



# ADVENTURERS LEAGUE™



# A COG IN THE WHEEL

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*Adventure Code: CORE 1-2*



With the identity of a murderer confirmed, heroes are needed to track it down to its home. As it turns out, it might be a longer journey than first imagined. Part Two of *The Chaos in Melvaunt*.

*A four-hour adventure for 1<sup>st</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> level characters*

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# INTRODUCTION

Welcome to *A Cog in the Wheel*, a D&D Adventurers League adventure, Part Two of *The Chaos in Melvaunt Trilogy*

*This adventure is designed for three to seven 1<sup>st</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> level characters, and is optimized for five 2<sup>nd</sup>-level characters. The adventure is set in the Moonsea region of the Forgotten Realms, in the city of Melvaunt.*

## The D&D Adventurers League

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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 continues their story.

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.

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.

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[www.dndadventurersleague.org](http://www.dndadventurersleague.org)

## Preparing the Adventure

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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 running this adventure—such as notecards, a DM screen, miniatures, and battlemaps.
- If you know the composition of the group beforehand, you can make adjustments as noted throughout the adventure.

## Before Play at the Table

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Ask the players to provide you with relevant character information:

- 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, etc.)

Players that have characters outside the adventure's level range **cannot participate in the adventure with those characters**. Players with ineligible characters can make a new 1<sup>st</sup>-level character or use a pregenerated character. Players can play an adventure they previously played or ran as a Dungeon Master, but not with the same character.

Ensure that each player has an official adventure logsheet for his or her character (if not, get one from the organizer). The player fills out the adventure name, session number, date, and your name and DCI number. In addition, the player also fills in the starting values for experience, gold, downtime, renown, and number of permanent magic items. He or she 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. Alternatively, 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 make adjustments for smaller/larger groups, and characters of higher/lower levels than the optimized group. Most of the time, this is used

for combat encounters.

You may adjust the adventure beyond the guidelines given. 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 may want to make it a little harder. Therefore, five categories of party strength have been created for you to use as a guide. 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 2nd-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

## Running the Adventure

As the Dungeon Master 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. Doing so 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 one. 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. Doing so 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

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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
- 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

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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.

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

## Disease, Death, and Recovery

Sometimes bad things happen, and characters get poisoned, diseased, or are killed. 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 is killed 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 1<sup>st</sup>-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 experience and rewards from that session (both those earned prior to and after death during that session) and cannot replay that episode or adventure with that character again. Once a character reaches 5<sup>th</sup> level, this option is no longer available.

## Adventure Background

Melvaunt is a city of merchants and craftsmen on the northern coast of the Moonsea. The open market at the center of the city boasts a selection of goods as impressive as anything found in



Waterdeep or Amn, with a particular focus on metalwork. Between the sacking of Zhentil Keep and the recent troubles in its two biggest rival cities of Mulmaster and Hillsfar, Melvaunt has been relatively undisturbed for a number of years.

Modrons are creatures of absolute law and order. They are native to the plane of Mechanus, where they tend its eternal gears and follow the dictates of Primus. However, one group of modrons have recently gone rogue after they were exposed to an influx of pure chaos energy. Under the malign direction of this chaotic impulse, the modron hierarchy has decided to invade Melvaunt. Unlike the Great Modron March, which happens every 289 years and is a reconnaissance mission, these rogue modrons are planning to conquer or destroy the city. They have constructed a portal from Mechanus and are readying their invasion force.

In the previous adventure CORE1-1 *A Scream in the Night*, a chaos-soaked modron malfunctioned and went on a killing spree to gain the attention of the Melvaunt authorities. Adventurers chased the modron back to the portal, but the portal closed, leaving only the modron's arm behind as evidence of its presence in the city.

Now, the authorities of Melvaunt are trying to decide how to manage the portal and the threat that it poses to the city.

## Overview

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The adventurers start in the city of Melvaunt, where they are hired by the newly promoted Captain Eledstra to hunt down the modron assassin and enter the portal to see what threat lies on the other side. The portal leads to the plane of Mechanus, a relatively safe place, not known to generate as much trouble as places like the Abyss or the Nine Hells.

When the characters step through the portal, they enter a battle between a group of modron and several chaos slashers. **Part 1** deals with the fight and its aftermath. Characters learn that some of the modrons are malfunctioning, and the lone survivor of the fight thinks the characters are modrons as well.

After the fight, the characters spot a modron army compound in the distance, and a small group of humans observing them. If they go to the humans, the adventurers find two curious mages studying the modrons. The mages are happy to discuss science, providing important information. Regardless, the trail of the assassin leads to the modron camp. **Part 2** describes the environment and provides the details on the two mages.

**Part 3** involves infiltrating the modron camp, retrieving the plans of the modron, and potentially dealing with the assassin. This encounter is rather freeform, and the characters have to plan on how to get inside and find what they are looking for.

At some point the characters trigger an alarm, and the characters have limited time before they are overrun by an army of modrons. Fleeing from the camp with the modrons hot on their trail is described in **Part 4**.

When returning through the portal back to Melvaunt, the characters find a group of modrons guarding it. Alerted to the intruders by their leader, they try to stop the adventurers from leaving Mechanus in **Part 5**. Depending on how the characters did in Part 4, reinforcements might arrive. Hopefully the characters leave through the portal before they are overwhelmed to report their findings to the Melvaunt authorities.

## Law of Averages

An optional rule in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* states that creatures in Mechanus always use the average damage results, rounded down, for attack and spells. As a DM, you should use this rule for the monsters throughout the adventure. Some players really love rolling dice, but at the same time using the rule strengthens the alien feel of the place. Only enforce the rule on the players if it is more fun for everybody involved. If you use it, determine the average damage for the typical attacks made by the characters in advance and have the players write it down.

Note that you could wave the rule in Part 1 due to the influence of the chaos slashers, and use it later when dealing with the modrons.

## Adventure Hooks

Characters who played the first adventure of the trilogy, CORE1-1 *A Scream in the Night*, naturally progress into the second part. Forty-eight hours have passed since the adventurers watched the modron assassin, C1e7i5, escape through the portal, sans its arm. Sergeant Eledstra has been promoted to Captain, and the Superintendent of the Melvaunt City Watch has placed her in charge of the investigation. Eledstra has consulted with a sage and determined the portal will open again, very briefly, in a few hours. She asks the adventurers to continue the investigation by going through the portal.

New characters are approached by their faction contacts or other friends and patrons. They are told that a captain in the City Watch is in over her head in an investigation and is looking for help.

Characters native to Melvaunt might alternatively have heard about the grisly murder(s) and have volunteered to help capture the culprit. Although, depending on the background, it might simply have been an order from a superior.

## Briefing

Whether the adventurers are continuing the story from the previous adventure or coming into the trilogy fresh, they are called into the office of the newly promoted (against her wishes) Captain LeCampe Eledstra. Just 48 hours ago she was a sergeant, but she was promoted by the leader of the City Watch, Superintendent Lahn Joden, because of her work in dealing with the assassin in the city.

When the adventurers enter the office of Captain Eledstra, read:

An older woman tugs uncomfortably at a new captain's uniform as you enter. [If they played CORE1-1 *A Scream in the Night*, she welcomes the adventurers by name, then continues.]

"To make a very long story short, Melvaunt has a potential problem," she sighs, running her fingers through her unruly short gray hair. "There is a magical doorway in the city. The experts are calling it," she consults a notebook on her desk, "an asynchronous intermittent interdimensional portal. I guess that means a magical door to other worlds that is sometimes there and sometimes isn't. I call it a probable end to my career and a certain threat to the city."

She itches the back of her head thoughtfully, ponders the ceiling, and then continues. "I am in charge of studying the doorway, assessing the threat, and making sure it doesn't get worse. Right now, the problem is this: the threat seems to be on the other side. So I need a group willing to enter this doorway, assess the threat, and report back. And, if possible, to bring back the creature that was killing cityfolk here."

If the adventurers did not play CORE1-1 *A Scream in the Night*, use these bullet points to explain the story so far:

- A note was delivered to the City Watch describing a murder about to take place. When Eledstra arrived at the scene, the murder had already happened. Another note warned of another murder in an hour.
- Adventurers on the scene were deputized

to investigate. After two more murders (or attempted murders), these adventurers chased the killer to a magical portal in the side of the Finger of the Gods, a lighthouse near the docks.

- The killer escaped through the portal as it closed, but an appendage of the killer was left behind, which turned out to be a thin metal arm.

Now Eledstra picks up with new information:

- A local sage knowledgeable in magic and the planes has been consulted, and she believes that the portal leads to Mechanus, a relatively safe outer-plane of absolute law and order. As long as visitors don't break any laws, the natives are likely to leave them alone.
- The natives are modrons, creatures with a hive-like mind and strict hierarchy. They maintain the gears of Mechanus and usually show little interest in other places, although there always have been exceptions.
- The murderer fled through the portal, but it left behind a piece of torn metal. According to divinations it is part of its body. The captain provides an ensorcelled item that always points toward the culprit.
- The natives of Mechanus should be helpful in tracking down criminals, although care should be taken. The murderer might have been under orders or may have killed under circumstances that would not be considered a crime in Mechanus. Mechanus is a place of pure law, not of good or evil, and if a law allows the act, it is perfectly fine.
- Characters should not stick around too long in Mechanus, since it is likely to influence their personalities toward law and order.
- The characters gain official papers, stating they work under orders of the authorities of Melvaunt with the intent to capture criminals. The captain is willing to change the exact wording. She is well aware the nature of the documentation impacts how the natives react to the characters' presence.
- Orc warbands have been sighted moving toward Melvaunt from the badlands of Thar. While this is not uncommon, the Melvaunt Council of Lords wishes to keep the City Watch

on alert. That means adventurers are Eledstra's only recourse to reconnoiter the portal.

- The characters are offered 500 gp total as a reward.

### Roleplaying Captain Eledstra

LeCampe Eledstra is a human of late middle age. She's a decent woman who takes her job of protecting Melvaunt's ordinary citizens seriously. Eledstra is tall, thin, and lanky with a shock of unruly white hair through which she runs his fingers constantly whenever she's trying to think. She is very bad at playing political games, which is why she is only just got promoted to captain despite her many years of service in the City Watch. She knows this promotion means that if anything goes wrong, she is the one who will take the political fall. And she suspects that she is expected to fail.

**Quote:** *"Just a few more years and I would have had a nice pension. Now I have to deal with this."*

## Any Questions?

The adventurers might have some questions. Unfortunately, Captain Eledstra has very few answers. She was given the use of a "half-mad sage" and the budget of a few hundred gold pieces to investigate a huge threat that for political reasons is being treated as a minor inconvenience. She is out of her depths, and she is hoping that the adventurers can save the day, as adventurers did for her in dealing with the assassin.

Roleplay that sense of frustration from Captain Eledstra, and get across the point to the characters that they are expected to make the best of the situation with the resources they have.

Before they leave the office, Captain Eledstra does offer each adventurer one *potion of healing*, saying that she wishes she could do more. She asks them to follow her to the portal, where they will meet the sage and begin the excursion.



## Instability

As the adventurers leave the City Watch station with Captain Eledstra, a short and powerfully built half-orc runs toward the group. Allow the adventurers to react as if being attacked, then have Captain Eledstra calm them.

Captain Eledstra smiles in the direction of an approaching half-orc, but it is difficult to say what emotions hide behind the smile. "This is our sage. Everyone, meet Truushee."

The half-orc, barely 5 feet tall but built like the burliest dwarf, practically runs through others to reach Captain Eledstra. Truushee puts her face within inches of the captain's and speaks in a far-too-loud voice. "Captain, the intermittent nature of the portal has manifested! It's trans-dimensional vector now manifests the portal in the northern part of the city! Follow me!"

The smile drains from Eledstra's face. "I don't know what she just said, but it doesn't sound good."

### Roleplaying Truushee the Sage

Truushee is a young half-orc, no more than 20 years old. She looks more orc than human, which is disconcerting to many citizens, especially with the orc-infested lands of Thar so close. Truushee was found as a baby by a sage travelling between Melvaunt and Phlan, and she raised Truushee as her own. When the old sage recently passed away, Truushee took over. Truushee's social skills are significantly lacking, rendering concepts like personal space and small talk nonexistent. Truushee learned a great deal from her foster mother and has a knack for understanding incredibly complex information.

**Quote:** *"The complexities of the multiverse dictate that the only constant is change, and even that constant is only true and valid in the exact moment of divergence from an infinite number of other constants."*

## The Portal

Truushee leads the adventurers and Captain Eledstra on a run through the city, until they arrive in a run-down neighborhood near the city wall:

Hanging in the air, about two feet off the ground, is a circular swirling field of energy. The field is perpendicular to the ground, and it is roughly a foot in diameter. Truushee points to it. "If my latest calculations are correct, it should remain in this location for several days, at least. Perhaps longer. My calculations predict the portal widen in a few minutes, and it will be our only chance to send an expedition through."

Convey the following to the adventurers:

- When the portal widens, they will be able to step through. The portal should stay widened for 2 hours and 17 minutes. They need to be back through the portal in that time, or they risk being stuck on the other side until the portal opens again, whenever that might be.
- That estimation relies on the information at hand. Other factors, on this side or the other, could cause the portal to change, move, or disappear.
- Using the piece of the assassin left behind, Truushee has crafted a device. It acts as a compass, pointing in the direction of the former owner of the arm. [She gives the compass to the adventurers. Be sure to note who carries it.]

Captain Eledstra wishes the adventurers good fortune and thanks them for their service to the city. When they step through the portal, proceed to **Part 1**.



# PART 1. WRECKED

## A Step Through The Portal

Read or paraphrase the following once the adventurers step through the portal:

Your vision explodes in a kaleidoscope of bright geometrical patterns, constantly changing. An intense sense of vertigo assaults you. Moments later you step out on the other side. Suppressing the urge to vomit, you notice the ground is moving slowly beneath your feet. Numerous gears, varying in size from merely large to gigantic, comprise the ground and sky. All steadily move, smelling faintly of metal and grease. The gear you occupy is one of the smaller ones, only the size of a large mansion.

Regaining your senses, you quickly realize combat takes place right in front of you. A large number of oddly geometrically shaped, grim-looking metal constructs fight creatures that keep changing in appearance from one horror into another. The monstrosities groan, growl, and howl. The constructs are oddly silent except for the grinding sounds of their gears, metal on metal, and short commands befitting highly disciplined soldiers.

The adventurers have entered Mechanus, which looks like the inside of a huge metal clockwork machine. It is a collection of gears, cogs, and pulleys linked together. The only green is that of tarnished copper. Instead of blue sky there are an infinite number of interlocking cogs from small to gigantic. The cogs are always moving, some slowly and others insanely fast. There is no apparent light source, yet it is as bright as during noon in Toril.

The characters stand on a flat smooth round metal gear with a diameter of 100 feet. Behind them stands the brass square arch, 10 feet high, 10 feet wide, that forms the borders of the portal. Of course, the areas directly around a chaos slasher keep

changing constantly.

The metal constructs are various types of modrons. This squad (16 monodrones, 8 duodrones, 4 tridrones, 2 quadrones and 1 pentadrone) was stationed as guards at the portal, with orders to question creatures coming through, as well as observe and memorize the motions of the nearby gears. These modrons were surprised by a group of chaos slashers. Natural enemies, the two sides immediately began fighting.

The modrons are perfectly willing to ignore the new arrivals. The chaos slashers, however, have no such inclination, and **two chaos slashers** turn their attention to the characters while the rest fight the modrons. At the moment, it is unclear which side is winning, but the characters' arrival does bring much needed relief to the modrons.

For ease of running the fight, assume the larger battle between the modrons and chaos slashers takes place on the side. In this case, the characters' arrival saves the life of pentadrone SL33P13-773P (see **Development** below). Each dying chaos slasher explodes with a burst of chaos, killing several modrons. The adventurers are apparently unaffected by the chaotic surge, likely because they are not native to Mechanus.

**Important Note:** The portal the characters used is closed for a return trip. As such, the adventurers cannot simply flee back. Although the characters don't know it, the portal's closing is the result of ever-changing patterns in Mechanus, and within a couple of hours it will open again.

### Modron Appearance

The drawings of the modrons in the *Monster Manual* are rather cute. The different description in the boxed text above is on purpose. In this campaign, modrons are not cute or friendly. (continued)

They are alien single-minded beings of law and order who intend to invade the city of Melvaunt to make the universe a better place (in their eyes). They are not evil or murderous, but they follow their orders to their letter. Hence their description: comprised of dark metal with angular sharp edges, cold mechanical eyes, and lipless mouths with lethal barbed weapons.

It is fine if the interaction with SL33P13-773P (see below) turns out to be humorous. Humor is great as long as the players are aware that modrons are not cute little toys.

Characters who succeed at a DC 10 Intelligence (Arcana) check recognize the shifting horrors as chaos slashers. These creatures are native to Limbo, and their presence in Mechanus is highly unusual.

Note that while there is no cover, and gravity is directional toward the gears. The characters could easily rush to the edge of the gear and either step on to the next one.

### Adjusting the Encounter

The modrons are a great tool to modify the difficulty up or down while running this encounter. They can take a hit or two for the characters or do some damage to the chaos slashers. Here are recommendations for adjusting this combat encounter. These are not cumulative.

- **Very weak party:** There are two lesser chaos slasher at 50% of their hit points.
- **Weak party:** There is one lesser chaos slashers.
- **Strong party:** There are three more chaos slashers.
- **Very strong party:** There are four more chaos slashers.

## Development

Regardless of how well the characters do, each dying chaos slasher turns more modrons into twisted bundles of steel in the explosions of chaotic energy. Oddly enough, none of the modron disintegrate (as they normally would), leaving the battlefield covered with ragged torn debris. All but one of the modrons die, and assuming the characters don't fail, all the chaos slashers perish.

The single surviving modron, the pentadrone squad leader, loses consciousness early in the battle. At a first glance it appears nonfunctional. When the battle ends, however, the pentadrone regains consciousness and stands.

It looks at the adventurers and in its malfunctioning state believes they are a group of decatons, who are superior to pentadrones in the modron hierarchy. Decatons are usually charged with the care and maintenance of modrons.

When the battle ends, read:

Amid the wrecked and twisted metal of modron corpses, a whirring grunt can be heard. A creature stands, shedding bits of rusted metal. The being is a large starfish-shaped construct made of dark-gray steel, standing on five steel legs attached to its central body and a mechanical eye and mouth in each of its five arms. The back of its arms are covered with spikes. It is covered with patches of rust, and many of its plates are bent and torn. "SL33P13-773P reporting for duty. Systems are functional, but some damage is detected. All chaos creatures have been rendered inactive. What are our orders?"

SL33P13-773P is happy to share information if asked:

- It and Squad 327-Q8 were here to guard the portal and deal with any arrivals as necessary. Chaos slashers came through and attacked, leading to the battle that the adventurers joined.
- A human envoy with a handful of underlings are at the nearby modron camp as well. These humans have a badge that allows them to move

around freely. The envoy was interested in the portal. SL33P13-773P does not know more about these humans.

- While waiting, the modrons were also to observe the patterns of the portal (such as when it becomes one way, when two ways, and so on) and the nearby gears, noting exactly when things change and to memorize the pattern in the process.
- It knows nothing about the assassin the characters are looking for. It remembers seeing a modron missing an arm pass through the portal approximately 200,000 seconds ago. Since that modron was damaged, it is either at the maintenance area being repaired, or it has been destroyed.

At some point the characters need to decide what to do next. SL33P13-773P offers a great opportunity to get into the modron compound. Other modrons might want to arrest the characters, but SL33P13-773P outranks most modrons at the compound and can keep them from bothering the characters.

SL33P13-773P follows the characters as long as they order it to, and it follows their commands to the letter. If no commands are given, it sets out to the camp to get repaired and report the incident at the portal. Proceed with **Part 2**.

### **SL33P13-773P**

SL33P13-773P, or “Sleepie,” or whatever nickname the characters settle on, looks like a typical pentadron. It is a large starfish-shaped construct made of dark-gray steel, standing on five steel legs attached to its central body and a mechanical eye and mouth in each of its five arms. The back of its arms are covered with spikes. Unlike most pentadrones, it is covered with patches of rust and many of its plates are bent and torn.

While the encounter with the chaos slasher unhinged SL33P13-773P, it still is a modron. It has no sense of self (yet). There is only “we,” which right now includes the characters. It does not ask questions beyond what is needed to clarify orders. In reality, it is slowly beginning to become an individual, so as the adventure progresses it may start asking questions that go beyond the orders. First it just wants to know why specific orders are given, but later this turns into a curiosity about the world at large.

Regardless, it remains a lawful neutral creature. It wants to know the rules so that it can follow the rules. Note that it is not particularly stupid, and while the characters might fool it into following some silly orders/laws, it should not be taken to extremes.





# PART 2. A DIFFERENT GEAR

## From The Portal

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From the portal the characters can see two points of interest.

- There is a small camp on the middle of a copper gear about 400 yards away. The tents are inhabited by humans, and in the middle stands an observation platform.
- There is a large walled military compound on a steel cog about 2 miles away. The camp is built near an even bigger black iron cog. The iron cog has gate-sized holes that touch the steel cog. The hole currently at ground level glows blue. The camp walls and buildings appear to be made out of metal. It is hard to see from this distance, but it seems to be a modron compound. The path to this compound is made up of smaller, faster moving gears.
- As the adventurers move from gear to gear, especially those leading from the portal to the compound, make a show of describing how that trying to move across or between these smaller, faster moving gears could be dangerous if done too quickly. They can be crossed slowly without concern, but it involves moving carefully and waiting for the gears to reach certain alignments.

**Note:** Everybody understands one another while in Mechanus. There are **no** language differences. Secret languages and codes only befuddle if the message is hidden behind an ordinary meaning. People still speak their native language. It is just that others simply understand what is said.

### Imposing Order

Any creature in Mechanus feels an imposing sense of order. Urges to do the unexpected are mostly suppressed. Mention the sense of order and the impact it has on their characters, but leave it to the players whether they want to do something with it. It can be fun to suddenly have the brash unpredictable adrenaline-junky rogue be calm and patient, but it is not for everybody and can lessen the fun when taken to extremes. Reward Inspiration liberally for good roleplaying.

Note that in the unlikely case the characters take a long rest in Mechanus each adventurer must make a DC 10 Wisdom saving throw at the end of the rest. On a failed save, the creature's alignment changes to lawful neutral. It shifts back after spending at least one day in a plane other than Mechanus.

## Moignos and Other Creatures

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There is virtually no wildlife, no plants and no rocks in Mechanus. Unless described otherwise the cogs and gears are bare smooth metal. In fact, animals are uncomfortable in this place of the rigid law and act accordingly. Besides the modrons at the steel cog and humans at the observation platform there are two other groups of "living" creatures in the area: the moignos and razorvine.

Moignos are two-dimensional mathematical constructs that flutter in small groups like flocks of birds. They act as calculators for the modrons, especially in regards to gear movement. They are not specifically loyal to the modrons and, unless working under direct orders, they begrudgingly help others solve various calculations. Their true passion lies with finding the absolute value of pi.

Lacking any true sentience, they are of little use outside of numerical equations. Still, the characters might have some fun interacting with these living calculators. One potential good use is asking them to observe the smaller gears and cogs between the portal cog and the steel cog and report their findings when the characters return. They do so even if the adventurers are clearly in some kind of conflict with the modrons. Feel free to give the characters advantage or even automatic successes when rushing past these cogs in Part 4.

Razorvine is a weed that grows almost everywhere, including in Mechanus. It grows in wild tangles, looking like brown ivy. The modrons try to remove the patches as part of their maintenance work, but they are only partially successful.

As the name implies, the edges of its leaves are razor sharp. When a creature comes into direct contact with razorvine for the first time on a turn, the creature must succeed on a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw or take 5 (1d10) slashing damage. The patches are easy to spot and avoid unless one is moving particularly fast. They might come into play in Part 4.

## Observation Platform

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The human camp on the copper cog consists of eight large green canvas tents standing around a 10-foot-high wooden platform. A ladder leads to the platform, which contains several mounted brass telescopes, two large desks including writing gear, and a single cabinet with books and papers.

The camp is occupied by the twins Inefi Kapp, a pale-skinned human woman with long silver hair, and Halaash Kapp, a dark-skinned human with glowing blue eyes. Both are wizards studying the modrons. They believe the universe is an orderly place, with modrons being the perfect representations of that order. Understanding modrons helps understand the universe. The twins are curious, studying for studying's sake. They are lawful and approach life and study with careful planning. Inefi is the more outgoing and humorous, while Halaash is the silent observer making notes during a conversation.

The twins are accompanied by five human servants and twenty-five human soldiers. The servants wear expensive green and white livery, and the soldiers wear similarly colored uniforms. All the servants and soldiers have similar features and might be hard to differentiate for the characters. They are all polite and unfazed by anything, although the soldiers are quick to react with violence to protect themselves and their charges.

The twins have observed the fight with the chaos slashers, and they would love a report from the participants. They have a strict policy of non-interference though. A scientist should not interfere with their study object. They are cautious but very happy to talk. They want a detailed account of what went on and what kind of dealings the characters have had with modrons before. They clearly admire modrons but don't react with anger when confronted with another opinion. They see it as a reason to debate, philosophize, and educate.

As long as the characters are willing to talk, they freely offer the use of their telescopes and answer any questions the adventurers might have about modrons:

- They have been here since the modrons arrived in this area. The twins set up camp half a turn of the big wheel ago. Since they are not from Toril, they have no idea how that relates to the characters' clock.
- There is one brigade stationed at the modron camp right now, which means 4,688 monodrones, 2,344 duodrones, 1,100 tridrones, 736 quadrones, 427 pentadrones, and 1 decaton for a total of 9,296 modron, give or take a few considering the recent fight.
- This brigade is part of the 9th Army. The 9th is one of the unassigned armies used either as reinforcements or in foreign operations.
- There is a small number of humans at the modron camp, an envoy of some kind and his servants. The man prefers black clothing. These humans likely have a badge or pass that allows free travel over the cog. The leader certainly had an interest in the portal. (continued)

- More modrons are constantly arriving, which excites the two wizards immensely. It looks almost like the start of a Great March (every 17 Mechanus years a large army of modron marches across all the outer planes), but it is too early for one. They are curious what the modrons are planning.
- The twins know the basic of modron as detailed in the *Monster Manual*. Of importance to the players is that modron are strictly hierarchical. They follow orders of their superiors to the letter even if said superior might have gone rogue or when it seems to contradict an earlier order. Military structure does apply, so an order from a direct superior takes precedence of that from another when there is a conflict. Of course, there is never a conflict since the modron are perfect.
- The decaton is the rank above the pentadrone and the highest ranking modron at the camp. Decaton are intelligent, powerful spellcasters that look like mechanical beholders.
- Modrons tend to react predictably to certain behavior, and even a pentadrone is not particularly intelligent. Infiltrating the compound should not be too hard as long as the characters avoid the decaton and look and act like they belong.
- The twins know the pattern of the portal the adventurers used and the big gate behind the modron camp. They can help the PCs set up the infiltration so that they can sneak in, punish the murderer and acquire the necessary information with time to spare to get through the portal back to Melvaunt.
- If a character mentions that the portal they used is a bit small and functioning somewhat irregularly, the twins react like proud parents. Everything follows a pattern in Mechanus, but the modrons can actually change those patterns. The twins don't know exactly how, or even if that is the modrons' intention, but if the characters want to know if that is the modrons' intent they need to enter the camp and look for whether the tools are there. Note that as stated in Part 1, SL33P13-773P has never been directly involved in these plans, and as such can neither confirm

nor deny these speculations.

- As a final note, the twins state that some of the modrons seem to be acting strangely, and they point to SL33P13-773P as an example. Something larger than anyone realizes might be happening in the camp, and the twins are very excited about that.

**Note:** It is unlikely the statistics of these NPCs are needed, but in a pinch use the **guard** stats (*MM* page 347) for the soldiers and the **archmage** stats (*MM* page 342) for the two mages.

## Modron Camp

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The portal gear is about 2 miles away from the compound on the steel gear. It is a perfectly square camp with towers on each corner and a gate in the middle of each wall, with watchtowers behind them.

Tent-like structures, each exactly the same as the others, stand in a regular pattern inside. Wide paths lead from the gates to a square in the center, where there are several larger square structures. The only smoke visible is rising from one of these central buildings, which might be a forge of some kind. There are no campfires, no kitchens, and no fields for animals. There is a lot of movement though, as groups of modron march around.

At the back rises a black iron cog with holes instead of teeth. The holes are at least the size of a big city gate. While the black iron cog turns around slowly, it is not connected to the steel one. The moment the hole is level with the steel cog, the hole glows blue. These holes are gates to the central domain of the modrons. It is impossible to see from this distance without aid, but when the gates activate, more modrons march through.

There are no other structures on the steel cog, giving the characters a clear view. Modrons patrol the cog, although they are not particularly vigilant, since it is possible to see for miles here. The patrols follow predictable patterns. Allow the characters who observe the cog for an hour a DC 10 Intelligence check to determine the pattern and avoid patrols. Characters with a military background succeed automatically.

A patrol consists of 8 monodrones, 4 duodrones, 2 tridrones, and 1 quadrone. Fighting the group is a deadly challenge even for a group of six 4th-level characters. As long as the characters patiently wait for the patrol's arrival and provide non-hostile logical answers to the quadrone in charge, there is no problem. In fact, if the group has SL33P13-773P with them, the pentadrone can simply order the patrol to move along.

More information on the camp can be found in Part 3. Note that a character trained in military matters would estimate that camp could hold up to at least 50,000 human soldiers. And since modrons don't need sleep or food, the camp could probably hold a significantly higher number of modrons without a problem.

### **Troubleshooting**

The players may be discouraged when they realize there is an army of modrons between them and their goals. If that happens, impress on them, preferably through the twins, that modrons are not typical opponents. Infiltrating an enemy camp might normally be hard, but it is different with modrons, especially if they have befriended SL33P13-773P. In fact, considering the potential threat the modrons pose to Melvaunt, learning the modrons' plans is vital.

Still, if they observe the modrons instead of entering the compound, let them. Another group of modrons sets up camp at the portal after a brief time passes. The adventurers have to fight them to get back through the portal, as discussed in Part 5. If the players choose not to enter the camp, the adventure is going to be over sooner than planned, and it might be somewhat boring, but that is their choice. Adventurers are expected to take risks, why else become one?





# PART 3. INTO THE STATION

To achieve their goals, the adventurers must enter the modron camp. They can find the assassin at the maintenance facility, and they can find the invasion plans at the camp headquarters. Several paths are available to the characters to reach that goal. The following section provides you the necessary information to adjust the adventure based on the characters' actions.

## Decaton General

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Modrons follow a strict hierarchy. Pentadrones are the highest ranking base modrons. The next step up is the decaton. The decatons are the lowest rank of the hierarch modrons, the highly intelligent modrons that rule the race.

Decatons are large spherical creatures with ten tentacle-like extensions, each ending in one eye. They float in the air and look like mechanical beholders except for the lack of a large central eye. Their most important task is maintaining the well-being of the modrons, and they are powerful healers. Each has the spell abilities of a 10th-level cleric, in addition to an almost unlimited ability to instantly heal up to ten nearby modrons of all damage. Decaton have the capability to communicate telepathically with all pentadrones within 44 miles. The conversations are initiated by the decaton, and no underling has the ability to contact the decaton except through the more mundane method of sending a messenger. (SL33P13-773P is currently not receiving those orders from the local decaton.)

Currently there is one decaton in the camp, which is in charge of this operation. The decaton has an intelligence of 14 and it is extremely busy. As a result, unless the characters purposely look for a confrontation or do something stupid, they are not going to meet the decaton. It should be highlighted as a constant threat in the background, because it is

virtually impossible to fool and it has every reason to dispose of the adventures. The characters might be able to defeat it in a direct confrontation if they were very lucky and it was just against the decaton. In reality, it is never alone and can summon any modron within 44 miles just with a thought.

**Important:** If the adventurers do confront the decaton directly, it does not stay around. Its destruction would be problematic to the modrons' plans, more so than the potential damage the characters could cause. Instead, it simply retreats and sends in wave after wave of modrons.

## Infiltration

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There is no day and night on Mechanus. Modrons do not need sleep. The characters cannot disguise themselves as modrons, and magical disguises are easily pierced with a modron's *truesight*.

There are a few things that makes things easier on the characters:

- The vast majority of modrons are not particular bright. They are automatons operating within a set of parameters. Even the more intelligent quadrones and pentadrones lack imagination and a sense of self.
- The higher-ranked modrons are still sentient creatures who react accordingly. As a result there is some leeway, but the adventures cannot simply blow things up and not expect a camp-wide alarm. At least some thought must be given to any infiltration attempt.
- The characters hopefully joined forces with SL33P13-773P. It might be broken, somehow thinking the adventurers are its superiors, but no lower-ranked modron would even contemplate questioning its orders. The difficulty with this path is getting SL33P13-773P

to give those orders and keep to a script that is at least somewhat believable to other pentadrones, especially those at the gates.

- There is a small group of humans present in the camp. As such, a wandering organic being inside the camp would not draw much attention. In other words, once the characters are inside, they can do a lot without risking retaliation.
- Give the players some time to design a plan and use your judgement on how to proceed from there. Err on the side of the players, and try to avoid a violent confrontation. If possible, try to add some kind of interaction/tension, but remember that for the adventure to proceed the characters need to at least get to the center of the camp.

## Diplomats

It is possible the characters decide to act as official legal representatives of a recognized government. They might march to the gate and demand to speak with the modron leaders. If it happens, the modrons detain the characters and bring them to their superiors, to have them deal with the issue.

If the characters try this tact, simply have the guards at the gate allow SL33P13-773P to escort the adventurers into the camp. That way they can move about unhindered.

## A Note on Dice Rolls

For the adventure to succeed, it is vital the characters get inside the camp and at least get into the maintenance area to confront the murderer and/or get into the headquarters to learn of the modrons' plans. Dice rolls are important to D&D, but be careful when asking for a roll while getting into the camp. A roll should have consequences, and before making a check you should be ready to accept the consequences.

There are multiple paths into the camp, so simply blocking one based on a check is one thing, although there is always the chance all paths are blocked through bad dice rolls. Once you ask for one roll, you are more or less forced to do so in similar future situations to remain consistent. The characters are nowhere near strong enough to face a whole brigade of modron, so violence should not be a reaction this early.

There is nothing wrong with granting an auto-success to characters trained in the right skills or who present a well-thought out plan.

## Modron Camp

See **Appendix II** for a map of the camp.

The modron compound is a relatively simple encampment with ten-foot-high walls and twenty feet high square watchtowers at each corner. Each of the walls is pierced by a simple double-doored gate without towers and a wall blocking straight access to the camp. Any military expert would recognize it as a temporary camp.

Inside four wide lanes lead to the middle, dividing the camp in four quarters. The middle of the camp consists of a large open area and a selection of buildings that fulfill support roles such as the forges, repair shops, supplies, and the headquarters. Everything, tents included, is made of thin dull gray iron sheets instead of cloth and wood.

## 1. Gates

Each gate is twenty-feet wide and closed with a large double door. An extension of the exterior wall behind the gate forces visitors to make a sharp right and left turn to enter the camp. There are no towers or catwalks across the entrance. The gates are usually closed. The gate nearest the modron portal (area 10) is open when the portal is active, seeing a lot of use by messengers, supply caravans, and reinforcements.

Each gate is permanently guarded by a single patrol: 8 monodrones, 4 duodrones, 2 tridrones, and 1 quadrone. The quadrone intercepts the adventurers who tries to enter, asking them their business. Unless the adventurers really bungle the interaction, they should be able to get in, as described earlier.

## 2. Walls

The walls of the fortress are 10 feet high and 10 feet thick and made of smooth iron sheets. They are hollow with no access to the inside. A simple low parapet offers some cover to those walking on top. Climbing the wall without a rope is impossible without magic, but doing so with a grappling hook and rope is easy. No modron patrol the wall, although climbing over unseen from the watchtowers or the gates is impossible without some distraction.

## 3. Corner Watchtowers

These square towers are twenty-feet high with a flat roof and two floors inside. Each floor consist of a single open empty room. A patrol is stationed at each tower, keeping an eye on the surrounding area. While the door into a tower is big enough for a pentadrone, the ladder up is not. The other modron can and can be found on any of the floors.

## 4. Troop Quarters

Modron are not living creatures, and nowhere is this clearer than in the four troop quarters. The area consists of square tents made of thin metal sheets, each exactly the same. A tent would provide eight humans a sleeping place, but modron do not need beds nor much space to maneuver. There is no furniture inside, and modrons resting are simply standing shoulder to shoulder staring into space.

Modrons need no sleep, but they need periodic rest. Many are simply waiting to go through the portal when the gate is in the correct alignment. There are row upon row of regularly spaced tents with enough space between for two pentadrones to pass one another (20 feet).

Modrons in these areas have been ordered to rest, and they ignore visitors completely, barring a direct attack or act of sabotage. If a camp-wide alarm is sounded, they spring into action.

## 5. Assembly Square

The square is simply a large open space where groups of modron gather to receive orders or report to headquarters. The modrons have no need for speeches, inspections, or training, so there are no platforms or training equipment. It is one of the busiest parts of the camp, and there is always modron active in the area.

## 6. Forge

The square building is one large open area under a sloped roof. There are several forges, all neatly arranged with coal in tidy heaps at one side, iron bars stacked on another, and tools carefully put away in their proper places. The area is hot and filled with smoke, extremely uncomfortable for most living creatures.

Modrons continually work here, with monodrones and duodrones keeping the bellows operating and forges burning while tridrones and quadrones do the actual smithing: all under the supervision of a single pentadrone. Most work consists of making and repairing tools, weapons, and body parts for the modrons. As long as visitors make sure they are not in the way of the workers, they are ignored.

## 7. Maintenance Area

The repair shop is a sixty by sixty foot square enclosed building. It has the same dimensions as the forges. It has no windows and two large sliding doors. The inside contains several workbenches, a pulley, and several modrons. It is the location where the characters find the assassin from CORE1-1 *A Scream in the Night*. More details can be found below in **Capturing an Assassin**.

## 8. Depot

A long, narrow building encloses a single space. Several large doors give access to the building, and a wide open corridor passes through headquarters on the assembly square beyond. The doors are locked, but there are no guards.

The area contains crates filled with supplies. There is no food, drink or much fuel. Instead there are supplies for the forges, spare weapons, tools, and modron body parts.

**Vault:** One area in the depot is enclosed by thick steel walls and a locked door. The door is protected by a *glyph of warding*, requiring a DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check to find. If triggered it explodes in a 20-foot-radius, dealing 9 (2d8) thunder damage. A successful DC 12 Dexterity saving throw halves the damage. Of course, the explosion alerts any nearby modron. The door can be opened with a DC 10 Dexterity (Thieves' Tools) check. Inside the characters find valuables (see **Treasure** below).

### Treasure

Several small gold ingots worth a total of 200 gp can be found here.

## 9. Headquarters

See **Appendix III** for a schematic layout of the headquarters.

The headquarters are a long narrow building with steel walls and a slanted roof. It stands at the edge of the assembly square with the depot at its back. It is two stories high with windows overlooking its surroundings. The doors are big enough for pentadrones. The building has ramps instead of stairs.

The doors and windows are locked unless otherwise noted. It requires a DC 10 Dexterity (Thieves' Tools) check or a DC 12 Strength (Athletics) check to open. Using weapons to open them is automatic, but unless the characters take the necessary precautions through a successful Dexterity (Stealth) check, doing so makes noise and alerts the modrons.

It is in this building that the characters can find the information they are looking for about the modrons' plans.

**1. Briefing Room.** The large room is mostly empty except for a large desk and large wooden board. There are no chairs. There is a map of the camp, the cogs in the area, and Melvaunt pinned to the wooden board. Colored pins on Melvaunt seem to highlight points of interest, mostly defensive structures and temples, but there are a few odd spots as well whose nature is not immediately obvious. The portal has its own golden colored pin. At the moment the room is hardly used except as a passage for the decaton.

**2. Document Processing.** The doors into the room are always open. Monodrones constantly deliver various documents, which are processed by duodrones and tridrones under the careful supervision of a quadrone. Archive cabinets line the walls, and desks stand in the middle. The constant noise is loud enough to at least dampen some of the sounds characters might make in other spots of the building.

Acquiring any good information in this area is impossible. Such information is hidden among a huge amount of minutia. As far as the characters are concerned, there is no clear labeling. More importantly, the modrons working here do not accept any interference. They kick interlopers out of the room, and if the culprit objects they react by calling superiors, which eventually ends with violence and an alarm.

**3. Decaton Office.** The large room contains a desk (no chair), a cabinet, and a large table with chairs. There is a large cushion in one corner, a resting place for the decaton. Otherwise the room is empty and all its doors locked. It is a clean room, and everything in the cabinet and desk is neatly stacked and well-ordered. It is here that the characters can find the plans of the modron inside the cabinet clearly labeled as such. The decaton cannot even imagine spies infiltrating its camp, and it has taken no precautions against theft. See **Information** below for more details.

**4. Archives.** This large windowless room is filled with file cabinets. Medium-sized creatures can move



around with some difficulty, but Large-sized ones get stuck. As with the document processing room, there is too much useless information here for the characters to find much.

**5. Guest Quarters.** The invasion of Melvaunt is a project in cooperation with a group of humans. A pale gaunt man with short black hair and a goatee in black is the group's liaison and envoy. His yellow snake eyes are his most distinct features though. He goes by the name of Black. He and his human guards (**two scouts**) and servants live in this single room.

It is a spartan room, but there are at least beds, a brazier for heat, and a small kitchen. The walk-in closet in one corner contains food. More details on the humans can be found below in the **Information** section.

## 10. Modron Portal

At the edge of the steel cog rises another large cog, which manages the gate to the modron's central community in a different part of Mechanus.

There is always a squad of modrons (sixteen monodrones, eight duodrones, four tridrones, two quadrones and one pentadrone) on guard. These guards react violently to the presence of non-modrons, considering it an invasion of their territory. The adventurers are ordered to leave immediately if they approach the portal or the guards.

When the portal is open, troops and supplies are moved through. It often requires direct oversight by the decaton. It offers both an opportunity for the characters and a risk: an opportunity because the modrons are distracted and the decaton is likely to be away from the headquarters, and a risk because a lot of modrons are active, and there is always the chance to run across the decaton who would instantly recognize the adventurers as intruders. Always give the players information they need to avoid the place.

## Capturing an Assassin

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The primary goal of the characters is capturing the assassin that has hunted the streets of Melvaunt. The modron responsible has been damaged during its mission and it is currently in the maintenance area. The modron compass the characters carry points them directly to the repair shop. The culprit has no intention to quietly surrender though.

The shop consists of a single sixty by sixty foot room with two 10 foot sliding iron doors opposite one another. These doors can be bolted from the inside or outside. The locking mechanism is operated from the headquarters as well. The ceiling is twenty feet high. Inside are several workbenches, and all the tools and supplies needed to repair metal constructs. There are two pulley systems attached to the ceiling. All the objects are neatly arranged, giving at least some room to maneuver.

There are **four monodrones** and **one duodrone** at the shop, plus the assassin C1e7i5, which is a quadrone. (C1e7i5 is currently unable to attack, although it is conscious and can talk to the adventurers). These are all damaged, reacting rather unpredictably especially to non-modron. At first they might be inclined to ignore the characters, but something suddenly changes after which they initiate the attack. They fight until they are disabled. The most likely moment is any aggressive confrontation with the assassin.

If a fight starts and no alarm has been sounded yet, the following happens:

- **Round 1-3.** No alarm. There is a lot of noise coming from the forges across.
- **Round 4.** If the fighting is still going on at the end of the third round, a quadrone rushes toward the shop to check what is going on.
- **Round 5.** The quadrone arrives at the end of the round. If the fighting has stopped, the adventures might be able to talk their way out of the situation, since these modrons were known to be damaged. DC 10 Charisma (Deception) checks can be the baseline. If the fighting is still going on, an alarm is sounded. See **Alarm** below for the consequences.

After the alarm is sounded, each round of fighting simply brings in more reinforcements.

- **Round 1.** Nothing special happens.
- **Round 2.** Two new monodrones arrive on the scene.
- **Round 5.** Four monodrones and one duodrone arrive.
- **Round 8.** A full patrol (eight monodrones, four duodrones, two tridrones and a quadrone) arrive.
- **Round 10.** The decaton arrives.

Reinforcements can be blocked by closing and locking the doors, although unless sabotaged by the characters, the doors can be opened from the headquarters. If the characters wait too long before fleeing, getting out of the building might also be hard, since those modrons that cannot enter, simply wait outside.

If SL33P13-773P is present, assume it is too confused to do anything. The broken modrons do not listen to its commands anyway. At this point it starts realizing something is amiss with it. The characters can try and convince it to come with them instead of facing destruction. Good roleplaying gets it to stay around. See the sidebar **SL33P13-773P's Fate**.

During or after the fight, C1e7i5 simply watches the fight with an odd grin on its metal face. At some point, before or after the battle, read:

The armless quadrone that caused the havoc in Melvaunt is suspended from a chain. In addition to its arm, it is missing several other parts. It smiles when it sees you, an odd look for a modron. "You are here, and that means the war has started. My mission was a success." With that, its head splits open and a black sapphire pops out.

## Treasure

The black sapphire is very small but still worth 300 gp.

**Short Rest.** Note that at this time it is impossible for the characters to take a short rest. The modron in the camp are in constant motion, and the adventurers cannot hope to stay unopposed for one hour. Eventually modrons come across evidence that something is wrong, resulting in an alarm as discussed below. If the players insist, give them a warning through behavior of the modrons about halfway through the rest. The characters might be questioned by modrons, there might be a commotion at the repair shop, and so on. If they ignore it, the alarm is triggered some time later.

## Adjusting the Encounter

The fight itself is an Easy encounter. The real challenge is in disabling the opponents quick enough without raising an alarm. If an alarm has already been sounded, it is more about time. The longer the characters take, the more reinforcements arrive.

Here are recommendations for adjusting this combat encounter. These are not cumulative.

- **Very weak party:** Remove the **duodrone**.
- **Weak party:** Remove **two monodrone**.
- **Strong party:** Add **two monodrone**. Instead of regular weapons, they grabs nearby chains. They keep the same attack rolls, but deal 5 (1d8 + 1) bludgeoning damage instead.
- **Very strong party:** Add **two monodrone and a tridrone**. Instead of regular weapons, they grabs nearby chains. They keep the same attack rolls, but deal 5 (1d8 + 1) bludgeoning damage instead.

## Information

The characters should be worried about the presence of a large army with direct access to Melvaunt. Except for the portal into Melvaunt, there are no other obvious interesting objects in the area. The army's presence can only be due to the portal.

The intent of the modrons is unlikely to be friendly since they would have send envoys otherwise. At this moment in time, though the portal is too small and inactive for a successful invasion, so there must be some kind of plan in place.

At the decaton's office, the adventurers find a neatly stacked set of documents detailing the immediate plans of the modrons with regards to the Melvaunt portal. The documents are in the filing cabinet in his office, filed under M.

The documents are written in Modron, which poses no problem while in Mechanus. A quick glance shows the modron are planning an invasion of Melvaunt. The first step in the plan is to observe the portal and determine exactly when the portal will be stable enough and large enough to send the entire army through. The purpose is to stabilize the environment and protect Mechanus against dangerous instability. Large amounts of chaos energy are leaking into Mechanus at the site of the portal, and that chaos originates in Melvaunt.

Before the characters can do much, they are interrupted by **Black**, the human envoy, and his two bodyguards (**two scouts**). He is a bit early for his appointment with the decaton, planning to double-check a thing or two in the plans. If an alarm has been sounded, Black is actually waiting here to prevent the plans from falling in the wrong hands.

If the characters took proper precautions, they should be alerted and with one or two appropriate skill checks manage to get away without a confrontation. Of course, Black immediate notes the missing papers and trigger an alarm (see **Alarm** below for what happens next). Otherwise Black catches them in the act.

Black is extremely surprised, giving the characters one surprise round. If Black is allowed to recover without a fight, he becomes curious, trying to get the characters to reveal who they are and why they are here. He is a proud, polite man who does not hide his disdain for the characters. He is not stupid though, and he is not about to risk his life fighting several unknown adventurers who managed to get into the camp unopposed. He answers no questions beyond giving his name and saying that he is a friend of the modrons. He does try to delay the characters, hoping for the decaton to

return.

If his delaying tactics do not work, he orders his guards to cover his retreat, while he fetches reinforcements. If necessary, he is not above jumping through a window. It might get him killed, but it will alert the modron.

The same thing happens here during a fight as in **Capturing an Assassin** above. The first three rounds are fine, but soon after reinforcements arrive, and then finally an alarm is sounded.

### Adjusting the Encounter

A direct confrontation with Black and his bodyguards is a medium fight. Black does not stick around though, trying to get help. If he succeeds, dealing with the two guards is easy. If the characters block his path, things become more difficult here, but somewhat easier in Part 4.

Here are recommendations for adjusting this combat encounter. These are not cumulative.

- **Very weak party:** Replace the **scouts** with **two guards**.
- **Weak party:** Remove a **scout**.
- **Strong party:** Replace the stats of **Black** with a **cult fanatic**.
- **Very strong party:** Add one veteran.

## Alarm

No amount of skill is going to allow the characters to remain undetected forever. Even if they don't accidentally trigger an alarm, at some point their presence is noted.

When the modrons become aware of the characters' presence, a camp-wide alarm is triggered. This should happen after the adventurers have found the assassin and the modrons' plans. A single loud gong is sounded. At that point the decaton flies up, and through telepathy contacts pentadrones near obviously visible trouble spots, quickly focusing on the source and reacting

accordingly. As a result distractions are quickly dealt with. If the modron are aware of the presence of intruders, they start to hunt the characters down. Otherwise things settle down, providing the adventurers with only a short reprieve.

Assuming a hunt is started, proceed with **Part 4**. The exact starting point depends on time and location the alarm is triggered. Under the best of circumstances, the adventurers managed to deal both with the assassin and acquire the plans without triggering an alarm. Start the chase in **Part 4** with the characters at the **Wall/Gate**.

It is possible the alarm is triggered either at the maintenance area or the headquarters. If the adventurers have been at both spots, or simply decide it is time to leave, start the chase in **Part 4** with the characters **Crossing the Camp**. If they still need to get to one area, start with **Into the Building** instead. Changes to those encounters are detailed above in **Capturing an Assassin and Information**.

In the unlikely case an alarm is triggered before even achieving one goal, and the adventurers decide to press on, proceed with **Through the Camp** in **Part 4**. If they decide to retreat, start at an appropriate spot. If it happens outside, it should be easier to retreat since the modrons are not nearby in sizable numbers. Half the consequences of a failed check in **Part 4**.

### SL33P13-773P's Fate

If the adventurers are still with SL33P13-773P, at some point they need to decide what to do with the now rogue modron. Without outside influence, SL33P13-773P simply stays behind at the repair shop awaiting its fate, which is destruction.

If the characters interacted regularly with the modron up this point, talking about the world and/or what it means to be an individual, SL33P13-773P expresses both curiosity and concern. It does not want to be destroyed but does not understand this emotion (or the concept of emotions for that matter). At that point characters can greatly influence what happens. They effectively decide whether to abandon SL33P13-773P and leave it behind or take it along back to Melvaunt.





# PART 4. RUNAWAY TRAIN

Triggering an alarm is unavoidable but most likely happens after the adventurers acquire what they were looking for. Regardless, once the alarm is sounded, the modrons start their hunt for the characters. Since the adventurers are not powerful enough to face a whole army, all they can do is run and flee through the portal back to Melvaunt.

**Note:** All modrons have truesight. Illusions and similar magic only work at more than 120 feet distance.

## On the Run

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As discussed in **Part 3**, the location of the characters depends on when the alarm is sounded. If everything went well, they are at the gates of the compound. If things did not go according to plan, they are elsewhere.

If the characters are still in the camp, and nobody has yet spotted them, they can try to keep hidden. Some kind of distraction can be a great boon. Use your judgement on how effective a particular distraction is. If they are at the gates or outside them, hiding is not an option. All the characters can do is run. When the adventurers are located, roll initiative and start the chase.

The chase can be divided in up to seven phases based on the areas the characters have to cross. These areas are described below. The characters have to cross each area to finally reach the portal home.

For simplicity's sake, assume the characters require a Dash action plus normal movement to cross any area (1 full round of movement), except the steel cog, which requires 3 Dash actions (3 full rounds of movement). The exact speed is not important since it is assumed faster characters help the slower and because it is more of a representation of time rather than actual movement.

In reality it takes more time and considerably more distance. Feel free to give bonuses to check for characters who have faster speeds or greater movement.

The chase assumes the characters make a more or less direct run for the portal. The terrain makes hiding challenging. Time is not on the characters' side, since any delay on the part of the adventurers gives the modrons the opportunity to place more guards at the portal. Besides, running in another direction does not make getting away any easier. If the characters insist, allow them to flee in another direction, adjusting the chase as necessary. In that case the chase stops with Stealth checks as described in the *Dungeon Master Guide* page 251 as soon as the characters leave the steel cog and enter a region with many smaller cogs. The characters can then take an extended rest and return to the portal afterward. Increase the number of modron posted at the portal in **Part 5** to make it a deadly fight.

### SL33P13-773P

If SL33P13-773P is with the characters, it can remove one opportunity attack made by a modron per round.

### Ending the Chase

The chase obviously ends when the characters reach the portal back to Melvaunt. Note down the amount of rounds the slowest character needed. See **Part 5** for the effects.

Regardless of the results, adjust the encounter as necessary to make it a fun experience for the players by adding specific complications (as long as they fit the setting), making things a bit easier or reduce the time necessary to reach the portal.

## Adjusting the Encounter

The chase is supposed to drain resources. Treat it as an easy to medium encounter, but don't make things harder just because the players roll well.

- **Very weak party:** Halve the damage caused by a failed check.
- **Very strong party:** Increase the damage caused by a failed check by 2.

## Through the Camp (1 full round)

It is unlikely the characters trigger the alarm while moving through the camp towards the center. If it happens, taking the diplomatic route may be a good option. As long as the characters don't become violent, the modrons are unsure on what to do and simply take the PCs to headquarters for a talk with the decaton. This gives them the chance to escape later.

If the PCs insist on simply running, instead of using the complication table, a character should make a DC 10 Dexterity (Stealth) check at the end of the round. They have advantage on the check if they cause some kind of significant distraction. On a success the characters avoid any complication, reaching their target without trouble. On a failure, they trigger an opportunity attack by a modron (+3 to hit; 1d6 + 1 piercing damage).

## Into the Building (1 full round)

If an alarm is sounded, but the adventurers still attempt to get into one of the buildings (maintenance area or headquarters), the doors are closed, locked and guarded by **two monodrones**. The characters can decide to fight their way through or in case of headquarters try avoiding them by using a window.

If they use a window, each character must make a group DC 10 Dexterity (Stealth) check at the end of the round. If half or more of the characters are successful, they remain undetected. If more than half fail, **two monodrones** arrive and attack the characters.

If caught in a fight, nothing happens if the two monodrones are disabled by the end of the first round. If the monodrones are still alive and able to make noise at the end of the round, **two** more monodrones arrive. The next round **four** monodrones and **one duodrone** arrive. If the characters are still not inside with a closed door after this they face a full patrol (8 monodrones, 4 duodrones, 2 tridrones and 1 quadrone).

Alternatively, they can run away and return some time later, see **Through the Camp** above. Or they could split up, one group making a lot of commotion while giving the stealthy characters the opportunity to get in. Doing so is a good idea in the case of headquarters, since Black does enter the office. He and his men stay at his room for now to avoid misunderstandings. Getting the murderer in the repair shop might be hard for a small group of characters though.

## Out of the Building (1 full round)

Except for as described in Part 3, the modron prefer to avoid a confrontation inside a building. Assuming the characters do not wait for a mass of modron to surround a building, they have two options: Rush past the modron blocking the door or stealthy try to leave through a window.

If done quickly enough, rushing past the modron simply triggers an opportunity attack (+3 to hit; 1d6 + 1 piercing damage). If the characters waited too long they also need to make a path through the gathered modron by making a path, either by disabling 1d4 monodrones or by bull rushing through which requires a DC 10 Strength check. On a failure, the character has to wait till the next round for another opportunity. An opportunity attack is triggered regardless of the results unless the characters use some kind of area of effect spell that disables several monodrones.

The characters can use a window in which case a DC 10 Dexterity (Stealth) check avoids detection. On a success the character gain advantage on any check made in the next phase. On a failure they are detected, but can avoid opportunity attacks for now. If the characters wait too long, this path is blocked as with the doors.

## Crossing the Camp (1 full round)

At this point in time, quietly running past the tents is the best path for the characters. The characters can choose to remain relatively undetected by making a DC 10 Dexterity (Stealth) check or simply rush through the modron with a DC 10 Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) check. On a success there is no problem. On a failure the character can choose to take an opportunity attack (+3 to hit; 1d6 + 1 piercing damage) or lose a round and try to get to the wall/gate in the next round.

### Over the Wall/Through the Gate (1 full round)

While rushing through one of the gates is theoretically an option, doing so requires the characters to rush past a full squad of modron (16 monodrones, 8 duodrones, 4 tridrones, 2 quadrones, and 1 pentadrone).

Getting over a wall is a lot easier. The characters just need to run past a few monodrones and jump down on the cog below. If they ignore the monodrone, they trigger an opportunity attack (+3 to hit; 1d6 + 1) piercing damage. Alternatively one of the characters can try to bull rush one (or more) monodrone out of the way with a DC 10 Strength (Athletics) check or use a spell for similar effect and prevent these attacks. Of course, casting a spell costs an action. Jumping down requires a DC 10 Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) check. A failed check causes the character to take 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage and land prone. Characters can use a rope, which might even be a free action if they prepared for such an eventuality or use a grappling hook. Doing so provides advantage on the climb check. Whether the character can retrieve the rope and/or grappling hook afterwards is up to you.

## Past the Steel Cog (3 full rounds)

The steel cog is mostly open terrain. Running over it is more a matter of speed and endurance with some quick maneuvering to avoid patrols. Barring complications it should take the characters 3 full rounds of movement to get across.

During this phase of the chase each adventurer rolls on the **chase complications** table at the end of its turn. Complications affect the next participant in the initiative order, not the participant who rolled.

Participants may spend inspiration to negate the result. Alternatively you can opt for one check at the start of the round that affects one or more of the characters during the round.

## Hopping the Little Cogs (1 full round)

The last part of the chase is past the smaller, fast-turning cogs between the steel cog and the portal cog. Spells and special abilities that allow a character to bypass a short distance grant advantage on any Dexterity check. Long range abilities allow a character to completely bypass the problem. You might allow other ideas have similar effects. Others are at more risk.

Getting past the crushing cogs unharmed is a matter of understanding the pattern and quick action. A character who successfully studied the cogs earlier in the adventure has advantage on one check during this phase of the chase. Characters passing over the cogs need to make a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed check they take 5 (1d10) bludgeoning damage and lose one round before getting past the obstacle, in addition to the round it already takes.

One or more characters can opt to study the cogs at the cost of 1 full round for that character. The character makes a DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check. On a success the cogs deal 2 (1d4) bludgeoning damage instead, or gives one other character advantage on their next Dexterity saving throw.

## **Table: Chase Complications**

### **1d20    Complication**

- 1** | *A moignos swarm crosses your path. While the moignos do not attack, they still block sight and hinder movement. Make a DC 10 Intelligence or Wisdom (perception) check (your choice) to get through unscathed. On a failed check, you do not make any progress this move.*
- 2** | *Your path takes you near a patch of razorvine. Make a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw or use one movement (your choice) to avoid the razorvine. On a failed save, you take 5 (1d10) slashing damage. If you go through the razorvine, you gain one bonus move action.*
- 3** | *The ground beneath your feet is slippery with some kind of oil. You can choose to go over it or around it. If you go through, you must make a DC 10 Dexterity (acrobatic) check. On a success you gain a bonus move since the modron are delayed. On a failure you fall prone, losing one move in the process. If you move around nothing happens.*
- 4** | *A group of modron blocks your path. You can run around them, costing you one move, or try to dash through them. If you go through them, make a DC 10 Charisma (deception) check. On a success the modron are too surprised to act and actually hinder those chasing you, giving you a free move this round. On a failure they take an opportunity attack (+3 to hit; 1d6 + 1 piercing damage) against you.*
- 5** | *The steel cog makes a sudden move. All characters must make a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw or fall prone.*
- 6** | *A group of flying modron starts shooting at you. You suffer one attack (+3 to hit; 1d6 + 1 piercing damage). The attack is at disadvantage if you succeed at a DC 10 Wisdom (perception) or Intelligence check (your choice) by moving around unpredictable.*
- 7** | *A large slab of steel suddenly bursts from the ground (the result of an angry cog spirit, something comparable to a dryad except tied to the cog instead) and you are forced to make a sharp turn to avoid colliding with it. Make a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw to navigate the turn. On a failed save, you collide with it and take 2 (1d4) bludgeoning damage.*
- 8** | *For a few moments you find the perfect stride. Make a DC 10 Intelligence or Wisdom check. On a success you manage to exploit this and gain a bonus move. On a failure you falter, gaining no benefit.*
- 9** | *The cog spirit is curious what is going on, suddenly appearing before you and questioning you on events. Ignoring him makes it harder, costing you a move and causing you to make further checks during the chase at disadvantage. Spending an action to talk causes it to leave you alone. A DC 10 Charisma (persuade) check convinces it help you, giving you an immediate double move (effectively giving you 1 bonus move).*
- 10+** | *No complication.*





# PART 5. BROKEN TRACK

## On The Portal Cog

Read aloud the following once the characters step upon the portal cog.

When you step upon the portal cog, you immediately note two things. The portal is shining brightly and it is clearly active, although whether it leads to Melvaunt or some other place remains an unsettling question. The second thing is that the portal is blocked by steel plates and a group of modron. More modron are certainly hot on your trail, but you don't know how much time you actually have. What do you do?

The portal is about 120 feet away at this point. Removing the metal plates covering the portal requires an action and a DC 10 Strength (Athletics) check, a DC 10 Dexterity (Sleight of Hand), or a DC 15 Intelligence check. Alternately you can allow character to use a suitable tool proficiency (such as smithing or thieves' tools) instead.

The portal is guarded by **six monodrones**, **two duodrones** and **one tridrone**. They start the combat at the portal, blocking access to the ten-foot-wide portal and ready to fight the characters. They know SL33P13-773P went rogue and do not listen to it. SL33P13-773P is conflicted at the moment and refuses to fight his former companions at first. However, the tridrone tells SL33P13-773P that it is going to be decommissioned for assisting the organic creatures. This prompts SL33P13-773P into action. He does not use his full abilities, but he uses the Aid action to assist his new friends.

The modrons do not leave the portal even when attacked with ranged attacks. They do return fire with their javelins or start dodging. They know reinforcements are on the way and their lives mean nothing to the collective. If one or more characters get close to the portal, especially if enough modrons

died to create an opening, they do swarm said character. Their aim is to prevent the characters from fleeing. Killing is the most certain way to do so, but they are not above grappling one or more characters. Of course, characters can always try to shove a modron out of the way (or even through the portal) at the risk of opportunity attacks by adjacent modrons.

Depending on how many rounds it took for the characters to arrive at the portal, reinforcements might arrive soon.

- **End 8th round from the start of the alarm:** Black and his bodyguards (see Part 3) arrive if they are still alive. If they are seriously wounded or dead, nothing happens.
- **End of the 10th round from the start of the alarm:** six **monodrones** and two **duodrone** arrive on the scene.
- **End of the 12th round from the start of the alarm:** Four **monodrones**, two **duodrones**, and two **tridrones** arrive on the scene.
- **End of the 14th round from the start of the alarm:** A **pentadrone** and two **quadrones** arrive on the scene.

## Adjusting the Encounter

The fight itself is a Deadly encounter if the characters stick around till all opponents are dealt with, and that is excluding potential reinforcements. The characters do **not** need to finish the fight, though and they can opt to flee through the portal as soon as there is a path open. If the characters do so early on while still going strong, have some of the modron follow through the portal unless characters consciously stay behind to delay any pursuers, but baring stubbornness from the players it should not be more challenging than a Medium to Hard encounter. If present, SL33P13-773P is a good tool to make the fight easier.

Here are recommendations for adjusting this combat encounter. These are not cumulative.

- **Very weak party:** Remove the **tridrone**, **one duodrone** and **two monodrones**.
- **Weak party:** Remove the **tridrone**.
- **Strong party:** Replace the **monodrones** with **one pentadrone**.
- **Very strong party:** The guards consists of **three quadrones** and **one pentadrone** instead.

## Conclusion

Stepping through the portal, the characters reach the safety of Melvaunt:

When you step upon the portal cog, you immediately note two things. The portal is shining brightly and it is clearly active, although whether it leads to Melvaunt or some other place remains an unsettling question. The second thing is that the portal is blocked by steel plates and a group of modron. More modron are certainly hot on your trail, but you don't know how much time you actually have. What do you do?

If any other modrons, apart from SL33P13-773P, came through the portal, they were killed by the guards. SL33P13-773P is treated as an enemy unless the adventurers intercede on its behalf with a simple "hold your fire!"

Any adventurers who died or were left behind in the final combat or during the chase are also tossed through the portal. There are notes of warning pinned to them, relaying the information that the modrons are coming through soon to take control of Melvaunt and rid it of the toxic chaos that has infected it.

Captain Eledstra asks for a debriefing of all that happened. The adventurers can give their report, as well as hand over any plans. The black sapphire that came out of C1e7i5's head might also hold information, so the adventurers are paid for that. SL33P13-773P is also questioned, but it is obviously very confused and can help a little, but knows nothing of the overall battle plans of the modrons.

If the characters brought SL33P13-773P with them, they earned a friend for life. Make a note of it on the adventure log.

## Rewards

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Make sure 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

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Name of Foe	XP per Foe
Chaos Slasher	200
Monodrone	25
Duodrone	50
Tridrone	100
Quadrone	200
Man in Black	100
Cult Fanatic	450
Veteran	700
Scout	100

### Non-Combat Awards

---

Task or Accomplishment	XP per Char.
Retrieve the modron plans	25
Retrieve the black sapphire	25
Get everyone back to Melvaunt alive	25

The **minimum** total award for each character participating in this adventure is **450 experience points**.

The **maximum** total award for each character participating in this adventure is **600 experience points**.

### Treasure

The characters receive the following treasure, divided up amongst the party. Characters should attempt to divide treasure evenly whenever

possible. 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

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Item Name	GP value
Total reward from Eledstra	500
Gold ingots	200
Black sapphire	300

### Potion of Healing

*Potion, uncommon*

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

### Story Awards

---

During the course of play, the characters have the opportunity to earn the following story awards:

**Friendship of S133P13-773P.** You have brought back to Melvaunt the malfunctioning modron S133P13-773P. It is gaining an independent consciousness, and it hopes that you will help it learn to be a great individual.

### Downtime

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

### DM Rewards

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You receive **200 XP**, **100 gp**, and **five downtime days** for running this session.

## Appendix:

### NPC / Monster Statistics

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#### Man in Black

Medium humanoid (human), neutral evil

**Armor Class** 12 (studded leather)

**Hit Points** 18 (4d8)

**Speed** 30 ft.

---

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

---

**Skills** Arcana +2, Deception +2

**Senses** passive Perception 12

**Languages** Common

**Challenge** 1/2 (100 XP)

**Spellcasting.** Black is a 2nd-level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 12, +4 to hit with spell attacks). Black has the following cleric spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *light, sacred flame, thaumaturgy*

1st level (4 slots): *healing word, guiding bolt, shield of faith*

#### Actions

---

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

#### Cult Fanatic (Man in Black)

Medium humanoid (human), neutral evil

**Armor Class** 13 (leather armor)

**Hit Points** 33 (6d8 + 6)

**Speed** 30 ft.

---

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	10 (+1)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)

---

**Skills** Arcana +2, Deception +4, Persuasion +4

**Senses** passive Perception 11

**Languages** Common

**Challenge** 2 (450 XP)

**Dark Devotion.** The fanatic has advantage on saving

throws against being charmed or frightened.

**Spellcasting.** The cult fanatic is a 4th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 11, +3 to hit with spell attacks). Black has the following cleric spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *light, sacred flame, thaumaturgy*

1st level (4 slots): *healing word, guiding bolt, shield of faith*

2nd level (3 slots): *hold person, spiritual weapon*

#### Actions

---

**Multiattack.** The fanatic makes two melee attacks.

**Dagger.** *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage.

#### Duodrone

Medium construct, lawful neutral

**Armor Class** 15 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 11 (2d8 + 2)

**Speed** 30 ft.

---

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)	6 (-2)	10 (+0)	7 (-2)

---

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

**Languages** Modron

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

**Axiomatic Mind.** The duodrone can't be compelled to act in a manner contrary to its nature or its instructions.

**Disintegration.** If the duodrone dies, its body disintegrates into dust, leaving behind its weapons and anything else it was carrying.

#### Actions

---

**Multiattack.** The duodrone makes two fist attacks or two javelin attacks.

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

**Javelin.** *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) piercing damage.



## Chaos Slasher

Medium aberration, chaotic evil

**Armor Class** 13 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 36 (8d8)

**Speed** 30 ft.

---

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	13 (+1)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	13 (+1)

---

**Skills** Stealth +3

**Damage Resistances** bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks that aren't adamantite

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** blinded, charmed, deafened, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, poisoned, unconscious

**Senses** blindsight 60 ft. (blinded beyond this radius), passive Perception 10

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

**Challenge** 1 (200 XP)

### Actions

---

**Multiattack.** The chaos slasher makes two claw attacks.

**Claw.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (2d4 + 1) slashing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 11 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened until the end of the chaos slasher's next turn.

**Terrifying Glare.** The chaos slasher targets one creature it can see within 30 feet of it. If the target can see the chaos slasher, then the target must succeed on a DC 11 Wisdom saving throw or be magically frightened until the end of the chaos slasher's next turn. The frightened target is paralyzed.

## Monodrone

Medium construct, lawful neutral

**Armor Class** 15 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 5 (1d8 + 1)

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

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STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)	4 (-3)	10 (+0)	5 (-3)

---

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

**Languages** Modron

**Challenge** 1/8 (25 XP)

**Axiomatic Mind.** The monodrone can't be compelled to act in a manner contrary to its nature or its instructions.

**Disintegration.** If the monodrone dies, its body disintegrates into dust, leaving behind its weapons and anything else it was carrying.

### Actions

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**Dagger.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d4 + 1) piercing damage.

**Javelin.** *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) piercing damage.

## Pentadrone

Large construct, lawful neutral

**Armor Class** 16 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 32 (5d10 + 5)

**Speed** 40 ft.

---

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	13 (+1)

---

**Skills** Perception +4

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

**Languages** Modron

**Challenge** 2 (450 XP)

**Axiomatic Mind.** The pentadrone can't be compelled to act in a manner contrary to its nature or its instructions.

**Disintegration.** If the pentadrone dies, its body disintegrates into dust, leaving behind its weapons and anything else it was carrying.

### Actions

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**Multiattack.** The pentadrone makes five arm attacks.

**Arm. Melee Weapon Attack:** +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) bludgeoning damage.

**Paralysis Gas (Recharge 5-6).** The pentadrone exhales a 30-foot cone of gas. Each creature in that area must succeed on a DC 11 Constitution saving throw or be paralyzed for 1 minute. A creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

## Quadrone

Medium construct, lawful neutral

**Armor Class** 16 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 22 (4d8 + 4)

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

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

---

**Skills** Perception +2

**Senses** truesight 120 ft., passive Perception 12

**Languages** Modron

**Challenge** 1 (200 XP)

**Axiomatic Mind.** The quadrone can't be compelled to act in a manner contrary to its nature or its instructions.

**Disintegration.** If the quadrone dies, its body disintegrates into dust, leaving behind its weapons and anything else it was carrying.

### Actions

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**Multiattack.** The quadrone makes two fist attacks or four shortbow attacks.

**Fist. Melee Weapon Attack:** +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d4 + 1) bludgeoning damage.

**Shortbow. Ranged Weapon Attack:** +4 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

## Scout

Medium humanoid (human), lawful neutral

**Armor Class** 13 (leather armor)

**Hit Points** 16 (3d8 + 3)

**Speed** 30 ft.

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

**Skills** Nature +4, Perception +5, Stealth +6, Survival +5

**Senses** passive Perception 15

**Languages** Common

**Challenge** 1/2 (100 XP)

**Keen Hearing and Sight.** The scout has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing and sight.

### Actions

**Multiattack.** The scout makes two melee attacks or two ranged attacks.

**Shortsword.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

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

## Tridrone

Medium construct, lawful neutral

**Armor Class** 15 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 16 (3d8 + 3)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)	9 (-1)	10 (+0)	9 (-1)

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

**Languages** Modron

**Challenge** 1/2 (100 XP)

**Axiomatic Mind.** The tridrone can't be compelled to act in a manner contrary to its nature or its instructions.

**Disintegration.** If the tridrone dies, its body disintegrates into dust, leaving behind its weapons and anything else it was carrying.

## Actions

**Multiattack.** The tridrone makes three fist attacks or three javelin attacks.

**Fist.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d4 + 1) bludgeoning damage.

**Javelin.** *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) piercing damage.

## Veteran

Medium humanoid (human), lawful neutral

**Armor Class** 17 (splint)

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

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

**Skills** Athletics +5, Perception +2

**Senses** passive Perception 12

**Languages** Common

**Challenge** 3 (700 XP)

### Actions

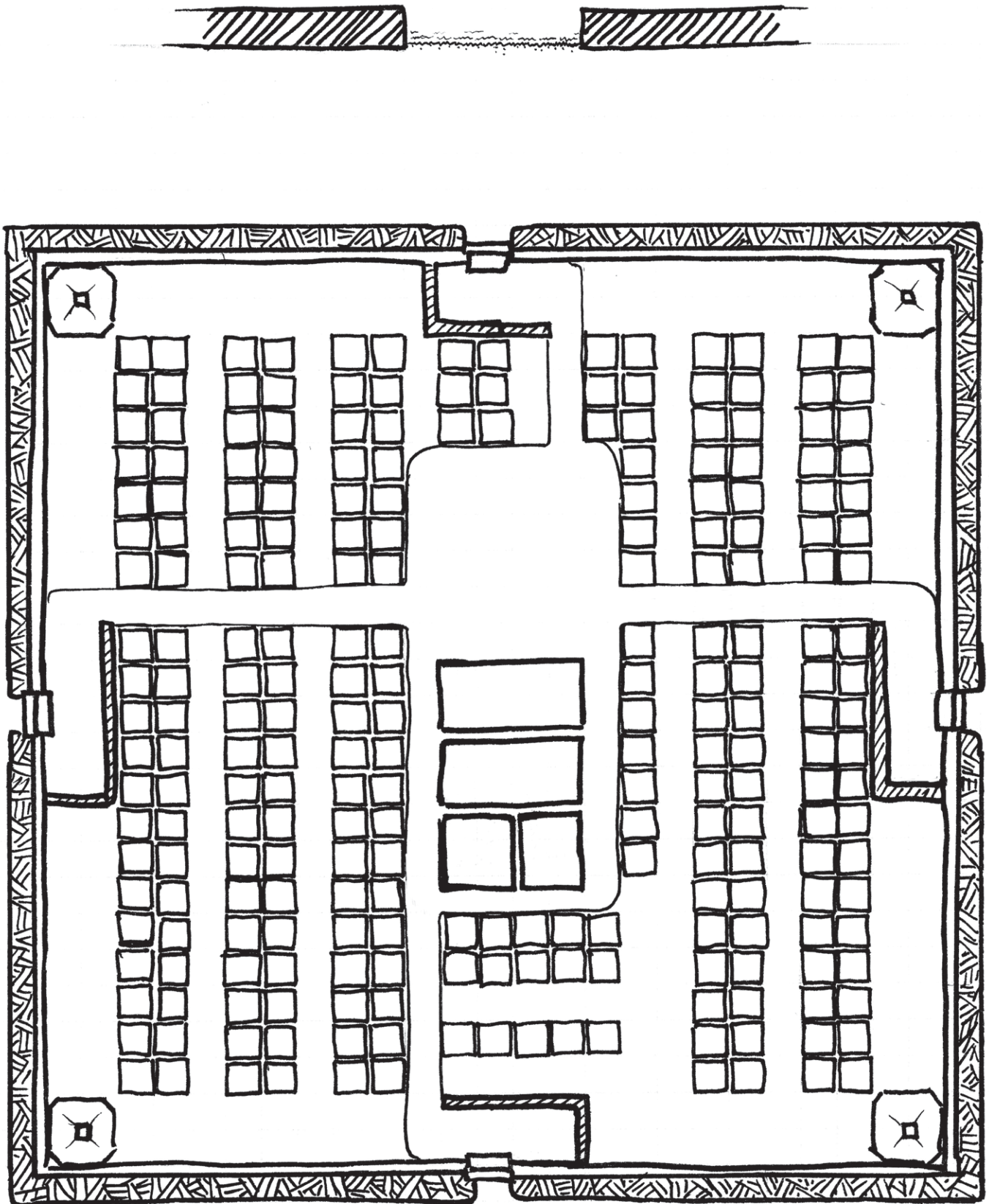
**Multiattack.** The veteran makes two longsword attacks. If it has a shortsword drawn, it can also make a shortsword attack.

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

**Shortsword.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage.

**Heavy Crossbow.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, ranged 100/400 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d10) piercing damage.

## Appendix II: Modron Camp





# Appendix III: HQ Map



## Appendix IV: Mechanus

