

THE SHRINE OF THE NAMELESS ONE



An adventure for 5th-6th level characters

by BRENDAN HAINLINE



ROGUE
HEXAGON 
studios

Version: 1.0

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS, D&D, Wizards of the Coast, Forgotten Realms, the dragon ampersand, *Player's Handbook*, *Monster Manual*, *Dungeon Master's Guide*, D&D Adventurers League, all other Wizards of the Coast product names, and their respective logos are trademarks of Wizards of the Coast in the USA and other countries. All characters and their distinctive likenesses are property of Wizards of the Coast. This material is protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America. Any reproduction or unauthorized use of the material or artwork contained herein is prohibited without the express written permission of Wizards of the Coast.

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS, D&D, Wizards of the Coast, Forgotten Realms, Ravenloft, the dragon ampersand, and all other Wizards of the Coast product names, and their respective logos are trademarks of Wizards of the Coast in the USA and other countries.

©2017 Wizards of the Coast LLC, PO Box 707, Renton, WA 98057-0707, USA. Manufactured by Hasbro SA, Rue Emile-Boéchat 31, 2800 Delémont, CH. Represented by Hasbro Europe, 4 The Square, Stockley Park, Uxbridge, Middlesex, UB11 1ET, UK.

This work contains material that is copyright Wizards of the Coast and/or other authors. Such material is used with permission under the Community Content Agreement for Dungeon Masters Guild. All other original material in this work is copyright 2017 by *Rogue Hexagon Studios* and published under the Community Content Agreement for Dungeon Masters Guild.

INTRODUCTION

An Avowed, one of the librarian-monks of Candlekeep, has gone missing. This adventure leads the party into the Cloakwood in search of the missing Avowed. Along the way they will encounter goblins and other dangers of the Cloakwood, and finally face the true threat: a cult devoted to a cryptic and malevolent entity of destruction, known only as 'The Nameless One.' The cult seeks to use the secret lore of the kidnapped Avowed to help them summon their dark master. It is up to the party to put an end to the cult's evil plot.

BACKGROUND

The legend of the Nameless One is not well known, but goes as follows. Somewhere in the multiverse is an entity of destruction that exists for one purpose: to destroy creation. This entity, however, is asleep, and can only be woken up if someone were to speak its true name aloud. For this purpose, the gods have hidden its name, with the hopes that no mortal might learn it and speak it in order to bring about the end of everything.

THE CULT OF THE NAMELESS ONE

The Cult of the Nameless is a secret organization dedicated to the purpose of discovering the true name of the Nameless One so that they might speak it aloud and bring about the destruction of the world. It is, fortunately for everyone, not a large cult – it is hard to recruit followers on no promises of wealth and power, only oblivion. Those few who have joined are mostly madmen and nihilists, and cells of the cult are not known for working together well.

Most governments of the Sword Coast do not even know about the Cult. Those groups that are aware of its existence have a simple, if brutal, method of dealing with the cultists. If a cultist is found guilty, their eyes or tongue are removed. A blind cultist has no hopes of reading the name of the Nameless One in some forgotten tome, and removing the tongue takes away the ability of the cultist to ever speak the Nameless One's name, should it ever be found.

THE IDENTITY OF THE NAMELESS ONE

'The Nameless One' is more of a title than an actual identification. As the Dungeon Master, you can determine the true identity of the Nameless One, should you so desire. It could refer to a known Elder Evil such as **Kezef the Chaos Hound** or **Dendar the Night Serpent**, and the 'name' that the cultists seek is a true name by which to summon their master to Faerûn. Perhaps it is the Elder Elemental Eye, and the 'name' is a magic word to release this god from his prison. Alternately, you could leave the Nameless One as just that, nameless, a shadowy and ever unknown entity.

Ultimately, this choice should boil down to how you want to use this adventure in your campaign and how to

MADNESS

If you are using the Madness option (*Dungeon Master's Guide*, p.258-260) or the Sanity ability score option (*DMG*, p.265), then this adventure offers plenty of opportunities to make use of these rules. As supplement to the varieties of madness in the tables in the *DMG*, consider using the following options that are more specific to the Nameless One:

- **Short-term Madness:** The character's head fills with a cacophony of whispers speaking different languages and suffers disadvantage on attack rolls and Wisdom (Perception) checks.
- **Long-term Madness:** The character becomes obsessed with reading any written material such as books or scrolls that they come across, and will not take any actions other than Disengage until the text has been read in its entirety.
- **Indefinite Madness:** "I find myself talking to myself in languages I don't actually understand."

In addition to the situations that the *DMG* suggests might call for a saving throw or check to prevent madness, you might also want to have the party make a DC 10 Wisdom saving throw (or Sanity, if you are using this option) every time they take a short rest inside the Corrupted Shrine. The first failure might give the character a short-term madness, a second failure might give them a long-term madness, and a third failure might give them an indefinite madness.

Introducing madness into your campaign might be more than you want to do, so feel free to ignore this option.

fit it best into your over-arching story. The decision is yours as the DM

RUNNING THE ADVENTURE

The adventure is designed for four characters of 5th-6th level. It is set on Faerûn's Sword Coast, with all of the action happening in the Cloakwood, between Baldur's Gate and the fortress-library of Candlekeep.

This publication assumes that you have the *Player's Handbook*, *Dungeon Master's Guide* (often abbreviated *DMG*), and the *Monster Manual*. Some of the creatures used in this adventure can be found in *Volo's Guide to Monsters*. These are marked with a superscript 'v' (for example: Xvart^v). If you do not have access to this book, you can often substitute a monster of a similar challenge rating from the *Monster Manual*. In some places in this publication, a specific suggestion will be given.

OVERVIEW

The party is given the task of locating a missing Avowed, one of the librarian monks from the fortress of Candlekeep. This search will lead them to the Cloakwood, where they find the Avowed's wagon being plundered by goblins. The party might then head to the goblin camp in search of answers, or, after a successful search, follow a second trail of tracks to an ancient elven ruin that has been taken over by the Cult of the Nameless One.

This adventure is intended as a side-quest, if your party happens to be in the Western Heartlands (or further afield, should you desire). If you wish to expand upon the Cult of the Nameless One, perhaps by connecting the

Nameless One to some other evil, this could lead into a longer campaign against the cult or aberrations and Elder Evil in general.

CHAPTER 1: INTO THE CLOAKWOOD

“Knowledge is a potent tool, but like all tools, it can be wielded for good or for ill.”

—Tuthayr Silverquill, Keeper of Tomes,
“Musings from Candlekeep”

THE ADVENTURE BEGINS

The starting point of this adventure is not really important, and should suit your campaign. Baldur’s Gate is an obvious place to start, and has the advantage of being a place where characters are likely to be spending time between quests. Starting in a small town like the nearby Beregost is also a possibility. Since Candlekeep is a location known throughout the Sword Coast, news of a missing librarian might reach even as far as Waterdeep or Neverwinter, but these would require a bit of traveling by the party before the adventure begins.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

The characters might be given the quest by a faction to which they belong (see the **Faction Hooks** sidebar). Alternately, a missing traveler is the kind of information that gets around, so the players might learn about the quest as gossip in a local tavern, or be given the mission by a local law enforcement agency (such as the Flaming Fists) seeking aid in resolving the case.

Regardless of how they found out about the missing Avowed, this is the information that the party knows before they set out:

- One of the Avowed, the librarian-monks of Candlekeep, was returning to Candlekeep from Baldur’s Gate, but he is now several days overdue. His name was Steffyn Aurelios, and he is an expert on onomastics (the study of names), in particular names that pre-date the Netherese Empire.
- Before his disappearance, he had written to his colleagues at Candlekeep. He had heard that a recent rainstorm had washed out a length of the Coast Way south of the city, so he was being forced to take a brief detour through the Cloakwood.

THE CLOAKWOOD

The Cloakwood is a thickly grown forest that lies between Baldur’s Gate to the north and Candle Keep to the south, and between the Coast Way to the east and the sea to the west. It is a dangerous forest, home to many beasts, fey, and evil humanoids. Travelers passing the Cloakwood on the Coast Way always have to travel warily and with caution.

FACTION HOOKS

If you are using factions in your campaign, the following hooks can be used to get your players involved in this quest.

Harpers. Harpers are known for frequenting the library of Candlekeep, and this particular Avowed is known to your superiors. His disappearance is a cause of concern for them, and they dispatch you to investigate.

Order of the Gauntlet. The Order has heard about the disappearance of this Avowed, and wants you to look into the matter. If there is some evil at work, it will be up to you to see that justice is done.

Emerald Enclave. The Emerald Enclave has been watching the Cloakwood, and something strange is happening in the woods. The librarian’s disappearance is just the latest strange occurrence, and it warrants investigation.

Lord’s Alliance. Although Candlekeep is not part of the Lord’s Alliance, it lies close enough to Baldur’s Gate to be of strategic interest. Maintaining good relations between the Alliance and the Avowed is important to your commanders, and locating this librarian would be politically beneficial.

Zhentarim. The Black Network knows the importance of information, and librarians are the best sources of information. Rumors of the missing librarian have reached the Zhentarim, and you have been tasked to acquire whatever useful information he might possess.

NAVIGATING THE WOODS

The party must find their way through the Cloakwood to locate the missing Avowed’s wagon. To track the wagon, one character needs to make a DC 15 Wisdom (Survival) check each day. After two successes, at least two days, the party finds the Ruined Wagon (see below).

For each failed check, the party wanders around the woods for an additional day.

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

For every day that the party is in the Cloakwood, including the two necessary to track the Avowed’s wagon, they experience one random encounter.

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS TABLE

d10	Encounter
1	14 Stirges (Challenge 1/8, 25 XP each)
2	14 Xvart ^V (Challenge 1/8, 25 XP each)
3	10 Wolves (Challenge 1/4, 50 XP each)
4	6 Worgs (Challenge 1/2, 100 XP each)
5	3 Giant Spiders (Challenge 1, 200 XP each)
6	3 Guard drakes ^V (Challenge 1, 200 XP each)
7	3 Quicklings ^V (Challenge 1, 200 xp each)
8	2 Meenlock ^V (Challenge 2, 450 XP each)
9	Green Hag (Challenge 3, 700 XP each)
10	Redcap ^V (Challenge 3, 700 XP each)

You might decide instead that the party meets a non-hostile creature that the party can interact socially with. If you desire to roll for this, then each day roll a d100. On a result of 01-66, the party experiences a random encounter. On a result of 67-00, the party experiences a random interaction.

RANDOM INTERACTION TABLE

d6	Encounter
1	Satyr (Challenge 1/2, 100 XP)
2	Scout (Challenge 1/2, 100 XP)
3	Dryad (Challenge 1, 200 XP)
4	Druid (Challenge 2, 450 XP)
5	Archer ^V (Challenge 3, 700 XP)
6	Warlock of the Archfey ^V (Challenge 4, 1,100 XP)

At the end of an interaction, decide whether the party treated the creature well or if they treated them poorly. If the party treated the creature well, it will give them guidance, granting them advantage on their next Wisdom (Survival) check to navigate the Cloakwood. If they treat the creature poorly, it will hinder them in any way that it can, inflicting disadvantage on their next Wisdom (Survival) check to navigate the Cloakwood. If they attack the creature, the creature will defend itself or run.

THE RUINED WAGON

After two successful Wisdom (Survival) checks, the party arrives at the site of the Avowed's ruined wagon.

The path you are on enters into a small clearing. In the middle of the clearing, you see the wreckage of a wagon. One wheel has been damaged, causing the whole wagon to tilt at an odd angle, and a draft mule lies dead still hitched to the front of the wagon. Several small, green-skinned humanoids surround the wagon sorting through gear and debris, accompanied by large, hairy spiders fitted with crude saddles.

Around the wagon are four **goblins** and their four **giant wolf spider** mounts. Two of the goblins are clambering over the wagon, and their spider mounts wait next to the wagon. The other two goblins, riding on their spiders, flank the wagon, keeping a lookout. This is not the first time these goblins have been at this wagon. They have come back to check the wagon for anything they might have forgotten on their first visit.

Development. After two of the goblins have been killed, the other two goblins will attempt to flee on any living spider mounts. A spider without a rider will fight until killed. If any goblins escape, they can be found with their surviving mounts in the Goblin Camp.

Rewards. Award standard XP for the encounter.

Among grimy pouches held by the goblins, the party finds 33 gp, 11 sp. The wagon has been almost entirely cleared of other valuables.

LOOKING FOR THE AVOWED

The party does not find Steffyn Aurelios the Avowed or any remains of him around the ruined wagon.

They can look for any tracks away from the wagon with Wisdom (Perception) check or an Intelligence (Investigate) check.

- A result of 10 reveals several sets of goblin and spider tracks leading off into the forest to the north. This was clearly not the goblin's first trip to gather loot from the wagon.
- A result of 15 reveals a second set of footprints. Several medium-sized humanoid boot prints lead away to the south. There is also evidence that they were dragging something.

THE PARTY'S PATH

If the party finds both sets of tracks, they have a choice to make.

- They can follow the goblin tracks. From here, they proceed to the Goblin Camp.
- They can follow the other set of tracks. From here, proceed to Chapter 2.

If the party goes directly to Chapter 2 and the Corrupted Shrine, they can either return to the Goblin Camp later or just skip it entirely. It is not actually necessary to resolve the adventure or the threat the cult poses.

THE GOBLIN CAMP

The party can follow the goblin and spider tracks with a successful DC 10 Wisdom (Survival) check. If they fail, you could roll on the random encounter table. Following the tracks leads to a small goblin encampment.

The set of goblin tracks that you have been following lead through a break in the trees, and you see a clearing occupied by several shoddy lean-tos and huts constructed of mud and sticks. The shelters are circled around a central campfire. Several goblins and spider-mounts meander around the camp. By the fire stands a particularly large, tough-looking goblin.

On the far side of the camp is what appears to be a large cage, constructed of sticks, bones, and spider web. A stained sheet of worn cloth has been tossed over the cage, concealing whatever might be inside.

In the camp are eight **goblins**, four **giant wolf spider** mounts, and a **goblin boss**. When the party is noticed,

four of the goblins attempt to mount the spiders, while the others provide ranged support.

Development. When the goblin boss is slain, if fewer than five goblins remain, they attempt to flee. Any giant wolf spider that is not being ridden by a goblin will fight to the death.

Rewards. Award standard XP for the encounter. Among grimy sacks found in the goblin dwellings, the party finds 41 gp, 17 sp, and 64 cp. On the goblin boss, the party finds a rusty key. Leaning up against one of the huts are two shovels.

With a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) or Intelligence (Investigate) check, the party finds a patch of recently disturbed earth. Digging in this spot results in the discovery of a buried chest. The chest is locked, but can be opened by the rusty key or with a DC 15 Dexterity check using Thieves' Tools. Inside the chest is 7 pp, 20 gp, 250 sp, 950 cp, 6 banded agates (worth 10 gp each), and 2 *potions of healing*.

GREETHAK THE MAD GOBLIN

Inside the cage at the back of the camp is not the missing Avowed, but is instead **Greethak the Mad Goblin**. Weeks ago he was kidnapped by the Cult of the Nameless One, an experience that drove him insane.

He managed to escape and make it back to his goblin band, but his fellow goblins were afraid of his ramblings

and locked him in a cage to keep him under control. His spirit is broken, and he has not attempted to escape from his cage.

Pulling back the cover of the cage, you see a small hunched figure. It is a goblin, looking more ragged and wild than any of the other goblins of the camp. He looks up at you with frantic eyes, bloodshot but with bright, unnaturally blue irises. He begins to mutter, though you are unsure to whom he is speaking.

Greethak does not immediately attack the party, or even attempt to escape his confinement at all. If the party asks him question, he answers with his wild ravings, which do hold some information helpful to the party.

GREETHAK'S WILD RAVINGS

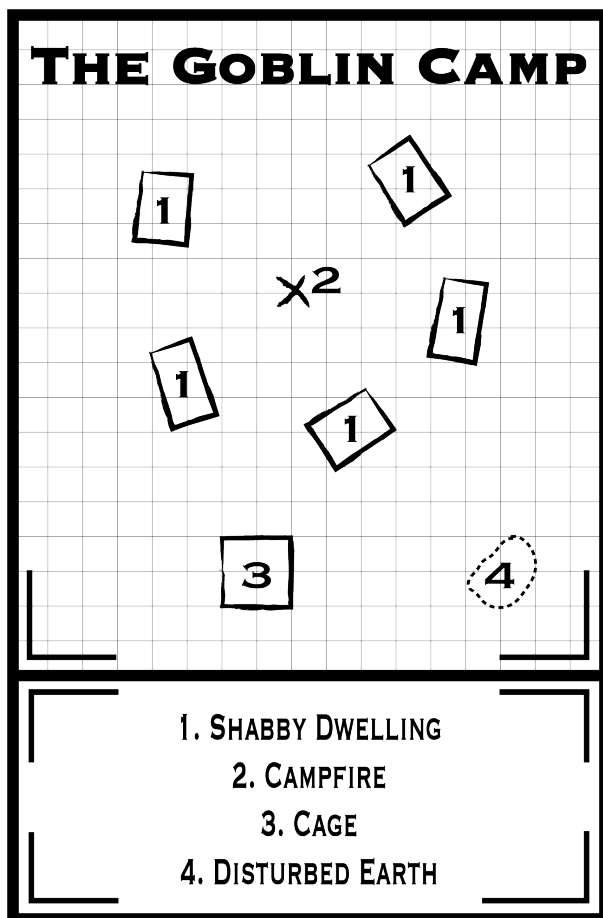
d10	Greethak says...
1	"Greethak no should have gone to south, now only gibberish comes from Greethak's mouth..."
2	"Only madmen would task blindman to guard door."
3	"Hanging lights speak only of danger."
4	"At sound of horn, they swarm to crumbling tower. Can you hear their screeches?"
5	"AAAAAEEEEEEEEYYYYYOOOOOOGGGGH HHH!"
6	"Greethak no will tell you Greethak's name. Greethak no should have told anyone Greethak's name."
7	"Camp cage is more nice than Greethak's last cage."
8	"No smell the flowers."
9	"Greethak no learned to read. This good. Reading man no looked good."
10	"The moons no are right."

The party can open Greethak's cage using thieves' tools (Dexterity check DC 10) or by cutting the bindings that lash it closed. If they do, Greethak attacks. If the party tries to leave, Greethak also attacks.

If the party tries convince Greethak to come with them, he will follow them. However, he will not lead them to the shrine out of fear, and if the party locates the shrine, he refuses to go near it.

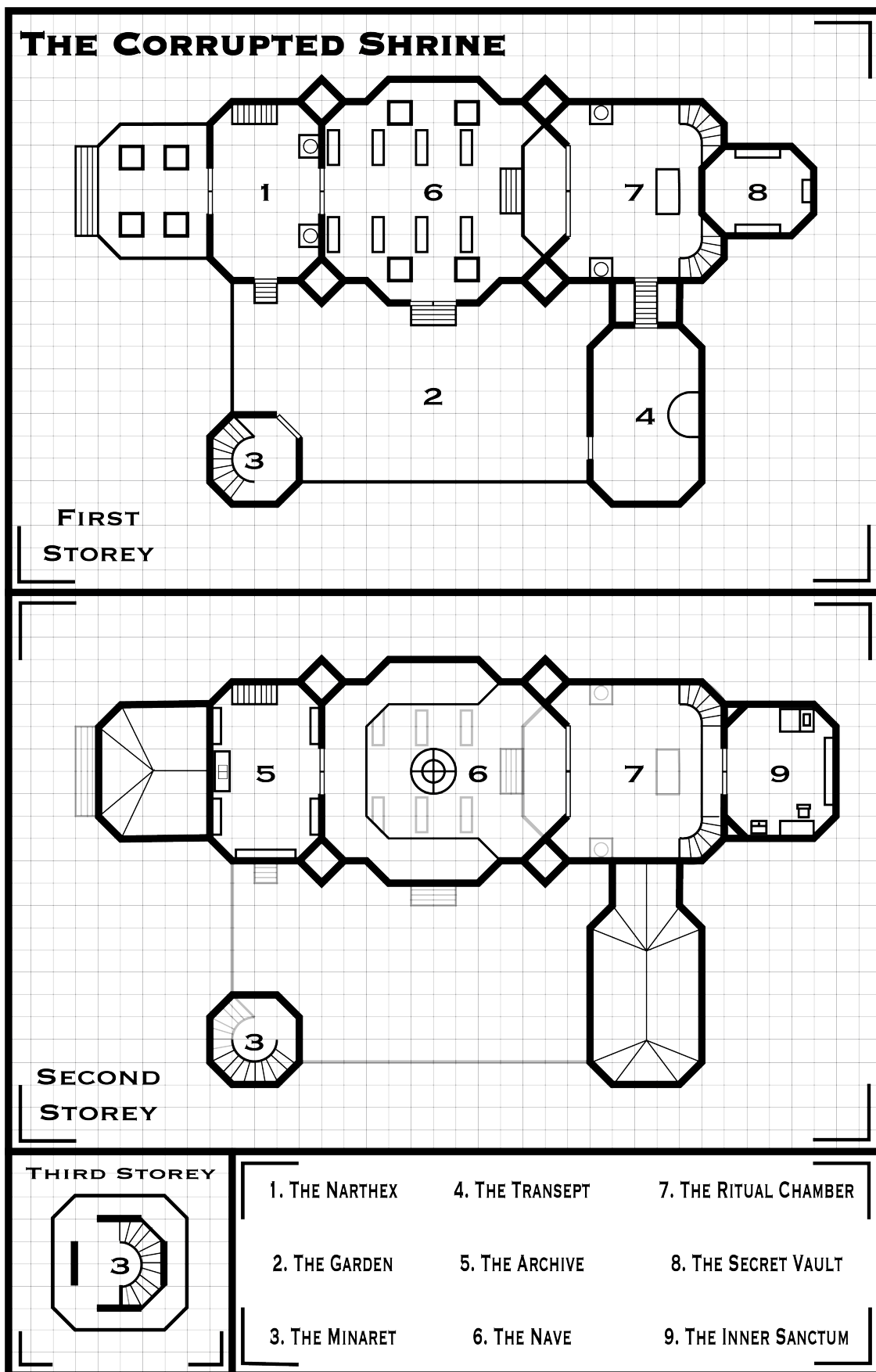
TO THE SHRINE

With the knowledge that the goblins do not have Steffyn Aurelios, the party must now head south to the ruins of the elven temple.



If the party did not find the extra footprints at the Ruined Wagon and also killed or ignored Greethak before he gave them any useful information, then they might have no reason to look for the shrine. You can either try to nudge them back to investigating the wagon again,

with the hopes of finding the extra footprints, or if they chose to wander through the Cloakwood, have them discover the shrine after $1d4+1$ days (with a corresponding number of random encounters).



CHAPTER 2: FIGHTING THE CULT

"By His Name shall ye know Him. By His Name shall ye call Him. By His Name shall all things cease."

— "The Apocryphon Ignosticae,"

Unknown Author

THE CORRUPTED SHRINE

Thousands and thousands of years ago, moon elves from the elven kingdom of Shantel Othreier built a shrine to their moon goddess Sehanine Moonbow. After the fall of this kingdom, the shrine was abandoned and largely forgotten.

In the years since, the shrine has sometimes sat empty or served as shelter for beasts or bandits, but a little over a year ago it was taken over by the Cult of the Nameless One. The cult sought ancient lore in the few texts from the shrine that had been preserved. They did not find what they were looking for, but have stayed in the shrine, using it as a base of operations in the Cloakwood.

FINDING THE SHRINE

The corrupted shrine stands in the middle of nowhere deep in the Cloakwood.

As you walk, the Cloakwood around you begins to change ever so slightly. It is darker here, and the trees and brambles seem to twist in a way that seems unusual, even unnatural. You realize that it has been quite some time since you have heard the call of birds or insects, although the forest is by no means silent. There is a faint din that fills the air, unrecognizable, that seems to come from the direction in which you are heading.

Finally, you come into a clearing, and before you stand the ruins of a structure. The design looks elven, although like no modern elven architecture you have seen, and the masonry twists slightly in a way that reminds you of the contorted trees in this part of the forest. The buildings are crumbling and show great wear and age, but solid construction keeps them standing even after an untold number of years.

The ruins can be identified as a shrine from the buttresses and large windows, long broken, and a tall minaret that stands in the southeast corner of the complex, separated from the main building by a walled courtyard. The doors of the shrine are rotten, although they show signs of recent repair.

If the party is curious about the ruins, they can attempt an Intelligence (History) check. A result of 15 reveals that the ruins probably belonged to one of the ancient elven kingdoms that occupied the Sword Coast during

the First Flowering. A result of 20 reveals that the shrine was likely built by the kingdom of Shantel Othreier.

The party can also attempt to identify the deity to whom the shrine was originally dedicated with an Intelligence (Religion) check. A result of 10 identifies lunar motifs suggesting a moon deity. A result of 15 identifies motifs specific to Sehanine Moonbow. However, either result also shows that these motifs seem to have been purposefully damaged in recent years.

The party can either choose to enter the shrine through the front doors or climb over the wall into the courtyard. Climbing the wall requires a successful Strength (Athletics) check with DC 10.

Once inside the shrine, the party has several routes available to them. They do not have to explore every room, although they will find greater reward if they do.

THE CORRUPTED SHRINE: GENERAL FEATURES

The following aspects can be applied to any room in the Corrupted Shrine, unless the description of an individual room specifies otherwise.

Walls. The shrine is constructed from stone blocks. The blocks were originally white, but after thousands of years, they have become a weathered grey, covered in green moss and lichen in places. The walls stand in most places, but chunks of stone and even whole blocks have fallen out of place.

Doors. The original doors of the shrine were made of a special, dark hard wood that resists decomposition, but after thousands of years the doors are splintered and rotten. Some have been repaired haphazardly by the cult. None of the doors are locked. A DC 10 Strength check is enough to knock one of these old doors off their rusty hinges.

Light. Most of the cultists are humans, so they keep the shrine well lit with torches and candles.

1. THE NARTHEX

The Narthex acts as the entrance hall of the shrine. It is about 30 ft. north to south and 40 ft. wide east to west.

The doors of the shrine creak open into a rectangular entry hall. On the western wall, a stairway leads up to the second storey. On the eastern wall is a door leading out. On the north wall are two large double doors that, although they look decrepit, still stand. Flanking these doors are the remains of two statues that, based on what fragments remained, might have depicted slender female figures.

Leaning up against one of the statues is an old man. He holds a slender staff in his hand. He wears ragged clothes and has a dirty cloth tied around his eyes.

The stairway on the western wall leads up to the Archive (area 5), the door in the eastern wall leads out into the Garden (area 2), and the large doorway in the northern wall leads into the Nave (area 6).

THE BLIND DOORMAN

The man leaning up against the statue is the **blind doorman**. If the party speaks to the blind doorman, he is brusque and cranky, but not outright aggressive. He will, however, do whatever he can to learn the names of the characters in the party. Also, he will refuse to give his own name.

If the party asks about the Avowed, the blind doorman states that there have been several folk coming and going, but he (gesturing to his eyes) cannot tell if any of them were librarians.

If the party refuses to give their names, something that the blind doorman considers quite rude, he will not let them pass farther into the shrine. If they try to get past him, he will attack. If they refuse to give him their names, he will eventually attack.

Rewards. Award standard XP for the encounter. In a satchel that blind doorman possessed, the party finds 40 gp and 230 sp.

2. THE GARDEN

The Garden is a large courtyard, about 45 ft. wide by 80 ft. long.

You enter into a large garden courtyard that is overgrown and weedy. There are four doorways that open onto the garden: two of the doors, one in the southwest corner of the garden and a set of double doors further into the garden lead into the main shrine; one door to the north leads into a side building of the shrine; and one door leads into a tall minaret in the southeast corner of the garden.

Other than weeds and bits of rubble fallen from the ruins, the only feature of the garden are six, tall flower stalks growing in a circle about 15 ft. in diameter. The flowers resemble sunflowers that have white petals and blood-red centers.

In the southwest corner, the door leads into the Narthex (area 1). The door in the southeast corner of the garden leads into the Minaret (area 3). The double doors in the middle of the western side of the lead into the Nave ((area 6). The door on the northern side of the garden leads into the Transept (area 4).

The circle of flowers in the center of the garden is an **udoroot**. If anyone moves within 30 ft. of this circle of flowers, the udoroot begins to attack.

Rewards. Award standard XP for the encounter. Half buried in the dirt in the center of the udoroot is a ceramic circular white and black tile that resembles a crescent moon.

3. THE MINARET

In the southeast corner of the shrine complex stands a three-story tall minaret.

Before you rises a tall tower. At the top of it, you can see a landing with a balcony. Although several stones have dropped from the walls and balcony and the whole structure seems to lean a few degrees to one side, it appears stable. A slightly ajar door leads inside.

Inside the Minaret, a spiraling staircase leads up three storeys.

Loose Stair. Near the top of the staircase, there is a loose stair. If a character is inspecting the staircase for anything dangerous, a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) or Intelligence (Wisdom) check reveals a loose stair. If no one notices the stair is loose, the first character going up the stairs must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or fall down to the bottom of the tower (taking 3d10 damage) as the stair comes loose. If someone notices the loose stair, it can be easily stepped over.

After the perilous climb up the uneven stairs, you come up to an open balcony. You see a man standing in a corner, writing cryptic formulae on the walls with a piece of chalk. His incomprehensible scrawlings cover the walls and floor.

When the party ascends the stairs, on the balcony level they find a **cult fanatic**. When the cult fanatic sees the party (after a surprise round, if they are stealthy), he attacks and lets out a high-pitched shriek, disturbing four **swarms of bats** that were roosting in the rafters. These are his pets and rush to defend him.

If a character wants to try and interpret the inscrutable formulae the cult fanatic has been writing on the walls, they may make an Intelligence check. On a result of 10, they can identify the writing as astronomical formulae. On a result of 15, they believe that the calculations are incredibly incorrect. On a result of 20, the character realizes that while the calculations might look incorrect, they actually use advanced methods of calculus that work when the movement of the Outer Planes are taken into account.

Rewards. Award standard XP for the encounter. In a satchel that the cult fanatic held, the party finds 11 electrum pieces and a ceramic circular white and black tile that resembles a half moon. They also find a black horn, decorated with motifs of flying bats. This is a *horn of the swarm*.

Horn of the Swarm

Wondrous item, uncommon

This hunting horn is the black color of a moonless night and is engraved with hundreds of images of flying bats. You can use an action to blow this horn, which produces

a sound of much higher frequency than expected, given the horn's size. This immediately summons 1d4 swarms of bats, using the statistics from the *Monster Manual*. These bats are loyal to you and will follow your directions. These swarms disappear when reduced to 0 hitpoints, or after one hour.

Once you have used the horn's power, you cannot use it again until after you have taken a long rest.

4. THE TRANSEPT

The transept is an annex chamber attached to the east of the main shrine. It is about 40 ft. east to west and 25 ft. north to south.

You enter a long room. Set against the middle of the north wall is a large, ornate fountain. The fountain no longer runs, but there is still some stagnant water in the basin. There are two exits from the room: one door to the west and one to the south.

Two shapes lay on the ground. They have strange, unnatural anatomy and pale grey skin covered in arcane runes. They are breathing rhythmically, as if asleep.

The door on the western wall leads to a small hall leading up to the Ritual Chamber (area 7). Another door on the eastern side of the south wall leads out into the Garden (area 2).

The creatures sleeping in the room are two **runehounds**. The party can attempt a Dexterity (Stealth) check (DC the runehounds' passive Perception 14) to sneak past the runehounds. However, due to the runehounds' psychic sight, the characters have disadvantage on this check.

Rewards. Award standard XP for the encounter.

Sunken in the water of the fountain basin is a ceramic circular white tile that resembles a full moon.

5. THE ARCHIVE

The archive stores the knowledge of the cult. It is about 30 ft. north to south and 40 ft. wide east to west.

You enter a room lined with old, weathered bookshelves. A table set against the southern wall of the room has a particularly large tomb resting upon it. A large set of double doors lead out of the room to the north.

On the western side of the room, a stairway goes down into the Narthex (area 1). The large set of double doors on the north wall lead out onto the mezzanine of the Nave (area 6).

Three **cult fanatics** are doing research in the room. They attack the party on sight, but do their best to avoid doing any attacks that might cause harm to the books. If anyone in the party uses area attacks that might damage the books (for example, a *fireball* spell), that character become the target of all of the cult fanatics' attacks.

THE APOCRYPHON IGNOTICAE

This is the unholy book of the cult of the Nameless One. It contains the doctrines and dogmas of their beliefs and the myth of the Nameless One.

The book is written in a bizarre mix of Deep Speech, Primordial, Infernal and Abyssal. The easiest way to read the book is using a *comprehend languages* spell. However, if a character knows at least one of these languages, they can make a DC 20 Intelligence check to try and comprehend the book. The DC decreases by 5 for each of these languages the character knows beyond the first.

The *Apocryphon Ignosticae* was written by madmen, and tears at the sanity of any who are foolish enough to read it. If you are using the rules for Madness, a character who reads the *Apocryphon* should make a DC 15 Wisdom or Sanity saving throw, gaining a short-term, long-term, or indefinite madness on a failure (you as the DM can decide the severity of the madness based on how bad they fail and whether they are already suffering from any madness).

If you are not using the rules for madness, have the character make a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw. On a failure, the character takes 4d8 psychic damage.

After reading the *Apocryphon*, the character knows the myth of the Nameless One.

THE MYTH OF THE NAMELESS ONE

"All things have a beginning and an end. When creation came into being, it had a beginning. To balance this, it also had an End. This End had a Name. But it was not time for the End as of yet, as all things also have a duration. A beginning, a duration, and an end. So the End of Creation had to wait, and slept until its Name might be spoken, to awaken the End.

The gods, foolish and proud, feared the End, being the End of Creation and the End of themselves. They deny the way of things, a beginning, a duration, and an end. So while the End slept, they hid its Name, making it Nameless. Its Name was shattered, and the pieces scattered and hidden. And so the Nameless One, the End of Creation, sleeps and waits for its Name to be remade and spoken.

The Speaking of the Name is inevitable. All things have a beginning, a duration, and an end. There will be no escape, only the End."

The large book on the table is the *Apocryphon Ignosticae* (see sidebar).

Rewards. Award standard XP for the encounter. In the satchels of the cult fanatics, the party finds 10 gp, 10 ep, and 16 sp. On the bookshelves, the party finds five spell scrolls: a *scroll of detect magic*, a *scroll of true strike*, a *scroll of comprehend languages*, a *scroll of illusory script*, and a *scroll of crown of madness*. Also resting on one of the shelves is a ceramic circular white and black tile that resembles a gibbous moon. On the table is the *Apocryphon Ignosticae*, which the party can take if they desire.

6. THE NAVE

The Nave is the main center of religious worship in the shrine. It is about 55 ft. long and 50 ft. wide, and two storeys high.

You enter the Nave, the main chamber of worship of the shrine. It is long and columned, lined with rows of pews. A mezzanine is supported by the columns. Hanging by a chain from the ceiling at the level of the mezzanine is a large, wrought iron chandelier. At the north end of the Nave, a small set of stairs leads up onto an elevated platform. At the back end of this platform is a set of huge, two-storey curtain doors. These doors were once richly decorated with lunar and elven motifs, but they have been damaged extensively and purposefully.

You now understand the source the low, unrecognizable din that you have heard since the woods approaching the shrine. Several cultists dressed in ragged burgundy robes are at worship, sitting in the rows of pews and chanting constantly in strange, unrecognizable syllables from a thousand languages. Another cultist stands on the northern platform. The low, monotonous continuity of the chanting unsettles you to your core.

On the ground floor, a large set of double doors on the south wall lead to the Narthex (area 1). An aisle leads up the middle of the Nave, with four rows of pews on either side. Four large columns support the mezzanine level above. A large set of double doors on the east wall lead out into the Garden (area 2). The large curtain doors lead north into the Ritual Chamber (area 7).

Above the first storey, the mezzanine level is a broad balcony that circles three sides of the Nave, all except the northern side. A double door on the south wall leads into the Archive (area 5).

Five **cultists** sit spread out in the pews, and a sixth **cultist** stands on the platform at the north end of the nave. They do not break from their chanting, but will all attack if disturbed at all.

Development. Unseen by the party (unless anyone in the party has a passive Perception of 18) a **gibbering moulder** has tucked itself in the iron chandelier. The gibbering moulder does not immediately reveal itself. If the party attacks the cultists, read the following at the end of the first full round of combat.

Although all of the cultists have now stopped their droning chant, you continue to hear a low barrage of continuously spoken gibberish. Suddenly, something drops down from the chandelier with a sickening *splort*. It is an undulating mass of eyeballs and mouths speaking a thousand sounds all at once.

If the party does not attack the cultists, then the gibbering moulder will drop down upon them when they walk underneath the chandelier, getting a surprise round. The cultists will then cease their chanting and join the fight.

Rewards. Award standard XP for the encounter. In the satchels of the cultists, the party finds 22 gp, 32 sp,

and 26 cp. The cultist who was standing up on the platform has in his satchel a ceramic circular white and black tile that resembles a gibbous moon.

7. THE RITUAL CHAMBER

The ritual chamber is a large room, about 35 ft. north to south and 40 ft. east to west. Two huge curtain doors on the south wall lead into the Nave (area 6). A door on the east wall leads to a short hall leading down to the Transept (area 4).

You enter a large ritual chamber. Flanking the room are two broken statues, one on the west wall and one on the east wall. From their remains, they seemed to have depicted slender female figures.

Against the north wall, two curved stairs lead up to a central balcony. A set of double doors on this balcony leads into the inner sanctum. On the wall under the balcony is a mosaic frieze. Although it is very damaged, the remains of lunar motifs can be seen.

A few feet in front of the mosaic frieze is a large stone altar, around which a ritual is in progress. Several cultists surround the altar, chanting in an unwholesome tongue. A man, dressed in robes you recognize as those of Candlekeep, lies motionless on the altar. You watch in horror as a strange creature that looks like a brain with four beast-like legs magically burrows into the poor man's head.

On a balcony overlooking the ritual stands a fierce-looking woman, dressed in the cult's ragged burgundy robes, but with extra embroidery signifying her importance. She sees you, and shouts to the cultists, "Intruders! Steal their minds!" She then turns and goes through a door, closing it behind her.

Standing around the altar are two **cult fanatics** and two **cultists**. An **intellect devourer** just entered the head of the Avowed Steffyn Aurelios (use the statistics of an **acolyte**). The cult leader is able to move into the inner sanctum before the battle. The cult fanatics, cultists, and intellect devourer (in the body of Steffyn) attack the party at the orders of the cult leader.

Rewards. Award standard XP for the encounter. In the satchels of the cultists, the party finds 6 pp, 12 gp, and 38 cp. On the altar are a set of alchemist's supplies and a set of poisoner's supplies, as well as a *potion of resistance* (psychic). On the ground in front of the mosaic frieze is a ceramic circular white and black tile that resembles a half moon.

THE MOON PUZZLE

Embedded in the mosaic frieze is a puzzle lock that opens the door to the secret vault. This puzzle dates back to when the shrine belonged to worshipers of Sehanine Moonbow. The cultists are unaware that there is a secret

door behind the frieze. The edges of the secret door can be spotted with a DC 20 Intelligence (Investigation) or Wisdom (Perception) check.

The centerpiece of the mosaic frieze is a horizontal row of nine circles. Two of these circles still hold circular tiles, while the other seven are shallow depressions where there were once similar circular tiles. The two remaining tiles are the leftmost circle, which is an all black tile, and the second circle from the right, which is a white and black tile resembling a crescent moon, with the white of the moon oriented on the right side.

When restored, the frieze should show the changing phases of the moon, from the all black new moon on one side, through the full moon in the middle, then back to a new moon on the other side.

The other seven tiles have been scattered throughout the shrine.

- The missing crescent moon tile can be found in the middle of the udoroot in the Garden (area 2).
- One half moon tile can be found in the possessions of the cult fanatic in the Minaret (area 3).
- The other half moon tile can be found on the ground in front of the mosaic frieze (area 7).
- One gibbous moon tile can be found on a shelf in the Archive (area 5).
- The other gibbous moon tile can be found in the possession of one of the cultists in the Nave (area 6).
- The full moon tile can be found in the fountain in the Transept (area 4).
- The missing new moon tile can be found on the table in the Inner Sanctum (area 9).

Once all of the tiles are set in place, in the proper orientation, the hidden door into the secret vault opens.

8. THE SECRET VAULT

The secret vault held the treasures of the ancient shrine of Sehanine Moonbow. These treasure remain, sealed in the vault and protected from the ages. They are laid out on three ornately carved tables.

Rewards. The party finds two elfen statuettes depicting dancing elf maidens (each worth 25 gp), a lute, a silver amulet of Sehanine Moonbow, *boots of elvenkind*, and a small ornate chest containing 35 gp, 300 sp, and 1100 cp.

9. THE INNER SANCTUM

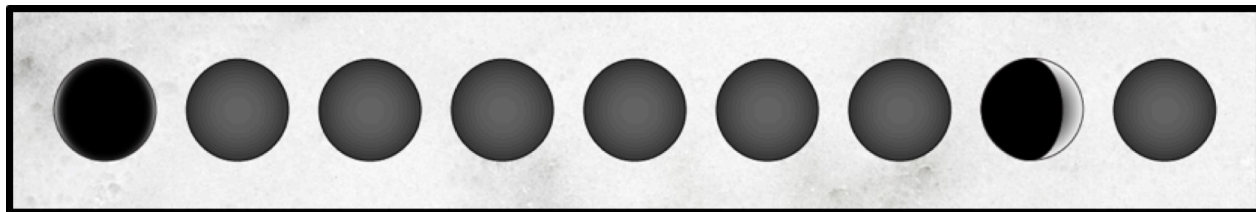
A set of double doors leads from the ritual chamber into the inner sanctum, a room about 30 ft. east to west and 25 ft. north to south. The room is used as the office and quarters of the cult leader.

You enter a small domicile. There is a rustic looking bed on the west side of the room, a chair and desk on the eastern side, and a chest and bookshelf on the northern side. The cult leader you saw in the Ritual Chamber stands in the center of the room, a small winged serpent coiled around her upper arm. She manically screams, "Your knowledge will be mine!" before attacking.

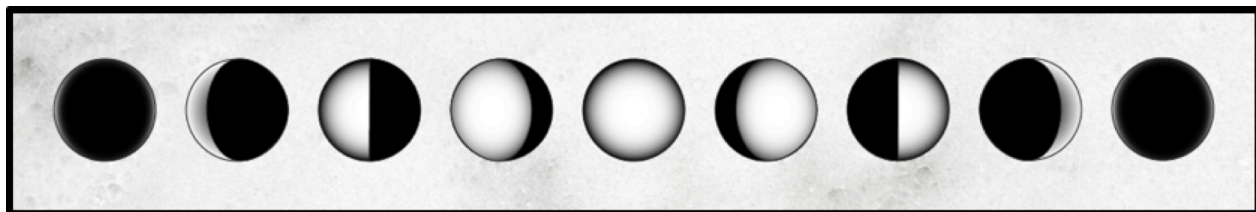
The cult leader (use the statistics for a **mage**) and her familiar, a **flying snake**, attack the party on site.

Rewards. Award standard XP for the encounter. In the satchel of the cult leader, the party finds 90 gp and a *wand of secrets*. In the chest are 30 pp, 1500 gp, 4650 sp, and 300 cp. On the desk are two violet garnet gems (100 gp each) and a ceramic circular black tile. On the bookshelf is the Research Journal of Steffyn Aurelios.

THE MOON PUZZLE (AS FOUND)



THE MOON PUZZLE (COMPLETED)



ENDING THE ADVENTURE

With the cultists defeated, the party can go where they wish. The party also is now in possession of the Avowed's Research Journal. If you used the Faction Hooks presented at the beginning of the adventure, the party could return the book to one of the factions to get a reward of **500 gp**. This choice might have interesting implications later in your campaign.

This Research Journal alternately could be presented at Candelkeep as the book-donation requirement to gain access to the libraries, which you could use to start the party on their next quest. The party might have also taken with them the *Apocryphon Ignosticae*. This tome could also be used to gain access to Candlekeep in this way.

APPENDIX A: MONSTERS

This appendix details the monsters and NPCs that appear in this adventure.

GREETHAK THE MAD GOBLIN

Greethak the Mad Goblin was driven insane by his imprisonment by the Cult of the Nameless One, but his madness comes with psychic abilities.

In combat, Greethak favors his psychic thrust attack. However, he is not so mad that he wouldn't recognize an enemy that consistently bests this attack. On an enemy that keeps succeeding on Wisdom saving throws, he is likely to use his frantic claws.

Greethak the Mad Goblin

Small humanoid (goblinoid), chaotic evil

Armor Class 14

Hit Points 45 (10d6 + 10)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	8 (-1)	14 (+2)

Skills Bluff +5, Insight +2, Stealth +5

Damage Resistances psychic

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 9

Languages Common, Goblin

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Nimble Escape. Greethak can take the Disengage or Hide action as a bonus action on each of its turns.

Armor of Madness. Greethak adds his Charisma modifier to his AC.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Greethak can make four attacks with his frantic claw.

Frantic Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack.* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) slashing damage.

Psychic Thrust. Greethak targets one creature that he can see within 30 ft. That creature must succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or take 22 (4d10 + 2) psychic damage.

THE BLIND DOORMAN

The party may underestimate the blind doorman, but he is actually a skilled martial artist.

For the blind doorman, use the statistics for the **martial arts adept** from *Volo's Guide to Monsters*, but with the following three changes.

The Blind Doorman

Medium humanoid (human), chaotic evil

Senses blindsight 30 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 13

Blind Senses. The doorman can't use his blindsight while deafened.

Keen Hearing. The doorman has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing.

In combat, the blind doorman uses his unarmed strike to stun as many enemies as possible.

If you do not have access to *Volo's Guide to Monsters*, you can instead use the statistics for the **veteran** from the *Monster Manual*. This will give him less of a blind monk feel, but will work just as well. Make the changes as above, but also exchange the veteran's actions for the following:

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The doorman makes three unarmed strike attacks.

Unarmed Strike. *Melee Weapon Attack.* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) bludgeoning damage.

RUNEHOUNDS

Runehounds are horrible creatures created by mad arcanists and cultists. They resemble shaven hounds, with black runes covering their pale grey skin. However, instead of a typical head, they have a serpentine neck sprouting from the middle of their backs. At the end of this neck is a large maw of vicious teeth.

In combat, a runehound will make use of its caustic spew when available and fall back on its bite otherwise. When possible, it will try to immobilize melee combatants using its adhesive spew, allowing the runehound to focus on the weaker, ranged combatants.

Runehound

Medium aberration, chaotic evil

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 30 (4d8 + 12)

Speed 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	14 (+2)	17 (+3)	5 (-3)	12 (+1)	8 (-1)

Skills Athletics +7, Perception +3, Stealth +4, Survival +3

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons that aren't silvered

Senses blindsight 120 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 14

Languages understands Undercommon

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Psychic Sight. Runehounds perceive the world through a psychic sense organ. They retain their blindsight even while deafened. They have advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks and Wisdom (Survival) checks made to track.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack.* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. **Hit:** 11 (2d6 + 5) piercing damage.

Caustic Spew (Recharge 5-6). *Ranged Spell Attack.* +4 to hit, range 30 ft., one target. **Hit:** 18 (5d6 + 3) acid damage.

Adhesive Spew. *Ranged Spell Attack.* +4 to hit, range 60 ft., one target. **Hit:** The creature is restrained by adhesive goo. As an action, a restrained creature can attempt a DC 13 Strength check, escaping from the goo on a success.

UDOROOT

The udoroot is a large psionic plant. All that is visible of the udoroot above ground is a circle of six tall flower stalks that resemble sunflowers, except with white petals and blood-red centers.

Udoroot can generate electrical charges, which they use to stun their potential victims. They then use their psionic energy to drag the victims into the center of the circle of flowers. There, the udoroot secretes digestive juices to begin to digest its victim into a liquid fertilizer.

Udoroot

Huge plant

Armor Class 5

Hit Points 67 (7d12 + 21)

Speed 0 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
1 (-5)	1 (-5)	16 (+3)	4 (-3)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)

Skills Perception +4

Damage Resistances cold, fire

Damage Immunities electricity

Senses blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 14

Languages —

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Sensing Stalks. The udoroot has six flowered stalks above the ground.

Whenever the udoroot takes 12 or more damage in a single turn, one of the six stalks is destroyed. If all six stalks are destroyed, the udoroot goes dormant and cannot take actions until the stalks regrow, in about a month.

The udoroot can't use its blindsight once all six of its stalks have been destroyed.

Digestive Juices. A creature that starts its turn in the udoroots space takes 1d6 acid damage.

ACTIONS

Stunning Shock. The udoroot targets two creatures that it can see within 60 ft. Those two targets must make a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw, taking 11 (3d6 + 2) electricity damage on a failed saving throw, or half as much on a success. On a failed saving throw, the target also becomes stunned. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

BONUS ACTIONS

Telekinetic Pull. One creature that has been stunned by the udoroot is knocked prone and pulled 10 ft. towards the udoroot. If the creature is less than 10 ft. away from the udoroot, it is pulled into the udoroot's space.

CREDITS

**ROGUE
HEXAGON**
studios

RogueHexagon.com

Designer: Brendan Hainline

Editors: Eshan Mitra, Geoff Weeks

Cartography: Brendan Hainline

Playtesters: Danny Canuto, Vicente Rodriguez, Jon Swan, Geoff Weeks

Resources and Inspiration: The runehound is originally from *Monster Manual III* by Rich Burlew, Eric Cagle, Jesse Decker, Andrew J. Finch, Gwendolyn F.M. Kestrel, Rich Redman, Matthew Sernett, Chris Thomasson, and P. Nathan Toomey (edition 3.5). The udoroot is originally from *Expanded Psionics Handbook* by Bruce R. Cordell (edition 3.5). Greethak is adapted from a blue, also from the *Expanded Psionics Handbook*.