

# DUNGEON OF THE MAD MAGE

## COMPANION:

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## BUNDLE IV



BY WYATT TRULL

*You Save \$2.50!*

**CONTAINS:**  
**LEVELS XIV-XVIII**



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## ART CREDITS

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All hail our glorious artist:

**Cover:** *Vampiric Skull* by Dean Spencer, hallowed be his name

## LEGAL STUFF

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# FOREWORD

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*Dungeon of the Mad Mage* is a tough nut to crack. Even after digesting its twenty-three chapters, you're left wanting, wondering. What, exactly, is this campaign's story? What aims are there beyond gold or glory or power—beyond just delving into the deeps?

The *Dungeon of the Mad Mage Companion* is aimed at fleshing out what would be an otherwise skeletal module. Through narration blocks, variants, and actual *narrative*, the *Companion* should make running *DotMM* easier for you and more satisfying for your players. No adventure is perfect, but *DotMM's* lack of a narrative is glaring—hence the founding reason for the *Companion*.

## SHORTHAND

With even just five chapters per document, this supplement is *massive*. The following shorthand must be implemented to reduce the strain on your printer or the scroll wheel of your poor, poor mouse:

**DoTMM** refers to this module, *Dungeon of the Mad Mage*.

**LX** refers to a level of Undermountain (e.g. "L1").

**Appx** refers to an Appendix, either of the of the *Companion* or *Dungeon of the Mad Mage* itself.

**Ch.** refers to a chapter. Intuitive, right?

**HG** refers to *Halaster's Game*, the overview chapter of the *Companion & DotMM*.

## STRUCTURE OF THE COMPANION

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Each chapter of the *Companion* follows this structure:

### PREAMBLE OR "RUNNING LEVEL X"

The *Companion* opens with notes on how to best run that level of Undermountain. It always includes quick notes for the DM but might also break down the story of that level, outline its factions, detail additional loot you can add, or criticize how that chapter was written, providing you with alternative ideas to running it.

**Halaster's Game.** The *Companion* depicts the Mad Mage as a deranged gameshow host whose program, *Dungeon of the Mad Mage*, is broadcasted across the multiverse. In specific chapters of the *Companion*, however, this also includes wide-reaching variants that you can utilize to flesh out or improve that level.

### AREAS OF NOTE

The *Companion* fleshes out areas of a particular level that need it. Sometimes this is simply a narration block to read to your players. Sometimes it includes tactics used by NPCs there or additional loot. Often it includes tips to better run that area, even if it alters *DotMM*.

**Special Events.** Many levels have special events written that can occur in a multitude of areas. These serve as narrative devices to shake things up. Use them at your own discretion.

## EPILOGUE

The epilogue details any possible paths that might occur after finishing a level, as well as reminding you of what level the party should reach.

**Send-Offs.** Each chapter of the *Companion* is written with a narration you can use to cap-off your session. Every send-off includes one in which the Mad Mage telepathically speaks to the adventurers *and* the audience. These messages may include quips, a moral to the story, warnings, jests, foreshadowing, or even an announcement of the next dungeon level.

## APPENDIX A: MAGIC ITEMS

Magic items—and sometimes mundane items—are detailed in Appendix A. The location thereof is also included. Some chapters of the *Companion* add additional loot to the mix since Undermountain often seems deprived of any useful items. *Spell scrolls*, however, aren't ever described in Appendix A.

## APPENDIX B: NPCs & MONSTERS

The statistics of the NPCs and monsters that inhabit a level are provided for you in Appendix B. Additionally, some chapters of the *Companion* include new or different monsters you can add to the level; these statistics are also provided for you.

**Exceptions.** Over 230 unique creatures are in *Dungeon of the Mad Mage*. To avoid bloating these supplements, CR 0 creatures such as **cats** aren't included. So too are spellcasters with different spells prepared than their original statblock, as well as creatures whose variants are just too trivial to detail—such as a wood elf **bandit** who merely gains an additional 5 feet of movement or the additional hit points an enlarged **mimic** might have.

Additionally, the many petrified creatures of Level 2, Area 26 are not included.

## ROLEPLAYING THE MAD MAGE

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As always, the Halaster Blackcloak has been rewritten as a deranged gameshow host whose program, *Dungeon of the Mad Mage*, is broadcasted across the multiverse. Countless souls watch—apparently—as Halaster hurls challenge after challenge at an adventuring party in Undermountain, filming their every struggle and victory. It's this insidious game that the player characters have found themselves trapped in.

See *Halaster's Game* of the *Companion* for more details on roleplaying the Mad Mage in this manner.

# LEVEL XIV: ARCTURIADOOM

"I have waited eons for this! So few have ever made it so far and neither I nor the fans will be denied the mid-season climax we are due! Also, clear my week. I'm due in Skullport again."

- Halaster, to his nothic secretary in Dweomercore

## QUICK NOTES

- The mithral keys to the weapon of mass disintegration (see Area 37) are found in Areas 7, 10, 13B, 21, 29 and 39A). Two keys were moved to new areas, as described below.
- The adventurers are very likely to split up to cover as much ground as possible during the WMD's countdown. Plan accordingly to oversee simultaneous journeys.
- Polymorph traps can be spotted with a DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check and require a DC 20 Wisdom saving throw to resist the spell.
- Major areas of intrigue are A15 (Mecha-Halaster) and A39 (Alussiarr, the **rakshasa**). Everything else is stocked with your run-of-the-mill hobgoblins or giants.
- If you're running Halaster as our archetypal mad gameshow host, be aware that, in the *Companion*, the Mad Mage will hurl the party into a demiplane as a "reward" for shutting off the WMD on this level. They languish there for three months while *Dungeon of the Mad Mage* is on break; see this chapter's *Epilogue* for more details.

## PREVIOUSLY ON DUNGEON OF THE MAD MAGE

Keep in mind the following as you run this level:

- Doomcrown is the estranged son of Warlord Azrok, who the party may have met on Level 3.
- Preeta Kreepa, a former apprentice of Arcturia, may have tasked the party with the Free Alussiarr quest. She never learned his true identity but knows his magical blood is used in Arcturia's twisted experimentations—like the one Preeta suffers from.
- The Cheeky Pluckers, an adventuring party added in the *Companion's Halaster's Game* have been added to A4, if they weren't slain on Level 9 during the *Arcturia's Lecture* event.

## ADDITIONAL LOOT

For the lair of a lich, there's a surprising absence of magic items on this level. The only item to be found is a *spell scroll of polymorph*. At your discretion, you can add the following loot to Arcturiadoom:

- 2d4+3 +2 arrows, Area 9B, in Darkshine's sarcophagus
- *Instrument of the Bards, Fochlucan Bandore*, Area 39C, zealously guarded by the **young blue dragons**
- *Quiver of Ehlonna*, Area 15, in the pit
- *Ring of Jumping*, Area 30, in the guts of the carrion **ogre**
- *Trident of Fish Command*, Area 31, in the brine pool
- *Wand of Web*, Area 40B on a bookshelf

## HALASTER'S GAME: THE MID-SEASON FINALE

Arcturiadoom is the site of the mid-season finale for Halaster's hit gameshow, *Dungeon of the Mad Mage*—and it's *live*. The clock is ticking: upon entering the lair of Arcturia, the contestants must find the six mithral keys to the weapon of mass disintegration, and if they fail, the weapon activates.

**Changes.** In *DotMM*, Arcturia's weapon of mass disintegration (described in Area 37) is dormant. The adventurers can activate it with the mithral keys, clearing the level with its destructive power. In the *Companion*, however, Halaster activates the machine—to hell with the fire giant, the hobgoblins, to all their hard work—and scatters the keys across the level. He gives the party **ten minutes** before this "WMD" goes off. Thus, the party cannot afford to fight every foe, nor do they have time for rests or rituals. This is the race of their lives.

**Cheating the Blast.** Halaster prevents the party from leaving Arcturiadoom by holing up the exits with a *wish* spell. However, the weapon cannot affect creatures in zones of antimagic (such as Areas 4 and 32) or those that get to Area 37. If the party chooses to follow through with this plan, *let them*. Halaster does nothing to prevent this, but he does chew them out for "ruining the live mid-season finale."

**The Game Begins.** It's once the adventurers enter Area 3 that Halaster lays this challenge at the feet of the party. An alarm blares throughout the level, but only the contestants can hear it; all other creatures are *completely unaware* of their impending doom. When a minute has elapsed, Arcturia's recorded voice says, "Weapon of Mass Disintegration: armed. Launch in T-Minus..." Thus, the party's always appraised of how much time is left. See Area 3 under *Areas of Note* for the script.

**No Escape.** Once Halaster's game begins, all exits from Arcturiadoom are sealed and all arcane gates are shut down. If the adventurers *somehow* manage to escape the level, Halaster pauses the countdown for until they return. He will not be deprived his mid-season finale.

## TRACKING TIME

For once, time is of the essence and the adventurers might find themselves dusted if they take too long searching for keys or fighting foes. Without making it a chore, track time with these principles:

- Timekeeping must be as straight forward and transparent as possible. Use ten tokens, notes, or some other visual aid such as a clock to show your players approximately how much time has passed since the WMD was armed.
- Approximate the length of any conversations the party has with NPCs; there's little time for full negotiations.
- Position and movement are crucial in the last minute of the countdown. Don't pull your punches; if anyone isn't in a safe zone when the WMD goes off, that's it—that's all she wrote.

Additionally, choose one of these methods to track time, if you haven't already devised one of your own:

**Real-Time Approximation.** You can approximate ten minutes of game time for one minute spent in-game. This gives the players one hour and forty minutes to find all the keys. If you're lenient, or your players are notorious dawdlers, extend it to three hours; you know your players best.

The disadvantage to this method is that you need to adjust real-world time for instantaneous events in-game. For example, if the adventurers were to spend thirty precious seconds picking a lock or searching a room, that can be resolved instantly at the table, they wouldn't lose any time unless you subtract that from the hour-forty or three hours (real-time) they have to shut off the WMD. Thus, consider these:

- Under the hour-forty model, subtract five minutes from their time for every thirty seconds in-game.
- Under the three-hour model, subtract nine minutes from their time for every thirty seconds in-game.
- Attempting to break down a door, pick a lock, search a room or the like on this level takes 30 seconds, without regard to how well or how poorly they rolled. The time it takes for these tasks is often handwaved, but on this level it *must* be accounted for.

**Map-Based Tracking.** It is *highly* recommended that you *don't* track time by movement and initiative. It will grind your game down to a halt. If you do go this way, you masochist, then assume the adventurers are always sprinting—and only use one token to represent the party (or subgroups, if they split up). The irritation of this method is lessened on a virtual tabletop, since distance can be measured quickly. Don't bother asking each player for their turn; they move as a group until presented with anything that would provoke a change, such as investigating a statue or searching a room. Again, this method will be painful—but precise.

**Round Approximation.** Under this method, you're just counting down from 100 and measuring by the number of areas they travel to. When the party moves to an adjacent, nearby area, subtract 1. When moving to a distant area,

such as from Area 3 to Area 15, roll a d4 and subtract the result. For the particularly long areas, like A6, or the long route through Area 14, this die increases to d6 with a minimum roll of 3.

## FINDING THE MITHRAL KEYS

After Halaster's spiel is over in Area 3, where he lays down the challenge and activates Arcturia's WMD, he leaves a handful of notes with an adventurer that describes how to find the mithral keys. They're all written in a lunatic's script.

**Changes.** The locations of keys U & V have been changed, as described below. Their original locations were either boring or difficult to write clues for.

**F.** This key is hidden in Area 7; Halaster's notes for this key read:

Find me and you find the key! Look longingly into my eyes, as a lover would—then squish 'em. Really poke 'em out like I owe you money. Ah, but beware, for my eyes have seen much, too much, and you too shall see what I have seen—and it ain't pretty, what I've seen. It ain't pretty at all. The sight might just drive you completely mad!

**H.** This key is hidden in Area 10; Halaster's notes for this key read:

It is in the dwarf maiden that you will find redemption! Her smile promises salvation, her gift guarantees it! To find her, you must follow the chanting! Follow the liturgy! Listen well to that sermon—praise the dread god, Maglubiyet, mighty o' is he—and turn left. It's the door on your left.

**J.** This key is hidden in Area 13; Halaster's notes for this key read:

Sandwiched between the maiden and the Timekeeper, between forges and chalkboards, between work and study. Look not at the eyed tapestry, but to the crystal door!

**U.** This key was originally hidden in Area 27, but was found by Vanar Freth and is with him in Area 29; Halaster's notes for this key read:

A drow has infiltrated Arcturia and has found a key—wouldn't Erelal Freth be proud. He'll be mucking around in the laboratory in about... two minutes. Better hurry, for he's hard to see and harder to find. Its by your right hand you'll find the laboratory.

**V.** This key was hidden in Area 7 with the H key, but it's since been moved to Area 21; Halaster's notes for this key read:

So far below the earth, we wonder of the world above. Is it day? Is it night? Does the sun's warmth fall upon the plains, or does night reign instead? Time waits for no man—well, except for me—but it can be defied. Defy the Timekeepers to claim your precious key. Defy the day and let night rule supreme.

Y. This key is possessed by Alussiarr in Area 39A; Halaster's notes for this key read:

Look right from the start for the Seal of the Skeletal Hand, beyond which slumbers a bachelor in his boudoir. But beware, beware for whilst man is like to wear the tiger's hide, this tiger hides in a man's flesh. Unleash that beast and you will have the key—and the scorn of Arcturia herself.

## OCCUPANTS OF ARCTURIADOOM

While there's a story to be told with Emberosa's fire giants and Doomcrown's hobgoblin legion, forget all that—your players won't care. Maybe they'll awe or shiver or sigh at the sight of Mecha-Halaster, but with the WMD counting down, none of that matters. The creatures on this level are just obstacles that will detract precious time to disarm the weapon—and there's irony in this as well. The giants and their pawns work towards appeasing Halaster just for the Mad Mage to so casually condemn them to death.

**Giants.** With 162 hit points apiece, Emberosa's ilk will (barely) survive the WMD, though nearly being torn apart by eldritch magic will surely have lasting psychological damage. After the weapon goes off, any unwounded **fire giants** are reduced to 12 hit points and shelter in Area 15. The survivors petition Emberosa for guidance, which she cannot provide.

**Hobgoblins.** The Death's Head Phalanx will be wiped out—with exception to the thirty sleeping in Area 32—and every clash with them drips with irony: by opposing the adventurers, they're only expediting their own destruction. The legion likewise refuses to believe whatever the adventurers tell them, for why would Halaster write them off when they're *so necessary* for the construction of Mecha-Halaster?

**Guests.** Alussiarr, the **rakshasa**, and the two **young blue dragons** in Area 39 will weather the blast (although barely). For the fiend, we can posit that the WMD is a 6th-level spell (per the actual *disintegrate* spell), and thus the rakshasa's unharmed, due to its Limited Spell Immunity trait.

## AREAS OF NOTE

The following areas are of note:

### AREAS IN SUMMARY

This nonlinear level can be a nightmare to keep track of, especially if your party splinters to search for the mithral keys. Refer to the table below. Unlisted areas are not noteworthy, or do not beg your attention until visited.

### AREAS IN SUMMARY

| Area | Contents                       | Area | Contents                       |
|------|--------------------------------|------|--------------------------------|
| 1    | Entrance to L14                | 20   | <b>Hobgoblins</b>              |
| 3    | <b>Giants, Hobs</b> , Halaster | 21   | Mithral Key                    |
| 4    | Prison (see A4 for details)    | 22   | Polymorph Trap                 |
| 5    | Polymorph Trap                 | 23   | Various                        |
| 6    | Polymorph Trap                 | 25   | <b>Hobgoblins</b> , Gate to L9 |
| 7    | Mithral key                    | 28   | <b>Hook horror</b>             |
| 8    | Polymorph Trap                 | 29   | <b>Drow mage</b> , mithral key |
| 9    | <b>Hobgoblins</b>              | 32   | <b>Hobgoblins</b> (30+)        |
| 10   | Mithral key                    | 33   | Warlord Doomcrown              |
| 11   | <b>Fire giant</b>              | 34   | <b>Gas spore</b>               |
| 12   | <b>Giants, hell hounds</b>     | 36   | <b>Hobgoblins</b>              |
| 13   | Mithral key                    | 37   | WMD                            |
| 15   | Mecha-Halaster                 | 38   | Trap                           |
| 16   | <b>Hobgoblins</b>              | 39   | <b>Rakshasa</b> , mithral key  |
| 18   | <b>Hobgoblins</b>              | 40   | Phylactery                     |
| 19   | Material components            | 41   | Exit to L15                    |

## 1. ENTRANCE TO ARCTURIADOOM

It's bitter cold in these caves, damp. Water drips from above. Stalagmites rise like fangs from the floor, flanking an iron door whose lintel is carved to resemble a skeletal hand. An arcane flame burns eternal in that hand, and it welcomes you to this place—a place named on the lintel as "Arcturiadoom."

Characters that succeed on a DC 14 Intelligence (Arcana) check can recall that the suffix -doom was often used to denote a lich's lair.

**The Drow.** Halaster seals the doors once he arms the WMD. At your discretion, the drow magi here slip inside just in time. Otherwise, they might as well not even exist for this level.

## 2. NATURAL CAVES

The point of this area is to foreshadow the disgusting experiments Arcturia performs on her subjects. The duergar here shouts Arcturia's name—that's all it can say now, so deep in its insanity. It howls her name, curses her name, hallows her as a merciful goddess that might reverse its disfigurement, whispers her name in despair—and so on.

## 3. FOYER

As you enter Arcturiadoom, time itself halts. Giants and hobgoblins stand bewildered and frozen, leaning over the piles of scrap metal they were sorting through. You can hardly move; you feel numb... except for an ill-wind that blows up and down your spine.

You hear the Mad Mage before you see him, before he teleports into this chamber. He brandishes a scepter, speaking into it: "This is Halaster Blackcloak comin' at you live on the multiverse's premiere gameshow, *Dungeon of the Mad Mage!* Tonight is a special night, folks, for we're airing this episode *live! Live, I tell you, Live!* Our contestants have made it to Arcturiadoom—the site of our mid-season finale. Let's see how our contestants are doing tonight." Halaster then reappears near you, brandishing that scepter.

Let the players respond; they're on live TV. They are, however, powerless to do anything to Halaster. After he's had his fun, read:

Halaster stares beyond you, as if there was an audience watching from afar. "Now folks, the ground rules for tonight's challenge: my dear apprentice, Arcturia, has crafted a weapon of mass disintegration! That's right! A WMD! I've never been prouder! It's due to go off in about... ten minutes after I shut up, and when it does, all living creatures in this lair will get their asses dusted, *unless* the contestants here can find its six mithral keys and shut the weapon off before it's too late!"

Halaster turns his attention to you: "The keys! The keys, my contestants, the *keys!* Six of 'em, all scattered across Arcturiadom! Behold! Clues!"

Within your hands are suddenly a handful of notes written in a janky script. Riddles, directions. Halaster looks beyond you once again: "The challenge has been laid, the stakes raised! Can our dear contestants shut down the WMD or shall they be dusted? Can we get some love and support?"

The cheers, jeers, and roars of an audience thunder in your ears. Countless languages, thousands of words, some dripping with contempt, some with adoration, but all thick with sadistic amusement. "Dust! Dust! Dust!" they cry.

The Mad Mage flashes you a smile and says, "Ya got ten minutes! Go!"

Time unfreezes. A siren blares in your ears: a woman's reedy voice that says, "WMD Activated. Launching in T-Minus ten minutes."

The giants seem undisturbed; they shout, "Arcturiadom is ours!" while the hobgoblins barrel towards you, weapons drawn and clearly deaf to the alarm ringing in your ears.

Great. Just great.

The doors of Arcturiadom are now sealed by a *wish* spell. No other characters can hear the alarm but the party, and convincing others of it is a Herculean task.

Halaster's notes describe how to find the keys. Also, each adventurer becomes magically aware of Area 37, courtesy of Halaster. They don't know the precise distance to it, but are always aware of the direction it lies in. This sense doesn't, however, account for walls or hallways.

## 4. PRISON

You can recognize a prison when you smell one. Corpses have been left to rot and waste to ferment in buckets. The rusty cells are streaked with bile and grease and a lever bolted to the floor promises freedom to those trapped here.

Within two cells are crammed a handful of abominations: men and women with the heads of animals—and one whose hands protrude from his temples.

"How do you do?" asks the head-hand creature. "I'm Danny Elfman. Think you can crank that lever?"

The prison, previously empty, has been filled with the surviving Cheeky Pluckers, an adventuring party added in the *Companion* and detailed in *Halaster's Game*. They may have been met previously by the party, whether it be in Undermountain or Waterdeep, perhaps even in Dweomercore in the special event *Arcturia's Lecture* (added in the *Companion*).

## SHORT-TERM MADNESS

| d100   | Effects (lasts 1d10 minutes)   |
|--------|--|
| 01-20  | The character retreats into his or her mind and becomes paralyzed. The effect ends if the character takes any damage.        |
| 21-30  | The character becomes incapacitated and spends the duration screaming, laughing, or weeping.                                 |
| 31-40  | The character becomes frightened and must use his or her action and movement each round to flee from the source of the fear. |
| 41-50  | The character begins babbling and is incapable of normal speech or spellcasting.   |
| 51-60  | The character must use his or her action each round to attack the nearest creature.  |
| 61-70  | The character experiences vivid hallucinations and has disadvantage on ability checks.                                       |
| 71-75  | The character does whatever anyone tells him or her to do that isn't obviously self-destructive.                             |
| 76-80  | The character experiences an overpowering urge to eat something strange such as dirt, slime, or offal.                       |
| 81-90  | The character is stunned.  |
| 91-100 | The character falls unconscious.   |

The Pluckers were, ironically, plucked by Arcturia during a visit to the upper reaches of Undermountain. She's transformed them into abominations. No matter their previous statistics, they're now **commoners**. Their disfigurements cannot be undone except by a *wish* spell. Assuming none have died previously in your campaign, 1d4 of them are here, detailed below:

- Fiona dé Vaun, a LG human, once the boisterous leader of the Pluckers now with the head of a moth.
- Four-Fingers, a N gnome, with the head of a shrew.
- Halberd, a LG dwarf, with the head of an aardvark.
- Sariel, a NE drow, has had her head replaced with that of a rabbit's. Her eyes are alight with fear.
- Daniel Elfman, a NG half-elf bard, is now armless. Hands protrude from his temples. He plays a lyre in a macabre manner that isn't half-bad.

The Pluckers know little of Arcturiadom beyond their doom and live in everlasting fear that the lich will return to inflict worse experiments on them. Most, except for Elfman, yearn for a merciful death. They can guide the adventurers through much of the level's eastern wing; they're familiar with Areas 13 and 28-31. They've never visited any other chambers.

**Antimagic Zone.** When spellcasters enter the area, they feel their connection to the Weave severed. Do not, however, just flat-out tell them it's anti-magic. Describe it as if they were out in the cold and suddenly their shawl was ripped away. They feel... naked, exposed, defenseless. In this manner, they can still guess the nature of the antimagic zone and posit that they might be able to weather the WMD here.

## 6. STATUE OF ARCTURIA

What could this abstract abomination be? A statue of a woman, skeletally thin, with butterfly wings and bone spurs jutting from her forearms. Its plague reads: LONG MAY SHE REIGN. Could this be your host, the dread-lich Arcturia, Halaster's apprentice?

The statue points a stone wand to the opposite alcove of the hall—a clue perhaps?

## 7. STATUE OF HALASTER

Look and behold, for it is Halaster Blackcloak, not in the flesh, but carved from stone. His face features a look of wild abandon and he brandishes his staff menacingly. Crazed, lidless eyes are engraved all along his robes.

**Mithral Key (F).** Halaster has left an insidious trap to protect this key; when scrutinized under a spell of *detect magic*, the statue radiates enchantment magic. When a creature within 5 feet looks at the statue, it must make a DC 15 Intelligence saving throw as all eyes animate and gaze at that creature. On a failure, they succumb to a form of short-term madness (see above) for a duration of 1d10 minutes. A *calm emotions* spell can suppress the effects of madness, while a *lesser restoration* spell can rid a character of their short-term madness.

If multiple creatures are within 5 feet and looking at the statue, the eyes target only one creature, chosen randomly. Once the eyes impose this saving throw, they cannot again for another 24 hours.

To find the key, a creature must still succeed on the DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check to find the button that releases the key. The V key has been removed to Area 21 and is no longer here.

## 9. DEATH'S HEAD WATCH POST

As the adventurers approach this area, they overhear a resounding sermon in Goblin. Assuming they can understand that language, read the following:

A sermon sung in a guttural tongue: Goblin. You bend your ear to translate:

"—and we must be ever ready," shouts a woman, "to march into the fire, the flames, spears forward, eyes forward, hearts—forward! It is towards Acheron we march, to Maglubiyet himself, might the dread god welcome us in his holy legion! It is to him we swear and it is for him we fight—is that not right, my brothers and sisters?"

A dozen voices shout out their agreement, clanging what sounds like spears into a stone floor or banging their fists onto their breastplates.

Per the clue given by Halaster, the party should know to follow the chanting and take the door on the left. There is no slipping by the hobgoblins without the aid of a *pass without trace* spell or the like; expect a bloody, drawn-out fight as the hobgoblins prove themselves to Maglubiyet.

## 10. DWARVES' DEN

What was once a den of revelry has fallen into disrepair. An iron tankard—massive enough to fit four dwarves inside—has crashed from its moorings in the ceiling. It's cracked in two, lying amidst other debris and watched over by two statues: one decapitated, the other a dwarf maiden with a flagon held high.

**Mithral Key (H).** Reaching into the maiden's mug unleashes a trap left by Halaster. The room begins to flood—with ale! Two doors appear at the north and south exits, trapping the party. The locks can be picked, or doors broken over 30 seconds with a DC 16 Dexterity check with thieves' tools and DC 24 Strength (Athletics) check, respectively. The north door is positioned just north of the polymorph trap, making it likely that an adventurer falls prey to it.

The room floods rapidly, with three feet of ale per each round of combat. After ten rounds, the chamber is completely filled. Creatures that swallow the sour ale must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for one minute. Dwarves succeed on this saving throw automatically.

## 11. SMITHY

It's the music of a hammer and anvil that you hear as you ease open the iron doors. The room is dimly lit by massive beetles that shed scarlet light. It's from this beetle-light that a fire giant works to reshape malleable metals into worthy pieces. In the corner pieces of sculpted iron: cogs, sheets, hinges and the like, all sized for a massive machine bigger than the giant itself. All the while, you hear this blacksmith grumble.

In Giant, Hrossk complains to himself about "unpaid overtime" and a lack of "representation" in "company dialogue." If the adventurers listen long enough, he grumbles, "Mecha-Mage ain't gonna conquer a thing without you. You're the real engine. You're the cog at the center of it all, Hrossk—and you deserve to be recognized. A place at the table."

Despite this dialogue that sheds light on how disgruntled Hrossk is, he's still hostile to the party and attacks. He wastes no time on words with smallfolk.

## 13. TRANSMUTORIUM

### 13A. WOVEN EYES

This area description assumes the party enters from the eastern entrance. Adjust accordingly.

As you enter the chamber, your mind squirms away from your eyes, instinctively looking away from something that should not be—and so you first focus on the other aspects of this chamber. There's a crystal door to your left. It's blue, transparent. Three pillars of black stone—basalt you notice, very nice, very nice indeed—sport a silver doorknob each. What could that be for, you must wonder—for to wonder about that tapestry of eyes, the one stretched across the wall, the one that gazes at you with burning jealousy, the one that menacingly flaps its living flesh, might just rend your sanity.



Touching any knobs on the pillars represents a *huge* setback for the adventurers, unless they needed to teleport back to the front of the lair. Even still, they're liable to the polymorph trap in Area 5.

**Brass Panels.** It makes no sense that the panels are *inside* the Alteration Chamber, so they're placed here in Area 13A instead.

**Roleplaying Xebekal.** The ruined beholder is just bored. It's absolutely mad with boredom and will give anything for entertainment—alas, it has nothing to give but its own company, and who would want that? Xebekal doesn't want to die, but instead be restored to its "glorious" form. During a telepathic conversation, it "gifts" participants with visions of its old form. Visions of it disintegrating drow and goblins, carving great chasms with its eye rays, and generally lording over "lesser" creatures.

### 13B. ALTERATION CHAMBER

Like any sane delver, you look through the glass before entering this strange chamber. The ceiling sports a crystal lamp that sheds a pale light—and at the chamber's heart, you spot a key.

As described above, the brass panels are in Area 13A and not 13B. However, there are buttons inside the chamber that can open or close the crystal door.

**Mithral Key (J).** Under this supplement, Xebekal can occasionally summon enough willpower to press the buttons in 13B telekinetically. It does so now, when adventurers are in the chamber. Roll initiative; Xebekal has a +2 bonus to its roll. On its first turn, it closes the door; on the next, it presses the left button, shrinking characters inside. It's then satisfied and ceases its tomfoolery, *unless* the characters reverse the shrinking. Cue a tug-of-war between Xebekal and the adventurers, as it repeatedly shrinks them or shuts the door. As written in *DotMM*, every time the left or right buttons are pressed, roll a d6 to see if the chamber malfunctions, damaging all creatures in the chamber. Throughout all this, the tapestry of eyes' eyes blink rapidly and it grunts with exertion.

## 15. MECHA-HALASTER

The doors open upon a *massive* hall, at least a hundred fifty feet in height, supported by towering stone pillars. A fire giantess paces the hall, grumbling to herself.

Smack-dab in the middle of the chamber is a giant construct made of finely-forged iron, humanoid in shape. A hundred feet tall—and it's still missing a head. Its body is engraved with lidless eyes and its fists are decorated in unpowered runes. Its open neck bulges with fitted cogs and gears.

Even without the head, you know what this is: an iron giant crafted in Halaster's image. A Mecha-Halaster. Are you even surprised? Is *this* the most absurd thing you've seen in Undermountain? Or is this just a normal Tuesday for you?

When Emberosa hears the doors open, she shouts in Giant, "I told you the inspection was not to be disturbed!" Roll initiative; the party has a chance to hide before she turns around. If discovered, she attacks them on sight, shouting "Halaster warned us that you might swing by!"

## 21. NIGHT AND DAY

This chamber is one massive timekeeper: wizard statues point towards an iron disk suspended above the chamber. A symbol of the sun decorates its underside, and by its hinges you can tell that it is meant to spin in its place.

By when the adventurers reach this place, it is daytime on the surface. The Timekeeper reflects this; the symbol of the sun hangs above the chamber.

**Mithral Key (V).** The key found here was moved from A7, its original placement. When the chamber is scrutinized under a spell of *detect magic*, conjuration magic can be sensed here, as well as the evocation and transmutation already described in *DotMM*. Halaster has squirreled away the key so as to force characters into defying the Timekeeper, triggering its lightning when a character manually flips the disc to show the moon (representing night). Afterwards, the mithral key is conjured from a pocket dimension and clatters at the center of the chamber. Halaster is quite the sadist indeed.

## 29. LABORATORY

**Mithral Key (U).** This key was originally found in Area 27, but Vanar Freth has since plucked it. He's unaware of its purpose but knows it's mithral—and that alone makes it valuable. He's been trying the key on every lock he's since come across, but to no avail. Vanar will only part with the key to save his life, or if convinced of the WMD's countdown (which, given that the alarm is only heard by the adventurers, requires a DC 22 Charisma (Persuasion) check).

Vanar's first instinct upon encountering the party is to flee this room under a spell of *invisibility*. He takes the door to Area 30 (leaping over the polymorph trap, which he's already spotted) and unlocks the carrion **ogre** in that chamber using the *mage hand* cantrip and his own deft fingers. Afterwards, he makes for Area 31—and loops back to A29. This rigamarole continues until he's cornered. He isn't above shouting for the hobgoblins in Area 32, if he can make it that far. Otherwise, he tries to escape via Area 14, taking the junction south to Area 3—only to find that, like the party, he too is sealed in Arcturiadom. Through this entire process, his **shadow demon** accosts the party, buying time for him to escape.

Other tricks at his disposal are spells of *misty step*, *web* and *Evard's black tentacles*, which he uses to tie up the party while he makes a coward's run.

**Roleplaying Vanar.** Vanar is a trickster by heart, an absolute squirrel of an elf. He's clever and prone to half-baked plans that somehow work out in the end. When cornered, he runs his mouth until he spots another opportunity to escape.

Vanar is aware of the legends concerning Arcturia and has since discovered the fire giants' Mecha-Halaster project, which he has correctly guessed will be used in some zany plot to conquer the surface just for the sake of

it. In addition to this, Vanar speaks Giant—and has listened to Emberosa's grumbling; he knows that Halaster promised them an ancient rune vital to upending the Ordning and the world. He's unconcerned.

### 30. HIDEOUS TRANSMUTATION

It's hideous, this *thing*—a creature chained to the floor, with the body of an ogre and the head of a carrion crawler. Mucus and spittle fly as it snarls and struggles in its chains, desperate to have at you. In the corners of this better-left-alone chamber are two corpses: an ogre's head and a carrion crawler's body.

When chased by the party from Area 29, Vanar Freth flees here and looses the **ogre** from its chains using his own deft fingers and a *mage hand* cantrip.

### 31. ILLITHID'S ASSISTANT

You can weather a guess at what sort of creature made this place into a home. The walls are decorated with sculpted tentacles; they're capped with skulls. At the foot of a slime pool cloaked in reeking miasma sits a simpleton in a loincloth too busy sucking his thumb to notice you.

If the *feblemind* spell is reversed, Ellix can inform the party of the whereabouts of three mithral keys. Only a spell of *greater restoration*, *heal* or *wish* can end the spell. Ellix, however, is unaware of the keys' locations, but was nursed on a dozen threats by his former master that she'd "dust [his] ass" if he failed her tests. She even took him to the WMD's chamber to show off the machine.

If chased by the adventurers, Vanar Freth loops back to Area 29 by way of this area.

### 33. DOOMCROWN'S QUARTERS

With the WMD armed, Doomcrown is nothing more than a distraction and red herring. If the adventurers happen across this area, they overhear Doomcrown complain to Ernie, the flumph, "I'm not giving up the bloody key" in Common (or Goblin, if the party is versed in it; the point is to get them to chase after this red herring). Expect them to bust in, demanding the key and wasting precious time. The "key" he refers to is the one to the storeroom, Area 20, where there's apparently wine and ale galore. His captains have been hounding Doomcrown to expand the "booze ration" for the sake of morale.

Once the party enter the chamber, read:

It's like a kid with building blocks has been on a caverns kick. Seven-foot-tall stalagmite-shaped spires of rectangular blocks decorate this chamber. You've caught a hobgoblin in the act: he's busy on the seventh spire when you bust in; he's decorated with stained medals and wears his armor as if it were a second skin. Beside him floats a strange jellyfish-like creature whose flesh shifts from blue to bloody orange at your presence. All of you freeze, as if this was an intimate moment better left alone.

The hell's going on here?

**Roleplaying Doomcrown.** The warlord is a brute at heart with a gentleman's flair for the dramatic and the tactical wit of a military genius. He has no idea what the mithral keys are but has happened across the WMD's chamber before—although he has no idea what its purpose is. "Magic," Doomcrown's fond of saying, "is better left to greybeards and shamans."

Doomcrown is hopelessly evil, despite Ernie's best efforts to convert him. He'd rather fight the party and die in glorious combat than risk dying as a mewling cur kept in chains. If he shouts loud enough, he can alert the **hobgoblin captains** in Area 32C, who come rushing to investigate the disturbance.

**Roleplaying the Flumph.** The flumph has no name except the one given to it by Doomcrown: Ernie, after his cousin who died from drinking still water, a story Doomcrown has shared and that Ernie now shares with others. As a flumph, its mood is reflected in the color of its membranes. Ernie is particularly sensitive to the moods of nearby creatures; thus, when it encounters the party, it turns bloody orange to reflect their immense stress.

Ernie is also hopelessly nihilistic, despite yearning to return home. If informed of the WMD, Ernie does not despair, but instead revels in its immediate death. Ernie does not, however, oppose the party in their goal to shut off the WMD. It knows not where any of the mithral keys lie. It can be coaxed to join the party if they promise it safety—"Why not?" says Ernie, telepathically, "We are all doomed to dust one day."

### 37. WEAPON OF MASS DISINTEGRATION

Plates line the walls of this domed chamber—shining with the unmistakable sheen of mithral. Seven narrow alcoves bite into the walls, wide just enough to squeeze into.

If you're worried that your party will just hide in the alcoves here, you can change it that the six mithral keys *unlock* the chamber and the WMD is controlled instead by a big, red button and other mechanisms. Obviously, you'll have to contrive this barrier before they get into the chamber.

**Magic Mouth.** With the WMD armed, a *magic mouth* spell counts down in Arcturia's reedy voice. The room is also lit in scarlet while the WMD is armed, not the yellow light of the crystal dome.

### 39. ARCTURIA'S BOUDOIRS

Hanging above the lintel of these double doors is a disk of black basalt, engraved with that same symbol—the skeletal hand of Arcturia herself. What else than the lich's personal chambers lie beyond these doors? The air is thick with menace.

### 39A. GOLD AND BLACK BOUDOIR

The opulence at display here is fit for kings. Lavishly furnished, this boudoir sports wall-to-wall carpeting, gold silk cushions, and black basalt braziers that smolder with melting incense. Two hammocks are strung between chiseled pillars, and in one naps an Adonis of a man wearing nothing but a golden silk skirt and fine sandals. Track marks march up and down his forearms. Alussiarr is in the throes of a dream that's about to end. If you'd like to strike a comical tone, he's pawing at an invisible ball of yarn. The track marks described above are evidence of the blood drawn by Arcturia, using a fine alchemical tool called a proboscis (a.k.a., a needle).

**Roleplaying Alussiarr.** The fiend is cunning and presents itself as the ultimate paramour, a peerless lover. Its accent is thick and intriguing, but fake. It takes great advantage over its innate *disguise self* spell and, if its true nature is discovered, promises it can be whatever a potential "suitor" wants. The fiend is a hedonist of the deepest debaucheries.

Alussiarr only hides behind its mortal façade until it knows it can serve it no more. At first, before it drops it, it claims that it is kept as Arcturia's slave and that any "right and moral man" would set it free by breaking the seal of binding that keeps it here. If this angle does not work, it drops all pretense and lets the party guess at its otherworldly nature. It promises secrets, loot, and "the key to prevent your demise." As the party learns, the fiend is aware of the armed WMD—but it does not need to worry, for its Limited Spell Immunity trait will protect it from the blast.

Once Alussiarr asks the adventurers to free him, the Mad Mage chimes in. Read the following:

A voice echoes throughout the chamber: Halaster. "Now," says the mage, "if you loose him, he'll work all manner of evil in Waterdeep, really muck up the place. Isn't that right, Alussiarr?"

The man flinches at the sudden voice. "I asked you not to use that name, mage."

"Answer the question."

"I don't wanna."

"I compel you."

Alussiarr makes a rude gesture "Yeah? Compel this."

A sudden shock surges through the man, illuminating a form hiding beneath that flesh: a tiger-like humanoid with backward palms. The creature looses a sharp scream and sucks in a heavy breath. "Fine, mage! Fine!" he shouts, before turning to you. "It is true that I intend to work all manner of evil in the city above. Plots, schemes, tomfoolery and vengeance. Stiffing waiters and taxis and the like." His lips curl into a smile. "Now, how about that seal?"

Freeing Alussiarr also has the risk of alerting the dragons in Area 39B, who (in the *Companion*) are tasked with keeping the rakshasa here. They bust in when they hear a conversation and demand that the fiend quells its tongue. They assume their true forms and attack the party if they move to undo the seal of binding outside Area 39A.

**Mithral Key (Y).** Alussiarr has the key hidden in a lit brazier. He reveals its location if freed, otherwise they must find it. Characters aware that the key is hidden in this room can make a DC 17 Intelligence (Investigation) check to deduce that it would be safest in a burning brazier and thus find it amongst the coals. Because it's mithral, it cannot melt, but it is white hot. When a creature touches the key or starts their turn holding it, they take 9 (2d8) fire damage and must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or drop the key. After five minutes away from the fire, the key cools down enough. If quenched in water, it cools down after 30 seconds.

**Tying in Alussiarr.** By itself, loosing a rakshasa should be a trying ethical quandary that the party has no time to explore. They need the key and either they fight the creature or free him. What's to say that the fiend does not escape to wreak havoc on the world? Whenever they return to Waterdeep, the newspapers hold a litany of tales concerning heists, murders, and sightings of a "weretiger." If the rakshasa is captured by the authorities (likely Force Grey, the highest caliber defense agency the city has to offer), it can be compelled into giving up the identities of those that freed it: the party.

### 39B. SKULL AND BONE BOUDOIR

As described in *Halaster's Game*, this gate is shut off until the WMD is no longer armed.

### 39C. CRYSTALIGHT BOUDOIR

Wonderful music fills the hall, wrought by invisible hands that pluck at a harpsichord. Two dancers, a man and a woman quite clearly in love, waltz about the chamber. Oh, how it makes your heart soar for better days, bright days in the world above, for days without danger or worry. Your heart swells, cries out for that gift, cries out like a neglected child denied its supper.

The dragons are Tenragos and Mylegosa and, under the *Companion*, they earn their keep by keeping Alussiarr both contained and entertained. To fail at the hands of mortals would mortally wound their otherwise immense pride. They attack the party if the rakshasa is about to be freed.

If two characters enter the chamber unmenacingly, the couple swaps partners, sweeping up a character in their waltz. They do not take "no" for an answer and introduce themselves. Veterans of *World of Warcraft* might recognize these naming conventions and peg the dancers as blue dragons. The dancers might ask the adventurers who they are, their purpose here, unaware that the WMD is close to mortally wounding them.

**Roleplaying the Dragons.** The drakes play the part of vapid nobles on vacation. They've summered here for so long that they've now embraced the lie and they condemn even reverting to their true forms as a violation of their due rest-and-relaxation. Once they do, they take out that frustration on those that forced them to give up their human forms.

## 41. WATCHFUL PILLARS

As you throw your weight against the doors, Arcturia's recorded, emotionless voice echoes through your skull: "Lockdown in progress. Exits have been sealed until launch countdown has been completed. Please enjoy your stay."

The doors are sealed until the WMD is launched or disarmed. They cannot be damaged or reshaped, per a *wish* spell cast by Halaster.

## EPILOGUE

Shutting off or surviving the WMD is enough to get the party to 14th level, even if they don't slaughter enough hobgoblins.

**The Cheeky Pluckers.** Even if sprung from prison, the Pluckers still can't catch a break. Arcturia finds them again and subjects them to further experiments. The adventurers will meet these poor bastards again on Level 23 as the **champions** that serve Arcturia in Area 17.

**Mecha-Halaster.** By shutting off the WMD, the party all but guarantees the eventual completion of Mecha-Halaster. Alas, the project is still weeks from completion—however, they'll have time to complete it if Halaster hurls the party into a demiplane for three months (see below).

**R&R.** If the party successfully shuts off the WMD (but not just escape its blast in antimagic zones) then Halaster rewards them with some well-deserved rest and relaxation—by forcefully teleporting them to a demiplane in which they'll languish for three months while *Dungeon of the Mad Mage* is on break.

During that time, Mecha-Halaster will be finished (provided that the fire giants survive or the Mad Mage replaces them with **azers**). Their reward for completing Level 15 of *DotMM* can be to return to Waterdeep and stop Mecha-Halaster from laying waste to the city. See *DotMM Companion 15: The Obstacle Course* for details on both the demiplane/ off-season break and Mecha-Halaster.

Alternatively, if you'd prefer to keep the party on the Material Plane, the Mad Mage confines them to Maddgoth's Castle on Level 7; he uses a number of tricks to keep them there for a few months, such as wards, yugoloth guards, and the like.

## THE HOST'S SEND-OFF

Unlike other chapters of the *Companion*, this one has no standard send-off, for it is so tightly wrapped around Halaster's gameshow.

"Weapon of Mass Disintegration," squeaks that woman's voice, "disarmed. Lockdown lifted."

With your hands trembling, you finally take a breath. It feels as if you haven't breathed in years. The voice of the Mad Mage echoes from above and below: "My god..." he says, "you actually did it. They did it, folks! Our contestants have made history tonight—can we get a round of applause?"

Your ears are filled with thunder: hoops, hollers, cheers and groans. You can pick out your names in the ruckus.

"That concludes the first half of *Dungeon of the Mad Mage*," Halaster tells the audience. "With much love and sorrow, I must bid you adieu until the season resumes in three months. Until then, folks, until then!"

The Mad Mage snaps his fingers from afar—and your world is consumed. When you come to, you're in another realm, a flat demiplane whose distant horizons are cloaked in mist.

Checking out your new digs, you find that there are no walls. Rusty bathtubs and chamberpots lie in plain view. A well draws water from... somewhere. The pantry consists of wooden crates stocked with food—but the food is kept in strange, iron jars that require an even stranger tool to open. There are feather beds to sleep on, but not enough. It seems three of you will be sharing.

Worse yet, the entertainment room consists of a decimated bookshelf stocked with Halaster's autobiographies and a few elven fashion magazines. There's also a lone table with a lone deck of cards—but after closer inspection, you find that a king and all aces are missing.

Halaster's voice echoes from above and below: "Enjoy your mid-season break, champs. You've really earned it. We're set to film again in... three months. I'll be back to collect you then. Try not to go as loony-toons as I did."

# LEVEL XV: THE OBSTACLE COURSE

"Welcome back to Dungeon of the Mad Mage folks. It's been too long! Too long indeed..." – Halaster Blackcloak

## QUICK NOTES

- This is the single greatest level of Undermountain, replete with traps, gags, goofs and deadly foes.
- You can't let your players dawdle. Whenever your patience crumbles, threaten the adventurers with a visit from this level's antagonist, Netherskull. Sometimes, however, these flybys are illusions crafted by Halaster.
- If you're hell-bent on engineering a showdown with Netherskull in Area 39, then remove the bone keys from Areas 19 and 30B, placing them on Netherskull's person. To leave this place, the party must defeat Netherskull or steal a key from its eye socket. With this variant, the doors to Area 39C are unlocked. See *Halaster's Game* for details.
- Teleport traps are invisible and cloaked from *detect magic* and other divination spells! No saving throw can be made to resist the teleportation!
- Covered pit traps are noticed with a passive Perception of 17 or higher, or a DC 17 Wisdom (Perception) check. 25 pounds or more cause it to open and a character takes 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage per 10 feet fallen!
- There are few characters on this level to interact with, so you'll want to steer your party to them. These characters are Fidelio the ghost (Area 7), Lorlynn (Area 14), the Githzerai (Area 24), Zorak Lightdrinker, the dwarf vampire (Area 27) and Kavil the mage (Area 30). You also want to make Netherskull into an antagonist that attacks periodically.

## HALASTER'S GAME

This level represents a new height of the Mad Mage's insanity: few intruders have ever made it this far, and fewer still were true contestants of *Dungeon of the Mad Mage*. Halaster is unhinged, ecstatic and, for the first time ever, on the edge of *his* seat.

**Variant: Victory or Death.** The *Companion* makes only one real change on this level: it's not enough for Halaster, or the audience, for the party to just make it to Area 37 and take the tunnel to Level 16. Nay, the fans demand blood, they demand entertainment, and so Halaster expects the party to best Netherskull, who was previously an optional boss. To facilitate this, a sealed, magical door separates Levels 15 and 16, which can only be opened by the bone keys that were previously found in Areas 19 and 30B. Now the keys are carried by Netherskull or left in Area 39C. With this change, the doors to Netherskull's lair must be open when the party has experienced enough of the Obstacle Course. This discretion is left to you and facilitated by Halaster. If the party reaches Area 39C too early, you can have the doors locked, if you wish.

**Play-by-Play: Expanded.** In addition to the ravings listed in *DotMM*, consider using these phrases for the Mad Mage's play-by-play:

- When characters win a battle or clear a room:

- "And another area cleared! Just thirty-nine to go!"
- "At this rate, you might finish the campaign before New Year's—*gosh*, could you imagine?"
- When characters dally or take too long:
  - (Out of combat): "Every moment you dawdle brings you closer to doom—to me."
  - (In combat): "Just kill something already!"
  - "Tick, tock, folks, I'm not paying you to sit around and eat oatmeal."
- When a character goes unconscious or dies:
  - "Another one bites the dust!"
  - "Death ought to be an old friend by now."
  - "They shall be immortalized in the show's credits."
- When a character cheats death:
  - "Confidence is a slow and insidious killer."
  - "Death: the most patient cuckold."
  - "There goes the life insurance payout."
  - "Man, how many more times can this guy go down without suffering brain damage?"
- When you or Halaster are bored or feeling zany, or when he "forgets" that the mic is still on:
  - "Is this thing still on?"
  - "What, Burger Lord again? Fine, get me the happy meal. Gods know I could sorely use some joy."
  - "Tell my wife I'll come back for her someday. And call Gary; he promised me that *sending* spells wouldn't work on that rock I left her on."
  - "Yeah, hey, pick up some medicine for me on the way back; I've been feeling... Well, the 'S' word, lately. What? No, not 'sick,' 'sterile.'"

## NETHERSKULL: HAIL TO THE KING

The chief antagonist of this level can't be left to rot in Area 39. Nay, Netherskull must instead terrorize the party. The death tyrant is the headliner for this level and must be seen often. Consider these methods to showcase it to your party and spruce up this level:

- Have Netherskull attack thrice, using its Disintegration Ray if necessary to open a vantage point on the party. Nowhere is safe. After one round of combat, Netherskull retreats via tunnels in the ceiling or other routes that the party can't follow it through.
- Interrupt social encounters that take too long with an ambush by Netherskull; the party must be constantly on the move.
- Consider the entirety of the Obstacle Course as Netherskull's lair, for the purposes of using lair actions. Remotely hound the party with these minor attacks to spice up encounters.

**Roleplaying Netherskull.** Netherskull is consumed by fury, the coals of which are always stoked when it discovers intruders in its lair. It doesn't play with its prey once found, but ruthlessly eradicates them.

Since its telepathy is lost when a beholder becomes a death tyrant, give Netherskull the ability to speak Common, if the party lacks Deep Speech or Undercommon—however, it refuses to degrade itself by using such a "mongrel tongue." It sees Deep Speech as an imperial tongue spoken only by the most advanced beings.

**Tactics.** Follow these tactics for Netherskull. The death tyrant is formidable even when faced without minions—and it can create some mid-fight.

- Much of the experience of facing any beholder is the randomness of its eye rays. Don't skimp out on that, no matter how tempting it is.
- Netherskull floats, preferring an altitude of 30 feet, especially in its lair. It will not tolerate melee combatants!
- If any nonplayer characters are with the party, such as Lorlynn or the githzerai zerths, raise them as **zombies** via its Negative Energy Cone feature. Alternatively, divide and conquer with a Charm Ray.
- The Slowing Ray neutralizes martial characters and sorcerers that rely on Quickened metamagic.
- To cover any retreat, or to fortify its position, Netherskull uses its second lair action to grapple foes with spectral tentacles.
- Netherskull counters foes that hide behind cover with its third lair action or uses its Disintegration Ray to remove the cover entirely.

## MECHA-HALASTER'S MARCH

As noted in the previous chapter of the *Companion*, Halaster hurls the adventurers into a demiplane for three months while work finishes on Mecha-Halaster (see Level 14). The party's "reward" for completing the Obstacle Course is to be teleported to Waterdeep to stop Mecha-Halaster, after which the Mad Mage will conjure them back into Undermountain.

This event isn't designed to take up a full session; it's simply a final battle that, if won, gives the party up to a week of time on the surface before Halaster forces them back into his domain. When you run this event, take into consideration how weak your players are from confronting Netherskull and Level 15 at large. If they're flagging, you can add to their firepower with other characters (such as ones found in *Waterdeep: Dragon Heist*) or reduce the amount of forces that arrive with Mecha-Halaster.

**Just A Gag.** It's important to know that Halaster isn't really expecting to conquer Waterdeep. This is just one of many half-baked plots that have emerged from his addled mind. He won't be particularly upset if Mecha-Halaster falls—for the scene will make for great TV regardless.

**A City in Peril.** It was without any preamble or showboating that the Mad Mage teleported Mecha-Halaster to the surface. The vision Halaster grants the party in the dungeon is carefully constructed—for the construct only appears outside the city moments after Netherskull is slain. The city is in a frenzy and its heroes, such as Force Grey, are still mobilizing. The city's garrison is in disarray, thanks to Halaster's earlier machinations and, having fed the city's brass false information, much of the garrison was stationed elsewhere today, leaving only a skeleton crew to defend the walls. The party is the first on the scene.

**Statistics.** Mecha-Halaster's statistics are found in Appendix B of this supplement.

**Minions.** Mecha-Halaster does not march alone: the Mad Mage stole a flock of **quadrones** from the factories of Mechanus and reprogrammed them to serve him instead. Additionally, the Mad Mage has sent a contingent of Stonecloaks: the **stone golems** that he imbued with intelligence through fragments of the Runestone on Level 20. They are carved in his likeness and view Halaster as a god. The golems are honored to serve him now on this "crusade" of his.

A Stonecloak has the statistics of a **stone golem** with Intelligence and Charisma scores of 9. It understands Abyssal, Celestial, Common, Draconic, Dwarvish, Elvish, Infernal and Undercommon, but can't speak. Stonecloaks communicate through a system of eye blinks.

## SHOWTIME

First on the scene, the party appears on the city walls. Two **stone golems** and eight **quadrones** have just slaughtered the garrison defenders stationed here. Up and down the wall, similar skirmishes rage. Mecha-Halaster can be seen in the distance and will arrive in three rounds, giving the party some breathing room to first dispatch the constructs here.

At an initiative count of 20, Mecha-Halaster's steps send tremors throughout the land. Creatures on the wall must make a DC 14 Strength saving throw or fall prone. Flying creatures are unaffected, as are the stone golems. This effect ends once Mecha-Halaster reaches the city walls.

**Iron Giant.** Mecha-Halaster arrives on the fourth round of combat. Mounted on its shoulders are two **magic missile gatling guns** (see Appendix B). These constructs are destroyed when Mecha-Halaster's hit points are reduced to 0, even if they still have any hit points remaining.

**Roleplaying the Mech.** Taking after its "father," Mecha-Halaster is just a big, obnoxious robot. Any-thing you would say as the Mad Mage can be said as Mecha-Halaster. Even its mannerisms mirror his, such as scratching its nose. When it's reduced to 0 hit points, it explains that it was only a proto-type—that one day, the true Mecha-Halaster will lay siege to this city.

**Tactics.** Mecha-Halaster's patented WHOOP-ASS ("Waterdeep Head-On Onslaught Protocol/Assault System Strategy") directive dictates the construct's battle tactics:

- Mecha-Halaster grounds flying characters with an *earthbind* spell, which he can cast thrice a day.
- If three adventurers are within 30 feet of one target, and its at half its hit point maximum, Mecha-Halaster casts *chain lightning*.
- If Mecha-Halaster lands a hit on a heavily armored character, it grapples them.
- Lacking ranged attacks, Mecha-Halaster relies on the **magic missile gatling guns** to attack distant foes.
- If outnumbered, Mecha-Halaster can call forth another 2d4 **quadrones**, which arrive at initiative count 10 the following round. Likewise, 1d2 **stone golems** can arrive from further up the city walls, painted red in fresh blood and brain matter.

## AFTERMATH

Waterdeep is sure to welcome the adventurers as the heroes they are for intervening in this battle. Days after the attack, the city honors those that fell in battle and bestows medals on the heroes that survived. The adventurers will receive such awards, and might even be rewarded with wealth, prestige, or property. Work with your players to establish how their characters would hope to be rewarded. At a minimum, they can each expect 500 gp apiece, straight from the city's treasury or its nobles' hoards. They may even receive an invitation to join the prestigious Force Grey, the city's most esteemed corps of defenders.

Halaster also ambushes the adventurers in the aftermath of the attack, promising them two weeks of rest. This is a lie; for after a week, he forcefully summons the party back into the bowels of Undermountain to continue his wretched game. If you'd like to strike a comedic tone and deny your adventurers their day in the sun, Halaster does this the night before the party is honored before the masses. In the wake of their disappearance, rumors spread like wildfire, branding them as humble, masked heroes that did not need reward or recognition. By when the adventurers next return to Waterdeep, dozens of two-bit adventurers have tried (and failed) to claim the party's identities and exploits as their own. Thus, if the party tries to prove it was truly they that saved the city, no one believes them.

## AREAS OF NOTE

The following areas are of note:

### AREAS IN SUMMARY

With forty areas in this nonlinear dungeon, refer to the table below. "PT" refers to a covered pit trap and "TP" refers to a teleport trap. Unlisted areas are empty of worthwhile content.

### AREAS IN SUMMARY

| Area | Contents                            | Area | Contents                              |
|------|-------------------------------------|------|---------------------------------------|
| 1    | PT, TP                              | 19   | <b>Ropers</b> , TP                    |
| 2    | PT                                  | 22   | TP, animates <b>stone golem</b>       |
| 4    | Trap (Magic, DC 22 Int)             | 23   | <b>Stone golem</b> , 10k gp gems      |
| 5    | Portcullis, TP                      | 24   | <b>Githzerai zerths</b> , TP          |
| 6    | TP                                  | 26   | TP, Trap (DC 17 Dex)                  |
| 7    | Fidelio, LG <b>ghost</b>            | 27   | Dwarf <b>vampire</b>                  |
| 8    | TP                                  | 28   | TP, Trap (DC 15 Dex)                  |
| 9    | Trap (Elder Rune, DC 22)            | 29   | PT, <b>champion</b>                   |
| 10   | TP, Dragon statue                   | 30   | <b>Mage</b> , Gate to L18             |
| 11   | TP                                  | 31   | TP, Boon/Treasure                     |
| 12   | Trap Deactivator                    | 33   | Trap (+6 to hit x2)                   |
| 13   | PT, TP                              | 35   | TP, Trap (DC 14 Dex)                  |
| 14   | <b>Skeletons</b> , <b>drow mage</b> | 36   | TP                                    |
| 15   | Gate to L20                         | 38   | Forty <b>zombies</b>                  |
| 16   | Trap (Fireball, DC 19)              | 39   | Netherskull's lair                    |
| 18   | Treasure, 250 pp                    | 40   | <b>Lava children</b> , <b>mephits</b> |

## 1. ON YOUR MARK! GET SET! GO!

When the adventurers reach this level, hit them with this telepathic speech by Halaster. At this point, the Mad Mage is unhinged, for few folks ever reach the Obstacle Course.

If you use the variant in which Halaster hurled the party into a demiplane for three months so that the work of Mecha-Halaster could finish *and* you intend to send the party to Waterdeep after Level 15 to fight that metal monstrosity, begin Halaster's speech with the following excerpt. If not, skip down to below.

Weeks have bled into months since the Mad Mage trapped you in this dull demiplane and neither ingenuity nor magic has managed to free you from this prison. Beginning yet another bleak day, you notice a rift in the far distance—far, far, *far* in the gray, misty distance of this infinite realm. You drop your block of cheese and muster your allies and go sprinting towards the portal! Freedom at long last—unless this is yet another trick by the Mad Mage.

You near the portal: an invisible force sucks you all up, like a maelstrom at sea. The ground slips away from your feet as you hurl towards the portal, beyond which you see a dungeon chamber—screw it, you'll take it! Anything is better than this!

The portal vomits you out onto a cold, stone floor. Standing before you is Halaster himself—but before you can strike him down, you realize he's but an illusion, a projection. Halaster smirks and says, "Welcome back to the land of the living."

A vision crosses your minds: the city of Waterdeep. Panic has consumed the streets—for in the distance, a steel monstrosity, easily a century tall, looms above the city walls; its face is the face of Halaster himself.

"Right now," the Mad Mage tells you, "My creation, Mecha-Halaster, long may he stomp, marches upon Waterdeep itself! Should you clear this level in time, a sojourn to the surface is yours! Perhaps you may even save the city! Such shall be your reward, my dearest contestants, for tonight is the glorious return of *Dungeon of the Mad Mage!*"

Give the party time to respond and interact with the Mad Mage. Thereafter, add the following:

Halaster's grin grows impossibly wide—clearly another trick of magic. "We come now to the Obstacle Course, the lair of my most esteemed tenant, Netherskull. Your goal is simple, dears, and it is to strike Netherskull down—and it knows! It knows, for I've told it! Twice it shall strike! Twice shall it try to send you to an early grave—but beware, for the dead shall find no rest here! No rest at all!

"Welcome to a game of cat-and-mouse—but where the mouse becomes the cat and the cat the mouse until, of course, in the eventuality that the mouse eats the cat, in which case—"

Halaster takes a breath to steady himself. "On your mark! Get set—don't disappoint me or the thousands watching—go!"

When Halaster promises them that Netherskull will attack twice, that's a lie you can leave up to your own interpretation. The point is to keep the party on edge.

Once Halaster has said his spiel, the illusion fades from being. Run the area as normal thereafter.

## TELEPORT TRAP

These await those that fall prey to the teleport trap:

**A10.** Teleporting here animates the dragon statue trap: the character in its path must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or be knocked prone and take 55 (10d10) bludgeoning damage.

**A19.** Three **ropers** lie in wait for prey!

**A40C.** The character falls from 30 feet into the lava and takes 55 (10d10) fire damage, in addition to the 3d6 bludgeoning they'd take from the fall.

## 2. CLACKING FLOOR

**Play-By-Play.** If a character falls into the pit, the Mad Mage announces, "This trap is brought to you by the Ghaunadaur ooze-clerics of Undermountain: *fhinala-pekta-een-een-pa-pha! Paa-pha!*"

## 3. STUFFED MONSTERS

You stumble upon an intimate chamber decorated with stuffed monsters arranged in lifelike poses. Frames line the walls, holding within them incredibly lifelike portraits.

With no other purpose, just utilize this room for light zaniness: framed photographs—yes, photographs—of Halaster in safari-gear with a rifle (etched with arcane runes) line the wall. Each photo depicts him shooting down his prey. The aarakocra photograph is particularly callous: the creature's kin can be seen in the background, terrified and aghast as Halaster is kneeling down and flashing a thumbs-up. A close inspection of a puddle in the photograph reveals that the cameraman is none other than Halaster himself—and its eyes follow those that look upon the photo.

## 5. ANTECHAMBER

### TELEPORT TRAP

These await those that fall prey to the teleport trap:

**A19.** Three **ropers** lie in wait for prey!

**A28.** The statue animates and takes a swing at the creature, who must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or take 16 (2d12+5) slashing damage plus 11 (2d10) fire damage.

**A40C.** The character falls from 30 feet into the lava and takes 55 (10d10) fire damage, in addition to the 3d6 bludgeoning they'd take from the fall.

## 6. LOOTED CHEST

This chamber's scorched from the fires of bygone days. There's not a single surface that hasn't been blackened by fire or painted with soot. Scrawled in the soot on the back wall is a foreign word, likely of Dwarvish origin: XUNDERBROK!

At the chamber's heart sits a stone chest, open and empty, its treasures long since taken, and it too is black with soot.

## TELEPORT TRAP

These await those that fall prey to the teleport trap:

**A13A.** Traps galore, in particular a covered pit trap trapped with a *glyph of warding* (*cloudkill*, save DC 22, 36 (8d8) poison damage, half damage on a save).

**A22B.** Teleport traps galore, four in total.

**A40C.** The character falls from 30 feet into the lava and takes 55 (10d10) fire damage, in addition to the 3d6 bludgeoning they'd take from the fall.

## 7. FIDELIO'S FOLLY

Little more than rubble separates this room from a chasm whose lava sheds dim, crimson light. Sweltering heat spills forth and has peeled away the chamber's green paint job. As you enter the chamber, a wind stirs up an apparition from bygone days; it reeks of cheap cologne. "Well, well, well," the ghost says, "Look who came crawling back like a bird on its belly."

Fidelio initially mistakes the adventurers as a former party that spurned him some decades ago, hence his remarks on them coming crawling back.

**Roleplaying Fidelio.** Channel Zapp Brannigan of *Futurama* or other haughty characters. Fidelio's legacy is one of failing upwards—but he sees every rung of that ladder as a remarkable victory worthy of the history books. He's incorrigible, oblivious to his own gaping flaws, and terribly uneducated. He often remarks about his "tasteful" cologne—which he pronounces as "ka-log-ne." You can also draw on any of this sample dialogue:

- "When I'm in command, every mission's a suicide mission."
- "Let's sing—and you'll see why they call me the 'Velour Fog.'"
- "Amateur hour's over; I'm piloting this steakhouse now."
- "If we can hit that bullseye, the rest of the dominoes will fall like a house of cards—checkmate."

**Striking the Beast.** Fidelio is aware that he cannot rest until Netherskull is slain by his hand—and that has made him desperate. If he and the adventurers meet Netherskull in battle and the death tyrant's on the ropes, Fidelio might hurl himself in front of spells or attacks just to give himself more time to land the killing blow. Utilize that for comedy, if you will.

## 8. TELEPORT TRAP

This place makes for a great ambush by Netherskull. On the round before it blasts open a hole from the chasm (Area 40C), it uses a lair action to ensnare the party: the walls sprout spectral tentacles, subjecting characters within 10 feet to a DC 17 Dexterity saving throw. On a failure, they're grappled until succeeding on a DC 17 Strength (Athletics) or Dex. (Acrobatics) check. Netherskull departs after one round.



## TELEPORT TRAP

These await those that fall prey to the teleport trap:

**A11.** The characters find the spellbook of Elvilac, the brother of Lorlynn, the **drow mage** of Area 14B.

**A26.** The statue animates, taking a swing at the character teleported here. They must make a DC 17 Dexterity saving throw or take 40 (6d10+7) force damage—and, if reduced to 0 hit points, that target is disintegrated.

**A31.** Any magical items on a character teleported here are stolen and left on the bottom of the 50-foot-deep pit in this chamber.

## 9. HIDDEN RUNE

The dungeon gives way to a seeping chasm churning with lava. Spanning this molten hell is a hazy, spectral bridge that ends at a pair of stone doors. Even from here, you can see the "H" that's engraved into the stone.

## 10. ROLLER-DRAGON

There's nothing for you here but a stone statue of a drake. Its wings are folded in tight, mouth is agape, its fangs bared. It has forty-seven fangs, this drake. You don't know if that matters, but you're at least impressed at your speedy counting. Curious enough, the entire thing is balanced on two stone cylinders.

A character that succeeds on a DC 14 Intelligence (Arcana) check identifies the statue as a gold dragon in the first century of its life, judging by its iconic frills. Halaster golf-claps telepathically in their mind for solving this great mystery.

**Play-By-Play.** If a character succeeds on its saving throw to avoid the animated dragon statue, the Mad Mage remarks, "Bravo! Quicker than the last guy, that poor schmuck of a gnome!"

If they instead failed, Halaster remarks, "Oof! You never wanna see how sausage gets made, folks—but it's something like that."

## TELEPORT TRAP

These await those that fall prey to the teleport trap:

**A13A.** Traps galore, in particular a covered pit trap trapped with a *glyph of warding* (*cloudkill*, save DC 22, 36 (8d8) poison damage, half damage on a save).

**A22B.** Teleport traps galore, four in total.

**A40C.** The character falls from 30 feet into the lava and takes 55 (10d10) fire damage, in addition to the 3d6 bludgeoning they'd take from the fall.

## 11. DEAD END

Lying on a soiled bedroll is a dead drow, his face frozen in a silent scream—a scream of death. His flesh sags like a crone's and all his teeth, you notice, have grayed into brittle daggers. There's a foul energy here. The air is thick with it.

You flinch—Halaster's voice bounces off the wall. "He chose to rest—and he chose poorly! Another notch on Netherskull's belt!"

At your discretion, Halaster throws up a projection on the wall, depicting the elf's last moments. Read the following description:

The dead end is painted with a vivid illusion, courtesy of the Mad Mage's magic. You know, since he bothered to include the phrase "COURTESY OF MY MAGIC" above it in floating letters.

In this operatic illusion, the dark elf lies snoring on his bedroll when a spectral eyestalk materializes above him. It watches, weeping a milky liquid that falls from above onto the elf. It watches for a long while—until the elf suddenly rouses, alert now, warned by the lizard at the back of his brain. He mistakes the eyestalk's spit for a leak of water staining his tunic.

Dagger in hand, he searches for danger. Finding none, he lays back down to sleep—and that's when he sees the eyestalk.

It blinks. It weeps more of that ichor, a fat globule that lands in the elf's eye. He flinches, wipes it away—and only then does the eyestalk shudder with coursing, black energy. As the elf meets its gaze, the eyestalk vomits out a ray of pure necrotic energy, ending the elf without any further fanfare.

A caption appears above. It reads, "AND SO WAS THE END OF DEAR ELVILAC ZMIRTH—DOES HIS SISTER KNOW?"

## TELEPORT TRAP

These await those that fall prey to the teleport trap:

**A6.** No danger abounds!

**A24A.** The **githzerai zerths** lay low nearby.

**A28.** The statue animates and takes a swing at the creature, who must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or take 16 (2d12+5) slashing damage plus 11 (2d10) fire damage.

## 12. WHEEL ROOM

No person has set foot here in some time, if the dust that coats every surface in this room is any indication. At the chamber's center, a rusty iron wheel protrudes from the floor, six feet in diameter. You notice there a harmless, an invisible attendant. Its ephemeral body is outlined by the lack of dust and is vaguely humanoid in shape.

You want to showcase the **living unseen servant** but ensure that the adventurers don't find reason to harm it—that way, if the servant reactivates the traps later on, they'll kick themselves for leaving it alive. When the party turns off the level's traps, the Mad Mage loudly remarks, "Well, thanks for ruining the fun, you jerks." His voice bounces off the walls.

## 13. HIDDEN TRAPS

The pit yawns wide—and so does Halaster. At the bottom his image has been painted over the stones, open-mouthed, his grey cavities on display. Painted maggots squirm in his rotten gums. A piece of yellowed paper lies in the corner.

The paper is a memorandum penned by Halaster and addressed to all "Undermountain residents." It details the cutting of the "company dental plan." Halaster is unremorseful in the letter and recommends "a good pair of pliers" in the meantime. At your discretion, his memo bears the *glyph of warding* that unleashes the *cloudkill* spell.

## TELEPORT TRAP

These await those that fall prey to the teleport trap:

**A19.** Three **ropers** lie in wait for prey!

**A22A.** Teleporting there animates a dormant **stone golem** that begins to stalk the halls.

**A40C.** The character falls from 30 feet into the lava and takes 55 (10d10) fire damage, in addition to the 3d6 bludgeoning they'd take from the fall.

## 14. SEPULCHERS

### 14A. SOUTHERN CRYPT

It's a herd of leering dwarven skulls that adorn this door. Runes decorate the lintel, carved in the notable Dwarvish script.

You can add a fourth sarcophagus that holds what appears to be the remains of one of the adventurers. Shortly after being discovered, the corpse animates. Its voice is clearly Halaster doing his best impression of that character. Tailor the dialogue as you see fit; the whole jig's just a lampoon meant to mock that character.

### 14B. NORTHERN CRYPT

It's the creak of bones you hear first—joints and discs popping, locking, groaning, and moaning. As a dungeon veteran, you're no stranger to animate skeletons, and long has it been since one posed a threat to you. As you crack open the crypt's door, you see them milling about: dead dwarves. They make no effort to accost you, but from one of the crypt's sarcophagi you hear an elf groan. She sharply grumbles in her native tongue.

Lorlynn, mistaking the adventurers as her brother, grumbles in Elvish, "We had a deal, brother! You stick to your crypt, and I to mine! Can't a girl get four hours in a coffin around here?"

If Fidelio is with the party and you're playing him especially Zapp Brannigan-esque, he takes quite the shine to Lorlynn, who wants nothing to do with him.

**Roleplaying Lorlynn.** Lorlynn is a true stick in the mud. She wants no part in the party's "adventure" and refuses to come along. An attack by Netherskull, however, can convince her to join them, as can a successful DC 19 Charisma (Persuasion) check.

## 16. SPECTRAL BRIDGE

Spanning that chasm is an ethereal bridge, mortared with wisps of energy that wavers in the heat thrown forth from the lava below.

If your version of Halaster is merciful, or would like to test their ingenuity, he might warn the party about the bridge's interaction with magic items. He might even offer to "hold onto" those items for them—but instead steals them, keeping them on Level 23.

If a character plunges through the ephemeral bridge because of a magic item, they fall through an illusion of the mincart from Area 1. Halaster's voice loudly shouts, "I warned ye! I warned ye! Don't dare say I didn't warn ye!"

**Ambush.** An attack by Netherskull while the party is crossing the bridge would be ideal. After one round of combat, the **death tyrant** slips away. The seven **smoke mephits** in Area 40 might then fly up to harry them further.

## 19. GRABBY PILLARS

As described in *Halaster's Game*, the Mad Mage has set the party on a collision course with Netherskull. With this variant, the bone key that would normally be here has been removed and its purpose changed. It instead unlocks a magical door to Level 16 and is carried by Netherskull (in his eye).

### TELEPORT TRAP

These await those that fall prey to the teleport trap:

**A5B.** Halaster's coin, which reverses an elder rune from a bane into a boon and vice versa.

**A13A.** Traps galore, in particular a covered pit trap trapped with a *glyph of warding* (*cloudkill*, save DC 22, 36 (8d8) poison damage, half damage on a save).

**A26.** The statue animates, taking a swing at the character teleported here. They must make a DC 17 Dexterity saving throw or take 40 (6d10+7) force damage—and, if reduced to 0 hit points, that target is disintegrated.

## 20. SEPARATED HALL

While normally this hall is a dead end, you might want to provide the adventurers a chance to progress to Area 36. Flight facilitated by magic, such as the *fly* spell, still causes creatures to plunge into the chasm (see Area 40 for details), forcing the party to confront this challenge without magic.

The gap between Areas 20 and 36 is twenty-two feet. What parts of the cliff aren't sheer are no less treacherous to pass. Characters can attempt to cross the gap with these methods:

- A character equipped with a climbing kit scale the cliffside until reaching Area 36A. This takes two minutes.
- A grappling hook or looped rope can be thrown to snatch at a rock outcropping and swing across; for the former, make a ranged attack roll against the rock (AC 17). For the latter, a DC 15 Intelligence (Sleight of Hand) check determines if the knot the character makes can hold their weight; this check is made *as* a character is swinging across.
- A series of rock outcroppings and leftover pillars allow the characters to leap from one to another, if they succeed on two of three skill checks: Athletics (DC 16), Acrobatics (DC 18) and Insight or Intelligence (mason's tools) to understand that a pillar is about to topple (DC 20). Failing two of the three checks causes a character to fall 30 feet into the lava below, taking 10 (3d6) bludgeoning damage from the fall and 55 (10d10) fire damage from the lava.

## 22. TELEPORT TRAPS

### AREA 22A. TELEPORT TRAP

These await those that fall prey to the teleport trap:

**A26.** The statue animates, taking a swing at the character teleported here. They must make a DC 17 Dexterity saving throw or take 40 (6d10+7) force damage—and, if reduced to 0 hit points, that target is disintegrated.

**A28.** The statue animates and takes a swing at the creature, who must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or take 16 (2d12+5) slashing damage plus 11 (2d10) fire damage.

### AREA 22B. TELEPORT TRAP

These await those that fall prey to the teleport trap:

**A6.** No danger abounds!

**A8.** No danger, with exception to elder rune carved onto the doors leading to the spectral bridge (DC 22 *prismatic spray*).

## 24. GITHZERAİ RETREAT

When the party first lays eyes on the githzerai, read the following:

As you creep towards this chamber, you lay your eyes on them: slim, olive-colored folk tattooed and freckled in black ink. They look like nothing that hails from this world—and your very eyes start to water as you continue to stare. It's as if your mind is shy to lay your eyes on them, as if a power gently—but firmly—suggests your mind to look elsewhere. To ignore their presence.

The zerth's ambient, psionic power naturally causes others to point their attention elsewhere, making it a challenge to focus on them. You don't want to gate this interaction behind a *tongues* spell, so grant Yrlakka telepathy with a range of 30 feet.

**Roleplaying Yrlakka.** The old sage is patient and trusting, for, thanks to his psionic power, he can look deep into an individual and glean their alignment and nature. So insightful is he that the sage has already gleaned the adventurers' names. You can showcase his gifts through nonthreatening acts of telekinesis. For example, he might offer water to the party by telekinetically drawing cups from the fountain in Area 24D or psychically lay out extra bedrolls as cushions for the party to sit on.

**Next Time On...** You can and should use the gith to preview Level 16. However, you don't want to ruin the surprise of them exiting a portal onto an *asteroid in outer space*. Thus, you must walk a tightrope when voicing the githzerai. They can share any of the following details, but avoid other topics:

- The githzerai are not of this world; theirs was lost to the mind-flayer empire of old. Over eons, they absorbed the illithids' psionic power and broke free. In the aftermath, however, their ancestors splintered: the githyanki sought war, and the githzerai solace. To this day, most of the gith remain on the Astral Plane, hunting mind flayers.

- Below the Obstacle Course, the githyanki have secured a foothold to wage war against a mind flayer colony on a deeper level of Undermountain. This foothold is named the Crystal Labyrinth.
- Yrlakka belongs to the Sha'sal Khou, a renegade faction that seeks to reunify the gith races. He and his pupils wait here in the Obstacle Course, ready to lend their aid to the githyanki.
- The githyanki tolerate no outsiders and are supremacists at heart. They are led by Al'chaia, a cruel and militant knight.
- Yrlakka's most headstrong pupil, Ezrial, has vanished, likely after rushing into the Crystal Labyrinth to probe the githyanki's defenses.
- The githzerai evade "the Mad One" through their psionic gifts. Yrlakka, however, suspects that that time is nearly at an end.

### TELEPORT TRAP

These await those that fall prey to the teleport trap:

**A6.** No danger abounds!

**A8.** As described in Area 8, this location serves as a prime ambush from Netherskull.

**A26.** The statue animates, taking a swing at the character teleported here. They must make a DC 17 Dexterity saving throw or take 40 (6d10+7) force damage—and, if reduced to 0 hit points, that target is disintegrated.

## 26. STATUE OF MORADIN

A dwarven-carved statue dominates this chamber, streaked with veins of mithral. Its stone hammer glows faintly with dwarvish runes. It is Mighty Moradin, great god of the forge—any fool can tell!

When the statue animates, as part of a creature being teleported to this area, it shouts, "That which has been made shall be undone!" in Dwarvish.

### TELEPORT TRAP

These await those that fall prey to the teleport trap:

**A1.** Back to the entrance, where Halaster mocks, "Come crawling back now, huh? Well too bad! Once more unto the breach with you, cretin!"

**A10.** Teleporting here animates the dragon statue trap: the character in its path must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or be knocked prone and take 55 (10d10) bludgeoning damage.

**A35.** The teleport trap puts a character right before the scythe trap.

## 27. MARK OF DEATH

The corridor is split by a gaping pit, twenty-feet long. The air is pregnant with dread, with silence. With slow and heavy steps, you approach the pit's edge to peer down: its sheer sides are stained with blood. A sarcophagus lies below, carved from alabaster and chiseled into a bat with folded wings.

Floating above that sarcophagus is a magical rune that sheds an ill-colored light.

Like the incubi on Level 12, the party is faced with incurring the wrath of an obsessive stalker. However, this one is compelled not by a vendetta, but by magic. If he is

not put down now, Zorak Lightbringer will become quite the thorn in the party's side.

**Roleplaying Zorak.** As with all vampires, anything good within Zorak's heart has been twisted into a cruel parody. His gregariousness has soured into an obsession to collect sycophants and slaves. Whereas he was always quick to share a drink with a stranger, now he finds pleasure in drowning them with ale. Zorak is remarkably straight forward and openly admits he's only hunting a death-marked character as per Halaster's *geas* spell. He's like to point to them and say, "Now, now, let's get this business over with so I can sod off to my crypt. Ye got a death mark, ye got to die. Simple as that, lad."

If the adventurers prove to be too much for Zorak, he first offers to turn the death-marked character into a vampire spawn ("Now, now, it ain't got to be all too bad; I can give ye eternal life, don't ye know it? We can put this ugly business behind us and move on. Everybody, ye see, wins."). What he neglects to tell anyone is that, as one of his spawn, they'll be bound to his will and made into a slave. Still, Zorak hungers for a respectable companion and might one day turn them into a full vampire.

**Tactics.** A seasoned warrior further empowered by undeath, Zorak uses the following tactics:

- Zorak makes ample use of his Legendary Resistances. Don't forget them!
- Zorak does his best to hurl characters into the pit, as without magic or tools, they cannot climb its sheer walls. The easiest method of achieving this is grappling a foe with an unarmed strike, moving into the pit (via his Spider Climb trait) and then dropping them.
- On his first turn, Zorak calls 2d4 **swarms of bats**. He has one swarm take the Help action to give an attack of his advantage. The others are used to harry unarmored foes.
- He follows up turn with an unarmed strike Legendary Action, choosing to grapple on a hit. He then follows it up with a bite Legendary Action at the next opportunity.
- On his second turn, Zorak uses his Charm ability to divide the party, ordering the character to attack the death-marked foe.
- If Zorak can manage to push the party into the pit, he utilizes his *dwarven thrower* to strike at them from above.
- Once the death-marked target is slain, Zorak will retreat unless the odds are overwhelmingly in his favor.

## 28. STATUE OF THARMEKHUL

When the statue animates, as part of a creature being teleported to this area, it shouts, "By fire, be purged!" in Dwarvish.

### TELEPORT TRAP

These await those that fall prey to the teleport trap:

**A5B.** Halaster's coin, which reverses an elder rune from a bane into a boon and vice versa.

**A11.** The characters find the spellbook of Elvilac, the brother of Lorlynn, the **drow mage** of Area 14B.

**A40C.** The character falls from 30 feet into the lava and takes 55 (10d10) fire damage, in addition to the 3d6 bludgeoning they'd take from the fall.

## 29. TRAPPED HALLS

### 29A. PIT OF BROWN MOLD

A description for brown mold has been extrapolated for your convenience—lucky you!

**Brown Mold** feeds on warmth, drawing heat from anything around it. A patch of brown mold typically covers a 10-foot square, and the temperature within 30 feet of it is always frigid.

When a creature moves to within 5 feet of the mold for the first time on a turn or starts its turn there, it must make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw, taking 22 (4d10) cold damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Brown mold is immune to fire, and any source of fire brought within 5 feet of a patch causes it to instantly outward in the direction of the fire, covering a 10-foot-square area (with the source of the fire at the center of that area). When a patch of brown mold is exposed to an effect that deals cold damage, it is instantly destroyed.

### 29B. UNDERBREW IN CHAINS

You find the most curious portrait mounted on the chamber's wall: a scowling dwarf in black plate armor, shackled within a dreary dungeon cell—and it is a massive portrait, sized at three feet by seven feet.

When Underbrew is released, he shouts, "I am your end! Your reckoning! Know my work and despair!"

**Roleplaying Underbrew.** Deaf to reason, Thwad Underbrew wastes no time striking down members of the party. Since you don't have the luxury of role-playing him outside of combat, use the following catch phrases:

- When Underbrew first attacks a target, he shouts, "Countless corpses in this dungeon, and they all died with 'Thwad Underbrew' on their lips!"
- When Underbrew first takes damage, he grunts, "Resist not! Do ye truly wish to live long enough to abandon yer beliefs? To become *like me*?"
- When Underbrew uses his Second Wind feature, he shouts, "Oh, was that the best ye could muster, you leaf-lily shrew?"
- When Underbrew first uses his Indomitable feature, he shouts, "I cannae be stopped! I cannae be quenched!" On the second use, he mutters, "Sheesh, that was a close one!"
- When mortally wounded or on Death's door, he whispers, "Give it time; ye'll end like me—a traitor to all you once held dear. Give it time... Give it... time. Be like... me. Promise ye... Only way to win the mage's game is not to play."

## 30. HALASTER'S HANDIWORK

### 30A. NETHERSKULL'S BIOGRAPHER

A dais dominates this room upon which sits a wretchedly pale mage in a dusty robe. His quill scratches madly into a yellowed journal. "I know, I know, I *know*!" the man snarls, looking over his shoulder to an archway—clearly one of Halaster's arcane gates. As you watch, the mage's head snaps to glare at a gong on the far side of the room. "And what would *you* know about biographies?" the man accuses. "You know how many of these I've written by now?"

By when the party reaches this place, Kavil is having a telepathic argument with the nycaloths, whose only relief from boredom is to taunt and torment the poor mage. Having this conversation before the players hints that there are invisible entities here—but also raises the possibility that poor Kavil is just insane and talking to himself.

**Netherskull's Lair.** To the south of this area lies a door to Netherskull's lair. If you feel that the party has not experienced enough of this level, then keep the door locked. Kavil can explain that they can be unlocked with a special key (see Areas 19 and 30B) although you might want to remove them. Kavil also explains that Netherskull can't use a key; when he leaves his lair, the door he exited through remains open until the death tyrant manipulates its locks from inside the lair with its telekinetic ray. However, if you're worried the adventurers will skip Netherskull when they find Area 37, you can repurpose the bone key to unlock a door to Level 16 in that area. You can then steer your party towards the other entrances to Area 39.

**Roleplaying Kavil.** Kavil's at the end of his rope. He's long since lost count of how long he's been here. He's malnourished, fed only the barest of essentials by Halaster, which are delivered by the magic gong. He refers to the nycaloths here as "Thing One" and "Thing Two," as they—his sole companions—refuse to give the man even their nicknames. You can use any of the sample dialogue below:

- "I want no part in any of this! I just want my spellbook! And my freedom!"
- "Netherskull has an open-door policy—in that, to leave its lair, it has to unlock and leave the door wide open."
- "The death tyrant has slain countless intruders—and still they remain here, humming and hollering and hungering."
- "Do you have any rations? For the love of the gods, tell me you have some fresh rations!"
- "The children in the chasm... They are not children, I promise you. If you find yourself in their game of hide-and-seek, you better hide well."

**Biography Ideas.** Scattered across the dais are old notes and pages discarded by Kavil. Written on them, easily seen, are ideas and titles that the mage has abandoned. They include:

- "Netherskull: Lady Killer."
- "Death Could Not Take This One."
- "A Lesson in Narcissism."
- "Unclaimed Frequent Flyer Miles Galore."

### 30B. PLAY-BY-PLAY GENERATOR

Once you enter this chamber, Halaster's voice booms, "Took ye long enough, ye crocodile-teared pez dispenser! Ye really have garlic in yer soul, ye know that?"

This voice, the one that has hounded you throughout this dungeon, comes from a strange contraption equal parts metal and flesh. This thing has a face: the face of Halaster. It spews out more excrement as you gawk:

"Yer a tepid puddle of a man—and yer mother was one hell-uvah ogre, and yer *father*? He reeked of elderberries. I can smell it on you like cheap cologne! And speakin' of cheap—"

As described in *Halaster's Game*, the Mad Mage has set the party on a collision course with Netherskull. With this variant, the bone key that would normally be here has been removed and its purpose changed. It instead unlocks a magical door to Level 16 and is carried by Netherskull (in his eye).

**Halastron's Reunion.** If your players forged a special bond with Halastron, the **quadrone** of Area 25 on Level 2, then this is the identity of the quadrone in this area. The modron has been reassigned to be the Play-by-Play generator and turning it off kills Halastron. Once Halastron makes its appearance, the fleshy bits of the device evaporate.

As recommended in that chapter of the *DotMM Companion*, allow Halastron to speak Common. His vocabulary has improved greatly since their last encounter, but he's still fond of these phrases:

- "That's show business for ya."
- "Shut up, baby, I know it."
- "Rejoice—you are all gears in the machine."
- "Extinction is inevitable. Live it up while you can."
- "Neat."
- "0-1-1-0-1-0-0-0 0-1-1-0-1-0-0-1."
- "I can dig it." / "Can you dig it?"
- "Bite my shiny, extraplanar ass."

## 31. HALL OF EMBERS

### TELEPORT TRAP

These await those that fall prey to the teleport trap:

**A26.** The statue animates, taking a swing at the character teleported here. They must make a DC 17 Dexterity saving throw or take 40 (6d10+7) force damage—and, if reduced to 0 hit points, that target is disintegrated.

**A36A.** When teleported here, you can have the six **lava children** from Area 40C in Area 36D, getting ready to cannonball into the chasm.

## 34. CHASM'S EDGE

When the party reaches this area, Netherskull might ambush them from Area 39—but not after yelling at Kavil, his reluctant biographer. Read the following:

As you straddle the edge of that molten abyss, you overhear a good ol' fashioned verbal flogging:

"I care little for your plight, wizard! This interview is over!" shouts a voice of gravel and thunder.

A reedier voice cries out, "But my Lord Netherskull—" "Over!" shouts the creature. "Away with you, wizard! Pray I do not reduce you to ash next we meet!"

If the adventurers fail a group Dexterity (Stealth) check, Netherskull comes to investigate.

## 35. SCYTHE-SEEING

If foes pursue the party to this chamber, you can craft a tense scene. No ability check is required to identify the scythe trap as unstable and any attempt to cross it without first disarming or removing the dwarf is suicide. The party must pick their poison.

If circumstances permit, use one of these scenarios:

- The six **lava children** pursue the party from the chasm or from the eastern doorway.
- Netherskull comes from his lair to the north; the party hears it loudly opening up the locks to the door from the north.
- Netherskull bears down on the party from the chasm or passes nearby, forcing the party to hide or flee from it.

### TELEPORT TRAP

These await those that fall prey to the teleport trap:

**A6.** No danger abounds!

**A10.** Teleporting here animates the dragon statue trap: the character in its path must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or be knocked prone and take 55 (10d10) bludgeoning damage.

**A24A.** The **githzerai zerths** lay low nearby.

## 36. LOOTED VAULTS

### TELEPORT TRAP

These await those that fall prey to the teleport trap:

**A1.** Back to the entrance, where Halaster mocks, "Come crawling back now, huh? Well too bad! Once more unto the breach with you, cretin!"

**A8.** As described in Area 8, this location serves as a prime ambush from Netherskull.

## 37. HARMLESS HALASTER STATUE

If you want your players to confront Netherskull, you can reroute the zombie horde described in Area 38, having it instead stream out of the tunnel from below. This then corrals the party into Area 38, where—surprise, surprise—there are yet even *more* undead, forcing them into Area 39 where Netherskull awaits.

**Halaster's Game.** If you're using the *Victory or Death* variant, a magical door stands in the way of Level 16 and can only be unlocked with one of the Mad Mage's bone keys—which is being carried by Netherskull. If you're the running *Mecha-Halaster's March* event, then behind the door is a portal to Waterdeep. In the distance, they can see Mecha-Halaster closing in on the city walls.

## 38. ZOMBIE HORDE

The stench of rot is your closest companion in these depths as you venture further into the Obstacle Course. You hear... hums. You hear the stomp of feet, the clap of hands—wet claps, as wet flesh hits wet flesh, as if it were moist thunder. You then come upon them: a legion of undead, dozens of corpses under various states of decay.

## MOB ATTACKS

| d20 Roll Needed | Attackers Needed for One to Hit |
|-----------------|---------------------------------|
| 1-5             | 1                               |
| 6-12            | 2                               |
| 13-14           | 3                               |
| 15-16           | 4                               |
| 17-18           | 5                               |
| 19-19           | 10                              |
| 20-20           | 20                              |

And what are they doing? What are these animate corpses doing with their time? Humming a tune—the theme song to that show you know so well: *Dungeon of the Mad Mage*.

All as one, the horde turns to peer at you—and they break out into a toothy grin.

The mob rules in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* have been extrapolated and personalized to the **zombies**:

**Mobs.** When handling a crowded battlefield, you can speed up play by forgoing attack rolls in favor of approximating the average number of hits a large group of monsters can inflict on a target. Instead of rolling an attack roll, determine the minimum d20 roll a creature needs in order to hit a target by subtracting its attack bonus from the target's AC.

The zombies have a +3 to hit, so subtract that from a target's AC. For example, if they attack a fighter with an AC of 19, they need a roll of 16 or higher. According to the table above, for every four zombies, one hits, if all four attack the same target. With forty zombies in this area, ten would hit creatures with an AC of 19 each round, until their numbers dwindled.

Leftover zombies automatically miss; for example, if fourteen attacked the same target (with an AC of 19), then only three zombies would hit, as there are enough for three groups of four; the two remaining zombies fail to hit their target.

This attack resolution system ignores critical hits in favor of reducing the number of die rolls. As the number of combatants dwindles, switch back to using individual die rolls to avoid situations where one side can't possibly hit the other.

## 39. NETHERSKULL'S SANCTUM

If you're running the *Victory or Death* variant, then the party has no choice but to face Netherskull. This conflict kicks off the latter half of *Dungeon of the Mad Mage*—and so, Halaster is hellbent on making it as cinematic as possible. Through him, you can use any of the following gags:

- Rifts to other realms open up, revealing various audiences watching this live-recording of *Dungeon of the Mad Mage*. These crowds consist of fiends, aberrations, angelic beings, oozes, and humanoids of countless races, many of which the party has never seen and can't make sense of.
- If one of your players is taking too long to decide their turn in combat, Halaster casts *time stop* to interview other characters, parodying classic reality TV show methods.

- If you're using the Points Game described in *Halaster's Game* chapter of the *Companion*, the party might be able to redeem their points for healing potions, spells, or other rewards.
- As noted in *DotMM*, the play-by-play machine grows more and more unhinged throughout the fight.

**Doors.** As described above, the doors to the lair can be opened without a bone key. When the party has explored enough of the Obstacle Course, one door is open to allow them inside. Use your best judgment.

**Tactics.** Netherskull's tactics are detailed in this chapter's preamble above. In addition to those, it can call upon the zombies in Area 38.

**Terrain.** Your adventurers are sure to make use of this chamber's terrain, namely the pillars supporting the ceiling. Netherskull itself can take advantage of the chasm here, flinging a character towards it with its telekinetic ray attack.

## 40. NETHERSKULL'S CHASM

It's important to remember that lava isn't so much a liquid, since it has the density of stone. Unlike usual portrayals in fiction, creatures do not sink in lava but instead flail helplessly on their surface as their skin boils off their very bones.

## SPECIAL EVENT

You can use the following special event on this level:

### I'M YOUR BIGGEST FAN

Whilst the party's traipsing through the dungeon, the Mad Mage opens up a rift—and out steps a strange creature that claims to be the party's biggest fan. This ideally occurs after an adventurer's been separated from the party via a teleport trap.

No matter this character's race, it has the statistics of a **commoner**. Alternatively, you can use a fiend or aberration—the more absurd, the better. This fan gushes and raves about how lucky they are to meet the party. He or she has a specific favorite member of the party, and might scorn others. The fan hopes for a harmless token, like an autograph or a lock of their hair. Hell, they might settle for getting a black eye from their favorite contestant.

When you spring this event on the party, read the following text:

Amidst your high-stakes dungeon delve, a rift opens up before you, a portal of swirling violet and pink hues! Halaster's voice echoes out from this rift: "And now, having won our sweepstakes, Mr. Giltr'ql can meet his favored contestant!"

From another realm comes applause and out steps a strange creature who says to you, in heavily accented Common, "My god, my good god! It's you, it's really, *really* you! I'm your biggest fan!"

Once the fan has been placated or spurned, the rift swells and throbs. An invisible force begins to draw the fan back

towards it; the fan, for their part, resists and shouts, "No! Just five more minutes! Please, I beg of you, Halaster!" Alas, a massive crab pincer comes from the rift to gently grapple the fan and bring them back whence they came.

## EPILOGUE

There's no where to go up from here—and to do that, the party must continue down. Having cleared this level, they should advance to 14th level, where many classes, such as wizards and warlocks, gain their subclass's capstone.

**Send-Off.** Cap off your session with one of the send-offs below. Both assume the party squared off against Netherskull and emerged victorious. If you run *Mecha-Halaster's March*, don't use a send-off for this chapter. Instead, Halaster congratulates the party and promises two weeks of leave on the surface. This is, of course, a lie. After one week, he summons them back into the bowels of Undermountain to continue this wretched game of his.

### THE STANDARD SEND-OFF

It's getting to you: the misery of it all. The tedium. Like dogs let out from a musty house, you can't help but wonder what lies beyond the fence. Alas, for you, there is no freedom to be found, no distant horizon to which you can gaze and dream of. No, the depths are your sole pasture now, and for far too long has the Mad Mage made you graze upon its dead and dying weeds.

### THE HOST'S SEND-OFF

Under this send-off, Halaster steps out of a portal to interview the party after their "stunning victory" in the Obstacle Course.

Bloodied, haggard, and fed-up, you leave behind Netherskull's corpse and make your way away from this wretched place—but before you get too far, a violet rift opens up and out steps the Mad Mage. Holding his scepter to his lips, he says, "And what a thrilling end to our first night back on *Dungeon of the Mad Mage!* Tell me, my contestants, how exactly are you feeling? Thrilled? Ecstatic? On the very brink of collapse? Do tell and tell well! Speak free and open, for the audience hopes to hear every single word!"

Once the party has been interviewed, Halaster looks past them to an invisible arcane eye. Read:

Still brandishing his scepter in that strange manner, the Mad Mage looks beyond you and cracks a smile. "It's been a helluvah run, folks, a helluvah run. Half-way done, half-way to go before our contestants can return to their nondescript lives on the world above. The future is bright and bloody, and to our contestants, we say, 'Have fun, don't die.' Remember, guts, gore, and more on *Dungeon of the Mad Mage!* Until next time!"

Before you can lay your weary hands on Halaster and wring his neck, a portal opens up beneath his feet, swallowing him whole and leaving you once again in the darkened depths of Undermountain.

# LEVEL XVI: THE CRYSTAL LABYRINTH

"Gate access to Stardock from level sixteen only."

- *Map Carving of Undermountain*

## QUICK NOTES

- You want to do everything in your power to preserve the surprise of walking out from a portal onto an *asteroid in outer space*. All dialogue must be carefully curtailed to avoid spoiling it!
- Think of the githyanki as *Star Wars* sith lords.
- Areas 1-11 are in Undermountain; 12-32 are on the asteroid Stardock, outside of Halaster's restrictions on magic cast in Undermountain.
- None of the characters on this level speak Common except for Urlon (Area 10), **githyanki knights** under a spell of *tongues* and the red dragons. Draconic is the shared tongue across this level's denizens.
- This level is less character-driven and more exploratory in nature. Urlon's plot to depose Al'chaia is the only true story here—but this level shines as an exploratory one.

## PREVIOUSLY ON *DUNGEON OF THE MAD MAGE*

Keep in mind the following when running this level:

**Map Room.** The players may have encountered the Map Room on Level 1 of Undermountain. Those that interacted with its interface may have heard a voice say "Gate access to Stardock from level sixteen only." Once the party reaches the portal to Stardock, hit them with a flashback of the Map Room. See Area 37 on Level 1 for further details.

**Githzerai Zerths.** On Level 15, the githzerai zerths led by the wise Yrlakka have lost one of their own: Ezria, the headstrong pupil. He left to probe the gith-yankis' defenses and has since been captured—which Yrlakka has successfully guessed. They are willing to accompany the adventurers to Level 16 to rescue Ezria from the cruel clutches of their distant kin. Yrlakka also belongs to the Sha'sal Khou, a faction of gith that hope to unify their race.

**Mecha-Halaster's March.** If you ran this event at your table following the conclusion of Level 15, then the party is owed a week of rest in Waterdeep—after being promised two by Halaster. He then rips them back into Undermountain with a conjuration spell, placing them in Area 1 of Level 16.

## HALASTER'S GAME

Halaster has but one game on this level: to push the party into the portal to Stardock. When they return to Toril, that same portal deposits them into Waterdeep itself—but, alas, this is just an illusion crafted by the Matrix-esque machine on Level 17, the Seadeeps. Thus, Halaster's efforts on this level are devoted to setting up the next level of Undermountain. To incentivize the party into entering the portal, you or Halaster can play upon the players' sympathies or their hunger for power.

**Altruism.** Halaster reminds the party of Ezria, the young githzerai zerth from Level 15 that recently went missing. Even if the party hasn't met the gith-zerai, he can still pluck at the heart strings through a vision showing Ezria being tortured by githyanki.

**Duty.** Halaster tells the party that the githyanki and their red dragon allies intend to level Waterdeep to the ground—and it is their duty to put a stop to them. This is, of course, a lie.

**Gain.** To goad the party into venturing to Star-dock, Halaster can inform them of the *manual of gainful exercise* and *tome of clear thought* possessed by Al'chaia, the githyanki commander. He will flat-out tell them that these magic items enhance one's strength and intelligence. If your version of the Mad Mage can break the fourth wall, then he even says "Intelligence score" and "Strength score."

## ROLEPLAYING GITHYANKI

The *Companion* likes to relate characters to real pop-culture. To that end, it is suggested that you think of the gith in the lens of *Star Wars*. If the githzerai are jedi, then the githyanki are best described as the sith. Theirs is a militant, Machiavellian culture hell-bent on avenging their ancestors by eradicating illithids—and anyone else in their path.

The githyanki are also otherworldly and must have mannerisms that provoke appreciation of that fact. You can use any of the following ...

**Mannerisms.** Githyanki never reach for objects, no matter how close they are; instead, they rely on their psionic *mage hand* ability. Particularly lazy ones that aren't expecting a fight will use their psionic *misty step* ability to cross a room.

**Language.** When encountering creatures that lack Common, the *Companion* often advises handwaving it through telepathy or Common. Not here with the githyanki, who must keep their otherworldly tone. If you speak a language that your players don't, now is the time to shout it at them. Otherwise, we can draw from popular science fiction, like the Klingons of *Star Trek* or the protoss of *Starcraft*. The *Companion* suggests using Khalani, the protoss language. You can use any of these phrases at the risk of incurring a cease-and-desist letter from Blizzard Entertainment:

- "Ki nala atum!" or "We are as one!"
- "Khassar de templari!" or "From order comes justice!"
- "Khas il'adare" or "May your spirit soar," often said in support of other warriors.
- "Na vazeal!" or "We destroy!"
- "Uhn dara ma'nakai" or "Our duty is unending."
- "Uhn ore'ki atum" or "Our minds are as one."



- "*Zerashk Guilda!*" or "Oblivion awaits!" The worship of gods is forbidden in githyanki society, so this serves as both as a rallying cry and one's dying words.

Likewise, the githyanki here can speak Draconic, allowing another means of communication with the party. **Githyanki knights** likewise can psionically cast *tongues* thrice a day.

## ASHTYRRANTHOR'S HUNT

The dragon matriarch is the true boss of this level—but even if the adventurers don't fight her, she can be used as a source of tension. Periodically describe how the adventurers can hear her slithering across the asteroid's surface, smell the acrid smoke from her nostrils, and pick out her claws ringing against stone. Set up tense scenes where she's about to pass by a window and the adventurers must duck and hide to avoid being detected.

**Wrath of the Red Drake.** Should the adventurers incur Ashtyrranthor's wrath, she comes after them across three phases of combat. This chain of events requires some creative liberties to be taken and so, it may not work at your table. This is also pained by the fact that you cannot exactly determine where her hunt begins, as she can be encountered in multiple areas. Nevertheless, once the adventurers face her, try to carve out the following phases for the sake of drama and narrative.

**Tactics.** Ashtyrranthor employs the typical tactics used by a dragon but with the benefit of spellcasting:

- Ashtyrranthor avoids harming githyanki and will allow prey to escape if it saves the life of some.
- Ashtyrranthor chases prey into the asteroid with a *passwall* or *gaseous form* spell.

### 1. THE BROOD MOTHER

When Ashtyrranthor first spots intruders, she looses an ear-shattering roar—using her Frightful Presence action. She first tests the adventurers' might through a few probing maneuvers; this lasts for no more than two rounds of combat. Thereafter, try to progress to the next phase. Ashtyrranthor is not above retreating from the adventurers. In her absence, a retinue of 1d4 +2 **githyanki warriors** flank the party from behind, driving them towards the outside of Stardock for the next phase.

### 2. TORIL BELOW AND DEATH ABOVE

The second phase of combat pits the party against Ashtyrranthor on the surface of the asteroid. This can happen naturally if the adventurers are in Area 12 or 20, but it can be forced through a twisted use of the *passwall* spell: she opens up a hole right beneath the party, which falls towards the asteroid's gravity plane and are then shunted to the asteroid's opposite side. Alternatively, if most of the party fails against her Frightful Presence, cue a harmless montage in which the party tramples across the asteroid's surface in utter and abject fear.

Regardless of how it's conceived, Ashtyrranthor comes clambering across the surface from afar. Out here, she can attack without the worry of harming the githyanki. Likewise, she can fly unabated, at least to an altitude of 120 feet (whereafter she leaves the asteroid's air envelope and is subjected to the void of space).

Stardock is not smooth; stalagmites point out from its surface like stone teeth. Every stalagmite gives either half or three-quarters cover, depending on its size. They also have 40 hit points; after being reduced to 0 hit points, they crumble.

Stardock is also not just stone; plant here and there windows made by the asteroid's previous tenants. They can be shattered easily, and the adventurers can drop down into any area of your choosing. If the party is on the bottom half of the asteroid, these windows propel them upwards into an area of your choosing. Area 23 is the best destination, as it puts the party close to the portal back to Stardock. Once Ashtyrranthor sees what the party is trying to do, she moves to intercept. If they escape, she chases after them with a *gaseous form* spell.

Once the party is back inside the asteroid, move to the next phase.

**Tactics.** Out on the asteroid, the drake's tactics change:

- Ashtyrranthor attacks without reservation, scorching the asteroid black with fire. When she makes a Claw attack at a character on the surface, so mighty is she that her talons leave 1-foot-deep trenches in her wake.
- If she grapples a character, she tries to deposit them just outside the air envelope. Likewise, if a character is flying above, she beats her wings (use the Wing Attack legendary action, but instead of being knocked prone, the character is knocked back 30 feet on a failure) to push them into space.

### 3. RACE TO TORIL

It has been far too long since Ashtyrranthor met a challenge or been wounded. By the third phase, any pretense of playing with her food has vanished. She's out for blood.

This phase begins once the adventurers are back inside the asteroid and ought to begin in Area 23, if they used windows to escape back inside. Either they make a last stand there or race back to the portal. Ashtyrranthor chases after them in *gaseous form*, reverting to her true form once she's in a large enough chamber.

If necessary, 1d4 **githyanki warriors** arrive from elsewhere to assist the dragon. If the adventurers have wounded a **githyanki gish** earlier, you can replace a warrior with him or her—although one at full power is certain to destroy the party when they're already facing an **adult red dragon**.

Once the adventurers reach the portal, whether they are victorious or in flight, skip to the Epilogue below and read the send-off of your choice.

## AREAS OF NOTE

The following areas are of note:

### 1. ENTRY HALL

The dungeon gleams with colored light: the walls, the ceiling, the very floor are streaked with luminous crystal. Forward you go, almost mesmerized by the glittering veins until the entire dungeon gives way to these crystalline surfaces. As you watch, the color shifts from red to blue, with motes of violet and topaz glittering here and there. An entire rainbow rests within these walls, shifting and quivering.

For the longest time, all you've seen in this wretched place is ruin and despair—and now... Now you have seen beauty unmentionable and light otherworldly.

What, you must wonder, is the catch?

It is trivial to skip this level; the entire dungeon spans but a few chambers. To get the most out of this level, you must steer the party towards Stardock, and you can use Halaster as your mouthpiece. Establish first how you intend to entice the party into venturing to Stardock, instead of heading straight to Level 17. Tailor Halaster's dialogue accordingly. You can draw upon the following sample dialogue:

**Altruism.** If Halaster plays upon their altruism, he references the githzerai zerths: "Poorest Ezria, that headstrong little twerp, rushed ahead. His screams echo across the 'yankis' inner sanctum—for they do not see him as kin, don't you understand? And we all know how the 'yanks treat even their own kin."

**Duty.** If he instead plays upon their sense of duty, Halaster references the red dragons and lies about the githyankis' intentions: "Red dragons! *Red! Dragons!* They slither about the 'yanks' most inner sanctum, hungering to unleash their fiery breath on the good people of Waterdeep, to tear down their kingdom and replace it with an inferno that can finally warm their frigid hearts! Hurry damn you, hurry!"

**Gain.** If personal gain is the party's chief motivator, Halaster references the magic items possessed by the githyanki commander, Al'chaia: "Should you wish to beat my game, you must first find power—and there is no shame in turning to *outside* enhancements to better aid you in this quest. The 'yank commander, Knight-Commander Al'chaia, possesses two magical tomes that, once studied, can enhance a man's strength and mind... something you clearly lack."

If your version of Halaster is prone to breaking the fourth wall, he flat-out tells the party that studying the tomes increases their Intelligence- and Strength scores. He can also mention the red dragons' hoard, which he described as "gadzookingly wealthy."

## 2. WESTERN CAVERN

The clash of steel and sparring alerts you to the presence of others. The light here is almost blinding, but you can pick out two pairs of fighters, sparring beside a pit wreathed in silvery mist. Above that pit hangs a crystalline stalactite with—with a *man inside of it*. His eyes fall upon you! He shuts his eyes and suddenly the fighters all turn to gawk upon you.

These warriors drop their blunted weapons and motion for greatswords leaning against the wall—which are flung into their hands by an unseen force. One shouts, "*Ki nala atum!*" and springs into battle. "*Ki nala atum!*" the others shout, following her lead!

"*Ki nala atum!*" is Khalani (the Protoss language) for "We are as one!" Additionally, for the sake of drama, grant creatures encased in the crystal stalactites telepathy with a range of 60 feet.

**Tactics.** Young these **githyanki warriors** may be, but they've been drilled for battle since they were but babes. With a **githyanki gish** above, they employ the following tactics:

- The **knight** that shouted the battle cry casts *misty step* using her bonus action and follows it up with two greatsword attacks. She attacks head-on. On their other turns, her three fellow **knights** teleport beside or behind the party.
- Githyanki about to die cast *misty step* to reach or jump into the pit to escape to the Astral Plane.
- The **gish** in the stalactite can only cast spells. She opens up with a *telekinesis* spell (DC 15) to grip a character, moving them to the pit in the center of the chamber.
- The **gish counterspells** the first spell cast that she can perceive.
- On its second turn, the **gish** casts *sleep* as a 4th-level spell (roll 11d8) after she shouts in Gith for its allies to make room, so they don't get caught in the spell.
- If the entire party is incapacitated, the surviving knights take them to Urlon, the ranking officer outside of Stardock. He resides in Area 10.

## 3. MAIN CAVERN

### 3A. ARBEZ'S WATCH

The following text assumes that the party has already spotted the crystal stalactite in Area 2.

You spot yet another crystal stalactite hanging from the ceiling, and in it yet another man dressed in flowing robes. Below him lies another silvery-misted pit. Straw dummies in the rough form of mind flayers stand further on.

If Arbez, the **githyanki gish** spots the party, he'll try to pass it off as if he didn't see them; he intends to attack them from behind. If they head to Area 4, he alerts his comrades in Area 3B. Otherwise, he throws a *fireball* at their backs as they venture elsewhere. A DC 14 Wisdom (Insight) check confirms he actually saw the party.

### 3B. SURLOCK'S WATCH

Your blood begins to boil, your heart hitches—for you smell it first: the acrid, volcanic odor of a red dragon. As you creep onward, you hear that sharp, barbaric tongue. Sure enough, yet another pit dots this chamber and above it hangs a stalactite containing yet another mage. Below him, a knight converses with her red dragon steed, whose very nostrils spit smoke.

The following text assumes that at least one party member can understand Draconic:

"How many more must be slain, Ashranthax?" complains the young knight to her draconic steed. "It's not like Undermountain is crawling with illithids.

"Not even Mother may influence Al'chaia—there are many among the brood that hunger for such power. Perhaps that is why she remains impartial, lest Infernexus or Smoakcant seize the clutch from her."

"Shall the Knight-Commander even part with her tomes, I've begin to wonder," murmurs the knight. "Or is it a ploy?"

**Tactics.** The trio here are unprepared for battle, two being engaged in a heated discussion. They hastily employ the following tactics:

- The **young red dragon** opens up with a fire breath (DC 17 Dex save, 16d6 fire damage, half on a success) aimed at the target, even if it includes the gish in the stalactite, which has 80 hit points and shatters when reduced to 0 hit points.
- If the **knight** dismounts, it costs half her movement speed. If an effect moves her mount, she must make a DC 10 Dex. save or fall prone. On her first turn, she casts *misty step* to close the distance with the party and casts it again to return to her mount at the end of her next turn. She reserves her last use of *misty step* to escape if necessary.
- The **gish** *counterspells* the first spell he perceives and casts *telekinesis* (DC 15) to restrain a character as the red dragon advances forward with her hungry jaws.

## 5. PRISON CELL

By when the party acquires a *Stardock rod*, they will probably just stumble straight towards Area 11, and thereby skip this encounter. You can circumvent that by having Marquox telepathically contact characters in Areas 3, 6 or 7. If you do, read the following:

A wet voice slithers past your ears and into your mind, "You and I must converse, mortal. Bound I am by these githyanki termagants and fools. Come and let us speak long. I have seen the githzerai youngling, have watched the githyanki open the starry portal to their innermost sanctum. I am an asset to you and yours—for as little of a price as my freedom. The officers carry a curious, black crystal rod. That is the key to your goals. Bring it to my cell."

Once the adventurers open the cell with a *Stardock rod*, read the following. If they refuse to open the cell with the rod or stick to a telepathic conversation, they will not learn of Marquox's identity. In this case, skip down to *Roleplaying Marquox*.

The air is tight, pressurized as if by magic. Those among you with the Gift feel your veins throb as the wards cut you off from select avenues of magic. Floating in the center of this prison cell is a mind flayer. Its eyes open up to regard you and its wet voice squirms its way into your brain: "At last we meet."

**Previously On...** You can link Marquox to earlier chapters of *DotMM*. It could know or be the mind flayer from Level 3 (see Azrok's Hold, Area 21G) or be the mind flayer that terrorized Skullport (per the *Companion's* Skullport chapter; see Special Events).

**Roleplaying Marquox.** The illithid's desperation is betrayed by its telepathic voice, which quavers. It fears not death but torture by the githyanki. Already they've paraded it through their trophy room (Area 9) and promised it a slow and humiliating death. Unlike in *DotMM*, Marquox *does not* know that Stardock is an asteroid; it instead thinks that Créche K'liir is just a distant part of Undermountain.

Marquox also knows about Ezria ("the youngling") and knows his location: "Créche K'liir." Even if the party refuses to free it, Marquox banks on them causing enough ruckus on Stardock to free its comrades, the mind flayers in Area 29C, who it then expects will rescue it in turn.

**No Lie Detectors.** The illithid offers protection through Seadeeps, but this is a lie. Since it's advised not to use the Insight skill as a lie-detector, if a character succeeds on the check, instead hint at the deceit with the phrase, "You can tell the creature's troubled—and desperate. In its current state, it would promise anything that could guarantee its escape."

## 6. EASTERN CAVERN

### 6A. MIRRK'S WATCH

Hushed tones echo from this corner of the dungeon, pregnant with discontent. You need not know the language to recognize brewing mutiny and indignation. As you peer around the corner, you see yet another person encased in a crystal stalactite. Below her, six young warriors are gripped in a heated discussion.

Again, grant the encased githyanki telepathy out to a range of 60 feet to communicate with her comrades. She alerts them when she sights the party.

The following text assumes that at least one party member can understand Gith:

The warriors are gripped in what appears as a debate—but clearly, they stand united in discontent:

"Al'chaia has gone too far," says an older woman. "Pushed too far, drilled us too long—and for what? *Books?* Like she would do anything to empower anyone but herself."

Another warrior nods fervently. "That termagant can't keep this up. I care not for her titles—Créche K'liir is our birthplace and it is *we* who shall govern!"

The others grumble their approval, arms crossed and brows furrowed. "No more!" they all agree.

**Tactics.** The githyanki here follow these tactics; you can also draw upon the tactics discussed in Area 2 for more information. The warriors here don't take prisoners, worrying that the intruders might have understood their discussion, for which they would be punished dearly by Al'chaia and her loyalists.

- The **gish** opens up with a *fireball* spell (DC 15) on the party, the sound of which alerts creatures in adjacent areas. On her second turn, she casts *haste* on the first **knight** (see below).
- The first **knight** to spring into battle shouts "*Na vazeal!*" ("We destroy!") after the *fireball* has been cast. She closes the gap with *misty step* cast as a bonus action. Four comrades follow suit, teleporting together into the heart of the party to fight as one unit while the sixth warrior teleports behind the party.

Until three knights have fallen, they run down targets with *misty step* spells.

## 6B. SCRYING CHAMBER

This chamber is lit in soft, violet light that emanates from the far wall. The wall is carved with intricate runes and hums with arcane power. Magic is clearly at work here.

To prevent the adventurers from gleaning too much information, the scrying wall is doomed to break by the ulitharid's mental might. Consider it a sloppy use of the *scrying* spell, which Extremiton detects and psychically lashes out against.

If a character touching the wall casts *scrying*, read the following:

Your mind bears a vision—black at first as it tumbles through dark waters and dark earth. Down, down, *down* you go until finally you see a six-tentacled illithid sat on a crystal throne. Its base is made of a black, alien metal veined with copper wires that snake down into the floor.

On the backwall stretches a crystal screen of sort depicting the city of Waterdeep—specifically, a spectral image of the *Yawning Portal's* taproom, a place you know so well. Suddenly, the image moves, and a gruff voice shouts out, "No roughin' in the taproom!" You recognize the familiar voice of Durnan, the owner and propriety of the *Yawning Portal*.

The illithid leans forward to press at a pale, crystalline button. The image on the screen shifts, depicting Waterdeep's harbor. A ship is just about to dock—but before you can see more, the illithid looks up and its mind, *its very mind*, links with yours. In a slithering voice it shouts, "Begone, voyeur!" With a wave of its tentacled beard, the vision is severed—and suddenly deep cracks race throughout the scrying wall. Its magical hum groans and shudders to a stop, its magic lost.

See Area 12 of Level 17 for more details on the room scried upon by the wall.

## 7. ANTI-ILLITHID DEFENSE

The adventurers are nearly blinded as they enter this chamber, encountering the bright, crystal golems for (presumably) the first time. Read the following:

You squint into the dazzling lights ahead, pain stabbing at your brain through your flimsy eyes. Two warriors stand tall, ready, and unarmed with nothing but their fists—but as you squint into the light, you realize they are golems fashioned from the very same crystal that makes up this dungeon's walls and floors.

The warriors turn to you and crack their knuckles—it sounds like shattering glass. As one, they advance.

**Tactics.** One golem opens up with its Slow action while the other advances to make Slam attacks. If not enough of the party fell prey to the Slow effect, then the other golem uses it at the start of its next turn or the one after that.

## 8. OFFICER QUARTERS

The following text assumes that at least one member of the party can understand Gith and have eyes on the githyanki:

"It shall be mine!" snarls a knight, beating upon his breast with a closed fist. His plated armor is set with twelve gems: six red spinels and six black jaspers, twinkling in the crystalline light.

"You are nothing," sneers a mage dressed in flowing robes. Arcane tattoos stretch across his neck. "Al'chaia's magic books are for better men than you—like me."

"You can hardly lift a sword and you would *dare* condescend to *me*, Theru? I would sooner see you bruised and broken before Al'chaia even shows you a single page of the tome!"

**Tactics.** If surprised, the gith follow these tactics:

- The **gish** opens up with a *thunderwave* spell (DC 15), cast at 4th level, to knock characters out of the room, following it up with a longsword attack as a bonus action, if any characters are left inside or resist the blast.
- The **knight** teleports behind the party with *misty step*. He first tries to knock a creature prone, using one of his attacks. If successful, he then follows up with a greatsword attack.
- The githyanki are still hot under the collar and that anger has made them careless. The **gish** casts *fireball* on his second turn and, if the knight is caught in the blast, then so be it.

## 9. TROPHY ROOM

Illithid heads decorate the walls of this trophy room, all pointed to gaze lifelessly at an immense, stuffed mind flayer with six tentacles instead of four. Its corpse has been erected into a humiliating posture. The scene is thick with scorn and triumph. All illithid heads are pointed towards the ulitharid. A character that used the scrying wall (Area 6B) will recognize that, like the one in the vision, this one has six tentacles as well.

## 10. GOLEM LABORATORY

A chisel rings out in the empty halls, chased by the mutterings of a devoted carver. As you peer into this workshop, you spot an older man carving the crystalline skull of a golem.

Though it isn't spelled out exactly in *DotMM*, Urlon is fluent in Common.

**Roleplaying Urlon.** The weight of his people's fate is heavy on Urlon's shoulders. He knows his people cannot survive for long under Al'chaia's tyranny but she is the lawful commander of Crèche K'liir and he has no means of sacking her. Honor and law demand his obedience, and both would be broken should he seek her death. So, when the adventurers encounter him, a light flashes across his face, as if his prayers have now been answered. He's elated, relieved. Still, deceit and homicide are greasy tools he would rather not touch. Almost squeamish about it, he at first hints at his intentions until finally sucking in a breath and flat-out asking the adventurers to depose of Al'chaia. You can draw on this sample dialogue:

- "Al'chaia's tyranny must end—for the good of the crèche, yet I am bound by law, honor and tradition to obey. Were if there was some *other* method to depose her for the good of our people."
- "Would if the gith could be reunited, made stronger together. Such a future can be forged once zealots like Al'chaia are long gone and silenced."

## 11. STARDOCK GATE

A stone archway is set into the far wall, dimly lit by glowing crimson crystals to its right. You know a portal when you see one, but this one seems not of the Mad Mage's design. Before it stands a pedestal of similar crimson crystal, and in it, a socket made for a scepter or rod.

When the gate is opened, read the following:

The portal snaps open, unleashing a thunderous roar as if some foul beast laired behind it—but it is only the air being sucked into the void. Beyond the archway, a new chamber glitters with scales: red scales, dragon scales. An identical pedestal lies on the other side, likewise lit by crimson crystals embedded into the chamber's walls.

### STARDOCK

Stardock is, perhaps, the greatest moment in *DotMM*. When players hash out their typical fantasies, they rarely include space beyond concepts like full moons or aligned stars. Now we get to spring this upon the party in what was advertised as a subterranean, dungeon crawl.

**Hints of the Starry Void.** As soon as the party gets to Stardock, you want to start hinting at the nature of this new lair without fully revealing that they're on an *asteroid in outer space*. Use any of the following hints, spacing them out accordingly until the party comes to a window.

- The gravity is just slightly lighter than Toril's, so read to a weary character, "The creak of your bones, the aches, have been muted, you notice. You've never known any stone that was pleasant and soft to walk upon, but perhaps this lair is enchanted to relieve one's burden?"
- "The air tastes stale... Almost recycled, even."
- "You instinctively pull out your compass only to find that its needle spins wildly."
- If a character is under the effects of *detect magic*, read to them: "The air is thick with transmutation magic. No matter where you look, you see its cloud, enveloping every void, coating every surface. No motes twinkle here or there; the cloud of magic is uniform and omnipresent, suggesting that this entire lair is under the same spell and the same intensity. Only truly powerful magi could affect such a vast dungeon with but a single spell."

**Showing the Starry Void.** When the adventurers first get a view of space, and the planet Toril below, read the following description. It's written for Area 12F but can be adjusted to fit just about anywhere.

It's the stars that get you at first, the stars you've seen all your life—but something's different. You creep forward, your lungs tight with worry, but why? What could be so amiss? How could the starlit sky feel so...so *wrong*? Your feet crunch on coins, but you can hardly hear it. It's as if you're in a trance.

You approach the cavemouth and the vastness of space lies out before you, that familiar black tapestry and its glittering diamonds—but below you stretches out a planet: Toril in all its beauty. You know it in your bones, your heart. In the distance, you see asteroids orbiting the planet below. The draft you feel? Just the force of an asteroid hurtling through outer space.

You feel sick to your stomach as the vertigo grips at your body and your mind grapples with your cosmic insignificance.

## 12. DRAGONS' DOMAIN

### 12A. ARCH GATE

Once the adventurers enter this chamber properly, read the following:

Scales litter the floor, shed by crimson behemoths that plain folk shudder at the very thought of: dragons. You approach very slowly, timidly even, listening for the slither of scale against stone, but find nothing, hear nothing, see nothing—yet.

Furthermore, Halaster remotely causes the gateway to snap close behind the party, giving them no chance to retreat. They find that any rods they brought with them to Stardock will not work on this side—more tomfoolery by Halaster. If they protest, he offers no whisper, no taunt—but he's watching very carefully.

### 12B. TIAMAT SHRINE

Still dreading signs of the leviathans, you creep into a mural-carved chamber. The floor depicts Tiamat, the evil goddess of dragons, her five chromatic heads each roaring gouts of flame and frost and acid. The mural, a pristine work of art, must be at least fifteen feet in diameter.

Similar tapestries hang nearby: one depicts Tiamat battling no less than twelve storm giants atop a frozen peak. The other shows her locked into a duel with a bloodied old wizard about whose head circle seven golden canaries.

There is piety in these halls—and you can't help but pray that you never meet the devout.

### 12C. FALSE HATCHERY

Dragon eggs! Your heart leaps and inside you that miserly demon rubs its hands together. Within a molten pool, fed by a falling curtain of lava, lie six red-speckled dragon eggs, each more valuable than the richest kingdom's treasury.

### 12D. DRAGON HATCHERY

As if you could be fooled by false eggs—as if! Feeling warm and a little smug, you look about this hidden hatchery. There in a pool of lava rests one single red-speckled egg by its lonesome. Your mind conjures up many a dream: a mountain of gold or a race through the skies—or a kingdom turned to ash by that red leviathan. Greed, wonder, and dread mix together into a sour concoction that leaves you uneasy.

### 12E. FALSE HOARD

At last you come to the dragons' hoard. Your insides feel as if they're lined with grease. You cannot help but remember the tales of old, of the riches paid tribute to the great leviathans. That much is here, piled up without care. Red scales litter the hall and in them sparkle the sheen shed by the piled gold.

Twin statues watch over this hoard, carved in a likeness you've never seen or heard of in tome or tale. They lack all familiar frills and horns iconic to the world's known dragons.

With a successful DC 16 check, the highly neglected Intelligence (Investigation) check can determine that the hoard is an illusion.

**Illusory Wall.** As written, one could just look north from the hoard and see yet *another* hoard in the next chamber. Assume that the northern tunnel ends in an illusory wall (discerned with a DC 16 Intelligence (Investigation) check).

## 12F. DRAGONS' HOARD

Your feet crunch on the copper and gold coins that litter this chamber, all leading up to a massive hoard of treasure. Around the hall are scattered mounds of gold. The rough-hewn chamber leads both left and right; in the distance, to the left, you hear the soft strums of a lute.

If a character disturbs the hoard, they must succeed on an ability check or risk alerting the dragons. If they pluck at a particular object, such as a gem, they must succeed on a DC 18 Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check or it causes the treasure above to tumble down. Likewise, a character standing on top of the treasure must make an Acrobatics check of the same DC. If the characters make noise or disturb the hoard, they must make a group Dexterity (Stealth) check against the dragons' passive Perception scores (18).

Scatter piles of treasure throughout the room; if the dragons are awoken, roll initiative. This gives party members the chance to hide behind treasure mounds. While behind a mound, a character has three-quarters cover. The dragons initially think Jerath, the old blind man in Area 13, may have walked into the hoard. Once, however, they hear his lute and catch a whiff of the party's scent, their suspicion mounts.

**The Starry Void.** A character has to stand in the eastern wing of the chamber to catch a sight of outer space, but a draft flowing through the cavemouth can also guide them. Once they see outward, read the description above (see *Showing the Starry Void*).

## 13. JERATH'S QUARTERS

A blind, old coot sits in a lonely chair, strumming at his lute. A silvered greatsword lies nearby; he wears no armor but save for a toothy grin, which he breaks out into at your approach.

Jerath is your chance to drop some comedy into this level. He's old, crass, and on pension. He's fond of long-winded tales and takes advantage of sympathy to keep listeners captive. Avoid, however, revealing to the party that they're on an asteroid if they haven't discovered that yet.

## 14. INFERNEXUS'S QUARTERS

When Infernexus awakens, it's with a smile. Adding his firepower to the party's is certain to tip the scales against Ashtyrranthor. If the party joins forces with him, Infernexus will come in during an encounter with his mother and betray her at the most opportune moment, preferably with a bite to the throat.

**Roleplaying Infernexus.** The drake is a brooding teenager choked with resentment. No other creature has earned more of his ire than Ashtyrranthor. You can draw upon the following sample dialogue:

- "No son should languish under his mother's yoke."
- "I am no guard dog. Whatever pact Mother has with the gith is hers and hers alone; I cannot be made a signatory by the accident of my blood."
- "By what fraternal love am I bound to this brood? Am I meant to sulk on this rock forevermore? Mine is a ripening destiny that I will not be denied."

## 16. NURSERY

Demonstrate the purpose of Crèche K'liir through the nursery. Being confronted by the babes of those that have been trying to kill you for the last hour should also show the adventurers that the githyanki aren't the bad guys in this situation—they're just defending their home and young.

### 16A. SLEEPING AREA

Crystal cradles float above the smooth-stone floor. Slumbering within them are olive-colored babes. Mobiles spin above each cradle, most decorated with stars and replica mind flayer heads. Unlike in *DotMM*, if Ashtyrranthor finds the party here, she doesn't attack. Any combat here threatens the sleeping babes, so instead she tracks their movement to a nearby chamber to attack at.

### 16B. NURSERY GUARDIANS

The mission of Crèche K'liir is a vital one. It makes total sense that the two **githyank knights** stationed here are armed and armored. If they encounter the party, one shouts, "*Khas il'adare!*" ("May your spirit soar!" to her comrade as the two fight to defend the younglings.

## 18. LIBRARY

### 18C. READING ROOM

By when the party arrives, a githyanki teacher is half-way through *Three Burly Gith Gruff*, a children's tale about three githyanki brothers that are terrorized by a mind flayer lurking below a bridge that connects the Astral Plane to the Material. She's reading the tale to about two dozen githyanki younglings, ages 4-7 years old.

## 20. DOCK

Docks thrust out into the vastness of space, decorated as if they were none other than maritime ports on the shores of the planet looming large below.

Particularly bookish characters may feel vindicated here as they gaze out at Toril, noticing that Faerûn's shape slightly defies the shores drawn by popular cartographers with whom said bookish characters have always had a beef with.

While out on the docks, or studying how sturdy it is, a character that succeeds on a DC 14 Intelligence (Investigation) check realizes that the dock is built along the asteroid's gravity plane—and so anyone can step out and stand on its underside.

**Special Delivery.** While here, the adventurers may see a githyanki astral ship spring into existence. Over the next several minutes, githyanki wheel out babes in floating, crystalline cradles. The infants raise quite the ruckus, drawing the attention of Ashtryrranthor. She does not notice the adventurers, and, if you'd like to strike a comedic tone, she begins to goo-and-gaw over the new babes, saying in Draconic, "Mama Ash won't let anyone hurt you, won't she? She'll devour and roast any fools that make it here alive." This goes on until a githyanki babe vomits on her. She then withdraws with a fanged smile and swipes off the filth before returning to her patrol.

## 22. AL'CHAIA'S QUARTERS

Such an apartment is fit for none other than the commanding officer of this stellar fortress. Mounted on the walls are thirteen mind flayer heads. Al'chaia herself pores over reports at her lavish desk, her dinner sat upon a silver tray nearby.

You immediately smell smoke and look to the corner where a red dragon lies curled up, resting. As your eyes sweep across the four-poster bed, you notice not the glittering onyx chest, but the bed's brand: you recognize it as Charbrel's Secondhand Furnishings from Waterdeep itself!

It is as the doomsayers all claimed: aliens do walk among us. Choose one character as the one that recognizes the brand of Al'chaia's bed; they've frequented the store.

**Roleplaying Al'chaia.** Al'chaia's command over the crèche was won through underhanded politics. No officer in their right mind would have named her as commander if they knew how much of a tyrant she truly was. You can give her proficiency in Deception to reflect this (a +3 bonus). Her uncontested rule has left her lazy—but now, faced with real foes for the first time, she's razor sharp, falling back on instincts that have not been used for so long.

**No Lie Detectors.** As the Insight skill shouldn't be just a lie detector, if a DC 19 successful check is made, hint at Al'chaia's deception as, "Though she keeps her face straight, Al'chaia's eyes seem to focus on the weakest of you, needling at their defenses, as if she were already planning how best to strike them down if she had to."

**Tactics.** Al'chaia and her dragon use these tactics:

- Al'chaia, on her first turn, uses a bonus action to psychically hurl her metal chest at a character. The target must make a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw or take 10 (3d6) bludgeoning damage and be knocked back 10 feet.
- Also on her first turn, Al'chaia throws open the secret trapdoor to Area 21B and drops in, alerting the ten **githyanki warriors** resting there. Half are asleep and instantly surprised, losing their first turn in combat. Three leap into battle, even casting *jump* if necessary to reach the adventurers. Two, however, lean back—they have suffered long under Al'chaia and take it upon themselves to either watch her die or betray her.

- Once Al'chaia is out of harm's way, the **dragon** unleashes her fire breath. If the adventurers chase Al'chaia into Area 21B, the dragon leans down from the trapdoor and spits fire from above.
- The freshly awoken **warriors** use their first turn to reach for their weapons and attack. Two push over a bunk bed on the adventurers. Those underneath it must make a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw or be knocked prone. Alternatively, a character can make a DC 13 Strength saving throw to throw their strength against the bunk bed, halting it.

## 25. MEMORIAL HALL

The walls are carved with what can only be names—making this chamber a memorial hall. Inscriptions line both sides of the sole doorway.

The inscription on the northern side of the door reads "*Uhn dara ma'nakai*," which means "Our duty is unending." The other lintel reads, "*Uhn ore'ki atum*," which means, "Our minds are as one."

## 26. KITCHEN

Warriors these githyanki may be, but there's no way they have their arms or armor here in the kitchen. They have an AC of 12 and fight with improvised weapons, such as kitchen knives and rolling pins and deal 1d4 damage of the appropriate type. If they spot intruders, the **githyanki warriors** run to alert those in Area 27 via *misty step* spells.

## 29. PRISON

### 29A. EMPTY CELL

Use any of the following graffiti for the prison cell:

- In Common, "For a good time, teleport to 4182 *Ghanishtalil*." This is followed by a teleportation sequence. If teleported to, the adventurers wind up in the City of Brass on the Elemental Plane of Fire at the ruins of an apartment complex.
- In Dwarvish, "Yer mother's a hamster, y'ken?"
- In Common, "Remember: licking doorknobs is illegal on other planets." This is next to frowny face with X's for eyes.
- In Orcish, "Bork was here. Bork did not enjoy his time. Bork must rate it 2/5 stars."
- In Deep Speech, "The end is nigh!"
- In Draconic, "We built this city on rocks and rocks."
- In a strange language comprehensible only via magic, "I AM LRRR, RULER OF THE PLANET OMICRON PERSEI 8! Your feeble rock shall crumble!"
- Six *thousand* tally marks, each presumably representing a day.

### 29B. EZRIA'S CELL

Meditating by his lonesome is another gith, but he feels... different. There is no cloud of militant hate hanging about him, but instead calm. His olive skin has been bruised purple and an eyepatch hardly covers an ancient scar marring his face.

## 29D. GUARD ROOM

The gish here aren't expecting intruders and consider any disturbance to be an unexpected visit from Al'chaia or one of her torturers. They investigate an opened cell with bored disinterest.

**Tactics.** This short battle follows these tactics:

- The **gish** won't fight inside the prison cells (Areas 29A-C), as each chamber is filled with an antimagic zone. They retreat to Area 29D or elsewhere to battle.
- On her first turn of combat, Aruut *fireballs* the party while Yangol casts *haste* on herself.
- After one round of combat, the githyanki flee to Area 30 via the southern door. Their intentions are easily divined and a character can move to intercept. If their retreat is cut off, they exit Area 29A instead.

## 32. GRADUATION CHAMBER

If the adventurers are overpowered but not killed outright, then Al'chaia or Astyranthor has them brought here to be executed. Each prisoner would be bound by manacles (15 hit points, DC 20 Dexterity check to escape, DC 20 Strength check to break, and picked via thieves' tools and a successful DC 15 Dexterity check).

## EPILOGUE

With the Crystal Labyrinth firmly behind them, the party should advance half-way to 15th level.

**Send-Off.** Cap off your session with one of the send-offs below. Each assume the party entered and left Stardock via the portal and that you'll be running the Matrix event described below for the next chapter of *DotMM*. Both are devoted to selling Halaster's lie and fooling the party into believing they're actually in Waterdeep.

**The Matrix.** After returning to Toril from the asteroid, the adventurers seemingly take the portal to Waterdeep—but they're actually now in the clutches of the ulitharid, Extremiton. Since their departure to Stardock, Halaster has organized it all. Using a *wish* spell, he put them to slumber the moment they returned to Toril and delivered them to Seadeeps where Extremiton was all too eager to add new test subjects to his simulation: Alterdeep.

### THE STANDARD SEND-OFF

With the sharp, curdled cries of the githyanki ringing out behind you, you throw yourselves into a fervor! The portal looms ahead and the rod in your hand begins to glow! You slam it into the pedestal, springing open the portal back to Toril. Knifelike daggers of psionic energy crash into the stone walls, hurled by the githyanki hot on your heels, their rage manifested into psychic power. You hurl yourself into the portal—and the last thing you hear is a dragon roaring its fury into the black void of space itself.

When you emerge, the world tilts at ninety degrees and you're hurled *upwards* through an old well, as if vomited out. You look about and find yourself in the familiar *Yawning Portal* taproom. Patrons stare at you in hushed amazement.

### THE HOST'S SEND-OFF

Add the following to the Standard Send-Off above:

As the crowd stares at you blankly, grease dripping off turkey legs and flagons going unfinished, Halaster's voice slips into your minds. He sounds, for once, embarrassed: "Erm, interplanetary travel is a wonky thing, you see, a wonky thing indeed. It's got my whole system fried. I'll be back for you shortly, my contestants! Try not to enjoy the City of Splendors all too much before I return for what is mine: you."



# LEVEL XVII: SEADEEPS

## QUICK NOTES

- This chapter of the *Companion* assumes you're running off the hook included in the previous chapter: Halaster put the party to sleep as they returned from Stardock and delivered them to Extremiton's clutches. Thus, they start this level already inside Alterdeep and their progression through the level is inverted, as they must break out of the mind flayers' compound after emerging from the simulation.
- Extremiton prefers to roleplay as Durnan, the owner and proprietor of the *Yawning Portal* tavern.
- If Extremiton ever leaves his crystal throne, the Alterdeep simulation ends immediately. However, subjects are still rendered unconscious by the psionic energy of the psipods.
- Creatures beside the underground river are deafened; those that fall in must make a DC 15 Strength save or be swept 60 feet downstream (or 30 on a success).
- Flumphs are telepathic, intelligent and wise collectors of lore, not just random psychic jellyfish!
- The githyanki on this level are deployed from Crèche K'liir and speak Draconic.

## PREVIOUSLY ON *DUNGEON OF THE MAD MAGE*

Keep in mind the following when running this level:

**Uncover the Telepathic Spy.** Durnan may have offered the party this quest while they were in the *Yawning Portal*. He urges those that heed him to find the source of telepathy contacting random people throughout Waterdeep—and end it if its intentions are less than benevolent.

**The Scrying Wall.** In the *Companion's* previous chapter, a vision hinting at the Alterdeep simulation could have been seen by characters interacting with the scrying wall of Level 16, Area 6B.

**Crystal Chaos.** The events of Level 16 may play heavily into how the githyanki react to the party. Refresh yourself on their antics and consider what orders the surviving leadership would put out that concerns the adventurers.

## EXTREMITON'S GAME

From its crystal throne, Extremiton hones Alterdeep, its precious simulation. This *Companion* chapter's gimmick is starting the level with the party *already* inside the Alterdeep simulation. Such trickery was organized and ordained by the Mad Mage himself, who resorts to any sort of arcane tomfoolery to facilitate it, such as a *glyph of warding* that casts an amped-up *sleep* spell, if not a *wish* spell.

Extremiton is more than pleased to have the Mad Mage's cooperation: not only does it relish finally having powerful adventurers to test, but its ego has been inflated now that the entire multiverse can see and appreciate its ingenious machine. That's right: this too is but another episode of the hit gameshow, *Dungeon of the Mad Mage*.

Halaster won't let the ulitharid have the adventurers forever, just a fortnight or two. When the adventurers find a way to free themselves, the Mad Mage won't lift a finger to put them back inside—although Extremiton will try to.

**Vignettes.** Running Alterdeep is a challenge; not only do you need to deceive your players while also dropping hints that they're in a simulation, you must also run an "in-town" episode. Extremiton has no real end-goal for the adventurers, no grand plot besides keeping them in the simulation for as long as it can. Thus, run this simulation in vignettes: let the party trample across Waterdeep, resolving plotlines, taking care of personal errands, and hitting up shops. Seed into this laid-back session vignettes (see below) that can hint at the truth.

**Dragon Heist.** If your party also ran *Waterdeep: Dragon Heist*, you can throw in characters from that campaign that the party has a relation with. While Extremiton has learned some of these details, it can't get it perfect and the folk the party knows so well will always seem slightly off.

**Other Subjects.** As described in Area 14, there are nine other victims to Extremiton's game. You need only concern yourself with a handful of them. Some are detailed in the vignettes below. The party should run into a few of these characters, who understand that something's just not right about Waterdeep.

## ROLEPLAYING EXTREMITON

Extremiton is not your average illithid; by its very nature, it is cunning and calculating, more so than the rest of its ilk—or, that's at least how you can roleplay the ulitharid.

The *Companion* suggests something a bit different: Extremiton is absolutely *fascinated* by mortals. Sure, they're cattle to be fed upon, but aren't they so cute? Aren't they hilarious? While its Alterdeep simulation has the benefit of priming the people of Waterdeep for enslavement, the true purpose is that Extremiton just *wants* to pal around with regular humans and elves, to see for itself how they think and work, to understand their maudlin emotions. Alterdeep is its playground to fulfill all the fantasies its ever had since an illithid tadpole ate its brain.

**Goals.** Extremiton's foremost goal, outside its and the colony's survival, is the Alterdeep experiment. It does not want to kill the adventurers but keep them in its simulation forever and ever. However, they represent the mightiest subjects it's ever captured. Thus, it wants to use them as test dummies against some of its wilder experiments, such as faux dragon attacks, invasion simulations, and more. Extremiton is also curious to test an illithid invasion to see how mighty adventurers like themselves will act amidst the carnage: if they'll flee, run, how they might best the mind flayers' and their thralls, and so on.

## FLAWS OF THE SIMULATION

Extremiton's simulation isn't perfect. As described in *DotMM*, if confronted with a flaw, it tries to correct it or draw attention away from it. The following list represents several of Alterdeep's flaws, which you can present to the party:

- Extremiton speaks Common, but not Dwarvish, Elvish, or Infernal. The party find few dwarves, elves, or tieflings in the city. Any character they know that frequently speaks to them in one of these languages instead speaks exclusively in Common—which should come as a surprise.
- Errors—"bugs" as Extremiton calls them, though its fellow illithids know not why—sometimes creep up in simulated characters. These bugged individuals may repeat the same lines, walk into walls or other obstacles, or appear catatonic. If you'd like to strike a comedic tone, actual insects appear when these errors occur (ex., malfunctioning simulated characters become fixated on a nearby beetle).
- Every so often, the neothelid in Area 8 rages enough against its prison to send tremors throughout the caverns, loosening stalactites hanging over the underground river. When they fall, they smash into the dynamo's walls, slowing the water flow. This can cause a brief power outage before the illithids psionically destroy or remove the obstruction. During an outage, Alterdeep slows down; its sky darkens and details outside any subjects' immediate notice freeze (ex., birds in mid-flight stop flying until a subject looks at them). This outage does not wake any subjects. Nervous, Extremiton follows up with the subjects as various characters, brushing off the event with phrases like, "The weather's crazy these days!" or "City of Splendors, eh? More like City of Inconvenience!" or "Magic, am I right?"

## HINTS & TIDBITS

While running Alterdeep, you need to drop subtle hints that things aren't as they seem. However, going into detail will blow the whole ruse. Instead, drop some of these unassuming bits into your narrations:

- "The weather has grown warm as of late," if the campaign is set during the colder months. Likewise, replace with "cool" if the current season is summer.
- While the party's navigating the streets or headed to a shop, "You take a familiar street, but as you make the bend, you notice that little bakery you fancied has closed down and been replaced with a cobbler's shop."
- "The wind is mighty curious today: you can hear it blowing through the streets, blowing straight past you, but you don't feel it against your skin, nor does it rifle any banners, flags, or tent flaps."
- If the party's suspicion is aroused after they interact with a familiar character that seems off, Extremiton panics and tries to paint that character as a doppelganger, instead of risking the entire simulation from being blown. Unfortunately, after the second "doppelganger," it's easy for an adventurer to see through this flimsy ruse.

## INSIDE ALTERDEEP

The adventurers start in the *Yawning Portal*, vomited out from the eponymous portal that leads to Level 1 of Undermountain. Read the following:

The world roars as you're vomited out from the sunken tower that gives the *Yawning Portal* its name. You spill out across the floor, shocking all patrons. A glass slips from someone's hand, shattering on the floor. A game master running *Krakens and Coves* in the corner pauses his sweeping oratory. All eyes are upon you—until Durnan, that familiar face, shouts, "It's just a bunch of adventurers gettin' spit outta Undermountain. Big whoop! Come off it!"

With that, the tavern resumes its busy cacophony. The Mad Mage's voice whispers into your minds, "Enjoy your time on the surface. I've, uh, teleportation networks to fix. I'll be back for you shortly, dearest contestants!"

The line from Halaster was specifically recorded for Extremiton by the Mad Mage himself to help sell the lie that the party's back in Waterdeep.

**What's Next?** The sky is the limit for Alterdeep; give the party as much time as they wish to dawdle, mingle, and run amok. While Extremiton plays as Durnan, the adventurers could play cards with other characters or update any of their past quest givers. If the party goes looking for a new quest for Undermountain, they find that all their usual suspects have to offer are errands or rumors to chase throughout Waterdeep, not the dungeon.

**Law and Order.** Remind the adventurers that the City of Splendors is a city of laws, not men. Even as high-level adventurers, they're expected to obey the law—and in Waterdeep, self-defense is not a valid defense in a court of law for violence or murder. Extremiton, for its part, cares not whether the party escapes the long-arm of the law, but will send the City Watch after them nonetheless. These forces consist of **veterans** and even **magics** if need be, all created by the simulation. If you've ever wanted to see your party become wanted fugitives but not have to worry about cleaning up their legal repercussions thereafter, now's your chance.

**Vignettes.** After leaving the *Yawning Portal*, ask the party what they want to do now that they've found some "downtime" on the surface. Let them drive the narrative while you seed the session with vignettes until they realize something is amiss or until you're ready to bring them out of Alterdeep. Here are two sample vignettes:

## MUGGED

While going about the streets, a NE **bandit** by the name of Silas Mark attempts to mug an adventurer. "Gimme your money, punk," he demands, as he pulls a knife. Once he's received a firm beat-down, Silas is quick to say, "Gimme your clemency, punk."

If turned into the City Watch, an officer is quick to reward the party 10 gp for apprehending the "Trade Ward Punk-Mugger."

## "THAT FILTHY TONGUE"

The party encounters Jarana Hammerstone & Daundarak Steelfist, two dwarves in Alterdeep. They're confused: suddenly their kin won't speak Dwarvish—a language Extremiton is unfamiliar with. No matter what, their dwarvish kin, neighbors and friends respond in Common.

This is especially strange, they say, because Melkari, their old friend, vowed long ago never to speak "that filthy tongue."

If the adventurers leave to find this Melkari and interview him on behalf of the dwarves, they find that he's gone. Extremiton, worried, twists the character into a **doppelganger**. He later pulls Jarana and Daundarak from Alterdeep—something that fails to slip by the party's attention.

## ESCAPING ALTERDEEP

How the adventurers escape the simulation is left up to you: by default, only Extremiton or outside intervention can free characters from Alterdeep.

- Once a character knows for certain that they're in a simulation, they can attempt a DC 23 Intelligence check to mentally free themselves from their shackles, waking up in Area 15.
- As described in the special event *The Blue Potion or the Red Potion* (see below), githzerai that remotely inserted themselves into Alterdeep seek out the party and offer them the chance to see the truth.
- The githyanki of Area 7 may stage a raid on the compound, freeing the party from their psipods.
- If Extremiton is slain inside Alterdeep, it short-circuits the entire simulation. All characters inside Alterdeep must make a DC 18 Intelligence saving throw, taking 36 (8d8) psychic damage or half damage on a success. Survivors then wake up in their psipods in Area 15.

### 1. THE BLUE POTION OR THE RED POTION

When you've had your fill of Alterdeep, you can run the following event, especially if it seems the party will never figure out they're in a simulation.

A group of githzerai, possibly led by Yrlakka from Level 15, remotely infiltrate Alterdeep to free the party and end Extremiton's game. Through careful manipulation of their own thoughts, these four **gith-zerai zerths** can wade through Alterdeep undetected. They seek out the adventurers, taking on a variety of disguises to evade Extremiton's scrutiny, who can't sense them and initially writes them off as bugs in the simulation. The adventurers themselves might grow suspicious, for the githzerai run into the party multiple times but abort their plan, for they can feel Extremiton turning its attention from other subjects in the simulation back to the party. Thus, the party might take note of these strange characters.

When contact is finally made with the adventurers, the githzerai manage to momentarily black out the simulation by overloading Extremiton with psychic feedback, blinding it. Knowing that the ulitharid will have the system back up and running soon, they shed their disguises and speak plainly about Alterdeep and how they can free the party. Read the following:

An elf opens its mouth, but pauses to cast his eyes to the sky: dark clouds roll over the city of Waterdeep. Those around you slow down, fixing their attention to the skyline.

Gulping, the elf passes a hand over his face—and his sharp, elven features disappear, replaced by the olive skin of a gith. "We must speak quickly, adventurers, before Extremiton fixes its machine and discovers our sedition."

This **githzerai zerth** is Yrlakka, if he still lives. If he and his zerths accompanied the party to Stardock on Level 16, then they felt it was their duty to rescue the party, having witnessed Halaster and Extremiton, in league with one another, capturing the party the very moment they emerged from the portal to Stardock.

After the party has time to react, Yrlakka launches into a monologue lifted straight out of *The Matrix*. Read the following:

The gith swallows; beads of sweat run down his forehead. "Alterdeep is all around us. This world is wool pulled over your eyes; it is a prison that you've been pressed into, a prison that you cannot see, nor smell, nor touch—a prison for your mind."

The gith pulls out from its robes two potions, one red and one blue. "Alas, you cannot simply be *told* of Alterdeep to escape it; you must see it for yourself. Make your choice: you take the blue potion, and you forget all this. You can lead your lives here in Alterdeep, enjoying the rest you so well deserve, until a time when the illithid grows bored or is cut down by its enemies.

"Or, you can take the red potion and together we will usurp this psychic tyrant and free all those that are bound in its foul game. The choice is yours; we will not judge. You have earned your respite—but there is no turning back from here. The mind flayer will fix its machine soon and by then we will be just a shadow in your mind."

If the party takes the blue potion, the zerths withdraw from Alterdeep, leaving the party to their fate—for now. The party may find other ways of escaping the simulation in their own time—but their memory of this encounter will be wiped away.

If the adventurers take a sip from the red potion, they can see Alterdeep for the farce that it is. Read the following:

You take a sip of the red potion—and for a moment, nothing happens. Is this a trick? A scam? A con run by a grifter? Is the Mad Mage himself about to appear and shout, "Gotcha!"?

Then it hits you—the world shifts to the left by three feet and you can *see* it as the farce that it is. Everything lies in a haze, a half-translucent haze. Except for the gith and your companions; they alone are solid. They alone are real. Seams run through the world around you, strings of alien characters that make no sense to you, nor ever should.

The wool has been lifted from your eyes; this "Alterdeep" has been betrayed and you now are free to decide your own path once again.

After taking the red potion, Yrlakka explains Alterdeep to the party. He mentions specifically that the illithid enjoys masquerading as Durnan and likely there at the Yawning Portal right now, watching the other simulation subjects. Yrlakka suggests that they take the fight directly there before Extremiton learns its secret has been betrayed and it can foil their plot.

Unfortunately for them, the adventurers' newfound awareness ripples throughout Alterdeep. Extremiton returns shortly, having unclouded the zerths' psychic feedback. Within the next 10 minutes, and every hour thereafter, each simulation subject must make a DC 15 Intelligence (Stealth) check to fool Extremiton. Gith characters have advantage on this check. If even a single character fails, it senses their awareness and calls on reinforcements to join it in Alterdeep.

**True vs. True.** Once the party drinks the red potion, they can no longer be harmed by the simulation. Only beings like Extremiton and other creatures hooked up in the psipods, can harm characters that have been awoken.

## 2. THE BATTLE OF THE YAWNING PORTAL

Armed with the truth, the adventurers can ride out to confront Extremiton at the *Yawning Portal*. If they manage to defeat the **ulitharid**, the simulation falters and short-circuits; all creatures still in the simulation must make a DC 18 Intelligence saving throw or take 36 (8d8) psychic damage. A creature takes half the damage on a success.

**Reinforcements.** If Extremiton learns that the party have figured out Alterdeep's truth, it orders other mind flayers to put up to six **orogs**, four **troglydytes**, two **duergar**, and two **mind flayers** into the psipods of Areas 14 & 15, so as to join it in battle at the *Yawning Portal*. Extremiton alters their appearances to look like regular tavern patrons, but a character can use an action to discern the illusion with a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check.

## 3. AFTERMATH

If Extremiton is slain in Alterdeep, so too is it slain in reality, immediately ending the simulation. The adventurers and any other subjects awaken in their malfunctioning psipods (see Areas 14 & 15). With Extremiton went the head of the snake, leaving the mind flayers in disarray. Run the level as normal, but with an inverted progression path, as the party would start within the compound instead without.

**The Neothelid.** With the illithids in disarray, it's likely that the **neothelid** (see Area 8) is unleashed. Driven by the scent of other psionic beings, it attacks the githyanki stronghold (Area 7), battering down the Qualith-locked doors and squeezing itself through the halls. It's equally likely to attack the mind flayer compound via Area 16A. The adventurers are sure to cross paths with it, or at least hear the raw carnage it wreaks across Seadeeps.

# AREAS OF NOTE

The following areas are of note:

## 1. TUNNEL PLEXUS

You come to a stone plexus, the congregation of several tunnels that snake through the damp earth like the stark veins in an old man's sagging body.

As the party explores the tunnels, they encounter the flumph corpses. Read the following:

Through your damp trek, you come across a creature most strange: a massive jellyfish-like creature whose eyestalks lie closed and whose tendrils have been severed by what appears to be a blade.

A DC 14 Intelligence (Arcana) check identifies the creature as a flumph; rare and confined to the Under-dark they may be, but their strange existence is well-known as one of the many "wonders" of this world, much like the platypus is in ours.

**Previously On...** The adventurers may have met a flumph had they visited Doomcrown's quarters in Arcturiadoom (see L14, Area 33).

## 3. HALASTER'S MAW

As an alternative to an instant infliction of damage, you can have the trap slowly press in, giving victims a chance to react. Roll initiative for the trap, which has a +3 bonus. On its turn, it snaps shut, dealing the 88 (16d10) bludgeoning damage to creatures that fail their DC 17 Dexterity saving throw and half that to those that succeed.

If you choose to give the character a chance, read the following:

A trap—you should've known! As you disturb the rubble, the walls groan to live and begin to press in! You can *hear* the force building up behind those animated walls! In but a moment, they are due to snap close, crushing you to a bloody pulp!

## 4. FLUMPH CLOISTER

The cavern is thick with a soft, warm energy that envelopes your mind as if it were a cloud of mist. A voice speaks from within your mind, as if it were at home, as it was always there—but this is not the insidious Mad Mage, oh no. This voice speaks with an air of concern:

"Hey! Listen! Illithids lurk nearby, as do the githyanki. You should flee this place!"

If the adventurers exhibit no threatening behavior, the flumphs descend one by one from the ceiling to greet the party in person.

**Roleplaying Flumphs.** Wise and sharp, flumphs are benevolent creatures whose moods are reflected in the soft colors they glow. The flumphs here are sick with worry and thus glow a greyish-blue light. They would be delighted to meet good-hearted folk that contrast their evil neighbors.

Flumphs are wholly telepathic and thus have full conversations with the adventurers; speak normally and stably to contrast their otherworldly physiology.

If the party rests in their cavern, they can expect lessons in philosophy and history as the flumphs gush over their guests. They can offer an Under-mountain secret (from Appendix B of *DotMM*) and shed light on several mysteries currently intriguing your players, such as Jhesiyra Kestellharp, the Mad Mage's history, or creatures on other levels, such as Level 18's Vanrakdoom cultists. They can also sense the psionic energy reverberating from Shadowdusk Hold on Level 22; the aberrations being contacted or even brought in from the Far Realms leaves them queasy with dread.

**Into the Stronghold.** Through the secret door, the party can skip straight into Area 13, deep inside the mind flayers' stronghold. However, without a means to operate the Qualith door locks, they won't be able to progress any further.

## 5. GITHYANKI GRAVE

Rivulets of murky water seep in from the ceiling. As you sweep your gaze across the cavern, you spot an alcove—and the familiar shape of piled corpses.

Carved into the space above the alcove are the words "*Uhn dara ma'nakai*" in the otherworldly Gith script. It translates to "Our duty is unending." A character under a spell of *comprehend languages* learns this.

## 6. BATTLEGROUND

### 6A. CAVE OF CARNAGE

You come upon a scene of carnage, a graveyard of battles both old and recent. The floor is strewn with the corpses of ogres, orcs, duergar, targs, and githyanki—and yes, mind flayers. All eight have been decapitated.

### 6B. SEVERED HEADS

Before a door embedded with an alien lock stand seven heads: the bloodied heads of illithids, mounted on pikes, their tentacles hanging limp and impotent. Each and every head faces the stone door and its strange, otherworldly lock.

### 6C. ONE BRAVE FLUMPH

When the adventurers encounter the flumph, read:

Floating in an alcove is a strange jellyfish like creature whose gentle voice reaches deep into your mind:

"Well met, I hope."

If the adventurers engage the flumph in conversation, it adds the following:

The creature whispers to you, "Harmless are our kind, yet the githyanki treat us as pests—and eradicate it them as your kind would rats. I mean no harm; we mean no harm and yet we are cut down solely for the accident of our birth."

The brave flumph decided to take up a lookout incase the githyanki leave their stronghold; whenever they do, it can sense the change in psychic currents and leaves approximately two minutes before they do. It then alerts

its kin. The githyanki used severed mind flayer heads, animated by magic, to open the locks.

**Qualith Lock.** The flumph is more than willing to open the lock for them, using its tentacles. While the githyanki are less evil than the illithids, the illithids tolerate the flumphs' presence and don't bother to cut them down. To see the githyanki put down would ensure the flumph cloister's continued survival, even if the cloister would rather risk itself to see the mind flayers eradicated.

**Patrol.** While the adventurers are here, a patrol of two **githyanki warriors** and a **githyanki knight** are due to leave Area 7 to this area. The flumph warns the party beforehand, who can get the jump on them. If the patrol springs into battle, the knight shouts "*Zerashk Guilda!*" or "Oblivion awaits!" in Gith. The other githyanki echo the battle cry.

## 7. GITHYANKI STRONGHOLD

If the adventurers entered Alterdeep as soon as they left Stardock (see Level 16), by when they meet the githyanki, news of the Crystal Labyrinth's disarray should have reached the soldiers here. If not, then the party likely precedes it. How they acted on that level determines how the githyanki react: with fear, with an armistice, or with respect. Adjust accordingly.

**Roleplaying Githyanki.** As described in chapter 16 of the *Companion*, githyanki are, literally, aliens to Toril and must be roleplayed accordingly. As a psionic people, githyanki tend to never reach for objects, always relying on a psychic *mage hand*.

You can use any of these phrases, ripped from the fictional Khalani language of *Starcraft*, to simulate the Gith language:

- "*Ki nala atum!*" or "We are as one!"
- "*Khassar de templari!*" or "From order comes justice!"
- "*Khas il'adare*" or "May your spirit soar," often said in support of other warriors.
- "*Na vazeal!*" or "We destroy!"
- "*Uhn dara ma'nakai*" or "Our duty is unending."
- "*Uhn ore'ki atum*" or "Our minds are as one."
- "*Zerashk Guilda!*" or "Oblivion awaits!" The worship of gods is forbidden in githyanki society, so this serves as both as a rallying cry and one's dying words.

### 7A. ARCH GATE TO LEVEL 15

The githyanki guard this area zealously, for if it fell into the hands of the mind flayers, their thralls could easily circle around the Crystal Labyrinth and attack from both sides. To ensure that their enemies can't easily do so, the githyanki prohibit a six-fingered gauntlet from even being kept on this level.

**The Zerths.** On the other side of the arch gate lurks the githzerai zerths, whom the adventurers may have already met. If the party is embroiled in Alterdeep and Yrlakka and his zerths intend to rescue the party, they enter Seadeeps from this gate, having procured a six-fingered gauntlet.

**Combat.** If a fight brings out here, the githyanki shout rallying cries in their native language. These phrases include, "*Ki nala atum!*" ("we are as one") and "*Na vazeal!*" ("we destroy!").

## 7C. KNIGHT'S QUARTERS

Bathed in the light of a lantern, two githyanki knights argue quietly, their dissent bouncing off the walls as whispers.

When the party arrives, the knights leap to their feet and telekinetically call their greatswords from where they lay against the wall. A character in the path of a weapon can use their reaction to snatch at it, making a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw. On a success, they prevent the weapon from reaching its wielder. On a failure, the character takes 3 (1d6) slashing damage.

Rather than jumping straight into battle, the knights first try to parley. They'd be surprised if the mind flayers' thralls made it into their stronghold but the thought has crossed their minds before.

**Roleplaying Yaveklar.** An old soldier, Yaveklar is too familiar with casualties and loss—but there still lurks cunning in her heart. Draw upon the following sample dialogue:

- "We are the shield of Créche K'liir—we cannot afford to fall. They cannot afford us to fall."
- "The odds are against us; without reinforcements, we can do nothing but contain the illithids in their compound."
- "We cannot throw lives into the red throat of that abattoir."

**Roleplaying Lashiir.** Eager to prove herself as a commander and advance, the headstrong Lashiir is quick to act, consequences be damned. Draw upon the following sample dialogue:

- "We are the tip of the spear and glory is ours."
- "The early roc gets the neothelid."
- "The illithids have let grown a neothelid, a feral behemoth that can melt bone and flesh but not brain matter. It must be killed for the good of the world. If we cannot take the fight to the mind flayers, we must slay their monster before it's loose."

## 8. OPERATION: EAT THEM ALL

When the party reaches this area, they should see the **neothelid's** freshest meal get hurled into the area. The chamber also glitters, shedding dim light upon the scene. Read the following:

As you creep throughout the dark, you hear the slamming of a stone door and the screams of a man: "No! No! Take me home! Take me home!"

Curious, you round the bend, catching sight of a human in a glittering cavern. Veins of metal shed dim light on the scene—but as you move forward, you slam into an invisible wall of force. You lay your hand upon it, much like a mime, and find that there's no further way forward, but still you watch the man as he roams around the dark... and a massive worm uncoils itself from the center! Its skin glistens with slime and it rears its eyeless head!

The human turns about and freezes, his mouth agape—just in time for the creature's head to split open like a flower and roar! Its roar shakes the very cavern and from its fanged maw uncoil barbed tongues that seize upon the man—screaming now, screaming as if it would do anything.

As its victim struggles, the massive worm wrenches out a bath of acid that reduces the human to slime—and leaving behind, you see, its intact brain. Carefully, the feral creature curls one of its tongues around the organ and swallows it whole.

At your discretion, this victim can be Ishan Toru's City Watch partner. See Area 10 for details.

## 9. GUARD POST

Gathered here are orcs, two ranks deep, each four strong, all babbling, their shields interlocked, their dignity tarnished and their minds rent asunder—and behind them pace those tentacled fiends, the mind flayers. Their telepathic orders bounce off your brain like water crashing on rocks. You make out one meaning from the babble—and realize with horror that the orcs are all murmuring it: "Serve! Serve well! Serve long! Serve! Serve!"

The **orogs** are highly intelligent orcs broken by the cruelty of the illithids. Rows of pikes line the north wall and each orog has one at its feet (+6 to hit, 1d10 +4 piercing damage) that it can pick up.

**Tactics.** Hailing from a handful of strong tribes, the orogs employ the following tactics, backed up by the mind flayers:

- The **orogs** start 5 feet from the door to Area 6B. The front two warriors are armed with greataxes; the two behind them are armed with pikes, allowing all four to attack the same targets.
- The third and fourth ranks of **orogs** hurl javelins up until the front-line defenders fall; they then reach for their own greataxes and rush into the brink.
- Given their shortage of thralls, the **mind flayers** take care to preserve the orogs, even wading through the ranks to use a Mind Blast attack on the invaders without hitting one. Moving through allies in combat counts as difficult terrain.
- Once the frontline falls, the **mind flayers** join the melee up until being reduced to half their hit points, whereupon they flee to an adjacent area, sealing the door with a Qualith lock.

## 10. DETENTION FACILITY

You know a prison when you see one. Cells that reek of filth and woe line this chamber, each door fitted with one of those strange, alien locks the illithids are so keen on. Of the ten cells, only three are occupied: one by a troglodyte, one by a grimlock, and one by a human.

The human rouses immediately, brandishing a Waterdhavian City Watch badge. In a weakening but firm voice he growls, "Waterdeep C-W! Open this gods-damned door!"

As described in Area 8, there was a fourth prisoner until quite recently, a human named Landers Stao. He was taken to be fed to the neothelid.

**Troglodyte.** You can link the trog with the party's past escapades: perhaps it belongs to Gorzil's gang of troglodytes on Level 10, if it's not Gorzil himself. If the party has had any significant contact with a trog in Undermountain, just graft its identity over Glorz's.

**Roleplaying Ishan.** While he's had no shortage of dealings with the mind flayers since being captured, Ishan knows nothing more about his alien jailors. Below his stoic façade quavers fear that he can only just silence with the promise of a dignified death.

Minutes ago, Ishan's City Watch partner, Landers Stao, was taken away by the illithids. Unbeknownst to Ishan, Landers has been fed to the neothelid. Loyal to the end, Ishan is determined to find Stao before returning to Waterdeep. He can track signs of the man's struggles throughout the compound, up to the door leading to Area 8, although the Qualith lock there will prevent him from progressing beyond it.

**"Ahpok."** Within the grimlock's stolen body, an **intellect devourer** metaphorically rubs its hands together. It's in sore need of fresh entertainment and the party is a ripe opportunity. When it converses with them in Undercommon, read the following:

The grimlock cracks open its toothy maw to smile. "There is a way! A way out from this wretched place! Long before the tentacled-ones came, these caverns belonged to Ahpok's tribe, of which she is the sole survivor! Ahpok knows Undermountain by sound, smell, touch! Free Ahpok and Ahpok will serve! Ahpok will gladly serve! Ahpok is a guide, free and happy!"

## 11. HALASTER IS GLOWING

You find yourself, of course, face to stony face with your wild patron, the Mad Mage himself, carved from marble. Motes of multicolored lights linger around the statue, which points a stony finger towards an arch gate—one of Halaster's many arcane gates littering Undermountain.

The gate here is a simple one to manipulate and so your players are likely to take it to safety—and thus trigger the trap. However, if you'd *really* like to mess with your players, have an adventuring party emerge from the gate just to die to *prismatic spray* in the most visceral manner.

## 12. DYNAMO

### 12C. CENTRAL HUB

When the party reaches this area, they can view the entire dynamo and sense its psionic energy. Read the following:

There is a wind in this place that howls not beside your ears but deep within your mind, one that you can hear above the river's roar—and its whispers pitch to a screech as you lay your eyes upon a vast and intricate machine, a turbine powered by the roaring river. It sheds power like a summer heat: omnipresent and humid. Your very mind reels!

### 12G. CONTROL ROOM

At the heart of this insidious dynamo sits a crystalline throne—and on it, a six-tentacled illithid dressed in flowing robes. The throne sits upon a base of black, alien metal veined with copper wires that snake into the floor, channeling power that hums and thrums. Your brain, your very brain, tickles.

Behind the illithid stretches a crystal screen that depicts the *Yawning Portal* of Waterdeep, a place you're well acquainted with. A clump of rowdy patrons toss a table, shattering their glasses and provoking a scolding from Durnan, the proprietor.

How the narration continues is determined by how the party enter this chamber for the first time; if they aren't in the simulation, but Extremiton is, "Durnan" is busy shouting at rowdy patrons in Alterdeep. The characters will notice that the illithid's mouth moves silently when Durnan shouts.

## 13. BACK DOOR

Expect a much shorter time on this level if the party enters the illithid compound if they enter via this route, rather than cut their way in from the front. You can draw some of the **orogs** from Area 9 to fill out this room.

**Inverted Route.** If the party starts this level inside Alterdeep, this path is the quickest way to escape the illithid compound.

## 14. PSIPOD NEXUS I

The following description makes no mention of the **mind flayers** normally found in this room; they can enter while the players are here, noisily coming from another chamber. To avoid detection, the party might slip inside the psipods—thus rendering themselves prone to Extremiton and its foul game.

You could have gone your life without seeing this mockery of life and science: coffin-sized cylinders worked from soft bronze cradle sleeping men and women who shift restlessly, as if lost in a dream. Each coffin is coated in a thin residue, a slime that seems to undulate on its own.

If the party instead started the level in Alterdeep, or are emerging from it, instead read the following:

With a sudden jolt you awaken from the dream, bolting upright only to smack your forehead against a crystalline lid. It leaves a foul-smelling residue against your skin. All around you hums the psychic power of this machine, plucking at your mind as if it were a harp.

Blinking yourself back from that surreal experience, you study your surroundings: your coffin is a cylinder from which copper wires snake into the floor. There are others like you in stasis, trapped in other cylinders. Their eyes flit as they too wrestle with the dream of "Waterdeep."

What foul sorcery is this?

## 15. PSIPOD NEXUS II

Borrow from the description written for Area 14; the four **mind flayers** can enter this room afterwards, possibly provoking the adventurers into hiding inside a psipod, and thus trapping them in Alterdeep.

## 16. OLD DWARVEN HALLS

### 16A. NORTH GUARD POST

That duergar have had their brains implanted into metal scorpions deserves to be appreciated fully. Lift the restriction on their ability to speak. Once alerted, they shout curses and insults in Dwarvish:

- "Yer mother's nothin' but an ogre and yer father stunk of elderberries, I tell ye!"
- "I din't know surface-folk could be s'thinned-skin!"
- "Me brain's in a jar, an' I can still score a lass quicker than ye, ye fallow, olive-lipped maypole!"
- (When it inflicts damage) "Oh, ya gon' cry now, are ya?"

### 16B. SOUTH GUARD POST

As described in *DotMM*, the **duergar** here have had their minds broken. They've lost all sense of personal identity and, when engaged in combat, all eight shout "For the colony!" at once.

### 16B. PSIONIC FORCE GENERATOR

You come upon a most sordid thing: two mind flayers gripping a crystalline pedestal above which floats a fist-sized diamond. Their eyes are shut in concentration and their bodies strain with the force of whatever it is they're channeling.

## 17. CRUMBLING BRIDGE

Over the roaring river spans a crumbling bridge of stone. With but a glance, you can see it for the death trap that it is.

## EPILOGUE

With Seadeeps behind them, the party can only look forward to the last six levels of Undermountain.

**Vanrakdoom.** To mirror Wyllowood, the path to Vanrakdoom has been rewritten. Instead of winding through caverns and winding up at the cult's sanctum, the way leads the party through a dead forest. As it will be described in the *Companion's* next chapter, the cultists are turning a subterranean forest made by Halaster into a section of the Shadowfell. Thus, their trek is through these Deadwoods.

**Send-Off.** Cap off your session with one of the send-offs below. Both are written to assume that the party started the level inside Alterdeep and emerged from the simulation—although how long has passed since they entered is up to you.

### THE STANDARD SEND-OFF

The mind is but a playground and never is it a pretty place, not when you dig too deep. What sort of monster trafficks in that surreal place? What sort of monster dares to hook up innocents to a shared dream? You've done well for the City of Waterdeep, for your common man, to have put down that illithid—for who knows how far such a scheme could reach, how large a machine it could make—how *many* could be trapped in its playground?

You've done well—for now. As you look to the bowels of the earth, you know there are worse horrors left by the Mad Mage.

### THE HOST'S SEND-OFF

As you leave this surreal playground in the past, the Mad Mage shouts in your ear:

"It's best that you put Extremiton down before we incurred a cease-and-desist letter," the Mad Mage tells you. "Its machine strayed dangerously close to realms that no mortal can dare tackle, much less appeal to.

"Beyond this place, in the bowels of my mountain, lies your next challenge: Vanrakdoom. Were you not my favored playthings, I would insist—*beg*—you turn back, but alas, for you, my pretties, there is but one direction and it is *down*. Down you go, into the final chapters of our game."

Upon hearing "Vanrakdoom," the adventurers should have alarm bells ringing in their heads, for such a suffix marks the lair of a lich. If the party doesn't grasp this, call for a DC 14 Intelligence (Arcana) check and inform them of this fact. Then capitalize on their fear, as no lich lies in Vanrakdoom.



# LEVEL XVIII: VANRAKDOOM

## QUICK NOTES

- Vanrakdoom is especially lethal for an adventuring party. Their hit points winnowed down by frequent vampire bites, harangued by shadow assassins, and opposed by a vampire cleric *and* a shadow dragon, the party will likely find their doom here. The *Companion* holds that it's perfectly normal for the party to perish or retreat; in the case of the latter, retreating to Level 19 would be advisable, as it continues the campaign without the party slamming themselves head-first into a wall. The party can lick their wounds and return later to tackle Vanrakdoom again.
- Vampires and their spawn can instantly grapple a target hit by their Claw attack! It takes an *action* to break this grapple via a Strength (Athletics) check!
- The various trinkets of Umbraxakar's past that can be found across the dungeon are vital to redeeming him. They can be found in Areas 5, 8, 15, and 17.

## PREVIOUSLY ON *DUNGEON OF THE MAD MAGE*

Keep in mind the following when running this level:

**Save the Dragon.** Helion Moonstar, the half-drow heir-apparent and grandson of Lady Wylynd may have approached the party with a quest to find and free Glyster from the grasp of Shar, the Lady of Loss.

## SAVE THE DRAGON

This level hinges on the history of Umbraxakar and his possible redemption. Alas, if the party hasn't had time to return to Waterdeep, they might never receive the *Save the Dragon* quest. It's better that the party enters Vanrakdoom knowing some of its history than not. Thus, the *Companion* suggests a simple fix: take Portia Dzuth, the prisoner in Area 25B, and move her into the Deadwood—an area added outside the lair by the *Companion*. See "Approaching Vanrakdoom" in *Areas of Note* for further details.

**The Deadwood.** Before Halaster created Wyllow-wood for his dearest companion, the Mad Mage first made this forest. Alas, neglect has allowed the cult of Shar to poison it with the Shadowfell's taint. When the party reaches Level 18, they begin in the Dead-wood and are subjected to the Shadowfell's effects.

**Portia Dzuth.** The prisoner has been released from the dungeon by the mercy of Glyster—the last flicker of the dragon's old self. It's for this reason that Portia believes Umbraxakar can be redeemed. She acts as the quest-giver for the party, informing them of the dragon's and dungeon's history, which she learned from House Moonstar of Waterdeep when hired a month ago.

In this variant, Portia has not been charmed by Keresta, although she can be later but is still poisoned by the Shadowfell's despair—unless such is a twist you wish to spring upon your players: later, when they enter battle, Keresta commands her to betray her newfound allies.

Already charmed, the warrior immediately turns on the party.

Additionally, Portia informs the party of the cult's looming attack on Waterdeep. Confronted with this information, the party must decide whether they will attack the Cult of Shar now, thwart their attack later, or leave them to their own devices. Without this vital information, there's little weight to their decision to invade such a deadly sanctum.

## THE DRAGON'S VISIONS

The visions included on this level are an excellent method of storytelling. Rather than unloading a heap of exposition on your party, the players experience the past with their very eyes. However, they're likely to be experienced out of order—which is part of the fun, for what else is the purpose of exploration but to be rewarded with lore and loot?

The visions are scattered across the dungeon and the party can experience them out of chronological order. Chronologically, they occur in this order:

1. *Best of Friends* (see Area 4)
2. *In the Black Jungles* (see Area 5). Add the ring from Area 5 to whichever area the party is currently in, if presented in order.
3. *The Calling Dark* (see Area 8). Add the *sunblade* from Area 8 to the area the party is currently in, if presented in order.
4. *Turn Back from this Dark Path!* (see Area 19)
5. *What They Deserve* (see Area 17)
6. *Drunk My Fill* (see Area 15)
7. *Redemption by Blade* (see Area 22)

In Area 10, Shar cultists are busy tethering another of Umbraxakar's memories to the Shadowfell. If the cultists finish, another vision is forged, this one of Glyster's willing-but-anguished transformation into a shadow dragon. In the chronological order, this one would occur between *Turn Back from this Dark Path* and *What They Deserve*.

## AREAS OF NOTE

The following areas are of note:

### AREAS IN SUMMARY

This nonlinear level can be a nightmare to keep track of. Refer to the table below. Unlisted areas are not noteworthy, or do not beg your attention until visited. Areas 19-33 lie within the Shadowfell.

## AREAS IN SUMMARY

| Area | Contents                          | Area | Contents                      |
|------|-----------------------------------|------|-------------------------------|
| 4    | Dragon's Vision                   | 17   | Dragon's Vision               |
| 5    | Dragon's Vision                   | 18   | Trap (DC 17 Con)              |
| 6    | Gate to L6                        | 19   | Dragon's Vision               |
| 7    | <b>Vampire Spawn</b>              | 22   | Dragon's Vision               |
| 8    | Dragon's Vision, <i>sun blade</i> | 25   | <b>Vampire spawn</b> , Portia |
| 10   | <b>Shadow assassins</b>           | 26   | Keresta ( <b>Vampire</b> )    |
| 11   | To Level 19                       | 28   | <b>Shadow assassins</b>       |
| 12   | <b>Vampire spawn</b>              | 30   | Shortcut to Area 31           |
| 13   | <b>Vampire spawn</b>              | 31   | Keresta's Tomb                |
| 15   | Dragon's Vision                   | 32   | Umbraxakar                    |
| 16   | Gate to L15                       | 33   | Treasure                      |

## THROUGH THE DEADWOOD

The *Companion* adds a dead, subterranean forest to this level as a preamble to Vanrakdoom, created long ago as a test-run for Wyllowood by the Mad Mage. When Shar's cult pulled it into the Shadowfell, most beasts fled; those that didn't were corrupted. For his part, Halaster just shrugged and continued to watch on, intrigued with the cult's experiment.

The Deadwood serves a number of functions:

- It acts as a buffer between Seadeeps and Vanrakdoom.
- It gives the party time to lick their wounds and explore. If they retreat from Vanrakdoom, they can rest here.
- It exposes the party to Shadowfell Despair and showcases this level's nature and inhabitants.

The party ought to wander through the Deadwood for at least 36 hours. Its skeletal trees and choking mists fill winding caverns that stretch for miles. Like Wyllowood above, it is painted with a sun and sky that sheds real warmth—or would, if the Shadowfell had not turned it into a dismal, cold wood whose canopy of dead limbs blots out the overcast sky. It's choked by fog, making it easy to get turned around. Likewise, as the party will soon learn, this Deadwood is not without its own fauna—and all are touched by the Shadowfell, if not already natives of it.

### DEADWOOD PROPERTIES

The Deadwood is always under the following effects:

- The forest is dimly lit where the canopy is thin and in darkness where it is not.
- Fog lightly obscures the forest. Occasionally, trains of thick fog roll in, heavily obscuring 1d4 30-foot-areas.
- Omnipresent dread can be felt as if it were humidity.
- Colors seem dimmed, if not outright muted.
- Characters can succumb to Shadowfell Despair.

Occasionally, these effects intensify, as the waves of the Shadowfell crash against the shores of the true Material Plane. This lasts for 1d4 x 1d10 minutes before abating.

## RANDOM SHADOWFELL ENCOUNTERS

| d10 | Encounter  |
|-----|--|
| 1   | <b>The Angry</b> ( <i>Sorrowsworn</i> )          |
| 2-4 | <i>Shadar-kai</i>                                |
| 5   | <b>The Lost</b> ( <i>Sorrowsworn</i> )           |
| 6   | <b>The Hungry</b> ( <i>Sorrowsworn</i> )         |
| 7-9 | 2d4+4 <b>The Wretched</b> ( <i>Sorrowsworn</i> ) |
| 10  | <i>Dragon Shadow</i>                             |

## RANDOM SHADOWFELL ENCOUNTERS

Random encounters haven't had a chance to shine since the upper reaches of Undermountain. Now's the time to add it back into your campaign, but drawing from some of the more esoteric monsters found only in the Shadowfell. Every 12 hours, roll a d20. On a roll of 18-20, the party is confronted with a random encounter, as determined by the table above.

Possible encounters are described below:

**Dragon Shadow.** Umbraxakar flies overhead, his wings like thunder in the oppressive silence. In two rounds, he passes above the party, on his way back to Vanrakdoom. If he detects them, he unleashes his shadow breath weapon upon them but continues to Vanrakdoom.

**Shadar-kai.** These withered elves, minions of the mysterious Raven Queen, have found themselves lost in Undermountain. Led by the **gloom weaver**, Rinrasiel, she and her 1d4 **shadow dancers** seek only answers as to where they are and how to return to the Shadowfell proper—unless the inscrutable Raven Queen has apparently laid claim to one of the adventurers' souls, in which case they attack.

**Sorrowsworn.** Manifestations of the Shadowfell's deleterious nature, these abominations are detailed in *Mordenkainen's Tome of Foes*.

### PRISONER OF DARKNESS

Under the *Companion*, Portia Dzuth, the prisoner in Area 25B, can be encountered in the Deadwood. In a moment of mercy, Umbraxakar released her from the dungeon of Vanrakdoom—and thus, she believes that the dragon can still be redeemed. She can act as a guide, quest giver, and ally to the party.

When the party encounters Portia, she's unarmored and unarmed, having been deposited by Umbraxakar deep in the Deadwood. She considers meeting the party a godsend. Read the following:

Out from the gray brush comes a weak cry, "Please... Drained, please help me." Your eyes fall upon the thin figure of a woman lingering behind a skeletal tree. Her robes are torn; thorns cling to the fabric. Her feet are red and muddy and most color has been drained from her face. She's far too thin and haggard.

"Please, shelter—and a sword, I beg you. They'll be after me soon; Keresta never lets a bauble out of her grasp."

### SHADOWFELL DESPAIR

A melancholic atmosphere pervades the Shadowfell. Forays to this plane can afflict characters with despair.

When you deem it appropriate, though usually not more than once a day, you can require a character not native to the Shadowfell to make a DC 10 Wisdom saving throw. On a failure, they're affected by despair. Roll a d6 to determine the effects from the results below.

If a character is already suffering a despair effect and fails another saving throw, the new effect overrides the old. After finishing a long rest, a character can attempt to overcome their despair with a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw. On a success, the despair effect ends. A spell of *calm emotions* removes the despair, as does any spell or magical effect that removes a curse.

**1-3: Apathy.** The character has disadvantage on death saves and initiative checks. They gain the flaw "I don't believe I can make a difference to anyone or anything."

**4-5: Dread.** The character suffers disadvantage on all saving throws. They gain the flaw "I am convinced that this place is going to kill me."

**6: Madness.** The character has disadvantage on ability checks and saving throws that use Int., Wis., or Charisma. They gain the flaw "I can't tell what's real anymore."

**Roleplaying Portia.** Weakened by blood loss, the once-mighty adventurer is a shadow of herself. She never rolls up her sleeves, so as to keep the vampires' bite marks hidden from onlookers. Like in *DotMM*, she's succumbed to Shadowfell Despair and has been consumed by dread that manifests in the following flaw: "I'm convinced that I'm going to die in Vanrak-doom."

Portia is quick to relay the following information to the party and knows nothing more:

- She and her comrades were hired by Lady Wylynd Moonstar of Waterdeep to find the dragon Glyster—now Umbraxakar—and restore him to his former self.
- Umbraxakar, an old friend to House Moonstar, has been corrupted into a shadow dragon by the Cult of Shar. She believes a fragment of good still lingers in his heart, evidenced by his mercy in releasing her from Vanrak-doom.
- This level of Undermountain is populated by the Cult of Shar, goddess of darkness and loss. They're performing "dark rituals" that have mired the dungeon with dread and bounding shadows. Its ranks consist of humans and vampire spawn, led by Keresta Delvingstone, a cleric who rewards her followers with vampirism.
- The cult is plotting an attack on Waterdeep's temples, but Portia knows not which ones or when.
- If given food, warmth, rest, and a sword, she will fight alongside the party to complete her quest.

### CULTISTS!

Some time after the party has met Portia—just long enough to rest and restore her to health, but before they reach Vanrakdoom—cultists sent by Keresta find the party. The vampire is furious that Portia has slipped through her fingers.

They consist of 1d6 **cultists**, 1d4 **cult fanatics** and a **vampire spawn** by the name of Hraskal, a former adventurer. Hraskal fights to the death, but surviving cultists are quick to yield. They corroborate all of Portia's information if questioned and can provide brief descriptions of the dungeon's layout, as well as explain purpose of the cult's rituals: to anchor the dragon's memories to the Shadowfell to pull more of Vanrak-doom into that deleterious plane.

### 1. ENTRANCE

The following description assumes that the Dead-wood added by the *Companion* was included at your table. Adjust accordingly. When the adventurers enter Vanrakdoom, read the following:

After far too long in those dead woods, you come upon doors carved from black marble. Out from each looms a chiseled, hooded maiden clutching a dagger. Upon the left door lies an inscription, recessed into the stone: "DARKNESS QUENCH THE SUN;" on the other, "DARKNESS SWALLOW THE MOON."

As you read, the stone itself shifts to bear one last phrase, this time etched in ivory: "WE ARE NOTHING BUT THE NIGHT."

With the world pregnant with silence and dread, you move to push the doors open—but your hand falls through, as if they were made of nothing but black air.

Characters that pass through the nonsolid door can see the rough-hewn tunnels that snake into Vanrak-doom proper.

### 2. DUSTY EMPTINESS

**Shift.** This chamber is perfect for the first Shadowfell shift (see above), as there's nothing in it. If the first shift occurs in an area with décor, the adventurers will instead suspect that décor as being responsible. When it occurs, read the following:

Silence—there's only silence here, heavy and omnipresent like the fog that clings to your waist. Not even your steps upon the stone are enough to pierce that mute canopy. It's almost as if the dungeon itself would rather slumber or wallow in the gloom.

Further you go, dread building up at the base of your spine—like a beast that can sense the coming earthquake. As you look about, you feel an invisible wave push past your ankles—and as it withdraws back into that unseen ocean, all the color in the room fades away, becoming only gray.

The shift lasts 1d4 minutes. A character can make a DC 18 Intelligence (Arcana) check to identify this as the phenomena of a shadow crossing—a leak from the Shadowfell.

### 3. STATUE OF SHAR

Amidst the fog stands a statue carved from black marble, carved in the likeness of a cloaked woman wielding twin daggers. Before her kneels a black-robed figure, supplicant and silent. At the figure's feet are the bones of skeletons, barely discernible in the fog that cloaks this place.

### 4. OLD FRIENDS

Fog and gloom choke the chamber whose walls were once lined with magnificent tapestries that have since been shredded. Tatters lie heaped in a corner, some depicting coastal scenes.

As you wade through the mist, a vision consumes your mind: your eyes fall upon a windy cliff overlooking the rough seas. A noble dressed in adventuring attire turns to you and murmurs, "I cannot mount this expedition without you, Glyster. The Black Jungles teem with horrors no man can face alone."

The noble lays a hand on your shoulder. In his eyes, you see yourself: a regal gentleman whose eyes are the color of freshly worked bronze and whose countenance is creased by frequent smiles. You offer a grin to the nobleman who asks, "We are the best of friends, Glyster, are we not?"

You, this "Glyster," nod. "Aye, Vanrak," comes his voice from your throat. "Aye. Until the end of our days, you and I. You and I against the world."

The nobleman shares his own smile. "May Selûne watch over us and this expedition. To Chult we go. Together, as always."

The scene fades away as your mind reels back into the gloom of this place, the contrast of friendship and darkness stark in your very heart.

### 5. UMBRAXAKAR'S GIFT

This chamber is decorated with bas-relief carvings of human skeletons—a macabre furnishing indeed. As you wade through that clinging mist, a vision grips your mind!

Your eyes fall upon a jungle steeped in shadow. At a campfire sit several men and women, their expeditionary gear heaped at their feet. Tents loom like leathern peaks over the barren jungle floor. You face a nobleman whose leather gear is wet with mud and bristling with captured thornbuds. Your hand creeps out from your coat as you hand him a polished coral ring.

"A token," you say. Your voice is solid but strange. "...of our friendship, Vanrak."

The nobleman cradles the ring and slips it on his finger. It glimmers with a rainbow of color. "I will treasure this gift forever," Vanrak says, his smile shining in the firelight.

With that, the vision ends. Your mind is hurled back to the gloom of this wretched place.

### 7. HALLS OF WORSHIP

#### 7A. CRAWLING RATS

As the adventurers approach this chamber, they're sure to hear the cultists' chanting and the squealing rats. When they reach the area, read the following:

The scene is lit by violet flames that burn from black wax. Six cultists kneel together, chanting a single phrase: "Darkness quench the sun. Darkness swallow the moon. We are nothing but the night."

Amidst them is a man draped in rats. Dozens crawl across his flesh, roaming across his body like it were virgin countryside. His arms are outstretched, T-posed, his brow furrowed as he endures whatever macabre test of devotion this must surely be.

"Darkness..." he grunts over the squeal of rats, "quench the sun. Darkness swallow... the moon."

Shadowfell shifts should happen rapidly here, each lasting a few seconds.

### 8. SCINTILMORN'S REST

The fog envelopes you and drapes your mind in a misty wreath. You experience a vision!

The world is black with darkness. Neither stars nor moons hang over the sky. Your boots echo out across throne as your voice shouts, "This is madness, Vanrak! Madness!"

A nobleman looms out of the gloom, whirling to face you, his eyes brimming with madness. He levels at you a longsword whose blade is made of pure sunlight. His voice is like shattered glass: "What have we to gear from darkness, you and I, Glyster? Undermountain is where we belong! It calls to us—can you not hear it?"

Waving his luminous blade about like a lunatic, he continues, "Together we shall see the Moonstar name elevated to glorious heights my father couldn't dream of! Waterdeep will shudder at the very sound of it!"

The last you see is the waving sunlight shed from that sword as the mists sweep in to pull you back to the present.

### 9. SHADOW VIGIL

Hardly heard above the legion squeal of rats are cultish chants sang in a low intonation and judicious pronunciation, as if their tongues dare not leave any stone unturned: "Darkness quench the sun. Darkness swallow the moon. Darkness claim this dungeon and all that dwell within."

The dread is thick here, a miasmatic mist that kisses at your arms and cheeks, lapping against the shores of your mind as lazily but persistent as the tide.

Multiple Shadowfell shifts should occur here, hinting at the work being done in Area 10.

### 10. RITUAL CHAMBER

Unity is a powerful force indeed—for gathered here are both brothers and sisters, all petitioning the cosmos in a single, solid voice: "Darkness quench the sun. Darkness swallow the moon. Darkness claim this dungeon and all that dwell within."

Their ritual is about to bear foul fruit: a cloud of fog roils at the chamber's heart. Black lines arc through the ivory cloud like lightning—and in it dance images of a dragon, bronze and glorious, writhing in pain as cloaked figures darken its scales with foul magic. Its anguished cries echo out from the fog, out across the chamber, all while the cultists pray to the darkness they so desperately crave.

**Tactics.** Any combat here will be short and bloody; against such mighty adventurers, the **cult fanatics** can only hope to score lucky shots. They employ the following tactics in combat:

- Once a cult fanatic falls, becoming a **shadow assassin**, the remaining cult fanatics buff their target with spells of *shield of faith* and the like.
- The first fanatic to act casts *hold person* on any target they perceive as weak-willed.
- The second fanatic casts *spiritual weapon*, preferring to attack a target that succumbed to *hold person*.
- The third fanatic casts *command* as a 2nd level spell, demanding that its two targets "flee" or "retreat."
- The fourth fanatic casts *inflict wounds* as a 2nd level spell, preferring a target that succumbed to *hold person*.

## 11. TUNNELS AND CAVERNS

For once, the *Companion* doesn't suggest a contrived barrier to the party's progress to the next level—for Vanrakdoom is as deadly as it comes. If the party wants to retreat to Level 19, let them.

Should the adventurers flee this place, it won't be they who pay the price but Waterdeep instead—specifically the temples of Selûne and Lathander's most devout. As described above, the cult's plot must be learned by the party by now, so as to add weight to their decision to thwart the cult now or let them be.

## 15. SHATTERED THRONE

As you gaze across the ruined chamber, a vision slips its way into your brain, rooting itself behind your eyes.

When you blink, the chamber is pristine, glorious. Not yet has that proud throne been reduced to rubble—and slumped within it is a skeletal lord with crimson pinpricks that burn in his empty eye sockets.

"Is this it?" the skeletal lord ponders. "Is this to be my legacy? The legacy of the 'great' Vanrak Moonstar? A shadow king damned to rule these moonless halls, fending off assassins, mad wizards, and ghosts of the ancient dead? Is this all that Lady Shar has to offer?"

Your voice calls out, "Do not lose yourself, Vanrak—"

The skeletal lord bats at the air, casting away the entire world. "No... I have drunk my fill of darkness and loss, old friend."

With that, the vision slips away from you.

## 17. LOST DWARVEN HORN

Out from the choking mists loom iron hooks set into the walls. Once decorated with portraits, they lie barren, forgotten, red with rust and neglect. Hanging from a hook is a golden war horn encrusted with rubies and sapphires.

As your eyes make out that gilded horn, your mind reels back with a vision of the past. Gone are you from this cramped chamber and instead in a great hall buttressed by six columns. Stone-hewn steps climb to a dais whose far wall is flanked with marble black statues, one carved in the likeness of a cloaked woman wielding a dagger—and the other in the visage of the Mad Mage himself. The two statues glare at one another as if they were mortal enemies.

You look about, noticing that your immense body is scaled and clawed. A hollow voice calls out from the dark, "Give these fools the death they deserve, Umbraxakar!"

You look out: bound to each column is a blindfolded prisoner, six in all, all weeping, all wavering before their doom. Sucking in a breath, you unleash a blast of shadow that swallows the nearest prisoner—a dwarf. As his body withers away, a shadow rises from his corpse, bowing to the dark. With that bow comes the present, delivering you from the wretched past.

The character that experiences this vision can make a DC 17 Intelligence (Religion) check to identify the cloaked statue as a depiction of Shar. The party may wonder what sort of beef the Mad Mage apparently has with the goddess.

## 19. HALL OF DEATH

Beyond that shadowed curtain lies a gloomy hall decorated with the bones of the dead and gone. As you step over the threshold, a wave pushes past your body as if you just now dove into a black sea. The world drains away, colorless and forlorn, dark and foreboding as the depths of the lightless earth.

Make no mistake: you've gone from your world to another, this one empty and wanting. A world without light, without warmth, and certainly without hope. It is hollow—and so too are you, as if your very being has been cheapened by crossing this planar threshold—as if there is a part of you you'll never get back. You know it deep in your bones this merciless truth: things will never be the same again.

## DRAGON'S VISION

When a character experiences the vision of the past, read the following:

The world quivers as a vision swamps over your fragile mind! In it, you're locked in a vicious brawl against a warrior dressed in a mithral chain shirt. His fist slams against your jaw, but you repay him in kind, flattening him against the tiled floor.

"Vanrak—!" you cry, disgusted by this violence and eager to see it resolved. "Cease this madness!"

The warrior stumbles to his feet and reaches for a bladeless hilt. With an arcane word whispered from his lips, a blade of pure sunlight bursts forward. "Remember this, drake? Your gift to me? Challenge me again, and I'll carve out that big heart of yours and eat it!"

Your body twists and enlarges, becoming draconic in nature. Your perspective elevates as you look down at Vanrak, your comrade, your brother. "Vanrak!" you cry again. "I'm your friend! Listen to me—*listen!* She's using the pain of your father's death to lead you down the darkest of all paths! For the love of Selûne, turn away from Shar!"

With that impassioned plea, shadows surge in to devour your world and return you to the present.

## 22. UNDER BLACK SHEETS

Figures loom out from the dark, draped in black sheets. As you pull away a sheet, your mind is gripped by a vision that hurls you back to the dark days of the past.

You stand before a knight draped in a mithral chain shirt, that legendary metal. In his gauntleted hand is the hilt of a bladeless sword. His voice is grave and deepened by sorrow. "This," he tells you, mournfully, "is not the fate either of us deserved. In darkness, we have lost our way."

With an uttered arcane word, sunlight springs forth from the sword's hilt, shedding its golden light across the chamber. The knight, you now see, is a corpse. His face is but bone and his eyes burn with a fire that sheds no light. Likewise, you now see your own form: draconic claws peel at the stone floor; your scales are the color of pregnant shadows.

"I will always love you, my friend," the death knight murmurs. "You and I against the world, remember? You and I... I'm sorry, Glyster."

Before you can act, the death knight drives the sunblade into his own throat, reducing him to dust. The blade snuffs out and clatters to the floor—and you unleash an anguished roar that shakes the very foundation of this wretched place and sends your mind back to the present.

## 25. PRISONER OF DARKNESS

As described in the preamble, Portia Dzuth has been removed from this area to the Deadwood to act as a quest giver for the party. See *Through the Deadwood* for more details.

## 26. VAMPIRE BOSS

At last you come upon the dark heart of the Cult of Shar: amidst two massive columns lies a wooden table carpeted with maps—and studying them is a pale woman tattooed with a colorless dragon. Behind her looms a furred behemoth, a yeti, imposing and abominable.

The woman gives you a colorless smile. "The Lady of Loss whispered of this day. Welcome, heroes! Welcome to your well-deserved end. All will fall before the Shadow!"

When the adventurers first enter this area, the nine **vampire spawn** laying beneath the fog must make Dexterity (Stealth) checks to remain hidden.

**Roleplaying Keresta.** As with all other vampires, undeath has scoured away anything good in Keresta's heart. Not even her devotion to Shar can bring her warmth, although it does fill her with pride—that can only be earned at the expense of others. Haughty and imperious, she expects to be obeyed by all; disrespect sends her flying into a rage. Only when mortally wounded does her pride abate long enough for her to flee. Draw on any of the following sample dialogue:

- "I was like you once, driven by thoughts of fame and fortune—but I have since found a higher calling."
- "The Lady of Loss has brought you here to become her greatest champions—*my* champions."
- "The Shadow will consume this world!"
- "Hope is a fool's errand."

### THE YETI IN THE ROOM

Look, we don't *need* to question why Keresta has a yeti at her disposal—it's Undermountain, after all—but here are some contrived explanations:

- It is a creature with only the statistics of an **abominable yeti**, perhaps crafted from the flesh of exsanguinated victims or a creature from Shar's midnight realm.

- The yeti predates Vanrakdoom; long-lived and humble, it accepted Vanrak as the new master of the dungeon... or saw him as the latest tenant.
- The yeti hails from an entirely different world; it was to be sold by the crew of the spelljammer spaceship on Level 19. When they crashed into Undermountain, the yeti got free and made its way into Vanrakdoom.

### DOOM OF A LENGTHY CAMPAIGN

Keresta is haughty indeed, but she's no fool—and so aren't you, the DM. With an **abominable yeti**, **nine vampire spawn**, and possibly a **champion** (Portia, if she's still charmed), this is the deadliest fight the party will have faced in Undermountain. The action economy alone will dwarf even a large party—which probably clocks in at six members at most.

Unless the party uses subterfuge and has a source of sunlight, they're likely to perish here and now. To have Halaster rescue them would be a cop-out, so the *Companion* offers some suggestions:

- Keresta offers vampirism to the adventurers willing to serve her. They must prove their devotion first by aiding the attack on the temples of Lathander and Selûne.
- Pit the party on a collision course to face Umbraxakar first—if they're already armed with the knowledge on how to redeem him. With him on their side, the odds will be evened out.
- Reduce the number of **vampire spawn** to four. If the party was accosted by packs of spawn in Area 12, just subtract the 1d4+2 from the nine here.

### TACTICS

The party is facing quite the fight; streamline your side of combat with the following tactics.

**Keresta.** On her turns, Keresta uses the following tactics. She shows no mercy against invaders.

- As a vampire, Keresta is a glass cannon lacking ranged attacks. Until she's fully buffed (see below), she sticks to the walls or ceilings, out of reach of melee fighters. Thereafter, she wades into combat as an opportunist. She comes into melee on her turn but exits without provoking opportunity via her Move legendary action.
- Even when wounded, Keresta, in her pride, believes she has the upperhand—until her forces dwindle. It's only if the party ostensibly have a source of sunlight that she begins to fear for her life. If so, she retreats at half her hit points, turning into mist to retreat to Area 31 via 32. She remains there to regenerate hit points until she's ready to fight again. If her minions are defeated in the meantime, she flees, hiding in the most remote places of Vanrakdoom; she can rebuild her cult later.
- If wounded and stranded between melee foes, she casts *antilife shell* to hedge them out and avoid their melee weapons (reach weapons can bypass the barrier).

- Keresta can still dish out damage while using her turns' actions to cast spells. She makes frequent use of her Claw or Bite legendary actions, but always keeps one charge for a Move legendary action, just in case.
- Keresta reserves her 4th level spell slots to deal with foes at range by dropping *blights* on them.
- On her first turn, Keresta keeps her distance and casts *death ward* on herself. If Portia Dzuth is present and already charmed, she orders the **champion** to betray the party (no action required).
- On her second turn, Keresta casts *spiritual weapon* using a bonus action, sending it into the thick of the party. It takes the form of Shar's dagger. With her action, she uses her Children of the Night ability to summon 3d6 **giant centipedes**.
- On her third turn, Keresta wades into the melee and casts *spirit guardians* if she's not already concentrating on a spell. If she is, she casts *destructive wave* instead.

**Allies.** On their turns, Keresta's minions abide by the following tactics:

- The **abominable yeti** charges forward, wading deep into the party to act as the frontliner. On its first turn, it tries to capture as many foes as possible in its Cold Breath. On its second turn, it uses its Chilling Gaze on a vulnerable target and follows up with its Claw attacks. Remember that it is a size of Huge.
- The **giant centipedes** surge forward against low-AC foes in an attempt to paralyze with their Bite attack. Otherwise, they take the Help action to give advantage to other creatures' attacks.
- The **vampire spawn** swarm the adventurers with wild abandon and block their path to Keresta. They make frequent use of their Spider Climb trait to go around the party and harry the flanks, if they don't just climb over the yeti itself.
- Portia Dzuth, the **champion**, sides with Keresta if she's still charmed. On her first turn, she squares off with the party's most formidable warrior. She blows through all of her abilities as soon as possible, such as her Second Wind ability.

## 32. UMBRAXAKAR'S LAIR

Like Area 26, this encounter is hilariously deadly. Four CR 9 **shadow assassins** and *eleven shadows*, backed up by a shadow dragon? Without sunlight, the party is as good as dead; even with it, few can expect to survive the Strength-draining attacks of the shadows. Consider reducing the number of shadows here if your party lacks these tools.

When the adventurers reach this area, launch into the following speech:

You know in your very bones that this was a place no mortal ought to tread. The darkness here is smothering, tyrannical. It clings to your sides, snakes its way into your throat and lays primal dread in your very stomach. You really are nothing more than an up-jumped lizard scared witless by that which lurks in the dark.

And it slithers. In that inky blackness slithers a leviathan, its scales rasping against the stones. The courage in your heart has bled out on the floor and there is only terror left—you try to fight it, to cling to hope and steel, but this dark world has beaten it out of you at long last.

And it speaks, this darkness. Its voice is midnight hanging over dead woods. It speaks and you listen, the doomed prey lucky enough to hear its own inevitable doom:

"You know as well as I," the leviathan rasps, "that this place will be your grave. I have sensed you since you first stepped foot into my domain. Upon the shoulder of the Shadowfell, I lay in gloom..."

"Join me."

Umbraxakar punctuates those last two words without malice but misery; it is the defeated cry of one who can't ever feel whole, regardless of how many others they manage to surround themselves with—for, in the end, those guests are just as hollow as he.

**Roleplaying Umbraxakar.** No dragon should go without lines, so draw on the following dialogue:

- "You were fools to come here! To leave the love you once had!"
- "Misery is the currency of our realm! May you die rich!"
- "If only you had turned back... If only."
- "I am the shadow on the moon! I am your end!"

## THE DRAGON REDEEMED

If the party successfully redeems Glyster, read:

Moonlight ripples across the dragon's scales as you remind it of the life it once had, the friendship it enjoyed, the memories made and the victories won! You remind him of all that is good and right and worthwhile in the world—a different world than this deleterious plane!

Heaving a sigh of relief, the dragon claws at the stone, as if releasing every toxin left in its body. The darkness slips from his scales, evaporating as shadows that shriek and snarl with disappointment, curling up as smoke. By the gods, it's almost done—almost is Glyster redeemed! With his every shiver, color surges back into the world, banishing the Shadowfell's dismal taint to the pit from whence it came!

The dragon shivers, wretches, vomiting out a blood-streaked curd of solid shadows across the stone floor. You watch with rapt horror as the mass *moves* on its own accord, sliming its way across the chamber.

"I..." the dragon sighs. "I... *feel* once again! By the graces of Selûne... I am forgiven—and at last I can forgive myself! It was by no fault of mine that my dearest Vanrak fell to darkness! It was by his own hand that he sought redemption—and so too do I! I am alive! Alive! Begone Shar, goddess of loss! Begone shadow-mine! Begone!"

With a mighty roar, Glyster lances the shadows with a gout of lightning! That mass shrieks and flails as if alive—but in mere moments, all that's left on the floors of Vanrakdoom is a scorch mark. "Come," says the drake, "let us purge this dungeon of the darkness and all who dwell within it!"

If Umbraxakar is redeemed, eliminate all remaining **shadows** and **shadow assassins** in Vanrakdoom.

## EPILOGUE

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Vanrakdoom is without a doubt the deadliest level in Undermountain, sans Level 23. This very well could be the end of your campaign.

***Send-Off.*** Unlike previous levels, there is no send-off for Vanrakdoom, only silence by the narrator, be it you or Halaster. Let the gloom of the Shadowfell and its oppressive silence be the send-off to Vanrak-doom, which may have witnessed the retreat, doom, or success of the party.

***Attacks on Waterdeep.*** If the party fails to cripple or vanquish the Cult of Shar, Keresta Delvingstone follows through on her plot to assassinate key priests of the temples of Lathander and Selûne in Water-deep. If the adventurers return to the surface with this news, the right authorities can prepare themselves. If the party doesn't, the next time they visit Waterdeep, they learn of these grisly terrorist attacks.



# APPENDIX A: MAGIC ITEMS

The following magic items are on this level:

## +2 ARROWS

You have a +2 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this piece of magic ammunition. Once it hits a target, the ammunition is no longer magical.

**Additional Loot.** This item is added to L14, A9B.

## CLOAK OF THE BAT

*Wondrous Item, Rare (Requires Attunement)*

While wearing this cloak, you have advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks. In an area of dim light or darkness, you can grip the edges of the cloak with both hands and use it to fly at a speed of 40 feet. If you ever fail to grip the cloak's edges while flying in this way, or if you are no longer in dim light or darkness, you lose this flying speed.

While wearing the cloak in an area of dim light or darkness, you can use your action to cast polymorph on yourself, transforming into a bat. While you are in the form of the bat, you retain your Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma scores. The cloak can't be used this way again until the next dawn.

**Location.** This magic item is found in L18, A33.

## DWARVEN THROWER

*Warhammer, Very Rare (Requires Attunement by a Dwarf)*

You gain a +3 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this magic weapon. It has the thrown property with a normal range of 20 feet and a long range of 60 feet. When you hit with a ranged attack using this weapon, it deals an extra 1d8 damage or, if the target is a giant, 2d8 damage. Immediately after the attack, the weapon flies back to your hand.

**Location.** This magic item is found in L15, A27, wielded by Zorak Lightdrinker, the dwarf **vampire**.

## ELEMENTAL GEM OF FIRE

*Wondrous Item, Uncommon*

This gem contains a mote of elemental energy. When you use an action to break the gem, a fire elemental is summoned as if you had cast the conjure elemental spell, and the gem's magic is lost.

**Location.** This magic item is found in L15, A31.

## FIGURINE OF WONDROUS POWER (ONYX DOG)

*Wondrous Item, Rare*

A figurine of wondrous power is a statuette of a beast small enough to fit in a pocket. If you use an action to speak the command word and throw the onyx dog figurine to a point on the ground within 60 feet of you, the figurine becomes a living creature for up to 6 hours. If the space where the creature would appear is occupied by other creatures or objects, or if there isn't enough space for the creature, the figurine doesn't become a creature.

The onyx dog becomes a **mastiff** that has an Intelligence of 8 and can speak Common. It also has dark vision out to a range of 60 feet and can see invisible creatures and objects within that range. The mastiff is friendly to you and your companions. It understands your languages and obeys your spoken commands. If you issue no commands, it defends itself but takes no other actions.

After six hours, the mastiff reverts to its figurine form. It also reverts to a figurine early if it drops to 0 hit points or if you use an action to speak the command word again while touching it. When the mastiff becomes a figurine again, its property can't be used again until 7 days have passed.

**Location.** This magic item is found in L15, A35.

## INSTRUMENT OF THE BARDS, FOCHLUCAN BANDORE

*Wondrous Item, Uncommon (Requires Attunement by a Bard)*

An instrument of the bards is an exquisite example of its kind, superior to an ordinary instrument in every way. Seven types of these instruments exist, each named after a legendary bard college. A creature that attempts to play the instrument without being attuned to it must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or take 2d4 psychic damage.

You can use an action to play the instrument and cast one of its spells. Once the instrument has been used to cast a spell, it can't be used to cast that spell again until the next dawn. The spells use your spellcasting ability and spell save DC.

You can play the instrument while casting a spell that causes any of its targets to be charmed on a failed saving throw, thereby imposing disadvantage on the save. This effect applies only if the spell has a somatic or a material component.

All instruments of the bards can be used to cast the following spells: *fly*, *invisibility*, *levitate*, and *protection from evil and good*. In addition, the Fochlucan bandore can be used to cast *entangle*, *faerie fire*, *shillelagh*, and *speak with animals*.

**Additional Loot.** This item is added to L14, A39C.

## MANUAL OF GAINFUL EXERCISE

*Wondrous Item, very rare*

This book describes fitness exercises, and its words are charged with magic. If you spend 48 hours over a period of 6 days or fewer studying the book's contents and practicing its guidelines, your Strength score increases by 2, as does your maximum for that score. The manual then loses its magic, but regains it in a century.

**Location.** This magic item is found in L16, A22.

## MITHRAL CHAIN SHIRT

Mithral is a light, flexible metal. This chain shirt does not impose disadvantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks, nor does it have a Strength requirement.

**Location.** This magic item is found in L18, A15.

## NECKLACE OF FIREBEADS

*Wondrous Item, Rare*

This necklace has up to 1d6+3 beads hanging from it. You can use an action to detach a bead and throw it up to 60 feet away. When it reaches the end of its trajectory, the bead detonates as a 3rd-level *fireball* spell (save DC 15).

You can hurl multiple beads, or even the whole necklace, as one action. When you do so, increase the level of the *fireball* by 1 for each bead beyond the first.

**Location.** This magic item is found in L15, A31.

## POTION OF ACID RESISTANCE

*Potion, Uncommon*

When you drink this potion, you gain resistance to acid damage for 1 hour.

**Location.** This magic item is found in L17, A13A.

## POTION OF FIRE RESISTANCE

*Potion, Uncommon*

When you drink this potion, you gain resistance to fire damage for 1 hour.

**Location.** This magic item is found in L15, A24.

## POTION OF GREATER HEALING

*Potion, Uncommon*

You regain 4d4+4 hit points when you drink this potion.

**Location.** This magic item is found in L15, A11, in the form of magic mushrooms and in L16, A8.

## POTION OF SUPREME HEALING

*Potion, Very Rare*

You regain 10d4+20 hit points when you drink this potion. The potion's red liquid glimmers when agitated.

**Location.** This magic item is found in L17, A7C.

## QUAAL'S FEATHER TOKEN (TREE)

*Wondrous Item, Rare*

This tiny object looks like a feather. You must be outdoors to use this token. You can use an action to touch it to an unoccupied space on the ground. The token disappears, and in its place a nonmagical oak tree springs into existence. The tree is 60 feet tall and has a 5-foot-diameter trunk, and its branches at the top spread out in a 20-foot radius.

**Location.** This magic item is found in L17, A13A.

## QUIVER OF EHLONNA

*Wondrous Item, Uncommon*

Each of the quiver's three compartments connects to an extradimensional space that allows the quiver to hold numerous items while never weighing more than 2 pounds. The shortest compartment can hold up to sixty arrows, bolts, or similar objects. The midsize compartment holds up to eighteen javelins or similar objects. The longest compartment holds up to six long objects, such as bows, quarterstaves, or spears. You can draw any item the quiver contains as if doing so from a regular quiver or scabbard.

**Additional Loot.** This item is added to L14, A15.

## RING OF JUMPING

*Ring, Uncommon (Requires Attunement)*

While wearing this ring, you can cast the jump spell from it as a bonus action at will, but can target only yourself when you do so.

**Additional Loot.** This item is added to L14, A30.

## SUNBLADE

*Longsword, Rare (Requires Attunement)*

This item appears to be a longsword hilt. While grasping the hilt, you can use a bonus action to cause a blade of pure radiance to spring into existence, or make the blade disappear. While the blade exists, this magic longsword has the finesse property. If you are proficient with shortswords or longswords, you are proficient with the sun blade.

You gain a +2 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this weapon, which deals radiant damage instead of slashing damage. When you hit an undead with it, that target takes an extra 1d8 radiant damage.

The sword's luminous blade emits bright light in a 15-foot radius and dim light for an additional 15 feet. The light is sunlight. While the blade persists, you can use an action to expand or reduce its radius of bright and dim light by 5 feet each, to a maximum of 30 feet each or a minimum of 10 feet each.

**Location.** This magic item is found in L18, A8.

### TOME OF CLEAR THOUGHT

*Wondrous Item, very rare*

This book contains memory and logic exercises, and its words are charged with magic. If you spend 48 hours over a period of 6 days or fewer studying the book's contents and practicing its guidelines, your Intelligence score increases by 2, as does your maximum for that score. The manual then loses its magic, but regains it in a century.

**Location.** This magic item is found in L1&, A22.

### TRIDENT OF FISH COMMAND

*Trident, Uncommon (Requires Attunement)*

This trident is a magic weapon. It has 3 charges. While you carry it, you can use an action and expend 1 charge to cast *dominate beast* (save DC 15) from it on a beast that has an innate swimming speed. The trident regains 1d3 expended charges daily at dawn.

**Additional Loot.** This item is added to L14, A31.

### WAND OF MAGIC DETECTION

This wand has 3 charges. While holding it, you can expend 1 charge as an action to cast the *detect magic* spell from it. The wand regains 1d3 expended charges daily at dawn.

**Location.** This magic item is found in L15, A24.

### WAND OF WEB

*Wondrous Item, Uncommon (Requires Attunement by a Spellcaster)*

This wand has 7 charges. While holding it, you can use an action to expend 1 of its charges to cast the *web* spell (save DC 15) from it.

The wand regains 1d6+1 expended charges daily at dawn. If you expend the wand's last charge, roll a d20. On a 1, the wand crumbles into ashes and is destroyed.

**Additional Loot.** This item is added to L14, A40B.

# APPENDIX B: MONSTERS & NPCS

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## ABOMINABLE YETI

*Huge monstrosity, chaotic evil*

**Armor Class** 15 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 137 (11d12 + 66)

**Speed** 40 ft., climb 40 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 24 (+7) | 10 (+0) | 22 (+6) | 9 (-1) | 13 (+1) | 9 (-1) |

**Skills** Perception +5, Stealth +4

**Damage Immunities** cold

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15

**Languages** Yeti

**Challenge** 9 (5000 XP)

**Fear Of Fire.** If the yeti takes fire damage, it has disadvantage on attack rolls and ability checks until the end of its next turn.

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

**Snow Camouflage.** The yeti has advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks made to hide in snowy terrain.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The yeti can use its Chilling Gaze and makes two claw attacks.

**Claw.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (2d6+7) slashing damage plus 7 (2d6) cold damage.

**Chilling Gaze.** The yeti targets one creature it can see within 30 feet of it. If the target can see the yeti, the target must succeed on a DC 18 Constitution saving throw against this magic or take 21 (6d6) cold damage and then be paralyzed for 1 minute, unless it is immune to cold damage. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. If the target's saving throw is successful, or if the effect ends on it, the target is immune to this yeti's gaze for 1 hour.

**Cold Breath (Recharge 6).** The yeti exhales a 30-foot cone of frigid air. Each creature in that area must make a DC 18 Constitution saving throw, taking 45 (10d8) cold damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

## ADULT BRONZE DRAGON

*Huge dragon, lawful good*

**Armor Class** 19 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 212 (17d12 + 102)

**Speed** 40 ft., fly 80 ft., swim 40 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 25 (+7) | 10 (+0) | 23 (+6) | 16 (+3) | 15 (+2) | 19 (+4) |

**Saving Throws** Dex +5, Con +11, Wis +7, Cha +9

**Skills** Insight +7, Perception +12, Stealth +5

**Damage Immunities** lightning

**Senses** blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 22

**Languages** Common, Draconic

**Challenge** 15 (13000 XP)

**Amphibious.** The dragon can breathe air and water.

**Legendary Resistance (3/Day).** If the dragon fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The dragon can use its Frightful Presence. It then makes three attacks: one with its bite and two with its claws.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 18 (2d10+7) piercing damage.

**Claw.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (2d6+7) slashing damage.

**Tail.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 16 (2d8+7) bludgeoning damage.

**Frightful Presence.** Each creature of the dragon's choice that is within 120 feet of the dragon and aware of it must succeed on a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw or become frightened for 1 minute. A creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. If a creature's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the creature is immune to the dragon's Frightful Presence for the next 24 hours.

**Breath Weapons (Recharge 5-6).** The dragon uses one of the following breath weapons:

**Lightning Breath.** The dragon exhales lightning in a 90-foot line that is 5 feet wide. Each creature in that line must make a DC 19 Dexterity saving throw, taking 66 (12d10) lightning damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

**Repulsion Breath.** The dragon exhales repulsion energy in a 30-foot cone. Each creature in that area must succeed on a DC 19 Strength saving throw. On a failed save, the creature is pushed 60 feet away from the dragon.

**Change Shape.** The dragon magically polymorphs into a humanoid or beast that has a challenge rating no higher than its own, or back into its true form. It reverts to its true form if it dies. Any equipment it is wearing or carrying is absorbed or borne by the new form (the dragon's choice).

In a new form, the dragon retains its alignment, hit points, Hit Dice, ability to speak, proficiencies, Legendary Resistance, lair actions, and Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma scores, as well as this action. Its statistics and capabilities are otherwise replaced by those of the new form, except any class features or legendary actions of that form.

## ADULT BRONZE DRAGON

### LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The dragon can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The dragon regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

**Detect.** The dragon makes a Wisdom (Perception) check.

**Tail Attack.** The dragon makes a tail attack.

**Wing Attack (Costs 2 Actions).** The dragon beats its wings. Each creature within 10 feet of it must succeed on a DC 20 Dexterity saving throw or take 14 (2d6+7) bludgeoning damage and be knocked prone. The dragon can then fly up to half its flying speed.

## ADULT BRONZE SHADOW

### DRAGON

Huge dragon, lawful neutral

**Armor Class** 19 (natural armor)  
**Hit Points** 212 (17d12 + 102)  
**Speed** 40 ft., fly 80 ft., swim 40 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 25 (+7) | 10 (+0) | 23 (+6) | 16 (+3) | 15 (+2) | 19 (+4) |

**Saving Throws** Dex +5, Con +11, Wis +7, Cha +9  
**Skills** Insight +7, Perception +12, Stealth +10  
**Damage Immunities** lightning  
**Damage Resistances** necrotic  
**Senses** blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 22  
**Languages** Common, Draconic  
**Challenge** 15 (13000 XP)

**Amphibious.** The dragon can breathe air and water.

**Legendary Resistance (3/Day).** If the dragon fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

**Living Shadow.** While in dim light or darkness, the dragon has resistance to damage that isn't force, psychic, or radiant.

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

#### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The dragon can use its Frightful Presence. It then makes three attacks: one with its bite and two with its claws.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 18 (2d10+7) piercing damage.

**Claw.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (2d6+7) slashing damage.

**Tail.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 16 (2d8+7) bludgeoning damage.

**Breath Weapon (Recharges 5-6).** The dragon uses one of the following breath weapons:

**Repulsion Breath.** The dragon exhales repulsion energy in a 30-foot cone. Each creature in that area must succeed on a DC 19 Strength saving throw. On a failed save, the creature is pushed 60 feet away from the dragon.

**Shadow Breath.** The dragon exhales lightning in a 90-foot line that is 5 feet wide. Each creature in that line must make a DC 19 Dexterity saving throw, taking 66 (12d10) necrotic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. A humanoid reduced to 0 hit points by this damage dies, and an undead shadow rises from its corpse and acts immediately after the dragon in the initiative count. The shadow is under the dragon's control.

**Frightful Presence.** Each creature of the dragon's choice that is within 120 feet of the dragon and aware of it must succeed on a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw or become frightened for 1 minute. A creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. If a creature's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the creature is immune to the dragon's Frightful Presence for the next 24 hours.

**Change Shape.** The dragon magically polymorphs into a humanoid or beast that has a challenge rating no higher than its own, or back into its true form. It reverts to its true form if it dies. Any equipment it is wearing or carrying is absorbed or borne by the new form (the dragon's choice).

In a new form, the dragon retains its alignment, hit points, Hit Dice, ability to speak, proficiencies, Legendary Resistance, lair actions, and Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma scores, as well as this action. Its statistics and capabilities are otherwise replaced by those of the new form, except any class features or legendary actions of that form.

## ADULT RED DRAGON

Huge dragon, chaotic evil

**Armor Class** 19 (natural armor)  
**Hit Points** 256 (19d12 + 133)  
**Speed** 40 ft., climb 40 ft., fly 80 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 27 (+8) | 10 (+0) | 25 (+7) | 16 (+3) | 13 (+1) | 21 (+5) |

**Saving Throws** Dex +6, Con +13, Wis +7, Cha +11  
**Skills** Perception +13, Stealth +6  
**Damage Immunities** fire  
**Senses** blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 11  
**Languages** Common, Draconic  
**Challenge** 17 (18000 XP)

**Legendary Resistance (3/Day).** If the dragon fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

#### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The dragon can use its Frightful Presence. It then makes three attacks: one with its bite and two with its claws.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +14 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 19 (2d10 + 8) piercing damage plus 7 (2d6) fire damage.

**Claw.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +14 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (2d6 + 8) slashing damage.

**Tail.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +14 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 17 (2d8 + 8) bludgeoning damage.

**Frightful Presence.** Each creature of the dragon's choice that is within 120 feet of the dragon and aware of it must succeed on a DC 19 Wisdom saving throw or become frightened for 1 minute. A creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. If a creature's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the creature is immune to the dragon's Frightful Presence for the next 24 hours.

**Fire Breath (Recharge 5-6).** The dragon exhales fire in a 60-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 21 Dexterity saving throw, taking 63 (18d6) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

## ADULT RED DRAGON

### LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The dragon can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The dragon regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

**Detect.** The dragon makes a Wisdom (Perception) check.

**Tail Attack.** The dragon makes a tail attack.

**Wing Attack (Costs 2 Actions).** The dragon beats its wings.

Each creature within 10 feet of the dragon must succeed on a DC 22 Dexterity saving throw or take 15 (2d6 + 8) bludgeoning damage and be knocked prone. The dragon can then fly up to half its flying speed.

## ADULT WHITE DRAGON

Huge dragon, chaotic evil

**Armor Class** 18 (natural armor)  
**Hit Points** 200 (16d12 + 96)  
**Speed** 40 ft., burrow 30 ft., fly 80 ft., swim 40 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|---------|
| 22 (+6) | 10 (+0) | 22 (+6) | 8 (-1) | 12 (+1) | 12 (+1) |

**Saving Throws** Dex +5, Con +11, Wis +6, Cha +6  
**Skills** Perception +11, Stealth +5  
**Damage Immunities** cold  
**Senses** blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 21  
**Languages** Common, Draconic  
**Challenge** 13 (10000 XP)

**Ice Walk.** The dragon can move across and climb icy surfaces without needing to make an ability check. Additionally, difficult terrain composed of ice or snow doesn't cost it extra movement.

**Legendary Resistance (3/Day).** If the dragon fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The dragon can use its Frightful Presence. It then makes three attacks: one with its bite and two with its claws.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 17 (2d10 + 6) piercing damage plus 4 (1d8) cold damage.

**Claw.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d6 + 6) slashing damage.

**Tail.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (2d8 + 6) bludgeoning damage.

**Frightful Presence.** Each creature of the dragon's choice that is within 120 feet of the dragon and aware of it must succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw or become frightened for 1 minute. A creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. If a creature's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the creature is immune to the dragon's Frightful Presence for the next 24 hours.

**Cold Breath (Recharge 5-6).** The dragon exhales an icy blast in a 60-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 19 Constitution saving throw, taking 54 (12d8) cold damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

## ANIMATED ARMOR

Medium construct, unaligned

**Armor Class** 18 (natural armor)  
**Hit Points** 33 (6d8 + 6)  
**Speed** 25 ft.

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

**Damage Immunities** poison, psychic  
**Condition Immunities** blinded, charmed, deafened, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned  
**Senses** blindsight 60 ft. passive Perception 6  
**Languages** -  
**Challenge** 1 (200 XP)

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

**False Appearance.** While the armor remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from a normal suit of armor.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The armor makes two melee attacks.

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

## BANDIT

Medium humanoid (any race), any non-lawful alignment

**Armor Class** 12 (leather armor)  
**Hit Points** 11 (2d8 + 2)  
**Speed** 30 ft.

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

**Senses** passive Perception 10  
**Languages** Common  
**Challenge** 1/8 (25 XP)

### ACTIONS

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

**Light Crossbow.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, range 80/320 ft., *Hit:* 5 (1d8+1) damage.

## ADULT WHITE DRAGON

### LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The dragon can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The dragon regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

**Detect.** The dragon makes a Wisdom (Perception) check.

**Tail Attack.** The dragon makes a tail attack.

**Wing Attack (Costs 2 Actions).** The dragon beats its wings. Each creature within 10 feet of the dragon must succeed on a DC 19 Dexterity saving throw or take 13 (2d6 + 6) bludgeoning damage and be knocked prone. The dragon can then fly up to half its flying speed.

## BORE WORM

Gargantuan construct, unaligned

**Armor Class** 18 (natural armor)  
**Hit Points** 247 (15d20 + 90)  
**Speed** 50 ft., burrow 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX    | CON     | INT    | WIS    | CHA    |
|---------|--------|---------|--------|--------|--------|
| 28 (+9) | 7 (-2) | 22 (+6) | 1 (-5) | 8 (-1) | 4 (-3) |

**Saving Throws** Con +11, Wis +4

**Damage Immunities** poison, psychic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from nonmagical attacks not made with adamantite weapons

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

**Senses** blindsight 30 ft., tremorsense 60 ft. passive Perception 9

**Languages** -

**Challenge** 16 (15000 XP)

**Tunneler.** The worm can burrow through solid rock at half its burrow speed and leaves a 10-foot-diameter tunnel in its wake.

**Regeneration.** The worm regains 10 hit points at the start of each of its turns if it has at least 1 hit point.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The worm makes two attacks: one with its grinding jaws and one with its stinger.

**Grinding Jaws.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 22 (3d8 + 9) slashing damage.

**Tail Stinger.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +14 to hit, reach 10 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 19 (3d6 + 9) piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 19 Constitution saving throw, taking 42 (12d6) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

## CARRION CRAWLER

Large monstrosity, unaligned

**Armor Class** 13 (natural armor)  
**Hit Points** 51 (6d10 + 18)  
**Speed** 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 14 (+2) | 13 (+1) | 16 (+3) | 1 (-5) | 12 (+1) | 5 (-3) |

**Skills** Perception +3

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

**Languages** -

**Challenge** 2 (450 XP)

**Keen Smell.** The carrion crawler has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

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

### ACTIONS

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (2d4+2) piercing damage.

**Multiattack.** The carrion crawler makes two attacks: one with its tentacles and one with its bite.

**Tentacles.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 10 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 4 (1d4+2) poison damage and the target must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 1 minute. Until this poison ends, the target is paralyzed. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the poison on itself on a success.

## CHAMPION

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

**Armor Class** 18 (plate armor)  
**Hit Points** 143 (22d8 + 44)  
**Speed** 30 ft.

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

**Saving Throws** Str +9, Dex +6

**Skills** Athletics +9, Intimidation +5, Perception +6

**Senses** passive Perception 16

**Languages** Common

**Challenge** 9 (5000 XP)

**Indomitable (2/Day).** The champion rerolls a failed saving throw.

**Second Wind (Recharges After A Short Or Long Rest).** As a bonus action, the champion can regain 20 hit points.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The champion makes three attacks with its greatsword or its shortbow.

**Greatsword.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d6+5) slashing damage plus 7 (2d6) slashing damage if the champion has more than half of its total hit points remaining.

**Shortbow.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (2d6+2) piercing damage plus 7 (2d6) piercing damage if the champion has more than half of its total hit points remaining.

## CHIMERA

Large monstrosity, chaotic evil

**Armor Class** 14 (natural armor)  
**Hit Points** 114 (12d10 + 48)  
**Speed** 30 ft., fly 60 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|---------|
| 19 (+4) | 11 (+0) | 19 (+4) | 3 (-4) | 14 (+2) | 10 (+0) |

**Skills** Perception +8

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 18

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

**Challenge** 6 (2300 XP)

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The chimera makes three attacks: one with its bite, one with its horns, and one with its claws. When its fire breath is available, it can use the breath in place of its bite or horns.

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

**Horns.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (1d12+4) bludgeoning damage.

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

**Fire Breath (Recharge 5-6).** The dragon head exhales fire in a 15-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw, taking 31 (7d8) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.



## CLOAKER

Large aberration, chaotic neutral

**Armor Class** 14 (natural armor)  
**Hit Points** 78 (12d10 + 12)  
**Speed** 10 ft., fly 40 ft.

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

**Skills** Stealth +5  
**Senses** darkvision 60 ft. passive Perception 11  
**Languages** Deep Speech, Undercommon  
**Challenge** 8 (3900 XP)

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

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

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

### ACTIONS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## CULT FANATIC

Medium humanoid (any race), any non-good alignment

**Armor Class** 13 (leather armor)  
**Hit Points** 33 (6d8 + 6)  
**Speed** 30 ft.

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

**Skills** Deception +4, Persuasion +4, Religion +2  
**Senses** passive Perception 11  
**Languages** any one language (usually Common)  
**Challenge** 2 (450 XP)

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

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

Cantrips (at will): *light, sacred flame, thaumaturgy*  
1st level (4 slots): *command, inflict wounds, shield of faith*  
2nd level (3 slots): *hold person, spiritual weapon*

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The fanatic makes two melee attacks.

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

## CULTIST

Medium humanoid (any race), any non-good alignment

**Armor Class** 12 (leather armor)  
**Hit Points** 9 (2d8)  
**Speed** 30 ft.

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

**Skills** Deception +2, Religion +2  
**Senses** passive Perception 10  
**Languages** any one language (usually Common)  
**Challenge** 1/8 (25 XP)

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

### ACTIONS

**Scimitar.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) slashing damage.

## DEATH DOG

Medium monstrosity, neutral evil

**Armor Class** 12  
**Hit Points** 39 (6d8 + 12)  
**Speed** 40 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 15 (+2) | 14 (+2) | 14 (+2) | 3 (-4) | 13 (+1) | 6 (-2) |

**Skills** Perception +5, Stealth +4  
**Senses** darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 15  
**Languages** -  
**Challenge** 1 (200 XP)

**Two-Headed.** The dog has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks and on saving throws against being blinded, charmed, deafened, frightened, stunned, or knocked unconscious.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The dog makes two bite attacks.

**Death Dog.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw against disease or become poisoned until the disease is cured. Every 24 hours that elapse, the creature must repeat the saving throw, reducing its hit point maximum by 5 (1d10) on a failure. This reduction lasts until the disease is cured. The creature dies if the disease reduces its hit point maximum to 0.

## DEATH TYRANT

Large undead, lawful evil

**Armor Class** 19 (natural armor)  
**Hit Points** 187 (25d10 + 50)  
**Speed** 0 ft., fly 20 ft. (hover)

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 10 (+0) | 14 (+2) | 14 (+2) | 19 (+4) | 15 (+2) | 19 (+4) |

**Saving Throws** Str +5, Con +7, Int +9, Wis +7, Cha +9  
**Skills** Perception +12  
**Damage Immunities** poison  
**Condition Immunities** charmed, exhaustion, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone  
**Senses** darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 22  
**Languages** Deep Speech, Undercommon  
**Challenge** 14 (11500 XP)

**Negative Energy Cone.** The death tyrant's central eye emits an invisible, magical 150-foot cone of negative energy. At the start of each of its turns, the tyrant decides which way the cone faces and whether the cone is active.

Any creature in that area can't regain hit points. Any humanoid that dies there becomes a zombie under the tyrant's command. The dead humanoid retains its place in the initiative order and animates at the start of its next turn, provided that its body hasn't been completely destroyed.

### ACTIONS

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (4d6) piercing damage.

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

1. **Charm Ray.** The targeted creature must succeed on a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw or be charmed by the death tyrant for 1 hour, or until the death tyrant harms the creature.

2. **Paralyzing Ray.** The targeted creature must succeed on a DC 17 Constitution saving throw or be paralyzed for 1 minute. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

3. **Fear Ray.** The targeted creature must succeed on a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened for 1 minute. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

4. **Slowing Ray.** The targeted creature must succeed on a DC 17 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save, the target's speed is halved for 1 minute. In addition, the creature can't take reactions, and it can take either an action or a bonus action on its turn, not both. The creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

5. **Enervation Ray.** The targeted creature must make a DC 17 Constitution saving throw, taking 36 (8d8) necrotic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

6. **Telekinetic Ray.** If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 17 Strength saving throw or the death tyrant moves it up to 30 feet in any direction. It is restrained by the ray's telekinetic grip until the start of the death tyrant's next turn or until the death tyrant is incapacitated.

If the target is an object weighing 300 pounds or less that isn't being worn or carried, it is moved up to 30 feet in any direction. The death tyrant can also exert fine control on objects with this ray, such as manipulating a simple tool or opening a door or a container.

7. **Sleep Ray.** The targeted creature must succeed on a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw or fall asleep and remain unconscious for 1 minute. The target awakens if it takes damage or another creature takes an action to wake it. This ray has no effect on constructs and undead.

8. **Petrification Ray.** The targeted creature must make a DC 17 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save, the creature begins to turn to stone and is restrained. It must repeat the saving throw at the end of its next turn. On a success, the effect ends. On a failure, the creature is petrified until freed by the *greater restoration* spell or other magic.

9. **Disintegration Ray.** If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 17 Dexterity saving throw or take 45 (10d8) force damage. If this damage reduces the creature to 0 hit points, its body becomes a pile of fine gray dust.

If the target is a Large or smaller nonmagical object or creation of magical force, it is disintegrated without a saving throw. If the target is a Huge or larger object or creation of magical force, this ray disintegrates a 10-foot cube of it.

10. **Death Ray.** The targeted creature must succeed on a DC 17 Dexterity saving throw or take 55 (10d10) necrotic damage. The target dies if the ray reduces it to 0 hit points.

## DEATH TYRANT

### LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The death tyrant can take 3 legendary actions. Only one legendary action can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The death tyrant regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

**Eye Ray.** The death tyrant uses one random eye ray.

### LAIR ACTIONS

When fighting inside its lair, a death tyrant can invoke the ambient magic to take lair actions. On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), the death tyrant can take one lair action to cause one of the following effects:

- An area that is a 50-foot cube within 120 feet of the tyrant is filled with spectral eyes and tentacles. To creatures other than the death tyrant, that area is lightly obscured and difficult terrain until initiative count 20 on the next round.
- Walls sprout spectral appendages until initiative count 20 on the round after next. Any creature, including one on the Ethereal Plane, that is hostile to the tyrant and starts its turn within 10 feet of a wall must succeed on a DC 17 Dexterity saving throw or be grappled. Escaping requires a successful DC 17 Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) check.
- A spectral eye opens in the air at a point within 50 feet of the tyrant. One random eye ray of the tyrant shoots from that eye, which is considered to be an ethereal source, at a target of the tyrant's choice. The eye then closes and disappears.

The death tyrant can't repeat an effect until all three have been used, and it can't use the same effect on consecutive rounds.

## REGIONAL EFFECTS

A region containing a death tyrant's lair is warped by the creature's unnatural presence, which creates one or more of the following effects:

- Creatures within 1 mile of the tyrant's lair sometimes feel as if they're being watched even when they aren't.
- When a creature hostile to the tyrant and aware of its existence finishes a long rest within 1 mile of the tyrant's lair, roll a d20 for that creature. On a roll of 10 or lower, the creature is subjected to one random eye ray of the tyrant.

If the death tyrant dies, these effects fade over the course of 1d10 days.

### DEEP GNOME

*Small humanoid (gnome), neutral good*

**Armor Class** 16 (chain shirt)  
**Hit Points** 16 (3d6 + 6)  
**Speed** 20 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|--------|
| 15 (+2) | 14 (+2) | 14 (+2) | 12 (+1) | 10 (+0) | 9 (-1) |

**Skills** Investigation +3, Perception +2, Stealth +4  
**Senses** darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 12  
**Languages** Gnomish, Terran, Undercommon  
**Challenge** 1/2 (100 XP)

**Gnome Cunning.** The gnome has advantage on Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma saving throws against magic.

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

At will: *nondetection* (self only)

1/day each: *blindness/deafness*, *blur*, *disguise self*

**Stone Camouflage.** The gnome has advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks made to hide in rocky terrain.

#### ACTIONS

**War Pick.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8+2) piercing damage.

**Poisoned Dart.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 1 minute. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

### DOPPELGANGER

*Medium monstrosity (shapechanger), neutral*

**Armor Class** 14  
**Hit Points** 52 (8d8 + 16)  
**Speed** 30 ft.

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

**Skills** Deception +6, Insight +3  
**Condition Immunities** charmed  
**Senses** darkvision 60 ft. passive Perception 11  
**Languages** Common  
**Challenge** 3 (700 XP)

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

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

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

#### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The doppelganger makes two melee attacks.

**Slam.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6+4) damage.

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

## DROW MAGE

Medium humanoid (elf), neutral evil

**Armor Class** 12 (15 with *mage armor*)  
**Hit Points** 45 (10d8)  
**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR    | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|--------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 9 (-1) | 14 (+2) | 10 (+0) | 17 (+3) | 13 (+1) | 12 (+1) |

**Saving Throws** Wis -3  
**Skills** Arcana +6, Perception +4, Stealth +5  
**Senses** darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 14  
**Languages** Elvish, Common, Undercommon  
**Challenge** 7 (2900 XP)

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

**Innate Spellcasting.** The drow's spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 12). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *dancing lights*  
1/day each: *darkness*, *faerie fire*, *levitate* (self only)

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

Cantrips (at will): *mage hand*, *minor illusion*, *poison spray*, *ray of frost*  
1st level (4 slots): *mage armor*, *magic missile*, *shield*, *witch bolt*  
2nd level (3 slots): *alter self*, *misty step*, *web*  
3rd level (3 slots): *fly*, *lightning bolt*  
4th level (3 slots): *cloudkill*, *Evard's black tentacles*, *greater invisibility*  
5th level (2 slots): *cloudkill*

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

### ACTIONS

**Staff.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 2 (1d6-1) bludgeoning damage or 3 (1d8 - 1) bludgeoning damage if used with two hands, plus 3 (1d6) poison damage.

**Summon Demon (1/Day).** The drow magically summons a quasit, or attempts to summon a shadow demon with a 50 percent chance of success. The summoned demon appears in an unoccupied space within 60 feet of its summoner, acts as an ally of its summoner, and can't summon other demons. It remains for 10 minutes, until it or its summoner dies, or until its summoner dismisses it as an action.

## DUERGAR

Medium humanoid (dwarf), lawful evil

**Armor Class** 16 (scale mail, shield)  
**Hit Points** 26 (4d8 + 8)  
**Speed** 25 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|--------|
| 14 (+2) | 11 (+0) | 14 (+2) | 11 (+0) | 10 (+0) | 9 (-1) |

**Damage Resistances** poison  
**Senses** darkvision 120 ft. passive Perception 10  
**Languages** Dwarvish, Undercommon  
**Challenge** 1 (200 XP)

**Duergar Resilience.** The duergar has advantage on saving throws against poison, spells, and illusions, as well as to resist being charmed or paralyzed.

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

### ACTIONS

**Enlarge (Recharges After A Short Or Long Rest).** For 1 minute, the duergar magically increases in size, along with anything it is wearing or carrying. While enlarged, the duergar is Large, doubles its damage dice on Strength-based weapon attacks (included in the attacks), and makes Strength checks and Strength saving throws with advantage. If the duergar lacks the room to become Large, it attains the maximum size possible in the space available.

**War Pick.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8+2) piercing damage or 11 (2d8 + 2) piercing damage while enlarged.

**Javelin.** *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., or range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6+2) piercing damage or 9 (2d6 + 2) piercing damage while enlarged.

**Invisibility (Recharges After A Short Or Long Rest).** The duergar magically turns invisible until it attacks, casts a spell, or uses its Enlarge, or until its concentration is broken, up to 1 hour (as if concentrating on a spell). Any equipment the duergar wears or carries is invisible with it.

## ETTIN

Large monstrosity, chaotic evil

**Armor Class** 12 (natural armor)  
**Hit Points** 85 (10d10 + 30)  
**Speed** 40 ft.

| STR     | DEX    | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|--------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 21 (+5) | 8 (-1) | 17 (+3) | 6 (-2) | 10 (+0) | 8 (-1) |

**Skills** Perception +4  
**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14  
**Languages** Giant, Orc  
**Challenge** 4 (1100 XP)

**Two-Heads.** The ettin has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks and on saving throws against being blinded, charmed, deafened, frightened, stunned, and knocked unconscious.

**Wakeful.** When one of the ettin's heads is asleep, its other head is awake.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The ettin makes two attacks: one with its battleaxe and one with its morningstar.

**Battleaxe.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (2d8+5) slashing damage.

**Morningstar.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (2d8+5) piercing damage.

## FIRE ELEMENTAL

Large elemental, neutral

Armor Class 13  
Hit Points 102 (12d10 + 36)  
Speed 50 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 10 (+0) | 17 (+3) | 16 (+3) | 6 (-2) | 10 (+0) | 7 (-2) |

**Damage Immunities** fire, poison  
**Damage Resistances** bludgeoning, piercing, slashing from nonmagical attacks  
**Condition Immunities** exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained, unconscious  
**Senses** darkvision 60 ft. passive Perception 10  
**Languages** Ignan  
**Challenge** 5 (1800 XP)

**Fire Form.** The elemental can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing. A creature that touches the elemental or hits it with a melee attack while within 5 feet of it takes 5 (1d10) fire damage. In addition, the elemental can enter a hostile creature's space and stop there. The first time it enters a creature's space on a turn, that creature takes 5 (1d10) fire damage and catches fire; until someone takes an action to douse the fire, the creature takes 5 (1d10) fire damage at the start of each of its turns.

**Illumination.** The elemental sheds bright light in a 30-foot radius and dim light in an additional 30 ft..

**Water Susceptibility.** For every 5 ft. the elemental moves in water, or for every gallon of water splashed on it, it takes 1 cold damage.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The elemental makes two touch attacks.

**Touch.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6+3) fire damage. If the target is a creature or a flammable object, it ignites. Until a creature takes an action to douse the fire, the target takes 5 (1d10) fire damage at the start of each of its turns.

## FIRE GIANT

Huge giant, lawful neutral

Armor Class 18 (plate armor)  
Hit Points 126 (11d12 + 55)  
Speed 30 ft.

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

**Saving Throws** Dex +3, Con +10, Cha +5  
**Skills** Athletics +11, Perception +6  
**Damage Immunities** fire  
**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 16  
**Languages** Giant  
**Challenge** 9 (5000 XP)

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The giant makes two greatsword attacks.

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

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

## FLUMPH

Small aberration, lawful good

Armor Class 12  
Hit Points 7 (2d6)  
Speed 5 ft., fly 30 ft.

| STR    | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|--------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 6 (-2) | 15 (+2) | 10 (+0) | 14 (+2) | 14 (+2) | 11 (+0) |

**Skills** Arcana +4, History +4, Religion +4  
**Damage Vulnerabilities** psychic  
**Senses** darkvision 60 ft. passive Perception 12  
**Languages** understands Undercommon but can't speak, telepathy 60 ft.  
**Challenge** 1/8 (25 XP)

**Advanced Telepathy.** The flumph can perceive the content of any telepathic communication used within 60 feet of it, and it can't be surprised by creatures with any form of telepathy.

**Prone Deficiency.** If the flumph is knocked prone, roll a die. On an odd result, the flumph lands upside-down and is incapacitated. At the end of each of its turns, the flumph can make a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw, righting itself and ending the incapacitated condition if it succeeds.

**Telepathic Shroud.** The flumph is immune to any effect that would sense its emotions or read its thoughts, as well as all divination spells.

### ACTIONS

**Tendrils.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage plus 2 (1d4) acid damage. At the end of each of its turns, the target must make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw, taking 2 (1d4) acid damage on a failure or ending the recurring acid damage on a success. A lesser restoration spell cast on the target also ends the recurring acid damage.

**Stench Spray (1/Day).** Each creature in a 15-foot cone originating from the flumph must succeed on a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw or be coated in a foul-smelling liquid. A coated creature exudes a horrible stench for 1d4 hours. The coated creature is poisoned as long as the stench lasts, and other creatures are poisoned while within 5 feet of the coated creature. A creature can remove the stench on itself by using a short rest to bathe in water, alcohol, or vinegar.

## GAS SPORE

Large plant, unaligned

Armor Class 11

Hit Points 1 (1d10 - 4)

Speed 0 ft., fly 10 ft. (hover)

| STR    | DEX    | CON    | INT    | WIS    | CHA    |
|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| 5 (-3) | 1 (-5) | 3 (-4) | 1 (-5) | 1 (-5) | 1 (-5) |

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** blinded, deafened, frightened, paralyzed, poisoned, prone

**Senses** blindsight 30 ft. (blind beyond this radius) passive Perception 5

**Languages** -

**Challenge** 1/2 (100 XP)

**Death Burst.** The gas spore explodes when it drops to 0 hit points. Each creature within 20 feet of it must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or take 10 (3d6) poison damage and become infected with a disease on a failed save. Creatures immune to the poisoned condition are immune to this disease.

Spores invade an infected creature's system, killing the creature in a number of hours equal to 1d12 + the creature's Constitution score, unless the disease is removed. In half that time, the creature becomes poisoned for the rest of the duration. After the creature dies, it sprouts 2d4 Tiny gas spores that grow to full size in 7 days.

**Eerie Resemblance.** The gas spore resembles a beholder. A creature that can see the gas spore can discern its true nature with a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Nature) check.

### ACTIONS

**Touch.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +0 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature.

*Hit:* 1 poison damage, and the creature must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or become infected with the disease described in the Death Burst trait.

## GELATINOUS CUBE

Large ooze, unaligned

Armor Class 6

Hit Points 84 (8d10 + 40)

Speed 15 ft.

| STR     | DEX    | CON     | INT    | WIS    | CHA    |
|---------|--------|---------|--------|--------|--------|
| 14 (+2) | 3 (-4) | 20 (+5) | 1 (-5) | 3 (-4) | 1 (-5) |

**Saving Throws** Wis -9

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

**Senses** blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this radius) passive Perception 6

**Languages** -

**Challenge** 2 (450 XP)

**Ooze Cube.** The cube takes up its entire space. Other creatures can enter the space, but a creature that does so is subjected to the cube's Engulf and has disadvantage on the saving throw.

Creatures inside the cube can be seen but have total cover.

A creature within 5 feet of the cube can take an action to pull a creature or object out of the cube. Doing so requires a successful DC 12 Strength check, and the creature making the attempt takes 10 (3d6) acid damage.

The cube can hold only one Large creature or up to four Medium or smaller creatures inside it at a time.

**Transparent.** Even when the cube is in plain sight, it takes a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check to spot a cube that has neither moved nor attacked. A creature that tries to enter the cube's space while unaware of the cube is surprised by the cube.

### ACTIONS

**Pseudopod.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 12 (3d6+2) acid damage.

**Engulf.** The cube moves up to its speed. While doing so, it can enter Large or smaller creatures' spaces. Whenever the cube enters a creature's space, the creature must make a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw.

On a successful save, the creature can choose to be pushed 5 feet back or to the side of the cube. A creature that chooses not to be pushed suffers the consequences of a failed saving throw.

On a failed save, the cube enters the creature's space, and the creature takes 10 (3d6) acid damage and is engulfed. The engulfed creature can't breathe, is restrained, and takes 21 (6d6) acid damage at the start of each of the cube's turns. When the cube moves, the engulfed creature moves with it.

An engulfed creature can try to escape by taking an action to make a DC 12 Strength check. On a success, the creature escapes and enters a space of its choice within 5 feet of the cube.

## 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 Immunities** cold, necrotic, poison

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

**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 (1100 XP)

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

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

### ACTIONS

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

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

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

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

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

## GIANT CENTIPEDE

Small beast, unaligned

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)

Hit Points 4 (1d6 + 1)

Speed 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

| STR    | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS    | CHA    |
|--------|---------|---------|--------|--------|--------|
| 5 (-3) | 14 (+2) | 12 (+1) | 1 (-5) | 7 (-2) | 3 (-4) |

**Senses** blindsight 30 ft. passive Perception 8

**Languages** -

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

### ACTIONS

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 4 (1d4+2) piercing damage and the target must succeed on a DC 11 Constitution saving throw or take 10 (3d6) poison damage. If the poison damage reduces the target to 0 hit points, the target is stable but poisoned for 1 hour, even after regaining hit points, and is paralyzed while poisoned in this way.

## GITHYANKI GISH

Medium humanoid (gith), lawful evil

Armor Class 17 (half plate armor)

Hit Points 123 (19d8 + 38)

Speed 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 17 (+3) | 15 (+2) | 14 (+2) | 16 (+3) | 15 (+2) | 16 (+3) |

**Saving Throws** Con +6, Int +7, Wis +6

**Skills** Insight +6, Perception +6, Stealth +6

**Senses** passive Perception 16

**Languages** Gith

**Challenge** 10 (5900 XP)

**Innate Spellcasting (Psionics).** The githyanki's innate spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no components:

*At will:* *mage hand* (the hand is invisible)

3/day each: *jump*, *misty step*, *nondetection* (self only)

1/day each: *plane shift*, *telekinesis*

**Spellcasting.** The githyanki is an 8th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). The githyanki has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *blade ward*, *light*, *message*, *true strike*

1st level (4 slots): *expeditious retreat*, *magic missile*, *sleep*, *thunderwave*

2nd level (3 slots): *blur*, *invisibility*, *levitate*

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

4th level (2 slots): *dimension door*

**War Magic.** When the githyanki uses its action to cast a spell, it can make one weapon attack as a bonus action.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The githyanki makes two longsword attacks.

**Longsword.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) slashing damage plus 18 (4d8) psychic damage, or 8 (1d10 + 3) slashing damage plus 18 (4d8) psychic damage if used with two hands.

## GITHYANKI KNIGHT

Medium humanoid (gith), lawful evil

**Armor Class** 18 (plate armor)  
**Hit Points** 91 (14d8 + 28)  
**Speed** 30 ft.

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

**Saving Throws** Con +5, Int +5, Wis +5  
**Senses** passive Perception 12  
**Languages** Gith  
**Challenge** 8 (3900 XP)

**Innate Spellcasting (Psionics).** The githyanki's innate spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no components:

At will: *mage hand* (the hand is invisible)  
3/day each: *jump*, *misty step*, *nondetection* (self only), *tongues*  
1/day each: *plane shift*, *telekinesis*

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The githyanki makes two silver greatsword attacks.

**Silvered Greatsword.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d6 + 6) slashing damage plus 10 (3d6) psychic damage. This is a magic weapon attack. On a critical hit against a target in an astral body (as with the *astral projection* spell), the githyanki can cut the silvery cord that tethers the target to its material body, instead of dealing damage.

## GITHYANKI WARRIOR

Medium humanoid (gith), lawful evil

**Armor Class** 17 (half plate armor)  
**Hit Points** 49 (9d8 + 9)  
**Speed** 30 ft.

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

**Saving Throws** Con +3, Int +3, Wis +3  
**Senses** passive Perception 11  
**Languages** Gith  
**Challenge** 3 (700 XP)

**Innate Spellcasting (Psionics).** The githyanki's innate spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no components:

At will: *mage hand* (the hand is invisible)  
3/day each: *jump*, *misty step*, *nondetection* (self only)

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The githyanki makes two greatsword attacks.

**Greatsword.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (2d6 + 2) slashing damage plus 7 (2d6) psychic damage.

## GITZERAI ZERTH

Medium humanoid (gith), lawful neutral

**Armor Class** 17  
**Hit Points** 84 (13d8 + 26)  
**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 13 (+1) | 18 (+4) | 15 (+2) | 16 (+3) | 17 (+3) | 12 (+1) |

**Saving Throws** Str +4, Dex +7, Int +6, Wis +6  
**Skills** Arcana +6, Insight +6, Perception +6  
**Senses** passive Perception 16  
**Languages** Gith  
**Challenge** 6 (2300 XP)

**Innate Spellcasting (Psionics).** The githzerai's innate spellcasting ability is Wisdom. It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no components:

At will: *mage hand* (the hand is invisible)  
3/day each: *feather fall*, *jump*, *see invisibility*, *shield*

**Psychic Defense.** While the githzerai is wearing no armor and wielding no shield, its AC includes its Wisdom modifier.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The githzerai makes two unarmed strikes.

**Unarmed Strike.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage plus 13 (3d8) psychic damage. This is a magic weapon attack.



## GLOOM WEAVER

Medium humanoid (elf), neutral

**Armor Class** 14 (17 with *mage armor*)  
**Hit Points** 104 (16d8 + 32)  
**Speed** 30 ft.

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

**Saving Throws** Dex +8, Con +6  
**Damage Immunities** necrotic  
**Condition Immunities** charmed, exhaustion  
**Senses** darkvision 60 ft. passive Perception 11  
**Languages** Common, Elvish  
**Challenge** 9 (5000 XP)

**Burden Of Time.** Beasts and humanoids, other than shadar-kai, have disadvantage on saving throws while within 10 feet of the gloom weaver.

**Fey Ancestry.** The gloom weaver has advantage on saving throws against being charmed, and magic can't put it to sleep.

**Innate Spellcasting.** The gloom weaver's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 16, +8 to hit with spell attacks). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *arcane eye*, *mage armor*, *speak with dead*  
1/day each: *arcane gate*, *bane*, *compulsion*, *confusion*, *true seeing*

**Spellcasting.** The gloom weaver is a 12th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 16, +8 to hit with spell attacks). It regains its expended spell slots when it finishes a short or long rest. It knows the following warlock spells:

Cantrips (at will): *minor illusion*, *prestidigitation*, *chill touch*, *eldritch blast*\*  
1st-5th level (3 5th-level slots): *armor of Agathys*, *blight*, *darkness*, *dream*, *invisibility*, *fear*, *hypnotic pattern*, *major image*, *contact other plane*, *vampiric touch*, *witch bolt*  
\*3 beams +4 bonus to each damage roll

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The gloom weaver makes two spear attacks and casts one spell that takes 1 action to cast.

**Shadow Spear.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage plus 26 (4d12) necrotic damage, or 8 (1d8 + 4) piercing damage plus 26 (4d12) necrotic damage if used with two hands.

### REACTIONS

**Misty Escape (Recharges After A Short Or Long Rest).** When the gloom weaver takes damage, it turns invisible and teleports up to 60 feet to an unoccupied space it can see. It remains invisible until the start of its next turn or until it attacks or casts a spell.

## GORGON

Large monstrosity, unaligned

**Armor Class** 19 (natural armor)  
**Hit Points** 114 (12d10 + 48)  
**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 20 (+5) | 11 (+0) | 18 (+4) | 2 (-4) | 12 (+1) | 7 (-2) |

**Skills** Perception +4  
**Condition Immunities** petrified  
**Senses** passive Perception 14  
**Languages** -  
**Challenge** 5 (1800 XP)

**Trampling Charge.** If the gorgon moves at least 20 feet straight toward a creature and then hits it with a gore attack on the same turn, that target must succeed on a DC 16 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone. If the target is prone, the gorgon can make one attack with its hooves against it as a bonus action.

### ACTIONS

**Gore.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 18 (2d12 + 5) piercing damage.

**Hooves.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 16 (2d10 + 5) bludgeoning damage.

**Petrifying Breath (Recharge 5-6).** The gorgon exhales petrifying gas in a 30-foot cone. Each creature in that area must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, a target begins to turn to stone and is restrained. The restrained target must repeat the saving throw at the end of its next turn. On a success, the effect ends on the target. On a failure, the target is petrified until freed by the *greater restoration* spell or other magic.

## GRIMLOCK

Medium humanoid (grimlock), neutral evil

**Armor Class** 11  
**Hit Points** 11 (2d8 + 2)  
**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS    | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|--------|--------|
| 16 (+3) | 12 (+1) | 12 (+1) | 9 (-1) | 8 (-1) | 6 (-2) |

**Skills** Athletics +5, Perception +3, Stealth +3  
**Condition Immunities** blinded  
**Senses** blindsight 30 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 13  
**Languages** Undercommon  
**Challenge** 1/4 (50 XP)

**Blind Senses.** The grimlock can't use its blindsight while deafened and unable to smell. While only deafened, its blindsight is reduced to 10 feet.

**Keen Senses.** The grimlock has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

**Stone Camouflage.** The grimlock has advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks made to hide in rocky terrain.

### ACTIONS

**Spiked Bone Club.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4+3) bludgeoning damage plus 2 (1d4) piercing damage.

## HELL HOUND

Medium fiend, lawful evil

**Armor Class** 15 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 45 (7d8 + 14)

**Speed** 50 ft.

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

**Skills** Perception +5

**Damage Immunities** fire

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15

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

**Challenge** 3 (700 XP)

**Keen Hearing And Smell.** The hound has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

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

### ACTIONS

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage plus 7 (2d6) fire damage.

**Fire Breath (Recharge 5-6).** The hound exhales fire in a 15-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw, taking 21 (6d6) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

## HOBGOBLIN CAPTAIN

Medium humanoid (goblinoid), lawful evil

**Armor Class** 17 (half plate armor)

**Hit Points** 39 (6d8 + 12)

**Speed** 30 ft.

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

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

**Languages** Common, Goblin

**Challenge** 3 (700 XP)

**Martial Advantage.** Once per turn, the hobgoblin can deal an extra 10 (3d6) damage to a creature it hits with a weapon attack if that creature is within 5 feet of an ally of the hobgoblin that isn't incapacitated.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The hobgoblin makes two greatsword attacks.

**Greatsword.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (2d6+2) slashing damage.

**Javelin.** *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., or range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6+2) piercing damage.

**Leadership (Recharges After A Short Or Long Rest).** For 1 minute, the hobgoblin can utter a special command or warning whenever a nonhostile creature that it can see within 30 feet of it makes an attack roll or a saving throw. The creature can add a d4 to its roll provided it can hear and understand the hobgoblin. A creature can benefit from only one Leadership die at a time. This effect ends if the hobgoblin is incapacitated.

## HOBGOBLIN

Medium humanoid (goblinoid), lawful evil

**Armor Class** 18 (chain mail, shield)

**Hit Points** 11 (2d8 + 2)

**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|--------|
| 13 (+1) | 12 (+1) | 12 (+1) | 10 (+0) | 10 (+0) | 9 (-1) |

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

**Languages** Common, Goblin

**Challenge** 1/2 (100 XP)

**Martial Advantage.** Once per turn, the hobgoblin can deal an extra 7 (2d6) damage to a creature it hits with a weapon attack if that creature is within 5 feet of an ally of the hobgoblin that isn't incapacitated.

### ACTIONS

**Longsword.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d8+1) slashing damage or 6 (1d10 + 1) 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.

## HOBGOBLIN WARLORD

Medium humanoid (goblinoid), lawful evil

**Armor Class** 20 (plate armor, shield)

**Hit Points** 97 (13d8 + 39)

**Speed** 30 ft.

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

**Saving Throws** Int +5, Wis +3, Cha +5

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

**Languages** Common, Goblin

**Challenge** 6 (2300 XP)

**Martial Advantage.** Once per turn, the hobgoblin can deal an extra 14 (4d6) damage to a creature it hits with a weapon attack if that creature is within 5 feet of an ally of the hobgoblin that isn't incapacitated.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The hobgoblin makes three melee attacks. Alternatively, it can make two ranged attacks with its javelins.

**Longsword.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8+3) slashing damage or 8 (1d10 + 3) slashing damage if used with two hands.

**Shield Bash.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 5 (1d4+3) bludgeoning damage. If the target is Large or smaller, it must succeed on a DC 14 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

**Javelin.** *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., or range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6+2) piercing damage.

**Leadership (Recharges After A Short Or Long Rest).** For 1 minute, the hobgoblin can utter a special command or warning whenever a nonhostile creature that it can see within 30 feet of it makes an attack roll or a saving throw. The creature can add a d4 to its roll provided it can hear and understand the hobgoblin. A creature can benefit from only one Leadership die at a time. This effect ends if the hobgoblin is incapacitated.

### REACTIONS

**Parry.** The hobgoblin adds 3 to its AC against one melee attack that would hit it. To do so, the hobgoblin must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.

## HOOK HORROR

Large monstrosity, neutral

**Armor Class** 15 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 75 (10d10 + 20)

**Speed** 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 18 (+4) | 10 (+0) | 15 (+2) | 6 (-2) | 12 (+1) | 7 (-2) |

**Skills** Perception +3

**Senses** blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 13

**Languages** Hook Horror

**Challenge** 3 (700 XP)

**Echolocation.** The hook horror can't use its blindsight while deafened.

**Keen Hearing.** The hook horror has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The hook horror makes two hook attacks.

**Hook.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6+4) piercing damage.

## ICE DEVIL

Large fiend (devil), lawful evil

**Armor Class** 18 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 180 (19d10 + 76)

**Speed** 40 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 21 (+5) | 14 (+2) | 18 (+4) | 18 (+4) | 15 (+2) | 18 (+4) |

**Saving Throws** Dex +7, Con +9, Wis +7, Cha +9

**Damage Immunities** fire, poison, cold

**Damage Resistances** bludgeoning, piercing, slashing from nonmagical attacks that aren't silvered

**Condition Immunities** poisoned

**Senses** blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 12

**Languages** Infernal, telepathy 120 ft.

**Challenge** 14 (11500 XP)

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

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

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The devil makes three attacks: one with its bite, one with its claws, and one with its tail.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d6 + 5) piercing damage plus 10 (3d6) cold damage.

**Claws.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d4 + 5) slashing damage plus 10 (3d6) cold damage.

**Tail.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d6 + 5) bludgeoning damage plus 10 (3d6) cold damage.

**Wall Of Ice (Recharge 6).** The devil magically forms an opaque wall of ice on a solid surface it can see within 60 feet of it. The wall is 1 foot thick and up to 30 feet long and 10 feet high, or it's a hemispherical dome up to 20 feet in diameter.

When the wall appears, each creature in its space is pushed out of it by the shortest route. The creature chooses which side of the wall to end up on, unless the creature is incapacitated. The creature then makes a DC 17 Dexterity saving throw, taking 35 (10d6) cold damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

The wall lasts for 1 minute or until the devil is incapacitated or dies. The wall can be damaged and breached; each 10-foot section has AC 5, 30 hit points, vulnerability to fire damage, and immunity to acid, cold, necrotic, poison, and psychic damage. If a section is destroyed, it leaves behind a sheet of frigid air in the space the wall occupied. Whenever a creature finishes moving through the frigid air on a turn, willingly or otherwise, the creature must make a DC 17 Constitution saving throw, taking 17 (5d6) cold damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. The frigid air dissipates when the rest of the wall vanishes.

## INTELLECT DEVOURER

*Tiny aberration, lawful evil*

**Armor Class** 12  
**Hit Points** 21 (6d4 + 6)  
**Speed** 40 ft.

| STR    | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|--------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 6 (-2) | 14 (+2) | 13 (+1) | 12 (+1) | 11 (+0) | 10 (+0) |

**Skills** Perception +2, Stealth +4  
**Damage Resistances** bludgeoning, piercing, slashing from nonmagical attacks  
**Condition Immunities** blinded  
**Senses** blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 12  
**Languages** understands Deep Speech but can't speak, telepathy 60 ft.  
**Challenge** 2 (450 XP)

**Detect Sentience.** The intellect devourer can sense the presence and location of any creature within 300 feet of it that has an Intelligence of 3 or higher, regardless of interposing barriers, unless the creature is protected by a mind blank spell.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The intellect devourer makes one attack with its claws and uses Devour Intellect.

**Claws.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (2d4+2) slashing damage.

**Devour Intellect.** The intellect devourer targets one creature it can see within 10 feet of it that has a brain. The target must succeed on a DC 12 Intelligence saving throw against this magic or take 11 (2d10) psychic damage. Also on a failure, roll 3d6: If the total equals or exceeds the target's Intelligence score, that score is reduced to 0. The target is stunned until it regains at least one point of Intelligence.

**Body Thief.** The intellect devourer initiates an Intelligence contest with an incapacitated humanoid within 5 feet of it that isn't protected by *protection from evil and good*. If it wins the contest, the intellect devourer magically consumes the target's brain, teleports into the target's skull, and takes control of the target's body. While inside a creature, the intellect devourer has total cover against attacks and other effects originating outside its host. The intellect devourer retains its Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma scores, as well as its understanding of Deep Speech, its telepathy, and its traits. It otherwise adopts the target's statistics. It knows everything the creature knew, including spells and languages.

If the host body dies, the intellect devourer must leave it. A *protection from evil and good* spell cast on the body drives the intellect devourer out. The intellect devourer is also forced out if the target regains its devoured brain by means of a *wish*. By spending 5 feet of its movement, the intellect devourer can voluntarily leave the body, teleporting to the nearest unoccupied space within 5 feet of it. The body then dies, unless its brain is restored within 1 round.

## LAVA CHILD

*Medium humanoid (lava child), neutral*

**Armor Class** 11  
**Hit Points** 60 (8d8 + 24)  
**Speed** 25 ft., climb 20 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 18 (+4) | 13 (+1) | 16 (+3) | 11 (+0) | 10 (+0) | 10 (+0) |

**Skills** Athletics +6, Survival +2  
**Damage Immunities** fire; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from metal weapons  
**Senses** darkvision 60 ft. passive Perception 10  
**Languages** Common, Ignan  
**Challenge** 3 (700 XP)

**Metal Immunity.** The lava child can move through metal without hindrance, and it has advantage on attack rolls against any creature wearing metal armor or using a metal shield.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The lava child makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its claws.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6+4) piercing damage.

**Claws.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6+4) slashing damage.

## MAGE

*Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment*

**Armor Class** 12 (15 with mage armor)  
**Hit Points** 40 (9d8)  
**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR    | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|--------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 9 (-1) | 14 (+2) | 11 (+0) | 17 (+3) | 12 (+1) | 11 (+0) |

**Saving Throws** Int +6, Wis +4  
**Skills** Arcana +6, History +6  
**Senses** passive Perception 11  
**Languages** any four languages  
**Challenge** 6 (2300 XP)

**Spellcasting.** The mage is a 9th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks). The mage has the following wizard spells prepared:  
Cantrips (at will): *fire bolt, light, mage hand, prestidigitation*  
1st level (4 slots): *detect magic, mage armor, magic missile, shield*  
2nd level (3 slots): *misty step, suggestion*  
3rd level (3 slots): *counterspell, fireball, fly*  
4th level (3 slots): *greater invisibility, ice storm*  
5th level (1 slot): *cone of cold*

### ACTIONS

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

## MAGIC MISSILE GATLING GUN

Medium construct, unaligned

**Armor Class** 14 (natural armor)  
**Hit Points** 52 (8d8 + 16)  
**Speed** 0 ft.

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

**Damage Immunities** poison, psychic

**Damage Resistances** bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks that aren't adamantite

**Condition Immunities** blinded, charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, poisoned, prone

**Senses** blindsight 120 ft. (blind beyond this radius) passive Perception 7

**Languages** understands one language of its creator but can't speak  
**Challenge** 3 (700 XP)

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The magic missile gatling gun makes five Magic Missile attacks.

**Magic Missile.** The gatling gun shoots a dart of magical force at one creature it can detect within 120 feet of it. The target takes 3 (1d4+1) force damage as the dart hits it unerringly.

## MAGMA MEPHIT

Small elemental, neutral evil

**Armor Class** 11  
**Hit Points** 22 (5d6 + 5)  
**Speed** 30 ft., fly 30 ft.

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

**Skills** Stealth +3

**Damage Immunities** fire, poison

**Damage Vulnerabilities** cold

**Condition Immunities** poisoned

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

**Languages** Ignan, Terran

**Challenge** 1/2 (100 XP)

**Death Burst.** When the mephit dies, it explodes in a burst of lava. Each creature within 5 feet of it must make a DC 11 Dexterity saving throw, taking 7 (2d6) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

**False Appearance.** While the mephit remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from an ordinary mound of magma.

**Innate Spellcasting.** The mephit can innately cast *heat metal* (spell save DC 10), requiring no material components. Its innate spellcasting ability is Charisma.

### ACTIONS

**Claws.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 3 (1d4 + 1) slashing damage plus 2 (1d4) fire damage.

**Fire Breath (Recharge 6).** The mephit exhales a 15-foot cone of fire. Each creature in that area must make a DC 11 Dexterity saving throw, taking 7 (2d6) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

## MANTICORE

Large monstrosity, lawful evil

**Armor Class** 14 (natural armor)  
**Hit Points** 68 (8d10 + 24)  
**Speed** 30 ft., fly 50 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 17 (+3) | 16 (+3) | 17 (+3) | 7 (-2) | 12 (+1) | 8 (-1) |

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

**Languages** Common

**Challenge** 3 (700 XP)

**Tail Spike Regrowth.** The manticore has twenty-four tail spikes. Used spikes regrow when the manticore finishes a long rest.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The manticore makes three attacks: one with its bite and two with its claws or three with its tail spikes.

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

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

**Tail Spike.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 100/200 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8+3) piercing damage.

## MASTIFF

Medium beast, unaligned

**Armor Class** 12  
**Hit Points** 5 (1d8 + 1)  
**Speed** 40 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 13 (+1) | 14 (+2) | 12 (+1) | 3 (-4) | 12 (+1) | 7 (-2) |

**Skills** Perception +3

**Senses** passive Perception 13

**Languages** -

**Challenge** 1/8 (25 XP)

**Keen Hearing And Smell.** The mastiff has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

### ACTIONS

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 11 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

## MECHA-HALASTER

Gargantuan construct, chaotic evil

**Armor Class** 18 (natural armor)  
**Hit Points** 247 (15d20 + 90)  
**Speed** 50 ft.

| STR     | DEX    | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|--------|---------|---------|---------|--------|
| 26 (+8) | 9 (-1) | 23 (+6) | 14 (+2) | 15 (+2) | 9 (-1) |

**Saving Throws** Str +13, Con +11, Wis +7  
**Damage Immunities** poison, psychic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks that aren't adamantine  
**Damage Resistances** fire  
**Condition Immunities** blinded, charmed, deafened, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, poisoned  
**Senses** darkvision 120 ft., blindsight 60 ft. passive Perception 12  
**Languages** Abyssal, Common, Draconic, Dwarvish, Elvish, Gnomish, Infernal  
**Challenge** 16 (15000 XP)

**Here To Stay.** Mecha-Halaster is immune to any spell or effect that would send it to another plane of existence, except when cast by Halaster Blackcloak.

**Immutable Form.** Mecha-Halaster is immune to any spell or effect that would alter its form.

**Innate Spellcasting.** Mecha-Halaster's innate spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:  
3/day each: *earth tremor*, *earthbind*, *knock*, *nondetection*  
1/day each: *chain lightning*, *dispel magic*

**Legendary Resistance (3/Day).** If Mecha-Halaster fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

**Magic Resistance.** Mecha-Halaster has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

**Siege Monster.** Mecha-Halaster deals double damage to objects and structures.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** Mecha-Halaster makes two Fist attacks.

**Fist.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +13 to hit, reach 20 ft., one target. *Hit:* 24 (3d10 + 8) bludgeoning damage. Instead of dealing damage, Mecha-Halaster can grapple the target (escape DC 23).

## MIND FLAYER

Medium aberration, lawful evil

**Armor Class** 15 (breastplate)  
**Hit Points** 71 (13d8 + 13)  
**Speed** 30 ft.

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

**Saving Throws** Int +7, Wis +6, Cha +6  
**Skills** Arcana +7, Deception +6, Insight +6, Perception +6, Persuasion +6, Stealth +4  
**Senses** darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 16  
**Languages** Deep Speech, Undercommon, telepathy 120 ft.  
**Challenge** 7 (2900 XP)

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

At will: *detect thoughts*, *levitate*  
1/day each: *dominate monster*, *plane shift* (self only)

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

### ACTIONS

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

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

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

## NALFESHNEE

Large fiend, chaotic evil

**Armor Class** 18 (natural armor)  
**Hit Points** 184 (16d10 + 96)  
**Speed** 30 ft., fly 20 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 21 (+5) | 10 (+0) | 22 (+6) | 19 (+4) | 12 (+1) | 15 (+2) |

**Saving Throws** Con +11, Int +9, Wis +6, Cha +7  
**Damage Immunities** poison  
**Damage Resistances** cold, fire, lightning; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks  
**Condition Immunities** poisoned  
**Senses** truesight 120 ft. passive Perception 11  
**Languages** Abyssal, telepathy 120 ft.  
**Challenge** 13 (10000 XP)

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

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The nalfeshnee uses Horror Nimbus if it can. It then makes three attacks: one with its bite and two with its claws.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 32 (5d10 + 5) piercing damage.

**Claw.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (3d6 + 5) slashing damage.

**Horror Nimbus (Recharge 5-6).** The nalfeshnee magically emits scintillating, multicolored light. Each creature within 15 feet of the nalfeshnee that can see the light must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened for 1 minute. A creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. If a creature's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the creature is immune to the nalfeshnee's Horror Nimbus for the next 24 hours.

**Teleport.** The nalfeshnee magically teleports, along with any equipment it is wearing or carrying, up to 120 feet to an unoccupied space it can see.

## NOBLE

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

**Armor Class** 15 (breastplate)  
**Hit Points** 9 (2d8)  
**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 11 (+0) | 12 (+1) | 11 (+0) | 12 (+1) | 14 (+2) | 16 (+3) |

**Skills** Deception +5, Insight +4, Persuasion +5  
**Senses** passive Perception 12  
**Languages** any two languages  
**Challenge** 1/8 (25 XP)

### ACTIONS

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

### REACTIONS

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

## NEOTHELID

Gargantuan aberration, chaotic evil

**Armor Class** 16 (natural armor)  
**Hit Points** 325 (21d20 + 105)  
**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX    | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|--------|---------|--------|---------|---------|
| 27 (+8) | 7 (-2) | 21 (+5) | 3 (-4) | 16 (+3) | 12 (+1) |

**Saving Throws** Int +1, Wis +8, Cha +6  
**Senses** blindsight 120 ft. passive Perception 13  
**Languages** -  
**Challenge** 13 (10000 XP)

**Creature Sense.** The neothelid is aware of the presence of creatures within 1 mile of it that have an Intelligence score of 4 or higher. It knows the distance and direction to each creature, as well as each creature's Intelligence score, but can't sense anything else about it. A creature protected by a mind blank spell, a nondetection spell, or similar magic can't be perceived in this manner.

**Innate Spellcasting.** The neothelid's innate spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 16). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no components:

At will: *levitate*

1/day each: *confusion*, *feeblemind*, *telekinesis*

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

### ACTIONS

**Tentacles.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +13 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 21 (3d8 + 8) bludgeoning damage plus 13 (3d8) psychic damage. If the target is a Large or smaller creature, it must succeed on a DC 18 Strength saving throw or be swallowed by the neothelid. A swallowed creature is blinded and restrained, it has total cover against attacks and other effects outside the neothelid, and it takes 35 (10d6) acid damage at the start of each of the neothelid's turns.

If the neothelid takes 30 damage or more on a single turn from a creature inside it, the neothelid must succeed on a DC 18 Constitution saving throw at the end of that turn or regurgitate all swallowed creatures, which fall prone in a space within 10 feet of the neothelid. If the neothelid dies, a swallowed creature is no longer restrained by it and can escape from the corpse by using 20 feet of movement, exiting prone.

**Acid Breath (Recharge 5-6).** The neothelid exhales acid in a 60-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 18 Dexterity saving throw, taking 35 (10d6) acid damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

## NYCALOTH

Large fiend (yugoloth), neutral evil

**Armor Class** 18 (natural armor)  
**Hit Points** 123 (13d10 + 52)  
**Speed** 40 ft., fly 60 ft.

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

**Skills** Intimidation +6, Perception +4, Stealth +4  
**Damage Immunities** acid, poison  
**Damage Resistances** cold, fire, lightning; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks  
**Condition Immunities** poisoned  
**Senses** blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14  
**Languages** Abyssal, Infernal, telepathy 60 ft.  
**Challenge** 9 (5000 XP)

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

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

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

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

### ACTIONS

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

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

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

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

## OGRE

Large giant, chaotic evil

**Armor Class** 11 (hide armor)  
**Hit Points** 59 (7d10 + 21)  
**Speed** 40 ft.

| STR     | DEX    | CON     | INT    | WIS    | CHA    |
|---------|--------|---------|--------|--------|--------|
| 19 (+4) | 8 (-1) | 16 (+3) | 5 (-3) | 7 (-2) | 7 (-2) |

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 8  
**Languages** Common, Giant  
**Challenge** 2 (450 XP)

### ACTIONS

**Greatclub.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

**Javelin.** *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) piercing damage.

## OTYUGH

Large aberration, neutral good

**Armor Class** 15  
**Hit Points** 114 (12d10 + 48)  
**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 16 (+3) | 11 (+0) | 19 (+4) | 6 (-2) | 13 (+1) | 6 (-2) |

**Saving Throws** Con +7  
**Senses** darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 11  
**Languages** Otyugh  
**Challenge** 7 (2900 XP)

**Limited Telepathy.** The otyugh can magically transmit simple messages and images to any creature within 120 feet of it that can understand a language. This form of telepathy doesn't allow the receiving creature to telepathically respond.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The otyugh makes three attacks: one with its bite and two with its tentacles.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d8+3) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw against disease or become poisoned until the disease is cured. Every 24 hours that elapse, the target must repeat the saving throw, reducing its hit point maximum by 5 (1d10) on a failure. The disease is cured on a success. The target dies if the disease reduces its hit point maximum to 0. This reduction to the target's hit point maximum lasts until the disease is cured.

**Tentacle.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8+3) bludgeoning damage plus 4 (1d8) piercing damage. If the target is Medium or smaller, it is grappled (escape DC 13) and restrained until the grapple ends. The otyugh has two tentacles, each of which can grapple one target.

**Tentacle Slam.** The otyugh slams creatures grappled by it into each other or a solid surface. Each creature must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or take 10 (2d6 + 3) bludgeoning damage and be stunned until the end of the otyugh's next turn. On a successful save, the target takes half the bludgeoning damage and isn't stunned.

## OWLBEAR

Large monstrosity, chaotic evil

**Armor Class** 13 (natural armor)  
**Hit Points** 59 (7d10 + 21)  
**Speed** 40 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 20 (+5) | 12 (+1) | 17 (+3) | 3 (-4) | 12 (+1) | 7 (-2) |

**Skills** Perception +3  
**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13  
**Languages** -  
**Challenge** 3 (700 XP)

**Keen Sight And Smell.** The owlbear has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight or smell.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The owlbear makes two attacks: one with its beak and one with its claws.

**Beak.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 10 (1d10+5) piercing damage.

**Claws.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (2d8+5) slashing damage.



## QUADRONE

Medium construct, lawful neutral

**Armor Class** 16 (natural armor)  
**Hit Points** 22 (4d8 + 4)  
**Speed** 30 ft., fly 30 ft.

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

**Skills** Perception +2  
**Senses** truesight 120 ft., passive Perception 12  
**Languages** Modron  
**Challenge** 1 (200 XP)

**Axiomatic Mind.** The quadrone can't be compelled to act in a manner contrary to its nature or its instructions.

**Disintegration.** If the quadrone dies, its body disintegrates into dust, leaving behind its weapons and anything else it was carrying.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The quadrone makes two fist attacks or four shortbow attacks.

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

**Shortbow.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6+2) piercing damage.

## QUASIT

Tiny fiend (demon), chaotic evil

**Armor Class** 13  
**Hit Points** 7 (3d4)  
**Speed** 40 ft.

| STR    | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA     |
|--------|---------|---------|--------|---------|---------|
| 5 (-3) | 17 (+3) | 10 (+0) | 7 (-2) | 10 (+0) | 10 (+0) |

**Skills** Stealth +5  
**Damage Immunities** poison  
**Damage Resistances** cold, fire, lightning; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks  
**Condition Immunities** poisoned  
**Senses** darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 10  
**Languages** Abyssal, Common  
**Challenge** 1 (200 XP)

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

**Shapechanger.** The quasit can use its action to polymorph into a beast form that resembles a bat (speed 10 ft., fly 40 ft.), a centipede (40 ft., climb 40 ft.), or a toad (40 ft., swim 40 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.

### ACTIONS

**Claw (Bite In Beast Form).** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4+3) piercing damage and the target must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or take 5 (2d4) poison damage and become poisoned for 1 minute. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

**Scare (1/Day).** One creature of the quasit's choice within 20 feet of it must succeed on a DC 10 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened for 1 minute. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, with disadvantage if the quasit is within line of sight, ending the effect on itself on a success.

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

## 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 Immunities** bludgeoning, piercing, slashing from nonmagical attacks  
**Damage Vulnerabilities** piercing from magic weapons wielded by good creatures  
**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13  
**Languages** Common, Infernal  
**Challenge** 13 (10000 XP)

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

**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.

### 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.

## ROPER

Large monstrosity, neutral evil

**Armor Class** 20 (natural armor)  
**Hit Points** 93 (11d10 + 33)  
**Speed** 10 ft., climb 10 ft.

| STR     | DEX    | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|--------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 18 (+4) | 8 (-1) | 17 (+3) | 7 (-2) | 16 (+3) | 6 (-2) |

**Skills** Perception +6, Stealth +5  
**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 16  
**Languages** -  
**Challenge** 5 (1800 XP)

**False Appearance.** While the roper remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from a normal cave formation, such as a stalagmite.

**Grasping Tendrils.** The roper can have up to six tendrils at a time. Each tendril can be attacked (AC 20; 10 hit points; immunity to poison and psychic damage). Destroying a tendril deals no damage to the roper, which can extrude a replacement tendril on its next turn. A tendril can also be broken if a creature takes an action and succeeds on a DC 15 Strength check against it.

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

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The roper makes four attacks with its tendrils, uses Reel, and makes one attack with its bite.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 22 (4d8+4) piercing damage.

**Tendril.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 50 ft., one creature. *Hit:* The target is grappled (escape DC 15). Until the grapple ends, the target is restrained and has disadvantage on Strength checks and Strength saving throws, and the roper can't use the same tendril on another target.

**Reel.** The roper pulls each creature grappled by it up to 25 ft. straight toward it.

## SCALADAR

Huge construct, unaligned

**Armor Class** 19 (natural armor)  
**Hit Points** 94 (7d12 + 49)  
**Speed** 30 ft., climb 20 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 19 (+4) | 10 (+0) | 25 (+7) | 10 (+0) | 12 (+1) | 10 (+0) |

**Damage Immunities** force, lightning, poison  
**Damage Resistances** fire; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks  
**Condition Immunities** charmed, paralyzed, poisoned  
**Senses** passive Perception 11  
**Languages** -  
**Challenge** 8 (3900 XP)

**Lightning Absorption.** Whenever the scaladar is subjected to lightning damage, it takes no damage, and its sting deals an extra 11 (2d10) lightning damage until the end of its next turn.

**Scaladar Link.** The scaladar knows the location of other scaladar within 100 feet of it, and it can sense when any of them take damage.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The scaladar makes three attacks: two with its claws and one with its sting.

**Claw.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (1d12 + 4) bludgeoning damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 15). The scaladar has two claws, each of which can grapple one target.

**Sting.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d10 + 4) piercing damage plus 11 (2d10) lightning damage.

## SHADOW

Medium undead, chaotic evil

**Armor Class** 12  
**Hit Points** 16 (3d8 + 3)  
**Speed** 40 ft.

| STR    | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA    |
|--------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 6 (-2) | 14 (+2) | 13 (+1) | 6 (-2) | 10 (+0) | 8 (-1) |

**Skills** Stealth +4  
**Damage Immunities** necrotic, poison  
**Damage Resistances** acid, cold, fire, lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks  
**Damage Vulnerabilities** radiant  
**Condition Immunities** exhaustion, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained  
**Senses** darkvision 60 ft. passive Perception 10  
**Languages** -  
**Challenge** 1/2 (100 XP)

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

**Shadow Stealth.** While in dim light or darkness, the shadow can take the Hide action as a bonus action. Its stealth bonus is also improved to +6.

**Sunlight Weakness.** While in sunlight, the shadow has disadvantage on attack rolls, ability checks, and saving throws.

### ACTIONS

**Strength Drain.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., *Hit:* 9 (2d6+2) necrotic damage and the target's Strength score is reduced by 1d4. The target dies if this reduces its Strength to 0. Otherwise, the reduction lasts until the target finishes a short or long rest. If a non-evil humanoid dies from this attack, a new shadow rises from the corpse 1d4 hours later.

## SHADOW ASSASSIN

Medium undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 14  
Hit Points 78 (12d8 + 24)  
Speed 40 ft.

| STR    | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|--------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 6 (-2) | 19 (+4) | 14 (+2) | 13 (+1) | 12 (+1) | 14 (+2) |

**Saving Throws** Dex +8, Int +5  
**Skills** Perception +9, Stealth +12  
**Damage Immunities** necrotic, poison  
**Damage Resistances** acid, cold, fire, lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks  
**Damage Vulnerabilities** radiant  
**Condition Immunities** exhaustion, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained  
**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 19  
**Languages** understands the languages it knew in life but can't speak  
**Challenge** 9 (5000 XP)

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

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

**Sunlight Weakness.** While in sunlight, the assassin has disadvantage on attack rolls, ability checks, and saving throws.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The assassin makes two Shadow Blade attacks.

**Shadow Blade.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage plus 10 (3d6) necrotic damage. Unless the target is immune to necrotic damage, the target's Strength score is reduced by 1d4 each time it is hit by this attack. The target dies if its Strength is reduced to 0. The reduction lasts until the target finishes a short or long rest. If a non-evil humanoid dies from this attack, a shadow (see the Monster Manual) rises from the corpse 1d4 hours later.

## SKELETON

Medium undead, lawful evil

Armor Class 13 (armor scraps)  
Hit Points 13 (2d8 + 4)  
Speed 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS    | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|--------|--------|
| 10 (+0) | 14 (+2) | 15 (+2) | 6 (-2) | 8 (-1) | 5 (-3) |

**Damage Immunities** poison  
**Damage Vulnerabilities** bludgeoning  
**Condition Immunities** poisoned  
**Senses** darkvision 60 ft. passive Perception 9  
**Languages** understands all languages it spoke in life but can't speak  
**Challenge** 1/4 (50 XP)

### ACTIONS

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

**Shortbow.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6+2) piercing damage.

## SHADOW DANCER

Medium humanoid (elf), neutral

Armor Class 15 (studded leather armor)  
Hit Points 71 (13d8 + 13)  
Speed 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 12 (+1) | 16 (+3) | 13 (+1) | 11 (+0) | 12 (+1) | 12 (+1) |

**Saving Throws** Dex +6, Cha +4  
**Skills** Stealth +6  
**Damage Immunities** necrotic  
**Condition Immunities** charmed, exhaustion  
**Senses** darkvision 60 ft. passive Perception 11  
**Languages** Common, Elvish  
**Challenge** 7 (2900 XP)

**Fey Ancestry.** The shadow dancer has advantage on saving throws against being charmed, and magic can't put it to sleep.

**Shadow Jump.** As a bonus action, the shadow dancer can teleport up to 30 feet to an unoccupied space it can see. Both the space it teleports from and the space it teleports to must be in dim light or darkness. The shadow dancer can use this ability between the weapon attacks of another action it takes.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The shadow dancer makes three spiked chain attacks.

**Spiked Chain.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) piercing damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw or suffer one additional effect of the shadow dancer's choice:

- The target is grappled (escape DC 14) if it is a Medium or smaller creature. Until the grapple ends, the target is restrained, and the shadow dancer can't grapple another target.
- The target is knocked prone.
- The target takes 22 (4d10) necrotic damage.

## SHADOW DEMON

Medium fiend (demon), chaotic evil

Armor Class 13  
Hit Points 66 (12d8 + 12)  
Speed 30 ft., fly 30 ft.

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

**Saving Throws** Dex +5, Cha +4  
**Skills** Stealth +7  
**Damage Immunities** cold, lightning, poison  
**Damage Resistances** acid, fire, necrotic, thunder, bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks  
**Damage Vulnerabilities** radiant  
**Condition Immunities** exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained  
**Senses** darkvision 120 ft. passive Perception 11  
**Languages** Abyssal, telepathy 120 ft.  
**Challenge** 4 (1100 XP)

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

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

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

### ACTIONS

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

## SMOKE MEPHIT

Small elemental, neutral evil

**Armor Class** 12  
**Hit Points** 22 (5d6 + 5)  
**Speed** 30 ft., fly 30 ft.

| STR    | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|--------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 6 (-2) | 14 (+2) | 12 (+1) | 10 (+0) | 10 (+0) | 11 (+0) |

**Skills** Perception +2, Stealth +4  
**Damage Immunities** fire, poison  
**Condition Immunities** poisoned  
**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12  
**Languages** Auran, Ignan  
**Challenge** 1/4 (50 XP)

**Death Burst.** When the mephit dies, it leaves behind a cloud of smoke that fills a 5-foot-radius sphere centered on its space. The sphere is heavily obscured. Wind disperses the cloud, which otherwise lasts for 1 minute.

**Innate Spellcasting.** The mephit can innately cast *dancing lights*, requiring no material components. Its innate spellcasting ability is Charisma.

### ACTIONS

**Claw.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) slashing damage.

**Cinder Breath (Recharge 6).** The mephit exhales a 15-foot cone of smoldering ash. Each creature in that area must succeed on a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw or be blinded until the end of the mephit's next turn.

## STONE GOLEM

Large construct, unaligned

**Armor Class** 17 (natural armor)  
**Hit Points** 178 (17d10 + 85)  
**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX    | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|--------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 22 (+6) | 9 (-1) | 20 (+5) | 3 (-4) | 11 (+0) | 1 (-5) |

**Damage Immunities** poison, psychic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks that aren't adamantine  
**Condition Immunities** charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned  
**Senses** darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 10  
**Languages** understands the languages of its creator but can't speak  
**Challenge** 10 (5900 XP)

**Immutable Form.** The golem is immune to any spell or effect that would alter its form.

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

**Magic Weapons.** The golem's weapon attacks are magical.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The golem makes two slam attacks.

**Slam.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 19 (3d8 + 6) bludgeoning damage.

**Slow (Recharge 5-6).** The golem targets one or more creatures it can see within 10 feet of it. Each target must make a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw against this magic. On a failed save, a target can't use reactions, its speed is halved, and it can't make more than one attack on its turn. In addition, the target can take either an action or a bonus action on its turn, not both. These effects last for 1 minute. A target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

## SWARM OF BATS

Medium swarm of tiny beasts, unaligned

**Armor Class** 12  
**Hit Points** 22 (5d8)  
**Speed** 0 ft., fly 30 ft.

| STR    | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA    |
|--------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 5 (-3) | 15 (+2) | 10 (+0) | 2 (-4) | 12 (+1) | 4 (-3) |

**Damage Resistances** bludgeoning, piercing, slashing  
**Condition Immunities** charmed, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, prone, restrained, stunned  
**Senses** blindsight 60 ft., passive Perception 11  
**Languages** -  
**Challenge** 1/4 (50 XP)

**Echolocation.** The swarm can't use its blindsight while deafened.

**Keen Hearing.** The swarm has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing.

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

### ACTIONS

**Bites.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 0 ft., one creature in the swarm's space. *Hit:* 5 (2d4) piercing damage, or 2 (1d4) piercing damage if the swarm has half of its hit points or fewer.

## SWARM OF RATS

Medium swarm of tiny beasts, unaligned

**Armor Class** 10  
**Hit Points** 24 (7d8 - 7)  
**Speed** 30 ft.

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

**Damage Resistances** bludgeoning, piercing, slashing  
**Condition Immunities** charmed, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, prone, restrained, stunned  
**Senses** darkvision 30 ft., passive Perception 10  
**Languages** -  
**Challenge** 1/4 (50 XP)

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

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

### ACTIONS

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

## THE ANGRY

Medium monstrosity, lawful evil

**Armor Class** 18 (natural armor)  
**Hit Points** 255 (30d8 + 120)  
**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 17 (+3) | 10 (+0) | 19 (+4) | 8 (-1) | 13 (+1) | 6 (-2) |

**Skills** Perception +6  
**Damage Resistances** bludgeoning, piercing, slashing while in dim light or darkness  
**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 16  
**Languages** Common  
**Challenge** 13 (10000 XP)

**Rising Anger.** If another creature deals damage to the Angry, the Angry's attack rolls have advantage until the end of its next turn, and the first time it hits with a hook attack on its next turn, the attack's target takes an extra 19 (3d12) psychic damage.

On its turn, the Angry has disadvantage on attack rolls if no other creature has dealt damage to it since the end of its last turn.

**Two Heads.** The Angry has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks and on saving throws against being blinded, charmed, deafened, frightened, stunned, or knocked unconscious.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The Angry makes two hook attacks.

**Hook.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 16 (2d12+3) piercing damage.

## THE HUNGRY

Medium monstrosity, lawful evil

**Armor Class** 17 (natural armor)  
**Hit Points** 225 (30d8 + 90)  
**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 19 (+4) | 10 (+0) | 17 (+3) | 6 (-2) | 11 (+0) | 6 (-2) |

**Damage Resistances** bludgeoning, piercing, slashing while in dim light or darkness  
**Senses** darkvision 60 ft. passive Perception 10  
**Languages** Common  
**Challenge** 11 (7200 XP)

**Life Hunger.** If a creature the Hungry can see regains hit points, the Hungry gains two benefits until the end of its next turn: it has advantage on attack rolls, and its bite deals an extra 22 (4d10) necrotic damage on a hit.

### ACTIONS

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

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8+4) piercing damage plus 13 (3d8) necrotic damage.

**Claws.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 18 (4d6 + 4) slashing damage. If the target is Medium or smaller, it is grappled (escape DC 16) and is restrained until the grapple ends. While grappling a creature, the Hungry can't attack with its claws.

## THE LOST

Medium monstrosity, lawful evil

**Armor Class** 15 (natural armor)  
**Hit Points** 78 (12d8 + 24)  
**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS    | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|--------|--------|
| 17 (+3) | 12 (+1) | 15 (+2) | 6 (-2) | 7 (-2) | 5 (-3) |

**Skills** Athletics +6  
**Damage Resistances** bludgeoning, piercing, slashing while in dim light or darkness  
**Senses** darkvision 60 ft. passive Perception 8  
**Languages** Common  
**Challenge** 7 (2900 XP)

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The Lost makes two arm spike attacks.

**Arm Spike.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (2d10 + 3) piercing damage.

**Embrace.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 25 (4d10 + 3) piercing damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 14) if it is a Medium or smaller creature. Until the grapple ends, the target is frightened, and it takes 27 (6d8) psychic damage at the end of each of its turns. The Lost can embrace only one creature at a time.

### REACTIONS

**Tightening Embrace.** If the Lost takes damage while it has a creature grappled, that creature takes 18 (4d8) psychic damage.

## THE WRETCHED

Small monstrosity, unaligned

**Armor Class** 15 (natural armor)  
**Hit Points** 10 (4d6 - 4)  
**Speed** 40 ft.

| STR    | DEX     | CON    | INT    | WIS    | CHA    |
|--------|---------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| 7 (-2) | 12 (+1) | 9 (-1) | 5 (-3) | 6 (-2) | 5 (-3) |

**Damage Resistances** bludgeoning, piercing, slashing while in dim light or darkness  
**Senses** darkvision 60 ft. passive Perception 8  
**Languages** -  
**Challenge** 1/4 (50 XP)

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

### ACTIONS

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d10 + 1) piercing damage, and the Wretched attaches to the target. While attached, the Wretched can't attack, and at the start of each of the Wretched's turns, the target takes 6 (1d10 + 1) necrotic damage.

The attached Wretched moves with the target whenever the target moves, requiring none of the Wretched's movement. The Wretched can detach itself by spending 5 feet of its movement on its turn. A creature, including the target, can use its action to detach a Wretched.

## TROGLODYTE

Medium humanoid (troglodyte), chaotic evil

**Armor Class** 11 (natural armor)  
**Hit Points** 13 (2d8 + 4)  
**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 14 (+2) | 10 (+0) | 14 (+2) | 6 (-2) | 10 (+0) | 6 (-2) |

**Skills** Stealth +2  
**Senses** darkvision 60 ft. passive Perception 10  
**Languages** Troglodyte  
**Challenge** 1/4 (50 XP)

**Chameleon Skin.** The troglodyte has advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks made to hide.

**Stench.** Any creature other than a troglodyte that starts its turn within 5 feet of the troglodyte must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned until the start of the creature's next turn. On a successful saving throw, the creature is immune to the stench of all troglodytes for 1 hour.

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

### ACTIONS

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

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

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

## ULITHARID

Large aberration, lawful evil

**Armor Class** 15 (breastplate)  
**Hit Points** 127 (17d10 + 34)  
**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 15 (+2) | 12 (+1) | 15 (+2) | 21 (+5) | 19 (+4) | 21 (+5) |

**Saving Throws** Int +9, Wis +8, Cha +9  
**Skills** Arcana +9, Insight +8, Perception +8, Stealth +5  
**Senses** darkvision 120 ft. passive Perception 14  
**Languages** Deep Speech, Undercommon, telepathy 2 miles  
**Challenge** 9 (5000 XP)

**Creature Sense.** The ulitharid is aware of the presence of creatures within 2 miles of it that have an Intelligence score of 4 or higher. It knows the distance and direction to each creature, as well as each creature's intelligence score, but can't sense anything else about it. A creature protected by a mind blank spell, a nondetection spell, or similar magic can't be perceived in this manner.

**Innate Spellcasting.** The ulitharid's innate spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 17). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no components:

At will: *detect thoughts*, *levitate*

1/day each: *confusion*, *dominate monster*, *eyebite*, *feeblemind*, *mass suggestion*, *plane shift* (self only), *project image*, *scrying*, *telekinesis*

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

**Psionic Hub.** If an elder brain establishes a psychic link with the ulitharid, the elder brain can form a psychic link with any other creature the ulitharid can detect using its Creature Sense. Any such link ends if the creature falls outside the telepathy ranges of both the ulitharid and the elder brain. The ulitharid can maintain its psychic link with the elder brain regardless of the distance between them, so long as they are both on the same plane of existence. If the ulitharid is more than 5 miles away from the elder brain, it can end the psychic link at any time (no action required).

### ACTIONS

**Tentacles.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 10 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 27 (4d10 + 5) psychic damage. If the target is Large or smaller, it is grappled (escape DC 14) and must succeed on a DC 17 Intelligence saving throw or be stunned until this grapple ends.

**Extract Brain.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one incapacitated humanoid grappled by the ulitharid. *Hit:* 55 (10d10) piercing damage. If this damage reduces the target to 0 hit points, the ulitharid kills the target by extracting and devouring its brain.

**Mind Blast.** The ulitharid magically emits psychic energy in a 60-foot cone. Each creature in that area must succeed on a DC 17 Intelligence saving throw or take 31 (4d12 + 5) psychic damage and be stunned for 1 minute. A target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

## UMBER HULK

Large monstrosity, chaotic evil

**Armor Class** 18 (natural armor)  
**Hit Points** 93 (11d10 + 33)  
**Speed** 30 ft., burrow 20 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|---------|
| 20 (+5) | 13 (+1) | 16 (+3) | 9 (-1) | 10 (+0) | 10 (+0) |

**Senses** darkvision 120 ft., tremorsense 60 ft. passive Perception 10  
**Languages** UMBER HULK  
**Challenge** 5 (1800 XP)

**Confusing Gaze.** When a creature starts its turn within 30 feet of the umber hulk and is able to see the umber hulk's eyes, the umber hulk can magically force it to make a DC 15 Charisma saving throw, unless the umber hulk is incapacitated.

On a failed saving throw, the creature can't take reactions until the start of its next turn and rolls a d8 to determine what it does during that turn. On a 1 to 4, the creature does nothing. On a 5 or 6, the creature takes no action but uses all its movement to move in a random direction. On a 7 or 8, the creature makes one melee attack against a random creature, or it does nothing if no creature is within reach.

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 can't see the umber hulk until the start of its next turn, when it can avert its eyes again. If the creature looks at the umber hulk in the meantime, it must immediately make the save.

**Tunneler.** The umber hulk can burrow through solid rock at half its burrowing speed and leaves a 5-foot-wide, 8-foot-high tunnel in its wake.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The umber hulk makes three attacks: two with its claws and one with its mandibles.

**Claw.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d8+5) slashing damage.

**Mandibles.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (2d8+5) slashing damage.

## VAMPIRE SPAWN

Medium undead, neutral evil

**Armor Class** 15 (natural armor)  
**Hit Points** 82 (11d8 + 33)  
**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 16 (+3) | 16 (+3) | 16 (+3) | 11 (+0) | 10 (+0) | 12 (+1) |

**Saving Throws** Dex +6, Wis +3

**Skills** Perception +3, Stealth +6

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

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

**Languages** the languages it knew in life

**Challenge** 5 (1800 XP)

**Regeneration.** The vampire regains 10 hit points at the start of its turn if it has at least 1 hit point and isn't in sunlight or running water. If the vampire takes radiant damage or damage from holy water, this trait doesn't function at the start of the vampire's next turn.

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

**Vampire Weaknesses.** The vampire has the following flaws:

**Forbiddance.** The vampire can't enter a residence without an invitation from one of the occupants.

**Harmed by Running Water.** The vampire takes 20 acid damage when it ends its turn in running water.

**Stake to the Heart.** The vampire is destroyed if a piercing weapon made of wood is driven into its heart while it is incapacitated in its resting place.

**Sunlight Hypersensitivity.** The vampire takes 20 radiant damage when it starts its turn in sunlight. While in sunlight, it has disadvantage on attack rolls and ability checks.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The vampire makes two attacks, only one of which can be a bite attack.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one willing creature, or a creature that is grappled by the vampire, incapacitated, or restrained. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage plus 7 (2d6) necrotic damage. The target's hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the necrotic damage taken, and the vampire regains hit points equal to that amount. The reduction lasts until the target finishes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0.

**Claws.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 8 (2d4 + 3) slashing damage. Instead of dealing damage, the vampire can grapple the target (escape DC 13).

## VAMPIRE

Medium undead (shapechanger), lawful evil

**Armor Class** 16 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 144 (17d8 + 68)

**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 18 (+4) | 18 (+4) | 18 (+4) | 17 (+3) | 15 (+2) | 18 (+4) |

**Saving Throws** Dex +9, Wis +7, Cha +9

**Skills** Perception +7, Stealth +9

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

**Senses** darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 17

**Languages** the languages it knew in life

**Challenge** 13 (10000 XP)

**Legendary Resistance (3/Day).** If the vampire fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

**Misty Escape.** When it drops to 0 hit points outside its resting place, the vampire transforms into a cloud of mist (as in the Shapechanger trait) instead of falling unconscious, provided that it isn't in sunlight or running water. If it can't transform, it is destroyed.

While it has 0 hit points in mist form, it can't revert to its vampire form, and it must reach its resting place within 2 hours or be destroyed. Once in its resting place, it reverts to its vampire form. It is then paralyzed until it regains at least 1 hit point. After spending 1 hour in its resting place with 0 hit points, it regains 1 hit point.

**Regeneration.** The vampire regains 20 hit points at the start of its turn if it has at least 1 hit point and isn't in sunlight or running water. If the vampire takes radiant damage or damage from holy water, this trait doesn't function at the start of the vampire's next turn.

**Shapechanger.** If the vampire isn't in sunlight or running water, it can use its action to polymorph into a Tiny bat or a Medium cloud of mist, or back into its true form.

While in bat form, the vampire can't speak, its walking speed is 5 feet, and it has a flying speed of 30 feet. Its statistics, other than its size and speed, are unchanged. Anything it is wearing transforms with it, but nothing it is carrying does. It reverts to its true form if it dies.

While in mist form, the vampire can't take any actions, speak, or manipulate objects. It is weightless, has a flying speed of 20 feet, can hover, and can enter a hostile creature's space and stop there. In addition, if air can pass through a space, the mist can do so without squeezing, and it can't pass through water. It has advantage on Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution saving throws, and it is immune to all nonmagical damage, except the damage it takes from sunlight.

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

**Vampire Weaknesses.** The vampire has the following flaws:

**Forbiddance.** The vampire can't enter a residence without an invitation from one of the occupants.

**Harmed by Running Water.** The vampire takes 20 acid damage if it ends its turn in running water.

**Stake to the Heart.** If a piercing weapon made of wood is driven into the vampire's heart while the vampire is incapacitated in its resting place, the vampire is paralyzed until the stake is removed.

**Sunlight Hypersensitivity.** The vampire takes 20 radiant damage when it starts its turn in sunlight. While in sunlight, it has disadvantage on attack rolls and ability checks.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack (Vampire Form Only).** The vampire makes two attacks, only one of which can be a bite attack.

**Unarmed Strike (Vampire Form Only).** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage. Instead of dealing damage, the vampire can grapple the target (escape DC 18).

**Bite (Bat Or Vampire Form Only).** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one willing creature, or a creature that is grappled by the vampire, incapacitated, or restrained. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage plus 10 (3d6) necrotic damage. The target's hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the necrotic damage taken, and the vampire regains hit points equal to that amount. The reduction lasts until the target finishes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0. A humanoid slain in this way and then buried in the ground rises the following night as a vampire spawn under the vampire's control.

**Charm.** The vampire targets one humanoid it can see within 30 feet of it. If the target can see the vampire, the target must succeed on a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw against this magic or be charmed by the vampire. The charmed target regards the vampire as a trusted friend to be heeded and protected. Although the target isn't under the vampire's control, it takes the vampire's requests or actions in the most favorable way it can, and it is a willing target for the vampire's bite attack.

Each time the vampire or the vampire's companions do anything harmful to the target, it can repeat the saving throw, ending the effect on itself on a success. Otherwise, the effect lasts 24 hours or until the vampire is destroyed, is on a different plane of existence than the target, or takes a bonus action to end the effect.

**Children Of The Night.** The vampire magically calls 2d4 swarms of bats or rats, provided that the sun isn't up. While outdoors, the vampire can call 3d6 wolves instead. The called creatures arrive in 1d4 rounds, acting as allies of the vampire and obeying its spoken commands. The beasts remain for 1 hour, until the vampire dies, or until the vampire dismisses them as a bonus action.

## VAMPIRE

### LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The vampire can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The vampire regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

**Move.** The vampire moves up to its speed without provoking opportunity attacks.

**Unarmed Strike.** The vampire makes one unarmed strike.

**Bite (Costs 2 Actions).** The vampire makes one bite attack.



## VETERAN

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

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

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

**Skills** Athletics +5, Perception +2  
**Senses** passive Perception 12  
**Languages** any one language (usually Common)  
**Challenge** 3 (700 XP)

### ACTIONS

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

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

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

**Heavy Crossbow.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, range 100/400 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d10+1) piercing damage.

## YOUNG BLUE DRAGON

Large dragon, lawful evil

**Armor Class** 18 (natural armor)  
**Hit Points** 152 (16d10 + 64)  
**Speed** 40 ft., burrow 40 ft., fly 80 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 21 (+5) | 10 (+0) | 19 (+4) | 14 (+2) | 13 (+1) | 17 (+3) |

**Saving Throws** Dex +4, Con +8, Wis +5, Cha +7  
**Skills** Perception +9, Stealth +4  
**Damage Immunities** lightning  
**Senses** blindsight 30 ft., darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 19  
**Languages** Common, Draconic  
**Challenge** 9 (5000 XP)

### ACTIONS

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

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 16 (2d10 + 5) piercing damage plus 5 (1d10) lightning damage.

**Claw.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d6 + 5) slashing damage.

**Lightning Breath.** The dragon exhales lightning in a 60-foot line that is 5 feet wide. Each creature in that line must make a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw, taking 55 (10d10) lightning damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

## WYVERN

Large dragon, unaligned

**Armor Class** 13 (natural armor)  
**Hit Points** 110 (13d10 + 39)  
**Speed** 20 ft., fly 80 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 19 (+4) | 10 (+0) | 16 (+3) | 5 (-3) | 12 (+1) | 6 (-2) |

**Skills** Perception +4  
**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14  
**Languages** -  
**Challenge** 6 (2300 XP)

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The wyvern makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its stinger. While flying, it can use its claws in place of one other attack.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 11 (2d6+4) piercing damage.

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

**Stinger.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 11 (2d6+4) piercing damage. The target must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, taking 24 (7d6) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

## YOUNG RED DRAGON

Large dragon, chaotic evil

**Armor Class** 18 (natural armor)  
**Hit Points** 178 (17d10 + 85)  
**Speed** 40 ft., climb 40 ft., fly 80 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 23 (+6) | 10 (+0) | 21 (+5) | 14 (+2) | 11 (+0) | 19 (+4) |

**Saving Throws** Dex +4, Con +9, Wis +4, Cha +8  
**Skills** Perception +8, Stealth +4  
**Damage Immunities** fire  
**Senses** blindsight 30 ft., darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 18  
**Languages** Common, Draconic  
**Challenge** 10 (5900 XP)

### ACTIONS

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

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 17 (2d10 + 6) piercing damage plus 3 (1d6) fire damage.

**Claw.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d6 + 6) slashing damage.

**Fire Breath (Recharge 5-6).** The dragon exhales fire in a 30-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 17 Dexterity saving throw, taking 56 (16d6) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.