

# AT DEATH'S DOOR

## EPISODE 10



BY PATRICK DUNNING

ACROSS EBERRON: CONVERGENCE MANIFESTO



# AT DEATH'S DOOR

*A DANGEROUS DELVE INTO THE DEPTHS OF THE DWELLING OF THE DEITY OF DEATH.*

EPISODE 10 OF *CONVERGENCE MANIFESTO*



AN ACROSS EBERRON ADVENTURE

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# INTRODUCTION

Welcome to *At Death's Door*, episode 10 of *Convergence Manifesto*, an Across Eberron adventure path. This adventure is the sequel to AE01-09: *Weathering the Storm*, [available on the Dungeon Masters Guild](#), using characters and story elements introduced in the previous adventure. This adventure plays best when used in conjunction with the [Wayfinder's Guide to Eberron \(WGtE\)](#) by Keith Baker. If your players are unfamiliar with either the Eberron setting or the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game, you may wish to use this set of [1st-level pregenerated characters, tailor-made for Eberron](#).

*At Death's Door* is an adventure designed for five 6th level characters to explore the diversity and themes of the Eberron Campaign Setting. Players will have a chance to explore the Lair of the Keeper, a location out of legend, said to be the location of that dark god's well of souls. The heroes are charged with finding an item said to grow only there.

## SUMMARY

*At Death's Door* is a dungeon crawl that takes place almost entirely in the upper chambers of the Lair of the Keeper. This lair belongs to an ancient dracolich that perhaps styles themselves after the legends of the Keeper, or perhaps even inspired them. This adventure is split into several sections.

**Stormhome.** The player characters are called to the home city of House Lyrandar to meet with Guild Handler Lhara regarding their quest for an artifact tethered to Dolurrh, the Realm of the Dead.

**The Descent.** Traveling by airship over the horrors of the Demon Wastes, the party descends into a vast canyon to find the Lair of the Keeper. After agreeing on a pickup point, the party skydives into the hellish landscape and hides to avoid the notice of a would-be god, then explores the surrounding area.

**The Lair of the Keeper.** The bulk of the adventure takes place in the upper chambers of a dracolich's lair in a manifest zone tied to Dolurrh, the Realm of the Dead. Surviving the horrors of this place is the main challenge of the adventure.

**The Ghaash'kala.** There is one last challenge standing between the players and their escape to the airship. The orc tribes called the Ghaash'kala consider it their holy duty to protect the rest of the world from the horrors of the Demon Wastes. They will attempt to stop anything from escaping the Wastes, unfortunately including our heroes.

## RUNNING THE ADVENTURE

*At Death's Door* is an action-packed dungeon crawl intended for five 6th-level characters and designed to take approximately 3-4 hours of game time. As the adventure is a dungeon crawl, there are branching paths within the dungeon, so the adventure can either be shortened or extended by the DM if you wish to close off paths within the dungeon to channel the party toward or away from the goal.

All monster stat blocks needed for encounters in this adventure are contained in **Appendix A: Bestiary**. A map of the dungeon can be found in **Appendix B: Maps**.

While running the adventure, look out for the following formatting:

Text like this is intended to be read aloud or paraphrased for your players.

Sidebar like this contain rules reminders, reveal background Eberron lore, or point you to sources to learn more.



## CAST OF CHARACTERS

In *At Death's Door*, the player characters travel to one of the most desolate places on Khorvaire. These are among the deadly creatures that they may meet.

### MAJOR CHARACTERS

**Rabanu** (RA-ban-oo). A rakshasa who has plotted for many ages to free the demon Overlord Katashka, the Gatekeeper. He believes that the souls contained in the Lair of the Keeper can be put to better use under his command, bringing him one step closer to ushering in a new Age of Demons.

*Personality:* I don't let little things like imprisonment and torture get me down, all things are temporary.

*Ideal:* I am pragmatic, mortals dealt with fairly make better catspaws than those dealt with cruelty.

*Bond:* Fiends are the natural masters of this world, and the natural order must be restored.

*Flaw:* Having all of eternity to enact my plans has made me sloppy.

**Bhrax** (BRAX). An imp and familiar to the rakshasa Rabanu. Since Rabanu's capture, he has been acting as his master's eyes on the outside. Too weak to free him, Bhrax keeps in telepathic contact, watching and waiting. When the party appears he reports to his master about it.

*Personality:* This one is a coward, would rather run or beg than fight.

*Ideal:* This one lives to serve.

*Bond:* The master's will is stronger than this one, it must obey.

*Flaw:* This one has no pride and will not hesitate to humiliate itself to survive.

**Nora Bawn** (NOR-uh BAWN). The ghost of a middle-aged human woman, her residual image appears well dressed in modern Aundarian style. Trapped within the Lair of the Keeper, she has somehow managed to keep her mind against the entrapping effect of Dolurrrh. In life, she was a priestess of the Keeper, and will try to lie to the party to get them to rescue her soul.

*Personality:* I do not let little things like honor, the truth, or basic human decency get in the way of what I want.

*Ideal:* There are two kinds of people, those who exist to be manipulated, and me.

*Bond:* I am the only one who matters.

*Flaw:* I might have chronic backstabbing disorder.

**Anuul** (ah-NEWL). A demon of decay who acts as a physical servant of the dracolich. Anuul believes that the dracolich is an avatar of the Keeper and literally worships the dracolich.

*Personality:* What I lack in smarts I make up for in enthusiasm. Mostly for dead rotten things.

*Ideal:* There is beauty in rot.

*Bond:* I am decay, the Keeper is the god of decay, so the Keeper is god of me.

*Flaw:* I am not a smart demon.

**Sorma** (SOR-mah). A twisted, undead abomination that the dracolich created when a foolish mortal found his way to the Lair to swear his undying loyalty to the dracolich. His mind has been twisted, but he has been commanded to do no harm to those who worship the Keeper.

*Personality:* I do as I am told. I am only a tool.

*Ideal:* I was a man once, a man!

*Bond:* Literally bound into servitude.

*Flaw:* The only emotion I can feel is hate.

**Devent** (DEV-ehnt). An orc paladin of the Ghaash'kala. He has spent decades protecting the world from the horrors of the Demon Wastes. Recently, he has had visions of evil flying from the Wastes in a ship in the sky. He will stop that from happening—or die trying.

*Personality:* I am weary, and the decades of hunting evil have taken their toll. My resolve is firm, but I'm slipping.

*Ideal:* I don't like killing ignorant fools who made it past us into the Wastes. It is sad, but necessary.

*Bond:* Kalok Shash and the Ghaash'kala are the only thing standing between the world and destruction.

*Flaw:* I am never swayed by extenuating circumstances. I cannot be, for the world would suffer if I were.



## ACROSS EBERRON CHARACTERS

The following characters are recurring characters in the Across Eberron series, though Faurious does not appear directly in this adventure.

**Guild Handler Lhara** (LAHR-ah). Lhara is a shifter with white hair streaked with black. Her skin is pale, she has blue eyes, and wears an eyepatch over the left. She holds a middling position of authority within the Clifftop Guild. Lhara is the characters' handler inside Clifftop and is trying to increase the guild's coffers and reputation.

*Personality:* I am always calm, no matter what the situation. I never raise my voice or let my emotions control me.

*Ideal:* Clifftop Adventurers' Guild. The Guild is my home and its members are my family.

*Bond:* I will prove that Clifftop is the best group of skilled troubleshooters and that we can get any job done.

*Flaw:* I am very sarcastic, and it can be difficult for people to tell when I am being serious.

**Provost Nigel Faurious** (NIGH-jel FAR-ee-us). The Provost is very focused on his work and is often lost in thought. He seeks to prove his theories on planar bodies and is willing to spend the money required to build his strange device.

*Personality:* I am horribly, horribly awkward in social situations and have little patience for any conversation that doesn't have to do with my work.

*Ideal:* No Limits. Nothing should fetter the infinite possibility inherent in all existence.

*Bond:* My life's work is the study of planar bodies and their effects on Eberron. I must complete my work and be given the recognition I deserve.

*Flaw:* Unlocking an ancient mystery is worth every coin of my family fortune.

### CLIFFTOP ADVENTURERS' GUILD

Eberron, of course, has its share of organizations dedicated to the support and employment of exceptional individuals. Professional adventurers in good standing might be invited to join the Clifftop Adventurers' Guild (*WGtE* 150, *Sharn: City of Towers* 52), based in the Clifftop district of Upper Dura, Sharn. It was founded 150 years ago by a dwarf named Shekkal Korranor. The current leader is Sumara Korranor, better known among her charges as Summer.

The reputation of the CAG is well earned, and members are expected to uphold the Guild's virtuous principles. Their long-standing rivals, the Deathsgate Guild, have no such inclinations.



## SCENE 1: STORMHOME

*"It is an established arcane fact that the soul can be drawn on for power. Given this truth, the power contained within Dolurrh must be immeasurable—if only it can be tapped."*

*—fragment of Provost Nigel Faurious's Convergence Manifesto*

*At Death's Door* begins with the assumption that player characters are members of the Clifftop Adventurers' Guild of Sharn, and have previously completed at least one adventure in the Convergence Manifesto series. Lhara, the party's contact and handler for the guild, requests that they meet her in the city of Stormhome in the nation of Aundair, the hometown of House Lyrandar.

After a short respite and recuperation from your last adventure, a letter finds its way to you, bearing the familiar wax seal of the Clifftop Guild.

*"Yet another job calls for your winter cloaks. If you would be so kind as to meet me in Stormhome, I'll be staying at the Fair Weather Arms. Our benefactor requests our services once again to retrieve an artifact from a place of myth and legend. We're sending you into the Wastes, though I should be able to make arrangements that will let us pass over the worst of it... Enjoy your cruise to Stormhome, because after that it is going to get interesting.*

*— Guild Handler Lhara, Clifftop Adventurers' Guild."*

The letter is packaged with several all-expenses paid tickets for first class cabins, first on the lightning rail to Aruldusk in Thrane, then on board a joint House Ghallanda/House Lyrandar riverboat casino that will take the characters the rest of the way up Scion's Sound toward the island city of Stormhome.

### STORMHOME, ISLAND PARADISE

Several hundred years ago, the dragonmarked house of Lyrandar leased a northern barren, cold, rocky island from the Kingdom of Galifar. With the magic inherent in the mystical Mark of the Storm, they manipulated the weather around the island to turn it into a paradise. The weather is kept perfect, with rain only falling when it is scheduled and given permission to. The oceanic winds are tempered to suit the needs of the residents, so that there is always a fair wind at hand for the massive harbor.

Today, the lease agreement continues with the Kingdom of Aundair. Stormhome is the headquarters of the house, the port of call for the northern Lyrandar shipping fleets, and the home port for their entire airship fleet.

The city consists of mostly sailors, longshoremen, and half-elves connected to the house. With its ideal climate opposed to the rest of the northern shores along the Bitter Sea, it has also become a leisure destination for those who can afford the travel, with House Ghallanda operating several resorts within the island city.



The party arrives in Stormhome to see the grand sight of House Lyrandar's fleet in the sky above. The party will have no difficulty finding the hotel Lhara has booked for her stay while waiting for the party to catch up. When the party arrives, she takes them aside to a private room. Read or paraphrase the following:

"I'm glad you were able to make it. I have something special for you, the stuff of legends," Lhara smiles and seems genuinely excited about the prospect she has for you. "I don't know if you know the stories. In the frozen north of the Demon Wastes there is a scar upon the land, ninety miles long, thirty wide, and no one knows how deep. The Lair of the Keeper. Legend tells us the Sovereign Lord of Death and Decay himself lives there. His faithful also believe that he does, or at least that his avatar does. Something does. The Keeper's strongest and most fanatic followers go there once every thirteen years to make offerings to it and seek its blessings.

"That's the only time we know it leaves its lair unguarded, traveling to the rim of the massive canyon to hold court over its worshipers. That's our way in. There's an airship here in Stormhome. Light, fast, uses an air elemental. At night, with no lanterns lit, it's practically invisible. We fly in. Its captain is crazy enough to take the charter. We get to avoid all the twisted horrors of the Demon Wastes, the Carrion Tribes, the Ghaash'kala, monsters, and the titular demons. We fly in, you dive into the Lair of the Keeper while it's out.

"There is supposed to be untold wealth down there, but don't get greedy, I need you focused. In the first century, the hero Jorna Nuran was said to have gone in to retrieve the soul of her love who was taken by the Keeper. One of the things she came back with was a Dolurrrh-infused Khyber shard shaped like a tuning fork. Said to be within was the voice of the Keeper itself. According to legend, all she had to do was strike the fork and she could speak to the dead any time she wanted. It was a myth, a legend.

"We know the artifact existed, the Provost found copies of a contemporary report from the Arcane Congress about it. The *Voice of the Keeper* was destroyed centuries ago during Tira Miron's crusade. But the firsthand account the Arcane Congress took from Jorna Nuran herself tells us that it was but one of many in those caves. She said these fork-shaped shards grew from the walls. You go in, find one, and get out.

"So, do you feel up to stealing from a god?"

## WHAT LHARA KNOWS

**What is the Keeper?** "God of Death, Decay, and Greed, of course, but I assume you mean the thing that *claims* to be the Keeper. I'm assuming you aren't the superstitious sort that think that one of the Dark Six lives in a hole in the ground. Some say the thing down there is a dragon, others that it is a demon, legends vary. Point is, we know that it won't be home when we get there."

**What does the *Voice of the Keeper* do?** "According to legend, if you ring it like a tuning fork, you can use it to ask questions of the dead. I know some holy men who can do that, but this will let anyone do it, and often."

**What is the airship like?** "*Whisper of the Storm*, one of the first-generation airships. Which means she's smaller than the ones they're putting in the air these days. Has an air elemental powering her, so she doesn't light up the night like the fire rings that are so popular these days. Since she isn't much of a cargo hauler, Captain Alvis d'Lyrandar has taken to using her to fly in and out of places all quiet-like. Perfect for our needs. Gets us over the real nasty stuff of the Demon Wastes."

**What are the Demon Wastes?** "Worst place on Khorvaire. Still looks like the world did in the Age of Demons, when fiends ruled the world, if you believe in that sort of thing. The land is sick and twisted, full of monsters, savages, and demon-hunting orc zealots."

**How can we be sure the Keeper won't be home?** "The Provost has wanted one of these things for a long time. The research is his. I didn't ask how he found out about this secret holiday of the Dark Six, but he is absolutely certain it's true."

**What are the Carrion Tribes?** "Savages. They say anyone who has tried to settle that land has died, if they're lucky. And if they're unlucky... well, they go mad. Turn feral, turn into cannibals."

**What are the Ghaash'kala?** "Orc border tribes. Live in the mountains outside the Wastes. Try to discourage anyone from going in. They kill anything trying to make it out. Which is why we're going to avoid them altogether."

**What exactly is the plan?** "We fly in. We find a place suitable to pick you up. You jump off with some *feather tokens*. Hide, wait for the thing to leave, then explore its cave looking for one of these crystal forks. Simple."

Lhara offers the characters 700 gp each for successful completion of the mission. She can give the party time enough in Stormhome to gather any supplies they believe they will need. As the main port of call for House Lyrandar, many tools are available. Once the party is prepared for their journey, they may gather at the high House Lyrandar docking tower housing the *Whisper of the Storm* and her cocky half-elf captain. Lhara will be joining the party on the ship and will meet them at the docking tower. Once safely on board, the ship will take off toward the forsaken land of the Demon Wastes.

## THE DARK SIX

The gods of Eberron are not known to walk the face of the world. There are stories, of course, tales, legends, and faith, but there is no evidence that they ever have. Some in the world do not believe that the Sovereign Host or the Dark Six even exist at all.

For those who believe, the Sovereign Host are the pantheon of gods whose divine power can be channeled by mortals. But not all the Sovereigns are benevolent. Six were cast out of the Pantheon. These Six stand apart, the Dark Six. Gods of destructive wild forces. Gods of evil. Gods of change. This adventure is primarily concerned with one of them, the Keeper. He is the Sovereign of Death and Decay, Greed and Gluttony, Time and Entropy.

## SCENE 2: DESCENT

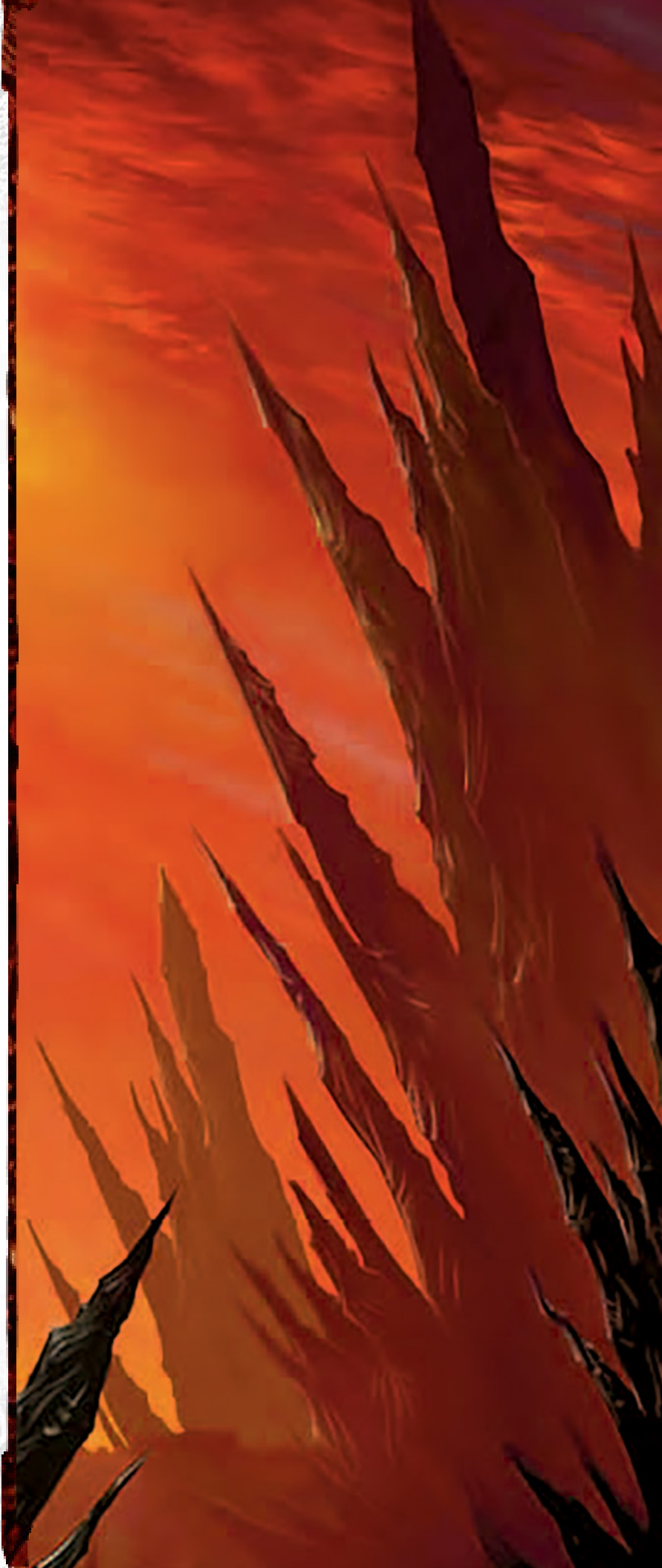
The airship makes its way northwest from Stormhome, across the Eldeen Bay, toward the Demon Wastes and the Lair of the Keeper. Read or paraphrase the following:

The altitude makes the bite of the cold northern air even worse as the airship, *Whisper of the Storm*, dares the skies of the Demon Wastes. Now that the sun has set, with all the lights on deck extinguished, it is nearly invisible and silent in the sky. However, the Ring of Siberys and the moons of Eberron offer enough light for you to see the blasted wasteland below. It is a chill, inhospitable expanse of badlands said to be home to nothing but cannibals, monsters, and demons.

About an hour after sunset, the land ahead darkens, looking as though the world comes to an end. Ahead, the twisted badlands drop off into nothingness, a vast open hole yawning wide ahead of you. “That canyon is said to be the widest and deepest in all of Khorvaire,” Guild Handler Lhara says beside you on the deck. “Within its depths lies the Lair of the Keeper. Look,” she points to lights and fires near the rim of the massive canyon. “The Keeper’s faithful gather to make deals with their god. The ceremony is supposed to happen at midnight. Could last days, but don’t count on it. That will be your window to enter, just make sure you wait until this would-be god leaves his Lair.”

Lhara passes out charms that should be very familiar to the party by now, *feather tokens*. The plan is for the airship to circle well away from the camp of the Keeper’s followers, go down into the canyon below the rim and have the party skydive down near the Lair. The party will hide, wait for the Keeper to leave, then enter. When they are done, Lhara reminds them that they are to make their way to a nearby promontory of rock for retrieval.

When the party asks about signaling for retrieval, Lhara gives the party a tiny mallet, and explains, “We’re working off old legends here, we don’t exactly have a map. The Song of Sir Jorna states that the entrance to the Lair can be found ‘where the River of Bone and Blood ends, falling below to Khyber’s depths.’ Let’s hope that isn’t a bard’s metaphor. If this waterfall exists, it will be our landmark, and we’ll try to spot somewhere suitable for pickup nearby. Strike that mallet against any hard surface and it’ll cause a bell I have here to ring. That will be our signal to come pick you up.”





Once the characters have asked Lhara any remaining questions they have about the mission, read or paraphrase the following:

The *Whisper of the Storm* dives down below the rim of the canyon, well away from the camp of the Keeper's faithful. The canyon is deep and very dark, in the low light of the moons you can barely make out the bottom far below. Your ears pop as you descend ever further down, as they do you begin to hear agonized, wordless whispers on the wind.

As the River of Bone and Blood comes into view below you, Lhara sighs sarcastically, "I'm not sure what I was expecting."

The metallic stink of blood rises from the dark liquid, its true color unknowable in the dim moonlight. The river crashes and froths against what massive skulls and ribs of immense creatures of days gone by.

Following the path of the grizzly river, you begin to hear the rush of a waterfall, then the river ends abruptly at a deep black pit. Across the hole the canyon continues, though that side is full of needle-like spires.

As the party gathers their equipment and prepares to leap into this dark land, Lhara reminds them to first find the entrance, then hide themselves well and wait until *after* the Keeper leaves before entering the Lair.

The character with the highest passive Perception can see a wide flat area suitable for a jump, to the right of the river bank just before the pit. Nearby, there also appears to be a ledge that should be suitable for pickup. Read or paraphrase the following:

As you leap over the side of the *Whisper of the Storm* and begin to freefall, you realize that you are higher up than you thought. The ground is not rushing up at you nearly as fast as you expected. That is when the true size of the place hits you. The pit, the river, the bones of those titanic beasts are all so much bigger than you thought.

Once the party makes landfall, the airship disappears into the darkness above, and the characters are left to find the Lair. The area is devoid of most plant life, despite (or perhaps because of) the rapidly flowing River of Bone and Blood. Ahead of the party, they can see the river flows into an enormous pit, falling down into Khyber below. If any characters investigate the river, they find that the water is red, but is not actually as thick as blood. The water here is poisonous and anyone who drinks the water must succeed on a DC 20 Constitution save or be poisoned for ten minutes.

As the party moves closer to the pit, they can see the entrance to the Lair of the Keeper (see area **K1: Main Entrance**) is a massive cave opening on the far side of this pit, about fifty feet down. The climb down will not be difficult; however, at the entrance of the Lair, the character with the highest passive Perception can see a shadowed humanoid figure, though they do not seem to have noticed the party yet.

The characters may attempt a DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) or Intelligence (Investigation) check to find another way into the Lair. Upon a success, they discover a crack in the cliff wall far to the right of the entrance that might offer another means of entry (see area **K2: Side Entrance**).



As Lhara warned before dropping off the party, they should hide and wait for the dracolich to leave before entering safely. There are many hollows and crags, and outcropping of bone they can hide below, behind, and within. Assuming that the characters choose to do so, the party may attempt a DC 10 group stealth check, made with advantage, since they will have plenty of time to hide before the Keeper emerges from his Lair.

If more than half the characters fail this check (or if they refuse to hide before the Keeper comes out or attempt to make themselves known to him), see the sidebar, “So You Were Caught by the Keeper?”

If at least half of the characters succeed on this check, read or paraphrase the following:

Time moves slowly, but at last it nears the midnight hour. From your hidden vantage point you see something stir within the mouth of the cave leading to the Lair of the Keeper, until finally it emerges. Once it was a dragon, and it must have been very old when it died, for the skeletal frame that remains is truly massive, easily 90 feet long. The single crested skull is enormous and could crush a lightning rail cart in its maw. The light of its glowing red eyes causes its long, pointed teeth to glisten strangely in the light, as though the teeth are made from dragonshards.

As it steps out onto the shelf that extends in front of the cave mouth, the air temperature, already cold, drops another twenty degrees. Stretching up to its full height, the undead dragon, the creature some believe to be the avatar of the Sovereign of Death and Decay himself, spreads its skeletal wings. The skin of its wings has long since rotted away, but as the wing bones open wide to a wingspan of over seventy feet, they wrap themselves in a pale white ghostly mist. Something about the way it moves seems unnatural, animated by necromancy rather than sinew and muscle. Launching itself into the air and beating its spectral wings, you can feel the force of the air from your hiding place. The wind chills you to the bone as coarse dust swirls up in the wake of the self-proclaimed god's passing.

### SO YOU WERE CAUGHT BY THE KEEPER?

While this adventure is designed to make hiding from the dracolich easy, there is always a chance of the party failing spectacularly, refusing to hide at all, or even attempting to attack or make contact with the dracolich as it emerges from his Lair.

The dracolich is entirely beyond the party's ability to fight, and if the players give any indication they plan to confront it, this should be made explicitly clear. However, if it does become aware of their presence, it need not immediately come to a combat (which the party has no hope of winning and will lead to their rapid demise).

The Keeper is a deity who, according to legend, makes bargains. Whatever the true nature of the dracolich is, whether it believes itself to be a god or not, the perpetuation of the common belief that it is an avatar of a god suits it. If the party is discovered, the dracolich will ask them what they are after. If they tell it that they are after the *Voice of the Keeper*, it will ask what they are offering in exchange for it. It might ask in trade for the soul of one of the characters to be collected upon their natural death, or it may ask the party to assassinate a specific individual with one of its fangs, which it will provide. The fang is a dagger-sized Khyber dragonshard; anyone slain with such a weapon has their soul taken by to the Lair of the Keeper and cannot be resurrected through normal means. If the party agrees to one of these stipulations, the dracolich will tell them they are free to have the *Voice of the Keeper* they seek, if they can find one. It confirms that they grow within the cave, and the party will have to retrieve it themselves—“but take nothing else.” Then, it goes on its way, as it has an appointment to keep. The consequences of such a deal are outside the bounds of this adventure, but can be explored while the party is between missions with the Clifftop Guild.



As the dracolich flies away, any character with passive Perception 16 or higher notices that the dust it whips up briefly outlines an invisible creature that is beside the characters in their hiding place. This is an imp by the name of **Bhrax**, tasked with keeping an eye on the Lair for the Lords of Dust, specifically Rabanu (see area **K10: Imprisoned Fiend**). Bhrax saw the party come down in the airship and followed them to learn what they might be after. He fears the Lair and will not follow them into it. He is not much of a challenge to the party and will attempt to flee if detected. If wounded and not immediately killed, he will put on a display of craven cowardice and beg for his life, speaking about himself in third person as “this one.”

### WHAT DOES BHRAX KNOWS?

If he is captured, Bhrax will freely divulge information the information below, though he will constantly ask for his freedom between answers.

**Who are you?** “This one is Bhrax. This one is eyes for the watching of the Lair.”

**What do you watch for? Who is your master?** “This one watches the Lair of the dead wyrm by the will of his masters, the Lords of Dust in Ashtakala.”

**Why do you watch?** “The dead wyrm is powerful enemy, enemies must be watched. This one watches.”

**What can you tell us of the Lair?** “This one does not enter. The dead fill that place. The wyrm leaves rarely. The entrances are guarded.”

**What guards the entrance?** “A champion slain stands guard at the cave mouth. The sisters protect the crack that goes through, so that none may slip in unknown. But no soul watches the back way.”

**Entrances? The back way?** “Through the needle spires, there is a fissure that extends down. It is where the dead worm disposes of the bodies of any who dare enter. This one knows that if bodies come *out*, there must be a way *in*.” After finishing their conversation with Bhrax, the party can choose to proceed through the needle spires to Area K3: Back Entrance.

**Why dispose of the bodies?** “Flesh does not interest the dead wyrm. Souls he desires.”

### NATURE OF THE KEEPER

The gods do not walk the face of Eberon, but this doesn't stop some beings from claiming that they are those gods. The dracolich within the Lair of the Keeper is one such being, and followers of the Keeper consider it an avatar of their dark deity.

The true nature of the dracolich in the Lair of the Keeper is unknown. Some believe that it is Mazyralyx, the first dracolich who was transformed in the age of demons. Others believe that it is a mad follower of the Thir religion of Argonessen, and that it actually believes he has ascended to godhood. Others whisper that perhaps it is a follower of the Demon Overlord Katashka, the Gatekeeper. Some say that it is all three, that Mazyralx made a deal with Katashka to gain the power to fight and help seal the other overlords from the world before turning on his master and becoming the basis for the myth of the Keeper. The choice is ultimately up to you as DM or can be left ambiguous. The only thing that the dracolich definitely isn't would be the Keeper himself.

This dracolich is the remains of a gargantuan ancient white dragon. It has divine spellcasting powers one would expect from something claiming to be a god and can cast 9th level cleric spells. A stat block is not provided for purposes of this adventure, as the party has no chance of survival against such a creature.



## SCENE 3: LAIR OF THE KEEPER

The Lair of the Keeper is formed out of a massive geode of Khyber dragonshards that has grown around a manifest zone to Dolurrh, the Realm of the Dead. Souls are drawn from Dolurrh and trapped within the Khyber shards. These souls may have been drawn here after being traded away as a deal made with one of the faithful of the Keeper, or perhaps the soul was stolen by one of those same faithful when slain with a Keeper's Fang weapon. Souls trapped within the Lair of the Keeper cannot be resurrected or reincarnated under normal circumstances, unless their soul is retrieved from the Lair. Throughout the ages, various cultures of Khorvaire have told tales of heroes managing such a feat, but they are few and far between.

The area that the party will be able to explore as part of this adventure is only a small part of the true lair. The dracolich has encouraged the growth of the crystals to enclose his true lair in the heart of the geode. Accessing it is near-impossible, requiring methods such as casting *passwall* or mining through 20 feet of solid dragonshards in area **K8: Lonely Soul**.

### LAIR FEATURES

The entire lair can be assumed to have the following features, unless otherwise noted in a particular area.

**Ceilings.** Cavern ceilings are 30 feet high, while tunnels are 15 feet high.

**Light.** The souls bound within the Khyber dragonshards glow with a ghostly light tinged blue, providing dim illumination.

**Dragonshards.** Players familiar with the setting may know that dragonshards are incredibly valuable, and the contents of this massive geode are likely worth millions of galifars. However, trying to actually mine any of the shards would be a lethal task. The act of breaking off a shard worth 50 gp from the walls, ceiling, or floor would free 1d4+2 **specters**, hungry for the life they no longer have. These undead, each of which can reduce a character's maximum hit points, should discourage the party from destroying Khorvaire's economy. However, if they wish to give it a try, breaking off a Khyber shard worth 50 gp requires dealing 20 HP of damage to a surface with a dragonshard with a bludgeoning weapon or mining tool.

**Effects of the Manifest Zone.** The influence of Dolurrh hangs heavy in this place. Characters in the Lair will begin to feel a sense of existential dread and ennui. All senses seem slightly numbed. Though it gives no mechanical penalties to perception, characters will find that colors and sounds, including the sound of each other's voices, seem dull, listless, and uninteresting. This apathy is the result of Dolurrh's field of entrapment bleeding over into this world.

**Entrapment Field.** A version of the apathy field that pervades Dolurrh bleeds over into this manifest zone. Upon first entering any of the entrances to the Lair of the Keeper (K1, K2, or K3), all players must succeed on a DC 12 Wisdom save, or suffer one level of exhaustion as a result of being overcome with a malaise of apathy. In addition, failing the save by 5 or more results in a temporary state, lasting one hour, where the character stares off into space blankly until prompted to action by another character. Once prompted, the character can once again act normally.

If the characters take a short rest within the Lair, the save must be repeated. If they take a long rest, the save must be made with disadvantage. While in the manifest zone, levels of exhaustion cannot be reduced with a long rest.

If a character reaches six levels of exhaustion while within the Lair of the Keeper, instead of dying, they become a **greater skulk** (see area **K7**).

**Visions of Lives Gone.** The lost souls collected by the Keeper attack as normal. However, when they hit with their attacks, their target receives brief flashes of moments of that soul's life. These visions are of important moments in these lost souls' lives, often visions of how they died. This has no mechanical effect in combat, but fleshes out the stories of these specters, ghosts, and wraiths to make them more than disposable monsters.

In each area, a brief description is provided of any significant spectral antagonists. This information should be shared in flashes of visions as they attack the party, making each encounter more memorable.

**Forbiddance.** The Lair is under a persistent warding similar to the *forbiddance* spell, which prevents any creatures from teleporting into or out of the bounds of the Lair, or from using portals, such as those created by the gate spell, to enter or exit the Lair. The spell proofs the Lair against planar travel, and therefore prevents creatures from accessing the Lair by way of any other planes or the *plane shift* spell. Teleportation abilities, such as *misty step*, if used while in the Lair, still function when moving to other locations within the Lair itself.



## K1: MAIN ENTRANCE

If the party chooses to approach the main entrance, read or paraphrase the following:

Directly across from the roaring falls of crimson water, there is a shelf-like cliff about fifty feet down from the pit's edge. It slopes back into a yawning cave.

This is the most obvious entrance to the Lair of the Keeper, and the party can climb down to it without difficulty. Upon entering this area, characters must succeed on a DC 12 Wisdom saving throw or suffer the effects of the manifest zone's entrapment field (see **Lair Features** for effects). The initial cave entrance is dark, not dimly lit as further in the Lair, as the Khyber shards that provide light do not extend this close to the entrance.

As the characters approach, they will see a dark hooded figure standing just within the dark shadows of the cave mouth. Should they try to attack him from range, he will step back behind cover until they try to enter. Should the party approach, the figure will step out into the moonlight and pull

back his hood. The light reveals a ghostly spectral creature that seems to be wearing very real armor and has a very real sword. But the most shocking thing is that the creature's face looks just like that of one of the player characters.

In life, this **sword wraith commander** was called the Broker, a changeling paladin of the Keeper and serial killer in Sharn. He would murder people, seal their souls within coins consecrated to the Keeper, then have the victims replaced by criminal changelings. He killed dozens of men, women, and children before he was killed in an attempt to murder a Brelish member of Parliament at the Celestial Vista restaurant situated in on the Skyway in Sharn.

A servant to the Keeper in death as he was in life, he has no interest in speaking to the characters. Instead he will immediately use his Call to Honor action to draw the souls of his murder victims to fight on his behalf. When these poor souls strike out, the Visions of Lives Gone will be of their murders at the hands of the Broker. As the Broker fights, he changes his face to match that of whichever target he intends to attack that round.

This entryway leads to **K5: Pit of Flesh**.



## K2: SIDE ENTRANCE

If the party succeeds in finding the side entrance and chooses to use that approach, read or paraphrase the following:

Just shy of two hundred feet to the right of the entrance, there is a deep fissure in the rock wall that juts in toward the Lair of the Keeper. The jagged cliff offers plenty of handholds to make your way down, dangling above the gaping black pit that seems impossibly deep.

A successful DC 10 Strength (Athletics) check is required to climb down to the fissure. Upon a failure, the character loses their grip and falls toward the abyss; luckily, rather than falling into Khyber, they abruptly land on a rocky outcrop 30 feet down and take 3d6 bludgeoning damage from the fall.

Once they reach the fissure, whether by climbing or falling, the characters can see a dark passage that leads deeper into the rock, a pale light shining from far within. Once the party climbs into the fissure and begins down the tunnel, characters must succeed on a DC 12 Wisdom saving throw or suffer the effects of the manifest zone's entrapment field (see Lair Features for effects). As the wave of ennui passes over the party, read or paraphrase the following:

Your steps falter briefly as you the air grows thick around you. A wave of apathy seems to float across you. As it does so, two figures slowly materialize in the air in front of you, translucent white forms of two elven women. Their features are gaunt and the ghostly image of their skin is drawn tight over their cheek bones. They begin speaking to each other in the elven tongue.

Any characters that know Elvish can understand the two elves talking excitedly to each other about their unexpected guests.

*"Look sister, unexpected guests, isn't that delightful?"*

*"Of course, it is dear, it is just such a shame you were not able to make yourself look presentable to them."*

*"I wake up presentable, I do not require the hours or work it takes to make you presentable."*

And so on, back and forth, sniping at each other.

These two **banshees**, Xanaphia and Antinua Liadon, were sisters in life, each growing up envious of the other. By their parent's design, they were set against one another and made to compete for attention and approval. A suitor from the continent, Aust Aukiir, took advantage of this environment. An elf who grew up in Khorvaire then traveled to Aerenal to 'reconnect with his roots,' Aust was devilishly handsome and wealthy. The sisters' parents encouraged both of their daughters to try to woo him. Secretly a priest of the Keeper, he manipulated the pair into secretly converting to the dark faith in an effort to use the power the Keeper provided to one-up the other. This escalated until Aust was able to get each to swear away their souls before providing them the means to kill the other. They did so, only to find their souls trapped in the Lair.

The two will engage any character who is able to speak Elvish, quizzing them on which of the two is the most brilliant and charming and lovely. To pass without combat, the characters can attempt to flatter each sister in turn, while assuring them that any compliment paid to the other is out of pity. If the party takes this approach, a successful DC 12 Charisma (Deception) check prompts the narcissism of the banshees to believe the party is telling the truth only to them, and lying to their sister, despite hearing the same being told to the other. If the party attempts another approach to talking their way past the sisters, it will require a successful DC 20 Charisma (Persuasion) check.

These restless shades are in denial about being dead, and any acknowledgment of that causes them to turn hostile. If unable to placate the sisters, they will attack. If the party chooses one sister over the other, only the spurned sister will attack. In death, they are slaves of the dracolich and do not know anything of the interior of the Lair as they have been assigned to this entrance since almost the day their souls arrived.

This entryway leads to **K4: Camp of the Lost**.



### K3: BACK ENTRANCE

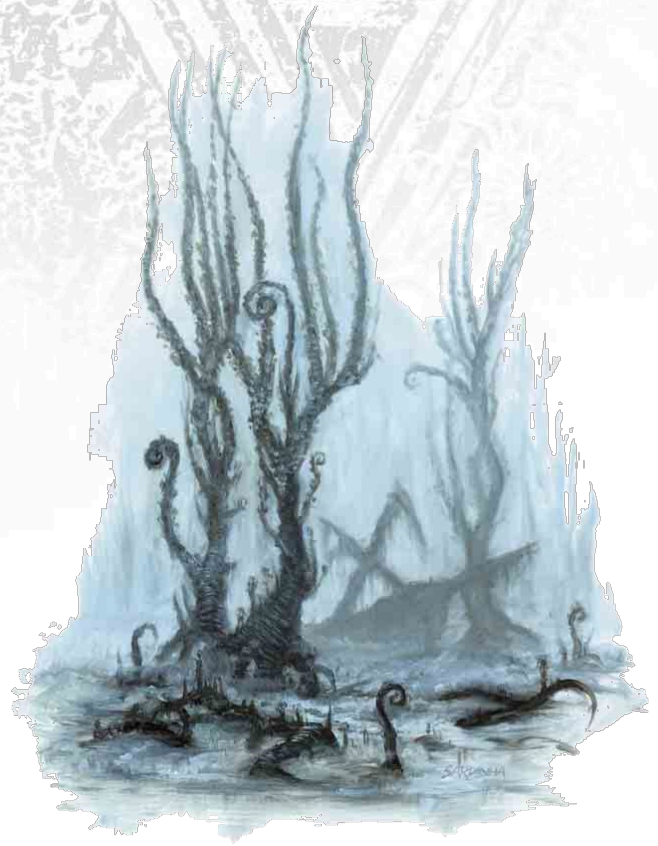
If the party learns about the back entrance from Bhrax and chooses to use that approach, read or paraphrase the following:

Beyond the pit, you weave your way through the needle-like spires that range anywhere from a handspan to as tall as an oak. You walk carefully and watch your step to avoid a new and unwanted foot piercing. After some time you approach a gully, and inside, you find the first plant life you've seen in this blasted canyon. A stunted tree with bone white wood, stiff prickly gray leaves, tiny white flowers, and gray berries. Down among its gnarled roots you see a number of bodies, and beyond it, you see a cave entrance.

As the party approaches the tree, characters must succeed on a DC 12 Wisdom saving throw or suffer the effects of the manifest zone's entrapment field (see Lair Features for effects).

The tree is a stunted and gnarled holly tree that, due to the effects of the manifest zone to Dolurrh, has become a **corpse flower**. When the party encounters the tree, it contains 6 corpses, remains of twisted creatures of the Demon Waste and humanoids from the Carrion Tribes. If the party uses some means of detecting undead in the vicinity, they will be aware of the souls that lie beneath them deeper in the Lair, but none in the immediate vicinity. The corpse flower is a plant that feeds on corpses and necromantic energy, but it is not itself undead. If the party tries to pass the plant to enter the tunnel, they will easily smell the stench of death and decay coming from the rotting pile of corpses tangled in its roots, and the corpse flower will animate and attempt to add the party to its collection of corpses.

With a groan the tree lurches forward, uprooting itself, and as it lumbers forward its roots writhe like tentacles passing corpses to its bows. The stench is horrible.



#### TREASURE

After the corpse flower is defeated, any proficient character may attempt a DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana or Nature) check. Upon a success, they recognize that this holly tree has been infused with the power of the manifest zone to Dolurrh. This fine-grained wood of imbued holly is white, appearing almost like ivory or bone. The trunk of this tree, if properly fashioned, can be made into an imbued wood arcane focus for channeling necrotic energy. This tree can yield either 1 staff, two rods, three wands, or one rod plus one wand.

#### IMBUED WOOD (DOLURRHAN HOLLY)

*Wondrous Item, common (requires attunement)*

Powerful manifest zones can infuse local trees with planar energies. A gifted artificer can tap into this to create a wand, staff, or rod that is especially effective at channeling a particular type of energy.

An *dolurrhan-imbued wood* arcane focus provides a +1 bonus when you roll damage for a spell that inflicts necrotic damage.

The back entrance leads to **K6: Servitors**.



## K4: CAMP OF THE LOST

If the party is coming from **K2: Side Entrance**, making this the first interior room of the geode that the party explores, read or paraphrase the following:

The narrow passage opens up into a breathtaking crystalline room. Surrounding you are walls, ceiling, floor, all formed of interlaced pillars of crystal. The crystals are deep dark blue, pulsing with inky-black veins, and a pale blue light, flickering, emanates from within the crystal. Dragonshards—you realize this entire room is made from Khyber dragonshards, worth a king's ransom. Looking closer, you see the flickers are coming from ghostly faces approaching near, then receding from the crystal surface, seemingly trapped within the binding crystals.

Whether or not this is the first room of the geode they enter, the party will also notice:

In the center of the room on the uneven floor, there is a circle of bedrolls and the remains of some old packs. They are in the style of the elves of Valenar, and seem old, as if they have been here for quite some time.

The party are not the first adventurers that have walked these passageways. A group of Valenar elves attempted to retrieve the soul of a fallen brother from these halls. This was their camp, but the group eventually fell victim to the entrapping effect of the manifest zone and became skulks (see area **K7: Fallen Adventurers**). There is no threat in this area save one the party may creature for themselves: dragonshards are valuable, so entrepreneurial players might try to find a shard to break off and take for themselves. Refer to Lair Features for the effects of breaking shards within the manifest zone.

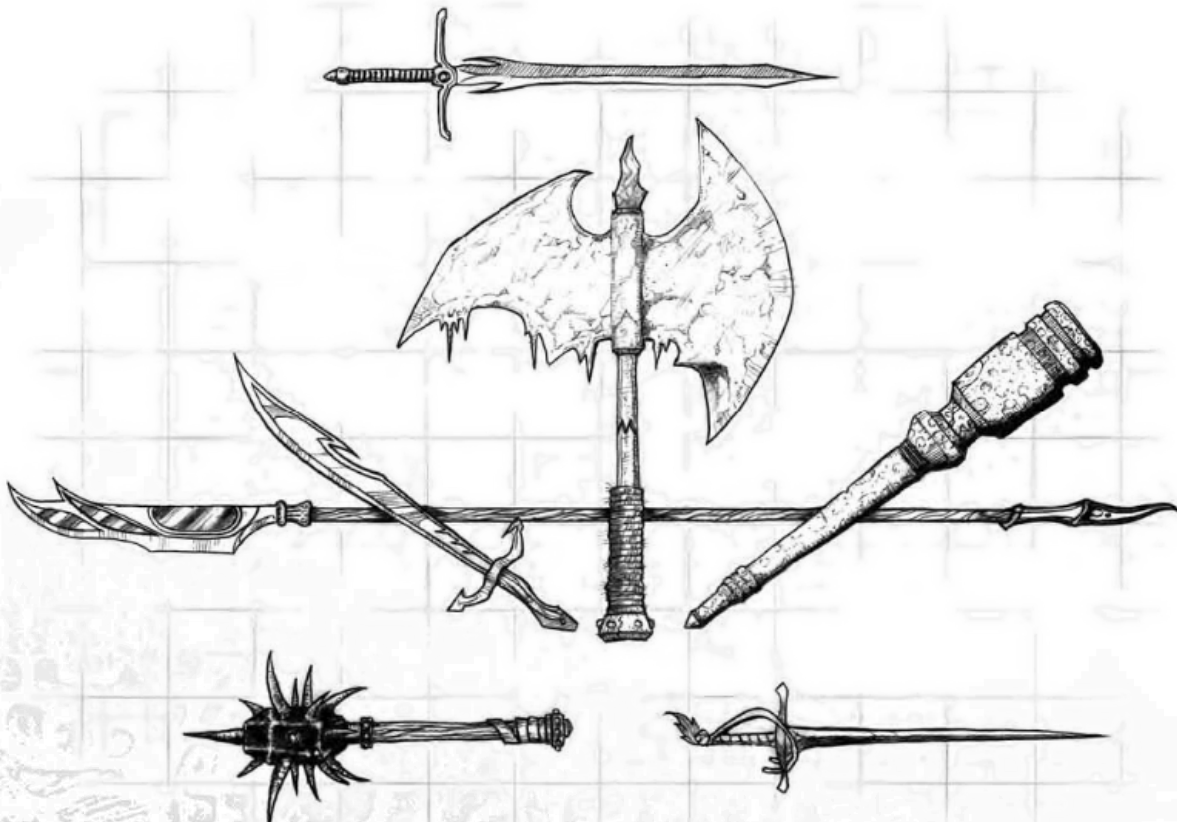
This room is otherwise safe and can be used for rests without fear of being interrupted. However, resting within the manifest zone results in another save versus the entrapment field.

The Camp of the Lost exits into area **K7: Fallen Adventurers**.

### TREASURE

The gear of the Valenar has been laying here for at least a decade, so the packs and soft materials have rotted away to an unusable state. While their weapons and other mundane gear remain, none of it is magical. Feel free to select any items from the weapon or adventuring gear tables in the *Player's Handbook* for the characters to find in the camp.

In addition, a successful DC 14 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals 130 gp scattered through the remains of the supplies.





## K5: PIT OF FLESH

If the party is coming from **K1: Main Entrance**, making this the first interior room of the geode that the party explores, read or paraphrase the following:

The narrow passage opens up into a breathtaking crystalline room. Surrounding you are walls, ceiling, floor, all formed of interlaced pillars of crystal. The crystals are deep dark blue, pulsing with inky-black veins, and a pale blue light, flickering, emanates from within the crystal. Dragonshards—you realize this entire room is made from Khyber dragonshards, worth a king's ransom. Looking closer, you see the flickers are coming from ghostly faces approaching near, then receding from the crystal surface, seemingly trapped within the binding crystals.

Whether or not this is the first room of the geode they enter, the party will also notice:

The crystal floor of this room drops into a pit about halfway across, creating a sheer plunge and a gap of 25 feet to where the tunnel continues beyond. As you near the ledge, you become aware of a moaning sound below and a terrible squelching noise.

When the party looks down into this pit, read or paraphrase the following:

Peering over the lip of the pit, a terrible sight awaits. Flabby, fleshy bodies of malformed creatures moan and drag themselves across the floor of this pit, over and around each other. Their wax-like flesh gives them no distinct form beyond deformed heads and malformed arms. Writhing, they pile on top of and intertwine with each other.

The creatures in the pit are fiends known as lemures, who have formed themselves into a **swarm of lemures**. These fiends are native to Dolurrh, though their exact nature is unknown. Some believe that they are souls of mortals that, instead of fading in that realm, unnaturally remain and become one with the plane, achieving immortality of a hellish twisted form. On occasion, these pitiful creatures of Dolurrh drag themselves through the walls of reality into the manifest zone here in the Lair of the Keeper. Seen as little more than vermin, the dracolich has instructed its servitors to toss any they find into this pit as an additional barrier to any who would intrude upon his sanctum.

Crossing the pit will be difficult. There is no ridge along the sides which the characters can use to walk along the edge, and the crystal walls offer few grips. Crossing the pit requires a successful DC 15 Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) check to shimmy along the walls over this pit, which is 25 feet wide and 10 feet deep. Climbing requires one extra foot of movement for every foot moved, so most characters will need two successful checks to climb along the walls to reach the

other side. If any characters fall into the pit, they take 1d6 bludgeoning damage and fall among the swarm of lemures. Climbing out of it requires a DC 15 Strength (Acrobatics) check, rolled with advantage if another party member assists; if the swarm is still alive, they will take an opportunity attack as the character attempts to climb out.

Dragonshards are valuable, so entrepreneurial characters might try to find a shard to break off and take for themselves. Refer to Lair Features for the effects of breaking shards within the manifest zone.

The Pit of Flesh has exits into both **K7: Fallen Adventurers** and **K8: False Hoard**.



## K6: SERVITORS

If the party is coming from **K3: Back Entrance**, making this the first interior room of the geode that the party explores, read or paraphrase the following.

You see a pale blue light coming from ahead in the cramped tunnel. Abruptly the tunnel turns, and instead of jagged rough-hewn walls, you see a breathtaking crystalline chamber. Surrounding you are walls, ceiling, floor, all formed of pillars of crystal. The crystals are deep dark blue, pulsing with inky-black veins, and the flickering light seems to be coming from within the crystal. Dragonshards—you realize this entire room is made from Khyber dragonshards, worth a king's ransom. Looking closer, you see the flickers are coming from ghostly faces approaching near, then receding from the crystal surface, seemingly trapped within the binding crystals.

Whether or not this is the first room of the geode they enter, the party will also notice:

Not all in this room is of crystal, however. A rasping whisper draws your attention to the far end of the room, toward some rudimentary furniture: a table, a pile of rags, and what seems to be trash and debris. As you move closer, however, you see two forms among the rags and debris.

This chamber contains the two physical servitors that the dracolich keeps on hand for menial tasks. The first creature is a **bodak**, hidden under what appears to be a pile of rags, as he tries to cover his malformed undead body as best he can. In life, this creature was known as Sorma. 200 years ago, Sorma was a faithful, if prideful, priest of the Keeper who offered himself to the dracolich in the Lair of the Keeper. He expected to be rewarded with incredible power, perhaps even lichdom himself. Instead, he was rewarded by being ravaged into this sick, twisted, undead creature. Sorma retains very little of his original personality or knowledge, and exists only to serve the dracolich. As part of his condition, Sorma can only speak in rasping, barely audible whispers. Annul, his companion, may have to translate for him.

The second creature, Annul, is a **bulezau**, a demon of decay that believes the dracolich to be the true incarnation of the Keeper, the Sovereign of Death and Decay, and serves him reverently. When the characters enter the room, Annul can be found sitting comfortably within his fetid pile of trash. Truly a disgusting creature, this fiend is covered with boils and rashes that look infected and rotten. A simple creature in mind, he derives pleasure from serving what he believes to be his god.

These creatures are both utterly evil, loyal to the dracolich, cruel, and dangerous. They are, however, both incredibly stupid. When the party enters, they will be discussing between themselves the ceremony the dracolich left to attend at the lip of the canyon, and how glorious it is for his devout followers to be

graced with his presence. If they detect the party, they will not initially be hostile, as they will assume that the player characters are lost devout of the Keeper and try to instruct the characters that the ceremony is not here, but up on the canyon. So long as they believe that the player characters are followers of the Keeper, they will not turn hostile. If the party plays along with the ruse, they will be able to ask questions of the pair.

What Annul and Sorma know.

**Where is the dragon's hoard?** Annul: "Within every rotten wound of the world." Sorma: "Look around you. A god needs no gold. There is no greater treasure than souls."

**Where is the *Voice of the Keeper*?** Annul: "Within his throat... no, he had no throat, rotten away to bone. In his mouth then. Yes, the master speaks from his mouth." Sorma: "The *Voice*, yes, I remember. A relic, a fork of crystal. There are more, deeper, the chamber of spikes, some are fork-like. Is that why you are not at the ceremony?"

**Where is the Chamber of Spikes?** Annul: "The sinister path leads to the spikes." Sorma: "He means take lefts."

**When will the Keeper be back?** Annul: "Is he not always with us? For death is never far, nor is the delicious rot that comes after." Sorma: "The ceremony... takes time. Deals are made, bargains struck. Depends if the faithful have the nerve to drive hard their bargains in the face of their god's maw."

**Are there any loose dragonshards we might have?** Annul: "No, the loose and the lost belong to the master. We collect so that none may be taken." Sorma: "No, any broken shards are taken by the master below."

**Below?** Annul: "The true heart of the Lair, not meant for our eyes." Sorma: "Far below, only accessible by the mightiest magics of the master, lies his true lair. None may enter; not even the mightiest of the Lords of Dust have ever breached it."

Annul and Sorma will not lead the party to the Chamber of Spikes because they have not been instructed to by their master. If the party is openly carrying symbols of another faith, the party must succeed on a DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion) check to convince the pair that they are of the Keeper and just have the symbols for some other reason. If that check fails or if the party chooses not to go with the ruse that they are followers of the Keeper, the pair will attack.

The chamber of the servitors leads into area **K8: Lonely Soul** and out toward **K3: Back Entrance**.





## K7: FALLEN ADVENTURERS

As the characters continue their exploration of the Lair, they come upon an intersection in the tunnels. Read or paraphrase the following:

You come to another chamber where the crystal lattice has expanded out, forming a natural chamber. It is an intersection of sorts, with three large passages large enough for the dracolich to squeeze through in those directions, and one narrow crack that seems to lead off in another.

The room appears to be empty, but it is not. Seventeen years ago a party of Valenar elves came to the Lair of the Keeper in an attempt to retrieve the soul of a fallen brother who had been slain with a Keeper's Fang. They made it to the Lair, but while exploring, half the party was killed and their own souls siphoned into the Khyber-shard walls. The survivors retreated back to the Camp of the Lost (area K4) where they attempted to recover before retrieving their fallen friends' souls. Sadly, they never got that chance. Falling victim to the entrapment effect of the manifest zone, they sat in a daze until they faded away to near-nothing, becoming skulks. Lost in limbo between life and death, they are not truly either.

These fallen Valenar have become three **greater skulks** and wander listlessly through this chamber. The skulks will attack the party if they try to pass through this room. They are invisible, but their reflections can be seen faintly on the crystal surface, allowing any character with a passive Perception 17 or higher to make their attacks without disadvantage. As skulks are not undead, they are not subject to the Visions of Lives Gone effect of the Lair.

This chamber leads deeper to area **K8: Lonely Soul** and **K9: False Hoard**. It leads out toward **K5: Pit of Flesh** and **K7: Camp of the Lost**.

## K8: LONELY SOUL

In this chamber, the dracolich opens a passage to his inner chambers of the geode using a power similar to the *passwall* spell, which he always dispels after passing. There is no natural way to pass through the twenty feet of solid Khyber shards, no line of sight to the chambers below, and teleporting blindly through a giant dragonshard is suicidal. The true lair of the dracolich is beyond the scope of this adventure, and characters are not intended to explore beyond these shards. Read or paraphrase the following:

One again, you come to a room where, either by design or happenstance, the shard crystals open into a wide chamber. This one is wider than most, with the floor smooth rather than irregular. Looking around, there appears to be nothing in this room, though through the crystal's surface on the far side, there seems to be the ghostly image of a woman, clearer than most of the ghostly images you've seen passing behind the surface of the crystals.

Most souls that pass to Dolurrah, and even those entrapped by the dracolich within the Lair of the Keeper, rapidly lose their sense of self and drive. Sometimes, however, a soul can hang onto their mind. Nora Bawn is one. Nora's **ghost** is entrapped within a Khyber shard in the wall of this chamber. When the party passes through, she will call out to them, begging them to break the shard and free her, so that she can escape the grasp of this dark god. She will tell the party any stories, whether lies or truth, that she believes might convince them to help her.

In truth, Nora was in life a priestess of the Keeper who sold her soul to the Keeper. She caused many failing businesspeople to sign away their souls to the Keeper for success and wealth. Now she seeks to escape her bargain at any cost. If the party frees her, she will make every effort to seem helpful. However, Nora will try to identify which of the party have the weakest force of personality (represented by their Charisma score), and during the party's next combat encounter, she will attempt to possess them and escape with their body.

If the party agrees to free Nora, they must shatter the Khyber shard she is entrapped in. While doing so will free her soul, it also frees 1d4 **specters** who will immediately attack the party. Nora is unable to assist the party against the other undead. The broken-off Khyber shard that contained Nora is worth 100 gp. This chamber exits into area **K7: Fallen Adventurers** and **K10: Imprisoned Fiend**.

## K9: FALSE HOARD

This room, one of the two possible entrances to area **K11: Chamber of Spikes** (which contains the tuning-fork-like growths the party seeks), appears filled with unimaginable treasure. Read or paraphrase the following:

Wealth, vast and piled high, sits in this room. Platinum bars intermingle with gold coins, their various shapes and sizes speaking to the age and diversity of this pile, the accumulated wealth of untold centuries of sacrifice to the Keeper. All the treasure rests on a bed of loose Khyber shards—a stunning dragon's hoard.

This is, of course, *not* the dragon's hoard. There is no pile of treasure in the Lair of the Keeper, as the dracolich values only souls. This is merely an illusion.

A character searching the area for traps or illusions detects the illusion with a successful DC 20 Intelligence (Investigation) check. Likewise, the *detect magic* spell reveals an aura of illusion magic surrounding the hoard. Otherwise, any checks (such as Perception or Arcana) suggest the treasure is entirely real. Feel free to add specific pieces of loot to the pile that might make it more enticing to a particular player character, such as glowing swords or staves of arcane might.

If the party tries to take anything from the treasure pile, prods it with a stick, or otherwise physically interacts with it, the action will activate a glyph, which acts as an explosive *glyph of warding*, except that it deals necrotic damage.

**Trap:** Necrotic Glyph of Warding. When triggered, the glyph erupts with magical energy in a 20-foot-radius sphere centered on the glyph. The Sphere spreads around corners. Each creature in the aura must make a DC 20 Dexterity saving throw. A creature takes 5d8 necrotic damage on a failed saving throw, or half as much damage on a successful one.

The False Hoard leads deeper to area **K11: Chamber of Spikes** and **K10: Imprisoned Fiend**, and outwards toward area **K7: Fallen Adventurers**.



## K10: IMPRISONED FIEND

This room, one of the two possible entrances to area **K11: Chamber of Spikes** (which contains the tuning-fork-like growths the party seeks), contains an unusual feline figure.

Another large chamber awaits ahead, but this one has a red glow at the center. Looking inside, you can see a dome of red energy over an emaciated and gaunt figure with the head of a great cat, covered in matted patchy fur. Wounds cover the creature and its left eye seems to be missing. Then, you see the being move, and it says in a voice as smooth as silk, "I know you're there. Don't worry. I am not your enemy. In fact, I think we can help each other."

This creature is a rakshasa sorcerer named **Rabanu**, who the dracolich tortured, then trapped inside a persistent *magic circle* when Rabanu attempted to reach the inner sanctum of the Lair of the Keeper. He had hoped to find the dracolich's phylactery, which has long eluded the Lords of Dust. Rabanu was looking through the eyes of his familiar, Bhrax the imp, when the party landed, and he has been expecting their arrival ever since.

Rabanu is a follower of an ancient demon Overlord, Katashka the Gatekeeper, and believes that control of the Lair is essential to freeing his Overlord. Rabanu has clashed many times with the dracolich over millennia, the last time losing quite sorely. For now, he merely wishes to be free, and will offer something in exchange: If the party breaks the *magic circle* entrapping Rabanu in the Lair, he will tell them the location of a soul within the Lair, one that has been snatched from Dolurrh by the dracolich. Rabanu will make every pledge and promise that he will not harm the player characters should he be freed, and he will abide by his word. He is glad to direct them how to disturb the runes around his prison to disrupt the *magic circle*. He has no reason to fight them, and if they free him, he will then tell them the location of the soul and leave.

**Whose soul does Rabanu offer that is trapped within the Lair of the Keeper?** This is for the DM to choose. It could be that of lost loved one, a PC or NPC who died during previous adventures, or an important community member. Once you have decided whose soul is trapped here in the Lair of the Keeper, select a yet-unexplored room or a random location within the dungeon, which Rabanu directs the party how to find.

Once the party knows which chamber the soul is trapped in, they need only travel to that location, call out the name of the lost loved one, and their soul will come into view in one of the crystal walls. Breaking the crystal to free the soul will result in the freeing of specters, per the usual Lair Features, but the party will be rewarded with a Khyber shard containing the soul of the one they sought. This shard can be used as the material component in a *resurrection* spell targeting that soul.

## WHAT RABANU KNOWS

**Who are you?** "I am known by many names and titles, I will not bore you with them all. I am called Rabanu."

**Why are you here?** "Because of the creature, the dragon lich who has gone to see those who believe him a god. He and I are old enemies. He got the better of me while I was trying to find the means to finally destroy him. He's kept me here and shown me his displeasure since."

**Why not kill you?** "Unlike the undead creatures, my kind are truly immortal. He could bind me, he has an ample supply of shards that could be put to such an end, but he fears too much...fears what a spirit such as mine could do if he locked me in with his collection of souls. He is right to fear it."

**What is the Keeper, the nature of the dracolich?** "That old dead dragon? A very old foe. I'm not sure if he actually believes to be what he claims, but if you think he is a god and have yet come to steal from him, then you are even bigger fools than his followers. He's strong, but I have something he doesn't: true immortality. It is only a matter of time, perhaps decades, or centuries, or millennia, before I finally send him to his ultimate death. He has beaten me, killed me more than once, and he can do so as many times as he likes. I need only destroy his phylactery and then kill him once. Time is on my side."

**How did you know we were here?** "I may be bound here physically, but I have eyes on the outside with which I can see. Once I saw you land outside, I used a bit of magic to expand my sight, to see if I had anything I could offer you."

**How did X's soul end up here?** "I don't know for certain. Were they murdered? Often that is a sacrifice to the Keeper, and those sacrifices end up here. Or the dracolich plucked it from

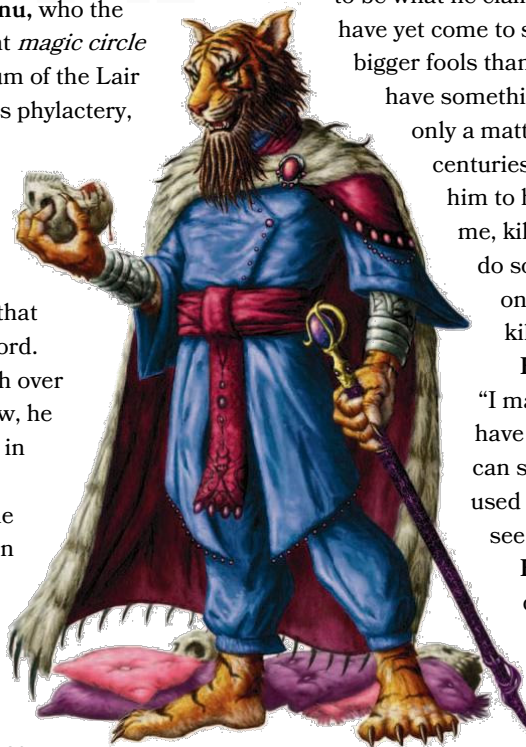
Dolurrh for some reason. He goes there to replenish sometimes. The walls between here and there are very thin. Regardless, if you want them back, I can tell you where to go."

**How are we supposed to trust you?** "I can make promises, I can swear oaths, I can give you my word. But does any of that matter? I offer you a great treasure and it is up to you whether you take me up on it. I have time."

**How are we supposed to break the circle?** "Easier than you may think, it only repulses fiends. If you are mortals, you can break it by merely disturbing those runes surrounding me. You can free me, and in return I will tell you the location of the soul."

**Do you know where the *Voice of the Keeper* is?** "Isn't that still in the vaults of Thronehold? No? Well, if you're looking for another you are very near the chamber where they grow."

The chamber of the Imprisoned Fiend leads across to area **K9: False Hoard**, deeper to **K11: Chamber of Spikes**, or back outward toward **K8: Lonely Soul**.



## K11: CHAMBER OF SPIKES

The characters finally arrive in the chamber where the crystals grow into the *Voice of the Keeper* that they seek. Read or paraphrase the following:

The tunnels converge and narrow into a smaller passageway. The crystals on the wall start to become jagged and narrower than those you've encountered up until this point. You must take care not to brush against the walls and risk snapping any of the fine protrusions off. Soon the walls and ceilings seem covered with the tiny spikes, which split to multiple points or kink and twist into odd angles. None, however look like the shape of a tuning fork you are looking for. Ahead, the passage widens again into a low gallery. The light is dimmer here, as this room is made of both crystal and rock, the spikes forming out of each.

This room exists on the very edge of the geode that forms the Lair of the Keeper, brushing up against whatever caused the needle pillars above and causing these strange growths of rock and crystal together. The party's goal is to locate a Khyber shard shaped like a tuning fork. To locate it, the party will need to succeed upon either a DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check or a DC 17 Wisdom (Perception) check. If the party fails these checks, they will eventually find one, but the amount of time spent searching requires another Wisdom save against the entrapment effect of the manifest zone (see Lair Effects).

This is the only *Voice of the Keeper* that the party can find fully formed in the Chamber of Spikes at this time. Once the party breaks off the *Voice*, read or paraphrase the following:

As you break off the Khyber shards that form this new *Voice of the Keeper*, a dark plume of spectral energy begins to leak from the crystal it sprang from. The spectral mist rolls across the floor to the center of the chamber, then swirls up to take on a rough shape. Glowing green eyes appear in the mist as it forms the shape of a thick square dwarven skull and the loosest outline of a body. It lifts arm and hand bones toward you, dragging the mist behind like a cloak. As it extends a skeletal finger, the skull opens its jaw and a voice declares, "This was not the reward that was promised! You think you can cheat me out of what is rightfully mine!" As it shouts, two additional shapes seem to fall out of its form, briefly taking the outline of forlorn souls before disappearing from view..

The black shape is a **wraith**, the bitter and insane spirit of Tarn Mroranon. In life, Tarn followed the Keeper's religion, killing his business rivals and binding their souls to his personal servitude. He believed that upon his death, he would be able to exchange these souls, escape Dolurrh, and be ushered into the realm of the Sovereigns beyond death. Tarn was wrong. After his death the dracolich captured his soul and those bound to him, adding all to his collection. Breaking off the *Voice* has released Tarn and two **poltergeists** he had bound to his service. In death, they serve him still.

In combat, the invisible poltergeists will attempt to use Telekinetic Thrust to push characters into the spiked walls of the chamber. If a character is pushed into the walls in this manner, they take an additional 2d4 piercing damage.

Once combat is over, if anyone gives the *Voice of the Keeper* a sharp tap, it will begin to vibrate. When rung outside the Lair, it merely allows one to cast the *speak with dead* spell. However, here in this manifest zone of Dolurrh, surrounded by the souls of the dead, it can be used to communicate with the collective consciousness of all souls within Dolurrh (see Voice of the Keeper sidebar below). Read or paraphrase the following:

The *Voice of the Keeper* chimes like a bell, vibrating in your hand. The sonorous tone seems to be backed with the whispering of thousands of indistinct voices. As you wait for the ringing to stop, it does not. The tone continues and you hear the whispering grow louder and more distinct, with the voices all whispering the same word in many different languages, "**Ask.**"

What these legions of dead know is up to the DM, but they are not omniscient. They have no useful knowledge of Provost Nigel Faurious or his plans for the artifacts. Once the five questions are asked, the *Voice of the Keeper* will stop ringing.

The party is now free to make their way out of the Lair of the Keeper, either by returning the way they came without incident, or by exploring additional chambers.

### VOICE OF THE KEEPER

*Wondrous Item, artifact*

This Khyber dragonshard has formed in the shape of a crystalline tuning fork. While you possess this dragonshard, you can use an action to ring the tuning fork, casting *speak with dead* from it at will.

While in a manifest zone of Dolurrh, this dragonshard can be used to ask any five questions, as with the *speak with dead* spell, to the collective thousands of souls contained in Dolurrh. The souls are not omniscient. They know a great deal about happenings within the last month, but memories beyond that, if any, are few and vague. The DM answers each question with one word, such as "yes," "no," "maybe," "never," "irrelevant," or "unclear" (if the souls do not know the answer to the question). If a one-word answer would be misleading, the DM might instead offer a short phrase as an answer. Once used in this manner, the *Voice of the Keeper* can't be used to communicate with the dead in Dolurrh until the next dawn.



## SCENE 4: THE GHAASH'KALA

Once the party finishes any remaining business in the Lair and makes their successful exit, read or paraphrase the following:

Emerging into the canyon, dim light reflects down from the Ring of Siberys and the few moons visible from the bottom of the canyon. Yet the world seems sharper, the light brighter and more vibrant now that you are free of the influence of Dolurrrh. Everything is as you left it, the roaring River of Bone and Blood, the field of needle spires beyond, and the rock outcropping you spied from the air to use as a point for pickup. Only one problem—that rock outcropping is not empty now. Standing upon it are several figures.

When the characters move close enough to make out details, read or paraphrase the following:

Four people stand on the rock outcropping, one watching in each direction. The largest figure, the one looking forward toward the black pit that contains the Lair of the Keeper, is a hulking orc. Thick with muscle, he stands with his hands folded in front of him. His forehead is marred by a burn scar, a brand in the shape of an arrowhead pointed down. His dark hair is streaked with gray, his hairline is receding, highlighting the brand. He holds his head high, exposing his neck which seems to be wreathed in tattoos of flames. His expression is a troubled one, filled with deep sadness.

Characters who succeed on a DC 15 Intelligence (Religion) check recognize this group as being of the Ghaash'kala, a tribe of orcs and demon-killers that patrol the borders of the Demon Wastes, preventing others from entering or leaving. A successful DC 20 check recalls that some scholars argue the Ghaash'kala faith is another expression of the Church of the Silver Flame. A successful DC 25 check recalls that the Ghaash'kala kill all who try to leave, and that they swear themselves to never leave because they believe they carry the taint of the Wastes.

### THE GHAASH'KALA

This confederation of tribes, comprised mostly of orcs, has dedicated their entire lives to the goal of protecting the rest of the world from the evils of the Demon Wastes, guarding the borders so that the demonic taint of that cursed land is never allowed to escape. They consider anything that enters these lands to be touched by the evil of the Demon Wastes. None who enter are ever allowed to leave, not even themselves.

The Ghaash'kala follow Kalok Shash, the “Binding Flame.” It is of the same ancient force that empowers the Church of the Silver Flame, though the church is loathe to admit it. Members of the Ghaash'kala use ritualistic scarification, branding, and tattoos to bind Kalok Shash into their skin so that they, for a time, may resist the taint of this dark land. The Binding Flame calls them to the sacred duty of containing the Demon Wastes.

The leader of this group is an orc paladin, **Devent**, accompanied by three **Ghaas'kala warriors**. Every thirteen years when the followers of the Keeper come here to meet with the dracolich, warriors of the Ghaash'kala clan Jaasakah, “The Deadly,” follow behind. Once the dracolich returns to rest in the Lair of the Keeper, they start their hunt to kill every follower before they can return to the world at large. Devent is on his third hunt, which he believes his last. On their journey here, he dreamed of evil escaping through the sky through the actions of heroes ignorant of what they do. He is here to make sure that his dream does not come to pass, and he will not allow the party to leave without a fight to the death. He does not believe they are evil and does not welcome his duty, but they walked into one of the vilest places in this cursed land. He cannot believe that they are without taint from such a journey, and the taint of this land cannot be allowed to escape.

There is only one other option, though it is one the characters are unlikely to agree to. Though prepared to fight, he wants to speak to the party first and offer them a choice. The Ghaash'kala are sympathetic to fools who make it into the Demon Wastes without knowing the danger, and while they cannot ever be allowed to leave, Devent will offer them the chance to join the Ghaash'kala, giving themselves over to the Binding Flame and renouncing their lives in the outside world. The party must agree to never again leave the Demon Wastes or see their loved ones, for the taint they now carry will only ever lead to ruin. There is no other option and no room for negotiation. Persuasion checks cannot change his lifelong beliefs and duties in a handful of moments, and he will merely promise, sadly, that their death will be quick.

If the party attempts to find another location and contact the airship in an effort to avoid this encounter, the Ghaash'kala will quickly be on their tail, hunting them before the party is able to climb aboard the airship.



## TREASURE

Once the Ghaash'kala are defeated, a successful DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check allows the party to discover Devent's simple but finely crafted *+1 silvered battleaxe*. He carried this magical weapon for decades. In honor of his deeds, it was silvered to represent the Binding Flame, then blessed by the high priests of each of the four tribes of the Ghaash'kala. It is functional, not decorative, though the squared blade does shine brilliantly with a silvered edge. The oaken handle has leather straps wrapped around it for a grip but is otherwise similarly unadorned.

## CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

Once the party defeats the Ghaash'kala, the airship sweeps down from above and the deckhands throw lines over the side for the party to climb back up. As the airship begins to pull away from the canyon, she asks the party about whether they completed their mission. Read or paraphrase the following:

Lhara helps pull the last of you over the rail and then waves an arm signaling the pilot of the airship to quickly pull away down the canyon. With a smile and evident relief, she exclaims, "You made it! I mean, of course you made it. Did you get it?"

After the party presents Lhara with the *Voice of the Keeper*, she congratulates them with genuine enthusiasm and a clear note of relief at their safe return.

"That was the stuff of legends." Her tone is one of sarcasm, but she's obviously pleased. "You went into the Lair of the Keeper and lived. Nine hundred years from now it'll be *your* names the legends speak of." She examines the *Voice* before tucking it away in an enchanted bag by her side. "One more for the collection. Soon everyone will know that the Guild has the best explorers on all Khorvaire, thanks to you. When we get back to Stormhome, first round is on me."

As the airship crests the lip of the canyon, you can still see the place on the rim where the Keeper's death cultists trade away their souls for power to that cursed dracolich, but rapidly it fades in the distance as you head back to a world free from these horrors.

## MISSION REWARDS

Once back in Sharn, Lhara will gladly reward the party for their efforts and deeds on behalf of the Clifftop Guild, giving each character 700 gp in payment for services rendered. She is also happy to help recommend interested buyers for any Khyber shards the party acquired along the way.

## THE CONVERGENCE MANIFESTO

With the *Voice* in hand, Provost Faurious has nearly all the planar artifacts he needs to complete his *Convergence Manifesto*. If the players wish to complete further missions for the Guild, they can do so in AE01-11: *A Heart in Mourning*.



# APPENDIX A: BESTIARY

## BANSHEE

*Medium undead, chaotic evil*

**Armor Class** 12

**Hit Points** 58 (13d8)

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

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
1 (-5)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	17 (+3)

**Saving Throws** Wis +2, Cha +5

**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 10

**Languages** Common, Elvish

**Challenge** 4 (1,100 XP)

**Detect Life.** The banshee can magically sense the presence of creatures up to 5 miles away that aren't undead or constructs. She knows the general direction they're in but not their exact locations.

**Incorporeal Movement.** The banshee can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. She takes 5 (1d10) force damage if she ends her turn inside an object.

## ACTIONS

**Corrupting Touch.** *Melee Spell Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. one target. *Hit:* 13 (3d6 + 3) necrotic damage.

**Horrifying Visage.** Each non-undead creature within 60 feet of the banshee that can see her must succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened for 1 minute. A frightened target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, with disadvantage if the banshee is within line of sight, ending the effect on itself on a success. If a target's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the target is immune to the banshee's Horrifying Visage for the next 24 hours.

**Wail (1/day).** The banshee releases a mournful wail, provided that she isn't in sunlight. This wail has no effect on constructs and undead. All other creatures within 30 feet of her that can hear her must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw. On a failure, a creature drops to 0 hit points. On a success, a creature takes 10 (3d6) psychic damage.

## BHRAX (IMP)

*Tiny fiend (devil), lawful evil*

**Armor Class** 13

**Hit Points** 10 (3d4 + 3)

**Speed** 20 ft., fly 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6 (-2)	17 (+3)	13 (+1)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)

**Skills** Deception +4, Insight +3, Persuasion +4, Stealth +5

**Damage Resistances** cold; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks not made with silvered weapons

**Damage Immunities** fire, poison

**Condition Immunities** poisoned

**Senses** darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 11

**Languages** Common, Infernal

**Challenge** 1 (200 XP)

**Shapechanger.** The imp can use its action to polymorph into a beast form that resembles a rat (speed 20 ft.), a raven (20 ft., fly 60 ft.), or a spider (20 ft., climb 20 ft.), or back into its true form. Its statistics are the same in each form, except for the speed changes noted. Any equipment it is wearing or carrying isn't transformed. It reverts to its true form if it dies.

**Devil's Sight.** Magical darkness doesn't impede the imp's darkvision.

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

**Familiar.** The imp has entered into a contract to serve another creature as a familiar, forming a telepathic bond with its willing master, Rabanu. While the two are bonded, Rabanu can sense what the imp senses as long as they are within 1 mile of each other. While the imp is within 10 feet of Rabanu, Rabanu shares the imp's Magic Resistance trait. If Rabanu violates the terms of the contract, the imp can end its service as a familiar, ending the telepathic bond.

## ACTIONS

**Sting (Bite in Beast Form).** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) piercing damage, and the target must make on a DC 11 Constitution saving throw, taking 10 (3d6) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

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

## BODAK

Medium undead, chaotic evil

**Armor Class** 15 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 58 (9d8 + 18)

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

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	16 (+3)	15 (+2)	7 (-2)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)

**Skills** Perception +4, Stealth +6

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

**Damage Immunities** lightning, poison

**Condition Immunities** charmed, frightened, poisoned

**Senses** darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 14

**Languages** Abyssal, the languages it knew in life

**Challenge** 6 (2,300 XP)

**Aura of Annihilation.** The bodak can activate or deactivate this feature as a bonus action. While active, the aura deals 5 necrotic damage to any creature that ends its turn within 30 feet of the bodak. Undead and fiends ignore this effect.

**Death Gaze.** When a creature that can see the bodak's eyes starts its turn within 30 feet of the bodak, the bodak can force it to make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw if the bodak isn't incapacitated and can see the creature. If the saving throw fails by 5 or more, the creature is reduced to 0 hit points, unless it is immune to the frightened condition. Otherwise, a creature takes 16 (3d10) psychic damage on a failed save.

Unless surprised, a creature can avert its eyes to avoid the saving throw at the start of its turn. If the creature does so, it has disadvantage on attack rolls against the bodak until the start of its next turn. If the creature looks at the bodak in the meantime, it must immediately make the saving throw.

**Sunlight Hypersensitivity.** The bodak takes 5 radiant damage when it starts its turn in sunlight. While in sunlight, it has disadvantage on attack rolls and ability checks.

## ACTIONS

**Fist.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) bludgeoning damage plus 9 (2d8) necrotic damage.

**Withering Gaze.** One creature that the bodak can see within 60 feet of it must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw, taking 22 (4d10) necrotic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

## BULEZAU

Medium fiend (demon), chaotic evil

**Armor Class** 14 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 52 (7d8 + 21)

**Speed** 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	14 (+2)	17 (+3)	8 (-1)	9 (-1)	6 (-2)

**Damage Resistances** cold, fire, lightning

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** charmed, frightened, poisoned

**Senses** darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 9

**Languages** Abyssal, telepathy 60 ft.

**Challenge** 3 (700 XP)

**Rotting Presence.** When any creature that isn't a demon starts its turn within 30 feet one or more bulezau, that creature must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or take 1d6 necrotic damage plus 1 necrotic damage for each bulezau within 30 feet of it.

**Standing Leap.** The bulezau's long jump is up to 20 feet and its high jump is up to 10 feet, with or without a running start.

**Sure-Footed.** The bulezau has advantage on Strength and Dexterity saving throws made against effects that would knock it prone.

## ACTIONS

**Barbed Tail.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d12 + 2) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw against disease or become poisoned until the disease ends. While poisoned in this way, the target sports festering boils, coughs up flies, and sheds rotting skin, and the target must repeat the saving throw after every 24 hours that elapse. On a successful save, the disease ends. On a failed save, the target's hit point maximum is reduced by 4 (1d8). The target dies if its hit point maximum is reduced to 0.



## CORPSE FLOWER

Large plant, chaotic evil

**Armor Class** 12

**Hit Points** 127 (15d10 + 45)

**Speed** 20 ft., climb 20 ft.

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

**Condition Immunities** blinded, deafened

**Senses** blindsight 120 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 12

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 8 (3,900 XP)

**Corpses.** When first encountered, this corpse flower contains the corpses of 6 humanoids. A corpse flower can hold the remains of up to nine dead humanoids. These remains have total cover against attacks and other effects outside the corpse flower. If the corpse flower dies, the corpses within it can be pulled free. While it has at least one humanoid corpse in its body, the corpse flower can use a bonus action to do one of the following:

- The corpse flower digests one humanoid corpse in its body and instantly regains 11 (2d10) hit points. Nothing of the digested body remains. Any equipment on the corpse is expelled from the corpse flower in its space.
- The corpse flower animates one dead humanoid in its body, turning it into a zombie. The zombie appears in an unoccupied space within 5 feet of the corpse flower and acts immediately after it in the initiative order. The zombie acts as an ally of the corpse flower but isn't under its control, and the flower's stench clings to it (see the Stench of Death trait).

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

**Stench of Death.** Each creature that starts its turn within 10 feet of the corpse flower or one of its zombies must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw, unless the creature is a construct or undead. On a failed save, the creature is incapacitated until the end of the turn. Creatures that are immune to poison damage or the poisoned condition automatically succeed on this saving throw. On a successful save, the creature is immune to the stench of all corpse flowers for 24 hours.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The corpse flower makes three tentacle attacks.

**Tentacle.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 10 ft. one target. *Hit:* 9 (2d6 + 2) bludgeoning damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or take 14 (4d6) poison damage.

**Harvest the Dead.** The corpse flower grabs one unsecured dead humanoid within 10 feet of it and stuffs the corpse into itself, along with any equipment the corpse is wearing or carrying. The remains can be used with the Corpses trait.

## DEVENT, GHAASH'KALA CHAMPION

Medium humanoid (orc), lawful good

**Armor Class** 16 (studded leather, shield)

**Hit Points** 112 (15d8 + 45)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	15 (+2)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	15 (+2)

**Saving Throws** Str +7, Dex +5, Con +6

**Skills** Athletics +10, Intimidation +5

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

**Languages** Common, Goblin, Orc

**Challenge** 5 (1,800 XP)

**Brave.** Devent has advantage on saving throws against being frightened.

**Blessed of Kalok Shash.** A melee weapon deals one extra die of its damage as radiant damage when Devent hits with it (included in the attack).

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** Devent makes three melee attacks or two ranged attacks.

**+1 Silvered Battleaxe.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft. one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d8 + 5) slashing damage plus 4 (1d8) radiant damage, or 13 (1d10 + 4) slashing damage plus 5 (1d10) radiant damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack.

**Spear.** *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft. and range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage plus 3 (1d6) radiant damage, or 8 (1d8 + 4) piercing damage plus 4 (1d8) radiant damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack, or 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage if used as a ranged attack.

**Shield Bash.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft. one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d4 + 4) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a Large or smaller creature, it must succeed on a DC 15 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

### REACTIONS

**Parry.** Devent adds 3 to his AC against one melee attack that would hit him. To do so, Devent must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.

## GHAASH'KALA WARRIOR

Medium humanoid (half-orc or orc), neutral good

**Armor Class** 13 (hide armor)

**Hit Points** 67 (9d8 + 27)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	12 (+1)	17 (+3)	9 (-1)	11 (+0)	9 (-1)

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

**Languages** Common, Goblin, Orc

**Challenge** 2 (450 XP)

**Reckless.** At the start of its turn, the Ghaash'kala warrior can gain advantage on all melee weapon attack rolls during that turn, but attack rolls against them have advantage until the start of its next turn.

### ACTIONS

**Greataxe.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft. one target. *Hit:* 10 (1d12 + 4) slashing damage.

## GHOST

Medium undead, any alignment

**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 weapons

**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 ft. 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 ft. 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 ft. 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 ft. 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.



H<sub>03</sub>

## GREATER SKULK

Medium humanoid, chaotic neutral

**Armor Class** 15

**Hit Points** 49 (9d8 + 9)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6 (-2)	20 (+5)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	7 (-2)	1 (-5)

**Saving Throws** Con +3

**Skills** Stealth +9

**Damage Immunities** radiant

**Condition Immunities** blinded

**Senses** darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 8

**Languages** understands Common but cannot speak

**Challenge** 3 (700 XP)

**Fallible Invisibility.** The skulk is invisible. This invisibility can be circumvented by three things:

- The skulk appears as a drab, smooth-skinned humanoid if its reflection can be seen in a mirror or on another surface.
- The skulk appears as a dim, translucent form in the light of a candle made of fat rendered from a corpse whose identity is unknown.
- Humanoid children, aged 10 and under, can see through this invisibility.

**Trackless.** The skulk leaves no tracks to indicate where it has been or where it's headed.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The skulk makes two claw attacks.

**Claw.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft. one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d6 + 5) slashing damage. If the skulk has advantage on the attack roll, the target also takes 7 (2d6) necrotic damage.

## POLTERGEIST

Medium undead, chaotic evil

**Armor Class** 12

**Hit Points** 22 (5d8)

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

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

**Damage Resistances** acid, cold, fire, lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons

**Damage Immunities** necrotic, poison

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

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

**Languages** understands all languages it knew in life but can't speak

**Challenge** 2 (450 XP)

**Incorporeal Movement.** The poltergeist 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.

**Invisibility.** The poltergeist is invisible.

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

### ACTIONS

**Forceful Slam.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. one target. *Hit:* 10 (3d6) force damage.

**Telekinetic Thrust.** The poltergeist targets a creature or unattended object within 30 feet of it. A creature must be Medium or smaller to be affected by this magic, and an object can weigh up to 150 pounds.

If the target is a creature, the poltergeist makes a Charisma check contested by the target's Strength check. If the poltergeist wins the contest, the poltergeist hurls the target up to 30 feet in any direction, including upward. If the target then comes into contact with a hard surface or heavy object, the target takes 1d6 damage per 10 feet moved.

If the target is an object that isn't being worn or carried, the poltergeist hurls it up to 30 feet in any direction. The poltergeist can use the object as a ranged weapon, attacking one creature along the object's path (+4 to hit) and dealing 5 (2d4) bludgeoning damage on a hit.

## RABANU (RAKSHASA)

Medium fiend, lawful evil

**Armor Class** 16 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 110 (13d8 + 52)

**Speed** 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	17 (+3)	18 (+4)	13 (+1)	16 (+3)	20 (+5)

**Skills** Deception +10, Insight +8

**Damage Vulnerabilities** piercing from magic weapons wielded by good creatures

**Damage Immunities** bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

**Languages** Common, Infernal

**Challenge** 13 (10,000 XP)

**Limited Magic Immunity.** The rakshasa can't be affected or detected by spells of 6th level or lower unless it wishes to be. It has advantage on saving throws against all other spells and magical effects.

**Innate Spellcasting.** The rakshasa's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 18, +10 to hit with spell attacks). The rakshasa can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *detect thoughts*, *disguise self*, *mage hand*, *minor illusion*  
3/day each: *charm person*, *detect magic*, *invisibility*, *major image*,  
*screaming*, *suggestion*

1/day each: *dominate person*, *fly*, *plane shift*, *true seeing*

## ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The rakshasa makes two claw attacks.

**Claw.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (2d6 + 2) slashing damage, and the target is cursed if it is a creature. The magical curse takes effect whenever the target takes a short or long rest, filling the target's thoughts with horrible images and dreams. The cursed target gains no benefit from finishing a short or long rest. The curse lasts until it is lifted by a *remove curse* spell or similar magic.

## SPECTER

Medium undead, chaotic evil

**Armor Class** 12

**Hit Points** 22 (5d8)

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

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

**Damage Resistances** acid, cold, fire, lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons

**Damage Immunities** necrotic, poison

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

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

**Languages** understands all languages it knew in life but can't speak

**Challenge** 1 (200 XP)

**Incorporeal Movement.** The specter 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 specter has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

## ACTIONS

**Life Drain.** *Melee Spell Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 10 (3d6) necrotic damage. The target must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or its hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the damage taken. This reduction lasts until the creature finishes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0.

## SWARM OF LEMURES

*Huge swarm of Medium fiends (devil), lawful evil*

**Armor Class** 11 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 85 (16d8)

**Speed** 15 ft.

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

**Damage Resistances** bludgeoning, cold, piercing, slashing

**Damage Immunities** fire, poison

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

**Senses** darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 10

**Languages** understands Infernal but can't speak

**Challenge** 5 (1,800 XP)

**Devil's Sight.** Magical darkness doesn't impede the lemures' darkvision.

**Hellish Rejuvenation.** A swarm of lemures that dies in Dolurrh or a manifest zone of Dolurrh comes back to life with all its hit points in 1d10 days unless it is killed by a good-aligned creature with a bless spell cast on that creature, or its remains are sprinkled with holy water.

**Like Fish in a Barrel.** The swarm of lemures has disadvantage on saves against any spell or effect that targets an area that at least half of the swarm occupies.

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

### ACTIONS

**Fist.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature in the swarm's space. *Hit:* 18 (4d8) bludgeoning damage, or 9 (2d8) piercing damage if the swarm has half of its hit points or fewer.

## SWORD WRAITH COMMANDER

*Medium undead, lawful evil*

**Armor Class** 18 (breastplate, shield)

**Hit Points** 127 (15d8 + 60)

**Speed** 30 ft.

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

**Skills** Perception +4

**Damage Resistances** necrotic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** exhaustion, frightened, poisoned, unconscious

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

**Languages** the languages it knew in life

**Challenge** 8 (3,900 XP)

**Martial Fury.** As a bonus action, the sword wraith can make one weapon attack, which deals an extra 9 (2d8) necrotic damage on a hit. If it does so, attack rolls against it have advantage until the start of its next turn.

**Turning Defiance.** The sword wraith and any other sword wraiths within 30 feet of it have advantage on saving throws against effects that turn undead.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The sword wraith makes two weapon attacks.

**Longsword.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) slashing damage, or 9 (1d10 + 4) slashing damage if used with two hands.

**Longbow.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage.

**Call to Honor (1/Day).** To use this action, the sword wraith must have taken damage during the current combat. If the sword wraith can use this action, it gives itself advantage on attack rolls until the end of its next turn, and 1d4 + 1 sword wraith warriors appear in unoccupied spaces within 30 feet of it. The warriors last until they drop to 0 hit points, and they take their turns immediately after the commander's turn on the same initiative count.

## SWORD WRAITH WARRIOR

Medium undead, lawful evil

**Armor Class** 16 (chain shirt, shield)

**Hit Points** 45 (6d8 + 18)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	12 (+1)	17 (+3)	6 (-2)	9 (-1)	10 (+0)

**Damage Resistances** necrotic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** exhaustion, frightened, poisoned, unconscious

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 9

**Languages** the languages it knew in life

**Challenge** 3 (700 XP)

**Martial Fury.** As a bonus action, the sword wraith can make one weapon attack. If it does so, attack rolls against it have advantage until the start of its next turn.

### ACTIONS

**Longsword.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) slashing damage, or 9 (1d10 + 4) slashing damage if used with two hands.

**Longbow.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d8 + 1) piercing damage.

## ZOMBIE

Medium undead, neutral evil

**Armor Class** 8

**Hit Points** 22 (3d8 + 9)

**Speed** 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	6 (-2)	16 (+3)	3 (-4)	6 (-2)	5 (-3)

**Condition Immunities** poisoned

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 8

**Languages** understands all languages it spoke in life but can't speak

**Challenge** 1/4 (50 XP)

**Undead Fortitude.** If damage reduces the zombie to 0 hit points, it must make a Constitution saving throw with a DC of 5+the damage taken, unless the damage is radiant or from a critical hit. On a success, the zombie drops to 1 hit point instead.

### ACTIONS

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

## 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 weapons that aren't silvered

**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 B: MAPS

