



# ADVENTURERS LEAGUE™

## ASSAULT ON MAERIMYDRA

With allies gained from denizens of the Underdark, the former drow enclave of Szith Morcane is on the precipice of being retaken. During the battle for Szith Morcane, secrets of the drow community are revealed. What will you do with this knowledge, and how will it affect the outcome of the conflict? A eight-hour adventure for 5th-10th level characters.

**Adventure Code: DDEX3-16**



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# EXPEDITIONS™

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# INTRODUCTION

Welcome to *Assault on Maerimydra*, a D&D Expeditions™ adventure, part of the official D&D Adventurers League™ organized play system and the Rage of Demons™ storyline season.

This adventure is designed for **three to seven 11th-16th level characters**, and is optimized for **five 13th level characters**. Players with 10th level characters may spend 100 downtime days to level up to 11th level. Characters outside this level range cannot participate in this adventure.

The adventure begins in the cavern of Sporedome but quickly moves to the Lowerdark, where the characters must lead the assault on Maerimydra. The adventure is broken up into two, approximately four-hour rounds.

# THE D&D ADVENTURERS LEAGUE

This adventure is official for D&D Adventurers League play. The D&D Adventurers League is the official organized play system for DUNGEONS & DRAGONS®. Players can create characters and participate in any adventure allowed as a part of the D&D Adventurers League. As they adventure, players track their characters' experience, treasure, and other rewards, and can take those characters through other adventures that will continue their story.

D&D Adventurers League play is broken up into storyline seasons. When players create characters, they attach those characters to a storyline season, which determines what rules they're allowed to use to create and advance their characters. Players can continue to play their characters after the storyline season has finished, possibly participating in a second or third storyline with those same characters. A character's level is the only limitation for adventure play. A player cannot use a character of a level higher or lower than the level range of a D&D Adventurers League adventure.

If you're running this adventure as a part of a store event or at certain conventions, you'll need a [DCI number](#). This number is your official Wizards of the Coast organized play identifier. If you don't have a number, you can obtain one at a store event. Check with your organizer for details.

For more information on playing, running games as a Dungeon Master, and organizing games for the D&D Adventurers League, please visit the [D&D Adventurers](#)

[League home](#).

# PREPARING THE ADVENTURE

Before you show up to Dungeon Master this adventure for a group of players, you should do the following to prepare.

- Make sure to have a copy of the most current version of the [D&D basic rules](#) or the *Player's Handbook™*.
- Read through the adventure, taking notes of anything you'd like to highlight or remind yourself 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.
- Get familiar with the monster statistics in the Appendix.
- Gather together any resources you'd like to use to aid you in Dungeon Mastering, such as notecards, a DM screen, miniatures, battlemaps, etc.
- If you know the composition of the group beforehand, you can make adjustments as noted throughout the adventure.

# BEFORE PLAY AT THE TABLE

Ask the players to provide you with relevant character information. This includes:

- Character name and level
- Character race and class
- Passive Wisdom (Perception)—the most common passive ability check
- Anything notable as specified by the adventure (such as backgrounds, traits, flaws, and so on)

Players that have characters outside the adventure's level range **cannot participate in the adventure with those characters**. Players can play an adventure they previously played or ran as a Dungeon Master, but not with the same character (if applicable).

Ensure that each player has an [official adventure logsheet](#) for his or her character (if not, get one from the organizer). The player will fill out the adventure name, session number, date, and your name and DCI number. In addition, the player also fills in the starting values for XP, gold, downtime, renown, and number of permanent magic items. He or she will fill in the other values and write notes at the conclusion of the session. Each player is responsible for maintaining an accurate logsheet.

If you have time, you can do a quick scan of a player's character sheet to ensure that nothing looks out of order. If you see magic items of very high rarities or strange arrays of ability scores, you can ask players to provide documentation for the irregularities. If they cannot, feel free to restrict item use or ask them to use a standard ability score array. Point players to the [D&D Adventurers League Player's 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 THE ADVENTURE

Throughout this adventure, you may see sidebars to help you make adjustments to this adventure for smaller/larger groups and characters, of higher/lower levels that the optimized group size. Most of the time, this is used for combat encounters.

You may adjust the adventure beyond the guidelines given in the adventure, or for other reasons. For example, if you're playing with a group of inexperienced players, you might want to make the adventure a little easier; for very experienced players, you might want to make it a little harder. Therefore, five categories of party strength have been created for you to use as a guide. Use these as a guide, and feel free to use a different adjustment during the adventure if the recommended party strength feels off for the group.

This adventure is **optimized for a party of five 13th level characters**. To figure out whether you need to adjust the adventure, do the following:

- Add up the total levels of all the characters
- Divide the total by the number of characters
- Round fractions of .5 or greater up; round fractions of less than .5 down

You've now determined the **average party level (APL)** for the adventure. To figure out the **party strength** for the adventure, consult the following table.

## 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

**Average party strength** indicates no recommended adjustments to the adventure. Each sidebar may or may not offer suggestions for certain party strengths. If a particular recommendation is not offered for your group, you don't have to make adjustments.

## DUNGEON MASTERING THE ADVENTURE

As the DM of the session, you have the most important role in facilitating the enjoyment of the game for the players. You help guide the narrative and bring the words on these pages to life. The outcome of a fun game session often creates stories that live well beyond the play at the table. Always follow this golden rule when you DM for a group:

**Make decisions and adjudications that enhance the fun of the adventure when possible.**

To reinforce this golden rule, keep in mind the following:

- You are empowered to make adjustments to the adventure and make decisions about how the group interacts with the world of this adventure. This is especially important and applicable outside of combat, but feel free to adjust the adventure for groups that are having too easy or too hard of a time.
- Don't make the adventure too easy or too difficult for a group. Never being challenged makes for a boring game, and being overwhelmed makes for a frustrating game. Gauge the experience of the players (not the characters) with the game, try to feel out (or ask) what they like in a game, and attempt to give each of them the experience they're after when they play D&D. Give everyone a chance to shine.

- Be mindful of pacing, and keep the game session moving along appropriately. Watch for stalling, since play loses momentum when this happens. At the same time, make sure that the players don't finish too early; provide them with a full play experience. Try to be aware of running long or short. Adjust the pacing accordingly.
- Read-aloud text is just a suggestion; feel free to modify the text as you see fit, especially when dialogue is present.
- Give the players appropriate hints so they can make informed choices about how to proceed. Players should be given clues and hints when appropriate so they can tackle puzzles, combat, and interactions without getting frustrated over lack of information. This helps to encourage immersion in the adventure and gives players "little victories" for figuring out good choices from clues.

In short, being the DM isn't about following the adventure's text word-for-word; it's about facilitating a fun, challenging game environment for the players. The *Dungeon Master's Guide*™ has more information on the art of running a D&D game.

## DOWNTIME AND LIFESTYLE

At the beginning of each play session, players must declare whether or not they are spending any days of downtime. The player records the downtime spent on the adventure logsheet. The following options are available to players during downtime (see the [D&D basic rules](#) or the [D&D Adventurers League Player's Guide](#) for more information):

- Catching up
- Crafting (exception: multiple characters cannot commit to crafting a single item)
- Practicing a profession
- Recuperating
- Spellcasting services (end of the adventure only)
- Training

Other downtime options might be available during adventures or unlocked through play, including faction-specific activities.

In addition, whenever a character spends downtime days, that character also spends the requisite expense for his or her lifestyle. Costs are per day, so a character that spends ten days of downtime also spends ten days of expenses maintaining his or her lifestyle. Some downtime activities help with lifestyle expenses or add lifestyle expenses.

## SPELLCASTING SERVICES

Any settlement the size of a town or larger can provide some spellcasting services. Characters need to be able to travel to the settlement to obtain these services. Alternatively, if the party finishes an adventure, they can be assumed to return to the settlement closest to the adventure location.

Spell services generally available include healing and recovery spells, as well as information-gathering spells. Other spell services might be available as specified in the adventure. The number of spells available to be cast as a service is limited to a **maximum of three per day total**, unless otherwise noted.

### SPELLCASTING SERVICES

Spell	Cost
<i>Cure wounds</i> (1st level)	10 gp
<i>Identify</i>	20 gp
<i>Lesser restoration</i>	40 gp
<i>Prayer of healing</i> (2nd level)	40 gp
<i>Remove curse</i>	90 gp
<i>Speak with dead</i>	90 gp
<i>Divination</i>	210 gp
<i>Greater restoration</i>	450 gp
<i>Raise dead</i>	1,250 gp

### ACOLYTE BACKGROUND

A character possessing the acolyte background requesting spellcasting services at a temple of his or her faith may request **one spell per day** from the Spellcasting Services table for free. The only cost paid for the spell is the base price for the consumed material component, if any.

Faiths that can call upon spellcasting services in and around Hillsfar include the following: Chauntea, Lliira, Mielikki, and Tempus.

## CHARACTER DISEASE, DEATH, AND RECOVERY

Sometimes bad things happen, and characters get poisoned, diseased, or die. Since you might not have the same characters return from session to session, here are the rules when bad things happen to characters.

## DISEASE, POISON, AND OTHER DEBILITATING EFFECTS

A character still affected by diseases, poisons, and other similar effects at the conclusion of an adventure can spend downtime days recuperating until such time as he or she resolves the effect to its conclusion (see the recuperating activity in the D&D basic rules).

If a character doesn't resolve the effect between sessions, that character begins the next session still affected by the debilitating effect.

## DEATH

A character who dies during the course of the adventure has a few options at the end of the session (or whenever arriving back in civilization) if no one in the adventuring party has immediate access to a *raise dead* or *revivify* spell, or similar magic. A character subject to a *raise dead* spell is affected negatively until all long rests have been completed during an adventure. Alternatively, each downtime day spent after *raise dead* reduces the penalty to attack rolls, saving throws, and ability checks by 1, in addition to any other benefits the downtime activity might provide.

**Create a New 1st-Level Character.** If the dead character is unwilling or unable to exercise any of the other options, the player creates a new character. The new character does not have any items or rewards possessed by the dead character.

**Dead Character Pays for Raise Dead.** If the character's body is recoverable (it's not missing any vital organs and is mostly whole) and the player would like the character to be returned to life, the party can take the body back to civilization and use the dead character's funds to pay for a *raise dead* spell. A *raise dead* spell cast in this manner costs the character 1,250 gp.

**Character's Party Pays for Raise Dead.** As above, except that some or all of the 1,250 gp for the *raise dead* spell is paid for by the party at the end of the session. Other characters are under no obligation to spend their funds to bring back a dead party member.

**Faction Charity.** If the character is of level 1 to 4 and a member of a faction, the dead character's body can be returned to civilization and a patron from the faction ensures that he or she receives a *raise dead* spell. However, any character invoking this charity forfeits all XP and rewards from that session (even those earned prior to death during that session), and cannot replay that episode or adventure with that character again. Once a character reaches 5th level, this option is not available.

## MAERIMYDRA REVISITED

This adventure is heavily informed by, and uses some descriptions from, *City of the Spider Queen* by James Wyatt, published in 2002, DDEX3-4 *It's All in the Blood*, and DDEX3-15 *Szith Morcane Unbound*. The material found herein updates this well-known city to the Rage of Demons storyline.

## ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Over a year ago, the archmage of Menzoberranzan, Gromph Baenre used a powerful ritual to summon several of the demon lords of the Abyss into the Underdark (starting the Rage of Demons storyline in *Out of the Abyss*). In the process, the madness of each demon lord amplified and spread due to interactions of the ritual with the magical radiation of the Underdark called the faerzress.

One of the demon lords, Graz'zt, the Dark Prince who represents hedonism and throwing down social mores, is one of the few demon lords given to plotting and long term scheming. Graz'zt's half fire giant granddaughter Hledh Hellspawn had succeeded her father and become the ruler of the former drow city Maerimydra where she had begun rebuilding it as a shrine to her grandsire. What was once the largest drow city in the area of the Underdark under the Moonsea became a haven for giants and demons that warred upon the remaining drow outposts. When Graz'zt arrived in the Underdark, he quickly made his way to Maerimydra to prepare for the inevitable trap only he could foresee.

He ordered the Undying Temple, a former temple to Kiaransalee the drow goddess of undeath, to be revived. The temple is located within a stalactite and is attached to Castle Maerimydra's highest point via a narrow bridge. Specifically designed for spell research on undeath and planar travel, Graz'zt foresaw an opportunity. Graz'zt seeks to prevent anyone from forcibly moving him between planes again. Using his massive power, he revived the powers of the Temple and regrew its heart, but instead of a heart of necrotic energy, now it beats with the raw chaos of the Abyss.

Graz'zt knows that the drow wizard Vizeran DeVir seeks to forcibly summon all the demon lords together that they might battle to the death and banish themselves back to the Abyss (events detailed in *Out of the Abyss*). Not only does Graz'zt's plan prevent his summoning, but it also gives him access to the Material Plane and the Abyss through the Ethereal Plane that the Undying Temple overlaps. He can then spread madness through the Material Plane, forming it into yet another land under his control, like his layers of the Abyss.

At the same time, the surface of the Moonsea has seen

overwhelming upheaval. The nonhumans have rebelled against the oppression of Hillsfar and helped install a new government. The five factions, seeking aid for the starving of Mulmaster and the displaced refugees of Phlan, have allied with the new government and several Underdark groups. Realizing the imminent threat, they have rallied all these groups into a great army that plans to assault Maerimydra and end the fire giant threat before they can march on the surface. They have no idea that Graz'zt himself is in the city.

At the same time, Elisande, a young girl who has been present at many of the major events in the Moonsea over the last two years, has appeared yet again suggesting for good or ill, that this may be a turning point in the history of the Moonsea.

## OVERVIEW

Things have come to a head and the adventure begins with the characters hearing about the gathering in Sporedome, home of the myconids, from which the attack is to be launched. However, before the characters arrive, they have the opportunity to purchase or beg for additional aid. See the Gathering Forces sidebar for more information.

### GATHERING FORCES

Before the characters arrive in Sporedome, they have opportunity to add to the forces assembling for the assault. Characters can do this by hiring mercenaries or making personal entreaties for aid. A character may choose to spend gold or downtime, but may not spend both and should not know the conversion rate to renown. The DM is also encouraged to NOT allow the player more than ten five minutes to make these decisions.

**Hiring Mercenaries:** The character can donate money to hire mercenaries to add to the attack in general. Ask the player how much gold their characters would like to donate, if at all. At the end of the adventure, for every 500 gp (round down) the character receives one renown, to a maximum of five. If the character donates 2,500 gp or more, they also receive the Shared Valor favor at the end of the adventure.

**Personal Request:** Instead of donating gold, the character can give of their time to rally others to the assault. Ask the player how much downtime their characters would like to spend before the start of the adventure, if any. At the end of the adventure, for every 20 DT (round down) the character receives one renown, to a maximum of five. If the character donates 100 DT or more, they also receive the Shared Valor favor at the end of the adventure.

## ROUND ONE

Round One consists of Part 1 through Part 5 and should take approximately 4-5 hours. Do not be afraid to "call" fights if it is clear that the characters have won and you are short on time in a convention setting.

**Part 1:** The characters gather in Sporedome with all of the other groups that are interested in stopping the threat of Maerimydra. The characters have an opportunity to learn about the battle plan and insert themselves into it however they might like. Role-playing with the various NPCs might gather additional information. Give out Player Handout 2 and 3 at this time to aid them in planning their part in the attack. Consider having multiple copies of these Handouts especially in a convention or time sensitive setting.

During this time the characters should also receive instructions from their factions regarding possible Secret Missions. Use parts of Handout One to facilitate this.

**Part 2:** Before the assault can begin, the allies have six different objectives they hope to complete. The characters have time to assist in completing two of them. Forces they have gathered can be assigned to assist with other objectives. Both the Order of the Gauntlet and the Emerald Enclave have the opportunity for secret missions.

**Part 3:** The main assault begins, but the characters are instead deployed inside the city itself to scout and secure one of the key sites inside the city.

**Part 4:** Disaster strikes when the Mother and derro of Ravagestone reveal themselves and attack the allied lines from behind. The party must rush back to their friends and aid them. The Harpers have the opportunity for an alternative secret mission.

**Part 5:** The Mother, twisted and maddened child of Graz'zt, has returned and the characters must destroy her before she wipes out any chance of success. If the characters succeed, they have a chance for a long rest before the final push.

### DM'S NOTE ON TIMING FOR ROUND ONE

If your table is running especially long after completing Parts 1 and 2, or you know that time is especially short, Part 3 can be eliminated or summarized. In this case, apply the success and failure conditions from Where Heroes Do Not Tread in Part 2 to Part 4 instead of Part 3.

## ROUND TWO

Round Two consists of Part 6 by itself and should take approximately 3-4 hours.

**Part 6:** The attack by the derro has made it unlikely that the allies will be able to take the city. However enough information has filtered in that Graz'zt himself and many of his court are up to something in the Undying Temple. The characters are asked to infiltrate it and do everything possible to stop it. As the party embarks on this suicide mission, Elisande and her blind goat appear, interested in what is no doubt a truly exciting adventure.

### DM'S NOTE ON TIMING FOR ROUND TWO

There are a number of rooms that are not in use by the followers of Graz'zt in the Undying Temple. Should time be short, feel free to ignore or summarize them and simply move your players on to the next floor. The DM may also remove the concealed doors and make them all normal doors.

## ADVENTURE HOOK

The adventure begins in Sporedome, where representatives of the various groups are meeting to go over final plans for the attack upon the giants of Maerimydra. Choose the most appropriate hook for each character to explain why they would choose to attend such a meeting.

Before arriving, make sure each character has had the opportunity to Gather Forces (see sidebar).

It is also important for Part 6 to determine which characters, if any, possess the favor *Taste of Madness* from DDEX3-8 *The Malady of Elventree* or the *Ex-Thrall of Graz'zt* limited release convention certificate originally from Gen Con 2015.

**Faction Special Mission:** The factions are committed to ending the threat of Graz'zt and his minions in Maerimydra and so they have called all their available operatives to Sporedome. Each of the factions has been given a specific mission ahead of time. Hand each player the appropriate portion of Player Handout 1.

**Heroes of Phlan:** Characters that have played in Season One (*Tyranny of Dragons*) may have connections to the town of Phlan. Aya Glenmiir, a well-known wizard from Phlan specializing in wards and friend to adventurers, calls on her allies to join her. If the threat is not dealt with the madness spread and there will be no one left to retake Phlan from its current draconic occupier, Vorgansharax. However, if an army can be raised, Phlan might be able to call on those allies to free Phlan as well, after dealing with Maerimydra.

**Mercenary Work:** If the characters have no

connections to Phlan or the factions, they have instead responded to a call for sellswords sent by Elanil Ellassidil, the Moonsilver Herald of Elventree.

### FAERZRESS

An unusual magical energy the drow call *faerzress* pervades much of the Underdark. The origin of this mysterious arcane power is unknown. Legend claims it is an ancient elven magic dating back to the time when the dark elves were first exiled from the world above. The drow and other Underdark creatures use the properties of areas suffused with *faerzress* to protect their settlements.

Areas suffused with *faerzress* can range in size from a few dozen feet across to several miles in diameter, and feature the following effects:

- Areas suffused with *faerzress* are always filled with dim light.
- A creature in an area suffused with *faerzress* has advantage on saving throws against any divination spells. If a divination spell doesn't allow a saving throw, the caster must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw to cast the spell. Failing this save means the spell is wasted and has no effect.
- Any creature attempting to teleport into, within, or out of a *faerzress*-suffused area must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the creature takes 5 (1d10) force damage and the teleportation attempt fails. Even if the save succeeds, the teleportation attempt can suffer a mishap as if the destination was known only by description, regardless of how familiar the destination actually is. See the table in the teleport spell for more information.
- Areas suffused with *faerzress* have become tainted by the chaos of the demon lords. When a spell is cast in a *faerzress*-suffused area, the caster rolls a d20. On a roll of 1, the spell has an additional effect, determined by rolling on the Wild Magic Surge table in chapter 3, "Classes," of the *Player's Handbook*.
- Though *faerzress* can't be dispelled, its effects are temporarily suppressed in the area of an antimagic field.

## MADNESS

At the best of times, the Underdark is a bizarre, alien, and inhospitable world, but the influence of the demon lords has transformed it into a domain of madness and chaos. *Faerzress* acts as a catalyst, spreading the demon lords' madness throughout the Underdark.

A creature's madness level starts at 0. When the creature fails a madness saving throw, its madness level increases by 1, and the creature immediately suffers the level's effect (as determined by rolling on the Short-Term Madness or Long-Term Madness tables on page 258-259 in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, as appropriate). Indefinite madness for Expeditions adventures instead uses the table below. When the effect ends, the creature's madness level doesn't change. Any time the creature's madness level increases, it suffers the effect of the new level. Madness is further explained at <http://dndadventurersleague.org/the-safety-of-a-shattered-mind/>.

If a creature with level 3 madness fails a madness saving throw, its madness level becomes 1. In this way, characters can potentially accumulate multiple forms of madness. If a character accumulates a form of madness that they are already suffering from, reroll until a new result is reached.

Bouts of short- and long-term madness can be cured as described in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*. Given the demonic source of the madness, *remove curse* and *dispel evil* are also effective as cures. A *greater restoration* spell or more powerful magic is needed to cure indefinite madness and also resets a creature's madness level to 0.

In adventures set during *Rage of Demons*, madness is measured in three levels:

## MADNESS LEVEL

Level	Effect
1	Short-term madness (lasts 1d10 minutes)
2	Long-term madness (lasts 1d10 x 10 minutes)
3	Indefinite madness (lasts until cured)

## INDEFINITE MADNESSES OF GRAZ'ZT

Graz'zt influence on the region has manifested itself in the different forms of madness that characters may develop. Upon reaching madness level 3, instead of rolling on the Indefinite Madness table on page 260 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, roll on the following table and the character gains the madness listed below. Have the player note it on his or her character sheet.

If the roll results in a madness already possessed by the character, reroll until a new result is reached.

**01-20 Narcissism:** "There is nothing in existence that is more important than me."

**21-40 Megalomania:** "Anyone who doesn't do exactly what I say does not deserve to live."

**41-60 Infatuation:** "I will not rest until I have made someone else mine and doing so is more important to me than my own life or the lives of others."

**61-80 Hedonism:** "My own pleasure is of paramount importance. Everything else, including social graces, is a triviality."

**81-100 Abomination:** "The mores of society are a lie, meant to shackle free thinking people. I will revel in that which others find shocking or disgusting to demonstrate my rebellion."

## APPROPRIATE DESCRIPTIONS

This adventure involves descriptions of Graz'zt the Demon Lord of Hedonism and his minions. Graz'zt in part 6 and his daughter the Mother and its spawn in Part 4 and 5 stretch the bounds of good taste. The things their insanity drives them to do may be disturbing. **In describing the extent of these debasements, consider your players and their comfort level. Do not venture into inappropriate territory at their expense.**



## PART 1: ON THE EVE OF WAR

Before beginning this part, the characters should have completed Gathering Forces (see Overview) to determine how many units of mercenaries they have brought with them, if any.

No one group in the Moonsea is large enough or powerful enough to dare to assault the fire giants and their demon allies squatting in conquered Maerimydra, but the efforts of adventurers and the Factions have assembled a force that is just large enough to try. The characters have arrived in Sporedome, from where the attack is to be launched, as a briefing is about to begin.

Around the fungal amphitheater of Sporedome, a myriad of faces are engaged in dozens of furious conversations. Excitement wars with panic and those not seated pace back and forth. Secretive drow mix with tall mushroom men while stout dwarves talk with humans wearing helmets capped with red feathers. A little girl in a dirty dress sits alone atop a tall mushroom, her arm around a black goat with milky white eyes.

An elven woman approaches the center of the gathering and raises her arms towards the cavern roof above. A silence magically descends and the assemblage looks towards the woman on the floor. Elanil Elassidil, called the Moonsilver Herald by some, lowers her arms and addresses the crowd.

"We are about to undertake the largest military operation in recent memory. The danger posed by the Dark Prince and his followers in Maerimydra has reached a critical stage. Our allies from Szith Morcane have provided us with the location and avenues of approach to the city deep in the Underdark and we have recently learned that Hledh Hellspawn, the leader of the fire giant and demonic forces is present in the city preparing for their invasion of the sunlit realms. This leaves their command structure vulnerable to attack and gives us the possibility to end the threat once and for all.

Teams will deploy from Sporedome to three advance positions where we will set up three separate bases for attacks into the city. At the same time, we will require two other small teams to scout alternate approaches to the enemy forces and gather local allies. Using any gathered intelligence, we will launch our attack and drive our forces into the city until the threat has ended.

To this we are committed. There is no going back now. We mobilize in an hour. Find your teams and make your preparations."

The characters have not yet been assigned to a team and given their varied talents, there is some leeway for them to choose which effort suits their skill set best. Elanil approaches the characters as the assembly starts to break up. She greets the characters and thanks them for joining the effort. She then asks the characters to consider which team they would like to join with the expectation that given their skills and mobility they are likely to participate in completing two objectives before the attack begins in earnest. The characters are then deployed as one of the advance teams inserted behind the enemy lines.

### OBJECTIVES

The following objectives are possible areas that the assembled forces are considering targeting to prepare for the assault. The characters are welcome to interact with the various groups present to determine how each plans to assist. **These objectives are also summarized in Player Handout 2 for the players to consider. Also give the players Player Handout 3 so they can consider what they might do after these objectives.** Each objective has an impact in later rounds that may not be readily apparent to the players.

- **Northern Forward Base.** In preparation for the attack on the Northern Gate the characters are asked to approach a nearby cave and eliminate any giants or demons present before they can warn the city of the alliance's approach. Since this path passes near Szith Morcane and it is the main approach to the city, scouts have warned to expect this cave to be well defended.
- **Eastern Forward Base.** In preparation for the attack on the Eastern Gate the characters are asked to approach a nearby cave to set up a secondary base. This approach is particularly poorly drained, and mud and water should be expected. It is also closest to the Slave District, so it is likely to find humanoids in the area.
- **Western Forward Base.** In preparation for the attack on the Western Gate the characters are asked to approach a nearby cave to set up a secondary base. This is the least used approach into the city and no information has been retrieved from these tunnels. All of the scouts sent to this area have not returned.

- **Fortify Gains.** The characters, once capturing one of the Forward Base positions, fortify it. This involves not only building defenses but holding the position while doing so. This objective can only be attempted after someone has taken forward base, so it must be the second objective attempted, whether captured by the characters or the NPCs.
- **The Underdoor.** The various shifts in the rivers and tunnels over the last few years have revealed another possible approach. The Lake of Blood, just passed the Eastern Gate is fed by two underground rivers. It is possible that access to one of them may have been discovered. Those accepting this mission are to attempt to take advantage of this newly discovered river and scout its length to determine if indeed it is one of those that feeds the Lake of Blood. If so, it can potentially provide a secret way into the city for spies or saboteurs. This objective also contains a special mission for the Emerald Enclave. Parties considering this objective are encouraged to complete it second since they may be inside the city when the attack begins.
- **The Friendly Dead.** Nearby is a cavern known as the Cave of Black Whispers where a large group of dwarves were once surprised and slaughtered by the drow of Szith Morcane. The cavern has since been haunted by their dead. It is possible that the dead might be put to a useful purpose and turned against the giants if they can be coaxed from their tombs. This objective also contains a special mission for the Order of the Gauntlet. Parties considering this objective are encouraged to complete it first since they would otherwise be far from the city when the attack begins.

#### ROLEPLAYING ELANIL ELASSIDIL

Elanil Elassidil resides in Elventree, where she has the title of Moonsilver Herald, and is a bard of some renown in the area around Hillsfar. Elanil is confident in her ability and strong in purpose. She is not afraid to give her opinion on a subject, even when not asked. She is quick to give historical detail to back her opinions and hard on those that do not back their opinions with similar evidence.

If things get too heated, Elanil is prepared with a song to lighten the mood and make all forget there was a disagreement. She has become the face of the nonhuman rebellion against Hillsfar oppression as well as a public agent of the Harpers.

Once Elanil has finished giving the characters a summary of their options, she encourages them to speak to any of the other groups present and make their choice. The primary goal of this encounter should be for the characters to familiarize themselves with their allies and their capabilities and then to take some ownership of the battle plan by choosing those objectives they feel are most important. They should also begin assigning any mercenary units they brought with them.

#### WHO'S IN ATTENDANCE?

The number of NPCs in attendance in this briefing is staggering. Many of the NPCs that the characters may have encountered in this and previous seasons have arrived for one of the largest operations in recent memory, and as famous heroes the characters are in the middle of it. If there is a memorable NPC that a character wishes to seek out, the DM is welcome add them to the gathering if appropriate.

What follows is a list of NPCs/groups that are assumed to be here. If you have run previous adventures for the majority of players at your table and events played out differently, some groups may be missing. If you are running this adventure after the Critical Events are released for Season Three, you may also choose to remove those groups which did not ally to join in the attack (if any):

**Elanil Elassidil/Hillsfar Rebellion:** The Moonsilver Herald is the face of the recent rebellion against the Hillsfar government of First Lord Torin Nomerthal. Primarily based around throwing down the Great Law of Humanity, they have recently succeeded in helping to install a new government. Now the various guerilla fighters, primarily woodsmen from Elventree and farmers turned revolutionaries from the lands around surrounding Hillsfar, have followed Elanil into the dark in defense of their homes. They are buoyed by their success and are just beginning to realize how in over their heads they really are. For the pre-assault objectives, the rebels are considering aiding in setting up the Western Forward Base.

**First Lord Vuhm Yestral/Government of New Hillsfar:** Former Guard Commandant of the Red Plumes, Vuhm was an opponent of the Great Law of Humanity and was responsible for the construction of the defenses that now guard access to the surface from the Underdark at both The Waydown and Yúlash. When the rebellion made their attempt on Torin Nomerthal, it was he that they turned to. As one of the leaders of the Red Plumes they hoped his installation would bring stability to the region. Vuhm is not comfortable in his new role as the leader of Hillsfar, but he knows that his fledgling government won't last for long if the forces of Maerimydra are not contained. So he is personally leading a large force of Red Plumes, among the only professional soldiers present. For the pre-assault objectives, the Red Plumes are considering aiding in setting up the Northern Forward Base.

**Saradreza Oussmtor/Faithful of Eilistraee:** The scantily clad Sword Dancers of the good-aligned drow goddess of song, beauty, swordsmanship, hunting and moonlight stand out among the other groups. While drow, these beautiful women are friendly and welcoming of everyone. They see the chance to retake Maerimydra and the aiding the drow of Szith Morcane as a chance to rally drow with no interest in remaining under the shackles of Lloth's tyranny. The high priestess of their small circle is Saradreza Oussmtor. She is charismatic and warm-hearted and views this opportunity for cooperation as the best chance to spread their goddess's message. For the pre-assault objectives, the Faithful are considering aiding in convincing the Friendly Dead to ally in the attack.

**Solom Ned'razak/Drow of Szith Morcane:** The archmage of Szith Morcane is the leader of those drow whose ancestral home was Maerimydra. These drow have been on the front lines against the fire giants for generations, and they have suffered the most since the coming of Graz'zt. Solom and his drow see this alliance as their best chance of liberating their lands and have no choice but to work with those who have joined the cause. The drow of Szith Morcane are not particularly religious and are dominated by drow warriors and wizards. They have trouble trusting the Faithful of Eilistraee and have reinforced their number with a squad of Nycaloth mercenaries. For the pre-assault objectives, the drow are considering aiding in setting up the Eastern Forward Base.

**Sovereign Agaricus/Myconids of Sporedome:** The myconids of Sporedome are led by the largest of their kind, Sovereign Agaricus. While not particularly aggressive, the myconids are a key component of the alliance. Not only is their home the staging point for the offensive, but the mushroom men are experts in the native plants of the Underdark, one of which, Braincap, is key to resisting the madness inducing energies emanating from Maerimydra. While not likely to play an integral part in the fighting, the operation would fail without their provisions and their defensive positions. For the pre-assault objectives, the myconids are considering aiding in reinforcing the bases.

**Huum/Mindflayers of Ryxyg:** The mind flayers of Ryxyg are a wild card in the alliance. Led by Huum who is acting as a proxy for Ryxyg's Elder Brain and who is a rival of Solom Ned'razak, the mind flayers are particularly resistant to the madness infecting the Underdark and their formidable mental powers allow them to confuse or control giants. **Huum is particularly interested in Elisande and her goat, as he cannot read, or even detect, the presence of their minds.** For the pre-assault objectives, the mind flayers are considering aiding in mapping the Underdoor.

**Elisande and her Blind Goat:** Elisande is a 14-year old orphan human girl and troublemaker from a disturbing, isolated island village in the Stormy Bay. Her years of malnourishment make her smaller than other children her age and she is frequently mistaken for a younger age. She is fascinated with outsiders still, despite over a year of wanderings beyond her village. She has few morals and due to her upbringing, no true concept of right or wrong. Elisande was encountered in several previous adventures, always managing to be wherever major events were about to befall the people of the Moonsea. Elisande is always encountered in the presence of a black furred Blind Goat, which for some inexplicable reason, seems able to see certain characters which it tends to follow; completely nonplussed by things that would bother a normal animal. It seems especially attracted to those who are "pure of heart." While nonthreatening, most find the goat a bit creepy. No one in the alliance knows Elisande or why she is present. Elisande has no plans for the pre-assault objectives and assumes that she will find something that entertains her but she has no interest in whatever the characters decide to do.

## DEVELOPMENTS

It is possible that the characters may have hard feelings towards some of the NPCs who are present but there isn't much they can do about it. Every individual is needed for the attack to come and if the characters should become confrontational, Elanil quickly intervenes and suggests that they stay far apart on the upcoming battlefield. This encounter should not devolve into a combat.

**Faction Contacts.** Each of the Moonsea faction representatives (listed below) is present in the mustering area and are available if characters would like advice or require more explanation about their special mission (If for some reason **Handout 1** has not yet been given out to the appropriate characters do so now). If the characters are unsure how to proceed, their faction contact makes a suggestion as to where they might direct their effort based on the factions's goals. The DM should make it clear that the factions do NOT require their members to follow their NPCs on the objectives they plan to attack. If the characters do not agree how to proceed, the faction representatives might help mediate disagreements. If there is confusion, the DM should also clarify that secret missions are not mutually exclusive.

- **Order of the Gauntlet: Zern Xerkstil (male half-orc).** The Friendly Dead
- **Harpers: Olisara Lightsong (female elf).** Western Forward Base
- **Emerald Enclave: Seranolla the Whisperer (female gnome).** The Underdoor
- **Lords Alliance: Dornal Whitebeard (male dwarf).** Northern Forward Base
- **Zhentarim: Chaab (male human).** Eastern Forward Base

**Supplies.** Before the characters head out, they are given the following items which they may keep:

- One *+1 short bow* and a quiver of nonmagical arrows
- One *+1 quarterstaff*
- One *scroll of lesser restoration*
- One *potion of greater healing* per character
- One *enhanced braincap mushroom* per character

These are uncertified magic items awarded at the end of the adventure. Any character may keep the item and writes it on their logsheet as normal. It cannot be sold or traded. The weapons are all marked with the symbol of House Gos of Mulmaster but are otherwise unremarkable.

#### **ENHANCED BRAINCAP MUSHROOM**

Each character is given one small, enhanced braincap mushroom and told the following information. When consumed or administered to someone else as an action, the mushroom acts as a *greater restoration* (unlike an untreated braincap which only reduces the character's madness score). Characters that consume an enhanced braincap also receive advantage on the next Wisdom (Madness) saving throw that they make within the next hour. The braincap mushrooms are potent, however, and if you consume more than one per 24 hours, you immediately gain 1d4 levels of madness (no saving throw). The enhanced mushrooms lose their potency when the adventure ends.

## WHERE HEROES DO NOT TREAD: PART 1

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The characters should assign their mercenaries to those objectives they do not plan to attempt in Part 2. Each player chooses where their own mercenaries go, but they may discuss it with the rest of the players however the DM should not allow this disbursement process to last more than a few minutes.

Each character has a unit of mercenaries equal to the number of renown earned during Gathering Forces at the beginning of the adventure. They may split their units as they like.

For example, Fortifying Gains is a DC 15 objective. Sara's character spent 1,000 gp hiring mercenaries, so she has 2 renown worth of troops which she sent on that mission. Dave's character spent 45 downtime days, so he also has 2 renown worth of troops, but he chose to send half on Fortifying Gains and the other half on the Underdoor objective.

How this affects the outcome of Part 2 is further described in and the end of that encounter in Where Heroes Do Not Tread, Part 2.

## PART 2: INITIAL ASSAULT

**This part contains six different encounters of which the party should attempt only two**, but which two is up to the players to decide. The party is strongly encouraged not to split up. The difficulty does not change due to the decreased number of characters present. If the players are worried that some objectives might fail, the DM is encouraged to describe the large number of capable operatives in each group as well as encourage the characters to allocate any mercenaries they hired, or allies they brought, to those objectives that concern them. **The characters may take a short rest, but not a long rest, between each objective, though they should be warned that it may give their foes more time to prepare.** If the characters decide to short rest, remove any allied help. The help has instead been diverted to a different battle and are not available. If the characters decide to long rest, they do so instead of attempting a second objective. They may not long rest after the second objective.

For each objective, there is a small group of allied forces accompanying the characters, the rest of that group's forces being allocated elsewhere instead. They hang back and let the characters, obviously more powerful and experienced heroes, take the lead. They do NOT serve as trap detectors or disposable fodder. In addition to the unique benefit they provide for each objective, the DM should describe them as being helpful as appropriate. If the characters are being overwhelmed, they might stabilize unconscious characters, pull them from combat, use the Help action in combat, or otherwise provide general aid. The DM should use them to advance the entertainment of the encounter and not overshadow the importance of the party's actions. The characters are the heroes of this story.

At the end of this part there is a summary of what occurred at those objectives where the characters were not present.

### REGIONAL EFFECTS OF GRAZ'ZT'S PRESENCE

The region containing Graz'zt's lair is warped by his magic, creating one or more of the following effects:

- Flat surfaces within 1 mile of the lair that are made of stone or metal become highly reflective, as though polished to a shine. These surfaces become supernaturally mirror-like. This applies throughout Maerimydra.
- Wild beasts within 6 miles of the lair break into frequent conflicts and coupling, mirroring the behavior that occurs during their mating seasons. This applies to every encounter with the exception of The Friendly Dead.
- If a humanoid spends at least 1 hour within 1 mile of the lair, that creature must succeed on a DC 23 Wisdom saving throw or descend into a madness determined by the Madness of Graz'zt table. A creature that succeeds on this saving throw can't be affected by this regional effect again for 24 hours. Have the characters make this saving throw when they long rest before Part 6.

### FIENDBORNE FIRE GIANTS

All the fire giants in Maerimydra are fiendborne, infused with the blood of Hledh Hellspawn. Aside from making them look rather scary, their heritage renders them immune to poison and the poisoned condition. In addition to this, they gain the ability to cast *darkness* innately 1/day. They gain blindsight 60 ft. Finally, the fiendborne trait also grants them the proficiency in Abyssal and some minor cosmetic features, examples of which include:

- Leathery wings (too small to fly with)
- Horns
- Extra eyes
- Extra fingers
- A long tail

The mechanical effects have already been included in the appropriate stat blocks.

## NORTHERN FORWARD BASE

As your information suggested, the cave is not empty. The cave is little more than a widened area of the tunnel and your foes have erected a wall that does not quite reach the ceiling. The wall is made of mortared stone with twisted and sharp bits of rusted metal studded into it. A thick iron gate provides a passage through, but two demonic faces forged of red hot iron hang on the wall, flanking the gate.

Flickering firelight dances off the cavern walls and shadows move with purpose, suggesting there is more than one enemy behind the wall. You can smell roasting meat, even at a distance.

The demon gate is guarded by two **fiendborne fire giants** that are sitting with their backs to the wall, a large pile of rocks for throwing and a large brass gong nearby. They have a bonfire burning and are roasting a rothë when the characters arrive and thus are not initially aware of the danger. They rely on the demonic masks to warn them. Both of the giants wear an unholy symbol of Graz'zt; a black six-fingered hand.

As soon as the giants are alerted to an attack, they start by throwing rocks at obvious enemies and taking three-quarters cover (+5 AC and Dexterity saving throws) behind the wall. They rely on the masks to provide additional ranged support. If the characters breach the wall, or the giants are forced into melee, one of the giants rings the gong as an action before fighting.

#### ADJUSTING THE ENCOUNTER

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter. These adjustments are not cumulative:

- **Very weak party:** Replace the 2 fire giants with 2 fire giant whelps.
- **Weak party:** Replace 1 fire giant with 1 fire giant whelp.
- **Strong party:** Add 15 hp and 1 AC to both giants. Increase the masks to hit by 1 and damage by 3.
- **Very strong party:** Replace 1 fire giant with 2 fire giant whelps. Increase the masks to hit by 2 and damage by 6.

#### GENERAL FEATURES

This section describes any features that are common throughout the cavern.

**Ceilings.** The ceiling is irregular, but averages 20-25 feet above the floor.

**Light.** The entire area is lit by the bonfire and the glowing demonic masks.

**Bonfire.** The bonfire provides bright light. Anyone that enters or ends their turn in the fire takes 18 (5d6) fire damage.

**Demonic Masks.** The demonic masks are larger than a man is tall, and fused with the wall. A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check recognizes that the demonic masks are some sort of magical sensor and may be animated in some way. The masks are immune to damage unless dispelled or otherwise disabled. Touching a mask causes 7 (2d6) fire damage. The masks growl loudly if any non-demon approaches within 40-feet of the gate (treat as *detect magic* except that it targets living non-demon creatures) and then they begin to attack. Upon animating, all that can see and hear them must attempt a DC 10 Wisdom saving throw or gain 1 level of Madness. On Initiative 20, each mask targets a non-demon not wearing a symbol of Graz'zt with an energy ray (*Ranged Spell Attack*: +7 to hit, range 30 ft., one target. *Hit*: 10

(3d6) necrotic damage) and those that are hit are outlined with red flames that do no damage but give disadvantage to Stealth checks and the victim cannot benefit from *invisibility*. A successful DC 13 Charisma saving throw negates the outlining flames but not the damage. A demonic mask might be deactivated by a *dispel magic* (as a 5th-level spell) or similar magic, or by carving it from the wall by destroying its 5'x5' section (see below).

**Gate.** The gate is made of heavy iron bars that are held shut with a massive lock forged in the likeness of a screaming fire giant. It takes a successful DC 20 Dexterity (Thieves Tools) to unlock the gate and a successful DC 15 Strength check just to move the doors when they are unlocked. The lock can be forced with successful DC 25 Strength check or broken (AC 19, hp 25, Damage Threshold 25 (*DMG* p. 247), immune to psychic and poison damage, resistant to piercing and slashing)

**Red Plume Support.** A group of Red Plumes and an acolyte of Tempus from Hillsfar named Landra have joined the characters. They are no match for the giants, so they try to provide support. At the beginning of each round, every foe is subject to one heavy crossbow attack (*Ranged weapon attack*: +2 to hit; 5 (1d10) piercing damage). The acolyte has two 1st-level spell slots with a +3 spellcasting modifier and has prepared *bleed* and *healing word*.

**Wall.** The 15-foot tall wall is made of mortared stone (AC 17, hp 54 per 5'x5' section, Damage Threshold 20, immune to psychic and poison damage, resistant to piercing) studded with jagged pieces of iron. Due to the protruding metal it is easy to climb (DC 10 Strength (Athletics)), but is dangerous. Anyone climbing the wall must succeed in a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or cut themselves for 10 (2d6+3) points of piercing damage and then further succeed in a DC 15 Constitution saving throw against the *bloodfire dust* that coats the metal. Those that fail are poisoned for 1 minute and suffer 22 (4d10) fire damage as their blood begins to boil. Those that succeed take half damage and are not poisoned. A character can recognize that the spikes are covered in dust and not rust with a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check and identify the poison for what it is with a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Nature) check or a *detect poison and disease* spell.

#### DEVELOPMENTS

If only one giant remains conscious and it is below half hit points, it surrenders.

If one of the giants managed to ring the gong and the characters stay in the same position for the Fortifying

Gains objective, the enemy forces are alerted to their presence. See Fortifying Gains for the effects.

If the characters manage to capture one of the giants alive, they can be forced into talking with a successful DC 15 Charisma (Intimidation) check. They reluctantly impart the following:

- All of the fire giants in the city are fiendborne and share the blood of the Dark Prince.
- The giants live primarily in the northern portion of the city, just south of the mushroom fields. The giants did not know the characters were coming.
- The slaves are doing something under the direction of some of the demons in Six-Fingered Courtyard. The giants do not know exactly what, but it has something to do with spreading the hedonistic doctrine of Graz'zt.
- Graz'zt and the giant queen Hledh Hellspawn are in Castle Maerimydra doing some sort of ritual with many of the city's demons and drow slaves.

#### TREASURE

The fire giants (or fire giant whelps) carry 500 gp in coin each.

### EASTERN FORWARD BASE

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The approach becomes muddy long before you can see the cavern. Pools of water sprouting fungus and a few large rocks are scattered throughout with a narrow dry path that moves lazily through the center. Poles sporting dim lanterns mark its passage and provide some amount of light in the otherwise dark cave.

At the far end of the cave, a heavily armored giant sits on boulder, slumped forward, apparently asleep.

Maerimydran forces have set up an ambush in this cave and await anyone foolish enough to enter. The sleeping fire giant is actually a trapped fake (see General Features below) and part of an ambush. A **fiendborne fire giant whelp** hides within one of the fake boulders, watching over the humanoid slaves. While an **orc war chief**, **eye of Gruumsh**, and **2 orogs** have buried themselves in the mud in the mushroom thickets. The group waits until they are spotted or their victims have moved into the center of the room and then they spring their trap.

The orogs move forward to engage the enemy while the eye of Gruumsh provides support by casting *bless* or *spiritual weapon*. The orc warchief uses *battlecry* when at least three allies might benefit. If the fire giant is overlooked, he rushes to the rear of the characters and try to put down lightly armored spellcasters. If he is discovered, he joins the orogs. If it looks like the group is going to be overwhelmed, both the orc warchief and the fire giant whelp have hunting horns which they sound to warn the city.

The orcs fight to the death, but if left without allies, the fire giant whelp can be made to surrender.

#### ADJUSTING THE ENCOUNTER

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter. These adjustments are not cumulative:

- **Very weak party:** Replace the fire giant whelp with 1 orc war chief.
- **Weak party:** Remove 1 orog.
- **Strong party:** Replace 1 orog with 1 orc war chief.
- **Very strong party:** Replace the 1 orog with 1 fire giant whelp.

#### GENERAL FEATURES

This section describes any features that are common throughout the cavern.

**Ceilings.** The ceiling is irregular, but averages 15-20 feet above the floor.

**Light.** The lanterns have but a few smoldering coals and provide only dim light along within 10-feet of the path (disadvantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely in sight). The rest of the cavern is dark (fail Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely in sight unless the character has darkvision, and then the check is made at disadvantage).

**Drow Support.** A group of drow and an apprentice wizard from Szith Morcane named Alexania have joined the characters. They are no match for the orcs, so they try to provide support. At the beginning of each round every foe is subject to one hand crossbow attack (*Ranged weapon attack*: +4 to hit; 5 (1d6+2) piercing damage). The apprentice has two 1st-level spell slots with a +3 spellcasting modifier and has prepared *fog cloud* and *magic missile*.

**Fake Boulder.** One of the large boulders is actually painted canvas over a frame built of harden mushroom "wood". A DC 17 Intelligence (Investigation) check notices two tiny (peep) holes in the side of it (remember to account for vision modifiers). The giant inside can toss the fake boulder aside as a bonus action.

**Sleeping "Giant."** The sleeping giant is a set of old fire giant plate armor filled with sand bags inside to prop it up. From a distance it is quite convincing but the ruse does not stand up to close up scrutiny should a character move adjacent to it. More importantly, a symbol of Graz'zt has been painted on the chest. It functions as the explosive runes version of *glyph of warding* (DC 15 Wisdom, 5d8 thunder), set to trigger when a living creature moves within 20-feet of it without saying "*Hail the six-fingered prince,*" in any language.

**Mushroom Thicket.** The mushrooms are non-toxic but provide advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks. Further burying oneself in the mud gives an additional +5 bonus to Stealth skill checks.

**Water Covered Pit.** There are several 20-foot deep pits under the water. The orcs and giant know where they are, so they avoid them but if a character should move through an area containing a pit, they must succeed in a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or fall into the pit. Those that fail by 5 or more do not successfully hold their breath before going under. To make matters worse, the orcs have filled the pits with nets, tangles of rope and barbed hooks. Those falling into the pit are restrained as per a net and take 10 (4d4 +4) piercing damage every time they fall in or attempt to free themselves.

**Water and Mud.** The areas of mud and water off the path are difficult terrain.

## DEVELOPMENTS

If the fire giant and either the war chief or the eye of Gruumsh are unconscious or dead, the remaining forces flee. If the fire giant is by himself and below half hit points, he surrenders.

If one of the monsters managed to sound a hunting horn and the characters stay in the same position for the Fortifying Gains objective, the enemy forces are alerted to their presence. See Fortifying Gains for the effects.

If the characters manage to capture one of the orcs or the giant alive, they can be forced into talking with a successful DC 15 Charisma (Intimidation) check. They can reluctantly impart the following:

- All of the fire giants in the city are fiendborne and share the blood of the Dark Prince.
- The slaves live primarily in the southeastern part of the city.
- The characters have taken the city by surprise (unless the alarm has been previously sounded).
- Some demons gathered many of the drow slaves about a day ago and took them into Castle Maerimydra.

## TREASURE

The fire giant wears a ring set with a large ruby worth 1,000 gp.

## WESTERN FORWARD BASE

The walls of this cavern are polished to a mirror sheen and stalagmites and stalactites ablaze with purple and green fire cover its floor and ceiling. With every surface a mirror, it is hard to tell which flickering stone is real and which is a reflection.

This cavern has become the hunting ground of a band of **3 umber hulks** that have been attracted here by the mirror sheen created by Graz'zt's nearby presence. For the last two weeks, the umber hulks have picked off anyone that has come or gone to Maerimydra from this rarely used approach. Given the infrequency of prey, they are suitably hungry.

The umber hulks are hiding in the walls and waiting for their *tremorsense* to detect the approach of a creature into the room. When a creature moves within range of one of them, it bursts forward and attacks, causing the others to follow suit. Characters adjacent to that area an umber hulk bursts out from take 18 (5d6) points of slashing damage from flying pieces of the mirror-like rock. A successful DC 15 Dexterity saving throw halves this damage. The umber hulks have been driven into a frenzy of madness by the demon lord's proximity, so they fight to the death.

## ADJUSTING THE ENCOUNTER

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter. These adjustments are not cumulative:

- **Very weak party:** Decrease each umber hulk's hp by 30 and decrease the DC of their *confusing gaze* by 1.
- **Weak party:** Decrease each umber hulk's hp by 15 and decrease the DC of their *confusing gaze* by 1.
- **Strong party:** Increase each umber hulk's hp by 20 and increase their *claw* damage by 4. Each creature targeted by *confusing gaze* is also targeted by a *dispel magic* (+7 casting ability) at the same time.
- **Very strong party:** Add 1 umber hulk. Increase the DC of their *confusing gaze* by 1 and increase their *claw* damage by 4. Each creature targeted by *confusing gaze* is also targeted by a *dispel magic* (+7 casting ability) at the same time. The *dispel magic* effect targets the creature's highest level active spell.



## GENERAL FEATURES

This section describes any features that are common throughout the cavern.

**Ceilings.** The ceiling is irregular, but averages 15-20 feet above the floor.

**Light.** The faerzress bounces off the reflective surfaces and fills the room with bright light.

**Bones.** The bones of the umber hulk's previous victims are spread over an area in the center of the room. This area is difficult terrain and gives disadvantage to Dexterity (Stealth) checks made to move quietly through the area.

**Faerzress.** In addition to all the effects listed in the sidebar at the beginning of this adventure, the first time in a 24-hour period in which any creature is targeted by *confusing gaze* in this cave must also attempt a Wisdom saving throw equal to the DC of the attack or gain 1 level of madness.

**Rebel Support.** A group of rangers and a druid of Mielikki from Elventree named Semdran have joined the characters. They are no match for the umber hulks, so they try to provide support. At the beginning of each round, every foe is subject to one longbow attack (*Ranged weapon attack*: +4 to hit; 6 (1d8+2) piercing damage). The druid has two 1st-level spell slots with a +3 spellcasting modifier and has prepared *faerie fire* (DC 13) and *healing word*.

**Reflections.** Due to the reflective nature of the room, gaze attacks do not need line of effect. This means averting one's eyes becomes useless, though closing one's eyes is still effective. In addition, any creature can see any other creature within 30 feet itself, regardless of cover or intervening objects, barring effects such as *invisibility*.

## DEVELOPMENTS

If the characters manage to capture one of the umber hulks and manage to speak with it, it is crazed; it wants only to fight or mate, but can be coerced into talking with a successful DC 15 Charisma (Intimidation) check. It can reluctantly impart the following:

- Some of their eggs are sometimes taken by giant spiders which live nearby in the great arena.
- Sometimes prey comes by with boxes of junk. It is pretty to look but does not seem important.
- The umber hulks want to mate and kill!

If the characters choose to do Fortifying Gains from this position, the patrol that arrives is looking into why so many travelers disappear from this tunnel and the DM should automatically treat the alarm as having been sounded. The patrol is actually looking for the umber hulks, but killing the characters will do just as well.

## TREASURE

The umber hulk's prey carried various coins. Digging through the bone pile yields 1,000 gp in coin and small gems, some of which is contained in the broken remains of ornate wooden boxes.

## FORTIFY GAINS

If the characters choose to attempt this objective, it should be their second choice after one of the forward bases has been captured.

Shambling out of the distance, the slow moving mushroom men of Sporedome wave you a greeting. Spores begin to fill the air as they offer their thanks.

The characters have one hour since their last encounter (do not tell the players how long they have). During that time, the myconids begin setting up tents and bring forth supplies. The characters may either take a short rest or aid in the construction of defenses. The DM should adjust the map accordingly to account for the character's actions during this time. Characters might cast glyphs in passageways or build embankments from mushrooms or rocks. Allow the players to be creative.

After the hour has passed, **1 cambion** and **2 drow elite warriors** come to inspect the area on a routine patrol if the alarm was not sounded or in response to the alarm. If the alarm has been sounded, the patrol has used consumables to prepare and the DM should modify the creatures as listed in the sidebar.

### ALARM SOUNDED

With all the wandering monsters of the Underdark, the alarm is sounded frequently, so a patrol is not as quick to respond in the hedonistically lazy city of Maerimydra as it would otherwise be. However, if the patrol knows to expect possible trouble, make the following modifications.

- The cambion (or succubus) has used a *scroll of aid* (+5 hp), a *scroll of see invisibility*, and a *scroll of longstrider* (+10' movement) before arriving. Just before approaching, he drinks a *potion of invisibility*.
- The drow elite warriors (and/or ologs) have had a *scroll of longstrider* (+10' movement) and a *scroll of aid* (+5 hp) used on them before arriving by the cambion. The ologs, if present, have also coated their weapon with basic poison (DC 10 Constitution, 1d4 poison damage). Just before approaching, they all drink *potions of invisibility*.
- The cambion has a *scroll of cloudkill* which he uses in the first round. If the party is Very Weak, he has no scroll at all. If the party is Very Strong, the scroll is instead a *scroll of incendiary cloud*. These scrolls are not included in the treasure and cannot be taken.

The patrol approaches under stealth as best as they are capable. If the ologs are present, the rest of the patrol is careful to approach separately as they know the ologs are much more likely to be spotted and the cambion has no compunction about using the disposable olog slaves to draw the attacks of potential foes. Be sure to account for any traps or defenses the characters may have prepared. The patrol seeks to do maximum damage from surprise, dropping or crippling one or two party members. The ologs (if present) are crazed with blood thirst and fight to the death, but drow break if the cambion (or succubus) falls and it is clear that they cannot win. If possible the cambion (or succubus) flies away as soon as the drow and ologs fall.

Those that escape immediately flee back to Maerimydra in order to raise the alarm there.

### ADJUSTING THE ENCOUNTER

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter. These adjustments are not cumulative:

- **Very weak party:** Replace 2 drow elite warriors with 1 olog.
- **Weak party:** Replace the cambion with a succubus.
- **Strong party:** Add 2 ologs. All the drow have drow poison on their weapons (DC 13 Con, poisoned 1 hour, fail by 5+ unconscious 1 hour).
- **Very strong party:** Add 2 drow elite warriors. All the drow have drow poison on their weapons (DC 13 Con, poisoned 1 hour, fail by 5+ unconscious 1 hour).

### GENERAL FEATURES

With the exception of the support provided, the general features for this encounter remain the same as they were for the previous encounter in this location modified by any traps or defenses the characters create.

**Myconid Support.** A group of myconids from Sporedome have joined the characters (replacing any previous support). They are no match for the patrol, so they try to provide support. Three times during the combat but only once per round, the myconids can rush one foe on the ground and target the enemy with pacification spores. The enemy must succeed in a DC 11 Constitution saving throw or be stunned for 1 minute. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. If the myconids stun one foe, they run away.

### DEVELOPMENTS

If the drow (and ologs if present) are defeated, the cambion flees. If cambion dies and have the remaining creatures are defeated, the others surrender.

The ologs rage with insanity and cannot comprehensibly provide any useful information. If the characters manage to capture the cambion or one of the drow, they can be forced into talking with a successful DC 15 Charisma (Intimidation) check. They can reluctantly impart the following:

- Matliedun the cambion is master of the Undying Temple. He is blood of the Dark Prince and works directly under Squallocks the Vrock (adjust demon type for strength of party) advisor to Graz'zt.
- The drow are concerned that many of the drow slaves were taken by demons into Castle Maerimydra about a day ago. The slaves were those who were not warriors and they have not been seen since.
- If the alarm has been sounded, the patrol tells the characters that all of Maerimydra knows they are coming and rise against them. (A DC 15 Wisdom (Insight) suggests that it is a half-truth at best.)

### TREASURE

The cambion has 5 sapphires worth 200 gp each.

## THE UNDERDOOR

A warm torrent of water rushes past a rent in the cavern floor. Floating in the air next to you, one of the mind flayers of Ryxyg speaks in your mind. "This may take us to the Lake of Blood. If so, we must know, but to do so we will need to traverse its depths. Can you see in the dark and survive without air?"

If the characters are capable of breathing water, the il-lithid named Vilcuum, allows them their small victory of independence. If they are not, he offers them the support listed below in General Features. Once they are ready, he dives into the river and begins following it in the direction of its current. After swimming with the current for roughly half an hour and finding no diversions or pockets of air, the characters come to large underwater cavern.

Following the current drags you around a corner and the passage opens up suddenly into a dimly lit cavern. The water here tastes foul.

A whirl of bubbles descends into a crack in the floor to one side amidst a cluster of bricks and shattered statues. A pillar holds up the ceiling with carved entrances that mark it as the ruin of a former drow enclave. The shimmer of faerzress dances along its surface as five humanoid figures swim out of the pillar.

A voice echoes in your mind so loudly that blood drips from your nose "Welcome all who would trespass!"

Vilcuum stops with a frantic look, "No, it can't be."

The cavern is inhabited by **Nevik'Dethig** (an **aboleth**) and his five **orc war chief** slaves. Once an enclave of Maerimydra, the cavern was abandoned when changes in the underground river caused it to flood. Nevik'Dethig has recently moved into this area following voices he hears, whispers of Graz'zt's madness. While not insane himself, the aboleth is interested in the goings on of this clearly powerful creature and has come to investigate. So far he has only claimed a few orc slaves from the city, but eventually he expects to go further and either take Maerimydra or build a stronghold for himself here. For now, he contents himself with this small following.

### ORC WAR CHIEF SLAVES

The aboleth's slaves appear similar to normal orcs with slime-covered skin. All of them suffer from the aboleth's *mucus cloud* and *enslave* abilities. The orcs breathe water, not air, and behave as the aboleth directs. Each uses its spear instead of a great axe so as to avoid penalties for fighting underwater.

The aboleth sends his orc slaves out to confront the characters before they can approach too far into his domain, hoping to determine who they are and from whence they came before he might be forced to slay them. If the characters try to force their way past the orcs, they attack. If a combat ensues, they do not flee but attack to the detriment of their own safety. The aboleth can always get more orcs.

Vilcuum recognizes the minions and lair of an aboleth and is terrified. If asked, he tells the characters that they have stumbled upon the lair of one of the ancient gods of the lake. He suggests they do everything they can to retreat without fighting and give up on their quest. He is however, unwilling to leave by himself.

Nevik'Dethig is inside the pillar when the characters arrive and communicates via telepathy. At first he is curious, though he talks from the perspective of perceived strength, not believing that any lowly humanoids might threaten him. Threats cause him to become unfriendly and eventually hostile. If this occurs, he sends his minions to attack and joins the fray himself. He focuses on the characters and ignores Vilcuum. Use the following when roleplaying this encounter:

- The characters trespass in Nevik'Dethig's domain and he wants to know why they are here and exactly where they come from.
- He knows that the crevasse in the floor does indeed join with a lake in a large cavern filled with demons, drow, and humanoids. His orc slaves were originally from there.
- There are a number of powerful minds in that cave and he is curious about them. They may become rivals of his and he is interested in removing that threat. If the party is interested in using his passage to attack those rivals, he does not aid them in the fight but allows them to pass under two conditions. First, he requires one hundred slaves. These may be taken from the survivors of the city and he does not care what race they are as long as they are not demons or undead. Second, to prove their worth as allies, the characters must defeat his minions. The orcs immediately attack if the characters agree, but Nevik'Dethig creates an illusory duplicate that comes out of the pillar and simply watches.
- If the characters refuse to ally with Nevik'Dethig, he determines he would be better served with them as his slaves rather than letting them go, and so he and his minions attack.

## ADJUSTING THE ENCOUNTER

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter. These adjustments are not cumulative:

- **Very weak party:** Remove 1 orc war chief.
- **Weak party:** Replace 1 orc war chief with 1 orog. The orog uses a spear instead of a great axe, doing 1 less point of damage.
- **Strong party:** Remove 2 orc war chief. Add 1 fiendborne fire giant whelp that uses a spear doing 1 less point of damage.
- **Very strong party:** Add 1 orc war chief and 1 fiendborne fire giant whelp that uses a spear doing 1 less point of damage. As a Lair Action, Nevik'Dethig can cast *dispel magic* (+6 casting ability).

## GENERAL FEATURES

This section describes any features that are common throughout the cavern.

**Ceilings.** The ceiling of the underwater cavern is irregular, but averages 40-45 feet above the floor. Should the water be removed from the cave, the rough walls and the enclave walls can be climbed with a successful DC 10 Strength (Athletics) check.

**Light.** The faerzress flickering on the ruins fills the cavern with dim light. Remember that even with darkvision, many characters are not be able to see across the cave.

**Faerzress.** In addition to all the effects listed in the sidebar at the beginning of this adventure, the first time in a 24-hour period in which any creature is targeted by *enslave* while in this cave, they must also attempt a Wisdom saving throw equal to the DC of the attack or gain 1 level of madness. Also, any character taking psychic damage must attempt Wisdom saving throw equal to the DC of the attack or DC 10 if no DC is listed for the effect.

**Mind Flayer Support.** Before entering the water, Vilcuum offers each character a tadpole like creature the size of a pebble and directs them to swallow it. Those that do are affected as per the **grapdol symbiote** sidebar below. During combat, Vilcuum targets one orc with a *mind blast* once every three rounds (DC 15 Intelligence saving throw; save or 22 psychic damage and stun for 1 minute; save again at end of each turn to remove stun). Vilcuum is unwilling to enter melee and is too afraid to target the aboleth. If the characters are having trouble moving around the room, the DM may choose to have Vilcuum use *telekinesis* to move a character 30 feet each round he does not use *mind blast*.

## GRAPDOL SYMBIOTE

The grapdol symbiote makes its way to the host's spinal cord where it burrows in and causes the several changes to occur over five agonizing rounds. First the host sprouts gills and is able to breathe both air and water. Second the host gains telepathy to a range of 60'. Third the host gains 30' of darkvision if it did not already possess darkvision of 30' or further. The symbiote dies after two hours of use and passes through the host's body naturally at which point all three benefits are lost. The symbiotic changes are nonmagical.

**Pillar.** The central pillar once housed several hundred drow, but Nevik'Dethig has smashed out all the walls and most of the floors so that it has only two large rooms stacked on top of each other. Each floor has a balcony with a large doorway that the aboleth can use to enter or exit the pillar. A large hole in the center allows access to both the first and second floors from inside.

**Ruins.** The cavern floor is littered with ruins of walls and broken statues. There are ample places to gain cover or hide.

**Whirlpool.** The crevasse in the floor creates a whirlpool-like effect that draws creatures and loose objects within 15 feet of it down through the crevasse. Those who enter the area must succeed in a DC 15 Strength check or be pulled 15' into the hole. While within the whirlpool creatures gain an extra 5' of movement per 5 feet moved if swimming with the current (down the hole) or lose 5' of movement per 5' moved if swimming against the current (away from the hole). This penalty/bonus is additive with the decrease in movement for those attempting to swim without a swimming speed.

## UNDERWATER COMBAT

The following rules from the *Player's Handbook* apply in this encounter:

- When making a melee weapon attack, a creature that doesn't have a swimming speed (either natural or granted by magic) has disadvantage on the attack roll unless the weapon is a dagger, javelin, shortsword, spear, or trident.
- A ranged weapon attack automatically misses a target beyond the weapon's normal range. Even against a target within normal range, the attack roll has disadvantage unless the weapon is a crossbow, a net, or a weapon that is thrown like a javelin (including a spear, trident, or dart).
- Creatures and objects that are fully immersed in water have resistance to fire damage.

## DEVELOPMENTS

The orcs rage with insanity and cannot comprehensibly provide any useful information. If the characters ally with or manage to capture the aboleth, it might offer useful information with a successful DC 25 Charisma (Persuasion or Intimidation as appropriate) check. It can reluctantly impart the following:

- The waterway connects to a blood fouled lake that radiates necromantic magic. The lake is surrounded by fields of mushrooms and cattle graze around it.
- The lake is between the slave district from which he gathered his orc minions, and the coliseum. The approach to the coliseum is more protected from view by the mushrooms and would be a better place to enter into the city.
- All of the residents are under a magical effect that twists their thoughts. Some of the characters are also touched by the mind that is causing it. Nevik'Dethig would like to know more about it, but has no interest in meeting the entity, as it is clearly immensely powerful.

## SECRET MISSION: EMERALD ENCLAVE

In order to succeed in their secret mission, members of the Emerald Enclave must slay Nevik'Dethig or drive the aboleth off. **Emerald Enclave characters of rank 2** (*Summerstrider*) or higher who complete their secret mission earn **one additional renown point** and should note the **completion of a secret mission** on their adventure logsheet.

## TREASURE

Two of the statuettes are intact and depict a matched set of dancing drow women. They are worth 500 gp each.

## THE FRIENDLY DEAD

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A strong, warm wind blows from the entrance to this cavern. Several natural columns are staggered around deep crevasses in the floor. Piles of bones are alight with the flickering of faerzress, giving them an eerie light. In the center, a particularly large mound of rock and skulls is topped by the T-shaped crossed poles of a typical banner. Instead of an army's colors, a skull is mounted on top.

The large cavern is a maze of deep crevasses and natural columns with heaping piles of bones between them. This is resting place of Vragni Moonsmith (**mummy lord**) and his retinue. Ambushed by drow from Szith Morcane nearly a decade ago, Vragni's body was wrapped in strips of his clan's destroyed war banner and desecrated. Needless to say, the dwarves did not rest lightly. Since that time, they have slaughtered nearly any living creature that attempted to cross the cavern.

When the characters enter, Vragni arises from the bone pile aboard a **nightmare**, with his squire, a **ghost**, at his side. Slowly more and more dwarven specters and **ghosts** rise from the dead and form a shield wall of thousands that surrounds the characters on three sides. It is not intended for the characters to engage these undead, they are there for effect. Vragni announces his presence and demands to know why the drow and their slaves would trespass here. He is hostile and the characters should realize that at any moment the dead might swarm over them. Use the following when roleplaying this encounter:

- The undead dwarves hate drow and have trouble trusting anyone in their presence.
- The dwarves want nothing more than to take their vengeance upon drow. In order to be convinced to join with the characters, they must agree to give them the clerics of Eilistraee to destroy, and then they serve the characters for one day.
- If the characters instead suggest that the drow of Szith Morcane be on the field of the upcoming battle, a DC 20 Charisma (Persuasion) check might convince the undead to fight through the battle to them. They do not agree to work with the allies and they promise to kill everyone and everything they find on their way to wreaking their vengeance. The faithful of Eilistraee are against this plan as they still have hopes of swaying the other drow to their goddess's good ways. They do not stop the characters from making this deal however.
- A successful DC 20 Wisdom (Insight) makes it clear that Vragni's anger is what motivates the dwarves to vengeance and indeed if checked for, the other dwarves do not radiate evil. If freed from his influence, the other dwarves agree to aid the characters in their attack.

## ADJUSTING THE ENCOUNTER

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter. These adjustments are not cumulative:

- **Very weak party:** Remove the nightmare and the ghost.
- **Weak party:** Remove the ghost.
- **Strong party:** Add 2 specters and 1 ghost.
- **Very strong party:** Add 2 ghosts. Add casting *dispel magic* (+6 casting ability) to Vragni's list of Lair Actions.

## GENERAL FEATURES

This section describes any features that are common throughout the location.

**Ceilings.** The ceiling is irregular, but averages 15-20 feet above the floor.

**Light.** The faerzress flickering along the bones fills the cavern with dim light. Remember that even with darkvision, many characters may not be able to see across the cave.

**Bone Pile.** These bones are from a mix of dwarves, drow, animals, and other less pleasant things. Their shifting piles are difficult terrain and those attempt to sneak through them suffer disadvantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks.

**Cairn.** The large skull and rock pile in the center of the room is home to Vragni's desecrated mortal remains. As long as his skull remains perched atop the poles, undead within 60-feet of it gain advantage on saving throws against attempts to Turn Undead. A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Religion) check notices the desecration emanating from the skull. The skull can be destroyed with 15 points of damage (immune to poison and psychic) or can simply be knocked to the ground with an action.

**Columns.** The naturally occurring columns are large enough to hide behind or seeking cover. Their rough surface can be climbed with a successful DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check.

**Crevasse.** These rents in the stone floor are 30-feet deep and can be climbed with a successful DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check.

**Eilistraeen Support.** A group of clerics of Eilistraee led by a priestess named Oxania has joined the characters. Describe the clerics as using their abilities against additional swarms of undead. At the end of the first round, one cleric targets the noncorporeal undead attacking the characters (if present) with a DC 13 Turn Undead. They are unwilling to enter melee and are too afraid to target the mummy lord. At the end of the second round, and at the end of every thereafter, one character (DM's choice as to who needs it most) receives a *healing word* that cures 5 hit points (1d4 + 3).

**Faerzress.** In addition to all the effects listed in the sidebar at the beginning of this adventure, the first time in a 24-hour period in which any creature is targeted by *blasphemous word* in this cave must also attempt a Wisdom saving throw equal to the DC of the attack or gain 1 level of madness. Also, any character taking psychic damage must attempt Wisdom saving throw equal to the DC of the attack or DC 10 if no DC is listed for the effect.

## SECRET MISSION: ORDER OF THE GAUNTLET

In order to succeed in their secret mission, members of the Order of the Gauntlet must slay Vragni Moonsmith. **Order of the Gauntlet characters of rank 2 (Marcheon) or higher who complete their secret mission earn one additional renown point and should note the completion of a secret mission on their adventure logsheet.**

## TREASURE

In the bone pile, there is a shield set with gems and chased with silver. It is worth 1,000 gp.

## WHERE HEROES DO NOT TREAD: PART 2

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As the characters finish their second attempt at an objective in Part 2, word comes in on the success or failure everywhere the characters were not. For the two objectives attempted by the characters, their play determines the success or failure and the information below should be ignored.

For each of the four remaining objectives roll a d20 plus the number of renown points worth of troops deployed to that objective by the characters and compare it to the DC for that objective. If the first three checks are successful, the last one is automatically a failure. The overall attack should be marred by some failure. For the failures, note that none of the leaders of the various groups are lost, no matter how many casualties there might be.

For example, Fortifying Gains is a DC 15 objective. Sara's character spent 1,000 gp hiring mercenaries, so she has 2 renown worth of troops which she sent on that mission. Dave's character spent 45 downtime days, so he also has 2 renown worth of troops, but he chose to send half to Fortifying Gains and the other half to the Underdoor objective. So the DM rolls and gets an 11 + 3 (2 from Sara and 1 from Dave), for a total of 14. The objective failed. If only Dave had sent all his troops!

- **Northern Forward Base (DC 20):** If successful the characters learn that the troops fought giants and an animate wall, but were able to storm it before an alarm was raised. If a failure, the Red Plumes took the wall, but an alarm was sounded and the allies took huge losses.
- **Eastern Forward Base (DC 20):** If successful the characters learn that the troops fought humanoids that were lying in wait with a swampy ambush, but it was spotted and they were dealt with before they could raise an alarm. If a failure, the drow defeated their foes, but were unable to advance out of the swamp filled area before enemies responded.
- **Western Forward Base (DC 20):** If successful the characters learn that the troops advanced through a mirror-like cavern and defeated burrowing creatures that confused the mind. If a failure, there is no response from the rebels that went to this cavern. It is believed they have been lost.
- **Fortify Gains (DC 15; 17 if the alarm was sounded):** If successful the characters learn that the myconids brought forth the supplies and built a number of fungal defenses that held off a counter attack of drow slaves lead by a demon. If a failure, the base was decimated by the counterattack and many of the supplies have been stolen or destroyed. While the allies have advanced, they are poorly supplied and not in a solid defensive position.
- **The Underdoor (DC 25):** If successful the characters learn that the troops made a costly deal with some sort of underwater creature and indeed the path does lead to the Lake of Blood, so there is a path by which the characters can sneak into the city if they wish. If a failure, the mind flayers say they were forced to retreat when they encounter an extremely powerful creature. Several of the troops that went with them were lost.
- **The Friendly Dead (DC 25):** If successful the characters learn that troops were able to make a costly deal with the undead which kills everything possible

in the eastern part of the city. Drow characters are warned to stay clear. If a failure, there is no response from the faithful that went to this cavern. It is believed they have been lost.

### GAME EFFECTS

Consult each objective below and note its effect on Part 3 based on the success or failure in Part 2. The DM should feel free to adjust based on the actions of the characters and any deals they may have made or plans they may have implemented as long as those effects do not last beyond the adventure.

**Northern Forward Base.** This encounter primarily affects 3A Fungus Farms.

- Success: The encounter plays as written.
- Failure: The alarm has been raised. Grumble has already roused an additional Quaggoth and the second wave arrives after 5 rounds.

**Eastern Forward Base.** This encounter primarily affects 3B Slave District.

- Success: The encounter plays as written.
- Failure: The alarm has been raised. Grumble has already roused an additional Quaggoth and the second wave arrives after 5 rounds.

**Western Forward Base.** This encounter primarily affects 3C The Six-Fingered Courtyard.

- Success: The encounter plays as written.
- Failure: The alarm has been raised. Grumble has already roused an additional Quaggoth and the second wave arrives after 5 rounds.

**Fortify Gains.** This encounter affects all of the encounters.

- Success: Before the encounter begins, myconid clerics arrive and use a *scroll of aid* (+5 hp) on each character.
- Failure: The enemies are using the allied supplies against them. Each enemy has a *scroll of aid* (+5 hp) and a *scroll of bless* (+1d4 on attacks and saves) used upon them just before the combat starts.

**The Underdoor.** This encounter primarily affects 3D The Coliseum.

- Success: The encounter plays as written.
- Failure: The characters may not assault the coliseum. Instead reinforce the encounter they are fighting by a quaggoth mounted on a female steeder.

**The Friendly Dead.** This encounter primarily affects 3B Slave District.

- Success: Spectral dwarves march across the battlefield. In the process, make an attack against each enemy and each drow character: **Withering Touch.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 17 (4d6 + 3) necrotic damage.
- Failure: The encounter plays as written.

#### **ADJUSTING THE ENCOUNTER**

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter. These adjustments are not cumulative:

- **Very Weak party:** Decrease the DCs by 3.
- **Weak party:** Decrease the DCs by 2.
- **Strong party:** Increase the DCs by 1.
- **Very strong party:** Increase the DCs by 2.



## PART 3: COUNTERATTACK!

Now that the characters have pushed forward into the city, the forces of Maerimydra must respond. The attack takes the same form regardless of where the characters approach from, but is flavored by the actions of their previous choices. If the characters wish, they may short rest before beginning this encounter, but if they rest before pushing on their foes have more time to prepare. The DM should note that time is of the essence and resting may affect their ability to push deeper into enemy held territory.

Use the appropriate section and read aloud text from the second objective/location that the characters completed. If the characters were forced to retreat from their second objective, use the first objective they completed if appropriate. If that choice is also inappropriate (they completed the Friendly Dead, retreated from their first objective as well, etc...), have the characters choose a gate to leave from and an objective to advance on.

The combat for each encounter involves the same creatures. The **shadow demon** Verix and **2 fiendborne fire giant whelps** have retreated from the nearest Gate to gather the slaves to aid in the defense. Not used to working with the quaggoth slaves, they have so far gathered Grumble, a **quaggoth thonot** who functions as an overseer and another **2 quaggoths**. So far Grumble has not organized the rest of the slaves, but left alone he rouses another **quaggoth** every round. The DM should describe the quaggoth and orcs as fighting reluctantly.

After six rounds of combat or once the party has defeated their foes, a **quasit**, **4 ogres**, and **6 orcs** arrive from the center of the city moving to reinforce the nearby gate. Seeing the conflict, they join in.

### GENERAL FEATURES

This section describes any features that are common throughout all areas.

**Ceilings.** The ceiling is 600 feet above at its highest point, but smoke from numerous fires and torches cloud the sky.

**Light.** There are braziers and torches spread sparingly throughout the cavern. Consider it dim light unless the characters have light of their own. There are many locations of complete darkness if the characters look for them.

**Smells.** The heavy scent of charcoal hangs in the air.

**Sounds.** The noise from the battle is accompanied by alarm bells and the roars of giants and demons mustering throughout Maerimydra. It is chaotic and noisy. Perception checks based on hearing are made at disadvantage.

**Plateaus.** The plateaus that separate Maerimydra into sections are 100 feet high. The grand stairs marked on the map between each plateau are 100 feet wide and offer no places to hide. Climbing the sides of a plateau requires a DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check. Residents of Maerimydra see a climber and warn nearby enemies unless the climber can succeed in a DC 18 Dexterity (Stealth) check.

**Quaggoths.** Every round that Grumble is not engaged in combat or aiding his allies, he rallies an additional quaggoth to the combat. He stops if he rallies 8 additional quaggoths.

**Short Rest.** If the characters choose to short rest before beginning this encounter, the shadow demon, quasit, and fire giants have all been blessed by a passing ally with a *death ward*. In addition, the caster has summoned a *guardian of faith* (DC 14) in the square next to the shadow demon.

**Smoke.** Anything above 250 feet over the city is enveloped in the ever-present layer of smoke. Creatures in the smoke layer are lightly obscured but must succeed on DC 16 Constitution saving throws every minute or inhale smoke and become incapacitated for 1 round from coughing.

### DEVELOPMENTS

If the giants and demons are defeated, the humanoids surrender. If the humanoids and giants are defeated and the demons still live, they try to flee.

The quaggoths, orcs and ogres are not especially interested in dying for their slave masters and might be convinced to switch sides. The quaggoths speak Undercommon and the orcs speak Orc and Undercommon. The slaves are fully engrossed in the madness of Graz'zt so if offered some form of hedonism (food, drink, gambling, etc...) on top of their freedom, they can be convinced with a successful DC 20 Charisma (Persuasion) check. If they are not bribed with something hedonistic, the check is made with disadvantage.

If they are persuaded to switch sides, the humanoids join the characters in the fight until the current combat is over, and then they immediately desert to raid the city for food, drink and companionship. While not directly helpful in the allied attack, the chaos they create should help to distract the enemy's ability to respond.

If interrogated, the shadow demon and the quasit know that Hledh Hellspawn and the Dark Prince himself are in the castle courtyard performing some sort of ritual. They also know that a gaunt drow woman was recently seen in the city with a half-drow half-spider creature. They do not know who she is, but Squallocks the Vrock (adjust demon type for strength of party) advisor to Graz'zt has given orders to kill her if she is seen again. If the quaggoths are questioned, they are slaves and forced to labor for the giants. They know some of their number were taken to the Six-Fingered Courtyard and all of the non-warrior drow slaves have been rounded up and taken somewhere. No one has seen them for two days.

Any creature can offer a description of the areas of the city.

### TREASURE

Grumble wears a tribal necklace set with moonstones worth 200 gp and has a *scroll of protection from poison*. One of the fiendborne fire giants wears a brass bracelet set with a garnet that is worth 500 gp and has a *potion of superior healing*.

### ADJUSTING THE ENCOUNTER (WAVE ONE)

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter. These adjustments are not cumulative:

- **Very weak party:** Replace 1 fire giant whelp with 1 quaggoth.
- **Weak party:** Remove the shadow demon.
- **Strong party:** Replace 1 fire giant whelp with 1 fire giant.
- **Very strong party:** Replace 1 fire giant whelp with 1 fire giant. Add 1 shadow demon.

### ADJUSTING THE ENCOUNTER (WAVE TWO)

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter. These adjustments are not cumulative:

- **Very weak party:** Remove 6 orcs.
- **Weak party:** Replace 6 orcs with 1 ogre.
- **Strong party:** Replace 3 orcs with 1 ogre. Add 1 bargura.
- **Very strong party:** Replace 6 orcs with 2 ogres. Add 1 chasme.

## A. FUNGUS FARMS

Advancing from the North Gate into the Fungus Farms:

The assault upon the North Gate was furious and it was difficult to wait behind the lines when your allies were in battle, but eventually your allies broke through giving you your opportunity. As the fighting devolved into a brutal melee, you were ordered through the gap and into the city beyond. Now you must trust that your allies can take and hold the gate while you prepared the way for them.

Catching a breather just past the fighting, you see a massive field of fungi ahead and beyond it a tract of giant-sized residential housing. It looks as though a vast number of bear-like humanoid slaves are manning the fields. Many look frightened at the sounds of combat in the direction of the North Gate, however a shadowy demonic creature and two fire giants seem to be trying to rally them to support the defense of the gate. There are hundreds of the burly creatures and the addition of even their reluctant numbers would be disastrous to your allies' efforts.

The Fungus Farms are one of the main food sources of Maerimydra. Quaggoth and orc slaves are overseen by a few fire giants, ogres and the occasional lower demon. The work is poorly organized and the fields are not well tended.

Just south of the fields is the northern residential district with houses sized for giants. From a distance, the neighborhood looks in turmoil as its residents are just rousing to the sounds of battle. If the characters do not push through soon, it is likely that waves of fire giants will overwhelm them.

### SPECIFIC FEATURES

This section describes any features that are specific to the Fungus Farms.

**Mushrooms.** The fields are filled with waist high mushrooms, creating difficult terrain that can be used to hide.

## B. SLAVE DISTRICT

Advancing from the East Gate into the Slave District:

The assault upon the East Gate was furious and it was difficult to wait behind the lines when your allies were in battle, but eventually your allies broke through giving you your opportunity. As the fighting devolved into a brutal melee, you were ordered through the gap and into the city beyond. Now you must trust that your allies can take and hold the gate while you prepared the way for them.

Catching a breather just past the fighting, on a lower level you see a neighborhood of dilapidated and ramshackle buildings that offer little resemblance to drow or fire giant architecture. The faces of bear-like humanoid slaves look out of shuttered windows, looking frightened towards the sounds of combat in the direction of the East Gate. A shadowy demonic creature and two fire giants seem to be trying to rally them to support the defense of the gate. There are hundreds of the burly creatures and the addition of even their reluctant numbers would be disastrous to your allies' efforts.

Advancing from the Underdoor into the Slave District:

Swimming to the surface, you struggle to get the taste of offal and blood from your mouth and breathe in the smoky air. In the distance, you can hear the assault upon the East Gate. It is furious and it is difficult to know your allies are in battle without you, but the distraction of your allies gives you an opportunity.

Pulling yourself onto the western shore of the Lake of Blood, you find yourselves surrounded by massive fields of mushrooms and deep rot. On a lower level you see a neighborhood of dilapidated and ramshackle buildings that offer little resemblance to drow or fire giant architecture. The faces of bear-like humanoid slaves look out of shuttered windows, looking frightened towards the sounds of combat in the direction of the East Gate. A shadowy demonic creature and two fire giants seem to be trying to rally them to support the defense of the gate. There are hundreds of the burly creatures and the addition of even their reluctant numbers would be disastrous to your allies' efforts.

The Slave District is home to most of the quaggoth and orc slaves that do much of the work throughout the city. Larger minions do not dwell here and the drow slaves have all been rounded up and taken to Castle Maerimydra. The district residents are on their own for food, waste collection, and building, which results a cross between a decaying village and waste dump.

## SPECIFIC FEATURES

This section describes any features that are specific throughout the Slave District.

**Buildings.** There are shacks and decaying buildings made of cast off wood, mushroom and tarps. Few are larger than one story and most can be easily climbed with a successful DC 10 Strength (Athletics) check.

**Garbage Piles.** These piles are slippery masses of waste and garbage that count as difficult terrain. Anyone passing through a square containing a garbage pile must succeed in a DC 10 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check or fall prone. Characters that fall into the garbage suffer disadvantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks for 2 hours or until they are able to sufficiently wash themselves off with water or prestidigitation, or the like.

## C. THE SIX-FINGERED COURTYARD

Advancing from the West Gate to the Six-Fingered Courtyard:

THE ASSAULT UPON THE WEST GATE WAS FURIOUS AND IT WAS DIFFICULT TO WAIT BEHIND THE LINES WHEN YOUR ALLIES WERE IN BATTLE, BUT EVENTUALLY YOUR ALLIES BROKE THROUGH GIVING YOU YOUR OPPORTUNITY. AS THE FIGHTING DEVOLVED INTO A BRUTAL MELEE, YOU WERE ORDERED THROUGH THE GAP AND INTO THE CITY BEYOND. NOW YOU MUST TRUST THAT YOUR ALLIES CAN TAKE AND HOLD THE GATE WHILE YOU PREPARED THE WAY FOR THEM.

Catching a breather just past the fighting, you climb north into the highest levels of the city. On the southern end of the plateau stands a courtyard with a shiny mirror-like polished obsidian floor surrounded by ebony pillars. A six-fingered hand is emblazoned in crimson on each of the pillars. Magical orbs bath the courtyard with a dim green light.

A SHADOWY DEMONIC CREATURE AND TWO FIRE GIANTS SEEM TO BE WATCHING OVER A GROUP OF BEAR-LIKE HUMANOID SLAVES THAT ARE CRATING UP SIMPLE EVERYDAY ITEMS FROM A NEARBY PILE. THE SLAVES LOOK FRIGHTENED, GLANCING TOWARDS THE SOUNDS OF COMBAT IN THE DIRECTION OF THE WEST GATE.

When the city was under drow control over 150 years ago this plateau served as the home to the most prominent and powerful houses. The temple of Lolth was torn down and most of the great houses torched when Kurgoth Hellspawn took the city, and since then it has become home to powerful fire giants who have pleased Hledh and her master, Graz'zt. Characters can make DC 15 Wisdom (Religion) checks to identify the six-fingered hand symbol as belonging to Graz'zt.

This wide open area is where the devout of Maerimydra come to pay their respects to Graz'zt. The obsidian floor is polished smooth as glass, and at every six hours the most faithful enter the courtyard to light the six ebony pillars in exultation to the Dark Prince.

The slaves are packing up mundane items such as cooking pots, a bolt of cloth, dice, mugs, chairs and the like. There are literally thousands of items. None of it is especially valuable, but all of them are infected with Graz'zt's madness. Characters who participated in DDEX3-8 *The Malady of Elventree* have seen this before and recognize the danger.

### SPECIFIC FEATURES

This section describes any features that are specific throughout the Six-Fingered Courtyard.

**Item piles.** The objects are piled in loose piles that require a DC 10 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check to scale, or fall prone in an avalanche of junk. In addition, handling any of the items requires the character to make a DC 10 Wisdom (Madness) saving throw or gain a level of madness. This check is only required once every 24 hours, so climbing through a second pile poses no additional risk of madness.

**Light.** Motes of green and purple flit about the area providing dim light and eliminate any areas of total darkness. The light dispels any *invisibility* effects within the area.

**Mirror Sheen.** This close to the power of Graz'zt, every surface is polished to a mirror sheen providing advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks based on sight.

### DEVELOPMENTS

The crates are labeled with various addresses throughout the Moonsea region. It is clear that these objects were part of the plan to spread the madness previously discovered DDEX3-8 *The Malady of Elventree*. If the characters choose, they can take some of the items and potentially use them as weapons. Any creature that handles an object must make one DC 10 Wisdom (Madness) saving throw or gain a level of madness. Demons are immune to the effect.

## D. THE COLISEUM

Advancing from the Underdoor to the Coliseum:

Swimming to the surface, you struggle to get the taste of offal and blood from your mouth and breathe in the smoky air. In the distance, you can hear the assault upon the East Gate. It is furious and it is difficult to know your allies are in battle without you, but the distraction of your allies gives you an opportunity.

Pulling yourself onto the western shore of the Lake of Blood, you find yourselves surrounded by massive fields of mushrooms and deep rothé in the shadow of the great arena of Maerimydra. Several bear-like humanoid slaves are streaming out of the arena in confusion, looking frightened towards the sounds of combat in the direction of the East Gate. A shadowy demonic creature and two fire giants seem to be trying to rally them to support the defense of the gate. Two large spiders are tethered next to the entrance. There are hundreds of the burly creatures and the addition of even their reluctant numbers would be disastrous to your allies' efforts.

The quaggoths were working in the Coliseum, feeding the beasts and making repairs to the stands when the attack began. They have streamed out into the streets to see what the noise is.

### SPECIFIC FEATURES

This section describes any features that are specific throughout the area outside the Arena.

**Mushrooms.** The fields are filled with waste high mushrooms, creating difficult terrain that can be used to hide.

**Steeder Mounts.** There are two female steeder mounts tied to polls next to the gate, waiting to be brought inside. During the fight, the steeders can be mounted and used. It takes a bonus action to untie the steeder. If one is still tethered in the second round of combat, the quaggoth thonot mounts one of the steeders and uses her in combat.

### MOVING ON

Once the characters have completed Part 3, move directly into Part 4 without a rest.

## PART 4: A SURPRISE VISIT FROM MOTHER

The derro of Ravagestone have spent the last few months gathering food and nurturing their new leader, Mother, a monstrous spawn of Graz'zt. Mother represents all worst aspects of Graz'zt's connections with hunger and fecundity. Now that the crazed derro have fed her to the bursting, she returns to her father bursting with her children and ready to unleash them upon the world. Unfortunately for the alliance, she has chosen this moment to make her appearance. Surrounded by thousands of ranting derro and her despicable demonic children, her forces have crashed into the rear of the alliance lines. What was beginning to look like a victory has now turned into a struggle to simply survive.

If the party contains a member of the Harpers, there is choice to make, as two messengers arrive with two objectives. Read both boxed text sections to the characters. The second alternative is not present if no Harper characters are in the party.

The characters do NOT have a chance to rest between Part 3 and Part 4. If the characters absolutely refuse and insist on resting, assume Rescue is a total failure and add all of the monsters and effects from Rally the Lines to Part 5. Mother also has spawned an additional demon (of the appropriate type for their party strength).

### RALLY THE LINES, PART ONE

Use this section for parties whether they contain Harpers or not:

Inside the city, it is beginning to look like a rout. The defenders of Maerimydra appear to have been caught unaware, or they at least are not responding as rapidly as your allies expected. It looks like you may have the opportunity to put a quick end to this fight.

A messenger wearing the colors of Hillsfar and accompanied by a dog in barding rushes to your forward position. She clearly shows the signs of recent battle: blood streams from her brow, her left arm hangs limply at her side, and her face is contorted in fear.

"You have to come quickly! It's horrible. They are everywhere, attacking from behind, appearing in the middle of us, we're being overrun. I didn't know what else to do. Please come back. We need you."

The messenger is Coralynn Winsail, keeper of hounds for the First Lord. She is in a panic when she arrives and knows the characters are great heroes and so she begs them to return with her.

She can tell them the following details of the surprise attack:

- While things in the city are going well, the rear lines were lightly defended, trusting on the walls of the caverns and tunnels to block most potential assaults from the city.
- Moments ago at the North Gate, hundreds of small grey dwarves with huge white eyes swarmed up from behind. The creatures seem crazed and threw themselves heedlessly into the waiting defenders. They would have been easily rebuffed if not for what happened next.
- From somewhere deeper in the tunnel, strange pods or eggs were flung and where they landed explosions occurred and noxious gases spread. Horrible creatures that defy comprehension crawled from the vile goo and began to massacre the allied forces.
- With the allied forces spread between the three gates, the force at the North Gate is in danger of being wiped out. Great heroes are need!

#### ROLE-PLAYING CORALYNN WINSAIL

Coralynn Winsail (DDEX3-14 *Death on the Wall*), a brutish human woman who was the keeper of hounds for Vuhm Yestral before he ascended to First Lord. She does not especially care for politics and or the recent rebellion and mostly just wants to be left alone with her dogs. She is blunt and lacks social skills, only being roused to confrontation when her pets are threatened.

### RESCUE, PART ONE

Use this section for parties that contain Harpers:

Making your way towards the fungus fields and the North Gate beyond, a second runner comes from the southeast. It is Elanil Elassidil, the Moonsilver Herald herself!

"Whatever you are doing, leave it. Something horrible has happened that threatens our future and the future of our alliance."

Elanil has come in search of the characters because Solom Ned'razak has been abducted. Without him, the warriors of Szith Morcane may desert and the alliance will crumble.

Elanil can tell them the following details of the abduction:

- While fighting at the Eastern Gate, a gaunt drow woman appeared in a swirl of mist behind the archmage of Szith Morcane. Enveloping him a sickly blue light, the two of them disappeared.
- The woman wore a holy symbol of Kiaransalee and the *piwafwi* of House T'sarran. (Characters that participated in DDEX3-3 *The Occupation of Szith Morcane* recognize the description of Dorina T'sarran, the former mistress of Szith Morcane who is rumored to be undead).
- The drow woman was heard saying that Solom would suffer in the ruins of the Shattered Tower, which is nearby.
- Elanil is aware that the North Gate is under attack, and while the Hillsfar and Lords Alliance troops will likely suffer heavy losses before the derro can be turned back, rescuing Solom is more important to the Harpers efforts to keep the alliance together. She urges the characters to go after Solom and then come back to the North Gate after he is rescued.
- Elanil offers to head to the North Gate herself to do whatever she can to help out until the characters can rendezvous with their allies.

#### DEVELOPMENT

It is up to the characters to choose their path. Coralynn is horrified at the idea of the Harpers choosing one drow over all the soldiers of Hillsfar. Elanil does not command the characters, but she stresses that it is important to think of the long term and the eventual retaking of Phlan. Once the characters make their choice, they both disperse to see about mitigating the damage of the choice the characters did not make.

Proceed with the path the characters choose.

### RALLY THE LINES, PART TWO

This encounter is mutually exclusive with Rescue, Part Two. If the characters choose to move towards the North Gate and the derro attack, proceed with the following read aloud text:

Approaching the gate, you can see demons and fire giants attacking from the city, but your allies are easily holding their own and it is easy to get past them safely into the chaos beyond. Hundreds of derro are everywhere throughout your lines like a swarm of vermin. It is hard to tell where they are coming from or if there is any organizing entity. A slime-covered orb larger than a horse rockets out of the dark and smashes to the ground next to you. Tentacles immediately sprout from its sides and peel back the dripping chitinous plates that cover its sides and more derro stream out. One of them rapidly expands in size as if being inflated and just before you expect him to pop; his blue skin deflates and settles onto a much larger frame. Covered in ooze and screaming incoherently, they throng towards your position.

Have the characters make a DC 15 Wisdom (Madness) saving throw upon witnessing this disturbing event. Those that fail gain a level of madness. Supported by the derro of Ravagestone, the Mother is birthing her twisted creations upon the battlefield. Her forces are twisted in form and mind, seeking only to kill and procreate more of their twisted kind.

The thirteen **derro** rush the characters fighting unintelligently while the **mutated derro savant** supports them with spells. None of them retreat. This is a relatively easy fight for tier 3 characters and the DM should focus describing the weirdness that surrounds them and the changes to the environment. Once they have defeated the derro above, there is enough of an opening for them to advance and meet the Mother (Part 5).

#### ADJUSTING THE ENCOUNTER

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter. These adjustments are not cumulative:

- **Very weak party:** Remove 7 derro
- **Weak party:** Remove 3 derro
- **Strong party:** Add 1 derro savant.
- **Very strong party:** Add 2 derro savants.

#### GENERAL FEATURES

This section describes any features that are common throughout the battlefield. The strange terrain and environmental effects are more a hindrance than the foes.

**Ceilings.** The ceiling is irregular, but averages 15-20 feet above the floor.

**Light.** The entire area is lit by numerous fires.

**Awakened Husk.** The remnants of the derro creatures's birth remains semi-alive. Scatter six of these around the battlefield. Any non-derro or non-demon creature that moves with 15 feet of one of the shattered eggs is attacked by one of the tentacle eggshells: *Melee Weapon Attack*: +10 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit*: 22 (4d10) bludgeoning damage plus 11 acid (2d10) damage. If the husk takes 30 points or more of damage, it is destroyed and no longer presents a threat. It is AC 15, vulnerable to cold and fire, resistant to piercing damage, and immune to acid and psychic damage.

**Bombardment.** At the beginning of every turn, each character must succeed in a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw or be hit by one of the many ova being flung onto the battlefield. If one of the characters fails, consult the nearby sidebar to determine what was inside.

**Ooze.** The ooze puddles are caustic to all living creatures not birthed by the Mother. Scatter four of these around the battlefield. Any non-derro or non-demon creature that touches or begins their turn in one of the ooze puddles must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or suffer 22 (4d10) acid damage and be slowed. Those who succeed take half damage and are not slowed.

#### BOMBARDING OVUM

A character was hit by one of the Mother's eggs being spewed onto the battlefield. Roll 1d6 to determine what was inside:

- 1 Stillborn:** The egg contains a dead **derro**. The character takes 11 (2d10) bludgeoning damage from the impact with the corpse and is slowed until they use an action to clean themselves of the sticky goo.
- 2 Ooze:** The egg is filled with the same **ooze** as the puddles. Make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or suffer 22 (4d10) acid damage and be slowed. Those who succeed take half damage and are not slowed. A 15-foot radius puddle forms around the character.
- 3 Mamma's Boy:** There is a crazed **derro** inside who attacks immediately!
- 4 Explosive Gas:** The egg was filled with a foul-smelling **explosive gas** that detonates on impact. The character and all within 5-feet must succeed in a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or suffer 21 (6d6) fire damage. Those who succeed take half damage.
- 5 Hallucinations:** A **thick black goop** covers the character causing them to suffer the effects of a confusion spell for 1 minute. A DC 15 Wisdom saving throw negates the effect. Characters that fail may attempt a new saving throw at the end of their subsequent actions to negate the effect.
- 6 Carnivorous Swarm:** The egg is filled with **hundreds of tiny masses of flesh**. Some have tentacles while others have wings; all of them have fanged mouths. The creatures attempt to burrow into the victim doing 11 (2d10) piercing damage and if the target is a humanoid, it must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or be infected with a disease- a minuscule egg. The character rapid swells at the end of their next action, a living quasit bursts from their abdomen doing 55

(10d10) slashing damage. The quasit attacks its host immediately.

#### TREASURE

The derro savant has a diamond worth 2,000 gp and a *scroll of wall of force* and a *potion of greater healing*.

#### DEVELOPMENTS

When the characters defeat the derro above, proceed to Part 5: Mommy Dearest without a short rest.

#### RESCUE, PART TWO

**This encounter is only run if the party includes a Harper and is mutually exclusive with Rally the Lines, Part Two.** If the characters choose to move towards the Shattered Tower and attempt to rescue Solom Ned'razak, proceed with the following read aloud text:

Leaving your allies at the North Gate to hold without you, you make your way to the northeast into a fire scarred and largely abandoned part of the city. The air crackles with magical energy that sparks from the rubble across the few large stones that mark the oval of a destroyed building.

The archmage of Szith Morcane is bound by two glowing chains in the center of the ruin, apparitions of angry drow swirling around him. One of the apparitions flies through his body and his face contorts in pain as he screams.

Behind a large half drow, half spider creature, a gaunt drow woman laughs, "Soon my vengeance will be complete and you will die here just like the Archmage of Maerimydra so long ago."

Turning to you, "Leave him. My quarrel is not with you but I feast upon your soul if you persist in my presence."

**Dorina T'sarran** was once the ruler of Szith Morcane and is furious that Solom has betrayed her and taken over the outpost. Almost a century ago, Dorina's mother Irae stormed the arch mage's tower of Maerimydra, slew Duneth Wharreil the archmage of Maerimydra, and leveled the tower. She sees the characters as lapdogs of Solom that he has manipulated into doing his bidding; history repeating itself like it did for her mother when she was slain by adventurers. If the characters do not immediately flee from her, she orders her **dridr** to attack and attempts to charm the largest, dumb looking warrior-type. She uses her legendary actions to make an unarmed strike and grapple followed by a bite on charmed or grappled foes. If not possible, she uses it to move away from dangerous foes and uses her spells. Twisted by the madness of Graz'zt, she is filled with narcissism and is not interested in talking with others.

#### ADJUSTING THE ENCOUNTER

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter. These adjustments are not cumulative:

- **Very weak party:** Remove the drider and decrease Dorina's hit points by 15 and DCs by 1.
- **Weak party:** Remove the drider.
- **Strong party:** Add 1 spectre. Add 15 hit points and 1 AC to the Drider.
- **Very strong party:** Add 1 spectre. Add 25 hit points and 1 AC to the drider. Increase Dorina's hit points by 40, DCs by 1 and she is an 11th-level caster gaining 1 6th-level spell slot with *harm* prepared. There is a third chain holding Solom.

#### GENERAL FEATURES

This section describes any features that are common throughout the shattered tower.

**Ceilings.** The ruin is located in a side chamber off the main cavern of the city with a ceiling 100 feet above.

**Light.** The blue sparks fill the chamber with dim light.

**Apparitions and Solom Ned'razak.** The acolytes of the Shattered Tower rose as silveraiths, and have since been twisted by the wild magic in the area. They blame the archmage for their state and are slowly killing him. At the end of the fifth round, Solom is completely drained of life and his soul is destroyed. He cannot be raised or otherwise brought back from the dead. A DC 20 Intelligence (Religion) skill check determines that the apparitions are killing Solom and that they are unlikely to be affected by magic or attacks. A DC 15 Wisdom (Medicine) determines that his life force is being drained. The apparitions are immune to damage and cannot be turned. Treat them as an environmental effect. Dorina cannot control the silveraiths.

**Chains.** While Solom is bound by at least one of the

two chains, he is in the center of *antimagic field*. The chains each have AC 19 and 30 hp. They can be picked with a DC 20 Dexterity (thieves's tools) check or broken with a DC 25 Strength check. They are immune to poison and psychic damage and are resistant to bludgeoning, slashing and piercing damage. If the chains are cut or opened Solom weakly crawls from the *antimagic field* and away from the combat. He is too injured to help, but is no longer in danger unless the characters are also defeated.

**Rubble.** These areas of dense rubble are difficult terrain.

**Warped Magic.** The area is filled with the twisted magic that originally gave rise to the silveraiths, and still absorbs magic. A character realizes what is taking place in the area with a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check. When casting a spell, the caster (including Dorina) must succeed in a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or the spell is absorbed and has no effect. If the spell is absorbed, the caster suffers 1d6 points of necrotic damage per absorbed spell level. Undead are healed by this damage. This is NOT a *faerzress*-suffused area, so those effects do not apply.

#### TREASURE

Dorina has a gold holy symbol of Kiaransalee worth 2000 gp and a *scroll of commune* and a *potion of greater healing*.

#### DEVELOPMENTS

Dorina and her drider have fully given over to the madness of Graz'zt and do not surrender. If Dorina should be slain, her *misty escape* power causes her to slip through tiny cracks and away into the Underdark to be seen at a future time.

If Solom is not rescued in time, his soul is destroyed and no magic short of a *wish* can restore him to life.

When the characters defeat the Dorina, proceed to Part 5: Mommy Dearest without a short rest.

#### SECRET MISSION: HARPERS

In order to succeed in their secret mission, members of the Harpers must rescue Solom Ned'razak alive. **Harpers characters of rank 2 (Harpshadow) or higher who complete their secret mission earn one additional renown point and should note the completion of a secret mission on their adventure logsheet.**



## PART 5: MOMMY DEAREST

The Mother, spawn of Graz'zt and an unknown, unspeakable creature has been in the care of the derro of Ravagestone since the Dark Prince's arrival in the Underdark. Fed on the fungus of Sporedome, the corpses of myconids, and any derro that wandered too close, Mother grew and grew. Once her fecundity had reached its peak, she rallied the crazed derro who had grown to worship her, and she has come to find her father and gift him with his many new children.

There characters do NOT have a chance to rest between Part 4 and Part 5.

Choose the appropriate boxed text based on what the characters just did:

### IF THE PARTY IS COMING FROM RALLY THE LINES

Your allies rally to your display of courage and surge forth behind your lead. Finally arriving at your base camp, you witness a true horror.

Hundreds of derro kneel prostrate with their backs toward you and their faces pressed to the ground. With repeated chants of "Mother," they worship a revolting mass of demonic flesh who sits upon a pile of chitinous eggs. Vaguely feminine in form, the demonic creature has three massive horns on each side of her head and several tentacles flail out of a wide horizontal furrow in her abdomen just below her chest. A snakelike tongue darts out and grabs one of the derro, who dies screaming into her gargantuan, fanged maw while a large bird creature claws its way free of the furrow; birthing slime oozing off the vile thing as it shakes free.

All around your allies fall to the ground gibbering or run screaming as what little sanity they had remaining is shattered.

### IF THE PARTY IS COMING FROM RESCUE

Your allies lay strewn about the ground, crazed derro and small unspeakable demonic creatures ignoring you and gorging on their corpses. Puddles of noxious ooze and fragments of chitinous shells scattered through the cavern. At least the fighting seems to have died down allowing you to advance to your base camp and discover what drove the derro.

Scores of derro kneel prostrate with their backs toward you and their faces pressed to the ground. With repeated chants of "Mother," they worship a revolting mass of demonic flesh who sits upon a pile of chitinous eggs. Vaguely feminine in form, the demonic creature has three massive horns on each side of her head and several tentacles flail out of a wide horizontal furrow in her abdomen just below her chest. A snakelike tongue darts out and grabs one of the derro, who dies screaming into her gargantuan, fanged maw while a large bird creature claws its way free of the furrow; birthing slime oozing off the vile thing as it shakes free.

This is a truly disturbing scene that should shake the will of even the strongest adventurer. Witnessing Mother in all her exposed glory as she births a vroock requires a DC 20 Wisdom (Madness) saving throw to avoid fully comprehending the horror. Those that fail gain a level of madness.

There are dozens of derro spread out between the characters and **Mother** and the **Vroock**. They show no sign of engaging the characters and the demons do not bother to acknowledge them. The vroock moves to engage the characters while Mother spawns as many minions as possible to defend her and consume the characters.

### ADJUSTING THE ENCOUNTER

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter. These adjustments are not cumulative:

- **Very weak party:** Remove the vroock. Remove Mother's parry ability. Mother may not spawn another of the same type of demon if one is currently alive.
- **Weak party:** Replace the vroock with a quasit. Decrease the bonus for Mother's parry ability to +2.
- **Strong party:** Replace 1 vroock with 1 hezrou.
- **Very strong party:** Add 1 hezrou. Add 30 hp and 1 AC to both Mother and the vroock.

## GENERAL FEATURES

This section describes any features that are common throughout a location.

**Ceilings.** The ceiling is irregular, but averages 25 feet above the floor.

**Light.** The entire area is lit by numerous fires, many fueled by the corpses of the characters's allies.

**Derro.** The crazed derro ignore the characters, given fully over to their worship. Squares containing living derro count difficult terrain for those trying to move through. Every time Mother uses her one of her Legendary Actions, she consumes a living derro (they move to her if necessary). If there are no living derro, she can no longer use Legendary Actions. There are 55 living derro at the beginning of the combat. Suggestions for dealing with the derro quickly are listed in the nearby sidebar.

**Infected dead.** The ground is littered with partially eaten myconids. These corpses writhe with the Mother's parasitic young. Any non-derro or non-demon creature that moves with 5 feet of one of the infected dead draws the attention of the young. The corpse explodes in a shower of ravenous tiny, tentacled demons. Hundreds of the tiny monsters swarm over the victim and attack.

**Melee Weapon Attack:** +10 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target.  
**Hit:** 22 (4d10) piercing damage plus 11 acid (2d10) damage. After making the attack, the creatures die, unable to survive outside a fungal host.

**Ooze.** The ooze puddles are caustic to all living creatures not birthed by the Mother. Any non-derro or non-demon creature that touch or begins their turn in one of the ooze puddles must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or suffer 22 (4d10) acid damage and be slowed. Those who succeed take half damage and are not slowed.

### DERRO WITHOUT A MAP AND AREA OF EFFECTS

Do spend time tracking AC and hit points for the derro. Every melee or ranged attack automatically hits and kills one. If not using a map (or if you just want to hurry things along, assume spherical attacks work as follows: a 10-ft. radius effect kills 4 derro, a 20-ft. radius effect kills 10, a 30-ft. radius kills 23, a 40-ft. radius kills 44. Lines kill can hit a number of derro equal to the length of the line divided by 5 plus 1 (e.g. a 30-ft. line kills 7 derro). A cone kills one third of the number of the spherical attack rounded up plus 3 (e.g. a 20-ft. cone kills 11). The DM should feel free to hand wave and be generous.

**Do NOT get bogged down with tracking where every derro is. Give the players the benefit of the doubt when determining how many they can kill.**

Once the battle is over:

Elanil waves you over. "I don't know what that thing was, but the swarm of derro has caused as much chaos in the city as it has amongst our people. Even so, it seems unlikely we will be able to push any further into the city. The giants and demons have rallied and are pushing back. We're going to have to retreat. I think we have failed."

Looking at your allies, your lines gone or in disarray, it is clear you must regroup and rest. Your lightning push into the city has ended and the slow slog has begun.

### DEVELOPMENTS

The characters may long rest before proceeding to Part 6. If they do so they must all make Wisdom (madness) saving throws as described in the Regional Effects of Graz'zt's Presence found at the beginning of Part 2.

### TREASURE

On one of the dead bodies, the characters find a *scroll of mass cure wounds*, a *scroll of invisibility*, and a *potion of superior healing*.

### THUS ENDS ROUND ONE

## PART 6: THE DARK PRINCE'S PLAN

There is time for a long rest prior to beginning this encounter.

Graz'zt, the Dark Prince, the demon lord who embodies hedonism and corruption of morality; is the only one of his kind to foresee Gromph Baenre's summoning and Vizeran DeVir's trap that would pit the demon lords against each other. And so he prepared. More than a century and a half ago, Kurgoth Hellspawn conquered the city of Maerimydra and prepared the way. Now Graz'zt's grand scheme is about to come to fruition.

Over a century and a half ago, Irae T'sarran, high priestess of Kiaransalee created the Undying Temple in a cylindrical cavern above Maerimydra. This sentient undead temple resided half on the Material Plane and half on the Ethereal Plane and was used by Irae for necromantic and cross-planar spell research. The two halves cupped a sphere of necromantic energy between them and while it was slain by adventurers, the temple's body remained.

When Graz'zt was forcibly brought into the Underdark, his minions in Maerimydra had already prepared his way. Using his considerable power, he revived the temple, but with a seed of Abyssal chaos at its heart, powered by the sacrifice of hundreds of drow slaves. The temple is no longer a sentient creature, but rather a construct controlled by Graz'zt's will. When Vizeran DeVir enacts his spell, Graz'zt is on the Ethereal Plane and the spell is re-directed to some of his minions leaving Graz'zt free to indulge his endless desires on the Material Plane.

The leaders of the army gather to discuss how to proceed and the looks on their faces are drawn or concerned. Even Huum's tentacles flick nervously.

Elanil looks at the assembled. "I don't know that we can take the city anymore."

"I agree. It appears no longer militarily possible." First Lord Yestral adds.

Your mind echoes with Sovereign Agaricus' thoughts, "If we withdraw, we have lost forever. Something stirs in the stone above the castle. Whatever the Dark Prince plans, if he succeeds, we should not expect to survive."

**Yestral looks up. "We could hold however. Hold for a while at least. Time enough for heroes to stop whatever it is. "**

**Elanil smiles. "Now we just need the right heroes."**

Solom Ned'razak (if he lives, otherwise Elanil), teleports the heroes to the bridge that leads from the top of Castle Maerimydra to the interior of a massive stalactite where the ritual is believed to be taking place. This area is NOT covered in faerzress and can be seen from the floor of the cavern so there is no chance of failure. The leaders ask that the party enter it and disrupt whatever is going on inside, hopefully throw the forces of Maerimydra into chaos. It is clear now that the Dark Prince himself is inside, so this may well be a suicide mission, but it is the last hope anyone has. If the characters refuse, the adventure is over.

"Stand near me and be ready."

For a moment you feel disoriented, and then you are on a bridge connecting the highest tower of the castle with a massive hanging stalactite. Sitting on the railing, covered head to toe with blood, is a small, smiling human girl and a blind goat. Bloody footprints lead from the castle tower door to the rail.

"Willkommenm Outsides! Eyes wishin' to be on greet avontuur wit youse! Wese hab greet fun."

"I see you have ample company. I'll be on my way to see what I can do down below." And with a flash of light, your teleporting ally is gone.

Elisande and goat are waiting for the characters and wish to travel with them. Even if the characters refuse they follow. If the characters use magic or force to prevent them from following, they find Elisande and the goat following them one or two rooms later.

### A NOTE ON TIME

This part can run long, and the DM should be mindful of time if in a time limited convention environment. It is okay to gloss over or summarize those rooms that have nothing of value if necessary to stay on track or play up the simple fights such as the two the drunken drow warriors as foregone conclusions.

## GENERAL FEATURES

This section describes any features that are common throughout the tower. Exceptions are noted in specific areas.

**Ceilings.** The ceilings are 9 feet high if not specified.

**Dimensional Lock.** Due to the warding on the Undying Temple creatures cannot *teleport* through its walls, but can from a point within to another point within. Spells that transport a creature from one plane to another only work to go to the Material Plane, Ethereal or Abyss, and then only within the tower itself. The spell *banishment* does not function at all.

**Light.** There are braziers that provide dim light in all the rooms on the Material Plane while the Ethereal Plane provides its own light. The fog on the Ethereal Plane limits sight to 60 feet.

**Sound.** On the Material Plane there are screams, moans, thumps and insane singing echoing throughout. Sound is muted on the Ethereal Plane.

**Doors.** The doors of the temple are made of the same smooth stone as the walls, so as to blend in. Every door in the temple is considered concealed and require a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) to locate. The doors are AC 17 and 27 hp. They are not locked unless noted, in which case be picked with a DC 20 Dexterity (Thieves Tools) or burst with a DC 25 Strength check.

**Traps.** If not specified, traps can be found with a DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) and disabled with by a successful Dexterity (thieves's tools) check; DC 20 for non-magical traps and DC 25 for magical traps.

**Walls.** The walls are made of magically reinforced marble.

#### ETHEREAL PLANE FEATURES

The Ethereal Plane is a misty, fog-bound dimension that is co-existent with the Material Plane. Ethereal travelers must deal with altered senses and slow but three-dimensional movement. This section applies rooms U18-U29 below.

**Senses.** The Material Plane itself is visible from the Ethereal Plane, but appears muted and indistinct, its colors blurring into each other and its edges turning fuzzy. No matter where a character is on the Ethereal Plane, he or she sees the corresponding part of the Material Plane. Vision is limited to 60 feet in both aspects. Furthermore, the Material Plane is wrapped in fog, so ethereal observers can't discern precise details, such as normal writing, though it's easy to distinguish faces and landmarks. Sight is otherwise normal, so gaze attacks launched from the Material Plane affect ethereal creatures.

The Ethereal Plane emits its own diffuse light, so ethereal observers do not need torches to see onto the Material Plane, even if it's pitch-black there. Light sources do not expand the 60-foot vision limit on the Ethereal Plane, nor do alternate methods of sight such as darkvision. A creature with blindsight on the Ethereal Plane can detect other ethereal creatures at its normal range.

To viewers on the Ethereal Plane, objects on the Material Plane are foggy, indistinct, and almost translucent. Such objects block line of sight but provide concealment, not cover. An ethereal observer can't see through a wall on the Material Plane without poking his or her head through it first. An ethereal character whose eyes are totally within a Material Plane object cannot see.

Ethereal listeners hear Material Plane sounds only when they originate within 60 feet away, and such sound is distorted and ghostly. Sonic or thunder attacks do not reach from the Material Plane to the Ethereal Plane, nor do senses of touch, smell, and taste.

An ethereal traveler is normally invisible and inaudible to an individual on the Material Plane, though spells and abilities such as see invisibility, reveal an ethereal object or creature. Blindsight used on the Material Plane does not reveal Ethereal Plane creatures. Creatures on the Ethereal Plane cannot talk to those the Material Plane, even if they want to be heard.

**Movement.** Creatures move on the Ethereal Plane just as they do on the Material Plane. However, because of the misty nature of the plane's protomatter, they can move up and down just as easily as they can along solid surfaces. All movement is at half speed, both for travelers and creatures native to the Ethereal Plane. A definite "down" on the Ethereal Plane corresponds to the gravity of the coexistent plane to which it is attached, but there is no danger of falling.

Because the Ethereal Plane is coexistent with the Material Plane, most travelers walk normally along the ground of the Material Plane. Creatures in the Ethereal Plane can move through solid objects on the Material Plane, but they cannot move through solid objects on the Ethereal Plane (such as the ethereal portion of the Undying Temple).

**Force Effects.** Force effects extend onto the Ethereal Plane and affect creatures therein. A wall of force for example, prevents an ethereal creature from passing through it. The appearance of the force effect is the same as it is on the Material Plane - often invisible.

**Ethereal Solids.** Half of the Undying Temple was built of stone and magically shifted into the Ethereal Plane. Now that portion is ethereal stone - invisible and insubstantial to creatures on the Material Plane. Characters in the ethereal portion of the temple can move in any direction as if flying, which is why there is no staircases, only holes in the floors and ceilings to allow access to all the temple's levels. Ethereal characters can also move through walls that exist only on the Material Plane, though such walls are opaque to them. They cannot, however, move through walls that exist on the Ethereal Plane. The walls, floor, and ceiling there are as real to them as material stone is on the Material Plane.

To the benefit of the temple's residents, this effect makes it more difficult for characters to scout through walls by becoming ethereal. However, characters on the Material Plane can use spells such as see invisibility or true seeing to see creatures and objects on the Ethereal Plane, and they can freely pass through ethereal walls.

## U1. APPROACH TO THE TOWER

The scene inside the stalactite is quite different from anything else you've seen in Maerimydra. You are at the bottom of a large, well-lit cavern almost completely filled by a graceful curving tower of ribbed black stone. Some 30 feet up, in the hollow of the tower's curve, a gigantic black pulsing sphere, aflame with demonic fire obscures most of the top of the tower.

Those characters capable of seeing into the Ethereal Plane note a mirror image of the spiraling tower, hanging upside-down above it in the Ethereal Plane, centered on the sphere so each tower cups the orb between them.

There is no obvious entrance into the tower, but entrance can be found via two methods. A secret door (DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) to find) leads into U2. If the secret door opens, a mouth like office gives way in the eastern wall and closes behind the characters. Characters capable of flying can also enter by flying into the abyssal energy orb U14 with all the dangers that entails, and then pass through it where it connects to U12, U13, or U15.

## U2. ENTRANCE HALL

### GENERAL FEATURES

This section describes any features that are common throughout the Entrance Hall.

**Maforie Chûmavh.** Maforie is a drow with AC 13 and 25 hp. She has no combat skills. She is chained to the ground with 30 feet of chain (AC 17, 30 hp, DC 20 Dexterity check with thieves's tools to unlock).

**Pillows.** The piles of pillows are difficult terrain.

If the characters somehow sneak passed the demons, they do not go looking for them but if the characters start a fight, the two *barlgura* rush into the fight while Bexron tries to disrupt the enemies with spells such as *confusion* and *power word stun*. Once the fight begins, the demons give themselves over to bloodlust and fight to the death.

The strangely shaped white room is oddly warm and smells of strong spices. Lurid murals on the wall depict giants and demonic creatures in various states of congress. Piles of cushions are heaped to the sides and several large demonic creatures languidly rest upon them, smoking from a gold plated hookah. A chained drow woman stands nearby, eyes downcast.

The demons here are supposed to be on guard, but the Dark Prince's insanity is especially strong this close to him. Bexron, a **glabrezu**, and his **two barlgura** minions are relaxing with a good smoke and boasting to each other. They note the characters entrance but do not react unless the characters interact with them or attempt to ascend the stairs to the north.

If the characters attempt to climb the stairs, the demons call them over and warn them that they are not allowed to go that way. Bexron would much rather share a smoke and some pleasant companionship rather than fight. If the characters do sample the demonic herbs in the hookah, they experience euphoric hallucinations for an hour and must succeed in a DC 15 Wisdom (Madness) saving throw or gain a level of madness.

Bexron can tell the characters the following in a slow, deep voice if the party interacts with him:

- The Undying Temple was a place of worship to Kiaransalee, the drow goddess of undeath. However, long ago, the fiendborne fire giants who are of the Dark Prince's blood began repurposing it.
- Graz'zt sacrificed most of the drow slaves to awaken the power of the temple.
- The master is doing some sort of ritual in the other half of the temple, but the characters are not allowed there.
- Under no circumstances does Bexron part with the drow slave. She belongs to Matliedun, one of the Dark Prince's children and is not his to give.
- Bexron might allow the characters to ascend the stairs, but they would need to bribe him with something special. If a character offers a bribe and succeeds in a DC 25 Charisma (Persuasion) he lets them pass. The roll is made with advantage if the DM rules that the bribe is particularly valuable or hedonistic such as a magic item, some Silkroot or other intoxicant, or a significant amount of alcohol.

### ROLEPLAYING BEXRON

Bexron was a ferocious and devious demon until Graz'zt's madness infected him. Now he has become lazy, and considerably friendlier as he looks for new experiences to luxuriate in. He is very willing to converse, but if the characters press him, he is still a dangerous foe.

If the characters approach the drow, she remains demure and avoids looking them in the eye. It is clear she is malnourished and poorly treated by her captives. Her name is Maforie Chûmavh and she does not speak unless spoken to.

- She is young and has spent her entire life here in captivity.
- Her captors have always been cruel, but of late their tastes have become more extreme, even for demons and the fire giants, and even some of the slaves now spontaneously join in debasing rituals.
- She knows that slaves who are to be punished are sometimes taken through the door to the west and downstairs.

- There is a portal on the floor above that leads to the other half of the temple. It is a strange place filled with fog where it is hard to see or hear and everything is muted, though you can fly if you wish. (A DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) recognizes her description as belonging to the Ethereal Plane.)
- This half of the tower that is solid and looks normal is mostly filled with living quarters for the Dark Princes closest followers, though she has not seen most of them for more than a day. They must be in the other tower. She knows that Matliedun and Bexron (obviously) are still in this half of the tower, likely along with some guards.
- Maforie is happy to be freed but does not really know what to do with freedom and has no skills with which to aid the characters.

#### ROLEPLAYING MAFORIE

Maforie is not the typical haughty drow woman, having spent her entire life abused as a slave. She is quiet, shy and distrustful of others. She does not know that she is the heir of the drow House Chûmavh.

#### ELISANDE

Elisande finds the demons fascinating and is happy to try the hookah if a pleasant conversation breaks out. The smoke makes her dizzy and she promptly falls over and vomits. She crawls over to the alcohol to wash her mouth out and then offers the bottle to one of the characters as she does not like it.

If the characters wish to save Maforie, Elisande takes an instant dislike of her and interposes herself between Maforie and the strongest looking warrior type, of whom she becomes possessive.

#### DEVELOPMENT

If the characters choose to send Maforie out on her own, remind them that the castle across the bridge from the tower is still held by Graz'zt's forces and it is very likely she will be killed or at least recaptured. Even waiting on the bridge outside is like to attract the attention of one of the flying demons, to her detriment. It is possible that players may develop plans on how to avoid her death or capture in these cases, and it is up to the DM as the success or failure of such plans.

#### TREASURE

Bexron's gold plated hookah is worth 500 gp. He also has a *potion of heroism*.

#### ADJUSTING THE ENCOUNTER

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter. These adjustments are not cumulative:

- **Very weak party:** Replace 2 barlgura with 1 ogre.
- **Weak party:** Replace 2 barlgura with 1 vrook.
- **Strong party:** Replace 2 barlgura with 2 vrooks.
- **Very strong party:** Replace 1 barlgura with 1 hezrou.

#### SECRET MISSION: LORDS' ALLIANCE

In order to succeed in their secret mission, members of the Lords' Alliance must rescue Maforie Chûmavh alive and she must stay alive until the end of the adventure.

**Lords' Alliance characters** of rank 2 (*Redknife*) or higher who complete their secret mission earn **one additional renown point** and should note the **completion of a secret mission** on their adventure logsheet.

### U3. BASEMENT STAIR

A stairway leading downward is the only feature in this long, narrow room.

There is nothing remarkable in this chamber.

### U4. BASEMENT

The circular room contains a rack, iron maiden and numerous other implements of pain. A table with manacles at its corners is placed over a padlocked trapdoor.

This room has remained much as it was intended when the Undying Temple was originally constructed, a torture chamber. The trapdoor is locked (see General Features above).

### U5. SUB-BASEMENT

A rusty iron ladder descends into a small bare circular room.

There is nothing of interest in the sub-basement beyond a few blood stains.

### U6. LEVEL 2 ETHEREAL PORTAL

A short wall separates the stairs down from the rest of the room. Behind it is another set of stairs leading up and in the short wall, an open archway filled with ghostly mist that was not visible from the other side.

Characters moving through the archway step onto the Ethereal Plane to U18, as though affected by an *ethereality* spell. Matliedun, a **cambion**, and **2 drow elite warriors** stand guard here. They are gambling and easily distracted unless alerted by sounds of combat below in U2, in which case one of the drow casts *darkness* over the stairs and they wait in ambush. They try to avoid killing Maforie if she is present, as Matliedun values her service.

Matliedun is wearing a suit of *demon armor*. Increase his AC to 22 and replace his spear attack with:

**Clawed Gauntlet.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 9 (1d8 + 5) slashing damage plus 3 (1d6) fire damage.

#### ADJUSTING THE ENCOUNTER

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter. These adjustments are not cumulative:

- **Very weak party:** Replace 2 drow elite warriors with 1 orog.
- **Weak party:** Replace the cambion with a succubus. The succubus also wears the demon armor. Increase its AC to 21, to hit to +6 and damage to 8 (1d8+4) slashing damage plus 3 (1d6) fire damage.
- **Strong party:** Add 2 orogs.
- **Very strong party:** Add 2 drow elite warriors.

#### DEVELOPMENTS

If Matliedun is defeated, the drow surrender as they have no loyalty to the giants or demons. They give the general layout of U1 through U17, but avoid mentioning specific foes or traps. They refuse to aid the characters in their quest and only wish to flee. If it looks like he is about to be overwhelmed, Matliedun uses his *plane shift* to get the Greater Temple on the Ethereal Plane (U29). He has not been told what the ritual will do.

If captured, Matliedun is the son of Graz'zt and one of his many concubines. He is responsible for tower security and can give the general layout of the tower and rough estimates of the creatures in it. He does not mention the traps. He also knows Graz'zt and Squallocks are in the Ethereal Plane half of the temple performing a ritual.

Maforie is his slave and if present, she is terrified of him.

#### TREASURE

If Matliedun is defeated, the characters can retrieve his suit of *demon armor*. He also wears a circlet inlaid with ivory and jade worth 1,000 gp.

#### ELISANDE

Elisande thinks Matliedun is pretty, but otherwise doesn't participate in this fight. She is more curious about the portal.

### U7. MATLIEDUN'S ROOM

A four poster bed with garish silks dominates the room. Several extremely realistic mannequins of drow females and one male quaggoth are posed in fanciful costumes around the bed.

A number of furs are piled in a corner.

Matliedun resides here. Those who inspect the mannequins with a DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) realize that they are not mannequins at all, but rather real people that have been stuffed. Realizing this horrific taxidermy forces a DC 10 Wisdom (Madness) saving throw. Those that fail gain a level of madness.

Maforie sleeps on the pile of furs in the corner.

#### ELISANDE

Elisande dances around with the quaggoth mannequin, as though it were a fuzzy doll. She asks one of the characters to carry it home for her.

#### TREASURE

The taxidermy humanoids wear 1,000 gp worth of jewelry.

### U8. DINING ROOM AND KITCHEN

Three chairs surround a small table on one side of this long room. On the other side is a small kitchen, including cabinets and countertop but no cook fire.

The few inhabitants that reside in the Undying Temple and still need to eat use this room to prepare and consume their meals. The cabinets have various dry goods and plain cutlery.

### U9. THIRD FLOOR LANDING

A short landing marks the next floor of the tower with a set of stairs continuing up. A fresco of leering succubus adorns the wall.

The door to U10 is locked and concealed like all the other doors in the tower. In addition, it is also trapped with a **fusillade of poisoned darts** that come out from north wall, filling the landing.

When one opens the door (it opens into U10, so it provides no cover), purple worm poison-tipped darts shoot from spring-loaded tubes. The tiny holes in the walls are cleverly hidden amid a fresco of a leering succubus that adorns the wall. A DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) spots them, with a successful DC 20 Intelligence (Investigation) check to deduce that the door appears to be connected to something inside the wall.

The darts make a ranged attack with a +8 bonus against each target on the landing. A target that is hit takes 2 (1d4) piercing damage and must succeed on a DC 19 Constitution saving throw, taking 42 (12d6) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

#### ELISANDE

Elisande and her goat miraculously avoid being hurt by the trap. She doesn't think much of the demonic fresco and tries to distract her chosen warrior type character from looking at it.

### U10. BEXRON'S ROOM

---

Large lurid paintings hang on the walls of this bedroom. One depicts a mother cooking and consuming her children, another shows a rider who clearly loves his favorite steed a lot, and the final shows a naked man kneeling in a pentagram of blood as he reads from an evil-looking tome.

Bexron's room is a shrine to depravity where he rarely spends any time. There is miscellaneous furniture and torture implements.

#### TREASURE

Searching through Bexron's room locates 500 gp worth of intoxicants and a *potion of superior healing*.

### U11. FOURTH FLOOR LANDING

---

This small landing has stairs continuing in both directions. This area is significantly warmer than the lower levels of the temple, and smells of brimstone.

The warmth here is due to the proximity to the abyssal energy orb (U14). Upon entering this level, any creature not warded against fire takes 3 (1d6) points of fire damage every round. This effect continues when the character remains in areas U11-U15, but not U12.

#### ELISANDE

Elisande and her goat are miraculously unbothered by the heat.

### U12. CHAMBER OF REVELS

---

This room is garishly painted with red and green with a huge black six-fingered hand painted on the ceiling. Shelves of spirits and herbs line the southern wall, while a stand with more than a dozen musical instruments, mostly brass and drums, is on the eastern wall. Large pillows are scattered throughout. The room is mercifully cooler than the hallway.

This room is used in the worship of Graz'zt or simply by those who wish to indulge. When the characters arrive two **drow elite warriors** are here well into their cups. They offer the characters a drink and ask them to sit and tell stories. If attacked they do their best to defend themselves, but due to their intoxication, they are effectively poisoned. They have no desire to fight and surrender if given the chance.

The room is magically chilled.

#### ELISANDE

Elisande thinks the drow should be killed as quickly as possible.

### U13. FIFTH FLOOR LAVATORY

---

Opposite the stairs that lead both up and down, the entire right half of the wall is open, revealing the side of the huge fiery orb hanging outside the tower. The heat is intense. Wooden seats with holes in them are perched over the edge of the orb.

This is the closest point to the abyssal energy orb. Any creature not warded against fire takes 3 (1d6) points of fire damage every round.



## U14. ABYSSAL ENERGY ORB

---

The throbbing black orb is covered in searing fire. Drow faces, contorted in agony, soundlessly scream in the dancing flames.

The orb is a piece of the Abyss burning through the souls of hundreds of slaves sacrificed by Graz'zt and his minions. Any creature not warded against fire takes 3 (1d6) points of fire damage every round in its presence. Any character foolish enough to touch the orb must make a DC 25 Constitution saving throw or take 55 (10d10) fire damage and become poisoned for 1 minute. A successful saving throw halves the damage and negates the poisoned condition. The character makes a new saving throw each round that they are in contact with the orb.

A creature that enters the orb can move from the Material Plane to the Ethereal Plane or the Abyss (or back) as a bonus action. Passing through the abyssal energy orb requires a DC 10 Wisdom (Madness) saving throw to avoid gaining a level of madness.

### ELISANDE

Elisande wants to touch the orb. It doesn't seem to bother her but unless the characters enter it, she chooses to stay on the Material Plane.

## U15. SIXTH FLOOR

---

This long, narrow room approaches the tower's pointed spire. The wall opposite the stairs is open to the air, and the opening looks out over the top of the great pulsating fiery orb.

Any creature not warded against fire takes 3 (1d6) points of fire damage every round.

## U16. SEVENTH FLOOR

---

This small room is little more than a landing, with stairs leading down into the body of the tower and up to the very top of its spiral.

There is nothing of interest here.

## U17. EIGHTH FLOOR

---

This tiny room is the very top of the tower's spiral. On the wall opposite the stairs, an image of an archway is carved into the stone, but a solid wall fills the arch.

This is the back side of a one-way portal from U26 in the Ethereal Plane to this location on the Material Plane. Creatures using the portal return to the Material Plane seem to step through the solid wall.

## U18. ETHEREAL SECOND FLOOR

---

This room is somewhat disorienting. The ceiling is smooth and level, but the floor slopes up from a point at the bottom to meet the ceiling only 8 feet away. No gravity pulls down to the floor, so it is easy enough to walk--either up the slope or simply up through the air--up to where a hole leads through the ceiling to a room above this one. On the wall opposite the hole in the ceiling, an image of an archway is carved into the stone, but a solid wall fills the arch.

The air is foggy but not damp, though the stone of the building seems clear and solid enough.

Because the room is smaller than the coexistent room on the Material Plane, no part of U6 can be seen.

## U19. ETHEREAL THIRD FLOOR

---

This small room has three solid walls, and the floor and the ceiling seem solid enough except for the hole through which you entered, but the fourth wall seems hazy and insubstantial. It blocks vision, but it's not at all clear whether it blocks movement as well.

The insubstantial wall is on the Material Plane. It is the curving wall of U10. Characters on the Ethereal Plane can move through it freely, but they cannot see through it without putting at least their eyes on the other side of it.

## U20. ETHEREAL FOURTH FLOOR

---

This room is long and narrow. A hole in the floor leads down, and another hole leads up about 15 feet away. The wall opposite these holes rises only about halfway to the ceiling, and the bottom of the gigantic fiery orb is visible beyond. It fills the room intense heat.

A character that looks out the gap in the wall near the south end of the room can see around the sphere to the indistinct form of the temple on the Material Plane.

Any creature not warded against fire takes 3 (1d6) points of fire damage every round. This effect continues through areas U20-U23.

## U21. ETHEREAL FIFTH FLOOR

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Opposite the holes that lead both up and down, the entire right half of the wall is open, revealing the side of the huge fiery globe hanging outside the tower. Drow faces, contorted in agony, soundless scream in the dancing flames. The room is filled with extreme heat.

This area is the closest point on the Ethereal Plane to the abyssal energy orb. Any creature not warded against fire takes 3 (1d6) points of fire damage every round. Touching the orb has the same effects as described in U14.

## U22. ETHEREAL SIXTH FLOOR LANDING

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This small landing has holes leading both up and down. The area is quite warm.

Any creature not warded against fire takes 3 (1d6) points of fire damage every round.

Any creature that touches the door or lock causes a *prismatic spray* (DC 15) to erupt in a cone towards the opposite wall.

## U23. NURSERY

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### GENERAL FEATURES

This section describes any features that are common throughout the nursery.

**Babies.** The children are AC 10 and have 10 hp. They are immune to poison and the poisoned condition and are resistant to cold, fire, lightning and bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from nonmagical weapons.

A combination of cooing and high-pitched wails greets you as the door opens. A dozen cribs fill the room, each with a monstrous infant. An attractive woman with red eyes, wearing a short white robe holds a drow baby. The baby's tail flicks back and forth as it offers a fanged smile.

"Do you want to hold him? Be careful..., he's started teething."

The nursery is filled with twelve of Graz'zt's half-demon spawn. Some are of drow heritage, while others are half fire giant, orc, or quaggoth. Joiifericus the **succubus** is their nursemaid. She spends hours every day feeding them and teaching the finer points of evil.

Joiifericus is pleasant and teasing, enjoying the horror some characters might feel at the sight of corrupted innocence. She does nothing to protect her charges and should the characters decide to end them or attack her, she uses her *ethereality* ability to swap to the other plane and flee. She does all she can to avoid combat and alert others to the intruders.

However, she recognizes the danger of stealing one of the children. If a Zhentarim character is present and takes one of the children, she joins the fight in U29 and does all she can to recover the baby focusing on the kidnapper.

### ELISANDE

Elisande is fascinated by the babies and she pokes them to make them cry, which she finds funny. She is not especially interested in killing them however. Elisande likes Joiifericus, unless her chosen warrior flirts with her. Then she wants Joiifericus dead.

### DEVELOPMENTS

Keeping the children has so far amused Graz'zt, but he is not especially attached to them, and he does nothing to protect them.

### SECRET MISSION: ZHENTARIM

In order to succeed in their secret mission, members of the Zhentarim must recover one of Graz'zt's children and keep the child alive until the end of the adventure. **Zhentarim characters of rank 2 (Knaves) or higher who complete their secret mission earn one additional renown point and should note the completion of a secret mission on their adventure logsheet.**

## U24. SANCTUM DEFENSE

---

If the characters are coming up from level six (U22)

Opposite the hole in the floor through which you came is a straight wall with a door set in its middle. Another wall curves around alongside the hole, and a third wall joins the two—but it seems only half substantial. Where it meets the curving wall the shorter wall is blurry, as if it were made of smoke. No hole leading upward is visible.

If the characters are coming down from level eight (U26)

The hole leads down into a tiny triangular room. One wall seems blurry and indistinct, almost insubstantial. No hole leading downward is visible.

This room is divided by the north wall of U16 on the Material Plane and it is visible but insubstantial to characters on the Ethereal Plane. Characters can move through it with ease, but no form of vision can penetrate it. This room is protected by **2 fiendborne fire giants**, and the door to U25 is trapped. Anyone that is not Hledh who touches the door or lock is targeted with a *harm* spell (DC 15) and everyone in the room is targeted with a *circle of death* (DC 15).

The giants are Hledh's personal guard and while they scream warnings that they are under attack, they fight to the death and do not run.

### ELISANDE

Elisande and her goat miraculously avoid being hurt by the trap. She tries not to chuckle if one of the characters should die, but a small giggle still escapes.

### TREASURE

One of the giants has a brass ring worth 100 gp and a *potion of greater healing*.

### ADJUSTING THE ENCOUNTER

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter. These adjustments are not cumulative:

- **Very weak party:** Replace the 2 fire giants with 2 fire giant whelps.
- **Weak party:** Replace the 1 fire giant with 1 fire giant whelp.
- **Strong party:** Add 15 hp and 1 AC to both giants.
- **Very strong party:** Replace the 1 fire giant with 2 fire giant whelps.

## U25. HLEDH HELLSPAWN'S QUARTERS

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A large brazier lights the room with a stifling fire. This luxurious chamber is draped with black leather drapes with embedded metal spikes. A massive bed is in the corner opposite the door, its frame made of brass. A large chest is next to it, a metal plate with half-eaten charred meat atop it.

This room is rarely used, but when Hledh sleeps she can be found here. The chest is locked (DC 25 Dexterity (Thieves Tools)) and contains all of her wealth that she does not carry.

### TREASURE

There is 500 gp worth of miscellaneous wealth taken from the city, primarily jewelry and ceremonial weapons that appear to be of drow make. There is also a scroll tube with a *scroll of heal* inside it.

## U26. MATERIAL PORTAL

---

This tiny room is formed from two solid walls and two that seem misty and insubstantial.

Assuming the characters enter from the portal in U24, they are in the small southern corner made by the walls on the Material Plane. The portal to U29 is on the other side of the Material Plane walls.

The characters cannot see the portal to the Material Plane or the second door until they come through the Material Plane wall of U17 and around the short wall.

The north side of the short wall contains a portal to the Material Plane which looks like the archway leading to a small room (U17), where the misty vapors of the Ethereal Plane are gone and everything looks especially crisp and clear. From the other side, the wall looks and is completely solid to ethereal creature. Any character stepping through the archway is transported to the corresponding location in the Material Plane, ending the effect that made the character ethereal.

## U27. VESTRY

The walls of this room are covered with pegs, some of which have thin, red silk robes or gold necklaces with a clawed six-fingered hand.

Graz'zt's minions store ceremonial robes and necklaces here, putting them on before entering into the temple above.

The necklaces radiate magic and make the wearer immune to the poison in the symbol of Graz'zt in U29, but give the wearer disadvantage to saving throws made to resist *crown of madness* or *dissonant whispers* spells cast by Graz'zt while within area U29.

### ELISANDE

Elisande puts on one set of robes and a necklace and dances around. The robe is massively large on her and she has trouble walking in it. She tries to put a robe on the goat, but it runs around the room preventing her from doing so unless the characters help corral it.

### TREASURE

One of Graz'zt's minions has hidden a pouch inside one of the robes which can be found with a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check. Inside the pouch is a small obsidian idol of Graz'zt worth 300 gp and a *scroll of suggestion*.

## U28. STORAGE

This room is filled with water, ale, salted meats, oil, coal, and other goods. More than two dozen drow corpses hang from hooks in the ceiling.

This room is used to store goods needed by the fire giants and their servants for daily life in the temple.

## U29. THE GREATER TEMPLE

### GENERAL FEATURES

This section describes any features that are common throughout the greater temple.

**Ceilings.** The ceiling is 15 feet high

**Light.** The symbols glow with a dark red light in addition to the light provided by the Ethereal Plane itself.

**Gravity.** Gravity functions as normal for the Material Plane in this room. There is a definite floor and characters cannot walk in the air, but they can move at normal speed in this room.

**Demonic Symbols.** A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Religion) recognizes each of the symbols of the demon lords (see nearby sidebar for the description of each symbol, the demon bound to it, and the effect on Graz'zt of destroying that link). A successful DC 20 Intelligence (Arcana) check realizes that the symbols are binding the demons and somehow protecting Graz'zt. Killing the demon, destroying the symbol, or nullifying its magic would be detrimental to Graz'zt.

The magical links can be affected in the following ways:

- The demons can be killed by doing enough damage to them. Once the ritual effect is triggered, they are treated as if unconscious: goristro (AC 19, 310 hp), hezrou (AC 16, 136 hp), quasit (AC 13, 7 hp), yochlol (AC 15, 136 hp), nalfeshnee (AC 18, 184 hp), bargura (AC 15, 68 hp), and chasme (AC 15, 84 hp). If a demon is slain, it disappears in a swirl of multicolored light that looks like faerzress.
- Unlike other creatures in the tower, the symbols make the demons vulnerable to being banished. Due to the effects of the ritual, all of them resist with a +5 saving throw bonus (total).
- The symbols can be disabled using thieves's tools as an action and succeeding on a DC 20 Dexterity check.
- The symbols can be dispelled individually as 6th-level spells. Effects that temporarily suspend magic (such as *antimagic field*) in an area also work, but only while they cover a symbol. If they are moved or end, the demon reappears and Graz'zt regains the abilities and hit points he lost.

**Symbol of Graz'zt.** The symbol on the floor is actually a two-inch-deep pool of caustic, poisonous blood from the drow slaves. Any creature entering it suffers 21 (6d6) poison damage when they enter it and at the end of each turn thereafter. Any creature wearing a symbol of Graz'zt from U27 is immune to this poison.

#### SEVEN SYMBOLS OF EVIL

There are seven symbols carved into the walls representing the other seven demon lords that have been summoned into the Underdark by Gromph Baenre's spell that began *the Out of the Abyss* storyline. Each of the symbols and the demon bound in front of them are key to Graz'zt remaining on the Material Plane at full power when Vizeran DeVir enacts his summoning ritual to bring all the demon lords together that they might destroy each other and be banished. When a symbol is destroyed the pain Graz'zt feels and the damage he takes is obvious.

- **Baphomet:** A goristro is bound in front of the symbol of a circular maze dripping blood. If the link is destroyed, Graz'zt can take one less Legendary Action per round and it reduces his current and maximum hit points by 30.
- **Demogorgon:** A hezrou is bound in front of the symbol of a scaled, forked tail in the shape of a spiraling Y. If the link is destroyed, Graz'zt loses the ability to cast any of his 3/day spells and reduces his current and maximum hit points by 40.
- **Fraz-Urb'luu:** A quasit is bound in front of the symbol of a scepter of five bestial arms gripping a horned and fanged skull. If the link is destroyed, Graz'zt loses the ability to cast any of his 1/day spells and it reduces his current and maximum hit points by 30.
- **Juiblex:** A yochlol is bound in front of the symbol of a pseudopod dripping slime. If the link is destroyed, Graz'zt loses one use of *Legendary Resistance* and reduces his current and maximum hit points by 30.
- **Orcus:** A nalfeshnee is bound in front of the symbol of a skull topped black mace. If the link is destroyed, Graz'zt current and maximum hit points are reduced by 40 and any spell cast by Graz'zt that is currently affecting another creature ends. Characters currently experiencing a madness effect have that effect ended as well (though their madness level does not decrease).
- **Yeenoghu:** A barlgura is bound in front of the symbol of a triple-headed flail. If the link is destroyed, Graz'zt can take one less Legendary Action per round and reduces his current and maximum hit points by 30.
- **Zugtmoy:** A chasme is bound in front of the symbol of a jawless skull with mushroom growing from it. If the link is destroyed, Graz'zt loses one use of *legendary resistance* and it reduces his current and maximum hit points by 30.

A massive six-fingered hand is inlaid in black tile upon the red marble floor. The symbol shimmers like it is wet. A huge throne, made of the corpses of hundreds of drow is against the northern wall. A handsome six-fingered, bare-chested man with black skin and green eyes stands before it, a wavy greatsword dripping with ichor in hand and a fire giant woman with leathery wings and hair of flames next to him.

There are seven symbols carved into the walls into the eastern and western walls. The symbols glow with a dark fiery light reminiscent of the orb outside the tower.

The room is crowded with demons, so much so, that there is barely enough room for you to enter. Most of the demons look ecstatic, but the seven directly in front of each symbol look upset.

Place the characters on the map and answer any questions they have about the room. Those who have encountered demons recognize many of their foes. In addition to Graz'zt, Hledh Hellspawn and a vrock (adjust demon type for strength of party) wearing a robe covered in stars stand on the other side of the room. In addition, the characters can count 1 goristro, 1 yochlol, 2 glabrezu, 3 nalfeshnee, roughly half a dozen each of hezrou, barlgura, and chasme and more than a dozen each of quasits, succubi and cambions. The Dark Prince himself would be an overwhelming fight, but the forces arrayed against them are terrifying. Characters witnessing the sheer horror of the gathered host must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or gain a level of madness.

### A TASTE OF MADNESS AND WARLOCKS OF GRAZ'ZT

Some characters may have the favor *Taste of Madness* from DDEX3-8 *The Malady of Elventree* or they might be warlocks who chose Graz'zt as their patron. In this case they suffer some additional effects during this fight.

- **Ex-Thrall of Graz'zt.** If a character has the special Ex-Thrall of Graz'zt certificate given out at limited conventions, Graz'zt is well aware of the character and their abilities. He knows what they can do, their defenses, and weaknesses. He is angry with them for throwing off his influence and all things being equal, targets the Ex-Thrall for death first.
- **Warlocks of Graz'zt.** As a *Legendary Action*, Graz'zt can expend one of the warlock's spell slots and cause the warlock to attempt a Charisma saving throw equal to the warlock's spell DC. Those who fail take necrotic damage equal to 5 plus 2 times the amount they failed by. For example, if a warlock had a spell DC of 16 and rolled a 10, they would take 17 points of necrotic damage (5 + (16 - 10) x 2).
- **Taste of Madness.** These characters have drunk deeply of the madness that Graz'zt exudes. Any time Graz'zt casts a spell or teleports they must make a DC 10 Wisdom (Madness) saving throw or lose half of their next movement as they dance and giggle madly. This is instead of, and not in addition to, other effects normally applied for failing a Madness saving throw. Failed saving throws are not cumulative and the character's movement can only be halved once due to a failed Madness saving throw from this effect. Characters do not increase their madness level or suffer the effects from the madness table when they fail this saving throw.

**Make sure the players fully understand everything the room before proceeding or allowing anyone to take actions.**

When the characters are ready to proceed, continue with the following read aloud text:

Suddenly a swirling light flairs into being in the center of the room. Like a hole in space, the air is sucked into it and a far-off roar can be heard. Demons around you begin to scream as many are dragged through the portal. Then each of the symbols begins to glow and just as suddenly the swirling light dissipates. The demon in front of each symbol stands stock still, bathed in dark red flame and paralyzed.

Graz'zt gives a full throated laugh. "Vizeran you fool. Let the others dance to your strings and kill each other. I'll be staying here, lord and master of Toril. Soon all will revel with me!"

Turning his attention to you for the first time, he offers a pleasant smile. "There is no need for us to conflict. I reward my servants well and as you can see," he gestures to the largely empty room, "I have some new openings in my organization."

Those who succeed in a DC 15 Intelligence (History) check recognize the name Vizeran as likely belonging to Vizeran DeVir, the archmage of Araj Tower in the area of the Underdark under the Sword Coast. House DeVir is a now destroyed drow House of Menzoberranzan.

Graz'zt is pleasant and happy to speak with the characters as long as they do not try to advance on him or take a hostile action. He offers them wealth, food, drink, and all the pleasures of the flesh if they swear their lives and souls to his service. Assuming the characters are not so foolish, it is likely that combat ensues. If some agree and others do not, Graz'zt assumes it is some sort of trap and attacks attempting to kill everyone.

Should all the characters sell their souls to Graz'zt, he sends them to the Abyss to be inducted into his forces. They are removed from play. Contact the campaign administrators with the players's names and emails. Proceed to the failure Conclusion.

When combat ensues, **Graz'zt**, Squallocks (a **vrock** advisor to the Dark Prince wearing a *robe of stars*), and **Hledh Hellspawn** are all the active foes that remain. If a Zhentarim character has stolen one of Graz'zt's children, Joiifericus the **succubus** is also here and focuses on the offending Zhentarim character during the combat. All of the other demons who are not linked into one of the seven symbols were sucked through the portal by Vizeran DeVir's spell (Chapter 17, *Out of the Abyss*). Hledh moves immediately into melee, preferably leaving space for foes to advance to her through the symbol of Graz'zt on the floor. She saves her bonus action for *healing word* or *shield of faith*. Squallocks begins with his *stunning screech* and then also engages in melee. Graz'zt begins by toying with the characters by using minor spells such as *dissonant whispers* until the characters show themselves a threat, attack him, or attempt to disable a symbol or kill one of the frozen demons. Then he brings his full fury to bear. For very strong groups he does not hesitate and brings his full strength immediately.

## ADJUSTING THE ENCOUNTER

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter. These adjustments are not cumulative:

- **Very weak party:** Replace Hledh Hellspawn with 1 fire giant, remove 1 vrock. Graz'zt does not take Lair Actions.
- **Weak party:** Replace 1 vrock with 1 bargura (who wears the robe) and Hledh Hellspawn with 1 fire giant. Graz'zt does not take Lair Actions.
- **Strong party:** Replace 1 vrock with 1 hezrou (who wears the robe). As an effect of the ritual Hledh has a *dispel evil and good* spell activated (DC 18).
- **Very strong party:** Replace 1 vrock with 1 glabrezu (who wears the robe). Graz'zt loses 5 less hit points every time a symbol is disabled. As an effect of the ritual Hledh has a *dispel evil and good* spell activated (DC 23). Squallocks has a *scroll of maze* (DC 18) that he uses in the second round. This scroll cannot be found as treasure.

Elisande is added to the initiative after the character with the highest initiative score. On her turn, she approaches a remaining symbol in this order: Fraz-Urb'luu, Yeenoghu, Zuggtmoy, Orcus, Baphomet, Juiblex, Demogorgon. If the next symbol in her list is already disabled, she moves to the next in her list. On her turn, she executes the demon and destroys the symbol.

The first time that Elisande acts, read the following read aloud text:

Elisande skips playfully across to the room towards one of the frozen demons, her goat walking calmly behind her. For the first time, it seems as if Graz'zt has noticed them.

"Do not think I do not see you Ausuriel. Show us your pretty smile." Making a cruel gesture in the air, the goat falls to the ground in agony and her body melts away until you see a screaming gnome-like woman with extremely long hair and goat legs.

"You should have stayed in your woods. You have no power here, Herald of Shiallia."

Through pain gritted teeth the goat-legged woman whispers, "That is why I brought these heroes and the daughter of the Dark Sun."

A smile across her blood splattered face, Elisande plunges her dagger into the chest of the unmoving demon and pulls out its heart. With a swirl of scintillating light, the demon disappears and the symbol goes dark. Graz'zt screams in pain. "What have you done!?!?!?"

Elisande giggles.

Characters that wish to may attempt to recognize some of the names Graz'zt has just used by making an Intelligence (Religion) check. Compare the result of the check to the list below. High results are cumulative and give all details for lower DCs.

- DC 10: The Dark Sun is a less common appellation for The Prince of Lies, Cyric; god of lies and previously death and murder.
- DC 15: Shiallia is an exarch of Mielikki; goddess of forests and good forest creatures. Shiallia herself is patron of pregnant forest creatures, korreds, satyrs, newborns and seedlings. She is giddy and carefree, but sometimes hides deeper, mysterious qualities often related to protecting children.
- DC 20: Ausuriel is the Herald of Shiallia and patron angel of lost children. She is known to serve Shiallia by protecting and nurturing lost children.

At no point does Graz'zt or the demons use actions to attack Ausuriel or Elisande. Ausuriel remains immobile and Elisande continues her killing spree as described above. The demons focus on the characters and it should be clear that while Elisande is helping, they are the true heroes of the story.

## DEVELOPMENTS

If the characters are overwhelmed, the DM may once allow Ausuriel to sing out a clear note to one target that heals 40 hit points and frees the target from any curse, charm or domination effect, disease, poison, blindness, deafness, or madness. She tries to reserve this ability for a character that would otherwise be removed from the fight as it's no fun for the player to wait while others play.

If the characters have not defeated Graz'zt and Elisande has no more symbols to destroy. She moves to the nearest foe and stabs them for 30 points of magical piercing damage each round.

If the characters are forced to flee, Graz'zt does not give chase. He is now safe on the Prime Material with his plan complete, and instead teleports to places unknown.

## TREASURE

The characters can recover the *robe of stars* from the body of Squallocks. In addition, all of the corpses of Graz'zt's demons wear jewels worth 4,000 gp.

## CONCLUSION

If the characters are able to defeat Graz'zt:

With the final blow, Graz'zt's form fades away and it is as if a weight has been lifted from your mind. You have done it. Against impossible odds you have forced the Dark Prince back into the Abyss.

Without their demonic allies, the allied forces streamed into the city and your victory assured theirs. Maerimydra is liberated!

In the days that follow, the drow of Szith Morcane join with the faithful of Eilistraee to occupy the city. The mind flayers of Ryxyg and the myconids of Sporedome join all of the factions in sending members to help rebuild and set up small trading enclaves in the city.

On the surface, the government of New Hillsfar and the rebels of Elventree come together in a new openness that has not been seen for generations. Both commit themselves to sending supplies to the starving of Mulmaster and troops to march on Phlan. Your victory has united people above and below the Moonsea!

Yet in the quiet of the night, after celebrating your success and mourning the dead, you wonder what became of young Elisande and her goat?

If the characters are not able to defeat Graz'zt:

And so the desperate attempt to retake Maerimydra has failed. While dealt a deep blow, the forces of the Dark Prince remain ensconced and strong.

In the days that follow, the drow of Szith Morcane and the faithful of Eilistraee go their separate ways, preventing any hope for reunion and moderating of the drow in the Moonsea. The mind flayers of Ryxyg and the myconids of Sporedome grow ever distrustful of the surface dwellers and retreat to their respective homes, fearing the next swarm of derro from Ravagestone.

On the surface, the government of New Hillsfar and rebels of Elventree never truly come together and many worry that Hillsfar will return to the xenophobic tendencies of past generations. Aid to the starving of Mulmaster and forsaken Phlan is in short supply. You have bought the people above and below the Moonsea more time, but how long remains unknown.

Yet in the quiet of the night, while fretting over what could have been and mourning the dead, you wonder what became of young Elisande and her goat?

If the characters liberated any slaves, Maforie, or half-demon babies, the factions take custody of them and plan to see to their care. All of the characters are assumed to successfully travel home after the adventure.

THE END



## REWARDS

Make sure the players note their rewards on their adventure logsheets. Give your name and DCI number (if applicable) so players can record who ran the session.

## EXPERIENCE

Total up all **combat experience** earned for defeated foes, and divide by the number of characters present in the combat. For **non-combat experience**, the rewards are listed per character. Give all characters in the party non-combat experience awards unless otherwise noted.

### COMBAT AWARDS

Name of Foe	XP per Foe
Bargura	1,800
Cambion	1,800
Derro	50
Derro Savant	700
Dorina T'sarran, Vampire Cleric	13,000
Drider	2,300
Drow Elite Warrior	1,800
Female Steeder	200
Fiendborne Fire Giant	5,000
Fiendborne Fire Giant Whelp	2,900
Ghost	1,100
Glabrezu	5,000
Graz'zt (Weakened)	13,500
Grumble, Quaggoth Thonot	700
Hezrou	3,900
Hledh Hellspawn	5,900
Mother	15,000
Mutated Derro Savant	2,900
Nevik'Dethig, Aboleth	5,900
Nightmare	700
Ogre	450
Orc	100
Orc Eye of Gruumsh	450
Orc War Chief	1,100
Orog	450
Quaggoth	450
Quasit	200
Shadow Demon	1,100
Specter	200
Succubus	1,100
Umber Hulk	1,800
Vragni Moonsmith, Mummy Lord	13,000
Vrock	2,300

### NONCOMBAT AWARDS

Task or Accomplishment	XP per Character
Gathered some additional forces	100
Make a deal with Nevik'Dethig	2,500
Make a deal with the undead	2,500
Rescue Solom	1,000
Rescue Maforie	500

The **minimum** total award for each character participating in this adventure is **17,250 experience points**.

The **maximum** total award for each character participating in this adventure is **23,000 experience points**.

## TREASURE

This section summarizes the treasure awarded during the adventure. Each award should be divided up equally among the party members. Gold piece values listed for sellable gear are calculated at their selling price, not their purchase price.

**Consumable magic items** should be divided up however the group sees fit. If more than one character is interested in a specific consumable magic item, the DM can determine who gets it randomly should the group be unable to decide.

**Permanent magic items** are divided according to a system. See the sidebar if the adventure awards permanent magic items.

### TREASURE AWARDS

Item Name	GP Value
Bexron's intoxicants	500
Brass and garnet bracelet	500
Brass ring	100
City wealth	500
Diamond	2,000
Drow statuettes	1,000
Fire giants' coin	1,000
Gem encrusted shield	1,000
Gold holy symbol of Kiaransalee	2,000
Gold hookah	500
Grumble tribal necklace	200
Jewelry from taxidermy humanoids	1,000
Matliedun's circlet	1,000
Ruby ring	1,000
5 sapphires	1,000
Throne jewels	4,000
Umber hulk horde	1,000

## DEMON ARMOR

*Armor (plate), very rare (requires attunement)*

The black metal from which this finely-crafted armor is forged lends a frightful appearance that is form-fitting and elegant in design. The visor comprises the entire front of the helm and resembles the face of an emotionless drow—complete with long, pointed ears. It is festooned with a long, hooded cloak of smooth, white silk that never seems to get dirty. The description for this item can be found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

## ROBE OF STARS

*Wondrous item, very rare (requires attunement)*

This robe is made of rough-spun, blue wool with stars of faded gray cloth embroidered in silver. The description for this item can be found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

## QUARTERSTAFF +1

*Weapon (quarterstaff), uncommon*

The weapon is marked with the symbol of House Gos of Mulmaster. The description for this item can be found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*. This item is uncursed, and therefore cannot be traded.

## SHORTBOW +1

*Weapon (shortbow), uncommon*

The weapon is marked with the symbol of House Gos of Mulmaster. The description for this item can be found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*. This item is uncursed, and therefore cannot be traded.

## POTION OF HEROISM

*Potion, rare*

A description of this item can be found in the *Dungeon Master Basic Rules* or the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

## POTION OF GREATER HEALING

*Potion, uncommon*

A description of this item can be found in the *Dungeon Master Basic Rules* or the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

## POTION OF SUPERIOR HEALING

*Potion, rare*

A description of this item can be found in the *Dungeon Master Basic Rules* or the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

## SPELL SCROLLS

*Scroll, varies*

The spell scrolls available in this adventure are listed below along with their rarity. Each spell scroll contains a single spell. A description of spell scrolls can be found in the *Dungeon Master Basic Rules* or the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

Spell Scroll	Rarity
<i>Commune</i>	Rare
<i>Heal</i>	Very Rare
<i>Invisibility</i>	Uncommon
<i>Lesser Restoration</i>	Uncommon
<i>Mass Cure Wounds</i>	Rare
<i>Protection from Poison</i>	Uncommon
<i>Suggestion</i>	Uncommon
<i>Wall of Force</i>	Rare

### PERMANENT MAGIC ITEM DISTRIBUTION

D&D Adventurers League has a system in place to determine who is awarded permanent magic items at the end of a session. Each character's logsheet contains a column to record permanent magic items for ease of reference.

- If all the players at the table agree on one character taking possession of a permanent magic item, that character gets the item.
- In the event that one or more characters indicate an interest in possessing a permanent magic item, the character that possesses the fewest permanent magic items gets the item. If there is a tie in the total number of permanent magic items owned by contesting characters, the item's owner is determined randomly by the DM.

## FAVORS AND ENMITY

The following favor is available during the course of this adventure to those that contribute at least 2,500 gp or 100 downtime days during the **Gathering Forces** introduction.

**Shared Valor.** Your efforts to gather forces for the Assault on Maerimydra have resonated throughout your faction. When you fail in a faction assignment or special mission, you may choose to void this favor and instead succeed. This does not grant you any rewards (XP, gp, items, story awards, etc.) that might be associated with success, but does count as a success for gaining renown or tracking success of special missions.

## REOWN

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**All faction members** earn **one renown point** for participating in this adventure. In addition, a character may **receive one to five additional renown points** based on their efforts in **Gathering Forces**.

**Order of the Gauntlet** characters of rank 2 (Marcheon) or higher who complete their secret mission earn **one additional renown point** and should note the **completion of a secret mission** on their adventure logsheet.

**Harper characters** of rank 2 (Harpshadow) or higher who complete their secret mission earn **one additional renown point** and should note the **completion of a secret mission** on their adventure logsheet.

**Emerald Enclave characters** of rank 2 (Summerstrider) or higher who complete their secret mission earn **one additional renown point** and should note the **completion of a secret mission** on their adventure logsheet.

**Lords' Alliance characters** of rank 2 (Redknife) or higher who complete their secret mission earn **one additional renown point** and should note the **completion of a secret mission** on their adventure logsheet.

**Zhentarim characters** of rank 2 (Knave) or higher who complete their secret mission earn **one additional renown point** and should note the **completion of a secret mission** on their adventure logsheet.

## DOWNTIME

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Each character receives **20 downtime days** at the conclusion of this adventure.

## DM REWARDS

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You receive **1,200 XP**, **600 gp**, and **20 downtime days** for running this session.

## APPENDIX: MONSTER/NPC STATISTICS

Please note that named NPCs with unique stat blocks have been separated into the next appendix for your ease of use.

### BARLGURA

Large fiend (demon), chaotic evil

**Armor Class** 15 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 68 (8d10+24)

**Speed** 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	15 (+2)	16 (+3)	7 (-2)	14 (+2)	9 (-1)

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

**Skills** Perception +5, Stealth +5

**Damage Resistance** cold, fire, lightning

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** poisoned

**Senses** blindsight 30 ft., darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 15

**Languages** Abyssal, telepathy 120 ft.

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

**Reckless:** At the start of its turn, the barglura can gain advantage on all melee weapon attack rolls it makes during that turn, but attack rolls against it have advantage until the start of its next turn.

**Running Leap:** The barglura's long jump is up to 40 feet and its high jump is up to 20 feet when it has a running start.

**Innate Spellcasting.** The barglura's spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell DC 13). The barglura can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components.

1/day each: *entangle*, *phantasmal force*

2/day each: *disguise self*, *invisibility* (self only)

#### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The barglura makes three attacks: one with its bite and two with its fists.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 11 (2d6+4) piercing damage.

**Fist.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 9 (1d10+4) bludgeoning damage.

### CAMBION

Medium fiend, chaotic evil

**Armor Class** 19 (scale mail)

**Hit Points** 82 (11d8+33)

**Speed** 30 ft., fly 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	18 (+4)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)

**Saving Throws** Str +7, Con +6, Int +5, Cha +6

**Skills** Deception +6, Intimidation +6, Perception +4, Stealth +7

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

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

**Languages** Abyssal, Common, Undercommon

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

**Fiendish Blessing.** The AC of the cambion includes its Charisma bonus.

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

3/day each: *alter self*, *command*, *detect magic*

1/day: *plane shift* (self only)

#### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The cambion makes two melee attacks or uses its Fire Ray twice.

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

**Fire Ray.** *Ranged Spell Attack:* +7 to hit, range 120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (3d6) fire damage.

**Fiendish Charm.** One humanoid the cambion can see within 30 feet of it must succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw or be magically charmed for 1 day. The charmed target obeys the cambion's spoken commands. If the target suffers any harm from the cambion or another creature or receives a suicidal command from the cambion, the target can repeat the saving throw, ending the effect on itself on a success. If a target's saving throw is successful, or if the effect ends for it, the creature is immune to the cambion's Fiendish Charm for the next 24 hours.

## DERRO SAVANT

Small humanoid (derro), chaotic evil

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**Armor Class** 13 (*leather armor*)

**Hit Points** 49 (11d6 + 11)

**Speed** 30 ft.

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STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	5 (-3)	14 (+2)

---

**Skills** *Stealth* +4

**Senses** *darkvision* 120 ft., *passive Perception* 7

**Languages** *Dwarvish*, *Undercommon*

**Challenge** 3 (700 XP)

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**Insanity.** The derro has advantage on saving throws against being charmed or frightened.

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

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

**Spellcasting.** The derro is a 5th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Charisma (save DC 12, +4 to hit with spell attacks). The derro knows the following sorcerer spells:

*Cantrips (at will): acid splash, light, mage hand, message, ray of frost*

*1st level (4 slots): burning hands, chromatic orb, sleep*

*2nd level (3 slots): invisibility, fear*

*3rd level (2 slots): crown of madness, lightning bolt*

### ACTIONS

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**Hooked Short spear.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1 (1d4 – 1) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, the derro can choose to deal no damage and try to trip the target instead, in which case the target must succeed on a DC 9 Strength saving throw or fall prone.

**Light Repeating Crossbow.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 40/160 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage.

## DRIDER

Large Monstrosity, chaotic evil

---

**Armor Class** 19 (*natural armor*)

**Hit Points** 123 (13d10 + 52)

**Speed** 30 ft., *climb* 30 ft.

---

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	16 (+3)	18 (+4)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)

---

**Skills** *Perception* +5, *Stealth* +9

**Senses** *darkvision* 120 ft., *passive Perception* 15

**Languages** *Elvish*, *Undercommon*

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

---

**Fey Ancestry.** The drider has advantage on saving throws against being charmed, and magic can't put the drider to sleep.

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

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

**Web Walker.** The drider ignores movement restrictions caused by webbing.

**Innate Spellcasting.** The drider's spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell DC 13). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components.

*At will: dancing lights*

*1/day each: darkness, faerie fire*

### ACTIONS

---

**Multiattack.** The drider makes three attacks, either with its longsword or longbow. It can replace one of those attacks with a bite attack.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 2 (1d4) piercing damage plus 9 (2d8) poison damage.

**Longsword.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) slashing damage or 8 (1d10 + 3) slashing damage if used with two hands.

**Longbow.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, range 120/600 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage plus 4 (1d8) poison damage.

## DROW ELITE WARRIOR

Medium humanoid (elf), neutral evil

**Armor Class** 18 (studded leather, shield)

**Hit Points** 71 (11d8 + 22)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)

**Saving Throws** Dex +7, Con +5, Wis +4

**Skills** Perception +4, Stealth +10

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

**Languages** Elvish, Undercommon

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

**Fey Ancestry.** The drow has advantage on saving throws against being charmed, and magic can't put the drow to sleep.

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

**Innate Spellcasting.** The drow's spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell DC 12). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components.

*At will:* dancing lights

*1/day each:* darkness, faerie fire, levitate (self only)

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The drow makes two shortsword attacks.

**Shortsword.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage plus 10 (3d6) poison damage.

**Hand Crossbow.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 1 hour. If the saving throw fails by 5 or more, the target is also unconscious while poisoned in this way. The target wakes up if it takes damage or if another creature takes an action to shake it awake.

### REACTIONS

**Parry.** The drow adds 3 to its AC against one melee attack that would hit it. To do so, the drow must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.

## FEMALE STEEDER

Large beast, unaligned

**Armor Class** 14 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 30 (4d10 + 8)

**Speed** 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	2 (-4)	10 (+0)	3 (-4)

**Skills** Stealth +7

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

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 1 (200 XP)

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

**Leap.** The steeder can use all its movement to jump up to 120 feet vertically or horizontally.

### ACTIONS

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw, taking 9 (2d8) acid damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

**Sticky Leg (Recharges when the Steeder Has No Creatures Grappled).** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one Medium or smaller creature. *Hit:* The target is stuck to the steeder's leg and grappled until it escapes (escape DC 12).

## FIENDBORNE FIRE GIANT

Huge giant, lawful evil

**Armor Class** 18 (plate)

**Hit Points** 162 (13d12 + 78)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
25 (+7)	9 (-1)	23 (+6)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)

**Saving Throws** Dex +3, Con +10, Cha +5

**Skills** Athletics +11, Perception +6

**Damage Immunities** fire, poison

**Condition Immunities** poisoned

**Senses** blindsight 60 ft., passive Perception 16

**Languages** Abyssal, Giant

**Challenge** 9 (5,000 XP)

**Innate Spellcasting.** The fiendborne fire giant can innately cast the following spell, requiring no material components.

*1/day:* darkness

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The giant makes two greatsword attacks.

**Greatsword.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 28 (6d6 + 7) slashing damage.

**Rock Ranged Weapon Attack:** +11 to hit, range 60/240 ft., one target. *Hit:* 29 (4d10 + 7) bludgeoning damage.

## FIENDBORNE FIRE GIANT WHELP (STONE GIANT)

Huge giant, lawful evil

**Armor Class** 17 (half-plate)

**Hit Points** 126 (11d12 + 55)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
23 (+6)	15 (+2)	20 (+5)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	9 (-1)

**Saving Throws** Dex +5, Con +8, Wis +4

**Skills** Athletics +12, Perception +4

**Damage Immunities** fire, poison

**Condition Immunities** poisoned

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

**Languages** Abyssal, Giant

**Challenge** 7 (2,900 XP)

**Innate Spellcasting.** The fiendborne fire giant can innately cast the following spell, requiring no material components.

1/day: darkness

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The giant makes two greatsword attacks.

**Greatsword.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 28 (4d8 + 6) bludgeoning damage.

**Rock.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, range 60/240 ft., one target. *Hit:* 28 (4d10 + 6) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 17 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

## GHOST

Medium undead, any alignment

**Armor Class** 11

**Hit Points** 45 (10d8)

**Speed** 0 ft., fly 40 ft.

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

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

**Damage Immunities** cold, necrotic, poison

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

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

**Languages** any languages it knew in life

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

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

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

### ACTIONS

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

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

**Horriying 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 Horriying 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.

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## GLABREZU

Large fiend (demon), chaotic evil

**Armor Class** 17 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 157 (15d10 + 75)

**Speed** 40 ft.

---

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	15 (+2)	21 (+5)	19 (+4)	17 (+3)	16 (+3)

---

**Saving Throws** Str +9, Con +9, Wis +7, Cha +7

**Damage Resistance** cold, fire, lightning; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** poisoned

**Senses** truesight 120 ft., passive Perception 13

**Languages** Abyssal, telepathy 120 ft.

**Challenge** 9 (5,000 XP)

---

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

**Innate Spellcasting.** The glabrezu's spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell DC 16). The glabrezu can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components.

*At will:* darkness, detect magic, dispel magic  
*1/day each:* confusion, fly, power word stun

## ACTIONS

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**Multiattack.** The glabrezu makes four attacks: two with its pincers and two with its fists. Alternatively, it makes two attacks with its pincers and casts one spell.

**Pincer.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 10 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 16 (2d10 + 5) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a Medium or smaller creature, it is grappled (escape DC 15). The glabrezu has two pincers, each of which can grapple only one target.

**Fist.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 7 (2d4 + 2) bludgeoning damage.

## HEZROU

Large fiend (demon), chaotic evil

**Armor Class** 16 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 136 (13d10+65)

**Speed** 30 ft.

---

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	17 (+3)	20 (+5)	5 (-3)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)

---

**Saving Throws** Str +7, Con +8, Wis +4

**Damage Resistance** cold, fire, lightning; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** poisoned

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

**Languages** Abyssal, telepathy 120 ft.

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

---

**Magic Resistance.** The hezrou has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magic effects

**Stench:** Any creature that starts its turn within 10 feet of the hezrou must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned until the start of its next turn. On a successful saving throw, the creature is immune to the hezrou's stench for 24 hours.

## ACTIONS

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**Multiattack.** The hezrou makes three attacks: one with its bite and two with its claws.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 15 (2d10+4) piercing damage.

**Claw.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 11 (2d6+4) slashing damage.



## MUTATED DERRO SAVANT

Large humanoid (derro), chaotic evil

**Armor Class** 16 (*chain mail*)

**Hit Points** 110 (13d10 + 39)

**Speed** 30 ft., fly 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	11 (+0)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)

**Saving Throws** Dex +3, Con +6, Wis +4, Cha +5

**Skills** Arcana +5, Deception +8, Perception +4

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

**Languages** Dwarvish, Undercommon

**Challenge** 7 (2,900 XP)

**Insanity.** The derro has advantage on saving throws against being charmed or frightened.

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

**Magic Weapons.** The mutated derro savant's weapon attacks are magical.

**Regeneration.** The mutated derro savant regains 10 hit points at the start of its turn if it has at least 1 hit point.

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

**Spellcasting.** The derro is a 9th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Charisma (save DC 16, +8 to hit with spell attacks). The derro knows the following sorcerer spells:

*Cantrips (at will): acid splash, light, mage hand, message, ray of frost*

*1st level (4 slots): burning hands, chromatic orb, sleep*

*2nd level (3 slots): invisibility, fear*

*3rd level (3 slots): crown of madness, gaseous form, lightning bolt*

*4th level (3 slots): banishment, wall of fire*

*5th level (1 slot): cone of cold*

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The mutated derro savant makes two attacks, either with its claws or its glaive.

**Claw.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) slashing damage.

**Glaive.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, range 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (2d10 + 4) slashing damage.

## NIGHTMARE

Large fiend, neutral evil

**Armor Class** 13 (*natural armor*)

**Hit Points** 68 (8d10 + 24)

**Speed** 60 ft., fly 90 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	15 (+2)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	13 (+1)	15 (+2)

**Damage Immunities** fire

**Skills** passive Perception 11

**Languages** Understands Abyssal, Common and Infernal but can't speak.

**Challenge** 3 (700 XP)

**Confer Fire Resistance.** The nightmare can grant resistance to fire damage to anyone riding it.

**Illumination.** The nightmare sheds bright light in a 10-foot radius, and dim light for an additional 10 feet.

### ACTIONS

**Hooves.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage plus 7 (2d6) fire damage.

**Ethereal Stride:** The nightmare and up to three willing creatures within 5 feet of it magically enter the Ethereal Plane from the Material Plane, or vice versa.

## OGRE

Large giant, chaotic evil

**Armor Class** 11 (*hide armor*)

**Hit Points** 59 (7d10 + 21)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	8 (-1)	16 (+3)	5 (-3)	7 (-2)	

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

**Languages** Common, Giant

**Challenge** 2 (450 XP)

### ACTIONS

**Greatclub.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

**Javelin.** *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. or ranged 30 ft./120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

## ORC

Medium humanoid (orc), chaotic evil

**Armor Class** 13 (*hide armor*)

**Hit Points** 15 (2d8 + 6)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	7 (-2)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

**Skills** Intimidation +2

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

**Languages** Common, Orc

**Challenge** 1/2 (100 XP)

**Aggressive.** As a bonus action, the orc can move up to its speed toward a hostile creature that it can see.

### ACTIONS

**Greataxe.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d12 + 3) slashing damage.

**Javelin.** *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage.

## ORC EYE OF GRUUMSH

Medium humanoid (orc), chaotic evil

**Armor Class** 16 (*ring mail, shield*)

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

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	9 (-1)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)

**Skills** Intimidation +3, Religion +1

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

**Languages** Common, Orc

**Challenge** 2 (450 XP)

**Aggressive.** As a bonus action, the orc can move up to its speed toward a hostile creature that it can see.

**Gruumsh's Fury.** The orc deals an extra 4 (1d8) damage when it hits with a weapon attack (included in the attack).

**Spellcasting.** The orc is a 3rd-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 11, +3 to hit with spell attacks). The orc has the following cleric spells prepared:

*Cantrips (at-will):* guidance, resistance, thaumaturgy

*1st level (4 slots):* bless, command

*2nd level (2 slots):* augury, spiritual weapon (spear)

### ACTIONS

**Spear.** *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (1d6 + 3 plus 1d8) piercing damage or 12 (2d8 + 3) piercing damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack.

## ORC WAR CHIEF

Medium humanoid (orc), chaotic evil

**Armor Class** 16 (*chain mail*)

**Hit Points** 93 (11d8 + 44)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)	11 (+0)	11 (+0)	16 (+3)

**Saving Throws** Str +6, Con +6, Wis +2

**Skills** Intimidation +5

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

**Languages** Common, Orc

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

**Aggressive.** As a bonus action, the orc can move up to its speed toward a hostile creature that it can see.

**Gruumsh's Fury.** The orc deals an extra 4 (1d8) damage when it hits with a weapon attack (included in the attack).

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The orc makes two attacks with its greataxe or its spear.

**Greataxe.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (1d12 + 4 plus 1d8) slashing damage.

**Spear.** *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (1d6 + 4 plus 1d8) piercing damage or 13 (2d8 + 4) piercing damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack.

**Battle Cry (1/Day).** Each creature of the war chief's choice that is within 30 feet of it, can hear it and not already affected by Battle Cry gain advantage on attack rolls until the start of the war chief's next turn. The war chief can then make one attack as a bonus action.

## OROG

Medium humanoid (orc), chaotic evil

**Armor Class** 18 (*plate*)

**Hit Points** 42 (5d8 + 20)

**Speed** 30 ft.

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

**Skills** Intimidation +5, Survival +2

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

**Languages** Common, Orc

**Challenge** 2 (450 XP)

**Aggressive.** As a bonus action, the orog can move up to its speed toward a hostile creature that it can see.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The orog makes two greataxe attacks.

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

**Javelin.** *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage.

## QUAGGOTH

Medium humanoid (quaggoth), chaotic neutral

**Armor Class** 13 (natural armor)

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

**Speed** 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	6 (-2)	12 (+1)	7 (-2)

**Skills** Athletics +5

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** poisoned

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

**Languages** Undercommon

**Challenge** 2 (450 XP)

**Wounded Fury.** While it has 10 hit points or fewer, the quaggoth has advantage on attack rolls. In addition, it deals an extra 7 (2d6) damage to any target it hits with a melee attack.

## ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The quaggoth makes two attacks.

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

## QUASIT

Tiny fiend (demon, shapeshifter), chaotic evil

**Armor Class** 13

**Hit Points** 7 (3d4)

**Speed** 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
5 (-3)	17 (+3)	10 (+0)	7 (-2)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

**Skills** Stealth +5

**Damage Resistances** cold, fire, lightning, bludgeoning, piercing and slashing from nonmagical weapons.

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** poisoned

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

**Languages** Abyssal, Common

**Challenge** 1 (200 XP)

**Shapeshifter.** The quasit can use its action to polymorph into a beast form that resembles a bat (speed 10 ft. fly 40 ft.), a centipede (40 ft. climb 40 ft.), or a toad (40 ft., swim 40 ft.), or back into its true form. Its statistics are the same in each form, except for the speed changes noted. Any equipment it is wearing or carrying isn't transformed. It reverts to its true form if it dies.

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

## ACTIONS

**Claws (Bite in Beast Form).** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) piercing damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or take 5 (2d4) poison damage and become poisoned for 1 minute. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

**Scare (1/Day).** One creature of the quasit's choice within 20 feet of it must succeed on a DC 10 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened for 1 minute. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, with disadvantage if the quasit is within line of sight, ending the effect on itself on a success.

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

## SHADOW DEMON

Medium fiend (demon), chaotic evil

**Armor Class** 13

**Hit Points** 66 (12d8+12)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
1 (-5)	17 (+3)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)

**Saving Throws** Dex +5, Cha +4

**Skills** Stealth +7

**Damage Vulnerability** radiant

**Damage Resistance** acid, fire, necrotic, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons.

**Damage Immunities** cold, lightning, poison

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

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

**Languages** Abyssal, telepathy 120 ft.

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

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

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

**Shadow Stealth:** While in dim light or darkness, the demon can take the Hide action as a bonus action.

## ACTIONS

**Claws.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 10 (2d6+3) psychic damage or, if the demon had advantage on the attack roll, 17 (4d6+3) psychic damage.

## SPECTER

Medium undead, chaotic evil

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**Armor Class** 12

**Hit Points** 22 (5d8)

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

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

---

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

**Damage Immunities** necrotic, poison

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

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

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

**Challenge** 1 (200 XP)

---

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

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

## ACTIONS

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

## SUCCUBUS

Medium fiend (shapechanger), neutral evil

---

**Armor Class** 15 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 66 (12d8 + 12)

**Speed** 30 ft., fly 60 ft.

---

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	17 (+3)	13 (+1)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	20 (+5)

---

**Skills** Deception +9, Insight +5, Perception +5, Persuasion +9. Stealth +7

**Damage Resistances** cold, fire, lightning, poison, bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons.

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15

**Languages** Abyssal, Common, Infernal, telepathy 60 ft.

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

---

**Telepathic Bond.** The fiend ignores the range restriction on its telepathy when communicating with a creature it has charmed. The two don't even need to be on the same plane of existence.

**Shapechanger.** The fiend can use its action to polymorph into a Small or Medium humanoid, or back into its true form. Without wings, the fiend loses its flying speed. Other than its size and speed, its statistics are the same in each form. Any equipment it is wearing or carrying isn't transformed. It reverts to its true form if it dies.

## ACTIONS

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**Claw (Fiend Form Only).** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) slashing damage.

**Charm.** One humanoid the fiend can see within 30 feet of it must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or be magically charmed for 1 day. The charmed creature obeys the fiend's verbal or telepathic commands. If the target suffers any harm or receives a suicidal command, it can repeat the saving throw, ending the effect on a success. If the target successfully saves against the effect, or if the effect on the target ends, the target is immune to this fiend's Charm for the next 24 hours.

The fiend can only have one target charmed at a time. If it charms another, the effect on the previous target ends.

**Draining Kiss.** The fiend kisses a creature charmed by it or a willing creature. The target must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw against this magic, taking 32 (5d10 + 5) psychic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. The target's 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.

**Etherealness.** The fiend magically enters the Ethereal Plane from the Material Plane, or vice versa.

## UMBER HULK

Large monstrosity, chaotic evil

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**Armor Class** 18 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 93 (11d10 + 33)

**Speed** 30 ft., burrow 20 ft.

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STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	13 (+1)	16 (+3)	9 (-1)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

---

**Senses** darkvision 120 ft., tremorsense 60 ft.

passive Perception 10

**Languages** UMBER HULK

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

---

**Confusing Gaze.** When a creature starts its turn within 30 feet of the umber hulk and is able to see the umber hulk's eyes, the umber hulk can magically force it to make a DC 15 Charisma saving throw, unless the umber hulk is incapacitated.

On a failed saving throw, the creature can't take reactions until the start of its next turn and rolls a d8 to determine what it does during that turn. On a 1 to 4, the creature does nothing. On a 5 or 6, the creature takes no action but uses all its movement to move in a random direction. On a 7 or 8, the creature makes one melee attack against a random creature, or it does nothing if no creature is within reach.

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

**Tunneler.** The umber hulk can burrow through solid rock at half its burrowing speed and leaves a 5-foot-wide, 8-foot-high tunnel in its wake.

### ACTIONS

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**Multiattack.** The umber hulk makes three attacks: two with its claws and one with its mandibles.

**Claw.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d8 + 5) slashing damage.

**Mandibles.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (2d8 + 5) slashing damage.

## VROCK

Large fiend (demon), chaotic evil

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**Armor Class** 15 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 104 (11d10+44)

**Speed** 40 ft., fly 60 ft.

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STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	15 (+2)	18 (+4)	8 (-1)	13 (+1)	8 (-1)

---

**Saving Throws** Dex +5, Wis +4, Cha +2

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

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** poisoned

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

**Languages** Abyssal, telepathy 120 ft.

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

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

### ACTIONS

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**Multiattack.** The vrock makes two attacks: one with its beak and one with its talons.

**Beak.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6+3) piercing damage.

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

**Spores (Recharge 6).** A 15-foot-radius cloud of toxic spores extends out from the vrock. The spores spread around corners. Each creature in that area must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned. While poisoned in this way, a target takes 5 (1d10) poison damage at the start of each of its turns. A target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. Emptying a vial of holy water on the target also ends the effect on it.

**Stunning Screech (1/day).** The vrock emits a horrific screech. Each creature within 20 feet of it that can hear it and that isn't a demon must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or be stunned until the end of the vrock's next turn.

## APPENDIX: UNIQUE NPCs

### DORINA T'SARRAN (DROW VAMPIRE PRIESTESS OF KIARANSALEE)

Medium undead (shapechanger), lawful evil

**Armor Class** 16 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 144 (17d8 + 68)

**Speed** 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	18 (+4)	18 (+4)	17 (+3)	17 (+3)	18 (+4)

**Saving Throws** Dex +9, Wis +8, Cha +9

**Skills** Perception +8, Stealth +9

**Damage Resistance** necrotic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons

**Senses** darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 16

**Languages** Elvish, Undercommon

**Challenge** 15 (13,000 XP)

**Fey Ancestry.** The drow has advantage on saving throws against being charmed, and magic can't put the drow to sleep.

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

**Legendary Resistance (3/Day).** If the vampire fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

**Shapechanger.** If the vampire isn't in sun light or running water, it can use its action to polymorph in to a Tiny bat or a Medium cloud of mist, or back into its true form.

While in bat form, the vampire can't speak, its walking speed is 5 feet, and it has a flying speed of 30 feet. Its statistics, other than its size and speed, are unchanged. Anything it is wearing transforms with it, but nothing it is carrying does. It reverts to its true form if it dies.

While in mist form, the vampire can't take any actions, speak, or manipulate objects. It is weightless, has a flying speed of 20 feet, can hover, and can enter a hostile creature's space and stop there. In addition, if air can pass through a space, the mist can do so without squeezing, and it can't pass through water. It has advantage on Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution saving throws, and it is immune to all nonmagical damage, except the damage it takes from sunlight.

**Misty Escape.** When it drops to 0 hit points outside its resting place, the vampire transforms into a cloud of mist (as in the Shapechanger trait) instead of falling unconscious, provided that it isn't in sun light or running water. If it can't transform, it is destroyed.

While it has 0 hit points in mist form, it can't revert to its vampire form, and it must reach its resting place within 2 hours or be destroyed. Once in its resting place, it reverts to its vampire form. It is then paralyzed until it regains at least 1 hit point. After spending 1 hour in its resting place with 0 hit points, it regains 1 hit point.

**Regeneration.** The vampire regains 20 hit points at the start of

its turn if it has at least 1 hit point and isn't in sun light or running water. If the vampire takes radiant damage or damage from holy water, this trait doesn't function at the start of the vampire's next turn.

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

**Vampire Weaknesses.** The vampire has the following flaws:

**Forbiddance.** The vampire can't enter a residence without an invitation from one of the occupants,

**Harmed by Running Water.** The vampire takes 20 acid damage if it ends its turn in running water.

**Stake to the Heart.** If a piercing weapon made of wood is driven into the vampire's heart while the vampire is incapacitated in its resting place, the vampire is paralyzed until the stake is removed.

**Sunlight Hypersensitivity.** The vampire takes 20 radiant damage when it starts its turn in sunlight. While in sun light, it has disadvantage on attack rolls and ability checks.

**Innate Spellcasting.** The drow's spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell DC 13). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components.

*At will: dancing lights*

*1/day each: darkness, faerie fire*

**Spellcasting.** The drow is a 10th-level spellcaster. Her spellcasting ability is Wisdom (save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks). The drow has the following cleric spells prepared:

*Cantrips (at will): guidance, poison spray, resistance, spare the dying, thaumaturgy*

*1st level (4 slots): bless, cure wounds, guiding bolt, ray of sickness*

*2nd level (3 slots): lesser restoration, spiritual weapon, web*

*3rd level (3 slots): conjure animals (2 giant spiders), dispel magic*

*4th level (3 slots): banishment, freedom of movement*

*5th level (2 slots): flame strike, insect plague*

## ACTIONS

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**Multiattack (Vampire Form Only).** The vampire makes two attacks, only one of which can be a bite attack.

**Slam (Vampire Form Only).** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage. Instead of dealing damage, the vampire can grapple the target (escape DC 18).

**Bite (Bat or Vampire Form Only).** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one willing creature, or a creature that is grappled by the vampire, incapacitated, or restrained. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage plus 10 (3d6) necrotic damage. The target's hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the necrotic damage taken, and the vampire regains hit points equal to that amount. The reduction lasts until the target finishes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0. A humanoid slain in this way and then buried in the ground rises the following night as a vampire spawn under the vampire's control.

**Charm.** The vampire targets one humanoid it can see within 30 feet of it. If the target can see the vampire, the target must succeed on a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw against this magic or be charmed by the vampire. The charmed target regards the vampire as a trusted friend to be heeded and protected. Although the target isn't under the vampire's control, it takes the vampire's requests or actions in the most favorable way it can, and it is a willing target for the vampire's bite attack.

Each time the vampire or the vampire's companions do anything harmful to the target, it can repeat the saving throw, ending the effect on itself on a success. Otherwise, the effect lasts 24 hours or until the vampire is destroyed, is on a different plane of existence than the target, or takes a bonus action to end the effect.

**Children of the Night (1/Day).** The vampire magically calls 2d4 swarms of bats or rats, provided that the sun isn't up. While outdoors, the vampire can call 3d6 wolves instead. The called creatures arrive in 1d4 rounds, acting as allies of the vampire and obeying its spoken commands. The beasts remain for 1 hour, until the vampire dies, or until the vampire dismisses them as a bonus action.

## LEGENDARY ACTIONS

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The vampire can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The vampire regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

**Move.** The vampire moves up to its speed without provoking opportunity attacks.

**Slam.** The vampire makes one unarmed strike.

**Bite (Costs 2 Actions).** The vampire makes one bite attack.

## GRAZ'ZT

Large fiend (demon, shapechanger), chaotic evil

**Armor Class** 20 (*natural armor*)

**Hit Points** 378 (36d10 + 180)

**Speed** 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
22 (+6)	15 (+2)	21 (+5)	23 (+6)	21 (+5)	26 (+8)

**Saving Throws** *Dex* +9, *Con* +12, *Wis* +12

**Skills** *Bluff* +15, *Insight* +12, *Perception* +12, *Persuasion* +15

**Damage Resistances** *cold, fire, lightning*

**Damage Immunities** *poison; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing that is nonmagical*

**Condition Immunities** *charmed, exhaustion, frightened, poisoned*

**Senses** *truesight* 120 ft., *passive Perception* 22

**Languages** *all, telepathy* 120 ft.

**Challenge** 24 (62,000 XP)

**Shapechanger.** Graz'zt can use his action to polymorph into a form that resembles a Medium humanoid, or back into his true form. Aside from his size, his statistics are the same in each form. Any equipment he is wearing or carrying isn't transformed.

**Legendary Resistance (3/Day).** If Graz'zt fails a saving throw, he can choose to succeed instead.

**Magic Resistance.** Graz'zt has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

**Magic Weapons.** Graz'zt's weapon attacks are magical.

**Innate Spellcasting.** Graz'zt's spellcasting ability is Charisma (casting ability +15, spell save DC 23). He can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

*At will:* *charm person, crown of madness, detect magic, dispel magic, dissonant whispers*

*3/day each:* *counterspell, darkness, dominate person, sanctuary, telekinesis, teleport*

*1/day each:* *dominate monster, greater invisibility*

## ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** Graz'zt attacks twice with the *Wave of Sorrow*.

**Wave of Sorrow (Greatsword).** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +13 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 20 (4d6 + 6) slashing damage plus 14 (4d6) acid damage.

**Teleport.** Graz'zt magically teleports, along with any equipment he is wearing or carrying, up to 120 feet to an unoccupied space he can see.

## LEGENDARY ACTIONS

Graz'zt can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. Graz'zt regains spent legendary actions at the start of his turn.

**Attack.** Graz'zt attacks once with the *Wave of Sorrow*.

**Dance, My Puppet!** One creature charmed by Graz'zt that Graz'zt can see must use its reaction to move up to its speed as Graz'zt directs.

**Sow Discord.** Graz'zt casts *crown of madness* or *dissonant whispers*.

**Teleport.** Graz'zt uses his *Teleport* action.

## LAIR ACTIONS

On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), Graz'zt can take a lair action to cause one of the following effects; he can't use the same effect two rounds in a row:

- Graz'zt casts the *command* spell on every creature of his choice in the lair. He needn't see each one, but he must be aware that an individual is in the lair to target that creature. He issues the same command to all the targets.
- Smooth surfaces within the lair become as reflective as a polished mirror. Until a different lair action is used, creatures within the lair have disadvantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks made to hide.



## GRUMBLE, QUAGGOTH THONOT

Medium humanoid (quaggoth), chaotic neutral

**Armor Class** 13 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 66 (6d8 + 18)

**Speed** 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	6 (-2)	12 (+1)	7 (-2)

**Skills** Athletics +5

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** poisoned

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

**Languages** Undercommon

**Challenge** 3 (700 XP)

**Wounded Fury.** While it has 10 hit points or fewer, the quaggoth has advantage on attack rolls. In addition, it deals an extra 7 (2d6) damage to any target it hits with a melee attack.

**Innate Spellcasting (Psionics).** Grumble's spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell DC 11). Grumble can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components.

*At will:* feather fall, mage hand (the hand is invisible)

*1/day each:* cure wounds, enlarge/reduce, heat metal, mirror image

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The quaggoth makes two attacks.

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

## HLEDH HELLSPAWN

Huge giant (demon), lawful evil

**Armor Class** 18 (plate)

**Hit Points** 175 (14d12 + 84)

**Speed** 30 ft., fly 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
25 (+7)	9 (-1)	23 (+6)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)

**Saving Throws** Dex +3, Con +10, Cha +5

**Skills** Athletics +11, Perception +6

**Damage Immunities** fire, poison

**Condition Immunities** poison

**Senses** blindsight 60 ft., passive Perception 16

**Languages** Abyssal, Giant

**Challenge** 10 (5,900 XP)

**Legendary Resistance (1/Day).** If Hledh fails a saving throw, she can choose to succeed instead.

**Innate Spellcasting** Hledh can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components.

*1/day:* darkness

**Spellcasting.** Hledh is a 2nd-level spellcaster. Her spellcasting ability is Wisdom (save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks). Hledh has the following cleric spells prepared:

*Cantrips (at will):* guidance, spare the dying, thaumaturgy

*1st level (3 slots):* bane, guiding bolt, healing word, shield of faith

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** Hledh makes two greatsword attacks.

**Greatsword.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 28 (6d6 + 7) slashing damage.

**Rock Ranged Weapon Attack:** +12 to hit, range 60/240 ft., one target. *Hit:* 29 (4d10 + 7) bludgeoning damage.

## MOTHER

Huge fiend (demon), chaotic evil

**Armor Class** 18 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 189 (18d10 + 90)

**Speed** 40 ft.

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STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	20 (+5)	20 (+5)	18 (+4)	16 (+3)	20 (+5)

---

**Saving Throws** Str +9, Con +10, Wis +8, Cha +10

**Damage Resistance** cold, fire, lightning; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** poisoned

**Senses** darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 13

**Languages** Abyssal, telepathy 120 ft.

**Challenge** 16 (15,000 XP)

---

**Legendary Resistance (3/Day).** If Mother fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

**Magic Resistance.** Mother has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magic effects

**Magic Weapons:** Mother's weapon attacks are magical.

**Reactive:** Mother can take one reaction on every turn in a combat.

## ACTIONS

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**Multiattack.** Mother makes seven attacks: six with its tentacles and one with its tongue.

**Tentacle.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

**Tongue.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 15 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 15 (2d10 + 4) bludgeoning damage. If the target is Large or smaller, it is grappled (escape DC 19). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained, Mother can automatically hit the target with its tongue, and Mother can't make tongue attacks against other targets.

**Teleport.** Mother magically teleports, along with any equipment it is carrying, up to 120 feet to an unoccupied space it can see.

## REACTIONS

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**Parry.** Mother adds 5 to its AC against one melee attack that would hit it. To do so, Mother must see the attacker.

## LEGENDARY ACTIONS

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Mother can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. Mother regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn. Mother consumes a derro worshipers and a spawned demon buds off Mother into an unoccupied space within 60 feet of Mother where it acts normally remaining on this plane until it or Mother is slain. All of the demons bare her mark and are twisted versions of the normal demon oozing slime, gifted with tentacles, dozens of eyes, or some other despicable visual trait.

**Spawn Succubus.** Mother spawns a succubus.

**Spawn Barlgura (Costs 2 Actions).** Mother spawns a barlgura.

**Spawn Vrock (Costs 3 Actions).** Mother spawns a Vrock.

# NEVIK'DETHIG, ABOLETH

Large aberration, lawful evil

**Armor Class** 17 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 135 (18d10 + 36)

**Speed** 10 ft., swim 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
21 (+5)	9 (-1)	15 (+2)	18 (+4)	15 (+2)	18 (+4)

**Saving Throws** Con +6, Int +8, Wis +6

**Skills** History +12, Perception +10

**Senses** darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 20

**Languages** Deep Speech, telepath 120 ft.

**Challenge** 10 (5,900 XP)

**Amphibious.** The aboleth can breathe air and water.

**Mucous Cloud.** While underwater, the aboleth is surrounded by transformative mucus. A creature that touches the aboleth or that hits it with a melee attack while within 5 feet of it must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw. On a failure, the creature is diseased for 1d4 hours. The diseased creature can breathe only underwater.

**Probing Telepathy.** If a creature communicates telepathically with the aboleth, the aboleth learns the creature's greatest desires if the aboleth can see the creature.

## ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The aboleth makes three tentacle attacks.

**Tentacle. Melee Weapon Attack:** +9 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. **Hit:** 12 (2d6 + 5) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or become diseased. The disease has no effect for 1 minute and can be removed by any magic that cures disease. After 1 minute the diseased creature's skin becomes translucent and slimy, the creature can't regain hit points unless it is underwater, and the disease can be removed only by heal or another disease-curing spell of 6th level or higher. When the creature is outside a body of water, it takes 6 (1d12) acid damage every 10 minutes unless moisture is applied to the skin before 10 minutes have passed.

**Tail. Melee Weapon Attack:** +9 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. **Hit:** 15 (3d6 + 5) bludgeoning damage.

**Enslave (3/day).** The aboleth targets one creature it can see within 30 feet of it. The target must succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw or be magically charmed by the aboleth until the aboleth dies or until it is on a different plane of existence from the target. The charmed target is under the aboleth's control and can't take reactions, and the aboleth and the target can communicate telepathically with each other over any distance. Whenever the charmed target takes damage, the target can repeat the saving throw. On a success, the effect ends. No more than once every 24 hours, the target can also repeat the saving throw when it is at least 1 mile away from the aboleth.

## LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The aboleth can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The aboleth regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

**Detect.** The aboleth makes a Wisdom (Perception) check.

**Tail Swipe (3/day).** The aboleth makes one tail attack.

**Psychic Drain (Costs 2 Actions).** One creature charmed by the aboleth takes 10 (3d6) psychic damage, and the aboleth regains hit points equal to the damage the creature takes.

## LAIR ACTIONS

When fighting inside its lair, an aboleth can invoke the ambient magic to take lair actions. On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), the aboleth takes a lair action to cause one of the following effects:

- The aboleth casts phantasmal force (no components required) on any number of creatures it can see within 60 feet of it. While maintaining concentration on this effect, the aboleth can't take other lair actions. If a target succeeds on the saving throw or if the effect ends for it, the target is immune to the aboleth's phantasmal force lair action for the next 24 hours, although such a creature can choose to be affected.
- Pools of water within 90 feet of the aboleth surge outward in a grasping tide. Any creature on the ground within 20 feet of such a pool must succeed on a DC 14 Strength saving throw or be pulled up to 20 feet into the water and knocked prone. The aboleth can't use this lair action again until it has used a different one.
- Water in the aboleth's lair magically becomes a conduit for the creature's rage. The aboleth can target any number of creatures it can see in such water within 90 feet of it. A target must succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw or take 7 (2d6) psychic damage. The aboleth can't use this lair action again until it has used a different one.

## REGIONAL EFFECTS

The region containing an aboleth's lair is warped by the creature's presence, which creates one or more of the following effects:

- Underground surfaces within 1 mile of the aboleth's lair are slimy and wet and are difficult terrain.
- Water sources within 1 mile of the lair are supernaturally fouled. Enemies of the aboleth that drink such water vomit it within minutes.
- As an action, the aboleth can create an illusory image of itself within 1 mile of the lair. The copy can appear at any location the aboleth has seen before or in any location a creature charmed by the aboleth can currently see. Once created, the image lasts for as long as the aboleth maintains concentration, as if concentrating on a spell. Although the image is intangible, it looks, sounds, and can move like the aboleth. The aboleth can sense, speak, and use telepathy from the image's position as if present at that position. If the image takes any damage, it disappears.

# VRAGNI MOONSMITH, MUMMY LORD

Medium undead, lawful evil

**Armor Class** 17 (*natural armor*)

**Hit Points** 97 (13d10 + 39)

**Speed** 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	10 (+0)	17 (+3)	11 (+0)	18 (+4)	16 (+3)

**Saving Throws** Con +8, Int +5, Wis +9, Cha +8

**Skills** History +5, Religion +5

**Damage Vulnerabilities** fire

**Damage Immunities** necrotic, poison; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons

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

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

**Languages** Common, Dwarven

**Challenge** 15 (13,000 XP)

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

**Rejuvenation.** A destroyed mummy lord gains a new body in 24 hours if its heart is intact, regaining all its hit points and becoming active again. The new body appears within 5 feet of the mummy lord's heart.

**Spellcasting.** The mummy lord is a 10th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 17, +9 to hit with spell attacks). The mummy lord has the following cleric spells prepared:

*Cantrips (at will): sacred flame, thaumaturgy*

*1st level (4 slots): command, guiding bolt, shield of faith*

*2nd level (3 slots): hold person, silence, spiritual weapon*

*3rd level (3 slots): animate dead, dispel magic*

*4th level (3 slots): divination, guardian of faith*

*5th level (2 slots): contagion, insect plague*

*6th level (1 slot): harm*

## ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The mummy can use its Dreadful Glare and makes one attack with its rotting fist.

**Rotting Fist.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (3d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage plus 21 (6d6) necrotic damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 16 Constitution saving throw or be cursed with mummy rot. The cursed target can't regain hit points, and its hit point maximum decreases by 10 (3d6) for every 24 hours that elapse. If the curse reduces the target's hit point maximum to 0, the target dies, and its body turns to dust. The curse lasts until removed by the *remove curse* spell or other magic.

**Dreadful Glare.** The mummy lord targets one creature it can see within 60 feet of it. If the target can see the mummy lord, it must succeed on a DC 16 Wisdom saving throw against this magic or become frightened until the end of the mummy's next turn. If the target fails the saving throw by 5 or more, it is also paralyzed for the same duration. A target that succeeds on the saving throw is immune to the Dreadful Glare of all mummies and mummy lords for the next 24 hours.

## LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The mummy lord can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The mummy lord regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

- **Attack.** The mummy lord makes one attack with its rotting fist or uses its Dreadful Glare.
- **Blinding Dust.** Blinding dust and sand swirls magically around the mummy lord. Each creature within 5 feet of the mummy lord must succeed on a DC 16 Constitution saving throw or be blinded until the end of the creature's next turn.
- **Blasphemous Word (Costs 2 Actions).** The mummy lord utters a blasphemous word. Each non-undead creature within 10 feet of the mummy lord that can hear the magical utterance must succeed on a DC 16 Constitution saving throw or be stunned until the end of the mummy lord's next turn.
- **Channel Negative Energy (Costs 2 Actions).** The mummy lord magically unleashes negative energy. Creatures within 60 feet of the mummy lord, including ones behind barriers and around corners, can't regain hit points until the end of the mummy lord's next turn.
- **Whirlwind of Sand (Costs 2 Actions).** The mummy lord magically transforms into a whirlwind of sand, moves up to 60 feet, and reverts to its normal form. While in whirlwind form, the mummy lord is immune to all damage, and it can't be grappled, petrified, knocked prone, restrained, or stunned. Equipment worn or carried by the mummy lord remains in its possession.

## LAIR ACTIONS

On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), the mummy lord takes a lair action to cause one of the following effects; the mummy lord can't use the same effect two rounds in a row.

- Each undead creature in the lair can pinpoint the location of each living creature within 120 feet of it until initiative count 20 on the next round.
- Each undead in the lair has advantage on saving throws against effects that turn undead until initiative count 20 on the next round.
- Until initiative count 20 on the next round, any non-undead creature that tries to cast a spell of 4th level or lower in the mummy lord's lair is wracked with pain. The creature can choose another action, but if it tries to cast the spell, it must make a DC 16 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, it takes 1d6 necrotic damage per level of the spell, and the spell has no effect and is wasted.

## REGIONAL EFFECTS

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A mummy lord's temple or tomb is warped in any of the following ways by the creature's dark presence:

- Food instantly molders and water instantly evaporates when brought into the lair. Other nonmagical drinks are spoiled--wine turning to vinegar, for instance.
- Divination spells cast within the lair by creatures other than the mummy lord have a 25 percent chance to provide misleading results, as determined by the DM. If a divination spell already has a chance to fail or become unreliable when cast multiple times, that chance increases by 25 percent. ..
- A creature that takes treasure from the lair is cursed until the treasure is returned. The cursed target has disadvantage on all saving throws. The curse lasts until removed by a *remove curse* spell or other magic.

# DM APPENDIX: NPC

## SUMMARY

This section is provided to the Dungeon Master to help keep track of the various NPCs present in the adventure.

**Bexron (BEX-ron).** Male glabrezu. Lazy and insane.

**Coralynn Winsail (COR-a WIN-Sail).** Female human master of hounds; uncomfortable around humans and devoted to her dogs. Dislikes soldiers.

**Chaab (CHAB).** Male human. Rough, deceptively smart. Member of the Zhentarim.

**Dornal Whitebeard (DOOR-nel White-beard).** Male dwarf. Storyteller, loves the finer things in life, gives extravagant gifts. Member of the Lords Alliance.

**Elanil Elassidil (EL-uh-kneel uh-LASS-ih-deel).** Female elf. Bard extraordinaire and member of the Harpers.

**Elisande (ELL-ih-sand).** Human female. A young and thoroughly disquieting girl. Introduced in DDEX1-3 Shadows over the Moonsea and appeared repeatedly. Elisande is seldom seen without her goat, and is revealed at the end of the adventure as a Chosen of Cyric.

**Goat (GOTE).** Female goat. Goat eat food. Food goat food. Food. Also revealed at the end of the adventure as Ausuriel, the Herald of Shiallia, exarch of Mielikki.

**Graz'zt (Graz-ZIT).** Male Demon Lord. The Dark Prince, demon lord, hedonistic, shocking, and just short of god-like.

**Grumble (Grum-BIL).** Male Quaggoth. Thonot of the quaggoth slaves.

**Hledh Hellspawn (Hey-LED Hell-spawn).** Female half-demon fire giant. Granddaughter of Graz'zt and ruler of Maerimydra.

**Huum (Whom).** Male illithid. Leader of the Illithids of Ryxyg. Dislikes Solom Ned'razak.

**Joiifericus (Joy-if-R-CUS).** Female succubus. Teasing nursemaid of Graz'zt's children.

**Maforie Chûmavh (May-FOUR-EE Chew-Mah).** Female drow elf. Shy slave of Bexron and heir to the rulership of Maerimydra.

**Matliedun (MAT-lee-done).** Male cambion. Blood of Graz'zt and master of the Undying Temple security.

**Mother (Mother).** Female demon. Daughter of Graz'zt,

patron of the derro of Ravagestone, and mother of thousands of twisted demonic children

**Nevik'Dethig (Nev-IK-death-ig).** Male aboleth. Ruler of the Underdoor.

**Olisara Lightsong (O-lee-sar-ah Light-song);** female moon elf, Harper, faction representative to the Moonsea region. Dry sense of humor and likes to disconcert others by displaying how much she knows about them.

**Saradreza Oussmtor (Sar-ah-drez-ah OOS-um-tor);** female drow elf. Charismatic and warm-hearted high priestess of Eilistraee.

**Seranolla the Whisperer (SIR-uh-NOLE-uh).** Female gnome representative of the Emerald Enclave. Nervous, and rarely speaks above a whisper.

**Solom Ned'razak (SOLE-um NED-rizz-ack).** Male drow archwizard and the deposed ruler of Szith Morcane.

**Sovereign Agaricus (uh-GARE-uh-kuss).** Uncorrupted Sovereign of the largest circle of myconids of Sporedome.

**Squallocks (Squall-ox).** Female Vrock, Advisor to the Dark Prince.

**Verix (Vair-IX).** Male shadow demon. Overseer of the slaves.

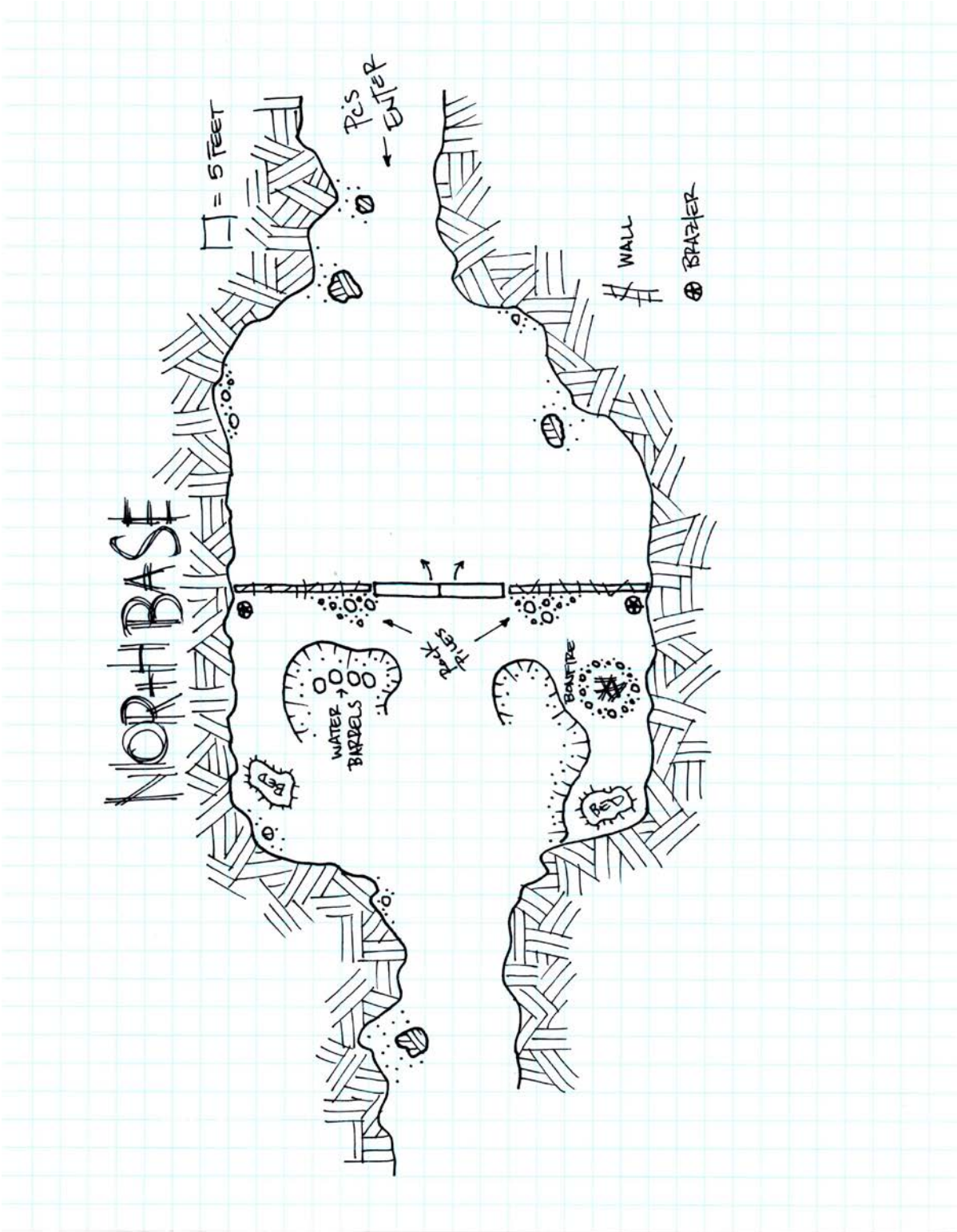
**Vilcuum (Vil-COOM).** Male illithid. Arrogant and cowardly.

**Vragni Moonsmith (Vrag-NEE Moon-smith).** Male dwarf mummy lord. Ancestor of Glenna Moonsmith from the Plodding plow. Obsessed with killing drow.

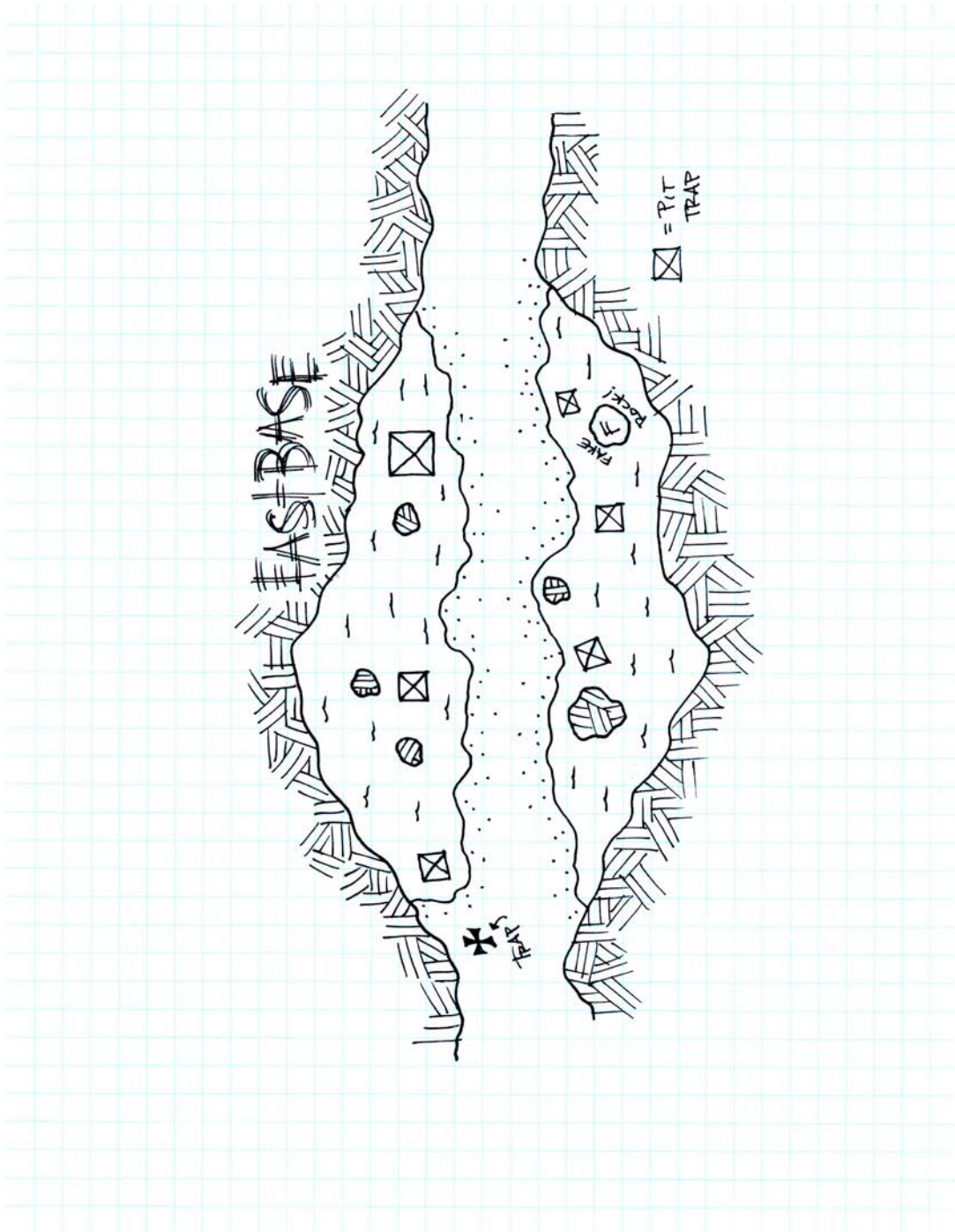
**Vuhm Yestral (VOOM YES-strill).** Male human officer within the Red Plumes, the military group charged with the security of Hillsfar. Kind and devoted to the citizens of Hillsfar. Member of the Lords Alliance. Formerly in charge of the construction of the fortress defending the Waydown and Guard Commandant of the Wall surrounding Yûlash. Now First Lord of New Hillsfar.

**Zern Xerkstil (ZERX-still).** Half-orc male. Paladin of Helm and has been given charge by his superiors to make sure that only the strongest are chosen to go into the Underdark to complete this mission. Speaks constantly of the infiltration of Devils and the need for physical prowess to slay them. Member of the Order of the Gauntlet.

# APPENDIX: PART 2 - NORTH BASE MAP

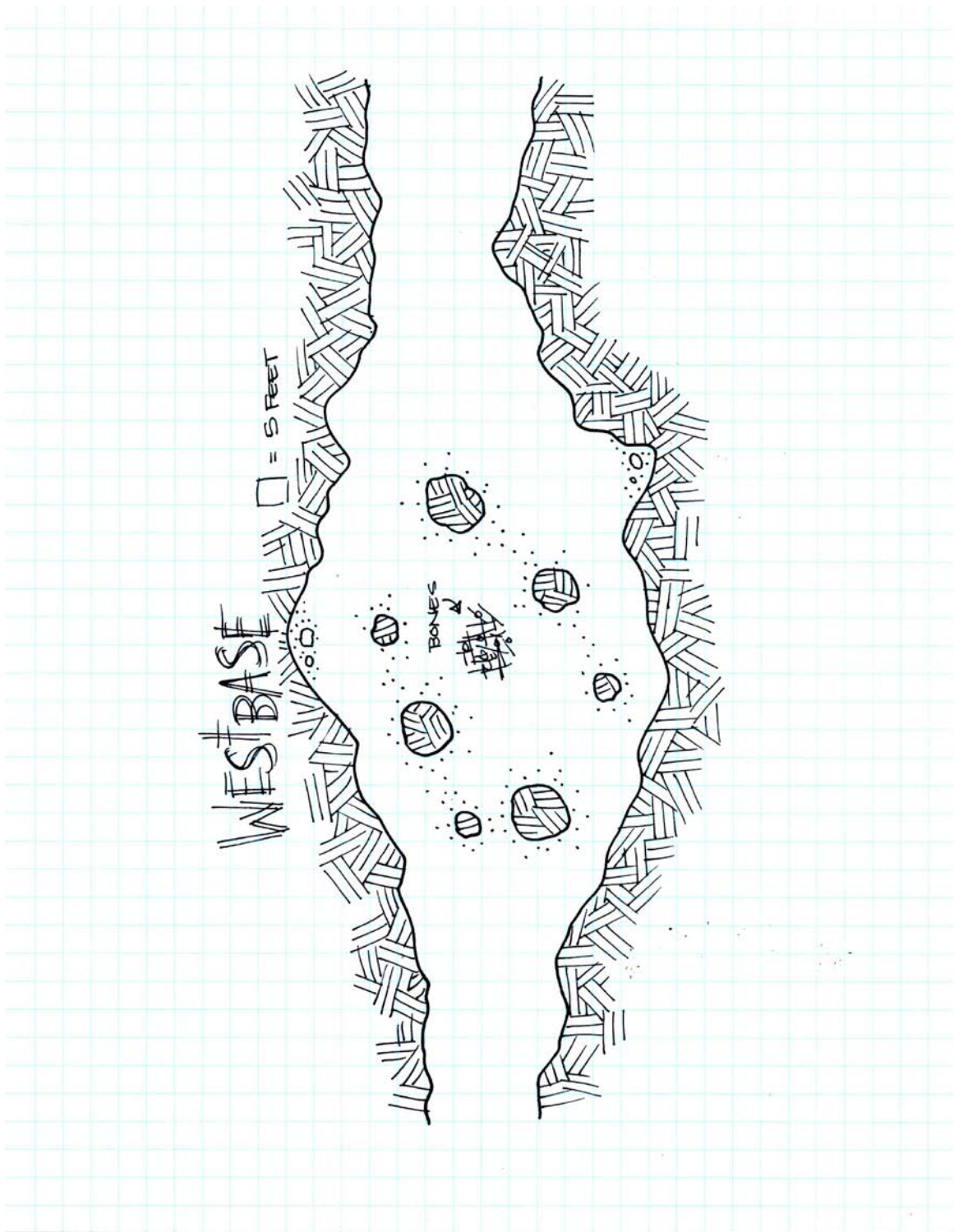


# APPENDIX: PART 2 - EAST BASE MAP

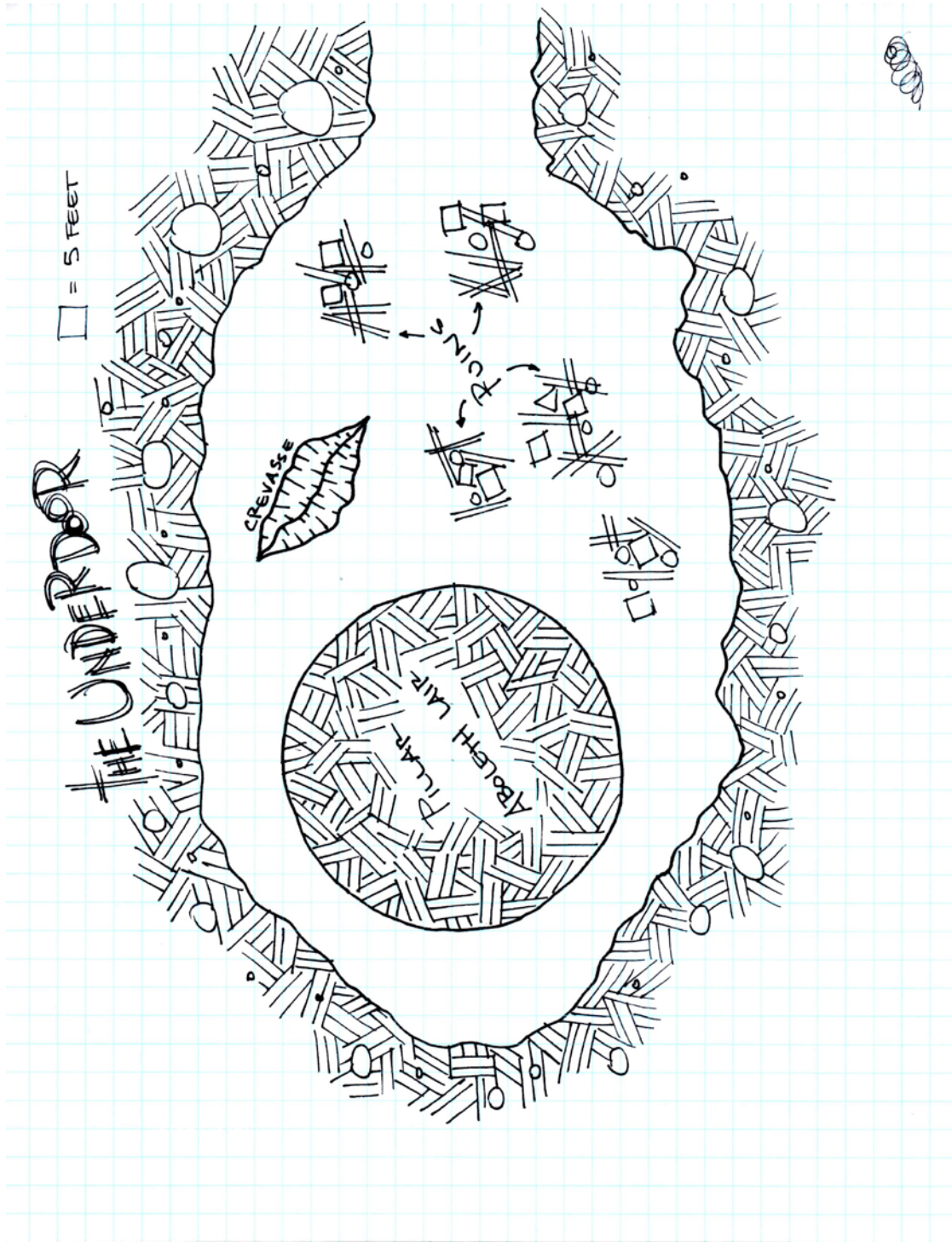




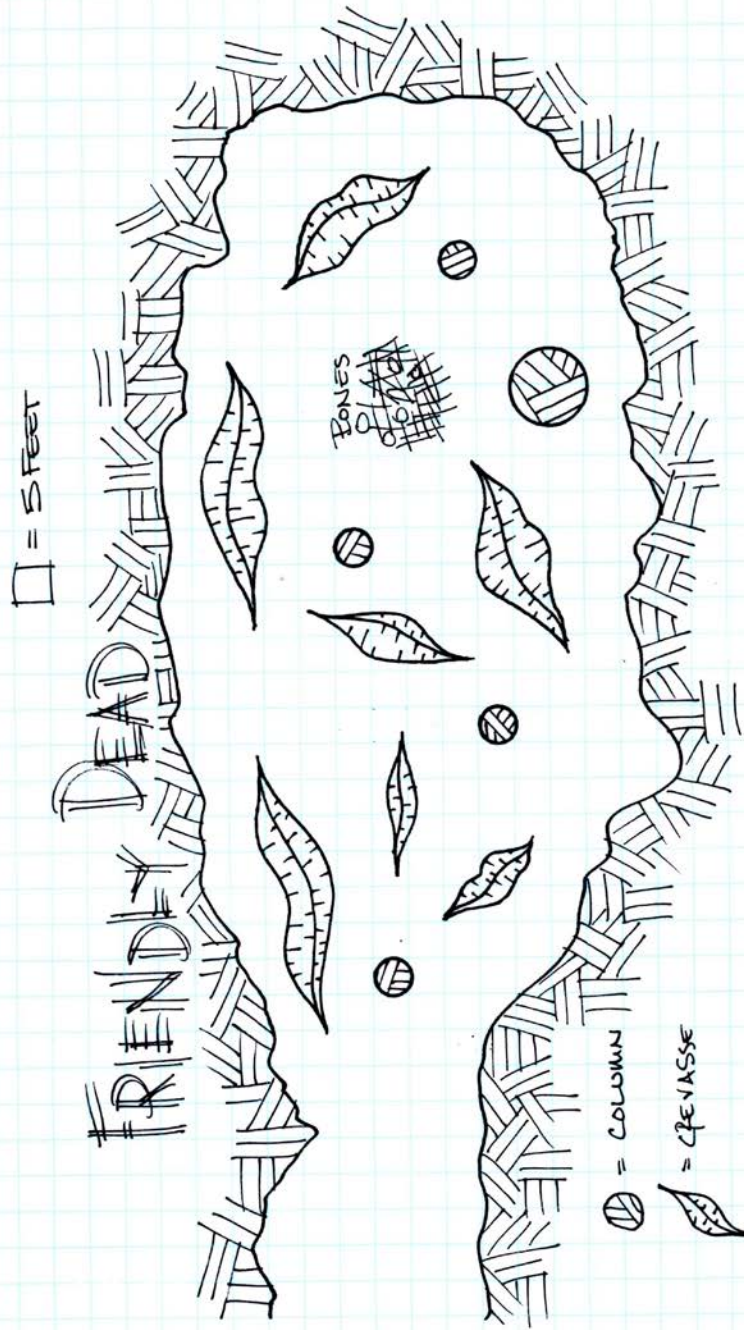
# APPENDIX: PART 2 - WEST BASE MAP



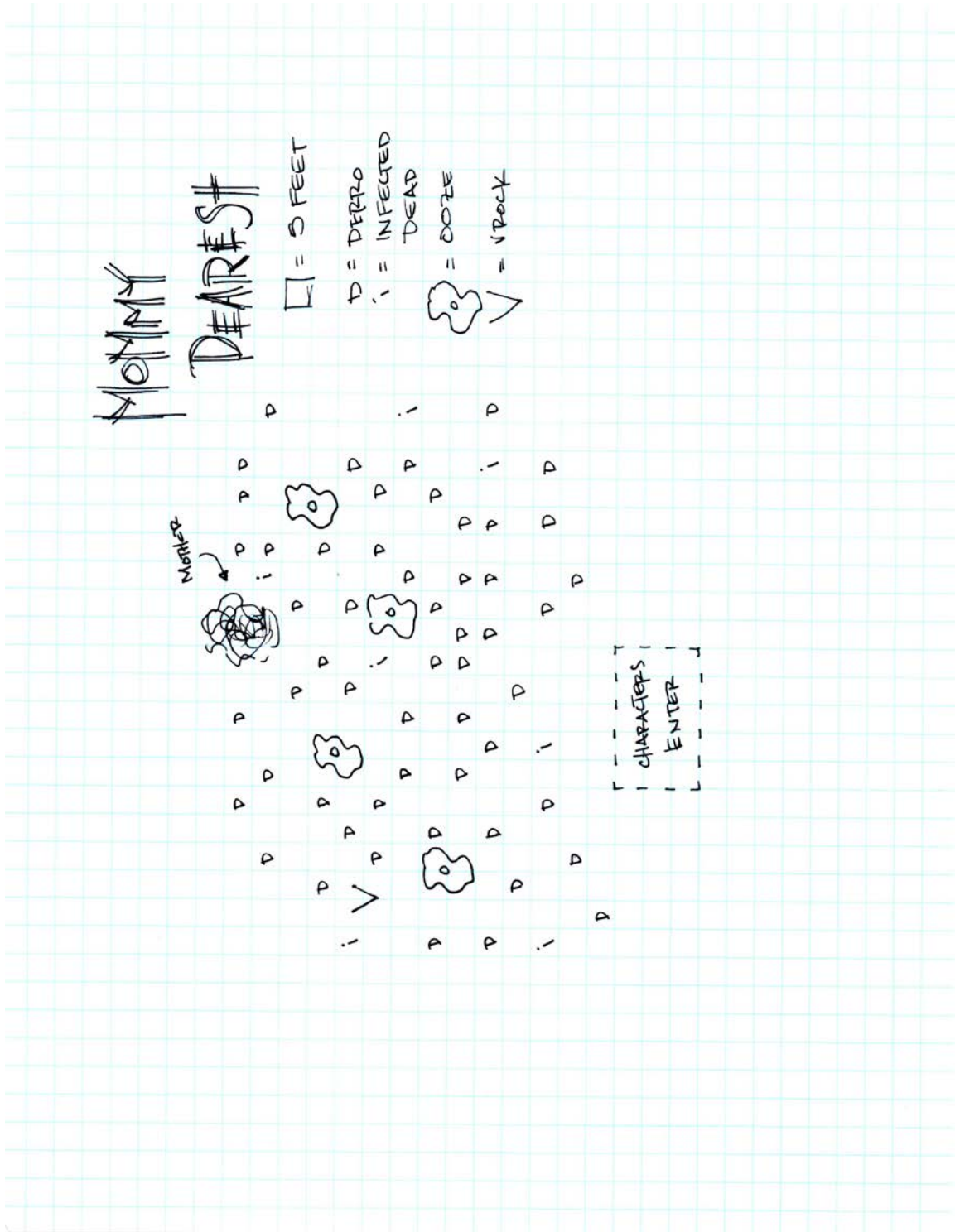
# APPENDIX: PART 2 - UNDERDOOR MAP



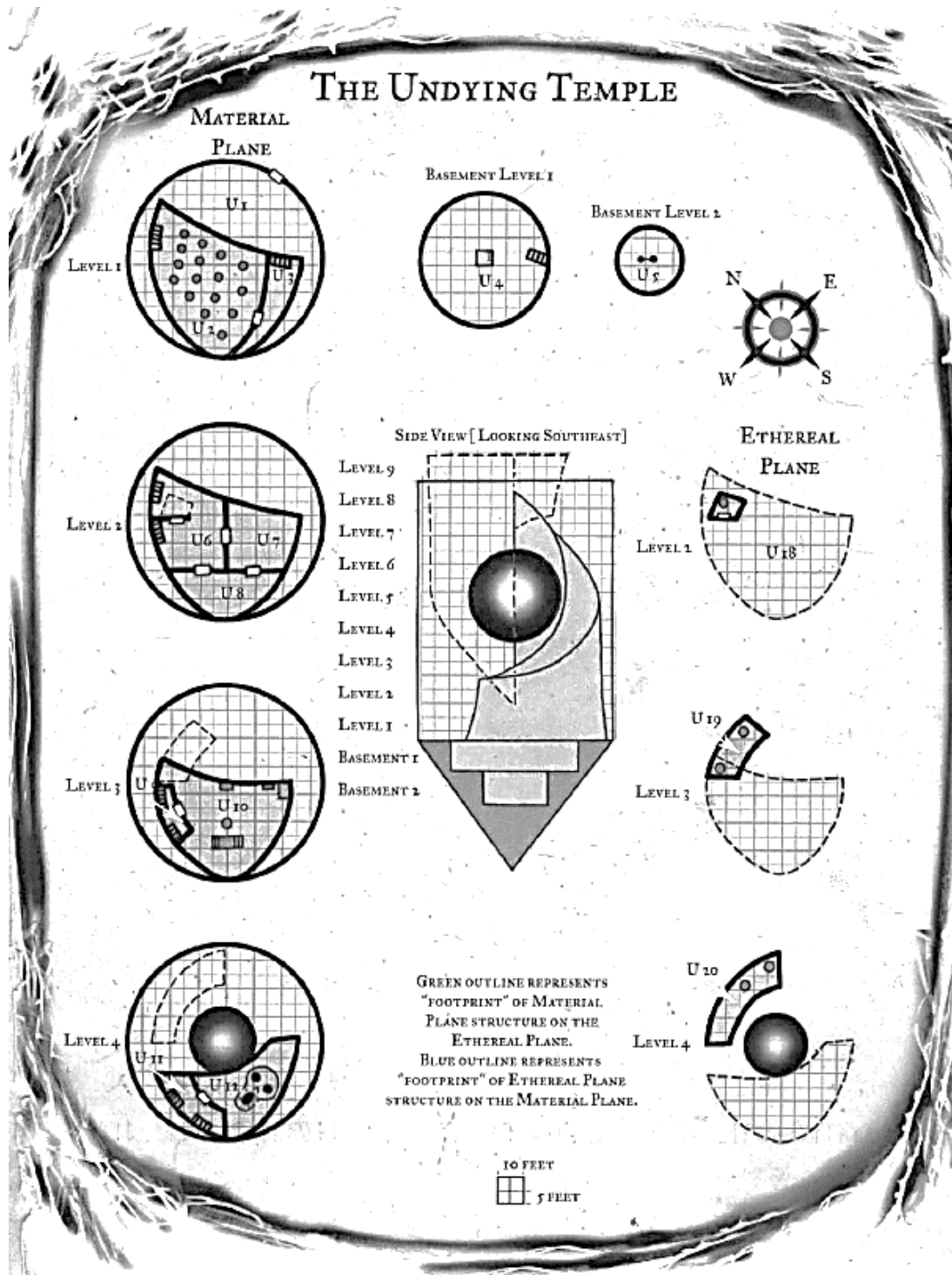
# APPENDIX: PART 2 - FRIENDLY DEAD MAP



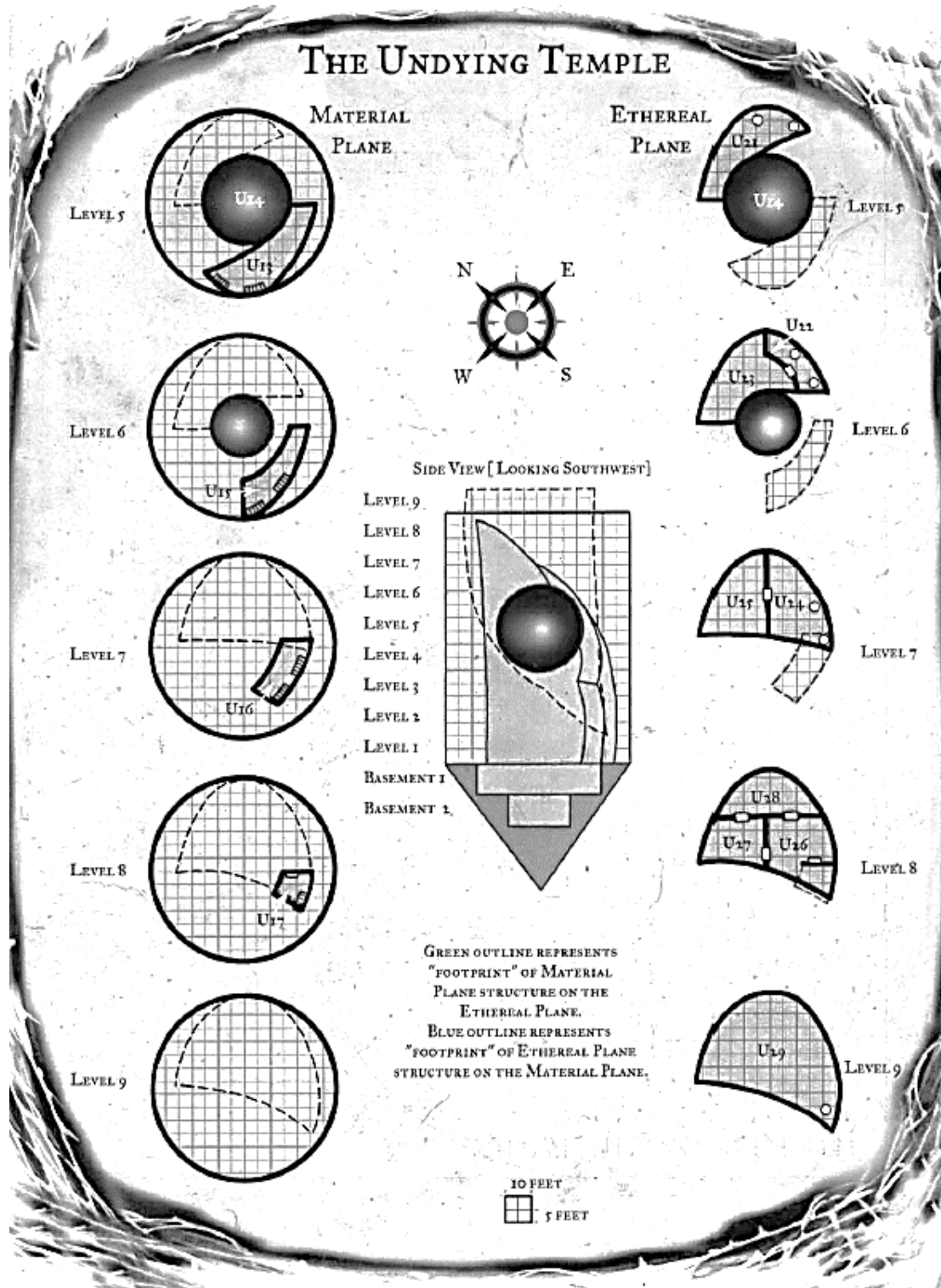
# APPENDIX: PART 5 - MOMMY DEAREST MAP



# APPENDIX: PART 6 - UNDYING TEMPLE MAP 1



# APPENDIX: PART 6 - UNDYING TEMPLE MAP 2



# APPENDIX: MAERIMYDRA MAP



# PLAYER HANDOUT ONE: FACTION SECRET MISSIONS

## ORDER OF THE GAUNTLET

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Nearby is a cavern known as the Cave of Black Whispers where a large group of dwarves were once surprised and slaughtered by the drow of Szith Morcane. The cavern has since been haunted by their dead. What the others do not know is that the leader of the dwarves has risen as a mummy of some power, and it is his evil that forces the dwarves to languish in undeath. A relative, Glenna Moonsmith, the owner of the Plodding Plow Inn in The Stop has approached us and begged us to lay her ancestor to rest, permanently.

**Faction Special Mission:** Kill the mummy Vragni Moonsmith at any cost.

## HARPERS

---

Solom Ned'razak, the archmage of Szith Morcane is the key to keeping our alliance together with his fellow drow. The drow know much about Maerimydra and are also skilled warriors. We must protect him at all cost so we can keep the drow in the alliance and keep them from potentially becoming another foe. Unfortunately we have heard that Dorina T'sarran, the former ruler of Szith Morcane and a vampire drow cleric of Kiaransalee, has been seen in the area and vowed revenge upon Solom. We cannot afford her meddling.

**Faction Special Mission:** Preserve the drow alliance and protect Solom Ned'razak at all costs.

## EMERALD ENCLAVE

---

The river which some are calling the Underdoor has opened recently due to the seismic activity centered around Mulmaster. What others have not noticed is that the water is fouled and divinations tell us that an ancient and unnatural creature is the cause. The demons are bad enough, but that enemy is soon to be dealt with. We cannot allow another evil to take their place. You must eliminate this threat to the natural world.

**Faction Special Mission:** Kill the powerful creature in the Underdoor, no matter the cost.

## LORDS' ALLIANCE

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The drow of House Chûmavh were once Maerimydra's rulers. While most of them were wiped out, our spies hear whispers that a newborn was saved by a Glabrezu servant of Graz'zt named Bexron. If she lived, one can only imagine what horrors have befallen her, but she still has her uses. The Lords' Alliance plans to open significant trade with Maerimydra and the other Underdark enclaves once the fighting is down. If we had a drow noblewoman as our front, it would greatly improve our position.

**Faction Special Mission:** Rescue Maforie Chûmavh and keep her alive.

## ZHENTARIM

---

The Zhentarim has some of the best operatives, but without good stock, not all of them work out. Word is that many of Graz'zt's children are in the city. The older ones will be set in their ways, but if we could get our hands on a newborn, we could raise them right; a true member of the Black Network with all the powers of a demon lord. That would be a powerful operative indeed. There are rumors that these children might be found somewhere in or near Castle Maerimydra.

**Faction Special Mission:** Rescue a newborn child of Graz'zt and keep it alive.



## PLAYER HANDOUT TWO: PRE-ASSAULT OBJECTIVES

Before the assault to breach the gates, there are six objectives to prepare or position the allies for the attack. A skilled, highly mobile team could potentially participate in **two** of these objectives.

**Northern Forward Base:** In preparation for the attack on the Northern Gate a group will approach a nearby cave and eliminate any giants or demons present before they can warn the city of the alliance's approach. Since this path passes near Szith Morcane and it is the main approach to the city, scouts have warned to expect this cave to be well defended. Groups that choose this objective are well positioned to participate in the attack on the Fungus Farms during the assault.

**Eastern Forward Base:** In preparation for the attack on the Eastern Gate a group will approach a nearby cave to set up a secondary base. This approach is particularly poorly drained, and mud and water should be expected. It is also closest to the Slave District, so it is likely you will find humanoid hordes in the area. Groups that choose this objective are well positioned to participate in the attack on the Slave District during the assault.

**Western Forward Base:** In preparation for the attack on the Western Gate a group will approach a nearby cave to set up a secondary base. No information has been retrieved from these tunnels. All of the scouts sent to this area have not returned. Groups that choose this objective are well positioned to participate in the attack on the Six-Fingered Courtyard during the assault.

**Fortify Gains:** A group, once having captured one of the Forward Base positions, will fortify it. This will involve not only building defenses but holding the position while doing so. If the party chooses this objective, it must be the second encounter, since a base must be captured first (by you or NPC allies).

**The Underdoor:** The various shifts in the rivers and tunnels over the last century have revealed another possible approach. The Lake of Blood, just passed the Eastern Gate is fed by two underground rivers. It is possible that access to one of them may have been discovered. Those accepting this mission will attempt to take advantage of this newly discovered river and scout its length to determine if indeed it is one of those that feeds the Lake of Blood. If so, it will potentially providing a secret way into the city for spies or saboteurs and give the team a chance to attack the Slave District or the Coliseum. If the party chooses this objective, it must be the second encounter, since you will be inside the city if you succeed.

**The Friendly Dead:** Nearby is a cavern known as the Cave of Black Whispers where a large group of surface dwarves were once surprised and slaughtered by the drow of Szith Morcane. The cavern has since been haunted by their dead. It is possible that the dead might be put to a useful purpose and turned against the giants if they can be coaxed from their tombs. If the party chooses this objective, it must be the first encounter, since you will be far the city whether you succeed or fail.

## PLAYER HANDOUT THREE: BREACH OBJECTIVES

Once the assault has begun, teams of skilled operatives will be inserted behind the enemy lines to disrupt the enemy's ability to respond. They will choose **one** objective and try to finish it as quickly as possible.

**Fungus Farms:** The Fungus Farms are one of the main food sources of Maerimydra. Quaggoth and orc slaves are overseen by a few fire giants, ogres and the occasional lower demon. The work is poorly organized and the fields are not well tended. However, the hordes of slaves could spell difficulty for the attack if they are forced to defend the city. A team needs to take out the overseers before they can rally the slaves. This objective is closest to the North Gate.

**Slave District:** The Slave District is home to most of the drow, quaggoth and orc slaves that do much of the work throughout the city. The district's residents are on their own for food, waste collection, and building, which results in a cross between a decaying village and waste dump. A team needs to terrify and disrupt the slaves or win them over to the allies' cause before they can be rallied to defend the city. This objective is closest to the East Gate.

**Six-Fingered Courtyard:** The Courtyard of Lloth has long since been defiled and converted to a place of worship of the Dark Prince. Slaves and demons have been seen in large numbers here. A team needs to find out what they are up to and put a stop to it. This objective is closest to the West Gate.

**The Coliseum:** Quaggoth slaves work in the Coliseum feeding the beasts. While the slaves are not especially dangerous, they need to be dealt with or run off before they can free whatever horrible beasts are housed in the coliseum. This objective is closest to the Underdoor.

## RESULTS CODE: FEBRUARY-MARCH 2016

If you are DMing this adventure during the months of February or March 2016, please show your players this page. The QR code below can be scanned, and will allow them to give feedback and results on the adventure to influence the storyline in the future!

If a player does not have a mobile device, please tell them to head to [dndadventurersleague.org/results](http://dndadventurersleague.org/results) to enter their results.

