

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® CAMPAIGN ADVENTURE

FORGOTTEN REALMS®

# ANAUROCH

The Empire of Shade™

A Campaign Adventure for Characters of Levels 9–13



Greg A. Vaughan

Thomas M. Reid Sean K Reynolds



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# FORGOTTEN REALMS

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# INTRODUCTION

As scorching breezes swirl across the hot, burning sands of Anauroch, the very fabric of magic itself vanishes. Spells no longer work, once-powerful weapons lie inert, and even the haunted halls of long-forgotten ruins shudder as the ghosts and wraiths of their former denizens simply vanish. The Princes of Shade are preparing to march across the breadth of the land—and with the help of Shar's clergy, annihilate the Weave once and for all.

With magic silenced all across the Great Sand Sea, the Shadovars seem impregnable in their floating city. But someone must find a way to put a stop to their fell schemes, even if it means taking the battle into the scorching desert and confronting the shades on their own doorstep—without magical aid.

*Anauroch: The Empire of Shade* is a DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® adventure designed for four 13th-level characters. Player characters will advance through 14th level and into 15th level during the course of the adventure, and perhaps reach 16th or 17th level by its conclusion.

## preparation

You need four books to run this adventure: the *Player's Handbook* (PH), the *Dungeon Master's Guide* (DMG), the *Monster Manual* (MM), and the *FORGOTTEN REALMS Campaign Setting* (FR). Also, much of the information on hazards of the desert is based on rules introduced in *Sandstorm*. You don't have to have that book to enjoy the plot, but it's a good resource for desert-themed adventuring.

Throughout this book, abbreviations (often in superscript type) are used to denote game elements and other materials that appear in certain supplements. Those supplements and their abbreviations are as follows: *Complete Warrior* (CW), *Magic of Faerûn* (Mag), *Epic Level Handbook* (ELH), *Expanded Psionics Handbook* (EPH), *Fiend Folio* (FF), *Libris Mortis* (LM), *Lost Empires of Faerûn* (LE), *Monster Manual II* (MM2), *Monster Manual*

*III* (MM3), *Monster Manual IV* (MM4), *Monsters of Faerûn* (Mon), *Player's Guide to Faerûn* (PG), *Races of Faerûn* (Rac), *Sandstorm* (San), and *Underdark* (Und).

Although this adventure is a sequel to the previous two adventures in a series—*Cormyr: The Tearing of the Weave* and *Shadowdale: The Scouring of the Land*—you don't need to play through those adventures before running this one. *Anauroch: The Empire of Shade* works just fine as a stand-alone adventure.

We recommend that you review the information presented on Anauroch and the shades in the *FORGOTTEN REALMS Campaign Setting* (pages 99 and 280, respectively) before running this adventure. You'll also find more detailed information about Anauroch in the appendix of this adventure.

This adventure uses a tactical format to describe encounters that are likely to result in combat. The adventure is divided into a narrative (the start of each chapter), in which encounters and location descriptions are presented in the traditional manner, and tactical encounters at the end of each chapter, in which specific battles are laid out in an easy-to-run format.

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## HOW TO USE THE TACTICAL FORMAT

The keyed entries in the text present, in essence, a flowchart of the adventure. Locations or event-based encounters that result in a fight have a corresponding tactical encounter at the end of the chapter in question.

When the adventure narrative directs you to refer to a tactical encounter, simply turn to the indicated page.

The most obvious feature of each tactical encounter is the map of the room or area where the encounter occurs. A variety of text entries accompany each map: a Setup section, information to be read aloud to the players, and other details specifying features of the tactical area. Begin with the Setup section first, which describes the initial creature positions and circumstances of the battle. The remaining sections include creature descriptions and statistics, creature tactics, traps (if any), and other related information.

The encounters in this adventure are designed for use with *DUNGEONS & DRAGONS*® Miniatures. In some cases, a miniature you own might represent a character or creature perfectly. If you don't have the exact miniature, just substitute another miniature of the same size and tell the players what the miniature you're using represents.

### HOW TO USE TACTICAL MAPS

As described on *DMG* 59, if a map feature covers more than half of a given square, the feature is considered to extend into that

square. If it covers less than half of a square, it doesn't extend into that square.

For example, if an area of light undergrowth skirts around the edges of a square, but the rest of the square is clear, then there's no extra movement cost to enter that square. If the undergrowth reaches past the middle of the square, the square costs 2 squares to move into.

## Adventure Background

In -700 DR, while she was contributing to the Roll of Years, the seer known as Augathra the Mad began having dark visions. The *Book of the Black* was the result of those horrifying prophecies. Tormented by the Black Chronology she saw woven between the years, Augathra began wandering Faerûn, slowly being driven insane and earning her moniker.

After years of being lost, the *Book of the Black* came into the possession of the Dark Diviners of Windsong Tower, who retrieved it from the Fane of Shadows in 684 DR. Inspired by the *Book of the Black* and their own ability to see the future, the Dark Diviners of Windsong Tower deduced a coming weakness of Shar and penned their observations in a second tome, the *Leaves of One Night*.

Shar immediately cursed the Diviners' writings, and shortly thereafter, thieves in the employ of the Church of Shar stole the Diviners' copy of the *Book of the Black*, as well as the only copy of the *Leaves of One Night*. In the hope of recreating their work

## coming from shadowdale

Groups who played through the adventure previous to this one—*Shadowdale: The Scouring of the Land*—might need an additional trail of bread crumbs to follow to reach the beginning of this plot. Here are some guidelines and advice on how to best achieve the transition between the two adventures.

First off, a number of clues point to the involvement of the Shadovars in the Shadowdale adventure. The most telltale of these is Esvele's letter from Prince Yder Tanthul. It not only clearly states the shades' involvement but also provides numerous clues to the next destination for the PCs—the remains of Windsong Tower in Myth Drannor. If the characters did not find the letter but managed to collect Eregul's *Windsong Towerkin ring*, it shouldn't be too hard to find a sage who can identify its origins.

If the group was unable to acquire either of these pieces of evidence, there are still obvious clues pointing to the Shadovars. The emissary Irphiina inhabits the lair of Alokkaïr the lich as his guest. If the characters managed to parlay with her rather than merely slaughtering her, she readily admitted

to being a citizen of the City of Shade and in the service of Lord Telamont. If the PCs succeeded in driving off the shadow simulacrum of Prince Yder Tanthul, they might have acquired additional evidence of Shadovar meddling.

Even if the characters were unable to interact with either of these individuals, authority figures in Shadowdale ought to be able to recognize a shade corpse and deduce the complicity of the Shadovars.

What would remain at that point, then, would be an additional nudge in the direction of Windsong Tower rather than directly toward the desert. Simply arrange for the letter and ring from that adventure to fall into the characters' hands—either they find the items on another body (with the addressee's name changed on the letter) or some minor official (perhaps a military officer helping to clean up the town in the aftermath of the fighting) brings the items to the PCs as "findings of interest." If they still don't deduce where to go next, any of the remaining members of the leadership in Shadowdale can take a look at the clues and suggest that a journey to the tower is in order.



(and understanding what went wrong), the Dark Diviners left Windsong Tower. Raanaghaun Cormrael (named for a long-dead famous Netherese priest of Shar) returned to the Fane of Shadows to seek more answers. His sister, Shar Cormrael (named for the goddess herself), sought the Crypt of Augathra the Mad.

Neither returned.

In her quest to destroy the Weave and replace it with the Shadow Weave—and thereby destroy Mystra—Shar has instructed her followers to establish dead magic zones throughout Faerûn. In the first adventures in this trilogy, Shar's clergy attempted to establish dead magic zones in the Vast Swamp and in Shadowdale; both times, the PCs thwarted their plans.

Undaunted, Shar has guided her followers into an alliance with the shades, who also have little use for the Weave. Intrigued by what the Sharrans have proposed, the Princes of Shade decided to let them create their most ambitious dead magic zone yet—right atop Anauroch, covering all but the fringes of the great desert. Fascinated by the zone and interested in expanding it, the shades decide to seek out more information on their own. In the course of doing so, they stumble upon an intact set of the *Nether Scrolls* (just as Shar had intended all along). With the scrolls in hand, the shades are now ready to begin their conquest of all of Faerûn.

## Adventure synopsis

*Anauroch: The Empire of Shade* offers PCs the opportunity to at last confront the ambitious machinations of the Princes of Shade, who have the power of Karsus himself within their grasp. The PCs must sift through history to determine what threat looms over the land, and then overcome the challenge of trekking through a hostile environment without the comfort of the Weave and its magic to aid them. To stop the shades from advancing their ambitions against the rest of the world, the characters must penetrate the very heart of the Empire of Shadow. Only by scattering the pages of the *Nether Scrolls* can they put a halt to the Shadovar scheme and prevent Shar from shattering magic forever.

**Chapter 1: Windsong Tower.** The characters explore the ruins of Windsong Tower in ancient Myth Drannor and learn that agents of the Shadovars were there very recently, searching for information on the Dark Diviners, the *Book of the Black*, and the *Leaves of the One Night*. The PCs discover that the shades accidentally found a set of the *Nether Scrolls*, in the form of a magic beech tree known as the *Quess Ar Teranthvar*, and took it back to their floating city.

**Chapter 2: The Crypt of Augathra the Mad.** Following some clues received by an ancient denizen of Windsong Tower, the PCs set off in search of the last known resting place of the famed seer who initially scribed the dark secrets of Shar's magic. They discover that Augathra has not died, but has existed as a prisoner of the terrible phaerimms for many centuries. After defeating the magic-eaters and speaking with Augathra, the PCs

determine that they must find the fabled Terraseer if they hope to stop the shades.

**Chapter 3: Research and Developments.** After combing through some of Faerûn's most complete libraries, the PCs at last know their next destination—the lost city of Oreme, a remnant of a civilization in Anauroch that predates even Netheril. Knowing they cannot brave the heat-scoured and magic-dead landscape of the desert without proper equipment, the characters visit Biradon, a traveling caravan city that roams the fringes of the sandy wasteland. Then they set out, seeking the hidden abode of the Terraseer.

**Chapter 4: Beneath the White Towers.** Next, the PCs must defeat a terrible abomination that has taken the Terraseer prisoner, and then learn what is needed to put a stop to the shades' scheme. Their success relies on an artifact that they must secure from well-guarded vaults deep beneath the desert. After battling the legendary thalud, they at last have the tools to complete their quest.

**Chapter 5: Shadow Seashore.** The characters' final confrontation leads them into the very heart of shade territory. They must find the *Quess Ar Teranthvar* and destroy it before the shades can complete their ritual. If they succeed, it is a mixed blessing, though, for the same act that scatters the pages of the *Nether Scrolls* also destroys the last remnants of the Sharn Wall (see page 46), freeing the phaerimms completely.

**Appendix 1: Anauroch** describes the features of the Great Desert.

**Appendix 2: Magic and Monsters** contains new monsters, magic items, and other information useful in running the adventure.

## Adventure hooks

Characters might become entangled in this adventure through a wide variety of methods.

**Out of Shadowdale:** Assuming that you have just played through *Cormyr: The Tearing of the Weave* and/or *Shadowdale: The Scouring of the Land*, the PCs have presumably recovered a *Windsong Towerkin ring* and are still following up on a scrap of parchment from a Sharran tome known as the *Book of the Black*. Clues they gathered there about the *Book of the Black* have led them to Windsong Tower.

**Detour:** The PCs have discovered a magic ring among some other treasure they recently acquired, and through their attempts to use it, they inadvertently whisk themselves to Windsong Tower.

**Desperate Summons:** Player characters with some allegiance or connection to a good-aligned organization (the refounded elf kingdom of Myth Drannor, the Harpers, the Purple Dragons of Cormyr, the Church of Lathander, or a prestigious order such as the Knights of the Chalice) receive a summons from an ally or superior. This person has learned from a reliable source that the shades are up to no good in Myth Drannor, and he asks (or orders) the characters to go to Windsong Tower and find out what they're up to.



# WINDSONG TOWER

**M**yth Drannor, once known far and wide as the City of Song, has lain in ruins for centuries in the depths of Cormanthor Forest. Sheltered by blueleaf, shadowtop, oak, and weirwood trees, the silent stones have waited, serving as homes to small creatures as well as monstrous beings of various kinds. But at long last, living beings have come to reclaim the fabled city and restore it—if not to its former glory, then at least to a functioning settlement. The moon elves, descendants of Myth Drannor's founders, have returned to Cormanthor to raise it once again as the capital of that nation.

But their efforts have not gone unchallenged. The Army of Darkhope, led by Scyllua Darkhope, Castellan of Zhentil Keep and High Captain of the Zhentarim, was charged with the destruction of the newly risen Myth Drannor. With its allies—first the Masked Brigades (the combined forces of the drow House Jaelre and the Auzkovyn clan), and later the Church of Shar and the drow of House Dhuurniv—a portion of Scyllua's army fought numerous engagements with the recently formed Army of Myth Drannor in a conflict known as the Cormanthor War. Skirmishing in the forest around Myth Drannor has been constant, and when the two Chosen of Mystra who were aiding Myth Drannor's forces left to lend support to Shadowdale, the war began to turn against the elves. But the defeat of the Zhents and their allies at Shadowdale has rallied the troops of Myth Drannor, and with their forces once again bolstered, they have resumed their zealous defense of the rebuilding city.

Now that they have defeated the Zhents and the Shadovars (see *Shadowdale: The Scouring of the Land*), the PCs must keep

the enemies from utilizing the *Nether Scrolls* in their nefarious plans. Thus, their next stop is Myth Drannor, where the only remaining full set of the *Nether Scrolls* lies below Windsong Tower. The Shadovars have beaten the PCs to the punch, however, and the scrolls are already gone. The scrolls' last remaining guardian, Darcassan the Farseer, has been using *dream* spells to project a cryptic message of loss, in the hope of attracting adventurers who will return the scrolls.

(For those who are interested, *Lost Empires of Faerûn* contains detailed information about the *Nether Scrolls*. None of that information, however, is important to how this adventure plays out.)

The PCs are assumed to possess one or more *Windsong Towerkin rings*. Each of these rings causes any *portal* within 5 miles of Myth Drannor's center to transport the wearer to Windsong Tower rather than to its usual destination. Thus, all the PCs need to do is find a functioning *portal* in order to enter the tower (see page 11).

## Event 1: Arrival at Myth Drannor

*Myth Drannor has again become a bustling place. Graceful spires rise above the treeline, and a few of the outlying structures on the forest floor appear to have been fully restored or replaced with newer buildings. Much of the city seems covered in tents—a testament to the number of troops stationed here these days. Tents of all sizes, shapes, and colors stand in most open spaces inside the city. Smoke rises from cookfires here and there, and some tent flaps stand open to reveal eateries, makeshift shops, and the workplaces of crafters. Armed patrols move through the restored streets and byways between tent rows and walk the perimeter of the city, keeping a sharp eye out for enemies.*



Because of the ongoing warfare with the Zhents and the drow, Myth Drannor operates as a city-sized armed camp. Most of the already restored buildings are currently serving either as barracks for the defenders of the city, or as quarters for important persons involved in the restoration effort. The rest of the city's new populace is living in the tents.

In the absence of the city's legendary *mythals*, perimeter security has become a necessity. Ground patrols consisting of elf rangers and fighters supported by arcane spellcasters challenge all who approach the city openly. Treants, *awakened* hawks, giant owls, and druids in wild shape note the presence of any visitors who attempt to circumvent the patrols, and pass descriptions of these skulkers along to the guard captains, who assign operatives to keep a close eye on the activities of such persons. Those who take pains to sneak into the city are not directly challenged unless they cause trouble, but they are watched closely, since the elves would prefer to know to whom any potential spies speak, and what they do while in the city.

If the PCs approach the city openly, they are challenged by one of the perimeter patrols, as described in the interaction encounter below. If they attempt to enter by any other means, they are spotted by Myth Drannor's operatives in the surrounding forest unless their precautions are extremely effective. In that event, they are not challenged, but they are still watched closely while in the city.

## Halt! who goes there?

*Numerous restored roads and well-used trails lead into Myth Drannor now, but access to the city still seems to be restricted. Armed patrols of moon elves are stopping all inbound travelers. "Halt! State your names and business in Myth Drannor!" says an authoritative voice. Two elves armed with swords and longbows accompanied by a wolf have appeared from somewhere in the throng. One of the elves holds a piece of parchment and a pen.*

The guards are Lerin and Dular (both CG male moon elf ranger 5); the wolf is Lerin's companion. If the PCs completed the Shadowdale adventure, they likely have gained some celebrity status. Thus, if the PCs give their real names, the guards recognize them as the "heroes of Shadowdale" and greet them enthusiastically, offering to escort them wherever they wish to go.

Otherwise, the guards record the information given and, assuming that the characters' stated business does not sound overly suspicious, pass them through. Thereafter, unless the characters cause a disturbance, they are free to move about the tent city as they wish.

If Lord Mourngrym survived the battle at Shadowdale and came here thereafter, he can vouch for the PCs' identity and intentions against any challenges (if he has met them before). He is also willing to help them locate *portals*, obtain supplies and services, or make contact with people they wish to see.

If the PCs have brought the *Warblade* from Shadowdale (see *Shadowdale: The Scouring of the Land*), Coronal Isvele Miritar gladly accepts the gift. In return, she gifts each character with one magic item whose value does not exceed 10,000 gp.

## Event 2: A Song of Loss

*Above the hum of activity, a lone voice rises, singing a melody so achingly sad that those who can hear it stop momentarily, brush tears from their eyes or shake their heads, then move on.*

*"Tall grew the trees in the hidden glade,  
Below the tower that was not a tower.  
Kept safe for eons from spell and blade,  
By guardians who wielded Mystra's power.*

*"The words that sighed through their golden leaves  
Had been heard in part but never whole.  
But the tall trees fell to the hands of thieves  
And Magic's death is now their goal.*

*"A precious circle of wizard's skill  
Is the key to their Sundered ground.  
Their home lies silent now and still  
Till the door in Nature's hall is found.*

*"The living must find that which is lost  
Before the world is riven,  
Or mortals and gods will pay the cost  
And lose forever the blessings given."*

The voice belongs to Kelloren Bluestar (CG male half-elf bard 6), who is seated on a rock near the outskirts of the tent city. He has had a dream the past two nights in which a mysterious stranger clad in green told him about the theft of the "trees," and he has turned the words he heard into a song. In fact, the voice he heard was that of Darcassan Farseer, who sent forth one of his shadow selves (Darcassan the Adroit) for the past several nights to search for someone who could carry his tale of woe to others. Most of the folk currently in Myth Drannor are elves and therefore not suitable subjects for his plan. But when Darcassan found Kelloren sitting near the ruins of Windsong Tower and singing to passersby, he decided the fellow was the perfect vehicle and sent him a message in the form of a *dream* spell.

The words Kelloren heard in his dream were a cryptic message meant to alert anyone who has sufficient knowledge about the theft of the *Nether Scrolls* without revealing too much information to those who would make inappropriate use of it. Kelloren doesn't understand the words himself—he doesn't know that the "trees" are really the *Nether Scrolls*, or that the "precious circle of wizard's skill" is a *Windsong Towerkin ring*.



that gives access to Windsong Tower. However, he does clearly understand the deep sense of loss that accompanied the words in his dream.

Kelloren is happy to talk to the PCs about his dream if they approach him. He provides the following information in response to questions.

- “My dream started with a man in green approaching me. He never said his name, but he was a sun elf—tall, with light skin and golden hair, and he wore a half-mask over his eyes. He wore a dark green cloak over traveling clothes, and a pair of soft boots.”
- “He talked about trees—a grove of very special trees—as though he had loved them all his life.”
- “The trees were special somehow. They held some great magical secret.”
- “He didn’t say exactly what had happened to the trees, but he made it clear that someone had stolen them. Sounds odd, I know, but they didn’t just die. Someone took them.”
- “The man didn’t say who took them, but it seemed like he knew.”
- “He seemed to want someone to come and check out the area where the trees were—someone more powerful than I am.”
- “He told me to sing his tale to all who would listen. He seemed very sad, but determined to set things right.”

A successful DC 15 Knowledge (Myth Drannor local) check identifies “Nature’s hall” as the Naturalists Guild, which houses a known and still functioning *portal*. A successful DC 25 Knowledge (arcana) check identifies the “precious circle of wizard’s skill” as a *Windsong Towerkin ring*. A successful DC 35 Knowledge (arcana) check identifies the “trees,” specifically the tree known as the *Quess Ar Teranthvar* (Golden Grove of Hidden Knowledge), as the disguised form of a full set of the *Nether Scrolls*. A bardic knowledge check can be substituted for any of these skill checks at the same DC.

**Development:** Kelloren can take the PCs to the Naturalists Guild if they ask him. He can also direct them to elves more knowledgeable about Myth Drannor than he is if they have trouble interpreting the message.

## Event 3: The Lure

*A raven with gleaming black feathers leaves its perch atop a tavern tent and lights nearby. “So you want to know about a lost tree, do you?” says the bird. “Myth Drannor is a place of secrets, and some secrets can kill—when you don’t know them. Meet my mistress, Keevosen Nibili, at the Blackthorn Hunting Lodge at midnight.” With that, the bird flies into the branches overhead and vanishes amid the foliage.*

The raven is Medar, Keevosen Nibili’s familiar. Keevosen is a Shadovar agent sent to keep tabs on all the doings in Myth Drannor. After the theft of the *Quess Ar Teranthvar*, Keevosen received orders to ensure that no one came after the *Nether Scrolls* until the Shadovars have had a chance to plumb their magic. She has been watching the area and has seen Darcassan’s shadow projections moving about. She also knows that the young bard Kelloren has been singing of the lost scrolls, though she does not know how he came by his information. As soon as Kelloren began talking with the PCs about the “trees,” the Shadovar assessed the group and laid plans for a deadly ambush.

Keevosen has been using the long-abandoned Blackthorn Lodge as a base since the theft of the scrolls. It lies less than a mile from Myth Drannor proper, to the north of the tent city. Once owned by the Blackthorn family, a fairly prosperous clan of humans who lived in old Myth Drannor, the lodge is now a crumbling ruin. Since it lies so far out of the city, the elves have not yet made any effort to restore it, though they did clear out most of the monsters that had taken up residence there.

PCs can get directions to Blackthorn Hunting Lodge by making a successful DC 15 Gather Information check in any of the local taverns or eateries, or they can ask Kelloren, who knows the location because he assisted in clearing that area of monsters. Lord Mourngrym and all the members of the Coronal’s staff also know the location.

If the PCs inquire about Keevosen, a successful DC 12 Gather Information check reveals that she is a fairly slim and fit human female with dark skin and a talent for magic. She has been in and around Myth Drannor for more than a year, helping to clear the more dangerous places in the vicinity of monsters and repel the occasional invader. This information is accurate—but she has of course also been collecting information for the Shadovars. No one in Myth Drannor who is outside Keevosen’s personal circle knows about her spying efforts.

## Event 4: The Lodge

*Ahead lies a stone building that must have once been a fine hunting lodge. The west side has collapsed from the steady pressure of trees growing too close to the wall, but the main portion of the structure seems intact, except where portions of the roof have collapsed. A double door of moss-covered oak seems to offer the only obvious means of entry.*

A map of the lodge can be found on page 30. The main portion of the lodge is still structurally sound, though the roof is in poor condition, with holes and weak spots throughout. The walls along the west wing, which was used to hold guests who came to the lodge to enjoy an occasional tenday of hunting, are ruined. Two sizable shadowtop trees have grown alongside the wall, and their roots have undermined the foundation there. Only a few



moss-covered stones remain atop one another to mark the former boundaries of the structure; the rest lies in rubble.

Keevosen has hired a few members of the Cormanthor tribe of the People of the Black Blood to assist her in dealing with any interlopers who might try to track down the scrolls. She and her band of werewolves have been living here at the lodge since a few days after the theft. The werewolves hunt in the area at night and keep the larder stocked, and occasionally make forays into the city in human form to pick up information on potential threats.

Keevosen has placed several mental *alarm* spells around the lodge to warn her of the approach of intruders. Her werewolf companions do not trigger the spells. When the PCs arrive, Keevosen's familiar Medar is away on an errand.

## L1. main hall

*The double doors open easily onto a spacious hall lit only by the dim moonlight filtering in through the holes in the roof. Piles of leaves and other debris lie here and there on the floor, and long tables line the chamber on both sides. At the far end of the hall is a stone fireplace, and on the walls hang wooden plaques supporting the dusty heads of various long-dead creatures—stags, boars, wolves, and other trophies.*

Four of the creatures mounted in this gallery are still alive. Keevosen's four werewolf companions have thrust their heads through holes cut through the wall and the plaques, and they are posing as trophies until she gives the signal for them to attack. A successful DC 20 Listen check detects the sound of their breathing. Only if the PCs create adequate light to see with can they determine that the wolf heads are less dusty than the rest.

**Development:** If the encounter goes against her, Keevosen attempts to flee, leaving her werewolf mercenaries to fend for themselves. Once they discern that she is gone, they also attempt to flee if they believe the PCs pose a serious threat.

**Tactical Encounter:** M1: Bad Blood, page 30.

## L2. kitchen

*Though its walls and floor bear old water stains and its ceiling has a gaping hole, this food preparation area is relatively clean and shows signs of recent use. The large brick oven set in one wall is still warm to the touch, and a few embers glow inside. The long table is clean and well used, the basin is still wet from dishwashing, and a few pans hang on a rack in the center of the room. The aroma of roasted meat hangs in the air.*

Keevosen does most of the cooking here, baking bread and roasting meat for herself. Her werewolf companions prefer their meat raw.

The cupboards yield only a few plates and cups.

## L3. pantry

*The walls of this rectangular chamber are lined with shelves, and more shelves stand in rows in the middle of the room. In the corners nearest the door are several open, empty barrels. The shelves are broken here and there, as though some heavy creature had attempted to climb them. A few pantry staples rest on some of the unbroken shelves—small containers marked as flour, salt, lard, and sugar, plus a few bags of dried fruit, onions, and potatoes.*

Roaming animals and monsters long ago consumed most of the foodstuffs that remained here from the lodge's heyday. Keevosen keeps a few staples here for her own use.

**Treasure:** In addition to the gear she and her mercenaries carry, Keevosen keeps a collection of gems and cash hidden among the foodstuffs. She uses this wealth to pay her servants and to make the occasional bribe. It takes a successful DC 18 Search check to locate all the loot. The cache includes 1 king's tear (5,000 gp), 3 fiery yellow corundums (1,000 gp each), 18 white tourmalines (100 gp each), 35 moss agates (10 gp each), 2,570 gp, and 28 pp.

## L4. dining room

*A massive oak table dominates this once-grand hall. Tattered tapestries adorn the walls, but they are faded beyond recognition. Heavy wooden chairs line both sides of the table, and the shattered remains of a deer-horn chandelier lie across the dusty surface of the table, along with bits of the ceiling and roof.*

The chandelier was once an artistic and fanciful rendition of the chandelier's art, using curving stag horns to support thick candles. It fell and broke when the roof above gave way. Keevosen and her minions have left this room alone, having no need for a formal dining experience.

# windsong tower

More than seven hundred years ago, the great city of Myth Drannor boasted a school of arcane magic that produced the most gifted wizards known in Faerûn since the fall of Netheril. The true extent of Windsong Tower's influence might never be known, because the staff members always kept their identities (and those of their pupils) strictly confidential. Likewise, daily activities within the school and all long-term projects the staff undertook remain veiled in secrecy even today. When the player characters enter the school, they'll discover a few of its secrets—for good or for ill.



## overview

The original school was a complex of three connected buildings and a maze of pocket dimensions and other extradimensional spaces. The inset portion of the map on page 21 shows the structures that existed on the Material Plane.

The main structure was a round stone tower four stories high, with no apparent windows or entrances. Intricate carvings on the tower's exterior reflected elven esthetics and gave the place an organic look, as though the structure had been grown from the bedrock below (and some bards' tales maintain that this was indeed so). When the wind blew over the tower's sculpted façade, it created a low murmur that was audible at a distance of a hundred yards or more. The elves of Myth Drannor appreciated the sound as both lovely and musical, but many visitors to the city found the sound unbearably eerie. This musical effect gave the school its popular name—Windsong Tower—though that name properly applies only to the central tower. A wrought iron fence fortified with deadly magic wards surrounded this tower, efficiently discouraging anyone from approaching its outer walls. The tower had one physical entrance, an invisible archway whose position shifted to face the sun or moon as they traversed the sky (on moonless nights the entrance vanished altogether). Only someone intimately familiar with the school could traverse the deadly wards and find the entrance.

The school also included two outbuildings. To the north stood Shadownsong Tree, a magically altered shadowtop, which was ancient even in Myth Drannor's heyday. The Shadownsong Tree contained a three-story building within its trunk and lower branches. To the south, a massive oak supported the three-story Windsong Aerie high in its branches.

Like Windsong Tower, neither Shadownsong Tree nor Windsong Aerie had any apparent openings in its walls. Most citizens of Myth Drannor believed that the school most likely had plenty of doors and windows, all of which lay hidden behind illusion spells. The assumption was largely correct, though most access to the complex was through a network of keyed *portals*.

## The school today

The ravages of time and misfortune have reduced the central tower to a pile of moss-covered rubble.

A single section of tile floor, about 30 feet square, stands perhaps a foot above the rubble. The tile is all that remains of ground-floor chamber inside the tower. A permanent effect similar to a *daylight* spell covers the tiled area. This effect has a caster level of 35th. If dispelled, it returns after 1d4 rounds.

Until recently, the tiled area functioned as a *portal* into the dungeons below the school. The busy citizens rebuilding Myth Drannor searched the dungeons some time ago and removed

## windsong tower lore

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (history) or Knowledge (arcana) can gain useful information about Windsong Tower. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, along with the information from lower DCs. Bards and loremasters can uncover similar information.

### Knowledge (history) or Bardic Knowledge

#### DC Result

- 10 The elf city of Myth Drannor was home to Windsong Tower, a school for wizards that took its name from a carved facade that literally "sang" when the wind blew.
- 12 The identity of teachers and students at the school was always a closely guarded secret.
- 15 The school was one of the last bastions of defense when Myth Drannor fell to invaders in 714 DR. The tower was destroyed in a vicious magical battle.
- 17 The school actually had three buildings, the main tower and a pair of tree-buildings to the north and south. The tree structures survived the final battle.
- 20 Graduates from the school were given rings inscribed with magic symbols along the insides of the bands.
- 25 A cadre of wizards from the school, the Dark Diviners, once earned the wrath of Shar by writing a treatise that revealed several of her secrets.

### Knowledge (arcana) or Loremaster Lore

#### DC Result

- 10 Windsong Tower, a famous school of wizardry in Myth Drannor, operated in strictest secrecy. Its numerous magic wards defeated divinations, and even its doors and windows were hidden by realistic illusions.
- 12 The school has few physical entrances; keyed portals were the primary means of egress.
- 15 An iron fence imbued with deadly magical effects once protected the school. These wards failed over the years.
- 17 The school was protected by its own mythal, which defeated divination spells and most forms of magical travel.
- 20 Graduates from the school were given rings bearing the school symbol—a harp surrounded by swirling winds.
- 25 Advanced students at the school had access to a source of magical knowledge more potent than any seen since the fall of Netheril—including the secrets of mythal construction.



everything even remotely noteworthy or valuable. After the dungeons had been cleared, the current city leaders deactivated the *portal* leading to them with a *seal portal* spell. They did so to prevent criminals or enemies of the city from using the dungeons as a base or an area of retreat. If the PCs reactivate the *portal* and gain access to the dungeons, they find nothing but a series of empty rooms and corridors.

The tile floor, however, still holds some value for the player characters. A big rune that consists of a triangle of diamonds, each with a barbed tail trailing from one point, is set within a pair of concentric circles at the center of the tiled space. The inner circle is 8 feet wide, and the rune fills it completely. This rune provides one gateway into the school (see Event 5: Getting In).

Although little of the main tower remains on the Material Plane, several extradimensional chambers once linked to the main tower still are accessible to the PCs.

The Shadowsong Tree continues to thrive and the structure within it remains intact, as do all the extradimensional chambers connected to it. The upper story, in the tree's branches, is so thickly shrouded in foliage that it's effectively invisible from more than a few feet away.

The left portion of the map on page 26 shows the Shadowsong Tree.

Windsong Aerie is a battered hulk. The roof is mostly gone and the floors are full of gaping holes. Foliage from the supporting oak fills most of the interior. From outside, the aerie looks like a wrecked elf tree-building. Inside, however, the player characters can find entrances to several extradimensional chambers still attached to the aerie; these remain in good repair. The right portion of the map on page 26 shows the aerie's ruins.

## Event 5: Getting In

The elves who built the school went out of their way to make entry difficult for the uninvited. The shifting entrance to the main tower has been destroyed, along with the structure. Two fairly easy methods of entry remain, however. The first is a *portal* located in the rubble that marks where the central tower once stood. The second is the wreck of Windsong Aerie; a determined party also might force its way in by breaching the walls of the Shadowsong Tree.

**The Portal:** A tile floor protruding above the rubble of the main tower (see the inset portion of the map on page 21) bears a large rune marking a *portal*. This *portal* gives access to the main tower's extradimensional spaces, and it remains active even though an adjacent *portal* leading to the school's dungeons is sealed (see the previous section).

Anyone wearing a *Windsong Towerkin ring* activates the rune's *portal* by touching any portion of the rune or the two concentric circles that surround it. Once activated, the *portal* remains open for 1 round, allowing any other creature who

touches the rune (or the circles) to follow. The *portal* leads to area 1 inside Windsong Tower.

A *Windsong Towerkin ring* also allows the wearer to redirect a *portal* in the Myth Drannor area so that it leads to the rubble where the main tower's entry hall once stood. See the *Windsong Towerkin ring* entry on page 149 for details.

If the PCs seek such a *portal*, they can locate one by combining the Myth Drannor area using an *analyze portal* spell or by making a successful DC 25 Knowledge (arcana) check. The PCs also might know the location of an operating *portal* in the Myth Drannor area from previous experience with the city. If they have made the right friends, they might be able to get a *portal*'s location just by asking. Isvele Miritar, the recently inaugurated Coronal of Myth Drannor, certainly knows about local *portals* (the PCs might befriend her by returning the legendary Warblade after the events of *Shadowdale: The Scouring of the Land*), as would many officials of the Church of Mystra or nobles of the Elven Court.

A character using a ring in the fashion discussed here winds up in an area of rubble about 100 feet east of the rune. It's a simple matter to walk through the rubble to the rune.

If the PCs undertook the previous adventure in this series and defeated Eregul the Freestave, they probably recovered his *Windsong Towerkin ring*. If the PCs did not seize Eregul's ring, they might find a *Windsong Towerkin ring* in a treasure hoard, or perhaps obtain one through a contact, mentor, or sponsor.

**Windsong Aerie:** If the PCs can climb or fly up to the remains of Windsong Aerie, they can gain entrance through the balcony at area 34. They also can slip through gaps in the walls, floors, or roof.

**Shadowsong Tree:** The PCs also can climb the Shadowsong Tree and literally hack their way inside. The roof is the most vulnerable point. Punching a hole through there gives access to area 33.

## The wards of windsong tower

An active *mythal* protects all remaining areas inside the school. This magic has the following effects:

- Divination spells fail when aimed or directed anywhere within the school. Characters wearing *Windsong Towerkin rings* can avoid this restriction, provided that they have line of sight to the area they're examining. Darçassan, as the school's sole remaining elder, also ignores this restriction.
- No spell can damage, alter, or penetrate the school's walls, ceilings, or floors unless the caster makes a successful DC 40 caster level check. A character wearing a *Windsong Towerkin ring* gains a +10 bonus on the caster level check.



- All spells and effects of the teleportation subschool, and all spells and effects that allow planar travel, fail if the caster's point of departure or arrival is inside the school. If the caster is inside the school when using the spell, the caster is hurled into a formless void for 1d10 minutes. After that time, the caster returns to the same general area he left. The caster is displaced 1d4×10 feet in a random direction (use the diagram on *PH* 158). If another creature or solid object occupies the new arrival space, the traveler appears in the closest available open space that has a surface that can support the character.

A creature wearing a *Windsong Towerkin ring* ignores this effect if the point of departure lies with the school and the point of arrival also is within the school and the caster has line of sight and line of effect to the destination.

This effect does not interfere with Darcassan's shadow projection ability, with the school's *portals*, or with conjuration or abjuration spells that summon, call, or banish creatures.

- Characters wearing *Windsong Towerkin rings* receive the effects of *protection from evil* and *protection from law* spells while within the school. These effects are negated if the character wearing the ring has an evil alignment.
- Characters wearing *Windsong Towerkin rings* receive the benefit of one *Rary's mnemonic enhancer* spell every 24 hours. If a character prepares spells while inside the school, this effect allows the character to prepare extra spells or recall one cast spell, as noted in the spell description. If a character prepares spells outside the school, this effect allows the character only to recall a cast spell.

This effect is negated if the character wearing the ring has an evil alignment.

- Spells and effects that allow the remote manipulation of objects are negated inside the school. These spells include *levitate*, *mage hand*, *telekinesis*, and *unseen servant*. A character wearing a *Windsong Towerkin ring* avoids this restriction unless he has an evil alignment; Darcassan also ignores this restriction.

## The Last Elder

One elder of Windsong Tower, Darcassan the Farseer, is still in residence. Darcassan serves as the guardian and custodian of the tower. Unlike other elves who remained in Faerûn after the elves' Retreat as ghosts or baelnorns, Darcassan opted to merge with the tower itself. Darcassan's sitting room (area 30) contains a beautiful wooden floor that features a mosaic depicting Darcassan bending over a crystal ball; the entire floor constitutes Darcassan's current body—he is now a construct. The conversion from living being to construct has cost Darcassan dearly, but he has gained new powers as well. His physical attributes

are those of an immobile construct, though he retains most of his mental faculties.

## shadow projections

It has long been rumored that the elders of Windsong Tower were seeking to create various kinds of simulacrums to preserve and spread their teachings (and perhaps to preserve and empower themselves).

Several elders, Darcassan among them, devoted some time and effort to experiments with illusion spells of the shadow subschool (such as *project image*) in an effort to bolster the tower's defenses and to stay one step ahead of their more willful students. If each elder could command even a small cadre of his or her own shadow duplicates, linked telepathically with each other, they would be a force indeed. The elders could defeat any invader, and they could appear nearly omnipotent to their students.

After a few centuries of work, Darcassan came close to achieving the elders' goal; he has learned to produce various "shadow versions" of himself. These projections function something like simulacrums and something like projected images. They're only semimaterial, but can manipulate objects and make physical attacks. They also can cast spells and communicate.

Darcassan can create four different shadow projections of himself; creating a shadow projection is a standard action for Darcassan. He can make the new shadow projection appear anywhere within the confines of Windsong Tower as it exists at the time of this adventure—it remains to be seen whether he also can produce images in parts of the tower that might be rebuilt in the future. Darcassan cannot make a shadow projection appear inside an *antimagic field* or in any location where teleportation isn't possible; however, the projection might be able to physically move into such areas. Although a shadow projection can appear only within Windsong Tower, it can move out of the tower after Darcassan creates it.

Darcassan can have only one shadow projection functioning independently at a time, and if one is destroyed, Darcassan must wait 1d4 days before producing that particular version of himself again. Darcassan, however, can recall and hold or dismiss a shadow projection whenever he likes. He can release a held projection again whenever he likes (provided another projection is not already active; see below). A released projection can appear anywhere within Windsong Tower, just as a freshly created one can.

### SHADOW PROJECTIONS AS CREATURES

Each shadow projection has its own ability scores, hit points, spellcasting ability, and other game statistics.

Because a shadow projection functions as a called creature, it cannot be dispelled and is not hedged out or disrupted by an *antimagic field*. Though it is a called creature, a shadow projec-



**DARCASSAN**

**CR 16**

hp 122 (15 HD); DR 10/adamantine

Male tower-merged sun elf diviner 13/expert 2  
CG Huge construct

**Init** -5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Listen +9, Spot +9

**Languages** Chondathan, Common, Giant, Gnome, Elven, Sylvan; telepathy 60 ft.

**AC** -1, touch -7, flat-footed -1

**Immune** ability damage, ability drain, critical hits, death effects, death from massive damage, disease, energy drain, exhaustion, fatigue, magic, mind-affecting spells and abilities (charms, compulsions, phantasms, patterns, and morale effects), necromancy effects, nonlethal damage, paralysis, poison, sleep effects, stunning, any effect that requires a Fortitude save unless it also works on objects

**Fort** +5, **Ref** —, **Will** +12

**Weakness** cannot heal damage, destroyed at 0 or fewer hp

**Speed** 0 ft.

**Space** 15 ft.; **Reach** 0 ft.

**Base Atk** +7; **Grp** —

**Wizard Spells Prepared** (CL 13th):

None

Prohibited school: necromancy

**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 15th):

At will—*clairaudience*, *clairvoyance*

**Abilities** Str —, Dex —, Con —, Int 17, Wis 12, Cha 13

**SQ** construct traits, shadow projection

**Feats** Alertness, Craft Wondrous Item<sup>B</sup>, Forge Ring<sup>B</sup>, Scribe Scroll<sup>B</sup>, Improved Initiative, Skill Focus (Bluff), Skill Focus (Sense Motive), Spell Focus (illusion), Spell Penetration

**Skills** Bluff +8, Concentration +15, Craft (bookbinding) +7\*, Craft (metalworking) +7\*, Craft (stoneworking) +7\*, Decipher Script +15, Diplomacy +5, Hide -8\*, Knowledge (arcana) +16, Knowledge (history) +16, Listen +9, Profession (scribe) +13, Sense Motive +8, Spellcraft +17  
\*Indicates a skill that Darcassan knows, but cannot use as an immobile construct.

**Spellbook** spells prepared plus 0—all except necromancy; 1st—*alarm*, *arrow mind*, *burning hands*, *charm person*, *color spray*, *comprehend languages*, *detect secret doors*, *detect undead*, *disguise self*, *endure elements*, *erase*, *expeditious retreat*, *feather fall*, *grease*, *hypnotism*, *identify*, *mage armor*, *magic missile*, *magic weapon*, *Nystul's magic aura*, *Nystul's undetectable aura*, *obscuring mist*, *protection from evil*, *protection from law*, *scatterspray*, *shield*, *silent image*, *true strike*, *unseen servant*, *ventriloquism*; 2nd—*alter self*, *battering ram*, *blur*, *continual flame*, *darkness*, *daylight*, *detect thoughts*, *flaming sphere*, *glitterdust*,

*hypnotic pattern*, *invisibility*, *knock*, *Leomund's trap*, *locate object*, *magic mouth*, *Melf's acid arrow*, *minor image*, *mirror image*, *misdirection*, *obscure object*, *resist energy*, *rope trick*, *scorch*, *see invisibility*, *shadow spray*, *shatter*, *summon swarm*, *Tasha's hideous laughter*, *web*; 3rd—*analyze portal*, *blink*, *clairaudience/clairvoyance*, *darkvision*, *dispel magic*, *fireball*, *fly*, *haste*, *invisibility sphere*, *keen edge*, *lightning bolt*, *magic circle against evil*, *magic circle against law*, *greater magic weapon*, *major image*, *nondetection*, *protection from energy*, *reverse arrows*, *suggestion*, *tongues*, *wind wall*; 4th—*arcane eye*, *backlash*, *confusion*, *detect scrying*, *dimension door*, *Evard's black tentacles*, *fire shield*, *ice storm*, *illusory wall*, *greater invisibility*, *locate creature*, *Otiluke's resilient sphere*, *phantasmal killer*, *scrying*, *shadow conjuration*, *shout*, *stoneskin*, *thunderlance*, *wall of ice*; 5th—*Bigby's interposing hand*, *cone of cold*, *contact other plane*, *dominate person*, *dream*, *feeblemind*, *lesser ironguard*, *mirage arcana*, *Mordenkainen's faithful hound*, *nightmare*, *persistent image*, *lesser planar binding*, *prying eyes*, *Rary's telepathic bond*, *sending*, *greater shadow conjuration*, *lesser spell matrix*, *telekinesis*, *teleport*, *wall of force*, *wall of stone*; 6th—*acid storm*, *analyze dweomer*, *antimagic field*, *Bigby's forceful hand*, *greater dispelling*, *legend lore*, *Mordenkainen's lucubration*, *programmed image*, *project image*, *repulsion*, *seal portal*, *shades*, *Tenser's transformation*, *true seeing*; 7th—*Bigby's grasping hand*, *delayed blast fireball*, *ethereal jaunt*, *greater scrying*, *limited wish*, *Mordenkainen's sword*, *prismatic eye*, *prismatic spray*, *simulacrum*, *spell turning*, *vision*

**Immunity to Magic (Ex)** Darcassan is immune to any spell or spell-like ability that allows spell resistance except for spells that have the sonic descriptor and can deal damage (such as *shout*). A spell that has the light descriptor and is directed at Darcassan repairs 1d6 points of damage per spell level.

**Shadow Projection (Su)** Darcassan can create up to four shadow duplicates of his former self. These projections can be held inside the matrix of his construct body or released to act as independent creatures. Darcassan can cast spells only through his shadow projections. If he holds one or more projections in his body, Darcassan can use any spells his shadow projections have prepared on himself or on subjects he can touch. Only one shadow projection can be released to function independently at a time. An independent shadow projection remains telepathically linked to Darcassan. Any spell a projection casts originates from that projection. If a shadow projection is destroyed, Darcassan must wait 1d4 days before he can replace that projection.

**Skills** Darcassan retains his elf racial skill modifiers as a construct (+2 on Listen, Search, and Spot checks).

tion is not extraplanar when within the tower or on the Material Plane, and is not subject to *dismissal* or *banishment*.

A shadow projection is destroyed when it is reduced to -10 hit points. Upon its destruction, a shadow projection (body and gear) falls to pieces and evaporates in 1 round.

When Darcassan creates a new shadow projection, it appears with full hit points and a full complement of spells. The new projection can appear with one or more spells precast and already operating—up to one such spell per point of its Intel-

ligence bonus. Such a spell must have a personal or fixed range, or have the shadow projection as its target. Whenever a shadow projection casts a spell, it does so without needing any material or focus component.

As noted earlier, a shadow projection is only partly real. Characters interacting with a shadow projection can attempt DC 24 Will saves to disbelieve the illusion. When a character successfully disbelieves a shadow projection, its physical attacks deal only 80% of their normal damage to the disbeliever. Any



spell effects a shadow projection produces, however, ultimately come from Darcassan and are wholly real. For example, if a shadow projection attacks with a sword or bow, the damage from that attack could be reduced through disbelief. A *fireball* spell from a shadow projection, however, is real and not subject to disbelief.

Also as noted earlier, a shadow projection is semimaterial. A shadow projection can fly and move through solid objects or creatures just as an incorporeal creature can, and attacks by corporeal creatures (even those involving spells) have a 50% chance to fail (a ghost touch weapon negates the miss chance). A shadow projection cannot fall, be tripped, or be bull rushed, nor does it make any noise unless it wishes to do so. A shadow projection has a +8 racial bonus on Listen, Search, Spot, and Hide checks.

A shadow projection can freely manipulate objects or make physical attacks. A defender's armor bonuses and natural armor bonuses are effective against a shadow projection's physical attacks. A shadow projection can use armor bonuses and natural armor bonuses; it also has a deflection bonus to Armor Class equal to its Charisma modifier (minimum +1). In effect, a shadow projection can function either as a corporeal or an incorporeal creature, whichever is most advantageous. It can even function as both a corporeal and an incorporeal creature simultaneously. For example, it can attack with a sword while hiding inside a wall.

Within an *antimagic field*, a shadow projection's supernatural attributes are suppressed. Its physical attacks are only 80% effective, it cannot fly or pass through solid objects, and attacks against it have no miss chance. A shadow projection also loses its +8 racial bonus on Listen, Search, Spot, and Hide checks and its Charisma-based deflection bonus to Armor Class.

### DISMISSED AND RECALLED PROJECTIONS

Darcassan can dismiss or recall a shadow projection as a standard action. When Darcassan dismisses an active shadow projection, it is destroyed and dissolves as described above.

Darcassan also can recall an active projection and hold the projection in the matrix of his physical body.

A held shadow projection heals damage and can regain spells exactly as a living creature can. If a recalled shadow projection suffers from some condition or impairment (for example, fatigue), it retains that condition until enough time passes for it to recover. Time spent while held in Darcassan's construct body counts as time sleeping or restful time spent in low physical activity, at Darcassan's option. For example, a shadow image that has taken 12 points of damage and failed a saving throw against an *insanity* spell when it is recalled remains damaged and under the spell's effects while held. The projection needs 8 hours of rest to recover the lost hit points, but the *insanity* effect remains until Darcassan dismisses the projection (and creates a replacement) or removes the *insanity* effect some other way

(such as through a *limited wish* prepared and cast through a different projection).

When Darcassan decides to release a held shadow projection, he can place it anywhere inside Windsong Tower, as noted above for newly created projections.

## DARCASSAN'S FIVE SELVES

Darcassan is a deep thinker who is capable of decisive action when necessary. After centuries of teaching magic to resourceful young elves, he has developed a knack for spotting duplicity and for pulling off the occasional ruse himself. In his state as a construct, Darcassan lacks Strength and Dexterity scores and cannot take any physical actions, but he can communicate telepathically and scan his surroundings with *clairvoyance* and *clairaudience*. To undertake any physical activity, Darcassan must use a shadow projection.

Darcassan shares a shadow projection's senses. He knows what a projection knows, and vice versa. If a shadow projection loses consciousness or is reduced to 0 hit points or fewer, Darcassan usually recalls or dismisses it.

Darcassan assigns spells to a shadow projection from his spellbooks, whose contents are held in his body.

In his state as a construct, Darcassan cannot cast any spells except for those that any shadow projections he has held within his body currently have prepared. Although Darcassan has the abilities of *clairvoyance*, *clairaudience*, and telepathy, he does not have line of sight or line of effect to anything except for himself (including any projections he is holding) or things in contact with his body.

Each of Darcassan's shadow projections reflects some aspect of Darcassan in the prime of his life (or at least the way Darcassan recalls himself in his prime). All of them share Darcassan's personality and capabilities, but, as noted earlier, each has its own abilities and quirks. Each appears as a male sun elf, approaching his middle years, with gold hair, bronze skin, a slender nose and a sharp chin, but each version's appearance varies a little in its details.

### DARCASSAN THE ADROIT

Darcassan uses this shadow projection most often. It represents Darcassan's spirit of adventure and inquiry. The projection is agile and good at working with its hands. It looks like a tall, lean male sun elf with pale gold hair worn shoulder length. He wears a weather-stained cloak of faded green over a light green woodsman's outfit, which shows many patches and other repairs. His upper face is hidden behind a green half-mask. His lower face looks deeply bronzed. He carries a longsword, a bow, and a worn leather case full of tools.

Darcassan uses the projection to make repairs to the tower and to patrol the site, looking for intruders. This is the first projection the PCs are likely to meet. When they do, Darcassan



## DARCASSAN THE MAGE

CR 16

hp 41 (15 HD)

Male sun elf diviner 13/expert 2

CG Medium humanoid

Init +9; Senses low-light vision; Listen +17, Spot +17

Languages Chondathan, Common, Giant, Gnome, Elven, Sylvan; telepathy 60 ft.

AC 25, touch 17, flat-footed 25

Miss Chance 50% (shadow existence)

Immune magic sleep effects

Fort +4, Ref +9, Will +14; +2 against enchantments; +2 against effects from evil casters with *protection from evil*

Speed 60 ft. (12 squares) with *expeditious retreat*, fly 30 ft. (perfect)

Melee +4 longsword of warning +11/+6 (1d8+4) with *greater magic weapon*

Ranged +4 longbow +16/+11 (1d6+4) with *greater magic weapon*

Base Atk +7; Grp +7

Combat Gear *lesser metamagic rod of Silent Spell*

Wizard Spells Prepared (CL 13th; 1d20+15 to overcome SR):

- 7th—*Bigby's grasping hand* (+31 melee, +35 grapple), *Mordenkainen's sword* (+22 melee)
- 6th—*acid storm* (DC 25), *greater dispel magic*, *Mordenkainen's lucubration*, *spell turning*†, *true seeing*
- 5th—*Bigby's interposing hand*, *feeblemind* (DC 24), empowered *fireball* (DC 22), empowered *lightning bolt* (DC 23), *nightmare* (DC 25), *telekinesis* (DC 24)
- 4th—*fire shield*, empowered *Melf's acid arrow* (3, +12 melee touch), *phantasmal killer* (2, DC 24), *heightened shadow spray*<sup>FR</sup> (DC 24)
- 3rd—*lightning bolt* (DC 22), empowered *magic missile* (2), *greater magic weapon*†† (2), *protection from energy* (2), *reverse arrows*† (see page 143), *tongues*
- 2nd—*battering ram* (see page 142), *daylight*, *detect thoughts* (DC 21), *glitterdust* (DC 21), *see invisibility*†, *shatter* (DC 21), *Tasha's hideous laughter* (DC 21)
- 1st—*arrow mind*† (see page 142), *charm person* (DC 20), *expeditious retreat*†, *grease* (DC 20), *protection from evil*†, *protection from law*, *scatterspray*<sup>FR</sup> (DC 20), *shield*† (2)

uses the projection to probe their defenses and determine their weaknesses.

### DARCASSAN THE WARRIOR

In addition to his magical training, Darcassan has fighting spirit, which is made manifest in this projection.

The projection has bright golden hair cropped close to his head, wide shoulders, and craggy features. He carries a greatsword, a longsword, and a longbow. He wears a short green cloak over a green tunic and light gray breeches.

The projection uses *Tenser's transformation* to improve its combat prowess, while negating its ability to cast other spells while this one is in effect.

0—*daze* (DC 19), *detect magic*, *ghost sound* (DC 19), *mage hand*, *prestidigitation*

† already cast

Prohibited school: necromancy

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 15th):

At will—*clairaudience*, *clairvoyance*

Abilities Str 10, Dex 20, Con 11, Int 28, Wis 12, Cha 13

Feats Alertness, Heighten Spell<sup>B</sup>, Improved Initiative, Quicken Spell<sup>B</sup>, Scribe Scroll<sup>B</sup>, Skill Focus (Bluff), Skill Focus (Sense Motive), Spell Focus (illusion), Spell Penetration

Skills Bluff +8, Concentration +18, Craft (bookbinding) +13, Craft (metalworking) +13, Craft (stoneworking) +13, Decipher Script +21, Diplomacy +5, Hide +13, Knowledge (arcana) +22, Knowledge (history) +22, Listen +17, Profession (scribe) +13, Search +17, Sense Motive +8, Spellcraft +23, Spot +17

Possessions combat gear plus *amulet of natural armor* +1, *bracers of armor* +3, *ring of protection* +2, +1 longsword of warning<sup>MAG</sup> (+4 with *greater magic weapon*), masterwork longbow (+4 with *greater magic weapon*), 20 arrows, *gloves of Dexterity* +2, *headband of intellect* +2

**Shadow Existence (Su)** Darcassan the Mage is both semi-material and is only partially real. He can pass through physical objects (but not force effects) just as an incorporeal creature can. All attacks, even spells (except force effects), have a 50% chance to fail. A ghost touch weapon negates this miss chance. A creature interacting with him can attempt a DC 24 Will save to disbelieve the projection. Successful disbelief makes the projection's physical attacks (but not spells) deal only 80% of their normal damage. You can calculate the reduced damage or use the following: longsword 1d8+2, longbow 1d6+2, unarmed strike 1d3-1. Within an *antimagic field*, Darcassan loses his fly speed, ability to pass through solid objects, deflection bonus to Armor Class, and miss chance. He also loses his +8 racial bonus on Listen, Search, Spot, and Hide checks (see below).

**Skills** Darcassan has a +8 racial bonus on Listen, Search, Spot, and Hide checks thanks to his semimaterial nature. As an elf, he has a +2 racial bonus on Listen, Search, and Spot checks.

### DARCASSAN THE GUARDIAN

Darcassan has a sense of duty and a tenacious streak that's represented in this projection. In this adventure, the guardian does its best to divide and conquer the party. The projection has dark golden (almost coppery) hair and very thin cheeks and lips. He wears a long green monk's robe, belted at the waist with a bit of rope.

### DARCASSAN THE MAGE

This projection is perhaps the closest to Darcassan's true self. It has a powerful intellect and excellent perceptions. When in this guise, Darcassan is most open to considering new possibilities—such as the chance that the PCs might actually be the good guys.



The projection has shoulder-length golden hair and a solemn expression. He is garbed in a light green smock with many pockets, gray breeches, and a long, dark green cloak adorned with dozens of magic and astrological symbols embroidered along the hem.

## Darcassan's Activities

Darcassan has dedicated himself to guarding the tower's secrets and treasures. Because visitors have been few and far between for decades—even centuries—Darcassan fell into the habit of losing himself in meditation for weeks at a time, rousing himself to create a shadow projection for keeping the tower's chambers clean and in fairly good repair. He doesn't have the tools or other resources to rebuild the sections that have been destroyed. In any case, Darcassan believes that any major rebuilding project would draw undue attention to the tower. Darcassan believes that his most potent weapon is secrecy.

When the Shadovars invaded the tower, they caught Darcassan by surprise, but they also roused him from his self-induced torpor. After the Shadovars fled with the *Nether Scrolls*, Darcassan took an inventory of the damage they caused and made extensive repairs, often aided by his spells. He now uses his both his spell-like abilities and his Adroit shadow projection to patrol the tower, watching for further attacks. He also has used the Adroit projection to make a few covert forays into Myth Drannor. He was amazed to find the city on the rise again, but unwilling to reveal himself just yet. He has used *dream* spells to drop a few hints about what has happened in Windsong Tower.

When the PCs enter the tower, Darcassan is aware of their presence almost immediately, and he loses little time in confronting this new intrusion.

## Darcassan's Goals

Darcassan does not know why the Shadovars stole the *Nether Scrolls*, but he fears the worst. He knows that the group that invaded the school included Shar worshipers who harbor a deep hatred for Mystra—they spent valuable time desecrating Mystra's shrine in the school (area 26) and destroying *Myrjala's Eyes*, a magic portrait that allowed limited communication with The Lady of Mysteries. He suspects, correctly, that a plot against Mystra is afoot. He doesn't know how deep the plot goes, but he believes it should be stopped. He also would like the *Nether Scrolls* recovered and returned to the school if possible.

When the PCs enter the school, Darcassan suspects they are Shadovar agents come to wreak more havoc in the school, but hopes they have come in answer to his calls for aid. He decides to test their powers and intentions by sparring with them through his shadow projections. After observing them in action, he can better judge what sort of folk they are. This approach is somewhat cold-hearted, because Darcassan uses at least some deadly

force. If the PCs aren't up to the challenge, Darcassan has the means to patch them up and even raise them from the dead (using his allies in area 31).

## Event 6: Meeting Darcassan

This event occurs when the PCs enter Darcassan's quarters in the school (area 30), or whenever Darcassan decides it's time to reveal himself to the PCs (most likely after the party has battled his Adroit, Guardian, and Warrior shadow projections).

*The graceful figure of a golden-haired male elf clad in a long green cloak rises like an apparition from the very floor beneath you. It's hard to judge the elf's age, but he wears a solemn expression that bespeaks wisdom gained the hard way.*

*"I feel I know you already," says the elf. "You may call me Darcassan, and the wreck of this school is my domain."*

*Darcassan's words sound inside your head. "My alter egos have handled you roughly, and your persistence has been admirable. Shall we cease our sparring and have a conversation?"*

If the PCs are inclined to talk, Darcassan insists on introductions all around. He expresses regret that he has fought so many battles against the group, but explains that he has found that people are truly themselves only when in mortal danger. After the small talk, Darcassan relates the following information to the PCs:

- Recently, a team of Shadovars, led by two shades and accompanied by a pair of clerics of Shar, invaded the school, vandalized a chapel dedicated to Mystra, and destroyed a device that had the power to contact the goddess.
- Worse, the Shadovars broke into the school's most secure chamber and stole its most secret and valuable possession—the *Quest Ar Teranthvar*.
- A better-known name for the *Quest Ar Teranthvar* is the *Nether Scrolls*, a document of nearly limitless magical potential. If misused, the knowledge held in the scrolls could undo the Weave itself.
- Darcassan cannot determine exactly where the *Quest Ar Teranthvar* is now; however, this version of the *Nether Scrolls* was created specifically for elves. It's certain that the shades have the scrolls now and will attempt to transmute the scrolls into a form they can better understand. To do that, they would need to carry the scrolls deep into their own territory and perform a long ritual, since the *Quest Ar Teranthvar* is a powerful artifact not easily altered or damaged.
- To recover the scrolls, the Shadovar ritual must be halted and reversed. Darcassan has performed several divinations



that indicate the first step lies in the life's work of Augathra the Mad, whose writings (if not Augathra herself) can be found in the crypt that bears her name.

**Development:** If the PCs have not destroyed the undead the Shadovars left behind in area 18, or dealt with Keevosen Nihili (from event 3), Darcassan might ask the PCs to take care of both of these matters. He has been unable to destroy the undead, and he has merely kept tabs on Keevosen, so as to avoid revealing his presence to the shades.

If the PCs agree to go after the *Nether Scrolls*, Darcassan can relate some of Augathra's history, but not even he knows the truth of what the crypt actually is. He can tell the PCs to look for the crypt along the border between Anauroch and the Stonelands. (This location is the setting for the part of the adventure that unfolds in Chapter 2.)

He also can offer the group a chance to study the spellbooks stored in the vault (area 31) along with a sum of money for expenses, up to 25,000 gp per character, but no more than the amount stored in the vault (which contains about 112,000 gp worth of portable valuables). Darcassan also offers the group a chance to study the *Tablets of Pharysolmyth* (see page 149). Darcassan allows the PCs to keep minor items they might have collected from the school, such as magic weapons taken from the armory, but not major items, such as the jade pedestal from the solarium, or any books. If the group includes any divine spellcasters dedicated to Mystra, Darcassan gives those characters *Myrjala's Shards* (see page 148).

## inside the school

The school's interior was intended to provide a pleasant atmosphere (at least for elves), with plenty of natural-looking artificial light, pleasant temperatures, and fresh air. These effects are still working in most places inside the school's three buildings.

## environment

Unless otherwise noted, the following conditions prevail throughout the school.

**Light:** Ceilings in the school shed diffuse light, similar to that in a shaded grove of trees on a clear summer day, that fills the space below, for 16 hours each day.

For the remaining 8 hours, the light dims, producing shadowy illumination. The interior light dims in the late evening and brightens again 8 hours later.

**Temperature:** The ambient temperature inside the school is about 70° F when the lights are bright (see above) and 65° F when the lights are low.

**Sound:** All is quiet within the school, except for sound that might be made by occupants or visitors. Noise does not carry into the school's extradimensional areas.

**Air Quality:** A gentle breeze plays through every chamber and corridor in the school. The air always smells fresh, with just a hint of moist forest leaves. Magical effects that create clouds or gases have only half their normal durations.

**Planar Considerations:** The school's extradimensional areas have planar traits (*DMG* 147) identical to those of the Material Plane. All these areas are coexistent with the Material Plane, though magical travel between them and other locales (including to planes other than the Material) is restricted due to the school's *mythal* (see The Wards of Windsong Tower, page 11).

Though they're similar to the Material Plane, the school's extradimensional areas also share one characteristic with the transitive planes—no creature has the extraplanar subtype while inside one.

## features

Thanks to Darcassan, most of the school's surviving structure is in good repair (though even Darcassan has given up on a few sections). Unless otherwise noted in an encounter description, the school's various features have the following characteristics.

**Doors:** The school's doors are made from hardwood planks reinforced with steel filigree, polished until it gleams like pure silver, with fittings to match. Most doors open easily, but some are stuck or fastened with *arcane lock* spells, caster level 35th. If an *arcane lock* is negated or dispelled, it returns in 1d4 rounds.

*Strong Wooden Doors:* 2 in. thick; AC 6; hardness 10; hp 40; break DC 0 (opens easily), DC 35 (arcane locked).

*Secret Doors:* 2 in. thick; AC 6; hardness 10; hp 40; break DC 0 (opens easily), Search DC 25.

**Stone Floors:** These surfaces are made from sandstone, smoothed to a high luster, and are at least 6 feet thick.

**Wooden Floors:** These are constructed from planks made from various hardwoods. The floors are about 3 feet thick and magically enhanced for extra hardness and strength.

**Stone Walls and Pillars:** These are made from closely fitted blocks of green marble or gray granite. They are at least 1 foot thick.

*Stone Walls:* 1 ft. thick; hardness 18; hp 180; break DC 45; Climb DC 25.

These walls increase the DC of Listen checks to hear through them by 15. The hit points and break DC given are for a 10-foot section. If a stone wall is breached, the squares breached and all adjacent nonwall squares become dense rubble.

**Wooden Walls:** These are similar to wooden floors, except that they're 6 inches thick.

*Wooden Walls:* 6 in. thick; hardness 10; hp 120; break DC 30; Climb DC 21.

Wooden walls increase the DC of Listen checks to hear through them by 5. The hit points and break DC given are for a 10-foot section. If a wooden wall is breached, the squares breached and all adjacent nonwall squares become light rubble.





*The School's foyer seems placid and welcoming—to those who come in peace*

*Illus. by Randy Gallegos*

**Illusory Doors/Walls:** These permanent figments cover *portals* that allow travel between various areas in the school. They have no magical aura, but *analyze dweomer* or *true seeing* reveals them; if a character uses a move action to study a door or wall, he can make a DC 30 Will save to notice the feature's illusory nature.

An illusory door looks just like a regular door in the school, but a creature touching the door (even when using an implement) triggers the door's *portal* and transports the character to the *portal's* destination. A projectile or other unattended object bounces off when it strikes an illusory door.

An illusory wall creates a duplicate image of the corridor or chamber in front of the wall (minus any creatures, debris, or movable furnishings in the space). For example, an illusory wall set at the end of a corridor 30 feet long creates the image of another 30 feet of corridor. Touching an illusory wall has the same results as touching an illusory door.

## 1. FOYER

The pillared hall here provides the main access to the central tower's extradimensional spaces. The tower builders intended it to be impressive but comfortable.

Characters using the rune *portal* in the rubble from the tower (see Event 5: Getting In, page 11) arrive adjacent to the fountain at the hall's western end.

Darcassan the Adroit (see page 33) casts an *alarm* spell centered on the fountain once every 24 hours. The *alarm* gives a mental warning, and any creature's arrival through the *portal* triggers the spell.

*At first glance, this area seems like a pleasant grove, with a fountain providing a pleasant environment for taking a moment's rest. Closer inspection reveals a rectangular chamber with a riot of lifelike vegetation painted on the walls. The "trees" planted in a double row down the middle of the chamber are actually tile-clad stone pillars placed to support a vaulted ceiling that glows with diffuse light. The soothing sound of bubbling water emanates from the fountain at the end of the hall, and the scent of wildflowers perfumes the air.*

The illusory wall at the west end creates a second image of the entire hall, fountain and all. Stepping through the wall activates a *portal* that returns creatures to an area of rubble about 100 feet east of the tiled area that bears the rune.

**Tactical Encounter:** M2: Adroit Challenge, page 32.



**Treasure:** The fountain's basin holds 321 gp, 22 pp, 3 platinum and emerald diadems worth 275 gp each, and 8 waterstars worth 100 gp each. It takes one character about 10 minutes to gather all the loot. Darcassan scattered these trinkets here after the Shadovar raid, hoping to distract and delay any new invaders. He took the items from the vault in area 31.

## 2. NORTH STAIRCASE

*A staircase spirals sharply upward, turning clockwise. Many deep scratches and chips mar the steps, mostly along the center.*

This staircase rises to area 19.

The marks on the stairs were made by the golems in area 20 at various times when they were called to defend the school. Darcassan set them on the Shadovars when they broke into the school, since he was unprepared to confront them himself. The intruders managed to destroy two of the golems during the fight.

A character who has the Track feat can attempt a DC 28 Survival check to discover that the marks were made by two or more bipedal creatures at least 8 feet tall that were very heavy for their size. They traversed the stairs in both directions several times, once very recently.

## 3. SOUTH STAIRCASE

This area is nearly identical to area 2. The stairs lead up to area 15. The steps are free of chips and scratches, but their center portions are well worn from the feet of several centuries' worth of students. A successful DC 15 Knowledge (dungeoneering) or Survival check (for characters who have the Track feat) reveals the source of the wear.

## 4. EXITS

Both of these illusory walls conceal *portals* leading to area 24 in the Shadowsong Tree.

## 5. MEETING/LECTURE ROOMS

*Several elegantly carved wooden desks are placed in small groups along the walls of this paneled hall. Opposite the door stands a raised wooden lectern in front of a large, round, white disk mounted vertically on the wall. A strip of carpet, half as wide as the room and decorated with a motif of vines and leafy branches, runs down the center of the stone floor.*

The staff used these rooms for conferences, and occasionally for delivering lectures to small groups of students. The disk is a piece of carved white marble that the faculty used as a sort of screen, casting illusions upon it to illustrate points in their lectures.

**Treasure:** The furnishings and carpets in these rooms have great value as antiques and historical objects. Each desk weighs 35 pounds and is worth 150 gp; each carpet weighs 75 pounds and is worth 450 gp.

## 6. AUDITORIUM

*Most of the grand chamber lies in shadowy darkness, except for a rectangular section raised several feet above the floor at the far end that is suffused with dim light. Between the door and this raised area are three rows of wooden benches arranged in a semicircular pattern. Curtains hang at the sides and back of the raised area, as well as along its top, creating a perfect stage for performances.*

The elves used this chamber for important meetings and lectures, as well as for musical and dramatic performances.

The floor at the eastern end of the room is about 6 inches lower than the corridor outside, and the floor inside slopes another 5 feet down toward the stage at the western end. The ceiling in this room doesn't shed light, but the stage is bathed in a dim glow around the clock, leaving the seating area cloaked in shadowy illumination.

## 7. ROBING ROOMS

*The upper section of this small chamber's far wall is covered entirely with one immense mirror. Beneath it runs a long counter stained with a multitude of colors. On the left wall hangs a row of closed cabinets, and along the right wall is a series of doors.*

These chambers were used by presenters to prepare for performances or lectures in area 6. The doors open outward to reveal closets that still hold a few wizards' robes and other costumes. The cabinets contain small brushes and pots of dried-up makeup for stage performances, plus several pitchers and basins to hold water for washing.

## 8. KENNELS

*Banks of stacked cages line every wall of this pristine white chamber. The cages come in various sizes, from 3 feet to 6 inches on a side. In the center is a long wooden table polished to a high shine, and in each corner are several wooden barrels and other containers of various sizes.*

These chambers once housed a variety of animals suitable to become students' familiars. The barrels held water, and the containers held food for the various creatures. The room has been thoroughly cleaned, and no traces of any animals remain.

## 9. EXAMINING ROOM

*This small chamber is furnished with a sturdy wooden table with a deeply scratched surface, a comfortable-looking, high-backed bench, and a small cabinet. Drawings on the walls depict cavorting cats, birds, weasels, toads, and other creatures.*

The school once employed a small staff to care for familiars and other small creatures. Animal healers used this room to examine patients and dispense remedies for creatures that had



fallen ill or become injured. The cabinet contains packets of old, dried herbs and small vials of elixirs; none have any medicinal or commercial value.

### 10. TREATMENT ROOM

*This clean, white chamber looks a bit like a small kitchen, with cupboards and shelves lining most of the walls. On one wall is a stone basin below a marble plaque from which two spigots extend. In the center of the room is a sturdy table with a stone top.*

The veterinary staff used this chamber for treating animals with serious injuries or illnesses. The table was used for performing surgery. The cabinets and shelves hold surgical tools as well as various herbs and ointments.

**Treasure:** The cabinets contain bandages, herbs and other medicines, most of which are still usable. They also hold 2 *potions of cure light wounds* and a jar of *Keoghtom's ointment* with three doses remaining. A successful DC 18 Search check is required to pick these items out of the mundane supplies.

### 11. GROOMING SALON

*Each of the small cubicles along the east end of this room contains a low bench on which lies a pair of sturdy cloth gloves. The north and south walls are lined with cabinets.*

This chamber was used for grooming animals. The cabinets contain combs, clippers, conditioning oils, and the like.

### 12. DORMITORY STAIRS

The illusory wall at the top of these stairs conceals a *portal* to area 13.

### 13. EAST DORMITORY EXIT

The illusory wall here is the site of a *portal* to the top of the stairs at area 12.

### 14. DORMITORIES

*A plain but comfortable-looking bed stands at the far wall of this cozy chamber. At the foot of the bed is a trunk with polished brass fittings. To the left of the bed is a writing desk; to the right is a plump green velvet pillow, edged with gold piping, on a small dais.*

Each of these chambers once housed a student who attended the school. The desk is empty except for several pens and ink bottles. The trunk is unlocked and empty except for two porcelain dishes (food and water dishes for the student's familiar). The pillow is where the familiar slept, and some still have a few cat hairs or snake scales. A few of the rooms have perches on tall stands instead of pillows.

### 15. DORMITORY STAIRS

This spiral staircase looks like the one in area 3. The stairs lead upward to nine more floors of chambers that look like area 14.

### 16. WEST DORMITORY EXIT

This illusory door leads to area 17.

### 17. PANTRY EXIT

This illusory door leads to area 16.

### 18. PANTRIES

*Empty shelves line all the walls of this small chamber. The front of each shelf bears several small labels. In the middle of the room stand several barrels and a few smaller wooden casks.*

These chambers once held supplies for one of the school's kitchens, which were housed in the now-destroyed portion of the main tower. Darcassan long ago cleared away the moldering remains of the supplies that were once stored here, though he left behind several casks of fine elven wine. The labels identify which kinds of foodstuffs were stored on the various shelves. The barrels are unlabeled and empty.

The Shadovar raiders left behind a nighthaunt and two dread wraiths to bedevil anyone who might enter the school to investigate their doings. The Shadovars expected these undead creatures to lurk in the foyer (area 1), but they didn't count on Darcassan, whom they thought they had defeated. Darcassan's shadow projections clashed with the undead several times, and the creatures have actually killed a couple of "Darcassans"—but his projections simply reappear a few days later and continue to harry the undead. At the moment, the situation is a stalemate. Darcassan knows the undead have gone to ground here, but he has decided to let them skulk in this out-of-the-way corner for the moment because he doesn't wish to exhaust himself defeating them.

**Tactical Encounter:** M3: Deadly Nightshade, page 34.

### 19. ARMORY STAIRS

These spiral stairs lead down to area 2.

### 20. ARMORY

*Weapons of every sort hang from hooks and brackets on the walls of this square chamber. Free-standing racks in the center of the room hold larger weapons, such as spears, polearms, and lances. Other racks hold pieces of light armor sized for elves.*

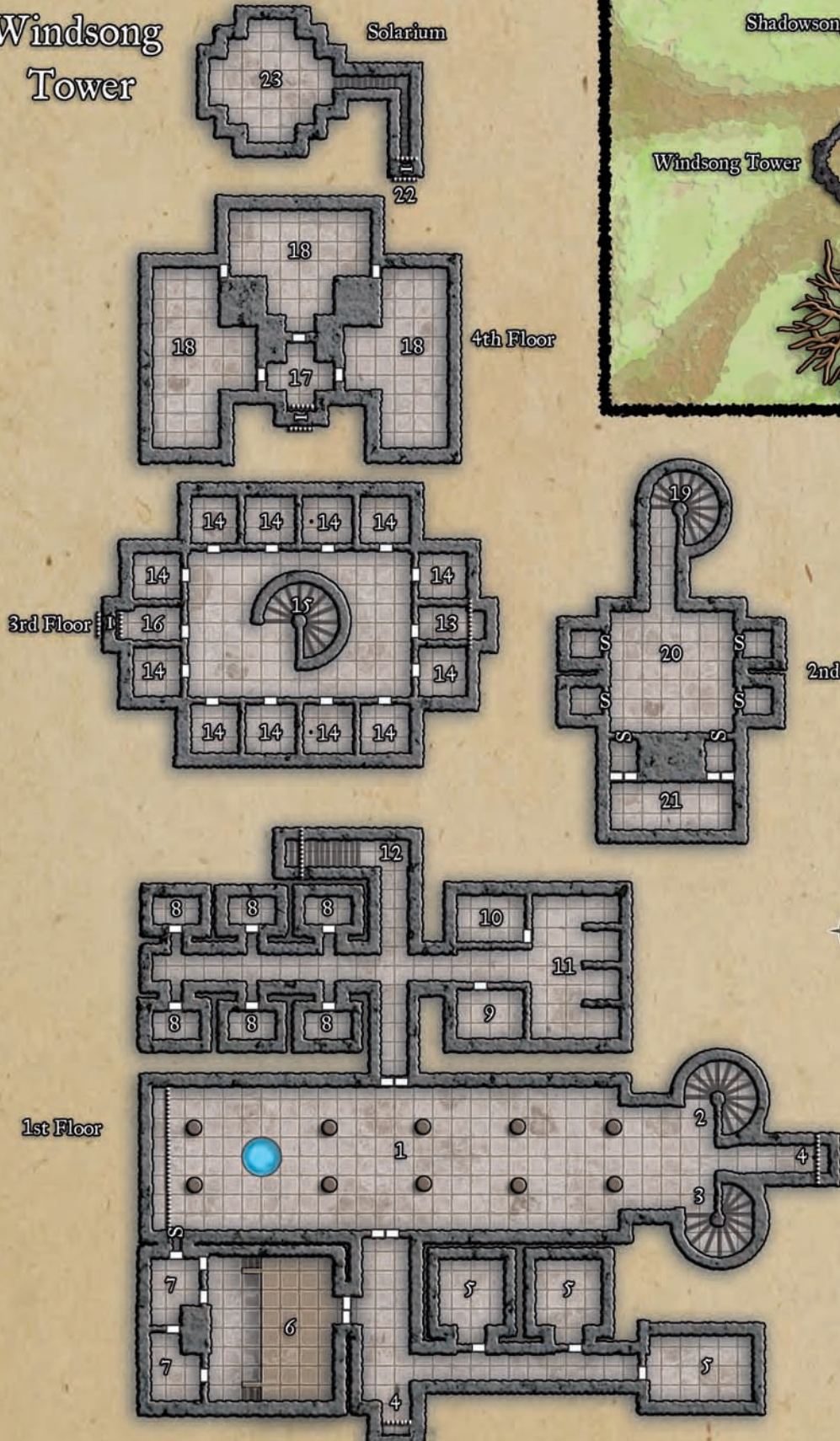
Most of the weapons and armor found in this room are nonmagical.

Secret alcoves in the walls hold a pair of advanced stone golems that resemble tall elf warriors armed with massive bows



WINDSONG TOWER

Windsong Tower



----- Illusory Wall  
 [I] Illusory Door  
 One square = 5 feet



and one battle horror<sup>LE</sup>. Darcassan has ordered these creatures to attack anyone who enters this chamber, except for himself.

**Tactical Encounter:** M4: Guardians of Stone, page 36.

**Treasure:** The collection of war gear stored here includes a pair of +1 longswords, a +3 rapier, a +2 buckler, and 20 +2 arrows. It takes about 2 minutes to locate them all with a *detect magic* spell.

## 21. SMITHY

*A massive forge built of blackened stone occupies much of the far wall of this chamber. A red glow emanates from deep within it, casting eerie shadows about the room. In front of the forge stands an anvil scarred from years of use, and various metalworking tools hang on the wall nearby. Two bins hold scrap metal, and a long table supports bits of worked metal and great lumps of stone.*

Darcassan has gathered in this chamber bits and pieces of two stone golems destroyed by the Shadovars; he hopes to replace them someday. A cursory glance at the pieces of stone on the table reveals some of them to be recognizable limbs—arms, legs, and hands.

The fire in the forge is an everburning flame. It's only about as bright and hot as a torch now, but on command it roars and becomes hot enough to melt metal. The forge has a strong aura of evocation magic, caster level 25th.

## 22. SOLARIUM STAIRS

The illusory door here leads to area 43a in Windsong Aerie.

## 23. SOLARIUM

*The door opens to reveal a chamber whose floor resembles a sandy forest clearing striated with winding patches of moss. Here and there around the perimeter are groupings of water-smoothed boulders, as well as clusters of wooden benches and chairs—some polished, some rough, and some upholstered with fine leather. In the center of the chamber stands a circular jade pedestal about 8 feet across and 2 feet high.*

The dark sandstone floor of this chamber is veined with a green mineral, giving it a mossy appearance. The ceiling displays an image of the sky above the tower, showing whatever light or weather prevails outside. The walls display images of the countryside around the tower, just as if they were floor-to-ceiling windows on the upper floor.

The *Queen Ar Teranthvar* once stood atop the pedestal with its golden roots gripping the stone. A successful DC 25 Search check reveals scratches on the stone where the tree was ripped away.

In the school's heyday, one student at a time was allowed to come into this chamber and sit, pace, or stand before the tree to contemplate the messages held within it. This room was

created to help elves understand the complex and deep magical knowledge contained in the *Nether Scrolls*.

**Treasure:** The jade pedestal weighs more than 8 tons and is worth 40,000 gp.

## shadowsong tree

This immense shadowtop tree is about 120 feet tall, with a trunk approximately 18 feet across—about one-third larger than a typical mature shadowtop. The building within it is three stories tall and mostly extradimensional. It features wooden construction throughout, though a few chambers on the lower floor are of stone. The central section is a cylinder 30 feet wide and about 60 feet high, but only a minuscule portion of the building is actually within the tree—a cylinder 6 feet across and 40 feet high. This section rests in the upper half of the tree trunk, starting about 30 feet above the ground.

The two lower floors are each 15 feet tall. The top floor is slightly wider and taller than the two lower floors, and a substantial portion of the top floor and the building's conical roof protrude from the tree's upper trunk and lower branches.

It's possible to break into the building through either the tree's trunk or the roof. Both the roof and the trunk have been rendered harder and stronger than stone through ancient elven magic, and they have the same immunities and protections as the walls inside the school. A character wearing a *Windsong Towerkin ring* can use a *passwall* spell to get in. Others must resort to cruder methods of entry.

**Trunk:** 5 ft. thick, hardness 16, break DC 70, hp 1,080, Climb DC 15.

**Roof:** 1 ft. thick, hardness 16, break DC 55, hp 180.

The roof is conical and steeply sloped. Characters moving uphill (to an adjacent square of higher elevation) must spend 2 squares of movement to enter each square of steep slope. Characters running or charging downhill (to an adjacent square of lower elevation) must succeed on a DC 10 Balance check. Characters who fail by 5 or more fall prone in the square where they end their movement. A steep slope increases the DC of Tumble checks by 2.

Inside, the walls and floors are made of wood, except where otherwise noted.

## 24. COMMON ROOM

*Tiers of wooden seats line the eastern section of this circular chamber. A staircase curves up toward the southwest, and a few tables are placed around the floor. Set into the south and northwest sections of the wall are double doors made of stout oak inlaid with fanciful forest designs in more expensive woods. Plain single doors provide egress to the west and north.*

Students once used this area for light study and for socializing. It was occupied at nearly all hours in the school's heyday.



The illusory door to the west leads to area 4 in Windsong Tower. Students could give keywords to specify which door in Windsong Tower (south or east) would be the destination. When a character uses the door without a keyword, randomly determine the arrival door. If several characters use the door without keywords, randomly determine each character's destination—even if they use the door at the same time.

The illusory door to the north leads to area 36 in Windsong Aerie.

### 25. CHAPEL OF THE CRESCENT MOON

*Stars twinkle against the ebon sky above, shedding dim light that reveals an oddly shaped chamber. Somewhere ahead an owl hoots, and the bracken underfoot rustles with the passage of some nocturnal creature. The ground feels soft and springy, like a moss-covered forest floor. To the northwest, a raised pedestal occupies a circular section of the chamber.*

This chamber, whose shape suggests a sword hilt, is dedicated to Corellon Larethian, one of the school's two patron deities. The ceiling shows an image of a starry night sky all day, and an image of the actual sky overhead at night. The ambient lighting is always equivalent to that of a forest clearing lit by a quarter moon. The floor is perfectly solid and bare of carpeting, despite its springy feel, and no creatures actually dwell here—the sounds are illusory. The pedestal in the northwest section bears Corellon's symbol, a crescent moon.

### 26. CHAPEL OF THE SEVEN STARS

*Two rows of pillars carved into female figures dominate this vaulted stone chamber, but they have been defaced to such an extent that the persons they once depicted are unrecognizable. Fresh gouges in the center of the floor mark a circular area that might once have been a mosaic design, judging from the bits of colored stone mixed into the rubble. Around the perimeter of the chamber are seven circular alcoves.*

This chamber is dedicated to Mystra, the school's other patron deity. The pillars depicted the goddess as a series of specialist wizards, one for each school of magic. The mosaic in the floor was Mystra's symbol, an arc of seven stars with a stream of red mist flowing from inside. The Shadovars defaced the pillars and the mosaic.

The central area of this chamber was intended for group worship. The seven circular alcoves arranged around the perimeter suggest Mystra's symbol but were intended for private meditation. The ceiling in this chamber looks normal during the day but shows an image of the actual sky overhead at night.

Darcassan has been too busy watching for additional invaders to repair the damage here, and he would find the effort challenging in any case. Though the room looks terrible right now, it's still a place of powerful magic. Any divine spell cast by a

character whose patron deity is Mystra (not just spells from clerics of Mystra) gains the benefit of one metamagic feat (caster's choice) without having to use a higher-level spell slot. The benefit ends if the caster leaves the chapel.

### 27. GARDEN CHAMBER

*Ferns, moss, and flowering vines grow in profusion on and around an artful grouping of large rocks that lies in the center of this circular chamber. The stones have many colors and textures. In the chamber's eastern section stand several padded chairs and low tables, most of which look rather battered. One graceful staircase curves downward in the southwest quarter, and another curves upward in the northwest quarter.*

The staff used this chamber as an informal place to socialize and to meet with advanced students.

A permanent barrier similar to a domed *wall of force* protects the rock garden, and a permanent *control weather* effect keeps the atmosphere inside cool and moist. The garden area has a moderate aura of evocation and a strong aura of transmutation.

Darcassan fought the Shadovars here, and the conflict proved more than a little hard on the furniture.

**Tactical Encounter:** M5: The Warrior Attacks, page 38. Possibly also M7: Just a Drill, page 42.

## Event 7: Avoiding a Fight

Darcassan pays special attention to this chamber, and keeps an eye out for other intrusions. When he notices anyone entering or poking around in here, he sends his Warrior shadow projection to confront the intruders. He will most likely note the PCs when they're on the stairs, but a stealthy character could slip in and search the furniture or open one of the doors before Darcassan notices.

When Darcassan the Warrior appears, read:

*A broad-shouldered elf with close-cropped golden hair, a broken nose, and a cleft chin appears out of thin air. He twirls a greatsword with a flourish. A haughty voice rings inside your heads: "Interlopers, your deeds are known! Lay down your arms and submit to the judgment of the tower—it's more than you deserve, but honor demands no less. Comply without delay!"*

The warrior speaks to the group telepathically. He dismisses all objections, protests, and attempts at reason with a disdainful gesture or a grunt. If all the PCs don't lay down any weapons they carry, and all spell component pouches, holy symbols, and magic items such as wands, the warrior attacks.

If all the PCs comply with the warrior's demand for surrender, the warrior gathers up the discarded gear and dumps it among the furniture in the eastern half of the room. Then he marches the group off to area 30 in the Shadowsong Tree to meet with Darcassan himself.



If the PCs object to the warrior's treatment of their gear, he offers to let them take it up again and fight for the right to do what they will. If the PCs seem willing to fight, the warrior attacks immediately, giving the characters no time to gather their equipment.

## 28. READING ROOM

*Three 10-foot-tall bookcases are set into alcoves in the walls of this brightly lit chamber. In the center of the room stand a leather-covered table and a set of straight-backed chairs. The bookshelves look only about two-thirds full, and the table is piled high with neat stacks of damaged books.*

In this chamber, the school's faculty and staff kept a modest collection (about 1,500 volumes) of what they regarded as light reading: mostly philosophy and history, but also geography, travelogues, folktales, and biology. The room is brightly lit around the clock.

The Shadovars searched this room for clues about the *Nether Scrolls*. When they didn't find any, they tore up a few books out of frustration. Darcassan put the intact books back on the shelves and piled up the damaged books on the table for repair at a later time. He then sorted them according to degree of damage—from torn or bent covers to badly mutilated volumes.

**Treasure:** The books in this chamber are worth at least 10,000 gp in total.

## 29. STAFF QUARTERS

*The polished wooden floor of this chamber is made from light and dark hardwoods carefully fitted together in a pattern that suggests a sun-dappled forest floor. The wooden walls are decorated with carvings that depict trees and animals. The room's furnishings include a divan, two high-backed chairs, a low table, and a fireplace with a wooden mantel.*

Teachers and other key staff at the school once lived in these suites. Each consists of a sitting room (15 feet square), a bed-chamber (10 feet by 15 feet), and a workroom (10 feet square). The furnishings are old but comfortable, and well made.

The description above is for a typical sitting room. The other chambers in each suite have a similar look but different furnishings. None of the suites contain any useful or valuable items.

## 30. DARCISSAN'S SUITE

*Carved trees, animals, and birds decorate the wooden walls of this chamber. A mosaic shows a golden-haired elf with a long chin gazing into a crystal ball. Most of the mosaic is made of wood whose natural grain and color renders the scene in tones of sepia, ivory, tan, and brown. The crystal ball is a disc of purest blue quartz. This chamber is completely bare of furniture.*

Darcassan has called these three rooms home for centuries. Before his transformation, he moved all the furniture out of the sitting room and piled it in the workroom. The sitting room floor is now his construct body (see page 13).

Darcassan defends the school from his sitting room. If the PCs enter, he lets them poke around for a few moments while studying them with his *clairaudience* and *clairvoyance* abilities. During this time, PCs who are examining the mosaic of Darcassan that fills the floor can see an image of their group in the blue quartz disc that serves as his crystal ball in that image. Anyone who makes a successful DC 20 Listen check can hear a faint echo of the party's conversation issuing from that disc.

Once the party seems aware that something odd is afoot, Darcassan uses his Mage shadow projection to meet the PCs; see event 6 on page 16.

## 31. VAULT

The double doors leading in here are secured using *arcane lock*.

Four eladrins, three advanced bralanis and a ghaele, guard this chamber as part of a pact forged long ago with the staff at the school. Though the school has stood empty for centuries, the eladrins are still here, guarding what remains of the school's treasury and using their spells and magical power to assist Darcassan from time to time. The eladrins know about the theft of the *Quess Ar Teranthvar*, and they're somewhat annoyed with Darcassan for not entrusting the item to them.

The moment Darcassan learns that someone has entered the school, he sends his Mage shadow projection to the vault to warn the eladrins. The ghaele moves to the alcove behind the secret door and waits there in globe form.

From time to time, it takes a peek through the secret door, taking advantage of the globe's incorporeal form to pass right through the door.

The PCs might see the ghaele as they approach the secret door. Make a Hide check for the ghaele (see page 41 for the ghaele's statistics) opposed by the party's Spot checks. The PCs can make their Spot checks when within 1d4×10 feet from the door (the DC for the PCs' Spot checks increases by 1 for each 10 feet of distance between them and the ghaele). If the PCs spot the ghaele, read:

*A faintly glowing bump protrudes from the wall in the alcove ahead. The globe doesn't shed much light, and it doesn't look like a gem or an architectural adornment.*

The ghaele doesn't peek for more than a few seconds at a time. The instant it sees anyone approaching (it always keeps a *see invisibility* effect running) it dashes into the vault to warn the bralanis. That done, it returns to the alcove outside the vault (behind the secret door) and assumes humanoid form, which



## WINDSONG TOWER

resembles a muscular elf with snowy hair and iridescent eyes, to await developments.

When the PCs open the secret door, read:

*The door opens to reveal a small alcove with a pair of ponderous-looking stone doors. These doors don't seem to have any handles or markings; a muscular-looking female elf with iridescent eyes stands before them.*

If the PCs managed to open the door without being noticed, they catch the ghaele in its globe form; in either case, the ghaele speaks with them, provided they don't attack it right away.

The ghaele greets the PCs and warns them that they cannot pass beyond the double doors. If the PCs leave, the encounter is over. If the PCs seem inclined to break into the vault, the ghaele resumes (or retains) humanoid form and dashes back into the vault.

Inside, visitors find the school's treasury:

*The chamber beyond the double door has walls lined with dozens of metal doors. There's also a sturdy table with several straight-backed chairs. Rows of metal drawers and inset cabinets line the walls.*

**Tactical Encounter:** M6: Guardians of the Vault, page 40.

**Treasure:** Empty cabinets lie behind most of the metal doors in this chamber (see page 40 for statistics). A few, however, still hold what's left of the school's liquid assets. The hoard includes 4,076 gp (in five leather sacks), 680 pp (in two leather sacks), 881 gold bars (1 pound, 50 gp each), 72 platinum bars (1 pound, 500 gp each), 3 deep green emeralds in a hard leather case (5,000 gp each), and 7 star sapphires in a hard leather case (1,000 gp each).

One cabinet contains a broken picture frame and several scraps of painted canvas. This is the remains of *Myrjala's Eyes*, a magic portrait that once hung in the school's Garden Chamber (area 27). The Shadovars destroyed the painting, but some of the strips that are left still have magical power (see *Myrjala's*

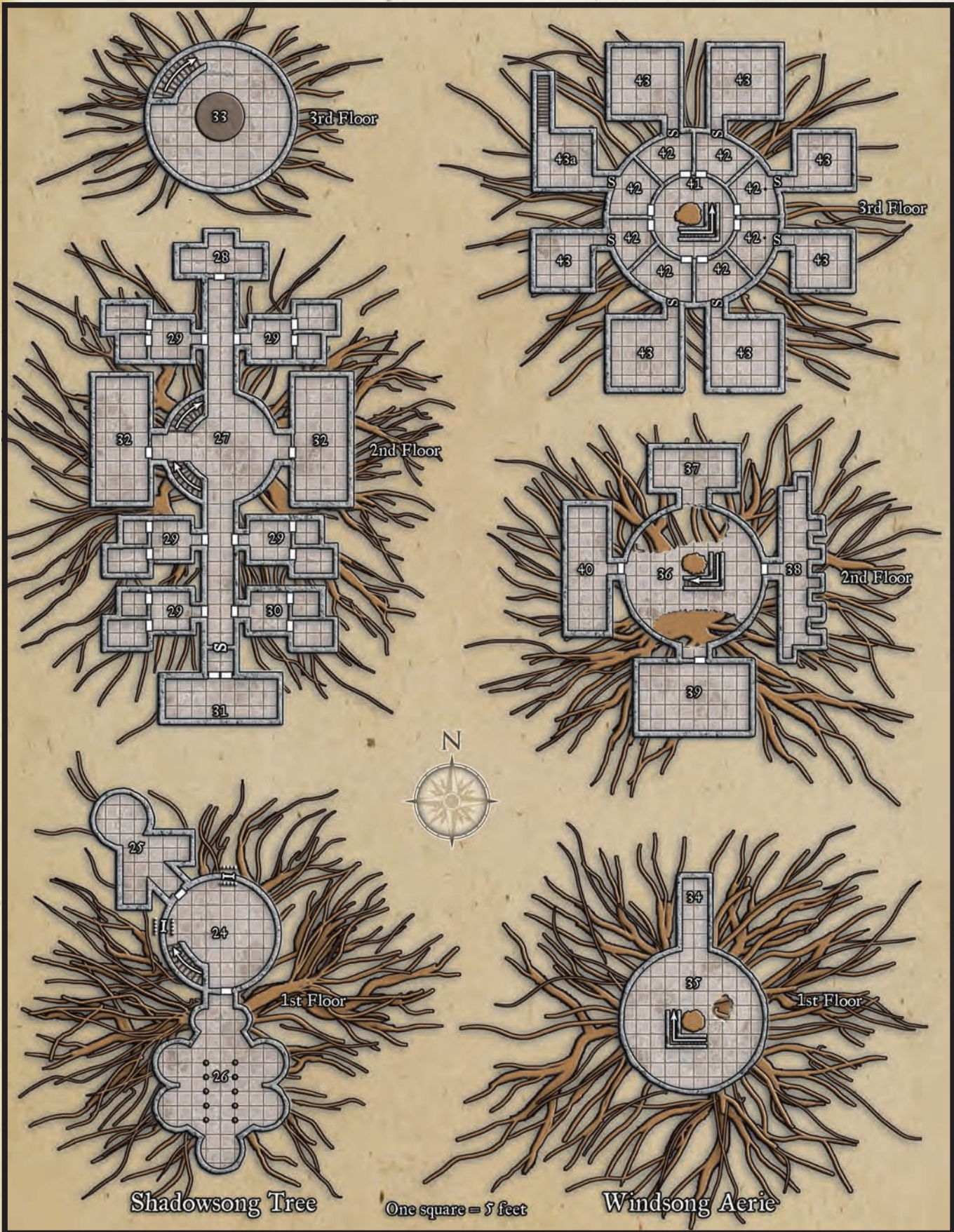
Illus. by Eric Deschamps



*Visitors to Darcassan's suite get an unexpected view of themselves*



WINDSONG TOWER



Shadowsong Tree

One square = 5 feet

Windsong Aerie



*Shards*, page 148). Darcassan moved the portrait's remains here after discovering the deed.

Another cabinet contains a long strip of soft leather with thirty-seven pockets, each containing a scale taken from a great black wyrm. The scales bear nearly invisible etchings filled with information about dragons. These are the *Tablets of Pharyssolnyth* (see page 149). The tablets were once stored in area 42 in Windsong Aerie. Darcassan moved them here after the Shadovar raid.

A final cabinet holds seventeen spellbooks filled with arcane spells from the *Player's Handbook*, the *FORGOTTEN REALMS Campaign Setting*, *Magic of Faerûn*, and *Lost Empires of Faerûn*. These tomes were once kept in area 43.

### 32. PRACTICE ROOMS

*The door opens to reveal a pile of ruins in a tangled jungle. Rubble and broken pillars lie scattered over a piece of cracked and bumped pavement measuring about 20 feet wide and perhaps twice that long.*

The staff created these chambers to give students some practical experience in using their magic. Each room is capable of creating a variety of encounter settings through various illusion and conjuration effects. Through a series of command words, the teachers could set up almost any kind of practice session they could imagine.

Darcassan currently has both rooms set up as magic traps for intruders. The wreckage on the floor is a *major creation* effect (caster level 20th) that functions only within the room. Items removed from the pile last for 20 hours, then vanish.

The "tangled jungle" that occupies the walls and ceiling of these rooms is part of a *mirage arcana* effect (caster level 20th) that is detailed in the tactical encounter on page 43. If dispelled, the illusion reappears after 1d4 rounds.

Entering the room triggers a *summon monster IX* spell that brings two fiendish dire tigers (west chamber) or three celestial dire bears (east chamber).

**Summon Monster IX Trap:** CR 10; magic device; proximity trigger (*alarm*); auto reset; bypass password; spell effect (*summon monster IX*, CL 20th), Search DC 31; Disable Device DC 34. Cost: 77,000 gp, 800 XP.

**Tactical Encounter:** M7: Just a Drill, page 42.

**Development:** Darcassan the Warrior might try to draw the PCs here if he fights the PCs in the Garden Chamber (area 27). Darcassan enters the chamber through the walls and uses a password to bypass the trap, hoping the PCs will follow and trigger it themselves.

### 33. OBSERVATORY

*This broad, circular chamber is bare except for a circular dais about a foot high and 15 feet wide at the center. Some sort of*

*diagram seems to be inscribed on the surface of the dais. Overhead is a clear view of the open sky.*

The staff used this chamber to study the stars, and it still serves that function well. As with the other rooms in this structure, however, the view of the sky is only an image on the stone ceiling.

The diagram on the dais is a scholar's view of Abeir-Toril (see *FR* 231 for an example). Anyone who stands on the diagram between sunset and sunrise and concentrates on the ceiling (Concentration DC 15) sees the sky exactly as it would appear if viewed from the locale corresponding to the spot on the diagram where he is standing. The school staff found this tool invaluable for producing well-rounded students.

## windsong Aerie

The massive oak that supports this three-story wooden building stands about 140 feet tall, and its trunk is nearly 25 feet thick at the base. The building rests on three enormous branches that spread out from the top of the trunk, about 80 feet above the ground. A fairly thin section of the tree's main trunk also snakes up through the building's center, providing additional support.

Unlike the rest of the school, most of the aerie lies on the Material Plane, though a few extradimensional areas are attached to the upper floors. The entire building is made from wood. The interior walls and floors are identical to the features described on page 17. The exterior walls and roof are magically reinforced and exceptionally tough.

**Exterior Walls and Roof:** 1 ft. thick, hardness 16, hp 180, break DC 55.

The roof is conical and steeply sloped. Characters moving uphill (to an adjacent square of lower elevation) must spend 2 squares of movement to enter each square of steep slope. Characters running or charging downhill (to an adjacent square of lower elevation) must succeed on a DC 10 Balance check. Characters who fail by 5 or more fall prone in the square where they end their movement. A steep slope increases the DC of Tumble checks by 2.

Inside, each story is about 15 feet high. The aerie looks windowless from outside, but isn't; the elves fitted the outer walls with panels that were opaque when viewed from outside and transparent when viewed from inside. This arrangement kept the aerie flooded with natural light on sunny days but veiled the interior from prying eyes. Except for the top floor (which is magically illuminated; see page 45), the aerie has no other lighting.

The aerie has one of the two original physical entrances to the school—the balcony at area 34. But time, violence, and the elements have been hard on this structure, and it now has a few gaps where enterprising characters can enter. Flying or climbing characters can also find entry through areas 35 or 36.



### 34. BALCONY

This narrow walkway encircles the whole building. It is open to the elements and has no railings. An invisible walkway, also without railings, leads to the south. It once sloped upward into the crown of an adjacent tree, where one could step off a wide branch and onto the walkway. This walkway is broken off only a few feet from the balcony now.

**Tactical Encounter:** M8: Battle in the Aerie, page 44. This area and areas 35–41 form a single tactical encounter.

### 35. LOWER FLOOR

*This chamber has a splintered wooden floor and smells of dampness and mildew. Large sections of clouded glass set into the curving outer walls allow a view of the treetops outside. Every breeze that stirs the leaves beyond these windows seems to create a draft. A tree trunk forms a central pillar in this chamber, and leafy branches fill most of the interior. A few walls and a staircase wrapped around the tree trunk are faintly visible through the leaves.*

This floor once housed the school's infirmary and a few chambers used for musical practice and instruction. About a quarter of the floor is gone, and foliage from the supporting tree has filled in most of the interior.

Characters can use the stairs to climb up to the Scriptorium (area 36); they can also climb up through all the tree branches (Climb DC 12) or fly up through gaps in the ceiling.

**Tactical Encounter:** M8: Battle in the Aerie, page 44. This area and areas 34–41 form a single tactical encounter.

### 36. SCRIPTORIUM

*The scents of forest breezes and mossy tree trunks fill the air. Enough structure remains to suggest that this area was once fully enclosed, but it's mostly open to the air now. A few wooden desks remain attached to what's left of the floor, though the riot of leaves and branches obscures the view in every direction. Archways to the north, south, east, and west house weathered wooden doors—all single except one double door in the south.*

The elves wrote scrolls, books, and daily correspondence in this spacious chamber. The walls and floor are mostly gone, and living branches and leaves have invaded the space.

The stairs in this area lead down to area 35 and up to area 41.

**Tactical Encounter:** M8: Battle in the Aerie, page 44. This area and areas 34–41 form a single tactical encounter.

### 37. BINDERY

*A heavy worktable and a pair of low stools are this chamber's only furniture. Pegs along the table's sides hold several sets of shears, hammers with leather or felt heads, and long needles. Atop the table are a few sheaves of pages stitched together and*

*a stack of leather rectangles and thin wooden panels. In one corner of the room stands a device with a heavy blade linked to a foot pedal.*

This extradimensional chamber is a fully equipped workshop for binding books. Darcassan has been using it recently to restore a few of the tomes that the Shadovars damaged in area 28.

The bladed device is a foot-powered shear for cutting a whole sheaf of pages at once. Anyone looking under the table sees two wooden chests (no check required). One holds leatherworking tools; the other contains writing implements.

**Tactical Encounter:** M8: Battle in the Aerie, page 44. This area and areas 34–41 form a single tactical encounter.

### 38. WEAVERS' LOFT

*Small cubicles line three walls of this long, narrow chamber. The fourth wall is covered, floor to ceiling, with empty shelves. The cubicles to the left and right hold spinning wheels, and the five cubicles opposite the door contain empty looms. The floor in front of the nooks bears faint stains in all colors of the rainbow.*

This extradimensional chamber contains a collection of spinning wheels and looms for making cloth. The activity here wasn't terribly vital to the school, but it helped some students satisfy their creative impulses.

The elves used the main floor for bleaching and dyeing their textiles, and the wood bears the marks of several centuries of such activities. Darcassan has removed the vats, dyes, and other supplies, but he has not yet repaired the floors.

**Tactical Encounter:** M8: Battle in the Aerie, page 44. This area and areas 34–41 form a single tactical encounter.

### 39. WOODWRIGHT'S SHOP

*The walls of this chamber are festooned with all manner of drills, saws, planes, hammers, and chisels. A heavy worktable in the middle of the room has a vise bolted to each corner. To the left of the door stands a rack that holds hundreds of planks, blocks, and other bits of wood, some of which emit a distinctly sweet fragrance.*

This extradimensional chamber serves as a woodworking shop. The staff of the school used it to make all sorts of wooden items, from floorboards to cabinetry to bowstaves.

**Treasure:** The supply of wood kept in this chamber includes some rare woods, some from as far away as Chult. The exceptional pieces are worth 8,200 gp in total and weigh 210 pounds. A successful DC 20 Appraise check is required to separate the valuable bits from the workaday material.

**Tactical Encounter:** M8: Battle in the Aerie, page 44. This area and areas 34–41 form a single tactical encounter.



#### 40. LAPIDARY SHOP

*The air in this chamber seems unusually dry, and all the surfaces are covered with fine dust. The sturdy wooden table and stool are pale with accumulated grit. A few stone hammers, metal bars, and smooth sticks lie scattered on the gray surface.*

This extradimensional chamber serves as a workshop for cutting gems. Darcassan has moved most of the tools to area 21 so that he can work on rebuilding the stone golems. The items on the table are what Darcassan left behind when collecting tools for his golem-repair project.

**Tactical Encounter:** M8: Battle in the Aerie, page 44. This area and areas 34–41 form a single tactical encounter.

#### 41. UPPER STAIRWELL

*The central feature of this circular chamber is a staircase leading downward. Eight wooden doors are spaced evenly around the room's circumference.*

These stairs lead down to area 36.

**Tactical Encounter:** M8: Battle in the Aerie, page 44. This area and areas 34–40 form a single tactical encounter.

#### 42. LIBRARIES

*Banks of curved shelves line this semicircular chamber. All are empty but free of dust. Transparent panels in the curved outer wall offer views of the forest canopy beyond. Only a single archway with a wooden door mars the view.*

In these chambers, the school's staff maintained a collection of books relating to each of the eight schools of magic. Darcassan has removed the books, leaving behind empty shelves.

The secret doors leading off these rooms once gave access to the areas numbered 43, but Darcassan has placed *seal portal* spells on each door. Removing the *seal portal* spells requires a *dispel magic* or *greater dispel magic* spell and a successful DC 24 caster level check.

#### 43. RESTRICTED LIBRARIES

*Built-in floor-to-ceiling bookshelves line the four walls of this musty-smelling, rectangular chamber, and several banks of free-standing shelves occupy the center. Some of the shelf space holds a smattering of books of every size and description.*

These extradimensional chambers hold books that were considered too valuable or too dangerous for any except staff members and advanced students to use. Darcassan has moved most of the books from the libraries (the areas numbered 42) to these rooms, and he has taken the spellbooks and magic tomes once kept here and stored them in area 31.

#### 43A. SECRET ABJURER'S LIBRARY

This chamber looks like all the other secret libraries. Its secret door looks just like a section of bookshelves, complete with books. A successful DC 30 Search check is required to locate it.

The secret door is a *portal* that takes the user to an extradimensional staircase, which in turn leads to Windsong Tower's solarium (area 23). The *portal* is keyed, and opening it requires a *Windsong Towerkin ring* and the express permission of the school's headmaster, who must be present at the time the *portal* is activated. Darcassan is the school's acting headmaster, so his permission suffices. In any case, however, only one creature can pass beyond the *portal* at any one time. It deactivates when anyone passes through and cannot be reactivated until someone returns through it.

The Shadovars circumvented the *portal* key by using a *wish* spell. After they gained access to the solarium, Darcassan cast *seal portal* on it.

## conclusion

After the characters have explored the school and learned what Darcassan has to tell them, they have enough information to continue the adventure. If they take Darcassan's advice, they should visit the Crypt of Augathra the Mad, and this course gives the party the best chance to complete the adventure; the crypt is described in Chapter 2. The PCs, however, might decide to go after the Shadovars, foolhardy as that might be at this juncture. In this case, proceed to Chapter 5, even though the PCs most likely will be forced to withdraw after tangling with a Shadovar patrol. (Until the characters have experienced other parts of this adventure and obtained some Shadow Weave magic items, they are probably going to be outmatched by the adversaries they meet in Anauroch's dead magic zone.)



# BAD BLOOD

Encounter Level 14

## setup

Run this encounter when the PCs visit Blackthorn Lodge. Keevosen and her werewolves lie in wait for the PCs.

Keevosen waits, hidden, in the space marked K. She has used her *invisibility* spell-like ability and has already cast *cat's grace* on herself. The werewolves stand behind the east wall, in the spaces marked W, with their heads sticking out through holes in the wall. Place the PCs in whatever order the group used when approaching the building, with the lead characters inside the entrance they decided to use.

If the PCs don't spot Keevosen when they enter the chamber, she surprises them. The PCs can see her with a *see invisibility* or similar spell. The character using the spell must make a successful Spot check opposed by Keevosen's Hide check to see her.

If Keevosen surprises the party, read:

*A voice, cool and feminine, speaks from the shadows. "I'm so glad you could come—some secrets are deadly." The voice mutters a few syllables, and a disgusting fog fills the chamber.*

If Keevosen doesn't surprise the party, she still speaks; however, she must roll initiative before casting any spells.



## tactics

When the *alarm* spells herald the PCs' arrival, Keevosen uses her shield of shadows ability, improving her defense as follows: AC 27, touch AC 20, flat-footed AC 21, 20% miss chance (concealment).

When the fight begins, Keevosen uses *shadow conjuration* to dump a *stinking cloud* on as many foes as possible (this is the effect described in the setup text).

The werewolves close in on whatever still-functioning PCs emerge from the cloud.

When the werewolves enter melee, Keevosen casts *steeldance* and moves in to flank a foe. She uses her *shadow stride* and *shadow image* powers to frustrate attacks directed at her. Whenever she cannot make an effective melee attack, she uses *magic missile* or *shadow evocation* (*lightning bolt* or *ice storm*, whichever she can use without hurting the werewolves).

Keevosen flees the fight (probably using *shadow stride*) when reduced to 10 hit points or fewer. Once away from the fight, she flees Myth Drannor; the werewolves flee if Keevosen is killed, incapacitated, or driven off.

## development

If the PCs capture Keevosen, she tries to escape using *shadow stride* if she can. A successful Bluff or Intimidate check persuades her to reveal her general mission. Keevosen doesn't know who performed the theft from the magic school or exactly what was stolen.

Any captured werewolves know only that Keevosen hired them as muscle; they won't admit to being members of the People of the Black Blood.

## FEATURES OF THE AREA

**Doors:** The doors have working locks. They are unlocked when the encounter begins, but Keevosen might close and lock them (using her key). 1-1/2 in. thick; AC 5; hardness 5; hp 15; break DC 18 (locked), Open Lock DC 20.

**Light:** Illumination is shadowy, characters without darkvision vision can see only dimly, and other creatures have concealment relative to that character.

**Wooden Walls:** 6 in. thick; hardness 5; hp 60; break DC 20; Climb DC 21.

Wooden walls increase the DC of Listen checks to hear through them by 5. The hit points and break DC given are for a 10-foot section. If a wooden wall is breached, the squares breached and all adjacent nonwall squares become light rubble.

Light rubble increases the DC of Balance and Tumble checks by 2, and it imposes a -2 penalty on Move Silently checks. A successful DC 10 Balance check is required to run or charge across light rubble. Failure means a character can still act but can't run or charge in this round.

**Holes:** Creatures behind holes in the walls have improved cover that gives them a +8 bonus to Armor Class, a +4 bonus on Reflex saves, and the benefit of the improved evasion class feature.



**KEEVOSEN NIHILI****CR 13****hp** 66 (+11 in darkness or shadows) (11 HD); **fast healing** 2Female human shade<sup>FR</sup> rogue 2/wizard 5/shadow adept<sup>PC</sup> 4  
NE Medium humanoid**Init** +6; **Senses** low-light vision, darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +3, Spot +3**Languages** Common, Draconic, Dwarven, Elven**AC** 27, touch 24, flat-footed 21 in darkness or shadows; Dodge or**AC** 23, touch 20, flat-footed 17; Dodge**Resist** evasion; **SR** 22 (in darkness or shadows only)**Fort** +10 (+14 in darkness or shadows), **Ref** +17 (+21 in darkness or shadows), **Will** +13 (+17 in darkness or shadows); +1 against enchantments, illusions, necromancy, and spells that have the darkness descriptor**Weakness** loses shade abilities (darkvision, increased speed, *shadow stride*, fast healing, *control light*, *invisibility*, *shadow image*) when not in darkness or shadows**Speed** 30 ft. (6 squares), 50 ft. in darkness or shadows; *shadow stride***Melee** +2 *short sword* +15 (1d6+4/19–20) in darkness or shadows or**Melee** +2 *short sword* +13 (1d6+2/19–20)**Ranged** mwk shortbow +13 (1d6+2/x3) in darkness or shadows or**Ranged** mwk shortbow +11 (1d6/x3)**Base Atk** +5; **Grp** +5**Atk Options** sneak attack +1d6**Special Actions** shield of shadows**Combat Gear** *potion of cure serious wounds***Wizard Spells Prepared** (CL 9th):5th—*shadow evocation* (DC 18)4th—*shadow conjuration* (DC 18), *shadow well* (see page 144)3rd—*blacklight*<sup>FR</sup> (DC 16), *dispel magic*, *steeldance* (see page 144), *suggestion* (DC 16)2nd—*cat's grace*<sup>†</sup>, *darkness*, *invisibility*, *Melf's acid arrow*, *mirror image*1st—*alarm*<sup>††</sup> (2), *cause fear* (DC 14), *disguise self*, *magic missile*0—*detect magic*, *ghost sound*, *mage hand*, *open/close*<sup>†</sup> already cast**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 11th):1/round—*invisibility* (in darkness or shadows only)3/day—*shadow image* (as *mirror image*, 1d4+4 images, in darkness or shadows only)**Abilities** Str 10, Dex 22, Con 15 (17 in darkness or shadows), Int 17, Wis 8, Cha 14 (16 in darkness or shadows)**SQ** familiar (none at present), trapfinding**Feats** Dodge, Extend Spell, Insidious Magic<sup>B PC</sup>, Pernicious Magic<sup>B PC</sup>, Quicken Spell, Scribe Scroll<sup>B</sup>, Shadow Weave Magic<sup>PC</sup>, Silent Spell, Tenacious Magic<sup>B PC</sup>, Weapon Finesse**Skills** Appraise +6, Balance +13, Bluff +13, Concentration +16, Diplomacy +11, Disable Device +8, Gather Information +7, Hide +19, Intimidate +4, Jump +2, Knowledge (arcana) +11, Knowledge (the planes) +14, Listen +3, Move Silently +19, Open Lock +11, Search +8, Sense Motive +4, Spellcraft +19, Spot +3, Tumble +11**Possessions** combat gear plus *bracers of armor* +3, +2 *short sword*, masterwork shortbow with 20 arrows, *cloak of resistance* +2, *ring of the ram*, key to lodge doors. Note: All of Keevosen's possessions are Shadow Weave magic items (see sidebar in Chapter 5, page 112).**Spellbook** spells prepared plus 0—all; 1st—*charm person*, *mage armor*, *net of shadows*, *Shelgarn's persistent blade*, *silent image*, *summon monster I*, *true strike*; 2nd—*claws of darkness*, *misdirection*, *shadow mask*, *shadow spray*, *summon monster II*; 3rd—*nondetection*, *reverse arrows*, *summon monster III*; 4th—*summon monster IV*; 5th—*cloudkill*, *greater shadow conjuration*, *Grimwald's graymantle*, *shadow hand*, *summon monster V***Fast Healing (Ex)** Keevosen heals 2 points of damage each round, provided she is still alive and in darkness or shadows.**Shadow Stride (Sp)** When in shadowy illumination, Keevosen can vanish from her current location and reappear in any shadowy area within 300 feet up to once every 2 rounds as a move action.**Control Light (Sp)** When in shadowy illumination, Keevosen can decrease the level of light within a 100-foot radius by a factor of up to 100%. This effect decreases the overall effective range of vision for characters and creatures dependent on light by the same percentage. A character within the affected area gains a +1 bonus on Hide checks for each 25% decrease in light.**Shield of Shadows (Su)** Keevosen can surround herself with a globe of purple-black force as a standard action. This shield functions like a *shield* spell, granting a +4 shield bonus to AC and absorbing *magic missiles* cast at her. In addition, it provides concealment against melee and ranged attacks. She can use it for up to 11 rounds per day, but this time need not be consecutive.**Skills** Keevosen has a +4 racial bonus on Listen and Spot checks in darkness or shadows, and a +8 racial bonus on Hide and Move Silently checks. She takes no penalties due to conditions of poor illumination.**4 WEREWOLVES (HYBRID FORM)****CR 7****hp** 45 each (6 HD); **DR** 10/silverMale or female human werewolf rogue 2/fighter 2  
CE Medium humanoid (shapechanger)**Init** +5; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Listen +9, Spot +0**Languages** Common; wolf empathy**AC** 25, touch 15, flat-footed 20; Dodge, Mobility**Resist** evasion**Fort** +10, **Ref** +12, **Will** +5**Speed** 30 ft. (6 squares)**Melee** +1 *short sword* +10 (1d6+4/19–20) and bite +5 (1d6+1) or**Melee** 2 claws +9 each (1d4+3) and bite +5 (1d6+1)**Ranged** mwk composite shortbow +10 (1d6+2/x3)**Base Atk** +4; **Grp** +7**Atk Options** Blind-Fight; curse of lycanthropy, sneak attack +1d6**Combat Gear** *potion of cure serious wounds***Abilities** Str 16, Dex 20, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 15, Cha 8**SQ** trapfinding**Feats** Blind-Fight, Dodge<sup>B</sup>, Iron Will<sup>B</sup>, Mobility, Track<sup>B</sup>, Weapon Finesse<sup>B</sup>, Weapon Focus (bite)**Skills** Balance +7, Bluff +4, Climb +5, Diplomacy +1, Gather Information +4, Hide +10, Intimidate +1, Jump +7, Listen +9, Move Silently +10, Spot +9, Survival +2 (+6 tracking by scent), Tumble +10, Use Magic Device +4**Possessions** combat gear plus +1 *studded leather*, +1 *buckler*, +1 *short sword*, masterwork composite shortbow (+2 Str bonus) with 20 arrows, *cloak of resistance* +1**Curse of Lycanthropy (Su)** Any humanoid or giant hit by a werewolf's bite attack must succeed on a DC 15 Fortitude save or contract lycanthropy.



# AN ADROIT CHALLENGE

## Encounter Level 16

### setup

If the PCs arrive here through the *portal* in the west wall (see page 11), they appear simultaneously and randomly around the fountain. Place each PC's miniature in a square adjacent to the fountain.

If the PCs arrive here from elsewhere inside the school, place their miniatures in the order the party uses when traveling, with the lead characters just entering the room.

Darcassan keeps watch over the chamber using his *clairaudience* and *clairvoyance* abilities. In addition, Darcassan the Adroit has cast an *alarm* spell on the fountain in this room. When he notices anyone in the room, Darcassan sends his Adroit shadow projection to deal with the intrusion. Darcassan the Adroit has *arrow mind*, *nondetection*, *greater invisibility*, and *lesser spell matrix* cast on himself. The *lesser spell matrix* holds a *daylight* spell. Darcassan also has cast *greater magic weapon* on both his sword and his bow.

Darcassan begins in the square with the pillar marked with a D.

If the first meeting between Darcassan and the PCs occurs here, Darcassan suspects the PCs might be Shadovar agents come to loot the tower, and he puts them to the test.

If Darcassan has met the PCs before, he probably doubts the group is associated with the Shadovars, but decides to test their mettle by pretending to be a Shadovar agent left behind after the raid.

### INVISIBILITY AND MISS CHANCES

Attacking Darcassan during this encounter can prove frustrating for characters. He's invisible most of the time, thanks to his use of *greater invisibility*, and *nondetection* makes him hard to spot even with divination magic. Characters can attempt a DC 20 Spot check to notice Darcassan in the vicinity, or a DC 40 Spot check to determine his exact location in the room. In either case, the character making the check takes a -1 penalty on the check for every 10 feet of distance between that character and Darcassan.

Listen checks also can reveal an invisible creature. However, Darcassan doesn't make any noise unless he decides to do so. If he uses a spell that has a verbal component, he can be heard. Noticing Darcassan in the vicinity is automatic when he speaks. Locating him requires a successful DC 20 Listen check.

Keep in mind that Darcassan keeps moving around during the battle, and PCs using Spot or Listen checks are more likely to notice where he has been than where he is.

Even when a character knows Darcassan's location, there is a miss chance for any attack when the attacker cannot see him. This miss chance is separate from the miss chance that applies because Darcassan is semimaterial. Unless the attacker also uses a ghost touch weapon, the attacker must roll a second miss chance.

If this is the first time Darcassan has met the PCs, read:

*A sharp rebuke echoes through the hall: "It's about time you got here! I've been waiting days for relief. What's the matter? Spend too much time admiring all the trees around here?" The voice has no visible source, but seems to come from among the pillars in the eastern half of the room.*

Darcassan can communicate telepathically, but speaks in Chondathan. Characters who cannot speak that language can tell the speaker is annoyed, but can't make sense of the words. If nobody seems to understand, he repeats his comments in Common.

If this is not the first time Darcassan has met the PCs, read:

*A hollow laugh echoes through the hall. A haughty voice seems to speak directly to your minds: "Enjoyed your visit so far? Time for a little exercise to liven up your experience!"*

### Tactics

Darcassan's primary goal is to probe and test the PCs, attempting to discern their true motivations. He casts *detect thoughts* at his first opportunity, and tries to keep the party talking for as long as he can.

When he's ready to fight, Darcassan chooses one or more armored characters, or characters that he suspects could prove dangerous in combat, and casts his heightened *shadow spray* spell on them. He then casts a quickened *Melf's acid arrow* on a spellcaster.

After that, he casts *prismatic eye* and his remaining quickened *Melf's acid arrow* on another spellcaster. After that, he casts *Evard's black tentacles*, aiming the spell to close off the exits from the chamber. He uses *Otiluke's resilient sphere* or *Bigby's interposing hand* on PCs who have successfully attacked him. If opposing casters give him trouble, he uses *spell turning*, or moves into melee range and uses his *Quaal's feather tokens* to bedevil those characters.

Throughout the battle, Darcassan remains in the pillared section of the hall, using the pillars as cover. He can walk right into a pillar because he is only semimaterial.

Darcassan keeps up his assault until he runs out of spells, is reduced to 15 hit points or fewer, or until the party leaves the school by exiting through the illusory wall to the west. When he senses the encounter drawing to a close, he chooses one character who isn't likely to have an effective Will save and casts *dominate person* on that individual. If this spell succeeds, Darcassan doesn't do anything immediately; see the Development section below. After casting *dominate person*, Darcassan returns to his construct body.



**DARCASSAN THE ADROIT****CR 16**

hp 41 (15 HD)

Male sun elf diviner 13/expert 2

CG Medium humanoid

**Init** +9; **Senses** low-light vision; Listen +17, Spot +17**Languages** Chondathan, Common, Elven, Giant, Gnome, Sylvan; telepathy 60 ft.**AC** 26, touch 18, flat-footed 26**Miss Chance** 50% (shadow existence)**Immune** magic sleep effects**Fort** +4, **Ref** +9, **Will** +14; +2 against enchantments**Speed** 30 ft. (6 squares), fly 30 ft. (perfect)**Melee** +4 *longsword of warning* +11/+6 (1d8+4) with *greater magic weapon***Ranged** +4 *longbow* +16/+11 (1d6+4) with *greater magic weapon***Base Atk** +7; **Grp** +7**Combat Gear** 2 *Quaal's feather tokens* (whip)**Wizard Spells Prepared** (CL 13th; 1d20+15 to overcome SR):7th—*prismatic eye* (+6 ranged touch, DC 19), *spell turning*6th—*acid storm* (DC 22), *greater dispel magic*, quickened *Melf's acid arrow* (2, +12 ranged touch)5th—*Bigby's interposing hand*, *dominate person* (DC 21), *feblemind* (DC 21), *lesser spell matrix*† (see page 144), *telekinesis* (+12 ranged touch, DC 21)4th—*Evard's black tentacles*, *greater invisibility*† (2), *Otiluke's resilient sphere*, *heightened shadow spray* (DC 21), *shout* (DC 20), *thunderlance* (see page 145) (+13/+5 melee)3rd—*haste*, *lightning bolt* (2) (DC 19), *greater magic weapon*†† (2), *nondetection*† (DC 28 caster level check), *reverse arrows* (see page 143)2nd—*battering ram* (see page 142), *daylight*†, *detect thoughts* (DC 17), *Melf's acid arrow* (+12 ranged touch), *scorch* (2, DC 17), see *invisibility*1st—*alarm*†, *arrow mind*† (see page 142), *magic missile* (4), *shield*†0—*detect magic* (2), *ghost sound* (DC 15), *mage hand* (2) † already cast

Prohibited school: necromancy

**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 15th):At will—*clairaudience*, *clairvoyance***Abilities** Str 10, Dex 20, Con 11, Int 22, Wis 16, Cha 17**Feats** Alertness, Heighten Spell<sup>B</sup>, Improved Initiative, Quicken Spell<sup>B</sup>, Scribe Scroll<sup>B</sup>, Skill Focus (Bluff), Skill Focus (Sense Motive), Spell Focus (illusion), Spell Penetration**Skills** Bluff +10, Concentration +15, Craft (bookbinding) +12, Craft (metalworking) +12, Craft (stoneworking) +12, Decipher Script +18, Diplomacy +7, Hide +13, Knowledge (arcana) +19, Knowledge (history) +19, Listen +19, Profession (scribe) +15, Search +14, Sense Motive +10, Spellcraft +20, Spot +19**Possessions** combat gear plus *amulet of natural armor* +1, *bracers of armor* +3, *ring of protection* +2, +1 *longsword of warning*<sup>Mag</sup> (+4 with *greater magic weapon*), masterwork longbow (+4 with *greater magic weapon*) with 20 arrows, *gloves of dexterity* +2, *headband of intellect* +2, masterwork artisan's tools**Shadow Existence (Su)** See page 15**Skills** Darcassan gains a +8 racial bonus on Listen, Search, Spot, and Hide checks thanks to his semimaterial nature. As an elf, he gains +2 on Listen, Search, and Spot checks.**development**

After the fighting ends, Darcassan ponders what he has learned about the PCs. After this encounter, Darcassan is fairly certain the PCs aren't associated with the Shadovars, but he might not be quite ready to recruit them to recover the Quess Ar Teranthvar. If he has met the group before, he might be ready to strike a deal.

If Darcassan managed to *dominate* anyone, he bides his time. When he can, Darcassan compels his victim to make his way, alone, to his sitting room (area 30) for a long chat.

**FEATURES OF THE AREA**

**Pillars:** 2 ft. thick, 20 ft. high; AC 4; hardness 16; hp 500; break DC 50; Climb DC 20.

A creature standing in the same square as a pillar gains a +2 cover bonus to Armor Class and a +1 cover bonus on Reflex saves. Darcassan can stand inside a pillar, gaining a +4 cover bonus to Armor Class and +2 cover bonus on Reflex saves. The presence of a pillar does not otherwise affect a creature's fighting space. A pillar can be pushed over with a successful DC 50 Strength check, dealing 6d6 points of damage to creatures in the squares that it falls in (Reflex DC 15 half). A pushed-over pillar fills the squares it falls in with dense rubble.

**Fountain (Basin):** 1 ft. thick, 3 ft. high; hardness 16; hp 180; break DC 55.





# DEADLY NIGHTSHADE

Encounter Level 16

## setup

This encounter occurs when the PCs enter one of the pantries (area 18 in Windsong Tower). The undead leader, an advanced nighthaunt, crouches in the space marked with an N. The creature always keeps *invisibility* and *see invisibility* effects running. The nighthaunt's companions, a pair of dread wraiths, occupy the two spaces marked W, and are hiding among the crates and barrels.

The PCs can spot the nighthaunt with a *see invisibility* spell or similar effect. Until the nighthaunt moves or acts, it takes a successful DC 40 Spot or Listen check to notice that there's an invisible creature in the chamber, and a successful DC 60 Spot or Listen check to pinpoint its location. Once the creature moves, it takes a successful DC 20 spot or Listen check to notice it, or a successful DC 40 Spot or Listen check to pinpoint it.

PCs can notice the dread wraiths hiding by making Spot checks opposed by the wraiths' Hide checks (increase the Spot DC by 1 for every 10 feet between an observer and a dread wraith).

If the PCs don't notice the creatures before they attack, the undead surprise them.

When the nighthaunt attacks, read:

*A fetid breeze and a serpentlike hiss give a tardy warning of a vicious swipe from a winged creature that seems to pop out of thin air with slashing claws and flailing wings.*

When a dread wraith attacks, read:

*A ghostly form about the size of an ogre drifts rises like a deadly fog from the stone floor and attacks with an emaciated hand that grasps at your heart.*

## tactics

The dread wraiths push forward to attack the party's rear ranks while the nighthaunt hangs back to use its spell-like abilities against the front ranks, starting with *finger of death* and *hold monster*. The nighthaunt uses its fly speed to move from room to room (swooping through the doorways), trying to stay out of reach while still keeping the dread wraiths within its desecrating aura. It uses *haste* on itself and targets its allies as well, if it can.

If the PCs try to block its movement, the nighthaunt chooses the speediest opponent and uses its improved grab ability on it.

If the undead are turned, the dread wraiths escape into the walls and the nighthaunt uses its *plane shift* power. The dread wraiths return to the encounter areas when the turning effect ends. Once the nighthaunt *plane shifts*, it cannot return for 1d10 minutes, thanks to the school's *mythal*.

## development

If the PCs destroy any undead here, Darcassan eventually discovers the deed through his divination abilities, and he looks more favorably on the characters afterward.



## FEATURES OF THE AREA

**Ceilings:** The ceilings are 20 feet high.

**Doors:** 2 in thick; AC 3; hardness 16; hp 40; break DC 0 or 25 (if jammed shut).

The doors here are 8 feet (outer doors) or 5 feet (inner doors) wide and 8 feet high. They open easily unless the characters jam them (for example, with a piton or a piece of debris torn from a crate), which is a move action.

**Barrels and Crates:** 1 in. thick; AC 6; hardness 5; hp 10; break DC 17.



**ADVANCED NIGHTHAUNT<sup>LE</sup>****CR 13****hp** 136 (16 HD); **DR** 15/silver and magic

CE Medium undead

**Init** +12; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +23, Spot +23**Aura** desecrating 20 ft.**Languages** Chondathan, Common, Elven; telepathy 100 ft.**AC** 33, touch 20, flat-footed 25; Dodge**Immune** undead immunities**SR** 24**Fort** +7, **Ref** +15, **Will** +16 with desecrating aura**Weakness** aversion to daylight, cannot be raised, destroyed at 0 or fewer hp**Speed** 40 ft. (8 squares), fly 60 ft. (good)**Melee** 2 claws +18 each (1d6+9) with desecrating aura and bite +15 (1d6+4) with desecrating aura and tail whip +15 (2d4+4) with desecrating aura**Base Atk** +8; **Grp** +17**Atk Options** Combat Reflexes; energy drain, improved grab**Special Actions** summon undead**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 16th):At will—*deeper darkness*, *detect magic*, *see invisibility*, *unholy blight* (DC 18)3/day—*contagion* (DC 18), *greater dispel magic*, *haste*, *invisibility*1/day—*finger of death* (DC 21), *hold monster* (DC 19), *ice storm*, *plane shift* (DC 21)**Abilities** Str 29, Dex 27, Con —, Int 14, Wis 18, Cha 18**SQ** undead traits**Feats** Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Multiattack, Weapon Focus (claw)**Skills** Balance +20, Concentration +23, Hide +27, Jump +20, Listen +23, Spot +23, Tumble +29**Possessions** *bracers of armor* +3, *ring of protection* +2, *cloak of Charisma* +2, *belt of giant strength***Aversion to Daylight (Ex)** If exposed to natural daylight (not merely a *daylight* spell), a nighthaunt takes a –4 penalty on all attack rolls, saving throws, and skill checks.**Desecrating Aura (Su)** A nighthaunt radiates a 20-foot-radius emanation of utter desecration, imbuing its surroundings with negative energy. This ability works much like a *desecrate* spell, except that the nighthaunt's evil is so great that it is treated as the shrine of an evil power. Every undead creature within 20 feet of the nighthaunt (including the creature itself) gains a +2 profane bonus on attack rolls, damage rolls, and saving throws, and +2 hit points per Hit Die. (The nighthaunt's Hit Dice, attack, and save entries given here include these profane bonuses.) Charisma checks made to turn undead within this area take a –6 penalty.Unlike other supernatural abilities, a *dispel evil* spell or similar effect can dispel the desecrating aura. If the effect is dispelled, the nighthaunt can resume it as a free action on its next turn. If the nighthaunt enters a *consecrated* or *hallowed* area, both its desecrating aura and the *consecrate* or *hallow* effect are suppressed as long as it remains in the area.**Energy Drain (Su)** Any living creature against which the nighthaunt wins a grapple check gains two negative levels. The DC is 20 for the Fortitude save to remove a negative level.**Improved Grab (Ex)** To use this ability, a nighthaunt must hit an opponent of up to Large size with both of its claw attacks. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking attacks of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and can use its energy drain attack.**Summon Undead (Su)** A nighthaunt can summon undead creatures once per night: 3–6 shadows, 2–4 wraiths, or 1 greater shadow. The undead arrive in 1d10 rounds and serve for 1 hour or until released.**2 DREAD WRAITHS****CR 11****hp** 104 each (16 HD)

LE Large undead (incorporeal)

**Init** +12; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., lifestense 60 ft.; Listen +25, Spot +25**Aura** unnatural 30 ft.**Languages** Common, Infernal**AC** 25, touch 25, flat-footed 17; Dodge, Mobility**Immune** undead immunities; can be harmed only by other incorporeal creatures, magic weapons, spells, spell-like abilities, or supernatural abilities**Resist** 50% chance to ignore any damage from a corporeal source (except force effects and attacks made with ghost touch weapons)**Fort** +5, **Ref** +13, **Will** +14**Weakness** cannot be raised, daylight powerlessness, destroyed at 0 or fewer hp**Speed** fly 60 ft. (12 squares) (good); Spring Attack; can pass through solid objects (but not force effects) at will, moves silently (cannot be heard with Listen checks unless desired)**Melee** incorporeal touch +15 touch (2d6 plus 1d8 Con drain)**Space** 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.**Base Atk** +8; **Grp** +12**Atk Options** Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes; attacks ignore natural armor, armor and shields (though deflection bonuses and force effects work normally), Constitution drain**Special Actions** create spawn**SQ** undead traits, incorporeal traits**Feats** Alertness<sup>B</sup>, Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative<sup>B</sup>, Improved Natural Attack (incorporeal touch), Mobility, Spring Attack**Skills** Diplomacy +12, Hide +23, Intimidate +25, Knowledge (religion) +20, Listen +25, Search +22, Sense Motive +23, Spot +25, Survival +6 (+8 following tracks)**Constitution Drain (Su)** A living creature hit by a dread wraith's incorporeal touch attack must succeed on a DC 25 Fortitude save or take 1d8 points of Constitution drain. On each such successful attack, the dread wraith gains 5 temporary hit points.**Create Spawn (Su)** A humanoid killed by a dread wraith rises after 1d4 rounds as a wraith under the dread wraith's control. Its body remains intact and inanimate, but its spirit is torn free from its corpse and transformed. It does not possess any of the abilities it had in life.**Daylight Powerlessness (Ex)** Dread wraiths are powerless in natural sunlight (not merely a *daylight* spell) and flee from it.**Lifestense (Su)** A dread wraith notices and locates living creatures within 60 feet, just as if it possessed the blindsight ability. It also senses the strength of their life force automatically, as if it had cast *deathwatch*.**Unnatural Aura (Su)** Animals, whether wild or domesticated, can sense the unnatural presence of a dread wraith at a distance of 30 feet. They will not willingly approach nearer than that, and they panic if forced to do so; they remain panicked as long as they are within that range.



# GUARDIANS OF STONE

## Encounter Level 15

### setup

Darcassan has ordered three constructs in this chamber—two stone golems and a battle horror—to attack anyone (except Darcassan himself) who enters without bypassing a trap.

The constructs stand inside alcoves behind secret doors. The golems are in the spaces marked G, and the battle horror is in the space marked B. All three of the constructs can see into the chamber beyond by means of peepholes in the secret doors.

The two squares marked T are location triggers for a trap that activates the secret doors in this room (see Features of the Area). If any character moves through one of these squares into the chamber before the trap is disabled, all the secret doors in the room come open at the same time, and the constructs attack with surprise.

If the characters disable or bypass the trap, the constructs remain in their hiding places until a character detects and attempts to open any one of the secret doors around the perimeter of the large chamber. When this occurs, roll initiative. The constructs must use move actions to open their doors before they can leave their hiding places or engage in combat.

As soon as the constructs reveal themselves, read:

*A number of stone panels slide open with barely a sound, revealing a trio of tall figures that march forth with bows raised.*

### tactics

If the constructs gained surprise, the two golems begin combat by firing their bows, and the battle horror casts *magic missile*. If the characters avoided the trap, the constructs begin combat by using melee attacks if they find themselves adjacent to intruders.

Thereafter, the golems use their slow power when they have a target in range. After that, they pound on anyone who comes within reach, and they use their slow power as often as they can. Otherwise, they pound on anyone within reach.

The battle horror prefers to remain in melee range and use its greatsword with the thundering special ability activated. It uses its air walk and spell-like abilities as needed to stay in the fight (it can use its *dimension door* ability as though wearing a *Windsong Towerkin ring*; see page 149).

The constructs fight until destroyed.

### development

Darcassan will be none too pleased with the PCs if they destroy the constructs, but can't really blame them for defending themselves.

## 2 ADVANCED STONE GOLEMS

CR 12

hp 129 each (18 HD); DR 10/adamantine

N Large construct

Init -1; Senses darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Listen +0, Spot +0

Languages accepts commands in Elven

AC 26, touch 8, flat-footed 26

Immune ability damage, ability drain, critical hits, death effects, death from massive damage, disease, energy drain, mind-affecting spells and abilities, necromancy effects, nonlethal damage, paralysis, poison, sleep, stunning, any effect that requires a Fortitude save unless it also works on objects; immunity to magic

Fort +6, Ref +5, Will +6

Weakness cannot heal damage, destroyed at 0 or fewer hp

Speed 20 ft. (4 squares)

Melee 2 slams +21 each (2d10+9)

Ranged +2 composite longbow +13/+8/+3 (2d6+7/x3)

Space 10 ft.; Reach 10 ft.

Base Atk +13; Grp +26

Special Actions slow

Abilities Str 29, Dex 9, Con —, Int —, Wis 11, Cha 1

SQ construct traits

Feats Martial Weapon Proficiency (longbow)<sup>B</sup>

Skills Hide -5

Possessions +2 composite longbow (+5 Str bonus) with 20 arrows

**Immunity to Magic (Ex)** An advanced stone golem is immune to any spell or spell-like ability that allows spell resistance. In addition, certain spells and effects function differently against the creature, as noted below.

A *transmute rock to mud* spell slows the golem (as the *slow* spell) for 2d6 rounds. A *stone to flesh* spell negates the golem's damage reduction and immunity to magic for 1 full round. The golem gets no saving throw against any of these effects.

A *transmute mud to rock* spell heals all the golem's lost hit points.

**Slow (Su)** As the *slow* spell; 1/2 rounds; range 10 ft.; duration 7 rounds; Will DC 19 negates; caster level 18th. Activating this ability is a free action.



**BATTLE HORROR<sup>LE</sup>****CR 12**

hp 130 (20 HD)

N Medium construct

**Init** +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, see invisibility; Listen +20, Spot +21**Languages** Elven**AC** 28, touch 15, flat-footed 26**Immune** ability damage, ability drain, critical hits, death effects, death from massive damage, disease, energy drain, mind-affecting spells and abilities, necromancy effects, nonlethal damage, paralysis, poison, sleep, stunning, any effect that requires a Fortitude save unless it also works on objects; spell immunities**Fort** +6, **Ref** +8, **Will** +11**Weakness** destroyed at 0 or fewer hp**Speed** 40 ft. (8 squares), fly (air walk) 40 ft. (good)**Melee** mwk greatsword +25/+20/+15 (2d6+12/17–20)**Ranged** +2 *composite longbow* +20/+15/+10 (1d8+10/x3)**Base Atk** +15; **Grp** +23**Special Actions** weapon power**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 7th):At will—*magic missile*3/day—*blink*1/day—*dimension door***Abilities** Str 26, Dex 16, Con —, Int 13, Wis 16, Cha 6**SQ** construct traits, rapid repair**Feats** Cleave, Great Fortitude, Improved Critical (greatsword), Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Toughness, Weapon Focus (greatsword)**Skills** Diplomacy +5, Listen +20, Search +18, Sense Motive +20, Spot +21, Survival +3 (+5 following tracks)**Possessions** masterwork greatsword, +2 *composite longbow* (+8 Str bonus) with 20 arrows**Spell Immunities (Ex)** Battle horrors are immune to *magic missile*, *fireball*, *lightning bolt*, and *disintegrate* spells.**Weapon Power** As a free action, a battle horror can imbue its greatsword with the thundering special ability. This is a function of the construct, not the weapon.**Rapid Repair** A battle-horror that rests for 1 full hour recovers 1 hit point, provided that it has at least 1 hit point remaining.**FEATURES OF THE AREA****Secret Door:** 4 in. thick; AC 3; hardness 16; hp 120; break DC 48 (locked), Search DC 30.**Heavy Weapon Rack:** 6 in. thick, 5 feet high; AC 6; hardness 10; hp 40; break DC 38.

Several of these racks occupy the center of the large chamber in this area. Anyone behind a weapon rack gains cover (+4 to AC, +2 on Reflex saves).

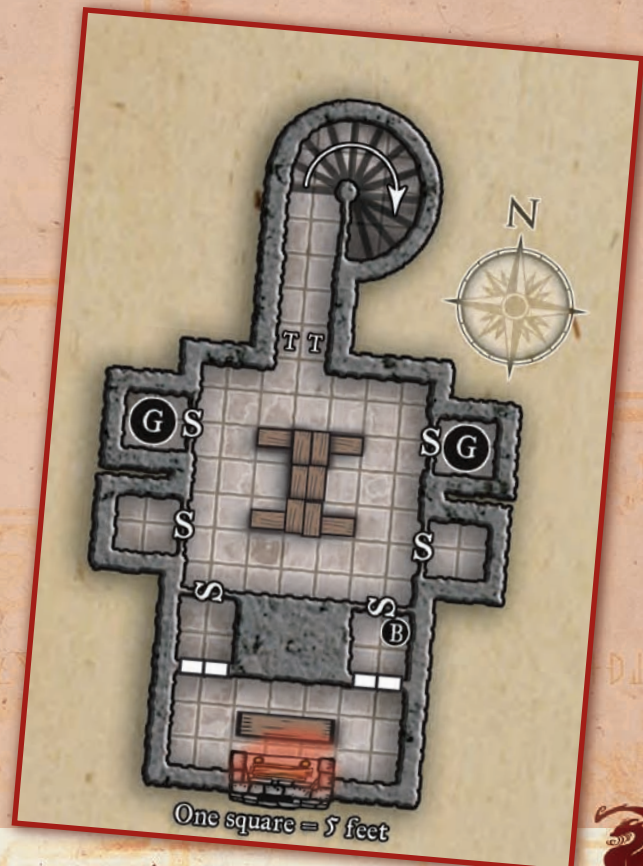
A character can push over a 5-foot section of weapon rack as a standard action with a successful DC 22 Strength check. Any creatures in the squares the weapon rack falls into are subject to 2d6 points of damage (Reflex DC 15 half) and 1d4 attacks by falling weapons. The attacks have a +4 attack bonus and deal 1d6 points of damage.

A fallen rack creates light rubble in the squares it covers.

Light rubble increases the DC of Balance and Tumble checks by 2, and it imposes a –2 penalty on Move Silently checks. A successful DC 10 Balance check is required to run or charge across light rubble. Failure means a character can still act but can't run or charge in this round.

**Door Trap:** CR 4; mechanical; location trigger; automatic reset; Search DC 20; Disable Device DC 20; Bypass hidden lock. *Market Price:* 22,800 gp.

This trap, when activated, opens all the secret doors immediately after the first character passes through either of the squares marked T, unless the trap has been disabled or the intruder has operated a hidden lock embedded in the corridor walls. Darcassan has the only key, but the PCs can operate the lock with a successful DC 30 Open Lock check; it takes a successful DC 20 Search check (separate from the check required to detect the trap) to locate the lock.





# THE WARRIOR ATTACKS

Encounter Level 16

## setup

This encounter occurs when the PCs first enter the Garden Chamber (area 27 on the Shadowsong Tree map); it immediately follows event 6 on page 16 if the PCs do not surrender to Darcassan the Warrior.

Once the PCs enter the school, Darcassan pays special attention to this chamber and keeps an eye out for other intrusions. When he notices anyone enter here, Darcassan sends his warrior shadow projection to confront the intruders.

Darcassan probably notices the PCs climbing the southern staircase. Place the PCs' miniatures on the stairs in their marching order; Darcassan the Warrior appears in the space marked W.

Darcassan has cast *haste*, *shield*, *stoneskin*, *spell turning*, and *Tenser's transformation* on himself, and *greater magic weapon* on both his greatsword and his bow.

Stealthy characters might enter the chamber and get a chance to explore a bit before Darcassan notices their presence. He notes any conversation between characters (thanks to his *clairaudience* ability) or any attempt to open a door or examine the furnishings (thanks to his *clairvoyance* ability). In this case, place the PCs wherever their actions have taken them. Darcassan the Warrior can appear anywhere in the room, so long as he has a clear path for charging a PC.

Depending on how his previous meetings with the PCs went (and what he has observed them doing inside the school), Darcassan might be openly hostile, or just wishing to test the PCs' mettle. In either case, he issues the group an ultimatum (as described in event 7, page 23).

## PREVIOUS COMPULSION?

If Darcassan managed to *dominate* anyone during a previous meeting, this is a good time to exert control over that character. Darcassan compels his subject to meet the warrior's challenge with fiery defiance. As soon as a fight begins, however, Darcassan orders the belligerent character to break away and flee out the south door. If not prevented from leaving, the character goes to area 30 in the Shadowsong Tree to meet with Darcassan; the warrior lets the fleeing character go and does his best to prevent anyone from interfering with the "escape."

If the PCs do not agree to surrender, read:

*The muscular elf grins broadly, showing a few broken teeth. "Very well!" he snarls. "Have at thee!"*

## tactics

Darcassan the Warrior's *Tenser's transformation* spell prevents him from casting any spells while the effect lasts. During this encounter, Darcassan is a fighting machine. When the battle begins, Darcassan charges his closest foe and attacks with his greatsword. He hacks away until the PCs begin to surround him. Once that happens, he uses his fly speed and hovers over the domed rock garden. He sheathes his greatsword and switches to his bow for a few rounds, peppering lightly armored foes. When the PCs manage to counterattack effectively, Darcassan switches back to melee attacks, charging whichever foe has given him the most trouble.

If the PCs manage to dispel or negate Darcassan's *Tenser's transformation* spell, he switches to a spell assault, loosing his offensive array, such as *ice storm* and *delayed blast fireball* (always careful to aim them so that the garden dome does not negate them).

If Darcassan finds he cannot prevent the characters from outmaneuvering him, he moves into area 32 and tries to lure the party into triggering the magic traps there.

## development

Darcassan watches this encounter closely. He pays special attention to the characters' reaction to the warrior's demand for surrender (and the warrior's veiled hint at their misdeeds). Darcassan knows that true-hearted people would at least consider submitting to a fair judgment—though he also understands that unfair accusations provoke an indignant response.



**DARCISSAN THE WARRIOR****CR 16**

hp 101 (15 HD) with *Tenser's transformation*; DR 10/adamantine with *stoneskin*

Male sun elf diviner 13/expert 2

CG Medium humanoid

**Init** +10; **Senses** low-light vision; Listen +17, Spot +17

**Languages** Chondathan, Common, Giant, Gnome, Elven, Sylvan; telepathy 60 ft.

**AC** 30, touch 19, flat-footed 30

**Miss Chance** 50% (shadow existence)

**Immune** magic sleep effects

**Fort** +13, **Ref** +12, **Will** +12 with *haste* and *Tenser's transformation*; +2 against enchantments

**Speed** 60 ft. (12 squares), fly 60 ft. (perfect) with *haste*

**Melee** +4 *longsword of warning* +23/+23/+18/+13 (1d8+8) with *haste*, *greater magic weapon*, and *Tenser's transformation*

**Ranged** +4 *longbow* +25/+25/+20/+15 (1d6+4) with *haste*, *greater magic weapon*, and *Tenser's transformation*

**Base Atk** +15 with *Tenser's transformation*; **Grp** +19 with *Tenser's transformation*

**Combat Gear** ring of counterspells (*feeblemind*)

**Wizard Spells Prepared** (CL 13th; 1d20+15 to overcome SR):

7th—*delayed blast fireball* (DC 23), *spell turning*†

6th—*greater dispelling*, *repulsion*, *Tenser's transformation*†, *true seeing*

5th—*Bigby's interposing hand*, *lesser ironguard*<sup>FR</sup>, *prying eyes*, *telekinesis* (DC 21, +12 ranged touch), *wall of force*

4th—*arcane eye*, *fire shield*, *ice storm*, *locate creature*, *stoneskin*†, *thunderlance* (see page 145) (+13/+5 melee)

3rd—*haste*†, *protection from energy* (3), *greater magic weapon*† (2)

2nd—*battering ram* (see page 142), *blur*, *daylight*, *detect thoughts* (DC 17), *invisibility*, *mirror image*, *see invisibility*

1st—*arrow mind* (see page 142), *endure elements*, *expeditious retreat*, *magic missile* (2), *obscuring mist*, *protection from evil*, *shield*†, *true strike*

0—*detect magic* (2), *ghost sound* (DC 15), *resistance*, *mage hand* (2)

† already cast

Prohibited school: necromancy

**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 15th):

At will—*clairaudience*, *clairvoyance*

**Abilities** Str 19, Dex 23, Con 19, Int 22, Wis 12, Cha 13 with *Tenser's transformation*

**Feats** Alertness, Heighten Spell<sup>B</sup>, Improved Initiative, Quicken Spell<sup>B</sup>, Scribe Scroll<sup>B</sup>, Skill Focus (Bluff), Skill Focus (Sense Motive), Spell Focus (illusion), Spell Penetration

**Skills** Bluff +8, Concentration +19, Craft (bookbinding) +10, Craft (metalworking) +10, Craft (stoneworking) +10, Decipher Script +18, Diplomacy +5, Hide +14, Knowledge (arcana) +19, Knowledge (history) +19, Listen +17, Profession (scribe) +13, Search +14, Sense Motive +10, Spellcraft +20, Spot +17

**Possessions** combat gear plus *amulet of natural armor* +1, *bracers of armor* +3, *ring of protection* +2, +1 *longsword of warning*<sup>Mag</sup> (+4 with *greater magic weapon*), masterwork longbow (+4 with *greater magic weapon*), 20 arrows, *gloves of Dexterity* +2, *headband of intellect* +2

**Shadow Existence (Su)** See page 15

**Skills** Darcassan has a +8 racial bonus on Listen, Search, Spot, and Hide checks thanks to his semimaterial nature. As an elf, he has a +2 racial bonus on Listen, Search, and Spot checks.

**FEATURES OF THE AREA**

**Dome of Force:** This field of force forms a low dome, 20 feet across and 5 feet high at the center. The effect somewhat resembles the violet layer of a *prismatic wall* spell, except as noted here. The dome is invisible. It has an overwhelming aura of abjuration magic, and a *see invisibility* or *true seeing* spell reveals it as a sparkling dome. It's impervious to antimagic, but a targeted *dispel magic* spell negates it for 1d4 rounds if the caster succeeds on a DC 31 caster level check.

Unattended objects striking the dome simply slide off. Creatures standing behind the dome gain a +4 cover bonus to Armor Class and a +2 cover bonus on Reflex saves.

Magical effects are negated if targeted at the dome or if their effects touch the dome; an area effect is negated if any portion of the area touches any part of the dome.

A creature that touches the dome is hurled into the extradimensional vortex around the school for 1d10 minutes, reappearing after this time in a space adjacent to the dome. A successful DC 22 Will save negates this occurrence.

The surface is nearly frictionless; creatures who step onto the dome and are not hurled into the vortex must make DC 22 Balance checks to move. If a character's check fails, the character must stop moving for the turn; if the check fails by 5 or more, the character falls down. A character who is unaware of the dome's presence and accidentally steps on the dome takes a -5 penalty on the check. Characters moving over the dome need not make new Will saves while they remain on it, but they must attempt new saves if they leave the dome and return later.

**Furnishings:** It costs 2 squares of movement to enter a space containing furnishings (Darcassan ignores the increased movement cost). Characters standing in a space with furniture gain a +2 cover bonus to Armor Class and a +1 cover bonus on Reflex saves. Characters sitting or kneeling in a space with furniture gain a +4 cover bonus to Armor Class and +2 cover bonus on Reflex saves.





# GUARDIANS OF THE VAULT

Encounter Level 14

## setup

Run this encounter if negotiations between the PCs and the eladrins in area 31 break down.

When the PCs open the double doors and enter the treasury, read:

*The chamber beyond the double door has walls lined with dozens of metal doors. There's also a sturdy table with several straight-backed chairs. Rows of metal drawers and inset metal cabinets line the walls. A quartet of elves with iridescent eyes stand in various spots around the table.*

If the eladrins have any time to prepare, the PCs see several spinning whirlwinds and a female elf the size of an ogre; see the Tactics section.

## tactics

If the ghaele has time to prepare for a battle, it casts *righteous might* and *greater invisibility* in addition to *shield of faith* and *see invisibility*.

*Shield of faith* gives the ghaele a +4 deflection bonus to AC. In globe form, its AC is unchanged.

*Righteous might* makes its size Large when in humanoid form, with the following new statistics: Str 33; AC 31, touch 13, flat-footed 31; Melee +4 *holy greatsword* +24/+19 (2d6+20/19–20); Space 10 ft., Reach 10 ft.

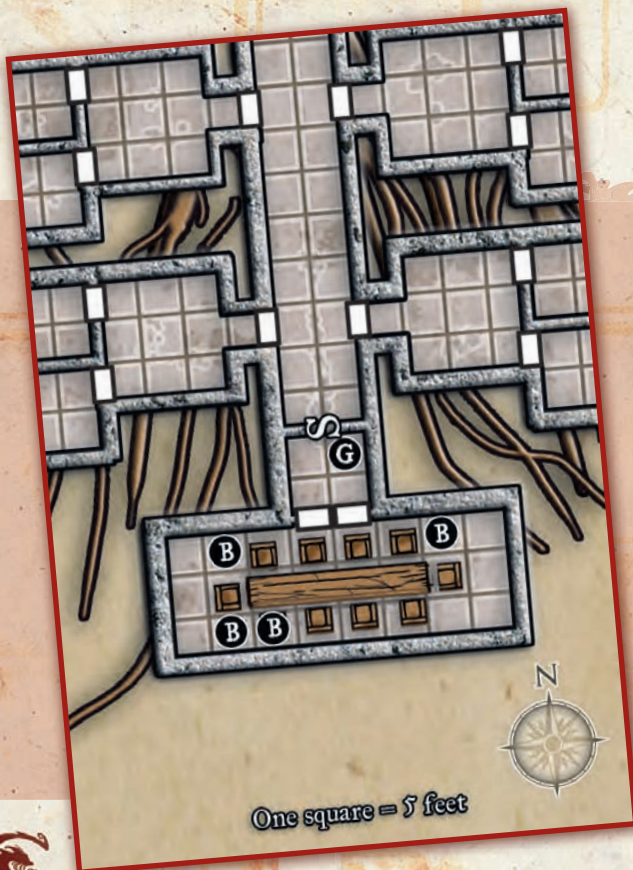
Once a fight begins, the ghaele attacks in its humanoid form, though it uses spells such as *chaos hammer* and *chain lightning*, cast defensively whenever it has the chance. It uses its healing spells (also cast defensively) as needed to keep itself in the fight.

The bralanis assume whirlwind form and use their whirlwind blast ability, aiming so as to avoid the ghaele. If one or more of them find that impossible, those individuals assume humanoid form and use their bows.

The eladrins fight to the death; however, if one eladrin falls, one of the survivors (usually a bralani) tries to go to area 30 to tell Darcassan about the attack.

## development

If the PCs defeat the eladrins, they can loot the vault. This act would displease Darcassan greatly, and he is likely to refuse any alliance with the PCs unless the group returns the stolen treasure and offers some kind of restitution for the damage. If the eladrins summon Darcassan, he does his best to calm the PCs and defuse the situation.



## FEATURES OF THE AREA

**Table:** 2 in. thick; AC 3; hardness 5; hp 20; break DC 19.

**Treasure Niches:** The walls of the vault are lined with a double row of small locked doors, thirty-two in total, each about 3 feet square and made of iron. (These doors are not depicted on the map.) They open to reveal niches 3 feet square and 5 feet deep. Collectively, these niches contain all the treasure described on page 25, although most of them are empty.

**Vault Door:** 4 in. thick; AC 6; hardness 20; hp 120; break DC 45, Open Lock DC 25.



**4 ADVANCED BRALANIS****CR 7****hp** 85 (10 HD); **DR** 10/cold iron or evil

CG Medium outsider (chaotic, extraplanar, good)

**Init** +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Listen +17, Spot +17**Languages** Celestial, Draconic, Infernal; *tongues* (CL 14th)**AC** 19, touch 13, flat-footed 16**Immune** electricity, petrification**Resist** cold 10, fire 10; **SR** 17**Fort** +11, **Ref** +12, **Will** +9**Speed** 40 ft. (8 squares), fly 100 ft. (perfect)**Melee** +1 *holy scimitar* +15/+10 (1d6+7/18–20)**Ranged** +1 *holy composite longbow* +14/+9 (1d8+1/x3)**Base Atk** +10; **Grp** +14**Atk Options** Blind-Fight**Special Actions** alternate form, whirlwind blast**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 6th):At will—*blur*, *charm person* (DC 14), *gust of wind* (DC 15), *mirror image*, *wind wall*2/day—*lightning bolt* (DC 16), *cure serious wounds* (DC 16)**Abilities** Str 18, Dex 16, Con 19, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 14**Feats** Alertness, Blind-Fight, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes**Skills** Balance +5, Concentration +15, Diplomacy +4, Escape Artist +13, Handle Animal +12, Hide +13, Jump +16, Listen +17, Move Silently +13, Ride +15, Sense Motive +12, Spot +17, Tumble +15**Possessions** +1 *holy scimitar*, +1 *holy composite longbow* (+4 Str bonus) with 20 arrows**Alternate Form (Su)** A bralani can shift between its humanoid and whirlwind forms as a standard action at will. This ability functions as a *polymorph* spell cast on itself (CL 6th), except that a bralani does not regain hit points for changing form and can assume only the form of a whirlwind. In humanoid form, it cannot fly or use its whirlwind blast, but it can use its spell-like abilities and its weapons. In whirlwind form, it can fly, make slam attacks and whirlwind blast attacks, and use spell-like abilities. A bralani remains in one form until it chooses to assume a new one. A change in form cannot be dispelled, nor does the bralani revert to any particular form when killed. A *true seeing* spell reveals both forms simultaneously.**Whirlwind Blast (Su)** When in whirlwind form, a bralani can attack with a scouring blast of wind, dealing 3d6 points of damage in a 20-foot line (Reflex DC 19 half).1/day—*chain lightning* (DC 20), *prismatic spray* (DC 21), *wall of force***Abilities** Str 25, Dex 10, Con 15, Int 16, Wis 17, Cha 18**Feats** Combat Expertise, Improved Disarm, Improved Initiative, Improved Trip**Skills** Concentration +15, Diplomacy +6, Escape Artist +13, Handle Animal +17, Hide +13, Knowledge (history) +16, Knowledge (religion) +16, Listen +16, Move Silently +13, Ride +15, Sense Motive +16, Spot +16**Possessions** +4 *holy greatsword***Alternate Form (Su)** A ghaele can shift between its humanoid and globe forms as a standard action at will. This ability functions as a *polymorph* spell cast on itself (CL 10th), except that a ghaele does not regain hit points for changing form and can only assume the form of a globe. In humanoid form, it cannot fly or use its light rays, but it can use its gaze attack and spell-like abilities, make physical attacks, and cast spells. In globe form, it can fly, use its light rays, and use its spell-like abilities, but it cannot cast spells or use its gaze attack. The globe form is incorporeal, and the ghaele has no Strength score while in that form. A ghaele remains in one form until it chooses to assume a new one. A change in form cannot be dispelled, nor does the ghaele revert to any particular form when killed. A *true seeing* spell reveals both forms simultaneously.**Gaze (Su)** Slay evil creatures of 5 or fewer HD, range 60 feet, Will DC 19. Success means the creature is affected as though by a *fear* spell for 2d10 rounds.**Light Ray (Ex)** Range 300 feet. This attack overcomes damage reduction of any type.**Protective Aura (Su)** Against attacks made or effects created by evil creatures, this ability provides a +4 deflection bonus to AC and a +4 resistance bonus on saving throws to anyone within 20 feet of the ghaele. Otherwise, it functions as a *magic circle against evil* effect and a *lesser globe of invulnerability*, both with a radius of 20 feet and CL 10th. (The defensive benefits from the circle are not included in the statistics block.)**GHAELE****CR 13****hp** 65 (10 HD); **DR** 10/cold iron and evil

CG Medium outsider (chaotic, extraplanar, good)

**Init** +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Listen +16, Spot +16**Aura** protective 20 ft.**Languages** Celestial, Draconic, Infernal; *tongues* (CL 14th)**AC** 24, touch 10, flat-footed 24**Immune** electricity, petrification**Resist** cold 10, fire 10; **SR** 28**Fort** +9, **Ref** +7, **Will** +10**Speed** 50 ft. (10 squares), fly 150 ft. (perfect)**Melee** +4 *holy greatsword* +21/+16 (2d6+14/19–20)**Ranged** 2 light rays +10 touch each (2d12)**Base Atk** +10; **Grp** +17**Atk Options** Improved Disarm, Improved Trip**Special Actions** alternate form, gaze**Cleric Spells Prepared** (CL 14th; save DC 13 + spell level):7th—*regenerate*, *resurrection*, *word of chaos*<sup>D</sup> (DC 20, CL 15th)6th—*chain lightning*<sup>D</sup> (DC 19), *heal* (2), *heroes' feast*5th—*dispel evil* (+17 melee, DC 18), *dispel law*<sup>D</sup> (+17 melee, DC 18, CL 15th), *healing circle*, *righteous might*4th—*chaos hammer*<sup>D</sup> (DC 17, CL 15th), *cure critical wounds* (2, DC 17), *freedom of movement*, *neutralize poison*3rd—*cure serious wounds* (2, DC 16), *daylight*, *invisibility purge*, *magic circle against law*<sup>D</sup> (CL 15th), *prayer*2nd—*consecrate*, *cure moderate wounds* (2, DC 15), *shatter*<sup>D</sup>, *silence*, *spiritual weapon* (2, +17 melee, +10 ranged)1st—*bless* (2), *cure light wounds* (2, DC 14), *divine favor*, *protection from law*<sup>D</sup> (CL 15th), *shield of faith*0—*cure minor wounds* (2, DC 13), *guidance* (2), *mending*, *read magic*

D: Domain spell. Deity: None. Domains: Air, Chaos.

**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 12th):At will—*aid*, *charm monster* (DC 18), *color spray* (DC 15), *comprehend languages*, *continual flame*, *cure light wounds* (DC 15), *dancing lights*, *detect evil*, *detect thoughts* (DC 16), *disguise self*, *dispel magic*, *hold monster* (DC 19), *greater invisibility* (self only), *major image* (DC 17), *see invisibility*, *greater teleport* (self plus 50 pounds of objects only)



# JUST A DRILL

## Encounter Level 12

### setup

These encounters occur when the characters trigger the magic traps in the Shadowsong Tree's practice rooms (area 32).

The trap in the western room produces two fiendish dire tigers, which appear in the northern end of the chamber. The eastern trap produces three celestial dire bears, one of which appears in each end of the room. The third one appears adjacent to the character who first enters the room. Place the PCs in whatever order they are in when one of them triggers the trap.

Only one map is presented for this encounter, showing the western room. For the eastern room, use a mirror image of the map provided. (Refer to the full map of the Shadowsong Tree on page 26 for details.)

When someone triggers a trap, read:

*The placid jungle scene abruptly turns menacing when shaggy beasts with dripping fangs and daggerlike claws come loping out of the brush.*

### tactics

If the characters encounter the dire tigers, one of the creatures moves toward the closest PC, charging if possible. The other creature tries to skirt the group and attack the party's flanks. Each tiger uses its smite good ability with its initial attack. The tigers do not hesitate to leap onto the room's fallen pillars to gain a height advantage in melee or avoid the rubble.

If the characters encounter the dire bears, they can avoid combat by simply not attacking the celestial creatures. However, the bears fight back if forced to defend themselves. They attempt to grapple whenever possible. All three of the bears use their smite evil ability against the first character who attacked any one of them, since they interpret that attack as an evil act.

### warrior maneuver

As noted previously, Darcassan the Warrior might attempt to lure the PCs here. He moves directly through the door and uses a password to bypass the trap, but not until he has passed completely through the door—he doesn't want the PCs to hear the password.

Once inside, he flies to the ceiling, near the room's center, and awaits the PCs' arrival. When the PCs enter the chamber, Darcassan remains in the air and fires his bow, while the PCs deal with his summoned monsters. If the PCs follow him into the air, Darcassan moves toward the floor and tries to position himself so that the PCs must come within reach of a monster to attack him.

## development

The dire animals vanish when slain, in the manner of summoned creatures. The traps in this area reset after 5 minutes, possibly subjecting the PCs to a new set of adversaries.

### 2 FIENDISH DIRE TIGERS

CR 10

hp 120 (16 HD); DR 10/magic

CE Large magical beast (augmented animal, extraplanar)

Init +2; Senses darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent;

Listen +6, Spot +7

Languages —

AC 17, touch 11, flat-footed 15

Resist cold 10, fire 10; SR 21

Fort +13, Ref +12, Will +6

Speed 40 ft. (8 squares); Run

Melee 2 claws +20 each (2d4+8) and bite +14 (2d6+4)

Space 10 ft.; Reach 5 ft.

Base Atk +12; Grp +24

Atk Options improved grab, pounce, rake 2d4+4, smite good 1/day (+16 damage)

Abilities Str 27, Dex 15, Con 17, Int 3, Wis 12, Cha 10

Feats Alertness, Improved Natural Attack (bite), Improved Natural Attack (claw), Run, Stealthy, Weapon Focus (claw)

Skills Hide +7 (+11 in tall grass or heavy undergrowth), Jump +16, Listen +6, Move Silently +11, Spot +7, Swim +10

**Improved Grab (Ex)** To use this ability, a fiendish dire tiger must hit an opponent of any size with a bite attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking attacks of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and can rake.

**Pounce (Ex)** If a fiendish dire tiger charges a foe, it can make a full attack, including two rake attacks.

**Rake (Ex)** Attack bonus +20 melee, damage 2d4+4.

**Smite Good (Su)** Once per day, a fiendish dire tiger can make a normal melee attack to deal +16 points of extra damage to a good foe.

**Skills** A fiendish dire tiger has a +4 racial bonus on Hide and Move Silently checks. \*In areas of tall grass or heavy undergrowth, the Hide bonus improves to +8.



**3 CELESTIAL DIRE BEARS****CR 9****hp** 105 each (12 HD); **DR** 10/magic**LG** Large magical beast (augmented animal, extraplanar)**Init** +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent; Listen +10, Spot +10**Languages** —**AC** 17, touch 10, flat-footed 16**Resist** acid 10, cold 10, electricity 10; **SR** 17**Fort** +12, **Ref** +9, **Will** +9**Speed** 40 ft. (8 squares); Run**Melee** 2 claws +19 each (2d4+10) and bite +13 (2d8+5)**Space** 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.**Base Atk** +9; **Grp** +23**Atk Options** improved grab, smite evil 1/day (+12 damage)**Abilities** Str 31, Dex 13, Con 19, Int 3, Wis 12, Cha 10**Feats** Alertness, Endurance, Run, Toughness, Weapon Focus (claw)**Skills** Listen +10, Spot +10, Swim +13**Improved Grab (Ex)** To use this ability, a dire bear must hit with a claw attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking attacks of opportunity.**FEATURES OF THE AREA**

**Floors:** Loose but evenly cut flagstones cover the floors. A successful DC 10 Balance check is required to run or charge across the surface; failure means a character can't move in this round.

**Dense Rubble:** It costs 2 squares of movement to enter a square with dense rubble, and they add 5 to the DC of Balance and Tumble checks, and impose a –5 penalty on Move Silently checks. Running or charging is impossible through dense rubble.

**Fallen Pillars:** These objects form a rugged surface some 8 feet above the loose flagstones and debris on the floor. Though rough, a pillar's top is smoother than the floor or the piles of debris on it.

A successful DC 10 Balance check is required to run or charge across a pillar. Failure means a character can still act, but can't run or charge in this round.

Because the pillars are only 3 feet wide, creatures larger than Medium must make a successful DC 12 Balance check each round to move along the pillar. Failure by 4 or less means the creature cannot move in this round. Failure by 5 or more means the creature falls from the pillar and takes 1d6 points of damage.

The pillar has a Climb DC of 15.

It's possible to use a move action to jump up on a pillar. To determine the DC for the high jump, subtract half the jumper's height (or half the body length of long creatures) from the pillar's 8-foot height and refer to the high jump table in the Jump skill description. If your result falls between two entries on the table, round up to the higher DC. For example, a 6-foot character would need to make a 5-foot high jump ( $1/2$  of 6 = 3,  $8 - 3 = 5$ ), which has a Jump DC of 20. (The Jump DC for the fiendish dire tigers is 12.)

If anyone performs any violent maneuvers on a pillar such as engaging in melee with another creature, there is a 25% chance each round the pillar will roll 5 feet to the right or left (equal chance for either, though if the pillar already lies against a wall it can only roll away from the wall). Creatures atop the pillar must make DC 18 Reflex saves or be thrown off, taking 1d6 points of falling damage. Creatures in the pillar's path must make DC 20 Reflex saves or be caught under the pillar, taking 8d8 points of damage and becoming pinned under it. Thanks to all the loose material on the floor, a trapped creature can scramble free with a full-round action and a successful DC 20 Strength check. Allies can pull a trapped creature free, also with a successful DC 20 Strength check.

**Illusory Surfaces:** The walls and ceilings in these rooms are masked with an illusion that looks and feels like jungle foliage. Anyone who moves up to a ceiling or wall with the intention of continuing to move gets a DC 22 Will save to disbelieve the illusion. If the save fails, the character

perceives that he or she has succeeded in entering the foliage, thereby gaining concealment from being in heavy undergrowth (*DMG 87*). In actuality, the character is still located in the space next to the wall or ceiling, not concealed at all. A character who tries to push farther into the foliage gains a new saving throw with a +4 circumstance bonus and can attempt a new saving throw in each round he tries.

**Warded Spells:** As a special condition of the school's *mythal*, *protection from evil* and *magic circle against evil* spells are suppressed inside these rooms unless the character benefiting from the spell wears a *Windsong Towerkin ring*. The staff did not wish to allow students to avoid the dangers here with such simple warding spells.





# BATTLE IN THE AERIE

## Encounter Level 16

### setup

This encounter occurs when the PCs attempt to enter any part of Windsong Aerie.

The aerie is the one place through which anyone can enter the school, and Darcassan keeps a careful watch over it, at least until he must deal with an intrusion elsewhere. When he notices anyone poking around the aerie, Darcassan sends his Guardian shadow projection to deal with the interlopers.

Place the PCs in whatever order seems appropriate for the method they used to enter the aerie (see Getting In on page 11 for an overview of the options).

Darcassan the Guardian arrives at the upper end of the stairwell in area 41 (the space marked D). Darcassan has *fire shield* (cold flames), *shield*, *spell turning*, and *true seeing* spells cast on himself. He has cast *greater magic weapon* on his sword and bow. After his arrival, Darcassan casts *Mordenkainen's faithful hound* to stand guard at the top of the stairs and seals off the entrance to the library that leads to area 43a with a *wall of force* before moving to deal with the party.

Depending on how the PCs react to Darcassan's arrival, this tactical encounter might play out anywhere in the aerie (see the map on page 26). The map provided with this encounter depicts the upper level of the complex, which is the part Darcassan is most concerned about protecting.

If this is the first time the PCs have met Darcassan, he suspects they're either Shadovar agents out to loot the school or perhaps merely curious souls who have come to explore.

If Darcassan has met the group before, he probably doubts the group is associated with the Shadovars. Nevertheless, he's unwilling to allow the group access to the libraries on the top floor (areas 42 and 43), and he wishes to discourage them from poking around the school any further. In either case, he tries to drive them from the aerie by force or by persuasion.

If this is the first time Darcassan has met the PCs, read the following when he arrives:

*A careworn elf with an ascetic face, a long chin, and dark golden hair appears without warning, gliding through solid objects as though they are mere shadows. Emerald flames play over his body. When he speaks, you hear his commanding voice inside your head. "This building is unsafe and no place for casual visitors. Leave, while you still can."*

If this is the not the first time Darcassan has met the PCs, read the following when he arrives:

*A thin, humanoid figure wrapped in green flame appears from nowhere, as though he'd stepped out of the very walls—and perhaps he has. The newcomer appears to be a familiar looking elf with a long chin, and dark golden hair. His voice rings clear inside your heads. "I hope you've enjoyed your tour of the school, but it's time to turn around and explore somewhere else."*

### Tactics

If Darcassan hasn't met the PCs before, he uses this encounter to assess their intentions. He casts *detect thoughts* at his first opportunity and tries to keep the party talking for as long as he can. See page 23 for some suggestions about Darcassan's banter.

If Darcassan and the PCs have met before, he uses this meeting to test their capabilities further.

In any case, Darcassan doesn't want the PCs poking around in the aerie's top floor, at least not until he has accepted them as allies.

When he's ready to fight, Darcassan casts *confusion*, targeting as many armored characters as possible. After that, he casts *web* on as many characters as he can. Next, Darcassan casts his heightened *shadow spray* spell on any characters who have eluded his first two efforts.

If all the foregoing isn't enough to discourage the PCs, Darcassan uses *Bigby's forceful hand* to try to push a PC out of the aerie (through either a hole in the floor or gap in the wall) and *summon swarm* on another character who has proven troublesome. After that, he begins using his damaging spells.

Throughout the battle, Darcassan tries to stay concealed in areas filled with foliage, or just keeps half his body in the walls.

Darcassan keeps up his assault until he runs out of spells, is reduced to 20 hit points or fewer, or until the party leaves the school. When he senses the encounter drawing to a close, he chooses one character who isn't likely to have an effective Will save and casts *dominate person* on that individual. If this spell succeeds, Darcassan doesn't do anything immediately; see the Development section. After casting *dominate person*, Darcassan returns to his construct body.

### development

After the fighting ends, Darcassan ponders what he has learned about the PCs. After this encounter, Darcassan is fairly certain the PCs aren't associated with the Shadovars, but he might not yet be ready to recruit them to recover the Quess Ar Teranthvar. If he has met the group before, he might be ready to strike a deal; see page 17.

If Darcassan managed to *dominate* anyone, he bides his time. When he can, Darcassan compels his victim to make his way alone to his sitting room (area 30) for a long chat.



**DARCISSAN THE GUARDIAN****CR 16**

hp 71 (15 HD)

Male sun elf diviner 13/expert 2

CG Medium humanoid

**Init** +7; **Senses** low-light vision; Listen +13, Spot +13**Languages** Chondathan, Common, Giant, Gnome, Elven, Sylvan; telepathy 60 ft.**AC** 24, touch 16, flat-footed 24**Miss Chance** 50% (shadow existence)**Immune** magic sleep effects**Fort** +6, **Ref** +7, **Will** +16; +2 against enchantments**Speed** 30 ft. (6 squares), fly 30 ft. (perfect)**Melee** +4 *longsword of warning* +11/+6 (1d8+4) with *greater magic weapon***Ranged** +4 *longbow* +14/+9 (1d6+4) with *greater magic weapon***Base Atk** +7; **Grp** +7**Combat Gear** *ring of counterspells (feeblemind)***Wizard Spells Prepared** (CL 13th; 1d20+15 to overcome SR):7th—*prismatic spray* (DC 23), *spell turning*†6th—*Bigby's forceful hand*, maximized *fireball* (DC 19), *greater dispel magic*, *true seeing*† (2)5th—*cone of cold* (DC 21), *dominate person* (DC 21), *Mordenkainen's faithful hound*†, *wall of force*† (2)4th—*confusion* (DC 20), *fire shield*†, maximized *magic missile* (3), *wall of ice* (DC 20)3rd—*greater magic weapon*†† (2), *reverse arrows* (see page 143), heightened *shadow spray*<sup>FR</sup> (DC 20), *suggestion* (2, DC 19)2nd—*darkvision*, *detect thoughts*, *Melf's acid arrow* (2, +10 ranged touch), *resist energy*, *summon swarm*, *web* (DC 18)1st—*burning hands* (DC 17), *arrow mind* (see page 142), *protection from evil*, *protection from law*, *scatterspray*<sup>FR</sup> (DC 17), *shield*†, *true strike*0—*detect magic* (2), *mage hand*, *resistance* (2)

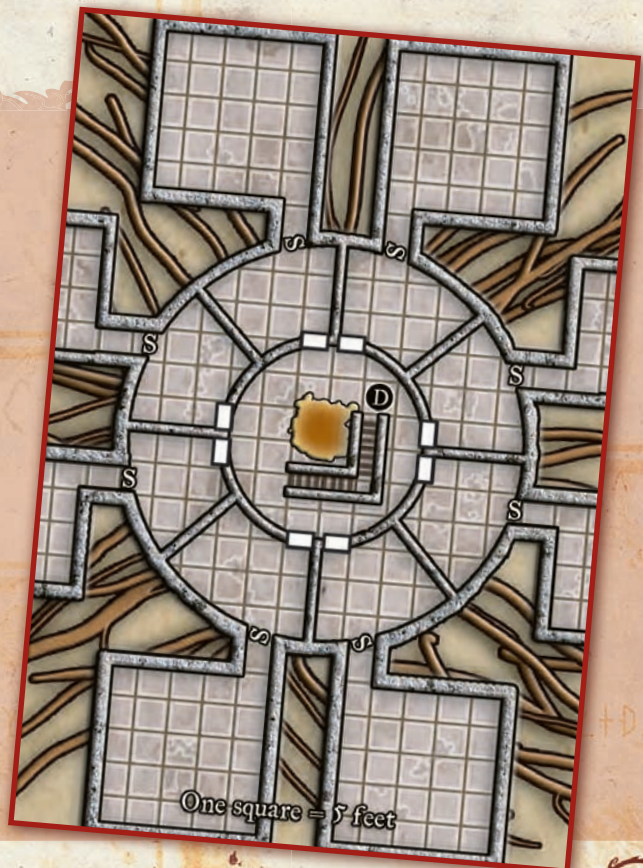
† already cast

Prohibited school: necromancy

**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 15th):At will—*clairaudience*, *clairvoyance***Abilities** Str 10, Dex 16, Con 15, Int 22, Wis 20, Cha 17**Feats** Alertness, Heighten Spell<sup>B</sup>, Improved Initiative, Quicken Spell<sup>B</sup>, Scribe Scroll<sup>B</sup>, Skill Focus (Bluff), Skill Focus (Sense Motive), Spell Focus (illusion), Spell Penetration**Skills** Bluff +10, Concentration +15, Craft (bookbinding) +10, Craft (metalworking) +10, Craft (stoneworking) +10, Decipher Script +18, Diplomacy +7, Hide +13, Knowledge (arcana) +19, Knowledge (history) +19, Listen +19, Profession (scribe) +15, Search +14, Sense Motive +10, Spellcraft +20, Spot +19**Possessions** combat gear plus *amulet of natural armor* +1, *bracers of armor* +3, *ring of protection* +2, +1 *longsword of warning*<sup>MAB</sup> (+4 with *greater magic weapon*), *masterwork longbow* (+4 with *greater magic weapon*), 20 arrows, *gloves of Dexterity* +2, *headband of intellect* +2**Shadow Existence (Su)** See page 15**Skills** Darcissan has a +8 racial bonus on Listen, Search, Spot, and Hide checks thanks to his semimaterial nature. As an elf, he has a +2 racial bonus on Listen, Search, and Spot checks.**FEATURES OF THE AREA**

**Floors:** The aerie has wooden floors. On the two lowest levels, the floors are slick, creaky, and littered with twigs and leaves. Balance, Move Silently, and Tumble checks take a –5 penalty. Running or charging requires a successful DC 12 Balance check (and the penalty applies). If the check fails, the character must stop moving for the turn; if the check fails by 5 or more, the character falls down.

**Light:** During daylight hours, the aerie is fairly well lit. From 1 hour before dusk until 1 hour after dawn, the interior is utterly dark. Creatures that do not have darkvision are effectively blinded. In addition to the obvious effects, a blinded creature has a 50% miss chance in combat (all opponents have total concealment), loses any Dexterity bonus to AC, takes a –2 penalty to AC, moves at half speed, and takes a –4 penalty on Search checks and most Strength- or Dexterity-based skill checks.





# THE CRYPT OF AUGATHRA THE MAD

**D**eep in the Stonelands, where the sands of the great desert wash against the base of the broken hills, lie the hidden remains of one of the many wonders of Netheril, a ruin known to legend as the Crypt of Augathra the Mad.

After countless lifetimes of serving as a living conduit for times yet to come and suffering the taint of the Black Chronology woven between the years by the primordial mistress of darkness, Shar, Augathra “The Lost Sage” sought to finally end her cursed existence. Driven to madness by the contents of the Black Chronology, she discovered that simply ending her life through suicide would not liberate her from this burden, because each such attempt failed spectacularly. Clearly she was born to carry this curse—perhaps for eternity. Instead, she decided to completely reinvent her existence, and looked to the enigmatic sharns for such a solution. To this end she followed many dark roads and threads of lost knowledge to learn of these beings that had for so long battled the phaerimms beneath the Great Desert.

Her search led her to rediscover a city she had known of long ago, a fallen outpost of ancient Netheril: the city of Synod. Once an ecclesiastical enclave ruled by an archwizard with a religious bent, many of Netheril’s finest cathedrals and temples rested on the sculpted slopes of this floating city. At the fall of Netheril, the enclave was thought to be out over the Sea of Fallen Stars so the archwizard could conduct certain weather-related nautical experiments in his laboratory. When the cities fell, Synod was believed to have been lost somewhere in the unfathomable depths. However, fierce storms over the sea had caused Synod to

head back toward Netheril early; because of this, it was above what are now the Stonelands when came Karsus’s Folly.

Thus, Synod fell into the broken lands that were later swept over by the dunes of the ever-expanding Great Desert and so was lost to history.

While tracing the extent of the Sharn Wall—the magic barrier erected by the sharns to entrap the phaerimms within the bounds of Anauroch—to better understand the hoped-for saviors from her plight, Augathra came upon a strange anomaly, a place where the wall had thinned and bulged without losing its integrity. This herniation encompassed a fractured, but otherwise nondescript, hill at the edge of the Stonelands, one of many such jagged terrain features in the area. However, upon daring to cross over the Sharn Wall into the phaerimm-controlled lands, Augathra discovered that the hill was actually the buried ruin of the fallen enclave of Synod, lost from all knowledge these many centuries. Locating a means of entry, she also discovered that the source of the bulge in the Sharn Wall was an interaction between its powerful magic and the damaged but still extant *mythallar* at the heart of the enclave. Seeing a unique opportunity to tap into the combined power of the sharns and the *mythallar* in this lost enclave, Augathra disappeared into the depths of Synod to conduct her experiments, and never emerged again.

Though the location of her disappearance was never known, the legend of the Lost Sage’s supposed death spread far and wide, and told of an unknown subterranean complex called the Crypt of Augathra the Mad where she rests for all time.

In 684 DR, Shar Cormrael, seeking the legendary crypt, managed to retrace the last journey of Augathra the Mad from lore held at Windsong Tower, and located her hidden lair. Unfortunately for her, during her quest she had foolishly crossed the Sharn Wall and had unknowingly picked up a trailing phaerimm, curious to see what this lone traveler sought within its territory. When Shar Cormrael entered the broken city and began to explore, Augathra



had just reached the culmination of her many years of research into becoming a sharn and, tapping into the damaged *mythallar*'s magic to augment her powers, had begun her complex incantation. The arrival of Shar Cormrael in the chamber at that moment, followed by the surprise attack of the trailing phaerimm, interrupted the complex ritual and caused a powerful magical backlash, creating a sharn as Augathra had intended—but incorporating into the tripartite creature the competing personalities of Augathra the Mad, Shar Cormrael, and the phaerimm Xeris. In addition, the newly created sharn was captured in the backlash and became bound to the damaged *mythallar*.

The powerful surge of magic issuing from the hidden hill attracted the attention of other phaerimms that soon discovered the hidden city and a hated sharn captive at its heart. A hive of phaerimms occupied the enclave and began using their magic to torture and interrogate the captive for information about its kind—information of which this newly created sharn was hopelessly ignorant. Assuming the strangely bound sharn to be resisting their methods, the phaerimms have spent the last several hundred years perfecting their techniques in hopes of gleaning from the sharn the means to finally escaping the Sharn Wall.

This state of affairs has recently changed with the discovery of the lost city of Synod by Hadrhune, personal agent and emissary to Most High Telamont, the High Prince of Shade. Ever ambitious and driven, Hadrhune continually seeks a means of advancement within the City of Shade. By diverting some of the city's resources to his own personal schemes, he sends agents outside the bounds of Anauroch to learn any new ways of magic in the world and organizes expeditions within Anauroch to locate and uncover lost Netherese ruins that might hold magical secrets—secrets he can keep for himself and use to his advantage.

One such expedition located the ruins of Synod and the strange, twisted *mythallar* within. Seeing the potential gain from such a device, Hadrhune elected to negotiate with the hive of phaerimms that inhabited the ruins rather than expend the resources and attract the attention that eradicating the hive would necessitate. The phaerimms, already in a precarious position due to the reversals in their recent war, were only too willing to oblige. To this end Hadrhune reached an accord with Drullister, the leader of the phaerimm hive. In exchange for access to the damaged *mythallar*, to which he hoped to introduce the Shadow Weave and create a powerful and unique artifact, he agreed to teach Drullister the ways of the Shadow Weave.

By this agreement, Hadrhune hopes to secure for himself greater prominence within Shade and favor with Telamont, as well as some unknown allies among the enemies of the Shadovars that could prove advantageous someday. Drullister meanwhile also gains an alliance with a powerful force among the Shadovars and a distinct advantage over his fellow phaerimms that are so badly hampered by the effects of the dead magic zone over Anauroch. In addition, if his alliance and promised use of the *mythallar* can finally bring down the Sharn Wall in its entirety, he will truly gain a place of authority among his comrades.

Both sides of the agreement intend to keep the arrangement secret—Drullister so no other phaerimms can move in and steal his prize, and Hadrhune so that one of the all-powerful princes of Shade does not usurp his project and reap its rewards. To hide his activities, Hadrhune has deployed a squad of krinith warriors (officially lost to a desert storm, according to Shadovar records) and sent a special faceless, nameless *simulacrum* of himself to lead the project.

## getting to the stonelands

Through conversation with Darcassan (see page 17), the characters learned that their next stop on this quest is in the Stonelands, an area of hills and low mountains that runs along the southeastern edge of Anauroch. How long it takes them to make this journey from Myth Drannor is not of critical importance, although it is assumed they make good speed by whatever means of travel are at their disposal.

The poster map of Faerûn in the *FORGOTTEN REALMS Campaign Setting* shows the relationship of the two locales. If the PCs are using overland travel, the most expeditious route is southwest along the Moonsea Ride. This path takes them through the small town of Ashabenford (*FR* 133),

where they can replenish provisions if needed.

Along the way, they will come across—or close to—the place that used to be the city of Tilverton (*FR* 113). Unless you want to throw an additional complication at the characters, simply allow them to circumvent this site by following the track that leads around the site. This same path will eventually take them into the foothills of the Stonelands on the eastern edge of that area.

In order to keep things moving, it's best to minimize or eliminate random encounters for the PCs during this trek—they'll have plenty to do once they enter the Stonelands and start searching for the crypt.



## The stonelands

The PCs' journey brings them into the desolate Stonelands on the southeastern fringe of the great desert of Anauroch. The Stonelands is a rugged area of broken hills, steep gullies, deep ravines, craggy cliffs, and strange stone monoliths. This close to the great desert, rockfalls are plentiful, and finding water can be a problem, since most of the known waterholes lie in lands claimed by tribes of orcs or goblinoids—unless the rains come, in which case raging flash floods course through the dry streambeds and down wadis with torrential force, sweeping away all in their path. If travelers manage to avoid being pulped or drowned by such an event, they find that the floods leave behind a flowing stream that provides a good source of water for at least a few hours before once again going dry.

Overland travel in the Stonelands is considered to be in hilly terrain, and typical travelers walk at a speed of 4 miles per day, though parties of the PCs' level likely have means of much faster travel. If you wish to add random encounters to the group's journey, roll on the tables below four times per day, three times during the daylight hours and once at night. If the party makes camp at night without the attractant of a fire, there is a 50% chance that no encounter occurs (roll this chance prior to rolling on the table below).

### STONELANDS RANDOM ENCOUNTER TABLE

d%	Encounter	Average	
		EL	Source
01–07	1d2 chimeras	9	MM 34
08–15	1d4 medusas	10	MM 180
16–23	1d2 gynosphinxes	10	MM 233
24–30	1d3 dustform giant banded lizards	11	Sandstorm 161
31–36	1d6 stone giants	11	MM 124
37–42	1d4+1 saguaro sentinels	12	Sandstorm 181
43–46	1d3 Gargantuan monstrous scorpions	12	MM 288
47–53	1d4 behirs	12	MM 25
54–57	1 dragonflesh golem*	14	MM2 116
58–60	1 mature adult sand dragon	14	Sandstorm 154
61–64	Sandstorm	—	DMG 91
65–100	No encounter		

\*Retreats if reduced to 70 hit points or fewer. See encounter C1.

## The ruins of synod

The fallen enclave of Synod lies at the edge of Anauroch, where the sands of the desert sweep in over the hills of the Stonelands. The enclave was at a low enough altitude when it fell that rather than shattering upon impact, it collapsed in upon itself. As a result, small sheltered areas within its bulk

survived somewhat intact, buried beneath a mound of broken rubble. The broken hill looked remarkably like those surrounding it, and it was soon partially buried by the sands so that no one suspected such a ruin lay here, even after the Sharn Wall extended around it. If it had not been for the phaerimms tracking Shar Cormrael when she entered the hidden crypt, it is possible that the phaerimms would have never discovered this valuable ruin or its potent magic.

Though the ruin does lie within the Sharn Wall now, keeping the phaerimm hive dwelling within it from escaping the desert's bounds, it is outside the dead magic zone that lies over Anauroch, so the phaerimms' magical experiments and those of their allies have continued uninterrupted even by that recent development.

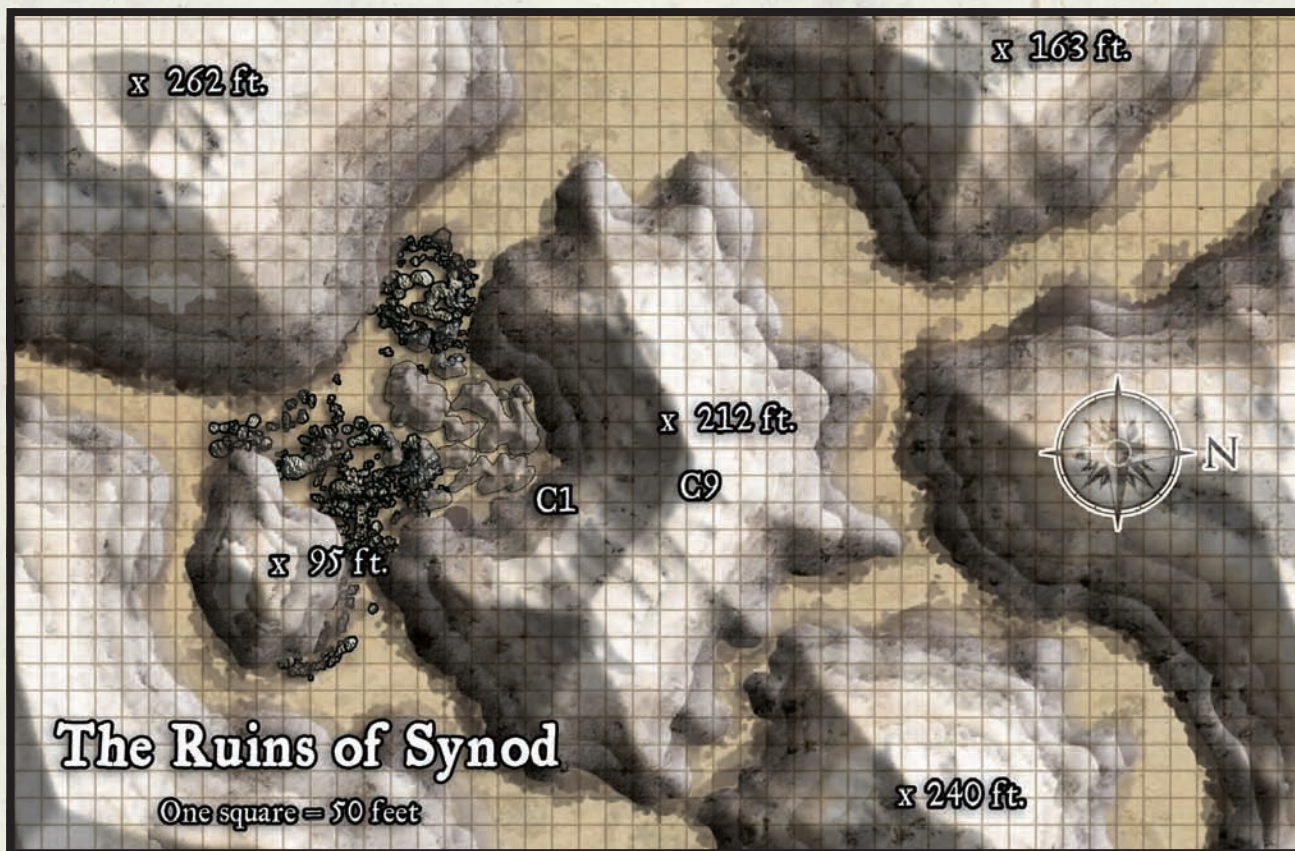
When the PCs first approach the hill that hides the fallen enclave, read or paraphrase the following.

*The sands of the Great Desert encroach among these broken hills here on the edge of the wastes, creating dunes and sand slopes among their valleys and draws and almost engulfing some of the smaller mounds. The heat is not as bad as out on the open desert, but the area still appears to be fairly parched with very little vegetation except for small scrub plants and cacti.*

*One large, irregular hill shows signs of excavation on its southern face. The sand has been cleared away, revealing broken layers of rubble concealed beneath. It appears that much of this rubble has been carted away, leaving mounds of tailings on the hill's periphery. What has been revealed is a maze of twisted gullies winding between great pieces of shattered rock. This excavation shows signs of recent work.*

When Augathra the Mad and later Shar Cormrael and her trailing phaerimm discovered Synod, they entered by way of the chimney at location C9 (see the accompanying map). The phaerimm hive that moved in shortly thereafter, being of a naturally flying species, likewise used this hidden and precarious approach. However, with the coming of the Shadovars and the Faceless Incanter (see area C37, page 63) to this unholy alliance, they were not content to only tap into the power of Synod's *mythallar*, but also sought to unearth any lost Netherese artifacts that might have remained behind. In addition, as earthbound creatures, they sought an easier entry to their new base. To this end, full-scale excavation has begun on Synod. To date they have managed to uncover the main entrance at location C1 (see the accompanying map) and have posted guardian creatures there to protect this exposed entrance. To conduct the excavation, the Shadovars have imported a small clan of enslaved earth genasi.





## Daytime Approach

It is an easy matter for the PCs to find their way through the winding passes cleared by the earth genasi, since all of them lead to essentially the same place, with few switchbacks or dead ends. During the day, PCs using such an approach will come across the earth genasi workers as they continue their excavation, overseen by their phaelin giant keepers and a dragonflesh golem. If such an encounter occurs, refer to tactical encounter C1 (page 64) for statistics of those creatures. These creatures will be spread out throughout the excavation area noted on the map, though the giants will primarily be posted along the outside perimeter to prevent escapes.

If intruders are encountered, an alarm will be raised. One phaelin giant will herd the genasi back into the ruins while the others, along with the golem, converge on the site of the alarm. The beholder in charge of the group remains inside the ruins unless called out by an alarm, in which case it responds in 1d10 rounds. (Statistics for the beholder can be found on page 75.) The excavation covers a fairly large area, so feel free to stage such an encounter anywhere you see fit.

The earth genasi have been thoroughly cowed by their captors such that they do not assist in any battle but will attempt to hide in nearby hollows and crevices until the battle is over or until they are ordered back into the ruins by an overseer.

If released, they know little information other than that they were captured by the Shadovars and brought here to excavate this hill in search of Netherese artifacts. They have not seen their Shadovar captors in some time, and any discoveries they have made are immediately carried deeper into the ruins by the giants. They fear to flee, knowing that the “dragon” (the dragonflesh golem) will hunt them down. If freed, they gladly depart, heading back into the deep desert that is their home.

Though the earth genasi will try to stay out of a fight, they will defend themselves. Their statistics are included in the description of area C2, page 52.

## Nighttime Approach

After dark, the earth genasi are all brought back inside to their quarters at area C2 (see the map on page 51), and the guards likewise return to their posts as indicated in the descriptions of areas C3 and C4. At this point, strange indigenous plant creatures called saguaro sentinels emerge and begin patrolling the maze of narrow canyons. Anyone entering this area between sundown and sunrise has a cumulative 25% chance each 10 minutes of encountering a group of 2d4 of these creatures. This chance starts again after an encounter, so multiple groups of these creatures can be met. They are fiercely territorial and attack anyone other than the dragonflesh golem, the beholder,



and the phaerlin giants. As with the daytime encounters, feel free to stage such an encounter wherever you see fit within these narrow ravines. The dragonflesh golem at area C1 continually takes 10 on its Listen checks, so there is a chance it hears any combat and comes to investigate; be sure to adjust the Listen DC for distance.

**2–8 SAGUARO SENTINELS<sup>SAN</sup>** **CR 9**  
hp 138 each (12 HD); DR 10/piercing

N Huge plant  
**Init** –1; **Senses** low-light vision; Listen +3, Spot +8  
**Languages** Sylvan

**AC** 22, touch 7, flat-footed 22  
**Immune** mind-affecting spells and abilities, poison, sleep, paralysis, polymorph  
**Fort** +15, **Ref** +3, **Will** +5

**Speed** 20 ft. (4 squares)  
**Melee** 2 slams +18 each (3d6+11)  
**Space** 15 ft.; **Reach** 15 ft.  
**Base Atk** +9; **Grp** +28  
**Atk Options** Awesome Blow, Improved Bull Rush, Power Attack, thorns, trample 3d6+16

**Abilities** Str 33, Dex 8, Con 25, Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 14  
**SQ** plant traits, tough flesh  
**Feats** Alertness, Awesome Blow, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Natural Attack, Power Attack  
**Skills** Disguise +2 (+14 to resemble an inanimate plant), Intimidate +12, Knowledge (nature) +10, Listen +3, Spot +8, Survival +6 (+8 aboveground)

**Thorns (Ex)** The body of a saguaro sentinel is covered in thorns. These tear at any creature touching it, dealing 1d6 points of piercing damage. Creatures striking a saguaro sentinel with natural attacks or unarmed strikes are subject to this damage, but creatures striking with melee weapons are not. A creature pushed into or falling onto the plant also takes damage.

**Trample (Ex)** Reflex DC 27 half.

## The hill

If the PCs choose instead to approach Synod from over the top of its prominence, they have a cumulative 25% chance per hour of running across a group of saguaro sentinels with the same statistics as above. There are dozens of these creatures residing in the vicinity, so any losses they suffer do not affect the chance for additional encounters unless the PCs battle them for several days.

Anyone making a successful DC 25 Search check within 100 feet of the hill's peak locates what appears to be a natural chimney extending down into the rock. This is actually the entrance discovered by Augathra, and later by Shar Cormrael and the phaerimms. It has not seen much use since the coming of the Shadovars a few months ago, and has since been discovered by some new creatures. See area C9 for details of this entrance.

# within the crypt of Augathra

The upper level of the crypt is composed primarily of ruins of the original Netherese city. As such, the walls and floors might be canted at odd angles and tend to consist of fractured masonry and heavy stone pillars. Any movement penalties are noted in the specific encounter areas. The lower level is mostly made up of tunnels excavated by the phaerimms using the *disintegrate* rays of their beholder slaves. As such, they tend to be uniform and level, with fairly smooth surfaces. The method of their construction can be discerned with a successful DC 26 Spellcraft check.

**Walls:** The masonry walls of the original Netherese construction are crumbling but intact and require a successful DC 18 Climb check. The smooth walls of the beholder excavations require a successful DC 25 Climb check.

**Ceiling Height:** Ceilings are typically 20 feet high unless otherwise noted.

**Doors:** The doors are heavy stone slabs 5 feet wide by 10 feet high (4 inches thick, hardness 8, hp 60, break DC 28). They do not have locks.

**Illumination:** Unless otherwise noted, the ruins and tunnels are not illuminated, since most of the inhabitants rely on darkvision to get around. All descriptions assume that the PCs have some light source of their own.

## C1. Colonnade Entrance

*The dusty ravines culminate here at the base of a cliff. Opening into the rock face at ground level is a colonnaded entrance with low marble stairs rising to a portico. Finely engraved columns, now cracked and chipped, still strain under the weight of the prominence above. The entire entrance seems to be slightly canted, as if it had shifted in an earthquake or suffered some other massive trauma. A wide plaza opens beyond the portico, its flagstone floor ruptured here and there, with a gaping pit near the entrance. A cluster of rubble stands at the rear of this chamber next to a rough-hewn excavated tunnel. Great stone doors hint at chambers that lie beyond on either side of the plaza.*

The ceiling of this chamber rises to a height of 60 feet, supported by the massive columns across the front and to either side. The entrance itself matches this height.

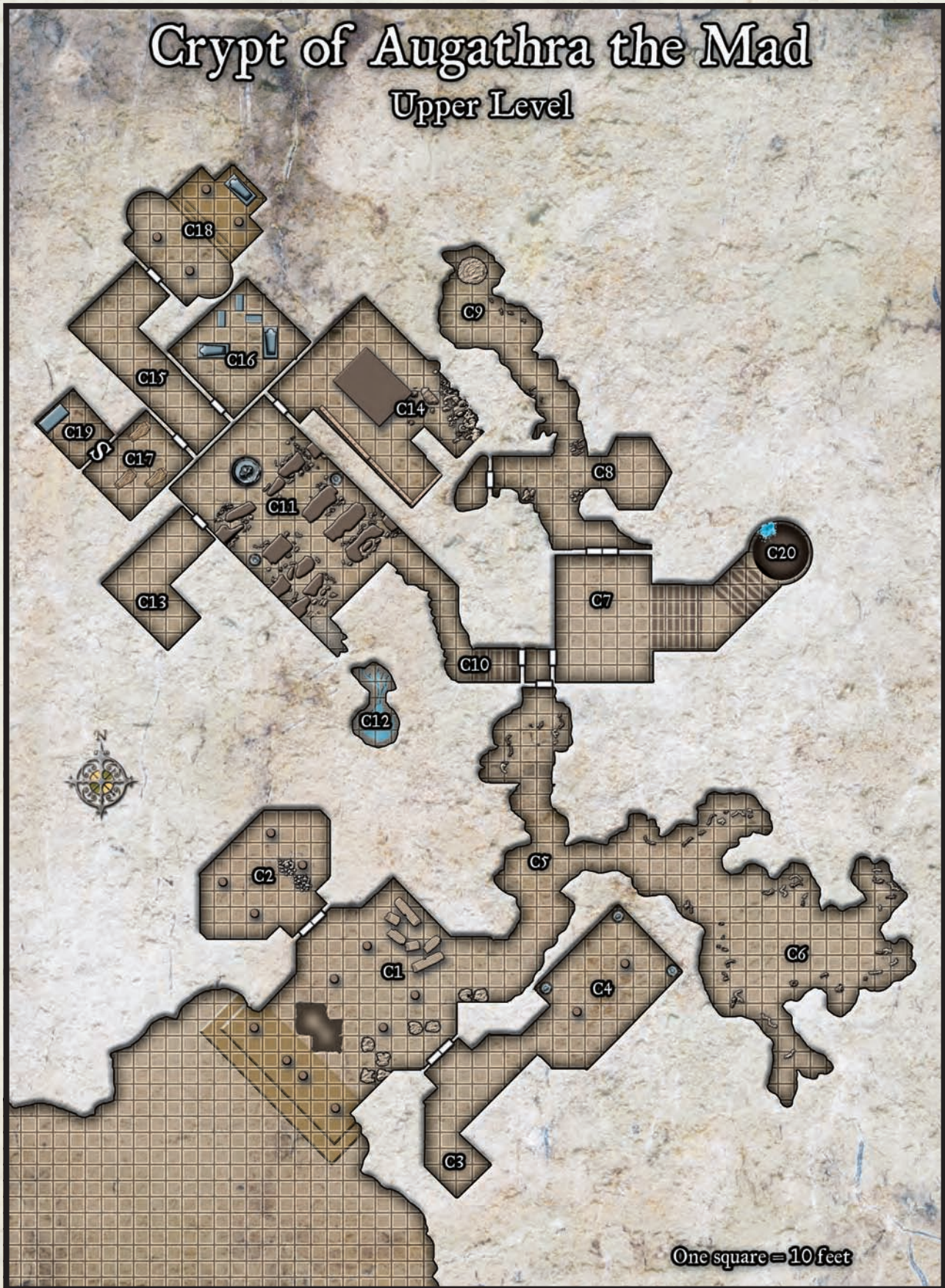
If the PCs enter here, the tactical map on page 64 provides details of the resulting encounter. This encounter can be modified if the PCs have already dealt with some of the creatures outside the ruins.

**Tactical Encounter:** C1: Entrance to Synod, page 64. This room and areas C2, C3, and C4 form a single encounter.



# Crypt of Augathra the Mad

## Upper Level





## c2. slave quarters

*This is an oblong chamber with the ends tapering to blunt points. The ceiling rises in an arch 30 feet high at its center. Stout columns support a ceiling that otherwise looks like it would be in danger of collapse due to some trauma that has fractured much of the stonework. Everburning torches mounted on these columns provide adequate illumination in the chamber and reveal several ragged piles of bedding scattered across the floor amid a fine layer of sand. More ominous are the two small piles of skulls that stand next to the entrance, leering at any who enter.*

The earth genasi slaves of the Shadovars are quartered here, along with some of their keepers. The bedrolls are theirs. The skull piles each hold about a dozen dried and cracked specimens, picked clean by desert scavengers. A successful DC 11 Knowledge (the planes) check identifies them as genasi skulls—the remains of slaves who displeased their masters.

Despite the dubious appearance of the ceiling, it is structurally sound.

Though the earth genasi are primarily noncombatants, statistics for them are provided here in case they are needed.

**Tactical Encounter:** C1: Entrance to Synod, page 64. This room and areas C1, C3, and C4 form a single encounter.

## c3. guard captain's quarters

*This chamber has a pyramid-shaped ceiling that rises to a peak 30 feet above. One section of the masonry has given way, revealing a layer of crushed and compacted rock directly above, though it appears to be stable. The chamber is empty except for a few small piles of dust and debris lying undisturbed on the floor. Cracked and faded murals on the walls depict ancient armies marshaling for drill and ceremony.*

Once a guard captain's quarters, this chamber now houses the beholder in charge of the defense of the entrance to the ruins. The dragonflesh golem and the phaerlin giants all answer to him. If this creature joins in the defense during tactical encounter C1, refer to page 64 for its statistics.

**Tactical Encounter:** C1: Entrance to Synod, page 64. This room and areas C1, C2, and C4 form a single encounter.

## c4. guardroom

*The arch of this 30-foot ceiling is supported by ornate pillars engraved with ancient symbols. In three of the corners stand finely carved statues depicting knights in the garb of long-ago Netheril. Four massive pallets line the walls.*

A barracks for temple guards in the days of Synod, this area is now a resting spot for the phaerlin giant enforcers that oversee the slaves and their excavation work. A successful DC 25 Knowledge (religion) check identifies the symbols on the pillars as the

## 11 EARTH GENASI SLAVES

CR 1

hp 12 each (2 HD)

Male or female earth genasi expert 1

N Medium outsider

Init +0; Senses Listen -2, Spot -2

Languages Common, Terran

AC 12, touch 10, flat-footed 12

Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +2; +1 against earth spells and effects

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee light pick +2 (1d4+1/x4)

Base Atk +1; Grp +2

Abilities Str 13, Dex 10, Con 14, Int 11, Wis 7, Cha 8

SQ outsider traits, merge with stone

Feats Toughness

Skills Appraise +4, Climb +5, Craft (blacksmithing) +4, Craft (stoneworking) +4, Hide +4, Knowledge (architecture and engineering) +4, Knowledge (the planes) +4, Profession (miner) +4, Survival +2

Possessions light pick

**Merge with Stone (Sp)** Once per day, an earth genasi can cast *pass without trace* as a 5th-level druid.

symbols for Mistryl, Tyche, and Amaunator, ancient gods who were revered when Synod still floated in the skies above Toril.

**Tactical Encounter:** C1: Entrance to Synod, page 64. This room and areas C1, C2, and C3 form a single encounter.

## c5. new tunnel

*A crude tunnel 10 feet high exits through one crumbling wall of the colonnade. Its floor is littered with stones and debris.*

Anyone who has stonemasonry or ranks in Knowledge (architecture and engineering) who makes a successful DC 20 Intelligence or Knowledge check determines that this is a recently excavated tunnel. It was dug by the earth genasi to provide access to Synod proper, deeper under the hill. It leads to areas C6 and C7.

## c6. excavation

*The rock of this chamber has been crudely chiseled out to form an open area with many small dead-end passages. Rubble and debris are strewn about liberally on the floor. This is obviously the site of an ongoing excavation.*

The earth genasi have done some excavating here in search of other buried chambers but have presently turned their attention to excavating the entrance to the ruins outside area C1.

## c7. grand stair

*Once a finely appointed chamber with elaborate mosaics and a grand stair, it is now a shadow of its former self. The mosaics are chipped or missing, and plaster has fallen from the walls. Doors exit to the north and west, and a grand stair descends to*



*the east, its steps buckled and cracked. A slight mist and the roar of water rise from this stairwell.*

The stairs lead to area C20. The doors lead to areas C8 and C10.

## C8. Abandoned guardhouse

*A partial cave-in has obstructed portions of this chamber. The masonry walls still visible make this appear as though it was once a cobbled avenue between buildings now buried under tons of rubble. A door exits to the west; to the east is a squat stone structure that looks like the remains of a guardhouse.*

This was once an alley between buildings on the surface of Synod with a small post for the city guard that has survived. Beyond the western door is a collapsed dead end that was once the interior of a building. The ceiling of crushed and broken rock is 15 feet overhead.

This area is currently inhabited by a quartet of dust wights<sup>MM3</sup> that use special spell-like abilities to be even more formidable than ordinary creatures of their kind.

**Tactical Encounter:** C8: Abandoned Guardhouse, page 66.

## C9. Augathra's entrance

*A narrow shaft of dim light illuminates this broken cavern from an opening in the ceiling's north end. Motes of dust dance slowly in this beam of illumination. A pile of fine sand has collected beneath the opening, and occasionally more sifts down to land atop it. The walls and ceiling of this cave appear to be formed from great chunks of broken rock compressed together and held aloft by their mutual pressure on each other. The air in here is hot, almost stifling, and bears the scent of brimstone.*

This shaft rises in jagged contortions 200 feet to the surface of the hill. It was formed when the city collapsed in upon itself; despite its appearance, it is surprisingly stable, though attempts at undermining it quickly result in a cave-in. There is a preponderance of handholds, so climbing this shaft is relatively easy, requiring only a successful DC 12 Climb check, but for every 50 feet climbed there is a 30% chance that a rock breaks free and plummets down upon the climbers. Anyone in the shaft below must make a successful DC 15 Reflex save or take 2d6 points of damage from the falling debris. Any falling damage in this shaft is reduced by 1d6 points due to the mound of soft sand that has accumulated at its base.

This is the entrance that was originally found by Augathra the Mad when she first made these ruins her abode. It has not seen much use since the Shadovars excavated the entrance at area C1 and has since become the lair of two living holocausts that have wandered in from the desert.

**Tactical Encounter:** C9: Augathra's Entrance, page 67.

## C10. Twisted stair

*An ancient stair has been twisted by some great catastrophe and now lies on its side. Its steps form the western wall of this passage, so that one of the stairwell's walls now serves as the floor. Though the passage is broken and somewhat uneven, it can still be traversed with relative ease. It ends at an archway ahead.*

The ceiling here is only 10 feet high, since that was the former width of the staircase. The floor of this passage is uneven and treacherous; a successful DC 10 Balance check is required to run or charge across it.

## C11. chapel

*The floor of this chapel is ruptured by some ancient trauma so that its formerly smooth tiles are now askew, creating a tangle of broken stone and sand. Shattered stone pews line the chamber. Columns rise to a ceiling arching 60 feet above, its plaster murals long since gone. At the far end stands the statue of a bearded, bare-chested god bearing a solar disk, with a human face at the center of his thick, elaborate belt. Two smaller versions of the statue flank the chapel. Stone doors exit to the southwest and northeast. An alcove in the southeastern corner holds a mound of what appears to be wet sand.*

This chamber was once a funereal chapel to Amaunator, the sun god of ancient Netheril and the chief deity of Synod; this is discerned by a PC after a successful DC 25 Knowledge (religion) check. The chapel suffered extensive damage during the enclave's fall but survived relatively intact. Many of the faithful of Amaunator were present when the city fell; their broken bodies have long since decayed to dust, but their spirits linger on.

Written in Loross at the base of the great statue are the words "Stand before the sun and kneel before his fury. Speak the name of the keeper and weigh his burden to pass." This provides the means of opening the secret door at its base and warns of the trap on the door to area C18, below. A successful DC 25 Search check reveals grooves worn into the floor behind the statue, as if it slides back.

The inscription refers to Amaunator, the Keeper of the Eternal Sun and patron of law and order in ancient Netheril; "his burden" refers to the judgment of law. If anyone stands before the main statue and says "Amaunator" and purposely brandishes a scale or balances objects in his two hands in imitation of a scale, the statue slowly slides to the northwest, revealing a hidden stairwell descending to area C15. After 10 rounds, the statue slides back into place but can be opened from below by the same means. A *knock* spell or similar magic will not open the stairwell.

The alcove to the south is a collapsed passage, which can be determined with a successful DC 12 Knowledge (architecture and engineering) check; a constant seepage of water can be detected.



The passage can be cleared with 16 collective hours of labor (for example, two PCs working 8 hours each) or suitable magic to reveal area C12.

**Tactical Encounter:** C11: Chapel of Amaunator, page 68. This room and areas C12, C13, and C14 form a single encounter.

## C12. Water source

*The air in this small, octagonal chamber is laden with a constant cool mist. A pool of water bubbles in the center of the room occupying most of its floor space. Rivulets escape from the pool and flow through fissures in the wall. A domed ceiling, green with moss, looms 20 feet overhead.*

The pool in this room has irregular sides and bottom and reaches a depth of 10 feet at its center. It radiates a faint aura of conjuration, and served as the water source for Synod that continues to function to this day. The water produced here is cool and safe to drink. One of the city's arcanists fled to this chamber when the city fell, hoping that its stability and water pool would serve to insulate him from the impact of the city's fall. Anyone who dives into the pool can find his limed-over skeleton at the bottom with a successful DC 15 Search check.

**Tactical Encounter:** C11: Chapel of Amaunator, page 68. This room and areas C11, C13, and C14 form a single encounter.

**Treasure:** Anyone who investigates the skeleton can find a *wand of magic missile* (CL 9th, 9 charges) among the bones.

## C13. Vestry

*The floor of this chamber is covered with dust and the dried remnants of various fabrics, long since decayed and destroyed. Metal hooks line the walls where garments once hung, and the barest remains of wooden shelving with the broken pieces of their contents are piled in the corners.*

This room was once a vestry that served the chapel. All of the priestly garb and accoutrements have been reduced to nothing more than dust and worthless shards.

**Tactical Encounter:** C11: Chapel of Amaunator, page 68. This room and areas C11, C12, and C14 form a single encounter.

**Treasure:** A successful DC 17 Search check reveals a small, gold-plated balancing scale hidden among the debris. This device is worth 75 gp and was used in religious services. It can be used to activate the secret door in room C11.

## C14. Embalming room

*Once a workshop of some sort, this room suffered the full effects of the city's fall. Great fractures run through the masonry of the walls, and part of the eastern wall has collapsed inward. Stone shelving that once lined the walls is now largely broken. In the center of the chamber stands a large stone table, still intact.*

*Stained sluice channels have been cut into its surface, leading to corroded metal catch basins.*

The deceased were prepared for burial in this embalming chamber. Some of the local phaerimms used the facilities to dabble in necromancy, and created an undead guardian from a rare creature they were able to capture.

**Tactical Encounter:** C11: Chapel of Amaunator, page 68. This room and areas C11, C12, and C13 form a single encounter.

## C15. Crypt

*A stair spirals from an opening in the ceiling. Extending away from the stair is a wide corridor shrouded in cobwebs and a layer of fine dust. Scuffed footprints mar the dust. Stone doors, slightly ajar, open to the right and left, and the corridor rounds a corner ahead.*

People of importance were once interred beneath the chapel to Amaunator. Around the corner is an iron door incised with an image of the sun with great solar flares issuing from it on all sides. This is the "fury" referred to by the inscription at area C11, and the door bears a trap.

If anyone touches the door without first kneeling and saying "Amaunator" while displaying or imitating scales as described at area C11, the flames of Amaunator are transmitted from the southwest face of the door where the sun symbol is inscribed. The symbol flares forth with a blinding burst of sunlight, dealing 15d10 points of damage (half of the damage is fire damage and the other half is divine in nature) to any creatures within 30 feet and causing blindness for 1d6 minutes. Undead take double damage from this sunlight. A successful DC 20 Fortitude save halves the damage and prevents the blindness. The trap resets itself after 24 hours.

**Amaunator's Sun Trap:** CR 12; magic; touch trigger; automatic reset; 15d10 fire and divine plus blindness for 1d6 minutes (Fortitude DC 20 halves damage and negates blindness); multiple targets (all targets in 30-foot spread); Search DC 30; Disable Device DC 35.

**Locked Iron Door:** 1 ft. thick; hardness 10; hp 360; break DC 45; Open Lock DC 32.

**Tactical Encounter:** C15: Hidden Tombs, page 70. This room and areas C16, C17, C18, and C19 form a single encounter.

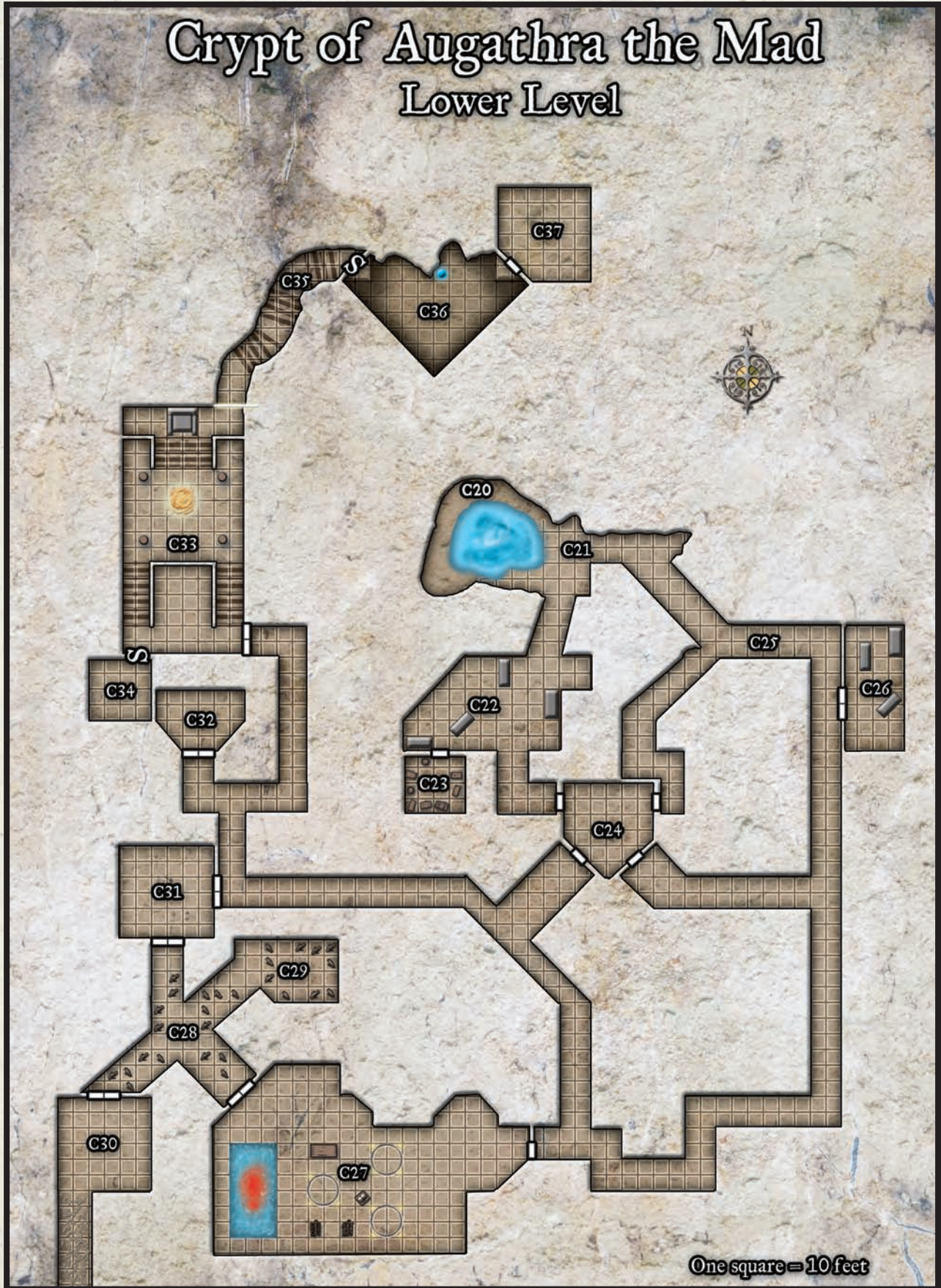
## C16. favored pets' tomb

*This low-ceilinged room is crowded with clay sarcophagi formed into the shapes of cats of all sizes, from small domesticated cats to the large feral hunting cats that used to roam the plains of Low Netheril. All have been given the honor of a ceremonial interment. Many of the jumbled sarcophagi show cracks and damage from rough handling, and several of the larger stone coffins have been shattered; their contents are nowhere to be seen.*



# Crypt of Augathra the Mad

## Lower Level



One square = 10 feet



The ceiling of this chamber is only 10 feet high.

The Netherese noble for whom this crypt complex was constructed was an ardent cat owner and was known to capture and domesticate such creatures as displacer beasts and krenshars. Many of his beloved pets were mummified at his death and laid to rest in this chamber. The fall of the city broke open the sealed crypts of some of these creatures; they have since been reanimated and now lurk about the area.

**Tactical Encounter:** C15: Hidden Tombs, page 70. This room and areas C15, C17, C18, and C19 form a single encounter.

## C17. servants' tomb

*Three wooden coffins, their boards warped and dried with age to a silvery sheen, occupy this low-ceilinged chamber. The room is dusty and filled with undisturbed cobwebs.*

This chamber has a 10-foot ceiling.

Some of the Netherese noble's favored servants were entombed here in honor after their deaths as well. The fall of the city and resulting desecration of the tomb has disturbed their rest.

A successful DC 28 Search check in the western corner reveals two small patches of clay on the wall molded to exactly resemble the surrounding masonry. If these are removed, diamond-shaped depressions are found beneath. If a diamond from one of the golems in area C18 is placed in one of these depressions, a previously undetectable secret door appears and opens into area C19 beyond.

**Tactical Encounter:** C15: Hidden Tombs, page 70. This room and areas C15, C16, C18, and C19 form a single encounter.

## C18. false tomb

The contents of this room are shrouded under a *permanent image* spell (CL 30th). When characters first view the area, read:

*A bare stone room with a 30-foot vaulted ceiling stretches before you. A raised dais gives access to a broken stone sarcophagus tipped over on its side. Only dust and a few shards of dried bone and fabric remain to tell the tale of what was once interred within. Alcoves on either side of the entrance hold the broken bases of statues.*

If the illusion is pierced, read:

*The bare stone room is suddenly flooded with color. Murals along the walls depict a floating city drifting over verdant, settled lands. On either hand, great crystalline statues sculpted in the shape of kneeling supplicants guard entry to this chamber. At the far end, a dais rises to an ornate gold sarcophagus glinting in the light of a tiny sun hovering over its head.*

This false tomb was designed to prevent intruders from discovering the true burial at area C19. The keys to opening the secret door to that room lie at the heart of the two diamond golems that guard this chamber. The glowing sun is merely a *continual flame* effect of particular brilliance.

**Tactical Encounter:** C15: Hidden Tombs, page 70. This room and areas C15, C16, C17, and C19 form a single encounter.

## C19. True Tomb

*Stone sconces set near the ceiling of this chamber provide a dim radiance. A thick layer of dust shrouds the sunburst mosaic in the center of the floor. At the far side of the room is a large stone sarcophagus bearing the image of a robed man lying in peaceful repose.*

The Netherese nobleman who commissioned this chapel to Amaunator is interred here. The fall of the city and the death of his family have kept him from resting easily these many years.

**Tactical Encounter:** C15: Hidden Tombs, page 70. This room and areas C15, C16, C17, and C18 form a single encounter.

**Treasure:** Within the sarcophagus is a mummified corpse that has a gold coin over one eye. Closer examination of this coin reveals that it bears a sunburst matching the solar disk on the statue of Amaunator in room C11. This coin is actually a seal from the *Chalice of Amaunator* (see page 147). The coin has no real value in and of itself—beyond a single gp—and radiates a faint aura of evocation.

## C20. Tower shaft

*In the heart of this hill rests a still-intact tower, its hollow cylinder descending into darkness. A waterfall plummets through a broken section of the tower's northern side and into the dark abyss below, sending up a cloud of mist and spray. The interior floors of the tower are gone, creating this cylindrical shaft, but their crumbled verges can be seen at intervals below. From these grow a riot of slick mosses and vines, flourishing in the humidity.*

Upon impact, the tower's floors all collapsed, but the outer wall remained intact, creating this shaft. A channel from the ruined city's water source has since broken through, creating the falls.

Cavities open at points along the length of the tower where its floors once stood, providing small ledges and even pieces of broken stair. These are illustrated on the tactical map. The walls are slick with moisture, raising the Climb DC to 23.

**Tactical Encounter:** C20: Waterfall, page 72. This room and area C21 form a single encounter.



## C21. collection pool

*A cavity has formed at the base of the tower shaft. Part of one wall still displays the original crumbling masonry. The floor is covered with sand that has been carried in by the waterfall, and a deep pool fills most of the floor.*

The pool reaches 20 feet deep at the base of the falls. An outlet into a subterranean tunnel provides drainage so that it does not overflow. This tunnel has no air pockets and eventually opens into a ravine deeper in the Stonelands 12 miles away. The water of the falls is safe to drink, but the collection pool has been subtly poisoned by its inhabitant.

**Tactical Encounter:** C20: Waterfall, page 72. This room and area C20 form a single encounter.

## C22. guardroom

*The walls of this irregularly shaped room are smooth and do not show the marks of stonework. Large furniture, crudely formed from chiseled slabs of stone and broken rock, is scattered about the chamber.*

The phaerimms have posted guards here to protect their hive complex beyond.

**Tactical Encounter:** C22: First Guardroom, page 74. This room and area C23 form a single encounter.

## C23. stores

*Crates and barrels of supplies are stacked around this chamber. They bear the stamps and trail marks of many cities, noble families, and trading costers.*

The servants of the phaerimms are kept supplied by the magic of their masters and the spoils of raids on various settlements and caravans throughout the area. Although the phaerimms still cannot venture beyond the remnants of the Sharn Wall, their phaerlin giants have no such restriction on their movement.

**Tactical Encounter:** C22: First Guardroom, page 74. This room and area C22 form a single encounter.



Illus. by William O'Connor

LEBID +X +72DEFKVV +11 EYL YVH#KDD +D LITD +1BY+D

The tower shaft



## C24. Empty chamber

*Four doors exit this pentagonal chamber. It is empty except for a scattering of debris on the floor: broken daggers, corroded arrowheads, and bits of broken armor and stone.*

The phaerimms have placed a trap of their own invention, called a “whirlsting,” in this chamber. One round after anyone enters the room, a floor-to-ceiling vortex of air 10 feet in diameter forms, centered on the first creature to enter the room. That creature and anyone else within the area must make a successful DC 26 Reflex save or be caught in the whirlwind and take 4d6 points of piercing damage from the whirling shrapnel caught in the miniature cyclone. Each round, entrapped creatures can attempt a new save to escape the vortex. The trap is stationary once activated and might block an exit. The whirlwind continues for 10 rounds. The trap automatically resets itself after 24 hours. A *dispel magic* successfully cast against caster level 19th ends the trap’s effect until it resets.

**Whirlsting Trap:** CR 15; magic; location trigger; automatic reset; 4d6 damage per round (Reflex DC 26 negates); multiple targets (all targets in 5-foot radius); Search DC 35; Disable Device DC 35.

## C25. Gelatinous pit trap

At the point where the two corridors meet in a “V” intersection, the phaerimms have constructed an insidious trap. The second creature of Small or larger size to step in one of these four squares causes a pit trap to open, dropping anyone in those four squares who fails the save 20 feet below the surface of the floor. This fall deals only 1d6 points of damage, because it is cushioned by a gelatinous cube that occupies the bottom 10 feet of this 30-foot-deep pit. The cube takes no damage from the impact of falling characters on it due to its elastic nature. Any creature landing on the cube is automatically exposed to its engulf attack (a free action for the creature that does not provoke attacks of opportunity).

After this trap has been set off, combat with the gelatinous cube proceeds in standard fashion (or as close to standard as possible, considering that the ooze is trapped in the hole). A character who avoids being engulfed immediately after falling onto the cube cannot be engulfed in a later round, because the cube is incapable of moving. The creature does use its slam attack, however, which means that any characters in the pit but not engulfed are subject to the ooze’s acid and paralysis for as long as they remain adjacent to (standing on) the creature.

A spyhole in the northwest corner of room C26 (Spot DC 40 to detect from farther away than 5 feet, Spot DC 20 to detect when adjacent) allows the guards in that chamber to monitor this corridor.

## GELATINOUS CUBE

CR 3

hp 54 (4 HD)

N Large ooze

Init –5; Senses blindsight 60 ft.; Listen –5, Spot –5

AC 4, touch 4, flat-footed 4

Immune electricity, mind-affecting spells and abilities, gaze and visual attacks

Fort +9, Ref –4, Will –4

Speed 15 ft. (3 squares) (immobile in pit)

Melee slam +2 (1d6 plus 1d6 acid)

Space 10 ft.; Reach 5 ft.

Base Atk +3; Grp +7

Atk Options acid, engulf, paralysis

Abilities Str 10, Dex 1, Con 26, Int —, Wis 1, Cha 1

SQ ooze traits

**Acid (Ex)** A gelatinous cube’s acid does not harm metal or stone.

**Engulf (Ex)** A gelatinous cube can ordinarily engulf Large or smaller creatures as a standard action. The gelatinous cube in the trap described here is able to engulf a victim as a free action, but only immediately after the trap is sprung. A creature that falls on the ooze is entitled to a DC 13 Reflex save to avoid being engulfed, as normal, but does not have the option of making an attack of opportunity instead of attempting the save. An engulfed creature is subject to the cube’s acid and paralysis, and is considered to be grappled and trapped within its body.

On a successful save, the creature has managed to land on the surface of the ooze without falling into it. The gelatinous cube cannot engulf such a creature in a later round, because it is trapped in the pit and incapable of moving.

**Paralysis (Ex)** A gelatinous secretes an anesthetizing slime. A target hit by the cube’s slam or that has been engulfed must succeed on a DC 20 Fortitude save or be paralyzed for 3d6 rounds.

**Gelatinous Cube Pit Trap:** CR 10; mechanical; location trigger; no reset; Reflex DC 25 avoids; victims fall onto gelatinous cube (1d6, fall); multiple targets (all targets in four 5-ft. squares); Search DC 30; Disable Device DC 20; Climb DC 25.

**Tactical Encounter:** C25: Second Guardroom, page 75. This room and area C26 form a single encounter.

## C26. watch post

*A few pieces of crude giant-sized furniture are arrayed throughout this room. A portion of the west wall has been dug out to form a peephole that looks out into the corridor.*

This area serves as a guard post where the occupants watch over this approach into the phaerimms’ hive. The peephole that is difficult to see from outside the room is readily apparent to anyone inside the chamber.

**Tactical Encounter:** C25: Second Guardroom, page 75. This room and area C25 form a single encounter.



## C27. Laboratory

*This is obviously a laboratory for magical experimentation. Magic circles marked with candles and glowing sigils adorn the floor. Between them are a worktable and a lectern. Two small cages stand to the side; winged snakes lie coiled inside them. At the west end of the room is a large, boiling pool, a reddish glow emanating from its depths.*

This laboratory is the domain of the phaerimm Culcathrax. The ceiling is 40 feet high.

**Tactical Encounter:** C27: Laboratory, page 76.

## C28. Larder/Hatchery

*This pair of intersecting corridors is occupied by a number of floating bodies. They are all humans or humanoid creatures and seem to float lifelessly two or three feet above the floor. One human corpse awash in blood, its chest sundered by a massive blow, no longer floats in the air but lies crumpled on the floor.*

These halls serve as the larder and hatchery for the phaerimms. Captured humanoids are implanted with eggs and left to float here after being paralyzed by repeated poisonings. After 90 days, the hatched phaerimms emerge from their hosts, devouring them from within. Only about one in ten eggs is viable, so the rest of the corpses are eventually devoured by the adult phaerimms of the hive. Unless otherwise noted, all of these humanoids are stable with between -5 and -9 hit points. Feel free to flesh out the details of any individuals rescued from this area, but without the expenditure of great magic by the party, it is likely that most are too far gone to be saved. There are a total of seventeen of these floating bodies.

**Tactical Encounter:** C28: Phaerimm Nursery, page 78. This room and areas C29, C30, and C31 form a single encounter.

**Development:** A tomb tapper has entered this chamber and is in the process of destroying these potential phaerimm larvae by crushing the implanted victims. Two rounds after the tomb tapper is encountered, whether it becomes engaged in combat with the party or not, one of the floating bodies, a goblin, begins to choke and gurgle blood. In the next round, a phaerimm hatchling explodes from its chest. Unless restrained in some way, the tomb tapper immediately obliterates this newly born creature with its great maul.

The tomb tapper begins the encounter as unfriendly, but it can be persuaded that the PCs are not enemies if its attitude is changed to indifferent. In such a case, it merely orders the PCs telepathically to drop their magic items and run away. If its attitude is changed to friendly, it will forego attempting to take their magi, and explain that it is here on a mission to reclaim magic from the hated phaerimms. If its attitude is changed to helpful, it can be convinced to accompany the PCs as they explore the dungeon complex and assist them in battling the

phaerimms and their underlings. However, at the conclusion of such a partnership, the alliance will likely fall apart when the tomb tapper demands any magic items found, including the *mythallar*.

## C29. More Larder/Hatchery

*Beyond an archway is a room holding more of the strange floating bodies.*

There are ten more of the implanted bodies floating in this room.

**Tactical Encounter:** C28: Phaerimm Nursery, page 78. This room and areas C28, C30, and C31 form a single encounter.

## C30. Empty Storage

*This dusty chamber is empty. Part of the western wall has been reduced to a section of pulverized rock.*

This storage area has been abandoned. It was recently used as an entrance by the tomb tapper in room C28, who tunneled through the wall, thus creating the pulverized section of stone.

**Tactical Encounter:** C28: Phaerimm Nursery, page 78. This room and areas C28, C29, and C31 form a single encounter.

**Development:** Two more tomb tappers enter this chamber and make their way into the corridor 5 rounds after the PCs first enter area C28. They react the same as their compatriot.

## C31. Nursery

*A layer of foul gore covers the floor of this otherwise unadorned chamber, some of it old and crusted but other bits quite fresh. A stray gnawed bone lies here and there, along with a number of partially eaten humanoid corpses.*

This chamber is used as a nursery for phaerimm hatchlings. They are watched over by their keeper until they are old enough to join the rest of the hive.

**Tactical Encounter:** C28: Phaerimm Nursery, page 78. This room and areas C28, C29, and C30 form a single encounter.

## C32. Cushtal's Chamber

*The walls of this chamber have been etched with images of the deep desert and a buried city of towers.*

The phaerimm Cushtal claims this chamber, which also holds his servitor guards.

**Tactical Encounter:** C32: Chambers of the Master, page 80. This room and areas C33 and C34 form a single encounter.



### C33. Drullister's chamber

*This chamber rises in a series of terraces to the north. Thick pillars engraved with acanthus leaves at their support an arched ceiling 60 feet overhead. In the center of the chamber, a column of fire spins in place. A large throne carved of stone sits at the head of the northernmost staircase.*

This chamber is used by the leader of this phaerimm hive, the mighty Drullister. A carefully concealed secret door in the south wall can be located with a successful DC 30 Search check. A peephole in the center of this secret door can be noticed with a successful DC 40 Spot check (DC 20 if within 5 feet). A portion of the north wall is actually an *illusory wall* hiding the tunnel at area C35 (Will DC 19 to disbelieve the illusion if interacted with).

**Tactical Encounter:** C32: Chambers of the Master, page 80. This room and areas C32 and C34 form a single encounter.

### C34. Treasury

*This chamber is crowded with uncounted treasures. A shaft of pure white light extends from floor to ceiling. Floating in this shaft, 5 feet off the floor, is a large open tome. Numerous chests, boxes, urns, and even a chariot are crowded into the room.*

This is the collected treasure of the phaerimm hive, augmented by the bribes paid by the Shadovars to secure the phaerimm alliance.

**Tactical Encounter:** C32: Chambers of the Master, page 80. This room and areas C32 and C33 form a single encounter.

**Treasure:** Piled upon the floor here are some treasures accumulated by the phaerimms, though most of their funds go toward the acquisition and creation of magic items. The treasure here totals 12,800 gp, 22,630 sp, 10,333 cp, 580 pp, and assorted gems worth a total of 3,800 gp. The chariot (5 feet wide, 10 feet long) is ancient and unusable but is set with copper plating that makes it worth 2,500 gp as an artifact of Netheril. Floating in the shaft of light, held aloft by a continual *levitate* effect, is the *Book of the Black* (see page 146). The *levitate* effect ends if the book is removed from the light.

### C35. Ancient tunnel

Beyond the *illusory wall* in the northeast corner of area C33 is an ancient passage crudely chiseled through the rock and descending over three flights of uneven stairs. The ceiling of this tunnel is 10 feet high. Augathra originally discovered this passage to the *mythallar* chamber—obviously not of construction original to the enclave—but who or what created it remains a mystery. The secret door at the far end of the stairway can be found with a successful DC 20 Search check.

**Development:** As the PCs descend this stair, the psyche of the Augathra sharn imprisoned in room C36 detects their pres-

ence and instinctively sends them a prophetic vision through the power of the *mythallar* in an attempt to communicate with them. All sentient creatures in this passage experience this vision at the same time as soon as it is triggered.

The vision occurs when any character reaches the bottom of the first flight of stairs. Read or paraphrase the following.

*Your view of the dusty tunnel is suddenly replaced by a dark sea. You stand upon its shores and look out over black waters whipped by the wind. The sky overhead is as dark as night, though you can see the sun—a sun that seems to be eclipsed by the invisible jaws of some great beast even as you watch, throwing your view into even deeper darkness.*

*Suddenly one single ray of light breaks free from this all-consuming shadow and shines in a brilliant shaft on something at the edge of the darkening sea. It is a young tree, tall and straight, its slim trunk sheathed in smooth, silvery bark—a beech tree, perhaps. From its limbs grow golden leaves that almost seem to give off a light of their own.*

*As you watch this tree, you see that its leaves are slowly undergoing a metamorphosis. One by one they shrivel into dark, spidery shells of themselves, blackening and curling before falling to the ground. There you can see that they take the form of strips of parchment or linen, seemingly charred but revealing glowing writing in symbols of power. Shadowy forms collect these fallen leaves and seem to be piecing them together.*

*The scene disappears in a flash, replaced by the image of a spider with an armored carapace of gold moving toward you. Then you stand once again on the dusty stone stair.*

This vision provides the PCs with a glimpse of the location of the *Quess Ar Teranthvar*, the tree-form of the *Nether Scrolls*, and the transformation it is undergoing to become more accessible to the Shadovars. The apparent eclipse seen in the vision is actually the bulk of the City of Shade occluding the sun. At the end of the vision, the PCs also catch a brief glimpse of the tree's guardian, the elf high mage Tyvollus Aluviirsan (detailed in Chapter 5), though they have no way of knowing that is whom they saw.

### C36. Mythallar chamber

*The door opens onto a narrow balcony overlooking a large room, the floor 30 feet below and the ceiling 30 feet above. Another balcony extends from the far side of the room, with a door beyond it. The ancient masonry walls of the room are cracked and obviously suffered a collapse at some point in the past, since the northern half of the room is buried under tons of debris from a cave-in. Suspended in the room on the edge of the debris, on a line between the two balconies, is a 5-foot-diameter sphere of crackling blue energy. Swirls of darkness appear to move within this sphere as if oil and water were held together in a bubble, unable to mix and each trying to gain dominance over the other.*





Illus. by Randy Gallegos

*A golden vision of light . . .*

*The side of the floating sphere nearest the debris bears a jagged gash from which sparks and small vortices of the sphere's energy flow out and disperse.*

This chamber was once the heart of Synod and held the city's *mythallar*. Like the *mythallars* of the other Netherese enclaves, this one failed when Karsus invoked his spell that disrupted the Weave and brought Netheril crashing into ruin. Unlike the other *mythallars*, however, this one was able to reconstitute itself as the Weave re-formed, albeit in a damaged state no longer capable of supporting its quasi-magic items. Instead it now exists in a state of slightly unstable, raw magical energy that the phaerimm have for years sought to harness in order to pierce the Sharn Wall. The Faceless Incanter (see area C37) has managed to infuse the damaged *mythallar* with the Shadow Weave, lending it some stability, and has been experimenting with how to best control this unique source of magical energy. The former *mythallar* is now a major artifact called the *Shadow Engine* (see page 148).

One other feature of this unique *mythallar* is that it contains the essence of the elder sharn that was formed when Augathra the Mad's experiment failed. The three personalities of this entrapped sharn—Augathra, Shar Cormrael, and the phaerimm Xeris—all struggle for dominance. They are unable

to escape from within the glowing sphere but can use its magic to manifest their own powers. The Augathra personality first noticed the presence of the PCs, and sent the vision to them on the stairway (area C35). The Xeris personality comes to the fore after they enter area C36, however, and uses its power to draw upon the spirits of many of the fallen Netherese whose psyches had been absorbed by the *mythallar* in the moments before their death.

**Tactical Encounter:** C36: Mythallar Chamber, page 84.

**Development:** After the orb wraith has been defeated, the Xeris personality is exhausted and becomes dormant, and the sharn's Shar Cormrael personality takes control and confronts the PCs. Because of her own prescience as a Dark Diviner of Windsong Tower, she is aware of why the PCs are here and what they hope to accomplish. She knows that the PCs seek the means to stop the Shadovars from gaining the secrets of the *Nether Scrolls* and that the Augathra personality holds the key to providing this means. However, she refuses to divulge this information to the PCs. After the orb wraith is defeated, read or paraphrase the following:

*The glowing orb flashes once, and now a new form is visible in its depths, a black teardrop-shaped creature with three smooth, eyeless beads. Two massive arm-trunks flare from the sides of its body,*



and another one sprouts from its back. Each arm-trunk supports three smaller arms equipped with clawed, three-fingered hands. Each of the nine small hands has multiple small eyes covering it. The central head seems to glare at you with an eyeless stare, its toothy maw curled in a snarl of defeat. Then, in the blink of an eye, the heads seem to shift—the snarling head is relegated to a secondary position, and a different one assumes the central, dominant position.

This new head speaks in a feminine voice, saying, “This Dark Diviner knows why you have come. You work against the will of Shar. You will find no help here.”

The reference to the Dark Diviner should tip off the PCs that they are dealing with Shar Cormrael (confirmed with a successful DC 25 Knowledge [history] or Knowledge [religion] check, or by simply asking the creature). The sharn is protected from all forms of attack or mental domination by the *Shadow Engine*. Her attitude is unfriendly. If it can be adjusted to friendly with a Diplomacy check or an Intimidate check, she will relent and allow the PCs to communicate with the Augathra personality. Factors that can contribute to the success or failure of this check are given below.

- 5 A PC is an obvious follower of Selûne.
- 2 The PCs attempt an Intimidate check rather than a Diplomacy check.
- +2 The PCs mention the killing of phaerimms.
- +2 The PCs bear a *Windsong Towerkin ring*.
- +5 A PC is a follower of Shar, or is a shadow adept.
- +7 The PCs promise to find a way to free the sharn (and manage to make a successful Bluff check opposed by the sharn’s Sense Motive modifier of +9 if this promise is insincere).
- +10 Shar Cormrael is allowed to examine the *Book of the Black*.

After the party has dealt with Shar Cormrael (successfully or unsuccessfully), the Faceless Incanter launches an attack from room C37.

**Tactical Encounter:** C37: The Faceless Incanter, page 82.

If the Faceless Incanter is defeated, the PCs can make another attempt to influence the attitude of the sharn (if the first was unsuccessful) with a +5 bonus on the check.

### MEETING WITH AUGATHRA THE MAD

After the PCs have secured permission to address the Augathra personality of the sharn, the triple heads seem to shift again, and another one lies in the position of prominence. It merely gazes out with a lidless stare upon the party for a moment without speaking before the characters are launched into another vision.

Once again reality is ripped apart, depositing you at another place and time. The golden beech tree you saw earlier stands alone beneath a turbulent purple sky, a continuous layer of clouds rolling past punctuated here and there by flashes of lightning. Shadowy humanoids, similar to those you just faced, stand in a ring nearby, enacting some ritual. The blackened leaves of the tree that had fallen in your previous vision have now been stitched together into a series of ashen scrolls that serve as the focal point of this ritual. Power throbs from the harsh words spoken by the master of this ceremony.

With the utterance of the master’s last syllable, a pulse is felt, like the pressure of deep water popping your ears. A silvery image appears in the air, depicting a circle of seven stars with red mist flowing from their center. This circle is ripped asunder and replaced by a black disk with a purple border. The light flickers and is replaced almost immediately by a shadowy illumination that distorts colors and places everything under a dark pall.

This vision provided by Augathra shows a possible future, which the PCs instinctively understand can be averted if any one of them makes a successful DC 12 Wisdom check. The vision depicts the destruction of Mystra and the Weave through the power of Shar and the secrets of the *Nether Scrolls*—and the subsequent ascendance of the Shadow Weave in its place. The PCs can guess at this interpretation, or they can perceive its significance with certainty by making a successful DC 15 Knowledge (arcana) or DC 20 Knowledge (religion) check.

After this, Augathra provides one more vision before she and the other sharn personalities go quiescent and no longer communicate in any way. Read:

*The flashing chaos of a third vision comes over you. You see the golden beech tree once again, though this time still with its shining leaves upon its branches in the early stages of their shriveling decline. But now you see a jewel-encrusted chalice of alabaster floating beside the tree. It tips and pours a golden liquid on the roots of the tree. At the touch of the liquid, the tree bursts into a column of purifying flame and in moments is reduced to a fine ash along with those shriveled, scroll-like leaves that had already fallen. This ash disperses in the breeze as shadowy creatures looking on howl in rage and frustration. There is a flicker, and a shadowy wall you had not noticed before disappears, leaving the scene brighter and with truer colors than were displayed in it a moment before.*

*The images begin to swirl in a flashing display that sharpens to again show a golden spider, then reveals the image of a wizened, hollow-eyed humanoid with stringy white hair. Finally the colors swirl once more before forming an image of the alabaster goblet, a solar disk prominently displayed. It is this floating afterimage that remains in your sight as the vision fades. A cracked voice whispers in your ears: “Let my final words guide you.”*



This final vision reveals the *Chalice of Amaunator* (see page 147) and its necessary role in destroying the *Quest Ar Teranthvar* and scattering the *Nether Scrolls* to keep them out of the hands of the Shadovars. It also hints that using the chalice in this way will destroy the Sharn Wall. It once again gives a glimpse of Tyvillus Aluviirsan, this time in both his spider form and his natural form, but provides no explanation as to his identity.

## C37. chamber of the faceless incanter

*This chamber is unadorned except for a half-dozen bedrolls. Based on the amount of debris and number of personal items scattered about the chamber, it appears that this chamber has served as a bivouac for some time.*

This room is occupied by the Faceless Incanter and his krinth servants. The Faceless Incanter is a shade whose face is featureless except for a mouth orifice and two blank eyes, giving no hint as to his identity. He is actually a special *simulacrum*, prepared and disguised by Hadrhune of Thultanthar to serve as ambassador and liaison with the phaerimms as he studies the *Shadow Engine*.

This room is under the effect of a *Mordenkainen's private sanctum* spell.

**Tactical Encounter:** C37: The Faceless Incanter, page 82. This room and area C36 form a single encounter.

**Treasure:** Hidden beneath the Faceless Incanter's bedroll (Search DC 11) is a leather chest. Within it are a number of dried and brittle papers covered in cramped and chaotic handwriting. They are obviously ancient and are written in Netherese, the language of Low Netheril. If translated by magic or a successful DC 30 Decipher Script check, they are determined to be the incomplete remnants of Augathra the Mad's personal notes and experiments, spanning centuries. They were recovered by the phaerimms and given to the Faceless Incanter to study. If the papers are reviewed for at least 4 hours, the following bits of relevant information can be gleaned. Each item requires a successful DC 20 Intelligence check to be sifted from the rambling and chaotic writings of the parchments.

- Augathra the Mad and, later, Alaundo the Seer composed their Roll of Years, building upon the works of previous diviners.
- As Augathra received her visions during the day and interpreted them using these older divinations to compose her prophecies for the Roll of Years, at night in her sleep she likewise received unwelcome visions from some unknown source. These nocturnal prophecies, woven between the years, formed the Black Chronology, prophecies of dark secrets and hidden knowledge that she penned into a work called the *Book of the Black*.
- The secrets of the Black Chronology drove Augathra to madness and cursed her to a seemingly eternal existence. Augathra hypothesized that these secrets and this curse were the work of the primordial deity of the night, Shar. She believed that Shar revealed this Black Chronology in hopes of bringing about the destruction of the Weave and the goddess Mystryl. It hints at the involvement of an archwizard named Karsus.
- After many failed suicide attempts over the centuries, Augathra resolved to become one of the sharns in an attempt to remove Shar's curse over her. A secondary note in the margin of this section mentions that if this plan proves impossible, she will seek out and consult one of the diviners whose work she used in her Roll of Years. She refers to him as a Netherese archwizard called the Terraseer, and the writing hints that he actually predates Netheril by thousands of years.
- Augathra's final note states that she has a strange foreboding about the outcome of the sharn transformation she is about to attempt, and her writings end with the statement "Terraseer still lives, according to the Sight. Seek him for answers."

This last statement alludes to Augathra's desire to overcome her madness, but it just as easily applies to the PCs' predicament, since they must locate the mysterious chalice of their visions. This fact they can confirm through Augathra's words to them, and by divinations as simple as an *augury* spell.



# ENTRANCE TO SYNOD

## Encounter Level 16

### setup

This encounter occurs only if the party hasn't already encountered these creatures outside in the excavation. Do not place any monsters on the map that the party cannot see. Add them as they react to the party and come in range of their sight.

When the PCs first see the dragonflesh golem in the shadows, read:

*A hideous draconic creature—the stitched-together conglomeration of parts of many different dragons—crouches before you. Emblazoned prominently on its chest is a giant brand depicting a flame with eyes burning above a dragon's claw.*

When the party sees a phaerlin giant for the first time, read:

*A twisted, howling giant lumbers toward you. Jagged teeth and broken claws promise a rending you won't soon forget, if you live to tell the tale. Beneath crude hide armor, the beast's own leathery skin has an unnatural scaled, pebbly texture.*

### tactics

These creatures serve as both the minders of the genasi slaves and the guardians to the entrance of the ruins. An alarm is immediately raised if intruders are spotted, and all such creatures converge on the disturbance. No one is sent deeper into the dungeon to raise the alarm, because the entrance's beholder commander is supremely confident in its ability to fend off attackers. The giants immediately rage when battle is joined, so non-raging statistics have not been provided for them.

If the beholder joins in the defense of this area, refer to page 75 for its statistics.

### development

A successful DC 20 Knowledge (arcana) check identifies the brand on the dragonflesh golem as the symbol of the Cult of the Dragon. This is a ruse concocted by the phaerimms to keep suspicion from falling on them for their activities in this area. A successful DC 30 Knowledge (arcana) check reveals that the Cult would consider a creature such as the dragonflesh golem to be a horrid abomination worthy only of destruction—thus uncovering the phaerimms' attempted deception.

### DRAGONFLESH GOLEM<sup>MM2</sup>

**CR 14**
**hp** 205 (30 HD); **DR** 15/adamantine

**N** Huge construct

**Init** +0; **Senses** blindsight 150 ft., darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, Listen +3, Spot +3

**Aura** frightful presence 30 ft.

**Languages** cannot speak, understands Common

**AC** 24, touch 7, flat-footed 24

**Immune** ability damage, ability drain, critical hits, death effects, death from massive damage, disease, energy drain, exhaustion, fatigue, magic, mind-affecting spells and abilities (charms, compulsions, phantasms, patterns, and morale effects), necromancy effects, nonlethal damage, paralysis, poison, sleep effects, stunning, any effect that requires a Fortitude save unless it also works on objects; immunity to magic

**Fort** +10, **Ref** +9, **Will** +13

**Speed** 40 ft. (8 squares) (can't run), fly 120 ft. (poor)

**Melee** bite +30 (3d6+10) and

2 claws +25 each (2d6+5) and

2 wings +25 each (1d8+5) and

tail slap +25 (2d6+15)

**Space** 15 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft. (15 ft. with bite)

**Base Atk** +22; **Grp** +40

**Abilities** Str 30, Dex 9, Con —, Int 4, Wis 17, Cha 17

**SQ** construct traits, immunity to magic

**Frightful Presence (Ex)** A dragonflesh golem can unsettle foes with its mere presence. The ability takes effect automatically whenever it attacks, charges, or flies overhead. Creatures within 30 feet are subject to the effect if they have fewer than 30 HD. A potentially affected creature that succeeds on a DC 28 Will save remains immune to that golem's frightful presence for 24 hours. On a failure, creatures with 4 or less HD become panicked for 4d6 rounds and those with 5 or more HD become shaken for 4d6 rounds.

**Immunity to Magic (Ex)** A dragonflesh golem is immune to any spell or spell-like ability that allows spell resistance. In addition, certain spells and effects function differently against the creature, as noted below.

A magical attack that deals cold or fire damage slows the golem (as the *slow* spell) for 2d6 rounds with no saving throw.

A magical attack that deals electricity damage breaks any *slow* effect on the golem and heals 1 point of damage for every 3 points of damage the attack would otherwise deal. A dragonflesh golem gets no saving throw against attacks that deal electricity damage.



**4 PHAERLIN GIANTS<sup>MON</sup> (RAGING)****CR 8**

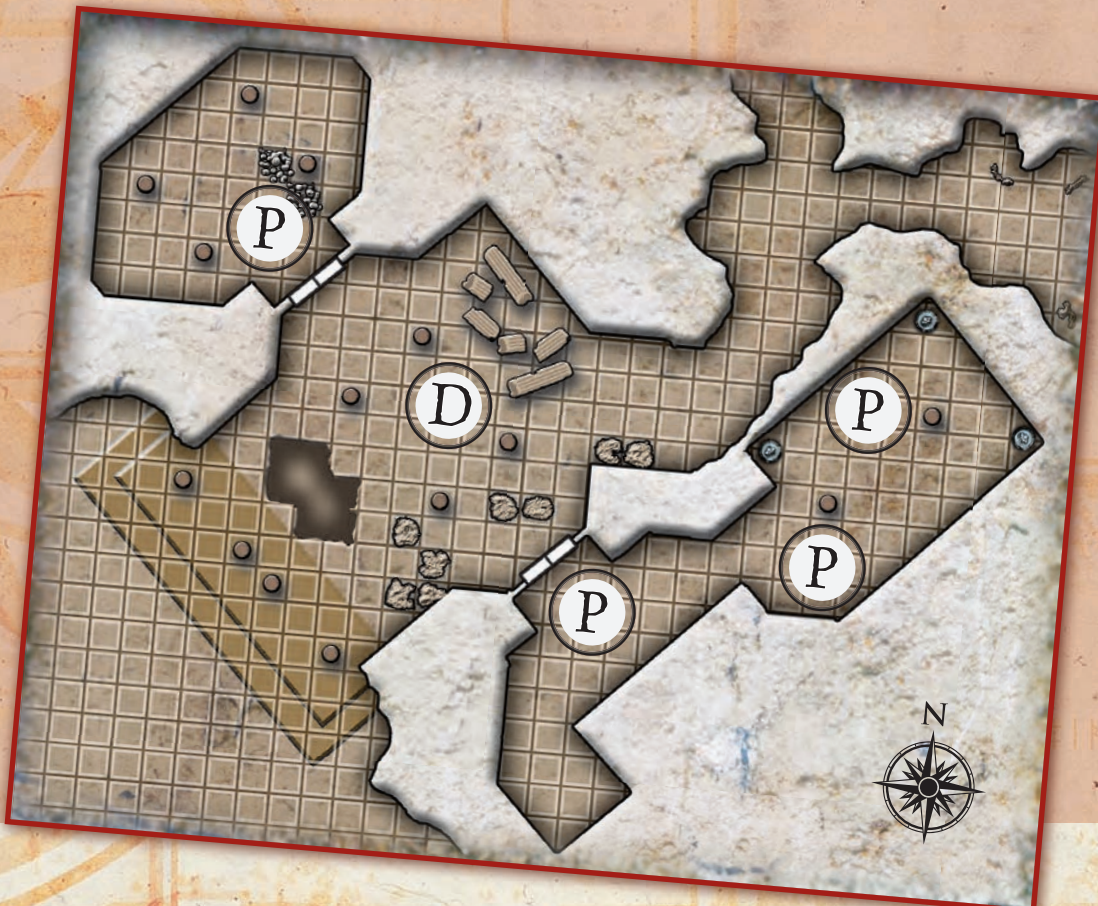
hp 146 each (13 HD)

Male or female phaerlin giant barbarian 5

NE Huge giant (earth)

**Init** +3; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Listen +6, Spot +7**Aura** frightful presence 30 ft.**Languages** Common, Giant**AC** 19, touch 6, flat-footed 19; improved uncanny dodge**SR** 19**Fort** +16, **Ref** +2, **Will** +4**Speed** 20 ft. (4 squares) in hide armor, base speed 30 ft.**Melee** 2 claws +18 each (2d4+8) and  
bite +16 (1d8+4)**Space** 15 ft.; **Reach** 15 ft.**Base Atk** +11; **Grp** +23**Atk Options** Cleave, Power Attack, rage 2/day (9 rounds)**Abilities** Str 26, Dex 9, Con 22, Int 8, Wis 8, Cha 9**SQ** trap sense +1**Feats** Alertness, Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Initiative, Multiattack, Power Attack**Skills** Climb +13, Jump +9, Listen +6, Spot +7, Survival +2**Possessions** hide armor**Frightful Presence (Ex)** A phaerlin giant initiates combat with a dreadful howling roar as a free action that strikes terror in the hearts of its foes. Creatures within 30 feet are subject to the effect if they have fewer than 13 HD. A potentially affected creature that succeeds on a DC 15 Will save remains immune to that giant's frightful presence for 24 hours. On a failure, a creature becomes shaken for 4d6 rounds.**FEATURES OF THE AREA****Crevice:** The crevice is 30 feet deep. It is roughly 8 feet across and 20 feet long. The golem is able to easily step across it without danger of falling. A fall causes 4d6 points of damage due to the jagged rock lining the bottom of the crevice. Climbing its crumbling walls requires a successful DC 25 Climb check.**Rubble Piles/Skull Piles:** The results of minor collapses or the remains of executed genasi slaves left to serve as a warning to cow the others, these features count as dense rubble and

require 2 squares of movement to enter. The DCs of Balance and Tumble checks are increased by 5, and the DC of Move Silently checks is increased by 2. The golem is unaffected by these features.

**Broken Pillars:** As rubble piles above, though anyone standing atop them gains a +1 bonus on attack rolls for being on higher ground.**Pillars:** A creature standing in the same square as a pillar gains a +2 cover bonus to Armor Class and a +1 cover bonus on Reflex saves.



# ABANDONED GUARDHOUSE

Encounter Level 13

## setup

Do not place the dust wights on the map until the party is aware of their presence (has caught them by surprise, is employing *see invisibility*, or through some other means).

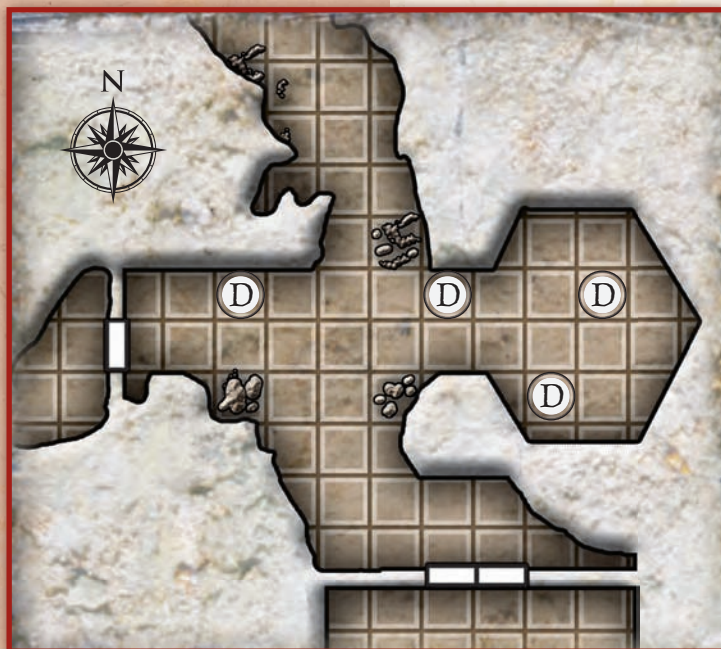
## tactics

When these creatures become aware of the PCs, either through the sound of the door opening in area C7, or the noise of the battle with the living holocausts to the north, they immediately turn invisible and cast their *haste* spells upon themselves. The dust wights prefer to allow intruders to begin to explore, enabling the creatures to move into flanking positions, before attacking. All subtlety is abandoned if they are discovered, or if PCs begin succumbing to their petrifying clouds.

## FEATURES OF THE AREA

**Rubble Piles:** The results of minor collapses, these piles require 2 squares of movement to enter. The DC of Balance and Tumble checks increase by 5, and the DC of Move Silently checks increased by 2. Anyone behind a rubble pile gains cover from those on the other side and concealment if crouching down.

**Partial Cave-in:** A portion of the tunnel leading north has collapsed, reducing it to an opening 3 feet wide and 4 feet high. This opening is considered to be a narrow and low cramped space for Medium creatures and requires a successful Escape Artist check for Large creatures. Medium creatures move at one-quarter normal speed through this area and take a -4 penalty on attack rolls with light weapons and a -8 penalty on attack rolls with one-handed weapons. Two-handed weapons cannot be used. Medium creatures take a -4 penalty to Armor Class and lose any Dexterity bonus while squeezing through the cramped space.



## 4 EVOLVED DUST WIGHTS<sup>MM3</sup>

CR 9

hp 120 each (16 HD); fast healing 3; DR 5/adamantine

CE Medium undead (earth)

Init -1; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +11, Spot +11

Languages Terran

AC 23, touch 10, flat-footed 22

Immune undead immunities

Fort +7, Ref +5, Will +10

Weakness vulnerability to elemental turning

Speed 40 ft. with *haste* (8 squares); base speed 20 ft.

Melee\* 3 slams +12 each (2d6+9/19-20)

\* 3-point Power Attack

Base Atk +8; Grp +14

Atk Options Improved Sunder, Power Attack, crumbling touch

Special Actions petrifying cloud

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 16th):

1/day—*greater invisibility*†, *haste*†

† already used

Abilities Str 23, Dex 8, Con —, Int 8, Wis 11, Cha 13

SQ undead traits

Feats Great Fortitude, Improved Critical (slam), Improved Natural Attack (slam), Improved Sunder, Improved Toughness, Power Attack

Skills Hide +11, Listen +11, Move Silently +11, Search +10, Spot +11

**Crumbling Touch (Su)** A dust wight's slam attack, in addition to dealing damage, weakens objects crafted of metal or stone. Each time a creature is struck by a slam attack from a dust wight, any metal or stone armor worn by the target takes 2d8+10 points of damage (Fortitude DC 24 half). If this attack destroys the armor, the dust wight gains 5 temporary hit points.

**Petrifying Cloud (Su)** A dust wight is surrounded by a cloud of dusty particles. Any living creature that comes within 5 feet of a dust wight must succeed on a DC 19 Fortitude save or become petrified 1 round later. During the intervening round, the petrification can be halted by *stone shape* or *move earth*. A creature that saves can't be affected by the same dust wight's petrifying cloud for 24 hours.

**Vulnerability to Elemental Turning (Ex)** A character who can turn or rebuke undead and also turn or rebuke earth creatures gains a +2 bonus on turning checks to turn or rebuke a dust wight.



# AVGATHRA'S ENTRANCE

Encounter Level 15

## setup

Place the living holocausts in the indicated squares.

## tactics

The living holocausts have just discovered this entrance and attack any who approach from either direction, using their whirlflame ability as soon as possible.



## 2 LIVING HOLOCAUSTS<sup>FF</sup>

CR 13

hp 112 each (15 HD); regeneration 5; DR 15/magic and good

CE Small elemental (air, extraplanar, fire)

Init +9; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +21, Spot +21

Aura fiery aura 30 ft.

Languages Abyssal, Auran, Ignan

AC 16, touch 16, flat-footed 11

Immune fire, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning

SR 24

Fort +8, Ref +14, Will +10

Weakness vulnerability to cold

Speed fly 50 ft. (10 squares) (perfect); can't run

Melee fiery windspike +18/+13/+8 (1d6/19–20 plus 1d6 fire) or

Melee touch +18/+13/+8 (1d6 fire)

Base Atk +11; Grp —

Atk Options air mastery, burn, whirlflame

Abilities Str —, Dex 20, Con 17, Int 14, Wis 16, Cha 15

SQ air subtype, elemental traits, fire subtype, gaseous

Feats Combat Reflexes, Improved Critical (fiery windspike), Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (fiery windspike)

Skills Diplomacy +4, Hide +17\*, Listen +21, Sense Motive +21, Spot +21

**Air Mastery (Ex)** A living holocaust gains a +1 bonus on its attack and damage rolls if its opponent is airborne.

**Burn (Ex)** Any creature hit by a living holocaust or that hits it with a natural weapon or an unarmed strike must succeed on a DC 20 Reflex save or catch on fire (DMG 303). The fire burns for 1d4 rounds.

**Fiery Aura (Ex)** Anyone within 30 feet of a living holocaust must succeed on a DC 20 Fortitude save or take 1d6 points of fire damage from the intense heat.

**Fiery Windspike (Ex)** Although gaseous, a living holocaust can whirl its form into a spike of superheated air and fire, dealing 1d6 points of damage plus 1d6 points of fire damage. A living holocaust can choose to make a melee touch attack instead to deal 1d6 points of fire damage.

**Gaseous (Ex)** The body of a living holocaust is naturally gaseous, as the *gaseous form* spell. Despite its gaseous nature, it can speak, cast spells that have only verbal components, and use its abilities. The creature can pass through small holes or narrow openings, but it can't run.

**Regeneration (Ex)** A living holocaust takes normal damage from cold and weapons that are both magic and good-aligned.

**Whirlflame (Su)** A living holocaust can transform itself into a whirlwind of flame once every 10 minutes and remain in that form for up to 7 rounds. In this form, the creature can move through the air or just above a solid or liquid surface at a fly speed of 60 feet (perfect). The whirlflame is 5 feet wide at its base, 10 to 20 feet tall, and 10 to 30 feet wide at the top. The living holocaust controls its dimensions within these parameters.

Creature caught in a whirlflame take 3d6 points of fire damage each round. In addition, Large or smaller creatures can take damage from the wind and be lifted into the air by its powerful force. A Large or smaller creature caught in the whirlflame's area must succeed on a DC 22 Reflex save or take 2d6 points of damage due to the force of the winds. It must also make a second DC 22 Reflex save or be picked up bodily and held suspended in the powerful winds and burning flames. A creature that can fly is allowed a DC 22 Reflex save each round to escape the whirlwind. The creature still takes damage but can leave the whirlflame if the save is successful.

A living holocaust can eject any carried creature whenever it wishes, depositing it wherever the whirlflame happens to be.

**Skills** The heat and light a living holocaust emits cause it to take a –10 penalty on Hide checks. \*In areas of other flames and fire (such as a burning building) or in any substantial blaze, living holocausts have a +10 racial bonus on Hide checks instead of the regular penalty.



# CHAPEL OF AMAVNATOR

Encounter Level 16

## Setup

Do not place the dream vestige on the map until it appears. It can appear at any location in room C11, C13, or C14, but prefers C11 for the greater space available. Place the mummified stinger (S) on the map when the party first sees it.

When the dream vestige first appears, read:

*A mist rises from the cracks in the flagstones of the floor and coalesces into a river of fog flowing toward you like an unbound cataract. A series of soft cries, moans, and laughs emanate from within this unnatural fog bank.*

When the party sees the stinger for the first time, read:

*Towering before you is a strange mixture of human and scorpion. Its desiccated human upper torso is wrapped in tattered linen strips, and its lower body is the armored form of a monstrous scorpion, complete with tail and stinger.*

## Tactics

Each round that the characters remain in this area, there is a cumulative 10% chance per round that the lost souls of Synod respond to the PCs' presence by forming the vengeful dream vestige. This chance increases to 30% each round if battle is joined with the stinger. The stinger remains inert until room C14 is entered or the dream vestige appears, in which case it emerges to battle the intruders. The two creatures are not allied, but they work together somewhat in their efforts to destroy those present. The dream vestige attempts to consume any living creatures present. It does not use its dream travel ability, preferring to remain within the ruins of its city. The dream vestige does not enter room C12.

## FEATURES OF THE AREA

**Broken Flagstones:** The floors of rooms C11, C13, and C14 consist of broken and uneven flagstones. A successful DC 10 Balance check is required to run or charge across this surface. Failure means a character can't move in that round.

**Pillars/Statues:** A creature standing in the same square as a pillar or statue gains a +2 cover bonus to Armor Class and a +1 cover bonus on Reflex saves. The large statue can be climbed with a successful DC 15 Climb check.

**Broken Pews/Table:** A character can climb or jump onto these to gain a +1 melee attack bonus for being on higher ground. A successful DC 10 Jump check is required to jump onto the table in room C14 as part of a move action. Otherwise an entire move action is necessary to climb atop it. The pews can be surmounted as part of a normal move action but not as part of a 5-foot step. The surface of the pews counts as difficult terrain (each square costs 2 squares of movement).

**Shelves:** Stone shelves, still partially intact, line portions of these walls. They do not hamper movement and are constructed into the walls, so they cannot be tipped over.





**DREAM VESTIGE<sup>LM</sup>****CR 16**

hp 110 (17 HD); DR 10/—

CE Huge undead (incorporeal)

**Init** +9; **Senses** blindsight 120 ft., darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +25, Spot +25**Aura** desecrating aura 20 ft., frightful presence 60 ft., deflective aura**Languages** All languages prevalent in Faerûn, including Thoross and Netherese**AC** 31, touch 31, flat-footed 26**Immune** undead immunities; can be harmed only by other incorporeal creatures, magic weapons, spells, spell-like abilities, or supernatural abilities**Resist** 50% chance to ignore any damage from a corporeal source (except force effects and attacks made with ghost touch weapons); **SR** 28**Fort** +9, **Ref** +14, **Will** +19**Speed** fly 40 ft. (8 squares) (perfect); can pass through solid objects (but not force effects) at will, moves silently (cannot be heard with Listen checks unless desired)**Melee** 4 tendrils +15 each (3d6+2 plus form consumption)**Space** 15 ft.; **Reach** 20 ft.**Base Atk** +8; **Grp** +16**Atk Options** Combat Reflexes, form consumption**Abilities** Str —, Dex 20, Con —, Int 18, Wis 20, Cha 20**SQ** dream travel, incorporeal traits, self spawn, undead traits**Feats** Combat Reflexes, Great Fortitude, Iron Will, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Weapon Finesse**Skills** Concentration +25, Diplomacy +7, Hide +17, Listen, Move Silently +25, Search +24, Sense Motive +25, Spellcraft +24, Spot +25, Survival +5 (+7 following tracks)

**Desecrating Aura (Su)** A dream vestige gives off a 20-foot-radius emanation of utter desecration, imbuing its surroundings with negative energy. This ability works much like a *desecrate* spell, except the vestige itself is treated as the shrine of an evil power. All undead within 20 feet of the dream vestige (including the creature itself) gain a +2 profane bonus on attack rolls, damage rolls, and saving throws, and +2 hit points per HD (already included in the statistics above). Turning checks made against undead within this area take a –6 penalty.

A dream vestige's desecrating aura cannot be dispelled except by *dispel evil* or a similar effect. If the effect is dispelled, the dream vestige can resume it as a

free action on its next turn. Its desecrating aura is suppressed if a dream vestige enters a consecrated or hallowed area, but the dream vestige's presence also suppresses the consecrated or hallowed effect for as long as it remains in the area.

**Form Consumption (Su)** Each touch by a dream vestige's tendril drains a portion of the victim's mind (though non-intelligent or mindless creatures are immune to a dream vestige's lascivious caresses). Each touch deals 1d4 points of Intelligence drain to the victim. When a dream vestige drains a victim's Intelligence, it gains 5 temporary hit points, no matter how many points it drains. Should a dream vestige ever acquire a number of temporary hit points equal to its full normal hit points, it self spawns (see below).

At the beginning of a dream vestige's subsequent action after a creature has been drained to 0 Intelligence, the victim's body is automatically engulfed and dissolved by the dream vestige, leaving nothing behind, not even dust.

**Frightful Presence (Su)** A dream vestige can inspire terror by charging or attacking. Affected creatures must succeed on a DC 23 Will save or become shaken, remaining in that condition as long as they remain within 60 feet of the dream vestige. A creature that successfully saves cannot be affected by that dream vestige's frightful presence for 24 hours.

**Deflective Aura (Su)** A dream vestige is protected by a powerful aura of dream energy. This special aura increases its AC deflection bonus by 13 (in addition to its incorporeal deflection bonus of +5), which is already factored into the statistics above.

**Dream Travel (Su)** A dream vestige can pull itself fully into the world of dreams, leaving behind the waking world, as a standard action. For every minute the dream vestige moves through the dream region, it travels 5 miles in the waking world. A dream vestige can also use this ability to travel across planar borders, should it desire. A dream vestige always knows where it will come out in the waking world.

**Self Spawn (Ex)** When a dream vestige gains a number of temporary hit points equal to its full normal hit point total, it self spawns, splitting into two identical dream vestiges, each with a number of hit points equal to the original dream vestige's full normal total.

**MUMMIFIED STINGER<sup>MON</sup>****CR 10**

hp 45 (7 HD); DR 5/—

Male mummified stinger ranger 3

LE Large undead (augmented)

**Init** +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 60 ft.; Listen +8, Spot +8**Aura** despair**Languages** Tlincalli**AC** 21, touch 11, flat-footed 19**Immune** undead immunities**Fort** +6, **Ref** +9, **Will** +7**Weakness** vulnerability to fire**Speed** 20 ft. (4 squares)**Melee** stinger +13 (1d6+7 plus poison plus mummy rot) and 2 slams +8 each (2d6+3 plus mummy rot)**Base Atk** +7; **Grp** +18**Atk Options** favored enemy humans +2, mummy rot, poison (DC 16, 1d6 Str/1d6 Str)**Abilities** Str 24, Dex 14, Con —, Int 6, Wis 14, Cha 16**SQ** bolthole magic, undead traits, wild empathy +4 (+0 magical beasts)**Feats** Endurance<sup>B</sup>, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (spiked chain), Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Track<sup>B</sup>, Two-Weapon Fighting<sup>B</sup>**Skills** Hide +6, Listen +8, Move Silently +5, Search +4, Spot +8, Survival +5 (+7 following tracks)

**Bolthole Magic (Sp)** A stinger can move 20 feet straight up or down, so long as it passes through at least a foot of earth during its movement. For every 5 feet (or fraction thereof) of earth a stinger moves through, it takes 1d3 points of damage. If a stinger's planned movement would place it inside a solid object, it remains in place but suffers the damage as if it had moved through the intervening earth.

**Despair (Su)** At the mere sight of a mummified stinger, the viewer must succeed on a DC 16 Will save or be paralyzed with fear for 1d4 rounds. Whether or not the save is successful, that creature cannot be affected again by the same mummified stinger's despair ability for 24 hours.

**Mummy Rot (Su)** Supernatural disease—slam, Fortitude DC 16, incubation period 1 minute; damage 1d6 Con and 1d6 Cha.

Unlike normal diseases, mummy rot continues until the victim reaches Constitution 0 (and dies) or is cured.



# HIDDEN TOMBS

Encounter Level 16

## setup

Do not place the creatures on the map until they are encountered or otherwise spotted by the PCs.

## tactics

If battle is joined with the diamond golems, any surviving crypt cats and mummies immediately converge on the scene to assist them in the defense of the true tomb. Likewise, if room C19 is penetrated, any surviving undead or golems head there to expel intruders. None of these creatures pursue into room C11 or beyond.

## FEATURES OF THE AREA

**Coffins/Sarcophagi:** The squares that a coffin or sarcophagus take up are considered difficult terrain, which costs 2 squares of movement to enter and prevents running or charging. The sarcophagi require a successful DC 10 Strength check to slide the lid off; wooden coffins require only a move action to open.

**Trap:** See area C15 (page 54).



## 4 CRYPT CATS

CR 5

hp 39 each (6 HD); DR 5/bludgeoning

NE Large undead

**Init** +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., scent; Listen +4, Spot +4

**AC** 18, touch 11, flat-footed 16

**Immune** undead immunities

**Fort** +2, **Ref** +4, **Will** +6

**Weakness** vulnerability to fire

**Speed** 40 ft. (8 squares)

**Melee** 2 claws +8 each (1d6+5 plus disease) and bite +5 (1d8+2 plus disease)

**Space** 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

**Base Atk** +3; **Grp** +12

**Atk Options** disease, improved grab, pounce, rake 1d8+2 plus disease

**Abilities** Str 21, Dex 14, Con —, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 12

**SQ** undead traits

**Feats** Improved Initiative, Multiattack, Weapon Focus (claw)

**Skills** Climb +8, Hide +6, Move Silently +6, Jump +9, Listen +4, Spot +4

**Pounce (Ex)** If a crypt cat charges a foe, it can make a full attack, including two rake attacks.

**Improved Grab (Ex)** To use this ability, a crypt cat must hit with a claw or bite attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking attacks of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and can rake.

**Rake (Ex)** Attack bonus +8 melee, 1d8+2 plus disease

**Disease (Ex)** Supernatural disease—claw or bite, Fortitude DC 14, incubation period 1 round; the wound becomes red and inflamed and will not completely heal; 1 point of damage per failed save remains even with magic healing.

Only a *heal* or *remove disease* spell allows the wound to completely heal. One such spell allows all such wounds to be healed normally.

**Skills** Crypt cats have a +4 racial bonus on Hide, Move Silently, and Jump checks.



**DEATHSHRIEKER**<sup>MM3</sup>

**CR 15**

hp 135 (18 HD)

CE Medium undead (incorporeal)

**Init** +11; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +17, Spot +17

**Aura** despair

**Languages** Thoross

**AC** 28, touch 28, flat-footed 21

**Immune** undead immunities; can be harmed only by other incorporeal creatures, magic weapons, spells, spell-like abilities, or supernatural abilities

**Resist** 50% chance to ignore any damage from a corporeal source (except force effects and attacks made with ghost touch weapons); +4 turn resistance

**Fort** +8, **Ref** +13, **Will** +15

**Weakness** vulnerability to silence

**Speed** fly 40 ft. (8 squares) (good); can pass through solid objects (but not force effects) at will, moves silently (cannot be heard with Listen checks unless desired)

**Melee** incorporeal touch +16 touch (1d8 Cha)

**Base Atk** +9; **Grp** +9

**Atk Options** Combat Reflexes, Charisma drain, death rattle, scream of the dying

**Abilities** Str —, Dex 25, Con —, Int 8, Wis 14, Cha 20

**SQ** incorporeal traits, undead traits

**Feats** Ability Focus (scream of the dying), Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Improved Toughness, Iron Will

**Skills** Hide +17, Intimidate +19, Listen +17, Search +12, Spot +17

**Charisma Drain (Su)** An individual struck by a deathshrieker must make a successful DC 24 Fortitude save or permanently lose 1d4 points of Charisma (2d4 points on a critical hit). The deathshrieker heals 5 points of damage (10 on a critical hit) whenever it drains Charisma, gaining any excess as temporary hit points.

**Death Rattle (Su)** When a deathshrieker is reduced to 0 hit points, it releases a final, devastating shriek. All living creatures within a 300-foot spread must succeed on a DC 24 Will save or gain 1d4 negative levels. Creatures that cannot hear or are under the effect of a *silence* spell gain a +4 bonus on the save to resist this effect.

**Despair (Su)** At the mere sight of a deathshrieker, the viewer must succeed on a DC 24 Will save or be paralyzed with fear for 1d4 rounds.

**Scream of the Dying (Su)** Once per day, as a full-round action, a deathshrieker can release a soul-numbing scream that lasts for up to 3 rounds. After this first round, a deathshrieker can use a standard action to sustain the scream. This attack affects all living creatures within a 30-foot spread or within a 60-foot cone (creature's option). Once chosen, the shape cannot be changed, and the cone cannot be redirected. Creatures caught in this area must make a successful DC 26 Will save or suffer the effects described below. Creatures that cannot hear or are under a *silence* spell gain a +4 bonus on their saves. The effects are cumulative and concurrent.

Round 1: deafened 1d4 rounds; Round 2: stunned 1d3 rounds; Round 3: effects of *insanity* (CL 18th).

Normal conversation is impossible, and casting a spell that has a verbal component requires a successful DC 26 Concentration check.

**Vulnerability to Silence (Ex)** Deathshriekers are harmed by silence. To even enter the area of a *silence* spell, it must make a Will save (DC 12 + caster level). Each round it remains within that area, it takes 1d10 points of damage (Will half).

**2 DIAMOND GOLEMS**<sup>MON</sup>

**CR 12**

hp 107 each (14 HD); **DR** 30/adamantine and magic

N Large construct

**Init** +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Listen +1, Spot +1

**Languages** cannot speak, understands Thoross

**AC** 29, touch 10, flat-footed 29

**Immune** Construct immunities; immunity to magic

**Fort** +4, **Ref** +5, **Will** +5

**Weakness** vulnerability to *ki* strike

**Speed** 30 ft. (6 squares); can't run

**Melee** 2 slams +19 each (2d6+10)

**Space** 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

**Base Atk** +10; **Grp** +24

**Atk Options** targeted dispel

**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 15th):

At will—*true strike*

3/day—*sunbeam*

**Abilities** Str 31, Dex 12, Con —, Int —, Wis 12, Cha 1

**SQ** construct traits, immunity to magic

**Possessions** At the heart of a diamond golem is a perfect diamond worth 10,000 gp. It can only be recovered if the golem is destroyed, in which case the golem crumbles to dust, leaving the gemstone behind.

**Targeted Dispel (Su)** Any creature struck in melee by a diamond golem's slam attack is struck by a targeted *dispel magic* effect as if cast by a 16th-level wizard.

**Immunity to Magic (Ex)** A diamond golem is immune to any spell, spell-like ability, or supernatural ability except as follows: A *shatter* spell affects the golem normally, as does *imprisonment*. A *mending* spell heals the golem of all damage.

**Vulnerability to Ki (Ex)** A diamond golem can be struck and damaged by any character who possesses the *ki* strike ability that monks gain at 4th level. *Ki* strike (magic) is enough to overcome a diamond golem's damage reduction. Any *ki* strike attack deals an extra 1d6 points of damage for every version of *ki* strike the attacker possesses.

**3 MUMMIES**

**CR 5**

hp 55 each (8 HD); **DR** 5/—

LE Medium undead

**Init** +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +8, Spot +8

**Aura** despair

**Languages** Thoross

**AC** 20, touch 10, flat-footed 20

**Immune** undead immunities

**Fort** +4, **Ref** +2, **Will** +8

**Weakness** vulnerability to fire

**Speed** 20 ft. (4 squares)

**Melee** slam +11 (1d6+10 plus mummy rot)

**Base Atk** +4; **Grp** +11

**Atk Options** mummy rot

**Abilities** Str 24, Dex 10, Con —, Int 6, Wis 14, Cha 15

**SQ** undead traits

**Feats** Alertness, Great Fortitude, Toughness

**Skills** Hide +7, Listen +8, Move Silently +7, Spot +8

**Despair (Su)** At the mere sight of a mummy, the viewer must succeed on a DC 16 Will save or be paralyzed with fear for 1d4 rounds. Whether or not the save is successful, that creature cannot be affected again by the same mummy's despair ability for 24 hours.

**Mummy Rot (Su)** Supernatural disease—slam, Fortitude DC 16, incubation period 1 minute; damage 1d6 Con and 1d6 Cha.

Unlike normal diseases, mummy rot continues until the victim reaches Constitution 0 (and dies) or is cured.



# WATERFALL

Encounter Level 14

## setup

Place the death tyrant in the indicated position. The lesser varrangoins are hiding in niches in the walls. Do not place them on the map unless the PCs succeed on opposed Spot checks or the varrangoins reveal themselves. Do not place the wheep on the map until a PC enters the water, or until it emerges.

When the PCs spot the death tyrant, read:

*Rising slowly from below comes a large, distorted orb, 8 feet in diameter. It is recognizable by the eye stalks that surmount the sphere, but deep wounds from some past conflict have removed half of these stalks, and the remaining five hang limp. Its great bloodshot central eye appears to be intact, however.*

When the varrangoins leave their positions of concealment, read:

*Human-sized batlike creatures suddenly flap forth from concealed perches in the ruined tower below. Foul hisses escape from fanged maws as their demonic, skull-like heads turn toward you.*

## Tactics

The death tyrant peers up the shaft with its antimagic cone to catch as many opponents as possible. If no PCs descend, the varrangoins rise to attack, focusing on climbers. They are careful to remain within the death tyrant's antimagic cone. If the varrangoins are dispatched or the PCs appear to be easily overcoming the obstacle presented by the antimagic cone, the death tyrant switches tactics and begins bringing its deadliest eye rays to bear instead. The wheep remains underwater and attacks anyone who enters the pool. If no one does, it instead emerges to attack any PCs who make it down to area C21.

## DEATH TYRANT<sup>FR</sup>

CR 13

hp 71 (11 HD); DR 5/slashing

NE Large undead

**Init** +0; **Senses** all-around vision, darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +2, Spot +6

**AC** 20, touch 9, flat-footed 20

**Immune** undead immunities

**Resist** +2 turn resistance

**Fort** +3, **Ref** +3, **Will** +9

**Speed** fly 15 ft. (3 squares) (average)

**Melee** bite –1 (2d4)

**Ranged** 5 eye rays +4 ranged touch each

**Space** 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

**Base Atk** +5; **Grp** +9

**Abilities** Str 10, Dex 10, Con —, Int —, Wis 15, Cha 17

**SQ** antimagic cone, flight, single actions only, undead traits

**Feats** —

**Skills** Listen +2, Search +4, Spot +6

**Eye Rays (Su)** Each of a death tyrant's small eyes can produce a magic ray once per round as a free action. During a single round, a death tyrant can aim only three eye rays at targets in any one 90-degree arc (up, forward, backward, left, right, or down). The remaining eyes must aim at targets in other arcs, or not at all. A death tyrant can tilt and pan its body each round to change which rays it can bring to bear in any given arc. Each of a death tyrant's eye rays resembles a spell cast by a 13th-level caster. Each eye ray has a range of 150 feet and a save DC of 18. Typically a death tyrant has lost the use of 1d4+1 of these eye rays. This creature has the following five functioning rays.

*Disintegrate:* Fortitude DC 17 negates.

*Fear:* Will DC 17 negates.

*Finger of Death:* Fortitude DC 17, 3d6+13.

*Sleep:* Will DC 17 negates.

*Slow:* Will DC 17 negates.

**Antimagic Cone (Su)** This death tyrant's central eye continually produces a 150-foot cone of antimagic. This functions just like *antimagic field* (caster level 13th). All magical and supernatural powers and effects within the cone are suppressed—even the death tyrant's own eye rays. Once each round, during its turn, the death tyrant decides whether the antimagic cone is active or not (the death tyrant deactivates the cone by shutting its central eye).

**Single Actions Only (Ex)** Death tyrants have poor reflexes and can perform only a single move action or standard action each round. A death tyrant can move up to its speed and attack in the same round, but only if it attempts a charge.



**WHEEP<sup>LM</sup>****CR 11**

hp 77 (11 HD); DR 5/slashing

LE Medium undead

Init +2; Senses blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +8, Spot +8

Languages Common

AC 29, touch 17, flat-footed 27; Dodge, Mobility

Immune undead immunities

Resist +4 turn resistance

Fort +8, Ref +10, Will +13

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee 2 claws +16 each (1d8+11 plus poison) and bite +13 (1d6+5 plus poison)

Base Atk +4; Grp +15

Atk Options poison tears, weeping dirge

Abilities Str 33, Dex 15, Con —, Int 6, Wis 14, Cha 20

SQ undead traits, unholy grace

Feats Dodge, Mobility, Multiattack, Weapon Focus (claws)

Skills Hide +8, Listen +8, Move Silently +8, Spot +8

**Poison Tears (Ex)** The poison tears that continually pour from a wheep's empty eyes are actually an injury poison that coats the creature's claws and teeth. Claw and bite, Fort DC 19; 1d6 Con/1d6 Con.

**Unholy Grace (Su)** A wheep adds its Charisma modifier as a bonus on its saving throws and as a deflection bonus to its Armor Class (already figured into its statistics).

**Weeping Dirge (Su)** A wheep can spend a free action each round crying and blubbering. All who hear the wheep's sorrow must make a successful DC 19 Will save or be shaken for the duration of the encounter. Once a creature saves against a wheep's dirge, that creature cannot be affected again by the same wheep for 24 hours. This is a sonic effect.

**2 LESSER VARRANGOINS<sup>FF</sup>****CR 6**

hp 32 each (5 HD); DR 10/silver

CE Medium magical beast (extraplanar)

Init +3; Senses darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Listen +2, Spot +2

Languages Abyssal, Common, Varrangoin

AC 19, touch 13, flat-footed 16

Immune electricity

Resist acid 10, cold 10, fire 10; SR 12

Fort +5, Ref +7, Will +1

Weakness light sensitivity

Speed 20 ft. (4 squares), fly 40 ft. (average)

Melee bite +7 (1d6+2) and

2 claws +5 each (1d4+1) and

tail sting +5 (1d4+1 plus poison)

Base Atk +5; Grp +7

Atk Options Flyby Attack, breath weapon, poison (DC 13, 1d6 Dex/1d6 Dex), death throes

Abilities Str 14, Dex 16, Con 13, Int 11, Wis 11, Cha 8

SQ varrangoin traits

Feats Alertness<sup>B</sup>, Flyby Attack, Multiattack

Skills Hide +10, Listen +2, Move Silently +10, Spot +2

**Breath Weapon (Ex)** Once every 1d4 rounds, 50-foot line, damage 3d6 electricity, Reflex DC 13 half.

**Death Throes (Ex)** When reduced to -10 hit points, a lesser varrangoin explodes in a 20-foot burst that deals 3d6 points of electricity damage (Reflex DC 13 half).

**Light Sensitivity (Ex)** Exposure to bright light (such as sunlight or a *daylight* spell) blinds varrangoins for 1 round. Each round thereafter they take a -1 circumstance penalty on attack rolls, saves, and skill checks while in the bright light.

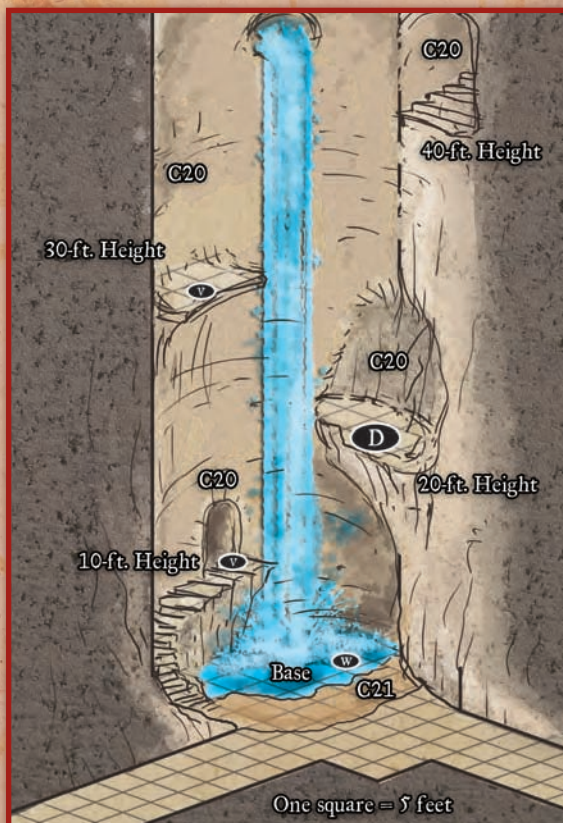
**FEATURES OF THE AREA**

**Niches:** These openings along the walls of the cylinder are large enough to provide cover for a Medium creature. The one in which the death tyrant hides provides cover for a Large creature. A Large creature in the larger niche or a Medium creature in the smaller niches must make a successful DC 10 Balance check to avoid falling if fighting; all are considered flat-footed unless they have 5 or more ranks in Balance. The varrangoins are unaffected by these precarious perches.

**Note:** The heights shown on the tactical map are not to scale, but have been exaggerated for clarity.

**Waterfall:** Climbing beneath the waterfall requires a successful DC 35 Climb check. Flying through it requires a successful DC 20 Strength check to avoid plummeting to the pool below.

**Sandy Beach:** This soft sand (area C21) costs 2 squares of movement to move into a square. The DC of Tumble checks is increased by 2.



**Pool:** Within 5 feet of shore, the water in this pool is 4 feet deep and costs Medium or larger creatures 4 squares of movement to move into a square. Smaller creatures must swim; tumbling is impossible. Medium or larger creatures have cover, and smaller creatures have improved cover (+8 bonus to AC, +4 on Reflex saves). Crouching allows Medium or larger creatures to have this improved cover. Creatures with improved cover take a -10 penalty on attack rolls against opponents who are not underwater. The water quickly deepens to 20 feet farther from shore.

**Plaque:** A successful DC 25 Spot check notes a broken stone plaque still attached to the wall of the tower shaft beside the stairwell where one of the varrangoins is perched. It reads "Synod" in Thoross. A successful DC 25 Knowledge (history) check recalls this to be the name of one of Netheril's floating enclaves thought lost over the Sea of Fallen Stars when the empire's magic failed. How it came to be here is not immediately obvious.



# FIRST GUARDROOM

Encounter Level 14

## setup

Place the phaerlin giants in the indicated squares. Do not place the beholder until it emerges from room C23 or that room is entered by the PCs.

## tactics

The phaerlin giants immediately rage upon spotting intruders. The beholder, which is sleeping in room C23, wakes to the sounds of combat and emerges from its room after 3 rounds.

### FEATURES OF THE AREA

**Stone Benches:** These stone-slab furnishings double as both benches and bunks. A character can climb or jump onto these to gain a +1 bonus on melee attack rolls for being on higher ground. A successful DC 10 Jump check is required to jump onto a bench as part of a move action; a move action is necessary to simply climb atop it.

**Crates, Boxes, and Barrels:** Squares containing these stolen goods count as dense rubble and require 2 squares of movement to enter. The DC of Balance and Tumble checks increase by 5, and the DC of Move Silently checks increased by 2. The beholder is unaffected by these features, because it hovers above them.



### 3 PHAERLIN GIANTS<sup>MON</sup> (RAGING) CR 8

hp 146 each (13 HD)

Male or female phaerlin giant barbarian 5

NE Huge giant (earth)

**Init** +3; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Listen +6, Spot +7

**Aura** frightful presence 30 ft.

**Languages** Common, Giant

**AC** 19, touch 6, flat-footed 19; improved uncanny dodge  
**SR** 19

**Fort** +16, **Ref** +2, **Will** +4

**Speed** 20 ft. (4 squares) in hide armor, base speed 30 ft.

**Melee** 2 claws +18 each (2d4+8) and  
bite +16 (1d8+4)

**Space** 15 ft.; **Reach** 15 ft.

**Base Atk** +11; **Grp** +23

**Atk Options** Cleave, Power Attack, rage 2/day (9 rounds)

**Abilities** Str 26, Dex 9, Con 22, Int 8, Wis 8, Cha 9

**SQ** trap sense +1

**Feats** Alertness, Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Initiative, Multiattack, Power Attack

**Skills** Climb +13, Jump +9, Listen +6, Spot +7, Survival +2

**Possessions** hide armor

**Frightful Presence (Ex)** A phaerlin giant initiates combat with a dreadful howling roar as a free action that strikes terror in the hearts of its foes. Creatures within 30 feet are subject to the effect if they have fewer than 13 HD. A potentially affected creature that succeeds on a DC 15 Will save remains immune to that giant's frightful presence for 24 hours. On a failure, a creature becomes shaken for 4d6 rounds.

### BEHOLDER CR 13

hp 93 (11 HD)

LE Large aberration

**Init** +6; **Senses** all-around vision, darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +18, Spot +22

**Languages** Common, Giant, Undercommon

**AC** 26, touch 11, flat-footed 24

**Fort** +9, **Ref** +5, **Will** +11

**Speed** 5 ft. (1 square), fly 20 ft. (good)

**Melee** bite +2 (2d4)

**Ranged** 10 eye rays +9 ranged touch each

**Space** 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

**Base Atk** +8; **Grp** +12

**Atk Options** Flyby Attack

**Abilities** Str 10, Dex 14, Con 18, Int 17, Wis 15, Cha 15

**SQ** antimagic cone, flight

**Feats** Alertness<sup>B</sup>, Flyby Attack, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Iron Will

**Skills** Hide +12, Knowledge (arcana) +17, Listen +18,

Search +21, Spot +22, Survival +2 (+4 following tracks)

**Eye Rays (Su)** See page 75.

**Antimagic Cone (Su)** 150-foot cone of antimagic (caster level 13th).



# SECOND GUARDROOM

Encounter Level 14

## setup

Do not place the creatures on the map until they emerge from room C26, or until the PCs enter that area.

## tactics

These creatures are tasked with guarding this approach to the pherimm hive. The beholder keeps watch using the spyhole into the hall. If the trap is detected and intruders attempt to remove it, the beholder tries to knock someone into it using its telekinesis ray. Once the trap has been activated or bypassed, unless the PCs have somehow gone unnoticed, the phaerlin giants emerge from the room and rage, all the while howling an alarm to alert the guards in room C22. The beholder remains behind in the room and uses its eye rays through the spyhole from a place where it has total concealment and cover. It can use only one eye ray per round in this manner, and cannot use its antimagic cone through the hole. If the PCs make short work of the giants, the beholder attempts to flee to room C27 to alert Culcathrax to the presence of intruders.

### BEHOLDER

CR 13

hp 93 (11 HD)

LE Large aberration

**Init** +6; **Senses** all-around vision, darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +18, Spot +22

**Languages** Common, Giant, Undercommon

**AC** 26, touch 11, flat-footed 24

**Fort** +9, **Ref** +5, **Will** +11

**Speed** 5 ft. (1 square), fly 20 ft. (good)

**Melee** bite +2 (2d4)

**Ranged** 10 eye rays +9 ranged touch each

**Space** 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

**Base Atk** +8; **Grp** +12

**Atk Options** Flyby Attack

**Abilities** Str 10, Dex 14, Con 18, Int 17, Wis 15, Cha 15

**SQ** antimagic cone, flight

**Feats** Alertness<sup>B</sup>, Flyby Attack, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Iron Will

**Skills** Hide +12, Knowledge (arcana) +17, Listen +18, Search +21, Spot +22, Survival +2 (+4 following tracks)

**Eye Rays (Su)** Range 150 feet.

*Charm Monster:* Will DC 17 negates.

*Charm Person:* Will DC 17 negates.

*Disintegrate:* Fortitude DC 17 negates.

*Fear:* Will DC 17 negates.

*Finger of Death:* Fortitude DC 17, 3d6+13.

*Flesh to Stone:* Fortitude DC 17 negates.

*InFLICT Moderate Wounds:* Will DC 17 half.

*Sleep:* Will DC 17 negates.

*Slow:* Will DC 17 negates.

*Telekinesis:* 325 pounds, Will DC 17 negates.

**Antimagic Cone (Su)** 150-foot cone of antimagic (caster level 13th).

### 2 PHAERLIN GIANTS<sup>MON</sup> (RAGING)

CR 8

hp 146 each (13 HD)

Male or female phaerlin giant barbarian 5

NE Huge giant (earth)

**Init** +3; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Listen +6, Spot +7

**Aura** frightful presence 30 ft.

**Languages** Common, Giant

**AC** 19, touch 6, flat-footed 19; improved uncanny dodge  
**SR** 19

**Fort** +16, **Ref** +2, **Will** +4

**Speed** 20 ft. (4 squares) in hide armor, base speed 30 ft.

**Melee** 2 claws +18 each (2d4+8) and  
bite +16 (1d8+4)

**Space** 15 ft.; **Reach** 15 ft.

**Base Atk** +11; **Grp** +23

**Atk Options** Cleave, Power Attack, rage 2/day (9 rounds)

**Abilities** Str 26, Dex 9, Con 22, Int 8, Wis 8, Cha 9

**SQ** trap sense +1

**Feats** Alertness, Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Initiative, Multiattack, Power Attack

**Skills** Climb +13, Jump +9, Listen +6, Spot +7, Survival +2

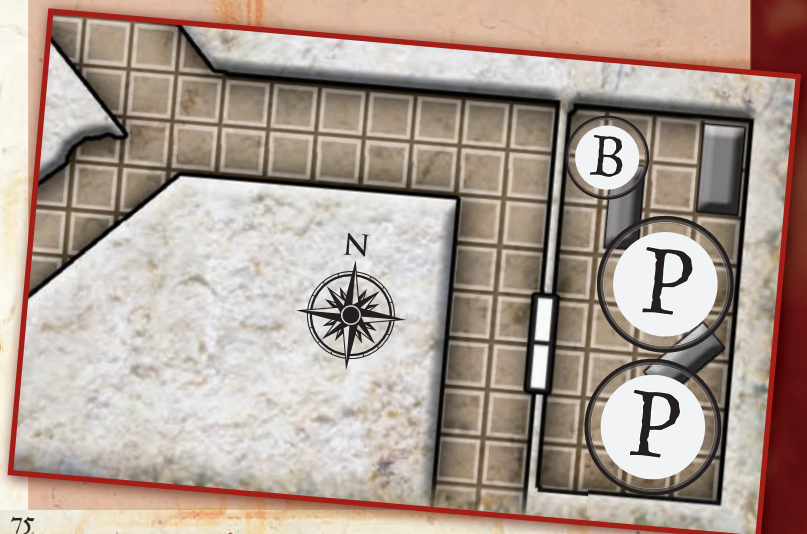
**Possessions** hide armor

**Frightful Presence (Ex)** A phaerlin giant initiates combat with a dreadful howling roar as a free action that strikes terror in the hearts of its foes. Creatures within 30 feet are subject to the effect if they have fewer than 13 HD. A potentially affected creature that succeeds on a DC 15 Will save remains immune to that giant's frightful presence for 24 hours. On a failure, a creature becomes shaken for 4d6 rounds.

## FEATURES OF THE AREA

**Stone Benches:** A character can climb or jump onto these to gain a +1 melee attack bonus for higher ground. A successful DC 10 Jump check is required to jump onto a bench as part of a move action; a move action is necessary to climb atop it.

**Trap:** See area C25.





# LABORATORY

Encounter Level 15

## setup

Place the flying snakes on the map in the indicated squares. Place the phaerimm only if it is not invisible, or if it has been spotted. Do not place the blighted bloodfire on the map until it emerges from its pool.

When the PCs first see the phaerimm, read:

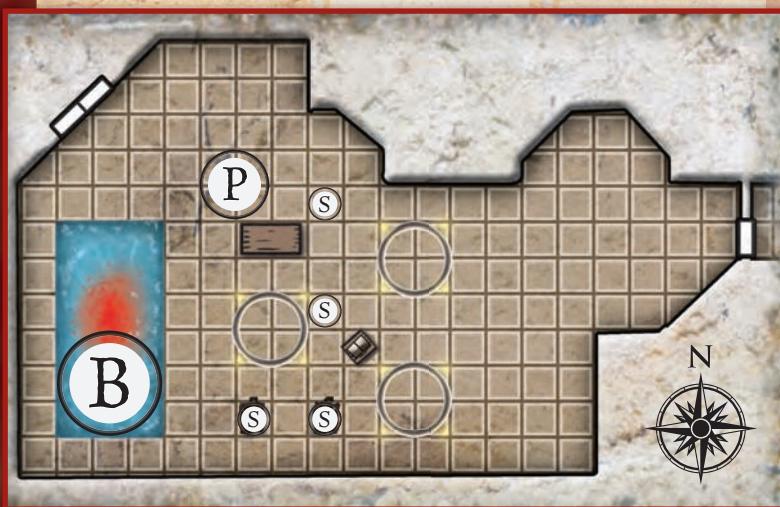
*A strange conical beast floats in the air. Rows of tentacles surround a lampreylike maw at its wide base. Four arms ending in clawed digits surround this end; one arm clutches an elaborate wand. The far end of this creature terminates in a stinger.*

When the bloodfire emerges from the pool, read:

*With a hiss and a rush of steam, a horror clambers from the pool; it is a disgusting mass of boiling brimstone, pulling itself along on gory pseudopods. Strange bulbous masses form and rupture across its fluid body, and occasionally a twisted face manifests itself in the effluvia that makes up its roiling hide.*

## Tactics

Once it is aware of the intruders, the phaerimm rises to the room's ceiling and casts *invisibility*, *stoneskin*, *lesser globe of invulnerability*, and *fire shield* (warm). The snakes serve to harass and distract intruders until the blighted bloodfire emerges to attack. The phaerimm remains at the ceiling using its fire spells (empowered by the bloodfire) and *chain lightning* against those that appear resistant to fire. If the bloodfire is killed or the battle is going poorly, the phaerimm drops *acid fog* on the PCs and teleports away.



## 4 FLYING SNAKES<sup>RAC</sup>

CR 1/2

hp 5 each (1 HD)

N Small magical beast

Init +3; Senses scent; Listen +8, Spot +8

AC 17, touch 14, flat-footed 14

Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +1

Speed 20 ft. (4 squares), climb 20 ft., fly 20 ft. (average)

Melee bite +5 (1d3–2 plus 1 acid)

Ranged acid spit +4 (1 acid)

Base Atk +1; Grp –3

Atk Options acid spit, improved grab, constrict 1d3–2

Abilities Str 6, Dex 17, Con 11, Int 1, Wis 12, Cha 2

Feats Alertness, Weapon Finesse<sup>B</sup>

Skills Balance +11, Climb +12, Hide +12, Listen +8, Spot +8

Possessions scroll case (for carrying messages)

**Acid Spit (Ex)** Once per round, a flying snake can spit acid as a ranged touch attack to a range of 10 feet. The acid deals 1 point of acid damage. A flying snake that bites an opponent automatically deals 1 point of acid damage.

**Improved Grab (Ex)** If a flying snake hits with its bite attack, it can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking attacks of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and can constrict.

**Constrict (Ex)** 1d3–2 points of damage with a successful grapple check against Tiny or smaller creatures.

## FEATURES OF THE AREA

**Pool:** The pool is 20 feet deep and filled with boiling water. It causes 1d6 points of fire damage to anyone touching it and 10d6 points of fire damage per round to anyone immersed in it.

**Table and Lectern:** Entering a square with one of these items in it costs 2 squares of movement. A character can climb or jump onto the table or the lectern to gain a +1 bonus on melee attack rolls for being on higher ground. A successful DC 10 Jump check is required to jump as part of a move action; otherwise a move action is necessary to climb atop it.

Atop the lectern is a book of notes on magical experimentation that provides a one-time +1 bonus on Knowledge (arcana) checks if examined by a character for 4 hours. Various implements and tools rest atop the table. Among them are two arcane scrolls: *acid fog* (CL 13th) and *limited wish* (CL 16th).

**Cages:** These impede movement just as the lectern does. They can be closed and locked with a full-round action (hardness 10, hp 35, break DC 25, Open Lock DC 22). They can each hold up to two Small creatures.

**Magic Circles:** These are used in magical experimentation and summoning by the phaerimms. Anyone with spellcasting capability gains a +1 bonus on the save DCs for any spells they cast while occupying one of these circles.



**BLIGHTED BLOODFIRE**<sup>MM4</sup>

CR 12

hp 162 (12 HD); fast healing 5

NE Huge outsider (augmented ooze, fire)

Init +1; Senses blind, blindsight 60 ft.; Listen +0

Aura negative energy (10 ft.)

AC 17, touch 9, flat-footed 16

Immune fire, gaze attacks, illusions, visual effects

Resist acid 15, electricity 15; SR 22 (27 against positive energy)

Fort +12, Ref +5, Will +4

Weakness vulnerability to cold

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee slam +15 (2d6+10/19–20 plus 2d6 fire)

Space 15 ft.; Reach 10 ft.

Base Atk +9; Grp +24

Atk Options burning blood, magic strike, true strike 1/day

Special Actions alternate form, flame burst, negative energy ray

Abilities Str 24, Dex 13, Con 26, Int 3, Wis 11, Cha 6

SQ empower fire spells

Feats Ability Focus (flame burst), Improved Critical (slam), Improved Natural Armor, Improved Natural Attack (slam), Weapon Focus (slam)

Skills Escape Artist +16, Hide +8, Listen +0, Move Silently +16, Sense Motive +15

Negative Energy Aura (Su) Any living creature within 10 feet of a blighted bloodfire loses 1 hit point per round.

Characters who have immunity to negative energy effects, as well as other entropic creatures, are not affected by this aura. If conscious, the blighted bloodfire can repress this aura as a standard action, but it takes 1 point of Strength damage for each full minute that the aura is inactive.

**Burning Blood (Ex)** A blighted bloodfire's body produces tremendous heat. Any creature that strikes or touches a blighted bloodfire with its body or a weapon, or that grapples it, automatically takes 2d6 points of fire damage. A creature takes damage from this ability only once per turn.

**True Strike (Su)** As the *true strike* spell.

**Alternate Form (Su)** As a standard action, a blighted bloodfire makes itself even more hideous, imposing a –1 morale penalty on attack rolls against it.

**Flame Burst (Su)** A blighted bloodfire can activate a flame burst as a standard action once per round. Any creature within 10 feet takes 6d6 points of fire damage (Reflex DC 26 half).

**Negative Energy Ray (Su)** Once every 1d4 rounds; range 60 feet; +10 ranged touch; 1d4–2 negative energy damage. This attack damages living creatures and heals undead.

**Empower Fire Spells (Su)** Any spell or spell-like ability that has the fire descriptor and is cast within 60 feet of a blighted bloodfire is empowered as if by the Empower Spell feat. In order to trigger this effect, both the spellcaster and the spell's point of origin must be within the affected area.

**CULCATHRAX**

CR 15

hp 84 (13 HD); DR 10/magic

Mature adult phaerimm<sup>Mon</sup>

NE Large aberration

Init +0; Senses full vision (arcane sight, see invisibility) 120 ft., low-light vision; Listen +11, Spot +12

Languages telepathy 100 ft.

AC 33, touch 9, flat-footed 33

Immune polymorph, petrification, death and negative energy effects (scarab)

SR 23

Fort +6, Ref +6, Will +13

Speed fly 30 ft. (6 squares) (good)

Melee 4 claws +12 each (1d6+4) and

bite +7 (2d6+2) and

stinger +7 (1d8+2 plus poison and implant)

Space 10 ft.; Reach 10 ft. (5 ft. with bite)

Base Atk +9; Grp +17

Atk Options Improved Counterspell, poison (DC 18, paralysis 2d4 rounds/paralysis 1d3 hours)

Combat Gear wand of magic missile (5th) (48 charges)

Sorcerer Spells Known (CL 13th):

6th (4/day)—*acid fog*, *chain lightning* (DC 21)5th (7/day)—*Bigby's interposing hand*, *dismissal* (DC 20), *teleport*4th (7/day)—*energation* (+8 ranged touch), *fire shield*, *lesser globe of invulnerability*, *stoneskin*3rd (7/day)—*dispel magic*, *fireball* (DC 18), *greater mage armor*† (see page 143), *suggestion* (DC 18)

2nd (7/day)—*bear's endurance*, *flaming sphere* (DC 17), *invisibility*, *resist energy*, *scorching ray* (3 rays, +8 ranged touch)

1st (8/day)—*burning hands* (DC 16), *identify*, *magic missile*, *reduce person* (DC 16), *unseen servant*

0 (6/day)—*acid splash* (+9 ranged touch), *arcane mark*, *daze* (DC 15), *flare* (DC 15), *ghost sound*, *light*, *mage hand*, *open/close*, *read magic*

† already cast

A phaerimm casts its sorcerer spells as if they were spell-like abilities, requiring neither verbal, somatic, nor material components.

**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 13th):

At will—*detect magic*

**Abilities** Str 18, Dex 11, Con 14, Int 18, Wis 20, Cha 21

**Feats** Brew Potion, Forge Ring, Improved Counterspell, Lightning Reflexes, Scribe Scroll

**Skills** Appraise +4 (+6 alchemy, blacksmithing, trapmaking), Bluff +14, Concentration +15, Craft (alchemy +12), Craft (blacksmithing) +12, Craft (trapmaking) +12, Diplomacy +7, Disguise +5 (+7 acting), Intimidate +7, Knowledge (arcana) +12, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +12, Knowledge (the planes) +12, Listen +11, Spellcraft +19, Spot +12, Survival +5 (+7 underground and other planes)

**Possessions** combat gear plus *greater ring of energy resistance (fire)*, *scarab of protection*, key to snake cages

**Full Vision (Ex)** An adult phaerimm can see magic auras to a range of 120 feet, as though constantly under the effect of an *arcane sight* spell.



# PHAERIMM NURSERY

## Encounter Level Varies

### setup

Do not place the creatures on the map until they are seen by the party.

When a tomb tapper is first seen, read:

*An ebon-skinned giant, with a featureless head and a massive mouth occupying its entire torso, stands holding a mighty adamantite hammer.*

Read the following when the phaerimms are first seen. The first entry describes a juvenile phaerimm; the second describes a hatchling phaerimm.

*This strange creature is no larger than a halfling but shaped like a floating cone; at its wide end is a fang-filled maw. Two spindly arms flank this mouth, and the buds of more arms or perhaps tentacles grow around its perimeter as well. At its conical tip is a smooth piece of flexible gristle or cartilage, perhaps an unformed stinger.*

*Shaped like a tiny trumpet, this creature wriggles through the air like some kind of malformed tadpole. At the wide end of its body is a toothless maw framed by two tiny clawed arms; its other end tapers to a delicate point.*

## 2 HATCHLING PHAERIMMS<sup>MON</sup>

CR 1

hp 4 each (1 HD)

NE Tiny aberration

**Init** +3; **Senses** low-light vision; Listen +5, Spot +1

**Languages** Common, Phaerimm

**AC** 17, touch 15, flat-footed 14

**Immune** polymorph, petrification

**SR** 11

**Fort** +0, **Ref** +3, **Will** +3

**Speed** fly 30 ft. (6 squares) (good)

**Melee** 2 claws –1 each (1d2–3)

**Space** 2-1/2 ft.; **Reach** 0 ft.

**Base Atk** +0; **Grp** –11

**Sorcerer Spells Known** (CL 1st):

1st (4/day)—*burning hands* (DC 12), *magic missile*  
0 (5/day)—*dancing lights*, *flare* (DC 11), *mage hand*,  
*resistance*

**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 1st):

At will—*detect magic*

**Abilities** Str 4, Dex 17, Con 10, Int 11, Wis 12, Cha 13

**Feats** Stealthy

**Skills** Hide +5, Listen +5, Move Silently +5, Spellcraft +4

## Tactics

The beholder has been placed in charge of the phaerimm nursery. It gathers any newly hatched phaerimms from areas C28 and C29 and brings them into C31 to feast on the remains of their former host. The hatchlings remain under the beholder's care until old enough to leave. If any threat appears, the beholder immediately interposes itself between the young phaerimms and the intruders. It keeps its central eye focused on its enemies and uses its eye rays to devastating effect on any who venture outside the cone's area. It defends itself with its bite as necessary. The young phaerimms cower behind the bulk of the beholder and gain total concealment and cover against anyone on the opposite side. However, anyone who tries to flank the creature meets a withering hail of *magic missiles* and *rays of enfeeblement* from the cowering younglings. None of these creatures will leave this room, having not been given free run of the phaerimm hive due to their young age.

## BEHOLDER

CR 13

hp 93 (11 HD)

LE Large aberration

**Init** +6; **Senses** all-around vision, darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +18, Spot +22

**Languages** Common, Giant, Undercommon

**AC** 26, touch 11, flat-footed 24

**Fort** +9, **Ref** +5, **Will** +11

**Speed** 5 ft. (1 square), fly 20 ft. (4 squares) (good)

**Melee** bite +2 (2d4)

**Ranged** 10 eye rays +9 ranged touch each

**Space** 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

**Base Atk** +8; **Grp** +12

**Atk Options** Flyby Attack

**Abilities** Str 10, Dex 14, Con 18, Int 17, Wis 15, Cha 15

**SQ** antimagic cone, flight

**Feats** Alertness<sup>B</sup>, Flyby Attack, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Iron Will

**Skills** Hide +12, Knowledge (arcana) +17, Listen +18,

Search +21, Spot +22, Survival +2 (+4 following tracks)

**Eye Rays (Su)** Range 150 feet.

*Charm Monster:* Will DC 17 negates.

*Charm Person:* Will DC 17 negates.

*Disintegrate:* Fortitude DC 17 negates.

*Fear:* Will DC 17 negates.

*Finger of Death:* Fortitude DC 17, 3d6+13.

*Flesh to Stone:* Fortitude DC 17 negates.

*Inflict Moderate Wounds:* Will DC 17 half.

*Sleep:* Will DC 17 negates.

*Slow:* Will DC 17 negates.

*Telekinesis:* 325 pounds, Will DC 17 negates.

**Antimagic Cone (Su)** 150-foot cone of antimagic (CL 13th).



**3 TOMB TAPPERS<sup>MON</sup> CR 12**

hp 118 each (16 HD); DR 10/adamantine  
 N Large construct  
 Init +3; Senses blind, blindsight 120 ft., tremorsense 60 ft.; Listen +16, Spot +16  
 Languages Common, Netherese, Undercommon, telepathy 100 ft.

AC 23, touch 12, flat-footed 21  
 Immune fire, gaze attacks, illusions, visual effects, ability damage, ability drain, critical hits, death effects, death from massive damage, disease, energy drain, exhaustion, fatigue, magic, mind-affecting spells and abilities (charms, compulsions, phantasms, patterns, and morale effects), necromancy effects, nonlethal damage, paralysis, poison, sleep effects, stunning, any effect that requires a Fortitude save unless it also works on objects

Resist cold 10, electricity 10  
 Fort +7, Ref +8, Will +7  
 Speed 40 ft. (8 squares), burrow 10 ft.  
 Melee +1 adamantine throwing returning maul +20/+15/+10 (2d6+11/19–20/x3) and bite +13 (1d10+3) or  
 Melee 2 slams +18 each (2d4+7) and bite +13 (1d10+3)

Ranged adamantine +1 throwing returning maul +16 (2d6+11/19–20/x3)  
 Space 10 ft.; Reach 10 ft.  
 Base Atk +12; Grp +23  
 Atk Options Cleave, Power Attack  
 Spell-Like Abilities (CL 18th):  
 At will—*detect magic*  
 7/day—*stone shape*  
 3/day—*spike stones* (DC 17)

Abilities Str 24, Dex 16, Con —, Int 14, Wis 11, Cha 16  
 SQ construct traits, maul, repair  
 Feats Cleave, Great Fortitude, Improved Critical (maul), Iron Will, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (maul)  
 Skills Appraise +14, Listen +16, Search +18, Spot +16, Survival +16 (+18 following tracks)

Possessions +1 adamantine throwing returning maul  
 Maul (Su) Each tomb tapper is created with a +1 adamantine maul appropriate to its size. In the hands of a tomb tapper, the weapon gains the throwing and returning special abilities.  
 Repair (Su) A *stone shape* effect repairs damage equal to 1d8 + caster level hit points if used on a tomb tapper. A creature can use its own spell-like ability to repair itself.

**JUVENILE PHAERIMM<sup>MON</sup> CR 5**

hp 18 (4 HD)  
 NE Small aberration  
 Init +2; Senses full vision (see invisibility) 120 ft., low-light vision; Listen +6, Spot +7  
 Languages telepathy 100 ft.

AC 19, touch 13, flat-footed 17; Dodge  
 Immune polymorph, petrification  
 SR 14  
 Fort +1, Ref +6, Will +6

Speed fly 30 ft. (6 squares) (good)  
 Melee 2 claws +3 each (1d3–1) and bite –2 (1d6–1)  
 Space 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft. (0 ft. with bite)  
 Base Atk +3; Grp –2  
 Atk Options Point Blank Shot  
 Sorcerer Spells Known (CL 4th):  
 2nd (3/day)—*Melf's acid arrow* (+6 ranged touch)

1st (6/day)—*charm person* (DC 13), *magic missile*, *ray of enfeeblement* (+6 ranged touch)  
 0 (6/day)—*detect magic*, *disrupt undead* (+6 ranged touch), *mage hand*, *read magic*, *resistance*, *touch of fatigue* (+3 melee touch)  
 A phaerimm casts its sorcerer spells as if they were spell-like abilities, requiring neither verbal, somatic, nor material components.

Abilities Str 8, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 15  
 SQ detect magic  
 Feats Dodge, Point Blank Shot  
 Skills Intimidate +7, Listen +6, Spellcraft +8, Spot +7

**FEATURES OF THE AREA**

**Floating Bodies:** Anyone in the same square with one of these floating bodies gains a +2 cover bonus to Armor Class and a +1 cover bonus on Reflex saves. Crouching beneath a floating body provides normal cover (+4 to AC, +2 on Reflex saves) against anyone standing erect or any creature that is Large or larger. A Medium creature that crouches beneath a body takes a –4 penalty on attack rolls.

**Pulverized Rock:** This is the remains of the tomb-tapper's tunnel. This path can be navigated by any creature that has a burrow speed.

**Corpse:** Among the gnawed remains on the floor is the partial corpse of a Purple Dragon Knight (identifiable by the tatters of his cloak with a successful DC 10 Knowledge [local] or Knowledge [nobility and royalty] check). Still on one of this corpse's hands is a *glove of Taarnahm the Vigilant*. This chainmail gauntlet allows the wielder to hurl a melee weapon he carries as though it had the throwing and returning special abilities.





# CHAMBERS OF THE MASTER

Encounter Level 18

## setup

Do not place the creatures on the map until they are seen by the party.

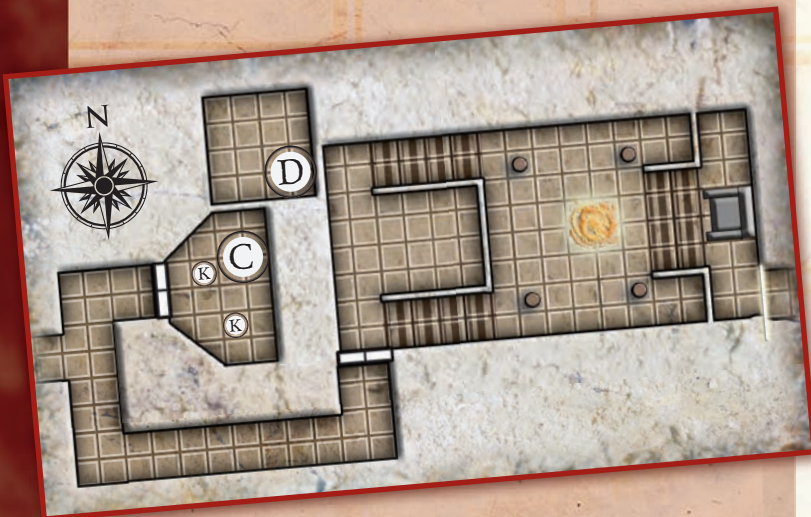
## tactics

When encountered, the kir-lanans move to defend Cushtal while remaining within arms' reach while he casts *dimension door* to carry them all to room C33, where Cushtal prepares for battle. Drullister begins this encounter in room C34 and uses *project image* through the peephole to place an image of himself in room C33 to hold off the intruders for as long as possible. After buffing for battle, Cushtal prepares to take the fight to his enemies in melee while his kir-lanans flank opponents and use their hexblade curses on their foes. The kir-lanans withdraw into room C34 to receive healing from Drullister if reduced to 30 hit points or fewer, then rejoin the fray.

## FEATURES OF THE AREA

**Throne and Pillars:** Anyone in the same square with one of these objects gains a +2 cover bonus to Armor Class and a +1 cover bonus on Reflex saves. Climbing onto the throne (a move action) provides a +1 melee attack bonus for being on higher ground.

**Pillar of Fire:** This spinning column of fire deals 10d6 points of fire damage (Reflex DC 20 half) to anyone who touches it. It provides concealment to anyone behind it. This pillar embodies the eternal flame of Amaunator (caster level 30th). If the pillar of fire is somehow extinguished, the trap in area C15 will no longer function.



## 2 KIR-LANAN GARGOYLES<sup>FR</sup>

CR 12

hp 91 each (14 HD)

Male elite kir-lanan gargoyle hexblade 10  
CE Medium monstrous humanoid  
**Init** +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +1, Spot +1  
**Languages** Common

**AC** 20, touch 12, flat-footed 18

**Resist** mettle

**Fort** +5, **Ref** +9, **Will** +10; +1 against spells and spell-like effects

**Weakness** vulnerability to positive energy

**Speed** 30 ft. (6 squares), fly 90 ft. (good)

**Melee** 2 claws +21 each (1d6+6)

**Base Atk** +14; **Grp** +8

**Atk Options** Combat Casting, Flyby Attack, negative energy touch 3/day (Fort DC 13), command undead 3/day (+1, 2d6+5, 4th), greater hexblade's curse

**Combat Gear** *potion of bear's endurance*, *potion of protection from energy (fire)*, *2 potions of eagle's splendor*, *necklace of fireballs type II* (1×6, 2×4, 2×2), *wand of inflict light wounds* (40 charges)

**Hexblade Spells Known** (CL 5th; 1d20+7 to overcome SR):

2nd (1/day)—*bull's strength*, *false life*, *mirror image*

1st (2/day)—*entropic shield*, *expeditious retreat*, *identify*, *protection from good*

**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 4th):

3/day—*ray of enfeeblement* (+6 ranged touch)

**Abilities** Str 18, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 12

**SQ** arcane resistance, mettle, summon familiar

**Feats** Combat Casting<sup>B</sup>, Flyby Attack, Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Armor, Improved Natural Attack (claw), Spell Penetration, Weapon Focus (claw)

**Skills** Concentration +9, Escape Artist +5, Hide +8, Knowledge (arcana) +6, Listen +1, Move Silently +4, Spellcraft +8, Spot +1, Use Magic Device +4 (+6 scrolls)

**Possessions** combat gear plus *bracers of armor* +4, *amulet of mighty fists* +2

**Negative Energy Touch (Su)** A kir-lanan can, as a free action once per round, empower its touch with negative energy three times per day. If it hits with a melee touch attack, it deals 2d6 points of damage and 1 point of Strength damage. A successful DC 13 Fortitude save negates the Strength damage. The kir-lanan is healed the same number of hit points as points of damage it causes with this attack.

**Positive Energy Vulnerability** Kir-lanans are vulnerable to positive energy attacks just as undead are. They take damage from *cure* spells and holy water. Like undead, kir-lanans are healed by *inflict* spells.

**Greater Hexblade's Curse (Su)** Three times per day, as a free action, a hexblade can unleash a curse upon a foe. The target must be visible and within 60 feet. The target takes a –4 penalty on attack rolls, saves, ability checks, skill checks, and weapon damage rolls for 1 hour. A successful DC 16 Will save negates this effect.

**Mettle (Ex)** If a hexblade makes a successful Will save or Fortitude save against an attack that normally would have a lesser effect, he instead negates the effect.



**DRULLISTER****CR 18**

hp 97 (16 HD); DR 10/magic

Mature adult phaerimm<sup>Mon</sup> shadow adept<sup>PG</sup> 3

NE Large aberration

**Init** +0; **Senses** full vision (arcane sight, see invisibility) 120 ft., low-light vision; Listen +11, Spot +11**Languages** telepathy 100 ft.**AC** 27, touch 9, flat-footed 27**Immune** polymorph, petrification, spells of 4th level or lower (*ioun stone*)**SR** 23**Fort** +7, **Ref** +5, **Will** +16; +1 profane bonus against enchantment, illusion, necromancy, and spells that have the darkness descriptor**Speed** 30 ft. (6 squares) (good)**Melee** 4 claws +13 each (1d6+4) and bite +11 (2d6+2) and stinger +11 (1d8+2 plus poison and implant)**Space** 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft. (5 ft. with bite)**Base Atk** +10; **Grp** +18**Atk Options** Maximize Spell, Pernicious Magic, Quicken Spell, poison (DC 18, paralysis 2d4 rounds/paralysis 1d3 hours)**Combat Gear** *staff of evocation* (42 charges), *lesser meta-magic rod of Enlarge Spell*, *wand of cure critical wounds* (20 charges)**Sorcerer Spells Known** (CL 16th; 1d20+18 to overcome SR):8th (3/day)—*mystic shield* (see page 141)7th (5/day)—*limited wish*, *project image*\* (DC 23)6th (6/day)—*crushing sphere* (CL 15th, DC 21; see page 145), *sandblast* (CL 15th, DC 21; see page 146), *symbol of persuasion*\* (DC 22)5th (7/day)—*cone of cold* (CL 15th, DC 20), *dominate person*\* (DC 21), *mind fog*\* (DC 21), *reciprocal gyre* (DC 20; see page 143)4th (7/day)—*Evard's black tentacles*, *lesser globe of invulnerability*, *spell fangs* (CL 15th, +21 melee; see page 141), *stoneskin*3rd (7/day)—*backblast* (see page 145), *dweomer vortex* (CL 15th; see page 141), *greater mage armor* (see page 143), *haste* (CL 15th)2nd (7/day)—*command undead*\* (DC 18), *darkvision* (CL 15th), *detect thoughts* (DC 17), *Melf's acid arrow* (+10 ranged touch), *scorching ray* (CL 15th, +10 ranged touch)1st (8/day)—*ray of enfeeblement*\* (+10 ranged touch), *shocking grasp* (CL 15th, +14 melee touch), *sonic blast* (CL 15th, DC 16; see page 144), *swift expeditious retreat* (CL 15th; see page 143), *true strike*0 (6/day)—*acid splash* (+10 ranged touch), *caltrops* (see page 142), *electric jolt* (CL 15th, +10 ranged touch; see page 143), *light* (cannot cast), *mage hand* (CL 15th), *message* (CL 15th), *ray of frost* (CL 15th, +10 ranged touch), *read magic*, *touch of fatigue*\* (+14 melee touch)

\* +1 to save DC and caster level for spell resistance

A phaerimm casts its sorcerer spells as if they were spell-like abilities, requiring neither verbal, somatic, nor material components.

**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 16th):At will—*detect magic***Abilities** Str 18, Dex 11, Con 14, Int 18, Wis 20, Cha 21**SQ** shadow defense +1**Feats** Craft Wondrous Item, Insidious Magic<sup>B PG</sup>, Maximize Spell, Multiattack, Pernicious Magic<sup>B PG</sup>, Quicken Spell, Shadow Weave Magic<sup>PG</sup>, Spell Penetration, Tenacious Magic<sup>B PG</sup>**Skills** Appraise +4 (+6 alchemy, trapmaking), Bluff +14, Concentration +21, Craft (alchemy) +13, Craft (trapmaking) +10, Diplomacy +13, Disguise +5 (+7 acting), Gather Information +13, Intimidate +7, Knowledge (arcana) +23, Knowledge (history) +13, Knowledge (Anauroch local) +13, Listen +11, Search +10, Spellcraft +25 (+27 scrolls), Spot +11, Survival +9 (+11 following tracks), Use Magic Device +21 (+23 scrolls)**Possessions** combat gear plus *ring of freedom of movement*, *ring of mind shielding*, *pale lavender ellipsoid ioun stone*. Note: All of Drullister's possessions are Shadow Weave magic items (see sidebar in Chapter 5, page 112).**CUSHTAL****CR 12**

hp 55 (10 HD)

Adult phaerimm<sup>Mon</sup>

NE Large aberration

**Init** +4; **Senses** full vision (arcane sight, see invisibility) 120 ft., low-light vision; Listen +9, Spot +9**Languages** telepathy 100 ft.**AC** 24, touch 10, flat-footed 24**Immune** polymorph, petrification**SR** 20**Fort** +4, **Ref** +3, **Will** +11**Speed** fly 30 ft. (6 squares) (good)**Melee** +1 *speed greatsword* +12/+12/+7 (3d6+7/19–20) and 2 claws +8 each (1d6+2) and bite +8 (2d6+2) and stinger +8 (1d8+2 plus poison and implant)**Space** 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft. (5 ft. with bite)**Base Atk** +7; **Grp** +15**Atk Options** Combat Casting, implant, poison (DC 16, paralysis 2d4 rounds/paralysis 1d3 hours)**Sorcerer Spells Known** (CL 10th):5th (3/day)—*cone of cold* (DC 19)4th (6/day)—*crushing despair* (DC 18), *dimension door*3rd (7/day)—*blink*, *lightning bolt* (DC 17), *ray of exhaustion* (+6 ranged touch)2nd (7/day)—*eagle's splendor*, *false life*, *protection from arrows*, *scorching ray* (2 rays, +6 ranged touch)1st (7/day)—*obscuring mist*, *mage armor*, *shield*, *Tenser's floating disk*, *true strike*0 (6/day)—*acid splash* (+6 ranged touch), *arcane mark*, *daze* (DC 14), *flare* (DC 14), *light*, *mage hand*, *open/close*, *read magic*, *touch of fatigue* (+10 melee touch)

A phaerimm casts its sorcerer spells as if they were spell-like abilities, requiring neither verbal, somatic, nor material components.

**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 10th):At will—*detect magic***Abilities** Str 18, Dex 11, Con 12, Int 17, Wis 18, Cha 19**Feats** Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Multiattack, Weapon Focus (greatsword)**Skills** Concentration +11, Decipher Script +6, Diplomacy +6, Intimidate +12, Knowledge (arcana) +11, Knowledge (religion) +8, Listen +9, Sense Motive +9, Spellcraft +13, Spot +9, Survival +12**Possessions** +1 *speed greatsword*, *ring of protection* +1, *gauntlets of ogre power*



# THE FACELESS INCANTER

Encounter Level 14

## Setup

Do not place the creatures on the map until they are seen by the party.

When the party sees the Faceless Incanter, read:

*This human-shaped figure is completely swathed in murky robes, and what little skin is visible has a dark, pearly sheen to it. His visage, barely visible beneath his hood, is most remarkable for the fact that he has none. Where there should be facial features is a smooth surface with an orifice for a mouth and two blank eyes.*

## STAFF OF NIGHT

This staff of black wood is carved with runes of darkness, stars, and night with one resembling an umber hulk. The wielder is immune to the confusing gaze of an umber hulk. In addition, the staff has the following powers:

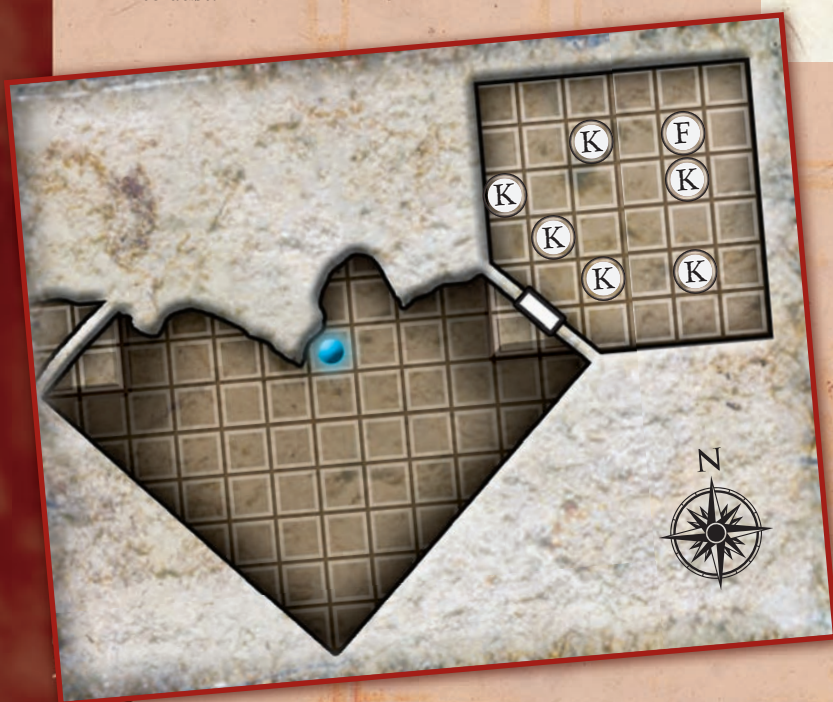
- *Darkvision* (1 charge)
- *Dispel magic* (only works against spells that have the light descriptor) (1 charge)
- *Darkness* (1 charge)
- *Summon monster VI* (summons one umber hulk only, usable once every tenday) (2 charges)

If the summoned umber hulk is slain, the staff crumbles to dust.

## Tactics

When the Faceless Incanter hears the combat with the orb wraith in room C36, he casts *feather fall* on the krinths as they spend a round gathering their weapons. He then casts *greater invisibility* and *fly* on himself as they drink their potions of *blur*. Next, he uses his *control light* ability to reduce the illumination in areas C36 and C37 to shadowy illumination, dark enough for him to gain his special benefits for being in darkness. When the battle with the orb wraith has ceased, the krinths burst through the door, leaping over the balcony to attack the intruders on the floor.

The Faceless Incanter uses *shadow stride* to appear near the ceiling of room C36. From there he attacks as long as possible using his touch spells through his *spectral hand*. If engaged in personal melee, he casts *darkness* (in which he can see normally) around himself with his staff to defend himself. If his krinth warriors are all slain, he uses *cloudkill* and *ice storm* in the room below. The Faceless Incanter will not retreat from battle, and will die to defend the work being conducted here. If slain, his body is reduced to a slushy pile of snow and ice, but his equipment is unharmed.



## FEATURES OF THE AREA

**Balconies:** The balconies from areas C35 and C36 stand 30 feet above the floor of the chamber. Each has a balustrade that provides cover from creatures at a lower level in the room (+4 to AC, +2 to Reflex saves).

**Shadow Engine:** This strange, corrupted *mythallar* floats in the center of the room. It is 5 feet in diameter and provides cover and concealment for anyone behind it. Anyone touching it takes 3d6 points of damage from raw magical energy and gains 1d4 negative levels (Fortitude DC 15 to remove).



**6 KRINTH WARRIORS****CR 8**

hp 58 each (9 HD)

Male krinth warrior 9

CE Medium humanoid (extraplanar)

**Init** +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +3, Spot +3**Languages** Common, Netherese**AC** 13, touch 11, flat-footed 12; Dodge**Immune** shaken condition**Fort** +9, **Ref** +5, **Will** +4; +1 against spells and effects that have the shadow descriptor, +4 against fear**Speed** 30 ft. (6 squares)**Melee** +1 *shock ranseur* +13/+8 (2d4+3 plus 1d6 electricity) or**Melee** mwk punching dagger +12/+7 (1d4+2/x3)**Base Atk** +9; **Grp** +11**Combat Gear** *potion of blur***Abilities** Str 14, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 9, Wis 10, Cha 6**Feats** Alertness, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (ranseur)**Skills** Hide +4 (+6 in shadowy conditions), Jump +10, Listen +3, Spot +3**Possessions** combat gear plus *harness of armor* +2 (as bracers but in torso body slot), +1 *shock ranseur*, masterwork punching dagger**THE FACELESS INCANTER****CR 12**

hp 36 (+10 in darkness or shadows) (10 HD); fast healing 2

Male shade<sup>FR</sup> simulacrum wizard 5/shadow adept<sup>PG</sup> 5

NE Medium outsider

**Init** +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Listen +2 (+6 in darkness), Spot +2 (+6 in darkness or shadows)**Languages** Common, Draconic, Goblin, Infernal, Netherese, Thoross**AC** 16, touch 13, flat-footed 13 (20, touch 17, flat-footed 17 in darkness or shadows)**SR** 21**Fort** +4, **Ref** +8, **Will** +11; +4 in darkness; +1 against enchantment, illusion, necromancy, and spells that have the darkness descriptor**Weakness** loses shade abilities (darkvision, increased speed, *shadow stride*, fast healing, *control light*, *invisibility*, *shadow image*) when not in darkness or shadows**Speed** 30 ft. (6 squares), 50 ft. (10 squares) in darkness or shadows; *shadow stride***Melee** mwk staff +5 (+7 in darkness) (1d6 [1d6+2 in darkness])**Base Atk** +4; **Grp** +4**Atk Options** Combat Casting, Insidious Magic, Pernicious Magic, Silent Spell, Tenacious Magic**Special Actions** *control light*, shield of shadows, familiar (none at present)**Combat Gear** *staff of night* (17 charges)**Wizard Spells Prepared** (CL 10th):5th—*cloudkill* (DC 20), *feeblemind*\* (DC 21), *Mordenkainen's private sanctum*†4th—*bestow curse*\* (DC 20), *greater invisibility*\*, *ice storm* (CL 9th), *Rary's mnemonic enhancer* (CL 9th)3rd—*displacement*\*, *fly* (CL 9th), *suggestion*\* (DC 19), *vampiric touch*\* (+4 melee touch)2nd—*feather fall* (CL 9th), *fox's cunning* (CL 9th), *ghoul touch*\* (+4 melee touch, DC 18), *spectral hand*\*, *Tasha's hideous laughter*\* (DC 18)1st—*chill touch*\* (+4 melee touch), *comprehend languages*, *identify*, *protection from good*, *shocking grasp* (CL 9th, +4 melee touch), *true strike*0—*detect magic*, *disrupt undead*\* (+7 ranged touch), *mage hand*\*, *read magic*

† already cast

\* +1 to save DC and caster level for spell resistance

**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 10th):1/round—*invisibility*\* (in darkness or shadows only)3/day—*shadow image*\* (as *mirror image*, 1d4+3 images, in darkness or shadows only)

\* +1 to save DC and caster level for spell resistance

**Abilities** Str 10, Dex 16, Con 13 (15 in darkness or shadows), Int 21, Wis 14, Cha 14 (16 in darkness or shadows)**SQ** outsider traits**Feats** Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Insidious Magic<sup>B PG</sup>, Lightning Reflexes, Pernicious Magic<sup>B PG</sup>, Scribe Scroll<sup>B</sup>, Shadow Weave Magic<sup>PG</sup>, Silent Spell<sup>B</sup>, Tenacious Magic<sup>B PG</sup>**Skills** +5 (+7 alchemy, woodcarving), Bluff +7 (+8 in darkness), Concentration +14 (+15 in darkness), Craft (alchemy) +13, Craft (woodcarving) +13, Diplomacy +4 (+5 in darkness), Disguise +7 (+8 in darkness/+9 acting/+10 acting in darkness), Hide +16, Intimidate +4 (+5 in darkness), Knowledge (arcana) +13, Knowledge (history) +13, Knowledge (the planes) +13, Listen +2 (+6 in darkness), Move Silently +11, Spellcraft +20, Spot +2 (+6 in darkness), Survival +2 (+4 other planes)**Possessions** combat gear plus *gloves of Dexterity* +2, *boots of speed*, *amulet of natural armor* +3, *cloak of resistance* +1.

Note: All of the Faceless Incanter's possessions are Shadow Weave magic items (see sidebar in Chapter 5, page 112).

**Spellbook** all above plus 0—*ray of frost*, *touch of fatigue*; 1st—*cause fear*, *mage armor*, *magic weapon*, *mount*, *sleep*, *unseen servant*; 2nd—*blur*, *daze monster*, *detect thoughts*, *glitterdust*, *resist energy*; 3rd—*Leomund's tiny hut*, *tongues*; 4th—*scrying*, *shadow conjuration*; 5th—*blight***Shadow Stride (Sp)** When in darkness or shadows, the Faceless Incanter can vanish from his current location and reappear in any shadowy area within 300 feet up to once every 2 rounds as a move action.**Control Light (Sp)** When in shadowy illumination, the Faceless Incanter can decrease the level of light within a 100-foot radius by a factor of up to 100%. This effect decreases the overall effective range of vision for characters and creatures dependent on light by the same percentage. A character within the affected area gains a +1 bonus on Hide checks for each 25% decrease in light.**Shield of Shadows (Su)** The Faceless Incanter can surround himself with a globe of purple-black force as a standard action. This shield functions like a *shield* spell, granting a +4 shield bonus to AC and absorbing *magic missiles* cast at him. In addition, it provides concealment against melee and ranged attacks. He can use it for up to 5 rounds per day, but this time need not be consecutive.



# MYTHALLAR CHAMBER

Encounter Level 18

## setup

Place the orb wraith on the map as indicated.

When the orb wraith appears, read:

*Spiraling from the strange shadowy orb comes a greater darkness that grows to monstrous proportions. It begins to coalesce, and its mass takes on a vaguely humanoid shape. Different features—faces, limbs, and glowing red eyes—shift and surface from within the mass of darkness, only to disappear again in an eyblink. Bolts of purple-black energy lance across and within this cloud of darkness.*

## FEATURES OF THE AREA

**Balconies:** The balconies from areas C35 and C37 stand 30 feet above the floor of the chamber. Each has a balustrade that provides cover from creatures at a lower level in the room (+4 to AC, +2 on Reflex saves).

**Shadow Engine:** This strange, corrupted *mythallar* floats in the center of the room. It is 5 feet in diameter and provides cover and concealment for anyone behind it. Anyone touching it takes 3d6 points of damage from raw magical energy and gains 1d4 negative levels (Fort DC 15 to remove).



## ORB WRAITH

CR 18

hp 195 (30 HD)

CE Huge undead (incorporeal)

**Init** +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +39, Spot +39

**Aura** unnatural aura 90 ft.

**AC** 17, touch 17, flat-footed 15; Dodge, Mobility

**Immune** undead immunities; can be harmed only by other incorporeal creatures, magic weapons, spells, spell-like abilities, or supernatural abilities

**Resist** 50% chance to ignore any damage from a corporeal source (except force effects and attacks made with ghost touch weapons)

**Fort** +10, **Ref** +12, **Will** +21

**Speed** fly 60 ft. (12 squares) (perfect); can pass through solid objects (but not force effects) at will, moves silently (cannot be heard with Listen checks unless desired)

**Melee** 2 incorporeal touches +16 touch each (1d8/19–20 plus 1d6 Con drain)

**Ranged** enervation ray +16 (1d4 negative levels/19–20)

**Space** 15 ft.;

**Reach** 10 ft.

**Base Atk** +15; **Grp** —

**Atk Options** Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes, Spring Attack, Constitution drain (Fort DC 32), assimilate, create spawn, enervation ray

**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 20th):

At will—*bane* (DC 18), *bestow curse* (DC 20), *doom* (DC 18), *fear* (DC 21)

3/day—*circle of death* (DC 23), *mass inflict light wounds* (DC 22)

1/day—*destruction* (DC 24)

**Abilities** Str —, Dex 14, Con —, Int 18, Wis 18, Cha 25

**SQ** incorporeal traits, undead traits

**Feats** Alertness, Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Critical (incorporeal touch), Improved Critical (enervation ray), Improved Initiative, Mobility, Spring Attack, Weapon Focus (incorporeal touch), Weapon Focus (enervation ray)

**Skills** Concentration +40, Diplomacy +9, Hide +27, Intimidate +40, Knowledge (arcana) +15, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +15, Knowledge (religion) +15, Listen +39, Search +37, Sense Motive +37, Spot +39;

**Enervation Ray (Su)** An orb wraith can attack with a bolt of negative energy that functions like an *enervation* spell with a range of 60 feet. A creature struck by the ray gains 1d4 negative levels.

**Assimilate (Su)** If an orb wraith kills an ordinary wraith, it assimilates the wraith's energy into itself. It adds the wraith's Hit Dice (usually 5) to its own, to a maximum of 60 HD. When an orb wraith reaches 60 HD, it splits into two identical orb wraiths with 30 HD.

**Create Spawn (Su)** Any humanoid slain by an orb wraith becomes a wraith in 1d4 rounds.

**Unnatural Aura (Su)** Animals can sense the presence of an orb wraith within 90 feet. They will not approach nearer than that and panic if forced to do so; they remain panicked as long as they are within that range.



# RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENTS

**I**n the first part of this chapter, the PCs will attempt to determine how to find the Terraseer, who disappeared from Netheril in -345 DR and has not been seen since. At their level, traveling the width and breadth of Faerûn should be no great feat for the PCs. Through the judicious use of magic, they might choose to visit Candlekeep, Evereska, the Host Tower Arcane, Nimbral, Silverymoon, Shadowdale, Spellgard, or Mount Talath and the Library of Raumarck in distant Halruaa, among other locales. Once at these sites (perhaps having fought their way through guardians and rivals), PCs who have abilities such as bardic knowledge, Gather Information, and various Knowledge skills can shine as they piece together the puzzle of how to locate the Terraseer.

The second portion of this chapter deals with the preparations the PCs must make to cross the desert—now an enormous dead magic zone—to reach the ruins of Oreme, where the Terraseer resides. They must first locate the traveling D'tarig caravan city of Biradon that traverses the borders of Anauroch. There they can learn the means of braving the deadly desert without the benefit of magic, obtain necessary supplies and specialized equipment developed by the D'tarigs for such travel, and possibly acquire local guides if they so choose.

The adventure continues thereafter with an overland journey across the sands of Anauroch. The PCs must make do without the use of magic, but the same is true for most of their foes. The chapter ends as the PCs come near the broken towers of Oreme, where they are beset by a group of raiders led by a psionic yuan-ti.

## Research

After speaking with Augathra the Mad and combing through her ancient notes, it should be clear to the characters that they next need to seek out the Terraseer. Of course, since no one has seen or heard from that mysterious being in seventeen centuries, figuring out where he resides—or if he is even still alive—appears to be a daunting task. Allow the PCs to determine their course of action—but no matter what they attempt, they will need to visit one or more repositories of research in order to piece together enough information to figure out what they need to know.

There are more potential locations in Faerûn where the characters can gather information than can be covered in this adventure. Thus, you should flesh out the secondary sources, discussed below, with any hallowed halls or wizened sages that already play a prominent role in your campaign. In such instances, a character might gather a few tantalizing scraps of lore, but whoever is assisting them should suggest they visit one or more of the primary sources for more in-depth information.

## secondary sources

Each of the following locations can provide some tidbit or clue to the whereabouts of the Terraseer: Evereska, the Host Tower Arcane, Nimbral, Shadowdale (depending on how the PCs left things at the end of the previous adventure, if applicable), Silverymoon, or any other depository of ancient knowledge that has been featured in the campaign already (some particular recurring



sage, The College of Wizards of Cormyr, the Harpers, Telbran Nelarn of Waterdeep, and so forth).

Without consulting with specialized outside resources (in other words, without traveling to one of the secondary source locations mentioned above), the PCs still have a chance of already knowing or discovering the information laid out in the table below. They can accomplish this merely through the use of Gather Information, bardic knowledge, Knowledge (history), and other appropriate checks, but in all cases, the DC is increased by 5. For example, a PC bard might know that Alaundo's outside reference for his prophecies was called the "T Source," but having that information would require a successful DC 25 bardic knowledge check, whereas if a PC is consulting some sage or other source of information on the subject, the DC is only 20. No unaided check reveals any of the information that comes from the primary sources described below. The characters must visit those sources personally in order to obtain those facts.

#### Secondary Source Clues

##### DC Information

- 20 Alaundo of Candlekeep built his prophecies upon the works of a far older seer that he called "the T Source."
- 22 A great history of Netheril is slowly being written by an unknown archmage. Where he dwells no one knows, but new volumes of his work appear at Candlekeep every few years, and they are stored in the stacks therein.
- 24 An accomplished mage known as the Terraseer made himself available to the archwizards of Netheril to provide guidance and teach them greater magic. Taking long departures, centuries at a time, he would return unchanged since his last visitation. After his first appearance to the Netherese in -3654 DR, he began to teach many secrets of the Art. Among his achievements, prophecies, and teachings are translations from many of the *Nether Scrolls*, the exploration of the Sword Coast North, the occupation of Old Owl Well, and the warning of impending doom at the hands of Karsus. He was last seen in the enclave of Karsus in -345 DR, six years before the Fall.
- 25 Part of an old saying goes, "In dead Oreme did the Seer sleep." The rest of the saying has been lost to antiquity.
- 27 Dead before the rise of Netheril, the lost city of Oreme has ever been a mystery. Now buried under the sands of Anauroch, the city is spoken of in old tales as the first Netherese enclave, the capital of a prehistoric kingdom, and the secret abode of the savage djinn of the deep desert. Despite these contradictions, all the stories agree that this city of gleaming spires might still hold some great secret or fabulous treasure.
- 28 The adventurer Steeleye of Westgate roamed far and wide across Faerûn from the Lake of Steam to the High Ice of Anauroch. He claims to have discovered the lost city of Oreme and walked its streets.

## primary sources

Although journeying to any of the numerous secondary sources could prove to be a simple matter, acquiring relevant knowledge from primary sources will undoubtedly be more trying. Such inquiries are likely to attract the attention of others who might not wish such secrets to be revealed, and the guardians and keepers of ancient lore might be averse to allowing access to their precious material. On the other hand, the bounty of helpful clues will make such struggles worthwhile, for only through exacting and diligent research in one of these hallowed archives will the characters find what they ultimately seek.

Each of the primary sources discussed in this section has its own set of information and particular challenges to overcome in order to acquire the needed information. There is no set order in which these locations must be visited, but it will take the knowledge gleaned from them as a whole to make the voyage into the desert worthwhile.

### candlekeep

This bastion of learning looms atop a volcanic crag overlooking the turbulent Sea of Swords, south of Cloakwood Bay. Once the home of Alaundo the Seer, this many-towered edifice now holds the greatest and most famous library in all of Faerûn—a well of knowledge containing copies of most of the written works produced in Faerûn in the last millennia. It also serves as the repository for the collected prophecies of Alaundo. The works stored at Candlekeep are carefully preserved and often copied by the Avowed, an ascetic order of monks devoted to this cause. The knowledge and prophecies are generally available for perusal by visitors to Candlekeep—for a price.

As the characters are approaching Candlekeep, read:

*The path you travel rises steeply through twists and turns as it climbs a crag of ancient basalt. The dozen towers of the fortress ahead blaze with points of flickering light—candles in innumerable windows—that create the illusion of night sky in the dark stone, set against the backdrop of twilight and the first stars of evening out over the Sea of Swords. As you near the gates of the citadel, faint chanting is carried on the evening breeze, the endless litany of Alaundo's prophecies that have yet to come to pass.*

Unless the PCs attempt to break into Candlekeep—an arduous task at best that would also preclude any real opportunity to examine the contents of the library—they will have to enter through the gates like any other petitioners. This entails a wait in a short line before the gates alongside a bewildering array of knowledge-seekers, agents of various lords, and powerful wizards of both fair and sinister mien. However, all are granted entrance once the appropriate toll is paid.



When the PCs arrive at the front of the line, the gatekeeper, an experienced monk warrior-scholar, advises them that the price of entry into the keep is the gift of a book. For those who are merely entering to seek shelter and enjoy the amenities of the place, any book will do. However, he advises the characters that if they wish to browse the famous library, the book must be a new one for the collection, worth at least 1,000 gp. The gatekeeper has a shrewd eye for books (Appraise +15) and a nearly encyclopedic knowledge of the books the library already has, allowing him to determine if a tome the PCs offer is new to the library. Attempts to fool him with an illusion or the Bluff skill must succeed against his Will save of +13 or his Sense Motive modifier of +12.

There are a few works that the PCs might have obtained recently that would serve for admittance to the library. These include the spellbook of the Faceless Incanter, the *Book of the Black*, and the *Tablets of Pharyssolnyth*.

If the PCs present the *Tablets of Pharyssolnyth* to the gatekeeper, he becomes visibly excited and calls for the Keeper of the Portal, who then summons the Gatewarden. After quick, hushed conversation during which the authenticity of the tablets is verified, the Gatewarden warmly welcomes the PCs to Candlekeep and ushers them immediately into the central keep and the presence of Ulraunt, Keeper of the Tomes. Refer to Dinner at the Keep, below.

If the PCs present the gatekeeper with the *Book of the Black*, he makes a quick perusal of it and then faints dead away. A couple of attendants nearby rush to his aid, one to revive the fallen monk and the other to examine the tome. The hubbub that follows is identical to that described above regarding the *Tablets of Pharyssolnyth*.

If the PCs hand over a lesser tome (such as the Faceless Incanter's spellbook), they are shown to the boarding house and advised that they must prepare to dine with the Keeper of the Tomes on the next evening before they will be admitted to the library. At that time, after the PCs have had the opportunity to explore the outer ward of the keep a bit (mostly mundane and uninteresting), proceed with Dinner at the Keep, below. Prices for room and board, or for goods purchased from the various vendors located at the keep, are the standard costs from the *Player's Handbook*.

### DINNER AT THE KEEP

Whether the PCs have an immediate audience or are admitted the next evening, all petitioners seeking to use the library must first endure a dinner with Ulraunt, Keeper of the Tomes (LG male Halruaan human diviner 7/lore-master 3). The meal occurs in the main dining hall of the central keep and is a frugal affair of watery soup, hard bread, boiled vegetables, and thin wine. Depending on what book the PCs gave for their entry fee, the particulars of the dinner differ.



*Candlekeep by night*

If the gift was a book other than the *Tablets of Pharyssolnyth* or the *Book of the Black*, then Ulraunt plies the characters with piercing questions as to their motives and what they seek. If the PCs wish to withhold the true purpose of their visit, they need to succeed on a Bluff check opposed by Ulraunt's Sense Motive modifier of +18 in order to obtain his approval to use the library.

If the PCs provided one of the two aforementioned tomes, then the dinner is more cordial (though the menu doesn't change), Ulraunt is flushed with gratitude at the priceless gift given to the library, and the PCs receive a +12 circumstance bonus on their Bluff check if they choose to hide the true details of their quest.



Regardless of the particulars of the dinner, in both situations Ulaunt begins with the maxim of the library: "He who destroys knowledge, with ink, fire, or sword, is himself destroyed. Here, books are more valuable than lives." He then proceeds to lay out the rules of conduct: No visitor can stay for more than a tenday and must wait a month before reentering Candlekeep; visitors are forbidden to write in the library, but monk scribes can provide copying services for visitors at the rate of 100 gp per text or between 1,000 gp and 10,000 gp for a text with magical writings. In this instance, "text" can mean anything from a single line of script from a book to an entire volume.

At the conclusion of the dinner, assuming the PCs have passed Ulaunt's scrutiny, one or more characters are given a chit that provides access to the general library for up to a tenday, to be turned back in upon the visitor's departure. If the PCs provided a lesser tome, only one individual is given a chit per book donated. If the PCs gave the tablets or the *Book of the Black*, Ulaunt graciously gives a chit to each PC present.

### CLUES AT CANDLEKEEP

The following pieces of information can be gleaned from the library at Candlekeep. Some of the facts mention a specific source that provides the information. Others can be discovered through general study of the library's contents. The information can be gained in different ways while at Candlekeep, depending on what sort of book the PCs gave as a gift to the library. See the following sections for details.

#### Candlekeep Clues

##### DC Information

- 13 Many of the scions of Netheril who survived the Fall stored the collected knowledge from their past in the Library of Raumar in distant Halruaa.
- 18 The Terraseer made himself available to the archwizards of Netheril to provide guidance and teach them greater magic. Taking long departures, centuries at a time, he would return unchanged since his last visitation. After his first appearance before the Netherese in -3654 DR, he began to teach many secrets of the Art. Among his achievements, prophecies, and teachings are translations from many of the *Nether Scrolls*, the exploration of the Sword Coast North, the occupation of Old Owl Well, and the warning of impending doom at the hands of Karsus. He was last seen in the enclave of Karsus in -345 DR, six years before the Fall (from *Of the Fall of Netheril* by the Shackled Scribe of Larloch).
- 23 "... betwixt sand-choked streets and shattered tower lay my path in flight. Upon my heel like the dogs of the death came the skull-bone of the lich. Thus I departed haunted Oreme, ne'er to turn back for the fortune lost ... " (This short excerpt of suspect authenticity is found

in the Journal of Steeleye, the Sword of Westgate, from an entry dated 1344 DR.)

- 25 The ancient city of Oreme existed in an age lost to history. Called the City of White Towers, it was said to consist of a thousand towers of the finest alabaster that soared impossibly into the heavens.
- 28 The castle of Spellgard, once called Saharelgard, stands upon the ridge that borders the Fallen Lands and the desert of Anauroch (from *Of the Fall of Netheril* by the Shackled Scribe of Larloch).
- 30 Though his abode was never found, many archwizards have whispered that the Terraseer was the master of lost Oreme (from *Of the Fall of Netheril* by the Shackled Scribe of Larloch).
- 33 The famous Alaundo the Seer and the Lost Sage, Augathra the Mad, built their prophecies upon the works of earlier diviners. It is said that one such diviner who heavily influenced them was the mysterious Terraseer of Netheril, referred to by Alaundo and Augathra in their own works as the "T Source" (from *Of the Fall of Netheril* by the Shackled Scribe of Larloch).

### THE GIFT OF A LESSER BOOK

This information applies if the characters presented any book other than the *Tablets of Pharyssolnyth* or the *Book of the Black* (or another tome of equal value) to Candlekeep upon entry. The items of information can be gained by a literate character through study of the library in conjunction with checks involving bardic knowledge, Knowledge (history), or Profession (librarian, researcher, or scribe) at the DCs given above. If none of these checks is possible, an Intelligence check can be made in their stead, though the DC for any such check is increased by 5. Each PC who does research in the library can make one check per item of information per day to try to locate that information. If a check fails, he cannot attempt to locate that particular item of information again until the next day.

### THE GIFT OF A MAJOR WORK

This information applies if the PCs gave the gatekeeper the *Tablets of Pharyssolnyth* or the *Book of the Black* when they entered Candlekeep. In that case, when the PCs are researching in the library they gain the assistance of the First Reader—the most knowledgeable sage of the monastery. The DCs and requirements for finding the items of information are the same as given above. However, with the assistance of the First Reader, a single PC (players' choice) who does research in the library gains a +10 circumstance bonus on each check or ability check per day.

In addition, during the audience with Ulaunt, the DC 13 information from Candlekeep Clues, above, comes out in the course of his talk with them without the need for a check of any sort. If the PCs are truthful about the nature of their quest during their conversation with Ulaunt or at least mention that



they seek Oreme, he provides them with the DC 25 information as well.

Finally, if the PCs gifted the monastery with the *Tablets of Pharyssolmyth*, they experience a haunting visit during their first day of research in the library. A random PC is approached invisibly by Miiryum, the ancient silver dragon ghost that guards the library of Candlekeep, who quickly whispers "Repair the Lady's home to gain her boon" in his ear before vanishing back to the catacombs beneath the fortress. Miiryum does not approach the party again unless acting in defense of the library. The dragon's remark refers to Lady Saharel of Spellgard, and how to gain her favor.

#### Ad Hoc XP Award

This portion of the adventure has very little opportunity for combat. To advance the player characters in level as needed, award 1,000 to 2,000 XP for each item of information they obtain while visiting Candlekeep. Award an additional 2,000 XP if they receive the secret hint from Miiryum.

## Mount Talath

This temple of Mystra sits high on the slopes of one of the tallest mountains in the range known as the North Wall in northwestern Halruaa, surrounded by a small town where its clergy and other staff live.

Once the characters reach the temple grounds (whether they arrive by conventional means or appear suddenly through magical conveyance), read:

*The temple is a magnificent structure of tall spires alongside the steep mountain slope. Constructed primarily of stout stone, it also includes delicate crystalline walls and even a peculiar absence of walls where there ought to be some in its architecture. Magic has undoubtedly been used to aid in the crafting of this edifice.*

Anyone wishing to pay homage to Mystra can enter here to worship, but items of true value (such as the information the PCs seek) are kept behind and beneath the surface structure, in a huge cavern complex designed to store centuries of magical knowledge safely.

As visitors from outside Halruaa, the PCs must pay the price for entry into the temple library—coins, gems, or magic goods worth no less than 1,500 gp per person. They are not permitted into the deepest levels, but specific works (in other words, the ones the characters need to examine) can be brought up from below to be examined in private viewing rooms, always under the watchful eye of a lorekeeper. Such shuttling of volumes out of the private collection costs an additional 200 gp per day.

Despite the priests' best efforts, thieves and spies occasionally gain entrance to places where they should not be—but ample magic is in place to deal with such intruders. Many of these ne'er-do-wells are not found for several days after they have been

fried, frozen, or partially disintegrated. If the PCs choose to test the limits of their hosts' hospitality, feel free to introduce them to suitable and impressive deterrents.

## CULT AMBUSH

On the third day of research within the library, one of the characters is attacked while searching for a new bit of information.

**NPCs:** A pair of members of a secretive organization known as the Cultists of the Shattered Peak attempt to ambush and slay a PC who wields arcane magic. The cultists believe that the characters have come seeking information about Netheril in order to claim some of its ancient magical power for themselves, and the cult's purpose is to thwart such greed. The two attackers have been tipped off to the characters' presence within the library by one of the lorekeepers, who also made arrangements to let them in without notice.

The ambushers wait until the PC in question is alone and then spring from their hiding places among the shelves.

**Tactical Encounter:** W1: Cult Ambush, page 93.

**Development:** If the ambushed PC survives the attempt on her life and the cultists are slain, other members of the cult might attempt to thwart the characters at a later time. After the dust settles, the priests of the temple demand a full explanation of what happened. Unless the characters go out of their way to hide something, whatever explanation they offer grudgingly satisfies the clergy of Mystra, and a couple of quick divination spells confirm the truth of the PCs' words shortly thereafter. For more information on the Cultists of the Shattered Peak, see page 10 of *Lost Empires of Faerûn*.

## CLUES AT MOUNT TALATH

For each day spent researching in the great library of the temple, the PCs can make one appropriate check using bardic knowledge, Knowledge (Netheril or history), Profession (scribe), and so forth. If no such skills are available, an Intelligence check can be made instead, though with a -5 penalty. Each previous day spent searching grants an additional cumulative +2 bonus to that day's check. At the end of a given day's searching, any bit of information with a DC equal to or less than the check result is revealed to the characters. Thus, it is possible to get a result of 18 and learn the first two clues on the first day, get a 16 and gain nothing on the second, then get a 25 and gain the next three clues on the third day.

### Mount Talath Clues

#### DC Information

- 15 A great history of Netheril is slowly being written by some unknown archmage. Where he dwells no one knows, but new volumes of his work appear at Candlekeep every few years and are stored in the stacks therein.
- 17 A city deep in Anauroch has been swallowed by the sands; no one knows who once dwelt there, but travelers report



that on certain nights one tower can still be seen across the dunes—nearly 200 feet tall and of white marble that glows softly in the moonlight.

- 20 A mage known as the Terraseer made himself available to the archwizards of Netheril to provide guidance and teach them greater magic. After his first appearance to the Netherese in -3654 DR, he began to teach many secrets of the Art. Among his achievements, prophecies, and teachings are translations from many of the *Nether Scrolls*, the exploration of the Sword Coast North, the occupation of Old Owl Well, and the warning of impending doom at the hands of Karsus. He was last seen in the enclave of Karsus in -345 DR, six years before the Fall.
- 23 The ancient city of Oreme existed in an age lost to history. Called the City of White Towers, it was said to consist of a thousand towers of the finest alabaster that soared into the heavens.
- 25 To the people of Netheril he was called merely the Terraseer, watcher of all that transpired on the earth, but to the learned among the archwizards he had a name—Arthindol.
- 32 The Lady Saharel still dwells in Spellgard. She knows all the secrets of ancient Netheril, so beware her fell powers. Those who do not respect her dominion are seldom seen again.

## spellgard

Where the southern edge of the high, broken region known as The Fallen Lands comes near the western edge of Anauroch, a serpentine, rocky ridge rises from the sands. That ridge is crowned by a vast, grand castle called Spellgard. Once the abode of Lady Saharel, one of the High Mages of Netheril, Spellgard was then called Saharelgard, and was a rich storehouse of wealth, mighty magic, and luxuries of dress, decoration, furnishings, and food. Today it is a ruin, largely stripped of its riches by time and thieves.

Upon reaching the ruined castle, the PCs initially find little more than empty ruins. A successful DC 16 Search check reveals a section of an old kitchen where, at some point in time, somebody began the job of restacking the broken stones to repair the fireplace that once stood there.

The castle appears to be deserted unless the PCs set about to cause further destruction, in which case they incur the wrath of the Lady Saharel (CG female Netherese human ghost wizard 20/ archmage 5/Netherese arcanist<sup>PG</sup> 5). She cannot be permanently laid to rest unless Manshoon of the Zhentarim and all of his clones are destroyed, a task far beyond the scope of this adventure. However, she will appear peacefully if the PCs restore a bit of her home. This fact can be discovered through a successful DC 30 bardic knowledge or Knowledge (history) check, or gleaned from clues gained elsewhere in this chapter. The repairs neces-

sary to summon Saharel and gain her boon require 12 (collective) hours of labor followed by a successful DC 10 Craft (carpentry or stonemasonry) check.

Because Spellgard lies just outside the dead magic area that pervades virtually all of Anauroch, it's possible for PCs to use spells to perform this work. Specifically, if *fabricate* or *polymorph any object* is used, the work is completed instantly and a Craft check is not necessary. Saharel is aware of the temporary nature of repairs from spells such as *minor creation* or *major creation* and will not respond to such attempts.

If Saharel is summoned by the peaceful reconstruction of her home, and the PCs subsequently mention or ask questions relating to the nature of their quest, she provides them with these three pieces of information:

- Oreme lies 200 miles east of the Weathercote Wood near great Anauroch. Its basin lies on the verge of the region known as the Frozen Sea.
- The Terraseer dwells not in Oreme itself, but beneath it, in the Crypt of Dreaming Lizards.
- Though Arthindol the Terraseer appeared to the Netherese as an archwizard of that land, he was actually King Oreme, and he hid his true form with magic. Some beings have walked the land far longer than the warm races.

### Ad Hoc XP Award

Award 3,000 XP to each character if the PCs make repairs to Spellgard and successfully obtain the above information from Lady Saharel.

## biradoon

Once the characters have a clear notion of where Oreme is, they face some formidable challenges in getting there. Obviously, the first obstacle to overcome is the dead magic zone. At their levels, the characters should be able to approach Anauroch magically (through teleportation, flying, or the like), but that will only get them to the edge of the desert. To actually move into the desert, they must travel the old-fashioned way: on foot or astride a camel. Even if they manage to find some obscure map that shows the location of Oreme and figure out that they can get there most easily by starting out from the western edge of Anauroch, they still face several days' travel.

Without proper equipment, such a journey is nigh impossible. Suitable protection from the elements, as well as plenty of precious water, are the minimum requirements for making the trip.

Furthermore, the lack of access to magic means that the characters will be unable to use divination or pathfinding spells to determine their route. Even an experienced ranger in the group will have a difficult time finding his way through unfamiliar terrain to a place he's never been before. Thus, the PCs are likely to want to hire a guide to lead the way.



*Biradoon*

For all of these reasons, the characters are likely to want to make a few special purchases before they truly set out toward Oreme. They have several choices for how they do this, including bartering with the Zhentarim at their trading posts at either end of the Black Road or stopping at a community relatively close to the desert's edge. In either case, they might be able to get only some of what they need. The best option the PCs have is to deal with the D'tarig. (See page 140 for more information on these denizens of the desert.)

The D'tarig are a better choice than the Zhentarim for obvious reasons. Though they might attempt to drive a hard bargain with the PCs (seeing them as greenhorns in the ways of the desert, and thus easily taken advantage of), they will undoubtedly be a fairer and more reliable source of goods than the Black Network. Furthermore, they will have a wider variety of goods available than a fringe community outside the desert, and they also have the camels the PCs will need.

Regardless of how the characters choose to equip themselves, one of the first things they encounter once they enter the fringe of the desert (no matter where they choose to do so) is one of the great D'tarig traveling caravan cities known as Biradoon.

The caravan cities roam along the desert's edge, meeting and trading with the various Bedine tribes they cross paths with. (See page 139 for more about the Bedine.) Each wandering caravan is truly a nomadic city. The merchants tend their wagons and send subordinate dealers on short excursions deeper into the desert or out into the lands bordering Anauroch for a few days at a time in order to exchange goods and turn a profit. A contingent of guards protects the wagons from beasts and bandits (and Zhents, on occasion). The whole entourage stops every few days at some new oasis to barter while they restock their water and rest the camels.

There are a number of ways the characters can come into contact with Biradoon. If they have stopped in a town or village near the edge of the desert before actually proceeding into Anauroch, they could meet a D'tarig merchant out and about who is more than happy to guide them back to the caravan—for a fair price, of course. If they choose to plunge recklessly into the desert without having stocked up on necessary supplies, Biradoon is one of the first points of interest they discover (indeed, the traveling caravan might be a welcome sight for some very tired and thirsty PCs). The caravan is located, of course, wherever it needs to be to make this happen, so regardless of where the characters enter the desert, they run across it.

However you choose to reveal the caravan city to the characters, read the following aloud when they first encounter it.

*As the sun beats down upon the endless rippling sands, a colorful pennant appears ahead, flapping in the scalding breeze. The thin flag seems to thrust up out of a low spot beyond the next dune, and as you crest that hillock, an amazing sight greets you. Spread out around a small but verdant oasis is a city of wagons and tents. What must be hundreds of people move about the makeshift village, as though it were a market square elsewhere in Faerûn. In addition to humans and a few elves, dwarves, and gnomes, you also spy dozens of camels tethered in groups.*

**Biradoon (hamlet)** Nonstandard; AL N; Spending limit 3,000; Assets 36,450 gp; Population 243; Races isolated (humans 97%, other 3%).

*Authority Figures:* Belin u'Hamar (N male human expert 14), head of the Merchants' Council; Lurgana Thromfop (NG female halfling fighter 8), Captain of the Guard.

*Important Characters:* The twelve other merchants on the Merchants' Council.



*Notable Imports:* Foodstuffs, metal goods, spirits, wood.

*Notable Exports:* Camels, desert gear, gemstones, incense, Shadow Weave magic.

Anything that might be found in a small frontier village elsewhere in Faerûn is available here. The only difference is in the presentation; taverns and inns become open-sided cloth pavilions with cushions for reclining, general stores become still more tents with wares spread out on ground cloths in their cool interiors. Whatever the characters could reasonably expect to find in another community outside the desert, they can find here. Most items described in the Equipment chapter of the *Player's Handbook*, as well as any of the special items in Appendix 1 of this book, can be purchased in Biradoon.

The one exception to this is magic. It's not that the D'tarig do not wish to deal in such, but with the dead magic zone in existence, normal magic items are next to useless in the desert. Most of these wares have been traded elsewhere, outside the magic-dampening field. There are a few precious Shadow Weave items available (a 10% chance of any character finding something worthwhile or that meets the PCs' proficiency requirements), but it takes some finagling to get a merchant to even admit that he or she has such goods, and the price for them is 10 times a normal item's market value.

## into the desert

Once the characters are well provisioned, they are ready to venture into the depths of the wasteland that is Anauroch. Depending on where the PCs begin, it could take them anywhere from two or three days—if they departed from the vicinity of Spellgard, for example—to three weeks or more, if they approach from the opposite side (say, from Shadowdale). However they choose to approach Oreme, they must contend with the harsh climate. Refer to Hazards in Appendix 1 of this book for more information on what the PCs must deal with.

During their travels, they can encounter a wide variety of creatures, both living and undead (though remember that the dead magic zone places certain limits on these beings' special abilities; see the sidebar). The PCs might find succor among a tribe of Bedine, cross paths with a few natural desert predators hunting for food, or even stumble upon the horrific denizens of another long-dead city half-buried in the dunes. Appendix 1 contains a handful of abbreviated descriptions of locales in the desert. Feel free to incorporate as few or as many of these suggestions into the journey as you wish.

What follows is a pair of specific encounters that can occur during the PCs' trek. Feel free to use them in either order or not at all. Both are considered nighttime encounters, though some provision and adjustment could be made to utilize them during the daylight hours.

## shadovar patrol

The shades have caught wind of the fact that the characters are snooping around in the desert and have sent a patrol to investigate. The visitation occurs at night, for the Shadovars prefer to travel under the cover of darkness. Therefore, the characters are either traveling by night or resting around a campsite.

**Creatures and NPCs:** Two Shadovars mounted on veserabs swoop in to get a closer look at the characters and their activities. When the shades determine that they have found the quarry they were told to investigate, they attack.

**Tactical Encounter:** W2: Shadovar Patrol, page 94.

**Development:** If the PCs slay or drive off the patrol, a second, more powerful contingent comes looking for them and finds them just as they are exiting Oreme, at the end of Chapter 4.

## psionic raiders

Kharantes, the half-fiendish yuan-ti abomination that is attempting to take over Oreme (see Chapter 4), has servants combing the wastes for miles around the abandoned city in search of treasure and potential threats. One such band discovers the PCs. The encounter occurs at night, so the PCs are either traveling by starlight (when it is cooler), or else they are camping.

**Creatures:** During one of their sweeps through the desert, a band of asabi raiders, led by a psionically endowed yuan-ti abomination named Sysalok, stumbles across the PCs. Rather than simply attacking the characters, Sysalok and his minions advance ahead of the group and hide at an oasis where the characters are certain to stop and resupply. The four raiders bury themselves in the sand near the banks of the oasis and lie in wait (Spot DC 25 to find the asabis, Spot DC 28 to locate Sysalok). Once the first character approaches the edge of the water, start the encounter.

**Tactical Encounter:** W3: Psionic Raiders, page 96.

**Development:** If the PCs do not kill the entire contingent of raiders during the encounter, the escapees make their way back to Oreme to warn Kharantes, who prepares for their arrival in whatever way you see fit (see Chapter 4 for more information).



# CULT AMBUSH

Encounter Level 14

## setup

The two cultists start out hiding in the spots marked A on the tactical map. The PC is in the spot marked V, browsing the shelves for a scrap of information.

*As your eyes roam over the ancient texts, seeking the bit of a clue that you know will bring you closer to your goal, you catch a flicker of movement out of the corner of your eye. As you turn to see what it is, you spy a stealthy form lunging at you.*

## tactics

In the first round after moving adjacent to the target, each cultist attempts to cast *touch of idiocy* on the PC. Thereafter, the two cultists attempt to keep the PC between them so that they can employ their sneak attacks to good effect.

## FEATURES OF THE AREA

**Shelves:** The shelves in the library block line of sight and line of effect. They cannot be tipped over or otherwise moved.

**Stepstool:** This stool is 2 feet high. Moving into the square containing the stool costs 2 squares of movement. A character can hop up onto the stool as part of a move action, thereby gaining a +1 bonus on attack rolls against opponents on the floor for being on higher ground.



## 2 CULTISTS

CR 12

hp 52 each (12 HD)

Male human rogue 7/Cultist of the Shattered Peak<sup>LE</sup> 5

N Medium humanoid

**Init** +7; **Senses** Listen +2, Spot +10

**Languages** Common, Loross

**AC** 18, touch 14, flat-footed 18; +2 against traps, uncanny dodge; Dodge

**Resist** evasion

**Fort** +4, **Ref** +14 (+16 against traps), **Will** +6; +1 against arcane spells

**Speed** 30 ft. (6 squares)

**Melee** +2 *keen dagger* +13/+8 (1d4+3/17–20); +1 morale bonus against spellcasters

**Base Atk** +8; **Grp** +9

**Atk Options** Blind-Fight, death attack (DC 17), sneak attack +6d6, smite mage, zeal

**Special Actions** ominous presence

**Cultist Spells Prepared** (CL: 5th):

2nd (1/day)—*touch of idiocy* (DC 14, +12 melee touch)

1st (3/day)—*endure elements*†, *hold portal*, *shield*†

0 (3/day)—*resistance*† (3)

† already cast

**Abilities** Str 13, Dex 17, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 8

**SQ** trapfinding, trap sense +2

**Feats** Alertness, Blind-Fight, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Weapon Finesse

**Skills** Balance +13, Bluff +4, Climb +16, Decipher Script +17, Disable Device +15, Disguise +9, Gather Information +14, Hide +18, Intimidate +4, Knowledge (History) +17, Listen +2, Move Silently +18, Open Lock +16, Spot +10

**Possessions** +2 *leather armor*, +2 *keen dagger*, *ring of protection* +1

**Death Attack (Ex)** A cultist has a death attack that works like the assassin ability of the same name, except that the DC of the Fortitude save to avoid the kill or paralysis effect is 15 plus the cultist's Int modifier.

**Evasion (Ex)** Beginning at 2nd level, a cultist can avoid damage from certain attacks with a successful Reflex save. See the rogue class feature, PH 41.

**Ominous Presence (Ex)** When adventurers or explorers come too close to discovering some great Netherese secret, the cultist prefers to frighten them off rather than kill them if at all possible. The cultist gains a bonus equal to his level on all Bluff and Intimidate checks.

**Smite Mage (Su)** Once per day, a cultist can attempt to smite an arcane spellcaster with one normal attack roll. The cultist deals an extra 5 points of damage on a successful attack.

**Sneak Attack (Ex)** A cultist deals extra damage when he is flanking an opponent or at any time when the target would be denied its Dex bonus. This damage applies to ranged attacks only if the target is within 30 feet.

**Zeal (Ex)** A cultist gains a +1 morale bonus on attack rolls against arcane spellcasters and a +1 morale bonus on saves against arcane spells and effects. The bonus on attack rolls does not apply to a creature that has arcane spell-like abilities unless it is also an arcane spellcaster.



# SHADOVAR PATROL

Encounter Level 14

## setup

The Shadovars approach the PCs from the directions marked with arrows on the tactical map. Position all the characters and their camels (if any) as closely around the point marked X as possible. If they are traveling, assume this is the center point of their formation. If they were camping, assume this is the remains of their cooking fire. If they are resting, determine if they have anyone on watch, and whether or not he is awake. If so, read:

*As the glow of the moon turns the dunes of Anauroch into a rippled sea of silvery hue, a darker shadow flashes across the night sky. A strange, wormlike beast undulates past, almost as if it were swimming through the air. As it passes and banks into a turn for another approach, a humanoid rider becomes visible.*

## tactics

Knowing that the characters are deprived of a significant part of their ranged firepower because of their lack of magic, the Shadovars remain mounted on their veserabs and attack the characters from a distance. They use area spells such as *cloudkill* and *summon swarm* to get the characters separated and disoriented, and then employ their *summon monster IV* spells to bring in fiendish giant wasps and fiendish monstrous scorpions (Large size) to quickly overwhelm the PCs. After that, judicious use of *ray of exhaustion* (preferably by wand) should wear the characters out—they hope.

Because they are so weak in melee combat (they do not even carry melee weapons), they do not engage the PCs on the ground if at all possible. If a veserab becomes seriously wounded, they retreat for the time being and round up more of their kin to come back for another go-round (after Chapter 4). If a veserab is killed, the Shadovar riding it uses *gaseous form* to escape both the fall and the impending attack from the PCs, escaping into the desert night under cover of *invisibility* if necessary. A *whispering wind* spell summons reinforcements on more veserabs to pick up a stranded Shadovar.



## FEATURES OF THE AREA

**Deep Sand:** The areas indicated on the map as deep sand contain loose sand about 3 feet deep. It costs Medium and larger creatures 3 squares of movement to enter a square of deep sand. It costs Small creatures 4 squares of movement. Tumbling is impossible in deep sand.

**Shallow Sand:** The areas indicated on the map as shallow sand have loose sand about 1 foot deep. It costs 2 squares to move into a square covered with shallow sand, and the DC of Tumble checks in such a square increases by 2.



**2 VESERABS****CR 4**

hp 42 each (5 HD)

N Large magical beast (extraplanar)

Init +3; Senses blind, blindsense 240 ft., scent; Listen +10

AC 16, touch 12, flat-footed 13

Immune gaze attacks, illusions, visual effects

Fort +7, Ref +7, Will +1

Speed 20 ft. (4 squares), fly 120 ft. (average); Flyby Attack

Melee bite +8 (1d8+4) and  
2 claws +6 each (1d6+2)

Space 10 ft.; Reach 5 ft.

Base Atk +5; Grp +13

Atk Options pounce, rake

Special Actions noxious breath

Abilities Str 19, Dex 17, Con 17, Int 2, Wis 10, Cha 4

Feats Flyby Attack, Multiattack

Skills Listen +10, Move Silently +9

**Blindsense (Ex)** A veserab uses echolocation to pinpoint creatures within 240 feet. Opponents still have total concealment against a creature that has blindsense. A *silence* spell negates this ability and effectively blinds the veserab.**Pounce (Ex)** When a veserab dives on a foe during the first round of combat, it can make a full attack.**Rake (Ex)** A veserab that pounces on an opponent can make two rake attacks (+6 melee) with its hind legs for 1d6+2 slashing damage each.**Noxious Breath (Ex)** As a standard action, a veserab can breathe out a black cloud of noxious fumes similar to a *stinking cloud* spell in a 20-foot cone that lasts for 10 rounds. Once a veserab uses its noxious breath, it can't use it again until 1d4 rounds later. Vesperabs are immune to the effects of their own and other veserabs' noxious breath.

The cloud obscures all sight, including darkvision, beyond 5 feet. A creature within 5 feet has concealment. Creatures farther away have total concealment.

Living creatures in the cloud become nauseated. This condition lasts as long as the creature is in the cloud and for 1d4+1 rounds after it leaves. (Roll separately for each nauseated character.) Any creatures that succeeds on its save but remains in the cloud must continue to save each round on the veserab's turn.

A moderate wind (11+ mph) disperses the cloud in 4 rounds; a strong wind (21+ mph) disperses the cloud in 1 round.

**Skills** Vesperabs have a +4 racial bonus on Listen and Move Silently checks.**2 SHADOVAR GUARDS****CR 10**

hp 40 each (10 HD)

Male human sorcerer 6/shadow adept<sup>PC</sup> 4

LE Medium humanoid

Init +2; Senses low-light vision; Listen +0, Spot +0

Languages Common, Loross

AC 13, touch 12, flat-footed 11; 20 with *shield* and *mage armor*

Fort +5, Ref +6, Will +10; +1 profane bonus against enchantment, illusion, necromancy, and spells that have the darkness descriptor

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Base Atk +4; Grp +4

Special Actions shield of shadows

Combat Gear wand of ray of exhaustion (40 charges)

Sorcerer Spells Prepared (CL 10th):

5th (3/day)—*cloudkill* (DC 18)4th (5/day)—*stoneskin*, *summon monster IV*3rd (7/day)—*gaseous form*, *ray of exhaustion* (+6 ranged touch, DC 16), *tongues*2nd (7/day)—*invisibility*, *resist energy*, *summon swarm*, *whispering wind*1st (7/day)—*endure elements*, *feather fall*, *mage armor*†, *protection from good*, *shield*†0 (6/day)—*arcane mark*, *daze*, *mage hand*, *mending*, *message*, *open/close*, *read magic*, *resistance*, *touch of fatigue* (+3 melee touch)

† already cast

Abilities Str 8, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 17

Feats Brew Potion, Combat Casting, Craft Wand, Enlarge Spell, Insidious Magic<sup>B PC</sup>, Pernicious Magic<sup>B PC</sup>, Shadow Weave Magic<sup>PC</sup>, Tenacious Magic<sup>B PC</sup>

Skills Bluff +12, Concentration +14, Diplomacy +5, Hide +14, Intimidate +5, Knowledge (arcane) +10, Listen +0, Spellcraft +12, Spot +0

Possessions combat gear plus *bracers of armor* +1, *cloak of resistance* +2. Note: The Shadovar guards' possessions are Shadow Weave magic items (see sidebar in Chapter 5, page 112).**Shield of Shadows (Su)** A shadow adept can surround itself with a globe of purple-black force as a standard action. This shield of shadows functions like a *shield* spell, granting the user a +4 shield bonus to AC and absorbing *magic missiles* cast at the user. In addition, a shield of shadows provides concealment against melee and ranged attacks. A shadow adept can see and reach through the shield, so it does not provide cover or concealment to opponents. A Shadovar guard can use a shield of shadows for up to 10 rounds per day. This time need not be consecutive. Creating or dismissing a shield of shadows is a standard action.



# Psionic Raiders

Encounter Level 15

## Setup

The raiding party is hidden at the spots indicated on the accompanying map. Sysalok (S) and three asabi raiders (A) are buried in the sand, waiting for the PCs to arrive. Once a character reaches the shore of the oasis, all four creatures spring forth to attack.

*In a flurry of sand, four figures erupt from the surrounding dunes. Lizardlike forms scramble toward you, their curved blades swooshing through the dry desert air. Though they are obviously reptilian, their breastplates and weapons mark them as accomplished adversaries.*



## Tactics

Sysalok's special abilities are psionic in nature, and are thus unaffected by the dead magic zone. All of the yuan-ti's equipment is psionically powered, rather than by Weave magic, so it also functions normally.

In the opening round of combat, when the raiders (presumably) have surprise, Sysalok begins by using *aversion* on the character who seems to pose the greatest threat to him. At the same time, the three asabis fire a barrage of arrows, concentrating on characters who seem to have little in the way of armor.

In subsequent rounds, the asabis and Sysalok continue to fire arrows until one or more PCs begins to fire back. At that point, the asabis close in to engage in melee while the yuan-ti hangs back and continues using his bow. If he finds his missile weapon ineffectual, Sysalok also closes in for melee attacks, looking for the combatant with the most apparent physical prowess. He uses Spring Attack to jump in and back out of range, if possible, and *body equilibrium* to move out onto the water if such a maneuver aids him.

If two of the asabi fighters drop in combat, or if Sysalok is reduced to 40 or fewer hit points, the yuan-ti attempts to employ the *aporter* power of his shield to flee. He transports himself in this manner to the opposite side of whatever barrier is most convenient—a couple of sand dunes might hide his escape, or the water of the oasis could block pursuit.

Once out of reach, he hustles to Oreme to report to Kharantes.

## FEATURES OF THE AREA

**Deep Sand:** The areas indicated on the map as deep sand contain loose sand about 3 feet deep. It costs Medium and larger creatures 3 squares of movement to enter a square of deep sand. It costs Small creatures 4 squares of movement. Tumbling is impossible in deep sand.

**Shallow Sand:** The areas indicated on the map as shallow sand have loose sand about 1 foot deep. It costs 2 squares to move into a square covered with shallow sand, and the DC of Tumble checks in such a square increases by 2.



**SYSALOK****CR 13**

hp 131 (15 HD)

Male yuan-ti abomination psychic warrior<sup>EPH</sup> 6

CE Large monstrous humanoid

**Init** +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., detect poison, scent; Listen +23, Spot +16**Languages** Abyssal, Common, Draconic, Yuan-ti**AC** 37, touch 12, flat-footed 34; **Dodge**, **Mobility****SR** 18**Fort** +14, **Ref** +13, **Will** +13**Speed** 20 ft. (4 squares), climb 15 ft., swim 15 ft.; **aporter****Melee** +4 *bodyfeeder scimitar* +24/+19/+14 (1d8+13/18–20) and

bite +20 (2d6+7 plus poison)

**Ranged** +4 *composite longbow* +20/+15/+10 (2d6+9/×3)**Space** 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.**Base Atk** +13; **Grp** +21**Atk Options** Blind-Fight, Combat Expertise; poison (DC 17, 1d6 Con/1d6 Con)**Special Actions** constrict 1d6+6, improved grab, *produce acid***Power Points/Day:** 11; **Psychic Warrior Powers Known** (ML 6th):2nd—*body equilibrium, hustle, prowess*1st—*burst, force screen, metaphysical weapon***Psi-Like Abilities** (ML 15th):At will—*aversion* (DC 22), *chameleon*, *psionic daze* (DC 18), *detect hostile intent*, *entangling ectoplasm*, *exhalation of the black dragon*3/day—*body purification*, *psionic charm* (DC 22), *concealing amorpha*, *deeper darkness*, *mind thrust* (DC 18), *psionic suggestion* (DC 19)1/day—*baleful polymorph* (DC 22)**Abilities** Str 24, Dex 16, Con 19, Int 22, Wis 20, Cha 16**Feats** Alertness<sup>B</sup>, Blind-Fight<sup>B</sup>, Body Fuel<sup>EPH</sup>, Combat Expertise<sup>B</sup>, Combat Manifestation<sup>EPH</sup>, Dodge<sup>B</sup>, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Mobility<sup>B</sup>, Weapon Specialization (scimitar)**Skills** Balance +19, Climb +13, Concentration +22, Hide +8\*, Jump +17, Knowledge (history) +21, Knowledge (local Anauroch) +21, Listen +23, Spot +16, Stabilize Self +22  
\* When using his *chameleon* ability, Sysalok gains a +10 circumstance bonus on Hide checks.**Possessions** +4 *bodyfeeder scimitar*, +4 *composite longbow* (+5 Str bonus) with 20 arrows, +4 *aporter heavy shield*, +4 *breastplate of quickness***Aporter** As a standard action usable twice per day, Sysalok's aporter shield transports him and his equipment to anyspot within 800 feet that he can visualize or specify, as the *psionic dimension door* power.**Bodyfeeder** His bodyfeeder weapon grants Sysalok temporary hit points equal to the total damage dealt by a successful critical hit. These temporary hit points last for 10 minutes. Thus, if Sysalok successfully scores a critical hit while he still enjoys temporary hit points from a previous critical hit, he gains only the better of the two values: either his current number of temporary hit points, or the new influx of temporary hit points, whichever is higher.**Body Fuel** Sysalok can recover 2 power points by taking 1 point of ability damage to each of Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution. He can recover additional power points for a proportional cost; for example, he could choose to recover 6 power points by taking 3 points of damage to Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution.**Aversion (Ps)** A yuan-ti abomination can psionically create a compulsion effect targeting one creature within 30 feet. The target must succeed on a DC 22 Will save or gain an aversion to snakes for 10 minutes. Affected creatures must stay at least 20 feet away from any snake or yuan-ti, alive or dead; if already within 20 feet, they move away. A subject unable to move away, or one attacked by snakes or yuan-ti, is overcome with revulsion. This revulsion reduces the creature's Dexterity score by 4 points until the effect wears off or the subject is no longer within 20 feet of a snake or yuan-ti. This ability is otherwise similar to *antipathy* as the spell (caster level 16th).**Constrict (Ex)** Sysalok deals 1d6+6 points of damage with a successful grapple check.**Improved Grab (Ex)** To use this ability, Sysalok must hit a Large or smaller creature with its bite attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking attacks of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and can constrict.**Produce Acid (Ps)** Sysalok has the psionic ability to exude acid from his body, dealing 3d6 points of acid damage to the next creature he touches, including a creature hit by his bite attack. If Sysalok is grappling, constricting, or pinning a foe when he uses this power, his grasp deals 5d6 points of acid damage. The acid becomes inert when it leaves his body, and Sysalok is immune to its effects.**Skills** Sysalok can always choose to take 10 on a Climb check, even if rushed or threatened.

He has a +8 racial bonus on any Swim check to perform some special action or avoid a hazard. He can always choose to take 10 on a Swim check, even if distracted or endangered. He can use the run action while swimming, provided he swims in a straight line.

**3 ASABI RAIDERS<sup>MON</sup>****CR 10**

hp 79 each (12 HD)

Male asabi fighter 10

CE Medium humanoid (reptilian)

**Init** +3; **Senses** Listen +1, Spot +1**Languages** Asabi, Yuan-Ti**AC** 20, touch 13, flat-footed 17; **Dodge**, **Mobility****Fort** +8, **Ref** +9, **Will** +7**Speed** 35 ft. (7 squares), burrow 15 ft.**Melee** mwk falchion +16/+11/+6 (2d4+4/18–20) and bite +9 (1d4+1)**Ranged** mwk composite shortbow +16/+11/+6 (1d6+3/×3)**Base Atk** +11; **Grp** +14**Atk Options** Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes, Mobility, Power Attack, Spring Attack**Abilities** Str 17, Dex 16, Con 13, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 8**Feats** Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Iron Will, Mobility, Power Attack, Spring Attack, Weapon Focus (scimitar), Weapon Focus (shortbow)**Skills** Climb +15, Hide +15, Intimidate +14, Jump +11\*, Move Silently +9

\* Asabis are especially good jumpers. Their maximum distance is 20 feet for a standing jump and 15 feet for a standing high jump.

**Possessions** masterwork falchion, masterwork composite shortbow (+3 Str bonus) with 10 arrows, masterwork breastplate





# BENEATH THE WHITE TOWERS

**T**he legends of Oreme, the City of White Towers, stretch back in time for millennia to the earliest days of recorded history, before Netheril had begun its rise. The truth of the matter is that it is actually far older even than that. Few remember what the legends stated before the realm of Netheril became the Great Sand Sea, but since that time, many tales are remembered that tell of the city of gleaming spires. It is alternately said to be the first enclave of the archwizards, the seat of a great pre-Netheril kingdom, or a magic-laced city of the savage djinn of the deep desert. Whatever the story, Oreme is always spoken of as the key to or repository of some vast treasure, magical secret, or extraplanar hoard.

The roots of Oreme lie in the fabled time of the Creator Races more than 35,000 years ago, when it was the crown jewel in the sarrukh empire of *Isstosseffil*. Oreme was a wondrous city of delicate and impossibly tall towers and minarets, and served as a bastion of the arts of magic, architecture, and artifice. When the *Isstossef*—as the inhabitants were called—sought to destroy their enemies, the *phaerimms*, around -33,800 DR by magically rerouting the Narrow Sea, the massive ecological shift resulting from the change caused their empire to collapse in a miniature foreshadowing of what would occur thousands of years later.

The leading spellcasters of Oreme transformed themselves into lichs and retreated into the catacombs beneath the fallen city, continuing to quietly rule and gather knowledge through their spells and the few *asabi* slaves that remained above. Over time, the abandoned towers fell and were buried beneath the dust bowl that had once been the Narrow Sea. When the *phaerimms* reappeared in force, the *sarrukh* lichs were driven farther into their catacomb refuge. For long years the city lay forgotten, ruled

from below alternately by the sixty *sarrukh* lichs—fifty-nine hibernating while the sixtieth ruled as King Oreme for four years until switching off with another and entering hibernation itself. In this way, the *sarrukh* continued to amass their great store of knowledge through undisturbed scrying and reports from their remaining *asabi* spies.

This pattern of secret observation changed in -3654 DR when the current King Oreme, a *sarrukh* calling himself *Arthindol*, chose to reveal himself to the burgeoning human settlements of the area that had begun to learn the arts of magic from the *Earlanni* elves. To these Netherese humans, *Arthindol* took the guise of an enigmatic human archmage and assumed the title of the *Terraseer*. For the next 3,300 years, he appeared to the Netherese at times during his turn upon the throne of Oreme and gave hints and guidance on further development in magic in what he thought of as his grand “Netherese Experiment.” Foreseeing the Fall, the *Terraseer* last appeared to *Karsus* in -345 DR, stating that the goddess *Mystryl* was about to face her greatest challenge—one that could alter the perception of magic for all time. With that ominous warning he disappeared, never to be seen again by human eyes. The fate of the *Terraseer* has long been a mystery, but one that was overshadowed and forgotten by the greater tragedy that unfolded in Netheril only a few years later.

However, the PCs are in luck in their search, for the very *sarrukh* lich that wore the mantle of the *Terraseer* through the long centuries is currently midway through his latest four-year reign as King Oreme. However, all is not well in Oreme, and the PCs must tend to another matter before having a chance to meet the *Terraseer*.

## oreme

Oreme lies on the eastern edge of the empty sands of the Frozen Sea. It is rarely seen due to the dangerous tribes of *asabis* known to inhabit its ruins and the rumors of powerful lichs and *demiliches*



that haunt its subterranean streets. In addition, great deep-desert sandstorms often bury it for decades at a time, so that very few individuals have a good idea where it actually lies. The last known report on the city, by the adventurer Steeleye some 30 years ago, indicated that all of its ancient towers had been shattered, though travelers' tales speak of seeing one spire from a distance, still intact and glowing in the moonlight. Whether this tower has since collapsed or still exists as a magical shadow of its past, revealed only during certain phases of the moon, is unknown and is beyond the scope of this adventure.

When the characters arrive near Oreme, having learned its location from their research in Chapter 3, they find only the half-buried ruins of the city's once-great towers. When the PCs first set eyes on the ruins, read:

*The forlorn wail of the wind reaches you as you descend between two great dunes. Revealed beyond them is a shallow depression in the desert sands, within which stand the broken ruins of a city. It is obvious by their circular bases and the sheer amount of rubble that lies among them that these buildings were once great towers, but none of the weathered stone walls now reaches higher than 8 or 9 feet. At last you have found the City of White Towers—or what is left of it.*

### OREME RANDOM ENCOUNTER TABLE

d%	Encounter	Average EL <sup>1</sup>	Source
01–03	Rockslide (see avalanche)	7	DMG 90
04–05	1 crawling apocalypse	11	Sandstorm 143
06–13	1d3 asabi brutes <sup>2</sup>	12	Page 106
14–19	1d6+4 desert devils	12	Sandstorm 147
20–22	1 sand golem	12	Sandstorm 182
23–26	1d3 dread wraiths <sup>3</sup>	13	MM 258
27–30	1d4 purple worms	14	MM 211
31–32	1 great fiyr <sup>3</sup>	15	MM2 100
33–35	1 dustform 12-headed pyrohydra	14	Sandstorm 161, MM 156
36–38	1 mature adult blue dragon	16	MM 73
39	1 gravecrawler	16	MM2 118
40–42	Devil dune	—	Sandstorm 20
43–45	Softsand	—	Sandstorm 26
46–49	Wailing waste	—	Sandstorm 26
50–100	No encounter		

- 1 These Encounter Levels have not been adjusted to account for the fact that, in the dead magic zone, creatures do not have access to their supernatural or spell-like abilities. The same is true for the PCs, of course, which means that the comparative difficulty of these encounters is the same as it would be if all combatants were able to use all their abilities.
- 2 Do not subtract these asabis from Encounter T1.
- 3 Occurs only at night. If this result is rolled during the day, treat it as no encounter.



The party has indeed found the ruins of ancient Oreme. The exposed section of the city is about a quarter-mile long and wide. A great portion still lies buried beneath the towering dunes. Inquisitive PCs can discover this fact with a little digging, but it has no bearing on this adventure since the entrance to the catacombs lies in the section currently uncovered.

Movement through the ruins is difficult due to the preponderance of fallen stone and broken foundations. The terrain is considered dense rubble, and each square costs 2 squares of movement to enter. The DCs of Tumble and Balance checks are increased by 5. Although the tribes of asabis that customarily encamp here are conspicuously absent, a successful DC 20 Search check turns up many traces of their recent habitation—and their more recent departure. Why or where they went remains unclear. Locating the entrance to the catacombs of Oreme requires a successful DC 35 Search check after 2d4 hours of searching. If the check fails, it can be tried again once for each additional hour spent searching.

Though the asabi tribes have departed, the ruins of Oreme are far from safe. Check the following random encounter table once for every hour the party spends above ground in the ruins.



## visitors to oreme

The PCs might be suspicious of the lack of asabis camped in the ruins of Oreme, and with good reason. The crown of King Oreme is now being sought by an outsider. The PCs are not the only ones who have researched the secrets of lost Oreme, but while the PCs have done so in the interest of good, this rival seeks to supplant the sarrukh liches and claim the secrets of the ancient creators.

The threat that has recently come to Oreme is a half-fiendish yuan-ti abomination known as Kharantes. The offspring of a male demon and a female yuan-ti abomination, Kharantes spent his formative years in the Abyss. When he found his way to Faerûn after reaching maturity, he discovered what he believed to be his destiny—rulership over all the serpentfolk of the world, and ultimately the world itself.

Kharantes learned about the history of the yuan-ti and their progenitors, the sarrukh. By studying texts preserved since the ancient days, he came to see how the sarrukh had squandered their position of dominance in the world. The Mhairshaulk Empire, on the Chultan peninsula far to the south, had actually been taken over by the yuan-ti after the sarrukh proved uninterested in, or incapable of, maintaining the realm. This event proved to Kharantes that the yuan-ti, and not the sarrukh, were entitled to the mantle of ultimate rulership.

Kharantes also discovered that at about the same time in history, far to the north in the area that would become known as Anauroch, the sarrukh established the Isstosseffil Empire. The city of Oreme was the capital of that realm, and the repository of the vast magical knowledge contained in the *Golden Skins of the World Serpent* (the serpentfolk name for the *Nether Scrolls*).

Kharantes managed to discover the location of Oreme and entered the ruins with his entourage (arriving just weeks before the characters reach the same destination). Beneath the surface of the sands, outside the effect of the dead magic zone, he confronted the Terraseer and demanded access to the *Golden Skins*. The lich, amused by the yuan-ti's boldness, allowed an audience for a brief time, but soon tired of him. However, when the sarrukh's ma-

nipulate form ability (see page 80 of *Serpent Kingdoms*) failed to work on Kharantes—since he is not a creature native to Toril—the Terraseer was caught off guard. A special concoction devised by Kharantes (see the sidebar) rendered the sarrukh helpless. With the Terraseer held captive, Kharantes took his own place on the throne. He now occupies the throne room along with his aide, a dark naga sorcerer named Marlist, and awaits the arrival of the rest of his army while he searches for the entrance to Oreme's library in preparation for the establishment of a new Isstosseffil Empire in the heart of Anauroch.

## The catacombs of oreme

When the PCs finally locate the entrance to the catacombs beneath the ruins of Oreme, they find it in the subbasement of one of the fallen towers. Rubble and sand have been moved aside to reveal a curving ramp descending through the floor in a smooth spiral. Tracks in the sandy floor lead in and out of this passage; a successful DC 15 Survival check identifies the tracks as those of Large and Medium reptilian humanoids (asabis) and the trails of what appear to be Large snakes (nagas and yuan-ti). The ramp is free of sand and debris, and it descends 200 feet to area 1 (see the tactical encounter map on page 107). The center of the spiral is an open shaft allowing a free plummet to the bottom from the railless ramp if travelers are not careful.

**Dead Magic:** Although the surface of the ruins of Oreme is in the dead magic zone, the same is not true of the catacombs far underground. Magic functions normally within these areas.

**Walls:** The walls of the sarrukh catacombs are ancient, but so cunningly crafted that they remain in excellent condition. To scale them requires a successful DC 20 Climb check.

**Ceiling Height:** Ceilings are typically 30 feet high, unless otherwise mentioned.

**Doors:** The doors within the catacombs appear to be wood, but are revealed to have petrified into hard stone upon closer examination. They stand 8 feet tall and are 4 feet wide (2 inches thick, hardness 8, hp 30, break DC 23). Each has a functional

## kharantes's concoction

During his research into the sarrukh and the lich-kings of Oreme, Kharantes came across some writings that conjectured about the possibility of creating substances that would affect undead in much the way that poisons affect other types of creatures. (These substances, known as positoxins, were introduced in *Libris Mortis*, where several varieties are described.)

After long periods of experimentation and the repeated application of his Craft (poisonmaking) skill, Kharantes succeeded in mixing up a positoxin he called *hsskala* ("nearkill" in the Common tongue), which renders unconscious any cor-

poreal undead creature that comes into contact with it. Such a substance perfectly suited his plans, because once he arrived in Oreme he would be able to incapacitate the reigning lich-king without destroying it and subsequently coerce that lich into doing his bidding. He feared that one king's destruction would awaken the next king in the line of succession and leave him no closer to his ultimate goal of acquiring access to the *Golden Skins*.

Game statistics for *hsskala* are not provided here because it is a unique substance, not reproducible outside the context of this adventure.



lock that can be engaged or disengaged with a successful DC 25 Open Lock check.

**Illumination:** Any light sources are noted in the text.

## 1. FOYER

*The heat and dust of the ruins above seem far away as you leave the circular ramp. Before you is a finely constructed chamber, obviously bearing the weight of many years, yet still showing the opulence of a bygone era. A floor of tiny mosaic tiles in vivid blues, greens, and blacks displays abstract shapes and designs. Sconces of some unfamiliar golden metal hang high on the walls and burn with ghostly white flames. The walls are decorated with bas-reliefs showing verdant jungles, sky-scraping mountain peaks, and a glorious city of a thousand delicate towers. The stone lines are as crisp as if the carvings were done yesterday; elaborate double doors stand to the north, south, and west.*

This chamber provides entrance to the throne room of King Oreme and has been carefully preserved through magic and the continuous efforts of the many servitors of the sarrukhs. Not a single mosaic tile is out of place after all these years.

The metal sconces are lit by *continual flame*.

**Tactical Encounter:** T1: The Catacombs of Oreme, page 106. This room and areas 2–6 form a single encounter.

## 2. ROYAL GUARDROOM

*Unlike in the previous room, no attempt has been made to keep up any ancient splendor here. The stone walls are still intact and finely dressed, but bear none of the ornamentation found elsewhere. All that occupies this room is a layer of fine dust that has sifted down from the ruins above.*

Once a barracks for the royal guard of King Oreme, that purpose was abandoned in favor of the ruins above, where the asabi tribes normally camped and protected the hidden chambers below. It has seen little use in many centuries.

**Tactical Encounter:** T1: The Catacombs of Oreme, page 106. This room and areas 1–6 form a single encounter.

## 3. KHANSAMAH'S CHAMBER

*This room's former opulence has been overcome by decay and neglect. The walls have been plastered and delicately painted to show scenes of everyday life in communities of reptilian humanoids among lush surroundings and magnificent architecture. This pleasant image is ruined by the mass of decaying serpent flesh dominating the room. It appears as if a number of gigantic snakes were slaughtered and their vast carcasses left here to rot.*

This chamber served as the abode of King Oreme's lieutenant, long since deceased. The decaying pile of snakes on the floor is the carcass of Kharantes' serpentflesh golem (see page 81 of

*Serpent Kingdoms*), which was destroyed in the struggle with the sarrukh's loyal asabi guards. Unwilling to feast on its putrid flesh, the invaders of the catacombs removed it to this room to keep it out of the way. It is identifiable for what it is with a successful DC 20 Knowledge (arcana) check. Buried beneath its bulk are the delicate ivory bed and nightstand that once belonged to the room's occupant.

**Tactical Encounter:** T1: The Catacombs of Oreme, page 106. This room and areas 1–6 form a single encounter.

**Treasure:** If the remnants of the ivory furniture are found beneath the destroyed serpentflesh golem (Search DC 23), the pieces of ivory can be salvaged and are worth 2,200 gp.

## 4. AUDIENCE HALL OF KING OREME

*This grand hall speaks of a time long lost to the present day. The ceiling reaches a peak 60 feet overhead, and gives off a diffuse glow. Supporting it from a wide dais at the far end of the chamber are six thick pillars of white stone, adorned with a winding, gilded carving resembling braided rope, shot through with a spiraling vein of some brilliant, emerald-green stone. At the center of the dais stands an ornate throne of jade carved to resemble a massive upthrust claw, the seat cradled in its palm. Near this scaly seat is a strange glass column, octagonal in cross-section and topped by a cap of riveted bronze. This glass column is hollow, and visible within the glass is a skeletal reptilian creature hanging suspended in pale green liquid. Narrow corridors exit the chamber to the north and south.*

For countless centuries the kings of Oreme have sat upon the Jade Claw Throne. The glow from the ceiling provides shadowy illumination throughout the room. When Kharantes captured the sarrukh lich, he imprisoned him in a glass cylinder filled with the positoxin that was used to incapacitate him. As long as he remains within the cylinder, the King of Oreme remains helpless and unaware of his surroundings.

Because the caretakers of Oreme were mindful of the ongoing threat of the pherimmms, the throne room has no direct connection to the rest of the sarrukh catacombs and their vast repositories of knowledge, nor does it provide access to the fabled Crypt of Dreaming Lizards wherein the other fifty-nine sarrukh liches lie in quiet repose. The only way to reach these chambers is to use pinpoint-accurate *teleport* or *dimension door* spells to pass through the solid rock that surrounds them. However, all of these sealed cysts in the earth are so covered in magic wards that locating them without being told their locations by someone who knows them is nigh impossible. Kharantes has discovered this, and has not yet gained access to the resources he came here to find.

**Tactical Encounter:** T1: The Catacombs of Oreme, page 106. This room and areas 1–6 form a single encounter.

**Development:** If the sarrukh lich is freed from the glass cylinder, either by breaking the glass or otherwise extricating him, he will shake off his stupor in 1d4 rounds. However, he will pretend to



be dead—easily accomplished for a skeletal undead creature—until the battle is over and he is sure of the PCs' intentions in regards to him. He is a male sarrukh lich wizard 25/archmage 5 and could probably easily defeat all present, but chooses to remain out of the battle. His Bluff modifier is +36, so it is unlikely that the PCs will see through his subterfuge and realize that he is aware of his surroundings until he allows them to. See "Meeting the Terraseer" below for details of this encounter.

## 5. courtier's chambers

Shortly after the downfall of Oreme, when the surviving sarrukhs moved their seat of power from the city above, these chambers were richly adorned and served as quarters and areas of refreshment for favored courtesans or visiting dignitaries. Since that time they have fallen into disuse and are now dusty and barren of furnishings.

**Tactical Encounter:** T1: The Catacombs of Oreme, page 106. This room and areas 1–6 form a single encounter.

## 6. bodyguards

This chamber is identical to those labeled 5, except that it serves as the quarters for a group of asabi brutes that were kept behind when the rest went out into the surrounding desert. These creatures now serve as the yuan-ti's personal guard. Three of them sleep in this room on the cold stone floor, while two others pull guard shifts in room 4. Occasionally those off duty climb to the ruins above to hunt and forage for food.

**Tactical Encounter:** T1: The Catacombs of Oreme, page 106. This room and areas 1–5 form a single encounter.

## meeting the terraseer

Once Kharantes and his minions have been dealt with, and the sarrukh lich is freed from the stupor induced by the positoxin, he addresses the party. Read:

*The skeletal reptilian creature begins to move with a creaking of ancient bones. As it rises, it pulls the tattered remnants of a robe around its shoulders as if it were wearing regal garb. It fixes its hollow-eyed stare upon you, and you can almost imagine a smirk upon its lipless, tooth-lined mouth.*

*"Welcome to the presence of King Oreme," it intones in a raspy whisper. "We have been expecting you. You may address me as your royal majesty or, if you prefer, I also answer to Arthindol the Terraseer."*

The Terraseer resumes his place on its throne if the PCs are civil. If, at any point, they become unruly, a quickened *teleport* spell takes him to his scrying chambers deep in the caverns beneath Oreme, where he is completely untraceable due to the magic shielding around it. From there he continues to observe the PCs and will return only if they humbly address the throne and succeed on a

DC 40 Diplomacy check. Before returning, he casts a *foresight* spell and then readies another quickened *teleport*. Since the PCs have sought the Terraseer for help, it is in their best interest to behave, and treat him accordingly.

Arthindol is aware of their quest, having watched the events unfolding in and around Anauroch with great interest until his capture by Kharantes a tenday ago. He was aware that Augathra would lead them to him. He considers all of these goings-on to be a continuation of his ancient "Netherese Experiment," and will thus provide some guidance, but will not do so for free, nor will he clear all obstacles in their path. Much as when he predicted the fall of Mystryl in –345 DR, he has foreseen the coming troubles for Mystra at the hands of Shar and will provide cryptic hints to allow the PCs to turn the tide—or not, it really matters little to him either way.

In gratitude for his rescue from Kharantes, the Terraseer provides the PCs with the following information. Either read or paraphrase this section through interaction with the Terraseer.

*"Whether you have discovered it or not, what both the shades of Thultanthar and the followers of the Dark Goddess seek are the Golden Skins of the World Serpent, the work holding the sum of magical knowledge on this world. You may have heard of them before as the Nether Scrolls, from which the arcanists of that ancient nation built their power and magical tradition. But let me tell you, the scrolls were ancient before the first towns of humans were founded on the shores of the Narrow Sea. The scrolls were penned here in Oreme, where you now stand, by the hand of the sarrukh, first of the creator races. It was I who gave the secrets of the Golden Skins to the first wizards of Netheril as the next phase of my Netherese experiment, and I have watched them ever since.*

*"The last surviving set of the complete scrolls was stolen by the elves of Cormanthor and hidden in the sanctum of Windsong Tower in the form of a golden beech tree called the *Quess Ar Terantboar*—ah, I see that you know of the tree I speak. Even now it grows in the shadow of Thultanthar at the edge of the Shadow Sea, and is nearing the completion of its transformation into a form usable by the Shadovars. Once they have its secrets, it will be too late.*

*"Because you have helped me in my own recent difficulties, I choose not to slay you, and will even help you by providing information to you without my usual surcharge. There is time yet to stop the tree's transformation and scatter its leaves to the four winds beyond the reach of the Shadovars or the church of Shar. You must seek the Chalice of Amaunator, an ancient relic of the time of Netheril. Only by pouring its golden ambrosia on the roots of the tree can the transformation process be stopped, and the scrolls once again scattered.*

*"But you must hurry, for there is not much time. I foresee a time coming—soon—when Mystryl will once again face her greatest challenge—one that could alter the magic of this world for all time."*



The Terraseer is cryptic on this last bit, though he is once again repeating the warning he gave Karsus more than 1,500 years ago. A successful DC 20 Knowledge (history) check recalls that when the Terraseer last uttered those words, Karsus tore the Weave asunder—and it took the destruction of the goddess Mystryl to save it. Of course, Karsus's folly also cost the Empire of Netheril its existence. A successful DC 15 Knowledge (religion) check is sufficient to realize that Mystra is the goddess who took Mystryl's place in guardianship of the Weave, and that the Terraseer is probably referring to her and some looming calamity that threatens all magic on Toril once again.

Despite the Terraseer's help, it should quickly become evident to the PCs that they are still in need of assistance. Other than the lore they can recall or divine about the *Chalice of Amaunator* (see page 147), they have no idea of where it is and can find no trace of it. Once again, they must consult the Terraseer, though this time he is not so free with his information.

Before the Terraseer will provide further information about the chalice, he demands payment in the form of powerful and unique magic. He is aware that the PCs recently discovered the *Shadow Engine*, a unique combination of the Weave and the Shadow Weave, and he is very interested in acquiring this artifact, but he leaves it up to the PCs to offer it. He will be unimpressed by anything else they have to offer, refusing to provide his knowledge for anything not worthy of his time. He will accept only the *Shadow Engine* in payment.

Upon being offered the *Shadow Engine* in exchange for information on the chalice, the Terraseer provides them with the following information.

*"That which you seek resides with the Children of Thaal. They have collected the chalice in their eternal quest for the Source of All Magic and have ensconced it within the Tomb of the Thaalud. Let us go see this Shadow Engine, and then I will show you how to find the Tomb of the Thaalud."*

A successful DC 25 Knowledge (arcana) check recognizes that the Children of Thaal that the Terraseer refers to are the thaalud—tomb tappers—some of which the PCs encountered back in Chapter 2. The lich also recalls for them the legend of the Tomb of the Thaalud. According to this legend, the tomb tappers serve an unknown entity of immense power called the Keeper of Thaal—most likely their creator. All of the keeper's children are tasked with finding the Source of All Magic. To this end, they scour the world in search of magic items in the belief that when enough have been accumulated, their combined resonance will finally reveal to them the all-powerful Source. The stories are vague about what they intend to do with the Source of All Magic when found, but most speculate dire consequences. The final portion of the legend is in regard to the Tomb of the Thaalud, which is variously described as where the tomb tappers are born or created, where they go to die, where they go after death, where

their greatest treasures are stored, or some combination of all of the above. Although learned sages know of the existence of tomb tappers and suspect there is some guiding force to their seemingly random activities, most scoff at the notion of the tomb and its supposed riches, seeing it as a fireside travelers' tale—much as they say about the lost city of Oreme.

Once this information is imparted and the PCs are ready (he will give them up to a day to rest and recuperate), the Terraseer teleports himself and the characters to room C36 of the Crypt of Augathra (or wherever else they might have stashed the *Shadow Engine*). He quickly gains control of the artifact and begins preparing to transport it. As a final bit of information, he states that the *Chalice of Amaunator* was separated into its component parts before it was taken by the thaalud. He says that a small gold seal in the shape of a solar disk was removed from the chalice, and that without the return of this disk the chalice will not function properly. He advises them that the chalice was last known to be in the possession of a Netherese archwizard and sponsor of the church of Amaunator. This wizard was said to have lived in the Netherese enclave of Synod, and if they can locate the ruins of that city they might be able to find the seal. He knows full well that the Crypt of Augathra is the ruin of Synod but withholds this information as a small joke. The PCs should have adequate information from their own explorations to have figured this out, and might have already recovered the seal themselves. If not, they will need to explore Synod further until they find area C19 and recover the seal from there.

## to the tomb of the thaalud

The Terraseer remains at Synod for a few hours, dabbling with the *Shadow Engine* before returning with it to Oreme. The PCs can use this time to prepare for their departure or to recover the seal. When the PCs are ready to go, he provides them with the means to reach the tomb. First, without explanation, he hands them a short adamantine rod inscribed with runes. Then he uses the abilities of the *Shadow Engine* to teleport the characters through the *faerzress*-laced rock of the Underdark beneath Anauroch to the current location of the gates of the tomb. He quickly departs, leaving them to their devices and returning with the *Shadow Engine* to the vaults beneath Oreme—but not before giving the final admonition: "The cup lies in the belly of Gruumsh."

## gates of the thaalud

The Terraseer's teleportation carries the PCs to area T1 on the tactical map that appears on page 109. The gates to the tomb have long been thought to lie in the Lowerdark beneath Anauroch; in actuality, they are the site of a *drifting portal* that leads to a demiplane. This *portal* shifts 2d6 miles from its present location every 1d10 days. It always appears in a cavern, but it might be an isolated cyst unconnected to any egress. Regardless of its loca-



tion, the tomb tappers can always instinctively find this gateway to their home realm. The gates currently stand in a closed cavern system that runs for miles; the water that formed it is long since gone, leaving behind a dry, barren cave. The walls are dry, natural stone; the PCs must bring their own light sources.

## 1. Guarded gates

*The Terraseer has deposited you in a dry cavern, the air stale and without a breath of movement. The walls are natural and unworked with small stalagmites at the edges of the cavern, though these no longer drip with the living water that once formed them. In addition, long-dry stalactites hang from the cavern roof, 40 feet overhead. Down one spur of this cavern, a pair of great stone doors is visible. All manner of sigils and glyphs cover the doors' surfaces. In the center of them stands a bas-relief of one of the thaalud—a tomb tapper. It clutches a mighty maul in its hands, though a section of the hammer's haft appears to be missing. There does not appear to be any means of opening the massive doors.*

The sealed stone doors are the gateway to the Tomb of the Thaalud.

**Tactical Encounter:** T2: Gates of the Thaalud, page 108. This room and area T2 form a single encounter.

## 2. Thaalud watchpost

This is a 25-foot-high dead-end tunnel that branches off the main cavern.

**Tactical Encounter:** T2: Gates of the Thaalud, page 108. This room and area T1 form a single encounter.

# The Tomb of the Thaalud

Though the tomb has been long a thing of legend, thought to be buried deep beneath Anauroch, the truth of the place is as yet unguessed. It is actually a demiplane created by the Netherese archwizard who first created the tomb tappers for his own unknown purposes. Just before the fall of Netheril, he relocated himself to the tomb and now rules as the Keeper of the Thaal (NE male human demilich<sup>ELH</sup> wizard 31). The demiplane has the following traits:

- No gravity.
- Erratic time.
- Finite size (a vault 2 miles in diameter and 1 mile high).
- Alterable morpic (*DMG* 148).
- Air dominant. The atmosphere is stale; those present much make a successful Fortitude save (DC 15, +1 per previous check) every hour or become fatigued. A fatigued character

becomes exhausted after a second failed save and takes 1d6 points of nonlethal damage every 15 minutes thereafter.

- No alignment trait.
- Impeded magic. To use a spell or spell-like ability, anyone not serving the Keeper of Thaal must succeed on a caster level check (DC 20 + spell level). Servitors of Thaal need not make the check, and they cast spells at +2 caster level while here.

Upon passing through the gates, the PCs appear at area T3 (see the accompanying map).

## 3. Entry to the vault

*A massive cavern stretches before you, the far wall lost from sight despite the glowing rock that illuminates the whole place in a dim, gray haze. The cavern ceiling is nearly a quarter mile above, and the floor is a quarter mile below the ledge upon which you stand. Odd stony shapes, resembling fantastic sculptures, drift in orbits around the cavern, along with fortresses of many different architectural styles and time periods, in various stages of repair—many little more than crumbling foundations perched on large clumps of stone. Drifting aimlessly among these varied structures drift are thousands of smaller boulders. The cavern is dominated by a single vast fortress, the size of a mountaintop, that rotates slowly in place. You recognize it as an ancient Netherese flying enclave.*

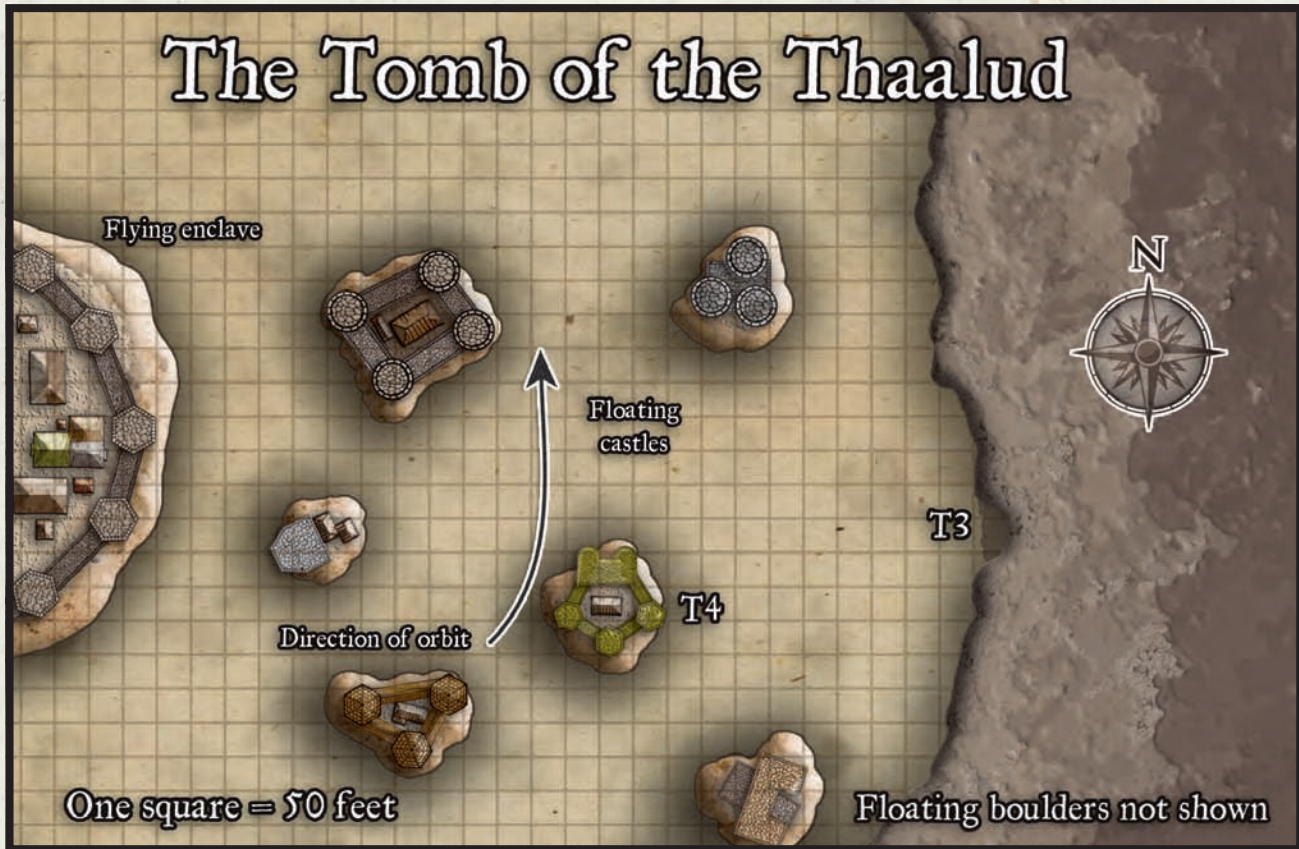
*A great gravelly voice, like boulders grinding together, fills the cavern at random intervals speaking in some language that seems to slip out of the ear before what is said can be grasped. It obviously emanates from the huge flying citadel. On the floor of the cavern far below can be seen companies and battalions of marching tomb tappers. As the voice speaks, a small group here and there responds to its unintelligible commands, marching away only to disappear through a suddenly appearing portal that winks out of existence just as quickly.*

The PCs have found the legendary vault of the tomb tappers, where the Keeper's work goes on to this day—finding, recovering and cataloging magic items in the never-ending quest for the Source of All Magic. The voice speaks in a subharmonic code that is intelligible to creatures that have tremorsense or that use magical means to translate it. The voice is merely stating a direction and distance (“210 miles north-northwest, 5 miles east,” for instance) providing the location of a cache of magic items that the Keeper has scried somewhere on Toril. The tomb tappers then instinctively know which of their number are summoned for the mission, and they march through a *portal* of the Keeper's creation to go and retrieve the items.

There are literally thousands of tomb tappers present in this vault, along with hundreds of floating castles. However, the PCs need not deal with all of these. Anyone making a successful DC 18 Spot check notices a fortress slowly orbiting nearby (approximately 500 feet away) that is so old it resembles little more than a misshapen lump of stone. However, from its one prominence



# The Tomb of the Thaalud



shines a single red light through an arrow slit. Characters who remember the last words of the Terraseer might realize the subtle resemblance to the one-eyed orc god Gruumsh in the misshapen lump with its burning eye. If the players do not arrive at this conclusion on their own, allow a DC 15 Knowledge (religion) check to make the connection. Based on the Terraseer's words, the chalice must be somewhere within that fortress. Once the PCs have figured out how to maneuver through the strange demiplane (the tomb tappers use *stone shape* to arrange the floating boulders into temporary bridges), then they can enter the fortress to claim their prize.

If the characters choose to wander around in the vault, feel free to have them encounter tomb tappers, greater tomb tappers, and even more powerful servitors of the Keeper of the Thaal.

## 4. Askilion's Tower

*Upon nearing the broken fortress, you can see that whatever its form might have once been, its tumbled-down walls now create a stony mound. At the top of this mound, the tip of the tower is still intact and has a narrow window from which shines the light seen earlier. At the base of the mound is the opening of an ancient arch, bowed under the weight of collapsed stone but still standing nonetheless. From this arch comes the same dim, red radiance.*

The origin of this fortress is unknown, but it is now the domain of one of the keeper's coterie of undead servitors. In this case the ward of the tower is what is left of the adventurer-bard Askilion, who managed to penetrate the tomb tapper vault centuries ago before falling prey to the Keeper. Through the Keeper's magic, he now lives on as a sentient undead horror served by four greater tomb tappers.

The main chamber's ceiling rises to a height of 80 feet. The ceiling above the upper floor, in the portion of that area not open to the lower floor, is 20 feet high. The side chambers on the lower floor have 20-foot ceilings.

**Tactical Encounter:** T4: Askilion's Tower, page 110.

Once the characters have retrieved the chalice, they must find a way out of the Tomb of the Thaalud. Teleportation will not work, since it is a demiplane. And heading out the gates merely leaves them in a sealed, *faerzress*-infused cavern without benefit of the *Shadow Engine*'s augmentation. Their best bet is to *plane shift* back to Faerûn (the chalice can come in handy for this if they do not have the spell on their own). Or they could ready an action to teleport to the next *portal* that the Keeper creates in order to rush through with the tomb tappers. They would likely have a fight on their hands, but at least they would be deposited somewhere outside the demiplane.



# THE CATACOMBS OF OREME

Encounter Level 20

## setup

Before this encounter begins, Kharantes (K) is in front of the throne and Marliss (M) is standing to his right. Two asabi brutes (A) are in area 4 south of the throne, and three others are sleeping in room 6. Do not place any creatures on the map until they are noticed by the PCs.

## tactics

Upon sighting intruders, Marliss flies to the ceiling and uses her *circlet of blasting* and spells to best effect. The initial pair of asabis sacrifice their lives to repulse the intruders, and the other three arrive to reinforce them after 3 rounds. Kharantes uses the throne for cover and tries to make ranged sneak attacks with the help of flanking asabis. He relies on his *aversion* ability to keep opponents at bay and Spring Attack if unable to do so. If sorely pressed, he slithers up one of the columns to make ranged attacks for as long as possible.



## 5 ASABI BRUTES<sup>Mon</sup>

CR 10

hp 82 each (12 HD)

Male asabi fighter 9

LE Medium humanoid (reptilian)

Init +1; Senses Listen +5, Spot +5

Languages Draconic

AC 19, touch 11, flat-footed 18

Fort +8, Ref +7, Will +5

Speed 50 ft. (10 squares), burrow 20 ft.

Melee mwk scimitar +16/+11/+6 (1d6+3/18–20) and bite +8 (1d4)

Ranged mwk heavy crossbow +15 (1d10/19–20 plus poison)

Base Atk +12; Grp +13

Atk Options Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Power Attack, Power Critical (scimitar), poison

Combat Gear 5 vials Large scorpion venom (DC 18, 1d6 Str/1d6 Str)

Abilities Str 12, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 10

Feats Alertness, Cleave<sup>B</sup>, Combat Reflexes, Greater Weapon Focus (scimitar)<sup>B</sup>, Power Attack, Power Critical (scimitar)<sup>CW</sup> [+4 bonus to confirm critical], Toughness, Weapon Focus (heavy crossbow)<sup>B</sup>, Weapon Focus (scimitar)<sup>B</sup>, Weapon Specialization (scimitar)<sup>B</sup>

Skills Climb +13, Hide +6, Intimidate +6, Jump +19, Listen +5, Move Silently +5, Spot +5

Possessions masterwork scimitar, +2 studded leather armor, masterwork light wooden shield, masterwork heavy crossbow with 40 bolts

Skills Asabis have a +4 racial bonus on Jump checks.

## FEATURES OF THE AREA

**Throne and Pillars:** Anyone in the same square with a pillar or the throne gains a +2 cover bonus to Armor Class and a +1 cover bonus on Reflex saves. This is increased to a +4 bonus to AC and a +2 bonus on Reflex saves if it is between two opponents. Climbing onto the throne (a move action) provides a +1 bonus on melee attack rolls for being on higher ground.

**Dais:** Each step of the dais rises 1 foot. Anyone standing on the dais gains a +1 bonus on melee attacks against anyone on the floor of the chamber or a lower step.

**Glass Cylinder:** This provides cover just as the columns do, but not concealment for those hiding behind it. It is easily broken by anyone attacking it (hardness 1, hp 3, break DC 5), or the top can be removed with a successful DC 15 Strength check.



**KHARANTES****CR 20**

hp 139 (16 HD); DR 10/magic

Male half-fiendish yuan-ti abomination rogue 7  
CE Large outsider**Init** +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., scent; Listen +22, Spot +24**Languages** Abyssal, Celestial, Common, Draconic, Yuan-ti**AC** 27, touch 12, flat-footed 24; Dodge, Mobility, uncanny dodge**Immune** poison**Resist** acid 10, cold 10, electricity 10, fire 10, evasion; **SR** 26**Fort** +10, **Ref** +16, **Will** +14**Speed** 30 ft. (6 squares), fly 30 ft. (average), climb 20 ft., swim 20 ft.**Melee** +2 *falchion* +21/+16/+11 (2d6+11/18–20) and bite +14 (2d6+3 plus poison) or**Melee** 2 claws +19/+14/+9 each (1d6+7) and bite +14 (2d6+3 plus poison)**Ranged** mwk composite longbow +18/+13/+8 (2d6+7/×3)**Space** 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.**Base Atk** +14; **Grp** +19**Atk Options** Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes, Spring Attack, constrict 1d6+9, improved grab, poison (DC 23, 1d6 Con/1d6 Con), smite good 1/day (+16 damage), sneak attack +4d6, *aversion, produce acid***Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 10th):At will—*animal trance* (DC 18), *entangle* (DC 17)3/day—*darkness, deeper darkness, poison, suggestion* (DC 19), *unholy aura*1/day—*baleful polymorph* (DC 21; into snake form only), *blasphemy, contagion, desecrate, fear* (DC 20), *horrid wilting, unhallow, unholy blight***Abilities** Str 23, Dex 19, Con 19, Int 24, Wis 20, Cha 20**SQ** *alternate form, chameleon power, detect poison, trap sense* +2, trapfinding**Feats** Alertness<sup>B</sup>, Blind-Fight<sup>B</sup>, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Spring Attack**Skills** Appraise +17, Balance +16, Bluff +19, Concentration +18, Craft (poisonmaking) +19, Diplomacy +28, Disguise +17 (+19 acting), Escape Artist +14, Gather Information +19, Hide +19 (+29 with *chameleon power*), Intimidate +28, Jump +9, Knowledge (nature) +19, Knowledge (the planes) +19, Listen +22, Move Silently +23, Search +26,

Sleight of Hand +16, Spot +24, Survival +20 (+22

following tracks, +22 aboveground or on other planes), Swim +17, Tumble +14, Use Rope +4 (+6 with bindings)

**Possessions** +2 *falchion*, masterwork composite longbow (+6 Str bonus) with 25 +1 *arrows, bracers of armor* +4, *bag of holding* (type IV) with a *stone of good luck*, 2 *candles of invocation*, poisoner's kit (+2 circumstance bonus for making poisons), 982 gp, 14 gems worth 100 gp each**Alternate Form (Sp)** Kharantes can assume the form of a Tiny to Large viper (see MM 280) as a psionic ability. He loses his natural weapons and gains the natural weapon of the viper form he assumes. He uses his own poison rather than that of a viper.**Detect Poison (Sp)** Kharantes has the psionic ability to *detect poison* as the spell (caster level 6th).**Aversion (Sp)** Kharantes can psionically create a compulsion effect targeting one creature within 30 feet. The target must succeed on a DC 24 Will save or gain an aversion to snakes for 10 minutes and must stay at least 20 feet away from any snake or yuan-ti, alive or dead; if already within 20 feet, it can move away. If the subject is unable to move away or attacked by a snake or yuan-ti, its Dexterity is reduced by 4 until the effect wears off or it is no longer within 20 feet of a snake or yuan-ti.**Constrict (Ex)** Kharantes deals 1d6+9 points of damage with a successful grapple check.**Improved Grab (Ex)** If Kharantes hits a Large or smaller creature with its bite attack, he can then start a grapple as a free action without provoking attacks of opportunity. If he wins the grapple check, he establishes a hold and can constrict.**Produce Acid (Sp)** Kharantes has the psionic ability to exude acid from his body, dealing 3d6 points of acid damage to the next creature he touches, including a creature hit by its bite attack. If he is grappling, constricting, or pinning a foe when he uses this power, his grasp deals 5d6 points of acid damage. The acid becomes inert when it leaves his body, and he is immune to the acid's effects.**Chameleon Power (Sp)** Kharantes can change the coloration of himself and his equipment to match his surroundings, granting a +10 circumstance bonus on Hide checks.**Skills** Kharantes can always take 10 on Climb checks or Swim checks even if rushed, threatened, distracted, or endangered.**MARLISS****CR 15**

hp 91 (16 HD)

Female dark naga sorcerer 7

LE Large aberration

**Init** +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +14, Spot +14**Languages** Common, Infernal, Yuan-ti**AC** 15, touch 12, flat-footed 12; Dodge**Immune** mind-reading, poison**Fort** +7, **Ref** +9, **Will** +13; +2 against charms**Speed** 40 ft. (8 squares)**Melee** sting +10 (2d4+2 plus poison) and bite +5 (1d4+1)**Space** 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.**Base Atk** +9; **Grp** +15**Atk Options** poison (DC 20, sleep 2d4 minutes)**Combat Gear** *major circlet of blasting* 1/day (+11 ranged touch, 40 hp), *major ring of spell storing* (*scorching ray, lightning bolt, cone of cold*)**Sorcerer Spells Known** (CL 14th):7th (3/day)—*waves of exhaustion*6th (5/day)—*disintegrate* (DC 20), *greater dispel magic*5th (6/day)—*cone of cold* (DC 19), *nightmare* (DC 19), *prying eyes*4th (7/day)—*animate dead, ice storm, mass reduce person* (DC 18), *stoneskin*3rd (7/day)—*displacement, fly, lightning bolt* (DC 17), *vampiric touch* (+10 melee touch)2nd (7/day)—*cat's grace, eagle's splendor, invisibility, protection from arrows, scorching ray* (+11 ranged touch)1st (7/day)—*expeditious retreat, magic missile, ray of enfeeblement* (+11 ranged touch), *shield, silent image* (DC 15)0 (6/day)—*acid splash* (+8 ranged touch), *daze* (DC 14), *detect magic, ghost sound* (DC 14), *light, mage hand, open/close, ray of frost* (+11 ranged touch), *read magic***Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 5th):1/day—*daylight, see invisibility***Abilities** Str 14, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 16, Wis 15, Cha 18**SQ** detect thoughts, summon familiar (none at present)**Feats** Alertness, Combat Casting, Dodge, Eschew Materials<sup>B</sup>, Lightning Reflexes**Skills** Bluff +23, Concentration +20, Diplomacy +9, Disguise +6 (+8 acting), Intimidate +6, Knowledge (arcana) +13,

Listen +14, Sense Motive +8, Spellcraft +24, Spot +14

**Possessions** combat gear plus *hand of glory***Detect Thoughts (Su)** Marliiss can continuously use detect thoughts, as the spell (caster level 16th; Will DC 15 negates). The ability is always active.



# GATES OF THE THAALUD

## Encounter Level 17

### setup

Place the player characters on the map in the area indicated by the P. Place the central tomb tapper (T) on the map as indicated; do not place the other tomb tappers on the map until they are seen by the PCs.

When the PCs first see a greater tomb tapper, read:

*This creature stands 16 feet tall. It sports a featureless head and a great adamantine hammer. Stone armor composed of great, interlocking plates covers its hide, with one hinged section that opens to reveal the massive maw in its chest.*

When the greater tomb tapper in area T2 burrows through the wall, read:

*There is a great cracking and rending of stone. Dust and small bits of debris fly as a section of the south wall collapses, revealing another of the monstrosities that guard these gates.*

### THAALUD STONE ARMOR

Thaalud stone armor is a mighty suit of plate armor composed of heavy stone plates held together by metal rivets and hinged joints. The stone used is a rare variety that is very dense and resistant to chips and fractures. The breastplate is hinged like the visor of a helmet, so the tomb tapper can use its powerful chest maw in battle. The armor is extremely heavy but provides little hindrance to greater tomb tappers. It is normally found sized for Huge creatures, but versions of smaller size could be constructed by someone of appropriate skill. The statistics below are for a set of the armor sized for a Medium creature.

**Thaalud Stone Armor:** heavy armor; cost 2,800 gp; armor bonus +12; max Dex bonus +0; armor check penalty -8; arcane spell failure 40%; speed 30 ft./20 ft., 20 ft./15 ft.; weight 180 lb.

### 3 GREATER TOMB TAPPERS<sup>MON</sup>

CR 14

hp 150 each (20 HD)

Advanced tomb tapper

N Huge construct

**Init** +2; **Senses** blind, blindsight 120 ft., tremorsense 60 ft.; Listen +19, Spot +19

**Languages** Common, Netherese, Undercommon, telepathy 100 ft.

**AC** 35, touch 8, flat-footed 33; **DR** 10/adamantine

**Immune** fire, gaze attacks, illusions, visual effects, ability damage, ability drain, critical hits, death effects, death from massive damage, disease, energy drain, exhaustion, fatigue, magic, mind-affecting spells and abilities (charms, compulsions, phantasms, patterns, and morale effects), necromancy effects, nonlethal damage, paralysis, poison, sleep effects, stunning, any effect that requires a Fortitude save unless it also works on objects

**Resist** cold 10, electricity 10

**Fort** +8, **Ref** +8, **Will** +8

**Speed** 30 ft. (6 squares) in stone armor; base speed 40 ft., burrow 10 ft.

**Melee** +2 *adamantine throwing returning thundering maul* +27/+22/+17 (3d6+18/19-20/x3) and bite +18 (2d6+5) or

**Melee** 2 slams +24 each (2d6+11) and bite +18 (2d6+5)

**Ranged** +1 *adamantine throwing returning thundering maul* +18 (3d6+18/19-20/x3)

**Space** 15 ft.; **Reach** 15 ft.

**Base Atk** +15; **Grp** +34

**Atk Options** Cleave, Great Cleave, Power Attack

**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 22nd):

At will—*detect magic*

7/day—*stone shape*

3/day—*spike stones* (DC 17)

**Abilities** Str 32, Dex 14, Con —, Int 14, Wis 11, Cha 16

**SQ** construct traits, maul, repair

**Feats** Cleave, Great Cleave, Great Fortitude, Improved Critical (maul), Iron Will, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (maul)

**Skills** Appraise +17, Listen +19, Search +21, Spot +19, Survival +19 (+21 following tracks)

**Possessions** +2 *maul*, +3 *thaalud stone armor*, one has a *ring of elemental command (earth)*

**Maul (Su)** Each greater tomb tapper is created with a +2 *adamantine maul* appropriate to its size. In the hands of a tomb tapper, the weapon gains the throwing, returning, and thundering special abilities.

**Repair (Su)** A *stone shape* effect repairs damage equal to 1d8 + caster level hit points if used on a tomb tapper. The creature can use its own spell-like ability to repair itself.



## Tactics

The greater tomb tappers are tasked with guarding the gates to the Tomb of the Thaalud. They are to let no creatures other than tomb tappers or greater tomb tappers pass. One of the guards stands in plain sight before the gate, with its maul at the ready. When the PCs appear, it orders them to stand down and not move, speaking first in Common and then in Netherese. As long as the characters do nothing other than remove all of their visible magic items and quickly depart, it makes no hostile moves. However, doing anything else provokes its readied action to fling its maul at a character who looks like a spellcaster. It then backs up to stand before the doors and battle anyone who approaches.

The second greater tomb tapper (to the north) remains in its alcove, not visible to anyone who doesn't advance at least to where the first tomb tapper stood.

It then attempts to flank opponents that attack the first creature, while staying at least partially within its alcove to prevent enemies from gaining flanking positions against it.

The third tomb tapper lurks behind a thin cave wall, listening to the vibrations of what goes on beyond with its tremorsense. It waits until it has the opportunity to flank opponents before quickly burrowing through the wall as part of a move action and attacking those beyond.

If their opponents appear to be lightly armored, the tomb tappers use Power Attack—sacrificing up to +10 of their base attack bonus to gain up to a +15 bonus on damage—with their two-handed mauls.

## FEATURES OF THE AREA

**Gates to the Tomb:** These sealed doors are 2 feet thick and composed of solid granite (hardness 8, hp 360, break DC 40). They open onto a demiplane, so if they are somehow sundered, a blank stone wall is revealed directly behind them. Any tomb tapper can will the gates to open to the demiplane, or if a special adamantine key is placed in the gap in the carving's hammer haft, a seam likewise appears in the bas-relief and the doors open. The doors cannot be opened in any other way through either magical or mundane means. The adamantine rod given to the PCs by the Terraseer happens to be the necessary key to this *portal*. It fuses in place on the bas-relief carved into the gate and cannot be removed thereafter.

**Natural Stone Walls:** The cavern walls are composed of unworked stone of varying thicknesses (hardness 8, hp 180 per foot of thickness, break DC 65). The wall between area T1 and T2 is 10 feet thick at its thinnest point. A successful DC 22 Climb check is necessary to scale these walls.

The walls of these caverns are laced with *faerzress*. As a result, all creatures in the area receive a +4 bonus on Will saves against divination spells, including *scrying* and *greater scrying*. Spells of the conjuration (teleportation) subschool do not work reliably over distances greater than 1 mile when either the origin or the destination is within an area containing *faerzress*. Attempts to do so require a successful DC 35 Spellcraft check. Failure means a character suffers a mishap with an "off target" result as described under the *teleport* spell description. A character using a normally infallible means of teleportation (such as *word of recall* or *greater teleport*) needs to make only a successful DC 25 Spellcraft check.





# ASKILION'S TOWER

Encounter Level 19

## setup

Place the pair of tomb tappers (T) in the large chamber on the map, but place the other two constructs only as they reveal themselves. The encounter begins as Askilion (A) descends the stairs from his original position on the upper floor.

When the PCs first catch sight of Askilion, read:

*Flowing down the rough stair like a wave comes a writhing, pulsing mass of putrescent body parts, moving with a will of its own.*

## tactics

As soon as intruders enter the large chamber, the two immediately visible tomb tappers move to the center of the room and try to engage them with their mauls. They attempt to lure the PCs into the center of the room so that the other two tomb tappers can take up flanking positions in the next round. Askilion remains above, and begins its song of horror. In the next round, it switches to its song of sorrow. It uses an enervated *sound burst* on anyone who climbs the stairs or flies up to find the source of the strange singing. When a PC first sees Askilion, they are subject to its fear aura. If the tomb tappers are being defeated, Askilion starts down the stairs attempting the *hold*, *charm*, and *hypnotize* as many as possible as it descends. As soon as it reaches the bottom, or is engaged in melee, it abandons spells and songs in favor of its swarm attack.



## FEATURES OF THE AREA

**Niches:** Four feet above the floor are several openings in the walls. These form niches 5 feet high and 5 feet deep. Some of these niches hold treasures of the thaalud (see sidebar). Climbing into a niche requires a move action or a successful DC 16 Jump check. Anyone inside a niche has cover from those outside (+4 bonus to AC and +2 bonus on Reflex saves) and receives a +1 bonus on melee attacks for being on higher ground. Creatures larger than Medium must squeeze to enter a niche.

**Treasure:** The treasures of the thaalud are stored in the many floating castles around the vault and in the central enclave. The primary treasure of Askilion's Tower is the *Chalice of Amaunator* (see page 147), though it is missing one of its seals. The chalice rests in the northernmost niche on the upper floor. Scattered between the other seven niches are a *Netherese blast scepter*<sup>LE</sup>, a *beholder crown*<sup>Mag</sup> with seven gems remaining (your choice), a *sun blade*, and a *mantle of energy resistance (electricity)*<sup>Und</sup>. If you do not have access to these sources, replace the scepter, crown, and mantle with a *rod of thunder and lightning*, a *helm of telepathy*, and a *cloak of Charisma +4*, respectively.



**4 GREATER TOMB TAPPERS<sup>MON</sup>****CR 14****hp** 150 each (20 HD); **DR** 10/adamantine

Advanced tomb tapper

N Huge construct

**Init** +2; **Senses** blind, blindsight 120 ft., tremorsense 60 ft.; Listen +19, Spot +19**Languages** Common, Netherese, Undercommon; telepathy 100 ft.**AC** 35, touch 8, flat-footed 33**Immune** fire, gaze attacks, illusions, visual effects, ability damage, ability drain, critical hits, death effects, death from massive damage, disease, energy drain, exhaustion, fatigue, magic, mind-affecting spells and abilities (charms, compulsions, phantasms, patterns, and morale effects), necromancy effects, nonlethal damage, paralysis, poison, sleep effects, stunning, any effect that requires a Fortitude save unless it also works on objects**Resist** cold 10, electricity 10**Fort** +8, **Ref** +8, **Will** +8**Speed** 30 ft. (6 squares) in stone armor; base speed 40 ft., burrow 10 ft.**Melee** +2 *adamantine throwing returning thundering maul* +27/+22/+17 (3d6+18/19–20/x3) and bite +18 (2d6+5) or**Melee** 2 slams +24 each (2d6+11) and bite +18 (2d6+5)**Ranged** +2 *adamantine throwing returning thundering maul* +18 (3d6+18/19–20/x3)**Space** 15 ft.; **Reach** 15 ft.**Base Atk** +15; **Grp** +34**Atk Options** Cleave, Great Cleave, Power Attack**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 22nd):At will—*detect magic*7/day—*stone shape*3/day—*spike stones* (DC 17)**Abilities** Str 32, Dex 14, Con —, Int 14, Wis 11, Cha 16**SQ** construct traits, maul, repair**Feats** Cleave, Great Cleave, Great Fortitude, Improved Critical (maul), Iron Will, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (maul)**Skills** Appraise +17, Listen +19, Search +21, Spot +19, Survival +19 (+21 following tracks)**Possessions** +2 *maul*, +3 *thaalud stone armor***Maul (Su)** Each greater tomb tapper is created with a +2 *adamantine maul* appropriate to its size. In the hands of a tomb tapper, the weapon gains the throwing, returning, and thundering special abilities.**Repair (Su)** A *stone shape* effect repairs damage equal to 1d8 + caster level hit points if used on a tomb tapper. The creature can use its own spell-like ability to repair itself.

(religion) +22, Listen +33, Move Silently +19, Perform (sing) +28, Search +22, Sense Motive +8, Spellcraft +14, Spot +19, Survival +19 (+21 following tracks)

**ASKILION****CR 16****hp** 208 (32 HD)All-consuming hunger<sup>Und</sup> bard 11/dirgesinger<sup>LM</sup> 5

NE Diminutive undead (swarm)

**Init** +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +33, Spot +19**Languages** Auran, Common, Elven, Orc**Aura** fear 60 ft. (CL 16th, DC 24)**AC** 14, touch 14, flat-footed 14**Immune** undead immunities, targeted spells, weapon damage**Resist** positive energy effects 10**Fort** +9, **Ref** +13, **Will** +21**Weakness** vulnerability to area spells**Speed** 40 ft. (8 squares), climb 20 ft.**Melee** swarm (4d6 plus all-consuming wasting)**Space** 10 ft.; **Reach** 0 ft.**Base Atk** +19; **Grp** —**Atk Options** all-consuming wasting, create spawn, distraction (DC 24), bardic music 11/day (dirgesong [song of awakening, song of horror [DC 29], song of grief [DC 29], song of bolstering, song of sorrow [DC 29], inspire greatness, *suggestion* [DC 21], inspire competence, inspire courage +2, fascinate 4 creatures, countersong)**Bard Spells Known** (CL 11th):4th (2/day)—*dimension door*, *hold monster* (DC 20), *rainbow pattern* (DC 20)3rd (4/day)—*crushing despair* (DC 19), *cure serious wounds*, *see invisibility*, *slow* (DC 19)2nd (5/day)—*blindness/deafness* (DC 18), *blur*, *detect thoughts* (DC 18), *sound burst* (DC 18)1st (5/day)—*charm person* (DC 17), *detect secret doors*, *hypnotism* (DC 17), *sleep* (DC 17)0 (3/day)—*dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *flare* (DC 16), *lullaby* (DC 16), *mage hand*, *open/close***Abilities** Str 1, Dex 11, Con —, Int 16, Wis 10, Cha 22**SQ** bardic knowledge +14, swarm traits, undead traits**Feats** Dodge, Enervate Spell<sup>LM</sup> (2 spell slots higher, +50% damage against living creatures due to negative energy), Eschew Materials<sup>Mag</sup>, Improved Initiative<sup>B</sup>, Positive Energy Resistance<sup>LM</sup>, Requiem<sup>LM</sup>, Skill Focus (Perform [sing])**Skills** Balance +11, Climb +38, Concentration +25, Diplomacy +8, Gather Information +17, Hide +42, Knowledge**All-Consuming Wasting (Su)** Supernatural disease—swarm, DC 21 Fortitude save negates, incubation period 1 day; 1d6 Constitution damage. Unlike normal diseases but similar to mummy rot, all-consuming wasting continues until the afflicted creature's Constitution score reaches 0 (at which point it dies) or until a *remove disease* spell or similar magic is applied. If an afflicted creature dies, it rises as a new all-consuming hunger 1d4 rounds after death.**Create Spawn (Su)** Any living creature killed by an all-consuming hunger rises as a new (typical nonintelligent) all-consuming hunger within 1d4 rounds.**Distraction (Ex)** Any living creature vulnerable to the swarm's damage that begins its turn with a swarm in its square is nauseated for 1 round; a successful DC 24 Fortitude save negates the effect.

A unique creature created by the Keeper of Thaal from an upstart adventurer, Askilion managed to retain the intellect and abilities of his original form.

As a dirgesinger bard, Askilion has the dirgesong abilities described on pages 43–44 of *Libris Mortis*.**Song of Sorrow:** As long as he can hear the song and for 5 rounds thereafter, an enemy takes a –2 penalty on Will saves, attack rolls, and damage rolls. A successful Will save negates the effect and makes the target immune for 24 hours.**Song of Bolstering:** All undead within 30 feet (including Askilion himself) gain +16 turn resistance for as long as the dirgesinger sings and for 10 rounds thereafter.**Song of Grief:** Enemies within 60 feet and able to hear the song must make a Will save or be *confused* (as the spell) for as long as the dirgesinger sings and for 5 rounds thereafter.**Song of Horror:** Enemies within 60 feet and able to hear the song must make a Will save or take 1d6 points of Strength damage and 1d6 points of Dexterity damage. A creature affected by the song, or that makes a successful Will save, is immune to additional uses of the song for 24 hours.



# SHADOW SEASHORE

Once the PCs have freed the Terraseer and recovered the *Chalice of Amaunator*, they're ready to find the Qess Ar Teranthvar, which stands in a Shadow Weave node on the shore of the Shadow Sea and within sight of the City of Shade. Because of the dead magic zone that covers Anauroch, the PCs have few options other than slogging along until they stumble across the tree. The visions that Augathra the Mad shares with them in Chapter 2 should provide a strong hint that the PCs need to search along the seashore. Failing that, a *commune*, *contact other plane*, or similar spell (cast outside the dead magic zone) could point the group in the right direction. If a group seems intractably stumped, Darcassan, the last elder of Windsong Tower from Chapter 1, might

step in with one or two *dream* spells. Having helped set the PCs on the Qess Ar Teranthvar's trail, he's not about to let them give up when they are so close to the tree.

The bulk of this chapter consists of a series of events that befall the PCs as they approach the Shadow Weave node. These events can occur in nearly any order you desire, though it's best to present Event 1: Air Attack first.

## Environment

The events of this chapter take place in the Anauroch desert. See page 136 in Appendix 1 for information on how the desert environment can affect those who travel through it. When the characters arrive at the Shadow Sea (events 3–6), their journey becomes slightly easier. Temperatures become more moderate, thanks to the nearby mass of water.

The freshwater Shadow Sea is almost continuously cloaked in thick, dark clouds, which alleviate the glare of the desert sun.

## shadow weave magic items

All the magic items that the PCs' foes carry in this chapter are Shadow Weave items, which operate normally even inside a dead magic zone. The PCs might already have a few Shadow Weave items at the start of this chapter if they defeated various adversaries in the adventure prior to this time and appropriated their possessions (or if they managed to purchase some Shadow Weave items during their stay in Biradoon at the end of Chapter 3). Characters who lack the Shadow Weave Magic feat, however, take damage when using Shadow Weave items, as follows:

- Activating a Shadow Weave item through spell completion, spell trigger, or command word (scrolls, wands, staves, and many other items) deals 1d4 points of Wisdom damage with each activation.
- A use-activated Shadow Weave item (some weapons and wondrous items) deals 1 point of Wisdom damage with each activation.
- A Shadow Weave item that functions continuously (such as a suit of armor or a ring of protection) deals 1 point of Wisdom damage each day at dusk, or when the character takes out or puts aside the item, whichever come first—but never more than 1 point to the same character during a given day.



Most encounters in this chapter take into account the PCs' lack of magic. Groups equipped with Shadow Weave magic items (see the sidebar) or psionic abilities might find these encounters too easy, so you should feel free to increase the number of foes to account for the PCs' extra power in such cases.

The first few encounters can (and should) occur at least a few days apart, to give the PCs plenty of time to recover before approaching their final showdown with the guardians of the *Quess Ar Teranthvar*.

## crossing the desert

The Shadovars maintain a close watch on the desert empire they have claimed. Now that they have brought the *Quess Ar Teranthvar* into their realm, the Shadovars are more vigilant than ever, and they have dispatched some of their best flying troops to keep any intruders far away from the City of Shade.

Run encounter S1 at any time after the PCs set out across the desert for the City of Shade or the Shadow Sea. If the PCs are traveling overland, the Shadovars most likely find their trail and track them down. A party flying over the sands (perhaps mounted on pegasi gained in *Shadowdale: The Scouring of the Land*) is probably quite conspicuous, and might also leave a few campsites or other signs of its presence. Even if the PCs use the Shadow Weave to pop into the city's vicinity unannounced, the Shadovars will be waiting for them—although it might take a quiet word from Shar herself to steer them to the PCs' location.

This encounter most likely takes place well distant from the City of Shade in the open desert—or perhaps in the Scimitar Spires (see the map of Anauroch on page 131) if the PCs chose that route. The text below assumes that the encounter occurs in daylight.

### event 1: shadovar aerial scouts

*A voice from overhead rings out in a deep tone, like a bell sounding from the depths of a temple. "Hold and state your business in the Empire of Netheril," it says. Whoever spoke seems some distance away but isn't immediately visible.*

The Shadovars have approached the PCs with the searing desert sun at their backs. They're some 200 feet from the main group, and it takes a successful DC 21 Spot check (including adjustments for distance) to see them before they move closer. Their spokesperson speaks through a crude horn that amplifies his voice.

The Shadovars demand that the PCs throw down their weapons and spell component pouches and submit to a search. The spokesperson reassures them that after they do so, they're free to go about their business—if that business proves to be legitimate.

In fact, however, the Shadovars have orders to slay all strangers, and they have no intention of letting the PCs go. They'd love

to have the PCs disarm themselves before the fight, though. A character can make a Sense Motive check with a +10 bonus opposed by a Bluff check from the Shadovar spokesperson to notice the deception. In any case, the Shadovars attack the moment the PCs stop talking.

**Tactical Encounter:** S1: Air Attack, page 118.

**Development:** If the PCs slay the patrol and take care to hide the bodies, the Shadovars take little note of the loss. Anauroch, after all, is a dangerous place, and casualties are bound to occur from time to time. If the PCs allow even one aerial scout to escape, however, the survivor alerts his superiors in about two days, and the Shadovars step up their aerial patrols.

Thereafter, the PCs have a 25% chance each day to meet another aerial patrol. The Shadovars discontinue the extra activity after a tenday, provided that the extra patrols don't uncover any unusual activity. If the PCs do not approach closer to the City of Shade for a tenday, they can wait out this high-security period.

### event 2: shadovar outpost

The Shadovars support their desert patrols with small fortified outposts that resemble the one described here. Each site has space for a few permanent troops, plus a few burrows for veserabs to settle in and rest for a few hours. Each outpost is built at the site of a natural pool or spring—an oasis in the desert. By controlling the water sources, the Shadovars control the desert around them.

The PCs might find this outpost somewhere in the open desert, or in the pass that leads through the Scimitar Spires (see the map of Anauroch on page 131). However, the group should not come across an outpost for two or three days after encountering an aerial patrol (event 1). A group that manages to carry enough water to take it all the way to its goal could bypass the outpost; others must clear out the Shadovars before they can replenish their water supply. An overly eager group of PCs might note the trees grouped around water here and believe they have found the *Quess Ar Teranthvar*.

A small wisp of cloud hangs over the oasis on most days, thanks to the open water that exists here. Anyone traveling over the desert can see this outpost from at least a mile away, and the overhanging cloud is apparent from an even greater distance.

Use the following information if the PCs decide to approach the outpost.

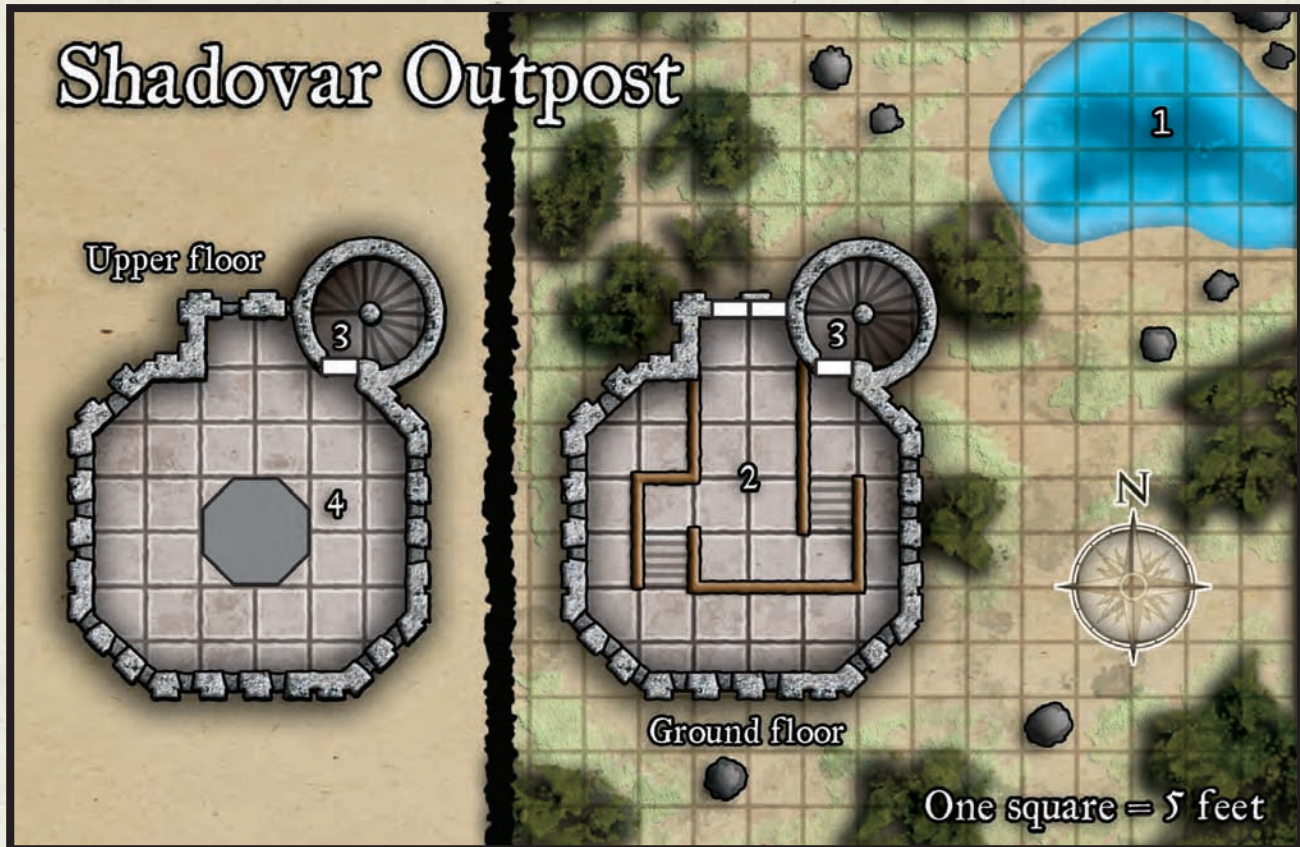
### The oasis

*A green jewel shines in the dun-colored desert. Amid a belt of brush and lush grass is a circle of small trees. Just outside the trees, but within the belt of green, stands a two-and-a-half-story stone building with a battlement on top.*

The Shadovars keep watch over the desert from the building's battlement (area 4) but stay out of sight. They allow intruders to enter the oasis before attacking.



# Shadovar Outpost



## 1: POOL

The natural pool here is spring-fed and about 2 feet deep.

**Tactical Encounter:** S2: Battle at the Oasis, page 120. This area and area 2 form a single tactical encounter.

## 2: TOWER GROUND FLOOR

This chamber has a central area with a dirt floor and a mezzanine level 10 feet above. In the high ceiling is a hole that opens to the battlement above (area 4).

The central area has burrows intended for veserabs. The garrison lives, camp style, on the mezzanine, which has arrow slits for defense.

Each soldier has a bedroll, a canvas sack for his personal gear, a few rations, and couple of canteens. Groups sent from the City of Shade bring fresh supplies and troops every few days. Though the tower is here to support the Shadovars' desert patrols, its primary role is to secure the local water source. Thus, little is kept here beyond what the garrison needs.

When the PCs arrive, no veserabs are in residence, but the tower's garrison is. Four krinith soldiers are on the mezzanine—two asleep and two keeping watch through the arrow slits. Two visitors have joined the troops as well. They are clerics of Shar who are here to preach to the krinith soldiers (to discourage any backsliding in the faith) and to survey Anauroch's dead magic zone and ensure that it remains intact.

When those in the mezzanine notice intruders, they raise the alarm and attack.

**Tactical Encounter:** S2: Battle at the Oasis, page 120. This area and area 1 form a single tactical encounter.

## 3: TOWER STAIRS

This spiral staircase rises 25 feet from the ground floor to the battlement above (area 4).

## 4: BATTLEMENT

Two krinith soldiers keep watch from behind the crenellated walls. A well in the center is open to area 2.

## event 3: surf and serpents

*A stiff breeze sends low waves washing up against the stony shore. Here and there, half-submerged rocks break up the waves. The turbulence in the area makes the water cloudy and nearly opaque.*

The Shadovars use one of their creations—the shadow sea serpent—to keep the Shadow Sea clear of invaders, colonists, and other riffraff. A pair of these serpents lurks among the rocks some 40 feet from the waterline, in water about 15 feet deep. They hide just below the surface, using their echolocation ability to sense prey nearby. A character can notice them with a Spot check opposed by the serpents' Hide checks.



If the PCs don't spot the serpents, they surface and attack. If the serpents get any hint that the PCs have noticed them, they break the surface and hail the party.

### AN INVITATION

*Two creatures thrust their bulbous heads from the turbid water. They have eyes the size of dinner plates and long, toothy snouts. One opens its maw and begins to speak.*

The serpents speak only Netherese. Showing their teeth, they invite the PCs in for a cool swim. If the PCs demur, the serpents casually mention that they've discovered a waterlogged chest with rusty iron bands around it.

The serpents eventually attack whether the PCs fall for the ruse or not.

**Tactical Encounter:** S3: Out of the Depths, page 122.

**Development:** If the serpents mentioned a mysterious chest, the PCs might be inclined to search for it after dealing with the serpents. The object is entirely fictional, and all the PCs can find in the vicinity are bones and bits of gear from the serpents' most recent kills.

## Event 4: forest of shadows

*The forbidding desert gives way to a verdant swath of 10-foot-tall leafy trees, most of them laden with ripening fruit. The orchards seem to extend for acres, though a rise here and there seems clad in some sort of trellised vines.*

The Shadovars have used an old trick to conceal the *Quess Ar Teranthvar*. They've hidden a tree in a forest—more or less. Several hundred acres of orchards and vineyards line the shores of the Shadow Sea near the site where the City of Shade customarily floats. The golden tree stands near the edge of a small bay. Characters searching for the *Quess Ar Teranthvar* enter the tilled area at least a quarter-mile from the grove where the tree stands.

Hundreds of krinth slaves work in the orchards all day, pruning, watering, weeding, and keeping a vigilant eye out for damaging insects and other pests. These workers tend to concentrate on their tasks, and they ignore visitors who don't harass them. If questioned, they offer to lead the newcomers to their overseers. PCs who accept the offer are taken straight to a squad of krinth guards charged with the workers' safety.

Should the PCs decide to attack the workers, they scatter, hoping that a speedy retreat can save them. Fleeing workers quickly vanish among the trees. Any attack on the workers brings a squad of guards in just a few rounds.

The PCs can easily evade the teams of workers, but they're bound to cross paths with the guards who meticulously comb the area, looking for any intruders.

**Tactical Encounter:** S4: Guardians of the Orchards, page 126.

## Event 5: grove of shadows

If the PCs follow the clues they've been given and search along the shores of the Shadow Sea, they eventually arrive here.

*A slender golden tree stands on a patch of bare soil, its web of gleaming roots spreading out over the ground below. A dusky nimbus surrounds the tree, dulling the shine of the golden leaves and branches. Some kind of creeping blight has blackened portions of the tree, and a layer of shriveled and corroded leaves litters the ground around it. Here and there, blotches of deep gray stain the golden trunk. A ring of smaller trees surrounds the golden tree, and the land beyond those small trees is barren for some distance before giving way to the regular rows of the greenery of the orchard.*

A great deal is happening in this scene, and not all of it is immediately obvious to the PCs.

### THE TREE

This golden tree is indeed the *Quess Ar Teranthvar*. The Shadovars have placed it in the heart of a level 5 Shadow Weave node (see the sidebar on the next page) and initiated a ritual aimed at breaking it down into its constituent scrolls (the better to understand their contents). Thus far, the tree's guardian has prevented this transformation, but he's losing the battle.

### THE GUARDIAN

The *Quess Ar Teranthvar* is a modified version of the famous *Nether Scrolls*, which in their true form appear as a set of golden tablets. Centuries ago, Tyvollus Aluviirsan (LG male gold elf high mage) converted the scrolls into a form more suitable for elves. Tyvollus believed (correctly) that elf students could comprehend the scroll's secrets more readily by studying the tree and meditating in its presence. But the scrolls resisted the change, and it has always taken all of Tyvollus's power and concentration to keep them in their tree form.

Tyvollus remains with the tree even now. Most of the time he appears as a golden spider lurking in the branches, though he sometimes blends into the bark, appearing as a mere lump. No statistics are presented for Tyvollus—he is present as a spirit rather than in any physical sense.

The added burden of trying to keep the scrolls in their tree form despite the Shadovars' ritual is proving too much for Tyvollus's magic. But even though Tyvollus knows he can't prevent the tree's transformation, he's trying to put up a good fight. His presence has created a hole in the dead magic zone, allowing Weave magic (including any spells the PCs have prepared and any normal magic items they carry) to function normally within 60 feet of the tree (anywhere within the level 4 and level 5 areas of the Shadow Weave node). Tyvollus has concealed this fact from Shadow Weave users, but Weave users know immediately when they leave the dead magic area and can use a move action to note its boundary. Tyvollus can also contact the PCs telepathically once



they enter the zone of normal magic and give them advice and encouragement.

Tyvollus knows that *liquid sun* from the *Chalice of Amavator* will halt the Shadow Weave's corruption of the *Quess Ar Teranthvar*. He also knows that he must release his hold on the *Quess Ar Teranthvar* to allow the *liquid sun* to work. When he does so, the tree collapses into a pool of semimolten metal.

Tyvollus suspects—correctly—that the *disjunction* effect from the *liquid sun* will scatter the scrolls. He knows that this process will take several rounds, but he doesn't know exactly how long. What he doesn't know is that the same force that destroys the tree and scatters the scrolls will also shatter the Sharn Wall (the magic barrier that keeps the bulk of the phaerimms imprisoned

beneath Anauroch; see Chapter 2). But he does know that letting the Shadovars have a complete set of the *Nether Scrolls* is a very bad idea, so he telepathically urges the PCs to douse the tree in *liquid sun* as soon as possible.

### AN UNHOLY ALLIANCE

Hadrhune, the high-ranking Shadovar behind the plot to recover the *Nether Scrolls*, is busy in the City of Shade attending to matters of state. He is the right hand of Prince Telamont, ruler of the city, and a busy man. As noted in Chapter 2, Hadrhune has struck a deal with Drullister, the leader of the phaerimm hive at the Crypt of Augathra the Mad, to acquire the means to corrupt the *Quess Ar Teranthvar* and recover the scrolls. As part of the arrangement,

## shadow weave nodes

A Shadow Weave node marks a place where the corrupted magic of the Shadow Weave leaks into the material world; Shadow Weave users can tap into this power to augment their spells.

A Shadow Weave node has a power class, usually from 1 to 5, that indicates its sheer level of magical power. The higher the class, the more powerful the node. A Shadow Weave node consists of a number of layers equal to its power class. The innermost layer contains the most power. Power diminishes in the outer layers until the node fades away altogether—the node's power class is reduced by one step for each layer.

The Shadow Weave node in this adventure is class 5. It has a power level of 5 at the center, where the *Quess Ar Teranthvar* stands, and four outer layers with power levels of 4, 3, 2, and 1. Each layer is a spherical band 40 feet wide, so the whole node has a radius of 180 feet.

Any creature can detect the node when within 30 feet of its outer boundary with a successful DC 20 Intelligence check. A character who has the Node Spellcasting (Shadow Weave) feat (see *Champions of Ruin*) can make a Spellcraft check instead at the same DC. A successful check reveals only that a zone of corrupted power lies ahead, not the node's full extent—though the character could determine the node's boundaries with enough time and effort.

Inside the node, Shadow Weave users gain several advantages. The first is a caster level increase that can apply to any spell except evocations, transmutations, and those that have the light descriptor. To get this boost, a character must have the Shadow Weave Magic feat and make an Intelligence check (or a Spellcraft check, if the caster has the Node Spellcasting [Shadow Weave] feat) at the DC given below. The DC is 4 lower for any spell from the enchantment, illusion, or necromancy school, as well as any spell that has the darkness descriptor. If the check succeeds, the caster receives a caster level increase equal to the power of the layer of the node in which the spell is cast. Making the check is part of the action used to cast the

spell. If the check fails, the spell is cast at its normal caster level, with no ill effects—no cost or risk is associated with attempting to use the node's power. A character can use the DC and benefit from a weaker layer instead if desired.

Node Layer	Intelligence or Spellcraft DC
5	30
4	25
3	20
2	15
1	10

Second, a character who has the Node Spellcasting (Shadow Weave) feat (described in *Champions of Ruin*) can make a Spellcraft check at the DC given above for the node's layer. Success gives the character a pool of bonus points equal to the rank of the layer in which he stands that can be applied to his Strength, Dexterity, and/or Constitution scores. For example, a successful DC 30 check result in the innermost layer provides 5 points to divide among the character's Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution. These granted ability points last for 1 hour. Anyone who fails a check to boost ability scores cannot try again for 24 hours.

This node also grants a character who has the Shadow Weave Magic feat access to the *blight* spell. A character who prepares spells within the node can prepare this spell even if it isn't in his spellbook. Preparing a granted spell requires a Spellcraft check at the DC given above for the node's layer. Once the spell has been prepared, the character can leave the node and still cast the spell. The node doesn't grant extra spell slots—just access to the spells.

A character who does not prepare spells can cast the granted spell even if it isn't among the spells he knows, but only while within the node.



Hadrhune has agreed to teach Drullister's phaerimms the secrets of the Shadow Weave, and, perhaps, gain an edge over the other phaerimms that infest Anauroch. For the moment, Hadrhune has kept the details of his plan concealed, even from Prince Telamont. What his liege doesn't know won't hurt him, Hadrhune reasons, and the secrecy saves him the trouble of explaining exactly why he has chosen the hated phaerimms as allies.

Currently, two phaerimms are loitering near the tree, disguised as carrion crows by means of a *veil* spell that Hadrhune has cast on them. They attack anyone who approaches the tree, unless Hadrhune himself accompanies the visitor.

**Tactical Encounter:** S5: An Ancient Enemy, page 124.

## event 6: hadrhune's wrath

Hadrhune keeps track of the tree's progress, and he knows the instant when his plan has gone awry. The Prince's Hand personally intervenes if the PCs use *liquid sun* on the *Quest Ar Teranthvar*, or when they have slain or driven off the phaerimms.

**Tactical Encounter:** S6: Hadrhune Intervenes, page 127.

## conclusion

With the defeat of Hadrhune and the dissolution of the *Quest Ar Teranthvar*, the characters have succeeded in their quest. Their adventures have taken them from Cormyr, to the battlefields of Shadowdale, to the deep desert of Anauroch, and ultimately into the very shadow of Thultanthar, the City of Shade. Their actions have thwarted Shar's attempts to murder Mystra and replace the Weave with the Shadow Weave, stopped the Shadovars from gaining full access to the *Nether Scrolls* and the secrets they hide, and prevented Hadrhune from completing his development of a hybrid Weave/Shadow Weave artifact possibly capable of tipping the scales of fate in favor of the Shadovars.

These tasks were not accomplished without a price—the acquisition of new and very powerful enemies. With the dissolution of the *Quest Ar Teranthvar*, the Sharrans of Thultanthar immediately sense the loss. Most High Telamont likewise becomes aware of the loss and quickly dispatches the Twelve Princes of Shade to try to recapture the departing component pieces of the *Nether Scrolls*. The panic in the city resulting from this sudden flurry of activity quickly leads to unrest and civil strife that the high prince must then put down.

With the princes absent and Telamont occupied with emergency matters of state, the PCs are given the opportunity to make their escape. In their wake, Thultanthar is rife with chaos, as its soldiery clashes with rioters in the streets and whole sections of the city and even parts of the Temple of Shar are put to the torch before order can be restored. Tyvollar Aluviirsan can use his magic to allow the PCs to *teleport* out of the desert as they make their escape to whatever safe haven they seek beyond the desert's bounds.

However, even with the PCs' successful escape from the clutches of the Shadovars, their actions are not without consequence. While

they are toasted in taprooms far and wide as heroes of Faerûn and their tale is told and retold, High Prince Telamont's decisive action in allowing the interlopers to escape is not without fruit. The sudden scrambling of the Twelve Princes in pursuit of the *Nether Scrolls* actually allows Prince Brennus to reconstitute and claim one of the scrolls. With this knowledge in hand for their study, the Shadovars begin to delve into the mysteries of the *Nether Scrolls* and unearth some of the great secrets of the Art. They then begin a systematic search of Faerûn for the rest of the scrolls.

Though the Church of Shar in Shade is momentarily weakened, the unrest in the city allows the Sharrans to eliminate some of the dissidents and rivals that have plagued them. In addition, Hadrhune's death allows Prince Rivalen, the city's High Priest of Shar, to secure his position and favor with his father. Though the worshipers of Shar have been thwarted in their bid to use the *Nether Scrolls* to murder Mystra and replace the Weave with the Shadow Weave, Shar's plot is merely forestalled—not destroyed. They continue in their search for the scrolls and the writings of Augathra the Mad, and are only encouraged by word of the recent rediscovery of the *Book of the Black*. It might be delayed, but the Shadovars feel the time of Shar's ascendance is still coming.

In addition, the long-trapped phaerimms have finally been freed from their sharn-created prison within the confines of Anauroch. Exhausted by their war of attrition in the west and the threats of the Shadovars, many phaerimms seek to leave their age-old home and strike out for new territory. From new hidden lairs they hope to learn more of the world around them, marshal their strength, and at long last strike out against their racial foes, the sharns, in a war of extermination. To this end, many of the phaerimms move to the wilderness areas on the fringes of Anauroch to scout out and evaluate the potential threats and resources presented by the lands around them.

Expeditions by the phaerimms include probes of Thay (for magical knowledge), Westgate (a city with a long history of harboring secret masters of monstrous races), and Zhentil Keep (for a possible alliance in the tradition of the beholders, which once held such a prominent role within the Black Network). One particular hive of phaerimms, led by a former broodmate of Drullister, sets out overland to begin the infiltration of Candlekeep to regain the *Book of the Black* if it was left there by the PCs, as well as to access the reams of other secret lore stored therein.

The heroes of Cormyr, Shadowdale, and Anauroch have succeeded in their mission—but the task is far from over. They have made bitter enemies of some of the most powerful beings in Faerûn. They have tipped the scales of fate in their favor for the moment, but Tymora is a fickle mistress, and her dark twin broods in silence, waiting for the moment to swiftly undo the deeds of the mighty. The PCs will find new responsibilities and expectations placed on them in the changing world order, and personages who were once distant legends—Elminster or the Seven Sisters, for example—might make demands on their time and abilities to right new wrongs. Truly, it is a time for heroes.



# AIR ATTACK

## Encounter Level 14

### setup

Run this encounter when the PCs set out for the Shadow Sea. The text for this encounter assumes the PCs are traveling by land, but the encounter plays out much the same if the group travels by air.

The Shadovars, on their veserab mounts, begin in the spaces marked S.

Place the lead PC in the space marked P, with the rest of the characters trailing behind. The Shadovars are 100 feet higher than the PCs.

The Shadovars have cast *cat's grace*, *shield*, and *endure elements* on themselves, and *endure elements* on their mounts.

When the Shadovars attack, read:

*Three humanoids ride atop winged creatures with wormlike bodies of midnight blue. The mounts pitch downward and streak toward you as the riders lower their lances.*

### Tactics

The Shadovars begin with a diving charge; their lances deal 3d6+9 points of damage thanks to their Spirited Charge feats. Their veserab mounts use their pounce ability against the PCs.

The next round, the Shadovars use the withdraw action to move away from the party, climbing and turning around.

In the round after that, the Shadovars dive and charge again. If possible, they use their Ride-By Attack feats to move past the PCs.

After the second charge, the Shadovars drop their lances, draw their greatswords, and wheel their mounts for a fresh attack. They then move in for melee attacks. After the riders attack, the veserabs use their breath weapons.

Because the veserabs must keep moving forward when in flight, the Shadovars make sword attacks on their next turns, and the veserabs bite. Then the Shadovars break away and circle back again for attacks the next round. This maneuver provokes attacks of opportunity, but the concealment from the veserabs' breath weapons might force them to miss (it also might make the Shadovars' attacks miss). The Shadovars continue to fight in this fashion for as long as they can. If attacks of opportunity from the PCs begin to tell, the Shadovars use the withdraw action to get away clean before making new attacks.

If the PCs try to hide in the noxious cloud from the veserabs' breath weapons, the Shadovars rely on their mounts' blindsight to help them locate foes. The Shadovars use their bows and Rapid Shot feats to pepper the hidden foes with arrows. Because the PCs have total concealment, each shot has a 50% miss chance.

The Shadovars fight until reduced to less than 15 hit points. After that, they break off and fly away, keeping up a steady fire from their bows as their mounts make double moves.

If the PCs decide to withdraw from the encounter, the Shadovars are inclined to let them go, so long as they head out of Anauroch—their job is to keep intruders out, not follow them across Toril.

### development

If the PCs capture any Shadovars, the prisoners admit that they're agents of the Empire of Shadow, charged with security. They can direct the PCs to a Shadovar outpost (see Event 2 on page 113), but know nothing else of value to the PCs.

### FLIGHT AND MOUNTED COMBAT

The veserabs fly with average maneuverability. They must move forward at least half speed (60 feet) each round to stay aloft.

Each time a veserab moves forward 5 feet when aloft, it can turn left or right 45 degrees (pivot the miniature at the center). For an extra cost of 5 feet of movement, the veserab can turn an extra 45 degrees. A veserab cannot turn more than 90 degrees in a single square.

When gaining altitude, a veserab moves at half speed, and can gain 10 feet of altitude for every 5 feet it moves forward.

A veserab can dive at any angle, including straight down, and moves at double speed when diving.

The Shadovars mounted on the veserabs use the veserabs' space and their own reach. The two move together as one unit, acting on the rider's initiative count. Since the mount does all the moving, the rider often can take other actions while the mount moves. For example, the rider can use a full attack action while the mount moves. The rider takes a -4 penalty on ranged attacks made while the mount makes a double move.

A rider and a veserab can fight at the same time, but the rider must make a successful DC 10 Ride check to do so. If the check fails, either the rider or the veserab can attack, but not both.

When the Shadovar riders in this encounter wish to use two-handed weapons (bows and greatswords) they must make DC 5 Ride checks to guide their mounts with their knees. If the check fails, the rider must use at least one hand to control the mount.

If anyone attacks a veserab while it carries a rider, the rider can attempt a Ride check to defend the mount. If the check result is higher than the veserab's AC, use the check result instead of the veserab's AC to resolve the attack.

None of the Ride checks discussed here count as an action for the rider.



**3 SHADOVAR AERIAL SCOUTS****CR 11**

hp 62 each (11 HD)

Male or female human fighter 5/ranger 2/sorcerer 4  
NE Medium humanoid**Init** +8 with *cat's grace*; **Senses** Listen +7, Spot +7**Languages** Common, Elven, Netherese**AC** 26, touch 15, flat-footed 22 with *shield* and *cat's grace*,  
Dodge**Fort** +9, **Ref** +7, **Will** +7**Speed** 30 ft. (6 squares); Ride-By Attack**Melee** +1 *greatsword* +13/+8 (2d6+5/19–20) or**Melee** mwk lance +13/+8 (1d6+3/x3)**Ranged** +1 *composite longbow* +14/+9 (1d8+3/x3) with *cat's grace* or**Ranged** +1 *composite longbow* +12/+12/+7 (1d8+3/x3) with  
Rapid Shot and *cat's grace***Base Atk** +9; **Grp** +12**Atk Options** Mounted Combat, Power Attack, Spirited  
Charge; favored enemy elves +2**Combat Gear** *potion of cure light wounds*, *potion of cure moderate wounds*, 2 alchemist's fire**Sorcerer Spells Known** (CL 4th; 20% arcane spell failure chance):2nd (1/day)—*cat's grace*†1st (3/day)—*endure elements*††, *shield*†, *true strike*0 (6/day)—*detect magic*, *disrupt undead* (+11 ranged touch), *light*, *mage hand*, *message*, *resistance*

† already cast

**Abilities** Str 17, Dex 18, Con 13, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 13 with  
*cat's grace***SQ** wild empathy +3 (–1 magical beasts)**Feats** Alertness, Discipline, Dodge, Improved Initiative,  
Mounted Combat, Power Attack, Rapid Shot, Ride-By  
Attack, Spirited Charge, Track**Skills** Climb +10, Concentration +10, Handle Animal +9,  
Jump +10, Knowledge (arcana) +3, Listen +7, Ride +12,  
Spellcraft +8, Spot +7, Survival +5, Use Rope +3**Possessions** combat gear plus +2 *studded leather armor*, +1  
*greatsword*, masterwork lance, +1 *composite longbow* (+2  
Str bonus) with 20 arrows, *ring of protection* +1, *amulet of natural armor* +1, *ring of feather falling*, 5 gp**3 ADVANCED VESERABS****CR 5**

hp 68 each (8 HD)

N Large magical beast (extraplanar)

**Init** +3; **Senses** blind, blindsense 240 ft., scent; Listen +12,  
Spot +0**AC** 18, touch 12, flat-footed 15; Mounted Combat**Immune** gaze attacks, illusions, visual effects**Fort** +9, **Ref** +9, **Will** +2**Speed** 20 ft. (4 squares), fly 120 ft. (average); Flyby Attack**Melee** bite +11 (1d8+4) and

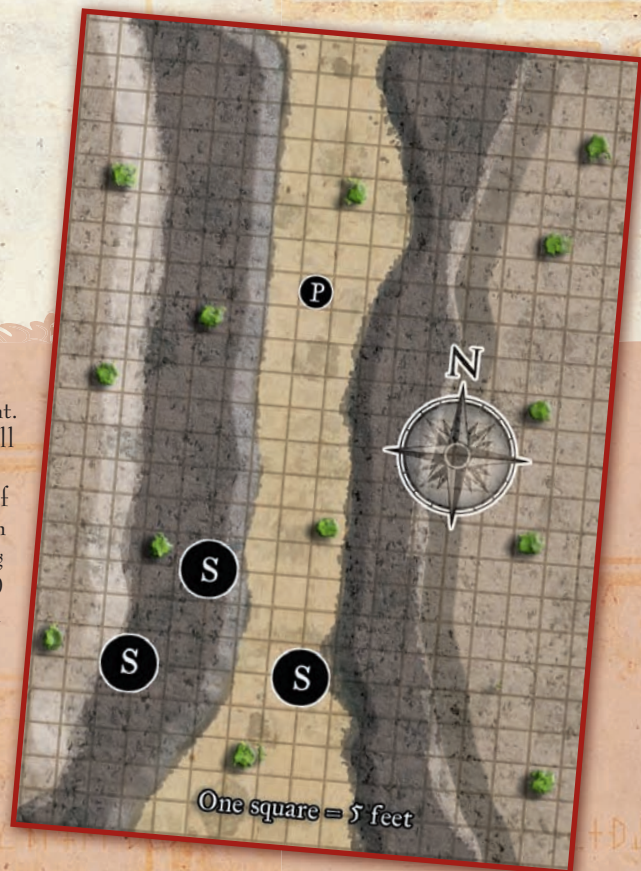
2 claws +9 each (1d6+2)

**Space** 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.**Base Atk** +8; **Grp** +16**Atk Options** Blind-Fight, pounce, rake**Special Actions** noxious breath**Abilities** Str 19, Dex 17, Con 17, Int 2, Wis 10, Cha 4**Feats** Blind-Fight, Flyby Attack, Multiattack**Possessions** leather barding**Skills** Hide –1, Listen +12, Move Silently +10**Noxious Breath (Ex)** See creature description, page 156**Pounce (Ex)** If an advanced veserab dives on a foe during the  
first round of combat, it can make a full attack, including  
two rake attacks.**Rake (Ex)** Attack bonus +8 melee, damage 1d6+2.**Skills** An advanced veserab has a +4 racial bonus on Listen  
and Move Silently checks.**FEATURES OF THE AREA****Gradual Slope:** These slopes aren't steep enough to affect movement. Characters gain a +1 bonus on melee attacks against foes downhill from them.**Steep Slope:** Characters moving uphill (to an adjacent square of higher elevation) must spend 2 squares of movement to enter each square of steep slope. Characters running or charging downhill (moving to an adjacent square of lower elevation) must succeed on a DC 10 Balance check upon entering the first steep slope square. Mounted characters must make a successful DC 10 Ride check instead. Characters who fail this check stumble and must end their movement 1d2×5 feet later. Characters who fail by 5 or more fall prone in the square where they end their movement. A steep slope increases the DC of Tumble checks by 2.

Characters gain a +1 bonus on melee attacks against foes downhill from them.

**Small Tree:** 1 ft. thick; AC 4; hardness 5; hp 150; break DC 25; Climb DC 15.

A creature standing in the same square as a small tree gains a +2 cover bonus to Armor Class and a +1 cover bonus on Reflex saves. The presence of a tree doesn't otherwise affect a creature's fighting space, because it's assumed that the creature is using the tree to its advantage when it can.





# BATTLE AT THE OASIS

## Encounter Level 15

### setup

Run this encounter if the PCs enter the oasis by the Shadovar outpost in Event 2.

Two krinth soldiers are inside the tower, in the squares marked K, keeping watch out through the arrow slits. Two soldiers are sleeping, in the spaces marked KS, clad in masterwork chain shirts. Two clerics of Shar are in the spaces marked C. Two more krinth soldiers stand atop the tower, also in spaces marked K, keeping watch from the battlements.

The PCs can enter the encounter area from any direction. Place the PCs at any point along the map edge, depending on how they decide to approach the site.

The soldiers aren't immediately visible; the PCs must make Spot checks opposed by the soldiers' Hide checks. Adjust the Spot check DC by 1 for every 10 feet between the character and the soldier. The tower interior is dim, and the soldiers inside get a bonus on their Hide checks for shadowy conditions, as noted in their statistics.

If the PCs don't see the soldiers, read:

*A tower of bleached stone looms over the treetops. The top has crenellations, and the lower floor is pierced with arrow slits. The place seems devoid of life, but it seems someone is in residence, because arrows come flying from the building.*

If the PCs see one or more soldiers, they see the archers, and you should roll initiative before they fire.

### tactics

When the soldiers see any intruders, they raise the alarm. The soldiers on the battlement fire poisoned arrows. Meanwhile, the soldiers inside the tower rouse their sleeping companions and head out to attack. The sleepers move to arrow slits and shoot. After shooting once, the pair of soldiers from the battlements move toward the fight.

Once they get into melee, the soldiers use their bastard swords.

When alerted, the clerics move to the battlement, cast *air walk*, and move to attack the PCs. They use spells such as *flame strike* and *darkbolt*. When attacking foes that are in melee with their allies, they use heightened *hold person* and *unholy blight*. As the soldiers fall, the clerics use *slay living* and heightened *bestow curse*.

The whole garrison fights to the death (having no desire to report failure to their superiors). The clerics' *word of recall* spells are mostly ineffective. When they prepared them, they designated the tower as their place of sanctuary.

### development

If the PCs slay or capture the entire garrison, they can use the place to rest. A patrol of eight Shadovar soldiers arrives in 2d4 days to relieve and resupply the outpost.

#### 6 KRINTH ELITE SOLDIERS

CR 8

hp 73 each (8 HD)

Male or female krinth fighter 8  
NE Medium humanoid (extraplanar)

**Init** +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +1, Spot +1

**Languages** Common, Netherese

**AC** 21, touch 11, flat-footed 20; Dodge or

**AC** 17, touch 11, flat-footed 17 in chain shirt

**Immune** shaken condition

**Fort** +10, **Ref** +4, **Will** +4; +1 against spells and effects that have the shadow descriptor, +4 against fear

**Speed** 20 ft. (4 squares) in mwk full plate, base speed 30 ft.

**Melee** mwk bastard sword +13/+8 (1d10+5 plus poison/19–20)

**Ranged** mwk composite longbow +9/+4 (1d8+3 plus poison/x3)

**Base Atk** +8; **Grp** +11

**Atk Options** Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Precise Shot; poison (DC 24, 1d6 Str/2d6 Str)

**Combat Gear** 3 vials acid, 3 alchemist's fire, 2 vials antitoxin, smokestick, tanglefoot bag, 2 thunderstones

**Abilities** Str 17, Dex 13, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 6

**Feats** Dodge<sup>B</sup>, Endurance, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bastard sword)<sup>B</sup>, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack<sup>B</sup>, Precise Shot, Weapon Focus (bastard sword)<sup>B</sup>, Weapon Specialization (bastard sword)<sup>B</sup>

**Skills** Climb +2 (+7 in chain shirt), Handle Animal +3, Hide –5 (–3 in shadowy conditions, +0 in chain shirt or +2 in shadowy conditions and chain shirt), Jump +3 (+8 in chain shirt), Ride +9

**Possessions** combat gear plus masterwork full plate, masterwork heavy steel shield, masterwork bastard sword, masterwork composite longbow (+3 Str bonus) with 20 arrows, 4 doses purple worm venom



**2 SHARRAN SHADOW ADEPTS****CR 12**

hp 67 each (12 HD)

Male or female human cleric 5 (Shar)/shadow adept<sup>PG</sup> 7

CE Medium humanoid

Init +4; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +5, Spot +5

Languages Common, Netherese

AC 24, touch 12, flat-footed 24; +4 and *magic missile* absorption with shield of shadows

Miss Chance 20% (shield of shadows)

Fort +8, Ref +3, Will +14; +4 against illusions; +2 against enchantment, necromancy, and spells that have the darkness descriptor

Speed 20 ft. (4 squares) in +1 *full plate*, base speed 30 ft.Melee +1 *vicious morningstar* +8/+3 (1d8+2 plus 2d6, plus 1d6 to wielder)

Ranged mwk heavy crossbow +7 (1d10/19–20)

Base Atk +6; Grp +7

Atk Options Blind-Fight

Special Actions rebuke undead 4/day (+3, 2d6+3, 5th), *shadow walk*, shield of shadowsCombat Gear scroll of *cure serious wounds*, antitoxin, sleep gas, thunderstoneCleric Spells Prepared (CL 12th; 1d20+14 to overcome SR):  
6th—*harm*\* (+7 melee, DC 22), *prying eyes*<sup>D\*</sup>, *word of recall*\*5th—*darkbolt*<sup>D FR\*</sup> (+6 ranged touch, DC 20), *flame strike*\* (DC 19), *greater command*\* (DC 21), heightened *bestow curse*\* (DC 21), *slay living*\* (DC 21)4th—*air walk* (CL 11th), *cure critical wounds*\*, *freedom of movement*\*, heightened *hold person*\* (DC 20), *unholy blight*<sup>D</sup> (CL 12th, DC 19)3rd—*blacklight*<sup>D FR\*</sup> (DC 18), *cure serious wounds*\* (2), heightened *command*\* (2, DC 19), *invisibility purge* (CL 11th)2nd—*aid*\*, *blindness/deafness*<sup>D\*</sup> (DC 18), *cure moderate wounds*\*, *sound burst* (CL 11th), *spiritual weapon* (2, +7 melee, +6 ranged, CL 11th)1st—*bless*\*, *cure light wounds*\* (2), *divine favor* (CL 11th), *endure elements*\*, *entropic shield*\*, *protection from good*<sup>D\*</sup> (CL 13th), *shield of faith*\*0—*cure minor wounds*\* (2), *detect magic*\* (2), *guidance*\* (2)

D: Domain spell. Deity: Shar. Domains: Darkness, Evil.

\* DC 23 caster level check against Weave users' divinations; DC 27 caster level check against Weave users' dispel checks, +4 bonus on caster level checks made to defeat Weave users' spell resistance

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 7th):

1/day—*shadow walk*

Abilities Str 13, Dex 10, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 20, Cha 12

Feats Blind-Fight<sup>B</sup>, Combat Casting, Heighten Spell, Improved Initiative, Insidious Magic<sup>B PG</sup>, Pernicious Magic<sup>B PG</sup>, Shadow Weave Magic<sup>PG</sup>, Spell Penetration, Spellwise<sup>PG</sup>, Tenacious Magic<sup>B PG</sup>

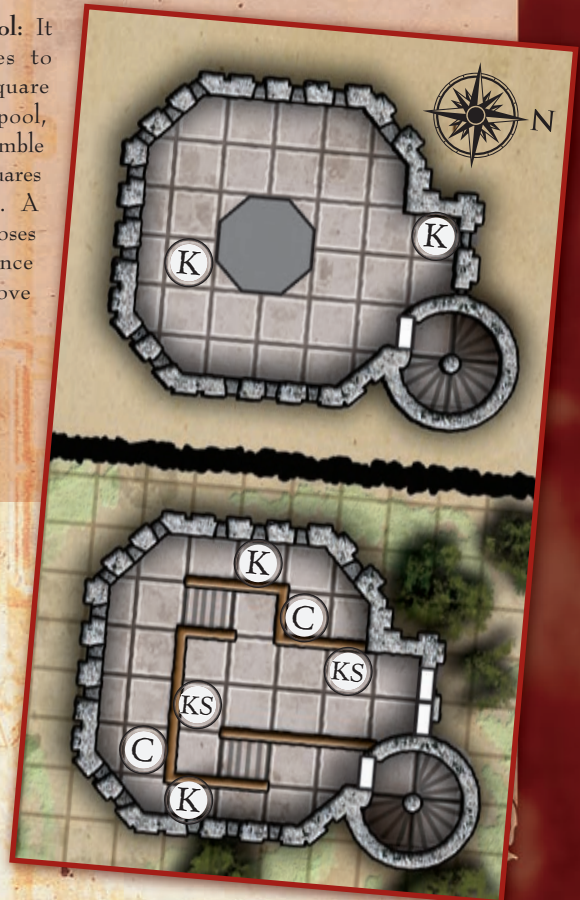
Skills Concentration +11, Hide +4, Knowledge (arcana) +10, Knowledge (religion) +10, Spellcraft +12

Possessions combat gear plus +1 *full plate*, +1 *heavy steel shield*, +1 *vicious morningstar*, masterwork heavy crossbow with 10 bolts, *periapt of wisdom* +2, *amulet of natural armor* +1, *ring of protection* +2, silver holy symbol**Shield of Shadows (Su)** A shadow adept can surround itself with a globe of purple-black force as a standard action. This shield functions like a *shield* spell, granting a +4 shield bonus to AC and absorbing *magic missiles* cast at the user. In addition, it provides concealment against melee and ranged attacks. The shield can be used for up to 12 rounds per day, but the time need not be consecutive.**FEATURES OF THE AREA****Iron-Reinforced Wooden Doors:** 1 ft. thick; AC 4; hardness 5; hp 150; break DC 25, Open Lock DC 25. These doors are usually kept locked. Two sets of keys are kept on the ground floor. The pair of soldiers on the battlement must knock and give a password ("May shadows reign") to get inside.**Steep Spiral Stairs:** Characters moving up steep stairs must spend 2 squares of movement to enter each square of stairs. Characters running or charging down steep stairs must succeed on a DC 10 Balance check upon entering the first steep-stairs square. Mounted characters must make a successful DC 10 Ride check instead. Characters who fail stumble, and must end their movement 1d2×5 feet later. Characters who fail by 5 or more take 1d6 points of damage and fall prone in the square where they end their movement. Steep stairs increase the DC of Tumble checks by 5.

Characters gain cover against foes below them on spiral stairs because they can easily duck around the staircase's central support.

**Masonry Walls:** 3 ft. thick; hardness 8; hp 270; break DC 45; Climb DC 20.**Arrow Slits:** Creatures behind arrow slits have improved cover that gives them a +8 bonus to Armor Class, a +4 bonus on Reflex saves, and the benefits of the improved evasion class feature.**Battlement:** A creature standing behind a battlement gains a +2 cover bonus to Armor Class and a +1 cover bonus on Reflex saves.**Small Trees:** 1 ft. thick; AC 4; hardness 5; hp 150; break DC 25; Climb DC 15.

A creature standing in the same square as a small tree gains a +2 cover bonus to Armor Class and a +1 cover bonus on Reflex saves.

**Shallow Pool:** It costs 2 squares to move into a square with a shallow pool, and the DC of Tumble checks in such squares increases by 2. A shallow pool imposes a –2 circumstance penalty on Move Silently checks.



# OUT OF THE DEPTHS

Encounter Level 14

## setup

You can run this encounter anytime the PCs visit the shores of the Shadow Sea. Two shadow sea serpents have spotted the PCs. Place the serpents' miniatures in the spaces marked S. Place the PCs in the spaces marked PC. The encounter assumes the party is marching fairly deliberately along the shore. If the characters choose to fan out to cover more ground, arrange their miniatures accordingly.

As noted on page 115, the serpents make a crude attempt to lure the PCs into the water. If this ruse succeeds, allow the players to move their miniatures into the water before beginning the encounter.

If the serpents surprise the party, read:

*A hot breeze sends waves churning over a rocky beach and a few half-submerged boulders offshore. Without warning, two slate-gray creatures with long, toothy snouts break the churning surface and emit earsplitting screeches.*

If the serpents don't surprise the party, they try to parley; see page 115 before attacking.

## tactics

If the serpents surprise the group, both attack with their sonic lances. In any case, they split up when they get their first full round of actions, one moving right the other left. They stay in the water, but move toward the PCs and try to get into position to loose their sonic wave attacks. If need be, they leave the water so they can get close enough to make the sonic waves effective. After using their sonic waves, they move in for melee attacks, going ashore if they must. They employ their sonic lances (usable every 1d4 rounds) whenever they can. The serpents are smart enough to pick out vulnerable or wounded foes and concentrate their attacks on such foes.

If reduced to 20 hit points or fewer, one of the serpents will suggest that the party simply withdraw and leave a wounded PC behind to "enjoy the hospitality of the Shadow Sea." The serpents speak only Netherese, so communication might prove difficult. If the PCs don't seem inclined to leave someone behind for a serpent snack, the wounded serpents fight for a round or two, then withdraw back to the water, using their sonic lances to discourage pursuit. Once in the water, they turn tail and flee.

## development

It's unlikely that the shadow sea serpents will be missed if the PCs slay them. Scavengers, including other shadow sea serpents, will consume the carcasses fairly quickly.

## 2 SHADOW SEA SERPENTS

CR 12

hp 162 each (12 HD); DR 5/piercing

NE Huge magical beast

**Init** +6; **Senses** blindsight 60 ft. (240 ft. underwater), darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; **Listen** +11, **Spot** +11

**Languages** Netherese

**AC** 25, touch 16, flat-footed 23

**Resist** sonic 10

**Fort** +18, **Ref** +12, **Will** +5

**Speed** 20 ft. (4 squares), swim 50 ft.

**Melee** bite +20 (2d6+10) and tail slam +16 (2d6+5)

**Space** 15 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

**Base Atk** +12; **Grp** +30

**Atk Options** Combat Reflexes; sonic lance, sonic wave, trip

**Abilities** Str 31, Dex 15, Con 26, Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 6

**Feats** Combat Reflexes, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Weapon Focus (tail slam)

**Skills** Hide +12, Listen +11, Search +12, Spot +11, Swim +18

**Blindsense (Ex)** A shadow sea serpent can locate creatures underwater within 120 feet by nonvisual means (echolocation). Underwater, the range is 240 feet.

Opponents a shadow sea serpent can't actually see still have total concealment against the shadow sea serpent.

**Hold Breath (Ex)** A shadow sea serpent can hold its breath for a number of rounds equal to 8 × its Constitution score before it risks drowning (see *DMG* 304).

**Sonic Lance (Ex)** A shadow sea serpent can generate a ray of sound with a range of 120 feet and no range increment. The ray deals 6d6 points of sonic damage. After using this power, a serpent must wait 1d4 rounds before using it again. Underwater, the lance's range is 240 feet.

**Sonic Wave (Ex)** Once per hour, a shadow sea serpent can generate a wave of stunning sound in a 120-foot spread centered on the serpent. A living creature in the spread (except other shadow sea serpents) must make a successful DC 24 Fortitude save or be stunned for 1d4 rounds. Underwater, the spread's range is 240 feet. A creature subjected to several waves at once need save only once.

**Trip (Ex)** A serpent that hits with a bite attack can attempt to trip the opponent (+18 check modifier) without using an action, making a touch attack or provoking attacks of opportunity. If the attempt fails, the opponent cannot react to trip the serpent. Underwater, a tripped opponent that is at least one size category smaller than the serpent is hurled 10 feet in a direction of the serpent's choice per difference in size category. For example, a Medium opponent is hurled 20 feet.

**Deflection (Sp)** A shadow sea serpent generates a magic field that gives it a deflection bonus to Armor Class equal to its Constitution modifier (minimum +1). This power is always active and has a caster level equal to the serpents Hit Dice. If the field is negated or suppressed, the serpent can activate it again as a free action on its next turn.

**Skills** See page 152.



## FEATURES OF THE AREA

**Boulder:** These masses of solid stone stick up about 3 feet from the surface of the water or land. It takes two squares of movement to step up on a boulder. Characters atop boulders gain a +1 bonus on melee attack rolls against foes below them.

A Medium or smaller creature on land can or kneel behind a boulder and gain a +2 cover bonus to Armor Class and a +1 cover bonus on Reflex saves. A swimming creature also can gain cover from hiding behind a boulder.

**Gradual Slope:** These slopes aren't steep enough to affect movement. Characters gain a +1 bonus on melee attacks against foes downhill from them.

**Steep Slope:** Characters moving uphill (to an adjacent square of higher elevation) must spend 2 squares of movement to enter each square of steep slope. Characters running or charging downhill (moving to an adjacent square of lower elevation) must succeed on a DC 10 Balance check upon entering the first steep-slope square. Mounted characters must make a successful DC 10 Ride check instead. Characters who fail this check stumble and must end their movement 1d2×5 feet later. Characters who fail by 5 or more fall prone in the square where they end their movement. A steep slope increases the DC of Tumble checks by 2.

Characters gain a +1 bonus on melee attacks against foes downhill from them.

**Small Tree:** 1 ft. thick; AC 4; hardness 5; hp 150; break DC 25; Climb DC 15.

A creature standing in the same square as a small tree gains a +2 cover bonus to Armor Class and a +1 cover bonus on Reflex saves.

The presence of a tree doesn't otherwise affect a creature's fighting space, because it's assumed that the creature is using the tree to its advantage when it can.

**Water:** A Medium character can wade in water no more than 5 feet deep. It costs 2 squares of movement to move into a square when wading, and the DC of Tumble checks in such squares increases by 2. Wading imposes a -2 circumstance penalty on Move Silently checks.

A character who has no swim speed must make a successful DC 15 Swim check to move through surf if the water is too deep to wade. Characters need a way to breathe if they're underwater; failing that, they risk drowning (*PH* 304). When underwater, characters can move in any direction as if they were flying with perfect maneuverability. An invisible creature

displaces water and leaves a visible, body-shaped "bubble" where the water was displaced. The creature still has concealment, but not total concealment.

A creature swimming on the surface or crouching down in the water gains cover against foes that aren't also swimming or submerged, gaining a +2 bonus to Armor Class and a +1 bonus on Reflex saves (these bonuses don't stack with bonuses for cover that derive from other sources).

A creature that's mostly submerged gains improved cover (+8 bonus to AC, +4 bonus on Reflex saves) against attacks from creatures that aren't also underwater. Creatures with this improved cover take a -10 penalty on attacks against creatures that aren't also underwater. A swimming creature can surface to avoid the attack penalty, but also loses its improved cover.





# AN ANCIENT ENEMY

Encounter Level 17

## setup

Run this encounter when the PCs approach the Grove of Shadows. Two phaerimms disguised as crows keep watch over the grove. Hadrhune has allied himself with the phaerimms of Anauroch in a plot to take over the City of Shade and the entire Empire of Shadows. Hadrhune has invited these two phaerimms to witness the transformation of the Quess Ar Teranthvar back into the *Nether Scrolls*. Hadrhune hopes to impress his new allies with the power of the Shadow Weave and with his prowess as a magician. In forging this alliance, Hadrhune also receives a pair of powerful phaerimm guardians for the Quess Ar Teranthvar.

When this encounter begins, each of the phaerimms is perched in one of the trees surrounding the Quess Ar Teranthvar. (For the purpose of this encounter, ignore the locations marked H; these come into play in encounter S6, which is described on page 127.) They look, smell, and feel just like real crows; however, a character fighting or studying the crows can make a DC 22 Will save to notice the phaerimms' true forms.

The PCs can approach the encounter area from nearly any direction, but most likely along one of the avenues through the surrounding orchards. Place the PCs at any point along the map edge, depending on how the PCs decide to approach the site.

When the group enters or studies the grove, read:

*A golden tree, tarnished with a creeping ebon blight, stands in a small clearing of bare, lifeless soil. A canopy of thick cloud seems to hover permanently overhead, casting deep shadows over the scene. The clearing looks deserted except for a pair of coal-black crows perched in the surrounding trees.*

## tactics

The phaerimms wait until the PCs enter the innermost zone of the Shadow Weave node; then they take to the air and attack using *chain lightning*. They select their primary targets with an eye toward catching as many secondary targets as they can. After that, they stay aloft and out of melee reach if possible. They use *Tasha's hideous laughter* and *ray of enfeeblement* on martial characters who manage to attack them. As the battle continues, the phaerimms use *disintegrate*, *phantasmal killer*, and *hold monster*. They use *spectral hand* and *ghoul touch* against spellcasters. If anyone manages to get within melee reach, the phaerimms defensively cast *vampiric touch* and then use their claws and stingers.

The phaerimms aren't willing to accept defeat, and they fight to the death.

## development

The PCs' real adversary, Hadrhune, joins the fight as soon as at least one phaerimm falls (is killed or incapacitated) or when the PCs pour *liquid sun* on the Quess Ar Teranthvar, whichever comes first. When Hadrhune arrives, see tactical encounter S6 (page 127).

The moment *liquid sun* hits the tree, it collapses into a mound of semimolten metal. This event is a prelude to the reformation of the original *Nether Scrolls*.

### TYVOLLUS SPEAKS

As noted on page 115, the spirit of Tyvollus Aluviirsan, the elf high mage who converted the *Nether Scrolls* into the Quess Ar Teranthvar, is present in the image of a golden spider hiding in the Quess Ar Teranthvar's branches. Tyvollus is the source of the zone of normal magic that surrounds the tree, and he can communicate with the PCs when they approach the tree (when they appear anywhere on the accompanying tactical map). If you think the characters need help, Tyvollus offers some or all of the following bits of advice and encouragement:

Watch out for the crows—they're deadly foes in disguise. They're phaerimms, evil spellcasters who have been striving to slay all life on Faerûn (other than themselves) for centuries.

The shades are working on a foul ritual that can be halted only by pouring *liquid sun* from the *Chalice of Amaunator* on the afflicted tree. The effect isn't immediate, so the PCs must be prepared to defend the site.

Pouring *liquid sun* on the tree will disrupt the flow of Shadow Weave magic that is working to corrupt the Quess Ar Teranthvar. When that happens, the scrolls will scatter—eventually. Someone must hold off the shades until the scrolls scatter. The process should take less than a minute.

The shades who will soon be arriving to defend the tree aren't aware that Weave magic works here.

One particular shade, Hadrhune, who wields considerable power, both political and magical, seems to be at the heart of the dark ritual; he also seems to be responsible for the presence of the phaerimms. The phaerimms are indirectly responsible for the fall of the ancient empire of Netheril, from which the shades and the Shadovars are descended. An alliance between phaerimms and shades is as unlikely—and deadly—as a pact between celestials and fiends.



**2 MATURE ADULT PHAERIMMS****CR 15****hp** 84 each (13 HD); regeneration/fast healing; **DR** 10/magic**NE** Large aberration**Init** +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; *arcane sight* 120 ft., *detect magic* (CL 13th), *see invisibility* 120 ft.; Listen +15, Spot +15**Languages** understand Chondathan, Common, Elven, Netherese; telepathy 100 ft.**AC** 27, touch 9, flat-footed 27**Immune** petrification, polymorph**SR** 23**Fort** +8, **Ref** +6, **Will** +13**Speed** fly 30 ft. (6 squares) (perfect); flight**Melee** 4 claws +12 each (1d6+4) and bite +7 (2d6+2) and stinger +7 (1d8+2 plus poison)**Space** 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.**Base Atk** +9; **Grp** +17**Atk Options** Empower Spell; poison**Special Actions** implant**Sorcerer Spells Known** (CL 13th; 1d20+15 to overcome SR)6th (4/day)—*chain lightning* (DC 21), *disintegrate* (DC 21)5th (7/day)—*cloudkill* (DC 20), *hold monster* (DC 20), *telekinesis* (DC 20)4th (7/day)—*charm monster* (DC 19), *dimension door*, *phantasmal killer* (DC 19), *wall of ice*3rd (7/day)—*displacement*, *lightning bolt* (DC 18), *sleet storm*, *vampiric touch* (+13 melee touch)2nd (7/day)—*ghoul touch* (+13 melee touch, DC 17), *see invisibility*, *spectral hand* (+13 melee touch), *summon swarm*, *Tasha's hideous laughter* (DC 17)1st (8/day)—*chill touch* (+13 melee touch), *grease*, *magic missile*, *ray of enfeeblement* (+9 ranged touch), *shield*0 (4/day)—*arcane mark*, *dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *disrupt undead* (+9 ranged touch), *ghost sound* (DC 15), *mage hand*, *message*, *open/close*, *read magic***Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 13th):At will—*detect magic***Abilities** Str 18, Dex 11, Con 14, Int 17, Wis 20, Cha 21**Feats** Empower Spell, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Spell Penetration**Skills** Concentration +12, Diplomacy +7, Hide -4, Intimidate +15, Knowledge (arcana) +13, Listen +15, Search +13, Sense Motive +15, Spellcraft +15, Spot +15**Flight (Ex)** Because a phaerimm's body is naturally buoyant, it can fly at a speed of 30 feet. This buoyancy also grants the creature a permanent *feather fall* effect (as the spell) with personal range.**Implant (Ex)** As a standard action, a mature adult phaerimm can use its stinger to lay eggs inside a paralyzed creature. The young emerge about 90 days later, literally devouring the host from the inside. A *remove disease* spell rids a victim of the eggs, as does a successful DC 20 Heal check made by a character who has ranks in that skill. If the check fails, the healer can try again, but each attempt (successful or not) deals 1d4 points of damage to the patient.**Poison (Ex)** Injury, Fortitude DC 18, paralysis 2d4 rounds/paralysis 1d3 hours. Paralyzed creatures levitate, helpless, a few feet off the ground.**FEATURES OF THE AREA**

**Light:** The whole area is cloaked in shadowy illumination, thanks to the dark magic at work here. PCs who lack darkvision can see only dimly. Creatures within the shadows have concealment relative to characters who can see dimly. A creature in an area of shadowy illumination can make a Hide check to conceal itself.

**Shadow Weave Node:** The whole area is suffused with the corrupted power of the Shadow Weave. Shadow Weave users can gain benefits from the node by making Intelligence or Spellcraft checks as noted on page 116.

The node has five spherical layers, each approximately 40 feet wide.

**Small Tree:** 1 ft. thick; AC 4; hardness 5; hp 150; break DC 25; Climb DC 15.

A creature standing in the same square as a small tree gains a +2 cover bonus to Armor Class and a +1 cover bonus on Reflex saves. The presence of a tree doesn't otherwise affect a creature's fighting space, because it's assumed that the creature is using the tree to its advantage when it can.

**Normal Magic:** A zone of normal magic exists within the dead magic

zone that surrounds the encounter area. Weave magic works normally within this area. Weave users can sense the boundary of this area.

The phaerimms in this encounter are Weave users and they've noted the area of normal magic, but they haven't informed Hadrhune of it. When Weave users enter the area of normal magic, they know instantly that their magic can work.

**Vines:** These areas are filled with long, creeping vines growing on trellises. It takes 4 squares of movement to move through a square of vines. Creatures who succeed on a DC 10 Climb check need only 2 squares of movement to move through the square. The vines are 10 feet high, and creatures standing behind them gain a +2 cover bonus to Armor Class and a +1 cover bonus on Reflex saves.

Characters who have the woodland stride class feature can pass through vines with no extra movement cost and no Climb check needed.





# GUARDIANS OF THE ORCHARDS

Encounter Level 14

## setup

Run this encounter after the PCs begin exploring the Forest of Shadows. Squads of four krinth guards patrol the area; they try to kill or drive off any strangers they meet.

The guards usually patrol in pairs, with each pair walking down one side of a row of trees. Place the guards in the spaces marked G. The PCs can enter from the north, east, or west edge of the map. Place the lead PC near one of the map edges and the remaining PCs behind her.

When the PCs meet the guards, read:

*A pair of humanoid*s clad in dull gray plate armor stride purposefully down a row of orchard trees. One carries a sword, the other a bow.

The remaining two guards are out of sight behind the trees for the moment. The PCs can see them with Spot checks opposed by the guards' Hide checks. The illumination here is shadowy, thanks to the clouds overhead and the shade from the trees.

## tactics

When the fight begins, one guard shoots at the nearest PC and the other sticks his sword into the ground (a free action) and casts *blindness/deafness* (blindness effect) on the character who looks to be the most dangerous. The guards behind the trees move toward the PCs, keeping the trees between themselves and their foes, and cast *divine favor*.

After that, one guard casts *spiritual weapon* and the rest attempt to close to melee range. In later rounds the remaining guards cast *spiritual weapon* defensively while the others make melee attacks. Whenever a guard falls, one of the survivors uses *unholy blight* from a scroll, and another guard casts *obscuring mist*. (Activating the scroll requires a successful DC 8 caster level check.) The guards are slaves who fight to the death.

## development

If the PCs capture a guard and ask about any kind of magic tree or about the Queen Ar Teranthvar, the prisoner reluctantly points the way to the Grove of Shadows (see page 115). All the prisoner knows about the grove is that some very powerful wizards stole a golden tree from some elves and now are working some great magic with it.

### FEATURES OF THE AREA

**Small Trees:** 1 ft. thick; AC 4; hardness 5; hp 150; break DC 25; Climb DC 15.

A creature standing in the same square as a small tree gains a +2 cover bonus to Armor Class and a +1 cover bonus on Reflex saves.

## 4 KRINTH GUARDS

CR 10

hp 91 each (11 HD)

Male and female krinth fighter 6/expert 2/cleric 3 (Shar)  
CE Medium humanoid (extraplanar)

**Init** +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +11, Spot +11

**Languages** Common, Netherese

**AC** 24, touch 11, flat-footed 24

**Immune** shaken condition

**Fort** +12, **Ref** +4, **Will** +13; +1 against spells and effects that have the shadow descriptor, +4 against fear

**Speed** 20 ft. (4 squares) in +2 *full plate*, base speed 30 ft.

**Melee** +1 *bastard sword* +12/+7 (1d10+4/19–20)

**Ranged** +1 *composite longbow* +10/+5 (1d8+2/x3)

**Base Atk** +9; **Grp** +10

**Atk Options** Blind-Fight, Power Attack

**Special Actions** rebuke undead 3/day (+0, 2d6+2, 3rd)

**Combat Gear** 2 scrolls of *cure light wounds*, 2 scrolls of *cure moderate wounds*, scroll of *shatter*, scroll of *unholy blight*, scroll of *zone of truth*, tanglefoot bag

**Cleric Spells Prepared** (CL 3th):

2nd—*blindness/deafness*<sup>D</sup> (DC 16), *bull's strength*, *spiritual weapon* (+10 melee, +9 ranged)

1st—*cure light wounds*, *divine favor*, *obscuring mist*<sup>D</sup>, *sanctuary*

0—*cure minor wounds*, *detect magic*, *guidance*, *resistance*

D: Domain spell. Deity: Shar. Domains: Darkness, Evil.

**Abilities** Str 13, Dex 10, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 18, Cha 11

**Feats** Alertness, Blind-Fight<sup>B</sup>, Endurance, Exotic Weapon

Proficiency (bastard sword)<sup>B</sup>, Improved Initiative, Power Attack<sup>B</sup>, Shadow Weave Magic<sup>PG</sup>, Weapon Focus (bastard sword)<sup>B</sup>, Weapon Specialization (bastard sword)<sup>B</sup>

**Skills** Climb –1, Concentration +9, Handle Animal +5, Hide –6 (–4 in shadowy conditions), Jump –1, Listen +11, Ride +7, Sense Motive +6, Spot +11

**Possessions** combat gear plus +2 *full plate*, +1 *heavy steel shield*, +1 *bastard sword*, +1 *composite longbow* (+1 Str bonus) with 10 arrows, *ring of protection* +1, *periapt of Wisdom* +2, silver holy symbol, 33 gp





# HADRHUNE INTERVENES

## Encounter Level 22

### setup

Hadrhune takes a hand in the battle at the grove when one of his phaerimm allies falls or when the PCs apply *liquid sun* from the *Chalice of Amaunator* to the Quess Ar Teranthvar. See page 128 for Hadrhune's statistics.

This encounter uses the map that accompanies encounter S5 on page 125. Hadrhune appears in one of the spaces marked H. Hadrhune chooses a spot well away from any foes, preferably a place where no enemy can charge him or reach him in a single or double move.

When he arrives astride his shadow dragon mount (using his *shadow travel* ability), accompanied by his shadow double, Hadrhune has the following spells and abilities operating: greater shield of shadows, *see invisibility*, *fly*, and *mind blank*. His shadow double appears on the ground in a square adjacent to his location.

### When Hadrhune appears, read:

*A tall, lean human with ash-gray skin and piercing eyes abruptly appears next to the crown of a tree, sitting on the back of a dragon that appears to be made of the stuff of shadow. He is wrapped in dark robes from head to toe.*

*An instant later, a duplicate of the human pops into view beneath the dragon. The two figures speak in unison, creating an effect not unlike an echo in a deep cave: "You've done well, for a swarm of worms—but you have burrowed into something you can't handle. Perhaps a bard will compose a sad ballad of your demise."*

### the chalice and the tree

When the PCs pour *liquid sun* from the *Chalice of Amaunator* onto the Quess Ar Teranthvar, the Shadovars' ritual is halted and the tree collapses into a mound of semimolten metal.

It normally takes years for the *Nether Scrolls* to coalesce from the remains of the tree. This is why Hadrhune and the Shadovars were trying to corrupt it. Thanks to the *liquid sun*, the process becomes explosive. Four rounds after the tree collapses, the mound vaporizes in a burst of positive energy with a radius of 100 feet. Evil creatures in the burst take 5d8 points of damage with no saving throw. Undead, evil outsiders, and shadow creatures (including Hadrhune and his double) take 10d8 points of damage.

The burst also shatters the Sharn Wall (see Chapter 2). Any phaerimms still in the area flee when the Sharn Wall shatters, leaving Hadrhune to his fate. Upon seeing their erstwhile ally in distress, the phaerimms might even aim a spell or two at him before they go. Now that they are free from

their long imprisonment in Anauroch, they have no need for an alliance with Hadrhune, or with any of the despised Shadovars.

The *Nether Scrolls* are not destroyed in the burst, but are scattered far and wide over the face of Toril (with the exception of the single scroll found by one of the Princes of Shade; see page 121).

### Tactics

Though he isn't aware that Weave magic works near the tree, Hadrhune knows the PCs have magical power at their disposal (else they could not have slain a phaerimm or interfered with the ritual), and he intends to eliminate them.

Whenever Hadrhune casts a spell (except for evocation or transmutation spells), he takes advantage of the Shadow Weave node to increase his caster level (see page 116).

Hadrhune's shadow double begins the encounter equipped with *Hadrhune's dark staff* and Hadrhune's scrolls.

At his first opportunity, Hadrhune aims a quickened *magic missile* at the nearest foe. After that, he casts *weird* at as many PCs as possible.

His shadow double stays on the ground and uses the staff against anyone within melee range. If given the opportunity, the double activates its scrolls in whatever order is most beneficial. The double does not cast spells, but it uses spell-like abilities just as Hadrhune does.

The dragon uses its breath weapon as often as it can, filling in with melee attacks when possible. Its primary purpose is to defend Hadrhune.

As the encounter unfolds, Hadrhune uses *greater shadow evocation* to create a *prismatic spray* effect on as many PCs as possible, and he casts quickened *enervation* on someone who seems dangerous.

After that, Hadrhune and the double keep up the pressure on the PCs, using *wail of the banshee*, *shadow evocation* (*fireball* or *ice storm*), and *Sinsabur's baleful bolt*. Hadrhune uses *blacklight* and his *control light* ability to keep things dark. Hadrhune fights for as long as he can. If defeat seems inevitable, he might choose to try to escape using his shadow walk power, but he knows the implications of losing this battle, and most likely fights to the bitter end.

### development

Once the PCs defeat Hadrhune, Tyvillus gives them a telepathic "well done." The group has a day or two to escape from the vicinity of the City of Shade. Hadrhune's fall and the release of the phaerimms causes quite a bit of chaos.

### FEATURES OF THE AREA

**Mound of Semimolten Metal:** The mound fills one space. It's as thick as porridge, and about 3 feet deep. Merely touching the mound deals 2d6 points of fire damage. Total immersion deals 20d6 points of fire damage.



## Hadrhune and his allies

Game statistics for Hadrhune, his shadow double, and his shadow dragon steed are presented here.

### HADRHUNE

CR 22

hp 77 (+20 in darkness or shadows) (20 HD); fast healing 2

Male human shade<sup>FR</sup> wizard 10/shadow adept<sup>PG</sup> 10

NE Medium humanoid

**Init** +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; *see invisibility*; Listen +9, Spot +9

**Languages** Chondathan, Common, Draconic, Netherese, Thorass

**AC** 29, touch 19, flat-footed 24; +4 and *magic missile* absorption with greater shield of shadows

**Miss Chance** 20% (greater shield of shadows)

**Immune** divination, emotion- or thought-detecting effects, mind-affecting spells and abilities, scrying

**SR** 31 in darkness or shadows or

**SR** 22

**Fort** +12 (+16 in darkness or shadows), **Ref** +18 (+22 in darkness or shadows), **Will** +23 (+27 in darkness or shadows); +5 against illusions; +3 against enchantment, necromancy, and spells that have the darkness descriptor

**Weakness** loses shade abilities (darkvision, increased speed, *shadow stride*, fast healing, *control light*, *invisibility*, *shadow image*) when not in darkness or shadows

**Speed** 30 ft. (6 squares), 50 ft. in darkness or shadows, fly (from spell) 60 ft. (good); *shadow stride*, *shadow walk*

**Melee** —

**Base Atk** +10; **Grp** +10

**Special Actions** *control light*, shield of shadows, *invisibility*, shadow double, *shadow travel*

**Wizard Spells Prepared** (CL 20th; 1d20+22 to overcome SR):

9th—*dominate monster*\* (DC 25), *power word kill*\*, *wail of the banshee*\* (DC 25), *weird*\* (DC 25)

8th—*mind blank*†, *greater shadow evocation*\* (2, DC 24) quickened *dimension door*, quickened *enervation*\* (+15 ranged touch)

7th—*finger of death*\* (DC 23), *power word stun*\*, silent *greater dispel magic*, *spell turning*

6th—*acid fog*, *circle of death*\* (DC 22), *veil*†

5th—quickened *magic missile* (3, CL 19th), *shadow evocation*\* (DC 21, CL 19th), silent stilled *suggestion*\* (DC 19)

4th—*confusion*\* (DC 20), *phantasmal killer*\* (2, DC 20), silent *dispel magic*, *Sinsabur's baleful bolt* (DC 20; see page 146)

3rd—*blacklight*<sup>FR</sup>, *fly*† (CL 19th), *protection from energy*, *suggestion*\* (2, DC 19)

2nd—*death armor*, *ghoul touch*\* (2, +10 melee touch, DC 18), *see invisibility*†, *spectral hand*\* (+10 melee touch), *Tasha's hideous laughter*\* (DC 18)

1st—*magic missile* (2, CL 19th), *protection from good*, *ray of enfeeblement*\* (+15 ranged touch), *shield* (2)

0—*detect magic*, *mage hand* (CL 19th), *message* (CL 19th), *prestidigitation*

† already cast

\* DC 35 caster level check against Weave users' dispel checks

### Spell-Like Abilities (CL 20th):

1/round—*invisibility* (in darkness or shadows only)

1/day—*shadow walk* (CL 10th)

3/day—*shadow image* (as *mirror image*, 1d4+6 images, in darkness or shadows only)

**Abilities** Str 10, Dex 20, Con 13 (15 in darkness or shadows), Int 21, Wis 14, Cha 14 (16 in darkness or shadows)

**Feats** Combat Casting, Craft Staff, Craft Wondrous Item<sup>B</sup>, Insidious Magic<sup>B PG</sup>, Node Spellcasting<sup>Und</sup>, Pernicious Magic<sup>B PG</sup>, Quicken Spell<sup>B</sup>, Scribe Scroll<sup>B</sup>, Shadow Weave Magic<sup>PG</sup>, Silent Spell, Spell Penetration, Spellcasting Prodigy<sup>FR</sup>, Still Spell, Tenacious Magic<sup>B PG</sup>

**Skills** Bluff +12, Concentration +21, Craft (alchemy) +15, Decipher Script +15, Disguise +12, Hide +25, Knowledge (arcana) +25, Knowledge (the planes) +25, Listen +9, Move Silently +13, Spellcraft +25, Spot +9

**Possessions** *black robe of the archmagi*, *gloves of Dexterity* +6, *boots of speed*, *amulet of natural armor* +5, *cloak of resistance* +5, *pearl of power* (7th level)

**Fast Healing (Ex)** Hadrhune heals 2 points of damage each round, provided he is still alive and in darkness or shadows.

**Shadow Stride (Sp)** When in darkness or shadows, Hadrhune can vanish from his current location and reappear in any shadowy area within 300 feet up to once every 2 rounds as a move action.

**Control Light (Sp)** When in shadowy illumination, Hadrhune can decrease the level of light within a 100-foot radius by a factor of up to 100%. This effect decreases the overall effective range of vision for characters and creatures dependent on light by the same percentage. A character within the affected area gains a +1 bonus on Hide checks for each 25% decrease in light.

**Greater Shield of Shadows (Su)** Hadrhune can surround himself with a globe of purple-black force as a standard action. This shield of shadows functions like a *shield* spell, granting him a +4 bonus to AC and absorbing *magic missiles* cast at him. In addition, a shield of shadows provides concealment against melee or ranged attacks. Hadrhune can see and reach through the shield, so it does not provide cover or concealment to opponents. Hadrhune can use his shield of shadows for up to 20 rounds per day. This duration need not be consecutive, and it can be broken up into increments as small as 1 round. He can dismiss it as a standard action.

**Shadow Travel (Sp)** Once per day when in shadowy illumination, Hadrhune can use either *teleport without error* to reach a shadowy locale on the same world or *plane shift* to access the Plane of Shadow.

**Skills** Hadrhune has a +4 racial bonus on Listen and Spot checks in darkness or shadows (figured in above statistics), and a +8 racial bonus on Hide and Move Silently checks. He takes no penalties due to conditions of poor illumination.



Illus. by Eric Descamps

**HADRHUNE'S SHADOW DOUBLE** CR —

Hadrhune's shadow double has all the abilities and characteristics of Hadrhune, except as noted here. Hadrhune has given his double possession of *Hadrhune's dark staff* as well as a selection of scrolls (see below). The shadow double remains in existence for 20 rounds or until it is destroyed.

**Melee** *Hadrhune's dark staff* +15/+10 (1d6+2 plus 1d6 cold/1d10 cold) in darkness or shadows or

**Melee** *Hadrhune's dark staff* +13/+8 (1d6 plus 1d6 cold/1d10 cold)

**Combat Gear** scroll of *dominate monster*, scroll of *horrid wilting*, scroll of *mass charm*, scroll of *wail of the banshee*, scroll of *weird*

**Possessions** combat gear plus *Hadrhune's dark staff* (+1 icy burst quarterstaff with *energy drain*, *Grimwald's graymantle*, *project image*, *shadow spray*, 33 charges)

**DELETHYRSOS** CR 16

hp 275 (22 HD); DR 10/magic

Mature adult shadow dragon  
CE Large dragon (earth)

**Init** +6; **Senses** blindsense 60 ft., darkvision 120 ft.; Listen +34, Spot +34

**Aura** frightful presence (DC 26)

**Languages** Common, Damaran, Draconic, Giant, Netherese, Undercommon

**AC** 40, touch 11, flat-footed 38

**SR** 25

**Immune** magic sleep effects, paralysis

**Fort** +21, **Ref** +17, **Will** +20

**Speed** 80 ft. (16 squares), fly 150 ft. (poor)

**Melee** bite +29 (2d6+6) and  
2 claws +27 (1d8+3) and  
2 wings +27 (1d6+3) and  
tail slap +27 (1d8+9)

**Space** 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft. (10 ft. with bite)

**Base Atk** +22; **Grp** +32

**Atk Options** Cleave, Flyby Attack, Power Attack

**Special Actions** breath weapon

**Sorcerer Spells Known** (CL 7th):

3rd (5/day)—*clairaudience/clairvoyance*, *heroism*†  
2nd (7/day)—*bear's endurance*†, *cat's grace*†, *detect thoughts*

1st (8/day)—*expeditious retreat*, *mage armor*†, *protection from good*, *shield*, *ventriloquism*

0 (6/day)—*detect magic*, *ghost sound*, *mage hand*, *message*, *open/close*, *read magic*, *resistance*

† already cast

**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 7th):

3/day—*mirror image*, *nondetection*†

2/day—*dimension door*

1/day—*shadow walk*

† already cast

**Abilities** Str 23, Dex 14, Con 23, Int 20, Wis 20, Cha 21

**SQ** keen senses, shadow blend

**Feats** Alertness, Blind-Fight, Cleave, Flyby Attack, Hover, Improved Initiative, Multiattack, Power Attack

**Skills** Concentration +33, Diplomacy +34, Hide +25, Intimidate +32, Jump +33, Knowledge (arcana) +32, Listen +34, Move Silently +29, Search +32, Sense Motive +32, Spot +34

**Breath Weapon (Ex)** Once every 1d4 rounds, 40-foot cone of shadow, four negative levels; Reflex DC 28 half.

**Frightful Presence (Ex)** 210-foot radius; Will DC 26 negates; see MM 69 for details.

**Keen Senses (Ex)** A shadow dragon can see four times as well as a human in shadowy illumination and twice as well in normal light.

**Shadow Blend (Su)** In any conditions other than full daylight, a shadow dragon can disappear into the shadows, giving it total concealment. Artificial illumination, even a *light* or *continual flame* spell, does not negate this ability. A *daylight* spell, however, does.



## Appendix I: Anauroch

Anauroch, a fierce, unconquerable desert, stretches like a vast, sundering shield between the Sword Coast North and the Moonsea North regions. It forces most trade and travel into long, torturous overland trips around its perimeter. Merchants have always sought shorter, cheaper routes, often braving the flat but harsh Great Desert, but few have found a way to survive a crossing of its vast sands.

Most folk of Faerûn see Anauroch as nothing more than a scorching waste of sand, but it actually contains three distinct areas:

— To the south, a sandy region called the Sword by sages because of the fierce human Bedine nomads who dwell there.

— A higher, wind-scoured land of bare rock called the Plain of Standing Stones, though very little of it is a flat plain.

— In the far north, a vast, rift-scored ice sheet overlying bedrock, known as the High Ice.

These areas were once very different from what they are now. A little more than five hundred years ago, Anauroch held little sand, and several verdant, wealthy human realms thrived there, with lakes and merchant ships of their own. At least one of these lands, Netheril, was then the height of human achievement in magic and the arts. Those long-lost cities of elves, men, dwarves, and others might still stand, buried or merely hidden in the vast desolation—their uncounted riches waiting for any adventurer brave and strong enough to claim them.

## The sword

The Sword, the southernmost section of Anauroch, stretches from the western fringe of the desert, south of Oreme, to the northern end of the Border Forest in the east, with narrow strips running farther north along each boundary. It is a vast wasteland of sand dunes, scorching hot by day and cold at night. The Sword holds the largest portion of the desert population, and is the area most visited by outsiders—most often merchants vying for lucrative trade, or adventurers seeking the lost riches of long-buried kingdoms.

## The landscape

Although endless stretches of sand dunes cover much of the Sword—hence its other popular name, the Great Sand Sea—rocky pinnacles, ridges, and piles of stones break up the landscape. Other regions of the desert become plains of pebbly gravel or flat sheets of sandstone rock, while still more areas change to salt flats, glistening white in the glaring sun. Stony, low-slung mountain ranges, some honeycombed with caves, fissures, and crevices, and even the occasional oasis further break up the desolate expanses of sand.

The dunes themselves can undulate in a variety of sizes and shapes, depending on the size of the sand grains, the depth of the sand over the underlying bedrock, and the force and direction of the wind. In every case, travelers find the going slow and the footing treacherous. See Hazards, below, for more information.

## The present situation

As part of their quest to conquer Faerûn, the shades have formed an alliance with the Church of Shar to begin depriving magic to most of the rest of the world. The Sharrans have revealed the secret of creating dead magic zones to the Shadovars, and the Shadovars have utilized their *mythal* to envelop Anauroch in just such a field. Since they rely on the Shadow Weave for their arcane prowess, deadening Mystra's field is of little consequence to the folk of Shade.

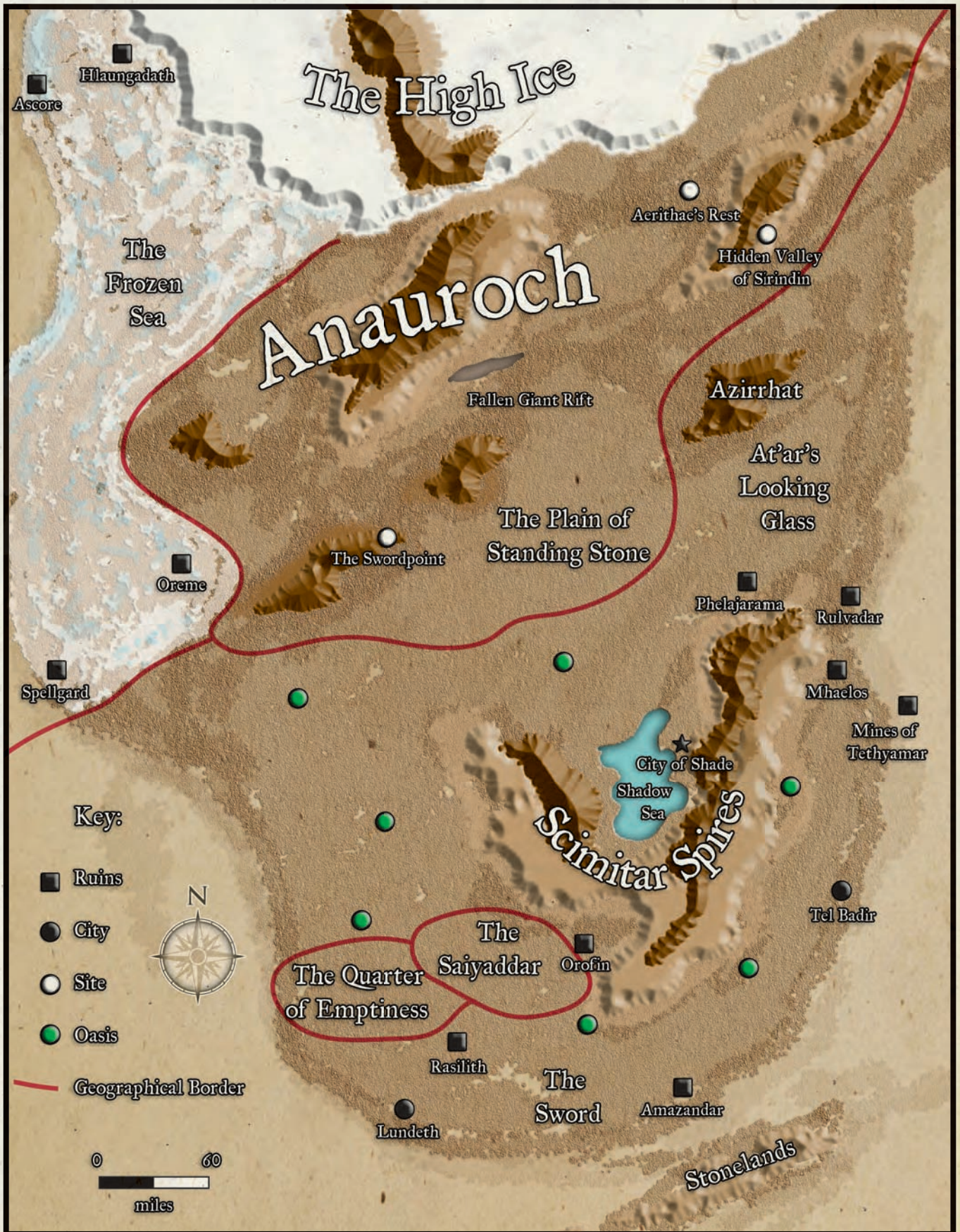
The result of this dampening of magic in the desert has proven quite profound. The Zhentarim find their livelihood in the region threatened, for their mages and Banite priests cannot ably protect the numerous caravans crossing the Black Road, nor do their guards' weapons and armor retain any arcane or divine potency. Some of their artificial oases along the route have dried up, making it even more treacherous to successfully navigate the sands. Small expeditions have been sent forth from the Citadel of the Raven to investigate, but the more immediate problem is as yet unresolved. Some few Zhentarim wizards have managed to hone their Shadow Weave

skills, but the whole operation is still severely hamstrung.

Creatures native to the region that rely on spell-like or supernatural abilities are likewise hampered, and though it's too soon to see dramatic shifts yet, the resulting ecological changes could be devastating, even in as desolate a region as a desert. Dragons hunting the wastes of Anauroch, undead haunting long-forgotten ruins, even the djinn of the dunes have all felt the absence of many of their abilities. Incorporeal undead simply cannot cross over into the Material Plane.

The residents of the Sword known as the Bedine (see Denizens, page 139) are the group least affected by this change, aside from the loss of a few mild healing trinkets and the drying up of several artificially created oases (which they commonly attribute to the disfavor of the gods). Those few among the tribes that are aware of it are likely to be exiled spellcasters, many of whom quickly succumbed to the harsh elements and denizens without their magic to help them survive. Few Bedine would even mourn the loss of such loathsome practitioners of "witchcraft" and "sorcery."









*The nomads of Lundeth defend their home*

Illus. by Fren Hooper

Oases serve as the most precious terrain feature in the desert environment, providing both life-giving water and blessed shade. Springs deep in the ground well to the surface, filling a low depression of rock or sand. Plants spring up on the fringes of the water source, growing lush and green and attracting all manner of wildlife—and the creatures that feed upon it.

Certain artificial oases created by the Zhentarim in their quest to establish a trade route across the desert have begun to dry up. These unnatural watering holes, cleverly created by burying a *decanter of endless water* within the sands or bedrock in a natural low-lying area, are suffering the effects of the Shadovars' dead magic zone. Because the decanters cannot function within the zone, the oases are disappearing, and many of the creatures, Bedine tribes, and merchants that have come to rely on the life-sustaining fluid are left scrambling—and squabbling—for alternatives.

## plants and wildlife

Despite its barren nature, the Sword hosts a wide variety of native flora and fauna. Tufts of coarse, tough grasses grow in many places, as do several varieties of cacti and stunted, twisted bushes and trees. Tumbleweeds roll across vast swaths of territory, often gathering in the valleys between dunes. Dozens of kinds of lichen grow on exposed rock, and where water is a bit more plentiful, bulbous, fleshy tubers and broad-leafed trees appear in

abundance. The Bedine harvest the sap from certain kinds of trees, which becomes a primary ingredient in certain rare incenses and unguents that are then sold across Faerûn.

The camel is by far the most prolific of the native desert creatures. Domesticated as beasts of burden and as a source of milk for the Bedine, camels also roam wild across the sands. More information about these creatures can be found in the *Monster Manual* and *Sandstorm*. In addition to camels, herds of antelope and big cats such as lions make their home in the Sword. Lizards and snakes of all types hide in the cracks and crevices of the rocky landscape, safely hidden in the nooks and crannies from birds of prey. At night, desert bats pour forth from hidden nesting places to feed on night insects, both of which can occasionally become so prolific that they menace the territory as swarms (see bat swarms and locust swarms in the *Monster Manual* for more information). Insect swarms have been known to strip every last bit of green from what sparse vegetation they come across, leaving oases devoid of edible plant life.

## places in the sword

The following entries are but a sampling of the myriad locations scattered across the Sword. Many more villages, ruins, and odd terrain features dot the landscape.



### LUNDETH

This village of sun-fired clay huts climbs the steep sides of a rock pinnacle within a day's ride of the southwestern edge of the Sword. Surrounded by salt flats and boasting its own deep well, it is a formidable, easily defended stronghold.

The Zhentarim once claimed this place, seizing it to serve as a base of operations. They spent many years here, served by the undead remains of the Goldor, the Bedine tribe that formerly owned and held the village, but when the Black Road was finally completed, the Zhentarim abandoned the place, leaving the undead behind.

### OROFIN

Orofin lies in a broad, grassy valley, overlooked by numerous ridges. Once a mighty city, it is now nothing more than several acres of ruined buildings, with a crumbling fortress at its center. Signs of its lost splendor can still be seen; four canals lined with fruit trees and thick grasses radiate outward from the fortress, dividing the city into quarters. The edge of the city is marked by a circular canal that connects the four radiating canals together. A grand avenue encircles this canal, and from it four magnificent granite bridges cross into the city.

Many Bedine and Zhentarim died here in a series of bloody attacks and counterattacks over the years. The waters are poisoned as a result of those battles, and is unsuitable for drinking.

### THE QUARTER OF EMPTINESS

In the southwestern area of the Sword is a region known for its lack of food and water, called the Quarter of Emptiness. Visitors (and there are few) can find nothing more than mile upon stretching mile of bare dunes, with bedrock exposed by the wind here and there between. Bedine seldom enter the area; there is nothing worth going in for, and it is expected that fools who choose to venture there will die of thirst about the same time their camels starve. This region is the site of an abandoned but still intact ancient city called Rasilith (see below).

### RASILITH

An ancient city stands in the southern part of the Quarter of Emptiness, half-buried in a massive sand dune. Encircling walls of gray stone surround a series of alabaster towers, which in turn encompass a fortress of unusual design and construction. A Bedine tribe discovered this locale and rejoiced when they investigated the well and found a great cavern filled with sweet, flowing water many feet below the desert's surface; but their joy was short-lived, for this cavern is an entrance into the domain of the phaerimms and their asabi servitors. More information on Rasilith can be found on page 106 of *Lost Empires of Faerûn*.

### THE SAIYADDAR

This area is the prized hunting lands of the Bedine, never mentioned to outsiders, and, by common agreement, not the territory of any single tribe. These high, rolling grasslands serve as home to

many gazelle, antelope, and a few lions that prey on them. Within its interior, trees and nourishing plants grow in plenty, and the grasses grow lush and tall here, fed by countless springs.

### TEL BADIR

This D'tarig hilltop village stands on the eastern edge of the Sword, overlooked by the Tethyamar Mountains. Its winding streets run along the tops of ridges in an area of ravines and trees. The Zhentarim trade regularly with the D'tarig here, and they used this place to gather supplies to equip their desert armies while completing the Black Road. Tel Badir is where most outlander merchants come to buy incense and other desert goods, and from where the traveling D'tarig caravan, Biradon, departs on its journey around the perimeter of the Desertsedge.

## Desertsedge

The edges of the Sword rise into rocky foothills dotted with scrub plants and marked by caves and jagged ravines carved out by small, rushing streams that plunge down into the desert, where they soon vanish, drunk down by the thirsty sands. This uneasy border area is lashed by winds and frequent storms and roamed by many fearsome monsters. Aside from higher temperatures, it varies little from the northern- and easternmost mountains of the Sword Coast.

## The Lost Kingdoms

Many have heard of the Lost Kingdoms, those fabled, rich realms of long ago that lie buried somewhere beneath the shifting sands of Anauroch. Many strange creatures appear from within those depths, for the Buried Realms are riddled with ancient, unmarked magic gates, allowing passage from Faerûn to other planes and worlds, and vice versa. Stairs, shafts, ravines, and even broad roads lead down from the Stonelands and the sands of the Sword to the Lost Kingdoms below. The folk of those once-proud realms have become the nomadic Bedine, fearing and shunning the depths and the magic that was once theirs.

More information on the Lost Kingdoms can be found on page 104 of *Lost Empires of Faerûn*.

### ANAURIA

Richest of the Lost Kingdoms, Anauria was a human-ruled land of humans, elves, and half-elves, where nobles hunted boar, stags, and monstrous game while the farms of the commoners produced food for the region, with enough spare grain to sell to all the lands about the Inner Sea. From its glittering capital, Amazandar, the City of Gems, Anauria dominated overland trade to and from the Three Realms. Rich gem mines lay underneath Amazandar, reached by well-guarded deep shafts that were kept as secret as possible by the noble families that owned them.



## ASRAM

Second richest of the Three Realms, Asram was governed from rich Phelajarama, the City of the Serpent, known for its gold-leaf-covered carved serpents. In this land, magic was used in everyday things, not reserved for a ruling elite as it was in Netheril. Spell-guarded expeditions went out to secret places in the Great Sand Sea and brought back the lost magic of Netheril—precious gold, rarer zinc, and the finest copper known in those days.

## HLONDATH

Least powerful of the Three Realms, northerly Hlondath was a land of loggers and herdsmen who kept sheep, goats, and shaggy cattle. Mhaelos served as its capital, but its most important city was Rulvadar, a fortified refuge for folk in the Moonsea North against marauding ogres, orcs, hobgoblins, bugbears, and worse. Companies of spearmen made many forays into the Border Forest, and under their protection, Hlundites exported sturdy wagons, fine furniture, paper, and lumber to other lands.

## The plain of standing stones

The central region of the Great Desert is not a sandy waste but rather a wind-whipped, almost treeless rocky plain. This broad, beltlike area rises above the sand in a plateau, though it is anything but flat or smooth. The howling, almost ceaseless winds have shaped and torn the rock of The Plain into spikes, pillars, and strange wavelike shapes, making it by turns a tossed sea or barbed forest of frozen, endless stone. The whole area is a succession of spires, spiny ridges, cliffs and rockslide rubble.

At first glance, all appears lifeless, but closer inspection reveals a few shrubs and stunted trees clinging to rock cracks and deep ravines. The larger valleys are sometimes revealed to be splendors of lush grass and vivid flowers, providing forage for large herds of wild crag sheep. These in turn provide milk, wool, and meat for outlaws, renegade dwarf bands, and a few human and hobgoblin barbarian tribes. Handfuls of ogres, hill giants, and verbeegs also dwell in caves here.

The mineral wealth of this tortured land is great, but it boasts no rich ruins or treasure caches; there were few settlements here even before Anauroch was a desert. Its ravines, pools, and rock pillars or peaks seem endless in numbers, and only a few have been named by outlanders.

## places in the plain of standing stones

The following entries are only a few examples of the numerous locations scattered across the Plain of Standing Stones.

## AERITHAE'S REST

Named for the long-ago adventurer who discovered it, this verdant valley is about three miles long and a mile wide. It consists of a deep, clear central lake (fed by an underground spring) surrounded by a thick, tangled forest that fills the valley and climbs a good way up the sheer rock walls that enclose it. It is hard to find, lying between two knife-sharp ridges that join in a three-pointed peak to the south. Hard climbing is necessary to get into or out of the Rest, but the ridges and ravines around it hold several known rock faces where iron-rich ore and nuggets can be mined with only a hammer. Foxes, raccoons, scramble-squirrels, and bears roam this tiny paradise; vultures avoid it because of eagles that lair above the valley. There are persistent rumors of an entrance to the Underdark hidden somewhere in the Rest.

## FALLEN GIANT RIFT

This crooked, many-branched crack in the earth runs for almost two dozen miles through the Plain. It is several hundred feet deep and over three miles wide, and its trampled earth is thickly grown with lush grass. Goats, sheep, and long-horned antelopes graze here, but their populations are kept from exploding by the giants who dwell there.

Named for a monster among giants slain here by dwarves in a bloody fight long ago, the rift is still home to many hill giants. A spring at one end of the rift feeds several pools along its length. Many caves have been dug in the rift walls above these pools, so that the giants who dwell therein can hurl rocks down at creatures coming to drink below. Gold veins can be found in at least one of the caves, for the giants of the rift adorn themselves with necklaces of human, dwarf, and various predators' skulls that have been dipped in gold and polished.

## THE HIDDEN VALLEY OF SRINDIN

Named for the elf explorer and adventurer who made it his home when he grew too old and gentle to roam Faerûn any longer, this tranquil spot is a hemispherical hidden vale roughly two miles across. It is a picturesque combination of alpine forest and grassy meadows, watered by at least three streams that spring from its walls and rush down to the trees in cascades.

The three streams come together in a deep sinkhole in the center of the vale, and there can be found the two most distinctive features of the vale: Srindin's abandoned home and a circle of corpses. Both the home—a beautiful miniature castle carved from a single great piece of stone—and the corpses are floating upright in midair above the dark waters of the pool. Some fell magic, or magic-using being, is present in the castle, which is said to still hold the relics and treasures amassed by Srindin during his adventuring career. The corpses are all skeletal, once-human, and clad in the rusting, disintegrating remnants of plate armor.

They face each other in a circle perhaps 30 feet across. Bones and weapons that fall from them do not plunge into the water below, but sink only a few inches, and then hang in midair around



the figures. Some unknown and very powerful magic holds them aloft: a magic that is demonstrably resistant to dispelling attempts.

### THE SWORDPOINT

This distinctive peak is a useful landmark: Its soaring, clean-lined needle shape is unmistakable from afar. Manticores are known to lair nearby, drinking at several natural wells (water-filled sinkholes) around the base of the Swordpoint. Intruders trying to use one of these water sources are likely to face a manticore ambush.

## The High Ice

As desolate and wind-flayed as the more southerly and dry areas of Anauroch, the High Ice is an ice plain broken by deep crevasses and roamed by dangerous creatures, including remorhazes, wyverns, and white dragons. In addition to these fierce creatures, the High Ice holds natural dangers aplenty for intrepid adventurers: falls due to ice, avalanches, suddenly opening crevasses, and the biting cold.

### The frozen sea

The western edge of the High Ice gives way to frozen sands. In ancient days, the Narrow Sea lay like a sword here, running north and south along what is now the Desertsedge. Its basin is now filled with a wind-sculpted, desolate labyrinth of frozen sand dunes, marked here and there both by the diggings of bold explorers seeking the riches of the lost port cities and the lairs of those creatures who prey upon them.

This region, called by some the Frozen Sea due to its past, holds certain features of interest to adventurers, including the ruined cities of Ascore, Hlaungadath, and Oreme.

## places in the high ice

The following section describes just a few of the possible points of interest within the High Ice.

### ASCORE

The haunted city of Ascore, once a port of the dwarf nation of Delzoun (itself little more than a memory), rests on the shore of this now-vanished sea. The half-buried hulks of colossal dwarven stone ships rise out of the sands east of Ascore's abandoned docks.

Intrepid adventurers report that a circle of thirteen red pyramids rises in Ascore's center. The pyramids are constructed of a strange red stone not unlike the bleeding stone of Karse; a Shadovar expedition has been studying these pyramids for the last few years.

### HLAUNGADATH

East-northeast of Ascore, another city rises out of the sands. This one is old but largely intact; long cracks lace its spired towers, and here and there a dome has fallen to winter snows or howling windstorms. This one-time independent human city is still inhabited, and kept more or less in repair. A community of lamias dwells here in warped luxury scavenged from Netherese ruins over the years. Twenty lamia nobles rule over another ninety of their species. Armed with Netherese magic, these nobles sally forth from the city in human form whenever their patrols report intruders in the area. The nobles attempt to capture the intruders by magic and deception, and then bring them to the city to serve as slaves.

### OREME

Another former port on the vanished Narrow Sea now stands isolated in the sands a short distance to the west of the Plain of Standing Stone. In its day, Oreme of the White

Illus. by William O'Connor



*The dwarven ships of ancient Ascore*



Towers was a city of artisans ruled by proud, independent mages.

Oreme is detailed in Chapter 4 of this adventure.

## Hazards

This section builds on the information found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, detailing the hazards characters might face within Anauroch. Further information can also be found in the *Sandstorm* and *Frostburn* accessories.

### Heat and cold dangers

The intense daytime heat of the desert waste of Anauroch, particularly in the Sword, threatens all creatures dwelling or passing through it. Prolonged exposure to extremely high temperatures without adequate protection can quickly wear down a character, and the resulting heatstroke can prove to be deadly. Conversely, when the sun sets and nighttime temperatures plunge, characters without protection from cold can also suffer.

Extreme conditions of cold and heat deal nonlethal damage to unprotected characters. The following table shows the time periods each day when various temperature ranges apply in different regions of Anauroch.

**Time:** The hour of the day beginning at that time. This table assumes a daytime and nighttime of approximately equal length, with each day beginning at 6:00 a.m. and each night beginning at 6:00 p.m.

**Abbreviations:** Most of the abbreviations used in the preceding table represent the temperature ranges described in Cold Dangers and Heat Dangers (*DMG* 302–303). Details that apply to these temperature ranges are given below.

Save	Protection	
SC: Severe cold (–20°–0°)	10 minutes	Level 2
C: Cold (1°–40°)	1 hour	Level 1
M: Moderate (41°–60°)	—	—
W: Warm (61°–90°)	—	—
H: Hot (91°–110°)	1 hour	Level 1
SH: Severe heat (111°–140°)	10 minutes	Level 2

**Save:** This column on the table above indicates how often an unprotected character needs to attempt a Fortitude save (DC 15, +1 for each previous check). A failed save results in 1d4 points of nonlethal damage to the character.

**Protection:** This column indicates the level of protection required to avoid needing to make the save. Note that level 1 protection worn in a level 2 temperature band provides partial protection (see page 138).

Time	The Sword	The Plain of Standing Stones	The High Ice
6:00 am	M	M	C
7:00 am	M	M	C
8:00 am	W	M	C
9:00 am	W	W	M
10:00 am	H	W	M
11:00 am	H	W	M
Noon	H	H	M
1:00 pm	H	H	W
2:00 pm	SH	H	W
3:00 pm	SH	H	W
4:00 pm	SH	H	W
5:00 pm	SH	H	M
6:00 pm	SH	H	M
7:00 pm	H	W	C
8:00 pm	H	W	C
9:00 pm	W	M	C
10:00 pm	W	M	C
11:00 pm	M	C	C
Midnight	M	C	SC
1:00 am	C	C	SC
2:00 am	C	C	SC
3:00 am	C	C	SC
4:00 am	C	C	SC
5:00 am	C	C	C

## Dehydration

As noted on *DMG* 304, a character must consume 1 gallon of water per day to avoid dehydration. (Small creatures must consume half this amount, Large creatures twice this amount.) In hot temperatures, this amount doubles; in severe heat, it triples. In warm or cooler temperatures, a creature can go without water for a number of hours equal to 24 + its Constitution score before becoming dehydrated. In hot temperatures, that time is reduced to 12 + Con, while in severe heat, it becomes 6 + Con. Each check is made against DC 10 with a +1 penalty for each previous check. Failure indicates the creature takes 1d6 points of nonlethal damage.

### BEING DEHYDRATED

Characters who have taken nonlethal damage from lack of water are considered dehydrated and also become fatigued. In addition, if a dehydrated character would take nonlethal damage from hot or severe heat conditions, that damage instead becomes lethal damage.

A character who falls unconscious from nonlethal damage due to thirst begins to take the same amount of lethal damage instead. Damage from thirst, whether lethal or nonlethal, cannot be recovered until the character has been treated (see below); not even magic that restores hit points heals this damage.



### TREATING DEHYDRATION

A character who has taken nonlethal damage from lack of water must be treated with long-term care (see the Heal skill description, *PH* 75) to recover. This treatment requires 24 hours of care and double the normal amount of water required per day for the conditions (for instance, 2 gallons of water in normal conditions, 4 gallons in hot conditions). If the character has also taken lethal damage from lack of water or from a hot environment, add 5 to the Heal DC and double the time required to recover (to 48 hours). Once this Heal check has succeeded, the damage taken by the character can be restored through the normal means.

Alternatively, certain spells such as *beal* can be used to rehydrate a character in place of the recovery time, water, and Heal check.

### sand and wind

Winds in the waste can be violent or even deadly. Worse still, winds laden with grit such as sand or blowing dust pose a variety of hazards. See *DMG* 95 for more details on wind effects.

### DUSTSTORMS

Duststorms arise in Anauroch when the wind speed exceeds 30 miles per hour. A duststorm blows fine grains of sand that reduce visibility, smother unprotected flames, and even choke protected flames, such as a lantern's light (50% chance). A duststorm leaves behind a deposit of 1d6 inches of sand.

Hearing and visibility in a duststorm is reduced, so all creatures within a duststorm take a -4 penalty on Listen checks and a -2 penalty on Search and Spot checks.

### SANDSTORMS

Sandstorms arise in the desert when the wind speed rises above 50 miles per hour. Sandstorms reduce visibility to brownout conditions (see below), smother unprotected flames, and choke protected flames (75% chance). Moreover, sandstorms deal 1d3 points of nonlethal damage each round to anyone caught out in the open without shelter and pose a suffocation hazard (see below). A sandstorm leaves 2d3-1 feet of fine sand in its wake.

**Brownout:** Sandstorms create brownout conditions. Swirling grit obscures the horizon and make it nearly impossible to get one's bearings. Any character in brownout conditions caused by a sandstorm takes a -8 penalty to Listen checks and a -4 penalty on Dexterity-based skill checks, as well as Search checks, Spot checks, and any other checks that rely on vision. These effects end when the character leaves the brownout area or enters a protected shelter.

**Suffocation:** Exposed character might begin to choke if their noses and mouths are not covered. A sufficiently large cloth expertly worn (Survival DC 15) negates the effects of suffocation from dust and sand. An inexpertly worn cloth across the nose and mouth protects the character from the potential for suffocation for a number of rounds equal to 10 × her Constitution score. An unprotected character faces potential suffocation

after a number of rounds equal to twice her Constitution score. Once the grace period ends, the character must make a successful Constitution check (DC 10, +1 per previous check) each round or begin suffocating on the encroaching sand. In the first round after suffocation begins, the character falls unconscious (0 hp). In the following round, she drops to -1 hit points and is dying. In the third round, she dies.

### SAND DUNES

Sand dunes are wandering things, although the mundane variety travels no more than a couple of hundred feet in a year.

**Collapse:** A sand dune has a long, shallow backslope created by the wind and a sharp leading edge with a steep drop on the lee side. Wind and creatures treading upon a sand dune can trigger a collapse. A collapsing dune is every bit as dangerous as an avalanche and follows the same rules (*DMG* 90).

### SAND TRAVEL

Deep sand can impede the movement of creatures that cannot fly, float, or otherwise stay off the ground when traveling through Anauroch. The following new terrain features supplement those found in the section on desert terrain, *DMG* 91.

**Shallow Sand:** Shallow sand is about 1 foot deep. It costs 2 squares of movement to move into a square with shallow sand, and the DC of Tumble checks in such a square increases by 2.

**Deep Sand:** Areas covered by this terrain feature have a loose layer of sand up to 3 feet deep. It costs Medium or larger creatures 3 squares of movement to move into a square with deep sand, and it costs Small creatures 4 squares of movement. Tumbling is impossible in deep sand.

### SUN DANGERS

In the clear, dry air of Anauroch, nothing blocks the rays of the sun, which can pose its own set of dangers.

#### GLARE

Characters traveling in areas of white sand or similar colored material must cover their eyes with a veil or similar protection. Those without such protection are automatically dazzled. Such characters take a -1 penalty on attack rolls, Search checks, and Spot checks. These penalties are doubled for creatures that have light sensitivity. Glare-induced blindness lasts for as long as the character is exposed to the glare, plus 1d4 hours thereafter, or for 1 hour in a shadowed or enclosed area. The effect can be negated by a *remove blindness* spell, but only for the duration of the spell.

#### SUNBURN

A character caught out in the sun completely unprotected suffers serious consequences. After 3 hours of such exposure, the character is mildly sunburned and takes 1 point of nonlethal damage. After 3 more hours, the character develops severe sunburn and immediately takes 2d6 points of nonlethal damage and a -2



penalty on Fortitude saves to avoid damage or fatigue from heat dangers until the nonlethal damage is healed.

Characters or creatures with naturally dark skin pigmentation are resistant to sunburn. Such individuals can remain in the sun unprotected for 6 hours before becoming mildly sunburned, and for 12 hours before becoming severely sunburned.

Characters who take even minimal care to protect their skin from direct sunlight (a hat, a cloak or other garments) are not subject to sunburn (though they might suffer other penalties from the heat if the clothing is considered heavy).

## Trading and provisioning

Most trade taking place in Anauroch occurs on the periphery of the great desert. The Zhentarim maintain fortified trading posts at either end of The Black Road. These waypoints have been constructed at naturally occurring defensible positions near reliable water sources (or with magical means to acquire such). Their primary purpose is to provision Zhent caravans preparing to brave the harsh desert, but some dealings with independent merchants and adventurers does take place. Of course, the Zhentarim merchants mark up everything they sell to the public, often to three or four times normal market value, or even more if it's a particularly crucial commodity (anyone stumbling into one of these checkpoints dying of thirst had better have a heavy coin pouch—the Black Network never lets compassion get in the way of turning a profit).

The D'tarig conduct most of the rest of any notable trading in the Great Sand Sea. Though most of their reclusive kind prefer to limit contact with strangers, some make a living acting as go-betweens for the Bedine tribes and the outside world. Some act as independent merchants, scouts, or guides, while others have formed large, roaming caravans that travel through the Desertsedge in sizable numbers, like migrant city markets (see Chapter 3 for more information on Biradon, one such roaming caravan-city).

Conversely, the Bedine are not much interested in trade with outsiders at all. They deal with the D'tarig (in some cases only grudgingly, but they have need of the iron goods the merchants bring them) and will, on occasion, accept a lone traveling merchant among their tents and offer him or her hospitality and barter. They have no toleration for magic of any sort, however. Anyone attempting to buy, sell, or trade magic goods or services with them gets run off (at best) or staked out in the sands to die of exposure (more likely).

Of course, the nature of trade has shifted considerably since the shades created their vast dead magic zone. Both the Zhentarim and the D'tarig have been left scrambling to adjust their markets. Though the outside demand for Netherese artifacts—as well as more mundane goods acquired from the Bedine—remains high, both mercantile organizations have been left with a surplus of now-useless preservative magic. Potions, scrolls, and water-creat-

ing magic items that rely on the Weave are useless to anyone preparing to venture into Anauroch's interior (though that hasn't stopped unscrupulous dealers on the very edge of the dead magic zone from selling them to unwitting fools who aren't yet aware of the altered state of the desert; by the time the duplicity is discovered, it will likely be too late).

As well, Shadow Weave magic is a commodity hotter than the sands themselves. Despite many folks' distaste for contact with the Shadow Weave, the lack of alternatives leaves them eagerly grabbing up any such magic they can. Any individuals planning a trip into the depths of the desert crave everything from consumable potions and wands to more permanent weapons and armor made from Shar's form of magic. A few opportunistic Shadow Weave arcanists have begun showing up to brew and craft Shadow Weave items, demanding princely sums for their services.

## protection from the elements

Fortunately for those who live in Anauroch and those who travel through it, a number of ways exist to negate or reduce the effects of the desert's hazardous environment. Several items of clothing and gear that provide protection from hot or cold temperatures are described in the following section.

Protection level, a concept introduced in the *Sandstorm* and *Frostburn* accessories, defines how well a piece of equipment (usually clothing) keeps its user safe from nonlethal damage. Protection level 0 is the default condition, possessed by any creature that does not have some sort of innate ability to withstand this damage and is not wearing or using any protective gear.

Level 1 is a minimal amount of protection, which keeps creatures safe in the cold and hot temperature ranges (see page 136). Gear that offers level 1 protection against heat includes armorbright and a desert outfit. Gear that offers level 1 protection against cold includes armor insulation, fur clothing, and a cold weather outfit.

Level 2 is a significant amount of protection, sufficient to keep someone safe from the hottest and coldest temperatures that Anauroch has to offer. The hydration suit is an example of gear that offers level 2 protection against heat. The combination of fur clothing with either armor insulation or a cold weather outfit offers level 2 protection against cold.

Creatures that are native to Anauroch's environment, such as the Bedine and the D'tarig (both described below) as well as many desert-dwelling creatures, such as the asabis, have level 1 protection as their default. If these individuals wear or use protective gear, the protection level of that gear stacks with their innate protection level. For example, a Bedine wearing a desert outfit has level 2 protection against heat and never needs to worry about taking nonlethal damage from severe heat.

**Partial Protection:** A character who has level 1 protection while in severe heat or severe cold is not safe from needing to make Fortitude saves, but such protection is better than nothing. In such a case, the character has to attempt saves every hour



(instead of every 10 minutes, which is true for an unprotected character; see the table on page 136).

## Desert Equipment

The following specialized desert survival goods are commonly available at any trading post or caravan along the Desertsedge. (For more information and descriptions of other special gear, see the *Sandstorm* and *Frostburn* accessories.)

**Armor Insulation (flask):** This thick red syrupy mixture is applied with a brush to the inner surface of a suit of armor. When the mixture comes in contact with body heat and sweat, it puffs up to trap body heat, giving the wearer level 1 protection against the effects of cold. For 24 hours after application, the wearer of a suit of armor treated with armor insulation gains a +5 circumstance bonus on Fortitude saving throws against exposure to cold weather. *Cost:* 50 gp. *Weight:* 2 lb.

**Armorbright (flask):** This metallic paint, when applied to the outside of a suit of armor, produces a shiny surface that reflects sunlight and lessens the effect of heat; for 24 hours after application, you gain a +2 bonus on Fortitude saving throws to avoid heat dangers. It provides level 1 protection against heat. *Cost:* 50 gp. *Weight:* 1 lb.

**Blackeye (vial):** This oily paint, when smeared around the eyes and cheeks, protects against sun glare for 4 hours. *Cost:* 1 gp. *Weight:* 1/2 lb.

**Cold Weather Outfit:** A cold weather outfit (described on PH 131) includes a wool coat, linen shirt, wool cap, heavy cloak, thick pants or skirt, and boots. This outfit provides level 1 protection against cold and grants a +5 circumstance bonus on Fortitude saves against exposure to cold. *Cost:* 8 gp. *Weight:* 7 lb. (1-1/2 lb. for Small creatures).

**Desert Outfit:** This outfit of loosely fitting clothing keeps the wearer cooler than normal garments and well-protected from the sun. It offers level 1 protection against heat, but this protection is negated if the wearer also dons armor. *Cost:* 6 gp. *Weight:* 3 lb. (3/4 lb. for Small creatures).

**Distillation Kit:** This simple kit uses the sun and the ambient heat to distill pure water from body or cooking waste, salt lakes, poisonous plant saps, and so on. It can produce 1 gallon of water per day if filled to capacity with any appropriate liquid. *Cost:* 50 gp. *Weight:* 20 lb.

**Filter Mask:** A filter mask is a fine cloth mesh with fastening straps that covers your mouth and nose. It grants a +2 bonus on saves against gas-based effects and negates the effects of suffocation from dust and sand for 4 hours, after which it is clogged and no longer functions. It can be reused if thoroughly laundered, but most desert travelers simply replace a used mask with a fresh one. *Cost:* 1 gp. *Weight:* —.

**Fur Clothing:** Fur clothing consists of thick layers of animal furs designed to be worn over a regular set of clothing or armor. Wearing fur clothing provides level 1 protection against cold and grants a +5 circumstance bonus on Fortitude saving throws

against exposure to cold weather. Fur clothing can be worn over a cold weather outfit or in combination with armor insulation; in such a case, the circumstance bonuses granted by each item stack, granting a total +10 circumstance bonus on Fortitude saving throws against exposure to cold weather, and the level of protection stacks as well.

Fur clothing is cumbersome to wear. Although the furs do not provide an armor bonus, they do increase your total armor check penalty for any armor worn by 2 points. *Cost:* 8 gp. *Weight:* 10 lb. (2-1/2 lb. for Small creatures).

**Hydration Suit:** The hydration suit is a masterpiece of water retention, crafted by waste-dwellers with technical skill and unusual materials. Its design allows you to recover nearly all the water your body loses through sweat and exhalation. A hydration suit is made of the skin and tissue of various desert-dwelling beasts and treated with oils or waxes for water retention. It covers your entire body, with a tight-fitting hood over the head and a mask covering the mouth and nose. Inside the mask is a glass plate to collect condensation and a tube fashioned from watertight materials. An inner lining wicks sweat away from your body and collects it in spongelike filtration material that can be removed after you doff the hydration suit. The tube from the facemask twists in loops around your body, through the sponge, to reclaim moisture, condensing it in a reservoir from which you can sip.

A functioning hydration suit eliminates the need to make Constitution checks to avoid becoming dehydrated. It provides level 2 protection against heat dangers, and its mask functions as a filter mask (see above). *Cost:* 1,000 gp. *Weight:* 10 lb. (2-1/2 lb. for Small creatures).

**Sun Lenses:** Made of thin slabs of mica or volcanic glass affixed in frames, these lenses can protect your eyes from being dazzled by bright light, such as from glare. If you are already dazzled when you don the lenses, you are treated as if entering shade; you recover from the dazzled condition in 1 hour if you continue to wear them. *Cost:* 10 gp. *Weight:* —.

## Denizens

Despite its desolate nature, the great desert hosts a variety of life, including several native sentient species. The following groups are prominent within Anauroch.

### Bedine

Bedine are brown-skinned, proud, warlike humans who live a nomadic, tribal existence in the Sword. They dwell in tribes ruled by sheikhs who freely share food and water with those in need, but who otherwise carry on endless, deadly rivalries.

The largest known Bedine tribe is about three hundred men, women, and children strong. There are over a hundred Bedine tribes; some have never even heard of each other, much less encountered one another in the vastness of the Great Desert.



The sheikh's word is law, so long as he breaks none of the important traditions of the Bedine (the rules by which all live, including, for example, the requirements that water must be given to the thirsty, and that oaths must be kept). The sheikh's ultimate threat to secure obedience to his will is banishment from the tribe.

The Bedine are concerned with survival; their daily existence is a long struggle with the desert, with a Bedine victory being a chance to see the sun rise over the dunes tomorrow. Most Bedine know that Anauroch is vast indeed, and gives way in the north to a land of hard-baked earth and wind-scoured stone. Used to desert ways and life, they believe that this Stone Sea is more lifeless and desolate than the sands of the Sword. Few Bedine have ever ventured far into it—and even fewer have seen the world outside the desert.

Bedine tend to judge other lands by the outlanders who have come to Anauroch, mostly desperate outlaws or reckless adventurers, schemers with plans of their own for the Bedine (such as the ruthless Zhentarim and the gold-hungry D'tarig), or lost and feeble madmen.

A Bedine camp at peace is generally a circle of tents, their entrances facing inward, a guarded stronghold against desert perils, such as predatory monsters and rival tribes.

Bedine fear magic and shun or cast out anyone who wields it. Other than small healing effects ("the favor of the gods"), magic is regarded as a treacherous and dishonorable weapon to use against enemies. Even the most fearless Bedine are wary of those who can work magic, either by spell or item. The Bedine think a being must be insane, very brave, or very evil to touch—or even willingly draw near—a magic item.

Bedine use scimitars, daggers, lances and arrows (all of which they can employ from camelback) in their struggles against each other and other desert predators. Desert wind and heat shimmer (by day) and poor visibility (by night) limit the usefulness of archery at long range; most combat is decided at swordpoint. Most fighting occurs at night—not only does darkness allow attackers some concealment, but the lack of a blazing sun makes



*Bedine and D'tarig*

it more likely that anyone can survive the exertions of combat. Battle is usually marked by loud battle-cries; raiding is usually silent and deadly. Most fighting between Bedine tribes occurs when one tribe tries to raid another to seize camels, food, or other goods.

### D'TARIG

These diminutive folk (averaging just over 4 feet tall) might be descended from marriages between humans and dwarves in the Tethyamar area. They are the desert folk most commonly encountered by outlanders. They dwell primarily on the eastern and southeastern fringes of Anauroch, where they herd goats and sheep in the foothills and make rare trips beyond the borders of the desert to trade. They like to travel in large groups, well armed with poisoned javelins and bolts for their crossbows.

D'tarig have their own language and largely avoid contact with other humans. The exceptions to this are the most adventurous of the tribe, who tend to be younger. They are often hired by outsiders who want guides into the desert, for they typically claim to be experts who know

every dune and oasis of great Anauroch. Some greedy D'tarig who are braver than their fellows are known as "desert walkers," for they venture into the desert to trade metal (usually metal weapons, though pots and other vessels are also valued) to the Bedine in return for camel-loads of collected resin. The D'tarig sell their jars of gathered resin to merchants from all over Faerûn for the making of incense.

D'tarig are selfish, brutish folk, tending to be self-serving and rather cowardly. They switch loyalties readily, to whoever will pay them the most. They have none of the land-lore and stone-skill of dwarves; most must find their way in the desert by learning the oasis-trails and the stars. They tend to keep to themselves out of fear for trouble.

In the desert, D'tarig wear white burnouses and turbans, with splay-footed sandwalking boots. Only their dark eyes, pugish noses, and leathery brows are exposed.



## Appendix 2: Magic and Monsters

Spells, magic items, and monsters that play a part in this adventure are described below.

### spells of the phaerimms

The phaerimms are known for their innovations with spells and magic.

#### Dweomer vortex

Abjuration

**Level:** Sorcerer/wizard 3

**Components:** V

**Casting Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Personal (and special; see text)

**Target:** You (and other; see text)

**Duration:** 10 min./level or until discharged

*A shimmering, conical field of swirling magical energy forms before you. The pointed end is attached to you, and the rest of the cone twirls around you, like a magic-hungry serpent searching for an opportunity to strike. This cone moves in response to your mental commands.*

This spell creates a spinning cone of arcane energy that can negate spells or spell-like abilities it comes in contact with.

Any spell or spell-like ability of 3rd level or lower that targets you or that has you within its area is automatically countered.

Also, as a swift action, you can have the spell's cone reach out to a single target creature or 5-foot square that is up to 60 feet away and within line of sight. Without the need for an attack roll or dispel check, the *dweomer vortex* dispels any spell or spell-like ability currently affecting the target creature or area. If the target creature or area has more than one spell or spell-like ability in effect upon it, *dweomer vortex* starts by dispelling the lowest-level spell (choose between spells of the same level randomly) and continues to dispel additional, higher-level spells until it reaches its limit (see below).

Once the *dweomer vortex* negates six levels of spells, it is discharged, vanishing in a harmless whirl of winking motes. 0-level spells count as 1st-level spells for this purpose.

#### Mystic shield

Abjuration

**Level:** Sorcerer/wizard 8

**Components:** V, S, M

**Casting Time:** 1 round

**Range:** Touch

**Target:** Creature touched

**Duration:** 1 round./level (D)

**Saving Throw:** Will negates (harmless)

**Spell Resistance:** Yes (harmless)

*With the casting of your spell, you feel a presence about you, warding off the spells of other casters.*

This spell creates an invisible aura around the recipient that moves with that individual. It prevents all spells and spell-like abilities of 6th level or lower from affecting the recipient. The protected individual can cast spells normally, even on himself. Magic items and spells that summon items to the caster such as *Leomund's secret chest* and *Drawmij's instant summons* likewise function normally.

A *mystic shield* also negates the enhancement bonuses and special properties of magic weapons used against the target.

**Material Component:** A stone, a drop of blood, a tear from the caster's eye, and a clear gem stone worth at least 400 gp.

#### spell fangs

Evocation

**Level:** Sorcerer/wizard 4

**Components:** V, S, M

**Casting Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Personal

**Effect:** 30-ft.-long tentacle extending from your hand

**Duration:** Concentration, to a maximum of 1 round/level

*A spectral tentacle ending in multiple fanged maws springs forth from your hand.*

A more powerful version of *toothed tentacle*<sup>LE</sup>, this spell creates a shadowy tentacle of energy that extends 30 feet from your hand, splitting off into 1d6+2 smaller tentacles about 10 feet from its end. Each of these smaller tentacles ends in a fanged, slaving maw. All of these mouths can be directed to attack as a full-round action, or one of them can attack as a standard action. You can direct the mouths to attack separate targets as long as all targets are within 10 feet of each other. Each mouth strikes with an attack bonus equal to your caster level plus the modifier for the ability score that controls your spellcasting, and each deals 2d6 points of damage on a successful hit. Damage done by the tentacles is gained by you as temporary hit points that last for 1 round.



Because the mouths are tangible, they can be destroyed. Each has an AC of 15 and hit points equal to 10 + your caster level. If a mouth is destroyed, it fades away into nothingness, but the other mouths remain. If all the mouths are destroyed, the spell's duration ends. The main tentacle cannot be attacked.

*Material Component:* A hair and three teeth.

## updated spells

The spells described in this section originally appeared in other D&D publications and were later updated before being presented again in *Spell Compendium*. The updated versions are repeated here for convenience.

### Arrow mind

Divination

**Level:** Ranger 1, sorcerer/wizard 1

**Components:** V, S, M

**Casting Time:** 1 immediate action

**Range:** Personal

**Target:** You

**Duration:** 1 minute/level (D)

*The bow in your hand feels more like an extension of your body as you complete the spell—as if it's become a part of your arm. Creatures nearby seem sharper to your eyes, more in focus.*

While this spell is in effect and you are wielding a projectile weapon that fires arrows, such as a longbow or shortbow, you threaten all squares within your normal melee reach (5 feet if Small or Medium, 10 feet if Large) with your bow, allowing you to make attacks of opportunity with arrows shot from the bow. In addition, you do not provoke attacks of opportunity when you shoot a bow while you are in another creature's threatened square.

*Material Component:* A flint arrowhead.

### Battering Ram

Evocation [Force]

**Level:** Sorcerer/wizard 2

**Components:** V, S, F

**Casting Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

**Target:** One object or creature

**Duration:** Instantaneous

**Saving Throw:** None

**Spell Resistance:** Yes

*You point the shard of carved ram's horn at your foe and snap off the last words of the spell. An invisible wedge of force slams into the creature's midsection, doubling it over and driving it back.*

You create a ramlike force that can strike with considerable power. The force can target a creature or an object. The force deals 1d6 points of damage to the subject. If the subject is a creature, this attack initiates a bull rush (as a Medium creature with Strength 30, for a +10 bonus on the bull rush attempt). If the subject is a movable object, such as a door, you can make a Strength check (with a +10 bonus) to attempt to force open the door.

*Focus:* A piece of carved ram's horn.

### caltrops

Conjuration (Creation)

**Level:** Sorcerer/wizard 0

**Components:** V, S

**Casting Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

**Area:** See text

**Duration:** 1 round/level

**Saving Throw:** None

**Spell Resistance:** No

*You speak the words and spread your palm open, as if you were throwing jacks. Coppery sparks spring from your palm, filling the corridor with small four-pronged spikes.*

A caltrops spell covers one 5-foot-by-5-foot square with caltrops. Every time a creature moves into an area covered by caltrops or spends a round fighting while standing in such an area, it might step on one. The caltrops make one attack roll (+0 melee) against the creature. For this attack, the target's shield and deflection bonuses do not count, nor does its armor bonus for armor worn. A target wearing shoes or other footwear gains a +2 armor bonus to Armor Class (which does count). If the caltrops succeed on the attack, the creature has stepped on one.

A successful attack by a caltrop deals 1 point of damage. If the target is Small, Medium, or Large, its land speed is reduced by one-half because of the injury. This movement penalty lasts for 24 hours, until the creature is successfully treated with a DC 15 Heal check, or until it receives at least 1 point of magic healing. A charging or running creature must immediately stop if it steps on a caltrop. Any creature moving at half speed or slower can pick its way through a bed of caltrops with no trouble.

The DM judges the effectiveness of caltrops against unusual opponents or opponents outside the size range given above. A giant centipede, for example, can scramble among the caltrops with no chance of hurting itself, and a fire giant wearing thick, massive boots might be immune to their attacks.

For every two caster levels beyond 1st, you can affect an additional 5-foot-by-5-foot square, and the caltrops' attack bonus increases by 1. Thus, you affect two squares at 3rd level (+1 melee), three at 5th level (+2 melee), four at 7th level (+3 melee), and a maximum of five at 9th level or higher (+4 melee maximum).



Multiple *caltrops* spells (or mundane caltrops) occupying the same space have no additional effect.

## electric jolt

Evocation [Electricity]

**Level:** Sorcerer/wizard 0

**Components:** V, S

**Casting Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

**Effect:** Ray

**Duration:** Instantaneous

**Saving Throw:** None

**Spell Resistance:** Yes

*A white-hot electric spark dances on your fingertip and then bolts toward your target.*

You release a small stroke of electrical energy. You must succeed on a ranged touch attack with the ray to strike a target. The spell deals 1d3 points of electricity damage.

## expeditious retreat, swift

Transmutation

**Level:** Bard 1, sorcerer/wizard 1

**Components:** V

**Casting Time:** 1 swift action

**Duration:** 1 round

*In a breathless voice you call out, as if you were already running a race.*

This spell functions like *expeditious retreat* (PH 228), except as noted above.

## mage armor, greater

Conjuration (Creation) [Force]

**Level:** Sorcerer/wizard 3

**Components:** V, S

*An invisible sheen of armor-shaped force surrounds you.*

This spell functions like *mage armor* (PH 249), except that it requires no material component and its tangible field of force provides a +6 armor bonus to Armor Class.

## reciprocal gyre

Abjuration

**Level:** Sorcerer/wizard 5

**Components:** V, S, M

**Casting Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)

**Target:** One creature or object

**Duration:** Instantaneous

**Saving Throw:** Will half, then Fortitude negates; see text

**Spell Resistance:** No

*You finger the tiny loop of wire in your hands as you complete the spell. You manipulate the magic aura of the target, creating a damaging feedback reaction, and the target explodes with white sparks.*

The subject takes 1d12 points of damage per functioning spell or spell-like ability currently affecting it (maximum 25d12). In addition, any creature so affected that fails its Will save must then succeed on a Fortitude save or be dazed for 1d6 rounds.

Only spells specifically targeted on the creature in question can be used to create the backlash of a *reciprocal gyre*, so spells that affect an area can't be used to deal reciprocal damage to creatures within their area. Likewise, persistent or continuous effects from magic items can't be used to deal reciprocal damage, but targeted spell effects can be.

*Material Component:* A tiny closed loop of copper wire.

## reverse arrows

Abjuration

**Level:** Sorcerer/wizard 3

**Components:** V, S, F

**Casting Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Personal

**Target:** You

**Duration:** 10 minutes/level or until discharged

*As you clasp the shell in one hand and the ball of sap in the other, a silver radiance flecked with blue lines surrounds you. You pocket the items, but the radiance remains.*

This spell functions like *protection from arrows* (PH 266), except as noted here. If any projectile fired from a ranged weapon that strikes you has all its damage negated by your damage reduction (10/magic), the projectile is turned back upon the creature that fired it. The attacker's attack roll is used to determine if the reversed projectile strikes the attacker, but the damage is rerolled. If the attacker is also protected by a *reverse arrows* spell, it is possible for the projectile to bounce between both individuals until one of the spells is discharged from accumulated damage.

Once this spell has prevented a total of 10 points of damage per caster level (maximum 100 points), it is discharged.

*Focus:* A piece of shell from a tortoise and a ball of tree sap.



## shadow well

Illusion (Shadow)

**Level:** Sorcerer/wizard 4

**Components:** V, S

**Casting Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

**Target:** One creature

**Duration:** 1 round/level

**Saving Throw:** Will negates; see text

**Spell Resistance:** Yes

*You spit out the words of the spell, and the shadow of your foe darkens, becoming a solid black pit. Your opponent pinwheels its arms as it topples backward into the darkness.*

You cause the target's shadow to become a temporary gateway to a pocket realm within the Plane of Shadow. The target must make a Will save or be pulled into the gateway. Inside the pocket realm, the creature sees a deserted, gloomy duplicate of the real world, while shadowy phantasms stalk and taunt it without causing actual harm. Each round, the creature can attempt another Will save to return from the *shadow well*. Otherwise, the subject returns to the real world when the spell's duration expires.

Being trapped in a *shadow well* can be terrifying; upon returning to the real world, the subject must succeed on another Will save or be frightened for 1d4 rounds.

Upon leaving the pocket realm, the subject reappears in the spot it had been in when the *shadow well* spell was cast. If this spot is filled with a solid object, the subject appears in the nearest adjacent empty space.

Spells and abilities that move a creature within a plane, such as *teleport* and *dimension door*, do not help a creature escape a *shadow well* spell, although a *plane shift* spell allows it to flee to another plane as normal. The target might still become frightened upon leaving.

## sonic blast

Evocation [Sonic]

**Level:** Sorcerer/wizard 1

**Components:** V, S

**Casting Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

**Target:** One creature

**Duration:** Instantaneous

**Saving Throw:** Will partial

**Spell Resistance:** Yes

*The words of your spell twist upon each other and grow stronger. Then, like a cluster of bees, they streak toward your target and detonate in a screaming bellow around him.*

You blast the target with loud and high-pitched sounds. The subject takes 1d4 points of sonic damage per two caster levels (maximum 5d4) and must make a Will save or be deafened for 1d4 rounds. This spell has no effect if cast into the area of a *silence* spell.

## spell matrix, lesser

Transmutation

**Level:** Sorcerer/wizard 5

**Components:** V, S, F

**Casting Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Personal

**Effect:** Matrix that holds one of your spells

**Duration:** 10 minutes/level (D)

*Concentrating as you intone the arcane words, you envision your mind as a maze of paths and doors. You get a chill as the spell completes and some of the doors open.*

You prepare a magic matrix that allows you to store one of your spells and use it later as a swift action.

In the round after you cast *lesser spell matrix*, you can cast one spell of up to 3rd level to be stored in it. The matrix closes after 1 round, whether or not you have stored a spell in it. Only a spell that can be altered by the *Quickened Spell* feat can be placed in the matrix, and any spell stored there is treated as a prepared spell. Casting *lesser spell matrix* deals 1d6 points of damage to you, and this damage cannot be healed by any means while the matrix exists.

While the matrix is active, you can cast the spell stored in it as a swift action. Once it is cast from the matrix, the spell is gone.

A *dispel magic* spell that successfully dispels the matrix also dispels the spell held inside it. If you are affected by an *antimagic field*, the duration of the matrix is interrupted, but the spell does not activate. The matrix becomes active again when you emerge from the *antimagic field*. If you die while the spell is still held in the matrix, both the spell and the matrix dissipate harmlessly.

*Focus:* A piece of amber with a minimum value of 500 gp.

## steeldance

Transmutation

**Level:** Sorcerer/wizard 3

**Components:** V, S, F

**Casting Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)

**Targets:** Two swords or daggers

**Duration:** 1 round/level

**Saving Throw:** None

**Spell Resistance:** No



*You place the two daggers in your outstretched palm and cast the spell. They rise from your hands, glowing with a dim blue radiance.*

The two daggers hover about you, attacking foes that come near. On your turn, each blade can make an attack at an adjacent opponent, with an attack bonus equal to your caster level + your relevant ability modifier. The damage they deal is equal to the normal weapon damage (1d4 for daggers) + your ability modifier (Intelligence for wizards and Charisma for sorcerers). The weapons are treated as magic for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction.

Your blades can be attacked with sunder or disarm attempts as if you were wielding them, and they use the above attack bonus to resolve such situations. Disarming a weapon under the effect of *steeldance* ends the spell for that weapon.

*Focus:* Two bladed weapons, such as daggers or longswords.

## Thunderlance

Evocation [Force]

**Level:** Sorcerer/wizard 4

**Components:** V, S, M

**Casting Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** 0 ft.

**Effect:** A spearlike beam

**Duration:** 1 round/level (D)

**Saving Throw:** None

**Spell Resistance:** No

*A faint gray shimmering force in the general shape of a staff or spear springs from your hand.*

When you cast this spell, you create a deadly lance of force. You can freely make a *thunderlance* retract or grow to any length from 1 foot to 20 feet, but it always remains a straight lance of force. This effect gives you a natural reach of 20 feet. You can use a *thunderlance* to make powerful melee attacks.

You can wield a *thunderlance* in one or two hands, dealing a base 3d6 points of damage (crit 20/x3). Instead of using your Strength modifier, you use the higher of your Intelligence modifier or Charisma modifier as a bonus on attack rolls and damage rolls.

If you successfully strike a target protected by any force effect of 3rd level or lower, such as a *shield* or *mage armor* spell, the *thunderlance* might dispel the force effect in addition to damaging the target. Make a dispel check against the level of the caster who created the effect. If you succeed, the effect is dispelled. The *thunderlance* remains whether you succeed or fail on this check.

*Material Component:* A small metal spear.

## other spells

The following spells were originally presented in other FORGOTTEN REALMS supplements and are reprinted here for ease of reference.

### Backblast

Abjuration [Fire]

**Level:** Sorcerer/wizard 3

**Components:** V, S

**Casting Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Personal

**Target:** You

**Duration:** Until expended or 10 minutes/level (D)

*As you finish casting, the air around you suddenly seems colder.*

Though this spell was originally created by the phaerimms, it has since been stolen by spellcasters of other races and can now be found in grimoires across Faerûn. *Backblast* protects you in the same manner as the *spell turning* spell (PH 282), except that it turns only spells that have the fire descriptor and that are targeted on you. Effect and area spells are unaffected, as is any spell with a range of touch. The DM secretly rolls 1d4+2 to determine the total number of spell levels that can be turned: *Backblast* otherwise follows the rules for the *spell turning* spell.

In addition to the above, *backblast* grants you fire resistance 10. This effect persists until the end of the round in which the spell turning effect ends.

### crushing sphere

Evocation [Force]

**Level:** Sorcerer/wizard 6

**Components:** V, S, M

**Casting Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)

**Effect:** 1-ft.-diameter/level sphere, centered around a creature

**Duration:** 1 round/level (D)

**Saving Throw:** Reflex negates

**Spell Resistance:** Yes

*The target of your spell is visibly restricted, unable to move freely as a shimmering sphere surrounds it.*

This spell functions like *Otiluke's resilient sphere* (PH 258), except that the sphere painfully constricts the target, hampering her movements and breathing. The target is entangled and takes 3d6 points of nonlethal damage per round as the *sphere* contracts. If the target is rendered unconscious, any remaining damage from the *crushing sphere* is lethal damage.



*Material Component:* An eggshell, which is crushed as the spell is cast.

## sandblast

Evocation [Earth]  
**Level:** Sorcerer/wizard 6  
**Components:** V, S, M  
**Casting Time:** 1 standard action  
**Range:** 60 ft.  
**Area:** Cone-shaped burst  
**Duration:** Instantaneous  
**Saving Throw:** Fortitude partial  
**Spell Resistance:** Yes

*A violent burst of sand and howling wind streams forth from your hand, extending outward in a cone.*

Every creature and object within the cone takes 6d8 points of damage and is subjected to winds of hurricane force that blow directly away from you. These winds blow away Medium or smaller creatures, knock down Large creatures, and check Huge or larger creatures. (See Table 3–24, *DMG* 95.)

Any creature that succeeds on a Fortitude save takes half damage from the sandblast and ignores the wind effect.

*Material Component:* A handful of sand from the heart of a desert.

## sinsabur's baleful bolt

Necromancy  
**Level:** Sorcerer/wizard 4  
**Components:** V, S  
**Casting Time:** 1 standard action  
**Range:** Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)  
**Area:** 5 ft. wide to medium range  
**Duration:** Instantaneous  
**Saving Throw:** Reflex half  
**Spell Resistance:** Yes

*A black bolt of dark energy begins at your fingertips and crackles out to the maximum range.*

The bolt deals temporary Constitution damage and Strength damage to each creature within its area, each equal to 1d3 points +1 per four caster levels (maximum 1d3+3). Lost ability score points are recovered normally at the rate of 1 point per day.

Constitution loss also causes a reduction in hit points by lowering the victim's Constitution modifier. (Creatures cannot be reduced to less than 1 hit point per Hit Die by Constitution loss.) This hit point loss might be fatal to a creature already injured, even if the Constitution loss alone does not kill it. Creatures without Strength scores or Constitution scores are unaffected by this spell.

## magic items

This adventure includes several noteworthy magic items.

### BOOK OF THE BLACK

**Price:** Major artifact  
**Body Slot:** —  
**Caster Level:** 20th  
**Aura:** Strong; (DC 21)  
 divination  
**Activation:** See text  
**Weight:** 1 lb.



*Book of the Black*

The secret work of The Lost Sage, Augathra the Mad, this book holds the legendary Black Chronology, written while she originally composed the Roll of the Years.

This large tome is rather nondescript. The pages are a sturdy vellum stained and weathered by long years. The writing on them, however, is completely unintelligible, thwarting all attempts at translation.

Like the *Leaves of One Night*, Shar cursed the *Book of the Black* to be illegible to anyone of her choosing. It cannot be freely translated by any magical means, even *wish*. A successful DC 45 Decipher Script check (translation magic provides a +1 competence bonus per spell level up to +9 for a *wish* or *miracle*) enables the reader to translate a single quatrain of the work. A spell can only be used to assist in the translation of one quatrain at a time.

Each time a quatrain is translated, the reader gains disturbing insights into the multiverse. These cannot be copied down or articulated to another. Each time this occurs, the reader gains a +1 insight bonus on attack rolls, damage rolls, skill checks, ability rolls, and saving throws for 24 hours, after which the knowledge fades. The bonus increases to +5 for Knowledge and Gather Information checks and bardic knowledge checks. Also during this time, the reader gains a +5 insight bonus on attack rolls and damage rolls, and +2 to his caster level against shadow adepts and followers of Shar. Such individuals automatically recognize and attack the reader on sight during this time period.

The effects from multiple quatrains do not stack, but the effect can be renewed each time another quatrain is translated.

**Lore:** Characters who have ranks in Gather Information, Knowledge (arcana), Knowledge (history), or Knowledge (religion) can research the *Book of the Black* to learn more about it. When a character makes a successful check, the following lore is revealed, including information from lower DCs.

*Arcana or History DC 25:* While Augathra the Mad received her visions and penned the Roll of the Years—the written standard for prophecy and the naming of the years for an age to come—at night she received visions of a Black Chronology woven



between the years and recorded them in her sleep in a tome called the *Book of the Black*.

*Religion DC 30, Gather Information DC 35, Arcana DC 35, or History DC 35:* The *Book of the Black* was discovered by the Dark Diviners of Windsong Tower in 684 DR. They discovered secrets within that they recorded in their own derivative work called the *Leaves of One Night*, but both works fell under a curse of illegibility and then disappeared shortly thereafter.

*Religion DC 30 or Arcana DC 45:* The secrets of the Black Chronology revealed in the tome are what drove Augathra to madness, and, ultimately, what would not let her die. It is said that the secrets within came from the mind of the goddess Shar and spoke of terrible things to come. It was she who cursed the book and caused it to disappear. Those with access to the work could learn the innermost secrets of the Dark Goddess.

**Prerequisites:** Major artifact.

**Cost to Create:** Major artifact.

### THE CHALICE OF AMAUNATOR

**Price:** Major artifact

**Body Slot:** —

**Caster Level:** 20th

**Aura:** Overwhelming; (DC 27) evocation

**Activation:** — (held)

**Weight:** 2 lb.

This bejeweled cup is the bane of Shadow Weave users, undead, and other creatures of darkness.

The chalice is an alabaster vessel about the size of two human fists stacked one atop the other. Three bands of golden inlays circling the rim and sides hold topazes, jacinths, and fire opals. The central band features two golden seals, one on each side. Each seal is about the size of a gold piece and bears the image of a sunburst. These seals can be slipped out of their mountings. When the PCs find the chalice, one seal is missing (see page 56).

The *Chalice of Amaunator* is self-identifying. Anyone holding the complete chalice (with both seals in place) learns one power each minute until all powers have been revealed with their commands.

Once a day, the chalice can produce a *sunbeam* effect (caster level 18th). To invoke this power, the chalice must be filled with any flammable liquid, such as lamp oil or alcohol.

Once a month, the chalice can produce a *plane shift* effect, with the following condition: The chalice allows only two destinations—the Material Plane or the House of the Triad—no matter what plane the user leaves from.

To invoke this power, the chalice must be filled with any natural, unaltered substance, such as water taken from a stream, sand from a beach, or even leaves or tufts of grass.

Also once a month, the chalice can produce *liquid sun*, a potent magic substance with a brilliant golden color. To invoke this power, the chalice must be filled with four vials of holy water, and both seals must be removed and dipped in the holy water. This requires a full-round action.

*Liquid sun* must be kept in the chalice until used. If it is poured out, its power is released, as noted below. *Liquid sun* does not spill or pour from the chalice unless the user wills it. The chalice can even be carried underwater without losing or diluting the *liquid sun* inside. *Liquid sun* can be held inside the

chalice indefinitely, but the chalice cannot produce another effect while holding it. *Liquid sun* produces illumination equal to a *daylight* spell for as long as it's held in the chalice.

The chalice user can hurl *liquid sun* from the chalice as a splash weapon with a range of 30 feet.

If simply splashed on the ground or flung into the air, *liquid sun* produces a maximized *sunburst* effect, heightened to 9th level (save DC 24), with a caster level 25th with regard to damage (but not range). The chalice user and any allies are not blinded by the *sunburst* effect. The effect is centered wherever the splash weapon lands; if the user hurled the chalice at a square (see Throw Splash Weapon, PH 158), roll 1d4 to determine the grid intersection where the *sunburst* effect originates.

*Liquid sun* poured or splashed on a Shadow Weave magic item, or on a creature, object, or magical effect brought into being through Shadow Weave magic, produces a *Mordenkainen's disjunction* effect (caster level 20th). Only the creature, object, or magical effect *liquid sun* touches is affected (along with all equipment). Shadow Weave magic is automatically disjoined on a direct hit. If a subject is merely splashed, there is a 50% chance that the subject is disjoined.

Shadow Weave artifacts or any epic Shadow Weave effects resist the *liquid sun's* effects for 1d10 rounds.

*Liquid sun* poured or splashed on shadow creatures or undead produces a *disintegrate* effect (caster level 20th); this deals 20d6 points of damage on a direct hit or 10d6 points on a splash. In either case, the creature can attempt a Fortitude save (DC 21) for half damage.

If *liquid sun* strikes a subject that falls into more than one category, all applicable effects occur, and the chalice user determines the order in which they are applied.

**Lore:** Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (arcana) or Knowledge (history) can research the *Chalice of Amaunator* to learn more about it. When a character makes a successful check, the following lore is revealed, including information from lower DCs.



*Chalice of Amaunator*



*Arcana DC 25 or History DC 25:* Amaunator was an ancient Netherese deity of the sun, law, order, and time. Amaunator was known for dispensing harsh—but fair—justice.

**Prerequisites:** Major artifact.

**Cost to Create:** Major artifact.

### MYRJALA'S SHARDS

**Price:** Minor artifact

**Body Slot:** — (held)

**Caster Level:** 15th

**Aura:** Strong; (DC 21) divination

**Activation:** — and standard

**Weight:** —

These strips of painted cloth were torn from a portrait. They are a boon to followers of Mystra.

Each shard is a bit of ancient canvas, painted on one side. It's about 2 inches wide and about 18 inches long. The edges show some fraying, but the paint holds the threads together.

A shard confers limited access to the goddess's Wisdom. A spellcaster who has chosen Mystra as a patron deity, and who holds or carries a shard while preparing a divination spell, can apply any one of the following metamagic feats to that spell without needing to use a higher-level spell slot: Enlarge Spell, Extend Spell, Silent Spell, Still Spell, or Widen Spell.

Characters who do not prepare their spells can use the shard's power, but doing so increases the spell's casting time to a full-round action (or an extra full-round action for spells that have casting times longer than one standard action).

In addition, any caster level check, skill check, or ability check the caster makes in conjunction with the spell (such as a caster level check to overcome spell resistance or a Spellcraft check to identify a magic aura) receives a +2 sacred bonus.

**Lore:** Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (arcana) or Knowledge (history) can research *Myrjala's Shards* to learn more about them. When a character makes a successful check, the following lore is revealed, including information from lower DCs.

*History DC 20 or Arcana DC 25:* Centuries ago, Elminster Aumar presented a life-sized portrait of the wizard Myrjala Darkeyes to the staff of Windsong Tower in return for magical knowledge and tutoring. The portrait hung in the Elders' Chamber until the Shadovars



*Myrjala's Shards*

invaded the school in their quest to recover the *Nether Scrolls*.

*Arcana or History DC 25:* Myrjala's portrait allowed viewers dedicated to Mystra to have limited communication with the goddess. The Shadovars recognized the portrait for what it was, and slashed it to ribbons, leaving behind seven strips that still held some magical potential.

**Prerequisites:** Minor artifact.

**Cost to Create:** Minor artifact.

### SHADOW ENGINE

**Price:** Major artifact

**Body Slot:** —

**Caster Level:** 25th

**Aura:** Overwhelming; (DC 28) all schools

**Activation:** — and free (command)

**Weight:** —

This is a floating, 5-foot-diameter sphere of alternating roiling magical energy and shadow. A jagged crack leaking small bursts of energy lances down one side.

The magic of the *Shadow Engine* can be tapped by any spellcaster within 30 feet who succeeds on a DC 30 Spellcraft check before casting a spell. Multiple spellcasters can attempt this at the same time.

Anyone touching the sphere takes 3d6 points of damage from raw magical energy and gains 1d4 negative levels (Fortitude DC 15 negates). A spellcaster able to harness the energy of the *Shadow Engine* gains several abilities. The spellcaster's spells are treated as if cast with the Shadow Weave Magic feat even the caster does not normally have access to the Shadow Weave. This allows the caster's spells to function even in areas of dead magic.

The *Shadow Engine* can also be used to cast spells accurately even in the auras of *faerzress* or other magic-distorting fields. In addition spells cast through the *Shadow Engine* are at +2 caster level and the save DC increases by 2. Each time the *Shadow Engine* is used to cast a spell, there is a 10% chance of a wild magic effect instead. Consult Table 2-1, *FR 55*, for possible effects.

A spellcaster who succeeds on a DC 45 Spellcraft check within 30 feet of the *Shadow Engine* can cause it to move in the same manner as a *sphere of annihilation* (*DMG*



*Shadow Engine*

Illus. by Fred Hooper

Illus. by Francis Tsai



279). Only one spellcaster can control the *Shadow Engine* in this way. Another spellcaster can attempt to wrest away control of the *Shadow Engine* just as described in the *DMG*, but must succeed on his own DC 45 Spellcraft check first.

It is possible that the *Shadow Engine* has other untapped powers waiting to be discovered. The sharn spirit trapped within the artifact has gone quiescent, but can become active once again in your campaign as you see fit. (A description of the sharn is provided later in this appendix, so that it can be used for this purpose or in any other appropriate situation.)

**Lore:** Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (arcana) or Knowledge (history) can research the *Shadow Engine* to learn more about it. When a character makes a successful check, the following lore is revealed.

*Arcana or History DC 30:* The damaged and corrupted remains of ancient Synod's *mythallar* still exists as an artifact of raw magical energy inhabited by the spirit of a unique sharn consisting of the competing personalities of Augathra the Mad, the Dark Diviner Shar Cormrael, and the phaerimm Xeris.

**Prerequisites:** Major artifact.

**Cost to Create:** Major artifact.

### TABLETS OF PHARYSSOLNYTH

**Price:** Minor artifact

**Body Slot:** — (held)

**Caster Level:** 20th

**Aura:** Strong; (DC 21) transmutation

**Activation:** — and free (manipulation)

**Weight:** 18 lb.

These black slates appear blank at first glance, but a closer look and a delicate touch reveals a trove of information about dragonkind.

There are thirty-seven tablets, each made from a single black dragon scale. Each scale has one side that is smoothly polished and one in its natural state. Pharyssolnyth's work lies on the polished side, scribed in neat Draconic. The raw sides contain additional notes, scribed in ancient Elven; these notes are incredibly hard to read, but very informative.

The information on the tablets is very valuable in and of itself; anyone who has the tablets at hand gains a +4 bonus on any bardic knowledge, loremaster lore, or Knowledge (arcana) check relating to dragons or dragon magic. A check made using the tablets as a reference requires at least 10 minutes, and the character must be able to read both Elven and Draconic to get the benefit.



Tablets of Pharyssolnyth

In addition, the tablets can provide special insight once per century. A character studying the tablets for a tenday gains a +2 insight bonus on saving throws against any spell or spell-like ability from a true dragon.

**Lore:** Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (arcana) or Knowledge (history) can research the *Tablets of Pharyssolnyth* to learn more about them. When a character makes a successful check, the following lore is revealed.

*Arcana or History DC 25:* The silver dragon Pharyssolnyth of Yrlaphon created these tablets. They describe how dragons learn, understand, and cast magic. Over the centuries, other scholars have added their own notes, until the tablets became the definitive treatises on dragon magic in Faerûn.

**Prerequisites:** Minor artifact.

**Cost to Create:** Minor artifact.

### WINDSONG TOWERKIN RING

**Price:** Minor artifact

**Body Slot:** Ring

**Caster Level:** 13th

**Aura:** Strong; (DC 21) conjuration

**Activation:** —

**Weight:** —



Windsong Towerkin ring

*Inscribed on the inner face of this nondescript silver band is the symbol of Windsong Tower: a harp surrounded by swirling winds.*

*Windsong Towerkin rings* date back to the height of Myth Drannor and the wizard's school known as Windsong Tower.

This ring negates the range limit (if any) of spells, spell-like abilities, or supernatural abilities from the subschool of teleportation.

If the wearer of a *Windsong Towerkin ring* uses any *portal* within 5 miles of the city of Myth Drannor, the *portal* deposits him amid the rubble where Windsong Tower's entrance hall once stood. This property can be negated as a free action by silent act of will. In effect, this ability is equivalent to the ring acting as a key and the *portal* having the additional properties of keyed and variability.

**Lore:** Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (arcana) can research *Windsong Towerkin rings* to learn more about them. When a character makes a successful check, the following lore is revealed, including information from lower DCs.

*DC 20:* Windsong Tower was a wizard's school in Myth Drannor before the Weeping War. The students and faculty of



Windsong Tower each possessed a ring known as a *Windsong Towerkin ring*.

**DC 25:** *Windsong Towerkin rings* enhance the bearer's ability to *teleport*.

**Prerequisites:** Minor artifact.

**Cost to Create:** Minor artifact.

## Monsters

Four creatures that play roles in this adventure (or in the case of the sharn, that *could* play a role either in the adventure or its aftermath) are described in detail in the following section.

## Krinth

The Netherese arcanists of Thultanthar, the City of Shade, regularly trafficked with the shadow demons of the Plane of Shadows. From time to time, such shadow demons forced themselves upon individual slaves. Krinth are a race of humanoids descended from such couplings, although their own oral histories suggest otherwise.

Dour and humorless, krinth are accustomed to working hard and playing hard. They are known for their physical endurance, their single-mindedness, and their quick tempers.



Krinth

## Krinth soldier

*The humanoid creature standing before you stands about six feet tall and weighs about 200 pounds. He has a black hair, black eyes, and dusky gray skin. He is clad in a dark black breastplate and has a fine ranseur at the ready.*

The armies of Thultanthar are composed largely of krinth soldiers.

## strategies and tactics

Krinth soldiers prefer to strike from ambush at twilight, but they fight in any conditions without fear. They tend to rely on their masters for direction and tactics. In the absence of orders, they usually fall back on direct melee engagement with the most obvious foes.

## society

The krinth race became fertile some 1,000 or-so years ago, due to the hidden hand of Shar. Krinth now divide themselves into the demonspawn (the direct product of a demon/slave coupling) and true-born (descended from a pair of krinth), with the latter heavily discriminating against the former.

Despite their single-mindedness in duty, krinth are naturally chaotic. They also tend to favor the

Illus. by Eric Deschamps

## Krinth Lore

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (the planes) can learn more about krinth. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs.

### Knowledge (the planes)

DC	Result
11	Krinth are the property of slaves of the Shadovars and demons, and are adept at functioning in a shadowy environment.
16	Born of fear and malice, krinth are nearly fearless.
21	Most krinth dwell in the City of Shade as privileged slaves, but small groups of escaped krinth can be found in the Realms Above and the Realms Below.

## KRINTH WARRIOR

CR 1

Male krinth warrior 1  
 Usually CE Medium humanoid (extraplanar)  
**Init** +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., Listen +2, Spot +2  
**Languages** Common, Netherese

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**AC** 15, touch 10, flat-footed 15  
 (+0 Dex, +5 armor)  
**hp** 6 (1 HD)  
**Immune** shaken condition  
**Fort** +4, **Ref** +0, **Will** +1; +1 against spells and effects that have the shadow descriptor, +4 against fear

---

**Speed** 20 ft. (4 squares) in breastplate; base speed 30 ft.  
**Melee** mwk ranseur +3 (2d4+1/x3) or  
**Melee** short sword +2 (1d6+1/19–20)  
**Base Atk** +1; **Grp** +2

---

**Abilities** Str 13, Dex 11, Con 14; Int 9, Wis 10, Cha 6  
**Feats** Alertness  
**Skills** Hide –1 (+1 in shadowy conditions), Listen +2, Spot +2  
**Possessions** breastplate, masterwork ranseur, short sword



evilness of their sires, although this tendency is less pronounced among escaped krinth than those who reside in the City of Shade.

Krinth do not have a well-developed racial culture. Although the krinth of Thultanthar are slaves, they occupy a higher social stratum than other humanoid slaves in the City of Shade. The krinth are favored by the Shadovars and treat their inferiors with contempt.

Krinth slaves are just now slowly awakening to the reality of their enslavement, thanks to the whispers of Shar. Although they do not resent their Shadovar masters, a growing number of krinth have escaped to see more of Faerûn. Most escaped krinth slaves become mercenaries and seek employ in a larger organization, recreating their social niche in the middle of the pack.

## Krinth Racial Traits

— Krinth are humanoids. Those native to the Plane of Shadow (most adults of the current generation) have the extraplanar subtype.

— +2 Constitution, -2 Charisma: Krinth are hardy and resistant to illness and damage, but they often lack self-determination and a sense of purpose outside that given to them by others.

— Medium: As Medium creatures, krinth have no special bonuses or penalties due to their size.

— Krinth base land speed is 30 feet.

— Darkvision out to 60 feet.

— +1 racial bonus on all saves. Krinth are resilient in mind as well as body.

— +1 bonus on all saving throws against spells and spell-like abilities that have the shadow descriptor.

— +2 racial bonus on Hide checks in shadowy conditions.

— +4 racial bonus on saving throws against fear. As the spawn of demons, krinth were born of fear and malice.

— Krinth cannot become shaken, and they ignore the effects of the shaken condition; they can still become frightened or panicked, though in most cases their innate resistance to fear keeps them from being subject to these conditions.

— Automatic Languages: Common and Halruaan. Bonus Languages: Abyssal, Chondathan, Damaran, Netherese, Undercommon.

— Favored Class: Fighter. A multiclass krinth's fighter class does not count when determining whether he takes an experience point penalty.

— Krinth clerics typically worship powerful demon lords, Bane, Lolth, Laduguer, or Shar, depending on their outlook and where they reside.

— Level Adjustment: +0.

## Krinth in Faerûn

Most krinth are slaves in the City of Shade, performing high-level tasks as well as menial labor for their Shadovar masters. They tend to reside in subterranean lairs even on the floating city, since they prefer to live in isolation from other races. Krinth who escape the city often retreat to the Underdark if they can find entry; otherwise, they simply travel as far from Anauroch as possible. They consider open terrain to be indefensible and uncomfortable, and the entire race suffers from agoraphobia. In cases where they cannot find their way into the Realms Below, krinth often take up residence in heavy forests, jungles, or in mountain valleys hidden away from the sun and other humanoids. There are also said to be colonies of escaped krinth left behind on the Plane of Shadow.

## Shadow Sea Serpent

*This creature resembles a cross between a giant eel and a night-mare whale. It's bigger than a freight wagon. It has a bulbous head, great lantern eyes and a long, beaklike snout full of curved teeth. It has tail flukes and small flippers just behind its thin neck. Its shiny hide is the color of dirty slate, mottled with veins of lighter gray.*

Despite the name, a shadow sea serpent is an air-breathing, warm-blooded predator that combines the worst aspects of carnivorous

## Shadow Sea Serpent Lore

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (arcana) can learn more about shadow sea serpents. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including information from lower DCs.

### Knowledge (arcana)

DC	Result
14	This creature is a shadow sea serpent, an amphibious hunter bred by the Shadovars. This result reveals all magical beast traits.
19	Shadow sea serpents can stun or damage prey with sonic attacks, and their bites are deadly as well.
24	The Shadovars buy the shadow sea serpents' loyalty with gifts of living prey.
29	Shadow sea serpents are air-breathers that can hold their breath for extended periods of time, and can echolocate as whales do. Their echolocation and sonic powers are most effective underwater.



**SHADOW SEA SERPENT****CR 12**

Usually NE Huge magical beast  
**Init** +6; **Senses** blindsight 60 ft. (240 ft. underwater),  
 darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Listen +11, Spot +11

**Languages** Netherese

**AC** 25, touch 16, flat-footed 23  
 (–2 size, +2 Dex, +7 natural, +8 deflection)

**hp** 162 (12 HD); **DR** 5/piercing

**Resist** sonic 10

**Fort** +18, **Ref** +12, **Will** +5

**Speed** 20 ft. (4 squares), swim 50 ft.

**Melee** bite +20 (2d6+10) and  
 tail slam +16 (2d6+5)

**Space** 15 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

**Base Atk** +12; **Grp** +30

**Atk Options** Combat Reflexes; sonic lance, sonic wave, trip

**Abilities** Str 31, Dex 15, Con 26, Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 6

**Feats** Combat Reflexes, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative,  
 Lightning Reflexes, Weapon Focus (tail slam)

**Skills** Hide +12, Listen +11, Search +12, Spot +11, Swim +18

**Advancement** 13–24 HD (Huge); 25–36 HD (Gargantuan)

**Sonic Lance (Ex)** A shadow sea serpent can generate a ray of sound with a range of 120 feet and no range increment. The ray deals 6d6 points of sonic damage. After using this power, a serpent must wait 1d4 rounds before using it again. Underwater, the lance's range is 240 feet.

**Sonic Wave (Ex)** Once an hour, a shadow sea serpent can generate a wave of stunning sound in a 120-foot spread centered on the serpent. A living creature in the

whales and unnamed horrors from the Plane of Shadow, where the Shadovars bred the species.

A shadow sea serpent is a powerful and agile swimmer. On land it is ungainly, but can slither along like a massive snake.

**strategies and tactics**

Shadow sea serpents are pack-hunters that try to overwhelm their prey with swift attacks. Serpents hunting underwater circle their prey for a time, firing off sonic

spread (except other shadow sea serpents) must make a successful DC 24 Fortitude save or be stunned for 1d4 rounds. The save DC is Constitution-based. Underwater, the spread's range is 240 feet. A creature subjected to several waves at once need save only once.

**Trip (Ex)** A serpent that hits with a bite attack can attempt to trip the opponent (+18 check modifier) without using an action, making a touch attack or provoking attacks of opportunity. If the attempt fails, the opponent cannot react to trip the serpent. Underwater, a tripped opponent that is at least one size category smaller than the serpent is hurled 10 feet per difference in size category in a direction of the serpent's choice. For example, a Medium opponent is hurled 20 feet.

**Deflection (Sp)** A shadow sea serpent generates a magic field that gives it a deflection bonus to Armor Class equal to its Constitution modifier (minimum +1). This power is always active and has a caster level equal to the serpent's Hit Dice. If the field is negated or suppressed, the serpent can activate it again as a free action on its next turn.

**Hold Breath (Ex)** A shadow sea serpent can hold its breath for a number of rounds equal to eight times its Constitution modifier before it risks drowning.

**Skills** A shadow sea serpent has a +8 racial bonus on Hide checks and a +4 racial bonus on Listen, Search, and Spot checks. It has a +8 racial bonus on Swim checks to perform some special action or avoid a hazard. It can always take 10 on a Swim check, even if distracted or endangered. It can use the run action while swimming, provided it swims in a straight line.

waves to disable as many creatures as they can before charging in for melee attacks. Once in melee combat, they count on trip attacks to scatter and confuse foes. If foes resist the sonic waves, the serpents use their sonic lances to weaken the opposition before closing in.

On land, shadow sea serpents usually bore in and use their sonic waves as they approach. If foes outrun them, the serpents try to bring them down with their sonic lances.



*Shadow sea serpent*

Illus. by William O'Connor



## sample encounter

The Shadovars use shadow sea serpents as hunting animals and guardians. Their presence in the Shadow Sea discourages anyone from attempting to plumb its depths.

**Guardian Pair (EL 14):** These serpents might be assigned to guard a specific item or place, or to patrol the sea's shore looking for anyone walking along the beach. They hide in the shallows and attack with surprise when they can.

**Hunting Pod (EL 15–17):** The Shadovars send these groups into the depths of the sea to search the bottom for valuables and to root out any aquatic invaders.

## ecology

Shadow sea serpents are superbly adapted to the murky deeps. They prefer to eat warm, living flesh, but will consume almost anything they can catch or find.

Shadow sea serpents are aware they've been bred to serve, but they enjoy the freedom of the sea and they eagerly accept gifts of living flesh from their Shadovar masters.

Shadow sea serpents can speak Draconic, and can also communicate with each other through a system of clicks, screeches, and whistles.

**Environment:** Despite their Shadovar-bred heritage, shadow sea serpents are natives of the Material Plane. They prefer the cool, gloomy depths of the sea, but won't hesitate to slither out onto land to catch prey.

**Typical Physical Characteristics:** An adult shadow sea serpent is about 25 feet long from snout to tail and about 4 feet in diameter. It weighs about 16 tons.

## environment

Though these creatures are mostly restricted to the Shadow Sea, it's possible that the Shadovars will (or perhaps already have) introduced shadow sea serpents into other bodies of water as part of a plan of conquest or economic disruption (a serpent's sonic lance could wreak havoc with bridges or shipping).

## sharn

*The creature floating before you has a coiling black and silver body lit by continual magic flares. Its three heads and grinning jaws sprout from a single trunk. No visible eyes, hair, or ears mar the smooth skin above its flaring nostrils. Two massive arm-trunks flare from the sides of its body and another arm-trunk sprouts from its back. Each arm-trunk supports three smaller arms equipped with clawed three-digit hands. Each of the nine small hands has multiple small eyes covering it.*



Sharn

Sharns are the product of a bizarre magical transformation uniting three or more dragons, fey, giants, humanoids, magical beasts, or monstrous humanoids into a single aberrant form.

## strategies and tactics

Sharns compensate for their relatively low HD by casting defensive spells and then attacking through their hex portals. They maneuver their portals to encircle foes, making it all but impossible for them to escape without provoking attacks of opportunity.

Sharns also favor counterspelling opponents and unleashing spells of their own, or employing melee attacks in the same round. Advanced sharns and sharns with class levels often take Improved Counterspell as a feat.

## ecology

Sharns are effectively immortal and seem to be tied to each other in the form of a collective consciousness. Although they need to breathe and eat, they seem to subsist on an infrequent diet of



**SHARN****CR 8**

Always CN Large aberration

**Init** +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +10, Spot +10

**Languages** Common, Draconic, Dwarfen, Elven, Sylvan

**AC** 19, touch 14, flat-footed 14

(-1 size, +5 Dex, +5 natural)

**Miss Chance** 40% (attacks of opportunity emanating from hex portals only)

**hp** 38 (4 HD); regeneration 2; **DR** 10/cold iron or lawful

**Immune** mind-affecting spells and abilities; inviolate form

**Resist** evasion; SR 20

**Fort** +6, **Ref** +6, **Will** +8

**Speed** 10 ft. (2 squares), fly 40 ft. (perfect)

**Melee** 9 claws +6 each (1d6+4) and  
3 bites +4 each (2d6+2)

**Space** 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft. (5 ft. through a hex portal)

**Base Atk** +3; **Grp** +11

**Atk Options** independent action, weapons

**Special Actions** hex portals

**Favored Soul Spells Known** (CL 6th):

3rd (4/day)—*cure serious wounds*, *magic circle against law* (DC 17), *searing light*

2nd (6/day)—*aid*, *bull's strength*, *eagle's splendor*, *sound burst* (DC 16)

1st (8/day)—*bane* (DC 15), *command* (DC 15), *detect law* (DC 15), *magic weapon* (DC 15), *shield of faith*

0 (6/day)—*cure minor wounds*, *detect magic*, *detect poison*, *guidance*, *read magic*, *resistance*, *virtue*

**Sorcerer Spells Known** (CL 6th):

3rd (4/day)—*lightning bolt* (DC 18)

2nd (6/day)—*protection from arrows*, *resist energy*

1st (8/day)—*mage armor*, *magic missile*, *protection from law*, *shield*

0 (6/day)—*acid splash*, *dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *ghost sound*, *ray of frost* (+8 ranged touch), *read magic*, *resistance*

**Abilities** Str 18, Dex 20, Con 20, Int 18, Wis 18, Cha 20

**SQ** archetypal shape, incorporate consciousness, inviolate form

**Feats** Alertness<sup>B</sup>, Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes, Multiattack<sup>B</sup>, Multiweapon Fighting<sup>B</sup>

**Skills** Bluff +10, Concentration +10, Diplomacy +9, Disguise +5 (+7 in character), Intimidate +7, Knowledge (arcana) +10, Knowledge (religion) +10, Listen +10, Search +6, Sense Motive +9, Spellcraft +11, Spot +10

**Advancement** 5–8 HD (Large); 9–12 HD (Huge); and/or by character class

**Archetypal Shape (Ex)** No other creatures can assume the form of a sharn (or anything approximating it) by means of an alternate form ability, *polymorph*, or other spells, spell-like abilities, or supernatural abilities.

**Hex Portals (Su)** As a full-round action, a sharn can form from one to three miniature portals—ethereal windows—anywhere within 20 feet of its body, each portal coalescing out of a swirl of purple motes. Each portal is a translucent hexagonal window of purple light, 3 feet in diameter. Hex portals can be dispelled, but a dispelled hex portal can be reformed as noted above.

A sharn can maintain up to three portals through which it can see, cast spells, and even launch melee attacks. A sharn threatens the area within 5 feet of each of its portals. Like a threatening creature, a portal can therefore be used to flank a foe.

A sharn can cause one or more of its portals to disappear as an immediate action, but cannot form a new portal until it uses its full-round action to create hex portals. If a sharn moves farther than 100 feet from one of its portals, the portal automatically disappears.

Once formed, each separate portal can move independently up to 20 feet per round as a swift action before the sharn takes its regular actions. The hex portals do not block movement, line of sight, or missile fire. A character can occupy the same space as a sharn's portal with no adverse effect other than proximity to the sharn's attacks.

An opponent cannot attack through a sharn's hex portals but can ready an action to mount an attack against an attack emanating from a hex portal. Because of the concealmentlike nature of the hex portals, such attacks have a 40% miss chance.

**Incorporate Consciousness (Su)** A sharn of less than 12 HD can grow by incorporating the body and consciousness of a dragon, fey, giant, humanoid, magical beast, or monstrous humanoid into its form. This process takes 1 hour to complete and requires the voluntary participation of both the sharn and the creature joining the sharn's collective consciousness. The chance of success is 10% per HD of the sharn minus 3. (For example, the chance of success for a 4 HD sharn is 10%, while the chance of success for an 11 HD sharn is 80%.)

If the process successfully concludes without disruption, it is irreversible without the aid of epic-level magic. The sharn inherits the memories and personality of the incorporated consciousness, but none of its abilities, and advances 1 additional HD as a result. (See the section on advancement below.)

If the process fails or is disrupted in any fashion, the sharn is reduced to 1d4 hit points and the consciousness being absorbed is permanently destroyed (reversible only by means of a *miracle*, *true resurrection*, or *wish*).

**Independent Action (Ex)** A sharn's three separate consciousnesses allow it to take three separate actions and a move action, or a full-round action and a move action, or a full-round action and a separate standard action, each round. It can thus cast two separate spells in a round, though the two spells must come from the lists of different classes due to the peculiar structure of a sharn's mental processes.

**Inviolate Form (Ex)** A sharn is immune to spells and effects that would significantly change its bodily form or composition, including polymorph, petrification, gaseous form, and transformative attacks such as the touch of an aboleth's tentacle or a chaos beast. It is incapable of lowering its immunity to these effects, even to its own spells.

**Regeneration (Ex)** A sharn takes normal damage from lawful-aligned weapons, and from spells or effects that have the lawful descriptor.

**Spells** A sharn casts arcane spells as a 6th-level sorcerer and divine spells as a 6th-level favored soul (detailed in *Complete Divine*).

Sharns use their sorcerer and favored soul spells as if they were spell-like abilities, so they require no verbal, somatic, or material components.

**Weapons (Ex)** A sharn can wield up to nine weapons. Sharns are proficient in all simple and martial weapons. A sharn is considered one size category smaller for the purpose of what size weapons it can wield. Weapon attacks replace claw attacks as primary attacks. A typical weapon attack employs a longsword (+6 melee, 1d8+4 damage).



**Feats** Because of its independent action ability and 20 Dexterity, a sharn's Combat Reflexes feat allows it to make fifteen additional attacks of opportunity, but no more than five attacks of opportunity with any given attack.

subterranean gasses and geodes. Sharns seem capable of resting one or more aspects of their personality at a time, allowing them to forgo sleeping altogether.

Sharns are incapable of natural reproduction. New sharns are created through spells, known only to elder sharns, that unite three disparate consciousness into a new form.

**Environment:** Sharns dwell in the deepest reaches of the Underdark. They favor regions with a concentration of earth nodes (see *Underdark* pages 49–52) for reasons not well understood.

**Typical Physical Characteristics:** Sharns typically weigh some 3,000 pounds and stand between 12 and 15 feet tall.

**Alignment:** Sharns are always chaotic neutral, and embody magical chaos.

## society

Sharns operate singly or in pairs. They gather together in parliaments of up to four dozen creatures.

Sharn society is a bedlam of political argument and social intrigue. Power struggles, usually based on ideological conflicts, are constant. This inward-looking focus does not prevent sharns from becoming embroiled in the affairs of other species, even across the planes. Sharn ideologies are almost incomprehensible to other races and their agendas are never obvious, making sharn society all but impenetrable to outsiders.

## typical treasure

Sharns have double the number of coins and quadruple the number of items for a monster of their challenge rating.

## sharns with class levels

A sharn has two favored classes: sorcerer and favored soul (*Complete Divine* page 6). As associated classes, its sorcerer and favored soul levels stack with a sharn's innate spellcasting ability. Levels of other classes (even spellcasting classes) are nonassociated. Sharns often take levels in mystic theurge, since they already meet the entrance requirements.

A sharn character cannot gain a familiar unless it takes at least one level in a class that grants the ability to summon one, but thereafter its levels in that class stack with its effective racial caster levels to determine the familiar's abilities.

*Level Adjustment:* +5.

## Advanced sharns

Each additional HD gained through advancement (not class levels) by a sharn reflects the addition of an additional consciousness. The difficulties of coordinating internal thought processes prevent

## sharn lore

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (arcana), Knowledge (history), or Knowledge (the planes) can learn more about sharns. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs.

### Knowledge (history)

#### DC Result

- 18 Sharns have dwelt in the Sharnlands beneath the Lower Delimbiyr Vale for centuries, and have long battled the phaerimms.
- 23 Sharns are responsible for the Sharn Wall, which, at least until recently, kept the phaerimms imprisoned beneath Anauroch.
- 28 It is said that dwarves from Clan Ironstar, moon and wood elves from Illefarn, centaurs from the High Forest, humans of Athalantar, and even a handful of dragons have all become sharns. It is believed that desperation drove such creatures to become sharns in the hopes that their cultures might someday be restored by a discorporation of sharns. In the Year of Lighting Storms (1374 DR), most such sharns reverted back to their original forms as three (or more) separate creatures in the wake of the high magic ritual that created the city of Rhymanthiin.
- 33 The original sharns were formed from the ninety dark-elf wizards and three green-elf High Mages who attempted to quell the Dark Disaster that consumed Miyeritar (now the site of the High Moor) during the Third Crown War. Centuries later, the process for creating new sharns was discovered.

### Knowledge (arcana)

#### DC Result

- 18 Also known as shiftshades, blackclaws, shimmer shadows, skulkingdeaths, or the *phaorn'quessir*, sharns are aberrations with multiple claw and bite attacks that move preternaturally fast.
- 23 Sharns are the result of a bizarre magical transformation uniting three or more dragons, fey, giants, humanoids, magical beasts, or monstrous humanoids into a single form.
- 28 Sharns are capable of parallel courses of thought and action. They can cast both arcane and divine spells.
- 33 Sharns have the ability to create hex portals, allowing them to cast spells or reach through such ethereal windows to attack their foes from unexpected angles.

### Knowledge (the planes)

#### DC Result

- 28 Each sharn is really a "bubble" extruding from a demiplane in which all of the consciousnesses who have been incorporated into individual sharns reside.
- 33 The demiplane containing the sharn consciousnesses consists of the roiling miasma of the Dark Disaster.



such advanced sharns from performing additional independent actions. However, each new consciousness does contribute to the whole in the form of ability increases at each new HD: +1 Int, +1 Wis, and +1 Cha, in addition to the standard increases all creatures get from advancing in HD.

Each additional 2 HD gained through advancement (not class levels) by a sharn increases its effective sorcerer and favored-soul levels by 1 each.

## sharns in faerûn

Sharns are encountered primarily in the Sharnlands, located 16 miles below the Lower Delimibyr Vale. These sprawling caverns run for miles through the deepest part of the Northdark. Entire caves made of crystals are common in the area, and such a place resembles nothing so much as the interior of a massive geode. The region is haunted by more sharns than can be seen anywhere else within or under Faerûn—although even here, sharns are rare.

## veserab

*An odd, faceless creature with a large maw and fan-shaped ears floats before you on gargoylelike wings, with four spindly legs sprouting from its midnight-blue tubular body.*

### veserab lore

Characters who have ranks in Knowledge (arcana) can learn more about veserabs. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs.

#### Knowledge (arcana)

DC	Result
14	This creature is a veserab, a flying wormlike native of the Plane of Shadow that travels in herds. This result reveals all magical beast traits.
19	Veserabs can spew a noxious cloud of fog if attacking or threatened. They can also attack with their claws and bite, pouncing on prey from above.
24	Veserabs are easily trained and make excellent aerial mounts. They actually enjoy carrying riders. They like to cool themselves in water.
29	Veserabs are blind, but can see in a manner similar to bats, and have a keen sense of smell. They are immune to gaze attacks and illusions.

Veserabs are flying wormlike creatures native to the Plane of Shadow, often employed as mounts by the denizens of that umbral landscape.

## VESERAB

CR 4

Always N Large magical beast (extraplanar)

**Init** +3; **Senses** blind, blindsense 240 ft., scent, Listen +10

**AC** 16, touch 12, flat-footed 13

(–1 size, +3 Dex, +4 natural)

**hp** 42 (5 HD)

**Immune** gaze attacks, illusions, visual effects

**Fort** +7, **Ref** +7, **Will** +1

**Speed** 20 ft. (4 squares), fly 120 ft. (average); Flyby Attack

**Melee** bite +8 (1d8+4) and

2 claws +6 each (1d6+2)

**Space** 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

**Base Atk** +5; **Grp** +13

**Atk Options** pounce, rake

**Special Actions** noxious breath

**Abilities** Str 19, Dex 17, Con 17, Int 2, Wis 10, Cha 4

**Feats** Flyby Attack, Multiattack

**Skills** Listen +10, Move Silently +9

**Advancement** 6–9 HD (Large); 10–18 HD (Huge)

**Blindsense (Ex)** A veserab uses echolocation to pinpoint creatures within 240 feet. Opponents still have total concealment against a creature that has blindsense. A *silence* spell negates this ability and effectively blinds the veserab.

**Pounce (Ex)** When a veserab dives on a foe during the first round of combat, it can make a full attack.

**Rake (Ex)** A veserab that pounces on an opponent can make two rake attacks (+6 melee) with its hind legs for 1d6+2 slashing damage each.

**Noxious Breath (Ex)** As a standard action, a veserab can breathe out a black cloud of noxious fumes similar to a *stinking cloud* spell in a 20-foot cone that lasts for 10 rounds. Once a veserab uses its noxious breath, it can't use it again until 1d4 rounds later. Veserabs are immune to the effects of their own and other veserabs' noxious breath.

The cloud obscures all sight, including darkvision, beyond 5 feet. A creature within 5 feet has concealment. Creatures farther away have total concealment.

Living creatures in the cloud become nauseated.

This condition lasts as long as the creature is in the cloud and for 1d4+1 rounds after it leaves. (Roll separately for each nauseated character.) Any creature that succeeds on its save but remains in the cloud must continue to save each round on the veserab's turn.

A moderate wind (11+ mph) disperses the cloud in 4 rounds; a strong wind (21+ mph) disperses the cloud in 1 round.

**Scent (Ex)** Veserabs have the scent ability. Creatures that cover themselves in veserab dung can easily mask their scent. This spoils the veserab's ability to properly detect or identify the creature and increases the Survival DC to track the creature to 20.

**Skills** Veserabs have a +4 racial bonus on Listen and Move Silently checks.



## strategies and tactics

Veserabs fight viciously to defend their mates and calves. They prefer to incapacitate targets with their noxious breath and then pounce on their quarry by diving from above, biting and clawing.

## sample encounter

Veserabs gather and are raised in herds of 5-20, usually containing three cows and one noncombatant calf for each bull. They are generally docile, but become aggressive if they sense small potential prey or skittish when sensing a potential threat or something unknown.

**Herd (EL.10)** A herd of ten veserabs, including two bulls, six cows, and two calves, cools itself in a small oasis just over some dunes and in the shadow of the great City of Shade. PCs who try to approach the veserabs will find the creatures skittish and defensive, particularly of their young.

## ecology

Veserabs are carnivores and take flight to catch small birds and the like. However, they do not fly so much as swim through the air, reaching to grab a piece of the firmament and pull themselves forward. They swim in water to clean themselves and cool off. Veserabs communicate through a series of short, high-pitched screeches and whistles.

**Environment:** Veserabs are native to the Plane of Shadow. They have been brought to the desert of Anauroch with their Shadovar handlers, but have not found adaptation to the harsh environment difficult.

**Typical Physical Characteristics:** Veserabs look like a cross between furless bats and earthworms. A typical adult bull or cow weighs over 500 pounds and is 10 feet long with a 20-foot wingspan.

## for player characters

Veserabs might appeal to PCs as mounts or summoned monsters.

## VESERABS AS MOUNTS

Like horses, veserabs can be used as mounts. They are often trained by the Shadovars to fly in tight military formation at high altitudes to avoid surprise attacks from the ground. The creatures actually enjoy carrying riders, undulating in pleasure when mounted. Veserab handlers sometimes mark their mounts by placing copper bands on the veserabs' legs.

Veserab calves are worth 12,000 gp apiece on the open market. They mature at a somewhat slower rate than horses. Professional trainers charge 4,000 gp to rear or train a veserab. Training a veserab as an aerial mount requires a successful Handle Animal check (DC 15 for a calf or DC 30 for an adult). Trainers can reduce the DC by 5, and the rearing time by half, by using a magic bridle enchanted for this purpose. Once a veserab has trained with its rider, its devotion is absolute—to the point that it would spit noxious fumes into the face of anyone else who tries to mount it.

Riding a trained veserab requires an exotic saddle, but it is easily ridden, giving its rider a +2 circumstance bonus to Ride checks. A veserab can fight while carrying a rider, but the rider cannot also attack unless he succeeds on a Ride check (PH 80).

**Carrying Capacity:** A light load for a veserab is up to 350 pounds; a medium load, 351–700 pounds; and a heavy load, 701–1,050 pounds.

## SUMMONING VESERABS

A typical veserab can be summoned using a *summon monster IV* or higher-level *summon monster* spell. Treat the veserab as if it were on the 4th-level list on the Summon Monster table (PH 287).

## veserabs in faerûn

Veserabs are the preferred mounts of the Shadovar, spellcasters from the City of Shade, who brought them to Faerûn from their native Plane of Shadow. In Faerûn, veserab mounts are offered for sale only in the markets of the City of Shade.



Veserab





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