

# A SOUND OF MANY FACES



**HOME BREW**

A D&D adventure for 5e by Daniel Steinmann

# INTRODUCTION

**A** *sound of many faces* is an adventure module for D&D 5e that is set in the port town of Harrowport. It is designed as a 3-5 hour one-shot adventure for 4-6 Characters of levels 4-6. However, depending on the choices of the DM, group composition, APL, background stories and time to spare, it is possible to adapt this adventure for any other RP-System and for any setting. It also includes tips and ideas to adjust and/or expand the adventure to a two-shot or even a mini-campaign and improve the experience for the players. If you think that the encounters are too difficult or too easy, feel free to change them. The ultimate goal of a one-shot is for you and your players to have fun. If you're having fun, you are doing your job correctly as a DM. Everything in the module is up to interpretation, modification, and improvisation.

## OVERVIEW & SUMMARY

Nerle Stergoda is a human Bard who travels around the land as a professional music star. She sells a rap/hip hop persona (or any other music genre the DM prefers) and wears a golden mask to accelerate her art. She plays a lot of good tunes and is often the center of attention wherever she arrives.

However, the mask she is wearing inhabits a dark secret: an evil presence that feasts on souls. Through her music, Nerle first gains the trust of the local population by giving concerts. At one point, she enralls and enchants her listeners during one of her performances. The following night, Nerle sets up a ritualistic circle in the woods and lures enchanted listeners to that circle with her music. There, the souls of the listeners are extracted and consumed by the mask as it needs souls to regain power.

The first part of the adventure lets the PCs come into contact with the artistic persona of Nerle Stergoda and with NPCs, e.g. through a concert. The PCs learn the basics of the problem surrounding Nerle and the mask. In the second part, the PCs investigate the nature and lore of Nerle, which will reveal her nefarious practices. The last and final part contains a dungeonesque encounter and a delicate and intricate final encounter with a boss.

## BACKGROUND

Nerle is actually a victim herself. Not so long ago, she was part of an adventuring party. During one of the adventures, she found a golden mask in a dungeon. One of Nerle's flaws is her low wisdom. Without thinking twice, she put on the mask and as soon as she put it on, she was overwhelmed by the sheer hunger and desperation of the evil spirit trapped inside the mask.

Nerle's soul and the souls of her party members were the first to be devoured. The mask inhabits the evil presence of an artist and serial killer, that tries to regain power through the souls it is consuming. However, it needs a host to function (Nerle). Nerle was drawn to this mask from the beginning, as both the evil presence and Nerle share a common passion for art. Her consciousness became trapped inside the mask and she doesn't know that her party members are basically dead.

There are some rumors about Nerle. By researching and asking the right questions to the right people, it can be uncovered that there has been an evil associated with her. Wherever Nerle appears and leaves, some of the townsfolk are missing afterwards. However, many people discount these rumors as part of her artistic persona. No one uncovered her dark secret yet and the true sinister nature of the mask is unknown. Depending on the taste of the DM, they can expand on the idea of the evil presence as much as they like:

- The evil presence originates from a serial killer, who used the "artist" persona as a cover up.
- The evil presence was primarily an artist (painter), who had an affinity for dead bodies and therefore killed his/her students (be as dark and sinister as you like).
- One day, an artist sculpted a mask, explored a magical scroll he/she found earlier in order to transfer his/her soul into the mask, to *become* art.
- A soul-extracting demon rampaged through the country hundreds of years ago. The demon was defeated by an adventuring party, however, his soul could not be destroyed and therefore had to be trapped in an object (a mask).
- The evil presence originates from an ancient evil, who just experimented with different curses and cursed a mask in the process.
- The evil presence inside the mask was used as a trap for tomb raiders.
- All of the above/a combination of them/your own ideas.

During the adventure, Nerle might put the protagonists in a position in which they must weigh the value of different peoples lives (including their own). The bard is a victim herself, so the PCs might be trying to lift the curse and save Nerle and the souls. However, this is a dangerous venture, as the PCs can't really gather intel about the villain's true domain. Therefore, it would be easier for the PCs to just kill Nerle and destroy the mask afterwards. However, this comes to the cost of abandoning the souls trapped inside.

## ROLEPLAYING NERLE

Nerle and the evil presence are intertwined. For roleplaying purposes, the villain as a whole is a narcissist. She wants, needs and gets attention. She is very charming (due to her bardic charisma), good with words and presents herself like a *femme fatale*.

# ACT 1: A FUEL FOR LIFE

**H**arrowport is a medium sized town with approximately 2000 inhabitants. They are primarily human, but other races are present as well. One of the notable places is a stage in the center of the town to be used by performers around the land. For a couple of days, Nerle is present in this town and begins to trick the townsfolk. Besides the important NPCs (see further down), there are some other people of interest that may or may not become important.

- Cotta: Female Elf Paladin, Good. Cotta has matted copper hair and light hazel eyes. She wears chain mail and wields a ranseur. Cotta has a terrible sense of direction.
- Joane Reray: Female Human Cleric, Good. Kilmil is willowy, with thick gray hair and amber eyes. She wears chain mail and wields a flail.
- Ebor: Male Elf Assassin, Evil. Ebor has blonde hair and soft brown eyes, and a magical tattoo on his leg. He wears leather armor and wields a poisoned dagger. Ebor has an animal companion, a giant spider named Erwelyen.

## PLOT HOOKS

### A NIGHT AT THE CONCERT

The adventure could start at a live concert of Nerle (PCs could have gotten tickets for the concert as a reward from another adventure).

#### “I’M A FAN!”

A lovable NPC of one of the party’s previous adventures is a known fan of Nerle and hasn’t been seen for quite some time. PCs could follow his/her tracks and uncover a connection with the masked bard.

### CONNECTING BACKSTORY

Depending on the backstories of the PCs, one of them could have a connection with the antagonist themselves, e. g. a missing family member. Turns out, the family member isn’t missing, but his/her soul was consumed by the mask/by Nerle. If memory loss is one of the PCs problems, they could easily take over the role of Marien Stergoda (see “NPCs, questgivers and sidequests”). Alternatively, the PC may have been part of the same adventuring party.

### COINCIDENCE & OFFICIAL ASSIGNMENT

Many people getting missing will at some point trigger the authorities or at least some questions. The PCs could be informed by their usual questgivers that people begin to disappear.

### BOUNTY BOARD

The PCs learn about missing persons through a bounty board. The questgiver could be Nelhar Meimmu (see “NPCs, questgivers and sidequests”).

## A NIGHT AT THE CONCERT (RECOMMENDED)

A beautifully made violin rests in the corner of the stage. As you sit down, the show is already starting. Nerle enters the stage, the crowd applauds and cheers. After the first couple of songs, Nerle shouts out from the stage: “This one is for all the poor souls that feel like they are lonely and desperate. I feel you and don’t forget, somewhere out there is someone who cares for you. In the meantime, let me take care of your tormented souls with this special song.” The bard then begins to play a ballad on her violin, which is unlike any ballad you’ve heard before. The tones are echoing in your mind and reverberating in your bones. As Nerle begins to sing, you find yourself intensely drawn to her and like you are at home.

PCs with a **passive perception of 14** or higher realize that there is something wrong with the audience. Each PC who can hear Nerle’s music must succeed on a **DC 12-15 Wisdom** saving throw or becomes charmed. While charmed, a character has disadvantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks and a -5 penalty to their passive perception score. In order to keep the situation a little less obvious, the DM can let the PCs make their saving throws *before* the adventure begins and use the score later (note that some races have advantage on saving throws against enchantment effects or against being charmed).

Nerle plays her final tunes and says: “Thank you! This was a great show tonight! Be safe and see you next time.” Nerle vanishes and you feel that time just flew by. People around you comment on the concert, how well it was executed and how they feel as if they didn’t even catch all of it.

**Development:** During or after the concert, the PCs can easily run into one of the NPCs and questgivers, e. g. Marien Stergoda (see section „NPCs, questgivers and sidequests“ for reference). In case, one or more of the adventurers are affected by the charm, the stakes are raised: Although they don’t feel any particular change in their body, the PCs that are charmed are in danger of getting their soul devoured the following night: The affected PCs will stand up unintentionally and walk towards Nerle’s ritual circle in the woods (see Act 3 “Curtain Call”).

### DM NOTE

If too many (2/3) or all of the PCs are affected, the DC on the saving throw can be adjusted. The purpose of the charm during the concert is to get the PCs more involved and raising the stakes a little. It is not intended to produce a TPK, just because all of the PCs rolled poorly.

## NPCs, QUESTGIVERS AND SIDEQUESTS

All three of the following NPCs offer the potential for sidequests which can be added and subtracted as the DM desires. All of the NPC offer a great opportunity for roleplaying (social interaction).

### MARIEN STERGODA (RECOMMENDED)

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Marien is a female human and 30 years old. She is quite adventurous, physically built, beautiful looking and attractive. She suffers from amnesia and can only remember some fractions of her past, before the "incident" happened. She is **Nerle's sister** and was part of the same adventuring party Nerle was part of. Somehow, Marien survived the soul extraction process after Nerle put on the cursed mask. However, Marien's survival came for the cost of her memory. She only remembers fractions and can only repeat some kind of mantra, that she has to find her friends. Alternatively, she is drawn to Nerle's location and the music of the bard. Because of Nerle, she lost her memory, her sister and her adventuring party. Of course, she doesn't know many of these things, yet. For now, she is only following Nerle's tracks, but doesn't know why. As she is Nerle's sister and adventuring friend, she has the capability of knowing a lot about the antagonist. For now, Marien knows that there is definitely something wrong with the masked bard and assumes Nerle has something to do with her memory loss.

**Quest (impaired memory):** Marien Stergoda wants her memory back. Besides asking questions, PCs can take a look into her notes or gather some information about the mask Nerle wears. If she is not present at the concert, Marien may be at the local Inn and can interact with the PCs there. She can bump into them and drop some of her notes about Nerle and the mask. During the pickup, PCs can easily see her connection with Nerle in her notes (e. g. a picture/sketch of the mask) and can ask further questions.

**Reward:** Marien can give as much information about Nerle and the mask as the DM wants. If the adventure should be longer, the DM can make her memory recovery a longer sidequest. If it is a one-shot, the DM can give the PCs any information they need to solve the adventure in one session. Marien can offer her alliance for the adventure. Because she was part of an adventuring party, the DM can decide on the fly which class she was and can adjust her class accordingly to the needs of the PCs (e. g. cleric). Additionally, Marien can offer gold, a *dungeon map* (for future adventures or another sidequest), magic items she found during her adventures, spells, etc., or her alliance for future adventures.

### NELHAR MEIMMU

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Nelhar is a 38 year old human male. He wears several tattoos on his body, some are shown, some are hidden. He has a nervous eye twitch. Besides that, he is your casual bartender: leather apron, brown, short cut hair, slightly overworked.

He sings beautifully and was therefore very intrigued, when Nerle entered his town. His wife's soul has already been consumed by the cursed mask. However, he doesn't know this. As far as he knows, his wife has gone missing and he doesn't know where she has gone.

He knows Nerle, because she entered the town singing a song and he joined her in the singing. He doesn't suspect her at all, he thinks in simple terms and thinks his wife betrayed him with another man or with Nerle.

**Quest (missing person):** Nelhar is either waiting for the PCs at the Inn or at the concert. Generally speaking, it is very much possible that the PCs will visit the Inn at some point (as this is what PCs usually do) and can pick up the quest there. He is looking for his wife. The last time she was seen was with another man at the concert Nerle gave several days ago (kind of a Red Herring). He asks the PCs to investigate the place of the concert and Nerle's private rooms backstage (in case, his wife betrays him with Nerle). He wants the PCs to find his wife and either teach her a lesson or bring her safely back to him.

**Reward:** In case the PCs are not present at a concert, he can offer the last place his wife was seen (concert) and can offer a physical description of Nerle, and a description of the concert. He can tell that he was really irritated by her mask and bring the PCs on the right track, if they ask the right questions. He can offer food, a house to rest in and some coin as a reward.

### ABBO GALBASSI

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Abbo is a 10 year old male Halfling. The little boy has a birthmark on his forehead for which he is made fun of by other kids. Because of his birthmark, he spends most of his time alone and pretends to be a great adventurer. Sometimes, he sneaks into the night and tries to uncover some secrets in the woods, at a forest clearing with ruins. His parents don't like that.

One night he went into the woods as usual and wanted to play "adventurer" and saw Nerle performing the ritual. He saw the extraction of souls, but he couldn't comprehend what he saw. He became scared by the sound and the light he saw, turned around and ran away. He didn't go into the woods since then and can't be an "adventurer" anymore, which makes him sad. He has kept this incident to himself, because his parents might punish him for being in the woods again, if he tells them what he saw there. However, he got scared enough to be angry with Nerle.

**Quest (strange observations):** Abbo wants the PCs to investigate "his place" in the woods and to make it safe again. He can offer the time and place of the ritual. If he trusts the adventurers, he can tell them about Nerle, her performance at night and the poor people he saw in the night who got their souls extracted. His descriptions are filtered by his childish personality.

Abbo can interact with the PCs any time the DM wants. Therefore, he can be used as a **wild card**, if the players lose track of their main objective. He may be playing with a ball just by himself on the streets or he could be sitting on the ground, crying. Maybe, he is also present at the Inn, looking for people to help him. He could also be present at the concert and investigate Nerle's private rooms by himself. In this case, he could be hiding from the PCs behind a curtain only to be found by the PCs.

# ACT 2: INVESTIGATION

The PCs could come to the conclusion that it would be reasonable to gather information and clues. They have several options to uncover what is going on. They can have a look at Marien's notes, check Nerle's private room backstage, do some research (e. g. at a library) or ask around town to get more information.

However, the PCs might come up with different ideas.

## DM NOTE:

The purpose of Act 2 and the investigation process is to scratch the exploration itch, the players might be having. It is up to the DM, how much information they give to the players and how long Act 2 takes. If time is short, many of the necessary clues can be delivered by Marien's notes alone (see "NPCs, questgivers and sidequests"). However, investigating Nerle's private chambers makes for a more rounded D&D experience.

## MARIEN STERGODA'S NOTES

Marien Stergoda's notes are a mess. It seems as if someone tried to solve a 1000-piece puzzle with pieces that belong to a kids puzzle. However, some of the background information can be uncovered, if the PCs invest some time and effort. Examples include

- Marien was part of an adventuring party
- Her party delved into a dungeon
- Her sister was part of the party as well
- All the other party members are missing
- The mask of Nerle calls for Marien from time to time at night, which drives her insane
- etc.

## AUTHOR'S TIP:

These notes are a great opportunity for props and handouts. A map of the dungeon where the "incident" happened could be in Marien's possession and can be used for future adventures or as a sidequest. Marien may carry a personal diary with her (some pages burned or bloodied). She could possess chaotic/mixed up notes with observations and conclusions, sentences that don't make sense or have been scratched out or burned by Marien. If you need further inspiration, the movie "Memento" offers great examples how to set up these handouts.

## BACKSTAGE

All of the NPCs and questgivers can pitch the idea of investigating Nerle's private rooms backstage. Predominantly, Marien wants to investigate the private room of the bard for a long time.

## DM NOTE:

Nerle might be giving two concerts on the day the PCs arrive in town: one at noon and one in the afternoon/evening. The PCs could attend the first concert and investigate her chambers during the second concert. That way, the DM can introduce a time constraint during the investigation process.

As you enter the backstage area, you can see a wooden floor covering the ground. There are some chairs and tables standing around. You can hear a distant mumbling from the stage area, it smells of a mixture of sweat and perfume. One short hallway leads to a room ahead with a closed door and a large golden mask printed on it.

The door is locked and can be picked with a successful **DC 14 Dexterity (thieves' tools)** check. In addition, the door leading to Nerle's chambers is magically protected by a **glyph of warding**, that requires a successful **DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation)** check to be noticed. Under the *detect magic* spell the glyph emits an evocation aura.

Without saying the correct password before opening the door, the glyph triggers, erupting with magical energy in a 20-foot-radius sphere centered on the glyph. The sphere spreads around corners. Each creature in the affected area must make a **DC 14 Dexterity saving throw**. A creature takes 3d8 fire damage on a failed saving throw, or half as much damage on a successful one.

## DM NOTE:

The DM can use any password they like. One of Nerle's songs would make a good password, e. g. her most popular song, etc. Alternatively, the glyph of warding can be disabled with a *dispel magic* spell.

After opening the door, the room opens up into an ornate chamber with an arched ceiling. In each corner of the room are instruments to be found: a small piano with a pile of sheet music placed on it, a violin on a stand, a harp, and a flute on the desk next to a music stand. Elegant chairs with poofy cushions surround a small wooden circular table, engravings of rabbits run laps along its edges. A bookcase covers the western wall. Next to it stands a wardrobe with different entertainer outfits. At the eastern wall stands a desk with a mirror on the wall and some utilities laying on the desk.

The piles of sheet music on the piano are mostly of popular songs. Some of them have been hurriedly written on with ink. There is nothing to be found here. These are Nerle's ideas for future songs.

The bookcase is filled with books ranging from a variety of topics, including history of music, music genres, but also other art books, poetry, some books on how to paint (“The joy of painting”), etc. There is one book that stands out, however: “How to camouflage and trick the people around you”. Nerle put some bookmarks in there.

**Development:** Along the **desk** are some objects, among them make-up tools, writing tools and entertainers supplies. (See “Tools” in the rulebook for their stats).

A **chest** is tucked underneath Nerle’s work desk and can be seen when approaching the desk (no check needed). The chest’s padlock can be picked using thieves’ tools with a successful **DC 16 Dexterity** check. However, the lock is rigged with a poison needle trap that triggers if a character isn’t pressing down a concealed button on the side of the chest while opening the chest. The needle and button can both be found with a successful **DC 18 Intelligence (Investigation)** check and can be disarmed with a successful **DC 15 Dexterity** check.

A creature triggering the needle trap is injected with wyvern poison and must make a **DC 13 Constitution** saving throw, taking 4d6 poison damage on a failed save, or half as much on a successful one. The chest contains a locket with a picture of a woman inside (Marien), a silver flute (80 gp), seven moonstones of 50 gp each, 150 sp, 80 gp, and 12 pp. There are four vials of acid, three potions of healing, and two alchemist’s fires. (See “Adventuring Gear” in the rulebook for their stats). If Marien is with the PCs, she immediately recognizes her own picture. Together with the journal entry, she regains some of her memory (depends on the DM how much is revealed).

A thorough search of **the mirror** reveals a sliding mechanism around the edges without a check. However, a **DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation)** check is needed, if the PCs just “search the room” or don’t explicitly investigate the mirror, just the desk. Activating the mechanism on the mirror lets it slide open, but is trapped with the same trap used for the chest (see above).

## ACT 3: CURTAIN CALL

This is the showdown part of the adventure. The basic assumption is that the PCs will gather and uncover enough information and want to look for Nerle in the woods at night. If the information in Act 2 is not enough to get the PCs into the right direction, there is still the option of (a) the failed saving throw during the concert (see Act 1) and (b) Abbo Galbassi (NPCs, questgivers and sidequests).

### DM NOTE

As the adventure is built as a modular setting, the DM can choose how to set up the villain’s domain. The following description follows a 5-Room-Dungeon structure (Entrance and Guardian; Roleplaying and Puzzles; Trick or Setback; Climax; Resolution and Reward).

A leather-bound book rests behind it; **Nerle’s journal**. The entries are kind of chaotic and seem to consist of several independent parts. The first part is a traveling / adventure journal describing Nerle, her adventuring party and the dungeons they delved in. Marien is mentioned in this part several times. The second part covers a particular dungeon: The party encountered a problem while advancing. They wanted to enter a treasure room. Out of a sudden, the log stops, followed by some blank pages.

The final entries are much more chaotic, sinister, have a touch of insanity and focus on the cover up of Nerle’s tracks, the hunger for souls and the progress Nerle’s making. Nerle describes the need to set up the ritualistic circle some miles out of the towns she is visiting, preferably in the woods or a place that is not so easily uncovered. Some passages are even written in *infernal* and very difficult to comprehend. However, some of the sentences are written in common and describe an increasingly desperate situation of Nerle (this is Nerle’s consciousness fighting for control over the mask and pushing through from time to time).

Depending on the time the DM wants to invest before the final encounter, more or less information can be revealed to the players.

### MORE RESEARCH (OPTIONAL)

The PCs may come up with the idea to do some research at the local library. Although this is a viable strategy to gather information about the mask, it should be noted that not every town has access to a library, nor do all libraries have exactly the information the PCs need. However, small towns might inhabit an old / wise person, that can drop some info. Perhaps someone who travels around a lot can give one or two clues (rumors) about the mask. There might even be another bard walking around that can share some info about the mask.

In case one or more of the PCs are charmed, they will go up at night and walk towards the ritualistic circle unwillingly and sleepwalking. Other PCs with a passive perception of 12-15 (depending on group composition and APL) who are not charmed will wake up from this and may or may not stop the charmed PC from getting into the woods.

### INTO THE WOODS

As you approach through the woods, darkness surrounds you. The moon is shining through small holes in the treetop and you can hear noises from animals and crackling sticks. From afar, you can hear ritualistic singing and the sound of drums. It smells of wet wood, fir, pine, and... fear.

**Room 1 (Entrance and Guardian):** Because of the energy surrounding the ritual, **twig blights** are summoned and attack the players to delay them. Furthermore, Nerle made some precautions (see Room 3).

**Room 2 (Puzzle or Roleplay):** One of the souls trapped in the mask is able to free itself during the ritual, as the ritual demands many resources from Nerle (performance and concentration). With the right amount of roleplay, the ghost could warn the PCs in advance of the danger that is ahead of them or give them a hint that is connected to defeating Nerle (e. g. the obelisks).

The ghost could easily be another member of Nerle's former adventuring party. If Marien Stergoda is with the PCs, the ghost could recognize Marien and she could be one of the keys to give Marien her memory back (and therefore advancing the sidequest).

**Room 3 (Trick or Setback):** In addition to the twig blight minions, Nerle laid down some glyphs of warding (like at the door of her private chambers). Some of them are in place to stop any intruders ("stun"), others are for damage ("poison"). The glyphs require a successful **DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation)** check to be noticed (or a passive perception of 14). If some of the PCs became charmed at the concert, but already awake, they feel a creeping presence climbing up their spine and beginning to whisper into their minds.

The glyphs trigger when walked over. Each creature in the area of a glyph of warding (poison) must make a **DC 13 Constitution** saving throw. A creature takes 3d6 poison damage on a failed saving throw, or half as much damage on a successful one. Alternatively, each creature in the area of a glyph of warding (stun) must succeed a **DC 12 Dexterity** saving throw or becomes stunned for a minute (which can be dangerous with attacking twig blights).

#### DM NOTE

Depending on the likes of the DM, Nerle could have set up several invisible (or even visible) barriers that should delay intruders or damage them. She may even have set up "alarm" so that she can't be surprised.

**Room 4 (Climax):** The final combat encounter is against Nerle (see "Final Encounter" for details).

## FINAL ENCOUNTER

The combat will take place in different phases. The ritualistic circle Nerle performs the ritual in draws its energy from **four obelisks** that are spread around the circle in different directions and distances. The PCs can see one of the obelisks when they approach the ritual. As soon as they are near the ritual circle, they can see the other three obelisks. During the fight against Nerle, they will have to disable the obelisks to disrupt the ritual. After that, Nerle will summon minions to keep the players off the ritualistic circle. In the ritualistic circle, there are some inhabitants of the town kneeling with closed eyes, unconscious, but alive.

There will be a time limit, as the PCs have to disrupt the ritual in order to save the souls. Furthermore, Nerle is a potent bard. She has access to a mechanic comparable to the "virtuoso performance" from pathfinder (see her stat block in Appendix A for details). There is basically a mirror image somewhere nearby who performs mainly independently from Nerle.

The mirror image's performance causes an area of **permanent silence** in the designated area. This area of silence doesn't affect Nerle, of course. Treat this as an overwhelming area of sound in which no verbal components of spells work. The players need to stop the mirror image in order to cast spells.

Nerle will taunt the PCs and within these taunts, they will get a glimpse of Nerle's true self. Her taunts might include:

- „Our performance begins.“
- „You lack imagination.“
- „You only understand harmony. Discord is required for contrast.“
- „This is your curtain call.“
- „I feel inspired.“
- etc.

**Development:** The obelisks can be disrupted by damaging them (AC 10, 10 Hitpoints) or dispelling them with *dispel magic*. The ritualistic circle can be disrupted by cutting through the lines and erasing its parts. As the players begin to disrupt the ritual, the obelisks, etc., Nerle's consciousness inside the masks will begin to regain control and cries for the help of her sister in between the taunts. Hopefully, some of the sounds Nerle's true self makes will lead to the idea that it would be wise to investigate the mask after Nerle falls unconscious, instead of just destroying it.

Once combat begins, Nerle's primary goal is to distract the adventurers long enough for the souls to be extracted. After that, she tries to escape. She stands on top of a rock behind the ritualistic circle and watches the players from there.

Here is a general sequence of actions that Nerle will take during combat, along with sample dramatic banter the artist likes to engage in.

### PHASE 1

Nerle casts invisibility on herself and taunts the adventurers. She continues her performance and only intervenes if the PCs try to disrupt the ritual.

### PHASE 2

The second phase starts as soon as her mirror image is destroyed or the obelisks are being deactivated.

**Round 1:** Nerle summons some of the souls trapped inside the mask. Depending on group composition, there will be **ghosts, spirits** or **wraiths** who engage the PCs. This will make her become visible.

**Round 2+:** Nerle positions herself well enough to use her special ability "Curtain call". After that, she uses spells and her legendary actions to fight off the PCs. She may even try to use Virtuoso Performance to set up the area of silence again.

## AFTERMATH (RESOLUTION AND REWARD)

Disabling the obelisks, disrupting the ritualistic circle and clearing the mirror images will result in a shut down of the ritual. Assuming some of the PCs attack Nerle in between, she will be weakened and perhaps her real consciousness will take control and tries to remove the mask.

If her sister (Marien Stergoda) is with the PCs, she might be able to talk to Nerle and to regain some of her memory. The bond between Marien and Nerle could be enough to help Nerle regain control.

As soon as the mask drops off Nerle's face, she falls unconscious. As the mask needs a host, the PCs only have a couple of minutes before the mask starts living on its own. It's up to the PCs how to deal with the situation that presents itself to them. The consequences that emerge from the conundrum that follows can be used by the DM in the future, even directly after combat.

**Destroy the mask:** It is easily possible to destroy the mask right here and be done with it. However, if the PCs do this, Nerle simply dies, Marien Stergoda can't get her memory back and the souls that were consumed by the mask are lost forever.

**Fight the mask:** When the PCs wait long enough, the mask comes to life again and starts attacking the PCs in search for another host (see Appendix A for its statblock). Winning this fight will destroy the mask and leads to similar consequences (see above).

**Hand over the mask:** As this is a cursed, but powerful artifact, the mask can be handed over to the nearest cleric (Joane Reray). If the adventure is used as a one-shot, this might be the best choice for the PCs. Consequences may vary.

For now, Marien won't get her memory completely restored. If the PCs don't take care of Nerle's unconscious body, she will most likely die. However, the town cleric could easily take care of both the mask and Nerle. If Marien is a cleric (see "NPCs, questgivers and sidequests"), she could be able to take care of the mask and Nerle herself. The PCs may come back later and decide to either help them or "enter the mask" (see further down).

**Inspect the mask:** Investigating the mask leads to dark, tormenting voices heard by the PC who inspects it. It speaks to the players and says that if they want the other souls back, it allows them to enter its domain and fight fair and square in its domain. Alternatively, the evil presence may try to convince the PC to put the mask on.

**Wearing the mask:** If one of the PCs should be foolish enough to decide to pick up the mask and wear it, they must make a DC 16 Wisdom saving throw immediately, then again each time waking each day. On a failed save, the mask compels them to carry out a course of action (DMs choice) for 24 hours and a +1 is permanently added to the save DC. After three consecutive failed saving throws, the mask and the PC become one. The mind and soul of the PC are consumed by the mask and the evil spirit inside takes control of the body of the player. They will use any form of action that brings them near the ultimate goal of reincarnation and start devour more souls. At this point, the mask cannot be removed without killing the PC.

**Enter the mask:** If the PCs enter the mask, the adventure continues (see act 4).

## ACT 4: THE SHOW MUST GO ON (OPTIONAL)

If played as a one-shot, the adventure may be over after the fight is resolved and the mask is handed over to the nearest cleric or Marien. However, if the PCs accept the offer of the mask, they may enter its domain and try to save the souls trapped within. The following descriptions are basic ideas for creative DMs to develop a dungeon for themselves.

### IDEAS FOR YOUR OWN DUNGEON

**Entrance or Guardian:** If the PCs enter the mask after the fight against Nerle, she basically becomes the guardian for the upcoming dungeon. It should be noted however, that the mask inhabits many souls. These entities guard the rooms/floors of the dungeon in several statuses of decay. Skeletons, ghosts and spirits, even invisible stalkers or shadow demons could be attacking the players from time to time in the dungeon (e. g. as roaming monsters).

**Puzzle or Roleplay:** The DM can invest as much as they want in terms of roleplaying and puzzles.

The PCs could encounter another ghost as an NPC who offers information to the players about Nerle and the mask and give them a hint of what happened to Nerle and her adventuring group.

The ghost could even be one of Nerle's previous adventuring party. If not already restored, this information could bring back some of Marien's memory if she accompanies the PCs.

The PCs could even encounter the remains of Nerle's former self in the dungeon. Nerle could either help them, give them info/intel about the evil presence or solve a riddle for them.

The DM can either use some standalone puzzles (like riddles) to let the PCs advance into other rooms. Or they can use Legend of Zelda like puzzles, many of them sound based, to advance to the final room of the dungeon. These puzzles could include singing the right song at a special place inside the dungeon. Alternatively, it could mean to use a melody/tune gathered from room A at the door of room B to advance.

**Trick or Setback:** As the PCs are deep inside the mind of Nerle/the mask, many of the traps will be sound based. Players could either be fooled by audio hallucinations and illusions (which call for several saving throws). These traps may even be potent enough to produce physical hallucinations (e.g. hellhounds or any other monsters who link to the evil presence inside the mask).

**Climax:** Combat Encounter with the evil spirit.



**Resolution & Reward:** After the final encounter, Nerle's soul is freed and she is reunited with her sister. Marien gets her memory back and the souls trapped inside the mask are free and can finally rest in peace.

### DM NOTE

If time is of the essence and in case you want to run a prepared dungeon, keep reading. In addition, Appendix B has got the layout of the dungeon prepared to use right away.

## THE TEMPLE OF THE MASK

This is the Temple of the Mask. In order to encounter the final boss, the PCs must first activate **four obelisks** in the main hall (room 2). They have to solve puzzles and interact with the dungeon to do so: Four locations within the dungeon feature a mechanic that serves as a key to be used with each of the obelisks.

The PCs must visit each of these rooms and solve a puzzle associated with the dungeon to gain the key and bring it back to the central hub.

### ROOM 1: ENTRANCE

You find yourself in a rectangular room. The floor is made of granite floor tiles. Beside the echoes of the sounds you produce, some instruments can be heard in the distance that play a nice tune. The doors within the complex are stone doors, which slide sideways, if a creature moves near them. The walls feature magical candle holders. It faintly smells of dust. In the center on the floor is an engraving of the golden mask.

### ROOM 2: MAIN HALL

The squared room is topped with a dome and has a circular stone podium bearing a crescent shaped altar in the middle of it. A set of four obelisks can be seen in the corners of the room. They are obelisks of the same shape and size as you witnessed during the ritual. The doors to the east and to the south are closed.

The obelisks are the key to summon the evil spirit of the mask, as they serve as a protection device for the mask against intruders. Each of these obelisks needs a specific "key" to be activated. When all of them are activated, the evil presence is summoned in the central chamber.

The obelisks share the feature of runes carved into them, which will begin to glow as soon as the key for each of them is found and they are activated.

- a) This obelisk has got a hole or little cave carved into it. It seems that something should be placed here. Around the obelisk are stylistic carvings of different instruments: A violin, a harp and a piano. They are different visual interpretations of the same instruments. The key to be used here is a missing instrument inside the dungeon. PCs have to find it and place it here: a flute. PCs who paid attention during the investigation of Nerle's private chambers may easily come to the conclusion that Nerle uses four instruments for her performances and that the missing instrument on the carvings may be the key to this obelisk.
- b) This obelisk shows carvings of tunes and melodies around it. At one point, there is a violet, crystalline rectangle, connecting and continuing one of the melodies. Touching the violet square causes it to glow bright and liquefy in a gelatinous way, though not spilling on the floor. PCs can write and draw something in this liquid. The key to this obelisk is to draw the correct melody into the liquid. Inside the dungeon will be a place with the correct melody displayed on a wall. PCs have to copy that and draw it into the liquid to activate the obelisk.
- c) Except for another rectangle with a violet area and the runes, this obelisk is without any features. However, this violet area does not respond to a PC touching it, but to acoustic cues (tunes and sounds). As soon as the PCs talk near the rectangle, it becomes liquid and shows vibrations due to a wave-like structure in the liquid. The key here is to produce music in front of it. The PCs need the right tune/vocals to do so. It depends on the DM, if the PCs need to perform themselves freely or if they need a specific melody to be played here. Depending on the choice of the DM, room 12 has got either the correct melody to play as a reward or has got the following inscription: "In art, sometimes it's not the song that matters, but the purity of the singing." Which means, one of the PCs just has to sing clearly in front of the obelisk (great opportunity for roleplaying).
- d) This obelisk has got an indent in it with a music instrument standing in it. If the group consists solely of PCs who are not artistic at all, the instrument could be as simple as a triangle or another percussion instrument. The chosen instrument and the corresponding way of how to activate this obelisk is of the DM's choice: (i) The instrument has to be removed and brought to room 13. In there, it has to be used (played) by one of the PCs. If they play the tunes right, this obelisk lightens up. (ii) To make the instrument play (in case of the triangle the mallet), its corresponding object has to be found in room 13 and brought back here.

Activating all obelisks triggers the Bonus Boss of the evil presence: The blood artist. See Appendix A for the stats.

### ROOM 3

The flute for obelisk a) of room 2 is in here. It is not alone, however. As soon as the PCs come near the flute, a gutter shuts and puts the flute out of range for the PCs. Four **ghosts** of consumed souls emerge from the ground. They inquire about the PCs reasons for being here. If the PCs are clever and state their intentions clear (destroying the mask, free the souls, etc.) the ghosts stand aside, the gutter opens and the PCs can take the flute. Otherwise, they ask the PCs to leave. If the PCs still want to advance, the doors shut and the ghosts attack. As soon as they are defeated, the gutter opens, the PCs can take the flute and bring it to room 2 to put it in obelisk a).

### ROOM 4

The **spirit** of one of Nerle's previous adventuring party manifests in here. The voice of the spirit can be heard in the minds of anyone within the room. If the PCs enter from room 3, this encounter may have different setups. If the PCs were able to convince the ghosts in room 3 to not attack them, the spirit can be used as a clue giver for the PCs. It can reveal its former self to the PCs and recognize Marien. It can explain how the obelisks work and can warn them, that traps may wait up ahead and that the mask will be summoned, as soon as all obelisks are activated. If the PCs fought the ghosts in room 3, the spirit may behave differently. It may challenge the PCs with a riddle, before giving any information. However, Marien could recognize the spirit, get some of her memory back and talk with it.

### ROOM 5

The wall in the middle of this room is covered with masks and artistic faces. A strange tune can be heard in this chamber.

The sound creates potent hallucinations, if the PCs stay in this chamber for a minute or longer, the music enters their mind and echoes throughout the area. It is almost impossible to pinpoint its origins.

Every round that a PC is exposed to the sound, they must make a **DC 15 Constitution** saving throw. If they fail, read or paraphrase the following:

In between the tunes, you can hear a low rumbling growl that emanates all around you. The growling gets louder; its tone is of sheer malice. Then, suddenly, you can spot creatures out of the corner of your eye: three monstrous hounds, stepping forward. As they growl, the beast exhale embers from their open maw filled with razor-sharp teeth and revealing a hot glow emanating from their throat.

These **hellhounds (MM 182)** are hallucinations caused by the sound in the room. PCs who failed their saving throws can see and hear them.

The hallucinations attack the players and try to use their breath weapon. The damage dealt by them to hallucinating characters looks like physical wounds, but in fact the characters are unknowingly taking psychic damage instead.

PCs can counter this attack: If they are damaged, they are allowed to make a **DC 15 Wisdom** saving throw. If successful, the PCs can see that their outline is slightly blurred or there is no weight to the attacks. Another **DC 10 Wisdom** saving throw shrugs off the illusion.

Clever players could come to the conclusion that these hellhounds are connected to the sound the PCs are hearing. If they cover their ears or try to shut down the sound (with an *aura of silence*), they can make a **DC 10 Wisdom** saving throw to shrug off the illusion right away, with advantage.

Behind a secret door, this chamber contains an **orb** that is needed in room 9 in order to circumvent the trap there. Searching the wall while the hallucination is active (see above) requires a **DC 17 Intelligence (Investigation)** check. Without the illusions, searching the wall is enough to find the mechanism to get the orb.

### ROOM 6

This room appears to be an art gallery and gives a small glimpse of what the PCs might encounter in room 11. Each wall has five distinct paintings on it. The paintings are surprisingly well preserved and valuable (250gp each). They will radiate magic if *detect magic* spell is used.

The evil presence "enhanced" these paintings with blood as paint (**DC 14 Intelligence (Investigation)**) and now they are imbued with conjuration magic. Whenever a painting is touched, the painting will spring to life and leap out of it. Each painting may be activated only once, though multiple paintings can be activated simultaneously.

#### DM NOTE

Depending on group composition, advancement in the dungeon, PC resources, etc. the paintings may have different effects. Examples include:

- Combat
- Disadvantage on ability checks till the end of the adventure
- Healing
- Any ability or AC +1
- -1 to Initiative rolls till the end of the adventure
- 1D6 to hit points permanently
- 2 to saving throws against fear effects

### ROOM 7

This room inhabits a younger version of Nerle's former self. The child sits in the center of the room and plays with a violin. PCs can easily tell that this child looks a lot like Nerle, because they saw her face, when the mask fell off it. Sooner or later, Nerle will interact with the PCs. If she does, read or paraphrase the following:

A voice rings to your ears. It sounds like a little girl, but the voice is strange, distracted and twisted. "Please, misters. Please help me! I am lost and don't know where to go. The only thing I have left is this violin. Will you help me?"

When Nerle speaks these words, she turns her face around and the PCs can see that the little girl does not move her mouth in order to communicate with the PCs. Nerle poses no threat to the PCs. If attacked, she turns invisible and the PCs can hear a distant sobbing. Nerle will answer the questions the PCs might have. However, her knowledge is filtered through her child personality.

- This place is evil. There is a "dark voice" in here that tries to consume her, but she was able to flee and hide. Some of "the others" helped her.
- She doesn't know how she came here. The last thing she remembers was a golden mask, that she found with her friends (she means her adventuring party)
- She really hates the "dark voice". She holds her ears, whenever it speaks to not be frightened by the voice.
- "The others" are other people's souls who are trapped in here as well.
- She does not know how to leave, she cannot pass the room with the pillars (she means the obelisks).

She can help the PCs, if they promise to help her escape. If the PCs agree, Nerle opens the door to room 9 and tells them, that they should be careful. They will need a "round object" in the room or it "will become very hot and hurting".

### ROOM 8

This room is connected by two stairs in the north and south. Its walls are decorated with murals and runes. Three sections of this squared room feature a vibration mechanism that serves as a trap. A **Passive Perception score of 15** or higher reveals the cracks on the walls that suggest indents. A character can disable the trap with a successful **DC 14 Dexterity (Thieves Tools)** check. Otherwise, the first creature to go through the room and is not careful enough must succeed a **DC 17 Constitution** saving throw to close their ears. Failure results in the creature taking 12 (3d8) force damage and falling prone. Depending on the PCs, they may even trigger all three vibration traps.

### ROOM 9

This room has a similar appearance as room 3. Next to the door stands a pillar with an indent on top. There is a glowing writing on the back wall in the east. A glowing violet script appears to float an inch away from the wall. The symbols are written in infernal, are not fixed or readable and are constantly shifting every second the PCs observe this.

The magic that changes the symbols is a cursed *glyph of warding* spell. It contains a level 5 *Fireball* spell that activates when the wall is physically inspected, before placing the orb from room 5 onto the pillar near the door. Once the glyph is triggered, each creature in the area must succeed a **DC 15 Dexterity** saving throw; failure results in the glyph inflicting 30 (10d6) fire damage, or half as much damage on a successful one. Identifying the trap requires a successful **DC 17 Intelligence (Investigation)** check. PCs get to roll with advantage, if Nerle in room 7 gave them clues to this room. Once the glyph is dispelled or discharged, magical violet dust forms notes on the wall. This is the melody the PCs need for obelisk b) in room 2.

### ROOM 10

This chamber has a funnel layout and contains some information about the evil presence itself. For example, depending on the choice the DM made earlier, this room has the appearance of an art studio. There are specific utilities and even furniture that corresponds to the identity of the evil presence. There is even a bookshelf present in here. A *detect magic* spell reveals that an abjuration aura protects the bookcase and its contents. Some of the titles refer to different methods of art. The books may even reveal the dark, twisted mind of the origin of the mask. The evil presence was primarily a painter, who had an affinity for dead bodies and therefore killed his/her students to write and paint with their blood. One day, the artist sculpted a mask, explored a magical scroll he/she found earlier in order to transfer his/her soul into the mask, to *become* art.

### ROOM 11

A series of reliefs decorate the walls. They portray many faces along the walls. They are made of dark stone with the sculpture being so fine they almost look real. From where you stand, you notice the faces within the wall begin to blink.

Two **Shadow Demons (MM, p. 64)**. Attack the players as soon as they investigate the walls.

Once the battle is over and the PCs examine the walls again, they can feel a majestic look to the faces. The art style is not easily to comprehend, but somewhat astounding. This is the room where the evil presence keeps the souls of the people it has consumed. A successful **DC 17 Intelligence (Arcana)** check reveals that an abjuration aura protects the faces. Any spells that try to dispel this aura do not work, however, as long as the evil presence is alive.

### ROOM 12

Upon entering the room, the PCs can see similar symbols on the wall as in room 9. In the middle floats a scroll, but **four wraiths** of consumed souls live here as well. Due to the long time they have been here, they have become mad and attack anyone who enters the room. If the PCs are able to slay them, a distant voice echoes into their minds: "In art, sometimes it's not the song that matters, but the purity of the singing." The PCs need to get the scroll, take it to room 2 and sing what is written on it. Doing so will activate obelisk c).

### ROOM 13

Upon entering the room, the PCs hear different sounds of music. Besides that, the room is completely empty. Carefully listening to the sound in this room let the PCs realize that they heard this sound before: It is the ballad that Nerle played during her concert and was used to charm the audience. If the PCs listen long enough, they can hear that something is off with the sound: An instrument is missing, but they don't know, which. In this room, the PC need the instrument from obelisk d) in room 2. It has to be used (played) by one of the PCs. If they do so, obelisk d) lightens up.

# APPENDIX A: STATBLOCKS

## NERLE STERGODA

Medium Human, chaotic evil

**Armor Class** 16  
**Hit Points** 150 (20 D8+2)  
**Speed** 30ft

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	17 (+3)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	9 (-1)	18 (+4)

**Saving Throws** Charisma +6; Dexterity +4  
**Skills** Acrobatics +7, Perception +5, Performance +9  
**Condition Immunities** Charm effects  
**Senses** passive Perception 15  
**Languages** Common, Sylvan, Infernal  
**Challenge** 7 (2,300 XP)

**Bardic Inspiration (3/Day).** As a bonus action, Nerle chooses a creature she can see within 60 feet who can hear her. That creature gains one Bardic Inspiration die, a d8. Alternatively, when an attack roll is made against the creature, it can use its reaction to roll the Bardic Inspiration die and add the number rolled to its AC against that attack.

**Every Moment Matters (1/Turn).** When Nerle makes a critical hit, her speed increases by 15 feet. This effect last until she ends her turn.

**Spellcasting.** Nerle is a 10th level spellcaster. Her spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). She has the following bard spells prepared:

- **Cantrips (at will):** friends, mage hand, minor illusion, vicious mockery
- **1st level (4 slots):** charm person, healing word, heroism, shield, sleep, thunderwave
- **2nd level (3 slots):** detect thoughts, invisibility, mirror image
- **3rd level (3 slots):** dispel magic, hypnotic pattern, tongues, counterspell
- **4th level (3 slots):** dimension door, compulsion
- **5th level (2 slots):** hold monster

**Taunt (3/day).** Nerle can use a bonus action on her turn to target a creature within 30 feet of her. If the target can hear her, it must succeed on a DC 15 Charisma saving throw or have disadvantage on ability checks, attack rolls and saving throws until the start of Nerle's next turn.

**Virtuoso Performance (2/day).** While this ability is active, Nerle uses one of her mirror images to set up an independent bardic performance which covers an area of 40ft in diameter. The virtuoso performance manipulates sound waves in the area of effect so that Nerle can converse normally within the spell's area, yet no other creature can speak or make any other noises within, including language-dependent or sonic spell effects. Anyone who enters the zone immediately becomes subject to its effects, but those who leave are no longer affected. This effect is centered on the mirror image performing and moves with it. Note, however, that a successful Spot check to read lips can still reveal what's said inside a zone of silence.

**Curtain Call (1/Day).** Four (4) Ranged Weapon Attacks: +6 to hit, range 150ft., one target. Hit 12 (2d8 + 4 piercing damage). Creatures hit by any shot of Curtain Call have their movement reduced by 10ft until the end of their next turn (does not stack). A creature struck by all four shots from Curtain Call must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or suffer 1 point of exhaustion.

## Actions

**Multiattack.** Nerle can make up to two attacks with either her Rapier or her crossbow.

**Crossbow.** Ranged Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, range 30 / 120 feet, one target. Hit 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage.

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

## Legendary Actions

Nerle can take 2 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. Nerle regains spent legendary actions at the start of her turn.

**Move.** Nerle moves up to half her speed without provoking opportunity attacks.

**Cast a cantrip (Costs 2 Actions).**

**Soul harvest (Costs 2 Actions)** Nerle extracts souls from her victims, regaining 3 Hitpoints.

# THE BLOOD ARTIST

Medium Human, chaotic evil

**Armor Class** 16

**Hit Points** 60 (2d10 + 50)

**Speed** 40ft., fly 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+3)	17 (+4)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	9 (-1)	18 (+4)

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

**Skills** Arcana +8, Deception +9, Insight +6, Perception +6

**Damage Vulnerabilities** force

**Damage Immunities** necrotic, poison

**Condition Immunities** charmed, petrified, poisoned

**Senses** passive Perception 15

**Languages** Common, Sylvan, Infernal

**Challenge** 9

**Legendary Resistance (2/Day).** If the artist fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

**Frightful Presence:** Each creature of the artist's choice that is within 30 feet of and aware of it must succeed on a DC 12 Wisdom saving throw or become Frightened for 1 minute. A creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. If a creature's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the creature is immune to the artist's Frightful Presence for the next 24 hours.

**Pain Transmutation (2/Day).** The artist is capable of absorbing damage to grow its form and enhance its physical capabilities. Each time it would be killed or reduced to 0 hit points, this feature activates to fully recover its hit points, absolve it of any conditions, and grow slightly in both size and power. Each time it uses this feature in a day, it gains a cumulative +1 bonus to its attack rolls.

## Actions

**Multiattack.** The artist makes two attacks, plus one additional attack for each time it has used Pain Transmutation.

**Slam.** Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (2d4 + 2) bludgeoning damage.

**Whip.** Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. Hit: 4 (2d2 + 2) slashing damage plus 2 force damage. If the artist has used Pain Transmutation twice and the target is a Large or smaller creature, at the end of this turn the target must succeed on a DC 14 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

**Death Bolt.** Ranged Attack: +5 to hit, range 120 ft., one target. Hit: 8 (2d6 + 2) necrotic damage.

**Sound Beams (Recharge 5-6).** The mouth of the artists emits a beam of force in a line 40 feet long and 5 feet wide, or a 30-foot cone. In either case, a creature in this area must succeed on a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw or take 15 force damage (halved after success).

## Legendary Actions

The artist can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. It regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

**Detect.** The artist makes a Wisdom (Perception) check.

**Bolt.** The artists casts death bolt from an object it is affecting with animate objects (see below, costs 2 actions).

**Conjure art.** The artist casts creation without consuming a spell slot to create up to two tiny masks and animate them.

# THE GOLDEN MASK

*small construct, chaotic evil*

**Armor Class** 17

**Hit Points** 27 (9d6)

**Speed** 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	15 (+3)	11 (+1)	11 (+1)	5 (-3)	1 (-5)

**Saving Throws** Str +8, Dex +6

**Skills** Intimidation +3, Stealth +6

**Damage Vulnerabilities** radiant

**Damage Resistances** cold, fire, necrotic

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** charmed, exhaustion, frightened, poisoned

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

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

## Actions

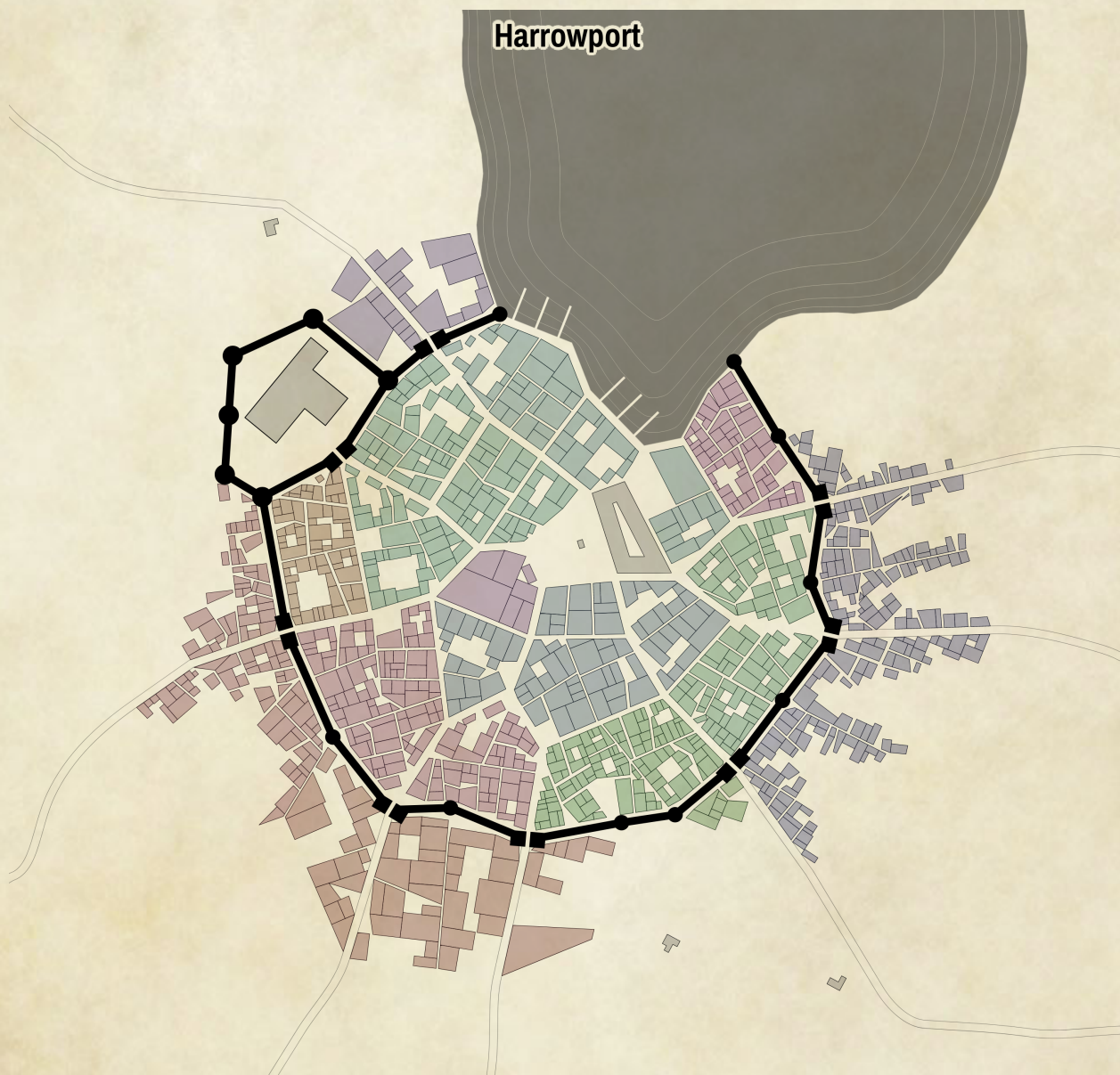
**Multiattack.** The mask makes two attacks, both with bite. Instead of making a bite attack, it may use its Terrify.

**Bite.** Melee Weapon Attack: +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 12 (3d4 + 5) piercing damage. The target must also succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or take 7 (3d4) poison damage and be poisoned for 1 minute.

**Terrify.** Each creature within 60 feet of the mask that can see it must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened for 1 minute. An affected creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. If a target's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the target is immune to this mask's Terrify for the next 24 hours.

# APPENDIX B: MAPS

## HARROWPORT

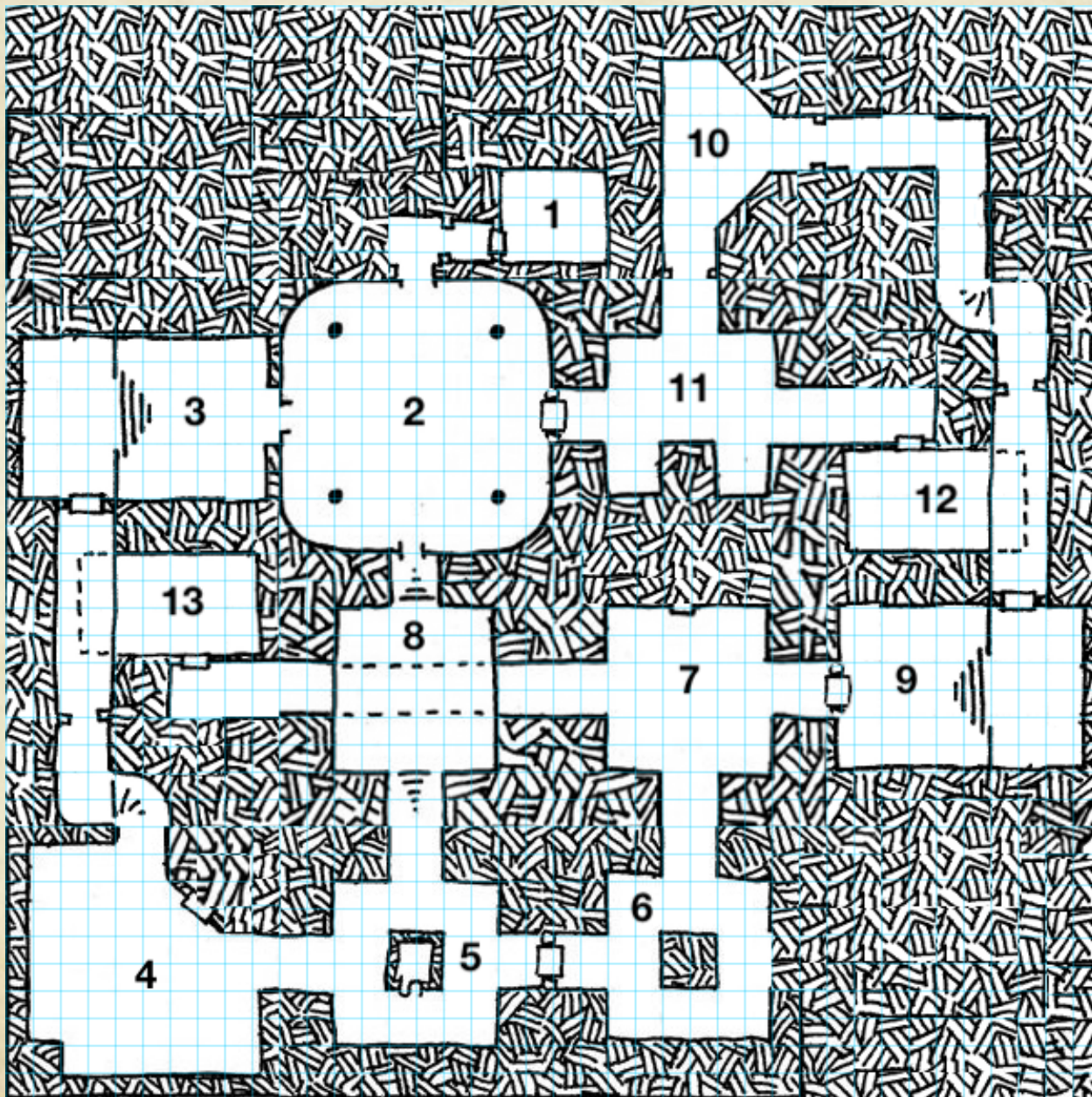


## RITUALISTIC CIRCLE





# THE TEMPLE OF THE MASK (OPTIONAL DUNGEON)



# A SOUND OF MANY FACES

This adventure draws inspiration from the tale “Pied Piper of Hamelin”, from the movie “Memento” by Christopher Nolan, from “Legend of Zelda: Majora’s Mask” and from the character “Khada Jhin, the Virtuoso” from League of Legends.

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An adventure for 4-6 characters of levels 4-6.

For use with the fifth edition of Dungeons &  
Dragons, Player's Handbook, Monster Manual and  
Dungeon Master's Guide.



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