

DDAL 08-17



THE TOWER OF AHGHAIRON

A Waterdeep Adventure

The Tower of Ahghairon has been sealed for years, but when the door opens at last, it's an invitation to even more mystery within.

Part Two of the *Home Sweet Home* trilogy.

A Four to Six-Hour Adventure for Tier 4 Characters.

Optimized For: APL 18



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ADVENTURE PRIMER

I knew who I was this morning, but I've changed a few times since then.

—Lewis Carroll, *Alice in Wonderland*

BACKGROUND

The characters are requested (sternly) by Artor Morlin to go to the long-sealed Tower of Ahghairon and return with an item to help the Baron of Blood make his own home safe from incursions of the Far Realms.

EPISODES

The adventure's main story is spread across **three main story episodes** that take approximately **4 hours** to play. A short Call to Action scene sets up the adventure.

- **Episode 1: A Lord's Request.** Artor Morlin asks the characters to go to the Tower of Ahghairon. This is the **Call to Action**.
- **Episode 2: Overdue for a Dusting.** The characters explore the tower and encounter "Ahghairon," who tells the characters that they must pass his tests if they are to seek his audience. This is **Story Objective A**.
- **Episode 3: Welcome to my Parlor.** The characters learn the true nature of their host and battle an unusually powerful arcanaloth who's imprisoned the real Ahghairon in order to steal his tower's magical secrets. This is **Story Objective B**.

BONUS OBJECTIVES

This adventure also includes two, **1-hour** bonus objectives that the characters can pursue if they have

additional time—earning more advancement and treasure checkpoints in the process. These bonus objectives are found in this adventure's appendices:

- **Bonus Objective A: A Little Ghost Story.** The characters can go through a small door in the foyer room, which leads them to discover a ghost in need of their assistance. This bonus objective is found in **Appendix 3**.
- **Bonus Objective B: You've Got a Mold Problem.** The characters find a spectacular "greenhouse" within the Tower, but there are some interdimensional pests to eradicate. This bonus objective is found in **Appendix 4**.

EPISODE SEQUENCE

Depending on your time constraints, play style, and environment, this adventure takes approximately four to six hours to play.

HOW WILL YOU PLAY?

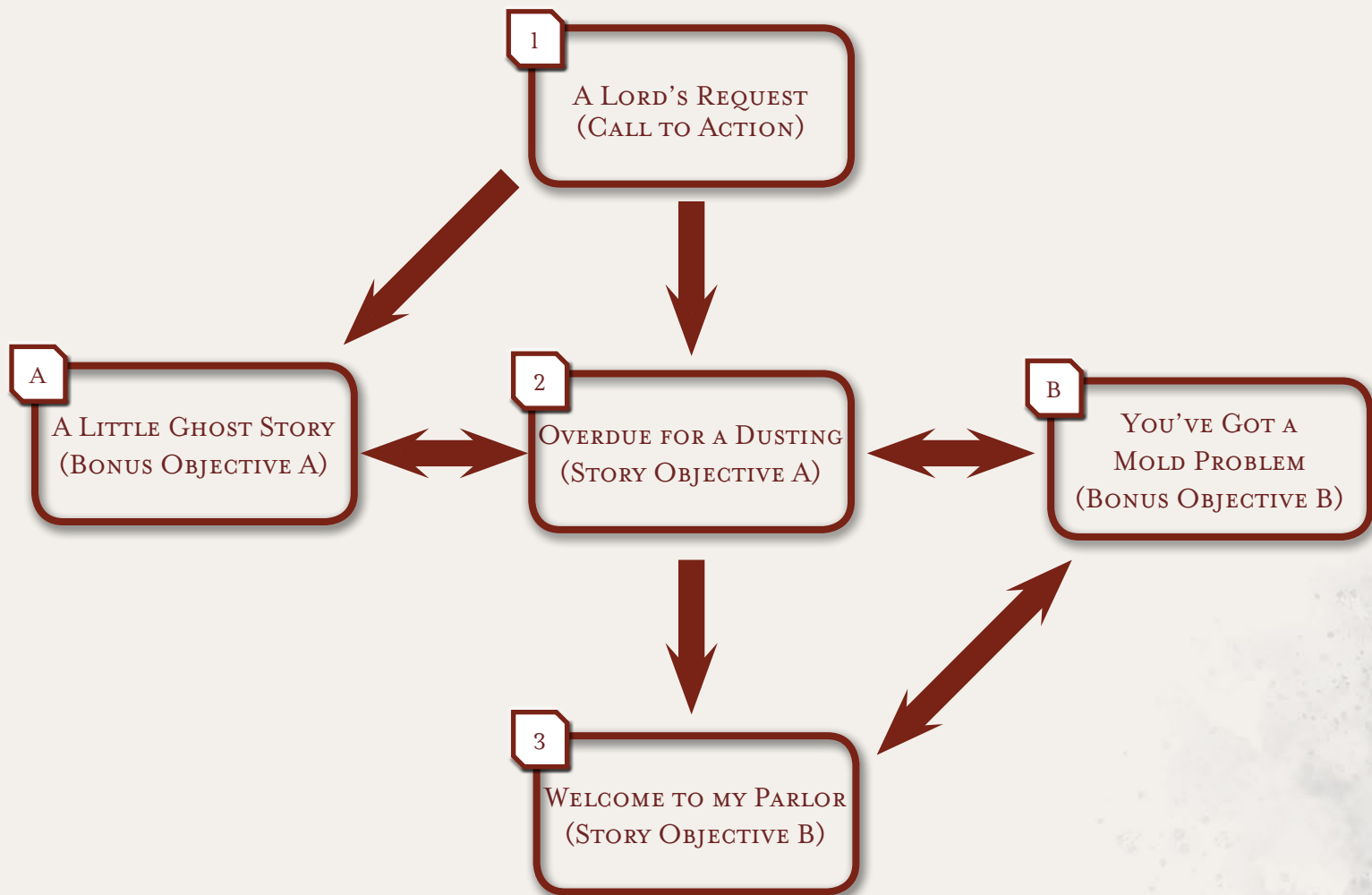
The duration of your session depends on how much of this adventure you use. At minimum, your session should last approximately **four hours**. However, if you wish, you can provide a longer experience for your players by using the optional bonus objectives.

- **Story Objectives Only.** To complete both of the adventure's story objectives, the characters play in Episodes 1 through 3 in order.
- **Bonus Objectives.** You can extend this adventure by one or two hours through the bonus objectives. **Bonus Objective A** fits best when played after the initial scene of Episode 1. **Bonus Objective B** can be played at multiple points: before or after Episode 2, or even after Episode 3, before the characters leave the tower.



ADVENTURE FLOWCHART

This section provides a basic understanding of not only the flow of the episode, but also the outline of the different paths that your players may take in reaching their stated objective.





EPISODE 1: A LORD'S REQUEST



Estimated Duration: 15 minutes

I'LL DRINK TO THAT

The vampire and Masked Lord of Waterdeep Artor Morlin has asked the characters to meet him in the Tempted Paladin to discuss a new task. He requests that they go to the Tower of Ahghairon in order to find and retrieve an item that will help him seal off the Far Realm incursions into his headquarters. How Artor gives them the task depends on whether or not the characters played previous Season 8 adventures:

- **Played Previous Season 8 Adventures.** Artor speaks to the characters at the Tempted Paladin after they return from a previously assigned task. He tells those in need of some encouragement that they've thus far proven themselves useful and are best suited for this next task.
- **Didn't Play Previous Season 8 Adventures.** Artor Morlin contacts the characters via his network of spies and invites to the Tempted Paladin in Skullport. Once there, he offers them the characters job based on their reputations—promising a nice reward if they return with something he can use.

AREA INFORMATION

The area has the following features;

Dimensions & Terrain. The Tempted Paladin is located in Skullport. The interior space of the tavern is approximately 60 feet long and 30 feet wide. The bar is on the right as the characters enter, and small round tables are arranged throughout the room.

Lighting. A fire burns in the central hearth, shedding dim light throughout the area.

Smells & Sounds. The tavern is clean and surprisingly free of the usual smells of food and spilled beer. It's also very quiet.

CREATURES/NPCs

Artor Morlin (a **vampire**) and masked lord of Waterdeep, is a powerful figure in the city. The nervous barkeeper (a **commoner**) stands behind the bar, waiting for an excuse to leave. The establishment is otherwise empty—everyone else having chosen to leave upon Artor arriving.

Objectives/Goals. Morlin has long been working towards establishing a secure lair, preferably free from the incursions of the Far Realms, and seeks out adventurers willing to assist him in facilitating this.

What Does He Know? Artor Morlin knows that Ahghairon is alive, though he doesn't reveal this to the characters. Within the tower is an item called the *cubic gate*—something that he believes is powerful enough to seal off the Far Realms.

CALL TO ACTION

Artor beckons them to sit, and then offers a simple proposal: go to the Tower of Ahghairon—yes, *that* Ahghairon—and retrieve the *cubic gate*, and return it. In exchange, he promises a suitable reward. If they don't wish to work for him...well, he does know a lot of hungry friends of the Tempted Paladin who just happen to be very close by.



EPISODE 2: OVERDUE FOR A DUSTING



Estimated Duration: 2 hours 45 minutes

THE TOWER OF AHGHAIRON

The Tower sits on the outskirts of Waterdeep, in the middle of a quiet grove of trees. The remaining grass is somewhat faded and weedy, but more than any physical neglect, there is a palpable sense of loneliness, one that discourages most people from even getting as far as the door. However, as soon as the characters approach, they notice that the door is slightly ajar, allowing them to walk inside. As soon as the characters all enter the tower, the door shuts swiftly and silently, and then resolves into a door-sized oil painting of the door.

PREREQUISITES

This episode may be pursued after the characters receive the **Call to Action**.

STORY OBJECTIVE A

Passing Ahghairon's "test of worthiness" is **Story Objective A**. This test supposedly judges the characters' strength and skills but is really a way for Eecon to easily rid himself of intruders.

AREA INFORMATION

The area has the following features:

Dimensions & Terrain. The Tower of Ahghairon is several stories tall, 50-feet across at its base, but tapering

slightly as it ascends—flaring at the top-most level, and capped by a tall, peaked roof. The tower is built of smooth grey stone, accented by patches of lichen on the northern side. Only the top floor appears to have windows. The ground floor is accessed by an arched stone doorway, with a heavy iron-banded oak door. The door is ajar.

Lighting. Unless otherwise specified, the interior of the tower is lit by candles set in regularly spaced wall sconces. Though they look like ordinary candles, they're sustained by magic (a *continual flame* spell), which prevents them from being extinguished. If blown out, a candle will relight itself the next round. The candles lose this property immediately upon being removed from the tower.

SCENE A. FOYER

Beyond the front door, the characters enter the tower's foyer. The foyer was once a gracious and impressive room, but it seems rather out of sorts right now. This octagonal room contains many points of interest for characters who are exploring it.

AREA INFORMATION

The area has the following features:

Dimensions & Terrain. This octagonal chamber is thirty feet across at its widest point. The north, east, and west walls are each set with a door. The door through which the characters entered via is now just a highly detailed painting of a door. Floor-to-ceiling, rectangular mirrors are set into the walls between each of these walls. A wooden chest sits beneath each of the mirrors.

Doors. There are three visible doors in addition to the door the characters entered through. The doors lead elsewhere into the tower:

- **West.** This door leads to **Scene B**.
- **North.** This door leads to **Scene D**.
- **East** This door leads to **Scene C**.

Mirrors. All four of the mirrors exhibit strange properties when gazed into. All of the mirrors radiate powerful illusion magic.

- **Southwest.** The creature reflected in this mirror is portrayed as standing in a different plane (Feywild, Shadowfell, Nine Hells, Arborea, etc.).
- **Northwest.** Creatures depicted in this mirror appear as being taller or shorter than normal.
- **Northeast.** The reflection cast by this mirror shows whoever standing it bathed in shadows.
- **Southeast.** Reflections from this mirror appear normal, but a creature standing in the mirror that succeeds on a DC 15 Wisdom check notices the faint outline of a creature pounding on the glass—trying to break through from the other side.

Chests. Of the four chests, the one in the northeast corner is opened and its contents scattered. The other three chests are closed. Two of the closed chests are actually mimics, and the open one contains a number of boggles (**Creatures/NPCs**).

Smells. Dust and mildew.

Graffiti. Characters with a passive Perception score of 13 or higher notice one or more scrawled messages, either inked on the walls, chests, or sometimes scratched onto the stone. The messages (written in Common) say odd things such as:

- “NO PLACE LIKE HOME”
- “HOME LIKE NO PLACE”
- “CAN’T GET OUT”
- “STAIRS” (carved on the north door).

BONUS OBJECTIVE A. If utilizing this additional content, any character with a passive Investigate score of 12 or higher notices a small hidden door just to the right of the entrance with the words “NO TREASURE HERE. IGNORE THIS DOOR” carved into it.

CREATURES/NPCs

Two of the chests are actually **mimics**, while four **boggles** hide in the open one.

Objectives/Goals. The mimics were put there in order to trap unwary treasure hunters and keep riff-raff from bothering the resident of the tower. The mischievous boggles got into the chest from the inside using their Dimensional Rift ability. If the contents of the chests are disturbed, they escape to the second floor using their Dimensional Rift ability (though they throw taunts and insult as they do).

What Do They Know? The mimics know only that they food is horribly sparse here. The boggles found their way here from the Feywild and are exploring the tower in their own mischievous way.

TREASURE

Inspecting the chests reveals:

- **Open Chest.** The items in and around this chest include fine clothing, a sapphire necklace, and two expended *Quaal's feather tokens*.
- **Closed Chest.** The other (real) chest in the room is closed but unlocked. If opened, it is revealed to be empty, but smells strongly of fish old, manky fish.

SCENE B: SHIELD GUARDIAN ROOM

The west door leads to this area from the foyer.

AREA INFORMATION

Dimensions. This 10-by-15-foot room has a 15-foot ceiling is nondescript and dusty.

Light. The room is completely dark.

Silent Guardians. The two shield guardians make no aggressive move at all, and indeed are absolutely inert. Upon closer inspection, it is clear that they've taken heavy damage, with carbon scoring as if from a mighty flame, and many dents to their armor. A Perception check (DC15) allows a character to realize that both have their heads tilted up, as if looking directly toward the top of the tower.

CREATURES/NPCs

The two **shield guardians** here are inert and inactive. A character that succeeds on a DC 10 Intelligence (Arcana) check knows that these constructs are tied to a control amulet that allows its wearer to control them. The amulets aren't here. The creatures are little more than inert curiosities.



SCENE C: GUEST ROOM

The east door leads to this area from the foyer. This room seems to be a place for a visitor to stay, but who visits a long-dead Lord of Waterdeep?

AREA INFORMATION

The area has the following

Dimensions. This dusty 25-by-25-foot room has 15-foot high ceiling.

Light. The room is unlit, but there are several sconces on the walls and a lantern on the desk. These burst into pale blue flame if touched.

CREATURES/NPCs

If the characters poke around under bed, they disturb a **swarm of rats**.

Objectives/Goals. The rats are normal rats and only want a place to call home. They'll defend themselves, but they'll scatter and escape if they can.

What Do They Know? Normal obstacles in translation aside, the rats know that they came to this place when it was cold and dark (last winter), and they prefer to stay on the ground floor and in the "twisting rooms" (i.e. the staircases). It's too dangerous to venture elsewhere.

TREASURE

There isn't much of interest here, but curious characters may discover:

- A small locked box beneath the bed has an emblem engraved on the top of the box, which a successful DC 15 Intelligence (History) check reveals is Artor Morlin's personal mark. The box contains six glass vials of a dark, sticky substance—old coagulated blood.
- A tapestry on the wall depicts a very outdated map of Waterdeep—a depiction of the city from when Ahghairon first laid out the plans for it.

SCENE D: STAIRS

Beyond this door, the characters find a spiral staircase that wraps up around the curve of the tower—matching the curvature of the exterior.

AREA INFORMATION

The area has the following features:

Dimensions. This passageway is 8-feet wide, with relatively shallow steps.

Light. Glass globes filled with luminescent fluid hang from the ceiling hang every 10 feet; their gentle, warm glow providing the only available light. One of the globes is smashed; shards of glass are scattered on the step below it.

CREATURES/NPCs

As they ascend the stairs, the characters are approached by Sabef (a **doppelganger** in the guise of an archetypical human wizard), who claims to be Ahghairon's "acolyte."

Objectives/Goals. Sabef's plans to draw visitors into the library, where they'll be killed and eaten, and their belongings divided up as spoils. To facilitate this, he puts on quite the pleasant demeanor.

What Do They Know? Due to a mishap with a new spell that he and Ahghairon were working on, Sabef claims that the tower is experiencing some side effects of momentary interdimensional rifts, this is a lie, and refuses to answer any other questions, instead insisting that the characters speak to Ahghairon himself because he can "explain it better." Sabef offers the characters a new way to learn about what's wrong in the tower, but because the doppelganger is a newcomer, it doesn't know that Ahghairon is supposedly long dead. If asked about the mimics, the inert shield guardians, or Inina, it feigns concern but doesn't offer much besides a promise that Ahghairon will "explain everything".

SCENE E: THE READING ROOM

After he leads the party to the reading room of the library, he returns with "Ahghairon."

AREA INFORMATION

This area has the following features:

Dimensions & Terrain. The reading room is 70 feet long, 50 feet wide, and 15 feet high. Based on the tower's dimensions, the room appears to be larger than it should be; it's a safe bet that magic is at play. It's otherwise beautifully appointed—plush carpets, dark wood furniture, and stuffed to the gills with packed bookshelves.

Lighting. A few lanterns in the area are filled with the same glowing liquid like those in the stairway. Elsewhere, the area is blanketed in darkness. The room's wards prevent any flame in the library—even fire-based spells or affects fail.

Sounds & Smells. The reading room smells of leather, old paper, and very faintly of dried roses. It is quiet, but a character that succeeds on a DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check hears the sounds of rustling and light footsteps outside of the light.

Doors. There are multiple doors in the reading room, though they are in shadowed parts and not immediately visible. On the wall to the right side of the entrance are two doors (the near one leads to the cloakroom and the further one to the office). A large set of double doors on the wall opposite the entrance leads to the Stacks (**Scene F**).

CREATURES/NPCs

Twenty **doppelgangers** inhabit the shadowy corners of reading room as well as the stacks beyond—usually in the guise of a "librarian" in case they're discovered. The room is also infested by thirty or so **crawling claws** that hide and skitter under tables and chairs and climb among the bookshelves. Eventually, Eecon (an arcanaloth disguised as Ahghairon) arrives.

Objectives/Goals. The doppelgangers were led here through a rift to this place and offered a deal by Eecon (**Episode 3**). In exchange for killing anyone who enters (though they wait to do so until Ahghairon's "test" has begun), they have free run of the library—they may read and absorb as much of the rare knowledge the library possesses as they wish. Eecon is curious to find out how the characters managed to find their way into the tower. Once his curiosity is satisfied, he insists that they undergo a test of strength and moral fiber before he grants an audience. He and Sabef then exit the room and leave the doppelgangers to dispose of the characters.

THE FALSE AHGHAIRON

As the characters interact with Eccon, a few clues may help them realize that he isn't who he claims to be:

- He doesn't recognize the characters despite potentially having met them before (if the characters participated in the *Folded Times* trilogy). If they mention details, he plays along with it, but he can't maintain the fiction for very long.
- He doesn't know details of who Artor Morlin is; he may think that Morlin and the Baron of Blood are two different people or be unlikely to guess that Morlin is a vampire.
- He plays up the befuddled old wizard persona, despite Ahghairon not being known as such. Eccon hopes that the characters buy his act long enough to be taken by surprise when they're attacked.
- **BONUS OBJECTIVE A.** If this additional content is utilized, Ahghairon knows that Inina is a ghost who lives in the tower but knows nothing of her past. Additionally, Inina acts very nervous around him, acknowledging that "he hasn't been himself lately."

SCENE F: THE CLOAKROOM

The characters enter this room from the reading room. It is very dark, but if the characters have darkvision or create a light, they will see that several cloaks hang on pegs along one wall, a few chairs are stacked in a corner, and that some cleaning supplies (broom, rags, buckets) are arrayed on shelves near the door. The only out-of-place thing here is a small pile of bones in the far corner, accompanied by a ring that flashes briefly in the light.

AREA INFORMATION

The area has the following features:

Dimensions & Terrain. This 10-by-10-foot room has a 10-foot high ceiling—cloaked in darkness.

Lighting. It is pitch black inside.

CREATURES/NPCs

A **cloaker** hides against the ceiling of this room, waiting for unwary explorers.

Objectives/Goals. The cloaker was brought here by the arcanaloth Eccon, mostly as a bad joke. Its only goal is to sate its hunger.

TREASURE

This nonmagical silver ring is the only item of interest that remains from previous "snacks." It's made of silver fashioned to look like twisting vines, with seven emerald "fruits" worked into the design. The cloaker leaves it there to attract others, hoping to get them all the way into the room.

SCENE G: THE OFFICE

The office is next to the cloakroom on the righthand side of the reading room. The heavy oak door is locked but can be opened with either lockpicks or a good old-fashioned shoulder ram (Strength DC 15). It contains a large desk and chair. A bookshelf half-full of books is on the wall behind the desk.

There is a sign on the desk:

*If you damage a book, remember to pay the fine.
All coins accepted.*

AREA INFORMATION

This area has the following features:

Dimensions & Terrain. This 10-by-10-foot office has a 10-foot-high ceiling.

Lighting. There is no light in the office, but a lantern rests on the desk. It illuminates if touched.

Sounds & Smells. The office is quiet—sound is muffled here, since the room is so much smaller than the reading room. The smell of dried roses is more pronounced, it emanates from a bowl of dried pink rose petals high on the bookshelf.

Tomes. There is an open book on the desk, written in an obscure language with a dozen additional books are stacked nearby. If investigated, each book is written in a different language. The books range in topic from history to discussions of magical theory.



TREASURE & REWARDS

A character that is investigating the desk that also succeeds on a DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check notices a secret drawer in the desk. The spellbook within the drawer has the demiplane and *contact other plane* spells etched inside but is otherwise completely blank.

SCENE H: THE STACKS

The characters enter this room through the doorway at the back wall of the reading room.

AREA INFORMATION

The area has the following features:

Dimensions & Terrain. The stacks are contained in a room the same size as the reading room, but this room has floor to ceiling shelving set up in a way that makes it impossible to see more than 20 feet ahead. The walkways between the shelves are no more than four feet wide. The shelves are arranged to create some alcoves and cul-de-sacs in addition to straight passages. It's rather like a maze.

Lighting. A few lanterns in the area are filled with the same glowing liquid like those in the stairway. Elsewhere, the area is blanketed in darkness. The room's wards prevent any flame in the library—even fire-based spells or affects fail.

More Doppelgangers. The stacks contain 10 doppelgangers, in addition to any that survived the reading room and fled here. If they can, they will try to trick the characters by appearing as one of their companions before attacking without warning.

Books Alive! If the characters or the doppelgangers cause any damage to the books in the library, they will be attacked (beginning the following round) by a flock of **ten animated books** that fly through the air like bats. When dormant, the books “roost” on the highest shelves in pairs or small groups throughout the stacks. When not active, they look just like regular books. A new flock will attack each creature who damages a book in the stacks.

CREATURES/NPCs

There is a total of ten **doppelgangers** milling about the room along with ten **animated books** (though the latter don't join the fray unless the characters damage the other books in the room).

Objectives/Goals. The doppelgangers generally fight to the death, unless only one is left or if one can be isolated and captured, in which case it attempts to bargain. The animated books mindlessly attack its prey until destroyed or until the target announces its intent to pay for any damage it may have caused—either by announcing it aloud or by throwing money at the book (which is promptly snatched up). Neither the books nor the doppelgangers pursue foes out of the Stacks.



WRAP-UP

If the characters defeat the doppelgangers, they can leave the library and either explore the other area on the second level (**Bonus Objective B**) or continue up the stairs to the third floor to **Episode 3**.

PLAYING THE PILLARS (SCENE H: THE STACKS)

Combat

The doppelgangers fight and try to trick the characters into attacking each other if possible.

Exploration

The characters can inspect the stacks, which contain many interesting and rare tomes, both mundane and magical.

Social

The characters may be able to bargain with a doppelganger.



EPISODE 3: WELCOME TO MY PARLOR

Estimated Duration: 60 minutes

SCENE A: THE WORKSHOP

The characters enter the top floor of the Tower, where the arcanaloth, Eecon, has taken up residence. The creature is obsessed with discovering every last drop of magic in the Tower and leave with as many secrets as possible.

PREREQUISITES

The characters must navigate the lower floors of the tower in Episode 2 before pursuing this Episode.

STORY OBJECTIVE B

Retrieving Ahghairon's cubic gate is **Story Objective B**. This is most easily accomplished by defeating Eecon and releasing Ahghairon from his prison.

AREA INFORMATION

The area has the following features:

Dimensions & Terrain. The room is a half-circle about 40 feet long on the flat side. The ceiling is about 12 feet high. Characters can see three doors besides the one they entered through. Two are set in the curving wall, one to the left (the nycaloth room), and one to the right (the inner chamber). A third, smaller door is set in the far left corner of the flat wall (broom closet).

Lighting. The lighting is good here, apparently coming from high windows in the curving wall. The effect is that of bright daylight (regardless of the actual time of day).

Sounds. The bubbling of brewing potions and the mutterings of the arcanaloth, if it's unaware of them.

CREATURES/NPCs

The **arcanaloth** Eecon is here, prowling through the workroom as it attempts to puzzle out some magical items. The **flameskulls** hover in the Inner Chamber, but fly out at the first sign of danger.

PLAYING THE PILLARS (SCENE A: THE WORKSHOP)

Combat

The arcanaloth attacks the moment the characters don't believe it's Ahghairon. The flameskulls enter the room the next round, summoned by Eecon to help.

Exploration

Characters can explore the room to discover the other doorways. If the characters use Stealth to sneak up on Eecon, they may overhear a clue.

Social

"Ahghairon" is behaving oddly—peering at potions or disassembling wands. The moment he notices them, he puts on the act of the befuddled wizard ("Oh, you must have passed the test. Congratulations. You must have a prize!"), Eecon is slightly mad and will happily answer questions about its time in the tower, though it won't stop combat to do so.

ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

- **Very Weak or Weak:** Take away two **flameskulls**.
- **Strong or Very Strong:** Add three **flameskulls**.

Objectives/Goals. Eccon is in the tower for one purpose: to extract every piece of arcane lore from it that he can—regardless of the damage he causes in the process. He tolerates the characters' presence until it stands in his way, at which point he responds with terrifying violence.

What Do They Know? Eccon knows where Ahghairon is, but very little about who he's actually managed to imprison and the significance of the tower. Until his guise is revealed, however, he plays the roll of the dottering wizard and chalks his lack of information on old age.

SCENE B: THE BROOM CLOSET

Anyone opening the door on the flat wall finds the broom closet.

AREA INFORMATION

This area has the following features:

Dimensions. The broom closet is 5-by-5 feet.

Lighting. There is no light in the closet.

Called to Clean. On a successful Investigation check, a character can read the sign written in Common on the inside of the door. It says: *Enough for today*. Speaking this phrase will call the brooms back to the closet. If the door is not shut behind them, they'll fly out again in two rounds.

CREATURES/NPCs

The closet contains five **animated brooms**. Should combat start, ten **boggles** use their Dimensional Rift ability to teleport into the closet and out into the adjoining room.

Objectives/Goals. The brooms were created by Ahghairon to clean his tower; they clean until done or until called back to the closet. The boggles, on the other hand, relish the chance to make mischief and create as big a mess as they can—using the closet as a good place to use their Dimensional Rift ability to maneuver around the tower.

CLEAN VERSUS DIRTY

The animated brooms want to clean the room, while the boggles want to dirty it, allowing the DM to create a scene with the brooms seeking to clean up after the oily, messy boggles. Just because there's a life or death battle going on doesn't mean everything has to be serious.

SCENE C: THE NYCALOTH ROOM

When Eccon begins combat, it calls to the two nycaloths in this room to join the fight. They burst out of the left-hand room the round following Eccon's first action. However, it is also possible that a character could open this door before combat begins, in which case the nycaloths will be surprised.

The nycaloths are subservient to Eccon and will obey its commands. They will attack the characters as soon as they can, choosing whoever appears to be the strongest to attack first.

AREA INFORMATION

This area has the following features:

Dimensions. This room is 70 feet by 50 feet, with 10-foot-tall ceilings. It function as a storage room for magical items and components, as is made evident by the contents of the shelves lining the walls.

Lighting. The nycaloths have destroyed the magical lighting in here, so it's quite dim if the door is open, and dark if the door is closed.

CREATURES/NPCs

Two **nycaloths** occupy the room, though they try to get to the workroom if that's where the characters are when fighting begins.

Objectives/Goals. The nycaloths are under the command of Eccon, and in the hierarchy the yugoloths, they're essentially the elite guard. Their goal is to carry out the orders of Eccon, though they're intelligent enough to have their own selfish motivations. That said, it's unlikely the characters can reason with them.





SCENE D: THE INNER CHAMBER

The characters who pass through the right-hand door of the work room find Ahghairon's personal chamber, once orderly and calm, but now taken over by the arcanaloth, who has made a mess of the place.

AREA INFORMATION

This area has the following features:

Dimensions. The chamber is forty feet by fifty feet, with 12-foot high ceilings.

Lighting. High windows of colored glass allow light in, dappling the scene with a riot of color if it is daytime. At night, sconces on the walls illuminate the space (they are identical to the ones elsewhere in the tower).

Furniture. The room contains a four-poster bed with heavy curtains, a fireplace with a comfortable chair and side table, and a large wooden wardrobe. It was once locked, but has been pried open. Several robes can be seen hanging inside.

Mirror. There is a massive mirror on the wall, framed in thick ebony intricately carved with depictions of devils, demons, and hideous creatures. The glass of this mirror is tinted black. The mirror is actually a pocket dimension, a tiny sliver of the Nine Hells in which the real Ahghairon is held powerless. Eecon cast *imprisonment* on Ahghairon

(hedged prison form, with the mirror as the chosen demiplane). The mirror has an AC of 19, 120 hit points, is resistant to bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from nonmagical attacks, and immunity to poison and psychic damage. Merely breaking the mirror doesn't break the *imprisonment* spell. To do that, a character must cast *dispel magic* at the appropriate level, or use the mirror brought into the area of an *antimagic field*. If this occurs before the end of combat, Ahghairon appears prone in the space in front of the now-shattered mirror, but is too exhausted and disoriented to fight.

CREATURES/NPCs

Eecon (**arcanaloth**) and the **nycaloths** retreat to this room if they feel it necessary in order to protect the magical prison that Ahghairon is trapped in.

Objectives/Goals. The arcanaloth fights fearlessly, since it can't truly be killed unless it is defeated on its home plane of the Nine Hells. If the characters manage to defeat it, with its dying breath it promises to return, vowing to make all the characters' lives miserable.

WRAP-UP

After defeating the arcanaloth and its minions, and freeing Ahghairon from his prison, the characters can speak with the legendary wizard to discuss the errand that brought them to the tower.

Ahghairon is grateful to the characters and remembers those he met before in a previous adventure (the *Folded Time* trilogy). He agrees that Artor Morlin should have something to help him seal off the Far Realms ("I've had quite enough of the other planes for the time being!"). Ahghairon gives the characters the *cubic gate*, an object that possesses the ability to lock or unlock passages to other planes of existence. He instructs the characters in how to use the cubic gate to seal off the Far Realms and tells them they must deliver it to Artor Morlin as soon as they leave the tower. Ahghairon states that the "knot" in the weave of time that's occurring in Undermountain is much more worrisome than it seemed at first. He won't leave his tower, or reveal his continued existence to the world, but he acknowledges that there may come a time when he'll have to lend aid to the characters or others like them to finally end this threat to Waterdeep.

TREASURE & REWARDS

Cubic Gate. This object is a cube of opalescent crystal about six inches tall, wide, and deep. On each side, a different magical glyph is carved, indicating a specific plane. See **Appendix 5**.

Ahghairon's Secret. If they get this far, the characters are among a very small number of people who know that the wizard Ahghairon is still alive. They can use this knowledge to their advantage, for example by returning to ask a favor at a later point, or perhaps bartering or selling the knowledge to someone else in Waterdeep.

Shield Guardians. If the characters are extremely persuasive (or Ahghairon deems it wise), he can offer the amulets that control the Shield Guardians to the characters for a certain length of time, or permanently. If so, he makes sure to repair the guardians first.

ADVENTURE REWARDS

At the end of the session, the characters each receive rewards based upon their accomplishments. These rewards include advancement and treasure, and may include player rewards—magic item unlocks, story awards, or new downtime activities, as follows:

ADVANCEMENT AND TREASURE

CHECKPOINTS

The characters receive **2** advancement checkpoint(s) and **4** treasure checkpoint(s) for each **story** objective that they complete, as follows:

- **Story Objective A:** Reaching the tower's top floor
- **Story Objective B:** Defeating the arcanoloth

The characters receive **1** advancement checkpoint(s) and **2** treasure checkpoint(s) for each **bonus** objective that they complete, as follows:

- **Bonus Objective A:** Retrieve Inana's doll
- **Bonus Objective B:** <Seal the Rift>

PLAYER REWARDS

The characters earn the following player rewards for completing the adventure:

MAGIC ITEM UNLOCK

Characters completing the adventure unlock:

Cubic Gate. Created by the wizard Hilather, the six sides of this cube are covered in characters from the language of Alzhedo. The six sides are keyed to: the Prime Material, the Elemental Plane of Fire, the Nine Hells, the Far Realm, the Outlands, and Arborea. This item can be found in **Appendix 5**.

DUNGEON MASTER REWARDS

In exchange for running this adventure, you earn advancement and treasure checkpoints and downtime as though you played the adventure, but none of the adventure's player rewards.

However, this adventure may qualify for rewards earned by completing DM Quests. See the ALDMG (*Adventurers League Dungeon Master's Guide*) for more information about DM Quests.



APPENDIX 1: LOCATIONS & NPCs

The following NPCs and locations are featured in this adventure.

- **Ahghairon (Ah-GAR-on).** Ahghairon is a wizard and the First Lord of Waterdeep. He dwells alone in his tower, and uses magic to keep the outside world out. Most people in Waterdeep believe he's long dead, which is honestly the only way to get any work done around here.

Personality: *I am old and wise, and I aim to get older and wiser.*

Ideal: *The pursuit of arcane knowledge is noble and worthy. The outside world can wait.*

Bond: *Promises to old friends must be honored, and Waterdeep is my home.*

Flaw: *I can absolutely handle any magic that I dream up.*

- **Artor Morlin (AR-tor MOR-lin).** A male vampire and one of the Masked Lords of Waterdeep. Also known as the Baron of Blood. Very few have this knowledge. Found in the Preview episode.

Personality: *I am wary and would rather observe my foes or send my minions and lackeys to deal with threats than handle them on my own.*

Ideal: *Waterdeep is my personal hunting ground, and I brook no challenges from other vampires.*

Bond: *I will keep my hunting to criminals and other undesirables so long as the other Masked Lords leave me alone.*

Flaw: *If I must fight, my bloodlust consumes me and exposes my vampiric desires.*

- **Inina (in-NEEN-ah).** A ghost of a young girl who haunts the Tower of Ahghairon, with Ahghairon's knowledge and indulgence. Inina was killed and her soul then captured in a phylactery that later came into Ahghairon's possession. He broke the phylactery to free the souls within, but Inina took the form of a ghost, too frightened to leave this plane. She is essentially innocent, and will not deliberately frighten or possess another creature. She can be found in **Bonus Objective A**.

Personality: *I have a child's fears combined with a ghost's regrets.*

Ideal: *I want to be strong enough to move on.*

Bond: *My memories of life are powerful pulls to this world.*

Flaw: *I'm fragile and easily frightened.*

- **Eccon (EK-con).** An unusually powerful arcanaloth who took advantage of a dimensional rift leading it into Ahghairon's tower. Once inside, Eccon imprisoned the wizard while he was sleeping, and used its innate abilities to take on Ahghairon's appearance. Eccon is greedy for the magical knowledge contained within the tower. A native to the Nine Hells, Eccon is also quite fearless, since he can only be truly killed on his home plane.

Personality: *I am urbane and clever, until I need to be terrifying. I'm happy to do either.*

Ideal: *All the magic, all for me.*

Bond: *Only that which is forced upon me by the hierarchy of ugoths.*

Flaw: *Did I mention I'm terribly clever?*

- **Tower of Ahghairon.** Home to the wizard Ahghairon. It's a virtual fortress, protected by stone and spells. The recent arrival of Eccon has change things, since the arcanaloth opened the front door to allow unwary adventurers in, the better to amuse him and his minions while they're stripping the Tower of its secrets. Architecturally, the tower is unique, in that it was designed by Ahghairon, and therefore contains several pocket dimensions to make the interior roomier while maintaining that svelte tower look on the exterior. It's a bit of a fixer-upper right now, since the magic that first opened a rift to the Nine Hells, additional, smaller rifts have been opening and closing intermittently, allowing some very nasty pests in. Ahghairon could fix it if he was restored at the tower's master.

APPENDIX 2: CREATURE STATISTICS

This appendix details monsters that are encountered in this adventure.

AHGHAIRON (ARCHMAGE)

Medium humanoid (human), lawful good

Armor Class 12 (15 with *mage armor*)

Hit Points 99 (18d8 + 18)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	20 (+5)	15 (+2)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Int +9, Wis +6

Skills Arcana +13, History +13

Damage Resistance damage from spells; nonmagical bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing (from *stoneskin*)

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages any six languages

Challenge 12 (8,400 XP)

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

Spellcasting. The archmage is an 18th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 17, +9 to hit with spell attacks). The archmage can cast *disguise self* and *invisibility* at will and has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *fire bolt*, *light*, *mage hand*, *prestidigitation*, *shocking grasp*

1st level (4 slots): *detect magic*, *identify*, *mage armor*,* *magic missile*

2nd level (3 slots): *detect thoughts*, *mirror image*, *misty step*

3rd level (3 slots): *counterspell*, *fly*, *lightning bolt*

4th level (3 slots): *banishment*, *fire shield*, *stoneskin**

5th level (3 slots): *cone of cold*, *scrying*, *wall of force*

6th level (1 slot): *globe of invulnerability*

7th level (1 slot): *teleport*

8th level (1 slot): *mind blank**

9th level (1 slot): *time stop*

*The archmage casts these spells on itself before combat.

ACTIONS

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage.

ARCANALOTH

Medium fiend (yugoloth), neutral evil

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 104 (16d8 + 32)

Speed 30 ft., fly 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	20 (+5)	16 (+3)	17 (+3)

Saving Throws Dex +5, Int +9, Wis +7, Cha +7

Skills Arcana +13, Deception +9, Insight +9, Perception +7

Damage Resistances cold, fire, lightning; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Damage Immunities acid, poison

Condition Immunities charmed, poisoned

Senses truesight 120 ft., passive Perception 17

Languages all, telepathy 120 ft.

Challenge 12 (8,400 XP)

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

At will: *alter self*, *darkness*, *heat metal*, *invisibility* (self only), *magic missile*

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

Magic Weapons. The arcanaloth's weapon attacks are magical.

Spellcasting. The arcanaloth is a 16th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 17, +9 to hit with spell attacks). The arcanaloth has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *fire bolt*, *mage hand*, *minor illusion*, *prestidigitation*

1st level (4 slots): *detect magic*, *identify*, *shield*, *Tensor's floating disk*

2nd level (3 slots): *detect thoughts*, *mirror image*, *phantasmal force*, *suggestion*

3rd level (3 slots): *counterspell*, *fear*, *fireball*

4th level (3 slots): *banishment*, *dimension door*

5th level (2 slots): *contact other plane*, *hold monster*

6th level (1 slot): *chain lightning*

7th level (1 slot): *finger of death*

8th level (1 slot): *mind blank*

ACTIONS

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.

Hit: 8 (2d4 + 3) slashing damage. The target must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw, taking 10 (3d6) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Teleport. The arcanaloth magically teleports, along with any equipment it is wearing or carrying, up to 60 feet to an unoccupied space it can see.

BOGGLE

Small fey, chaotic neutral

Armor Class 14

Hit Points 18 (4d6 + 4)

Speed 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	18 (+4)	13 (+1)	6 (-2)	12 (+1)	7 (-2)

Skills Perception +3, Sleight of Hand +6, Stealth +6

Damage Resistances fire

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages Sylvan

Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

Boggle Oil. The boggle excretes nonflammable oil from its pores. The boggle chooses whether the oil is slippery or sticky and can change the oil on its skin from one consistency to another as a bonus action.

Slippery Oil: While coated in slippery oil, the boggle gains advantage on Dexterity (Acrobatics) checks made to escape bonds, squeeze through narrow spaces, and end grapples.

Sticky Oil: While coated in sticky oil, the boggle gains advantage on Strength (Athletics) checks made to grapple and any ability check made to maintain a hold on another creature, a surface, or an object. The boggle can also climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

Dimensional Rift. As a bonus action, the boggle can create an invisible and immobile rift within an opening or frame it can see within 5 feet of it, provided that the space is no bigger than 10 feet on any side. The dimensional rift bridges the distance between that space and any point within 30 feet of it that the boggle can see or specify by distance and direction (such as “30 feet straight up”). While next to the rift, the boggle can see through it and is considered to be next to the destination as well, and anything the boggle puts through the rift (including a portion of its body) emerges at the destination. Only the boggle can use the rift, and it lasts until the end of the boggle’s next turn.

Uncanny Smell. The boggle has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

ACTIONS

Pummel. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +1 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 2 (1d6 – 1) bludgeoning damage.

Oil Puddle. The boggle creates a puddle of oil that is either slippery or sticky (boggle’s choice). The puddle is 1 inch deep and covers the ground in the boggle’s space. The puddle is difficult terrain for all creatures except boggles and lasts for 1 hour.

If the oil is slippery, any creature that enters the puddle’s area or starts its turn there must succeed on a DC 11 Dexterity saving throw or fall prone.

If the oil is sticky, any creature that enters the puddle’s area or starts its turn there must succeed on a DC 11 Strength saving throw or be restrained. On its turn, a creature can use an action to try to extricate itself from the sticky puddle, ending the effect and moving into the nearest safe unoccupied space with a successful DC 11 Strength check.

BROOM (ANIMATED OBJECT)

Small construct, unaligned

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 17 (5d6)

Speed 0 ft., fly 50 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	17 (+3)	10 (+0)	1 (-5)	5 (-3)	1 (-5)

Damage Immunities poison, psychic

Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, deafened, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone

Senses blindsight 30 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 7

Languages —

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Antimagic Susceptibility. The broom is incapacitated while in the area of an *antimagic field*. If targeted by *dispel magic*, the broom must succeed on a Constitution saving throw against the caster’s spell save DC or fall unconscious for 1 minute.

False Appearance. While the broom remains motionless and isn’t flying, it is indistinguishable from a normal broom.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The broom makes two melee attacks.

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

REACTIONS

Animated Attack. If the broom is motionless and a creature grabs hold of it, the broom makes a Dexterity check contested by the creature’s Strength check. If the broom wins the contest, it flies out of the creature’s grasp and makes a melee attack against it with advantage on the attack roll.

CLOAKER

Large aberration, chaotic neutral

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 78 (12d10 + 12)

Speed 10 ft., fly 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)

Skills Stealth +5

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages Deep Speech, Undercommon

Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Damage Transfer. While attached to a creature, the cloaker takes only half the damage dealt to it (rounded down), and that creature takes the other half.

False Appearance. While the cloaker remains motionless without its underside exposed, it is indistinguishable from a dark leather cloak.

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

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The cloaker makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its tail.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) piercing damage, and if the target is Large or smaller, the cloaker attaches to it. If the cloaker has advantage against the target, the cloaker attaches to the target's head, and the target is blinded and unable to breathe while the cloaker is attached. While attached, the cloaker can make this attack only against the target and has advantage on the attack roll. The cloaker can detach itself by spending 5 feet of its movement. A creature, including the target, can take its action to detach the cloaker by succeeding on a DC 16 Strength check.

Tail. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 10 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) slashing damage.

Moan. Each creature within 60 feet of the cloaker that can hear its moan and that isn't an aberration must succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or become frightened until the end of the cloaker's next turn. If a creature's saving throw is successful, the creature is immune to the cloaker's moan for the next 24 hours.

Phantasms (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). The cloaker magically creates three illusory duplicates of itself if it isn't in bright light. The duplicates move with it and mimic its actions, shifting position so as to make it impossible to track which cloaker is the real one. If the cloaker is ever in an area of bright light, the duplicates disappear.

Whenever any creature targets the cloaker with an attack or a harmful spell while a duplicate remains, that creature rolls randomly to determine whether it targets the cloaker or one of the duplicates. A creature is unaffected by this magical effect if it can't see or if it relies on senses other than sight.

A duplicate has the cloaker's AC and uses its saving throws. If an attack hits a duplicate, or if a duplicate fails a saving throw against an effect that deals damage, the duplicate disappears.

CRAWLING CLAW

Tiny undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 2 (1d4)

Speed 20 ft., climb 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	5 (-3)	10 (+0)	4 (-3)

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, poisoned

Senses blindsight 30 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 10

Languages understands Common but can't speak

Challenge 0 (10 XP)

Turn Immunity. The claw is immune to effects that turn undead.

ACTIONS

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d4 + 1) bludgeoning or slashing damage (claw's choice).

DOPPELGANGER

Medium monstrosity (shapechanger), neutral

Armor Class 14

Hit Points 52 (8d8 + 16)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)

Skills Deception +6, Insight +3

Condition Immunities charmed

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages Common

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Shapechanger. The doppelganger can use its action to polymorph into a Small or Medium humanoid it has seen, or back into its true form. Its statistics, other than its size, are the same in each form. Any equipment it is wearing or carrying isn't transformed. It reverts to its true form if it dies.

Ambusher. The doppelganger has advantage on attack rolls against any creature it has surprised.

Surprise Attack. If the doppelganger surprises a creature and hits it with an attack during the first round of combat, the target takes an extra 10 (3d6) damage from the attack.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The doppelganger makes two melee attacks.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.

Hit: 7 (1d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

Read Thoughts. The doppelganger magically reads the surface thoughts of one creature within 60 feet of it. The effect can penetrate barriers, but 3 feet of wood or dirt, 2 feet of stone, 2 inches of metal, or a thin sheet of lead blocks it. While the target is in range, the doppelganger can continue reading its thoughts, as long as the doppelganger's concentration isn't broken (as if concentrating on a spell). While reading the target's mind, the doppelganger has advantage on Wisdom (Insight) and Charisma (Deception, Intimidation, and Persuasion) checks against the target.

DRYAD

Medium fey, neutral

Armor Class 11 (16 with *barkskin*)

Hit Points 22 (5d8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	18 (+4)

Skills Perception +4, Stealth +5

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14

Languages Elvish, Sylvan

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Innate Spellcasting. The dryad's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 14). The dryad can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *druidcraft*

3/day each: *entangle*, *goodberry*

1/day each: *barkskin*, *pass without trace*, *shillelagh*

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

Speak with Beasts and Plants. The dryad can communicate with beasts and plants as if they shared a language.

Tree Stride. Once on her turn, the dryad can use 10 feet of her movement to step magically into one living tree within her reach and emerge from a second living tree within 60 feet of the first tree, appearing in an unoccupied space within 5 feet of the second tree. Both trees must be Large or bigger.

ACTIONS

Club. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit (+6 to hit with *shillelagh*), reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 2 (1d4) bludgeoning damage, or 8 (1d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage with *shillelagh*.

Fey Charm. The dryad targets one humanoid or beast that she can see within 30 feet of her. If the target can see the dryad, it must succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw or be magically charmed. The charmed creature regards the dryad as a trusted friend to be heeded and protected. Although the target isn't under the dryad's control, it takes the dryad's requests or actions in the most favorable way it can.

Each time the dryad or its allies do anything harmful to the target, it can repeat the saving throw, ending the effect on itself on a success. Otherwise, the effect lasts 24 hours or until the dryad dies, is on a different plane of existence from the target, or ends the effect as a bonus action. If a target's saving throw is successful, the target is immune to the dryad's Fey Charm for the next 24 hours.

The dryad can have no more than one humanoid and up to three beasts charmed at a time.

FLAMESKULL

Tiny undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 40 (9d4 + 18)

Speed 0 ft., fly 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
1 (-5)	17 (+3)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)

Skills Arcana +5, Perception +2

Damage Resistances lightning, necrotic, piercing

Damage Immunities cold, fire, poison

Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, paralyzed, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Common

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Illumination. The flameskull sheds either dim light in a 15-foot radius, or bright light in a 15-foot radius and dim light for an additional 15 feet. It can switch between the options as an action.

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

Rejuvenation. If the flameskull is destroyed, it regains all its hit points in 1 hour unless holy water is sprinkled on its remains or a dispel magic or remove curse spell is cast on them.

Spellcasting. The flameskull is a 5th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). It requires no somatic or material components to cast its spells. The flameskull has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrip (at will): *mage hand*

1st level (3 slots): *magic missile*, *shield*

2nd level (2 slots): *blur*, *flaming sphere*

3rd level (1 slot): *fireball*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The flameskull uses Fire Ray twice.

Fire Ray. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +5 to hit, range 30 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (3d6) fire damage.

FLYING BOOK (FLYING SWORD)

Small construct, unaligned

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 17 (5d6)

Speed 0 ft., fly 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	15 (+2)	11 (+0)	1 (-5)	5 (-3)	1 (-5)

Saving Throws Dex +4

Damage Immunities poison, psychic

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

Senses blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 7

Languages —

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Antimagic Susceptibility. The book is incapacitated while in the area of an antimagic field. If targeted by dispel magic, the book must succeed on a Constitution saving throw against the caster's spell save DC or fall unconscious for 1 minute.

Fine Payment. If any coin is thrown toward a book, it will devour it and return to its roost.

False Appearance. While the book remains motionless and isn't flying, it is indistinguishable from a normal book.

ACTIONS

Snap. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.

Hit: 5 (1d8 + 1) bludgeoning damage.

GAUTH

Medium aberration, lawful evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 67 (9d8 + 27)

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

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	15 (+2)	15 (+2)	13 (+1)

Saving Throws Int +5, Wis +5, Cha +4

Skills Perception +5

Condition Immunities prone

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 15

Languages Deep Speech, Undercommon

Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

Stunning Gaze. When a creature that can see the gauth's central eye starts its turn within 30 feet of the gauth, the gauth can force it to make a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw if the gauth isn't incapacitated and can see the creature. A creature that fails the save is stunned until the start of its next turn.

Unless surprised, a creature can avert its eyes at the start of its turn to avoid the saving throw. If the creature does so, it can't see the gauth until the start of its next turn, when it can avert its eyes again. If the creature looks at the gauth in the meantime, it must immediately make the save.

Death Throes. When the gauth dies, the magical energy within it explodes, and each creature within 10 feet of it must make a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw, taking 13 (3d8) force damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (2d8) piercing damage.

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

1. **Devour Magic Ray.** The targeted creature must succeed on a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw or have one of its magic items lose all magical properties until the start of the gauth's next turn. If the object is a charged item, it also loses 1d4 charges. Determine the affected item randomly, ignoring single-use items such as potions and scrolls.

2. **Enervation Ray.** The targeted creature must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw, taking 18 (4d8) necrotic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

3. **Pushing Ray.** The targeted creature must succeed on a DC 14 Strength saving throw or be pushed up to 15 feet directly away from the gauth and have its speed halved until the start of the gauth's next turn.

4. **Fire Ray.** The targeted creature must succeed on a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw or take 22 (4d10) fire damage.

5. **Paralyzing Ray.** The targeted creature must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or be paralyzed for 1 minute. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

6. **Sleep Ray.** The targeted creature must succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw or fall asleep and remain unconscious for 1 minute. The target awakens if it takes damage or another creature takes an action to wake it. This ray has no effect on constructs and undead.

ININA (GHOST)

Small undead, neutral good

Armor Class 11

Hit Points 45 (10d8)

Speed 0 ft., fly 40 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
7 (-2)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	17 (+3)

Damage Resistances acid, fire, lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Damage Immunities cold, necrotic, poison

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

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages any languages it knew in life

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Ethereal Sight. The ghost can see 60 feet into the Ethereal Plane when it is on the Material Plane, and vice versa.

Incorporeal Movement. The ghost 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.

ACTIONS

Withering Touch. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 17 (4d6 + 3) necrotic damage.

Etherealness. The ghost enters the Ethereal Plane from the Material Plane, or vice versa. It is visible on the Material Plane while it is in the Border Ethereal, and vice versa, yet it can't affect or be affected by anything on the other plane.

Horrifying Visage. Each non-undead creature within 60 feet of the ghost that can see it must succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened for 1 minute. If the save fails by 5 or more, the target also ages 1d4 × 10 years. A frightened target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the frightened condition on itself on a success. If a target's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the target is immune to this ghost's Horrifying Visage for the next 24 hours. The aging effect can be reversed with a *greater restoration* spell, but only within 24 hours of it occurring.

Possession (Recharge 6). One humanoid that the ghost can see within 5 feet of it must succeed on a DC 13 Charisma saving throw or be possessed by the ghost; the ghost then disappears, and the target is incapacitated and loses control of its body. The ghost now controls the body but doesn't deprive the target of awareness. The ghost can't be targeted by any attack, spell, or other effect, except ones that turn undead, and it retains its alignment, Intelligence, Wisdom, Charisma, and immunity to being charmed and frightened. It otherwise uses the possessed target's statistics, but doesn't gain access to the target's knowledge, class features, or proficiencies.

The possession lasts until the body drops to 0 hit points, the ghost ends it as a bonus action, or the ghost is turned or forced out by an effect like the *dispel evil and good* spell. When the possession ends, the ghost reappears in an unoccupied space within 5 feet of the body. The target is immune to this ghost's Possession for 24 hours after succeeding on the saving throw or after the possession ends.

MEENLOCK

Small fey, neutral evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 31 (7d6 + 7)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
7 (-2)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)	8 (-1)

Skills Perception +4, Stealth +6, Survival +2

Condition Immunities frightened

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 14

Languages telepathy 120 ft.

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Fear Aura. Any beast or humanoid that starts its turn within 10 feet of the meenlock must succeed on a DC 11 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened until the start of the creature's next turn.

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

Shadow Teleport (Recharge 5–6). As a bonus action, the meenlock can teleport to an unoccupied space within 30 feet of it, provided that both the space it's teleporting from and its destination are in dim light or darkness. The destination need not be within line of sight.

ACTIONS

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (2d4 + 2) slashing damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 11 Constitution saving throw or be paralyzed for 1 minute. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

MIMIC

Medium monstrosity (shapechanger), neutral

Armor Class 12 (natural armor)

Hit Points 58 (9d8 + 18)

Speed 15 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	12 (+1)	15 (+2)	5 (-3)	13 (+1)	8 (-1)

Skills Stealth +5

Damage Immunities acid

Condition Immunities prone

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages —

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Shapechanger. The mimic can use its action to polymorph into an object or back into its true, amorphous form. Its statistics are the same in each form. Any equipment it is wearing or carrying isn't transformed. It reverts to its true form if it dies.

Adhesive (Object Form Only). The mimic adheres to anything that touches it. A Huge or smaller creature adhered to the mimic is also grappled by it (escape DC 13). Ability checks made to escape this grapple have disadvantage.

False Appearance (Object Form Only). While the mimic remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from an ordinary object.

Grappler. The mimic has advantage on attack rolls against any creature grappled by it.

ACTIONS

Pseudopod. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) bludgeoning damage. If the mimic is in object form, the target is subjected to its Adhesive trait.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage plus 4 (1d8) acid damage.

NYCALOTH

Large fiend (yugoloth), neutral evil

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)

Hit Points 123 (13d10 + 52)

Speed 40 ft., fly 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	11 (+0)	19 (+4)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	15 (+2)

Skills Intimidation +6, Perception +4, Stealth +4

Damage Resistances cold, fire, lightning; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Damage Immunities acid, poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14

Languages Abyssal, Infernal, telepathy 60 ft.

Challenge 9 (5,000 XP)

Innate Spellcasting. The nycaloth's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma. The nycaloth can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *darkness*, *detect magic*, *dispel magic*, *invisibility* (self only), *mirror image*

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

Magic Weapons. The nycaloth's weapon attacks are magical.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The nycaloth makes two melee attacks, or it makes one melee attack and teleports before or after the attack.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d6 + 5) slashing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 16 Constitution saving throw or take 5 (2d4) slashing damage at the start of each of its turns due to a fiendish wound. Each time the nycaloth hits the wounded target with this attack, the damage dealt by the wound increases by 5 (2d4). Any creature can take an action to stanch the wound with a successful DC 13 Wisdom (Medicine) check. The wound also closes if the target receives magical healing.

Greataxe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 18 (2d12 + 5) slashing damage.

Teleport. The nycaloth magically teleports, along with any equipment it is wearing or carrying, up to 60 feet to an unoccupied space it can see.

PIXIE

Tiny fey, neutral good

Armor Class 15

Hit Points 1 (1d4 - 1)

Speed 10 ft., fly 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
2 (-4)	20 (+5)	8 (-1)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)

Skills Perception +4, Stealth +7

Senses passive Perception 14

Languages Sylvan

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

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

Innate Spellcasting. The pixie's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 12). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring only its pixie dust as a component:

At will: *druiddcraft*

1/day each: *confusion*, *dancing lights*, *detect evil and good*, *detect thoughts*, *dispel magic*, *entangle*, *fly*, *phantasmal force*, *polymorph*, *sleep*

ACTIONS

Superior Invisibility. The pixie magically turns invisible until its concentration ends (as if concentrating on a spell). Any equipment the pixie wears or carries is invisible with it.

SHAMBLING MOUND

Large plant, unaligned

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 136 (16d10 + 48)

Speed 20 ft., swim 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	8 (-1)	16 (+3)	5 (-3)	10 (+0)	5 (-3)

Skills Stealth +2

Damage Resistances cold, fire

Damage Immunities lightning

Condition Immunities blinded, deafened, exhaustion

Senses blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this radius),
passive Perception 10

Languages —

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Lightning Absorption. Whenever the shambling mound is subjected to lightning damage, it takes no damage and regains a number of hit points equal to the lightning damage dealt.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The shambling mound makes two slam attacks. If both attacks hit a Medium or smaller target, the target is grappled (escape DC 14), and the shambling mound uses its Engulf on it.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

Engulf. The shambling mound engulfs a Medium or smaller creature grappled by it. The engulfed target is blinded, restrained, and unable to breathe, and it must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw at the start of each of the mound's turns or take 13 (2d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage. If the mound moves, the engulfed target moves with it. The mound can have only one creature engulfed at a time.

SHIELD GUARDIAN

Large construct, unaligned

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 142 (15d10 + 60)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	8 (-1)	18 (+4)	7 (-2)	10 (+0)	3 (-4)

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened,
paralyzed, poisoned

Senses blindsight 10 ft., darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages understands commands given in any language
but can't speak

Challenge 7 (2,900 XP)

Bound. The shield guardian is magically bound to an amulet. As long as the guardian and its amulet are on the same plane of existence, the amulet's wearer can telepathically call the guardian to travel to it, and the guardian knows the distance and direction to the amulet. If the guardian is within 60 feet of the amulet's wearer, half of any damage the wearer takes (rounded up) is transferred to the guardian.

Regeneration. The shield guardian regains 10 hit points at the start of its turn if it has at least 1 hit point.

Spell Storing. A spellcaster who wears the shield guardian's amulet can cause the guardian to store one spell of 4th level or lower. To do so, the wearer must cast the spell on the guardian. The spell has no effect but is stored within the guardian. When commanded to do so by the wearer or when a situation arises that was predefined by the spellcaster, the guardian casts the stored spell with any parameters set by the original caster, requiring no components. When the spell is cast or a new spell is stored, any previously stored spell is lost.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The guardian makes two fist attacks.

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

REACTIONS

Shield. When a creature makes an attack against the wearer of the guardian's amulet, the guardian grants a +2 bonus to the wearer's AC if the guardian is within 5 feet of the wearer.

SWARM OF RATS

Medium swarm of Tiny beasts, unaligned

Armor Class 10

Hit Points 24 (7d8 - 7)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	11 (+0)	9 (-1)	2 (-4)	10 (+0)	3 (-4)

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, slashing

Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, grappled, paralyzed,
petrified, prone, restrained, stunned

Senses darkvision 30 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages —

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Keen Smell. The swarm has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

Swarm. The swarm can occupy another creature's space and vice versa, and the swarm can move through any opening large enough for a Tiny rat. The swarm can't regain hit points or gain temporary hit points.

ACTIONS

Bites. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 0 ft., one target in the swarm's space. *Hit:* 7 (2d6) piercing damage, or 3 (1d6) piercing damage if the swarm has half of its hit points or fewer.

TWIG BLIGHT

Small plant, neutral evil

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)

Hit Points 4 (1d6 + 1)

Speed 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6 (-2)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)	4 (-3)	8 (-1)	3 (-4)

Skills Stealth +3

Damage Vulnerabilities fire

Condition Immunities blinded, deafened

Senses blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 9

Languages understands Common but can't speak

Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

False Appearance. While the blight remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from a dead shrub.

ACTIONS

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.

Hit: 3 (1d4 + 1) piercing damage.

THORNY

Medium plant, neutral

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 27 (5d8 + 5)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)	2 (-4)	10 (+0)	6 (-2)

Skills Perception +4, Stealth +3

Damage Resistances lightning, piercing

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14

Languages —

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Plant Camouflage. The thorny has advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks it makes in any terrain with ample obscuring plant life.

Regeneration. The thorny regains 5 hit points at the start of its turn. If it takes cold, fire, or necrotic damage, this trait doesn't function at the start of the thorny's next turn. The thorny dies only if it starts its turn with 0 hit points and doesn't regenerate.

Thorny Body. At the start of its turn, the thorny deals 2 (1d4) piercing damage to any creature grappling it.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (2d6 + 1) piercing damage.

VINE BLIGHT

Medium plant, neutral evil

Armor Class 12 (natural armor)

Hit Points 26 (4d8 + 8)

Speed 10 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	8 (-1)	14 (+2)	5 (-3)	10 (+0)	3 (-4)

Skills Stealth +1

Condition Immunities blinded, deafened

Senses blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 10

Languages Common

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

False Appearance. While the blight remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from a tangle of vines.

ACTIONS

Constrict. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (2d6 + 2) bludgeoning damage, and a Large or smaller target is grappled (escape DC 12). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained, and the blight can't constrict another target.

Entangling Plants (Recharge 5–6). Grasping roots and vines sprout in a 15-foot radius centered on the blight, withering away after 1 minute. For the duration, that area is difficult terrain for nonplant creatures. In addition, each creature of the blight's choice in that area when the plants appear must succeed on a DC 12 Strength saving throw or become restrained. A creature can use its action to make a DC 12 Strength check, freeing itself or another entangled creature within reach on a success.

WRAITH

Medium undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 67 (9d8 + 27)

Speed 0 ft., fly 60 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6 (-2)	16 (+3)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)

Damage Resistances acid, cold, fire, lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks not made with silvered weapons

Damage Immunities necrotic, poison

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

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages the languages it knew in life

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Incorporeal Movement. The wraith 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.

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

ACTIONS

Life Drain. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 21 (4d8 + 3) necrotic damage. The target must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or its hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the damage taken. This reduction lasts until the target finishes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0.

Create Specter. The wraith targets a humanoid within 10 feet of it that has been dead for no longer than 1 minute and died violently. The target's spirit rises as a specter in the space of its corpse or in the nearest unoccupied space. The specter is under the wraith's control. The wraith can have no more than seven specters under its control at one time.

APPENDIX 3: A LITTLE GHOST STORY (BONUS OBJECTIVE A)

Estimated duration: 60 minutes

SCENE A: THE OUTER DARKNESS

The characters encounter an unexpected resident of the Tower. The characters pass through the small door in the foyer, finding themselves in a strange, narrow room. The air is cold here, with a thin layer of wispy fog swirling just above the floor. The stone walls are bare, with a thin film of moisture clinging to them. It is dark except for whatever light seeps through the doorway to the foyer.

PREREQUISITES

This bonus objective may only be pursued if the characters enter the small door in the foyer.

OBJECTIVE

Freeing Inina the ghost from her predicament is **Bonus Objective A**.



AREA INFORMATION

This area has the following features:

Dimensions. This room is a slightly curved rectangle, evidently echoing the shape of the outside of the tower. It is twenty feet long and ten feet wide. There is an opening in the short wall at the far end—a passageway.

Lighting. The room is unlit.

Unsettling Sounds. The characters can hear what sounds like a young child's scream of pain or anguish. It's coming from the passageway.

SCENE B: THE STAIRWAY

The characters can go through the passage to discover stone steps going down into utter darkness.

AREA INFORMATION

This area has the following features:

Dimensions. The stairs are six feet wide, and the ceiling is about 8 feet tall. The stairs descend for forty feet, terminating in the circular room below.

Lighting. The area is unlit.

Sounds. The screams from below continue intermittently. On a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check a character can hear a slight scratching sound, not unlike rats.

CREATURES/NPC'S

10 feet from the top of the stairs, a swarm of **crawling claws** lurks in the shadows. The swarm waits until the characters have passed by, then attempt to chase them, grabbing onto clothing, capes, necks, etc. If the characters make noises fighting off the claws, it alerts the monsters below.

SCENE C: THE CIRCLE OF PAIN

At the base of the stairs, the characters enter a circular room. It appears to be primarily a storage area, with stacks of wooden crates and barrels around the perimeter. However, the most arresting sight is that of a small figure being hounded by three dark, spectral forms floating the air above her. The small figure looks like a young human girl, but her filmy, insubstantial appearance reveals her to be a ghost. The dark forms seem to be tormenting her, pulling at her very self, drawing it into thin, luminescent threads.

AREA INFORMATION

This area has the following features:

Dimensions & Terrain. The circular room is 30 feet in diameter. The floor, ceiling, and walls are constructed of very solid grey stone.

Lighting. The area is unlit, except for the faint glow coming from the ghost.

Sounds. The ghost is shrieking, a bone-chilling sound.

CREATURES/NPCs

Two **wraiths** hover over the ethereal form of a young girl (a **ghost**) who shrieks and begs for help.

Objectives/Goals. The ghost wishes to be freed from its torment by the wraiths, and ultimately leave this plane of existence. The wraiths seek to kill all life they encounter. Inina wishes to tag along with the characters as they navigate the tower. Before this, however, she wishes to venture to the floor below (Scene D) and collect her doll—something she’s been too afraid to do on her own due to the presence of the “eyes in the dark.”

What Do They Know? Inina knows that Ahghairon is alive. She also says he “hasn’t been himself lately” and his erratic behavior scared her and drove her to hide in the disused passageway of the outer staircase. She knows that the wraiths appeared from a dark gash in reality not long ago and have been chasing her ever since. Though she is undead, they were attracted to her innocent soul. The wraiths know nothing of the situation. They found a rift in reality that allowed them to pass into the tower from the Shadowfell, and they’re simply taking advantage of a new hunting ground. They can speak Common and Elvish.

ININA, A GHOST

She was once a young girl living in Waterdeep (through details of her story, the characters can glean that she lived centuries prior). An evil mage cast a spell that killed her and a large number of other children, trapping their souls in a strange, glassy prison. She remembers little of that time, but she knows when the prison was broken open, she was here in the Tower. The nice wizard Ahghairon explained that he now had the item that contained her soul, and he broke it to release the ghosts inside. While most of the ghosts disappeared soon after, Inina remained in the Tower, afraid to pass through the veil. Ahghairon permitted her to linger, telling her that when she was ready, he’d help her to another plane of existence. The recent, frightening events in the tower have convinced Inina that her time has come.

If the characters come to Inina’s aid, encourage them to roleplay their interactions with her. She can provide useful information if she is treated kindly:

- She knows that evil things have been appearing in the tower, and thinks a magic spell went wrong, though she can’t explain further.
- She knows that most of Ahghairon’s most important magical things are kept in his chambers on the top floor, with more in the sub-basement.
- She knows that the scratched messages found throughout the tower are relatively recent, from about the time that Ahghairon’s behavior started to change.
- She can offer insight into some of the layout of the tower, including the fact that many rooms in the tower are “too big to fit inside it” (i.e. that they are pocket dimensions and/or gates to other dimensions). If the DM wants to include Bonus Objective B, she knows a beautiful garden is accessible from the second floor.

SCENE D: THE SUB-BASEMENT

Inina leads the characters to another stairway on the opposite side of the circular room, which leads down to the sub-basement.

AREA INFORMATION

This area has the following features:

Dimensions & Terrain. The lowest basement in the tower is also circular, with a 50-foot diameter. The walls and ceiling are the same smooth stone, but the floor is quite a bit rougher, perhaps the natural stone level anchoring the tower itself.

Lighting. There is a faint glimmering of light in the center of this room. A single candle in a lantern hangs from the ceiling, lit by the same continual light spell as the others in this tower.

Eyes in the Dark. The characters may catch a glimpse of what appears to be the two eyes of some massive creature. The “eyes” are in fact two gauths hovering in the back of the room, opposite the bottom of the spiral staircase.

Junk Room. Whatever this room used to be, it now looks like a trash heap. Broken objects are scattered across the floor, and crates have been smashed open or burned to ash. A successful DC 15 Arcana check allows a character to realize that nearly all of these items were once magical but have had the essence drained from them. None of the objects in this room are magical now.

Bones. There are bones scattered amongst the items: rats, boggles, and some larger specimens that look human or elvish. These are the victims of the gauths, who will eat meat if it’s on the menu.

CREATURES/NPCs

Two **gauths** lurk in this room. They came here via a dimensional gate, much like the other creatures in the tower. They were drawn to the intense level of magic contained within the tower and have been draining many of the magical items that were kept here. It also eats any rats, boggles, or other creatures foolish enough to explore this level.

Objectives/Goals. The gauths are ravenous for magic and will try to devour whatever magic they can sense in range. They rely on victims seeing their hideous forms, which is why they allow the one magically-lit lantern to remain. They’ll focus on magic-users who enter their space, and they’ll be very attracted to powerful magical items.

What Do They Know? They are opportunists who took advantage of an unexpected portal between their home dimension and this one. They know little of what’s happening above.

WRAP-UP

After they defeat the monsters, Inina hunts for and retrieves a non-magical cloth doll Ahghairon gave her after she decided to stay on this plane. She explains that it’s her darling companion, and she can’t “move on” without it near. [Note: she is able to use her *etherealness* ability to draw the doll into the Border Ethereal, allowing her to keep hold of it]. The characters can go upstairs to the foyer to return to the main storyline.

APPENDIX 4: YOU'VE GOT A MOLD PROBLEM (BONUS OBJECTIVE B)

Estimated Duration: 60 minutes

SCENE A: THE GARDEN ROOM

The characters find that the garden room isn't as serene as it seems.

PREREQUISITES

This bonus objective may only be pursued if the characters enter the green door on level 2. They can find it on their own through exploration after **Episode 2**, or even after **Episode 3** is concluded and they are on their way back down.

OBJECTIVES

Eradicating the threat to the garden by sealing the rift that is allowing the monsters through from the Feywild and the Shadowfell is Bonus Objective B.

AREA INFORMATION

The area has the following features:

Dimensions & Terrain. The garden is 1,000 yards square and open to the sky—an unusual sight that a character that succeeds on a DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) recognizes as due to the fact that it's part of the Feywild, permanently attached to Ahghairon's tower. He designed it as a retreat from his work.

Lighting. The light comes from the sky, a soft twilight glow that makes the area under any trees heavily shadowed. What seem to be fireflies flicker among the trees.

Sounds & Smells. The main garden smells wonderful, the aroma of fresh air and flowers providing a sense of rejuvenation. A successful Perception check (DC 15) reveals a less pleasant scent from further on—mold or rot, perhaps.

COMPLICATIONS

The garden is filled with many diversions, some magical and whimsical, some more disturbing. Use as many as you wish in any order, while the characters move through the garden.

- About 100 feet beyond the clearing to the right, a group of 20 **boggles** lay in wait to tease anyone who happens by. They'll play tricks if they can, but they'll attack if they are attacked (or they see an opportunity to strike).
- In a secluded grove, three statues of humanoids that look somewhat like elves stand in a triangle, facing each other, about 15 feet apart. A character who walks to the middle of the triangle will hear a hauntingly sweet song in an ancient language. A *comprehend languages* spell or similar power lets a character translate the song, which is a lullaby.
- A natural-looking pool of clear water lies among a group of willow trees. Fireflies and showy moths dance over it. A non-evil character who drinks the water find that it functions as a *potion of healing*. Evil characters who try the water react to it as if it were poison.

- A character who sits quietly in the garden may attract the interest of several pixies. This is especially likely for druids or characters with a fey background. The pixies will lead the character to the dryad's grove, if no one has already encountered her.
- In another corner of the garden is a small hill with a "temple" at the top. The structure is composed of seven marble pillars topped with a round marble roof. Everything is intricately carved. It can accommodate three people comfortably. If a character sits on one of the silk cushions on the ground, unseen servants will produce refreshments: a flask that pours the character's chosen beverage, and a platter filled with cheeses, fruits, and sweets. There is a 10% chance the offerings will be tainted with mold or rot, evidence of the problems in the garden.
- There are a few tricks in the garden, essentially harmless traps. A character who trips one of them may suffer one of the following effects detailed in the sidebar.

THE GARDEN'S TRAPS

The DM can choose one or more traps for the characters to encounter

- A cloud of multicolored bubbles surrounds the character for one minute. The bubbles smell and taste like honey.
- Illusory moths appear and flutter around the character for one minute.
- Ethereal piping sounds around the character for one minute, inspiring them to dance.
- The character can levitate for one minute. They'll be lowered down gently at the end of the effect.

SCENE B: THE GROVE

The most prominent feature of the garden is a grove of trees, planted in a perfect circle around a clearing of soft grass.

AREA INFORMATION

This area has the following features:

Dimensions & Terrain. The clearing is about 100 feet in diameter, and the surrounding trees block the view of the garden beyond.

Lighting. The same twilight glow lights the sky. A flickering in the trees might be fireflies.

A Restful Spot. A path leads from the doorway to this clearing of lush green grass about 100 feet into the garden. It is surrounded by trees planted in a circle, and concentric rings of flowers and plants. There are a few stone benches in the clearing, artfully carved with elven designs.

A **dryad** emerges from her tree and asks the characters what they're doing in the garden. The dryad recognizes Inina, if she is with the party. If asked, the dryad explains that the garden is under assault from some evil creatures from the darker corners of the Feywild. She requests the characters help to eliminate the threat (**Scene C**).

CREATURES/NPCs

One **dryad** and a dozen **pixies** are in this area.

Objectives/Goals. The dryad is a long-time resident of this grove. She was called there by Ahghairon a long time ago, and her task is to watch over the garden, which Ahghairon uses as a retreat when he wants to “get outside” without leaving his tower. The pixies also live in the garden; they came from the Feywild as well. The dryad seeks help in eliminating the dark fey in

What Does She Know? The dryad is loyal to Ahghairon, and his recent absence from the garden worries her. She is unaware that the real Ahghairon has been imprisoned by the arcanaloth. The pixies know that the dimensional rifts are becoming more frequent.

SCENE C: SHAMBLY CHIC

The characters move toward the shadowed part of the woods, where the unpleasant smell is emanating. What causes them to move there depends on how this encounter unfolds:

- They can discover it through their own explorations.
- The dryad can point them to source of the trouble.
- A surprise attack by any of the evil creatures in this area can lead the characters to the source.

In any case, the characters discover that this part of the woods is unwholesomely dark, with webs or long mosses hanging from the branches of blighted trees.

AREA INFORMATION

Dimensions & Terrain. This area is heavily shadowed, the tree branches thick and the ground overgrown with vines. Moving off the path leads the characters into difficult terrain that is boggy and contains small sinkholes. There are a few spots of higher ground (a foot or so above the waterline) where footing is safer.

Lighting. There is almost no light here. Even the fireflies avoid this part of the woods. The rift itself glows dimly (30 foot radius).

Smells & Sounds. The smell of rot and mold grows more pronounced the closer the characters get to the rift. On a successful Perception check (DC 12), characters can notice the smell of decaying flesh. The woods aren't quite silent, but all the pleasant noises of birds and breeze elsewhere in the garden are replaced with the occasional chittering, growling, and the unsettling sound of something heavy stepping on spongy, boggy ground not far away.

Rift. The characters notice a sickly greenish glow about forty feet away, off the path and in the difficult terrain. This is the rift that is allowing the nastier creatures of

the Feywild into the garden. Looking into the rift is like looking through a jagged window to the scene beyond: a nightmarish forest of twisted, dead trees in a bog, with massive growths of mold and fungi in place of healthy vegetation. Misshapen creatures prowl in the shadows, their eyes glowing red. Any character attempting to move through the rift takes 5d10 lightning damage (half damage on a saving throw), with the side effect of any stray bolts hitting and strengthening the shambling mound.

Closing the Rift. The characters can battle the creatures already here, but to solve the problem, they need to close the rift that keeps allowing them in. This can be done by means of a *dispel magic* (level 7) or a *hallow* spell.

CREATURES/NPCs

Five **thornys** growl at the characters and attack once they get within 20 feet of the rift. Ten **meenlocks** join the fray as soon as the characters are engaged. The area also hides 20 **twig blights** and 5 **vine blights**, which will attack if a character gets close enough, though they primarily function as a way to corral victims near the rift. In addition, a **shambling mound** has taken up residence in the new bog.

Objectives/Goals. These creatures emerged from the rift and are focused on turning the garden and its denizens to a world more like their own.

What Do They Know? The monsters know nothing of what's going on the tower. They don't know how to close the rift either.

WRAP-UP

After they defeat the monsters and close the rift, the dryad thanks the characters for their assistance. She points them to the fountain with healing waters if anyone is wounded. She explains that the threats to the garden are recent, and due to a number of small rifts in reality that let creatures in from other, more fell dimensions.

She hasn't seen Ahghairon in the garden since that point, and hasn't been able to tell him about the problem (she can't leave the garden). She asks the characters to report what happened to Ahghairon.

If the characters wish, they can benefit from a long rest in only an hour.

TREASURE & REWARDS

The dryad allows the characters to take some of the water from the fountain. She permits each character to fill up to two containers—each of which functions as a *potion of healing*. Those that disobey and fill more find their containers bone dry.

PLAYING THE PILLARS (SCENE B: THE GROVE)

Combat

Combat will happen once the characters encounter the boggles, the thornys, or the blights, but can be delayed until a few other encounters occur.

Exploration

There are several points of interest in the garden, which was designed as an amusing, relaxing getaway.

Social

The dryad is perfectly willing to talk once the threat is ended, but she's focused on the dangers upsetting her realm.

APPENDIX 5: MAGIC ITEM UNLOCK

Characters completing this adventure's objective unlock this magic item. Once unlocked, the item may be purchased once using treasure checkpoints. Once this item has been purchased, it's no longer available unless later unlocked by other means.

CUBIC GATE

Wondrous Item, very rare

This cube is 3 inches across and radiates palpable magical energy. The six sides of the cube are each keyed to a different plane of existence, one of which is the Material Plane. The other sides are linked to planes determined by the GM.

You can use an action to press one side of the cube to cast the *gate* spell with it, opening a portal to the plane keyed to that side. Alternatively, if you use an action to press one side twice, you can cast the *plane shift* spell (save DC 17) with the cube and transport the targets to the plane keyed to that side.

The cube has 3 charges. Each use of the cube expends 1 charge. The cube regains 1d3 expended charges daily at dawn. This item can be found on **Magic Item Table I** in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

Created by the wizard Hilather, the six sides of this cube are covered in characters from the language of Alzhedo. The six sides are keyed to: the Prime Material, the Elemental Plane of Fire, the Nine Hells, the Far Realm, the Outlands, and Arborea.

APPENDIX 6: DUNGEON MASTER TIPS

This adventure is designed for **three to seven 17th to 20th level characters** and is optimized for **five characters with an average party level (APL) of 18**. Characters outside this level range cannot participate in this adventure.

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To DM an adventure, you **must** have 3 to 7 players—each with their own character whose level is within the adventure's level range. Characters playing in a **hardcover** adventure may continue to play to but if they play a different hardcover adventure, they **can't return** to the first one if they're outside its level range.

PREPARING THE ADVENTURE

Before you start play, consider the following:

- Read through the adventure, taking notes of anything you'd like to highlight or remind yourself of while running the adventure, such as a way you'd like to portray an NPC or a tactic you'd like to use in a combat. Familiar yourself with the adventure's appendices and handouts.
- Gather any resources you'd like to use to aid you in running this adventure—such as notecards, a DM screen, miniatures, and battlemaps.
- Ask the players to provide you with relevant character information, such as name, race, class, and level; passive Wisdom (Perception), and anything specified as notable by the adventure (such as backgrounds, traits, flaws, etc.)

Players can play an adventure they previously played as a Player or Dungeon Master but may only play it once with a given character. Ensure each player has their character's adventure logsheet (if not, get one from the organizer). The players 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 advancement and treasure checkpoints, downtime days, and renown. These are updated 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 Players 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 THIS ADVENTURE

When combat is a possibility, the adventure will provide a sidebar that helps you to determine the best mix/number of opponents to provide them with to create an appropriate challenge. While you're not bound to these adjustments; they're here for your convenience and consideration.

To determine whether you should consider adjusting the adventure, add up the total levels of all the characters and divide the result by the number of characters (rounding .5 or greater up; .4 or less down). This is the group's average party level (APL). To approximate the **party strength** for the adventure, consult the table below.

DETERMINING PARTY STRENGTH

Party Composition	Party	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



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