

CCC-ELF-03-02



Echoes of Rage



As murders of non-humans continue in Hillsfar, the populace calls for drastic action against the city's most xenophobic Senator. Can you find a way to stop the violence?

A Two to Four Hour Adventure for Tier 2 Characters. Optimized for APL 8.

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Adventure Primer

"In his place there grew / an angry festered wound / full of hatred and remorse. Where I pick and scratch / 'til the blood amassed / to silent rage now that fills my lungs."

– Flogging Molly, "What's Left of the Flag."

This adventure is designed for **three to seven 5th-10th level characters** and is optimized for **five characters with an average party level (APL) of 8**. Characters outside this level range cannot participate in this adventure.

This adventure occurs in Hillsfar.

Background

Senator **SIR ARDEM ROHAN** is running out of political allies. After the fall of Torin Nomerthal's regime, Sir Ardem became the leading advocate for restoring Hillsfar's exclusionary humans-only law. Three months ago, he falsely accused fellow senator **BURT THE GOBLIN** of poisoning dozens of citizens, mainly humans (CCC-SQC 03-03).

When adventurers foiled the poisoning plot, they exposed Sir Ardem's blind xenophobia for the entire court. The disgraced senator went back to his manor to sulk. Every night he heard the voice of his father **ELIAS ROHAN** urging him to honor all the ghosts of Hillsfar's **RED PLUMES** by getting revenge against the nonhumans who have moved to town.

Sir Ardem has yet to swing his sword, but he has unwittingly attracted a **boneclaw**, a failed lich kept alive by Sir Ardem's subconscious desire to purge his homeland of nonhumans. Earlier today, adventurers tracked down the boneclaw and defeated it in combat (CCC-ELF 03-01). But the boneclaw will rise again!

Overview

The adventure's story is spread over **three parts** and takes approximately **2 hours** to play. The adventure begins with a Call to Action scene. If you're planning to play the entire adventure at once, you only need to introduce the Call to Action once. However, if you plan to

play them over several sessions, you'll want to revisit the **Call to Action** each time you play.

- **Part 1: I Thought We Won.** The boneclaw attacks once more in the **Call to Action**.
- **Part 2: Echoes of Rage.** Characters explore Sir Ardem's haunted mansion, learning how to get him to repent. This is **Main Objective A**.
- **Part 3: Have We Had Enough?** The characters decide whether to help Sir Ardem repent or try to kill him, along with defeating the boneclaw for good in **Main Objective B**.
- **Bonus Objective A: False Phylactery.** Ranlynn, a cleric of Ilmater, tells the party to find an artifact making it harder for Sir Ardem to forgive himself. This bonus objective is found in **Appendix 1**.
- **Bonus Objective B: War Buddies.** A ghost asks the party to find a lost dragonchess set, showing a happier side to Sir Ardem. This bonus objective is found in **Appendix 2**.

Adventure Hooks

This adventure starts a couple of hours after CCC-ELF-03-01 ends. Any character participating in that adventure is refreshed enough by their victory to gain the benefits of a full rest. Finding adventure hooks for other adventurers is more complicated.

Played Previous Adventure. Adventurers stayed in Hillsfar to investigate Sir Ardem's connection to the boneclaw.

Protecting Nonhumans. A racist Hillsfar senator is suspected of aiding a mysterious serial killer targeting nonhumans.

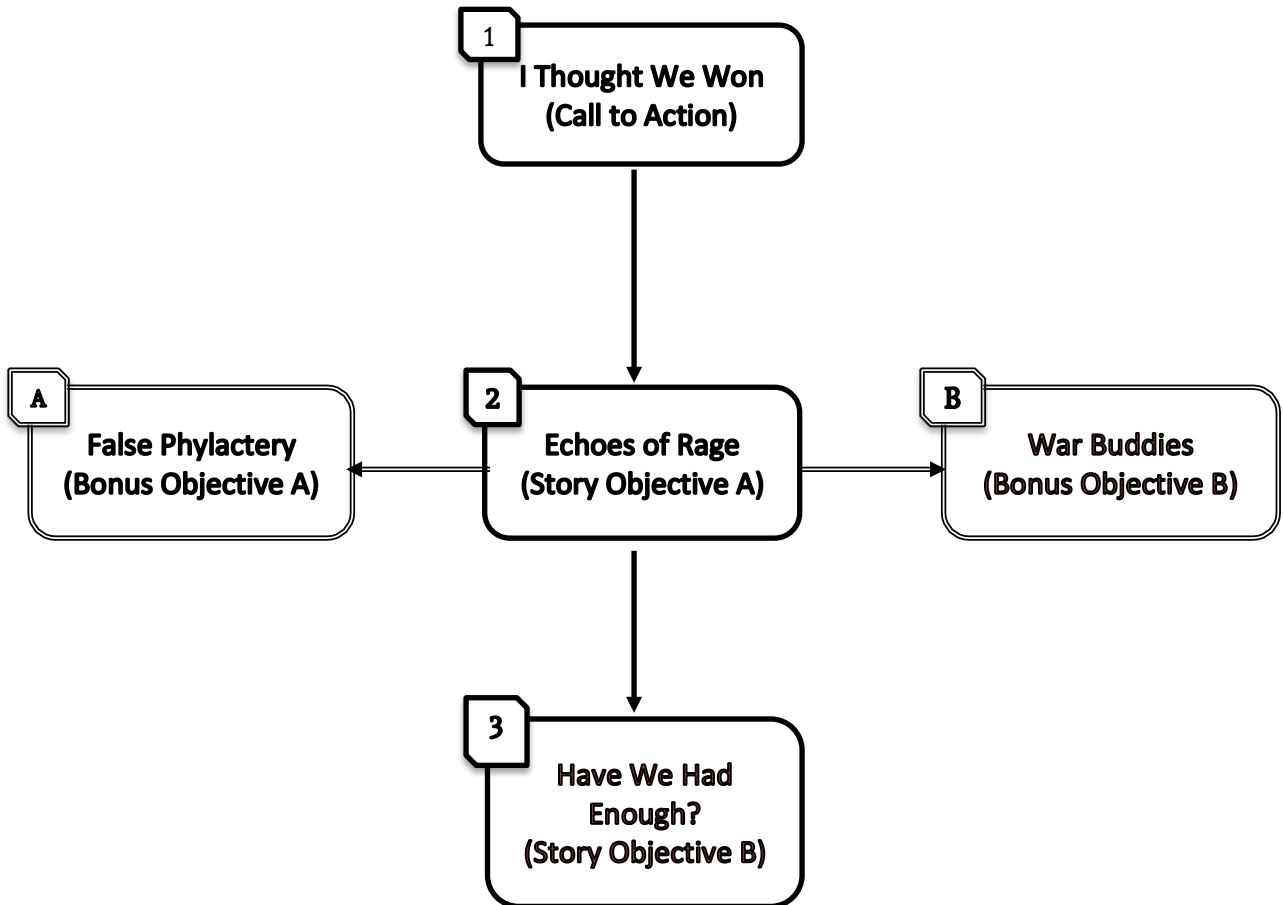
Preventing War. Soldiers, nobles, urchins, and faction agents have all seen signs of brewing discontent over the Red Plumes' inability to maintain order. One of many aggrieved groups may start a coup.

Designer's Notes

Xenophobia is not as prevalent on the streets of Hillsfar as it was in earlier CCC adventures, but the hostile echoes of Hillsfar's racist past haunt Sir Ardem's mansion. If portraying NPCs' xenophobia would make you or anyone at your table feel uncomfortable, feel free to shift the focus toward Sir Ardem's grief and despair over losing his father Elias.

Adventure Flowchart

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



Part 1: I Thought We Won (Call to Action)

Estimated Duration: 20

1: Bloodlust

Nonhumans have packed the Hydra's Den – one of Hillsfar's largest taverns – to celebrate adventurers killing the boneclaw earlier today (CCC-ELF-03-01). The party is contacted to gather evidence from Sir Ardem Rohan's manor for his upcoming trial. Little do they know that the boneclaw will come back.

Area Information

Dimensions & Terrain. The Hydra's Den is completely packed with nonhumans, mainly elves, half-elves and halflings.

Crowd: Any movement through the crowd is considered difficult terrain.

Lighting: Between people dancing on tables and smoke in the room, visibility is limited to 30 feet of bright light before heavy obscurement.

Sounds: Drunken revelry and bards trying to play their instruments over the crowd. Voices are indistinct beyond 30 feet.

Human Instigators: Dozens of Sir Ardem's human supporters stand outside the bar, slinging insults and hoping to get punched.

Creatures/NPCs

Johar Firahel, a male half-elf clearly wearing a chain shirt under his formal attire, has reserved a table for the party next to the bards. Once he offers the job to the adventurers – **but before they can ask clarifying questions – he leaves to get drinks and the boneclaw returns.**

Objectives/Goals. Johar has been dispatched by the Hillsfar Senate to hire someone to investigate the Rohan manor. The Senate wants to find any evidence that can be used at his trial. However, inviting adventurers to the castle may rouse too much suspicion of bias, so they dispatched a relatively anonymous functionary.

What Does He Know? Sir Ardem was arrested after adventurers fought and destroyed the boneclaw. He claims to know nothing about how it arrived.

2: Boneclaw Reformed

The boneclaw that adventurers defeated in the previous adventure forms a new body in the Hydra's Den, appearing **completely unharmed** and killing once more!

As you are waiting for your drinks, Johar's severed head crashes in to your table. The tavern's screams of joy turn to screams in terror as the undead menace that adventurers struck down just hours ago is back, getting revenge before you could see or hear what was happening.

Roll initiative! Remember that movement, vision, and hearing in the packed tavern are all limited. It takes five rounds to clear the tavern without opening a large hole the boneclaw could escape through as well.

Objectives/Goals. The boneclaw wants to kill as many nonhumans as possible before losing this body. **At normal and weaker APL, it only uses one claw against the adventurers, attacking an innocent with the other claw.**

Adjusting This Scene

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene, according to your group.

- **Very Weak:** The **boneclaw** has 90 hit points. It saves its *deadly reach* reaction for fleeing commoners and does not use it against PCs.
- **Weak:** The **boneclaw** has 90 hit points. If it hits with its first *deadly reach* reaction attack, it chooses not to follow up with the second attack.
- **Strong:** The **boneclaw** focuses all attacks against the more threatening party.
- **Very Strong:** The **boneclaw** has 170 hit points and focuses all attacks against the party.

After combat, the boneclaw's body disintegrates in to ash. Clever adventurers may consider restraining, not killing the boneclaw. The creature can turn its dark energy on itself, dealing 34 force damage to itself as an action until dying and forming a new body later.

3: Emergency Council

Sir Rexx Aaron (CCC-SQC-03-02) and Kenna (CCC-SQC-03-03) explain that the key to preventing civil war between Hillsfar's humans and nonhumans is in the haunted Rohan manor.

Area Information

Dimensions & Terrain. A deserted street somewhere between the Hydra's Den and the Rohan Manor. Human instigators run past, saying nothing, as Sir Rexx Aaron approaches.

Creatures/NPCs

Sir Rexx Aaron is in his late 60s, but still looks more than capable of smiting a fiend if need be. He wears gleaming full plate and an equally bright smile as he welcomes another group of adventurers to the path of righteousness.

Kenna, a human warlock of Tharizun in her early 30s, wears a red feather plume in her purple hair. She hasn't slept since the murders started. **Ranlynn Strongheart**, a female hill dwarf cleric of Ilmater stands by her side. She wears a reflective rainbow chain and carries an eldritch orb pulsing with purple runes, which is too bulky for Kenna to carry herself.

Objectives/Goals. Sir Rexx Aaron fears that the current boneclaw attacks are part of a continuous cycle of violence and retribution that plagues Hillsfar, even as many move towards reconciliation of the city's xenophobic, humans-only past. He invited Ranlynn to Hillsfar a month ago to help develop rituals that may quell the city's remaining malice.

Kenna is thrilled to see the adventurers, because it means she won't have to step foot in to the haunted Rohan manor herself. She wants to burn the monument to Hillsfar's xenophobic past to the ground, but her rage may empower the ghosts. Ranlynn is preoccupied with keeping Kenna and any hotheaded adventurers from destroying the manor.

What Do They Know? Whatever the party does over the next couple of hours to resolve the link between Sir Ardem Rohan and the boneclaw will shape the future of Hillsfar, calming of enflaming racial tensions.

If Sir Ardem is found guilty without some clear, physical evidence of working with the boneclaw or working against the Red Plume government he represents, the faction of xenophobic humans who elected him to office will see him as a martyr. The city will be plunged in to civil war, and thousands will die. If adventurers can find a way to get Sir Ardem to repent where others have failed, they could make Hillsfar a more welcoming city.

Kenna's eldritch orb carries a message from Sir Ardem's father Elias Rohan, urging his son to pursue vile vengeance against nonhumans. Elias died nearly a year ago.

Kenna tried to break in to the Rohan manor an hour ago by destroying a side window. An unusual purple light filled the interior wall and started shooting beams until she fled. Anyone succeeding on a DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check recognizes the *wall of light* spell.

Dealing With Sir Ardem Now?

Players who recognize what a boneclaw is may realize that the only ways to keep a boneclaw from forming a new body are killing its master or getting its master to sincerely turn away from evil.

- Sir Rexx Aaron knows this too. He just tried to get Sir Ardem Rohan to repent and failed. It takes better insight in to Sir Ardem's past to get him to open up.
- If he or the adventurers kill Sir Ardem Rohan now based on his suspected connection to the boneclaw, it would spark rebellion by his xenophobic supporters.
- The boneclaw was a diviner who tried and failed to become a lich. However, it is aware of anyone trying to scry on it and destroys its body in 30 seconds.

Treasure and Rewards

Ranlynn gives the party a *wand of smiles* now, unless more than six innocents died after rolling initiative in the last scene. She explains that just destroying everything in the manor may make the ghosts inside stronger.

Kenna offers "blood pie" to anyone with the *My Dreams Taste Like Raspberries* story award from CCC-SQC 03-03. Anyone who eats the unusual concoction enjoys the refreshing taste of raspberry sorbet and gains inspiration.

Part 2: Echoes of Rage

Estimated Duration: 55

Setting Description

As characters enter the austere Rohan manor, they find Sir Ardem is living in a house haunted by bitter memories of losing a war and being on the wrong side of history. The intense pain and feeling of loss has attracted Shar's attention.

Story Objective A

Find the information needed to get Sir Ardem to repent. (Characters can choose to kill him later.)

Area Information

Dimensions: Appendix 3 has the manor map.

Décor: Elegant and refined, but showing subtle signs of decline. Most paintings and artwork look unusually dark.

Lighting: Each room has sconces for torches, but they are all empty. All sources of light are dimmed by Shar's presence unless cast by a 3rd level spell or higher. Their bright light becomes dim, and their additional radius of dim light provides no illumination.

Characters looking for a source can make DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check. On a success, they realize the effect is everywhere inside.

Sounds: The deathly quiet of the Rohan mansion amplifies the haunting sound of Sir Ardem's father speaking from beyond the grave via *magic mouth*.

Desecration of Shar

The *magic mouths* and mournful ghosts of dead Red Plume soldiers have desecrated the Rohan manor. Its halls of accumulated malice and vicious entitlement are a festering wound, allowing Shar to corrupt all who enter. Paladins' *divine sense* detects the desecration.

Religion: Any cleric, paladin, or character proficient in Religion knows Shar is the goddess of darkness. However, it takes a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Religion) check to recall Shar is also a goddess of hidden pain and loss. Her followers have been known to plot revenge against whoever rules.

Echoes of Rage

Sir Ardem's father left messages via *magic mouth* before he died serving Torin Nomerthal's exclusionary regime. After the Senate rejected Sir Ardem as a racist during Bert the Goblin's trial three months ago (CCC-SQC-03-03), Sir Ardem dug up the messages and placed them throughout the manor.

DMs should keep track of what characters do with the *magic mouth* in each room of the manor. It affects some traps in this chapter and empower the villain in Part 3:

- **Destroy the Mouth:** Each *magic mouth* is embedded in a physical object that can be destroyed via mundane violence. This empowers the boneclaw and its minions. Characters hear maniacal laughter each time.
- **Disable the Mouth:** Each *magic mouth* has a mundane way to keep it from triggering further. **Reward creative solutions, even if they are not specifically listed in the adventure.** Solving these puzzles makes it easier to get Sir Ardem to repent.

Resting

If characters attempt to rest, the boneclaw has enough time to form a new body. It destroys one previously disabled echo, then teleports to the front door with *shadow jump*. **After a second short rest, it destroys two additional mouths, guaranteeing a more difficult boss fight. It attacks at full strength if they rest for more than one hour at a time.**

Limited Playing Time

This adventure presents numerous exploration and roleplay opportunities. It is harder to predict how long these take. Some groups of players spend a long time planning and pondering every decision out of combat. DMs with a strict time limit, like at a convention, may want to prod players to vote on a course of action to keep the adventure moving.

1: Unforgotten

As adventurers step in to the Rohan manor, they hear a voice from beyond the grave, constantly reminding visitors Hillsfar's xenophobic past.

The Haunted House is Taunting Me!

The haunted Rohan manor is one of the main antagonists of this adventure. Each "Echo of Rage" is designed to taunt characters into committing rash acts of violence. The manor's connection to Shar grows stronger every time an adventurer gives in to this temptation. Make sure to show signs that each destroyed echo empowers the manor.

Non-violent solutions should be relatively quick and not involve any elaborate plan or skill check unless they occur during combat (i.e. Scene 5). Characters can cover the statue's eyes, offer distractions, etc. It is impossible to list everything they will think of. Say yes and keep the action moving unless players need time to cool down after a particularly tense scene.

Try to get to know your players and their characters before the game. Ideally you can find ways to taunt characters in to making rash actions against the manor. **Don't go overboard! DMs are empowered to rewrite any Echo of Rage!** For example, consider replacing some xenophobia with the elitism and entitlement of a stuck up noble if players are sensitive to xenophobia.

As the DM, be ready to think on your feet and adjust room descriptions based on characters' actions. If they start destroying every Echo of Rage, the manor starts to come alive with a sense of palpating dread!

Area Information

Dimensions & Terrain. 40 feet by 30 feet

Décor. Portraits of humans in noble attire or plate mail. Two suits of plate mail. A statue of Elias Rohan is displayed next to one of the suits of plate mail, facing the door to the manor.

Echo of Rage: Statue of Elias Rohan

Any time a humanoid walks through the door or moves within 30 feet of the statue, it triggers the *magic mouth* held inside.

A voice booms from the statue as you approach: "This is a civilized home. All little ones and flower eaters should be on their best behavior."

The message repeats every 15 seconds as long as a humanoid is within 30 feet of the statue. Any character passing a DC 13 Wisdom (Insight) or DC 15 Intelligence (History) check recognizes Elias Rohan is using racial epithets against halflings and elves. They are rarely used in contemporary Hillsfar.

- **Silencing the statue:** Adventurers can throw something over its eyes to stop the trigger, or jam something in its mouth to prevent speech.
- **Destroying the statue:** Characters can easily smash the statue. This stops the *magic mouth* recording. However, the two sets of plate mail turn jet black.

Bonus Objective A

If you are using bonus objectives, Ranlynn casts the *sending* spell once an adventurer deals with the Echo of Rage in this room: "The boneclaw hid a minor artifact somewhere in the manor, amplifying the pain people feel and coating their hearts in darkness! Kenna says look for an extra-dimensional space. It's the best hiding spot. I'm sure you can find it!"

2: What Is Dead May Never Die

After taking over the Rohan manor, Sir Ardem converted his library in to a memorial for fallen Red Plume soldiers, suggesting a way to turn him away from evil.

Area Information

Dimensions & Terrain. 25 feet by 30 feet. A painting rests on the far wall, with the mural also covering the right wall. Some bookcases are stacked in a corner to the near left side. Books have clearly been removed, and a few lie discarded on the floor.

Commanded by Malice

As characters enter the room, read or paraphrase the following:

A mural depicting a human woman in a red plumed helmet and full plate rests on the far wall. She towers over a horned, six-fingered demon, ready to decapitate her foe. Under the mural and to each side is a list of names, written in red ink on smooth black walls stretching across the room.

Anyone examining the demon can make a DC 15 Intelligence (Religion) check to recall that Hillsfar was threatened by the Demon Lord Graz'zt, whose followers often have six fingers.

Echo of Rage: Demonic Taunting

When someone closely inspects the mural, they hear a deep booming voice coming from the demon: "You will be consumed next!" This voice repeats every 15 seconds until stopped.

- **Silencing the demon:** Characters need to place meat or flesh near the mural.
- **Destroying the demon:** Any attempt to damage the demon depicted in the mural stops the *magic mouth*. However, all the red lettering turns purple, and every character in the room is targeted by Shar's Sting (see below). From this point on, any failed skill check in this room causes that character to be targeted by Shar's Sting again.

Shar's Sting: If characters stay in the room but ignore the *magic mouth*, they are overcome with an intense sense of loss and must make a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw. On a failure, that character suffers 9 (2d8) psychic damage.

Clue: Honoring the Fallen

From far away, the ink red ink looks like it dried blood. A DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals the "ink" is actually crushed garnets, pressed in to the onyx wall. Touching the "ink" confirms this as well.

The names are all written in common. Any character looking for a pattern realizes they all sound like human names and are all arranged in alphabetical order.

Building the memorial required considerable time and effort, as a DC 15 Intelligence (Mason's Tools) or Charisma (Performance) check confirms. Sir Ardem spent a large portion of his fortune to carve names in to the history books, like a wound that never healed.

After studying the memorial, players should realize that **appeals to Sir Ardem's sense of military honor could lead him to a more righteous path.**

Understanding the Memorial

Characters may have an easier time making sense of the memorial's significance than players. Any character with a military background (Soldier, City Watch, Mercenary Veteran, etc.) should understand. If players struggle with the clue, allow them to make a DC 16 Wisdom (Insight) check to figure it out.

Bonus Objective B

If you are using bonus objectives, a **ghost** named **Sam Whitless** phases in from the Ethereal Plane, wearing spectral breastplate to show off his once mighty biceps. Sam calls out to the character(s) who figured out what the memorial means, particularly if they found his name!

If the party finds his favorite dragonchess set in the attic manor, Sam shares everything he knows about the rare times Sir Ardem treated others decently.

3: Cleansing the Soul?

Adventurers may be shocked to discover that Sir Ardem has already considered repentance after reading the journal in his desk.

Area Information

Dimensions & Terrain. 20 feet by 15 feet. This room is conspicuously empty aside for the desk and one painting. A small bookcase lies nearly empty on the left side of the room. Various histories of Hillsfar are stacked outside.

Echo of Rage: Eat the Halfling

Looming over Sir Ardem's desk is a painting of halflings fighting lions in the Hillsfar arena. One halfling is in the lion's mouth, dead.

Whenever a non-human is within 30 feet of the painting and in visual range, they hear Elias Rohan's voice coming from the dead halfling's mouth: "History will prove that we were right."

- **Silencing the painting:** Characters need to cover its eyes or otherwise block its vision.
- **Destroying the painting:** Any source of damage works. Characters hear the ghost of the dead halfling howl in delight.

Sir Ardem's Desk

A quill and blank sheets of paper are neatly stacked on the right side of the desk. Twelve small iron figures of humans, representing each character class, are arranged on the desk.

Sir Ardem's locked desk can be opened with a successful DC 15 Dexterity (Thieves' Tools) check. On a failed check, that character hears a deafening scream from Sir Ardem in their mind. They suffer psychic damage equal to twice their level and gain the flaw "I am convinced that this haunted manor is going to kill me" for the rest of the adventure. Any character can rip the desk open, suffering the same consequences as a failed Thieves' Tools check. Characters find Sir Ardem's confession inside (**Player Handout 1**).

Treasure

The iron figurines can be kept as trinkets

4: Where Are My Servants?

Characters find food and utensils they can use to trick some of the *magic mouths*, hidden behind several traps.

Area Information

Dimensions & Terrain. 40 feet by 20 feet.
Décor. Unlike most of the manor, the kitchen is perfectly orderly. The trapped cabinet contains anything characters expect.

Echo of Rage: Pompous Butler

When a creature other than Sir Ardem enters the room, Elias Rohan's voice calls from a childish face on the cookie jar: "Finally. How long will it take for actual dinner to be served?"

- **Silencing the mouth:** Cover the face or place a freshly cooked meal in front of it.
- **Destroying the mouth:** Cookie jars are easy to smash! But there are no cookies inside.

Have a Shot!

A *glyph of warding* on the upper cabinet can be spotted with a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check. If anyone but Sir Ardem opens the cabinet, it releases the stored *animate objects* spell on eight shot glasses filled with whisky. Each creature in the room must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw suffering 9 (2d8) piercing damage if they fail. Then the party has one round before the oven erupts in flames.

Do You Know How to Cook?

Sir Ardem has had to cook his own meals for the last two tendays, and it has not gone well. Anyone with a passive Perception of 16 or higher smells gas coming from the oven. If opened, the gas explodes out, igniting the entire room. Each creature must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or suffer 21 (6d6) fire damage, with half damage on a successful save.

A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Tinkerers' or Thieves' Tools) check lets a character construct a lever capable of safely opening the oven.

Treasure

A *potion of superior healing* is in the cabinet.

5: Restless Sleepers

With no live-in help to maintain the manor, the servant's quarters are now home to undead xenophobes seeking refuge.

Area Information

Dimensions & Terrain. 50 feet by 30 feet.

Décor. Well-maintained beds, stacks of surplus bedding.

Creatures/NPCs

Three **sword wraith warriors**, all former Red Plume soldiers, animate as characters enter the room. Anyone with a passive Perception of 16 or higher notices an **allip** hiding in the corner and the **guardian portrait** moving its eyes.

Objectives/Goals. In life, Selina led this squad of sadistic Red Plumes. In undeath, she yearns to enforce the Great Law of Humanity one last time, killing a nonhuman.

What Do They Know? Other ghosts in the manor have grown more tolerant of non-humans. Sir Ardem may be listening to them, betraying his oaths to the Red Plumes!

Echo of Rage: Commander

When either the adventurers or Selina start combat, read or paraphrase the following:

Selina and her squadron rise as one, rattling their chain shirts as they prepare for battle. The portrait of Elias Rohan suddenly shifts its eyes to survey the scene. His booming voice echoes from the portrait: "STOP THE TRAITORS! GET THEM OUT OF MY SIGHT!" Hundreds of tiny spectral Red Plume helmets emerge from its eyes.

The spirits of fallen Red Plume loyalists try to possess characters on initiative count 20 (losing all ties) while the *magic mouth* is active. Each humanoid must succeed a DC 14 Charisma saving throw or be stunned until the next round. Anyone succeeding the save has advantage on future attempts.

- **Silencing the portrait:** Covering it with a blanket, paint, etc. requires an action and a

successful DC 15 Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check in combat.

- **Destroying the portrait:** Use **guardian portrait** stats.

Adjusting This Scene

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene, according to your group.

- **Very Weak:** Remove the **allip**. The **guardian portrait** has used each of its spells twice.
- **Weak:** Remove the **allip**. The **guardian portrait** has used 2 of its daily *counterspells*.
- **Strong:** The sword wraith warriors have maximum hit points (66). The portrait has 50 HP.
- **Very Strong:** Selina is a **sword wraith commander**. She has already used *call to honor*. Add a **sword wraith warrior**. The portrait has 50 HP.

Playing the Pillars

Here are some suggestions for this encounter, particularly if time is limited:

- **Combat.** Sword wraiths are enraged and use *martial fury* every turn. This should speed up combat.
- **Exploration.** Parties may be split when combat starts. Make sure every adventurer rolls initiative. They can all hear the guardian portrait yelling and respond!
- **Social.** Selina is happy to complain about Sir Ardem ignoring her before initiating combat. If time is limited, consider having her attack immediately.



6: Renewal

Sir Rohan has sealed a holy revenant away in an abandoned shrine to Chauntea, trying to bury the gaping hole in his family lineage.

Area Information

Dimensions & Terrain. A 40 foot by 5 foot hallway, leading to a sealed iron door. Behind the door is a 20 by 15 foot room with an abandoned shrine to Chauntea.

Décor. The hallway is completely undecorated. No one has passed by in months. It is the only area of the manor that does not have a *magic mouth*.

Shar's Seal

Sir Rohan commissioned a *glyph of warding* on the handle of the iron door to keep anyone from releasing the revenant. Characters who have destroyed multiple *magic mouths* find the seal is even stronger.

- Finding the glyph requires an active DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check. On a success, the character also finds a riddle: “only the master’s voice can open the vault.”
- If the party has destroyed three or more *magic mouths*, the iron door shines purple, imposing disadvantage on the check.
- The glyph discharges when a humanoid touches the door handle without speaking in Elias Rohan’s voice. A successful DC 18 Charisma (Performance) check can impersonate him. Non-humanoids and spells below fifth level cannot open the vault.
- If characters have destroyed zero or one *magic mouths*, the glyph is cast at 3rd level and stores a *lightning bolt*. Characters must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw, suffering 28 (8d6) lightning damage on a failure and half damage on a success.
- If characters have destroyed two or three mouths, the glyph is cast at 5th level and stores *synaptic static* (DC 15 Intelligence saving throw, 8d6 psychic damage), centered on the middle of the hall.
- If characters have destroyed four or more mouths, the door has two glyphs of warding

cast at 6th level, raising the DC to 16. One stores *circle of death* centered in the middle of the hall. The other stores *enemies abound*, targeting the person touching the door.

Creatures/NPCs

After dealing with the trap and entering the vault, characters see a ghostly pale halfling named **Wellby Wildheart**. cursory inspection shows Wellby is undead, but bears no hostility towards the party.

Objectives/Goals. Wellby murdered Elias Rohan on the streets of Hillsfar after Torin Nomerthal’s death. He told himself he was ridding the world of a vile racist, but deep down Wellby knew he was in it for the money. Sir Ardem tracked Wellby down, taking his vengeance and then taking Wellby’s magical vine-laden gloves as a trophy.

Wellby rose from the grave a month later, trying to atone for his misdeeds by preventing further bloodshed. He cannot rest until Sir Ardem is redeemed, renouncing evil. Wellby dodges and begs for his life if attacked.

What Does Wellby Know? As a former killer, Wellby knows how hard it is to get people to accept that forgiveness may be the healthier option. He has gained a degree of contemplative enlightenment in death, which most mortals lack.

Wellby last saw Sir Ardem two months ago. The knight started apologizing for his hatred of halflings, then turned and ran away, sealing the door. Sir Ardem wore Wellby’s gloves for a minute, before dropping to his knees and sobbing uncontrollably. He put the gloves in an unlocked cabinet, just trying to get them out of sight.

Treasure and Rewards

Characters find the **Vines of Avarice** (thematic Gloves of Thievery) in the vault. They are allowed to use this magic item during the rest of the adventure. If the party talks to Sir Ardem in Part 3, the Vines of Avarice can change this social interaction.

7: Last Gasp

Characters confront the most concentrated sorrow in the manor to find evidence of Sir Ardem's subconscious desire to kill nonhumans.

Area Information

Dimensions & Terrain. 30 x 20, with a large bed in the back.

Echo of Rage: Eternal Sorrow

A defaced portrait sits in a broken glass frame on Sir Ardem's nightstand. When a humanoid gets within 10 feet, it repeats the phrase "We're all alone. No one else could possibly love us now" in a distorted ethereal scream.

- **Silencing the mouth:** Place it next to another magic mouth that has not been destroyed.
- **Destroying the mouth:** Any attack destroys it.

Sir Ardem's Second Journal

Sitting in plain sight on Sir Ardem's bookshelf is a lockbox sealed by a purple rune. Anyone succeeding a DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana or Religion) check recognizes the mark of Shar. One or more characters sacrificing some of their energy can only open the lockbox:

- Channel a spell of third level or higher in to the rune.
- Spend seven hit dice (spread across the party). Whoever spent the most hit dice gains the character flaw "I am all alone in this world" for the rest of the adventure.

Once the lockbox is opened, characters a journal where Sir Ardem writes about his desire to kill. Give **Player Handout 2**.

Adjusting This Scene

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene, according to your group.

- **Very Weak:** A second level spell can unlock the rune. Alternatively, the party can spend five hit dice.
- **Strong and Very Strong:** A fourth level or higher spell slot is needed to unlock the rune. Alternatively, the party can spend eleven hit dice.

Wrapping Up Part 2

The party's goal in Part 2 is investigating the Rohan Manor, finding how to get Sir Ardem to repent. Only four scenes have clues:

- **Scene 2:** Sir Ardem's extreme dedication to the memory of his fallen compatriots.
- **Scene 3:** The journal where Sir Ardem considers repentance.
- **Scene 6:** Meeting Wellby and obtaining the Vines of Avarice.
- **Scene 7:** The journal where Sir Ardem admits to wanting to kill nonhumans.

Other scenes are technically optional, but they help the party progress through the rest of the Rohan manor.

Bonus Objectives

Once the party leaves the Rohan Manor, they cannot return until after completing Part 3. Groups can complete the Bonus Objectives after finishing Part 3 if they desire, but these objectives will not be as narratively satisfying.

Echoes of Rage

As you end Part 2, make sure to count how many of the *magic mouths* were permanently silenced through some non-violent means and how many were destroyed.

- Silencing at least three of the mouths without violence makes it easier to get Sir Ardem to repent for his misdeeds in Part 3.
- Destroying at least three mouths makes it harder to get Sir Ardem to repent and add additional challenges to the boss fight.
- If the party rested, at least one mouth was destroyed. If they took multiple short rests, at least three mouths were destroyed. In this situation, it is possible that the party could trigger both the silencing three mouths and destroying three mouths condition.

Part 3: Have We Had Enough?

Estimated Duration: 45

Setting Description

Characters return to the streets of Hillsfar to see boarded homes and businesses. A few brave humans walk the streets. However, every nonhuman is seeking safety in numbers.

Story Objective B

Defeat the boneclaw, one way or the other.

Adventurers face one of three final confrontations based on whether they redeem Sir Ardem, try to redeem him and fail the first time, or kill him without trying redemption.

Passage of Time

Sir Ardem's Imprisonment: Sir Ardem has been held in a secret cell in Hillsfar Castle. Sir Rexx Auron wants to give time for the adventurers to investigate, without anyone assassinating Sir Ardem or him killing anyone. Sir Ardem accepts his imprisonment and looks forward to being exonerated at trial.

Boneclaw Reborn: Regardless how many rests the party took, the boneclaw has formed a new body.

To Kill or Not to Kill?

Feel free to remind players that their characters know the boneclaw will keep reforming a new body, then start hunting and killing nonhumans, until one of two things happen:

- Sir Ardem finds redemption, turning away from evil.
- Sir Ardem dies. No one in the Senate is willing to kill him without a trial, so it would be up to the adventurers to kill him.
- **Players' decision is supposed to be difficult.** They should leave the table wondering "what if we made a different choice?"
- **Redemption is not automatic.** Try to challenge players to make bold, emotional, and empathetic arguments if they try to sway Sir Ardem.

1: Ardem's Last Rites?

The party has one last chance to confer before deciding what to do with Sir Ardem. Ranlynn, Kenna and Bert can offer guidance.

Read Your Table – Most Of Scene Optional

This scene is largely designed as a way to spur on players who haven't made a decision about whether to try and redeem or kill Sir Ardem.

- If the party has already **chosen the redemption path**, summarize what Ranlynn knows and move to Scene 2.
- If the party has already **chosen to kill Sir Ardem**, ask them to cinematically describe their plan. They will automatically succeed. Then **move to Scene 5. This fight takes longer and is deadlier.**

Creatures/NPCs

Ranlynn, the cleric of Ilmater, waits for the party to explain how to try and redeem Sir Ardem. If the party has yet to discuss it, Kenna and Bert the Goblin offer contrasting opinions.

Objectives/Goals. Ranlynn wants the adventurers to save Sir Ardem's soul, sincerely believing this is the best way to heal Hillsfar's wounds. If Bert is present, he advocates for redemption as well. Nothing would be funnier than Sir Ardem talking down to Hillsfar's other xenophobes.

If Kenna is present, she uses *awakened mind* to remind people about how Sir Ardem persecuted nonhumans. She hates the racist legacy of the Red Plumes and certainly wouldn't mind if Sir Ardem dies, but she won't go so far as to advocate killing him. Her ambivalence is obvious.

What Do They Know? Ranlynn knows her ritual will keep Sir Ardem from attacking during the conversation. She also knows she can keep the boneclaw away from Castle Hillsfar for a time. If the party chooses to kill Sir Ardem, then Kenna is willing to help cover their tracks.

2: What's Left of the Flag

Characters decide to talk to Sir Ardem to try and get him to walk a more righteous path. They must get him to think about others and show they believe in his potential to grow.

Prerequisites

Characters decided to try the redemption path.

Area Information

Dimensions and Terrain: A hidden room with lead-coated iron walls, 30 feet by 30 feet, in the bowls of Hillsfar Castle.

Lighting: A *driftglobe* provides bright light.

Creatures/NPCs

Sir Ardem Rohan sits on the bed, waiting for someone to decide his fate. He has no weapons or armor. **Ranlynn** casts *death ward* on Sir Ardem before letting the party in his cell, to prevent one party member from acting rashly.

Objectives/Goals. After months of being tormented by ghosts, Sir Ardem wants resolution. He is convinced that martyrdom in the name of the Great Law of Humanity is his only option, because no one would trust him trying to change his ways.

What Does Sir Ardem Know? Sir Ardem knows he has orchestrated several heinous plots to try and expel nonhumans or “tainted” humans from Hillsfar and killed Wellby. He expects any nonhuman in the party bearing weapons is here to kill him.

However, Sir Ardem is shocked and surprised to hear about the boneclaw reforming. A successful DC 12 Wisdom (Insight) check confirms that he hasn't worked up the courage to face his connection to the creature. Anyone succeeding by 5 or more realizes Sir Ardem's pursuit of martyrdom attracted the boneclaw.

Converting Sir Ardem

Characters have to overcome Sir Ardem's objections. Try to reward emotional and empathetic roleplay. **Keep roleplaying the scene, even if an argument fails. If the party completed Bonus Objective A, they can fail once without consequence.**

Honoring Family and Comrades

Sir Ardem is convinced that he can only honor the memory of his father and other fallen Red Plumes by reinstating Hillsfar's humans-only laws. Besides, after all he has suffered personally, any vengeance he seeks is justified!

Characters need three consecutive successful counter arguments. Examples are listed below. Try to minimize dice rolling. DC 16 Charisma checks with appropriate skills can be used. Give advantage if at least three echoes were silenced.

Public War Memorial: Convince Sir Ardem that he can honor the dead without vengeance.

Battlefield Nobility: Sir Ardem's desire to kill all nonhumans and self-pity are unbecoming of his station as a knight.

Possession: Sir Ardem is not conscious of his growing connection to Shar. Characters can convince the knight he has been possessed.

Independence: Characters may suggest that Sir Ardem is just living out his father's dreams, and must choose a different path for himself.

Survival: Characters can be direct and tell Sir Ardem to repent or he has to die.

Can I Be Redeemed?

Sir Ardem is convinced that even if he tries to walk a less evil path, others will never accept his change. At this point the Vines of Avarice start to shake and Wellby tries to emerge. If characters accept this, read the following:

Wellby gently places a hand on his killer's thigh, calmly saying “I forgive you. Now you need to forgive yourself.” Then the revenant turns to the party with a blissful smile on his face, his quest complete, and fades to dust.

If characters do not use the gloves, **or if they destroyed at least two echoes, or if anyone in the party has the Sir Ardem's Abhorrence story award (CCC-ELF-03-01)**, they must convey a similar message of forgiveness. Try to minimize dice rolling but use a DC 18 Charisma (Persuasion) check if needed. Grant advantage if at least three echoes were silenced.

3: Burying the Past

As Sir Ardem confesses his sins, the party hears a roar in the distance. The boneclaw collapses and dies, but a cohort of undead led by **Elias Rohan** take its place.

Prerequisites

Characters redeemed Sir Ardem.

Area Information

Dimensions and Terrain: A 50 by 60 foot courtyard of Hillsfar Castle with a 20 foot high balcony. Solid balcony railings provide half cover. See **Appendix 4**.

Lighting: Moonlight provides dim light.

Counterspell Glyph: A human separatist mage had time to place a *glyph of warding* in the base of the left stairwell. It holds a 4th level *counterspell* for the first spell targeting Elias Rohan. A DC 14 Intelligence (Investigation) check finds the glyph. Anyone with a passive Investigation of 14 or higher spots it too.

Cloudkill Glyph (Very Strong only): At very strong APL, a more powerful wizard placed a second glyph on the right stairwell, holding a *cloudkill* that triggers when an adventurer deals 25 or more points of damage in a turn. It is centered on the PC triggering the spell and starts moving in the direction of Elias Rohan on the triggering character's next turn. The *cloudkill* glyph has DC 15 for detection and saving throws if it is triggered.

Creatures/NPCs

Elias Rohan (revenant) leads two **spawns of kyuss** and a **flameskull** in to battle.

Objectives/Goals. Elias Rohan and his band prioritize attacking nonhumans if possible. They appear to be disorganized and lash out.

What Do They Know? The boneclaw is dead, so the adventurers must pay.

Adjusting This Scene

- **Revenant's Vengeance:** Elias Rohan swears vengeance against all nonhumans, dealing an additional 14 (4d6) damage per fist.
- **Alignment:** Elias Rohan is lawful evil.
- **Shar's Blessing:** If characters destroyed three or more mirrors, all enemies receive the benefits of the *bless* spell.

Here are some additional suggestions for adjusting this scene, according to your group.

- **Very Weak:** Remove the **spawns of kyuss**. Add a **wight**. Elias Rohan only seeks vengeance against the last adventurer to hold the *Vines of Avarice*. Remove the *counterspell* glyph.
- **Weak:** Replace the **spawns of kyuss** with **wights**. Remove the *counterspell* glyph.
- **Strong:** Add a **the lost**. Elias Rohan has 170 hit points.
- **Very Strong:** Add a **nycaloth**. Elias Rohan has 170 hit points. The *cloudkill* glyph is active.

4: The Hardest Path

Sir Ardem's fears come true. As the disgraced senator contemplates his future, former supporters storm the castle to keep him from abandoning the faith by any means necessary. Then the boneclaw stalks the party.

Prerequisites

Characters tried and failed to redeem Sir Ardem. This took a full hour.

Area Information

Dimensions and Terrain: A 50 by 60 foot courtyard of Hillsfar Castle with a 20 foot high balcony. Solid balcony railings provide half cover. See **Appendix 4**.

Lighting: Moonlight provides dim light.

Creatures/NPCs: Wave 1

A red plume **knight** leads a **gladiator** while two **archers** wait on separate balconies.

Objectives/Goals. Sir Ardem's closest allies fear he may go soft, so they want to kill the bad influences (the party) then confront their leader.

What Do They Know? Sir Ardem may give in to calls for a more benevolent Hillsfar while under captivity.

Adjusting This Scene

- **Shar's Blessing:** If characters destroyed **three** or more mirrors, all enemies receive the benefits of the *bless* spell.
- **Shar's Sorrow:** If characters destroyed **four** or more mirrors, all bright light on the battlefield is dimmed.

Here are some additional suggestions for adjusting this scene, according to your group.

- **Very Weak:** Remove the **gladiator** and one **archer**. Add a **knight**. The remaining archer has 50 HP.
- **Weak:** Remove the **knight**. Archers have 60 HP.
- **Strong:** Add a **gladiator**.
- **Very Strong:** Remove the **knight**. Add two **gladiators**.

After the last of Sir Ardem's spiteful followers dies, a wave of Shar's encroaching shadow envelops the courtyard in darkness. Her new champion – the boneclaw – must be nearby!

Adventurers have one turn to prepare for combat while both enemies try to hide. Shar's darkness imposes disadvantage on all Perception checks. Barbarians can spend an action to maintain *rage* by punching themselves.

Activated Glyphs

A human separatist mage had time to place a *glyph of warding* in the base of the left stairwell. It holds a 4th level *counterspell* for the first spell targeting the boneclaw. A DC 14 Intelligence (Investigation) check or passive Investigation of 14 finds the glyph.

At strong or very strong APL, a second mage placed a glyph on the right stairwell, holding a *wall of fire* (5d8 fire damage, DC 14 Dexterity save) that triggers when an adventurer deals 25 or more points of damage in a turn. The 10 foot high wall lands on the triggering character and extends to each wall, bisecting the room to give the boneclaw obscurity. Heat radiates out. Remember that the wall does not shed light.

Creatures/NPCs: Wave 2

The boneclaw leads a **master thief** in to battle.

Objectives/Goals. The boneclaw tries to stay mobile, using *shadow stealth* and its *shadow claw* ability to split the party.

What Do They Know? Adventurers almost turned Sir Ardem away from evil!

Adjusting This Scene

- **Shar's Blessing:** If characters destroyed **three** or more mirrors, all enemies receive the benefits of the *bless* spell.
- **Shar's Sorrow:** If characters destroyed **four** or more mirrors, all bright light on the battlefield is dimmed.

Here are some additional suggestions for adjusting this scene, according to your group.

- **Very Weak:** Remove the **master thief** and glyphs. The **boneclaw** has 90 HP and only makes one *claw* attack.
- **Weak:** Remove the **master thief** and glyphs.
- **Strong:** Add a **master thief**. The boneclaw has 170 hit points.
- **Very Strong:** Add two **master thieves**. The boneclaw has 204 hit points.

5: Rage? Rage Never Dies

Adventurers killed Sir Ardem. As they seek out the boneclaw for a decisive battle, they find the failed lich may not be the biggest threat.

Prerequisites

Characters decided to kill Sir Ardem Rohan.

Walking past the Rohen Arms, moonlight fades. Sudden winds whip an unnatural mist, tasting vaguely like blood. A 10 foot black disc of primal rage screams in anguish. As the tormented faces of Sir Ardem and his father spring forth and then disappear in the swirling mass, the boneclaw cannot be found.

Area Information

Dimensions and Terrain: A city block in Hillsfar with narrow (10 foot wide) streets. All rooftops are 60 feet high. Ladders allow for climbing up at half walking speed without a check. Characters enter from the west. See **Appendix 5**.

Lighting: Shar's influence grows throughout Hillsfar due to the characters' choice, dimming all bright light. Spells of third level or higher that would provide light weaken the Echoes of Rage instead of their normal effects.

Winds of War: 25 mile per hour winds sweep the battlefield, putting all ranged attacks at disadvantage. At Strong or Very Strong APL, anyone attempting the *dash* action while flying must succeed a DC 15 Strength saving throw or their action is wasted.

Glyphs of Warding: Wizards loyal to Sir Ardem have left several glyphs to protect any who defend the humans-only regime, including the **boneclaw**, in the Rohen Arms sign. Each glyph requires a DC 15 Investigation (Intelligence) check to find.

- Two glyphs store *feather fall*, in case the boneclaw falls. It is aware of them.
- One glyph stores a 4th level *counterspell* for the first spell targeting the boneclaw.
- Another glyph stores a 4th level *dispel magic* for the first spell preventing the boneclaw from attacking.

Creatures/NPCs

The boneclaw acts alone, appearing from stealth near where the Echoes first move. Anyone who does not have a passive Perception of 17 is surprised (21 at Strong or Very Strong).

Objectives/Goals. The boneclaw wants one last kill, ideally Sir Ardem's killer. It tries to grapple and then teleport to an isolated rooftop, dangling its prey to taunt the rest of the party. On a crowded rooftop, it tries to grapple secondary targets and drop them off the roof.

What Do They Know? The boneclaw knows how the Echoes of Rage operate and are immune to its effects.

Adjusting The Creatures

- **Enduring Rage:** For a standard or higher APL party, the **boneclaw** cannot be destroyed while the Echoes of Rage are active.
- **Shar's Blessing:** If characters destroyed **three** or more mirrors, the boneclaw receives the benefits of the *bless* spell.

Here are some additional suggestions for adjusting this scene, according to your group.

- **Very Weak:** The **boneclaw** has 90 hit points. It only makes one *claw* attack. If it hits with its first *deadly reach* reaction attack, it chooses not to follow up with the second attack. Remove the glyphs.
- **Weak:** The **boneclaw** has 110 hit points. If it hits with its first *deadly reach* reaction attack, it chooses not to follow up with the second attack. Glyphs are cast at third level.
- **Strong:** The boneclaw has 170 hit points. A friendly wizard cast *skill empowerment (stealth)* on it.
- **Very Strong:** The boneclaw has 204 hit points. A friendly wizard cast *skill empowerment (stealth)* on it.

Combat Event: Echoes of Rage

Characters must deal with this complex, mobile 10 foot-by-10 foot trap during combat.

Initiative: The Echoes of Rage act on initiative count 20 and 10, losing all ties.

Active Elements: The Echoes of Rage evoke the overwhelming feeling of being the last survivor of a terrible war.

- **Enveloping Hate (Initiative 20):** The Echoes of Rage move up to 50 feet, moving through other creatures. Any humanoid it passes must succeed on a DC 13 Charisma saving throw or take 14 (4d6) necrotic damage and is affected by the *bane* spell for a turn.
- **Soul Shredder (Initiative 10):** A spectral arrow lashes out from the disc, attacking a single creature (+8 to hit, 2d10 piercing damage). **Add one more attack for each successful check the party makes to disable the Echoes.**
- **Sorrow (Initiative 10):** Voices and images of the defeated manifest in a 20 foot radius, centered at a spot within 120 feet of the disc. All creatures in the radius must succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened for a minute. They can repeat the save at the end of their turn.

Constant Element: The cacophony of noise around the disc deafens anyone within 20 feet. Anyone casting a spell with a verbal component within this radius must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or the spell is wasted. Anyone ending their turn in the radius takes 7 (2d6) force damage, or half as much on a successful DC 13 Constitution saving throw.

Disabling the Echoes: Characters within 30 feet can spend an action to attempt a DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion), Wisdom (Insight) or Intelligence (Religion) check to calm the echoes. Anyone in this range can communicate telepathically with the mass of souls, even if otherwise deafened by being too close to the center. One successful check is needed per character. A third or higher level spell providing light counts as one success.

Adjusting The Echoes of Rage

Here are some additional suggestions for adjusting this scene, according to your group.

- **Very Weak:** Reduce the attack bonus and save DC for any hostile effects by 2. Remove the active *sorrow* element constant noise element.
- **Weak:** Reduce the attack bonus and save DC by 1. Remove the constant noise element.
- **Strong and Very Strong:** Increase the attack bonus and save DC by 2.

Wrapping Up

One way or another, adventurers have defeated the boneclaw that was tormenting Hillsfar. Whether or not this brings any solace to the city depends largely on the characters' actions:

Sir Ardem Already Atoned: Adventurers return to Sir Ardem's cell to see Bert handing him a potion of "healing." When the knight takes a sip, his skin turns green! Sir Ardem looks at his hands, shrugs his shoulders, and gulps down the rest of the potion. As he starts crying, you look closer and see a little smile cross his lips.

- Characters get the **Hillsfar's Cycle story award (see Appendix 8).**

Sir Ardem Is Alive, Hasn't Atoned: Adventurers come back from fighting the boneclaw to see Sir Ardem on his knees, begging Bert and Ranlynn for forgiveness. They both turn to the party: "It's going to be a process, but it's worth it."

- Characters get the **Hillsfar's Cycle story award (see Appendix 8).**

Sir Ardem is Dead: Adventurers have a moment to tend to the wounded and reflect on their hard-won battle. Eventually Kenna finds them, but she seems to be staring in to a different plane of existence as she examines the bodies then keeps walking. Ranlynn and Bert chase after her, ignoring the party.

- Characters get the nightmares from the **Hillsfar's Cycle story award (see Appendix 8).**

Treasure and Rewards

In the rare case characters did not get the **Wand of Smiles** earlier, Ranlynn gives it to them at the end, dropping it their feet without a word if Sir Ardem is dead.

Rewards

At the **end of the session**, the characters receive rewards based upon their accomplishments.

Player Rewards

The characters can earn the following rewards:

Advancement and Treasure Checkpoints

The characters receive **1 advancement** and **1 treasure checkpoint** for each story objective that they complete, as follows:

- **Story Objective A:** Investigate the Manor
- **Story Objective B:** Defeat the boneclaw

The characters earn one advancement checkpoint and one treasure checkpoint for each **bonus objective** they complete.

- **Bonus Objective A:** Destroy the minor artifact
- **Bonus Objective B:** Get Sam's dragonchess set

Magic Item Unlock

The characters unlock the following magic item(s) for **completing the adventure**.

The Vines of Avarice (Gloves of Thievery).

These vines from the Cormanthor Forest can be wrapped around someone's hands as a pair of fingerless gloves, turning invisible when worn correctly. They function as *gloves of thievery*. Whenever the wearer contemplates vengeance, they see a vision of a grand hearth lying in ruins. This item can be found in **Appendix 9**.

Ilmater's Respite (Wand of Smiles). This wand crafted from an illithid tentacle feels like it is constantly squirming in the user's hand. Anyone staring at the wand for a minute hears an ominous voice in their head: "WARNING: best used on strangers and loved ones." This item can be found in **Appendix 9**.

Consumable Magic Item

Characters can find the following consumable magic item.

Potion of Superior Healing. This item can be found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

Story Awards

During this adventure, the characters may earn the following story awards:

Hillsfar's Cycle. One way or another, you resolved the dilemma with Sir Ardem Rohan and the boneclaw.

If Sir Ardem recanted his racist past and begged forgiveness, he may just be trying to save his own life. Nonetheless, you feel assured that others will follow his example.

If Sir Ardem was killed, despite Bert and Ranlynn's pleas, you feel a bony, clawed fingertip brush against your cheek during your dreams every time you take a long rest. (This is not intended to have a mechanical effect, but characters earning this story award may face tangible consequences in future adventures.)

More information can be found in **Appendix 8**.

Why So Serious? You used (or attempted to use) Ilmater's Respite on another member of your adventuring party. On your return to Hillsfar, Bert and Kenna welcome you to their merry band of pranksters. Watch out for the blood pie! More information can be found in **Appendix 8**.

Dungeon Master Rewards

In exchange for running this adventure, you earn **advancement** and **treasure checkpoints** for the characters' completion of objectives, above.

You may complete DM Quests for running this adventure. See the ALDMG (*Adventurers League Dungeon Master's Guide*) for more information about DM Quests.

Dramatis Personae

The following NPCs and locations feature **prominently** in this adventure.

- **Sir Ardem Rohan (ser ARR dem ROH han).**

LE Human male senator who blames non-humans for every problem in Hillsfar. Has attracted a boneclaw, feeding on his desire to kill nonhumans.

Personality: *Aristocratic, combative, humorless*

Ideal: *“Non-humans should be kicked out of town.”*

Bond: *“My father served the glorious humans only regime.”*

Flaw: *“Everybody persecutes me. I should prove them right!”*

- **Kenna (keh nah).** CG Human warlock of Tharizun. Purple haired Red Plume investigating the occult. Humbled by her recent need to rely on others.

Personality: *Cunning, relentless, manic*

Ideal: *“Anyone could be a cultist. Or worse, a politician. They never put the people first.”*

Bond: *“I had to do awful things under the old regime. If only I could purge those memories.”*

Flaw: *Paranoid, self-loathing, dumbfounded by her loss of control.*

- **Ranlynn Strongheart (ran-lin).** LG Female hill dwarf, cleric of Ilmater. On a religious pilgrimage to try and alleviate Hillsfar’s ongoing suffering. Begg the party to help save Sir Ardem’s soul.

Personality: *Righteous, optimistic, pacifist.*

Ideal: *“I’m tough enough to sooth even the most fractured soul!”*

Bond: *“My parents died in a pointless feud. Honor is not worth spilling others’ blood.”*

Flaw: *“I lie to everyone, saying my divine magic gives more emotional support than any spell can.”*

- **Wellby Wildheart (well-BEE).** LG Assassin who murdered Elias Rohan in an act of retribution for racial injustice. Sir Ardem Rohan killed Wellby. His redeemed soul haunts the Rohan manor, trying to help Sir Ardem repent.

Personality: *Evangelical, sarcastic, loud*

Ideal: *“Everyone deserves a second chance!”*

Bond: *“Wow was I evil when I was alive!”*

Flaw: *“I haven’t had a chance to show what a good person I have become, so I will SHOW YOU NOW!”*

- **Rohan (ROH han) Manor.** Officially Sir Ardem owns the place, but it has taken a life of its own, feeding on the malice of Hillsfar’s xenophobic former ruling class.

Personality: *Exclusionary, provocateur.*

Ideal: *“I will get so far under your skin you forget who you are and respond only to me!”*

Bond: *“Hillsfar used to be a glorious kingdom and can be once more.”*

Flaw: *“I don’t care enough about your feelings to learn how you really think.”*

Creature Statistics

Allip

Medium undead, lawful evil

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 40 (9d8)

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

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6 (-2)	17 (+3)	10 (+0)	17 (+3)	15 (+2)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Int +6, Wis +5

Skills Perception +5, Stealth +6

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

Damage Immunities cold, necrotic, poison

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

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15

Languages Common, Elvish, Infernal (languages it knew in life)

Challenge 5 (1800 XP)

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

Actions

Maddening Touch. *Melee Spell Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 17 (4d6+3) psychic damage.

Whispers of Madness. The allip chooses up to three creatures it can see within 60 feet of it. Each target must succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw, or it takes 7 (1d8+3) psychic damage and must use its reaction to make a melee weapon attack against one creature of the allip's choice that the allip can see. Constructs and undead are immune to this effect.

Howling Babble (Recharge 6). Each creature within 30 feet of the allip that can hear it must make a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, a target takes 12 (2d8+3) psychic damage, and it is stunned until the end of its next turn. On a successful save, it takes half as much damage and isn't stunned. Constructs and undead are immune to this effect.

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)	16 (+3)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)

Skills Acrobatics +6, Perception +5

Senses passive Perception 10

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

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.

Longbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8+4) piercing 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)	9 (-1)

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

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 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.

Deathlock

Medium undead, lawful evil

Armor Class 12 (15 with *mage armor*)

Hit Points 36 (8d8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Int +4, Cha +5

Skills Arcana +4, History +4

Damage Resistances necrotic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks that aren't silvered

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities exhaustion, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages Common, Elvish, Infernal, Abyssal (languages it knew in life)

Challenge 4 (1100 XP)

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

At Will: *detect magic, disguise self, mage armor*

Spellcasting. The deathlock is a 5th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 13, +5 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): *chill touch, eldritch blast, mage hand*
1st-3rd level (2 3rd-level slots): *arms of Hadar, dispel magic, hold person, hunger of Hadar, invisibility, spider climb*

Turn Resistance. The deathlock has advantage on saving throws against any effect that turns undead.

Actions

Deathly Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (2d6+2) necrotic damage.

Flameskull

Tiny undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 40 (9d4 + 18)

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

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

Skills Arcana +5, Perception +2

Damage Resistances lightning, necrotic, piercing

Damage Immunities cold, fire, poison

Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, paralyzed, poisoned, prone

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Common

Challenge 4 (1100 XP)

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

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

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

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

Cantrips (at will): *mage hand*

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

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

3rd level (1 slot): *fireball*

Actions

Multiattack. The flameskull uses Fire Ray twice.

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

Ghost

Medium undead, any alignment

Armor Class 11

Hit Points 45 (10d8)

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

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

Damage Resistances acid, fire, lightning, thunder;

bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Damage Immunities cold, necrotic, poison

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

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages Common, Abyssal (languages it knew in life)

Challenge 4 (1100 XP)

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

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

Actions

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

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

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

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

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

Gladiator

Medium humanoid, any alignment

Armor Class 16 (studded leather armor, shield)

Hit Points 112 (15d8 + 45)

Speed 30 ft.

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

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

Skills Athletics +10, Intimidation +5

Senses passive Perception 11

Languages Common

Challenge 5 (1800 XP)

Brave. The gladiator has advantage on saving throws against being frightened.

Brute. A melee weapon deals one extra die of its damage when the gladiator hits with it (included in the attack).

Actions

Multiattack. The gladiator makes three melee attacks or two ranged attacks.

Spear. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6+4) piercing damage or 13 (2d8+4) piercing damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack.

Shield Bash. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (2d4+4) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a Medium or smaller creature, it must succeed on a DC 15 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

Guardian Portrait

Medium construct, unaligned

Armor Class 5

Hit Points 22 (5d8)

Speed 0 ft.

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

Damage Immunities poison

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

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Infernal, Elvish

Challenge 1 (100 XP)

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

Constructed Nature. An animated object doesn't require air, food, drink, or sleep. The magic that animates an object is dispelled when the construct drops to 0 hit points. An animated object reduced to 0 hit points becomes inanimate and is too damaged to be of much use or value to anyone.

False Appearance. While the figure in the portrait remains motionless, the portrait is indistinguishable from a normal painting.

Innate Spellcasting. The portrait's innate spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 12). The portrait can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

3/day each: *counterspell*, *crown of madness*, *hypnotic pattern*, *telekinesis*

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)	10 (+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 captain must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.

Master Thief

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 16 (studded leather armor)

Hit Points 83 (13d8 + 26)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Skills Acrobatics +7, Athletics +3, Perception +3, Sleight of Hand +4, Stealth +7

Senses passive Perception 13

Languages any one language (usually Common) plus Thieves' Cant

Challenge 5 (1800 XP)

Cunning Action. On each of its turns, the thief can use a bonus action to take the Dash, Disengage, or Hide action.

Evasion. If the thief is subjected to an effect that allows it to make a Dexterity saving throw to take only half damage, the thief instead takes no damage if it succeeds on the saving throw, and only half damage if it fails.

Sneak Attack (1/turn). The thief 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 thief that isn't incapacitated and the thief doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

Actions

Multiattack. The thief makes three attacks with its shortsword.

Shortsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6+4) piercing damage.

Light Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8+4) piercing damage.

Reactions

Uncanny Dodge. The thief halves the damage that it takes from an attack that hits it. The thief must be able to see the attacker.

Nycaloth

Large fiend (yugoloth), neutral evil

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)

Hit Points 123 (13d10 + 52)

Speed 40 ft., fly 60 ft.

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

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

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

Damage Immunities acid, poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

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

Languages Abyssal, Infernal; telepathy 60 ft.

Challenge 9 (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.

Poltergeist

Medium undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 22 (5d8)

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

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

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

Damage Immunities necrotic, poison

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

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Abyssal (but cannot speak)

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

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

Invisibility. The poltergeist is invisible.

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

Actions

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

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

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

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

Revenant

Medium undead, neutral

Armor Class 13 (leather armor)

Hit Points 136 (16d8 + 64)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws Str +7, Con +7, Wis +6, Cha +7

Damage Resistances necrotic, psychic

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, poisoned, stunned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages the languages it knew in life

Challenge 5 (1800 XP)

Regeneration. The revenant regains 10 hit points at the start of its turn. If the revenant takes fire or radiant damage, this trait doesn't function at the start of the revenant's next turn. The revenant's body is destroyed only if it starts its turn with 0 hit points and doesn't regenerate.

Rejuvenation. When the revenant's body is destroyed, its soul lingers. After 24 hours, the soul inhabits and animates another humanoid corpse on the same plane of existence and regains all its hit points. While the soul is bodiless, a wish spell can be used to force the soul to go to the afterlife and not return.

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

Vengeful Tracker. The revenant knows the distance to and direction of any creature against which it seeks revenge, even if the creature and the revenant are on different planes of existence. If the creature being tracked by the revenant dies, the revenant knows.

Actions

Multiattack. The revenant makes two fist attacks.

Fist. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6+4) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a creature against which the revenant has sworn vengeance, the target takes an extra 14 (4d6) bludgeoning damage. Instead of dealing damage, the revenant can grapple the target (escape DC 14) provided the target is Large or smaller.

Vengeful Glare. The revenant targets one creature it can see within 30 feet of it and against which it has

sworn vengeance. The target must make a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw. On a failure, the target is paralyzed until the revenant deals damage to it, or until the end of the revenant's next turn. When the paralysis ends, the target is frightened of the revenant for 1 minute. The frightened target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, with disadvantage if it can see the revenant, ending the frightened condition on itself on a success.

Spawn of Kyuss

Medium undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 10

Hit Points 76 (9d8 + 36)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	11 (+0)	18 (+4)	5 (-3)	7 (-2)	3 (-4)

Saving Throws Wis +1

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities exhaustion, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 8

Languages understands the languages it knew in life but cannot speak

Challenge 5 (1800 XP)

Regeneration. The spawn of Kyuss regains 10 hit points at the start of its turn if it has at least 1 hit point and isn't in sunlight or a body of running water. If the spawn takes acid, fire, or radiant damage, this trait doesn't function at the start of the spawn's next turn. The spawn is destroyed only if it starts its turn with 0 hit points and doesn't regenerate.

Worms. If the spawn of Kyuss is targeted by an effect that cures disease or removes a curse, all the worms infesting it wither away, and it loses its Burrowing Worm action.

Actions

Multiattack. The spawn of Kyuss makes two attacks with its claws and uses Burrowing Worm.

Burrowing Worm. A worm launches from the spawn of Kyuss at one humanoid that the spawn can see within 10 feet of it. The worm latches onto the target's skin unless the target succeeds on a DC 11 Dexterity saving throw. The worm is a Tiny undead with AC 6, 1 hit point, a 2 (-4) in every ability score, and a speed of 1 foot. While on the target's skin, the worm can be killed

by normal means or scraped off using an action (the spawn can use this action to launch a scraped-off worm at a humanoid it can see within 10 feet of the worm). Otherwise, the worm burrows under the target's skin at the end of the target's next turn, dealing 1 piercing damage to it. At the end of each of its turns thereafter, the target takes 7 (2d6) necrotic damage per worm infesting it (maximum of 10d6). A worm-infested target dies if it drops to 0 hit points, then rises 10 minutes later as a spawn of Kyuss. If a worm-infested creature is targeted by an effect that cures disease or removes a curse, all the worms infesting it wither away.

Claw. Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. **Hit:** 6 (1d6+3) slashing damage plus 7 (2d6) necrotic damage.

Swashbuckler

Medium humanoid, any non-lawful alignment

Armor Class 17 (leather armor)

Hit Points 66 (12d8 + 12)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Skills Acrobatics +8, Athletics +5, Persuasion +6

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Common

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Lightfooted. The swashbuckler can take the Dash or Disengage action as a bonus action on each of its turns.

Suave Defense. While the swashbuckler is wearing light or no armor and wielding no shield, its AC includes its Charisma modifier.

Actions

Multiattack. The swashbuckler makes three attacks: one with a dagger and two with its rapier.

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

Rapier. Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. **Hit:** 8 (1d8+4) piercing damage.

Sword Wraith Commander

Medium undead, lawful evil

Armor Class 18 (breastplate, shield)

Hit Points 127 (15d8 + 60)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Skills Perception +4

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

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities exhaustion, frightened, poisoned, unconscious

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 4

Languages Common, Abyssal (languages it knew in life)

Challenge 8 (3900 XP)

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

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

Actions

Multiattack. The sword wraith makes two weapon attacks.

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

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

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

Sword Wraith Warrior

Medium undead, lawful evil

Armor Class 16 (chain shirt, shield)

Hit Points 45 (6d8 + 18)

Speed 30 ft.

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

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

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities exhaustion, frightened, poisoned, unconscious

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 9

Languages Common, Abyssal (languages it knew in life)

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

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

Actions

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

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

The Lost

Medium monstrosity, lawful evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 78 (12d8 + 24)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	12 (+1)	15 (+2)	6 (-2)	7 (-2)	5 (-3)

Skills Athletics +6

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, slashing while in dim light or darkness

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 8

Languages Common

Challenge 7 (2900 XP)

Actions

Multiattack. The Lost makes two arm spike attacks

Arm Spike. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (2d10+3) piercing damage.

Embrace. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 25 (4d10+3) piercing damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 14) if it is a Medium or smaller creature. Until the grapple ends, the target is frightened, and it takes 27 (6d8) psychic damage at the end of each of its turns. The Lost can embrace only one creature at a time.

Reactions

Tightening Embrace. If the Lost takes damage while it has a creature grappled, that creature takes 18 (4d8) psychic damage.

Wight

Medium undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 14 (studded leather armor)

Hit Points 45 (6d8 + 18)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Skills Perception +3, Stealth +4

Damage Resistances necrotic; bludgeoning, piercing and slashing from nonmagical attacks that aren't silvered

Damage Immunities poison

Condition immunities: exhaustion, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages the languages it knew in life

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

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

Actions

Multiattack. The wight makes two longsword attacks or two longbow attacks. It can use its Life Drain in place of one longsword attack.

Life Drain. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 5 (1d6+2) necrotic damage. The target must succeed on a DC 13 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.

A humanoid slain by this attack rises 24 hours later as a zombie under the wight's control, unless the humanoid is restored to life or its body is destroyed. The wight can have no more than twelve zombies under its control at one time.

Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8+2) slashing damage or 7 (1d8+2) slashing damage if used with two hands.

Longbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8+2) piercing damage.

Appendix 1: False Phylactery (Bonus Objective A)

Estimated Duration: 60

Ranlynn tells the characters to destroy an artifact in some extradimensional space within the Rohan manor, quelling the malice that permeates the place.

Bonus Objective A

Characters need to destroy the minor artifact and escape the extradimensional space.

Placing the Portal

DMs are empowered to put the portal anywhere they want in the manor. Once the party clears a room, an inky black portal with a purple outline starts shimmering on the wall. **If you are preparing this module quickly, put the portal in the kitchen.**

1: A Hole to Nowhere?

Characters have to trust Ranlynn's advice as they start to face the Shadowfell's despair.

Mysterious Portal

The portal reveals a kitchen, similar to the one in the Rohan manor. However, the kitchen in the portal is almost entirely in grayscale. Counters are stacked with crackers and other unleavened bread.

Any character succeeding a DC 13 Intelligence (Arcana) check recognizes this is a portal to the Shadowfell. A DC 13 Intelligence (Religion) check recalls Shar is one of the rulers of the Shadowfell.

Modified Shadowfell Despair

Each character must make a DC 10 Wisdom saving throw. On a failure, the character is affected by apathy. The character has disadvantage on death saving throws and on Dexterity checks for initiative, and gains the following flaw: "I don't believe I can make a difference to anyone or anything." A *calm emotions* spell removes despair, as does any spell or other magical effect that removes a curse.

2: So Close, Yet So Far Away

Characters must break an arcane seal to get to the statuette of enmity.

Area Information

Dimensions and Terrain: A 10 foot wide gray, featureless hallway stretches forever.

Lighting: Dim light comes from the ceiling.

The Wandering

Four ghostly figures at the end of the hall ask characters to approach. No matter how the party moves, they cannot get closer.

- Characters can easily guess there is a magical ward. Anyone can breach the ward by calling out for an end to the maze and succeeding a DC 16 Charisma saving throw. On a failure, that character can choose to sacrifice some of their life force to pass the barrier. Roll four hit dice and suffer that much psychic damage.
- If *dispel magic* is cast, the caster sees an end to the hall, but the ghostly figures scream in agony as they disappear. The caster must succeed a DC 16 Charisma saving throw or take 11 (2d10) psychic damage.

Adjusting This Scene

Here are some additional suggestions for adjusting this scene, according to your group.

- **Very Weak and Weak:** Reduce the save DC by 1. It only takes three hit dice to break the ward.
- **Strong and Very Strong:** Casting *dispel magic* leads to 22 (4d10) psychic damage.

The Sundering

After dispelling the Shadowfell ward, characters see a brittle onyx statuette of a warrior clad in plate mail emit a wave of purple light. Characters must succeed a DC 23 Wisdom saving throw or feel an overpowering urge to shout the name of their most despised enemy.

After shouting, the party should realize this is the artifact they were sent to destroy. Any attack shatters it.

3: The Remnants

After characters destroy the statuette, four desperate adventurers approach them from near the portal. They have been corrupted by the sinister magic of the Shadowfell and feel compelled to fight the adventurers, even after their bodies suffer mortal wounds!

Area Information

Dimensions and Terrain: The onyx statuette was in the back of a 20 x 25 room at the end of a 60 x 10 hall. Characters destroyed the door already.

Lighting: Dim light comes from the ceiling.

Creatures and NPCs

Norrian and **Avinia**, a pair of haggard and garishly dressed half-elf **swashbucklers**, lead the way. Their heavily cloaked friend **Pera (the lost)** wanders closely behind. **Gillith (deathlock)** follows behind, using *disguise self* to appear like a living half-elf.

Objectives/Goals. After being trapped with each other for so long, The Remnants want the reassuring touch of another living creature even more than they want to be free. Sadly, Pera is so traumatized that he cannot embrace another creature without squeezing it to death. Any character with a passive Perception of 17 or higher recognizes a spiked arm under Pera's cloak and realizes he is not human.

The other Remnants cannot fully reconcile themselves to the threat their old friend Pera poses. A successful DC 16 Wisdom (Insight) check confirms this. On a failed check, the other Remnants appear to be morally conflicted.

Norrian wants to escape with his boyfriend **Gillith**. The love they feel for each other has kept them both from turning evil.

What Do They Know? The Remnants used to be Wellby Wildheart's adventuring companions. They tried breaking in to the Rohan Manor after Wellby was murdered to reclaim the Vines of Avarice, but have been trapped in the Shadowfell for 20 days.

Gillith learned Shar is feeding off Sir Ardem's powerful feelings of loss to create a portal between his manor and the Shadowfell. However, he was unable to dispel the ward. Pera succumbed to his frustration two days ago, transforming in to a five-armed creature and killing Gillith before regaining some composure.

Fueled Beyond Death

If combat begins, **lethal damage** cannot reduce any of the Remnants below 1 hit point. Adventurers see their bodies rise like puppets, fueled by loss and Shar's overpowering will.

When a character does lethal damage that should have killed a Remnant, they can attempt a DC 15 Wisdom (Insight or Religion) check. On a success, they realize non-lethal damage or a charismatic appeal is required.

Charisma skills other than Intimidation can be used to disrupt the negative energy sustaining The Remnants. A successful DC 15 check (as an action) deals 13 (3d8) radiant damage to each Remnant, knocking them unconscious if reduced to 0 hit points this way. A check of 20 or higher deals 18 (4d8) damage.

Adjusting This Scene

Here are some additional suggestions for adjusting this scene, according to your group.

- **Very Weak:** **Avinia** is not hostile, giving advantage to any PC attempting Persuasion. **Pera** has 50 hit points.
- **Weak:** **Avinia** is not hostile nor immediately helpful.
- **Strong and Very Strong:** Add a **the lost**.

Playing the Pillars

Here are some suggestions for this encounter:

- **Combat.** If the Remnants are all working together, Gillith uses *hold person* against warriors without holy symbols to set up attacks.
- **Exploration.** Adventurers could try to bypass combat by going through the portal, back in to the manor. In this case, the Remnants follow the party and try to ambush them as they leave the manor.
- **Social.** A successful DC 25 Charisma (Persuasion or Deception) check can get Norrian and Avinia to turn on Pera. Lower the DC to 18 if the party promises to protect Gillith too.

Appendix 2: War Buddies (Bonus Objective B)

Estimated Duration: 60

After climbing up to a trapped attic, characters find Sam is being disciplined by the ghosts of his commanders, who took his dragonchess set.

Bonus Objective B

Characters need to get Sam's dragonchess set.

1: Follow the Friendly Ghost

Some adventurers carry a dragonchess set with them, but Sam wants *his* set back. Insightful characters realize he's holding a bigger problem.

Area Information

Sam can show up anywhere in the Rohan Manor after characters visit the memorial.

Creatures/NPCs

Private **Sam Whitless, now a ghost**, cheerfully flexes his large, incorporeal muscles and follows the characters from room to room.

Objectives/Goals. Sir Ardem tried Sam while he served in the Red Plumes, and always had a soft spot for Sam's boyish spirit. In death, Sam is convinced he's a better influence on Sir Ardem than any of the other ghosts wandering around the manor. The two relax, joke around, and ignore the trappings of status or pursuit of power. Once Sam "lost" Sir Ardem's dragonchess set, Sir Ardem doesn't want to spend time together.

What Does Sam Know? He joined the Red Plumes because it paid well, not because he wanted to be a soldier. As long as other people pointed him in the right direction and didn't demand too much bloodshed, that was enough. Sam didn't believe in safety precautions either, slipping on the wall around The Waydown in DDEX 03-14 and falling on his head, dying instantly.

Because Sam's discipline has only deteriorated in death, the ghosts of several commanding officers in the manor took his chess set as punishment. Sam is willing to share this secret, but calls the officers "mean jerks" and "bullies."

2: Kindling

Sam asks the party to follow him up to the attic, but has no idea that the old cobwebs hide a far more dangerous trap!

Area Information

Dimensions and Terrain: A secret door in the memorial room leads to a 30 by 10 foot corridor, then four flights of wooden stairs (40 feet) up to an attic turret.

Lighting: Only what the characters bring.

Haunting Webs

The entire staircase is covered in webs, similar to the *web* spell. Characters entering the web must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or be restrained. Each additional 10 feet of movement requires another save. If a character gets restrained, **roll initiative**.

Any creature starting its turn in the webs hears mocking voices all around them and takes 4 (1d8) psychic damage.

A successful DC 15 Strength check is needed to break free of the webs. Other characters can destroy a 10x10 section of webbing (AC 15, 15 HP, immunity to bludgeoning, piercing and psychic damage).

Sawdust Trap

Sir Ardem left sawdust in this stairway as a way to keep people from sneaking in to the memorial. If someone sets fire to the webbing, the sawdust ignites in a massive explosion. Anyone in the stairway or secret corridor must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw. They suffer 28 (8d6) fire damage, or half on a success.

- A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check is needed to see the sawdust. Unless characters provide bright light, this check is made at disadvantage.
- Any character proficient in Nature or Alchemists' Supplies understands the threat.
- Creative use of spells like *gust of wind*, *mage hand*, or slashing the webs can defeat the trap.

Scene C: Sharing is Caring

Characters find the ghosts of four officers playing with the dragonchess set. They must negotiate with the ghosts or fight.

Area Information

Dimensions and Terrain: A 20 by 15 room, with a map of post Red War Mulmaster laid across a table to serve as the chess board.

Lighting: Only what the characters bring.

Creatures/NPCs

Three **ghosts** and a **poltergeist** are dressed in full Red Plume officer regalia, including spectral splint armor. They all make slight metallic creaking noises as they turn around and notice the adventurers as they enter the room, imitating the sound of their armor:

- Commander Cile Holybend (LN ghost) maintains command of this unit in undeath, just as she did in life.
- Quartermaster Zolleas (LN poltergeist) is responsible for moving the chess pieces for all the ghosts.
- Sergeant Bonifaz Ecinzo (LE ghost) was Sam's commanding officer.
- Scout Pegorin (LG ghost) keeps quiet and watches for demons or other undead. Her 138-105 record is the best of the four ghosts.

Objectives/Goals. Each of these ghosts believes discipline and sacrifice are the hallmarks of any good soldier. They believe playing chess is the best way to keep their minds sharp in undeath, so they can better advise Sir Ardem in matters of military strategy.

- Cile knows her subordinates disagree on most political matters beyond the importance of killing demons, so **she speaks for the group as much as possible. Use this to simplify the scene if running short on time.**
- Bonifaz was jealous of Sam's talent with a sword, despite a lack of training or discipline. He constantly badmouths Sam's lack of discipline, encouraging the other ghosts to punish him.

What Do They Know? Sir Ardem told the other ghosts that Sam gave better advice two tendays ago. He hasn't asked for their advice since, so Zolleas "reclaimed" Sam's dragonchess set as a way to impose discipline.

Offers For The Dragonchess Set

Cile would rather get Sir Ardem's ear than bother disciplining Sam, so it can be very easy to negotiate a deal.

- Characters could offer to relay Cile's tactical advice to Sir Ardem, because he is no longer in the manor. A successful DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion or Deception) check gets Cile to relay her advice: "Bide your time. Say nothing. Gather allies." She also gives the dragonchess set.
- Anyone claiming to be a superior authority can try to bully Cile, but this requires a successful DC 25 Charisma (Intimidation) check. On a failure, the ghosts attack.
- Interrogating Bonifaz is easier. A successful DC 15 Intelligence (History) check reveals he violated Red Plume policy by sending Sam on the wall alone.
- Sam has not learned the lesson Cile and Zolleas were hoping to teach. Characters can suggest an alternative punishment with a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Insight) check.

Adjusting This Scene

Here are some additional suggestions for adjusting this scene, according to your group.

- **Very Weak and Weak:** Remove **Pegorin**. Reduce any skill check DCs by 2.

Playing the Pillars

Here are some suggestions for this encounter:

- **Combat.** If combat ensues, ghosts prefer possessing the body of martial characters to fight once more.
- **Exploration.** A DC 22 Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check is needed to gather all the chess pieces without getting caught.
- **Social.** Other offers can work too. Reward creativity. Just remember the ghosts have little need for physical objects.

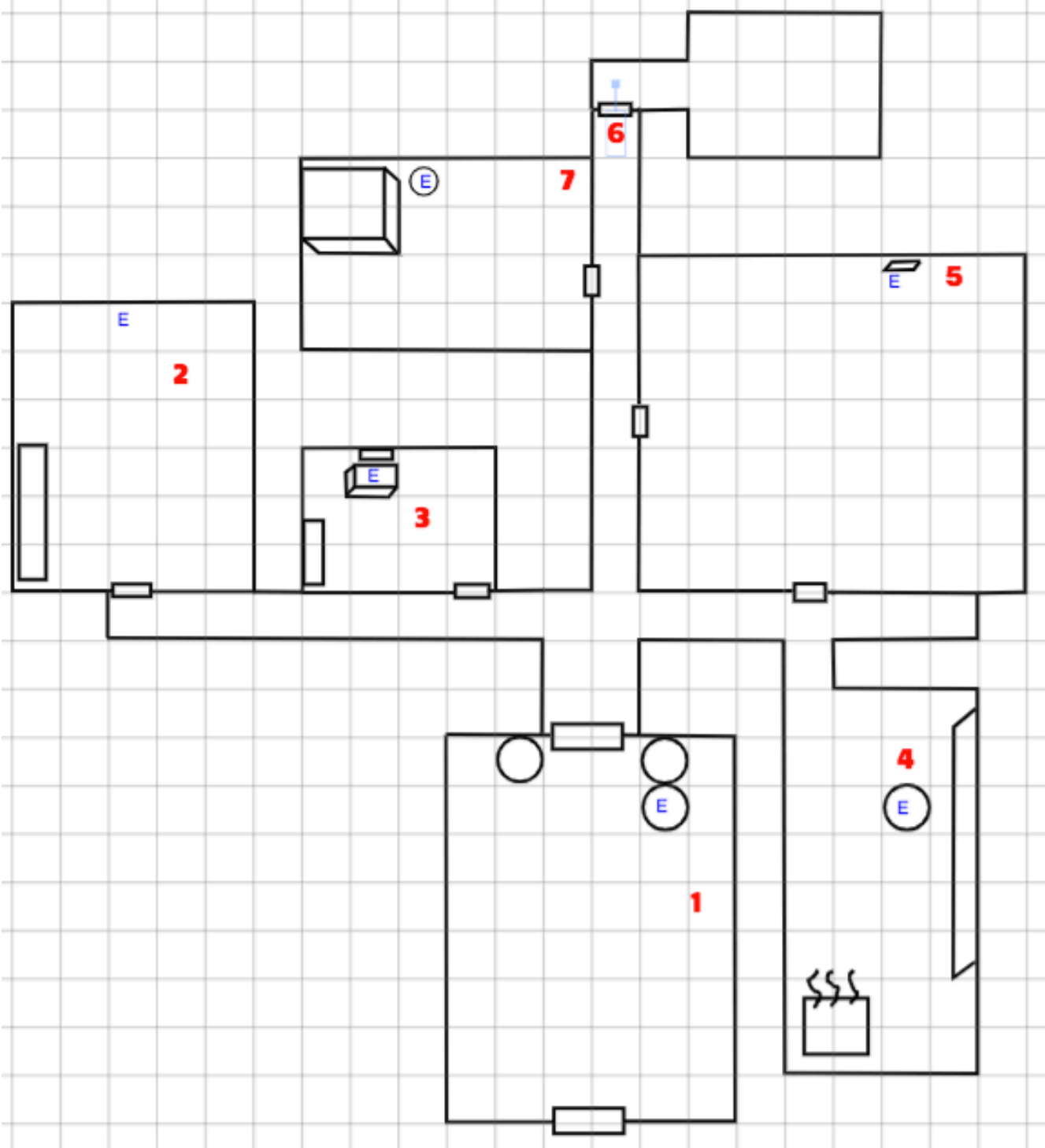
Wrapping Up Bonus

Objective B

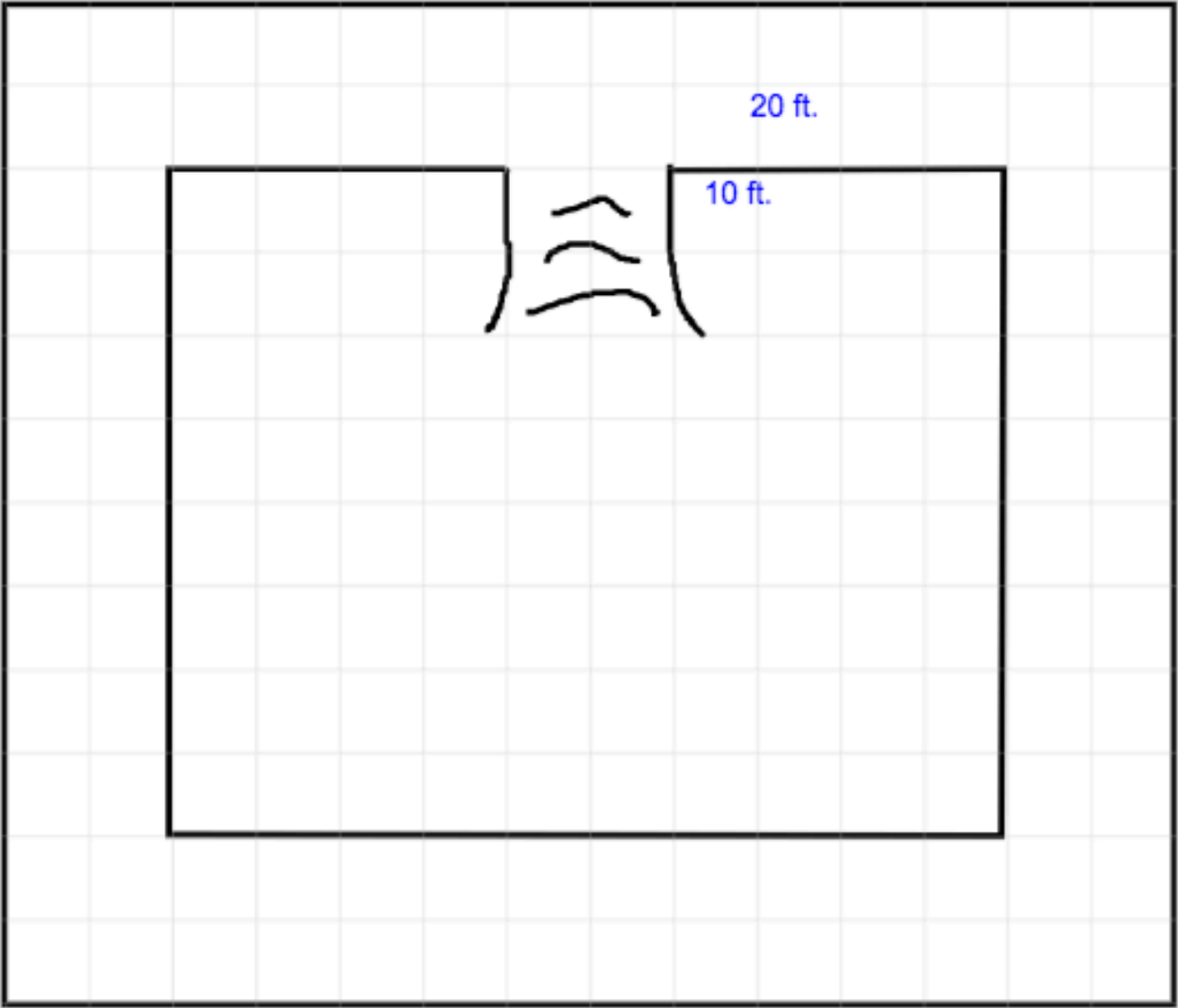
Once Sam gets his dragonchess set back, he reveals a different side of Sir Ardem that few witness. Jovial, laid back, and unburdened by the legacy of the Rohan name. As a proud noble, Sir Ardem always hid these feelings from the world for sake of his reputation. But he was always willing to let Sam lead in dragonchess or combat training. The two were friends, not a noble ordering a commoner around.

Sam tells the party that nothing scares Sir Ardem more than disappointing his father. Since Elias Rohan built his life around enforcing the xenophobic Great Law of Humanity, it's difficult to get Ardem to separate love of family from excluding nonhumans. If the party can help him separate these feelings, they can get Sir Ardem to repent.

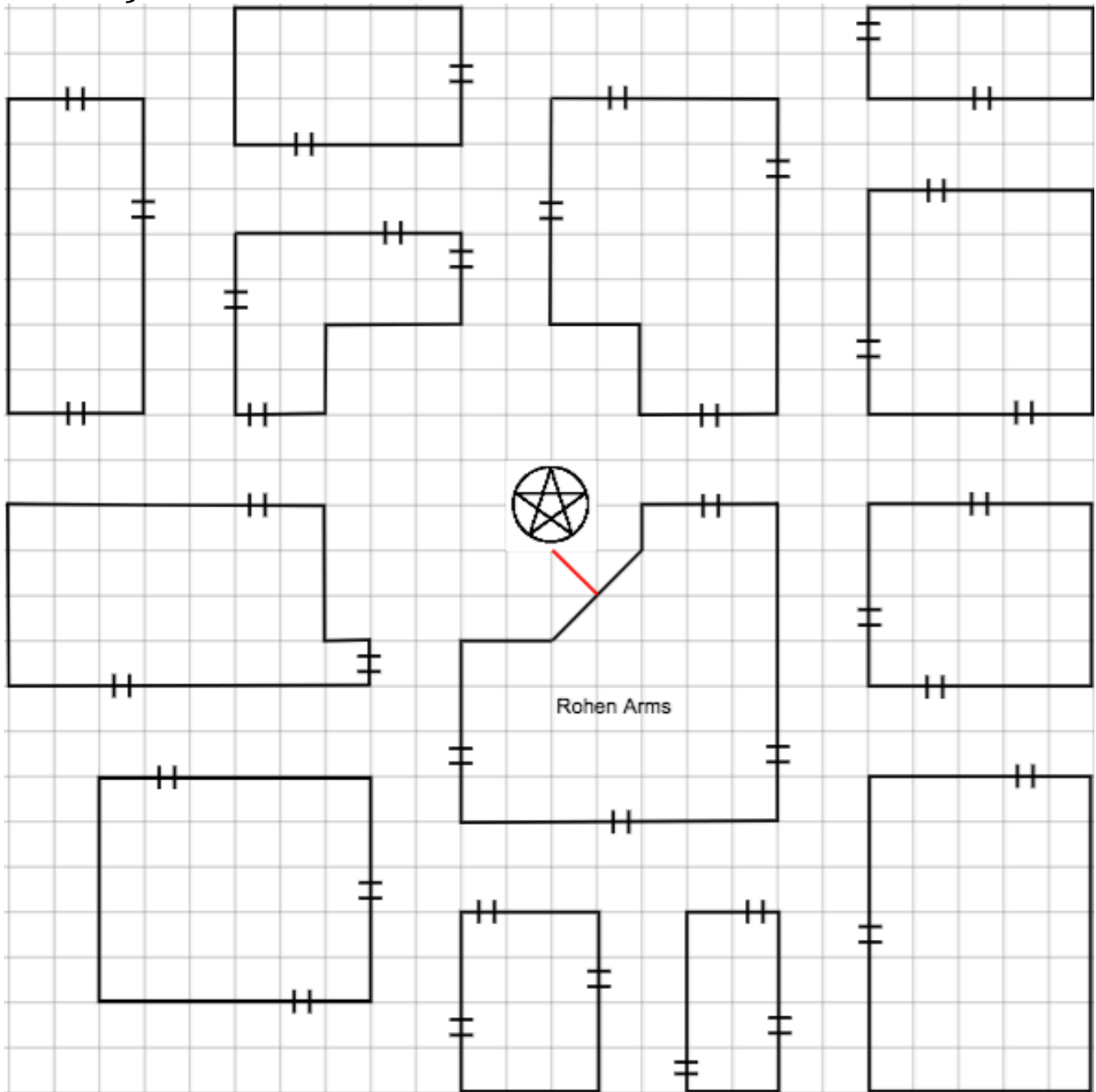
Appendix 3: Rohan Manor Map (Part 2)



Appendix 4: Castle Courtyard Map (Part 3, Sir Ardem Lives)



Appendix 5: Hillsfar Streets Map (Part 3, Sir Ardem Killed)



Key to Map:

- Red diagonal line: Rohen Arms Sign (with glyphs)
- Pentagram rune: Starting location for the Echoes of Rage
- Dashed lines on buildings: ladders

All buildings are 60 feet tall, with living quarters over storefronts.

Appendix 6: Sir Ardem's Confession (Player Handout 1)

13 Alturiak

I should tell the rest of the Senate what I did. All of it. Trying to kill all of the "tainted" humans. Encouraging the exile or murder of nonhumans. I let my hatred of Bert get the best of me. It's not like it's a secret. Everyone knows what I have done.

Maybe they will forgive me. Maybe they'll kill me. I doubt I will be able to remain in the Senate. Who would vote for me if I turn against my supporters?

I wonder what it will be like, focusing my thoughts on the people I love instead of the people I hate? I guess I will have to find someone to love first.

Appendix 7: Sir Ardem's Journal (Player Handout 2)

23 Alturiak

Our honor is no more. I am all that is left of our banner. My father lies dead. My greatest comrades? All dead. The rest of those "loyal" soldiers have turned from our cause. Ever since the Juiblex cultists were defeated three months ago, people look at the GOBLIN as some sort of a hero.

It doesn't matter how many lives I save at this point. People will never look at me again the way they look at Bert. They want to make me the villain. If everyone else in the Senate looks at me like a bloodthirsty killer, maybe I should prove them right? Then my soul can join my kingdom once more.

Appendix 8: Story Awards

Characters may earn the following story awards during the course of this adventure.

Hillsfar's Cycle

One way or another, you resolved the dilemma with Sir Ardem Rohan and the boneclaw.

- If Sir Ardem recanted his racist past and begged forgiveness, he may just be trying to save his own life. Nonetheless, you feel assured that others will follow his example.
- If Sir Ardem was killed, despite Bert and Ranlynn's pleas, you feel a bony, clawed fingertip brush against your cheek during your dreams every time you take a long rest. (This is not intended to have a mechanical effect, but characters earning this story award may face tangible consequences in future adventures.)

Why So Serious?

You used (or attempted to use) Ilmater's Respite on another member of your adventuring party. On your return to Hillsfar, Bert and Kenna welcome you to their merry band of pranksters. Watch out for the blood pie!

Appendix 9: Magic Item Unlocks

Characters completing this adventure's main objective unlock these magic items.

The Vines of Avarice (Gloves of Thievery) (Table F)

Wondrous item, uncommon

These gloves are invisible while worn. While wearing them, you gain a +5 bonus to Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) checks and Dexterity checks made to pick locks.

This item is found on **Magic Item Table F** in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

These vines from the Cormanthor Forest can be wrapped around someone's hands as a pair of fingerless gloves, turning invisible when worn correctly. They function as *gloves of thievery*. Whenever the wearer contemplates vengeance, they see a vision of a grand hearth lying in ruins.

Ilmater's Respite (Wand of Smiles) (Common)

Wondrous item, common

This wand has 3 charges. While holding it, you can use an action to expend 1 of its charges and target a humanoid you can see within 30 feet of you. The target must succeed on a DC 10 Charisma saving throw or be forced to smile for 1 minute.

The wand regains all expended charges daily at dawn. If you expend the wand's last charge, roll a d20. On a 1, the wand transforms into a wand of scowls.

This item is found in the **Common Magic Item list** in *Xanathar's Guide to Everything*.

This wand crafted from an illithid tentacle feels like it is constantly squirming in the user's hand. Anyone staring at the wand for a minute hears an ominous voice in their head:

"WARNING: best used on strangers and loved ones.

Appendix 10: Dungeon Master Tips

To DM an adventure, you **must** have 3 to 7 players—each with their own character within the adventure’s level range (see Adventure Primer). Characters playing in a **hardcover** adventure may continue to play to but if they play a different hardcover adventure, they **can’t return** to the first if outside its level range.

New to D&D Adventurers League?

<http://dnd.wizards.com/playevents/organized-play>

Preparing the Adventure

Before you start play, consider the following:

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

Players can play an adventure they previously played as a Player or Dungeon Master but may only play it once with a given character. Ensure each player has their character’s adventure logsheet (if not, get one from the organizer) with their starting values for advancement and treasure checkpoints, downtime days, and renown. These are updated at the conclusion of the session. The adventure information and your information is added at the end of the adventure session—whether the completed the adventure or not.

Each player is responsible for maintaining an accurate logsheet. If you have time, you can do a

quick scan of a player’s character sheet to ensure that nothing looks out of order. If you see magic items of very high rarities or strange arrays of ability scores, you can ask players to provide documentation for the irregularities. If they cannot, feel free to restrict item use or ask them to use a standard ability score array.

Point players to the D&D Adventurers League Players Guide for reference. If players wish to spend downtime days and it’s the beginning of an adventure or episode, they can declare their activity and spend the days now, or they can do so at the end of the adventure or episode. Players should select their characters’ spells and other daily options prior to the start of the adventure, unless the adventure specifies otherwise. Feel free to reread the adventure description to help give players hints about what they might face.

Adjusting This Adventure

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

Determining Party Strength

Party Composition	Party	Strength
3-4 characters,	APL less than	Very weak
3-4 characters,	APL equivalent	Weak
3-4 characters,	APL greater than	Average
5 characters,	APL less than	Weak
5 characters,	APL equivalent	Average
5 characters,	APL greater than	Strong
6-7 characters,	APL less than	Average
6-7 characters,	APL equivalent	Strong
6-7 characters,	APL greater than	Very strong