

DUNGEON OF THE MAD MAGE

COMPANION:

BUNDLE V



You Save \$3.00!

BY WYATT TRULL

CONTAINS:
LEVELS XIX-XXIII



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Cover: *Mage with Marionette* by Dean Spencer,
hallowed be his name

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FOREWORD

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").

App refers to an Appendix, either 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

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.

APPENDIX C: EFFECTS

Appendix C includes effects or traps, such as Madness, that are encountered in more than one chapter or otherwise warrant their own section to detail.

ROLEPLAYING THE MAD MAGE

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 XIX: CAVERNS OF OOZE

QUICK NOTES

- Nothing on this level is serious. The *Companion* intends to make it as ridiculous as possible.
- Nothing prohibits the party from quickly advancing to the next level of Undermountain; in fact, they're encouraged to by the genies on this level. Thus, they should be presented with both their first time on this level, as well as random encounters. You should aim to leave this level by the end of one session.
- The genies cannot leave their respective areas even if the party gives its rival the phylactery. However, you can lift this restriction to facilitate vengeful attacks on the party. See *Special Events* under *Areas of Note* for details.
- Gargoyles, present in Area 9, cannot be harmed by non-magical attacks from non-adamantine weapons.
- It goes without saying that the genies on this level cannot grant wishes to the party. However, they're certain to imply to the adventurers that they can, in return for a certain lich's phylactery...
- Area 10 is deceptively deadly; if a creature falls prey to the culvert, they *will* drown in ooze as they're swept up in the ooze-river's current.
- If your party is lost and aimless on this level, direct Urm, the mud mephit in Area 4, to them. It can deliver them to both the genies, who give the party the quest to retrieve Ezzat's phylactery from Level 20.

PREVIOUSLY ON *DUNGEON OF THE MAD MAGE*

Keep in mind the following when running this level:

- On Level 10, the party may have come across altars and statues dedicated to Ghaunadaur, the drow god of oozes and other slimy creatures.
- As described in the supplement, *Halaster's Game*, the Mad Mage is fond of announcing to the show's viewers and contestants this episode's sponsor. The party may have been needled with the advertisement, "This episode of *Dungeon of the Mad Mage* is brought to you by the Ghaunadaur ooze-clerics of Undermountain: *fhinala-pekta-een-een-pa-pha! Paaa-pha!* The Church of Ghaunadaur is not responsible for any caustic burns, mutations, or reduction to jelly matter that occur during or after baptism."
- On Level 16, the adventurers may have been confronted with proof that there are spacefaring species living out across the cosmos, that there is life among the stars. If they encounter *The Scavenger*, you cement this fact.
- The illithids of Level 17 have a host of orogs under their control; while never confirmed in *DotMM*, there's no doubt that they were all survivors of *The Scavenger's* crash and Captain N'ghathrod's starved betrayal.

HALASTER'S GAME

As an immortal magus of great power, Halaster has found himself acting as other higher beings do. Sure, he could take the fight to the lich Ezzat himself, but such a task is beneath him. Like deities and feylords, Halaster has a game of cat-and-mouse to play. That's where the adventurers come in—and, if you play the Mad Mage as the game show host of *Dungeon of the Mad Mage*, he knows it'll make great TV.

Level 19 excels as a short chapter sandwiched between two dangerous levels of Undermountain. After Vanrakdoom, the adventurers (and players) will need a breather. The party can run through this level passively, perhaps only facing the oozes and orogs scattered across the caverns.

The Chessmaster. The Mad Mage, for his part, is surprisingly silent on this level. He relies on Urm, the mud mephit in Area 4, to push his pawns to Level 20. He should, for once, keep his distance from the party as they entertain offers from the genies.

A Rock & A Hard Place. The party must pick their poison if they agree to the genies' terms. Of the two, Ichthyglug the marid is surely the gentler patron to spurn, for it lacks the minions that its rival has. In contrast, Jarúk is sadistic and cruel. It's backed up by minions that can go where it cannot.

MAXIMUM ABSURDITY

The Caverns of Ooze are already absurd, but it's time to crank it up a notch. As the genies already offer the chance for you to sing, we might as well play some... copyrighted songs throughout the level. Adjust the campaign to better fit the song, such as changing the name of Rukha (see Area 2) to Gaston. Otherwise, simply ignore any discrepancies the music may offer.

Several songs are suggested throughout the level with this variant, which can be found online. Play them at the terrible risk of summoning the ghost of Walt Disney.

Knot in the Weave. Spacefaring individuals (such as the pirates from *The Scavenger*) are especially vulnerable to the Knot in the Weave, the very force that drove Halaster insane. Continued exposure has planted seeds of madness in the crew, who now sing just as the genies on this floor do. Or that's how you can rationalize it, anyway.

AREAS OF NOTE

The following areas are of note:

"RANDOM" ENCOUNTERS

The Caverns of Ooze are large but empty. The party *should* face the encounters outlined in *DotMM*, but with added narrative.

HUGE GRAY OOZE

The ooze is best encountered in the tunnel to Level 18. It slides in from the tunnel to Area 13. When it attacks, Halaster telepathically announces, "This episode of *Dungeon of the Mad Mage* is brought to you by the Ghaunadaur ooze-clerics of Under-mountain: *fhinala-pekta-een-een-pa-pha! Paaa-pha!* The Church of Ghaunadaur is not responsible for any caustic burns, mutations, or reduction to jelly matter that occur during or after baptism."

The ooze has swallowed 1d4+4 willing **cultists** of Ghaunadaur, who are slowly being dissolved. These masochists, however, consider it a trial imparted by their deity. While in the ooze, they are considered restrained. Likewise, they're unarmed and unable to attack. They're simply along for the ride and shout insane gibberings held dear by the Church of Ghaunadaur:

- "Pekta-een... Pekta-eeeeen!"
- "Come on in; the water's pekta-een."
- "It's all pekta-een in here, my man."
- "Life has many doors, Ed-boy!"
- "Surf's always up with Ghaunadaur."
- "Join us! Free *baklenal* on Tuesdays!"
- "I am one with the ooze; the ooze is with me. One with the ooze, the ooze is with me." (When one cultist says this, the next nearest cultist immediately adds, "He is one with the ooze; the ooze is with us. He is one with me; the ooze is with us.")

INTELLIGENT BLACK PUDDINGS

Make the most of the puddings, who can harangue the party throughout the caverns. They should attack at least twice, preferably as the adventurers leave a genie's territory and while near *The Scavenger*.

Maximum Absurdity. If the black puddings hope to return to their true forms, the song *Human Again* from *Beauty and the Beast* would be perfect. At your table, you may see fit to make that change to invoke this variant. Otherwise, the songs *Circle of Life* or *Hakuna Matata* from *Lion King* serve to express the oozes' jubilation. Per this variant, they can still speak, despite being turned into oozelings.

SPACE OROGS

The space ologs are best encountered along the banks of the ooze river, such as in Area 3B, 4, and 5A. They must take care to avoid provoking the genies' wrath and thus won't pursue prey into those territories.

Maximum Absurdity. Driven insane by hunger and the Knot in the Weave (see Ch. 1 of *DotMM*), the ologs sing as they fight. In particular, they sing *Can You Feel the Love Tonight* from *Lion King*.

1. THE RESPLENDENT GROTTO...

As the adventurers descend from Level 18, they should encounter the huge **gray ooze** described in "Random" Encounters above.

1C. ICHTHYGLUG'S CAVERN

The air is warm, humid. It clings to your flesh as the scent of the sea overwhelms your senses. Melodic music brings you back to better days, days on the beach and in the surf.

As you round the bend and approach the cavern's heart, an enchanting voice booms, "Welcome to my grotto!"

That's when you see it swimming in a pool of shimmering water: a piscine creature dressed in flowing robes whose cuffs are embroidered with illustrious pearls. You know what you're looking at; the legends have never failed you before. It's a genie, a genie here and in the flesh.

Continue with Ichthyglug's song once you finish with the text above.

Music. Ignoring *DotMM*'s specification that the music playing is harp music, you can use any of the following songs at your table:

- The opening to *Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time*
- Two Steps from Hell's *Colin Frake*
- Two Steps From Hell's *Legend of Velkee*
- Two Steps From Hell's *Nightwood* (seriously, the entire album is amazing).

Roleplaying Ichthyglug. The marid is as covetous as the rest of its kin; it's truly a shame that these new, marvelous baubles (the party) must be sent away to retrieve Ezzat's phylactery, as Ichthyglug would like nothing more than to keep them around as trophies and trinkets. Still, the marid is kind and full of mirth, and fond of tranquil music. Whether the party agrees to fetch Ezzat's phylactery, Ichthyglug allows them to rest in its cavern, offering the "freshest of refresh-ments" (which is water drawn from its native plane). Ichthyglug can also be fleshed out with the following sample dialogue:

- "You must take care, for the lich Ezzat is a master of magic. A handful of heroes like yourself have fallen prey to his dark magics and I have wept each and every time. Should you fall... I will weep for you as well."
- "No doubt the mephit will lead you to Jarûk, that ground-hugging dao, if its minions do not deliver you first to its sandy doorstep. Tread carefully, for the dao are greed-manifest. Trust not its offers, for a usurer never lends money it has no intention of reaping interest on."
- "...afterwards, you may join me in my coral palace in the depths of the Plane of Water. Together we can enjoy such lavish luxuries like olives, perfume, flayed eels, music, and the like. You can check out at any time, though you can't ever leave..."

- "The ooze that so superfluously fills these caverns comes from the Swamp of Oblivion: the border between the pristine Plane of Water and that muddy realm that is the Plane of Earth. It is a dismal place, an affront to the very senses! I mean, can you imagine it! Purest water tainted by soil and earth and conceit!"

Maximum Absurdity. If using this variant, play the song *Hawaiian Rollercoaster Ride* from the film *Lilo & Stitch* and use it to voice Ichthyglug's desire to return home. *Under the Sea* from *The Little Mermaid* is also a fitting song to describe the Plane of Water's mystical beauty.

Ichthyglug's Quest. When the genie propositions the adventurers to retrieve Ezzat's phylactery, he of course does it in song. Read the following, while keeping in mind that the author of the *Companion* is as tone-deaf as they come.

I've been pressed into service!
Can't you help me so?
Below here lairs a lich,
Did ya happen to know?

See the Mad Mage... he's got a grudge!
That lich has got to go!
Ezzat's his name, a real mean fella!
Oh, can't you help me so?

Venture there for me!
Return with his phylactery!
I'll reward you, I swear!
Loot beyond satisfactory!

So, what say you, pal?
You reap what you sow,
Riches can be yours!
Oh, won't you help me so?

2. SPACE OROGS

Unlike *DotMM*, the space orogs should be hostile but hesitant to attack the party. Rukha has more to gain by treating with the outsiders at first, namely in the form of rations. Meanwhile, her men circle around the party to attack if they prove less than generous.

Roleplaying Rukha. Rukha speaks Common—or rather, a strange dialect of it spoken by spacefarers. Her companions follow suit. When she first interacts with the party, it never even occurs to Rukha that they might not know of space travel and it would shock her to learn otherwise. Calm, civil, and level-headed, she may surprise adventurers with an unkind opinion of the average orc. You can draw upon any of the following sample dialogue to help shape the story she feeds the party:

- "We were laying low in the planet's orbit, far outside the eyes of Johnny Law, when a portal opened up before the ship. Our captain saw it as a boon—and fearing that the constables were on our tail, we took it. All readings suggested we'd end up on the edge of the solar system. Instead, we crashed in this dismal cavern."

- "Much of our crew hails from Wheeled H'catha, farthest orb from the sun. Nothing on this earth or the next will convince me to go back; I'd rather die a brigand than live under a beholder's lash."
- "Captain's an illithid. One of the good ones, I suppose. Or was, before he started to starve. When he ran out of pickled brains, he turned on us. Look, I know a rabid dog can't help but bite, but I don't have to just give it an arm. We high-tailed it outta there."
- "Without the spelljamming helm, our craft's dead in the water. When we crashed, some old-timer flashed into the Bridge, snatched it, and disappeared as fast as he came in. Saw it m'self, an' I'll remember his fearsome battle cry 'til the end of my days: 'Yoink!'"
- "You don't know what a spelljamming helm is? What are you, straight primitive? The helm is a high-backed ornate chair attuned to the very stars. A magus sat upon it can traverse a million miles in a matter of hours."

Maximum Absurdity. With this variant, the song *Gaston* from *Beauty and the Beast* should be played as the adventurers overhear a conversation between the orogs in which they praise Rukha (or "Gaston" if you see fit to change her name) prior to their arrival.

3. OOZE THERE?

3A. THE GREAT OOZE MARCH

The ooze meanders in a lazy river throughout these stinking caverns. As you tread upon its banks, the surface ripples! You instinctively ready for another peculiar confrontation—but the ooze has other plans. It coalesces into a conga line of strange, geometric beings: modrons.

These modrons, however, are not native to that distant plane of Mechanus. Forged from ooze, they clasp their hands upon each other's sharp-angled shoulders in brotherly love. They march onward, making little progress against the ooze-river's current, but still they sing in camaraderie:

"The modrons go marching one by one, huzzah, huzzah. The modrons go marching one by one, huzzah! Huzzah! The modrons go marching one by one! The little one stops to share a pun, and they all go marching on!

"The modrons go marching two by two, huzzah, huzzah. The modrons go marching two by two, huzzah! Huzzah! The modrons go marching two by two! The simple ones stops to tune its axiomatic-mind lest it defy its basic programming—and they all go marching on!"

If left unchecked, this song reaches thirty-six before the ooze-modrons collapse back into goo.

4. THE WEEPING EYE

The ooze-river's tide is strongest here, and you can see why: the river begins not from deep underground, but from a floating orb of murky slime that weeps ooze into the cavern. It floats above the tide, two armlengths in diameter.

When the adventurers reach the "M" on the map, read the following:

You sweep your gaze across the fetid river, catching sight of ripples that originate from the bank. You squint, making out the shape of an imp made of mud. It's absentmindedly poking the surface of the ooze with a stick.

Urm is bored to tears; if it wasn't already compelled by a *geas* spell to see Halaster's quest fulfilled, it'd approach the party itself, flying above the river if not diving into its foul depths.

Roleplaying Urm. Urm belongs on a farm—which is what the Swamp of Oblivion is most like among the Inner Planes. It starts just about every sentence with "boy" or "lemme tell ya." It's an ungrateful being, prone to blaming others for its woes. You can draw on any of the sample dialogue to share its tale:

- "Boy, lemme tell ya a tale. There I was, minding my own business in the Swamp-Blivion, when a sorta flood swept me out and into the Material Plane. Suddenly, I'm pressed into service by some old man by his gods-damned *geas* spell, forced t'be messenger and punchin' bag to two genies, both of 'em held up to some bargain with the same magus that bound me. Neither can hold a tune. I'm Urm, by the way."
- "Per my *geas*, I'm to act as messenger 'tween the genies bound here. Mostly I'm sent to spirit along insults."
- "The dao roosts in that direction. Name's Jarûk. Lives in a sandpit, tended to by living boulders and gargoyles. Cruel as the rest of its kin, no matter how civil a smile it wears."
- "Ichthyglug 'the Volum-nous' as it calls itself is a marid lairin' in the grotto thatta-way. Loves flattery more than anythin' else, but don't you dare enter its pool."
- "Neither Jarûk or Ichthyglug can leave their d'mains. They're bound there by the same magic of the magus as I am. 'Til they get some lich's phy-lak-to-ree, they cain't return to the Elemental Planes. Way I see it, they's desperatè."

6. CAVE WITH A VIEW

As you trudge through ankle-deep ooze in another otherwise nondescript cavern, you spot a gargantuan cuttlefish through a gap in the wall.

You're so distracted by this oddity that you trip and fall into the muck. But when you clear the ooze from your eyes, that fish is still there—an utterly *massive* cuttlefish stranded in Undermountain. As you peer through the gloom, agog and confused, you make out finer details: the oddity is actually an entire vessel carved to resemble a cuttlefish. Its eyes are portholes and iron rivets line its sides. There are no sails, no oars, but you're certain it's a ship of some kind—which begs the question: what sort of moron models a vessel after a *cuttlefish*?

7. STANDING GATE TO LEVEL 21

Floating before two crystalline menhirs is a beholder, silent and brooding and patient. The air is thick with strange spores that meander about in the sour air.

Maximum Absurdity. Honestly, at this point, even the demons ought to be singing. As they look like a mockery of apes and boars, they sing *I Wanna Be Like You* from *The Jungle Book*. Those that listen to the entire song and compliment the demons' singing are rewarded with the command word needed to open the arcane gate. Otherwise, they attack.

8. THANKS FOR THE MEMORIES

While the adventurers are in this area, they should experience every memory the **gas spores** can offer. These memories are described in Area 7. If you don't want to inundate your party with them now, just have them harmlessly inhale spores throughout the level without the danger of facing an actual gas spore.

9. HIGH GROUND

When the adventurers encounter the gargoyles, read the following:

Out from the dark comes the thunderous beating of wings on stale air and the scratch of stone on stone. They emerge from the gloom as a single flock: gargoyles brandishing outlandish grins on their stony faces.

Their leader lands before you and renders to you a deep bow. The gargoyle babbles in a language that sounds like stones getting it on. It bears an air of hospitality.

While this spectacle unfolds, you spot a sixth gargoyle flying away, towards the cavern's rear, but whether it's as a messenger or tattletale, you do not know.

The gargoyles, proud but amicable servants of Jarûk, treat the party as honored guests.

Gargoylic Insult. If the gargoyles deign the party as fools, one hurls an insult in Terran: "Your mother was a mephit and your father reeked of fireberries!"

10. CULVERT

As with all potentially deadly traps, this one ought to be broadcasted to the party.

Maximum Absurdity. If a character falls prey to the culvert, the ooze sings *A Whole New World* from *Aladdin* as they're scraped against dagger-like stones and drowned in viscous ooze. Two faces even form in the ooze: a man and woman's. Their haunting duet will be the last thing that poor fool ever hears.

11. THE GLITTERING CAVERNS...

11B. JARÛK'S CAVERN

This cavern is wall-papered in violet crystals that gleam with a rainbow of light, blazing brighter than the fiercest stars of the night sky—and without any darkness to diminish their light. It's as if you've walked into the stomach of a geode. At its heart is a pit of sand.

Music is everywhere, reverberating off of every stone and rock of this place, rolling through the cavern like an invisible force. As you listen, mesmerized by the drums, the sands stir. A voice booms, "Welcome to my cavern!"

Out from the sand pit looms a creature whose flesh is stone. Its features are humanoid, but its eyes are twin topazes that gleam with the fury of the sun. Dressed in a robe of soft-worked golden-scales, you recognize the creature from legend: a genie of the Plane of Earth... a dao in the "flesh."

Rock Music. Yeah, we're really leaning into the rock puns. Consider the following songs to play:

- Metallica's *Orion*

- Ozzy Osbourne's *I Don't Want to Stop*
- The Scorpion's *Rock You Like a Hurricane*
- Led Zeppelin's *Immigrant Song*
- Kiss's *Rock'n'Roll All Night*
- Twisted Sister's *I Wanna Rock*
- Deaf Election's *Never Get to Me*

Roleplaying Jarûk. Jarûk keeps to an imperious tone, as it's used to being obeyed. All dao are cruel by their very nature and Jarûk is no exception. It will only ever see "lesser" creatures as pawns to its own ambitions; the adventurers are just the latest stock of pieces to be moved across its chessboard. You can flesh out the dao with any of this sample dialogue:

- "When I am freed, I will return to the Plane of Earth. To my call will my vassals flock, their levies raised and armed. And I will return here to teach that impetuous mage the price of arrogance. He will taste the fury of the Earth—and when his broken body is lain at my feet, I will lean down to whisper the slur he first addressed me with long ago when I was ripped away from my palace: "Howdy."
- "Ezzat is a cunning foe, indeed. In undeath, he has found the strength and safety of the earth, burying himself in a stalagmite tower decorated in runes. These runes... they sing. I hear the song as I ponder the mysteries. The 'Runestone,' as the mage calls it, is a tremendous font of power. I often wonder from which dao-lord it was stolen from, for it is impossible for a mere mortal to create such an impressive crystal."
- "These caverns are filled with the blood and strength of the Plane of Earth. I speak, of course, of the ooze that clogs the subterranean arteries of Undermountain. It hails from the Swamp of Oblivion, a frontier blessed with charitable donations from my kin on the Plane of Earth. It is the duty of the strong to bolster the weak, is it not? And so, we give graciously to our neighbors in the Plane of Water, adding to their empty lives the soil and salt of earth—to give them purpose and pride. Are we dao not generous as we are regal? Ah, but the short-sighted marid can only balk at a gift, much like an ape does when handed a hammer."

Maximum Absurdity. If you utilize this variant, play *Prince Ali* from *Aladdin* when the adventurers first meet Jarûk (changing its name, if necessary). It's heralded by a parade of gargoyles, galeb duhrs, medusas, earth elementals, and more.

Alternatively, you can play *I Just Can't Wait to be King* from the *Lion King* to describe Jarûk's tragic history and ambitions on the Plane of Earth. If freed from Halaster, Jarûk will return to its kingdom to reclaim the throne of its sire from its rivals, which was stolen long ago.

Jarûk's Quest. When the genie tasks the party with retrieving Ezzat's phylactery, he of course does it in song. Read the following, while keeping in mind that the *Companion's* author is as tone-deaf as they come.

Listen! Listen well!
This ain't my kind of town.
This ain't where I get down, dig?
That Mage's got me bound!
Now I've a job to do!

Ezzat: lich! Liar!
He lairs just below
in a place that I can't go!
So, believe me when I say,
I've got a job for you!

I know not the Mage's grudge
But 'til Ezzat's gone,
From this place I can't budge!
So, handle this for me!
Get me that phylactery!

Scour that stalagmite tower
for the lich's precious jewel,
and my debt you'll accrue!
I promise all within my power!
If only this job you'll do!

12. GHAUNADAUR SHRINE

When the adventurers arrive here, they witness a new cleric being transformed into an ooze. In addition to the three intelligent **black puddings** are six **cultists** and a **cult fanatic**, gathered in prayer as a seventh cultist receives "Ghaunadaur's" blessing before the statue. The cultists are still human, but parts of their bodies have become amorphous. Some have ooze-tentacles for arms, others viscous pools of ooze for eyeballs. The cult fanatic is missing its nose, which has been replaced with a blue pit of ooze that ripples with every breath he takes. Read the following:

Just when you thought you were done with cultists, you hear a familiar chanting that floats throughout the depths: "*Fhinala-pekta-een-een-pa-pha! Paaa-pha! Fhinala pekta-een!* One with the ooze, one with the earth! One with the ooze, one with the earth! Ghaunadaur swallow us *pekta-een* and make us whole!"

As you creep forward, hiding among stalagmites, you see them: assorted freaks dancing before a shrine in sputtering torchlight. One of their number kneels before a statue carved to resemble a lurching ooze-creature, its dozen clawed arms outstretched to welcome this new supplicant.

These freaks are horrors unto themselves, half-dissolved into abominations. You make out a brute with an ooze-tentacle for an arm, a ragged young man whose eyes weep black ooze, and more. These fanatics have been forever marred by the ooze they so clearly worship.

As the party watches, the statue shivers and moves. It embraces the seventh cultist with its clawed arms and drenches him in opaque slime. In the sheen of it, one lucky adventurer can glimpse the grinning visage of Halaster Blackcloak himself. When the statue finishes vomiting, the cultist is missing—but from the ooze on the floor emerges a new **black pudding** (added to the three already here). The cultists go wild, cheering and hooping with calls of "*Pekta-een! Pekta-eeeeen!*"

13. THE SCAVENGER

After their foray to the Crystal Labyrinth, the party should now know that there are spacefaring cultures out there—but *The Scavenger* truly cements the truth by proving that strange, steel ships can cross the stars—and that it is *the party* who are primitive beings.

When the adventurers near the ship, the Mad Mage telepathically whispers to them. Read the following:

Words worm their way into your brain, drawing out the familiar rasp of Halaster Blackcloak:

"No one would have believed it if I told them that our world was being watched keenly and closely by intelligences greater than man's—but not mine—and yet as mortal as his own. If only they could see what I have seen, heard what I've heard, tasted what I've touched. The cosmos are vast indeed, its secrets and resources ours for the taking, if only we could put aside our petty differences and—"

A strange sound consumes your brain: the sound of metal rapidly striking brass. The ringing pounds across your head, drawing tears. The Mad Mage grunts, "Sorry, gotta take this—my regards to Captain Hook!"

Once the party get onto the ship, the four **gray slaadi** approach them under the guise of orogs. They have orders to bring guests to their captain in Area 13G. They won't take "no" for an answer—for they can't actually disobey N'ghathrod, who possesses their control gems.

Roleplaying N'ghathrod. Desperate to cut a deal, N'ghathrod can be cowed into submission. Alas, tigers can't change their stripes and still the mind flayer hungers. Like a pissy housecat or domesticated zombie, it extends its tentacles threateningly at an opportune moment in a vain attempt to devour a person's brain. Proverbially spraying N'ghathrod with water causes it to back down... for a time.

You can use any of the following sample dialogue:

- When it enters combat, N'ghathrod unsheathes its rapier and telepathically snarls, "Avast, ye rock-bound priss!"
- "We were cruising at a steady 45-million knots when the portal opened; I saw it as salvation... a fool I was. It spat us out on this primitive world, in the depths of the black earth. I know not by what magic we were brought here, but I know who stranded us: an old-man by the initials of "H.B." He left them in the dust."
- "When the mage appeared, it was without flash nor fan-fare. One moment he was just there; and with a single arcane word, he worked terrible magic! I will remember it 'til the end of my days as I work to replicate it for my-self. That spell... That *word*. It fills me with dread and wonder: "Yoink!"
- "You must recover the spelljamming helm! We cannot die on this rock! Come with me, and you will see worlds of pure imagination! We will cross the stars together!"

Maximum Absurdity. Under this variant, Captain N'ghathrod and its four **gray slaadi** sing *The Elegant Captain Hook* from *Peter Pan*. They begin when N'ghathrod offers the adventurers the chance to join his crew and traverse the stars—if they manage to find his spelljamming helm. Using divination spells, the arcanist knows that it's "hundreds of leagues" down, deeper in the earth, in a sanctum radiating with arcane magic. When it offers the party a ride across the stars, if they recover the helm, N'ghathrod sings *Pure Imagination* from *Willy Wonka*.

15. STANDING GATE TO LEVEL 17

When the adventurers arrive here, they find 1d4+3 space **orogs** scratching their heads at the Standing Gate. Read the following:

You hear the chatter of Cockney accents as you stroll through this corner of the caverns. Several orcs are gathered about, each scratching their head or voicing doubt. At last you see it rising from the muck: one of Halaster's arcane gates. Two pillars share a lintel upon which an arrow symbol has been carved.

"That's rubbish, Gregorel," an orc grumbles. "Sure as the turn of the worlds, there's no way we need a gods-damned arrow."

Another orc grimaces. "Y'know nothin,' you wain o' an orc. Shoot an arrow through, see what happens."

"Where are we even gonna get an arrow?"

"On *The Scavenger*."

"I ain't goin' back there," the orc grunts. He casts a look at his brethren. "Anyone else?"

The remaining orcs shake their heads, firm in their solidarity.

The orogs attack the party only if the party fails to provide the solution to the standing gate. Their "leader" is named Gregorel. They speak in a strange dialect of Common used by spacefarers.

16. TUNNEL TO LEVEL 20

Since the adventurers are expected to play ball with the genies, this tunnel is undefended. If the party has yet to meet either (or both) of the genies, either one can use their elemental magic to block the tunnel. Ichthyglug floods it with his water curtains, which turn solid when a creature tries to pass through. Jarûk prefers to collapse the tunnel.

The voice of whichever genie blocked the tunnel floats out, urging the party to meet them in their respective lairs for a "quest of a life-time."

Heads Up. Ezzat, the lich of Level 20, has trapped Area 1 with a *symbol* spell. It cannot be discerned without a DC 20 Intelligence (Investigation) check. The first character to cross over it triggers the spell's death effect and must make a DC 20 Constitution saving throw or take 10d10 necrotic damage. On a success, a creature takes half damage.

SPECIAL EVENTS

You can run either of the following encounters on this level when or if the party returns with Ezzat's phylactery.

DAO-DADDY BEATDOWN

This event can only occur if you allow Jarûk to roam this level after Ezzat's phylactery is instead given to its rival, Ichthyglug. The dao can sense when its rival escapes to the Inner Planes or is informed by the party's decision by Halaster.

Forever condemned to this drag of a dungeon, Jarûk cuts the party off as they try to leave this level by gate or tunnel. Jarûk won't rest until they've been beaten into a bloody pulp for their insolence.

Its cruelty and mastery over the earth certainly makes Jarûk the more dangerous of the two genies.

Bound. In this event, Jarûk can roam anywhere on Level 19, but cannot enter the Expanded Dungeon, nor can it ascend or descend to another level. It likewise cannot escape through any magic short of a *wish* spell—which it lacks the power to grant to mortals.

Wrath of Khan. Jarûk can sense whenever the party returns to this level. When the dao marshals its minions and moves to intercept the party, it chooses any of the following areas to stage its attack, utilizing the terrain to their advantage:

- Area 1: Jarûk collapses the tunnel leading to Level 18 and sends its six **galeb duhrs** rolling towards the party.
- Area 5B: Jarûk's six **gargoyles** boil out from the chasm to accost the party; they attempt to drop the adventurers into the 20-foot-deep pit, which may still be inhabited by intelligent **black puddings**.
- Area 7: Jarûk positions its two **medusas** in the cave's alcoves to petrify the party as they open the gate.
- Area 15: Jarûk seals the two tunnels to Area 13; its six **galeb duhrs** emerge from the water to attack.
- Area 16: Jarûk collapses the tunnel to Level 20, using the same tactics it would in Area 1.

Tactics. Jarûk employs these tactics:

- Jarûk travels and hides within the earth, courtesy of its Earth Glide feature. It uses this to surprise foes from below or aside and to move without provoking attacks of opportunity, save from any foes within 5-feet of its initial descent into the earth.
- Jarûk has several spells at its disposal, but nearly every one requires its concentration. Thus, it relies more on a good thwacking than magic.
- Before engaging its foes in combat, Jarûk casts *conjure elemental* from within the ground, summoning an **earth elemental**, which can also move through stone and soil thanks to its Earth Glide feature.
- To corner a foe, Jarûk can cast *wall of stone*, separating them the party (to do so banishes a conjured elemental). It then takes a maul to that stranded foe.

MARID MELTDOWN

By default, Ichthyglug is bound to its cavern, even after Ezzat's phylactery is given to its rival. You can lift that restriction to facilitate this event. Now bound forever to Undermountain, Ichthyglug seeks revenge against the party for freeing Jarûk. It can sense when the dao leaves or Halaster telepathically taunts the marid. Given the opportunity, Ichthyglug attacks the party when they return to this level.

Bound. Ichthyglug can roam anywhere on Level 19, but cannot enter the Expanded Dungeon, nor can it ascend or descend to another level. It likewise cannot escape through any magic short of a *wish* spell—which it lacks the power to grant to mortals.

Attack of the Cray King. This stony world isn't the marid's oyster, but it can still utilize the viscous ooze-river to attack the party. Only the arcane gate in Area 5B is inaccessible from the nearby river. While it can still attack on dry land, Ichthyglug prefers a watery terrain to use to its advantage. Likewise, it lacks for reinforcements, as opposed to Jarûk's minions, who are vast and mobile.

Tactics. In battle, Ichthyglug employs these tactics:

- Ichthyglug prefers to stick to watery terrain, using the viscous ooze river to its advantage.
- Before combat begins, Ichthyglug summons a **water elemental** with *conjure elemental*.
- As a master of water, Ichthyglug can envelope the six **swarms of quippers** from Area 1 in floating spheres of water, allowing them to attack on dry land or from within the ooze.
- The ooze-river obeys Ichthyglug's call, allowing it to use *control water* on it. The ooze *does* come from the mesh of the Planes of Water and Earth, after all.

EPILOGUE

This level is intentionally short and sure to see the return of the party, unlike all other levels. If the party didn't square off against any antagonists, such as the genies or Captain N'ghathrod, they shouldn't level up to 16th level. Only if they deliver Ezzat's phylactery should they receive the experience. Alternatively, if they defeated N'ghathrod *and* slaughtered any oozes on the level, you may level them up.

Send-Off. You can cap off your session with the send-off below. Unlike other levels, the send-off is the same whether or not you're running the Halaster's Game variant presented in the *Companion*. The send-off likewise has little to do with Level 19 and more Level 20, as Halaster details his relationship with Ezzat—although, it's seeded with lies.

THE SEND-OFF

When the adventurers leave for Level 20, read the following:

The Mad Mage's grave voice pipes up within your mind, stained blue with regret. "Ezzat," he rumbles, as if to himself. "Ezzat... My dearest Ezzat. If only he had not spurned my offers. What a jewel Dweomercore could have been under his stewardship... What could have been..."

Your mind swims as a vision swamps your senses. In it, you see a human with sharp cheekbones—Ezzat; his name is heavy on your lips—frolicking through ghostly meadows, arm in arm with Halaster Blackcloak himself. Together the two unleashed gouts of fire and lances of lightning—but soon Halaster trips into a pit that falls deep into the earth. And when Halaster throws out his hand for Ezzat to catch him, the magus instead looks to the east, across the meadow to a priest whose silent lips seem to shout, "Turn back from this evil path!"

And when Ezzat looks again to Halaster, hanging there on the edge, does he reach out for Blackcloak? Does he brace himself against the earth to take the Mad Mage's weight? No, no he does not. And so, the mage falls deep into the darkness—into Undermountain, where he has fumed ever since.

Your vision rocks back to the present; your mind is wreathed in a haze. What you saw... Surely it was not literal, but how much of it was a lie?

LEVEL XX: RUNESTONE CAVERNS

QUICK NOTES

- This level is a confluence of several factions, especially if you utilize every addition here made by the *Companion*:
 - The Shadowdusk Expedition (added to the tunnel leading to Level 21)
 - The Myconids (Area 4)
 - The Duergar Raiders (Area 7)
 - The Gentlemen Bastards (Area 3)
 - The Stonecloak golems as background
- The Stalagmite Tower *does* count as Ezzat's lair, raising his CR to 22. While the party would be wise to draw him out, he *should* be fought in his lair—and with an Intelligence score of 20, nothing will convince him other-wise, not even his dear pseudodragon familiar, Ipses.
- Ezzat's tower can only be accessed by the front door, which is trapped by a spell. Teleportation spells and spells similar to *passwall* fail to breach the tower, which is also immune to all damage.

PREVIOUSLY ON *DUNGEON OF THE MAD MAGE*

Keep in mind the following when running this level:

Retrieve a Runestone Fragment. The adventurers may have received this quest on the surface; if you forgot to issue it, handle it as a flashback: Volothamp Geddarm—esteemed author and perpetual bachelor—introduced the party to Jalester Silvermane of the City Watch. He promises them his friendship... and the young captain has many friends in high places.

Throwbacks. So late into the campaign, you want to remind the adventurers of their past exploits. It's recommended that you bring back the following characters if they've had any meaningful interaction with the party:

- On Level 6, the party met duergar of Clan Ironeye, led by the half-duergar Skella, during their raid on the Lost Level. You can include them on this level (see Area 7 for details).
- On Levels 7 & 8, the party may have met the Gentlemen Bastards, an adventuring party added to the campaign by the *Companion*. They fell prey to both the bullywugs and nagas of Level 8, but can reprise their roles here.
- As noted in the Epilogue, you can link this level to Level 7 by having Maddgoth make a return if the party clears Ezzat out of the Stalagmite Tower. By the time they return from Level 19, the **archmage** (or **lich**) may have already taken up residence in the tower.
- On Level 13, the party may have encountered the ruins of a myconid colony and its sovereign, Chanterella. The *Companion* added other survivors, which were taken to be living cattle by the hobgoblins. You can include these survivors on this level or replace its sovereign with Chanterella. See Area 4 for details.

HALASTER'S GAME

Imagine the life of an immortal, nearly-omnipotent magus condemned to boredom and insanity. Such is the life of Halaster, who has been elevated beyond the station of a mere mortal. Such elevation comes with new rules and expectations obeyed by fey lords, deities, fiends, and other otherworldly entities.

The short of it is this: Halaster could take the fight to Ezzat, who has so audaciously set up shop in the heart of Halaster's demesne, but he cannot. That's just not how higher beings *do* things. And so, Halaster has a game of cat-and-mouse to play. He *must* use his pawns—adventuring parties—to dispatch Ezzat; his very pride and dignity as a higher being hinges on it.

Halaster's Enmity. We know nothing wounds the Mad Mage more than betrayal. The disappearance of Jhesirya still haunts Halaster, so much so that he won't allow his remaining apprentices any semblance of peace. That Ezzat has spurned him before and even *returned* to usurp him cuts Halaster deeply. His very ego has been tattered—for isn't it *he* that is meant to use and throw away mortals?

The *Companion* dials up Halaster's attachment to Ezzat; he loved the man as if they were brothers—and no scorn is worse than that of a brother betrayed.

Conflicts & Distractions. There are a number of potential conflicts on this level to entertain your party with; the mission to recover Ezzat's phylactery should overshadow these distractions. A cunning party ought to utilize some of these conflicts to draw out the lich from his lair. These conflicts are:

- The Stonecloaks vs. Ezzat (and everyone else).
- The duergar raiders (unknowingly) vs. Gorka Tharn, the duergar mummy lord. The *Companion* also pits them against Halaster's precious snail in Area 8.
- The Shadowdusk Expedition, led by Akarrth (contrived by the *Companion* to be opposed to the myconid colony in Area 4, as well as Ezzat).
- The Gentlemen Bastards vs. the party and Ezzat.

Dramatized Visions of the Past. You can seed this level with melodramatic visions that detail the spirit of the Mad Mage's and Ezzat's relationship. Each is an allusion to a famous movie from our world. Whenever the party enters a new area, you can roll a d8 and use one of the visions below. If you get the same result, Halaster telepathically grumbles, "Man, I hate reruns."

DRAMATIZED VISIONS OF THE PAST

d8	Vision
1	Ezzat clings to a cliffside on Level 15, dangling above the molten chasm carved by Netherskull. "You were the chosen one!" Halaster shouts. "You were meant to bring balance to Undermountain! Not leave it in darkness! You were my brother, Ezzat! I loved you!" Ezzat then loses his grip and falls into the chasm.
2	Halaster is dangling upside down from a golden chain in Maddgoth's Castle on Level 7. He tells Ezzat, "You just couldn't let me go, could you? This is what happens when an unstoppable force meets an immovable object."
3	Ezzat unleashes a storm of <i>magic missiles</i> against Halaster on the rooftops of Alterdeep (the simulation of Level 17), who leans back, dodging each and every one at lightning speeds. From the adventurer's perspective, time slows down as the missiles sail past Halaster.
4	Halaster and a young Ezzat are on Level 13; Halaster has a strange contraption in his hands. On a horseless carriage made of iron sits a dog. Halaster tells Ezzat, "When this baby hits 88 miles an hour, you're gonna see some serious shit." As the chariot animates and races forward, Halaster prevents Ezzat from jumping out of the way. Just before collision, the chariot disappears, leaving tracks of fire. Halaster begins to dance and shout "88 miles an hour!"
5	Ezzat and Halaster are dueling with flaming swords on a rope-bridge spanning a gaping chasm. The Mad Mage gets the upper hand and severs Ezzat's sword hand. "There's no escape," Halaster warns. "Don't make me destroy you... Together, we can bring order to the world. You've never known the truth, have you? Ezzat... I am your father!" Ezzat then gives him an incredulous look and says, "No you're not!" Halaster shrugs, caught, and says, "Okay, I'm not, but you get my point. C'mon, let's wrap this up and get back to business." Ezzat then peers down the chasm and, after a moment's hesitation, let's go. As he hurtles into the abyss, Halaster cries out in faux-paternal pain.
6	A catatonic Halaster is wrapped in a spider silk cocoon. Ezzat cradles him, crying out, "Master Halaster! Don't go! Don't go where I can't follow you!"
7	Halaster brandishes a <i>wand of magic missiles</i> at Ezzat who bears one of his own. After a shootout, Halaster strides up to Ezzat and says, "I know what yer thinking: 'Did he fire two shots or only three?' Well, to tell ye the truth, in all this excitement, I forgot myself. Well, bein' this is a <i>wand of magic missiles</i> , the cheapest wand in the world, you better ask yourself, 'Do I feel lucky?' Well... do ya, punk?"
8	Halaster bursts into a hearth-lit room on a stormy night, waking up a young Ezzat in his bed. Trembling, Ezzat clutches at the blanket, his nightcap damp with sweat. Halaster breaks into a grin and shouts, "Yer a wizard, Ezzat!"

DEALING WITH EZZAT

The party should start this level already knowing their objective: find Ezzat and steal his phylactery. Their best bet is to fight the lich outside his lair, but Ezzat is loathe to leave his sanctum. Drawing him out will surely require either holding Ipses, the pseudodragon, hostage or staging a distraction or pitting another faction against Ezzat, such as the Shadowdusk Expedition, duergar raiders, or the Gentlemen Bastards (described below). You as the DM surely *do* want Ezzat to fought in his lair.

Roleplaying Ezzat. Evil has corrupted Ezzat's soul, as it does any lich's, but still the old mage believes his cause to be righteous. He pities Halaster, referring to him as "the Mad Dog of Undermountain." Putting down that rabid hound has become his sole mission. At the heart of this self-righteousness is a faint ember of love for Halaster that yet glows.

While Ezzat's time in Undermountain isn't exactly spelled out in *DotMM*, we can assume he's been here for at least half a century—for that's how long the two drow vampires have been trapped in his black sapphires (see Area 15), unless he's traveled with them in his pocket. Over the years, Ezzat has faced 2d6+7 adventuring parties, most of whom have been set up by the Mad Mage. At this point, Ezzat finds no pleasure in entertaining them and considers them nuisances. He's quick to call adventuring parties rude—which, from his lips, is a grave insult.

Liches are inherently evil, but portraying an evil character can be taxing or tiresome. Since the *Companion* dials up *DotMM*'s absurdity to 11, consider roleplaying Ezzat as a posh, frustratingly-polite individual full of "umm's" and "ah's." You can draw upon any of the sample dialogue below:

- When someone has truly irked him, Ezzat calls their behavior "unacceptable."
- Ezzat is quick to concede arguments with a sheepish "fair enough."
- When the adventurers seem intent on harming him, Ezzat calls such violence "quite unnecessary."
- "Leave me to my books and let yourselves out!"

Tactics. As a mighty spellcaster, Ezzat utilizes the following tactics in combat; his quick wit allows him to think clearly through any shock the party might give him. With a spell save DC of 20, his foes will be in for quite a challenge.

- If Ezzat is expecting a fight, he begins with *mirror image* and *globe of invulnerability* already cast upon himself.
- If Ezzat is fought inside his lair, he tries to make his way to Area 22B (via *dimension door*, if necessary), wherein the statue in his likeness stands. Its antipathy effect (from the *antipathy/sympathy* spell already cast upon it) can frighten creatures, preventing them from reaching Ezzat (as frightened creatures cannot willingly move closer to the source of their fear). If they are still within 5 feet of Ezzat when they fall prey to this effect, he knocks them back with a *thunderwave* spell so that they can't come closer to him.

- Ezzat is *very* liberal with his *shield* spell, using it every turn if he can. Since he can regain spell slots every other round from his first Lair Action option—and *shield* can be upcasted, despite not having a higher-level-benefit—he has no reason not to. At a minimum, he regains a 1st level spell slot from the Lair Action, fueling another *shield* spell.
- If the adventurers demonstrate a preference for hard-hitting lightning or force spells, Ezzat makes his way to Area 20 (via *dimension door* if necessary) to drink a *potion of lightning resistance* or *-force resistance*, if not both. Doing so requires an action.
- While in his lair, if Ezzat expects a bruising soon, he resorts to his second Lair Action to link himself to his own attacker—or, worse, their healer.
- While in his lair, if Ezzat needs to punish a ranged target, Ezzat uses his third Lair Action.
- On his first turn, Ezzat opens up with *power word: stun* to temporarily remove one adventurer from the fight.
- With his first Legendary Action, Ezzat uses Frightening Gaze on a non-spellcaster, disadvantaging their attacks. He then puts distance between him and that target, since the frightened target cannot willingly move closer to the source of its fear. Afterwards, Ezzat uses his last Legendary Action this turn to cast *ray of frost* against a melee combatant.
- On his second turn, Ezzat casts *mirror image* if he isn't already under its effects. He then wades into the melee and, at the next opportunity, follows it up with a Disrupt Life Legendary Action, hoping to catch as many foes in it as possible.
- On his third turn, Ezzat is likely to be wounded, but so too will his foes. He shocks a weakened target with a *finger of death* spell, adding a **zombie** to the mix if his foe is slain. See Appendix B for its statistics. If this does occur, he then follows up with a Paralyzing Touch via a Legendary Action; he then directs the zombie to attack that target; it will have advantage on its attacks and will automatically score a critical hit on a hit.
- Once Ezzat is mortally wounded, he unleashes a *power word: kill* spell. Before then, he's loathe to expend his greatest spell slot against the party, fearing that greater foes—like Halaster—might be lurking in the shadows, waiting for an opportune moment to strike. Once near death, however, he knows he cannot afford to let the survivors rummage around so close to his phylactery.

THE GENTLEMEN BASTARDS

Added by the *Companion* in *Halaster's Game*, Level 7, and Level 8, the Bastards are an adventuring party that the players may already be familiar with. If the Bastards didn't die on Level 8, or were never met by the party at all, you can add them to this level. The Bastards too met the genies of Level 19 and hope to cash in the lich's phylactery before *finally* leaving the dungeon for good.

As Allies. If the Bastards were rescued by the party on Level 8, or never met at all, the Bastards greet the players with open arms. They're loathe to take on a lich by themselves and welcome any aid they can get. They're resting in Area 3.

As Enemies. So late into the adventure, it's very possible that the Bastards are already hostile to the party. Reasons abound:

- If Grel Momesk, their leader, is dead or gone, Jocelyn of Daggerford has seized command. Unless she believes the party can be duped into helping them, she sets up an ambush for when they leave Ezzat's lair.
- If the party spurned them, such as by leaving them to their fates on Level 8, the Bastards plan an ambush; they only kill if necessary and hope only to steal Ezzat's phylactery from the players.
- If the party has attacked or betrayed them before, the Bastards are out for revenge and stage an ambush—the phylactery be damned. See *The Gentlemen's Hello* special event for more details.

THE BASTARDS

The Gentlemen Bastards are cautious opportunists who only enter fights they're sure they'll win. While Grel Momesk and Ilinar are alive, the Bastards tend to lean towards NG. However, without Grel, Jocelyn quickly pushes the remaining Bastards towards evil.

The Gentlemen Bastards consist of:

Grel Momesk. A LN human **champion**, Grel seeks the riches necessary to lift his family out of poverty. He leads the party, often to his own peril. The Bastards, for their part, tolerate his occasional mistakes and fragile temperament.

Jocelyn of Daggerford. A NE human **warlock of the archfey**, Jocelyn serves the Queen of Air and Darkness, who has tasked her with discovering "the secret" of Undermountain (the Knot in the Weave). She once belonged to the Fine Fellows of Daggerford but was kicked out for being too "unsettling." When a fight she has no intention of fighting seems imminent, she casts *charm person* as a 5th-level spell so as to defuse the situation.

Perlos. A NE halfling **assassin**, Perlos is a wanted man in Waterdeep, Baldur's Gate, and Never-winter. The name attached to his various crimes varies. He joined up with the Bastards to escape his life of contract killing in the hope of retiring to the countryside a rich man. At night, he's haunted by those he's slain for coin.

Ilinar. Devoted to the elven god of war, Shevarash, this NG moon elf **war priest** is a veteran of several wars. After years of serving in the Waterdeep City Guard, he found employment as a mercenary. He eventually gave that up too before finally setting out as an adventurer. Ilinar is crass and impatient. His holy symbol is a broken arrow over a teardrop.

THE SHADOWDUSK EXPEDITION

Only briefly mentioned by *DotMM*, the Shadowdusk Expedition is further fleshed out on this level and can be utilized by the party to breach Ezzat's tower or draw the lich from its lair. Since the penultimate level of *DotMM* features these lunatics, it's important that the party meet Akarrth now to gain further insight into his family and their dealings.

Changes. The *Companion* adds 2d6+4 **cultists** and 1d6 **cult fanatics** to this level, all of whom attend Akarrth. They're essentially cannon fodder that also rationalize the logistics of the expedition. If they're interrogated by the adventurers, they can reveal any of the information below (any clause marked with an asterisk is something added by the *Companion*):

- The Shadowdusk family, who seek to "become one with the Void" are intentionally trying to burst into the Far Realms on Level 22. Last these cultists heard, progress has been going "swimmingly."
- The Shadowdusk family is cursed with both genius and insanity—"two sides of the same coin, really," laments the cultist.
- The Shadowdusk family is allied with Halaster, who acts as a sort of patron to their escapades. Those that seek to elevate themselves through the family can cut through seniority and inheritance rights with his favor. To that end, it's logical that Akarrth would oppose Ezzat so as to curry favor with the Mad Mage.*
- Akarrth is in a loose partnership with a beholder named Gz'zarp. They're in heated arguments day and night but seem to have a grudging respect for each other—"well, as much respect can be possible between an eye tyrant and a mad tyrant," says the cultist. Their most feverish argument was on the correct amount of alfredo sauce for pasta when one person is hungry and the other is just "feeling peckish."* Since this, all expedition personnel have been forbidden from mentioning alfredo sauce or wood peckers.
- Akarrth intends to capture the myconids of Area 4 to use as test subjects on Level 22. He wonders what influence the Far Realms will have on sentient, fungal creatures.*

MEETING AKARRTH

The expedition is camped out in the tunnel that leads to Level 21. Their camp is quite literally a camp, with tents fashioned from strange, violet flesh dotted with still-blinking eyes the size of acorns and corncobs. The gazes of cob-sized eyeballs, in particular, follow nearby characters.

Roleplaying Akarrth. Roleplaying a lunatic can be cumbersome. Akarrth's madness manifests in the following flaws, which you can use to guide your portrayal of him:

- "I can't die; my story is not yet over."
- "Unseen enemies lie in every shadowed corner. They're after me. Always after me."
- "Ethics cannot stand in the way of science."

Halaster's Game. If you're running *DotMM* with the *Companion's* gameshow twist, then Akarrth is already familiar with the party, having "caught a few episodes on [his] scrying orb between experiments." He's keen on shaking hands with these impressive individuals. Madness and ego have deluded him into thinking that they'll never harm *him*—after all, he's not a part of the show, right?

An Alliance of Convenience. If confronted by the party, Akarrth's first tactic is to dangle an alliance in-front of them, claiming to know all about Halaster's "beef" with the nearby lich. He has no love for his pet aberrations and servants and is willing to hurl them at Ezzat's tower to save his own skin—or to accomplish his goal of kidnapping the myconids of Area 4 (a goal added by the *Companion*; he wants to expose them to energies from the Far Realm and create a super-breed of "mold men"). If Akarrth has it his way, the myconids will be delivered to his camp in chains before his forces march on the Stalagmite Tower. Only Gz'zarp refuses to attack the tower.

HOW THE TABLES TURN

If Akarrth is mortally wounded, the beholder Gz'zarp wastes no time in overthrowing his reign. It has long resented the Shadowdusk family and will take this opportunity to carve out its own demesne in Undermountain, using the expedition's forces as its inaugural class of underlings. These underlings obey under the imminent threat of disintegration.

Gz'zarp cares not for mortals' "petty squabbles" and won't oppose Ezzat. "I've no nothic in this fight," the beholder is quick to say.

AREAS OF NOTE

The following areas are of note:

1. DESICCATING SYMBOL

When the party enters Level 20, read the following:

Down into the earth you venture, hounded by the shrill calls of the Mad Mage. But these shrill calls are not his usual shrill calls; for once he isn't trying to haggle with a cabbage vendor. Nay, now his shrill calls share a single name: "Ezzat!"

Sometimes he shouts the name, other times, he whispers or cries... but in the darkness, when your torchlight sputters out for just a moment, he whispers the name with longing. "Ezzat," he whispers. "Ezzat." You can taste each syllable: "Eh-Zat," but you feel it in your heart a third syllable: silence. A silent syllable of loss that trails into the shadows.

Down into the earth you go, until at last the tunnels straighten out and deliver you to a cavern that weeps lazy water. In the distance, you hear the pounding of stone against stone. There is something here... an air of unease and wanting. Power, too.

The last sentence hints at the existence of the *symbol* spell. Remove it at your own discretion. Once the spell is triggered, read the following:

The air cracks like thunder! The stench of death wafts through the earth, bubbling out like an invisible miasma! Your very life force staggers in the presence of such power, and as you stumble to your knees, ghostly skulls float about you, howling, cackling! Each shares the same sunken face, and you know in your heart that this is the face of Halaster's dreaded foe, the lich Ezzat.

Halaster's voice crowds its way into your mind: "See? See? Do you not see his treachery everywhere like I? Do you not feel his spite in your very bones! Strike him down for the good of the world! For the good of man, for the good of good itself! Find him, find Ezzat, *find* him!"

2. MAD GOLEM'S LAIR

When the party enters the area, read this maddened rant. Embrace melodrama for the narration.

Thunderous blows echo across the otherwise empty caverns, stone pounding against stone. As you round the bend, you see a sight most curious: a mobile mass of jumbled torsos, limbs, and heads—all fashioned from stone—wailing on a golem carved in the likeness of the Halaster himself. Instinctively you know to call this golem a "Stonecloak," as if informed by magic.

The multi-armed, multi-headed behemoth beats down on the Stonecloak in mute fury. The Stonecloak tries to reason with it, speaking in a language of blinks, but the behemoth ignores its pleas! The Stonecloak throws up its hands in fealty, but the next thunderous blow sends it reeling! And when the Stonecloak tries to crawl away from its assailant, all negotiations at a standstill, the behemoth snatches the golem's ankles! Its every head shakes simultaneously, silently pronouncing "Not today!"

The behemoth heaves! It ho's! It whips the Stonecloak into the wall! *Crack!* It reels back! *Crack! Crack!* You watch the stony face of Halaster lose its nose! A gash the size of your arm gapes across its chiseled cheek!

If the party intervenes for some reason, they can save the Stonecloak, earning its gratitude; it then serves as their guide and confidant, convincing other golems in the caverns to leave them be. If the party doesn't intervene, read the following:

Crack! Crack! There goes an arm! *Crack! Crack!* The other arm! Good gods above, the carnage! Oh, the stone-manity!

Heaving a silent sigh, the behemoth drops the Stonecloak to the floor and *pants* as if strained by this labor. Dazed, the golem sits there, cradling its battered head—but then... oh, but then the behemoth rallies, snatching at Halaster's stony lips. It pries them apart as the golem flails helplessly! You hear the crack of stone bones as the behemoth begins to tear apart the golem's head—and in that head shines a light, you see, an ivory light!

With a terminal groan, the behemoth snaps open the golem's head and reaches deep into its brain, plucking out a fragment of a gemstone that shines with luminous magic. Every head on that jumbled behemoth smiles as it swallows the gem. It shudders with ecstasy and begins to attach the severed limbs of its victim to its jumbled body, which quickly fasten on its form.

3. SUNKEN PARADISE

The cavern gapes with a gash that falls deep into the earth. Pebbles scatter and fall into the abyss as you near its edge to peer down into the depths. Soft violet hues color the otherwise tenebrous depths and crimson lights slowly meander across the dark, adding to the illumination. Fungi and fire beetles, you reckon. This soft light dances on the surface of a subterranean lake, the nearest bank of which you can see is dotted with huts and other empty structures.

Surely this must be a trick of the Mad Mage. There's no doubt that this sunken paradise is truly a trap waiting to be sprung.

THE GENTLEMEN BASTARDS

If you include the Gentlemen Bastards on this level, they're already resting here in Area 3. How they react to the party depends on their past dealings. Because it's so late in the adventure, the *Companion* cannot anticipate who among them are even still alive. Refer to the descriptions above. If they're on good terms with the party, they offer to team up with the party to get Ezzat's phylactery. If not, they pretend as if they have no idea the lich even exists—and immediately begin plotting an ambush. See *The Gentleman's Hello* in *Special Event* below for details.

4. MYCONID COLONY

4B. FRIENDLY SOVEREIGN

The sovereign can offer several quests to the party if they've the time or interest to help the colony.

Previously On... On Level 13, the hobgoblins had torched a myconid colony. Only its sovereign, Chanterella, survived. The *Companion* added survivors, all of whom were taken to be living cattle by the hob-goblins. You can replace Floom with Chanterella so as to show a familiar face to the party, provided they actually met Chanterella and helped it.

Enemies Without. The myconid colony is beset by both gargoyles from Areas 8 & 9, and the Shadow-dusk Expedition. Akarrth intends to scour the colony and drag its survivors kicking and screaming back to Level 22 for further experimentation. The sovereign asks the adventurers to dispatch these cultists. When it does so, read the following:

The sovereign looks at you with its strange eyes. The air is thick with those special spores that grant you a rapport with the fungal creature. Its voice rings softly through your head: "There are others that have come here, not for the deathlord in the tower, nor the rock demons. They have come for us. There is an evil far below us now, a cancer in the earth—and it is they who have let it fester. I fear that this world and a stranger one are about to be wed and that we, if lucky, will merely be witnesses to it all. For us, for everyone, rid these caverns of those lunatics. Even now I can sense their budding madness..."

Opposing the expedition, however, removes them as a potential ally in the fight against Ezzat. The party must decide whether to defend the defenseless or leverage those lunatics against the lich.

Sunken Paradise. If the adventurers have found Area 3 and inform the sovereign of its existence, it attempts an exodus from Area 4 to Area 3, believing that the colony will be safe there. The sovereign then asks the party to escort its people there. Such a task will take over an hour, given how slow the myconids are. While in transit, they're attacked by the Shadow-dusks, whose forces consist of Akarrth, the human **archmage**, two **cult fanatics**, 1d4 **cultists**, a **grell** and a **nothic**. The remaining forces are back at their camp in the tunnel to Level 21. If he's reduced to half his hit points, Akarrth flees, leaving his minions behind if necessary.

5. GIGGLING CHASM

Look, by now we've had enough of Halaster's ghostly giggling and we can't waste an opportunity to detail Halaster and Ezzat's relationship. Instead of giggling, the chasm plays out one of the dramatized visions of the past, namely #1 from the table.

6. LAIR OF THE MUMMY LORD

In case it wasn't clear, this entire area counts as the lair of Gorka Tharn, the duergar **mummy lord**.

6A. TOOTHY MAW

When the party reaches this area, they're filled with a sense of dread. Read the following:

There is no breeze here; the air smolders in monotony. The little lizard at the back of your brain seems to shiver, as if your most primal instincts can sense a danger your "advanced" brain cannot. The lizard sticks out its forked tongue, tasting the air of this place and deeming it too eerie to remain in. It withdraws back to its hidey hole at the base of your head.

You want to bait the party into casting spells here, so as to awaken Gorka Tharn. Methods include:

- Ipses, Ezzat's **pseudodragon**, flies through this cavern, chasing after a lizard or rat.

- The Gentlemen Bastards are already hidden in the area. Contest their Dexterity (Stealth) checks against the party's passive Perception. An altercation here is likely to produce several spells.
- The **duergar** raiders from Area 7 are exploring the area.

Whenever a spell is cast, the spellcaster is filled with a sense of dread and hairs on their arms stiffen.

6C. MUMMY LORD'S CRYPT

It isn't clear in *DotMM* where exactly Tharn's body is located, only his preserved organs. Assume he is sleeping beneath the piles of treasure.

Roleplaying Gorka Tharn. Gorka Tharn is a loud-mouthed, melodramatic, narcissist. The first thing he does when awoken is shout in Dwarvish, "*I liiiiiive!*" which echoes throughout Area 6. He never demeans himself by speaking anything but Dwarvish—and if others can't understand him, so be it. Other than when he announces that he's alive again, Gorka Tharn only ever refers to himself in third person. You can draw on the following sample dialogue (in Dwarvish):

- "Kneel before Tharn, first and last of his name!"
- "We all have masters—and Tharn is yours."
- "Death is the gift of the gods! Milk it for all its worth!"
- "And so you come to the lair of Tharn... May it be your last regret!"
- "You would defy Tharn so jubilantly?"
- "Tharn shall be your redeemer!"
- "Everything's coming up Tharn!"

Tactics. In combat, the **mummy lord** employs the following tactics. Even without his eight **mummies**, he's a considerable threat to the party. Many of his abilities can hamper them long after Tharn is dead.

- Tharn uses his first Lair Action on the third option, inhibiting spellcasters until the next round. He switches between that and the second option throughout combat unless the party tries to flee. As noted in his statblock, he can't use the same Lair Action two rounds in a row.
- Tharn *wants* to be in the thick of his foes, as so many of his spells and abilities are Areas-of-Effect. He stops at nothing to accomplish this, using his movement or his Whirlwind of Sand Legendary Action to get within 10 feet of several characters.
- On his first turn, Tharn snaps out a *harm* spell. He then follows up with a Channel Negative Energy Legendary Action. At the next opportunity, he follows up with Rotting Fist via a Legendary Action.
- On his second turn, Tharn casts *guardian of faith* and positions the spirit 5 feet away from him. At the next opportunity, if he's in melee range, he unleashes his Blasphemous Word Legendary Action, thus trapping his foes between a rock and a hard place. He follows this up with another Rotting Fist attack via Legendary Action or a Blinding Dust if he's injured.

- On his third turn, Tharn casts *insect swarm* on a point that doesn't include him but does include his *guardian of faith*. He intends to have a trifecta of effects going on at once: these two spells and his Legendary Actions. Any creature within this area is gonna have a bad time. At the next opportunity, he uses his Channel Negative Energy Legendary Action. He then follows it up with another Rotting Fist via Legendary Action.
- When at Death's Door, Tharn casts *contagion* against the nearest, lowest-AC character as revenge.

Maximum Absurdity. If you'd like an absurd tone for your session, consider dressing Gorka Tharn in a bright red robe; when he and his eight mummies are together, he sings Michael Jackson's *Thriller*.

7. CRYPT RAIDERS

When the adventurers reach this area, the duergar are in a heated discussion. Assuming an adventurer speaks Dwarvish, read the following:

"Damnit, Klom! I've had enough of the snail! Cease prattlin' about it!" snarls a dwarf.

Wounded, another dwarf replies, "It's shell glitters gold! Ye can imagine, can't ye, the favor we'll earn with Fazrian!"

"Tell ye what I *can* imagine, Klom! Bein' reduced to bloody pulp by the 'goyles and golems 'tween us and the snail!"

PREVIOUSLY ON...

If your party ventured to Level 6, they'll have met the duergar raiders of Clan Ironeye, led by Skella, a half-duergar. It's suggested that you add her here; after getting lost in Undermountain, her raiders joined up with the duergar on Level 21.

This accomplishes two things: it links the current level with a past escapade of the party, and it gives them an "in" with Prince Valtagar on the Terminus level.

On Level 6, the duergar plundered a Melairkyn temple dedicated to Dumathoin, a god of secrets and miners. The *Companion* added **invisible stalkers** loosed by Halaster to torment the duergar, which the party may have tangled with. Additionally, Skella may have attuned to the Heart of the Mountain (a site in the temple), allowing her to cast *divination*. If so, she asked "What fate awaits my people?" What she saw was to be determined by you; however, it was suggested she foresaw the party's treachery, or the duergars' demise as a punishment by Halaster for not slaying the party.

Roleplaying Skella. If you add Skella to this level, follow these guidelines, altering them to reflect her past dealings with the party. Skella, unlike other half-duergar, feels no need to prove herself to her kin; she rose to her station through merit alone and has the confidence of her men. While she's as dour as most other duergar, she has an obsession with artistry and beauty—an obsession she doesn't bother hiding. As a lawful person, she's a woman of her word and keeps her end of all bargains.

How Skella treats the party is determined by both you and their past actions. If the party worked with Skella before and did not betray her, she greets them well. If they did, her men greet the party with drawn weapons; Skella demands they remove themselves from the area.

Having already been to the Terminus Level, she can provide any of the information the duergar here normally would, including the name of the exiled prince that the duergar serve: Valtagar Steelshadow, younger brother of Deepking Horgar Steelshadow V of the mythic city of Gracklstugh. After a humiliating ransom, Valtagar attempted to foment war between the duergar and drow. To keep the peace, Valtagar was exiled by the Deepking. Now Valtagar hopes to buy his way back into his brother's good graces with Undermountain's mithril and wealth.

Skella's Statistics. On the Lost Level, so long ago, Skella had the statistics of a **duergar**. After being tormented by the Mad Mage and preyed upon by the predators of Undermountain, she's risen to a **duergar warlord**. She and her men, likewise battle-hardened, all now have the Brave feature (they have advantage on saving throws against being frightened).

Skella's Motive. The duergar raiders' goals remain unchanged, even with Skella and her men added to the level. The raiders want to plunder the shrine of Laduguer in Area 6C (ignorant of Gorka Tharn) and earn Fazrian's (the planetar of Level 21) favor. Skella and her men, however, intend to worm their ways into Valtagar's good graces. Despite his termagant of a wife, Skella intends to seduce Valtagar and harness his influence as her own. Like all duergar, she is unaware that Valtagar's wife, Stalagma, is secretly a steel dragon (**adult silver dragon**) in disguise.

8. MADE OF STONE

8D. GOLDEN HAUNGHARASSK

The *Companion* offers three humble changes to this otherwise unimportant snail: it has the statistics of a **flail snail**; the duergar raiders hope to steal it; and it's worshipped as a messiah by the Stonecloak golems.

Flail Snail. Haungharassk's new statistics can be found in Appendix B. Ignore the statistics described in *DotMM*.

Raiders. Having learned of the snail, the duergar hope to steal it away for the same reasons they hope to raid Area 6. If the adventurers clear Areas 8A-C of foes, the duergar creep in to snatch up the snail—although it's likely that they perish to it.

Golden Messiah. In times of trouble and political upheaval, the Stonecloaks make a pilgrimage to this area, bowing before Haungharassk and pleading for its divine guidance. These pleas are, of course, met with more silence, leaving the golems unsatisfied until one golem insists it heard the snail speak and that those that could not hear its regal voice are fools and heretics that deserve to be purged. They defend Haungharassk with their lives.

11. WEIRD MAGIC

11A. HAMMER TIME

Look, it's the dungeon of the *Mad Mage*. You're more than welcome to play *U Can't Touch This* by MC Hammer as the party fights the golem. Just for good measure, have an apparition of Halaster dance nearby as the song plays. Characters that copy the dance (via a successful DC 15 Charisma (Performance) check avoid the golem's wrath.

13. RUNESTONE CAVERNS

13A. MAIN CAVERN

A sterile, blue-white light paints this cavern and its many stony teeth, as if a dentist has set up shop far below the earth. Its light sheens off every stalactite and stalagmite, every dripping drop of water that falls from the ceiling. That sterile light wipes away every shadow, reveals every nook and cranny; it banishes the secrets from this place, letting the truth rot for all to see.

At the heart of it all twists a massive stalagmite crowned with a glowing crystal within which floats a red rune—a pupil, almost. Caves lead off into the dark, but you pay them no mind. The floor is strewn with the broken remains of golems, which point towards that stalagmite, as if they threw themselves against a lethal force that extolled from them the ultimate price.

SURVEILLING THE TOWER

If the party decides to surveil the tower, the hours pass slowly before anything or anyone emerges from the tower. Structure this as a series of choices, after which they see the results of their surveillance:

1. When the party chooses to surveil the tower, an hour passes, granting them the benefit of a short rest. Nothing emerges from the tower.
2. Choosing to continue surveilling the tower, two hours pass. At one point, a **stone golem** meanders into the cavern; contest the party's Stealth checks against its passive Perception. If they go undetected, the golem approaches within 10 feet of the tower (as far as the wards placed by Ezzat allow) and rails silently at the tower, protesting against the lich. This lasts for about twenty minutes before the golem lumbers back into the dark, satisfied with its work.
3. Forty minutes later, Ezzat lets out Ipses, the pseudo-dragon, to feed. After fifteen minutes, Ipses returns to the tower and Ezzat shuts the door.
4. An hour after Ipses returns, 1d4 **cultists** and one **cult fanatic** from the Shadowdusk Expedition come to inspect the tower. This inspection lasts five minutes, after which the cultists hightail it back to the tunnel to Level 21, where Akarrth has set up camp.
5. Thirty minutes later, the Gentlemen Bastards arrive to scout out the tower. They creep around its base for two minutes and then hunker down in Area 13F to plot their next move.

14. THE RUNESTONE

The Runestone is comparable to the Eye of Sauron in *Lord of the Rings*. When they at last approach the tower, the Mad Mage peers through the Runestone but does not say a single word. Read the following:

You creep towards that Stalagmite Tower, bathed in the blue-white light of the Runestone above. You're tense: with dread, with anticipation. A showdown with a lich is no trivial matter. You push away the doubt but it finds a way to crowd back into your mind, drowning out reason, drowning out hope, drowning out the dawn. The Runestone watches over you, its sterile light almost calming—until suddenly it twists crimson.

You flinch, a rat caught on the floorboards—surely it must be a spell of the lich Ezzat! The Runestone's light paints the cavern crimson, but before you decide to hide, flee, or gun it, you see in the Runestone's heart a familiar symbol: the personal, purple rune of Halaster Blackcloak himself. It gazes down upon you like an immense, fiery eye, perceiving all before it.

But no fire comes, no lightning. The light... the light *winks* at you—and you know that the master of Undermountain has wished you luck against dreaded Ezzat! Halaster has given you his blessing, his confidence!

15. OUTER DOOR AND FOYER

In terminal silence, you approach the stalagmite tower. The air is thick, as if the caverns themselves have deigned to hold in a breath on your behalf.

There's only a single door to this lich's lair: a doorway carved with a bas-relief of a human skull, a black sapphire embedded in each eye socket. The skull is grinning a grin that stretches too far to be human. Your eyes flick up to a message carved into the lintel: "GO AWAY!" These words of unwelcome ring throughout your ears, repeated inside your mind with growing alarm.

If the adventurers trigger the trapped **vampires**, read:

As you push against the door, the twin sapphires begin to glitter! Without a sound, they unleash a flash of light—and when at last you blink away that blinding pain, the causeway to the tower is shrouded in mist—a sudden mist streaked with crimson veins.

The mist rapidly begins to condense, outlining two elven figures, gaunt and doubled over in apparent agony.

The vampires appear in unoccupied spaces within 10 feet of the outer door. Once they've reverted to their true forms on the second round of combat, read the following:

Throughout the mists beat twin heartbeats that quickly wither into silence. The elves' translucent forms solidify. What you notice first are the fangs—vampires!

The first elf stretches, cracking every vertebrae in its spine. "Half a century imprisoned in an opal!" he shouts!

"Sapphire!" shouts his counterpart.

"What?"

"Sabatene, we were in sapphires, not opals."

This "Sabatene" gives his counterpart an incredulous look. "What difference does it make?"

"Well, geologically speaking—"

"You shouldn't speak with your mouth full, Tebran!"

"My mouth isn't full?" Tebran stammers.

"Then shut up and fill it!" The vampire bears its fangs and lunges at you!

16. ANIMATED STAFF

Amidst a cozy nook, sandwiched between a gameboard and the door, floats a staff carved from ice.

The staff continues to float, seemingly inanimate, in the center of the room, hoping that a creature tries to touch it (and thus bewitching them). Otherwise, it attacks as they attempt to leave the room.

Statistics. See Appendix B for the **animated staff of frost's** statistics.

Roleplaying the Staff. The sentient staff can speak Common! It is a haughty creature that believes itself due for a great destiny, so long as it faithfully serves the lich Ezzat for a time, for however long it deigns, for it is free to leave of its own accord is it not—for it is an imperial creature, fully dressed in the regalia and authorities befitting a king! Or, at least, that's how the staff views itself. You can draw on any of the following dialogue:

- "It shall be a cold day in the Nine Hells before I submit to you—*cold*, get it? Ha! Don't you get it! You get it, right? You do? Great! Now die." (The staff is likely to cast *cone of cold* immediately after this.)
- When the staff casts *ice storm* or *wall of ice*, it says, "There's snowplace like home!" or "It's easy to become *ice-olated* in these depths..."
- "You don't like my genius puns? How *cold* of you."

17. LICH'S STUDY

Thanks to his *alarm* spell placed on the tower's door, Ezzat will already be aware of the party, unless they went to the pains of casting *dispel magic* on it. When the party arrives, treat it as a cutscene. Let Ezzat have his say then jump straight into combat. Read the following:

At last you see him, dreaded Ezzat, the lich that has rattled even the Mad Mage. His gaunt, skeletal form is hunched over a desk piled high with dusty tomes of ancient lore, reading by the light of candles made from the skulls of rats. His voice is like gravel:

"Yet another party of fools sent to their deaths by the Mad Dog of Undermountain." The lich heaves a heavy sigh and turns to face you. Twin spokes of blue fire blaze in his eyeless skull. "Can you not see the futility of your quest? Can you not hear that dog howling in the distance, cackling, chortling? I need not ask this more than once: turn back on your path. Cast off your shackles. Free yourselves from the Mad Mage."

Ezzat's next words fall like hail on a grey day: "Join me, and we can cleanse Undermountain of Halaster Blackcloak once and for all."

If the party declines Ezzat's invitation to conspiracy, he sighs and says, "So be it. Let's get this over with."

Tactics & Roleplaying. See the preamble for this chapter for Ezzat's tactics and roleplaying tips.

19. EZZAT'S SCRYING MIRROR

The scrying mirror here should always be fixated on the false-Halaster, otherwise the party will miss it. However, if the party fights Ezzat here, Halaster ends his trick and allows the mirror to view him directly. He sits on his purple marble throne within his tower on Level 23. Read:

Amidst the carnage, the nearby scrying mirror bubbles over with static. Gone goes the image of Halaster sweeping and in its stead is the Mad Mage himself seated on a violet throne. His personal rune glows behind him, carved into the wall.

"*Yesss*," the Mad Mage purrs. He pushes himself to his feet, shouting, "Yes! Strike him down! Strike down the Betrayer! Strike him down and let this world *know* a brother's scorn!"

On every subsequent round, Halaster gets closer to the "camera" of the scrying mirror until his face is pressed up against it, every craterous pore and liver spot gaping on its surface. By then, Ezzat looses a blast of lightning at the mirror (no action required), destroying the mirror so that maddened voyeur can't watch his demise.

23. EZZAT'S PHYLACTERY

The stone lid groans, opening upon a cave—or, rather, a chamber meticulously carved by magic to resemble one. It glitters with a sky's worth of tiny stars, each a crystal fragment. Beneath this starry sky is an ornate silver box—and guarding it is a six-armed maiden whose torso ends at a serpent's body! Your mind reels against her shrill cry: "Years burdened, but no more! No more!"

SPECIAL EVENT

You can include the following special event:

THE GENTLEMAN'S HELLO

This event only occurs if the Gentlemen Bastards are added to this level and if they're opposed to the party for whatever reason.

Whether it's for revenge or to nab Ezzat's already-stolen phylactery, the Gentlemen Bastards stage an ambush they lovingly call "The Gentleman's Hello." Assuming that their adversaries will be returning the phylactery to the genies on Level 19, the Bastards hide in the tunnel leading to Area 2. Ultimately, their goal, once the attack begins, is to push the party back to the chasm in Area 3.

Variant. If your version of the Bastards are loathe to fight the party, they retreat to Level 19. Jocelyn casts *seeming*, disguising one Bastard as a genie and the others as medusas (if they suspect the party will turn in the phylactery to the dao) or as water genasi. To see through this illusion requires a DC 15 Int. (Investigation) check made as an action. If the ruse is blown, the Bastards either hightail it or fight.

Tactics. During the ambush, the Bastards employ these heavily-rehearsed tactics:

- For the purpose of this ambush, Jocelyn (**warlock of the archfey**) has the One with Shadows eldritch invocation. She can use an action to become invisible until moving or taking an action or reaction. Before the party arrives, she casts *silent image* (which she can cast without using a spell slot) to paint the tunnel to Level 19 as if it were blocked by a rockfall. She remains invisible nearby, concentrating on the spell. This, hopefully, gives the party pause. To discern her illusion requires a DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check made with an action.

- Perlos (a Small **assassin** that can move through the spaces of other creatures thanks to his halfling heritage) waits behind the rockfall illusion. He has already made an Investigation check to see through the illusion. He is hidden behind the illusion. On his first turn, he fires off a poisoned light crossbow attack against the party, possibly surprising them. Once Grel Momesk or Ilinar have waded into the melee, Perlos joins in, making two shortsword attacks per turn & utilizing his Sneak Attack feature.
- On her first turn in combat, Jocelyn drops concentration on *silent image* and casts *conjure fey*, summoning a **yeth hound** (see App. B) and loosing it on the party.
- On its first turn, the **yeth hound** uses its Baleful Baying ability. Since it's friendly to Jocelyn and her allies, the Bastards are unaffected. Creatures that fail the Wisdom save must run from the hound; the hound tries to force the party south towards Area 3 where Grel Momesk and Ilinar are waiting.
- Grel Momesk (**champion**) hides out of sight in the tunnel to Area 2. Once Perlos has kicked off combat, he storms into the area and flanks the party. If a character is at the edge of the chasm in Area 3, he takes the Shove action. Characters that fall into the chasm take 20d6 damage from the fall.
- Ilinar (elven **war priest**) hides with Grel; on his first turn in combat, he casts *crusader's mantle*. He stays within 30 feet of Grel, Perlos and the yeth hound. He blasts clumps of foes with a *flame strike* spell. Once the party has been routed to the chasm in Area 3, he casts *spirit guardians* and tries to block off any escape. For most of his turns, he pairs *healing word* with the Attack action.

EPILOGUE

Defeating a lich is no easy task; doing so advances the party half-way to 17th level. Soon enough, they'll have 9th level spells at their disposal.

Back to Level 19. If the party returns to Level 19 to turn in Ezzat's phylactery, the opposing genie attacks them. See the *Companion's* previous chapter for details on this attack.

Send-Off. You can cap off your session with one of the send-offs below; one is written for if the party failed or didn't bother to steal Ezzat's phylactery and the other assumes they completed the quest, in which case you should deliver it after the party turns in the phylactery to a genie on Level 19.

THE LICH ROBBED

With an air of victory all around you and the phylactery handed off to your benefactor, an image of Halaster steps out of the wall as if it were a door. His hands are greasy. So is his hair; it's all slicked back with a foul-smelling grease. His smile is just as greasy and he beams it at you like torchlight.

"Well, well, well, *well* done!" Halaster shouts, his voice thundering across the cavern. The image wavers with static. "My dearest contestants, my *friends*, my *stars*. Ezzat'll never live this down. In fact, he'll never live again!" Halaster throws back his head and cackles with delight. He doubles over and slaps his own knee. "No longer shall he plague my thoughts! No longer shall I weep at the memory of what once was and what could have been! No longer will I need to remember the brother I so loved and cherished. No longer..."

The image of Halaster rapidly begins to fade, first losing all color, then definition. "No longer... must I feel human. No longer must I feel at all..." The image sobers, giving you a blank look. His eyes go wide with the realization of it all. The Mad Mage blinks—once, twice—and by the third time, he's gone to lament the loss of one he loved so well.

After this, preferably at the start of your next session, the party should have to face the wrath of the genie they've just condemned to an eternity in Under-mountain. See *DotMM 19* for details.

THE LICH UNTOUCHED

Your mind rings with heavy silence, as if you've fallen prey to a curse of tinnitus. The sounds of the world around you are hushed and colorless, distant and faint. You try to speak and can hardly hear your own voice. The ringing thunders against your ears to the tune of your own heartbeat; the very blood pulsing through your ears becomes a storm so fierce it drives you to your knees—and as you crash to the dirt in absolute agony, an image appears before you: a specter of Halaster Blackcloak. Grim is his countenance. Grim and disappointed.

When he speaks, his voice thrashes through your head: "You would spurn *me*? I, who gave you life? I, who gave you *purpose*? Suffer! Suffer as I have the grey silence! SUFFER!"

The party must all make a DC 18 Constitution saving throw or take 4d10 thunder damage. A character that is reduced to 0 hit points by this damage is not killed and is instead unconscious and stable. If the entire party falls unconscious, they awaken 1d4 hours later with 1 hit point each. No enemies attack them during this time, although you could have them dragged off to Level 21 by the duergar raiders from Area 7.

LEVEL XXI: THE TERMINUS LEVEL

QUICK NOTES

- This level is almost entirely a social encounter that might erupt into a deadly duel with a **planetar** and its yugoloth minions. Once the party has met Fazrian and the duergar, most exploration through the level will halt, consumed by this encounter.
- Fazrian knows when it hears a lie thanks to his Divine Awareness trait!
- Valtagar Steelshadow, the **duergar archmage**, is married to Stalagma, a steel dragon (**adult silver dragon**) in disguise! You don't want to meet *his* in-laws!
- The passageway to Level 22 is found in Area 19A and is guarded by an **ultroloth**. Do not prevent the party from escaping this level, even if you're running the *Judged From on High* plotline; the players must always have the choice to fight, flee, or stand trial.
- Clearing this level puts the party at 17th level; wizards, sorcerers and bards that utilize their Magical Secrets feature will now have access to the *wish* spell. See the epilogue at the end of this chapter for advice on how to deal with the *wish* spell.
- Attempting to leave Level 21 provokes Fazrian's wrath.

PREVIOUSLY ON *DUNGEON OF THE MAD MAGE*

Keep in mind the following when running this level:

- A simulacrum of Halaster was added to Level 12 by the *Companion*; Erelal Freth, matriarch of the drow house, mistook him for the true Halaster and sought to forcibly marry him to cement a claim over Undermountain. He has been brought back to serve as the prosecutor in the *Judged From on High* plotline.
- On Level 6, the party met duergar of Clan Ironeye, led by the half-duergar Skella, during their raid on the Lost Level. Just as they were added to Level 20 as a possible "in" with Valtagar, you can utilize them on Level 21 as well. Skella, not knowing how dangerous Valtagar's wife truly is, seeks to seduce the prince and use him to cultivate her own influence over the duergar. She can be added to the duergar patrols, Area 2, 6 or 15. She can also be called as a witness in the *Judged From on High* plotline, either endorsing or condemning the party.

REGIONAL EFFECTS: UNHOLY CHOIR

As described in Fazrian's regional effects, whenever combat breaks out, an unholy choir begins to sing. The following songs are suggested for this choir; it's important that you play the same song each time:

- Two Steps From Hell's *Unholy Requiem*
- *Mindhunter's* Main Titles by Choir
- *The Daughter of Darkness* by Peter Gundry
- *Bloodletting* from the game Darkest Dungeon's Crimson Court expansion

JUDGED FROM ON HIGH

The Terminus Level is well-designed—but you can ignore just about all of it. This level shouldn't be a dungeon crawl; it isn't a hack-and-slash. No, on this level, the party must talk their way out of being put to death by the planetar Fazrian. For once, it isn't a battlefield they must tackle, but a courtroom.

When adventurers (and players) gallivant across the world, rarely do they think of the consequences—and when confronted with consequence, they justify themselves, absolve themselves of blame. Level 21 is your chance to bring about their reckoning. Should they fail to convince the jury and/or Fazrian of their virtue, the planetar orders their immediate execution. If the party doesn't just keel over and take it, the angel unsheathes its mighty sword and attacks, along with any minions it might have left.

CHARGES

The charges levied against the party must be tailored to fit their history. Even the most virtuous characters will be judged as corrupt by corrupted Fazrian. You want to also confront the party with their past crimes. So, at the very least, Fazrian charges them with being corrupt; at the most, he tacks on specific crimes and injustices they've committed. How does Fazrian know these sins? Why, Halaster was kind enough to tell Fazrian's yugoloth servants, who shared it with the planetar.

JUDGE: FAZRIAN THE JUST

Unsurprisingly, Fazrian presides over this court. Thanks to his Divine Awareness trait, he can tell whenever a creature lies in his presence. He does, however, wait until a substantial amount of lies have been told to inform the jury in one fell swoop whose testimony is false. Perjury is then added to the party's list of crimes; other creatures might also be put on a quick trial during a recess—in which the jury finds them guilty and Fazrian orders the defendant's death.

Roleplaying Fazrian. In the fallen angel's mind, he can do no wrong. He is soft-spoken and smug; when he resorts to violence, he pretends to be disappointed, but he secretly revels in it. When he speaks to others, he refers to them as his "children." To cement his authority in an argument or decision, he admits that he is literally "holier-than-thou." When he speaks, he often pauses mid-sentence to sound profound.

JURY

The jury consists of five (or six) individuals, each with their own vices. The jury must be unanimous to carry out a verdict; if instead the jury is hung, Fazrian decides the party's fate.

- The **arcanaloths** Aximus and Exekarus, wish only to please Fazrian, unless bribed otherwise. They lean in whatever direction they believe Fazrian would want them to. Thus, if Fazrian seems impressed with tales painting the party as heroes (such as testimony claiming that they defeated Ezzat or the Vanrakdoom cult), the yugoloths probably vote not-guilty.
- Valtagar Steelshadow, the duergar **archmage**. Unless he is the only outlier, he always votes guilty—hoping to provoke a conflict between Fazrian and the party. He privately tells the party that he has their "best interests at heart" and will vote not guilty.
- Malgorn, the **duergar** of Area 10B that hungers for the last card to complete his Three-Dragon Ante deck. If the party give him the card (which he knows in Area 23C) he votes not guilty. However, slaying the **otyughs** in Area 23C will likely enrage Fazrian—if they're caught. Malgorn was chosen as a juror precisely for how insignificant and irrelevant he is. In this manner, he represents the Common Man, according to Fazrian.
- Thomas Clarke, a LG human **commoner** summoned straight from Waterdeep. He has no idea what is going on or why he's suddenly in Undermountain. He can only be won over through clever lawyering.
- Trobriand (**iron golem** with an Int. of 20 and 18th-level spellcasting, found on L23). This apprentice of the Mad Mage is unaligned; the transference of his spirit into a metallic vessel has scrubbed away his morality. With him, sound reasoning and logic prevail. Add Trobriand only if you wish to introduce him to the party before they reach Level 23.

EXECUTIONER (AND BAILIFF)

The **nycaloth** Raxxus follows the planetar's orders without hesitation. It acts as the bailiff, and when it gets lucky, the executioner of the court. Fazrian does not assist Raxxus unless the fiend's life is in danger.

PROSECUTOR: SIM, HALASTER'S SIMULACRUM

The prosecution consists of Sim, a simulacrum of Halaster himself. He was first added to the campaign by the *Companion* on Level 12, wherein Erelal Freth mistook him for the true Mad Mage and sought to marry him, cementing her claim to all of Under-mountain. Sim statistics are included in Appendix B under **Halaster's simulacrum**. Sim was created by Halaster to entertain guests or fulfill commitments he himself couldn't be bothered with. He's forgotten Sim's very existence and would surely destroy him if he remembered. Sim, who frankly enjoys existing, does his best to sneak under the Mad Mage's radar.

Sim shares much of Halaster's personality, but little of his power or insanity. His power is capped, per the *simulacrum* spell, and his attachment to the Knot in the Weave is virtually nonexistent. He's thus much less powerful than the true Mad Mage. He must also abide by the alterations to magic in Undermountain, making it impossible for him to teleport. Now free from Erelal Freth, he reveals his identity to anyone who takes the time to listen.

Simulacrum. As a simulacrum, Sim is severely handicapped: he can't regain hit points except in an alchemical lab, forcing him to avoid confrontations; he can't ever regain expended spell slots, many of which he's used over the years, effectively reducing him to a 7th-level spellcaster; and he lacks the capacity to learn, meaning he will never increase in power. All in all, this creates a meek, feeble, and terrified version of the infamous Mad Mage.

A Gig's A Gig. With no other purpose, Sim has found employment as Fazrian's prosecutor. He's still fresh on the job, however, and sort of bumbles his way through trials. This is much less a problem now that he doesn't represent defendants.

DEFENSE

The party receives no outside aid or counsel and must represent themselves. They are told before the trial begins that they can call upon at least five witnesses to testify on their behalf.

Ideally, the party relies on a character proficient with History and Persuasion; the former relates to legal decorum and the latter is self-explanatory.

WITNESSES

The prosecution intends to call at least five witnesses to provide testimony against the party, proving themselves to be evil or corrupt. For every witness the prosecution calls, the defense is allowed to call another. Halaster remotely summons that character to Area 23B, whether they're even aware of the trial or not. Likewise, both the prosecution and defense can question a witness, regardless of who called them. You must tailor these witnesses to your party. Possible witnesses include:

- Yek (**goblin boss**, L2) or any other Rustbone goblin
- Rizzeryl (**drow mage**, L2) who opposed the Xanathar Guild. If the party opposed the guild too, this is a point in their favor.
- Azrok (**hobgoblin warlord**, L3), who may have been aided by the party by virtue of opposing House Auvryndar. He likely has an **intellect devourer** in his skull, implanted by the mind flayer on Level 3.
- Willow (**archdruid**, L5) who likely fought the party. If the party also killed or drove off Illuun (the **abolet** of L4), she might begrudgingly call the party "neutral at heart" or even endorse them.
- Skella Ironeye (**duergar/duergar warlord** of L6, who may already be present on this level). If the party aided them in finding the Tomb of King Melair or fighting off invisible stalkers, she endorses them.
- The **stone giants** of L7 if the party somehow reversed their magical amnesia or otherwise brought happiness back into their lives.
- Chanterella (**myconid sovereign**, L13), who they may have aided. Likewise, Zox Clammersham, the gnome **archmage** of L13 might endorse the party if they saved him from hobgoblins.
- The **githzerai zerths** of L15, who would endorse the party if they saved Ezria from L16

- The githyanki of L16, who are likely pissed that the party rampaged through their home.
- Characters that were stuck in the Alterdeep simulation of L17, if it was shut down by the party.
- Portia Dzuth (**champion**) from Vanrakdoom, if she was freed. If she testifies that the party ended the cult, it scores big in the eyes of Fazrian and Thomas Clarke.
- Any character of Skullport—if the party overthrew the Xanathar Guild whilst there.

ACT I. WE THE VIRTUOUS...

Act I starts when the adventurers are first brought to Area 23, where they meet Fazrian. The planetar is already aware of the party's crimes, having been told by Halaster, whose letter is on the arm of Fazrian's throne. This brief part consists of Fazrian charging the party and laying down the rules of the trial. If the party tries to flee during his speech, all exits to Area 23 slam shut, requiring a DC 29 Strength (Athletics) check to pry open. A *knock* spell works as well.

When Fazrian begins his spiel, read the following; it assumes the party has already identified him as an angel and that they've already been introduced.

The angel lifts a letter whose envelope was once sealed with a violet, wax "H." "*Halaster*," you instantly think, knowing that this is a trap laid for you by the Mad Mage.

"I have been appraised of your crimes, of which there are many, my children. Courage. Good judgment. These are the ideals of my lord, Torm. Ideals that creatures both mortal and immaculate must live by. You... You have not lived bravely; you have not exercised restraint nor good judgment. You have found cowardice a soap with which you absolve your faults and flaws and crimes. But fear not, for now in the eyes of Torm, I myself will wash you. I will make you clean. I will make you whole at last."

The angel stands from his throne of bones, resting his greatsword against its side. "Justice shall be meted out in these halls. Justice is blind; it is fair. And so shall you stand trial before Torm... Before me. Tomorrow begins your trial. An unbiased jury shall be called to weigh in against the charges being levied against you. The prosecution shall call witnesses to bear sacred testimony to your crimes. I suggest you prepare a list of those that may exonerate you. The Mad Mage has offered his aid in summoning these individuals to these halls. I tell you this now: there are no half-measures in the Dogma of Torm. Should you be found guilty of corruption, death will be your just reward."

With a cherubic word, the greatsword animates, flying straight into Fazrian's hand. "But, my children, should you try to flee the Deep Mines, I myself will give pursuit—and know this: I have chased fiends and sinners across the sordid planes since before your world was even a pile of smoldering dust. There is no escaping the Long Arm of Torm."

With that Fazrian grants the adventurers their leave, graciously allowing them to take up Area 10 as their temporary residence. However, before they leave, he has each of them swear the following oath, using his Divine Awareness trait to determine whether they will defy his rule: "I swear to remain here in the Deep Mines until the trial's conclusion; I swear to respect the verdict rendered

unto us by the jury and to accept the sentence meted out, should guilt be found."

Fazrian focuses on which clause a character lies about. Even if they lie, he still wishes to go through the farce of a trial before executing them.

Witnesses. After being dismissed, the party must compile a list of witnesses (preferably five) that they can count on to provide favorable testimony, and deliver that list to Fazrian directly or indirectly via a minion. Remind your players that you yourself will be roleplaying these NPCs, so they *must* give you notice. Not calling witnesses all but dooms their defense. Also remind them that they are representing themselves, whereas, apparently, a prosecutor has been appointed.

Keeping the Party Weak. If the adventurers are at full strength, they can likely prevail over Fazrian. He knows this; the Mad Mage knows this; and they, of course, suspect it. If you cannot afford for the party to achieve a long rest, have Halaster drop a **beholder zombie** on them whenever they try to finish one.

ACT II. COURT IS NOW IN SESSION

Act II begins the next day with an unannounced visit by the **nycaloth**, Raxxus, who escorts the party to Area 23. When they arrive, Fazrian is not yet there, but the jurors and prosecution are. As described in Area 23B, the prosecution stands before the crystal menhirs; the jurors (and witnesses) share the north wall. Meanwhile, the defense must stand with their backs against the open pit, just beyond the reach of the **otyughs** lairing there.

Jurors. Generally, the party is barred from speaking to the jury; Raxxus moves in if they try, insisting (with his axe drawn) that they take their places near the pit.

Prosecution. The *Companion* assumes the party is already familiar with Sim, having met him on Level 12. Adjust accordingly if you never used that variant. When he first sees the party, read the following:

You look towards the prosecution—and it's Halaster himself. Halaster Blackcloak! Prosecuting you in a trial he has surely set up himself! With fury in your veins, you rush forward, but, when the mage turns around, you instead hear the mewling voice of Sim, the simulacrum:

"Oh, hey! It's you guys! What are you doing here?"

It takes Sim, who's a bit daft, to remember that it's the party that he's prosecuting this time. He explains that, after untangling himself from House Freth, he found his way to the Terminus Level. Since he is not truly alive, Fazrian could not judge him ("He just about short-circuited," Sim says) and thus decided to hire him for a "greater purpose." Initially, that was to counsel and represent defendants, but after proving himself to be a little too green, Fazrian relegated him to prosecution instead.

ALL RISE

When the trial is about to commence, Fazrian enters the chamber (from Area 24, if you don't mind betraying the location of the secret door; in which case he was cradling the headless corpse of the cleric Brythia, believing it will keep him "true" and "just"). Read the following:

Whilst the chamber bubbles with chatter, the fiend Raxxus raises his voice and greataxe, shouting "All rise for Fazrian the Just!"

With an eerie smile stretched taut across his face, the angel glides into the chamber to the tune of that unholy choir. He takes to his throne of bones and sighs dreamily. "Please be seated. Court," he says, fondling the hilt of his greatsword, "is now in session."

Tailor the proceeding dialogue to your party. If they have a group name use it. Otherwise, Fazrian calls on their true and full names. If a character has neglected to give their true name, or hid an embarrassing middle name, for example, Fazrian somehow knows it and declares it to the court. Likewise, he must name the charges being levied against them; by default, this is merely "corruption."

PROCEEDINGS

The trial is divided into three "rounds" interrupted by recesses. Both the prosecution and defense can call a recess which can last 10 minutes to an hour. Any further recesses require a party to succeed on a DC 18 Charisma (Persuasion) check against Fazrian. While they are forbidden from speaking to jurors during a recess, the party will find that that is their only chance to do so.

Calling Witnesses. The prosecution calls the first witness; the defendants, of course, have a chance to cross-examine that character. The defense can then call their witness. Each round should two witnesses from both sides. The third round is reserved for the fifth and final witnesses, plus any surprise witnesses called by the party.

Objections. Whenever a party objects to how the opposition questions a witness, they must succeed on an Intelligence (History) check to convince Fazrian to sustain or overrule this behavior. Characters cannot, however, just shout "objection, your honor" without providing a valid reason rooted in legal decorum. Thus, Charisma (Persuasion) checks have no bearing on Fazrian's decision. Unfortunately for the party, Sim has a +15 to Intelligence (History) checks.

The following reasons are proper and valid for an objection to a question asked of a witness:

- Ambiguous, confusing, misleading, or vague questions
- The question makes an argument rather than actually asking a question
- The same question is continuously asked to a witness even after already receiving an answer
- Asking the jury to prejudge evidence, even if certain facts are proved thereafter that they claimed would sway their vote
- Assuming a fact as true without evidence

- Badgering or antagonizing a witness to provoke a response such as by mocking them or not giving them time to respond
- The question calls for conclusion (i.e., asking for an opinion rather than a fact)
- The question calls for speculation (i.e., asking for the witness to guess the answer rather than rely on the known facts)
- The question is a compound question with multiple questions strung together; Sim is always quick to call these out just to be annoying
- Hearsay (i.e., the witness doesn't personally know the answer but heard it from elsewhere)
- The witness is incompetent and not qualified to answer the question
- The question is irrelevant or inflammatory, intended to cause prejudice against another party
- The question is leading (i.e., suggestive of an answer to the witness). Leading questions can be sanctioned if the attorney asks the judge permission to treat the witness as a hostile witness

Convincing Jurors. Each of the jurors have a bias or sympathy. Whenever the prosecution and defense are in opposition to a point (such as whether one specific act was evil versus being justified), contest each side in a Persuasion check. When this check is related to compassion, use Charisma; when it's based on logic and facts, use Intelligence.

- Thomas Clark's simple world is black and white. Thus, he is swayed by evidence painting the adventurers as heroes or villains.
- Valtagar cares only to provoke a conflict between the party and Fazrian; if voting guilty precipitates this, he does not hesitate to.
- In a twisted way, evidence of virtue sways Aximus and Exekarus as they vote how they perceive Fazrian wants them to. So, if the planetar seems impressed or revolted by testimony and evidence, they follow suit.
- Without the last card of his Three-Dragon Ante firmly in his pocket, Malgorn is swayed solely by logic. Like other duergar, he is pragmatic above all else; arguments that what the adventurers did was necessary to survive resonate well with him.
- Heartless, Trobriand is swayed only by logic. He cares not for the morality of one's actions, only if they were justified legally or naturally. He would not find a lion guilty for murder if its victim was an antelope; likewise, he would not find the party guilty of murder if sparing a foe would conflict with their goals. In Trobriand's mind, there is no need to seek other solutions when an acceptable one is already available.

ACT III. THE VERDICT

After all of the hullabaloo is finished, the jurors retire to Area 14 to deliberate on the party's fate, which takes 4d10+35 minutes. How they vote is determined by how the trial went, in accordance to each juror's internal biases. In the meantime, Fazrian *does not* allow the party to leave Area 23B. Raxxus remains at his side and all other witnesses are dismissed and returned whence they came.

As the jury deliberates, the party may be tempted to flee or fight. Do not deprive them of this decision. If they attack Fazrian and its **nycaloth**, the **planetar** calls for aid. The **arcanaloths** in Area 14 hear their master's call and obey. See Area 23 for Fazrian and the yugoloths' tactics.

Once they're finished deliberating, the jury files back into Area 23B to pronounce the adventurers guilty or not guilty. If you do not want so many characters at the scene of the battle, then reduce their numbers. Trobriand would leave immediately, not returning to Area 23. If the verdict is guilty, Malgorn also decides to dip, knowing he'll likely wind up dead in the crossfire; Valtagar might send him to fetch his wife Stalagma (an **adult silver dragon**) and his **iron golem** from Area 15.

THE JURY HUNG

If the jury could not come to an agreement, Fazrian takes matters into his own hands. Read the following:

The jurors file back into Fazrian's court, stony-faced. It's the duergar prince, Valtagar, that delivers their verdict. "We the jury, pursuant to our oaths sworn, on the matter as to whether the defendants ought to be sentenced to death, cannot come to a unanimous agreement."

The silence is deafening. The jurors almost seem to cringe with the expectation of a scolding by Fazrian. The angel, however, looks only to you, gathered there before the pit into which you're dead-certain other defendants have been tossed. The angel frowns. Its greatsword flies into its hand as it stands and descends from its throne.

"With your peers splintered, it is up to... a higher being to decide your fate." He levels the sword at you. "There will be no amnesty, no mistrial. It pains me to do this, my children, but this is the fate you have earned. You've only yourselves to blame. Raxxus! Perform your duties, my child!"

THE VERDICT: GUILTY

If the jury declares the party guilty—a verdict likely engineered by Valtagar—read the following:

The jurors return to the quiet hall. You look to Valtagar; he tries to avoid your gaze and silently shakes his head. Its one of the duergar priests that declare to the court, "We the jury have found the defendants... guilty as all Hell, my lord Fazrian! Guilty! Rot is in their souls, my lord! A rot that has spread and will spread to others if they are not cut down now! Do so, my lord, we the jury do beg! Do so!"

The angel lifts a hand, silencing the mad priest. "Enough of these theatrics, Aximus. This court will not tolerate such buffoonery." The angel stands from his throne, taking to the steps with reluctant steps. "The jury has found you guilty—and so you are. The only punishment in the court of Torm for the failure to be pure... is death. Raxxus, perform your duties."

If Valtagar is confronted later over voting guilty along with the rest of the jurors, he lies, claiming that the arcanaloths assured him that Fazrian would see him, his wife, and his people dead if they "so clearly lacked the judgment to denounce these degenerates." He's a victim see? This, however, is a flat-out lie.

As described in *DotMM*, a character that willingly submits themselves to Fazrian's judgment is deemed innocent and can perhaps force the angel to confront its own folly.

THE VERDICT: NOT GUILTY

If the jury finds the adventurers not guilty, Fazrian begrudgingly spares their lives—but also demands they swear an oath to serve him when he one day raises an army to purge Undermountain. Read the following:

The "not guilty" verdict rings throughout the court. The angel only thaws after a frozen moment when it begrudgingly says, "So are you judged innocent by your peers. Your lives are your own... to be spent in fulfillment of further righteous causes."

The angel stands and descends from its macabre throne, his greatsword in his hand. "But know this, my children: there shall come a day when I will raise an army to purge Undermountain of its degenerates, to bring light where it is dark, and good conduct to where it is needed. I expect you to swear an oath, here and now, before Torm himself, to serve me when the time comes. Together we shall make the world clean."

If a character swears the oath, Fazrian knights them with his greatsword, declaring them to now "rise as a servant of Torm."

Screw It. At your discretion, Fazrian is appalled at the jury's decision and decides to put the party to death anyway. Read the following:

The jurors stand as one, quiet but for Valtagar Steelshadow, who proclaims in a solid voice, "We the jury find the defendants not guilty."

Silence thunders across the hall. You look to the fallen angel. His lips are set in a flat line that, only after another moment, curl into a callous scowl.

"No," he whispers. Then a little louder: "No. This cannot be. It will not be. You are mistaken, my children. These 'heroes' are guilty of the most primitive deformity: corruption. Do not blame yourselves, though. I am... disappointed, but it was my mistake to trust the sheep to spot the wolves amongst them."

The angel opens its palm; its greatsword—forged in the fires of Heaven, no doubt—flies into its grasp. Fazrian levels the cruel blade at you and denounces you: "For the crime of unrepentant corruption, I, Fazrian, Hand of Torm, sentence you to death."

Fazrian can only be mollified by a character that submits themselves to his judgment, as described in *DotMM*.

REDEMPTION

If the party manages to force Fazrian into confronting his own fall from grace, read the following:

Your words echo out across the courtroom, silencing all others but the angel, who gapes at you. "I... *I* have fallen? I, who basked in the warmth of Torm? You would *dare* accuse me of cor—"

The angel's fury melts from its face as it confronts the truth. It looks to its own hands, stained as they are. Its eyes swing to the walls that weep blood. And then, just as chaos is about to erupt, the unthinkable occurs: the angel collapses to his knees and weeps. His sobs are like thunder! His remorse is like a flash of light that blinds you! You hear steel rasping against stone, and when you blink away that blinding light, you see Fazrian impale himself on his own sword.

"Forgive me, my lord Torm," the angel whispers as he slowly sinks onto the steel and moves no more.

No one else moves. No one dares. Then a pillar of golden light crashes in from the ceiling, illuminating Fazrian's corpse, and rapturing it to the heavens above! The weeping blood dries and evaporates and the tiles of this forsaken place begin to glow gold. Fazrian's corpse begins to float, disintegrating into golden motes of ash. When all is done, not even his sword is left, having melted into a puddle of molten steel.

AREAS OF NOTE

The following areas are of note:

1. ENTRANCE

When the adventurers enter the Terminus Level, it's in minecarts led along a tour narrated by Halaster. Read the following:

You come upon a great well of darkness that slants deep into the earth, pierced only by a solitary minecart track. Four carts lay along the flat. As you creep forward, perpetually wary of traps, the world explodes into neon lights, loud music, and far too much confetti to be environmentally conscious.

Words burst into being above you: "THE TERMINUS TOUR! NARRATED BY HALASTER BLACKCLOAK (YES, THAT ONE)!" The disembodied voice of the Mad Mage himself bounces off the walls, commanding you to get in the minecart.

Assuming the party plays ball, read the following as their minecarts roll into Level 21:

Your minecart teeters on the edge, stopping with a rusty groan. You hear a spell muttered from all around you; suddenly near-translucent hands materialize behind your cart and give it a healthy shove. You go rolling through the dark, islands of light passing you by. Halaster's voice squeaks from above:

"Welcome to the Terminus level! Once upon a time, King Melair—yeah, that Melair, of the *Melairkyn* dwarves—sent his best and brightest to oversee his most impoverished people as they lifted mithril from these depths. If you look to your left, you can see where he first found mithril. On your right is where he first found his second deposit of mithril. Up ahead is where he considered penning his dear mother but, ultimately, decided he wasn't ready to open up *that* can of worms. 'Better not open *that* can of worms,' he muttered—and truer words were never spoken, I tell you. Last I spoke to my mother, she told me I ought to get some sunlight, supply her with more grandkids. It was all 'are you eating enough carrots? Did you try on that sweater I sent you?' and so on and so forth. We lost contact shortly after; wonder if she's still alive. It's been... centuries.

"Up on the left is where Melair took a nap, by the way. The dwarves—they worshipped him, you know—called it King's Rest, pretentious buggers. Vast pilgrimages to it every year, but whenever I just sleep in a mine, all I get is a trespassing notice."

As your minecart speeds through the earth, you see it: a small, hollowed out cave with a gilded pillow and hammock strung up between two stalagmites. Halaster—you recognize his handwriting—has put up a sign that says "King's Rest, 4 copper."

Still that voice prattles on; you can't escape it. When you press your hands to ears, you hear it switch to a frequency that seems to come from within your brain. You grit your teeth but that only makes the voice chuckle. You thump your fist against the cart and hear a snort. There's nowhere to go as Halaster rambles on and on and on. He tells you all about the Terminus Level, namely how he "honored King Melair" by using it as a dumping ground for monsters, failed experiments, and "tire-some grad students."

When at last the ride ceases, you glide gently to a stop in a cavern with four exits, two of which contain more mine tracks. The voice shouts, "Thank you for partaking in our tour! Also, you're doomed! So doomed! *Doooooooooooooooooomed!*"

After that last bit, the tracks the characters rode into this level retract, rolling up like a carpet. Thereafter, the tunnel gets bricked up right before their eyes. A message then appears on the wall: "WE SINCERELY HOPE YOU ENJOY THE TERMINUS LEVEL!" After a minute, "WHILE YOU CAN" is added just below the first message.

2. ORE-FILLED CART

If the party has yet to encounter the **remorhaz** (see *Wandering Monsters* in *DotMM*), this is an ideal area for it to appear. Do include the duergar as well. If you do so, read the following:

Amidst your deadly tryst with this centipedal horror, you hear the thunder of steel on stone. Out from the dark storm dwarven warriors clad in bucket helms and armor dripping with the omnipresent blood that weeps from the walls. In Dwarvish, they shout a rallying cry: "For Steelshadow!" The first warrior draws twin axes and leaps onto the monster's tail, hacking and cackling with wild abandon!

Once the monster is dealt with, the duergar present themselves as vassals of Valtagar Steelshadow. If she wasn't slain on Level 6 or 20, this warrior is none other than Skella Ironeye, the **duergar warlord** (see *Previously On...* above). If not, the warrior is instead Rojkarn Ironhead (a **duergar** with 40 hit points who normally resides in Area 6). Once introductions have been made, draw on the sample dialogue below, tailoring it to fit the identity of the duergar speaking to the party:

- "If you're here... Fazrian already knows. Hurry! To the prince with you before the giant orders you to court."
- On Fazrian: "A cruel giant whose skin is the color of unpolished jade. I would mistake him for an angel if I hadn't seen his callousness firsthand."
- "Prince Valtagar Steelshadow, pretender to the throne of Gracklstugh, expects to meet all visitors to the Deep Mines—before it's too late. As his humble servant, I promise ye safety and guest right."
- "These mines were once full of mithril; now, only iron and monsters dumped here by the Mad Mage. Watch yourself; a rift may open at any time."
- "Our people cannae suffer anymore incursions by the Mad Mage. Somethin's got ta give! By when the iron dries up, I pray to Laduguer that our fortifications are finished or we're on our way back to Gracklstugh."

3. DEPLETED MINE

When the adventurers first visit this place, they are confronted with a memory from the past. Read:

These mines have seen livelier days; the picks and hammers of old no longer ring out here, instead lying in rusting silence. Yet as you pick your way through the tunnels, a warm wind blows in, and with it, a scene from the long-forgotten past:

Apparitions climb from the dirt and walls, armed with ghostly picks. They take to their work feverishly, watched over by armed guards who cast out wary glances towards the dark. You can tell that they're afraid, but of what?

The picks fall silent one by one as the dwarves haul the last of their metals to a cart: mithril, that legendary ore. As the last deposit is dropped off, a miner tells a foreman, "That's the last of it, boss."

The foreman swallows and addresses the miners and warriors alike: "Be quick; leave your tools where they are. There are worse things down here than dark elves and duergar. Say your last to the Deep Mines, boys. Say your last to Undermountain."

With that, the apparitions vanish and silence reigns again.

4. DEEPER MINES

4A. INVISIBLE SPIES

If the three **duergar** don't detect the party, they are engaged in a conversation in Dwarvish by when the party arrives. Read the following, if a character in the party shares a language with the duergar:

In the dark float whispers shared between scared voyeurs, all in the proud Dwarven tongue:

"They look hungry, Hoitr," a dwarf whispers. His accent is acutely duergar. "Mayhaps we can enlist them."

"And where d'ye think we're supposed to get enough food to feed these brutes? We're hardly scrapin' by ourselves."

"Rojkarn—"

"Aye, aye, I heard the overseer's orders just the same as ye. You wanna be the first dwarf to walk up, biscuits in hand? Think you might like that? I say, we report back to Rojkarn with inconclusion! Let some other poor saps be the ones to make first contact with the giants!"

The duergar, all male, are named Hoitr, Heimyr, and Tawd. If the adventurers come into view, Heimyr quickly shushes his companions. When they see that party are adventurers, read the following:

As you search for those invisible spies, the silence stretches until at last it is broken by a casual "Hey" in Common.

"The name is Tawd," the whisper explains. "Vassal of Prince Valtagar, Lord of the Mines. You're just what the prince has been looking for. Come, come, drop your weapons and let us speak plain! All visitors to the Deep Mines are extended guest right by the prince himself!"

4B. SOMETHING WICKED

The **fomorian**s here are starving; an extraordinary display of conjuring sustenance could placate them, such as a spell of *create food and water* or *heroes' feast*. Whether sparing or slaying these monsters impresses or angers Fazrian is up to you.

6. DUERGAR OUTPOST

If the adventurers have not yet met Rojkarn in Area 2, plant him here as normal and rely on the dialogue presented earlier to steer them towards Valtagar.

7. CLERIC'S END

You enter amidst chaos: a spectral maiden clad in the livery of her deity swings wildly at an invisible foe. That foe catches her winged mace and tears it from her grasp, sending it flying—it fades away into the darkness. "No!" she cries, "You are the hand of Torm! Act like—"

Before she can finish her indictment, her head is separated from her shoulders by an invisible blade. It careens through the air, landing at your feet. For a moment, all is still; the maiden looks up at you with her still, dead eyes, as blue, spectral blood oozes out onto the floor—and all at once, blue blood begins to weep from the walls around you, as if her death sealed the fate of this dungeon. For a moment, everything is still. The memory has played out, paused. But as if you sneezed, they violently shatter into spectral glass and disappear.

9. MINERS' QUARTERS

When the adventurers first arrive to this area, they behold a strange but harmless phenomena: the ghosts of Melairkyn dwarves yet sleep on the stone slabs. The apparitions are without sentience and instead closer to an illusion. Read the following:

Dust covers every surface of this forgotten chamber, lit by a soft but spectral blue light. On stone slabs, dwarven apparitions slumber, just as they so clearly did in life, some snoring, some stirring, some awake and mending boots or writing letters by candlelight. Once you step foot into the room proper, they vanish, like a candlelight snuffed out with a strong blow.

While the trial is underway, Fazrian allows the party to take this area as their resting chambers. He has his pet **nycaloth**, Raxxus, keep an eye on the chamber. The yugoloth remains invisible thanks to its Innate Spellcasting trait.

10. COMMON AREAS

10B. DEN

If you're running *Judged From on High*, Malgorn is aware of the location of the last card of his Three-Dragon Ante set: Area 23C. Desperate to receive it, he tells the party that the pit is laired in by three otyughs ("living garbage disposers," he adds). He says, "Listen to me! Listen! I will do *anything* for that card, hear me? A favor for a favor. I swear it on the name of my father and on the name of Prince Valtagar Steelshadow himself."

13. GRAND VESTIBULE

You come upon a grand vestibule streaked with blood. The very walls weep with it, staining the murals that were once so painfully carved into the walls. Its vaulted ceiling is held up by old pillars, one of which is carved to resemble a scowling, muscular dwarf with sapphires for eyes—King Melair, perhaps?

A curtain of black dragon scales hang from a wall, brittle but unaffected by the perpetual blood that so eerily leaks from the walls. The curtain is opposite doors that sport a waterfall carving. Its mithril inlays paint the scene as one of flowing, molten metal. The craftsmanship here is appallingly thoughtful, ruined now by that omnipresent blood.

Suspended from the ceiling by iron chains is a massive war-horn, 20-feet-long at least. The Dwarvish runes etched upon its surface tell you that it is magical, protected, or beloved—if not all three. Such is the legacy of the Melairkyn dwarves, over whose toils you now tread, eons after their disappearance.

While the adventurers are here, the doors to Area 14 open; the **arcanaloth** Aximus (in his dwarven form) shouts at the party, "Come to hear the Dour Words of Laduguer, eh? Quickly! Quickly, before Brother Exekarus begins his eighth sermon of the day!"

If the party hesitates or refuses to come, Aximus says "Don't you want to be rosy with the lord?" but otherwise returns to Area 14.

14. SHRINE OF LADUGUER

A thin, smoky haze chokes this low-lit chapel, at the heart of which rests an iron altar traced with silver and shaped like a giant anvil. A shield fit for a giant is mounted behind it on the wall, bearing the symbol of a broken arrow with a jagged arrow-head. In a set of drab robes kneels a duergar who turns to you with something between a scowl and a smile plastered on his face... Something between misery and excitement.

"Welcome! Have you come to hear the Dour Words of Great Laduguer?"

If the adventurers linger here, Exekarus launches into a sermon lasting 1d4 + 10 minutes. Throughout it, they can make a DC 15 Wisdom (Insight) check to sense that these duergar are... off; their mannerisms are unlike any other duergar, many of which the party has surely met throughout their time in Under-mountain. A DC 15 Intelligence (Religion) check also implies that the "priest's" sermon is quite text-book and lacking a personal interpretation or touch that most priests would weave into their preaching.

Recited Dogma. The arcanaloths love to share their favorite maxims of Laduguer, be it in a sermon or in a run-of-the-mill conversation. They always manage to work in those maxims by precipitating it with, "As the Dour Laduguer says..." or attributing the quote to "Holy Laduguer." No matter how brief the party's interactions with the fiends, they'll walk away having heard one, if not all, of these maxims:

- "No matter how much wealth and power you have, it's never enough."
- "The fight never ends. Take what you deserve and destroy all who stand in your way."

- "Let no emotion rule you. Abandon joy! Abandon love! Abandon pride and anger and ambition, for they are all signs of weakness! Know your role and perform it to the best of your ability."

15. VALTAGAR'S QUARTERS

The walls of this chamber are adorned with iron masks—the visors of helmets, scarred or charred or stained with blood shed long ago, all arranged neatly. At a lectern studies a duergar mage, if the spellbook at his disposal is any indication—and rather than paper or papyrus, this one is formed from mithril plates. The mage looks up at you, his dark eyes unblinking. The very first thing out of his mouth is, "Has Fazrian found you?"

When Valtagar invites the party to conspire with him against Fazrian, you have a handful of options to choose from:

- He proposes they take the fight directly to Fazrian: "Quickly; if you're here, the giant will surely know. You cannot escape the Deep Mines without alerting him. We must take the fight to him now while we are at our strongest."
- He proposes they meet Fazrian and stand trial: "The giant will try you for your 'crimes.' As Lord of the Deep Mines, I will be one of the jurors deliberating your fate. At least, I will be, if he does not suspect we have already met. No matter the evidence presented against you, I shall ensure you survive the ordeal. On your way out of the Deep Mines, I pray for nothing short of you freeing us from this tyrant. Gods know I want nothing more than to return to my rightful home of Gracklstugh."

As the *Companion* holds that the Insight skill should not be a lie-detector, any checks made against Valtagar should reveal that the duergar seems to be confident and relieved, if not to eager, to proceed with the next chapter of its plot. It should not betray the fact that he intends to vote guilty, no matter what, to provoke the party into fighting Fazrian.

18. IRON MINE

The sound of mining echoes throughout these caves. A steel voice cuts through the din of pick and chain and cussing:

"Come now, you curs! Surely you wish to return home, do you not? Swing! Strip! Swing! Strip! Take from the earth what is ours! Tear open its clots and let it *bleed*! Strip! Swing! Strip! Your break isn't for another forty, so get your fragile selves back to work! Gracklstugh awaits! Redemption awaits!"

The voice belongs to Stalagma Steelshadow, the wife of Valtagar; it cuts over all other noise here. If the miners attack the adventurers, she can quickly arrive astride her **gorgon** to settle the conflict. She has no compassion for the duergar, but understands that the mining operation will suffer for any harm they incur.

Roleplaying Stalagma. An absolute brickhouse, Stalagma is unflinching in danger. Unlike Valtagar, she has no fear of adventurers; she's devoured or dissolved too many to count over her years. After all, she is a dragon. When she first sees the adventurers, she shouts, "You there! Either pick up a pick and take to the wall or get the hell out of my mine!"

Hinting at the Truth. The duergar refer to their cruel overseer as "Valtagar's dragon" and "the lady of steel," unaware of how right they truly are. You want to work in these in often so that your party groans when Stalagma assumes her true form later.

19. OUTPOST

19A. WAY TO LEVEL 22

Unlike on some other levels of Undermountain, you shouldn't contrive a method to prevent the party from advancing to Level 22. They must always have the agency to decide whether they will face Fazrian's wrath or flee from his "justice."

Xindulus. The invisible **ultroloth** guards the secret door to Level 22. Unlike other yugoloths, which look fiendish, the ultroloth is as alien as they come, which thus necessitates a description. When Xindulus' invisibility is dropped, read the following:

The hidden door slides in its socket—and suddenly you're at your knees as a thunderous screech consumes your brain! You turn around and there it is! There it is, a smooth-faced creature with no other features than its inveigling eyes! It is a creature unlike any other you have ever seen! A creature with no place in this world—not a fiend, angel, or horror from the Far Realms, only a gray-skinned abomination whose flat face is the sum of all your deranged uncle's ramblings of "aliens" and "visitors!" And its *voice*, gods above! Its voice makes no sound, uttering a word audible only to deep within your brain, a word that slips past your mind's most forward defenses: "No."

Unlike in *DotMM*, Xindulus does not need to attack immediately if a creature opens the secret door. It can instead cast *mass suggestion* (for the purpose of this, give it Common, unless all party members speak Abyssal or Infernal). It says, "You should proceed to Lord Fazrian and submit yourself to his judgment."

Tactics. On its first turn, Xindulus attempts to summon 1d4 **nycaloths**. On its second turn, it casts *firestorm*. On its third turn, it uses its Hypnotic Gaze if it doesn't need to flee via *dimension door*.

21. CLEAN AIR STATION

The natural tunnels break into a mortared room whose smooth walls are otherwise decorated in runes. The air here is noticeably fresher, cleaner even. You suck in a breath greedily, and it's as if you're back on the surface of this world, before you learned to appreciate open skies and crisp, cold air. Your heart twitches as you remember the world above...

23. FAZRIAN'S COURT

23B. HALL OF FINAL JUDGMENT

When the party visits this area for the first time, read the following:

The neglected foyer empties out into a hall dimly lit by distant braziers. Through the thin haze, you make out a giant upon a throne fashioned from bones. His skin is the color of soft jade and from his back sprout two white-feathered wings. His eyes are of molten silver and his smile is unwelcoming.

"Welcome," the giant tells you. "To my court—to the Hall of Final Judgment. I am Fazrian the Just. In the name of Torm, I ask you... have you been righteous?"

The giant focuses on you with the heat of the sun. Its gaze is sterile and clinical, and it nitpicks at your every flaw, even those you've managed to hide on the inside. There is no escaping that heat, that attention, that scrutiny. You feel a force in the air; it is unlike any you have ever experienced in Undermountain. It is warm, but unkind. It is gentle—but even the softest hands can curl into fists, and that's what you feel here. That's what you feel. As if the open palm will clench into a fist that will smite you from the heavens themselves. You feel far too small... as if you were but a child again, facing your father as he devises your punishment, disappointment fierce on his face as he wonders why his child misbehaves so.

You have come face to face with an angel, of that you have no doubt, and his question thunders through your mind: have you been righteous? Have you?

Now that Fazrian has been introduced to the party, the *Judged From on High* storyline begins.

Tactics. In combat, Fazrian relies on these tactics:

- Fazrian has a flying speed of 120 ft. and Area 23B has a ceiling of 40 ft. On his first turn, he flies upwards after making his attacks or before, if he intends to cast spells. If he can afford the opportunity attacks, he relies on strafing foes on the ground before flying back up.
- To crowd in its foes or split the party, Fazrian opens up with a *blade barrier* spell, devoting his concentration to maintaining the spell.
- If his foes are clumped up, he unleashes a *flame strike* spell to capture as many as possible.
- If Raxxus the **nycaloth** is present, it casts *mirror image* on itself before entering the fray. If *blade barrier* is up, it teleports in (or out) before or after making a Claw attack. It focuses on one single character, making Claw attacks against it to further exacerbate the fiendish wound the attack inflicts.
- If they're not already present, the **arcanaloths** Aximus and Exekarus hear Fazrian's call and attack from Area 14, arriving on the second turn of combat (via two back-to-back *dimension door* spells, with each one taking its peer through the door with them, per the spell). Both devote their reactions to *counterspell* or *shield* spells.
- Aximus targets an armored character with a *heat metal* spell, especially if *blade barrier* separates it from its target. On its next turn, it casts *finger of death* while using a bonus action to continue inflicting damage to the armored character.
- Exekarus unleashes a *chain lightning* spell, then mops up with a *fireball* spell the next turn.

Valtagar. If Valtagar is present, he joins combat on the second round of combat if he's confident that the adventurers can defeat the angel. Likewise, his wife Stalagma, joins the fray if present. They respectively have the statistics of an **archmage** and **adult silver dragon**. Knowing that the yugoloths will answer to any master with enough clout or coin, they focus on taking down Fazrian. If the party becomes collateral damage during this attack, so be it.

JUDGED FROM ON HIGH

During the trial's proceedings, Fazrian, of course, sits on his throne. The defendants are to stand with their backs against the open pit on the southern end. The prosecution stands in the crystal menhirs to the north. Jurors and witnesses stand behind the prosecution, along the northern wall.

23C. GARBAGE DISPOSAL

As you stand near the pit, you hear... a scrabbling. As if bone and flesh paws at the sheer stone walls. The darkness here defies you, as if by magic. From its depths, you hear whispers, three in all, and each offered by a different voice. These whispers... they echo within your mind, begging you to visit the dark below, to come "only for a little while."

Creepy. You shut down a shudder.

The "defiant darkness" here is just a *darkness* spelled placed at the middle of the pit's height to keep up the suspense of what's down there. Darkvision really ruins the game sometimes. The *darkness* spell does not darken the pit's floor, nor the cave attached to it.

Judged From on High. If you run this variant, Malgorn knows that the last card of the Three-Dragon Ante set is down here with the otyughs. They telepathically tell the adventurers that it was they who informed Malgorn—and told him that if he wanted his precious card, all he had to do was come down here and take it.

24. SECRET VAULT

There is little here in this hidden vault. No loot, no monsters—only a headless corpse and a winged mace. The dead woman has been left in the rubble; maggots the size of carrots squirm within her guts. Where, you wonder, is her head? Then you find it, forlorn and forgotten in a dusty corner.

As you turn the head around, you can't help but think that she was pretty in life. Not so much in death. As you lift your eyes from hers—already half-eaten by maggots—you see that the blood stains on the far wall depict a giant hand... the symbol of Torm, God of Courage and Self-Sacrifice.

What a farce.

EPILOGUE

They've done it, the madmen. The adventurers have reached 17th level, triumphing over nearly all of Undermountain's troubles. Only one level remains between them and the Mad Mage. Your game is to change considerably now that the spellcasters among the party have access to 9th level spells—so consult with them on which spell they choose and prepare yourself for any possible chicanery.

Wish. Now that the adventurers are 17th level, the *wish* spell is available to wizards, sorcerers, and bards that use their Magical Secrets feature to gain the spell. Keep in mind the following to prevent Halaster's untimely—but deserved—demise:

- If the caster simply wishes for Halaster to die... he just reforms 1d10 days later via his Rejuvenation trait.
- If the caster wishes for Halaster to cease existing, the Knot in the Weave explodes, probably killing every single creature in Undermountain.
- If the caster wishes for Halaster to have never existed, the adventurers are knocked down to 5th level, since they only advanced in power while in Undermountain.
- If the caster wishes for Halaster to become sane, they have just unleashed the worst possible version of him upon the world.
- If the caster somehow manages to skirt the above issues and still *wishes* to get rid of Halaster, they may succeed, but a version of the Mad Mage from an alternate reality steps in to fill his shoes. This one is even crazier or crueler than the original.
- Halaster may be warded against *wish* spells via an upgraded *contingency* spell he has crafted; whenever a *wish* spell that affects him occurs, he is given time to review it and screw around with it. Halaster is one of the most powerful mortal wizards in existence; thus, this isn't outside the realm of possibilities. Someone he pissed off would have tried this long ago before the party was even born; he would already have planned of this and thwarted other attempts on his existence.
- If all else fails, then Halaster has already *wished* that he cannot be thwarted by a *wish* spell. Insist that *wish* spells cannot alter other *wishes*.

Essentially, be happy if the adventurers use their *wish* for something that *doesn't* derail the campaign. The best possible meta-use of a *wish* spell could be for them to skip Level 22 and reach Halaster's tower, saving you several sessions of game-time.

THE SEND-OFF

Unlike other levels of *DotMM*, there is no Host's Send-off—which the party should find curious, since Halaster never shuts up and would surely gloat over orchestrating the trial. Cap off your session with the send-off below:

Through the fresco you delve, leaving behind the Mad Mage's dumping grounds, leaving behind the angel that has so clearly fallen from grace. Instinctively, you know that there is only one more distraction keeping you from the Mad Mage's lair... but as you turn into the darkened depths, Halaster is absent. Not even silent, just absent. His attention—that inescapable warmth—is strangely absent. Why isn't he watching you? Mocking you?

What, you must wonder, awaits you below?

LEVEL XXII: SHADOWDUSK HOLD

"The stars turn, and a time presents itself,"

– Dezmyr Shadowdusk

QUICK NOTES

- The party doesn't need to fight this level's bosses to get to Level 23, they only need to reach Area 35. Of course, they will lose out on experience—and possibly doom the world to an aberrant apocalypse.
- The Shadowdusk family has made frequent contact with the Far Realm via the *black crystal tablet*, which is in Area 23. The portal is in Area 32.
- This level's three bosses cannot truly die—the **death knights** Dezmyr and Zalthar and the **adult blue dracolich** provided its phylactery isn't destroyed—meaning that the party might have to face them again in the far-off future. These foes would not be appeased with anything but the adventurers' death and eternal servitude as undead slaves.
- Star spawn, featured in *Mordenkainen's Tome of Foes* are featured on this level. When using them, be cautious; their CR's are incorrect and misleading.
- There is a trapped **couatl** in Area 34, a LG celestial. While it has little purpose in *DotMM*, its role is expanded in the *Dead Hold* variant.
- There are no other means to Level 23 in Undermountain. To reach the Mad Wizard's Lair, the party *must* take the arcane gate in Area 35, which requires the sacrifice of a magic item. As written on Level 23, Halaster is keen on returning this item to the party once they reach his throne room, if he has no intention to fight them. However, the *Dead Hold* variant on this level has the item permanently destroyed when given to the gate—as a means to deprive the Shadowdusks of their *black crystal tablet*.

PREVIOUSLY ON *DUNGEON OF THE MAD MAGE*

Keep in mind the following when running this level:

- The party has likely already encountered Shadowdusk family members throughout Undermountain: the **mage** Maleen and the **assassin** Tendra Nightblade sent to Level 12 to recruit Drivvin Freth as an apprentice of the Mad Mage; and Akarrth, the mad **archmage** that led an expedition to Level 20.
- A *sun blade* could be found on Level 18; it would come into great use against the six **wraiths** that join Dezmyr, a **death knight**, in battle.
- Fazrian, the planetar of Level 21, dreamt of purging Undermountain of its filth—was Shadowdusk Hold to be the heart of darkness the angel intended to impale? Surely the planetar must have known of the family's horrific endeavors. Surely, if its current two leaders were once paladins of Torm, Fazrian's god.

MADNESS UNFURLED

The penultimate level of Undermountain is a mad arcade devoted to opening a gate that should've never even been discovered. The Far Realm has corrupted Shadowdusk Hold, leaking out from the portal the family has so foolishly opened. Above all else, Level 22 should be *weird*—and not the campy, oddness of the Mad Mage, but *horrifically weird*.

To that end, consider the following additions to Shadowdusk Hold:

NESTED TENTACLES

As described in *Halaster's Game*, contact with the Far Realm has sprouted tentacles that infest much of Undermountain, especially Shadowdusk Hold. With a mind of their own, they can attack a creature within 10 feet of it (+6 to hit). On a hit, the creature is grappled (escape DC 14) and takes 1d6 psychic damage. The tentacle nest has 16 hit points and an AC of 14. Inside each nest is a cloudy eye that leaks a milky-white fluid.

These nests have been scattered throughout the level to harass the party.

FUNKY PHYSICS

The energies of the Far Realm are wreaking havoc on the physics of Shadowdusk Hold. At any moment, an area or character—but not an aberration—can suffer from one of the following effects:

Gravitational Distortion. Gravity no longer affects creatures equally in Shadowdusk Hold, subjecting some to the effects of a *reverse gravity* spell. At your discretion, a creature must roll a d20. On a result of 1-11, gravity remains normal for the creature. On a roll of 12-15, gravity vertically reverses; on a result of 16-19, it shifts 90 degrees so that they fall towards the east. On a roll of 20, gravity presses down on the character, encumbering them.

Time Dilation. Time has become stretchy. At your discretion, when a character leaves an area, their perception of time remains the same, but minutes may have passed. Characters keep to the same clock if they are within the same room together or if they remain in each other's line of sight, otherwise time is prone to lengthen for one of them. Stairways are especially screwy. This can be your party's ticket to a rest if allowed one.

Synesthesia. A character's senses may get jumbled, allowing them to taste colors, smell the passage of time, and more. A character afflicted by synesthesia must roll a d10 and consult the Synesthesia table.

SYNESTHESIA

d10 Form of Synesthesia

1	You personify numerals (ex. the numeral 4 is generous).
2	You can taste music; high notes are sweet and cloying; low notes are earthy and bitter.
3	Letters always have a color affixed to them, such as the letter C always being magenta.
4	You can hear colors.
5	Others' emotions radiate a heat (or lack thereof).
6	You mirror the tactile feelings of another person you can see (i.e., if they touch a hot surface, you feel the heat too).
7	Certain sounds produce tactile sensations on your body.
8	Words have distinct tastes on your tongue.
9	Any sound provokes aggression within you.
10	Silence provokes aggression within you.

Toxic Air. Once during this level, oxygen becomes toxic—and creatures that normally need to breathe find that they no longer need to. For the next 10 minutes, every creature that breathes in air takes 3 (1d6) poison damage.

A successful DC 10 Intelligence check is enough to make the connection between breathing and pain. After 10 minutes, the oxygen loses its toxicity and all creatures therein must breathe normally. There's no indication when this change occurs; some creatures might foolishly suffocate themselves as they still believe that they must *not* breathe to live.

MADNESS

Madness is heavily featured on this level; several effects can induce it. For your convenience, the Madness tables from the *Dungeon Master's Guide* have been included in Appendix C.

DEAD HOLD

Level 22 has its flaws and its strengths—but the *Companion* contends that it has much more potential than what is presented in *DotMM*. The adventurers have already faced cults working towards diabolical ends before—so why not give them a level where they're *already too late*?

Doom Has Come. Under this variant, the Shadowdusks have stabilized their portal to the Far Realm and an inaugural class of star spawn—the aberrant horrors featured in *Mordenkainen's Tome of Foes*—have stormed through the sanctum, slaughtering any-one not of Shadowdusk blood. This variant seeks to turn Level 22 into a feverish romp infested with horrors from beyond the stars.

A Storm of Strange. The creatures of Shadowdusk Hold must seek out the adventurers, charging them down as they're detected. Shift the onus away from the party—rather than investigating rooms one-by-one and coming upon foes, the foes must come upon them instead if you're to achieve the atmosphere of *Dead Hold*. Give no quarter, no respite.

Player Sacrifice. As noted several times below, in the sixth encounter of *Dead Hold*, one mortal must be given (or give themselves) to the Far Realm to host a **star spawn seer**. If one of the adventurers is slain, you might have the Shadowdusk minions steal their corpse and revive it, sacrificing them to the portal in Area 32. The circumstances are up to you.

Changes to the Module. The *Dead Hold* variant makes a number of changes, elaborated on below:

- The Shadowdusks were attended to by a large number of cultists and servants born into or brought to the Hold. Most are dead now, slaughtered by star spawn. Some managed to flee—into the Expanded Dungeon or via the gate to Level 23.
- The adventurers will meet a fleeing cultist named Jeras in Area 1 who elaborates on the situation. You want him to spell this out for the party: the sanctum is overrun, there's a portal to the Far Realm, and the only way out is the arcane gate to "the Mad Mage's private sanctum."
- Most aberrations on this level, including the nothics and slaadi, have been cosmetically changed to star spawn.
- *Dead Hold* has up to seven encounters to run.
- Several foes have been removed from the level to make up for the additional difficulty of facing real star spawn.

Magus ex Machina. If you're concerned about the far-reaching consequences of star spawn being let into the world en masse, remember that Halaster can intervene off-screen. Once larva magi are around, even the Mad Mage is sane enough to see that this might require some clean-up.

STAR SPAWN

As noted in *DotMM*, star spawn can periodically visit Shadowdusk Hold. These horrors are described in *Mordenkainen's Tome of Foes* and are featured in the *Dead Hold* variant. Do not be deceived by their listed CR's: star spawn are deadly. The *Companion* has so far advocated unleashing Undermountain's full wrath on the party, so long as they had a fair shake... but you *must* err on the side of caution with star spawn. You must.

Grue. Even the lowly grues can doom a party, as they impose disadvantage on attack rolls and saving throws on non-aberrations within 20 feet—without a saving throw to resist that aura. Grues are pitiful by themselves but become a deadly nuisance when mixed with other creatures.

Mangler. The mangler is rated as a CR 5 monster—and that could not be further from the truth. This horror can make up to *six* attacks in a single turn, *with* advantage against a target that has yet to act in the first turn of combat—and with its +7 bonus to Stealth checks, it's more than likely to surprise someone in the party. Were the mangler to make all six attacks against one target, it would deal an average of 48 slashing damage and 42 psychic damage—and a critical hit isn't unlikely. Ask yourself how much health your party's wizard or sorcerer has before you merrily unleash the mangler upon them.

Hulk. The hulk is both an aberrant bruiser and tank. If it strikes the same target with both Slam attacks, it can stun them—a condition that is deadly at all levels of this game. Likewise, because of their Psychic Mirror trait, other star spawn, namely the seer, will target them with psychic damage so that it bounces off and harms the hulk's foes. Do not forget that even if two hulks are within 10 feet of each other, they cannot create an endless feedback loop of psychic damage. The triggering psychic damage bounces off the hulk only once; the other hulk is simply immune to the damage.

Seer. The seer is our penultimate villain in *Dead Hold*. It can only be formed by a foul union between a mortal and sentient energy from the Far Realm. One of the Shadowdusk **archmagi** must be sacrificed for this purpose (preferably Melissara or Cassiok). In combat, the seer targets its pet hulks with the Psychic Orb ability, splashing its foes with psychic damage.

Larva Mage. The larva mage comes out to play only if eight hours pass without the party closing the portal to the Far Realm in Area 32. Unfortunately for our heroes, even if they slay the creature, it might later return, per its Return to Worms trait.

REFLAVORING OTHER CREATURES

For a mad asylum in frequent contact with the Far Realm, Shadowdusk Hold doesn't have enough star spawn. There are aberrations, sure, but not enough of those mind-rending horrors. You can re flavor the creatures on this level without altering the balance of its encounters. Simply cosmetically alter them while keeping their statistics the same.

Nothics. Most nothics on this level are now star spawn in name and appearance while retaining their normal statistics. No two look alike; they can only be described as "multi-armed horrors" whose tentacle-limbs are serrated with teeth. The *Companion* notes which nothics have been turned into star spawn.

Slaadi. While they're aberrations, slaadi have been seen before the party—and they come from Limbo, not the Far Realm. They are instead reptilian ooze-creatures whose limbs somehow cut sharper than forged steel.

Wraiths. Dezmyr's council of wraiths are instead creatures of a sickly light, roughly humanoid in shape—for that is the closest association a mortal mind can make when confronted by these *things*.

Death Knights. Because Dezmyr and Zalthar were paladins in life that fell from grace, you need not change them much. Dark powers of any sort can create a death knight. Perhaps instead of skeletons clad in armor, they're now faceless creatures in an exoskeleton of chitin—your choice.

THE DEAD RUN

Dead Hold is designed to evoke terror and urgency. It is ran as a series of encounters aimed at getting the party from Area 1 to Areas 23, 32, 34 and 35, the last of which gets them to Level 23. In an ideal world, the party will free the **couatl** in Area 34, which can close the portal in Area 32 by sacrificing itself. Thereafter, the party can take the arcane gate in Area 35 to Level 23—hopefully sacrificing the Shadowdusks' *black crystal tablet*, found in Area 23, which began this entire mess in the first place. Under this variant, any magic item sacrificed to gain passage to Level 23 is permanently destroyed.

Quick Burn. *Dead Hold* is not a slow burn. The party is entering Shadowdusk Hold after it's already fallen. They must be confronted with horror at every turn. It's only after that all seems lost that they're given a glimmer of hope in the form of closing the portal to the Far Realm and sparing the world from these aberrant horrors.

Maintaining Balance. Because the inclusion of star spawn adds more challenge to an already deadly level (again, there's two **death knights**, multiple **archmagi** and a **dracolich!**), you can remove other creatures from the level to maintain a (relative) balance. These creatures are:

- The four **nothics** in Area 3 to make up for Encounter 1
- Four of the twelve **nothics** in Area 24A and two **death slaadi** (one from both Areas 28 and 31) to make up for Encounters 5 & 6.
- One of the **archmagi**, who must be sacrificed for the **star spawn seer** to take a mortal form. Preferably, this is Melissara (of Area 10), who is dragged kicking and screaming to the portal after the party meets her and while they're away. Otherwise, use Cassiok (Area 39) because, c'mon, the body of a beetle isn't horrific, it's just ridiculous. Alternatively, do both, if Melissara does not end up fighting the party.
- Three of the six **wraiths** in Area 38 to make up for Encounter 6.

Other Encounters. On this level, more than any, creatures already dwelling in other rooms—such as the many **nothics** and **grells** should investigate other sounds, should the party fail to be stealthy. You want doors being kicked down and hordes of horrors to descend upon the party. The first level is relatively quiet, but the second and third are where they come under fire from throngs of monsters.

Kicking it Off. After the party meets Jeras, the cultist added to Area 1, the encounters below—the Dead Run, more or less—begins.

1. THE MANGLER DESCENDS

The first encounter of *Dead Hold* features the **star spawn mangler**, a terrifying, multi-armed creature. After the party are appraised of the situation by Jeras, they're liable to an ambush by the mangler. It begins to hunt them and will attack before they descend to the second level of Shadowdusk Hold. It prefers to attack in Area 3 or 9 (replacing the area's preexisting combatants if need be) after the party returns from an adjacent room. It can also attack in the stairwell if they immediately make for it. When the adventurers return to either of these areas, they find the hallway dark; all sconces have been snuffed—curious, since they were lit with *continual flame* spells.

Death From Above. The mangler clings to the ceilings or hangs from the walls, dropping amidst the party when it attacks. It immediately unleashes its Flurry of Claws attack. Don't forget to utilize its +7 bonus to its Stealth checks.

Flight. If the mangler is reduced to 20 hit points or fewer, it takes the Hide action as a bonus action and flees. It clammers up the walls, its claws puncturing the stone, to avoid opportunity attacks. If it can, it goes for the stairwell to Shadowdusk Hold's second level. It can then attack later on.

Fear of the Unknown. When the mangler attacks, describe it no more than as a "a faceless, fleshless, eight-armed horror whose claws are the color of night." Don't try to fill in the blanks, but instead let the players' imaginations run wild. To that end, you *want* the mangler to escape, because then it becomes an object of dread to hang over the party, until its inevitable return. If it dies, the party can inspect its corpse and that scrubs away much of its mystery.

2. GRUE SWARM

On the heels of the mangler's attack comes a swarm of star spawn: 2d4+3 **star spawn grues** and 1d4+1 **nothics** that boil out of the stairwells in Area 3 or 9. They're chasing after 1d6+2 blubbering **cultists** that are making a break for the exit.

Nothics. The **nothics** involved in this attack are only nothics mechanically. Cosmetically, they're star spawn, not cursed Shadowdusk arcanists. Subtract their numbers from the five nothics found in Area 20B. They're included in this encounter only because grues lose much of their potential if they're not joined by a non-grue ally (per their Aura of Madness trait).

Funky Physics. When the star spawn boil out from the depths, the Far Realm's influence poisons the oxygen in Shadowdusk Hold for the next 10 minutes. The party will likely associate this sudden change with the grues.

3. MELISSARA'S PLEA

The third encounter is a social one that threatens to erupt into violence. The adventurers open a door—any door, it doesn't matter, for the Far Realm has warped space just as it has time—onto Area 10A, where they meet Melissara, the **archmage**.

Melissara wants nothing more than to end this madness. The star spawns' recent arrival has shocked her to her core, but she dares not make an escape, believing that an "eight-armed horror" is waiting for her to make her move and that "they" will allow none of the Shadowdusk family to leave. "They want their parade," Melissara says, "they crave the welcoming my brethren so promised them." She implores them to seal the portal and slay her undead cousins.

She also tells them where to find the *black crystal tablet* that started this entire mess. If they can find a way to destroy it, grand. If they cannot, the best thing they can do for this world, she says, is to take it far away from Shadowdusk Hold so that her brethren can never again use it to contact the Far Realm.

Melissara will allow the adventurers to rest in her suite, but they must contend with the irritable and overprotective Derrion (her husband, a **champion**) who refrains from violence only at her request. However, if they do so, the seventh encounter of *Dead Hold* comes to pass.

See Area 10 for further details and Melissara's dialogue for this encounter.

4. CELESTIAL WHISPERS

This encounter should occur only on Levels 2 or 3 of Shadowdusk Hold. When it does is up to you, but it should be done early in their exploration of Level 2.

By now, Tezca-Zyanya, the **couatl** trapped in the black obelisk of Area 34, has sensed the adventurers. The celestial is aware of the fell energies seeping out from the Far Realm portal in Area 35 and seeks to close it. To do so, Tezca-Zyanya must be freed from the obelisk.

When the couatl contacts the party, read:

Madness presses in all around you, bringing your mind to its very knees. As the darkness seeps in, you cannot help but reel and despair. Yet as you near the brink, a warmth consumes your heart and you hear within your head the chime of bells...

"Listen to me," whispers a saccharine voice. "This world, this very reality, is in danger of falling apart. There yawns a portal on the lowest level of this mad asylum, a portal to a realm that should not be. Free me! It is my duty to spare this world from those horrors! Free me by toppling my prison—an obelisk guarded by a knight of death! I am Tezca-Zyanya and it is my duty to end this madness!"

The couatl cannot directly guide the adventurers to the obelisk, but they can feel its warmth or hear the bells stronger when they go in the correct direction.

Sacrifice. Tezca-Zyanya's only solution to the Far Realm portal is to enter it itself and close it from the other side. Doing so will subject the celestial to an eternity of torment and madness—a sacrifice it is more than willing to make, if given the chance. See Area 34 for the couatl's dialogue concerning this. This act of sacrifice should come as a twist later on, so don't reveal this to the party just yet.

5. THE SEVEN-ARMED SLASHER

This encounter can occur anywhere on Level 2 or 3, preferably in Areas 20 or 29, such as when the party is leaving Area 23 or about to descend the staircase to Area 30. A pack of 2d4+1 **star spawn grues** swarms the party; amidst these murderous scamps lurks a seven-armed **star spawn mangler** that was so hunched over it almost passed as a bulkier grue. That this mangler has seven arms should come as a shock to the party—it confirms that the eight-armed horror they already faced has bedfellows.

6. ENVOYS FROM THE HUNGERING REALM

This encounter is centered on the portal in area 32. The time has come to offer to the Far Realm a living vessel that can host a **star spawn seer**. The ideal candidate is Melissara, the **archmage** of Area 10. She is brought kicking and screaming to the portal just before the adventurers arrive—and thrown in before they can intervene. If Melissara is dead, then Cassiok (from Area 39) willingly sacrifices himself to the Far Realm.

Tezca-Zyanya. Ideally, the adventurers have with them the freed **couatl** from Area 34, who intends to close the rift... from the other side.

Combatants. The encounter consists of Zalthar, the **death knight** and three **nothics** (former arcanists of the Shadowdusk family). On the third round of combat, a **star spawn seer** arrives with a **star spawn hulk**. It is unsurprised when it finds the adventurers instead. This seer has similar features to the archmage that was sacrificed to give it a living vessel, hinting of what has transpired.

Details. See Area 32 for further details, including narrative text to read aloud.

7. FOR THIS WORLD, A BED OF WORMS

This encounter only occurs if the adventurers rest in Shadowdusk Hold for eight hours or more without already closing the portal. A **star spawn larva mage** emerges from the portal to inspect its new bastion on the Material Plane. It roams the halls with 1d4+1 **star spawn grues** that mewl like cowed dogs. For every day that goes by, more star spawn enter Shadowdusk Hold, growing into a horde that hungers to wreak havoc on the world above.

The larva mage can confront the adventurers anywhere within the Hold. It can collapse into a swarm of worms to squeeze under doorways or through cracks. Its minions are never long behind.

AREAS OF NOTE

The following areas are of note:

1. GRAND FOYER

Shadowdusk Hold shouldn't sit right below the Deep Mines; the *Companion* contends that the journey to Level 22 should take 1d4 days. Despite the staircase on Level 21 leading straight to Shadowdusk Hold, as it is written in *DotMM*, the *Companion* adds a myriad of tunnels in the way. This is for the sake of narrative and to also explain why the planetar Fazrian didn't just sweep into Shadowdusk Hold before and cut down these cultists—after all, he clearly knew of the entrance to Level 22, since he stationed one of his minions there. If he was afraid they would boil up from below, he would have kept more than just a single sentry there to keep watch.

The text below, to be read when your party reaches Level 22, assumes that you run with these changes. If you're worried about your party attaining a long rest, be reminded that for this level *they sorely need one to survive*.

When the party reaches Level 23, read the text below, altering it to your liking:

It has been days since you left the Deep Mines and they have been spent in darkness—until at last you have come upon the most curious sight: a neatly carved stairwell descending below. You know it in your hearts that this is your next trial, that the Mad Mage would've righted your course if it was indeed wrong.

Carefully, you descend the spiral staircase, wary for traps. By when you reach the grand foyer below, you encounter none. Pillars support a vast chamber curiously lit by torches whose flickering flames point upside-down. You find a statue of a young woman in plate armor. The plague reads LADY DEZMYR SHADOWDUSK. Below that, another line reads "MAY SHE DELIVER US TO THE PROMISED LAND."

DEAD HOLD

If you're running this variant, a **cultist** named Jeras, fleeing certain death, slams into an adventurer. He was hiding behind a pillar and makes a break for the exit. He is almost incoherent but manages to sputter out that "doom has come at last." Read the following:

A man steps out from the pillar, making a break for the exit, wailing in terror. He slams straight into you and falls flat on the floor, shrieking a shrill shriek as fragile and sharp as glass. He lifts an arm to shield his face. There's foam on his lips—actual foam. "Spare me, O' Old One! Spare me, star spawn!" he howls, but once he sees you for what you are, he instead shouts, "Run! Run now! The gateway is open and doom has come at last from beyond the stars! Gravity has gone and, with it, time!"

If the adventurers don't let Jeras go immediately, he curls into the fetal position and begins to repeat mantras taught to him by the Shadowdusks: "If you taste magenta, grovel. The clock shrieks. Shriek with the clock. Shriek until the magenta is ash."

The party can sober Jeras with a DC 12 Charisma (Persuasion or Intimidation) check. If he is calmed down, read the following:

Terrified, the man continues to howl, "I saw it myself! The creatures lumbered from the portal, greeted by Lady Dezmyr—and sixteen of us dropped dead, bleeding out our eyes and ears! Raving! Raving! They've went mad and I ran! The star spawn boiled out from the gate, sparing only those of noble blood! My own sister, julienned into a ribbon! You have to go! They stalk all other exits but the gate to the Mad Mage's private sanctum! The world itself is at its end and you must outrun it *now!*"

Jeras is at the brink of irreparable madness. There are scant moments before his mind snaps unless a *calm emotions* spell is cast upon him. Your goal is to have the party informed of the portal's existence and that the gateway to Halaster's sanctum is on this level before he goes catatonic.

Grells. While running this variant, either hold off on the six grells that guard this chamber or have them attack before Jeras appears. If the former, they can float in from Area 2, 3, or 9.

The Mangler Descends. You can launch the first encounter of *Dead Hold* now if you so wish. The **star spawn mangler** drops from the ceiling amidst the party. Starting the encounter now capitalizes on raw shock; delaying it capitalizes on dread.

Halaster's Whisper. You can also have Halaster telepathically confirm Jeras' story about the portal. If so, he whispers to the party, "The lunatic speaks true. There is but one way to my domain and between you and it lies only madness. Madness and other horrors. Our game is nearly at an end. Find the gate; pay the toll. I await you in my lair below."

3. WEST WING

Nested Tentacle. A nest has sprouted in the stairwell and attacks intruders on sight. See *Nested Tentacles* above for details.

DEAD HOLD

This area is one of the possible locations for the first encounter of *Dead Hold*. If you run this variant, replace the four **nothics** in this area with the **star spawn mangler**.

4. DECAYED QUARTERS

4B. MAD CREATURE

Within this circular chamber, a foul creature scratches at the stone. When it hears you, the creature turns to face you with an unsettling smile. Its forehead gapes with a massive, unblinking eye so sickly green it is the color of vomit. Its claws scrape at the stone as if it were a chalkboard. In mangled Common, it says, "The stars turn, and a time presents itself. A visitor comes to barter for secrets."

Just because the **nothic** says the phrase above in Common does not mean he speaks the language. He likely picked it up from Dezmyr Shadowdusk.

Roleplaying the Nothic. The creature once known as Rhamagant wears an unsettling smile. He never fails to blink with exaggerated slowness. He is eager to trade secrets and gives his answers first—and does not voice his own question. If the party asks why he does not get his side of the bargain, he blinks slowly and assures them that he already has (via his *Weird Insight* ability). You can use the following dialogue to convey the three pieces of information provided in *DotMM* by the nothic (in order):

- "You stand in Shadowdusk Hold. The soft ones tell me I once belonged to their ranks. Slept on the second floor, I did, they say, on a bed of straw. No roaches. No mites. Straw. I think of it from time to time. *Straw*. Visited it too. Found the *straw*. It balked! It took one look into me and forbade that I nest on its silken flesh! The *straw* branded '*freak*' upon my face and spoke no more!" The nothic then reaches into its gums and picks out a length of chewed straw. "This is what I told the *straw*."
- "We are on the brink of the Promised Land. For every level one descends, the higher they climb to that wondrous realm, so far from our nest in the cosmos. I wish to visit, I tell Lady Dezmyr. I wish to tour it. To go on holiday in that distant realm." The nothic then scowls and leans in. "And what does she tell me? That I do not have the right '*vee-sa!*' I! I? I who spent his existence, apparently, in pursuit of finding the Promised Land? I, Rhamagant, cannot visit the Far Realm? If I may be denied my birthright, what does that spell for others not so landed as I?"
- "Secrets abound. They lie in shadow. They hold out for the hope of being discovered by one who is worthy. Three secrets. Three floors. Three of me, now three of you. They yearn to be opened by one who is worthy, do you ken?"

5. STOREROOM

Funky Physics. Influence from the Far Realm has poisoned all food and drink in the storeroom. Weird, one-eyed maggots crawl across food, lay eggs within fruit, and play water polo in wine bottles, the corks of which they've seemed to squeeze through via a process similar to osmosis. The Shadowdusk and their servants are immune to any ill effects of the food and they consider the maggots treats—as if they were ghostly, live, alien tequila worms.

6. KITCHEN

DEAD HOLD

If you're playing with the *Dead Hold* variant, the kitchen is littered with corpses, all torn apart by the **star spawn mangler** hunting the adventurers. The **living unseen servants** continue their work as if it never happened, scrubbing dishes and sweeping the floor—ignorant to the fact that their brooms are wet and red and sticky with spilled intestines.

Read the following when the adventurers enter:

Red. It's all red. Corpses are strewn about the kitchen. Not a single one is intact. Heads have been smashed into pulp, limbs julienned into long strips.

The Shadowdusk family is clearly attended to by living, unseen servants and these invisible masses of energy continue to lazily perform their chores, despite the carnage. Even now, dishes are being scrubbed and dried. The floor is being swept with red, wet brooms sticky with spilled intestines.

A quiet voice within your mind compels you to shut this door and never open it again.

7. DERELICT SHRINE

The adventurers should be familiar with the icons of Torm by now, the very god that Fazrian in the level above once served. If the party saw to the planetar's redemption earlier, this should be a sad reminder; if not, the symbol sends a shiver down at least one person's spine. Once they identify the shrine as one devoted to Torm, they should ask themselves why that would be here in these depths.

8. NOTHIC'S NICHE

The nothic has stashed away several goodies, but the party has likely had its fill of gold, or can't carry any more. Thus, they might be unmotivated to invade the niche, which is 20 feet above them. However, you may want your party to get ahold of the *potion of supreme healing* here. How do you get it to them without just saying the nothic has one? Just have the nothic wear the silver necklace it's fastened to.

When the party enters this area, read the following:

This meeting chamber has borne the stress of Undermountain itself: a fissure gapes across the ceiling, just large enough for a man to clamber inside, if he could jump twenty feet. The niche is filled with darkness. Dust is everywhere, thanks to the crumbling ceiling.

As you inspect this chamber's very fine tapestry—a wedding invaded by shadowy tentacles that creep from the corners—you hear glass softly clink against stone. You look up, just as a horrific creature with one massive eye pulls back into the niche above. On its neck, you saw, was a sparkling vial containing a scarlet liquid. You're a seasoned adventurer; you can recognize a potion when you see one.

Roleplaying the Nothic. Channel Gollum from *Lord of the Rings*. The nothic has forgotten its name and cares only for its next meal and, of course, its "precious potion".

DEAD HOLD

Even if you run this variant for Level 22, this nothic is still a cursed Shadowdusk family member, unlike other nothics that are cosmetically rebranded as star spawn. The nothic offers cryptic omens about the invading star spawn. You can use the following sample dialogue:

- "It is done. Our grand quest is complete. Waterdeep will rue our exile—the very world shall rue it!"
- "You are too late. They are already here. They always have been... The knob just needed turning."
- "Dezmyr has foreseen your coming. Join her! She has lain quite the banquet out for you below..."

9. EAST WING

A lazy, ivory light drifts down the hall of this wing, painting the walls in flickering shades of white and silver. An elaborate bas-relief depicts peasants kneeling before nobles who brandish coy smiles and cold eyes.

Nested Tentacle. A nest has sprouted in the stairwell and attacks intruders on sight. See *Nested Tentacles* above for more details.

DEAD HOLD

This area is one of the possible locations for the first encounter of *Dead Hold*.

10. NOBLE QUARTERS

DEAD HOLD

Should you run this variant, the party's visit to this area becomes inevitable. The Far Realm buckles reality in Shadowdusk Hold and the next door the party opens opens on Area 10A, wherein they meet Melissara. The **archmage** greets them with visible relief and ushers them in before the star spawn—"they"—find the party.

Melissara wastes no time directing the party to the tablet and portal room (Areas 23 and 32). While she tolerates the party resting in her suite, she implores them to act now before "worse *things* crawl into our reality." If they leave, she does as well to seal any exits to Shadowdusk Hold, hoping to contain the star spawn. She then holds the line in Area 1 to ensure further horrors don't escape into Undermountain.

Roleplaying Melissara. Melissara, like her mind, has begun to gray. Years have been spent in these depths. She's watched her family turn to madness and seen the same corruption take root in both her and her beloved, Derrion. With the portal stabilized, she can see the apocalypse creeping up upon the world. It's now or never to snuff out the Shadowdusk's upside-down flame and she knows it. The arrival of the party represents the answering to prayers she never prayed but secretly yearned to voice. Paranoid, Melissara refers to the star spawn as "they" and knows that they're *always* watching.

For years now, Melissara has searched for a means to destroy the *black crystal tablet* in Area 23B, which she blames for all her family's troubles. She doesn't know how to destroy such a powerful artifact of magic.*

*Although the *Companion* rewrote it so that the arcane gate in Area 35 destroys any magic item sacrificed to it—so that the party might destroy the *black crystal tablet*—that's only a recent stipulation added by Halaster, whose humor, of course, is morbid. Melissara is unaware of the change to the gate; beforehand, a magic item was said to be just "given" to Halaster.

You can use any of the following sample dialogue to further flesh out Melissara and spirit the party along their quest through Shadowdusk Hold:

- To explain why she not fled, Melissara says, "They want their parade. They crave the welcoming my brethren so promised. Those without Shadowdusk blood were cut down—if not dragged screaming back to that god-forsaken portal. My brethren are on lockdown. They will not let us leave—as if I'm not the only were that doesn't wish to stay. The second I leave this suite, an eight-armed horror will find me... and when it sees that my madness is not as deep as Dezmyr's it will instead tear me to pieces. I know it. I know it true."
- "There is but only one arcane means to escape the Hold: a magical gateway on the lowest floor that leads to the Mad Mage's sanctum. Dozens fled there when the star spawn boiled out from the portal—but they're dead. They must! Dead or about to be! Halaster approved of my family's efforts, encouraged them even! Those fools have delivered themselves to the very monster that allowed their—and this world's—doom!"
- "I know not how to seal the breach to the Far Realm. It has bled into the Hold unabated for years. Now... Now it's stable and things have emerged. Things that not even my family could have pictured, even after a century of research. Those creatures... they were spawned beyond the stars and have come to undo this world."
- "It's all that damned tablet's fault! My ancestors should have left it in the blackened depths! It doesn't matter if you seal the portal—so long as my cousins have that infernal thing, they can rebuild. They can open the gate once again and let those horrors pour out into the world. You can find it on the floor below, but... it is a mythic piece. My life's work has been devoted to destroying that tablet but... nothing. It's as if I'm been holding onto fistfuls of sand."
- "My cousins, Dezmyr... Zalthar. Madness has been their sole inheritance. They wear it like a crown and continue the work our ancestors began. They've died, you know. They've died once already and risen from the grave; I saw it happen. Once they were worshippers of Torm, paladins even, and now all they worship is that godforsaken tablet—and the beings that whisper to them through it."

Roleplaying Derrion. The knight is an irritable, sleep-deprived wreck of a man that dances on the brink of insanity, wondering why his dear wife will not join him on the edge. He protects her at all costs and obeys with only a minimal amount of husbandly lip. You can use the following sample dialogue:

- "I've but one life and it has been sworn, in madness and in health, to my beloved."
- "I've not slept in ages. The nightmares care not. They'll visit when they wish. They visit as I speak even now."
- "Dezmyr and Zalthar have fallen to undeath, rising again as skeletal warriors—knights of death incarnate. Their lord Torm must be weeping from the heavens."
- "There is no price too steep to end this madness."

Melissara's Fate. The sixth encounter of *Dead Hold* involves a **star spawn seer**. Seers are animate, sentient matter; when summoned to the Material Plane, they must take over a mortal's body, which has the added benefit of scrubbing away the host's entire personality. One of the **archmagi** of this level must be given to the Far Realm. Long-suspecting that their cousin was not as committed

to "the future" as they are, Dezmyr and Zalthar have Melissara brought to Area 32 and sacrificed. This happens off-screen, after the party have met her and moved on, provided they didn't kill her. If Melissara cannot be used, use Cassiok, that ridiculous freak in Area 39.

12. LOUNGE

Clearly, this is where the family receives its guests. This lounge is furnished with leathern chairs, all facing a tapestry depicting an ivy-overgrown villa in the familiar streets of Waterdeep. For but a moment, you yearn again to return to the world above. Soon, you tell yourself. Soon...

Nested Tentacle. A nest has sprouted here and attacks the party as they try to leave; before it does, it uncurls to reveal its cloudy, milky-teared eye. See *Nested Tentacles* above for more information.

13. WALKING DEAD

A **zombie** is less than a gnat to a party of 17th-level adventurers unless it gets the drop on them. Instead of shambling throughout the room, it's poised on the ceiling, spread eagle and hanging on rafters. It drops on the first character to enter the room that isn't its creator. The character it falls on must make a DC 14 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

14. TRAINING ROOM

Energies from the Far Realm have corrupted the suits of armor in this chamber. Any set has the following curse attached to it:

Hooked Curse. Once you don this cursed armor, you can't doff it unless you are targeted by a spell of *remove curse* or similar magic. Slimy talons dig into your flesh and whispers poison your mind; whenever you finish a long rest while wearing the armor, you must succeed on a DC 14 Intelligence saving throw or suffer from a form of Indefinite Madness.

DEAD HOLD

While running this variant, several cultists made a last stand here before being torn apart by the very **star spawn mangler** that haunts Area 15—if not the one featured in Encounter 1 of *Dead Hold*.

When the party enters this area, read the following:

This sparring room has been made into a grave. Corpses lie in tatters, whatever weapons borrowed from the racks impotently strewn across the bloodstained floor. Even the mannequins and training dummies have been cleaved by wicked claws, mixing straw, canvas, and wood with the scattered organs of the poor fools that made their futile last stand here.

15. FOUNTAIN

The halls are eerily quiet, save for the constant splash of water from this fountain. The clean deluge is vomited out from a marble aboleth. Your mind reels with the sudden memory of the twisted caverns, which you put behind you so long ago—of the creature that claimed those sunken tunnels as its demesne.

DEAD HOLD

While running this variant, the fountain is polluted by two corpses, under which a halfling **cultist** hides. After witnessing a **star spawn mangler** tear apart his compatriots, the cultist was driven mad—so much that he has forgotten his own name (Aldrin). He now only refers to himself as "this one."

Expanded Dungeon. The tunnel leading out from this area is watched over by a **star spawn mangler**, which attacks anyone who dares leave Level 22. It was this creature that cut down Aldrin's compatriots and even dumped their bodies in the fountain. Aldrin is aware of its presence; he was playing dead when the beast dumped the corpses in the fountain. He suspects that it knows he is not dead and is simply waiting for him to make his move.

17. VERTRAND'S ROOM

The door opens silently upon a modest suite. A bald, elderly man darkened by liver spots sits at his desk, scribbling into a journal. His back is to you—but his quill halts.

"I foresaw this..." the old mage whispers. "I saw it long ago. And I have chosen to face you. Alone."

He turns to you—and where his eyes ought to have been is only smooth flesh. He breaks out into a sad, toothy grin. "In the end," he sighs, "Death owns us all."

With a world-weariness, he pushes himself to his feet and unleashes an arcane word of power!

Roleplaying Vertrand. There's little opportunity to roleplay Vertrand outside of combat, as he attacks the party the moment they reach him. He is fond of loosing world-weary sighs. His verbal components for spells are lazily pronounced.

Tactics. A brilliant mage waiting for this inevitable conflict, Vertrand employs the following tactics:

- Vertrand fights to the death, never fearing his doom. It's as he said—Death already owns him.
- Vertrand casts *time stop* on his first turn. While time is halted, he casts *mirror image*, *fire shield*, *mage armor*, *stoneskin* and finally *cone of cold* (in that order, if he gets enough turns). He sacrifices *stoneskin* for *cold of cone* if he only gets four turns in *time stop*.
- If he is facing multiple spellcasters, Vertrand casts *globe of invulnerability* instead of *stoneskin*.
- Vertrand wastes no opportunity to *counterspell* a foe.
- While concentrating on a spell, Vertrand utilizes spells of *lightning bolt* and *cone of cold*.
- If he must pursue a fleeing foe, Vertrand casts *misty step* and looses a *fire bolt* cantrip.

18. BERLAIN'S SUITE

18A. STUDY

It's warm here. Candles are still lit, giving off a fragrance that hints at a sinister origin... as if it were rendered not from the fat of animals. You hear now soft murmuring in another chamber, spoken in a language that itches your very brain.

18B. BEDCHAMBER

Sitting there upon the bed, nestled between two floating grells, is a two-mouthed woman with too many arms. She seems to be... conversing with those floating, beaked brainy horrors. When she sees you, she smiles twice and says, "Just when I was fresh out of subjects."

To your horror, that second mouth of hers animates and spits out in a serrated voice, "You shall rue the day your mothers spat you out. To the table with you!"

Roleplaying Berlain. Like Vertrand, there's little opportunity to roleplay Berlain before combat erupts. She wields a scalpel instead of a dagger. You can have Korva, her obliterated brother, speak through Berlain's extra mouth in a twisted voice. Together, they say the following in combat (parentheses mark when Korva speaks):

- "The gate is open!" ("This world will finally know the Truth!")
- "The stars turn!" ("And a time presents itself!")
- "There is indeed a method to madness!" ("Reason within rhyme!")
- "I cannot wait to get you onto my table!" ("The scalpel makes whelps of us all!")
- "Yours will be an enlightening tale..." ("In the marrow, we shall find Truth... together!")

Tactics. Berlain wants to capture the adventurers for use in her experimentations, not kill them. Thus, in combat, she uses the following tactics:

- On her first turn, Berlain casts *time stop*. While time is halted, she casts *mirror image*, *wall of force*, *fire shield* and *mage armor* in that order of priority. Should she get a fifth turn, she casts *polymorph*, turning the target into a white lab rat. Her second turn is spent on *polymorph* if she does not cast it on *time stop's* last turn.
- To better befit her theme as a mad scientist, give Berlain the *acid splash* and *chill touch* cantrips. She can cast two in a single turn.
- Berlain's **grells** attack creatures on their side of the *wall of force* with their Tentacles action, grappling and potentially paralyzing their victims.
- If things look bleak for the party, Berlain offers them this: "My toll for safe passage is simple: leave me two live subjects and go your separate way, unmolested." Korva adds, "Their sacrifice to science shall not be made in vain!"
- If things look bleak for Berlain, she abandons her hope of capturing the adventurers and instead tries to kill them. There will be more in the future, she tells herself.

20. PILLARED HALL

20A. CENTRAL CHAMBER

When the adventurers reach this area, read:

Your very first step into this hall echoes loudly throughout it. You need not be a dwarf or mason to see that it has been carved to amplify every sound and whisper committed here.

If the adventurers are discovered by the five **will-o'-wisps** haunting this hall, read the following:

As you make your way through the hall, a floating, ivory light appears before you. It flickers like a ghostly flame and its voice is thin like glass. "What is your purpose here?"

Before you can respond, yet another light appears, winking into existence to your right. "Were you bid?" it asks.

Then a third, a fourth, and yes, indeed, a fifth wisp of light materialize, surrounded you, and they ask:

"Have you strayed?"

"Strays receive no guest right."

"Would you die a vagrant's death, stranger?"

Hovering there, the first wisp repeats itself, firmer now: "What is your purpose here?"

"Were you bid?" asks the second wisp.

Then, all in one voice, the others demand, "Well? Were you?"

Roleplaying the Wisps. The wisps all share ghostly voices that talk over each other. If one speaks, the other four are quick to add something, piling onto the conversation with several quips. They are impatient and haughty, and they condescend to all who are not of Shadowdusk blood, especially the nothics.

DEAD HOLD

If it has not yet happened, the fourth encounter of *Dead Hold* should happen while the adventurers are in this area. The trapped **couatl** in Area 34B reaches out to the party, who it can sense. It implores them to seek it out. This happens amidst combat, if a fight breaks out in this area.

Additionally, the five **nothics** in Area 20B—which are star spawn in name and appearance—do not shy from combat. They instead charge down the party once they hear the adventurers. Their sadistic howls can alert the ten **nothics** in Area 24, who arrive three rounds later. These nothics are also star spawn in appearance.

Throughout this encounter, the **will-o'-wisps** strafe the party. One cackles, "The rift yearns! It hungers! Give to it yourself—come as you are!"

21. PARLOR

Mirror, Mirror. The parlor's mirror contains a thing of nightmare within it; its surface is glossy and black, reflecting no light. As a character is looking at it, a massive eyeball opens up, as if the entire mirror was its lid. This six-pupiled eyeball gazes into its victim character and overwhelms them with madness. The creature must make a DC 14 Intelligence saving throw or succumb to a form of short-term madness. See Appendix C for details.

DEAD HOLD

Under this variant, the parlor is littered with corpses of servants that died here, several seemingly having committed suicide. They were not torn apart by star spawn but were instead driven mad by the *thing* in the mirror. Those that did not die to aneurisms instead slit their own throats to spare themselves from that darkness.

22. TORM'S SHRINE

After Level 21, the party should be familiar with Torm's iconography. If they correctly identify the shrine, read:

Just as you thought you had put the imagery of Torm behind you, here it is again. The memories of Fazrian the fallen angel crowd your mind. The walls of your world are suddenly streaked with that mysterious blood once again.

Questions abound: why did the angel never lift a finger against the Shadowdusks? How could he not turn his crusade upon this place? Or was this the crusade he had in mind all along? Were they just hiding under his nose this entire time?

You will never know why... but still you must wonder what this shrine is doing down here. These freaks do not seem to be the most... orthodox of worshippers.

If they were responsible for Fazrian's atonement, then a vestige from the heavens manages to whisper a warning to the party:

As you turn back to those wretched halls, a warmth overwhelms you, flooding your senses in an instant—and it's gone the very next. But not before leaving you with this wisdom:

The Shadowdusk matriarch and her brother were once paladins in service to that distant god, Torm. Paladins that have since fallen from grace—and the power they once wielded for good can still be wielded now for more wicked ends. You face not robed freaks ahead but—the wisdom warns—knights of death and malice.

23. MEDITATION ROOMS

23B. BLACK CRYSTAL TABLET

The door slides open upon a chamber filled with a greasy darkness that hurls back any light that might be brought to bear. Upon a stone table at the far wall rests a black, crystalline tablet whose glyphs you instinctively know should never have been carved, let alone read. Its runes writhe as if it were the flesh of a living beast kept in captivity with no other recourse but to rage against its prison.

The darkness... it beckons you forward. You feel that in your bones. It... invites you to stand before it, as if it were an altar to an attentive god. And slowly you realize that it is. It is an altar. These freaks have made it into one. They worship it—they have to. It is an artifact that demands attention, that draws the very mind to it like a beacon. Not a beacon in the dark, but a beacon that glowers at all the light touches—and wishes to see it not dead but only stranger.

A sickness wells up in your belly. You taste bile on your tongue and foam on your lips. Your mind begins to reel, cringe. A step. You take a step, though you never planned on doing so. Your mind fights against that oily hold on your body, knowing that should you give in, there will be nothing to save you but madness.

DEAD HOLD

The fifth encounter of *Dead Hold* can occur here after the adventurers lay their eyes on the tablet. The star spawn attack from Area 20, if so.

24. NOTHIC WARRENS

DEAD HOLD

If you're running this variant, the **nothics** here are star spawn in name and appearance only. No two look the same. Describe them simply as "aberrant horrors with no place in this world." They're feasting on actual dead nothics (former family members of the Shadowdusks) and dead servants. They attack the party on sight and investigate any sounds they hear in adjacent areas.

Four nothics have been removed from the fourteen in Area 24 to make up for the added difficulty of facing star spawn.

25. ABANDONED CHAMBER

DEAD HOLD

You step over shattered dregs of furniture to enter this ghastly chamber. You can't but shake your head at it all. What were they thinking? That divans and doors could stop these aberrant horrors? As you survey the carnage, you know it would take hours to piece together the unfortunate souls that were torn apart by those creatures rampaging through this madhouse.

Several cultists holed up in this chamber, hoping to wait out the star spawn—as if they expected the Shadowdusks to call the beasts off. If a character spends an hour sifting through their remains, they can piece together eight humans. These unfortunate souls were torn to shreds by a swarm of star spawn grues—the very same swarm that attacks the party in *Dead Hold's* second encounter.

26. HOARDED SECRETS

DEAD HOLD

Should the adventurers discover the tunnel to the Expanded Dungeon, read the following. Apparently, some cultists managed to escape down there but were followed by star spawn.

Behind the tapestry yawns a blackened tunnel that stretches out into oblivion. Fresh blood streaks the tiles closest to you, already drying into a sticky paste. You know not how many escaped this wretched place—nor what sort of horror might even now be in hot pursuit of them.

28. LEGACY OF XERRION

You come upon what can only be history: a fresco fifteen by thirty feet long. A robed wizard stands before a black portal, clutching in his arms like a newborn babe a tablet fashioned from black crystal. He's smiling. His eyes are cracked with a lifetime of smiles. He shares that warm smile with the portal—a lightless rift from which serrated tentacles slither. Your eyes fall on the plague below: "THE LEGACY OF XERRION," it reads... and below that: "WE WILL ONE DAY JOIN HIM IN THE PROMISED LAND."

DEAD HOLD

If you're running this variant, reduce the number of **death slaadi** here by one, so as to make up for the added difficulty imposed by the star spawn.

Additionally, make the slaadi star spawn in name and appearance. They appear as translucent, half-gelatinous horrors with razored limbs. Once their invisibility drops, they "shift colors."

29. LANDING

You come upon a staircase under the stony gaze of a statue. It depicts a grimacing man being crushed by tentacles that erupt from the floor—from a carved portal. His expression seems to say, "Well, them's the breaks."

As you near the staircase that spirals down into darkness, you feel a wind blow through you—through your mind. This is the brink; you know it like an animal knows when foul weather is ahead. Your instincts are tuned up. You can feel the foulness down there, a brooding darkness that, at best, seeks not to consume you... only leave you stranger than before.

30. LOWER HALLS

The tension in the air builds as you clamber down the stairwell. The air takes on an oily quality, as if it were humid without the heat. You feel in your heart a palpable dread, thick like molten lead, that pushes its way through your arteries. You shouldn't be here—and this place should not be.

What you see first is the Shadowdusk family crest inscribed upon the floor: a 20-foot disk of purple stone carved upon which is a lit torch, its flames pointed away from you. Peeling mosaics paint the ceiling as a cloudy sky and scorch marks can be found along the walls and many pillars of this place.

In the distance, some titan grumbles a sleepy groan—and a breeze flutters throughout the halls, one not felt on your skin but on your very brain. For a moment, you're reminded how very small you are.

DEAD HOLD

If you're using this variant, cultists were slaughtered here by star spawn. Blood streaks the floor and walls. The family crest is outlined in the spilled intestines of the star spawn's victims—the handiwork of bored grues after all their cattle had been slain.

31. APPROACH TO MADNESS

If combat breaks out in this area, Zalthar, the **death knight**, investigates from Area 34A.

31A. WARPED FOYER

You feel a wind that seems to push at your every being. The lines between the floor and its walls are warped. In some places, the stone has seemed to melt. In others, they meet at angles that make your head swim. And the pillars holding up that ceiling your eyes seem to refuse to look at? They were but columns once. Now you don't really know what they are, only that they... breathe.

31B. THRESHOLD OF INSANITY

You should not be here. Nothing should. Nothing of this world, this reality, anyway. There is a pressure here, a power, a shadow that should not be. Strange energy pervades this place and, in the distance, you can hear a sort of... groaning.

At the end of the day, you're still an animal. Face it—you are. Every instinct of yours screams at you to abandon this place, for there are things lurking here that are antithetical to all reason and reality—a force of unmaking.

You swallow that primordial dread. A tapestry on the wall depicts noblemen giving themselves to some unseen god that has deigned to twist, warp, and melt them into one gelatinous entity that your mind cannot bear to focus on for too long.

DEAD HOLD

If you're running this variant, reduce the number of **death slaadi** here by one, so as to make up for the added difficulty imposed by the star spawn.

Additionally, make the slaadi star spawn in name and appearance. They appear as translucent, half-gelatinous horrors with razored limbs. Once their invisibility drops, they "shift colors."

Despite what's written above, Zalthar doesn't come to investigate a disturbance in this area if you are running *Dead Hold*. He's instead busy in Area 32.

32. FAR AND GONE

Sickly light bleeds out from a breach in what your mind assures you is reality itself. Tumorous flesh hangs there, draped across a rift that beats as if it were a heart—a heart whose arteries have crept out along the walls and ceilings like mold and found purchase on this side.

As you gawk at this rift, you begin to giggle. Blood trickles down your nose and you know that to gaze into this abyss is to let it gaze long into you.

DEAD HOLD

If you're running this variant, the portal has been stabilized and creatures can now physically pass through the portal—although mortals will find that it is a one-way trip. Once they enter the Far Realm, they will *not* find their way out, effectively killing their character. If there was ever a thing that a mortal *should not enter* it is this portal.

Once the adventurers reach this area, read the text below. Zalthar, the **death knight** (armed with his *nine lives stealer*, as detailed in Area 34), is here with three **nothics** (former family members) and their sacrifice: either Cassiok (see Area 39) or Melissara, who has long-been suspected of not being committed enough to the family or "the future."

The world is awash in a sickly light vomited out by a rift to a place your mind has unhinged itself from. In the distance, from behind that veil, you hear some titanic beast groan again, lazily belching out its contempt for this very reality. A cloud of spores erupts from the rift, crashing to the floor and then dragging itself into the air, meandering aimlessly but not inanimately. The rift, you realize, is alive. It's *breathing*. Along the walls of this room, tumorous flesh has crept in, finding purchase on this side of reality, growing like a mold.

There are others here, standing before the breach in your reality: three one-eyed freaks and a knight clad in armor that can only be dedicated to celebrating death itself. In his hand the knight clutches a longword around which float the wailing souls of its past victims.

If Melissara is the intended sacrifice, she has 1 hit point and no remaining spell slots. Add the following text to your narration; it assumes the adventurers are already familiar with the **archmage**:

Crumbled at the death knight's feet is a bruised woman missing an entire patch of hair—Melissara. She's screaming; you could hardly hear them over the portal's groans. She's screaming and kicking, but the freaks have her tight and they inch ever closer to the edge.

"Zalthar!" she screams. All her magic must have already been spent. She writhes again, but it's a futile effort. "Zalthar! No! Please! Do not send me *there!*"

"Your commitment to our family—to the future," murmurs Zalthar, "has been found lacking. A host must host—what else is it good for? Goodbye, dear cousin... and see you again soon."

The freaks plant Melissara before the brink—and as she beholds an unseen madness therein, the death knight plants his heavy boot on her back and kicks. She goes screaming to what you're certain is not her death—but something far worse.

If Cassiok is the sacrifice instead, he hands off his *staff of power* to Zalthar. Read the following:

At the death knight's side is a ridiculous horror—a man whose body is more of a carapace, beetlelike in nature. His head is still mostly human, however. You catch only a glimpse of his middle-aged features in that sickly light: a crooked nose, a bald head, chitinous protrusions along his cheeks.

"Well," says the freak. "Cousin, it has been a delight."

"You will be remembered," the death knight says, "but perhaps not missed."

"My life for the future," says the freak. "A host must host, mustn't he?"

"What else would he be good for?" agrees the death knight.

The freak nods and hands his runed staff to the death knight. With a content sigh, he walks face-first into that sickly light, disappearing from this world entirely.

Once the sacrifice has been made, Zalthar and his minions face the party. Read the following:

Only now does the death knight turn to face you. His eyes burn as blue fire from behind that helmet.

"Dezmyr foretold your arrival," he says, lifting that wretched blade of his. "I've been waiting for you. All this time, I've been waiting for *you*."

Envoys of the Hungering Void. After the sacrifice has been made, Zalthar and his nothics attack. On the third round of combat, the sixth encounter of *Dead Hold* unfurls: the sacrifice returns to Shadowdusk Hold as a **star spawn seer** with a pet **star spawn hulk**. The seer's features are familiar, matching with whoever was sacrificed—but his or her personality has been obliterated and its skin is rubbery now, its fingers fused into tongue-like appendage.

Read the following once this encounter occurs:

Amidst the carnage, the rift shudders and groans with sloppy ecstasy. Your eyes confront that breach in reality, even if your mind shies away into a dark corner, fearful of that sickly light. Out from the portal steps a tumorous creature whose arms are but rubbery, tongue-like appendages. Its eyes are starry voids and it grips a twisted staff made of equal parts flesh, bone, and iridescent matter. It looks out across this place, this world, and pronounces a sound of victory in a language you were never meant to hear—that no mortal ought to ever hear.

At this creature's side is a flayed, hulking brute with far too many teeth and lidless eyes that regard you as more than a meal. It regards you only as its freshest plaything.

If Zalthar is still alive, he welcomes back whoever was sacrificed and then adds, "It is done! Our work is at its zenith! Let the world get... weirder. Now."

Lair Actions. The rift itself is as living of an entity as the star spawn. On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), one of the following effects occur; the same effect cannot occur two rounds in a row:

- A tentacle unfurls and makes an attack roll against a creature within 60 ft. (+5 to hit). On a hit, the target is grappled (escape DC 13) and dragged 10 ft. closer to the portal; prone creatures are dragged 15 ft. If it is dragged into the portal, the creature is spirited to the Far Realm. See *Entering the Rift* below for the effects of entering the Far Realm. A tentacle has an AC of 14, 20 hit points and immunity to psychic damage; destroying it frees the grappled character.
- The rift groans and unleashes a foul, strong wind. All non-aberrations within 30 ft. must make a DC 14 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone. Zalthar and Dezmyr Shadowdusk are immune to this effect.
- The rift shrieks in rage. All non-aberrations within 30 ft. of the portal must make a DC 15 Intelligence saving throw or take 14 (3d6) psychic damage. Zalthar and Dezmyr Shadowdusk are immune to this effect.
- The rift vomits out a cloud of spores. Creatures within 10 ft. of the portal must make a DC 16 Constitution saving throw or take 17 (4d6) poison damage or half as much on a success. On a failure, a creature also succumbs to a form of Indefinite Madness (see App. C for details).

Funky Physics. Any of the effects described above can come into play during this encounter.

DESCRIBING THE FAR REALM

The Far Realm is antithetical to the mortal mind. Should an adventurer fall through the portal, describe it as a lightless realm whose only floor is a black canvas. Every step sends ripples of some foul water out across existence. A creature with darkvision or magic is just as lost in the dark and can only see up to 10 feet away. *Things* lurk there in the dark, just outside their periphery, sending up splashes of water as they circle around that unfortunate soul. From time to time, the ground shifts as a groan echoes throughout the realm, as if they stand on the back of some sleepy titan—which they do. They and the monsters there are but mites on the back of an unseen colossus whose tumors and bleeding sores are like carnivorous flowers.

Meanwhile, the senses begin to blur. The ears ring with tinnitus and the nose bleeds as the brain suffers a long-drawn-out aneurism. Organs begin to fail one by one, but this does not kill the unfortunate visitor, only liberate them. The mind slowly unhinges as the shadows press in, as the claws come out, and the wolves lurking there in the dark can help their appetite no longer. No one, as that damned fool will learn, truly dies in this insidious realm—that would be too merciful—and they are doomed to suffer this madness for eternity.

Entering the Rift. A creature that enters the rift is taken to the Far Realm and instantly takes 36 (8d10) psychic damage. This damage occurs again every time the creature ends its turn in the Far Realm. If it is reduced to 0 hit points, it does not die but is instead taken by *things* therein and is effectively killed.

A creature on the other side of the rift is stunned. It can still see the Material Plane and it can make a DC 15 Charisma saving throw to return whence it came, even though a stunned creature cannot move. On a success, it appears in an unoccupied space within 5 ft. of the portal in Shadowdusk Hold. This harrowing visit wreaks havoc on the creature's mind, causing them to develop a form of Indefinite Madness (see App. C). They might also suffer other deformities like the Shadowdusks have, determined by the DM.

Closing the Rift. The gateway to that hungering realm can only be closed from the other side—a realization that eventually dawns on the party if the **couatl** Tezca-Zyanya doesn't reveal it. If the couatl is with the party, it volunteers to close the portal, otherwise it falls to another character, such as one of the adventurers or Melissara. For the purpose of this module, exactly *how* the portal is closed is never told to the players... and any character that makes this sacrifice will never again see the Material Plane. For all intents and purposes, that character is dead, their corpse trapped in the Far Realm. Should one of your players wish to make the sacrifice, let them, but only after warning them that there is no coming back from that darkened realm.

If Tezca-Zyanya is with the adventurers, it reveals its true form now and sacrifices itself to close the rift. Read the following, dramatized text:

It's bedlam. Even now the rift seems to shudder with pleasure. Its mold trembles and finds further purchase in this reality. You can see shadows in that sickly light—more of those foul creatures are lining up to walk into this world and see it undone. Your heart begins to sink as the hordes fall into ranks and march towards your side of the rift.

It's when the first faceless beast pokes its maw through the rift that a frog hops onto your shoulder and then into the fray. You almost forgot of Tezca-Zyanya—and when the frog lands, it becomes a flash of blinding light. Not sickly light, oh no. Heavenly light that washes away the darkness. Where once a frog crouched now hovers a winged serpent whose every scale is radiant. Tezca-Zyanya's saccharine voice echoes within your mind: "There is only one way to seal the rift... And it is my burden alone to bear."

The winged serpent wades through the fray, evading claws and psychotic energies. It slips into that rift, showing no fear, no hesitation... and blinding light erupts from within. That distant titan rages, denied again its entrance to this world, and in its tantrum, you crumble to your knees! The rift implodes, leaving a radiant scar on the wall!

The rift now sealed, the moldy flesh of the portal wails as it wilts to death. The star spawn howl, denied reinforcements and conquest. Surviving Shadow-dusks despair, their costly efforts thwarted.

33. SHRINE

Portraits galore hang in this chamber, all featuring the same woman: Dezmyr Shadowdusk. Her name is painted onto every single one. As you spin about, you see that the portraits are arranged chronologically: first showing Dezmyr as a young woman who slowly grows taller until she abandons gowns for armor in the iconography of Torm himself. Just as she reaches what you can estimate to be her thirties, she plunges into death, becoming a skeletal warrior clad in dark armor... armor that still bears that same iconography.

Disgust rears up within you. There's an air of adulation, of unchecked limerence. Obsession, even. Whoever produced or commissioned these portraits is obsessed with Lady Dezmyr. It's almost frightening. These works of art are nothing more than idols—this entire scene is nothing more and nothing less than naked idolatry.

34. ZALTHAR'S CHAMBERS

34A. ZALTHAR SHADOWDUSK

The door to this dusty chamber is already open—and in it sits a skeletal knight clad in deathly armor. In his withered hands are two painted wooden figurines—and you can only guess what sort of scene he was privately enacting.

Having interrupted his make-believe, the knight addresses you: "Dezmyr foretold your arrival. I've been waiting for you." He drops the figurines and unsheathes a blade around which circle the souls of his past victims, all wailing in damnation.

If the adventurers do not deign to join Zalthar in his private chambers, the knight looses a Hellfire Orb and strides out to greet them personally. He follows the same tactics as Dezmyr (see Area 38).

34B. BLACK OBELISK

Nothing stands in this bald chamber but for a black obelisk fashioned from darkened crystal. It has a gravity to it that lacks the greasy touch of all the other abhorrent artifacts found in this wretched sanctum of the Shadowdusks.

DEAD HOLD

Under this variant, Zalthar is not in his chambers, but instead Area 32, where he is sacrificing a family member to the Far Realm so that a **star spawn seer** can take over his or her body.

Trapped Celestial. The **couatl** imprisoned within the black obelisk telepathically contacts the party, urging them to free it from this dark prison. Read the following:

As you gaze at the obelisk, that saccharine voice infiltrates your mind—and, tracing its warmth, you find that it first found purchase in your very heart.

"Free me," it softly demands. "Whether your heart is black with rot or as gilded as the heavens above, you *must* free me. The flood is coming and it will sweep up all creatures—even you—in its wrath. There is no parleying with such an animal force. No mortal, no matter how evil, can weather their invasion—nor should they abide it. Destroy my prison; topple the obelisk. The rift must be sealed before it is too late."

Free at Last. If its prison is toppled, the couatl emerges as a toad. Read the following:

The obelisk teeters—and crashes thunderously onto the floor, sending lightning-like cracks throughout the tiles. Crystal flies everywhere and, for the sake of your own skin and eyesight, you shield your face from the debris.

When at last you lower your guard, you see only a yellow frog crouched upon the obelisk's shattered head.

"Well?" comes a telepathic voice. "Let's get a move on."

Roleplaying the Couatl. Tezca-Zyanya normally would not reveal itself as a celestial, but does so if the adventurers promise to help end this madness. It insists that they immediately set out for the portal, "before more of the unbidden enter this world." It is utterly consumed by this duty. Having forgotten its own identity, the couatl has founded its new one on this quest. It does not yet reveal that only a creature on the other side of the portal can close the rift.

35. EYES OF STONE

There is power here. More power than you could possibly ever crave. It flows like an arcane wind that whispers in your ear and rustles your cloak. You know whence it came: the arch gate set into the wall. One of the Mad Mage's gates—perhaps the *last* gate in all of Undermountain. Its keystone is carved in the likeness of Halaster himself and its stony eyes follow you as if they were alive. Surely there must be a trap here, a trick. In the corner you spot a petrified beholder lost to eternal, stony sleep. What does it mean? What has the Mad Mage lain for you?"

Sacrificial Item. At your discretion, Halaster's gate permanently destroys any magic item sacrificed to gain access to Level 23. This distinction is necessary; it is written on Level 23 that Halaster might return the magic item when they meet him in his sanctum. Ideally, the adventurers will sacrifice the Shadow-dusks' *black crystal tablet*, depriving them of their usual means of contact with the Far Realm.

Do It. If the adventurers have not yet dealt with the Shadowdusk family—*Dead Hold* variant or not—the Mad Mage telepathically whispers to them, "Come. Leave them to their devices. To their crusade. Ours is a dance between friends and lovers; they have no place at the table. There's but one road to my domain and you're looking at it. Come. Take the head, and the rest of the body dies—isn't that true?"

DEAD HOLD

Under this variant, over a dozen corpses surround the arch gate, most torn apart, but some clutching their faces or scraping at the empty space underneath. These were those that did not "make the cut-off," as Halaster would put it, and were left to the star spawn. Those that weren't torn to shreds died by sheer panic.

Additionally, Dezmyr and Zalthar can sense if the rift to the Far Realm is sealed. If the couatl manages to close the rift, Dezmyr attacks the party when they reach this area along with three **wraiths** and, at your discretion, Zalthar. If the party has the *black crystal tablet* and seem intent on sacrificing it to the gate, they're desperate and panicked—a sharp contrast to their otherwise frosty, undead demeanors.

If Dezmyr intercepts the party, she unleashes a Hellfire Orb as soon as she's within range. There's a 25% chance that it only hits the closest adventurers. Read the following:

Just as you're about to put an unknowable amount of distance from this madhouse, an orb of black flame comes sailing out of the darkness and explodes against the gate. Through the smoke and flames you see striding forth a knight clad in the armor of Death itself, and, at her heels, a retinue of wraiths.

Lady Dezmyr Shadowdusk comes forth, her name attaching itself firmly to your brain. Her blade is already drawn when she shouts, "The fork is unforgiving and the void vast between the stars. Your end begins here."

38. DEZMYR'S CHAMBERS

38A. MEMENTO MORI

The door opens silently upon an unfurnished suite. It's cold here and the air is ripe with spores that undulate like a fleet of wasps. A tapestry depicting Waterdeep, the City of Splendors, hangs from the wall and before it is a stone pedestal on which rests a charred skull, small and human. The skull is angled towards the tapestry, as if it longed to look at those better days of the past.

Across the room stands another door behind which a hushed conversation takes place.

The conversation is too faint to be heard, even with an ear pressed to the door. In Area 38C, Dezmyr is taking counsel from her **wraith** advisors.

38C. DEZMYR'S SANCTUM

A voice heralds your arrival, a voice of the grave, filled with rot and worms: "They have come at last."

"Indeed," murmur's a graven woman. Your eyes fall upon a knight of death and decay clad in ebon armor. A council of wraiths float behind her, smoky and ephemeral.

Behind the knight stretches a fresco depicting her and another knight as they were in life—gilded and good, armored and on horseback, with the iconography of Torm emblazoned on their armor. The symbol on her shield is that of an upright torch—the opposite of what the Shadowdusks now consider their heraldry.

The death knight looks to you; her eyes are starry voids within which one can guesstimate all of Creation's worth. Her blade rasps against the sheathe as its drawn. Dezmyr Shadowdusk murmurs, "The stars turn, and a time presents itself" as her wraiths sink into the wall and disappear with chilling shrieks!

Dezmyr cannot be parleyed with, even if they hold the *black crystal tablet* hostage. She attacks without hesitation.

Tactics. Dezmyr and her forces use these tactics:

- Dezmyr fights with wild abandon, knowing that she will return from death just as she did before. It's only if she knows that Zalthar is dead and her family's work is threatened that she tries to survive.
- Dezmyr's **wraiths** rely on their Incorporeal Movement to harangue the party from above, below, and behind, employing hit-and-run tactics by phasing through the walls and floors. They start combat behind Dezmyr, thus avoiding her Area-of-Effect abilities. She directs them to harangue distant foes, especially casters that can't inflict much damage with an opportunity attack.
- Dezmyr does nothing that will endanger her mother's skull in Area 38A. Thus, the adventurers are safe from a Hellfire Orb while within 20 feet of it.
- Dezmyr opens up on her first turn with a Hellfire Orb if the adventurers are bunched up and her wraiths aren't going to be caught in the blast.
- Many of Dezmyr's spells are cast as bonus actions, which competes with her ability to undo damage to herself or her allies. Likewise, most are concentration spells. She blows through her highest-level spell slots first, which are spent on *smite* spells.
- On her second turn, Dezmyr casts *destructive wave* if she's in the heart of the fray. If not, she casts *staggering smite* at 4th-level instead.
- Until her foes dwindle in number, Dezmyr reserves her reaction for her Parry ability. As they fall, she then uses it for opportunity attacks.
- If a foe tries to flee, Dezmyr casts *compelled duel* to ensure they stay within 30 feet of her.

Dead Again. If Dezmyr is slain, her last words are, "We do not fear the darkness... the void between stars... but you soon shall."

DEAD HOLD

If you're running this variant and the party has dealt with Encounter 5 or 6, remove three of the **wraiths** in this fight to make up for the beating they've taken from the star spawn. Likewise, the wraiths appear as creatures of sickly light only vaguely humanoid in shape—a measure the mortal mind takes to attach some degree of familiarity to those *things*.

If the portal to the Far Realm has yet to be sealed, Dezmyr says, after her initial riddle, "It is too late. The knob turns and the darkness smiles."

If the portal has already been sealed by the couatl's sacrifice, Dezmyr mocks, "Time is a wheel. So as it was, shall it be again," believing that her family's work cannot be thwarted. She, like her family, can sense if the portal is sealed.

39. DRACOLICH'S PHYLACTERY

You're met by a freak so ridiculous you find yourself analyzing this strange chamber before confronting him.

The walls here bulge and wriggle as if they were the flesh of some flea-ridden, tumorous beast. A statue suffering from a similar malady stands nearby in an alcove, writhing until it morphs into another person. Every few seconds, it takes on a new appearance, but always is it of a noble.

The freak. You turn your eyes and mind back upon the freak: a bald, middle-aged man with chitinous protrusions along his cheeks. His body is that of a beetle's, its black carapace only modestly hidden by the tatters of a black robe that spares you the indecency of his groin. He leans on a heavy staff intricately carved with runes of power.

You only realize now that the freak has been addressing you for the last few moments and you cannot even make sense of his words, he's so crazed. His mind is as ruined as his body. Even the slaving, beaked monstrosity at his side—a grick, you dully realize—makes more sense than him.

"This place must be razed," you can't help but think—and not for the first time.

DEAD HOLD

If you're running this variant, one of Shadowdusk Hold's **archmagi** must be sacrificed to the Far Realm so that a **star spawn seer** can take over the host's body and enter the Material Plane. If this victim isn't Melissara (dragged screaming to the portal's edge), then it has to be Cassiok. There's just no way that you can maintain the integrity of this level's theme of horror by presenting a *man with the body of a beetle* to your players. It's just too ridiculous. Send him to the portal, leaving the **gray slaad** and **grick alpha** to guard this room.

40. LYNNORAX'S LAIR

Darkness lurks like a smoky haze in this unlit chamber, within which lies a dragon—and it's with a silent sigh of relief when you realize it's nothing more than a skeleton cloaked in dust so thick, you could bake it into bread.

When it moves on its own accord, you can't but flinch—your heart seizes, for Death was clearly cheated out of this corpse. "Imprisoned for decades," the skeletal drake grumbles. "Reduced to a guard dog with no visitors to harangue."

The creature rises to its full height, its every joint creaking and complaining with the effort. Dust showers the chamber, falling like heaps of sand and choking the air.

"You," says the drake, "will make a fitting distraction." Its jaws part—and inside its empty mouth lightning curdles, lighting up its entire body and filling the Hold with a serrated shriek!

It isn't explicitly spelled out in *DotMM* whether this area counts as Lynnorax's lair. The *Companion* contends that it doesn't; the adventurers already face more than enough danger in these halls. If this was to be the dracolich's lair, they would have included new and exciting lair actions befitting its undead nature and Far Realm-influenced location.

41. SHADOWDUSK VAULT

There can only be one thing behind a dragon, dead or otherwise: a hoard of unimaginable wealth... and the Shadowdusk's vault does not disappoint. Treasure galore is heaped in one precarious pile at the center of the vault, watched over only by monstrous statues standing in shallow alcoves.

The statue directly ahead is carved in the likeness of a nude woman whose head has been replaced with a chisel-toothed maw. No eyes, no forehead, no ears—only a toothed void.

To your right stands a statue of a young man whose cranium has erupted into a mass of tentacles. And to your left is a melting statue of Halaster himself, his eyes sparkling as they droop in the flood of his face. His stony smile speaks volumes. It seems to tell you that your game is almost at its end—that all things must end and when they do it is not pretty, not at all.

Additional Loot. If you're a kind DM, or a worried one, now is the most opportune moment ever to add diamonds worth 300 gp or more. Or, in other words, the reagents needed for the *revivify* spell. These are the last of the diamonds that Dezmyr and Zalthar used to resurrect family members—before they fell from grace. Choose one of the methods below to present the diamonds to your players:

- Each of the statues holds the diamond: stuffed in the melting eye of Halaster; deep in the chisel-toothed maw of the southern statue; and in the center of the tentacles of the western statue.
- For every minute the adventurers sift through the hoard, they have a 5% chance of finding a diamond.
- If the adventurers listen to the gold music box's song, which takes 1d4+2 rounds to play, a diamond magically appears in a space where a ballerina would be. This can occur three times, after which the music box loses its magic.

EPILOGUE

The simple fact is that the adventurers are just about to peak. It doesn't matter if they defeat this level's bosses; they're already 17th-level and they're slated to become 20th level after they defeat Halaster.

Dead Hold. If the adventurers ran through the *Dead Hold* encounter, give them the experience they would have earned if they tackled the **dracolich**. If the party destroyed the *black crystal tablet* and sealed the rift, the Shadowdusks' are effectively destroyed, all their efforts undone. Without the tablet, they can't so easily contact the Far Realm. Without the rift, the star spawn cannot waltz into this reality. The party has truly scored a victory for the Multiverse.

SEND-OFFS

The *Dead Hold* variant is of so much importance that separate send-offs to end your session are written below. Regardless of which one you use, add in *Halaster Bids* to the end.

THE STANDARD SEND-OFF

You have always known Undermountain to be the opposite of paradise—but this, as they say in the worlds above, truly takes the cake. The foul efforts of these freaks can never be told, lest they inspire others to stranger heights. As you stand in the gate to Halaster's personal domain, you can't help but shudder with relief as you put an unknowable amount of distance between you and Shadowdusk Hold. You can only pray that the Mad Mage has a gateway there that will let you return home without ever again stepping foot in this madhouse.

THE DEAD HOLD SEND-OFF

If you ran the *Dead Hold* variant, read one of the send-offs below.

The Rift Sealed. If the adventurers managed to seal the rift to the Far Realm, they've spared this world from an early Armageddon. Read the following:

The world will never know how close it came to destruction—and nor should it. This rift has been sealed, but there are surely others that would try to open that blasphemous door to the Far Realm. They would try, you have no doubt, emboldened by the near-success of the Shadowdusks.

Even you have forgotten so much of what has transpired. Dully, you understand that's just your mind's attempt to cope with the horrors you've witnessed. Like patterns in the sand, waves sent from the deep ocean of your mind wipe away any evidence of what happened. The details are already foggy. Some part of you knows that you *ought* to remember—but your mind refuses, as if it were a parent choosing the better of two evils. Your sanity has surely been frayed—and soon you won't

even know it. Will your mind ever heal? Will it ever surrender to you the memories of what—
—of whatever happened here in this wretched place?

The Rift Unclosed. If the adventurers leave this level without sealing the rift, read the following:

You've gazed long into the abyss—and it has left you broken. What's done is done; you cannot be expected to right a wrong so flagrant. What mortal can? This is above your paygrade.

You'll return, you tell yourself—but deep in your heart, you know that to be a lie. Perhaps one day you can forgive yourself for such cowardice—even if the world, whether it learns of this blasphemy, does not. Your only solace is that, should you cut down the Mad Mage, you might find in his sanctum the secrets to return to Shadowdusk Hold—and bring about these freaks' well-deserved reckoning.

HALASTER BIDS

Add the following narration to your chosen send-off:

The gate thrums with energy, scooping you up and spiriting you away from this madhouse. The journey to the Mad Mage's sanctum is not instantaneous, however. You speed through corridors strewn with passing stars and long-drawn-out light. His voice bounces off the curve of infinity and resounds in your mind: "Our game is almost at an end. The stars turn, and a time presents itself."

It's in that moment you realize Halaster has been the patron behind all this madness. If he did not orchestrate the Shadowdusks' efforts, he certainly approved it, gave it his rubber stamp. If he would allow such *things* to be bidden into this world, then he cannot be left alive. He's broken a covenant with all mortalkind—with the Multiverse itself. No person should be willing to let those *things* crawl into reality.

This madness must be stopped and that burden falls to you. Only you are in a position to end Halaster Blackcloak's spree. It's as if Destiny itself has lured you here for this purpose—and you cannot help but think back to your initial motivation to delve into Undermountain: gold, glory, and power.

What use is the power you've gleaned if you do not use it now to spare the world from the Mad Mage's antics? What has this all been for, if you do not thrust that blade deep into his rotted brain?

Chasing that is another realization, this one far more chilling: *he wants you there*. He's *expecting* you. Perhaps he always has. Perhaps all of this is just one long-drawn-out game of chess in which a deluded pawn has painted itself as the king. He's waiting for you there, armed and ready in a mad wizard's lair.

His whisper comes again, as if he heard your conflicted thoughts. "The time has finally come... to dance with you in person.... At ground zero of my zoo. You truly are the greatest friends I have ever had."

LEVEL XXIII: MAD WIZARD'S LAIR

QUICK NOTES

- If you utilize the many variants provided in this chapter of the *Companion*, the party should gain a long rest before they leave Area 1, courtesy of chronomancy spells placed by the Mad Mage. Thereafter, they cannot achieve a long rest on this level. Let that be repeated: the party should **never** be allowed another long rest on this level. It isn't hard to contrive (and justify) a way to ruin any rests the party takes. This is Halaster's *personal* domain, after all.
- There are few—but mighty—creatures on this level. All are meant to soften the party up before they reach Halaster.
- If you use the *Elite Four* penultimate encounter, Arcturia and Trobriand are missing from their respective areas—so that the party can't kill them prematurely.
- The party can acquire a *horned ring* in Area 29, allowing its attuned wearer to bypass Undermountain's restrictions on magic—meaning a wizard could *teleport* the party out of the dungeon to rest and come back to fight Halaster.
- Marambra Nyghtsteel, the missing apprentice of Halaster's, was intentionally left out of *DotMM* by its authors so that the DM could use her as they wished. The *Companion* has a few ideas, but does not make her a cornerstone of this chapter. See the *Elite Four* penultimate encounter and Areas 2, 24, and 29.
- Except for the final encounter of *Third Times the Charm*, where the Mad Mage tries to drop the asteroid Stardock into Toril, Jhesiyra is mentioned little in this document, as she is best left to the Dungeon Master's imagination.

PREVIOUSLY ON DUNGEON OF THE MAD MAGE

Keep in mind the following when running this level:

- The adventurers may have destroyed Arcturia's phylactery on Level 14, earning her ire.
- The party may have encountered the *Scavenger* on Level 19 and learned of its purpose. Its helm is in Area 20.
- The party may have sided with one of the genies on Level 19, which can come up in the *Planar Hopscotching* encounter (see *Ultimate Showdown*)
- The adventurers should be familiar with the Seven, whose portraits could be seen on Level 9.

ART CREDITS

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IN THE KINGDOM OF MADNESS

The time has come to lay waste to Undermountain's mad tyrant. At last, the gloves are off: the tortured captives of Halaster Blackcloak can strike him down and win their well-earned freedom—and the Mad Mage can shed his veneer and finally throw his full might against such worthy opponents.

ORGANIZATION

This toolbox of a chapter is heavily modular. It adds several variants to help cap-off your campaign and overhaul its final encounters. The following elements are included:

Optional Twists are late additions to your game you can use to shock your players. They are more narrative than mechanical.

Penultimate Encounters provides a challenge to throw against the party right before they face the Mad Mage—because otherwise, they just saunter into his throne room.

Ultimate Showdown encounters are used to elevate the pitiful final fight with Halaster into something worthy of you and your players. Mix and match your preferred encounters.

THE LEVEL AT LARGE

LEVELING UP IN THE MAD WIZARD'S LAIR

The adventurers must be 17th-level to contend with the Mad Wizard's Lair and *DotMM* claims that they should hit 20th-level by clearing the level. The *Companion* breaks this down further:

Penultimate Encounter. If you run a penultimate encounter before facing Halaster, the party should reach 18th-level. See below for details.

Ultimate Showdown. The adventurers should hit 19th-level after triumphing over two of the ultimate encounters described in *Ultimate Showdown*.

The Mad Mage. For defeating Halaster in combat, the party should hit 20th-level. If you're running the *Ground Mage Day* optional twist or *Third Times the Charm* variant, the party cannot level up to 20th-level until they're free from Halaster forever.

PERSONALIZING LEVEL 23 FOR YOUR PARTY

Your party has triumphed over countless horrors and challenges to reach this level. They're the cream of the crop, destined for greatness, and worthy of the Mad Mage's respect. You can personalize this level for your players in some of the following ways:

- Every creature on this level should know who the party is—by now they're legendary throughout Undermountain. These creatures' dialogue should reflect this infamy.
- An artificer might be invited to become Trobriand's apprentice if they help him overthrow Halaster.

- Take stock of the party's arsenal and plan around it—but don't invalidate it. If they have a stock of healing potions, then you have license to amp up the pressure. If they have a *potion of giant's strength*, don't let an Athletics check derail your entire set-up. Keep track of their consumables and other magic items. You cannot afford to be taken unawares. Halaster, a 20th-level wizard with an Intelligence score of 24 and ample access to scrying spells, should know what the adventurers have at their disposal.
- Arcturia might offer to cure a character of their "maladies."
- Halaster might offer an apprenticeship to a character, whether they're already a spellcaster or not. Muiral began as just a bodyguard, so why can't the party's barbarian or fighter?
- A cleric or paladin or warlock might be drawn by divine (or infernal) providence to the diabolical and angelic shields in Area 6B and 9B, which respectively contain a **pit fiend** and **deva**. This entity might be the warlock's patron or ally; or it might be a servant of the cleric or paladin's god.
- Call back to the campaign's earlier days. If a beloved or hated character survived the party, perhaps orchestrate their grand appearance on this level, even if they're here to oppose the party. Examples include Wyllow, the aboleth Illuun, and the genie the party did not free from Halaster's service.

RESTING IN THE MAD WIZARD'S LAIR

It is impossible for the *Companion* to anticipate your party's composition or current wellbeing. Thus, it assumes that they achieve a long rest upon arrival to Level 23, courtesy of Halaster. This will be the last long rest the party ever gains until Halaster is dead.

To ruin the adventurers' long rest, consider the following methods:

- Halaster is aware of the party's presence on this level. No one enters his lair without his knowledge. To interrupt the party's rest, he releases the four **invisible stalkers** from Area 5. They do not fight to the death, but attack for a round or two, then flee. Until the party gives up on resting, the stalkers plague them. If these stalkers are slain, Halaster can resort to the **helmed horrors** or **ultroloths** also on this level.
- Contrive that spells of *Leomund's tiny hut* do not work on this level or have Halaster just dispatch a creature with *dispel magic*, such as a **nycaloth**.

BATTLING HALASTER

The final showdown with Halaster is described under *Ultimate Showdown* below. A number of encounters, all of them zany, have been provided. Simply pick your poison and run it.

The *Companion* seeks to fulfill the expectations of Halaster, a master wizard, by overhauling the final encounter, his changing up his spell list, describing the defenses he would erect in anticipation of this conflict, and more.

While you could bend rules or fashion homebrew spells for Halaster, the *Companion* tries to keep it all aboveboard, more or less, working within the limits of a 20th-level wizard at the helm of a massive hoard of wealth, spellcraft, and industry.

ADDRESSING THE DISAPPOINTMENT

Halaster Blackcloak is a mad genius empowered by the legendary Knot in the Weave. He has defied his natural lifespan and spent it in the study of magic. He is cunning, diabolical, paranoid, and a master of the Arcane that can never truly die, so long as his demise occurs in Undermountain—and yet *DotMM* makes him into a lightweight. Suffice to say that the final showdown of this campaign is a letdown unworthy of print.

The Criticisms. Here are a number of issues with Halaster, as presented in *DotMM*. To be fair, the Mad Mage is practically immortal, and therefore isn't too troubled by death, but his demise is too anticlimactic for a *Dungeons & Dragons* campaign when he is the chief antagonist in the story.

- Despite being a CR 23 foe, Halaster is a glass cannon, hardly able to withstand a group of 17th-20th-level adventurers for even a single round.
- With the exception of the empyrean Nalkara, he has laid no traps for the adventurers—not a *glyph of warding*, not a spell of *symbol*. Neither has he even already cast *mind blank* on himself—which he has prepared—or set of a defense with *contingency*. He hasn't even utilized his arsenal of potions or spell scrolls (which can be produced in areas that are already described in his lair). All he has to his name is a throne that renders him invisible. Big whoop.
- His Lair Actions are largely muted in Area 33, with exception to his ability to reshape stone or spaces—although the latter must be *unoccupied*. His other two options are only useful if he tries to run from the adventurers, which the module makes no mention of.
- Despite sitting on a hoard of magic items, many of which he can reasonably find throughout Undermountain, he has only a *blast scepter* and *horned ring*. Compare this to other 5E campaign antagonists, some of whom have *five* attuned items.
- His Spell Ward Legendary Action is laughably insignificant: *five temporary* hit points per level of sacrificed spell slot, up to 4th level? Get out of here.

HALASTER'S EMOTIONAL STATE

The Mad Mage does not need to fear death—he has returned from it several times. However, it takes an excruciating toll on his body and, more importantly, his ego. Halaster wants to have his game, but he *does not* want to lose. He will not abide failure—because he has *never* been a failure. He has been slain, he has goofed up, dropped the ball, and made more mistakes than he can remember, but he *is not a failure*.

That being said, Halaster is in pursuit of something far greater than victory: a challenge. He has had quite a while to prepare for the adventurers and he could easily crush them—he could *wish* them away—but that would not be *satisfying*. That's what Halaster craves: satisfaction by besting a worthy opponent whose fate is undetermined. It's for reasons like this that he lacks spells that just utterly remove creatures from the fight, such as *banishment* (and why the *Companion* removes *maze* from his spell list).

When the adventurers take the fight to Halaster, don't excuse stupidity for madness. Halaster is, of course, the Mad Mage, but he is not irrational for this encounter. He is, perhaps, the most lucid he has ever been. He would take every precaution that would not spoil the challenge. He would not spare an enemy—in fact, he would break the fourth wall and subvert expectations by finishing them off. Above all, he cannot afford to become a cliché, and he knows it. There are no grandiose speeches, no taunts. The Mad Mage is spoiling for a fight—and he has no obligation to fight fair.

HALASTER'S SPELLS

Obedying the same mechanics of spell preparation just like any other wizard, Halaster can prepare up to twenty-seven spells. In anticipation of this inevitable conflict, he has swapped out the following spells from his list of prepared spells: *arcane lock*, *cloud of daggers*, *hallucinatory terrain*, *knock*, *maze* (because it's an anti-fun spell that just removes the dumbest character from the final battle) *magic missile*, *programmed illusion*, *silent image* and *symbol* (if he were to use this spell, he would've cast it days ago).

You can replace the spells as you see fit. However, several *Ultimate Showdown* encounters require that he prepare particular spells, such as *feather fall*. The following spells are worthy of his preparation. Spells marked with an asterisk belong in *Xanathar's Guide to Everything*.

- *Fire shield*, which he would cast before combat
- *Mirror image*
- *Misty step*, which is great for goading *counterspells*, pairing with a *fire bolt*, and casting via a Legendary Action
- *Mordenkainen's faithful hound*, which he would cast before combat; it bites any warrior foolish enough to approach the Mad Mage
- *Power word pain**, used to cripple spellcasters
- *Slow*
- *Steel wind strike** made with a dagger
- *Synaptic strike**
- *Thunderwave* (which replaces *magic missile*; while it may seem redundant with his *blast scepter*, Halaster needs a 1st-level spell that protects him, harms others, and baits *counterspells* that he can cast with a Legendary Action)

Cantrips. Halaster knows four cantrips and they're all a bit lackluster. As a 20th-level wizard, he should at least have a fifth; as an apex mage, it's conceivable for him to know every single wizard cantrip. At a minimum, the *Companion* adds *shocking grasp* to his repertoire, but you can also add the following:

- *Blade ward*, which he only ever casts with a Legendary Action
- *Chill touch*, if you're especially vicious with how you run your version of Halaster; he casts it via a Legendary Action after a character is grievously wounded
- *Gust*, which is quite useful for encounters in which the party must contend with great heights and gravity, such as the Plane of Fire encounter in *Planar Hopscoatching*

HALASTER'S GEAR

It would be easy to kit Halaster out in overpowered magical items, but the *Companion* is conservative. It suggests only the following equipment. Given his potion brewery, factory, and wealth, it's conceivable for him to have prepared these items.

- Two *potions of resistance*, chosen from the party's two most favorite damage types (but not fire or lightning, as his *blast scepter* already grants resistance to those damage types). These effects persist for 1 hour.
- An *oil of slipperiness*, granting him the effects of a *freedom of movement* spell for the next 10 minutes—which will wrinkle the nose of any warriors fond of grappling and monks that intend to disable him with a Stunning Strike. He applies this to himself before the adventurers reach Area 33.
- Three *potions of greater healing* (4d4+4 hit points), two *potions of superior healing* (8d4+8) and a single *potion of supreme healing* (10d4+20).
- A handful of *dust of sneezing and choking* which can be used to incapacitate foes—namely spellcasters who are warded with heavy spells like *invulnerability*. Be aware that Halaster also has to make the DC 15 Con. saving throw and will blow a Legendary Resistance if he fails.
- A single *bead of force*
- A *gem of brightness* with five remaining charges
- A *rope of entanglement*

See the sidebar for these items' effects and details, as well as *Halaster's Legendary Actions* for how Halaster can utilize these items.

HALASTER'S PREPARATIONS

The greatest and most ridiculous mistake made by the *DotMM* authors is not having Halaster cast any spells in anticipation of the battle. He's a *wizard*, for crying out loud. Perhaps they would have assumed that the Dungeon Master would do so. Perhaps they didn't. At the very least, Halaster would ward himself with the following spells:

- *Fire shield*, cast shortly before the adventurers arrive to Area 33. Woe be to the warrior that dares strike at Halaster.
- *Mage armor* (this is a given; even *DotMM* can assume to have that already cast)
- *Mind blank*, cast within the last 24 hours, but before the Mad Mage underwent a long rest. This wards him from psychic damage and even *wish* spells that alter his consciousness.
- *Mirror image*, cast while the party's in Area 33, before combat or via a Legendary Action during it.
- *Mordenkainen's faithful hound*, cast seven hours ago. The hound is not there as a sentry, only as a means to punish the warrior that attacks Halaster

Per his Arcane Recovery feature, Halaster regains his expended spell slots of 5th level or lower when he finishes a short rest. Therefore, he can afford to buff himself before battle. If the adventurers take a rest, so does he.

Traps and Glyphs Galore. The *Clash of the Titans* encounter, detailed below in *Ultimate Showdown*, has Halaster also ward his lair with *glyphs of warding* and the like.

HALASTER'S GEAR (ABRIDGED)

As described in *Halaster's Gear*, the Mad Mage can have any of the following items on his person for the ultimate battle:

BEAD OF FORCE (1 BEAD)

You can use an action to throw the bead up to 60 feet. The bead explodes on impact and is destroyed. Each creature within a 10-foot radius of where the bead landed must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or take 5d4 force damage. A sphere of transparent force then encloses the area for 1 minute. Any creature that failed the save and is completely within the area is trapped inside this sphere. Creatures that succeeded on the save, or are partially within the area, are pushed away from the center of the sphere until they are no longer inside it. Only breathable air can pass through the sphere's wall. No attack or other effect can.

An enclosed creature can use its action to push against the sphere's wall, moving the sphere up to half the creature's walking speed. The sphere can be picked up, and its magic causes it to weigh only 1 pound, regardless of the weight of creatures inside.

DUST OF SNEEZING AND CHOKING (1 HANDFUL)

When you use an action to throw a handful of the dust into the air, you and each creature that needs to breathe within 30 feet of you must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or become unable to breathe while sneezing uncontrollably. A creature affected in this way is incapacitated and suffocating. As long as it is conscious, a creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on it on a success. The *lesser restoration* spell can also end the effect on a creature.

OIL OF SLIPPERINESS

The oil can cover a Medium or smaller creature. Applying the oil takes 10 minutes. The affected creature then gains the effect of a *freedom of movement* spell for 8 hours. Alternatively, this oil can be poured on the ground as an action, where it covers a 10-foot-square, duplicating a *grease* spell in that area for 8 hours.

Freedom of Movement. The creature's movement is unaffected by difficult terrain, and spells and other magical effects can neither reduce its speed, nor cause it to be paralyzed or restrained. Additionally, it can spend 5 feet of movement to automatically escape from nonmagical restraints, such as manacles or a creature that has it grappled. Finally, being underwater imposes no penalties on its movement or attacks.

POTION OF HEALING

Using an action, you regain a number of hit points:

Greater (3). You regain 4d4 + 4 hit points.

Superior (2). You regain 8d4 + 8 hit points.

Supreme (1). You regain 10d4 + 20 hit points.

POTION OF RESISTANCE (2 POTIONS)

You gain resistance to the type of damage the potion is brewed for. This effect lasts 1 hour.

ROPE OF ENTANGLEMENT

This rope is 30 feet long and weighs 3 pounds. If you hold one end of the rope and use an action to speak its command word, the other end darts forward to entangle a creature you can see within 20 feet of you. The target must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or become restrained.

You can release the creature by using a bonus action to speak a second command word. A target restrained by the rope can use an action to make a DC 15 Strength or Dexterity check (target's choice). On a success, the creature is no longer restrained by the rope.

The rope has AC 20 and 20 hit points. It regains 1 hit point every 5 minutes as long as it has at least 1 hit point. If the rope drops to 0 hit points, it is destroyed.

GEM OF BRIGHTNESS (5 CHARGES)

While holding this prism, you can use an action to speak one of three command words to cause one of the following effects:

- The first command word causes the gem to shed bright light in a 30-foot radius and dim light for an additional 30 feet. This effect doesn't expend a charge. It lasts until you use a bonus action to repeat the command word or until you use another function of the gem.
- The second command word expends 1 charge and causes the gem to fire a brilliant beam of light at one creature you can see within 60 feet of you. The creature must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or become blinded for 1 minute. The creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.
- The third command word expends 5 charges and causes the gem to flare with blinding light in a 30-foot cone originating from it. Each creature in the cone must make a saving throw as if struck by the beam created with the second command word.

When all of the gem's charges are expended, the gem becomes a nonmagical jewel worth 50 gp.

Contingency. The Mad Mage wards himself with the most wizardly spell of all: *contingency*. You need to personalize the contingent spell to your players' penchants and capabilities; however, the following spells would interest Halaster:

- *Haste*, with the clause that he's within 5 ft. of a foe. Thus, he can take the Disengage action with *haste's* extra action.
- *Otiluke's resilient sphere*, activated when he is reduced to half his hit points or less (a.k.a. "bloodied"). While in the sphere, he drinks any potions he might have or reapplies any buffs he needs, such as *mirror image* or the like. Alternatively, the clause he sets is that it activates when a *power word kill* spell is cast against him, if he knows the party has that spell.
- *Polymorph*, with the clause he is reduced to 62 hit points or less (a.k.a. "gravely wounded"). He turns into either a **giant ape** or a **tyrannosaurus rex** (your choice)

- *Protection from energy*, if he didn't account for such damage with a *potion of resistance*. The spell activates whenever he takes the chosen damage from acid, cold, or thunder damage (fire and lightning can be chosen as well, but his *blast scepter* already grants him resistance to those damage types)
- *Remove curse* if your adventurers have demonstrated a penchant for *bestow curse* or the like.
- *Skill empowerment* (see *Xanathar's*) if Halaster did not use an *oil of slipperiness*. He chooses Athletics or Acrobatics to be competitive in grapple checks; the former bumps his check up by +14, the latter by +18.
- *Stoneskin*, with the clause of activating whenever he is struck by a physical attack.

Remember, that a contingent spell still requires the caster's concentration if it would normally require it. Additionally, a caster can only have one contingent spell at a time. You—and Halaster—can write down on an index card what his contingency was, if you'd like to have a "Gotcha" or "You've activated my trap card!" moment.

Some encounters make use of a *contingency* spell and thus competes with whatever you use here. See *Ultimate Showdown* for details; a notable example is Halaster *polymorphing* himself into a shark if he is ever engulfed in water (which he will be if he takes the adventurers to the Plane of Water).

HALASTER'S LAIR ACTIONS

When compared to other legendary characters and creatures, Halaster's lair actions come up short. You must, however, utilize them during the final conflict. Consider:

- Per *Alterations to Magic*, spells cannot destroy or alter the shape of Undermountain's ceilings, walls, floors and more (doors, however, aren't protected). Therefore, Halaster can form an impenetrable wall or create pits. He can't encase a character within the area, as the area must be unoccupied, but he can at least hinder their progress.
- Halaster can duck into Areas 32 and 34-36 and use a lair action to replace the door with an impenetrable wall that cannot be reshaped by magic. He does so if he needs to avoid hazards, drink a potion, or cast a spell uninterrupted.
- Per the points above, Halaster can sit on his throne and protect himself with a newly-formed wall. The alcove the throne is in is only 20-feet-wide and the ceiling is 30 ft. high. Halaster can give himself three-quarters cover, or even total cover, and blast behind the wall through slits.

HALASTER'S LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The authors of *DotMM* did not afford our dear lunatic many options for his Legendary Actions. His Spell Ward is laughably terrible, so he'll only ever make use of the Cast Spell option.

The following spells are worth using a Legendary Action to cast, provided he has them prepared:

- Cantrips such as *chill touch*, *shocking grasp* and *blade ward*, if he has them added to his spell list (see above), which are great for baiting *counterspells* from the enemy
- *Dispel magic* to rid his foes of their buffs
- *Fireball* to soften up his foes
- *Mirror image*, to keep himself alive
- *Slow* to hamper his foes

Additional Action. One more Legendary Action can be added to Halaster's repertoire, which allows him to keep up longer in the fight.

Use Magic Item. Halaster uses a magic item that requires an action to use, except for his *blast scepter*.

HALASTER'S BARE MINIMUM MINIONS

5th Edition boils down to this: no matter how mighty the boss is, they're toast if outnumbered four to one. Halaster *needs* minions to soak up damage and divide the party's attention, otherwise he's just dead. At a minimum, he has a **shield guardian** that contains a spell of *fireball*, *haste* or *slow* (your choice). He is also joined by a **gray render** (see *MToF* for lore) that he's named after the dumbest of the adventurers. These minions never leave Area 33, even if Halaster sends the party to a demiplane or the like.

The *Clash of the Titans* encounter vastly expands on Halaster's minions, which includes these two. See the *Ultimate Showdown* sections for details.

Tactics. These minions are simple ones, freeing up your decision-making to focus on Halaster. They follow these tactics:

- The gray render is incredibly aggressive and harries the party's backline.
- The shield guardian remains within 5 ft. of Halaster so it can protect him with its Shield reaction. It unleashes its stored spell at Halaster's command.

HALASTER'S TACTICS

Halaster possesses a razor-wit burdened by madness. With an Intelligence score of 24, he can, would, and should come up with a myriad of countermeasures and plots that individually disable members of the party. You have *carte blanche* when tailoring these individual strategies.

Tactics. Halaster has had ample time to study his foes. In combat, he generally follows these tactics:

- When fighting in Area 33, Halaster can escape a beating by touching the statue of himself (no action required) to teleport to Areas 22 or 28, where he can drink potions, cast new spells, and more.
- Halaster's first priority is to disable or hinder the party with spells such as *synaptic strike*, *confusion*, *slow* or *wall of force*.
- Halaster knows he's done for if he's pinned down in a grapple. To combat this, he either *misty steps* out of a grapple, sets his *contingency* spell (see above) to *skill empowerment*, or uses an *oil of slipperiness*.
- Wary of being *counterspelled*, Halaster baits such spells with cantrips cast with Legendary Actions. He reaction is reserved for *counterspells* of his own—especially if he suspects his foes of having *power word kill* at their disposal. He is *certain* that his first spell will be *counterspelled*—and that another foe will counter any of his retaliatory *counterspells*.
- Halaster reserves his turn for hard-hitting spells of 4th-level or higher and usually only casts 3rd-level or lower spells with a Legendary Action.
- If Halaster has utilized spells of *fire shield*, *mirror image*, and *Mordenkainen's faithful hound* (see *Halaster's Spells* above), he *wants* melee combatants to strike him.
- Halaster absolutely won't live long enough to use every one of his spell slots, so he doesn't bother being conservative with them. If he needs a spell, he needs a spell.
- *Bigby's hand* is a favorite of Halaster's, as it allows him to use bonus actions. This versatile spell can grapple targets, push away foes, and provide half cover.
- Halaster may pair *thunderwave* with his Legendary Actions (if he replaces *magic missile* with it) to bait *counterspells* and keep away warriors. Imagine three *thunderwaves* in one round of combat. To fool the party, he can cast it twice, then use his last Legendary Action for a *fireball* spell.
- Halaster is loathe to waste his Legendary Resistances. He only blows them against abilities that would disable him, such as a Stunning Strike or *polymorph*. Damage can be healed, but a debuff like that could end everything.

- Within Area 33, Halaster remains on his throne until he's being wailed on by a warrior, after which he's likely to cast *fly* and hover out of reach—but only if he isn't concentrating on a crucial spell.
- Remind yourself of the points made in sections above, such as *Halaster's Preparations* and incorporate them into his tactics.

ON PARTICULAR SPELLS

You must consider the following spells, many of which can just ruin Halaster's day:

Concentration spells are best countered by a bag of *dust of sneezing and choking*, which you can add to Halaster's equipment. Spells like *invulnerability* and *globe of invulnerability* can be interrupted easily by this simple magic item.

Counterspell is the one spell that can completely neuter Halaster. Keep these in mind:

- Per *XGE*, a character must use their reaction to identify a spell being cast (via an Intelligence (Arcana) check, the DC of which equals 15 + the spell's level; made with advantage if the spell belongs to that character's class spell list).
- How you run *counterspell* at your table is your business, but the *Companion* suggests declaring to your players "Halaster casts a spell" and giving them a six-second countdown for anyone to decide if they're going to *counterspell* him. You should afford players this same courtesy, since Halaster can also cast *counterspell*.
- Spellcasters *do not* add their proficiency bonus to *counterspell* ability checks, although bards get to add half, thanks to their Jack of All Trades feature.

Polymorph is at Halaster's disposal, but he doesn't share Arcturia's penchant for transmutation. He is loathe to waste his concentration on the spell, but if he must, he turns a target into a toad or the like. If he needs to cast it on himself, he chooses either a **giant ape** or a **tyrannosaurus rex** (see App. B for stats). If it's cast against him, he either *counterspells* it or blows a Legendary Resistance to succeed.

Power word kill can just simply end Halaster. No saving throw, no counter. His only option is to cast *counterspell* against the resident warlock, wizard, sorcerer or bard—or set up a *glyph of warding* that does the same.

Wish is an anticlimactic spell that ruins just about everything. Halaster wouldn't waste his own on the party unless they were to do something drastic like *wish* that he could not be resurrected. Because of his *mind blank* spell, his mind cannot be affected by a *wish* spell.

OPTIONAL TWISTS

Now, in the final hour of *Dungeon of the Mad Mage*, you can spring a twist on your party if you hadn't already planned on one. Choose one of the following twists below; if you manage to weave together more than one, more power to you.

Epiphany. Should one of the adventurers figure out the twist before it's revealed to them, reward them with Inspiration.

HALASTER'S GAME

This section applies whether you've been running the *Companion's* game show element, or if you'd like to add it to your campaign now as a twist.

In the case of the latter, the adventurers learn that they're the unwitting contestants on Halaster's hit transplanar game show broadcast across the Multi-verse: *Dungeon of the Mad Mage*. Expect a litany of groans when they hear its title. See Area 33 for the dialogue used when Halaster makes his grand reveal:

THE GENTLEMEN BASTARDS

If you've included the rival adventuring party, the Gentlemen Bastards (added by the *Companion*, and featured on Levels 7, 8 and 19), you can add another twist: they too are contestants on *Dungeon of the Mad Mage*. Perhaps, even, they're the sole survivors of last season's party and were promised freedom if they manage to kill the current contestants.

THE POINTS GAME

If you utilized the Points Game (see the *Halaster's Game* supplement), the adventurers should cash in on their points before facing Halaster personally. If you didn't ever use it, but would like to invoke a *Harry Potter*-esque scene, have an apparition of the Mad Mage appear to randomly reward and subtract points for the players for reasons such as, "Striking down the death tyrant Netherskull" or "Being the first to hop into the minecarts on the Terminus Level."

Rewards. Halaster promises anything to the party, but likely won't deliver. His rewards might come in the form of healing potions, spell scrolls, trinkets, or even a *catnap* spell (see *Xanathar's Guide to Everything* for details on this spell). The prices for these rewards are arbitrary, of course.

THE DARK TOWER

Halaster's tower has poked its way into the epicenter of not just the Multiverse but the—as he calls it—"Multi-Multiverse." This has afforded the Mad Mage the opportunity to fight the contestants' alternate-selves from other universes. In most timelines, these contestants have died in Undermountain, but in a *very* select few, they have triumphed, beating the Mad Mage at his very own game.

Using this twist, the "main" party can find visions and literal bones of their alternate-selves. If you employ this twist, you must:

- Lay bones and familiar belongings of the alternate-parties throughout Level 23. The party is likely to at first think that the Mad Mage is messing with them, but these are just hints to the later reveal that Halaster has been tormenting countless alternate versions of them.
- Confront the party with past visions of themselves; however, something is always different, such as a decision or event that occurred. For example, if the main-party slew Wyllow on Level 5, a vision can show them sparing her. Alternatively, in these visions, minute details are changed, such as an adventurer having a scar or dyed hair.
- Intelligent creatures should mutter otherwise benign phrases like, "You again?" or "Aww hell, here we go again."

RESPAWNS

At your discretion, alternate-selves of the party are still alive, and, thanks to Jhesiyra, they can replace slain versions of themselves. The disembodied spirit orchestrates their rendezvous, invisibly guiding them back to the party. In this manner, the adventurers effectively have respawns.

Using this variant, you have the license and even the responsibility to dial up this level's dangers to 11, now that the party has extra lives. Instead of running three ultimate showdown encounters, run five—or throw two penultimate encounters at the party.

Extra Lives. To determine how many versions of a character are still kicking and can be brought by Jhesiyra, roll a d4. The "main" version of a character already counts as one of these; thus, a character has a maximum of three replacements.

Hit Points. Replacements arrive with less hit points than the last one. Crossing through different realities has reduced the replacement's hit point maximum; the first replacement has only three-quarters of its hit points and hit point maximum; the second has half, and the third has a quarter. There is no fourth.

Spell Slots. Whenever a spellcaster is replaced, you must roll to determine their remaining spell slots. 6th-9th level spell slots are already exhausted. They have 1d4 1st-level spell slots and 1d3 2nd-5th spell slots remaining.

Items. These replacements come with no items, mundane or magical, except for armor and regular weapons. Nothing stops them from picking up their former selves' gear from the floor and—perhaps if you're a generous DM—they find that they're already attuned to the magic items of that character.

AS A PENULTIMATE ENCOUNTER

As described below, the adventurers must face one last trial before reaching Halaster's sanctum. If you're using this twist, you can have the adventurers fight alternate versions of themselves instead. If you do so, you need to create a 17th-level version of the party to battle.

Why Can't We Be Friends? If the party meets their alternate-selves, you can be sure the first thing they'll do is suggest they all team-up against the Mad Mage. Unfortunately, these alternate-selves have already been burned by *other* alternates and now trust no one but themselves. Surely any other attempts would just be yet another trap laid by the Mad Mage, no?

Try as they might, the adventurers can broker no peace and must murder their alternate-selves to progress to the Mad Mage.

GROUND-MAGE DAY

As the adventurers learn, they've already defeated the Mad Mage once. Countless times, in fact. With his dying *wish*—one whispered in a past when the party managed to rob him of his reincarnation cycle—Halaster trapped them in a time-loop. Only a *wish* spell cast while Halaster is dead (again) can break the cycle.

To foreshadow this twist, follow these guidelines:

- Describe areas of the Mad Wizard's Lair as "familiar"
- A grave, gut feeling warns a character when they're about to enter a dangerous area

PUPPET ON THE STRING

While more of a truth than a twist, you can paint the Mad Mage as the tragic figure he is: a wizard kept enthralled by the Knot in the Weave. Halaster never asked for this, remember, for who could ever know the madness that had already bloomed beneath Undermountain?

You can tack this onto any other twist presented here, or just run it in general. No accommodations must be made to reveal the truth.

PENULTIMATE ENCOUNTERS

Before the party faces the Mad Mage in Area 33, they must triumph over one of the challenges below.

Nalkara. The encounter with the **empyrean** that Halaster summons in Area 33 is considered a penultimate encounter and has been expanded on below in *Welcome to the Thunderdome*.

The Dark Tower. As described in *Optional Twists*, the other versions of the adventurers from alternate realities may have already faced Halaster, whose tower pierces the Multi-Multiverse at the epicenter of all time and space. If the adventurers are going to fight alternate versions of themselves to reach the Mad Mage, this can instead count as their penultimate encounter.

Leveling Up. For overcoming their penultimate encounter, the adventurers should level up to 18th-level if they weren't already there. However, this doesn't entitle them to regaining all their resources (i.e., they do not heal up to their hit point maximum, they only get an extra hit die to increase their hit point maximum and current hit points, et cetera).

THE ELITE FOUR

Throwing open the doors to the Mad Mage's sanctum, you find only a long corridor leading to a darkened, empty doorway.

A force from behind blows you into the corridor just as the floor begins to slide forward, animated by underlain magic. The walls are soon painted with an illusion that spells out the words, "NEXT OBJECTIVE: DEFEAT THE ELITE FOUR!"

As you're hurried to the next door, a clock appears within your mind, ticking down from sixty-one minutes and fifteen seconds. You know not what it means but can conjure the image at the slightest thought.

The clock ticks to fourteen, to thirteen. By twelve, you're already thrown through that darkened doorway and into the next world beyond.

This encounter hurls the party into a harrowing gauntlet in which they must best Halaster's surviving apprentices, provided they're still alive. When they throw open the doors to Halaster's throne room (Area 33), they're teleported to several locations throughout Undermountain in the order below:

Time Limit. When the first encounter begins, the adventurers can see a timer in their minds set to 61 minutes and 12 seconds. They are acutely aware of the remaining time. The implication of this timer is subtle: if the party can best all of the Elite Four in under 1 minute and 12 seconds (a.k.a. 12 rounds of combat), they can achieve a short rest before the Mad Mage rips them back to his lair.

Running Out the Clock. If time runs out, the party must still face all of the Elite Four. Halaster will just teleport them to the next encounter. When he does, he telepathically scorns them with, "There's only one train on this railroad, and you're on it, like it or not!"

Changes to the Module. If you run this variant, both Arcturia and Trobriand are absent from their lairs on Level 23 (Areas 17 and 13, respectively)—so that the party cannot preemptively kill them and ruin your plans.

Surprise. Despite being teleported into a member's lair unannounced, none of the Elite Four can be surprised, thanks to a telepathic warning sent by the Mad Mage only seconds before the showdown.

1. NESTER

You're spat out from a rift into a dolorous deadwood barely lit by a sputtering campfire. Assembled students—wearing the Dweomercore school colors—gape at you. As you pick yourself up, you see Nester, that sadistic, skeletal fiend and apprentice of the Mad Mage himself!

"Well," chides Nester, grinning a lipless grin, "class, it seems, is finally in session." The fiend points a massive claw at his terrified pupils. "Extra credit to whomever cuts down these flunkies! Extra credit and a semester untortured!"

A master of necromancy felled by his own hubris, Nester is the first of the Elite Four. He was featured on Level 9, wherein the *Companion* remade him into a **boneclaw**. That change is present here, even if he appeared with his normal statistics in your campaign. This failed lich has been reduced to a professor in the Mad Mage's academy.

DWEOMERCORE STAR PUPILS

While running Nester in *The Elite Four*, you can use the Dweomercore pupils the party already met, provided they are still alive. For the encounter, choose three of the following characters to back-up Nester:

Spite Harrowdale is a human **archmage** protected by an **oni** bodyguard. Together, they count as three characters for the encounter.

Nylas Jowd is a human **mage** with *animate dead* prepared instead of *fly*.

Skrianna Shadowdusk is a human **mage** with quite the grudge to nurse against the party for what they did to her family on Level 22.

The Horned Sisters are tiefling **mages** with resistance to fire damage and darkvision out to a range of 60 ft. Each sister counts as one character for the encounter.

Elan Tanor'thal is a **drow mage** from Skullport.

Cephalosk is a **mind flayer arcanist**. It counts as two characters for the encounter. Shocked, it doesn't use its Mind Blast ability until the second round of combat.

Every semester, the sadist physically and mentally tortures his pupils.

This encounter occurs in a dolorous grove smack-dab in the Shadowfell. Nester, see, has taken his students on a field trip to that grim realm. If you used the *Deadwood* variant for Level 18 (in which the *Companion* added a subterranean forest outside of Vanrakdoom, which has been subjected to a Shadow Crossing), then the field trip takes place there, rather than the Shadowfell proper. Characters must abide Undermountain's restrictions on magic nonetheless.

The students have set up camp in this dead forest, as Nester is forcing them to spend the night. When the adventurers arrive, many students are huddled grimly around a sputtering campfire, watching their professor torture Jacob Anderbrood, a loner **mage** (with 10 hit points) that just can't catch a break—or at least they were, until Nester mysteriously dropped Anderbrood and craned his earless head to the side. What they don't know is Halaster has just warned Nester he has about eighteen seconds before the party is teleported to him.

Students. Of the twenty students on the field trip, sixteen of them are **apprentice wizards** way in over their heads. As for the other three students, choose three individuals from Dweomercore's star pupils (see the sidebar). Otherwise, a **conjurer**, a **diviner** and an **enchanter** aid Nester.

Tactics. Nester and his students follow these tactics in combat:

- All apprentice wizards flee to the tents or out into the woods, effectively removing themselves from the fight.
- The campfire sheds bright light for 10 ft. and dim light for another 20 ft. The rest of the camp is shrouded in darkness, allowing Nester to use his Shadow Jump unabated.
- Nester grapples a foe with his Piercing Claw on his first turn. On his second, he Shadow Jumps up 40 ft. to the boughs of a great dead tree, where he can rip his prey apart in peace. If thwarted, he returns to the fray, relying on his Deadly Reach reaction to harry foes.
- If present, the conjurer casts *Evard's black tentacles*, choosing an area occupied by an adventurer.

- If present, the diviner subjects a character to a *maze* spell and uses its Portent feature at the first opportunity to hinder a foe.
- If present, the enchanter casts *haste* on Nester and blows its Instinctive Charm feature at the first opportunity.
- If present, Nylas Jowd, a coward, casts *greater invisibility* on himself and follows it up with *cone of cold* on his second turn. He then flees into the wood like the craven bastard he is.
- If present, Cephalosk traps a single foe with a *wall of force* spell on its first turn. On its second, it makes a Tentacles attack, and, if the target is stunned or incapacitated, it then uses its Extract Brain attack.
- If present, Elan Tanor'thal casts *Evard's black tentacles*. He relies on a *ray of frost* and *misty step* combo to outrun foes.
- With exception to the Horned Sisters, who always blow their reactions on *counterspells*, the craven Dweomercore star pupils use their reactions for *shield* spells.
- If present, the Horned Sisters pair the *ice storm* and *cone of cold* spells on their first turns. On their next, they both let out a *fireball* spell.
- If present, Skrianna Shadowdusk casts *greater invisibility* on Nester. On her second turn, she *misty steps* 20 ft. up into the boughs of a tree and looses a *fire bolt*.
- If present, Dumara, Spite Harrowdale's **oni** bodyguard, draws its sword and engages the party's most formidable warrior in battle. If Nester is in need of darkness for his Shadow Jump, it can also cast *darkness* to provide it.
- If present, Spite Harrowdale snaps out a *time stop* spell to cast the following spells on in this order of priority: *mirror image*, *fire shield*, *wall of force* and *mind blank*.
- Jacob Anderbrood staggers to his feet and declares firmly, "No more!" He casts *fireball* on his classmates, regardless if the spell also hits the adventurers.

Victory! When Nester and his allies fall, the Mad Mage opens a rift leading to the next challenge. The adventurers can take however long they want before they enter, but must remember that time is ticking—and they innately know how much time is left. The rift, if peered into, reveals nothing of their next fight.

2. MUIRAL

The rift dumps you out upon a familiar scene: the Temple of Lolth, deep within the stained halls of Muiral's Gauntlet. This time, however, you've seen a sight most strange: a porcelain tub lying smack-dab in the center of the nave. Violet flames light the curious scene and a zombie stands idly by, holding in its rotten hand a decrepit loofah.

Muiral just can't catch a break, not even in death. If he was slain by the party, Halaster stitches the freak back together and animates his corpse with a *create undead* spell, bestowing him the same autonomy and intelligence he possessed in life.

Map. For this encounter, you must prepare the map from Level 10, focusing on Area 3B.

Halaster gave Muiral a twelve-second heads-up before the adventurers arrived. He was previously bathing. He's since called for his minions, of which there are few, to back him up: a **zombie** (standing at the tub in the center of the room, holding a decrepit sponge), four **skeletons** standing in Area 3A, and two **ghouls** hiding beside the pillars (where the X's are marked on the map).

Tactics. Muiral and his minions use the following tactics in combat:

- Muiral, having been forewarned, starts the encounter with *greater invisibility* already cast upon him. He does not retreat from battle, knowing that the Mad Mage will just cause these intruders to find him again until one side is dead.
- Furious, Muiral casts *finger of death* on his first turn. On his subsequent turns, he prefers to make longsword and sting attacks rather than cast spells.
- Once his *greater invisibility* spell is lost, Muiral casts *wall of force* to separate the party. He tries to angle it so that he is alone with one foe and his minions can harry those without.
- Muiral always uses his reaction on *shield* spells.
- The **skeletons** make shortbow attacks at the party (+4 to hit, 1d6+2 piercing damage).
- The two **ghouls** flank the adventurers, haranguing creatures not within melee range of Muiral.
- Muiral commands the **zombie** to go touch the altar of Lolth, summoning eight **swarms of spiders** that attack the zombie; as they pursue prey, he has the zombie run back up to the party, causing the swarms to also attack them. The zombie starts 25 feet away from the altar and takes the Dash action until this goal is achieved. Thereafter, it mauls at foes.
- Half the summoned **swarms of spiders** (see Area 3B, L10), attack the zombie until its dead. The other swarms attack foes within 10 feet of the zombie.

Victory! As soon as Muiral dies a rift opens up to the next Elite Four member. The party can take it at their leisure; Muiral's remaining minions need not be eliminated for them to enter the rift.

3. TROBRIAND

The rift drops you at the feet of an iron golem standing between iron-plated pillars humming with magical energy. The golem pushes its fist against its palm in a gesture of violence. Sparks leap across its fingers, trailing up its arm.

"Gone are the frailties of flesh," the golem murmurs. Its head has been carved into a mirthless skull. "I consider you a worthy test—and your sacrifice for science will not go in vain. Today, machine finally triumphs over man!"

The adventurers are teleported to Area 13, Level 23. Halaster gave Trobriand only six seconds to prepare, and so Trobriand has Readied a single Slam attack for the closest character that appears near him. It's advised you put the party's resident tank within 5 ft. of him for this purpose.

Roleplaying Trobriand. Refer to Area 13 in *Areas of Note* for further tips about roleplaying Trobriand. In this variant, he still attempts to convince the party to join him in usurping Halaster, but realizes too late that the Mad Mage that only one side can emerge alive. Thus, attempting to parley with Trobriand serves only to waste their time, possibly depriving them of the short rest they can win if they defeat the Elite Four fast enough.

Tactics. See Area 13 for Trobriand's tactics.

Victory! Once Trobriand is truly defeated, the rift to Arcturia's court opens. They can hear her singing the *Dismemberment Song* by Blue Kid.

4. ARCTURIA

The final challenge lies before you, and the rift betrays no hint to where it leads—but it doesn't need to. You know there is but one apprentice of the Mad Mage left: Arcturia, whose domain you romped through long ago.

Preparing yourself for whatever foul trial lies ahead, you step through the rift, and appear in the familiar court of Halaster's most devoted apprentice.

The shock is evident on her face, and it thaws with sheer rage. "You will not harm him!" this gossamer-winged lich shouts. She shouts it with all the love and ire of a devoted partner. Magic kindles in her palm. "Your crusade ends here!"

The final member of the Elite Four is Halaster's most devoted apprentice, Arcturia, who was only warned by Halaster five seconds before the party appears, depriving her of even a round of combat to prepare. She is joined by her twelve **mimics** and her three malformed **champions** (one of whom turns on her).

Roleplaying Arcturia. Refer to Area 17 in *Areas of Note* for tips about roleplaying Arcturia, which paints her as madly (unrequitedly) in love with the Mad Mage. In the *Elite Four* variant, she views herself as his last line of death.

Arcturia's Lair. *DotMM* does not specify whether this atelier of a chamber counts as Arcturia's lair. The *Companion* contends that it is not, and, if you run the *Elite Four* challenge, that you follow this distinction. The adventurers already have a grueling gauntlet before them and adding Lair actions would break the tenuous balance of this challenge.

On Polymorph. As lamented in Area 17 below, the *Companion* does not advocate Arcturia abusing the *polymorph* spell. At the end of the day, D&D is about having fun for everyone. See *On Polymorph* in Area 17 for details.

Tactics. Arcturia's tactics are detailed in Area 17 below, since the adventurers can already encounter her if the *Elite Four* encounter isn't being run. Her tactics are the same, as Halaster didn't warn her soon enough for her to prepare for the party.

VICTORY!

If the adventurers slay each of the Elite Four and still have at least 60 minutes left on their timer, Halaster teleports them to a demiplane to get a short rest. Read the following:

The last of Halaster's apprentices falls before you. Thunderous applause erupts within your mind and the Mad Mage shouts, "Well done! Well done, indeed!"

Before you even realize what's happened, you're in another realm entirely: a den without walls whose horizons stretch endlessly. A fireplace warms the nearby sofas. On a coffee table sits a pitcher of wine, a kettle of tea, and cups of steaming coffee. A tall grandfather clock ticks away loudly in the corner, but the little hand is fixed to 12 and the big hand has yet to reach 1.

Halaster's voice bounds across this gray realm: "Take a load off, friends! You've earned it!"

Any refreshments and objects taken from this realm turn to dust when the adventurers are returned to the Material Plane an hour later. When their rest is over, they stand in Area 32, the doors already open upon Area 33, Halaster's throne room.

BACKUP: DRIVVIN FRETTH

A foul wind scoops you up, carrying the putrid scent of licorice and rotten teeth. As it embraces you in its own vortex, the world grows dark—until you crash upon a tiled floor. Slowly, you recognize the place: Spiderwatch Keep, the bastion of House Freth, whom you met so long ago.

The hall is as dark as ever, as befitting the drow, but you can make out the details: the shrine of Lolth, in all its silvered glory, and a familiar elf staring at you, his prayer interrupted and his mouth ajar: Drivvin Freth.

"How in the Nine Hells have you made it here?" the archmage shouts, his hands already kindling fire.

If for some reason the Elite Four members above are unavailable to you, you can sub in Drivvin Freth, the drow mage courted by Halaster Blackcloak. Unlike the other Elite Four members, Halaster gave Drivvin no heads-up whatsoever. He cannot be surprised, however.

Map. If the adventurers face Drivvin, it's on Level 12, Area 19K, in Spiderwatch Keep. Alternatively, if Ezzat was evicted from Undermountain, Drivvin now lairs in the Stalagmite Tower on Level 20. The party teleports into Area 21; Drivvin is in Area 22A. His guards (1d4 **drow** and a **drow elite warrior**) are in Area 20.

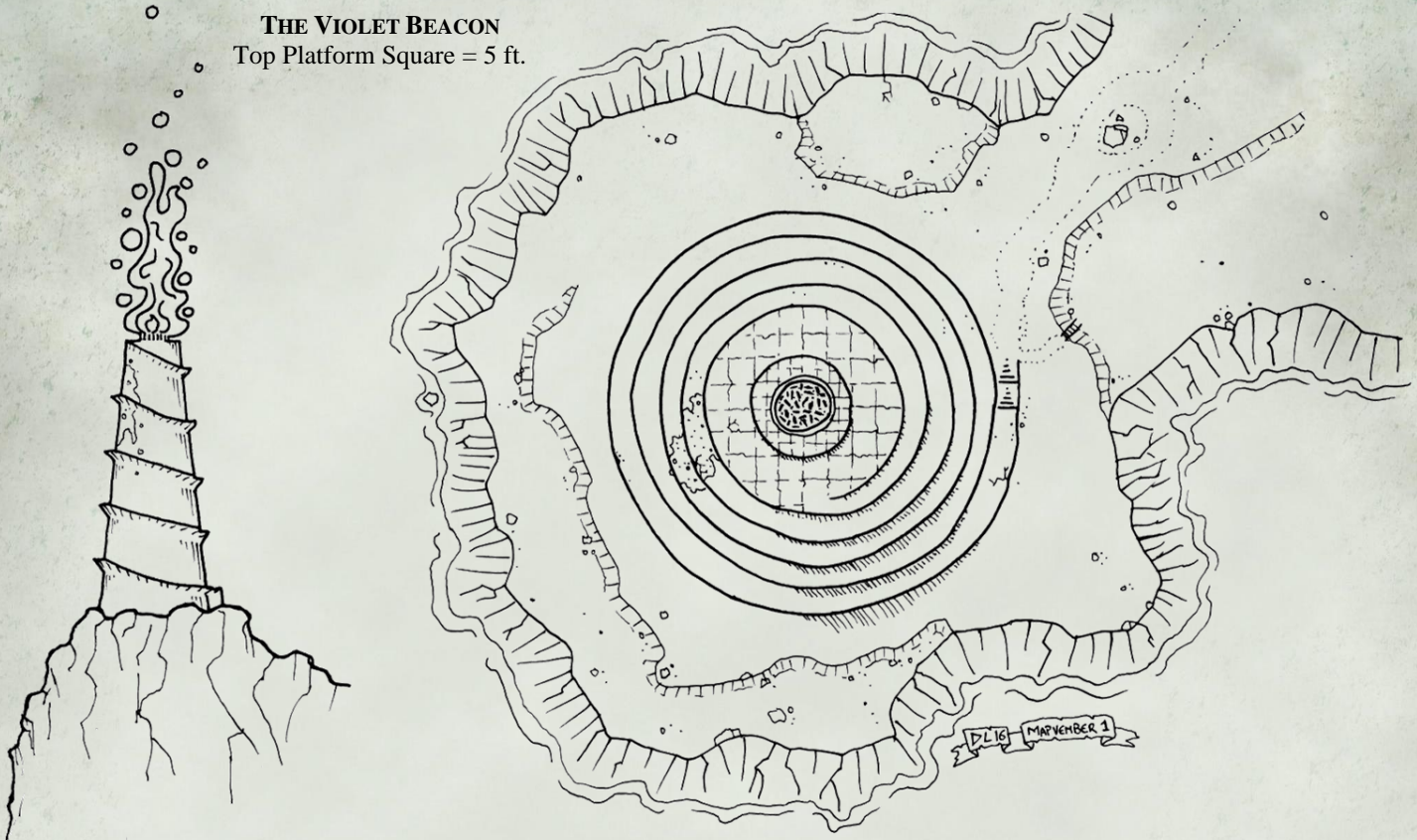
Roleplaying Drivvin. The drow is committed to his house and sister first and foremost—but if they've been destroyed by the party, Drivvin has nothing left but anguish and mottled ambition. Now, given the chance to revenge himself, he falls into a frenzy. You can use any of the following sample dialogue:

- "You again! The Mad Mage promised we would meet again!"
- "Vengeance is an endless cycle!"
- "House Freth shall rise again—over your broken bodies!"

Statistics. Drivvin Freth has the statistics of a NE **archmage** with the following changes:

- He has advantage against being charmed, and magic can't put him to sleep.
- He has darkvision out to a range of 120 ft.
- He can innately cast *dancing lights* at will, and can cast *darkness*, *faerie fire*, and *levitate* (self only), each once per day. Charisma is his spellcasting ability (DC 15) for these spells.
- He has disadvantage on attack rolls and Wisdom (Perception) checks relying on sight while he's in sunlight.
- He always has *mind blank* cast upon himself.
- Once per day as an action, Drivvin can summon a demon that has a CR of 6 or lower. The summoned demon appears in an unoccupied space within 60 ft. of him, acts as his ally, and can't summon other demons. The demon remains until it is dismissed by Drivvin, as an action, or until its reduced to 0 hit points.

THE VIOLET BEACON
Top Platform Square = 5 ft.



Tactics. Unlike other Elite Four members, the Mad Mage did not give Drivvin enough of a warning to prepare for the adventurers—as a test, of course. He uses the following tactics:

- On his first turn, Drivvin casts *time stop*. His first action is to summon a **barlgura**, then cast *fire shield*, *mage armor* and *stoneskin* on himself, in that order of priority. He then calls for nearby guards, who arrive on the second turn of combat, adding 1d4 **drow** and a **drow elite warrior** to the fray.
- On its first turn, the barlgura casts *entangle*. If any targets fall prey to it, the barlgura prioritizes them with its melee attacks. If the spell failed to restrain anyone, it uses its Reckless trait and attacks.
- Once they arrive, the drow cast *faerie fire* spells on unarmored foes and plink away at them with hand crossbows on the third turn of combat.
- Once it arrives, the drow elite warrior positions itself between Drivvin and the adventurers, if possible.

BACKUP: MARAMBRA NYGHTSTEEL

The Mad Mage's rift delivers you to a hive of scum and villainy that you miss dearly: Skullport. In the distance, you see that wretched town, its shores clogged with endless flotsam.

The island you stand upon is aglow in violet light emitted by a massive beacon. You see a figure there—a mage performing a ritual. Around her slender frame dance entities born of fire and a creature of pure lightning coils around the beacon.

Per its authors, Marambra Nyghtsteel was excluded from *DotMM* so that DM's could write her in as they see fit. Now, should you need her, you can draw upon Marambra—a master of evocation—as a backup apprentice for the *Elite Four* encounter.

For reasons unknown, Marambra has returned to Skullport. Perhaps out of altruism, she has been working on a vast arcane beacon that will perpetually light Skullport—but whether this is just an added benefit is anyone's guess. This vast spire has been erected on a small island southwest of town.

Contradictions. The *Companion* touches on the missing apprentice a few times in this chapter, which can clash with her inclusion:

- If you're running the *Puppet on the String* optional twist, Marambra is mentioned in Halaster's journal in Area 2—specifically that she managed to escape Undermountain's addicting influence.
- In Area 24, Marambra is suggested as one of the alternate identities of the demilich overseeing the potion brewery.
- In Area 29, when a character looks at Marambra's portrait, they see a vision of her being exiled by Halaster.

Map. Refer to *The Violet Beacon* map above.

Statistics. Marambra Nyghtsteel's statistics are detailed in Appendix B.

Minions. As a master of evocation, Marambra has created several living spells that serve her in combat: three **living burning hands** and one **living lightning bolt**. She also has at her disposal a **shield guardian**, the amulet to which she wears, which stores a spell of *fireball*.

Tactics. Halaster warned Marambra of her coming battle fifteen seconds ago, giving her two rounds to prepare. He has also forbid her from fleeing; should she disobey, he has promised to hunt her down, no matter where in the Multiverse she flees. She follows these tactics in combat:

- Marambra starts the encounter under spells of *mage armor*, *fire shield* and *mirror image*. Thus, she's out of one 1st-level, 2nd-level and 4th-level spell slot.
- Marambra takes flight when the adventurers arrive, utilizing her *winged boots*. Because she can cast *shield* at will without expending a spell slot, she isn't concerned with provoking an opportunity attack.
- Marambra is likely to utilize her reaction every round for a *shield* spell, or her Elemental Aegis reaction to dampen any elemental damage she receives.
- Depending on the adventurers' positions, she snaps out a 5th-level *fireball* or *cone of cold* and uses her Overchannel trait to deal maximum damage. On this round, she reserves her reaction to *counterspell* a *counterspell* against that juicy spell.
- When she's at Death's door, Marambra drops *meteor swarm*, now indifferent to the Violet Beacon's construction.

Treasure. As reflected in her statistics, Marambra wields a +3 *wand of the war mage* and wears a pair of *winged boots*. See Appendix A for details.

THE PRISMATIC GAUNTLET

The dungeon is aglow with a scintillating rainbow of fiery light, all crisscrossed and welded into a single wall of magical energy. To behold such a beauty is to look into pure fire—fire that burns at your retinas, perhaps at the core of your very being. You can feel the waves of energy being shed as one color dominates its fellows, moving through a predictable pattern. Your hackles rise as that energy washes over you, as if it's a sickness that pierces your skin and embeds itself deep in your bones.

Halaster has trapped the entrance to Area 19 with a *prismatic wall* spell. Assailed by the Mad Mage's minions, the adventurers must contend with each of the *wall's* layers—or gun it, taking obscene amounts of damage.

Permitted Individuals. Per the *prismatic wall* spell, creatures of Halaster's choice can pass through the wall unharmed. The only individuals he designated long ago when casting the spell were Trobriand, Arcturia, and the ultrcloth below.

Minions. The *prismatic wall* is a boring waste of time and resources without an assault from the Mad Mage's minions—a force consisting of three **helmed horrors**, two **invisible stalkers** and an **ultrcloth**.

Tactics. The assailants follow these tactics:

- The invisible stalkers and helmed horrors approach from the northern tunnel, whereas the ultrcloth comes from Area 21.
- While under a spell of *invisibility* (granting advantage to its +8 Stealth check) the ultrcloth approaches and opens up on the party with *fire storm* before its allies storm the tunnel. Its *invisibility* spell then ends. Thereafter, it attempts to trap itself and a single foe in its *wall of fire* spell. On its third turn, it uses its Hypnotic Gaze on its target, then makes its three Longsword attacks against the (hopefully stunned) target.
- If the ultrcloth takes too much of a beating, it can pass through the *prismatic wall* to safety; however, it must *walk* through it. If too many foes block its way, it teleports up to the indigo layer and walks through the rest. Halaster granted it free passage when he cast the spell, allowing it to pass unharmed.

PRISMATIC WALL (ABRIDGED, DC 17)

The wall sheds bright light for 100 ft. and dim light for another 100 ft. Creatures that can see the wall and moves to within 20 ft. of the wall or starts its turn there must succeed on a Con. save or become blinded for 1 minute.

The wall consists of seven layers, each with a different color. When a creature attempts to reach into or pass through the wall, it does so one layer at a time through all the wall's layers. As it passes or reaches through each layer, the creature must make a Dex. save or be affected by that layer's properties as described below.

The wall can be destroyed, also one layer at a time, in order from red to violet, by means specific to each layer. Once a layer is destroyed, it remains so for the duration of the spell. An *antimagic field* has no effect on a prismatic wall.

Red. The creature takes 10d6 fire damage on a failed save, or half as much on a success. While this layer is in place, nonmagical ranged attacks can't pass through the wall. The layer can be destroyed by dealing at least 25 cold damage to it.

Orange. The creature takes 10d6 acid damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. While this layer is in place, magical ranged attacks can't pass through the wall. The layer is destroyed by a strong wind.

Yellow. The creature takes 10d6 lightning damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. This layer can be destroyed by dealing at least 60 force damage to it.

Green. The creature takes 10d6 poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. A *passwall* spell, or another spell of equal or greater level that can open a portal on a solid surface, destroys this layer.

Blue. The creature takes 10d6 cold damage on a failed save, or half as much on a successful one. This layer can be destroyed by dealing at least 25 fire damage to it.

Indigo. On a failed save, the creature is restrained and must make a Con. save throw at the end of each of its turns. If it successfully saves three times, the spell ends. If it fails its save three times, it permanently turns to stone and is subjected to the petrified condition. The successes and failures don't need to be consecutive; keep track of both until the creature collects three of a kind. While this layer is in place, spells can't be cast through the wall. The layer is destroyed by bright light shed by a daylight spell or a similar spell of equal or higher level.

Violet. On a failed save, the creature is blinded. It must then make a Wis. save at the start of its next turn. A successful save ends the blindness. If it fails that save, the creature is transported to Area 22, Level 23 of Undermountain. This layer is destroyed by a *dispel magic* spell or a similar spell of equal or higher level that can end spells and magical effects.

- On its fourth turn, the ultrcloth uses its action to summon yugoloths. It has a 50% chance of succeeding. If it does, it summons its choice of 1d6 **mezzoloths**, 1d4 **nycaloths**, or one other **ultrcloth**. After 1 minute, or if the summoner dies, the summoned yugoloths disappear.
- The helmed horrors act as the vanguard; given the opportunity, they shove creatures into the *prismatic wall*.
- The invisible stalkers harangue the party's flanks.

Thwarting the Wall. The adventurers *must* contend with the wall; they cannot teleport past it, per the indigo layer's effects. Thus, spells of *dimension door* and the like are futile against it. Do not budge on this; even the ultrcloth can't teleport through it (although Halaster *did* permit it to physically pass through it unharmed when he cast the spell...)

Identifying the Spell. A creature can use its action to make a DC 18 Intelligence (Arcana) check. On a success, they identify the spell at work. Specifically, they learn the following:

- A creature *can* pass through it, at the risk of being reduced to smoldering ash.
- An *antimagic field* has no effect on the wall and a *dispel magic* spell only affects the final layer—which is protected by the indigo layer.
- The wall can be destroyed one layer at a time, in order, through specific means and each layer has its own properties:
 - The red layer inflicts fire damage and can only be destroyed with cold damage
 - The orange layer inflicts acid damage and can be destroyed only by a strong wind
 - The yellow layer inflicts lightning damage and can only be destroyed with force damage
 - The blue layer deals cold damage and can only be destroyed by fire damage
 - The indigo layer can petrify those that walk through it and blocks spells from passing through it; to destroy it, it must be exposed to bright light shed by a *daylight* spell or a similar spell of equal or higher level
 - The violet layer blinds creatures and can teleport victims to other planes of existence. Only a *dispel magic* cast at 9th level, or a similar spell of equal or higher level, can destroy the layer.

VIOLET BANISHING

Should a character be banished by the violet layer of the *prismatic wall*, they're transported to Area 22 and are paralyzed into a gesture of supplication before the Halaster statue until Halaster remotely releases them or another creature uses an action to touch them.

TARRASQUIC PARK

Hurling open the doors to the Mad Mage's sanctum, a wall of darkness crashes over your psyche. Your last memory of that distant place is Halaster's giggle.

When you awaken, you find yourself within a horse-drawn buggy parked alongside a road audaciously carved through a jungle. Night has already fallen and a tropical storm batters the land, but braziers lit by magical flames light the scene whenever lightning fails to flash across the sky. Somewhere a goat bleats between bouts of thunder.

You throw open the door to the dickey box where two draft horses stamp nervously as the storm rages above. Looking out, you see another carriage nearby and can make out the familiar shapes of your allies.

If you've ever wanted to shoehorn in a **tarrasque**, then, boy, do I have the encounter for you.

Under this variant, when the adventurers hurl open the doors to Area 33, they wake up inside two horse-drawn buggies, which are parked on a road winding through a darkened jungle. Braziers lit by *continual flame* spells flicker in the rain. A *wall of force* spell separates the adventurers from a **giant goat** chained to a post inside what they may realize is one massive paddock.

Shortly after the adventurers awaken, the braziers go dark, signaling that the park's magical systems have gone down for whatever reason and the *wall of force* separating them from that titanic beast is gone. The **tarrasque** is on its way.

Precautions. The tarrasque is a CR 30 creature. Use this encounter only if you're absolutely certain that your party has the resources to tackle it *and* then face Halaster.

Buggies. Each buggy is drawn by two **draft horses** which grant the buggy a speed of 40 ft., or 80 ft. if both take the Dash action. If only a single horse draws the buggy, it has a speed of 20/40 ft. A buggy has an AC of 14, a damage threshold of 10, immunity to poison and psychic damage, and 50 hit points.

The Rift. When the tarrasque attacks, a brightly-glowing rift opens 500 ft. away from the buggies, visible to the party despite the inclement weather. A character that reaches the rift can expend 5 feet of movement to enter it, crashing onto the floor of Area 33 of Halaster's tower.

Tarrasque's Tactics. The savage titan acts quite simply in combat:

- The tarrasque starts 100 ft. away from the closest buggy. Until it gets within melee range, it takes the Dash action. When it does so, it can also use its Frightful Presence.
- The tarrasque relies on its Legendary Actions to either close the gap with its prey, or, if it took the Dash action on its turn, to still make attacks.
- The tarrasque has extended reach, given its size. Do not forget that its Bite and Horn attacks have a reach of 10 ft., its Claw a reach of 15, and its Tail a reach of 20 ft.

THE BEAST COMETH

When the tarrasque attacks, read the following:

As rain pelts the jungle, the wind—wailing like an abandoned child—snuffs out the flames that lit those distant braziers. The horses have grown distressed, neighing and stamping wildly.

It's only now you realize what's missing: the goat's no longer bleating. The goat's gone—until it's dropped upon the roof of your buggy. Looking into the dark, you see the massive eye of some titanic, horned beast staring down at you from above. And as a fresh lance of lightning sheds light from above, the beast looses a thunderous roar that drowns out even the storm.

Unlike in *Jurassic Park*, this creature's vision is *not* based on movement; the tarrasque plainly sees the party. If it was capable of such emotion, the tarrasque would be amused to see them try to remain still.

Theme Music. Creatures with a passive Perception score of 22 or higher can hear Halaster humming the *Jurassic Park* theme song.

VICTORY!

If the adventurers flee from the tarrasque, they still advance to 18th-level. However, if they manage to slay it, Halaster rewards them with an hour—long enough for them to gain a short rest. Thereafter, he teleports them to Undermountain, specifically Area 33 on Level 23.

The following text assumes the adventurers slew the tarrasque. Read:

With a clash of thunder, the tarrasque crashes to the ground, unleashing tremors that will surely be felt for miles. You have done the unthinkable, the impossible. Only in the most dreaded myths has this creature ever emerged to scour men from the face of the world. And yet, the Mad Mage—and if not him, then who?—has dared to include such a behemoth in what can at best be described as a zoo.

The storm rages all around you, but in this moment, you are perfectly calm. As you rest in the safety of an enormous kapok tree, you know that this was the day that you truly became legends in your own right—even if no one ever knows what you've achieved tonight.

WELCOME TO THE THUNDERDOME

Reckoning has come at last! With an air of triumph, you hurl open the doors to Halaster's innermost sanctum—and the world beyond it is a colosseum infested with fans that buck and cheer under a sky painted with an illusion reading ENTER THE ARENA!

When you look back, the furnished chamber is gone. Everything is gone. You know not which world you're on, but certain that this is no trick, but a trap laid by the Mad Mage.

Ivory sands sift beneath your feet as you contend with this new reality. Only now do you hear the audience jeering in every language possible, some that you can even recognize. A voice booms out across the world, and instantly you can hear the hint of a *tongues* spell on his lips:

"Coming from you live on the Shattered Shelf, it's *Enter the Arena!* Tonight, we welcome a crowd of challengers to our little bloodbath! You may know them as the stars of the hit game show *Dungeon of the Mad Mage* and more! To our guests, we cry, 'Welcome! Welcome, welcome, welcome! Tooooo the *Thuuunderdome!*'"

Apprehensive, you back up. You didn't sign up for this and won't tolerate it. Gateways gape all along the walls. Moving to the closest one, you slam into a wall of impenetrable force. "It's like that," you realize. High above soar grim-faced magi that seem to police this so-called "Thunderdome."

The announcer continues his spiel, his voice thunderous: "This episode of *Enter the Arena* is brought to you by *Dungeon of the Mad Mage* and Undermountain Dew: do the Dew!

"Tonight our guests square off against the heavyweight champ herself, the Celestial with Attitude, the Daughter of Auril and Thrym, the Frost Queen herself—it's *Nalkara!*"

Outside the dome and into the arena strides a giantess whose beauty can only be described as empyrean, as angelic. Her skin is a soft, blue and her eyes are the deepest shades of winter. Her very hair crackles with blue fire and where she walks, the very sands shiver as frost creeps out from her footprints to claim all it can for her wintry domain.

This titan smiles down at you, her maul crooked across her shoulder. "Nalkara in the house, yeah!" she roars, stepping through that invisible wall of force.

The announcer again thunders, "Glory, guts, gore and more only on *Enter the Arena!* Let the game *begin!*"

This encounter is a fresh coat of paint for the battle with the **empyrean** Nalkara in Halaster's throne room. Instead of being summoned, Nalkara is the heavyweight champion of *Enter the Arena*, a trans-planar gladiatorial gameshow enjoyed by much of the Multiverse. *Enter the Arena* is one of the possible sponsors named in the Trans-planar Advertisements added in the *Halaster's Game* supplement.

The Dome. A hemispherical, 30-foot-radius *wall of force* spell encloses the arena. Creatures that manage to escape the dome are instantly *thunderwaved* (DC 17) back inside by a flying **archmage**—three of which circle the dome. The archmagi can permit a character or object to enter or leave the dome (no action required), as is the case when a creature is forced back inside via a *thunderwave* spell. The spell is initially cast at 1st-level, but repeat offenders are subjected to 4th-and higher levels of the spell.

Roleplaying Nalkara. Honestly, just channel the ludicrous charisma of Macho Man Randy Savage. Nalkara drops any of the following lines in battle:

- "You are like a grain of sand in the desert—and I am the entire desert!"
- "I'm the tower of power, too sweet to be sour. I'm funky like a monkey. Sky's the limit and space is the place!"
- "Best there is... past, present, and future! Oh yeah!"
- "Expect the unexpected in the kingdom of madness!"
- "The cream surely rises to the top!" (Nalkara says this after a Trembling Strike or after standing up from being prone. She then just continues to shout, "The cream of the crop!")

Tactics. Nalkara follows these tactics in battle:

- As an empyrean, Nalkara is incapable of even *considering* the possibility of failure. She fights without fear, without caution. Egotistical, she fantasizes about glorious one-on-one duels with a formidable warrior—thus, she eliminates the "softer" members of the party first, leaving the resident barbarian, fighter, or paladin for last.
- On her first turn, Nalkara softens up her foes with a *fire storm* spell. At your discretion, the spell instead deals cold damage. Objects set aflame burn under a blue flame.
- Nalkara picks off distant or flying targets with her Bolt attack, choosing cold damage—or surprises them by flying herself.
- Nalkara pairs her Legendary Actions to annihilate foes, first using Trembling Strike and then a Maul attack, courtesy of another Legendary Action.

VICTORY!

If the adventurers triumph over Nalkara, the audience quickly turns on them—incited by the announcers—for felling their beloved champion. The legion fans begin to hurl their garbage and insults at them from afar and images from *arcane eye* spells are projected onto the sky, showing the party the enraged crowd. An announcer shouts, "Get 'em!" and the fans surge forward, slamming their fists against the Thunder-dome, which slowly powers off. Just before the first fan—a demon—can get at the party, a rift opens up and sucks the adventurers back to Undermountain, depositing them into Area 33.

WHEN WORLDS COLLIDE

Requires the Dark Tower optional twist

Before they can reach the Mad Mage, the adventurers must battle their alternate-selves from other realities. These doppelgangers match the "main" party in level and gear. Admittedly, much of this encounter falls upon you, as the *Companion* cannot know how your players are designed, nor how they would act.

Location. This encounter should occur in Area 28. The alternate-selves make great use of the *antimagic field* at the center of the chamber.

ULTIMATE SHOWDOWN

The final showdown with Halaster is, to say the least, lackluster. It's almost guaranteed the party will want to fight him—him, their tormentor and jailor—yet he prepares nothing. Even though he can be resurrected in Undermountain, death is *painful* and humiliating. This section provides several encounters you can use to overhaul your showdown.

Halaster's Hit Points. Most encounters are meant to be finished in either one round of combat or to halt combat completely. However, failing that, should the Mad Mage lose 100 or more hit points in a phase, he dips out and heads to your next chosen encounter.

Leveling Up. After overcoming two of Halaster's challenges, the party should level up to 19th-level. However, this doesn't entitle them to regaining all their resources (i.e., they do not heal up to their hit points, they only get an extra hit die to increase their hit point maximum; and et cetera).

THE BIG HALOWSKI

When next you open your eyes, the world has swelled into a great riot of polished wooden lanes lit by crazed lamps. Surely, the Mad Mage has shrunk you with his foul chicanery. On the far wall, in titanic letters, a sign reads, "Bowl-A-Rama!" You try to make sense of it, but you find no bowls here. Not on the tables, not on the distant counter. All you see is a gargantuan Halaster Blackcloak polishing a ceramic ball as stout and thick as a dwarf. His yellow grin stretches wide and his pores gape like craters. He shouts, "You're entering a world of pain!"

You reach for your weapons, but your limbs disobey! They disobey! You struggle against your invisible bonds to no avail and it's only then that you notice that Halaster has kidnapped innocents from all across Undermountain. All are struggling against their invisible bonds, mewling or demanding answers as to what game they've been dragged into, their terror alight.

That's when you hear it: the crash of thunder. Halaster has pitched that ceramic ball; as it sails down the lane, it seems to shift, revealing it to be a ball of pure force that reduces the first victim—a barber you recognize from Skullport—into a red smear. T

"Uh," Halaster thunders, "I'm just warming up!"

Exercising his love of bowling, Halaster condemns his foes to an extradimensional bowling alley where they—and innocent victims—are the pins. His first pitch completely demolishes an innocent.

The Alley. Within this realm, characters other than Halaster remain their normal size. It may seem to them that they have been shrunk to the relative-size of a bowling pin, for the bowling alley is *massive*, as is Halaster (although, for the purpose of combat, he is still a Medium size creature).

The Lane. The lane on which the adventurers and other victims start is a 15-foot-wide, 150-foot-long passage enclosed by *walls of force*. Creatures in it cannot fly via magic items or spells.

PINS

There are ten pins in a game of bowling; Halaster has kidnapped enough innocents to fill out that ten, after accounting for the adventurers. Choose characters that the adventurers have an attachment for, otherwise they won't care for their fates.

Paralyzed! The pins start the encounter paralyzed. At the end of their turn, a pin can attempt a DC 15 Charisma saving throw, ending it on a success.

Swapping. Halaster is a sadistic host. It wouldn't be enough for the adventurers to watch their comrades be pulverized by magical bowling balls. Whenever a pin is targeted by Halaster, but before his attack roll is made, a character can use their reaction to swap places on the board, letting them be struck. Thus, to save their friends, the adventurers must put them-selves at risk. If a character swaps with a paralyzed character, both characters become paralyzed and must attempt a DC 15 Charisma saving throw at the end of their turn, ending the effect on a success.

HALASTER

The Mad Mage is a masterful bowler; within this realm, his bowling balls are condensed energy. For this encounter, he cannot attack or cast a spell against creatures on a lane; he can only use his Bowl attack, described below. Once a pin reaches the end of the lane, he can contend with them as normal.

Bowl. Ranged Spell Attack: +14 to hit, range 150/400 ft., one target. *Hit:* 16 (3d10) force damage.

Legendary Action. During this encounter, Halaster can make use of a new Legendary Action:

Bowl. Halaster makes a Bowl attack against a pin.

Defenses. The Mad Mage bowls from within a *globe of invulnerability*. When Halaster is struck by a ranged weapon attack, a *glyph of warding* activates, unleashing a *warding wind* spell that disadvantages ranged weapon attacks that pass in or out of the wind. Halaster's Bowl attacks are unhindered.

Tactics. Halaster continues playing his game until the majority of the adventurers have escaped the lane or when he has lost 50 or more hit points. Afterwards, the characters are expelled from the bowling alley. Proceed to the next encounter.

CHECKMATE

Halaster brings the adventurers to a demiplane that resembles a chessboard—and to their horror, they find familiar faces forced to play in the game. The Mad Mage has kidnapped individuals across Under-mountain and even the world at large.

Personalization. This challenge is a moral one; if the innocents involved are not known by the party, it loses all its impact. You have to include individuals both loved and hated by the party—and distribute them across both teams. As an example, if Vlonwely Auvryndar survived the party, and they detest her, put her on their team. Meanwhile, someone the party cherishes is on the black team. Would it not be gut-wrenching to order Vlonwely, their hated enemy, to murder their beloved friend for the sake of the game? If you run out of individuals, snatch familiar faces from the adventurers' lives: a friend, an acquaintance that once loaned them 10 silver, their local baker, or the lonely old painter that spends his time feeding the birds near the church. Hell, grab their barbers, the cobbler that made their shoes, and especially their mothers and mentors. No one is safe from Halaster.

Statistics. Unless a character already has statistics, use the ones befitting their piece in the *Chess Piece Statistics* table. If their statistics are pitiful, such as a **commoner's**, use the statistics better befitting their role instead, such as a **knight**.

Rules. The magical game of chess follows these rules, in addition to the normal rules of chess. The party is forced to play the game and can't act or move as they normally would in combat.

- Halaster's team is black, symbolizing the evil nature of this demented game.
- The party's side is white, allowing them to take the first turn.
- At the start of the game, the adventurers can choose which pieces on the board they represent; shift the identities of those involved accordingly.
- In this encounter, there is no initiative. The white team goes first, then the black team. Each turn, a team can move only a single piece across the board. Characters cannot take actions, bonus actions, or reactions. Every character's movement speed is reduced to 0 and they can only move as the piece they represent can.
- Whenever a piece takes another, it instantly kills them *unless* the defending piece is a player character, in which case the player character instantly takes the damage from the attacks used by the attacking piece (e.g., a **knight's** two Greatsword attacks) and is then eliminated from the game. An eliminated player character is teleported to the side of the board and can no longer affect the game or its pieces. They can, however, affect themselves (i.e., they could drink a potion).

CHESS PIECE STATISTICS

Piece	Statistics (if no other statistics apply)
Bishop	Priest
King	Halaster Blackcloak
Knight	Knight
Queen	Warlord
Pawn	Thug
Rook	Assassin

- If a piece overtakes another piece and subjects it to a saving throw, such as a spell that only does half damage on a success, the overtaken piece can attempt their saving throw, but are still eliminated. This is so that a piece can't just unleash a *finger of death* on a player character without any chance of halving the damage. Use tact whenever determining which attack the overtaking piece uses; there is such a thing as over-kill in this encounter.
- When the first king is slain, the remaining pieces on their team takes 22 (4d10) necrotic damage and the encounter ends. Any player characters already eliminated also take this damage.
- If Halaster is overtaken, he takes damage from his attacker's attack, but doesn't take the 4d10 necrotic damage for losing. He leaves the demiplane before the damage is inflicted.

ICONIC INDIVIDUALS OF UNDERMOUNTAIN

You don't need to attach an identity to every piece on the board, but you do want to bring back individuals that left a lasting mark on the party and survived. Your table will vary, of course, but some possible individuals are included below. Their statistics *are not* in Appendix B of this chapter.

Bishops. Bishops are good-hearted individuals that are driven by duty to commit evil in this game.

- Yrlakka of Level 15 (**githzerai zerth**)
- Preeta Kreepa of Level 3 (human **mage** with beholder eye-stalks, see Level 3, Area 21M)
- Any **stone giant** of Level 7, if the party found them tragic or sympathetic
- Any quest-giver from Waterdeep

King. The opposing team's king is, of course, the Mad Mage. The following individuals could take the role of king for the adventurers' team if none wish to wear that crown. The king represents a fragile leader kept alive solely by the duty of others.

- Warlord Azrok of Level 3 (**hobgoblin warlord**)
- Yek the Tall of Level 2 (**goblin boss**)
- Doomcrown of Level 3 (**hobgoblin warlord**)

Knights. Knights are unyielding, unquestioning soldiers of the king. Individuals who represent this uncompromising loyalty, whether it's to Halaster or someone else, are included below. Most yugoloths and slaadi would be knights.

- Hexacali of Level 8 (**bone naga**)
- Zress Orlezzir of Level 10 (**drow house captain**)
- The Headmaster of Level 9 (**arcaneloth**)
- Drivvin Freth of Level 12 (drow **archmage**)
- The Alchemist of Level 4 (**green slaad**)

Queen. To Halaster, the queen represents his chief confidant. Likewise, the queen is a strong, feminine figure. Possible individuals include:

- Tasselgryn "Tas" Velldarn of Skullport (**archmage**)
- Wyllow of Level 5 (elven **archdruid**)
- Lurkana, wife and general of Azrok's Legion of Level 3 (**hobgoblin captain**)
- Emberosa of Level 14 (**fire giant**)
- Vlonwelv Auvryndar of Level 10 or Erelal Freth of Level 12 (**drow priestess of Lolth**)

Pawns. Pawns ought to be innocents forced into the game, such as a friend, a cherished barber, et cetera.

Rooks. In normal chess, a rook represents a castle. In Halaster's game, they're instead wild cards that can wreak great damage upon others. Identities include:

- Torbit of Level 8 (bullywug **assassin**)
- Maddgoth of Level 7 (human **archmage** or **lich**)
- Xarann A'Daragon of Level 10 (drow **assassin**)
- Trenzia of Level 2 (a **flameskull** with resistance to fire and immunity to lightning damage; and *lightning bolt* prepared instead of *fireball*)
- Zox Clammersham of Level 13 (gnomish **archmage**)

HALASTER'S STRATEGY

As black, Halaster is instantly on the defensive and his strategies must reflect that. With an Intelligence score of 24, Halaster should prove to be formidable opponent. If you yourself aren't an expert at chess, familiarize yourself with the most famous defensive strategies, such as the Sicilian Defense, the Nimzo-Indian Defense, and more.

USING INTELLIGENCE

When it comes to puzzles and the like in tabletop games the issue boils down to a player being ham-strung out of the game while their character could reasonably figure out the answer—especially if their character is a genius wizard.

The players, not the adventurers, must play chess in this encounter. To just let them use their abilities and scores utterly trivializes it. However, to tie-in their abilities, you can let one character on the team, preferably the character calling the shots in this encounter, attempt Intelligence (chess) checks (chess, or dragonchess, being a gaming set). On a success, the white team can reverse their turn. For example, if they moved a knight and lost it the next turn because of that single, foolish move, they can get a do-over if they succeed on the check.

If you allow this, it can only occur once per turn and the DC begins at 14, increasing by 2 for every subsequent success.

CLASH OF THE TITANS

Ultimate Encounter, counts as three encounters

The gloves are truly off in this encounter, which dials Halaster's cunning and wrath up to 11. It presents him as the ultimate wizard—one that has had ample time to prepare for his foes and utilized every tool at his disposal.

Balancing the Encounter. Halaster has pulled out all the stops for this battle, which occurs entirely in Area 33. He has *glyphs of warding*, a *contingency* spell at work, and laid traps to thwart the adventurers. That being said, it would be easy to just equip him with an incredible arsenal of tools, per DM fiat—but this encounter does its best to stay within the bounds of what a wizard could do. Review *Halaster's Spells*, *-Gear* and *Preparations* at the start of this chapter, incorporating all elements thereof.

MINIONS OF THE MAD MAGE

Halaster crumbles when outnumbered; knowing that, he has called upon a number of allies:

- A **shield guardian**—perhaps even the one that can be met on Level 1—whose amulet is worn by Halaster
- A **gray render** that Halaster has long-since bonded with. He's named him after the dumbest of the adventurers.
- A **red dragon wyrmling** taken from Stardock as a tax
- A **green slaad** whose control gem is in Halaster's possession. If it was not slain, this slaad is the Alchemist of Level 4, otherwise it is just a random one conjured from Limbo
- Halastron, the adopted **quadron** from Level 2, provided it wasn't destroyed. Admittedly, it can do little against such high level adventurers—but they can still go "bite [its] shiny, transplanar ass!"
- Two **living counterspells**, which come out to play on the second round of combat

Tactics. Halaster's minions follow these tactics:

- The shield guardian stores a spell of *slow* (DC 22) and casts it on its first turn, concentrating on the spell. It positions itself to always be within 5 ft. of Halaster for its Shield reaction.
- The wyrmling flies at a height of 15 ft. and strafes the party with its Fire Breath attack. On turns the ability is recharging, it attacks weak and unarmored characters.
- Halastron flies at a height of 15 ft. and picks off weakened adventurers with its four Shortbow attacks.
- The green slaad starts the encounter invisible. On its first turn, it unleashes a *fireball* spell. On its second, it casts *fear*.
- The living counterspells use their actions on Magical Strikes and reserve their Spell Mimicry for whenever the adventurers cast *counterspell*

GLYPHS GALORE

It's not enough for the Mad Mage to be backed up by a handful of minions; nay, this wizard's lair is trapped with several *glyphs of warding*. Per the spell, the *glyphs* "concentrate" on these spells, allowing Halaster to concentrate on his own.

CLASH OF THE TITANS: HALASTER'S ARCANES ARSENAL

The following spells are utilized in the *Clash of the Titans* encounter. Their effects have been summarized for your convenience. Because they are cast with *glyphs of warding*, Halaster does not concentrate on the spell; it instead continues for its full duration. The spell save DC for these is 22.

GREASE

Duration: 1 minute

Slick grease covers the ground in a 10-foot square centered on a point within range and turns it into difficult terrain for the duration.

When the grease appears, each creature standing in its area must succeed on a Dexterity saving throw or fall prone. A creature that enters the area or ends its turn there must also succeed on a Dexterity saving throw or fall prone.

MADDENING DARKNESS

Duration: 10 minutes

Magical darkness spreads from a point you choose within range to fill a 60-foot-radius sphere until the spell ends. The darkness spreads around corners. A creature with darkvision can't see through this darkness. Non-magical light, as well as light created by spells of 8th level or lower, can't illuminate the area.

Shrieks, gibbering, and mad laughter can be heard within the sphere. Whenever a creature starts its turn in the sphere, it must make a Wisdom saving throw, taking 8d8 psychic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

OTTO'S IRRESISTIBLE DANCE

Duration: 1 minute

The target begins a comic dance in place: shuffling, tapping its feet, and capering for the duration. Creatures that can't be charmed are immune to this spell.

A dancing creature must use all its movement to dance without leaving its space and has disadvantage on Dexterity saving throws and attack rolls. While the target is affected by this spell, other creatures have advantage on attack rolls against it. As an action, a dancing creature makes a Wisdom saving throw to regain control of itself. On a successful save, the spell ends.

REVERSE GRAVITY

Duration: 1 minute

This spell reverses gravity in a 50-foot-radius, 100-foot-high cylinder centered on a point within range. All creatures and objects that aren't somehow anchored to the ground in the area fall upward and reach the top of the area when you cast this spell. A creature can make a Dexterity saving throw to grab onto a fixed object it can reach, thus avoiding the fall.

If some solid object (such as a ceiling) is encountered in this fall, falling objects and creatures strike it just as they would during a normal downward fall. If an object or creature reaches the top of the area without striking anything, it remains there, oscillating slightly, for the duration. At the end of the duration, affected objects and creatures fall back down.

SYMBOL

Duration: 10 minutes once triggered

When you inscribe the glyph, choose one of the options below for its effect. Once triggered, the glyph glows, filling a 60-foot-radius sphere with dim light for 10 minutes, after which time the spell ends. Each creature in the sphere when the glyph activates is targeted by its effect, as is a creature that enters the sphere for the first time on a turn or ends its turn there. The glyph is nearly invisible, requiring a DC 22 Intelligence (Investigation) check to find.

Death. Each target must make a Con. save, taking 10d10 necrotic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful save.

Discord. Each target must make a Con. save. On a failed save, a target bickers and argues with other creatures for 1 minute. During this time, it is incapable of meaningful communication and has disadvantage on attack rolls and ability checks.

Fear. Each target must make a Wis. save and becomes frightened for 1 minute on a failed save. While frightened, the target drops whatever it is holding and must move at least 30 feet away from the glyph on each of its turns, if able.

Hopelessness. Each target must make a Cha. save. On a failed save, the target is overwhelmed with despair for 1 minute. During this time, it can't attack or target any creature with harmful abilities, spells, or other magical effects.

Insanity. Each target must make an Int. save. On a failed save, the target is driven insane for 1 minute. An insane creature can't take actions, can't understand what other creatures say, can't read, and speaks only in gibberish. The DM controls its movement, which is erratic.

Pain. Each target must make a Con. saving throw and becomes incapacitated with excruciating pain for 1 minute on a failed save.

Sleep. Each target must make a Wis. save and falls unconscious for 10 minutes on a failed save. A creature awakens if it takes damage or if someone uses an action to shake or slap it awake.

Stunning. Each target must make a Wis. save and becomes stunned for 1 minute on a failed save.

WARDING WIND

Duration: 10 minutes

A strong wind (20 miles per hour) blows around you in a 10-foot radius and moves with you, remaining centered on you. The wind lasts for the spell's duration. The wind has the following effects:

- It deafens you and other creatures in its area.
- It extinguishes unprotected flames in its area that are torch-sized or smaller.
- It hedges out vapor, gas, and fog that can be dispersed by strong wind.
- The area is difficult terrain for creatures other than you.
- The attack rolls of ranged weapon attacks have disadvantage if the attacks pass in or out of the wind.

- A *glyph of warding* in the center of the magical circle contains a *reverse gravity* spell that activates when a creature passes over the center of the room. A creature that falls upward takes 2d6 bludgeoning damage if it strikes the ceiling. Halaster has tailored it to only affect the area of the magic circle, reducing it to a 20-foot-radius cylinder.
- When touched, a *glyph of warding* on the left arm of Halaster's throne casts *warding wind*, centered on the throne.
- When touched, a *glyph of warding* on the right arm of the Mad Mage's throne casts *maddening darkness*, centered on the throne. Because Halaster is already under a *mind blank* spell, he is immune to its effects. See the sidebar for this spell.

- A *glyph of warding* placed at the foot of Halaster's throne contains a spell of *otto's irresistible dance* that activates once a creature passes over it to ascend or descend the throne.
- A *glyph of warding* on the door to Area 35 activates when a creature enters within 10 feet of it, unleashing a *grease* spell on the 10-foot-area before it.

HIDDEN PIT TRAP

Hidden by an illusion spell, the Mad Mage has placed an extradimensional pit trap in front of the door to Area 36. The pit is 10-feet-wide, 20 ft. deep, sheer, and trapped with spikes. A creature that falls into the pit takes 2d6 bludgeoning damage from the fall and must make a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw to avoid the spikes, taking 2d10 piercing damage on a failure.

To see through the illusion, a creature can use its action to attempt a DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check. The illusion and pit trap also disappear 1 minute after Halaster dies.

SYMBOL

Halaster has inscribed a *symbol* spell on the statue of himself that activates when a creature other than him-self touches it. To goad them into doing so, he races for it—making a big show about touching it—and teleports to Area 22 or 28. Alternatively, he can have a minion of his touch it.

When activated, the 60-foot-radius sphere covers most of Area 33. Creatures pressed against the south-western and southeastern corners are out of its range, as are creatures on the steps leading to Halaster's throne, or further. The spell cannot penetrate walls, so Areas 32 and 34-36 are safe.

Effect. Choose beforehand which effect Halaster has chosen for the *symbol* spell and consider its implications, remembering that *all* creatures must contend with its effect, if they're in the sphere, including Halaster and his minions:

- The Death effect is a reset button that will likely wipe out Halaster's minions, none of whom have immunity or even resistance to necrotic damage—and all creatures take 10d10 damage *every time* they enter or start their turn in the sphere for the *ten minutes*. It is, hands down, the most brutal effect.
- The Discord effect allows the battle to continue but drags it out further by disadvantaging attacks and the like.
- The Fear effect disarms combatants and forces them to the corners of the room, or through a door. The shield guardian cannot be frightened and is thus unaffected.
- The Hopelessness effect will likely be overcome by warlocks, sorcerers, bards, and paladins. Any non-healer or supporter that fails the save is, effectively, removed from the fight, which is no fun.
- The Insanity effect can be hilarious if Halaster tells them, "Now you can be just as crazy as I am!" It effectively pauses the fight while Halaster freshens up outside.
- The Pain effect allows the fight to haphazardly continue, as affected creatures can still move. Becoming incapacitated also ends a spellcaster's concentration.
- The Sleep effect momentarily pauses the fight, but it can be thwarted if enough characters resist the spell. Meanwhile, Halaster can freshen up outside.
- The Stunning effect removes characters from the entire fight, which is no fun. However, it can facilitate roleplay as the characters speak falteringly while the villain gets away.

Tempering the Spell. Once the spell is activated, *symbol* causes its effects every turn for ten minutes. For the sake of the encounter, you can temper the spell by letting it emit its effects for only a minute, or even just once.

DONKEY KONG REDUX

The world shrinks down to a glass prison striped with strange, red, steel platforms. In your mind's eye, you can see it all, as if you were looking in from a window. Atop this crisscrossed gauntlet, a gigantic ape lords over its sole captive: a frail figure in a floral gown that you recognize to be none other than the Mad Mage himself.

As if it could sense your peeping, the giant ape pounds its chest with its fists and reaches into the darkness. From that inky void it plucks a barrel, and the primate hurls it down the crisscrossed gauntlet.

This variant is ostensibly based on *Donkey Kong*, the 1981 arcade game. If your version of Halaster *has* visited Earth, it's directly based on it. If not, it's just uncanny. Halaster teleports the party to a demiplane whose dimensions are 5-foot-wide, 100-foot-tall and 50-foot-long. To the south extends a glass wall impervious to all magic and damage. The north, east, and west "walls" are solid darkness. The adventurers can magically view the entire demiplane at once, just as if they were an arcade player looking at a screen.

Like in *Donkey Kong*, the characters have to reach the top while jumping over barrels, climbing ladders, and more. A **giant ape** has kidnapped Halaster (who, of course, is wearing a floral pink dress) and tosses down the barrels from the top layer. For the sake of simplicity, barrels aren't tracked on the map, nor can they be targeted.

Map. For very obvious copyright concerns, the *Companion* cannot include an image of the *Donkey Kong* map. Take inspiration from the original game's Level 1 stage. Every platform is 50 ft. in length, with 10 ft. between each platform. Ladders connecting the platforms count as difficult terrain for any creature without a climbing speed.

Rules. Follow these guidelines for Halaster's game:

- At the start of a character's turn, there is a 75% chance they must leap over a rolling barrel, subjecting them to a Dexterity saving throw (DC 10 + 2d6). On a failure, they're knocked prone and take 5 (1d10) bludgeoning damage. It then explodes, dealing 11 (2d10) fire damage to all creatures within 10 feet. A character that takes the Ready action to jump over the next barrel succeeds automatically.
- Once a character comes within 10 ft. of the giant ape on the final layer, it ceases to throw barrels. Starting the next round, creatures already on the final layer no longer need to make Dexterity saving throws at the start of their turn.
- The giant ape and Halaster fight in tandem against the party once a character reaches them. Halaster leaves the demiplane after losing 50 hit points or more, or when the giant ape is slain. Once the ape is dead, the next encounter begins.

Magical Restrictions. Magical flight is disabled in this realm, be it from magic items or spells. The Mad Mage has specifically not warded against spells that would teleport a creature or alter the landscape.

MONTY'S HALL

You awaken on a stage, bleary-eyed and confused. An audience leers at you, clamoring, cheering. Jaunty music is playing all around you as an announcer shouts, "These people have come from all over the Multiverse to make a deal here, on live planar-vision! Now, here's our host: Monty... Thrall!"

A smart-dressed man with a broad smile steps onto the stage. "Hiya folks, it's me, Monty Thrall! Today, our guests hail from the little rock known as Toril and they're here to—"

The crowd erupts into a chant of: "Make! A! Deal!"

Monty throws back his head and laughs. "I like this energy! Now, let's get right to it! Our guests have been kidnapped by a deranged mage whose name is—" Monty checks a notecard. "Halastar Blackcape. They're hot on his tail and they've gotta get outta here. Now, the escape from this demiplane is hidden behind one of these three doors."

Monty gestures and... and you can see them now: three, unremarkable doors along the far wall.

The host continues, "Now, they get to choose one door and one door only. You, sir- or madam-fleshbag! Which door of those three do you choose? And I remind you, you best choose fast, because today as our Shadow of Doom, we have... a spell of *delayed blast fireball*!"

Monty points upward and only now are you aware that a wall of force keeps a spinning orb of fire from crashing down into the studio, setting all ablaze. As you watch, the cracks in that invisible forcefield grow. Time is of the essence.

The adventurers find themselves within a demiplane sporting a stage whose far wall has three doors in it. A game show host named Monty (secretly Halaster in disguise, unsurprisingly) lays down the rules of the game: the party must open one of the doors and face whatever is inside. Behind one, Monty assures them, is the demiplane's exit—secretly Door #2.

When the adventurers choose a door, Monty opens one of the other doors, unleashing whatever is inside. Obviously, he doesn't open Door #2, because that is the correct answer. After Monty opens Door #1 or Door #3, he asks the party if they'd like to switch to another door and open that one instead.

Halaster. If you run this encounter, subtract a 7th- and 8th-level spell slot from Halaster, which he used to cast *delayed blast fireball* and *incendiary cloud*.

The Stage. The stage is a 20-foot-wide square. The adventurers find that the demiplane does not extend beyond that, except for chambers behind the doors. The audience is beyond the wall and is illusory.

Everything Sucks. It would be easy for Halaster to force the adventurers to face every horror and then just reveal—surprise, surprise—that there was never a hidden exit in the first place. Alas, there *is* a correct answer, but it isn't harmless. Perhaps if this game were played on a mortal world, there *would* actually be a prize behind a door, but truly this is an exercise in "winning" the least amount of pain.

DELAYED BLAST FIREBALL (DC 22)

When the spell ends, either because your concentration is broken or because you decide to end it, the bead blossoms with a low roar into an explosion of flame that spreads around corners. Each creature in a 20-foot-radius sphere centered on that point must make a Dexterity saving throw. A creature takes fire damage equal to the total accumulated damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. The spell's base damage is 12d6. If at the end of your turn the bead has not yet detonated, the damage increases by 1d6.

If the glowing bead is touched before the interval has expired, the creature touching it must make a Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save, the spell ends immediately, causing the bead to erupt in flame. On a successful save, the creature can throw the bead up to 40 feet. When it strikes a creature or a solid object, the spell ends, and the bead explodes.

The fire damages objects in the area and ignites flammable objects that aren't being worn or carried.

Time Limit. Give the players a minute at your table and one round in-game to debate which door to choose, with a second minute for when Monty gives them the option to switch doors. If they fail to adhere to this time limit, humble them with the *delayed blast fireball* spell.

Screw the Game! If the adventurers just attack "Monty," roll initiative. On his turn, Halaster uses an action to release the **spirit troll** and **bulezau**, then a bonus action to leave the demiplane. When he leaves, the *delayed blast fireball* is released.

DOOR #1

Monty waves his hand and the door crumbles into dust—and out from the cloud born from it storms a caprine demon whose howls can only be described as "murderous."

"Zonks!" shouts Monty. "Looks like you chose the bulezau!" The host reaches up to his face and pulls away the flesh as if it were a mask—and, of course, it was Halaster all along. "I bet that really gets your goat, doesn't it?" says the Mad Mage. "Get it? Because it's a goat-like demon? The bulezau? Ah, you don't get it..."

Behind this door is a **bulezau**, a caprine demon that has been forced into Halaster's service for the last forty years. Due to the demiplane's wonky rules, the demon gets to take one turn before initiative is rolled, and it uses that turn to attack the closest creature that isn't Halaster, whom it is forbidden to harm.

Magical Aura. If scrutinized by a spell of *detect magic* or the like, the door radiates a faint aura of conjuration magic—faint, for the demon therein was summoned decades ago.

DOOR #2

A look of revulsion crosses Monty's face. The door opens on its hinges, revealing a long corridor at the end of which stands a glowing, open doorway.

"Take your prize and go," the host snarls... and at the heels of that last word, fiery miasma pours into the passageway—a cloud of smoke striped with white-hot embers.

If the adventurers choose this door, they only have to contend with the *incendiary cloud* spell trapping it. Halaster does not open any other doors, nor does he unleash the *delayed blast fireball* unless they dawdle here for more than three turns.

Magical Aura. If scrutinized by a spell of *detect magic* or the like, the door radiates a strong aura of conjuration magic, due to the *incendiary cloud* spell.

DOOR #3

You hear glass shatter from behind the door, as if some seal that was meant to remain forgotten was finally disturbed. *Through* the door comes a ghostly claw chased by a tumorous, but ephemeral maw—a troll! A spirit troll steps through the door and turns its claws upon you!

"Looks like you've been *trolled*," Monty quips to the groans of the audience. The host looks at them and says, "Hey! The sign says 'laugh!'"

"You suck, Monty!" shouts an audience member just as the spirit troll beats its incorporeal chest and bellows out its rage.

Behind the third door lurks a **spirit troll**—the spirit of the troll that once laired on Level 1 of the dungeon. If the adventurers are responsible for its death, the beast hungers only to revenge itself upon its killers. Alternatively, if you ran the *Troll in the Dungeons!* special event on Level 9, in which a dire troll rampages through the academy, the spirit is all that remains of that colossal beast.

Magical Aura. If scrutinized by a spell of *detect magic* or the like, this door radiates a moderate aura of abjuration magic—indicative of the wards placed to contain the spirit troll, who could otherwise phase through the door.

PLANAR HOPSCOTCHING

Ultimate encounter, counts as two encounters

In this encounter, Halaster takes the adventurers on an absurd tour of the Multiverse. Whenever they arrive to a new plane, the party must grapple with its hazards, denizens, and any planar effects it imposes upon visitors. Nine planar encounters are included; choose at least three to run. If you decide to run five or more, if Halaster lives that long, then *Planar Hopscotching* counts as three *Ultimate Showdown* encounters instead of two.

Plane Shifting. Halaster *plane shifts* the party to the plane of his choice as a Legendary Action, without even casting a spell, and no matter the distance between him and all targets. If you need to justify this spellcasting, equip him with at least four *spell scrolls of plane shift*.

NPCs' Initiative. Several planar encounters feature denizens of that plane. It's recommended that you roll initiative beforehand to avoid slowing down your game.

Escaping. This encounter hinges on the good will of your players, who are free from Undermountain's restrictions on magic once brought to another plane. They could absolutely ditch Halaster and *plane shift* elsewhere. However, they're unlikely to know the spell, since it's utterly useless in Undermountain, and Halaster can just *wish* them back into the dungeon.

Aftermath. Once Halaster is finished gallivanting across the planes, or when he's beaten within an inch of his life, he returns them to Area 33. Everyone but Halaster crashes onto the floor and is knocked prone.

Death. Remember, Halaster can only be reborn if he was slain within Undermountain. Therefore, he ends this planar spree when near death.

ACHERON

The world echoes with war. You find yourself upon an iron battlefield floating in the emptiness of space. Distant cubes of iron collide above and below while orcish hordes hurl themselves against a goblinoid legion. Instinctively, you know yourself to be in Acheron, that fabled realm of ceaseless war, whose armies clash for the amusement of dread-gods.

The adventurers and Halaster appear at the heart of a massive battle between goblinoids and orcs waged in the name Maglubiyet and Gruumsh, respectively. Shocked, the nearby warriors both strive to slay these newcomers to honor their dread-god.

Goblinoids. Goblinoids slain by the adventurers in Undermountain have the opportunity to appear here again. For example, Yek the Tall from Level 2 and the hobgoblins of Levels 3, 13 and 14 (such as Azrok, Yargath the Breaker, and Doomcrown, respectively) could be fighting here, eternally serving under their deity now that their souls have been liberated from the Material Plane. Regardless of their identities, the following goblinoids are present:

- A **goblin boss** or **hobgoblin captain**
- Three **hobgoblins** or five **goblins**
- A **hobgoblin warlord**

Orcs. The orcish horde attacks from the south. The soldiers that involve themselves in the battle against Halaster and the party consist of an **orc Blade of Ilneval**, an **orc Hand of Yurtrus**, and three **orogs**. They use the following tactics in combat:

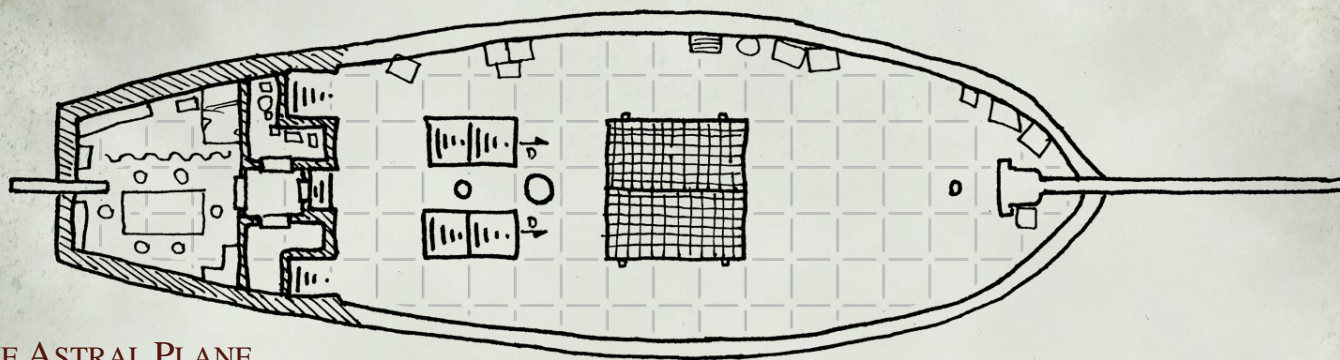
- The Hand of Yurtrus casts *bane* on three adventurers (DC 12).
- The Blade of Ilneval makes two Longsword attacks then uses its Ilneval's Command to galvanize the three orogs.
- The three orogs each make two Greataxe attacks, plus a third if they're affected by Ilneval's Command.

Planar Effect. Acheron rewards a creature for harming others by imbuing it with the strength to keep fighting. While on Acheron, a creature gains temporary hit points equal to half its hit point maximum whenever it reduces a hostile creature to 0 hit points. These temporary hit points are lost when the creature leaves Acheron.

Halaster's Tactics. Knowing Acheron will reward him for slaying *other* creatures, Halaster does his best to include orcs or goblinoids in his attacks; thus, he relies more on his *blast scepter* or *fireball* spells to gain 123 temporary hit points whenever he slays a creature.

THE WRECK OF THE WIGHT'S SHADOW

1 Square = 5 ft.



THE ASTRAL PLANE

The world blurs again and you find yourself on the deck of a ship sailing a waterless sea. Asteroids and the corpses of dead gods float in the distance. The air here is clean, invigorating—and after a flash of clarity, you understand why: you're on the Astral Plane, that famed realm free of hunger, of thirst, of aging.

As if reading your thoughts, Halaster says, "I like to lounge here whenever I need a break from my arthritis." He pats the dust off his robe and then arches his back, smiling as a handful of vertebrae pop. "That's the stuff," the Mad Mage moans.

It's only then that you realize you're not alone: olive-skinned aliens stare at you, jaws agape. A psychic murmur runs through the crowd and the first githyanki telekinetically draws its silver blade. "*Na vazael!*" the warrior shouts, leaping into battle!

A perfectly-timed *plane shift* spell has supplanted the adventurers onto a warship bound for Créche K'liir. It's minutes away from shifting to the Material Plane and docking with Stardock.

Planar Effect. While on this plane, a creature's walking speed is equal to 3 x its Intelligence score.

Githyanki. This is your opportunity to bring back the githyanki of Level 16, who would nurse grudges against the adventurers. At the very least, they should be familiar with their likenesses. The following combatants enter the fray:

- Three **githyanki warriors**, (speed 39 ft.)
- A **githyanki knight** (speed equals 42 ft.)
- A **githyanki gish** whose speed equals 48 ft. on the Astral Plane. On its first turn, it casts *haste* on the knight.

Map. Refer to *The Wreck of the Wight's Shadow* map below, courtesy of Dyson Logos.

THE BEASTLANDS

When the world's lines become crisp and sure again, you find yourself in a place of staggering heat. A thousand feet below lies a sprawling jungle—and at its edge is a reptilian beast with three, magnificent and bloodied horns. It stamps its massive paws in a dance of indignation.

Dust is everywhere, choking your lungs and impairing your vision. Waving a hand, you look away from the cliff—and out from the cloud comes a scaled behemoth whose roar shakes the very ground—and on its back rides Halaster himself. "Steven Spielberg, eat your heart out!" he shouts.

Halaster has delivered the party to the fabled Beast-lands, a savage realm of unchecked nature. They appear on a cliff a thousand feet above a jungle.

Beasts. The party finds itself in the middle of an epic struggle between a **tyrannosaurus rex** and a **triceratops**. An opportunistic **quetzalcoatlus** strafes the adventurers, at first attempting to grapple the weakest among them and flies out; if a creature falls, they take 20d6 bludgeoning damage as they crash into the jungle below.

Halaster is, of course, riding the T-Rex, although the behemoth isn't too happy about it. The two dinosaurs ignore each other to attack these sudden interlopers, perceiving them as threats.

Planar Effect. While on this plane, the adventurers must contend with these two planar effects:

- Characters have advantage on Wisdom (Animal Handling), Wisdom (Perception), and Wisdom (Survival) checks.
- Whenever a visitor slays a beast native to the plane, the slayer must succeed on a DC 10 Charisma saving throw or become transformed (as in the *polymorph* spell) into the type of beast that was slain. In this form, the creature retains its intelligence and ability to speak. After each long rest, the polymorphed creature can repeat the saving throw. On a success, the creature returns to its true form. After three failures, the transformation can only be undone by a *remove curse* spell or similar magic.

GEHENNA

Your stomach reels as reality shifts. Halaster deposits you into the dismal ruins of what only could have been a temple or courthouse. Smog has choked all color from the sky, whose sole clouds are floating chunks of earth. Volcanos burn in the distance and the dead land is pock-marked with craters. This is a scabrous realm, indeed.

"Uh," says a telepathic voice, "Can I help you?"

You look and see a grotesque fiend attending to three others at a stone dais in the ruins. Its massive left arm bulges with muscle and in its atrophied right, it holds documents whose script make your head spin. You're well-acquainted with yugoloths by now, but never have you seen one like *this*.

The fiend grimaces at you, and its voice chimes again: "Look, we're in the middle of hashing out a contract, so..."

Suddenly, the Mad Mage appears—and the fiend sighs. "Oh, it's *you*. What now, Mr. Blackcloak?"

The Mad Mage rips a coinpurse from his robe and tosses it at the fiends' feet. "There's more where that came from! Kill these fools!"

Immediately, the three yugoloths across the dais spring into action: two insectoid fiends wielding tridents, and some faceless, quadrupedal horror whose rotund mouth is lined with fangs. It opens that circular maw and out spills a serrated tongue that can be no less than thirty feet in length.

The lawyer-like fiend sighs. "Well, Mr. Blackcloak, I will take no part in your chicanery. If you will excuse me..."

Counting on the fiends' greed, Halaster has brought the party to Gehenna, the infernal realm of yugoloths. The lawyer-fiend, a yagnaloth named Hiynis, is the Mad Mage's usual broker for infernal contracts. It comes as no surprise when Hiynis refuses to partake in the violence—and if Halaster were to die, it would be one less headache for the yugoloth. Unfortunately, it is bound by a contract to never harm Halaster—but the other three fiends aren't.

Yugoloths. The gathered fiends consist of a **yagna-loth** finishing up a contract concerning the **canoloth** and the two **mezzoloths** who have been hired by a hedge-wizard with a grudge. Under no circumstance does the yagnaloth fight; therefore, it's statistics are not included in Appendix B. However, the others do initially side with Halaster. They follow these tactics:

- The first mezzoloth enshrouds itself in a *darkness* spell that its fellow fiends utilize to their advantage; thanks to their blind- and truesight, they're unhindered by the spell.
- The canoloth makes a Tongue attack against a target within 30 ft. and follows up with its claws.
- The second mezzoloth tears into the first victim grappled by the canoloth's tongue.

Planar Effect. The plane's cruel nature makes it difficult for visitors to help one another. Whenever a visitor casts a spell with a beneficial effect, including a spell that restores hit points or removes a condition, the caster must first make a DC 10 Charisma saving throw. On a failed save, the spell fails, the spell slot is expended, and the action is wasted.

Bidding War. Halaster bribes the yugoloths with 500 gp (50 platinum coins in a pouch). The party can attempt to win over the yugoloths by overbidding Halaster. To throw money on the ground requires no action. Halaster has a total of 1500 gp on him for the purpose of this encounter.

Earthquake. Once during this encounter, an earthquake rips through the ruins, turning it into difficult terrain for the next minute. Every creature in contact with the ground that is concentrating must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw. On a failure, the creature's concentration is broken. Additionally, each creature on the ground must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or be knocked prone.

MECHANUS

The Mad Mage utters a scornful word. The world around you blurs yet again, this time replaced by bronze gears the size of grown drakes. It's as if you were standing in the guts of some clockwork behemoths. Shafts of light fall through uniformly distributed windows. Mechanical workers stand at the assembly line, assembling intricate clockwork pieces together—all at the same rhythm.

As you collect yourselves, a clarion alarm blares across what you can only call a factory. A feminine voice shrills, "Intruders! Intruders! Guest permits undetected! Eliminate immediately! Good day!"

"Oh, right," Halaster says. He digs into his pocket for a little brass badge embedded with a cog. He affixes it to his lapel just as the constructs converge upon you. "Yeah, get 'em, boys!" he shouts, promptly turning tail and fleeing into a tunnel leading down the assembly line.

Halaster has chosen a modron factory as the next site of the adventurers' battle. Intruders are to be put to death—and if the party doesn't like it, they should've read the numerous warning signs posted outside. Halaster alone has the guest permit—a badge he awkwardly affixes to his lapel—and that affords him protection from the constructs.

Constructs. Hundreds of modrons are at work, but only a few involve themselves in combat: a **penta-drone**, three **quadrones**, and two **tridrones**. They are, admittedly, no match for the party, but they can't help but obey their security protocols.

Planar Effect. While on Mechanus, creatures always use the average damage result for attacks and spells. For example, an attack that normally deals 1d10 + 5 damage always deals 10 damage.

Guest Badge. A character wearing a guest badge is considered to be an ally by the constructs. To snatch it from Halaster's lapel requires a DC 16 Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check made as a bonus action.

Assembly Line. The assembly line is a 5-foot-wide, 60-foot-long tunnel. Windows exist here and there for modron workers to perform their work. Creatures on the assembly line have half-cover, thanks to the low ceiling, and the moving pistons and gears.

Down the Line. On his first turn, while the party is accosted by modrons, Halaster hops onto the assembly line, which leads into the next chamber. The party must give pursuit, chasing him through a gauntlet of lethal machines and contraptions.

Lethal Machines. The combatants must face each of the following traps in order, each of which are 10 ft. apart from one another. Having practiced this run time and again, Halaster automatically succeeds on his saving throws.

- A *cloud of daggers* spell shaves off loose metal from the product. Creatures, including Halaster, automatically take 4d4 slashing damage when passing through the area.
- A buzzsaw swings down to cleave products. A Medium or larger creature that passes through must succeed on a DC 15 Dex. saving throw or take 4d10 slashing damage.
- An angry modron attacks the trespassers (except to whomever is wearing the guest badge), making a melee attack (+5 to hit, 5 bludgeoning damage).
- Two metallic pads crush product into the correct shape. A creature can make a DC 14 Intelligence check as an action to time their jump through the machine. On a success, they take no damage. If they do not time their jump perfectly, they must make a DC 15 Strength saving throw or take 3d10 bludgeoning damage, or half as much on a success.

PLANE OF AIR: CEASELESS STORM EFFECTS

d20	Effect
1	You are struck by lightning and must succeed on a DC 17 Constitution save or take 6d10 lightning damage, or half as much on a success.
2-5	You are battered by violent winds and must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or take 4d6 bludgeoning damage.
6-8	A thunderclap explodes nearby. You must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or take 3d8 thunder damage, or half as much on a success. If you were concentrating on a spell, the spell ends if you fail the saving throw. Deaf creatures are unaffected.
9-12	An air elemental makes a single Slam attack against you: +8 to hit, 2d8+5 bludgeoning damage. It slips away before it can be retaliated against.
13	Gravitational forces render you unconscious until the start of your next turn or until you take damage.
14-19	You are blown 10d10 ft. in a random direction.
20	You are miraculously unharmed by the storm.

- A pipe spits fire to make metal more malleable. A creature on the line must make a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw or take 2d8 fire damage, or half as much on a success.

End of the Line. Once Halaster reaches the end of the assembly line, he fires off at the adventurers. If two or more of them reach him, he *plane shifts* the party to the next encounter.

THE PLANE OF AIR

Amidst your battle, Halaster does the most curious thing: he stuffs his ears with wax. He shouts, "I'm half-deaf and this one always gets me!"

Before you can even voice your frustration, the walls of this world disappear, replaced by an endless sky and the thunderous howls of wind. There is no ground, none that you can see—only ceaseless vistas of air pocked by adventurous clouds. As you and the Mad Mage hurtle in a free fall, you see far below you a titanic thunderstorm veined with lightning.

Halaster has chosen the Plane of Air as the next stage of his battle—but he's neglected to fight on any of the flying citadels that pepper the realm. Instead, he and the party are in free fall, hurtling towards a massive storm below.

Falling. All characters begin the encounter falling. Follow these guidelines for a simple encounter:

- All characters start at the same height. Until a creature does anything to affect its falling speed or grant it a flying speed (such as by *feather fall*, *fly* or similar magic), assume all the combatants are at the same height.
- Per *Xanathar's Guide to Everything*, when a falling creature starts its turn, it instantly descends 500 ft. Per the point above, until someone *isn't* falling the same rate, just assume that all the characters are falling together, regardless of whose turn it is. Once a character does fly or alter their falling rate, you must bust out this turn order rule.
- To move horizontally, a falling creature must point their body at an angle to fall diagonally. At most, they can travel 30 ft. horizontally in one turn.

The Ceaseless Storm. Seven hundred feet below, a miles-wide storm rages. Thus, combatants that do not alter their rate of free fall, or have a flying speed, are expected to plunge into it next round. Whenever a character starts its turn in the storm, roll a d20 to determine the effects its subjected to and consult the Plane of Air: Ceaseless Storm Effects table.

Halaster's Tactics. On this plane, Halaster makes great use of his *fly* spell to avoid plummeting into the storm below.

THE PLANE OF EARTH

The mortal body is truly an innovative machine capable of feats of alacrity that the mind could never achieve. When the lines of the last world blur and the next ones sharpen, you find yourself on a cliffside overlooking a vast vista of mountains and hills fashioned from geodes. The air reeks of sulfur; lava lazily seeps down from above. Your hands are already clinging to the cliffside, finding loose purchase. The instinct that drives you could clearly tell what was up—and what was down—long before your mind could even comprehend the peril here.

A sharp whistle directs your gaze upward: Halaster. He clings to the cliff just as well, but draws from his robes a brown, silver and gray-striped potion. He imbibes it with a grimace. Enigored, the Mad Mage begins to climb.

Halaster *plane shifts* the party to a rocky cliffside in the Furnace, the border-mountains between the Plane of Earth and the Plane of Fire. Thirty feet above the Mad Mage yawns a cave that overlooks this glittery realm. The adventurers have a vertical battle ahead, as Halaster is empowered by a *potion of climbing* that eases his progress. The nearest adventurer begins 40 ft. below him.

Starting Positions. The adventurers are distributed randomly across the cliff face, with the closest one being 30 ft. away from Halaster.

Hazards. The combatants must contend with these hazards while on the Plane of Earth:

- The characters begin 1700 ft. above the ground. If a character falls, they instantly fall 500 ft. At the start of their next turn, they fall the remaining distance and take 1d6 bludgeoning damage per ten feet fallen, up to 20d6.
- A character unaided by magic or unequipped with a climbing kit must make a DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check to climb the cliffside. Characters require both hands to climb, but can cling to the cliffside with one hand if they succeed on a DC 10 Strength (Athletics) check.
- Once during the encounter, the cliffside rumbles and a tide of lava spews out from a nearby fissure, basking the adventurers in scalding heat. Each character on the cliffside must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw. On a failure, they take 16 (3d10) fire damage. On a success, they take half damage.

Halaster's Spells. If Halaster intends to visit this plane, he prepares *earthbind*, *erupting earth* and *feather fall* instead of *arcane lock*, *knock* and *silent image*, respectively.

Halaster's Gear. To prepare for this venture, the Mad Mage brings along a *potion of climbing*, which grants him a climbing speed of 30 ft. and advantage on Strength (Athletics) checks made to climb.

Revenge of the Dao. Halaster has made a grave mistake coming here. If it was freed from its prison on Level 19, Jarúk, the **dao**, appears to exact its revenge on Halaster. The moment it sensed him, the genie used a *wish* spell to appear nearby. Halaster uses a **Legendary Action** after the genie's turn to *plane shift* him and the party to the next realm.

THE PLANE OF FIRE

Halaster offers you a wan smile and shouts, "I hope you packed for a beach trip!" He snaps his fingers and the world becomes fire. It burns everywhere. The air is stagnant and searing; you swallow cinders with every breath. A river of lava rages below the ruined remains of a temple now connected to the distant cliffs only by rickety bridges made of some fire-resistant wood. Spires of earth jut from the magma, as if to condemn the swollen sun that hangs in the sky.

This isn't Hell; Hell could never burn so fiercely. There is but one place in all of Creation that can foster such heat—the Plane of Fire.

Halaster mounts his next battle at a ruined temple on the scorching Cinder Wastes of the Plane of Fire. A river of boiling lava rages below—a fiery maw that can consume even the mightiest heroes.

Map. Refer to the *Pillars of the Temple Rains* map below. A river of lava churns below the rocky cliffs and outcroppings. The adventurers start between the two bridges; Halaster starts on the platform marked "C."

Pillars. If they lack a flying speed, creatures must leap across pillars to reach Halaster. Remember, the distance a creature can jump is equal to their Strength score if they run at least 10 ft. first.

- The gap between Areas A & B is 19 ft. across
- The gap between Areas B & C is 23 ft. across

Hazard. Lava rages 100 ft. below. A creature that falls into it takes 35 (10d6) bludgeoning damage (because lava is much denser than a normal person, it's effectively a solid surface). Additionally, they take 55 (10d10) fire damage when they enter the lava the first time or start their turn there.

Natives. While here, 1d4+2 **living burning hands** accost the adventurers, coming in on a fiery wind.

Halaster's Spells. If Halaster intends to visit this plane, he prepares *feather fall* instead of *arcane lock*.

Halaster's Tactics. Halaster employs the following tactics in this encounter:

- Halaster begins in Area C, as marked on the map, and hurls spells at the party, such as *fire bolt* and *fireball*.
- If he falls, Halaster casts *feather fall*, then uses a **Legendary Action** to cast *fly* (which he can cast once per day without expending a spell slot) or even just *plane shifts* the party to the next plane.
- Although his *blast scepter* provides resistance to fire damage, Halaster has no intention of getting a face full of magma. That would just ruin his day.



PILLARS OF THE TEMPLE RAINS
1 Square = 5 ft.

THE PLANE OF WATER

"I hope you've got your floaties!" Halaster shouts, waving his hands in a swimming gesture. Before you can even raise an eyebrow, the world warbles and cold, bitter water rushes in. The depths of the sea lay out before you and the sun is nothing more than a distant pinprick wavering high above you. The salt is sharp on your lips as water pushes its way towards your lungs.

The Plane of Water welcomes every treasure it can come by—and Halaster has delivered himself and the party into its clutches. It comes as no surprise that the party will have to exercise restraint when dealing with Halaster, if he's the sole means of them escaping this watery realm.

Hazard. The adventurers did not have time to suck in a breath before being plane shifted; therefore, each character has only a number of rounds equal to its Constitution modifier (minimum of 1 round) before it suffocates. At the start of that next turn, it drops to 0 hit points and is dying.

Contingency. If you intend to use this encounter, Halaster cast a *contingency* spell on himself several days ago. The contingent spell, *polymorph*, activates when Halaster is submerged in water, turning him into a **giant shark**, as described below. He loses no spell slots for this, having spent them days ago when he first cast *contingency*. Be aware that a spellcaster can only be under one *contingency* spell at a time; using it for this encounter removes it from others.

Alternatively, Halaster chose *water breathing* as his contingent spell, rather than *polymorph*.

Halaster's Tactics. Halaster *polymorphs* himself into a **giant shark** for this encounter, either on his first turn, or immediately if he used a *contingency* spell for it. Once his hit points are depleted, he *plane-shifts* the party after his next turn. If any of his foes have *power word: kill* at their disposal, Halaster *does not* ever cast *polymorph*; instead he relies on a *chain lightning* spell and the like—if he even brings the party to this plane at all.

Revenge of the Marid. Halaster has made a grave mistake coming here. If it was freed from its prison on Level 19, Itchthyglug, the **marid**, appears to exact its revenge on Halaster. The moment it sensed him, the genie used a *wish* spell to appear nearby. Halaster uses a Legendary Action after the genie's turn to *plane shift* him and the party to the next realm.

SNAKES AND PORTALS DIAGRAM

100	99	98	97	96	95	94	93	92	91
81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90
80	79	78	77	76	75	74	73	72	71
61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70
60	59	58	57	56	55	54	53	52	51
41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50
40	39	38	37	36	35	34	33	32	31
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

SNAKES AND PORTALS

You find yourself in a flat, dreary realm whose distant plains are wreathed in shadow. All you can make out is a checkered floor of black and white tiles. Above every tile floats an ephemeral number, some red, some gold, but most just white.

Clearly this is a trap laid by the Mad Mage—and when you move to act, you find your legs petrified into stone. All of you are crowded on a tile above which floats the number "1." Time seems to be frozen; your body is deaf your will.

Suddenly the Mad Mage winks into existence. He shares with you a sheepish glance and says, "Well. The host might eat last but he plays first." He produces a six-sided die and rolls it into the air and takes a number of lanky steps out onto the board. Still smiling, Halaster rolls twice more, putting more distance from you. "Forgive me!" he shouts, "But it's a house rule!"

Halaster escapes to a demiplane whose checkered floor is an area of 10x10 tiles. Every tile is a 5-foot-square and above each one floats an intangible but glowing number, which number from 1-100. The numbers are either red, white, or gold.

This encounter is, of course, just the classic board-game, *Snakes and Ladders* ported into *D&D*. When the *Companion's* author—that's me—brainstormed encounter ideas, he found an old *Snakes and Ladders* worksheet in his teaching bag. "If it was good enough for 3rd-graders," he said, "it's good enough for this." The encounter follows the rules below:

- When the characters first awaken in the demiplane, their legs are petrified. For the remainder of this encounter, their speed is effectively 0. Roll initiative to determine turn order.
- At the start of a character's turn, they find a six-sided die in their hand, which they can roll, after which their legs are restored to their usual fleshy goodness. Roll a d6 to determine how many squares forward the character can move. At the end of their turn, their legs are petrified once again.

- Characters must move forward at the start of their turn; they cannot move backward or stay still.
- A character can use actions and bonus actions within the demiplane, but not reactions. Spells that affect their movement or would thwart the petrification of their legs fail. The Dash action likewise does nothing.
- All ranged attacks, including for spells, have a reduced range of 20 ft. Melee attacks can only be made against creatures in adjacent squares; melee attacks made with a weapon with the reach property can hit a creature up to 10 ft. away.
- Halaster's placement on the board is determined before the party can act. He rolls three times to determine his placement but must then abide by his initiative for later turns. Each turn, he can reroll his die once but must use the new result.
- Several tiles are trapped, as marked with a red number. When a character lands on this number, a massive snake appears, swallowing them whole and inflicting 5 (1d6+2) piercing damage and an additional 10 (3d6) acid damage. That character is then deposited elsewhere on the map. See the *Snakes and Portals* diagram for details.
- Several tiles host portals that will spirit the character ahead on the board. These tiles are marked with golden numbers. When a character lands on the tile, the number transforms into a portal which the character can choose to take. The portal's destination is clearly marked: its linked tile's number morphs into a portal. See the *Snakes and Portals* diagram for details.
- At the end of the first round, a wall of acid begins to fill the board, starting at 0. At the end of the second round, roll a d6 for the acid, which follows the same path across the board that the characters do. A creature that starts its turn in acid takes 14 (4d6) acid damage.
- If Halaster is reduced to half his hit points or less, he abandons the demiplane, ostensibly cheating his way across the board. Thereafter, the adventurers must outrun the wall of acid.
- Once a character reaches tile #100, they are safe from acid and can leave the demiplane if they so wish.
- If the party attempts to take a rest in the demiplane, likely on tile #100, Halaster kicks them out.

THIRD TIMES THE CHARM

Ultimate encounter, counts as three encounters

Under this variant, you really lean into how anti-climactic the showdown with Halaster is in *DotMM*. You can still have a penultimate encounter, but otherwise, run Area 33 as written: the party have to face the **empyrean** Nalkara and then the Mad Mage himself. He should fall easily enough—so easily that your players will probably complain, "That's it?"

Halaster returns to fight the party, but only 1d10 days later, per his Rejuvenation trait. Sometime later, he teleports the party back into the dungeon. The adventurers are likely to be commanding their full resources—but that's fine, because he's is meant to lose againn anyway.

ROUND 1: THE ANTICLIMAX

When the party first reaches Halaster, run the encounter exactly as it is in *DotMM*: a fight with an **empyrean** followed by a lackluster fight with a wizard that made no preparations for this inevitable conflict. He follows his normal tactics but lacks a *contingency* spell, potions, and minions. His tower collapses as normal.

ROUND 2: SEETHING VENGEANCE

Halaster resurrects 1d10 days later and *wishes* them back into Undermountain. With his tower destroyed, he summons them to Level 15, Area 16—atop the spectral bridge that spans Netherskull's smoldering chasm. From Area 17 Halaster hurls his spells while his minions advance from both ends of the bridge.

Map. For this encounter, you must prepare the map of Level 15.

Starting Position. The adventurers begin 40 ft. from Area 9—as Halaster *wants* them to head north and trigger the fireball trap (see below).

Chasm Hazards. Keep these in mind for the battle:

- Although the spectral bridge normally becomes insubstantial when a magic item is within 10 feet of it, Halaster's death has broken that nasty condition.
- Spells and magic items that grant flight are suppressed in the chasm. A character that enters under a *fly* spell or similar magic instead goes hurtling into the lava. Spells that slow one's fall, such as *feather fall*, function normally.
- Per Area 16, whenever a creature on the bridge crosses the midpoint of the span, there's a 25% chance that the lava pool spouts a *fireball* (save DC 19, 12d6 fire damage on a failure or half as much on a success) that explodes at a point centered on that creature.
- The lava is 30 ft. below the bridge. Because lava is denser than most creatures, a character that falls onto the lava takes 3d10 bludgeoning damage, plus the 10d10 fire damage for entering or starting its turn there.
- The chasm walls are sloped and have abundant handholds, which can be climbed with a successful DC 10 Strength (Athletics) check. On a check that fails by 5 or more, the creature slips and falls into the lava.

Aerial Minions. The following minions fly above the chasm; because their flight is not granted by a spell or magic item, they do not plummet into the fiery depths below.

- Two **flameskulls** hover above the chasm, 15 ft. above and away from the bridge, one to the east, the other to the west.
- Up to five **magma mephits** kamikaze the adventurers (see their Death Burst trait) but only after getting their money's worth on *heat metal* spells and Fire Breath attacks.

Northern Minions. These minions act as Halaster's vanguard, holding the line as he hurls his spells at the adventurers:

- Four **azers**, whose sole directive is to stall the adventurers from reaching Halaster. If moving does not provoke attacks of opportunity from the party, they move back and forth along the bridge, trying to trigger the fireball trap. The first pair starts the battle 20 ft. from Area 17; the other pair wait at the foot of the bridge, ready to advance if necessary.

- A **fire elemental** that can safely move through the azers' space without harming them (see its Fire Form trait). It attempts to move through every adventurers' space to set them aflame.

Southern Minions. These minions are meant to push the adventurers northward to Halaster and stop them from escaping to the south.

- A **fire giant** lumbers up from the south, aiming to pressure the adventurers into heading north so that they might activate the fireball trap on the bridge. If she was not slain, this giant is Emberosa from Level 14; otherwise, the giant is the sole survivor of the adventurers' rampage and Halaster's wrath.
- Four constructs carved in the likeness of Halaster pepper the adventurers with arrows from Area 9. They are **archers** but count as constructs, and have immunity to both psychic and poison damage, as well as the poisoned condition. Should the party storm Area 9, one of the constructs opens the double door (see Area 9, Level 15), activating a random elder rune that affects all creatures in the room. If Halaster's rune is drawn, the pillars also emit a *prismatic spray* (DC 22) that targets all creatures within Area 9.

Halaster's Tactics. The Mad Mage employs these tactics, in addition to his normal ones:

- Halaster opens up with a *chain lightning* spell that should teach the adventurers just how very badly they've screwed up.
- Halaster has prepared *feather fall* and *investiture of flame* (see XGE) instead of *arcane lock* and *knock*.
- If he has it prepared and isn't concentrating on another spell, Halaster drops a *cloud of daggers* to shore up a 5-foot-area, should one of his northern minions die.
- As a last resort, Halaster attempts to destroy the bridge with a *dispel magic* spell, cast via a Legendary Action. He adds a +7 bonus to his ability check and must succeed on a DC 18.

Victory. Should Halaster be defeated, the party will find no further traps to harry them. However, if the **death tyrant** Netherskull is not already dead, it may strike as they make their way out of Level 15.

Repeat Ad Nauseum. If you'd like to insert more battles with Halaster into your story without actually using precious in-game time for it, narrate that over the course of the next several weeks or months, the party is just repeatedly conjured by Halaster for battle after battle. Often he conjures them to the dark depths of Undermountain, but he also ambushes them on the surface: at their inn, while they're getting a haircut, at a carnival in which he challenges them to a ringtoss, and more. No matter what, it seems they cannot escape his shadow. Each time, they emerge victorious; each time the Mad Mage returns, more frenzied than the last—until there comes a period in which he does not bother them. That's when you begin Round 3, the final encounter, below.

ROUND 3: MAXIMUM INSANITY

Like a scorned toddler, Halaster has deigned to take out his fetal rage on the entire world—by knocking Stardock out of orbit and crashing it into Waterdeep. There upon the asteroid's craggy surface, the party must defeat Halaster to spare the world an extinction level event.

Jhesiyra's Intervention. Unlike Round 2, it isn't Halaster who conjures the adventurers, but Jhesiyra herself. Although she is no saint, she cannot abide the Mad Mage's lunacy any longer—especially since the asteroid is aimed at Waterdeep itself and will destroy most of Undermountain.

Halaster's "Plan." The Mad Mage has lost him-self to insanity. He would rather destroy his toys than let others play with them. Alas, he cannot crash an asteroid on his own and required additional magi. Eager to see this carnage wrought upon the world, fiends of all stripes have volunteered for this effort. These co-conspirators care little for their own self-destruction, for they shall return to the Lower Planes where they will be lauded as heroes. Even Halaster is unconcerned, as he's *certain* the Knot in the Weave will survive to resurrect him in the collapsed remains of Undermountain.

Stardock Inhabitants. Halaster neglected to tell the dragons and githyanki of his plans, but they've discovered them anyway. His fiendish army proved too much to handle, and so they fled through the gateway leading to the Crystal Labyrinth and hopped into the pits that empty out into the Astral Plane.

Map. This encounter requires the Level 16 map.

1. THE END IS NIGH

When Jhesiyra conjures the adventurers, they begin in Area 19A, which is strangely empty. Noises—almost religious in nature—can be heard from Area 20. Read the following:

Once again, you've been ripped away from your well-earned rest. It does not surprise you that the Mad Mage lives again—but what does surprise you is the tone of this most recent kidnapping. There's a distinct lack of... chicanery. A reek of desperation hangs heavy in the air, heavy in your mind. The chamber you stand in is familiar—and you realize that you aren't on Toril anymore, but back on the orbiting asteroid you visited long ago. Inertia rocks the asteroid and your stomach.

It's while you're holding onto your lunch that a voice visits your mind. It whispers, "The Mad Mage! His fetal rage will cost the very world! He's knocked the asteroid from orbit and is aiming it at Waterdeep! At Toril itself! Murder is the only solution left to us! Go, go now! *GO!*"

The doors fly open, revealing the swollen mass of the blue planet below—and it's getting closer. At the docks, Halaster Blackcloak watches, his arms spread out as if to embrace this wanton destruction. Countless creatures so horrid that they can only hail from the deepest of Hells crawl along the docks, supplicating themselves in worship of the imminent destruction and perhaps even Halaster himself.

A throng of fiends stand between the adventurers and Halaster, described below, but only a handful involve themselves in combat; the others must give their lives to propel the asteroid. The Mad Mage stays until the adventurers cut a path to him, after which he simply steps off the dock and winds up on the inverted side of the asteroid's gravity plane. He then runs onto Stardock's bottom, where other fiends continue their diabolical ritual.

Fiends. Devils, all giddy with excitement, inhabit Area 20 and protect Halaster at all costs: an **ice devil**, two **bearded devils**, four **spined devils**, and a **blue abishai**. They employ the following tactics:

- The ice devil engages the adventurers in melee combat but it first raises a wall of ice to protect Halaster, closing off the southeastern dock.
- The spined devils rain tail spines from above.
- The two bearded devils rush the intruders.
- On its first turn, the blue abishai casts *greater invisibility* and launches into the air. On its second turn, it unleashes a *chain lightning* spell and a *cone of cold* on the third.

Halaster's Tactics. Halaster spends this encounter layering defensive spells on himself. He already has *mage armor* and *mind blank*. His first turn is spent casting *fire shield* and his first Legendary Action is used to cast *mirror image*, if he has it prepared. He flees after two rounds or when a foe reaches him.

Halaster's Rebuttal. When the party confronts the Mad Mage, read the following:

Halaster turns around slowly as the asteroid enters Toril's fiery atmosphere. If he's surprised to see you, he doesn't let it show. He shouts, "Sometimes, my friends, the only way to win the game is not to play! This time, the only way is to throw it all out: the game, the baby, the bathwater! All of it! Lest we find ourselves trapped in this endless cycle of duels and death, until at last I triumph over you! But that would be madness! *That* would be mad!"

The Mad Mage raises his arms to welcome this destruction. He looks like a doomsday prophet that has graduated into becoming the very messiah whose fiery arrival he foretold.

2. CHASING MADNESS

Chasing after the Mad Mage, you step off the docks and let gravity reverse itself. What you see on the asteroid's underbelly can be described only as a Golgotha strewn with the tattered corpses of creatures so hellish, not even the most astute demonologists could categorize them. One behemoth towers above them all: a two-headed demon whose whip rains black blood. Its wolf head snarls at you and its ophidian counterpart declares, "In the name of Demogorgon, this world must burn!"

A frail figure clammers onto the demon's shoulder: Halaster. He shouts, "Don't worry! There's plenty more where that one comes from! Whole universe is full of 'em!"

On Stardock's underbelly, a horde of demons have just finished slaughtering each other, for every death is a well of power that Halaster can draw on to propel the asteroid. Only one demon has emerged from this bloody and gratifying conflict: a **molydeus** (see *MToF* for lore) upon whose shoulder rides the Mad Mage. The demon's infernal weapon is a whip, signifying its service to Demogorgon, the Prince of Demons. Wounded in this bloody conflict, it has only 140 remaining hit points.

Halaster's Tactics. After his first turn, Halaster uses a Legendary Action to cast *fly* and flees to the top-side of Stardock. If he is reduced to 101 or fewer hit points, he leaves at the next available opportunity.

3. INSANE IN THE MEMBRANE

Fiendish corpses litter the asteroid, all aglow in the light of Halaster's personal rune. It takes little effort to understand that their lives, temporary as they are, were expended to fuel propelling this asteroid into the unsuspecting planet below. Flames lick at an invisible dome of force surrounding the asteroid, preventing it from burning up in the atmosphere. A coastline rushes in to meet you, and with a sickening clarity, you recognize it as the Sword Coast.

You hear nothing but the screams perpetuating themselves in your mind, perhaps planted there by the Mad Mage... perhaps not. Over the asteroid's curvature, you run, until you see him there, waiting for you. At his side are two yugoloths: a vulpine creature clutching a glowing tome, and a green-skinned brute fondling a bloodied greataxe.

"You should've known!" comes the Mad Mage's voice, flung out like uncaring dice across a tabletop. "You should've known I am nothing more than a sore loser! A sore loser armed with more and better spellcraft than any mortal that has ever walked these planes! Can you think of no better end than this?"

With his fortune expended on this ridiculous effort, the Mad Mage has had to go on credit with his most favorite retinues: yugoloths. Too many, however, are wise to his tricks and only his chief-most confidants, all of whom have also fallen prey to the seductive influence of the Knot in the Weave, have decided to join him: an **arcanaloth** and a **nycaloth**. If they were not slain, the former is the headmaster of Dweomer-core; the latter is Raxxus, the executioner of Fazrian the planetar.

Tactics. The yugoloths employ these tactics:

- The nycaloth is already under a spell of *mirror image*. On its first turn, it teleports into the fray to strike at the weakest foes and continues to harry them until they reach Halaster. It does not land, but instead strafes its targets.
- Should a creature come under a powerful or necessary spell (such as *fly*, to keep after Halaster), the nycaloth flies over and casts *dispel magic*.
- The arcanaloth has already used its 8th-level spell slot to cast *mind blank* on itself. It reserves its reaction for *counterspelling* any *counterspells* used on Halaster or itself. It opens up with a *chain lightning* spell and uses a *finger of death* spell to finish off a weakened foe.

Halaster's Tactics. Halaster has already cast *fly* upon himself and devotes his concentration to it. Use his general tactics thereafter. He fights to the death, believing that the Knot in the Weave can and will ensure his resurrection.

JHESIYRA'S SACRIFICE

If Halaster is slain, his hold over Stardock vanishes. Jhesiyra imposes all her will on it and causes it to explode within the atmosphere, sparing countless lives—at the cost of her own. Her last breath is also spent spiring the adventurers back to Waterdeep where they can see the asteroid shatter.

Permadeath. Despite believing otherwise, Halaster cannot be resurrected outside Undermountain. Even the Knot in the Weave can extend its influence into the upper atmosphere, let alone outer space.

TIME IS A WHEEL

Within this encounter, Halaster leads the adventurers back to Level 1, Area 27, the Hidden Demiplane he may have first met them in so long ago. As they will discover, the rift they chased him through crossed not only space, but time itself. They have turned back the clock to that fateful day they found the Mad Mage.

If your party did not visit that location, or met Halaster elsewhere, you can still reshape these events to better fit your story. So long as a past- and present-Halaster faces the adventurers, you're golden.

This encounter is a lesson in the dangers of chronomancy, as the adventurers will soon learn. Read the following when the adventurers follow Halaster:

Through the rift you go, hungry to strike down that flippant, fleeing wizard. Where you emerge is a gray and gloomy realm you've seen before: a demiplane where you first met the Mad Mage. And there he is, lounging on his plush chair, reading a novel. A freestanding wall holds a portrait of Halaster, which seems to grin crazily at you.

The wizard looks from his tome and smiles. "Well, don't just stand—" His smile flattens, and his eyes take on a hard look. "Oh, it's *you*. You're not my problem yet. Take it up with this buffoon." The Mad Mage gestures to the portrait on the wall—which animates. The portrait melts, becoming an empty frame, and that pool of ichor forms itself back into the true Halaster Blackcloak. "Let's dance!" he shouts, brandishing his scepter!

When the adventurers arrive, the younger Halaster is already there, reading a novel—*The Adventurers of Huckleberry Sahaguin*. He seems unconcerned when a future version of himself storms in with a band of adventurers at his heels. The party can then resume their fight with Halaster, now that he's stepped out from his portrait.

Past-Halaster. If Halaster is bruised, he blackmails his past-self into helping him. This **Halaster Black-cloak** has all his hit points and spell slots, but only casts cantrips or *magic missile* (at any level). Only if he himself is in danger will he use his meaner spells.

When Present-Halaster solicits his past-self, read:

As you lay waste to the Mad Mage, his past-self jeers from his plush chair. "Yeah, you get him!"

On the heels of an arcane flourish, Present-Halaster snarls, "Get in here and help me, you daft fool!"

"Now why would I do that?"

"I know your every skeleton—enough dirt to fill a grave! I'll tell Tas all about the—"

Past-Halaster gasps, "You wouldn't!"

Present-Halaster shrugs, "Won't be me that has to deal with the fallout—you'll have already cleaned it up for me!"

Balling his fists, the past-Halaster grumbles, "Fine, you blackmailing-bastard, fine!"

PARTIES OF FUTURE PAST

Amidst your mythic battle, the Past-Halaster cocks his ear and demands, "Shhhh! I think I hear them?"

"Them?!" shouts Present-Halaster. "Who?"

Past-Halaster gestures at you. "*Them!*"

"Oh god," Present-Halaster mumbles. He looks to you and says, "Quick! Hide! If your past-selves see you, it will destroy everything!"

Past-Halaster snorts. "No, it won't."

Present-Halaster grins sheepishly. "Okay, it won't, but it *will* scramble your brains—and I just can't handle the paperwork right now! The Chronomancer's Union's already on my ass!"

At the end of the first round of combat, the party's past-selves discover the Hidden Demiplane on Level 1 of Undermountain. The present-adventurers can't risk being seen by their past-selves, as it will inflict tremendous damage to their past-psyches—damage that ripples out to the present, harming them now in their battle with Halaster. When the past-adventurers enter the demiplane, read the following:

The Mad Mage squeals, "Eek!" and literally dives into the empty portrait on the freestanding wall. As if driven by animal instinct, you hide behind the furniture of this gloomy realm. A rift opens and familiar voices echo throughout the realm.

"Well," says Past-Halaster, "don't just stand there like a boob. Three questions of this lair you can ask; twice will the answer be true, and once false. And be quick about it—the show *must* go on!"

Good gods above, it's so eerie, so familiar, so hollow. Was the Mad Mage always referring to you in this moment when he said "the 'show' must go on?" Was he always just trying to hurry you along while, outside your periphery, future titans battled it out for the fate of Undermountain?

You can't help but nurse a need to see yourself, not as you are but as you were. That need grows and grows into an insatiable hunger that drives you towards the wall's edge. You inch forward until at last you can behold them—you. You, so naïve, so young and so unbroken, unaware to the horrors ahead and blind to the chains that have always been locked firmly around your neck. Time is a wheel, indeed.

Any character that doesn't take the Hide action and succeed on its DC 17 Dexterity (Stealth) check is glimpsed by their past-self while conversing with Past-Halaster. This sight is immensely traumatic. The past-self has no choice but to compartmentalize the trauma of seeing their future-self and kicks the can of that trauma down the road, inflicting 22 (4d10) psychic damage to the present-character. Thereafter, the present-character suddenly remembers that they *did* already see their future-self back then. Time has come full circle.

If a character currently in the party was not there when the original party first met Halaster here on Level 1, they've less to fear. They cannot be harmed, but *can* minorly harm their comrades that *were* there in the past. If the party met Brad the Bold on Level 10, weeks after meeting Halaster, but now see him in the past, the same trauma that would have occurred for being seen by a past-self echoes out again. This trauma inflicts 5 (1d10) psychic damage to others.

THIS IS THE SOUND OF THE POLICE

After hiding from their past-selves, the adventurers must listen to Past-Halaster give the same speech he gave to the party so long ago. Just after the past-party leaves, a golden rift opens up within the demiplane, out which steps a Timeline-Enforcer named Kolidas Anderius. He's been sent to arrest the Mad Mage for screwing around with chronomancy again. Kolidas is not human, only humanoid; in fact, his race is so utterly alien that a mortal of the Material Plane can't even recall what the mage looked like; they can only liken him to an "authority figure."

Read the following when Kolidas appears:

A rift of golden hues roars into existence and out steps a man—a creature—whose eyeless face mutes your very mind. It may as well be a grey, humanoid-shaped blob. All you can recall is that this authority figure flashes a brass badge.

"You've done it this time!" the authority shouts. "This is your third-strike, Halaster!"

"Kolidas?" shouts the Mad Mage.

"Anderius?" adds the past-Mad Mage.

"The very same!" agrees the present-Mad Mage.

"We warned you to stop screwing around with timelines, H.B.! The Chronomancer's Union has called you to court! Get in the rift. All of you—yes, *all of you*—are to face justice."

The Mad Magi squint at this alien officer of the time-court and one shouts at you, "Get him!"

The adventurers have the opportunity to side with the Halasters, lest they all be brought to face justice in the Chronomancer's Court. After a round of combat, Kolidas teleports through the rift, leaving them. If the adventurers pay Kolidas no heed, Halaster teleports out of the demiplane, waiting for the party in your next chosen encounter.

Kolidas has the statistics of a LE **archmage** with *slow* and *haste* prepared instead of *fly* and *identify*. He considers all parties guilty and stops at nothing to take them into custody. He won't aid the adventurers against Halaster. He flees when reduced to 25 hit points or less.

AREAS OF NOTE

The following areas are of note:

1. NO RETREAT

The Mad Mage's last gate flashes with violet energy, vomiting you out onto the cold, marble floor. There is a chill in the air, a miasma that drifts out from the now inactive gate. The sigil above has gone dark and Halaster's stony visage bears a lunatic's grin. Its eyes look towards a nearby statue of himself, his stony fingers curled into talons like the vulture he is.

Frescoes line the wall, each depicting Halaster performing mundane tasks: stretching and yawning; juggling rods; sweeping the floor; making a grand escape from a straitjacket, doing handstands, and shadowboxing. His chicanery is on full display here—and you would expect nothing less in this mad wizard's lair.

There is no escape. You know that and it does not scare you. That truth dawns on you with little fanfare—and with it comes this realization: the day has come at last. You've dreamed of it, dreaded it. Not a single soul can truly understand for how many years Undermountain has languished under the Mad Mage. It's impossible to know how many lives have been lost or ruined by Halaster's chicanery. There's but one certainty: you are not the first, but you *will* be the last to suffer by his hand.

The day has come at long last to kill Halaster Blackcloak.

A WELL-NEEDED RESPITE

If you're utilizing the variants used throughout this chapter, the adventurers will need a long rest—which those variants assume they'll have. Before they leave, Halaster's voice booms, "Take a rest! You'll need it!"

Thanks to chronomancy spells placed by Halaster, the adventurers can achieve their long rest within minutes. However, the statue here in Area 1 can still selectively *counterspell* the party, so as to put a stop to any hijinks they might attempt now that they've been gifted time to rest.

Push it to the Limit. As described in *Quick Notes*, this should be the last long rest the party achieves in the campaign. Halaster stops at nothing to prevent them from scoring another one.

HALASTER'S JUKEBOX

Throughout the Mad Wizard's Lair, music is belched out from every hall and from under every tile. When the adventurers first enter, they hear Apocalyptica's cover of *Hall of the Mountain King*.

You can add further songs, including songs with lyrics (which are normally avoided in tabletop games for how distracting or ill-fitting they are), as all this music is in-game, being played by Halaster himself.

Halaster's Top Ten. Listed in the *Halaster's Game* supplement, the *Companion* recommends several songs that could be used as your campaign's theme song. You may be interested in playing any or all of them right now:

- Apocalyptica's *Hall of the Mountain King*
- Blues Saraceno's *Run On For a Long Time*
- Ennio Morricone's *Rabbia E Tarantella*
- The Cosby Show's theme song.
- Blondie's *One Way or Another*
- Benny Goodman's *Sing, Sing, Sing*
- DJ Day's *Four Hills*
- Seatbelt's *Tank!* (Cowboy Bebop theme)
- Ousiodes' *Arcadia*
- Gary Jules' *Mad World*

2. REVERSED LIBRARY

You come upon an upside-down library whose gravity has so clearly been screwed with. Bookshelves teem with ancient tomes, some floating in the empty air, opened on their spines. Behind a desk stands a high-backed chair wreathed in the shadows spat out by a cold but roaring fireplace.

If this den seems familiar to the adventurers, it's because it is: on Level 1, the *Companion* changed Area 13, into an upside-down den. It's an exact copy of this chamber, except for the desk.

Optional Twist. If you're using an optional twist, plant one (or all) of the following tomes in the book-shelf or on the desk.

- If you're running *The Dark Tower*, the tome is *On the Nature of Alternate Realities* by Richard Bachdwarf.
- If you're running *Halaster's Game*, instead of a tome, a ratings report is on the desk, describing that this "season" is the highest-rated, most-watched ever.
- If you're running *Ground-Mage Day*, the tome is a collection of plays. *Woodchuck's Omen* is bookmarked, a story in which a wizard finds himself trapped in a time-loop. If this is too on the nose for you, consider instead *What the Chronomancers Don't Say*.
- If you're running *Puppet on the String*, the tome is instead a loose diary page. Most of the chicken scratch is illegible, but the reader can make out, "Melair could not leave either. It called to him. Kept him here. Would not let him leave. This was his tomb long before he ever died. Only Marambra managed to break free... but no one else. Arcturia, Trobriand. Will I succumb to the addiction? Have I already? And what of Jhesiyra?"

3. TALKING HEADS

Cringing at what you expect can only be another trap, you push open the door upon a sight most macabre: shelf after shelf lined up with heads lined up in jars. And, to your horror, they're *alive*. Alive and *talking*. One of these heads, a human's, pipes up: "Heads up, fellas," he says—eliciting an avalanche of groans—"We've got new guests!"

Channel *Futurama* when presenting this area, which it certainly is an allusion to.

To enumerate every head here would be tedious; to craft several new characters for this social encounter would also be tiresome. Instead, place characters that the adventurers have already met—and perhaps even killed—in this area. Yes, that's right: Halaster has decapitated these corpses and filled them with a foul mimicry of life.

OPTIONAL TWIST

The following optional twists affect this area:

The Dark Tower. If you're running this optional twist, some of the heads have recently spoken with alternate versions of the adventurers from other realities. For example, after being asked a question, a head might remark, "Didn't you hear me an hour ago?"

Halaster's Game. If you're running this twist, or already operating under it, the heads often provide interviews for the show, detailing their encounters with the party, the Mad Mage, or Undermountain. For example, if the head belongs to Sundeth, the half-ogre that commanded Skullport under the Xanathar Guild's banner, he might detail his run-in with the adventurers: "Now, when the contestants arrived, I just thought it was another boat of adventurers. Boy, was I wrong. I don't particularly enjoy ruling with an iron fist, but it's necessary sometimes... They didn't see it that way, as you can tell."

4. HELMED HORRORS

The **helmed horrors** here are carved in the likeness of Halaster himself. Anticipating their visit, he has magically suited each horror's Spell Immunity trait to protect against the adventurers' favorite spells—so determine this ahead of time.

Additionally, the horrors are capable of speaking short phrases in Common, as demonstrated in the text below. Read the following:

From within the darkness, you hear a creaking whisper: "They have come... at last."

"At last," murmur five more voices, each ringing out with the echoes of drawn steel.

Now you see them, floating there in the alcoves: crimson suits of animated armor whose helms are carved in the likeness of Halaster himself.

With a shiver, each of these helmed horrors lift their arms, growing a blade of crimson steel from their wrists.

"At last," they murmur in unison, "Our purpose is complete."

OPTIONAL TWIST

If you're running one of the optional twists described in this chapter, the helmed horrors cryptically hint at it. Use the dialogue below:

The Dark Tower. The horrors hint at the existence of alternate realities. Two of these quotes are from Stephen King's *Dark Tower* series. Reward a player that can identify them as such with inspiration.

- "You come again, only slightly less than the last. Are we to believe this time will be different?"
- "You again. Let us clash as we have in our fondest times."

- "We were worried you would never return. Dance."
- "All is forgotten in the stone halls of the dead. These are the rooms of ruin where the spiders spin and the great circuits fall quiet, one by one..."
- "Go, then... There are other worlds than these."

Halaster's Game. You can use these quotes even if your campaign already uses the *Companion's* game show variant.

- "Look, brothers. They've made it. We must be in the season finale!"
- After cutting into an adventurer, the horror sheepishly asks, "Might I have your autograph?"
- Looking into one of Halaster's spectral eyes, the horror says, "This episode is sponsored by Paethier's Pipeweed: keep blazing, stay amazing!"
- The helmed horrors all sing the *Dungeon of the Mad Mage* theme song
- "The show must go on!"

Ground-Mage Day. The horrors remark about the funny nature of cyclical time and remember each of its cycles since being created.

- "Time is truly a wheel, indeed..."
- "So it has happened. So it shall again."
- "We tire not of our task. Nay, we revel in it."
- "Another barge comes every fifteen minutes..."
- "Failure is simply the opportunity to begin again. We welcome it. We welcome you."

Puppet on the String. The horrors, sympathetic to their dear creator, lament over Halaster's torment by the Knot in the Weave.

- "The Master's torment is nearly at an end..."
- "It courses through us all. Nourishes us. Sustains us. Do you not hear its phantom call?"
- "Its seed has already bloomed within you. Try as you might, never shall you leave this dungeon. Never shall you wish to."
- "There is a Knot in the Weave—a noose from which we all hang. You feel it, do you not? You feel it around your neck."
- "Free him who gave us life. Free him who gave purpose to yours. Free him!"

6. WIZARDLY WARDS

6A. LIGHTNING PILLARS

At last, you come to the first gauntlet laid by the Mad Mage to deter and eliminate intruders: a web of copper-plated pillars that spit lightning. You watch arcs of lightning bounce from pillar to pillar, zipping and zagging across the chamber.

Between a pair of pillars stretches a forking hallway. What treasures and horrors might those vaults shelter? There's but one way to find out...

Although it can only be gleaned by a divination spell or a DC 20 Intelligence (Investigation) check, the lightning that surges through the pillars is actually being channeled to Trobriand's Workshop.

The Dark Tower. If you're running this twist, the scorched bones of one alternate-self are in the corner, easily noticed with a DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check.

6B. ANGELIC SHIELD

When a character wields the shield, read:

The angelic shield is a comfortable weight on your arm. As you admire its fine craftsmanship—likely forged by the Melairkyn dwarves—a whisper runs up your arteries and into your heart. "What mortal dares bear my weight?" it coldly demands.

Roleplaying the Shield. The voice emanating from the shield belongs to a calm but indignant entity—a higher being whose patience has thinned. Draw on any of the sample dialogue below:

- "I have languished here for centuries only to be lifted up by a mortal—oh how the mighty fall, indeed."
- "My secrets are my own. Deprive me of them if you must, but I will not give them up so easily."
- "The Mad Mage is a cunning pest. I would like nothing more than to break free from this prison and teach him the error of his flippant ways."

Roleplaying the Pit Fiend. If Kastzanedes is ever released, the fiend revels in it. It mocks the party as gullible mortals who have invited themselves to their own doom. As if evil were blood sugar, Kastzanedes' has built up to cartoonish levels and its every word is a cliché.

Optional Twist. If you're running a twist, the pit fiend is aware of it. It tells the shield's bearer, "There is a secret to this place, to you. A dark horse that not one of you could even begin to suspect. Alas, I am bound to silence, thanks to the Mad Mage. Together, with my sister shield, we can overcome our bonds to share the truth... Otherwise, this secret is mine alone to bear until magic forces me to divulge it."

If Kastzanedes is released, it doesn't divulge the secret except to mock the adventurers mid-battle. It only hints at the truth, reveling in the fact that it's privy to the truth and they're not.

7. TELEPORTATION PILLARS

The cold hallway terminates in a chamber supported by eight black, basalt pillars, each bearing a symbol. It's the fleshless skull you notice first, directly opposite of you. To its left and right are a kite shield and an open eye. You need not be a wizard to understand their meaning: abjuration and divination magic, respectively. You continue to scan the pillars for their symbols: a painted smirk that can only represent the school of enchantment; a trio of fire, frost, and lightning; the masks of tragedy and comedy; an anvil; and an open palm that seems to beckon creatures from beyond the stars.

Perpetually wary for traps, it comes as no shock when a stone mouth sprouts upon the floor. Its nasal voice shares with you a riddle: "A crown festooned my dwarven brow; I rest beneath the mountain now. Who, I ask, am I?"

When the adventurers provide the correct answer, the *magic mouth* returns. Read the following:

That stone mouth reappears on the floor to mock you: "Wow, you figured out this barebones, simple riddle that even the most disheveled layman could provide. Feel good? Warm, fuzzy? Like you earned something and weren't just handed it? Like you broke into the Mad Wizard's Lair uninvited instead of what's *clearly* happening?"

Amidst this castigation, the symbols begin to glow bright, psychedelic colors.

"Well?" says the stone mouth. "Stand inside and wave your arms about if you want to advance. Melair... Gods, Melair..."

8. TELEPORTATION PILLARS

Assuming the adventurers are teleported here from Area 7, read the following:

The chill wind that wound its way about you has delivered you to another basalt-pillared chamber. Expecting to have to put up with the *magic mouth's* diatribe again, you're relieved when it's absent. The pillars in this chamber are embedded with fist-sized, yellow sapphires. Or, rather, five of the eight are.

It's when you see the empty indentations along three pillars that you realize that, unless they're returned, there is no leaving Halaster's lair from this way.

9. VAULTS

9A. HALL OF STAFFS

It is no secret that the Mad Mage has a fondness for staves—and in this half-collapsed hall, you find countless mosaics that depict staves of every kind: staves of iron and gnarled wood; of frost, fire, even vengeance; staves adorned with pearls from the forgotten depths and staves made from driftwood, kept together only by rope and faith. The one farthest from you depicts a staff crowned with a nest of metal spires, within which lightning curdles.

9B. DIABOLICAL SHIELD

This chamber holds but one treasure: a steel shield cast in the form of a scowling devil's face. Bronze flames wreath the fiend, framing its jagged, sinister face.

If your party's resident cleric or paladin happens to serve Tyr, it's incredibly convenient they find one of their deity's servants. You can otherwise personalize Aryx to serve the deity of your choice, but most holy- or god-fearing men would respect the angel, no matter who he serves.

Optional Twist. Unlike the pit fiend trapped in the angelic shield, Aryx is aware that the optional twist exists, but has no idea what it is. The Mad Mage has spent many hours, Aryx says, mocking him over it.

10. ARCANE DISPLAY

DotMM misses a great opportunity with the flame skulls here. If any of the Dweomercore students from Level 9 are dead—be it by an adventurer's hand or Halaster's—then they've since been turned into one of the seven flame skulls in Area 10B.

The students retain their memories and vendettas. Likewise, they're identifiable by their voices, which, other than taking on a fiery tone, are the same. The skull of Cephalosk, the mind flayer, is the most identifiable, given its abnormal shape.

If even one former pupil is present, focus entirely on them—and if all seven of Dweomercore's star pupils are dead, all the better. Any other flame skulls aren't worth roleplaying.

If any Dweomercore student is present, they might confront the adventurers with the following dialogue. Tailor it to better fit their past interactions with the party, especially if they were slain by an adventurer.

- If present, Cephalosk says, "Today I will dine on that which I should have ripped from your skulls long ago!"
- If present, Spite Harrowdale complains, "I had it all! Youth! Admiration! The envy of my peers! And you've *deprived* me of it! Face my fate and despair! At last—I can *never* die!"
- If present, Elan Tanor'thal blithely remarks on the irony of his situation: "My ancestors ruled Skullport long before the skulls came... And when you're nothing more than ash, I will return there to take back my birthright."
- If present, Skrianna Shadowdusk mentions the portal her family opened on Level 22: "Even now I still hear the whispers... The door may be closed, but they can still peer from the crack. You can hear them too now, can't you?"
- If present, Nylas Jowd laments, "I am what I made. And what I made could never be satisfied again. Suffer with me!"
- If present, Turbulence and Violence shout a duet. Turbulence shouts, "The Headmaster promised things would change for the better." Violence snarls, "Then *you* arrived!"

Skullport. If you ran the *Return of the Thirteen* questline included by the *Companion* in the Skullport chapter, the adventurers should be familiar with the flame skulls that once ruled Skullport. The seven skulls here could be members of ruling Thirteen instead of the Mad Mage's former apprentices or students. This could go to explain how Skullport came to be under the Xanathar Guild's rule.

Running with this idea, you can up the number of flame skulls here to Thirteen, but structure it into a wave assault: two waves of four skulls attack, one after the other, then a wave of five.

It seems that the Mad Mage has pressed the Thirteen into service. They cannot return to Skullport until the party is defeated here. One might even remark, "We have always known the price of duty... Never have we been forced to ignore it until now. Because... Because of *you*."

11. TROBRIAND'S WORKSHOP

Demotivational posters decorate Trobriand's work-shop, as included in the descriptions below. The author of the *Companion*—that's me—did not come up with these himself, so don't give that bastard any of the credit.

11A. WORK IN PROGRESS

The doors to this workshop are well-oiled; they swing open without even the barest squeak.

Work benches line the walls and scrap metal is piled everywhere in unorganized heaps. Grim, sarcastic, animated posters line the walls. In one, you see a salmon leaping up a waterfall—right into the jaws of a grizzly bear. The caption reads, "Ambition: The journey of a thousand miles sometimes ends very, very, badly." After a moment, the animation resets.

Another poster shows a line of slaves pulling blocks of stone towards a half-built pyramid. The caption reads, "Achievement: you can do anything you set your mind to when you have vision, determination, and an endless supply of expendable labor."

The posters go on.

Looking about, this seems familiar. The metal, familiar. You've seen this handiwork before, ten floors up, in Trobriand's Graveyard. Surely, this is the workshop of the Metal Mage.

11B. SCALADAR

Scaladar! The name is on your tongue as if their creator wanted all to know of his invention! The metallic scorpions descend upon you, their stingers crackling with arcs of lightning!

Behind them, you can't help but notice, is another one of those bleak posters, this one depicting a sinking ship. The caption below reads, "Mistakes: it could be that the purpose of your life is only to serve as a warning to others."

11C. TROBRIAND'S BODY

Look, do you really think that Trobriand would leave his body unguarded and unwarded? The archmage has instead cast an *antipathy/sympathy* spell (DC 17) upon the door that activates the moment a creature attempts to push it open.

The following text assumes the party is familiar with Trobriand's likeness. Adjust accordingly.

Lying upon a stone slab is the body of a wizard whose beard is the color of rusted iron. On his left index finger is an elaborate ring carved in the likeness of a scorpion.

It's only after a brief pause that you realize the comatose wizard lying there is none other than Trobriand himself—the so-called Metal Mage, the apprentice of Halaster Blackcloak.

As you approach, of course wary for traps, an emotionless voice recites a message that booms from above: "Body in stasis. Please confer with host golem. Please vacate the premises. Body in stasis. Please confer with..."

Elite Four. If you're running this variant, the body of Trobriand is protected by a *wall of force* that only Trobriand or Halaster can dismiss, although it can be destroyed by a *disintegrate* spell.

13. THE METAL MAGE

Lightning screams in the distance, washing the dungeon in an azure glow. A door opens on its own accord, revealing an iron golem whose chiseled skull is as fleshless and macabre as a real one. The construct strokes its offhand and emits a cold voice: "I have waited for this day. To think my place in the Seven could be thwarted by someone as fragile as *you*."

Behind the golem, twin iron-plated pillars hum with power, clouded by a strange miasma that instills within you a spiritual malaise. This is no mere construct, you realize, but a vessel.

The golem's hand curls into a fist, within which lightning curdles. The energy leaps from its knuckles, empowering its entire frame. That cold voice declares, "Face the wrath of Trobriand, mortals! Behold the triumph of machine over man!"

Roleplaying Trobriand. An anti-socialite that has always preferred machines over men, Trobriand is a heartless shut-in. The recent transference of his spirit to his new body has done little wonder for his flimsy humanity and emotional capacity. Only self-interest and indignation remain. In his one-track mind, once an acceptable solution has been found, there's no reason to look for another.

Older modules and materials have shown that the Metal Mage has long-sought to usurp his master. The *Companion* follows suit. Paint him as an impotent, would-be usurper waiting for his moment—and *this* is his moment. At your discretion, he parleys with the party, offering to side with them against Halaster—an act of treason that earns Arcturia's scorn. Secretly, Trobriand is in love (or obsessed) with Arcturia, who is deeply in love with the Mad Mage. Perhaps this is what drives his treason. Perhaps, in his one-track mind, if Arcturia will not love him as he is now, she may love him if he becomes Undermountain's new master.

As an Ally. If Trobriand does side with the party, Arcturia does not rest until he's dead. This is, admittedly, a big can of worms to open up on your end, as the DM, as they would suddenly have an **iron golem** at their side. Trobriand does, however, betray the party once Halaster is dead, as is his nature.

Tactics. Trobriand employs these tactics in battle:

- On his first turn, Trobriand casts *haste* on himself, enjoying the barrage of Longsword attacks he can unleash.
- Once he's been wounded—likely on his third or fourth turn—Trobriand casts *incendiary cloud*, centering it on himself. Not only does this inflict up to 10d8 damage on his foes, but it *heals* him for that much, thanks to his Fire Absorption trait. He intentionally fails the Dexterity saving throw imposed by the spell.
- While in the body of a golem, Trobriand uses his reactions to cast *counterspell*.
- If foes try to leave the room, Trobriand casts *chain lightning* if the spell can reach them. The spell does not specify that it cannot round corners between jumps.

Round 2. If his body was not destroyed, Trobriand makes a thunderous return three rounds later, once his spirit has been ejected from the golem. His tactics change during this phase:

- Trobriand gets three turns to prepare for his thunderous return to battle. First he casts *greater invisibility* on himself; with his movement (after standing up from being prone) he can get to Area 11B. On his second turn, he Dashes to get to just outside of 11A. On his third turn, he takes the Ready action to cast *chain lightning* when the first adventurer comes from the hallway to Area 13.
- On his fourth turn, Trobriand snaps out a *power word: kill*. The gloves are off now; he knows that this is life-or-death.
- While in his fragile body, Trobriand uses his reactions to cast *shield* spells.

- If he needs to gain cover, Trobriand retreats to Area 11A and closes the doors.
- If the adventurers do not leave Area 13, Trobriand kicks open the doors (if they're not already open) and unleashes either a *chain lightning* or *fireball* spell cast up to 8th-level, if possible.
- When at Death's Door, Trobriand sputters, "It needn't be this way! We can usurp the Mad Mage together!" (Trobriand is earnest, although there can be no peace between them so long as the *Elite Four* variant is being ran.)

ELITE FOUR

If you're running this variant, Trobriand is strangely absent from this area until the party's teleported here by Halaster, so that he can't be killed prematurely.

16. BROOM ROOM

When the adventurers enter this room, the brooms, which are animated and can speak, but not attack, are performing a play of your choosing. Singing *Be Our Guest* from *Beauty and the Beast* is also appropriate.

If there are any items you're itching to give your party, such as a lost memento, or a MacGuffin, here is a rather anticlimactic place to leave it.

The Dark Tower. If you're running this twist, then a nonmagical weapon belonging to one of the party members is among the brooms. It is an exact copy of their weapon, down to the last detail. It cannot be a weapon the adventurer lost, as they'll assume that the Mad Mage simply retrieved it.

17. ARCTURIA'S COURT

It shouldn't surprise you to hear music in this lair, but still it sends shivers up your spine—and it's because there's no warmth in it. You never thought music could be cold. It's as if all of winter opened its throat to sing.

When you throw open those doors to this atelier, you note first the swarm of butterflies plucking at a harp. All together, they vaguely resemble a humanoid. It's the animal-headed servants you see first, each brandishing blades or feather dusters. These freaks number six in all: one with the head of a dingo, another with an iguana, and—if you can believe it—a stork; others bear the heads of a shrew, an aardvark and a macabre head that can only belong to a moth.

At the center of it all is a blue-skinned woman adorned with gossamer wings. Lifting up her skirts, she dances gaily upon a pedestal. Her fingers are tipped in claws and bone spurs jut from her forearms and elbows. It's only when you smell the rot do you realize she's a gussied-up lich that has cheated the skeletal disfigurements such undead are forced to bear.

Roleplaying Arcturia. As mercurial as her magic, Arcturia has a volatile temperament. She can fly into a rage just as easily as she can relax to fine music. If she decides to betray the adventurers, her attack is as sudden as it is treacherous.

Of the Seven, Arcturia has always been the most devoted to Halaster. Older modules and materials even imply that she loves him. Embracing this tidbit, the *Companion* suggests roleplaying her as an un-requested admirer, one perpetually envious of the few individuals Halaster cares for, such as Tasselgryn Velldarn (the archmage of Skullport, whom he oft visits) or even the adventurers, who he gives so much of his attention—especially if Halaster has gone on and on about how he expects one to become his newest apprentice.

With no one else to find true companionship with, Arcturia has bonded with the many mimics that lair in this atelier of hers. They are her chief confidants; killing one sends her into a frenzy of wild grief.

Tactics. Arcturia and her minions (twelve **mimics** and three **champions**, one of which who sides against her and shall be referred to as "Dingo" below) use the following tactics in battle:

- Above all else, Arcturia is spiteful. She tries to inflict the most harm on someone, such as by disfigurement or *feblemind*.
- Arcturia treasures her mimic companions and does her best not to harm them, which greatly influences her tactics. She won't, for example, cast an area-of-effect spell, like *fireball*, if it will include the mimics.
- On her first turn, Arcturia moves to the back of the room and casts *reverse gravity*, centering the cylinder on the doors so as to escape its influence. Creatures that fall upwards take 3d6 bludgeoning damage when they strike the ceiling.
- On her second turn, Arcturia casts *feblemind*, targeting the foe she envies the most (such as a spellcaster Halaster has gone on and on about and wants to take on as an apprentice).
- On her third turn, or when she's been reduced to 63 hit points or less, Arcturia casts *true polymorph* on herself, assuming the statistics of an **adult gold dragon**, the statistics of which are provided in Appendix B. Per *Monster Manual* Errata, *true polymorph* does not grant the target access to that creature's Legendary Actions, but it *does* grant them its Legendary Resistance.
- Arcturia's reactions are reserved for *counterspells* until she is at 75 hit points or fewer.
- Arcturia prioritizes disabling her foes over inflicting damage. Her first Legendary Action is spent on Paralyzing Touch (if any targets are in range) or Frightening Gaze. Thereafter, she uses Cantrip or Paralyzing Touch, as she's loathe to harm her mimics. Once they're dead, she busts out Disrupt Life.
- If Arcturia wins the battle, she casts *flesh to stone* on the last combatants. Later, after a rest, she *true polymorphs* them into an animal-headed servant.

ON POLYMORPH

Arcturia is an unparalleled transmuter with the *true polymorph* spell at her disposal, allowing her to turn into a CR 21 or lower creature. While it would be easy for her—and therefore, you—to abuse this spell, the *Companion* recommends using tact instead. The same goes for the *polymorph* spell, which she could incessantly cast to gain more hit points and prolong this fight.

Additionally, consider the following whenever Arcturia casts *true polymorph* or *polymorph*:

- Area 17 has a 20-foot-high ceiling.
- Per *Monster Manual* Errata, a polymorphed target doesn't gain the Legendary Actions of the creature whose form it assumes. It does, however, grant its Legendary Resistance trait.
- Arcturia has a special kinship with her mimics and would rather not flatten them.

At the end of the day, D&D is about having fun. It's up to you as how to Arcturia uses her *polymorph* spells, but the *Companion* argues that less is more, which comes out in the tactics above.

HALASTER'S JUKEBOX

In this area, Halaster's music is muted. Instead, play Blue Kid's *Dismemberment Song*, which is sung by Arcturia and played by her band of butterfly-swarm-humanoids. All necessary instruments are provided.

The Cheeky Pluckers. Described in the *Halaster's Game* supplement and featured on Levels 9 and 14, the Cheeky Pluckers were amateur adventurers that fell into Arcturia's clutches. If any still survive, then Arcturia is cutting one open on a **mimic** in the form of a surgeon's table. She sings the *Dismemberment Song*. The dingo-headed **champion** is Fiona dé Vaun and sides with the adventurers against Arcturia.

ELITE FOUR

If you're running this penultimate encounter then Arcturia is absent from this area until it begins. Her mimics stay hidden. The Cheeky Pluckers, if they're included, are here as well.

18. ANIMATED HALLWAY

Cracking open the next door unleashes a frenzy of thunder: the hallway writhes and undulates like a worm high on moon dust. Slowly, you close the door, muting the cacophony. Taking a deep breath, you prepare yourself for this chicanery.

19. DOUBLE DOOR ROULETTE

The winds of fate blow you towards a chamber marked with seven sets of iron doors, each decorated with a mosaic of the Mad Mage in a seductive pose. At the chamber's heart stands a scintillating pillar wounded with deep notches. Within these notches flash a rainbow of lights, fiery and beautiful.

Seven doors. You know it in your heart that one, if not all, leads to the Mad Mage. What's the catch?

PENULTIMATE ENCOUNTER

As described in *Penultimate Encounters*, Area 19 is the site of the *Prismatic Gauntlet* challenge. If you're running this encounter, a *prismatic wall* spell stands between the eastern tunnel and the chamber's heart.

OPTIONAL TWIST

Two of the optional twists can play a part here:

The Dark Tower. If you're running this optional twist, then the remains of two alternate-selves can be found in front of the north and northeastern doors. The first remains are still-smoldering ashes; the other remains are acid-scattered bones.

Puppet on the String. When a character opens the wrong set of doors, they behold a flash of a chaotic realm of boundless energy—the Knot in the Weave. Under this variant, the pillar at the heart of Area 19 doesn't emit the *prismatic spray* spell, but the Knot in the Weave does from the doorway. Characters that see the Knot also see the silhouette of a man trapped in the knot's center.

20. HIDDEN HELM

Tucked into this chamber, as if it were some prize or secret, is a gilded throne with no hall to loom over, no subjects to dazzle. Its black velvet is embroidered with silver stars, as if it call out to the night skies you once dreamt under.

If Captain N'ghathrod or Rukha of the *Scavenger* explained their starbound journeys, a character can divine the purpose of this throne with a successful DC 23 Intelligence (Arcana) check.

Tactics. If the **ultroloths** attack from Area 21, they use the following tactics:

- The fiends are already concentrating on *clairvoyance* spells to watch Area 20, which they end to free up their concentration for better spells, but at the cost of their vision in Area 20. To make up for this, two ultroloths cast *dimension door*, each bringing along a companion. Before doing so, each fiend enshrouds itself in a *darkness* spell—which it can see through, thanks to its truesight. Teleporting into the chamber most likely surprises the adventurers, since the fiends can do so from 500 ft. away.
- On their second turn, the first and second ultroloths each make three melee attacks, prioritizing targets already stunned by its companions. Once a fiend loses concentration on its *darkness* spell, it uses its Hypnotic Gaze, now that its foes can see it.
- On its first turn, the third ultroloth casts *fire storm* on the party. On its second, it casts *fear*, which ends its *darkness* spell. On its third, if it gets one, it uses its Hypnotic Gaze and makes three longsword attacks.
- On its first turn, the fourth ultroloth casts *wall of fire*, dividing the party if possible, after its *dimension doored* into Area 20. This ends its *darkness* spell. On its later turns, it uses its Hypnotic Gaze and follows up with three melee attacks.

21. DISPLACED VAULT

21A. ACID AND GLASS

While *DotMM* has the ultroloths teleport into Area 20 to attack intruders, you can have them instead bide their time; they only attack if the intruders attempt to magically transport the *Scavenger's* helm.

Tactics. The ultroloths employ these tactics:

- If the ultroloths detect the adventurers—easily done with their *clairvoyance* spells in Area 20—they first cast *invisibility* on themselves (granting advantage to their +8 Stealth checks), then take Readied actions to spring the following tactics below once the party is in position.
- The first ultroloth encases the adventurers within a *wall of fire* spell, making it 20 feet in diameter. On its second turn, it casts *fear* from outside of the *wall of fire* if any adventurers haven't fallen into the pit.
- The second ultroloth unleashes a *fire storm* spell. This also damages the glass pit, possibly shattering it. On its second turn, it teleports into the fray alongside its brethren.
- The third and fourth ultroloths Teleport into the fray. On their second turns, they both use their Hypnotic Gazes, then follow up with three melee attacks.

The Dark Tower. If you're running this twist, one adventurer is consumed by a vision of him- or herself falling into the vat of acid below, although something about them appears different, such as a different hair color or armor style.

22. TOWER ENTRANCE

Per *DotMM*, characters that enter Halaster's extra-dimensional tower have no sense that they've left Undermountain at all. They simply move from one room to the next. If you'd instead prefer the party see Halaster's tower, read the following text:

The doors open upon a field of evenly clipped grass at the heart of which stands the Mad Mage's tower: a twisted spire whose roof is thatched with moldy, ancient books. The sky above is overcast and bleak, as if it were threatening to rain. What could possibly fall in this realm is anyone's guess. Toads? Perhaps silver, or maybe even eyeballs. Gods above know that Halaster is fond of eyeballs.

Only one thing is for certain: you're not in Undermountain anymore. As if it heard your thoughts, you find a sign growing out of a mushroom; it reads, "MAD WIZARD'S LAIR AHEAD: YOU'RE NOT IN UNDERMOUNTAIN ANYMORE!"

The adventurers start 300 ft. away from Halaster's tower. They cannot affect it, or the field, in any way at all. Neither can they fly; their only option is to walk to the front door.

23. GNOME WITH NO NAME

This otherwise empty chamber has nothing for you but a mirror framed in bronze—and gods above, you look terrible.

It comes as no surprise when the mirror's surface warbles, depicting now a red desert. A gnome stranded there blinks at you and she cries, "You! Can you hear me? Please, for the love of all that's right, get me outta this thing!"

Why, you wonder, can't a mirror in Undermountain ever just be a mirror?

As noted in *DotMM*, the gnome has been trapped so long she has forgotten her own name and history. Freedom is her only objective. Unfortunately, she can't provide information about Halaster's lair, if she ever had any to begin with.

The following text, in which the gnome is freed, assumes that the party breaks the mirror, instead of casting *dispel magic*. Adjust the text accordingly if they did the latter. Read the following:

You can't be certain that breaking this prison will not kill its sole prisoner—but here you are. The gnome offers a contented sigh, as if no fate could be worse than the one she already faces. The silvered surface cracks easily enough and the shards fly.

Instinctively you shield your eyes, lest glass or magic blind you. In the aftermath, you hear what can only be described as audible happiness. The gnome! The gnome is free! She picks herself up from the debris, caring not that her hands are red and slick with blood.

"Thank you!" she cries. "Gods above, thank—" As she opens her arms to embrace you, she and you notice how quickly her hand has deteriorated. Before she can even gasp, it turns to dust. Immediately, the gnome scrambles for the mirror frame, now deciding that imprisonment is better than death—but there is no refuge for the poor woman as she wails and crumbles into dust.

Before the adventurers can do anything, the gnome crumbles into dust. Because she died of old age, she cannot be brought back by a *revivify* spell. Them's the breaks.

HALASTER'S JUKEBOX

While in this area, Halaster plays America's *A Horse With No Name*. The mirror's background becomes, of course, a desert to better reflect this.

24. POTION BREWERY

At last, you come upon the Mad Mage's potion brewery—no doubt the source of many a man's doom. Shelves line the walls, the upper reaches accessible only to those that climb the rickety ladder lain against the sides.

A rainbow of odors assail your senses, but most distinct of them is moldy death. Floating behind the bubbling cauldron is a skull whose eyes are set with sapphires—not quite a lich, but something in between. It looks at you and shouts, "They'll be done when they're done!"

Alternate Demiliches. Instead of Branta Myntion, whom the adventurers have no connection to, you can replace her with any of the following mages, especially if you have no intent on ever using them again in your story:

- Maddgoth of Level 7. Although he achieved lichdom, he failed to continue feeding souls to his phylactery, due to tomfoolery on the Mad Mage's part or the faerie dragon Otto. Alternatively, another band of adventurers, the Gentlemen Bastards perhaps, stole his phylactery.
- Ezzat of Level 20. After his phylactery was stolen, Halaster kidnapped his old friend and has since broken his spirit.
- Marambra Nyghtsteel, the unaccounted-for apprentice of the Mad Mage, unused throughout this entire campaign. It turns out that she too attempted lichdom but failed to feed souls to her phylactery. Choose this if you want closure without any of the work.

27. RANTANTAR'S WAND

Alabaster busts of Halaster leer at you from their pedestals, as if their lunatic-grins held some great secret they were dying to share with you. As you meet the gaze of one, the bust literally turns towards the center of the room—they all do. That's when the veil drops, revealing a floating wand orbited by golden orbs. Magic sparks from its tip as the sentient wand points at you!

32. JHESIYRA'S WARNING

An unseen force pushes through you, past your mind's defenses. Its presence is warm but sharp with concern, and it leaves you with a simple warning: "He's there. The Mad Mage awaits; he darkles but is no less delighted. Prepare yourselves!"

PENULTIMATE ENCOUNTER

Per the *Companion*, the adventurers should face a penultimate encounter before engaging Halaster. These possible encounters are:

- *Welcome to the Thunderdome*, which begins before they can enter Area 33 (Halaster just teleports them to the arena) and features Nalkara the **empyrean**
- *The Elite Four*, which begins here before they can enter Area 33 (Halaster just teleports them to the first encounter)
- *Tarrasquic Park*, which begins here before they can enter Area 33 (Halaster just teleports them to the demiplane)
- *The Prismatic Gauntlet*, which would have occurred in Area 19, long before they reached the tower
- *When Worlds Collide*, which requires the *Dark Tower* optional twist, and would've occurred in Area 28

33. MAD MAGE SHOWDOWN

In your heart you know the truth: few have ever laid eyes on this—this, the sanctum of the Mad Mage, the very seat of power from which Halaster Blackcloak has lorded over Undermountain. Quite keenly do you see, in your mind's eye, the trail of corpses that led you here. The pain, the suffering—and after all that, the Mad Mage can't even be *bothered to show up*.

The chamber is empty! Empty but for a circle of runes, a statue of Halaster (riding a donkey and nude but for a wide-brimmed hat) and an empty throne fashioned from purple marble, behind which are heaps of ancient tomes haphazardly stacked together.

Nothing is louder than pained silence and that's what you hear here. Silence. Not the quiet thrum of magic. Not the lunatic-howls you've grown deaf to. Nothing. What has this all been for if the Mad Mage would deprive you of catharsis?

COMMENCEMENT

You should personalize Halaster's opening statement to best fit your campaign, but you can draw upon the sample below. Modify it accordingly.

Halaster's voice seeps in from every darkened corner of this chamber—and for once, his voice is plain, not telepathic. It bounces from every brick, but does not penetrate your mind.

"The day has come. The day has come at long last. Do you know for how long I've waited here? For how long I've suffered your absence? How long I've longed for you—a worthy opponent? You truly are the greatest friends that I've ever had. Perhaps, you'll be the last."

Halaster's monologue shouldn't be one-way. Let the party respond accordingly. Remember, no one can be surprised here. If a character decides to shoot the Mad Mage (assuming they can perceive him on his throne), roll initiative—that's what it's for, anyway.

ULTIMATE SHOWDOWN

As described at the start of this chapter, the battle with Halaster has been overhauled. Choose the three encounters that interest you. After his opening statement, the first encounter begins.

DO IT!

If, at your table, Halaster has decided not to battle the adventurers and instead reward them for their efforts, you can have Jhesiyra intervene. Hoping to depose Halaster, she provokes a conflict.

- If the adventurers are inclined to leave peacefully, Jhesiyra urges them to kill Halaster: "Countless lives have been ruined by his antics! And he will ruin countless more if left alive! Strike him down and spare the world from his madness!"
- If Halaster refuses to fight, or the adventurers continue to abstain from violence, Jhesiyra provokes him. Her master has long wondered where she went and was devastated by her abandonment—and furious. A slight breeze flows through the chamber and her voice audibly whispers, "*Halaster*." This hurls Halaster into a frenzy; he shouts, "You brought *her* here?" He then reaches for his *blast scepter* and attacks.

OPTIONAL TWIST

If you're using an optional twist, make sure to utilize it in the final battle.

The Dark Tower. The party should have already been exposed to signs that hint to alternate realities. This truth becomes evident as Halaster nears death. Read:

As Halaster weeps red, a vision overwhelms your mind: the tower. The tower and where it stands in that field of polished grass. Only now do you see it; only now do you understand it: every blade, every drop of dew is an entire universe spinning in its own orbit, shivering in whatever strange wind ripples across the meadow. There are other worlds than these—haven't you already seen omens of that stark truth?

As that psychic wind howls, you hear another sound: a heartbeat. You look down and now can see it far below the earth, pumping out its invisible blood and influence, infecting everything in Undermountain. It is a knot in the Weave, a font of almost sentient magic.

Halaster grins at you. "See it now, do you?"

Halaster's Game. If you're using the *Companion's* game show element or adding it as a twist, during the battle, the walls of Area 33 seemingly fall away, revealing a legion of spectators—the audience watching the live finale of *Dungeon of the Mad Mage*. Should a character press themselves against a wall, they can feel phantom-hands groping at their ankles like fans at a concert. These individuals—mortal, demonic, angelic, or just alien—are real and sit together on the Ethereal Plane, all enmities and grudges forgotten for the sake of enjoying good television.

Ground-Mage Day. As Halaster lays dying, he murmurs, "I thought this time it would be different. I thought..." Alternatively, if the adventurers *aren't* already in a time-loop, have Halaster start the cycle now with a *wish* spell. Read the following:

Halaster's voice is little more than a ragged whisper: "It can't end like this. All those... good times together. It can't end. Time... If only there was more time... If we could do it all over again... I wish we could do it all over again... and again... and again..."

Puppet on the String. If running this twist, you'll want to show the Knot in the Weave and that it will resurrect Halaster. Read the following:

You land the killing blow against Halaster Blackcloak, but even still he manages to mutter one last omen: "If only my torment was at an end. See you soon."

Halaster's corpse crashes to the floor; the very tower rumbles with thunder. Cracks web out from his form and with a sick feeling, you understand that this place is about to collapse. As another tremor rocks the lair, a chasm splits open, letting in violet light so blinding and intense, you fear it might rot the flesh from your very bones.

That light... It seems to inch towards Halaster as if it were magma or the tide itself. It swamps over his body, almost like a mother scooping up its wounded child. Instinctively, you leap at the corpse but it's too late—the light has taken him into the radiant depths below and closed off its womb. And although he is very much dead, you can hear his cries echoing out, as if he were being punished by that very same mother.

Halaster's last words thunder in your mind: "See you soon."

34. FLYING SAUCER

You aren't exactly sure what you're looking at. Surely, it is some sort of vessel—a disc-shaped vessel crowned with a glass dome. Steel hinges reveal the dome to be the vessel's sole entrance. All of it is polished to a sheen so bright, so clean you aren't sure what sort of chromatic adjective is appropriate to describe it. Certainly its metal was unknown even to the Melairkyn dwarves of old.

Circling the vessel, you inspect its underside. Strange doodads line the surface. The vessel is propped up on three legs. You feel sick, knowing this thing to be unnatural... yet so advanced it leaves you feeling inferior, even insignificant.

35. EXERCISE ROOM

If your version of the Mad Mage *has* visited Earth, *Pumping Iron* is projected onto the wall for the benefit of the flesh golems.

EPILOGUE

The ending to a campaign is a heavy burden for any Dungeon Master. After such a length journey, your party will hunger for a brief but satisfying epilogue. It has to be personal; it has to tie up loose ends; and it must put to rest any mysteries—or provoke them.

ACUTE WEAVE ADDICTION

Leaving Undermountain, as the adventurers find, is not so easy. They have languished here for so long, the Knot in the Weave has left its maddening touch in their minds and bones. Some among them may have fallen prey to the same addiction that plagued the Melairkyn dwarves, the Seven, and, of course, the Mad Mage himself. The Knot is alive—and now it seeks to keep the adventurers in its grip forevermore. As they journey towards the surface, it strikes thrice.

Weave Addiction is included as a variant rule in the *Halaster's Game* supplement of the *Companion*. If you never used it before in your game, you can still implement it here in this final chapter.

In the aftermath of their final battle with Halaster, as they're trekking back to the surface, have each of the adventurers make each of the following saves:

- While in the lower depths of Undermountain, a Wisdom save to resist the Knot's phantom call
- While in the middle depths of Undermountain, an Intelligence saving throw to recognize this potential madness as what kept so many others in these wretched depths. The saving throw also represents constructing mental fortifications against this addiction.
- While in the upper reaches of Undermountain, the Knot in the Weave, spurned and in the throes of a tantrum, subjects the character to a Charisma saving throw to overpower their will and keep them in the dungeon long enough to seduce them into never leaving.

To leave Undermountain by their own accord, a character must succeed on two of the three saving throws. The first saving throw is a DC 20; failing that increases the second save's DC to 23 and the third's to 25.

Suspense. You want to work in these saving throws across the adventurers' journey back to the surface. Nor do you want to reveal the purpose of the saving throws until it's too late. Instead, tell them what sort of feeling washes over them, should they fail:

- A character that fails the Wisdom saving throw feels a weight around their throat, almost like a noose.
- A character that fails the Intelligence saving throw feels panic bloom within their mind—an invisible dread that animals must feel when they can sense a storm or earthquake.
- A character that fails the Charisma saving throw feels helpless against this invisible tyrant and buckles under its regime.

Failure. A character that fails two of three saves gains the following flaw: "Undermountain is my lair, my home, my *prize*. I cannot leave it." Tailor that to fit a character's personality; for example, a dutiful character's flaw would likely sound like, "If I were to leave Undermountain, there is no guaranteeing who will inherit the Mad Mage's arsenal. I cannot allow that to happen; I must maintain my vigil, lest Water-deep, or even the world, be subjected to yet another mad tyrant. I must police these depths with my dying breath."

Additionally, at your discretion, the character is afflicted with the most dangerous malady of Weave Addiction: every time they willingly leave Undermountain, or remain on the surface, they suffer the effects of a *geas* spell (save DC 25).

Narration. If a character falls prey to Acute Weave Addiction, read the following as they're about to leave the dungeon, modifying it to best suit the character(s) involved:

You can't leave—not after so much bloodshed, so much loss. This is your home—you've won it, goddammit! You've earned every victory here and to leave it all behind is not a testament to your strength, only your carelessness. So as it was, so shall it be again—unless you remain here to guard Undermountain and its denizens from future threats, keeping its baubles of power out of the hands that would see this world brought to its knees. You can't leave, and why would you ever want to? This is your home. Maybe it always has been.

If the character that falls prey to Weave Addiction is an arcane spellcaster, be sure to drop the title "Mad Mage" on them. Alternatively, "the Mad Priest" or the "The Mad Beast" would work for clerics and druids, respectively. "Mad" anything, really. "Mad King, Mad Sovereign," et cetera.

THE FATE OF UNDERMOUNTAIN

As described in *DotMM*, the fate of Undermountain is left up to you. It is worth petitioning your players to see what *they* want to do with Undermountain—and their lives in general. After having bested one of this world's most formidable foes, they deserve the chance to carve out enterprises of their own.

THE FINAL SEND-OFF

End your final session with the following send-off, modifying it as you see fit:

The roof is coming down; you can sense it. The Mad Mage has left one last trap for you and it's time to bail. You can hear his snide laughter in your very bones as blood roars in your ears. The tower is collapsing and there is no more time to dilly nor dally. Like frightened beasts, you flee from this reckoning.

Amidst your flight, your mind begins to drift. You've done the impossible. You've slain the Mad Mage, one of the most powerful, if not *the* most powerful mage, in the world. You have triumphed where so many others have failed... And there was a look in Halaster's eyes when he died. You haven't been able to shake it from your memory. You fooled yourself into believing it was madness, or some indecipherable emotion, but you've known the truth: it was pride. Halaster Blackcloak was *proud* of you. The dungeon-master of Undermountain went to his grave *proud of you*.

POST-CREDITS: JHESIYRA'S RETURN

If Jhesiyra did not make a grand reveal during the campaign, you can read to your players—but not their characters—this post-credit scene in which Jhesiyra takes command over Undermountain.

Never has Undermountain been so silent. Its ruined chambers have gone dark and for once its dead halls hear no laughter. The Mad Mage is gone yet again. He has perished before, but this time... this time Jhesiyra Kestellharp was ready.

One by one the gates fell. One by one had Halaster's grip, desperate at best, been undone, his phantom fingers uncurled from the hilt of Undermountain's very soul. Although she could already hear him reforming—his essence kindling in the crucible below—he was powerless to stop her. His cries came out like distant groans from deep within the earth. He was watching. Good.

A breeze slipped through the ruined remains of Halaster's lair, slowly turning into a frail woman whose smile was just as sharp and cruel as a knife. She had played them like fools—all of them. Her schemes had at last born fruit. She reminded herself of their names; of what they sacrificed to depose her master. She would always be grateful. And she would be sure to show her gratitude should they ever dare descend into Undermountain again.

With a wave of her hand, a marble throne materialized before her in the remains of Arcturia's court. She climbed the steps, savoring each one. In due time, she would erect her own tower in that void below, but for now, she would reign from here.

Halaster was mewling again. Jhesiyra closed her eyes and willed his rebirth to end—as if she was snuffing out a candle. He fought her; to his credit, he fought her even then, weak as he was. Even at his lowest, her master knew how to unravel her defenses and strike deep into her heart. If only she still had one.

She pressed her will on the flame, ignoring its fetal rage and the burns it left upon her. With an apocalyptic cry, the Mad Mage was no more. And as Jhesiyra Kestellharp now surveyed her new kingdom, a soft giggle exploded from her chest—a maniacal giggle that shared all the lunacy that graced her grin and her mad eyes.

"Well master," she murmurs, "the show must go on."

APPENDIX A: MAGIC ITEMS

The following magic items are found on this level:

+3 SHIELD

Shield, Very Rare

While holding this shield, you have a +3 bonus to AC. This bonus is in addition to the shield's normal bonus to AC.

Location. This magic item is found in L23, A21B.

+3 WAND OF THE WAR MAGE

Wand, Very Rare (Requires Attunement by a Spell-caster)

While you are holding this wand, you gain a +3 bonus to spell attack rolls. In addition, you ignore half cover when making a spell attack.

Elite Four. Marambra Nyghtsteel wields this item in the *Elite Four* penultimate encounter on L23.

AMULET OF PROOF AGAINST DETECTION AND LOCATION

Wondrous Item, Uncommon (Requires Attunement)

While wearing this amulet, you are hidden from divination magic. You can't be targeted by such magic or perceived through magical scrying sensors.

Location. This magic item is worn by Ezzat on L20.

BEAD OF FORCE

Wondrous Item, Rare

You can use an action to throw the bead up to 60 feet. The bead explodes on impact and is destroyed. Each creature within a 10-foot radius of where the bead landed must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or take 5d4 force damage. A sphere of transparent force then encloses the area for 1 minute. Any creature that failed the save and is completely within the area is trapped inside this sphere. Creatures that succeeded on the save, or are partially within the area, are pushed away from the center of the sphere until they are no longer inside it. Only breathable air can pass through the sphere's wall. No attack or other effect can.

An enclosed creature can use its action to push against the sphere's wall, moving the sphere up to half the creature's walking speed. The sphere can be picked up, and its magic causes it to weigh only 1 pound, regardless of the weight of creatures inside.

Location. This magic item is found in L20, A2.

BLACK CRYSTAL TABLET

Wondrous Item, Legendary (Requires Attunement by a creature that has proficiency in the Arcana skill)

Any creature that attunes to the tablet must make a DC 20 Wisdom saving throw at the end of its next long rest. On a failed save, the creature becomes afflicted with a random form of long-term madness (see "Madness" in chapter 8 of the *DMG*).

As an action, a creature attuned to the *black crystal tablet* can use it to cast *eyebite* or *gate* (the portal created by this spell links to the Far Realm only). After the tablet is used to cast a spell, it cannot be used again until the next dawn.

Location. This magic item is found in L22, A23.

BOOTS OF FALSE TRACKS

Wondrous Item, Common

Only humanoids can wear these boots. While wearing the boots, you can choose to have them leave tracks like those of another kind of humanoid of your size.

Location. This magic item is found in L19, A11B.

CANDLE OF THE DEEP

Wondrous Item, Common

The flame of this candle is not extinguished when immersed in water. It gives off light and heat like a normal candle.

Location. This magic item is found in L19, A1C.

CHIME OF OPENING

Wondrous Item, Rare

This hollow metal tube measures about 1 foot long and weighs 1 pound. You can strike it as an action, pointing it at an object within 120 feet of you that can be opened, such as a door, lid, or lock. The chime issues a clear tone, and one lock or latch on the object opens unless the sound can't reach the object. If no locks or latches remain, the object itself opens.

The chime can be used ten times. After the tenth time it cracks and becomes useless.

Location. This magic item is found in L20, A12B.

DECANTER OF ENDLESS WATER

Wondrous Item, Uncommon

This stoppered flask sloshes when shaken, as if it contains water. The decanter weighs 2 pounds.

You can use an action to remove the stopper and speak one of three command words, whereupon an amount of fresh water or salt water (your choice) pours out of the flask. The water stops pouring out at the start of your next turn. Choose from the following options:

- "Stream" produces 1 gallon of water.
- "Fountain" produces 5 gallons of water.
- "Geyser" produces 30 gallons of water that gushes forth in a geyser 30 feet long and 1 foot wide. As a bonus action while holding the decanter, you can aim the geyser at a creature you can see within 30 feet of you. The target must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or take 1d4 bludgeoning damage and fall prone. Instead of a creature, you can target an object that isn't being worn or carried and that weighs no more than 200 pounds. The object is either knocked over or pushed up to 15 feet away from you.

Location. This magic item is found in L22, A15.

GEM OF BRIGHTNESS

Wondrous Item, Uncommon

This prism has 50 charges. While you are holding it, you can use an action to speak one of three command words to cause one of the following effects:

- The first command word causes the gem to shed bright light in a 30-foot radius and dim light for an additional 30 feet. This effect doesn't expend a charge. It lasts until you use a bonus action to repeat the command word or until you use another function of the gem.
- The second command word expends 1 charge and causes the gem to fire a brilliant beam of light at one creature you can see within 60 feet of you. The creature must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or become blinded for 1 minute. The creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.
- The third command word expends 5 charges and causes the gem to flare with blinding light in a 30-foot cone originating from it. Each creature in the cone must make a saving throw as if struck by the beam created with the second command word.

When all of the gem's charges are expended, the gem becomes a nonmagical jewel worth 50 gp.

Location. This magic item is found in L19, A11B.

HELM OF THE SCAVENGER

Wondrous Item, Legendary (Requires Attunement by a spellcaster)

This ornate chair is designed to propel and maneuver a ship through space.

Passive Properties. The following properties of the helm come into play even when no creature is attuned to it:

- When placed aboard a vessel weighing between 1 and 100 tons, the helm generates an envelope of fresh air around the ship while it is in the void of space (but not underwater). This envelope extends out from the edges of the hull in all directions for a distance equal in length to the vessel's beam, so that creatures aboard and near the ship can breathe normally in space. The temperature within the air envelope is 70 degrees Fahrenheit.
- When placed aboard a vessel weighing between 1 and 100 tons, the helm generates an artificial gravity field while the ship is in the void of space, so that creatures can walk on the ship's decks as they normally would. Creatures and objects that fall overboard bob in a gravity plane that extends out from the main deck for a distance equal in length to the vessel's beam.

Active Properties. The sensation of being attuned to the helm is akin to being immersed in warm water. While attuned to the helm, you gain the following abilities while you sit in it:

- You can use the helm to propel the vessel across or through water and other liquids at a maximum speed in miles per hour equal to your highest-level unexpended spell slot.
- You can use the helm to propel the vessel through air or space at a maximum speed in miles per hour equal to your highest-level unexpended spell slot \times 10.

- Provided you have at least one unexpended spell slot, you can steer the vessel, albeit in a somewhat clumsy fashion, in much the same way that oars or a rudder can maneuver a seafaring ship.
- Whenever you like, you can see what's happening on and around the vessel as though you were standing in a location of your choice aboard it.

Drawback. While attuned to the helm, you cannot expend your own spell slots.

Location. This magic item is found in L23, A20.

HORNED RING

Ring, Very Rare (Requires Attunement)

Allows an attuned wearer to ignore Undermountain's magical restrictions (see "Alterations to Magic").

Location. This magic item is found in L23, A29.

INSTRUMENT OF THE BARDS, ANSTRUTH HARP

Wondrous Item, Very Rare (Requires Attunement by a Bard)

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. 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 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.

The harp can be used to cast the following spells: *control weather*, *cure wounds* (5th level), *fly*, *invisibility*, *levitate*, *protection from evil and good*, and *wall of thorns*.

Location. This magic item is found in L23, A17.

IOUN STONE OF INSIGHT

Wondrous Item, Very Rare (Requires Attunement)

An Ioun stone is named after Ioun, god of knowledge and prophecy, who is revered on some worlds. Many types of Ioun stone exist, each type a distinct combination of shape and color.

When you use an action to toss one of these stones into the air, the stone orbits your head at a distance of 1d3 feet and confers a benefit to you. Thereafter, another creature must use an action to grasp or net the stone to separate it from you, either by making a successful attack roll against AC 24 or a successful DC 24 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check. You can use an action to seize and stow the stone, ending its effect.

A stone has AC 24, 10 hit points, and resistance to all damage. It is considered to be an object that is being worn while it orbits your head.

Your Wisdom score increases by 2, to a maximum of 20, while this incandescent blue sphere orbits your head.

Location. This magic item is found in L22, A41.

MACE OF SMITING

Mace, Rare

You gain a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this magic weapon. The bonus increases to +3 when you use the mace to attack a construct.

When you roll a 20 on an attack roll made with this weapon, the target takes an extra 7 bludgeoning damage, or an extra 14 bludgeoning damage if it's a construct. If a construct has 25 hit points or fewer after taking this damage, it is destroyed.

Location. This magic item is found in L21, A24.

MARINER'S ARMOR

Scale Mail, Uncommon

While wearing this armor, you have a swimming speed equal to your walking speed. In addition, whenever you start your turn underwater with 0 hit points, the armor causes you to rise 60 feet toward the surface.

Location. This magic item is found in L19, A1.

NINE LIVES STEALER

Weapon, Very Rare (Requires Attunement)

You gain a +2 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this magic weapon. The sword has 1d8+1 charges. If you score a critical hit against a creature that has fewer than 100 hit points, it must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or be slain instantly as the sword tears its life force from its body (a construct or an undead is immune). The sword loses 1 charge if the creature is slain. When the sword has no charges remaining, it loses this property.

Location. This magic item is found in L22, A34A.

ORB OF DIRECTION

Wondrous Item, Common

While holding this orb, you can use an action to determine which way is north. This property functions only on the Material Plane.

Location. This magic item is found in L19, A11B.

POLE OF ANGLING

Wondrous Item, Common

While holding this orb, you can use an action to determine which way is north. This property functions only on the Material Plane.

Location. This magic item is found in L19, A1C.

POTION OF CLOUD GIANT STRENGTH

Potion, Very Rare

When you drink this potion, your Strength score changes to 27 for 1 hour. The potion has no effect on you if your Strength is equal to or greater than that score. This potion's transparent liquid has floating in it a sliver of fingernail from a cloud giant.

Location. This magic item is found in L22, A37.

POTION OF FORCE RESISTANCE

Potion, Uncommon

When you drink this potion, you gain resistance to force damage for 1 hour.

Location. This magic item is found in L20, A20.

POTION OF HEALING

Potion, Common

You regain 2d4+2 hit points when you drink this potion. The potion's red liquid glimmers when agitated.

Location. This magic item is found in L19, A13B.

POTION OF INVISIBILITY

Potion, Very Rare

This potion's container looks empty but feels as though it holds liquid. When you drink it, you become invisible for 1 hour. Anything you wear or carry is invisible with you. The effect ends early if you attack or cast a spell.

Location. This magic item is found in L22, A16B.

POTION OF LIGHTNING RESISTANCE

Potion, Uncommon

When you drink this potion, you gain resistance to lightning damage for 1 hour.

Location. This magic item is found in L20, A20.

POTION OF MIND READING

Potion, Rare

When you drink this potion, you gain the effect of the detect thoughts spell (save DC 13). The potion's dense, purple liquid has an ovoid cloud of pink floating in it.

Location. This magic item is found in L20, A4B.

POTION OF SUPERIOR HEALING

Potion, Rare

You regain 8d4+8 hit points when you drink this potion. The potion's red liquid glimmers when agitated.

Location. This magic item is found in L20, A4B.

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 L22, A8.

RING OF X-RAY VISION

Ring, Rare (Requires Attunement)

While wearing this ring, you can use an action to speak its command word. When you do so, you can see into and through solid matter for 1 minute. This vision has a radius of 30 feet. To you, solid objects within that radius appear transparent and don't prevent light from passing through them. The vision can penetrate 1 foot of stone, 1 inch of common metal, or up to 3 feet of wood or dirt. Thin sheets of lead and thicker substances block the vision.

Whenever you use the ring again before taking a long rest, you must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or gain one level of exhaustion.

Location. This magic item is found in L20, A13D.

ROD OF LORDLY MIGHT

Rod, Legendary (Requires Attunement)

This rod has a flanged head, and it functions as a magic mace that grants a +3 bonus to attack and damage roll made with it. The rod has properties associated with six different buttons that are set in a row along the haft as well as three other properties.

Six Buttons. You can press one of the rod's six buttons as a bonus action. A button's effect lasts until you push a different button or until you push the same button again, which causes the rod to revert to its normal form.

- If you press button 1, the rod becomes a flame tongue as a fiery blade sprouts from the end opposite the rod's flanged head (you choose the type of sword).
- If you press button 2, the rod's flanged head folds down and two crescent-shaped blades spring out, transforming the rod into a magic battleaxe that grants a +3 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with it.
- If you press button 3, the rod's flanged head folds down, a spear point springs from the rod's tip, and the rod's handle lengthens into a 6-foot haft, transforming the rod into a magic spear that grants a +3 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with it.
- If you press button 4, the rod transforms into a climbing pole up to 50 feet long, as you specify. In surfaces as hard as granite, a spike at the bottom and three hooks at the top anchor the pole. Horizontal bars 3 inches long fold out from the sides, 1 foot apart, forming a ladder. The pole can bear up to 4,000 pounds. More weight or lack of solid anchoring causes the rod to revert to its normal form.
- If you press button 5, the rod transforms into a handheld battering ram and grants its user a +10 bonus to Strength checks made to break through doors, barricades, and other barriers.
- If you press button 6, the rod assumes or remains in its normal form and indicates magnetic north. (Nothing happens if this function of the rod is used in a location that has no magnetic north.) The rod also gives you knowledge of your approximate depth beneath the ground or your height above it.

Drain Life. When you hit a creature with a melee attack using the rod, you can force the target to make a DC 17 Constitution saving throw. On a failure, the target takes an extra 4d6 necrotic damage, and you regain a number of hit points equal to half that necrotic damage. This property can't be used again until the next dawn.

Paralyze. When you hit a creature with a melee attack using the rod, you can force the target to make a DC 17 Strength saving throw. On a failure, the target is paralyzed for 1 minute. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on a success. This property can't be used again until the next dawn.

Terrify. While holding the rod, you can use an action to force each creature you can see within 30 feet of you to make a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw. On a failure, a target is frightened of you for 1 minute. A frightened target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. This property can't be used again until the next dawn.

Location. This magic item is found in Area 33.

SENDING STONE

Wondrous Item, Uncommon

Sending stones come in pairs, each smooth stone carved to match the other so the pairing is easily recognized. While you touch one stone, you can use an action to cast the sending spell from it. The target is the bearer of the other stone. If no creature bears the other stone, you know that fact as soon as you use the stone and don't cast the spell. Once sending is cast through the stones, they can't be used again until the next dawn. If one of the stones in a pair is destroyed, the other one becomes nonmagical.

Location. This magic item is found in L19, A2 & 13C.

SHIELD OF THE UVEN RUNE

Shield, Very Rare (Requires Attunement)

This shield is made from the scale of an ancient white dragon. It has a rune burned into its outward-facing side. A character who examines the rune and succeeds on a DC 20 Intelligence (History) check recognizes it as an uven ("enemy" in Giant) rune that confers great power. While holding the shield, you benefit from the following properties.

Winter's Friend. You are immune to cold damage.

Deadly Rebuke. Immediately after a creature hits you with a melee attack, you can use your reaction to deal 3d6 necrotic damage to that creature.

Bane. You can cast the *bane* spell from the shield (save DC 17). The spell does not require concentration and lasts for 1 minute. Once you cast the spell from the shield, you can't do so again until you finish a short or long rest.

Gift of Vengeance. You can transfer the shield's magic to a nonmagical weapon by tracing the uven rune on the weapon with one finger. The transfer takes 8 hours of work that requires the two items to be within 5 feet of each other. At the end, the shield is destroyed, and the rune is etched or burned into the chosen weapon. This weapon becomes a rare magic item that requires attunement. It has the properties of a +1 weapon. The bonus increases to +3 when the weapon is used against one of the following creature types, chosen by you at the time of the magic weapon's creation: aberrations, celestials, constructs, dragons, elementals, fey, fiends, giants, or undead.

Location. This magic item is found in L23, A28.

STAFF OF POWER: RETRIBUTIVE STRIKE

Distance from Origin	Effect
10 ft. or closer	8 x the number of charges in the staff
11-20 ft. away	6 x the number of charges in the staff
21-30 ft. away	4 x the number of charges in the staff

STAFF OF POWER

Staff, Very Rare (Requires Attunement by a Sorcerer, Warlock, or Wizard)

This staff can be wielded as a magic quarterstaff that grants a +2 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with it. While holding it, you gain a +2 bonus to Armor Class, saving throws, and spell attack rolls.

The staff has 20 charges for the following properties. It regains 2d8+4 expended charges daily at dawn. If you expend the last charge, roll a d20. On a 1, the staff retains its +2 bonus to attack and damage roll but loses all other properties. On a 20, the staff regain 1d8+2 charges.

Power Strike. When you hit with a melee attack using the staff, you can expend 1 charge to deal an extra 1d6 force damage to the target.

Spells. While holding this staff, you can use an action to expend 1 or more of its charges to cast one of the following spells from it, using your spell save DC and spell attack bonus: *cone of cold* (5 charges), *fireball* (5th-level version, 5 charges), *globe of invulnerability* (6 charges), *hold monster* (5 charges), *levitate* (2 charges), *lightning bolt* (5th-level version, 5 charges), *magic missile* (1 charge), *ray of enfeeblement* (1 charge), or *wall of force* (5 charges).

Retributive Strike. You can use an action to break the staff over your knee or against a solid surface, performing a retributive strike. The staff is destroyed and releases its remaining magic in an explosion that expands to fill a 30-foot-radius sphere centered on it.

You have a 50 percent chance to instantly travel to a random plane of existence, avoiding the explosion. If you fail to avoid the effect, you take force damage equal to 16 × the number of charges in the staff. Every other creature in the area must make a DC 17 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save, a creature takes an amount of damage based on how far away it is from the point of origin, as shown in the following table. On a successful save, a creature takes half as much damage.

Location. This magic item is found in L22, A39.

WAND OF WONDER

Wand, Rare (Requires Attunement by a Spellcaster)

This wand has 7 charges. While holding it, you can use an action to expend 1 of its charges and choose a target within 120 feet of you. The target can be a creature, an object, or a point in space. Roll d100 and consult the following table to discover what happens.

If the effect causes you to cast a spell from the wand, the spell's save DC is 15. If the spell normally has a range expressed in feet, its range becomes 120 feet if it isn't already.

If an effect covers an area, you must center the spell on and include the target. If an effect has multiple possible subjects, the DM randomly determines which ones are affected.

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 dust and is destroyed.

See the *Wand of Wonder Effects* table for details.

Location. This magic item is found in L23, A27.

WINGED BOOTS

Wondrous Item, Uncommon (Requires Attunement)

While you wear these boots, you have a flying speed equal to your walking speed. You can use the boots to fly for up to 4 hours, all at once or in several shorter flights, each one using a minimum of 1 minute from the duration. If you are flying when the duration expires, you descend at a rate of 30 feet per round until you land.

The boots regain 2 hours of flying capability for every 12 hours they aren't in use

Elite Four. This item is worn by Marambra Nyghtsteel in the *Elite Four* penultimate encounter on L23.

WAND OF WONDER EFFECTS

d100	Effect
1-5	You cast <i>slow</i> .
6-10	You cast <i>faerie fire</i> .
11-15	You are stunned until the start of your next turn, believing something awesome just happened.
16-20	You cast <i>gust of wind</i> .
21-25	You cast <i>detect thoughts</i> on the target you chose. If you didn't target a creature, you instead take 1d6 psychic damage.
26-30	You cast <i>stinking cloud</i> .
31-33	Heavy rain falls in a 60-foot radius centered on the target. The area becomes lightly obscured. The rain falls until the start of your next turn.
34-36	An animal appears in the unoccupied space nearest the target. The animal isn't under your control and acts as it normally would. Roll a d100 to determine which animal appears. On a 01-25, a rhinoceros appears; on a 26-50, an elephant appears; and on a 51-100, a rat appears.
37-46	You cast <i>lightning bolt</i> .
47-49	A cloud of 600 oversized butterflies fills a 30-foot radius centered on the target. The area becomes heavily obscured. The butterflies remain for 10 minutes.
50-53	You enlarge the target as if you had cast <i>enlarge/reduce</i> . If the target can't be affected by that spell or if you didn't target a creature, you become the target.
54-58	You cast <i>darkness</i> .
59-62	Grass grows on the ground in a 60-foot radius centered on the target. If grass is already there, it grows to ten times its normal size and remains overgrown for 1 minute.
63-65	An object of the DM's choice disappears into the Ethereal Plane. The object must be neither worn nor carried, within 120 feet of the target, and no larger than 10 feet in any dimension.
66-69	You shrink yourself as if you had cast <i>enlarge/reduce</i> on yourself.
70-79	You cast <i>fireball</i> .
80-84	You cast <i>invisibility</i> on yourself.
85-87	Leaves grow from the target. If you chose a point in space as the target, leaves sprout from the creature nearest to that point. Unless they are picked off, the leaves turn brown and fall off after 24 hours.
88-90	A stream of 1d4 × 10 gems, each worth 1 gp, shoots from the wand's tip in a line 30 feet long and 5 feet wide. Each gem deals 1 bludgeoning damage, and the total damage of the gems is divided equally among all creatures in the line.
91-95	A burst of colorful shimmering light extends from you in a 30-foot radius. You and each creature in the area that can see must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or become blinded 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.
96-97	The target's skin turns bright blue for 1d10 days. If you chose a point in space, the creature nearest to that point is affected.
98-100	If you targeted a creature, it must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw. If you didn't target a creature, you become the target and must make the saving throw. If the saving throw fails by 5 or more, the target is instantly petrified. On any other failed save, the target is restrained and begins to turn to stone. While restrained in this way, the target must repeat the saving throw at the end of its next turn, becoming petrified on a failure or ending the effect on a success. The petrification lasts until the target is freed by the <i>greater restoration</i> spell or similar magic.

APPENDIX B: NPCs & MONSTERS

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ADULT BLUE DRACOLICH

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The dracolich 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 dracolich regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Detect. The dracolich makes a Wisdom (Perception) check.

Tail Attack. The dracolich makes a tail attack.

Wing Attack (Costs 2 Actions). The dracolich beats its tattered wings.

Each creature within 10 feet of the dracolich must succeed on a DC 21 Dexterity saving throw or take 14 (2d6 + 7) bludgeoning damage and be knocked prone. After beating its wings this way, the dracolich can fly up to half its flying speed.

ADULT BLUE DRACOLICH

Huge undead, lawful evil

Armor Class 19 (natural armor)
Hit Points 225 (18d12 + 108)
Speed 40 ft., burrow 30 ft., fly 80 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
25 (+7)	10 (+0)	23 (+6)	16 (+3)	15 (+2)	19 (+4)

Saving Throws Dex +6, Con +12, Wis +8, Cha +10
Skills Perception +14, Stealth +6
Damage Immunities lightning, poison
Damage Resistances necrotic
Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, poisoned
Senses blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 24
Languages Common, Draconic
Challenge 17 (18000 XP)

Legendary Resistance (3/Day). If the dracolich fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

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

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The dracolich can use its Frightful Presence. It then makes three attacks: one with its bite and two with its claws.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +13 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 18 (2d10+7) piercing damage plus 5 (1d10) lightning damage.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +13 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (2d6+7) slashing damage.

Tail. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +13 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 16 (2d8+7) bludgeoning damage.

Frightful Presence. Each creature of the dracolich's choice that is within 120 feet of the dracolich and aware of it must succeed on a DC 18 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 dracolich's Frightful Presence for the next 24 hours.

Lightning Breath (Recharge 5-6). The dracolich exhales lightning in a 90-foot line that is 5 feet wide. Each creature in that line must make a DC 20 Dexterity saving throw, taking 66 (12d10) lightning damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

ADULT SILVER 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 SILVER DRAGON

Huge dragon, lawful good

Armor Class 19 (natural armor)
Hit Points 243 (18d12 + 126)
Speed 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 +5, Con +12, Wis +6, Cha +10
Skills Arcana +8, History +8, Perception +11, Stealth +10
Damage Immunities cold
Senses blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 21
Languages Common, Draconic
Challenge 16 (15000 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:* +13 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 19 (2d10+8) piercing damage.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +13 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (2d6+8) slashing damage.

Tail. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +13 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 18 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.

Cold Breath. The dragon exhales an icy blast in a 60-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 20 Constitution saving throw, taking 58 (13d8) cold damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Paralyzing Breath. The dragon exhales paralyzing gas in a 60-foot cone. Each creature in that area must succeed on a DC 20 Constitution saving throw or be paralyzed 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.

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.

ANIMATED STAFF OF FROST

Medium construct, neutral evil

Armor Class 17
Hit Points 40 (9d8)
Speed 0 ft., fly 30 ft. (hover)

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

Damage Immunities poison
Damage Resistances cold
Condition Immunities poisoned
Senses passive Perception 12
Languages Common
Challenge 0 (10 XP)

Enchanting Touch. A creature that grapples the staff must succeed on a DC 12 Charisma saving throw or be charmed by the staff until the staff is no longer in its grasp. While the creature is charmed, the staff can issue commands to it, which the creature does its best to obey. The creature can repeat the saving throw each time it takes damage, ending the effect on itself on a success. A creature that successfully resists the staff's control can't be charmed by it for 24 hours.

Fragile Construct. A creature holding the staff that isn't charmed by it can use an action to attempt to break the staff over a knee or against a solid surface, doing so with a successful DC 17 Strength (Athletics) check. Breaking the staff in this manner destroys it.

Spellcasting. The staff has 10 charges. As an action, it can expend 1 or more of its charges to cast one of the following spells (save DC 12): *cone of cold* (5 charges), *fog cloud* (1 charge), *ice storm* (4 charges), or *wall of ice* (4 charges). It regains 1d6 + 4 expended charges daily at dawn. If the staff expends its last charge, roll a d20. On a 1, the staff turns to water and is destroyed.

ACTIONS

Staff. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (2d6) bludgeoning damage plus 1 cold damage.

ARCHER

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 16 (studded leather armor)
Hit Points 75 (10d8 + 30)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	18 (+4)	4 (-3)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)

Skills Acrobatics +6, Perception +3
Senses passive Perception 13
Languages any one language (usually Common)
Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Archer's Eye (3/Day). As a bonus action, the archer can add 1d10 to its next attack or damage roll with a longbow or shortbow.

ACTIONS

Longbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8+4) piercing damage.

Multiattack. The archer makes two attacks with its longbow.

Shortsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6+4) piercing damage.

ARCANALOTH

Medium fiend (yugoloth), neutral evil

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)
Hit Points 104 (16d8 + 32)
Speed 30 ft., fly 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws Dex +5, Int +9, Wis +7, Cha +7
Skills Arcana +13, Deception +9, Insight +9, Perception +7
Damage Immunities acid, poison
Damage Resistances cold, fire, lightning; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks
Condition Immunities charmed, poisoned
Senses truesight 120 ft., passive Perception 17
Languages all, telepathy 120 ft.
Challenge 12 (8400 XP)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

ACTIONS

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (2d4 + 3) slashing damage. The target must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw, taking 10 (3d6) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

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

ARCHMAGE

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 12 (15 with mage armor)
Hit Points 99 (18d8 + 18)
Speed 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws Int +9, Wis +6
Skills Arcana +13, History +13
Damage Resistances damage from spells; nonmagical bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing (from stonewood)
Senses passive Perception 12
Languages any six languages
Challenge 12 (8400 XP)

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

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

Cantrips (at will): *fire bolt*, *light*, *mage hand*, *prestidigitation*, *shocking grasp*
1st level (4 slots): *detect magic*, *identify*, *mage armor**, *magic missile*
2nd level (3 slots): *detect thoughts*, *mirror image*, *misty step*
3rd level (3 slots): *counterspell*, *fly*, *lightning bolt*
4th level (3 slots): *banishment*, *fire shield*, *stoneskin**
5th level (3 slots): *cone of cold*, *scrying*, *wall of force*
6th level (1 slot): *globe of invulnerability*
7th level (1 slot): *teleport*
8th level (1 slot): *mind blank**
9th level (1 slot): *time stop*

*The archmage casts these spells on itself before combat.

ACTIONS

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

AZER

Medium elemental, lawful neutral

Armor Class 17 (natural armor, shield)
Hit Points 39 (6d8 + 12)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	12 (+1)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Con +4
Damage Immunities fire, poison
Condition Immunities poisoned
Senses passive Perception 11
Languages Ignan
Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Heated Body. A creature that touches the azer or hits it with a melee attack while within 5 feet of it takes 5 (1d10) fire damage.

Heated Weapons. When the azer hits with a metal melee weapon, it deals an extra 3 (1d6) fire damage (included in the attack).

Illumination. The azer sheds bright light in a 10-foot radius and dim light for an additional 10 ft..

ACTIONS

Warhammer. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) bludgeoning damage, or 8 (1d10 + 3) bludgeoning damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack, plus 3 (1d6) fire damage.

ASSASSIN

Medium humanoid (any race), any non-good alignment

Armor Class 15 (studded leather armor)
Hit Points 78 (12d8 + 24)
Speed 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws Dex +6, Int +4
Skills Acrobatics +6, Deception +3, Perception +3, Stealth +9
Damage Resistances poison
Senses passive Perception 13
Languages Thieves' cant plus any two languages
Challenge 8 (3900 XP)

Assassinate. During its first turn, the assassin has advantage on attack rolls against any creature that hasn't taken a turn. Any hit the assassin scores against a surprised creature is a critical hit.

Evasion. If the assassin is subjected to an effect that allows it to make a Dexterity saving throw to take only half damage, the assassin instead takes no damage if it succeeds on the saving throw, and only half damage if it fails.

Sneak Attack (1/Turn). The assassin deals an extra 14 (4d6) damage when it hits a target with a weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 feet of an ally of the assassin that isn't incapacitated and the assassin doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The assassin makes two shortsword attacks.

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

Light Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8+3) piercing damage and 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.

BEARDED DEVIL

Medium fiend (devil), lawful evil

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)
Hit Points 52 (8d8 + 16)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	15 (+2)	15 (+2)	9 (-1)	11 (+0)	11 (+0)

Saving Throws Str +5, Con +4, Wis +2
Damage Immunities fire, poison
Damage Resistances cold; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks that aren't silvered
Condition Immunities poisoned
Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 10
Languages Infernal, telepathy 120 ft.
Challenge 3 (700 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.

Steadfast. The devil can't be frightened while it can see an allied creature within 30 feet of it.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The devil makes two attacks: one with its beard and one with its glaive.

Beard. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 1 minute. While poisoned in this way, the target can't regain hit points. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

Glaive. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d10 + 3) slashing damage. If the target is a creature other than an undead or a construct, it must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or lose 5 (1d10) hit points at the start of each of its turns due to an infernal wound. Each time the devil hits the wounded target with this attack, the damage dealt by the wound increases by 5 (1d10). Any creature can take an action to stanch the wound with a successful DC 12 Wisdom (Medicine) check. The wound also closes if the target receives magical healing.

BEHOLDER

Large aberration, lawful evil

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)
Hit Points 180 (19d10 + 76)
Speed 0 ft., fly 20 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	14 (+2)	18 (+4)	17 (+3)	15 (+2)	17 (+3)

Saving Throws Int +8, Wis +7, Cha +8
Skills Perception +12
Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 22
Languages Deep Speech, Undercommon
Challenge 13 (10000 XP)

Antimagic Cone. The beholder's central eye creates an area of antimagic, as in the antimagic field spell, in a 150-foot cone. At the start of each of its turns, the beholder decides which way the cone faces and whether the cone is active. The area works against the beholder's own eye rays.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (4d6) piercing damage.

Eye Rays. The beholder 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:

- Charm Ray.** The targeted creature must succeed on a DC 16 Wisdom saving throw or be charmed by the beholder for 1 hour, or until the beholder harms the creature.
- Paralyzing Ray.** The targeted creature must succeed on a DC 16 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.
- Fear Ray.** The targeted creature must succeed on a DC 16 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.
- Slowing Ray.** The targeted creature must succeed on a DC 16 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.
- Enervation Ray.** The targeted creature must make a DC 16 Constitution saving throw, taking 36 (8d8) necrotic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.
- Telekinetic Ray.** If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 16 Strength saving throw or the beholder moves it up to 30 feet in any direction. It is restrained by the ray's telekinetic grip until the start of the beholder's next turn or until the beholder 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 beholder can also exert fine control on objects with this ray, such as manipulating a simple tool or opening a door or a container.
- Sleep Ray.** The targeted creature must succeed on a DC 16 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.
- Petrification Ray.** The targeted creature must make a DC 16 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.
- Disintegration Ray.** If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 16 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.
- Death Ray.** The targeted creature must succeed on a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw or take 55 (10d10) necrotic damage. The target dies if the ray reduces it to 0 hit points.

BEHOLDER

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The beholder 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 beholder regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Eye Ray. The beholder uses one random eye ray.

BEHOLDER ZOMBIE

Large undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)
Hit Points 93 (11d10 + 33)
Speed 0 ft., fly 20 ft. (hover)

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

Saving Throws Wis +2
Damage Immunities poison
Condition Immunities poisoned, prone
Senses darkvision 60 ft. passive Perception 9
Languages understands Deep Speech and Undercommon but can't speak
Challenge 5 (1800 XP)

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

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (4d6) piercing damage.

Eye Ray. The zombie uses a random magical eye ray, choosing a target that it can see within 60 feet of it.

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

2. **Fear Ray.** The targeted creature must succeed on a DC 14 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.

3. **Enervation Ray.** The targeted creature must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw, taking 36 (8d8) necrotic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

4. **Disintegration Ray.** If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 14 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 nonmagical object or creation of magical force, this ray disintegrates a 10-foot cube of it.

BLACK PUDDING

Large ooze, unaligned

Armor Class 7
Hit Points 85 (10d10 + 30)
Speed 20 ft., climb 20 ft.

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

Damage Immunities acid, cold, lightning, slashing
Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, deafened, exhaustion, frightened, prone
Senses blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this radius) passive Perception 8
Languages -
Challenge 4 (1100 XP)

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

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

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

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

ACTIONS

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

REACTIONS

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

BLUE ABISHAI

Medium fiend (devil), lawful evil

Armor Class 19 (natural armor)
Hit Points 195 (26d8 + 78)
Speed 30 ft., fly 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	14 (+2)	17 (+3)	22 (+6)	23 (+6)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws Int +12, Wis +12
Skills Arcana +12
Damage Immunities fire, lightning, poison
Damage Resistances cold, bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks that aren't silvered
Condition Immunities poisoned
Senses darkvision 120 ft. passive Perception 16
Languages Draconic, Infernal, telepathy 120 ft.
Challenge 17 (18000 XP)

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

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

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

Spellcasting. The abishai is a 13th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 20, +12 to hit with spell attacks). The abishai has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *friends, mage hand, message, minor illusion, shocking grasp*
1st level (4 slots): *chromatic orb, disguise self, expeditious retreat, magic missile, charm person, thunderwave*
2nd level (3 slots): *darkness, mirror image, misty step*
3rd level (3 slots): *dispel magic, fear, lightning bolt*
4th level (3 slots): *dimension door, greater invisibility, ice storm*
5th level (2 slots): *cone of cold, wall of force*
6th level (1 slot): *chain lightning*
7th level (1 slot): *teleport*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The abishai makes two attacks: one with its quarterstaff and one with its bite.

Quarterstaff. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) bludgeoning damage, or 6 (1d8 + 2) bludgeoning damage if used with two hands.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d10 + 2) piercing damage plus 14 (4d6) lightning damage.

BONECLAW

Large undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)
Hit Points 127 (17d10 + 34)
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	16 (+3)	15 (+2)	13 (+1)	15 (+2)	109 (+49)

Saving Throws Dex +7, Con +6, Wis +6
Skills Perception +6, Stealth +7
Damage Resistances cold, necrotic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks
Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, poisoned
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 16
Languages Common plus the main language of its master
Challenge 12 (8400 XP)

Rejuvenation. While its master lives, a destroyed boneclaw gains a new body in 1d10 hours, with all its hit points. The new body appears within 1 mile of the boneclaw's master.

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

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The boneclaw makes two claw attacks.

Piercing Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 20 (3d10 + 4) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, the boneclaw can pull the target up to 10 feet toward itself, and the target is grappled (escape DC 14). The boneclaw has two claws. While a claw grapples a target, the claw can attack only that target.

Shadow Jump. If the boneclaw is in dim light or darkness, each creature of the boneclaw's choice within 5 feet of it must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or take 34 (5d12 + 2) necrotic damage.

The boneclaw then magically teleports up to 60 feet to an unoccupied space it can see. It can bring one creature it's grappling, teleporting that creature to an unoccupied space it can see within 5 feet of its destination. The destination spaces of this teleportation must be in dim light or darkness.

REACTIONS

Deadly Reach. In response to a visible enemy moving into its reach, the boneclaw makes one claw attack against that enemy. If the attack hits, the boneclaw can make a second claw attack against the target.

COMMONER

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 10
Hit Points 4 (1d8)
Speed 30 ft.

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

Senses passive Perception 10
Languages any one language (usually Common)
Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

ACTIONS

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

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.

CONJURER

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)

Benign Transportation (Recharges After The Conjurer Casts A Conjunction Spell Of 1st Level Or Higher). As a bonus action, the conjurer teleports up to 30 feet to an unoccupied space that it can see. If it instead chooses a space within range that is occupied by a willing Small or Medium creature, they both teleport, swapping places.

Spellcasting. The conjurer is a 9th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is intelligence (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks). The conjurer has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *acid splash*, *mage hand*, *poison spray*, *prestidigitation*

1st level (4 slots): *mage armor*, *magic missile*, *unseen servant**

2nd level (3 slots): *cloud of daggers**, *misty step**, *web**

3rd level (3 slots): *fireball*, *stinking cloud**

4th level (3 slots): *Evard's black tentacles**, *stoneskin*

5th level (2 slots): *cloudkill**, *conjure elemental**

*Conjunction spell of 1st level or higher

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.

COUATL

Medium celestial, lawful good

Armor Class 19 (natural armor)
Hit Points 97 (13d8 + 39)
Speed 30 ft., fly 90 ft.

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

Saving Throws Con +5, Wis +7, Cha +6
Damage Immunities psychic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks
Damage Resistances radiant
Senses truesight 120 ft., passive Perception 15
Languages all, telepathy 120 ft.
Challenge 4 (1100 XP)

Innate Spellcasting. The couatl's spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 14). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring only verbal components:

At will: *detect evil and good, detect magic, detect thoughts*
3/day each: *bles, create food and water, cure wounds, lesser restoration, protection from poison, sanctuary, shield*
1/day each: *dream, greater restoration, scrying*

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

Shielded Mind. The couatl is immune to scrying and to any effect that would sense its emotions, read its thoughts, or detect its location.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 8 (1d6 + 5) piercing damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 24 hours. Until this poison ends, the target is unconscious. Another creature can use an action to shake the target awake.

Constrict. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 10 ft., one Medium or smaller creature. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) bludgeoning damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 15). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained, and the couatl can't constrict another target.

Change Shape. The couatl magically polymorphs into a humanoid or beast that has a challenge rating equal to or less 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 couatl's choice).

In a new form, the couatl retains its game statistics and ability to speak, but its AC, movement modes, Strength, Dexterity, and other actions are replaced by those of the new form, and it gains any statistics and capabilities (except class features, legendary actions, and lair actions) that the new form has but that it lacks. If the new form has a bite attack, the couatl can use its bite in that form.

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.

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.

DAO

Large elemental, neutral evil

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)
Hit Points 187 (15d10 + 105)
Speed 30 ft., burrow 30 ft., fly 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
23 (+6)	12 (+1)	24 (+7)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws Int +5, Wis +5, Cha +6
Condition Immunities petrified
Senses darkvision 120 ft. passive Perception 11
Languages Terran
Challenge 11 (7200 XP)

Earth Glide. The dao can burrow through nonmagical, unworked earth and stone. While doing so, the dao doesn't disturb the material it moves through.

Elemental Demise. If the dao dies, its body disintegrates into crystalline powder, leaving behind only equipment the dao was wearing or carrying.

Innate Spellcasting. The dao's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *detect evil and good, detect magic, stone shape*
3/day each: *passwall, move earth, tongues*
1/day each: *conjure elemental* (earth elemental only), *gaseous form, invisibility, phantasmal killer, plane shift, wall of stone*

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

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The dao makes two fist attacks or two maul attacks.

Fist. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (2d8 + 6) bludgeoning damage.

Maul. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 20 (4d6 + 6) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a Huge or smaller creature, it must succeed on a DC 18 Strength check or be knocked prone.

DEATH KNIGHT

Medium undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 20 (plate armor, shield)
Hit Points 180 (19d8 + 95)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	11 (+0)	20 (+5)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws Dex +6, Wis +9, Cha +10
Damage Immunities necrotic, poison
Condition Immunities exhaustion, frightened, poisoned
Senses darkvision 120 ft. passive Perception 13
Languages Abyssal, Common
Challenge 17 (18000 XP)

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

Marshal Undead. Unless the death knight is incapacitated, it and undead creatures of its choice within 60 feet of it have advantage on saving throws against features that turn undead.

Spellcasting. The death knight is a 19th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 18, +10 to hit with spell attacks). It has the following paladin spells prepared:
1st level (4 slots): *command*, *compelled duel*, *searing smite*
2nd level (3 slots): *hold person*, *magic weapon*
3rd level (3 slots): *dispel magic*, *elemental weapon*
4th level (3 slots): *banishment*, *staggering smite*
5th level (2 slots): *destructive wave* (necrotic)

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The death knight makes three longsword attacks

Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d8 + 5) slashing damage, or 10 (1d10 + 5) slashing damage if used with two hands, plus 18 (4d8) necrotic damage.

Hellfire Orb (1/Day). The death knight hurls a magical ball of fire that explodes at a point it can see within 120 feet of it. Each creature in a 20-foot-radius sphere centered on that point must make a DC 18 Dexterity saving throw. The sphere spreads around corners. A creature takes 35 (10d6) fire damage and 35 (10d6) necrotic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

REACTIONS

Parry. The death knight adds 6 to its AC against one melee attack that would hit it. To do so, the death knight must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.

DEATH SLAAD

Medium aberration (shapechanger), chaotic evil

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)
Hit Points 170 (20d8 + 80)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	15 (+2)	19 (+4)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)	16 (+3)

Skills Arcana +6, Perception +8
Damage Resistances acid, cold, fire, lightning, thunder
Senses blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 18
Languages Slaad, telepathy 60 ft.
Challenge 10 (5900 XP)

Innate Spellcasting. The slaad's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). The slaad can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *detect magic*, *detect thoughts*, *invisibility* (self only), *mage hand*, *major image*
2/day each: *fear*, *fireball*, *fly*, *tongues*
1/day each: *cloudkill*, *plane shift*

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

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

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

Shapechanger. The slaad can use its action to polymorph into a Small or Medium humanoid, 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.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The slaad makes three attacks: one with its bite and two with its claws or greatsword.

Bite (Slaad Form Only). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d8 + 5) piercing damage plus 7 (2d6) necrotic damage.

Claws (Slaad Form Only). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (1d10 + 5) slashing damage plus 7 (2d6) necrotic damage.

Greatsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d6 + 5) slashing damage plus 7 (2d6) necrotic damage.

DEMILICH

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The demilich 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 demilich regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Flight. The demilich flies up to half its flying speed.

Cloud of Dust. The demilich magically swirls its dusty remains. Each creature within 10 feet of it, including around a corner, must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or be blinded until the end of the demilich's next turn. A creature that succeeds on the saving throw is immune to this effect until the end of the demilich's next turn.

Energy Drain (Costs 2 Actions). Each creature within 30 feet of the demilich must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the creature's hit point maximum is magically reduced by 10 (3d6). If a creature's hit point maximum is reduced to 0 by this effect, the creature dies. A creature's hit point maximum can be restored with the greater restoration spell or similar magic.

Vile Curse (Costs 3 Actions). The demilich targets one creature it can see within 30 feet of it. The target must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or be magically cursed. Until the curse ends, the target has disadvantage on attack rolls and saving throws. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the curse on a success.

DEMILICH

Tiny undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 20 (natural armor)

Hit Points 80 (20d4)

Speed 0 ft., fly 30 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
1 (-5)	20 (+5)	10 (+0)	20 (+5)	17 (+3)	20 (+5)

Saving Throws Con +6, Int +11, Wis +9, Cha +11

Damage Immunities necrotic, poison, psychic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, slashing from magic weapons

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, stunned

Senses truesight 120 ft. passive Perception 13

Languages -

Challenge 18 (20000 XP)

Avoidance. If the demilich is subjected to an effect that allows it to make a saving throw to take only half damage, it instead takes no damage if it succeeds on the saving throw, and only half damage if it fails.

Legendary Resistance (3/Day). If the demilich fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

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

ACTIONS

Howl (Recharge 5-6). The demilich emits a bloodcurdling howl. Each creature within 30 feet of the demilich that can hear the howl must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or drop to 0 hit points. On a successful save, the creature is frightened until the end of its next turn.

Life Drain. The demilich targets up to three creatures that it can see within 10 feet of it. Each target must succeed on a DC 19 Constitution saving throw or take 21 (6d6) necrotic damage, and the demilich regains hit points equal to the total damage dealt to all targets.

DEVA

Medium celestial, lawful good

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 136 (16d8 + 64)

Speed 30 ft., fly 90 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	18 (+4)	18 (+4)	17 (+3)	20 (+5)	20 (+5)

Saving Throws Wis +9, Cha +9

Skills Insight +9, Perception +9

Damage Resistances radiant; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 19

Languages all, telepathy 120 ft.

Challenge 10 (5900 XP)

Angelic Weapons. The deva's weapon attacks are magical. When the deva hits with any weapon, the weapon deals an extra 4d8 radiant damage (included in the attack).

Innate Spellcasting. The deva's spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 17). The deva can innately cast the following spells, requiring only verbal components:

At will: *detect evil and good*

1/day each: *commune, raise dead*

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

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The deva makes two melee attacks.

Mace. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage plus 18 (4d8) radiant damage.

Healing Touch (3/Day). The deva touches another creature. The target magically regains 20 (4d8 + 2) hit points and is freed from any curse, disease, poison, blindness, or deafness.

Change Shape. The deva magically polymorphs into a humanoid or beast that has a challenge rating equal to or less 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 deva's choice).

In a new form, the deva retains its game statistics and ability to speak, but its AC, movement modes, Strength, Dexterity, and special senses are replaced by those of the new form, and it gains any statistics and capabilities (except class features, legendary actions, and lair actions) that the new form has but that it lacks.

DIVINER

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 12 (15 with *mage armor*)
Hit Points 67 (15d8)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)

Saving Throws Int +7, Wis +4
Skills Arcana +7, History +7
Senses passive Perception 11
Languages any four languages
Challenge 8 (3900 XP)

Portent (Recharges After The Diviner Casts A Divination Spell Of 1st Level Or Higher). When the diviner or a creature it can see makes an attack roll, a saving throw, or an ability check, the diviner can roll a d20 and choose to use this roll in place of the attack roll, saving throw, or ability check.

Spellcasting. The diviner is a 15th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks).

The diviner has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *fire bolt, light, mage hand, message, true strike*

1st level (4 slots): *detect magic*, feather fall, mage armor*

2nd level (3 slots): *detect thoughts*, locate object*, scorching ray*

3rd level (3 slots): *clairvoyance*, fly, fireball*

4th level (3 slots): *arcane eye*, ice storm, stoneskin*

5th level (2 slots): *Rary's telepathic bond*, seeming*

6th level (1 slot): *mass suggestion, true seeing**

7th level (1 slot): *delayed blast fireball, teleport*

8th level (1 slot): *maze*

* Divination spell of 1st level or higher

ACTIONS

Quarterstaff. *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.

DRAFT HORSE

Large beast, unaligned

Armor Class 10
Hit Points 19 (3d10 + 3)
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	2 (-4)	11 (+0)	7 (-2)

Senses passive Perception 10
Languages -
Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

ACTIONS

Hooves. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (2d4 + 4) bludgeoning damage

DROW

Medium humanoid (elf), neutral evil

Armor Class 15 (chain shirt)
Hit Points 13 (3d8)
Speed 30 ft.

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

Skills Perception +2
Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 12
Languages Elvish, Undercommon
Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

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

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

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

At will: *dancing lights*

1/day each: *darkness, faerie fire*

ACTIONS

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

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

DROW ELITE WARRIOR

Medium humanoid (elf), lawful evil

Armor Class 18 (studded leather armor, shield)
Hit Points 71 (11d8 + 22)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Dex +7, Con +5, Wis +4
Skills Perception +4, Stealth +10
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)

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

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The drow makes two shortsword attacks.

Shortsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6+4) piercing damage plus 10 (3d6) poison damage.

Hand Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6+4) piercing damage and the target must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 1 hour. If the saving throw fails by 5 or more, the target is also unconscious while poisoned in this way. The target wakes up if it takes damage or if another creature takes an action to shake it awake.

REACTIONS

Parry. The drow adds 3 to its AC against one melee attack that would hit it. To do so, the drow must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.

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.

EARTH ELEMENTAL

Large elemental, neutral evil

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)
Hit Points 126 (12d10 + 60)
Speed 30 ft., burrow 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	8 (-1)	20 (+5)	5 (-3)	10 (+0)	5 (-3)

Damage Immunities poison
Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, slashing from nonmagical attacks
Damage Vulnerabilities thunder
Condition Immunities exhaustion, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, unconscious
Senses darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 60 ft. passive Perception 10
Languages Terran
Challenge 5 (1800 XP)

Earth Glide. The elemental can burrow through nonmagical, unworked earth and stone. While doing so, the elemental doesn't disturb the material it moves through.

Siege Monster. The elemental deals double damage to objects and structures.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The elemental makes two slam attacks.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (2d8+5) bludgeoning damage.

DUERGAR WARLORD

Medium humanoid (dwarf), lawful evil

Armor Class 20 (plate armor, shield)
Hit Points 75 (10d8 + 30)
Speed 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	11 (+0)	17 (+3)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)

Damage Resistances poison
Senses darkvision 120 ft. passive Perception 11
Languages Dwarvish, Undercommon
Challenge 6 (2300 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

Multiattack. The duergar makes three hammer or javelin attacks and uses Call to Attack, or Enlarge if it is available.

Psychic-Attuned Hammer. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d10 + 4) bludgeoning damage plus 5 (1d10) psychic damage, or 15 (2d10 + 4) bludgeoning damage plus 5 (1d10) psychic damage while enlarged.

Javelin. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage, or 11 (2d6 + 4) piercing damage while enlarged.

Call To Attack. Up to three allied duergar within 120 feet of this duergar that can hear it can each use their reaction to make one weapon attack.

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.

Invisibility (Recharge 4-6). The duergar magically turns invisible for up to 1 hour or until it attacks, it casts a spell, it uses its Enlarge, or its concentration is broken (as if concentrating on a spell). Any equipment the duergar wears or carries is invisible with it.

REACTIONS

Scouring Instruction. When an ally that the duergar can see makes a d20 roll, the duergar can roll a 1d6 and the ally can add the number rolled to the d20 roll by taking 3 (1d6) psychic damage. A creature immune to psychic damage can't be affected by Scouring Instruction

EMPYREAN

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The empyrean 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 empyrean regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Attack. The empyrean makes one attack.

Bolster. The empyrean bolsters all nonhostile creatures within 120 feet of it until the end of its next turn. Bolstered creatures can't be charmed or frightened, and they gain advantage on ability checks and saving throws until the end of the empyrean's next turn.

Trembling Strike (Costs 2 Actions). The empyrean strikes the ground with its maul, triggering an earth tremor. All other creatures on the ground within 60 feet of the empyrean must succeed on a DC 25 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

EMPYREAN

Huge celestial (titan), chaotic good (75%) or neutral evil (25%)

Armor Class 22 (natural armor)
Hit Points 313 (19d12 + 190)
Speed 50 ft., fly 50 ft., swim 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
30 (+10)	21 (+5)	30 (+10)	21 (+5)	22 (+6)	27 (+8)

Saving Throws Str +17, Int +12, Wis +13, Cha +15
Skills Insight +13, Persuasion +15
Damage Immunities bludgeoning, piercing, slashing from nonmagical attacks
Senses truesight 120 ft. passive Perception 16
Languages all
Challenge 23 (50000 XP)

Innate Spellcasting. The empyrean's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 23, +15 to hit with spell attacks). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *greater restoration*, *pass without trace*, *water breathing*, *water walk*
1/day each: *commune*, *dispel evil and good*, *earthquake*, *fire storm*, *plane shift* (self only)

Legendary Resistance (3/Day). If the empyrean fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

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

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

ACTIONS

Maul. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +17 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 31 (6d6 + 10) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or be stunned until the end of the empyrean's next turn.

Bolt. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +15 to hit, range 600 ft., one target. *Hit:* 24 (7d6) damage of one of the following types (empyrean's choice): acid, cold, fire, force, lightning, radiant, or thunder.

ENCHANTER

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 5 (1800 XP)

Spellcasting. The enchanter is a 9th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks). The enchanter has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *friends*, *mage hand*, *mending*, *message*
1st level (4 slots): *charm person**, *mage armor*, *magic missile*
2nd level (3 slots): *hold person**, *invisibility*, *suggestion**
3rd level (3 slots): *fireball*, *haste*, *tongues*
4th level (3 slots): *dominate beast**, *stoneskin*
5th level (2 slots): *hold monster**
*Enchantment spell of 1st level or higher

ACTIONS

Quarterstaff. *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.

REACTIONS

Instinctive Charm (Recharges After The Enchanter Casts An Enchantment Spell Of 1st Level Or Higher). The enchanter tries to magically divert an attack made against it, provided that the attacker is within 30 feet of it and visible to it. The enchanter must decide to do so before the attack hits or misses. The attacker must make a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, the attacker targets the creature closest to it, other than the enchanter or itself. If multiple creatures are closest, the attacker chooses which one to target.

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.

FLESH GOLEM

Medium construct, neutral

Armor Class 9
Hit Points 93 (11d8 + 44)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	9 (-1)	18 (+4)	6 (-2)	10 (+0)	5 (-3)

Damage Immunities lightning, poison; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks that aren't adamantine
Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned
Senses darkvision 60 ft. passive Perception 10
Languages understands the languages of its creator but can't speak
Challenge 5 (1800 XP)

Aversion To Fire. If the golem takes fire damage, it has disadvantage on attack rolls and ability checks until the end of its next turn.

Berserk. Whenever the golem starts its turn with 40 hit points or fewer, roll a d6. On a 6, the golem goes berserk. On each of its turns while berserk, the golem attacks the nearest creature it can see. If no creature is near enough to move to and attack, the golem attacks an object, with preference for an object smaller than itself. Once the golem goes berserk, it continues to do so until it is destroyed or regains all its hit points.

The golem's creator, if within 60 feet of the berserk golem, can try to calm it by speaking firmly and persuasively. The golem must be able to hear its creator, who must take an action to make a DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion) check. If the check succeeds, the golem ceases being berserk. If it takes damage while still at 40 hit points or fewer, the golem might go berserk again.

Immutable Form. The golem is immune to any spell or effect that would alter its form.

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

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

FLAIL SNAIL

Large elemental, unaligned

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)
Hit Points 52 (5d10 + 25)
Speed 10 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	5 (-3)	20 (+5)	3 (-4)	10 (+0)	5 (-3)

Damage Immunities fire, poison
Condition Immunities poisoned
Senses darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 60 ft. passive Perception 10
Languages -
Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Antimagic Shell. The snail has advantage on saving throws against spells, and any creature making a spell attack against the snail has disadvantage on the attack roll. If the snail succeeds on its saving throw against a spell or a spell attack misses it, an additional effect might occur, as determined by rolling a d6:

1–2: If the spell affects an area or has multiple targets, it fails and has no effect. If the spell targets only the snail, it has no effect on the snail and is reflected back at the caster, using the spell slot level, spell save DC, attack bonus, and spellcasting ability of the caster.

3–4: No additional effect.

5–6: The snail's shell converts some of the spell's energy into a burst of destructive force. Each creature within 30 feet of the snail must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, taking 1d6 force damage per level of the spell on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Flail Tentacles. The flail snail has five flail tentacles. Whenever the snail takes 10 damage or more on a single turn, one of its tentacles dies. If even one tentacle remains, the snail regrows all dead ones within 1d4 days. If all its tentacles die, the snail retracts into its shell, gaining total cover, and it begins wailing, a sound that can be heard for 600 feet, stopping only when it dies 5d6 minutes later. Healing magic that restores limbs, such as the regenerate spell, can halt this dying process.

Scintillating Shell (Recharges After A Short Or Long Rest). The snail's shell emits dazzling, colored light until the end of the snail's next turn. During this time, the shell sheds bright light in a 30-foot radius and dim light for an additional 30 feet, and creatures that can see the snail have disadvantage on attack rolls against it. In addition, any creature within the bright light and able to see the snail when this power is activated must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or be stunned until the light ends.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The flail snail makes as many flail tentacle attacks as it has flail tentacles, all against the same target.

Flail Tentacle. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) bludgeoning damage.

Shell Defense. The flail snail withdraws into its shell, gaining a +4 bonus to AC until it emerges. It can emerge from its shell as a bonus action on its turn.

FOMORIAN

Huge giant, chaotic evil

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)
Hit Points 149 (13d12 + 65)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
23 (+6)	10 (+0)	20 (+5)	9 (-1)	14 (+2)	6 (-2)

Skills Perception +8, Stealth +3
Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 18
Languages Giant, Undercommon
Challenge 8 (3900 XP)

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The fomorian attacks twice with its greatclub or makes one greatclub attack and uses Evil Eye once.

Greatclub. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 19 (3d8+6) bludgeoning damage.

Evil Eye. The fomorian magically forces a creature it can see within 60 feet of it to make a DC 14 Charisma saving throw. The creature takes 27 (6d8) psychic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Curse Of The Evil Eye (Recharges After A Short Or Long Rest). With a stare, the fomorian uses Evil Eye, but on a failed save, the creature is also cursed with magical deformities. While deformed, the creature has its speed halved and has disadvantage on ability checks, saving throws, and attacks based on Strength or Dexterity. The transformed creature can repeat the saving throw whenever it finishes a long rest, ending the effect on a success.

GALEB DUHR

Medium elemental, neutral

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)
Hit Points 85 (9d8 + 45)
Speed 60 ft. rolling downhill

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	14 (+2)	20 (+5)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)

Damage Immunities poison
Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, slashing from nonmagical attacks
Condition Immunities exhaustion, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned
Senses darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 60 ft. passive Perception 11
Languages Terran
Challenge 6 (2300 XP)

False Appearance. While the galeb duhr remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from a normal boulder.

Rolling Charge. If the galeb duhr rolls at least 20 ft. straight toward a target and then hits it with a slam attack on the same turn, the target takes an extra 7 (2d6) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 16 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

ACTIONS

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d6 + 5) bludgeoning damage.

Animate Boulders (1/Day). The galeb duhr magically animates up to two boulders it can see within 60 feet of it. A boulder has statistics like those of a galeb duhr, except it has Intelligence 1 and Charisma 1, it can't be charmed or frightened, and it lacks this action option. A boulder remains animated as long as the galeb duhr maintains concentration, up to 1 minute (as if concentrating on a spell).

GARGOYLE

Medium elemental, chaotic evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)
Hit Points 52 (7d8 + 21)
Speed 30 ft., fly 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	11 (+0)	16 (+3)	6 (-2)	11 (+0)	7 (-2)

Damage Immunities poison
Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, slashing from nonmagical attacks that aren't adamantite
Condition Immunities exhaustion, petrified, poisoned
Senses darkvision 60 ft. passive Perception 10
Languages Terran
Challenge 2 (450 XP)

False Appearance. While the gargoyle remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from an inanimate statue.

ACTIONS

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

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

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

GHOUL

Medium undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 12
Hit Points 22 (5d8)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)	7 (-2)	10 (+0)	6 (-2)

Damage Immunities poison
Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, poisoned
Senses darkvision 60 ft. passive Perception 10
Languages Common
Challenge 1 (200 XP)

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 9 (2d6+2) piercing damage.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (2d4+2) slashing damage. If the target is a creature other than an elf or undead, it must succeed on a DC 10 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.

GIANT APE

Huge beast, unaligned

Armor Class 12
Hit Points 157 (15d12 + 60)
Speed 30 ft., climb 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
23 (+6)	14 (+2)	18 (+4)	7 (-2)	12 (+1)	7 (-2)

Skills Athletics +9, Perception +4
Senses passive Perception 14
Languages -
Challenge 7 (2900 XP)

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The ape makes two fist attacks.

Fist. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 22 (3d10 + 6) bludgeoning damage.

Rock. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, range 50/100 ft., one target. *Hit:* 30 (7d6 + 6) bludgeoning damage

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.

GIANT SHARK

Huge beast, unaligned

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)
Hit Points 126 (11d12 + 55)
Speed 0 ft., swim 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
23 (+6)	11 (+0)	21 (+5)	1 (-5)	10 (+0)	5 (-3)

Skills Perception +3
Senses blindsight 60 ft., passive Perception 13
Languages -
Challenge 5 (1800 XP)

Blood Frenzy. The shark has advantage on melee attack rolls against any creature that doesn't have all its hit points.

Water Breathing. The shark can breathe only underwater.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 22 (3d10+6) piercing damage.

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.

GOBLIN BOSS

Small humanoid (goblinoid), neutral evil

Armor Class 17 (chain shirt, shield)
Hit Points 21 (6d6)
Speed 30 ft.

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

Skills Stealth +6
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 9
Languages Common, Goblin
Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Nimble Escape. The goblin can take the Disengage or Hide action as a bonus action on each of its turns.

ACTIONS

Javelin. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., or range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d6) piercing damage.

Multiattack. The goblin makes two attacks with its scimitar. The second attack has disadvantage.

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

REACTIONS

Redirect Attack. When a creature the goblin can see targets it with an attack, the goblin chooses another goblin within 5 feet of it. The two goblins swap places, and the chosen goblin becomes the target instead.

GOBLIN

Small humanoid (goblinoid), neutral evil

Armor Class 15 (leather armor, shield)
Hit Points 7 (2d6)
Speed 30 ft.

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

Skills Stealth +6
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 9
Languages Common, Goblin
Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Nimble Escape. The goblin can take the Disengage or Hide action as a bonus action on each of its turns.

ACTIONS

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

Shortbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 80/320 ft., *Hit:* 5 (1d6+2) damage.

GORGON

Large monstrosity, unaligned

Armor Class 19 (natural armor)
Hit Points 114 (12d10 + 48)
Speed 40 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 darkvision 60 ft., 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.

GRAY OOZE

Medium ooze, unaligned

Armor Class 8

Hit Points 22 (3d8 + 9)

Speed 10 ft., climb 10 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	6 (-2)	16 (+3)	1 (-5)	6 (-2)	2 (-4)

Skills Stealth +2

Damage Resistances acid, cold, fire

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

Senses blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this radius) passive Perception 8

Languages -

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

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

Corrode Metal. Any nonmagical weapon made of metal that hits the ooze corrodes. After dealing damage, the weapon takes a permanent and cumulative -1 penalty to damage rolls. If its penalty drops to -5, the weapon is destroyed. Nonmagical ammunition made of metal that hits the ooze is destroyed after dealing damage. The ooze can eat through 2-inch-thick, nonmagical metal in 1 round.

False Appearance. While the ooze remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from an oily pool or wet rock.

ACTIONS

Pseudopod. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., *Hit:* 4 (1d6+1) bludgeoning damage plus 7 (2d6) acid damage, and if the target is wearing nonmagical metal armor, its armor is partly corroded and takes a permanent and cumulative -1 penalty to the AC it offers. The armor is destroyed if the penalty reduces its AC to 10.

GRAY RENDER

Large monstrosity, chaotic neutral

Armor Class 19 (natural armor)

Hit Points 189 (18d10 + 90)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	13 (+1)	20 (+5)	3 (-4)	6 (-2)	8 (-1)

Saving Throws Str +8, Con +9

Skills Perception +2

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages -

Challenge 12 (8400 XP)

ACTIONS

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

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 17 (2d12 + 4) piercing damage. If the target is Medium or smaller, the target must succeed on a DC 16 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) slashing damage. If the target is prone an additional 7 (2d6) bludgeoning damage is dealt to the target.

REACTIONS

Bloody Rampage. When the gray render takes damage, it makes one attack with its claws against a random creature within its reach, other than its master.

GRAY SLAAD

Medium aberration (shapechanger), chaotic neutral

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)

Hit Points 127 (15d10 + 45)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	17 (+3)	16 (+3)	13 (+1)	8 (-1)	14 (+2)

Skills Arcana +5, Perception +7

Damage Resistances acid, cold, fire, lightning, thunder

Senses blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 17

Languages Slaad, telepathy 60 ft.

Challenge 9 (5000 XP)

Innate Spellcasting. The slaad's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 12). The slaad can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *detect magic*, *detect thoughts*, *invisibility* (self only)

mage hand, *major image*

2/day each: *fear*, *fireball*, *tongues*

1/day: *plane shift* (self only)

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

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

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

Shapechanger. The slaad can use its action to polymorph into a Small or Medium humanoid, 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.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The slaad makes three attacks: one with its bite and two with its claws or greatsword.

Bite (Slaad Form Only). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6+4) piercing damage.

Claws (Slaad Form Only). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d10+4) slashing damage.

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

GREEN SLAAD

Large aberration (shapechanger), chaotic neutral

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)
Hit Points 127 (15d10 + 45)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	15 (+2)	16 (+3)	11 (+0)	8 (-1)	12 (+1)

Skills Arcana +3, Perception +2
Damage Resistances acid, cold, fire, lightning, thunder
Senses blindsight 30 ft., darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12
Languages Slaad, telepathy 60 ft.
Challenge 8 (3900 XP)

Innate Spellcasting. The slaad's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 12). The slaad can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *detect magic*, *detect thoughts*, *mage hand*
2/day each: *fear*, *invisibility* (self only)
1/day: *fireball*

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

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

Shapechanger. The slaad can use its action to polymorph into a Small or Medium humanoid, 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.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The slaad makes three attacks: one with its bite and two with its claws or staff. Alternatively, it uses its Hurl Flame twice.

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

Claw (Slaad Form Only). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6+4) slashing damage.

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

Hurl Flame. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., or range 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (3d6) fire damage. The fire ignites flammable objects that aren't being worn or carried.

GRELL

Medium aberration, neutral evil

Armor Class 12
Hit Points 55 (10d8 + 10)
Speed 10 ft., fly 30 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	9 (-1)

Skills Perception +4, Stealth +6
Damage Immunities lightning
Condition Immunities blinded, prone
Senses blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this radius) passive Perception 10
Languages Grell
Challenge 3 (700 XP)

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The grell makes two attacks: one with its tentacles and one with its beak.

Tentacles. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 10 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 7 (1d10 + 2) piercing damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 11 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 1 minute. The poisoned target is paralyzed, and it can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on a success.

The target is also grappled (escape DC 15). If the target is Medium or smaller, it is also restrained until this grapple ends. While grappling the target, the grell has advantage on attack rolls against it and can't use this attack against other targets. When the grell moves, any Medium or smaller target it is grappling moves with it.

Beak. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 7 (2d4+2) piercing damage.

GRICK ALPHA

Large monstrosity, neutral

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)
Hit Points 75 (10d10 + 20)
Speed 30 ft.

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

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, slashing from nonmagical attacks
Senses darkvision 60 ft. passive Perception 12
Languages -
Challenge 7 (2900 XP)

Stone Camouflage. The grick has advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks made to hide in rocky terrain.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The grick makes two attacks: one with its tail and one with its tentacles. If it hits with its tentacles, the grick can make one beak attack against the same target.

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

Tentacles. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., *Hit:* 22 (4d8+4) slashing damage.

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

HELMED HORROR

Medium construct, unaligned

Armor Class 20 (plate armor, shield)

Hit Points 60 (8d8 + 24)

Speed 30 ft., fly 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	13 (+1)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

Skills Perception +4

Damage Immunities force, necrotic, poison

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, slashing from nonmagical attacks that aren't adamantite

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

Senses blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 14

Languages understands the languages of its creator but can't speak

Challenge 4 (1100 XP)

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

Spell Immunity. The helmed horror is immune to three spells chosen by its creator. Typical immunities include fireball, heat metal, and lightning bolt.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The helmed horror makes two longsword attacks.

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

Hit: 8 (1d8+4) slashing damage or 9 (1d10 + 4) slashing damage if used with two hands.

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.

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 60 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.

INVISIBLE STALKER

Medium elemental, neutral

Armor Class 14
Hit Points 104 (16d8 + 32)
Speed 50 ft., fly 50 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	19 (+4)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	15 (+2)	11 (+0)

Skills Perception +8, Stealth +10
Damage Immunities 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 18
Languages Auran, understands Common but doesn't speak it
Challenge 6 (2300 XP)

Faultless Tracker. The stalker is given a quarry by its summoner. The stalker knows the direction and distance to its quarry as long as the two of them are on the same plane of existence. The stalker also knows the location of its summoner.

Invisibility. The stalker is invisible.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The stalker makes two slam attacks.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6+3) bludgeoning damage.

IRON GOLEM

Large construct, unaligned

Armor Class 20 (natural armor)
Hit Points 210 (20d10 + 100)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
24 (+7)	9 (-1)	20 (+5)	3 (-4)	11 (+0)	1 (-5)

Damage Immunities fire, poison, psychic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks that aren't adamantite
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 16 (15000 XP)

Fire Absorption. Whenever the golem is subjected to fire damage, it takes no damage and instead regains a number of hit points equal to the fire damage dealt.

Immutable Forms. 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 melee attacks.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +13 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 20 (3d8+7) bludgeoning damage.

Sword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +13 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 23 (3d10+7) slashing damage.

Poison Breath (Recharge 5-6). The golem exhales poisonous gas in a 15-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 19 Constitution saving throw, taking 45 (10d8) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

KNIGHT

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 18 (plate armor)

Hit Points 52 (8d8 + 16)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws Con +4, Wis +2

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Brave. The knight has advantage on saving throws against being frightened.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The knight makes two melee attacks.

Greatsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) slashing damage.

Heavy Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, range 100/400 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d10) piercing damage.

Leadership (Recharges After A Short Or Long Rest). For 1 minute, the knight 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 knight. A creature can benefit from only one Leadership die at a time. This effect ends if the knight is incapacitated.

REACTIONS

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

LICH

Medium undead, any evil alignment

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 135 (18d8 + 54)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	16 (+3)	16 (+3)	20 (+5)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Con +10, Int +12, Wis +9

Skills Arcana +19, History +12, Insight +9, Perception +9

Damage Immunities poison; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Damage Resistances cold, lightning, necrotic

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, poisoned

Senses truesight 120 ft., passive Perception 19

Languages Common plus up to five other languages

Challenge 21 (33000 XP)

Legendary Resistance (3/Day). If the lich fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

Rejuvenation. If it has a phylactery, a destroyed lich gains a new body in 1d10 days, regaining all its hit points and becoming active again. The new body appears within 5 feet of the phylactery.

Spellcasting. The lich is an 18th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 20, +12 to hit with spell attacks). The lich has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *mage hand, prestidigitation, ray of frost*

1st level (4 slots): *detect magic, magic missile, shield, thunderwave*

2nd level (3 slots): *detect thoughts, invisibility, Melf's acid arrow, mirror image*

3rd level (3 slots): *animate dead, counterspell, dispel magic, fireball*

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

5th level (3 slots): *cloudkill, scrying*

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

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

8th level (1 slot): *dominate monster, power word stun*

9th level (1 slot): *power word kill*

Turn Resistance. The lich has advantage on saving throws against any effect that turns undead.

ACTIONS

Paralyzing Touch. *Melee Spell Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 10 (3d6) cold damage. The target must succeed on a DC 18 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.

LICH

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The lich 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 lich regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Cantrip. The lich casts a cantrip.

Paralyzing Touch (Costs 2 Actions). The lich uses its Paralyzing Touch.

Frightening Gaze (Costs 2 Actions). The lich fixes its gaze on one creature it can see within 10 feet of it. The target must succeed on a DC 18 Wisdom saving throw against this magic or become frightened for 1 minute. The frightened target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. If a target's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the target is immune to the lich's gaze for the next 24 hours.

Disrupt Life (Costs 3 Actions). Each non-undead creature within 20 feet of the lich must make a DC 18 Constitution saving throw against this magic, taking 21 (6d6) necrotic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

LIVING BURNING HANDS

Medium construct, unaligned

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)
Hit Points 15 (2d8 + 6)
Speed 25 ft., fly 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	3 (-4)	6 (-2)	6 (-2)

Damage Immunities fire
Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, slashing from nonmagical attacks
Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, deafened, exhaustion, frightened, poisoned, prone
Senses darkvision 60 ft. passive Perception 8
Languages -
Challenge 1 (200 XP)

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

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

ACTIONS

Magical Strike. *Melee Spell Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) fire damage

Spell Mimicry (Recharge 5-6). The living spell unleashes a thin sheet of flames in a 15-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw, taking 10 (3d6) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

LIVING COUNTERSPELL

Small construct, unaligned

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)
Hit Points 37 (5d8 + 15)
Speed 25 ft., fly 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	16 (+3)	16 (+3)	3 (-4)	10 (+0)	6 (-2)

Damage Immunities force
Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, slashing from nonmagical attacks
Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, deafened, exhaustion, frightened, poisoned, prone
Senses darkvision 60 ft. passive Perception 10
Languages -
Challenge 3 (700 XP)

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

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

ACTIONS

Magical Strike. *Melee Spell Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) force damage.

REACTIONS

Spell Mimicry (Recharge 5-6). The living spell attempts to interrupt a creature in the process of casting a spell. If the creature is casting a spell of 3rd level or lower, its spell fails and has no effect. If it is casting a spell of 4th level or higher, the living spell must make a Constitution check. The DC equals 10 + the spell's level. On a success, the creature's spell fails and has no effect.

LIVING LIGHTNING BOLT

Large construct, unaligned

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)
Hit Points 57 (6d10 + 24)
Speed 25 ft., fly 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	15 (+2)	18 (+4)	3 (-4)	10 (+0)	6 (-2)

Damage Immunities lightning
Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, slashing from nonmagical attacks
Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, deafened, exhaustion, frightened, poisoned, prone
Senses darkvision 60 ft. passive Perception 10
Languages -
Challenge 5 (1800 XP)

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

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

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The living spell makes two Magical Strike attacks.

Magical Strike. *Melee Spell Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 21 (5d6 + 4) lightning damage.

Spell Mimicry (Recharge 5-6). The living spell unleashes a stroke of lightning in a line 100 feet long and 5 feet wide. Each creature in the line must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw, taking 28 (8d6) lightning damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

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.

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.

MARAMBRA NYGHTSTEEL

Medium humanoid (human), lawful evil

Armor Class 13 (16 with *mage armor*)

Hit Points 169 (26d8 + 52)

Speed 30 ft., fly 120 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	16 (+3)	15 (+2)	20 (+5)	18 (+4)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Int +10, Wis +9

Skills Arcana +15, History +15, Perception +8

Senses passive Perception 18

Languages Abyssal, Common, Draconic, Elvish, Infernal, Undercommon

Challenge 15 (13000 XP)

Overchannel (1/Day). When Marambra casts a spell of 1st-5th level that deals damage, she can deal maximum damage with that spell.

Sculpt Spells. When Marambra casts an evocation spell that forces other creatures she can see to make a saving throw, she can choose a number of them equal to 1 + the spell's level. These creatures automatically succeed on their saving throws against the spell. If a successful save means a chosen creature would take half damage from the spell, it instead takes no damage from it.

Special Equipment. Marambra wields a +3 *wand of the war mage* that grants her a +3 bonus to spell attack rolls. Additionally, she ignores half cover when making a spell attack.

Marambra also wears a pair of *winged boots* that grant her a flying speed of 120. She can use the boots to fly for up to 4 hours, all at once or in several shorter flights, each one using a minimum of 1 minute from the duration. If she's flying when the duration expires, she descends at a rate of 30 feet per round until she lands. The boots regain 2 hours of flying capability for every 12 hours they aren't in use.

Spellcasting. Marambra is an 18th-level spellcaster. Her spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 18, +10 to hit with spell attacks, or +13 when wielding her +3 *wand of the war mage*). She can cast *scorching ray* and *shield at will* and has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *fire bolt*, *mage hand*, *message*, *shocking grasp*
1st level (4 slots): *detect magic*, *feather fall*, *mage armor*, *thunderwave**
2nd level (3 slots): *earthbind*, *invisibility*, *mirror image*, *misty step*
3rd level (3 slots): *counterspell*, *dispel magic*, *fireball**, *nondetection*, *protection from energy*
4th level (3 slots): *arcane eye*, *fire shield**, *stoneskin*
5th level (3 slots): *cone of cold**
6th level (1 slot): *investiture of flame*, *sunbeam*
7th level (1 slot): *plane shift*
8th level (1 slot): *incendiary cloud*
9th level (1 slot): *meteor swarm**

*Evocation spell

ACTIONS

Scorching Ray. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +13 to hit, range 120 ft., three targets. *Hit:* 7 (2d6) fire damage. Marambra must make a separate spell attack for each ray.

REACTIONS

Elemental Aegis. When Marambra takes acid, cold, fire, or lightning damage, she can gain resistance to that instance of damage. All creatures within 10 feet of her take 2d10 damage of that type.

MARID

Large elemental, chaotic neutral

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)
Hit Points 229 (17d10 + 136)
Speed 30 ft., fly 60 ft., swim 90 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
22 (+6)	12 (+1)	26 (+8)	18 (+4)	17 (+3)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws Dex +5, Wis +7, Cha +8
Damage Resistances acid, cold, lightning
Senses blindsight 30 ft., darkvision 120 ft. passive Perception 13
Languages Aquan
Challenge 11 (7200 XP)

Amphibious. The marid can breathe air and water.

Elemental Demise. If the marid dies, its body disintegrates into a burst of water and foam, leaving behind only equipment the marid was wearing or carrying.

Innate Spellcasting. The marid'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: *create or destroy water*, *detect evil and good*, *detect magic*, *fog cloud*, *purify food and drink*
3/day each: *tongues*, *water breathing*, *water walk*
1/day each: *conjure elemental* (water elemental only), *control water*, *gaseous form*, *invisibility*, *plane shift*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The marid makes two trident attacks.

Trident. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d6 + 6) piercing damage, or 15 (2d8 + 6) piercing damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack.

Water Jet. The marid magically shoots water in a 60-foot line that is 5 feet wide. Each creature in that line must make a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw. On a failure, a target takes 21 (6d6) bludgeoning damage and, if it is Huge or smaller, is pushed up to 20 feet away from the marid and knocked prone. On a success, a target takes half the bludgeoning damage, but is neither pushed nor knocked prone.

MARILITH

Large fiend (demon), chaotic evil

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)
Hit Points 189 (18d10 + 90)
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	20 (+5)	20 (+5)	18 (+4)	16 (+3)	20 (+5)

Saving Throws Str +9, Dex +10, Wis +8, Cha +10
Damage Immunities poison
Damage Resistances cold, fire, lightning; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks
Condition Immunities poisoned
Senses truesight 120 ft. passive Perception 13
Languages Abyssal, telepathy 120 ft.
Challenge 16 (15000 XP)

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

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

Reactive. The marilith can take one reaction on every turn in combat.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The marilith can make seven attacks: six with its longswords and one with its tail.

Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) slashing damage

Tail. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 10 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 15 (2d10 + 4) bludgeoning damage. If the target is Medium or smaller, it is grappled (escape DC 19). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained, the marilith can automatically hit the target with its tail, and the marilith can't make tail attacks against other targets.

Teleport. The marilith magically teleports, along with any equipment it is wearing or carrying, up to 120 feet to an unoccupied space it can see.

REACTIONS

Parry. The marilith adds 5 to its AC against one melee attack that would hit it. To do so, the marilith must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.

MEDUSA

Medium monstrosity, lawful evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)
Hit Points 127 (17d8 + 51)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	15 (+2)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)	15 (+2)

Skills Deception +5, Insight +4, Perception +4, Stealth +5
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14
Languages Common
Challenge 6 (2300 XP)

Petrifying Gaze. When a creature that can see the medusa's eyes starts its turn within 30 feet of the medusa, the medusa can force it to make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw if the medusa isn't incapacitated and can see the creature. If the saving throw fails by 5 or more, the creature is instantly petrified. Otherwise, a creature that fails the save begins to turn to stone and is restrained. The restrained creature must repeat the saving throw at the end of its next turn, becoming petrified on a failure or ending the effect on a success. The

petrification lasts until the creature is freed by the greater restoration spell or other magic.

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 medusa until the start of its next turn, when it can avert its eyes again. If the creature looks at the medusa in the meantime, it must immediately make the save.

If the medusa sees itself reflected on a polished surface within 30 feet of it and in an area of bright light, the medusa is, due to its curse, affected by its own gaze.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The medusa makes either three melee attacks—one with its snake hair and two with its shortsword—or two ranged attacks with its longbow.

Snake Hair. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage plus 14 (4d6) poison damage.

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

Longbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage plus 7 (2d6) poison damage.

MEZZOLOTH

Medium fiend (yugoloth), neutral evil

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)
Hit Points 75 (10d8 + 30)
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	11 (+0)	16 (+3)	7 (-2)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)

Skills Perception +3
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 13
Languages Abyssal, Infernal, telepathy 60 ft.
Challenge 5 (1800 XP)

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

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

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

2/day each: *darkness*, *dispel magic*
1/day each: *cloudkill*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The mezzoloth makes two attacks: one with its claws and one with its trident.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (2d4+4) slashing damage.

Trident. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6+4) piercing damage or 8 (1d8 + 4) piercing damage when held with two claws and used to make a melee attack.

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

MIMIC

Medium monstrosity, neutral

Armor Class 12
Hit Points 58 (9d8 + 18)
Speed 15 ft.

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

Skills Stealth +5
Damage Immunities acid
Condition Immunities prone
Senses darkvision 60 ft. passive Perception 11
Languages -
Challenge 2 (450 XP)

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

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

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

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

ACTIONS

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

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

MIND FLAYER ARCANIST

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 13

Languages Deep Speech, Undercommon, telepathy 120 ft.
Challenge 8 (3900 XP)

Innate Spellcasting. 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.

Spellcasting. The mind flayer is a 10th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). The mind flayer has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *blade ward*, *dancing lights*, *mage hand*, *shocking grasp*

1st level (4 slots): *detect magic*, *disguise self*, *shield*, *sleep*

2nd level (3 slots): *blur*, *invisibility*, *ray of enfeeblement*

3rd level (3 slots): *clairvoyance*, *lightning bolt*, *sending*

4th level (3 slots): *confusion*, *hallucinatory terrain*

5th level (2 slots): *telekinesis*, *wall of force*

ACTIONS

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

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

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

MOLYDEUS

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The molydeus 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 molydeus regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Attack. The molydeus makes one attack, either with its demonic weapon or with its snakebite.

Move. The molydeus moves without provoking opportunity attacks.

Cast a Spell. The molydeus casts one spell from its Innate Spellcasting trait.

MOLYDEUS

Huge fiend (demon), chaotic evil

Armor Class 19 (natural armor)

Hit Points 216 (16d12 + 112)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
28 (+9)	22 (+6)	25 (+7)	21 (+5)	24 (+7)	24 (+7)

Saving Throws Str +16, Con +14, Wis +14, Cha +14

Skills Perception +21

Damage Immunities poison

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

Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, deafened, frightened, poisoned, stunned

Senses truesight 120 ft., passive Perception 31

Languages Abyssal, telepathy 120 ft.

Challenge 21 (33000 XP)

Innate Spellcasting. The molydeus's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 22). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *dispel magic*, *polymorph*, *telekinesis*, *teleport*

3/day: *lightning bolt*

1/day: *imprisonment*

Legendary Resistance (3/Day). If the molydeus fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

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

Magical Weapons. The molydeus's weapon attacks are magical.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The molydeus makes three attacks: one with its weapon, one with its wolf bite, and one with its snakebite.

Demonic Weapon. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +16 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 20 (2d10 + 9) slashing damage. If the target has at least one head and the molydeus rolled a 20 on the attack roll, the target is decapitated and dies if it can't survive without that head. A target is immune to this effect if it takes none of the damage, has legendary actions, or is Huge or larger. Such a creature takes an extra 6d8 slashing damage from the hit.

Wolf Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +16 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 16 (2d6 + 9) piercing damage.

Snakebite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +16 to hit, reach 15 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 12 (1d6 + 9) piercing damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 22 Constitution saving throw or its hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the damage taken. This reduction lasts until the target finishes a long rest. The target transforms into a manes if this reduces its hit point maximum to 0. This transformation can be ended only by a wish spell.

MUD MEPHIT

Small elemental, neutral evil

Armor Class 11

Hit Points 27 (6d6 + 6)

Speed 20 ft., fly 20 ft., swim 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	9 (-1)	11 (+0)	7 (-2)

Skills Stealth +3

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft. passive Perception 10

Languages Aquan, Terran

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Death Burst. When the mephit dies, it explodes in a burst of sticky mud. Each Medium or smaller creature within 5 feet of it must succeed on a DC 11 Dexterity saving throw or be restrained until the end of the creature's next turn.

False Appearance. While the mephit remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from an ordinary mound of mud.

ACTIONS

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

Mud Breath (Recharge 6). The mephit belches viscid mud onto one creature within 5 feet of it. If the target is Medium or smaller, it must succeed on a DC 11 Dexterity saving throw or be restrained 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.

MUIRAL

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

Muiral 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. Muiral regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Cast Cantrip. Muiral casts a cantrip.

Lunging Attack (Costs 2 Actions). Muiral makes one longsword attack that has a reach of 10 feet.

Retreating Strike (Costs 3 Actions). Muiral moves up to his speed without provoking opportunity attacks. Before the move, he can make one longsword attack.

MUIRAL

Large monstrosity, chaotic evil

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 195 (23d10 + 69)

Speed 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	11 (+0)	16 (+3)	18 (+4)	13 (+1)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws Con +8, Int +9

Skills Arcana +9, Athletics +9, Perception +6, Stealth +5

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 16

Languages Common, Dwarvish, Elvish, Goblin, Undercommon

Challenge 13 (10000 XP)

Legendary Resistance (3/Day). If Muiral fails a saving throw, he can choose to succeed instead.

Spellcasting. Muiral is a 13th-level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 17, +9 to hit with spell attacks). He has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *dancing lights, mage hand, prestidigitation, ray of frost, shocking grasp*

1st level (4 slots): *expeditious retreat, fog cloud, magic missile, shield*

2nd level (3 slots): *darkness, knock, see invisibility, spider climb*

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

4th level (3 slots): *greater invisibility, polymorph*

5th level (2 slots): *animate objects, wall of force*

6th level (1 slot): *create undead, flesh to stone*

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

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Muiral makes three attacks: two with his longsword and one with his sting.

Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) slashing damage, or 15 (2d10 + 4) slashing damage if used with two hands.

Sting. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 10 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 9 (1d10 + 4) piercing damage. The target must make a DC 16 Constitution saving throw, taking 27 (6d8) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

MUMMY

Medium undead, lawful evil

Armor Class 11 (natural armor)

Hit Points 58 (9d8 + 18)

Speed 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	8 (-1)	15 (+2)	6 (-2)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Wis +2

Damage Immunities necrotic, poison

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, slashing from nonmagical attacks

Damage Vulnerabilities fire

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, prone

Senses darkvision 60 ft. passive Perception 10

Languages the languages it knew in life

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The mummy can use its Dreadful Glare and makes one attack with its rotting fist.

Rotting Fist. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6+3) bludgeoning damage plus 10 (3d6) necrotic damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or be cursed with mummy rot. The cursed target can't regain hit points, and its hit point maximum decreases by 10 (3d6) for every 24 hours that elapse. If the curse reduces the target's hit point maximum to 0, the target dies, and its body turns to dust. The curse lasts until removed by the remove curse spell or other magic.

Dreadful Glare. The mummy targets one creature it can see within 60 feet of it. If the target can see the mummy, it must succeed on a DC 11 Wisdom saving throw against this magic or become frightened until the end of the mummy's next turn. If the target fails the saving throw by 5 or more, it is also paralyzed for the same duration. A target that succeeds on the saving throw is immune to the Dreadful Glare of all mummies (but not mummy lords) for the next 24 hours.

MUMMY LORD

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The mummy lord 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 mummy lord regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Attack. The mummy lord makes one attack with its rotting fist or uses its Dreadful Glare.

Blinding Dust. Blinding dust and sand swirls magically around the mummy lord. Each creature within 5 feet of the mummy lord must succeed on a DC 16 Constitution saving throw or be blinded until the end of the creature's next turn.

Blasphemous Word (Costs 2 Actions). The mummy lord utters a blasphemous word. Each non-undead creature within 10 feet of the mummy lord that can hear the magical utterance must succeed on a DC 16 Constitution saving throw or be stunned until the end of the mummy lord's next turn.

Channel Negative Energy (Costs 2 Actions). The mummy lord magically unleashes negative energy. Creatures within 60 feet of the mummy lord, including ones behind barriers and around corners, can't regain hit points until the end of the mummy lord's next turn.

Whirlwind of Sand (Costs 2 Actions). The mummy lord magically transforms into a whirlwind of sand, moves up to 60 feet, and reverts to its normal form. While in whirlwind form, the mummy lord is immune to all damage, and it can't be grappled, petrified, knocked prone, restrained, or stunned. Equipment worn or carried by the mummy lord remain in its possession.

LAIR ACTIONS

On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), the mummy lord takes a lair action to cause one of the following effects; the mummy lord can't use the same effect two rounds in a row:

- Each undead creature in the lair can pinpoint the location of each living creature within 120 feet of it until initiative count 20 on the next round.
- Each undead in the lair has advantage on saving throws against effects that turn undead until initiative count 20 on the next round.
- Until initiative count 20 on the next round, any non-undead creature that tries to cast a spell of 4th level or lower in the mummy lord's lair is wracked with pain. The creature can choose another action, but if it tries to cast the spell, it must make a DC 16 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, it takes 1d6 necrotic damage per level of the spell, and the spell has no effect and is wasted.

REGIONAL EFFECTS

A mummy lord's temple or tomb is warped in any of the following ways by the creature's dark presence:

- Food instantly molders and water instantly evaporates when brought into the lair. Other non magical drinks are spoiled - wine turning to vinegar, for instance.
- Divination spells cast within the lair by creatures other than the mummy lord have a 25 percent chance to provide misleading results, as determined by the DM. If a divination spell already has a chance to fail or become unreliable when cast multiple times, that chance increases by 25 percent.
- A creature that takes treasure from the lair is cursed until the treasure is returned. The cursed target has disadvantage on all saving throws. The curse lasts until removed by a remove curse spell or other magic.

If the mummy lord is destroyed, these regional effects end immediately.

MUMMY LORD

Medium undead, lawful evil

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 97 (13d8 + 39)

Speed 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	10 (+0)	17 (+3)	11 (+0)	18 (+4)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Con +8, Int +5, Wis +9, Cha +8

Skills History +5, Religion +5

Damage Immunities necrotic, poison; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Damage Vulnerabilities fire

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft. passive Perception 14

Languages -

Challenge 15 (13000 XP)

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

Rejuvenation. A destroyed mummy lord gains a new body in 24 hours if its heart is intact, regaining all its hit points and becoming active again. The new body appears within 5 feet of the mummy lord's heart.

Spellcasting. The mummy lord is a 10th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 17, +9 to hit with spell attacks). The mummy lord has the following cleric spells prepared:

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

1st level (4 slots): *command*, *guiding bolt*, *shield of faith*

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

3rd level (3 slots): *animate dead*, *dispel magic*

4th level (3 slots): *divination*, *guardian of faith*

5th level (2 slots): *contagion*, *insect plague*

6th level (1 slot): *harm*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The mummy can use its Dreadful Glare and makes one attack with its rotting fist.

Rotting Fist. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (3d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage plus 21 (6d6) necrotic damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 16 Constitution saving throw or be cursed with mummy rot. The cursed target can't regain hit points, and its hit point maximum decreases by 10 (3d6) for every 24 hours that elapse. If the curse reduces the target's hit point maximum to 0, the target dies, and its body turns to dust. The curse lasts until removed by the remove curse spell or other magic.

Dreadful Glare. The mummy lord targets one creature it can see within 60 feet of it. If the target can see the mummy lord, it must succeed on a DC 16 Wisdom saving throw against this magic or become frightened until the end of the mummy's next turn. If the target fails the saving throw by 5 or more, it is also paralyzed for the same duration. A target that succeeds on the saving throw is immune to the Dreadful Glare of all mummies and mummy lords for the next 24 hours.

MYCONID ADULT

Medium plant, lawful neutral

Armor Class 12 (natural armor)
Hit Points 22 (4d8 + 4)
Speed 20 ft.

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

Senses darkvision 120 ft. passive Perception 11
Languages -
Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

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

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

ACTIONS

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

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

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

MYCONID SPROUT

Small plant, lawful neutral

Armor Class 10
Hit Points 7 (2d6)
Speed 10 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	8 (-1)	11 (+0)	5 (-3)

Senses darkvision 120 ft. passive Perception 10
Languages -
Challenge 0 (10 XP)

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

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

ACTIONS

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

Rapport Spores (3/Day). A 10-foot radius of spores extends from the myconid. These spores can go around corners and affect only creatures with an Intelligence of 2 or higher that aren't undead, constructs, or elementals. Affected creatures can communicate telepathically with one another while they are within 30 feet of each other. The effect lasts for 1 hour.

MYCONID SOVEREIGN

Large plant, lawful neutral

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)
Hit Points 60 (8d10 + 16)
Speed 30 ft.

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

Senses darkvision 120 ft. passive Perception 12
Languages -
Challenge 2 (450 XP)

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

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

ACTIONS

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

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

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

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

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

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

NALFESHNEE

Large fiend (demon), 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.

NOTHIC

Medium aberration, neutral evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)
Hit Points 45 (6d8 + 18)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	16 (+3)	16 (+3)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)	8 (-1)

Skills Arcana +3, Insight +4, Perception +2, Stealth +5
Senses truesight 120 ft., passive Perception 12
Languages Undercommon
Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Keen Sight. The nothic has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The nothic makes two claw attacks.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6+3) slashing damage.

Rotting Gaze. The nothic targets one creature it can see within 30 feet of it. The target must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw against this magic or take 10 (3d6) necrotic damage.

Weird Insight. The nothic targets one creature it can see within 30 feet of it. The target must contest its Charisma (Deception) check against the nothic's Wisdom (Insight) check. If the nothic wins, it magically learns one fact or secret about the target. The target automatically wins if it is immune to being charmed.

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.

ONI

Large giant, lawful evil

Armor Class 16 (chain mail)
Hit Points 110 (13d10 + 39)
Speed 30 ft., fly 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	11 (+0)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	15 (+2)

Saving Throws Dex +3, Con +6, Wis +4, Cha +5
Skills Arcana +5, Deception +8, Perception +4
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14
Languages Common, Giant
Challenge 7 (2900 XP)

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

At will: *darkness*, *invisibility*

1/day each: *charm person*, *cone of cold*, *gaseous form*, *sleep*

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

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

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The oni makes two attacks, either with its claws or its glaive.

Claws (Oni Form Only). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8+4) slashing damage.

Glaive. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (2d10+4) slashing damage or 9 (1d10 + 4) slashing damage in Small or Medium form.

Change Shape. The oni magically polymorphs into a Small or Medium humanoid, into a Large giant, or back into its true form. Other than its size, its statistics are the same in each form. The only equipment that is transformed is its glaive, which shrinks so that it can be wielded in humanoid form. If the oni dies, it reverts to its true form, and its glaive reverts to its normal size.

OROG

Medium humanoid (orc), chaotic evil

Armor Class 18 (plate armor)
Hit Points 42 (5d8 + 20)
Speed 30 ft.

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

Skills Intimidation +5, Survival +2
Senses darkvision 60 ft. passive Perception 10
Languages Common, Orc
Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Aggressive. As a bonus action, the orog can move up to its speed toward a hostile creature that it can see.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The orog makes two greataxe attacks.

Greataxe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d10+4) slashing damage.

Javelin. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., or range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6+4) piercing damage.

ORC BLADE OF ILNEVAL

Medium humanoid (orc), chaotic evil

Armor Class 18 (chain mail, shield)
Hit Points 60 (8d8 + 24)
Speed 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws Wis +3
Skills Insight +3, Intimidation +4, Perception +3
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13
Languages Common, Orc
Challenge 4 (1100 XP)

Aggressive. As a bonus action, the orc can move up to its speed toward a hostile creature that it can see.

Foe Smiter Of Ilneval. The orc deals an extra die of damage when it hits with a longsword attack (included in the attack).

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The orc makes two melee attacks with its longsword or two ranged attacks with its javelins. If Ilneval's Command is available to use, the orc can use it after these attacks.

Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d8 + 3) slashing damage, or 14 (2d10 + 3) slashing damage when used with two hands.

Javelin. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage.

Ilneval's Command (Recharge 4-6). Up to three allied orcs within 120 feet of this orc that can hear it can use their reactions to each make one weapon attack.

ORC HAND OF YURTRUS

Medium humanoid (orc), chaotic evil

Armor Class 12 (hide armor)
Hit Points 30 (4d8 + 12)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	11 (+0)	16 (+3)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)	9 (-1)

Skills Arcana +2, Intimidation +1, Medicine +4, Religion +2
Senses darkvision 60 ft. passive Perception 12
Languages understands Common and Orc but can't speak
Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Aggressive. As a bonus action, the orc can move up to its speed toward a hostile creature that it can see.

Spellcasting. The orc is a 4th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 12, +4 to hit with spell attacks). It requires no verbal components to cast its spells. The orc has the following cleric spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *guidance*, *mending*, *resistance*, *thaumaturgy*

1st level (4 slots): *bane*, *detect magic*, *inflict wounds*,
protection from evil and good

2nd level (3 slots): *blindness/deafness*, *silence*

ACTIONS

Touch Of The White Hand. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (2d8) necrotic 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.

PENTADRONE

Large construct, lawful neutral

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)
Hit Points 32 (5d10 + 5)
Speed 40 ft.

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

Skills Perception +4
Senses truesight 120 ft. passive Perception 10
Languages Modron
Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Axiomatic Mind. The pentadrone can't be compelled to act in a manner contrary to its nature or its instructions.

Disintegration. If the pentadrone dies, its body disintegrates into dust, leaving behind its weapons and anything else it was carrying.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The pentadrone makes five arm attacks.

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

Paralysis Gas (Recharge 5-6). The pentadrone exhales a 30-foot cone of gas. Each creature in that area must succeed on a DC 11 Constitution saving throw or be paralyzed 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.

PIT FIEND

Large fiend (devil), lawful evil

Armor Class 19 (natural armor)
Hit Points 300 (24d10 + 168)
Speed 30 ft., fly 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
28 (+9)	14 (+2)	24 (+7)	22 (+6)	18 (+4)	24 (+7)

Saving Throws Dex +8, Con +13, Wis +10
Damage Immunities fire, poison
Damage Resistances cold; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks that aren't silvered
Condition Immunities poisoned
Senses truesight 120 ft. passive Perception 14
Languages Infernal, telepathy 120 ft.
Challenge 20 (25000 XP)

Fear Aura. Any creature hostile to the pit fiend that starts its turn within 20 feet of the pit fiend must make a DC 21 Wisdom saving throw, unless the pit fiend is incapacitated. On a failed save, the creature is frightened until the start of its next turn. If a creature's saving throw is successful, the creature is immune to the pit fiend's Fear Aura for the next 24 hours.

Innate Spellcasting. The pit fiend's spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 21). The pit fiend can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:
At will: *detect magic*, *fireball*
3/day each: *hold monster*, *wall of fire*

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

Magic Weapons. The pit fiend's weapon attacks are magical.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The pit fiend makes four attacks: one with its bite, one with its claw, one with its mace, and one with its tail.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +14 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 22 (4d6 + 8) piercing damage. The target must succeed on a DC 21 Constitution saving throw or become poisoned. While poisoned in this way, the target can't regain hit points, and it takes 21 (6d6) poison damage at the start of each of its turns. The poisoned target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +14 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 17 (2d8 + 8) slashing damage.

Mace. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +14 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (2d6 + 8) bludgeoning damage plus 21 (6d6) fire damage.

Tail. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +14 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 24 (3d10 + 8) bludgeoning damage.

PLANETAR

Large celestial, lawful good

Armor Class 19 (natural armor)
Hit Points 200 (16d10 + 112)
Speed 40 ft., fly 120 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
24 (+7)	20 (+5)	24 (+7)	19 (+4)	22 (+6)	25 (+7)

Saving Throws Con +12, Wis +11, Cha +12
Skills Perception +11
Damage Resistances radiant; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks
Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened
Senses truesight 120 ft. passive Perception 16
Languages all, telepathy 120 ft.
Challenge 16 (15000 XP)

Angelic Weapons. The planetar's weapon attacks are magical. When the planetar hits with any weapon, the weapon deals an extra 5d8 radiant damage (included in the attack).

Divine Awareness. The planetar knows if it hears a lie.

Innate Spellcasting. The planetar's spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 20). The planetar can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *detect evil and good*, *invisibility* (self only)
3/day each: *blade barrier*, *dispel evil and good*, *flame strike*, *raise dead*
1/day each: *commune*, *control weather*, *insect plague*

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

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The planetar makes two melee attacks.

Greatsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 21 (4d6+7) slashing damage plus 22 (5d8) radiant damage.

Healing Touch (4/Day). The planetar touches another creature. The target magically regains 30 (6d8 + 3) hit points and is freed from any curse, disease, poison, blindness, or deafness.

PRIEST

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 13 (chain shirt)
Hit Points 27 (5d8 + 5)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)	16 (+3)	13 (+1)

Skills Medicine +7, Persuasion +3, Religion +5
Senses passive Perception 13
Languages any two languages
Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Divine Eminence. As a bonus action, the priest can expend a spell slot to cause its melee weapon attacks to magically deal an extra 10 (3d6) radiant damage to a target on a hit. This benefit lasts until the end of the turn. If the priest expends a spell slot of 2nd level or higher, the extra damage increases by 1d6 for each level above 1st.

Spellcasting. The priest is a 5th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). The priest has the following cleric spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *light*, *sacred flame*, *thaumaturgy*
1st level (4 slots): *cure wounds*, *guiding bolt*, *sanctuary*
2nd level (3 slots): *lesser restoration*, *spiritual weapon*
3rd level (2 slots): *dispel magic*, *spirit guardians*

ACTIONS

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

PSEUDODRAGON

Tiny dragon, neutral good

Armor Class 13
Hit Points 7 (2d4 + 2)
Speed 15 ft., fly 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6 (-2)	15 (+2)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)

Skills Perception +3, Stealth +4
Senses blindsight 10 ft., darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13
Languages understands Common and Draconic but can't speak
Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Keen Senses. The pseudodragon has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight, hearing, or smell.

Limited Telepathy. The pseudodragon can magically communicate simple ideas, emotions, and images telepathically with any creature within 100 feet of it that can understand a language.

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

ACTIONS

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

Sting. *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 become poisoned for 1 hour. If the saving throw fails by 5 or more, the target falls unconscious for the same duration, or until it takes damage or another creature uses an action to shake it awake.

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.

QUAGGOTH SPORE SERVANT

Medium plant, unaligned

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)
Hit Points 45 (6d8 + 18)
Speed 20 ft., climb 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	2 (-4)	6 (-2)	1 (-5)

Damage Immunities poison
Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, frightened, paralyzed, poisoned
Senses blindsight 30 ft. (blind beyond this radius) passive Perception 8
Languages -
Challenge 1 (200 XP)

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The spore servant makes two claw attacks.

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

QUETZALCOATLUS

Huge beast, unaligned

Armor Class 14
Hit Points 30 (4d12 + 4)
Speed 10 ft., fly 80 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	13 (+1)	13 (+1)	2 (-4)	10 (+0)	5 (-3)

Skills Perception +2
Senses passive Perception 12
Languages -
Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Dive Attack. If the quetzalcoatlus is flying and dives at least 30 feet toward a target and then hits with a bite attack, the attack deals an extra 10 (3d6) damage to the target.

Flyby. The quetzalcoatlus doesn't provoke an opportunity attack when it flies out of an enemy's reach.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 10 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 12 (3d6 + 2) piercing damage.

RED DRAGON WYRMLING

Medium dragon, chaotic evil

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)
Hit Points 75 (10d8 + 30)
Speed 30 ft., climb 30 ft., fly 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	10 (+0)	17 (+3)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	15 (+2)

Saving Throws Dex +2, Con +5, Wis +2, Cha +4
Skills Perception +4, Stealth +2
Damage Immunities fire
Senses blindsight 10 ft., darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14
Languages Draconic
Challenge 4 (1100 XP)

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d10 + 4) piercing damage plus 3 (1d6) fire damage.

Fire Breath (Recharge 5-6). The dragon exhales fire in a 15-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw, taking 24 (7d6) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

REMORHAZ

Huge monstrosity, unaligned

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)
Hit Points 195 (17d12 + 85)
Speed 30 ft., burrow 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
24 (+7)	13 (+1)	21 (+5)	4 (-3)	10 (+0)	5 (-3)

Damage Immunities cold, fire
Senses darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 60 ft. passive Perception 10
Languages -
Challenge 11 (7200 XP)

Heated Body. A creature that touches the remorhaz or hits it with a melee attack while within 5 feet of it takes 10 (3d6) fire damage.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 40 (6d10 + 7) piercing damage plus 10 (3d6) fire damage. If the target is a creature, it is grappled (escape DC 17). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained, and the remorhaz can't bite another target.

Swallow. The remorhaz makes one bite attack against a Medium or smaller creature it is grappling. If the attack hits, that creature takes the bite's damage and is swallowed, and the grapple ends. While swallowed, the creature is blinded and restrained, it has total cover against attacks and other effects outside the remorhaz, and it takes 21 (6d6) acid damage at the start of each of the remorhaz's turns.

If the remorhaz takes 30 damage or more on a single turn from a creature inside it, the remorhaz must succeed on a DC 15 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 remorhaz. If the remorhaz dies, a swallowed creature is no longer restrained by it and can escape from the corpse using 15 feet of movement, exiting prone.

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.

SPINED DEVIL

Small fiend (devil), lawful evil

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)
Hit Points 22 (5d6 + 5)
Speed 20 ft., fly 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)	8 (-1)

Damage Immunities fire, poison
Damage Resistances cold; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks that aren't silvered
Condition Immunities poisoned
Senses darkvision 120 ft. passive Perception 12
Languages Infernal, telepathy 120 ft.
Challenge 2 (450 XP)

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

Flyby. The devil doesn't provoke an opportunity attack when it flies out of an enemy's reach.

Limited Spines. The devil has twelve tail spines. Used spines regrow by the time the devil finishes a long rest.

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

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The devil makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its fork or two with its tail spines.

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

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

Spines. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 20/80 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage plus 3 (1d6) fire damage.

SHIELD GUARDIAN

Large construct, unaligned

Armor Class 17
Hit Points 142 (15d10 + 60)
Speed 30 ft.

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

Damage Immunities poison
Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, poisoned
Senses blindsight 10 ft., darkvision 60 ft. passive Perception 10
Languages understands commands given in any language but can't speak
Challenge 7 (2900 XP)

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

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

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

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The guardian makes two fist attacks.

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

REACTIONS

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

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.

SPIRIT TROLL

Large giant, chaotic evil

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)
Hit Points 97 (15d10 + 15)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
1 (-5)	17 (+3)	13 (+1)	8 (-1)	9 (-1)	16 (+3)

Skills Perception +3
Damage Immunities bludgeoning, piercing, slashing from nonmagical attacks
Damage Resistances acid, cold, fire, lightning, thunder
Condition Immunities exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, prone, restrained, unconscious
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13
Languages Giant
Challenge 11 (7200 XP)

Incorporeal Movement. The troll 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.

Regeneration. The troll regains 10 hit points at the start of each of its turns. If the troll takes psychic or force damage, this trait doesn't function at the start of the troll's next turn. The troll dies only if it starts its turn with 0 hit points and doesn't regenerate.

ACTIONS

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

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 19 (3d10 + 3) psychic damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or be stunned for 1 minute. The stunned target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 14 (2d10 + 3) psychic damage.

STAR SPAWN GRUE

Small aberration, lawful evil

Armor Class 11
Hit Points 17 (5d6)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6 (-2)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)	9 (-1)	11 (+0)	6 (-2)

Damage Immunities psychic
Senses darkvision 60 ft. passive Perception 10
Languages Deep Speech
Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Aura Of Madness. Creatures within 20 feet of the grue that aren't aberrations have disadvantage on saving throws, as well as on attack rolls against creatures other than a star spawn grue.

ACTIONS

Confounding Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (2d4 + 1) piercing damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 10 Wisdom saving throw or attack rolls against it have advantage until the start of the grue's next turn.

STAR SPAWN HULK

Large aberration, chaotic evil

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

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	8 (-1)	21 (+5)	7 (-2)	12 (+1)	9 (-1)

Saving Throws Dex +3, Wis +5
Skills Perception +5
Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, slashing from nonmagical attacks
Condition Immunities charmed, frightened
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15
Languages Deep Speech
Challenge 10 (5900 XP)

Psychic Mirror. If the hulk takes psychic damage, each creature within 10 feet of the hulk takes that damage instead; the hulk takes none of the damage. In addition, the hulk's thoughts and location can't be discerned by magic.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The hulk makes two slam attacks. If both attacks hit the same target, the target also takes 9 (2d8) psychic damage and must succeed on a DC 17 Constitution saving throw or be stunned until the end of the target's next turn.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (2d8 + 5) bludgeoning damage.

Reaping Arms (Recharge 5-6). The hulk makes a separate slam attack against each creature within 10 feet of it. Each creature that is hit must also succeed on a DC 17 Dexterity saving throw or be knocked prone.

STAR SPAWN LARVA MAGE

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The star spawn larva mage 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 star spawn larva mage regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Cantrip (Costs 2 Actions). The larva mage casts one cantrip.

Slam (Costs 2 Actions). The larva mage makes one slam attack.

Feed (Costs 3 Actions). Each creature restrained by the larva mage's Plague of Worms takes 13 (3d8) necrotic damage, and the larva mage gains 6 temporary hit points.

STAR SPAWN LARVA MAGE

Medium aberration, chaotic evil

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 168 (16d8 + 96)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	12 (+1)	23 (+6)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Dex +6, Wis +6, Cha +8

Skills Perception +6

Damage Immunities psychic

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

Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, restrained

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 16

Languages Deep Speech

Challenge 16 (15000 XP)

Innate Spellcasting. The larva mage'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: *eldritch blast**, *minor illusion*

3/day: *dominate monster*

1/day: *circle of death*

*3 beams, +3 bonus to each damage roll

Return To Worms. When the larva mage is reduced to 0 hit points, it breaks apart into a swarm of insects in the same space. Unless the swarm is destroyed, the larva mage reforms from it 24 hours later.

ACTIONS

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) bludgeoning damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 19 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned until the end of its next turn.

Plague Of Worms (Recharge 6). Each creature other than a star spawn within 10 feet of the larva mage must make a DC 19 Dexterity saving throw. On a failure the target takes 22 (5d8) necrotic damage and is blinded and restrained by masses of swarming worms. The affected creature takes 22 (5d8) necrotic damage at the start of each of the larva mage's turns. The creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

REACTIONS

Feed On Weakness. When a creature within 20 feet of the larva mage fails a saving throw, the larva mage gains 10 temporary hit points.

STAR SPAWN MANGLER

Medium aberration, chaotic evil

Armor Class 14

Hit Points 71 (13d8 + 13)

Speed 40 ft., climb 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)	7 (-2)

Saving Throws Dex +7, Con +4

Skills Stealth +7

Damage Immunities psychic

Damage Resistances cold

Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, prone

Senses darkvision 60 ft. passive Perception 11

Languages Deep Speech

Challenge 5 (1800 XP)

Ambush. On the first round of each combat, the mangler has advantage on attack rolls against a creature that hasn't taken a turn yet.

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

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The mangler makes two claw attacks.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) slashing damage. If the attack roll has advantage, the target also takes 7 (2d6) psychic damage.

Flurry Of Claws (Recharge 4-6). The mangler makes six claw attacks against one target. Either before or after these attacks, it can move up to its speed as a bonus action without provoking opportunity attacks.

STAR SPAWN SEER

Medium aberration, lawful evil

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)
Hit Points 153 (18d8 + 72)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)	22 (+6)	19 (+4)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Dex +6, Int +11, Wis +9, Cha +8
Skills Perception +9
Damage Immunities psychic
Damage Resistances cold; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks
Condition Immunities charmed, frightened
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 19
Languages Common, Deep Speech, Undercommon
Challenge 13 (10000 XP)

Out-of-Phase Movement. The seer can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. Each creature it moves through takes 5 (1d10) psychic damage; no creature can take this damage more than once per turn. The seer takes 5 (1d10) force damage if it ends its turn inside an object.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The seer makes two comet staff attacks or uses Psychic Orb twice.

Comet Staff. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d6 + 6) bludgeoning damage plus 18 (4d8) psychic damage, or 10 (1d8 + 6) bludgeoning damage plus 18 (4d8) psychic damage, if used with two hands, and the target must succeed on a DC 19 Constitution saving throw or be incapacitated until the end of its next turn.

Psychic Orb. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +11 to hit, range 120 feet, one target. *Hit:* 27 (5d10) psychic damage.

Collapse Distance (Recharge 6). The seer warps space around a creature it can see within 30 feet of it. That creature must make a DC 19 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, the target, along with any equipment it is wearing or carrying, is magically teleported up to 60 feet to an unoccupied space the seer can see, and all other creatures within 10 feet of the target's original space each takes 39 (6d12) psychic damage. On a successful save, the target takes 19 (3d12) psychic damage.

REACTIONS

Bend Space. When the seer would be hit by an attack, it teleports, exchanging positions with another star spawn it can see within 60 feet of it. The other star spawn is hit by the attack instead.

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 INSECTS

Medium swarm of tiny beasts, unaligned

Armor Class 12 (natural armor)
Hit Points 22 (5d8)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
3 (-4)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)	1 (-5)	7 (-2)	1 (-5)

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, slashing
Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, prone, restrained, stunned
Senses blindsight 10 ft. passive Perception 8
Languages -
Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

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 insect. The swarm can't regain hit points or gain temporary hit points.

ACTIONS

Bites. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 0 ft., one target in the swarm's space. *Hit:* 10 (4d4) piercing damage, or 5 (2d4) piercing damage if the swarm has half of its hit points or fewer.

SWARM OF QUIPPERS

Medium of (swarm tiny beasts), unaligned

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 28 (8d8 - 8)

Speed 0 ft., swim 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	16 (+3)	9 (-1)	1 (-5)	7 (-2)	2 (-4)

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, slashing

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

Senses passive Perception 8

Languages -

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Blood Frenzy. The swarm has advantage on melee attack rolls against any creature that doesn't have all its hit points.

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 quipper. The swarm can't regain hit points or gain temporary hit points.

Water Breathing. The swarm can breathe only underwater.

ACTIONS

Bites. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 0 ft., one creature in the swarm's space. *Hit:* 14 (4d6) piercing damage, or 7 (2d6) piercing damage if the swarm has half of its hit points or fewer.

SWARM OF SPIDERS

Medium swarm (of tiny beasts), unaligned

Armor Class 12 (natural armor)

Hit Points 22 (5d8)

Speed 20 ft., climb 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
3 (-4)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)	1 (-5)	7 (-2)	1 (-5)

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, slashing

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

Senses blindsight 10 ft. passive Perception 8

Languages -

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

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

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 insect. The swarm can't regain hit points or gain temporary hit points.

Web. While in contact with a web, the swarm knows the exact location of any other creature in contact with the same web.

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

ACTIONS

Bites. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, one target in the swarm's space. *Hit:* 10 (4d4) piercing damage or 5 (2d4) piercing damage if the swarm has half of its hit points or fewer.

TARRASQUE

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The tarrasque 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 tarrasque regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Attack. The tarrasque makes one claw attack or tail attack.

Move. The tarrasque moves up to half its speed.

Chomp (Costs 2 Actions). The tarrasque makes one bite attack or uses its Swallow.

THUG

Medium humanoid (any race), any non-good alignment

Armor Class 11 (leather armor)

Hit Points 32 (5d8 + 10)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Skills Intimidation +2

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

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

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The thug makes two melee attacks.

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

Heavy Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, range 100/400 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d10) piercing damage.

TARRASQUE

Gargantuan monstrosity (titan), unaligned

Armor Class 25 (natural armor)

Hit Points 676 (33d20 + 330)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
30 (+10)	11 (+0)	30 (+10)	3 (-4)	11 (+0)	11 (+0)

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

Damage Immunities fire, poison; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, paralyzed, poisoned

Senses blindsight 120 ft. passive Perception 10

Languages -

Challenge 30 (155000 XP)

Legendary Resistance (3/Day). If the tarrasque fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

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

Reflective Carapace. Any time the tarrasque is targeted by a magic missile spell, a line spell, or a spell that requires a ranged attack roll, roll a d6. On a 1 to 5, the tarrasque is unaffected. On a 6, the tarrasque is unaffected, and the effect is reflected back at the caster as though it originated from the tarrasque, turning the caster into the target.

Siege Monster. The tarrasque deals double damage to objects and structures.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The tarrasque can use its Frightful Presence. It then makes five attacks: one with its bite, two with its claws, one with its horns, and one with its tail. It can use its Swallow instead of its bite.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +19 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 36 (4d12 + 10) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it is grappled (escape DC 20). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained, and the tarrasque can't bite another target.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +19 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 28 (4d8 + 10) slashing damage.

Horn. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +19 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 32 (4d10 + 10) piercing damage.

Tail. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +19 to hit, reach 20 ft., one target. *Hit:* 24 (4d6 + 10) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 20 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

Frightful Presence. Each creature of the tarrasque's choice within 120 feet of it 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, with disadvantage if the tarrasque is within line of sight, 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 tarrasque's Frightful Presence for the next 24 hours.

Swallow. The tarrasque makes one bite attack against a Large or smaller creature it is grappling. If the attack hits, the target takes the bite's damage, the target is swallowed, and the grapple ends. While swallowed, the creature is blinded and restrained, it has total cover against attacks and other effects outside the tarrasque, and it takes 56 (16d6) acid damage at the start of each of the tarrasque's turns.

If the tarrasque takes 60 damage or more on a single turn from a creature inside it, the tarrasque must succeed on a DC 20 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 tarrasque. If the tarrasque dies, a swallowed creature is no longer restrained by it and can escape from the corpse by using 30 feet of movement, exiting prone.

TRICERATOPS

Huge beast, unaligned

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)
Hit Points 95 (10d12 + 30)
Speed 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
22 (+6)	9 (-1)	17 (+3)	2 (-4)	11 (+0)	5 (-3)

Senses passive Perception 10
Languages -
Challenge 5 (1800 XP)

Trampling Charge. If the triceratops 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 13 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone. If the target is prone, the triceratops can make one stomp attack against it as a bonus action.

ACTIONS

Gore. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 24 (4d8 + 6) piercing damage.

Stomp. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one prone creature. *Hit:* 22 (3d10 + 6) bludgeoning damage.

TRIDRONE

Medium construct, lawful neutral

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)
Hit Points 16 (3d8 + 3)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)	9 (-1)	10 (+0)	9 (-1)

Senses truesight 120 ft. passive Perception 10
Languages Modron
Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Axiomatic Mind. The tridrone can't be compelled to act in a manner contrary to its nature or its instructions.

Disintegration. If the tridrone dies, its body disintegrates into dust, leaving behind its weapons and anything else it was carrying.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The tridrone makes three fist attacks or three javelin attacks.

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

Javelin. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) piercing damage.

TYRANNOSAURUS REX

Huge beast, unaligned

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)
Hit Points 136 (13d12 + 52)
Speed 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
25 (+7)	10 (+0)	19 (+4)	2 (-4)	12 (+1)	9 (-1)

Skills Perception +4
Senses passive Perception 11
Languages -
Challenge 8 (3900 XP)

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The tyrannosaurus makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its tail. It can't make both attacks against the same target.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 33 (4d12 + 7) piercing damage. If the target is a Medium or smaller creature, it is grappled (escape DC 17). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained, and the tyrannosaurus can't bite another target.

Tail. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 20 (3d8 + 7) bludgeoning damage.

ULTROLOTH

Medium fiend (yugoloth), neutral evil

Armor Class 19 (natural armor)
Hit Points 153 (18d8 + 72)
Speed 30 ft., fly 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	16 (+3)	18 (+4)	18 (+4)	15 (+2)	19 (+4)

Skills Intimidation +9, Perception +7, Stealth +8
Damage Immunities acid, poison
Damage Resistances cold, fire, lightning; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks
Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, poisoned
Senses truesight 120 ft., passive Perception 17
Languages Abyssal, Infernal, telepathy 120 ft.
Challenge 13 (10000 XP)

Innate Spellcasting. The ultraloth's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 17). The ultraloth can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *alter self, clairvoyance, darkness, detect magic, detect thoughts, dispel magic, invisibility (self only), suggestion*
3/day each: *dimension door, fear, wall of fire*
1/day each: *fire storm, mass suggestion*

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

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

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The ultraloth can use its Hypnotic Gaze and makes three melee attacks.

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

Hypnotic Gaze. The ultraloth's eyes sparkle with opalescent light as it targets one creature it can see within 30 feet of it. If the target can see the ultraloth, the target must succeed on a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw against this magic or be charmed until the end of the ultraloth's next turn. The charmed target is stunned. If the target's saving throw is successful, the target is immune to the ultraloth's gaze for the next 24 hours.

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

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.

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.

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.

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.

WAR PRIEST

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 18 (plate armor)
Hit Points 117 (18d8 + 36)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	17 (+3)	13 (+1)

Saving Throws Con +6, Wis +7
Senses passive Perception 13
Languages any two languages
Challenge 9 (5000 XP)

Spellcasting. The priest is a 9th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). It has the following cleric spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *light, mending, sacred flame, spare the dying*
1st level (4 slots): *divine favor, guiding bolt, healing word, shield of faith*
2nd level (3 slots): *lesser restoration, magic weapon, prayer of healing, silence, spiritual weapon*
3rd level (3 slots): *beacon of hope, crusader's mantle, dispel magic, revivify, spirit guardians, water walk*
4th level (3 slots): *banishment, freedom of movement, guardian of faith, stoneskin*
5th level (1 slot): *flame strike, mass cure wounds, hold monster*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The priest makes two melee attacks.

Maul. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6+3) bludgeoning damage.

REACTIONS

Guided Strike (Recharges After A Short Or Long Rest). The priest grants a +10 bonus to an attack roll made by itself or another creature within 30 feet of it. The priest can make this choice after the roll is made but before it hits or misses.

WARLORD

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 18 (plate armor)
Hit Points 229 (27d8 + 108)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	16 (+3)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws Str +9, Dex +7, Con +8
Skills Athletics +9, Intimidation +8, Perception +5, Persuasion +8
Senses passive Perception 15
Languages any two languages
Challenge 12 (8400 XP)

Indomitable (3/Day). The warlord can reroll a saving throw it fails. It must use the new roll.

Survivor. The warlord regains 10 hit points at the start of its turn if it has at least 1 hit point but fewer hit points than half its hit point maximum.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The warlord makes two weapon attacks.

Greatsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d6 + 5) slashing damage.

Shortbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage.

WARLOCK OF THE ARCHFEY

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 11 (14 with *mage armor*)
Hit Points 49 (11d8)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	13 (+1)	11 (+0)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws Wis +3, Cha +6
Skills Arcana +2, Deception +6, Nature +2, Persuasion +6
Condition Immunities charmed
Senses passive Perception 11
Languages Common, Sylvan
Challenge 4 (1100 XP)

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

At will: *disguise self, mage armor (self only), silent image, speak with animals*
1/day: *conjure fey*

Spellcasting. The warlock is an 11th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 14, +6 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): *dancing lights, eldritch blast, friends, mage hand, minor illusion, prestidigitation, vicious mockery*
1st-5th level (3 5th-level slots): *blink, charm person, dimension door, dominate beast, faerie fire, fear, hold monster, misty step, phantasmal force, seeming, sleep*

ACTIONS

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4+2) piercing damage.

REACTIONS

Misty Escape (Recharges After A Short Or Long Rest). In response to taking damage, the warlock 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, makes a damage roll, or casts a spell.

WARLORD

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The warlord 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 warlord regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Weapon Attack. The warlord makes a weapon attack.

Command Ally. The warlord targets one ally it can see within 30 feet of it. If the target can see and hear the warlord, the target can make one weapon attack as a reaction and gains advantage on the attack roll.

Frighten Foe (Costs 2 Actions). The warlord targets one enemy it can see within 30 feet of it. If the target can see and hear it, the target must succeed on a DC 16 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened until the end of warlord's next turn.

WATER ELEMENTAL

Large elemental, neutral

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 114 (12d10 + 48)

Speed 30 ft., swim 90 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	14 (+2)	18 (+4)	5 (-3)	10 (+0)	8 (-1)

Damage Immunities poison

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

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

Senses darkvision 60 ft. passive Perception 10

Languages Aquan

Challenge 5 (1800 XP)

Freeze. If the elemental takes cold damage, it partially freezes; its speed is reduced by 20 ft. until the end of its next turn.

Water Form. The elemental can enter a hostile creature's space and stop there. It can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The elemental makes two slam attacks.

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

Whelm (Recharge 4-6). Each creature in the elemental's space must make a DC 15 Strength saving throw. On a failure, a target takes 13 (2d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage. If it is Large or smaller, it is also grappled (escape DC 14). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained and unable to breathe unless it can breathe water. If the saving throw is successful, the target is pushed out of the elemental's space.

The elemental can grapple one Large creature or up to two Medium or smaller creatures at one time. At the start of each of the elemental's turns, each target grappled by it takes 13 (2d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage. A creature within 5 feet of the elemental can pull a creature or object out of it by taking an action to make a DC 14 Strength check and succeeding.

WILL-O'-WISP

Tiny undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 19

Hit Points 22 (9d4)

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

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
1 (-5)	28 (+9)	10 (+0)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)

Damage Immunities lightning, poison

Damage Resistances acid, cold, fire, necrotic, thunder, bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

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

Senses darkvision 120 ft. passive Perception 12

Languages the languages it knew in life

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Consume Light. As a bonus action, the will-o'-wisp can target one creature it can see within 5 feet of it that has 0 hit points and is still alive. The target must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw against this magic or die. If the target dies, the will-o'-wisp regains 10 (3d6) hit points.

Ephemeral. The will-o'-wisp can't wear or carry anything.

Incorporeal Movement. The will-o'-wisp 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.

Variable Illumination. The will-o'-wisp sheds bright light in a 5- to 20-foot radius and dim light for an additional number of ft. equal to the chosen radius. The will-o'-wisp can alter the radius as a bonus action.

ACTIONS

Shock. *Melee Spell Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., or range 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 9 (2d8) lightning damage.

Invisibility. The will-o'-wisp and its light magically become invisible until it attacks or uses its Consume Life, or until its concentration ends (as if concentrating on a spell).

WRAITH

Medium undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 67 (9d8 + 27)

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

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

Damage Immunities necrotic, poison

Damage Resistances acid, cold, fire, lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks that aren't silvered

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

Senses darkvision 60 ft. passive Perception 12

Languages the languages it knew in life

Challenge 5 (1800 XP)

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

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

ACTIONS

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

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

XORN

Medium elemental, neutral

Armor Class 19 (natural armor)

Hit Points 73 (7d8 + 42)

Speed 20 ft., burrow 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	10 (+0)	22 (+6)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)

Skills Perception +6, Stealth +3

Damage Resistances piercing and slashing from nonmagical attacks that aren't adamantite

Senses darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 60 ft., passive Perception 16

Languages Terran

Challenge 5 (1800 XP)

Earth Glide. The xorn can burrow through nonmagical, unworked earth and stone. While doing so, the xorn doesn't disturb the material it moves through.

Stone Camouflage. The xorn has advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks made to hide in rocky terrain.

Treasure Sense. The xorn can pinpoint, by scent, the location of precious metals and stones, such as coins and gems, within 60 feet of it.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The xorn makes three claw attacks and one bite attack.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (3d6+3) piercing damage.

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

YETH HOUND

Large fey, neutral evil

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 51 (6d10 + 18)

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

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	17 (+3)	16 (+3)	5 (-3)	12 (+1)	7 (-2)

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, slashing from nonmagical attacks not made with silvered weapons

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened

Senses darkvision 60 ft. passive Perception 11

Languages understands Common, Elvish, and Sylvan but can't speak

Challenge 4 (1100 XP)

Keen Hearing And Smell. The yeth hound has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

Sunlight Banishment. If the yeth hound starts its turn in sunlight, it is transported to the Ethereal Plane. While sunlight shines on the spot from which it vanished, the hound must remain in the Deep Ethereal. After sunset, it returns to the Border Ethereal at the same spot, whereupon it typically sets out to find its pack or its master. The hound is visible on the Material Plane while it is in the Border Ethereal, and vice versa, but it can't affect or be affected by anything on the other plane. Once it is adjacent to its master or a pack mate that is on the Material Plane, a yeth hound in the Border Ethereal can return to the Material Plane as an action.

Telepathic Bond. While the yeth hound is on the same plane of existence as its master, it can magically convey what it senses to its master, and the two can communicate telepathically with each other.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) piercing damage, plus 14 (4d6) psychic damage if the target is frightened.

Baleful Baying. The yeth hound bays magically. Every enemy within 300 feet of the hound that can hear it must succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened until the end of the hound's next turn or until the hound is incapacitated. A frightened target that starts its turn within 30 feet of the hound must use all its movement on that turn to get as far from the hound as possible, must finish the move before taking an action, and must take the most direct route, even if hazards lie that way. A target that successfully saves is immune to the baying of all yeth hounds for the next 24 hours.

ZOMBIE

Medium undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 8

Hit Points 22 (3d8 + 9)

Speed 20 ft.

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

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft. passive Perception 8

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

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

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

ACTIONS

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

APPENDIX C: EFFECTS

The following effects are described on this level:

MADNESS

TYPES OF MADNESS

Madness can occur in one of three forms:

A character afflicted with **short-term madness** is subjected to an effect from the Short-Term Madness table for 1d10 minutes.

A character afflicted with **long-term madness** is subjected to an effect from the Long-Term Madness table for 1d10 × 10 hours.

A character afflicted with **indefinite madness** gains a new character flaw from the Indefinite Madness table that lasts until cured.

CURING MADNESS

A *calm emotions* spell can suppress the effects of madness, while a *lesser restoration* spell can rid a character of a short-term or long-term madness. Depending on the source of the madness, *remove curse* or *dispel evil and good* might also prove effective. A *greater restoration* spell or more powerful magic is required to rid a character of indefinite madness.

INDEFINITE MADNESS

d100 Flaw (lasts until cured)	
1-15	"Being drunk keeps me sane."
16-25	"I keep whatever I find."
26-30	"I try to become more like someone else I know—adopting his or her style of dress, mannerisms, and name."
31-35	"I must bend the truth, exaggerate, or outright lie to be interesting to other people."
36-45	"Achieving my goal is the only thing of interest to me, and I'll ignore everything else to pursue it."
46-50	"I find it hard to care about anything that goes on around me."
51-55	"I don't like the way people judge me all the time."
56-70	"I am the smartest, wisest, strongest, fastest, and most beautiful person I know."
71-80	"I am convinced that powerful enemies are hunting me, and their agents are everywhere I go. I am sure they're watching me all the time."
81-85	"There's only one person I can trust. And only I can see this special friend."
86-95	"I can't take anything seriously. The more serious the situation, the funnier I find it."
96-100	"I've discovered that I really like killing people."

LONG-TERM MADNESS

d100 Effects (lasts 1d10 x 10 hours)	
1-10	The character feels compelled to repeat a specific activity over and over, such as washing hands, touching things, praying, or counting coins.
11-20	The character experiences vivid hallucinations and has disadvantage on ability checks.
21-30	The character suffers extreme paranoia. The character has disadvantage on Wisdom and Charisma checks.
31-40	The character regards something (usually the source of madness) with intense revulsion, as if affected by the antipathy effect of the <i>antipathy/sympathy</i> spell.
41-45	The character experiences a powerful delusion. Choose a potion. The character imagines that they're under its effects.
46-55	The character becomes attached to a "lucky charm," such as a person or an object, and has disadvantage on attack rolls, ability checks, and saving throws while more than 30 feet from it.
56-65	The character is blinded (25%) or deafened (75%).
66-75	The character experiences uncontrollable tremors or tics, which impose disadvantage on attack rolls, ability checks, and saving throws that involve Strength or Dexterity.
76-85	The character suffers from partial amnesia. The character knows who he or she is and retains racial traits and class features, but doesn't recognize other people or remember anything that happened before the madness took effect.
86-90	Whenever the character takes damage, he or she must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or be affected as though he or she failed a saving throw against the confusion spell. The confusion effect lasts for 1 minute.
91-95	The character loses the ability to speak.
96-100	The character falls unconscious. No amount of jostling or damage can wake the character.

SHORT-TERM MADNESS

d100 Effects (lasts 1d10 minutes)	
1-20	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.