

The tent is appointed with chairs and a table. He takes a ladle from a barrel in the tent and drinks from it. He then offers some to the characters. He sits at the opposite side of the table from them. The man introduces himself as Guard Commandant Vuhm Yestral. He then asks to hear about their "mission" into the Underdark.

ROLEPLAYING VUHM YESTRAL

Guard Commandant Vuhm Yestral is the head of the Red Plumes, the military group charged with the security of Hillsfar. He is loud and opinionated, however, is kind and very devoted to the citizens of Hillsfar. He is a member of the Lord's Alliance, who is looking to restore proper trade balance by allowing nonhumans into the city for business only, and not to lodge there regardless. Vuhm, as a human in his early 60s, still is a commanding presence among his subordinates.

If the characters do not reveal who has hired them, Vuhm asks that question first. He gives this information about what the Red Plumes are doing at The Waydown:

- Due to the recent attacks by drow around the city of Hillsfar, the First Lord called for Vuhm to bring a contingent of Red Plumes here to protect the masons and secure the sinkhole.
- Some of the drow are surfacing during the day which is very unusual. He is used to them attacking during the cover of night. He is under the impression that they are sensitive to sunlight.
- The drow he has seen seem wild in their fighting skills, not graceful and cunning. They appear frantic. It is like their only goal is to destroy.
- The sinkhole is 100 feet straight down at which point it opens into a cavern that has a river flowing through it. The current is pretty fast and the water deep enough only for a raft. He offers supplies to build one once they make it to the bottom.
- The climb is difficult and treacherous, yet somehow the drow have managed to make it.
- He has sent a patrol down once a day to clear the area underneath the hole of any creatures that seem a threat. They have encountered the usual denizens of the Underdark. The sunlight has attracted many creatures to the hole. Giant spiders, quaggoths, derro, and oozes have all been seen in the cavern below.

- The patrols are sent down in a basket attached to a winch. He would be willing to lower the characters down using the basket.

THE UNDERDARK

If the characters want to delve into the sinkhole, Vuhm orders his men to attach the basket and lower them down into the Underdark. All the characters are able to fit easily in the basket and the winch has been secured so no accidents happen on the way down.

GENERAL FEATURES

The Underdark is not welcoming to those from the surface. It has taken the inhabitants centuries to become accustomed to the harsh conditions it provides. The following features are true throughout one's travel in the Underdark unless otherwise described in a specific location.

Light. The caverns and passages of the Underdark are completely void of any light. Those without darkvision must have a light source in order to be able to see. The area descriptions assume the characters have a light source. Adjust the description if they do not

Sound. The sound of dripping, an occasional "scream", but mostly utter silence is what you hear here.

Smell. The smell of a dank and musty cellar is constant. Occasionally the smell of death is unmistakable.

FAERZRESS

An unusual magical energy the drow call *faerzress* pervades much of the Underdark. The origin of this mysterious arcane power is unknown. Legend claims it is an ancient elven magic dating back to the time when the dark elves were first exiled from the world above. The drow and other Underdark creatures use the properties of areas suffused with *faerzress* to protect their settlements.

Areas suffused with *faerzress* can range in size from a few dozen feet across to several miles in diameter, and feature the following effects:

- Areas suffused with *faerzress* are always filled with dim light.
- A creature in an area suffused with *faerzress* has advantage on saving throws against any divination spells. If a divination spell doesn't allow a saving throw, the caster must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw to cast the spell. Failing this save means the spell is wasted and has no effect.
- Any creature attempting to teleport into, within, or out of a *faerzress*-suffused area must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the creature takes 5 (1d10) force damage and the teleportation attempt fails. Even if the save succeeds, the teleportation attempt can suffer a mishap as if the destination was known only by description, regardless of how familiar the destination actually is. See the table in the teleport spell for more information.
- Areas suffused with *faerzress* have become tainted by the chaos of the demon lords. When a spell is cast in a *faerzress*-suffused area, the caster rolls a d20. On a roll of 1, the spell has an additional effect, determined by rolling on the Wild Magic Surge table in chapter 3, "Classes," of the *Player's Handbook*.
- Though *faerzress* can't be dispelled, its effects are temporarily suppressed in the area of an antimagic field.

THE WAYDOWN

Traveling down the Waydown is slow, jerky, and at times painful as the characters are jostled around in the basket. A basket of supplies for building a raft follows.

You begin to realize what a lobster in a trap feels like when it is being brought in. On the way down into the darkness the basket swings, hits the side, and causes your companions to fall into you. By the time the basket reaches the bottom the bruises are already visible.

You step onto the solid ground outside the basket and pull on the rope to let those above know that they can bring the basket back up. The supplies to make the raft are sent down next.

It is evident, as you use this time to take in your surroundings, that the Underdark is a whole different world from the surface. New sounds and smells accost you as you slowly move around this enormous cavern.

A fast moving river flows into the chamber, travels the length of the cavern, and then exits on the other side.

Suddenly, you hear loud twang and something large crashing down the sinkhole. Looking up you see wood, tools, and pieces of the basket falling down the sinkhole. It is going to be landing right on top of you.

The characters must succeed at DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or be hit by the **falling debris**. Those who get hit by the debris take 2d6 points of bludgeoning damage.

As you move out from under the remains of the basket, you see a black tar-like substance on some of the pieces. The substance starts to move toward you, leaving a trail of slime that is eating away at anything it touches.

The substance is a **black pudding**. It attached itself to the basket as it was coming down. It easily dissolved the rope and caused the basket to fall.

In the second round of combat, a **kuo-toa archpriest** and **two kuo-toa whips** emerge from the river and join the fight. They have been waiting for the opportunity to get rid of the surface dwellers that have been invading their lair.

The **archpriest** starts combat with *hold person* against the strongest looking character. It then uses *spiritual weapon* to attack that person on the next round.

The **whips** start by casting *shield of faith* and moving closer the characters. They then use their pinchers and bite to attack. The whips stay in melee combat. Try not to use spells.

MADNESS

At the best of times, the Underdark is a bizarre, alien, and inhospitable world, but the influence of the demon lords has transformed it into a domain of madness and chaos. *Faerzress* acts as a catalyst, spreading the demon lords' madness throughout the Underdark.

A creature's madness level starts at 0. When the creature fails a madness saving throw, its madness level increases by 1, and the creature immediately suffers the level's effect (as determined by rolling on the Short-Term Madness, Long-Term Madness, or Indefinite Madness table in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, as appropriate). When the effect ends, the creature's madness level doesn't change. Any time the creature's madness level increases, it suffers the effect of the new level.

If a creature with level 3 madness fails a madness saving throw, its madness level becomes 1. In this way, characters can potentially accumulate multiple forms of madness. If a character accumulates a form madness that they are already suffering from, reroll until a new result is reached.

Bouts of short- and long-term madness can be cured as described in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*. Given the demonic source of the madness, *remove curse* and *dispel evil* are also effective as cures. A *greater restoration* spell or more powerful magic is needed to cure indefinite madness and also resets a creature's madness level to 0.

In adventures set during *Rage of Demons*, madness is measured in three levels:

MADNESS LEVEL

Level	Effect
1	Short-term madness (lasts 1d10 minutes)
2	Long-term madness (lasts 1d10 x 10 minutes)
3	Indefinite madness (lasts until cured)

INDEFINITE MADNESSES OF GRAZ'ZT

Graz'zt influence on the region has manifested itself in the different forms of madness that characters may develop. Upon reaching madness level 3, instead of rolling on the Indefinite Madness table on page 260 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, roll on the following table and the character gains the madness listed below. Have the player note it on his or her character sheet.

If the roll results in a madness already possessed by the character, reroll until a new result is reached.

01-20	Narcissism: "There is nothing in existence that is more important than me."
21-40	Megalomania: "Anyone who doesn't do exactly what I say does not deserve to live."
41-60	Infatuation: "I will not rest until I have made someone else mine, and doing so is more important to me than my own life or the lives of others."
61-80	Hedonism: "My own pleasure is of paramount importance. Everything else, including social graces, is a triviality."
81-100	Abomination: "The mores of society are a lie, meant to shackle free thinking people. I will revel in that which others find shocking or disgusting to demonstrate my rebellion."

ADJUSTING THE ENCOUNTER

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter. These are not cumulative.

- **Very weak party:** Remove the archpriest.
- **Weak party:** Remove whips.
- **Strong party:** Add two kuo-toa monitors
- **Very strong party:** Add two whips and two kuo-toa monitors.

TREASURE

The kuo-toa have jewelry made from bones and pearls and precious gems that total 50 gp.

DEVELOPMENT

Once the combat has ended and the supplies gathered, the characters can get busy constructing a raft to take them down the river. The raft is easy enough to make and in a short time they are ready to launch their creation.

When the raft is ready and the characters climb aboard, their journey to Sporedome should take about five hours. Along the shore there are many passages that lead away from the river. Beside the occasional giant rat or spider the trip down stream is uneventful.

DOWN THE RIVER

Once the combat has ended and the supplies gathered, the characters can get busy constructing a raft to take them down the river. The raft is easy enough to make and in a short time they are ready to launch their creation.

When the raft is ready and the characters climb aboard, their journey to Sporedome should take about five hours. Along the shore there are many passages that lead away from the river. Beside the occasional giant rat or spider the trip down stream is uneventful.

As the raft approaches the Sporedome read the following:

The raft moves through the darkness with only the light you provide illuminating the dank passages you travel. Save for the common creatures one expects to see underground, your journey has provided few glimpses of other living creatures.

After several hours of travel, the passage opens up ahead. Exiting it, you realize the enormity of what lies ahead of you. The cavern stretches farther than your light reaches. However, light is not needed to see vastness of the area you are in. Phosphorescent molds, fungi, and lichen give off an eerie glow that reveals the cavern's size to be miles across. Spores cloud the air, floating on unseen breezes. The river you are on winds through a forest of full of color and texture. It ends in a lake that appear to be exactly in the middle of the chamber.

As you start to contemplate your course of action, there is a rustling on the nearby shore. Shining your light in that direction, two creatures suddenly burst out of a grouping of bright purple mushrooms. A very small humanoid with dark skin, white hair and mustache, white bulbous eyes, and wearing armor chases, strangely enough, a tall multicolor mushroom. The small creature catches up to the fungi and trips it, all the while spouting off gibberish. More like the dark creature run out from the cover of the flora. They try and take possession of the mushroom creature from the first. A scuffle starts, enabling the mushroom to escape without the small creatures noticing. What they *have* noticed, however, is your light.

The creatures are derro and they are hunting myconids. A successful DC 20 Intelligence (Nature) identifies both the ten **derro** and the **myconid**. A character whose race is native to the Underdark automatically succeeds on this check. The derro come to the edge of the water, snarling and shouting at the characters in Undercommon. The characters are easily able to get the raft to the closest shore if they wish.

ADJUSTING THE ENCOUNTER

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter. These are not cumulative.

- **Strong and very strong parties:** Add a derro savant

DEVELOPMENTS

The **derro** start shooting their crossbows at the characters. If the characters do not come to shore they lose interest and take off into the fungi forest after a round or two of combat.

They can be subsequently found by succeeding at a DC 20 Wisdom (Survival) check. They are found waiting to ambush whatever happens by. The characters can avoid being surprised by succeeding on a Wisdom (Perception) check opposed by the derros's Dexterity (Stealth) check.

If any of the derro are captured and interrogated, between gibberish and insane ravings, they can tell the characters that they have come from the city of Ravagestone to harvest myconids to bring back to feed "Mother." She hungers and will come for them! They do not elaborate on the location of Ravagestone or who or what "Mother" is. Indeed, it seems almost as if they do not really know.

TREASURE

The derro carry a total of 50 gp in various coins and trinkets.

COMMUNICATION IS KEY

While the characters were dealing with the derro the myconid had time to escape and gather some of his kin. Surface dwellers do not often come into the Underdark, it could mean disaster or a great opportunity.

A group of six myconid adults and one myconid sovereign approach the party, shortly after combat has ceased. Adjust the boxed text based on character actions after combat completed.

As you catch your breath from the run in with the derro you notice that the surrounding have changed slightly. The patch of mushrooms that you were resting in has become a bit thicker. In fact, a particularly tall one seems to have the same coloring as the creature that the derro were chasing.

As you become aware of their presence a group of myconids break from camouflage and surround you. They make no hostile moves, except that they collectively move their arms and spores come forth and envelope all of you.

Within seconds of breathing in the pollen, you start to hear voices in your head. They seem to all be asking if you can hear them.

The voices are those of the myconids using spores to communicate with the characters. After verifying that the characters can hear them, the myconid sovereign steps forward and his voice quiets the others. He thanks the characters for helping him escape the derro. He asks if they are in need of a safe place to rest. He offer the hospitality of Sporedome to the party, as well as giving this information:

- The derro occasionally come into Sporedome and wreak havoc among the myconids. They are completely deranged and attack for no other reason than to kill. They know there is a derro city somewhere far from this cavern.
- Lately their attacks have been more frequent and ferocious. They have started carrying away the bodies of the myconids they kill.
- The increase could have something to do with a new presence in the Underdark.
- No creature knows what the entity is but they all feel its pull toward madness.
- If asked where Szith Morcane is, he is able to give them directions. It is about 21 days walk from here. However, he happens to know a creature that knows of a portal connected close to there. The creature is known as Huum and has been friendly to the myconids.

RAPPORT SPORES

The spores the myconids spread are *rapport spores*. They do not speak a language but instead communicate by creating a telepathic link by spreading the spores. The effect lasts for an hour.

The characters are welcome to stay with the myconids as long as they would like. The creatures are very hospitable and can answer many questions about the Underdark, and what to expect.

When the characters are ready to depart the myconids take them to their contact, the Mind Flayer **Huum**, who knows the location of the portal.

If the characters choose to make the trek on foot, the myconid gives them basic directions on how to get there. The trip is long, arduous and dangerous, but eventually the characters arrive. However, they arrive too late and Solom has been taken to Maerimydra by Fydor and his slaves. To top it off, the characters must still make saving throws to avoid accumulating Madness Points. If they are lucky, they won't be stark, raving mad by the time they finally arrive.

YOUR FRIEND IS A WHAT?

The myconids send a contingent of four with the characters to visit the contact they know. They lead the group through what seems like a maze of tunnels and caverns, until they finally arrive at a door.

The telepathic link that existed between you and your new found friends has worn off by the time they stop and point down a short passage. The passage ends at an elegantly carved stone door that has a giant knocker.

Before you are able to knock, the door flies open and a hairless purple-skinned humanoid with writhing tentacles surrounding its mouth say, "Ahhhh. Come innnnn. I have tea waiting on the table. You mussst be dyyying of thirssst."

The creature can be identified as a **mind flayer** if a character succeeds at a DC 15 Intelligence (Nature) check. He introduces himself as Huum and asks what he can do for them. If asked about allowing use of his teleportation circle to travel to Szith Morcane, he chuckles and pours himself a cup of tea.

- "Yessss I can give you accesssss to Szith Morcane, for a priccce."
- "Morcane'ssss leader is a ssssimply awful drowwww, by the name of Ssssolom Ned'razak. He hassss ssssomething of mine."
- "It issss a broachhhh that protectsss hissss mind from my prying into hissss brainnnn."
- If the characters bring the brooch back to him he promises that he won't hunt them down and eat their brain for his next meal.
- "Beaussse now that you have sssspent ssssome time with me, I will not have a hard time locating you in the futurrre."

If the adventurers agree to this deal, Huum slowly rises and walks toward another door in his chamber. After quietly mumbling something to himself he opens it and a bright orange glow can be seen from inside the room. He then walks into the room. With a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check a character is able to discern that he likely uttered a magical password to deactivate the room's protections.

Inside is a glowing circle on the ground, whose magical energy extends up to the ceiling. He looks at the group and says, "Right through there is the way to Sssszith Morcannne. Pleassse ssssend Ssssolom my regaaaaaards."

Before they leave, Huum warns them that they will not be able to return the way they are arriving. The portal is a one way trip without him.

If attacked Huum defends himself and receives help from the four adult myconids that brought the characters here.

It is possible that the characters may decide to attack Huum before he repeats the password to enter the room. If that happens, the characters are unable to access the portal. A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check reveals that without the password only a *knock* or *dispel magic* spell opens the door without ill effects.

Breaking down the door is possible with a successful DC 20 Strength (Athletics) check. This, however, triggers the **room's protections** and each creature in a 20 foot sphere must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or takes 22 (4d10) lightning damage.

If the group does not want to take Huum's offer, they must then make the twenty-one day trip to Szith Morcane. The myconids will be able to give the characters a crude map showing the way. The characters eventually find a spot where they are able to descend into the chasm. This leads them down to the entrance of the Barracks level.

XP AWARD

If the characters treat peacefully with Huum, award each character 250 XP.

PART 3: INTO THE FIRE

SZITH MORCANE

This encounter assumes the characters have used the portal in the Huum's home. Adjust accordingly if they made their way without the illithid's help. Either way they arrive in a cave in the great chasm wherein the entrance to Szith Morcane lies.

FODDER OR FOE?

As they travel through the ravaged outpost, they find it has been attacked by a fire giant accompanied by demons and a host of slaves--drow, duergar, quaggoth, and other denizens of the Underdark.

Any humanoids led by one or more demons or the fire giant Fydor are slaves and bear the marks of their servitude. Anytime the characters encounter such a creature, a character with a passive Perception or Insight score of 12 or higher notices one of these marks. Examples of such indicators are:

- A thick, iron collar set with a ring to which a chain could be attached.
- Numerous fresh scars that appear to be from a scourge or a whip.
- Malnourished or otherwise sickly in appearance.
- Afraid to go within 5 feet of a demon or fire giant.

If any of the humanoids are still alive when the demons or giant leading them are slain, they immediately surrender and plead that they be spared. If spared, they refuse to fight, and flee at their earliest opportunity. Any drow that hasn't used its *darkness* spell-like ability uses it to facilitate its escape.

GENERAL FEATURES

The general characteristics of this area of Szith Morcane are listed below. Any changes are specified in the descriptions for specific areas.

Light. The fire giants are unable to see in the dark, so they have illuminated this entire level in bright light shed by countless braziers of burning coals.

Sound. Echoed screams calling for help from somewhere further in this level can be heard.

Smell. The smell of sulfur and death hang in the air.
Read:

Stepping through the portal is almost unnoticeable. One moment you are in Huum's refuge, and the next you find yourself in a small cavern. A single table is the only furniture present and there are two bodies of drow lying on the floor. Next to them lies the carcass of a giant spider.

A cave mouth is the only way out that you see.

The fire giants have cleared this part of Szith Morcane. The drow are dead as a result of that purge. They do not have any gear or belongings with them. The cave mouth leads to the chasm, the sides of which Szith Morcane is built into.

When you go to look out the cave, instincts urge you to take a step back as an enormous chasm lies immediately outside the opening. Carefully peering out, you see the chasm is 30 feet across and deeper and wider than your light extends. Far below, you can hear the sound of rushing of water.

A giant web stretches across the surface of the cliff.

With closer inspection of the web a character can see that the strand connected to the cave they are in has been spun to act as a ladder. The ladder extends straight down to a second cave that is 130 feet directly below. As they continue to look out, a third cave can be spotted approximately 100 feet below and to the left. There are many diagonal strands of webbing that can be used to travel to that cave.

Climbing down the center strand requires a successful DC 10 Strength (Athletics) check to keep from falling. Characters who fall must attempt a Dexterity saving throw with advantage in order to catch hold of one of the abundant strands of the web. Failure causes the character to fall, slamming against the cliff face while doing so; causing 11 (2d10) bludgeoning damage. Those that succeed take only half damage.

Climbing on a diagonal strand is a little more difficult. To shuffle along one of those strands a character must succeed at a DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check or fall as above.

The enormity of the web you are climbing down is only realized as you travel to the other caves. As you climb, you find the strands of the web resonate and vibrate at your slightest touch. You are half way down to the center of this particular strand when you see it. What can only be described as an enormous spider leg as long as an immense tree extends from the darkness and touches a thick strand of vibrating web--silencing it. It nudges gently at the sticky rope before the leg withdraws and disappears back into the darkness.

As you draw closer to the other side of the chasm, other cave openings fade into view. A half dozen total caves line this side of the chasm, though four of them are blocked with rubble and detritus, leaving them impassable.

The strand splits in two; the upper branch goes towards the Barracks Level (S1, below), and the lower branch goes down towards House Morcane (H1, below).

The spider to whom the leg belongs is a colossal, fiendish spider that resides in the vast depths of the chasm, hundreds of feet below. The spider makes no move to attack the characters. If attacked, the spider retreats into the caves near the bottom of the chasm; far beyond the characters's reach.

S1. BARRACKS

As you climb on the ledge here, you can see into the cave ahead. The entrance is dimly lit by the light in the room beyond.

S2. SLEEPING QUARTERS

These rooms are filled with simple bunks. There is a small chest at the foot of each bunk. Some of the furniture has been overturned. There is nothing else of interest here.

S3. MESS HALL

This room is taken up almost entirely by a huge table. There are many chairs knocked over or broken here as well. Scattered about the room are playing cards, dice, and plates of food.

Treasure. Among the debris in the room is a pair of sapphire dice with silver pips worth 100 gp.

S4. PRISON CELLS

Six cells line the sides of this hall. It is hard to hear yourself think as desperate cries for help come from at least two-dozen drow imprisoned there.

The locked cells are occupied, each with four **drow** prisoners (for a total of twenty-four drow). Fydor, the fire giant in H8 possesses the key for the cells. A character without the key that wishes to attempt to unlock a cell must have a set of thieves' tools and succeed on a DC 20 Dexterity check. The doors can also be breached with a DC 25 Strength check or by doing 30 points of damage (AC 19). The doors are immune to poison and psychic damage. Each of the occupied cells has four drow inside.

The drow know the following information:

- Solom Ned'razak is being held in House Morcane. The only access now is the web.
- It is the cave at the bottom of the web.
- The fire giants came with demons and destroyed everything they came into contact with.
- They are led by Hledh Hellspawn of Maerimydra. She is a fearsome fire giant who commands a legion of demons.
- She is no longer here. She left one of her captains in charge while they took the rest of the drow back to the arena in Maerimydra.

The drow do not fight for the characters. They are thoroughly dehydrated, and weak; their primary concern is escape. They use their *darkness* spell-like ability if necessary to escape.

XP Award. If the characters free the drow rather than leave them to die, award each character 200 XP.

S5. STUDY

This room is of newer construction than the others. It is a modestly-sized study. There's nothing of value present.

HOUSE MORCANE

Climbing down the web leads the characters to the entrance of House Morcane. Proceed to H1, below.

THE CITY OF THE SPIDER QUEEN

House Morcane may be familiar to some players. It was featured in the 3rd edition adventure *City of the Spider Queen*, released in 2002. Some of the features within the House remain so many years later--specifically the **illusory throne in H8 and the coffin in H9**. This inclusion in this adventure is done for the sake of continuity.

GENERAL FEATURES

The general characteristics of this Szith Morcane are listed below. Any changes are specified in the description of a given area.

Light. The fire giants are unable to see in the dark, so they have illuminated this entire level in bright light shed by countless braziers of burning coals.

Terrain. The hallways of House Morcane are 20 feet wide and just as high. Though burnt, torn, and broken in many places, the area is lavishly decorated. Unless otherwise specified, the ceilings of the rooms in House Morcane are 30 feet high and also finely appointed.

Sound. Echoing deep laughter reverberates through the level.

Smell. The smell of sulfur and death hang in the air.

THE OCCUPATION OF SZITH MORCANE

H1. HOUSE MORCANE ENTRANCE

Climbing down the center strand the characters see the following:

You finally make it to the cave opening at the end of the strand of web you are on. You easily move onto the ledge and your light illuminates a large stone worked room. Its far wall is vaguely octagonal in shape. There are two openings that lead out of this room. There is also another ladder that resembles the one you have been climbing on, that leads through an opening in the ceiling.

DEMON PATROL

The fire giant leader at Szith Morcane has ordered a group of demons to patrol the passages of the former seat of House Morcane. The patrol's location is determined randomly each time the adventurers reach a new area in their exploration of this level.

When the group enters a new numbered area that doesn't already contain an encounter, roll a 1d8. If the number you roll corresponds to the room number on the map, the characters encounter the patrol in that area. If the patrol has not been encountered by the time the characters move towards Solom Ned'razak's residence (H8), they are found in the quartermaster's (H7). Additionally, the patrol might happen upon the characters if they take a short or long rest; if the characters attempt to rest, roll a die. On an even result, the patrol happens upon the characters half way into their rest.

A demon patrol consists of three **quaggoths**, two **dretches**, and a **chasme**. There is only one patrol; once it is defeated, there is no other patrol to replace it.

ADJUSTING DEMON PATROL ENCOUNTERS

Here are some suggestion for adjusting a demon patrol. These are not cumulative.

- **Very weak party:** Add a quaggoth; replace chasme with a shadow demon.
- **Weak party:** Remove one dretch; add a quaggoth; replace chasme with a shadow demon.
- **Strong party:** Remove dretches add two quaggoths.
- **Very strong party:** Add one shadow demon and one quaggoth.

H2. ASCENTS TO THE FANE OF LOLTH

These octagonal chambers are identical, each with a ladder that resembles a spider web made of cool, black metal leading up and through a hole in the ceiling.

The ladders here lead to the ruins of the Fane of Lolth, above. Characters venturing into the Fane are greeted by a century's worth of dust. The room is immense and shaped like a spider. Aside from the aforementioned dust, there is nothing in this room but the haunting thoughts of the profane and obscene acts performed here in centuries past.

H3. GUARD POST

This room is a guard post. When the fire giants attacked, after defeating the guards they destroyed all the furniture in this room. Piles of debris are strewn about the room as well as broken weapons amid puddles of dried blood.

H4. HOUSE BARRACKS

There are broken cots and chests throughout this structure. There is nothing of interest here.

H5. FORMER TEMPLE TO KIARANSALEE

Beyond the guard post is the central feature of the complex—a structure once dedicated to Kiaransalee.

KIARANSALEE, THE REVENANCER

This lesser drow deity's portfolio includes the undead and vengeance. Her worship rose to prominence in Szith Morcane when, during the Silence of Lolth, cultists of the Revenancer tracked down and slew the last remaining worshippers of Lolth who had fled to Szith Morcane.

Eventually, however, the cult would be defeated and her worship all but ended.

Solom Ned'razak repurposed this structure as an audience chamber after he came into power.

The double doors to this room have been taken off their hinges and lie in the hallway. As you approach the room you can hear a great ruckus. Outrageous cackling and angry roars are heard in between loud crashes.

Looking into the room you see a monstrous, demonic creature accompanied by a handful of drow.

The noise is being made by a pair of **drow veterans** and a **hezrou**. The characters are able to surprise the demon and its entourage if they are succeed on a Dexterity (Stealth) group check.

ADJUSTING THE ENCOUNTER

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter. These are not cumulative.

- **Very weak party:** Remove one veteran.
- **Weak party:** Add one veteran; replace hezrou with a chasme.
- **Strong party:** Add one veteran.
- **Very strong party:** Add one veteran; replace hezrou with a glabrezu

DEVELOPMENT

The hezrou demon fights to the death. If drow escape they go and warn the fire giant in H8.

Treasure. Among the debris is a gold chalice worth 100 gp.

H6. BEDROOM SUITE

This suite consists of three rooms, two of them smaller than the third. The larger room looks like it was once a very elegant bedroom. The drapes around the bed have been torn down and ripped to shreds. The mattress has also been shredded. The furniture has been smashed and thrown about the room.

The smaller rooms are in the same state as the bedroom. One of them has clothes thrown about, ripped and soiled. Bureaus and wardrobes are open and knocked over. The other room has a fireplace and several upholstered chairs that have been shredded and broken to pieces.

Treasure. A half full silver tea set has been knocked over and its contents have stained some of the upholstery that has been scattered about. The set is worth 100 gp.

H7. QUARTERMASTER

The large room has no furniture in it but it is stocked with barrels, casks, and crates—all broken. Food in the early stages of rot lies on the floor. Casks have been smashed—their contents leaving a slightly-sticky, dark red patch on the floor.

H8. SOLOM NED'RAZAK'S RESIDENCE

The doors to this room are barred from the inside. A character must succeed at a DC 20 Strength (Athletic) check to break the door open. Otherwise, magic is needed to gain entrance.

This is the only room you have seen that still has all its furniture intact and no rubble. Rich furniture adorns the room at ground level. A bed with green velvet curtains surrounding it is against the far wall. A fire is lit in the fireplace faced by a green-upholstered chaise and several comfortable looking chairs. The chairs surround a large low wooden table. There is a large desk with many papers strewn over it along the wall to the left. Several smaller chairs sit in front of it.

A male drow in rich robes sits in the chair behind the desk. He is bound with his hands behind his back and a gag in his mouth. The large round table is being used as a chair for an immense, black skinned giant with flaming red hair. A smirk crosses his face as he notices you.

The **fire giant**, Fydor, is accompanied by four **drow** hiding within the illusory column.

Upon seeing the characters, Fydor says (in Giant) "*Ahhh visitors. Are you here to see the master of the house?*" He then picks up an immense greatsword and rushes the characters.

The drow bound in the chair is Solom Ned'razak.

ADJUSTING THE ENCOUNTER

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter. These are not cumulative.

- **Very weak party:** Reduce Fydor's AC to 16 and his hit points to 137; remove three drow.
- **Weak party:** Remove four drow; add one drow veteran
- **Strong party:** Remove two drow; add one drow elite warrior
- **Very strong party:** Remove four drow; add two drow elite warriors

DEVELOPMENT

Fydor relentlessly attacks the strongest-looking character. The drow, however, ready their action to attack after all of the characters have gone. They then take it in turn to attack the least armored, physically weakest character present with their hand crossbows. They then spread out and seek out cover behind whatever furniture present. All enemies fight to the death.

Once the enemies are defeated the characters are able to free Solom. He is grateful and asks them who they are and why they are here. He can relay the following information:

- The fire giant attacked about four tendays ago.
- Their leader, Hledh Hellspawn, led an army of fire giants and demons up the chasm wall into Szith Morcane.
- Many of the inhabitants have been taken back to Maerimydra to fight in the arena.
- She left the fire giant Fydor here to clean up any stragglers and to question me.
- On the way back to Maerimydra she had the giants collapse all but two of the access caves. He suspects it will take many years to clear that up.
- Fydor wanted to know where all the valuables were and what magical defenses the place had.
- They plan on bringing more giants and demons back soon to take complete control of the outpost. Solom prefers not to be here when that happens.

If the characters refuse to rescue the other drow, Solom says he will come with them only if they free his kin. They don't have to bring them to the surface, just ensure they are able to escape the fire giants and their slaves. If they still insist on not rescuing them, he rescues them himself. Solom refuses to willingly accompany the characters unless the drow are freed. He then tells them to bring him to the people who hired them so he may tell them how incompetent they are. If the characters defeat him in battle, there isn't much he can do about their refusal to free his kin—at least for now.

If asked about the brooch that Huum asked them to obtain, he just laughs and says that he has managed to convince Huum that the brooch protects Solom from his powers. It doesn't do any such thing. He is just easily able to resist Huum's powers through strength of will. He hands them a brooch from his robes.

The entrance to H9 is hidden on the northern wall behind a curtain. Any creature examining the wall finds the hidden entrance if they succeed on a DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check. The entrance is unlocked and is not trapped.

Treasure. The fire giant has gathered all of the treasure from around the house and barracks and put them in a chest that sits underneath the desk. It contains 400 gp in various coins, a statue of Kiaransalee inlaid with precious jewels worth 200 gp, and a *staff of swarming insects*. He also has a chain with a key around his neck. This key is to the cells in the barracks.

They also receive a brooch; presumably the one that Huum asked them to retrieve. To all estimates, it appears to be worthless; it is simply a cheap brooch made of soft metal set with a green, glass gem.

H9. A REMINDER

The room contains nothing but a coffin made of stone, covered in shining copper leaf that appears to have been untouched by quite some time if the dust on its lid is of any indication. The lid has been carved to resemble a beautiful drow woman.

Though there is no means to determine this short of asking Solom, the coffin once belonged to Dorina T'sarran, the former ruler of Szith Morcane. Solom left the coffin intact after his assumption of power and keeps it as a reminder of why he sealed Szith Morcane away from the surface world. Any character investigating the coffin that succeeds on a DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) finds that tiny holes have been drilled into the eyes, nostrils, and mouth of the face carved into the coffin's lid. Dorina was a vampire, and the holes in the coffin's lid allowed her to enter and leave the coffin while *shapechanged* into a cloud of mist. The coffin is empty.

CONCLUSION

Solom assures the characters that he will dispel the magical seal he put into place to keep the inhabitants from going to the surface. He leads them to the cave Huum's portal originally brought them to and performs a ritual to open a hole in the ceiling that leads to the Dordrien Crypts which is about 10 miles from Daggardale in the Dalelands. In Daggardale the group can purchase horses and make their way back to Elventree.

The faction leaders are thrilled that the adventurers were able to complete their mission and are eager to talk with Solom about what Hledh is planning.

They award the group their fee for completing their mission and ask about what they saw during their travels.

The group can return the brooch to Huum if they wish. If the characters tell him the fact that the brooch is only mundane, he chuckles and gives the characters a *potion of greater healing* for returning it even when they knew it was not magical.

TREASURE

In exchange for returning the brooch, Huum gives the characters a *potion of greater healing*.

Upon returning to Seranolla, the characters receive a purse containing 10 platinum trade bars worth 100 gp each.

XP AWARD

If the characters return to Huum with the brooch, award each character 200 XP.

REWARDS

Make sure the players note their character's rewards on the adventure log sheets. 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
Drow	50
Commoner	10
Black pudding	1,100
Kuo-toa archpriest	2,300
Kuo-toa whip	200
Kuo-toa monitor	700
Derro	50
Myconid adult	100
Myconid sovereign	450
Mind flayer	2,900
Dretch	50
Bargura	1,800
Chasme	2,300
Shadow demon	1,100
Quaggoth	450
Drow veteran	700
Hezrou	3,900
Fire giant	5,000

NON-COMBAT AWARDS

Task or Accomplishment	XP per Character
Treat peacefully with Huum	500
Freeing the imprisoned drow	200
Brought brooch to Huum	200

The **minimum** total award for each character participating in this adventure is **4,500 experience points**.

The **maximum** total award for each character participating in this adventure is **6,000 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	GP Value
Kuo-toa Jewelry	50
Derro	50
Dice found in the Mess Hall	100
Temple of Kiaransalee	100
Bedroom Suite	100
Fire Giant Stash	600
Seranolla's reward	1000

STAFF OF SWARMING INSECTS

Staff, rare (requires attunement by a bard, cleric, druid, sorcerer, warlock or wizard)

This staff is made of finely-polished white wood. The insects summoned by the staff take the form of winged spiders with gossamer wings. The description of this item can be found in the *Dungeon Masters Guide*.

ANTITOXIN

Gear, Common

A description of potions can be found in the basic rules or the Players Handbook.

POTION OF GREATER HEALING

Potion, uncommon

A description of potions can be found in the basic rules or the Dungeon Master's Guide.

RENOWN

All faction members earn **one renown point** for participating in this adventure.

DOWNTIME

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

DM REWARDS

You receive **400 XP**, **200 gp**, and **10 downtime days** for running this session.

APPENDIX: MONSTER/NPC STATISTICS

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.

DROW

Medium humanoid (elf), neutral evil

Armor Class 15 (chain shirt)

Hit Points 13 (3d8)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Skills Perception +2, Stealth +4

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Elvish, Undercommon

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Fey Ancestry. The drow has advantage on saving throws against being charmed, and magic can't put the drow to sleep.

Innate Spellcasting. The drow's spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 11). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *dancing lights*

1/day each: *darkness*, *faerie fire*

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

ACTIONS

Shortsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

Hand Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 1 hour. If the saving throw fails by 5 or more, the target is also unconscious while poisoned in this way. The target wakes up if it takes damage or if another creature takes an action to shake it awake.

BLACK PUDDING

Large ooze, unaligned

Armor Class 7

Hit Points 85 (10d10 + 30)

Speed 20 ft., climb 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	5 (-3)	16 (+3)	1 (-5)	6 (-2)	1 (-5)

Damage Immunities acid, cold, lightning, slashing

Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, deafened, exhaustion, frightened, prone

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

passive Perception 8

Languages —

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Amorphous. The pudding can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing.

Corrosive Form. A creature that touches the pudding or hits it with a melee attack while within 5 feet of it takes 4 (1d8) acid damage. Any nonmagical weapon made of metal or wood that hits the pudding corrodes. After dealing damage, the weapon takes a permanent and cumulative -1 penalty to damage rolls. If its penalty drops to -5, the weapon is destroyed. Nonmagical ammunition made of metal or wood that hits the pudding is destroyed after dealing damage.

The pudding can eat through 2-inch-thick, nonmagical wood or metal in 1 round.

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

ACTIONS

Pseudopod. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) bludgeoning damage plus 18 (4d8) acid damage. In addition, nonmagical armor worn by the target is partly dissolved and takes a permanent and cumulative -1 penalty to the AC it offers. The armor is destroyed if the penalty reduces its AC to 10.

REACTIONS

Split. When a pudding that is Medium or larger is subjected to lightning or slashing damage, it splits into two new puddings if it has at least 10 hit points. Each new pudding has hit points equal to half the original pudding's, rounded down. New puddings are one size smaller than the original pudding.

KUO-TOA ARCHPRIEST

Medium humanoid (kuo-toa), neutral evil

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)

Hit Points 97 (13d8 + 39)

Speed 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

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

Skills Perception +9, Religion +6

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 19

Languages Undercommon

Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

Amphibious. The kuo-toa can breathe air and water.

Otherworldly Perception. The kuo-toa can sense the presence of any creature within 30 feet of it that is invisible or on the Ethereal Plane. It can pinpoint such a creature that is moving.

Slippery. The kuo-toa has advantage on ability checks and saving throws made to escape a grapple.

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

Spellcasting. The kuo-toa is a 10th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks). The kuo-toa has the following cleric spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *guidance, sacred flame, thaumaturgy*
1st level (4 slots): *detect magic, sanctuary, shield of faith*
2nd level (3 slots): *hold person, spiritual weapon*
3rd level (3 slots): *spirit guardians, tongues*
4th level (3 slots): *control water, divination*
5th level (2 slots): *mass cure wounds, scrying*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The kuo-toa makes two melee attacks.

Scepter. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) bludgeoning damage plus 14 (4d6) lightning damage.

Unarmed Strike. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) bludgeoning damage.

KUO-TOA WHIP

Medium humanoid (kuo-toa), neutral evil

Armor Class 11 (natural armor)

Hit Points 65 (10d8 + 20)

Speed 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

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

Skills Perception +6, Religion +4

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 16

Languages Undercommon

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Amphibious. The kuo-toa can breathe air and water.

Otherworldly Perception. The kuo-toa can sense the presence of any creature within 30 feet of it that is invisible or on the Ethereal Plane. It can pinpoint such a creature that is moving.

Slippery. The kuo-toa has advantage on ability checks and saving throws made to escape a grapple.

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

Spellcasting. The kuo-toa is a 2nd-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 12, +4 to hit with spell attacks). The kuo-toa has the following cleric spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *sacred flame, thaumaturgy*
1st level (3 slots): *bane, shield of faith*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The kuo-toa makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its pincer staff.

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

Pincer Staff. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage. If the target is a Medium or smaller creature, it is grappled (escape DC 14). Until this grapple ends, the kuo-toa can't use its pincer staff on another target.

KUO-TOA MONITOR

Medium humanoid (kuo-toa), neutral evil

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)

Hit Points 65 (10d8 + 20)

Speed 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

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

Skills Perception +6, Religion +4

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 16

Languages Undercommon

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Amphibious. The kuo-toa can breathe air and water.

Otherworldly Perception. The kuo-toa can sense the presence of any creature within 30 feet of it that is invisible or on the Ethereal Plane. It can pinpoint such a creature that is moving.

Slippery. The kuo-toa has advantage on ability checks and saving throws made to escape a grapple.

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

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The kuo-toa makes one bite attack and two unarmed strikes.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage.

Unarmed Strike. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) bludgeoning damage plus 3 (1d6) lightning damage, and the target can't take reactions until the end of the kuo-toa's next turn.

DERRO

Small humanoid (derro), chaotic evil

Armor Class 13 (leather armor)

Hit Points 13 (3d6 + 3)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	5 (-3)	9 (-1)

Skills Stealth +4

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 7

Languages Dwarvish, Undercommon

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Insanity. The derro has advantage on saving throws against being charmed or frightened.

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

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

ACTIONS

Hooked Shortspear. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1 (1d4 - 1) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, the derro can choose to deal no damage and try to trip the target instead, in which case the target must succeed on a DC 9 Strength saving throw or fall prone.

Light Repeating Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 40/160 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage.

MYCONID ADULT

Medium plant, lawful neutral

Armor Class 12 (natural armor)

Hit Points 22 (4d8 + 4)

Speed 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	13 (+1)	7 (-2)

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages —

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Distress Spores. When the myconid takes damage, all other myconids within 240 feet of it can sense its pain.

Sun Sickness. While in sunlight, the myconid has disadvantage on ability checks, attack rolls, and saving throws. The myconid dies if it spends more than 1 hour in direct sunlight.

ACTIONS

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

Pacifying Spores (3/Day). The myconid ejects spores at one creature it can see within 5 feet of it. The target must succeed on a DC 11 Constitution saving throw or be stunned for 1 minute. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

Rapport Spores. A 20-foot radius of spores extends from the myconid. These spores can go around corners and affect only creatures with an Intelligence of 2 or higher that aren't undead, constructs, or elementals. Affected creatures can communicate telepathically with one another while they are within 30 feet of each other. The effect lasts for 1 hour.

MYCONID SOVEREIGN

Large plant, lawful neutral

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)

Hit Points 60 (8d10 + 16)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages —

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Distress Spores. When the myconid takes damage, all other myconids within 240 feet of it can sense its pain.

Sun Sickness. While in sunlight, the myconid has disadvantage on ability checks, attack rolls, and saving throws. The myconid dies if it spends more than 1 hour in direct sunlight.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The myconid uses either its Hallucination Spores or its Pacifying Spores, then makes a fist attack.

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

Animating Spores (3/Day). The myconid targets one corpse of a humanoid or a Large or smaller beast within 5 feet of it and releases spores at the corpse. In 24 hours, the corpse rises as a spore servant. The corpse stays animated for 1d4 + 1 weeks or until destroyed, and it can't be animated again in this way.

Hallucination Spores. The myconid ejects spores at one creature it can see within 5 feet of it. The target must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 1 minute. The poisoned target is incapacitated while it hallucinates. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

Pacifying Spores. The myconid ejects spores at one creature it can see within 5 feet of it. The target must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or be stunned for 1 minute. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the condition on itself on a success.

Rapport Spores. A 30-foot radius of spores extends from the myconid. These spores can go around corners and affect only creatures with an Intelligence of 2 or higher that aren't undead, constructs, or elementals. Affected creatures can communicate telepathically with one another while they are within 30 feet of each other. The effect lasts for 1 hour.

MIND FLAYER

Medium aberration, lawful evil

Armor Class 15 (breastplate)

Hit Points 71 (13d8 + 13)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	19 (+4)	17 (+3)	17 (+3)

Saving Throws Int +7, Wis +6, Cha +6

Skills Arcana +7, Deception +6, Insight +6, Perception +6, Persuasion +6, Stealth +4

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 16

Languages Deep Speech, Undercommon, telepathy 120 ft.

Challenge 7 (2,900 XP)

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

Innate Spellcasting (Psionics). The mind flayer's innate spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 15). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no components:

At will: *detect thoughts*, *levitate*

1/day each: *dominate monster*, *plane shift* (self only)

ACTIONS

Tentacles. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 15 (2d10 + 4) psychic damage. If the target is Medium or smaller, it is grappled (escape DC 15) and must succeed on a DC 15 Intelligence saving throw or be stunned until this grapple ends.

Extract Brain. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one incapacitated humanoid grappled by the mind flayer. *Hit:* The target takes 55 (10d10) piercing damage. If this damage reduces the target to 0 hit points, the mind flayer kills the target by extracting and devouring its brain.

Mind Blast (Recharge 5–6). The mind flayer magically emits psychic energy in a 60-foot cone. Each creature in that area must succeed on a DC 15 Intelligence saving throw or take 22 (4d8 + 4) psychic damage and be stunned for 1 minute. A creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

DRETCH

Small fiend (demon), chaotic evil

Armor Class 11 (natural armor)

Hit Points 18 (4d6 + 4)

Speed 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)	5 (-3)	8 (-1)	3 (-4)

Damage Resistances cold, fire, lightning

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 9

Languages Abyssal, telepathy 60 ft. (works only with creatures that understand Abyssal)

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

ACTIONS

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

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d6) piercing damage.

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

Fetid Cloud (1/Day). A 10-foot radius of disgusting green gas extends out from the dretch. The gas spreads around corners, and its area is lightly obscured. It lasts for 1 minute or until a strong wind disperses it. Any creature that starts its turn in that area must succeed on a DC 11 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned until the start of its next turn. While poisoned in this way, the target can take either an action or a bonus action on its turn, not both, and can't take reactions.

BARLGURA

Large fiend (demon), chaotic evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 68 (8d10 + 24)

Speed 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	15 (+2)	16 (+3)	7 (-2)	14 (+2)	9 (-1)

Saving Throws Dex +5, Con +6

Skills Perception +5, Stealth +5

Damage Resistances cold, fire, lightning

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses blindsight 30 ft., darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 15

Languages Abyssal, telepathy 120 ft.

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Innate Spellcasting. The bargura's spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 13). The bargura can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

1/day each: *entangle*, *phantasmal force*

2/day each: *disguise self*, *invisibility* (self only)

Reckless. At the start of its turn, the bargura can gain advantage on all melee weapon attack rolls it makes during that turn, but attack rolls against it have advantage until the start of its next turn.

Running Leap. The bargura's long jump is up to 40 feet and its high jump is up to 20 feet when it has a running start.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The bargura makes three attacks: one with its bite and two with its fists.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) piercing damage.

Fist. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d10 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

CHASME

Large fiend (demon), chaotic evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 84 (13d10 + 13)

Speed 20 ft., fly 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Dex +5, Wis +5

Skills Perception +5

Damage Resistances cold, fire, lightning

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses blindsight 10 ft., darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 15

Languages Abyssal, telepathy 120 ft.

Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

Drone. The chasme produces a horrid droning sound to which demons are immune. Any other creature that starts its turn within 30 feet of the chasme must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or fall unconscious for 10 minutes. A creature that can't hear the drone automatically succeeds on the save. The effect on the creature ends if it takes damage or if another creature takes an action to splash it with holy water. If a creature's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, it is immune to the drone for the next 24 hours.

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

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

ACTIONS

Proboscis. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 16 (4d6 + 2) piercing damage plus 24 (7d6) necrotic damage, and the target's hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the necrotic damage taken. If this effect reduces a creature's hit point maximum to 0, the creature dies. This reduction to a creature's hit point maximum lasts until the creature finishes a long rest or until it is affected by a spell like *greater restoration*.

SHADOW DEMON

Medium fiend (demon), chaotic evil

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 66 (12d8 + 12)

Speed 30 ft., fly 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
1 (-5)	17 (+3)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws Dex +5, Cha +4

Skills Stealth +7

Damage Vulnerabilities radiant

Damage Resistances acid, fire, necrotic, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons

Damage Immunities cold, lightning, poison

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

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages Abyssal, telepathy 120 ft.

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

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

Light Sensitivity. While in bright light, the demon has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

Shadow Stealth. While in dim light or darkness, the demon can take the Hide action as a bonus action.

ACTIONS

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) psychic damage or, if the demon had advantage on the attack roll, 17 (4d6 + 3) psychic damage.

QUAGGOTH

Medium humanoid (quaggoth), chaotic neutral

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)

Hit Points 45 (6d8 + 18)

Speed 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	6 (-2)	12 (+1)	7 (-2)

Skills Athletics +5

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Undercommon

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Wounded Fury. While it has 10 hit points or fewer, the quaggoth has advantage on attack rolls. In addition, it deals an extra 7 (2d6) damage to any target it hits with a melee attack.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The quaggoth makes two claw attacks.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) slashing damage.

DROW VETERAN

Medium humanoid (elf), any alignment

Armor Class 17 (splint)
Hit Points 58 (9d8 + 18)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

Skills Athletics +5, Perception +2
Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 12
Languages Elvish, Undercommon
Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Fey Ancestry. The drow has advantage on saving throws against being charmed, and magic can't put the drow to sleep.

Innate Spellcasting. The drow's spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 11). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *dancing lights*
1/day each: *darkness*, *faerie fire*

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

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The veteran makes two longsword attacks. If it has a shortsword drawn, it can also make a shortsword attack.

Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) slashing damage, or 8 (1d10 + 3) slashing damage if used with two hands.

Shortsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage.

Heavy Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, range 100/400 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d10) piercing damage.

HEZROU

Large fiend (demon), chaotic evil

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)
Hit Points 136 (13d10 + 65)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	17 (+3)	20 (+5)	5 (-3)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)

Saving Throws Str +7, Con +8, Wis +4
Damage Resistances cold, fire, lightning; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons
Damage Immunities poison
Condition Immunities poisoned
Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages Abyssal, telepathy 120 ft.
Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

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

Stench. Any creature that starts its turn within 10 feet of the hezrou must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned until the start of its next turn. On a successful saving throw, the creature is immune to the hezrou's stench for 24 hours.

ACTIONS

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

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (2d10 + 4) piercing damage.

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

FIRE GIANT

Huge giant, lawful evil

Armor Class 18 (plate)
Hit Points 162 (13d12 + 78)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
25 (+7)	9 (-1)	23 (+6)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)

Saving Throws Dex +3, Con +10, Cha +5
Skills Athletics +11, Perception +6
Damage Immunities fire
Senses passive Perception 16
Languages Giant
Challenge 9 (5,000 XP)

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The giant makes two greatsword attacks.

Greatsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 28 (6d6 + 7) slashing damage.

Rock. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, range 60/240 ft., one target. *Hit:* 29 (4d10 + 7) bludgeoning damage.

DM APPENDIX: NPC SUMMARY

This section is provided to the Dungeon Master to help keep track of the various NPCs present in the adventure.

Elanil Elassidil (EL-uh-kneel uh-LASS-ih-deel). Female elf. Bard extraordinaire and member of the Harpers.

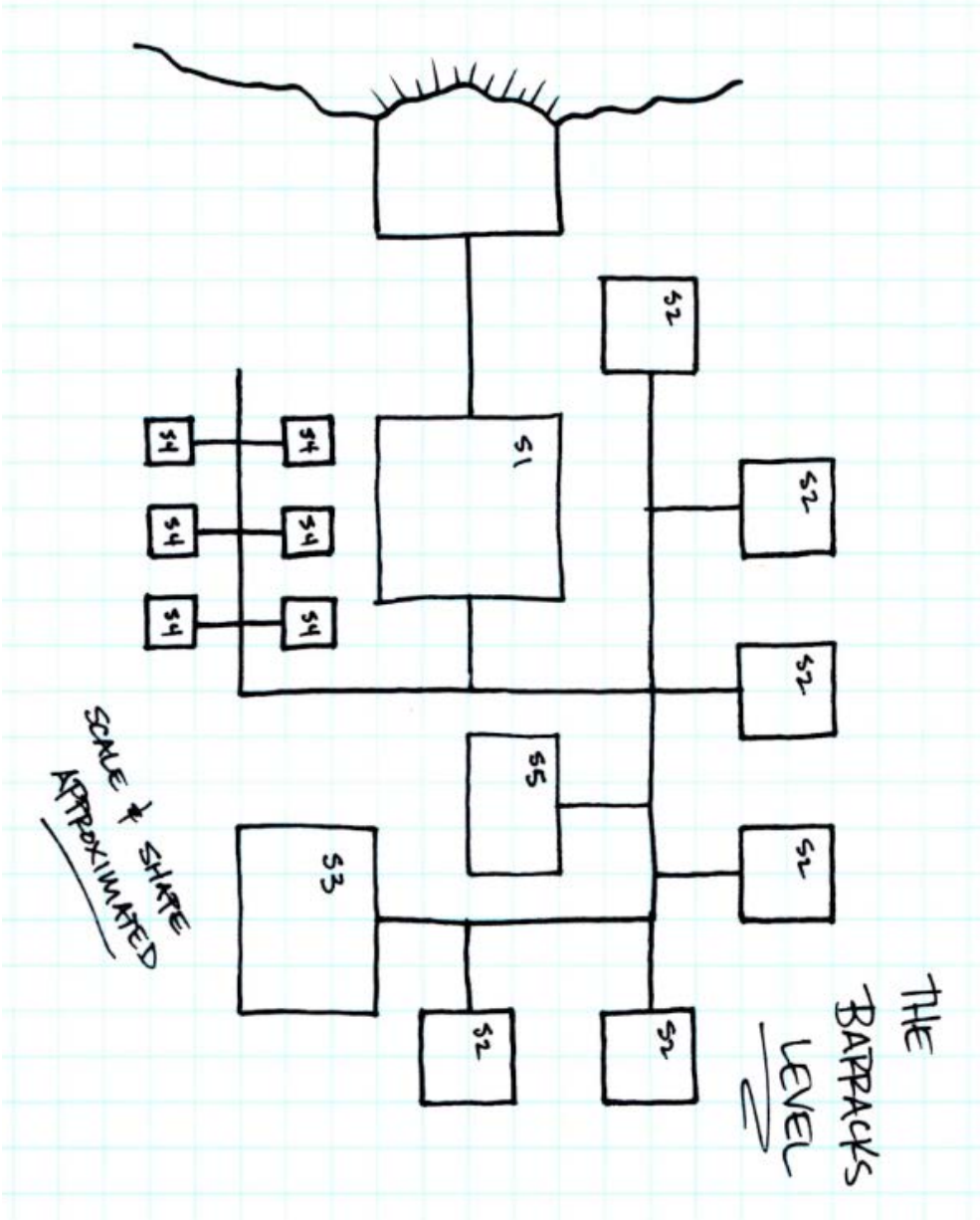
Falwan Underbough (FALL-won). Male halfling. Once a renowned baker of bread in Hillsfar. Now relegated to little more than a community organizer.

Seranolla the Whisperer (SIR-uh-NOLE-uh). Female gnome representative of the Emerald Enclave. Nervous, and rarely speaks above a whisper.

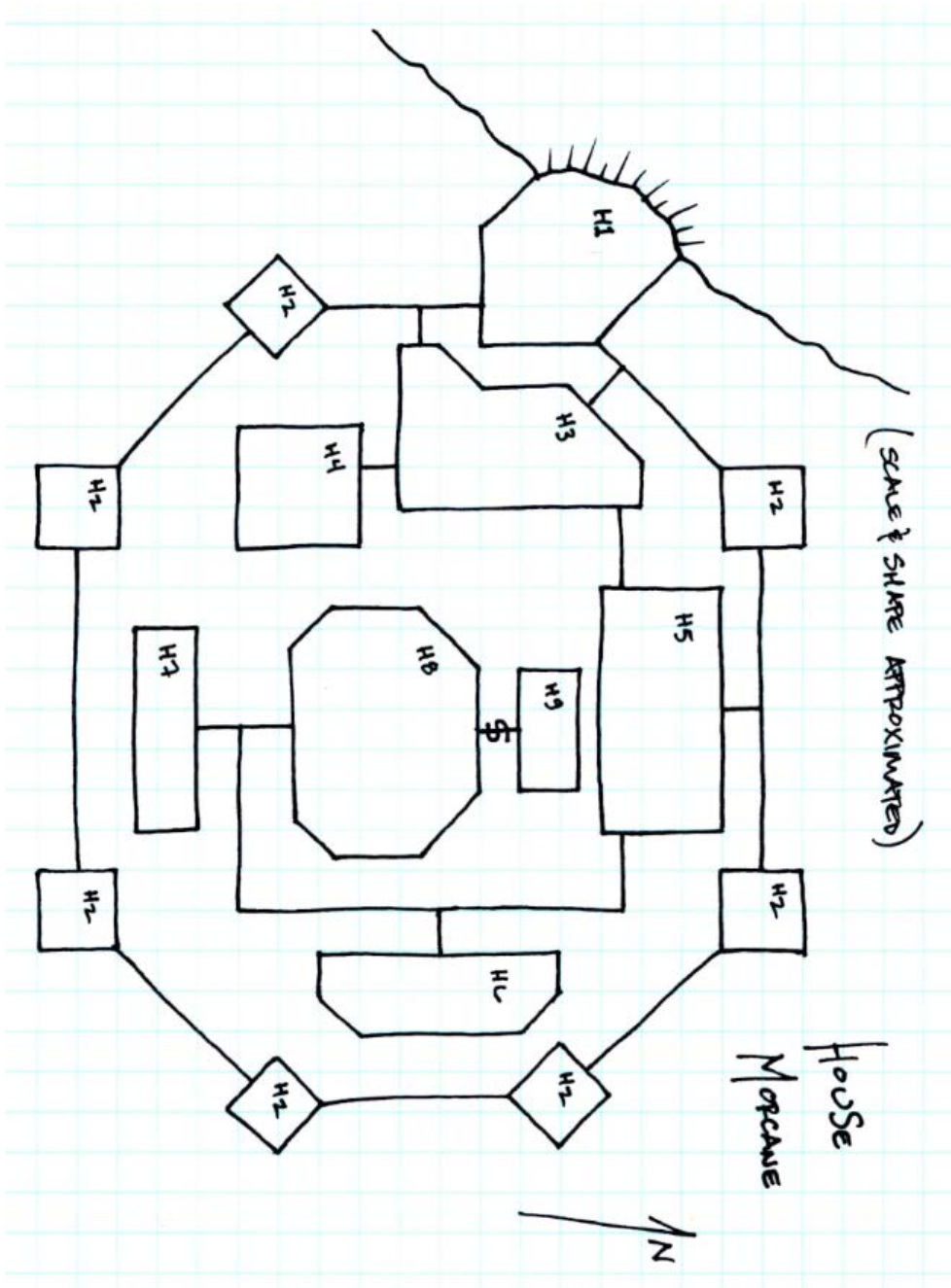
Zern Xerkstil (ZERX-still). Half-orc male. Paladin of Helm and has been given charge by his superiors to make sure that only the strongest are chosen to go into the Underdark to complete this mission. Speaks constantly of the infiltration of Devils and the need for physical prowess to slay them. Member of the Order of the Gauntlet.

Vuhm Yestral (VOOM YES-strill). Male human officer within the Red Plumes, the military group charged with the security of Hillsfar. Kind and devoted to the citizens of Hillsfar (provided they are human). Member of the Lords Alliance.

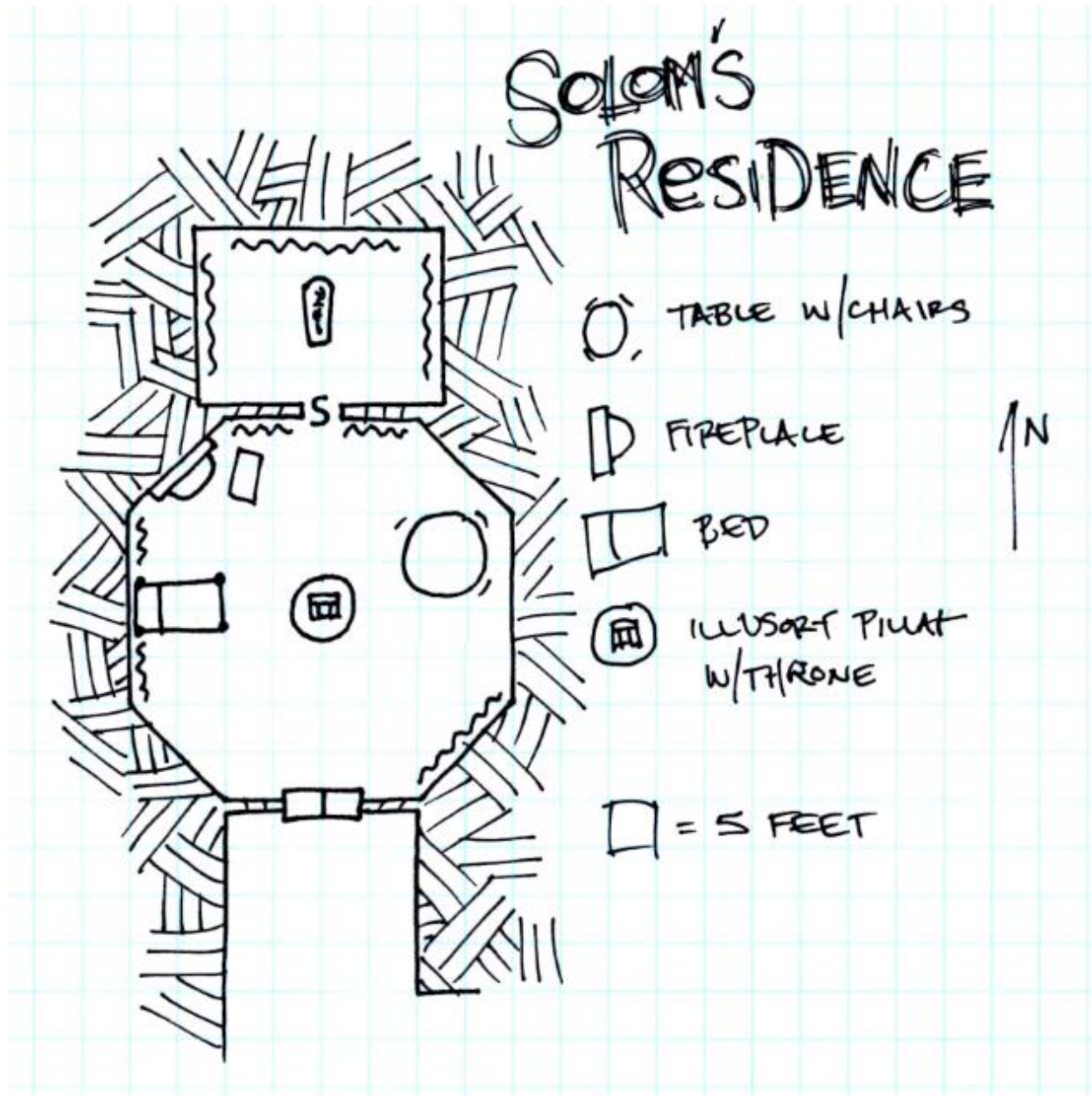
MAP: BARRACKS LEVEL



MAP: HOUSE MORCANE



MAP: SOLOM NED'RAZAK'S RESIDENCE



RESULTS CODE: AUGUST-SEPTEMBER 2015

If you are DMing this adventure during the months of August or September 2015, please show your players this page. The QR code below can be scanned, and will allow them to give feedback and results on the adventure to influence the storyline in the future!

If a player does not have a mobile device, please tell them to head to dndadventurersleague.org/results to enter their results.

